



Department of History and Civilization

**Collective Identities, Integration and
Resistance during the Scanian War
1676-1679**

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War 1676-1679**
PhD Thesis

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Part I: Introduction

In 1658 one third of Denmark was ceded to Sweden. The Swedes had invaded the western and central parts of the country and were laying siege to Copenhagen. In a situation where the country's very existence was threatened, the government decided to give in to the enemy's demands and surrender the eastern parts of the country that bordered on Sweden. The treaty of Roskilde stated that Scania (Skåne), Halland, Blekinge and Bornholm, the so-called Scanian provinces, would remain under Swedish rule for ever and ever. However, war soon broke out again. A conspiracy against the Swedes led to the Danish take-over of the island of Bornholm but in the rest of Scania the conspiracy failed when the brains behind it were betrayed.¹

Technically, Scania (except Bornholm) had become a part of Denmark under Swedish rule. The treaty of Roskilde allowed the Scanians to keep their old Scanian Law and the inhabitants' customs and religious ceremonies were to be kept intact as long as they did not clash with Swedish fundamental law. In reality, a number of changes were soon enough introduced, although it has long been disputed what impact they had on the Scanians. Some of the novelties included the billeting of Swedish troops with local families, the introduction of the Swedish mercantilist system and the replacement of many native civil servants with Swedes and non-Danish foreigners in Swedish service.² A number of trade routes were cut off or changed, sometimes for the better, but sometimes also for the worse. In the same manner the Scanians now gained access to the Swedish legal system, which not only meant that the peasantry had their own representatives in the Diet but also that the Scanians avoided Absolutist rule as it was established in Denmark in 1660.

Then the Danes returned to Scania. In June 1676 the Danish army landed at Råå, just south of Helsingborg, and they quickly re-conquered the lost lands except for the province capital of Malmö (Malmö) and a few other enclaves. Half a year later the Swedes were back. They beat the Danes in the battle of Lund, but most parts of

¹ The most exhaustive description of the conspiracy is to be found in Knud Fabricius's *Skaanes overgang fra Danmark til Sverige*, (Scania's Transition from Denmark to Sweden), Copenhagen 1906), vol. 1, pp. 98-131. See also: Poul Erik Engelhardt, *Skåne mellem dansk og svensk. En undersøgelse af de nationale brydninger i Skåne stift årene 1658 til 1679. Holdninger hos biskoppen og i præsteskabet*, (Scania between Denmark and Sweden. An Inquiry into the Clashes between the Nations in the Scanian Diocese between the years 1658 and 1679), Copenhagen 2007, pp. 134-183.

² Alf Erlandsson, *Skånska generalguvernementet och dess arkiv. Förvaltnings-och arkivhistoriska undersökningar*, (The Scanian Government General and its Archives), Lund 1967, esp. pp. 138-152.

Scania remained no man's land for the following three years. The Danes kept the cities of Landskrona (Lands Crone) and Kristianstad (Christianstad), the Swedes stayed in Malmö and the rest of the lands were in the hands of whoever had the most powerful arms. At times, this third factor was constituted by the so-called *snaphaner*, locals that fought the Swedes with what we today would call guerrilla techniques.³ During the course of the war these irregular combatants were recognised by the Danish king if they would enlist units and adhere to a minimum of martial law. These troops were then given the name of The King's Friskytter, and it is on them that this thesis will concentrate.

Maybe the *snaphaner/friskytter* is the dominating single theme of the sources that remain from the Scanian war, on both sides. It is difficult to find a letter, report, newsheet, or book from the time that does not mention the *snaphaner/friskytter*, especially from the summer of 1677 until the end of the war. In order to be able to see whether the *snaphaner* and *friskytter* could be classified as appertaining to the military category of guerrillas or irregulars, I will study their operations during the Scanian War in detail and also analyse the reports and letters that they sent to HQ during this war, in order to find out what lines mobilisation followed (communal ones?), what sort of men the leaders were, what the relationship to the Danish regular army was and how/if they related to other rebel movements or irregular troops in Europe. Now, it is often maintained that terms that were not in use during the historical era that one is studying should be avoided, although that was obviously not the case in Mommsen's days. For that reason, I have chosen not to call the *snaphaner/friskytter* "guerrillas" in this dissertation although they used battle techniques that today go under the name of guerrilla warfare.⁴ I have chosen to spell Scandinavian words such as "*snaphane*" in Danish except in Swedish quotations. The reason for this is that I have tried to keep as closely to the language of my sources as possible when words, names and placenames have to be rendered in the text and the majority of my sources are in Danish. As for the names of geographical locations I have generally used the

³ The Swedish governor general Jöran Sperling even imagined that the *snaphaner* would take over the whole country. See: Letter from Sperling to the king, 1678, Swedish National Archives (SRA): "...snaphanarna ämna Kristianstad blockera, att fästningen snart skall bliva uppgiven och att sedan hela landet utöver skall falla i deras våld." Quote: Johnsson, p.133.

⁴ The military historian Lars Ericson Wolke of the Swedish Defence University characterises the Swedes' encounter with *friskytter* and *snaphaner* during the Scanian War as an encounter with "guerrilla war, a kind of war that was not described in the scientific war manuals of those days." See: Lars Ericson Wolke, *Krigets idéer. Svenska tankar om krigföring*. (Ideas of War. Swedish Reflections on the Conduction of War), Värnamo 2007, p.109.

modern Swedish placenames that are in use today, putting the Danish or German versions from my sources in brackets. I have tried to indicate both the Danish and Swedish names and spellings, unless where I have not been able to trace one or the other. In the case of Malmö, both versions existed during the Scanian War, but “Malmøe” was more common in the Danish sources.

In his dissertation *Der kleine Krieg* Johannes Kunisch discerned a close connection between the rise of the Absolutist states and the growing importance of irregular troops.⁵ Kunisch primarily studied Austrian irregular troops from 1740-1790 but most of his theories can be applied to late 17th century Scandinavia as well; what interested Kunisch was the nexus absolutism-irregular troops and the friskytter/snaphaner fit perfectly into this pattern since they were the result of the similar processes in the Danish and Swedish armies.⁶

In the first part of this thesis I will take into consideration the development of the snaphane movement from the end of the Scandinavian (Kalmar) Union until the last snaphane trials at the beginning of the 18th century.⁷ However, the emphasis will be on the Scanian War when the King’s Friskytter Corps was established, and more specifically on the time from the battle of Lund in December 1676 until approximately the execution of baron Krabbe in January 1678, a period that was crucial and which saw both the foundation of the official Friskytter Corps and the radicalisation of the Swedish measures against all friskytter and snaphaner. The snaphaner/friskytter⁸ were generally perceived of as profoundly anti-Swedish. If one

⁵ See: Johannes Kunisch *Der kleine Krieg. Studien zum Heerwesen des Absolutismus*, Frankfurter Historische Abhandlungen, Band 4, Steiner Verlag GMBH Wiesbaden, 1973, pp.1–4. Quote: p.1.

⁶ Although the king of Sweden, Charles XI, had not yet become absolutist at the time of the Scanian War, his army already shared some of the characteristics that Johannes Kunisch described as typical of absolutist armies. However, some traits that were characteristic of the Swedish army, such as the allotment system (“indelningsverk”) reform that tied the soldiers to the soil and to agricultural life in times of peace, were not shared with other absolutist kingdoms except to some extent, Denmark.

⁷ If indeed something like a “movement” in the sense of an “organisation” existed, which I do not take for granted at all. It is, however, a term that has been widely used in both scholarly and less scholarly works on the issue and it is common in daily speech. In this dissertation I will use it as a working hypothesis, but since I sincerely doubt the existence of a movement in any but the vaguest sense of the word, I will analyse the whole idea of a movement in the light of the sources that constitute the basis for the chapter on the snaphaner. As Clutterbuck (p.27) has pointed out, the expression “guerrilla movement” (in this case “snaphane movement”) does not necessarily imply any tighter knit organisation.

⁸ These terms are used to describe the same men in Denmark and Sweden. Another synonym is *gønger/göingar* that is often used in Denmark today. However, when it appears in my sources it is generally impossible to discern whether it indicates “gønger” in the sense of “snaphaner” or as an

asks what it meant to be anti-Swedish one must also ask what it meant to be Swedish, Danish or Scanian at the time. It is important to stress that I do not take for granted that the snaphaner/friskytter were anti-Swedish but only that they were accused of being so by the Swedes.

It is difficult for us today to understand how people in the 17th century experienced the coming of new overlords and having to get used to a new culture. It is even more difficult to understand the impact that war, torture, and general devastation had upon these people. Although the main scope of this thesis remains an attempt at classifying the snaphaner/friskytter from a rather technical point of view I will also try to analyse the collective cultural identities of the people that left traces of their views and of their perception of themselves and the world in the sources, although this remains a minor theme. I will do that against a background of theories of the origins of nations and nationalism with special emphasis on the ones that have provided me with the necessary analytical tools. I hope that my dissertation will help me understand how identities were constructed in 17th century Scandinavia. Cultural, ethnic, and territorial communities in the early modern world differed from what we call nations and nationalism today. Did incorporation and assimilation into a new culture have any importance for the conception of self of ordinary and less ordinary people? Did it matter to them whether they were Danish or Swedish? How soon did they start thinking about themselves as different from their one-time countrymen on the other side of the border? Did the border have any real significance to people in these new-born border territories? Fredrik Barth stresses the importance of borders for the creation of collective identities, but he sees social and cultural borders, not geographical ones as most important, in that groups have to relate to and interact socially with someone who is conceived of as different in order to be able to exist as a group⁹. Consequently, this thesis has two main themes: resistance and the underpinnings of it.

ethnic group. The distinctions between these terms will be analysed in the section on the image of the snaphaner. I have chosen to use “snaphaner” in the cases where my sources do not make explicit distinctions between the groups. I know that “snaphaner” was considered a derogatory term but it is the one that is most widely used in Scania today and it does *not* carry negative connotations today.

⁹ Fredrik Barth, “Introduction”, in Fredrik Barth (ed.) *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries. The Social Organisation of Culture Differences*, Oslo 1969, pp.14–15.

I have intentionally paid particular attention to the “dark and bloody dimensions” of the Scanian War: it is not the main theme of the thesis but a minor theme. To me it is obvious that all wars have dark and bloody dimensions, and I cannot see why it should be wrong to analyse them as long as one is honest and clear about one’s sources and theoretical framework. Much has been written in Scandinavia on the gruesome executions that those who were defined as snaphaner were sent to but serious research regarding this issue has never been done. What were the causes of the gradual acceleration of violence on both sides? How was this acceleration related to the development of the war in general? These are some of the questions that I have put to my sources. At the same time there is another issue that is closely related to that of the appalling degree of violence that was reached during the Scanian War: namely that of the “demonisation of the snaphaner” on the Swedish side as compared to attempts to “normalise the snaphaner” on the Danish side. I have tried to interpret the workings of the demonisation process and to make clear that it is a process that is characteristic of that kind of situations and in order to refer to the religious importance it had to be able to classify the snaphaner as nonmembers of the Christian community. It should be stressed, however, that the Swedish policy on the snaphane issue varied and that there were different currents of thought that influenced the decisions of those in power. There were for example, continuous amnesty offers that many snaphaner accepted voluntarily and there is also ample evidence of how these ex-snaphaner tried to manoeuvre the authorities with the help of their amnesty certificates.

Finally, I have also included a section on the historical background in order to explain the tensions that created the series of wars that led to the cession of eastern Denmark to Sweden. Most likely Scandinavians will judge that section superfluous, but they should try to remember that the history of their own northerly part of the world is not very well known outside that area. In the very last chapter of the thesis, I will try to tie up all loose ends and come to some conclusions.

The Problem in its Historiographical Dimension

“The Danes all smiled happily when they heard that the Swedes were gone and that they, without any effort or loss of lives, had been able to gain a footing on the beautiful land of Scania that was the precious bride that they were to dance for.”

The landing of the Danish army at Råå, 29th June 1676.¹⁰

In 1956 the Scanian historian Alf Åberg divided the scholars that had been working with Scania's passage from Danish to Swedish rule so far, into Swedes on one side and Danes and pure Scanians on the other.¹¹ Up until about a decade ago this was still very much the case: those who occupied themselves with Scanian history, especially that of the transition era, could be divided along national lines with the Scanians themselves as a grey zone somewhere in the middle: the odd Scanian historian like Åberg himself who managed to make it to the pinnacles of Swedish historiography stuck out against a sea of non-professional historians with separatist or reunitionist sympathies. Today the situation is different although there is still not much of a middle ground. The events of the last ten or fifteen years have blurred the distinction lines between pro-Danish and pro-Swedish history writing slightly. Sweden's entrance into the European Union, the bridge between Denmark and Sweden and last but not least, the establishment of the Scanian autonomous region are all important elements in this chain of events. Another novelty is that groups of researchers on both sides of the Sound have dedicated serious research to try to promote a new view of the Scanian problem throughout the centuries, since no new research had been done in many areas during the last fifty or even hundred years. These research projects have centred on Lund University and the Centre for Danish Studies, but researchers from all over Scandinavia and especially the universities of Copenhagen and Malmö have participated. The great difference is not that the two camps should have disappeared because they have not, but rather that nationality and point of view tend to be less closely connected than before. There are Danish scholars like Anders Linde-Laursen and Hanne Sanders who both work in Lund and take an all but Danish nationalist view on the matter. Traditional nationalism has gone out of fashion and at least in

¹⁰ Sthen Jacobsen, *Den nordiske Kriigs Krønike*, 1697. Edited and published by M. Weibull, Copenhagen 1897, p.36: ”*De danske loe allesammen høijt op i værett, der de hørte, at de Svenske vare borte, och at de uden nogett arbeid och uden nogen mandss forliss kunde faae fodefæste paa dett skionne Skaane, som var den fornemmeste brud her skulde dandzess om.*”

¹¹ Alf Åberg, *När Skåne blev svenskt*, (When Scania Became Swedish), LTs förlag, Stockholm 1958, p.102.

academia, it has instead become a question of recognising the existence of pre-national identities or some sort of patriotism to a greater or smaller degree, or maybe not at all. Researchers are trying to interpret key periods like the one between Roskilde and the Scanian War in a light slightly different from traditional views of either harsh repression or smooth assimilation. Perhaps a more nuanced image is emerging.

There are several issues that practically all works on the Scanian “transition era” have had to deal with. Some of these can be traced back to the time when the events took place. The main problem is whether the so-called Swedification was a natural process or a de-nationalisation project.¹² One of the other main issues, and the one that is of most importance to this thesis, is whether the snaphaner/friskytter were simple bandits or noble freedom-fighters, or maybe something completely different. This is one of the oldest themes in the whole debate and it can easily be dated back to the Scanian War. Other issues regard the behaviour of the Swedes during the inter-war period (mainly the nature of the billeting of soldiers and military violence), the language question (how important was the change of the language of the state?), legal issues and the relationship between the little man and the state, religion, even architecture. The answers to these questions have tended to follow national lines for a very long time.

In this section I will now go through some of the historiography that has led to the research situation of today. It would be desirable to have a proper historiographic text on how the Scanian question has been treated by historians of both nations throughout the ages, but at present no such is available. I have tried to include the most important works, with preference for those that deal with the snaphaner/friskytter. As a starting point it is suitable to begin with Sthen Jacobsen (1635-1696), clergyman, combatant

¹² The main problem that has troubled many a historian (and maybe some other people) is the how and why Scania is so Swedish today. This issue should not be exaggerated in that it is still common that other Swedes mistake Scanians for Danes and the cultural closeness is visible to the eye in the architectural heritage and cultural landscape that makes central and southern Scania look arch-Danish. As the historian Per Johnsson pointed out, there is nothing that is not fragmentary when the “true” story of Scania is to be told: a hundred years ago many people thought their ancestors had been Swedish but at the same time there were people who were telling the stories of what had happened when “the Swede came down upon this country.” To me these two versions are not even contradictory: a fragmented story is not the same as chronological history. People often had (and have) a muddled image of a one-time Danish past but exactly how and when could be defined by few.

among the student troops during the siege of Copenhagen 1659, later also translator of Cicero and spy for district governor Knud Thott during the Scanian War.¹³ Today Jacobsen is mainly remembered for his brilliant chronicle of the Scanian War that he wrote while the war was still in course.¹⁴ Jacobsen's chronicle is as close to neutral as can be. It cannot be doubted that the old Latinist's aim was to write history *sine ira et studio*.¹⁵ His account is detailed and includes extracts decrees and pamphlets that were issued at the time and the two sides are always spoken of as "the Danes" and "the Swedes". Jacobsen criticised unnecessary violence and expressed his horror at some of the gruesome scenes he had been eyewitness too himself. He also criticised the snaphaner violently but at the same time he provided some of the most important "how and why's" "regarding the snaphane/friskytte movement and stresses that they in their turn were treated atrociously by the Swedes. As Paul Erik Engelhardt has wisely pointed out, a slight pro-Danish tendency transpires in Jacobsen's work. I think that perspires from the quote at the beginning of this section. Engelhardt mentions another passage in which Jacobsen bitterly criticises the Danes for not having taken the chance while they could: "In a war, everything depends on watching out for the right moment, because sooner or later, *occasio* (the right occasion) will present itself, but it will also soon go away."¹⁶ According to Jacobsen the Danes would have won the war if they had attacked the Swedish army outside Landskrona (Lands Crone) in May 1677 and he claimed that the Swedes themselves said that if they had been attacked at that moment "then the Danes would have given us such a thrashing that we would never have forgotten it again."¹⁷ It should be noted that the Danish tendency in Jacobsen is vague and that his attempts to be neutral in his writing are obvious. Nevertheless, Jacobsen's intellectual career was thwarted by the war and his chronicle had to be stowed away in a church tower. Since the chronicle was written in the

¹³ For the spy business see also: Fabricius III, p.97 footnote 12. Fabricius stresses how eager Jacobsen was that Kristianstad be liberated.

¹⁴ It should be noted that at the time the war was known as "The Nordic War" and that is the expression Jacobsen used. See: Sthen Jacobsen, *Den nordiske Kriigs Krønike*, Edited and published by M. Weibull, Copenhagen 1897. Original title as it results on Jacobsen's own title page, with blank gaps for the names of the kings: "Den Store och Blodige Fiire Aarss Nordiske Kriig imellem Den Stormæchtigste Høybaarne Förste och Herre Kong ... Konge till...paa den eene och Den Stormæchtigste Høybaarne Förste och Herre Kong...paa den anden Siide. Upassioneret sammenskreffuet." (The Great and Bloody Four-Year Nordic War between the Mighty Noble Lord and Master King...King of...on one side and the Mighty Noble Lord and Master King...on the other. Written and collected without passion.)

¹⁵ In fact the original title included the addition "Written and collected without passion".

¹⁶ Jacobsen, p.108: "Alting udi krieg bestaaer mest der udi, at mand achter den rette tiid, thi occasio præsenrerer sig vell undertiiden, men forsuinder snarligen." Quoted by Engelhardt, pp.248–249.

¹⁷ Jacobsen, p.107: "...da haffde de Danske pidskett oss saalediss, at vi aldrig haffde glemet det."

language of the losers it became a dangerous object after the peace of Lund in 1679.¹⁸ From 1679 onwards the Danish language could no more be used as a tool for intellectual, spiritual, or artistic pursuits. Scanian intellectuals, clergymen and artists who chose not to leave the country had to adjust themselves to the situation in as far as they could. Jacobsen was one of few Scanian clergymen who seemed to have survived the war without having suffered any serious consequences, except that he is reported to have died a very bitter man.¹⁹

The Gothic Discourse

So much said about Danish-writing intellectuals like Jacobsen but one should not that native Scanians were *not* barred and blocked from Swedish cultural life. As long as they followed certain lines, they were heartily welcome into the Swedish community. Those lines included taking a pro-Swedish point of view and writing in any language but Danish. Latin was excellent option. One of Jacobsen's contemporaries was Professor Andreas Stobaeus who made a brilliant academic career under the Swedish regime. At an early stage the Stobaeus family decided to put their stakes on the Swedes, and they were generously remunerated for their efforts. At the time the Swedes were trying to underpin their uniformity efforts in Scania with the theory of the Scanians' Sweo-Gothic origins and both A. Stobaeus and Samuel Pufendorff subscribed to this programme. If they could help convince people that the Scanians and their language constituted a branch of the same tree of origin as that of the Swedes it would become so much easier to gain final acceptance of the annexation, at home and abroad. Although Andreas Stobaeus chose to side with the Swedes, he was proud of being a Scanian, dealt mainly with Scanian history and called himself a "Scano-Gothus", a Scanian Goth.²⁰ As a professor of History and Poetry at the University of Lund he supervised students like Johannes Fabrin and Jonas P. Gjelberg who also supported the thesis of the Gothic link. In his dissertation from 1684

¹⁸ The peace regulations stated that written materials that thwarted or ridiculed the warring side of which country the materials were to be found were strictly and severely forbidden. Nor could Danish texts be printed in Scania.

¹⁹ It should be added that Knud Thott bragged that he managed to make all clergymen work for him as informers through the very effective method of not letting them buy any food if they refused to provide him with Swedish letters or information. Letter from Knud Thott to the king, 22nd May 1679, DRA, quoted by Edvardsson, III, p.119.

²⁰ The author of the poem *Regum augustissimo, optimo, maximo, serenissimo ac potentissimo principi & domino Carolo XI.*...is stated as Andreas Stobaeus Scano-Gothus, the Scanian Goth (Literis Nicolai Wankijf, no date, Swedish Royal Library).

Johannes Fabrin told the story of a German man who criticised those Scanians who “shared the strong but misdirected conviction that they ought to attain conformity with other Sweo-Gothic regions in the areas of language, rituals, laws and proceedings, as if these Scanians in their loathsome fawning should serve their own interests rather than those of the fatherland and as if they had been striving to introduce a language, especially during church services, that not even one out of a hundred Scanians understood, and through which the Scanian commoners would never be able to acquire the teachings of the religious revelation.”²¹ In his thesis of 1706 Gjelberg concluded that there was “a great controversy between us and the Danes regarding this matter” and he continued to explain that not even among themselves did the Swedes agree but that there were those who considered Danes, Swedes and Norwegians as of the same language, customs and behaviour and consequently of the same origins.²² Gjelberg himself claimed that the original inhabitants of Scania were the Goths and that they had spread from there. Another exponent of the same line of thought was Jonas M Floraeus who in 1743 wrote *Flores Antiquitatis Scaniae* in which he declared that: “...it can inerrably be said that Scania, as regards name and location, as also blood and descent, since olden age has under all these respects a strong and secure connection with the other Gothic (Göthiska) Countries.”²³ Floraeus was proud enough of his origins to trace the cradle of Europe to south-eastern Scania.

The debate on who could trace their origins to the Goths and who could not had been going on for a long time by the beginning of the 18th century. In his *Historia de*

²¹ Fabrin is quoted in Olsson 1993, pp.89-90. Fabrin’s supervisor was Anders Stobaeus. The German man in the text is raising objections to the Swedish uniformity project and Fabrin’s scope was to counter this tirade.

²² For the dissertation see: *De Scania Antiqua Dissertatio Prima quam cum consensu Ampliss. Facult. Philos. in indyta Gothorum CAROLINA sub Praesidio Viri Celeberrimi DNI. MAG ANDREAE STOBAEI Hist. & Poes. Profess. Publ. & Ordin. & h.t. Rectoris Magnifici, Publico bonorum Examini subjicit Jonas P. GJELBERG, Stip.Reg, In Auditorio Carol. Superiori ad diem 3 Octobr. Anni MDCCVI Londini Gothorum* (Lund 1706), pp.34-35. He also mentions Aquilonius as one of those who supported the thesis of common Scandinavian origins. Please note the modest Latin translation of the name of the town of Lund: London of the Goths. It was certainly not a Swedish idea to compare Lund to London: early medieval texts claimed that King Canute the Great had wanted to imitate London when he founded Lund and called it Lundona Sconiae as opposed to British Lundona/London. Some of Bishop Winstруп’s sermons from the 1660’ies were also printed in “Lond.Scan”. See: Weibull & Tegnér 1868, p.22. See also: Knut Stjerna, “Lund och Birka” (Lund and Birka), pp.171-225, in *Historisk Tidskrift för Skåneland*, (Historical Journal for the Scanian Provinces), vol 3, Lund 1908, p.204.

²³ M. Jonas Floraeus *Flores Antiquitatis Scaniae*, (M Jonaz Floraei), Göteborg 1743, Cap.IV § 4.

omnibus Gothorum Sueonumque regibus from 1554 Johannes Magnus had presented the Danes as descendants of a band of criminals and Scania as an original part of Sweden. The Danes countered with a *Refutatio* (1561) by Hans Svaning and the *Res Danicae* (1574) by Erasmus Laetus. Both historians tried to prove that the Danes were descendants of the Goths too and that Scania had always been “the heart of old Denmark.”²⁴ In 1633 Hans Nielsen Strelow published a *Cronica Guthilandorum* in which he claimed that the “Goths” on the island of Gotland (northeast of Sweden) could trace their origins to the peninsula of Jutland.²⁵ Strelow wrote his *Cronica* in part to contest the view of those Swedes who refused to think of Danes as descendants of the glorious Goths. Both currents of thoughts consequently existed at the same time and were often called upon to serve the scopes of those who needed to legitimise their claims on Scania or their claims on the island of Gotland which was another bone of contention between the two Scandinavian states. By the time of the Scanian War this discourse had become more important than ever since it could legitimise the annexation of the Scanian provinces, and it was used as a powerful intellectual weapon. A wave of history books, dissertations and poems were published in order to re-write the history of Scania. The pattern had been set by the German history professor Samuel Pufendorff who was commissioned to write a History of Sweden in which the conquest of Scania was justified as a “reunion”.²⁶ Pufendorff’s theories were violently contested by his Lundian colleague Joshua Schwartz already in 1673 in a volume that was burned in public in Lund in 1675.²⁷ Although Schwartz eventually became the personal chaplain of Christian V and was a respected clergyman outside Sweden, he could not compete with Pufendorff. Pufendorff’s version was spread all

²⁴ “The Literary Feud between Denmark and Sweden in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries and the Development of Danish historical scholarship”, in *Renaissance Culture in Context. Theory and Practice*. Eds. Jean R. Brink and William F. Gentrup, Scholar Press, England 1993, pp.4-120. Quote p.115.

²⁵ *Cronica Guthilandorum. Den Guthilandiske Cronica*, Kiøbinghaffn MDCXXXIII; facsimile Visby 1978, see: Introduction.

²⁶ Samuel Pufendorf, *Inledning Till Swänska Historien*, (An Introduction to Swedish History), Ståckholm 1688, s.911: “Sweden’s old borders have been healed again” (de gamle Swerikes Gränsar igen heladt). In the same chapter (p.912) Pufendorff claimed that the Norwegian and the Danish territories that were ceded to Sweden had been “won back”.

²⁷ *Index quarundam novitatum, quas Sam.Puffendorffius in libro suo, de jure naturae et gentium, contra orthodoxa fundamenta edidit*, Gießen 1673. See: Weibull & Tegnér 1868, p.68. Later, Schwartz continued to contest Pufendorff’s views in *Index novitatum Puffendorffii, denuo contra stricturas et apologiam Sam. Puffendorffii assertus*, Copenhagen 1678, and finally he was probably the anonymous author of *Discussio calumniarum Sam. Puffendorffii Eride Scandica, indicis errorum suorum causa venerabili uni viro indignissime impositarum*, Copenhagen 1687.

over Europe and it remained in European history books well into the 20th century.²⁸ Some of the misconceptions that date from that era still circulate. Although book-burning has not been practised in Lund for a long time now, schoolbooks and university handbooks still insist on the Swedish origins of the Scanian dialect although there is no scientific ground for such a classification.²⁹ Generally these books are based on the works of the Scanian linguist Bengt Pamp whose dissertation built on a serious error: on the basis of Scanian land registers from 1664 he concluded that the language that was used by the Scanians at the time was a hybrid between Danish and Swedish but definitely closer to the latter. Only a few years after the publication of this dissertation a historian by the name of Alf Erlandsson discovered that the land registers had been written by a *Swedish* clerk who tried to translate the Danish place names into good Swedish, which invalidates the results of the thesis completely.³⁰ Scanian in its older form constitutes the eastern branch of the (older) Danish language.³¹ Linguistically this view cannot be confuted but *politically* it never stood a chance.

Abraham Cronholm and the 19th Century

²⁸ See: A.H.L Fishers *Storia d'Europa II Storia moderna*, Universale Laterza, Bari 1971, pp. 311-316. (*A History of Europe*, London 1935).

²⁹ Mainly in rural areas and the south-eastern smalltowns.

³⁰ Alf Erlandsson, pp.219-220. Footnote 37. And Bengt Pamp's *Svenska dialekter*, (Swedish Dialects), Gleerups, Lund 1990.

³¹ Scanian in its older form is spoken by less than 10% of the population today, in the Scanian provinces and on the island of Bornholm, and linguistically it constitutes the eastern branch of the Danish language. See: Johannes Brøndum-Nielsen, *Dialekter og dialektforskning*, (Dialects and Dialect Research), København, 1927.pp, 99-104 and 108-112. The most thorough description and analysis of Eastern Danish (as spoken in Scania and on Bornholm) is still Johannes Brøndum-Nielsen's: *Gammeldansk grammatik i sproghistorisk fremstilling*, (A Grammar and History of the Older Danish Language) København, J.H Schultz forlag, 1932. The remaining 60 or 70% of the population that identify themselves as Scanians have introduced Swedish vocabulary, grammar, and syntax to varying degrees, depending on the area of origin and place of residence, and on social group. The situation is very much the same on the island of Bornholm where "high Danish" has taken the upper hand in most linguistic areas. However, even in modern Scanian the pronunciation and prosody, i.e., the sound of it, have remained practically identical. In that sense modern Scanian is as far from "up"-Swedish (RP Swedish as spoken by educated people in the Stockholm area and on television.) as it is from English, but quite close to "high" Danish. In his excellent dissertation in linguistics, Stig Örjan Olsson tried to put more attention to the fact that the old Scanian dialect is an eastern branch of the Danish language as, in fact, all scholars of old Danish have always sustained. See: Stig Örjan Ohlsson, *Skånes språkliga försvenskning*, (The Linguistic Swedification of Scania) Lundastudier i nordisk språkvetsenskap, Serie A, No: 31, 1979. See also his "Den språkliga förändringen" (The Linguistic Change), pp. 87-97, in Rosborn (ed.), 1993, in which he also analyses the discussion on the Scanian dialect (s) in Scandinavia just before and after the Swedish take-over. The Swedish historian Sten Skansjö has also recently pointed out that Scanian is still not to be classified as a "southern Swedish dialect" but as an "eastern Danish dialect with southern Swedish influences". See: Sten Skansjö, *Skånes historia*, Borgå 2006 (originally 1997), p.10.

Around the middle of the 19th century Abraham Cronholm wrote his *Political History of Scania* that boasted the inclusion of not inconsiderable numbers of hitherto unpublished documents.³² Cronholm who put great weight on the romantic concept of “nationalkänsla” or “feeling for one’s nation” did not treat the snaphaner entirely without sympathy:

“Old affection for Denmark, an inclination towards looting, and a wish to profit from the lawlessness of a war, are the circumstances that explain why disorderly groups like that continued to grow in numbers until they gained considerable strength and could count on reinforcements from the wild border inhabitants.”³³

Cronholm also declared that the snaphaner were present in the whole of Scania and stresses that governor general Sperling had claimed that in 1678 their “safest nest” was Simrishamn on the south-eastern coast.³⁴ He also proffered the view that the snaphaner were nothing but “peasants run wild” and that at first, they enjoyed massive support from the commoners, else the Scanian “little war” would never had been as successful as it actually was.³⁵ Quite correctly Cronholm also traced some of the snaphaner to troops of young men that had originally been recruited for the Danish king.³⁶ The later clichés of snaphaner as a border phenomenon and of snaphaner as common criminals did not appear in Cronholm.

Research on Scania’s Danish history and the transition era made a leap forwards towards the end of the 19th century when Martin Weibull of Lund University first started publishing his collection of original documents with comments, the so-called *Scanian Collections* and then had Sthen Jacobsen’s brilliant *Chronicle of the Great Nordic War* published after two hundred long years.³⁷ According to Weibull the

³² Abraham Cronholm, *Skånes Historia och Beskrifning. Skånes Politiska Historia, efter till största delen otryckta källor*, (A History and Description of Scania. The Political History of Scania, According to Mainly Unpublished Sources), Stockholm 1851.

³³ Cronholm, p.192.

³⁴ Cronholm, p.193.

³⁵ Cronholm, p.195. According to Cronholm the snaphaner originally fought because of their awakened “national feeling” but later unrestrained violence and barbarity took the upper hand, and the culprits were justly punished with barbarian methods.

³⁶ Cronholm, p.49. In the case of the snaphaner of Färs he had this information from the Swedish warlord Taubenfeldt in a letter to the king from 31st March 1659. It is interesting that Taubenfeldt suggested that the Swedes set after these men “on the pretext of searching for vagrants” (under förevändning at slå efter lösdrifware).

³⁷ Martin Weibull, *Samlingar till Skånes historia*, (Collections regarding the History of Scania), 1871, p.73. Idem: *Skånska samlingar, II, Till Skånes historia under öfvergångstiden 1658–1710, 1. Skånska kriget och snapphanefejden 1676–79*, (Scanian Collections II. Additions to the History of Scania during the Transition Era 1658-1710, 1. The Scanian War and the Snaphane Feud 1676-79), Lund 1873. See also Åberg 1958, p.98 where he quotes Weibull.

snaphaner practically became lords of the land during the later phase of the Scanian War and they were not particularly appreciated as overlords, in fact they were the peasant's natural enemies and the peasants turned against Denmark when the "snaphane feud" was recognised as an official war by the Danish king. Weibull also reckoned that Bishop Winstrup's reconciliatory or even, pro-Swedish policy, and his influence on the rest of the clergy was what held back the outbreak of a "snaphane war" like the one of 1676-1679 already during 1658-1660. Weibull thought of nationalism in a highly traditional way, which was only natural at the time.³⁸ These were highly respectable views that were based on a serious scrutiny of the sources but at times Weibull's interpretation becomes flawed since he simply did not have as much of the context clear to him (or as many of the sources at hand) as we do today.

In 1886 S. Wägner explained that the Scanian Commission could only be seen in the light of the war and the widespread misery that it had brought down on the land. Wägner claimed that the population did not see the Scanian provinces as incorporated into Sweden but as "half foreign" and that this belief was strengthened by the fact that Swedish soldiers were billeted in a manner that was only the norm in enemy territory.³⁹ The soldiers saw the peasants they lodged with as enemies and not as fellow countrymen because this kind of system existed in enemy country only and the soldiers were used to see "hosting families" as enemies.

The most important work on the transition era is still the Danish history professor Knud Fabricius's monumental work *Skaanes overgang...* (The transition of Scania) that consists of four volumes, of which the first two were published in 1906 and the last two only in the 1950ies. In it he dealt with almost all aspects of the history of the

³⁸ In Martin Weibull's and Elof Tegnér's history of the university of Lund, the reverend Hans Frederik Hjort Cervinus, former theology professor, was excused for having gone over to the Danish since he was an inborn Danish subject from Ausås in Scania: "at the time of the national clashes his feelings for his old fatherland became too strong and in 1677 he resigned his post, went over to Denmark and died there as a minister of the church in Zealand." (Weibull & Tegnér, II, p.68). Up until that time most people had thought of Cervinus as Peder Winstrup's natural successor to the bishopric of Lund. The case of another theology professor, namely that of Olof Bagger, is interpreted in a strange way: Weibull and Tegnér declared (p.67) that Odense-born Bagger had remained true to both his nationality and his oath of allegiance. He was of "Danish birth and schooling" but had been forced to swear allegiance to the Swedish king. I do not quite understand how one could be true to both one's nationality and oath of allegiance during the Scanian War, but it is an interesting interpretation. As Weibull and Tegnér stated, Olof Bagger died amidst the horrors of war on 11th March 1677. Three months later Olluf Bagger's brother Hans was decapitated on the charge of haven hidden away Danish soldiers after the battle of Lund.

³⁹ Wägner's *Skånska kommissjonen af 1669-1670*, Lund 1886

years 1645-1709. Fabricius introduced his work with an episode that he had been an eyewitness to himself, in which Danish children were teased by Scanian children for having had such a cruel king as Kristian the Tyrant.⁴⁰ The Scanian children thought that their own 16th century ancestors had been Swedish! That little episode made Fabricius set out on a trek for the clue to the stunning “Swedification” that had taken place in Denmark’s lost lands in the east. According to Fabricius the Swedes had concrete “denationalisation plans” when they took over Scania and this was only possible because they were quite capable of “national feelings” in the modern sense. Unfortunately, the national feelings of the Danes were still slumbering when the Scanian provinces were ceded to Sweden and so they could not resist the Swedification programme properly. The spark that lit the rebellion of 1675-79 was primarily (what Fabricius’s saw as) the disastrous financial situation, not nationalism. By the time the Scanians stirred from their lethargy and woke up to Danish nationalism it was far too late and that was why they had to carry such a heavy yoke. That is the story according to Fabricius who can be seen as the perfect representative of the romantic nationalistic school that thrived during the latter part of the 19th and the first part of the 20th centuries.⁴¹ Fabricius promptly defined the *snaphaner* as peasants and farmers who had had their umbilical cord cut off and were compelled to take to the woods and a life of outlawry –later they transformed into *friskytter*.⁴² To him they were social rebels who turned nationalist. In a radio interview in 1952 Knud Fabricius declared that the *snaphaner/friskytter* were the predecessors of the freedom fighters of our days and he prized their love for Denmark.⁴³

Early in the 20th century a collection of documents regarding the *snaphaner* from the Swedish archives was published by Pehr Johnsson.⁴⁴ In spite of having spent years in the Swedish archives, Johnsson preferred to write his book on the *snaphaner* as a fragmentary series of notices and accounts with comments by the author, because “no

⁴⁰ Christian II (“Kristian the Tyrant”) was quite popular in Scania.

⁴¹ Fabricius, II, p.48, III pp.13-14 etc.

⁴² Knud Fabricius, *Skaanes overgang fra Danmark til Sverige*, (The Passing of Scania from Denmark to Sweden) vols. I-IV, Copenhagen-Lund 1906-58, Quote: idem, vol.III, pp. 101-102.

⁴³ See: Åberg, 1958, p.100. In Denmark the Scanian guerrilla fighters (the *snaphaner*) became national heroes and stories of them were used to encourage the Resistance movement during the Second World War. This was also the interpretative key to understanding why *snaphaner* films became so popular in Denmark during the war.

⁴⁴ Pehr Johnsson, *Snaphanefejden, Brev och anteckningar*, (The Snaphane Feud: Letters and Notes), Örebro 1910.

coherence and nothing that was unbroken ever existed during that guirilla war.”⁴⁵ The factual account and the numerous excerpts from the sources are interspersed with legends about snaphaner that could only be killed by silver bullets (like all other wizards and trolls). However, Johnsson makes quite clear when it is the matter of non-factual or source-based materials. It is hard to classify Johnsson because his rhetoric is clearly and pompously Swedish when he starts praising the Swedish warlords but then he takes such obvious delight in telling the stories of the mischievous snaphaner and is at such pains to excuse his fellow countrymen for their deeds that he betrays where his sympathies lie. He also explained that, according to him, at the time of the Scanian War, many people still had not managed to “wear” Swedish hearts although they wore Swedish clothes. According to Johnsson, Scania was one of the most precious jewels in the Danish crown and its inhabitants were fervent loyalists. For centuries they had feared and hated the archenemy up in Sweden and so it could not have been easy to become one with that enemy. However, by 1709, when the Danes returned for the second time, a new generation with Swedish hearts had grown up: a generation that felt that it was an honour to be Swedish and, Johnsson stressed, this was still the case.⁴⁶ As for the snaphaner, Johnsson traced their existence to the peasants in arms recruited by Ebbe Ulfeld during Horn’s War 1644-45. He defined the snaphaner as “peasants gathered in units that, under suitable command, were given the task of causing the enemy as much damage as possible.”⁴⁷ According to Johnsson the snaphane “feud” went astray when it ceased to be a movement of a “national nature” that fought for the Danish cause and turned into a guerrilla war in which “cruel acts of violence and robberies seemed to be the main business and the national only of minor consequence.”⁴⁸ Johnsson hypothesised that this might have depended on the fact that the initially honest snaphaner had been joined by considerable numbers of “deserters and scumbags”.⁴⁹ Johnsson praised the virtues of the valorous Swedish commanders who, like Johan Gyllenstjerna, fought the snaphaner with “wisdom and courage”.⁵⁰ Nevertheless he was clearly fascinated by the intricate adventures of the snaphaner

⁴⁵ Johnsson’s preface, p.3: ”Att de föreligga i form av brottstycken, utan något sammanhängande helt beror därpå, att förf:n velat ge artiklarne en populär form, dels ock därpå, att någonting helt fanns icke i detta guirillakrig.” My translation.

⁴⁶ Johnsson, p.12.

⁴⁷ Johnsson, p.6.

⁴⁸ Johnsson, p.7.

⁴⁹ Johnsson, p.7.

⁵⁰ Johnsson, p.241.

whom he alternately described in terms of “wild hordes”, “rebels” and “highwaymen”.⁵¹ Johnsson sometimes took a rather banal view of the snaphaner, accepting the robber cliché without reflecting about what the sources really say. One example of this tendency is the passage in which he writes that there was a huge group of “highwaymen” on the Halland ridge from where they could “harass” the peasants.⁵² The source that Johnsson interpreted in this way is a report from General Major Ulfsparre to the Swedish king in which Ulfsparre claimed that “the roguish snaphaner and peasants “ received four ducats each for each prisoner they consigned to the Danish camp and that he had just come back after having pursued a company of snaphaner on the Halland ridge. Ulfsparre also added that the Swedes were very afraid of leaving their camp. Johnsson did not notice that Ulfsparre claimed the peasants were working together with the snaphaner. Nor that the *Swedes* were afraid of the snaphaner, not everybody, and consequently it could hardly have been the matter of “highwaymen” since robbers do not ask for people’s nationality.

Then, in 1921 Per Sörensson wrote a booklet in which he claimed that the registered friskytter were Danish irregular troops that acted on direct orders from the Royal head quarters. Sörensson came to his conclusions on the basis of his analysis of the military account books from the Scanian War that are kept in the Danish National Archives. It is hard to see why his work has been largely ignored since it is undoubtedly *the* most knowledgeable study of the friskytter that has been done so far.⁵³ Sörensson stressed that no one had ever done serious research on the military organisation of the snaphaner and whether they co-operated with the regular army. All Swedish historians that had dealt with the snaphaner/friskytter up until his day had only used Swedish sources when the real nature of the friskytter could only be discerned in the Danish sources. This is a view that I share. The predominance of the use of Swedish sources and Swedish secondary literature in this whole field of research is a fact that one can only hope that the future will change.

⁵¹ Johnsson, p.88 (de vilda skarorna), p.31 (rebellen) and p.80 (stråtrövare). Johnsson mixed notices from the archives and newssheets with legends and stories he had heard.

⁵² Johnsson, pp. 79–80 and Handl. rör. Sk.kr. 1676–79, SRA.

⁵³ Per Sörensson, *Friskyttarna (snaphanarna) under skånska kriget (1676–79), Deras organisation och militära betydelse*, (The Friskytter (Snaphaner) during the Scanian War, Their organisation and Military Importance), Karolinska förbundets årsbok 1916. Åberg only mentioned Sörensson in order to criticise him for having based his research on Danish sources only. The fact that Åberg himself and most other Swedish scholars have limited their work almost exclusively to the Swedish archives was not commented upon.

In the late 30'ies Yngve Bogren wrote a dissertation on the Swedification of the Scanian church, mainly in the region of Bohuslän.⁵⁴ For unclear reasons the dissertation was not approved, though it was published as a book. Some ten years later the Swedish historian Jerker Rosén wrote a series of articles that explain the Swedification in terms of power politics. He tried to explain why there were such vague attempts at a full incorporation of Scania into Sweden during the inter-war period and that if this was so then it was because it was also a time of almost interregnum when the nobility ruled the realm and more “lax” integration politics in all conquered provinces were a general trend, whereas single kings and their inner circle tended to tie the foreign provinces closer to Sweden itself.⁵⁵ Rosén’s article is sober and very interesting, especially in that he analyses Scania as one out of many Swedish conquests, but it should be added that like many other domestic works on Swedish history he is deeply embedded in a ‘Sweden as a Great Power’ discourse that is rather hard to fathom from a non-Baltic perspective.

In 1947 Alf Åberg’s dissertation on the the organisation of the cavalry in Scania was published.⁵⁶ From that time onwards Åberg has remained one of Sweden’s leading historians and an authority on the snaphaner. Almost all consequent works on the snaphaner have relied exclusively or next to exclusively on both Fabricius and Åberg although these two gentlemen far from agreed on all points.⁵⁷ However, Åberg was also puzzled by the apparent “amnesia” that seemed to have arisen in the Scanian provinces. As an example of how fast that process had worked, he proffered the example of the magistrates of Luggude, Rönneberga and Onsjö that in the 1780ies declared that the roads in that area had been constructed as a result of the (Swedish) Diet at Västerås in 1544, some 120 years *before* the Swedish conquest.⁵⁸ Åberg’s view of the Swedification is contradictory. On the one hand he states that “hardly ever has a change of nationality after a long war been executed with less bloodshed and fewer violations of laws than the one that united the Scanian provinces with the

⁵⁴ Yngve Bogren, *Försvenskningen av kyrkan*, (The Swedification of the Church), Lund 1936.

⁵⁵ Jerker Rosén, “Statsledning och provinspolitik under Sveriges stormaktstid (Statesmanship and Provincial Politics during Sweden’s Age of Greatness), *Scandia* 1946, pp.224-270.

⁵⁶ Alf Åberg, *Indelningen av rytteriet i Skåne*, (The Distribution of the Cavalry in Scania), Lund 1947.

⁵⁷ Whereas Fabricius was a stout Danish patriot, Åberg felt much the same fervour for Sweden. In his works he is generally prone to glorifying the indomitable Swedish warriors that followed their kings across Europe.

⁵⁸ Åberg, 1958, p.9.

kingdom of Sweden.”⁵⁹ This view was shared by most Swedish historians up until the end of the 20th century. Nevertheless, Åberg is enough of a good Scanian to imply that thanks to its double heritage, Scania is superior to both Denmark and Sweden. The assimilation never became complete and the Scanians have always fallen back on their Danish traditions whenever they have needed to.⁶⁰ On the other hand, Åberg claims that after the Swedish take-over the Scanians fell victims to the Stockholm syndrome: in other terms, they took on the identity of the aggressor. Like so many hi-jack victims they simply absorbed the history and the memories of their overlords.⁶¹

Åberg characterised the *snaphaner* as a group of “wanted criminals, army deserters, Danish royalists and adventurers”⁶² that were supposed to fight for the Danes but in reality, they attacked anyone who got in their way. He agreed that they were the peasants’ worst enemies and claimed that their actions were characterised by ambushes that hit both sides indiscriminately. These actions were limited to the woodlands along the border. Åberg practically ignores the presence of *snaphaner/friskytter* in other areas of the Scanian provinces, although he was well aware of the existence of sources that proved contrariwise.⁶³

Åberg worked exclusively with Swedish sources, foremost the protocols of the Östra Göinge assizes that registered the proceedings of cases against people who were accused of being *snaphaner*. Moreover, Åberg made scarce use of footnotes and as often as not he quotes sources that are not stated.⁶⁴ Even in the simplified 1981 edition of his *Snapphanarna* he did not update his research from the 1951 situation, nor did he add notes to the quotations, though it might be more excusable since the

⁵⁹ Alf Åberg, 1958, p.9.

⁶⁰ See: “Introduction” in Åberg, 1958, pp.9-11 and p.127. Quote: p.136.

⁶¹ Åberg, 1958, p.9.

⁶² Alf Åberg, *När Skåne blev svenskt*, (When Scania Became Swedish), LT’s förlag, Stockholm 1958, p.102.

⁶³ The footnotes of his *Snapphanarna* (1951) shows that he was acquainted with Sörensson’s *Friskyttarna* and with Pehr Johnsson’s excerpts from the sources that include many episodes from the southern parts of Scania.

⁶⁴ Cf. Åberg (1951), pp.154-155 where he tells the story of the Swedish professor Nordeman who was caught by the *snaphaner* under Nicolaus Hermansen during the autumn of 1676 but then released again because the pro-Swedish professor Stobaeus managed to convince Hermansen that Nordeman was Norwegian. Åberg even quotes Stobaeus as saying that Nordeman “never saw a Danish man without anguish and anger and never went close to one without being forced to” but there is no mention of a source or an archive or anything. I have seen this report and know it exists but Åberg could not have assumed that everyone would have gone through many enough documents to know where his quotations came from.

simplified version is more of a children's book with enlarged letters, simplified language and huge, beautiful drawings and photos. Unfortunately, even this version has been used as an important source book by many historians and writers, probably because it is a nice book and because of Åberg's status.

Åberg did not question the Swedish sources and he did not consult the Danish ones but trusted the Swedish jurors almost without exception. He obviously did not think much about the fact that these tribunals set out with the intention of finding murderers and assassins where there were none from the point of view of those who felt that King Christian was the lawful lord of the land. Tribunals that that helped construct a discourse that rendered acts criminal that had not been committed with a criminal intention but as acts of war that had been authorised by the Danish authorities. Åberg does not seem to realise the problematics of this whole issue, but imitates the discourse of the Swedish court registers that declare that a snaphane (a scoundrel) had abducted a decent clergyman, when in fact the scoundrel was registered as a lieutenant in the regular forces but was of Scanian birth and he had worked on strict orders from the district governor.⁶⁵ I am not saying that Åberg should agree with the Danish authorisation of the friskytter or with the fact that they considered Scanian born regular soldiers on a par with soldiers from other Danish regions, but it somehow puzzles me that he seems unaware of the fact that he continues a discourse that his sources helped construct the beginnings of. A discourse that constructs the snaphaner/friskytter as criminals and not as soldiers and that in part romanticises life in the forests. The forests isolated the peasants on both sides of the border from the central authorities and the peaceful border area has been described as a "peasant republic" whose citizens had little or no sense of belonging with Sweden or Denmark. This line of thought generally supports the view that national identities did not exist in any guise at the time. Which might have been the case. But that sort of rhetoric should not be used to create an imaginary republic of woodlanders that was the scene of action for the wild snaphaner that had to be tamed by their righteous king – the snaphane/friskytte problem regarded the whole of Scania, in one form or another, and during the Scanian War it was not an outlawry problem.

⁶⁵ See the case of Sigvard Juul, Pieter Sten (that Åberg calls Per Stensson), and district governor Knud Thott, p.152 in Åberg (1951).

In this context I would also like to add that perhaps I have been hard on Alf Åberg's works, possibly even unnecessarily so since his are far from the worst works on the "snaphaner". The reason why I chose to criticise Åberg more in detail than other history writers on the subject is primarily that he was a highly competent academic, not a hobby historian, and secondly that there is hardly any criticism of him in other works and that he is often considered the maximum authority on the snaphaner. Furthermore, Åberg is also a comparatively recent "authority" on the snaphaner. In the case of non-professional researchers, I felt that it was enough to state clearly that they were not academics and that their works have not had much importance for academic research although they might have been of political importance. With those that have been dead for decades or centuries, and that have been criticised in other works I felt that in part their theories were results of the times they lived in and in part that it was enough to refer to the criticisms of others. In the latter case I primarily refer to Fabricius.

In the late 1970ies, the Scanian linguist Ohlsson wrote the one extant scholarly work on the Swedification of the language in Scania, in which he analysed the language that was spoken in the area before and just after it became Swedish and also the language that is spoken there today.⁶⁶ In 1987 the Danish historian Inger Dübeck published a short but detailed book on the consequences of the transition from Danish/Scanian to Swedish law.⁶⁷ Gitte Kjær's biography on the famous friskytte Svend Poulsen Gønge presents interesting documents and nice pictures but is rather short. It should be added that Kjær presents a clearly positive view of the "national hero".⁶⁸ The Danish ethnographer Anders Linde-Laursen who works in Lund has written a study of Danish-Swedish relations which concentrates on "the Scanian problem." Linde-Laursen tries to put the snaphaner into their social context and analyses the transition from a strictly modernist point of view.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Stig Örjan Ohlsson, *Skånes språkliga försvenskning*, (The Linguistic Swedification of Scania) Lundastudier i nordisk språkvetenskap, Serie A, No: 31, 1979. Ohlsson concluded that Scanian was and still is a variant of Danish.

⁶⁷ Dübeck, Inger. *Fra gammel dansk til ny svensk ret*, (From Old Danish to New Swedish Law), G-E-C GAD 1987.

⁶⁸ Gitte Kjær, *Svend Poulsen Gønge – i virkeligheden*, (SVP – in real life), Skippershoved 1992. For an account of Poulsen's life see: Kjær (pp.9 and 66) has attested his military career from 1625-1677.

⁶⁹ Anders Linde-Laursen, *Det nationale natur. En studie i dansk-svenske relationer*. (The Nature of Nationalism. A study of the Relations between Denmark and Sweden) Lund 1995, pp.48-50.

Harald Gustafsson of Lund University has continued in the same vein with a more up-to-date analysis of integration policies in early modern Europe: if one could link the annulment of the edict of Nantes to the Nueva Planta to the union between England and Scotland and the Pragmatic Sanction to the Swedification of Scania then maybe one could speak of a general European tendency.⁷⁰ Gustafsson studies not only how states but also how identities were constructed in early modern Europe. He stresses that ethnic and territorial communities differed quite radically from what we call nations and nationalism today and that while analysing early modern (or earlier) communities one has to be careful not to fall into the so called “nationalistic trap”: it is easy to get blinded if one has one’s mind set on finding the roots of nationalism or proof of the modern origins of nationalism. Instead it is important to remember that “national” identities were only a minor part of a complex set of loyalties and identities. The sources provide sufficient evidence of the fact that it meant something to be a “Swede” or “Dane” at the time but the components of these identities were probably not the same as today.⁷¹ One way of discerning what “identity components” were important in 17th century Scania is suggested by Gustafsson in a recent article in which he analyses the motivations proffered by Scanian peasants of both sexes in their letters of solicitation to the Swedish governor generals 1661-1699. According to Gustafsson, the classical “letter of supplication” should be seen as a “ritualised encounter between subject and authorities, in which identity concepts and moral values are being produced and reproduced.” In this context the Scanian peasants primarily stressed their identities as Christians, taxpayers, and members of a hierarchical society (in which the authorities should remember their responsibilities) and sometimes, as women. “Swedish” or “Danish” identities were seldom referred to.⁷²

⁷⁰ Harald Gustafsson, “The Conglomerate State: A Perspective on State Formation in Early Modern Europe.” In the *Scandinavian Journal of History* 23, 1998, pp.208-209.

⁷¹ Harald Gustafsson, “The Eighth Argument. Identity, Ethnicity and Political Culture in Sixteenth-Century Scandinavia”, *Scandinavian Journal of History* 27, 2002, pp.91-114. Quote p.91; Gustafsson, “The Conglomerate State: A Perspective on State Formation in Early Modern Europe.” *Scandinavian Journal of History* 23, 1998, p.210.

⁷² Harald Gustafsson, “Going to Malmö to Claim One’s Rights. Subjects, Authorities, and Notions of Identity in Scanian Solicitations 1661-1699”, pp. 78-115 in Fredrik Nilsson, Hanne Sanders & Ylva Stubbergaard (eds), *Rörelser, möten och visioner i tid och rum*, (Movements, Meetings and Visions in Time and Space), Lithuania 2007, quote p, 81. See also the English summary pp.112-113.

In his dissertation on the Scanian commission 1669-70 the Swedish historian Karl Bergman expresses his firm view that the Scanian peasantry did not identify themselves as either Danes or Swedes. Nor did a strong pan-Scanian identity between Scania, Blekinge, Halland and Bornholm exist. Instead, Bergman believes that the regional identity as Scanians, Blekingar (inhabitants of Blekinge/Bleking) etc. was strong among the peasantry. Since no kind of Danish identity existed it was of little interest to people who ruled the land. They might even have seen the coming of Swedish rule as rather an improvement since it gave the peasants a voice in parliament.⁷³ It was certainly not a negative factor that the fourth estate was given more rights. The problem is that it is so hard to say whether these were theoretical or practical rights. New research is implying that the judicial system might also have become more distant under Swedish rule. Danish local courts (ting) were held in every hundred every two weeks but Swedish ones only every six months.

In a dissertation from 2003 Reverend Stig Alenäs presents an analysis of church documents from the 1680ies both from a linguistical point of view and through the way the inner spaces of the churches were changed (or were supposed to be changed) with the introduction of Swedish liturgy. He concludes that there was a great deal of passive resistance on the side of the native clergy: “The deans were key figures in the Swedification process. They were overtly loyal to the bishop and the authorities, but covertly showed a disloyalty which bordered on obstruction.”⁷⁴ Alenäs stresses that using Swedish or, if one could do no better, pidgin Scandinavian, was a way of showing compliance with the authorities and that the clergy made more efforts to produce non-Danish epistles as the Swedish uniformity programme gained momentum. He also studied the way the communities, contrary to Swedish practice, strove to keep their altar candles and Danish bibles. In a more recent article on a group of clergymen who were tried in court for having abandoned their posts during the Scanian war, Alenäs concludes that the most important thing in order not to be discharged was to have good connections among the Swedes. What is more important

⁷³ Karl Bergman, *Makt, möten, gränser. Skånska kommissionen i Blekinge 1669–70*, (Power, Meetings, Borders. The Scanian Commission in Blekinge), Lund 2002, p.368.

⁷⁴ Stig Alenäs, *Lojaliteten, prostarna, språket. Studier i den kyrkliga försvenskningen i Lunds stift under 1680-talet*, (Loyalty, Rural Deans, the Language. Studies of the ecclesiastical Swedification in the diocese of Lund during the 1680ies), *Bibliotheca historico-ecclesiastica lundensis* 46, Lund 2003, p.222.

for this thesis is that Alenäs's sources contained innumerable references to the snaphaner who, in his sources, were described in a very negative light.⁷⁵

Jens Lerbom's dissertation on pre-national identities on the island of Gotland slightly north-east of the Scanian provinces, dates to the same year, 2003. In it, Lerbom analyses the war the Gotlanders used or did not use ethnically connected terms like "Swede" or "Dane" during the years following the Swedish take-over of the island.⁷⁶ In later research, Lerbom has dedicated himself to the analysis of military violence during the period between the first and the second Scanian War, to the emigration of Scanians to Denmark during the Scanian War and last but not least to an analysis of the reaction of the clergy in Halland to the new system.⁷⁷ In his dissertation on the interaction between the peasants and the crown in early modern Denmark, and more specifically in the border area of what is today called Göinge⁷⁸ 1525-1640, Stefan Persson pointed out that the creation of a standing army and the militarisation of the border region gradually frayed at the once so lively and mutually vital relationship between Göinge and Copenhagen.⁷⁹ At an earlier stage, the local inhabitants had enjoyed special privileges in exchange for their protection of the border but eventually

⁷⁵ Stig Alenäs, "Förräderikommisionen 1682", (The Treason Board of 1682), pp.150–183 in Stig Alenäs (ed.), *Roskildefreden 350 år. Från danskt till svenskt kyrkoliv*, (The 350th Anniversary of the Roskilde Peace Treaty. From the Church of Denmark to the Church of Sweden.), Malmö 2008. See especially p.183 and p.158 and p.173. Several of the clergymen had been physically abused by the snaphaner and even more were threatened with it. It should be added that the letters were addressed to the Swedish authorities and that the rhetoric used in them echoed the Swedish "snaphane" discourse in that the snaphaner were generally described as barbarians with no bond to the Danish state.

⁷⁶ Jens Lerbom, *Mellan två riken, integration, politisk kultur och förnationella identiteter på Gotland 1500–1700*, (Between Two Realms, Integration, Political Culture and Pre-national Identities on Gotland 1500–1700), Studia Historica Lundensia, Lund 2003

⁷⁷ Jens Lerbom, "Väldets regionala realiteter. Soldaters dödliga våld mot civila i Skåne och Blekinge 1660–1675." (The Regional Realities of Violence. Deathly Military Violence against Civilians in Scania and Blekinge 1660-1675), pp. 272-285, in *Våld – representation och verklighet*. (Violence-Representation and Reality), eds. Eva Österberg & Marie Lindstedt Cronberg, 2006. Jens Lerbom, "Flyttare, flyktingar, återvändare. Migration i gränsområdet kring Öresund under 1600-talets andra hälft", (Migrants, Refugees, Returnees. Migration in the Borderlands of Öresund in the Late 17th Century), pp.116-139 in Fredrik Nilsson, Hanne Sanders & Ylva Stubbergaard (eds), *Rörelser, möten och visioner i tid och rum*, (Movements, Meetings and Visions in Time and Space), Lithuania 2007, 2007. Jens Lerbom, *Evighetens motsträviga målsmän? Hallands prästerskap på Sveriges riksdagar 1649–1719*, (Eternally unwilling persecutors? The Halland Clergy at the Swedish Diets 1649-1719), pp.108-120 in Stig Alenäs (ed.), *Roskildefreden 350 år. Från danskt till svenskt kyrkoliv*, (The 350th Anniversary of the Roskilde peace treaty. From the Church of Denmark to the Church of Sweden.), Malmö 2008.

⁷⁸ Then the terms Gyng or Gøng were used. Stefan Persson uses the Latin term "Gothungia".

⁷⁹ Stefan Persson, *Kungamakt och bonderätt. Om danska kungar och bönder i riket och i Göinge härad ca. 1525–1640*, (Royal Power and Peasant Rights. On Danish Kings and Peasants in the Whole Kingdom and in the Hundred of Gothungia app.1525-1640), Riga 2005. See esp. pp. 273-276 but also pp. 427-428 of the summary in English.

the state took over the responsibility for the border and placed a permanent garrison at the newly founded town of Kristianstad (Christianstad). Another aspect of S. Persson's work is that he analyses the way crown rhetoric and closer ties to the state helped shape the beginnings of a Danish "national" identity.⁸⁰ Only recently Stefan Persson has written a massive volume on the wars against the Swedes as they were experienced and organised along the long "old" border in the Scanian provinces. The book also includes an interesting section on the snaphaner/friskytter in which Persson stresses that the friskytter were mentioned already during the Nordic Seven-Years-War, when the term referred to Michel Gynges troops (the gränsvärnsfänika). To Persson the connection between peasant troops and snaphaner/friskytter is also evident. He makes an important point when he points out that the friskytter and snaphaner were so much more feared by the Swedes than the peasant troops and that consequently the employment of them was a deliberate choice that rendered the Danish battle techniques more efficient in a situation when were in desperate need of competent combat support.⁸¹

Some ten years ago the reverend Paul Erik Engelhardt, a retired lecturer from the University of Greenland, wrote his PhD on the problems that the encounter between Danish and Swedish culture caused among the Scanian clergy and their bishop Peder Winstrup. The dissertation has now been updated and published as a book in the Museum Tusulanum collection. Engelhardt sees the controversial bishop in a new light in that he claims that Winstrup was not so much of a traitor or turncoat as has been supposed, but that Winstrup should rather be seen in the light of a man who tried to mediate between the two cultures so that all too strident clashes could be divided. According to Engelhardt, Winstrup accepted reality for what it was and promptly greeted the Swedish king when he arrived, but throughout his lifetime he kept

⁸⁰ Stefan Persson 2005, p.426. Persson also claims that there is evidence of a clearly discernable Scanian identity that was more important than the micro-regional Gothungian identity: one example of this was when the Swedes offered the Gothungians to join Sweden and the Gothungians promptly replied they would not divorce their fellow-Scandinavians.

⁸¹ Stefan Persson, *Gränsbygd och svenskkrig. Studier i Blekinges, Skånes och Hallands östdanska historia*, (The Borderlands and the Wars against the Swedes. Studies in the Eastern Danish History of Blekinge, Scania and Halland), Stockholm 2008. See esp. pp.380-392 and for the analysis of the battle efficiency of respectively peasant troops and friskytter/snaphaner see p. 383.

working for the maintenance of the old Danish church and its traditions in Scania.⁸² Furthermore, Winstrup has gained even some more moral standing through the research of Hanne Sanders of Lund University.⁸³ The controversial bishop tried to promote the version that the loss of the Scanian provinces and the consequent sufferings were God's way of punishing the Danish people for their sins and that the Scanians should accept whatever the Lord sent them. In fact, Winstrup only tried to be a good Christian and that was so much more important than being Danish or Swedish at the time. Apart from her research on Bishop Winstrup, Sanders has written profusely (and with great competence) on various aspects of the history and culture of southern Scandinavia, both in the present and the past. Her most recent contribution is a little volume⁸⁴ that constitutes the sequel to Harald Gustafsson's latest work *Scania in Denmark. A History of Denmark until 1658*.⁸⁵ In it Sanders comes back to her interpretation of Winstrup's sermons and speeches,⁸⁶ but the main theme of the book is to analyse how the transition was experienced by the man (and woman) in the street, not primarily as a war-time experience but as an extended process that lasted during several decades and that should not be interpreted in terms a conflict between "Danish" and "Swedish".⁸⁷ Sanders also claims that the long inter-war period between the two short wars should be seen as a period of "Scanification" rather than "Swedification" since Scania very much remained a piece of old Denmark (with its

⁸² Engelhardt 2007, pp.269-270. Engelhardt takes a far more traditional view of national identities than most of the researchers at Lund University today: he does not believe that the difference between being Danish then and now is as radical as has been claimed.

⁸³Hanne Sanders, "Religiøst eller nationalt verdensbillede? Skåne efter overgangen til Sverige 1658" ("A Religious or National Conception of the World? Scania after the transition to Sweden in 1658), pp.231-252 in Sanders, Hanne (ed). *Mellem Gud og Djævelen. Religiøse verdensbilleder i Norden 1500-1800*, (Between God and the Devil: Religious and Magical World-views in the Nordic Countries 1500-1800), Copenhagen 2001, p. 239: "To Winstrup the war consequently remains a tool in the hand of God: a tool that the Lord can use for or against the peoples that live on Earth. He brings war as a punishment and ends it as a gift."

⁸⁴ *Efter Roskildefreden 1658. Skånelandskapen och Sverige i krig och fred*. (After the Roskilde Peace Treaty of 1658. The Scanian Provinces and Sweden in Times of War and Peace), Munkedal 2008.

⁸⁵ Original title: *Skåne i Danmark. En dansk historia till 1658*, Riga 2008. In it Gustafsson traces the outline of how "Little Denmark" took shape, from the Viking era until the Roskilde Treaty. One important point that he makes is that he stresses how the eastern parts of the kingdom (the one-time marches) became ever more important during the first stages of the Christian era and that that trend continued until the Swedes took over the eastern provinces. (See: pp.27-29.) Later in the book Gustafsson also analyses the difference between how the loss of territories was experienced in an early modern conglomerate state and in a mid 19th century national state – and sees that as the reason why the loss of Slesvig-Holstein became such an emotional issue in Denmark whereas the loss of the Scanian provinces was next to forgotten.

⁸⁶ See: pp.102-105.

⁸⁷ Sanders 2008, p.8 and pp.60-65, esp. p.62.

own traditional Scanian Law) under Swedish sovereignty while Denmark itself moved away from nobility rule to Absolutism.

The Danish historian Jens Christian V. Johansen has occupied himself with Scanian history for quite some time. In the year 2000 he analysed the concept of Swedification in an interesting article in which he stressed the fact that some historians do not accept the existence of a Swedification for the mere reason that they still see the Scanians as some sort of Danes.⁸⁸ Vesterskov Johansen returned to the subject of the Swedification in a recent article in which he claims that Swedish authorities tried to introduce Swedish laws long before 1683 when Scania officially went over to Swedish law. To Vesterskov Johansen an important fact is the degree of coercion that was used during the Swedification process. However, the article also concludes that in fact some aspects of the Swedification actually improved the situation for many people: Swedish law, for example, was not necessarily experienced as a bad thing and politically the vast majority of the population enjoyed more rights than in Denmark.⁸⁹

Other recent works that deal with different aspects of Scania's passage to Sweden and the background of it include Sten Skansjö's *History of Scania* in which the subject of a regional Scanian identity throughout history is maybe the main theme.⁹⁰ There is also Jonas Nordin's *A People of Poverty and Liberty*, a book on national and political self-images in Sweden from 1660-1772. In it the author, who is a Swedish historian, describes some of the actions of the Swedish authorities in the Scania business as

⁸⁸ Jens Christian Vesterskov. Johansen, "Hvilken forsvenskning?" (Which Swedification?) in *Mark og menneske. Studier i Danmarks historie 1500-1800 (Territory and Human Beings, Studies in Danish History 1500-1800)*, ed. Claus Bjørn og Benedicte Fønnesbech-Wulff, Skippershoved 2000, pp.181-186. One example mentioned by Vesterskov Johansen is Sven Skovmand, *Guds og kongens tjener: om søfolk, svenskere og enevælde*, (Servants of God and the King: of Seafarers, Swedes and Absolutism, Copenhagen 1995. This view can be suitably exemplified by a quote from Ingrid Dora Jarnbjer's (unpublished) MA thesis "Skånelands blodige historie" (The gruesome history of the Scanian provinces): "The Swedification continued and after approximately a couple of generations the Swedish conquerors claimed that the Swedification was complete, but still today Scania is not "properly Swedish", it is Scanian, and the population still speak their particular dialect and have close ties to Denmark", unpublished MA thesis 2003, quote p.103.

⁸⁹ "Den hastige forsvenskning. Skåne efter freden i Roskilde", pp. 36-48 in Stig Alenäs (ed.). *Roskildefreden 350 år. Från danskt till svenskt kyrkoliv*, (The 350th Anniversary of the Roskilde Peace Treaty. From the Church of Denmark to the Church of Sweden.), Malmö 2008. See: p.37 where Vesterskov Johansen stresses that one of King Christian the fifth's most important justifications (as declared in a decree of 1st July 1677) for having retrieved Scania was that the Swede's had rendered the peace treaty of Roskilde nul and void in that they had tried to introduce Swedish law. Se also pp. 46-47.

⁹⁰ Sten Skansjö, *Skånes historia*, (A History of Scania), Borgå 2006 (originally 1997).

“horse-trading” and seems convinced that the Swedification was more of a set programme than a process.⁹¹ Only a couple of years ago the Cambridge-based Danish historian Kim Wagner wrote a revisionist biography of Poulsen in which the latter is characterised as something of a social bandit.⁹² The Swedish archaeologists Bo Knarrström and Stefan Larsson only recently published a very interesting volume in which they analysed the friskytter and the situation during the Scanian War from an archaeological point of view. Moreover, they have tried to explain “the eruptions of violence” without “emotional pathos”.⁹³ In their analysis of the state of the Scanian lands (i.e. the soil) they have come to the conclusion that there was indeed a problem with desertion of farmlands and poverty during the war.⁹⁴ Fredrik Persson of Lund University has also recently written a dissertation on the construction of a regional identity that has come to construct the “Swede” as “the other” and how history has been used by regionalists to this scope. He has already written several articles on the same topic.⁹⁵

Last but not least I would like to add that maybe the majority of the extant literature on Scanian history, and definitely so in the case of the snaphaner, has been produced outside academia. Most books in the “Scanian collections” in the local libraries have nothing with the universities to do and those are the history books that are most widely read. By far, the majority of the non-professional historians are fervent

⁹¹ Jonas Nordin, *Ett fattigt men fritt folk. Nationell och politisk självbild i Sverige från sen stormaktstid till slutet av frihetstiden*, (A People of Poverty and Liberty. National and political self-image in Sweden from the late Age of Greatness to the end of the Age of Liberty 1660-1772), Symposium, Stockholm 2000, p.65.

⁹² Wagner, Kim A., *Snaphanelederen Svend Poulsen, en militärhistorisk biografi*, (The Leader of the Snaphaner Svend Poulsen, a military history biography, Næstved 2003. See also Stig Wørmer’s article in “Berlingske Tidende” 19 January 2004 in which Wørmer contestates Wagner’s views.

⁹³ Bo Knarrström & Stefan Larsson. *Hans Majestäts friskyttar av Danmark*. (His Majesty’s Friskytter of Denmark), Riksantikvarieämbetet, Lund 2008. See e.g. p.22.

⁹⁴ See: p. 175 and attachments 10 and 11 that include lists of abandoned farms and proprietors of inhabited farms in the Örkelljunga area during from the 1650ies to the 1680ies.

⁹⁵ Fredrik Persson, “Ett historiskt gränsöverskridande? Regionerna Öresund och Skåne som historiska konstruktioner”, (A Historical Crossing of Borders? The Öresund and Skåne Regions as Historical Constructions), pp.321–351 in Fredrik Nilsson, Hanne Sanders & Ylva Stubbergaard (eds), *Rörelser, möten och visioner i tid och rum*, (Movements, Meetings and Visions in Time and Space), Lithuania 2007. See especially p.347 (English summary) and p.340 where he comments on the “explosive political power” of the debate about the sad fate of the snaphaner. He also draws parallels to the Balkans, the Basque Country, and the Caucasus. (p.322). In a newspaper article from 26th February 2008 F. Persson goes on to claim that the idea of a harsh Swedification is an image that has been constructed in order to serve the political scopes of Scanian patriots. As the title of the article, “The Myth about the Subjugation of Scania”, (in the *Sydsvenska Dagbladet*) indicates, F. Persson believes that the concept of a “subjugation” has also been invented in modern times, and consequently, that when early modern Scanians like Olluf Rosencrantz claimed that their fatherland had been subjugated by the Swedes they meant something totally different.

Scanian patriots that resent the actions of the Swedes three hundred years ago but also, some are traditional Swedish patriots that contribute to the nationalist greater Sweden discourse in which the passage to Sweden is seen as a blessing. There are also Danes that reclaim the lost lands and write history to underpin their case⁹⁶ and genealogists that just want to tell the story of their ancestors. I have largely ignored these works since most of them are based on the works of other people on not on primary sources. But I have included a few works by nonmainstream historians that are based on primary sources that are of importance to my work, primarily Vigo Edvardsson and Uno Røndahl. In both cases I have double-checked most of the sources they stated and that were of importance to me, except the extracts from the Swedish court records (“domböcker”) in Edvardsson. It is difficult not to take some of these works into account since some of these hobby-historians of both camps have found and published documents of importance, as have many genealogists. Vigo Edvardsson was a schoolteacher and a hobby historian with pro-Swedish tendencies who compiled a three-volume work on the snaphaner during the 70ies and 80ies.⁹⁷ Contrary to most Swedish researchers, Edvardsson made frequent use of Danish sources and the traces of his many hours spent in the Danish National Archives can still be found in the form of little notes with his name that he stuck among the documents wherever he found something of importance. Uno Røndahl has published most of the existing muster rolls with ample comments on the lives of the registered friskytter. It should be noted that Røndahl is a retired inspector superintendent of the Swedish police force: his tendency to dramatic pro-Scanian interpretation of history has gained him a questionable reputation among Swedish historians. Another “hobby historian” who came up with important information about the snaphaner from mainly Danish sources and that I have used in this dissertation, in spite of his traditionally nationalistic interpretation, was the Reverend Anders Hedwall of Västerstad who amongst other things wrote an excellent little biography of Simon Andersen, one of the most famous friskytte-officers.⁹⁸ Thanks to Hedwall’s work we have not only a

⁹⁶ See: Sven Skovmand, *Guds og kongens tjener: om søfolk, svenskere og enevælde*, (Servants of God and the King: of Seafarers, Swedes and Absolutism, Copenhagen 1995.

⁹⁷ Vigo Edvardsson, *Snaphanekriget 1675–1679 Dokument från en orolig tid I-III*, Kristianstad 1974–1985.

⁹⁸ Anders Hedwall, *Tullsagra Simon alias Simon Snaphane. En skånsk frihetskämpe*. (Simon from Tullsager alias Simon the Snaphane. A Scanian Freedom Fighter.), Copenhagen 1966. Several of Hedwall’s works were published by the Dansk-skaansk förening (The Danish-Scanian society) in the early 1960ies. They are now also available on the internet of that association.

cohesive account of Andersen's actions during the war but also something like an overview of the documents in the Danish archives that can be traced to Andersen's hand. It is not always easy to make a division between academic historians and non-academic ones. I am not quite sure about the background of Per Johnsson and Pehr Sörensson for example, and then there are cases where professionals and non-cooperate: the peasant republic-and romantic-woodlander-rhetoric is repeated by the highly accomplished historian Dick Harrison in his preface to *They Called Them Snaphaner* by Kim Hazelius in which he (Harrison) speaks of "the outlawed population of the woods".⁹⁹ Harrison and Hazelius seem to ascribe to the peasant republic-theory. It should be added that the view that the snaphaner had questionable backgrounds has also become an "established fact" among writers of otherwise clearly pro-Scanian views like Björn Gyllix who calls them "criminals, mentally disturbed people, hobos and various other outcasts from society"¹⁰⁰ as opposed to the friskytter who were military heroes. Nowhere do any of these historians and history writers state exactly on which basis they draw their conclusions. Generally, they refer to either Fabricius or Åberg or (most frequently) both.

On a popular level interest in Scanian history has always been intense and floods of books, records, novels, films, and even comic magazines have come out during the last two centuries from Carit Etlar's 19th century classic *Gøngehøvdingen* onwards.¹⁰¹

The Ideological Context – Scandinavian Issues

In modern-day Scandinavia the Scanian problem is a highly emotional and political issue. It is a matter that keeps popping up in the frequent squabbles between Denmark and Sweden. When the new Danish government was elected in 2001, they were immediately accused of being racists by the Swedes because of the new immigration laws. The Danish politician Pia Kjærsgaard promptly responded that the Swedes

⁹⁹ Dick Harrison, "Preface", pp. 7–17 in Kim Hazelius, *De kallade dem snaphanar. Friskyttar, rövare & bondeuppbåd*, (They Called Them Snaphaner. Friskyttar, Robbers and Peasant Insurgents), Kristianstad 2006, p.12.

¹⁰⁰ Björn Gyllix, "A small town in the midst of a great war", pp. 231-268, p.246 in Tor Flensmarck and Björn Gyllix, *Ve de besegrade. Om snaphanetiden och seklet då Skåne blev svenskt*, (Vae victi. On the Times of the Snaphaner and the Century When Scania Became Swedish), Gdansk 2006.

¹⁰¹ Carit Etlar was a pseudonym for Carl Brosbølls. The *Gjøngehøvdingen* was published in 1853. In 1899 a Swedish version of the Svend Poulsen saga was published, C A Cederborg's *Göingehövdingen*.

should think twice before they accused their neighbours of racism. After all, the Swedes had practiced “ethnic cleansing” in Scania long before anyone else in Europe had thought of such measures.¹⁰² In 2007 a Danish rightist party publicly declared that Denmark should claim the restitution of Scania and a Scanian and a Danish major newspaper (HD and Berlingske Tidende) promptly had their readers vote on the issue: to the result that 60% on both sides would prefer a reunion and some 10% on the Scanian side claimed independence. As the opinion poll continued on the Swedish newspaper’s website the majority switched to the Swedish side after a while and the Scanian and Danish reunionists claimed that it was an up-Swedish conspiracy. Due to squabbles of the kind, it can sometimes become difficult to do historical research.¹⁰³ I have included this paragraph on contemporary Scanian and Scandinavian politics in order to make clear to non-Scandinavians that however distant the things I write about in this thesis may seem, they can still be made to serve the purposes of one or the other side of a rather inflamed ongoing discussion. And I sincerely hope that this will not happen. Whoever feels tempted to insert any of my research results into a modern context should think twice before doing it since the world has changed a lot since 1658. It is not correct to apply modern concepts and keys of interpretation to issues like those that arose after the Roskilde peace. Unfortunately, I also have to stress that I do *not* hold anybody responsible for what their fathers or forefathers did. I do not believe in hereditary guilt, and I felt sorry for the Swedish television journalist who some time ago deposited a bunch of flowers on the steps of a church at Örkened. Although the Örkened area was razed to the ground some three hundred odd years ago this young man had very little to do with that fact. Once and for all I would like to make clear that I have nothing against up-Swedes and do not wish this material to be used for any ideological or political scopes.

¹⁰² See: Berlingske Tidende 13th June 2001. The new immigration laws were the political background of the Swedish verbal attacks.

¹⁰³ At the moment of writing, 7th May 2007 12.30-1 pm, Radio Kristianstad P4, is broadcasting a musical programme with songs in the honour of the friskytter. The songs are written and performed by Lars Fernebring. The lyrics celebrate King Christian and the memory of the happy times before the arrival of the Swedes. Another song is dedicated to the sad fate of Captain Severin (“backbound and crucified his pain exploded in a wave of agony and so the snaphane ceased fighting, oh Severin why did you leave us?...years of humiliation took our hope away”). This programme is emblematic of the popular vision of the Scanian question. The second part was broadcast on 21st May 2008.

Legends and Myths

Alf Åberg has claimed that the original legends depicted the snaphaner in a sinister light and that the stories of heroes with almost or actually supernatural gifts that are told today are products of the Romanticism. Åberg is convinced that Robin Hood themes in combination with Walter Scott's novels had such an impact on the Scandinavians that the originally evil snaphaner were remodelled into national heroes. It was easy enough to identify Scott's highlanders with the snaphaner and already in 1831, the first Swedish snaphane-novel was published, O. K's *Snaphanerne*. Åberg claims that the original legends portrayed the snaphaner as unwelcome guests that were killed by the locals. The truly romantic vein was then continued by hobby historians and authors in Scania and Denmark, whereas the Swedes generally judged the snaphaner more soberly. That is the theory presented by Åberg but as usual it is not clear where he got his evidence from.¹⁰⁴ The most famous of all snaphane-novels is Carit Etlar's *Gøngehøvdingen* (The leader of the Gønger) from 1854. After him came a Swedish poem called *Snapphanens bröllop* (The Wedding of the Snaphane), then J.O Åberg's and August Cederborg's novels about Little Mads. The snaphane-novel is still going strong and now it also has a little brother in the form of comics. Another variety on the theme of snaphane romanticism are the snaphane-films and television series, also genres that still very much in vogue. The last Swedish version, the television series "Snapphanar!" from 2006 portrays the very Robin Hood-like protagonists in a positive light and there is also a female snaphane with some sort of a ninja sword on her back. According to other legends the Swedes lined up all the men of suspect villages in front of the churches, made them pray Our Father and then shot them. There is no evidence that these executions ever took place. The story is reported as a legend in the Ethnological Archives in Lund. It is also an element of a play by N.R Munck af Rosenschöld that was published in 1859.¹⁰⁵ That kind of stories are representative of the traditions that present the Swedes in a sinister light and the

¹⁰⁴ Åberg, p.99. Unfortunately Åberg does not explain how *he* got to the bottom of the legends. As usual he leaves the reader without footnotes and with no further explanations.

¹⁰⁵ According to legend, all grown men in the village of Matteröd were shot outside the church (after having prayed Our Father), as reported in the archives. See: Edvardsson, III, p.100. N.R Munck af Rosenschöld's play *Lyriskt – romantiskt skådespel i fem avdelningar ur folkefejden i Skåne mot Karl XI* (Lyrical-romantic play in five parts about the people's fight in Scania against Charles XI) is published in part by Edvardsson, III, pp.168-180. See p.179: "all the peasants were ordered to kneel and to pray Our Father...". Munck af Rosenschöld (p.175.) hoped that the conquest of Scania would eventually lead to the unification of the whole of Scandinavia.

snaphaner as resistance fighters, a parallel tradition that exists across the entire Scanian territory.

I believe that sometimes the legends contain a grain of truth: sometimes they tell us the stories of events, people and places that have been forgotten because they belonged to the losers. That kind of stories had no place in official history writing since they did not fit into the official Swedish image and the Danes chose not to identify with the losers of the Scanian War.¹⁰⁶ The foremost example of legends that reflect real events is perhaps the Loshult treasure. It remained a local legend that the families of those responsible for the coup still had the booty stowed away, but only recently a farmer decided to show the part his family had kept in their barn over three hundred years. In the same manner do the Snaphaner stables that have constituted a local tourist attraction for centuries and that the archaeologists have finally proved were exactly what legend said they had been: a huge snaphane base with cooking facilities and stables etc. at the bottom of a ravine. Some hobby historians have even claimed that the truth about the snaphaner has never been documented in any other manner than through oral traditions and legends.¹⁰⁷ Local tradition has for example always known that there were snaphaner all over Scania, which the official version has almost forgotten. Vague attempts at documenting the presence of snaphaner in the whole region have had to stand back for the peasant republic theory into the frames of which snaphaner outside the border region did not fit. Theories apart, I cannot see why one tradition should exclude the other. Maybe parallel discourses on the snaphaner have existed all along and some people absorbed the tradition that presented them through freedom fighter legends and others the tradition that presented them as villains.¹⁰⁸ Finally, I would like to stress that I absolutely do *not* think that legends should be mistaken for historical facts. Sometimes they can give us a hint about the truth but never more than that.

¹⁰⁶ Naturally I do **not** believe that all legends are true: then I would have to accept that some people claimed the snaphaner were allied with the trolls and that they were invulnerable to all but silver bullets...

¹⁰⁷ Tor Flensmarck, "Friskyttar och snapphanar", pp.186–205, in Tor Flensmarck and Björn Gyllix, *Ve de besegrade. Om snapphanetiden och seklet då Skåne blev svenskt*, (Vae victis. On the Age of the Snaphaner and the Century when Scania became Swedish), p.186.

¹⁰⁸ I would also like to add that the legends that I heard as a child did *not* represent the snaphaner as either heroes or villains. I was told they were just people who lived in bad times and sometimes they had to fight, sometimes they had to hide in the cellars for long periods.

Sources

Introduction

This section contains a presentation of my sources and my motivations for having chosen them. I have also tried to explain the limitations of these and why I chose to concentrate on Danish sources.

The snaphaner and friskytter in the archives

Early in the 20th century Per Sörensson criticised the scholars that had almost exclusively done research on the snaphaner in the Swedish archives where the sources speak little or nothing of their military role.¹⁰⁹ On the contrary, Swedish sources tend to describe what they called “snaphaner” as common criminals. Sörensson pointed out that it is in the Danish sources that most information about the friskytter/snaphaner is to be found and he hoped that in the future more research on them through Danish sources would be done. Unfortunately, Sörensson and his injunctions have been left in oblivion. The same can be said for the case of Baron Jørgen Krabbe who was executed by the Swedes on the charge of high treason in the middle of the Scanian War. Two of the main charges against him were that he had (perhaps) told a friend that he considered himself Danish (and not Swedish) and that he associated with “snaphaner”. As Knud Fabricius noted, very little research has been done on the Krabbe case and he called out for other people to take over where he ended. Most 20th century research, including Alf Åberg’s, has relied almost exclusively on Swedish sources. The sources that I have used almost all date from 1676-1679 and mainly deal with the operations that were undertaken by those who were seen as snaphaner by the Swedes. In many cases it is the matter of the execution of orders from the Danish headquarters and we have evidence of this today because the “snaphaner” wrote back to report if the mission had been completed or not. In some cases, we also have transcribed oral reports in the “Depositiones” collection. My main aim was to find sources that dealt with the way the friskytter/snaphaner worked and for this reason I concentrated on the Danish collections that are today to be found in the National Archives in Copenhagen. In this thesis I have tried to analyse what those who were branded as “snaphaner” did and if possible, what they did it for. The sources that can be traced to the snaphaner themselves are mainly to be found in Denmark and it seemed an obvious first choice of archival research. I know that the Swedish sources

¹⁰⁹ See: Sörensson, p.2.

provide excellent material for a study of how the Swedes constructed the image of the snaphaner but to me that was not the main issue, although I have included it in my thesis as a sideline theme. In that sense I have tried to follow up on Sörensson's advice and work mainly with Danish sources although I have spent short research periods in the National Archives and Royal Library in Stockholm, too. On the basis of the Danish sources, but also using Swedish sources and secondary literature I have tried to add new dimension to the way the snaphaner should be regarded in that I have not only mapped their actions geographically and shown that the registered troops tended to follow the movements of the Danish army and in what manner they did so and what their tasks were but I also studied the various forms that resistance in the form of snaphane activities took during the Scanian War: until now nobody has paid any attention to the shape the snaphane "movement" took on the noble estates, although some attention has been paid to the fact that estate managers and bailiffs tended to be mentioned in association with the snaphaner. Nor has the south-eastern part of Scania (roughly modern-day Österlen) been dealt with at all as an arena for snaphane activities, except in local legends. I felt that the case of Captain Bendix was extremely interesting since the sources that refer to it transmit the image of a middle phase of irregular warfare, that neither corresponded to the image of the peasants-in-arms troops nor to that of the King's Friskytter Corps that are registered in the National Archives, nor to that of bandits. The sources from that case also allow us to study local society from various perspectives: that of pro-Swedes testifying to the Danes (in Danish sources) and that of supposedly pro-Danes testifying to Swedes (in Swedish sources), regarding the very same events. We certainly only have access to a filtered version of what happened at Skräddaröd. The Swedish soldiers told a different version from the truth of the Danes. Danish court officials and registers would have presented everything in a different light since it would not have been considered a crime to have once been a friskytte. It has certainly not been my intention to minimise the importance of the multiplicity of voices that the sources transmit to us in cases like this: on the contrary it has been my ambition to make a variety of them heard when possible. Finally, documents of this kind provide us with information about events that have been lost to history: it is interesting to think whether the events that took place at Skräddaröd for example would have been forgotten if the Danes won the war.

This kind of inquiry is always subjective in that it cannot possibly cover all letters in the archives and the interpretation is left to the researcher. The documents we are treating here can be found under the headings of Received letters 1678 (*Indkomne breve 1678*), Intercepted Letters (*Opsnappede breve*) from 1677-1678 and a collection of war reports called *Depositiones 1676-1678*, all to be found among the papers of the War College in the National Archives in Copenhagen. I have also used the archives of the “General Commissariat” that include account books and pay-rolls.¹¹⁰ The letters that sorted under the papers of the War College are mainly reports to the commanders from single officers and soldiers and sometimes petitions from soldiers and ordinary people, or whole communities, to the king. The intercepted letters are mainly the ‘fruit’ of the work of the friskytter/snaphaner whose task it was to try and interfere with the Swedish postal services. The Swedish letters that the friskytter/snaphaner managed to get hold of eventually ended up in the hands of the War College and that is where they still are to be found.¹¹¹ This collection of letters mainly consists of military reports, some of which are coded, but one can also find private letters to and from Swedish soldiers who were fighting in the Scanian provinces.¹¹²

The *Depositiones und Kundschaften* collection contains daily reports from the scene of war from 1676 until 1678. The reports were written by two or three scribes or Danish officials. Everyone who came to the Danish Army Camp had to report what they knew about the war and those who had something interesting to report had their testimonies (depositiones) taken down.¹¹³ Many of the testimonies are constituted by

¹¹¹ The Danish National Archives will be referred to as DRA (Rigsarkiv) and the University Library of Lund as LUB (Lunds universitetsbibliotek).

¹¹² In a letter from 3rd June 1678 King Charles XI of Sweden told Colonel Carl Hård that he had to try and send his letters the safest way. Some letters were even sent in triplicate but a large part of them got lost anyway: Charles XI declared that Hårdh’s letters of the 26th and 27th “must have fallen into the hands of the enemy” and the triplicate of the letter of the 31st had only just arrived but the two first copies remained lost. *Opsnappede breve, 1677-79, DRA.*

¹¹³ It seems as if this was also the custom in the (Danish) towns, at least periodically. An order that General Major Merheim had been charged by the king to issue (from Landskrone, 27th March 1678, *Indkomne breve, DRA*, two orders with the same date, one in Merheim’s own handwriting, and the one for the harbour guards in a scribe’s writing), stresses that all persons (men and women, on foot or by horse), who came in through the northern gates had to be thoroughly interviewed and state their name and address, where they would be staying in town and what their errand was and what they were bringing with them and that those who left town should get “passir zetteln” without which they would not be allowed in again. Recently there had been several cases of espionage and informers that had escaped the notice of the authorities; some spies had travelled to Copenhagen and Elsinore and back only just to bring news to the enemy. The same orders were issued to the harbour guards.

oral reports from friskytter and the deserters and traitors that they had caught. In some cases, a more “direct” report from the front is added in the form of a letter to the authorities from anonymous sources. Both kinds of *depositiones* reveal a great deal about the activities of the friskytter. I have also analysed a series of testimonies from people who had either been caught by friskytter or peasants or who had come to them of their own free will. The kind of testimonies that the *Depositiones* registers provide us with can help us understand who the friskytter picked up and *why*.

Most of the documents in the *Depositiones* collection are written in Danish but many are in German or Low German, or even a mixture between two or three of these languages.¹¹⁴ Contrary to most Swedish sources from the Scanian War there is not much “hybrid” Scandinavian language. Scanians who tried to write Swedish (with varying success) to or the Swedish authorities wrote in Danish to or for the Danish authorities. A few cases of “hybrid” language are among my sources, though: intercepted letters from ethnic Danes who wrote to Swedes or whilst acting as Swedish officials (Uhlfeldt for example), but also Danes who spied on the Swedes and copied down Swedish letters (Erlandsson’s letter) and in the case of the *Depositiones*, the scribes often wanted to render what the interviewee said as closely as possible and this meant that sometimes a report in German could be interspersed with Danish exclamations, but then the Danish was usually rendered correctly. However, in the case of Danish or German reports that try to render what the Swedes said often end up in hybridisation: when they were celebrating in the Swedish camp that the food supply lines from Zealand to Landskrona (then Landscrone) were cut off the Danish spies reported the Swedes to have said: “The Jutes are eager enough to return home now that they have not any option but to starve to death!”¹¹⁵ In the original this phrase is written in what the speaker and/or the scribe *perceived* to be Swedish, which proves that the scribes at least sometimes really tried to reproduce what the interviewees said. Another soldier reported that the Swedes were saying:

¹¹⁴ For example, War Commissary Jens Harboe’s reports are normally but not always. The friskytter’s reports are normally in Danish but for example Nicolaus Hermansen who was listed both in the regular army and the friskytter corps wrote in German. See for example: Nicolaus Hermansen to General Friderich von Arrenstorp 8th June 1678 and 2nd July 1678, Indkomne breve, DRA.

¹¹⁵ “Og nu wilde Juttan gierne tilbaka, og kunde intet komme mens matte forkomme aff swelten”

“Yes, let the Jutes waste their men away, we will be waiting for them...”¹¹⁶ Some of the intercepted letters are in French, English, Dutch or even Italian.

The letters/reports from the friskytter were not devoid of importance at all, nor were their oral reports. The Secretary of the Army Board¹¹⁷ and War Commissary Jens Harboe frequently reported to chief military prosecutor (generalauditøren) Herman Meyer of the Army Board in Copenhagen, and sometimes almost his whole reports consisted of what he had been told by the friskytter, in person or through written reports, and I have used these reports for both main parts of my thesis. Just as Harboe reported on the regular soldiers’ operations he reported about the operations of the friskytter.¹¹⁸ Sörensson took some interest in Harboe’s account books from 1678 and pointed out the difficulty in separating friskytter (free shooters) from “skytter” (sharpshooters) in the register books, if indeed there is any difference to be found.¹¹⁹ Fabricius refers to Harboe as a Danish commissary and consulted his account books for the week 19th-26th April 1677 in which registered expenses for three friskytte units.¹²⁰ I have concentrated my analysis to the *depositiones* from 1677-1678.¹²¹ In some cases I have used reports that fall outside this time span but then I have explained why. My dissertation will concentrate on this period since it was then that the friskytte corps developed, but the whole of the Scanian war will be seen as the background of these developments.

Since I first started my research, the Danish National Archives have started using a computerised catalogue called DAISY and part of the collections have been changed. The “*Depositiones und Kundschaften*” now make part of the “*Interrogations and Testimonies of Captives and Renegades and Others 1675-1678*”, which is a misleading title, since at least half of the reports come from people who were anything but renegades or captives.¹²² Some documents have changed place and

¹¹⁶ *Depositiones*, Rasmus Persen’s report of 26th June 1677, DRA. “Ja, (lat) lad Juttan spiillde folch, saa wil wi wel bie ham.” In the original “lat” is crossed over.

¹¹⁷ Jensen, p.490. (sekretær i Krigskollegiet).

¹¹⁸ See for example Jens Harboe to Herman Meyer, LCrone 18th June 1678, Indkomne breve, DRA.

¹¹⁹ Sörensson, pp.38-39. As Jensen (pp.453-453) points out, Schwanewedel tended to use “skytter” as avant-garde.

¹²⁰ Fabricius III, p.106.

¹²¹ The section June-July 1677 comprises 70 sheets.

¹²² Krigskollegiet (Landetaten) 468 Forhør over og udsagn af fanger og overløbere 1675-1677 (*Interrogations and testimonies of captives and renegades.*): 98. Old title: -*Depositiones und*

sometimes they appear in other collections. Part of the “Intercepted Letters” are to be found in other collections.¹²³ The War College collection of incoming mail (Indkomne breve) now has been assigned numbers for each box of documents.¹²⁴ From the beginning the documents were each assigned a number with which one could trace the single documents and those numbers are still the most efficient way of keeping track of single documents and when possible, I have also written those numbers. In any case, the documents that do not have a complete DAISY reference in the footnotes can still be found through the reference to the collection and the date that are always included in the footnotes.

Finally, I have also used the unpublished booklet “A Promemoria on the Snaphaner”¹²⁵ in which the professional snaphane catcher Sven Erlandsson reported his feats during the war. The original has been lost but a handwritten copy is to be found in the Danish Royal Library.¹²⁶ Fabricius pointed out some obvious mistakes in Erlandsson’s account. Jeppe Bosøn’s death is described to have taken place soon after the battle at Lund in December 1676 whereas Knud Thott described the same event as recent in a letter to the king from 13th May 1679. In the same manner Tage Bøg’s death is described by both Erlandsson in the “Promemoria” and Simon Bengtsson in a letter to Sperling from 24th September 1678. Erlandsson claimed he had killed “Böök” himself, whereas Bengtsson declared that “a Swedish unit” had done it.¹²⁷ Fabricius hypothesises that the events in the “Promemoria” can generally be dated to the period after the fall of Kristianstad (Christianstad) in August 1678. Fabricius also hypothesises that Erlandsson might not have been the author of the “Promemoria” at all since it is written in the third person. It might have been written in defence of Erlandsson’s actions during his conflict with Governor General Rutger von Ascheberg who took a considerably more lenient view on the Scanian question and with whose post-war war policy Erlandsson disagreed violently. On the other hand, the text is

Kundschaften, Forhør og Udsagn af Fanger Overløbere og andre 1677-78. (Interrogations and testimonies of captives, renegades, and others); Forhør over og udsagn af fanger og overløbere 1677-1678 (Interrogations and testimonies of captives and renegades.): 99. [Old title: -Depositiones und Kundschaften, Forhør og Udsagn af Fanger Overløbere og andre 1677-78. (Interrogations and testimonies of captives, renegades, and others)].

¹²³ “Intercipirte briefe 163” is to be found among the 469 Krigskancelliet 1679-1699 Indkomne sager 1679 Maj-Juni:831 (Received Matters 1679 May-June).

¹²⁴ Krigskollegiet (Landetaten) 468 - Indkomne breve 1676–1678 (received letters), boxes 52-72.

¹²⁵ “Promemoria”, Ny kgl. Sml. 4o 1076, KB. See also: Fabricius III, p.174 note 2.

¹²⁶ For the story of the “Promemoria” see: Fabricius III, p.174, footnote 2.

¹²⁷ See also Sörensson, p.45.

obviously influenced by Julius Caesar's account of his feats in Gaul, *De bello gallico*, which was also written in the third person. In any case, on account of the numerous minor inaccuracies in the text, it can only be assumed that the "Promemoria" dates to a time when the events it describes were not quite recent anymore.

Sources for the Krabbe case

The original court records from Krabbe's trial disappeared without a trace at a very early stage. What we have today are extracts of documents that made part of the court proceedings. These extracts were printed in both pamphlets that constitute our main sources. Governor General Sperling, who was also presided as judge at the trial, wrote a so-called *Deduction* of about 30 pages in which he justified his actions and decisions. The *Deduction* was banned before it reached the shops, but someone had managed to get a copy over to the other side. Fabricius hypothesised that the embarrassing court records disappeared at the same time as Sperling's defence pamphlet was withdrawn from circulation.¹²⁸

The one most important source is the *Replique* that countered Sperling's accusations. The author of the *Replique* is only stated as "Aletophilus" on the cover. Fabricius declared that the pamphlet was ascribed to "Oluv Rosencrantz" but did not go into details about why and how that had come about.¹²⁹ At the university library in Lund the pamphlet sorts under Rosencrantz and seems to have done so before Fabricius's day too if one is to judge by the old-fashioned handwriting. I have accepted this attribution and speak of Rosencrantz when I mean Aletophilus throughout this chapter. The *Replique* consists of Rosencrantz's actual defence-pamphlet, a mass of documents from the court proceedings, extracts from Krabbe's correspondence and finally Sperling's *Deduction*. A full list of the contents of the *Replique* is added at the end of the thesis. I do not believe that the veracity of Rosencrantz's version of the court documents should be doubted. They agree perfectly with Swedish accounts of the court case such as Sperling's and Olivekrantz's letters. Some of Sperling's letters to the king contain extracts from the court proceedings and Krabbe's letters and they agree with Rosencrantz almost to the letter. I have found Sperling's letters and reports to Stockholm very useful. They are to be found in the archives of the government general of Scania in the Swedish National Archives. A copy of the verdict from

¹²⁸ See Fabricius III: p.122.

¹²⁹ Fabricius III: p.123. I refer to "Aletophilus" for this volume and "Rosencrantz (1679)" for his volume in the Thott brothers' defence.

November 1677 is also to be found amongst these letters. In the Swedish National Archives, I have also used those of Krabbe's and his wife Jytte Thott's papers that can be found in the Biographica collection, though I was not allowed to see the originals and many pages seemed to be missing. I do not know whether they were only missing from the microfilm or from the archives. In Stockholm, most sources from the Scanian War are in disorder. Johan Paulin Olivekrantz's appeal to the king is to be found under Krabbe's name.

A pamphlet in Krabbe's defence called "Blood Crying for Revenge" can be found in the Rostgaard collection in the Danish Royal Library. Fabricius concluded that the author was unknown, but a pencilled note declares the renowned clergyman and writer Anders Matthiessen Hjørring to be the author and I have accepted his authorship with some reservations.¹³⁰

I have also used a pamphlet that was written in defence of Krabbe's brothers-in-law Knud, Holger and Tage Thott who were also charged with high treason. This "short and truthful relation" is written in the same style as the *Replique*. The author is not stated at all, instead of having a "lover of truth" for author this booklet was written "for the information of all impartial lovers of truth." I presume that Rosencrantz wrote this pamphlet too.

I would like to add that there may have existed a third pamphlet in Krabbe's defence. In one of his letters Sperling mentions a support pamphlet that was published in Germany. So far, I have not been able to trace it – but he might simply have meant Aletophilus: the pamphlet that was written in defence of the Thotts was printed in Lübeck. There is no mention of where the *Replique* was printed but it is not unlikely that it was at the same place: the letters and design of the two pamphlets are almost identical.

Another source from the Danish Royal Library that I will analyse here is the prayer-book that Krabbe wrote during his imprisonment. The prayer-book was handed over to Krabbe's widow after his death and he had written it with her in mind. But Krabbe knew that chances were that the Swedish authorities would read it too: he could not afford to express anti-Swedish views in it because it would have cost his family in Scania too dear. No one can tell what his prayers would have sounded like if he had written them Denmark. It is a neat little book in leather covers, and it is all written in

¹³⁰ MS Rostgaard 4to, 93, KB, p.43. Fabricius called this manuscript *Det hefnraabende blod* (Blood Calling for Revenge).

Krabbe's own handwriting. He hoped that it would be published or at least widely circulated people, because he mentioned "his readers" in several places.

Other sources of interest at the Royal Library include a number of documents that once belonged to the Thott family. There is an account of Krabbe's last days as told by his confessor Willum Laurenberg, and copies of some of Krabbe's papers. I have also used War Commissary Jens Harboe's reports from Landskrona (then Landskrone) to the War College in Copenhagen and those are to be found among the Received Letters in the War College Collection in the National Archives.

Very little has been written on Krabbe- Sthen Jacobsen mentioned Krabbe briefly in his History of the Great Nordic war from 1699. Towards the end of the 18th century Barfod mentioned the case in his bizarre tales of the Scanian Nobility. At the beginning of the 19th century a Danish historian by the name of Odin Wolff wrote a lengthy article on Krabbe in the *Journal for Politics, Science and Humanities*.¹³¹ A romantic novel about the baron was published in Sweden at about the same time. In it Krabbe had become a Swedish patriot and the father of one of King Charles's XII great warriors. In 1851 Abraham Cronholm reported the most important details of the "Krabbe case" in his Political History of Scania.¹³² Martin Weibull published some of the most important documents in his Scanian Collections from the end of the 19th century. Fabricius took up the Krabbe case and ended his short resume by saying that more research needed to be done. Several articles have appeared in local historical journals. Many guidebooks and guide-sites on the Internet include some paragraphs on Krabbe. It's generally very easy to decide whether the author takes a pro-Swedish or pro-Danish/Scanian view.

Conclusions:

The Danish sources on and by the snaphaner have been left largely unexplored although there is ample first-hand material from snaphaner in Danish archives and as regards other documents I believe that the Danish sources give a more truthful picture of the snaphaner/friskytter. Naturally it was in the Danish state's interest to defend the friskytter, and sometimes also snaphaner, but it was certainly in the Swedish state's interest to do the very opposite thing. Consequently, the image that the sources of

¹³¹ Odin Wolff, "Baron Jørgen Krabbes ulykkelige Skjebne" (The sad fate of baron Jørgen Krabbe), pp.98–119, in *Journal for Politik, Natur- og Menneske-Kunskab*, November 1825.

¹³² *Skånes politiska historia, efter större delen otryckta källor, Senare delen*, Stockholm 1851. For the Krabbe case see pp.198-205.

both countries left in heritage to us is likely to be twisted, either way we look at it. I am to some extent, trying to write the history of the losing side, but once again I am not doing that because I believe the snaphaner were martyrs or because I think modern Scanians should take revenge. I do most certainly not think they should. Nor do I think that the snaphaner/friskytter was such an extraordinary phenomenon as has sometimes been made out: similar situations have arisen in many parts of the world during the ages, as I will come back to in the section on the snaphaner and the Swedish response was far from unique. On the contrary they responded much the same way as states have tended to do throughout history, maybe even today, when there is a situation of popular rebellion or guerrilla movements that are hard to get at with traditional army means.¹³³

Theoretical Background. National Identities in the 17th Century

“The dispute that leads to the war involves a process by which each side calls into question the legitimacy and thereby erodes the reality of the other country’s issues, beliefs, ideas, self-conception.”¹³⁴

It is difficult for us today to understand how people in the 17th century experienced the coming of new overlords and having to get used to a new culture. Not the least so if one considers that national identities probably did not play the same role as today. When I read Danish books from the time of the Swedish conquest of Scania like Sthen Jacobsen’s chronicle of the Nordic war or Leonora Christina Uhlfeld’s memories from the Blue Tower¹³⁵ or Johan Monrad’s autobiography¹³⁶ I find it hard to think of these people as substantially different from the Danes and Scanians I know around the Sound today. A modern reader might smile a little at the fact that Reverend Jacobsen kept interpreting all kinds of meteorological phenomena as omens and that Leonora Christina interrupted the fascinating story of her time in prison with psalms

¹³³ For an analysis of punishments of guerrillas and rebellious subjects in the West, see: Richard Clutterbuck, *Guerrillas and Terrorists*, pp.24-27, Faber & Faber, London 1977.

¹³⁴ Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain, The Making and the Unmaking of the World*, OUP, Oxford, 1985, p.128.

¹³⁵ Leonora Christina Uhlfeld, *Jammers minde og andre selvbiografiske skildringer*, (Memories of my sufferings and other autobiographical accounts) ed. by Johannes Brøndum-Nielsen and C.O. Bøggild-Andersen, Copenhagen 1949. There is an Italian translation of this book called *Memorie dalla torre blu*, Adelphi edizioni 1971.

¹³⁶ *Selvbiografi (1638-1692)*, (Autobiography) edited and published by S. Birket Smith, Copenhagen 1888.

that she had composed herself. To a Scanian the greatest difference might be that Jacobsen wrote the way our grandfathers spoke. It was not until I started studying nationalism and “prenational” identities that it struck me that the writers mentioned above took very little interest in the national side of the conflict in the Scanian provinces, despite living in the midst of it. Leonora Christina who was the daughter of King Christian IV of Denmark sometimes mentioned Denmark with nostalgia when she was out travelling in Europe but at least her husband Corfitz seemed only to care about his status as a nobleman. Knud Fabricius has pointed out that men like Corfitz Uhlfeld took their oaths of allegiances very seriously but did not give much weight to the nationality of their sovereign.¹³⁷ Monrad and Jacobsen both seem fairly neutral in their works even if a note of sadness can be noted in Monrad when he declares that he still can remember how beautiful Scania was before the beginning of the wars. Jacobsen an obvious predilection for the ravaged country of Scania that he still called a lovely bride to do the dance of war around. Perhaps Jacobsen reasoned the same way as the nobleman Niels Krabbe who declared that his one and only fatherland was Scania and that was all that mattered in the conflict.¹³⁸ If Niels Krabbe said that he had a fatherland then he obviously meant something by those words, and I would like to understand what. Both Leonora Christina and Jacobsen had all the reasons in the world for avoiding the subject of Denmark-Sweden. Leonora Christina was in prison for having sold herself and important state secrets to the Swedes. Jacobsen was probably hoping that his work would be acceptable to both sides since it was unclear whether his beloved Scania would stay under Danish or Swedish rule. It might very well be that they just avoided subjects that were too inflamed at the time. But we do not know. In my research I often encounter evidence of the importance that 17th century Scanians gave to their “national” identity and of the importance it was attributed by the Swedes, at least in times of armed conflict. In the spring of 1677 a captain of the friskytter by the name of Jens Keldsøn defined the tasks of his unit as:

¹³⁷ Fabricius, Knud. Knud Fabricius, *Skaanes overgang fra Danmark til Sverige*, (The Passing of Scania from Denmark to Sweden) vols. I-IV, Copenhagen-Lund 1906-58 vol.III, p.138.

¹³⁸ Fabricius (II, p.14.) quotes a letter from Niels Krabbe to Governor General Stenbock, dated 29th December 1660, in which Krabbe declares that it was his duty to obey the king and the government that Almighty God had decided should subjugate “his dear fatherland Scania.” As regards Jacobsen, it should be added that although his Chronicle is essentially a neutral work, he himself spied actively for the Danes. See: Engelhardt, p.251.

”extinguishing all native Swedes and bereaving them of their privileges.”¹³⁹ About half a year later a nobleman by the name of Olluf Rosencrantz claimed that all Swedes were born with innate hatred of Danes and that the Swedes in Scania had their minds set on extinguishing the whole Scanian nation because the members of it had Danish blood in their veins.¹⁴⁰

Cultural, ethnic, and territorial communities in the early modern world differed from what we call nationalism today. While analysing these communities one must be careful not to fall into the so called “nationalistic trap”: it is easy to get blinded if one has one’s mind set on finding the roots of nationalism or proof of the modern origins of nationalism. Instead it is important to remember that “national” identities were only a minor part of a complex set of loyalties and identities. The sources prove that it meant something to be a “Swede” or “Dane” at the time, but the components of these identities were probably not the same as today.¹⁴¹ This is the point at which Anthony Smith’s theories come in. I believe that the “ethnie” concept is a valid analytical tool when one is analysing early modern sources.¹⁴² In his dissertation on the collective identities of the early modern Gotlanders, Jens Lerbom has used Smith’s “ethnie” concept to analyse how the islanders experienced the passage from Danish to Swedish rule in 1645. Lerbom believes that the good old Danish days, the “Danish times”, became mythicised as a past that stood for all that was right and good.¹⁴³ This conclusion would probably also be valid for Scania even if the Danish identity had deeper roots there. Although most Scanians have vague ideas about kings and wars and precise dates they tend to know that, once upon a time, “we were Danish.”

In academia today there are on the one hand perennialists who believe that nations have existed for a long time but in different forms, on the other hand there are modernists who believe that nations are modern constructions. Whereas the idea of

¹³⁹ Uno Røndahl, *Skåneland ur det fördolda*, (The Scanian Provinces – Out of the Shadows), Karlshamn 1996, p.233, quote: ”då ’ville de gå mand ur huse’ för att enligt Christian V:s order, utrota alla infördde svenskar ’och deras Formon fra dem tage.’”

¹⁴⁰ Rosencrantz/Aletophilus (*En sandfärdig REPLIQUE*...Copenhagen 1678.) compared governor general Sperling to Caligula and maintained that his hatred was unquenchable and his cruelty towards the “remaining Scanians of Danish extraction” so great that he would have liked to do away with them all in one blow.

¹⁴¹ Harald Gustafsson, “The Eighth Argument. Identity, Ethnicity and Political Culture in Sixteenth-Century Scandinavia”, *Scandinavian Journal of History* 27, 2002, pp.91-114. Quote p.91; Gustafsson, “The Conglomerate State: A Perspective on State Formation in Early Modern Europe.” *Scandinavian Journal of History* 23, 1998, p.210.

¹⁴² Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Oxford 1988, pp.12-13.

¹⁴³ Jens Lerbom, *Mellan två riken, integration, politisk kultur och förnationella identiteter på Gotland 1500–1700*, (Between Two Realms, Integration, Political Culture and Pre-national Identities on Gotland 1500–1700), *Studia Historica Lundensia*, Lund 2003, pp.213–223.

the relative or even total continuity of nations had been dominant during the first part of the 20th century the Second World War came to change this. A new generation of historians seemed to think that the horrors of the war proved that the "homogeneous territorial nation could now be seen as a programme that could be realised only by barbarians, or at least by barbarian means."¹⁴⁴ Perennialism was abandoned by most scholars and the modernist school became dominant. One of its major representatives was Elie Kedourie whose *Nationalism* was first published in 1960. Kedourie did not deny that the word "nation" had existed long before his own century, but he maintained that nationalism had given it a new meaning.¹⁴⁵ Exactly what that word meant before the end of the 18th century seemed to be of little or no interest to Kedourie. The kind of patriotism that existed in early modern Europe could be described as: "affection for one's country, or one's group, loyalty to its institutions, and zeal for defence." The difference between patriotism and nationalism was that the latter had a doctrine of its own whereas the former lacked a particular doctrine of the state and did not impinge on the individual's relation to it. Patriotism and nationalism are only confused because the latter has "annexed" the universal sentiments that constitute the essence of patriotism. Scholars who speak of an early kind of nationalism from the 15th century onwards are only applying categories from their own era to a past that did not know anything of the sort:

"Men who thought they were acting in order to accomplish the will of God, to make the truth prevail, or to advance the interests of a dynasty, or perhaps simply to defend their own against aggression, are suddenly seen to have been really acting in order that the genius of a particular nationality should be manifested and fostered."¹⁴⁶

Another scholar who emphasised the nexus modernity-nationalism as much as Kedourie was Ernest Gellner. According to Gellner it was only towards the end of the 18th century that something that could be called nationalism came into being. Any sense of belonging between members of the same tribe or people that might have existed earlier could be classified as "patriotism". Nationalism could not have developed any earlier than it did because the literate élites that existed during the Middle Ages and the early modern era had no desire whatsoever to spread their

¹⁴⁴ Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, Cambridge University Press 1990, p.134.

¹⁴⁵ Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism*, Hutchinson & Co LTD, London 1974, p.9.

¹⁴⁶ Kedourie, pp. 72-75. Quotes p.75.

culture to the lower strata of society.¹⁴⁷ Gellner's line of thought has been continued by Eric J. Hobsbawm who accepts the idea of a kind of proto nationalism that in particular cases might have constituted the basis for nationalism. A component of proto nationalism might have been the cultural identification with a language as was probably the case with the Albanians who had little else in common. This kind of ethnicity does not have anything to do with the formation of a nation state. The one most important criterion of proto-nationalism in Hobsbawm's sense is "the consciousness of belonging or having belonged to a lasting political entity." Another kind of proto-nationalism worth mentioning was that of the élites that included the three elements of "nationality, political loyalty and political commonwealth."¹⁴⁸ Popular movements of defense against foreign invaders in the early modern era were spurred by social and religious ideologies, but not national ones: In a somewhat ambiguous manner he then declares that such movements could become "the basis of a broader popular national patriotism."¹⁴⁹ Benedict Anderson defines nationality and nationalism as "cultural artifacts of a particular kind" that came into being towards the end of the 18th century.¹⁵⁰ To him collective identities are "imagined" in so far as the individual feels a sense of belonging with other members of the same community in spite of their never having met. Seen in this way national identities become social constructions and the nation an imagined political community. Before the invention of the printed book, it was simply not possible to imagine communities, according to Anderson. Books opened a non sacral world in non-sacral languages to the mass of the population. Nationalism is best to be understood towards the background of the two cultural systems that preceded it. The first system was constituted by religious communities like Ummah Islam and Christendom with their sacral languages. The second system was that of the dynastic realm that up until the middle of the 17th century was the only imaginable political system.¹⁵¹ It was only when these old cultural conceptions had lost their "axiomatic grip on men's minds" that the nation could be imagined.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁷ Ernest Gellner, *Stat, nation, nationalism* (Swedish translation of *Nations and Nationalism*), Nya Doxa 1997, p.69. Gellner's *Thought and Change* was published in 1964.

¹⁴⁸ Hobsbawm (1990), pp.53 and 73 (see quote).

¹⁴⁹ Hobsbawm (1990), p.75. An example of this would be Bohemia.

¹⁵⁰ Benedict Anderson, p.4.

¹⁵¹ Anderson, pp.12-19 and 46.

¹⁵² Anderson, p.34 and p.36.

The wave of post-modernists was eventually countered by groups of scholars who felt that one had to look further back in time than the French Revolution to explain the existence of nations and nationalism. Many of those were ancient and medieval historians like Susan Reynolds who maintains that the “regnal sentiments” of the peoples of the Middle Ages were not all that different from the nationalistic sentiments of our days.¹⁵³ A certain tendency to give the primate of national roots to their own forefathers can easily be traced among the perennialists. Adrian Hastings is convinced that the English “gave the world the model of a nation-state” and that the Normans saw to it that it became an aggressive one. Other nationalisms were produced in order to stand up against this aggressive model. The English had been a nation since the days of Earl Byrhtnoht.¹⁵⁴ This Anglo-centric view is interesting but less convincing when one discovers that scholars of other nationalities seem to be able to trace nationalism quite far back in their own countries.¹⁵⁵ To Hastings ethnicity is the basis of nationhood and languages the ultimate origins of every nation. Ethnicities would not have become nations if it had not been for the influence of Christendom that provided models of nationhood in the Bible and allowed the usage of vernacular languages. An ethnicity that had this background and was put under a certain pressure of the state eventually became a nation.¹⁵⁶

In his *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* Anthony D. Smith declares that the roots of national identities can be traced back to the beginnings of human civilisation and that the “ethnies” of the past have been remodelled into modern nations.¹⁵⁷ One should not, however, think of Smith’s view as anything but a constructivist view of nationalism. Smith does not believe that collective identities are biological facts – in that he agrees with the representatives of the modernist school. He differs the more from them by claiming that modern nations were preceded by “ethnies” that were united by a collective name, a common myth of origins, history and culture, a sense of

¹⁵³ See Reynolds Susan, *Kingdoms and Communities in Western Europe 900-1300*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1984.

¹⁵⁴ Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood, Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism*, Cambridge University Press 1997, pp.42-46.

¹⁵⁵ For Scandinavia see: Harald Ilsøe, “Danskere og deres fædreland. Holdninger og opfattelser ca. 1550-1700.” (The Danes and their Fatherland. Attitudes and Conceptions 1550-1700). Pp.27-89 in *Dansk identitetshistorie*, ed. Ole Feldbæk, København 1991. Harald Gustafsson, *Gamla riken, nya stater* (Old Kingdoms, New States), Stockholm 2000, p.330. Jonas Nordin, *Ett fattigt men fritt folk. Nationell och politisk självbild i Sverige från sen stormaktstid till slutet av frihetstiden*, (A People of Poverty and Liberty. National and Political Self-image in Sweden from the Late Age of Greatness to the End of the Age of Liberty 1660-1772), Symposium, Stockholm 2000. pp.444-447.

¹⁵⁶ Hastings, p.11. The Jews constitute the nation *par excellence* in the bible.

¹⁵⁷ Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Oxford 1988, pp.12-13.

unity and a particular territory. An “ethnie” is a cultural community that has constructed its own image and understanding of itself based on myths, memories, language, religion, traditions, and institutions. These ethnies could also be described as “historical communities built up on shared memories.”¹⁵⁸ Smith emphasises the importance of the *longue durée* to be able to understand what nations and nationalism are.¹⁵⁹ The main difference between ethnies and nations is that the former put more emphasis on ancestry myths and historical memories whereas the latter are defined by their homeland, their mass cultures, and common laws. An ethnie can do without a homeland but a nation cannot.¹⁶⁰ Smith uses the term “nation” in the sense of “a named human population occupying a historic territory or homeland and sharing common myths and memories; a mass, public culture; a single economy; and common rights and duties for all members”. Nationalism as defined by Smith is “an ideological movement for the attainment and maintenance of autonomy, unity and identity on behalf of a population deemed by some of its members to constitute an actual or potential ’nation.’”¹⁶¹

I agree with the postmodernists that the kind of nationalism that Fabricius accused to Scanians of not waking up to is a modern construction that belongs to the modern world. It is totally unfeasible that one should accuse a social group from three hundred years ago of not thinking the way one would have wanted to. I also agree with Ernest Gellner and other scholars that homogenisation and cultural integration are inherent to the industrial state and that modern nationalism should be seen against this background. At the same time, it seems obvious to me that modern nationalism has its roots in the societies of past times and that the processes that Gellner described as characteristic of the Industrial revolution in certain cases could trace their roots to early modern Europe.

I also feel that their theories come short as soon as they venture outside the field of history and that this undermines their general credibility. Both Hobsbawm and Benedict Anderson seem obsessed with the importance of languages and the written word. That is all very well but it is hard to understand why they have not tried to deal with languages as objects of serious research. Hobsbawm analyses the linguistic

¹⁵⁸ Smith (1988), pp.25-29. Quote p.25. See also Smith (2000) p.65.

¹⁵⁹ Cfr John Armstrong’s *Nations before Nationalism* from 1982. Armstrong sees nations in a plurimillennial perspective and does not draw clear lines between ethnicities and nations.

¹⁶⁰ Smith (2000), pp.65-71.

¹⁶¹ Anthony D. Smith, *The Nation in History*, Historiographical Debates about Ethnicity and Nationalism, The Menahem Stern Jerusalem Lectures, University Press of New England 2000, p.3.

situation in Catalonia and the Basque country with very scarce references to linguistic and philological works in the field.¹⁶² Anderson ascribes the fixity of modern languages to print-capitalism without having considered any scholarly works on the matter at all.¹⁶³ Hobsbawm's claim that Catalan and Basque would be "equally opaque"¹⁶⁴ to a Norman sailor is rather absurd and, in any case, it would be easy to prove or disprove scientifically. A test that screened the percentage of understanding would most likely show that the sailor understood some Catalan, but no Basque. History is not the only field in which scholarly methods are required in order to be able to make credible statements. Linguistics and philology are two other fields where certain scholarly standards should be maintained.

Further incongruities appear when the modernists hazard theories on phenomena in the early modern world that they do not seem to have documented very well at all. Anderson claims that there "was no idea of systematically imposing the language on the dynasts' various subject populations" before the 19th century.¹⁶⁵ But in France and Sweden the *idea* existed already in the 17th century and at least in Sweden the idea was put into practice to some extent.¹⁶⁶ According to Hobsbawm it was only towards the middle of the 19th century that linguistic arguments came of use in international conflicts. In Scandinavia such arguments were used already in the 16th century. In 1523 King Gustav Vasa of Sweden invited the Scanians to join the Swedish kingdom since they "had the same language, customs and mores as the

¹⁶² He claims that Catalan is now "not only a spoken idiom but the established and institutionalised language of culture" without specifying what the criteria of an "idiom" or a "language" are. Linguistically Catalan has been a language since at least the early dark ages.

¹⁶³ Anderson pp.43-44. The Scandinavian languages have changed far more between the 16th and the 21st centuries than Italian between Dante and today for example. Just as Germanic languages in general have changed far more than Latin and its descendants during the last two millennia. And what about Lithuanian that has changed so little over the millennia that its closest relative is still Sanskrit.

¹⁶⁴ Hobsbawm (1990), p.52.

¹⁶⁵ Anderson, .42.

¹⁶⁶ The *écoles royales* in Roussillon seem to have been instituted exactly for this purpose: it is just that this experiment remained very much at the experimental stage. See P. Torreilles och E. Desplanques, "L'enseignement élémentaire en Roussillon depuis ses origines jusqu'au commencement du XIXe siècle" in *Bulletin de la société agricole, scientifique, et littéraire du département des Pyrénées-Orientales* 50, 1895, pp.145-398, cit.p.109. Cfr Aschenberg's Swedification programme as presented in his account of his time in office. Every child in Scania who did not have at least a superficial knowledge of Swedish had to pay a fine and these fines were actually exacted. See: von Ascheberg, Rutger. "Rutger von Aschebergs ämbetsberättelse 1693." (RvA's Account of his Years in Office) ed. by Jerker Rosén in *Scandia* 17, 1946. See also: Alenäs, pp.99-100.

Swedes.” The king was kind enough to add that if they did share this vision, he would make them do so by means of fire and murder...¹⁶⁷

I believe that most postmodernist representatives fail to recognise the guises these collective identities appear under in our world and perhaps that is why they seem incapable of perceiving any links between the early modern world and that of today. Anderson sees nationalism as a new religion that has filled a void in the souls of a humanity without traditional securities and both Kedourie and Hobsbawm agree with him.¹⁶⁸ They seem blind to the fact that a large part of the Western world still gives great importance to religious identities and would not recognise themselves or their world in the description that Anderson, Hobsbawm and their likes give of it.¹⁶⁹ As I have already stated I do not believe that ”national” identities meant the same thing to people in the days of the snapshaver as to us today, nor that it necessarily had the same significance to people from different strata of society. I tend to agree with Harald Gustafsson that it is obvious that those identities existed in the 17th century but that we cannot take for granted that they conveyed the same kind of associations and emotional response as they do to us today.¹⁷⁰ Gustafsson classifies the Swedes of the early 16th century as an ”ethnie” and stresses the territoriality of this ethnicity: the common Swedish Law defined the kingdom (riket) as a whole that was united by the different judiciary districts that were contained by fixed territorial borders.¹⁷¹ In the 1670’ies the consistory at the new university of Lund had to try to put an end to “the national odium, sc. inter nationem danicam et suecicam” that was raging among the students. Danish students were reported to send out patrols with long sticks to look for “Swedish bastards” that they could thrash. The consistory decided to

¹⁶⁷Hobsbawm (1990), p.98.Gustafsson (2000) p.85: “et twungamaal ok alla aathlefwor ok seder...efther Swenske.” In the early 19th century, the Danish king claimed that the Scanians spoke Danish and should rise against the Swedes and enter the Napoleonic wars on the side of Denmark.

¹⁶⁸ Anderson, p.10.

¹⁶⁹ Jack Goody stresses this point in his *Islam in Europe*, (Italian translation: *Islam ed Europa*, Raffaello Cortina Editore, Milano 2003, p.146) in which he declares that religion has only lost its importance to intellectuals like Gellner and Hobsbawm, **not** to ordinary people.

¹⁷⁰ Harald Gustafsson, “The Conglomerate State: A Perspective on State Formation in Early Modern Europe.” *Scandinavian Journal of History* 23, 1998, p.231. P. Torreilles och E. Desplanques, “L’enseignement élémentaire en Roussillon depuis ses origines jusqu’au commencement du XIXe siècle” i *Bulletin de la société agricole, scientifique, et littéraire du département des Pyrénées-Orientales* 50, 1895

¹⁷¹ Harald Gustafsson, *Gamla riken, nya stater. Statsbildning, politisk kultur och identitet under Kalmarunionens upplösningsskede 1512–1541*, (Old Kingdoms, New States. State Formation, Political Culture and Identity during the Last Years of the Kalmar Union 1512-1541), Atlantis 2000, p.307. See also p.330 id. “In Scandinavia one can probably speak of the existence of “ethnies” in the sense that Anthony D. Smith gave the word.”

establish student “nations” that would keep Danish and Swedish students apart.¹⁷² The modernists do not give me any kind of answer as to why the students who had been born south of the *old* border identified themselves as Danes and felt that the students from north of the old border deserved being beaten up. The perennialists provide history students like me with analytical tools and at least the hope of being able to make sense of actions and motivations of men and women who lived in a comparatively distant past. I believe that the ethnic concept may serve as a help when one tries to analyse identities before nationalism and what it meant to be “Swedish” or “Danish” a century before the ideas of the French revolution. *In what order did people in the 17th century put their identities as Protestants, Scanians and Danes/Swedes? How important were their identities as members of their local communities and of particular social estates? Were their loyalty bonds to local magnates important? How did all these identities relate to their loyalty to the king? And how important was it for the new authorities that the Scanians identified themselves with the Swedes? And did it matter to themselves or the authorities whether they spoke one kind of Scandinavian or another?*

The Integration of Conquered Provinces

“Integrate”: *harmonise, blend, unify, combine, to join together systematically, incorporate.* German. *integrieren*, Fr. *intégrer*, Lat. *integrare* but ultimately from Lat. *integer* whole, intact, unhurt, immaculate, unsullied, pure.¹⁷³

The process of integrating conquered provinces is easier to understand if one studies it with certain theories at the back of one’s mind. To Charles Tilly capital and war are the two most important propelling forces behind the modern state. Those very same forces also drove the state towards new conquests and incorporation of border territories. Tilly sees the 17th century as the period when the modern state first took shape and asserts that it was the “winner takes it all” principle that dominated. The normal development was that every state fought its neighbours in order not to be engulfed. But rearmament and warfare cost a lot of money and in one way or another that money had to be squeezed out of the population. The struggle for provisions and personnel created the central organisation structures of the state. If one wanted to

¹⁷² Fabricius II, p.164.

¹⁷³ *Svenska Akademiens Ordbok*, (The Dictionary of the Swedish Academy) www.g3.spraakdata.gu.se; *Lo Zingarelli 1999*, Zanichelli editore; F. Calonghi, *Dizionario latino italiano*, Rosenberg&Seller 1990; *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary & Thesaurus*, www.m-w.com.

protect the advantages that subjection to the central authorities brought with it (personal security for example) one also had to protect the area within which these advantages could be enjoyed. Around this safe area it was advisable to construct a buffer zone that the army could control and use in order to keep the enemy at bay. Whoever impinged on the safe area constituted a threat to the rights and advantages of its inhabitants. With the passing of time the buffer zone might become integrated into the rest of the kingdom and then one had to construct a new buffer zone outside the old one. Often there was a different state outside the buffer zone and this process inevitably led to conflicts and eventually war.¹⁷⁴

Tilly's theories can help us see how war became a means of its own right, how the need to protect already integrated parts of the state led to new wars and new annexations. They also enable us to understand how important annexations were from a financial point of view...especially to a small country like Sweden that had great difficulties in financing its wars. Naturally the integration process of buffer zones did not always take the same shape; it depended on the person who sat on the throne, on the political situation and on the nature and history of the territory in question. An example of this is Jerker Rosén's hypothesis that provinces that were conquered by the Swedes were very much left to themselves when the nobility ruled the country. When a powerful king sat on the throne the provinces were tied more closely to Sweden.¹⁷⁵ A certain connection between general political trends and integration policies can probably be traced in all countries. An interesting explanation of "state-building" as a chain of events has been given by Tilly in *The Formation of National States in Western Europe*.¹⁷⁶ The original chain went from 1) Change or expansion of the army. 2) Attempts acquiring more means from the subjects. 3) New or more efficient administration. 4) Resistance from the subjects. 5) Renewed coercion. 6) Expansion of the "volume" and extortion capacity of the state.¹⁷⁷ Applied to the Scanian case this chain might take the following form: The occupation of the Scanian

¹⁷⁴ Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and the European States, AD 990-1990*. Cambridge, Mass, 1990, pp.70-71.

¹⁷⁵ Jerker Rosén, "Statsledning och provinspolitik under Sveriges stormaktstid (Statesmanship and Provincial Politics when Sweden was a Great Power), *Scandia* 1946, pp.224-270.

¹⁷⁶ I am using this term but perhaps that of "state-formation" would be more correct, as Harald Gustafsson has proposed. Both Tilly and Gustafsson believe that the early modern state was not created "on purpose" by absolutist rulers but rather "came into being as unforeseen consequences of a ruler's desperate attempts at solving urgent problems." See Gustafsson, "Statsbildning och territoriell integration." (State-building and territorial integration) in *Scandia* 57, 1991.

¹⁷⁷ Tilly, Ch. (ed.), *The Formation of National States in Western Europe*, Princeton University Press 1975, p.74.

provinces necessitated an expansion of the Swedish army (point 1.) that the governor general had to try and cover by taxation of the new subjects (2.), and this could only be realised through the construction of a Swedish administration (3.). All this led to increased resistance from the Scanians: from conspiracies to upright rebellion (4.) As the resistance became fiercer the Swedish authorities became harsher (5.) which is especially evident in Scania after the Scanian War. According to Tilly “preparation for war has been the great state-building activity”.¹⁷⁸ The construction of an efficacious army was a heavy burden on the shoulders of the population: taxes, conscriptions, requisitions etc.¹⁷⁹ In order to be able to obtain all this from the population the state needed power, sheer force, and a passable administrative system. In the long run all this would mean “territorial consolidation, centralisation, differentiation of the instruments of government and monopolization of the means of coercion, all the fundamental state-making processes.” Tilly has also claimed that a homogeneous population made all this easier.¹⁸⁰

In conglomerate states the “normal” way of ruling conquered province was normally that of leaving everything much as it had always been and pleasing the nobility – one could say that it lay in the nature of conglomerate states to take this line.¹⁸¹ But as we will see in this section the Swedish central authorities seem to have deviated from the “natural” course of conglomerate states in several respects. I will also pay some attention to the concept of “territorial integration” that does not necessarily only have to mean the incorporation of foreign territories that have been taken by force. To Harald Gustafsson “territorial integration” does not only mean the incorporation and/or integration of conquered territories but he gives this concept three meanings. The first is the one we have just mentioned: traditional integration of conquered (border-) territories and in this category eastern Denmark fits perfectly well. The second category would be that of integration that is directed “inwards” and “points at

¹⁷⁸ Tilly (1975), p.76.

¹⁷⁹ Nevertheless, these burdens were strictly necessary and already Tacitus in his day had pointed this out. However, Machiavelli insisted that “virtu” was more important to sustain warfare than money! See: Anthony Molho’s article “Lo stato e la finanza pubblica, Un’ipotesi basata sulla storia tardomedioevale di Firenze”, pp.225-280, in Giorgio Chittolini, Anthony Molho, Pierangelo Schiera (eds.), *Origini dello Stato. Processi di formazione statale in Italia fra medioevo ed tarda eta’ moderna*, il Mulino, Bologna 1994, pp.225–226 and p.280. Tacitus is quoted on the first page.

¹⁸⁰ Tilly (1975), p.42.

¹⁸¹ Gustafsson (1998, p.195) defines a conglomerate state as: “a state area consisting of several territories, usually brought together by a ruling dynasty but kept together by a few other factors. Each territory –or rather the social elite of each territory- had its distinctive relation to the ruler, its privileges, its own law code, its administrative system staffed by that same local elite, and often its own estate assembly.”

crushing the privileges of older units within the realm.” An example of this would be the way King Gustaf Vasa of Sweden abolished the regional laws in the 16th century. The third kind of territorial incorporation is constituted by the construction of new administrative systems: the Danish *amts* (administrative units that centred around the towns) of the late 17th century were for example imposed by the absolute king in order to in order to create greater cohesion within the realm.¹⁸² Gustafsson’s point is that one should not see the integration of conquered provinces as something abnormal but as a variation on the theme of what happened within the states at the time.

In my MA thesis I compared Scania and Alsace according to these criteria and concluded that Alsace could be classified as typical case of integration of border territories. Only very vague attempts at integrating the province “inwards” can be traced (for example the *Conseil Souverain* and the introduction of French currency). Louis XIV did work on a centralisation programme and tried to break down the regional *parlements* but at least in Alsace this “inner” integration remained superficial. The third kind of integration (the construction of new administrative units) only concerned Alsace in so far as that the provincial governor was put “on top of” all traditional leaders and that it was the first time that the province got a unified administrative system. The *gouvernement* became a unity on paper but in practice the old administrative system was maintained under the surveillance of the *intendants*. The real change would only come with the revolution. In Scania the process of transition from the first to the second kind of integration was much faster; the intensified internal integration became Swedification at a certain point. The process was the very same as when the Swedish provincial laws (*landskapslagar*) were substituted by a unified set of *Rikslagar* (national laws). Nevertheless, the gap between old and new becomes more difficult to abridge depending on how great the difference between one’s original culture and language is. In Scania new administrative units (Swedish *län*) were soon constructed. Uniformity was an official ideology both in France and in Sweden but as René Pillorget has pointed out it was very important to proceed with care and patience in France.¹⁸³ The king hoped that

¹⁸² Harald Gustafsson, “Statsbildning och territoriell integration.” (State building and territorial integration) in *Scandia* 57, 199, pp.192-228. Quote: p.200. For the development of Danish institutions see also: Ertman, pp.306-311.

¹⁸³ René Pillorget, “L’âge classique” i *Histoire de la France*, ed. Georges Duby, Larousse 1970, p.292.

the Alsatians would come round through “la douceur de notre domination.”¹⁸⁴ In line with this policy was also the fact that Alsace was allowed to remain outside the mercantilist fortress of France...whereas Scania was included in the Swedish mercantilist system and had all its traditional trade routes cut off. It seems as if the Swedish authorities were more interested in integrating their conquered territories actively than the French authorities.¹⁸⁵ In the case of Scania the Swedish authorities probably resorted to this measure because of the violent war of 1675-79 in which most of the population sided with the Danes and their king.

A Brief Historical Background

When the Nordic states first took shape towards the end of the Viking era Scania was an integral part of Denmark. According to legend there had been independent kings of Scania in pagan times when the art of writing was restricted to the odd runic inscription. When the three Scandinavian kingdoms were constituted along European lines, they also became Christian and literate. One of first collections of laws that was put into writing was the Scanian Law (“Den Skonske Logh”) and it was written in runes. The Scanians showed a certain tendency to support or even elect their own candidates for the kingship. This story would repeat itself many times during the following centuries, but unfortunately not always with such a peaceful outcome. The Middle Ages were dominated by the struggle between the archbishops in Lund and the Crown. At this time the king and the court moved around to different royal castles around Denmark. Copenhagen only shouldered its role as “the king’s/queen’s city” from the 15th century onwards.¹⁸⁶ The earlier part of the (Scandinavian) Middle Ages was also the era when immigrant German knights introduced the Danish nobility to “the fighting techniques and lifestyle associated with European knighthood.”¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁴ Instruction from Louis XIV to Colbert de Croissy in Georges Livet, *L'intendance d'Alsace sous Louis XIV 1648-1715*. Thèse principale pour le Doctorat dès Lettres présentée à la Faculté des Lettres de l'Université de Paris le 2 mai 1953, Publications de la Faculté des lettres de l'université de Strasbourg 1956, p.935: “vous donnerez lieu à nos sujets de se remettre des pertes passées et aux autres de se louer de la douceur de notre domination...”.

¹⁸⁵ For the history of the incorporation of Alsace see also: G. Livet, *Le duc Mazarin gouverneur d'Alsace (1661-1713)*. *Lettres et documents inédits*. Éditions F.-X. Le Roux, Strasbourg-Paris 1954. Bernhard Vogler, *Histoire culturelle de l'Alsace*, La Nuée Bleue, Strasbourg 1994, especially pp.75-89.

¹⁸⁶ Professor Sten Skansjö kindly suggested that I should stress this fact.

¹⁸⁷ Thomas Ertman, *Birth of the Leviathan, Building States and Regimes in Medieval and early Modern Europe*, Cambridge University Press 1997, p.307. Ertman claims that the German knights were one of the main forces behind the gradual descent into “vornedskab” (being bound to the soil) and “hoveri” (labour dues).

In 1329 Denmark was divided between king Christoffer II and the two counts that had helped him regain the throne after a period of insurrections. Scania, Blekinge and part of Zealand fell to the share of Count Johan of Holstein. This situation led to an insurrection in Scania. Archbishop Karl Eriksen pleaded with the Swedish king that he should deliver them from the foreign yoke. King Magnus willingly agreed and expelled the Germans with force. As a premium he could call himself “rex Sveciae, Norvegiae et terrae Scaniae” in 1332.¹⁸⁸ He remained king of Scania until the Danish King Valdemar Atterdag won it back in 1360. As a result of the consequent wars part of Scania was ceded to the Hanseatic League from 1370-1385.

King Valdemar’s daughter Margerethe became queen of a united Scandinavia in 1389. The so called “Kalmar Union” came to last until 1523 when the Swedish nobleman Gustav Eriksson (Vasa) rebelled and managed to get himself elected king of an independent Sweden. It is rather doubtful whether one could speak of a “national revolution” the way Thomas Ertman does.¹⁸⁹ Sweden was divided between the supporters of Gustav Eriksson and the king of the Scandinavian union Christian II and for a long time it seemed as if the unionists would win. Christian II was eventually manoeuvred out from Denmark too and the Danish throne was taken over by his uncle the Duke of Slesvig-Holstein who became Frederik II.¹⁹⁰ Nevertheless King Christian maintained numerous supporters in all of Denmark-Norway. This conflict would become known as the “Grevefejd” (The Count’s Feud).

In Scania the nobility had recognised Frederik, but burghers and peasants tended towards the other camp. The island of Gotland had remained in the hands of one of King Christian’s men: Søren Norby who was raiding the whole of the Baltic Sea with his fleet. In 1525 Norby’s fleet landed in Blekinge, and his mercenaries invaded the whole of Scania. It seems to have been quite a welcome invasion to large parts of the population. It is not clear whether the Scanian rebellion of 1525 was an agrarian rebellion against the nobility or whether Norby mobilised the peasantry against his

¹⁸⁸ Ingvar Andersson, *Skånes historia. Senmedeltiden*, (A History of Scania. The Late Middle Ages), Stockholm 1974, pp.131-156.

¹⁸⁹ Ertman, p.313. Cf. Harald Gustafsson who stresses that Eriksson might just as well have become king of Norway and consequently a “national liberator” there. King Christian II had been King of Sweden too...only that he was also king of other kingdoms (*Gamla riken, nya stater. Statsbildning, politisk kultur och identitet under Kalmarunionens upplösningsskede 1512–1541*, (Old Kingdoms, New States. State formation, political culture and identity during the last years of the Kalmar Union 1512-1541), Atlantis 2000, pp.76 and 86-88).

¹⁹⁰ In his pamphlets Frederik maintained that this had become necessary since his nephew had disregarded native Danes to the advantage of “Scotsmen, Hollanders, Germans, Rogues, Tyrants and Witches.” See Gustafsson (2000), p.77.

and King Christian's enemies.¹⁹¹ King Christian was still in the hands of his uncle and Søren Norby and his mercenaries and Scanian peasants had both Scandinavian kingdoms and Lübeck against them. Scania was transformed into a gigantic battlefield but in the end Norby had to surrender.¹⁹²

The Nordic Seven Years' War lasted from 1563 to 1570 and was something of a catastrophe for the inhabitants of the war zones that yet another time included Scania as a prime scene. The bone of contention this time was the Baltic provinces: the island of Ösel and modern-day Estonia. It was only with the peace of Stettin in 1570 that the Nordic Union was formally dissolved. It was also during this war that the *snappaner* were first mentioned and Mikkel Pederssøn Gyding alias Mikkel Gønge became a legend.¹⁹³

A cold war was going on between Denmark and Sweden for the whole of the end of the 16th century and during the beginning of the 17th. On direct orders from the king troops of peasants were created and exercised in the Scanian provinces. These troops sorted under the responsibilities of the king's *lensmand*.¹⁹⁴ War was finally declared again in April 1611. The direct cause of the war was the Finnmark: areas in Lapland that both Denmark-Norway and Sweden claimed the rights to. The war operations included the so called "Incendiary Expedition" of 1612 when King Gustavus II Adolphus of Sweden and his men laid waste large parts of north-eastern Scania. The peace treaty stipulated that Sweden should abstain from all claims on the Finnmark and that only Denmark had the right of including the Three Crowns in its coat-of-arms.

King Christian IV was not only king of Denmark but also Duke of Holstein. It was as duke that he declared his entrance into the Thirty Years' War in 1625. The Council of the Realm had not supported his policy on the issue but had to stand back when it was as a German duke and not as Danish regent that he entered the war. Nevertheless, the

¹⁹¹ See: Mikael Venge, "Tiden fra 1523-1559" (The era from 1523-1559) in Kai Hørby & Mikael Venge, *Danmarks historie* II:a. Tiden 1240-1559 (A History of Denmark 1240-1559), Copenhagen 1980, pp.291-311 and Gustafsson (2000) p.107.

¹⁹² Søren Norby himself managed to escape to Livonia from where he went to Russia. He then served the emperor for some years and was killed during the siege of Florence in 1530.

¹⁹³ For details on this war and more especially Daniel Rantzau's campaign in Sweden and how the *snappaner* under Mikkel Gyding were employed in that war see: Stefan Persson, *Vinterfälttåget*, (The Winter Campaign), Lund 2008, p. 27 but also pp.167-172.

¹⁹⁴ The *lensmand* corresponded roughly to the French *intendants* and were not responsible to the local administration. See: Ertman, p.308.

whole of continental Denmark (Schleswig-Holstein and Jutland) was occupied by Imperial troops after the defeat at Lutter am Barenberg in 1626. Harald Gustafsson, for one, has declared the Danish intervention in the Thirty Years' War as a "bitter fiasco" that weakened Denmark considerably, both financially and politically, at a time when Sweden was a rising star on the northern European firmament.¹⁹⁵

The war of 1643-1645 goes under different names. In Scania it has gone to history as "Horn's War". Jutland was invaded by the Swedes in January, Scania by the troops of field marshal Gustav Horn in February that same year. A royal order from Christmas Eve 1643 urged the lensmænd of Scania to prepare their peasant troops. The lensmand of Kristianstad (then Christianstad) Ebbe Ulfeld, who was also the king's son-in-law, became commander-in-chief of both the regular troops and the peasant troops. The most famous of all snaphaner, Svend Poulsen Gønge, was first mentioned during this war when he led a company of dragoons on the ridge between Halland and Scania.¹⁹⁶

In 1645 the peace treaty of Brömsebro stipulated that Denmark should cede the province of Halland to Sweden for 30 years. Queen Christina obtained "all rights, percentages and custom duties ordinary and extraordinary, the lordship, the glory and the jurisdiction" that had earlier been the privilege of King Christian IV of Denmark. The inhabitants of Halland had to swear an oath of allegiance to the Swedish queen – except for members of the gentry and aristocracy who had properties in Halland without being resident there. Although the peace treaty stated expressly that Danish Law and religion should be kept intact, the Swedes immediately put their own taxation system into effect and added Halland to the diocese of Gothenburg.¹⁹⁷

Thirteen years later, on the 26th of February 1658, the peace treaty of Roskilde was signed and all the Scanian provinces (Scania, Bornholm, Blekinge and Halland) were handed over to the Swedes permanently. The treaty stated that the provinces that had been ceded to Sweden should be allowed to keep their own laws "for ever and ever" as long as they were not contrary to the "leges fundamentales" of Sweden. Loccenius provides us with a contemporary juridical definition of the concept of "leges fundamentales" and he explains them as the laws that were the basis of royal power and the state. These laws were the following: 1) Unity in religion and ceremony 2) Certain inheritance laws. 3) The oaths of loyalty that were sworn by both the ruler and

¹⁹⁵ Gustafsson 2008, p.108.

¹⁹⁶ For an account of Poulsen's life see: Gitte Kjær, *Svend Poulsen Gønge – i verkligheten*, (SVP – in real life), Skippershoved 1992. Kjær (p.9 and p.66) has attested his military career from 1625-1677.

¹⁹⁷ Fabricius I, p.30.

the estates at the accession to the throne of a new monarch. 4) The King's oath 5) The form of government of 1634. 6) The decisions of the estates, the so called "recesser" or agreements.¹⁹⁸

The Swedish overlordship brought approximately the same consequences to the rest of the Scanian provinces as it had to Halland in 1645: all the inhabitants (including non-resident noblemen this time) had to swear the oath of allegiance, the Swedish taxation- and customs system was introduced, and commerce was to follow the regulations of the Swedish mercantilist laws. The Danish church was left as it was but there was a hope that the clergy eventually would become "incorporated" with the Swedish clergy.¹⁹⁹ In a resolution from May 1659 King Karl X Gustaf of Sweden declared that Scania was "an old member of the state that has been retrieved"²⁰⁰ that is to say: Swedish territory that had been lost to Denmark and then reconquered.

Nevertheless, Bornholm was lost already in 1660 when the population of the island rebelled, and the Swedish authorities declared that they would refrain from putting the rebellion down if the Danish king and the Scanian nobility would agree to sell him enough of their lands in Scania to correspond to the entire surface of Bornholm. They said yes.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁸ Fabricius I, pp.49-50.

¹⁹⁹ Fabricius I, p.57 (from an instruction of the commission of 3rd March 1658).

²⁰⁰ Fabricius I, p.60.

²⁰¹ For the Bornholm rebellion see: Ebbe Gert Rasmussen, "Begivenhederne på Bornholm under Sveriges besiddelse af øen 1658" in *Bornholmske samlinger*, ("The Events on Bornholm during the Swedish Occupation of the Island 1658" in *Collections from Bornholm*), Rønne 1967.

The Scanian War

“And it is now communicated to each and everyone whom it concerns that some years ago a pernicious and ruinous Flame of War was lit in Christendom, that afflicted almost the whole of Europe, especially the Roman (Empire) and its contiguous Kingdoms, Lands and Provinces, consequently it spread so that the Most Mighty Lord and Master Herr Christian V King of Denmark and Norway...and the Most Mighty Lord and Master Herr Carl King of Sweden...were drawn into the conflict in order to assist their Allies...”²⁰²

In Scandinavia today people tend to forget that the Scanian War of 1676-79 was only part of a larger European conflict in which Denmark had allied itself with Austria, Brandenburg, Holland and Spain and Sweden with France and with the duke of Holstein-Gottorp.²⁰³ At the time, there was a distinct awareness that the war in Scania and Norway (Gyldenløvefejden) were only two fronts in a major war, which is obvious in the quote from the Peace Treaty above. In the same manner, Sthen Jacobsen’s chronicle gives considerable weight and space to the European background and continues throughout to report from the various fronts and the archive collections from the Scanian War contains as many files and packs of reports from the German front and the naval war on the Baltic as from Scania.

In 1672 France under Louis XIV had attacked Holland and the ensuing conflict did not calm down easily. For some time, Sweden tried to stay at large from the armed conflict and instead act as a mediator between the two sides and that was also the aim of the Chancellor of the Realm, Magnus Gabriel de la Gardie. In the same manner, armed conflict with Denmark was to be avoided if possible and with this aim in mind, marriage between Charles XI and the Danish princess Ulrika Eleonora was proposed to the Danes in 1674. In Denmark too, a strong faction headed by First Minister Peder

²⁰² *Fredstractat some er oprettet oc sluttet imellem Hans Kongelig Mayestet til Danmarck oc Norge paa den ene oc Hans Kongelig Mayestet til Sverrig Paa den anden Side/ Ved begge deres Fuldmægtige Extraordinaire Ambassadeurs til Lund i Skaane Aar 1679. den 26 septembris.* [Peace Treaty that has been drawn up and accorded between His Royal Majesty of Denmark and Norway on the one and His Royal Majesty of Sweden on the other Side/ by their Delegated Extraordinaire Ambassadors in Lund in Scania in the year 1679 the 26th September.] LUB. Forthwith referred to as “*Fredstractat*”, p.i.

²⁰³ For a background of the Scanian War see: Michael Roberts (ed.). *Sweden as a Great Power 1611-1697. Government: Society: Foreign Policy.* London 1968, pp.174-175 for Magnus Gabriel de la Gardie’s foreign policy. See also: Alf Åberg, *Karl XI*, (Charles XI), Stockholm 1958, pp. 66-72 on the years preceding the Danish declaration of war. See also: Knud Fabricius, *Det danske folks historie*, (A History of the Danish People), Copenhagen 1929., esp. pp. 158-166. See also: Anders Fryxell, *Berättelser ur Svenska historien*, i urval av Axel Strindberg, (Accounts from the History of Sweden, excerpts chosen by A.S) vol. IV, Malmö 1983 (original ed. published between 1823 and 1847), pp. 7-10 concentrates on the background in Danish politics and although one should keep into account that Fryxell was a convinced national romantic he nevertheless gave a concentrated overview of the situation. Jensen (pp. 1-40) offers an excellent introduction to the political and military background to the Scanian War on a European level.

(Schumacher) Griffenfeld worked for the maintenance of the equilibrium and it was Griffenfeld who had first proposed the suitable match. His main aim was to keep Denmark out of the conflict at almost any cost.²⁰⁴ Much like those who desired Sweden to be an intermediary and peace monger among the European state, Griffenfeld's dream was to get his country to shoulder this role and to manage to pull through an alliance with France. The opposing faction in Denmark wanted the Scanian provinces back and maintained that unless Sweden was confronted openly, Denmark would end up as its vassal. At about the same time France demanded that Sweden enter the war actively and in exchange for French subsidies the Swedish government promised to send over troops to Germany.²⁰⁵ In December 1674 Swedish troops crossed the border to Brandenburg. The Swedish government was well aware that eventually this step would also bring about a state of war with Denmark-Norway and Holland and troops were soon moved to the long northern border to Norway at the same time as the navy was prepared for engagement with Danish and Dutch troops.²⁰⁶ In June 1675 Charles XI and the Danish princess were officially engaged. At about the same time Swedish troops lost against Brandenburg in the battle of Fehrbellin. At the beginning of September that year, Danish troops crossed the border to Mecklenburg and from there they entered Swedish Pomerania.

The Scanian War changed the attitude of the Swedes towards the Scanian provinces, which becomes evident when one reads sources from this era. The Danes tried to win back the lost provinces and the Scanians joined them in this enterprise. After a devastating war the earlier treaties were confirmed. The peace treaty was signed in Lund on 27th September 1679. The Danes had hoped that they would have been allowed to keep part of the territory that they had reconquered from the Swedes but the French ambassador (and emissary of Louis XIV) replied: "Mon pauvre monsieur, pas un village".²⁰⁷ In December 1679 King Louis XIV decreed that with the exception of the island of Bornholm, Sweden was to keep the lands it had conquered in 1658.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁴ See: Jensen, pp. 35-36. Griffenfeld was eventually outmanoeuvred and thrown in jail.

²⁰⁵ Åberg 1958b, p.52.

²⁰⁶ Åberg 1958b, p.70.

²⁰⁷ "Dear Sir, you're not going to keep a single one (village)!" Fabricius III, p.182. See also: Jensen, pp.445-446 where he claims that although Charles XI felt offended that Louis XIV had concluded a peace accord on behalf of Sweden, it seems obvious that Sweden could never have obtained such favourable conditions on its own.

²⁰⁸ Jensen, p. 468 who stresses that Denmark conquered part of Bremen, Wismar, Rügen, Landskrona, Helsingborg, Gotland and Marstrand but that it was contrary to the interests of Louis XIV to let the

Further attempts to reconquer the lost provinces in 1709-1710 would prove equally vain. The Scanian provinces (except Bornholm) became an integral part of Sweden in 1719 when their special status as conquered provinces was repealed.

If the Swedish integration policy had been reasonably lenient up until the beginning of the Scanian War, it was no longer so from the point in time when the Swedes realised that they were about to win again. The king and his government started working on a way of incorporating the new provinces totally; the best way to keep them would be "if such uniformity and likeness between our Swedish lands and the aforementioned ones was brought about that the inhabitants and subjects with the passing of time would be won over from Danish to Swedish modes and manners and eventually lost their love for Denmark;"²⁰⁹ Uniformity was a term that was used to describe the centralisation- and unification process that took place during the latter part of the 17th century; in Scania uniformity became synonymous with "Swedification."²¹⁰ Governor General Rutger von Aschenberg reported about the programme that was drawn up in order to "cure the Danish minds of the Scanians". The goals of this programme were: 1) To adopt Swedish religious practices and the Swedish language. 2) To adopt the Swedish juridical system. 3) To mix Scanians and Swedes through marriages. 4) The castigation and final subjugation of the inhabitants so that they would be "forced to learn the Swedish language and to become virtuous, honest and blithe." This proposal was favoured in place of a preceding one that had outlined a way of "extinguishing" the Scanians so that Swedes and people from less treacherous provinces could substitute them.²¹¹

In order to override the clauses of the Treaty of Roskilde the different Scanian estates were "encouraged" to appeal for the right of being included in the uniformity of the realm and to gain access to the Riksdag. The fact that the bourgeoisie and the nobility

Danes hold on to these territories. See also: §V of the Peace Treaty (*Fredstractat*) that clearly states that "all those places and lands that the Royal Majesties have taken from each other during this war must be given back so that both these Majesties once again each will have the towns, locations, fortresses, lands and places that they had before this war...". The same booklet (p.ii) makes clear that the accord was the result of negotiations and accords in France on 23rd August and 2nd September.

²⁰⁹ King Karl X Gustaf from his camp on the moors of Ljungby, 10th February 1678. Quote in: Fabricius IV, p.22.

²¹⁰ "Swedification" is the term that is normally used in Scandinavia, first and foremost in the case of the Scanian provinces and the other foreign territories that became Swedish but sometimes also to underline the comparatively intense centralisation process in the whole of Sweden and the territories of the *Samer* (Lapps).

²¹¹ Rutger von Ascheberg, "Rutger von Aschebergs ämbetsberättelse 1693." (RvA's account of his years in office) ed. by Jerker Rosén in *Scandia* 17, 1946, p.24.

in Halland promptly refused did not prevent the Swedish Riksdag from declaring the validity of the uniformity in the whole of the Scanian provinces. In his dissertation *The Swedish Commonwealth* (Det svenska väldet), Torbjörn Eng claims that *just because* the Swedish authorities were so aware of the considerable cultural differences between Swedes and Scanians they had to try to hammer in their message into the heads of both old and new subjects (i.e., both Swedes and ex-Danes). Getting the Scanians to apply for uniformity was an important step on the way to success for the Swedish policy.

Scania and the Baltic provinces

In 1630 Johan Skytte, the Governor General of Estonia and Livonia, wrote to King Gustavus II Adolphus that the principle according to which these provinces were to be ruled was: "unus rex, una lex et grex unus".²¹² All since Estonia placed itself under Swedish protection in 1561 that had been the rule of thumb for the governors.²¹³ This policy was directed against the Baltic provinces' most powerful group: the German-Estonian nobility. King Erik XIV of Sweden had ordered his men to "hate the Estonian nobility a little so that they would understand how advantageous it would be for them to sell their estates to Swedish noblemen."²¹⁴ Perhaps King Erik's policy should be considered as the background of the government discussions a century later when Charles X Gustaf discussed the possible extermination of the Scanian nobility. The government tried to weaken the position of the Baltic nobility by freeing the clergy from their dependence upon the nobles and by weakening the bonds of serfdom. An oath of loyalty was demanded from the whole of the population and the nobility and representatives for Tallinn (Reval) were called to participate in the Swedish Diet. Swedish ecclesiastical ceremonies were introduced in these provinces and Swedish law was introduced in the province of Ingria that had been incorporated in 1617. This trend came to a halt under Gustavus II Adolphus and his chancellor Axel Oxenstierna. Instead of opposing the élite the king started to co-operate with them. By that time the Swedish élite had acquired a considerable number of Baltic

²¹² "En kung, en lag och en flock". 'Grex' could also be interpreted as "community" or "people". Rosén, p.240.

²¹³ Corresponds to modern-day northern Estonia. Southern Estonia and Latvia constituted the province of Livonia that came under Swedish rule in 1629.

²¹⁴ Jerker Rosén, "Statsledning och provinspolitik under Sveriges stormaktstid.", (Government and Provincial Politics during Sweden's Time as a Great Power) *Scandia* 17, 1946, pp. 224-270. See especially p.230.

estates and concluded that they had rather keep the privileges of the Baltic nobility. This situation would repeat itself in the Scanian provinces. If the old privileges were kept there was less of a chance that the noblemen from the conquered provinces would join in the competition for seats in the Privy Council. Gustavus Adolphus did not want the noblemen from the Baltic provinces in the Privy Council because he was so afraid that they would oppose his foreign policy.²¹⁵ From around this time the conquered provinces were governed locally through county diets (*lantdagar*) and a Swedish governor-general. Only Sweden (-Finland) was represented in the Swedish Diet. It was only in 1680 that a will to tie the Baltic provinces closer to Sweden could be traced in government policies.

There are remarkable similarities between the “Swedification” policies that were used in the Scanian and the Baltic provinces. In many cases it was the same families or even the same men who ruled and administered these provinces. When Johan Skytte was Governor General of Livonia, Ingria and Carelia (1629-1634) he carried through the same political line as his grandson Johan Gyllenstierna did in Scania forty years later: “With Dorpat as the centre of everything, Skytte tried to centralise everything, justice, ecclesiastical matters, education etc, so that he would be able to bring the Baltic conditions in line with Sweden. It cannot be doubted that incorporation and uniformity was the ultimate goal.”²¹⁶ Johan Gyllenstierna followed his grandfather and uncle’s line and is held to be the man behind the Swedification programme. The integration policy that the Skytte-Gyllenstierna clan promoted in the conquered provinces was not all their own work; it should be seen as a link in a political line that had been supported by the opponents of the Swedish aristocracy since the days of Erik XIV. This policy promoted a total incorporation of conquered territories. The Estonian historian Jaak Naber makes a difference between the “svenskhetspolitik” (literally “Swedishness-politics) in Ingria and the Swedification of the Scanian provinces and the Norwegian provinces that had also been conquered in 1660.²¹⁷ The policy that was carried through in Ingria was characterised by the king’s desire to centralise and unify and by a demand for a general recognition of the Swedish king and his power. Jaak Naber believes that Swedification is very close to denationalization and apart from among some government officials there were no

²¹⁵ Rosén, p.245.

²¹⁶ Rosén, s.240.

²¹⁷ Jaak Naber, *Motsättningarnas Narva*, (Narva –A Town of Controversies), *Opuscula Historica Upsaliensia* 15, 1995, p.8.

such tendencies in Ingria. No attempts were made to introduce the Swedish language in church ceremonies. The difference between Naber's two concepts is not quite clear. Many scholars would not agree at all that the Scanian (and Norwegian) provinces were denationalised (renationalised). Naber notes that Jöran Sperling acquired a "certain amount of practical Swedification experience" during his years as Governor General of Scania.²¹⁸ He then put this knowledge into use at Narva (which roughly corresponds to modern-day Saint Petersburg) where he started a "campaign in favour of Swedishness". This campaign included trying to get as many Swedes as possible into the city council and to give Germans and Swedes equal rights in ecclesiastical and educational matters. Sperling was Governor General of Scania from 1677 to 1679 and Governor of Ingria from 1682.²¹⁹ In both provinces he represented what Jerker Rosén has called the "incorporation line" and in both provinces he was well-known for being even more radical than his sovereign. It was only with the introduction of uniformity after the Scanian War that the integration policy in the Scanian provinces became harsher than in the Baltic provinces. It was only then that commoners were forced to learn Swedish. But a tendency in the same direction was noted in Livonia when Charles XI confiscated a large number of noble estates and the nobility rebelled. The similarities between the Baltic- and the Scanian provinces were obvious to the contemporaries. The leader of the Baltic rebels Johann Reinhold Patkul and the most important Scanian in exile, Knud Thott had secret meetings in Copenhagen.²²⁰ Patkul lost his life, but the Baltic provinces were never incorporated into Sweden. Knud Fabricius thought it rather odd that the language question did not seem to constitute much of a problem when the position of the Baltic provinces was discussed in Swedish government circles: in Fabricius' day it seemed strange to consider letting people who spoke German, Slavonic and God knows what other languages become members of the Swedish Diet. In early modern Sweden that did not seem to have been a major problem.²²¹ The upper strata of society in the conquered provinces were expected to learn Swedish: a decree from Gustavus Adolphus to the city council of

²¹⁸ Naber, p.124.

²¹⁹ For Sperling's politics in the Baltic provinces see: Naber pp.124-136. Fabricius analysed his policy in Scania thoroughly and saw a clear connection between his discharge from the position as Governor General and the way the execution of Krabbe was handled. See: Fabricius III, pp.128-140 and the chapter on Krabbe in this dissertation.

²²⁰ Fabricius III pp.222-223. Rosén pp.269-70. Alvin Isberg's *Karl XI och den livländska adeln* (Charles XI and the Livonian Nobility), (Lund 1953) gives an excellent description of the situation in Livonia at the time. For Patkul see pp. 112-121.

²²¹ Fabricius IV, p.18.

Narva declares that: “And for this reason you shall take down, register, and write all court cases, verdicts and letters that are treated in court, in Swedish. Do the same when you write to His Royal Majesty, and not in German, so that the Swedish tongue will come of use among them and they will understand Swedish matters, law and order better.”²²² A “main” language was considered useful, especially when it came to administration and judiciary matters, but it did not regard people outside the higher strata of society.

The Manorial System

Northern Scania and Blekinge could be described as characteristic of the early modern Nordic area. As regards the eighteenth century, Harald Gustafsson has distinguished four traits that most parts of Scandinavia shared: the soil was so poor that one could not depend on it for a living, the vast majority of those who cultivated the land were freeholders, there was hardly any nobility, and the export was dominated by raw materials.²²³ These conditions were also characteristic of the seventeenth century. However, the rest of the Scanian provinces were different from the northern forests. The landscape could be described as classically Danish: wide plains with fields that were interrupted by the odd patch of beech wood, small towns and villages with stone churches and half-timbered cottages with thatched roofs. As Gustafsson has also pointed out these parts of the Scanian provinces fitted better into the continental pattern: there was a “dense network of towns”, and the countryside was dominated by large estates. Most peasants were “subject tenant peasants” of the owners of these estates.²²⁴ In 1651 the nobility owned approximately 54% of the 15 000 farmsteads in Scania.²²⁵ However, in Denmark the greatest estate owner was the crown with its 45% of the farmsteads.²²⁶ By 1675 this percentage had shrunk to half in Denmark. In the Scanian provinces a considerable part of the crown lands had gone over to private

²²² Naber, p.36. Quote from letter from 21/11 1615. SRA Livonica II, 662, p.105.

²²³ “Freehold farmers, who were not subject to any local lord but had in principle a direct relationship to the central government.” See: Harald Gustafsson, *Political Interaction in the Old Regime, Central Power and Local Society in the Eighteenth –Century Nordic States*, Studentlitteratur, Lund 1994, p.29.

²²⁴ Gustafsson (1994), p.30.

²²⁵ Professor Sten Skansjö kindly communicated this piece of information to me.

²²⁶ Palle Ove Christiansen, *A Manorial World; Lord, peasants and cultural distinctions on a Danish estate 1750-1980*, Scandinavian University Press, 1996, p.100. See also: Thomas Munck, *The Peasantry and the Early Absolute Monarchy in Denmark 1660-1708*, Copenhagen 1979, p.26. Munck takes a different view of the matter in that he sees Denmark as an area that could not be classified either as belonging to the Gutsherrschaft area or as part of the area of comparably independent freeholders in Norway and northern Sweden.

hands by that time too. The Swedish crown had taken over the Danish crown lands and later these had been parcelled out to officials in recompense for their war-efforts. It was much the same process as in Denmark where the crown lands had been parcelled out to those who had supported the king in his strivings to become absolute. Many of these supporters were civil servants whose salaries could not be paid. However, one should note that the Danish peasants had rather fewer rights compared to their continental counterparts. Palle Ove Christiansen has maintained that estate farming in Denmark was similar to that of the German Western Rhineland and Carolingian France, but the difference was that, in the latter areas, *corvée* labour had been substituted by money rents and paid farm labourers there during the latter part of the Middle Ages. In Zealand and the southern islands the peasants were bound in villeinage from the end of the fifteenth century until 1702.²²⁷ Nevertheless certain areas of the Danish realm were dominated by freeholders: among these were the province of Ditmarsken²²⁸ and some areas of northern Jutland. Christiansen concludes that "Zealand and Lolland-Falster, and until 1660 Skaane, had in agrarian administrative terms more in common with Holstein and Further Pomerania than with North Jutland, which preserved more of the features from west of the Elbe, and which after 1600 was closer to the trading centre of Europe in terms of communications."²²⁹ The *Grundherrschaft* system that dominated west of the Elbe was characterised by the substitution of *corvées* for kind rents or money after the crisis of the Middle Ages.²³⁰ Although Denmark was ideologically and politically part of Western Europe it was closer to Eastern Europe under other aspects. One of these aspects was the demesne farm system that was necessary in order maintain the trading balance. Just like Pomerania, Poland, Prussia and Livonia, the whole of Scandinavia depended on import of finished goods from continental and Mediterranean Europe. In return for salt, herring, groceries, textiles, wine and silver, the Scandinavians exported grain, hemp, tar, flax, lumber, copper, iron, and furs. In Denmark the export of cattle was also of great weight. Nevertheless, the Danes had difficulties competing with the grain that was pumped out from the estates of the eastern Baltic and that is the background towards which the tightening of the manorial forms should be seen. It was a means to intensify the production of trading goods. This tendency was characteristic of the so-

²²⁷ In 1733-88 villeinage was substituted by adscription (*stavnsbånd*) for the whole of Denmark.

²²⁸ For Ditmarsken see Gustafsson (2000), pp.15-20.

²²⁹ Christiansen, p.111. Skaane=Scania.

²³⁰ Christiansen, p.107.

called *Gutsherrschaft* system that dominated east of the Elbe.²³¹ Those were areas where urbanisation had only taken place to a limited extent and where money circulation was even more limited. In Western Europe the population growth and trading boom of the sixteenth century resulted in intensified demesne farming; the landowners tried to re-establish corvées but had to settle for a little less. In the end most estates in the west had their demesne lands worked by cottagers who were paid for their services. In the east the basic situation was similar, but the result was that the upper strata of society succeeded in tying the peasants to the land. The *Gutsherrschaft* system was characterised by a kind of refeudalisation that included “striking reductions of the peasants’ customary rights and ... very heavy corvée.”²³² According to Christiansen, Denmark could be included in this refeudalisation process and the same could be said of some areas of Sweden (-Finland). It should be noted that Thomas Munck questioned this classification already in his dissertation *The Peasantry and the Early Absolute Monarchy in Denmark 1660-1708* from 1979 in which he sustained that Denmark should be classified neither as part of the demesne system nor as part of the traditional Scandinavian free holding system, but as “closer to western and central Europe than to its Scandinavian neighbours.”²³³ The debate about how the early modern Danish agricultural system should be classified is still going on.

Absolutism

Before the cession of the Scanian provinces Denmark was ruled by a king who was something of a *primus inter pares*. Together with the aristocrats of the Council of the Realm (rigsråd) he ruled a country that kept its ancient feudal system. The aristocracy enjoyed extensive privileges. Not only were they exempt from taxes, but they were also the only ones who were entitled to own estates. They had their own harbours and export-rights and did not have to compete with the merchants of the towns. In return for all this the noblemen pledged everlasting faith and loyal (military) service to the king. With the introduction of absolutism in 1660 the situation changed. The burghers allied themselves with the king against the aristocracy and eventually won the day. Christiansen explains this in part with the fact that the siege of Copenhagen had

²³¹ Christiansen, p.108.

²³² Christiansen, p.108.

²³³ Munck, p.240.

proved the impotence of the nobility as a warrior “caste”. They had simply not been able to protect the country. As for Copenhagen it was only the efforts of the burghers that saved it. In effect, the role of the aristocracy as protectors had already been played out with the development of modern firearms and more advanced military technology and strategies. The disastrous wars of 1657-1660 had made this all too obvious. That was also the way people at the time conceived of it and hostilities between burghers and noblemen were all too evident when the different estates met in parliament in September 1660.²³⁴ The parliamentary proceedings that continued until December that year led to the introduction of hereditary kingship and increased royal powers. The lower estates hoped that they would be able to win privileges over the nobility if they allied themselves with the king. The nobility, represented by Iffuer Krabbe, tried to hold their own but found themselves in a situation that might even have led to civil war.²³⁵ Nevertheless it does not seem as if absolutism as such was consciously supported even by the burgher estate. In his analysis of the downfall of the Danish aristocracy J.A Fridericia claimed that when the estates-general (stændermøde) of 1660 closed, even the burghers believed that the estates would be assembled regularly in the future. Only a month later the king issued a “pragmatic sanction” that not only declared his dynasty’s hereditary rights to the throne but also stated that his were the “*jura majestatis*, absolute rule and all *regalia*.”²³⁶ That was the end of all estates-generals for another two hundred years. The old aristocracy was in part substituted by a new order of civil servants that supported the whole ideology of the king as the Lord’s anointed. A permanent army financed by a new taxation system liberated the king from the armed power of the old aristocracy. The right to own land became free. Important administrative reforms were also effectuated. The members of the new group of social servants could often trace their origins to the urban trades or to the fields of administration and politics and by the time of the Scanian War in 1675 they owned approximately a third of the arable land in Denmark. According to Christiansen this process turned manorial rights into a “commodity that could

²³⁴ See: J.A. Fridericia, *Adelsvældens sidste dage, Danmarks historie fra Christian IV’s død til enevældens indførelse (1648-1660)*, Kjøbenhavn, P.G. Philipsens forlag 1894, genudgivet af Selskabet for udgivelse af kilder til dansk historie 1969, pp.517-542, especially p.533 where we are told of a burgher by the name of Frederik Thuresen who patted his rapier and asked a nobleman called Hans Friis if he had carried his rapier as proudly on the island of Funen as himself and the other brave burghers during the siege of Copenhagen. Friis had already been accused of cowardice during the battle of Nyborg by an emissary of the emperor (Colonel v.d. Naht).

²³⁵ Fridericia, p.523 and p.527.

²³⁶ Fridericia, p.546.

circulate.”²³⁷ However, it is important to stress that recent research has stressed the limited extent to which 1660 paved the way for emergence of this new social group.²³⁸ According to Thomas Munck, the Estates General in Denmark had played out their role and no longer had a function by the time absolutism was introduced. Much in the same manner he sees the nobility as a political reality that had become obsolete by 1660 when they were forcefully transferred from the political to the administrative sphere.²³⁹

The Swedish Wars had depleted the funds of the exchequer. The king owed money that he could not pay back to many prominent burghers. Intensifying demesne farming was a way of bringing the country back on its (financial) feet again. Donating lands to burghers was a way of paying back one’s debts at the same time as new upper ranks were created. Furthermore, the members of these new ranks were both more loyal and more efficient in their work than their predecessors.

It was probably not clear to anyone just how far the king wanted to go in his absorption of powers. Up until the day when the throne became hereditary the king had not been sovereign. The kingship was held by different dynasties and different individuals. Sovereignty rested with the Danish Crown that was represented by the Council of the Realm (rigsrådet). The Danish historian Sebastian Olden-Jørgensen claims that, until 1660, the crown was seen as a “transcendental conception” that was represented by the council of the realm, at least during periods of interregnum. After 1660 the “crown” became one with the royal dynasty (the house of Oldenburg).²⁴⁰ As early as 1658 the king became sovereign in the duchy of Slesvig that had been bestowed upon him as a fief (len) by the Crown. As sovereign the king was freed from this feudal relationship. In 1660-61 Frederik III and his dynasty became one with the crown of Denmark.

Thus, we can see that seventeenth-century Denmark was a land that was literally stuck in the middle between the northern-Atlantic and the Baltic worlds. In 1677 absolutism had been the form of state for seventeen years. Sweden was still ruled by more

²³⁷ Christiansen, p.103.

²³⁸ This fact has kindly been pointed out to me by Professor Thomas Munck of the University of Glasgow.

²³⁹ Munck, p.240.

²⁴⁰ Olden-Jørgensen, p.301.

traditional means. After the long regency, young Charles XI had taken the reins of the realm into his own hands, but he was not an absolute monarch yet. At this point in time Scania did not quite make part of either country. Perhaps one could describe it as a part of old Denmark under Swedish rule. The treaties of Roskilde and Copenhagen had allowed the Scanian provinces to keep their old laws and privileges as long as they were not contrary to Swedish fundamental law. That meant that the Scanian provinces remained under the Scanian Law.

On the other hand, Denmark differed from many other parts of Europe under some aspects. Thomas Munck has pointed out that the relationship between the Crown and the peasants was closer in Denmark than in most other European states and that it was easier to resort to juridical instances for the common man in Denmark and that those facts may have contributed to the fact that there were no peasant rebellions in Denmark during this era.²⁴¹ The way Norbert Elias saw things the modernisation and centralisation of Europe should be seen against a background of statal control of firearms and of taxation. He claimed that in the early modern era ordinary people were not allowed to carry guns and that the central authorities had a monopoly on taxation: “The financial means thus flowing into this central authority maintain its monopoly of military force, while this in turn maintains the monopoly of taxation.”²⁴² Neither of Elias’s two criteria were valid in Scania. There was no monopoly on firearms in Scandinavia during the latter part of the 17th century. A ban on firearms in the Gønge area was decreed by the Swedes in 1677, but when the local population appealed to colonel Gyllenstierna and explained that they would not be able to stand up against the snaphaner without (snaphane-) guns the Swedish authorities gave in. Likewise, in Scania taxation was not quite yet a business between emissaries of the central state and individuals as the Krabbe case will show us.²⁴³

²⁴¹ Munck pp. 240-243. Munck also notes that compared to other Scandinavian peasants the Danes had less independence and social self-consciousness than their neighbours.

²⁴² I am quoting Elias as quoted by Molho. See: Anthony Molho, “The State and Public Finance: A Hypothesis Based on the History of Late Medieval Florence”, *The Journal of Modern History* 67, suppl. (December 1995), pp.97-135, quote: p.98 from Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, vol.2 of *Power and Civility*, New York 1982, p.104.

²⁴³ But then, if the Danish system really was all that old-fashioned in the early modern era that was maybe one of the reasons why the Danish state was almost engulfed during the war of 1658-1660. Swedish tax collection was much more effective.

Border- or frontier wars (Grenzkriege) changed shape as wars about religious issues were substituted by dynastic conflicts and a general European “Gleichgewicht” became ever more important. The new kind of border war was characterised by the conquest of neighbouring provinces and a prerequisite for it was a complex war machinery that depended on supplies from stores in the own country (like Charles’s XI army in Scania). In Europe in general, but also in Denmark that had become absolutist with the introduction of the “Enevælde” in 1660, unconventional warfare took on a new shape with the coming of Absolutism. The absolutist states were characterised by what Kunisch called a “Disziplinierungsbesessenheit”, the immediate consequence of which was that the soldiers came under stricter control than ever, and the maneuvers demanded a thitherto unthinkable precision. In this way the flexibility of the regular army became limited. The growing dimensions of the absolutist armies meant that regular units could not venture into enemy territory or even too close to it. The sheer bulk of the absolutist army also meant that efficient communication and supply lines became vital and that the opposite side in the war needed to target those lines almost as badly as they needed to face the enemy in open combat. Whereas the regular soldiers still executed the latter task best it was the easily manoeuvrable irregulars that were charged with the task of attacking communications and supply lines. As conventional armies became bigger and more slow-moving the military theoreticians realised that guerrilla tactics might become a powerful weapon in the right hands. In this manner irregular troops were attached to the official armies of many European countries. These irregulars or “partisans” were supposed to operate on the flanks and in the rear of an opposing army. Famous irregular units included the Croats²⁴⁴ and the Panduren around 1750, the Hungarians during the Schlesian war, the Freikorps of Frederic the Great, the Prussian Free battalions (Freibattalione) during the Seven Years’ War of 1757-1758.²⁴⁵ In the Seven Years’ War irregulars were not only used by the Prussians, but also by the French and especially by the Russians.²⁴⁶ These troops all had surprisingly much in common with the Danish King’s Friskytter Corps from the 1670ies. But then, by the end of the 17th century the work of unconventional units had started to get its recognition in Europe and manuals of how

²⁴⁴ The Croats or Grenzer (border fighters) had lighter arms and were often compared to Cossacks.

²⁴⁵ Kunisch, p.5.

²⁴⁶ Kunisch, p.27.

best to conduct it were already becoming all the vogue.²⁴⁷ The *petite guerre* was largely ignored by the military theoreticians of earlier ages because they thought it an embarrassing remnant of more primitive war techniques, but nevertheless it existed. At best it was considered a support technique that was not worth the attention of the great military commanders and military theoreticians. By the 18th century strategics had become a science in its own right. The movements of the huge armies were thoroughly calculated by military experts. Every single move depended on the workings of the gigantic wheel that the absolutist state had become: taxes had to be collected, soldiers conscripted, storages filled with supplies that could then be transported across the border... Irregular troops did not have to follow the rules of the absolutist game. Official warfare had stiffened in its form so that it had become almost impossible to improvise. It was here that the irregular troops had an important role to play.

²⁴⁷ Hahlweg mentions Antoine de Ville's manual on guerrilla warfare (*petite guerre*) from 1670 as an example of this trend.

Part II: Friskytter, Snaphaner and Gønger

The Snaphane Movement

“Our peasants here pluck up their courage and become Snaphaner, just as they do in Holsten. To which I wish them Luck. They gather here and there in the forests and cause the Enemy great damage but are of great advantage to us in that they very often take 60- 80 well, even more heads of cattle from the Enemy...Whomsoever of the Enemy that they kill, they bury in the woods. Recently the Enemy found an enormous Grave full of Dead Bodies, that an old Hag had shown them. For this Reason they soon put Fire to some farmhouses and sent a very strong party against the same Snaphaner but in vain: for they know how to retreat into the bushes so that they are not easily to be found”

*Report on the Snaphaner in Scania and Holsten, 5th August 1644*²⁴⁸

In the wake of the continuous wars between Denmark and Sweden during the early modern era a movement called that of the snaphaner arose. The anonymous writer I just quoted saw the snaphaner as groups of courageous peasants who had taken up arms against the enemy and fought what in everyday language would be called a guerrilla war in a terrain where regular enemy soldiers could not track them down. In Scandinavia, the designation "snaphane" is first testified in documents dating to the early 1500s.²⁴⁹ At that time, the definition of the word was vague, or at least it seems so to us today.²⁵⁰ During the Nordic 7-year-war in the 1560ies a snaphane was often synonymous with Mikkel Gønge's corps of men from the Gønge region²⁵¹ that followed the regular Danish army.²⁵² Not only Danes enrolled in Mikkel's corps but also some Swedes from the border regions and Alf Åberg called them "the voluntary guerrilla troops of the border forests."²⁵³ As far as is known, that is the first time we

²⁴⁸ *Relation om snaphanerne i Skaane og Holsten*, Det Konglige Bibliotek (The Royal Library) in Copenhagen that will be referred to as KB.

²⁴⁹ See: O. Källström, "Snaphane på 1520-talet" ("Snaphane" in the 1520's"), pp. 322-326 in *Fornvännen* 1944, with a summary in English. This article can be found on the following website: http://fornvannen.se/pdf/1940talet/1944_322.pdf.

²⁵⁰ The Swedish king used the term to designate a ship, but also to indicate a gun. See: Källström, p.324. As for the origins of the word "snaphane" I refer to the section "The Word Snaphane" in the Snaphane Chapter. I make quite clear there (see p.9 in particular) that the word entered the Scandinavian languages during the Middle Ages and that its definitions varied.

²⁵¹ I have also mentioned the original placenames when possible. The area that is called Gyng/Gønge/Giønge in my sources is called Göing today, but the local pronunciation would be much the same in all four cases, something like "yuhynghge" with the stress on the first syllable. The Latin/English form Gothungia is sometimes used and when I refer directly to sources/literature where that variant is included I do so too.

²⁵² Alf Åberg, *Snapphanarna*, Lund 1981, p.30. According to Sörensson (p.1.) the snaphaner were first mentioned during Horn's war 1643-45 but that is obviously wrong. The official name of Mikkel's corps was the of "the *hakeskytte* company" that they had taken after their rifles (*hakebössor*).

²⁵³ Åberg, 1981, p.30.

come across snaphaner in something like the shape we meet them during the Scanian War well over a century later.

It has traditionally been claimed that the “snaphane movement” came to an apex during the Scanian war of 1675-79 when Denmark tried to reconquer the eastern part of the realm that was lost to Sweden in 1658 (excluding Bornholm). The local name for this war is the “Snaphane War.”²⁵⁴ Apart from spontaneous “guerrilla-style” fighting, the Danish authorities also created a special corps of Scanian volunteers that was based on the snaphane movement: the King’s Friskytter Corps. From this time onwards even, non-registered combatants preferred to be called “friskytter”. The Swedes, on the other hand, insisted promptly on calling them all snaphaner. It even became punishable by Swedish law to use the term “friskytte”.²⁵⁵

To the Danes the snaphaner were ordinary people who defended their homes and lands against the Enemy; later this designation acquired a slightly stale flavour and they all seemed to transform into friskytter. To the Swedes they were common criminals. In modern times these divisions have remained much the same: on the one hand the snaphaner have come to symbolise the Danish fight against the evil Swedish invaders, both in Denmark itself and Scania, on the other hand they have been defined as a bunch of “wanted criminals, army deserters, Danish royalists and adventurers”²⁵⁶ that have been used as an efficient tool in the hands of fanatic Danish and Scanian nationalists, but who really had very little to do with modern-day Denmark and Sweden. Today it is difficult to define what a snaphane/friskytt really was, and anyway, whose definition are we to accept?

In this part of the thesis, I will try to analyse the “snaphane movement” on the basis of sources that testify of the work of those who were classified as snaphaner. Primarily I

²⁵⁴ Or “the Snaphane Feud”. In Norway and the ex-Norwegian areas that Sweden had conquered from Denmark(-Norway) some thirty years earlier the same war was called “Gyldenløve’s war” after the governor of Norway Ulrik Frederik Gyldenløve.

²⁵⁵ For this reason, Chaplain Jens Pedersen Cloeger/Clöer from Ystad was denounced to the Swedish authorities by his (Swedish) boss Reverend Lacander. See: *Acta clericia*, LA, Lund, quoted by Johnsson, pp.167-170. Cloeger was charged with several other offences apart from using the term “friskytte”. He was also suspected of having sold wheat to “snaphaner” and of having bought horses off the “snaphane leader (Knud) Böök” and it was claimed that Cloeger still owed “Böök” money for the transaction. Doing business with snaphaner was highly incriminating. “Böök” is a Swedification of the Danish surname Bøg.

²⁵⁶ Åberg 1958, p.102.

have consulted the Depositiones and the Intercepted Letters collections in the Danish National Archives, but I have also used pamphlets and news sheets from the late 1670ies and naturally I have taken advantage of the few sources that have already been published by different scholars. Is there a way we can find out what the snaphaner really were up to? I think a meticulous study of their actual work could bring us to an understanding of how they should be categorised and what they fought for. The documents in the Danish National Archives contain numerous descriptions of the working methods of the snaphaner: of how they described their daily life themselves and of what their employers the Danish authorities required them to do. The Intercepted Letters collection is the fruit of the snaphaner's work since one of their main tasks was to interrupt the Swedish communication lines and confiscate enemy mail. The muster rolls and account books also provide important details about the snaphaner, their background, work, and the nature of their relationship to the Danish state. If we know what the tasks of a snaphane or friskytte were then we should also be able to classify their work according to some sort of standard. In this case I thought it fit to compare the nature of the tasks of a snaphane/friskytte to those of guerrilla fighters and irregular troops throughout history. The pro-Danish side have always insisted that the Gønger, friskytter and snaphaner were guerrilla fighters. Is that view sustainable from the point of view of military history and strategics? Another hypothesis is the one that was first presented by the ethnologist Anders Linde-Laursen and then by the historian Kim Wagner who both interpret the snaphane phenomenon as social banditry. But Linde-Laursen only dealt with the snaphaner very briefly in his work on the relations between Denmark and Sweden in general and Kim Wagner's study concentrates on a small group of so-called Gønger on the island of Zealand during the preceding war (1658-60). Do the snaphaner/friskytter of the Scanian War qualify as social bandits? These are the main issues that I will deal with in this chapter.

Traditionally Swedish historiography classifies the snaphaner as outlaws that attacked anyone who got in their way. In the 19th century the distinguished Scanian historian Martin Weibull called the snaphaner the "natural enemies" of the peasants.²⁵⁷ Later, Alf Åberg continued this line of thought, describing them as villains whose actions

²⁵⁷ Åberg 1958, p.98.

were characterised by ambushes that hit both sides indiscriminately.²⁵⁸ These actions were allegedly limited to the woodlands along the border. The forests isolated the peasants on both sides of the border from the central authorities and the peaceful border area has been described as a “peasant republic” whose citizens had little or no sense of belonging with either Sweden or Denmark. This line of thought generally supports the view that national identities did not exist in any guise at the time. The Danes countered with a far more lenient view of the snaphaner. To Fabricius the snaphane movement was “an economic phenomenon that surfaced in the borderlands every time war broke out and disturbed the natural occupations. But it was not only an economical phenomenon. The snaphaner/friskytter did not only look for booty but they also asked who the booty belonged to. Fabricius emphasised that in the sources, you *never* come across snaphaner/friskytter that turn against the troops of their own country. The snaphane movement had what Fabricius called a “political tendency”, and it therefore –or in any case- could be taken into the service of the state. To Fabricius the acquisition of a political cause explains how the snaphaner turned into friskytter.²⁵⁹ I think that is a very important point and one of very few parameters that we have to measure up the snaphaner/friskytter against. However, I doubt seriously that a neat line of development from destitute peasants to politically conscious friskytter can be drawn. The snaphaner of Mikkel Gønge in the 16th century fought for Denmark too, and followed the Danish, *not* the Swedish army, which indicates that there was some sort of political consciousness then too. I think that political consciousness served the scopes of frustration, whether that frustration be caused by perceived threats to one’s safety (war-situation) or changed conditions that one ascribed to the new rulers of the land (financial hardship), and that these factors should be considered during the whole era of the snaphane wars, from the 16th century onwards.

The early 20th century historian Per Sörensson felt that it was important to stress the fact that the peasants on both sides had been actively participating in warfare against each other for generations. Wars that had impressed a sense of “Danish-ness” on them. A Danishness that might simply have consisted in the feeling of diversity that developed over the years when they were called upon to help the authorities kill the

²⁵⁸ Åberg, 1958, p.102.

²⁵⁹ Fabricius III, p. 98 and p. 102.

peasants on the Swedish side of the border.²⁶⁰ The Gønger were those among the Scanians that grumbled the most over the new overlords and did not show any signs of being pleased with the forced union with their dear neighbours. Young men from Gønge were wont to go to Copenhagen to fight for their king and they knew that likely enough, the enemy was going to be their northern neighbours. After the end of the Scandinavian union around 1521 the Gønger had had to fight back invasions from the north innumerable times. They were used to drawing guns on their next-door-neighbours. It is important to stress here that the Blekinge and Gønge areas were the poorest parts of Denmark long before they came under Swedish rule. The inhabitants depended on their connection to Zealand and the capital to where they could export men, cattle, and goods. Knud Fabricius claimed that the passage to Swedish rule had severed the umbilical cord of these northerly regions. The extent of the financial crisis caused by the annexation has been questioned in recent times.

Uno Røndahl even goes so far as to claim that a “local peasant war” broke out during the autumn of 1677 when there was a wave of raids and killings across the border: a group of snaphaner called the UGGLE-boys (Uggleherarne) concentrated their raids on the Swedish villages right across the border from their own area. Their Swedish neighbours from the county of Småland answered in the same manner: during a raid on Örkened (Ørkende) they captured five men and shot one, who might have been Trued, the leader and eldest of the brothers from UGGLE.²⁶¹ At least periodically local hostilities seem to have taken surprising dimensions. Edvardsson tells the legend of a Swedish “snaphane” who had the king Carl’s initials tattooed onto his hand and fought his Danish neighbours with great fierceness. In this case it is the matter of a legend, but it tells of a time when the border became more important than ever and when the crossing of it meant that you had a right to kill the first man you met. And

²⁶⁰ Sörensson, p.7.

²⁶¹ Røndahl, 1996, p.366. The UGGLE boys were seven brothers. According to tradition their father was executed outside the Glimåkra (Glimager) church by the Swedes. Five of the brothers are mentioned as “snaphaner” in the archives. According to legend the other two were killed in battle, but there is no trace of them in the records. A network of names is connected to the UGGLE brothers. At least one of them (Pehr) had fought among Captain Caspar Due’s friskytter. Pehr had been conscripted to the Swedish army in 1674 but took to the woods instead. Their home, Ugleboe, was burnt down by Gyllenstierna in the spring of 1677. The last three of the brothers were executed in 1684, as can be read in the court registers of Östra Göinge 16th April 1684. See: John Tomenius, *Den stora ofärden* (The Great Disaster), Uddevalla 1984, p. 147. See also: Røndahl 1996, p.365.

that was what quite a few men did. Ethnic distinctions existed before the wars, but probably they were accentuated by the hostilities.

As I mentioned in the introduction practically all works on the Scanian “transition era” have concentrated on either the Swedification or the Snaphaner. Somehow the snaphaner have become emblematic of the whole Scanian question, today and yesterday. Since these issues have remained in the focus of attention for so long it might simply be that people perceive them as unresolved and somehow hard to deal with still today, especially in Scania. At one point or another most Scanians find themselves being called half-Danes (or worse) and start wondering why. Maybe it is a good thing that these things are being aired in the open, and that today, it is infinitely much easier to do so than only fifteen years ago.²⁶²

However, it is not a good thing that until quite recently these issues have almost always been analysed according to strictly binary parameters: good or bad, black or white. In the end it all came down to pinpointing the bad guys. Those who identified with Sweden and its proud history needed to blacken the snaphaner’s reputation; else Sweden’s own reputation would become tarnished. What is generally recognised is that the snaphaner fought the Swedes like madmen and that the Swedes tortured them grossly. But it is not easy to make sense of that if you subscribe to a traditional Swedish view of history. Nor is it all that easy to come to terms with if you are Danish or Scanian and want your ancestors to have had a glorious past and not to appear as pathetic losers. Those who felt embarrassed by Denmark’s many defeats at the hands of their northerly neighbours needed heroes to boost their national pride. Either the Swedes were the monsters or the Snaphaner. Generally, the Danes as a people have not been nominated real bad guys, maybe because it would not be good

²⁶² As Anne Llewellyn Barstow declared in her *Witchcraze* (p.xiv), some things need to be “named and brought to light” if the trauma the event itself has caused is to be healed at last. She wrote that book because she wanted to “remember the names of those who died, to understand why it happened –and happens still” and that is very much the kind of work I would like to *start* doing in the field of snaphane research (with this thesis). In a way this is also an analysis of violence as a power language or conveyor of messages that are inscribed on the bodies of human beings or through the transformation of the environment. For that analysis I have very much relied upon Llewellyn Barstow, Françoise Sironi’s research on the significance of torture and the workings of it upon the sufferer’s mind, Joanna Bourke’s works on the killing trade throughout history, and, last but not least, Elaine Scarry and her brilliant work on the transforming power of pain: *The Body in Pain, The Making and the Unmaking of the World*.

for the Scandinavian community or “gemenskap”, as some people call it.²⁶³ But the snaphaner were convenient scapegoats since they did not necessarily have to be identified with Danes in general. “The true nature” of the snaphaner has been the subject of innumerable analyses all since their own times. In the end it always comes down to judging whether the snaphaner/Gønger/friskytter were simple thugs or noble freedom-fighters, essentially, whether they were good or bad? In recent times exactly this question was raised by the Scanian historian Dick Harrison in a Scandinavian history magazine (*Populärhistoria*) and towards the end of the article he promptly replied that they were both, and rather that the snaphaner/friskytter included different kinds of people that could be put into very different categories.

Today’s “freedom-fighters or thugs”-debate can be traced back to a radio interview with the Danish history professor Knud Fabricius in 1952, in which he declared that the “friskytter” were the predecessors of the freedom-fighters of our days and he prized their love for Denmark.²⁶⁴ During the war the snaphaner actually served as a model for the Danish resistance and the so-called “snaphane-films” encouraged the Danish freedom-fighters in their battle against the Germans.²⁶⁵ In Sweden the Scanian historian Alf Åberg fiercely opposed Fabricius romantic view of the “snaphaner” and claimed that they had only been a mixture of “wanted criminals, army deserters, Danish royalists and adventurers”.²⁶⁶ Naturally he claimed that these villains stood outside the peasant communities.

In this chapter I will analyse letters, reports, newsheets and notebooks that deal with the so-called snaphaner. The criteria of selection have not been whether the persons in question would have called themselves snaphaner but if the Swedes would have done so. In some cases it is only the matter of persons who were accused of collaborating with snaphaner or of occupying themselves with anti-Swedish activities and sometimes the final verdict remains unknown. The nature of these anti-Swedish and snaphane activities will be in the centre of attention. Since the fight of the

²⁶³ “Gemenskap” could also be translated as “sense of togetherness”. Some of my colleagues have kindly put to my attention that my dissertation constitutes a threat to the cohesion of the Scandinavian community (gemenskap). I stressed then, as I stress now, that it has never been my attention cause unnecessary trouble but that I feel that it is wrong to abstain from historical research in areas that are considered not politically correct.

²⁶⁴ Åberg, p.100.

²⁶⁵ For example, “Snapphanen” with the legendary Scanian actor Edvard Persson from 1941.

²⁶⁶ Åberg 1958, pp.101-107 and p.111. Quote p.102.

snaphaner/Gønger/friskytter²⁶⁷ was intrinsically connected with being Danish, Swedish and/or Scanian I also hope that this analysis will lead to some clues as to how identities were constructed in 17th century Scandinavia and what components they included. The principal questions that I will keep in mind while analysing the sources that constitute the basis of this chapter are the following: *Who became a snaphane/friskytte and why? What was the nature of their work, as seen by themselves, by their employers and by the enemy? What was their relationship to local society? Did it matter to them whether they were Danish or Swedish? Why did the Swedes crack down on them the way they did?*

²⁶⁷ These terms are used to describe the same men in Denmark and Sweden. The distinctions between these terms will be analysed in the section on the image of the snaphaner. I have chosen to use “snaphaner” in the cases where my sources do not make explicit distinctions between the groups.

The Word “Snaphane”

Introduction

This chapter contains a brief analysis of the terminology that was used to indicate those who fought on the Danish side without making part of the regular army and how these groups could be classified technically today. There is a tendency in Sweden today to use the term “snaphane” (Da. snaphane) to indicate what were really a number of different categories of people and in this chapter, I will analyse the linguistic history of that term. However, it will take a good part of the rest of the thesis to try to delve into the background of the change of terminology that took place on the Danish side and of the change of meaning of the old term that took place on the Swedish side and how these two occurrences were interconnected.

Snaphaner, Gønger, Friskytter, guerrillas...

There is a certain controversy about the very word "snaphane" and its connotations and origins. According to some historians it was the famous "snaphane"- guns that were made in the Göinge area that gave their name to the men who used them most. A more likely origin of the word “snaphane” would be that it came from Old Low German to the Scandinavian languages during the Middle Ages. According to KA Blom the word originally designated a tiny but very quick bird in Low German and then in the 14th century it came to designate fast and agile men and from that it came to describe armed peasants, rebels and finally, outlaws.²⁶⁸ Maybe one should not forget that “Schnapphahn” still means “highwayman” in German and that the first part of the word is the same “snap” as the English verb “to snap” and the noun “snapshot”. The somewhat quaint expression “snaphance” or “snaphaunce” for “freebooter” is linguistically identical with the word “snaphane”, not the least in that it also means “a flintlock or a weapon with one.” Chambers Dictionary states that “snap” probably comes from Dutch “snappen” that means exactly “to snap” and that “hance/haunce” traces its origin to Dutch “haan” i.e., a “cock”.²⁶⁹ In *Ordbog til det ældre danske sprog* (A Dictionary of the Older Danish Language) "snaphane" is explained as “highwayman, partisan” and from the 16th and 17th centuries the combinations “snaphaner and robbers” and “snaphaner and pirates” are reported. However, the

²⁶⁸ KA Blom, Jan Moen, *Snapphaneboken*, (The Book of the Snaphaner), p.22. Trelleborg, 1987.

²⁶⁹ See: “snapha(u)nce” in *Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary* 1986.

most common usage of the word in early modern Danish was as a designation of "armed independent combatants in the wars of 1675-1679: the brave and courageous Gønger and snaphaner."²⁷⁰ The Danish national encyclopaedia reports that the word derives from North German "snaphan", highwayman and that it in Danish means "armed independent combatants in the northern wars of the 17th century. It is stressed that the "snaphaner" were commanded by regular officers and worked as paramilitary troops Scania, Holstein, and some other regions."²⁷¹ In the Swedish language the word first appeared during the first part of the 16th century as a loanword from Middle Low German, and it was then applied to as various objects as ships, guns and people. In the 1520ies it was the surname of a Danish smith who lived in Stockholm.²⁷² Swedish encyclopaedia explain the word "snaphane" as irregular troops consisting of peasants and warriors"²⁷³ and "Swedish designation for guerrillas, resistance members and common looters on the Danish side in the Danish-Swedish wars."²⁷⁴

The German sociologist Norbert Elias claimed that "the more or less sudden emergence of words within languages nearly always points to changes in the lives of people themselves..."²⁷⁵ and I believe that the new term for snaphane signified on the one hand that the friskytter had 'gone official' and had the King's protection, on the other hand that they wanted to distinguish themselves from the signification the Swedes had given to the word 'snaphane.'

In his book on rebels in Wales from 1400-1600, Arfon Rees draws the conclusion that the image of the outlachs became less positive over the centuries.²⁷⁶ During the Glyndwr uprising at the beginning of the 15th century those who rebelled against the English and had to take refuge in the mountains were seen as great heroes and the bards wrote long poems about them. As times grew harder and the English gained a steadier footing in Wales it became more difficult to survive in the mountains and the outlachs became a problem for the locals. In this way their heroic image was

²⁷⁰ Otto Kalkar, *Ordbog til det ældre danske sprog 1300-1700*, (A Dictionary of the older Danish Language 1300-1700), Copenhagen 1902-1907. Quotes: "snaphaner oc røffuere" and "snaphaner og sørøvere."

²⁷¹ *Den Store Danske Encyklopædi, Danmarks Nationalleksikon 17*, (The Great Danish Encyclopaedia)1997.

²⁷² O. Källström (p.326) hypothesised that this Hans Snaphane "originally came from the border districts which were famed for their good guns, and which, about one hundred years later, were to set the scene for the bitter Danish-Swedish border wars and the renowned partisans –the 'Snaphaner'". The border district that Källström meant was of course Gønge.

²⁷³ *Bonniers konversationslexikon XII*, Stockholm 1952.

²⁷⁴ *Bra Böckers Lexikon 21*, Bokförlaget Bra Böcker, Höganäs, 1989.

²⁷⁵ Norbert Elias, *The Civilising Process*, Blackwell 1997 (English translation), p.43.

²⁷⁶ E.A. Rees, *Welsh Outlaws and Bandits*, Caterwen Press, Birmingham 2001, p. 33 and p.37.

blackened. Glyndwr's image changed from that of heroic status to that of a feared outlaw. Nevertheless, he was never bereaved of that halo of romanticism that surrounded him in the popular songs and poems. Something very similar happened in the case of the snaphaner. By 1677 nobody wanted to be called by that name, because things had happened that rendered it offensive. In this chapter we will analyse the events that led to that situation. In a letter from November 1677 Lieutenant (cornet) Hendrik Ovesen Pflug who was sent out from the regular army to command the Bornholm-based friskytter asked Copenhagen "das die, so Freyschützen jemahls gewest, mihr folgen sollen undt alsdan vor keine Schnaphanen erkennet werden."²⁷⁷ In 1916 Per Sörensson pointed out that with this phrase Pflug made quite clear that in 1677 the two words had very different connotations and that "only lawless vagrants should be branded with the latter name (Schnaphanen)."²⁷⁸ It was no longer the case to use the word "snaphane" as a positive headline, the way the author of the "Account of the snaphaner in Scania and Holsten" had done, since nobody would voluntarily identify himself as a snaphane and even less be encouraged to take action through that kind of identification. During the intervening thirty years, the situation had changed and a snaphane during the latter part of the Scanian War was not the same as a snaphane during the Torstensson's War.

And yet, according to Alf Åberg the term "snaphane" was not derogatory during most of the early modern era but it became so during the 1690'ies when the Swedish authorities came to use it to designate all kinds of criminals and political opponents.²⁷⁹ I believe that the *Account of the snaphaner in Scania and Holsten*²⁸⁰ proves that at least the Danes did not feel that "snaphane" was a derogatory term in 1644. However, thirty-five years later, when the Scanian war was drawing towards its close, the Danes avoided using it. One reason for this is probably that the connotations of the word "snaphane" probably changed earlier than Åberg assumed, both in Denmark and Sweden. Pflug made that quite clear in his neat distinction between the two categories. We can also see that the "friskytter" are mentioned on almost every page of the little notebook in Jørgen Krabbe's defense called "Blood Crying for Revenge".

²⁷⁷ Quote from a letter from Pflug to HQ in Copenhagen, Copenhagen 19th November 1677, I.S., No: 684: Suppliker (Petitions), DRA. The letter, including the quotation, has in part been published by Sörensson, p.50.

²⁷⁸ Sörensson, p.50.

²⁷⁹ Åberg 1958, p.108.

²⁸⁰ See the Introduction.

The notebook can be dated to the beginning of 1678 or thereabouts. At least in one case the author - probably Hjørring - first started writing "snap" but corrected himself and wrote "friskytte" instead.²⁸¹ He also explained that it only was Swedes who said "snaphane" whereas the Danes said "friskytt".²⁸² During the latter part of the 1670'ies the Swedes were terrified of the snaphaner, of their reputed unpredictability and cruelty. The Swedish sources that I have analysed all speak of them in the same wary, often enough almost terrorised tone, and always as "snapphanar" not "friskyttar", except a few times in reported Danish speech, but then using the term "friskytte" was enough to get one denounced.

In the Danish reports from the Scanian war the "snaphaner" are normally called "friskytter", at least from 1677 onwards. The Scanian clergyman Sthen Jacobsen called them "snaphaner" all through his *Chronicle of the Nordic War* but explained that from 1677 onwards they insisted on being called "friskytter."²⁸³ In my sources the word "snaphane" is sometimes used by Danes but almost only when it is the reported speech of a Swede.²⁸⁴ In many Danish contemporary sources the friskytter were mentioned with reverence; if the darker sides of their deeds were mentioned they were often (but not always) excused.²⁸⁵ The term "friskytte" was used much in the same contexts as "snaphaner" in Danish sources even in earlier eras: Mikkel Pederssøn Gyding's troops were sometimes mentioned as "Michel Juding mit seiner

²⁸¹ "...and no one has either said or accused Krabbe of having paid his servants to go to the *snap friskytter* or of making deals with them or even saying the least word to them...", MS Rostgaard 4to, 93, KB.

²⁸² "...that Krabbe should let the Swedes know that *those whom they call snaphaner* were there...." ("...att Krabben skulle lade svensken vide, att disse som de kalder snaphanerne var der at finde.") MS Rostgaard 4to, 93, KB, p.43. Fabricius called this manuscript *Det heftraabende blod* (Blood Calling for Revenge).

²⁸³ Jacobsen also knew that if he had written friskytter his history of the Scanian War would have remained not publishable in Sweden. The book could not be published in any case, since it was in Danish, but probably Jakobsen had hoped up until a certain point that it would be publishable even if the Swedes won.

²⁸⁴ At his arrival at the Danish camp on 18th June 1677 (Depositiones, DRA) Cristen Jensen reported that a group of soldiers had brought 3 *snaphaner* with them to the Swedish camp. This is one of the very few passages from the Scanian war where a Danish scribe uses the expression *snaphane*. It was the expression Jensen would have heard in the Swedish camp. In the same manner Danes always referred to themselves as "Danes" but when they reported Swedish speech, they used "Jutes" if the Swedish original used that (usually derogatory) term.

²⁸⁵ The author of MS Rostgaard 4to, 93 (KB) admitted the ferocity of the *friskytter* but explained it as a retribution for what the Swedes had done during the past wars in Denmark and as a normal but horrible thing that happens in times of war.

freischutzen” etc.²⁸⁶ In the same manner Christer Bagge who was condemned to death for being a leader of the snaphaner in 1658 called himself a captain of the friskytter.

As far as we know today, the terms “guerrilla” and “petite guerre” only started to be used during the Napoleonic Wars. However, the corresponding Italian form, “guerriglia”, can be dated back to the 16th century. “Guerriglia” is the diminutive of “guerra” and like “petite guerre” and “guerrilla”, it simply means “little war”.²⁸⁷

Today, the terms “partisan” and “guerrilla” warfare are generally held to be synonymous, although partisan fighting is sometimes attributed more of an ideological colouring.²⁸⁸ The term “partigænger/partigångare” that was frequently used at the time is closely connected to the word “partisan”.²⁸⁹ During the Scanian War “to go on a party” meant to practise irregular/detachment warfare or to execute irregular operations. For the Danes, a “party” (Scand. “parti”) could be constituted of regular soldiers, friskytter or a mixture of both. The Swedes often used the term to describe minor detachments that were sent out to fight snaphaner/friskytter. A similar terminology was used during the Spanish campaign against Napoleon (1808-1814) in which both “partida” and “guerrilla” designed:

“a guerrilla band or irregular operations, but it can also mean a picket of regular troops or be used to describe the use of skirmishers on the battlefield; by the same token, the word partida can stand not just for a guerrilla band but also for a detachment of soldiers.”²⁹⁰

In a way it is disrespectful to use the term “snaphane”, even in a historical context. On the other hand, it is the word that is used in Scania today where a whole area has

²⁸⁶ Holger Rørdam(ed.). *Historiske samlinger og studier vedrørende danske forhold i det 17. aarhundrede*. (Historical Collections and Studies regarding the State of Things in 18th Century Denmark), Copenhagen 1884, pp. 49-50: “Weil es aber eine sehr gefערliche reise, dazu sich niemandt gern gebrauchen wolt lassen, wardt entlich Michel Juding, welchem die Schwedische Sprache und die gelegenheit des gantzen Reichs bewust, mit grossen zusagungen bewogen die reise mit 30 seiner freischutzen anzunemen.” See also p.78: “...Ago Brun, welcher in abwesen Michel Juding die Denische freischutzen furete.” The passages have kindly been put to my notice by Dr. Stefan Persson.

²⁸⁷ The Zingarelli 1999 derives “guerriglia” from the Spanish “guerrilla” and dates its first appearance in Italian to 1573. The meaning is stated as: “Forma di lotta condotta da formazioni irregolari di armati che combattono un esercito regolare. Maybe its most common usage in Italian today is to describe fights between hooligans and police at football matches.

²⁸⁸ Leonid D. Grenkevich, *The Soviet Partisan Movement 1941-1944, A Critical Historiographical Analysis*, Frank Cass, London, Portland, Or, 1999, p.1. In 1863 Karol Borkowski (*Pamiętnik historyczny o wyprawie partyzanckiej do Polski*, Leipzig 1863, p.242, quoted by Emanuel Halicz, *Partisan Warfare in 19th Century Poland*, Odense University Press 1975, p.28.) distinguished between partisan fighting and partisan warfare. The former was a national war of liberation, the latter a revolutionary war.

²⁸⁹ Hahlweg (p, 27) defines early modern guerrilla warfare as a war for “independent (free) troops, Parteigänger, and detachments”.

²⁹⁰ Charles J. Esdaile, *Fighting Napoleon. Guerrillas, Bandits and Adventurers in Spain 1808-1814*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London 2004, p.25. See also pp.198-199.

taken its name after them and schools and companies are named after them. And people are proud to be the descendants of the snaphaner. For this reason, I have chosen to use the term, with certain reservations. Hopefully the bad connotations have been exorcised by the frequent and positive usage of the word, in the face of those who wanted it to mean something else, or whose fear made them believe so.

Conclusions:

In this chapter, I have stressed that my sources indicate that the term “snaphane” could even be used in a positive sense in Danish before the Scanian War and that some Danish pamphlets spoke of the snaphaner as heroes, but that during the Scanian the word had become (as Fabricius put it) “an offence that cried for a bloody vengeance.”²⁹¹ From early 1677 onwards, nobody called themselves “snaphaner”.²⁹² This gradual change in connotations is lacking in Fabricius and I wanted to point it out. As we will see later, early 1677 was also the time when the Swedes came down heavily on the “snaphaner” and took to increasingly brutal punishments, at the same time as the King’s Friskytter first turn up on the scene of war.

The Historical Origins of the Snaphane Movement

Introduction

Scania had a long history of rebellions and peasant uprisings behind herself already by the time of the Scanian War. Was that the most plausible background of the so-called “snaphane movement”? In this chapter the actual battle techniques of the snaphaner/friskytter will be traced back in time and compared to similar movements throughout history, on an international basis. However, the local Scandinavian context and how its specificity formed the basis of the snaphane movement will not be forgotten.

From the Hittites to the Renaissance

In his *Guerrillas and Terrorists* Richard Clutterbuck traces two original branches of guerrilla warfare: the “development of organized revolt against established

²⁹¹ Fabricius, III p.102. The Scandinavian expression that corresponds to “a bloody vengeance” is “en dyr hævd/hämnd” which literally means “an expensive vengeance”, which is also what Fabricius wrote. In Scandinavian it is obvious that the expense is not assumed to be monetary.

²⁹² Fabricius, III p.102.

government” of which the Spartacus revolt was typical and secondly, “resistance to foreign occupation or domination by a tribe or community subdued by another” of which Scythian resistance to Persian occupation in 512 BC was an example.²⁹³ In pre-Roman Gaul, the popular leader Vercingetorix addressed his men when they were about to set out on their fight against Julius Caesar and the Romans. What he said (or so it is claimed that he did) was this:

“We have to conduct the war quite differently, to cut off the Romans from their food and supply, to destroy isolated detachments. All the open villages and farms from which the Romans can get their provisions will be cut off and the Romans will starve”.²⁹⁴

Seventeen centuries later or so, on 26th July 1678, the Danish War Council discussed what should be done now that open battle against the enemy (the Swedes) seemed out of the question. In the face of an undeniably superior enemy the members of the War Council advised King Christian V to concentrate on a strategy that was similar to the one Vercingetorix had employed against the Romans: War Councillor Herman Meyer declared that according to him the best way to weaken the enemy was through attacks on minor targets such as the Swedish redoubts on the Skepparslöv (then Skiberslev) heights, and by using “small parties”, friskytter and ships in order to cut off enemy food provisioning lines, and furthermore, to send out reconnaissance parties, and by “alarming and harassing bread and forage provisioning they would try to divert the enemy until the times changed.”²⁹⁵ The situation of the Danish army and the commanders choice of strategy becomes more comprehensible in the light of Johannes Kunisch’s analysis of the Absolutist state as a gigantic wheel, the workings of which depended on the functioning of the innumerable sub-units: taxes had to be collected, soldiers conscripted, storages filled with supplies that could then be transported across the border...Irregular troops did not have to follow the rules of the absolutist game. Official warfare had stiffened in its form so that it had become almost impossible to improvise. It was here that the irregular troops had an important role to play.²⁹⁶

²⁹³ Clutterbuck, p.24.

²⁹⁴ Gaius Julius Caesar, *De bello gallico*, VII, quoted by Lacqueur, p.6.

²⁹⁵ Jensen, p.381.

²⁹⁶ Kunisch, p.4 and p.21: “Den kleinen Krieg kennzeichnet auf der einen Seite eine größere Unabhängigkeit, auf der anderen eine größere Gebundenheit. Was die Unabhängigkeit betrifft, so ist daran zu erinnern, wie stark der Aktionsradius großer Armeen von Magazinen und zuverlässigen Nachschubverbindungen eingeschränkt wurde.”

The basic structure of this kind of combat methods can be traced as far back as the beginnings of civilisation and maybe further. In military manuals this manner of fighting is called guerrilla- or partisan warfare, and in its more technically and strategically advanced versions, it becomes detachment- and irregular warfare. Hit-and-run-tactics, the evasion of open battle and the attempt to wear down the enemy has been practised in all times. So-called “primitive” cultures know no other way of fighting. Most likely, it is mankind’s oldest way of waging war.²⁹⁷ The first time we know of that a classical trait of guerrilla warfare was mentioned is in the Anastas Papyrus in which the Hittite king Mursilis complained that “the irregulars did not dare to attack me in the daylight and preferred to fall on me by night.”²⁹⁸ The characteristics of this kind of war was that the troops practiced hit-and-run tactics which they were good at because they were more mobile than their enemies and had a knowledge of the often difficult terrain that was denied their opponents. Sometimes they ended up as brigands. Normally they were supported by the local inhabitants and not few of them acquired the status of legends. To return to the days of the Roman Empire the troops of the Empire were often countered by native uprisings that were violent and sometimes effective. Hardly ever were the rebels on a par with the military technology or the numbers of the Roman soldiers but had to try to outwit them in other ways than sheer brawn. The climax of the war of the Iberians against the Romans was Viriathus’s rebellion. From 147-139 BC Viriathus and his men tried to expel the Romans with battle techniques that could be characterised as typical of guerrilla warfare. In fact Theodor Mommsen called Viriathus “chief of the guerrillas”.²⁹⁹ Although guerrillas have always existed, irregular troops like the Danish Friskytter only came into existence in Europe during particular conditions and at a stage in history (post Thirty Years’ War) when general warfare was becoming heavier in bulk, more efficient and violent in arms techniques, and at the same time,

²⁹⁷ Lacqueur, p.3.

²⁹⁸ Walter Laqueur, *Guerrilla Warfare. A Historical & Critical Study*. Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick and London, 1998 (originally 1976), p. 3. See also: Werner Hahlweg, *Gerillakrig utan fronter*, Halmstad 1970, p.25. Original version: *Guerilla. Krieg ohne Fronten*, Stuttgart 1968. Laqueur, p.29, traces the origins of the term “guerrilla” to the Spanish war against the French (1808-1813) though as a diminutive of “guerra” it can be traced back to at least the early 16th century. See: *Lo Zingarelli, Vocabolario della lingua italiana*, Zanichelli 1999, “guerriglia”.

²⁹⁹ Lacqueur, p.8.

more dependent on connection lines to areas that the mass of the army could not reach but that were vital to it.³⁰⁰

I will now trace an outline of the events and the social situation that eventually led to the development of the complicated network of resistance fighters and irregular troops that existed in Scania during the war of 1676-79. Denmark had a long tradition of calling the ordinary inhabitants to arms in times of war. This habitude constituted the basis, if not for the existence, then for the dimensions and efficiency of the “snaphane movement” during the Scanian War. If there is a set of skills and military techniques that are characteristic of guerrilla- and irregular warfare, then the Scandinavian peasants were well practised in many of these skills and techniques centuries before the Scanian War.

In most European countries the *defensio patriae* theories had little practical outcome but in Scandinavia it already felt quite natural for peasants to go to war for their country. This was especially the case in Sweden. In Denmark it was first and foremost the inhabitants of the border region whose services were called upon. The Gønger of the Gønge region were considered the most valorous warriors in the kingdom of Denmark. Contrary to what for example Alf Åberg seems to think in his books, the snaphaner/friskytter were far from an exclusively Scandinavian phenomenon.

Continental European influences were crucial for the development of the snaphane movement, albeit in combination with the already existent readiness and ability to go to war of the peasantry in a corner of Europe where the lower classes had never been disarmed. In the early modern era peasant detachments were employed in practically every battle between Swedes and Danes. Although local peace treaties were common in the border area it was also a plain fact that every generation that grew up there had to get used to participating actively in wars against their neighbours across the border. When the “European” idea of local militia was introduced in Denmark the concept of “fatherland” was much used in order to increase the loyalty of the local soldiers. I believe that the snaphane movement, and later, the friskytter, developed out of the troops that were raised in every parish, at least to some extent as a result of the *defensio patriae* movement.

³⁰⁰ *Der kleine Krieg. Studien zum Heerwesen des Absolutismus*, Frankfurter Historische Abhandlungen, Band 4, Steiner Verlag GMBH Wiesbaden, 1973. Pp.1–4. Quote: p.1.

In an article on the origins of patriotism Gunner Lind analyses the way the concept of “fatherland” was used in Denmark up until the introduction of absolutism in 1660. According to Lind this concept gained a broader value when the idea of *defensio patriae* was broached in Denmark at the very beginning of that century. By mid-century patriotism based on the duty to defend the fatherland had become a force in its own right and not only in the upper strata of society.³⁰¹ Now, if Lind is right Krabbe and the Thotts and their contemporaries all grew up reading *Encomion Regni Daniæ*, Nør-Nissom’s *A Short Danish Chronicle* and other popular history books that were directed to readers that “wish their dear fatherland well, and wants its best from the bottom of their hearts and victory against its enemies.”³⁰²

During the century and a half that preceded the Snaphane War the Scanian peasantry had several occasions to practice their wartime skills. The Norby rebellion of 1525 transformed Scania into a gigantic battlefield. It is not clear whether it was the matter of a purely agrarian rebellion against the powerful nobility or whether its leader Søren Norby had simply mobilised the peasantry against his and King Christian’s enemies.³⁰³

King Christian was still in the hands of his uncle and Norby and the Scanian peasants had both Scandinavian kingdoms and Lübeck against them and in the end Norby had to surrender.³⁰⁴ It is highly unclear whether a category of men called the snaphaner existed already at this point. No mention of the word “snaphane” has (so far) been found in the scarce sources that remain from Søren Norby’s days. Nevertheless it is hard not to agree with the Danish ethnologist Anders Linde-Laursen who sees a clear connection between what he calls “earlier peasant uprisings” like the one headed by Søren Norby, and the snaphaner.³⁰⁵ It was only with the Nordic Seven Years’ War (1563-1570) that the snaphaner and their legendary leader Mikkel Pederssøn Gyding

³⁰¹ Lind, p.102.

³⁰² Gunner Lind, “Gamle patrioter”, (Old patriots), pp.91–115, in *Søfart, Politik, Identitet*, tilegnet Ole Feldbæk, Handels- & Søfartsmuseet på Kronborg, Søhistoriske Skrifter XIX, Falcon 1996, p.95. and p. 103 where he quotes Jens Søffrensøn Nør-Nissom, *En kort Dansk Krønike*, Copenhagen 1649, introduction:”som vel mener deres kære fädreland, og af et oprigtigt hjerte søger dets bedste og gavn mod dets fjender.” For the introduction of *franc-archers* in France and militia (under Machiavelli) in Tuscany that led to the institution of Danish militia towards the middle of the 16th century see: John R. Hale, *Guerra e società nell’Europa del Rinascimento*, Laterza 1987, pp.218-222. (War and Society in Renaissance Europe, 1450-1620, Fontana books 1985).

³⁰³ See: Mikael Venge, “Tiden fra 1523-1559” (The years 1523-1559) in Kai Hørby & Mikael Venge, *Danmarks historie* II:a. Tiden 1240-1559 (A History of Denmark 1240-1559), Copenhagen 1980, pp.291-311 and Gustafsson (2000) p.107.

³⁰⁴ Søren Norby himself managed to escape to Livonia from where he went to Russia. He then served the emperor for some years and was killed during the siege of Florence in 1530.

³⁰⁵ Linde-Laursen, p.44.

alias Mickel Göing were first mentioned.³⁰⁶ A characteristic piece of “irregular” war tactics that Mikkel Gyding practised was that he and his men fought in the rear of the regular troops: the very first time the “snaphaner” are mentioned in the sources it is in association with what is considered a classical trait of guerrilla warfare. At a later stage in European history, irregular troops would follow closely in the footsteps of the regular army so that they could serve as rear guards. In that position, they could also catch deserters and stragglers and sometimes to finish them off.³⁰⁷ These were all tasks that the fearsome Mikkel and his men managed brilliantly and that were continued by later generations of snaphaner. A cold war was going on between Denmark and Sweden during the latter part of the 16th century and the beginning of the 17th. Yet again the peasants played a crucial role: on direct orders from the king peasant troops were created and exercised in the Scanian provinces. These troops sorted under the responsibilities of the king’s *lensmand*.³⁰⁸ War was finally declared again in April 1611. The direct cause of the war was the northerly Finnmark: areas in Lapland that both Denmark-Norway and Sweden claimed the rights to. The war operations included the so called “Incendiary Expedition” of 1612 when King Gustavus II Adolphus of Sweden and his men laid waste large parts of north-eastern Scania. It should be added in this context that it is not my intention that potential readers of the text should interpret it as if the Danes were innocent victims. I am trying to write a brief background of Scanian early modern history before the Scanian War, and to study what precedents the friskytter/snaphaner might have had during that era. For that reason, I have not paid much attention to other war zones, but the Danes certainly committed atrocities too. During this war the areas of Småland and Öland were particularly exposed to Danish violence.

Mercenary troops had never been a great success Scandinavia. As with many other things this “European” trend did not have much success in a part of the world where

³⁰⁶ The Seven Years’ War was something of a catastrophe for the inhabitants of the war zones that yet another time included Scania as a prime scene. The bone of contention this time was the Baltic provinces: the island of Ösel and modern-day Estonia. It was only with the peace of Stettin in 1570 that the Nordic Union was formally dissolved. For information on Mikkel Gyding see: Stefan Persson, pp.372-373.

³⁰⁷ See: Kunisch, p.19.

³⁰⁸ The *lensmand* corresponded roughly to the French *intendants* and were not responsible to the local administration. See: Ertman, p.308, but also Appel, p. 673. Appel also explains the significance of the different Danish administrative units *len* and *amt*, and the difference between a *lensmand* and an *amtsmand*. See Appel, pp. 366-378.

there weren't any cities (according to European standards) until the 19th century and the climate is either arctic or almost so. Consequently, irregular warfare in Scandinavia can hardly be seen as a substitute for mercenary troops that were never a big hit there, although on a European scale the irregulars that were so characteristic of the Absolutist armies have often been explained in that light.³⁰⁹ In Scandinavia the mercenaries were not substituted by massive, sluggish armies in combination with swift irregular detachments. Instead, the Danish peasant armies became ever more professional, first under the German knights and a never-ending stream of foreign officers, then under the leadership of *lensmænd* and other officials that were sent out by the state to make warriors of them. In Sweden there were never any German knights, but a certain number of foreign officers. Some made part of the limited number of mercenary troops that after all existed in Scandinavia where it was comparatively easy for them to rise in rank and even become noblemen. The peasant troops were organised under stricter military forms during Horn's War (1643-1645), which was yet another "ramification" of the Thirty-Years' War.³¹⁰ Jutland was invaded by the Swedes in January 1643, Scania by the troops of field marshal Gustav Horn in February that same year. A royal order from Christmas Eve 1643 urged the *lensmænd* of Scania to prepare their peasant troops. The *lensmand* of Christianstad Ebbe Ulfeld, who was also the king's son-in-law, became commander-in-chief of both the regular troops and the peasant troops.³¹¹

It is from that war that the report on the *snaphaner* in Scania and Holsten that I quoted at the beginning of the chapter dates. In it the *snaphaner* were described as quite ordinary peasants who fought the enemy with all their might. Another report from the same year regards the *snaphaner* in Jutland: a French envoy by the name of de la Thuillerie had ended up in the hands of the *snaphaner* on his way from Hamburg to the Swedish quarters general in Denmark. de la Thuillerie later wrote to secretary of state Count de Brienne and to Mazarin to tell of his little adventure:

³⁰⁹ Kunisch, p.2. Kunisch studied the Austrian irregular troops from 1740-1790 but most of his theories can be applied to late 17th century Scandinavia as well; what interested Kunisch was the nexus absolutism-irregular troops and I feel that the *friskytter*/*snaphaner* fit perfectly into this pattern in its own, Scandinavian way.

³¹⁰ Sörensson, p.5. Skansjö pp.168–171 on Scandinavia and the Thirty-Years'-War.

³¹¹ Skansjö, p. 170. Ulfeld later went over to the Swedes and was employed as a "snaphane-catcher". Due to his experience of Danish peasant troops, he was also considered an expert in the field of *snaphaner*: which implies that those two categories were, perhaps, closely associated in the Swedish imagination.

“On my way from Hamborg...I ended up in the hands of the snaphaner (les chapans). They are rebellious and armed peasants, of whom everyone has tried to frighten me. But far from hurting me, they escorted me through all dangerous places, with so many blessings and prayers for the success of my peace negotiations, so that it is obvious that these poor people are driven by desperation rather than evil, and that they have been forced to lead the life they are leading because they cannot manage to pay all the “contributions” they are burdened with. Although there is only seven- or eight hundred of them, they nevertheless cause the Swedish army great damage; because since this country is full of woods, they always manage to surprise one or other (Swede) and then they kill him, even if he is an officer or of even higher rank. But the worst problem is that they interrupt connections between this town and Hamburg, unless there is a considerable escort troop, but that is very tiring for the troops.”³¹²

This letter and the *Report on the Snaphaner in Scania and Holsten* agree on almost all points as to the way the snaphaner are described. At this point in time many of the characteristics of the snaphaner/friskytter of the Scanian War were already there: ordinary, and even religious, peasants that ambushed the enemy who was not just anybody who happened to have some money, as brigands would have done, but rather enemy soldiers from the invading army. They hustled cattle (from the enemy) and interrupted communications so that the “big” war was facilitated. All these characteristics were present thirty-odd years later, too.

Around this time, the Swedish authorities created so-called “border brigades”.³¹³ The peasants appreciated this idea and in a short time 400 men were enlisted within the confines of one hundred³¹⁴; more than four times the result of an ordinary conscription muster. The commander of the Swedish dragoons was a professional soldier, but the other officers were locals. Most of them were not professional soldiers. The state provided these dragoons with equipment.³¹⁵

The Danes followed suit. Dragoon companies were enlisted in the border areas: many of these men came from the province of Halland that was officially under Swedish rule. Whether this was a choice influenced by the Swedes, as Sörensson declared³¹⁶, or whether it was the result of general European tendencies in this direction, or both, is difficult to say. A company of 100 was enlisted by a man called Svend Poulsen who

³¹² *Historiske samlinger og studier vedrørende danske forhold i det 17. aarhundrede*, (Historical Collections and Studies Regarding the State of Things in 18th Century Denmark), ed. Holger Rørדם, Copenhagen 1896, pp. 477-478. The letter is dated Haderslev 24th June 1644. This letter has kindly been put to my notice by Dr. Stefan Persson.

³¹³ Sörensson, p.5.

³¹⁴ District divisions into “hundreds” is an old Germanic tradition. In Christian times it normally comprised several parishes.

³¹⁵ Sörensson, p.5.

³¹⁶ Sörensson, p.6.

would go to history as “Gøngehøvdingen”, the leader of the warriors from the Gønge area. His life would become the subject of endless academic squabbles, even more endless soap operas and the occasional acceptable novel. Not to mention exhibitions, comics, musicals and records. As a young man Poulsen had participated in the Thirty Years’ War and he had considerable experience as a mercenary on the continent. Now that war was drawing close to his native Halland again he appears for the first time in the Danish military records as the captain of the 100 dragoons that patrolled the ridge between Halland and Scania, dragoons that have gone to history as snaphaner or simply, “the Gønger”.³¹⁷ Exactly the same formation pattern would become the norm during the Snaphane War when the vast majority of the men were locals, some with military experience from the regular army, but most not, and then an addition of a few professional officers that had been sent out from Copenhagen. As we will see later, the difference between peasants, snaphaner, Gønger, dragoons and later, friskytter remained vague, even in the military records.³¹⁸ Many of these dragoons, like Poulsen himself, came from the province of Halland that had been under Swedish rule for twelve years in 1657 and now that a new inter-Scandinavian war seemed to be drawing closer, they all wanted revenge.

Apart from the dragoon companies that at least in part, have gone to history as “snaphaner”, the so-called “landstorm” was kept intact: the landstorm was constituted by ordinary peasants in arms. They were divided into companies and every detachment had its own captain and a lieutenant. Every detachment represented a parish or hundred. In 1657 the Danes followed suit. The authorities wanted to organise a company of peasant troops in every hundred.³¹⁹ The younger and stronger of these peasants were not only supposed to defend their own area but also participate in raids on the other side of the border. The Swedish border-dragoons, Poulsen’s dragoons and the Danish peasant troops all participated in the main offensive apart

³¹⁷ He had recruited these men himself as stated in the licence. For an account of Poulsen’s life see: Gitte Kjær, *Svend Poulsen Gønge – i virkligheten*, (SVP – in real life), Skippershoved 1992. Kjær (pp.9 and 66) has attested his military career from 1625-1677. Poulsen died missing in action at a considerable age.

³¹⁸ Most of the snaphaner that survived the Scanian war wanted to be transferred to regular dragoon units in the Danish army.

³¹⁹ This was not only the case in Scania but in the rest of Denmark too. More than a thousand peasants were killed by the Swedes in the forest of Iversnæs on the island of Fyen. Only some days after the fortress of Hindsgavl at Middelfart surrendered to Rutger von Ascheberg and his men. The 450 Danish soldiers were enrolled in the Swedish army. This seems to have been the norm.

from playing an important role in the so-called “little war”, which today would be called guerrilla activities. A Danish attempt to extend Poulsen’s dragoon organisation to the Gønge area itself was prevented by the intervention of the Swedish border-dragoons that ambushed the actual mustering place.³²⁰

In 1658 the Swedes had won again and this time a temporary lease on Halland was not enough. Denmark had to cede the whole of the Scanian provinces, eastern Denmark, for ever and after.

When the Swedes arrived, they promptly started conscripting young men. Since Scanians were not allowed to do military service in their own region they were sent off to the Swedish provinces on the other side of the Baltic where they might be more inclined to turn their guns the right way in battle. Tax exactions were sometimes violent under the Swedes. Erlandsson has found that it was not unusual to bring the military in.³²¹ In May 1658 several hundred peasants gathered in the village of Glimåkra (Glimager) and shot seven Swedish dragoons. In Gønge several hundred peasants were conscripted during that summer, but the conscripts escaped almost to a man and took to the woods. At about this time count Ebbe Ulfeld declared that:

“A people that is not used to such harsh treatment, that has only recently come under the crown of Sweden, that are tough by nature, are bound to join forces with the runaway cavalrymen now that the vast woodlands are green...”³²²

Ulfeld, who was a native Scanian himself, knew that a “little war” was only to be expected. Malcontent, armed peasants, dragoons and green woods spelled snaphaner.

In 1659 there were continuous Swedish reports of rebellious peasants and attacks on Swedish military patrols, especially in the woods along the border. In the summer of that year a rich farmer from Holje called Oluv Perssön called the men of four whole parishes together and organised an attack on a Swedish dragoon company. In the autumn colonel Lybecker and his men were sent out to try and “pacify” Glimåkra (Glimager) and Jämshög (Gemsø). Oluv Perssön told him “You will not always be

³²⁰ Sörensson, p.6. On the same page Sörensson also claims that this kind of troops were “branded as snaphaner” by the enemy. See also Johnsson who has published important documents on the snaphaner/rebels of 1658-1660.

³²¹ Erlandsson, p.146 and p.166. Jørgen Krabbe in his day claimed the same thing both before and during the Scanian War, but we will come to that in the chapter on Krabbe.

³²² Åberg 1958, p.47: ”Ett folk ovant vid sådant hårt traktamente, nyligen kommet under Sveriges krona, käckta av naturen, och nu då den gröna stora skogen är för handen, skall de rota sig tillhoppa med de bortrymda ryttarna.”

that strong. Sooner or later our divorce will come through!”³²³ Some time later Lybecker came back and burnt down part of the worst villages, killed some peasants and sent Oluv Perssön to prison.

One of the most convincing points in Åberg’s works is his analysis of the Swedish donation policy during the first years after the conquest. He sees this policy as the origin of the widespread abuse and maltreatments of the local population on the side of the army. At the outset the army was supposed to live off the lands of the Swedish Crown in Scania: lands that had been taken over from the Danish Crown and the nobility. But by and by these lands were donated to Swedish noblemen, officials and administrators who wanted something in return for their efforts in Scania.

Consequently, the army had to squeeze out the means for their upkeep from the local population.³²⁴ I believe that Åberg is right in seeing this as one of the main propellants of the “rebellion” of the Danes and the consequent Snaphane War.

There were new conscriptions, although it has been disputed how many people were conscripted in Scania and how much influence that had on the people around them. In the summer of 1674 about 500 men from Göinge were sent to Pomerania. Two years later they were transferred to Livonia “so that the occasion to escape would not present itself so easily to them.” At about this time another 500 men were conscripted from Gønge but 300 of them escaped before reaching the Swedish fortress.³²⁵

Scanians were not allowed to do normal military service during the reign of Charles XI³²⁶ but nevertheless Scania had to keep as many soldiers as other parts of the Swedish reigns: only that in Scania these soldiers were not locals but Swedish soldiers that were billeted with farmers. The nationality of the soldiers could naturally vary, as

³²³ Åberg 1958, p.55. See also Fabricius’ account of the snaphaner 1658-1660 in Fabricius I (“Snaphanebevægelsen 1658-1660”), pp.131-151.

³²⁴ Åberg 1958, pp.75–77.

³²⁵ Åberg 1958, pp.81–82.

³²⁶ It was only in 1698 that Scanians were officially allowed to become “ryttare”, the sort of dragoon that was kept and equipped by a farmer according to Swedish law. Sometimes the farmer himself did service as “ryttare”. In the case of Eskeld Nielsen the friskytte captain, he claimed that he had been constrained to keep a Swedish “ryttare” and that when the soldier died, he was expected to take his place, which he refused to do. Captain Eskeld was Scanian, so there were probably exclusions to the rule. In Scania there were two Swedish cavalry regiments, the northern and southern Scanian Cavalry Regiments, that comprised approximately 2000 men. See: Göran Larsson, “Aldrig mera – Skånska krigets följder för svensk militär organisation och taktik” (Never Again – The Consequences of the Scanian War for Swedish Military Organisation and Tactics), pp.352-362 in Göran Rydstad (ed.), *Kampen om Skåne*, (The Battle for Scania), Falun 2005, p.357.

the Swedish army contained many foreign mercenaries too. Eventually these lodgers even obtained right of inheritance to the farmsteads they were billeted in.³²⁷

The so-called Scanian Commission has been interpreted in different ways. The Swedish king founded it on a temporary basis as a means of evaluating the situation in the Scanian provinces.³²⁸ Already in 1886 S. Wägner explained that the Scanian Commission could only be seen in the light of the war and the widespread misery that it had brought down on the land. Wägner claimed that the population did not see the Scanian provinces as incorporated into Sweden but as “half foreign” and that this belief was strengthened by the fact that Swedish soldiers were billeted in a manner that was only the norm in enemy territory. The soldiers saw the peasants they lodged with as enemies and not as fellow countrymen because this kind of system existed in enemy country only.³²⁹ This view was supported by Per Johnsson in his *The Snaphane Feud* in which he claims that during the inter-war period of 1660-1675 the situation was calm on the surface, but malcontent was breeding underneath. On the basis of his scrutiny of the acts of the Scanian commission Johnsson claimed the inter war-period and the consequent billeting was oppressive and that both the billeted soldiers and other visiting soldiers behaved outrageously.³³⁰ He was aware that some of the supplicants might have exaggerated the misery their Swedish “guests” brought upon them but he believed there was ample evidence to prove that the peasants had suffered unnecessarily from the unprecedented billeting of soldiers in their homes.³³¹ According to Johnsson “the internal situation in northern Scania after the transition to Sweden was deplorable, and for this reason one must not be surprised by the fact that

³²⁷ In the same manner as with the conscriptions it is hard to say what the real consequences of this norm were. We do not know today how many soldiers inherited their host’s home and wife.

³²⁸ The peasants found themselves in the constant presence of soldiers that reminded them of their status as “conquered” subjects. Occasional outbreaks of protest were quickly calmed down by the military. For fifteen years the Scanian provinces remained in a state of semi-occupation.

³²⁹ Wägner’s *Skånska kommissionen af 1669–1670*, Lund 1886

³³⁰ Johnsson lists several complaints in the commission documents, and a few single courtcases like the one from Ronneby 23rd May 1658 when a group of Swedish soldiers had, as they thought, come down upon a den of snaphaner at Ramdala but only managed to shoot down a couple of civilians. The Swedes also tortured the vicar of Jemsjö and Ramdala Måns Ågesen. Eventually the Swedish soldiers were convicted: three of them to the death penalty, the one who had abused of the vicar to run the gauntlet six times through one hundred men and the last two to be imprisoned in chains for fourteen days. See: Johnsson, p.25. The original documents are to be found in the “Rebellernas Acta”, LA. See also: Johnsson pp.25-26 for a long list of violence against civilians in the border area just after the Swedish take-over.

³³¹ Johnsson, pp. 13-27.

the snaphane movement found such fertile soil in that area.”³³² Almost a century later Karl Bergman hypothesised that although the commission was a normal measure and not a measure the state took to in times of crises, the failure of the Scanian commission might have led to the revolt of the snaphaner.³³³ Røndahl in his turn indicates the court case against a Swede called Liljenberg who had settled in Ingelstad (Ingelsted) in the south-east of Scania where he abused the locals viciously. If those were normal conditions during the inter-war period, the situation must indeed have been intolerable for the indigenous population. To Røndahl the connection between the insistent complaints of the peasants and the rebellion of 1675-79 is obvious.³³⁴ In a recent article, Jens Lerbom stresses that the Swedish authorities did not approve of violence against civilians at all: in fact, military offenders were generally punished more severely than civilian criminals.³³⁵ The violent episodes that took place were neither authorised nor encouraged by the Swedish state. Nor were they a direct result of the Swedish take-over, but, as Lerbom sees it, should be seen in a larger cultural framework of early modern concepts of honour and masculinity, inclusion and exclusion, soldierly camaraderie, and pub brawls. Ethnicity played a very limited role in the episodes studied by Lerbom.³³⁶

³³² Johnsson, p.19.

³³³ See Bergman, pp.377-378: “On the basis of my analysis it is difficult to extrapolate to what extent the complaints (to the Scanian Commission) led to actual changes. But it does not seem as if rapid or direct measures were the scope or strength of the commission. On that basis it is possible to draw the conclusion that the commission was a failure. The snaphane movement during the Scanian War might be an indicator in that direction, the faith of the population had not been won over. But one could also turn the question around and ask what would have happened if the Scanian commission had not carried through their journeys and if they had not dialogued with the population. What shape would the conflict then have taken on?”. Bergman’s thesis is excellent in that it delves deep into questions such as the one mentioned here, without pretending to give definite answers. I believe that Bergman has overseen one fact. Namely that the commission acted in the wake of a war. There is no mention of this as any kind of non-normal situation in Bergman but has war and conquest ever constituted normal situations?

³³⁴ Røndahl, 1996, pp.190-191. Now, the Liljenberg case was not the norm since Liljenberg was called back to Stockholm and his “fief” Ingelsted given to someone else. Røndahl refers to the county assizes of Ingelstad, March 1670 and to S. Wägner’s book (from 1886), on the Scanian Commission to which the peasants presented their case. A special investigation into this case was done by Jørgen Krabbe and Lejonsköld.

³³⁵ Jens Lerbom, “Våldets regionala realiteter. Soldaters dödliga våld mot civila i Skåne och Blekinge 1660–1675.” (The Regional Realities of Violence. Deathly Military Violence against Civilians in Scania and Blekinge 1660-1675), pp. 272-285, in *Våld – representation och verklighet*. (Violence-Representation and Reality), Eva Österberg and Marie Lindstedt Cronberg, Lund 2006, quote p. 275.

³³⁶ Lerbom 2007, p.279. Lerbom (p.274) has managed to track down thirteen cases of deathly military violence against civilians during the period from 1660-1675 of which two cases were involuntary manslaughter.

Conclusions

Age old familiarity with firearms, the habitude of defending oneself and one's king and country in person, incipient nationalism that was fuelled by the *defensio patriae* movement, surrender to the archenemy and consequent humiliations, financial changes and deterioration which were attributed to the arrival of the new overlords, the partial failure of the Swedish state to create a sustainable situation with its Commission... All these factors were important for the development of the snaphane movement and eventually led to the creation of the King's Friskytter units in the middle of the so-called Snaphane War.

The Snaphane War

Introduction

In this long chapter I will analyse the role of the friskytter/snaphaner during the Scanian War and on how the "snaphane threat" was met by the Swedes. I chose to call this section "The Snaphane War" because to the snaphaner that was certainly what it was, and this thesis centres upon their work and their motivations. Please note that by a "snaphane war" I do not intend to say that there was ever a war waged by "snaphaner" on their own or for their own scopes, in the sense that Martin Weibull and various other scholars have believed there was. The snaphaner/friskytter could and would not have existed without the support of the Danish king and the Danish army. It is important to stress that neither this thesis, nor this section of it, are intended to take a general overview of the so-called Scanian War. It is the part that the snaphaner/friskytter played in it that I am trying to analyse here, as outlined against the bigger conflict, the Scanian War. In my general outline of that war, I have by and large followed Jacobsen, Jensen and Fabricius, though I have included more recent analyses of events like those of Lars Ericson (Wolke), Sten Skansjö and Göran Rystad. As Rystad correctly stresses in his *The Battle for Scania*, the Scanian War was determined not by the battle of Lund, not by the snaphaner, not by anything that happened in Scania at all but by the war on the plains in Flanders.³³⁷ But then Rystad is only repeating, or pointing out, what Sthen Jacobsen tried to say with his *Chronicle of the Nordic War*, more than three hundred years earlier: first of all he called it a "Nordic" war, that included various northern European territories and

³³⁷ Göran Rystad, "Snapphanarna och 'det lilla kriget'" (The snaphaner and 'the little war'), pp.283–298 in Göran Rystad (ed.), *Kampen om Skåne*, (The Battle for Scania), Falun 2005, p.297.

started and ended outside the Scanian provinces, secondly it was a war between kings for the lordship of these various strips of land, and thirdly, the end of the war and the destiny of the contested land strips were decided from outside, by the then super powers of world politics according to what they saw as the convenience of the general European situation. But Jacobsen ascribed a role to “the snaphaner who wanted to be called friskytter” and in his chronicle as in most other accounts of the Scanian War, and sources from it, these persons occupy space on almost every page that deal with the war scene and politics in the Scanian provinces. In this thesis I have certainly not tried to write or re-write the history of the Scanian War.³³⁸ I have only tried to shed some light on an aspect of it that has been left largely unexplored, although the “memory” of it draws busloads of tourists across south-eastern Scandinavia to see the places where it all took place and the houses where the snaphaner lived. An enormous amount of attention has been paid to the snaphaner and the Snaphane War, and a lot of people have a lot of different opinions on the issue. Other important works on the Scanian War and/or the Transition Era that I have also consulted include Colonel N.P. Jensen’s *The Scanian War* from 1900 and Oscar Bjurling’s contribution to his own and Salomon Kraft’s *History of Ystad*.³³⁹

As I have already mentioned, what little serious research has been done can almost entirely be traced back to Knud Fabricius, in the sense that no academics seem to have worked in at least the Danish archives since his days. Pehr Sörensson’s attempt to draw some serious conclusions about the nature of the friskytte corps on the basis of Army Board accounts has been largely ignored.³⁴⁰ So much theorising and mythicising has been done but we still do not really know what the snaphaner/friskytter *did* during the Scanian War. What was their role in the operations? Göran Rystad may be perfectly correct in guessing that whatever the friskytter/snaphaner did was in vain but what did they do? Until today the picture of the friskytter/snaphaner’s actions has been dominated by myths. The sources tell us there were quite many of them and a quick scrutiny is enough to realise that the

³³⁸ N.P. Jensen, *Den skaanske Krig 1675–1679*, Kjøbenhavn 1900.

³³⁹ Oscar Bjurling, “1658–1792”, pp.175–507 in Salomon Kraft and Oscar Bjurling, *Ystads Historia, Del I, Från äldsta tid till 1792*, (A History of Ystad. Part I, From the oldest times until 1792), Ystad 1956.

³⁴⁰ The exception to the rule is Kim Wagner’s excellent book on Svend Poulsen during the war of 1657-1660. I would like to thank archivist Nils Bartholdy of the National Archives in Copenhagen for having informed me of Wagner’s work at an early stage.

friskytter/snaphaner were involved in all sorts of different contexts during the war. So, even if we know today that their fight was in vain, it still seems interesting enough to me to try to obtain a general picture of what they did, what an ordinary workday in the life of a friskytte looked like, and if possible, why they did it. We should try to remember that neither they nor the Danish authorities knew that it would all be in vain. It has often even been denied that the snaphaner fought at all. Although for example Sthen Jacobsen clearly stated that the snaphaner participated in battles jointly with the regular army and undertook major actions on their own, later historians have often discarded the snaphaner as robbers who probably hid in their dens with their gold and their women when they were not prowling on decent people. That view is a myth, as is the view that nationalistic Danes and Scanians have traditionally taken of Svend Poulsen and his Gønger. In this context I feel that it is suitable to quote Kim A. Wagner who has written an excellent biography on “the real” Svend Poulsen during the war of 1657-1660. Wagner claims that Poulsen “was reduced to a myth and a symbol, which rendered the entire topic irrelevant to 17th century history. There is nothing wrong with all that, historical myths also have a function and a justification – as long as you do not mix them up with truth.” In his book Wagner tried to point out that maybe the real Svend Poulsen was not quite as blond and noble of heart and passions as in the television series *but* he was a very professional soldier who fought four long wars from the Thirty Years’ War onwards and he was the brain behind very effective guerrilla attacks against Swedish convoys in southern Zealand during the Karl Gustav Wars. I would like to take the occasion to stress that I think that it is the same thing whether one makes the snaphaner out to be super blond superheroes or mentally disturbed villains³⁴¹, both versions make excellent soap opera subjects, but we will not find them in the sources.

The Return of the Danish King

Introduction

In this section I will analyse the events of the first few months after the Danes took control of Scania again in June 1676. Nothing like the King’s Friskytter was then existent but the corps would soon enough crystallise from the various attempts at using popular resistance and guerrilla methods to fight the enemy. Throughout my

³⁴¹ Please see “Introduction” p.25 where I refer to Gyllix’s and Flensmarck’s conclusions on the snaphaner.

account of the events of the Scanian War I will try to put emphasis on the nexus peasants-snaphaner-friskytter-regular army-authorities. During the first phases of the fighting there was a lot of confusion regarding who was what and what role they were to play during combat and during military operations (including looting).

Peasant Troops and Border Guards

When King Christian V of Denmark returned to what he considered his lost lands in 1676 he did not come as a conqueror but as a rightful sovereign.³⁴² To the Swedes he was an invader, but King Christian offered the Scanians an alternative view of the matter. He claimed that he had been suffering great distress and despondency during the years that he had been constrained to watch the humiliations the Scanians had endured under the Swedish yoke.³⁴³ According to that point of view the Swedes could be equalled to the Babylonians who held the poor Jews captive in a foreign land.³⁴⁴ King Christian reminded the Scanians that the Swedes had broken every single paragraph of the Roskilde peace treaty and consequently the Swedes themselves had freed the Scanians from every obligation to their new masters. Scania was immediately re-organised in accordance with the new, absolutist-invented administration system that divided the kingdom of Denmark into “amt” units.³⁴⁵ The Scanians did not have to swear new oaths of allegiance and just like all other Danes they were urged to enrol in the Danish army. Those who chose not to do so were encouraged to rise against the Swedes anyway.³⁴⁶ In this manner the Scanians were provided both with an official excuse for rebellion and with hope of victory. During the whole war the Danish cause depended largely on popular support and active

³⁴² The Danes claimed that the Swedes had forsaken their right to the Scanian provinces by breaking important paragraphs of the Roskilde Treaty. The Swedes were convinced that they still had a conqueror's right to the lands they had been ceded in 1658 and 1660 and that King Christian was the invader. I am not trying to decide once and for all who was right there. I am only trying to present the Danish case as King Christian was justifying it to the people in his propaganda. In this thesis as a whole, I have tried to study the underpinnings of the motivations of the “snaphaner” and the Danish authorities provided them with justifications in decrees like the one I refer to here. The official Danish discourse did not at all consider the Danish presence in Scania as an invasion but as a liberation operation that had freed them from the Babylonian yoke.

³⁴³ That this was the official Danish view can be discerned from the pamphlets that were sent out to the Scanians at about this time. See: Weibull, *Samlingar till Skånes historia*, VI, p.19.

³⁴⁴ Cf. Tue Tuesen who claimed that the Swedes who condemned him to decapitation were indeed a “foreign land” to him. Cf. Also the Book of Psalms 137:1: “By the rivers of Babylon, when we sat down and when we cried...when we remembered Sion...how can we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?”.

³⁴⁵ Sörensson pp.14-15.

³⁴⁶ Every man who went into Danish service was promised 5 *rigsdaler* and all others who supported the Danish cause would be rewarded for their service. Those who did not support the Danish cause would be severely punished. See: Åberg 1958, p.84.

participation in combat by non-regular troops and the people who provided the support and armed assistance to the Danish state were in their turn provided with a justification for their actions by the Danish state. And with hope, of course.

Hazardous actions like participation in resistance movements or guerrilla war, or perhaps any war at all, would hardly be undertaken if it was not for the hope of a better future.

Right from the beginning of the war we see snaphaner, peasants and regular troops acting together: on 25th July 1676 a united force of Danish cavalry, snaphaner and peasants ambushed King Charles's XI luggage train and the Swedish Crown treasure at the village of Loshult.³⁴⁷ In fact, some Swedish peasants also dragged part of the booty across the border. As soon as news of the raid reached King Christian a cavalry troop of 100 were sent to help the Gønger at Loshult.³⁴⁸ But at the very same time the Danish authorities were getting wary of the unruly freelancers. On 27th July the king annulled the licences that he had already issued to various snaphane-captains. All those who wanted to serve King Christian should join the regular army instead, preferably Colonel Steen Brahe's regiment of Scanian dragoons. Unauthorised looting and destruction of Swedish property in Scania was to be severely punished. Sörensson stressed that this decree is only to be found as a vague outline in the Danish archives: therefore we cannot be sure whether it was ever issued.³⁴⁹ However, it is obvious from sources that Sörensson did not consult, that friskytter were in fact arrested and court-martialled for unlawful lootings and other offences.³⁵⁰ The point here is, however, that the snaphaner were generally *not* accused of attacking Danish/Scanian property too, which they would have been if they had been thugs. Nevertheless, the peasants were still encouraged to rise against the Swedes and so they did.³⁵¹ This indicates that there was (in the minds of the Danish commanders at least) a difference between snaphaner/friskytter and peasants in arms, at this point of the war. Meanwhile, the

³⁴⁷ Åberg, p.90. Johnsson, pp.52–54. Two days after the Danish king prohibited all kinds of private guerilla warfare and asked that those who supported him should report to the regular army.

³⁴⁸ In 2002 a Scanian farmer revealed that he had one part of the Loshult treasure in his barn where his family had always kept it hidden. The rest of the treasure has not been found, though people in the area claim they know where it is.

³⁴⁹ Sörensson p.10. The document he refers to is: Krigskollegiets udgaaede Sager (U.S.), Outgoing mail, 1676-77, no 1209, DRA.

³⁵⁰ Fabricius, vol.III. pp.102-105. See also: Marie Hanßdatter's petition to the king from 1679 (469:831, DRA) in which she pleads for mercy for her fiancé who was a friskytte and who had been arrested and thrown in prison on the charge of pillage in the Børringe area.

³⁵¹ Sthen Jacobsen claimed that the snaphaner would just as well go for a Dane as a Swede.

authorities were hoping that the whole of the province of Blekinge (Bleging) would be reconquered in the same manner as the Swedish Crown treasury had been obtained: that is, through the rebellion of the peasants with the help of limited regular troops.³⁵² In response to the pleas for assistance from the inhabitants of the border area on September 3rd 1676 King Christian ordered that Colonel Steen Brahe and Hans Detlev Steensen should set out with their (regular) regiments to help the people of Blekinge (Bleging) and Göinge (Gønge).³⁵³ Their main task would be to help the locals fight back the assaults of the neighbouring Swedish peasants and to protect the King's subjects in general. These peasant troops were also encouraged to cause the enemy rear as much damage as possible, just as Mikkel Gyng with his snaphaner had been ordered to do more than a hundred years earlier.³⁵⁴ Colonel Steensen was ordered to the Gønge area with his men in order to meet the Swedish onslaught and to organise border guard troops and an efficient resistance strategy. This kind of peasant troops that were organised by Colonel Steensen were under the command either of the sheriff (ridefoged) or an official Danish officer.³⁵⁵ According to Jensen the "small corps" that Brahe was sent out to create were called Snaphaner and they were supposed to operate in the enemy rear and cut off all kinds of communications and provisioning: "Naturally the importance of the snaphaner increased the further the Swedish army penetrated into Scania for in doing that its communication lines lengthened."³⁵⁶ In that sense, Jensen and the snaphane and future minister of the church Jacob Wesseltoft agreed that "Where there is no *Durchmarch* there are no snaphaner".³⁵⁷ Jensen further claims that snaphaner of that kind co-operated with the "parties" that were sent out from the Danish main army, often enough on the orders of General Major Meerheim and Colonel (oberstløjtnant) Schwanewedel. As is clear from Sthen Jacobsen's accounts, Herman Franz Schwanewedel often enough

³⁵² U.S., 29th July 1676, No: 1212, DRA. Quoted by Sörensson, p.10.

³⁵³ Jensen, p. 172 and Sörensson, p. 13. Referring to orders to Colonels Sten Brahe and Hans Detlev Steensen, 3rd September 1676, U.S, No 1396, 1397, DRA. For the latter see also: Oberstløjtnant J.C.W Hirsch og Premierløjtnant Kay Hirsch, *Fortegnelse over de danske og norske Officerer med Flere fra 1648-1814*, (A Register of Danish and Norwegian Officers and Others 1648-1814) Ny kgl. Saml 1586, 2o, KB (referred to as Hirsch & Hirsch in this thesis), vol. XI: Hans Detlev Steensen.

³⁵⁴ Fabricius III, pp. 35-36 and p. 61.

³⁵⁵ Sörensson, p.15. Presumably, Pieter Sten(sen) alias Peter Sten alias Per Stensson was one of them. See also the section on Pieter Sten in this thesis.

³⁵⁶ Jensen, p.172.

³⁵⁷ See p. 314 of this thesis.

commanded these operations in person.³⁵⁸ The line between this kind of troops and “snaphaner” was thin or non-existent.

Many of the characteristics described here as typical tasks for the snaphaner, friskytter or peasant troops would have suited perfectly in Russian partisan commander General Denis Davidoff’s *Essay on Partisan Warfare* from the 19th century, in which he concluded that partisan forces should always operate in support of regular forces and not as a force on its own. Tasks that Davidoff considered suitable for partisans to deal with included the following active missions: “attacking the enemy where he least expected it, burning magazines, hospitals and other establishments in the enemy rear, and destroying units moving to join their parent army”. Passive missions included “alerting forces about the approach of enemy reinforcements, locating enemy supply depots and regrouping areas, and employing obstacles to slow the enemy’s retreat”³⁵⁹ Generally irregulars travelled lighter than regular soldiers.

By August 1676 the fortress of Karlshamn (then spelt “Carlshamn”) was the only place in Blekinge that was still in the hands of the Swedes: then it was besieged by a troop of approximately 200 peasants under the command of the sheriff (ridefoged) of the hundreds of Lister and Bräkne (Bregne) Johan Johansen Hollænder. But the Danish king was preparing Admiral Tromp for a conquest from the sea of Kristianopel (Christianopel) and Karlshamn and on 30th August he sent over drawings of both strongholds to the admiral.³⁶⁰ The Danish troops³⁶¹ kept the Karlshamn fortress under siege on the landside until the beginning of October when the Danish fleet under Admiral Rodsten managed to ship over some regular troops that quickly conquered the fortress with the help of the landside troops.³⁶² After that the fortress was manned with 100 regular foot soldiers and 100 peasants from Blekinge.³⁶³ Sheriff

³⁵⁸ Jacobsen, p. 68 and p.79 etc.

³⁵⁹ Grenkevich, p.2.

³⁶⁰ See: Jensen, p.152.

³⁶¹ Sörensson (p.12) claimed they were peasant troops under Sheriff Hollænder, Jensen (p.153) that that the Danish troops that blockaded the landside were Colonel Brahe’s troops. However, one does not exclude the other.

³⁶² See: Jensen, p.153.

³⁶³ Lützwow to Arensdorff, 17th October 1676, I.S., no: 593, DRA, this letter is mentioned by Sörensson, p.12. Fabricius has also based part of his account of the events in eastern Blekinge during October-November 1677 on both Colonel Aegidius Lützwow’s and his brother Lieutenant Colonel (oberstløjtnant) B. Valentin’s reports to the authorities that are to be found in the War College

Hollænder also organised border guards along the Blekinge (Bleging) border to Sweden. These guards were supposed to prevent the reading out of Swedish decrees. They were also charged with the task of collecting war taxes for the Danish crown – a task that would also fall to the lot of the friskytter. Co-operation between non-regular and regular forces was the rule during the Scanian War, as it had been for generations.

Sheriff Hollænder had a colleague in the neighbouring hundred of Östra (Østre) who was called Michel Mørch. Mørch reported to Copenhagen that he had mustered all the men in the hundred and that he had divided them all into a detachment and a captain for every parish. Unfortunately, there was a dearth of guns. All in all, he had managed to muster four companies of peasant troops and a company of dragoons that he would bring to the regular army. Some of the dragoons were Danes that had served in the Swedish army, and some were “snaphaner” whom he had persuaded to go regular. Mørch was aiming at a total incorporation of the snaphaner into the regular troops or perhaps a merger with the peasant troops. The second option was obviously less attractive since the snaphaner considered themselves dragoons and not foot soldiers. Mørch was against the snaphane-system because it ruined the peasants. From Mørch’s reports to the War Ministry in Copenhagen we can deduce that there was a debate going on at the time, as to whether the widespread employment of irregular troops was more efficient than reliance on troops that were tighter knit to the central authorities. Mørch felt that the snaphaner (whom he defined as “cavalry that fought almost independently from the army”) were dangerous and that just like Hollænder claimed, the peasant troops were hard to keep at rein too, because they were too eager to shoot or kill any male of the Swedish nation with their long knives and that they all wanted “all Swedes out of the country.”³⁶⁴ To Mørch they all needed to be closer tied to the authorities. He also pleaded to Copenhagen that he might receive assistance in the form of more regular troops.³⁶⁵ Men like Mørch and Hollænder perceived of the snaphaner as a potential threat and an asset at the same time. The Scanian peasants

collections in Copenhagen, although Fabricius does not mention this one. Aegidius was commander of Kristianstad (Christianstad) and Valentin of Kristianopel (Christianopel).

³⁶⁴ Fabricius, p.39.

³⁶⁵ Michel Mørch to the Army Board (General Commissariat), Christianopel, 30th August and 3rd October 1676, I.B, Blekinge, DRA. See: Sørensen, p.12 and Fabricius III, p.38ff. My account of the sheriffs Johan Johansen Hollender’s and Michel Mørch’s organised resistance is based on the accounts of Fabricius and Sørensen. I think the letters that Fabricius and Sørensen refer to are the same, since dates, names and placenames in their footnotes correspond, although they used different collocation systems.

had wreaked havoc in Denmark before (cf. Søren Norby's war) but they had also gained themselves the reputation of being among the most valorous warriors of the kingdom.³⁶⁶ Towards the end of September the sheriffs (ridefogder) along the entire border, from southern Halland to eastern Blekinge were ordered to intensify the work of the border guards and to see to it that every single man in the land was prepared to fight the Swedes in case of an attack from the north.³⁶⁷ And the attack came: on 19th October King Charles XI of Sweden mustered his troops at Ljungby in the very south of "old" Sweden. Four days later the Swedish army crossed the old border to Scania, as the scouts were quick enough to report to the Danish headquarters.³⁶⁸ At the same time the Swedish king sent out two "peasant-armies". One to Kristianopel (Christianopel) under the command of the Scanian count Ebbe Ulfeld³⁶⁹ and the other to Gønge under the command of the Swedish nobleman Pontus De la Gardie.³⁷⁰ The return of the Swedes meant that the Scanians were expected to obey two overlords. Naturally they were supposed to choose between the two and each side punished treason with death. The Danish army gathered at Östra Ljungby (Østre Lyngby) to prevent the Swedes from reaching Malmö (Malmø) which was believed to be their main aim.

The Continuation of the War

At this point, the events take different turns depending on the historical traditions and interpretations. According to the Swedish sources, on 6th November 1676 count Pontus De La Gardie's troops were attacked by "snaphaner" at the Gallrya bridge near Mörrum. On 8th November 1676 Ebbe Ulfeld met the snaphaner who had been waiting for him at modern-day Olsäng and by the bridge of Aspenåsa, but he and his men managed to beat them back. The Danish response (according to the Swedish

³⁶⁶ The Danish king always had Gønger among the Royal Lifeguard.

³⁶⁷ Order to the sheriffs (ridefogder), 30th September 1676, U.S., No: 1539, DRA. See: Sörensson, p.13. The order also stresses that all peasants were divided into troops with an officer for each company.

³⁶⁸ See: Jacobsen, pp.60-61 and Jensen, pp.162-163. The connection between "fogder" and snaphaner/friskytter is thoroughly explored in the section on Captain Bendix.

³⁶⁹ Ulfeld had gathered 2-3000 peasant troops. See: Jensen (p.153) who describes how, on the orders of the king, Ulfeld and his peasants tried to storm the stronghold at Christianopel and when they failed to do so they blockaded the landside so that the Danes could only get in by sea.

³⁷⁰ Jensen, p.163, but also Jacobsen, p.61, though he claimed that "Count Pontus" was sent down to Blekinge (here: Bleging). On 30th October 1677 a peasant reported the following to the Danish camp at Sireköpinge (Serekiöpinge): "Count Pontus has invaded the hundred of Losalt with 6000 peasants and 1800 cavalry and they have burnt the villages down totally and are now on their way to Christianstad." It seems clear from this document that "Count Pontus" passed through Göinge where Loshult (Losalt) is situated. The document is to be found in the 468 Krigskollegiet (Landetaten) collection, 1675-1678 "Forhør over og udsagn af fanger og overløbere":98, DRA.

sources) was to try to assist the snaphaner. B.V. Lützwow, the commander of the battalion at Kristianopel (Christianopel), sent out what the Swedish sources report as “snaphane” troops to assist the others. The leaders on the 8th November were “John Månsson, a major from Olsängen” and also a peasant called Per and a man called “tall Håkan”.³⁷¹ The Danish historian Jensen describes this episode in different terms: according to his sources in the Danish National Archives, the encounter between Ulfeld and the snaphaner on 8th November 1676 was a strategic move from the Danish side and not a haphazard ambush.³⁷²

On 25th September Admiral Rodsten had shipped Valentin von Lützwow’s battalion into Christianopel that had been abandoned and in part destroyed by Swedish troops. The Swedish response was to send out Count Ulfeld with his peasant troops to try to take the fortress by storm, but by the time Ulfeld got there, the fortress and the battlements had been sufficiently repaired to withstand attack and Ulfeld would have had to lay siege to it, which did not have enough funding for.³⁷³ Instead he and his troops blockaded the landside so that from 1st November 1676 Kristianopel (Christianopel) could only be reached by sea. According to Jensen, a “snaphane troop” under Major Jens Monsen, Pehr the Peasant and Tall Hakon were sent in succour of Lützwow, and it came to a battle on 8th November 1676, but Ulfeld managed to hold the snaphaner back.

Although this is an excellent example of how Swedish and Danish sources may vary in their description and/or interpretation of events, it also remains another obvious example of how the snaphaner were assisted or even under the command of the regular military authorities. In that sense Swedish and Danish sources agree. It also gives us further clues as to what sort of targets the snaphaner were set on (by the Danish regular commanders) or chose to attack: Ulfeld, De La Gardie, possibly a succour mission. Finally, these “encounters” give us yet another chance to study in what military contexts Swedish warlords like De La Gardie and Ebbe Ulfeld worked.

³⁷¹ Information based on Professor Winslow’s diaries from the war, UB, but also *Skånska samlingar* 1874, pp.80-81. See also: Johnsson, pp.60-61. The names are Swedised. See also Fabricius III, pp.65-67 for Ulfeld’s and De La Gardie’s movements and encounters with the snaphaner and the peasant troops in this area during the first days of September 1676.

³⁷² Jensen, p.153.

³⁷³ Jensen, p.153.

The provincial capital of Malmö (Malmö) was under siege during large part of the war. The people in the surrounding areas were encouraged to take part in the “landstorm” that was organised in order to support Colonel Holch’s army that was blockading the walled in city.³⁷⁴ There is no way of knowing how many locals actually participated in the “landstorm” on this occasion, but to the Swedes they would have been snaphaner. A notary called Axel Willumsen who had been in command of the local troops on this occasion later reported to the authorities in Copenhagen that he had had 4000 peasants under him.³⁷⁵

Up until the Danish conquest of Kristianstad (Christianstad) on 12th or 15th August 1676³⁷⁶ the Danish “reconquest” was as successful as anybody could have hoped for. Sthen Jacobsen concluded that “Until now the king of Denmark’s weapons had been fortunate, in that His Majesty had, including these three fortresses, won three quarters of Scania.”³⁷⁷ The land was gradually emptied of regular troops. The king and the main part of the army went towards Kristianstad (Christianstad). According to Jensen they were hoping to meet the Swedes there for a conclusive battle, but by the time the Danes got there the Swedes had withdrawn across the border to Sweden.³⁷⁸ While the Danish king still thought he was on the hunt for the Swedish main army, he decided to send General major Duncan out with his troops in the direction of Halmstad (Halmsted in these sources) in Halland. The aim of this mission was for him to try and establish a connection between the Scanian provinces and Norway from where Gyldenløve was attacking the Swedes.³⁷⁹ The first step would be to lay siege to the fortress at Halmstad (Halmsted) that was still in Swedish hands. Duncan had not got

³⁷⁴ For the origins of the “landstorm” see p.109. According to Jacobsen, (p.45) Holch and his 600 cavalymen were stationed outside the city walls to see to it that nobody got out from there. Jensen (p. 133) claimed that Count Christian Christoffer Holch was sent there on 5th August to “observe the fortress”. On 1st October (Jensen, p.150) Holch and his regiment were replaced by General Hans Wilhelm Meerheim and the “livregiment” and Colonel Gotfried Rauch with his cavalry regiment.

³⁷⁵ Sörensen, p. 11. His source is: Willumsen, Incoming Letters (IB) which is probably the same source as Fabricius (III, p. 41 footnote 18) mentions: Aksel Willumsen to the king, 28th December 1679, War College (Krigskoll. i S.), DRA. Willumsen is the only authority we have for the number 4000, and he might have exaggerated, which Fabricius points out.

³⁷⁶ Sthen Jacobsen (p.49) claims that it started in the early hours of Tuesday 12th. Jensen (p.134) claims it was the night between 14th and 15th.

³⁷⁷ Jacobsen, p.49. He also quoted Livy, book 21: “adeo varia belli fortuna ancepsque Mars fuit, ut propius periculo fuerint, qvi vicere.”

³⁷⁸ Jensen, p.133.

³⁷⁹ Jensen, pp.132-133 where he quotes a letter from the Danish king to Gyldenløve of 4th August 1676, in which the king reported: “We are breaking camp in order to seek out the Enemy, so that for the time being You will not have anything to fear.” See also: Sörensson, p.11.

any further than to start digging trenches around the fortress when he was brought news that enemy troops were approaching.³⁸⁰ Quite unexpectedly (to the Danes) the main body of the Swedish army, under King Charles, were attacking Duncan.³⁸¹ Duncan immediately set his troops on the retreat and sent to the king for help, but on 17th August at dawn he had to face the Swedes in battle at the Fylle bridge. At first, Duncan thought it was only Rutger von Ascheberg's 300 advance troops that were arriving, but soon enough the main body of the Swedish army was on the spot. Eventually Duncan chose to surrender. King Christian who only had just conquered the town of Kristianstad (Christianstad) in north-eastern Scania left Colonel Aegidius Lützow in charge and set out for Halland himself. Eventually the whole of Scania was left with very few regular troops and the snaphaner and the peasant forces became ever more important.³⁸²

On 4th December 1676 the Swedes triumphed at Lund in the bloodiest battle ever fought on Scandinavian ground.³⁸³ It was also the most important battle of the Scanian War. It has often been argued that it was more of a psychological than an actual victory: the Swedes suddenly realised that they stood a good chance and the Danes that the return to Danish rule might not be permanent. The Danish army was evacuated to Zealand and only the towns of Landskrona (Landskrone) and Kristianstad (Christianstad) were still officially under Danish rule. Malmö (Malmö) remained in the hands of the Swedes. The rest of the land was no man's land.

³⁸⁰ Presumably this piece of news was brought to him by the later so famous friskytte Eskeld Nielsen. See: Fabricius III, p.100.

³⁸¹ Although the Swedish king's main aim was to join his troops on the Norwegian front. At the time the Swedish army that was with the king counted 5300 men. Duncan's troops counted approximately 3000 men. These numbers are Jensen's (p.136 and p.139.) Jacobsen (pp.49-50) claimed that Duncan had 3000 men that the Swedes counted Ascheberg's six squadrons plus then king's 10 000 men. He also commented that the Danes fought desperately but in a desperate situation even the most brave and strong have to surrender in the end. The sources agree that only 500-600 Danes managed to return to the main army. Between 1000 and 1500 died and the rest became POWs. The Swedes reported their numbers of dead to twenty, but that number is doubtful too.

³⁸² Sörensson, p,11.

³⁸³ 6000 Danes and 3000 Swedes remained on the battlefield. See: Karl-Erik Frandsen, "Da Østdanmark blev til Sydsverige 1645-1720. En oversigt over den politiske baggrund og historikernes vurdering af den." (When Eastern Denmark became Southern Sweden 1645-1710. An Overview of the Political Background and the Historians' Evaluation of it.), pp. 11-21, in *Da Østdanmark blev Sydsverige. Otte studier i dansk-svenske relationer i 1600-tallet* (When Eastern Denmark became Southern Sweden. Eight Studies in Danish-Swedish Relations in the 17th Century), Skippershoved 2003, p.18. See also: Jacobsen, pp. 71-76; Jensen, pp. 178-218; Claes Wahlöö & Göran Larsson, *Sextonhundraårtiosex, Minnet av historien. Historien av minnet.* (1676 The Memory of the Historical Events, the History of the Memory of Them), Lund 1996. For casualty number see pp. 153-155. Wahlöö and Larsson emphasise that at least 46% of the Danish combatants died. Their volume includes Dahlberg's excellent drawings from the vast battlefield e.g., pp.140-141.

Conclusions:

When the Danes returned to Scania in 1676, they provided the locals not only with a legitimation but with an excuse for rebellion against their Swedish overlords. Oaths were taken seriously at the time, and it cannot be taken for granted at all that the Danish ethnicity of the Scanians should have counted more than fealty to their sworn lord and master the king of Sweden. But King Christian V of Denmark now declared that whatever the Scanians had once owed the Swedes was no more valid: the Swedes had broken the paragraphs of the peace treaty of 1660 and consequently the Scanians were free from obligations towards them. This discourse was offered to the Scanians as a motivational force, and it was readily absorbed by many of them. It can only be assumed that those who had already been thinking that maybe the coming of the Swedes was the cause of the misery of their lives jumped eagerly at the chance to expel the Swedes from the country or to cut all those of the Swedish nation up with their long knives.³⁸⁴ The Danish official discourse offered them to do so within the limits of the law.

The line between peasant troops and snaphaner was blurred. To the Swedes, armed Danish peasants were snaphaner, but then so were they to the Danes too if they did not make part of the border guards or other troops that had been trained by emissaries of the state. Various forms of “landstorms” and border guards, led by emissaries of the state were difficult to separate from troops consisting of peasants in arms. Officers working under Brahe and Steensen were not classified as snaphaner by the Danes. Two of the most frequently mentioned men in the documents from the war; Nicolaus (Nikolaj) Hermansen and Pieter Sten were among these officers. They were both classified as snaphaner in the Swedish sources. An alternative to using regular officers as heads of peasant troops was that of putting sheriffs in charge and as we will see, Danish sheriffs, estate-managers, foresters, and gamekeepers would continue to play a prominent role among the snaphaner/friskytter. Another man who must not be forgotten in this context is the man who in Danish and Scanian myths has become a Scanian William “Braveheart” Wallace: Svend Poulsen Gønge. When King Christian V reconquered Scania Poulsen was called to the headquarters at Landskrona (Landscrone) and on 13th July he was appointed Major in order that he might help

³⁸⁴ In this context it is of little importance whether the Swedish take-over really had caused a lot of misery or not, what matters here is that some people blamed them for the bad times and other things.

organise peasant troops for the Danes. He started his work in the border region and was sighted by the Swedish who could hardly believe that the old fighter was still going strong.³⁸⁵ Poulsen's role, like those of Nicolaus Hermansen and Pieter Sten was hard to define but it is obvious that the three of had some official status and were bestowed with regular military ranks by the authorities. Poulsen, who must have been in his seventies when he was appointed major disappears from the records during the spring of 1677 and his fate is unknown.

A War of Inclinations

Introduction

In this section I have tried to analyse the importance that perceived or real support from the people played for the authorities: almost all reports from the snaphaner/friskytter included a report on what people thought, on whose side they were and exactly how ardent those sympathies were. It was well-known then, as it is today, that insurgencies were battles for “the hearts and minds of the people who were providing the sea of support in which the insurgents swam.”³⁸⁶ The words I just quoted come from an account of the situation in Fallujah, Iraq 2003 and served to illustrate how the Americans tried to apply the classic doctrine of how to fight insurgents there. The authorities were just as aware of this principle in Scandinavia in the 1670'ies, and both sides strove hard for the affections of the people.

After the Battle of Lund

In several decrees from the period immediately following the battle of Lund King Charles of Sweden announced that the entire Scanian population were abandoning their homes to join the Danes.³⁸⁷ A decree from 14th December 1676 declared that “all the inhabitants of the provinces of Scania and Blekinge have broken faith, even some of the clergy”. They were *all* responsible for the havoc that the snaphaner had

³⁸⁵ Jensen, pp.171-172. Hirsch & Hirsch, vol VIII under Svend Poulsen: On 3rd September 1676 Haqvin Spegel mentioned in his diaries that an old brute (“härjesman”) by the name of Swen Pålsson was stationed at Knäröd with a couple of hundred snaphaner “that pretended they were dragoons”. Poulsen's military career is described particularly well by Hirsch & Hirsch, vol. VIII, p.41 ff.

³⁸⁶ Bing West, *No True Glory, A Frontline Account of the Battle for Fallujah*, Bantam Dell, New York 2005, p. 1.

³⁸⁷ Decree from the Swedish king, Markaryd (here: Marcheröd) 24th October 1676, printed in Jacobsen, p.65 (“...the commoners...in stead of coming to us, their lawful master by oath, with utter humility and obeisance, and offer help in our operations for their own protection and help...on the contrary run away from their houses and homes and actually keep to the enemy, and do him all sorts of services...”). According to Jacobsen the Swedish king felt that *all* the inhabitants of Scania and Blekinge had betrayed their lawful king.

wreaked and for that reason they all deserved their just punishment: wherever a snaphane was found all the peasants of his parish would be considered traitors. Not only would they all have to pay a fine of 1000 *riksdaler* each, but every tenth of them would be hung.³⁸⁸ On 19th January 1677, the Swedish governor general in Malmö (Malmøe) Fabian von Fersen communicated to the king that the situation in Scania was extremely worrying.³⁸⁹ The inhabitants of the province were unreliable, and they all supported the Danes. Fersen could feel how their evil and loathing grew day by day. According to Fersen the clergy were no different from the rest of the inhabitants: they were “up to their necks in evil, agitated and excited” and this whole pernicious situation constituted a safety risk to the Swedes.³⁹⁰ On 21st January 1677 it was decreed that:

“...all peasants that dwell in that parish will not be regarded kindly, and not only will they be fined 1000 Rix Daler for each man they attack, but by the decision of the dice every third of them will be condemned to lose his life, these orders should be obeyed by all those that they regard.

Carolus

Ebbe Ulfeldh vidi³⁹¹

On 27th January 1677 Governor General von Fersen declared that the whole of Blekinge was unsafe due to the activities of the snaphaner that gathered mainly in the forests. Fersen reported that District Governor Lilliecron had written that many people were forced to side with the snaphaner else they would be attacked by them. The way Fersen saw it the snaphaner were inciting the commoners to revolt and the only way to reinstate calm and awe of the Swedish authorities would be to “cleanse” the land.³⁹²

In the same manner the Swedish nobleman Pontus De la Gardie declared that not a single faithful man was left in northern Scania and Blekinge, neither among the clergy nor among the peasants.³⁹³ Some Swedes suspected that *all* the Danes that had

³⁸⁸ Decree from the Swedish king (Vä) 14th January 1676, Riksregistraturet 1677, SRA. Quoted by Johnsson, p.77. This decree was supposed to integrate a decree from 14th December 1676.

³⁸⁹ Fersen to the king, 19th January 1677, Generalguvernörsarkivet, SRA. Most of Fersen’s letters were in German (his mother tongue) and in his own writing. Fersen was born in the Baltic provinces and hardly ever used the Swedish language. He always spoke German to the Scanian nobles for example. This letter takes the form of an official report and is written in Swedish with another person’s handwriting.

³⁹⁰ ”i ondskan nedsänkte, exciteradhe och opväckte...” och detta prästernas ”enorme och skadelige förhållande” utgjorde en säkerhetsrisk för svenskarna.

³⁹¹ Opsnappede breve, DRA. “Ebbe” is Ebbe Ulfeldh.

³⁹² Fersen to the king, 27 January 1677, SRA, quoted by Johnsson, pp.80-82. Cf. Scanian peasants who told county sheriff Hollænder who complained of their cruelty that the only way out was to cleanse the land from Swedes. See: Fabricius III, pp. 138-139.

³⁹³ Martin Weibull, 1871, p.62.

become Swedish subjects in 1658 had rebelled against them as soon as they felt assured of the back up of the Danish army. Because the Swedes were convinced that the “allmoge”, the commoners that constituted most of the population, were against them they decided to clamp down heavily on them. The Danish regular army had been vanquished (at least temporarily) but the peasant soldiers, the border guards and the landstorm, the local dragoons and the freelancers that some called snaphaner, were still there. At some point after the victory at Lund the Swedes opted for a harsher policy against the Scanians. The comparatively peaceful and humane way in which they had treated the Danish population until then had obviously not paid off. It had left those Scanians who were inclined to rebellion time, space and liberty to conspire against their overlords and to let their hatred flourish. During the year 1676 the Swedish king had issued several decrees that declared parole to those snaphaner who surrendered their arms to the Swedes, but the attempts had been of very limited efficiency. Now it was time to change policy.

At the same time as the Swedes were beginning to despair about ever being able to convert the Scanians to loyalty and good behaviour, the Danes were not quite as convinced that the Scanians would stay true to Denmark at any cost. The defeat at Lund had made many of them lose faith. The Danish authorities responded by trying to provide the locals with some encouragement: on 5th December 1676 General Major Meerheim was sent to Kristianstad (Christianstad) with a cavalry force of 1000.³⁹⁴ Meerheim and the “lifeguard” regiment had replaced Holch’s troops outside the city walls of Malmö (Malmøe) at the beginning of October. During the battle of Lund, he served under Friedrich von Arensdorff on the right flank.³⁹⁵ Now Meerheim would become commander of the garrison at Kristianstad (Christianstad). He was instructed to make great efforts to make the peasants keep faith, especially in Gønge and Blekinge because it was so important for the Danish cause that the Gønger should help Meerheim’s men interrupt the Swedish communication lines between Scania and

³⁹⁴ Two cavalry regiments and one of dragoons. See: Jensen, p.211. Jacobsen, (p.76) saw this principally as a move that prevented an expected Swedish attack on Christianstad. Besides, Jacobsen claimed that Meerheim set out on 7th December. Elowsson interpreted this measure in a different way: “A change in sympathies that at least occasionally made itself noted even among the snaphaner, an unease that caused the Danish commanders to send colonel Meerheim with a cavalry force of 1000 as reinforcements to Christianstad.”

³⁹⁵ Jensen, pp.176-177 and p.180.

Sweden.³⁹⁶ Meerheim also brought a letter to the Gønger that encouraged them to take service in the regular army. In it the king swore that he would come over and save his faithful subjects from the foreign yoke the following year.³⁹⁷ In a decree that was issued a few days later the Danish king urged his faithful subjects in northern Scania and Blekinge to arrest all Swedish civil servants and all those who sympathised with the Swedes.³⁹⁸ But nevertheless, the news from the northeast was not encouraging. Meerheim did not stay put in Kristianstad (Christianstad). Just like during most of the war he spent much time and effort on the “little” war that he was so expert at. Meerheim excelled at partisan warfare or “party” warfare as it was called at the time, and had long experience of this from the Thirty-Years’ -War when he served in the Imperial Army.³⁹⁹ But then, it should be noted that detachment warfare only differs from partisan warfare in a quantitative sense, not in a qualitative one.⁴⁰⁰ Meerheim and his men went out on brief missions, often but not always, in limited groups and they constituted as much of a nuisance to the enemy as they ever could. On 20th November that year Meerheim’s and Colonel Reventlow’s men burnt down Skarhult manor and three villages, where supposedly the Swedes stored their ammunition.⁴⁰¹ The same sort of tasks were executed by Colonel Schwanewedel’s troops. On 12th November they had effectively stopped a grain convoy that the burghers of Malmö (Malmøe) tried to get inside the city walls.⁴⁰² According to Jacobsen, the previous commander of the troops outside the walls, Holch, had been transferred because he was too weak and took pity on the people inside the besieged town so that he let them come out and look for food, but among them was at least one spy who brought letters for the Swedish king.⁴⁰³ Consequently, Meerheim and Schwanewedel took over the task of keeping the inhabitants of Malmö (Malmø) blockaded and furthermore,

³⁹⁶ Sörensson, p.18. He refers to the Instructions to Meerheim, Copenhagen, 9 December 1676, U.S. No:1646. Interrupting communication lines was a task as characteristic of irregular troops as can be. See: Kunisch, p.19; Grenkevich, p.5 and p, 14.

³⁹⁷ Copenhagen, 9 December 1676, U.S. No:1648. Quoted by Sörensson, p. 18.

³⁹⁸ Sörensson, p.278. Copenhagen 16th December 1676, US No:1690, DRA. The Danish authorities often threatened those who sided with the Swedes but not with the flames of hell like the Swedes in the case of Scanians that sided with the Danes. The Danes were more lenient both in their threats and in the execution of them, but they obviously also felt that they could be fairly assured of the sympathy of the Scanians whereas the Swedes felt more insecure about it. Cf. The decree of the Swedish king of 19th December 1676, quoted by Jacobsen on pp.79-80.

³⁹⁹ Jacobsen, p.278. (Notes added by Weibull, I suppose, but it is not stated in the text.)

⁴⁰⁰ Kunisch (p.19) quotes Carl von Decker’s *Der Kleine Krieg*, Berlin 1844. This manual made clear that sometimes the traditional petite guerre took the shape of detachment warfare instead.

⁴⁰¹ Jensen, p.172.

⁴⁰² Jensen, p.172.

⁴⁰³ Jacobsen, pp.45–46.

dedicated themselves actively to detachment warfare, and when Meerheim was stationed at Kristianstad (Christianstad) he continued the same sort of operations as long as he was not totally blockaded by the Swedes, just as Schwanewedel did at Landskrona (Landskrone) where he even brought in Croats.⁴⁰⁴ It was practically impossible to distinguish Meerheim's and Schwanewedel's troops from "snaphaner".

On the Danish side, the authorities took care to collect as much information as possible about the "affections" of the people, both through interviews with all those who wanted to enter the cities and the Danish army camps and through reports from friskytter and spies. Those people whom the friskytter brought to the Danish camp or to the Danish enclaves always had to report how they perceived the feelings of the people and information about this was normally included in the friskytter's own reports too.⁴⁰⁵ Another report that betrayed that some people simply tried to place their markers on the winning party was the one that tells of Frans Rasmussen, first estate manager and then sheriff, native of Flensburg in southern Jutland but long since resident in Scania. Rasmussen's career would have rendered him a perfect applicant for a position in the friskytte corps, but he chose a different path in life. First of all he had served the Ulfeld family for twelve years and the Ulfeld's were Danes who had gone into Swedish service at an early stage. Then he had got himself mixed up in the Captain Bendix affair that will be described at a later stage of this thesis: Rasmussen was arrested by the Danes on the charge of having informed against Bendix Clawssen, the local sheriff, in exchange for his job. When faced with these charges, Rasmussen replied that he was innocent of any criminal offence but that he had applied for Clawssen's job because he had 12 children to feed and "the Swedes had made the

⁴⁰⁴ Regarding Swanededel och Meerheim see: Sörensson, pp.38–39. For the Croats, see Jensen, p. 335 and p.422. The Croat "Parteygänger" that participated in the Scanian War were recruited by the Danish ambassador (afsending) to Vienna, Liliencron in July 1677. They did not participate in the 1677 campaign. Their numbers went from 70 to 120 during the war.

⁴⁰⁵ Report from Landskrone, 5th January 1678, (among Harboe's reports, DRA, one Danish, one German identical copy.) states that Knud Larsen the miller of the parsonage mill at Fulletofte had reported that the king of Sweden and his closest men (Aschenberg, Uhlfelt and Gyldenstjerne) had visited the nearby Magle manor in the company of 4000 cavalry. Larsen then reported: "die rede ging unter die bauren, alß mann Gen: Maj: Meerheim und noch ein ander Gen: so hir gekommen weßwegen sie aufgebrochen den unsrigen entgegen zu kommen, so bald sie aber vernommen, daß sie in ihre meinung betrogen, haben sie sich reterieret." In this kind of reports, it was taken for granted by the Danish authorities, as represented by the scribes, that the commoners *en masse* sympathised with the Danes, although there were traitors and rascals that preferred the other side. When Jens Harboe (letter to Herman Meyer, 2nd January 1678, Indkomne breve, DRA) spoke of a peasant who was arrested on the charge of espionage, he called him a "lesster Schelm", the same title that the Swedes bestowed on the friskytter and snaphaner.

whole country believe that the Danes would never come back to Scania again.”⁴⁰⁶ It is quite possible that Rasmussen identified himself more strongly with the family he had been serving for twelve years (the Ulfelds) than with his being part of a Danish “nation” and that he felt that he owed loyalty to his patron Ebbe Ulfeld rather than to either one of the two kings that staked a claim on his loyalty. In any case, this was exactly the kind of information the authorities wanted the *snaphaner/friskytter* and others who did the same kind of job (soldiers and spies) to come up with. The authorities did take heed of reports like this and instructed their emissaries to try to boost people’s spirits and faith in the Danish cause. They knew that people’s loyalty could be swayed easily enough by persuasion and doubts as to the viability of their options. The Danish king and his emissaries tried to ingratiate themselves with the *Gønger* by telling them how good and faithful they were and soon they would be saved from the foreign yoke once and for all. But the *Gønger* would have to keep their faith and keep ambushing and harassing Swedes, or possibly they could join the (Danish) army, else they would never be saved. The Danish authorities were aware of the practical connection between “humeur” and combat efficiency. They were also prone to using biblical images like the foreign yoke because they assumed that people knew about the Babylonian yoke and the Egyptian thralldom and that it was obvious who was on the right side in the biblical battle between good guys and bad guys.

Traditionally most Swedish historians have claimed that the Scania lost their sympathies for the Danish cause after the battle of Lund when the Danish army retreated to Zealand and the *snaphaner/friskytter* became ever more powerful. Firstly, it should be stressed that the King’s *Friskytter* were authorised by the king, as their name makes clear. They acted upon the orders of their superiors and their aim was that the King of Denmark should take over the land on a permanent basis. For that reason, it can hardly be said that the land was in the hands of the “*snaphaner*”: if it had been so, victory would have been Danish once and for all. That was not the case, though. There was detachment warfare and skirmishes going on all over the place, with groups of combatants that participated on one or the other side, but the “*snaphaner*” were no more in power than the Swedish detachments that were sent out

⁴⁰⁶ Depositiones, 15th June 1677: *”Hand siger at være gifft og hawer 12 børn, derudower søgte hand bestilling att de kunde nære sig, der til med hafde de swenske indbildet det heele land att de danske aldrig komb i Scaane igien.”*

to fight them. The “snaphaner” did no more strive after power in their own right than did the Swedish “snaphane-catchers”. Secondly, I believe it rather unlikely that the friskytter should have constituted enough of a problem to turn the Scanians against the Danes as early as 1676, and neither the Swedish nor the Danish sources indicate any change in the “inclination” or “humeur” of the people, although the Danes feared that it might change if things did not take a better turn. In fact, both Fabricius and more recently, Stig Alenäs have come to the conclusion that the Scanians continued their passive resistance long after 1679 when active resistance had ceased.

Nevertheless, the whole concept of passive resistance has been questioned by Stefan Persson in his dissertation on the situation in Gønge during the century before the Swedish conquest. Although Persson does not deny the existence of passive resistance he claims that often enough it is not the matter of resistance at all but of pure and (relatively) simple passivity.⁴⁰⁷ Passivity, however, should not be mistaken for indifference. In fact, the line between passive resistance and passivity is very fine. The actual difference between one and the other is only the state of mind of the person who has the chance to offer resistance but does not. In most cases it is impossible to judge whether an action was omitted because the agent was embittered and wanted to cause trouble or because he/she did not care what happened anymore. In either case the specific state of mind (passivity or passive resistance) tends to be the result of overwhelming events that have exhausted the physical and mental resources of the agents. As Sörensson wisely suggested, it was probably the whole situation, a combination of many different factors, but especially the destruction of the land and towns (that was caused by regular and irregular troops from both sides) that made the Scanians lose their will to oppose themselves.⁴⁰⁸

It seemed obvious already at this point that it was a war about sympathies and inclinations in which all too much depended on the “humeur” of the people. Preferably one would want the “inclination” of the people on one’s own side. The Swedes had worked hard to win it during the inter-war period, or at least to make themselves accepted by a people who after all, had a regional identity that did not need to be interfered with from above only because the province had new overlords: it would have been normal *not to* in those days. Furthermore, this regional identity

⁴⁰⁷ Persson, p.20.

⁴⁰⁸ Sörensson, p.55.

provided the Swedes with the possibility to claim that the Scanians were not Danes, because they were Scanians and geographically, culturally, and linguistically different from the Danes because they descended from the Goths (like the Swedes).⁴⁰⁹

At around this time it seems that it was becoming evident to some Swedes that gentle persuasion would not suffice to change the inclination of the Scanians. Irritation with the Scanians transpires clearly from some sources that can be dated to this period. Governor General Fabian von Fersen was aware of the connection between snaphaner and the general population. In January 1677 he wrote to the “Praepositus”, the rector of the hundreds of “Norre and Biähre”⁴¹⁰ in order to complain that both “here and there” in the area, Swedish civil servants and military were being “attacked, abducted and often killed” by snaphaner.⁴¹¹ This would not have happened had all inhabitants of the area remained true to their oath of allegiance, and Fersen stressed that regarded *both* “commoners and others.” Now Fersen communicated that in those parishes and villages that any soldier or civilian was attacked, robbed, or murdered, the country folk would be held responsible. There would be no more snaphane attacks if the country folk stopped providing for and supporting the snaphaner. The Praepositus was now asked to read out this decree from his pulpit and to tell the rest of the clergy in his area to do the same. They should tell their parishioners to capture all snaphaner and to bring them to Malmö (Malmö). There were tax reductions to be had for those who managed to capture a snaphane. To Fersen the nexus snaphaner-peasants was clear at an early stage, and he also realised that without local support the snaphaner would have to give in.

The governor general was not the only one to feel that the snaphaner were becoming too much of a nuisance. Sven Erlandsson was also aware of the connection between countryside population and snaphaner. In a letter from mid-February 1677, he betrays an increasing annoyance with the peasants and snaphaner that he gave vent to during his career as a snaphane catcher.⁴¹² At this time Erlandsson was at the Swedish army

⁴⁰⁹ See the section on the Gothic discourse.

⁴¹⁰ Modern Swedish: Norra Åsbo and Bjäre, early modern Danish: Nørre and Bjerge

⁴¹¹ Fabian von Fersen to the Praepositus of Norre and Biähre, 26th January 1677, Intercepted Letters, DRA.

⁴¹² Sven Erlandsson to Knud Peders at Ruggerödh, Wää (Wæ) 13th February 1677. In the margin a note says that this letter was written by Inspector Svend Erlandhs at the Swedish army camp at Wæ and

camp at Vä (Wæ) and had left his duties at the Herrevads kloster (Herrewadh Closter in this source) Priory estate in the hands of others. He had been estate manager there and it seems that he still occupied that position or at least had some responsibility for the estate, although by this time he had taken service as a commissary for the Swedes.⁴¹³ Now he had ordered Knud Peders who worked for him on the estate, to send rye and malt over to the Swedish army camp and he also asked about some of his clothes but Peders had replied that the enemy had taken away everything, including Erlandsson's clothes. Erlandsson's reply was furious: "those rascals and traitors the Priory peasants" had done it because the enemy would never have found his clothes on their own. All since the "rupture" the peasants had treated their masters in such a manner that more than one of them would have to "jump over the sword's edge" once it was time for payback. Erlandsson had seen with his very own eyes how much rye there was in the barn and now Peders was lying blatantly about it. Erlandsson frankly told him:

"In summa the liar is as good as the thief...you be assured that all Rascals and Thiefs will be extirpated from this land, things will never be good, until the false roots at the Priory estate (Clostergodset) will have been pulled out....The good Priory peasants and rascals insist they are neither snaphaner nor supporters of them, but they are lying in the second case, which can be proven by the 200 dragoons that were standing at Færingtofftte while 80 snaphaner ...were warned by those rascals at Færingtofftte, a Wasteland is better than a land full of Rascals and Traitors."⁴¹⁴

In this letter Sven "The Thrasher" Erlandsson also claimed that county sheriff Mons Haksen was a snaphane, which (according to Erlandsson) was proved by the fact that at the time of writing, Mons Haksen was in Kristianstad (Christianstad).

The *Ny beretning* pamphlet gives the impression that there were lots of activities going on among the Danes and Scanians during early 1677.⁴¹⁵ It claims that during the first months of 1677 Meerheim roamed the land with his detachments in order to

copied word by word, on the spot. This copy is now to be found among the Intercepted Letters in the Danish National Archives. A few lines from this letter have been quoted by Fabricius III, p.73.

⁴¹³ Fabricius III, p.73.

⁴¹⁴ In Summa, Talleren er så goed som Stielaren, forsækra i Eder på, at wederbørande skall, och Skielmer och Thiufuar skole rødes aff landet, tÿ før blifue aldrig godt, førend den falska roten blir på Clostergodtset utrøgt. . . .Di gode folck Clostersbønder och skelmar, sæga de er Inte Snaphanar, heller hålla med dem, I det sidsta de liuget, wist hålla de med dem, dhet wetta det parthi af 200 hästar beretta, som stod i F. då dhe 80 snaphanerdå de skelmar i F. gafue dem. . . wärsell, det er better et Öde Land, end fuld aff Skielmar och forrædare."

⁴¹⁵ *Om hvis i denne Maanet Febru. aff General Major Meerheim udi Skaane/ Oc Commendanten udi Carls=Haffn nyligen er passeret/ Sangvis forfattet under den Mellodie. Ach Amorillis har du nu forlat de skønne Volde*, (A New Account of how in this Month of February by General Major Meerheim in Scania and the Commander of Carlshaffn recently has taken place/ transformed into a song and set to the tune of "Woe Amoryllis have you abandoned the beautiful pastures" etc.) Copenhagen 19th February (1677), stanzas 4-5. This newssheet will be referred to as *Ny Beretning*.

search out Swedes and challenge them and that he (according to the anonymous author) was excellent at this task. The feats extolled in the *Ny beretning* comprised an attack on a large convoy with more than one hundred men from Stockholm that was on its way to the Swedish army camp in Scania. The Swedish dragoons that defended the convoy had died “with honour”. Meerheim then brought the convoy to Kristianstad (Christianstad).⁴¹⁶ Other feats were the work of the snaphaner. The song takes a very positive view of the snaphaner (and they are called exactly that in the lyrics): it is also clear that they obeyed Meerheim’s orders and that it was their duty to do so.⁴¹⁷ They “dared lie in wait for Swedes like hunters on foxes” and recently the snaphaner had caught four Swedes that they had taken prisoner to the Danish enclave Landskrona (Lands=Crone). Another attack had been carried out by “our men” from Kristianstad (Christianstad) although the song does not state whether the troop comprised regular or irregular troops or a mixture: it only says that it was Ebbe Ulfeld’s luggage and horses they took as spoils.⁴¹⁸ Another attack was carried out against the vicarage at Billinge where twenty-four Swedes were said to have been killed.⁴¹⁹

Conclusions:

Throughout all this it remains evident that the ethnic or pre-national identity did carry some weight at the time. It was of considerable military importance that people in Scania opted for a Danish identity, although that Danish identity did not contain the same components as a 21st century Danish identity. But it remained important that they, as a constituent of that identity, considered the king of Denmark their rightful sovereign and that the Swedes could be identified as Babylonians, i.e., as foreign, and unlawful conquerors. By the winter of 1676-77 the Danes had lost much ground in Scania and the Danish authorities doubted whether the inhabitants were prepared to keep faith to Denmark at any cost. They were encouraging guerrilla warfare and tried

⁴¹⁶ *Ny beretning*, stanzas 4–5.

⁴¹⁷ *Ny Beretning* stanza 6.

⁴¹⁸ *Ny Beretning* stanza 9.

⁴¹⁹ Per Andersen who was the teacher of the vicar’s children was taken captive by the Swedes and held prisoner at Vä (Wæ) for five months until he was allowed out with the troops and escaped over to the Danes. See: Per Andersen studiosus, born at Ringsted, testimony from the beginning of June 1677, the army camp at Wæ, 468 Krigskollegiet (Landetaten) 1675-78 Forhør over og udsagn af fanger og overløbere:98. This report is mentioned by Fabricius III, p.116 where he adds that after the attack on the vicarage at Billinge, nine prisoners were brought to the Danish head quarters. Fabricius also supposed that it was Niels Andersen’s friskytter (those of eastern Gønge) that had undertaken this operation.

to convince the locals that the road to victory went that way. At the same time Swedes of some importance like Fabian von Fersen and Sven Erlandsson expressed their worry over increasingly frequent “snaphane-attacks” and they both connected these attacks not to groups of outlaws outside society, but to the peasant commonalty. In this context the Swedish king expressed his fear that the entire Scanian population were traitors. Erlandsson stressed this with his frequently quoted phrase “a wasteland is preferable to a land full of knaves and traitors.”

The Establishment of the King’s Friskytter Corps

Introduction

In this chapter I will trace the development of the King’s Friskytter Corps during the Scanian War and to underpin my claim that during the early part of 1677, just after the battle of Lund, there were distinct changes in attitude to the “snaphaner” on both sides. It cannot be stressed enough that both registered and unregistered combatants were considered snaphaner by the Swedes.

The King’s Friskytter

From January 1677 onwards the Danish account books show that grain was often distributed to groups of “friskytter”.⁴²⁰ During the first months of that year many of the most famous friskytter turn up in the Army Board records in Copenhagen where they had been assigned winter quarters. Not only Nicolaus Hermanssøn alias Nikolaj Hermansen appears frequently as a recipient of wages and provisions for his friskytter⁴²¹ but also Major Hendrik Frederik Dreyer⁴²², Major Eskeld Nielsen, Jens Jenssøn, Simon Andersen and Knud Espersen (Espensen) Böek, Böeg or Bøg. It should be stressed that Nicolaus Hermansen had been in action from the beginning of the war on the Scanian front and that he was a regular soldier, as was Lieutenant

⁴²⁰ Sörensson, p.21. The information is to be found in a report from: Copenhagen, 20 February 1677, U.S. No:207, DRA. The grain was destined for the horses of these friskytter.

⁴²¹ Arensdorff tried to help Hermansen get his due payment from the Army Board. See: Letter from Nicolaus Hermansen to Arensdorff 9th February 1678 that was sent on to the Army Board with a note from Arensdorff. This missive also included Hermansen’s authorisation from the king to become captain of one of Colonel Brahe’s dragoon companies (20th November 1676) and then as a major, (2nd April 1677) to enlist four companies of dragoons. See also: “Lista der Officerer won deß hr: Majeur Nicolaj Esquadron Dragouner”, 14th December 1677. These documents can be found in the following collection: 470 Generalkrigskommissariatet 1674-1679 Indkomne breve, 1674 Arnstorff 1679 Auerswald: 1921, DRA. See also Sörensson, p.24 and Hirsch & Hirsch, vol. V, p.92. See also: Sörensson, p.23: on 2nd March seven friskytter received 21 daler, on 22nd March five friskytter from Blekinge received 10 *daler*, on 28th March Knud Espersen (Böge) received 46 *daler* for his company of 22 friskytter.

⁴²² Sörensson, p.24. In May 1677 Dreyer received 100 *daler* “in advance” for his company.

Pieter Sten and several others. In fact, it is significant that so many friskytter were in Copenhagen that winter because those who had not compromised themselves too severely with the Swedes would presumably have stayed at home. Only those who were too much at risk to spend the winter at home would have betaken themselves to winter quarters. On 20th February 1677 the king issued friskytte licences for Jens Jenssön and Simon “The Snaphane” Andersen:

“With this we concede to Jens Jenssön of Stoheby in the county of Landscrone and to Simon Andersen of Wester Wram in the county of Christianstad who are both present here, the authority and order, that they with their followers and the assistance of true Danish subjects would and will persecute all Swedish natives and officials and subjects that sympathise with the Swedes in Scania, that are trying to betray and destroy their brothers and our faithful peasants and inhabitants, which they should kill and treat as adherents of the enemy.”⁴²³

As soon as the harsh Scandinavian climate would let them the friskytter left their winter quarters (in Zealand, Scania or on Bornholm) and returned to the scene of war. In Scania most of them had their official quarters in Landskrona (Landscrone) where they were enrolled and had to swear their oaths of allegiance to the king. Then Christian V issued the following order that put them on a par with other dragoons, at least nominally:

*“Christian der Fünfte...etc...
Wohlgeborner und Wolledle Räfte, Liebe, Getreue. Demnach etzliche Freyschützen auss Schonen, Halland und Bleckingen sich in Landscron angegeben, gegen den Feind fersner sich gebrauchen zu lassen präsentiret und umb Unterhalt allerunterhänigst gebethen, so ist Unser Allergnädigster Wille und Begehr, dass ihr durch Commissarius Harbo alda dieselbe in Unsseren Eid nehmen, enrollieren und hernach ihnen ihr Unterhalt **gleich andern Dragonern** monatlich geben lasset. Und Wir verbleiben euch mit Königl. Gnaden gewogen. Geben auf unserer Residentze zu Copenhagen d. 20 Martij Anno 1677.*

*Christian
Ad mdtm S.R. Maj
H. Mejer”⁴²⁴*

Fabricius estimated the number of registered friskytter to in between 1000 and 2000.⁴²⁵ This estimate coincides remarkably well with that of Peder Andersen from

⁴²³ This licence (Copenhagen, 20th February 1677, U.S. No:207, DRA.) is quoted by Sörensson on p.21 and by Røndahl on p.224.

⁴²⁴ Kongl. Ord. 1677, Quoted from Sörensson, pp.21-22. I would like to add here that my point here was *not* to claim that I had discovered that JJ and SA etc. had obtained licences from the king, nor that the king ordered that the friskytter be recognised as dragoons, these are well-known facts in both professional and hobby-historian literature.

⁴²⁵ Fabricius III, s.206. Jacobsen (p.202.) states that in 1678 there were 12 companies of snaphaner that had joined forces and he concluded that “anyone can imagine what oppression Scania suffered from this vast number of vagrants that only did what pleased them.” Others have claimed that they counted as many as 5-10% of the entire male population between 15 and 65. See Carl-Gustav Liljenberg, “Krig och ofredsår vid gränsen” in *Osby Hembygdsförening, Årsbok 1963*, (War and Discord along the Border” in *The Yearbook of the Local History Association of Osby*) pp.131-197 and Linde-Laursen p.53. The population of the Scanian provinces amounted to about 250.000. Maybe, if one counted all

Slagelse⁴²⁶ who had been a soldier under Captain Adelpohl and then got caught by the Swedes when Helsingborg surrendered. He escaped from the Swedes and dwelled with the friskytter during the whole winter. The unit he had stayed with comprised sixty-six men but he estimated the total numbers of the friskytter that winter to 1400. A newsheet called *Copenhagensche Relation von dem Was irgend in diesen Nordischen Königreichen passiret* from 1st June 1678 reported the numbers of the friskytter in Scania as five hundred and that they were causing the enemy serious losses.⁴²⁷ It is impossible even to hypothesise about the numbers of the non-registered snaphaner. There are reports like that of Per Andersen, a student who had been a Swedish prisoner for twenty weeks and when he managed to make his way back to the Danes, he reported that the Swedes said there were three thousand snaphaner in the woods but those are very uncertain numbers. For one thing, the Swedes would have counted all friskytter, regular troops on detachment missions and unregistered “snaphaner” into those numbers. It is also likely that three thousand was an estimate that regarded the surroundings of the Swedish main camp at the time.⁴²⁸

The muster- and pay rolls in the National Archives in Copenhagen are extremely interesting to study but they only allow us stealthy glances at the situation in certain moments of time; they do not cover but a limited part of the Scanian war and we know that important documents are missing.⁴²⁹ Approximately 20 companies of friskytter are registered in the muster-rolls in Copenhagen. A company could include anywhere between 20 and 160 men, but the normal number was that of a dragoon company: 60. The numbers of each company vary greatly in the records: one reason is that some of them simply returned home during the winter months and only those who considered themselves too compromised went to the main winter-quarters in Landskrona (Landskrone), Helsingborg, Copenhagen, and Elsinore. The payrolls from

the men of all ages who had ever participated in some sort of armed action against or looting of Swedes, one might accept the higher estimate.

⁴²⁶ His comrade Rasmus Hansen from Fyen who had belonged to General Major Duncan’s company told the same story. Copenhagen 25th April 1677. 468:98

⁴²⁷ *Copenhagensche RELATION von dem Was irgend in diesen Nordischen Königreichen passiret* Num 21 Den 1 Junij Anno 1678, Copenhagen: “30. May. Die Freyschußen haben sich bey 500. Mann in Sconen zusammen gefuget und thun dem Feind ublich großen abbruch.” To be found in Siwert Juul’s defence file among the Acta af commissionen som Ao 1682...holdtes uthi Malmö öfwer dhe uthi sijstförledne Kriget afwekne Prester, Lunds Domkapitel, Acta Cleri, 1681-1715, FIIc:1

⁴²⁸ 468:98, The Danish camp at Wæ, June 1677.

⁴²⁹ Tage Bøg’s licence for example. It is mentioned in several Swedish and Danish sources but has unfortunately been lost to the archives. Another example is Captain Bendix who is missing from both muster-and pay rolls but frequently mentioned in other sources from both sides.

the winter months show that the friskytte-companies tended to become considerably smaller during the cold season: among Dreyer's at least forty friskytter (excluding officers) only twelve registered for payment during the winter 1677-78. Out of Aage "the Hare" Monsen's fifty-odd friskytter only twenty-three remained with him during that winter. Perhaps Niels Andersen's friskytter were included in this number.⁴³⁰ Many friskytter were killed. From one muster to another sometimes one third of a company had been killed, in battle or through impalement. Some accepted the occasional general parole offers of the Swedish king or even went over to the other side. During the winter 1678-79 it looks as if there were only ten official companies: Captains Niels Andersen, Aage Monsen Harlof, Peder Lawritzen (Laursen/Lauridsen), Eskild Nielsen and all their men were assigned winter quarters in the Helsingborg area, as close to the enemy lines as possible. At the same time the governor of the Landskrona (Landskrone) district, Knud Thott, received the same orders regarding Hendrik Dreyer, Peder Christophersen, Anders Pedersen, Simon Andersen, Matz Oelsen and Hans Severin with their men in the Landskrona (Landskrone) area.⁴³¹ These ten companies *might* have constituted the registered friskytte troops in Scania at the time. In that case it was the matter of maximum 3-400 men during the two or three winter months when most of them did not operate actively, but probably two or three times as many during the campaigns.⁴³² A year later the major of the friskytter Aage Monsen Harlof stated the number of companies under him as eight.⁴³³ But by then Dreyer and Severin had both suffered gruesome deaths during the last Swedish roundups of the friskytter, and many other friskytter with them. It can only be assumed that all those who had the chance acted like Captain Eskild's quartermaster Svend from Boarp who only just made it in time to obtain a parole certificate and returned to his farm.⁴³⁴ In February 1680 the number of friskytter on Zealand was listed as 400. But then again, in March that year 500 friskytter in the Kronborg district received passports.⁴³⁵

⁴³⁰ Sörensson, p.4.

⁴³¹ Lit.D, quoted by Sörensson, p.53.

⁴³² I.B. Levetzow. 9 January 1679. The friskytter that found winter-quarters in the districts of Landskrona (Landskrone) and Helsingborg were assigned a monthly pay of 5 slettedaler from the peasants but they seem to have tried to squeeze out more than that. See: Sörensson, p.53

⁴³³ Aage Harlof to the King, 18th November 1679, I.S., No:413. See: Sörensson, p.60.

⁴³⁴ Like many others he ended up in serious trouble with the law because of his past anyway. See: Edvardsson III, p.130, Johnsson, p.129.

⁴³⁵ Hans Rostgaard to the Army Board, (General Commissariat), 7 February 1680, I.S., June, No:221; and 1 March 1680, I.S., August, No:269, DRA. Quoted by Sörensson, p.61. The list included 2 majors,

Liljenberg's calculation of the numbers of *registered* friskytter was probably exaggerated, considering that an average of 60 men multiplied with 20 would only make 1, 200. However, he might not be all that far from the truth when it comes to the total number of friskytter/snaphaner, registered or not, since the non-registered ones might have constituted the majority during many operations.

Not only Gønger volunteered for service in the friskytte corps but young men from all over Scania and Blekinge/Bleging.⁴³⁶ Most companies took their names from the area from which most of the men originated: with a few exceptions the friskytter organised their companies in their own parish (or hundred) even if they later operated all over Scania. In the muster-rolls we find companies from eastern and western Göinge (Gønge), Bjäre, Northern Åsbo, Villand, Börringekloster, Malmö (Malmøe), Landskrona (Landscrone) and Helsingborg, Kristianstad (Christianstad), Blekinge (Bleging), one company from "Scania and Blekinge", four more from Blekinge, of which one from the parish of Sturkö. Other companies took their names after their commander. Each company was an independent unit, but it was not infrequent that they co-operated.

The most common procedure was that a local man of some influence and means gathered a troop of at least fifty men who were willing to fight and then he offered their services to the king in the hope of receiving an authorisation to become a lieutenant or captain of the friskytter with licence to "attack the enemy."⁴³⁷ Evidence from the 1658 trial against the rebels in north-eastern Scania show that a man of some status in the area was entitled to send out a message calling to arms those of his neighbours that he thought apt.⁴³⁸ This was standard procedure but personnel from the

11 captains, 14 lieutenants, 13 cornets, 19 quarter masters, 25 corporals, 4 scribes, 2 drummer boys, 410 friskytter.

⁴³⁶ As results from those muster rolls on which place of origin is reported. As we have seen earlier in this thesis, there were also snaphaner in Holsten and Jutland. There were also "snaphaner" in Halland and in the old Norwegian territories around modern-day Gothenburg and the border province of Jämtland.

⁴³⁷ The classical expression was "tage paa Fienden." See: Fabricius III, p.102. At the beginning most companies were led by a lieutenant who later became a captain or major (ryttmästare). Regular dragoon companies were normally headed by a captain.

⁴³⁸ Christer Bagge's case in Johnsson, p.32 where he refers to the court registers from Ronneby 11th December 1658, *Rebellernas acta*, (The Rebel Files), LA. Christer Bagge himself claimed that he had never been keen on acting as a snaphane leader, but he had been persuaded to do it by, amongst other, the two local ministers of the church. Christer Bagge is also mentioned by Alf Åberg in his *Snapphanarna* from 1952 (pp.41-42.) Åberg stresses that Bagge was chosen by the peasants in his area because of his experience as a corporal in the Swedish army and because of his status. Åberg also makes the point that Bagge recruited his snaphaner by sending messages to those farmsteads where a farmer he thought apt resided. Åberg did not add that Bagge himself claimed that he had been talked

regular army were often sent out to train peasant troops and during the Scanian War this became more and more frequent.⁴³⁹ Sometimes HQ nominated captains without followers who were then sent out to recruit volunteers. It is rather unlikely that men from the lowest strata of society would be able to enrol in the friskytter corps since a horse and a good gun were the basic requirements. The friskytter were armed with “long guns”, very often manufactured in Gønge. They carried knives and sometimes rapiers and pistols.⁴⁴⁰ The companies chose some or all their own officers. The friskytter were entitled to use the same military ranks as regular soldiers by the Danish authorities, and some were also enlisted in the regular army. The non-commissioned men (menige) were normally called dragoons. At the time dragoons were soldiers who travelled by horse but normally fought on foot with long guns and that was also the characteristic manner of fighting of the friskytter. In fact, the Danish authorities considered the friskytter as a kind of dragoons.⁴⁴¹ Their fighting tactics were based on the existence of at least some degree of military discipline and a functioning rank system. It is also quite clear in the Danish sources that the Danish army not only worked together with snaphaner/friskytter, but that the commanders of the regular army considered them their “servants” and expected orders to be obeyed by them.⁴⁴² Since the Swedes did not recognise the friskytter as anything but common criminals they consequently did not recognise their military ranks either.⁴⁴³ Nevertheless, many Swedish officials accepted these ranks *de facto*. A military man

into the enterprise not by two local clergymen and that the snaphane company was sworn in during a meeting outside a church, in the company of one of these prelates.

⁴³⁹ Pflug and Hermansen for example.

⁴⁴⁰ Sörensson claimed the contrary but I have rapiers and pistols are mentioned in many places in my sources, p.31.

⁴⁴¹ Cf. King Christian’s ordinance of 20th March 1677 (Sörensson, pp.21-22): “***Demnach etzliche Freyschützen*** auss Schonen, Halland und Bleckingen sich in Landscron angegeben, gegen den Feind fersner sich gebrauchen zu lassen präsentiret und umb Unterhalt allerunterthänigst gebethen, so ist Unser Allernädigster Wille und Begeh, dass ihr durch Commissarius Harbo alda dieselbe in Unsseren Eid nehmen, enrollieren und hernach ihnen ihr Unterhalt ***gleich andern Dragonern monatlich geben lasset.***”

⁴⁴² See for example Johnsson, pp.60-61: “General Kristian Lützow sent out the snaphaner. The leader of the snaphaner on 8th November was John Månsson from Olsängen, major...”. See also Dalhoff’s letters to Rommel (February 1677, DRA) in which he reported that when General Brock set out to attack the Swedes in Bleging he not only brought 60 regular soldiers but also all friskytter and farmers he could get hold of.

⁴⁴³ In the legal records the accusations against the friskytter often include phrases like: “he called himself a major of he snaphaner...” from the trial against Sheriff (länsman) John Månsson (Joen Mogensen), 1677, Letter from district governor (landshövd. skriv till k.m:t) to the king, SRA, quoted by Johnsson, p.73. The court preferred to call Månsson “leader of the rebels.”

probably felt prouder if he defeated majors and captains than if he just caught thugs.⁴⁴⁴

The friskytter/snaphaner often fought in sizeable troops. Units of as many as 200 snaphaner were quite frequently mentioned, sometimes up to 700⁴⁴⁵: the Swedish king was reported to have been ambushed by 200 snaphaner towards the end of 1677, and so were the Councillor of the Realm Ebbe Ulfeld, Sir Carl Gustaf Skytte and Lieutenant Colonel Sparrfelt with several others while they were hunting at Fjälkinge in September 1678. In the latter case the friskytter/snaphaner were led by Major Henrik Aagesen Pflug who was a regular officer.⁴⁴⁶ Harlof had 400 men under his command during the latter part of the war.⁴⁴⁷ The Swedes did not always seem know whether they were fighting regulars or irregulars. On 6th November 1676 the Swedish newssheet *Mercurius* reported that “300 Finnish dragoons were gone out on a “party” but they ended up in battle with 200 snaphaner. Some people think they were the enemy’s avant-garde, which is more likely since the Finns surrounded them and killed them all so that nobody escaped.”⁴⁴⁸

An Escalation of Violence

As Sthen Jacobsen pointed out, there was a notable escalation of violence on both sides just around this period. I will now try to analyse why and how this was the case. At the beginning of 1677 the Swedes caught some snaphaner, who were treated in the following manner:

⁴⁴⁴ On 24 September 1678 the snaphane catcher Simon Bengtsson seemed overjoyed to be able to report to the governor general that a Swedish unit only had just managed to kill “*Major Tage Böök*.” (Letter and report to the governor general, 24th September 1678, LA, Lund, quoted by Johnsson, pp.172-273.) In September 1678 a Swedish captain by the name of Lindeman reported that the area around Sövdeborg castle was swamped with snaphaner. He had caught a snaphane who had confessed that there was a “Danish detachment” in the village. The day after Lindeman fought with the “major and lieutenant of these bastards and killed them”. (LA, Lund, quoted by Johnsson, p.171.) Lindeman calls what appears to be the same men “snaphaner”, “Danish detachment” and “bastards” in the same letter.

⁴⁴⁵ The renegade Hans Karup claimed they were fighting in 700. See: Depositio, 12th May 1677, DRA, Interrogation of Hans Karup: “Det er bunde i Gyngetherret, som hand hawer handlet med om Snaphanernis wesen og deres revocation thi effter at pardon engang war gifwen, exequerede Ulfeld paa ny igien, hworfore bönderne igien gick til skofs.”

⁴⁴⁶ While the noblemen were hunting, they caught sight of some snaphaner who they set after and followed to Håstad where a detachment of 200 snaphaner under Major Henrik Agesen Pflug were waiting for them so that the noblemen had to run towards Nosabro bridge. They managed to escape but four servants were caught by the snaphaner. The servants were later ransomed. The information about the ambush comes from Professor Winslow’s diary from 1678, UB, Lund, Sk. saml.1874, p.26, quoted by Johnsson, pp.166-167. Agesen Pflug’s patronymicon is also spelled Ageson/Auesen/Owesen.

⁴⁴⁷ The *Mercurius*, 31st July 1679, Swedish Royal Library.

⁴⁴⁸ Quoted by Johnsson, III, p.192. Finland was then part of Sweden.

*“First they were placed in the guilds of the nightmen, so that those who were prisoners at Wæ first had to draw out and then flay dead mares, and those who were prisoners in Malmö had to clean outhouses and toilets, which greatly annoyed the master of the nightmen...When they had learned this craft they were handed over to the executioner who crushed their arms and legs and put each of them on 4 wheels (steijler).”*⁴⁴⁹

This was an unprecedented step that outraged the Danes and the Scanians. For the first time the “snaphaner” were singled out and executed like thugs, although at least one of the victims of the first batch of torturees (Captain Bendix) was a man of considerable influence and social standing. But the Swedes would cling to this policy throughout the war and soon enough they would even take to the unheard-of measures of impalement and skewering.⁴⁵⁰ According to Sthen Jacobsen the harsh Swedish reprisals had the opposite effect of what the Swedes had hoped. Instead of paralysing the insurgents with fear the snaphaner multiplied from this moment onwards. Jacobsen further reports that the surviving snaphaner were terrified and angry when the first executions of this kind took place.⁴⁵¹ Many of them retreated to Landskrona (here: Landtzcrona), some went over to Copenhagen where the authorities tried to calm them down and ensured them that the army would be back in the spring. Jacobsen claimed that the snaphaner went to the woods to hide away during the winter, (although others claimed that on the contrary the snaphaner only went to the woods with the arrival of spring). According to Jacobsen the snaphaner became like “Daniel’s goat” from the time of the first violent executions onwards: if one horn was broken off soon four others grew out so that “when a snaphane was killed, ten others

⁴⁴⁹ Jacobsen, p.89. Cf. Edvardsson, p.192: *“...a captain of the snaphaner called Bendix was brought to our camp with 12 of his subordinates, they were all to be sent to the stake and wheel but first they had to draw out all dead horses that could be found in the camp...They confessed the names of both clergymen and noblemen who had conspired with them.”* A “Captain of the snaphaner” called Bendix Classon was executed near Lyngsiö and “broken on five wheels” on 9th January 1677. The Danish “natmænd” were a group of men who took care of dead animals, emptied latrines, and did other unpleasant chores, while their wives often worked as fortune-tellers. Sometimes they are identified with “tartars” or “gypsies”, but we do not know if that is indeed the case. Many towns in Denmark and Scania still have their Nightman’s street (Nattmansgata).

⁴⁵⁰ Fabricius III, p.91 footnote 3: “The first example of breaking on the wheel (“radbrækning”) seems to have been that of Captain Bendiks Klausen with four other snaphaner in January 1677”. Impalement and “skewering” (impalement on a red-hot iron skewer) were new to Swedish punishment history. Impalement had a long tradition in Eastern Europe, where it had not only been one of Vlad Tepeş’s favourite methods but was also frequently practiced by Peter the Great. See: Ambrius (1996), pp. 61-62.

⁴⁵¹ As did Arensdorff in his reports to the king, only that he wrote that the peasants were absolutely terrified because of the executions. See: Fabricius III, p. 107.

turned up in his stead.”⁴⁵² It was also from about this point in time that the snaphaner started calling themselves friskytter, as contemporaries pointed out.⁴⁵³

At the very beginning of February 1677, the snaphaner captured Colonel Abraham Cronhjort, Major Oldengreen, Lieutenant Creutz and seven dragoons on the ice that was covering the Finja (Finie) Lake.⁴⁵⁴ The Swedes took refuge at a farmstead on the shore of the lake and defended themselves from there. In the end they had to surrender and at least four of the dragoons were shot.⁴⁵⁵ The officers were brought to Landskrona (Landskrone) where the commander paid the snaphaner 20 *rigsdaler* for them.⁴⁵⁶ Apart from the monetary reward the snaphaner also received oats for their horses and were allowed to sell their booty and so they were “extremely pleased” when they rode away again.⁴⁵⁷ Towards the end of January 1677 the friskytter delivered a Swedish captain as POW to Kristianstad (Christianstad). At about the same time, possibly somewhat earlier as Fabricius claims, three lieutenants and a sergeant were delivered to the Danish authorities in Landskrona (Landskrone) and then sent on to Copenhagen. The sergeant had tried to escape twice but “the peasants and the women managed to catch him in the end.”⁴⁵⁸ This episode is confirmed by the *Ny beretning* song from 19th February 1677 in which the three lieutenants and the

⁴⁵² Jacobsen, p.89.

⁴⁵³ Jacobsen, p.89. The author of “Det hefnraabende blod” (Blood Calling for Revenge) from early 1678 asserted that only Swedes used the term “snaphaner”.

⁴⁵⁴ In his war diaries Johan Jacob Winslow dated this event to 2nd February 1677. See: “J. J. Winslows dagbok öfver kriget 1676-79” (J.J Winslow’s Diary of the War 1676-79) pp. 72-104 in Martin Weibull ed., *Samlingar utgifna för De skånska landskap ens historiska och arkeologiska förening*, (Collections published on account of the Historical and Archaeological Society of the Scanian Provinces) Lund 1874, p.86). Jacobsen (p.89.) claims this event took place on 2nd February and so does Johnson (pp.65-66 where he quotes Winslow’s diaries for this date). Fabricius claims it took place on 1st (Kyndelsmäss) and his source is a report from Bibow in the War College collection in the Danish National Archives from 1st February 1677. Fabricius (III p.91, footnote 2) also consulted a letter from Cronhjort to the Danish king from around 13th March 1677(War College collection, DRA). Jensen (p.229) also dates this event to 1st February. Unfortunately, Jensen only seldom refers to precise sources, but has a general list of sources at the beginning of his volume. His first-hand sources were the Danish National Archives.

⁴⁵⁵ In his letter to the Danish king Cronhjort claimed that he had made an agreement with the friskytter but the friskytter got drunk around midnight and murdered four of his dragoons. See: Fabricius III, p.91, footnote 2.

⁴⁵⁶ 1 RD: 6 mark: 16 skilling = 96 skilling. 1 RD = 48 lybske (Lübeck) skilling. From the 1650ies there was also the krone/skettedaler = 4 mark. See: Poul Thestrup, *Mark og skilling, kroner og øre. Pengeenheder, priser og lønninger i Danmark i 360 år (1640–1999)*, (Mark and skilling, kroner and øre. Monetary Units, Prices and Wages in Denmark during 360 Years), Arkivernes Informationsserie, Statens arkiver 1999.

⁴⁵⁷ Fabricius III, p.91.

⁴⁵⁸ Fabricius III, p.91, footnote 3 in which he states Bibow’s reports from 27th February and 9th March and Sthen Jacobsen, p.90 as his sources. Note that on this occasion even the women had participated actively.

sergeant are mentioned as captives of the snaphaner.⁴⁵⁹ Consequently those women and men that Bibow considered “peasants” were called “snaphaner” in a positive sense by the *Ny beretning*, but then that was a normal Danish usage up until the spring of 1677 when the negative connotations were taking over more and more, probably due to the intensification of the Swedish policy of branding snaphaner as criminals.

Nevertheless, the *Ny beretning* still uses the term “snaphaner” and in a very positive way. In the same manner, the reports of the “Interrogations and testimonies of captives and renegades” in the Danish National Archives from around this time also use “snaphaner” without negative connotations and tend to use “friskytte” in the sense of a registered full-time combatant. On 23rd April 1677 Hans Ibsen was put down in the register of statements as a “friskytte”. However, in his statement he referred to “snaphaner and peasants” that were being massacred by the Swedes and those “snaphaner and peasants” obviously belonged to a different category from himself. In the same manner, on 11th May 1677 Hans Alrum reported to the authorities that the Swedish amnesty offers had worked well enough during the winter but “since the woods turned green, they (the snaphaner) have betaken themselves to the friskytter anew.”⁴⁶⁰

The reports coming in to Copenhagen from the eastern border area and the woods that spread from it down south were numerous and very often they continued accounts of the outrages the people had to suffer under what at least some of them called “the tyrants”.⁴⁶¹ The Swedish response to the intense Danish/Scanian raids and attacks was

⁴⁵⁹ Stanza 10.

⁴⁶⁰ Forhør over og udsagn af fanger og overløbere, 468 Krigskollegiet (Landetaten) 1675–1678:98, DRA.

⁴⁶¹ Nels Andersen’s report from Färs (Ferse) of 30th March 1677: “Their tyranny is unspeakable, they send the peasants and the town-dwellers to the racks; a boy of 16 had his head cut off because he kept a gun in his closet; lots of people have been sent to the racks and tortured to death.” Hans Ibsen (friskytte) 23rd April 1677: “The Swedes have sent more than 50 peasants and snaphaner to the racks in the Cristianstad area, most of the peasants because they had sold provisioning and lodged snaphaner, and their worst persecutor is Ebbe Ulfeld.” Swend Cristensen 2nd May 1677 from Perstorp (Perstrup): “Johan Gyldenstiern has been touring this land with quite a large number of Swedish peasants in order to catch snaphaner and they have caught quite a few and send them to the racks straight away and burn their farms down...one peasant is to be hung for each Swedish dragoon that is killed by the snaphaner and his farm will be burnt...Their only wish is that the Danes might come back soon so that the peasants that have been driven away could come back and be saved from the harsh Tyranny.” Hans Alrum from Helsingborg 2nd May 1677: “The commoners are insisting with urgency that the Danes come to the land to deliver them from the yoke of the Tyrants”. Nels Moridtsen 5th May 1677: “The peasants are treated miserably by the Swedes, and they all wish the Danes soon would come to their deliverance. “Swend Pedersen from Sudermanland (Danish for “Sven Pettersson from Södermanland”)

a series of deaths on the racks and as Knud Fabricius pointed out, to judge by the documents in the Danish National Archives, the Scanian reaction was strong.⁴⁶² One example is the report 12th February in which Per Ericson from Färs (Fers) claimed that back home the Swedish officials were running wild:

“...they (the Swedes) are persecuting them (the peasants) very hard and have taken away many of the inhabitants, they have recently sent 4 to the racks. One of them had a cross stuck down front-and backside and they tortured him so that his stomach came out from the throat. On another one they cut a hole in his side and let himself wind his bowels around his waist... whoever is negligent gets his farmstead burnt down and will be put to a miserable death and normally they set out in a group of 100 men but Tax Collector Jens Bentzon always sets out with 80 men in order to search out the Snaphaner....where they go they show no mercy if they suspect someone of being a snaphane and they kill the old with the young, even little boys of 12 to 14 years of age.”⁴⁶³

This execution has been commented upon before and both Fabricius and Røndahl have quoted the description of goriest part it.⁴⁶⁴ In spite of that I chose to quote a longer passage from the report since it is representative of the atmosphere that penetrates the reports from Scania that winter and spring. Many other examples are quoted in the footnotes. It is important to stress that it was in the interest of most of the interviewees to describe the situation in as desperate a light as possible. In this context, perhaps the most important point that transpires from these documents is the almost non-existent line behind snaphaner, peasants and indeed, inhabitants in general. The way Per Ericson and most of the other testimonies describe the situation,

23rd April 1677: “Johan Gyldenstiern and 800 cavalry and dragoons are riding around the land destroying all snaphaner.” Adrian Uppenborg from Brunswick, 13th February 1677: “The people in that land are still good Danes, in particular at Laholm, and they are waiting for deliverance.” Johan Nebling from Brunswick 14th February 1677: “...die Schnaphanen machen viele Schweden caput, die danshe aber helfen sie durch...” Jakob Smit’s account of a trip to Karlshamn (Carlshafn) taken down by Mathias Frijsrid, 20th May 1677: “They are Tyrannising most Cruelly over the poor commoners who have been god Danes, with terrible corporeal sufferings and threats...these honest Danish subjects nevertheless used every occasion to obtain information from the above mentioned Smit as to whether His Royal Majesty our Most Gracious Lawful Lord and Master would soon launch his navy....their unbroken Sincerity towards Our own most gracious Lawful King can be guaranteed, in spite of their having been exiled and now they are daily being *Tormented* in various ways.” These reports are all to be found among the “Interrogations and testimonies of captives and renegades” in Copenhagen (Forhør over og udsagn af fanger og overløbere, 468 Krigskollegiet (Landetaten) 1675-1678:98, DRA).

⁴⁶² Fabricius III, p.91: “...forbitrelsen herover voksede mere og mere: svenskerne svarede med radbraekning.” It should be noted that this kind of executions was unheard of in a military and paramilitary context in Scandinavia.

⁴⁶³ Report from Per Ericson, Hans Jensen and his fourteen-year-old son Jens Hansen from Åsum (Ausum) and Per Larsen from Västerstad (Westerste). Copenhagen 12th February 1677. Forhør over og udsagn af fanger og overløbere, 468 Krigskollegiet (Landetaten) 1675–1678:98, DRA. These men wanted to stay in safety in Copenhagen over the winter and appealed to the authorities for help.

⁴⁶⁴ Fabricius, III, p.107. See also: Røndahl, p.232. In medieval and early modern Europe disembowelling was a common punishment for serious crimes such as high treason. William Wallace (Braveheart) was punished in this way in 1305. See also: Geoffrey Abbott, *Rack, Rope and Red-Hot Pincers. A History of Torture and its Instruments*, Eric Dobby Publishing, Ltd, 2002 (originally 1993), p.209 and Ambrius (1996, pp.66-67), who points out that disembowelling and winding the victim’s intestines around him was an old Germanic tradition that can be traced at least back to the Vikings.

the Swedes were after every male who could possibly be deemed strong enough to carry a gun. It is possible that this was only an impression that Ericson and the others wanted to communicate to the authorities but even in that case it was a way of thinking that existed and that could have become part of the dominant discourse if the war had finished differently. From that time onwards notices like that often appeared in the Swedish newssheets. Often, they ended with a note in the following vein: “Nevertheless the others persist in their wicked ways and show no fear of punishment”.⁴⁶⁵ On 23rd April 1677 Swend Pedersen⁴⁶⁶ who was a Swedish POW reported to Copenhagen that from his own regiment, that of Colonel Jerta, twenty men had been shot by the snaphaner some time earlier. Pedersen also reported that at the beginning of that month the snaphaner had shot seven men in Laholm in Halland, of which one was a captain and another a sergeant and at about the same time there had been a “skirmish” in the woods between Johan Gyllenstjerna and two hundred snaphaner and that twelve of the Swedes had been killed before the snaphaner “ran away.”

The Importance of Oaths

On 6th June 1677 three executions were reported from Lund: “Last Monday a burgher from Lund called Hans Bagger was decapitated. He was accused of having shot some Swedes who had sought refuge in his house after the battle of Lund. It was his neighbours who had reported this to the Swedes. When he was about to die, he said ‘May God punish whoever is unfaithful to the King of Denmark and has told lies about me!’ He then walked to his death with great courage (according to the Danish source). The following Friday two *friskytter* were quartered in that same town.⁴⁶⁷ As in so many other wars it had become impossible to trust one’s neighbours, but one should remember that the dividing lines were not necessarily ethnic.

⁴⁶⁵ The *Mercurius* 10th April 1678, quoted by Rödahl, p.267. This source ends with a piece of rhetoric that had become a cliché in Swedish official snaphane discourse. The same sort of rhetoric was common when “normal” criminals were executed too, in Sweden and in Denmark, unless they had repented their sins in public. In this case it is the rhetoric that is of interest: not the claim that the remaining snaphaner persisted in their wicked ways and had no fear of punishment. I have no idea of what the percentage of people who had no fear of punishment was.

⁴⁶⁶ Swend Pedersen is a Danish name. Since this man’s birthplace was Södermanland in Sweden his name was probably Sven Pettersson. The report is dated Copenhagen 23rd April 1677 and is to be found among the 468 Krigskollegiet (Landetaten) 1675-1678. Forhør over og udsagn af fanger og overløbere:98, DRA.

⁴⁶⁷ ”Nu Gud i himmelen straffe den som er Kongen aff Danmarck utroe og hawer falskelig wundet paa mig!”, Depositiones, 6th June 1677, DRA.

Bagger obviously did not like the Swedes and felt that it was his duty to stay true to the Danish monarch. It is very interesting that he said that he thought that those Scanians who broke faith with the Danish king had deserved themselves damnation. Men like Bagger probably saw the oath of allegiance to the Swedish king as something he had been forced to against his own will and consequently devoid of value, but that their old Danish oath should be respected. In a similar situation, Christer Bagge clearly stated his reasoning in court when he was facing charges of rebellion against the Swedish king and of pretending to be a chief among the snaphaner in December 1658: he proudly declared that yes, he had gone down to Malmö (Malmøe) to swear the oath of allegiance to the king on behalf of the hundred of Öster (Østre), but he had never cared much for that oath and yes, he was indeed a most faithful friskytte officer.⁴⁶⁸ An oath that Bagge on the contrary, contributed the utmost importance was the one he had fallen on his knees to take in the midst of a ring of men and in the presence of the vicar, on the Rödeby churchyard some time later. That was the oath he had taken to become a captain of the friskytter, and which meant that he had sworn to kill every Swede he came across.⁴⁶⁹ However sacred oaths might have been during the early modern era, it is obvious that early modern men like Hans Bagger and Christer Bagge did not consider forced oaths as oaths at all. According to their line of reasoning an oath had to be taken of one's own will in order to be valid and they were bound by no other oath of allegiance than the one that enjoined them to oppose Swedes, to kill them or to have them killed. In the same manner, although lying was not accepted in general it was sometimes considered permissible to lie like the jurors who promised Christer Bagge pardon if he confessed everything but then had him decapitated anyway.

⁴⁶⁸ Johnsson, pp.28-30 where he refers to the court registers from Ronneby 11th December 1658, *Rebellernas acta*, (The Rebel Files), LA.

⁴⁶⁹ Johnsson, p.32. Christer Bagge is also mentioned by Alf Åberg in his *Snapphanarna* from 1952 (pp.41-42.) Åberg stresses that Bagge was chosen by the peasants in his area because of his experience as a corporal in the Swedish army and because of his status. Åberg also makes the point that Bagge recruited his snaphaner by sending messages to those farmsteads where a farmer he thought apt resided. Åberg did not add that Bagge himself claimed that he had been talked into the enterprise not by one but by two local clergymen and that the snaphane company was sworn in during a meeting outside a church that was attended by one of these prelates.

Conclusions:

By early 1677 nobody wanted to be called a “snaphane” anymore, since a criminalising process had taken place through which the word had become tantamount to being called a “thug” in Swedish. Consequently, those who wanted to express their sympathies with the Danes started using the term “friskytte” instead and all those who identified as resistance fighters naturally adopted this term immediately. As I see it the Danish authorisations and payment lists reflect the Danish tendency to adapt the “snaphaner” to a more modern military situation at the same time as they were, *perhaps*, trying to protect them from Swedish punishments that were growing increasingly cruel. Whereas a rebel and ex-Swedish soldier like Christer Bagge was granted decapitation in 1658, it was now becoming more and more frequent that rebels were tortured to death. In the case of Hans Bagger, who was a respected burgher, it seems that he too was granted decapitation. Being executed as a criminal also remained a question of rank. Both Bagge and Bagger proudly declared that they owed no loyalty to the Swedes and that their only true loyalty bond was the one to the king of Denmark. Like so many others they adhered to a discourse that was very different from the official Swedish one but that went hand in glove with what the views expressed by the Danish authorities.

The Fall of Kristianopel (Christianopel) and Karlshamn

“Between the 8th and 9th of this month, the enemy arrived at Night at one o’clock, and stormed Fort Bokul but with the assistance of our Lord they were deluded. Their commanders were Colonel Skytte and Colonel Swinhofwet. According to some Accounts 400 drowned in the ice or were shot and when they retreated 60 carts were needed to carry their wounded to Rönneby.”⁴⁷⁰

Introduction

In this section I will try to show that, in the light of new evidence and through a detailed exam of the different versions of the events surrounding the capitulation of Kristianopel (Christianopel) and Bodekuld/Karlshamn it is obvious that things went a

⁴⁷⁰ Falch Lauridtzön Dalhoff’s report to the Army Board on the first Swedish assault on Bodekuld/Carlshamn in February 1677, Falch Lauridtzön Dalhoff to the Army Board, 22nd February 1677, Indkomne Breve, DRA. On 27th of that month Jacob Jörgensen Wesseltoft informed the Danish authorities that he had heard that three hundred men had sunk through the ice and died. See: Wesseltoft’s report, 27th February 1677, 468 Krigskollegiet (Landetaten) 1675-78 Forhør over og udsagn af fanger og overløbere 1675-1677:98, DRA He also claimed (correctly) that the Swedes were marching on “Carlshaffn”.

bit different from what has been thought. Contamination of sources, misinformation and pure mistakes have led to considerable confusion as to what really took place.

The Two Strongholds

That winter the province of Blekinge (Bleging) was brought to its knees. According to Jensen the Swedish decision to lay siege to Kristianopel (Christianopel) and then Karlshamn was principally meant to bereave the "snaphaner" of their safe havens in that area.⁴⁷¹ The main Swedish aim was to conquer Kristianstad (Christianstad) but the king's councillors did not feel confident enough of their numerical strength, so from his camp at Vä (Wæ) where he had arrived on 12th January that year, Charles XI decided to let his commanders set out for the snaphaner first. Copenhagen knew all too well that Kristianopel (Christianopel) and Karlshamn were exposed: a rescue expedition was sent out by sea, with the intention of evacuating the garrison at Kristianopel (Christianopel). Commander Lützow was ordered to keep his stand as long as possible but then to save his men when he could no more. Unfortunately, the ships could not get through the thick ice that was covering the sea and so the rescue mission had had to be postponed.⁴⁷²

The First Attack on Karlshamn/Bodekuld

Meanwhile, the Swedes had sent out troops against Karlshamn/Bodekuld.⁴⁷³ Colonel Axel Wachtmeister, Colonel Swinhufvud, Colonel Lieutenant Carl Gustav Skytte and Colonel Lieutenant Gustaf Hård and 800 troops (at least in part peasants) set out for Karlshamn, the "Swedish" town that had replaced the small seaport of Bodekull (Bodekuld) that was there in Danish times.⁴⁷⁴ A contemporary Danish pamphlet declared that "the Swedish Marshal Horn has with Banner come down from

⁴⁷¹ Jensen, p.229.

⁴⁷² Jensen, p.228.

⁴⁷³ The usage of the name varied, though. Falch Lauridsön Dalhoff used the terms "Bodekuld fortress" and "Carlshafn" in his reports to Copenhagen, so that it seems that to him (and he took for granted that the recipients of his missiles understood it the same way) the old name designed the fortress whereas the new name indicated the actual town. Dalhoff was mayor of Kristianstad (Christianstad) according to Fabricius (III, p.66), although it seems obvious that he occupied the same position at Karlshamn/Bodekuld at the time of writing the reports that I mention below, and he was also its customs officer. In the treaty that stipulated the surrender of Kristianstad (Christianstad) Dalhoff is mentioned "former mayor, the Danish customs officer, Falch Larsön" See: Jacobsen, p.177. See also: Falch Lauridszön Dalhoff's reports to the Army Board and to Offue Rommell of 22nd February 1677 and 19th October 1677 respectively, Indkomne breve, DRA. Another contemporary, the Reverend Sthen Jacobsen (p.90.) preferred to use the terms "Carlshaffn" and "Carlshaffn fortress." A Danish newsheet from 19th February 1677 uses "Carlshaffn". See: *Ny Beretning*, stanza 10.

⁴⁷⁴ Fabricius III, p.91.

Sweden...in order to visit Carlshaffn with bad and not good intentions.”⁴⁷⁵ The garrison at Bodekuld/Karlshamn was very small: only two companies under Captain Krumsee.⁴⁷⁶ At the very beginning of this section I quoted Mayor Falch Lauridtzön Dalhoff’s account of these events. The Swedes tried to attack Bodekuld/Karlshamn from the seaside: the sea was frozen, and they were planning a surprise attack across the ice and then from the back. But, according to Jensen’s account, the “snaphaner” had warned the garrison under Captain Hans Ernst Krumsee who promptly ordered the ice to be broken around the two ships that were stuck there and along the side of the fortress.⁴⁷⁷ When the Swedes arrived the Danes opened fire both from the ships and from the fortress and as we have seen from Dalhoff’s account, many of those who were not shot perished in the icy water instead.⁴⁷⁸ According to Dalhoff the Swedish troops consisted of 200 regular soldiers from Ronneby (Rönneby) and 600 conscripted peasants.⁴⁷⁹ Jensen claims that it was Colonel A. Wachtmeister who led the attack and that he had 1700 peasant troops with him and that half of them perished. Wachtmeister’s role is confirmed by the *Ny beretning*.⁴⁸⁰

Furthermore, Dalhoff adds the interesting detail that a burgher from Karlshamn led the Swedes across the ice but he was shot outside the fortress and Dalhoff himself had ordered the burgher to be hung in the gallows in the central square, “as a warning to his comrades.”⁴⁸¹ Dalhoff also reported that some of the Karlshamn burghers had “run

⁴⁷⁵ “Ny Beretning”, stanza 10.

⁴⁷⁶ Jensen, p.228. At the capitulation there were 150 men inside the fortress.

⁴⁷⁷ Jensen, p.230. See also Nils Skytte’s diaries (“Öfverste Nils Skyttes dagboksanteckningar 1675-1720” [The Diaries of Colonel Nils Skytte 1675-1729], pp. 1-29, in *Skånska samlingar II:1*, Martin Weibull ed., Lund 1892, p.2): Skytte’s cousin Christopher Heldemuth Skytte drowned during the attack on Carlshamn on 8th February 1677. Skytte consequently confirms the date.

⁴⁷⁸ The *Ny beretning* (Stanza 11) confirms this version in that it mentions the disaster in the ice and mockingly deplores those Swedes that had been called by Neptune and now rest with him. The commander of the fortress (Krumsee) is praised highly in that he managed to show the enemy that “The little Danes also have brains behind their brows.” (Danske=Manden har Klogskab oc i Panden).

⁴⁷⁹ “...bemelte Partie af de Svendske vare ey udskrefne bönder som stöte till de –200 som laa i Rönneby, och vare de saa –800 mand som Hand (Col. Skytte) attaqverede skandtzen med.” Jacobsen (p.90) agreed with this estimate. As for the losses, however, Jacobsen estimated them to 200 instead of 400 like Dalhoff.

⁴⁸⁰ The *Ny beretning* (stanza 14) claims that “that courageous soldier Baron Wachtmeister and many other officers and soldiers died in the battle”.

⁴⁸¹ “Een Borger af Carlshafn anförte samme swendske parti.e...ofwer Isön, blef skudt uden for skandtzen, saa hafwer Jeg udgifwet order at lade opreyse een gallie paa Carlshafns torfwe och hannem der udi ophenge, andre hans Cammerater til Exempel...” This episode is only mentioned by Dalhoff and has not been mentioned by any scholars or hobby historians either. However, it is interesting in its way, not the least because, as far as I know it is the one and only time any burgher at all is mentioned as taking part actively on the *Swedish* side. With Carlshamn having been built in Swedish times it can perhaps be assumed that its population identified more easily with the kingdom of Sweden.

away” with the Swedes and that he had expelled their families from the town. The belongings of these persons had, according to Dalhoff, already been sent to Sweden.⁴⁸² This incident is another case in which non-optional ethnic distinctions might have been of some importance. Was it only by chance that the one town in the Scanian provinces that did not welcome King Christian’s troops with open arms was a “new” town that had largely been populated with ethnic Swedes and non-Danes? Rebuilding or founding from zero towns/villages that had decayed or been destroyed by war, especially in this important border region was a political statement in itself: to let Charles’s Crown and Port Charles (Karlskrona and Karlshamn) guard the new territories made quite clear what the Swedish intentions were.⁴⁸³

The Reliability of the Sources

Unfortunately, the precise details of what happened at Bodekuld/Karlshamn are unsure since the sources give us various versions of the events and do not even agree as for the dates. As Fabricius pointed out, Sthen Jacobsen wrongly dated this event to 8th January instead of February.⁴⁸⁴ Fabricius mainly relied on Falch Lauridtzön Dalhoff’s report of 22nd February 1677 for the account of these events. The *Ny beretning* from 19th February 1677 reports of the Swedish onslaught on Karlshamn and the disaster in the ice as “recent”.⁴⁸⁵ Whereas Dalhoff was closest to the events, and most reliable as for the dates (since he sent in an almost day to day report from January until 22nd February and had no reason to mix up January and February like Jacobsen), he was also an enthusiastic pro-Dane who did not try to be impartial. It does seem unlikely, however, that a fervent Danish patriot like Dalhoff would have omitted mentioning the considerably higher casualty numbers reported by Jensen. Jacobsen was also a contemporary, but he was further away from the events that he might even have learned about from newssheets and letters etc. but he tried to be as

⁴⁸² ”Nogle Borger løb med det swendske partie bort, deres Hustruer och börn lader Jeg forwise byen, derres godtz er intet thi det er fört til Swerrig.”

⁴⁸³ That does not mean that the Danes in their turn did not build and rebuild when they thought necessary or politically opportune. The names “Christianopel” and “Christianstad” in themselves were also political statements. As for the Swedish tendency to replace Danish border towns with new Swedish towns, see: Linde-Laursen, p.47. Bodekuld and Christianopel were substituted by Karlshamn and Kristianopel and the burghers of the remaining old “Danish” town in the area, Sölvesborg, complained that they were being reduced to “a speck of dust on the map” or a “minor locality on the map”. For pre-Swedish Bodekuld and how Karlshamn was constructed see also the excellent maps on the website of the local museum: <http://www.karlshamnmuseum.se/ezweb/?Page=14&ID=1>

⁴⁸⁴ Fabricius III, p.91 footnote 4 and Jacobsen, p.90.

⁴⁸⁵ *Ny beretning* stanza 10. The only event that has a precise date in the same pamphlet is the arrival in Copenhagen of approximately one hundred captured Swedes on 16th February.

impartial as possible and was therefore, perhaps, less prone to exaggerating numbers. Jensen and Fabricius wrote more than two hundred years later, but they had access to documents that contemporaries like Jacobsen and Dalhoff had no possibility of reading. Unfortunately, Jensen is very vague about his sources. What can be said for sure is that the Danes managed to ward off the attack and that after having suffered severe losses the Swedes retreated and set out for Kristianopel (Christianopel) instead.

Kristianopel (Christianopel)

The Swedish Colonels Gyllenstjerna and Tungell were then sent out to expugn Kristianopel (Christianopel) instead.⁴⁸⁶ Gyllenstjerna's troops arrived on 11th February and then Tungell brought his heavy mortars (mörser) down from Sweden and laid siege to Kristianopel (Christianopel).⁴⁸⁷ Five days later a battery of cannons was posted at the distance of a gunshot from the city walls.⁴⁸⁸ Heavy bombardment was then started and destruction and fire spread over the town: important buildings like the bakery and the brewery were soon in ruins and although the inhabitants fought desperately on the walls the commander, Colonel Valentin Lützwow, who was running out of ammunition, decided to capitulate on 22nd February 1677.⁴⁸⁹ The agreement that was signed by both sides stated that the garrison should be escorted safely "an die nächste Grenze nach Selandt" (to the border that is closest to Zealand), with the exception of "rechte gebohrne Schweden" and "gefangene schwedische Bediente".⁴⁹⁰ However, this never came to be. What really happened after the surrender of Kristianopel (Christianopel) has long been disputed. According to Sthen Jacobsen "all officers and privates became prisoners of war" and he then added that "among these Danes there were 70 men from Bleging and Gyngel that were singled out from the others and hung that very same hour."⁴⁹¹ Jacobsen does not mention the

⁴⁸⁶ There were eight companies at Kristianopel (Christianopel), two of Colonel Lange's, four of Col. Warnstedt's and two of Col. Schack's. See: Jensen, p.228. Røndahl (p.222) states that the garrison at Kristianopel (Christianopel) comprised 750 soldiers, approximately 150 armed burghers and 50 men from different partisan units that could be called "snaphaner".

⁴⁸⁷ Jensen, p.229.

⁴⁸⁸ Jacobsen, p.91 claims it was on 15th January that Colonels Tungell and Gyllenstjerna started bombarding the town. Jensen (p.230) claims the heavy bombardment started on the 18th and continued for two days.

⁴⁸⁹ Jensen, pp.230–131; Fabricius III, p.92. Nils Skytte (p.2) claims it was Christianstad that capitulated on 24th February 1677 but that was obviously an error: possibly the mistake might be Martin Weibull's who edited and published the diaries in the 1890ies.

⁴⁹⁰ Fabricius III, p.92.

⁴⁹¹ Jacobsen, (p.91.), was critical of Lützwow's attempts to keep the enemy at bay: "Lytzou probably did offer some resistance..." (Lytzou gjorde vel nogen modstand).

“snaphaner” in this context and nor does his account offer any clues as for the fate of the prisoners of war who were not hung.⁴⁹² As he saw it the blame for this disaster could be attributed to Lützow’s incompetence. This view was obviously shared by some important people in Denmark because some time later, Commander Valentin von Lützow was court-marshalled. According to a letter to “Kriegs Rath” Herman Meyer from Valentin’s brother Aegidius, people were saying that Valentin had refused to listen to his officers’ advice and only acted according to his own will, but Aegidius von Lützow insisted that it was slander: his brother had written to him about what had happened and now the whole family would be immensely grateful if the “Kriegsrath” would help collect testimonies from the officers that had been present.⁴⁹³ Valentin von Lützow was condemned to death by the sword but eventually he was granted pardon.⁴⁹⁴

Although they vary on several other points Jensen and Fabricius agree that original agreement was that the entire Kristianopel (Christianopel) garrison be guaranteed safe passage to Zealand and that eventually they were not: the Swedes declared that the Danes had broken the agreement since the two ships that had been stuck in the ice off the coast managed to break through the ice and escape.⁴⁹⁵ With this excuse the Danes (including Lützow himself) were sent on a trek to Trondheim in Norway that took them well over four months. No numbers of casualties are reported by Jensen, but he claims that “the majority perished on the way.” Jensen’s version agrees with Jacobsen in that he reports that 70 “snaphaner” were singled out and executed before the garrison was sent on a forced march to Norway.⁴⁹⁶ According to Knud Fabricius the agreement that was signed by both sides stated that the garrison should be escorted safely “an die nächste Grenze nach Selandt” (to the border that is closest to Zealand), except for “rechte gebohrne Schweden” and “gefangene schwedische Bediente”. Further according to Fabricius, the Swedes then used this paragraph as an excuse to

⁴⁹² According to the Swedes the latter category would not have been seen as POWs but as criminals. It is important to note that, from a Danish point of view there should not have been either POWs or captured criminals among those who had fought for Kristianopel (Christianopel) on the Danish side, since the treaty stated that they would all be allowed safe passage to Danish territory if they surrendered. Seen in that light, the lawbreakers were the Swedes.

⁴⁹³ Aegidius von Lützow to “Herr Kriegs Rath” (Herman Meyer), Indkomne breve, 1678, DRA. No date.

⁴⁹⁴ Jensen, p.231. Fabricius (III, p.92) only stated that Lützow had been condemned to decapitation.

⁴⁹⁵ Jacobsen, (p.91), mentions no ships outside Kristianopel (Christianopel), only the two off the Karlshamn coast. Jensen, (p.231) and Fabricius (III, p.94) claim there were two ships off the coast of both Karlshamn/Bodekuld and Kristianopel (Christianopel) and that all four had been stuck in the ice.

⁴⁹⁶ Jensen, p.231.

single out 141 men from the garrison⁴⁹⁷; namely those of the soldiers who could trace their origins to the Scanian provinces and who, according to Gyllenstjerna, belonged to the category of “rechte gebohrne Schweden.” These men were then examined and those that could be considered as “snaphaner” were executed.⁴⁹⁸ The German mercenaries in Kristianopel (Christianopel) were also singled out enlisted in the Swedish army.

According to Jacobsen the Karlshamn/Bodekuld garrison under Captain Krumsee capitulated before Kristianopel (Christianopel), and it was those men who were sent on “a walk across Sweden up to Jempteland to Trundheim in Norway”. Only fifty-six men survived the trek through what was still a wintry landscape.⁴⁹⁹ Still according to Jacobsen, the two ships that had escaped the Swedes had been anchored outside Karlshamn/Bodekuld and the Swedes had broken the agreement for this reason. Jensen claims the Swedes had no excuses at Karlshamn/Bodekuld and that Krumsee’s behaviour had been impeccable, which the Danish inquiry into the case later that year also concluded.⁵⁰⁰ Although Jensen mentions two ships that were stuck in the ice during the Swedish attack on Karlshamn/Bodekuld of 8th February 1677, he seems to have forgotten to mention their fate at the capitulation. He does mention, however, that there were two ships off the Kristianopel (Christianopel) coast at the time of the capitulation of that town. According to Jensen the 150-man strong Karlshamn/Bodekuld garrison were sent on a forced march to Rørås in Norway and 57 of them survived.⁵⁰¹

Towards the end of March 1677 Jörgen Hörman from “Lynebourger Landt” left a statement with the Danes since he had become a POW after sixteen years of Swedish service.⁵⁰² Hörman had not been an eyewitness to the surrender of Kristianopel

⁴⁹⁷ According to Fabricius. Røndahl (1996, p.222) believes that the numbers might be slightly exaggerated.

⁴⁹⁸ ”de, der blev overbeviste om snaphaneri, henrettedes”, Fabricius III, p.92.

⁴⁹⁹ Jacobsen, p.91.

⁵⁰⁰ Jensen, pp. 231-232, based on Document 637 among the Indkomne Sager (Krigskollegiet) October 1677, DRA.

⁵⁰¹ Jensen, p.231.

⁵⁰² Jörgen Hörman born at Fehren in the Lynebourger Landt, Major under Colonel Lichtborn, has served for approximately 16 years under the Crown of Sweden. 468 Krigskollegiet (Landetaten) 1675-1678, Forhør over og udsagn af fanger og overløbere: 98, DRA. “Er wird fuer dies mahl vershont, weil er won Christianopel und Karshaffn bescheid weiss und won den accorten was nachricht geben kan...Holger Trolle to Arensdorff 25th March 1677, 468:61, DRA.

(Christianopel) but he had heard that the agreement had been broken because the ships had sailed away and that the Swedes said that the commander (Lützow) and his men would remain under arrest until the ships were back. Hörman's lackey Abraham Serilus from Livonia also left a statement in which he stressed that he had not been present at Kristianopel (Cristianopel) but he had heard that the Danes had not been granted an honourable retreat because the ships had been included in the agreement and the Swedes considered the agreement broken when the ships sailed away.⁵⁰³ He also claimed that the Germans had taken service with the Swedes straight away and that those who were natives of Scania and Blekinge (Blegind) had been forcefully picked out but that the Swedes would not have any Danes in their service. News did not always travel quickly during those Arctic winters. On 4th March 1677 a Mr J.⁵⁰⁴ wrote to his friend "Monsieur Barkman Inspecteur Premier des Gabelles pour Sa Maytt de Suède à Malmö" but his letter was intercepted by the Danes and ended up in the National Archives. Mr J. was eager to tell his friend some news: "Yesterday we received news from Markarid that Christianopel had gone over to us (by storm) and is consequently once more obedient to His Majesty. There was a whole bunch of snaphaner in there."⁵⁰⁵ The same news were given an important place in Johan Krook's letter from Vä (Wæ) of 5th March 1677 to his friend "Monsier Gustaff Lährman Medicin du Roy de Sued a Mallmoe ou il sera...His Majesty has news from Bleking that Christianopel...has been conquered...they found a bunch of snaphaner there."⁵⁰⁶ Were these "snaphaner" the men who were singled out as natives of Scania and Blekinge (Blegind)?

If one is to trust the sources in the archives, the Kristianopel (Christianopel) garrison were *not* sent to Norway. Sergeant Hans Nielß Stourop was taken prisoner at Kristianopel (Christianopel) and kept in Swedish custody for twenty-eight weeks after which he somehow managed to make his way to the Danes or was released. He then wrote a petition for compensation to the Danish Army Board in which he declared that the Swedes had sent "the others" to Livonia but he made no mention of snaphaner

⁵⁰³ Abraham Serilus from Narven in Livonia, servant of Major Hörman, 31st March 1677, 468 Krigskollegiet (Landetaten) 1675–1678, Forhør over og udsagn af fanger og overløbere:68, DRA.

⁵⁰⁴ I have not been able to decipher this man's surname: it reads something like Haghis. See: Opsnappede breve, 4th March 1677, DRA.

⁵⁰⁵ I have not been able to decipher this man's surname: it reads something like Haghis. See: Opsnappede breve, 4th March 1677, DRA.

⁵⁰⁶ Modern-day "Vä" was then spelled "Wæ" or as in this letter "Wä". I have not been able to decipher this man's surname: it reads something like Haghis. See: Opsnappede breve, 4th March 1677, DRA.

or free companies.⁵⁰⁷ Almost three months after the capitulation of Kristianopel (Christianopel), on 19th May 1677, County Governor Augustin Leijonskiöldh wrote to the Swedish king from the town Jönköping just north of the border to Scania, in order to report that he had received His Majesty's instructions regarding the Kristianopel (Christianopel) garrison, i.e. that the officers should live on their own money, and the privates would sooner or later be constrained to find masters (hußbonde) for themselves when they realised they would receive nothing.⁵⁰⁸ Obviously the Kristianopel (Christianopel) garrison had *not* been sent to Norway but were held captive in the province of Småland, just across the border. The letter specifies that the privates were placed in the parishes of Säby and Linderöd (Linderähs) and that they "have now been reduced to fairly small numbers compared to what they were at first, and they now consist exclusively of national Danes to a number of 120 or 130 men...".⁵⁰⁹ Leijonskiöldh then went on to report that the privates had no higher wish than to be accepted into Swedish service, no matter where they would be sent. However, if possible, they would rather not join the navy. According to Leijonskiöldh the Danish soldiers were miserable and frightened and they felt sorry for themselves that they were "Jutes", else they would have been recruited into the army but as it were they were at the mercy of the peasants.⁵¹⁰ The peasants had the power to decide whether the POWs would have "a little bit or nothing" and Leijonskiöldh feared the peasants were rather inclined towards the latter option, for the "Jutes" were suffering great misery and were beseeching him in the name of God that they be allowed to serve as soldiers.⁵¹¹ The exception were three "constables" (constabler), residents of Copenhagen who had their wives in that town, who would not hear of the word "service" (tjänst), and so Leijonskiöldh had brought these three to Jönköping in order to starve them into obedience. Now, Leijonskiöldh was asking the king if there was

⁵⁰⁷ Hans Nielß Stourop to the Army Board and the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Skattmister), 470 Generalkrigskommissariatet 1674-1679 Indkomne breve 1674 Slesvig amter 1679 Slesvig By:1955, DRA. Skourop was a sergeant who had served under Major Ebertz at Kristianopel (Christianopel) and who appealed to the Army Board for his right to payment (5 rigsdaler a month) during the time he had been away. He reported that "*the others* were all brought by force to Livonia".

⁵⁰⁸ Leijonskiöld to His Majesty, Jönköpingh, 19th May 1677, Intercipierte breve, DRA.

⁵⁰⁹ "Dhe Christianobelska gemehna, som mehrendels ligga i Säby och Linderöhs socknar befinnas nu reducerade till ett tämmeliget litet antahl dhet dhe i förstone wahr, och bestå alleenest af national danska till 120 ell 130 man..." I here understand the term "national danska" as belonging to the regiments that were supposed to comprise only men from particular Danish regions, such as the National Scanians etc. Very often these regiments also included Danes from other regions and even foreigners.

⁵¹⁰ "dhet är nu ingen ringa olycka, at dhe ähr Juthar"

⁵¹¹ "...lijda deße Juthar stoor nödh och bedia för Gudz skull, at man wille taga dhem i tjenst..."

any possibility that the other soldiers could be taken into Swedish service, and he also asked the king to take into consideration that most of these soldiers had served “His Majesty’s forefathers”.⁵¹² Another piece of evidence that points clearly in this direction is a recent article in which Jens Lerbom proves that there was no mass execution of snaphaner after the siege of Kristianopel (Christianopel) as rumour has long had it, but that those who were singled out from the other soldiers were shipped over to Livonia.⁵¹³ If indeed it were the so-called snaphaner that were sent to Livonia: Sergeant Stourop’s petition makes no mention of snaphaner and Leijonsköldh’s report hints that the captive soldiers might have been willing to take Swedish service rather than being the slaves of the local peasants.

The Surrender of Karlshamn

After Kristianopel (Christianopel) the Swedes went for Karlshamn. At the beginning of March Gyllenstierna started the attack on the Bodekuld/Karlshamn fortress with his cannons. The commander of Kristianstad (Christianstad), General Major Meerheim, sent reinforcements in the shape of 200 dragoons and Nicolaus Hermansen’s friskytter.⁵¹⁴ On 15th February Hermansen set out in the direction of Blekinge with 60 men plus the officers. They were supposed to go out and recruit more “friskytter and peasants”. The representative of the Danish Army Board (General Commissariat), Christoffer Lindenow had divided these men into companies so that the king would have a Blekinge (Bleging) regiment once it pleased him to send them regular officers. Lindenow had also obtained a request for Danish flags from the parish of Jämshög (Gemsø) so that he was having one tailored for them. A week later the men were back

⁵¹² “såsom största dehlen af dhem för detta Eders Kongl: Mayß: förfäder tiänt hafwa.”

⁵¹³ Jens Lerbom, “Massavrättningen vid Kristianopel 1677 och något om problemen med övergångstidens historieskrivning” (The Mass Execution outside Kristianopel 1677 and Something about the Problems Concerning the Writing of the History of the Transition Era), pp.25–32 in *Ale* 2008:4. See especially p. 25 and p.30.

⁵¹⁴ Jacobsen, (p.90), mentions this rescue mission, though his dating of this letter to January is wrong. According to Jacobsen Meerheim set out with some troops from Kristianstad (Christianstad) that were to be joined by “Blegingssfarer”, people from the province of Blekinge (Bleging), at the Asserum bridge. Unfortunately, the Swedes were waiting for them there and the Danes had to retreat, according to Jacobsen because of their useless German officers. In this case the “Blegingssfarer” that were to fight for Meerheim were *not* called snaphaner by Jacobsen. Hermansen is called “Nikolaj Hermansen” in that source.

without having been able to do anything, which Falch Lauridtzön Dalhoff⁵¹⁵ reported with great compunction:

“Captain Nicolauss Hermandssön came back to Christianstad today without having gone about his business up in Bleging. When he arrived at Rönneby with the peasants and wanted to attack the enemy they refused to follow him. For it is with the peasant as I have always said and still say, that is that the Peasant is of no use except when the woods are green and he will be out hiding behind the bushes where he can shoot at whoever he likes, as soon one of our own as an enemy.”⁵¹⁶

Dalhoff spoke of Hermansen with great admiration, as did many others.⁵¹⁷ Hermansen was one of many fighters in the Snaphane War whose position was far from clear. Sometimes he was called a captain of the dragoons, sometimes of the friskytter. It seems as if he changed between being a regular and an irregular soldier several times, which probably was *not* all that strange at the time. The difference between regular detachment warfare and irregular warfare was only nominal⁵¹⁸ and Hermansen was often employed on that kind of missions, as were his colleagues Svend Poulsen Gønge and Pieter Sten. Commander-in-chief Meerheim’s troops were reinforced with in between six- and seven hundred peasants. On 7th March the Danes attacked the Swedes that were laying siege to Karlshamn. When the peasant troops found themselves face to face with the regular Swedish infantry they soon escaped, or so the Danish reports claimed. A Swedish report of the incident states that 500 “snaphaner” assisted a troop of 200 Danish cavalry in an attack on Karlshamn at the beginning of March. The Danes had set out from Kristianstad (Christianstad) with the intent of a surprise attack. Fortunately for the Swedes they were beaten, some were shot, and many were taken prisoner. Reportedly several “snaphaner” were hung on the spot but some others were reprieved.⁵¹⁹ Could this execution have been mixed up with what took place at Kristianopel (Christianopel)?

Fabricius pointed out that it was rather singular to let peasant and irregulars attack regular troops on open ground. It did not at all correspond to their image as treacherous peasants who ambushed decent people in the woods. Nor did the fact that the snaphaner often acted in troops of as many as several hundred together, alone or in

⁵¹⁵ In the Danish National Archives, he is registered as a “customs officer”. In the accord between Danes and Swedes after the Danes had surrendered Christianstad (Jacobsen, p.177), Dalhoff is mentioned as “former mayor, the Danish customs officer Falch Larsön...”.

⁵¹⁶ Falch Lauridtzön Dalhoff to the Army Board, 22nd February 1677, Indkomne Breve, DRA.

⁵¹⁷ For an account of Hermansen’s life see: Røndahl, pp.442-444. Hermansen is sometimes known as Nicolai Hermanssön.

⁵¹⁸ Kunisch, (p.19), quotes Carl von Decker’s *Der Kleine Krieg*, Berlin 1844.

⁵¹⁹ Anonymous report to the king, 14th March 1677, Handlingar rörande danska kriget 1676–79, SRA. Quoted by Johnsson, pp.82-83.

co-operation with regular troops. As in many other cases it is not very clear what kind of troops that really participated on the Danish side in this battle. The Swedes claimed that 500 were “snaphaner”, the Danes that several hundred peasant troops had participated, but there might also have been more professional irregular troops, by now even authorised friskytter. On 9th March 1677 the fortress at Karlshamn capitulated to the Swedes. From then on Blekinge (Blegind) was in Charles XI's hands.⁵²⁰ One of Krumsee's garrison at Karlshamn (Bodekuld) who managed to escape from the Swedes was Nels Moridtzen who left a statement in Copenhagen on 5th May.⁵²¹ Moridtzen had escaped from the Swedes in Blekinge (here: Bleginde) where he had kept in hiding with the peasants and then made his way to Landskrona (Landscrone) and from there to Copenhagen. He reported that the enemy had laid siege to Karlshamn (Bodekuld) for five days and that there had been such heavy bombardment that all the houses were ruined but only two men had been killed and two wounded. According too Moridtzen there had been eighty men in the garrison and although they had been promised to return honourably to Denmark they were instead forced to march to Sweden. According to what people said, the commander had been put in prison in Kalmar. Approximately twenty of the German soldiers had taken service with the Swedes at Ronneby (Rönneby) in Blekinge (Blegind). Some other Danes had run away and stayed in the woods. Another testimony comes from the POW Jörgen Hörman who had been wounded while fighting on the other side. According to him the Danes had been forced to surrender because of the Swedish “feuer mörser” (fire mortars?) that had ruined the warehouses. He said he had heard that the Danes had broken the agreement, but he did not know why. Hörman's servant Servilus was a little better informed, or more willing to speak, and he reported that at the surrender “those who were natives of Scania and Blekinge (Blegind) were forcefully singled out and then all the Germans took service, one and the other, even though the commander was against it. And contrary to the agreement the garrison had to march to Växjö. The reason for this he did not know.”⁵²²

⁵²⁰ This date is confirmed by Skytte in his diaries (p.2).

⁵²¹ Forhør over og udsagn af fanger og overløbere, 468 Krigskollegiet (Landetaten) 1675–1678, DRA. In this document Karlshamn is called “Carlshawen”.

⁵²² Jörgen Hörman 29th March 1677; Abraham Servilus, 31st March 1677, 468 Krigskollegiet (Landetaten) 1675–1678, Forhør over og udsagn af fanger og overløbere:68, DRA

Conclusions:

It now seems obvious that the Kristianopel (Christianopel) garrison or part of it were kept in Swedish captivity for about three months after the capitulation, after which some of them were sent to Livonia. The Bodekuld/Karlshamn garrison were sent on foot to the north of Norway, as had the Helsingborg garrison before them.⁵²³ Both the literary sources and private letters confirm that there were people who were defined as “snaphaner” by the Swedes at Kristianopel (Christianopel) and that their presence was noticeable enough to stress in Swedish private letters. Nothing indicates that these people thought of themselves as “snaphaner”, or that other Danes did so. The sources in the Danish archives treat them on a par with other soldiers. In the same manner, Sergeant Hans Nielß Stourop who was taken prisoner at Kristianopel (Christianopel) and kept in Swedish custody for twenty-eight weeks wrote in his petition for compensation from the Danish Army Board that the Swedes had sent “the others” to Livonia but he made no mention of snaphaner or free companies.⁵²⁴ Sthen Jacobsen called those who were singled out from the other Danes “men from the Bleging and Gynge areas”.⁵²⁵ Eye-witnesses from both sides affirm that the natives of Scania and Blekinge (Blegind) were indeed singled out from the others. Per Sörensson considered Karlshamn/Bodekuld the last time that the Danes used peasant forces in the war: the way he saw it the 700 men could only be seen as peasant troops, if nothing else then because of their numbers.⁵²⁶ But then, even at the time nobody seemed to know quite what to call the different categories of combatants that participated in the battles on the side of the Danes. To the Danish authorities it was the matter of different categories of people, but clear distinctions were not easy to make, at least not at this point of the war. Meerheim called the 700 men that Colonel Brahe had recruited “peasants.” At the same time the governor of Kristianstad (Christianstad), Lindenow, called those men “snaphaner” that had joined Hermansen under Brahe’s dragoons. Nevertheless, he would later write that he himself had managed to raise forces consisting of “*peasants, snaphaner and friskytter.*” To the Swedes all these categories

⁵²³ Jacobsen, p.90.

⁵²⁴ Hans Nielß Stourop to the Army Board and the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Skattmister), 470 Generalkrigskommissariatet 1674-1679 Indkomne breve 1674 Slesvig amter 1679 Slesvig By:1955, DRA. Stourop was a sergeant who had served under Major Ebertz at Kristianopel (Christianopel) and who appealed to the Army Board for his right to payment (5 rigsdaler a month) during the time he had been away. He reported that “*the others* were all brought by force to Livonia”.

⁵²⁵ Jacobsen, p.91.

⁵²⁶ Sörensson, p.20.

were classified as “snaphaner”. The distinguishing factor was that the persons in question were Scanians and thus subjects of the Swedish king. It seems obvious that Meerheim, Lindenow⁵²⁷ and Falch Dalhoff⁵²⁸ were speaking about the same 700 men but they were not sure what to call them.

Most Danish operations were characterised by the employment of a combination of regulars and some sort of irregulars, be they snaphaner, friskytter or peasant troops. Just as Meerheim chose to send mixed troops to Karlshamn he also sent Major Zepelin with 60 dragoons to help the friskytter in north-western Scania at the same time.⁵²⁹ Co-operation between regulars and irregulars of various kinds was the rule rather than the exception. The line between a peasant, a snaphane and a friskytte and often between friskytter and regular troops too, sometimes existed only in the eye of the viewer: the Swedes classified most of these categories as snaphaner I do not know how Scanians who were enrolled in regular Danish companies were categorised by the Swedes, but even Colonel Brahe’s Scanian dragoons that constituted regular if newly created troops were sometimes called “snaphaner” or “friskytter”. Colonels Brahe and Hans Ditlev Stensen were both regular Danish soldiers of considerable social standing. They were charged with the responsibility for the defence of the north-eastern regions and had some very well-known men under them: Nicolaus Hermansen was one of Brahe’s officers, and Pieter Sten one of Hans Ditlev Stensen’s.

⁵²⁷ Sörensson, p. 20 bases his conclusions on: Lindenow to the King 21 February 1677, 8th March 1677, Meerheim to the King, 21st February 1677, Indkomne sager (Krigskollegiet). No:254, DRA.

⁵²⁸ Falch Lauridtzön Dalhoff to the Army Board, 22 February 1677, Indkomne Breve, DRA. Falch Lauridsön Dalhoff to Offue Rammell, 19th October 1677, Indkomne breve, DRA.

⁵²⁹ Fabricius, p.95.

The Devastation of the Borderlands

“Instead of respecting the oath and the loyalty that you all have committed yourselves to but have abused of and ignored in a disgraceful manner, you have given no thought to the salvation of your souls but have condemned yourselves to eternal damnation. What do you mean you treacherous and damned people, would the righteous wrath and fire that is afflicting you be appeased, would the bloody fires of war that are ravaging this country be calmed or extinguished? No! Not while you persist in your evil intents and doings and insist on committing abominable and treacherous sins against your lawful king and overlord, and all other authorities. Eternal damnation is hanging over your heads day and night, and over your wives and children and your possessions too.”

General Georg Henrik Lybecker to the people of Göinge (Gønge), 14th April 1679.⁵³⁰

Introduction

From the attempt to liberate Kristianopel (Christianopel) and Karlshamn/Bodekuld onwards the Danish authorities avoided using peasant troops, in the sense that they did not send in massive locally recruited troops but preferred the smaller but more skilled and swifter King's friskytter that operated across wide stretches of land.

According to the Swedish point of view, they preferred one kind of snaphane strategy over another.

Early Spring 1677

Towards the end of March 1677, the Swedish War Commissary Gabriel Månsson Hilleton commented upon the events in a letter to Baron Hans Ulfsparre:

“Now that Christianopel and Carlshambn have been conquered, His Excellency Councillor of the Realm Johan Gyllenstierna has also forced the unfaithful inhabitants of Blekinge and Göinge to submit to His Majesty's most gracious Devotion.”⁵³¹

Hilleton felt that the conquest of the two main Danish enclaves in the east had been necessary in order to make the locals disposed to negotiate on Swedish terms.

Whether it was the matter of getting at the snaphaner through the conquest of the towns or vice versa is hard to tell. Jensen claimed that the Swedish king's main aim was to take Kristianstad (Christianstad) by storm but that in early 1677 his councillors dissuaded him from that for the time being. Instead, they decided to go for the snaphaner and the smaller strongholds, and it proved to be an excellent strategy.

⁵³⁰ Quoted by the regionalist historian Jonny Ambrius in his Scanian History, <http://home1.swipnet.se>. The year 1679.

⁵³¹ G. Hilleton to Le Baron Hans Ulfsparre, 28th March 1677, Opsnappede Breve, DRA: “Sedan Christianopel och Carlshambn eröfrande hafuer hans Excellentz H Riiks Rådet Johan Gyllenstierna twingat dee otrogna Bleking och Göinge borna at submittera sig Kongl: May: aldra nådigaste Devotion.”

Hilleton also reported that he had reliable information that the situation in Kristianstad (Christianstad) was frightful, only about 1000 of the soldiers were well enough to do service and there had been problems between the Danish “national soldiers” and the Germans. However, there were also many snaphaner, “but,” he concluded, “they will soon have other things to do.”⁵³²

After the siege and the capitulation, the town of Christianopel was in a miserable state. Gyllenstierna had ordered the burghers to pay 1500 *daler* in ransom but there was no money to be found in the devastated town.⁵³³ The remaining inhabitants of Kristianopel (Christianopel), Ronneby (Rønneby) and the hundreds of Medelstad (Medelsted) and Bräkne (Bregne) had to sign a written statement in which they promised never to help the snaphaner. Contrariwise the parish or the town would have to pay a fine of 1000 *daler* and every tenth man would be executed. By May further 167 inhabitants (both men and women, as Bauman emphasised) had died at Kristianopel (Christianopel): the Swedish emissary of the state, Petter Bauman declared that it was impossible to get anything done in the area. The town was damaged by fire, people were ill (Bauman too had had a bout of the illness that so many people suffered from) and there were no horses and no cattle, which meant that the pot ash trade that was so important had died totally.⁵³⁴ Gyllenstierna had to renounce on his money. The city walls were pulled down and the inhabitants were ordered to move to other places; their abodes were left prey to the nearest Swedish peasants who were allowed to pull down the houses and take the materials.⁵³⁵ According to Fabricius the fall of the strongholds up east was also the point when support for the Danish cause in eastern and central Blekinge started to fail, exactly because everything had gone so terribly wrong, and people up there did no longer think that the Danes could prevail. In fact, after the fall of Kristianopel (Christianopel) the Danes did not venture east of Karlshamn/Bodekuld for any major actions.

⁵³² “Snaphanner ähr också här många, Men de skola snart få annat at giöra.”

⁵³³ “...when Councillor of State, the Most Noble Sir Johan Gyllenstjärna, through God’s might, received the town back, he ordered the burghers to pay 1500 *Rix Daler*...” Letter from Petter Bauman to His Majesty’s honest man and General Customs Officer in Scania and Blekinge the noble and well-born Johan Barckman in Mallmö, Opsnappede breve, DRA.

⁵³⁴ Petter Bauman to Nilß Arfueson, 11th May 1677, Opsnappede breve, DRA. This letter was mentioned by Fabricius III, p. 92. See also: Bauman to Arfueson, 12th May 1677, Opsnappede breve, DRA. The latter is probably the customs officer whose name is also spelled “Arwidson” eg. (Cronholm, p. 207) and who was later ennobled under the name of “Hägerflycht” (Flight of the Heron).

⁵³⁵ Fabricius III, pp.91-92.

Fabricius also claimed that the clergy in these areas no longer obeyed Danish orders as willingly as before and that the indefatigable turncoat Blasius König soon started to “incite the commoners to rebellion against his royal majesty of Denmark”.⁵³⁶ There were continuous clashes between Swedish troops and friskytter, with or without regular troops. The Swedish ex mayor of Helsingborg and commissioner of the tithes, Gabriel Månsson Hilleton had to withdraw his troops to the churchyard at Markaryd (just across the old border to Sweden) at the beginning of 1677 in order to avoid continuous assailments by groups of snaphaner that had crossed the border.⁵³⁷ In those days most churchyards were surrounded by walls and the churches were as stout edifices as could be found in Scandinavia in those days, maybe with the exception of some of the castles. Hilleton had stored all his troop’s ammunition inside the church and was prepared to take a stand against the snaphaner from the churchyard. On 26th March Månsson Hilleton reported that two of his men who had ventured outside the “fortifications” two days earlier had disappeared and nobody knew whether they were dead or prisoners and two of their horses and two heads of cattle had mysteriously disappeared.⁵³⁸ However, the expected assault never came and Hilleton was replaced by his half-brother Brodde Jacobsson.⁵³⁹ Jacobsson reported that there were snaphaner everywhere in Scania and that they came as close as a quarter of a mile’s distance from Markaryd, in troops of fifty or sixty. However, a few snaphaner had also been caught and brought into the camp.⁵⁴⁰

King Charles XI first tried to pacify the Scanians, and the Göinge (Gønge) area, through peaceful persuasion. In January 1677 he decreed general amnesty for those snaphaner who turned themselves (and their arms) in, as he had already tried on

⁵³⁶ Fabricius, p.93: “instigeret almuen til trodsighed og rebelleri”. An example of a clergyman who started acting as a “good Swede” was the Reverend Rasmus Larsen of Lykkeby in Østre Herred who started sending on Danish orders to the Swedish authorities. König had once been a Swedish tax collector (kronefoged), then he had pledged fealty to Christian V. Now he too wanted to become a good Swede again. The quotation comes from a letter in which Valentin Lützow warns the Army Board against him. Since König belonged to the administration, and moreover was a “kronefoged”, I think his case is of importance to my analysis: after all I do come back to the role different kinds of “fogder” played during the war and Blasius König was one of the few that managed quite well in the long run.

⁵³⁷ Johsson (p.69) calls Hilleton a “captain”, but maybe it was meant in the sense of a “leader”.

⁵³⁸ Letter from Gabriel Hillethon to Major Knebel, Markaryd 26th March 1677, Handl.rör . Dansk. Kr. 1676-79, SRA. Quoted by Johsson, pp.69-70.

⁵³⁹ Hilleton’s mother married the mayor of Halmstad, Jakob Broddesson in second marriage and consequently the brothers had different patronymics although they called each other “brother”. I would like to thank Jens Lerbom for this information.

⁵⁴⁰ Letter from Brodde Jacobsson, Markaryd 26th April 1677, Handl.rör . Dansk. Kr. 1676-79, SRA. Quoted by Johsson, p.71.

several earlier occasions, but the decrees had not been particularly successful. The king now thought he would have to think of other means to quench the rebellion. One first attempt was to enjoin the Scanians to attend certain rallies that were organised with the purpose of trying to track down snaphaner. All those who were not snaphaner were supposed to hand in “obligation letters” (förpliktelsebrev) in which they promised always to stay at home in peace and quiet and that they would consign their arms and never support the snaphaner. Those who did not pay heed to this ordinance would cause every tenth man in their parish to be hung and the whole parish would have to pay a fine of 1000 Swedish *daler*. All the inhabitants of the hundred of Gärds (Giers) had been ordered to present their “assurance letters” in Ystad (Ysted) on 29th April 1677. The decree was issued at Malmö (Malmøe) on 14th April 1677.⁵⁴¹ Another attempt in the same direction was when Charles XI sent out two academics (Stobaeus and Karup) from Lund to try and convince the Scanians that they had better recognise their righteous lord and master.⁵⁴² When their attempts at pacifying the Gønge region proved a complete failure King Charles decided to leave the task to the feared military commander Johannes “The Brute” Gyllenstierna. During the months of March and April 1677 Gyllenstierna and 230 of his warriors went from village to village in western Blekinge and northern Scania to persuade the inhabitants to consign their arms and to promise not to give shelter to any snaphaner. The punishment was constituted by a fine of 1000 *daler* and the hanging of every tenth man. Eventually the peasants were allowed to keep their guns so that they would be able to fight the snaphaner with them. They had to swear an oath that declared that they were brothers with the Swedes and that they were obliged to defend Swedish lives:

“Since Our most gracious King has communicated that we may keep our rifles, then we pledge to use them against the Snaphaner and never to the injury, ruin, or destruction of a Swedish person; but we

⁵⁴¹ Letter to the Rector (Probst) of the hundred of Gärds (Giers), the Right Honourable and Learned Herr Clas i Träne from Hack Larß Stiern, 14th April 1677, Intercepted Letters, DRA. See also: Letter that speaks of this to Herr Hans and Herr Peder of Hurryd, date: Høiredh 14th May 1677, Intercepted Letters, DRA.

⁵⁴² Karup and Stobaeus, as they were called, were both native Scanians who had put their stakes on the Swedes, or at least Stobaeus had done so. Karup seemed more disposed to side with whoever won the conflict and he worked actively both as a Danish and Swedish spy. However, when faced with the Danish authorities he claimed that “the hearts of all Scanians are inclined to retrieve their lost freedom” and stressed that he was an inborn Scanian who would much rather have gone to live in Denmark when the Swedes took over if it had not been for his family. See: written statement by Hans Karup 7th May 1677, 468 Krigskollegiet, (Landetaten), 1675-1678. Forhør over og udsagn af fanger og over løbere:98, DRA.

will help all our Swedish brethren, both inborn and incorporated, against violence and abuse with Our very same Rifle in order to maintain and defend them (our Swedish brethren).”⁵⁴³

It was a demonstration of Swedish muscle that did not fail to produce results. The king was so pleased with the outcome of this campaign that he sent Fabian von Fersen on a similar campaign in the southern parts of Scania.

Reports from the Front

Reports of Swedish ravages in the region of Göinge (Gønge) were constantly coming in during the summer of 1677.⁵⁴⁴ The future commander-in-chief of the friskytter, Aage Monsen Harlof, declared reported the following on 9th June: ”Ebbe Ulfeld has now gone to Sweden, and Johan Gyldenstiern is in the hundred of Göinge (Gynge) where he is burning down everything, the last place he burnt down was Agerup.”⁵⁴⁵ Cristen Jensen from Viborg managed to escape from the Swedes and reported that they had ”500 men in Gynge who were dragoons and foot soldiers and were there to catch snaphaner and devastate the land.”⁵⁴⁶ Nels Persen from western Gønge (here: Westre Gyngeherred) had left his home in order to make his way down to the camp outside Malmö (Malmøe), (a distance of about 100 kilometres.⁵⁴⁷ He came to ask for help since commander Johan Gyllenstierna was behaving with great cruelty and committed outrages and burnt villages down and drove their cattle to Sweden.⁵⁴⁸ The day of Nels Persen’s departure Gyllenstierna had burnt down Kråkeberga (then Krogeberg) and Tofta (Töffte) and had taken all the cattle from those villages to Sweden. Now he was not only threatening the inhabitants of Farstorp (then Farstrupe) with fire and the sword if they did not meet up with him at Verum (Weirum) three miles from the Swedish border on 24th June, but he was also saying he would burn

⁵⁴³ Christianstad 11th Junii 1677, Depositiones, DRA. Gyllenstjärna’s edkrävartåg 1677, oath from northern Scania:”Efftersom Wor aller nåhdigste Koningh oß låther tilseja, at wi skuhlla få beholla wort ghewähr och Byser, da forpligta wii os hermed, de samme at bruka *emot Snaphanerne och til ingen suensk manniskis skahde, forderf eller undergangh, uthan alla svenske, som vare Indfödde, och incorporerede medbrøder*, emoth alt ghiewähr och øffuerlast, med samma Wort ghiewähr hielpa at maintainera och forsuahra.”

⁵⁴⁴ Please note once more that these are Danish sources and things are generally presented the way people thought they would sound reasonable or welcome to the Danish authorities. Swedish sources do not present what happened in Göinge (Gynge) in the same manner at all.

⁵⁴⁵ Ebbe Ulfeld had been *lensmand* and commander-in-chief of the Scanian forces during Horn’s War in the 1640’ies but he willingly went over to the Swedish side after the annexation. See: Aage Monsen Harlof’s report from 9th June 1677, Depositiones, 1677.

⁵⁴⁶ The camp outside Malmö 18th June 1677, Depositiones, DRA: ”Og sagde att der war 500 Mand i Gyngeherrit som war draguner og fodfolck at opsøge Snaphanerne og ruinere landet.”

⁵⁴⁷ Depositiones, Nels Persen’s report, 26th June 1677, DRA. Nels Persen’s place of origin is stated as “Boborb” or something of the sort and then “Gyngeherret”.

⁵⁴⁸ ”Nels Persen...beklager sig ower den store haardhed som Johan Gyldenstiern foröfwer imod denem med skenden og brænden...”

down Osby (Ousby) and Loshult (Losalte). Nels Persen was wondering if he and his neighbours might get a party of soldiers to help them chase the foe away.⁵⁴⁹

Yet another refugee from the Swedish camp, Søren Jensen from Roskilde, reported that the Swedes had been given permission “to plunder and devastate Gyngø and the lands around it as far as they could reach” and that the soldiers had been warned of the snaphaner. Jensen also declared that before leaving Mölleryd (Möllerid) the Swedes had taken two peasants “of which one had to hang the other.”⁵⁵⁰ Almost three weeks later Christen Jochum from Viborg made his way back to the Danish camp and declared that the Swedes said that

“...they would send a party of 4000 horsemen to Gyngø and destroy and burn everything down. They wanted to leave the southern parts of this country until they found out how the siege of Malmö would go: in case the town falls into the hands of the Danes they will head for Sweden and devastate the land with murder and fire on their way.”⁵⁵¹

On 22nd June 1677 Jens Michelsen, the owner of Hovdala (then Howdal or Howdale) Castle, arrived at the Danish army camp outside Malmö (Malmö) in the company of “Lieutenant Per Steen”. Jens Michelsen has gone to history as a Danish traitor who sided with the Swedes and was later knighted Ehrenborg, (Castle of Honour) by the Swedes.⁵⁵² However, the Danish archives reveal that he actually turned up at the Danish army camp of his own free will and in the company of what the Swedes considered an “arch-snaphane” like Pieter Sten in order to let the Danes know all he knew about the movements of the Swedes.⁵⁵³ Maybe history’s been wrong about Michelsen. On this occasion, Michelsen reported some interesting news from the north-eastern border region:⁵⁵⁴ firstly, that Gyllenstierna had called all civil servants and clergymen in the area to a meeting where he had reminded them of their duties to the king of Sweden. As usual Gyllenstierna was swearing and threatening everyone with the hounds of hell. The best way to prove one’s loyalty was to send provisions to

⁵⁴⁹ ”Nu begærer de att maa faa et partie hwor til de kunde samle sig om det war mueligt at bortjage samme fiendtlige partier:”

⁵⁵⁰ The camp at Lund 8th June 1677, Depositiones, DRA. ”førend de reyste fra Möllerid tog de 2 bönder hwor den ene maatte ophenge den anden.”

⁵⁵¹ The camp outside Malmö, 21st June 1677, Depositiones, DRA.

⁵⁵² See e.g., Johnsson, p.88 who claims that ‘Jöns Mickelsson’ was one of very few Scanian gentlemen who stayed true to the Swedish king.

⁵⁵³ Then I would like to stress that Fabricius did *not* mention that Pieter Sten and Michelsen knew each other. I do not think it has been known until now that they did.

⁵⁵⁴ It seems as if Michelsen sympathised with the Danes to some degree, or at some stage of the fight, although eventually he put his bets on the Swedes. In August 1678 Hovdala (Howdale) was besieged by a troop of snaphaner but after a fight that lasted for thirty hours Michelsen managed to escape across the lake behind the castle. Michelsen’s family kept the Hovdala (Howdale) estate until the last male descendant died in 1981 and it is now a museum.

the army and all of them were expected to contribute with 1 ox, bread, butter, two barrels of beer, white bread, hens and eggs, and the peasants their part, if they could.⁵⁵⁵ He then reminded them that they were not allowed to visit or communicate with the enemy in any manner. The civil servants and clergymen replied that they had nothing to contribute with because the army had already plundered the whole area. Eventually Gyllenstierna agreed that special consideration would be taken in the case of those places that had already been totally plundered: “Brynnested, Howdale, Matved, Maglegaard, Finnie, half of the parishes of Melby, Winslef, Enneberg and Stoby and part of Torup”.⁵⁵⁶ He then communicated that he would sell both his body and soul to the devil if Copenhagen and Landskrona (Landskrone) had not been blockaded within two weeks.⁵⁵⁷ The most curious detail about this report is finding Michelsen and Sten together. Only ten days earlier an informer (Petersen of Magløgaard) had reported to the Danish military command that Jens Michelsen kept the Swedes informed of the movements of the Danish army and that he had had to pay himself free from the snaphaner’s harassments, not once but four or five times, when they were angry with him because he was a “skælm” i.e. a knave.⁵⁵⁸ Possibly Pieter Sten had been sent out to fetch Michelsen to clear up the “misunderstanding”. The day after his arrival, Michelsen wrote a most humble application for a “salva guardie” letter for his estate, and as Fabricius noted with a vein of sarcasm, Michelsen whose door still today bears the marks of the snaphaner’s bullets, signed his letter to the Danish king “Your most subservient, dutiful and true subject and servant.” However, the snaphaner/friskytter did not launch a major attack on Hovdala (Howdale) until much later and Michelsen was certainly not the only gentleman who had problems with the snaphaner. Even county sheriff Mons Hacksen complained that they were a danger to him, although Mons Hacksen was considered a snaphane himself by the Swedes. Furthermore, Michelsen was not the only person of Danish origins who was rumoured to have said too much to the Swedes. Jørgen Krabbe of Krageholm

⁵⁵⁵ At least in the case of Käglinge at the beginning of the month, Gyllenstjerna had Hilleton write the officials of the area to meet up at “Hoffdahla” mansion after mass on 2nd June with their “contributions” and so that they could meet Gyllenstjerna. See: Letter from Hilleton to the Sheriff and all Commoners of the parish of Käglinge, 2nd June 1677, Intercipierte breve 1677. Gyllenstjerna was consequently Michelsen’s lodger at the time. A report from 25th June (Elias Davidsen, Depositiones, DRA) states that on 21st June 400 Swedes had been stationed at Howdale but that “Gyldenstiern” himself was lodging at Möllerid.

⁵⁵⁶ Modern names where known: Brönnestad, Hovdala (?), Maglehult (?), Finja, Mellby, Vinslöv, Ignaberga (?), Stoby, Torup.

⁵⁵⁷ Depositiones, DRA.

⁵⁵⁸ Fabricius III, p.116.

(Krogholm) was subject to the same kind of suspicions. Whatever Michelsen's reasons for coming to the Danish camp in June 1677, they should not be judged in the light of later events.

A Danish soldier who had been a Swedish prisoner of war managed to make his way back to the Danish camp on 23rd June 1677 and observed that “wherever their Army goes there are new executions.”⁵⁵⁹ Elias Davidsen of Pramhuset by the Ringsjö (Ringsøe) lake reported to the camp outside Malmö on 25th June 1677. With him he had Boel Broersdatter from Klinta (Klinte) who had interesting news from Erichsholm mansion. Furthermore, Davidsen also reported that the Swedes had moved their camp from Herrevads kloster (Herridhwahds Closter) some way east to a place called Risselberg (Risberga) where they were bivouacking on the meadows by the vicarage. The peasants in the area had been ordered to meet up in the army camp on the Friday evening with their wagons and those who failed to turn up would be fined 40 march and lose their lives. Davidsen also reported that on 21st June a troop of 400 soldiers had arrived at Hovdala (Howdale) mansion and were still there and that “Johan Gyldenstiern” was staying at Mölleryd (Möllerid). According to Davidsen, rumour had it that “they” were 9000 men strong and that they were heading for Kristianstad (Christianstad). On 27th June Karen Bentsdatter turned up at the camp outside Malmö (Malmøe), all on her own it seems, in order to report about the ravages in the border region. She had left her home at Broeslef the day before and then Gyllenstierna and 600 of his men had first been to Hovdala (Howdale) and Mölleryd (Möllerid) and then they had gone to Weirum (modern-day Verum?). Bentsdatter declared that Gyllenstierna was laying waste and looting every place he came to, and he also took all the cattle he could find, and he had burnt down Gammelstorp, Torpe and Togerup (modern-day Tågarp?) to the ground.⁵⁶⁰

A letter from a peasant in Blekinge (Bleging) tells us of the precarious situation of the autumn of 1677. The anonymous man who lived in the countryside wrote to his wife (?) who was inside the Karlshamn fortress. He assured his “dear heart” that he had managed to hide most of their belongings in the hay (loft); thanks to this they still had

⁵⁵⁹ Fridric Liwertz's testimony, 23rd June 1677, *Depositiones*, DRA.

⁵⁶⁰ *Depositiones*, DRA. She added that even an old widow had lost everything she had because Gyllenstierna's men had found a dead body on her grounds.

their things while “all other people had lost theirs.”⁵⁶¹ According to the letter-writer the “grand seigneurs” Count Pontus (De la Gardie), Ulfeld, Håkan Skytte and Colonel Gyllenstierna all visited people every day and demanded “royal treatment”: one day they visited one farm, the next day another. The peasant claimed that “those who were of that nation did not save their efforts, only the best was offered...there are no words for the happiness of those people.” By “those of that nation” and “those people” the peasant intended the Swedes and their sympathisers. He then went on to declare that on the contrary “the others are very sad and are moping about as if their last day had come, but someday God Almighty will surely make them happy again.”⁵⁶² The peasant had had innumerable visits from the Swedish army, fortunately the last time it was only four or five “peasant officers” (gemen bøunner officerer). Then on 11th November Carl G. Skytte arrived from the Swedish camp at Hoby with 50 or 60 men and the peasant had to accept an officer and his squire as lodgers. During this time, he had also had a visit from a soldier with seven horses that had to be fed. On 18th November the peasant received a visit from Ulfeld’s people, though they lodged with the village tailor. On 24th November they went in the direction of Karlshamn and from there they were going down south to Ystad (Ysted) where they said they had “the Jutes” in a mousetrap. According to the letter-writer many of the peasants deserted as soon as they could. Most of them came from the neighbouring region of Småland and claimed that they would never agree to join the armed forces again. Finally, the peasant begged his “dear heart” not to worry about him. They were doing reasonably well in the village because “the Swedes treat us as their own and so do the Danes so I hardly believe they will plunder us”. Unfortunately, later in the war both sides would come to treat the Scanians as their enemies.

On 7th December 1677 Lieutenant Hans (Bentsen) Gammelstrup came to Landskrona (Landscrone) with his remaining 33 friskytter.⁵⁶³ He and his men had set out from

⁵⁶¹ Interciperede breve, DRA. This letter is to be found among the intercepted letters from the Scanian War in the Danish National Archives. I could find no mention of the writer’s name in it. I dated it according to the events described in it, which also corresponds to the dates of the letters it sorts with.

⁵⁶² Quote from the letter of the preceding foot-note: “...dhe som war *uthaff den Natio*, sparrhde ingen ting de het öpperste var hos C.P.V:S* for Carl Gustaff Skutt og jeg kand icke uth sige hor glad dhe folcker er dher imod er dhe andre disto bedröffuer gar och henger dheres huffuet som dhe var förtapet. Gud dhen allerhögste glader dhem dog en gang igen.” *det er cort pehrsen, palm och spholinger.” My italics.

⁵⁶³ Depositiones, DRA. Hans Bentsen Gammelstrup is one of the most well-known friskytter and he had one of the most difficult tasks: to defend the easternmost province of Bleking/Blekinge. Gammelstrup himself survived the war and went to live in Denmark, but his company suffered

Blekinge (Bleging) (from where Gammelstrup and most of his men originated) six weeks earlier and then spent a long time in the Göinge (Gønge/Gyng) area where the situation had become unbearable. Some of Gammelstrup's men had gone over to the Swedes and so he did not dare stay in the area anymore. The Swedes had arranged blocks along all roads where peasants had to look out for friskytter and deserters. Bentsen reported that there were about one hundred peasants at each checkpoint, but they were all unarmed and there were "no other Swedes with them".⁵⁶⁴ And the Swedes were moving all peasants within a radius of 1 mile from Kristianstad (Christianstad) area away from their farmsteads, nobody knew why. Then, on 14th December 1677 the friskytter Anders Pedersen⁵⁶⁵ and Michel Troelsen of the Brønnested (modern-day Brønnestad) friskytter arrived in Landskrona (Landskrone) with more news from the north-eastern areas of Blekinge and Göinge (Bleging and Gyng): the situation was critical. The peasants were doing duty at the Swedish roadblocks. Somehow the Swedes already knew that the Danes were about to send assistance to the besieged town of Kristianstad (Christianstad). Some friskytter had accepted amnesty from the Swedes and were refusing to move. These friskytter tried to make the authorities realise that the Scanians would not stay true if there was no hope of victory.⁵⁶⁶ The day after a peasant called Niels Bendsen from Andrarum (Anderom) reported that eight days earlier, Gyllenstjerna had arrived, immediately beginning to conscript men from all the hundreds in the area according to the rote system (mantallet), and without caring whether the men were old or young.⁵⁶⁷

The Different Stages of the "Revolt"

Traditionally most scholars have explained the creation of the King's Friskytter and the Danes' increased reliance on irregular warfare with the fact that the peasant forces

terrifying losses. See eg. the muster roll from 15th March 1680 (Fabricius III, p.242) where he states that thirty-four of his soldiers had ended on the stake and wheels.

⁵⁶⁴ "...hafr ingen gewehr eller andere suänshe hos dem..."

⁵⁶⁵ Anders Pedersen was captain of a company of friskytter as results from other sources, amongst other Knud Thott's reports. Fabricius (III, p.206) mentions his as one of four companies that made up the Scanian National Friskytter under "Major Aage Monsen Herlev" in 1680. Obviously, he was *not* the Anders Persson from Öja/Øje who had been with Colonel Holch's regiment in Zealand and then a friskytte with Peder Christophersen (Per Kristoffersson) and who was condemned to death by a tribunal in Helsingborg in October 1677. See: Johnsson, p.102.

⁵⁶⁶ "...landmanden ovfer alt begynder nu at blifue good schwensk, eftersom fienden dennem indbilder at for dennem ingen viidere undsatning af de danske er vorwente...", Depositiones, DRA. Fabricius (III, p.148) quotes a Danish report that says that the 'country folk' around "Børringe" were becoming 'quite shy' (ganske forsagt). According to Fabricius there was a general feeling among the Danes and the Scanians at the time that they were losing ground and maybe would not be able to throw the Swedes out after all.

⁵⁶⁷ Report from Landskrone, 15th December 1677, Depositiones, DRA.

in the border region could no longer be counted upon and that the creation of new regular dragoon regiments seemed too expensive. Alf Åberg distinguished two different stages of the snaphane movement. The first phase was an agrarian revolt, “the rebellion of a primitive peasant republic against the multiple abuses of the Swedish authorities.” This phase ended in the spring of 1677 when the Swedish commander Johan “the brute” Gyllenstierna “pacified” the whole border area from Blekinge (Bleging) to the Kullen peninsula. That was when the second phase started. The Danes were no longer able to call whole parishes to their help and so instead they concentrated on the snaphaner that Åberg reluctantly calls an “organised friskytte movement” without explaining in what sense it was an organised movement. Alf Åberg’s interpretation of the snaphaner was noticeably influenced by Marx’ and Engels’ interpretation of the Spanish guerrilla war.⁵⁶⁸ In the 19th and 20th centuries the *petite guerre* was often considered to be the war of revolutionary rebellions. In that sense, no, *petite guerre*, guerrillas and partisans did not exist before the French revolution, unless Robin Hood and his mates could be counted as pre-Marxist revolutionaries.⁵⁶⁹ This ideologically coloured view can be traced to Marx and Engels who did a lot of theorising on guerrilla/partisan warfare. Engels concluded that “the tactics of guerrilla warfare on the part of poor people against their rich antagonists was an integral part of the British proletariat’s struggle for human rights.”⁵⁷⁰ Marx correctly pointed out that the distinguishing mark of guerrilla warfare was the hit-and-run tactics that enabled partisans to maintain their centre of resistance “everywhere and nowhere” at the same time.⁵⁷¹ Marx and Engels saw Spanish resistance to Napoleon’s troops as the first true guerrilla war, and to them guerrilla warfare was intrinsically connected with political ideology. The war of the Spanish guerrillas could be divided into three phases: first the one during which the French army was winning the day and the locals took up arms to do the job that the army had not been able to do. They did this using unconventional partisan tactics. The second and most important phase was when guerrilla bands were formed from the remnants of the Spanish Army’s and (Spanish) deserters from the French armies. They were organised in small but manoeuvrable bands. The third phase was characterised by an increase in

⁵⁶⁸ For example, the division into corresponding phases.

⁵⁶⁹ Grenkevich, p.41. characterised the Spanish guerrilla war as “the earliest of partisan experiences.” Hobsbawm’s theories can also be traced back at least to Marx and Engels.

⁵⁷⁰ Grenkevich, p.39 quotes K. Marx and F. Engels, *Sochineniia*, (Collected works), tom 2, Moscow 1955, p.517.

⁵⁷¹ Grenkevich, p.41. Quotes: Marx and Engels, *Sochineniia*, tom 10, Moscow 1958, p.458.

numbers. The guerrillas now tried to take on the trappings of regular army forces, their ranks swelled from 3.000 to 6.000 men. They were now less able to conceal themselves or suddenly disappear: “the increase in the numerical strength of partisan formations and their strict chain of command did not always improve their combat capabilities or quality.”⁵⁷² Another way of seeing guerrilla warfare is to classify it as a combat method, a set of strategies that is resorted to in certain situations, and not as the offspring of a particular political ideology. In his *Short History of Guerrilla Warfare*, J.A. Ellis stresses that identical strategies were employed against the English in North America, the Napoleonic French in Spain, the Austrians in Italy and Hungary, and the German Nazis in Yugoslavia and Russia and that the same methods had been practised very long before the Napoleonic Wars. These were all instances in which “guerrilla warfare compelled would-be conquerors to treat popular resistance as a form of warfare that could and did frustrate the achievement of their final goals.”⁵⁷³

According to Fabricius too, it was the events around this time, mainly in the border area that transformed the snaphaner into the more efficient and more dangerous friskytter,⁵⁷⁴ although they appeared in the registers well before the oath taking campaigns. The snaphaner did not turn into friskytter of themselves but it was obviously a decision from above. The word “friskytte” had been used for irregular troops before 1677, but it totally substituted the term “snaphane” in the Danish language from that time onwards.⁵⁷⁵ The Swedish attempts to create a category of criminals that could be denominated “snaphaner” had made those who had once possibly used that term to indicate themselves or their war-time occupations, shrink from it. However, Fabricius was right insofar as the more strictly organised friskytte movement was very likely spurred on by Gyllenstierna’s and the other grand seigneurs’ harsh reprisals in the northeast. Perhaps it had become a personal issue for

⁵⁷² Grenkevich, p.40.

⁵⁷³ J.A. Ellis, *A Short History of Guerrilla Warfare*, New York: St Martin’s Press, 1976, p.112.

⁵⁷⁴ Fabricius III, p.97.

⁵⁷⁵ Although today “gønger” is the most common word to indicate paramilitary- and resistance fighters in early modern Denmark. “Snaphane” is sometimes perceived as an offensive word in modern Danish too. When in January 2009, I asked the archivist at the main desk of the Danish National Archives for the boxes with information on the “snaphaner”, he sneered and said, “In this country we do not call them snaphaner, we call them great national heroes or sometimes gønger.” (Her hjemme kalder vi dem store national helter...). He also explained that great men like Svend Poffuelsön/Svend Poulsen the “Gøngehøvding” and Nicolaus Hermansen were far too busy saving the country to have time to sneak around and cut innocent people’s throats.

Gyllenstierna, as perhaps it had for the Swedish king.⁵⁷⁶ In June 1677 an informant explained to the writers of the *Depositiones* records that Gyllenstierna was not in a very good mood during this period because the *snaphaner* had stolen all his luggage that was coming down from Sweden. He felt “very angry with the peasants and promised he would destroy them all completely.”⁵⁷⁷ There is some evidence that popular support for Denmark and the *friskytter*/*snaphaner* diminished after this point in time.⁵⁷⁸ But I would like to add that these are all theories based on very limited sources. At the most we can try to say today that there were trends in that direction or the other when we are discussing vague and vast concepts like “popular support in general among the 250.000 inhabitants of the Scanian provinces.” There were no mood barometers in the news bulletins way back then, no opinion polls. Furthermore, some of the scholars that have had their say on the matter only consulted a limited number of documents during their research. It is not unlikely that the border inhabitants were paralysed with fear: almost every statement in the *Depositiones* collection speaks of terror, desperation, and cruelty. It might not have had anything to do with Denmark or Sweden to most people. Maybe people were simply war weary. Perhaps those who were not prepared to become full-time *friskytter* and risk whatever they had left decided that more loosely organised part-time “guerrilla” activities were not worth the risk. In that sense one kind of resistance activities might have become more frequent while the other decreased. Also, the *snaphaner* and *friskytter* acted in almost the whole of Scania, not only in the border area that had been laid almost totally in ashes by the warlords. In fact, the King’s *Friskytter* had their headquarters behind the safe city walls of Landskrona (*Landskrone*) and they operated from there, not from the border area.

The Situation South of the Border

⁵⁷⁶ The Swedish king was attacked by *snaphaner* on several occasions. A letter from 15th November 1677 states that the Swedish king had been ambushed by 200 *snaphaner* while he was having dinner at a parsonage near Kristianstad (Christianstad) but that he and his officers had managed to fight them off. This letter has no signature, but it was written to Magnus Gabriel De la Gardie, *Handl.rör.Sk. kr.1676-79*, SRA, quoted by Johnsson, p.117.

⁵⁷⁷ *Depositiones*, 22nd June 1677, DRA. Yet again we see that very often “peasants” was tantamount to “*snaphaner*” and vice versa.

⁵⁷⁸ Johnsson, p.82.

The war was going on in more than one part of the land: there is evidence that the population at large did not fare particularly well during those times, and that “ordinary” life had been brusquely interrupted by the war, far outside the immediate border area. One example of this is a letter from a young man called Hanß Wæbo to his girlfriend Sissele Hansdatter, from 11th March 1677. Wæbo wrote to his “dearest Sissele” whose address was care of her uncle who was a cobbler at Skommesleu (modern-day Skummeslöv?). Wæbo himself lived in Lund.⁵⁷⁹ In his letter, he excused himself for not having been in touch for so long, but he had been unwell and both his aunt and “Little Anderß” had died from the same illness. Nor had he received his dearest’s last letter but one, which she had asked him about. Obviously Sissele had also asked when he was coming up to see her because he excused himself with the general situation:

“...as soon as God wants this situation to calm down a little, so that one can travel then I will at once go up there, I beg my dearest not to have doubts about me...I implore you my dearest to stay where you are and let God decide when we shall be able to meet, different times must surely come, with the help of God.”⁵⁸⁰

Meanwhile there were continuous skirmishes in the northwestern corner of Scania: the commander of Helsingborg, on 7th April 1677 Carl Hård reported the following after a victory over Danish troops that had tried a surprise attack on Helsingborg:

“ich glaube fast daz der feindt 100 man dieser weiße verloren, daz fält liegt aller wegen mit todten, kan man also straxt so just nicht wißen, die straßen sindt auch allerwegen mitt todten geziert, undt wird der feindt so bald kein apetit haben.”⁵⁸¹

He then continued his description of the latest events in the area in a report to Governor General Fersen from the same day. In this report he complained that the worst threat was not attacks like the one he had just fought back, but the “snaphaner” that were “spreading their contagion” around the hundred of Bjäre (Bierre) and Ängelholm (Engelholm). According to Hård they had already called meetings for the inhabitants of both areas, at which they had forced people to consign their firearms to the authorities. In Ängelholm (Engelholm) they had pulled up the bridges after them so that they could practise their “maliciousness” in peace and quiet.⁵⁸² Hård’s aversion

⁵⁷⁹ Wæbo’s letter is written in Danish as are all other letters between Scanians and Danes that I have come across during the Scanian War. Mixed language letters appertained to mixed spheres: like Baron Krabbe many Scanians tried to write Swedish, or at least to put a Swedish touch, to letters to Swedes.

⁵⁸⁰ Letter from Hanß Wæbo to Sissele Hansdatter, 11th March 1677, Intercepted Letters, DRA.

⁵⁸¹ Intercepted Letters, (Opsnappede breve), Carl Hård to unknown recipient (GM?), Helsingborg 7th April 1677, DRA. Sthen Jacobsen, (p.102) dates this assault to 6th April, whereas Jensen (p. 244) dates it to 5th April.

⁵⁸² Carl Hård to Baron Fabian von Fersen, Marschal du Camp & General gouverneur en Schone, Halland & Blekingh a M. 7th April 1677, Opsnappede breve, DRA. “Sonst stehe Gott Lob in solcher Posteur das vor den feindes anfall mich nich betrügte, allein die snaphanen grassieren hier ziemblich

to snaphaner is obvious, but so was maybe his aversion to Danes in general.

Regarding the snaphaner, Hård adheres to a Swedish discourse that again and again returns to their “maliciousness” and evil nature and that describes “snaphaner” as beyond the pale of humanity.

A Swede who was obviously worrying about the state of things in Helsingborg was the town’s former mayor Gabriel Månsson Hilleton who wrote to General Major Ulfsparré from “Marchary” (Markaryd) on 21st February 1677:

“Herr General Major would be very gracious if he would be as careful with the town Helsingborg as possible and especially not let town councillor Anders Jöran’s house and garden get all too ruined, since, if possible, a good Swedish man might later become owner of it.⁵⁸³

It seems from this letter that Hilleton understood that buildings in his old place of residence might be coming down, and that consequently, the situation was far from normal although Helsingborg was not exactly in the border area. That Helsingborg with its strategical position at the entrance to the Sound was severely damaged by the Scanian War is clear from Cronholm’s study of the registers of damaged or ruined houses at the end of the war. These registers were created so that people could claim compensation for war damages from the Danish government.⁵⁸⁴ 4000 *rix daler* were claimed in compensation for “Mayor Anders Jörgenssen’s main house with its garden, summerhouse and other curiosities.”⁵⁸⁵ The man who was called Anders Jörans in Swedish was obviously identical the man who was called Anders Jörgenssen in Danish and his precious garden seemed to have been well-known. Cronholm states that it was demolished to make way for heavier fortifications around the central fortress and in order to make way for a street from the fortress to the pier.⁵⁸⁶

Conclusions:

her umb und in sonderheit in Bierrshärad und Engellholm, wo selbsten sie das ganstze härad zu sammen berufen und von ihr Schutwappen abgetwungen, ein gleiches procedere haben sie auch mit Engelholms einwohner gehabt, in dhem sie etzliche.... von der Brücke abgewarfen. Damit sie desto sicher sein könnten Ihr malitiositet auf gleicherweiße mit Ihren aus aus zu üben.... Ich habe zwar alle brücken laßen ab...., so den Snaphanen zu gehen...könten, weillen aber das waßer wieder feldt,nicht kan gehemmet werden, weder sie... wogen den contribution sehr hinderlich sein....”

⁵⁸³ ”H General Majoren will gunstigt låta sig wara staden Helsingborg i bästa måttan recommenderat i synnerheet och at rådmanden Anders Jörans huus och hägård icke alt för mycket måtta ruineras, effter mögeligen ehn redelig suänsk kar här effter blifua ägare der till.” Opsnappede breve, DRA.

⁵⁸⁴ Cronholm, p.323.

⁵⁸⁵ Cronholm, p.323 where he refers to the Helsingborg Municipal Archives (Helsingborgs rådhsarchif).

⁵⁸⁶ Cronholm (p.323) based his conclusions on decrees issued by Offue Ramell (Offue Rommel) 17th August 1678 and King Christian V 29th March 1679.

In this section I have tried to analyse how and why the Swedes came down so effectively on the border area exactly at the same time as the King's Friskytter Corps started to crystallise and how this fact has been interpreted by different scholars. One fact that is often forgotten is that the King's Friskytter had their headquarters behind the safe city walls of Landskrona (Landskrone) and they operated from there, not from the border area. Maybe one should take into consideration that, considering the circumstances, the swift-moving and intensely motivated friskytter might have been considered an efficient way of combating the enemy rather than a desperate measure. Maybe the Danish authorities really thought the friskytter might be their winning card, in the sense of a means they could employ in order to distract the enemy enough to avoid direct confrontation on the Scanian front. The Danish war strategy during the latter part of the war aimed not at another full-scale confrontation in Scania but on diverting the attention from there and trying to beat the Swedes on other fronts (the Baltic provinces, Norway) and by other means (navy and detachment warfare including the friskytter).

It should be noted that *Swedish* peasant soldiers were generally not called "snaphaner": locally recruited peasant troops were quite common in Sweden, but they were normally referred to as peasants in both Danish and Swedish sources.

Nevertheless it was *not* inconceivable to speak of Swedish snaphaner.⁵⁸⁷ A report in the Danish "Captives and Renegades" collection from 2nd June 1677 contains the account of how Gewert Asman from Bremen, one of General Arensdorff's free dragoons (fri ryttere) had been caught by "Swedish snaphaner" the preceding autumn.⁵⁸⁸ The Swedish snaphaner had come to the Danish army camp and had made him believe that they would show him a place where he could find "rich spoils at some Swedes' place". Consequently, he and three other dragoons followed these snaphaner and eventually they were set upon by thirty other snaphaner. Two of the dragoons were shot instantly but he and a Dane who could speak German were saved and after ten weeks in captivity they were made to enlist in the Swedish army. The snaphaner operated in the same way as their Danish colleagues and like them, they

⁵⁸⁷ Vigo Edvardsson refers to Swedish snaphaner that were peasants that went on independent raids across the border.

⁵⁸⁸ The camp at Væ 2nd June 1677, 468 Krigskollegiet (Landetaten) 1675-1678, Forhør over og udsagn af fanger og overløbere.

made a clear distinction between those of the “German nation” and their closest neighbours.

The Development of the Friskytte Corps

Introduction

This section contains an analysis of how the Danish authorities elaborated a new “friskytte” concept that substituted the old snaphaner except in the meaning of criminal or thug. In part, this development was a response to the Swedish policy of criminalising the snaphaner, in part it was a natural development of combat resources that was in tune with contemporary European trends.

The Distinction between Snaphaner and Friskytter

At the beginning of the campaigning season 1677 the Danes, including the friskytter, were preparing to take a stand that would make up for the disaster at Lund in December the year before. From June 1677 onwards the king issued vast numbers of friskytte licences and that same month the king also decreed that no “snaphaner” were allowed to dwell in the hundreds of Ingelstad (Ingelsted), Herrestad (Harrested) and Ljunits (Lynits) since they had been causing the locals such damage. Any snaphane that was caught there would be arrested and hung.⁵⁸⁹ This part of Scania was not particularly peaceful at the time, which there is ample evidence of in the sources although little research has been done into the activities of the snaphaner/friskytter in this area. One testimony of the precarious situation in the area and of the fear that the snaphaner/friskytter inspired in their adversaries is transmitted by the testimony of Weitik Albretch from Krakow. Albretch had been a dragoon under Colonel Jerta in the Swedish army. On 8th June 1677 he was caught by some Danish guards in the surroundings of Malmö (Malmøe). The day after he explained that he had been stationed in Ystad (Ysted) during the past two months but the few Swedes that had stayed behind there had almost all been killed by the snaphaner. Major “Klinckspor” and some 200 dragoons were still in the surroundings of Ystad (Ysted) but they would be returning to Malmö (Malmøe) soon.⁵⁹⁰ Albretch had decided to try and get through the Danish lines to the Swedish enclave of Malmö (Malmøe) rather than to end up in

⁵⁸⁹ Sörensson, p.35: Royal Decree, 10th June 1677, Lit. K, DRA.

⁵⁹⁰ Klinckspor is the Klingspor who would later be kidnapped at Marsvinsholm castle and sent to Copenhagen.

the hands of the snaphaner.⁵⁹¹ Numerous other testimonies of the situation in south-eastern Scania during the summer of 1677 are mentioned in the chapter on Krabbe. In fact, Captain Klingspor who was mentioned by Albretch did not make it to Malmö (Malmø) because he was captured by the “snaphaner” and sent as a POW to Copenhagen. The “snaphaner” that caught Klingspor were employees of the Krabbe-Thott family, and as far as I know they were not registered as “friskytter” at all. However, the decree that banned snaphaner from Ingelstad (Ingelsted), Herrestad (Harrested) and Ljunits (Lynits) made (at least in appearance) a clear distinction between snaphaner and friskytter: naturally those legitimate friskytte-companies that were ordered to operate in the Ingelsted-Herrested-Ljunits area were still allowed to do so. District governor Owe Rommel in Kristianstad (Christianstad) received a similar order at about the same time: since the peasantry around Kristianstad (Christianstad) were complaining of the ravages of the friskytter Rommel should see to it that those who were guilty of abuse should be arrested and brought to Kristianstad (Christianstad).⁵⁹² In this latter case it was not the matter of “every snaphane” that was found in the area but only of friskytter that were misbehaving. It is important to note that the intention of the authorities was that friskytter who misbehaved should be punished like other soldiers and that in the letter to Rommel he was encouraged to see to that. Perhaps, by mid-1677 a friskytte who did not behave was called a snaphane? It is obvious that the Danish authorities were trying to distance themselves from “snaphaner” that by then had become a tainted concept with all but pleasant connotations. It could also be that they were making an indirect statement by outlawing all sorts of snaphaner in certain areas. In a sense they agreed with the Swedes that to be a snaphane was a crime. But they were also saying that to resist the enemy under regulated forms as one could do among the friskytter was not

⁵⁹¹ The army camp at Malmö, 9th June 1677 (Leyren wed Malmø d.9 Junii 1677), Depositiones, DRA: “der kund blifwe nogle faa Swedske wed Ysted, som Snaphanerne hawer caputered, derfor wilde hand heller hazardere sig igenem de danske krigsfolck, en komme i Snaphanernes hender.”

⁵⁹² Sörensson, p.35. Owe Rommel wrote to the king on 19th June 1677 (I.B., Rommel, DRA) to ask permission to make the friskytter go regular: he promoted the same policy throughout the war and was partly successful. Rommel insisted that regular officers head the friskytte units and that they should have banners and that they should take oaths of allegiance in the name of the banner. In the letter that he sent on 19th June he tried to promote this policy by claiming that it would put an end to the rampages the friskytter occasionally got away with out in the countryside and that outraged the peasants. That time Rommel’s request was not granted. It is the reply to it that Sörensson quotes on p.115 and that is somewhat out of context as Sörensson presents it since it seems as if the big issue was the outrages of the friskytter whereas in Rommel’s letter it was the reformation and regularisation of the friskytte units that were the main issue. See also: Fabricius III, p.115.

only legal but commendable. Considering that the documents from the Krabbe case testify of quite fervent “snaphane” activities in the area during the latter part of 1677 and no particular Danish efforts to hold back these activities, though single cases of arrests of marauders were reported, it should maybe be hypothesised that with the decree of 10th June the authorities did not mean anything but that operations in the service of the state were approved of whereas private looting and violence that was could not be interpreted as defence of Denmark/the Danish king was prohibited.

By mid-1677 the Danes had started to make a neat distinction between snaphaner and friskytter⁵⁹³, this was not the case with the Swedes, which the court records from the assizes of the hundred of Sunnerbo in the south of “old” Sweden from 3rd May 1677 make quite clear. The records from this trial make no difference, and moreover a clearly derogatory tone is used: whereas noble and courageous Swedes vanquish treacherous rogues, the rogues murder honest Swedish cavaliers. On this day three men were brought to court on the charge of being *snaphaner* or of collaborating with them.⁵⁹⁴ The most prominent of these three was Jöns Tygesson (Jens Tygesen) of Göstorpshult in Halland who was (or had been) the bailiff of Sir Gabriel Gyllengrip. The second man was Olof Jöransson (Olluf Jørgensen) from Zealand who had been a soldier with Prince Jörgen’s Regiment but who had got separated from his company during the battle of Landskrona (Landskrone) and had sought shelter with the snaphaner. The third man was Sven Olofsson Speleman from Spång (Spaange) in the parish of Örkelljunga (Ørkellunge), Scania. The three men had been caught in the bailiff’s house by “the noble and manly” captain Lars Hjerta and his horsemen and some peasants.

During the interrogation Jöns Tygesson confessed that 50 snaphaner had come to his village some days earlier. The quartermaster of the snaphaner, Per Ryttare⁵⁹⁵, had

⁵⁹³ See e.g., decree that outlaws all snaphaner in certain parishes of south-eastern Scania, but certainly not the friskytter, p.158 of this thesis.

⁵⁹⁴ See Sunnerbo härads dombok (The Court records of the hundred of Sunnerbo), 3rd May 1677, www.halland.genealogi.se. This case has kindly been put to my notice by Jens Lerbom of the History Department at Lund University.

⁵⁹⁵ Little is known about this man, except that he was well-known at the time and in the few sources that mention him, it is taken for granted that people knew who “Peder Reuchter” or in Swedish “Per Ryttare” was. See: Johnsson, (p.198), who mentions a trial in the assizes of northern Åsbo (Norra Åsbo domsbok 1680. LA) during which a witness claimed that “Per Ryttare” had beaten up a woman from Rye so badly that she dropped the letter she was supposed to deliver to “postal officer Tor Gabriel Hillethon at Markaryd.” Peder Reuchter is also mentioned by Uno Rëndahl (p.451) as one of the “missing” snaphane captains, i.e., one of many persons who are mentioned as captains or leaders of the

seen to it that they all found lodgings in the village and Tygesson was given six of them. Tygesson had been in bed when the snaphaner arrived, but his servants and farmhands were up and he himself got up to serve them some food. He later told the court that he had been too scared to refuse the snaphaner anything. During supper they were saying that they had been to Sweden and that they had done a raid at Markaryd and that they were now heading for Fyen where they would be safe. After having smoked tobacco five of them went out to sleep in the stable but the one called Knut went to sleep on the bench inside. The snaphaner had no watches out and slept soundly until 7 o'clock in the morning when Tygesson served them breakfast. Some time after breakfast that day the Swedes arrived and started shooting in through the windows and put fire to the house. Tygesson, Speleman and Jöransson were caught while trying to escape from the flames.

The court wanted to know why Tygesson had not sent for the Swedes who were hardly 20 kilometres away, but Tygesson had no prompt reply. Thereafter he was condemned to death as a traitor. His execution would not be instant, but he would have time to ask for grace from the king. The court explained its harsh judgment with the fact that Tygesson had proved himself a traitor when he did not send for the Swedes and that he would not have dared let a snaphane sleep inside his house unless they were close friends. In any case Tygesson should have killed the snaphane in question when he had the chance. The case was not improved by the fact that Tygesson's son had "gone over to the Danes" and that his brother-in-law used to organise drinking parties for snaphaner. Tygesson was declared to have "violated his loyalty to our Gracious King in that he has lodged and colluded with the men who are the worst and most evil enemies of us and our King and consequently he has committed *Crimen Laesae Majestatis*."⁵⁹⁶

The two "real" snaphaner fared worse. Jöransson confessed to having been with the snaphaner when two Swedish dragoons were caught outside the church in Halmstad

snaphaner/friskytter in the sources but that we know next to nothing about. Röndahl reports that on 20th July 1677 Peder Reuchter is mentioned in the sources as a quarter master and leader of a group of fifty friskytter at Hishult in Halland. Further according to Röndahl, on 30th August 1677 Peder Reuchter and "a group of Friskytter" (en Flok Friskytter) had crossed the border and gone to Markaryd where they had hustled 1300 heads of cattle that had been destined as food (slaktdjur) for the Swedish army and brought them to Landskrone. In case this Peder's patronymic had been known, it would have been easier to identify him. At the time, all Scandinavians had patronymics, but commoners seldom had surnames. "Reuchter/Rytter" means "horserider, cavalryman" and it could have been either a proper surname or a nickname.

⁵⁹⁶ Sunnerbo härads dombok 3rd May 1677, LA.

and then murdered in the woods. He also confessed having participated in the raid against Markaryd. For these reasons he was condemned to death on the wheel and his head would be stuck on a pole and his body buried. The second “rogue” deserved an even more atrocious death since he was a Scanian and had broken his oath of allegiance. Speleman was reported to have “fought against his righteous Lord and King and to have helped our worst enemy” and to have “committed raids in our Fatherland.” He was also accused of having bragged of having murdered a Swedish man and to have been present when others had murdered Swedes. This last piece of information had been obtained from his “comrade” Jöransson. These crimes were more than sufficient to sentence Speleman to being quartered alive and put on 5 wheels. Since both men were “incurable knaves and snaphaner” the court decided that they should be executed instantly.

This trial includes men from three different parts of old Denmark: a Scanian, a Zealander and a man from Halland. It was quite common that Danish soldiers that had got separated from their companies joined the snaphaner. Sometimes they were deserters, sometimes prisoners-of-war that had escaped from the Swedes, sometimes they had simply got lost the way Jöransson claimed he had. Tygesson, Speleman and Jöransson also came from totally different backgrounds. Tygesson was the prosperous farmer and bailiff. Jöransson was the professional soldier. Speleman’s background is unclear unless his surname (*speleman*=musician or fiddler) indicated his occupation. It should be noted that the Danes would *not* have called the company that came to Tygesson’s village snaphaner. The fact that there was a quartermaster and that they seem to have been well organised indicates that we are dealing with a company of friskytter. Both Tygesson and Speleman were accused of having broken faith, of willingly having ignored their oath of loyalty to the Swedish king but they certainly did not consider themselves as subjects of the Swedish king anymore.

During the summer of 1677 the Danish army engaged in two disastrous battles. On 26th June they tried to storm the Swedish garrison at Malmö (Malmøe) but the attempt only resulted in massive losses on both sides. During the fight the Swedish governor general von Fersen was deathly wounded, and he died some time later.⁵⁹⁷ The Danish army that consisted of somewhere between 11000 and 14000 men then marched in the

⁵⁹⁷ He was then substituted by Jöran Sperling.

direction of Landskrona (Landskrone) and took a stand at Billeberga on 13th July. Meanwhile a Swedish army of 10 000 regular soldiers and 4000 peasant soldiers from the Småland region broke up from their camp at Herrevads kloster and set out towards the south-western parts of Scania.⁵⁹⁸ On 13th July the Swedes reached Tirup where the peasant soldiers were given responsibility for the left flank. King Charles himself led the right flank past Sireköping to Yllestad where they encountered the already battle-weary Danish army. The Danish cavalry was struck by what their commander von der Golz called “terror panicus” and when the whole western flank gave way King Christian decided to withdraw his troops inside the safety of the Landskrona (Landskrone) city walls.⁵⁹⁹ On the battlefield approximately 2000 dead and wounded Swedes and 2500 dead and wounded Danes were left behind. A group of friskytter reported to Copenhagen that in accordance with their orders they had burnt four bridges and the remains of the Swedish camp and that they had “decapitated” all survivors on the battlefield.⁶⁰⁰ The Swedish army then camped at Rönneberga. After a short offensive that concentrated on Kristianstad (Christianstad), the Danish army was shipped over to Zealand again. Some detachments were left behind in the enclaves of Kristianstad and Landskrona (Christianstad and Landskrone). For the time being the friskytter were also left behind and were supposed to go on fighting the Swedes.

The “little war” went on, not independently of, but in parallel to the great battles. It is important to note that the activities of the friskytter were not independent of the movements and actions of the main army, they were complimentary to them. In the north-west the friskytter had been trying to detain Swedish reinforcement troops and to ambush their convoys but these operations were getting ever more difficult to execute. Just after the failed attempt to storm Malmö (Malmø) the friskytte captain Eskild Nielsen arrived at the main camp with his lieutenant.⁶⁰¹ He claimed that the

⁵⁹⁸ Lars Ericson (Wolke) claims that the Swedish troops were numerically superior but Göran Rystad claims the contrary. See: Lars Ericson, *Krig och krigsmakt under svensk stormaktstid*, (War and Military Power during the Swedish Age of Greatness), Riga 2004, pp.216-217 and Göran Rystad, *Slaget vid Landskrona (The Battle of Landskrona)*, pp.163-168 in Göran Rydstad (ed.), *Kampen om Skåne*, (The Battle for Scania), Falun 2005, p.164.

⁵⁹⁹ Lars Ericson, *Krig och krigsmakt under svensk stormaktstid*, (War and Military Power during the Swedish Age of Greatness), Riga 2004, pp.216-217.

⁶⁰⁰ Sörensson, p.41, reports his source as: I.S. Supplique, among the documents from September, DRA.

⁶⁰¹ Eskild Nielsen, 2nd July 1677, I.S. DRA, No: 508. This letter is referred to by Sörensson, pp.28-29. Originally Nielsen came from the Bjäre (Bjærge) peninsula but concentrated his operations on the ridge between Halland and Scania. On 8th February 1678 an officer of the snaphaner called “Eskil” was reported to be the leader of a group of snaphaner in the parish of Brunnby, where they had gathered “on

whole country would rise in rebellion if only they were ordered to do so. Then he reported that parties of Swedes were ravaging the lands between Ängelholm (Engelholm) and Båstad (Baasted) in the northwest: the main scope of these parties was to catch friskytter and several of Eskild's men had deserted from fear of them. Captain Eskeld now pleaded that the King should order these persons to return to their posts.⁶⁰² Eskeld Nielsen's report of 2nd July 1677 is an example of how the friskytter's work had various aspects. It also emphasises their multifaceted relationship to the main army. The friskytter were not always asked to follow in the footsteps of the main army, or to work in unison with regular troops, but sometimes (as in this case) they were simply set tasks in parallel to the regulars. Nielsen's report is also interesting because it mentions how some friskytter reacted to the anti-snaphane raids up north and because it makes clear that Nielsen not only expected the king to take a certain responsibility for the friskytter, but he also expected his mates to obey the king. The months that followed the return of the main part of the Danish army in 1677 left large parts of Scania in a power vacuum. Theoretically there were two kings and two administrations: one Danish with its main fortresses at Kristianstad (Christianstad), Helsingborg and Landskrona (Landskrone), and one Swedish that was led by the governor general in Malmö (Malmø). In reality, large tracts of land had been abandoned by the authorities. Martin Weibull described the situation as disastrous: "armies, bands of stray soldiers and snaphaner ruled the land as they pleased. Orders crossed orders, all parties threatened with murder and fire."⁶⁰³ As is quite clear from Eskeld Nielsen's reports, the situation was indubitably disastrous, but as I have already mentioned, neither the stray soldiers, nor the snaphaner ruled the land. Neither Eskeld Nielsen, nor Aage "The Hare" Monsen were aiming to take over Scania: their goal was that King Christian V should do so on a permanent basis.

the hill there, and had boats ready in case of necessity". The hill must have been Kullen or Kullaberg, the mountainous peninsula where Brunnby is situated. The name means "the hill" ("På kullen därstädes"). These snaphaner got their provisions from the hundred of Bjäre. There was also another snaphane officer in the Ystad (Ystedh) area who was almost ruined ("en annan, som är mest ruinerat"), and they all had guns and rifles. See: Johnsson, pp.68-69: Information that lieutenant Klingspor obtained from a Danish prisoner, as reported among the *Handl. Rör. Sk. Kr. 1676-79*. SRA. Johnsson erroneously dated this letter to 1677. Johnsson also wondered who Eskeld might be since he had found no other information about him, but it seems clear that he was the Captain Eskeld/Eskild/Eskil who is now known from many other sources.

⁶⁰² In some renewed licences the king orders those who have once joined the friskytter to go on with their work. See e.g., Thue Manssøn's licence, Authorisation letter, U.S., No:588, DRA, referred to by Sörensson, p.28.

⁶⁰³ Martin Weibull, *Skånska samlingar, II, Till Skånes historia under öfvergångstiden 1658-1710, I. Skånska kriget och snapphanefejden 1676-79*, Lund 1873.

Unfortunately, chaos is often the result of a major war in which both parties find themselves in a no-win situation.

Deserters and Renegades

Backed by a strictly organised finance system (Finanzverwaltung) the Absolute monarchs managed to create standing armies that were radically different from the mercenary troops of earlier ages (at least in continental Europe). The army was subjected to the general centralisation process that was led by the monarch. In this kind of army, the officers were mainly recruited among the nobility; it was a way of binding them closer to the monarchy and of incorporating them into the new system. According to Kunisch the ordinary foot soldiers had no personal relationship to the state whatsoever: “Sie wurden zu den Waffen gepreßt oder aus den untersten Bevölkerungsschichten rekrutiert, und darüber hinaus war das Unterstecken von Kriegsgefangenen ein vielfach beschrittener Weg der Truppenergänzung.” All that held them together was constriction (Zwang). All that mattered was obeisance. For this reason, desertion was a greater threat than war casualties.⁶⁰⁴ The irregular troops were often set the task of retrieving deserters from their own side and taking care of enemy deserters and renegades. In Scania this was one of the friskytter’s most important tasks as can be seen in the Depositiones documents. They were paid for every deserter from the Danish army they brought back to camp. In the same manner they strove to get hold of as many Swedes as possible, and very often these were deserters or stragglers. No Swede would willingly surrender to the friskytter because everyone knew they were authorised to “decapitate” whoever they liked of that nation and often did so. They were paid for each Swede they brought to the Danish army camp or the military headquarters in Landskrona (Landskrone) but the retribution for civilians and private soldiers was so low that often enough the friskytter could not be bothered to keep them alive.

A report that might help us understand whom the friskytter picked up and why is that of 9th June 1677 in the Depositiones collection that states that that same day Aage Monsen (Harlof) and his friskytter had brought in nine men that they had “got hold

⁶⁰⁴ Kunisch, p.2. In continental Europe most army camps were erected on open ground so that it would be more difficult to sneak away and the inside of the camps were closed societies where every individual was under continuous surveillance

of' a week earlier at Billinge near the Swedish camp at Riseberga. The first man on the list was Paul Hansen from Flensburg in southern Denmark who had set out as a musketeer in the Danish army but who was caught by the Swedes during the battle of Halmstad. Since then, he had served in the Swedish army. Hansen's testimony consists of 2 pages full of information about the state of the Swedish army. Finally, he reported on the movements of the great leaders of the other side: "Ebbe Ulfeld⁶⁰⁵ has now gone to Sweden, and Johan Gyldenstiern is in the hundred of Gynge where he is burning down everything, the last place he burnt down was Agerup (modern-day Aggarp?)." Most other depositions are shorter than Hansen's, but the basic elements remain the same.⁶⁰⁶ The next man on the list from 9th June 1677 was Per Andersen from Småland (Sweden) who had fought in Colonel Post's regiment. He estimated the Swedes' numbers to 7000. Andersen had heard that the Swedes were expecting reinforcements from Sweden and that they wanted to "defend the borders of their country."⁶⁰⁷ Then there was Peter Jonas from Calmar (Sweden) who had served a year in the Danish army and said that he would not mind working for the Danes again. He was serving as a dragoon in the Swedish army when he got caught by the friskytter. So here we have a Swede who had served the Danes and claimed he would not mind changing sides again! The next soldier on the list was Per Ottesen from "Grenna" or as we write it today: Gränna (Sweden), who was a dragoon in the Scanian dragoons and "had been in this land for six years."⁶⁰⁸ The Scanian dragoons were largely composed of native Swedes who had moved to Scania. The fifth man was Hoken Nelsen from Kristianopel (Christianopel) (Scania) who was a dragoon and had a farmstead that had been given to him by the Swedish state. He had served for 8 years, and his father was a soldier in Kristianstad (Christianstad). The next one was Wolfs Clorf from Lübeck who had his wife and children in Kiel. After having fought on the Danish side at the battle of Lund he had been made a prisoner of war and then a soldier by the Swedes. Clorf said that he "would be happy to join the Danes" and enrolled with the friskytter. After Clorf there was Henric Muller from Dresden. Muller said that he had been in Landskrona (Landskrone) with his Danish company about a year earlier and that he had gone out into the countryside to buy milk when he was

⁶⁰⁵ Ebbe Ulfeld had been *lensmand* and commander-in-chief of the Scanian forces during Horn's War in the 1640'ies but he willingly went over to the Swedish side after the annexation.

⁶⁰⁶ Aage Monsen Harlof's report from 9th June 1677, *Depositiones*, 1677.

⁶⁰⁷ "det blef sagt att de wilde sende lige saa meget fock fra Suerig enn som nyligen war kommen, og landet wilde ey heller meere gifwe, mens wel forsware deres grendtzer:"

⁶⁰⁸ Aage Monsen Harlof's report from 9th June 1677, *Depositiones*, 1677.

caught by the Swedes. Underneath his deposition there is a little note that says: “We suspect that he deserted (of his own will) from our troops.” The last two on the list, Peter Jürgens and Johan Helwig were of German origins too and had both originally fought on the Danish side. Jürgens had been caught by the Swedes at the battle of Lund and had remained in their service ever since. Helwig who came from Lübeck had ended up in the hands of the Swedes at Karlshamn (Bodekuld). The testimonies of these nine men give us a clear picture of what the main task of the friskytter consisted in (apart from outright combat): procuring information about the enemy. Out of the 9 prisoners only Per Andersen did not have any connection to Denmark; this fact makes it likely that Monsen was pointing at men that could be considered traitors or at least involuntary deserters. These nine “traitors” were brought in by the famous friskytte lieutenant Aage Monsen and his men. Directly after the depositions of the nine men Monsen reported the following:

“Last Sunday at noon a woman came to Boserup, which is situated 4 miles from the camp. This woman had letters with her from Malmö and she was to deliver them to the Swedish camp. The friskytter went to look for her almost immediately but could not find her.”

Did Monsen and his men chase a Swedish (female) spy sometime in between catching and handing over the soldiers who had been fighting for the Swedes? It seems like it Monsen then went on to report that:

“...there is Danish cavalry approximately 4 or 5 miles from this camp but they want to stay with the friskytter and ride around the country: they are asking for a permit to gain entrance to the camp. There still are several men who have been in hiding with the peasants all since the battle of Lund; they too would like to have a permit so that they could come to the camp.”

What Monsen meant was probably that there were Danish dragoons that had got separated from the regular army and were fighting together with the friskytter. The disaster at Lund seven months earlier had driven many Danish soldiers to take refuge with peasants and friskytter in all parts of Scania. It is not to be totally excluded that they might have been civilians who had joined the friskytter and wanted to be accepted as such.⁶⁰⁹ The report from 9th June 1677 ends with a plea from Aage Monsen and “some other friskytter” that His Majesty may grant them a permit to attack the enemy. Monsen added that he would soon deliver a muster roll of all his men that could be used in case any complaints should come in. The only muster roll

⁶⁰⁹ The Danish word “*Ryttere*” that I have translated with “cavalry” had a somewhat ambiguous meaning in that it originally just meant “rider, horseman” but as a military term it was used as a synonymous with “cavalry”.

of Mosen's men that is conserved from the year 1677 is dated to January so it is not sure whether he sent in a new roll that year.

An interesting point in Harlof's letter is where he mentioned peasants that were hiding "men". Very likely it was the matter of Danish soldiers that had got separated from the regular army. The disaster at Lund seven months earlier had driven many Danish soldiers to take refuge with peasants and friskytter in all parts of Scania. On 29th June 1677 Peter Jansen from Altona (near Hamburg) was accompanied by a group of friskytter to the Danish camp outside Malmö (Malmö).⁶¹⁰ Groups of friskytter came in every day with prisoners or persons who wanted to be accompanied to the Danish camp of their own free will. Sometimes the clerks only write "a group of friskytter", sometimes they indicate which unit it was or the officers that led them. At other times it is just "Aage Mosen", "Captain Simon" or "Captain, later Major Dreyer." In this case some anonymous friskytter had brought in Peter Jansen who had first served as a musketeer in the Danish army, but he had been caught by the Swedes during the battle of Lund. He had been "constrained" to take service in the Scanian Regiment (that fought for the Swedes) but he had escaped as soon as he could. Then he sought refuge with some peasants in the village of Hallösa (Lyckås) and remained there until the friskytter came and brought him to the Danish camp. It is not at all clear under what circumstances the friskytter picked Jansen up from the peasants. It seems as if there were an underground movement that organised contacts between peasants and friskytter and that some peasants took it on them to hide away refugees until they could be collected by the friskytter that would accompany them to the Danish camp.

On 21st June 1677 a friskytte by the name of Madtz Persen from the hundred of Färs (Ferhs) brought a Swedish dragoon to the Malmö (Malmö) camp. The Swede was a certain Eric Olsen Riman (Olsson Ryman or Rydman in Swedish) from the border region of Småland. Riman had served as a dragoon under field marshal Aschenberg but unfortunately, he had ended up in a fight with a colleague. Right there and then Riman had decided to escape and had deserted the Swedish camp. He had not come far before he started having second thoughts and decided to make his way back again but by then it was too late because he was caught by a group of friskytter. Riman

⁶¹⁰ The camp outside Malmö 29th June 1677 Depositiones, DRA.

seems to have been left in the custody of some peasants with whom he stayed for three weeks. Then Madtz Persen arrived. His original mission was that of liquidating the Swede, but the peasants pleaded for the prisoner's life. In the end Persen agreed on bringing Riman to the Danish camp instead.⁶¹¹ This report transmits important information about the friskytter and the way they worked. It seems as if the friskytter were constantly on the outlook for deserters and other Swedes that they could catch. In Riman's case they seem to have been unsure of what to do with him, so they left him with some peasants until further orders arrived. Unfortunately, we are not told whom the order of shooting Riman could be traced back to.

On 21st June 1677 one of Major Dreyer's friskytter who was called Per Ericson consigned three prisoners that he had caught in the woods.⁶¹² These men were the only "real" deserters from the Danish army that seem to have come into the camp during June 1677. They did not even pretend that they would want to get back to the Danish army again. Perhaps the evidence against them was too massive. One of them was Morten Persen from Næstved⁶¹³ on Zealand who had deserted from his regiment during the siege of Landskrona (Landskrone). He had sold his equipment and stayed "in this land" until he was finally caught by friskytter in Aarhus. The other two had much the same story to tell.

A deposition from 22nd June 1677 gives us further evidence on how the friskytter worked. Hans Adolph von Schetzwitz from Saxony had served as a corporal in the Danish army but had become a prisoner of war during the battle of Lund. He was then taken to Växjö in Sweden where he had to become a second lieutenant in the Swedish army. In May 1677 his squadron was sent to Scania⁶¹⁴ where he took his chance to desert as soon as he could. von Schetzwitz then "dwelled among the friskytter" until he managed to get to the Danish camp on 21st June. Schetzwitz seems to have had his mind set on returning to the Danes all along and he found that the friskytter could help him back. As in so many other cases they served as a link to the Danish authorities and a complement to the regular army. He also reported that in Sweden "[b]oth high

⁶¹¹ The camp outside Malmö 21st June 1677, Depositiones, DRA. The Swede's name has been Danicised: most likely he was called Erik Olsson Ryman.

⁶¹² The camp outside Malmö 20th June 1677, Depositiones, DRA. Major Hendrik Fredrik Dreyer and his company were mainly active on the plains around Malmö. See Røndahl pp.437-438.

⁶¹³ Here spelt "Nestved".

⁶¹⁴ "her til landet" means "to this land" as the report from 22nd June 1677 (Depositiones, DRA) has it.

and low despise the Danish nation very much.” Count Wittenberg had even asked him “how he could have served such people as the Danes.”⁶¹⁵

Jens Jenssön from Stoby (Stoheby) in northeastern Scania was another friskytte of peasant or yeoman origins who had peasants working for him.⁶¹⁶ He was good friends with Simon Andersen and first went to the Army Board to apply for a license in the company of Andersen. Jenssön continued to operate from his farmstead even after becoming a professional friskytte. On his arrival at the Danish camp outside Malmö (Malmö) on 26th June he reported that he had sent a peasant to the Swedish camp and that this peasant had brought him useful information about the Swedish camp at Riseberga (Risselberg in the source).⁶¹⁷ Jenssön now reported that the enemy had received reinforcements of 300 men, and a large amount of supplies “from Sweden” and moreover, they were also receiving large amounts of food from the peasants in the area, and (according to Jenssön’s man) all horses and carts that were brought into the Swedish camp were confiscated. The people in the areas around “Risselberg” had been ordered to bring wagons and strong horses with provisioning to the Swedish camp. Finally, Jenssön reported that the Swedes had built a bridge across the river that was broad enough for four wagons to cross alongside and that some were saying in the Swedish camp that they might be marching towards Ängelholm (Engelholm) soon. The encounter between Jenssön and the peasant had taken place *in Jenssön’s home*; this fact makes it rather likely that the bond between the two men was one that should be seen in the context of the local community of Stoby put it in his frequent reports it seems as if regular friskytte captains like him on the one hand had his men who were enlisted and recognised officially but that he also worked with “peasants” who were what one would call spies. The peasants were constrained to come to the Swedish camps with food supplies and wagons and other things that served the Swedes and that gave them an excellent chance of seeing what was going on there.

Other examples of ordinary peasants who seem not to have left their farms all that much were the “snaphaner” that appear in the court cases that were the long aftermath

⁶¹⁵ ”Baade høye of lafwe ere saa foragtelige ower den danske nation, som Graf Wittenberg i synderlighed spurde ham, hworfor hand wilde tiene saadanne folck som de danske etc.”

⁶¹⁶ Jenssön and his company worked mainly around the Ringsjö lake in central Scania. See Rön Dahl, pp.423-425. During the campaign of 1678 Jenssön was responsible for the Landskrona (Landskrone) district.

⁶¹⁷ Depositiones, DRA. Jens Jenssön’s report, 26th June 1677.

of the Captain Bendix case. The people who were killed in the Skräddaröd massacre were considered “snaphaner” by the Swedes but they themselves saw themselves as a normal peasant community consisting of families that ran farms and employed farmhands that were normally the sons of neighbouring families.⁶¹⁸ In fact Broor Andersson, Swen Nillsson, Nills Swensson and Truls Jönsson were all condemned to the stake and wheel after having been shot at home in their absolutely average south-eastern farmsteads. Both their community and that of their acquaintances that survived (but ended up in court thirty years later) give the impression of a normal and honourable peasant community, which in itself illustrates how ambiguous the concept of a “snaphane” could be.

I believe that there were three categories of snaphaner/friskytter with peasant or yeoman backgrounds: the first and largest one was constituted by peasants who still led a normal life on their farms most of the time even if some of them moon lighted as spies or participated in the odd attack on the Swedes. The second category was that of those who had given up normal life in order to fight the Swedes. This group might have included outlaws of various kinds, but I have only found one case of a snaphane/friskytt who was an ex-convict. In the documents this kind of “snaphaner” was normally constituted of men who owned or worked on farms or who had had quite legal jobs before the war. Many of them returned to their farms during the cold season. Finally, there was the category of the registered friskytter that considered themselves part of the Danish army. Even among them those who could returned to their farms during the winter season. It is very hard to decide where the lines should be drawn.

In June 1677 General Major Schack proposed that a number of free-lancing groups of friskytter should be united into a company that could help protect the town of Landskrona (Landscrone). Schack believed that one way of disciplining those friskytter who were not officially registered would be to have them registered and paid. The friskytter were reportedly quite keen on the idea and assured they would be able to gather well over 100 men in only a few days. They were even willing to renounce on monetary payment if the king entitled them to claim food rations from

⁶¹⁸ Erich Tuedsen declared that the Swedes went from one house to another and shot whoever they came across. See the section on Captain Bendix.

the peasantry. Schack proposed that they be provided with a nice Danish flag. Probably nothing came of Schack's proposal: there is no registered reply to his proposal and a particular company that was tied to the governor of Landskrona (Landskrone) is not mentioned in any other sources.⁶¹⁹

By the summer of 1677 the snaphaner had become a serious problem not only in the north but in the whole of Scania. But so had the snaphane catchers, depending on which side of the conflict you were on. One of several Swedish responses to the outburst of "snaphane" activities was the establishment of a special corps of snaphane-catchers. In the south this corps was headed by Captain Simon Bengtsson and the mayor of Ystad (then Ydsted), Olaus Harman (also spelt "Ole or Olluf Hermand"). At the beginning the headquarters were at Näsbyholm castle, but as we will see they were later moved to Krageholm (then Krogholm).⁶²⁰ The second most important move against the snaphaner, and the one that was especially directed against the estate dominated south, was the deportation of the nobility (and gentry) to a camp at Vimmerby just across the border and the consequent occupation of their habitations. The most robust country houses and castles were turned into heavily armed fortresses that were to constitute strongholds in the battle against the snaphaner. However, this move encountered fierce passive resistance among the Scanian nobility that tried in vain to negotiate a compromise with the Swede.⁶²¹ The foremost spokesman of the nobility, Jørgen Krabbe of Krogholm (later to be called "Krageholm"), was arrested and executed on dubious grounds and several other prominent noblemen fled to Denmark as a consequence of Swedish threats to drag them to Sweden in chains.⁶²² Consequently the "evacuation" of the castles and noble

⁶¹⁹ Sörensson, p.30, refers to: Indkomne sager (Krigskollegiet), June 1677, No:520, DRA.

⁶²⁰ Skriv till gen.guv, Landsarkivet, Lund, quoted by Johnsson, pp.105–106. See also: Martin Weibull "Snapphaneväsendet i Sydsåne" (The Snaphane Movement in Southern Scania), pp.1-9 in *Skånska samlingar III*, (Scanian Collections) ed. Martin Weibull, Lund 1896, esp. p.7.

⁶²¹ Fabricius III: pp.121-124 and p. 141: 83 men were stationed at Krageholm (Krogholm): 46 of them were dragoons, 115 at Borby in the deepest south of which 34 dragoons (or is that Borgeby?), 42 at Svaneholm (Swaneholm) of which 20 dragoons), 37 at Getinge (Giddinge) skans of which 7 dragoons, 57 at Häckeberga (Heckeber) of which 27 dragoons), 57 at Sövdeborg (Söfwede gaard) of which 27 dragoons) and 68 at Trolleholm (Erichsholm) of which 33 dragoons. The numbers come from a "Register of the soldiers that have been selected from the garrison here for the occupation of the noble houses and also of those that have been added to Söfwede from Erichsholm and Knutstorp". ("Specification på dhett Manskap sin heruthur Garrisonen till dhe adelige husens besättning är uttagit som och huadh ifrå Erichshollm och Knutstorp till Söfwede är kommit"), GG, SRA.

⁶²² See the chapter on the Krabbe case.

mansions and the transformation of them into outposts in the battle against the “snaphaner” were not completed until the year after.

Autumn and Early Winter 1677

During the autumn of 1677, or possibly the winter 1677-78, the Swedish commanders Gyllenstierna and Augustin Leijonsköld organised assemblies in each hundred during which those friskytter that gave up were automatically pardoned.⁶²³ Those “snaphaner” that accepted the amnesty offer would then have to hunting for other “snaphaner” themselves.⁶²⁴ The locals were also ordered to organise groups of guards or snaphane-catchers among themselves. In this manner the Swedes thought they would be able to fight the snaphaner from the “inside” and it was clearly stated that those Scanians who wanted to pass for “good Swedish subjects” would agree to participate in snaphane hunts and to escort Swedish convoys when necessary.⁶²⁵ Sörensson interpreted the peasant guards mainly as an attempt to create something like friskytter fighting on the Swedish side instead.⁶²⁶ To me Sörensson fails to see that the Swedes were trying to fight the “snaphaner” from within, and the consequences of that. Since I feel confident (on the basis of my research) that the majority of the “snaphaner” during the Scanian War were perfectly normal people who continued to make part of local society, the implementation of peasant guards would mean that you turned one neighbour against the other and that sometimes the peasant guards that took the morning shift were the snaphaner who ambushed convoys at night. I also think it was part of a Swedish marginalisation policy that aimed at re-defining the borders between who was part of the Christian (Lutheran) community and not, and the new definition left the snaphaner on the wrong side of that confine. Marginalising meant pushing certain individuals beyond the pale of

⁶²³ Jacobsen, pp.152-153 dates these events to the winter of 1678, but he does not precise the dates. The preceding chapter ended with December 1677 and the account of Gyllenstjerna’s and Leiyonskiöld’s campaign is the first passage of the chapter that describes the events of 1678. Sörensson (p.45) dates this campaign to the autumn of 1677. See also: Jensen, p.340 and Fabricius III, pp. 147-148.

⁶²⁴ Swedish instruction on snaphane hunting etc. from 1678, quoted by Johnsson, p.123.

⁶²⁵ See: Johnsson, p.125 that quotes a decree from the Handl. rör. D:ska kriget 1676-79, SRA. In the text the ethnicities that are mentioned are “skåningar och halländingar” i.e., the inhabitants of the provinces of Scania and Halland. See also: pp. 122-124 for Swedish instructions on how to fight the “snaphaner”.

⁶²⁶ Cf. Sörensson, p.46: Furthermore, the commoners were called together everywhere and received orders to keep guard against the snaphaner on a 4-shift-basis. A certain amount of organisation of these peasant guards was also introduced. In this manner they (the Swedes) wanted to combat the friskytter with a similar organisation. They also had some success with this, quite a few ‘snaphaner’ asked for parole and the remains withdrew themselves to the protection of the Danes.”

Lutheran society and convincing the rest of the community that those individuals had been righteously dealt with. In this manner the community boundaries were purposely changed during the war.⁶²⁷

On 29th October 1677 Jens Harboe communicated to Meyer that he was sending out about 300 friskytter together with parts of the cavalry to find forage, which shows that the Danish authorities actively employed the friskytter on missions like that.⁶²⁸ According to Sörensson who first mentioned the 29th October report, the friskytter were greatly upset that commander Uffeln would not let them inside the fortress.⁶²⁹ It seems from Harboe's reports that Pieter Sten for one was already inside, so it can only be assumed that some friskytter were exempt from Uffeln's rules. But then, it could seriously be questioned whether Sten should be counted as a "friskytte" at all since even Sthen Jacobsen describes him as a regular soldier.⁶³⁰ It is also obvious from Harboe's reports to Herman Meyer, Chief Military Prosecutor (general auditør) and influential enough to be called "the true commander of the Danish army"⁶³¹, in Copenhagen that Uffeln and Harboe did not get on. In a letter from 24th September or October 1677 Harboe claimed that he had to *make* Uffeln do things, such as send out "Pieter Stenssön" on reconnaissance.⁶³² But then, one might wonder whether anybody got on in Landskrona (Landskrone): towards the end of August that year Harboe had declared that "chaos reigned in Landskrone, because all the commanders were at loggerheads with each other" and there was even risk of a duel between Baudissin and von der Goltz.⁶³³ Uffeln was only in service between 30th August and 8th November 1677. Still according to Sörensson, when Uffeln refused to let the friskytter in, many of them went over to Copenhagen where they pleaded with the king for their right to winter-quarters and food.⁶³⁴ Uffeln was substituted by the Duke of Croy on 8th November, officially because of his poor health. The Duke of

⁶²⁷ For the issue of "marginalisation" see also p. 281 of this thesis.

⁶²⁸ Sörensson, p. 39. The letter is to be found among the Indkomne Sager, No: 519, DRA.

⁶²⁹ Sörensson, p. 46 stated his sources as: reports from Landskrone, November-December 1677, I.S. DRA.

⁶³⁰ See: Section on Pieter Sten.

⁶³¹ See: Jensen, p.299. It was Fieldmarshal Joachim Rüdiger von den Goltz who claimed that during Meyer's visit to Landskrone in August 1677.

⁶³² But then, Harboe often did not disagree with his superiors' policies: see e.g., his 2nd January 1678 report on torture (Harboe to Meyer, Indkomne Sager 1678, DRA).

⁶³³ Jens Harboe to Herman Meyer, 25th August 1677, as referred to by Jensen, p.302.

⁶³⁴ Jacobsen (p.153) agrees with Sörensson that most friskytter went over to Zealand that winter, but he claims they only stayed for the month of January.

Croy did not stay long; he himself claimed he found everything in a state of chaos in Landskrona (Landscrone) and his detractors claimed he was generally disliked because of his manners. By the end of November he had been substituted by Meerheim who took over the position as commander.⁶³⁵ Officially Uffeln was governor of Landskrona (Landscrone) until he died on 11th January 1678.⁶³⁶

On 11th November the king ordered that all friskytter that arrived in Landskrona (Landscrone) should swear a oath of allegiance after which they would be provided for during the coldest months. Private soldiers received 1 *rigsdaler*, lower officers 2 and officers 4 *rigsdaler* a month apart from housing and food. In return they would have to obey the governor's orders and help break the ice in the harbour.⁶³⁷

Hermansen and Knud Espensen Bøg⁶³⁸ and their companies agreed to break ice in the harbour and spent the winter in Landskrona (Landscrone). Bøg had received authorisation from Hermansen to enlist a squadron of "dragoons" and he had paid for all the expenses himself. In a letter to the king Bøg asks that his squadron be recognised as part of the regular army.⁶³⁹ Dreyer's company was registered in Landskrona (Landscrone) but also in Copenhagen at the same time. Many of the friskytter complained that they did not want to do chores like breaking ice and consequently went over to Copenhagen instead. Some of the friskytter spent the winter of 1677-1678 on Zealand where they were provided with lodgings, food, and money, just like soldiers from the regular army. Eskeld Nielsen and his men found winter-quarters in Elsinore.⁶⁴⁰ Those friskytter that came from Blekinge should spend the winter on Bornholm from where it was easier for them to get back to their own region, the Gønger should go to Landskrona (Landscrone).⁶⁴¹

Meerheim's Mission

Towards the end of November 1677 general major Meerheim was set on a secret mission. He was ordered to confiscate what forage he could find, especially on the great estates, and to either partition it out or burn it. Much the same rules were applied for horses. Meerheim was expressly ordered to employ friskytte troops on this

⁶³⁵ See: Jensen, p.320.

⁶³⁶ Jensen, p.341.

⁶³⁷ Sörensson, p.46. He refers to a Royal Ordinance of 11th November 1678, DRA.

⁶³⁸ His name was also written "Böge", "Boek" etc.

⁶³⁹ Sörensson, p.47.

⁶⁴⁰ Sörensson, p.24 and p.48.

⁶⁴¹ Indkomne breve. Arensdorff, January 1678, DRA, referred to by Sörensson, p.49.

mission, at least in areas where other Danish detachments could not reach.⁶⁴² They were also expected to interrupt the Swedish postal line between Helsingborg and Halmstad and to confiscate the letters. Meerheim was ordered to keep the precise contents of these orders a secret so that others could be blamed for whatever havoc was wreaked.⁶⁴³ Sörensson hypothesised that it was only natural the Danish authorities expected that the friskytter be held responsible.⁶⁴⁴ In case this was really so, then it was not only the Swedish authorities that tried to criminalise the friskytter and to clump them together with whatever disobedient Scanians they could track down as “snaphaner”, but the Danish authorities too used the friskytter as political scapegoats. Nevertheless, we *cannot* take for granted that the Danish authorities expected that the blame be attributed to the friskytter. There was a distinct “acknowledging tendency” towards the friskytter at the time that included bestowing the name of the King’s Friskytter on them. It hardly seems likely that the Danish king would have wanted the blame for the devastation missions to fall on an armed corps that carried his name. The Danish authorities certainly expected someone to take the blame, but maybe the scapegoats might be the more indefinable “snaphaner” that the Swedes (and some other people) sighted all over the land and that could be identified with marauders and looters. There is evidence that people sometimes did not know what kind of troops had come down upon them, whether they were regular soldiers or friskytter, but on the other hand, nor were these troops mistaken for gangs of criminals. It consequently remains unclear who was expected to be held responsible for these actions, although it is beyond doubt that they were part of a carefully planned Danish strategy of war, not a haphazard decision as Sörensson seems to have thought. Jensen stressed that the plans for this stratagem were discussed in the King’s Council and how Danish “strøjjpartier” (parties) were continuously sent out on similar missions, normally under Meerheim, Rantzau or Schwanewedel.⁶⁴⁵ Already at the beginning of 1677 War Councillor Herman Meyer had proposed that the Scanian plains be laid waste so that the enemy would not be able too subsist and the

⁶⁴² As Fabricius (III, p.154) noted, Meerheim and Schwanewedel specialised in setting out on minor expeditions with combined regular and irregular (friskytte-) troops. See also Jensen, p.418.

⁶⁴³ Sörensson, pp.34-35. He refers to an “Order to Meerheim”, 27th November 1677, U.S., No 1153, DRA.

⁶⁴⁴ Sörensson, p. 35.

⁶⁴⁵ Jensen, pp. 340-341, pp. 346-347 and p. 419 on which Jensen quotes a memorandum written by Herman Meyer (?) in October 1678 that states that the aim was to bring all forage in the land into the Landscrone fortress, and as much food and firewood as possible.

population of those areas be moved to Zealand.⁶⁴⁶ It was consequently an issue that had important lobbyists in Danish government circles. Although Meerheim did receive secret orders, he most certainly had more tasks in Scania than confiscating forage. Jensen reported that the General Major was sent to Landskrona (Landskrone) at the end of November with the official excuse of collecting information about the enemy, but that his real mission was to try to straighten up the situation inside the fortress where far too many soldiers were dying from illnesses and the internal organisation was in chaos. In fact, shortly afterwards, Meerheim was nominated temporary governor of Landskrona (Landskrone) and the situation inside improved considerably.⁶⁴⁷ On 22nd December 1677, the commander of Helsingborg Carl Hård reported to governor general Sperling and to a “baron” friend of his that “Mörheim” had no more than 300 cavalry with him, including 60 officers that had deserted from the Swedes and 50 *snaphaner* and that the infantry consisted of maximum 1500 men.⁶⁴⁸ It is obvious that Hård considered the “snaphaner” a separate group enough to mention, just as he thought he should mention the “renegades”, although we do not know why he thought so. It could have been that they were considered less good at fighting, but it could also have been that Hård felt he should mention there were Scanians on the scene. On the other hand, and that is my main point here, the fifty “snaphaner” made part of “Mörheim’s” cavalry to Hård too, and he did not try to pretend they were a pack of murderers that were crawling behind the hedgerows on the look-out for prey. From a military point of view, he did not report of them as one did of outlaws or common criminals at all.

Conclusions:

The first part of this section included an analysis of the Danish and the Swedish attitudes to the snaphaner/friskytter by mid-1677, as expressed through court records, official decrees, letters, and authorisations. By that time, it was obvious to everyone that there was a wide gap between the Danish and Swedish conceptions of what kind of battle techniques would be considered permissible in the war, or maybe rather what

⁶⁴⁶ Jensen p.242.

⁶⁴⁷ Jensen, p.320.

⁶⁴⁸ To Baron och gen: lieut: from Carl Hård (in German), 22nd December 1677 (Helsingborg). He reported the same to Sperling in Swedish on the same date (Hård to Sperling, 22nd December 1677, both among the Opsnappede (Intercipirte) breve, DRA. *Overløbere* or renegades were often Danes that had served under the Swedes for different reasons. Some were Scanians that had been drafted, others were continental- or island Danes that had been caught by Swedish troops and had taken service with them (voluntarily or not). Some were mercenaries of various nationalities that had served under the Swedes but thought the Danes would offer them a better deal.

kind of combatants would be allowed on the battle scene. The friskytter were not only accepted, but frequently employed by the Danes and in the subsection on deserters and renegades I analysed what task they were set when their services were required. It is unclear to what degree their ethnic background played a role in the Swedish criminalisation of the snaphaner, but if nothing else it did play a motivational role in that their origins rendered them Swedish or at least, bound by oath to the Swedish king according to Swedish theories. I have also tried to underline that the snaphaner/friskytter depended on the Danish army and that, throughout, they worked either in parallel to or in unison with it.

In the latter part of this section, I have tried to study the events of the winter 1677-78 as lived by the “snaphaner”. I only highlighted what I thought of particular importance to my analysis, e.g., the fact that the authorities were trying to provide lodgings for them and that they were expected to work extra in the Landskrona (Landskrone) harbour but obviously not in Copenhagen, although they were not very popular there. It is consequently obvious that a great deal of administrative work went into the organisation of the friskytter troops and that a notable effort was made on the side of the state to keep them going. Obviously because the authorities thought the friskytter would be of some worth in the fight for Scania. These are facts that I needed to include, both in order to render a coherent picture of the development of the war, and in order to be able to draw upon them in my general conclusions.

1678

Introduction

The Danish authorities periodically sponsored a policy that based much of their operations in Scania on “party” or detachment warfare that was undertaken by friskytter, smaller units from the regular army and hired Croat units. Those who favoured this policy the most also favoured the evacuation of the population and the laying waste of the land so that the Swedes would not be able to subsist there anymore. In this section I have tried to illustrate how Danish officials employed spies and friskytter in their work (Swedish snaphaner) and how they did not, and how the Danish state tried to tie the friskytter corps closer to itself as the Swedish state increased its tendency to criminalise those whom they considered snaphaner.

Traitors and Spies

Hostilities did not cease because of the winter, although there were no major operations during the coldest two or three months. Nevertheless, as we have already seen, there were activities on both sides all through the year, not the least intelligence operations that might prepare the way for the coming campaign. On 2nd January 1678, War Commissary Jens Harboe reported to Herman Meyer that they had a peasant sitting there (at Landskrona/Landscrone) in arrest because he was seriously suspected of being a spy. He claimed that he dealt in silk and did small business trips between Landskrona (Landscrone) and Helsingborg, but this man was known to be a shady character and he had already been in custody once. When body-searched, they found a considerable amount of silver money (grob silber gelt) on him. They had threatened him with “Tortur”, but it was of no use, the man stuck to his story. Jens Harboe was quite annoyed that he was not in charge himself because he (or so he told Meyer) would not have made himself second thoughts about tightening a screw or two around the rascal’s thumbs.⁶⁴⁹ Apparently it was not on the order of the day to use torture on spy suspects in Danish towns. Harboe’s comments also show that views on the subject of torture varied at the time and that people did discuss it.

Spies did abound, however. On 5th January 1678 miller Hans Jonsen from Västra Karaby (Wester Carreby) just south of Landskrona (Landscrone) arrived at the city gates with a message from his employer, the vicar. The vicar was wondering whether he might send his furniture and other belongings to Landskrona (Landscrone) since the Swedes were evacuating the whole area within two or three (Swedish?) miles’ distance from the city walls. Clergy and peasants alike were being asked to remove themselves “mit Sack und Pack”. The Swedish district governor Lewenhaupt had sent out the orders from Engelholm, which also other peasants bore witness of.⁶⁵⁰ The day after, Harboe reported to Meyer that the peasants were coming in with their belongings since they were afraid the enemy would burn it.⁶⁵¹ Another clergyman who reported to the Danes in Landskrona (Landscrone) was Hans Gudmanni Brock

⁶⁴⁹ “...wenn ich was zu sagen hatte, wolte ich gantz keine gewissens werch daraus machen, ihm einige schreuben auf den deumen zu setzen.”

⁶⁵⁰ Preen’s report of 4th January 1678 that is to be found among Harboe’s reports, DRA. This notice is in another handwriting, dated 5th January 1678. It was probably taken down by a scribe or guard at Jonsen’s arrival at the city gates.

⁶⁵¹ Jens Harboe to Herman Meyer 6th January 1678, Indkomne breve, DRA. See also: Jacobsen, p.160 and p.163 about the evacuation orders. He stresses that the order said that the people in the concerned areas were supposed to betake themselves *to the Swedes*, not to the Danes, and that the Swedes did burn down property that had not been evacuated.

vicar of the village Halmstad in Scania who left at least one detailed report of the situation to lieutenant Preen around this time.⁶⁵² During the war Brock was imprisoned by both Swedes and Danes.⁶⁵³

The Burning of Örkened (Ørkende)

In February 1678 Aage “the Hare” Mosen Harlof, Niels Andersen and their Gønger were sent over to Landskrona (Landskrone). According to the payrolls they stayed there until 21 June.⁶⁵⁴ In March and April 1678 most of the other friskytter that had stayed on Zealand came over to Scania again. Several of them had pawned their guns during the winter and asked the king for money to be able to get them back. The Danish authorities had rather they stayed behind until the end of March because that was when the deadline for the Swedish general amnesty.⁶⁵⁵ When the success of the amnesty offer turned out to have been moderate the Swedish authorities decided to try to intimidate the border inhabitants for real. At this time, it also seemed evident that Gyllenstierna’s oath-taking campaign in the border regions had been of limited success.⁶⁵⁶

In April 1678 the following orders were issued by the Swedish king to the commanders in Gønge:

“When you come to Örkende where the snaphaner are supposed not only to have most of their hide outs but also to have stowed away most of their booty, have all the men that are old enough to carry guns killed, but save the womenfolk and children, and then burn all the farms after having confiscated the cattle and the foodstuff”.⁶⁵⁷

⁶⁵² Lieutenant Colonel Preen’s report of 4th January 1678 is to be found among Harboe’s reports, DRA, consequently under the letter H among the Incoming Letters (Indkomne Breve). This report is mentioned by Fabricius III, p.149 footnote 7 although the document cannot be found under Preen’s name as indicated by Fabricius. Gudmansen was brought in by the friskytter on 24th May 1678 as results from a report in the 468:98 collection. He was extremely upset and did not understand why they had taken him, but he also said that now he did not want to return home again since the Swedes would think him a traitor for having been to Landskrona. He added that the friskytter had taken his horses from him and that he assumed that was the reason for his having been brought to Landskrona. Two of his horses were now in the city and he demanded they be returned to him.

⁶⁵³ Fabricius III, p.81.

⁶⁵⁴ Harboe’s accounts quoted by Sörensson, p.50. According to Sörensson the Gønger left the safety of the fortress at the same time as the Danish army went on campaign and he claimed that they then accompanied the regular army throughout the whole offensive.

⁶⁵⁵ Charles XI’s last parole decree from 26 February 1678 in which all “snaphaner” were offered a chance to return to their homes.

⁶⁵⁶ Sten Skansjö, *Skånes historia*, (A History of Scania), Historiska Media, Borgå 2006, p.185.

⁶⁵⁷ Fabricius III, pp.156-157. He refers to an order to Hedefält from 19th April, or so it seems from his rather vague footnote. See also: Tomenius, pp. 158-173.

The same orders were originally also issued for the neighbouring hundred of Jämshög (Gemsø) but Charles XI decided to revoke them when his soldiers were done with Örkened (Ørkende). Supposedly people had found out about the Swedes' plans and had time to evacuate before the arrival of the soldiers.⁶⁵⁸ We do not know for sure how many people were killed. The Swedish colonel Nils Skytte reported in his diary on 22nd April 1677 his brigade had set out with the scope of burning down the entire hundred of "Örken" and killing all menfolk there between the ages of fifteen and sixty. He then stated that he and his men had burnt down "Kärraboda, Räfteorp, Smålatorp, Månstorp, 2 windmills and 1 house, moreover an old peasant was killed." Then they had rested over night and the day after they burnt down a number of other locations and that when they were done only two farmsteads in "Örken" remained.⁶⁵⁹ Sthen Jacobsen connected the burning of "Ørchen" with the Swedish surrender to the friskytter at Hönjarum (Højnebro), and he claimed that only three old men had been killed. It should be added that in this case, as in several others, Jacobsen got the order of the events on the other side of Scania quite wrong and since the Gønge friskytter ousted the Swedes at Hönjarum (Højnebro) on 2nd August, and Örkened (Ørkende) was razed to the ground in April, the latter could hardly be seen as a reprisal action for what took place at the former occasion.⁶⁶⁰

The Planned Evacuation

On 18th May 1678 the Danish General Commissariat ordered the Scanians to evacuate the country.⁶⁶¹ Within five weeks, they and their cattle and belongings should all go to Zealand and stay there "until Scania had been retrieved". Those who stayed behind would have to suffer the consequences since soldiers from "foreign nations" were likely to wreak havoc upon the land and the Swedes were thought to be planning a mass deportation of all inhabitants to Sweden and to ruin the land. In order to keep the Scanians safe from this sad fate, the king now ordered them to betake themselves to Zealand where they would be assigned places to stay until the war was over and they

⁶⁵⁸ Fabricius III, p.157.

⁶⁵⁹ Skytte, p.9. The farmsteads in Örkened that were not burnt down are big tourist attractions today, though I do not know if they are the same as Skytte mentioned, since the descendants of the 17th century owners claim that the family camouflaged the buildings with leaves and branches so that the Swedish troops just rode past...

⁶⁶⁰ Jacobsen, p.180.

⁶⁶¹ The decree in is to be found in Jacobsen, pp.163-164. It was signed by Holger Wind, Christopher Sehested, von Stöchen and Pedersön Lerche.

could return home.⁶⁶² Fabricius estimated the Scanian refugees in Denmark to somewhere in between ten and twenty thousand. His research in this area was based on the tax exemption certificates that all Scanian refugees were entitled to. Fabricius found 500 of these and counted approximately 5 family members per certificate. He also found 400 beggar licenses (allmosebrev) registered on Scanians.⁶⁶³ Åberg thinks Fabricius's numbers exaggerated and yet he declares that the Scanian exodus must have taken on considerable dimensions.⁶⁶⁴ In more recent times the importance of the Scanian refugees has been re-evaluated by Jens Lerbom who has studied lists of people who "emigrated" from some areas of Scania: according to these lists it was only rarely that refugees brought their families with them. Consequently, the certificates mentioned by Fabricius should be counted on their own or possibly for a couple of persons. It should also be taken into account that many refugees returned to Scania after the war, just as the "General Commissariat" had counted on their doing. Maybe a notice from the beginning of June that year is connected to the evacuation orders: a Danish official called Lutgens wrote from the coastal town of Dragør by to Herman Meyer to ask how he should act in the case of two peasants from the Scanian side of the Sound that had come over with all their cattle and part of their belongings and now wanted to go back to fetch the rest of their belongings so that they could stay on the other side of the Sound.⁶⁶⁵

The Day-to-Day Work of the Friskytter

Among the documents with the plans and orders regarding the Danish campaign of 1678, there is also a list of the distribution of responsibilities among the leading friskytter. The list is only written on a slip of paper and might be the personal notations of General Arensdorff. There is only a date on the back of the slip: 7th Ap.

⁶⁶² Jacobsen, p.164.

⁶⁶³ Fabricius III, p.209.

⁶⁶⁴ Åberg 1958, p.111. Since the majority of the Scanian refugees that can be traced through Danish church registers cannot be connected to either kind of certificate Fabricius doubled the number of refugees as a hypothesis... After the war Governor General Ascheberg wanted the exiles to return and tried to influence the king in this direction, but Charles XI stubbornly refused. When Ascheberg insisted that there too many abandoned farmsteads in Scania the king replied that he did not want unreliable elements in his border provinces so Ascheberg had better find some Swedish farmers for the abandoned farms. See also: Dübeck, p.92 who not only accepts Fabricius' calculations but also adds that during the first decade after the Scanian War another 5-10, 000 Scanians fled to Denmark and that the dimensions of this exodus should be enough to re-evaluate the classical Swedish thesis of a quick and smooth Swedification.

⁶⁶⁵ Lutgens to Herman Meyer 2nd June 1678, Indkomne breve, DRA: "...bitte weiter daß ich möchte eine gnädige ordre bekommen, wie ich mich darin verhalten solle, ob die Schönische leuthe Ihre Guth hollen wollen, undt wen sie kommen passiren mögen oder nicht..."

but the slip contains information that belonged to a later stage of the war: some of the names are crossed out and substituted with a cross and then a new name. We know that Casper Due and Wissmand died later than April 1678.

According to this document the “Troupen der freishützen” were distributed as follows in 1678:⁶⁶⁶

The district of Malmö (Malmøe lehn) – Captain Hans Severin

The district of Landskrona (LCrone lehn) – Jens Jensen

The district of Helsingborg (Helsingb. lehn)

-Captain Jens Nelsen Wisman⁶⁶⁷ †

-Lieutenant Peder Christoffersen⁶⁶⁸

Captain Peder Larsen: the hundred of Northern Åsbo (Nørre herred)

Major Eskel Nelsen⁶⁶⁹: the hundreds of Bjäre and Southern Åsbo (almost illegible: “B: oc søndre herred”)

Kristianstad and Blekinge (Cstad und bleking)

– Captain Simon Andersen

- Lieutenant Thue Krop

- Captain Mogens Mogensen (third name crossed out, possibly “dragon”)

-Cornet Anders Peersen

Captain Nels Andersen: Eastern Göinge (oster gønge herred)

Captain Har Haagen (Haagen the Hare) then on the line beneath this man’s real name is added: Aage Mogensen: Western Göinge (westre gønge herred)

Major Hindrich Aagesen Pflug

Lieutenant: Casper duwe (name crossed out) †

⁶⁶⁶ ”Troupen der freishützen”, 468 Krigskollegiet (Landetaten) 1660–1678, Uanbringelige registrerede sager, Nov-Dec 1678+Div: 85, DRA.

⁶⁶⁷ Jens Nielsen Wismand was alive and fully active on 8th July 1678. See his letter to Arensdorff from Stenestad from that date: attached to Pieter Sten’s letter to Arensdorff 8th July 1678, 468:71.

⁶⁶⁸ At the same time included on the “Lista der Volunteurs und reformirten officirer bey der shonshen Armeé” as a Lieutenant. See this list in the 468:85 collection, DRA.

⁶⁶⁹ Also included as responsible for the friskytter together with Peder Ibsen on the “Lista der Volunteurs und reformirten officirer bey der shonshen Armeé”. See: 468:85, DRA.

The everyday life of the friskytter went on much as before. In the sources we keep finding them in the same situations, carrying out the same tasks and using the same techniques. On 30th May 1678 the Depositiones simply reported that a group of sixty Swedish soldiers had fought with a friskytte unit at “Spange” and that twelve Swedes had been killed, many wounded and all their luggage left behind.⁶⁷⁰ Three days later it was reported that Peder Maagenßen Lent⁶⁷¹ of the Western Gønge friskytter had arrived on his own, bringing with him an intercepted letter that had been destined for Markaryd (“Marcherød” in the text). He also reported that the Swedes were expecting 4000 reinforcements, both cavalry and foot soldiers, and that eight days earlier a huge Swedish provisioning convoy had arrived from Loshult (“Losholdt” in the text). Furthermore, Lent reported that there were sixty Swedish horsemen stationed at Mölleryd (“Møllerød” in the text) and that on the preceding Friday, the friskytter had snatched thirteen horses from these Swedes while the horses were grazing right beside the mansion. According to Lent, people were saying that the Danes had reached Gothenburg and that Ascheberg would lead the Swedish troops against them.⁶⁷²

On the same day it was reported that Corporal Bent Hanßen (Jenßen?) of the Western Gønge friskytter had arrived with his unit. Obviously, Lent had preceded the rest of the troop. They now brought five Swedish letters with them that they had intercepted on the road between “the camp and Helsingborg”. Hanßen reported that in the hundreds of Western and Eastern Gønge the enemy had ordered that as many carts as possible were to be brought to the camp outside Kristianstad (Christianstad) and each cart should be accompanied by three men, each with an ox. People were saying that the enemy had attacked Kristianstad (Christianstad) two weeks earlier but that they were struck back, but Hanßen emphasised that that was only what was being said, there was no way to find out the truth because no peasants, carters or coachmen were

⁶⁷⁰ Depositiones und Kundschaften 1678, R, Krigskollegiet, Forhør over og Udsagn af Fanger, Overløbere og andre 1677–78. DRA. Pieter Sten also reported of this event in one of his letters to Arensdorff. See: Peedher Steensen to Arensdorff, 2nd June 1678, 468:71, DRA: “the friskytter were informed about the party that was stationed at knudstorp, namely Anckerspitz’s and they met them...by spange hohr ...and shot ten men to death, amongst them an officer...”

⁶⁷¹ This is possibly the man who also spelled his name “Peder Moensön” and is called Peder Monsen by Sörensson (p.66), and who was Aage “The Hare” Monsen Harloff’s brother. Peder Monsen’s served as a “cornet” under his brother in 1677 and by July 1678 he was a lieutenant. See: Letter from Peder Moensön to Friderich von Arensdorff, 10th July 1678, attached with a letter from Pieter Sten to Arensdorff 11th July 1678, 470 Generalkrigskommissariatet, 1674-1679 Indkomne Breve, 1674 Arnstorff-1679 Auerswald:1921.

⁶⁷² 2nd June 1678, Depositiones und Kundschaften, 1678, R., DRA. The same as; report 2nd June 1678, 468: 99 in which the man’s name is Peder Maagenßen Lent.

allowed into the Swedish camp. Three nights earlier three cannon shots had been heard from inside the city, but it was difficult to guess what that meant. Furthermore, people were saying that the enemy were going to try to assault the city with 7000 men.⁶⁷³

On 2nd June 1678 friskytter Jens Jacobss. and Jörgen Hanss. from Stenestad (?) left an oral report upon their arrival in Landskrona (Landskrone). They had left Stenestad the night before. Now they reported that the enemy were coming with 1000 cavalry and “1000 Swedish peasants from Sweden” and these were to be distributed among the Scanian peasants. They were to guard the roads and to “search out the friskytter in the woods”. Jacobsen and Hansen then reported that the peasants in their area that had been driven away from home were seeking refuge in the villages nearby, close to the noble mansions, and were leaving all their storages to the enemy, The two friskytter also reported that two weeks earlier their unit had beaten a “party” of 32 enemy cavalry at Broby.⁶⁷⁴

In June 1677 Captain Harlof reported that there was Danish cavalry 4 or 5 miles from the camp but “they want to stay with the friskytter and ride around the country: they are asking for a permit to gain entrance to the camp.”⁶⁷⁵ There still are several men who have been in hiding with the peasants all since the battle of Lund; they too would like to have a permit so that they could come to the camp.” This passage shows that it was not even considered strange that friskytter and regular cavalry worked close together; on the contrary the regular cavalry even preferred staying with the friskytter out in the countryside sometimes.

At this point, I would like to make clear that there were Scanians in regular regiments too. The Reverend John Wanngren has analysed the muster roll of the company of the Second National Regiment of Zealand (2. Sjællandske nationale Infanteriregiment) that was stationed at Västra Vram (Westre Wram) during the autumn and winter of

⁶⁷³ 2nd June 1678, Depositiones und Kundschaften, 1678, R., DRA. Possibly the same as dend 2 Juny, 468:99.

⁶⁷⁴ No signature (Harboe?): 2nd June (1678 written in the margin in another handwriting), DRA.

⁶⁷⁵ Depositiones, mense Junii 1677, no 508, DRA.

1676.⁶⁷⁶ Wanngren has concluded that out of 186 men, including officers, the vast majority hailed from Zealand as they were supposed to be, but nine can be proved to be Scanians and quite a few others could possibly have been Scanians. Furthermore, there were also a few soldiers from other parts of Denmark and Norway, three soldiers from Bohuslän, one from Marstrand, one from Varberg and one from Laholm. One of the lieutenants, Jean or Jehan Sallibert, was possibly French.⁶⁷⁷ To judge by the *Depositiones* reports the grazing of horses offered excellent opportunities for both deserters and friskytter. On 4th June 1678 a group of five Swedish soldiers of the Småland regiment were caught outside Malmøe while they were grazing horses.⁶⁷⁸ One of the main tasks of the friskytter was to ambush Swedish troops and convoys; to lay hands on their goods, interrupt the communication lines and strike terror into the hearts of all Swedes that showed themselves outside the Swedish enclaves. One of the most important tasks of the friskytter was also to prey on small groups of Swedes and naturally small parties of this kind were ideal objects. The Swedish troops in Malmö (Malmøe) included many Danish prisoners of war who had been forced into Swedish service and some of them managed to escape while on “grazing service”. Normally sixteen horsemen and some musketeers guarded the horses that grazed on the meadows on the other side of the moat.⁶⁷⁹ This time five Swedes were captured and brought into the Danish camp the day after and there they had to leave statements with the *depositiones* scribe. They were asked to report how many troops were gathered inside the city walls and how big the rations of food were for the soldiers and how much the soldiers earned. They all responded in detail. That same day five Scanian civilians were also brought to the Danish camp. Olle Nielsen and Jens Ander Stundwirt had been grazing horses with the Swedes. Olle Nielsen was reported as an inhabitant of Malmö (Malmøe), Jens Ander Stundwirt was a butcher, Peder Haagens worked as a groom (*Kriigmands Tiener*), Niels Oelsen was a burgher and glove-maker (*handskemager*) who had his son Mads Nielsen and his servant Jacob Jørgens with him. These latter three were caught in the middle of the night a

⁶⁷⁶ The rest of the regiment was posted on the island of Gotland. See: Wanngren (1991), pp.68-70. The 2nd National Regiment of Zealand was created in 1675.

⁶⁷⁷ In the latter case it was the matter of soldiers whose place of origin had a name that can be found both in Zealand and Scania, e.g., Ramløse and Torup. See: Wanngren (1991), pp.68-70.

⁶⁷⁸ *Depositiones*, DRA.

⁶⁷⁹ See: *Depositio* of 3rd July 1677 in which Nels Hansen of “Kiøge” reported of how he had made his way from his enforced Swedish service back to the Danish camp.

quarter of a Danish mile from the city walls and Oelsen had all his tools with him. Probably they had been trying to escape from the besieged city.

Peder Pedersen from “Sandbye” in Western Gønge was a peasant who had worked as a registered friskytte for some time but who then spied for the Danes from his home and eventually had to seek refuge (and a job as a carter) in the Danish enclave of (Landskrone). Only eight days before his arrival in Landskrona (Landskrone) in June 1678 he had carted food supplies from Växjö (“Wexsiøe” in the text) in Sweden to the Swedish camp in Scania. He promptly declared: “I know of a peasant who has come down here with the intention of spying for the enemy”.⁶⁸⁰ Pedersen himself had decided to leave his home when the Swedes ordered every parish to provide them with a certain number of men and oxen who could help them build palisades. Pedersen declared that he was a “free man” who would not obey such orders! Furthermore, he wanted to go to “Lands Crone” to look for one of his sons who was working as a groom in the army camp outside town. Now he was hoping that someone in “Lands Crone” would hire him as a carter. As further proof of Pedersen’s loyalty he stated that he had been a friskytte for a long time and that it could easily be certified.⁶⁸¹ I cannot see why we should think that Pedersen was a criminal? For all we know he was middle-aged man with a totally “normal” background, like many others that we come across in the sources; the Depositiones collection does not only tell us how the friskytter worked, but it also explains how and why some people actually became friskytter. On 4th June 1678 eight peasants from Blekinge (Bleging) arrived at the Danish camp. In their company were three soldiers from the Swedish Royal Lifeguards who had joined them on the island of Hanö (Hanöe) under the pretext that they wanted to come to “this land” (de vilde hid til landet). Two of the peasants declared that they would like to go to Copenhagen. Olluf Jörgensen and Haagen Nielsen declared that they would rather join the friskytter. Then there was Mogens Mogensen from Hoby (Hoby) who had been conscripted to a Swedish ship as a boatswain. The ship he was on was sunk by the Danes who set Mogensen free so that he could return home. Now he too wanted to join the friskytter. The next two ones, Clemmed Mogensen and Anders Biörnßen, wanted to take service “here in this

⁶⁸⁰ ”Wid ieg en bunde needgaen at wære her nedkommen i meening at bringe fienden kundskab.”

⁶⁸¹ 17th June 1678. Depositiones, DRA.

land” (tienze her paa landet). Finally, there was a man called Bunne Jenßen who wanted to stay “in this country” and make shoes.

The three lifeguards who arrived in the company of the eight peasants were classified as “Swedish renegades”. However, none of them were of Swedish origins. Jacob Delen was a Scotsman who had been a sergeant in the Danish army until he was taken prisoner by the Swedes during the battle of Landskrona (Landskrone). Jonas Suanton was also a Scotsman who had served the King of Denmark but had then ended up as a prisoner of war. Both Scotsmen claimed that the Swedes had maltreated them badly and that they had been forced to join the Swedish army. The third lifeguard was a German, Heinrich Wegner from Bremen who had been caught near Stettin and then brought to Stockholm where he had been forced to take service. All three of them wanted to travel to Copenhagen.

The Sack of Ystad (Ydsted)

On that same day (4th June), but further east, Danish troops under Major Holger Trolle arrived at Ystad (Ydsted) to collect war tribute from its inhabitants since the Swedes were using the harbour to ship in provisions for Malmö. At the very same time the Danish fleet was sighted, on its way into the harbour and Trolle renounced on his money with the following words: “May God help you, for I cannot.” It Admiral Niels Juel with his half of the Danish fleet who had been set the task of interrupting communications and transports of Swedish troops between Sweden, areas dominated by the Swedes and Pomerania and Rügen on the other side of the Baltic. The Danish sailors sacked the town for a whole day and night so that “it cannot be imagined what was left of it”.⁶⁸² According to Cronholm the sack went on for two or three days. He also reports that the town hall archives were thrown out from the windows but that parts of them were later retrieved.⁶⁸³ We know that the friskytter participated in the sack because Mayor Sivert Kofoed was chased out of his house by “a friskytte called

⁶⁸² Jacobsen p.165, Fabricius III, p. 160 who mentions that Lund too was to be burnt down if its inhabitants refused to evacuate it. See also: Bjurling in Kraft and Bjurling, pp.293-294. At the time Ystad (Ysted) counted 2000 inhabitants, which was about the same size as Helsingborg and consequently large enough to be a major Scanian town. See: Fabricius, III, p. 4 among the “Notes to the Introduction”. He based his notices on late 17th century Ystad (Ysted) on O. & G. Palme’s, *Släkten Palme*, (The Palme Family), from 1917, see especially Palme, vol. II, p.188.

⁶⁸³ Cronholm, p.333 and p.337. His sources are stated as: Riksdagsbesvär (Appeal to the Diet), 18th Maarch 1689. Sk. Comm.:s handlingar. Kammar=coll. archif. In the appeal to the diet of 1681 the representatives for the town of Ystad appealed for tax reductions sine they had first been subjected to extraordinary (war) taxation, billeting, and straying soldiers and then a sack that lasted for three days.

little Mads” and had to run down to the beach in his slippers, as he later complained to Copenhagen.⁶⁸⁴ Little Mads (Lille Mads) is a figure who is mainly known from legends and latter-day novels, in which he plays the role of one of the leading friskytte captains during the Scanian war and what legend claims is his rifle is today treasured in the Hovdala (ex-Howdale) museum. But he does not result in the muster rolls, and nobody seems to know for sure who he was. If it had not been for Erlandsson the snaphane catcher, Little Mads’s existence would have been doubted, but his last fight is described in detail in Erlandsson’s “Promemoria” and according to Erlandsson, Little Mads was a “Swedish dragoon”.⁶⁸⁵ And Sivert Kofoed seemed to have known quite well who little Mads was.

In the summer of 1678, the Swedish forces were laying siege to Kristianstad (Christianstad). At the same time the Swedish enclave of Helsingborg was in a perilous situation and Malmö (Malmøe) was in bad need of reinforcements. Nevertheless, the Swedish generals were reported to have declared that they would not hazard to send troops south or west. The reasons for this decision were three: 1) it would be too difficult to find means of subsistence, 2) the whole land sympathised with the Danes, 3) the “snaphaner” were getting stronger and would soon cause them more trouble than ever.⁶⁸⁶ The Swedes certainly saw the friskytter/snaphaner as a serious threat. A Hessian prisoner of war who had escaped from the Swedes reported that the Swedes were terrified of the friskytter who were causing them great losses.⁶⁸⁷

⁶⁸⁴ Fabricius III, p. 160 footnote 5. The quotation comes from an official complaint to King Christian V from the rich merchant Jakob Palme, mayor Sivert Kofoed and Peder Hansen Gade, 26th June 1678. They had escaped from Ysted on a ship that took them to Copenhagen. Fabricius places the letter in the “Krigsk. I.S.” collection. It is also quite interesting that Kofoed seemed to know quite well who the friskytte Little Mads was and that he used the term “friskytte” in his complaint although would have had all the reasons in the world to fob the man off as a “snaphane”. But it was obviously not politically correct to do so in Denmark at the time.

⁶⁸⁵ Sven Erlandsson, §3. That Little Mads was mentioned as a “Swedish” dragoon probably meant that he had served as a dragoon in a Swedish regiment. However, that does not say anything about his nationality, although it would indeed have been interesting to know what his ethnic origins were. In fact, a considerable part of the snaphaner had a background as “Swedish” soldiers which you were often enough called if you were in the Swedish army, whether you were a Dane or a Scotsman or a Stockholmer. There is a good chance he was from the south-east of Scania since the sources and legends about Little Mads centre on the modern-day Ystad-Österlen area and the friskytter often but not always operated in areas they knew well. However, there is also a possibility that he was an ethnic Swede because there were some ethnic Swedes who fought with the snaphaner.

⁶⁸⁶ Depositiones und Kundschaften, 11th June 1678: ”Kunde snaphanerne da mere end nogen sinde incommodere dennem”.

⁶⁸⁷ Depositiones, 17th June 1678, Bastien Gebbener: ”de giør dem stoor afbreck”.

The Danish archives contain several letters from desperate peasants who were asking for protection and compensation for what the King's troops were doing to them during this period of time. The whole village of Herrestad (then Harrestad or Harrested) in the south-east wrote to the king to let him know that first the regular troops had looted Ystad (Ydsted) then they had come to their village where they had taken away all their cattle. Then a party of friskytter had turned up and they had taken whatever money and valuables they could get hold of so that three poor men had been totally ruined. For this reason they supplicated the king that they might get some of their cattle back.⁶⁸⁸ Some seven weeks later Johanne Jensedatter from Skotthusa (Skuthuuße) in Färs (Fers) wrote to the king for exactly the same reason, except that her "poor old husband" had been so unlucky as to have been severely beaten by the visitors. First a group of soldiers had taken all the money they had, and then another group had turned up asking for cash. This second group might have been either regular soldiers or friskytter, Johanne was not sure. They only had pistols and carbines, not long guns, she explained. When Johanne and her husband told these men that they had given away what they had a week earlier the men beat her husband so badly that he might not be alive when she got back home. Then they took all their clothes, their copper and brassware and whatever else they liked. Johanne had gone to "Landzcrone" to ask for help and to beg the king to see to it that the villains were arrested and punished before they hurt other people; unfortunately, they were still around in her area.⁶⁸⁹

King Christian's Campaign

Meanwhile King Christian's army was approaching Kristianstad (Christianstad) in an attempt to break the Swedish blockade and everyone knew that the fate of the besieged town might depend on food supplies and on the accessibility of the roads.⁶⁹⁰ The friskytter were often given the task of guarding and burning bridges, a task quite characteristic of partisan and irregular troops: On 24th July 1678 Aage Mosen (Harlof) reported that he had burnt the Kumla (Kumle) bridge and to a house as well as to the Broby bridge the day before and that he and his men had been to the

⁶⁸⁸ Letter from the village of Harrestad to "Monsieur" (samptlige byemend udi Harrestad), 16th June 1678, I.B, DRA. Fabricius III, p.160 refers to this letter but makes no mention of its contents further than that it regards Danish outrages during that period

⁶⁸⁹ Letter from Johanne Jensedatter to the king, 24th June 1678, I.B., No: 475, DRA. Fabricius (III, p. 160, footnote 2) mentioned Jensedatter's letter as one of many letters of complaint of the behaviour of both Danish regular soldiers and that of the King's friskytter but makes no further comments.

⁶⁹⁰ Cf. Jensen, pp. 363–388. Fabricius III, pp. 166–170.

Hönjarum (Højnebro but also spelled: Hönnerumbs/Højnerum) bridge in order to burn it but the Swedes in the nearby fortress had prevented them from doing so by putting them under intense fire. It is quite clear from his report that he had had express orders to burn the last two bridges but not the first one. He explained that he had decided to burn the Kumle bridge because a Swedish “party” had ordered the peasants to reinforce it so that it became broader and stronger.⁶⁹¹

The Swedes were laying siege to the town of (Christianstad) and the Danish army under King Christian V had set out to liberate it, but eventually they had been constrained to halt their campaign at a short distance from the town, at Önnestad (Ønnested). The Danish army was in a horrid state and the cavalry would not be up to a direct confrontation with their Swedish counterpart, and besides, reconnaissance reported that there was no viable route past the Swedish encampments.⁶⁹² In case they could not get past those, it would also become unfeasible to face the Swedes in open battle. The generals now proposed different alternatives to confronting the enemy directly, since they knew their own army was too weak: War Councillor Herman Meyer advised that minor targets like the Swedish redoubt (temporary fortification works) and the Swedes that occupied the heights at Skepparslöv (Skibberslev) should be attacked instead. General Major Johan von Bülow, the Duke of Croy and General Major Hans Wilhelm von Meerheim agreed that open battle would be too hazardous but expressed no opinion on alternatives. Field Marshal Lieutenant Claudius Saint Paul felt they should accept Meyer’s line and attack “the heights” and so did Field marshal Lieutenant Gustav Wilhelm von Wedel who also stressed that they should try to cause the enemy as much damage as possible. General Friedrich von Arensdorff whose scouts had provided the information that made the king doubt in the first case, naturally enough supported this view and also said that the enemy should be harassed as much as possible from where they were. The other generals agreed that “parties” and “detachments” would be their only chance to weaken the enemy. Arensdorff claimed this strategy would perhaps incommode the enemy so much that they would not dare attack Kristianstad (Christianstad) or send troops to the Norwegian front.

⁶⁹¹ Aage Mogensen to Herr Generall Lütenant Arenstorp, Hestvede 24th July 1678, DRA. Referred to by Sörensson, p. 40 (Aage Monsen, I.S., No: 465). In this letter Aage “The Hare” called Arensdorff his “gracious lord and powerful patron” or “min Naadige Herre och mæctige Patron”.

⁶⁹² Jensen, p. 379. The scout that had provided the information was Lieutenant Pieter Sten who was classified as a “snaphane” by the Swedes.

It seems obvious from these discussions that the friskytter, or rather tactics that minor detachments and friskytter were most apt to carry out, constituted the Danish counter measure against a massive threat that they did not know quite how to fight: the increasingly modern Swedish army. In the *Exercier-Reglement für die Kaiserlich-Königliche Gränz-Infanterie* from 1808 the tasks of the irregular border troops were the following:

“die Bewegungen des Feindes zu erschweren, nicht aber seine geschlossenen Linien zu durchbrechen oder ihre eigenen Posten auf das äusserste und gegen überlegene Stärke zu verteidigen, oder sich gar davon zu entfernen, um den Gegner anzugreifen... Da also das Tirailiren... keinen entscheidenden Ausschlag geben, sondern nur zur Vorbereitung und Erleichterung desselben führen soll.”⁶⁹³

Other tasks included threatening the flanks of the enemy and camouflaging the major attacks. Naturally they were also expected to provide information about the position of the enemy and about their numbers and intentions.⁶⁹⁴

Meanwhile the upstart military commander Löwenhielm had been sent from the Norwegian front to Landskrona (Landskrone) where he was to head the troops that were posted there. Only four days after his arrival he wrote to the Danish king who was at Önnestad (Ønneste). He reported that he had received information that a “fairly strong” Swedish troop had set out from Malmö (Malmøe) the preceding night and had passed through “Lunden” (Lund). Löwenhielm now complained that he only had 46 dragoons (excluding officers) and that he needed reinforcements, preferably a party of three hundred dragoons so that he could set out for the Swedes and make his utmost to “forbid the Enemy (with God’s help) such behaviour.”⁶⁹⁵ He repeated the same request, with much the same motivation, in a letter to Friedrich von Arensdorff’s successor some time later, but obviously the authorities did not feel that his line should be followed, or maybe they simply did not have the possibility to send reinforcements.⁶⁹⁶ Löwenhielm frequently reported on the operations of “our friskytter” and he also mentioned other “parties” that set out against the Swedes and

⁶⁹³ Kunisch, p.16.

⁶⁹⁴ Kunisch, p.17: “die taktische Vorbereitung, Unterstützung und Sicherung der Operationen im großen.” Apart from the *Exercier-Reglement* Kunisch quotes F. F von Nicolai, *Die Anordnung einer gemeinsamen Kriegsschule*, Stuttgart 1781 and Georg Wilhelm Valentini, *Abhandlung über den kleinen Krieg*, Berlin 1820.

⁶⁹⁵ Löwenhielm arrived on 20th July 1678. See: Löwenhielm to the King from that very date, I.B, DRA. The quote is from Löwenhielm to the king, 24th July 1678.

⁶⁹⁶ Löwenhielm to Baron -, 14th August 1678, I.B, DRA. “Undt weill wier allhier eine Allzugerige und shwache Cavallerie haben, und nicht mehr alß 46 Reutter, dawon die helffte krank und sonst nicht viel taugen...”

the information that “Lieutenant Steen” alias Pieter Sten brought in. Steen was indeed a “snaphane” to the Swedes.⁶⁹⁷

Löwenhielm was not the only Dane to have been informed of the Swedish party that had set out from Malmö. Information about the enemy’s movements sometimes travelled fast. On 23rd July 1678 Jenssön had just recently been to the Danish main army camp to receive orders from Arensdorff and he now communicated that he had obeyed the general’s orders and had betaken himself and his “party” to Hörby where they had arrived on the day of writing (a Tuesday). Once there, Jenssön had been informed that a Swedish “party” had set out from Malmö (Malmøe) and that they were now at “Söndre Strøe” (modern-day Södra Strö). At this news, Jenssön and his men hurried to the Getinge (Giddinge) bridge in order to find out how strong this party was, and they discovered that there were sixty of them, armed with long guns and their commander was “Svend Erlands”⁶⁹⁸. Right then the Swedish party started moving again along the “bre leen” the broad road. They now dressed up as Danes and went around the area making a lot of enquiries; they enquired after “Lieutenant Petter Stens”⁶⁹⁹ whom they were particularly keen to see and sent their most heartfelt regards to Jens Jenssön, warning him to watch out for the “Swedish party”.⁷⁰⁰ The man “who was supposed to be their commander” then told the peasants that he was on his way to Landskrona (Landskrone) or Helsingborg. When the disguised Swedes came to the village of Effwne rödh (Everöd?) they bumped into one of Jens Jenssön’s friskytter, Niels (Niels) Pers⁷⁰¹, who had just been to Landskrona (Landskrone) with “the Lieutenant” (Pieter Sten) who was guiding around one of the King’s Lifeguards and now he had letters with him. Niels Pers did not realise they were Swedes because they were all wearing “Danish insignia”⁷⁰², Jenssön reported. Now, the Swedes shot at him, beat him over the head and stabbed him with a bayonet. Then they set out for the Hasla (Hasle) bridge where they met a group of farmers who were driving their oxen to Landskrona (Landskrone) but all the oxen were taken by the Swedes who then

⁶⁹⁷ See chapter on Pieter Sten.

⁶⁹⁸ Sven Erlandsson, the famous snaphane hunter. The text also says that they had “tre tremmer” with them, which possibly means “three drums” here.

⁶⁹⁹ Pieter Sten.

⁷⁰⁰ “...di sagde till bönderne hwor di komme at di helße Jens Jenßön Meget flittelig at hand skulle påße well op di Swenske partij...”

⁷⁰¹ Probably the man who is registered as Niels Pedersen Hiortleff in Jenssön’s muster-rolls. See: Röndahl, p.424.

⁷⁰² “...for di hafde alle dansk tegn på dem...”

continued in the direction of Risberga (Risse berge). Jenssön finally promised Arensdorff that he would send out two of his men to find out where the Swedish party were heading for that very same night. This letter reveals how intimately connected the snaphaner and the snaphane hunters were: Jenssön uses the term “party” to indicate both his own and Erlandsson’s units and both parties also seemed to be doing the same job, namely riding around the country trying to collect information about the enemy with sometimes dubious means but not without a mission i.e. to help their own king and country win the war. This letter also provides us with evidence that Sven Erlandsson was quite familiar with Pieter Sten’s and Jens Jenssön’s names and took for granted that the country folk in the area would know them in person. It also lets us know that Jenssön’s unit and Pieter Sten worked together.

Jens Jenssön’s reports to Arensdorff from this period indicate that at least he and his men were working very much in the same way as before, scouting and spying as best they could. On 29th July he reported the following:

“Today...I went with my unit to Hasle bridge, but I had sent two of my men reconnoitring to Giddinge bridge, when they came back there were two hundred Swedes from Malmö at Gudmandtorp, they were on their way towards hörbye...ps. today at 12 o’clock they were at Gudmandtorp.”⁷⁰³

A week later he wrote a similar report to Arensdorff, and closed his letter with a Christian V seal.⁷⁰⁴ This time he reported that a Swedish unit had been present in his area. The Swedes had come from the Swedish army camp, passed through Rörum (Rörumb) and went out to Hörby where they were at the time of writing, which was in the middle of the night. Another Swedish unit that had been heading towards Häggenäs (Hægenes) in the hundred of Frosta had also joined them. Jenssön had only just had the news and reported it straight away, or so he claimed. He did not seem aware that Kristianstad (Christianstad) had surrendered four days earlier.

Occasionally the friskytter undertook major military actions without the aid of regular troops. In June 1678 Aage Monsen and his men had expugned and destroyed the fortress at Broby. In August that year the friskytter laid siege to the Hönjarum (Høynebro) fortress and eventually forced the Swedes to capitulate. The Hönjarum siege started some time after Aage Monsen had failed to burn the nearby bridge and

⁷⁰³ See for example: Jens Jenßön to General Frederich von Arensdorff, 29th July (No: 30) and 8th August 1678, Indkomne breve, DRA.

⁷⁰⁴ 8th August 1678, Indkomne breve, DRA. The previous letter had a more ordinary seal with a pattern that unfortunately cannot be discerned today: it was *not* a Christian V seal, though.

while the Swedish and Danish armies were facing each other outside Kristianstad (Christianstad). When the Swedes had given up the following report was sent to Copenhagen:

“Accord between His Majesty’s Friskytter of Denmark and the Swedes at Høynebro fortress. When Captain Niels Anders. Had been waiting outside the fortress with his friskytter for 14 days , Captain Aage the Hare came to help him with one hundred men, bringing with him a trumpeter, whom he on 2 August made declare that if they wanted to surrender unconditionally or not then they could: then, since they had no more sustenance, they asked for the conditions, whereupon Captain Aage the Hare and the trumpeter rode over to them and asked that they should march out of the fortress with their rifles and then lay down their arms outside. Secondly, they should all be accompanied as prisoners to the Danish camp outside Christianstad.

P.S. Since the Swedes had no more sustenance and they saw that Captain Niels Andersen stood there ready with his three troops, and that 100 men would storm them, they had to surrender.

Actum Højnebro 2 August 1678

Aage Maansen Captain
of the Friskytter of Western Gønge

Niels Andersen Captain
of the Friskytter of Eastern Gønge⁷⁰⁵

It is very hard to find out to what degree the friskytter went into combat without the support of regular troops. They ambushed and captured Swedes, yes, but whenever there is fighting it becomes hard to separate regulars from irregulars because the combatants are described as “Danish troops” and “Swedish” troops.⁷⁰⁶

Kristianstad (Christianstad) was finally lost to the Danes on 4th August, and the whole of eastern Scania and Blekinge remained in Swedish hands. When Kristianstad (Christianstad) capitulated, the Danish commanders had fortunately remembered to stipulate an agreement in which native Scanians, civilians, soldiers and any other kind of combatants alike, would *not* be singled out from the other Danes, but could walk away with the rest of the survivors.⁷⁰⁷ The inhabitants of the surrounding district of Gønge were promised that they would receive permanent tax-exemption after the war if they continued to support the friskytter and stayed true to the Danish king.⁷⁰⁸ It should be noted that the Danish authorities asked of those who wanted to be considered true to their king to be true to the friskytter too. It would also be possible for those of the inhabitants who preferred to do so to go Landskrona (Landskrone) or Helsingborg and they would also receive some monetary assistance. The passage over

⁷⁰⁵ I.S., August 1678, No: 50. Also printed in Sörensson, p.43.

⁷⁰⁶ See for example the case of Simon Snaphane’s unit on p. 87. (Isac Ulf)

⁷⁰⁷ The Danes had demanded guaranteed security for all Scanians in Kristianstad (Christianstad) before surrendering. See: Jacobsen, p.177. Fabricius III, pp169-170.

⁷⁰⁸ Sörensson, pp. 52-53.

the Sound would be free for all those who preferred to go to Zealand or other parts of Denmark.⁷⁰⁹

In August Arensdorff issued an order that reads as follows:

“Im Nahmen und von wegen Ihr. Königl. May:tt. Wird der Herr General Major Bülau hiemit beordert **durch di Freyschützen anstecken und abbrennen zu lassen Ydsted, Trelleburg, Cimbershaufn und Skanöer** samt den da herum sich befindenden Früchten und Fourrage. Datum im Lager bey Rissberg den 9. August 1678.

F.von Arensdorff-

Item alle Böhte und Fahrzeuge zu ruinieren. Wie auch Schwanholm und Ouds Closter wie auch Söfwede und Krocholm.”⁷¹⁰

According to Fabricius, the background of this order was partly that the informers had told Arensdorff that the Swedish army were planning to draw down to the comparatively well-preserved Ystad (Ysted) area (‘den Ystedske vinkel’) to find provisioning. He also mentioned that Arensdorff had ordered that the land be ruined for the first time a little earlier that summer, by the time that Arensdorff might have started to realise that Kristianstad (Christianstad) would be lost to the Danes.⁷¹¹ There were also proposals in the King’s Council that the land in Scania be ruined so that a foreign army would not be able to maintain itself there. It should be stressed, in any case, that Arensdorff would certainly not have been authorised to issue an order of the kind without the approval of the king.⁷¹² Sadly enough friskytter and regular troops seem to have competed at who was the best at laying the land waste. Now the Danes would continue the work that the Swedes had already completed in Blekinge, Gønge and the Landskrona (Landskrone) area (where the countryside to a distance of 30 kilometres around the town had been laid waste by the Swedes). Apart from the above-mentioned towns and castles, Lund and Laholm (in Halland) were also burnt to the ground and so were most of the other castles and mansions. Malmö (Malmøe) was “safe” in the hands of the Swedes but had been severely damaged by bombardments and the long siege.

Martin Weibull claimed that the Scanians turned against the Danes around this time, according to him because it was only now that the friskytter first received official

⁷⁰⁹ Sörensson., p.53, footnote 1 in which he refers to: I.S., 1678 Aug., No:44, DRA.

⁷¹⁰ Sörensson, p.52, on which page he publishes this document in its entirety. It is referred to as: I.S.1678 Aug., No:42, DRA. Today it can be found under the following reference: 468 Krigskollegiet (Landetaten) 1660-1678 Uanbringelige registrerede sager, Nov-Dec 1678+ Div:85. See also: Weibull, p.73 and Fabricius (III, p.170) also refer to its contents in detail.

⁷¹¹ Fabricius III, p.170.

⁷¹² For all that Arensdorff was fired and court-martialled shortly afterwards.

support from the king: “the Danish cause was lost to the better part of the inhabitants of the Scanian provinces when it (Denmark) recognised the snaphane-feud as a legitimate war”.⁷¹³ Which Weibull, quite *wrongly*, considered to have happened with the decree of 9th August 1678. In reality, the king had authorised the operations of both snaphaner and friskytter from the beginning of the war (as long as they obeyed his orders, but in that sense they were no different from other soldiers).⁷¹⁴ Weibull seems to have misunderstood the very essence of the “snaphane feud” in that he considered it as bands of outlaws on the rampage that had little to do with the Scanian War in itself. He failed to see that it is extremely unlikely that there would have been any kind of snaphane or friskytte “movement” at all if not for the Danish king. As in the rest of the official Swedish discourse from the time of the Scanian War until Weibull’s own day he took for granted that the snaphaner were irresponsible knaves if not outright evil and that they did not represent the Danish state. It was *certainly not* the snaphaner/friskytter who wanted to burn down Scanian towns and villages for their own pleasure and who were then allowed to do so by the king, but rather the king who agreed to resort to a strategy that had long since been discussed in the Danish War Council and that the friskytter together with other light detachments were to effectuate it.

Autumn and Winter 1678

Among the reports from the war theatre, we also have a number of testimonies that were transcribed in Copenhagen. People who had escaped or who had been ransomed from the Swedes were interviewed when they got to safe ground in Denmark. A short report, signed Hidenborg, from 20th October 1678 tells of two women who had managed to get to the capital after having been prisoners in Halmstad for three weeks, but who had been released on 15th of that month.⁷¹⁵ They reported that there were very few soldiers left in Halmstad but that many sick and wounded dragoons were coming in. The two women then declared that the Swedes were complaining that “they could not manage to get food supplies sent over to their army camp because of

⁷¹³ Weibull, Martin. *Samlingar till Skånes historia*, 1871, p.73.

⁷¹⁴ I felt it important to include the background of Arensdorff’s orders from 9th August 1678; this information is relevant for the study of the operations of the friskytter since they were co-operating with regular troops on the orders of their superiors on this: that of ruining the land in order to make the enemy starve.

⁷¹⁵ Depositiones, Hidenborg 20th October 1678, Copenhagen. DRA.

the Danes and the friskytter.” Two of the latter were “broken on the wheel” the day before the ladies came to Halmstad, consequently around 20th September.

Orders were passed from the Army Board to the district governors who in their turn were supposed to pass these orders on to particular captains of the friskytter, either in person or through go-betweens like War Commissary Jens Harboe. During the winter of 1678-79 most friskytter did not go to Zealand. Instead, the governor of the Helsingborg district (amtsmand) Owe Rommel organised winter-quarters for them. On 1 November 1678 Rommel reported that a group of friskytter from Blekinge had arrived the preceding day and that they wanted to stay in Helsingborg during the winter. At the same time, he reported that a group of approximately 100 friskytter from Northern Åsbo (Aasbo) and Göinge (Gønge) had been assigned winter-quarters in some border parishes.⁷¹⁶ Five days later Rommel received orders from Copenhagen that he should provide Niels Andersen, Aage Monsen Harlof, Peder Laursen, Eskild Nielsen and all their men with winter quarters in the Helsingborg area. They should be assigned quarters as close to the enemy lines as possible.

At the same time the governor of the Landskrona (Landscrone) district, Knud Thott, received the same orders regarding Hendrik Dreyer, Peder Christophersen, Anders Pedersen, Simon Andersen, Matz Oelsen and Hans Severin with their men.⁷¹⁷ The friskytter that found winter-quarters in the districts of Landskrona (Landscrone) and Helsingborg were assigned a monthly pay of 5 *slettedaler* to be exacted from the peasants.⁷¹⁸ It is the internal communication lines of the Danish administration and army that are of importance here, and how the Danish authorities tried to solve the practical problems that arose in connection with the friskytter. The winter quarter orders are interesting in that they connect the friskytter captains to particular areas and that makes it easier to map the whereabouts of the different units during the course of the war.

During the winter of 1678-79 the friskytter had to draw ever closer to the Danish fortresses at Landskrona (Landscrone) and Helsingborg. On 4th October 1678

⁷¹⁶ Sörensson, p.53. He refers to: Rommel to the Board of the Army (General Commissariat), 1st November 1678, I.B., Rommel, DRA.

⁷¹⁷ Lit.D, quoted by Sörensson, p.53.

⁷¹⁸ I.B. Levetzow. 9 January 1679. They seem to have tried to squeeze out more than that from the peasants. Sörensson, p.53.

Captains Aage Mosen of the Western Gønge Friskytter and Peder Lawritzen (Laursen/Lauridsen) of the Northern Aasbo Friskytter wrote to Arensdorff to ask for winter quarters away from north-eastern Scania that had become too devastated and too dangerous for them to operate in. They explained that they had fought His Majesty's enemies with all their "might and force" and that they had tried to do good to their fatherland so that it could return to its former glories under the Danish Crown as of old, but they feared that they would not be able to hold their stand because the whole area had been laid waste and looted.⁷¹⁹ At the end of October 1678 seven hundred friskytter, mainly from the Gønge area, sought refuge in Helsingborg because they could not hold their stand anymore: they declared themselves unable to hold back the enemy in the northeast. District governor Owe Rommel had to provide for them and found winter quarters for them in the Rosendal area.⁷²⁰ This information is important since it tells us that at least these friskytter felt that they were losing the war. Furthermore, they did not turn up in the company of regular army units or with orders to betake themselves to Helsingborg (as far as we understand from Fabricius who based his information on a letter from general Lähndorff to Christian V that is supposed to be in the War College in Scania Collection. Naturally, by the end of October it was time to find winter quarters, but these troops seemed to have given up and it seemed as if they felt they had been left on their own to keep the enemy at bay in the northeast.

⁷¹⁹ Aage Moensen Capitein and Peder Laßen Capitein to the King, 4th October 1678, Indkomne Breve, DRA. "...eders Kongl: Mayts: troo undersaatter och frijskytter ere aff eders Kongl: Maytt: och hans Mayts: högt betrodde herrer ordineret, tijd effter anden oß til Armadien at indstille som wij och effter wor skyldighed, aff yderste fomue effter kommit haffuer, sampt med all wor magt och krafft, sögt eders Kongl: Mayts: fiender, och federne landet till nötte igien at komme i sin gammel formue under rette Danmarchs Crone, och der offuer sat all wor lifff och timmelig welfært i störste fare, sosom en deel der aff fienden erapped haffuer, maattet fornemme... thi om fienden oß skulle ertappe bliffue wij for woris giorde tienniste imod woris arffue Rige, aff dennem ille belönnede." "Your Majesty's faithful subjects and Friskytter have been ordered time and again by Your Majesty and Your Majesty's highly most esteemed lords, to betake themselves to the Army and we have obeyed (these orders) as is our duty to the utmost of our might, and with all our might and force we have set on Your Majesty's enemies, and have tried to be of gain to the fatherland so that it could return to its old well-being under the Crown of Denmark, and moreover we have put our lives and earthly well-being at the greatest risk, as some who were caught by the enemy have experienced...since if the enemy should catch us then we will be ill paid by them for our services for our hereditary Kingdom." Fabricius (III, p.172) quotes a few words from this letter. Note that to Mosen and Lauridsen the "fatherland" was Scania. As Fabricius (III, p.226.) pointed out it was very common in early modern Denmark to speak of the regions of Scania/the Scanian provinces, Zealand, or Jutland as the "fatherland".

⁷²⁰ Fabricius III, p.172.

At the same time as the Danish authorities tied the friskytter closer to the regular army they also drew an even neater line between them and the surrounding peasant communities. Sthen Jacobsen for one complained of “the knaves” that oppressed the farmers and who refused to join the regular army although the district governor of Helsingborg (Rommel) wanted them to do so. The snaphaner treated the farmers badly and then the farmers betrayed them, and so Jacobsen observed more snaphaner than ever were caught by the Swedes. He also concluded that the Swedes were treating them worse than ever:

“When the Swedes got hold of some snaphaner during this winter, then they first tortured them gruesomely, burnt them under their feet with glowing iron, and then inserted a skewer into their bottoms and out from their noses; after that they nailed them to a tree with nails through both hands, above their heads, and let them hang like that until they died.”⁷²¹

According to Sthen Jacobsen it was only around this time that the Danish authorities tried to organise the friskytter more strictly and attach their forces to regular regiments. In Jacobsen the nexus escalation of violence-development of the friskytte corps is obvious. To the Swedes the dimensions and the force of the snaphane movement was a complete surprise and something they did not know quite how to fight. They had very limited experience of guerrilla warfare.⁷²² Consequentially but not uncharacteristically of states that are faced with that sort of threat, the Swedes responded with an (in that context) unheard of degree of violence. In their turn, the Danish authorities tried to protect and “domesticate” the friskytter through ever closer ties to the regular army. Reverend Jacobson pointed this out while the war was still in course, but no one seems to have taken notice of his conclusions.

District governor Rommel in Helsingborg sent out an order that stated that all “snaphaner” in the district should meet up by the Kvidinge (Quidinge) bridge for general muster on 6th December 1678.⁷²³ Mayor Falch Larsen went to the assembly place with a guard of 30 cavalry and ordered the 500 “snaphaner” that had gathered there that they should swear an oath of loyalty and accept four standards. Jacobsen reported that the “snaphaner” replied that they did not mind swearing the oath but they would not accept the standards. Nor did they want to be commanded by regular

⁷²¹ Jacobsen, p.202.

⁷²² See also: Lars Ericson Wolke, p. 109 and p.180.

⁷²³ Jacobsen, p.201. Jacobsen always called the friskytter “snaphaner”. I doubt that Rommel used this term himself, if for no other reason then because the friskytter would not have come to the muster if he had called them snaphaner. Fabricius mentions this episode in Vol.III: p.176.

officers because they already had their own ones. The sources do not tell us much about this episode. The same episode is obviously mentioned in a letter from the Duke of Croy to the Danish king from December 1678: the duke reported that Rommel had called all the friskytter within a radius of 30 kilometres (3 mil) to a meeting where they would be asked to swear an oath of loyalty and to accept an “official standard”. Croy himself had sent out 30 cavalymen to the meeting.⁷²⁴ As Sörensson has pointed out it is doubtful if Jacobsen’s version is entirely correct. A muster-roll of Eskeld Nielsen’s company from July 1679 mentions a previous muster at Kvidinge (Quidinge) and so it must be assumed that the muster did take place after all.⁷²⁵ All other sources prove that the friskytter/snaphaner were extremely keen on Danish flags and banners, but then Rommel might have offered them regimental standards at Kvidinge (Quidinge), not red and white Dannebrog flags, the sources are not clear on this point. In the same manner it was normally the case that friskytter/snaphaner begged Copenhagen for officers from the regular army.⁷²⁶

The Kvidinge (Quidinge) muster of 1678 remains a problematic issue. Jacobsen took for granted that everyone would understand the implications of what he meant but since he wrote at the time of the events and we live today, things have changed, and it is not quite clear what was implicated by wanting to give the snaphaner four standards and officers. Other sources state that regular officers were sent out at other times without major problems. Some officers oscillated between being registered as regular or irregular (Nicolaus Hermansen, Svend Poulsen, Pflug etc.) Nor is it clear to us why the muster at Kvidinge (Quidinge) should have been necessary when muster-rolls were the rule and not the exception for those who wanted to count as friskytter. Sörensson doubted Jacobsen’s version since he could not understand what the problem was to the friskytter. I think that is an important point: namely that it is hard to see today what the problem was! We have ample evidence of regular officers that were accepted by the snaphaner, and some evidence of snaphaner that craved for

⁷²⁴ Croy to the king, 16 December 1678, I.S., No:175. Sörensson, p. 54.

⁷²⁵ Sörensson, p.55. Refers to muster roll and letter from “Edskell Nielsen”, Pehr Nielsen Flink and Olle Nielßen Flink, 10th July 1679, Fortegnelser og Ruller over Friskytterne: Skaane og Bleking 1677-80, PK nr1843-, DRA. “...herforuden findis nogen som siden sidste munstring ved quidinge, Companiet hafr entviget, dem formodis ved neste Munstring sig igien skall instille...” (...furthermore there are a few who have absconded since the last muster at Quidinge, but they are expected to present themselves again at the next muster...”

⁷²⁶ See e.g., Depositiones, Nels Persen’s report, 26th June 1677, DRA that is also mentioned on p.76 of this thesis.

Danish flags. I meant to underline that there is something that we do not quite understand that was implicated by Jacobsen's text. Fabricius implies that it was an attempt to absorb these friskytter into the regular army and that the flags were regimental banners. Which might be an answer. But as he himself admits, only a short time later part of the friskytter were absorbed into the regular army anyway.

Conclusions

At the beginning of this section, I tried to stress the uncertainty of the situation that prevailed during early 1678 and how the reports from the Landskrona (Landskrone) area continuously talked of spies, Swedish destruction of villages and planned mass deportations. Those were fears reported to the Danish authorities or by representatives of the Danish state like Jens Harboe. As is also evident from the sources, there were spies *on* both sides and sometimes spies that worked *for* both sides, and if the Swedes laid waste the Landskrona (Landskrone) area and the borderlands, then the Danes did their best in other regions. Nevertheless, the tone in most Danish sources from 1678 is subdued. The friskytter Aage Monsen (Harlof) and Peder Lauridsen officially resigned their task in the borderlands since it had become too much for them to try to hold the enemy at bay. They did not seem to believe that their fatherland (Scania) would ever return to the Danish Crown again. At the same time the authorities tried to "domesticate" and protect the friskytter through the institution of ever closer bonds to the regular army. In this section I have also tried to describe how the Danish authorities actively employed friskytter, Croats and detachment warfare in general to a higher degree as the "normal" war went wrong for them. Arensdorff who propagated a strategy based on "party" warfare and on destroying the enemy's chances to live off the land, was the leading man until shortly after the fall of Kristianstad (Christianstad). The fact that the friskytter/snaphaner played an ever more notable role in Scania at the time was consequently not the matter of the land being taken over by bandits but a policy that was not only sponsored, but planned, by the Danish government, as is evident from the discussions in the War Council. As was noted by contemporaries like Sthen Jacobsen, the Swedes responded with increasingly violent methods against the "snaphaner", whoever they were.

The End of the War

“It is obvious to the eye that God has totally abandoned the snaphaner...”
Letter from Georg Hindrich Lybecker to the king, 17th September 1679⁷²⁷

Introduction

This section deals with how the Danish government policies continued to give weight to the *petite guerre* as an efficient means to, at least, hold the enemy at bay, at the same time as there was a series of Swedish executions of well-known Friskytte officials. The end of the war also meant that the Friskytte Corps was officially dissolved, and, in this section, I have also analysed how the Danes set about that task.

1679

The Swedish newssheets continuously published notices like the following: “Today a corporal of the snaphaner had his tongue ripped out, both hands cut off and the sign of the gallows branded into his forehead and then he was sent back to his mates”⁷²⁸ or “Two Snaphaner were punished on Monday. One of them had his bones crushed and was then while the other one was put on an iron skewer while he was still alive, they both lived until the evening...”⁷²⁹

In February 1679 the Swedish colonel-lieutenant and feared snaphane catcher Rebinder who was stationed at Tunbyholm (Tundbyholm) in the south-east had caught a whole company of snaphaner: in the newssheets it was claimed that twenty had been killed and eight were made prisoners, among them “an old captain called Sören who had been their leader.”⁷³⁰ The old captain was almost certainly Captain Severin. A week later the same newssheet reported to its Swedish readers that nineteen snaphaner were going to be executed at Vanneberga (Vannebjerg) that same day; among those were Captain Sören (Severin) and his German lieutenant who admitted to having murdered ten people and to have had mercy on eleven others. Among the snaphaner was also a boy of thirteen or fourteen who had admitted to having killed two people: “There are no words for the cruelty of these people.” On

⁷²⁷ Hazelius, p.189.

⁷²⁸ The *Post Tijdender* 23rd January 1678, quoted by Edvardsson III, p. 194 and by Röndahl, 1996, p.265. This event is mentioned in a court register in the Swedish National Archives (RA ÄK:65a): two other peasants that were charged on the same occasion with having participated in snaphane activities were released. The existence of this document was kindly put to my notice by Dr. Jens Lerbom.

⁷²⁹ The *Mercurius* 10th April 1678, “En av dem rådråkades och steglades levande, den andre sattes jämväl levandes på en järnstör, bägge levde de intill aftonen sent.” quoted by Edvardsson III, p.195 and Röndahl, 1996, p.267.

⁷³⁰ The *Mercurius*, report from Kristianstad, 8th February 1679, quoted by Edvardsson, III, p.196.

23rd February the readers were told that several of these snaphaner had been executed at Åhus (Aahus/Aus):

“Last week the already mentioned captain and lieutenant of the snaphaner, together with several snaphaner, were impaled and their feet nailed to the stake, two were put alive on the racks, three were decapitated and then put on the racks. One of the captains was buried in a church but our men had him exhumed and brought to Åhus where his body and the coffin were put on two racks.”⁷³¹

This passage should be compared to Svend Erlandsson’s account of how Little Mads was defeated posthumously in his “Promemoria”:

“The snaphaner took him (Little Mads) and buried him at Blentarp, but Sven Erlandsson exhumed him and had him transported to Åhuus, where he was put on the racks in his coffin, once the lid had been opened and thrown away”.⁷³²

Unfortunately, there are no dates in the “Promemoria”. However, Jens Lerbom has checked the court registers in the Swedish National Archives and confirms that the “exhumed” snaphane was Little Mads. Moreover, the court records state that “only” eight of the eighteen (or nineteen) snaphaner were condemned to death. In fact, the newsheet only mentions eight executions expressly, including that of the already dead Little Mads.

On 27th March 1679 the war commissary in Helsingborg received an order that stated that Scanians should be employed in the regular army (now that the friskytter corps was no longer necessary).⁷³³ The Danish policy on this issue fluctuated during the Scanian War: there were always Scanians among the regular soldiers but during some periods new Scanian recruits were directed to regular regiments, during other periods they were encouraged to join the friskytter. Individual examples of this are presented by Hans Severin’s and Jacob Jörgensen Wesseltoft’s careers. Severin was a professional soldier with long Swedish service behind him: he was given command over the friskytter in the entire district of Malmö “lehn”. Jacob Wesseltoft was enrolled in the regular army but during at least part of the war he made part of a special operations unit that qualified as “snaphaner” according to the Swedish standards.⁷³⁴

Some time afterwards Rommel was ordered to call all the friskytter in his district and Gønge to a general assembly in which they would be offered positions in the regular

⁷³¹ The *Mercurius*, 23rd and 28th February 1679, quote from 28th February, quoted by Edvardsson, III, p.196.

⁷³² Sven Erlandsson’s “Promemoria”.

⁷³³ Sörensson, p.56. The Board of the Army (General Commissariat) to the king, 19th April 1679. Lit.E, DRA.

⁷³⁴ See the section on Jacob Wesseltoft in this thesis.

army. On 8th April 1679 Owe Rommel replied that he was expecting a large group of friskytter that he would be able to send over to the regular army, but only if they were offered positions as dragoons or in the cavalry or possibly in the fleet. They refused to serve in the infantry. In June Rommel's friskytter were sent over to Elsinore where they were mustered and provided with lodgings.⁷³⁵ The authorities tried to ship as many of the friskytter as possible over from Scania to Zealand although no one seemed to know how they should best be employed after the war. When the new bishop of Münster refused to let his fearsome troops stay in Danish service it was proposed that the friskytter and the Croats take their place. Schwanewedel, Pieter Sten and other detachment combatants continued a rather fierce fight throughout the summer of 1679. But the Swedes were hunting the "snaphaner" down at a terrifying pace. Already in February Captain Severin was captured west of Ystad (Ystedh), court-marshalled and tortured to death. At the end of July Major Hendrik Friderich Dreyer ended his days in much the same manner.⁷³⁶ The muster roll of the Bleging Company from March 1680 listed 28 men under Captain Hanns (Hannis) Bentsen Gammelstrup. At the end of the list a short notice is added: "...out of my company a number of 34 have been killed by the enemy and are now lying on the racks and wheels." The list was signed by Captain Bentsen himself. He survived the war and settled in Denmark.⁷³⁷

There was another company from the Blekinge (Bleging) area: that of Captain Jens Keldsøn. At an early stage of the war Hanns Bentsen served under Keldsøn but later he was allowed to form his own company. Whereas Bentsen's men operated in Blekinge (Bleging), Keldsøn's men were sent over to the island of Bornholm.⁷³⁸ Nevertheless Keldsøn's men were no more fortunate than Bentsen's: in 1677 the muster-roll listed 60 men. Two and a half years later their numbers counted 25. A brief explanation was added underneath: "30 men killed by the Swedes". The other muster rolls generally do not tell us of the fate of the friskytter.

⁷³⁵ Fabricius III, p.176. Sörensson, p.56.

⁷³⁶ For Severin see: Johnsson, p.183, Sörensson, p.56, Edvardsson III, p.195, Røndahl, 1996, p.314. For Dreyer see: Sörensson p.56. Jens Lerbom has kindly informed me that according to a letter from Sperling to the Swedish king that is to be found in the Swedish National Archives, Dreyer was executed on the Saturday following 24th July 1679, in Malmö.

⁷³⁷ Fabricius, III, p.216 and p.242.

⁷³⁸ The place where most of the survivors settled after the war. The language in the villages of Gudhjem and Tejn where they settled is still influenced by the Blekinge/Bleging dialect.

Major Dreyer's company counted 20 men when it was first registered in October 1677, 41 one month later and only 12 in 1679.⁷³⁹ By then first Hans Severin, then Dreyer had been impaled by the Swedes. Out of the other Captains of the friskytter we know that Tage Bøg was caught by the snaphane-catchers and shot on the spot.⁷⁴⁰ Wissmand died. Casper Due was impaled. Hans Engelsen was shot. Mogens Dragon died fighting. Little Mads fought Erlandsson's men on his knees until they sabred him down and Captain Severin was tortured to death. They both tried to fight to death because they knew surrendering would mean a fate that was much worse than dying. Some of these events would have remained legends if they had not been corroborated by Erlandsson's "Promemoria".⁷⁴¹

In Landskrona (Landskrone) the situation was even more difficult. The Danish district governor Knud Thott reported that hardly any friskytter at all had come to town to register with the regular army. Perhaps because Thott was not on particularly good terms with Captain Simon. Thott was forever complaining about Simon Andersen's behaviour. Andersen in his turn kept complaining about Thott. According to Andersen he and his 160 friskytter had not received any support at all during the winter months so that their horses had become unusable.⁷⁴² Thott wanted to force Andersen's obstinate men to enlist in the regular army but feared that instead they would beg the enemy for parole. In the end Thott only saw to it that all the friskytter were registered and then they were assigned quarters in the hundreds of Albo and Järrestad on the opposite side of Scania. Naturally Andersen's 160 men could not be expected to keep the Swedish army at bay on their own in that area, which Thott must have known.⁷⁴³

⁷³⁹ These variations were quite normal. Towards the end of the war the muster rolls grew shorter for various reasons: those who could had returned to their normal lives in Scania, others had already found other occupations on the other side of the Sound, yet others, like Dreyer himself, got killed during the last, violent anti-snaphaner operations.

⁷⁴⁰ Tage Bøg had been to a wedding at Kronovall (then Kronovold) Castle and was on his way home alone. Erlandsson reported that he was very drunk and riding asleep on his horse so they could simply shoot him at point blank. Little Mads participated in a battle between Erlandsson and 500 (?) snaphaner but was surrounded by a group of Swedes when his horse was shot. Little Mads was shot through the leg but fought on with his sword on his knees and refused to yield so that Erlandsson's men had to kill him. He was buried in the churchyard at Blentarp, but the Swedes dug the corpse up and put it on racks inside the coffin. According to legend his horse was shot dead under him so that he fell to the ground and dropped the key to the lock of his gun (nøglen til hjullåsen). He had been shot through both his legs so that he had to stand on his knees and shoot as fast as he could while he pulled the wheel of his gun with his teeth. This version of the legend is reported by Jarnbjer, p.93.

⁷⁴¹ For the "Promemoria", see also p. 31 of the introduction and pp. 122 and 153-154 of this chapter.

⁷⁴² Merheim supported Andersen against Thott and saw to it that his reports were read by the king.

⁷⁴³ Fabricius III, pp.176-177. Sörensson, pp.57-58.

In July 1679 the Swedish newssheets reported that the snaphaner in Scania were still growing stronger and that they had occupied a country house near Kristianstad (Christianstad) where they had killed three of the six soldiers that had been stationed there but they had spared the lives of the other three. They were laying siege to another mansion in the surroundings. The commander was Major Harlof whose troops were estimated to about 400. Fortunately, the snaphaner in the Blekinge region had been defeated and Major Lybecker was offering them to take service in his regiment instead.⁷⁴⁴ In August Captain Casper Due was betrayed by his own men and consigned to Lybecker who was pleased to have “that ferocious murderer and captain of the snaphaner “Casper Dufwa” in his hands. Lybecker declared that he would never have been able to catch Due on his own and that he would see to it that Due would meet his end very soon.”⁷⁴⁵ A Swedish newssheet reported as follows:

“Today a captain of the snaphaner called Kasper Dufwa, of the nation a Polack, and with him another snaphane, who confessed that he had committed several murders with his captain, have suffered their well-deserved punishment.”⁷⁴⁶

On 20th September 1679 King Christian decided that it was no longer necessary to provide the friskytter with lodgings since their services were no longer needed. Those who wanted to stay in Denmark should be allowed to do so. If they were willing to take over abandoned farmsteads, they would be allowed three to four years of tax-exemption and they would also be provided with as much wood as they needed. Else they would receive 2 *rigsdaler* on leaving.⁷⁴⁷

By this time, it was becoming evident that the Danes were losing their battle. In his book on the development of the military central administration in Denmark from 1660 to 1763, O. Kyhl claimed that by the end of the Scanian War, the state of Denmark

⁷⁴⁴ The *Mercurius*, 31st July 1679, Swedish Royal Library.

⁷⁴⁵ Letter from Lybecker to King Charles XI, 19th August 1679, SRA, quoted by Edvardsson, p.125. Lybecker declared that Due and his men had murdered at least 70 people, among them many of the king’s lifeguards (drabanter). It was “the peasants and six of his own snaphaner” who had betrayed him.

⁷⁴⁶ The *Svenska Ordinarie Post-tijdender*, Kristianstad 4th September 1679, Swedish Royal Library, quoted by Edvardsson, p.197. Due’s background is very unclear. Røndahl (p.276) claims that he was a Danish nobleman. According to legend he had a cottage on the grounds of Vanås castle.

⁷⁴⁷ Sörensson, p.58 footnote 1. Kong.ord. (Royal ordinances), 20th September and 26th September 1679. Lit.N, DRA.

would have collapsed for lack of funds if peace had not been concluded so quickly.⁷⁴⁸ Seen from this point of view, the Danish authorities were constrained to accept a peace offer at any cost. Kyhl also emphasised that the Army Board was dissolved by a royal decree from 11th December 1679 and that the king blamed the financial and military disaster on institutions like the Army Board. Henceforth he would manage all military matters with the help of a few trusted collaborators.

The peace treaty that was signed at the end of September 1679 said nothing about the friskytter. Some time later Aage Mosen Harlof who had been nominated commander-in-chief of the friskytter, wrote to the Danish king to plead his and his men's cause because in Scania he and his men were being tracked down like "wild and mute beasts".⁷⁴⁹ In his letter he declared that they had tried to persuade the "gentlemen of the Army Board (General Commissariat)" to prolong their winter-quarters and payment since all eight companies had come over to Zealand on direct orders with their whole equipment and horses. After four months they had nothing left of the provisions they had brought with them, and all their savings were left behind in Scania and they had received news that the Swedes had taken it all. For the sake of their loyalty to their king and dear fatherland they had all become "freaks and exiles" that no one would take in or help.⁷⁵⁰ Harlof then continued to explain that they had all left their wives, children, kin, houses, and money in an extremely rude manner. All of these persons were now living in great poverty and some of them were being arrested and executed in gruesome ways: "We did all this and suffered it all in the hope that we would be saved from the Swedish yoke and in times of grace be rewarded by or gracious King."⁷⁵¹ Harlof added lists of all his remaining men to the letter. The sheriff (ridefoged) of the district of Kronborg (Hamlet's castle outside Elsinore) complained to the authorities that the friskytter were running wild in his area and he wanted to be "delivered" from them. Towards the beginning of March 1679, he received passports

⁷⁴⁸ O. Kyhl, *Den Landmilitære Centradministration 1660-1763*, (The Military Central Administration on Land), vol. I., Rigsarkivet, Copenhagen 1975, pp. 236-238.

⁷⁴⁹ Sörensson, (p.63) quotes Major Harlof: "vilde och umælende Bester". A translation of this letter can be read at the end of this dissertation.

⁷⁵⁰ Sörensson, p.63.

⁷⁵¹ Aage Harlof to the King, 18 November 1679, I.S., No:413, DRA See: Sörensson, p.60.

and payment for the 500 friskytter that dwelled in the Kronborg district.⁷⁵² That was the official end of the king's friskytter corps.

Conclusions:

In this section I have tried to analyse the relationship between the friskytter and the authorities during the last phase of the war. I have also put it into relation with what Jacobsen had to say about the transfer of the friskytte units to the regular army, and the fact that Rommel eventually had some success with this whereas Thott did not quite manage it: which Sörensson and Fabricius both imply might have been because Thott and Simon Andersen failed to co-operate. There is no such thing as “*the* role of the snaphaner/friskytter during the Scanian war”. Their role was in constant transformation during the whole early modern era and although it crystallised towards the latter part of the Scanian War, their position remained unclear, just as it became a much-disputed issue what should come of the friskytter after the war. The King's Friskytter Corps were just one of many outcomes of the so-called snaphane movement, which in its turn was intrinsically intertwined with the peasant troops and the “land storm” men that the king's emissaries had trained for generations. The war itself formed the multiple roles of the Friskytte Corps and their non-registered assistants. If the northeast had not been lost during the first months of 1677 then the Danes might have preferred going on working with more numerous peasant troops instead of opting for friskytte troops...if the Swedes had not decided on a course of such harsh reprisals and criminalisation of those they branded as “snaphaner” then the snaphaner might not have been remodelled into friskytter by the Danish authorities...and yet there were certain characteristics that were distinctive of snaphaner and friskytter in general and that they had in common with their predecessors in earlier Scandinavian wars and often enough with the peasant troops. But then, many of the constant characteristics are identical with the characteristics of guerrilla warfare in general. Traits that rendered them very useful to the regular army. The easiest recognisable of these traits was precisely their knowledge of the terrain and their familiarity with the local population. But they were also employed on a wide

⁷⁵² Sörensson, p.61, refers to letters from Hans Rostgaard to the Board of the Army (General Commissariat), 7th February 1680, I.S., June, No:221; and 1st March 1680, I.S., August, No:269, DRA. The list included 2 majors, 11 captains, 14 lieutenants, 13 cornets, 19 quarter masters, 25 corporals, 4 scribes, 2 drummer boys, 410 friskytter.

range of missions and were required to execute a variety of tasks that all correspond to tasks that are designed as characteristic of guerrilla warfare in military manuals from different ages.

The Snaphane Captains

Introduction

Pehr Sörensson argued that the account books proved that the friskytter were employees who worked on orders for a certain payment. Fabricius included a perfunctory but solidly researched outline of snaphane/friskytte actions that were parallel or part of the greater conflict. In essence I am trying to continue Fabricius's and Sörensson's work and continue the pursuit of the more practical aspects of the matter. Sörensson brought lists of salaried friskytte officers to the light, in some cases with notes or letters included that stated some of the tasks they were paid to execute, like breaking the ice in the harbours when they were in winter quarters, but generally not. In most cases the receipts and lists of payments only contain names that Sörensson knew little or nothing about. Fabricius gave a historical face to some of these names. I stress the term "historical" because in the myths, local and national, some of those names were super famous but there were few facts to verify or contradict the legends with. As in the case of Simon Andersen, one of the most famous friskytter, Sörensson presented his authorisation licences and excerpts of account books in which payments to "Captain Simon" were registered. Fabricius based some of his research on the "snaphane movement" on Simon Andersen's reports, although his use of them was fragmentary and he seems not to have located Andersen's operative zone to the correct area. Because some serious research has been done on Simon Andersen before me, first and foremost by Sörensson and Fabricius, but also by the reverend Hedwall, it has become easier to draw a general picture of Andersen's movements and actions. For that reason, I have chosen Captain Simon as the first 'case study' in which I try to pin down a friskytte company's operations during the war. I have then analysed three other friskytte/snaphane officers' actions during the Scanian War. I did not pick Svend Poulsen for two motives: one, that so much has already been written on him and Kim A. Wagner was working on his book when I started my research and two, his name has never appeared in the sources I have consulted. Nor did I choose Captain Severin or the UGGLE brothers, that are undoubtedly the most famous next to Svend Poulsen.

Unfortunately, I do not have all that many sources regarding Captain Severin, nor have I found much about the Uggle brothers in Copenhagen although the court records in Sweden contain ample information on both Severin and the Uggle brothers. Instead, I based a little section on the comparatively unknown lieutenant Thue Piill whose reports transmit a factual and detailed image of an ordinary workday in the woods and the villages. I also wanted to include an analysis of the sources on Captain Bendix, a legendary snaphane whose existence has not been documented until now. According to Swedish court records, Captain Bendix was authorised but there are no traces of him among the muster rolls in Copenhagen. Possibly because he and his closest men were dead by the time most of the muster rolls date from. It was only after the execution of Captain Bendix's men early in 1677 that the typical muster-rolls of the friskytter start to appear. I included Captain Bendix because he was representative of a different kind of snaphane/friskytte, one that was based on the work of sheriffs and bailiffs who surrounded themselves with armed guards, often gamekeepers and foresters from the huge estates that dominated those parts. That kind of snaphaner/friskytter seemed to be more common in the deep south and I will analyse it more in detail in the Krabbe chapter. Finally, there is Pieter Sten who represented yet another kind of snaphane/friskytte. Contrary to Svend Poulsen the name of Pieter Sten kept popping up all the time when I was looking through the sources. As did those of Jenssön and then Simon Andersen (who contrary to the other two has gone to legend). Fundamentally I concentrated on the snaphaner that appeared in my sources and tried to map their activities as closely as possible. Like several other officers Sten seems to have sometimes been enrolled in the regular troops, sometimes in the friskytte corps. Like his even more famous colleague Nikolaj Hermansen he was sent out to organise friskytte companies and to do intelligence work in the war zone(s). Like Hermansen he moved almost all over Scania and we find him in different places during different periods.

Bendix Clawssen

Introduction

This section deals with Captain Bendix whose name has been added to the “missing snaphaner” list by local historians. Spread notices about Captain Bendix have been known, but much due to the confusion of names that appear in various versions, these

have never been interconnected. In the same manner, local legends about a Captain Bendix have not been connected to the notices in the sources either. Danish sources reveal that Bendix Clawssen was a Danish public official with jurisdiction over a large part of southeastern Scania and that he was authorised by the authorities to recruit (conscript?) “snaphaner”. In this section I will try to analyse the nature of Clawssen’s tasks, in his civilian job and as a leader of a group of “snaphaner”. This was before the “breakthrough” of the term “friskytte”. Since the sources are mainly based on other persons’ court testimonies and interrogation statements about their own role in the Captain Bendix affair, I have also tried to analyse Clawssen’s position in society and to the community around him as sifted through the sources. It is for example evident that loyalty bonds to the great noble families (the Ulfelds) played an important role.

Sheriff, Forester and Snaphane

In June 1677 the Scanian cornet Claws Wildskött was given the task of travelling around southeastern Scania to round up native Swedes and Swedish sympathisers. Whether Wildskött was a regular soldier or a friskytte is impossible to tell, but it was one of the most common tasks executed by the friskytter. From the very first, the king had given them the task of “persecuting” Swedes and those who sympathised with them,⁷⁵³ but as with most other tasks executed by friskytter, regular troops were also used to “persecute” Swedes. In the middle of the native Swedes who were brought in by cornet Wildskött on 15th June there was a Dane from Flensburg (in southeastern Jutland) called Frans Rasmussen.⁷⁵⁴ Rasmussen had worked for the Scanian nobleman Ebbe Ulfeld for 12 years but now he occupied the position of “*Skowridere*” in the hundreds of Albo, Ingelstad and Herrestad. Literally “*skowridere*” means “rider of the forest” and the position was that of something in between that of a forester and an emissary of the state. Rasmussen had been appointed to the job by Count (Ebbe) Ulfeld that same year when the position had become vacant through the unfortunate demise of its previous occupant, Bendix Clawssen. Wildskött’s report explains how this came to be in the following terms:

“Bendix appealed to Ulfeld for pardon for what he had done against the Swedes. He handed this petition over to Frandt Rasmussen who in his turn brought it to Ulfeld. The king, Askenberg and Ulfeld wrote on the petition that Bendix would be granted pardon if he turned in 10 Snaphaner. In spite

⁷⁵³ As written in their licences.

⁷⁵⁴ Depositiones, 15th June 1677, 468:99, DRA.

of this his house was soon surrounded and broken into by Ulfeld's men and he was then sent to the stake and wheel."

Now Rasmussen was arrested by the Danes on the suspect of having caused the death of Bendix Clawssen and of having usurped the position to which Clawssen had been appointed by the (Danish) king. Since Ulfeld had gone over to the Swedes he was not authorised to appoint officials on behalf of the Danish authorities.

Frans Rasmussen denied all charges, claiming that he had had no idea of what Ulfeld was planning when Clawssen first came to him. Instead, he named five men who had been present when Bendix was caught and said they were to blame, not him. These five men included the mayor of Simrishamn (Cimmershavn) and Ulfeld's personal secretary. The deposition then states that Ulfeld had divided the territory that had been Bendix's in three parts between Rasmussen, Bartholomeus Urtegaardsmand from Vä (Wee) and Jens Pedersen from Göinge (Gynge). Rasmussen replied that his only reason for applying for the job was that he had 12 children to feed and "the Swedes had made the whole country believe that the Danes would never come back to Scania again."⁷⁵⁵

Bendix Clawssen's territory as a forester was enormous and he must have been envied by many. Today we know terribly little about him except what transpires from the sources that are presented in this section and that have in part already been published by Vigo Edvardsson and Uno Röndahl.⁷⁵⁶ Almost certainly Bendix Clawssen is the "Captain Bendix" that figures in numerous legends from an area that roughly corresponds to the territory Clawssen was responsible for as skowridere.

Wildskött's report does not indicate where Clawssen came from; but he might have been the son of the vicar of Harlösa (Harlöse) who went by that very same name.

Ebbe Ulfeld himself was not only Danish by birth but the son-in-law of Christian IV of Denmark. Urtegaardsmand and Jens Pedersen were Danes to judge by their names and so were at least three of the five men Rasmussen betrayed to the Danes. Ethnic

⁷⁵⁵ Depositiones, 15th June 1677: "*Hand siger at være gifft og hawer 12 børn, derudower søgte hand bestilling att de kunde nære sig, der til med hafde de swenske indbildet det heele land att de danske aldrig komb i Scaane igien.*"

⁷⁵⁶ Röndahl (III, pp. 220-221 and p. 453) is as far as I know the only one who has made any sort of attempt to "identify" Captain Bendix and who has related information from two different sets of sources (the *Mercurius* and Winslow's diaries) in attempt to find out more about this man. Edvardsson first "re-discovered" and published excerpts from the newssheets that regarded the snaphaner but made no further comments in Bendix's case and Röndahl used that material. He refers to Edvardsson as one of his sources at the end of the chapter.

distinction lines do not seem to have played any role here. Possibly patronage did. Rasmussen was one of Ebbe Ulfeld's old clients and maybe he had chosen the side of his patron in the conflict.⁷⁵⁷ Naturally Ulfeld's party was that of the Swedes and Rasmussen knew very well that he would be safe as long as the land remained in their hands, and he seems to have trusted them blindly.

Clawssen had acted "against the Swedes." Theoretically he was offered to make amends for this crime by turning in ten snaphaner but then he was sent to die the death of a snaphane anyway. The fact that the Swedish king gave him the option of making amends for his crimes by consigning 10 snaphaner indicates that the forester was supposed to know the whereabouts as many of these men and perhaps even to have some power of command over them. If nothing else, it proves that Bendix Clawsen was mixed up with the "devilish snaphaner" in the eyes of the Swedes. Else he would not have been sent to die the death of one.

Knud Fabricius found records that attested of the execution of a "Bendiks Klausen" and four others as the first snaphaner to be broken on the wheel.⁷⁵⁸ Uno Røndahl reports of a "Captain of the snaphaner" called "Bendix Classon" who was executed near "Lyngsiö" and "broken on five racks (5 stegel)" on 9th January 1677. Røndahl also lists him as one of 29 men that are recorded in different sources as leaders or captains of friskytter/snaphaner but who do not figure in the muster rolls in Copenhagen.⁷⁵⁹ Classon is the Swedish form of Clawsen (modern Danish: Clausen). Wildskött reported that Clawssen had been broken on the wheel at "Lyngsøe bridge".

⁷⁶⁰ The Swedish newssheet *Mercurius* reported on 5th February 1677 as follows:

"...a captain of the snaphaner called Bendix was brought to our camp with 12 of his subordinates, they were all to be sent to the racks and wheel but first they had to draw out all dead horses that could be found in the camp... They confessed the names of both clergymen and noblemen who have conspired with them."⁷⁶¹

⁷⁵⁷ In the case of Ebbe's cousin Corfitz his Danish servants and clients seem to have continued in his service even after he had gone over to the Swedish side. See: *Aktstycken ock Anteckningar om Snälleröd* (Documents and Notes about Snälleröd), ed. by Ludvig Larsson and Agda Larsson neé Berthelius, Lund 1936. Pp. 24-30. See also Fabricius, vol.I, p.135.

⁷⁵⁸ Knud Fabricius III, p. 91 footnote 3. The records he mentioned were: "RR 31st January 1677).

⁷⁵⁹ Røndahl, p.543. Røndahl has constructed this list on the basis of Sörensson, Fabricius and other existent works. Sometimes these persons, who were mentioned in some sources as "snaphaner" and therefore ended up on Røndahl's list, were quite well-known as e.g., Danish sheriffs (Mikkel Mörch) or regular soldiers (Peer Stenssön).

⁷⁶⁰ Depositiones 15th June 1677.

⁷⁶¹ Edvardsson, p.192. (hava först måst utdraga alla döda hästar, som I lägret funnits och som därefter skola steglas).

We also have Sthen Jacobsen's description of the first really cruel Swedish executions of snaphaner that he dated to between 14th January and 2nd February 1677.⁷⁶² In that passage he also mentioned that the captured snaphaner were made to drag out dead horses from the army camp at Vä (Wæ). It can only be assumed that it was Clawssen and his men that he meant. Was Bendix Clawssen the forester also a captain of the friskytter? The name is not only Danish but was also fairly unusual in Scania at the time. It is not to be excluded that even groups of snaphaner who were not registered in the official corps grouped themselves in military units and called their leaders "captains." Perhaps Bendix Clawssen is not to be found in the muster rolls because his unit had never been there. But perhaps the muster roll has simply been lost. A witness in the Rasmusson vs. Swänsson trial from 1701 claims that Captain Bendix put the names of his recruits on a list and that Bendix showed the men he tried to recruit "papers from Tromp" (a Dutch admiral in Danish service)⁷⁶³, which can only be assumed to be a friskytte licence. For that reason, it seems that Clawssen's men were registered with the Danish authorities.

In the preceding section of this chapter, we were told of two villagers who almost ended up on the racks because a professional snaphane hunter accused them of having sent for Captain Bendix and his snaphaner: a concept that seemed to be so well known that no explanations were felt to be needed. That episode took place sometime between the middle of December 1676 and the middle of January 1677; or rather, after the battle of Lund but before the death of Captain Bendix. The places that are mentioned in the documents concerning Bendix Clawssen (Classon)/Captain Bendix are all situated within the 9 hundreds that constituted his district as a forester. They also correspond to the area in which the legends about Captain Bendix are told.

The Skräddaröd Massacre

Further details about Captain Bendix can be found in a court register from 1701.⁷⁶⁴

The two farmers Jacob Rasmuson and Nills Swens.⁷⁶⁵ had both been called to court

⁷⁶² Jacobsen, p.89.

⁷⁶³ Österlens Släkt- och Folklivsforskarförening, "Assizes in the hundred of Järesta", (Sommarting i Järesta härad), 14th May 1701, <http://www.osterlen.com/slaktforskning/1701st.htm>

⁷⁶⁴ The state vs. Nils Swensson Österlens Släkt- och Folklivsforskarförening, "Assizes in the hundred of Järesta", (Sommarting i Järesta härad), 14th May 1701, <http://www.osterlen.com/slaktforskning/1701st.htm>

⁷⁶⁵ By 1701 Swedish had become the language of the official records and all names are written in that language, consequently a Rasmusen became a Rasmuson etc. The pronunciation, however, remained Rasmusen as is often still the case in Scania today. The abbreviated form "Swenss." might depict the

because the judge felt that a recent argument between the two men had to be cleared up. During the altercation Nills Swens. had said things that called for public action; namely, that his neighbour Rasmuson had been a snaphane during the war! Now, Nills Swens. handed in a written statement in which he declared the following:

“In the presence of me, Judge Erich Swänson end Per Nillson (he) told how the Captain of the snaphaner Benedix, during that last war in this country, found Nills Swens. in the countryside and took him with him and wrote Nils Swenson’s name on a list among the other snaphaner who were with him later when he was caught, for which reason Jacob Rasmuson presumes that Nills Swänson might have been condemned...”.

Rasmuson adds that he too had had occasion to find himself in the company of Captain Bendix who wanted him to join his troops and had shown him Admiral Trump’s orders, but that he had said “no thank you”, whether the court believe it or not. Swensson did not deny. He admitted that he had met Bendix while he was out driving his cart and that Bendix had wanted him to join his troops but that he had said no and that he had later fled over to the island of Bornholm in order not to be forced to join Bendix’s troops.

Rasmuson told the court that a Swedish party on the hunt for Captain Bendix’s men had entered the village of Skräddaröd and that during this raid several locals had been killed in an insensate shooting-spree.⁷⁶⁶ Broor Andersson, Swensson’s father Swen Nillsson and Swensson’s brother, and two brothers called Erich and Jöns Tuedsson were among these. At the time Rasmuson was a public official and he had seen a verdict that condemned Broor Andersson, Swen Nillsson, Nills Swensson and Truls Jönsson to the stake and wheel (stegel och hjul).⁷⁶⁷ However, Broor Andersson died from his wounds on the spot and only his corpse could be quartered and put on the wheel. Truls Jönsson also died but was later granted parole because he had been shot by mistake while he was eating and so he was granted a normal funeral.

Erich Tuedsson who had been called to the stand told the court that when he was working as a farmhand at Skräddaröd the Swedes came down on Captain Bendix at Delperöd and that then they had come straight to Skräddaröd where they had gone

actual usage; it is still common in the area to substitute the patronymic –sen/son with a genitive –s. Hence Nills Swens (Swen’s son) instead of Swensen/Swensson.

⁷⁶⁶ Erich Tuedsen declared that the Swedes went from one house to another and shot whoever they came across.

⁷⁶⁷ Normally this meant that the convict was first hanged and then his corpse was quartered and placed on top of wheels. Sometimes the convict was nailed to a pole and had to die hanging there, much as if he had been crucified. See: Ambrius (1996), p.63.

from one house to another, *killing whoever happened to be in at the moment*.⁷⁶⁸ Erich himself had been shot through the head and left for dead but he had survived because the bullet had passed through his teeth. In spite of their wounds some of the others had managed to escape.

Next, Judge Tillof Mårtensson from Röllå was called to the stand. He declared that during the war he had lived at “Wemmenlöfs torp” (probably modern-day Vemmerlövstorp in the parish of Östra Vemmerlöv in the hundred of Järrestad) and that he clearly remembered that Nills Swensson had been “taken” by Captain Bendix on Wemmenlöf’s grounds while he was driving a keg of beer to Stiby and that the snaphaner had dragged him along “between two horses”. They were desperate for Swensson to join their ranks because he was such a good shot.

At this point Nills Swensson could have found himself in bad trouble, but Jacob Rasmusson now chose to defend him: he declared that he had never wanted the little misunderstanding to end up in court. He and Swensson had argued because Rasmussen’s wife had been evicted “because of a lamb” and that certain things that should have been kept secret had been said in public. But Rasmusson did not want to hurt Swensson. Eventually the court decided that both men should pay a fine of 3 marks each for having uttered “unwise words” but the case was closed for lack of evidence.

Sheriffs, Bailiffs and Gamekeepers

One eminent group of leaders/captains of the friskytter were originally sheriffs, bailiffs, and gamekeepers in positions similar to that of Bendix Clawssen. Fabricius mentions Jon Svendsøn from Sturkö (Sturkø) as one of many friskytter who had occupied a prestigious position as a district official, or *lænsmand*, before the war. Fabricius hypothesised that the disastrous financial situation that had especially hit the inhabitants of the forest areas particularly hard was what had driven men like Svendsen to enrol in the friskytter corps. I come back to that argument in the latter part of the thesis in which I analyse the snaphane movement on the large estates in the southeast where the role of the district officials and gamekeepers seem to have been as important as in the north. Which in a way contests Fabricius’s view that the

⁷⁶⁸ “...då dhet swänke partiet tagit snaphane Capitainen i Delperödh komme dhe till Skräddarödh, och funno snaphane Bror Anderss. den dhe ihjelskutit ginge så uhr ett huus i dhet andra, och sköts hwem som förekom.” (When the Swedish unit had taken the Captain of the snaphaner at Delperödh they went to Skräddarödh, and found a snaphane (called) Bror Anderss. whom they shot dead and then they went from one house to another shooting whoever they came across.”)

lensmaend in northern Scania only became friskytter because of the disastrous financial situation up there. Svendsøn had also been captain of the peasant troops of his parish. Jon Svendsøn had fought with the peasant troops under Michel Mørch but did not feel like languishing under the Swedish yoke anymore, so he fled from home leaving his wife and four children behind.⁷⁶⁹ After that he gathered a small group of friskytter around him and in March 1677 he turned up in Copenhagen in order to obtain licence for his company, which he easily did. In the records he still results as a captain of the friskytter at the end of the war.

Jens Kiildsen visited the Army Headquarters in Copenhagen in the company of Jon Svendsøn in March 1677. From the statement he left then we can deduce that he participated in the fight against the Swedes in Blekinge in February 1677 and that he was impressed by Hermansen's efforts. Kiildsen claimed that the inhabitants of Blekinge were prepared to fight to the last man if only Hermansen and his dragoons received more support from Copenhagen. Kiildsen asked that he and a group of men he had gathered be inserted into the official payrolls of the friskytter because of their efforts to "wipe out all native Swedes in Scania, Halland and Blekinge" and to "deprive them of their privileges".⁷⁷⁰ Some time later we find Kiildsen as captain of a company of 60 friskytter in Blekinge. Hermansen authorised Kiildsen's friskytter to become regular dragoons (through a royal patent Hermansen had received). Eventually Kiildsen and Hermansen seem to have fallen out. Hermansen did not pay Kiildsen's men and in the end Kiildsen's company had to seek refuge from the Swedes on the island of Bornholm.⁷⁷¹ As I have already mentioned, lensmend, ridefogder (sheriffs) and fogder (bailiffs) seem to have provided the friskytter and snaphaner with an unending stream of new forces.

⁷⁶⁹ 468 Krigskollegiet (Landetaten) 1675–78 Forhør over og udsagn af fanger og overløbere 1675–77: 98. Jon Svendsøn i Størke i Øster herridt, report from Copenhagen 4th March. Sörensson, p.25 and Fabricius III, p.104 referred to these as Svendsøn, 4th March 1677, Kiildsen 18th March 1677, I.S (316 and 343), DRA.

⁷⁷⁰ Svendsøn, 4th March 1677, Kiildsen 18th March 1677, I.S (316 and 343), DRA. The latter might possibly be the same report as Hirsch & Hirsch (V:92) refer to.

⁷⁷¹ Copenhagen, 3rd November 1677, Indkomne breve. Skaanske Friskytter, DRA. Sörensson, p.25 and Fabricius III, p.206. Although very popular with the people, Nikolaus or Nikolaj Hermansen tended to get into fights with his officers about monetary matters. Knudt Bøgg (here: Böek) also complained to Arensdorff and the army board about Hermansen's unwillingness to pay his men.

In 1677 a special commission in Ronneby (Rønneby) was charged with the inquiry into cases of persons who were suspected of “snaphaneri”.⁷⁷² Among these were Sheriff (länsman) John Månsson from the hundred of Öster (Østre) and his son Torkel Johnsson who was also a sheriff.⁷⁷³ Månsson did not present himself in court but his son did. The charges against Månsson were the following:

- 1) “Having acted against the authorities of the realm.”
- 2) “Having maltreated the king’s men and having called himself a major of the snaphaner.”
- 3) “Having signed a call for rebellion and having sent it on and having spent time with the enemies at Kristianopel (Christianopel). Furthermore, he had read out a letter from the Danish king.

All witnesses confirmed that Månsson was a “rebel leader”.⁷⁷⁴ The Danish response was to try to assist the snaphaner. Colonel Lützwow, the commander of (Christianopel), sent out what the Swedish sources report as “snaphane” troops to help the others. The leaders on the 8th November were “John Månsson, a major from Olsängen” and also a peasant called Per and “tall Håkan”.⁷⁷⁵ In his absence, Månsson was condemned to lose his life, honour and property and his corpse to be put on four wheels and his head on a stake, in case he ever turned up. Månsson’s son Torkel was charged with not having extracted enough taxes and with having signed the same rebellious call as his father, but he was in possession of a royal parole letter. Torkel Johnsson was present in court, and it was decided that he should be sent to prison while the king decided on a suitable verdict.⁷⁷⁶

⁷⁷² The members of this commission were Ebbe Uhlfeld (president), Colonel Anders Ridderlöf, Captain Nils Broberg, the Reverend Valleman of Thorsås and Sheriff Nils Strömer. See: Johnsson, p.72.

⁷⁷³ Johnsson, pp.72–74 and ”Landshövdingens skrivelser till K. Maj:t”, SRA. The names are Swedised.

⁷⁷⁴ In his war diaries professor Winslow (UB, but also *Skånska samlingar 1874*, pp.80-81 and Johnsson, pp.60-61) mentioned a John Månsson from Olsäng as the major of the snaphaner who ambushed Ebbe Uhlfeld’s troops at Olsäng and the Aspenåsa bridge on 8th November 1676. Considering that Uhlfeld was now president for the commission for snaphane inquiries it can only be supposed that Månsson made a wise choice in not turning up.

⁷⁷⁵ Information based on Professor Winslow’s diaries from the war, The names are Swedised.

⁷⁷⁶ The county sheriff (länsman) of Hanavrå, Christen Torkelsson (“Krister” in Johnsson?) was accused of having started the first “snaphane rebellion” together with Little Joen when the war first started. Handl.rör.Danska kriget 1676-77, SRA, quoted by Johnsson, p.149. His brother Jon and “Har Åcken” i.e., Major Aage Monsen Harlof were involved in the same raids. See: Arthur Stille, “Några anteckningar om nordskånska släkter” (Annotations on a few Families from Northern Scania), pp.25–44 in *Skånska samlingar III:2*, ed. Martin Weibull, Lund 1896, esp. pp. 34–35.) The länsman of Västerlösa was arrested on the charge of having served the enemy in July 1678. Letter from Simon Bengtsson to the governor general, 1678, Brev till gen.guv, L.A, Lund, quoted by Johnsson, p.160.

Jens Tygesen from the Sunnerbo court case was yet another bailiff (birkefoged) who was charged with collaborating with the snaphaner in August 1677.⁷⁷⁷ In July 1678 Ebbe Uhlfeld issued a warrant for four deserters, who had first served as friskytter with Simon Andersen, then they had been caught by the Swedes and made to enrol in Uhlfeld's troops but eventually they had run away. The four men were: Faiher Murtensen who had worked as a "forester at Hindszöe, Esbiørn Jacobsen who had previously worked as a sharpshooter (forsuerssskytt) and Peer who had been "in the service of district governor Durell" and then Nills Skytt whose patronymic is not stated either but normally somebody called "Skytt" occupied himself with exactly what his surname indicated, i.e., with being a sharpshooter or gamekeeper.⁷⁷⁸

In Swedish instructions to the governors general from the time the importance of having "Swänske Män" (Swedish men) in the right places was stressed whereas the Danes were described as incapable of holding office.⁷⁷⁹ After the Swedish take-over the entire Danish administration was discharged. Already towards the end of 1658 a high Swedish official by the name of Johan Forsman demanded that the Danish sheriffs (befallningsmän) be replaced by "capable Swedes". Forsman complained in the following terms:

"God forbid that they remain in service, it will end in disaster, for I have been told in secret that they torment the people and frighten them to think that the Swedish yoke (as they call it) is too heavy and turn the hearts of the people from our nation, God help us get rid of them..."⁷⁸⁰

Sörensson stressed the role of the fogder (bailiffs or sheriffs) that were sent out from the Danish authorities. The nexus fogder-snaphaner is recurrent in all my sources and it also seems that this development was planned from the Danish side.⁷⁸¹ Mons Hacksen was a fogde, as was his brother Johan who (contrary to his two brothers) survived the war and went to live in Copenhagen.⁷⁸² They were all sons of Jørgen Krabbe's former estate manager Hack Søffrensen who was accused posthumously of

⁷⁷⁷ Handlingar rörande danska kriget 1676-79, SRA, quoted by Johnsson who calls him "Jöns Tygesen", pp.95-98. The trial was held on 29th to 31st August 1677 at the Sunnerbo häradsrätt (assizes).

⁷⁷⁸ Hedwall, p.9

⁷⁷⁹ Three governors general wrote accounts of their time in office: Stenbock, Banér and von Aschenberg: "General-Guvernören öfver Skåne, Halland och Blekinge, Grefve Gustaf Otto Stenbocks berättelse af år 1662." in *Nya handlingar rörande Skandinaviens historia*, 31/21, Stockholm 1850, for Aschenberg see: Ch.2, and finally *Gustaf Banérs generalguvernörsberättelse 1664-1668*, edited and commented by Ingvar Andersson, Gleerups, Lund 1940.

⁷⁸⁰ Erlandsson, p.215.

⁷⁸¹ See pp. 110-111 of this thesis where Holländer's and Mørch's efforts are analysed.

⁷⁸² See chapters on Krabbe.

the same crimes as his master, i.e. of collusion with snaphaner and “unnecessary” contacts with Danes. As we have seen earlier in this thesis, Mons Hacksen had the authority as a sheriff to arrest friskytter that did not behave and to consign them to the authorities. Already at the beginning of the war Mons Hacksen complained of the snaphaner who constituted a danger to him while he was travelling.⁷⁸³ Whatever Mons Hacksen’s attitude to the friskytter was, it is obvious from the sources that he had authority over them and that it did not make part of his job as a “Cronofoged”⁷⁸⁴ to arrest any friskytter but those who misbehaved seriously. His brother Johan was a “ridefoged” in the hundred of Färs (Fers) and had nothing against working with friskytter, on the contrary, encouraged by Jens Harboe, in July 1678 he wrote to Arensdorff to beg for friskytte troops to be sent to him, or that he be authorised to muster those available in the Ringsjö (Ringsøe) area because there was a lot of work to be done there: the Swedes knew that all the friskytte troops were centred around Kristianstad (Christianstad) right then and so they went out and about as they liked (or so Johan Haksen claimed). He promised that he and the friskytter would fight courageously if only they were authorised to do so.⁷⁸⁵

As we will also see in the third part of this thesis Jørgen Krabbe’s estate manager (bailiff) resigned in order to become a Danish tax collector (a kind of sheriff) but to the Swedes this Hindrich Peehrsøn was a snaphane who had his base in Landskrona (Landscrone) and then rode around the country with a band of snaphaner, especially to Krabbe’s estates where he had his fiancée. Moreover, the “fogder” had constituted the links in the contact chain that crossed Scania from one part to the other during the conspiracy against the Swedes in 1659. Tage Bøgg had been a bailiff just like Erlandsson himself. One of Tage Bøgg’s men had been a tax collector.⁷⁸⁶ On the plains in southern Scania several snaphaner had a background as gamekeepers and guardians

⁷⁸³ Fabricius, III, p.37 and p.113. Nevertheless, he was also considered a snaphane himself by the Swedes.

⁷⁸⁴ In his index, Fabricius claims Mogens Haksen was “ridefoged” of Färs and Frosta (Fers and Froste). On p.126 of volume III Mogens Haksen is called a “kongefoged”.

⁷⁸⁵ Letter from J. Hacksen to Arensdorff, included among Jens Harboe’s reports, 31st July 1678. DRA. Fabricius (III, p. 169, footnote 20) has consulted what seems like the same letter, but he reports it as “undated”. Either there is a copy without a date somewhere else in the War College collections or Fabricius made a slip. In November 1678 Hacksen was riding about with 100 cavalymen, on his way from Landskrona to Färs (Landscrone to Fers) (See Sven Erlandsson’s report from Tundbyholm 20th November 1678, Skrifvelser till konungen E-F, SRA). Obviously, he had got the armed forces he wanted. But were the cavalymen (Ryttare) he was commanding regulars or irregulars?

⁷⁸⁶ Sven Erlandsson, §3.

on the noble estates.⁷⁸⁷ In fact Charles X was so suspicious of this group that he ordered that they all gamekeepers be arrested and brought to the Swedish camp.⁷⁸⁸

Conclusions

Captain Bendix was in many senses a forerunner of the friskytte troops that would develop during the months following his death. Although Bendix Clawssen has been largely forgotten by the history books, his and his men's death as criminals set its mark upon the course of events in that they men were made into a statutory example by the Swedes. Most sources agree that the executions that took off with Clawssen's death were the starting point for a new course of the Scanian War in that the friskytte forces crystallised and become more prominent than the "snaphaner" had ever been. Nevertheless, as I have tried to show in this section, Captain Bendix and his men seemed to have operated much as the friskytter did. It was also evident that the Danish authorities who sent out troops to arrest Swedes and those who sympathised with them felt that loyalty bonds to Denmark and its king should have been uppermost to the Scanians, but that some men, like those who were accused of having betrayed Clawssen, felt that loyalty to a patron or to the winning party could be more important.

Pieter Sten

"One man's 'terrorist' is another man's freedom fighter."
Richard Clutterbuck⁷⁸⁹

Introduction

Pieter Sten's career during the Scanian War is maybe the best documented of all "snaphaner's" and yet he remains one of the most unknown. There are numerous reports about him from both sides, he is mentioned in both contemporary and modern history books and several of his reports and letters remain in the archives. Nevertheless, he is practically unknown today and on a par with Captain Bendix he is reported by local historians as a "missing" snaphane whose name is known but little else. Part of the problem with Pieter Sten is the numerous versions of his name that

⁷⁸⁷ Fabricius, p.102. Herregårdsskytter. See also the section on the Krabbe case.

⁷⁸⁸ See: Sörensson, p.32 and the chapter on Krabbe. Krabbe's gamekeeper was involved with the friskytter and several of the other men that participated in the kidnapping of Basch and Klingspor were game keepers.

⁷⁸⁹ Clutterbuck, p.18.

are in circulation: people did not connect the person that Swedish sources described as “Per Stensson, the most wrathful snaphane of all” to what Danish historians described as the valorous and manly “Lieutenant Peter Sten.” To add to the confusion, the man himself normally⁷⁹⁰ signed his name as Pieter Sten and there were even more versions of his name. But then it is obvious from the sources that Pieter Sten was as amphibious as his name and his job description. Apart from the fact that no coherent text has ever been written on Pieter Sten until now, and nobody seems to have realised that the various text that were referred to in books and articles were about the same man, he is one of few combatants, commanders apart, whose entire career throughout the Scanian War can be mapped both geographically and as to what tasks he had. There is ample documentation of his doings between the early autumn of 1676 and late summer 1679. In this section I will analyse these sources in an attempt to classify the nature of these activities and also, in order to see if Sten himself could or should be categorised as a friskytte, snaphane or a regular soldier.

The Most Wrathful Snaphane of All

The 19th century historian Abraham Cronholm mentions a “Pehr Stensson from the hundred of Göinge” as one of four main snaphane leaders under Colonel Schwanewedel during the Scanian War. The other three were Niels Tommesen Tidemand, Svend Poulsen and Ubbe of the Frisholm island.⁷⁹¹ In its various forms Pieter Sten’s name is almost omnipresent in the sources from the Scanian War. Most likely Pieter Sten can be identified with the “Peder Steenssön” whom Sthen Jacobsen mentions as a non-commissioned officer or “cornet” in 1677.⁷⁹² Fabricius claimed that “Peter Sten/Stensen” was a lieutenant in the regular army whose task it was to maintain the connections between the regular army and the friskytter.⁷⁹³ Indeed, Pieter Sten was a perfectly regular and registered soldier during the entire war and he

⁷⁹⁰ The only known exception is a letter that is signed “Peedher Steensen” but that letter might have been written by someone else for him: it was sealed with Pieter Sten’s seal (PTS) and consequently authorised by him. See: Peedher Steensen to Arensdorff, 2nd June 1678, 468:71, DRA.

⁷⁹¹ Cronholm, p.192. Cronholm literally wrote as follows: “The leaders of the snapphanar were Nils Tideman on the Halland ridge, Swen Pålson, Ubbe of the Frisholm island in the hundred of Western Göinge and Pehr Stensson, also from the hundred of Gönge.” It should be stressed that he noted that the “snaphaner” were commanded by a regular Danish colonel, a fact overseen by myth but which the sources confirm. Cronholm states that Fryxell was one of his sources and Fryxell (p.33) mentioned “Ubbe of the Frisholm in the hundred of Western Göinge, on the Halland ridge Nils Tideman and Sven Pålsson, the latter well-known from the campaign on Zealand in 1659.”

⁷⁹² Jacobsen, 105.

⁷⁹³ Fabricius III, p.165. Fabricius (IV, *Noter og anmærkninger*, p.62) registers him as a “Danish lieutenant” as opposed to Simon Anderson whom Fabricius classified as a “Friskytte officer.”

continued to be so until his death in Kolding, Denmark in 1692.⁷⁹⁴ Swedish sources, however, insist on calling him a “snaphane.”

Pieter Sten appears in all sorts of sources from the Scanian War and as with Captain Simon, his movements can be traced through them. I will now make a brief outline of Sten’s movements throughout the war and an analysis of the tasks he was occupied with during this time.

1676

In the autumn of 1676 Sten was in Western Vram, Västra Vram, working for his namesake colonel H.D Steensen who was trying to organise popular resistance or irregular troops in the area. We know that much through the court registers from the local assizes of the hundred of Gärds 1680 in which Pieter Sten’s name is mentioned in the the scandalous case which made the vicar of Västra Vram, Jörgen Offesen (Offuesen) and his wife Catrine Eliædatter escape to Copenhagen.⁷⁹⁵ During the autumn of 1676 most of Scania was in Danish hands and Swedish property was being confiscated. Lusse Per Mårtensdotter in Träne who was married to the forester (jägare) Herman Skultz had her vodka distiller, five cauldrons, eight big plates and four chandeliers confiscated by Pieter Sten “a free lieutenant from the Danish troops”, who had then had the goods carted away by Hans Ågesen from Träne who, by 1680, claimed that he had been highly unwilling to do so.⁷⁹⁶ Ågesen then left the “Swedish” goods with Gregers Andersson in Western Vram. Gregers Andersson and his wife Sisse claimed that from there, the goods had been transported to the vicarage where Colonel Hans Detlev Steensen was then lodging. At the time Colonel Steensen was stationed in the border area in order to try to organise an effective border defence system. Pieter Sten and his men are generally mentioned as “soldiers” or even

⁷⁹⁴ In 1677-78 Sten was a “cornet” and then a lieutenant in the 1st National Regiment of Zealand (1. Sehlandsche National Regiment) under Colonel Holger Trolle. His company was headed by Major Fridrich Rantzau. Later he remained with Meerheim and Schwanewedel in Landskrona (Lands Crone) although his regiment had been transferred. By 1679 he was a “Ryttmästare” in Colonel Johan Casimir Bahsum’s regiment, the 2nd National Regiment of Jutland (2 Jydsche) and had his own company. See: 469 Krigskancelliet 1678–1762 Den danske militætat 1678: 1774 (Obrist Trollen Regiment); 469 Krigskancelliet 1678-1762 Den danske militætat 1679-1682: 1771 (2 Jydsche National Regiment); See also: Hirsch & Hirsch XI under “Peter (Pehr) Sten” and ”Peter Steensen”.

⁷⁹⁵ John Wanngren, “Jörgen Offesen, komminister i Västra och Östra Vram – sognepræst i Jylland”, (Jörgen Offesen, Vicar in Western and Eastern Vram – Parson in Jutland), pp.2-8, in *Gärds Härads Hembygdsförenings Årsbok 1999*, (The Annual Book of the Local Heritage Society of the hundred of Gärd 1999), 1999, p. 3 of the separately printed version of Wanngren’s paper. In the book itself Wanngren’s paper occupies pp. 48-57.

⁷⁹⁶ Wanngren (1999), p.3. ”en frij corporal af dhe danske”.

“Colonel Steensen’s soldiers” in the registers from the case against Catrine Eliædatter and the confiscation order is reported as having been issued by Colonel Steensen although it was executed by his namesake Pieter.⁷⁹⁷ No “snaphaner” or “friskytter” mentioned at all.

1677

Sten had the advantage of being bilingual so that he could pass for a Swede. In a report from May 1677 he told the story of how, on the night between the 20th and the 21st of that month, he and his 26 men had gone out on a “party” in order to collect provisioning and that he had tricked some Swedes into believing that he was one of them so they told him that a Swedish convoy was at the public house in Kävlinge (Kiöfflinge) and so Sten and his men could surprise the convoy while the Swedes were carousing.⁷⁹⁸ Two days later (23rd May) Sten with thirty cavalry was ordered to collect Swedish goods from the bishop’s residence in Lund and to capture the Swedish royal physician Sack who was staying in the same city. Just outside the village of Vallkärä (Waldekilde) Sten and his men met a Swedish convoy of 162 wagons with food and drink.⁷⁹⁹ They managed to kill the Swedes that escorted it and could lay their hands on all the wagons. Sten then left 10 of his men to guard the wagons and the prisoners.⁸⁰⁰ On their way to Lund a “snaphane” told Sten that the Swedes were bringing fourteen cannons from Lund to the Swedish camp at Rönneberga.⁸⁰¹ Upon knowing this, Sten left his men outside the city walls and hurried inside Lund, where he promptly rode down the high street where the cannon convoy was passing. According to Jensen, Sten then approached the head of the convoy and told him in obviously perfect Swedish that he (Sten) had been sent out to

⁷⁹⁷ Wanngren (1999), p.4: ”Krigs Karle” or ”Krigsfolk”.

⁷⁹⁸ According to Jacobsen (p.105), Sten had bumped into two of the Swedish king’s lifeguards and the goods they were conveying were uniforms and equipment for the Swedish king’s lifeguards (drabanter). Winslow (p.89) reported: “21 Maj gick cornet Pehr Stensson med ett parthij från Landscrona till Kävlinge och borttog en hoop proviant samt annen montering, som skulle varit till h:s k. m:tts drabanter.”.

⁷⁹⁹ According to Jacobsen (p.105) there were 150 wagonloads of food and 12 of tobacco, beer, and spirits. Jensen (p.248) reports 160 wagons with food, beer, tobacco, and vodka. According to Jensen these supplies were destined for the Swedish army and were escorted by fourteen cavalymen, of which nine were killed.

⁸⁰⁰ According to Jacobsen (p.105) and Jensen (p.248) nine of the Swedes were killed and the remaining five were left with ten of Sten’s men to watch the booty while Sten went on to Lund.

⁸⁰¹ Jensen who agrees with this story but does not say that the information came from a snaphane (p.249) adds that the cannons originated in Malmö. Jacobsen (p.106) claims that Sten first set about his task in Lund (regarding Sach etc.), then somebody cried out that a huge group of Swedes were on their way in from Malmö.

warn them because the Danes were attacking and now, he would lead them into safety.⁸⁰² He led them to the gates and then cried: “Hurry up! The Jutes are attacking!” The Swedes panicked and rushed outside the city walls where several were killed by Sten’s men.⁸⁰³ The rest of the men who had been with the convoy left their lives in Sten’s hands⁸⁰⁴: thirty of them were Scanians who had been conscripted by the Swedes from the Ystad (Ydsted) and Malmö (Malmøe) areas.⁸⁰⁵

A list of these captives is to be found in the National Archives in Copenhagen and it includes forty-seven men and two women.⁸⁰⁶ One of these men was “Doctor Erasmus Sach.”⁸⁰⁷ Out of the other men twelve were Swedes and except Christopher Cock who was a chef, they were all soldiers of various ranks.⁸⁰⁸ They were not asked if they would like to join the Danish army. Of the other prisoners Marcus Hendricsen was born between Sleswig and Flensburg and had been in Swedish service as a kitchen boy in Stralsund. He now wished to continue his job with “prince’s cook who knew him well.” Johan Mejer from Tallinn (Reval) had been a sutler with Major Ribbing and would now like to take Danish service. The thirty Scanians and the two other Danes were all asked if they would like to join the Danish army and twenty-four said yes. Further two were registered as in too poor health to be of interest for the army.⁸⁰⁹ Mons Olsen who was a brewer from Malmö (Malmøe) and Hogen Hansen who was a

⁸⁰² Jensen, p.249.

⁸⁰³ Jacobsen (p.106) claims 68 Swedes were killed but that the 50 Scanians’ lives were spared; they had all been conscripted into Swedish service to serve as matrosses or gunners’ assistants (artollerie-knechte). These were then drafted into Danish regiments. Jensen (p.249) writes that 40 were killed. Winslow (p.89) reports of these events: “On 23rd May the same officer was sent out from Landscrona and on 24th May he removed 14 metal cannons that came from Malmö and were destined for the camp at Rönneberga, furthermore a whole lot of provisioning wagons that he encountered at Walkärä and the day but next he brought these to Landscrona. More than 40 Swedish cavalry and soldiers were shot to death and a whole bunch, that accompanied the cannons, were taken prisoners.”

⁸⁰⁴ Jensen (p.249) claims these were peasants.

⁸⁰⁵ Twelve or thirteen of them came from the Ystad area and the others from the Malmö area, Veberöd, Simrishamn, Färs, Börringe kloster and Trelleborg. One boy might have come from Kristianstad.

⁸⁰⁶ “Lista Paa de fanger som d: 24 May med de 14 swenshe canoner blefwe indbragte”, (A List of those prisoners who on 24th May were brought in with the 14 Swedish cannons.) 468 Krigskollegiet (Landetaten), 1675-1678 “Forhør over og udsagn af fanger og overløbere”: 98, DRA. Winslow (p.89) also dated this event to 24th May 1677.

⁸⁰⁷ Erasmus Sack, pp.353-373 in P.G. Ahnfeldt, *Lunds universitets historia*, (A History of the University of Lund) vol. 1, Stockholm 1859, p.354 “anatomia & botanices prof.” Ahnfeldt also stresses (ss. 371-372) that professor Sach was a favourite with the Swedish king and that the king paid ransom for Professor Sach out of his own pocket. Once Sach was released from his Danish prison in early 1678, he became the king’s personal physician. Eventually he returned to the Academia Carolina.

⁸⁰⁸ One of the survivors was Reinhold Bynik from Stockholm was a “regiments adjutant” under colonel Modaeus regiment of mountaineers and he had been the convoy’s overseer.

⁸⁰⁹ Mons Persen from Getinge was “quite unfit for service because of his weakness.” Furthermore, he was thirty-eight years old. Poul Hansen from Nevishög (Nevshöy) near Lund was only fourteen and “unfit.”

burgher from Ystad (Ydsted) were not asked if they would join the army, presumably because of age and status but maybe also because they might have been seen as “traitors” who were working for the Swedes. Four of the twenty-four men declared they would only join the army if there was no other way of avoiding Swedish army service. The two women were Brita Jonsdatter who was the wife of Christopher Cock and Lispet Persdatter who was the wife of a non-commissioned officer (fänrik) called Nels Bergman.⁸¹⁰

The cannons were then carted (by the peasants) to Valkärra (Waldekilde) where the rest of their booty was waiting. Sten then sent out a man to ride as fast as he could to Landskrona (Landskrone) to ask for reinforcements, because he realised the Swedes would set after them. By that time the Swedish king had already sent a Major Romanewitz and one hundred cavalry after them, but the Danish reinforcements managed to reach Sten first and so the Swedish troop had to retrace its steps to base camp.⁸¹¹ Sten’s return to Landskrona (Landskrone) was triumphant, to the point that the King rode out to meet him in the company of 3000 cavalry.⁸¹² Approximately a month later, on 22 June 1677 Sten turned up at the army camp outside Malmö (Malmøe) in the company of Jens Michelsen, the owner of Hovdala (then Howdal) castle, arrived with interesting news from the north-eastern border region. He and “Lieutenant Stensen” who came with him reported that Gyllenstierna had called all civil servants and clergymen in the area to a meeting where he had reminded them of their duties to the king of Sweden.⁸¹³

In the autumn of 1677, probably on 24th October, War Commissary Jens Harboe in Landskrona (Landskrone) reported to Meyer that his informants were telling him that the Swedes outside Kristianstad (Christianstad) were on the move, and that as soon as he had found out he had persuaded General Uffel⁸¹⁴ to send “Peter Steens with 20

⁸¹⁰ Se: 468:98, DRA.

⁸¹¹ Jensen, p.249. Jacobsen, p.106. This episode is probably mentioned by Nils Skytte in his diaries (p.3): May...24 a Danish unit met 14 of our troops with their armour carts and horses near Lund, that were on their way to our camp, all which they possessed themselves of without trouble and brought to their camp, while Major Romanovitz and a unit of our men who were supposed to prevent this were busy finding lodgings and food supplies at Dagstorp and Saxtorp there in the vicinity.”

⁸¹² Jacobsen, p.106. See also: Röndahl, pp.234-235.

⁸¹³ Depositiones 22nd June 1677, DRA.

⁸¹⁴ Commander of Landskrona (Landskrone) from 28th August 1677. See: Jensen, p.303.

men to Borreby” in order to spy on the Swedes and although they had set out that morning, “Steens” had already written back to him.⁸¹⁵

1678

On 4th January 1678, War Commissary Harboe reported to his patron Herman Meyer at the Army Board in Copenhagen that some days earlier, “Lieutenant Steensen” had brought in a minister of the church from Lund whom he suspected of having spied on behalf of the enemy.⁸¹⁶

On 28th May 1678 Pieter Sten’s presence was reported from the Sövde (Søffuede) area where the Swedish troops that were stationed at Sövdeborg Castle (Søffuede gaard) had met the snaphaner, “their lieutenant Per Stensson and 30 horsemen (man rytteri)⁸¹⁷ who were planning to join troops with the Danish forces at Röddinge (Rødinge) so that they could attack Ystad (Ysted) conjointly. Only a few days later Sten’s company co-operated with regular troops in an attack on Trolleholm (then Erichsholm) castle that had been fortified and occupied by Swedish troops under Lieutenant Colonel Jurgen Rotherman. Rotherman reported that during the fight for Trolleholm (then Erichsholm) Major von Schaar had caught a prisoner who betrayed that “the same party, that was here, operates further north, but he did not know where”.⁸¹⁸ At the time of writing (3rd June 1678) the prisoner had been brought to the Swedish army camp, but Rotherman did not believe that he knew anything about the Danes. This man had admitted to serving under “Per Stensson”.⁸¹⁹ According to the sources it seems that whereas Simon Andersen was mainly employed with provisioning tasks, interrupting, and crossing enemy lines and attacking the enemy alone or with regular troops, Pieter Sten was more of a liaisons officer and secret agent, and one of his main tasks was to “persecute” and collect native Swedes and Scanians who supported the Swedes. Another Scanian who met Sten in the latter guise

⁸¹⁵ Jens Harboe to Meyer, 24th (October)? The month is illegible, but it is to be found among the reports from October 1677. If not in October, then it had to be in September because Uffeln was only there from the end of August until the beginning of November. See Jensen, p.320.), 1677, DRA. “daß er Peter steens mit 20 leute nach borreby...gesent.”

⁸¹⁶ Jens Harboe to Meyer, 4th January 1678.

⁸¹⁷ Report from Captain J. Lindeman, 28th May 1678, “Rapporter till general guvernörerna”, LLA, quoted by Johnsson, p.143.

⁸¹⁸ A Danish detachment of 600 regular soldiers and an unknown number of “snaphaner” were besieging Erichsholm and the Swedish soldiers inside during this period. Erichsholm was but a burnt-out shell at the end of the war.

⁸¹⁹ Jurgen Rotherman to the governor general, 3rd June 1678, Rapporter till gen.-gouv, LA. Quoted by Johnsson, pp.145-147.

was Sir Mogens Schuaue (Swave) of Oretorp. On 6th June 1678 Sir Mogens was “arrested” by a “richmäster Petter Steen” and a party of “snaphaner”. According to Schuaue’s account to the *Swedish* authorities the snaphaner had come to his home, Oretorp manor, from where they had brought him to the boathouse where the captain (“richmästare”) was waiting with his cavalry. They then plundered whatever was left at the house (that had already been plundered by other troops). Sir Mogens then had to stay in Danish custody until 24th October 1679.⁸²⁰ The Danish report of the event is conserved in the *Depositiones* collection, and it tells a different story: on the orders of General Arensdorff, “Mogens Schwab of Oretorp” had been collected and brought to the Danish camp. He had then left a detailed account of the situation in the Kristianstad (Christianstad) area and of what he had overheard the Swedish generals say.⁸²¹ Schuaue’s report is about a page long and quite detailed. He claimed that there were 17 000 Swedes and that new troops were continuing to arrive from Sweden and that he had overheard the Swedish generals say that they would not waste lives on a direct attack, but that (Christianstad) would eventually surrender for lack of food.⁸²² He also claimed that the generals said they were not going to send any help to the garrison at Helsingborg that were under Danish siege, because it would be impossible for the army to find means of subsistence in that area. Schuaue also maintained that “the whole country was with them” and that the army could not move from

⁸²⁰ Application for tax exemptions, from Mogens Schuaue of Oretorp to the secretary of the government general Jöran Adlersten, 1st June 1683, printed in *Historisk Tidskrift för Skåneland*, vol VII, Lund 1917, pp.299-300. Schuaue/Svave writes passable Swedish and emphasises that he and his wife had obeyed Swedish orders when the Danish fleet landed in Scania: they had immediately betaken themselves to “Christianstadh with all their belongings that were of any worth”. When the Danes stormed Christianstad Mogens Schuaue and his wife lost everything, and they were also called “Swedish bastard and whore” by the soldiers. (“min hustru och jagh totaliter blef ruineret och wdplydret, som een hver witterligit ähr, som då der inne wohre, och min hustruis och min titell war inttet annat än svensk schiälm och hore”.) It should be added that according to Martin Weibull in the 1917 article Schuaue’s wife, Sissela/Cecilia Bonde, was an ethnic Swede. However, in an earlier article (“Anders von Reiser och Lärkeholmsstiftelsen” [A.v.R and the Lärkeholm Foundation] pp. 1-62 in *Skånska samlingar* II:2, Lund 1892, p.57) Martin Weibull claims that Cecilia Bonde belonged to the Danish/Scanian branch of the Bonde family and consequently counted as an ethnic Dane. Fabricius (II, p.101 and IV, p. 195) identified Cecilia/Sidsel Bonde as the sister of the Swedish judge Tor Bonde of the Göta Court of Appeal. In the light of Schuaue’s testimony, it seems more likely that his wife was a native Swede.

⁸²¹ *Depositiones und Kundschaften*, 11th June 1678, DRA.

⁸²² See also: *Depositiones* 13th June 1678, DRA, Hans Hinrich Gutterorm from Helligestad, Mainz’s report in which he claimed that it was Uhlfeld who had persuaded the Swedish not to risk an attack on Kristianstad (Christianstad). Contrary to Schuaue, Gutterorm spoke in terms of “the enemy” and “ours”, if we are to assume that the scribe rendered their wording correctly, which seems to have been the norm. Gutterorm’s account agreed with Schuaue’s report of what the Swedish generals were saying in that he (Gutterorm) claimed that “traitors from Christianstad” were saying that “ours in the town are already beginning to suffer from food shortage” (“...wores udi byen allereede paa vivres begynte at manequere...”).

Kristianstad (Christianstad) because of the “snaphaner” that were causing them too much trouble. Finally, Schuaue left a detailed account of the different Swedish regiments and smaller units and of how many men were in each. As in the case of many other depositions, it is difficult to tell what Schuaue’s real position was.⁸²³ He used the term “snaphaner” and avoided any open declaration of his position which an open “us” and “the Swedes” discourse would have meant. Instead, he seems to have said “they” and “the Danes”.⁸²⁴ He also seems to have told those that took his account down that the Swedes would be winning: 17 000 Swedes were a lot. Other accounts in the *Depositiones* collection from the same days report varying numbers, from 2400⁸²⁵ to 14 000⁸²⁶. It is obvious, however, that Schuaue was not too intent on watching his word. Someone who was only interested in saving his own skin, would surely have adhered to the “us” and “them” discourse (or “ours” and “the enemy”) as most people did who left voluntary or less voluntary reports to the Danish authorities.

Pieter Sten does not appear in the *Depositiones* report of how Mogens Schuaue was brought into Danish custody. However, Sten appears in the entrance that follows directly after Schuaue’s: “DITO Hanß Eggerßen born in the hundred of Western Gønge, collected by Lieut. Pieter Steenßen...”. It seems therefore that the Danish sources agree with Schuaue’s own account to the Swedish authorities that it was Sten who brought him in. The Danish sources, however, do not speak of an “arrest”, nor do they hide the fact that Schuaue was “collected” on the express orders of the Danish commander-in-chief. The way Schuaue described the event in his letter to the Swedish authorities, it seemed as if he had been kidnapped by street robbers. Obviously that was what the Swedish authorities wanted to hear, and the sort of discourse they expected to be expressed by their subjects in Scania, because it appears time after time again in accounts to the Swedish authorities.⁸²⁷ For once, it is the matter of a detail that is not difficult to prove wrong, since there are sources that can prove that “kidnappings” of the sort were not the deeds of outlaws but operations

⁸²³ Maybe it should be added that Mogens Schuaue was an old army man who had served as a “cornet” and then “ritmester” in the Danish army. He was consequently aware of what he was expected to say and what terminology would serve him best. He had also married a Swede, Cecilia (Sidsel) Bonde of Oretorp. For Schuaue’s background, see Fabricius III, p.27 and IV, p.195.

⁸²⁴ Cf. Gutterom’s report of 13th June in which the terms “ours” and “the enemy” are used. That kind of terminology is more representative of the *Depositiones* vocabulary in general.

⁸²⁵ *Depositiones* 17th June 1678, DRA, the Scotsman Jacob Delen’s report.

⁸²⁶ *Depositiones* 13th June 1678, DRA, Herman Marner from Westphalia’s report.

⁸²⁷ Cf. Stig Alenäs’s 2008 article.

ordered by the Danish military commanders. Pieter Sten for one spent a lot of time picking up persons that his superiors ordered him to bring into the Danish camp, for one reason or another. Sometimes, these persons were on the lists of suspect Swedish sympathisers and spies that had to be brought in, at other times these persons had themselves asked to be convoyed out of the war zone, and yet at other times the Danish authorities had found out that the Swedes were after a particular person and decided to get hold of that potentially important person first. Examples of the first category would be all those on Lieutenant Wildskött's list from 15th June 1677 (of which several had participated in betraying Captain Bendix)⁸²⁸, examples of the first *and* second category would be Baron Krabbe who was first brought into Danish custody in Kristianstad (Christianstad), then released and then, some time later, he asked of his own free will to be collected by Danish troops and convoyed to Danish territory, and then Doctor Christian Foss would be an example of a person who was wanted by the troops of both countries, not because he was a criminal but because he was a skilled physician.⁸²⁹ It was Sten's task to get hold of persons like this, but it was his job, not a vile pursuit that he had taken to for his own pleasure (as it would seem from the accounts of his doings that were sent to the Swedish authorities). This kind of operations were organised from the Danish Headquarters and could comprise regular troops, friskytter or a mixture of the two, which seems to have been the most common option. In October 1677 the two Thott brothers (Holger and Tage) that had not already been "arrested" by the Danes like their older brother Knud, were "abducted" by Colonel Barsse's mixed cavalry and friskytter troops that managed to get them over to Landskrona (Landskrone).⁸³⁰ A few months later, Knud Thott himself came to War Commissary Jens Harboe and tried to organise a similar foray into no man's land in order to get his mother, Dorette Rosencrantz, out of Scania.⁸³¹ Harboe reports that "Monsieur Tott" wanted to send out a convoy to "Hikeberg" (Häckeberga) mansion to save his mother but Harboe doubted that it would be possible since that at least one hundred Swedes were stationed there. Eventually, Dorette Rosencrantz and her daughter Jytte Thott, Baron Krabbe's widow, were

⁸²⁸ See p. 211 of this thesis.

⁸²⁹ See: Fabricius III, p. 145. The Swedes saw him as a traitor because he was the Danish king's personal physician.

⁸³⁰ Fabricius III, pp.142-143. See also the Krabbe chapter of this thesis. Harboe's report of the event.

⁸³¹ Jens Harboe to Herman Meyer, 2nd January 1678, Indkomne breve, DRA.

“abducted” by a Danish party in June 1678.⁸³² Similar actions were also reported of in Swedish sources: one of Sven Erlandsson’s informers reported in November 1678 that the troops that had collected some merchants from Lübeck from Ystad (Ysted) had been “snaphaner” except sixteen cavalrymen that the sheriff had brought with him.⁸³³

Consequently, on 11th June 1678 Sten brought in the nobleman Mogens Schuaue and the plebeian Hanß Eggerßen, a court bailiff (“*tingsfoged*”) in Western Göinge (Gynge). Sir Mogens and the rest of the nobility obviously constituted valuable pawns in the hands of the authorities and that being a man of some importance and influence on both sides, he might have interesting information to report. I do not know who Eggerßen was or why Sten brought him in. The only indication of a motive that he gave in his testimony was that he had some knowledge of what renegades from Kristianstad (Christianstad) were telling the Swedes. It might even have been that he came in willingly. Normally the scribes wrote “this or that person *came in* with Lieut. Steensen...” if the person was there of his own free will, but maybe this was not always the case. Eggerßen reported that the Swedish army was spread all over the hundred of Villands (Willanz) and that the Swedes claimed they had 18 000 men but that “there are probably around 11 000, well equipped men...”. Just like Schuaue, Eggerßen claimed that the Swedes were not intent on taking Kristianstad (Christianstad) by force, but they would “lie and starve them out” and try to bomb them out with the artillery on the “Blegedam”. “Renegades” from Kristianstad (Christianstad) were saying that they suffered no lack of beer and bread and that people in there did not suffer more from illness than before. Eggerßen also claimed that the inhabitants went out on the “Berghoff” with the troops and made fun of the enemy.

At about this point in time Sten was also directing some sort of intelligence central near Kristianstad (Christianstad). From the months of June, July, and August there are several reports from him on the situation in that area. In June he reported to Arensdorff that people in the area were making bread from beer dregs and tree leaves

⁸³² Dorette’s sister Mette Rosenkrantz who was the owner of Hækkeberga was deported to Sweden together with her daughter. From there she spied for Knud Thott in exchange for food supplies. See: Thott’s letters, 1678-1679 and Fabricius III, p.144. Eventually all three ladies returned to Scania.

⁸³³ Report from Tunbyholm (Tundbyholm), 20th November 1678, signed by Sven Erlandsson, Skrifvelser till Konungen E-F, SRA.

but that they were all so hopeful and praying to God now that the general (Arensdorff?) was back in the country.⁸³⁴ Nevertheless, Sten kept moving around the land: on the 20th June 1678 War Commissary Jens Harboe reported from Landskrona (Landskrone) to Army Board member Herman Meyer that “Peter Steensen ist auch mit seiner partej bereits wegk.”⁸³⁵ Sten was stationed at Landskrona (Landskrone) but did not spend much time there.

From July 1678 we have two detailed reports from Sten to Arensdorff. In the first, Arensdorff had sent Sten orders to go up to the border area with his men. At his return from this mission Sten despondently declared: “Nothing could be done for the simple reason that the peasants up there are not to be trusted.”⁸³⁶ A little further on in the report, Arensdorff was told that the peasants who were working for Sten as spies in Kristianstad (Christianstad) were not particularly good at their work. Sten concluded in the following tone: “if only I had had a true Dane who was reliable then it would have been possible to get some work done.”⁸³⁷ Sten was a bit ambiguous about the inhabitants of the border areas: he did let them work for him but did not consider them patriotic enough; very often that was what was meant by the expression “being a good Dane/Swede.” Most of the information he sent over to Arensdorff came from peasants. He repeatedly wrote: “I have a peasant who went to Ljungebye” or “My peasant reports that...”. In the first of the two reports Arensdorff was told that Sten’s peasant had talked to a Swede called Billingen who amongst other things was proud to declare that they have driven the “devilish Jutes” back twice.⁸³⁸ Later on the same day the peasant had talked to “Aseenberg” (General Rutger von Ascheberg,

⁸³⁴ Undated report from between 4th and 18th June 1678. Quoted from Fabricius III, p. 166. Two of Sten’s letters to Arensdorf (16th July and 18th July) were inserted into Aage Mønsen Harlof’s reports to the Army Board. Harlof and Sten were consequently co-operating.

⁸³⁵ Jens Harboe to Herman Meyer, LCrone 18th June 678, Indkomne breve, DRA. Harboe did not call Sten a “friskytte” but either just used his name, writing “Peter Steensen” (as in this report) or he wrote “Lieutenant Steensen” as in his letter to his patron Meyer of 4th January 1678 (Indkomne breve, DRA). However, Harboe had a positive attitude to the friskytter and always underlined their importance in his reports to Meyer.

⁸³⁶ ”doeg haffuer Jeg weret der oppe huorum Min Her Generals Breff formelder...saa kunde der Intet udrettes aff orsagen Bønderne Intet er til Troe der oppe” Sten to Arensdorff, 16th July 1678, Indkomne breve 1678; stack 4, M, DRA. Sorts under Aage Mønsen Harlof’s patronymic since Sten’s letter was enclosed in Harlof’s report.

⁸³⁷ ”Jeg haffuer siiden hafft Bønder i den svenske Leger doeg kunde der intet udwittes, men dersom Jeg haffde en Ret dansk Karll som var at Troe skule det vel lade sig giøre.”

⁸³⁸ ”...geffuels Jutarna haffuer fallet uth 2 ganger Men wora haffuer kiört dem ind igen.” The Swedes used to call all Danes (including Scanians) “Jutes” and it was considered a derogatory term; it was even worse to be a Jutish dog than a Danish one.

most presumably). The peasant begged Aseenberg that there might be peace soon and Aseenberg answered that they would know the answer to that soon enough. The informer-peasant insisted and asked if there would be a decisive battle first, but Aseenberg avoided a direct answer and replied that for Christ's sake, they had already beaten the Jutes ten times over. When Aseenberg asked the peasant why he would not do some spy work for the Swedish king the peasant promptly replied that they (the peasants) could not because they were no more trusted than the 'snaphaner'.⁸³⁹

In the second letter Sten reported further attacks on the besieged town and that his peasant had talked to a "controleur" from the nearby coastal town of Åhus (Aahus) and that many small ships had docked there. The peasant had asked the controleur what the ships had come to Aahus for and was told that those were pirate ships.⁸⁴⁰ That Sten made a distinction between peasants and "friskytter" becomes clear from the last part of the second letter where he reported that he had sent two "friskötter" and a "renegade" to the Swedish camp on a little mission.⁸⁴¹

The four terms that were used by Sten to describe the men who were working for him were: "peasants" (bönder), "snaphaner", "friskötter" and "renegades" (overlöbere). The last term was normally used by the Danes to describe deserters of different kinds.⁸⁴² Through Sten's reports we can see how peasants were used as spies and informants on the Danish side, just as Sven Erlandsson's reports show that there were peasants that worked for the other side. Sometimes Sten received information from "snaphaner" instead. The distinction between one and the other does not seem quite clear. "Snaphaner" and "friskytter" were also sometimes mixed up in his writings.

⁸³⁹ "Aseenberg talte med bonden, da bad bonden till at dett matte bliffue freed, huor Aseenberg svarade: 'Ja her bliffuer vell snart' svaret Bonden 'her bliffuer vel försst et stort slag' 'Ja for gud' svaret hand 'wii haffuer slagit hannem tiu ganger.' Aseenberg spurte bonden at huor forre de icke wille giffue Kongen aff Suerrige kundskab, huor till bonden svart at di det ey kunde thi di ey var bedre troet end snaphaner."

⁸⁴⁰ "Liidet dereffter spurte Bonden Controleureren at huad...skulle dere for skiibe...svaret hand det var Capere som var ahnkommen." Sten to Arensdorf, 18th July 1678, enclosed in a report from Aage Monsen Harlof that sorted under M, Indkomne breve 1678; stack 4, M, DRA.

⁸⁴¹ "Jeg sende i dag in offuerlobere med tuende friskötter som berette at aff Cavaleriet er hundrede och tie standarhrer, och en och tiuffue faner foedfolcket."

⁸⁴² An ex prisoner of war reported that during his 3 weeks in the Swedish camp outside Landskrone during the summer of 1677, 20 *overlöberere* (renegades) came over from the Danes: "some went into service with the Swedes, others were sent to Stockholm from where they would be taken to Livonia to go into service there." (Depositiones, mense Junii 1677, no 508, DRA). One of these "renegades" was a lieutenant from Slesvig who told the Swedes that he had killed a man in the Danish camp. The man who left the report was not technically a "renegade" himself since he had been captured by the Swedes and made a POW.

Evidence of Sten's work during that month also come up in an already mentioned letter to Arensdorff from Friskytte Captain Jens Jenssön Stoheby dated 23rd July. In it Jenssön reports of one of his men, Nielß Pers, who had been to Landskrone with "the Lieutenant."⁸⁴³ It seems from Jenssön's letter that Sten and Nielß Pers had guided around one of the king's life guards. The same letter also shows that Sven Erlandsson, the snaphane hunter, knew very well who Pieter Sten was, and where one should look for him.

On 25th July evidence of Sten's work came up in the King's Council. At the time, the Danish king and the main part of the army had set out on an assistance mission to (Christianstad) that was intended to liberate the town from its Swedish besiegers. The Danes were bivouacking at Önnestad (Ønnested) and on 24th it had been decided that they should proceed towards Vä (Wæ) along the road that passed through Böckeboða, Ovesholm, Ormatofta and Mansdala.⁸⁴⁴ But on the morning of the 25th King Christian called together his War Council again, because he had had information from "Lieutenant Peder Stensøn" that it would not be possible for the Danes to march on a united front across the river Wæ because of the peaty consistence of the riverbed.⁸⁴⁵ Friedrich von Arensdorff spoke himself warm for Sten's sake and reminded the council of another occasion on which the bed of the brook that passed through Wæ had caused problems, and he and Herman Meyer agreed that there would be severe problems with communications and provisioning if they chose that road. Eventually it was decided that the Danish army should stay put and the king sent a message to the commander of Kristianstad (Christianstad), General Major von Osten, in which he ordered von Osten to surrender in case there was a chance of obtaining an honourable agreement.⁸⁴⁶ It seems quite evident that Sten played a role that influenced the course of things and that although he was considered nothing but an "angry snaphane" by the Swedes his work was taken seriously enough by the Danish king.

Friedrich von Arensdorff was dismissed from his position shortly after the surrender of Kristianstad (Christianstad) and would soon have to face court charges for having

⁸⁴³ Depositiones 23rd July 1678, DRA.

⁸⁴⁴ These last placenames are rendered in Swedish as Jensen since I am not sure of their Danish names.

⁸⁴⁵ Jensen, p.380.

⁸⁴⁶ Jensen, p.383.

omitted to liberate the strategically important town from the Swedish siege.⁸⁴⁷ The king had left the army at Önnestad (Ønnested) on 30th July, claiming that General Arensdorff annoyed him too much and that no major action would be undertaken anyway, so that he (the king) might just as well return home to Copenhagen.⁸⁴⁸ One of the 76 dubious points that Arensdorff was later asked by the War Council to elucidate, was (No 12):

“Whenever it was decided that there was reconnaissance to be done here or there, *he never set anybody on the task but Lieutenant Peder Sten or the Friskytter* that did not know well enough how to, and who probably did not report anything but what he (Arensdorff) wanted.”⁸⁴⁹

On 4th August Sten was at Hästveda (Hestved) and was about to set out for Sandby (Sandbye).⁸⁵⁰ He reported to Arensdorff who was at the main camp at Önnestad (Önsted) that unfortunately his latest mission had failed: he had tried to send a messenger with a letter through the lines in the company of a “peasant” but the messenger had been taken by the Swedes. He now humbly excused himself and asked the assistance of twenty-four cavalry if he were to try again.

It was evident that Arensdorff was thought by others to have put great trust in Pieter Sten. In the same manner, War Commissary Jens Harboe and General von Löwenhielm employed Sten’s services and spoke well of him. In a letter from 16th August 1678 von Löwenhielm, who was then commander of Landskrona (Landscrone), wrote to the king that he had sent “Lieutenant Peer Steenßen” out for information since the enemy seemed to be on the move from their camp. Now, Steensen had find out whether this was correct and to report directly back to “His Royal Majesty”.⁸⁵¹ That is evidence enough that Pieter Sten was thought of as a respectable and trustworthy man in some, rather high circles. It is also evident that the Danish king knew perfectly who he was.

⁸⁴⁷ Jensen, p.472.

⁸⁴⁸ Jensen, p.383. Jensen claimed that the real reason Christian V left was that he felt too ashamed to be present when Kristianstad would be forced to surrender.

⁸⁴⁹ Jensen, p.476. Jensen then comments: “Lieutenant Peder Stensøn was well-known as one of the best and most courageous young officers of the army, and the fact that snaphaner were used to obtain information was only natural.”

⁸⁵⁰ Pieter Sten to Friderich von Arensdorff, 4th August 1678. 468 Krigskollegiet (Landetaten) 1660-1678 Indkomne breve 1678 S4. Breve:71.

⁸⁵¹ von Löwenhielm to the king, 16th August 1678, Indkomne breve, DRA. Generally, von Löwenhielm just wrote “we have received information that...” or “a renegade has been brought in today...” but not by whom. He mentions only the two names of “Lieutenant Steenßen” and “Colonel Suanwedel” in connection with the phrase “collect information” (kundskab). See also: von Löwenhielm to the king July-August 1678, Indkomne breve, DRA, esp. 22nd August in which he mentions Schwanewedel.

1679

By now, Sten was a “ritmester”, a commissioned officer with his own company of dragoons. The Reverend Jacobsen called him “ritmester” in his generally anti-snaphane chronicle of the Scanian War.⁸⁵² Although Jacobsen did not save any kind words for snaphaner in general, he expressed admiration of Sten and respectfully called him a “Danish officer”. In the same manner he did not seem to consider Schwanewedel’s sharpshooters as less respectable than other soldiers.⁸⁵³ At the beginning of April 1679 Pieter Sten was on the island of Bornholm and on the 6th of that month he left in the company of an anonymous captain of the friskytter.⁸⁵⁴ On 14th May 1679 district governor Knud Thott reported to the king that “Peiter Stensön” had just come back to Landskrona (Landscrone) from Göinge (Gønge) where he had tried to catch a treacherous clergyman and schoolmaster. Unfortunately, the mission had not been completed since the peasants had been doing turns as guards on the churchyards⁸⁵⁵, assumably in order to protect the clergy. Pieter Sten had asked Thott for thirty horses in order to be able to return and catch the traitors and now, Thott furthered this request to the king. Around the middle of June 1679, Scania was almost depleted of Danish regular troops. The Danes had been informed that France was planning to enter the war on the Swedish side and that a French invasion via Westphalia was imminent. At that news, the Danish king had sent the six regiments that had spent the winter in Landskrona (Landscrone) and Helsingborg across the sea to Holsten, so that all that was left of the Danish army in Scania was Schwanewedel’s regiment (the 3rd National Regiment of Jutland) and his sharpshooters.⁸⁵⁶ When this became known to the Swedes (through the testimonies of captives), an officer (general-adjutant) by the name of Hörman (Hörmand in the Danish sources) set out with one hundred horsemen from the Swedish camp in the hundred of Villands (Willanz). Hörman’s aim was to take the Danish artillery and horses away and also the cattle the Danes kept on the pastures outside Landskrona’s (Landscrone’s) city

⁸⁵² Jacobsen, p.229. In the same manner Winslow (II, p.34) called him “Ryttmestare Peder Stensen”. This passage is almost identical in Jacobsen and Winslow. It can only be concluded that they based their accounts on the same source, assumably a newsheet, song or pamphlet.

⁸⁵³ Jacobsen, pp.229-230.

⁸⁵⁴ “Bornholm 160”, a sheet with annotations about a letter from district governor Giedde of 6th April 1679, 469:83, DRA.

⁸⁵⁵ Knud Thott to the king, Landscrone 14th May 1679, 469:831, DRA.

⁸⁵⁶ See: Jacobsen, p.229 and Jensen, p.453. Jacobsen claims that Schwanewedel only had 60 cavalrymen.

walls.⁸⁵⁷ On his way from the Swedish camp, Hörman and his men were sighted by Sten and a couple of his men who were in the village of Klinta (Klinte) by the Ringsjö (Ringsjöe) lake that day (15th June 1679).⁸⁵⁸ Sten immediately sent warnings to Landskrona (Landskrone) from where Schwanewedel set out with cavalry and sharpshooters the very same hour.⁸⁵⁹ At 6 o'clock in the morning of 16th June Schwanewedel's troop attacked the Swedes at Bälteberga (Belteberge), first Schwanewedel himself with the sharpshooters and their long guns and then in a second moment, the regular cavalry attacked. Eventually the Danes managed to send the remains of the Swedish troop back to the main camp.⁸⁶⁰ Whether Pieter Sten took part in this battle we do not know.

Sten and the Clergy

A clergyman whose wartime experiences can help us throw some light on Pieter Sten's activities is Mats Hansson (Schowgaard) of Västra Hoby and Håstad, also known under his Danish name Mads Hansen (Schowgaard).⁸⁶¹ In spite of the promise of general amnesty that had been included in the peace treaty, the church of Sweden instituted a commission that was to make an inquiry into the case of those clergymen who were suspected of having "totally forgotten their oath, fidelity and duty". Those who were found guilty were not to be punished but at least a clear distinction between guilty and non-guilty would have been made.⁸⁶² In 1682 Schowgaard's case was investigated and as was then wont, he sent a letter of defense, plus a signed testimony by three of his parishioners to the commission. In both these letters "Per Stensson" plays a leading role. M.H. Schowgaard claimed that during the war, the "officer of the snaphaner Stensson" had forced him to wade forwards and backwards across a river with water to his neck because he refused to spy on the Swedes.⁸⁶³ Schowgaard had had further problems with Sten when he was transferred to the village of Örtofta (Ørtofte), where he not only had to share the parsonage with a troop of "snaphaner"

⁸⁵⁷ Jacobsen, p.229.

⁸⁵⁸ Jacobsen (p.229) claims he had two men with him, Winslow (p.34) that there were three other men.

⁸⁵⁹ This episode is mentioned by Jacobsen (pp. 229-230), Winslow (II, pp.34-35) and Jensen (pp.453-454) but only Jacobsen and Winslow mention who it was that spotted Hörmand's troop. According to Jacobsen Schwanewedel's troop comprised 60 horsemen and 16-18 sharpshooters. Winslow (p.34) stated their numbers to 60 horsemen and some sharpshooters. According to Jensen they were 100 all in all.

⁸⁶⁰ Jacobsen, p.230 and Jensen p. 454.

⁸⁶¹ His case is also mentioned by Åberg (1951), p.152. In Åberg he is called Herr Matthias of Hoby.

⁸⁶² See: Alenäs (2008), p.151.

⁸⁶³ Alenäs (2008), p.166.

but where also a huge cavalry troop under Sten took away all the oxen in the village.⁸⁶⁴ Schowgaard and the peasants then betook themselves to the Danish enclave of Landskrona (Landskrone) to inquire after their cattle but Schowgaard was arrested and had to stay there. From his arrest in Landskrona (Landskrone) he then went to Copenhagen “to procure foodstuffs”.⁸⁶⁵ The commission that held the inquiry were not too convinced that Schowgaard had not stayed voluntarily with the Danes, but at least he was allowed to keep his calling until his death in 1696.

Naturally, Schowgaard’s and his parishioners’ letters are coloured by a desire to free Schowgaard from all connections with the Danes and the friskytter, and to insert Schowgaard into the “us”-part of an official “us” and “them” discourse. At this point I would like to stress that the general Swedish discourse has tended to accept at face value such statements as those that characterise the letters to the Ecclesiastical Commission from Schowgaard and his colleagues. I then refer to the so-called memories of the ministers of the church, Severin Cavallin, Alf Åberg etc. By that I do not mean to belittle the personal experiences of the letter writers, because I am convinced that some of them were made to suffer horribly by the snaphaner, but I think it important that the frames within which the ministers were free to write were narrow. And that whereas complaints in the Danish archives often state that the letter-writers had no idea whether the “bad guys” who had threatened or maltreated them were regulars or friskytter, that does not seem to be the case with this kind of complaints.

Naturally, Schowgaard wanted to continue his calling in Scania and during the war he had only tried to save himself, his family, and his parishioners. He had no other choice but to position himself within the official Swedish discourse if he wanted to keep his position – it is highly unlikely that he would have used the same tone if he had written to the Danish authorities. Firstly, he would not have used the term “snaphaner” and especially not about a regular officer like Pieter Sten, whom he also would not have called by his Swedish name “Per Stensson”. And he would perhaps not have claimed that the snaphaner “took away” his oxen but that they were confiscated. It is evident from his letter that he and his parishioners were aware that

⁸⁶⁴ Alenäs (2008), p.166: “Då kom en stor avdelning ryttare under ledning av Stensson och tog alla oxar i byn.”

⁸⁶⁵ Alenäs (2008), p.166.

the Danish authorities were responsible for the “snaphaner” and especially officers like Sten who in fact, was enrolled in the regular army and not among the friskytter.⁸⁶⁶ They also seem to have known that the cattle had been taken to Landskrona (Landskrone). As in Schowgaard’s defence letter, in Swedish propaganda the snaphaner were very often made out to have acted independently of the Danish army or not to have any connection to the Danish troops whatsoever. The oxen from Örtofta (Ørtofte) were confiscated by the Danish army, not “taken away” by a troop of robbers. Pieter Sten had strict orders to make the clergy report what they knew to the Danish authorities; else he was supposed to arrest them. He was *not* authorised to use torture but keeping someone to the neck in water was probably not seen as violent enough a method to pass for abuse against a clergyman, or so Sten must have hoped.⁸⁶⁷ In a way, the Swedes had to make believe that the snaphaner acted without orders. It would not have been possible to make the snaphaner pass for robbers and assassins if their connection to the Danish authorities had not been obscured. And a man like Schowgaard participated in the making of this discourse because he had to be politically correct in order to be able to carry on the existence he was used to and had chosen as his path in life. For all that he probably did not like Sten’s lot who had been so rude to him, he would not have expressed himself in the same terms to the Danish authorities and what he felt in his heart is totally unknown to us. Nevertheless, Schowgaard’s and his parishioners’ letters are interesting because they provide us with information about Swedish discourse propagation *at the same time* as it throws more light on Sten’s actual activities: he tried to recruit spies and to collect information about the enemy, which seems to have been his speciality, but he also executed the more ordinary friskytte task of collecting cattle and provisioning for the Danish army.

The Reverend Sigvard/Siwert Juul of Stora Harrie and then Norrvidinge also ended up in front of the ecclesiastic treason tribunal after the war. And even more than

⁸⁶⁶ As far as we know today. It might also have been the case that he, like Nicolaus Hermansen, sometimes resulted as registered in the regular army, sometimes in the friskytte corps.

⁸⁶⁷ Very often the authorised friskytter or regular officers who worked with the friskytter used that kind of methods to “pressurise” people who would not work for the Danes actively. When it came to more violent pressurising and interrogation methods, they seem to have passed the tasks to non-authorised colleagues. At least in the case of the Swede who got roasted at Lövestad it seems as if the friskytter were present, but the “peasants” did the torturing bits. The friskytter risked being court-marshalled if they were caught torturing the enemy.

Schowgaard, his path had been crossed by Pieter Sten during the war. Or perhaps, it was Juul who had crossed Sten's path: when the Swedish army bivouacked at Herrevadskloster a troop of soldiers were sent out by the king to pick Juul up and accompany him back to the camp.⁸⁶⁸ It was not strange at all that the Swedish king wanted to see Juul, because they had made friends during the king's stay at the castle of Næs (modern-day Trolleås). Juul had come there to ask for help because his parish was totally devastated by the war, and he could not work there anymore. The Swedish king then promptly found him a new position in the safer village of Norrvidinge⁸⁶⁹ and shortly afterwards the king came to stay with Juul in the parsonage. Unfortunately, the king's visit was interrupted by a fire that burnt the whole parsonage down, because the bell-ringer-cum-schoolmaster had been "careless" with the fire,⁸⁷⁰ but the friendship remained. Now the soldiers were to escort Juul to the king, but while they took a beer-break on the way, Juul was informed by the boy who had run to fetch the beer that "Lieutenant Peder Steenson and a strong troop had come out from Landskrona and were blocking the road waiting for our troop".⁸⁷¹ Juul promptly informed the commanding officer who decided to take another road so that they all arrived happily at the camp.

Unfortunately Sten found out exactly how their ambush had been betrayed and from then on (according to Juul) he had been filled with "an unchristian hatred" of Juul and had seen to it that Juul had been arrested.⁸⁷² The occasion to do so came some time later when, during the Sunday service, two Danish officers walked into the church with a decree that Juul was required to read out to the parishioners. He was also asked to pray for the king of Denmark, but when Juul got into the pulpit he tried to be as neutral as possible and said that he had sworn an oath to the king of Sweden whom he was also paid by and for that reason he admonished the parishioners to pray for the Swedish king but he also declared that they should not exclude His Majesty the King

⁸⁶⁸ According to Sigvard Juul's report to the treason commission and that is now to be found in the regional archives in Lund (Landsarkivet i Lund). See Alenäs (2008), pp.164-165.

⁸⁶⁹ Alenäs, (p.160) dates this event to 1677. Possibly it was in June that year.

⁸⁷⁰ Alenäs, p.160.

⁸⁷¹ Alenäs, pp.164-165.

⁸⁷² Alenäs, p. 165. Court scribe Jacob Dominico later testified that Sten had a personal grudge against Juul. On one occasion Dominico had tried to speak to "lieutenant pähr Stensson who had arrested the honourable and learned Herr Sigvard Jull", asking him whether Juul were to remain in custody forever, but Sten had grimly replied "no, he'll never be released, nor will he ever become a man of the church again, actually he should rather lose his life."

of Denmark or any other crowned head from their other prayers or the Lord's Prayer.⁸⁷³ Herr Juul was consequently physically removed from his position and from his home. In his parishioners' testimonies it was claimed that he had been "caught by the snaphaner"⁸⁷⁴ but his friend, court scribe Jacob Dominico declared that he was "forcefully collected by Danish troops from his altar",⁸⁷⁵ and sheriff Matts Danielsson testified that Juul had been brought to Landskrona (Landskrone) by the Danes. Then again, Juul's colleague Torbiorn Joenson Varberg testified that Juul had been taken "in custody" by "Danish troops" that had also plundered his house. Varberg specified the "Danish troops" as consisting of "Peder Steenson with his party of sharpshooters and snaphaner"⁸⁷⁶. Towards the end of the letter Varberg claimed that the "friskytter" had taken Juul's belongings while he was away.⁸⁷⁷ At the beginning of this paragraph I wrote that Juul had been "physically removed" exactly because I wanted to stress how easy it is to describe the same event in various ways. To be caught by robbers is one thing. To be arrested by the military another. But Sten was described as the leader of a pack of robbers by some and as a Danish officer by others. In this case I am not trying to depict either Juul or Sten as heroes or villains because I do not think either of them fits into clear categories of the kind. To me it seems obvious that they were both trying to do their jobs and that they bore a personal grudge to each other.

Some circles of Swedish society liked to think of Scanians who fought on "the wrong" side as robbers and thugs. Consequently, some testimonies of the Juul-Sten business adhered to the kind of rhetoric that established the devilish snaphaner cliché, either because they really believed in it or because they wanted to improve Herr Sigvard's chances with the Swedes. I think it would be impossible to classify the sort of "snaphaner" that appear in this case as outlaws sprung from a woodland republic. Pieter Sten took the first occasion he could get back at Juul, but he did so in accordance with Danish military practices and with the approval of his superiors. During that period Sten seemed to have Landskrona (Landskrone) as his base, from

⁸⁷³ Alenäs, p. 165. Åberg (1951, p.152) briefly mentions this case but not on what sources he relied. He claimed that Juul had refused to pray for King Christian but as Alenäs pointed out, Juul did not exactly refuse but tried to include King Christian too. Maybe he would have got away with it if Sten had not had his eyes on him already.

⁸⁷⁴ "af de danske bortfört till Landskrone", See: Alenäs, p.162.

⁸⁷⁵ "af di danske partier med magt borthembt ifrån hans sockne altar" Court scribe Jacob Dominico's version quoted by Alenäs, p.162.

⁸⁷⁶ "Peder Steensen med sit parti aff skötter och snaphaner...", Alenäs, p.162.

⁸⁷⁷ Alenäs, p.162.

there he rode out on missions and then returned with information, prisoners or provisioning.⁸⁷⁸ Jacob Dominico's testimony provides us with further details of Sten's work on the day that Juul was arrested:

"Peder Steenson came to Dagstrup with his party of sharpshooters and snaphaner and gathered the peasants, both from my parish and other ones, and with coercion made them help his party break down the churchyard wall and when something went against them, they took Her Siguert and brought him to Lantzcrone".⁸⁷⁹

The churchyards were often used as bastions by both warring parties⁸⁸⁰ and consequently Sten's men were trying to destroy a potential Swedish stronghold when they pulled down the wall that surrounded the church and the churchyard. This and other similar tasks were executed not because they made part a series of acts of senseless violence committed by a robber band (as one might be tempted to believe if one accepts the devilish snaphaner discourse). Sten did not make his men and the villagers break down stone walls for his own high pleasure. He probably arrested Juul with great pleasure, but he did it according to the book.⁸⁸¹

Some other clergymen who were suspected of treason against the Swedes and lost their positions after the war wrote to the authorities to plead for mercy, claiming that not only had some of their colleagues been killed brutally by snaphaner but they themselves had been threatened and plundered by "the most wrathful of all Snaphane leaders, Pehr Steenson".⁸⁸² Two other gentlemen who did not care much for Sten reported to the Swedish authorities about "the most wrathful of all Snaphane leaders, Pehr Steenson...who boasted that the Danes had authorised him to do whatever he

⁸⁷⁸ Juul claimed that Sten rode out from Landskrona (Landskrone) to organise his ambush near modern-day Trolleholm (then Erichsholm). The other testimonies claim that Sten brought his prisoners to Landskrona (Landskrone), among them Juul.

⁸⁷⁹ Alenäs, p.162. Torbiorn Joenson Varberg to the ecclesiastical treason court, 2nd March 1680.

⁸⁸⁰ See: Fabricius III, p.14 and p.150. At Örkeljunga (Ørkellunge) that Charles XI considered to be the area at the highest risk of snaphane attacks, he stationed a garrison of 100 soldiers inside the churchyard walls.

⁸⁸¹ From his prison in Landskrona (Landskrone) Juul was sent to Copenhagen where he was set free on bail. Soon enough he ended up in a pub brawl where he had fought with another Scanian clergyman, Christian Sørensen Giersing from Dalköpinge (Dalkøbing) because he (Juul) called himself "an honest Swedish man". Eventually Juul was freed from all charges by the Swedish ecclesiastical treason commission. See: Alenäs, p.163.

⁸⁸² "dhen argaste eblant alla Snaphane förare, Pehr Steenson...". See: Hazelius, p.150. The clergymen who had been killed were Herr Madtz in Helliaryd who had been "dragged" to death (presumably after a horse) and Herr Johan Saur in Gudhmantorp who had been bound between his horses, dragged between them, and beaten until he died. It is not clear which "snaphaner" killed Herr Madtz of Helliaryd but Saur was arrested by Pieter Sten and died in prison according to the records. According to the clergymen's testimonies, Sten claimed that if they did not obey him then he would practise all sorts of "tyranny" against them as soon as he found them at home and that he was authorised to do whatever he liked.

liked”.⁸⁸³ However, Sthen Jacobsen, the vicar of Kågeröd (Kogered) who generally did not have much love to spare for the snaphaner, greatly appreciated Pieter Sten and concluded that Sten had indeed showed the Swedes what a man he was.⁸⁸⁴

Conclusions:

In this section I have tried to elucidate how the very same person could be described in a radically different light by the two warring sides in the conflict and by those who wanted or needed to ingratiate themselves with the one or other side. Pieter Sten was very much employed by the Danish authorities, and he is reported of as a regular Danish Lieutenant and Major in the Danish sources, at first frequently in connection with Colonel Brahe and Sten’s border troops, then his name is more and more often connected with that of General Arensdorff, although he was officially registered in H. Trolle’s and then J.C Bahsum’s regiments. Even Sthen Jacobsen who loathed “snaphaner” in general spoke of Sten as an exceptionally courageous soldier. Nevertheless, he was often classified as a dangerous criminal in the pro-Swedish sources. This might have been because Sten was Scanian and the Swedes consequently classified him as a traitor, since they felt he should have been bound to the Crown of Sweden by oath.⁸⁸⁵ Possibly, it was the kind of military missions he undertook that branded him as a “snaphane” to the Swedes, or a combination of these two facts. We do not know for certain where he hailed from.

The Swedish army increasingly employed men like Pieter Sten and troops like the King’s Friskytter during the wars that followed the Scanian War, when the commanders and soldiers set the lesson they had learnt in Scania into practise on the other side of the Baltic.⁸⁸⁶ An example of a Swede in exactly the same line of trade as Pieter Sten is Stephan Löfving whom the historian Bengt Liljegren describes as “one of the most illustrious spies in the history of the Swedish intelligence service”.⁸⁸⁷ Löfving’s tasks included spying behind enemy lines (the Russians in Finland), gathering men who were willing to fight for Sweden and planning attacks against the

⁸⁸³ Letter from Abraham Larson (Larsen) Rosenlund vicar of Torrlösa and Jacob Sörenson (Sørensen) vicar of Reslöv to the Swedish king, no date, ”Till Skånes historia under övergångstiden 1658–1710, 1. Skånska kriget och snaphanefejden 1676–79”, pp.104-112 in *Samlingar till Skånes historia fornkunskap och beskrifning*, Martin Weibull ed., Lund 1871. See also: Stig Alenäs (2008), p.159.

⁸⁸⁴ Jacobsen, pp.105-106.

⁸⁸⁵ A note written with a pencil in the margin of Hirsch & Hirsch (p.82) adds that “Peeter Steensen” was born in Norway in 1656.

⁸⁸⁶ Lars Ericson Wolke (p. 109 and p.180.) stresses this fact.

⁸⁸⁷ Liljegren, p.82. In his day, Löfving was called a party runner or “partigångare” and Liljegren translates that as “spy” although spying was only one of the tasks of a partigångare who usually also partook in active combat.

enemy. He could pass for a native Russian officer and worked as a pirate and took prisoners that he handed over to the authorities.⁸⁸⁸ Löfving, who was a native of Finland, was called “Our beloved Löfving” by Charles XII and was certainly not seen as a snaphane, although the Russians might have considered him one.

Simon Andersen

Introduction

The main aim of this section is to illustrate how a captain of the friskytter worked on a day-to-day basis and what his relations to the authorities were. Part of the work of a friskytte was also to remain in continuous movement, either on missions independent of the regular army or in the traces of it and sometimes in unison with it and I have tried to stress that in this thesis and in particular in this chapter. Simon Andersen is an interesting case in that his background as a yeoman farmer is comparatively well-documented and his later career as a registered friskytte is documented and described by both sides of the conflict. During the Danish campaign of 1678 he was responsible for all the friskytter in the district of Christianstad and Blekinge.⁸⁸⁹ He is also a well-known personage in local legends in which he goes under the names of Simon Snaphane, Tullsagra Simon or Simon Böse, “Angry Simon”.⁸⁹⁰ Although Simon Andersen allegedly worked from home and the bullet holes in the rests of what was his house are still shown, as are the remains of his underground passageway, the sources prove that he and his men were in continuous movement great part of the time, often preceding or following the Danish main army. A comparison between Danish War Council records and the operations of Andersen’s company around the time of the Danish attempt to liberate Kristianstad (Christianstad) in 1678 that Andersen’s men (like Pieter Sten’s) were employed on a government mission: the goals they attacked, like the heights with the Swedish redoubts outside Kristianstad

⁸⁸⁸ Liljegren, pp.82-85.

⁸⁸⁹ “Troupen der Freishützen”, (april 1678?), 468 Krigskollegiet (Landetaten) 1660–1678, Uanbringelige registrerede sager, Nov-Dec 1678+Div: 85, DRA.

⁸⁹⁰ See pp.22-27 of Hedwall’s booklet for the legends concerning Simon from Tullsager alias Captain Simon/Simen alias Snaphane Simon/Simon Snaphane alias Simon Böse. Hedwall made the interesting annotation that the different names that Simon Andersen is known under correspond to different Scania regions: whereas Simon Böse is characteristic of the Andrarum area where he in fact caused a lot of trouble for the inhabitants when the Danish authorities would not pay him his wages. He is mainly remembered as Simon Snaphane or Captain Simon in the Tullåkra area and as Tullsagra Simon (Simon from Tullsåker) in nonnegative legends that that did not originate in his direct home area. Another name for the same man that we meet in the sources is “Tullsagre-Svennen”, the lad from Tullsagra, which also is a name that indicates that Simon at least looked young (See: Johnsson, p.212.).

(Christianstad) were first discussed by the lords of the War Council, then Andersen, Sten and other small and swift units effectuated these strategies.

Yeoman farmer and Friskytte

Simon Andersen was born in Western Vram in the hundred of Gärds around 1648. His father Anders Simonsen came from an old family that had some noble ancestry and at the time of Simon's birth his father was the owner of both the massive modern-day Tullsåkra 2 farm, also known as the "Snaphane farmstead" and the Östra Vram 11 farmstead.⁸⁹¹ Less is known of Simon's mother Bolle but perhaps the Skettiljunga 18 farmstead that was first registered on Simon (in 1674) and then on his sister Hanna and her husband (1699) came from Bolla's family.⁸⁹² These people were not common peasants.⁸⁹³ It could possibly be hypothesised that Simon Andersen himself was a loser who turned to the friskytter in search of a more adventurous life and to get rid of problems at home. Maybe he had had to sign the Skettiljunga farm over to his sister because he could not manage it? We do not know, and it is highly unlikely that we will ever find out. At the time Simon Andersen was twenty-eight and according to the standards of his society and time, he should have been well on his way in life as a farmer with a family of his own. But Andersen was not married, and the Swedes called him a "farmerboy" even when he had passed thirty.⁸⁹⁴ Nevertheless it is quite possible that he only gave up Skettiljunga to fight for his king.

Andersen's career in the King's Friskytter Corps can be traced from 20th February 1677 when he and Jens Jenssön were in Copenhagen and obtained authorisation from the Danish king to "persecute all native Swedes and supporters of the Swedes in Scania who try to betray and ruin their brothers and our faithful peasants and

⁸⁹¹ The lands that belonged to Tullsåkra 2 in Anders and Simon's days have since been split into four parts of which two still belong to their family.

⁸⁹² For details on the genealogy see: Flensmarck, p.199. Flensmarck's account of Simon Andersen's life is based on Fabricius and Hedwall to the point that he almost copies their words but when it comes to genealogy Flensmarck who is essentially a genealogist (and a descendant of the Tullsåkra family), contributes with some new pieces of information that he has published in various genealogy journals earlier.

⁸⁹³ But nor were many others that Scandinavian historians classify as "peasants" in their writings in English: the Scandinavian "bonde" that is normally used in texts in Scandinavian could mean any sort of person who owns or rents land that he or his employees work, whether that land be a mere rented strip that was cultivated by the "bonde" who rented it or a huge estate owned by what would rather be called a gentleman farmer. The Tullsåkra family were well-to-do freeholders and were registered as "skattebönder" – freeholders who had to pay tax and fulfil certain conditions towards the state.

⁸⁹⁴ "bondedräng"

inhabitants...”.⁸⁹⁵ By the time Andersen and Jenssön obtained their authorisations they already had recruited groups of men that would constitute their companies.⁸⁹⁶ It is not unlikely that they had already been operating for a season and that they had gone to Copenhagen with some of their men to find safe winter quarters. Several of Captain Simon’s muster rolls have been conserved in the Danish National Archives and later published. Most rolls include well over one hundred names, in May 1679 as many as one hundred and sixty.⁸⁹⁷ The last muster roll from 10th May 1680 was signed by sheriff (ridefoged) Johan Hacksen and only included thirty-one men, including officers.⁸⁹⁸ On that last list the places of origin of the twenty-eight non-commissioned soldiers are also stated, which was the exception rather than the rule on the other muster rolls. Out of these twenty-eight men, eight came from Häglinge (Heylinge), five hailed from Vram like Captain Simon himself, five others from Äspinge (Espinge), two from Äsphult (Espel), two from Rörum (Rørum), one from Vanneberga (Vannebjerg), one from Göinge (Gønge/Gynge), one from Nävlinge (Neflinge), one from Skarhult (Scharelte), one from Gammelstorp (Gammelstrup) in Blekinge (Bleging) and one from Stehag (Steha). Other places of origin that turn up in Captain Simon’s muster rolls are: Hörröd (Hørridt), Venestad (Wennesta), Sönnarslöv (Sønderslef), Steensma (?), Hurva (Hurre), Lybye (?), Långaröd (Lungerød), Huaröd (Huerød), Everöd (Efuerød), Frenninge, Gunnerup, Angvolte (?), Lund, Blekinge (Bleging), Frigestad (?), Segen (?), Tuetarp, Lie, Kulde, Mjölkelånga (Michelange), Hindbye, Hald and then there was one of Captain Simon’s closest men, “vagtmaster”, non-commissioned officer Morten Jyde whose surname betrayed his Jutish origins. But except for Morten Jyde and a few men from the region of Bleging/Blekinge, and a Jens who maybe hailed from the city of Lund on the southwestern plains, most of the men whose place of origin was indicated came from areas close to Tullsåkra. Captain Simon often appeared in the company of his calmer colleague Jens Jenssön who was head of the Stoheby friskytter in central Scania and for a while also of all friskytter in the Landskrona (Landscrone) district, whereas Captain Simon’s men tended to

⁸⁹⁵ Hedwall, p.5.

⁸⁹⁶ In fact, the authorisation speaks of “Andersen and Jensøn and *their men*”.

⁸⁹⁷ See: Hedwall, p.36. The muster rolls from 1679-80 can be found on pp.37-42.

⁸⁹⁸ In a document from 7th June 1678 (468:99) “Johan Haxen” is declared to serve “Thro Königl. Maytt für einen ReitWogt auff Wers= und Frosteherrit”.

concentrate their operations around the Linderöd ridge when they were not ordered to the Christianstad area.⁸⁹⁹

During the autumn of 1677 Kristianstad (Christianstad) was under siege again and it was Simon Andersen's main task to collect provisioning for the beleaguered city where the soldiers were eating mouldy malt.⁹⁰⁰ Andersen's company gathered a considerable amount of provisioning in the Vram area and on 29 November the commander of the Kristianstad (Christianstad) fortress, general major Carl Henrik von der Osten and six hundred of his men managed not only to break through the Swedish lines but also to overcome the Swedish troops at Åsum so that they could meet with Simon Andersen and his men and transport the provisioning back into the fortress. It is quite obvious that Andersen might have annoyed the people he got the provisioning from, but it is just as obvious that he was doing so because he was following orders and that Andersen and von der Osten were working together. On 22nd January the commander managed to break out and collect new provisioning from Andersen's deposit at Skepparslöv (Skibberslev) and then bring it all back with the help of Andersen's men again. Hedwall hypothesises that Simon Andersen was one of the brains behind the break-through in the other direction a month later when reinforcements and money were sent out from Landskrona (Landscrone).⁹⁰¹ General Major Meerheim himself accompanied the troop to the Getinge (Giddinge) bridge, then they continued through Western Vram and Vä (Wæ) towards Kristianstad (Christianstad) where they charged at the Swedish guards at Långebro (Laangebroe), broke through the lines and managed to get into the city. Whether Andersen or any other friskytter played any role for that operation we do not know. What we do know is that Simon Andersen and his men worked intensively with intelligence activities in the area during the summer of 1678.

⁸⁹⁹ See: "Troupen der Freishützen", (april 1678?), 468 Krigskollegiet (Landetaten) 1660–1678, Uanbringelige registrerede sager, Nov-Dec 1678+Div: 85, DRA. Andersen and Jenssön were mentioned together in the Royal authorisation letters and turned up together for payment of money and provisions both in Copenhagen and Landscrone. Their names tend to be mentioned after one another in orders issued by the authorities to the friskytter, Andersen first and then Jenssön/Jensen. If I claim that Jenssön was the calmer of the two then it is because his reports to the authorities (among the Depositiones etc.) seem calmer than his colleague's. Jenssön was convinced that the Lord would help the righteous and that the fact that most of the population supported the Danes would be enough to win the war. Andersen often threatened those who did not do as he liked with the hounds of hell.

⁹⁰⁰ Hedwall, p.6.

⁹⁰¹ Hedwall, p.7.

Three of Andersen's reports to Arensdorff have been conserved in the Danish National Archives from that period.⁹⁰² A preceding correspondence between Andersen and the man he calls his "benefactor" can be assumed from references to earlier letters but unfortunately, I have not managed to track them down, if they are still to be found in the archives. Simon Andersen did not date his reports but the clerks at the Danish headquarters normally wrote the time of delivery and from where the observations in the report had been made. Unfortunately, the dates are nevertheless not quite clear in this case. Surrounding events and the collocation in the archives fit the letters into the period from the beginning of June to the beginning of the war. Fabricius reported that one of Andersen's letters was registered as "delivered" on 20th June and the other could be dated to sometime *after* 16th June. It seems as if Fabricius referred to the letter that Hedwall mentions as registered on 10th June, but it is not very clear. Hedwall then continues to one letter that had an annotation on its back that said that the observations at "Auss" (assumably modern-day Åhus) had been made in the evening of the 16th June and that Captain Simon was at Långaröd in Färs (Fers) when he wrote the report and then Hedwall also quotes a letter that he dated to "sometime during June".⁹⁰³ He claimed that Andersen's report about the sharpshooters that had escaped from Uhlfeld's troops can be dated to 10th June but then Uhlfeld's warrant for the same men was dated 12th July. Why would Uhlfeld have waited a whole month if he was interested in getting hold of the rascals? Uhlfeld was a highly intelligent man, and he would not have waited. The relationship between the different reports and their dating is consequently not certain. Andersen's and Uhlfeld's reports on the four sharpshooters should surely be connected closer in time. The annotation from 16th June should maybe be ascribed to the totally undated letter since the most important piece of information in it is that the Swedish troop that had bivouacked inside the churchyard at Åhus (Auss in this source) had marched on towards Malmö (Malmø) "tonight which is Tuesday night". But in that case the clerks messed the dates up. Both Pieter Sten and the scribes who wrote the

⁹⁰² Two of these are mentioned by Fabricius, III, pp.164.165, footnote 12. I assume that Fabricius meant the letter that mentions the four escapees, since his wording is similar to Simon Andersen's. Fabricius also refers to Andersen's letter as if they were to be found in the "Krigsk. i. S." collection but today the originals are among the Indkomne Breve in the Danish National Archives. Fabricius writes in the footnote that one letter was delivered on 20th June and the other was written after 16th June, but he does not go into detail. I do not know which one of the remaining two letters Fabricius had read or if maybe, he found one that is no longer there.

⁹⁰³ Hedwall, p.12.

Depositiones reports dated this event to 19th June 1678 and that is probably the correct dating.⁹⁰⁴

In the first (?) letter from this period, that is undated but registered as having arrived at HQ on 10th June 1678, Andersen communicates that four of his men who had been Swedish prisoners had returned. Nills Skytt, Faihre Murtensen, Esbiørn Jacobsen and Peer (Peder Nelsen?) had been captured by the Swedes and forced to take service among Ebbe Uhlfeld's sharpshooters, troops that specialised in turning "snaphaner" against "snaphaner".⁹⁰⁵ While the four men were captives their old boss managed to send messages to them and encouraged them to take advantage of their experience gathering as much information about the Swedish camp as possible and then try to sneak away. And as Andersen states in his letter, since these were "honest and faithful men" who wanted His Majesty to be well informed, they did so. Not only did they manage to escape and bring useful information with them, but they also stole five beautiful horses, four of Uhlfeld's own rifles and a military jacket.⁹⁰⁶ Andersen preferred not to mention the latter details to his patron. However, the escapees informed their king and his servants at the headquarters about the latest Swedish troop movements, about Swedish plans to storm Kristianstad (Christianstad), how many cannons the Swedes had and that they were considering "shooting fire into the city" ("God forbid", as Andersen commented), that there had been approximately eighteen thousand Swedish soldiers but that four thousand of them had been sent as reinforcements to Gothenburg. Andersen assured Arensdorff that he would obtain further information when he talked to the men himself. Naturally, Ebbe Uhlfeld was annoyed and sent out warrants for the fugitives. A letter to district judge Tønneßen from 12th July in which Uhlfeld asked that the "treacherous sharpshooters" that had run away and gone over to the enemy should be asked publicly to present themselves to the authorities and if they did not do so their names should be stuck onto the

⁹⁰⁴ Depositio 24 juni 1678, 468:99: "Peder Nelsen aff Christianstad Ebbe Ulfelds Skytte gek fra di svenshe leyer forleden den 19 om natten."

⁹⁰⁵ The peace time occupations of these four men are stated in Ebbe Uhlfeld's "wanted" decree of 12th July 1678 (Hedwall, p.9) that was sent to the assize judges (häradshövdingar): Peder Nelsen had been in the service of district governor Durell, Faiher Murtensen had worked as a forester at Hindsjöe (Hindsjö?) and Esbiørn Jacobsen as a sharpshooter (forsuersskytt). Nills Skytt's profession is not stated but normally somebody called "Skytt" occupied himself with exactly what his surname indicated, i.e., with being a sharpshooter or gamekeeper. None of the three men whose full names are stated appear in the muster rolls.

⁹⁰⁶ As results from Uhlfeld's own letter to the judge of the hundred of Gärds (Giers), 12th July 1678, Opsnappede breve, DRA, published by Hedwall, p.9.

gallows to “eternal shame and contempt” so that all others who had a mind to doing the same thing would be discouraged. According to Ulfeld the sharpshooters were: Nillß Skytt, Fager Mårtenßon forester at Yngsiø and defence shooter Esbiörn Jacobson. In this context he forgot the fourth (Peder Nelsen), but he also added that all four had worked for the sadly deceased district governor Durell.⁹⁰⁷

In his next letter, Andersen confirmed that he had received and obeyed his patron’s orders.⁹⁰⁸ Arensdorff had had intelligence that a party or convoy of Swedes were to be sent from Kristianstad (Christianstad) to Malmö (Malmøe) and he had set Andersen on the task of finding out the truth behind these allegations. Now Andersen confirmed the suspicions. The Swedes had detached five thousand men from their main forces, three thousand foot soldiers and two thousand cavalry that were to escort a huge convoy of clothes and ammunition to Malmö (Malmøe). At the time they were bivouacking in the churchyard in “Auss” (modern Åhus).⁹⁰⁹ Andersen assured that he would inform Arensdorff the minute the Swedes crossed the river Helgeå (Helljaa), his scouts were at their workday and night. Finally, he reported that the Swedes were keeping Kristianstad (Christianstad) under constant fire and that they had shot a hole in the west, close to the wall. As Andersen had promised, he informed his superiors as soon as the Swedish convoy moved from the churchyard at Åhus (Aahus/Auss)⁹¹⁰:

Gentle Sir, General Field Marshal Gracious Lord!

I would humbly like to inform Your High Excellency that the Camp has been moved to this Side of the River, and they have Marched across the bridge at Lilleöe and for each Cannon that was fired from the

⁹⁰⁷ Ulfeld to the judge of the hundred of Gärd (Giers) (“häradz dommeren”), ...Tønneßen, 12th July 1678, Opsnappede brevve 1677-79, 761002, DRA. A passage of the decree has been published by Hedwall on p.9. “I ville efter wehnligheten bem:te skiälmske skytter 3:ne gånger efterlysse låthe och, dher dhe sigh jmeddlertyds icke jnställe, dess namn dhu till een ewigh spott och skändzell på gallgen måtte oppslagne blifue, androm till een sky och wahnagel, som slijkt kunna hafue i sinnett att föröfwe.” Fabricius (III, pp.164-165) referred briefly to this letter, though he dated it to 11th July 1678.

⁹⁰⁸ Simon Andersen to Arensdorff, Indkomne Breve DRA, published by Hedwall, p. 10.

⁹⁰⁹ The Swedes often used walled-in churchyards as camps or strongholds.

⁹¹⁰ Letter from the Danish National Archives, Indkomne Breve collection. It has been published by Anders Hedwall in his *Tullsagra Simon alias Simon Snaphane. En skånsk frihetskämpe*. (Simon from Tullsager alias Simon the Snaphane. A Scanian Freedom Fighter), Copenhagen 1966. Hedwall (p.32 and p.36) stresses that the friskytter and those who fought with them but did not have the funds to join the King’s Friskytter Corps, fought for freedom. They wanted to be free from the Swedish yoke which they experienced as living under conditions they had not asked for, in other words, coercion. Naturally, any sort of state brings a certain amount of coercion with it. But Swedish exercise of coercion was different from what the Scanians had been used to. Some people lived that experience as drudgery, as existence under a yoke like that of the Lord’s elect under the Babylonians. See also Flensmarck, p.194 who is a generally a Scanian regionalist but who is quite critical of angry Simon’s and other snaphaner’s doings and has preferred to take a classically Swedish stand on that issue. He even claims that many of the snaphaner were mentally ill.

town 7 or 8 Men out of the Swedish bastards fell, and People are saying that Tonight, which is Tuesday Night they will attack the Town, and they have demanded from Each Parish Fifty Heads of Cattle, and it is also said that they are going to collect Corn from Kahrls Hafn but only God knows their Intentions, furthermore the Party that camped on the Auss Churchyard has Marched towards Malmö tonight which is Tuesday night but if we perceive that the Swedes are about to Turn away from the Town and towards the Crown then Your Excellency will Immediately be informed through two Healthy Men and horses, that will always be kept Ready; I humbly beg Your Excellency that You will Let Us know through the Messenger, how we should Act, I have nothing more to announce to Your Excellency but I recommend You to the Protection of the Lord Almighty, and I remain

Your Excellency's
Most Dutiful and Sincere
Simon Andersen
Captain

The Town = then Christianstad, now Kristianstad or in English: Christian's Town.

Kahrls Hafn = modern-day Karlshamn

The Crown = then Landskrone, modern-day Landskrona. In either case the name means "the crown of the country".

Auss = modern-day Åhus

In this letter, as in the preceding ones, we can see that Andersen was in a certain professional confidence with his superiors. He was a humble enough servant but the importance here is that he considered himself a servant and took for granted that the authorities saw him as one too. Swedish propaganda to the point that the snaphaner were murderous barbarians whose only motivation was their own thirst for gold and blood does not fit in with Andersen's regular reports to Copenhagen nor with his pleas for instructions on how and when to act. It is characteristic of the reports from the friskytter that they asked for instructions and reinforcements from Copenhagen. Andersen's seemed to be something of a classical patron and client relationship to his superiors. Furthermore, an analysis of this letter makes clear that Andersen worked according to classical irregular troops strategies: he kept the enemy under close surveillance and promptly reported their movements and losses to HQ so that the Danish commanders would be able to get a clearer picture of what they were up against. In this letter, Andersen also reports what people are saying in the area, which was important, both as information about the military situation and about morale among the enemy and one's own. And last but not least, Andersen had messengers ready 24/7 so that they could warn his superiors of enemy troop movements. He was working on the orders of his superiors, and he was on the payroll of his superiors. Towards the end of that summer Captain Simon's company got involved in a battle at Sönderslöv (Sønderslef) that was described by the vicar of Vittskövle, Christen Lauridsen Klim in a letter to his "highly honoured and dear" daughter Anna from 3rd

August 1678.⁹¹¹ Lauridsen and his family had taken the Swedish side in the strife and in his letter he writes about “our men” vs. “the Danes” although he was a native Dane who wrote in Danish. Nevertheless, Lauridsen’s letter is exempt from anti-snaphane rhetoric of the kind that is often found in the clergy’s missives to the Swedish authorities. For one thing he writes “friskytter” not “snaphaner”. Now he told his daughter that the friskytter were beginning to get too noisome: on the preceding Wednesday Captain Simon’s “party” had taken away several horses, oxen, and cows and in the middle of the day at that! They had then spent the night at a nearby farm and on the following morning they left the area. Now the vicar knew that Captain Simon often came to his daughter’s place and so he asked her to try to put Simon in such a good mood that he would give back the vicar’s four heads of cattle. Interestingly, Christen Lauridsen thought that his married daughter had enough influence over Angry Simon to make him change his mind.

Lauridsen then told his daughter that there had been a battle between “one of our parties” and “a Danish party”. He then goes on to declare that “some of ours were killed and some taken prisoner, amongst whom were Isac Ulf whom Captain Simon himself captured and now he is riding Isac’s big brown horse...”. Lauridsen made no difference between regular Danish soldiers and friskytter: from his account it is impossible to tell what kind of Danish troops the Swedes had encountered at Sönderslöv (Sønderslef) the preceding Sunday.⁹¹² It is quite clear, that the Swedes had not been assaulted by highwaymen or robbers. Isac had lost his horse in a clash between “our troops” and “a Danish troop”, he had not been ambushed by highwaymen.

Lauridsen also explained that the battle in which Captain Simon had taken the colonel’s horse had taken place on the Sunday, then on the Monday “the Danes” had gone on to burn the village of Skepparslöv (Skibersleff) down and on the Tuesday it was Härlöv’s (Häreblef’s) turn, “God help us all” as he commented. “The Danes” in

⁹¹¹ Christen Lauridsen to Anna Christensdatter, (wife of the vicar of Andrarum, Anders Schartau who was pro-Swedish and was beaten up so severely by the “snaphaner” that he later attributed his death from tuberculosis to the rifle thrusts he had received), 3rd August 1678, Wedskuule (Vittskövle), Opsnappede breve/Intercepted letters, DRA, quoted by Hedwall, p.13. Fabricius (III, p. 168, footnote 18 and p.192.) briefly refers to this letter.

⁹¹² Based on Per Sörensson’s study of the account books, Anders Hedwall (p. 13.) concluded that Captain Simon had checked out 24 pounds of gunpowder on 23rd July 1678 (quite a considerable amount) but that only five days later he was back and checked out another twenty pounds. The skirmish at Sönderslöv took place in between these two points in time. The Danish authorities would hardly have let Andersen have check out more ammunition and explosives than most regular captains if they had not believed in his military talent.

his letter *included* Captain Simon's company. It is not clear whether Captain Simon's company worked together with regular troops or on their own during the operations described by Lauridsen, but they most certainly did so in the role of "Danish troops" not as robbers, which was quite clear to Lauridsen. The records from the meetings of the Danish War Council on 25-26th July 1678 make quite clear that Captain Simon was working according to a carefully considered Danish strategy that had been decided on by King Christian and his councillors. At this time von Osten had already been ordered to surrender if he could obtain an agreement with the Swedes and consequently Kristianstad (Christianstad) was considered lost by the Danish commanders that instead had decided on trying to harass the enemy as much as possible and to try to cut of their communication lines to Sweden.⁹¹³

At about the time of the Sönderslöv (Sønderslef) engagement, a man who might have been connected to Captain Simon's troops was executed by the Swedes. Lauridsen informed his daughter that "a man called Ole Fiskere" had been executed ("steilet") by the Långbro (Langebroe) Bridge because he was supposed to have helped betray the Swedes at Kristianstad (Christianstad) so that the town could be taken over by the Danes. The Swedish soldier and later professor J.J Winslow mentioned the same episode in his war diaries: "1678: Between 30th and 31st July old Ollof Nilsson the fisherman, who had come out from Kristianstad (Christianstad) with information for the Danish army, and had been caught by our men three days earlier, was put on the stake and wheel at the end of the Långebro bridge, by the big stones, on the right hand of the road when one is entering the city."⁹¹⁴ Ole Fiskere (Fisherman) does not appear in the muster rolls but a Jens Oelsen Fischer ("Jens Ole's son Fisherman") does.⁹¹⁵ Another man who had managed to get into the city was chased by the Swedes and chose to drown himself in the river before they caught him.⁹¹⁶ All these events should be seen in the light of the decisions of the Danish War Council while the bulk of the Danish army was standing at Önnestad (Ønnested).

⁹¹³ Jensen, pp. 379-383.

⁹¹⁴ Winslow's war diaries, J.J. Winslows dagbok öfver kriget 1676-1679. Ollof Nilsson is the Swedecised form of Olluf/Ole Nielsen. Quoted from Hazelius, p.179. Hazelius also hypothesises that Ole Nielsen Fiskere worked for Captain Simon.

⁹¹⁵ Simon Andersen's company of Friskytter, muster roll from 27th February 1680, DRA.

⁹¹⁶ Christen Lauridsen to Anna Christensdatter, (wife of the vicar of Andrarum, Anders Schartau), 3rd August 1678, Opsnappede brevve, DRA, quoted by Hedwall, p.13.

Lauridsen described all this without participating in the official Swedish discourse of tyrannical and barbarian snaphaner, although he sided with the Swedes, maybe because he was writing to his daughter who knew his standpoint and to whom he did not feel that he had to exaggerate his insurances of good faith, maybe because he knew the Danes might intercept the letter and the Swedish diabolical snaphane discourse was not politically correct in Denmark. However, I believe that many of the clergymen who wrote to the Swedish authorities felt that they had to adhere to the official discourse of the anti-snaphane crusade. The clergymen were suspect subjects themselves and had to try to prove their loyalty if they wanted to keep their callings. Not only did they have to try and copy the language of their overlords in order to prove their loyalty, but they also tried to copy the rhetoric formulated by that language. An important part of the Swedish discourse was that of “the tyrannical snaphaner” who were described as assassins and robbers who stole, thrashed and slaughtered for their own high pleasure. However, it should be noted that siding with the Swedes did *not* necessarily have to mean that you really thought the snaphaner were animals. One can only assume that some Swedes and Swedish supporters knew that they were not.

Anna Christensdatter, wife of Herr Anders, knew one of the “arch-barbarians” in person and obviously had some influence on him. Her father’s principal errand in writing to her had been to ask her to talk to Captain Simon, if possible before Anna came to visit her father the day after. Lauridsen complained that the “Fri Skyttere” were becoming too audacious. On the Wednesday, after having met a Swedish troop in combat on the Sunday and having burnt down two villages on the Monday and Tuesday, they had come to Vittskövle (Vedskøfle)⁹¹⁷ around noon and they had taken away “many horses, oxen, cows and calves amongst which were also two young stallions and two young cows that were ours, they were only two years old, I have never seen any as beautiful as them”. Lauridsen then heard that the Friskytter had gone on to the Maltesholm estate and tried to send a messenger to them but to no use. Lauridsen now asked his daughter to try to talk to Captain Simon since he knew that “he often comes to your place, please try to convince him to be as kind as to let me

⁹¹⁷ I can only assume that Lauridsen’s animals had been grazing on the lands of the Vittskövle estate and that the “house” he mentions was Vittskövle castle.

have them back, I would like to have the three dotted ones and the fourth with the black star.”⁹¹⁸

The same day as the vicar of Vittskövle (Vedskøfle) wrote to his daughter to try to speak to Captain Simon, the king of Denmark, Christian V, wrote to the commander of Kristianstad (Christianstad) to yield. On the 4th August 1678 the garrison capitulated and on the 5th they were all (Scanians included) allowed to march back to Landskrona (Landscrone), leaving Kristianstad (Christianstad) in Swedish hands. We know that Captain Simon was in the Andrarum area in the southeast when Kristianstad (Christianstad) capitulated. On 9th August the captains Jens Jenssön, H. Severin, S. Andersen, and Lieutenant Thue Krop were ordered by Arensdorff to betake themselves to the western parts of Scania (Malmøehuss Lehn) to help destroy all provisioning for people and animals that could be found, including whatever had not been harvested yet. They also received strict orders to burn and plunder all farms where they found provisioning indoors. When and how Captain Simon obeyed these orders is hard to say. Arensdorff’s harsh orders were retracted after some ten days and Arensdorff himself was suspended from service. On 31st August Andersen and his men had taken over two Swedish provisioning boats that were to sail from Åhus (Aahus) to Kristianstad (Christianstad). The boats were sunk and the six Swedish prisoners they had taken were sent to the army camp.⁹¹⁹ The next certain date is 7th October 1678 when Captain Simon and nine of his men were ambushed at the Västerstad (Vestrested) vicarage by a party of snaphane catchers under Sven “The Thrasher” Erlandsson. The background to the ambush was probably Captain Simon’s enmity with Hans Nielsen Holmbye, the vicar who seemingly supported the Swedes and who had told those of Andersen’s men who went to mass in his church that they would end up in hell. In order to punish the vicar, Andersen’s men abducted him from home in the middle of the night and let him run between two horses in his nightshirt so that the scars from the ropes they had tied him up with never disappeared.⁹²⁰ They

⁹¹⁸ “...kand I gjøre hannem saa god, at hand vil lade mig faa dem igen, bad ieg gjerne om de tre blessede, den 4 er sort stiernet.” A more literal translation would be: “...try to put him in such a good mood that he lets me have them back...” or “try to make him so good as to let me have them back.” In either case Lauridsen seems to have known Andersen and to have thought of him as irascible.

⁹¹⁹ 468 Krigskollegiet (Landetaten), 1678–1680 Journal, 1678 August 15 1680 Dec.31: 102. Hedwall, pp.15-16.

⁹²⁰ According to Gunnar Carlqvist’s *Lunds stifts Herdaminne*, (Memories of the Clergy in the Diocese of Lund), quoted by Hedwall, p.17.

let the vicar run for a quarter of a Swedish mile, and then they let the villagers pay ransom for him. The episode cannot be dated. But the vicar had his revenge on 7th October when, for some reason Andersen and some of his men had come to a party at the vicarage, and the vicar managed to send a message to Erlandsson in Hörby for help. Six of Andersen's men were killed on the spot, two were taken prisoner and "examined" until they confessed, but Captain Simon and his servant boy escaped.⁹²¹ According to legend, Captain Simon managed to escape because he had somehow got hold of a blue (Swedish) coat and managed to pass for a Swedish soldier long enough to throw himself upon his horse and ride straight through the Swedish troops that had surrounded the whole vicarage.⁹²²

The next thing we know about Simon Andersen is that he was consigned winter quarters in the Landskrona (Landscrone) district on 5th November 1678. The district governor of Landskrona (Landscrone), Knud Thott, and Simon Andersen did not get on. Thott would have liked to force Andersen and his men to join the regular army since he thought they were of no use whatsoever except making the peasants destitute. But eventually Thott refrained from that policy since it might have made all the other friskytter accept the next Swedish amnesty offer (as he concluded himself)⁹²³, and

⁹²¹ Sven Erlandsson to the king, Wästerdal (sic!) 8th October 1678, DRA. In the letter Erlandsson writes the name of the village in various ways. He called Andersen "Tulsagra Simon". Letter quoted in part by Hedwall, p. 18. Carlqvist reports a slightly different version of the facts, as the story was told at Västerstad (Vestrested) in later times. To Carlqvist, "the leader of the snaphaner was a farmerboy from Tullsåkra called Simon, the one the snaphaner called captain but the commoners Tullsagra Simenen (Simen from Tullsager)." Much the same story is told in Erlandsson's "Promemoria" but in it Erlandsson adds that he pulled the coat off "Tullsagra Simon" when Simon charged straight through the Swedish ranks, and that a man who was with the captain was shot down. Hedwall claims that the latter version was an error and that Erlandsson did not quite remember how things went when he wrote the "Promemoria" since he had written to the king the day after that Captain Simon's servant boy had survived. However, we cannot be certain that Erlandsson wrote the "Promemoria" himself, and even if he did, he might have been writing about different persons: a servant boy who followed his boss closely enough to escape, and a friskytte who did not quite manage it. Fabricius (III, pp.174-175) also mentions this episode and comments: "The audacity of these feats was countered by an equal degree of cruelty in the punishments that befell the friskytter at the hands of Erlandsson...Erlandsson should probably have praised his lucky star that he did not fall into the hands of the friskytter."

⁹²² According to Carlqvist who based his account on what he had heard and on the account of Samuel Rönnbeck who was vicar of Västerstad (Vestrested) around the middle of the 18th century and who had met people who had been at the party when the vicar offered the snaphaner beer. The dead snaphaner were buried along the church wall on the outside of the southwestern side where silver coins have been deposited ever since.

⁹²³ Fabricius III, pp. 176-177. Knud Thott often wrote about Simon Andersen and his "insolence" in his reports to the king from August 1678 to the end of May 1679. Some people in Landskrona (Landscrone) were saying that Captain Simon had grown so fond of cattle hustling that he had forgotten to fight the Swedes, as Fabricius III, p.192 footnote 9) reports from a letter from Sofie, Herr Hans of Tosterup's widow to Merheim 14th February 1679. However, Fabricius adds that it should not be forgotten that Andersen was a brilliant cattle hustler not only on behalf of himself but also on behalf of the Danish

probably also because he did not have enough support from the Army Board. Early in 1679 Simon Andersen's friskytter were mustered by Thott and consigned quarters in the hundreds of Albo and Järrestad that were closest to the Swedish zone. According to a new government policy the friskytter were to be based in certain areas, the inhabitants of which were obliged to pay their upkeep and wages. This policy was not popular, neither with the peasants nor with the friskytter. On 4th September 1679, when the Danish government had already signed the Fontainebleau peace treaty, in which the Scanian Provinces were left to the Swedes, Simon Andersen wrote an angry letter to the director of the Andrarum mills, Monsieur Teingelein. According to Andersen, Teingelein and the aldermen of the parish of Andrarum had not paid him his "winter quarters money" that the King and his ministers had entitled him to. Andersen therefore warned Teingelein that if he, the village tailor and the vicar did not pay him his wages of 300 Danish *rigsdaler* within eight days they would be in bad trouble. By then, Andersen and his men were in Landskrona (Landscrone) because they could not venture into the Andrarum area that was too close to the Swedish enclaves. In his letter, Andersen stressed that by now the land was calm so that Teingelein and the village representatives should not have any trouble sending the money to him in Landskrona (Landscrone) or travelling. Stressing how calm the land was, Andersen continued: "You have no excuses anymore, for you or some other man can come here whenever you like." And then Andersen went on:

"And if you do not willingly oblige these recommendations Sir, then you and the Vicar can be assured that I will treat you so very according to His Majesty's orders that you will sooner forget God than me, and there will be such Trouble that nobody will believe it. May I also remind you, my dear Inspector, of the last time I came to you asking for materials that were required, and you claimed that you had no more in the stables than you needed for yourself, but that only a few days later you supplied the Swedes with materials, which will be your ruin unless you send the aforementioned money to Landzcrona. I recommend you to the Lord.

Landzcrona d:4: Sept:1679, Simon Andersen, Captain of the Friskytter."⁹²⁴

After that, we have no more sources that can be ascribed to Simon Andersen's own hand, nor do the sources tell us what came of him after the war. His company was mustered in Copenhagen on 18th October 1679 (95 friskytter plus 10 officers), then again on 27th February in Copenhagen (11 officers, 91 friskytter). Both these muster-rolls were signed by Andersen himself. Then the company was mustered for the last

Army and that he took his provisioning task seriously. And Fabricius (III, p.176) also adds that probably Knud Thott had less success in his interactions with the friskytter because contrary to his colleague Rommel in Helsingborg, he was not used to getting on with commoners.

⁹²⁴ Letter from Simon Andersen to Monsieur Teingelein, Landzcrona 4th September 1679, quoted by Hedwall, pp.26-27.

time on 10th May 1680 although according to Hedwall, it had been officially dissolved in March that year, but Andersen himself was not on the list nor did he sign it. Only four officers and 28 friskytter were included.⁹²⁵ According to Fabricius Captain Simon's company was included in "The Scanian National Friskytter" under Major Aage Monsen Harlof by this time.⁹²⁶ In February that year Simon Andersen was godfather to a child of another friskytte in the village of Værløse some miles north of Copenhagen, as Knud Fabricius found out.⁹²⁷ Fabricius pointed out that the christening included the more respectable part of the villagers, which in itself indicated that the friskytter were respected men in post-1679 Denmark and that they continued their lives "inside" the communities.⁹²⁸ After the christening at Værløse Simon Andersen disappears from the sources. According to family tradition Simon obtained a farm in Jutland from the state in recognition of his services and/or that he worked as a coast guard there. Tradition also has it that he died only a few years later, when his cart crushed him while he was digging in the sands on his lands in Jutland.

There are more legends about Simon Snaphane than about any other single combatant during the Scanian War, or about any of the snaphaner that preceded him in other wars. The snaphaner in the legends tend to get mixed up with each other, and some feats have been attributed to Simon from Tullsager that were certainly his to claim, such as the legend of the snaphane who threw himself into the sea from a rock off cape Stenshuvud.⁹²⁹ Hedwall collected a neat number of legends about Simon Snaphane and for those who are interested he also writes down the traditional clues for those who want to go on a quest for the treasure that everyone knows Simon hid somewhere.⁹³⁰

Knud Fabricius included Simon Andersen among the friskytte officers whose background could not under any circumstance be included among the socially suspect

⁹²⁵ Hedwall, p.41; Fabricius III, pp.240-241. Sheriff (ridefoged) Johan Hacksen had compiled the list.

⁹²⁶ Fabricius III, pp.205-206. The Scanian National Friskytter comprised 349 men including officers.

⁹²⁷ Fabricius, III p.216. Captain Hans Bentsen, Andersen's lieutenant Rasmus Boesen and some other friskytter were also present.

⁹²⁸ See: Appel, p.674 for the importance of being a member of the Christian community ("menigheden") in 17th century Denmark and how the parish minister had the power to include or exclude people from the "menighed". Those who were deemed unworthy of being part of it were not allowed to participate in important religious functions and could for example neither be godfathers to children nor take communion. Episodes of rage and violence against clergymen like the Nils Holmbye/Simon Andersen conflict should maybe be seen in this light.

⁹²⁹ In his "Promemoria" Erlandsson makes quite clear that that was Jeppe Baassen, but some local legends insist it was Andersen, who in reality survived the war and died fairly young in Denmark.

⁹³⁰ See Hedwall, pp.22-27.

ones.⁹³¹ As Fabricius noted, Swedish historians had often claimed that all friskytter/snaphaner were vagrants or outlaws, so-called “asocial elements,”⁹³² but in the case of comparatively well-documented personages like Andersen, Aage Monsen Harlof, Sheriff Jon Svendsøn, Eskeld Nielsen and several others, this claim did simply not hold water.⁹³³

Conclusions:

Although this section is mainly based on sources that have already been consulted by others, it still is of particular importance in that nobody has related the scattered evidence on Angry Simon’s life and activities: Anders Hedwall who after all did write a booklet on Simon Andersen apparently had no knowledge of the discussions in the Danish War Council during the end of July 1678 that shed an entirely new light on Andersen’s operations as part of an official Danish strategy in the Kristianstad (Christianstad) area during the same period. Both Per Sörensson and Anders Hedwall had already intimated that Andersen’s presence in the army account books and ammunition depot records imply that he was far from a bandit or outlaw, and the still impressive property of his family exclude the theory of his lowly origins. Far from defending the moral character of Simon Andersen or expressing a view on whether he deserved his nickname Angry Simon, I would still like to claim that the sources indicate that Andersen’s unit did, at least in part, not work so much as an independent guerrilla unit but rather as irregular troops that effectuated strategies that had been decided upon officially and that either substituted or complemented traditional warfare.

It should furthermore be stressed that one of Simon Andersen’s main tasks was to break through the Swedish blockade and get food and ammunition into (Christianstad).⁹³⁴ The Danes used the friskytter as an effective means of maintaining a constant connection between their stronghold in the east, Kristianstad (Christianstad), and their south-western holdings. Kristianstad (Christianstad) was often blockaded by the Swedes and then only the friskytter knew the secret routes that could be used to cross the lines: maintaining communications on their own side and

⁹³¹ Fabricius III, p.104.

⁹³² Fabricius referred vaguely to Alf Åberg’s contestations to this effect in his “Snapphanarna” from 1951.

⁹³³ Fabricius III, p.103.

⁹³⁴ Hedwall, pp.6-14, analyses Captain Simon’s activities during the siege of Kristianstad (Christianstad).

interrupting those of the enemy was one of the main tasks of the friskytter and Simon Andersen worked hard at it.

Thue Piill

Introduction

This section contains an analysis of the routine work of a friskytte officer and his relations to the community around him and to the regular army.

A Trek through the Woods

Lieutenant Thue Piill belonged to the friskytte corps and kept in close touch with commander in chief Friedrich von Arensdorff to whom he sent reports of his actions on an almost daily basis. In a “memoriall” from the summer of 1678 Piill gave the following description of his daily work⁹³⁵:

“In accordance with the orders of My Lord General I rode to Sönderslöff bridge where I did not find anyone but some frisköter, Rames Sined was their captain. No one was to be seen by the bridge though they were supposed to build it up, and nor would it be possible to get a bridge built for a very long time. Then I rode from Sönderslöff bridge to Öde vad where I am now. I have not been able to obtain any news about the Swedes, but the peasants advised me to direct my path into the woods since it was not safe at all on the main road...the 9 dragoons could not accompany me any further. Their horses are too big for these narrow forest paths. Consequently, I am sending them back again. After that I went into the woods again, that is where I am safe and as soon as I can I shall send His Excellency more useful information,

16th July 1678

Thue Piill

One detail that transpires from the letter is that Piill had had 9 dragoons from the regular army sent out to help him. It is interesting to see how closely the regular army and the friskytter cooperated and how natural men like Piill seemed to think it was that they should do so. But then, even Sthen Jacobsen did not deny that the regular army and what he called the “snaphaner” worked together.⁹³⁶

One thing that Fabricius pointed out was that Piill’s letter shows the close connection between the friskytter/snaphaner and the woods that has remained in the popular imagination until our days. However, it is important to remember that there were snaphaner and friskytter on all fronts and in all parts of the Scanian provinces, including the island of Bornholm, and that snaphaner, if not authorised friskytter were

⁹³⁵ Thue Piill to general Arensdorff 16th July 1678. This letter has been published in part by Fabricius (vol.III, p.104).

⁹³⁶ See p.181 where Jacobsen describes Major Johan Randtzou’s attack on a group of Swedes at Båstad (Baadsted) which he started by sending out 16 “snaphaner” before the regular soldiers attacked.

also active in other border areas like Holsten and Norway in times of war.⁹³⁷ Piill made quite clear in his letters that his main task was to find out what the Swedes were up to. He wrote in the first letter that he was trying to find more news about the Swedes. In the second letter that is dated “a cottage in the woods, 17th July, an hour and a half before sunrise” he declared that he had been told by two persons who had visited his mother that the Swedes were standing just outside the town (Kristianstad/Christianstad).⁹³⁸ Obviously many friskytter like Piill worked as much as secret agents as anything else.

Lieutenant Thue Piill’s letters give us a picture of the friskytter as anything but enemies of the peasants. Piill received his fellow-spies in his mother’s house. Piill clearly felt responsible for the community. He declared himself to be “assailed” by peasants who were asking for help and protection. He wanted to tell them to leave their homes and escape but did not dare do so without express *orders from his superiors*.⁹³⁹ Instead Piill asked Arensdorff to send 12 soldiers from the lifeguards, to protect his mother’s neighbourhood.⁹⁴⁰ Piill told the general that the peasants all came to him because he knew everyone there. Piill for one did not see the peasants as essentially different from himself. It is obvious that he considered himself one of them, or at least as having been one of them. It seems as if he had become an intermediary between the village and the Danish authorities. It is also clear that Piill worked with both the regular army and the locals; he sent his letters to HQ with a “peasant” and told the general to send the reply and eventual reinforcements back with the peasant who knew where to find him. To judge by Piill the peasants turned to

⁹³⁷ Unfortunately, the limited time-space for this study will not allow us to make a survey of all kinds of rebellious activity that was reported in early modern Denmark, but it would definitely be an interesting topic. See for example: Gabriel Hilleton to Colonel Charl. Hård, Markary 3rd April 1677 (Intercipierte Brefwe, DRA): “In Boohuslehn the Norwegians and their snaphaner are showing their faces again, but appropriate counter measures have been taken against them.” In Poland the Strelitzer who fought the Swedish invasion of 1707-08 were called “snapphanar” by the Swedes. The Swedish commanders were the same as those that had fought the friskytter or, in some cases, their sons. In the OUP *Short History of Poland (Heart of Europe)*, Norman Davies, 1990, first ed. 1984, (p.304.) the Swedes are mentioned as one among six depredating hordes that descended on early modern Poland. They found themselves in such excellent company as the Cossacks, Tartars and Transylvanians there, but also the Muscovites and Brandenburgers. The Swedish invasion at the middle of the 17th century goes under the name of “potop” or “The Deluge”.

⁹³⁸ “I gor som var mandag var to folk i Perstorp til min moders som hörde hime pa ½ mill...mölleröd, i tyringe be nemd, de bereter de svenske stoe enu stile ved staden, som de stod tilforne, och den captin som liger paa Mölleröd, la alt stile...” Letter from Thue Piill to general Arensdorff, 17th July 1678.

⁹³⁹ Shortly afterwards Arensdorff ordered all Scanians were ordered to evacuate the land.

⁹⁴⁰ “Ellers beder ieg Hr General at hand ud aff Nade ville unde dise bönder her om kring min moders paa bege veyiner: 12 styk aff lifff gardit” Letter from Piill to Arensdorff 17th July 1678. Indkomne breve 1678; stack 4, M, DRA.

the friskytter for protection from the Swedes and not contrariwise. Thue Piill made quite clear in his letters that one of his main tasks was to find out what not only what he and his men observed the Swedes doing but also what people were *saying* the Swedes were doing.⁹⁴¹

Contrary to what I thought when I first read Piill's reports in the archives he was not a local boy, nor was he of peasant origins, although his mother might have been so from what he writes about her in his reports. There is a great confusion about names and spellings in the sources and I did not connect the Pihlkronas with Thue Piill until a footnote in Fabricius made me realise that the mayor I had thought of as Bengt Pihlkrona had a nephew who had been a "snaphane".⁹⁴² Thue Piill belonged to a powerful Helsingborg family. His uncle Bent Piill (who became Bengt Pihlkrona under the Swedes) was mayor of Helsingborg.⁹⁴³ Already in November 1676 he was arrested on the charge of Swedish sympathies and was put in custody in Copenhagen. The Swedes also suspected him and confiscated all his property in Scania because of his "Danish sympathies". Bent Piill's son-in-law Herman Schlyter who was in local politics too, ended up in the same kind of trouble⁹⁴⁴, as did Bent's brother Svend Piill who was put under Danish military surveillance because he was suspected of being a spy. Their relatives Peter Klein and Iver Ravn, both sheriffs ("ridefogeder"), were accused of the same crime and so was his nephew Thue Piill, who was a lieutenant in the friskytte corps. In February 1678, shortly after Baron Krabbe's death, all these men except Thue ended up on Sperling's black list on the charge of high treason.⁹⁴⁵ In July 1678 Herman Schlyter wrote to the king from Elsinore to ask that he may be allowed to remain in Elsinore with his fellow town councillors and burghers and with his wife, instead of being sent to the island of Fyen as the authorities were meaning

⁹⁴¹ "I gor som var mandag var to folk i Perstorp til min moders som hörde hime pa ½ mill...mölleröd, i tyringe be nemd, de bereter de svenske stoe enu stile ved staden, som de stod tilforne, och den captin som liger paa Mölleröd, la alt stile..." Letter from Thue Piill to general Arensdorff, 17th July 1678, IB, DRA.

⁹⁴² Fabricius III, footnote 11.

⁹⁴³ Bent Piill became ennobled by the Swedes under the name of "Bengt Pihlkrona".

⁹⁴⁴ Fabricius III, p. 180. Åberg (1951, p.155), unfortunately without stating his source, claims that Schlyter had been subjected terrible sufferings by the Danes. But how do we know that Schlyter was telling the truth? How could Åberg trust what he said in front of a jury that had the power to send him to the stake? What we do know is that Schlyter was overjoyed when the Danes reconquered Helsingborg in 1709.

⁹⁴⁵ Fabricius III, pp.145-146,

to.⁹⁴⁶ In February 1679 Piill and his uncle the mayor were lodging with a Baltser Bolhagen in Copenhagen.⁹⁴⁷ Somehow, Thue Piill managed to make his way back to Scania because he later appears in the sources as a county sheriff there and he lived in Perstorp until his death in 1705.⁹⁴⁸ The court records from his last years show that he often quarreled with another former “snaphane” called Jörgen/Jöran Hanssön Horster who was now a minister of the church. Interestingly, it seems that Thue Piill never went to church and that when Horster died, Piill continued to fight with his successor.⁹⁴⁹ Bent Pilcrona also returned to Scania after the war and resumed his role in local politics and as a civil servant. In 1685 he and Herman Schlyter kindly asked that they might be paid back the money they had lent the king during Gyllenstjerna’s time in office, and they would also like to receive payment for the grain they had lent the peasants. Piillcrona emphasised that he and his son-in-law had also spent considerable sums on the reconstruction of Helsingborg after the war. Now, they wanted to start a manufactory and needed funds for it.⁹⁵⁰ A few years earlier Schlyter had been charged by the Swedish treason commission with having supported the Danish cause.⁹⁵¹ Schlyter replied that far from treating him as one of theirs, the Danish garrison in Helsingborg had maltreated him because “in his great joy he had called toasts to our (i.e., the Swedish) victory at Halmstad”. Because of this his house had been plundered and he had been forced to stay in house arrest in Zealand. Schlyter admitted to the commission that he and his father-in-law and his father-in-law’s brother had sworn fealty to the king of Denmark and that they had been absent when “the others” swore fealty to the king of Sweden, but he now hoped that he would be forgiven. Eventually Schlyter was freed of charges.⁹⁵² Nevertheless, he was

⁹⁴⁶ Herman Schlyter to the king, Helsingör 7th July 1678, 468 Krigskollegiet (Landetaten), 1660-1678 Indkomne breve 1678 S. 4 Breve. DRA.

⁹⁴⁷ Fabricius III, p. 180 footnote 11.

⁹⁴⁸ According to a notice transmitted to me by Jens Lerbom it is almost certainly the same man. In the Swedish records his name is “Tuve” instead of Thue.

⁹⁴⁹ See: ”Perstörpspräster under fyra sekler. Jöran Horster, prästen och snapphanen, som ständigt låg i fejd med sina sockenbor.” (Perstorp clergymen during four centuries. Jöran Horster, a clergyman and snaphane who was always at loggerheads with his parishioners)” in *Höganäs tidning* 24th November 1928 and “Perstörpspräster under fyra sekler. Werming, Horster, Tyrell och Sundius – en fridsam fyrväppling.” (Perstorp clergymen during four centuries. Werming, Horster, Tyrell and Sundius-a peaceful quartet) in *Höganäs tidning* 1st December 1928.

⁹⁵⁰ Cronholm, p.326. It is interesting to note that other people accused Schlyter of having occupied the old main street and the “Axeltorv” square with his new constructions and of having blocked the freshwater flow to the town in the same manner. See: Cronholm, p.329 footnote 98 where he refers to a “Riksdagsbesvär” (Appeal to the Diet) from 11th August 1681.

⁹⁵¹ Cronholm, p. 327. Åberg 1951, p.155.

⁹⁵² Cronholm, (p.327) refers to the “Gen. gouv:s acta, 6th March 1682”. Åberg 1951, p.155. As I have mentioned earlier no source is stated here.

overjoyed when the Danes reclaimed Helsingborg in 1709. Fabricius concluded that Schlyter was a true Dane at heart since he immediately joined the Danes in 1709 and was nominated Mayor of Helsingborg by the Danish king who was reported to have been Schlyter's personal guest during the campaigns of that war.⁹⁵³ When the Danish cause was lost again, Schlyter and his wife and children fled to Copenhagen where they lived on the "bounties of the king" since their assets in Scania had been confiscated. Shortly afterwards, Schlyter died of the plague that raged in Denmark and Scania at the time.⁹⁵⁴ Whatever the case, whether Schlyter was the true Dane Fabricius claimed he was or just someone who toyed with various identities, he was probably not the maltreated Swedish patriot Åberg⁹⁵⁵ made him out to be either.

Conclusions

There are a few things that should be especially noted about Thue Piill:

- 1) He was part of the surrounding countryside community
- 2) He did not act, except on express orders from HQ
- 3) His operations were executed in co-operation with regular soldiers
- 4) He acted as an intermediary between the village and the authorities.

These factors all remove Thue Piill quite far from the traditional Swedish image of a "snaphane" as a robber who lived with his fellow outlaws outside the boundaries of "normal" society and whose only contacts with the authorities would have been hostile ones. It should also be stressed that the Piills were not a peasant family at all, but rather the leading Helsingborg family with tentacles stretching quite far into the web of Scanian state officials that tried to balance between the two states that contested the sovereignty. Thue Piill himself, like several of his relatives, later became a sheriff in Swedish service. Loyalties apart, that is another indication of the frequent connection between friskytter and sheriffs, and of that it was obviously an advantage to have experience of the work of a sheriff in order to become a friskytte and vice versa.

⁹⁵³ Cronholm, p.332; Fabricius III, p.180.

⁹⁵⁴ Cronholm, p.332.

⁹⁵⁵ Åberg 1951, p.155.

Exorcising the Devil with Beelzebub - The Snaphane Hunters

Introduction:

In this section I will analyse the development of the professionalised snaphane hunters that were entrusted the task of quenching the “snaphane movement” by the Swedish authorities. Since my main aim in this thesis is the snaphaner and not the snaphane hunters I have limited the extensions of this section to aspects and episodes that concern my sources directly.

Mickell Nymand

Introduction

It is generally held that a more generalised hunt down of the snaphaner only took off during the latter part of 1677 and that professional snaphane catchers were employed from sometime after the establishment of the special martial courts that inquired into the snaphane connections of all layers of society. The names of men like man who implemented the special treason tribunals, Jöran Sperling and the most successful snaphane catcher of them all, Sven Erlandsson, both saw their heyday from mid 1677 onwards. But there were professional snaphane catchers before then. It has not been pointed out before that there were specialised snaphane hunters as early as 1676, but there were.

The Tunby Case

At the beginning of June 1677, a difficult case was reported from the south-eastern parts of Scania. The whole village of Tunby was pleading for help from the Swedish authorities.⁹⁵⁶ In the winter of 1676, just after the battle of Lund, a man called Mickell Nymand⁹⁵⁷ had turned up in the surroundings of Tunbyholm castle. Nymand was wearing a Danish uniform and brought two horses with him. He soon found a position as quarter master under Colonel Kock and his main task would be to catch snaphaner and find hidden Danish goods, which was a job that would suit him fine since he kept bragging about how good he was at shooting snaphaner. Six months later Nymand was reported to the authorities for having gone way too far in his chase.

One of the main charges against Nymand was that he accused whoever he did not get on with of being a snaphane and sent the person in question to the stake and wheel; such had been the fate of the village tailor whose integrity everyone in the village

⁹⁵⁶ 9th June 1677. Opsnappede breve, DRA. Today: 468:99.

⁹⁵⁷ Mickell Nymand's nationality is not stated anywhere. Mickell Nymand is a Danish name, but it might have been the Danicised version of Mickel/Mikael Nyman. We don't know.

would have vouched for.⁹⁵⁸ Nymand accused two other locals of having sent for Captain Bendix and his snaphaner and they almost ended up on the racks, but fortunately Kock had saved them at the last moment. Nymand was also accused of hankering for other people's property and sending them off to "the dungeons in Malmø" on the charge of treason so that he could take possession of their goods. Another craftsman had had to accept that his house was emptied by Nymand and his men. When they wanted to burn it down too, the other villagers "persuaded" Nymand's lot not to but they could not stop them from smashing all the windows. Yet another man who had ended up in serious trouble because of Nymand was Jacob Hweffuere (Weaver) in Tunby who had had to go into hiding because Nymand had sworn that he would shoot him. When Nymand realised that he would not find Jacob at home he chose to denounce him on trumped up charges to the local noble court and eventually managed not only to track Hweffuere down but also to get him sent to prison in Malmö (Malmøe). Naturally all Jacob's things ended up in the hands of Nymand. The list of men who had ended up in trouble because of Nymand does not stop there. In the end some of the locals reported him to the authorities. We cannot be quite sure of Nymand's nationality. But what matters is that Nymand was working for the Swedes as a snaphane hunter and that he abused of his position grossly. To him the war was a chance to get forward in the world and he did obviously not care by what means that happened. The fate of Jacob Hueffuere and the others make us realise that everyone risked being accused of being a snaphane in communities where men like Nymand were at large.

Conclusions:

Nymand is an example of a kind of carpetbagger and shady character that seems to turn up in the wake of every war; Steven G. Ellis has described how the allegedly "trusted and impartial outsiders" who were sent out from Tudor England to civilise Gaelic Ireland threw the whole country into chaos because all they thought of was "land-grabbing".⁹⁵⁹ To a lesser degree the same can be said of many others of the men of modest or comparatively modest means who made their fortune in Scania around

⁹⁵⁸ 9th June 1677. Opsnappede breve, DRA.

⁹⁵⁹ Steven G. Ellis. *Tudor Ireland, Crown, Community, and the Conflict of Cultures, 1470-1603*, Longman, London and New York 1985, pp.317-318.

this time, especially as snaphane-catchers or land-grabbers.⁹⁶⁰ However, I would like to stress I am not claiming to state the ultimate truth about Mickell Nymand: I have only tried to analyse a series of events that centred on him and that took place during the Scanian War and that are of relevance to my thesis. It is quite possible that some of the villagers were involved with the Captain Bendix's lot or with other "snaphaner", but it hardly changes the image of Nymand as someone who took advantage of the war.

Sven Erlandsson and the Snaphane Hunters

Introduction

There can be no doubts as to Sven Erlandsson's suitability for the position as maybe the leading snaphane hunter of his day. He had long experience of work with Scanian peasants and other country folk and he knew the land on his five fingers. This section contains an analysis of Erlandsson's work tasks as a snaphane hunter and of how the snaphane hunter force in general worked. It also contains a comparison with the friskytte corps and of the similarities between the two forces.

A Professionalised Corps

In April 1678 King Charles of Sweden established a dragoon corps that was to specialise in snaphane catching. In itself this measure was a means towards the pacification of the border area and consequently, also an attempt to achieve safe conduct for Swedish convoys through the Gønge area. The official head of this corps was Major Bengt Månsson, commander of the city of Halmstad. Månsson was an original of the Gønge area himself and already during the war of 1657-1660 he had been a fierce snaphaner catcher. Count Pontus de la Gardie warmly recommended Månsson to the post with the motivation that he had such excellent local connections and knew all roads and paths in the area and that Månsson might be able to "bring over some of the very worst and most wicked rascals to his own side, which would be paramount to exorcising the Devil with Belzebug." In the same manner, all snaphaner who had obtained pardon were to join Månsson's troops. Fabricius commented that

⁹⁶⁰ Perhaps Governor General Jöran Sperling should be included in this category since he described himself as "almost destitute" and therefore in need of the enormous Söfwede estate that unsuitably enough was run by an old Danish widow (Dorthe Rosencrantz).

the Swedish policy had gone from fighting the snaphaner with peasants to fighting snaphaner with snaphaner.⁹⁶¹

In September 1678 a Swedish party of 24 men and a lieutenant under Sven Erlandsson stopped for a rest at Bollerup castle. The Swedish sheriff (befallningsman) there feared for their safety, though: he felt that they were too close to the “snaphanebygd”, the area that was under the control of the snaphaner⁹⁶², and so he sent to Simon Bengtsson at Krageholm (then Krogholm) castle for reinforcements. Erlandsson’s party only dared continue their journey after Bengtsson’s reinforcements of 32 musketeers and dragoons had arrived. In fact, that same day they ran into Tage Bøg and 16 of his men. Bøg himself was dead drunk and was shot dead on this occasion. He had been on his way back from Landskrona (Landskrone) with his authorisation letter and muster-roll, ammunition, and gunpowder. The authorisation was drenched in blood so that the text had become illegible, but the rest of the documents were sent over to the Governor General.⁹⁶³ Unfortunately these documents are not to be found in the archives today. Simon Bengtsson was proud to be able to report to the governor general that a Swedish unit only had just managed to kill “Major Tage Böök”⁹⁶⁴ and Erlandsson later mentioned this episode in his “Promemoria”.

Simon Bengtsson and Sven Erlandsson were just two of many Swedish residents in Scania who were given military charges during the Scanian war without having had anything to do with the army before. Normally new men like him were given charges as “commissaries of provisions” or “snaphane-catchers”. In a sense there was a parallel between “snaphaner” and “snaphane-catchers” in that many of the snaphaner did not have military training either. Bengtsson had been a sea-captain⁹⁶⁵ but

⁹⁶¹ Fabricius III, p.156. “...at kunne bringe de principaleste og værste skælmer på sin side, drivende alltså Fanden ud med Belzebub.” Fabricius noted that Bengt Månsson *might* have been identical with the frisky leader Bengt Mogensøn from Fagerhult who was active in the Markaryd area during Horn’s War 1643-45. Månsson is the Swedised version of Mogensøn. However, Fabricius also noted that this hypothesis was not very likely.

⁹⁶² Today the “Snaphanebygd” is synonymous with Göinge, the northeastern parts of Scania but during the Scanian War it was used to describe the areas that were under the control of the snaphaner/friskytter in all parts of Scania.

⁹⁶³ Sven Erlandsson calls Bøg “Båg”. See: “Promemoria on the Snaphaner”, §3, KB; Sörensson, p.45.

⁹⁶⁴ Letter and report to the governor general, 24 September 1678, LA, Lund, quoted by Johnsson, pp.172-273.

⁹⁶⁵ According to Erlandsson, p.100. Jens Lerbom has found a notice in Hyltén-Cavallius register of the officers at the Kronoberg regiment that indicates that a man by the same name became a “ryttare” there in 1662.

nevertheless managed to become an efficient snaphane-catcher, whereas Erlandsson had worked as an estate manager. It was during his time as an estate manager that he received the name he is known under in the legends: “Banketröja” or “The Thrasher.” Considering that even the rather careful Jørgen Krabbe described “monsieur Erlandsson” as a very cruel man who would not leave the peasants a minimum to eat and complained to the governor general that men like Erlandsson tried to rule the land⁹⁶⁶ one might suspect that Erlandsson had sort of a harsh attitude on the job. However, the Swedish authorities appreciated his efforts and after the war he was ennobled under the name of Ehrenflycht (Flight of honour). Erlandsson’s most eager supporter was his officer Alexander Hummer who was an especially useful snaphaner catcher since he, like his arch enemy Pieter Sten, was completely bilingual and could pass for a Dane. Hummer’s war diaries were later published under his noble name “Hummerhjem”.⁹⁶⁷

A position as a snaphane catcher or a provisions officer was often the beginning of a brilliant career during the reconstruction after the war. Many of these men were later ennobled for their war efforts. Niklas Jonsson who had appropriated himself of the Krabbe family’s Fulltofta (Fulletofte) estate received the noble name of Cronaker. He later also received some of the Thott family’s houses as a reward for his services to the Swedish state. Other civil servants who made their fortune as supplies officers and snaphane-catchers were mine surveyor Carl Paulin (Lillengrip), the mayors of Ystad and Helsingborg Olof Harman and Gabriel Månsson (Hilletan), church inspector Niklas Kreuger and the royal gamekeeper Bengt Steenman. Two professors from Lund University could also be included among these, namely Joachim Buschovius (Ehrenbusch) who became chief military prosecutor (generalauditör) during the war and served on the court martial and Andreas Stobaeus who was a native Scanian in Swedish service.⁹⁶⁸

⁹⁶⁶ Fabricius III, p.88. Krabbe to Fersen, 27th April 1677, SGA. Krabbe used almost the same expressions when he had his say about the snaphaner.

⁹⁶⁷ See Fabricius III, p.175.

⁹⁶⁸ Alf Erlandsson, p.100. According to Erlandsson (p.37. a generalauditör acted as prosecutor in courts-martial too. Other civil servants who made their fortune as provisioners and snaphane-catchers were bergverksinspektoren mine inspector Carl Paulin (Lillengrip), the mayors of Ystad and Helsingborg Olof Harman and Gabriel Månsson (Hilletan), church inspector Niklas Kreuger, (kronojägare) the Royal Gamekeeper Bengt Steenman and (sea-) captain Simon Bengtsson. Two professors from Lund University could also be included among these, namely Joachim Buschovius (Ehrenbusch) who became chief military prosecutor (generalauditör) during the war and served on the court martial and Andreas Stobaeus who was a native Scanian in Swedish service.

As I mentioned in the section on the sources, Sven Erlandsson wrote about his feats as a snaphane-catcher in a “Promemoria”. Whether the “Promemoria” was ever published is not known. It can only be assumed that the author was hoping that it would be so, since the account is told in the third person in order to bestow it with an aura of impartiality. It does not take many seconds for the reader to realise that Erlandsson (or his ghost writer) had read Julius Caesar’s *De Bello Gallico* that is written in the same style:

“Some time later Sven Erlandsson was to accompany a convoy of provisioning wagons to Ljungby, from Östre slätt (the eastern plains) but at southern Rörum he was attacked by the snaphaner who pursued him to Raflunda where he had to surrender all his goods to them, while he and his men took refuge in the Churchyard. The Snaphaner climbed onto the roof of the Vicarage and shoot at the members of the convoy but at last the Vicar let them into the church and from there they managed to send a request for reinforcements to Ljungby but when the snaphaner realised what they had done they burnt the Vicarage down.”⁹⁶⁹

Amongst other things Erlandsson also described how the famous friskytte Jeppe Baason was caught.⁹⁷⁰ Baason was spotted by Erlandsson in the surroundings of Månstorp (Monstrup)⁹⁷¹. The Swedes were spying on him in secret but General Ribbing’s groom was a bit drunk and got fed up with waiting, so he attacked on his own and was shot down by Baason who also took the young man’s horse. Then Baason and his men retreated quickly but the Swedes followed them and managed to push Baason himself to cape Stenshuvud (a promontory in the southeast) where they cornered him. Baason managed to get himself to a rock in the middle of the sea and Erlandsson offered him parole, but Baason refused to accept. Erlandsson then sent for a boat and two divers but when Baason realised what was going on he threw his gun and his money into the sea and then he jumped himself. Now, Erlandsson reported to the Swedish king that Baason’s dead body was soon dragged up from the waters and it was then taken to Nygård where two other snaphaner, Pehr Siudare and Åge alias Kongapågen, had to hang it feet upwards from an oak tree. Then they were

⁹⁶⁹ Rödahl (II, p.316.) has dated this episode to the winter of 1679. Erlandsson did not write the dates of the episodes in his “Promemoria” himself.

⁹⁷⁰ See also section on Captain Simon (Andersen). The names in the “Promemoria” are often Swedised: Baason’s Danish name was probably Boesen. It was also common that Swedish names appeared in Danish versions in Danish documents.

⁹⁷¹ As Professor Sten Skansjö has kindly pointed out to me, there were no less than eighteen localities known under the name of Monstrup/Månstorp in Scania in the 17th century. The geographical context of the “Promemoria” indicate a location in the south-east where there were two Monstrups at the time, one in the parish of modern-day Smedstorp and another in the parish of Ingelstad.

killed too.⁹⁷² Like many of his opponents, Erlandsson had a background as some sort of estate manager or bailiff, and he knew the land well after having resided a long time in Scania. I have already mentioned that Alexander Hummer showed similarities with his arch-enemy Pieter Sten, not only in linguistic competence and daring, but also in ruthlessness. Two other categories of snaphane catchers, namely that of a native of the Gønge region and possible ex-snaphaner like Bent Monsen/Bengt Månsson who started up a snaphane catcher force and that of the ex-lensmand Ebbe Uhlfeld who did much the same thing on a higher level, also based their success on the same technique as the Swedish snaphane catchers, namely using the snaphaner's methods against them. That was a conscious (and clever) choice on the side of the Swedes who aptly compared it to exorcising the devil with Beelzebub. Under other aspects too, the snaphane catchers were similar to their main opponents: War Commissary Sven "The Thrasher" Erlandsson worked much in the same manner as his enemy Pieter Sten: he kept a network of informers and spies going from where he happened to be at the moment, and he then reported what news he had collected from clergy, officials or peasants on to the Swedish king.⁹⁷³ One example is his report from 20th May 1678 in which he tells of a vicar who had sent a spy to Landskrona (Landskrone) who then came back with news about the situation for the vicar and Erlandsson.⁹⁷⁴ Then on 18th June 1678 a sheriff (fierdingsman af Winslöf och Wanneberga) told him of a peasant from Göinge (Gønge) who had interesting news to tell from his recent trip to the Landskrona (Landskrone) area. The sheriff begged Erlandsson not to make known where the information came from because the "snaphaner" would kill the peasant if they found out.⁹⁷⁵ Regarding the importance of keeping up to date with what people were saying and with what they claimed they had seen and heard in enemy territory, Erlandsson excused himself with the Swedish king for having referred what a peasant had seen inside the Danish enclave at Landskrona

⁹⁷² Their names were Pehr Sudare from Siudaretorpet in the hundred of Albo and Åge alias Kongapågen (The king's lad) who was caught at Båretoffte. As reported by Sven Erlandsson himself in his "Promemoria on the Snaphaner", KB.

⁹⁷³ See: Erlandsson's letters to the king in the Swedish National Archives (Skrifvelser till Konungen E-F SRA) e.g., report from 20th May 1678 in which he tells of a vicar who had sent a spy to Landskrona (Landskrone) who then came back with news about the situation for the vicar and Erlandsson.

⁹⁷⁴ See: Erlandsson's letters to the king in the Swedish National Archives (Skrifvelser till Konungen E-F SRA) Report from 20th May 1678. Erlandsson reported from "Mölleredh" that Danish military and snaphaner had been bivouacking just a mile away, at Torup, for two nights, but the day before they had left in the direction of Färingtofta (Færingtoftte).

⁹⁷⁵ See: Erlandsson's letters to the king in the Swedish National Archives (Skrifvelser till Konungen E-F, SRA) Report from 18th June 1678.

(Landskrone) in June 1678 claiming that it was his duty to refer such peasant chatter to His Majesty the King.⁹⁷⁶ However, His Majesty Carolus himself used “the peasants” as his foremost source at times.⁹⁷⁷ Another spy left a report about a trip to Landskrona (Landskrone) to Erlandsson on 20th November 1678: on his way to town he had accidentally bumped into “the Danish King’s sheriff Johan Hacksen with 100 cavalry that were on their way from Landskrone to the hundred of Fers. Hacksen asked the informer if it was true that Swedish military had been stationed at the Tunbyholm Castle and the informer said “Yes, that there were 1000 men”, at which the others turned back to Landskrone again”.⁹⁷⁸ The informer then reported that the situation was calm in Landskrona (Landskrone) although he saw lots of cavalymen and a few Croats (“Crabater”)⁹⁷⁹. The informer also told Erlandsson that the Danish troops that had collected a group of merchants from Lübeck from Ystad (Ysted) were snaphaner, all but sixteen cavalymen (“ridere”) that the sheriff had brought with him.⁹⁸⁰ Yet again we see that the line between snaphaner and not snaphaner was vague. In this case it had only been known that “Danish troops” had evacuated a group of foreign merchants from Ystad (Ysted) but not what kind of troops. Now the informer could provide the details that the majority had been “snaphaner” but sixteen had been regular cavalry under the county sheriff, who himself would pass under the definition “snaphane” according to the Swedes. Co-operation between different kinds of Danish troops rendered the definition of the distinguishing lines difficult to the Swedes. Furthermore, once again there is the so frequently recurring nexus friskytter/snaphaner – sheriff.

⁹⁷⁶ Sven Erlandsson to the king, Hörby 18th June 1678, Skrifvelser till Konungen E-F, SRA. ”...af min underdånigste skyldighet har dock ey underlåta kunnat, at Eds. Kongl. Maytt. Ijkwäl sådant bondetal allerunderdånigst relatera...”

⁹⁷⁷ e.g., In a letter to Johan Gyllenstjerna of 30th June 1677 (Carolus to Gyllenstjerna, Intercipierte breve, DRA), in which he tells Gyllenstjerna how governor general Fersen had driven off the Danish assault on Malmøe and that just as the peasants were saying, the enemy now seemed minded to leave (“...och som Bonden seijer skall fienden wara sinnat at brÿta derifrån up.”).

⁹⁷⁸ Jacobsen (p.200) mentions that in the autumn of 1678 “a garrison of 200 men were posted at a mansion house called Tunbyholm in order to maintain communications between Malmøe and Christianstad.” The Bendix case records reveal that Swedish troops were stationed at Tunbyholm (Tundbyholm) during the preceding winter too. See the subsection on Clawssen.

⁹⁷⁹ Croat light troops. See also: Letter from Lauritz Falckman to GA Örnevinge, 29th July 1678, (Interciperte Brefwe, DRA), in which Falckman tells his patron Major Örnevinge that theirs (the Swedes) were charging daily and that “some of the *crabater* had fallen. (nogra af crabaterne hafwa stupat).”

⁹⁸⁰ Report from Tundbyholm, 20th November 1678, signed by Sven Erlandsson, Skrifvelser till Konungen E-F, SRA.

Conclusions

If the Swedish governor general of Scania, Jöran Sperling, once expressed his fears that the snaphaner wanted to rule the land, then the leading Scanian nobleman of the day once claimed that Erlandsson and his likes tried to rule the land.⁹⁸¹ This is not the only similarity between the snaphane catchers and their prey. In fact, it seems obvious that the Swedes tried to establish a corps that could fight the Friskytter on their own terms and that based their work on the same operational methods. As is stressed in this chapter, the sources show that Sven Erlandsson and Pieter Sten worked much in the same way. In this sense, the snaphane hunters were a sort of anti-snaphaner that mirrored their enemies backwards.

The Executions of the Snaphaner

“The torturer’s gesture brands the order that wants to gain acceptance through submission into the flesh (of the sufferer).”⁹⁸²

Introduction

It is the escalation of violence and how it should/could be interpreted as a language of power that is in the focus of this section. Why was it so impossible to recognise the snaphaner/friskytter as combatants? Why was it not enough to decapitate them? What line of reasoning led the Swedish authorities to decide to brand the snaphaner as criminals? But then, on the first hand, the category of people who were called snaphaner by the Swedes during the Scanian War was largely a category that had been invented, or possibly, reinvented, by the Swedish authorities.

Extraordinary Measures

The measures taken against the “snaphaner” from early 1677 onwards were not something that the Danes and Scanians had anticipated, exactly because they were so out of the ordinary. During the Karl Gustav Wars (1658-1660) and during the first phase of the Scanian War the Swedish authorities were more lenient. Then, the crack down on Captain Bendix’s friskytter was only the beginning of what was to come. The violence against the snaphaner was escalated gradually, from the execution of Clawssen onwards to that of Hans Severin which was an extraordinary example of

⁹⁸¹ Fabricius III, p.88. Krabbe to Fersen, 27th April 1677, SGA. Krabbe used almost the same expressions when he had his say about the snaphaner.

⁹⁸² Michel de Certeau, “Le corps torture, parole torturée”, in *Cahier pour un temps*, Éditions du Centre Georges-Pompidou, Paris 1987, quoted by Sironi, p.20.

cruelty. As the Scanian War went on and the snaphane “movement” took on considerable dimensions the Swedes responded by instituting special forces of snaphane-catchers that had it as their only task to track down snaphaner and special tribunals that dealt with traitors. They also published lists of suspects that were to turn themselves in to the special tribunals. There were special “snaphane” tribunals that could condemn snaphaner without recurring to normal law procedure. However, while the war was going on it was not necessary to send the snaphaner to any sort of court at all.

According to Swedish law there were two kinds of death penalty: “simple” or “qualified”. The simple death penalty meant hanging or decapitation. The qualified death penalty depended on the severity of the crime. The most common version was that the prisoner was sent to the wheel (rådbråkning).⁹⁸³ This method was widely known on the European continent (though never practiced in England for example). The classical version consisted of “an iron flanged wheel being placed on top of the spread-eagled victim, the wheel then being repeatedly struck, breaking the bones until eventually the coup de grace was administered to the neck or chest, further blows which brought death.” In different countries there were different variations of the method. In Scandinavia the right hand was sometimes amputated before the victim was tied down.⁹⁸⁴ Sometimes the right hand and/or the head were cut off. The dead body was then quartered and bound to a wheel (or a gridiron) where it was left on display. Normally the head was put on a pole on the same place, in order to “warn other people.” The sword was reserved for people of greater dignity. During the

⁹⁸³ Ambrius (1996, p.62) describes this punishment in the following terms: “On the continent the convict was stretched out so that he lay on his back and was lashed to a cartwheel. Then the executioner first crushed his limbs and his back with heavy blows from a blacksmith’s hammer or an iron baton. If the executioner was good at his craft and had done his job in the right manner then the victim should still be alive at this point, and if he was, then it was time for stage two of the execution. The broken limbs were inserted between the spokes of the wheel and the whole construction was mounted on a pole (hel stegling).” This punishment was also an old Germanic tradition and in heathen times it had been considered particularly cruel since dead people were thought to be able to return to life as long as their skeletons were intact. See also: Oscar Bjurling, “Ystads Historia 1658-1792”, pp. 175-494, in Salomon Kraft and Oscar Bjurling *Ystads Historia Del I, Från äldsta tid till 1792* (A History of Ystad Part I, From the Oldest Times until 1792), Aurora AB, Ystad 1956, p. 205 on which Bjurling describes the “Stegel och hjul” method efficiently enough, pointing out that at the time it was considered a means of sending someone to the Lord already cleared of his sins. Bjurling also points out that in 1700, exactly for the same reason, the Reverend Lacander accompanied a woman who had done away with her child to the stake where she was to be burnt, assuring her of God’s infinite goodness.

⁹⁸⁴ Geoffrey Abbott, *Rack, Rope and Red-Hot Pincers. A History of Torture and its Instruments*, Eric Dobby Publishing, Ltd, 2002 (originally 1993), p.227.

Scanian war it is only mentioned in one case in my sources and that was that of Baron Krabbe who, however, insisted that he wanted to be shot. After the war the authorities became milder. The executions of ex-snaphaner continued for at least twenty-five years after the war, but far from all were condemned to death and when they were decapitation was the most common execution method.⁹⁸⁵

In February 1679 Hans Severin of the King's Friskytter was court-marshalled at Åhus (Aahus) and condemned to impalation, hanging *and* burning, in spite of the fact that Colonel Meerheim himself had pleaded for him with the Swedes. Captain Severin's fate has become emblematic of the whole situation during the Snaphane War.⁹⁸⁶ Severin's father was a farmer in the southern village of Skivarp (Skibberup) near Ystad.⁹⁸⁷ Severin made a career for himself in the Swedish army during thirteen years and consequently he was considered a deserter gone arch-criminal when he joined the Danes and became a leading "snaphane". The Danes saw Severin in a completely different light. Although he was arrested on the charge of unauthorised plunder by Colonel Meerheim in 1678, the very same colonel later wrote to Ascheberg in order to plead for the life of one of King Christian's most valorous soldiers in a vain attempt to save his life.⁹⁸⁸ Meerheim would *not* have pleaded for the life of a bandit or outlaw. Nevertheless, Severin was "impaled alive, not internally but between the spine and the skin through the neck and then skewered onto the stake with his feet nailed to it and his hands bound: under the gallows with the loop loosely around his neck." A ring of fire was also lit around the so-called arch traitor. It took him between seven and eight hours to die.⁹⁸⁹ The execution of the already severely wounded Hans Severin was witnessed by a huge crowd. The Swedish authorities had tried to get as many people

⁹⁸⁵ See the section on the snaphaner and the church in which the Tuesen case is mentioned.

⁹⁸⁶ Captain Severin has become something of a martyr to the Scanian national romantics of today. For that reason, I hesitated before presenting his case as "emblematic" but I think it was, and it is well-documented from both sides and in various sources.

⁹⁸⁷ Blom and Moen (p. 124) do not state their source, but the court registers verify their version. In Hirsch & Hirsch he is registered as "from Böringe".

⁹⁸⁸ See: Sörensson, p.71; Cronholm, p.194. Cronholm refers to a letter of 23rd February 1679 among His Majesty's letters in the Swedish National Archives (K. Maj:ts br. 23 Febr.1679, R. Re.g.).

⁹⁸⁹ This last detail was first communicated to me by Jens Lerbom who noted that Åberg who first came across this document had not been able to decipher the manuscript correctly because it has been severely damaged. According to Lerbom nobody has consulted the original document after Åberg. See: Document in the Swedish National Archives: Militära ämnessamlingar M1336, Dnr RA 42:2, SRA. For different interpretations of Severin's verdict see of that the ethnologist Linde-Laursen, p.51 and that of the regionalist historian Röndahl, pp.440-441.

as possible to watch the execution because they wanted “respect for the law and fear of joining the snaphaner” to be instilled into the populace.⁹⁹⁰

In order to avoid biased interpretations, I would like to stress that Swedish execution methods were no crueller than those of many other early modern states. Extreme cruelty made part of the language of power of both the state and the church in early modern Europe. There were differences in the preferred methods but then violence is influenced by culture too. Possibly the old Viking heritage and eastern European influences played their role for the Swedish choice of torture and execution methods. Although impalement (spitting) of criminals was uncommon in Western Europe it was hardly less cruel than the continental and British methods described by Michel Foucault in his *Surveiller et punir*. In 1757 a patricide called Damiens was condemned by Louis XV to be subjected to the following treatment:

“tenaillé aux mamelles, bras, cuisses et gras des jambes, sa main droite tenant en icelle le couteau dont il a commis le dit parricide, brûlée de feu de soufre, et sur les endroits où il sera tenaillé, jeté du plomb fondu, de l’huile bouillante, de la poix résine brûlante, de la cire et soufre fondus ensemble et ensuite son corps tiré et démembré à quatre chevaux et ses cendres jetées au vent.”⁹⁹¹

Since the executioners had some trouble in making the horses tear Damiens’s body apart they eventually, after several attempts, had to cut him to pieces themselves. Damiens was still alive when the bonfire was lit.⁹⁹² Damiens’s case was certainly no more humane than the execution of Hans Severin; the difference is that whereas Damiens was a civilian who considered himself a civilian, Severin was a highly competent soldier who fought for his rightful king and country according to the state he fought for.

The Swedes feared that if the friskytter’s status as soldiers was recognised it would become even more difficult to hold back popular resistance in Scania and that

⁹⁹⁰ See also the regionalist historian Jonny Ambrius’s *Att dömas till döden. Tortyr, kroppsstraff och avrättningar genom historien*, (To be Condemned to Death: Torture, Physical Punishment and Executions throughout History), Vällingby 1996, p.61.

⁹⁹¹ Michel Foucault, *Surveiller et punir. Naissance de la prison*, Gallimard, 1975, p.9.

⁹⁹² Another example of “European” punishment methods is presented in detail by Foucault: *Punishment for high treason*, supplice des traîtres décrit par W. Blackstone, Commentaire sur le Code criminel anglais, trad.1776, I, p.105. La traduction étant destinée à faire valoir l’humanité de la législation anglaise par opposition à la vieille Ordonnance de 1760, le commentateur ajoute: “Dans ce supplice effrayant par le spectacle, le coupable ne souffre ni beaucoup ni longtemps... Plus de ces supplices où le condamné est traîné sur une claie (pour éviter que la tête n’éclate sur le pavé), où son ventre est ouvert, ses entrailles arrachées en hâte, pour qu’il ait le temps de voir, de ses yeux, qu’on les jette au feu; où il est décapité enfin et son corps divisé en quartiers.”

consequently, the “snaphaner” would become too powerful.⁹⁹³ Recognition of the friskytter might also weaken popular support for the Swedish cause in Sweden itself (and the motivation of its mainly conscripted soldiers). The impalement victims were no longer champions of the Danish king when their corpses were pushed off the stake. They had been transformed into Swedish criminals, or at least that was what their executors were hoping for. In a way it was a propaganda war between Sweden and Denmark, the messages of which was inscribed on people’s bodies. Those were messages that ordinary people were expected to decipher correctly. Maybe my most obvious example of bodies used as conveyors of messages⁹⁹⁴ is that of the Swedes who were tortured by the Brandstad friskytter:

“...when they [the snaphaner] entered the Lövestad forest they first grilled the quarter master over the fire until he was both black and brown and then they crushed his bones and put him, still alive, on a wheel. A peasant was ordered to chop one hand of the officer who was then liberated with the order that he should go to the Swedish king and tell him that the snaphaner had taken care of him.”⁹⁹⁵

During torture a certain number of mechanisms are activated: these mechanisms aim at reducing the victim to “universality”, a human being who is deprived of everything that distinguishes him/her from other human beings.⁹⁹⁶ One of these mechanisms is that of transformation through psychological and physical wounds. This kind of transformation has a cultural basis. As a method it works in the same way as the initiation rites of the “primitive” cultures of ancient and modern times, including military training and college hazing in the world of today. The scars confirm the temporary or permanent rupture of the alliance with the religious, ethnic, or political group that the victim used to belong to. Torture is a method of provoking trauma. Deliberate traumatising has been used in various cultures throughout history, not only for the sake of extracting information and confessions, but also in rites of passage and initiation. Its effects are the same, no matter what the cultural origins of the victim are.⁹⁹⁷ Deconstruction and traumatising techniques are built on the same principles

⁹⁹³ The Swedish governor general Jöran Sperling even imagined that the snaphaner wanted to take over the whole of Scania. Sperling to the king, 1678, SRA: “...snapphanarna ämna Kristianstad blockera, att fästningen snart skall bliva uppgiven och att sedan hela landet utöver skall falla i deras våld.” Quote: Johnsson, p.133. See also: Eskeld Nielsen, 2 July 1677, I.S. DRA, No: 508, quoted by Sörensson on p. 28. In this letter, Nielsen claimed that the entire population would rise against the Swedes if only the Danish king would order them to.

⁹⁹⁴ The concept of bodies used as conveyors of messages is taken from Llewellyn Barstow. See for example p.146.

⁹⁹⁵ This letter has been published by amongst others Røndahl (1996) p, 276.

⁹⁹⁶ See: Haritos-Fatouros (p.40) who mentions “deindividuation and value reformulation”.

⁹⁹⁷ Sironi, p.38.

and have the same results in U.S. army training camps as in Yoruba initiation rites. It could be called a way of inoculating the intention of the torturer (or those he/she represents) into the victim.⁹⁹⁸ The torture techniques that are practised by Westerners today function in a similar way to those that were used during the Scanian war.⁹⁹⁹

When the Milanese intellectual Pietro Verri wrote his “Observations on Torture” in the 1770ies he felt that he had to prove that men of all times had criticised the usage of torture: “it is a mistake to claim that it is a modern invention to feel horror for torture.”¹⁰⁰⁰ He did not only call Cicero in his defence, but also Saint Augustine, Quintilian, Seneca and Valerius Maximus.¹⁰⁰¹ The main argument of the ancients was that pain forces even the most innocent man to lie and so, torture is useless as a means of extracting information. Writing about the Middle Ages Michel Foucault concluded that: “Torture was not an uncontrolled expression of anger, but a technique whereby minutely calibrated amounts of pain could be administered to the criminal’s body; an organised ritual in which that body was marked by the power of the sovereign.”¹⁰⁰² Indeed the Greek psychologist Mika Haritos-Fatouros claims that the situation has not changed over the years. Her research into the field of torturers and how they are

⁹⁹⁸ Sironi, p.28: “Il processo di tortura è una tecnica di inoculazione dell’intenzionalità di tutto un gruppo, tramite l’interfaccia costituita dai torturatori, in un altro gruppo, tramite un’altra interfaccia, ossia il torturato.”

⁹⁹⁹ Some of the most common torture methods: *The establishment of an obsessive total code as a system*. This code of behaviour sanctions the division of the world between “masters” and “servants” or rather, between torturers and authorities on the one hand and opponents who must be subjected and psychologically annihilated on the other. The prisoner learns that he must accept absurd and illogical rules. Friskytter and snaphaner who were prisoners in the Swedish camps had to do jobs that normally only the nightman did. See: Jacobsen, p.89 and Haritos-Fatouros, p.34. *Logical perversion*. A sense of impotence (for the prisoner) and omnipotence (for the torturers) is constructed through the mechanism of logical perversion. Situations of impossible choices and paradoxical messages are characteristic. A typical situation would be the one where the prisoner has to choose what kinds of torture his comrades will have to face. To stay alive, you are forced to hurt others and go against your beliefs, culture or ethics. Another example would be those snaphaner who were offered to stay alive a little longer if they executed their comrades first like Kongapågen and his mate who had to desecrate Baasson’s corpse, or like the two peasants who were caught, and of which one had to hang the other before he too was killed. There is no right or wrong that follows logical rules. (Haritos-Fatouros, p.46.) Sometimes the persecutors are good to you, sometimes not. This mechanism works towards the deconstruction of the prisoner’s identity.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Verri, p.83.

¹⁰⁰¹ Pietro Verri, *Osservazioni sulla tortura*, Newton Compton, Roma 1994 (originally published in 1804), pp.81-82. On p.81 he quotes Cicero’s *Pro Silla*: “Illa tormenta moderatur dolor, gubernat natura cujusque tum animi, tum corporis, regit quaesitor, flectit livido, corrumpit spes, infirmat metus, ut in tot rerum angustiis nihil veritati locus relinquatur.” (La tortura è dominata dallo spasimo, governata dal temperamento di ciascuno, si d’animo che di membra; la ordina il giudice, la piega il livore, la corrompe la speranza, la indebolisce il timore, cosicché fra tante angosce nessun luogo rimane alla verità.)

¹⁰⁰² Michel Foucault, *The Will to Truth*, Tavistock, London 1980, p.180, quoted by Mika Haritos-Fatouros, p.115.

created has led to the conclusion that anger still has very little to do with torture.¹⁰⁰³ The torturer and his/her trade are tools in the hands of the authorities: they constitute a way of impressing power into the bodies and minds of those who are supposed to obey. Even in those cases in which the victim dies, his pain is used as a tool that instils obedience into the minds of others. Torture still plays a role as a deterrent. In January 2005 the Egyptian daily *El Messaa* concluded that the horrendous images of the torture that the prisoners in the Abu Ghraib prison had to endure had been published by the Americans to frighten the Iraqi resistance into submission.¹⁰⁰⁴ Torture is a *rite of passage* that transforms a soldier into a thug, a faithful Dane into a Swedish deserter. It makes the victim take a on a strictly binary vision of the world: there is good and bad, clean, and dirty, nothing in between. The torturers make their victims understand that there is only one right world order: the one in which torturers are strong, secure, and powerful and victims are vermin.¹⁰⁰⁵ The intentionality of the persecutor crushes the victim's sense (and capacity) of having an identity of his own. The torturers' thoughts invade his mind.¹⁰⁰⁶ Finally, this mechanism is characterised by violations of taboos and that, in its turn, results in a cultural blank, or rather, deculturation. Sironi attributes three main functions to torture: obtaining information, extracting confessions, and cancelling the victim's culture of belonging:

“(Torture) reduces the person to his/her universal component and deprives him/her of his uniqueness and his bonds. Through the individual who is being tortured the persecutors want to hit the group of belonging; you attack the ‘collective part’ of the individual, the one that unites him/her to a group that the aggressor has chosen for a target, and in that way the relationship between the individual and the collective is unhinged.”¹⁰⁰⁷

Culture creates meaning.¹⁰⁰⁸ According to modern psychology researchers it holds peoples lives together and makes existence bearable. In a sense it is the pair of glasses through which the things our eyes register are given meaning. It renders us able to interpret the world and feel safe. The separation from one's culture of origin always

¹⁰⁰³ Mika Haritos-Fatouros, *The Psychological Origins of Institutionalized Torture*, Routledge 2003, p.181 and p.238. Which is also very much what Foucault says in his *Surveiller et punir*.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Quoted in the Italian daily *Il Messaggero*, 18th January 2005. Haritos-Fatouros (p.149) claims that torture has the dual task of extracting information and intimidating the public.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Sironi, p.36.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Sironi (p.36.) expresses this mechanism eloquently: “Se te la cavi, dentro di te deve rimanere in vita solo la scimmia che è nell'uomo. Faremo sparire in te tutto quello che fonda la tua singolarità.”

¹⁰⁰⁷ Sironi, p.37.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Cf. Margaret Moore's article “*Nationalism and Political Philosophy*” (pp.94-104 in *The Sage Handbook of Nations and Nationalism*, Gerard Delanty and Krishan Kumar eds., Sage Publications, London Thousand Oaks/New Delhi, 2006) in which she explains how difficult it can be to change identity and culture “like hats” even though it is quite possible and probably even the norm to do so. The mere fact that many identities are shaped in relation to others or as opposed to others (being Scottish means not being American) might render it difficult to change between some identities.

causes a trauma. The invalidation of it can be even more serious, in the sense that invalidation is the same as denial (“you don’t exist”) or denigration (“you belong to the bad guys”). Identities are instable and keep changing. Some aspects of our identities, like ethnicity and nationality, remain in the background until particular circumstances turn our attention upon them. Different aspects of our identity continue to change place between the centre and the periphery of attention.¹⁰⁰⁹ Our identity is also continuously changed by new experiences. Ageing is the most palpable change in our self perception. Our bodies change drastically between childhood and old age, and yet we all keep a certain feeling of continuity and particularity. There is something that persists and that overcomes the workings of the years on our identities. Our identities are conglomerates of fixed characteristics and a growing supply of experiences that life itself provides us with as it passes. The more we can bring ourselves to accept the unchangeable parts of our identities, the easier it gets to accept the unavoidable changes that time brings with it.

The psychiatrist Marcello Vignar defines torture as a means of destroying those intimate beliefs that constitute the basis of the victim’s identity and consequently defines him/her as a person. Seen from that point of view torture becomes a tool that can bring about the “deactivation” of those who constitute a danger to law and order. It effectuates a paralysis of the governed.¹⁰¹⁰ Through fear the authorities try to obtain a fundamental confirmation of its legitimacy. By executing the “snaphaner” like murderers, with singularly cruel methods like spitting on a stake, the Swedish authorities conveyed a new vision of the world to the Scanians. Torture effectuates a rift between the sufferer and the world. Firstly, because the victim is bereaved of his language and identity. Pain sends him/her to a universe where friends, family, politics, religion have ceased to exist.¹⁰¹¹ That is why confession (betrayal) also ceases to matter. The only voice that is left to the sufferer is that of a speechless baby or animal. The torturer *always* tries to dehumanise the sufferer.¹⁰¹² A person who has been humiliated beyond a certain degree starts to think of himself/herself as non-human, as an animal, or vermin. Secondly because the spectators or bystanders start to see the

¹⁰⁰⁹ This paragraph is based on Richard A. Moskowitz’s *Vilse i speglingar –borderline sett inifrån*, Dualis 2001, p.70. (Translation of *Lost in the Mirror*, Taylor Publishing, Dallas, 2001).

¹⁰¹⁰ Marcello Vignar, quoted by Sironi, p.20.

¹⁰¹¹ Scarry, p.29: “in confession, one betrays oneself and all those aspects of the world-friend, family, country, cause-that the self is made up of.”

¹⁰¹² Sironi, p.25.

sufferer as non-human. People who have assisted the torture or have to live with psychologically and/or physically mutilated torture victims easily come to see them in the same way. Those grotesque sounds and that deformed body cannot possibly belong to a beloved son or husband. Human beings tend to doubt or deny the suffering of others, simply because it is so very difficult to grasp the depths of it, because it is easier to believe that only non-humans could be exposed to such torments. Physical pain is not easily shared, communicated, or justified when believed in. Its incommunicability distances the sufferer from the rest of the world. It resists objectification in language because it takes no object, it has no “of” or “for” like love or fear. It shatters language and sends the sufferer back to a “state anterior to language, to the sounds and cries a human being makes before language is learned.” Pain has triumphed when it brings about an “absolute split between one’s sense of one’s own reality and the reality of other persons.”¹⁰¹³ The French psychologist Françoise Sironi’s study of the psychology of torture starts with the phrase: “torture steals the voice.”¹⁰¹⁴ The treaty said nothing about the friskytter and perhaps because of that they were tracked down like “wild and mute beasts”, or at least that is how some of them perceived what happened after the outcome of the war had become clear.¹⁰¹⁵ The image of the animal, the *animalesque* and *monsters that are not allowed to have a voice* is recurrent through the sources from both sides.¹⁰¹⁶ On the one hand it is the Swedes’ attempts to classify their arch-enemy as such, on the other it is the arch-enemy’s wild fear of becoming what they knew they were not. Once you have passed “the confines of the species” doing things that human beings do not do you have also passed a passage point from where it is difficult to return.¹⁰¹⁷ This kind of process is called dehumanisation and it takes place when cultural taboos are violated.

Like many others Håkan Erichsson from Kolbengtseröd had not gone to church for all the time he was a snaphane but they had “lived in the woods like beasts and soulless creatures.”¹⁰¹⁸ In the same manner Major Aage “the Hare” Monsen Harlof claimed that he and his men had all become “freaks and exiles” that no one would

¹⁰¹³ Scarry, p.4.

¹⁰¹⁴ Sironi, p.11: (La tortura ruba la voce)

¹⁰¹⁵ Sörensson, (p.63) quotes major Harlof: “vilde och umælende Bester”.

¹⁰¹⁶ In the same manner as witches, bandits and murderers were not allowed to have a voice.

¹⁰¹⁷ Haritos-Fatouros, p.63 (Training in dehumanisation).

¹⁰¹⁸ Rydstrand, p.25. “Haver varken han eller de andra varit i all den tiden uti någon kyrka eller brukat sine salighetsmedel, men såsom bestar och oskälige kreatur följt skogen.”

take in or help.¹⁰¹⁹ On the other hand, the Swedish officer who was roasted on a spit was transformed into a pig by the Brandstad friskytter. As the war proceeded increasingly violent measures were taken against the rebellious Scanians. The friskytter were *not* able to pay back in the same coin. They could not execute their captives like criminals. It seems as if these orders were normally taken seriously. Friskytter who disobeyed orders or misbehaved were arrested by the county sheriff and consigned to the authorities who had them court-martialled.¹⁰²⁰ But naturally, there were numerous ways to avoid the eyes of the authorities. Tasks that friskytter were unable to do could naturally be executed by “snaphaner” or “peasants”.

The whole scapegoat mechanism and the representing of rebels/guerrillas as monsters is not uncommon at all. It is not a tendency or trait that is particular to the Swedes (as is sometimes implied by Scanian and Danish nationalists) but rather a reaction that seems to be inherent to states that are faced by an insurgency threat, especially in conquered or annexed territories. To a greater or lesser extent that tends to happen in similar situations. In the same manner that the language of the rebels/monsters was depicted as gibberish that should be transformed into a proper language (Swedish.). Those who did not learn the real language were not part of the Christian community and could not participate in the Eucharist or get married. Exclusion from the Christian community was an efficient weapon in the hands of early modern authorities.¹⁰²¹ Reshaping and restyling so that reality could be perceived as righteous and true was an important component of the Swedish policy in Scania.

The Hi-Jack Effect

There is one important point regarding the “Scanian question” that has long been neglected and that is the fact that scholars like Fabricius and Alf Åberg and local historians like Uno Røndahl all based part of their research on a set of fundamental questions that were of a psychological rather than a historical nature. Fabricius started out doing research on Scania because he was stupefied by the fact that Scanian schoolchildren derided Danish kings that had been their own ancestors’ rulers and Alf Åberg was rather puzzled by the fact that after only a century some of the official instances in Scania seemed to have no clue that Scanian had once been Danish.¹⁰²²

¹⁰¹⁹ Sörensson, (p.63) quotes major Harlof: “vilde och umælende Bester”.

¹⁰²⁰ See the section on “Peasant Troops and Border Guards” of this thesis.

¹⁰²¹ See: Appel, p.674.

¹⁰²² See: Introduction.

Åberg turned to the most recent psychological findings of his day for an answer and suggested that the Scanians had reacted like hijack victims who fall in love with their kidnappers (the Stockholm syndrome) because in a situation where there is no hope of liberation human beings tend to become one with the enemy. This psychological analysis might provide an explanation of the total identification with Sweden and Swedish values that so astounded the Danish historian Knud Fabricius. But it is an explanation that presumes massive collective trauma and deculturation for the Stockholm syndrome is the result of exposure to that kind of stress factors. It is a contradiction to claim that the transition from Danish to Swedish rule was smooth and perhaps the least troublesome change of state in history, at the same time as you affirm that the population were struck by the Stockholm syndrome.

It is extremely interesting that both Alf Åberg and the Scanian regionalist Uno Røndahl come to the same trauma-theory conclusion although they take widely different views of the Scanian question and the snapshooter in general. To Røndahl "ignorance is power" and it is through the systematic suppression of the history of the Scanian provinces that has kept the official Swedish version afloat for 300 years.¹⁰²³ In order to explain the Scanians' apparent docility after 1680 Røndahl quotes Barbara Tuchman who claims that terror never wins unless it becomes total.¹⁰²⁴ Røndahl set out with the preconception that the Swedes were war criminals that had created the situation on purpose, but he did not take into consideration that even if he were right and a number of Scanians might have experienced a sense of terror at the time, that state of things might have been the result of many factors. More recent research than that which Åberg (or any of the other scholars and writers I have mentioned in this subsection) had access to at the time, indicates that the victim does not so much identify with the persecutor as become "possessed" by him. Passivity is a *normal* reaction to war, torture, and trauma. Severely traumatised persons tend to become "deactivated" and show an utter fear of violence. When they find themselves in a situation in which they are supposed to defend themselves, they either avoid conflict, remain totally paralysed or react with violence but in an unsuitable manner and in the wrong situations. In the same manner, hatred often leads to passivity, especially if the object of this feeling is a deeply feared authority figure. Conformity and obedience is

¹⁰²³ Røndahl 1996, quote: p.195

¹⁰²⁴ Røndahl 1996, p.386 quote from Barbara Tuchman, *Den första saluten*, Stockholm 1989.

most easily achieved through arbitrary violence that reduces the weaker part to a state of “learned” helplessness. Those are forces that maintain social hierarchy and bind individuals to authority.¹⁰²⁵ Victims do not take on the identity of the aggressor until things get really bad and then it is *not* a voluntary action but the result of utter passivity or even, resignation. In her *Trauma and Recovery*, psychiatrist Judith Lewis Herman stresses the consequences of long-term captivity and dominance on human beings: the most common symptoms are passivity and incapacity to act, helplessness and apathy. This kind of experience also leads to identity problems and a tendency to continue to serve the destructive ends of one’s captors. The Stockholm syndrome that Alf Åberg explained the reactions of the Scanians’ with is perhaps the result of reactions like those described by Lewis Herman.¹⁰²⁶ Towards the end of the Scanian War when Danish troops were looting and laying waste the land quite as thoroughly as the Swedes, there was a widespread feeling that the Danes had abandoned them and the Swedes would never let them go again.¹⁰²⁷ As Harman stresses: in a major armed conflict a sense war weariness and defeat might become almost endemic and it is only natural to keep one’s head low, and only natural not to rush to the arms next time round if you are not convinced that there is a chance to win.

Conclusions

Violence was an important component of the Swedish anti-snaphane policy that very much centred upon the marginalisation of the snaphaner from the “normal” population; marginalisation, or ending up outside the Christian community, meant becoming an outlaw who could and should be punished the way the snaphaner were. Torture is primarily a means of silencing dangerous voices, only at a secondary and less certain stage it becomes a means of extracting information. Thirdly, it is also a way of re-creating the world.¹⁰²⁸ Scania had to be re-imagined as a Swedish retrieved

¹⁰²⁵ Françoise Sironi, *Persecutori e vittime, Strategie di violenza*, (Translation of *Bourreaux et victimes, Psychologie de la torture*, Éditions Odile Jacob 1999) Feltrinelli 2001, p.155 and Haritos-Fatouros, p.136 and esp. p.159.

¹⁰²⁶ Judith Lewis Harman, *Trauma och tillfrisknande*, Estland 2007. (Original version: *Trauma and Recovery*, Basic Books 1992.), pp.142-143.

¹⁰²⁷ See: Skansjö, pp. 186-188. On p. 186 he stresses that Scanian resistance had ebbed out, possibly because it seemed pointless when they did not stand a chance anymore. He also stresses (p.188) that the sack of Ystad and similar Danish incursions created great mistrust in Scania.

¹⁰²⁸ “Unmaking resides in and can thus be represented by two relatively self-contained events, torture and war, the first of which is its most complete and therefore most perfect representative. Because the deconstruction of creation takes a specifically political form (torture, war), it might seem most appropriate to trace the outlines of the opposite event again in a specifically political form, such as the

province and its inhabitants had to fit into the pattern. The Scanian rebels were restyled into monsters, destroyed, and replaced by true Swedes, obedient subjects, pious members of the Christian community. I do not mean that many people were replaced in a physical sense. Sometimes they were but in most cases they were not. It was enough that they were replaced by obedient subjects in the imagination of people. Only the most disturbing elements were physically removed and replaced. Those were the elements that were made into scapegoats that cleaned the slate for a new way of conceiving of Scania.

The Dregs of the Human Race

“The worst about the Friskytter is that there is no order and no manners among them so that if only they had real Officers, they would be able to defend themselves better, and the peasants would not be bothered by them so often as when the bad people among them take command.”¹⁰²⁹

Introduction

Opinions on the snaphaner and friskytter vary and varied. As was exemplified by Pieter Sten in earlier chapter contemporary sources would glorify or vilify the same person to exaggeration, often depending on the nationality of the source but far from always so. It should be noted that there were many Danes and Scanians who distanced themselves from the friskytter/snaphaner, but as far as I know, no Swedes who praised them or called them heroes. This section contains a partial explanation as to how and why the friskytter/snaphaner raised such conflicting feelings even amongst those they considered their own.

An International Phenomenon

A tendency to confuse guerrillas/partisans with outlaws and criminals is characteristic of the fight against guerrillas, be it literary or physical.¹⁰³⁰ The Romans called the “insurgents in Spain street robbers and highwaymen, their leader was the *latronum dux*.”¹⁰³¹ Although the *petite guerre* certainly could trace its roots to the Middle Ages and far beyond, it took on a new form under the absolutist monarchs. In its essence it

moment when a new country is being conceived and constructed (made-up, made-real), or when an already existing country, having been partially destroyed, is being re-imagined and re-constructed (remade-up).”Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain, The Making and the Unmaking of the World*, Oxford University Press 1985, p. 177.

¹⁰²⁹ Hendric Troulsen Querk from Onsjö (Onsee) herret and a friskytte, report from the Sönderaas friskytter (the captain of whom was Thue Piill), Landskrone 25th March 1678, 468:99. Sörensson, p. 51, quote from: I.S., March 1678, B, No: 256, DRA.

¹⁰³⁰ The Greek civil war 1944-47 was called “an anti-bandit struggle” by the Greek political, economic, and military leaders who were allied with the king and the British against the Communists. (Haritos-Fatouros, p.24.)

¹⁰³¹ Lacqueur, p.8.

was a kind of rebellion against official army techniques, but a rebel force that could be channelled into the service of the state (i.e., the king).¹⁰³² The irregulars that Johannes Kunisch studied often had a bad reputation. During the campaign of 1745 Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick called the Austrian irregulars “Diebe und Räuber” that were always hiding behind trees and did not behave like courageous soldiers at all.¹⁰³³ Valentini claimed that the Croats of the Seven Years’ War and the Bavarian War of Succession (Erbfolgekrieg) had become all-time masters of the art of ambushing. Valentini accused the Croats of “unaufhörliche Neckereien” and of “beständig im Lande herumkriechen und auf Gelengenheit lauern, etwas wegzuschnappen”.¹⁰³⁴ In the same manner de la Croix concluded in his *Abhandlung vom kleinen Kriege, zum Gebrauch der Freycompagnie* that the Partiegänger or Freycompagnien often were seen with hatred or disgust by others.¹⁰³⁵ Frederic the Great considered the irregulars an inevitable evil: “Da sie nun aber doch einmal unentbehrlich waren, so entstand eine greuliche Mißgestalt.”¹⁰³⁶ Johann von Ewald who wrote an *Abhandlung von dem Dienst der leichten Truppen* in 1796 nevertheless declared that the object of his study consisted of the “Abschaume des menschlichen Geschlechts”. In 1789 Georg Wilhelm von Bolstern declared that the irregulars were “das Rendezvous für die Ausreißer der gegenseitigen Armeen”.¹⁰³⁷ In a military manual from 1766 the “Frei-Bataillons” were accused of stealing, looting and debauchery by the Prussian officer who wrote it. According to Kunisch the Austrian Grenzer were different from other irregulars in that they were bound together by “national bonds” (nationale Bindungen). However, they still gained a reputation for being “beutegierigen, zügellos plündernden und mordlustigen Draufgängern”.¹⁰³⁸

Kunisch has an explanation for the accusations against the irregulars. There is no way of denying that the irregulars often behaved unconventionally, mischievously, or even criminally. Kunisch claims that these problems were due to the structural problems of

¹⁰³² Kunisch, p.80: “das Ausbrechen aus den durch ein verabsolutiertes Reglementierungsdenken gesetzten Normen, - den antimechanistischen Gegenschlag gegen ein artifizielles, sich in kalkulierbaren Gesetzmäßigkeiten verstrickendes Heeressystem.”

¹⁰³³ Kunisch, p.27. Letter from Brunswick to Herzog Karl, 8 August 1745, Archiv Wolfenbüttel.

¹⁰³⁴ Kunisch, p.27. Valentini, *Abhandlung über den kleinen Krieg*, p.357.

¹⁰³⁵ Paris 1752, pp.105–132.

¹⁰³⁶ Kunisch, p.34.

¹⁰³⁷ *Der Kleine Krieg oder die Maximen der leichten Infanterie, Kavalerie, Scharfschützen und Jäger*, Magdeburg 1789. Kunisch, p.90.

¹⁰³⁸ *Idealistischen Project zur Einrichtung der Armee* written by an anonymous officer in 1766, quoted by Kunisch, p.35.

the army organisation rather than the evil characters of the irregulars themselves.¹⁰³⁹ When the Austrian army enlisted an irregular company by the name of “das Trenksche Pandurenkorps” in 1741, it was ordered that all bandits on parole in the area should be conscripted and ordered to stop their “Raubereyen.”¹⁰⁴⁰ We can only guess at the demoralising effect it had on the other members of the Pandurenkorps. In the same manner the irregulars were often reinforced by the enlistment of deserters and renegades. Another demoralising factor was constituted by the fact that the Austrian irregulars received their main income through looting. Much like the Danish friskytter, their army pay was low, and the Austrian authorities believed that many men were attracted to the irregulars by the hope of being allowed to loot in a way that other regular soldiers were not allowed to. The Austrian irregulars did receive some supplies from the army depots but often it was difficult to get the supplies through to them since they were operating on the other side of the enemy lines.¹⁰⁴¹ Just like the Austrian Grenzer troops the friskytter were sometimes accused of lasciviousness and libertinage.¹⁰⁴² When Jöns Ottosson was caught by the Swedes he was immediately accused of loose living and debauchery. Bengtsson, the snaphane-catcher who found Ottosson and his colleague Henrik Jönsson at an inn in Ystad wrote a conscientious account to Sperling about the occurred. First and foremost, Bengtsson pointed out that Ottesen had been staying with a widow whom he had promised to marry but that he had not done so because of the other snaphaner and the tax-collector (“kronofogden”) who had ordered him to leave town. Ottesen reported his presence to Mayor Hartman who replied: “I do not want you to stay here. You have whored with a widow and tempted a married woman away from her husband”. Then the letter stresses that Ottesen and Jensen were caught at a public house where

¹⁰³⁹ Kunisch, p.37: “Vielmehr herrschte zwischen den hemmungslosen Ausschweifungen der leichten Truppen und den Bedingungen, unter denen sie zu Kriegsdiensten angeworben und ins Feld geschickt wurden, ein Wechselverhältnis, das viele der Übeltaten weniger als Böswilligkeit und verstocktheit unverbesserlicher Missetäter, sondern als strukturelle Mängel der Heeresverfassung erscheinen läßt”

¹⁰⁴⁰ Kunisch, p.37.

¹⁰⁴¹ Kunisch, p.39. In Scania this problem was not so evident since the Danish enclaves remained close. When the friskytter/snaphaner in the northeastern area of Blekinge got too isolated they withdrew to Scania.

¹⁰⁴² But then the Scanian people *en masse* was accused of “Danish libertinage”. See: von Ascheberg, p.20.

the two of them were lodging in a chamber that was right opposite that of two women and the doors of both rooms were wide open!¹⁰⁴³

Towards the end of the summer of 1678 Major Niels Tommesen Tidemand of the King's Friskytter wrote an angry letter to the Swedish commander of Ängelholm (Engelholm), Sven Broch.¹⁰⁴⁴ He accused Broch of having tried to entice friskytter over to the other side. According to Tidemand the Swedish commander was spreading false rumours that said that many friskytter had joined the Swedes and that those who remained on the Danish side were torturing their Swedish prisoners atrociously. Tidemand replied indignantly that the friskytter would have wanted to treat their prisoners like the Swedes did, but they were not allowed to pay back in the same coin because they were professionals who respected military ethics. Tidemand continued:

“As long as this land has healthy men with Danish blood in their veins there will be more and more children in the kingdom of Sweden who will weep and cry...unless you agree to grant our men military status so that we can ransom those of us who become prisoners of war. His Royal Majesty of Denmark has employed and ordered us to be officers (majors, ritmester, lieutenants and non-commissioned officers etc) and consequently we are not allowed to pursue the enemy in murderous ways but have to ride in uniform on our horses and attack in honourable ways...We do not sneak upon innocent people in our free time but keep ourselves busy taking care of our horses and cleaning our guns and uniforms. Furthermore, I would like our enemies to know that the peasants should not be punished for our sake...but if we find out that a peasant is bringing messages to the enemy then he becomes an enemy himself.”¹⁰⁴⁵

Tideman's letter speaks for itself. There is no need to explain that he considered himself a soldier and clearly explained why: he and his men followed military tactics, fought like soldiers, dressed like soldiers, and wanted to die like soldiers. Instead, many of them had to die in the worst and most humiliating manner one can think of. He called the Swedes “skælmer”, the word the Swedes normally used to describe delinquents and snaphaner.¹⁰⁴⁶ It describes someone very unreliable, with a touch of “bastard” to it. To Tideman the Swedes were “skælmer” because they were tricking

¹⁰⁴³ Johnsson (p. 128, Skrivelser till gen.-guv från Simon Bengtsson 27th February 1678, LA) refers to their names in their Swedish form Jöns Ottosson and Henrik Jönsson, rather than the Danish Jens Ottesen and Hindrich Jensen.

¹⁰⁴⁴ Tidemand was also one of the protagonists of the classical Swedish snaphane novel *Den siste snaphanen* (The Last Snaphane) by Carl August Cederborg in which Tidemand is called “Nils Thomasson Tideman” and is a robber who gets hung by the energetic Swedish officer/snaphane catcher Alexander Hummerhjelm. In the novel and in the local legends Tidemand's angry son, Per Tidemansen, remained with the snaphaner until long after the war. See: Mellhed, p.54.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Røndahl 1996, pp.448-450. Tideman's letter is to be found in Nordiska Saml.Nr.205, Uppsala University Library, it is also quoted by Kjær, *Gjøngehøvdingen Svend Povlsen og Snaphanerne. Et Bidrag til Snaphanetidens Historie*, Dansk-Skaansk –Forening 1974 and by Hansgaard, pp.144–145. A photocopy of the original has also been published by Mellhed.

¹⁰⁴⁶ Some Scanians agreed with the Swedes on this point: Reverend Jacobsen for one. He preferred calling them “the ungodly snaphaner” though.

friskytter into asking for amnesty with false promises. Honest men would not try to trick soldiers into joining the enemy, nor would they make enemies that had fought a good fight die the grisly death of a criminal. From Tideman's point of view the ones who were not playing fair game were the Swedes. He also emphasised that it meant something to have Danish blood in one's veins and that to him, ethnic identities were not optional. Tidemand's letter is a good enough explanation of the snaphaner's "whys" in general but also as to particulars like that of wearing uniforms and leading a normal military life. He claimed that real friskytter wore uniforms and dedicated their free time to taking care of their horses, uniforms, and guns and that it was only slander that had it that friskytter spent their time off mugging people. I do not know which version is true, if any, but it is obvious from his letter that there was a uniform issue, and that it was of consequence to Tidemand to assume all the external paraphernalia of regular soldiers. However, Broch did not feel that he and Tidemand had much in common, and even less that he had anything to feel sorry about. In September 1678 Swedish newssheet reported that a "major of the snaphaner" had written a letter to one of the Swedish commanders in which he begged that the Swedes might treat their prisoners in "an honest soldierly manner". The Swedish commander responded that if the major wanted to meet him and his men in honest battle, then he would treat his prisoners in an honest manner, but as long as they hid in the woods and murdered people, they would get what *murderers and bandits* deserved.¹⁰⁴⁷

The letter at the beginning of this section was written by friskytter that belonged to a contingent of some 700 friskytter from the hundreds of Åsbo (Aasbo) and Onsjö (Onsiø) that were based on the central ridge of Söderåsen (Søndreaas) under Captain Thue (Piill). In this letter they complained of their colleagues who were growing too undisciplined: there were certainly miscreants among the friskytter, but nevertheless that was not what friskytter were supposed to be like. *Real friskytter* (like the authors of the letter) were not bad people who mistreated peasants. On the contrary they obeyed military discipline and considered themselves part of the Danish army. The

¹⁰⁴⁷ The *Mercurius*, 10th September 1678. SKB. Quoted by Røndahl, 1996, p.265. Although there were no names in the article, I assume that the major and the commander were Tidemand and Broch because there were not that many majors of the friskytter and not that many Swedes that were intitulated "commander", nor any other known cases of correspondence between a major of the friskytter and a Swedish commander, and especially not in 1678.

registered friskytter were eager to distance themselves from the free-lancers that could behave as they liked. In the summer of 1678 Lieutenant Tue Krop, who was responsible for the Christianstad and Blekinge area together with Captain Simon, had problems with his own men who would not refrain from sneaking out to harass the peasants and because of this problem Krop found himself constrained to renounce on a planned mission to Simrishamn (Simmershavn). At that point he wrote to Arensdorff and asked that all those who wanted to count as friskytter should meet at Landskrona (Landskrone) on a certain date so that they could hear from the general himself what their orders were.¹⁰⁴⁸

The representatives of the Danish civil administration often complained about the excesses of the friskytter; they sometimes claimed that the friskytter did more damage than good, that they plundered the peasants and made them un-cooperative. A Danish official who was strongly critical of the friskytter was *overauditør* Claus Reenberg who complained of the friskytter in every report to the authorities that he wrote: “the destruction that the friskytter are causing is indescribable” and “They are very stubborn, proud and cruel people, if you give them free reins now they will get ten times worse than before” and again “the peasants are outraged.”¹⁰⁴⁹ However, the Danish authorities punished abuse and misconduct severely when possible. It was not uncommon that friskytter that had broken the disciplinary rules were handed over to the authorities for punishment.¹⁰⁵⁰ Friskytter who disobeyed orders or misbehaved were arrested by the county sheriff and consigned to the authorities who had them court-martialled.¹⁰⁵¹ In those cases they were arrested by their colleagues, usually on the order of a “fogde” or sheriff. In June 1677 district governor Owe Rommel in Kristianstad (Christianstad) received orders (in reply to his own inquiry about how he should act regarding problems with the friskytter) that since the peasantry around

¹⁰⁴⁸ Fabricius III, p.164. Letter from Tue Krop to Arensdorff, undated but among the June 1678 letters. From the very same period there is a letter to king Christian V from a captain of the friskytter called Svend Bjørnsen from Osby, 12th June 1678, in which Bjørnsen also complains that his friskytter had become unruly and that stricter orders from above were needed because he could not keep his men from stealing from the peasants.” Jens Lerbom has pointed out that contrary to what Fabricius believed, “Bjørnsson” was hardly very unknown: he was possibly identical with “Sven from Mossaröd”, quarter master of the Østre Gynge company, whom Sörensson mentions on p. 65.

¹⁰⁴⁹ Fabricius III, p.155. Reenberg’s reports were dated 3rd and 6th April 1678 and are to be found in the “Krigsk. i. S” collection in the Danish National Archives.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Cf. the case of kongefoged Mons Haksen who brought in three friskytter that had misbehaved to the Danish camp.

¹⁰⁵¹ Fabricius, vol.III. pp.102–105.

Kristianstad (Christianstad) were complaining of the ravages of the friskytter he should see to it that those who were guilty of abuse should be arrested and brought to Kristianstad (Christianstad).¹⁰⁵² That kind of orders was not just empty words. There were efforts from the authorities to keep law and order among the friskytter. In a report from 29 June 1677 among the Depositiones we can read that the friskytter had brought in a group of three men and a woman. Two of the male prisoners were friskytter: Jens Jacobsen¹⁰⁵³ from Stenestad and Swend Anderson from Kågeröd (Kogere). The sheriff of Färs (Fers), Mons Hacksen had ordered the friskytter to arrest them because they had been “behaving badly.”¹⁰⁵⁴ Jacobsen was 20 years old and had been married for two years. Andersen was 24 and had been married for 5 years. He was a tenant of Knud Thott and his 16-year-old stepson Michel Olsen had accompanied him to the Danish camp. These men were not outlaws but made part of the outskirts of the circles of the great Thott and Krabbe families, just like Hacksen himself.¹⁰⁵⁵ The fourth person on the list was Berete Stensdatter who had been brought in ”because she was planning to inform against the friskytter.”¹⁰⁵⁶ Another arrested friskytte was Henrik Jørgensen who was accused of having shot a fellow friskytte in or around Landskrona (Landskrone) and who was court-marshalled and condemned to death.¹⁰⁵⁷

Another example of how the Danish authorities tried to keep the friskytter under discipline and the civil servants away from corruption is a letter from War Commissary Jens Harboe to General Arensdorff of 9th April 1678 in which Harboe defends himself against accusations of having helped the friskytter steal horses from some farmers.¹⁰⁵⁸ Harboe remembered that some friskytter had brought in a few horses some time earlier and that a group of angry farmers had come in at the same time, claiming that the friskytter had treated them badly and then stolen the horses

¹⁰⁵² Sörensson, p. 35: answer to Rommel’s letter of 19th June 1677, I.B., Rommel, DRA.

¹⁰⁵³ Jens Jacobsen was working as a friskytte again a year later, so he was obviously not dismissed from service.

¹⁰⁵⁴ ”*effter Cronfogdens Mons Hacksens order taget af friskytterne formedelst hand ilde hafde hanteret sig der i landet.*” Depositiones, 29 th June 1677. Mons Hacksen was the son of Krabbe’s old bailiff Hack Söffrenson. He died during war. His brother Johan was also a ridefoged. Already at the beginning of the war Mons Hacksen Jørgen complained of the snaphaner who consuted a danger to him while he was travelling. Fabricius (III, p. 37)

¹⁰⁵⁵ ”*Swend Anderson hiemme i Kogere Sogn, aff Knud Tottes godtz.*”

¹⁰⁵⁶ ”*Berete Stensdatter...blef indbragt til leyren aff aarsage att hun wilde Angifwe friskytterne.*”

¹⁰⁵⁷ Fabricius, III, p.105.

¹⁰⁵⁸ Jens Harboe to General Arenstorff, LCrone, 9th April 1678, Indkomne Breve, DRA.

from them. Harboe asserted his own honesty and loathing of corruption and intrigues and declared that the friskytter had been arrested and interrogated by the “General Auditeur”, i.e., Herman Meyer who was a very influential man in Copenhagen. It should also be added that complaints against the ravages of the regular troops were often enough filed: the troops from Munster that fought for the Danes were feared all over Denmark and Scania for example.¹⁰⁵⁹ Sometimes those who complained of the behaviour of the Danish troops had no idea whether the soldiers who had beaten and/or plundered them had been friskytter or regular soldiers. There was *no* certain way of distinguishing a friskytte from a regular soldier.

The Friskytte Outfit

“We ride in uniform on our horses and attack in honourable ways...We do not sneak upon innocent people in our free time but keep ourselves busy taking care of our horses and cleaning our guns and uniforms.”

*Captain Tidemand of the King’s Friskytter in a letter to the Swedish army officials.*¹⁰⁶⁰

Official uniforms had only just been introduced in the regular army during the Scanian war. Today we know that at least some friskytter wore red uniforms but not how frequent it was. Svend from Boarp was described in the following manner: “Sven had a red coat, a rapier and decorations and a hat with its sides bent upwards, a carbine gun and pistols on the saddle.”¹⁰⁶¹ According to legend, Captain Simon Andersen from Tullsåkra (Tullsager) was characterised by his scarlet coat.¹⁰⁶² During the war the same Svend from Boarp was sent over to Elsinore to buy uniforms for Captain Eskeld’s company several times.¹⁰⁶³ Presumably, he was not the only friskytte to have been sent on such an errand and Captain Eskeld’s men were probably not the only ones to wear uniform. Fabricius claimed that uniforms were rare but that flags and banners were common. Sörensson declared that all the sources tell us is that the friskytter were “well equipped” but does not comment more closely on their

¹⁰⁵⁹ See Chapter on Krabbe who claimed his bailiff had saved his tenants from the terrible Munster regiment.

¹⁰⁶⁰ Rödahl, 1996, pp.448-450. Tideman’s letter is to be found in Nordiska Saml.Nr.205, Uppsala University Library, it is also quoted by Kjær, *Gjøngehøvdingen Svend Povlsen og Snaphanerne. Et Bidrag til Snaphanetidens Historie*, Dansk-Skaansk –Forening 1974.

¹⁰⁶¹ See Edvardsson (III, p.130) who quote court witnesses that mention that Sven from Boarp always wore a red coat (like the Danes) and a rapier. Also: Johnsson, p.129. Sven claimed to be of noble origins and called himself a quarter master.

¹⁰⁶² Legend registered at Nöbbelöv, Västra Wram, 2nd July 1843, quoted by Edvardsson, III, p.71. Tullsagra-Simon was also characterised by his two horses: one to ride upon, the other a pony that kicked and bit all those who tried to follow him.

¹⁰⁶³ As can be seen in the Bjäre härad court registers, 17th June 1684, quoted by Edvardsson, III, p.133.

clothing.¹⁰⁶⁴ In any case there is enough evidence to allow us to presume that the friskytter often enough did *not* dress like peasants. One way of telling a peasant from a friskytte was to check his wardrobe and belongings. In February 1678 the Swedish authorities were informed that two “snaphaner” were to be found at an inn in Ystad (Ysted) where they had taken rooms right opposite the doors of two women of questionable reputation. Adequate measures were immediately taken: the snaphane-catcher Simon Bengtsson, Captain Peter Klingspor and Mayor Olaus Harman went to get the rascals who were called Jöns Ottosson and Henrik Jönsson.¹⁰⁶⁵ The two men claimed to be peasants on a town visit, but Bengtsson insisted they had been at least in part dressed like soldiers and he asked them why simple peasants would walk about in army jackets (“kollertar”), boots and studs? Nor could they provide the Swedes with an explanation as to why two peaceful peasants would keep bullets, gun powder, and weights in their bags? Moreover, they had also been found to be in possession of an elegant coat with silver hems.¹⁰⁶⁶

Another indirect indication of the way friskytter dressed is given by the episode when Shipper Henning from Malmö (Malmøe) was mistaken for a friskytte and shot in the stomach¹⁰⁶⁷: Shipper Henning was one of very few or perhaps the only burgher in Malmö (Malmøe) who sided openly with the Swedes and fought on their side voluntarily.¹⁰⁶⁸ Henning Olsen also facilitated Swedish money transactions, as is clear

¹⁰⁶⁴ Fabricius, p.102, Sörensson, p.31.

¹⁰⁶⁵ Johnsson (p. 128, Skrivelser till gen.-gouv från Simon Bengtsson 27th February 1678, LA) Ottosson was one of the “snaphaner” present on the Marsvinsholm estate when Captain Klingspor was kidnapped, which he admitted to but claimed that he had only made part of the rear guard at the nearby village of Årsjö and consequently could not describe the attack in detail. Nor had Ottosson participated in the attack in the woods (skogen) outside Ystad, but he and Jönsson had remained inside the city where they had stayed until dawn when they set out for Hörby. Hartman claimed that Commander Brackel and his men had tried to clamp down on the snaphaner at Ystad one evening around nine but that they had failed to find them. Ottosson and Jönsson explained that they had hidden in an attic. Ottosson had now been granted parole and had been staying first with his mother and then with a cavalryman’s widow at Ystad. He had promised to marry this widow but hadn’t been able to because of the “other snaphaner” and the tax collector (“kronofogden”) who had ordered him to leave the city but to stay in the nearest surroundings. Now, Ottosson claimed that he had turned to the city council and that he had spoken to two members of it: Lars Kofod and Mayor Hartman. The latter had told him that it would be better if he left because “You have lived in whoredom here with a widow and you have enticed a wife away from her lawful wedded husband and you have never been up to any good.” At this point Jönsson claimed he had decided to leave the city, but he was nevertheless caught at an inn there some time later, in the company of Jönsson and two ladies.

¹⁰⁶⁶ Letter from Simon Bengtsson, Peter Klingspor and Olaus Hartman to Sperling, Krogholm 27th February 1678, Skrivelser till gen.-gouv, Landsarkivet i Lund. Quote from Johnsson, p.129.

¹⁰⁶⁷ See: Depositiones report from Landskrone, 10th December 1677, DRA. The episode had taken place a few days earlier.

¹⁰⁶⁸ On 26th October 1676 (468) a Swedish renegade called Matz Olsøn from reported that some of the burghers had been thrown in jail and that the others were then persuaded to “take arms”. They were supposed to form a burgher troop with the governor of the province as colonel and Shipper Henning,

from a letter from J. Hoghusen at Vä (Wæ) to “Mons. Hoghusen Conseiller de la Chancellerie pour Sa Maj de Suede, Jönköping” from 24th March 1677. J Hoghusen had sent a check (wexel) for 300 *daler* to Thomas Jyde in Malmø (Malmö) but that probably the money would not be paid out until “Henning Ols arrived.¹⁰⁶⁹ In spite of the fact that Shipper Henning was a very rich man who would not have shown himself in anything but the best clothes, he was once mistaken for a friskytte when he was trying to get some Swedes into the beleaguered city and almost died from the bullet wounds. Shipper Henning was a Norwegian and it is therefore doubtful whether his accent could have triggered the accident. He would hardly have spoken Danish/Scanian perfectly and even if he did there is no reason why he should have done so with Swedes. It is not totally unlikely that he did so or that somebody mistook Norwegian for Danish. However, one can only assume that his “burgher outfit” did *not* set him out particularly from what one might take for a friskytte or snaphane.

Conclusions:

In this section I have tried to point out that criticising irregular troops and guerrillas and accusing them of criminal acts, lewd behaviour and various other things is probably as old a phenomenon as the battle techniques that guerrillas and irregulars use. I have also tried to emphasise that the friskytter themselves agreed that there were disciplinary problems among their troops but that a true friskytte did not misbehave. On the contrary there were efforts to curb disorderly behaviour both from the side of the Danish state and the Friskytter themselves. There was an express wish on their side to distance themselves from miscreants. Consequently, I have also tried to show how contempt of guerrillas/irregular troops seems to be intrinsic to their very existence: they become an embarrassing element that cannot be easily fitted into the official disciplinary pattern.¹⁰⁷⁰ Although the *petite guerre* certainly could trace its roots to the Middle Ages and far beyond, it took on a new form under the absolutist

Haagen Bjerresen and David Kröger as captains. However, Matz Olsøn expressed his doubts as to whether the burghers would really participate in the fighting since they had said before that they would rather be killed than fight the Danes. On 3rd July 1677 (Depositiones) Nels Hansen reported that “Shipper Henning put the Corps de Garde on fire while the field marshal commanded the halberdiers (“drabanter”) to attack the Danes...”. As for the other burghers Hansen claimed that they were forced to go to the city walls.

¹⁰⁶⁹ Opsnappede breve, DRA.

¹⁰⁷⁰ Kunisch, p.80. Unlike some other military historians Kunisch would *not* characterise the irregulars as “remnants” of intractable pre-Absolutist forms of fighting (“einen unbewältigen Restbestand vorabsolutistischer Formen”).

monarchs. In its essence it was a kind of rebellion against official army techniques, but a rebel force that could be channelled into the service of the state (i.e. the king).¹⁰⁷¹

The Snaphaner and the Church¹⁰⁷²

*“We are neither Germans nor heathens, so why should you preach in Swedish to us?”
Scanian parishioner to a Swedish minister of the church, 1681*¹⁰⁷³.

Introduction

The sources do not offer us many chances of understanding what opinions were held by “the man in the street” in late 17th century Scania, and if we would try to delve into the minds of the woman or the child in the street, the task would become next to impossible. Very likely, the “men in the street” that have left most traces in the sources from the Scanian War were the snaphaner and it is about their religious and “national” interpretation of the situation that this section is going to be about. In this section I have tried to analyse the conditions under which a religious discourse was used and naturally, by whom and why.

Between Two Fires

In most wars throughout history both warring parties have claimed that they, and only they, had God on their side and this was also the case during the Scanian War. When the Danish king and his army landed at the village of Råå in June 1676 the king proclaimed that he was there under righteous arms and that he would free the languishing Scanian provinces from the burden that were weighing so heavy on their shoulders. Similarly, the Swedish king also thought he had God on his side and when he won the battle of Lund in December that same year, he proclaimed that it was a sign from God that proved that He was on the side of the Swedes.¹⁰⁷⁴

¹⁰⁷¹ Kunisch, p.80: “das Ausbrechen aus den durch ein verabsolutiertes Reglementierungsdenken gesetzten Normen, - den antimechanistischen Gegenschlag gegen ein artifizielles, sich in kalkulierbaren Gesetzmäßigkeiten verstrickendes Heeressystem.”

¹⁰⁷² This section has in part been published as an article. See: Jojan Vadenbring, ”Mellan tvänne eldar. Snapphanarnas förhållande till kyrkan under skånska kriget.” (Between Two Fires. The Relationship between the Snaphaner and the Church during the Scanian War), pp. 120-150 in Stig Alenäs (ed.) *Roskildefreden 350 år. Från danskt till svenskt kyrkoliv. Stiftshistoriska sällskapet i Lunds Stift Årsbok 2008*. (350th Anniversary of the Peace at Roskilde. From the Danish to the Swedish Church. The Yearbook of the Historical Society of the Diocese of Lund 2008).

¹⁰⁷³ Røndahl, 1996, p.355. The parish was Gessie, and the clergyman was reverend Wulff.

¹⁰⁷⁴ The message of King Christian V to the Scanians: “...since His Royal Majesty for these and other reasons of utter and judiciary importance finds himself obliged, with his righteous arms...now to dedicate himself to the liberation and salvation of the above mentioned provinces that are languishing under a burden, with the conviction that God will bless this enterprise from heaven... Helsingborg, 1st

In the 19th century the church historian Severin Cavallin wrote that during the Scanian war, the clergy were expected to obey both the Danish and Swedish authorities and that consequently, they literally ended up under crossfire, so to speak “between two fires”. Naturally the clergy constituted an especially vulnerable category since none of them could avoid choosing sides or at least, pretending to do so. But it was not only the clergy that were being bombarded with radically different religious messages from two sides; in fact, this problem regarded the entire population. How then did people decide what and whom to believe and to believe in? Bishop Winstrup in Lund tried to promote the version that the loss of the Scanian provinces and the consequent sufferings were God’s way of punishing the Danish people for their sins and that the Scanians should accept whatever the Lord sent them.¹⁰⁷⁵ At the very same time there were other interpretations of the war that claimed that the Scanians were languishing in Babylonian captivity and that sooner or later, this virtuous people would be liberated from the tyrants that refused to listen to the voice of their conscience and instead insisted on continuing to torment a people in captivity.¹⁰⁷⁶ However, one might wonder whether ordinary people listened to what was being preached to them? How much did they pick up of the messages that kings, bishops and warlords were trying to inculcate into their heads? The further we go back in time, the harder it becomes to make out what “ordinary” people really thought and felt.

The sources leave enough evidence for us to be able to conclude that it meant something to be “Danish” or “Swedish” three hundred years ago too, but those identities included components that were different from the ones that constitute the

July 1676” (Jacobsen, ss.38-40.) and the message from the king of Sweden:”We Carl of God’s grace king of Sweden, the Goths and the Wends etc. herewith make known that since it pleased God the Almighty to render our arms victorious and fortunate against our enemy... HQ 9th December 1676” (Jacobsen, p.77).

¹⁰⁷⁵ Winstrup’s attitude towards the Scanian transition has been analysed by Hanne Sanders in “Religiøst eller nationalt verdensbillede? Skåne efter overgangen til Sverige 1658 (“A Religious or National Conception of the World? Scania after the transition to Sweden in 1658), pp.231-252 in Hanne Sanders, ed. *Mellem Gud og Djævelen. Religiøse verdensbilleder i Norden 1500-1800*, København, Nord: 2001, p. 239: “To Winstrup the war consequently remains a tool in the hand of God: a tool that the Lord can use for or against the peoples that live on Earth. He brings war as a punishment and ends it as a gift.”

¹⁰⁷⁶ Aletophilus (Olluf Rosencrantz), *En sandfærdig replique...*København 1678, s.36), wished that the Swedes had listened long enough to their conscience to restitute Scania to Denmark because this option would have meant that so much violence could have been avoided and the Swedes would not have bought themselves a place in hell. The same view was expressed by the author of “Unavenged Blood”.

“Danish” or “Swedish” identities today, and those components that were identical to their modern counterparts were perhaps given a less prominent place than today, or maybe the contrary, a more prominent place.¹⁰⁷⁷ Generally, religion and religious identities occupied a more prominent place then than in the secularised Western world of today.¹⁰⁷⁸ Amongst others Hanne Sanders has pointed out that God and his relationship to humanity constituted a fundamental part of one’s ”national” identity in the early modern world.¹⁰⁷⁹ This view of the identity of the single person is radically opposed to that of “classical” nationalism that sees the relationship of the single person to the nation as fundamental to one’s personal identity. When Jørgen Krabbe was condemned to death for high treason, *crimen laesae majestatis*, and collusion with the enemy he personally interpreted it as God’s punishment for a deathly sin he had committed in his youth. However, at the same time he also claimed that the Swedish authorities had forgotten their religion and that they were acting contrary to the voice of their conscience. It came quite natural to noblemen like Krabbe, Olluf Rosencrantz and the Thotts to interpret the conflict in religious terms. But is it feasible to suppose that Krabbe shared his views with his snaphane-friends? Maybe it was only in the upper strata of society that the Scanian War was interpreted as a cosmic battle between good and evil, sinners and the righteous? I will now try to analyse the official “crime and punishment” discourse in documents that regard the snaphaner, at the same time as I will try to analyse what the snaphaner themselves had to say about the matter.

The Official Discourse

“Instead of the oath and loyalty that you have all pledged but unfortunately have shamefully abused of and made light of, to no measure have you considered the salvation of your souls, but you have delivered yourselves unto eternal damnation...For as long as you persist in your evil intentions and doings and dedicate yourselves to abominable and treacherous sins against your righteous lord, master and authority, nothing but an eternal curse hovers over you day and night and over your wives, children, belongings and property too.”¹⁰⁸⁰

¹⁰⁷⁷ Se: Harald Gustafsson, “The Eighth Argument. Identity, Ethnicity and Political Culture in Sixteenth-Century Scandinavia”, *Scandinavian Journal of History* 27, 2002, pp.91-114.

¹⁰⁷⁸ With this I would *not* like to make little of the role of religion today, not even in the West. Many scholars, especially in the more recent past, tend to underestimate what religion and God mean to people today.

¹⁰⁷⁹ Sanders (2001), pp. 251–252.

¹⁰⁸⁰ (I stället för den ed och trohet som I allesammen eder förpliktat men dessvärre skamligen missbrukat och alldeles slagit i vädret, i intet mål tänkt eder själs salighet, utan levererat eder till den eviga fördömsen...Nej aldrig så länge I framhärden uti edert onda uppsåt och förehavanden samt söka eder utii denna vederstygglig och förrädiska synd emot eder rättmätige konung, herre och överhet, utan *den allmänna förbannelsen svävar över dag och natt, samt över edre hustrur, barn, gods och*

Just as in most other wars both parties of the conflict in Scania could proffer a long list of arguments and theories that prodded their own views. In the public letters that the Swedish king sent to the Scanians his tone was not particularly religious. Normally he tried to pull at other heartstrings than the religious ones: he might reprove the Scanians because of their lack of faithfulness and reminded them that they had once sworn him fealty. In a manner of speaking that sort of argument is still religious since Carl XI considered himself God's Elect and failing faith against him, the Scanians' earthly master, was the same as betrayal of their Lord in Heaven. But contrary to most of his warlords Carl preferred not to use an abundance of religious terms when he addressed the Scanians. In many of these epistles he claimed that he really believed that the Scanians had "the safety and welfare of the kingdom at heart" and that his emissaries could help them liberate themselves from whatever misconceptions they might erroneously have embraced.¹⁰⁸¹ The Swedish generals Gyllenstierna and Lybecker used a language that was impregnated with the religious ideals and conceptions of the time and they claimed that faithfulness to Sweden was the first step on the road to heaven.¹⁰⁸² In the Swedish propaganda the Scanians were threatened with fire and brimstone both in this world and the next if they took arms against the Swedes. As can be seen from the quotation at the beginning of this section General Lybecker in particular tended to appeal to religious sensibilities in his attempts at persuading the Scanians from siding with the Danes.

It was not impossible to gain forgiveness even if one had sinned ("peccerat") against one's righteous king: repentance was accepted if it was perceived of as sincere. In their epistles and proclamations to the public the Swedish authorities assumed, or

egenom.") General Georg Henrik Lybecker to the population of Göinge/Gønge, 14th April 1679. Quoted by Johnny Ambrius in his History of Scania, <http://home1.swipnet.se>. År 1679.

1081 Letter to the commoners in the Blekinge and Kronoberg (län) from Carl XI, 28th January 1677, Opsnappede breve, DRA. Quote: "riksens välfärd och trygghet om hjärtat". A part of this letter is quoted in Edvardsson II, p.171.

1082 Gyllenstierna often introduced his letters with "Be saluted in God Almighty" ("Hällsen medh Gudh allmäktig") so that the recipient would understand that he was a man who respected the traditional Lutheran moral values. See for example his letters from Bäckaskog/Bäch-skough och Glimåkra/Glimager 16th March and 3rd April 1677 that are to be found in the "Intercepted Letters" collection in the Danish National Archives. Excerpts are also quoted by Edvardsson II, pp.172-173. Furthermore, it should be mentioned that Gyllenstierna's everyday language seems to have been spiced up with expressions like: "I'll sell my soul to the devil if Landskrona and Copenhagen aren't blockaded in two weeks' time", but in these cases the religious significance of the words should probably not be taken seriously. The quote is from Jens Michelsen's (of Howdale Castle) report in the Depositiones collection, 22nd June 1677, DRA. Today: 468:99.

pretended to assume, that the Scanians had been led astray and that, in their naïveté or stupidity they had let themselves be used by criminals.¹⁰⁸³ Very often the ex-Danish subjects responded with exactly the same rhetoric and claimed that they had been kidnapped or tricked by “murderous” snaphaner and naturally, they now repented sincerely what they had done.¹⁰⁸⁴ Contrition, if sincere, was regarded as a valid excuse even for snaphaner, unless one had caused the death of an inborn Swede. In his letter to the commonalty of Norra Åsbo (Nørre Aasbo) in March 1677, Gyllenstierna claimed that the Swedish victories were due to “God’s help” and that the Scanians should ponder upon that and repent whatever their foolishness had let them be tricked into doing.¹⁰⁸⁵ Each man had a choice that was his own responsibility. Youth, poor wits or being a woman were considered valid excuses if one had chosen the wrong side in the cosmic battle. The first two circumstances could (and should) be outgrown so that one reached the stage in life where maturity and wisdom allowed one to see which one was the right side in the battle between good and evil. The last circumstance (belonging to the weak sex) was incurable but exactly for that reason, women were more often excused than men. If they were led into temptation by the Danes and went about the Devil’s business, it was primarily their male relatives (fathers, husbands etc) who were held responsible for that. The women of the snaphaner did generally not have to suffer the same penances as the men, not even when they had participated actively in resistance activities. They were sometimes sent into exile by the authorities, but to my knowing they were not tortured.¹⁰⁸⁶

Religiosity in the Friskytters’ Reports

In those letters and reports that can be traced back to the hands of the friskytter/snaphaner today religion is not something that was often mentioned.

¹⁰⁸³ “they have been found guilty of sinning against their righteous king and master out of foolishness” (“af oförståndh emoth theras rätta konung och herre, funnes hafva peccerat”) as Gyllenstierna wrote in his letter to the commonalty of Norra Åsbo on 16th March 1677, see: Edvardsson II, p. 172. The fealty contract of the hundreds of Vånga and Oppmanna states that the “motion” in Scania had been caused by “a few loutish and noisome persons” that had led all the others astray. See: Edvardsson II, pp.178-182, quote: p.179.

¹⁰⁸⁴ See: The letter from the fifteen snaphaner to the king, the snaphane from Halland and the one from Österlen.

¹⁰⁸⁵ Gyllenstierna’s letter to the commonalty of Norra Åsbo, 16th March 1677, Edvardsson II, p.173.

¹⁰⁸⁶ Stig Alenäs claims that one of the major problems during the Swedish bishop’s visitation of the diocese in 1680 was whether the wives of the snaphaner would be entitled to the Eucharist. To be suspended from the Eucharist equalled suspension from society. See: Alenäs, Stig. *Lojaliteten, prostarna, språket. Studier i den kyrkliga ”försvenskningen” i Lunds stift under 1680-talet*, Studentlitteratur, Lund 2003, p.41.

Generally, the sources that were actually produced by friskytter/snaphaner are quite sober reports from the front that were meant to facilitate the work of the regular army and the decisions of the commanders to whom the reports were addressed. Normally there was no room for spiritual matters in that kind of epistles. The friskytter generally reported the position of the Swedish troops in their area and what people were saying about the Swedes. They also reported about their own situation: how their unit was faring, if they needed equipment or if somebody was dead or wounded, but not about their relationship to God. Most of the letters that Thue Piill, Simon Andersen, Jens Jenssön, Aage Monsen, Pieter Sten and many other friskytte officers sent to HQ are highly representative of that kind of reports: as factual as any military report from today and conserved in considerable numbers in the Danish archives.¹⁰⁸⁷ Aage Monsen Harlof was maybe the most prolific report-writer of them all. His reports were always detailed and detached in their tone. Monsen would for example write to HQ to ask for more efficient weapons so that they could reach the Swedish positions more easily: when his company was laying siege to the Hönjarum (Højnebro/Højnerum) fortress in July 1678 he realised that the only way they could put the enemy under direct bombardment was if they could get a set of ultra-modern cannons that could shoot at an oblique angle: consequently he wrote to Arensdorff to ask for a couple of “Falcheneter” as that kind of guns were called:

“...we could not get out into the open because of all the bullets. But if it would please Your Excellency to send us a Couple of Falcheneter cannons, so that we could shoot on the Walls, then we would try again. Methinks we will get them.”¹⁰⁸⁸

Another category of reports from the friskytter are the statements they left when they entered the Danish camp. Sometimes they simply consigned the written reports they handed in on a weekly or even daily basis during the campaigns but at other times the clerks took down an account that was reported on the spot. One of the most diligent “reporters” was Jens Jenssön from Stoby. He both wrote reports and left oral statements on a regular basis. In an oral report from 26th June 1677, he told the clerk that he had sent a “peasant” to the Swedish camp and that this peasant had then

¹⁰⁸⁷ A few can also be found among the “Intercepted letters” from the Scanian War in the Swedish National Archives.

¹⁰⁸⁸ It is the same letter in which Monsen reported the burning of the Kumle bridge. "...vi kunde intet baare os der for Kugler men dersom det behagede hans Excelentz att sende os ett paar falcheneter, att vi kunde schude paa wollene, saa ville vi endnu proberet. Jeg troer vist, at vi skulle hae den;". Hedwall (*Skånska friskyttechefer 1676-1679*, Dansk-Skaansk forening 1962, p.2) quotes a few lines of Monsen's letter in original, these amongst them. This particular letter has been published in Swedish translation by Vigo Edvardsson (vol.II, p. 163).

returned with important information about several aspects of the Swedish camp at “Risselberg” (Riseberga). They could now be quite certain of what it looked like and what the routines were. The encounter between Jenssön and the peasant took place in Jenssön’s own home that worked as a kind of central for spies and resistance actions. People who had hidden away refugees from the Swedes could contact Jenssön in order to find out how the refugees could be transported to the Danish enclaves most safely. Large part of Jenssön’s work consisted in that kind of tasks.¹⁰⁸⁹ Captain Jenssön had a generally positive attitude. On June 28th 1678, he reported to Arensdorff that the people in his area (“Froste og Fers”) were quite angry with the Swedes and that the Swedes on their side, were “so confused in their thoughts, that they continue to change their minds, and one never knows which way they will go, either up or down.” He was also one of very few military men who mentioned God in a non-formal way in his reports: in the same letter Jenssön confidently declared that although the Swedes threatened him every day, he was not afraid because “the Lord lives in the centre of the land and he helps those who are in need.”¹⁰⁹⁰

Bilingual Pieter Sten did not only deal in deception and take on under cover work among the Swedes, but he also directed a spy central much like that of Jens Jenssön. Whereas Jenssön was based in his home and centred his operations on that area, Sten’s place of origin is not known and so we do not know if he had centred his net of connections and spies in the Kristianstad (Christianstad) area around his home or simply around temporary quarters that he had established there. In July 1678 Sten let one of his peasant spies accompany him to the Danish camp so that the peasant could leave a full statement to the clerks. The peasant primarily emphasised the state of mind inside the walls of the beleaguered city Kristianstad (Christianstad) where he had obviously managed to sneak in: “It can hardly be said that the enemy is held in high esteem by those inside the city...they are always making fun of them in there.”¹⁰⁹¹ None of the officers mentioned here wasted their words. Nor did they call the heavens above in a situation where the recipients of the reports wanted facts, logic and initiative. Except for the odd “God bless you and your family” as a salute, military reports were off-limits to religious rhetoric in late 17th century Denmark.

¹⁰⁸⁹ Depositiones, mense Junii 1677, no 508, DRA. Jenssön’s company mainly worked in the Ringsøe/Ringsjö area in central Scania. See: Røndahl, pp.423-425.

¹⁰⁹⁰ Fabricius III, p.165. Letter from Jens Jenssön to Arensdorff, 28th June 1678, (Krigsk.i S.).

¹⁰⁹¹ Depositiones, DRA, 11 Junij 1678.

But were there any contexts at all in which it would be appropriate for a friskytte officer to mention God's name? Yes, there were. In letters and appeals to the authorities in which they appealed to somebody for something they were often fell back on a religious discourse and/or on a Christian identity. In some situations, it gave a good impression to be a man of spiritual values. There were times when one had to remind the authorities that they were fellow Christians that shared the same values and that God was on all of their sides, but not that of the enemy. Sometimes the same argumentation was used in appeals to both sides. One should be careful of imagining that the whole population were devout Christians at the time because they were definitely not. A lot of people did not have the slightest fear of incurring the wrath of God: probably because they did not believe in it. And yet, Christian rhetoric was important, and it was used to transmit the idea of a decent person, an honest man who made part of the community of Christians that also included the king and all his faithful subjects. Chances were that the recipient of the letter would soften and concede whatever grace was asked from him if the supplicant proved himself a humble servant and sincere believer. It was also an opportunity to remind the person whom the letter was addressed to that if he wanted to go to heaven, he had better remember his Christian virtues and take the chance to do some good in the world. Even if you did not share these values yourself it might be useful to use Christian rhetoric since the recipient was supposed to believe in it. Referring to God and the Bible was a guarantee of honesty, sincerity and of shared values. However, it should not be taken for granted that all the people who made light of Christian rhetoric weren't believers. Although it was not uncommon at all to write to the Danish king that God was on his side and to assure the Swedish king in another letter that one prayed for his victory, it did not always mean that one was not a Christian. It did not even mean that the letter-writer did not have a personal opinion. During the Scanian War many people took to religious rhetoric when they communicated with the authorities and since loyalty and faith were intrinsically combined, one had to swear things to God that one did not mean if one wanted to survive. Similarly, the clergy were sometimes caught at praying for both kings in church in a vain attempt at satisfying the requirements of both sides.

It was quite common that a friskytte unit turned directly to the authorities in order to try to obtain a favour or to complain of their superiors. An example is the letter that the friskytter of Wånga and Oppmanna (in the hundred of Villand) wrote to the Danish general Meerheim in order to complain of their major (Hinrich Aagesen Pflug) who was not sufficiently keen on attacking the enemy. They also complained that the civil servants, the sheriffs and some of the peasants in the area were quite un-cooperative. On the contrary, some of these people had done everything to obstruct the friskytter's work but fortunately "God had punished these people for their disloyalty"¹⁰⁹² In June 1679 fifteen friskytter/snaphaner who had been caught by the Swedes wrote to the king ask for mercy. They claimed to have been in prison for three years by that time.¹⁰⁹³ They had no excuses for what they had done but pleaded with the king as a fellow Christian. None of the fifteen denied having been a snaphane but none of them had been one any longer than fourteen days and they all swore to God that none of them had ever hurt another human being. At the beginning of the letter the fifteen ex-snaphaner claim that they had all been forced to join the snaphaner, but half a page later they claim that they had been naïve enough to let themselves be "persuaded to seek such ungodly company"¹⁰⁹⁴ and consequently they admitted to having sinned both against God and the king. They finished their letter by swearing that they would never again join "that kind of company" and finally, they expressed their most sincere hope that it might be possible to find the same kind of grace and forgiveness with the king as with God in heaven, since "man's nature is frail" and only God can improve the character of a man who ends up with perfidious and false people." Is it then feasible to assume that the fifteen ex-snaphaner really believed what they said? Or was it simply empty words that they hoped would sound right to the ears of the authorities?

I have no definite answer to these questions but again I would like to refer to a work on the witch trials: in his *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early*

¹⁰⁹² Edvardsson II, p. 136. The peasants in Villand also wrote to the king to complain of the behaviour of the Danish soldiers and the snaphaner. See: Edvardsson II, p.141. Finally, it should be added that General Major Lybecker who commanded the Swedes in that region felt that everybody there fought the Swedes fiercely and that the peasants informed the snaphaner of every Swedish movement. As we see, the same situation can be described in many ways.

¹⁰⁹³ Edvardsson II, pp.137-138. Quotation p.138. The Swedecised names of the fifteen snaphaner are: Hans Fajersson, Sören Andersson, Frans Loding, Per Pehrsson, Olof Svensson, Per Bengtsson, Jöns Persson, Nils Matzon, Håkan Persson, David Jonsson, Pehr Månsson, Olof Månsson, Sven Persson och Jöns Larsson. Unfortunately, the letter does not tell us the place of their imprisonment.

¹⁰⁹⁴ "...en halv sida senare påstår de sig ha varit lättsinniga nog att låta sig "bedraga till sådant ogudeligt sällskap"."

*Modern Europe*¹⁰⁹⁵ Stuart Clark emphasises how important it is to take “belief” as a “motivating factor” seriously. In Clark’s case it was the matter of belief in witchcraft, magic, “superstition” and the paranormal, but it is if possible, even more important to take religious faith seriously. In certain situations, religious rhetoric was used as mere tools that could serve a scope, but in other situations the sincerity of religious rhetoric should not be underestimated. If we choose to create too great distances between us and the past, or between us and religious faith, we will sooner or later end up rendering overly exotic or patronising whoever acts for reasons that we cannot quite recognise ourselves in.¹⁰⁹⁶ It is far too easy to create distances where there do not have to be any. Only a few years ago, in 2003, Apps and Gow claimed that people today cannot understand what it felt like to live in times when the state justified the use of torture.¹⁰⁹⁷ Five years later, most people in the Western world have realised how easy it is to get used to living in a culture that accepts that dangerous individuals are being put to torture.¹⁰⁹⁸

I will now end this section with an analysis of the religious views of three friskytter whose letters and reports contain some hints as to their relation to God. Aage Mønsen Harlof, commander of all the remaining friskytter during the latter part of the war, was normally a very sober war correspondent but in November 1679 he wrote a desperate letter to the Danish king in which he literally begged that his men be conceded winter quarters and wages although the war was lost and the friskytter no longer needed.¹⁰⁹⁹ In this letter Harlof did not use his usual strict military tone but instead he tried to play on the emotional heartstrings of his sovereign whom he turned to as one Christian to another, albeit one was in power and the other not. Harlof claimed that the friskytter had sacrificed everything for their king and country: they had now been forced to abandon their homes and families without hope of return and

¹⁰⁹⁵ Clarendon Press, Oxford 1997, Chapter One.

¹⁰⁹⁶ See e.g. Bengt Ankarloo (*Att stilla herrevrede. Trolldomsdåden i Vegeholm* (To Placate the Wrath of the Lord. The Sorcery Crimes at Vegeholm, Stockholm 1988, p.13): “Historicism tends to exoticise: it considers past times so totally different, that we always run the risk of misunderstanding them. Only lifelong intimacy with the mentality of times passed and gone enables the scholar to describe that era correctly.” Ankarloo adds that, in its turn, this line of thought risks creating “an exclusive class of mandarines that guard their secrets with jealousy”.

¹⁰⁹⁷ Apps and Gow, p.76.

¹⁰⁹⁸ Cf. Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay.

¹⁰⁹⁹ A translation of this letter can be found at the end of this thesis. The letter in its original version was published by Sörensson, p.60. Else, the letter itself can be found in the Danish National Archives, Major Aage Harlof till kungen, 18th November 1679, Krigskollegiet, Indkomne Sager, 1679 No: 413.

what was worse; they knew that those they had left behind had been punished for their sakes. Their original intention had been to save their beloved fatherland from the Swedish yoke but instead of winning rewards they had been transformed into “freaks” and exiles. Harlof now begged the king to help his “poor exiled men” who had done nothing but their duty and who had only obeyed the orders of others but were now about to perish from hunger and frost: “God will reward such Royal Grace when Your Royal Majesty and the whole Royal Family and their ancestors have to face God’s merciful Tribunal on the day of the Resurrection of the Just.”¹¹⁰⁰ Harlof presents a picture that is diametrically opposed to Lybecker’s religious interpretation of the actions of the Scanians during the war. Contrary to what Lybecker claimed, Harlof and his men had not wallowed in sin and evil, but rather sacrificed their whole lives and those of their dear ones for the hope of freedom. Harlof was convinced that God knew that and those who shared knowledge of the truth with him would be rewarded in heaven when the time came. Major Niels Tommesen Tidemand shared the very same conviction, which his letter to the Sven Broch, the commander of Ängelholm (Engelholm), clearly shows:

“And in response to the fact that you have tortured, pined and burnt our men, who are common soldiers, in response –with the help of God- we hope that we will get hold of some of their Swedish noblemen and commissioned officers, so that they may die an even more painful death...but *we swear to God in heaven*, that we will keep our word and never sneak treacherously upon anybody¹¹⁰¹

Tidemand assumed (or hoped) that the Swedish commander would share the same religious values as himself and that his own word of honour would seem more reliable if he could convince his colleague on the other side that he himself was a devout Christian. Indirectly, Tidemand intimated that the Swedes did not act like Christians and that they would have to learn to repent their sins if they wanted to count as Christians.

Last but not least I would like to analyse the religious worldview of a less famous “snaphane” as it transpires from Swedish court records. Contrary to the two preceding cases the sources in this case were produced by enemy hands. For that reason, I do not know whether “Nils Tuasson”, whose real name was probably Niels Tuesen or Nels Tuesøn, was a friskytte or just a youngster who had to keep away from the Swedes on account of a precipitous deed he committed on the spur of the moment. His case has

¹¹⁰⁰ Sörensson, pp.59–60 samt Rödahl, pp. 339–40.

¹¹⁰¹ Niels Tommesen Tidemand to Sven Broch, 1678, Nordiska Saml.Nr.205, Uppsala universitetsbibliotek. (My italics). See also: Rödahl, p. 449.

already been mentioned by several historians, but Tuesen's statements have never been analysed. I chose to concentrate on Tuesen in this context since he was a profoundly religious man whose seemingly insensate return to Scania after twenty years only becomes comprehensible if interpreted as an attempt to listen to God's voice. In April 1700 "Nils Tuasson" from Holmatorp, Vittsjö had to face court on the charge of having been a "snaphane" during the Scanian War.¹¹⁰² When the war was lost, Tuesen escaped to the other side of the sound and made a living there, but he longed home all the time and as the years passed he felt worse and worse.¹¹⁰³ In the end Tuesen decided that he would return home because he was convinced the wonderful water in Scania would do him good. Naturally his friends warned him that the Swedes would arrest him but, in the end, he managed to persuade a friend from Elsinore to row him over and from the Helsingborg area he managed to make his way home. Exactly as he had thought, he felt better as soon as he started drinking Scanian water again, but unfortunately, he was soon arrested and put in custody in a military prison. During the court case against him, Tuesen admitted that during the summer of 1677 when he was a young and thin man, he had killed a Swede and then joined the "snaphaner". During the interrogations, Tuesen stoically declared that it had all taken place according to God's will. When the soldiers stole two heads of cattle and three pigs from his mother, twenty-year-old Tuesen had got extremely upset with the Swedes and had sworn to kill the first Swedish soldier that crossed his path. The occasion came on a summer's day when Tuesen and a couple of his neighbours were out mowing the lawn behind the vicarage and a man in a grey coat came walking down the road and asked them which direction Markaryd was in. Tuesen promptly replied that he would give the man a good description, and then he jumped over the fence between the vicar's garden and the road, snatched the stranger's weapon from him and cut his throat with the explanation that *the devil would show him the way* to where he was going.¹¹⁰⁴ During the proceedings in court, Tuesen explained that it had all been "*the providence and design of a god*"¹¹⁰⁵ but that if he had understood things

¹¹⁰² Edvardsson, II, pp.55–62. Edvardsson's sources were the court registers from the assizes of Västra Göinge, 20th, 21st and 30th April 1700, Landsarkivet i Lund.

¹¹⁰³ The nature of Tuesen's problem is not quite clear. Tuesen said he felt "förstörd i huvudet", literally "wrecked in my head" which in modern Scanian could mean either that Tuesen suffered from migraines or some sort of mental problems. I am not quite sure what it meant at the time.

¹¹⁰⁴ There were several witnesses of this episode and they all claimed that they had not interfered because they were afraid to end up in trouble with the snaphaner.

¹¹⁰⁵ "en guds försyn och skickelse."

then as well as he did now he would have thought twice before acting. When the judge asked him if he repented his sins, he chose not to answer directly but explained that he would accept whatever decision the authorities came to but that he was hoping that *God would be show him mercy*. He could not repent having gone back to Scania since he was fully conscious of what he was doing when he made that choice: the evil that had assailed him and that had made his suffer so much in his head had disappeared and he was now *a healthy man who chose to suffer for his sins*. To Tuesen this option was much better than continuing to suffer in Denmark. When the crown prosecutor, the “kronans befallningsman”, demanded that Tuesen be judged according to the letter of the law, Tuesen started crying but at the same time he thanked God and declared that *he would gladly suffer in this world on account of his sins*. The final verdict was not merciful: the High Court had decided that Tuesen should “give a life for a life” and that consequently that “the murderer and snaphane Nils Tuasson will be beheaded, quartered and put on the wheel, as a well-deserved punishment for himself and as a terrifying warning to other wicked people.”¹¹⁰⁶ Tuesen’s own comment was that *he would rather sell his soul to the devil than die by the axe and those who had decided that that should be his fate were indeed “a foreign land” to him*.¹¹⁰⁷ In April 1700 the Göta court confirmed the verdict and decided that the “murderer and snaphane” should die on account of the “terrible murder” he had committed and because he had betrayed his lawful king. Tuesen was executed in May 1703.

Tuesen stood up for what he believed in: namely, God. He also insisted that he did not have to answer for his sins to anybody but God and that he was about to lose his life because he was a man who listened to God. The fact that the Scanian water had made him well again was proof enough that he had not been wrong in his interpretation of God’s will for himself. That was God’s sign to Niels Tuesen in a time when man still thought that God interceded actively in the world.

The Gross and Pernicious Attitude of the Clergy

At the beginning of 1677 governor general Fabian von Fersen enjoined the Scanian clergy not to socialise with snaphaner and on the contrary, to send all snaphaner they

¹¹⁰⁶ Edvardsson, II, p.60. Quotation from Edvardsson II, p.62.

¹¹⁰⁷ Edvardsson, II, p.61. Tuesen quoted the Book of Psalms with these words.

could get hold of to Malmö (Malmøe). A few weeks later, Fersen changed his policy, probably after consultations with his superiors: he now ordered bishop Winstrup to tell the clergy to preach to the snaphaner in church. In the sermons that were directed to the snaphaner the clergy should urge the snaphaner to abandon their evil pursuits and return to their usual occupations. They should make clear that all those who showed true repentance of their since would be forgiven. The clergy were also asked to write lists of those farm boys and others who would not apply for amnesty so that those sinners could be arrested and sent to Malmö (Malmøe).¹¹⁰⁸ These letters prove that the governor general considered “snaphaner” and “farm boys” as closely connected concepts and that he took for granted that they went to church on a Sunday morning like everybody else. If Fersen had thought that the snaphaner were some sort of robbers that lived outside the village community he would not have deemed it worth the trouble to direct the Sunday sermon to them. Nor would he have assumed that the parish ministers had a clue or two as to who the snaphaner might be. Fersen understood the majority of the snaphaner were to find among quite ordinary parishioners. The Danish authorities were also aware of the whereabouts of the “snaphaner”. In a decree from June 1677 the Danish king enjoined the clergy that they should let the friskytter bury those of their comrades that had been executed by the Swedes. Furthermore, the clergy were informed that the friskytter were authorised to destroy the execution grounds and that no minister of the church was allowed to refuse a friskytte the Holy Communion since the friskytter were only men who had been forced to abandon their homes by the ravages of the Swedes. In the same decree the king urged the clergy to respect the friskytter and treat them no different from the way they treated other parishioners since they had been employed by the king himself as his “Soldiers and Servants.”¹¹⁰⁹

Consequently, the authorities on both sides knew that there were “snaphaner” who attended church services regularly and that they could be assumed to listen to, or at least hear, sermons.¹¹¹⁰ One minister of the church who decided to take the Swedish

¹¹⁰⁸ Fersen to the Swedish king, 27th Januari 1677, SRA, in Pehr Johnson's, *Snapphanefejden, Brev och anteckningar*, Örebro 1910, pp.80-82; Letter from Winstrup and Andreas Stobaeus to the Scanian clergy 17th February 1677, in *Handlingar rörande det skånska kriget 1676-79*, SRA. Quoted by Johnson, p.79.

¹¹⁰⁹ Decree, 9th June 1677, U.S., No:573. Sörensson, p.27.

¹¹¹⁰ In a report to the king from 27th May 1678, Major General Lybecker mentioned a “snaphane” called Little Tufve, whose father was had the post station at Marklunda in the parish of Osby. Little

injunctions seriously was Hans Nielsen Holmbye at Västerstad (Vestrested) who preached to the snappaner in his parish that they would end up in hell if they did not change their ways.¹¹¹¹ As mentioned in the preceding chapter this sermon had very sad consequences; "Angry Simon" had the parish minister kidnapped and tortured to make him repent his threats. Holmbye was ransomed by his parishioners but in his turn, he set the Swedes under Sven "The Thrasher" Erlandsson on the friskytter so that nine of Andersen's men were killed.¹¹¹² Simon Andersen was obviously convinced that he and his friskytter were not the ones who were going to burn in hell. They had another discourse to fall back on: the one that was propagated by the king of Denmark and that described the Swedes as unlawful intruders and tyrants. Andersen was a captain of the friskytter with a perfectly lawful license to attack the enemy and to persecute Swedes and their followers.

On 19th January 1677, the Swedish governor general in Malmö (Malmøe) Fabian von Fersen communicated to the king that the situation in Scania was extremely worrying.¹¹¹³ The inhabitants of the province were unreliable, and they all supported the Danes. Fersen could feel how their evil and loathing grew day by day. According to Fersen the clergy were no different from the rest of the inhabitants: they were "up to their necks in evil, agitated and excited" and this whole pernicious situation constituted a safety risk to the Swedes.¹¹¹⁴ As Stig Alenäs pointed out in his dissertation on the Swedification of the church, the clergy were "intermediaries between the bishop and the parishioners and participated in their protests and dialogues. They were supposed to resolve conflicts in co-operation with both

Tufve and his brother Big Tufve had joined the snappaner and had been present when a corporal was shot to death at the Hönjarum (Højnebro) bridge although they had both obtained amnesty through the intervention of their father. Little Thue then threatened to kill a farmer at Loshult if the farmer did not give him money, which he did. Now the unhappy father was trying to get a new parole letter for Little Tufve, but Lybecker advised the king not to concede him one. Instead, he suggested that the "guards" by the Hönjarum bridge arrest Little Tufve on his way to church the following Sunday, because Little Tufve went to church "as if he had done nothing wrong." See: Edvardsson, III, p.123.

¹¹¹¹ Røndahl, 1996, pp. 303–304.

¹¹¹² Sven Erlandsson, "Promemoria", KB, Ny kgl. Samling 1076, 4o. Hedwall, pp.14–18.

¹¹¹³ Fersen to the king, 19th January 1677, Generalguvernörsarkivet, SRA. Most of Fersen's letters were in German (his mothertongue) and in his own writing. Fersen was born in the Baltic provinces and hardly ever used the Swedish language. He always spoke German to the Scanian nobles for example. This letter takes the form of an official report and is written in Swedish with another person's handwriting.

¹¹¹⁴ "i ondskan nedsänkte, exciteradhe och opväckte..." och detta prästernas "enorme och skadelige förhållande" utgjorde en säkerhetsrisk för svenskarna.

authorities and the local population.”¹¹¹⁵ It was consequently of utter importance to the Swedish government that they could trust the local clergy, including the bishop, to transmit the right message to their parishioners.¹¹¹⁶ In his article “Scania and the legal system 1658-1684” Jens Christian Vesterskov Johansen points out that communication between the early modern authorities and the inhabitants could take place in at least three ways. There was an individual channel through letters of appeal that burghers and peasants alike could send to the king, and there were two collective ways of communicating: 1. The communications from the authorities that the local ministers read aloud in church and 2. The court proceedings at the local and regional assizes (byting and herredsting).¹¹¹⁷

Now, Fersen reported that hardly any parishes at all had celebrated the thanksgiving service that had been decreed after the battle of Lund, but when the “encouragement-letter” from the Danish king was read aloud in the churches on 18th December everybody had cheered. One clergyman who had been indefatigable in his efforts to distribute and read out not only this letter but also one from general Meerheim to the Scanians, was Christopher Corvinus in the Ystad (Ysted) area.¹¹¹⁸ Corvinus’ eagerness had caused great damage to the Swedes and now Fersen felt that severe measures should be taken against all Scanians, but especially the clergy. The first step should be to exchange the native clergy for Swedes. For this reason, the Swedish minister Magnus Lacander had been given deanery of Ystad (Ysted) instead of baron Krabbe’s candidate Christopher Corvinus.¹¹¹⁹ Unfortunately this decision had created problems since even the the bishop of Lund, Peder Winstrup had supported Krabbe on this issue. Now Fersen proposed that Winstrup who was of a certain age should be made to accept the presence of a vice-bishop of Swedish origins. With the passing of

¹¹¹⁵ Alenäs (2003), pp.25-26.

¹¹¹⁶ Naturally it was also an issue with the Danes, especially towards the end of the war when it seemed more and more likely that the Swedes would win.

¹¹¹⁷ “Skåne og rætsvæsenet 1658–1684”, pp.61–80 in Karl-Erik Frandsen & Jens Christian Vesterskov Johansen (eds.), *Da Østdanmark blev Sydsverige. Otte studier i dansk-svenske relationer i 1600-tallet* (When Eastern Denmark became Southern Sweden. Eight Studies in Danish-Swedish Relations in the 17th Century), Skippershoved 2003. Quote: p.62. Vesterskov Johansen adds that unfortunately the communications that the clergy read aloud in church have seldom been conserved to our days.

¹¹¹⁸ Fersen enclosed the original letters with Corvinus’s signature so that the king could see that he was telling the truth. Corvinus also called himself “Raffin” and “Ramm”. All three words mean “raven” in respectively Latin, Danish and Scanian.

¹¹¹⁹ Jørgen Krabbe did not have the *ius patronatus*, i.e., the right to choose the ministers of the church, in Ystad (Ysted) although he had that right in several of the surrounding parishes, but obviously he was normally able to exert influence on the choice of the town clergy too.

time the senescent bishop would surely realise that he would feel better if he could spend his last few years in peace and quiet in his own home! If only the Swedish bishops would send down some able Swedish ministers to Scania, then it would become easier “to combine and unite the nations with each other...”.¹¹²⁰ Furthermore, Fersen informed the king that in order to guarantee the safety of the realm, the Danes did not let native Norwegian clergymen work in Norway, or at least not many of them. Norwegian clergymen were sent off to “Denmark and Jutland”.¹¹²¹ The last step proposed by Fersen was that a special tribunal for the inquisition of snaphane suspects and all other suspects should be instituted.

By that time, Fersen only had a few months left to live. In June that year he was mortally wounded during the siege of Malmö (Malmøe) and died some time later. He was then substituted by Jöran Sperling. Nevertheless, Fersen’s proposal was partly successful. The substitution of Danish ministers did not take on the dimensions he would have liked at all, but a quite efficient tribunal was instituted in Malmö (Malmøe) with branches in at least two other towns (Helsingborg and Örkelljunga) and lists of “infidelity” suspects who would have to face these tribunals were issued. One of the first persons who had to face the Malmö (Malmøe) tribunal was baron Krabbe who could be indicted and eventually condemned to death, in part because of his role in the Corvinus affair. General prosecutor Breuer who led the preliminary inquiries declared that Krabbe’s stubborn support of Corvinus had proved that the baron had a predilection for criminals and oath breakers.¹¹²² Breuer saw Corvinus as a hypocrite and turncoat who did not respect the words of Our Saviour the Lord Christ. The baron had disgraced himself and his estate utterly by supporting a person

¹¹²⁰ “att combinera och föreena nationerna medh hvar andre...”.

¹¹²¹ Fersen then informed the king that the Danes hardly let any Norwegians occupy positions of political importance but left the majority of those to “Danes and Jutes”. According to Fersen that policy was a way of “combining and uniting the nations with each other. “(...att combinera och föreena nationerna medh hwer andre). He told the king that he had liberated two vicar positions (callings) so that the formerly Danish ministers on these posts could be replaced by Competent Swedish ministers (Capable Swenska prester) and hopefully the inclinations of the parishioners would then be “straightened and corrected.” (retta och Corrigeria).

¹¹²² Breuer emphasised that Fersen not once, but several times, had incited Krabbe not to help Corvinus with his career since it was unsuitable that a man who at best was neutral should become head of other ministers. Native Swedish men with good merits were needed on such jobs.

like Corvinus when there were numerous suitable and honest Swedish men available for the post.¹¹²³ Corvinus was not only a criminal but a sinner.

The Corvinus affair gives us a clearer image of the precarious situation of the clergy during the Scanian War. Not only were personal relationships closely entwined but also that problematic issues like snaphaner, loyalty to the king, being a patriot and a good Christian regarded all strata of society. Another point that is obvious in the documents from the Corvinus affair is that there were those who wanted to expel all Danish ministers of the church from the Scanian provinces, although this policy did not win out in the long run. The writings of Fersen and Breuer do not let us doubt the existence of that line of thought. In the article “Religious or National World View? Scania after the Transition to Sweden in 1658” Hanne Sanders claims that the Swedes did not try to confer Scanian callings to particularly many native Swedes, at least not before the Scanian War and even later only in limited numbers, since the so-called *ius indigenis* that gave ministers that hailed from the area precedence to callings in their home province. According to Sanders, later developments in the direction of conferring more Scanian callings to native Swedes depended on a uniformity desire rather than a Swedification policy.¹¹²⁴ In his *Bishops in the Diocese of Lund 1638-1865 and the Events Surrounding Them* Allan Green claims that the *ius indigenis* question remained a big issue during the entire transition period until at least the times of bishop Mathias Steuchius (1694-1714) and that it was side-tracked on purpose during certain periods. According to Green, bishop Canutus Hahn (1680-1687)¹¹²⁵ and Steuchius both tried to introduce as many Swedish born ministers to Scanian callings as possible, since they wished to facilitate the introduction of national “uniformity” and that was difficult with Scanian ministers who did not manage to speak proper Swedish.¹¹²⁶

¹¹²³ Breuer’s Second Intercession, 15th October 1677, Rosencrantz, p.73. ”Mindre war dhett tienlige, at een reedelige och wel meriterat Swensk Mand, för hannom skulle tillbaka sättias...”

¹¹²⁴ Sanders, pp.245-248.

¹¹²⁵ The Swedish born vice bishop whose presence Bishop Winstrup had to accept from 1677 onwards.

¹¹²⁶ Allan Green, *Biskopar i Lunds stift 1638–1865 och händelser kring dem*, Libris 1986. See pp. 32-33 and pp.50-51. Also pp.49-50: It had been to no use that a list of Danish words (‘idiotismi’) that the ministers of the church were encouraged not to use had been distributed.

The Fight for the Souls

“A captain of the snaphaner who used to be buried in a church, has been exhumed by ours and brought to Åhus, where his body with the corps has been put on the racks. And, since all these have committed serious crimes, they have also had to suffer the punishment they deserved.”

Svenska Ordinarie Post-Tijnder, 23 februari 1679¹¹²⁷

The fact that many snaphaner/friskytter took an interest in religion can be understood from the fact that they went to church on Sundays and maybe even organised services in the woods. In the same manner they also wished to be buried like Christians, inside the churchyard walls or in the church. In this article I have tried to point out that some snaphaner/friskytter like Niels Tuesen obviously were deeply religious, and maybe, like Aage Monsen Herlof, they had taken in the Danish official discourse that claimed that the Scanians had been living in a Babylonian captivity with yokes on their shoulders.¹¹²⁸ It was only natural for their times that that should be the case. As A. Hallenberg has pointed out in his book on the spiritual culture of 17th century Blekinge (Bleging), the sacraments were given extreme weight and forgiveness and grace was found through them. Personal, inner conversion and individual responsibility in front of God had not yet become the word of the day in Scandinavian religiosity, but it was participation in common rites that brought salvation to the individual.¹¹²⁹

The Scanian War came to assume ever more macabre overtones and, in a few cases, even degenerated into a fight for the corpses of already dead “snaphaner”. From the winter of 1677-78 onwards the Swedes adopted increasingly violent execution methods that until that point had been saved for criminals who had committed particularly heinous (civilian) crimes. This tendency first became apparent in January 1677 when Sheriff Bendix Clawssen’s unit of snaphaner/friskytter were betrayed and

¹¹²⁷ *En snapphanekapten, som varit begraven i en kyrka, är av de våra uppgraven och fördd till Åhus, där hans kropp med kistan är satter på stegel. Och, såsom alla dessa hava grova missgärningar begått, så hava de ock utsått sådant straff, som de förtjänt.”*

¹¹²⁸ See also the *Hodomoriana Hahniana*, the not very flattering poem about Bishop Hahn that continued the theme of the Babylonian captivity in the 1680ies: “Have you never read that Israel was captive and under Babylonian rule, until many years had passed, they had to sit there in fear. Who knows if Scania will not have her day, when she goes away to her own family, own alter, measure and speech...” (“Har du det aldrig læst, at Israel var fangen/og under Babylon, til mange år var gangen./ mått’ sidde der i frygt. Hvem veed, om Skåne ej kan ha sin visse tid, indtil det går sin vej/ hen til sin egen slægt, sit alter, mål og tale...”)). The poem was written after the war by an ex-friskytte who had gone back to university, Hans Mand. The quote is from Fabricius IV, p.119.

¹¹²⁹ Aug. Hallenberg, *Blekings allmoge efter Roskilde fred. Bidrag till kännedom om ståndets materiella och andliga kultur under senare hälften av 1600-talet*, (The Commoners of Bleking after the Peace at Roskilde. A Contribution to the Knowledge of the Material and Spiritual Culture of this Estate during the Latter Part of the 17th Century), Karlskrona 1929, pp.276-277.

caught by the Swedes in the south-eastern parts of Scania.¹¹³⁰ Clawssen himself was drawn into a trap. During the consequent interrogations Clawssen provided the Swedes with a long list of “traitors”. We do not know how Clawssen was persuaded to betray both clergymen and noblemen as he did, but we do know that he and his men were forced to do the humiliating work of the “nightmen” while they were waiting for their execution.¹¹³¹

In his “Promemoria” Sven Erlandsson reveals that the snaphane catchers also fought a “religious” battle with their prey: Erlandsson was proud of having exhumed a “snaphane” from hallowed ground so that the body could be put on the wheel, as a warning to others.¹¹³² An example of a man whose corpse on the contrary was transported in the opposite direction was Truls Jönsson from Skräddaröd who was shot dead during a Swedish shooting spree. During the hunt for Captain Bendix’s men the Swedish soldiers went from house to house shooting down all the men in the village without asking questions. Later, Truls Jönsson’s family managed to free him of all charges, and he was granted a Christian funeral.¹¹³³ It was consequently important for the Swedes to convince the Scanians (and maybe people back home) that the snaphaner had no right to be buried in hallowed ground. In other words, they wished to make clear to everyone that the snaphaner were not the King’s Friskytter with righteous arms but murderers that were going to burn in hell, unless they repented their sins during their last moments on the stake. If that version had come natural to the Scanians, it would hardly have been necessary to go to such lengths to teach them the “truth”. The grotesque fight for corpses should rather be interpreted in religious terms. In his article on religion and magic in the penal system during the first part of the 18th century, the Danish historian Tyge Krogh has analysed what executions and torture meant during the early modern era and I have found his

¹¹³⁰ For details see section on Captain Bendix.

¹¹³¹ The *Mercurius* 5th February 1677: ...[the snaphaner] first had to drag out all the dead horses that were to be found in the camp and they will thereafter be put on the racks. (“hava först måst utdraga alla döda hästar, som I lägret funnits och som därefter skola steglas.”) Quote from Edvardsson III, p.192

¹¹³² One of these cases was described by Sven Erlandsson (“Promemoria”) in the following terms: “Among these was one called little Matz who was born in Höby in the hundred of Ingesta...the snaphaner took and buried him at Blentarp, but Sven Erlandsson dug him up and brought him to aahuus in which place he was put on the racks in his coffin, once the lid had been opened and thrown away.”Iblandt desse war en hette lille Matz som var född i Höby i Ingesta härads...Snaphanarna tågo och begrof hån timer sedermere i blentarp, men Sven Erlandsson tog honom upp och lät föra honom till ahuus *derest han blef satt på stegel i Kistan*, sådan loket vår upslagit och bortkastadt.”

¹¹³³ Summer-assizes of the hundred of Järesta, (Sommarting i Järesta härads), 14th May 1701.

interpretative framework quite fruitful in my attempts to understand why it became necessary for the Swedes to treat the "snaphaner" as they did.¹¹³⁴ Krogh emphasises that executions and corporeal punishment were very concrete events that took place in public. In this manner the authorities carried on a dialogue with the population. The execution ceremony became a religious ceremony:

"God demanded that the Christian prince should execute blasphemers, sodomites, murderers and those who had committed incest, but God also wanted the churches to fight for the soul of the offender until the very last. According to Luther the human being was defenceless when confronted with the temptations of Satan. Infallibly, the humans sinned and only the grace of God could save them. It was therefore essential for the single human being to confess his faith and repent his sins. This possibility was offered even to those who were condemned to death."¹¹³⁵

In this manner the sinner was given a chance to repent his sins and be redeemed. The snaphaner were wrenched from the claws of Satan so that they could go to heaven. During the early modern era good Lutherans found themselves in a situation in which they continuously had to choose between good and bad, between the path of the Lord and that of the Evil One; it was a universe that centred upon man but which was also characterised by a binary worldview that was always threatened by "inversion", that is that the good and true worldview would be reversed to its contrary.¹¹³⁶ The concepts of "inversion" and "binary worldview" are characteristic of modern-day torture research. The torturer tries to instil the "correct" worldview into his victims: the one in which torturers are strong, confident and powerful and victims are vermin. Sooner or later the tortured accept this strictly binary worldview: there is good and evil, clean and dirty, white and black but nothing in between. The intentionality of the torturer crushes his victims' capacity of experiencing an identity of his/her own: the thoughts and worldview of the torturer has taken the upper hand over the mind of the tortured person. This mechanism is also characterised by the infraction of various taboos, which in itself leads to a cultural vacuum, or "deculturation".¹¹³⁷ The snaphaner/friskytter described themselves as animals (Monsen) and were described as such (vermin, soulless beasts), at the same time as it became essential to them to hold on to the Danish worldview in which they were human beings and not animals, in

¹¹³⁴ "Religion og magi i straffesystemet i 1700-tallets første halvdel" in Sanders, pp.105–120.

¹¹³⁵ Krogh in Sanders, p.112.

¹¹³⁶ What Stuart Clark calls a "a binary vision of the world". Se: *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1997, p.112. According to Clark everything was divided into pairs of opposites like "good/evil, order/disorder, soul/body, and male /female" and it was utterly dangerous to try to move the equilibrium between the single units of one of these pairs. See also: Sanders, p.7.

¹¹³⁷ Sironi, p.36.

which they “only were peasants that had had been driven away from their farms by the Swedes.” The image of the yoke appears in testimonies from all layers of society, which might signify that it constituted a “discourse” that penetrated Danish/Scanian society during the Scanian War. It had been absorbed even by millers and carters, whom it served to help them ascribe a meaning to what was going on around them during a very difficult time. Naturally it was not easy to know what one should believe and a man like Aage Monsen Harlof admitted that he sometimes had come to consider himself a “monster” that had no part in the existence of ordinary people. But in the end, he nevertheless wrote to the king to reclaim his humanity and his right to live on the same terms as other people, like all other subjects of the Danish king. It is not unlikely that Monsen Harlof was influenced by the song *The Scanians’ and the Gynger’s Lament of the Swedish Yoke* from 1677 that contains the lines: “Like wild beasts in the forest we have to dwell in fear and we are never far from danger...we have been driven away from our wives and also from our property and children...this yoke is tearing us apart.”¹¹³⁸ The “snaphane” Håkan Erichsson from Kolbengtseröd in Halland ended up in court and “confessed” that he and his comrades had not been to church in a very long time but had lived in the woods “like animals and soulless beasts.”¹¹³⁹ The Danish tax collector Hendrich Peersøn who had previously served as estate manager at Krageholm (then Krogholm) castle was called “vermin” and “snaphane” by the Swedes.¹¹⁴⁰ In modern-day Russia president Putin calls the Chechnyan rebels “animals and monsters”. Russian mass media call them “bandits.”¹¹⁴¹ This tendency makes part of a long rhetorical tradition that can be traced to Antiquity: in order to learn to live with the fact that someone constitutes a threat to our style of life and moral values, or that someone constitutes a menace to our physical safety or even worse, that of our loved ones, it is but all too easy to choose to brand that person as a ungodly bastard or bandit. It is not difficult to doubt the very humanity of that person. Putin consequently draws the conclusion that the cruelty of the Chechnyans proves that they are wild beasts.

¹¹³⁸ *Skaaningernis Oc Gyngernis Klagemaal Offver Det Svenske Aag/ De ere under/ Sangviis forfattet Under den Melodie: Jeg beder dig min Herre oc Gud/ etc.* (The Scanians’ and the Gynger’s Lament of the Swedish Yoke they are suffering under/composed as a song to the melody: I pray to you my Lord and God etc.) printed on 16th March 1677, LUB.

¹¹³⁹ Rydstrand, p.25.

¹¹⁴⁰ Aletophilus, Breuer’s second intercession 15th October 1677, pp.70-71.

¹¹⁴¹ Quote from the French documentary “Putin’s System” from 2007.

Clergymen, Theology Students and Snaphaner

The newly established university of Lund closed at the beginning of the Scanian War and did not open again until 1681.¹¹⁴² A few of the students of the Scanian/Danish nation enrolled in the army while they were waiting to be able to pursue their studies.

Jørgen Hansön Horster

The theology student Jørgen Hansön Horster, son of the Norwegian doctor Hans Georg Horster and Anna Jespersdatter¹¹⁴³, helped a Danish quartermaster arrest Swedes when the Danes reconquered Scania in 1676. He also partook in confiscations of Swedish goods and lootings of Swedish property. Many years later, when he was curate of the parish of Oderljunga/Perstorp, Horster was accused by another clergyman, the reverend Wättring of Ingelstorp of having been a “snaphane” during the war and of having plundered the vicarage of Ingelstorp in the company of some other “snaphaner” who called him “corporal” during the early parts of the winter of 1676 (before the battle of Lund). Wättring claimed that Horster and his fellow snaphaner had not only ruined or stolen all his belongings but they had also taken him captive to the Ingelstorp (Ingelstrup) vicarage and from there to Ystad (Ysted) where they intended to kill him. Fortunately, some of the burghers had offered the snaphaner 50 daler in exchange for his life and then during the night Wättring managed to escape. That same night Horster and the other two rode away with whatever of the booty they had not managed to sell, including some cattle and sheep that they had taken with them to the Markie estate (that belonged to Horster’s rich mother) and remained there until the battle of Lund was over. Wättring had not had any idea of who the corporal was until he met Horster at a conference for the local clergy in the 1680ies.¹¹⁴⁴ As a Swedish clergyman he was known as “Jöran Horster”.

¹¹⁴² For a long time, the authorities were uncertain whether the new university should be re-opened. See: Weibull & Tegnér, p.23 and p.26.

¹¹⁴³ Gunnar Carlquist (ed.), *Lunds stifts herdaminne, No 14: De obefordrade prästerna* (Remembrance of the Pastors of the Diocese of Lund, No 14: The Unpromoted Clergymen), Lund 1991, p.31. Jørgen Horster’s mother was first married to the mayor of Landskrona (Landskrone) Niels Jørgensen, then to his father and finally to Professor Nils Wolf who was later ennobled Stiernberg. Jørgen Horster was consequently far from a snaphane who dwelled in the woods with other outlaws and robbed whoever came in his way.

¹¹⁴⁴ Mellhed, pp.174-175. Mellhed does not state any sources, but he might have found his information among the Acta Cleri, 1698, LLA where these facts are accounted in a file on Horster.

There are no traces of a Jørgen Hanssön (Horster) in the muster rolls, but Fabricius refers to a report from him to the authorities about the Swedish charges against the vicar of Lemmestrø, Johan Clausen Trænovius.¹¹⁴⁵ In that very report Horster also explains why he had been denounced as a snaphane:

“...during the winter when our people were at Lund then there was a quartermaster with whom I went to Ysted and this same man took a Swedish man and wanted to bring him to the army camp but he got away from him and the Swedes came back and I was denounced as a snaphane and soon I was arrested in Malmö...”¹¹⁴⁶

Horster then continued to explain that his stepfather (Nils Wolf) had been allowed to bail him out on condition that Horster accompany him to Sweden and so when Wolf set out a fortnight after Horster’s arrest, the young man was let out from the Swedish enclave at Malmö (Malmö) and soon enough he sneaked away from his stepfather. The same person who had informed against Horster the first time now promptly reported to Field Marshal von Fersen that Horster was on the run, whereupon some of Fersen’s men were sent out to catch him. Fortunately, Horster was not at home when they came to look for him, but at a clergyman’s place and Horster’s brother managed to send a message to warn him that he had to go away. Horster then went to Kvarnby (Quærnbye) and stayed there for a while, from there to Burlöv (Burlöf) where the vicar provided him with information for the Danes, from there to Hög (Höy) and from there to Landskrona (Landskrone) where he reported everything of weight that he had heard and seen during his stay in Malmö (Malmö) and the journey.

A year later War Commissary Jens Harboe mentioned a “Jørgen Hanss.” as a friskytte that came in from Stenestad in the company of “Jens Jacobss.” on 2nd June 1678.¹¹⁴⁷

Fabricius also mentioned a Jørgen Hansen Horst who was a “Danish sheriff” (ridefoged).¹¹⁴⁸ It might have been the same person. Jørgen Hansen Horst was mentioned together with Mogens Haksen and Henrik Persen, Baron Krabbe’s bailiffs who both joined the Danish forces quite soon after the Danish return to Scania. These three men worked in the same area in southern Scania. Both Haksen and Persen were

¹¹⁴⁵ Fabricius III, p.83 footnote 12. Report from Jørgen Hanssön Horster, 11th April 1677. In that letter Horster reported that the vicar of Lemmestrø was not only facing charges of high treason but of theft because the Swedes claimed he had stolen four mares from Børringe (Børringe) when the Danish fleet under Tromp landed at Ystad (Ysted). Trænovius was condemned to death but at the last moment the king transformed his punishment to exile.

¹¹⁴⁶ Report from Jørgen Hanssön Horster, Landskrone 11th April 1677, Forhør over og udsagn af fanger og overløbere, 468 Krigskollegiet (Landetaten) 1675-1678, DRA.

¹¹⁴⁷ Jens Harboe’s reports, 2nd June (1678), Indkomne breve, DRA.

¹¹⁴⁸ Fabricius III, p.146.

discarded as “snaphaner” by the Swedish authorities. It might therefore have been possible that Horster had a similar position during the Scanian War. The bailiffs Mogens Haksen, Henrik Persen and Jørgen Hansen Horst ended up on Sperling’s black list in February 1678, about a month after Baron Krabbe’s execution.¹¹⁴⁹ A “preaching snaphane’s” name was put on the gallows in Malmö (Malmö) after the war, as results from the inquiries of the Swedish ecclesiastical treason commission.¹¹⁵⁰ The name of the preaching snaphane was Jöran Hansson Horster and the prelate who had let him preach, the vicar of Grönby Petrus Bering, was later called in front of the ecclesiastical treason commission because of the event. Bering promptly replied that he had not had the slightest idea that the man was supposed to be a snaphane. The treason commission asked him to send in further explanations. Unfortunately, we do not know more than that today. As far as I know Horster himself was never called to answer to the treason commission, possibly because of his good contacts with eminent Swedes like his stepfather and also because his father-in-law Hans Eilersen was a well-known and respected clergyman who tried to protect him. Somehow Hanssön Horster managed to gain enough credibility with the Swedes to be able to resume his theology studies when the University of Lund re-opened after the war and then get ordained in 1684. Around 1685 Horster married Marna Hansdotter (Maren Hansdatter) from Lund and they had five children.¹¹⁵¹ From December 1684 until his death on 28th April 1698 he was rector of Oderljunga (Oderliunge) and Perstorp (Perstrup). An inquiry into his case was made shortly before his death when he was denounced for having been a snaphane again.

Jacob Jørgensen Wesseltoft

Another theology student who became a “snaphane” was Major Hermansen’s lieutenant Jacob Wesseltoft whose father was the vicar of Visseltofta (Visseltofte or

¹¹⁴⁹ Fabricius III, p.146. The special tribunal instituted by Sperling on the suggestion of his predecessor Fersen had lists of suspected traitors published and the longest one was the one from February 1678 that included a large part of the burghers of Helsingborg and several personages from the circle around Baron Krabbe.

¹¹⁵⁰ Alenäs (2008), p.180.

¹¹⁵¹ See G. Carlquist (1991, p.31) for the dates. Carlquist reports the names of four children but at Horster’s death his father-in-law stated that Horster had left five small children and many debts behind. See: Lunds stifts herdaminnen, Oderljunga and Perstorp, p. 290. Maybe it should be added that Horster remained a rector for the rest of his life, which is rather odd for a clergyman. All his requests for promotion were refused, allegedly because there had been complaints against him but maybe his wartime activities had not been directly advantageous to his career.

Wesseltoft) Jørgen Simonsen Schee who was a Norwegian from Stavanger.¹¹⁵² Wesseltoft junior was studying theology at Lund University when he was conscripted and became a lieutenant in the Danish army. Later that year he participated in the battle of Lund.¹¹⁵³ When the troops had been dispersed, young Wesseltoft tried to hide with the vicar of Harlösa (Harløse) but he was arrested by Gabriel Hilletan, the ex-mayor of Helsingborg who had turned to snaphane-hunting. Wesseltoft was then detained as a POW but Ebbe Ulfeld somehow managed to get him free. Hilletan did not give up though, and when Wesseltoft realised he was risking arrest again he set out for the Danish enclave of Landskrona (Landscrone). On the way there he was mugged and physically abused by a group of men whom he declared to be “a [Swedish] party from Helsinborg” to the Danish authorities and “snaphaner” to the Swedish authorities.¹¹⁵⁴ On 27th February 1677 he reported to the military headquarters in Landskrona (Landscrone). Two months later he was reported to be one of Major Nikolaj Hermansen’s lieutenant.¹¹⁵⁵ In October 1678 he is listed as one of several “zugegebene officiren” under Colonel Barthold von Bülow of the “Jydshe Regiment”. Barthold von Bülow’s cavalry did service on the Copenhagen citadel during that winter. At the same time Wesseltoft was registered in “das ander Jütsche Regiment” under Captain Schmeikel.¹¹⁵⁶ He was also reported to have done service on the island of Rügen where some of the fiercest fighting between Swedes and Danes was going on.¹¹⁵⁷ The sources prove that Jacob Wesseltoft was a perfectly regular soldier, although his “nationality” and the nature of the fighting he was ordered to participate in (special commandos) qualified him as a “snaphane”. If Wesseltoft ever

¹¹⁵² Report from 27th February 1677, 468 Krigskollegiet (Landetaten) 1675-78 Forhør over og udsagn af fanger og overløbere 1675-1677:98, DRA. This seems to be the same report as Fabricius III, (p. 83) refers to as “Indberetn. i. Krigsk. i S. 27/2”.

¹¹⁵³ It seems that he did not join the army of his own will. However, it should be remembered that at the time when that was written, Wesseltoft was still hoping to obtain a calling in Scania, and it was vital for him not to appear to have fought for Denmark of his own free will. In his examination certificate from the university of Copenhagen 19th April 1681 (Siv Truedsson, “Jacobs liv och leverne” (Jacob’s Life and Adventures) in *Gydhingen* 1997:2, pp. 9-11, quote p.10.) it was openly declared that he had been conscripted.

¹¹⁵⁴ Report from 27th February 1677, 468:98, DRA vs. Jacob Jöranson Wesseltofft Theol: Studiosus to the Ecclesiastical Commission, Malmö 28th February 1682. LDA, FIIC:1, 1681-1715, LLA.

¹¹⁵⁵ In April 1677 Wesseltoft served as a lieutenant under Major Nikolaj Hermansen. His fellow-student Hans Mandius was his captain. See: Fabricius III, p. 50 and p.106.

¹¹⁵⁶ 469 Krigskancelliet 1678–1762 Den danske militæretat 1678: 1774, DRA. ”Anno 1678= in Octob: nach den Winter Quartiren gezogen Cavalleri” and ”Nachricht von der Milice bey Ausgang des Jahrs 1678.”

¹¹⁵⁷ Nils Parelius, “Fra soldat til sjelesørger”, (From Soldier to Clergyman), pp. 26-41 in *Nordtröndelag Historielag Årsbok for 1954* (The Yearbook of the Historical Association of *Nordtröndelag* 1954), p.29.

made part of a friskytte unit he did so at the same time as being a regular soldier.¹¹⁵⁸ It is possible that his younger brother Simon was more of a traditional “snaphane” in that he does not seem to have been registered in the regular army and there is no evidence for his having been enrolled in the friskytte corps. According to both Scanian and Norwegian legends, Simon Wesseltoft fought by his brother’s side during the war and the fact that they moved to Norway together indicates that the legends might be right.¹¹⁵⁹ After the war “Jacob Jörgen Wesseltoft” was called to respond to the treason commission, in order to respond to the charges of having been a snaphane and of having visited Copenhagen during the war.¹¹⁶⁰ Jacob Wesseltoft finished his studies in Copenhagen with flying colours and then became a vicar in Norway after having tried to obtain a calling in Scania in vain. He died in Bergen in 1732.

Morten Jørgensen Odder and Lars Mortensen Odder

Unfortunately, much of what is known or believed to be known about the snaphaner can be traced back to legends and is for that reason not of much use when one tries to write history. One example are the Odders because who are better known through legends than history. According to legend the Reverend Morten Jørgensen Odder organised church services on a stone in the middle of the woods that is now a tourist attraction (the so-called Altar stone). According to one version of the legend that is reported by the Swedish historian Fryxell, the snaphaner caused so many problems that church services could not be held in the church but the whole congregation had to resort to the altar stone in the woods. Odder sr. was then kidnapped by the snaphaner and forced to give the Eucharist to them on that stone. Fryxell claims that this was done out of a wish to mock the church but that the “criminals” converted to the true religion on the spot and returned to their homes.¹¹⁶¹

In this case, the “true story” is hardly less dramatic than the legend. Odder and his son Lars Mortensen Odder were both arrested on the charge of collusion with snaphaner during the war and Morten almost lost his neck.¹¹⁶² Lars Odder was still a student in

¹¹⁵⁸ For Scanians in the regular Danish army, see also: Wanngren (1991), pp.68-70.

¹¹⁵⁹ Ivar Johansson, *Västra Göinge härad och domsaga. Anteckningar för tiden intill 1690*. (The hundred and court district of Western Göinge. Annotations for the Time until 1690), Hässleholm 1968, p. 196 och p.217. Simon Wesseltoft became a prosperous merchant in Norway.

¹¹⁶⁰ Alenäs (2008), p.180. Alenäs quotes the protocols from the ecclesiastical treason commission of 1681.

¹¹⁶¹ Edvardsson, II, p.74. Edvardsson quotes Fryxell p. 35. For the “altar stone” at Ekeby, see: Edvardsson II, p.32.

¹¹⁶² Edvardsson, pp.65-74.

1681 when the ecclesiastical treason commission called him.¹¹⁶³ Eventually he became a respected clergyman who was even charged with helping another minister of the church who could not seem to learn Swedish. Nevertheless, Odder Jr. ended up in serious trouble again almost twenty years later when another clergyman denounced him for having been a “snaphane” during the Scanian War and one of the witnesses claimed that Lars Odder had bragged that he had killed seven “Swedish bastards” with his own hands. He was also denounced for showing contempt of all those who socialised with Swedes.¹¹⁶⁴

Hans Erichsøn Mandius (Mand)

Before the war Mandius, who hailed from the other side of the Sound, had been a student at Lund University. At the beginning of the war he was arrested by the Swedes because he was considered to belong to the Danish nation although, as Fabricius pointed out, this was quite contrary to the university norms.¹¹⁶⁵ Fabricius first stated that Mandius became a “befalingsmand” or sheriff during the war,¹¹⁶⁶ but later he claimed that Mandius was a captain under Nikolaj Hermansen and that two other students, Jakob Pedersen Bredal and Jakob Jörgensen Wesseltoft served under him as “captain lieutenant” and lieutenant respectively.¹¹⁶⁷ The Reverend Sthen Jacobsen in his turn bestowed Hans Mandius with the titles of “marauder general”, “thief” and “rascal” who claimed that one fourth of all brewery and distillery utensils in Scania belonged to himself, when Arensdorff had ordered that all that sort of equipment should be confiscated.¹¹⁶⁸ Jacobsen blamed General Arensdorff for the destruction that was wrought on Scania during the summer of 1678, and according to Jacobsen, Mandius was Arensdorff’s most willing servant who was extremely sad because of all the vodka distillery equipment that would be left unused when Arensdorff’s confiscation order was annulled and Arensdorff called back to Copenhagen. Furthermore, Jacobsen claimed that Mandius had been just as willing a

¹¹⁶³ Alenäs (2008), p.180. Alenäs quotes the protocols from the ecclesiastical treason commission of 1681. Unfortunately, the names are swedised and so it is sometimes difficult to identify them with the Danish names in the Danish records.

¹¹⁶⁴ The case between Lars Odder and Carl Tvetofvius, Lunds Domkapitel, Acta Cleri. Fl:a:23, LLA. The man who testified against Odder was a Jöns Nøllbon who left a written statement dated 13th January. Later during the court process the validity of Nøllbon’s testimony was questioned.

¹¹⁶⁵ Fabricius III, p.50. Fabricius IV, p.52 of the index, also calls him a “student and captain of the friskytter.”

¹¹⁶⁶ Fabricius III, p.50.

¹¹⁶⁷ Fabricius III, p.106.

¹¹⁶⁸ Jacobsen, p.166.

servant to the Swedish district governor, Lejonsköld (Leijonschiold) as he now was to the Danes at an earlier stage. Jacobsen's final verdict on Mandius was that he had only fought for himself and not for the kingdom of Denmark. In his book *Christi Krybbe...* from late 1676¹¹⁶⁹, Hans Mandius insisted that peace was all that mattered to him. The book was written in Danish it was warmly dedicated to Lejonsköld and his family and it described warmongers as evil and true Christian pacifists as good. "National" differences had no importance to Mandius in this book, only the difference between warmongers and true Christians mattered.¹¹⁷⁰

Later on Mandius composed a poem that caused him much trouble: the *Hodomoriana Hahniana*, a not very flattering poem about Bishop Hahn that continued the theme of the Babylonian captivity.¹¹⁷¹ Mand was as learned a Latinist as could be, and he also interspersed his writings with quotes in Hebrew and Greek, at the same time as his literary talent was obvious. Even his military reports to the Danish headquarters are characteristic in their style and easily identifiable.¹¹⁷² It would consequently not have been very difficult for the Swedish authorities to guess who had written the *Hodomoriana*. Eventually, Hans Mandius left Scania and became a parson on the Danish island of Lolland.¹¹⁷³

Yet another theology student whom the ecclesiastical treason commission expected to present himself to explain his actions was Hans Hansson Werming.¹¹⁷⁴

¹¹⁶⁹ Hans Erichsøn Mandius, *Christi Krybbe de christnis himmel: kortelig forfattet vdi vor höijtdelige juule-fæstis Evangelii Forklaring*, (The Manger of Christ, Paradise of Christians: A Brief Expansion of the Gospel of our Solemn Christmas Celebrations), Lund 1676.

¹¹⁷⁰ See eg. extract from the hymn "Ny-Aars Fred-ventende och Fryd-hentende Basuun" (A Herald Awaiting Peace and Bringing Joy for the New Year) that is contained in the book: verse 7. "Felt-herren Skade-glad/Mord-gierig at afliffve/Om=søger i hver Stad/Sin Grumhed at bedriffve: Huor mangel freydig helt/Sit Liff vel vilde Skaaned/ har dog mot udi Felt/For Sværd og Kugle daan." (The vicious and blood-thirsty Conqueror is eager to kill, he strives to practise his cruelties in every place: How many brave heroes could have saved their lives but were constrained to go to war and the clash of swords and the thunder of missiles.)

¹¹⁷¹ : "Have you never read that *Israel was captive and under Babylonian rule*, until many years had passed, they had to sit there in fear. Who knows if Scania will not have her day, when she goes away to her own family, own alter, measure and speech..." ("Har du det aldrig læst, at *Israel var fangen/og under Babylon*, til mange år var gangen, / mått'sidde der i frygt. Hvem veed, om Skåne ej kan ha sin visse tid, indtil det går sin vej/ hen til sin egen slægt, sit alter, mål og tale...") (my italics). The quote is from Fabricius IV, p.119.

¹¹⁷² See e.g., Mandius's report of a reconnaissance mission across the Swedish border from 2nd August 1678. In his usual humorous style, he signed the report "Hans Mandig" i.e., "Manly Hans" and as a true academic he emphasised that his mission had been executed "with scientific precision" (med største vidskabeltzhed), 468:99 DRA.

¹¹⁷³ Gunnar Carlquist, *Lunds stifts herdaminnen II:4 Torna kontrakt*, Lund 1952, p. 258. Carlquist refers to G. Göranssons "Canutus Hahn" (1950).

¹¹⁷⁴ Alenäs (2008), p.180. Alenäs quotes the protocols from the ecclesiastical treason commission of 1681. The names are swedecised and so it is sometimes difficult to identify them with the Danish names of the Danish records.

Conclusion

Naturally the constant calling out for God's help was a kind of rhetoric that might easily be experienced as pompous and fake by the modern-day reader, and probably some people felt the same in the 17th century. However, it is important to stress that it can be supposed that many people at the time really believed in the values they represented in their rhetoric. Independently of how deep the faith of the single person was (or was not) Christian rhetoric was expected to sound good and to suscite vivid feelings among the receivers of the message. One was expected to believe, even if one was simply a "snaphane". There is hardly any need to add that naturally, the King's Friskytter took for granted that they had the Lord on their side. Had they not parted from the supposition that they fought for the "good and just" they would not have had any motivation at all to continue to make part of a paramilitary organisation in which they risked more than life itself and where it was demanded that they obey certain rules.

To a certain extent the Swedish policy in the Scanian provinces aimed at changing the reality that the Swedes had first found there so that it could be adapted to a form that would suit the Swedish realm better. Anders Linde-Laursen has claimed that some of the north-eastern towns were replaced by "Swedish" towns out of a wish to remodel and restyle.¹¹⁷⁵ Much in the same manner, the rebels were re-modelled into criminals or even, animals. Reshaping reality so that it could be perceived as righteous and just became an important constituent of the Swedish policy in Scania. Charles XI was a pious man who needed to feel that he was acting in accordance with the will of God. It was also important that Charles's subjects at home and around Europe conceived of "their universe" as that of the "good guys", else it would have become too hard to motivate them for active combat service and to make them send their sons to war. According to Anthony F. Upton who has written a book on the reign of Charles XI of Sweden, the king was convinced that the Scanians had broken the law of God and that he himself and his subjects were united by "a common endeavour to discover and obey God's will for Sweden."¹¹⁷⁶ In his biography of Charles XI, Alf Åberg claims that the king was profoundly religious; perhaps even the most frequent church-goer of all Swedish kings. The Italian visitor to the court Lorenzo Magalotti noted in his

¹¹⁷⁵ Linde-Laursen, Anders. *Det nationales natur. En studie i dansk-svenske relationer*. Lund 1995, p.47.

¹¹⁷⁶ Anthony F. Upton, *Charles XI and Swedish Absolutism*, Cambridge University Press 1998, p.113.

writings that Charles XI had a religious worldview and had been raised “in a fear of God that still lasts.”¹¹⁷⁷

Just like many other Scanians, the friskytter and those who were called snaphaner, chose to trust a radically different discourse. In case they had taken the Swedish propaganda seriously they would have had to consider themselves the devil’s henchmen who deserved nothing but the worst. But they obviously did not see themselves in that light. Those friskytter and snaphaner who have left statements regarding this issue in the sources were firmly convinced that they were fighting on the side of the good and righteous. If, in the end, victory would not be theirs it still did not mean that the Swedes had been right in keeping Scania and treating people the way they had. According to Danish propaganda it would sooner or later be the Swedes who would suffer the most since they had committed the worst sins and had refused to listen to their own conscience.¹¹⁷⁸ Many Scanians and probably all friskytter adhered to that kind of beliefs. We have testimonies of counts, footmen, carters and why not, the king himself, who used the Babylonian captivity discourse in order to motivate their personal resistance to the Swedes. This fact indicates that there was space for personal freedom of choice at the time and that even if the northern European worldview was practically identical from one realm to another it did not exclude different interpretations: interpretations that in their turn could become dangerous weapons or bulwarks of vital importance, depending on who chose to adhere to them.

Conclusion of Part II: Who and What Were the Snaphaner?

A person who scouted for the Danes or who brought letters between different outposts, or who spied on behalf of the district governor (amtmand), was a “snaphane” to the Swedes if, in times of peace, he dedicated his time to modest occupations like ploughing, cobbling, or sewing. Furthermore, all those who had enrolled in the official corps of Friskytter during the war, were automatically branded as “snaphaner”. As a rule, any Scanian who in any manner had used arms against a Swede was included in that category, unless the Scanian was of noble extraction. The higher up you were in society, the smaller the chance of going down as a snaphane. The reverend Sthen Jacobsen of the parish of Kågeröd (Kogere), near Landskrona (Landscrone), would probably not have been condemned for snaphane activities if the

¹¹⁷⁷ Åberg 1958b, p.64. Magalotti is quoted by Åberg.

¹¹⁷⁸ *En sandfærdig replique*, p.36.

Swedes had discovered that he was indeed spying on behalf of the Danes, possibly he might have been charged with collusion with the snaphaner. He was also not known to have taken arms against the Swedes. The same can be said of Jens Michelsen, the owner of the Hovdala (then Howdale) estate in northern Scania, who informed against the Swedes. In those cases, social position was crucial. The minister of the church, Morten Jörgensen Odder was accused of collusion with snaphaner but, at the very last moment, he was reprieved by the king. These men would probably not have been classified as snaphaner by the Swedes even if a peasant who had committed the same “crimes” would have been so. “Snaphaner” in the sense that it acquired during the Scanian War, was a category that had been created from outside, by the Swedish authorities *and it was not a term that anybody used to denote themselves.*¹¹⁷⁹ At least not after the institution of the (Danish) King’s Friskytter Corps. The category of men that I am analysing here is mainly composed of friskytter, since they were those who left the largest number of written sources in the archives. Nevertheless, I have also included sources that can be traced to the hands of, or deal with, people who were classified as snaphaner by the Swedes. In a manner of speaking, being a “snaphane” was a social classification that excluded certain categories.¹¹⁸⁰

Most “snaphaner” did not consider themselves as such. It can only be hypothesised that some of them only came to think of themselves as snaphaner when the Swedes (the executioners perhaps) had convinced them that all they were was “scoundrels and snaphaner”. In their *Male Witches in Early Modern Europe* Lara Apps and Andrew Gow describe how persons who had never thought of themselves as witches came to identify themselves with that connotation through the workings of torture.¹¹⁸¹ Apps and Gow emphasise that some of those who were executed as witches actually dealt in magic and other mysterious things, but that these persons too tended to prefer being

¹¹⁷⁹ “. att Krabben skulle lade svensken vide, att *disse som de kalder snaphaner* var der att finde skulde dommen haffde optegnedt huor de vare at finde som mand dett skulle lade vide.” My italics.

¹¹⁸⁰ However, this was not always the rule: Bendix Clawssen occupied a distinguished position and he aristocrat Offue Rommell was impaled *in effigie* in 1678.

¹¹⁸¹ Manchester University Press 2003, pp. 17-18. The same process has been described by Anne Llewellyn Barstow in her *Witchcraze-A New History of the European Witch Hunts* (Harper Collins 1994, p.xiii) in which she claims that modern Indian women who have been abused by their displeased husbands’ families succumb to the same psychological mechanism. The women internalised the message that they were intrinsically evil once they had been the target of other people’s aggressions and desire for power long enough.

called other things than witches.¹¹⁸² The category “witches” was consequently a classification that had been created from the outside, by the “enemy”.¹¹⁸³ The same thing can be said about the category “snaphaner” in the sense that it took during the Scanian war. “Snaphaner” as in “the godless snaphaner”, “the barbaric snaphaner” and the “monsters and wild beasts” were created by the Swedish authorities. Originally the term “snaphane” was a vague, but not negative denotation of peasants in arms, guerrilla-style warriors and possibly (but I have no clear evidence from the sources that this was the case), outlaws. If, before 1676, its connotations were fluctuant and not weighed down by negative associations, the situation changed with the war when the term “snaphane” came to denote the dregs of society. As Alf Åberg has pointed out, the Swedish state included all sorts of personages in this classification.¹¹⁸⁴ What Åberg failed to realise was that this classification was largely created from the outside, i.e., by those very same authorities. During the German witch hunts a contemporary torturer claimed that it was no use even being a count, one might as well say whatever the persecutors wanted if one wanted to avoid the worst kinds of suffering.¹¹⁸⁵ This was also the case with the so-called “snaphaner”.

Vigo Edvardsson pointed out that the Swedish fealty campaign of 1677 caused a division of the inhabitants between those who had signed the Swedish “fealty-contract” in which they promised to stay at home in peace and quiet and to denounce all snaphaner and those who had chosen not to. Edvardsson commented that it was “the part of the population that was loyal to the Swedes that had presented themselves, while the snaphaner stayed away from the meetings.”¹¹⁸⁶ However, one might wonder whether those who did not sign the contract really considered themselves as snaphaner? Just as one might question Edvardsson’s conclusion that all those who did sign constituted “the loyal part of the population” when quite some

¹¹⁸² Often enough the local wise women and men, as well as midwives, spaewives and fortune-tellers were re-named “witches” and “sorcerers” by the authorities. Today the same professional category prefer to call themselves healers, clairvoyants or mediums. Apps and Gow prefer using the term “witch” for all genders. When necessary, they use the expression “male witches”.

¹¹⁸³ The example in Apps and Gow is Johannes Junius, a fifty-five-year-old local magistrate at Bamberg who was tortured and condemned of witchcraft on most dubious grounds. His case is well testified by the sources.

¹¹⁸⁴ See: Åberg, 1958, p.102.

¹¹⁸⁵ Apps and Gow, p.82 footnote 36. The advice was given by Johannes Junius’s torturer when as he wanted to warn the Burgermeister of denying the charges of witchcraft: “Erdenke etwas, dann ir könnt die marter nicht ausstehen, die man euch anthut, vnd wann ir sie gleich alle ausstehet, so kompt ir doch niht hinaus, wann Ir gleich ene graff weret...”

¹¹⁸⁶ Edvardsson II, p.188.

show of Swedish muscle had been necessary to get them to sign. Edvardsson's point is an important one in that he realised that the actions of the Swedes created a difference that had not been there before: the fealty campaign and other similar measures created "snaphaner" in the sense of "murderers and bastards". I do *not* want to claim that the snaphane-movement was a figment of the Swedes' imagination. The friskytter constituted a physical reality that had to be dealt with in some very concrete manner. So did the more general forms of Scanian/Danish opposition to Swedish rule. The friskytter were quite real and quite combative: so much so that the Swedes in the war zone were terrified of them. In the same manner most other persons who could be classified as snaphaner exhibited quite physical presences and in many cases, they had indeed opposed the Swedes in one way or another. Many scholars have interpreted the snaphane-movement as the result of social malcontent.¹¹⁸⁷

Contemporary interpretations did not come to very different conclusions. The Scanian nobleman Olluf Rosencrantz despised the snaphaner at the same time as he felt true compassion for them (as he did with peasants in general). According to Rosencrantz the snaphaner were quite ordinary peasants who wanted to avenge the maltreatments the Swedes had submitted them to during the interwar period:

*"some ordinary Peasants and Commoners in the conquered Scanian Provinces, during these Times of War, had sought out the right Occasion to avenge the Maltreatment, Derision and Contrariness with which they all in unison and with great misery claim that they have been exposed to in many Ways by the Swedish Officers and Civil Servants since they left Danish rule and that since that Time they have been maltreated by them, always with Punches and Blows,, heavy Burdens and Taxes, and among other hard, evil and derisive Treatments they have daily have had to hear that that is only what false Danish Dogs deserve."*¹¹⁸⁸

Olluf Rosencrantz was firmly convinced that the Swedes wanted to do away with all Scanians of Danish origins, independently of which estate they belonged to.¹¹⁸⁹

¹¹⁸⁷ See: Fabricius, III, especially pp. 101-102 where he claims that the snaphaner were peasants that suffered financial collapse when their usual trade routes were cut off and the tax system changed after the Swedish take-over. According to Fabricius these men first become outlaws and then friskytter. On this issue Alf Åberg (1958, pp. 75-77) follows Fabricius line. More recently, Karl Bergman (2002, pp.78-79) has claimed that in the aftermath of the Scanian commission, social discontent found its safety valve in the snaphane movement.

¹¹⁸⁸ Aletophilus (Olluf Rosencrantz?), *En sandfärdig REPLIQUE*, pp. 26-27: "nogle gemeene Bønder oc Almues Folck i de conqvesterede Skaanske Provincier, ved disse Krigs Coniuncturer, kunde haffve søgt Leylighed til at hefne den onde Medfart spot oc Fortred som de endrecteligen oc ynckeligen beklager dem at være beegnet med i mange Maader aff de Svenske Officerer oc Betienter siden de ere komne fra den Danske regering at de siden den Tid haffver været aff dem ilde tracteret, med idelig Hug oc Slag store Tyngde oc Contributioner, oc iblant anden haard ond oc spottelig Medfart daglig maatte höre derhos at mand icke anderledis burde at tractere de false Jytte Hunde."

¹¹⁸⁹ See: Aletophilus, *En sandfärdig REPLIQUE*, p.32: "the late Baron's Persecutors, from endless Hatred and Cruelty towards the majority of the remaining Scanian inhabitants of Danish Birth and Extraction would gladly like to follow in Caligula's footsteps."(den Sl.Barons Efftertractere aff et

Hjørring continued much in the same vein as Rosencrantz, with the difference that the snaphaner and friskytter were defended more expressly. According to Hjørring they all wanted to be called “friskytter”, whether they were registered in Copenhagen or not. He also claimed that only a Swede would call those “snaphaner” who really were only ordinary peasants who had decided to fight for their righteous king and country. They never called themselves anything but friskytter! Hjørring explained the origins of the snaphane-movement in the following terms:

“When the King of Denmark landed in Scania with his army, many of the country folk took service with the King of Denmark as Scouts and Friskytter, after which they set out, under the command of their assigned officers, against the enemy of Denmark which was the Swedes, in order to serve their most righteous lord according to their Natural Duty.”¹¹⁹⁰

According to Hjørring the snaphaner and friskytter were people who fought on the right side, i.e., on the side that society, their righteous king, and God would have wanted them to fight. Hjørring’s interpretation of the friskytte movement is interesting since he was one of very few contemporaries who did not only express his “for” or “against” the friskytter/snaphaner, but he also tried to explain the “why” and “how” these people decided to declare war on their overlords. Thott emphasised that they did not behave worse than other soldiers. Swedish propaganda tended to depict the snaphaner as murderous beasts who acted on their own initiative, but Hjørring fiercely opposed this view. Neither Hjørring nor Rosencrantz denied that the friskytter proceeded by violent means but they both claimed that this was so because the Scanians had been provoked to violence by the Swedes who avenged themselves with

umettelig Had oc Grumhed til de fleeste aff de offverbleffne Skaanske Indbyggere aff Danske Biurd oc Extraction gerne skulle ville efterfølge Caligulae Exempel”) and p.12: “the natural Hatred and thirst for Blood against all people of Danish Descent and Extraction, which alone is the true Reason for their having set in action such a Murder and Tyrannical Behaviour.” (det naturlige Had oc Blodgierighed imod alle Danske Affkomst oc Extraction, hvilcket alleeniste er den rette Aarsag som dem til saadan et Mord oc Tyrranniske Medfart haffver operret.”)

¹¹⁹⁰ MS Rostgaard 4to, 93, KB. Fabricius called this manuscript *Det heftraabende blod* (Blood Calling for Revenge). Translation: “Der Kongen aff Danmark kom paa Skoneland med sin armee, vahr der mange aff Landfolcket som toge tieniste hos kongen aff Danmarck som Parthie gienger oc friskytter, derpaa toge de bestilling under tilskickede officerir imod Danmarcks fiende som vare de svenske, at tiende deris retteste herre effter Naturens Plict.” Here Hjørring betrayed his familiarity with contemporary philosophical trends in mind: the Danish historian Tyge Krogh has pointed out that at the time, many philosophers considered “nature and the history of the different societies as expressions of the divine order and consequently alternative sources for our knowledge of God’s will”.

(Naturrättsfilosofin) Quote from Krogh’s “Religion og magi i straffesystemet i 1700-tallets første halvdel”, (Religion and magic in the penal system of the first half of the 18th century), pp.105-120 in Sanders 2001, quote p. 107. Furthermore, Krogh (pp.108-109) emphasises that sins and/or crime that went against the order of both society and nature arose the wrath of God and God demanded that that kind of abominations should be extirpated from the world. Seen from this point of view the capital punishment was an order from Above.

fire and the sword on anyone who was not on their side.¹¹⁹¹ Finally I would like to quote Major Aage Monsen Harlof of the friskytter who explained that he and his men had become friskytter "...because we were Hoping that we would once more be saved from the Swedish Yoke and in Times of Grace be Rewarded by our Most Gracious King."¹¹⁹²

Part III: The Krabbe Case

*"I have sinned against all of God's 10 commands, I have led a bad life, and have not shied from pernicious actions until now that I am not far from death and can see the disaster that was mine with my very own eyes"*¹¹⁹³

Introduction: Selling Oneself to the Devil

On a summer's day in 1676 the wealthy country squire Jørgen Krabbe was taking a walk in the park when his bailiff Hindrich Peersøn suddenly turned up with a paper in his hand. It was an authorisation from the Danish king that entitled Peersøn to work as a tax collector. By that time almost all of Scania had been taken back by the Danes and Krabbe had sent his bailiff to ask for a safeguard letter for his estate Krogholm that is now known as Krageholm. Jørgen Krabbe was shocked and exclaimed: "Do you want to sell yourself to the devil? You'll have to prepare yourself to become an exile and an outlaw!"¹¹⁹⁴ From a Swedish point of view Peersøn had become a snaphane and in the sources he was mentioned as the "Swedish nation's worst persecutor".¹¹⁹⁵ The following year Krabbe was court-marshalled on the charge of high treason against the Swedes. One of the most serious charges against Krabbe was

¹¹⁹¹ "The King of Sweden set an example of sword and murder for all those who opposed him in Denmark." ("dett exempell som Kongen aff Sverrige udi Danmarck statueredt med sverd oc mord offuer alle dem som gjorde hans parthie offuerlast.")

¹¹⁹² "...i den Forhaabning, vi kunde igen frelsis af Suenschens Aag og i Tiiden af Naade winde Belønning hoes worris Allernaad. Konge." Aage Harlof to the Danish king, 18th November 1679, I.S., No:413, DRA. The letter has been published by Pehr Sörensson, p.60.

¹¹⁹³ Jeg hafr syndet mod alle de 10 Gud budord, lefwet ilde, og icke taget mig være for skade, førend nu jeg icke er langt fra døden, og seer min store ulykke for mine øyen." Jørgen Krabbe's "Bönnebog", p.25.

¹¹⁹⁴ "Vilt du nu Fanden i Vold, det du maa forsickre dig, och bereede dig til, at blifve Landflyctig, och en Rømnings-Mand?" Jorgen Krabbe's Reply to the Second Instance of the "Prosecutor", 23th October 1677, in Aletophilus, *En sandfærdig REPLIQUE imod Den falske Deduction, som underfundligen er sammenspunden til at bemandle den Morderiske oc Tragoediske Action Som Gen.Leutenant oc Vice-Gouverneur i Mallmøe Baron Jørgen Sperling Sammesteds lod anrette offver Den Høyædle oc Velb: Herre Baron Sl. Jørgen Krabbe Den 16. Januari 1678*, København 1678. This episode and some other parts of this chapter have been published in: Jojan Vadenbring "Om vi blifver svensk. Identitetsfrågor i övergångstid" (If we become Swedish...Identity Issues in Times of Change), pp.160–179 in Harald Gustafsson & Hanne Sanders, *Integration och identiteter i det förnationella Norden*, (Integration and Identities in the Pre-National Nordic Countries), Göteborg/Stockholm förlag 2006. See especially pp 160-161.

¹¹⁹⁵ 8th October 1677 Lorens Basch to Krabbe, Aletophilus, p.17.

that he had let Peersøn continue in his service even after that day in the park when he declared that he had become a “snaphane”. Governor General Sperling declared that he would rather have expected the sky to come crashing down than that baron Krabbe should prove himself a traitor. And yet, Sperling felt that the baron had now showed his truly Danish colours. Krabbe himself insisted that he was and always would be an honest Swedish and patriot.¹¹⁹⁶

This part of the thesis concentrates on the so-called Krabbe case that brought the leading Scanian nobleman face to face with a firing squad in the midst of the Scanian War. The court case against him centred upon his relations to people around him who were not only Danish-minded but in several cases also “snaphaner”. The severity of the charges against Krabbe also depended on the fact that the prosecution claimed that his private correspondence betrayed his considering himself a Dane. Both these points, the relations of the snaphaner to the manorial world that dominated most of Scania, and the importance of identifying oneself as a Dane or a Swede will be in the centre of the analysis in the following sections. One of Knud Fabricius’s main theses was that Denmark lost Scania because the national feelings of the nobility were not awakened until it was too late. A Danish nationalist like Fabricius naturally felt that Krabbe was a dubitable character: the baron was an inborn Dane, and his behaviour should have been predictable. A true nationalist does not change nationality. From that point of view, it is odd that Krabbe could claim that he was Swedish although he behaved like a Dane and spoke Swedish with a Danish accent. He might even have looked like a Dane. However, the kind of nationalism that Fabricius represented did not exist in the 17th century. If one sees nationalism as a product of the French revolution, industrialisation, and the modern world then the Krabbe case must be seen in a different way.¹¹⁹⁷ In this chapter I will analyse how patriotic rhetoric was used in the documents that remain from the trial against Krabbe. I will also try to analyse what role collective identities and loyalties played. The Krabbe case brings conflicting loyalties like royalism, religion, Swedishness and Danishness to the fore. There were Danish and Swedish identities at the time, but we cannot take for granted that they awakened the same sort of emotional response as today or that they conveyed the

¹¹⁹⁶ Fabricius III, p.135.

¹¹⁹⁷ Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, Cambridge University Press 1990, p.75. Eric J Hobsbawm claims that “the nation” is a modern phenomenon that was created by nationalist ideologies that, in their turn, were a product of the French revolution and industrialism.

same associations.¹¹⁹⁸ If we set out from a desire to find the roots of nationalism or, on the contrary, from the firm conviction that nationalism is a modern phenomenon we might easily get blinded. Maybe one should look for a different perception of the world: a time and a world when loyalties and identities other than those we are used to now played an important role. What did Krabbe's and Peersøn's detractors mean when they spoke of a nation? What did Krabbe mean when he said that he was a Swede and a patriot?

It is important to try to use other terms than those that are immediately connected to modern nationalism. The ethnic concept is quite useful in this context. I do not speak about "nationalism" but try to use the term "patriotism" that is normally used in Scandinavia.¹¹⁹⁹ However, my sources use words like "nation" and "national hatred" on almost every page and I would find it too confusing to use modern substitute terms in the analysis. It should be kept in mind that it is the matter of 17th-century nations and national hatred and that the aim of this chapter is to analyse what contents were attributed to these concepts back then.

Jørgen Krabbe's Background

Introduction

This subsection contains a biography of Krabbe's first years and a brief analysis of the lines of thought that dominated the environment he grew up in.

The Early Years

Jørgen Iffuersen Krabbe was born into an illustrious Danish family on 21st August 1633. The ancestral home of the family was Jordeberga (Jordebjerg) in southwestern Scania but Jørgen was born at Laholm castle in the province of Halland, where his father Iffuer was commander-in-chief of the troops. Later Iffuer was promoted to the fortress at Varberg close to the Norwegian border in the north. Jørgen's mother Karen Ottesdatter Marsvin descended from another important Danish family. Jørgen had a brother who was three years older, Tage, and two sisters called Karen and Sophie. Jordebjerg was razed to the ground during the Swedish invasion of 1643-45 (Horn's

¹¹⁹⁸ Harald Gustafsson, "The Conglomerate State: A Perspective on State Formation in Early Modern Europe." *Scandinavian Journal of History* 23, 1998, s.210.

¹¹⁹⁹ Harald Gustafsson, "The Eighth Argument", p.112. Regnalism, protonationalism and ethnicism have also been proposed.

War). Legend has it that Iffuer shook his fist against the sky and swore to fight the Swedish dogs till the bitter end. Nevertheless, Iffuer Krabbe had to accept defeat and hand the fortress over to the Swedes when Halland was ceded to Sweden in 1645. However, Iffuer Krabbe chose to take the whole archive of the county of Varberg with him instead of surrendering it to the Swedes as established in the peace treaty of Brömsebro, an act that made him go to history as a “saboteur” and hater of Swedes.¹²⁰⁰ After the introduction of absolutism in Denmark, Iffuer Krabbe was on the commission that elaborated the first Danish unitary law book (“Danske Lov”) and then, in 1661, he became governor of Norway. Both Iffuer and his brother Niels were important “pre-industrialists” in Scania: they both ran pot ash works at the same time as they dedicated themselves to public life. Iffuer Krabbe had a house of moderate dimensions between the Nørregade and Nørrevold in central Copenhagen.¹²⁰¹ They always spent part of the year in the capital.

Later on in his life Jørgen would declare that was proud of having been born to a good family and of having received a thoroughly Lutheran education that taught him all the Christian virtues that belonged to his estate and illustrious family; virtues that were of great use to Krabbe in the service of his “king and fatherland.” Krabbe spent his youth in “*studiis humanioribus*” and in all sorts of “*exercitiis*” that appertained to a cavalier of some standing. In order to be able to honour his fatherland even more he then went to “foreign countries in order to improve his knowledge of the languages, customs and constitutions of these foreign Nations”. He also studied statesmanship and government.¹²⁰² Krabbe then continued his grand tour to France, Italy, England, the Netherlands, and Germany. His studies enabled him to serve his fatherland and “any Lord or Powerful Man.”¹²⁰³ In September 1653 Jørgen and his older brother Tage enrolled at the University of Orléans where Tage was elected chairman of the *Natio Germanica*.¹²⁰⁴ Two years later they went on to Padua where their father also had

¹²⁰⁰ Dübeck, Inger. *Fra gammel dansk til ny svensk ret. Den retlige forsvenskning i de tabte territorier 1645-1683*, (From Old Danish to New Swedish Law. The Judiciary Swedification in the Lost Territories, 1645-1683), Rigsarkivet/G.E.C Gad 1987, p.49. Iffuer Krabbe lived from 1602-1666.

¹²⁰¹ Ramsing, H.V., *Københavns Ejendomme 1377-1728: V Nørre kvarter*, (Property in Copenhagen 1377-1728: V The Northern Parts) Ejnar Munksgaards forlag, Copenhagen 1967, p. 92. It was the matter of Karré nr. 5, Matr nr.54 and 310-311. By 1661 he had sold it to Otte Pogwisch.

¹²⁰² ”til at erkynde sig i udländiske Nationers Sprock, skicke oc Constitutioner; oc til at erlange videnskab om hvis som til verdslig Politie oc Regiering henhörer.

¹²⁰³ ”hvor med hand oc ved sin hiemkomst her i Riget hafde giort sig capable, sit Fäderneland oc enhver herre oc Potentat med god Fruct oc Nytte at kunde tiene.” p.4.

¹²⁰⁴ E. Wrangel, ”Danske og norske Studenter der ere indskrevne i Natio Germanica ved Universitetet i Orléans”, pp. 124-162, in *Personalthistorisk Tidsskrift* 4:I, Kjøbenhavn og Christiania 1898: ”1653,

studied in 1625.¹²⁰⁵ Sometime in 1656 they returned to Denmark. Later on, in his life Jørgen would thank God for having brought him home to his fatherland after the wild years abroad in his youth. After his years on the continent, he went back to Denmark where he worked for Frederik III as a royal secretary at the Royal Chancellery.

Conclusions:

Before the cession of the Scania to the Swedes the Krabbes were now for their hostility to Swedes. Jørgen Krabbe did consequently *not* grow up in an environment that preached peace and brotherhood between the Scandinavian nations. Nevertheless, it is evident from his own writings that he grew up in a profoundly Christian home and that he was proud of his high rank and of his valorous ancestors. From the beginning he had dreamt of serving his king and country and he studied at a grammar school (Sorø) and university in order to be able to serve his fatherland and "any Lord or Powerful Man."¹²⁰⁶ Although the fatherland was an important issue in Jørgen Krabbe's writings about his earlier years he also made clear that his upbringing and studies had also prepared him to be able to serve a lord different from the one who had been his ancestors'. With that claim he also showed that as a nobleman he also adhered to an older line of thought that gave more weight to the relationship between lord and liege than to the patria and the nation.

Fabricius accused the Scanian nobility of being totally devoid of "national consciousness" and only thinking in terms of their rank. To prove this he quoted Corfitz Uhlfeld who had made the following declaration during a stay in France: "Well, the true noblemen are in Denmark where the king cannot even make them go out of their houses if they do not want to."¹²⁰⁷ I am not sure whether I agree totally with Fabricius when he claimed that noblemen like Corfitz Uhlfeld felt a more intense sense of belonging with other European noblemen than with their own countrymen of

Sept. 22: Tago Krabbe, eq. Danus; Georgius Krabbe danus." Glabo, Henning. "Danske studerende i Orléans. Tiden 1560–1688, pp.151–174 in *Personalthistorisk Tidsskrift*, 8. Række, IV: Kjøbenhavn-Oslo 1925, p.157.

¹²⁰⁵ H. Riis-Petersen, "Danske og norske Studenter ved udenlandske Universiteter og Kiel Universitet", (Danish Students at Foreign Universities and Kiel University), vol.III (unpublished), 1961, RA; "Danes in Italy" Danish Institute in Rome, www.dir.it Jørgen and Tage Krabbe are registered in 1655. Not only Germans but also Flemings, Dutchmen and Scandinavians were considered Germanic and consequently belonged to the *Natio Germanica*. See: Lucia Rossetti, *The University of Padua, An Outline of its History*, Edizioni Lint, Padova 1988, p.46.

¹²⁰⁶ "hvor med hand oc ved sin hiemkomst her i Riget hafde giort sig capable, sit Fäderneland oc enhver herre oc Potentat med god Fruct oc Nytte at kunde tiene." p.4.

¹²⁰⁷ Fabricius, I, p. 69: "Nej, udi Danmark ere de rette Adelsmænd, hvem kongen ikke en Gang kan tvinge til at gaa ud af deres Huse."

other ranks. Although Jørgen Krabbe's outlook on life had many points in common with that of Corfitz Uhlfeld, he would not have felt a foreigner in Stockholm if that had always been the case. My argument here is that traditional noble values and patriotism existed side by side and sometimes clashed. I also believe that people (like Krabbe) could choose which way they preferred to see things, although sometimes it became a subconscious choice. Krabbe appealed to a more traditional set of values where concepts like "patriot" and "fatherland" existed but had not quite crystallised. Sperling and Breuer appealed to values that corresponded closer to the kind of patriotism described by Gunner Lind in his article "Old Patriots" in which he analyses how the concept of "fatherland" was used in Denmark up until the introduction of absolutism in 1660. This concept had first gained a broader value when the idea of *defensio patriae* was broached in Denmark at the very beginning of the 17th century.¹²⁰⁸ By mid-century patriotism based on the duty to defend the fatherland had become a force in its own right and not only in the upper strata of society.¹²⁰⁹ If Lind is right, Krabbe and the Thotts and their contemporaries all grew up reading *Encomion Regni Daniae*, Nør-Nissom's *A Short Danish Chronicle* and other popular history books that were directed to readers that "wish their dear fatherland well, and wants its best from the bottom of their hearts and victory against its enemies."¹²¹⁰ And so they had grown up with the idea that one's duty was to defend one's fatherland and if not with the sword, well then by other means such as work and travels. Rosencrantz claimed that Krabbe had studied for the fatherland and Krabbe himself that he had worked (at the Danish Chancellery) for it. Lind points out that the kind of patriotism that was flourishing in Denmark around the middle of the 17th century questioned "noble honour as a fundamental value in life."¹²¹¹

¹²⁰⁸ Gunner Lind, "Gamle patrioter", (Old patriots), pp.91–115, in *Søfart, Politik, Identitet*, tilegnet Ole Feldbæk, Handels- & Søfartsmuseet på Kronborg, Søhistoriske Skrifter XIX, Falcon 1996, p.95. When the "European" idea of local militia was introduced in Denmark the concept of "fatherland" was much used in order to increase the loyalty of the (local) soldiers. For the introduction of *franc-archers* in France and militia (under Machiavelli) in Tuscany that led to the institution of Danish militia towards the middle of the 16th century see: John R. Hale, *Guerra e società nell'Europa del Rinascimento*, Laterza 1987, pp.218-222. (War and Society in Renaissance Europe, 1450-1620, Fontana books 1985). The relation between Danish militia and snaphaner is still not clear to me.

¹²⁰⁹ Lind, p.102.

¹²¹⁰ Lind, p.103, quotes Jens Søffrensen Nør-Nissum, *En kort Dansk Krønike*, Copenhagen 1649, introduction: "som vel mener deres kære fædreland, og af et oprigtigt hjerte søger dets bedste og gavt mod dets fjender."

¹²¹¹ Lind, p.102: "Ud fra den kunne man stille spørgsmål ved den adelige ære som fundamental livsværdi..."

Accepting Swedish Rule

Introduction

In this section I will analyse the relations that the Krabbe clan were faced with as Denmark lost the eastern provinces and consequently the Krabbes' ancestral lands to the Swedes. As a clan they eventually compromised, although the single constituents of the extended family had to make personal choices, young Jørgen among them. A certain tendency to compromise became characteristic of the Krabbes from this point in time onwards, although the Swedes were wary of them.

The Karl Gustav Wars

Then came the war against Sweden that changed everything. During the siege of Copenhagen Jørgen Krabbe served on the Danish side. His whole family were fervent supporters of the Danish cause. One can only guess what their reactions were when the Scanian provinces were lost to Denmark in 1658. The war went on for another two years, but the Danes did not manage to win their lost lands back, except for the island of Bornholm.

In 1658 Iffuer Krabbe had been offered to become Marshal of the Realm (rigsmarsk) which was the highest political position one could get. He had said no to the offer because he wanted to retire from public life and enjoy his otium on his estates in Scania. The Swedish ex-ambassador to Denmark, Magnus Durell warned the Swedish king of Iffuer Krabbe who was far too powerful: "there was nothing to fear from the Scanian nobility unless it found a leader in Ifwar Krabbe". According to Durell, Iffuer Krabbe had too much power and too many relatives and friends in Scania; these facts would render it much easier for him to win people's hearts be they noble or not. His Majesty's ministers and servants would not stand a chance if it came to that. One could only pray to God that the Danes or the Dutch would not attack because "the whole country would have a leader to count on". Another potential danger was if the Scanian nobility came to feel oppressed under Swedish rule. Durell advised the king to let his ministers "keep an eye on Ifwar Krabbe, more so than on the rest of the country". Another Scanian whom the Swedes were keeping an eye on was Count Uhlfeld. The king was suspicious of his intentions because he seemed to be hand in glove with the rest of the Scanian nobility. Maybe it would be better to "remove" him if he did not start "behaving better". According to the Swedish king, both Uhlfeld and

the Danish Chancellor of the Realm (rigshofmästaren) Geersdorff had been so drunk when the treaty was concluded that they could not get out of bed.¹²¹²

That summer Governor General Stenbock reported to the king that some of the Scanians had rather submitted to “the Turk than to us”. The noblemen were grumbling about the new custom duties that were being imposed on export to Denmark. Iffuer Krabbe told Stenbock that he assumed that His Majesty would grant him and the other noblemen special “grace”. Stenbock complained to the king that unfortunately it would be necessary to keep Krabbe in a good “humeur”.¹²¹³ Nevertheless Iffuer Krabbe did not step back from public life for another few years: he participated in political life as usual during the autumn of when things were returning to “normal” in Denmark. The cession of the Scanian provinces did not mean that the inhabitants were excluded from Danish politics or the court circles. Nor did it mean that minor officials like Iffuer’s son Jørgen were expected to renounce their careers for an uncertain Swedish future. At the time Jørgen was working as a chancellery secretary. This was the starting step of the Danish *cursus honorum* in the early modern era. It was a way of raising one’s fortunes in the world but, at least according to Ladewig Petersen, not the point from where real aristocrats would have had to set out. Chances of becoming a councillor of the realm were existent but not good.¹²¹⁴ During the estates-general of September-December 1660 that led to the declaration of the extended rights of the king, Iffuer Krabbe was one of those who represented the nobility most assiduously: he worked actively against absolutism. When the “hereditary kingship” was celebrated on 18th October 1660 Major General Krabbe carried the “blood banner” (“blodfanen”) as usual during royal processions.¹²¹⁵ J.A Fridericia claimed that the king’s aims had become obvious to the public by the end of 1660 or at the latest, before the end of January 1661, though Frederick seems to have had his mind set on becoming absolute from the very beginning. *The Act concerning Absolute and*

¹²¹² Cronholm, p.40.

¹²¹³ Cronholm, p.40: Royal letter 25th June and 8th July 1658 (Riksregister): “Turken, än under oß”; p.41: Stenbock to His Majesty 8th and 15th July 1658, “nödigt att hålla Krabbe wid godt humeur.”

¹²¹⁴ E. Ladewig Petersen, “Landsdommerkorpset under adelsvælden, Rekruttering, karrieremønstre og status,” *Historisk Tidsskrift* 93:2, (Provincial Judges During the Rule of the nobility: Recruitment, Careers, Status), pp.279-295, see p.288. It should be noted that more than anything it was important to keep close to the king: In his article “Court and Nobility in Early Modern Denmark” Leon Jespersen (*Scandinavian Journal of History* 27 2002, pp.129-142, p.141) has pointed out that “proximity to the king was more important than the salary of the court offices.” The Krabbes always tried to stay in the king’s proximity, whether they were under Swedish or Danish rule.

¹²¹⁵ Fridericia, pp. 506-507, and p.537.

Hereditary Government was published on 10th January 1661.¹²¹⁶ Was it a coincidence that Jørgen Krabbe declared that he would become a Swedish subject during the last week of December 1660?¹²¹⁷

In his analysis of the actions of the Scanian nobility during the transition era Knud Fabricius concluded that the coming of absolutism was crucial for many of them. Staying in Scania meant that they would be able to maintain their customary rights and privileges under a Swedish king who was not absolute. In Denmark they would be at the mercy of an absolute monarch who had it in his mind to change many things. In June 1661 the privileges of the nobility in Denmark were “confirmed” but these privileges did not include their time-old taxation rights over their peasants.¹²¹⁸ Changes like these probably convinced many Scanian noblemen to opt for the Swedish monarch instead of Frederik III. Jørgen, Iffuer and Niels Krabbe did not make up their minds about becoming Swedish until it was obvious that absolutism was to win the day in Denmark. When young Krabbe declared that he would swear fealty to the Swedish king he was offered a position as county judge by the Danish king. When he communicated this to the Swedes, he was promised the corresponding position in Scania. Jørgen Krabbe was the first one out of the entire Scanian nobility to pledge fealty to the Swedes. Governor General Stenbock was pleased as Punch at the sight of “General Major Iffuar Krabbe’s son” who popped in and offered his services exactly when the Swedish authorities had started to despair of the nobility. He also told the governor general that his uncle Niels Krabbe was planning to take the same step, which made Stenbock hope that the rest of the nobility might follow in his footsteps.¹²¹⁹ Young Krabbe was in such a hurry to see his fiancée (Jytte Thott) that time that he offended the Governor General by not staying on for dinner. But he did pledge loyalty and so did his father and uncle some time later.¹²²⁰ Consequently,

¹²¹⁶ The so-called Enevoldsarveregeringsakten. See: Sebastian Olden-Jørgensen, “Christian V’s og Frederik IV’s politiske testamenter” (The Political Testaments of Christian V and Frederick IV) in *Historisk Tidsskrift* 95, ed. Carsten Due-Nielsen and Anders Monrad Møller, Copenhagen 1995, pp.313-348, quote p.348. See also: Fridericia, p.543 and p.528. Fridericia doubted whether Frederik III had really had his mind on absolutism from the beginning but Olden-Jørgensen (p.309) claims that the king conspired with a group of burghers and that the conspirators were aiming for absolutism from the start.

¹²¹⁷ Letter from Otto Stenbock to the king, 27th December 1660, Gen.guv över Skåne, SRA.

¹²¹⁸ Fridericia, pp. 506-507.

¹²¹⁹ Otto Stenbock to the king, 27th December 1660, GG, SRA.

¹²²⁰ Iffuer and Niels Krabbe swore their oath on 29th January 1661. They both had lunch with the governor general who reported to the king that at least Niels Krabbe seemed friendly and behaved very well. See: Letter to the king, 29th January 1661, GG, SRA.

Niels, Iffuer and Jørgen Krabbe gave up one pair of king and fatherland for another pair. Niels claimed that it did not really matter because his true fatherland was Scania, no matter who ruled it. Their friend Olluf Rosencrantz was of the same opinion.¹²²¹ Even if the oath was a personal choice, it did not necessarily have anything with one's personal sympathies to do. Oaths of allegiance and loyalty could be seen an affirmation of early modern citizenship, defined in relation to the king. It might simply have been a question of strategy in situations like that of the annexation of Scania. Many families chose to split their possessions between two sons: one on each side of the Sound and it might have seemed the logical thing to do in times when no one knew who the future lord of the land would be. With a foot on each side of the waters chances of survival were higher.

Conclusions

The Swedes saw a potential threat in the Krabbes from the very beginning and the Swedish king was informed at an early state that Iffuer Krabbe might become a front figure for the Scanian nobility in case they decided to cause trouble. But although Iffuer Krabbe was seen both as a bitter enemy of the Swedes and as too influential he eventually opted for Sweden. It seems obvious from the sources that it was in part a political decision taken by the Krabbe clan when it turned out that that the Absolutist wing would win the day in Copenhagen. For all that Iffuer Krabbe hated Swedes he might have hated Absolutism even more. Now, Iffuer's eldest son remained on the Danish side of the Sound and took care of their lands there. Jørgen Krabbe stayed on in Scania like his father and uncle. The way he described it himself it had first and foremost been a personal decision. To Jørgen Krabbe the greatest doubt had been whether he should give up his career in the Danish Civil Service, not the least because the king in person had promised him that he would soon be promoted if he chose to stay in Denmark. When he was promised the same opportunities in Sweden, he decided to become a Swedish subject. Another personal issue that made him opt for Sweden was his relationship with Jytte Thott. Both Jørgen Krabbe's own account and the Swedish sources state this as one of his motives for choosing to stay on in Scania under Swedish rule was his wish to be with his young fiancée. Consequently, many factors contributed to the personal choice of overlord that many people had to take

¹²²¹ Rosencrantz (1679), p.2.

when Scania came under Swedish rule. Political acuteness, career opportunities and personal affairs were all motives for Jørgen Krabbe and his closest relatives when they made their choice. Finally, another factor that was stressed by Niels Krabbe was his regional patriotism, in that he felt that Scania was more important to him than being the liege of one king or another.

The Interwar Years

Introduction

The years between the Karl Gustav Wars and the Scanian War (1660-1676) have been considered both as disastrous and as hardly different from the preceding eras by various traditions. Most research has concentrated on “how things really were” during this era, but it is not the aim of this analysis at all. I have not tried to go through the Krabbes’ account books in order to check whether their affairs really deteriorated on account of the Swedish overlordship. It is the personal perceptions of Jørgen Krabbe and the existence of certain currents of thought that can be proved through an analysis of them that are of interest here.

A Division of Lands

In 1661 Iffuer Krabbe’s vast holdings were divided between his two sons: Jørgen got what was then called Krogholm¹²²² in Scania and Tage Gunderslev in Denmark.

Karen got Fulltofta (then Fulletofte) in Scania although she was living abroad with her husband Just Høgh who was a diplomat. The house in Nørregade was sold in 1661. The reason for this might have been that Iffuer and his wife had inherited a house behind the St. Nicolai church from Oluf Parsberg who died that year.¹²²³

On 25th August 1661 Jørgen married Jytte Thott, the sixteen-year-old daughter of the nobleman Otte Thott and the granddaughter of the “King of Scania” Tage Thott. The Thotts were an older and more influential family that owned great part of the lands

¹²²² Modern day Krageholm. In my sources it is also called: Kroegholm, Krogeholm, Kraageholm and Kragholm. Sthen Jacobsen (p.77) called it Kraageholm (pronounced Krogeholm with a short o), just as he used “kraag” for standard Danish “krog.” Krageholm is probably a Swedish hybridisation. I feel that it would be anachronistic to use the modern Swedish name for it here. Krabbe never called it anything but Krogholm, just as he never used the Swedish version of his name “Jöran”, although he liked using the Latinised “Georg” or “Georgius” in his youth.

¹²²³ The Krabbes only inherited the house two years later though. See: H.V. Ramsing, *Københavns Ejendomme 1377-1728: I Øster kvarter*, (Property in Copenhagen 1377-1728, The Eastern Parts) Ejnar Munksgaards forlag, Copenhagen 1943, p.52. It was the matter of Karré Nr.6, Matr.216 between the Store and Lille Færgestræde.

that were contiguous with the Krabbes' and the Marsvins' estates.¹²²⁴ Until then the Thotts and the Krabbes had been rivals that never took the same side in political disputes but the marriage of the two youngest representatives of the families concluded a union between them that would prove its durability during the hard times that were to come. Maybe it was simply a clever political move in the face of the Swedish annexation and the hypothetical threat of Swedish interference in the Scanian equilibrium.

The wedding took place in "Malmö in Scania" as it said on the *corolla nuptialis* where the mention of Sweden was avoided but toasts were drunk to both kingdoms to a number of three to Denmark and two to Sweden.¹²²⁵ Krabbe was very close to his wife's three brothers Knud, Holger and Tage Ottesen Thott and remained so for the rest of his life.¹²²⁶ At the beginning of the 1660'ies "Jöran" Krabbe and Jytte Tott were registered as owners of "Krageholm, Högestad, Baldringe and Jordberga" in a Swedish register of Scanian noblemen and women who had sworn the oath of allegiance.¹²²⁷

In 1664 Krabbe became a member of the Swedish *Riddarhus* which was an institution similar to the House of Lords. Krabbe was one of very few Scanian noblemen who spent long periods in Stockholm and attended the *Riddarhus* on a regular basis. Krabbe himself claimed that during his years in the Diet (Riksdag) he had always worked "for the best of the fatherland and its inhabitants."¹²²⁸ Knud Fabricius accused Krabbe of having been an informer because he reported what he

¹²²⁴ The Thott family is possibly the oldest Scandinavian noble family. In 1651 Tage Thott the older owned Skabersjø, Verpinge, Barsebæk, Ulstrup, Erichsholm, Herrested and Bjersjøholm. On his main estate, Skabersjø (modern-day Skabersjö) he had gathered the elite of the Scanian intellectuals of his day: amongst others the poet Anders Bording and the historian Vitus Bering. See: Fabricius I, pp.40-41.

¹²²⁵ *Corolla nuptialis*, Georg Krabbe, Copenhagen 1661. Personregistret, LUB.

¹²²⁶ The Thott brothers did not always get on between themselves, however. Knud and Tage ended up in court and Knud tried to harass his younger half-brother as much as possible. (See: Fabricius I, p. 58). Amongst other things he interrupted Tage's hunts. Knud lived at Næs (modern day Trolleås), Tage at Erichsholm (modern day Trolleholm), and Holger at Marsvinsholm. Holger was also registered as the owner of the Søvdegaard (modern day Sövdeborg) estate, that he had received as part of his future heredity from his mother Dorthe Rosencrantz, but she continued to run that estate herself until the family was expropriated by the Swedes in 1678 and the whole estate ended up in Jöran Sperling's hands. Later Søvde was sold to governor general Rutger von Ascheberg, allegedly to pay for Holger Thott's debts. See: Fabricius IV, p.240.

¹²²⁷ Cronholm, p.34. The names are all swedecised. Knut Thott and his (first) wife Sophie Brahe were registered as owners of Knutstorp. Holger and Tage Thott were registered as "not of age yet" but Holger owned Søvdegaard and Marswinsholm and Tage Eriksholm.

¹²²⁸ "A Prayer for one's enemies and persecutors", Jørgen Krabbe's "Bönnebog", The Royal Library.

had heard from his Danish friends to the Swedish diet.¹²²⁹ Krabbe made friends in Stockholm. One of those was Johan Paulin who made part of the king's closest circle of friends and who would risk his own career and honour for Krabbe many years later.¹²³⁰ Nevertheless the "Danes" were frowned at by many Swedes who felt annoyed by the way they behaved and dressed. The entrance of the Scanian nobility in the Riddarhus was opposed by many who felt that "a conquered nation" had no honour and no right to equal rights with Swedish families of ancient lineages. During these years Krabbe was involved in an outdrawn lawsuit against a Swedish upstart called Niclas Jonsson. Krabbe's sister Karen was married to a diplomat called Just Høgh and let her youngest brother manage her affairs in Scania. Their father's head steward, Hack Søfrensøn, leased her estate Fulltofta (Fulletofte) during these years. Krabbe then sold Fulltofta (Fulletofte) to Jonsson but never received a penny for it. That was the immediate cause of the lawsuit. The fact that Krabbe tried to get Fulltofta (Fulletofte) back from a native Swede would become fatal to him. In the autumn of 1666 Iffuer Krabbe died. The house in Copenhagen was inherited by his daughter Sophie and her husband Kjeld Krag of Trudsholm. However, Jørgen Krabbe continued to spend part of the year in Copenhagen so he might have owned other property there.

Krabbe became increasingly frustrated under the Swedish rule. In 1670 he was employed shortly on a land tax revision committee but after that the Swedes did not make use of his services except to demand loans. He was not paid for his work on the revision committee.¹²³¹ Krabbe complained to a Swedish official that he had been persuaded by Charles X Gustaf's "gracious promise" to leave Denmark and a future as county judge on Zealand. It cost him 6000 *rigsdaler* to exchange his property in Denmark with that of his siblings in Scania. He spent a lot of money on loans to "this and that person" who had promised to procure him a position in the Swedish

¹²²⁹ See the *Riksdag* records from May-July 1664 when Krabbe first was admitted. For the latter episode see the *Riksdag* records from 18th July 1668 (p.236) in B. Taube & S. Bergh (eds), *Sveriges ridderskaps och adels riksdags-protokoll*, (The *Riksdag* records of the Swedish nobility), vols. I-XVII, Stockholm, 1855-1902.

¹²³⁰ For Johan Paulin's background and his relationship with the king from their youth onwards, see: Åberg 1958b, p. 48.

¹²³¹ Together with notary Daniel Gudmundsen and Dr. Christian Foß, Krabbe constituted the committee for the hundreds of Luggude, Bjäre and Åsbo. As established by a decree of 1st May 1670. The members of the committees were selected on the basis of their knowledge of the land. Nobody was allowed to work in their own areas to avoid corruption. In Krabbe's own hundred it was the Scanian nobleman Steen Holch, Krabbe's Swedish archenemy Niklas Jonsson and a man called Swen Jacobsson who constituted the committee. See: Cronholm, pp.172-173.

administration. His Majesty the king had sent him on numerous journeys and commissions that he had to pay out of his own pockets.¹²³² His petitions to the king and the chancellor (riksdrotts) demonstrate that he felt that the Swedish king had not fulfilled his promises. In 1673 he complained that he was now over forty and had wasted away twelve years in the countryside without an “*employe*.”¹²³³ He felt that he would become a disgrace to his family and good name. His father and his uncle Niels had both had important positions in the Danish administration and Jørgen had believed that he would be able to follow in their footsteps under Swedish rule. He would never forget that the Danish king had promised him the position of county judge (“*landsdommer*”) on Zealand if he stayed in Denmark and that he had been promised an equivalent position by the Swedish king. Seventeen years under the Swedes would never bring him an opportunity of the kind, no matter how many petitions he sent to the higher spheres in Stockholm.

During the inter-war years Krabbe kept sending petitions to the king in which he asked that his people should be relieved of the burden of the billeted regiments. In 1673 he wrote to the king complaining that a cavalry company had lodged in the villages around Ystad (Ysted) for 30 days and that these villages had been “badly dealt with and some peasants totally ruined.”¹²³⁴ He then calculated the value of all the food the soldiers had eaten to 1600 *daler* in silver. Together with a notary he also started an official inquiry into the question of the behaviour of the troops but for reasons that he did not “want to mention”, the inquiry had to be given up.

Conclusions

Krabbe’s correspondence from the interwar years show that he was becoming an increasingly bitter man and that he blamed the Swedish overlordship both for his failure to make a career in the administration and for his increasing financial problems. Although it could be claimed that he should have been pleased with his obtaining a place in the Diet and that he was able to give his home province and his estate a voice in that context, Krabbe himself did not hesitate to give voice to his delusion in his letters to Swedish friends and acquaintances. He would rather have made a career for himself at the bar as he would have in Denmark; for all that Denmark at the time had become strictly absolutist. Although Krabbe never ceased to

¹²³² Cronholm, p.198.

¹²³³ From Krabbe to the king, Bibliographica, RAS: “Jag derhos mine aar och alder skulle saaledis paa landet uden employe henslitta, huilcket Jeg maa beklage nu offuer 12 aars tid haffua maat giort...”

¹²³⁴ Krabbe to His Majesty, no date but almost certainly early 1673, Biographica, SRA.

stress that he was bound by oath to the King of Sweden, he also perceived of the coming under Swedish rule as a deterioration of things, both to him personally and to the people on his lands. He claimed that nothing like the billeting of considerable troops on his lands and in the surrounding areas had ever taken place before and that their economy had been totally run down because of it. In this sense, Krabbe's letters reveal that there was a current of thought that blamed the Swedes for some of the societal problems that were perceived to exist in the 1670'ies and that on an individual level it was quite feasible to blame one's joblessness or financial problems on the coming of the Swedes.

Krabbe during the Scanian War

Introduction

This section contains an analysis of how Krabbe and the people around him tried to balance between the two states that contended the rule over Scania when war broke out again. It was obviously not only the clergy that found themselves so to speak between two fires during this era. However, as we have already seen at the beginning of this part of the thesis, some of the people around Krabbe did not try to "balance" at all: Hindrich Peersøn, for one chose Denmark and to be branded as a "snaphane" by the Swedes, as soon as the Danish fleet landed. What made some people take sides at once? And how did they explain that? The same questions could, and should, be asked regarding those who tried to be devious or simply faltered and that is very much what this section is about.

Between One King and Another

A new war between the Nordic kingdoms broke out in 1675. Jørgen Krabbe immediately went to Vänersborg in southern Sweden to offer his services to the king, but the king was not interested. Then Krabbe returned to Scania to ask the Governor General if he could be of any service there, but he received the same brusque reply. He offered his services to the Swedish king on two more occasions: at Vä (then Wæ) and Trolleån (then Næs).¹²³⁵

¹²³⁵ Krabbe, in Aletophilus, p.144. At first the Swedish authorities had considered employing Scanian noblemen on their side during the conflict. It was feared that "those who were spending their time on their estates without any particular employment" would be offered tempting positions on the other side.

Scania was invaded by the Danish army in June 1676. When the Danish fleet under Admirals Tromp and Juel came to the bay of Ystad (Ysted) Krabbe was in the company of General Fersen. The Danes landed and the Swedes were forced to retreat. Baron Krabbe went to Fersen for advice as to what he should do but Fersen replied that the only advice he could give him was to return to Krageholm (Krogholm) and stay put there. Some time later General-Admiral Tromp summoned all noblemen of the surroundings to Ystad (Ysted): Krabbe, Holger Thott and Christian Bilde were the foremost of these. Tromp sent a Dutch captain by the name of Le Maire and fifty dragoons to deliver a letter to Krabbe in which he asked why His Excellency had not rendered homage to his righteous king yet. If His Excellency presented himself at Mayor Mattis Friis's place in Ystad (Ysted) on Tuesday 4th July, he'd be offered a perfect opportunity to render homage. If His Excellency chose to avail of this opportunity, he and his family would remain safe. Else His Excellency might, unfortunately, be exposed to fire and plunder according to the rigours of war.¹²³⁶ Krabbe wrote to Fersen for advice, but we do not know whether or what Fersen replied. In any case Krabbe and his neighbours presented themselves punctually on 4th July. Tromp made them swear on their knightly honour that they would stay put on their estates. Some time later Tromp picked Krabbe's Krageholm (Krogholm) for a short countryside holiday, possibly because of its closeness to Ystad (Ystedh).¹²³⁷

In a fairly short time, the Swedes were driven out of most of Scania and Danish sovereignty was re-established. Krabbe and the Thott brothers were summoned to the Danish camp to pay homage to the Danish king and to deliver their tax registers ("*jordebøger*") so that they could be taxed. Rosencrantz claimed that they had tried to stall their departure as long as possible because they were hoping that the Swedish

(Government instructions to regional governors in Scania, "Handlingar rörande danska kriget 1676-79", SRA; Quoted by Johnsson, p.48.) The regional governors were therefore asked to send in reports on all noblemen in their area who did not occupy official positions, including noblemen of Swedish descent. During the inter-war years, the Scanian nobility had been largely ignored and left to occupy themselves with their estates and nothing else. Jørgen Krabbe had been sending out job applications for years without the least success: it was obvious that Stockholm knew that some of the noblemen would very much have wanted to work all along. Suddenly someone had come to think that these frustrated noblemen might constitute a risk and for some time it looked as if they would be offered employment. As things turned out, however, these plans came to nothing. Maybe because, after all, it was deemed that the Scanians were not reliable enough. Even Swedish educated young men like Tage Thott who was in Swedish service were sent back to where they came from.

¹²³⁶ Aletophilus (p.66) reported that they had to obey this summons since they were in the hands of "a foreign Power" and knew that it would be dangerous not to. See: Cronholm, p.199.

¹²³⁷ Aletophilus insisted that he had only stayed for two hours, p.66.

king would come and save them.¹²³⁸ When they realised that their hopes had been vain, they decided to ride to the Danish army camp. They were not treated like foreigners by Christian V. According to the Swedish sources they rushed to Landskrona (Landskrone) as soon as they could and became great favourites with the king. Krabbe and Knud Thott rushed in by the side of the Danish king with great “*empressement*” when the castle of Landskrona (Landskrone) surrendered on August 3, 1676.¹²³⁹ Later the Swedes claimed that their tent had stood next to that of the Danish king.¹²⁴⁰ They also claimed that Krabbe became a favourite with the Danish king during the summer of 1676. Rosencrantz declared this accusation ridiculous since everyone knew that the Danish king had had Krabbe arrested on the suspicion of being a “good Swede”.¹²⁴¹ However this might be, the baron did not behave like a good Swede whilst in Landskrona (Landskrone) because he promptly communicated to the Danish authorities that Henning Olßen (Shipper Henning) had hidden away Spanish salt at a widow’s place in Landskrona (Landskrone) and that the salt belonged to Johan Eyer and Robert Tey.¹²⁴²

Nevertheless, it seems there were also serious doubts about Krabbe’s loyalty to Denmark. At one point, a major and seventy cavalymen picked him up from his home and “accompanied” him to the Danish headquarters at Kristianstad (Christianstad). For a couple of days Krabbe was kept a prisoner in this location, despite having obtained a Danish safeguard letter long before. Then he was brought to the Danish Army Camp where it was resolved that he should be taken (hostage) to Copenhagen.¹²⁴³ Fortunately his numerous connections on the Danish side managed to get him set free on condition that he give his word that he would not move from Krageholm (Krogholm). His wife had also written a petition to the Danish king that is

¹²³⁸ Rosencrantz, p.67.

¹²³⁹ Rosencrantz claimed that they only did so out of curiosity. They had not acted differently from many other “honorable cavaliers and foreign nations that take no personal interest in our war.” (p.69): ”at hand som mange andre fornemme Cavalliers oc fremmede Nationer, som uinteresseret i voris Krig var kommen offver alleene for den Kongl. Danske Armee oc Leyer at besee ved Slottens uformodelig hastig Ofvergang oc Erobring fuldte ind med aff Curiositet...”

¹²⁴⁰ See: p.65 and p.68 (quote) Rosencrantz denied the first charge and claimed that they had stayed with one of their tenants in the village of Hostad: “Bleffve de endelig foraarsaget at haffve deris Ophold i Närvärelsen hos en aff deris egne Bönder udi Hostad en Fierding Veys Fra Leyeren...”

¹²⁴¹ See: p.69: ”...Hans Kongl.Mayestet selff haffde ham i störste Suspicion for at være en god Svensk oc derfor lod hannem siden affhendte fra sin Gaard Krogholm oc fangen indfördte udi Christian-Stad.”

¹²⁴² Note from 4th August 1676 signed Jørgen Krabbe. 470 Generalkommissariatet 1674-1679 Krabbe-Kørbitz:1939, DRA.

¹²⁴³ Krabbe’s first instance, p.13. and the second p.100 in Aletophilus.

still to be found in the War College collections. It seems that Krabbe had asked to be permitted to plead his cause in the presence of the Danish king but that he had been denied that “grace”.¹²⁴⁴

Shortly after the battle of Lund on 6th December 1676, Jørgen Krabbe and Knud Thott asked the Swedish governor general for safeguard letters for their estates. Charles XI commented sourly that the two gentlemen had showed no signs of affection for Sweden until Denmark’s luck had turned.¹²⁴⁵ The Swedish authorities proclaimed that a Thanksgiving Service should be held in every church on 3rd January 1677 in order to celebrate the victory. Krabbe’s parson Corvinus sent the written order on to his colleagues in the surrounding parishes and then he celebrated the Thanksgiving service obediently enough.¹²⁴⁶ It was only that the Danish War Commissary Christoffer Lindenow followed up the Swedish order with a letter that said that each and every clergyman who celebrated the “fictitious victory” would soon end his days in a deplorable manner. Lindenow kindly asked the clergy to sign the letter in order to prove that they had partaken of its contents.¹²⁴⁷ Which Corvinus also did and sent it on to his colleagues as well. Because of this Corvinus was suspended from office and the new (Swedish) parson in Ystad (Ysted), Lacander, soon took over his place.

Early in 1677 Krabbe visited Governor General von Fersen in Malmö (Malmøe). During this visit Fersen told him that Corvinus had been denounced for having sent on a letter from the Danish authorities that forbade the Scanian clergy to celebrate “the fictitious victory” at Lund.¹²⁴⁸ On 19th January Fersen sent a report about the

¹²⁴⁴ p.70: Hvor fra hand icke uden andris intercession oc store Forbön bleff entlediget saa at hand icke engang erholt den Naade at tale med Hans Kongl. Mayestet aff Danmarck.

¹²⁴⁵ Cronholm, p.197.

¹²⁴⁶ Corvinus is listed under the name of Raffn/Ramm in the church registers at the village of Snårestad where he worked. Da. “raffn”, Sc. “ramm” means “raven” which is “corvus” in Latin. It was very common among Danish clergymen to translate their prosaic Danish names into Latin (cf. the common surname Kjær “marsh, bog” that became Paludan/us/.) Letter from Christoffer Corvinus to the clergy in the hundred of Herrested, Söfvested February 21, 1677 (sic!) The date must be wrong since Berro Glimager signed December 27 below), Breuer’s Second Intercession, 15th October, pp.85-86. Unfortunately, this letter seems to be corrupt.

¹²⁴⁷ Letter from Christofer Lindenow to the clergy in the hundred of Herrested, Christianstad December 29, 1676, Breuer’s Second Intercession, 15th October, pp.83-84.

¹²⁴⁸ Letter from Krabbe to Fersen, Krogholm 21st January 1677, Breuer’s Second Intercession 15th October 1677, pp.86-88.

general situation to the king.¹²⁴⁹ In it Fersen declared that the situation in Scania was very worrying. The inhabitants of the province were unreliable, and their minds were all inclined towards the Danish side. He felt how they grew in their “malice” every day and felt that soon there would be conspiracies going on everywhere. On 3rd January hardly any parishes had celebrated the Thanksgiving Service for the Swedes, but they had all gladly listened to a letter from the Danish king from 18th December that had been read out aloud in the churches. Corvinus had spread out this letter and another one from Meerheim “with great diligence”. Fersen sent over originals with Corvinus’s signature so that the king could see that he was telling the truth. He felt that something had to be seriously done about the matter. The first measure he proposed was to exchange the native clergy for Swedes. For this reason, the Swedish minister Magnus Lacander had been appointed vicar of Ystad (here: Ystedh). The bishop wanted Krabbe’s man (Corvinus) for the job, which was a bit of a problem but then Fersen suggested that bishop Winstrup would have to accept the presence of a vice-bishop of Swedish origins.¹²⁵⁰ If the Swedish bishop could procure able Swedish ministers for Scania then it would become so much easier to “combine and unite the nations with each other.”¹²⁵¹ After all the Danes did not employ any Norwegian ministers in Norway, or at least not very many, because the realm was safer that way. Norwegian men of the church were sent off to “Denmark and Jutland”. Finally, Fersen also proposed that a special tribunal (“*Judicium*”) against the snaphaner and other suspect people be instituted.

On 21st January Krabbe wrote a letter to Fersen in which he tried to explain the whole Corvinus affair in a favourable light. He sent over both the Swedish and the Danish circular letters and then he explained that Corvinus had only signed the one from Lindenow because it had been brought to him by a group of Danish soldiers that would have put the threat into effect if he had refused. Krabbe then stressed that Corvinus was one of the oldest and most virtuous clergymen in the hundred and, moreover, he was by far the best preacher. In his letter Krabbe also implied that maybe Corvinus even deserved being appointed vicar (prost). He obviously did not

¹²⁴⁹ Contrary to most of his little epistles in German that were written in his own handwriting, this four-page report was written in perfect Swedish and in what looks like different handwriting. Probably that of a scribe. Fersen grew up in the Baltic provinces and very rarely used Swedish.

¹²⁵⁰ Fersen also expressed his opinion that Winstrup was so old that it would be better for him to sit at home in peace and quiet during those few years that he might still have left.

¹²⁵¹ “till att combinera och föreena nationerna medh hvar andre...”

know that the Swede Lacander had already been appointed to the post. Fersen promptly replied that Krabbe had better stop insisting on this issue since it was highly unsuitable that other clergymen should depend upon a man who in the best of cases could be said to be neutral: “an honest Swedish man with all the required merits should not have to stand back for him.” Neutrality was something that could be conceived of but it was not accepted. Perhaps ordinary people could try and stand outside the conflict, but clergymen had to take sides since both sides required their services. Out of 104 parsons in the Scanian provinces 57 were reported as dead or missing after the war.¹²⁵² Krabbe’s actions in the Corvinius case would later be judged as an attempt to defend delinquents.¹²⁵³

Around this time Krabbe also went to visit the Swedish king who bestowed a baronetcy upon him, but Krabbe was far from enthusiastic. In a letter to his ex-bailiff and friend Hack Söfrenssön he described the events in the following manner:

“I returned from the King some days ago, all my wishes were granted. I was allowed to keep Höegesteedh, I was granted a tax exemption for Kroegholm, Ingildstrup was also exempted and will be classified as my other farms, against my will I had to accept the title of baron and other great Royal Promises...”¹²⁵⁴

Sometime during the winter of 1676-77 Krabbe’s brother-in-law Knud Thott was “abducted” by the Danes. The Danish authorities declared that the abduction had taken place very much against Knud Thott’s will. Knud stayed nice and calm in his arrest in Lands Crone and then went to Funen.¹²⁵⁵

At the beginning of February Krabbe came to the governor general with a letter from the king that was dated 6th February. In it the king asked Fersen to try to clear up any problems that Krabbe might have with other people: “wann Krabbe einige wirdt beschuldigen können, die ihm übel nachgeredet haben, dieselben für mich besheyden undt der grund ihrer beschuldigung vernehmen...”¹²⁵⁶ So far the only one who had had anything to say about Krabbe was Colonel Sehested who had complained that Krabbe was a “good Swede” and had told everyone how much he hated Krabbe and that once he had let his regiment surround Krabbe’s mansion so that he had been closed in.

¹²⁵² M. Weibull, *Skånska samlingar, II Till Skånes historia under övergångstiden 1658-1710, Skånska kriget och snapphanefejden 1676-1679*: 4. http://www.ra.se//lla/dokument/v_1871/II_1_4.html

¹²⁵³ Breuer’s Second Intercession, 15th October, p.73: ”Mindre war dhett tienlige, at een reedelige och wel meriterat Svensk Mand, för hannom skulle tillbaka sättias...”

¹²⁵⁴ Kroegholm, 27th January 1677, From Krabbe to Hack Söfrenssön, see “Excerpts”.

¹²⁵⁵ Letter from Knud Thott to Sperling, 19th May 1678, in Rosencrantz (1679), pp.18-23.

¹²⁵⁶ Fersen to the king, 19th February 1677, GG, SRA.

However, Krabbe was worried that the Swedes might be questioning his loyalty. On 27th February he wrote to his Swedish friend Bent Rosenhane in order to ask him to try and find out whether the king gave credit to the rumours that someone was spreading about Krabbe in court circles. It appears from the letter that someone was accusing Krabbe of being “an unfaithful subject” that had committed offences against his lord and king.¹²⁵⁷ In May Fersen asked Krabbe if “Mogens Hacksøn”¹²⁵⁸ was in his service and if it was true that Krabbe had helped him to a position as a Danish tax-collector (Crone fouget). Krabbe replied that Hacksøn was the son of his one-time steward, but he was not working for him. Krabbe emphasised that he had never helped anyone into the service of the Danes.¹²⁵⁹

The Thott-Krabbe clan were losing credibility among the Swedes. Young Tage Thott was frozen out from Swedish court circles in spite of his occupying a position as page-boy (“kammerherre”).¹²⁶⁰ After the battle of Lund Tage’s friends in the Swedish army told him he had better get out of there as soon as possible because some people were spreading really nasty rumours about him. The Thotts and Krabbe were considered a potential hazard to the security of the realm, in part because they had close relatives on the other side. Krabbe’s brother Tage had remained there from the beginning. His sister Karen’s husband Just Høgh was first governor of Norway and then Denmark’s ambassador at the Nimwegen conference. Krabbe’s other brother-in-law Jørgen Due was an important government minister. Some of Krabbe’s friends from his childhood immediately opted for the Danes when the war started and then received important positions in the Danish war administration in Scania. The Thotts had even more connections to the other side. No matter how many times they pledged faith there would still be people who wondered whether they had chatted one word too much to their friends and relatives. Since it was enough to keep in touch with one’s connections on the other side to be classified as a traitor it is also clear that there were plenty of reasons for people to spread rumours about the Thotts and Krabbe even

¹²⁵⁷ Letter from Krabbe to Baron Bent Rosenhane, Krogholm 27th February 27, 1677, (copy), DRA: ”indtil såå lenge Jag nogensinde kand offerbevisas at haffva Committeret noget mod min aller nådigste herre och konge som en otrogen undersaatte...”

¹²⁵⁸ In other sources this man’s name is spelt “Mons Hacksen” or “Mons Hacksøn”.

¹²⁵⁹ Krabbe, in Aletophilus, p.139. Mons Hacksøn was considered a “snaphane” by the Swedes.

¹²⁶⁰ Rosencrantz (1679), p.46: ”Saa snart hand effter Slaget for Lund underdanigst indstillede sig som før er ommeldt hos Hans Kongelig Mayestet aff Sverrig møtte hannem der Truseler oc haarde ord...” He had encountered similar reactions already when the Swedish king left Malmö in the early summer of that year (1676).

when they were still officially on the Swedish side. During the spring Swedish troops were billeted at Krageholm (Krogholm) and the surrounding farms. One of the Swedes was a quarter master by the name of Lorens Basch. Krabbe wrote to Fersen to complain of the situation:

“Words aren’t enough to describe our miserable and piteous situation. We are given prey to the enemy and our own side plunder and steal all that we own: horses, cows, and everything that is kept in chests and boxes, especially from the peasants. Your Excellency can judge for Himself what the effects are on people’s thoughts and affections. Tonight, Christian Bilde and his wife, my niece, who is pregnant and expecting any day now, had to escape from their home and take refuge at my place since our people (the Swedish troops) were pillaging their home. They took his oxen and told him that they were going to put the house on fire.”¹²⁶¹

On 25th May the troops left Krageholm (Krogholm).¹²⁶² During this distressful period Krabbe was forced to pay 10.000 *rigsdaler* in contributions to both sides. Considering that an average aristocrat in Denmark made 20.000 a year at the time of the cession of the Scanian provinces it is easy to understand that he found it hard to manage the situation.¹²⁶³ Christian Bilde and Arill Swawe wrote similar letters of complaint to the Governor General. When Fersen received Swawe’s letter from 4th April he brusquely wrote “Dieser Brief soll mir verwahret werden und alle von derselben Natur, so noch einkommen werden” at the back of it.¹²⁶⁴

In June 1677 the heads of the Scanian noble families were ordered to meet up in Malmö (Malmøe). The order was issued by Fersen shortly before his untimely death on 30th June 30.¹²⁶⁵ Unfortunately the snaphaner got hold of the first batch of letters so the order had to be repeated. This order is to be found in 12 copies among the Intercepted Letters: all signed by Fersen and worded slightly differently depending on whom the addressee was. The most personal version was the one that was meant for Krabbe. The other eleven letters were addressed to the rest of the cream of the crop of the Scanian nobility, including some Swedish newcomers.¹²⁶⁶ Since this batch of

¹²⁶¹ Cronholm, p.199. During this period the Swedes were laying waste the border areas in the north, but it seems from Krabbe’s letters that they were also using tough methods in the south.

¹²⁶² Aletophilus, p.18.

¹²⁶³ Cronholm, p.198.

¹²⁶⁴ Swawe’s letter and Fersen’s comment are printed in M. Weibull, *Skånska samlingar, II Till Skånes historia under övergångstiden 1658-1710, Skånska kriget och snapphanefejden 1676-1679: 4.*

http://www.ra.se/lla/dokument/v_1871/II_1_4.html

¹²⁶⁵ Sperling later commented that the only noble families that were left by that time were those around Ystad so that was why the order was only sent out to them. See the section on Sperling’s *Deduction*. Fersen was wounded in the head during the Danish assault on Malmö on June 25 and 26 and died some days later.

¹²⁶⁶ Intercepted letters.

letters is to be found in the Danish National Archives today it must have been picked up by snaphaner too. It is unclear whether Fersen found out that another dispatch had been lost and had the letters written again or whether they were sent out in duplicate from the beginning. The same order was then repeated for the third time by Fersen's successor Jöran Sperling. The decision to deport the nobility was triggered by the snaphaner/friskytter that blocked the roads and threatened to kill anyone who tried to obey the orders of the governor general and go to Malmö (Malmøe). Or perhaps, the snaphaner/friskytter provided the nobility with a plausible excuse not to go. Sperling often claimed that all Scanians followed their leader Krabbe and the rest of the nobility. Passive resistance was a problem that had to be dealt with too. All castles and mansions were to be cleared out in order to leave space for Swedish troops that would turn them into strongholds from where the snaphaner could be fought more efficiently.

Conclusions:

Although some people apparently found it easier to take sides than others, there are often strong incentives involved in the choice making. Hindrich Peersøn for one was obviously very happy about the opportunity to become a "foged", else he would not have waved the certificate at his former (?) boss. Danish sovereignty offered him opportunities that perhaps would have been harder to come at under Swedish rule. It could also be added that being an inborn Dane constituted an obstacle to making a career in the administration under the Swedes and that consequently, since it was not so to the Danes, it was easy enough for people like Hindrich Peersøn to identify with that side. Krabbe vacillated, but his aims in life were also completely different. He was middle-aged and it is doubtful whether he by now wanted to do something else other than running his estates in Scania. It seems as if that was his main aim, but we cannot be sure. Knud Thott was "abducted" by Danish troops around this time and later he made a splendid career in the civil administration and the closest circles around the king of Denmark. Maybe that was also still an option for Krabbe. What is evident in the sources is that from after the battle of Lund onwards the Krabbe-Thott family were beginning to feel discredited by the Swedes and Krabbe seemed convinced that he was being slandered in certain circles. Even his youngest brother-in-law, Tage Thott was brusquely dismissed from the Swedish court where he was then a page boy, for no better reason than that he was Danish. In this sense, the

nobility and gentry were being driven towards the Danish camp by Swedish suspicions and perhaps also by the hope of career opportunities they felt they had been bereft of under Swedish rule. Fabricius saw the decision to deport the nobility as a tactical move on the side of the Swedes: principally it was seen as an element in the war on the snaphaner but also as a way of getting rid of the nobility and gentry that (according to Fabricius) were seen as very dangerous in their ostentatious passivity.

The Abduction of Basch and Klingspor

“...offentlig bekiender for dig min gode Gud, at jeg er en gieldbunden og grow synder, der icke alleniste er fød og undfangen i synden; men end og saa der udi min gandske lifs tiid fremdraget hawer, og fortørnet min gode Gud og herre, i mange maader, med tanker, ord og gierninger...”¹²⁶⁷

Introduction

This section analyses the workings of the friskytte/snaphane organisation on Krabbe's lands and in the closest surroundings. It also concentrates on the connections between Krabbe and the persons who were considered by the Swedes to be snaphaner, and of whom at least some almost certainly were Danish friskytter. During this period, it was not very clear who ruled over that part of Scania and so the people in the area found themselves at the mercy of the authorities and troops of both countries.

Tax collectors and Snaphaner

In July 1677 the Swedish king had his headquarters at Rönneberga near Landskrona (Landskrone). On the 18th of that month Colonel Bernt Mellin sent his quartermaster Lorens Basch to collect debts and war contributions in the Ystad (Ysted) area where the regiment had been stationed two months earlier. In his company Basch had two other quartermasters of lower rank, a physician and at least one groom.¹²⁶⁸

The day after Basch arrived at Krageholm (Krogholm). He promptly communicated his orders to the baron who answered in the following terms: “I cannot do anything about that. The enemy has taken everything. If the King does not want to defend us, then we cannot give any contributions.” Basch demanded either a written statement or payment, but the baron replied: “I will have to think about that until tomorrow” and asked where Basch was heading for. No witnesses were present. Then Krabbe asked Basch how he had dared travel straight through the hundred of Färs (Fers) that was

¹²⁶⁷ Jørgen Krabbe's prayer-book, p.22.

¹²⁶⁸ Lorens Basch's petition to General Sperling, 1678, Lit A in Rosencrantz. They had been absent since May 25 See: Basch's court statement, 8th October 1677, in Aletophilus, p.18.

infested with snaphaner. At which Basch confidently replied: “I fought courageously with them and shot one or two and then I burnt a farmstead to the ground!”¹²⁶⁹

Basch told the baron about the recent battle of Landskrona (here: Lands Crone). He described it in the following terms: “...on the Danish left flank they behaved like dogs and we had no choice but to slaughter the Infantry like so many piglets.”¹²⁷⁰ Then Basch said that he would be kind to Krabbe’s peasants but that he would have to exact some money from the peasants in the village where he had been assigned night quarters. He declared that he would be back in two days’ time and said good-bye. That night Basch stayed at Kiöppinge.¹²⁷¹

Meanwhile Krabbe had received a new visitor: one of his mother-in-law’s farmhands who had come down from her estate Sövdeborg (Söfvde) some 13 kilometres north of Krageholm (Krogholm). This servant reported that the snaphaner had paid them an unexpected visit and that they had asked if they had seen any Swedes. Krabbe supposed it was Basch they were after since he knew that Basch had visited the bailiff (fougde) of Munkasjö (Munke-Siø) that was very close to Sövdeborg (Söfvde).¹²⁷² Krabbe also knew that Basch had been telling people that he was going to Tosterup (Taastrup) to collect taxes. That same evening 60 snaphaner passed Krogholm on their way to Tosterup (Taastrup). Halfway there they stopped at what had used to be Krabbe’s estate Höggestad (Høgested) where they met Krabbe’s garden boy from Tosterup (Taastrup) and a boy whom Tage Thott had apprenticed to Krabbe’s gamekeeper.¹²⁷³ The snaphaner asked for Basch and then they all rode on to Tosterup (Taastrup) castle to look for him. The snaphaner knew that he was either at Tosterup (Taastrup) or Bollerup (Bullarp). They turned the place upside down in their quest but all they found was Rasmus the bailiff (“ladufoged”) in bed. Then they ate and drank beer and eventually Rasmus joined them too. It is unclear what the role of the boys and Rasmus was.

¹²⁶⁹ Krabbe’s first court statement (inlägg), 5th October 1677, in Aletophilus, p.11. Basch’s court statement, 8th October 1677, in Aletophilus, p.19: ”aldrigh nembde Hr. Baronen eller hans Fouget noget Ordh til migh om Snaphannerne. ”

¹²⁷⁰ Basch’s letter of 9th October 1677, in Aletophilus, p. 21: ”...de uppå den Dankse vänstre Fliglen hølle sigh som Hundsvutter, det var intet annat for os at giörra end stiche Infanteriet ihiel som Grussar...”

¹²⁷¹ Lorens Basch’s Petition (supplique) to General Sperling, 1678, Lit A in Rosencrantz.

¹²⁷² Krabbe, in Aletophilus, p.105. Krabbe claimed he had wanted to warn Basch. Krabbe’s mother-in-law was Dorthe (Dorette) Rosencrantz.

¹²⁷³ ”min Urte-Dreng fra Taastrup och een liden Jeger Pog som min Svoger Tage Tott hafde saat udi Lære hos min Skytte.” Krabbe to Sperling, 2nd Sept. 1677, in Sperling’s *Deduction*, p.31. Tage Thott was the proprietor of Erichsholm (Trolleholm).

On 20th July Basch went to Glemminge-Tågarp (Glimminge Tuggerup) to see court bailiff (“tingfougen”) Christen Nielsen.¹²⁷⁴ Meanwhile Krabbe’s peasants had come to him complaining that Basch wanted 3 pounds of bread, 2 pounds of meat and 2 *daler* in silver or 5 silver *mark* from every farmstead. Krabbe knew that his peasants had already paid the Danes that month and that most of their cattle had been confiscated so he decided to send his bailiff Christopher over to try and placate Basch.¹²⁷⁵ Christopher arrived around noon and told Basch that the baron sent his greetings and wanted to know if there was any way his tenants might be exempted from transport duties: they were so busy with the harvest that they could not transport victuals to the army camp. The bailiff also told Basch that the baron promised to pay his debts and that he would come and visit Basch the day after if Basch would only let him know where he was to be found. Basch then told his men where they were going, and he did so while at dinner with Christopher. The Swedish party was to split up into three groups that would spend the night in separate places about 2 Swedish miles apart. He himself was heading for Bollerup (Bullarp). Later on, Basch would explain that he had let the bailiff know where they were going because he thought “the baron would behave like an honest Swedish man towards me.”¹²⁷⁶ Christopher then went to tell the peasants that they would have to have 5 marks ready for the following day.¹²⁷⁷ On his way back Christopher bumped into a group of snaphaner who asked him who he was and where he had been. Christopher told them that he was Baron Krabbe’s bailiff and that he had been to see Quarter master Basch to try and work out a tax deal with him. Now he was on his way back to his master to see what he had to say and the following morning he would have to return to Basch. The snaphaner then ordered Christopher to lead them to Basch and he agreed.

That same night when Basch was sleeping “like a log” Christopher and Rasmus arrived in the company of 66 snaphaner. At the same time the other two groups of

¹²⁷⁴ The same man is called Nilsson in Rosencrantz (who might have been quoting Basch), Nielsön in Breuer (Second instance p.61). Probably Nielsön was the original since all local judges were Danish until 1683. Contrary to many other native public servants they were not discharged at an early stage since they were experts on Scanian Law. It was only when Swedish law was introduced in 1683 that these local judges were replaced by Swedes. See: Alf Erlandsson, pp.154-155 and p.165: the “tingsfogde” or “herredsfoged” was an “amateur” judge without schooling, normally a farmer who presided the “häradsting” the court of each hundred. Some of these local judges were analphabets.

¹²⁷⁵ Krabbe’s Response to the Prosecutor, 9th October 1677, p.45.

¹²⁷⁶ Basch’s court statement, 8th October 1677, in Aletophilus, pp.17-18.

¹²⁷⁷ Krabbe’s Response to the Prosecutor, 9th October 1677, p.46.

Swedes were surprised by snaphaner accompanied by “Krabbe’s men”.¹²⁷⁸ The snaphaner surrounded Bollerup (Bullarp) castle and went in and caught Basch, a physician,¹²⁷⁹ two quarter masters and two grooms. The victims were stripped of both clothes and belongings. Later Basch would claim that it was Krabbe’s two bailiffs who had led the troop with guns in their belts and that the two of them had made a prisoner of him with the words: ”*Du Schwedscher Hund, nu wollen wir dich prüglen!*”.¹²⁸⁰ Rasmus also told Basch that the misery he found himself in now was a punishment for all the times he had beaten the vice-bailiff black and blue for no reason.¹²⁸¹ Then they brought one of the grooms into the courtyard and shot him.¹²⁸² Meanwhile some other snaphaner were torturing Basch in order to try and make him tell them where the rest of his money was.¹²⁸³ The snaphaner told Basch that he was only getting what he deserved for having said that the Danish soldiers cried like piglets when they died.¹²⁸⁴ Some of the men wanted to shoot Basch but the Lieutenant who was in charge took the Swede under his wings and brought him inside the castle. After that the two bailiffs took their leave of the snaphaner and all the time they were whispering and chattering along. Then the snaphaner invigorated themselves with 3 tuns of beer and set off for Kiöppinge. Once there they sat about and waited for further orders from the bailiffs. At 10 in the morning, they set off in the direction of Krageholm (Krogholm) but on the way they met one of Krabbe’s servants who called General Major Hans Walther’s sharpshooter¹²⁸⁵ who was in charge of the vanguard

¹²⁷⁸ Basch’s Petition to Sperling, in Aletophilus, Lit.A.. Basch’s court statement, 8th October 1677, in Aletophilus, p.18.

¹²⁷⁹ In Krabbe’s first court statement (5th October 1677 in Aletophilus, p.10) he claimed that Basch was caught by the snaphaner at Taastrop. Since Bollerup is the place that is mentioned in all other sources even by Krabbe I have chosen to consider this as a mistake. Taastrop (Tosterup) and Bollerup are only a few kilometres distant from each other.

¹²⁸⁰ “You Swedish dog now you’ll get a good beating”. Krabbe’s first court statement (inlägg), 5th October 1677, in Aletophilus. It is interesting that the Danes spoke to the Swedes in German. The general view is that (Low-) German was only used when one of the interlocutors was a native German speaker. Just like today, Swedes and Danes tended to speak their own languages to each other or to turn it into Scandinavian pidgin. Stig Örjan Ohlsson (1979, pp.38-41) emphasises the fact that German was spoken to some extent even among the lower classes in Scania and that German might also have been used when native speakers of that language were not involved.

¹²⁸¹ Krabbe’s first court statement (inlägg), 5th October 1677, in Aletophilus.: ”all dend Ulycke som du nu hafver er for det du hug mig blodig oc prögdele mig uden Aarsag.” Obviously, on the side of the bailiffs it was a question of personal grudges.

¹²⁸² Breuer called this man a cavalryman (“ryttare”). See: Breuer’s second instance, 15th October, in Aletophilus, p.63.

¹²⁸³ Please note that this is according to Basch’s own account.

¹²⁸⁴ According to Basch. See: Basch’s letter of 8th October 1677, in Aletophilus, p.21.

¹²⁸⁵ “General Major Hans Walthers Skötte”. The term ‘skötte’ is vague; literally it means ‘shooter’. It was sometimes used to indicate gamekeepers, sometimes to indicate sharpshooters. In case this man

and cried: “Hurry up! We just had a visit from Captain Klingspor and he has just left for Marsvinsholm! Ride faster so that you can get him too!” The six best horsemen were sent in the direction of Marsvinsholm, while the rest of the *snappaner* split up in two troops. The first of these brought the prisoners to Krageholm (Krogholm) and the others surrounded the village of Årsjö.¹²⁸⁶

Klingspor had arrived at Ystad the day before and that same morning he set out for Krageholm (Krogholm) some 11 kilometres to the northwest. When Klingspor was told that the baron had gone to the Marsvinsholm estate he went after him.¹²⁸⁷ At Marsvinsholm Klingspor was met by the squire, Holger Thott and his brother-in-law Krabbe. The three of them were taking a walk in the fruit-gardens when a group of *snappaner* fell on them. All of sudden, Thott and Krabbe were nowhere to be found. Klingspor was captured and his groom shot on the spot. Krabbe’s garden boy and Tage Thott’s gamekeeper’s lad were both there. Then the *snappaner* took their latest prisoner with them and set off for Krageholm (Krogholm) to divide their booty. Meanwhile Krabbe had materialised and hurried after the *snappaner* to try and buy the lives of the prisoners. He offered the *snappaner* money in exchange for Basch’s life and they accepted it.¹²⁸⁸ There were 8 *snappaner* to every man at his house so that he and his men stood no chance.¹²⁸⁹ The prisoners were then taken to Kristianstad (Christianstad) where they were registered officially as prisoners of war. Later Krabbe would claim that he had sent a report to Fersen immediately. Unfortunately, no such report was to be found in the Swedish archives when the trial started. What is sure is that on 2nd September Krabbe reported to Governor General Sperling that the *snappaner* had forced some of his men to participate in the kidnapping of Basch and Klingspor.¹²⁹⁰ In the same letter Krabbe reported that he had already written to War Commissary Svend Erlandsson in order to ask him if he

was a sharpshooter then he would constitute a connection to the regular army. General Major Walther was killed in the battle of Tirup on 14th July 1677. See: Jensen, p.275.

¹²⁸⁶ Interrogation of the two *snappaner* Jöns Ottosson and Henrik Jönsson, Ystad, 27th February 1678, Letters to the governor general, Landsarkivet, Lund, quoted by Johnsson, pp.128-131. Ottosson admitted to having made part of the rearguard when Klingspor was caught, i.e., he and some others were left behind at Årsjö. He denied having participated in the attack in the woods outside Ystad. That night he had been with Henrik Jönsson in Ystad. Unfortunately, Jönsson told the court contrariwise.

¹²⁸⁷ Krabbe’s first court statement (inlägg), 5th October 1677, in Aletophilus.

¹²⁸⁸ Krabbe’s first court statement (inlägg), 5th October 1677, in Aletophilus, p.12.

¹²⁸⁹ Krabbe’s response to the Prosecutor, 9th October 1677, in Aletophilus, p.50. This means that there must have been 8 or 9 grown men at Krageholm (Krogholm).

¹²⁹⁰ Breuer’s Second Instance, 15th October, p. 61 and Extract Nr XII.

had any idea of whether any of Krabbe's men "had done something they should not have." This was when Sven Erlandsson had visited the Krageholm (Krogholm) area and had held an "inquisition" there.¹²⁹¹

Conclusions

In this case the actions of the snaphaner were carefully planned. Someone saw to it that they could attack the Swedish party in three different places contemporaneously. Probably the same people or the same network that had enabled them to follow Basch's footsteps that closely. There was also some degree of military discipline and a lieutenant whose commands were obeyed. There was a vanguard and the leader of it had some sort of connection to the regular army (General Major Hans Walther). These men were not enemies of the peasant community around them, most of them belonged to it themselves. Let us assume that Basch was telling the truth. Then we would have an estate where the lord of the manor was keeping an eye closed to the fact that a not insignificant part of his employees was participating in anti-Swedish activities. These employees occupied all sorts of ranks from bailiff to garden-boy. The anti-Swedish activities ranged from regular jobs in the Danish army to passive support of the Danes (proved by laughing at captive Swedes etc). In this latter kind of support women were involved too.

Krabbe's account of the evening after Basch's visit offers us some interesting information about the snaphaner. They had crossed the plains and woodlands of the hundreds of Torna and Färs (Torne and Fers) and seemed to be fairly well-informed. They were after Swedes and were not interested in bothering rich old ladies about anything but information (in this case at least). Since their numbers corresponded to the average for a company and military grades were used among them it can be assumed that it really was a (registered?) company. They had a clear scope for their actions and were not out to kidnap anyone in their way with a fat purse. The story as we have it is the one that Krabbe was told by his people, and it is the only version we have. Perhaps they actually did tell the truth. As we have already seen in the preceding chapter, the snaphaner were wont to drag people along by force when they

¹²⁹¹ Breuer's Second Instance, 15th October, p. 65, and Extract Nr XII., and Krabbe, Aletophilus, p.128. This notice provides us with yet more information on Sven Erlandsson's tasks during the Scanian War. Krabbe's account shows that by mid-1677 Erlandsson was travelling around making inquiries into the state of things on the noble estates and he was obviously meant to keep account of whether there were any snaphaner. It is interesting that Krabbe at least pretended that Erlandsson might know more about Krabbe's own employees and tenants than Krabbe did himself.

had orders to do so, and many witnesses claim they did so in very arbitrary cases too. Most people who were accused of having been with the *snaphaner* defended themselves by saying that they had been dragged along by force. But if it was a well-known fact that that was their *modus operandi*, people who had joined the *snaphaner* willingly were likely to proffer it as an excuse when they were caught. Naturally, it was a comfortable excuse but in order to sound plausible it must also have been an excuse that seemed realistic. Krabbe's excuses to the Swedish authorities also show that he used one of the most common clichés to explain to the Swedes why oneself or someone else one cared for had been sighted or caught in the company of *snaphaner*: i.e., that this person had been shanghaied or at least forced very much against his own will.

There is no way of knowing whether the two boys and Rasmus were forced to ride along with the *snaphaner* or whether they had been *snaphaner* all along. My scope here is to analyse the *snaphane* movement against the background of a pseudo-feudal society like that of Krabbe's estates around Ystad (Ysted). It makes no difference to this aspect of the analysis whether the *snaphaner* in question were impressed or not. To judge by the actions of Krabbe's men during the two days in July when the Basch and Klingspor were kidnapped, they were neither reluctant nor unwilling to fight. To tell the truth, they did not seem unprepared to fight either, considering that they were all armed to the teeth from the beginning. The garden boy had pistols and knives hanging from his saddle and his friend had a huge rifle. Admittedly, those were days when one could not feel safe even in one's own home. Most men were armed and not only with knives, but not as heavily armed as Krabbe's men on this particular night. Moreover, these men had neither tried to escape nor to stay in the back rows. On the contrary, they had all taken active part in the action. Christopher was said to have used his rapier as enthusiastically as any of the *snaphaner* and all the witnesses heard by the court agreed that he had eaten and drunk and been as merry as any of the *snaphaner* after their "feat." Christopher himself admitted that the two boys had gone on a nightly raid with some of the *snaphaner* and that they had been in the best of moods and very merry when they returned. Rasmus insisted that the *snaphaner* had dragged him out of bed and into the night was accused of taking command. In any case it was not him but the lieutenant who won the day when the destiny of the prisoners was to be decided upon. Rasmus wanted to do away with the Swedes, but the lieutenant would not let him because they had to act honourably. This fact

indicates that the lieutenant of the snaphaner did invest some authority over them all. Besides the lieutenant is the only member of the original group of snaphaner that is mentioned as an individual. With the possible addition of the sharpshooter who led the vanguard. As for those of Krabbe's men who partook in the actions one was his estate manager (steward), another one his bailiff, one was a sixteen-year-old gardener's assistant, another one was Krabbe's gamekeeper's apprentice. Krabbe's previous steward, now a Danish Crown Bailiff, was also involved. At least one fifth of Krabbe's servants helped the snaphaner as informers or scouts. There could be no doubts as to Rasmus's actions being voluntary or not. It is obvious that he did not mind partaking in the action. Perhaps because it gave him a chance to get personal revenge. Basch had given him a good thrashing on at least one earlier occasion, and this was Rasmus's chance of getting his own. To him, Basch was not only a dog but a Swedish dog. This is one occasion where we can see how national identities were used to acerbate pre-existing conflicts even on a personal plane. Rasmus would probably have loathed any tax-collector who took advantage of his power in order to mistreat other people. But it seems as if he loathed Basch even more because he was Swedish. And not only Rasmus, because Basch claimed that he had been "tortured" by a group of snaphaner who wanted to make him suffer for having spoken derisively of Danish soldiers. Perhaps they too had personal quarrels with tax-collectors, soldiers that they had had as lodgers, officials that had acted in a way they were not used to or even abused them physically. Representatives of a central state and system that were new to the country and used methods that were not the same as the good old ways. Officials and soldiers that, after all, spoke a different language and therefore did not even sound the way representatives of the king should sound. Men like Basch. The conflict was there, and national identities crystallised around it. Perhaps men like Rasmus would not even have thought about the nationality of a cruel tax-collector if it had all happened twenty years earlier when Scania was still part of the heartland of Denmark. It would simply have been the matter of a "bastard" that needed to be marked and so they would have sneaked up on him one dark night anyway. But the Swedish occupation and the ravages of the consequent war had made things different. The existence of the snaphaner made things very different for they provided Rasmuss with an opportunity for his personal vendetta at the same time as he could lash out against the Swedes in general. All within the limits of the law if one was a Dane. Why did the snaphaner shoot the grooms right away? Perhaps it was a pecuniary question.

They knew someone would be willing to pay for the lives of men like Basch and Klingspor, but no one would want the grooms. The lieutenant also knew that he might gain some merit by bringing Basch and Klingspor to the war commissariat at Kristianstad (Christianstad) but the grooms would only be a burden to them.

As for the local community, people seemed to be afraid of the snaphaner: Dorthe Rosencrantz quickly sent a messenger to warn her son-in-law Krabbe of the snaphaner, nobody dared stand up against the snaphaner or tried to stop them. This latter fact could also be interpreted as tacit consent. Perhaps the local community did not mind if Basch got a good beating, and his followers were killed. Perhaps they were all the happier if some Swedes had to bite the dust. But once the trial in Malmö (Malmøe) had started it was not impossible at all to find witnesses who were willing to testify about both this and that even if it would cost Krabbe and his men their lives. In its turn this fact indicates that perhaps there were those who would have stood up for Basch and the Swedes if they had dared to challenge the snaphaner. One might only wonder whether Jytte Thott and the other women at Krageholm (Krogholm) really laughed their heads off at the sight of Basch in chains or whether they cried their eyes out at the shame of it as Jytte's loving husband claimed. Some months ago, I stood there on the ramp where the drawbridge used to be and looked up at the windows of the "frustua" right above me. The frustua was the ladies' parlour where the mistress of the house used to spend her days with her maids. I stood there on the gravel of the driveway and looked at some bits and pieces of Swedish cannons that were lying about there. There is no frustua anymore. And yet I looked up at the windows and thought well, this is what Basch saw when he was brought here by the snaphaner, that is where they sat. So, what did he see, smiling faces or bitter tears? Or was it even so that the ladies were sly enough to turn their laughter into tears when the baron arrived? As we will see later, Jytte Thott's chamber maid Anne Andersdatter was very close friends with a notorious snaphane. So, it seems rather odd that at least Anne should have cried at the sight of a group of triumphant snaphaner. It would not be so odd if Krabbe tried to protect his wife. He knew that she would have a hard time of it trying to prove that she was on the right side once she was on her own, as he suspected she would be.

In any case it is quite clear that the snaphaner who were involved in this action were also normal members of the local community. In the case of Walter's employee, it is

not clear whether he still kept his position or whether he had become a full-time snaphane/friskytt. The latter option is the most probable one in case he had come with the troop all the way from Torna (Torne). The members of registered companies worked full time and their activities ranged all over the province. In this case they went a considerable distance. From the hundred of Torna (Torne) and perhaps beyond, to Krageholm (Krogholm) and to Kristianstad (Christianstad). Another gamekeeper who was involved was Krabbe's who had stowed away the booty, as the Swedes were to discover.

Basch's Complaint against Krabbe

"I always ran the greatest risk because of their continuous threats, which God the Almighty and the whole of my neighbourhood know to be true." Jørgen Krabbe on the "snaphaner" in his prayer book.

Introduction

In this section I will analyse the events that led up to Krabbe's arrest, both on a micro level and on a macro level in that coincidences and personal grudges certainly played as big a role as the greater political events that were the background of both Krabbe's arrest and execution. Some of the motives for Krabbe's death can be traced to the events that resulted from the deportation order. Krabbe's choices and actions can only be understood against the background of the "threat" of involuntary exile in the north. For that reason, I will try to analyse what the prospect of that exile really meant to him and the people around him. The decision to deport the nobility was triggered by the snaphaner/friskytter who blocked the roads and threatened to kill anyone who tried to obey the orders of the governor general and go to Malmö (Malmøe). Or perhaps, the snaphaner/friskytter provided the nobility with a plausible excuse (for when it really mattered, they would let them go where they liked anyway). Either way the operations of the snaphaner/friskytter were crucial. This is also an excellent opportunity to study the role the snaphaner/friskytter played as emissaries of the Danish king.

"A Highly Useful Emigration"

The deportation plans were proceeding. At this point the snaphaner sent out a troop of about 100 men to guard the road between Ystad (Ysted) and Malmö (Malmøe) that most of the noblemen would have to take to obey Sperling's orders. They also sent a message to Krabbe that said that they would shoot him to death in his own parlour if

he set out for Malmö (Malmøe). The other noblemen were kindly informed that if they left, their estates would be plundered and their families killed.¹²⁹² Krabbe, the Thotts, Christian Bilde and Arild Swawe¹²⁹³ then sent a petition directly to the king of Sweden in which they pleaded their cause. Then they wrote a letter to the same purpose to Sperling in which they also congratulated him on his having been appointed Governor General: “since you are a man who, for a long time, has been known by everyone in this land to be sensible, generous and reasonable enough to be our friend, benefactor and patron.” Fabricius commented dryly that that kind of incense was wasted on Sperling.¹²⁹⁴ Only a few days later the noblemen received a brusque answer¹²⁹⁵ to the point that they and their families would have to go to Sweden with no further delay and that they would be convoyed by Swedish troops. If they did not meet up in Malmö (Malmø) on 3rd September they would be in deep trouble.¹²⁹⁶ At this point another missive was sent to the Governor General, in which the noblemen declared that Sven Erlandsson had promised to convoy them all from Marsvinsholm castle to Malmö (Malmøe) but that he and his men had failed to turn up. Now the area was swamped with snaphaner that were threatening to murder their families if they left so they could no longer risk it.¹²⁹⁷ King Charles let them know that he would send a troop to Krageholm (Krogholm) that would convoy them to “old Sweden” on 6th October.¹²⁹⁸ At this news first Christian Bilde and then Jørgen Krabbe set out for Malmö (Malmøe) to try and persuade the governor general. On 25th Sperling reported to the king that Krabbe had come to town on behalf “of the whole bunch” (the nobility) in order to appeal for a change of policy so that they would not have to set out on the “journey” that had been planned for them.¹²⁹⁹ The situation in Malmö (Malmøe) was so troublesome that Sperling asked the king for help because he feared that Krabbe might win the day else. In the same letter Sperling reported that

¹²⁹² See: p.72: ”dersom Adelen reyste ind i Malmøe ville de ruinere oc affbrände alle deris Adelige Gaarder oc afplyndre alt hvis der fandtis oc deris Fruer oc Börn dräbe oc omkomme.”

¹²⁹³ The same surname was spelt “Schuaue” by Sir Mogens of Oretorp. The modern version would be “Svab”. “Schuaue” and “Swawe” were pronounced identically.

¹²⁹⁴ Fabricius III: p.122.

¹²⁹⁵ Aletophilus called it “harsh and relentless” (haardt oc ubarmhiertigt), p.72.

¹²⁹⁶ Fabricius III: p.122.

¹²⁹⁷ Fabricius III: p.122.

¹²⁹⁸ Fabricius III: p.124. Sperling seemed to consider 1st October the departure day. See his letter to the king from 29th September 1677, GG, SRA.

¹²⁹⁹ It is rather telling that Sperling calls the nobility “the whole bunch” here. Normally it was the word he used to describe the snaphaner. It could also be translated as “horde.” If this postscript is dated correctly then the dates should be changed. It means that the prisoners arrived on 24th September and that Krabbe had been at Sperling’s place or office that evening.

something had happened at his place the night before. Krabbe had come over to plead the cause of the nobility. In front of Sperling and several other of His Majesty's servants Krabbe protested his loyalty and sincerity towards His Majesty "as he was wont to do" and then "he exclaimed that he wished to God that the good fortune or grace would be granted him that someone would appear who could accuse him of infidelity towards the authorities for not only would he prove his sincere loyalty to the whole world but he would also disprove the rumours that had been spread about him everywhere." Krabbe repeated this with "violent animosity and excitement" several times but then he was interrupted by the arrival of a visitor. It was General Lieutenant Schulße's son who had come back from his captivity in Copenhagen. The young man declared that some other officers had been liberated with him, amongst them Captain Klingspor. Krabbe's consternation showed both in his "mode and on his face."¹³⁰⁰ Krabbe then hurried home to send two messages to Klingspor while the latter was still on the quay. Quarter master Basch was also among the ransomed prisoners and both he and Klingspor had then told Sperling that "he" had colluded with the snaphaner. The governor general finished his letter to the king by saying that he would inquire into the case before "he slips out" and then it remained to be seen whether "he" was innocent or guilty.¹³⁰¹

That evening Krabbe hurried back to the Västergata (Vestergade) and sent his coach boy Eggert out to get hold of Klingspor. Eggert approached Klingspor already on the quay but then he hurried back home to tell his master that Klingspor was coming up from the seafront. Krabbe who was sitting in his parlour responded that Eggert should go back to the pier and ask Klingspor to come over and then come to his residence twice in order to try and persuade him to come over to Krabbe's house in the Västergatan (Vestergade).¹³⁰² Then the coach boy met Klingspor in the street and asked him to come to the baron's but Klingspor said he had to see the governor general first but that he would come after that. Eggert went back to the baron who told

¹³⁰⁰ Deduction, p.23 and letter from Sperling to the king 25th September.

¹³⁰¹ Sperling to the king, GG 1677-78, SRA. "Jöran" is a swedised version of Jørgen. In most Swedish documents Krabbe is called Jöran. On the contrary Sperling is sometimes called Jørgen in Danish documents. The pronunciation of the two names is similar in standard Danish and Swedish.

¹³⁰² First court statement of the Prosecutor, 5th October 1677, in Aletophilus, p.40 and Breuer's Second Instance, 15th October, p.67. Krabbe's house was the so-called "Kockska huset" that is one of the oldest and most well-preserved in Malmö today.

him to go find Klingspor again and invite him to dinner.¹³⁰³ Klingspor accepted some money from the baron but did not come over for dinner.¹³⁰⁴ Basch had bumped into Krabbe in the central square (Stortorget). The baron had offered Basch redress – according to Basch on his own account, but according to Krabbe himself for the sake of his vice-bailiff. Basch then signed an accord note (Zeddel) that said that he and the vice-bailiff were even.¹³⁰⁵ Krabbe then sent a couple of servants over to Basch’s with 24 silver *daler*. Nevertheless, Klingspor and Basch went to the governor general’s and consigned written statements in which they denounced Krabbe for collusion with snaphaner.¹³⁰⁶ Basch who assumed the role of plaintiff reported everything that had happened during those fatal days in July. He added that he had trusted the baron because he thought he would act like a “faithful Swedish man” but unfortunately the contrary had been proved.¹³⁰⁷

Under House Arrest

Krabbe was now ordered to stay inside the city walls by both the Chief Military Prosecutor (General Auditeur) and the Town Major¹³⁰⁸. Both Krabbe and Christian Bilde pleaded that he might remain free until he had been able to get hold of those of his employees that were accused but this wish was not granted them. Krabbe then asked that someone should be sent to look for the suspects because once they heard of his arrest, they would go into hiding - but Sperling replied that Krabbe should write for them. Krabbe obeyed and he also sent a list of their names to Sperling. On 26th September Krabbe wrote an “Explanation” to Sperling. Unfortunately, it has not been preserved. In it he asked to be informed of whether any of his employees had been involved with the snaphane-movement and he promised to punish whoever had been so.¹³⁰⁹

On 29th September Sperling communicated to the king that he had announced (again) that the nobility and gentry would have to betake themselves to the other side of “the old Swedish border”. The direct consequence of this announcement was that Krabbe

¹³⁰³ Later Krabbe would say that he had asked Klingspor to dinner because he had always considered him a friend and he wanted to make good for what had happened. Krabbe, in Aletophilus, p.131.

¹³⁰⁴ Krabbe’s Response to the Prosecutor, 9th October 1677, p.50.

¹³⁰⁵ Breuer’s second instance, 15th October, p.67.

¹³⁰⁶ Basch wrote a relation about the way he was caught. See: 8th October 1677 court statement.

¹³⁰⁷ Basch’s Petition to Sperling, Lit A, no date, in Aletophilus.

¹³⁰⁸ Possibly in house arrest in his lodgings that faced Västergatan (then Vestergade).

¹³⁰⁹ Krabbe’s first court statement (inlägg), 5th October 1677, in Aletophilus; Breuer’s Second Instance, 15th October, p. 65.

and Christian Bilde went to Sperling's residence to appeal for mercy on behalf of all noblemen and gentry of the province. Sperling told them that they had better obey His Majesty's orders and not oppose themselves to his wishes. Sperling continued: "at which they both entreated me to send His Majesty the humble petition that is enclosed here."¹³¹⁰ The petition was dated Malmö (Malmö), 24th September and signed by the two noblemen mentioned above. It was written in Krabbe's own handwriting in quite passable Swedish. Sperling made no mention of it in his letter from 25th September, so it probably was not handed over to him until four days later. In the petition Krabbe and Bilde explained that the nobility had not come to Malmö (Malmö) when the king had called them because the journey was considered too dangerous and the snaphaner were threatening them. A journey north of the old border would be even more dangerous. They begged His Majesty to be allowed to stay on their estates for how would they else be able to pay their taxes? None of them had any property north of the old border and would not know how to maintain themselves and their families. Meanwhile their homes and lands would be wrecked and ruined in the war. They had always been faithful to His Majesty and the realm so why should they be punished? Rosencrantz saw the decision to deport the Scanian nobility as "against both the rights of all peoples and the laws of Christianity"¹³¹¹ and one could only blame the authorities for this. What they would have to face in Sweden was "misery, shame and ridicule".¹³¹² In this case Rosencrantz's comment is interesting because he was one of them, one of the little group of noblemen from the surroundings of Ystad (Ysted) that was headed by his best friend Krabbe, and his view might be assumed to reflect the way they reacted at the news of their imminent "deportation." It was "against both the rights of all peoples and the laws of Christianity."¹³¹³ The only comparison that Rosencrantz could think of was the expulsion of the moors from Granada: but the moors were "unchristian Barbarian people" who had committed treason and serious

¹³¹⁰ GG 1677-78, SRA: Sperling had not felt that he could deny them this since he was unsure of the precise whereabouts of the king and was even less sure whether he would be able to find men enough to organise a convoy to and from Krogholm for 1st October.

¹³¹¹ p.73: "...da det ald deris timelige Velfärd var angaaende at de icke imod alle Folckis Rät oc Christelige Maneer skulde tvingis til at være huussflycktige aff deris egen Öffrighed til at forlade deris gaarder oc Gods i Fiendernis oc fremmedis Händer ja end oc i Snaphanernis oc andre ubarmhertige Röffveris som der allevegne grasserede..."

¹³¹² See p.72: "Armod, Elendighed, Spot oc Forhaanelse."

¹³¹³ See p.73. The cultural universe that Rosencrantz moved in was the one we would call Western. The classical world and then Europe as it grew from its ashes, with something one might define as "Christendom" in between. And naturally The Two Realms were as central as France and the Netherlands. He considered the Danes a prominent "nation" that held their own among "the European countries" (quote p.66).

misdeeds.¹³¹⁴ The Swedes had no peers in the Christian world so one had to go to the Turks or even total heathens to be able to make a comparison. The authorities wanted to leave the noble estates in the hands of “snaphaner and other merciless thugs that had swamped the land”.¹³¹⁵

On 30th September Holger Thott tried to stall the departure by writing a desperate letter to Krabbe. He declared himself prepared to pay any price in the world in order to be able to stay on until his wife had recovered from the birth of the youngest child. He could not preserve his dignity and nobleman’s honour if he was sent as a prisoner to Sweden.¹³¹⁶ The news about Krabbe’s arrest had obviously not reached Marsvinsholm yet.

In a letter to the king Sperling now declared that he was so short of troops that he was not sure whether he would manage to escort the nobility to old Sweden in time. He could not get any men from Kristianstad (in this source: Christianstadh) and the garrison at Glimminge had been disbanded. Nevertheless, Sperling guaranteed that “one way or another Your Royal Majesty’s most gracious order will be executed.” Especially so since he had ordered the officer who was “convoying the cannons” to Krageholm (Krogholm) to let them know “if not in a kind way, well then in a serious way” that they had better please Your Majesty’s gracious will.¹³¹⁷ Finally, he added that in any case Krabbe would have to remain in town until the whole business with Basch could be explained. In a postscript from the day after Sperling added in his own handwriting that the Danes had sent out 400 riders on a foray from Landskrona to Ystad (in this source: Ystadh) and that they were being assisted by the snaphaner in their attacks on the occupied mansions in the area. For that reason, he would send even more men with the convoy to Krageholm (Krogholm). It transpires from this letter that the governor general was sending over artillery to Krageholm (Krogholm)

¹³¹⁴ Rosencrantz, (1679), p.27: ”Anseendis det aldrig tilforn udi nogen Christelig och vel constituered Regiering hafde været hørt...Vel læsis der de transmigratiōne Maurorum Granatensium...”

¹³¹⁵ See p.73: ”... i Snaphanernis oc andre ubarmhiertige Röffveris som der allevegne grasserede...”

¹³¹⁶ “Monsieur mon très honoré Frère, I am sending you a letter for Sperling, in which I beg him that I may be allowed to go to Malmö with my poor wife, and not to Sweden with this detachment, if not for a longer time, then until she has recovered from childbirth. See to it yourself or through others for the sake of Jesus Christ, that this will be granted us so that I will not be struck by the misfortune to see my wife dead at my feet; I will spend anything that could be asked in the world. Help, help for the death of Jesus. Marsvinsholm 30th Sept. 1677”, quoted by M. Weibull. <http://www.ra.se/lla/dokument/>

¹³¹⁷ ”en wägh som annan Ed.K.Mtz. nådigste förordning effterlefuas skall, som Jag och i medler tijdh har gifwit Officeraren som styckene till Kroghollm convoyerar ordre at tillhålla dhem, huar icke medh godho doch medh alfuat at fullgiöra Ed. K.Mtz nådigste willie heruthinnan,”

with the convoy. Krageholm (Krogholm) was already occupied by this time.¹³¹⁸ It was used as headquarters for the troops that had been sent out from Malmö (Malmøe) to wage war on the “snaphaner”. The commander was called Simon Bengtsson and he and his men left Malmö (Malmøe) some time during the first part of September. At the same time Häckeberga, Svaneholm, Näsbyholm, Glimmingehus, Tunbyholm and Sövdeborg were occupied as well.

It was decided that Krabbe would have to face the Royal Commissarial Court that had been instituted in Malmö only a short time before. It did not have to take heed of normal Swedish or Scanian law-procedure. The “president” or supreme judge was Jöran Sperling. According to Olluf Rosencrantz the jury consisted of a selection of “army officials, professors, magistrates, customs officers and court bailiffs” whose main scope was to enrich themselves.¹³¹⁹ Two hundred years later Martin Weibull promptly described the commissarial court as a “political blood tribunal” and illustrated its methods through a series of documents that proved that Sperling’s special court dealt with traitors and disloyal subjects at breakneck speed. It was enough to pass on Danish orders or even to have a Danish official call oneself “old friend” to be hurled into a dungeon for years.¹³²⁰ At approximately the same time professor Casper Weiser from Lund University was indicted. He had written a poem in honour of the Danish king in which he derided the Swedish Majesty and claimed that “the righteous owner is coming back to claim his property”.¹³²¹ From the very beginning Sperling had no doubts as to whether Weiser was guilty or not. Though in the end Weiser was pardoned and only his poem was burnt by the executioner.¹³²² Jöran Sperling was convinced that the case was so serious that it could no longer be regarded as a private quarrel between Basch and the baron but concerned “His

¹³¹⁸ Rödahl (1996), p.250.

¹³¹⁹ Rosencrantz (1679), p.3. The members of the commission were: chairman Jöran Sperling, Reinhold Modée, Canutus Liljehöök, Johan Buschovius, Sigismund Aschenborn, Lars Törnschiär, Tobias Nauman, Per Tolesten and Jöns Andersson (See: Cronholm, p.202).

¹³²⁰ Martin Weibull, *Skånska samlingar, II Till Skånes historia under övergångstiden 1658-1710, Skånska kriget och snaphanefejden 1676-1679: 4.*

http://www.ra.se//la/dokument/v_1871/II_1_4.html

¹³²¹ Rödahl (1996), p.259: ”Saa kommer Ejermanen god, vist snart til sit at tage!”. The Latin version is a pun that could also be translated as “swine always return to swine.”

¹³²² Sperling to the king, 7th October 1677. Weiser’s criminal poem contained the following lines: “*Spes jacentis terrae/ Perge Triumphator reliquas submittere terras; Sic redit ad Dominum, quod fuit ante, suum;*” (Rödahl, 1981, p.277.) His verdict was eventually changed into exile.

Majesty's highest interests."¹³²³ At this point Sperling got the *militie fiscal* or military prosecutor in on the case. The major task of the *militie fiscal* was to act as prosecutor in lawsuits between officers and private soldiers and in all other "military cases."¹³²⁴ The mere fact that the *militie fiscal* was involved implied that the court should be considered as a court martial. In this case the commissarial court had handed over the written declarations of Krabbe, Klingspor and Basch to the "fiscal" Michel Philip Breuer for closer examination. The baron was allowed to be present when the witnesses swore their oaths in the courtroom but not afterwards and so he was never informed of what they said. The main witnesses for the prosecution were Basch, the physician and two company quartermasters who had come over from Copenhagen. Basch left in the middle of the proceedings.¹³²⁵ He had been the original plaintiff but at a certain stage this role was taken over by the "Militiä Fischeal". From then on Basch's role became that of crown witness which Rosencrantz contested was contrary to the law since one could not both be plaintiff and witness in the same court case. At the beginning of the trial Krabbe was asked to compile a list of persons that he would like to come and testify (presumably in his favour), which he did. However, no one was allowed to witness in Krabbe's defence.

Conclusions

It is probably hard for us today to understand just how humiliating the Scanian noblemen thought it would be to be deported to Sweden. Time and again we come across concepts like "dignity and nobleman's honour" in the violent protestations and tearful pleas that can be read in the archives today. Apart from the insecurity of being sent off to an uncertain destination and leaving one's home and belongings in a war-stricken land, it was the shame of it all, the tarnish on their noblemen's honour that they used as an obvious argumentation against being sent away and that they obviously hoped the Swedish administrators would sympathise with. Not only did they hope that men like King Charles or von Fersen would be able to understand (from own experience) what a nobleman's honour was, but they also pleaded to them as Christians. Later the Danish nobleman Olluf Rosencrantz declared that no Christian

¹³²³ Fiskalens förste Indleg, 5th October 1677, in Aletophilus, p.35.

¹³²⁴ See Alf Erlandsson, pp.98-99, footnote 32 and p.65. The "generalguvernementsfiskal" reviewed judiciary matters ("rättsövervakande funktion"). It was also his task to see to it that schools and hospitals only employed native Swedes.

¹³²⁵ See p.44.

would ever have been able to think of such a measure, the only comparable event on European ground was the expulsion of the Moors and they had at least not been Christians.

Krabbe had only just been put under house arrest when the governor general sent over a convoy with artillery to Krabbe's home so that it could be transformed into a stronghold in the battle against the "snaphaner". Only a few days later the definitive deportation ("emigration") order was read out to the representatives of the nobility and gentry. These facts alone indicate that although Krabbe did not have any real power over his fellow noblemen, he was considered an effective obstacle to the policy that was thought to be the most efficient. It was consequently desirable, if not absolutely necessary, to get Krabbe out of the way and a perfect opportunity to do so within the bounds of legality offered itself when Klingspor and Basch were ransomed. Krabbe was always the first one to protest his loathing of snaphaner in public and the mere thought of him in connection with "snaphaner" constituted a blemish on his honour. In his later writings governor general Sperling revealed that Krabbe's death and the deportation of the nobility had had the one and same cause: the "illicit love" for the Danish name that the Scanians were "totally besotted with."¹³²⁶

The Court Statements and Instances

Introduction

This section contains an analysis of the various court statements that the prosecutors and Krabbe handed in during the court proceedings. Both sides are accordingly presented in detail as are the conclusions that were drawn by the different parties in the conflict and that can be drawn by an external reader today. The main themes will be analysed at the end of this subsection, including that of the snaphaner.

Krabbe's First Court Statement (5th October)

On 5th October 1677 Krabbe was on the stand for the first time. Contrary to normal Swedish law Krabbe was not allowed to defend himself in court but only to hand in a written statement in which he declared his position in the following words:

¹³²⁶ Sperling's Deduction, p.3: "wiisandes sigh ännu wara så aldeles betagne medh en oloffligh Kiärleck och inclination til dhett Danske Nanpnet."

*"Basch will never be able to prove that I have acted against His Majesty and the Crown in any manner for I have sworn an oath and as far as possible is for a human being I have done my duty towards His Royal Majesty just like his other loyal subjects...I have behaved like any other of His Majesty's true patriots: I have lived honourably in peace and quiet on my estate, I have not had any correspondence with the snaphanner but have always observed my duty and have inquired on my estate if any farmhands or the sons of my tenants have deserted or had correspondence or been in collusion with the Snaphanner..."*¹³²⁷

He appealed to the values and honour codes of the traditional "feudal" world that he had grown up in and expected the tribunal to respect a gentleman's word. From the beginning of the trial Krabbe announced to the judge and the jury that he was a nobleman who lived by the traditional noble codes and that his king was Charles XI of Sweden: he claimed that "the LORD had blessed our gracious King with a felicitous Victory and chased the Enemy off the land".¹³²⁸ According to Krabbe it was a known fact that the snaphaner and the Danes despised him. They had told him "in public" that he deserved to be shot at his own dinner-table because he had let the King of Denmark down. They also would not let him leave his estate, plundered his storages, and beat his tenant farmers black and blue. In the same manner he claimed that the Danes had been harder on him than on any other nobleman. Everyone knew that the Danes despised his "Swedish stomach" and that the Danish king had had him arrested.¹³²⁹ Krabbe insisted on his being a Swedish patriot and emphasised the fact that he had left his king and fatherland for the sake of the Swedish king and Sweden.¹³³⁰

Krabbe insisted that he had never harboured any grudge against Basch.¹³³¹ Basch had behaved rudely when his regiment was billeted at Krageholm (Krogholm) and he had

¹³²⁷ Krabbe's first letter of defence (Inlägg) to the Royal Commissarial Court (14 pages) from 5th October 1677, no coherent pagination, in Aletophilus: "da skal Baschen mig aldrig kunde ofverbevisse at jeg hafver handlet imod Hans Konglige Mayt. oc Cronen i ringeste maade at jeg jo hafver taget min Aed oc Skyldighed saa meget mig aff Menniskelige Magt oc yderste Efne mueligt väret hafver dend jeg Hans Konglige Mayt. med andre troe Undersaattere skyldig ere...at jeg som en anden Hans Konglige Mayt. troe Patriot hafver mig forholdet – lefvet ärligen oc stille paa mit Gods, icke haft nogen Correspondens eller ladet correspondere enten med Snaphanner eller nogen anden mens altid hafver jeg som min Skyldighed oc Pligt udkräfvede ladet strengeligen inqvirere paa mit Gods om nogen Bonde Dreng eller nogen aff mine Bönders Sönnner skulle hafve sig absondret eller haft nogen ringe Correspondens eller Madschapie med Snaphannerne..."

¹³²⁸ Krabbe's first court statement (inlägg), 5th October 1677, in Aletophilus, p.12.

¹³²⁹ In Scanian, much as in English "to have a stomach for something" i.e., "att ha mave for noed" means to have a predilection or intense liking for something. This is not so obvious in modern Swedish. Krabbe's first court statement (inlägg), 5th October 1677, in Aletophilus, pp.12-13.

¹³³⁰ Krabbe, in Aletophilus, p.143, p.151 and First Response to the Prosecutor, p.49.

¹³³¹ Basch himself would point this weakness out to the court some days later: Basch's court statement, 8th October 1677, in Aletophilus, p.20.

put the whole estate under pressure and he had thrashed Krabbe's vice-bailiff Mons Peerssön. Nevertheless, the baron had made an effort to be civil and "treat the man well". Basch also seems to have known people everywhere in the surroundings of Krageholm (Krogholm) and according to Krabbe he visited all his friends on his way there in July 1677 and told everyone that he was heading for "Kroegholm" and Tosterup (Taastrup). Everyone had known where he was heading for so it could not have been difficult for the snaphaner to find out.¹³³² Christopher had warned Basch that the snaphaner might be after him since he had chosen to ride through Färs (Fers). He added that Basch had been so drunk at the time that he might not be able remember what he had been told.¹³³³ Krabbe had only found out that Basch was taken prisoner around noon the day after and no one had mentioned that any of his employees had been involved.¹³³⁴ He had offered the snaphaner money in exchange for Basch's life and they accepted it.¹³³⁵ Later, when Krabbe met Basch in Malmö (Malmøe), Basch had threatened Rasmus and Krabbe had begged him to forgive Rasmus for what he had said.¹³³⁶ Furthermore Krabbe insisted that he would not have had to ransom the lives of Basch and Klingspor if he had been in collusion with the snaphaner.¹³³⁷

Krabbe asked that six questions be put to Basch: 1. Could Basch deny that the baron had always behaved like a gentleman towards him and that Basch himself had been rude on several occasions? 2. Was there any way Basch could prove that the snaphaner had been in the hundreds of Herrestad and Ingelstad (Herrested and Ingelsted) before they came for Basch and Klingspor? 3. Could Basch prove that the snaphaner had come to the baron at Krageholm (Krogholm) before they rode to Tosterup (Taastrup) to catch Basch or that the snaphaner had been in touch with the baron and his men before meeting the bailiff (Hindrich Peerssön) three quarters of a mile from Krageholm (Krogholm)? 4. Was there any manner in which Basch could

¹³³² Krabbe's first court statement (inlägg), 5th October 1677, in Aletophilus, pp.9-10.

¹³³³ Krabbe's first court statement (inlägg), 5th October 1677, in Aletophilus, p.11 and Krabbe's second Indleg, 11th October 1677, in Aletophilus, p.29.

¹³³⁴ Krabbe's first court statement (inlägg), 5th October 1677, in Aletophilus, (p.7) page not numbered: "...ey heller viste at hand fangen var, förend anden Dangen efter ved Middags Tide, da der efter Snaphannerne om efter middagen förde hannem til Kroegholm formedelst de hafde kundskab om Klingsporen som sagt var om Dagen tilforne var kommen til Ystæd..."

¹³³⁵ Krabbe's first court statement (inlägg), 5th October 1677, in Aletophilus, p.12.

¹³³⁶ Krabbe's first court statement (inlägg), 5th October 1677, in Aletophilus.

¹³³⁷ Krabbe's first court statement (inlägg), 5th October 1677, in Aletophilus, pp.11-12.

prove that the baron had colluded with the snaphaner or that he had sent for them when Basch came to Krageholm (Krogholm)? 5. Could Basch deny that the baron had asked him however he had dared to travel on his own through Färs (Fers) that was infested with snaphaner? 6. Could Basch deny that Krabbe's bailiff had warned him of the *snaphaner* at Christen Nielsen's?¹³³⁸

Krabbe claimed that the "frivolous Snaphaner" had never come to the hundreds of Herrestad and Ingelstad (Herrested and Ingelsted) until the day they came there to look for Basch.¹³³⁹ It is rather strange that Krabbe insisted that there had not been any snaphaner in Ingelstad or Herrestad (Ingelsted or Herrested) before July 1677. On 10th June that same year the Danish king had issued an order that said that any snaphane that was caught in the hundreds of Ingelstad, Herrestad and Ljunits (Ingelstad, Herrestad and Lynits) would be executed. The background to this decision can be seen in the numerous complaints against the *snaphaner* on the side of the local population. Was it possible that the leading nobleman of the area could remain totally ignorant of the harassments that his tenants and the neighbours of his tenants were exposed to?¹³⁴⁰

By this date Krabbe's bailiff Christopher was already in custody ("Cronens hectelse") in Malmö (Malmø). As soon as heard of the trouble the baron was in, he left Krageholm (Krogholm) and rode along the beach to Malmö (Malmø) to give himself in to the authorities.¹³⁴¹ He had had to be very careful not to get caught by the snaphaner on the way.¹³⁴² On the very same day (5th October) the prosecutor presented the results of his research in the form of an 8-page-long court statement. Michel Philip Breuer immediately declared that the baron had pronounced words that were "utterly criminal."¹³⁴³ Having said that the king did not deserve tax payments was not a private issue between Basch and the baron but concerned "His Majesty's

¹³³⁸ Krabbe's first court statement (inläg), 5th October 1677, in Aletophilus, pp.10-11.

¹³³⁹ Krabbe's first court statement (inläg), 5th October 1677, in Aletophilus, p.10.

¹³⁴⁰ Røndahl 1996, p.238. A similar decision was taken in the regards of the Kristianstad (Christianstad) area, but nowhere else.

¹³⁴¹ Krabbe's first court statement (inläg), 5th October 1677, in Aletophilus, p.14.

¹³⁴² Krabbe's response to the Prosecutor, 9th October 1677, in Aletophilus, p.47.

¹³⁴³ Fiskalens förste Indleg, 5th October 1677, The Prosecutor's first court statement. Fiskalens förste Indleg Imod Höy-Edle oc Velbaarne Her Baron Her Jörgen Krabbe. Insinueret i Rätten den. 5 Octobr. 1677.in Aletophilus, p.34.

highest interests.”¹³⁴⁴ Apart from attacking His Majesty’s royal person verbally the baron had encouraged his already “disobedient” tenants to break their oath of allegiance and duty towards the king. The prosecution now claimed that these tenants had welcomed the enemy with open arms and that they were always eager to help them in deeds and words and everyone knew that. According to the prosecution Krabbe had purposely delayed Basch’s return so much that the snaphaner got a chance to kidnap him.¹³⁴⁵

In the introduction of the fiscal’s statement, we are told that Klingspor too had contributed with writings to the court. Unfortunately, no traces of them are to be found today. At this point it also transpired that Krabbe had offered all that he owned in bail (at cavere) for his bailiff who “was as innocent as a child”. He had done so in a letter to His Excellency about the innocence of his bailiff.¹³⁴⁶ The prosecutor was “pleased” with the baron’s offer and accepted it as *pro rato*. But he warned Krabbe that if Christopher was found guilty it would be worse for Krabbe himself. He and Rasmus were both guilty of having led the snaphaner that kidnapped Basch and of having abused Basch verbally. At this point the question of the snaphaner present at the kidnapping of Klingspor came up. According to the prosecution one of them had been Krabbe’s garden boy. Krabbe insisted that it was only a little boy that had guarded the fruit in his garden and that the boy had run away some time earlier. Yet another of the snaphaner had been what the prosecution called Krabbe’s hunter and what Krabbe called a little boy of 10 or 12 years. The prosecutor did not believe Krabbe’s version. He also accused him of having left Klingspor in the hands of the snaphaner in stead of trying to fight them.¹³⁴⁷

Breuer wondered if Krabbe believed him to be a man of such poor wits as not to notice the inconsistencies of his account. He now declared the case to be quite serious and recommended that the court call as many witnesses as possible. Finally, Breuer concluded that Krabbe was guilty of having offended the royal person, of tergiversation, conspiracy, and collusion with the snaphaner.¹³⁴⁸

¹³⁴⁴ Fiskalens förste Indleg, 5th October 1677, in Aletophilus, p.35.

¹³⁴⁵ Fiskalens förste Indleg, 5th October 1677, in Aletophilus, p.36.

¹³⁴⁶ Krabbe’s response to the Prosecutor, 9th October 1677 in Aletophilus, p.47.

¹³⁴⁷ Fiskalens förste Indleg, 5th October 1677, in Aletophilus, p.40.

¹³⁴⁸ Fiskalens förste Indleg, 5th October 1677, in Aletophilus, p.40.

On 7th October Sperling assured the king that he would learn to recognise the requirements of his true duty and that with the help of God, he would see to it that the Krabbe case would be dealt with on the one hand so that His Royal Majesty's rights and interests would not be violated, but on the other so that Krabbe would not be able to accuse Sperling of having wronged him unjustly.¹³⁴⁹ Sperling then assured the king that he had been busy with this problem "all these days" and that prosecutor was acting against Krabbe "in a serious way"; they had brought all the witnesses from Ystad to Malmö ("Ysted" to "Malmøe") and interrogated them. Hopefully the case would be over within the next few weeks. In the same letter Sperling communicated that he had had invited professor Casper Weiser to explain himself. Sperling had no doubts as to whether Weiser was guilty or not. That same day Sperling also sent an eleven-page-long account of the situation in the Scanian provinces to the king. His first and most important point was that the war had brought the infidelity of the Danish and Scanian officials to the fore: not few of them had declared an "inclination towards the enemies of the realm" and that they wished for "the ruin and total extinction of the Swedish Nation". Sperling advised his king not to allow Danes or Scanians to occupy positions in the army or administration from then on. His second point was that the clergy was dangerous: "their affection (for Denmark) has far too deep roots in their hearts". Sperling reported that they were trying to keep their positions through "secret arts" and he knew that they nurtured "illicit desires" in their hearts. They all clung to Danish church rituals and that was not good for His Majesty's safety. Corruption was widespread in the towns that were ruled by the town councils. All burghers did as the town councils did.¹³⁵⁰

Basch's Reply (8th October)

On 8th October 1677 Lorens Basch's reply to Krabbe was read aloud in court. Basch's tone was harsh, if not derisive and he called the baron's statement "a pack of lies." Basch called Krabbe's defence "nonsense" and demanded that the baron be

¹³⁴⁹ In reply to a royal missive of 1st October 1677, GG 1677-78, SRA. This letter has been published in part by Cronholm, p.202.

¹³⁵⁰ Underdånigst Memorial uppå några ährander, hwilka till befodring aff Eders Kongl: May:ts nyttige tjenst, och denne Provinciens upkomst och wählrefnadt, allenast rättade är, och fördenskuld Eders Kongl: May:ts allernådigtste godtfinnande uti diupaste underdånigheet hemskiutes, affbjidandes der uppå een nådig Resolution, Sperling to His Majesty 7th October 1677, SRA. (Svenske Nations fördeerff och total utrotande).

requested to use a more polite tone.¹³⁵¹ Basch claimed that *stante pede* in court he had answered the baron who demanded an answer that he had received the money from the baron's servants so that the whole business would be swept under the carpet. From this passage it seems as if Krabbe had appeared in court and that he had been allowed to interrogate his adversary.¹³⁵² Basch also claimed that the Baron had said "you do not have a charge to come with there" in front of the Royal Commission the Friday before.¹³⁵³

Basch openly accused the baron of procuring a base and a cover for snaphaner: "the baron's servants that caught me stayed on in the baron's service as long as they could keep their roguery hidden but as soon as an inkling of their sympathies was revealed they were gone, no doubt to the snaphanner." Earlier in this passage Basch made clear that Krabbe knew about their sympathies from the beginning, so it was *not* him they were running from. Basch did not comment on the baron's manners but claimed that he nurtured secret hatred towards Basch in his heart. To Basch it was obvious that Krabbe was lying since he claimed not to have anything against Basch at the same time as said that Basch was insolent and did not fulfil his duties to the king.¹³⁵⁴ The only one who had complained about the Swedish exactions was the baron. The peasants had told Basch that the baron's steward "who was now with the Danes" had put them under even harder pressure than Basch. Krabbe owed Basch money from when Basch's regiment had spent the winter at Krageholm (Krogholm) and Basch saw this as the main reason for his being kidnapped.¹³⁵⁵ According to Basch it was a fact that the snaphaner had been a familiar sight in the hundred of Ingelstad (in this source: Ingildsteed) and around Sövdeborg (in this source: Söfvedegaard) and he called Major Gyllenpistol as a witness, because the major had had his horses stolen by the snaphaner in that area.¹³⁵⁶ He denied having been drunk when he and Christopher

¹³⁵¹ Basch's court statement, 8th October 1677, in Aletophilus, p.15. (Basch's expression was "sammanspinnen" i.e. "fabricated" or "made up" by himself.)

¹³⁵² Basch's court statement, 8th October 1677, in Aletophilus, p.16.

¹³⁵³ Basch's court statement, 8th October 1677, in Aletophilus, p.17:"...mens Her Baronens saghde i Fredags for Kongl. Commiss. til mig dher var ingen Anklågerre..."

¹³⁵⁴ Basch's 9th October/10 statement, in Aletophilus, p.20.

¹³⁵⁵ Basch's court statement, 8th October 1677, in Aletophilus, pp.18-19: "...for Hr. Baronens er migh ennu en Post Penningar før førflutne Winterqvarter skyldigh, på Regimentens Weigne, for hwilcke Penningar jagh meehrendeels bleff fangen..."

¹³⁵⁶ Was that the same Carl Gyllenpistol who had stolen the nobleman Arild Svab's (Swawe's) ten best horses in April that year? See: Letter from Arild Swawe to Governor General Fabian von Fersen, in M. Weibull, *II Till Skånes historia under öfvergångstiden 1658-1710*, 1:5:1,

had had dinner at Glimminge. Basch had been completely sober, and nobody had warned him of the snaphaner. Basch knew nothing of any warnings. He only knew that three groups of snaphaner had surprised him and his men in three different places at the same time and only the baron had known their whereabouts. Christopher had been present when Basch divided his men into three parties. According to Basch no one else could have known where they were heading for. Basch commented Krabbe's attitude in the following terms: "*qvi tacet consentire videtur.*"¹³⁵⁷ Basch only knew that snaphaner had known that he had told the baron that the Danish infantry at Lands Crone cried like pigs and that the snaphaner who captured him were commanded by two of Krabbe's bailiffs.¹³⁵⁸ According to Basch's logic the Danish party was strengthened in this way and His Royal Majesty damaged. Krabbe still owed Basch money from when Basch's regiment had spent the winter at (Krogholm) and Basch saw this as the main reason for his being kidnapped. With these words Basch accused the baron of having plotted the kidnapping.¹³⁵⁹ Basch continued this line by informing the Commissarial court that Krabbe's two ex-stewards Hindrich and Mogens Peersøn were both busy doing roguery in the service of the Danes: "Henrich Peerssøn and Mons Peerssøn who have been the Baron's faithful servants are in His Majesty of Denmark's service and all the grace that they enjoyed under our most gracious king and lord's protection do they now return with roguery and daring tricks and they are the fiercest persecutors of the Swedish nation."¹³⁶⁰

At this point Basch declared that he would rather respond to Krabbe's accusations in the courtroom. The Royal Commission denied him this, however, and we have a document that contains Basch's answers to Krabbe's "*interrogatoria*" that can be dated to sometime between 8th and 11th October.

http://www.ra.se//lla/dokument/v_1871/II_1_5.html. Basch's 9th October/10 statement, in Aletophilus, pp.20-21.

¹³⁵⁷ Basch's court statement, 8th October 1677, in Aletophilus, pp.17-18.

¹³⁵⁸ Basch's 9th-10th October statement, in Aletophilus, p.15 and p.21.

¹³⁵⁹ Basch's court statement, 8th October 1677, in Aletophilus, pp.18-19.

¹³⁶⁰ Basch's court statement, 8th October 1677, in Aletophilus, pp.16-17. som hafver väret Her Baronens troegne Tiennare ähr udi Hans Majest. Tieneste aff Danmarck och all den Naadhe dhe under vor aldrånådigste Konningh oc Herres Beskydh niudet hafve det vedergelle dhe med Skielm och vofve Stöcker och er den Svenske Nations störste föfölliera."

Krabbe's *Replique* (9th October)

On 9th October 1677, Krabbe sent what was called a *Replique* to the prosecutor.¹³⁶¹ At this point it had become clear to the baron that he was in serious trouble: it now seemed to him that not only his honour was at stake but also his worldly well-being.¹³⁶² Krabbe's tone had become very different compared to his letters to Basch. Not half as condescending but more learned: he kept referring to the "Law book" and quoting passages in Latin from it. Krabbe's main argument was that the Commissarial Court had no evidence against him; all they had was Basch's word against his: "*allegare & dicere rem hoc vel illo modo sese habere nil juvat nisi probetur.*"¹³⁶³ Then Krabbe continued: "*Actore non probante reus etsi nihil probaverit vel praestiterit sit solvendus, item* how it is prescribed in the Roman and other honorable Laws that in such serious Criminal and other Actions, no one be condemned unless there are clear and evident reasons for this..."¹³⁶⁴ Furthermore Krabbe declared that "every true Patriot" could testify that he had always served his "Master and King" to the utmost of his forces and this service had included generous loans and monthly contributions. And Krabbe had always done this with a "sincere heart."¹³⁶⁵ In this statement Krabbe went back on his earlier claim that no one had ever heard of the presence of snaphaner in his hundred before. In stead he declared that he had meant that those "misguided fools" the snaphaner never had come to Ingelsted "in groups" before.¹³⁶⁶ He also claimed that Scanian noblemen had the right to punish snaphaner among their peasants themselves, and that this privilege had been granted them by the king. The "fiscal" had claimed the contrary.¹³⁶⁷ The baron insisted that Basch had misinterpreted his words when he came to Krageholm (Krogholm) to collect taxes. Krabbe had only said that it was impossible for him to pay contributions to both Swedes and Danes during the same month. Basch had not had any written orders to show. Nor had he demanded a written statement from Krabbe.¹³⁶⁸

¹³⁶¹ Krabbe's Response to the Prosecutor (Fischal), 9th October 1677, p.46.

¹³⁶² Krabbe's Response to the Prosecutor, 9th October 1677, p.52: "...een Erlig Mand skulle saa strengt paa Hæder oc Ære samt timelig Velfærd (hvor paa det siunis mig angaae) ...kunde anklagis."

¹³⁶³ Krabbe's Response to the Prosecutor, 9th October 1677, p.43.

¹³⁶⁴ Krabbe's Response to the Prosecutor, 9th October 1677, p.44.

¹³⁶⁵ Krabbe's Response to the Prosecutor, 9th October 1677, p.43.

¹³⁶⁶ Krabbe's Response to the Prosecutor, 9th October 1677, p.46. "de ilde forhollende Skielmer."

¹³⁶⁷ Krabbe's Response to the Prosecutor, 9th October 1677, p.49.

¹³⁶⁸ Krabbe's Response to the Prosecutor, 9th October 1677, in Aletophilus, pp.42-44.

Krabbe then asked that he be allowed to face the witnesses in court and that Basch be kept in custody.¹³⁶⁹ Both pleas were ignored. However, Krabbe was allowed to write down a series of questions to the witnesses. His *Interrogatoria* were handed in to the court the same day as his *Replique* to the prosecutor. The *Interrogatoria* contained fourteen questions, most of them to the point that the witnesses should tell the court what they had heard about the baron from the snaphaner. Eleven of these questions expressly mentioned the snaphaner, so it must be supposed that Krabbe knew that the witnesses had been in touch with them.

Krabbe was never allowed to face the witnesses in court. He was not even told the identity of all of them¹³⁷⁰ Krabbe mentioned some of them as “the peasantsthat are supposed to have transported things for the snaphanner from Bollerup to Krogeholm.”¹³⁷¹ One of the witnesses was Jens Hals who leased the Glimminge estate. Krabbe asked Hals to reveal what he and Rasmus had been saying about Basch when the baron last dined with him. In the same way he asked Hals to tell the court if Rasmus ever had asked him to do “errands” for him.¹³⁷² He also explained that he only recently had found out about the way Basch had been insulted by Rasmus: namely on a visit to Glimminge and Bollerup when he had talked to Jens Hals.¹³⁷³

In the same way the baron wanted to find out what the peasants and Basch had been chattering about the day before when “he brought them to Henning Olsön’s and offered them vodka before going to the courthouse.”¹³⁷⁴ Olsen was the one and only burgher in Malmö (Malmø) who worked for the Swedes. From these two passages it transpires that some of the witnesses were peasants from the Ystad (Ysted) area. Others were members of “higher” social categories like Jens Hals.

¹³⁶⁹ Krabbe’s Response to the Prosecutor, 9th October 1677, pp.52-53.

¹³⁷⁰ Krabbe’s Response to the Prosecutor, 9th October 1677, pp.52-53.

¹³⁷¹ Krabbe’s *Interrogatoria*, 9th October 1677, in Aletophilus, p.54.

¹³⁷² Krabbe’s *Interrogatoria*, 9th October 1677, in Aletophilus, p.56: ”...hand at udsige hvad Tale det var hand oc Ladefougden paa Tostrup hafde sig emellem anlangendis Basken saa vel oc om Ladefougden noget tilforn eller siden hannem ombedet hafver paa hans Vegne at forrette sig at forklare.”

¹³⁷³ A Georg Andreas Donner was sheriff (befallningsman) in the hundreds of Oxie, Skytt o 1664-1675. Then he became “generalguvernementsfiskal” (Alf Erlandsson p.158). His son was first secretary (kanslist) at the chancellery of the government general (generalguvernementskansliet) 1688-1693. Then he became “stadsnotarie” and a member of the city council at Ystad. See: Alf Erlandsson, p.199.

¹³⁷⁴ Krabbe’s *Interrogatoria*, 9th October 1677, in Aletophilus, p.56: ”...hvad Tale Basken oc de hafde sig imellem forleden Dag her da hand haffde dennem inde til Henning Olsöns oc tracterede dennem med Brendeviin förend de gick for Rätten.”

Apart from Christopher only two of the witnesses that were in custody in Malmö (Malmø) are mentioned: Eggert and Jens Hals. Krabbe's coach boy Eggert had come with him to Malmö (Malmø) and became an important witness; especially as regarded those fatal September days when Krabbe, Klingspor and Basch all arrived in Malmö (Malmø). He admitted that he had tried to "bribe" Klingspor.¹³⁷⁵

Basch's Second Replique (9th or 10th October)

In another harsh reply to Krabbe's court statements Basch stressed that the baron was contradicting himself. Why had he claimed not to have anything against Basch when at the same time, he said that Basch was insolent and did not fulfil his duties to the king? Perhaps he was even right in claiming that the baron had nurtured "secret hatred" against him in his heart.¹³⁷⁶

Basch pointed out that that the men who captured him at Bollerup had known that he had said that the Danish infantry at Lands Crone cried like pigs. Basch thought it rather strange that his private (?) conversation with Krabbe should have reached the ears of snaphaner so easily and so fast. Basch claimed that Krabbe had been scheming to find out where he was heading for and that the Baron himself had had him kidnapped.¹³⁷⁷ From this passage on it became clear that Basch gave Krabbe the whole responsibility for what had happened, and what was even more serious, he openly claimed that it had happened at Krabbe's instigation.¹³⁷⁸ Finally, Basch quoted Jesus: "Abandon everything and come with me" and concluded that if only Krabbe had listened to the Swedish king in this way he would never have ended up in trouble. Krabbe's servant-boy Eggert had told Basch that the baron had lost an ox to the snaphaner, but if Krabbe had loved his house and estate less then he would not have had to deal with the snaphaner at all. Krabbe had showed himself a traitor by the mere fact of not going to Sweden.¹³⁷⁹

¹³⁷⁵ Breuer's Second Instance, 15th October, p.67.

¹³⁷⁶ Basch's 9th-10th October statement, in Aletophilus, p.20.

¹³⁷⁷ Basch's 9th-10th October statement, in Aletophilus, p.21. (Men at hand var at uhtspanne huar jagh ville blifva)

¹³⁷⁸ "the high and mighty fight very often but dare less than nothing" (dhe Mechtige fechte offte och våge mindre än intet) pique from Basch to Krabbe as regarded the latter's knowledge of the outcome of the battle of Landskrona (Landskrone). Basch's 9th-10th October statement, in Aletophilus, p.22.

¹³⁷⁹ Basch's 9th-10th October statement, in Aletophilus, p.22.

Krabbe's Second Court Statement and Reply to Basch (11th October)

Krabbe swore that he had sent a report to the Governor General when he found out that his employees had been constrained to join the snaphaner. He also explained that he only recently had found out about way Basch had been insulted by Rasmus: namely on a visit to Glimminge and Bollerup when he had talked to the Jens Hals who had told him about it. Then he declared that Hindrich Peersön had left his position as a bailiff well before the Danish invasion; Peersön's intent had been to go and live in the nearby town of Ystad (Ysted). Krabbe claimed not to have had the least idea of what Hindrich Peersön was doing until the day when the latter came to visit him and showed him the authorisation from the Danish king to exact taxes and a list of peasants from which to do so. Mogens Pedersön had not been in Krabbe's service since April that same year when Krabbe had been constrained to cede the Högestad (Högsted) estate to the Swedish Field Marshal and Councillor of the realm (rigsraad) Gustaf Banér. Mogens had stayed on in Baner's service under Hauptmand Monsieur Donner.¹³⁸⁰

The second part of this court statement consists of Krabbe's answers to the accusations that Basch had come up with in court (*stante pede*). It seems as if the question of Basch's behaviour during his time at Krageholm (Krogholm) had come up. Krabbe insisted that Basch had acted against the Royal decrees that stated that billeted regiments must not cause destruction. According to these decrees peasants should even receive some help from the regiment if they lacked oxen or seed but Basch had denied Krabbe's tenants any kind of help. At the time Krabbe and a county bookkeeper (Lands boghollere) called Stiern had even started an inquiry that was supported by the king, but for obscure reasons nothing had come of it.¹³⁸¹ Basch accused Krabbe of complaining more than anybody else of the Swedish taxes. Krabbe now tried to prove the contrary: in two months' time more than twenty of Krabbe's farms had been abandoned by their tenants, because of their "poverty and utter misery."¹³⁸² Krabbe claimed that he was made to pay up to ten times more than he

¹³⁸⁰ A Georg Andreas Donner was sheriff of Oxie, Skytt o Bara 1664-1675. Then he became a "generalguvernementsfiskal". His son Carl Mattias Donner worked as a secretary in the chancellery of the government general, then he became a notary and town councillor in Ystad. See: Alf Erlandsson p.158 and p.199.

¹³⁸¹ Krabbe's second Indleg, 11th October 1677, in Aletophilus, pp.24-28.

¹³⁸² Krabbe's response to Breuer's second statement, Aletophilus, pp.97-98.

should for farmsteads like Ingelsted and Baldringe.¹³⁸³ A telling example was that of the Ingildstorp farm that at no time had rendered more than a normal farm. The Swedes had classified Ingelstorp (Ingildstorp)¹³⁸⁴ as a “Sädegaard” i.e. a mansion worth twelve average farmsteads and therefore Krabbe had to pay twelve times more contributions than it could render. At the time when Krabbe wrote this statement, Ingelstorp (Ingildstorp) lay in total ruins because of the war. The second example was Tosterup (Taastrup) that had been put in the same class as Ingelstorp (Ingildstorp) and was counted as the equivalent of twelve farms. Obviously Tosterup (Taastrup) rendered more than Ingelstorp (Ingildstorp) but not enough to equal twelve farmsteads. After much trouble and many petitions Krabbe had been granted a tax reduction for Ingildstrupgaard.¹³⁸⁵ Krabbe had written a Memorial that he handed in to the Royal Commissarial Court of Justice. Basch had read it although, according to Krabbe, it was none of his business.¹³⁸⁶ Finally Krabbe declared that sooner or later he would make Basch pay and that in any case, Basch was only a visitor to Scania whereas Krabbe himself was a permanent resident.

The Prosecutor’s Second Instance (15th October)

Around this point in time Basch disappeared from Malmö (Malmø) and played no further role in the court proceedings. His role had been taken over by the public prosecutor Philip Michel Breuer who presented his second court statement on 15th October 1677. It consisted of 20 pages of accusations and 15 extracts from Krabbe’s personal letters, all of which were read aloud in the courtroom.¹³⁸⁷ The attack on Krabbe was massive. Breuer and Sperling had managed to get hold of Krabbe’s papers, account books and part of his correspondence from the beginning of the war onwards. They had also procured themselves numerous testimonies. Krabbe was

¹³⁸³ These two farms or estates are probably identical with modern-day Ingelsta and Baldringe. The authorities claimed both properties were to be taxed as manor houses, but Krabbe insisted they were to be classified as farms.

¹³⁸⁴ This farmstead is probably identical with either a farm in the village of Ingelstorp or the Hedvigsdal estate.

¹³⁸⁵ Krabbe’s second Indleg, 11th October 1677, in Aletophilus, pp.28-29.

¹³⁸⁶ Krabbe’s second Indleg, 11th October 1677, in Aletophilus, p.31.

¹³⁸⁷ Breuer’s second intercession (15th October 1677) The prosecutor’s second court statement (20 pages) (Prosecutorens anden Indleg Imod den höy-ädle oc Velbaarnde herre her Baron her Jörgen Krabbe, Opleest för Kongl. Retten den 15. Octob.1677.) It was only this report that the prosecutor accused Krabbe of more things than Basch had. Rosencrantz (p.48.) insisted that that was contrary to Swedish court procedure.

allowed three days to compile a written defence against their accusations. The text was read out aloud in Krabbe's presence and then handed over to him so that he could reply to the accusations.¹³⁸⁸ Breuer's tone had changed. From civil but suspicious to next to insolent. He started out by excusing himself to the honourable vice-governor general and the "manly, learned and clever" members of the commission (assessores). He would rather not have bothered them again, but he felt that it was necessary to get certain ideas out of the baron's head. The baron had better not persist in believing that the prosecutor's preceding instance was only slander based on suspicion. On the contrary, what the prosecutor had written in it was evidence "clearer than the sun" and based upon reliable testimonies.¹³⁸⁹ Breuer proudly declared: "I have written these (remonstrations and evidence) in as few words as possible and have not dollied them up with many Latin quotes and words and even less have I referred to foreign *Leges*."¹³⁹⁰ Then Breuer went on to declare that when the word of the baron stood against that of Herr Basch the court would listen to the latter who was "one of His Majesty's honest officers." This was wholly in line with Swedish law: "when the prosecution has evidence, proof or comparison or even a single witness then that is worth more than a single "no" from the defendant." The one testimony necessary was Basch. And Breuer himself stood for the "comparison" in that he concluded that since the baron admitted to having felt that it was too much to pay taxes to two kings in the same month that was the same as having said that he did not owe the Swedish king anything. Breuer wondered if Krabbe believed him to be a man of such poor wits as not to notice the inconsistencies of his account.

It could easily be proved that on several occasions Krabbe had said: "Let them take everything away so that there will be an end to it, when this is up there's nothing left for them to take."¹³⁹¹ Krabbe denied having spoken ill of the Swedish king, but not that he had said that he could not pay two armies at the same time. For Breuer that was more than enough. It was obvious that Krabbe always had been unwilling to pay

¹³⁸⁸ Sperling to the king, 16th October, 1677, GG, SRA.

¹³⁸⁹ Breuer's second instance, 15th October, in Aletophilus, p.57. Klage Libell

¹³⁹⁰ Breuer's second instance, 15th October, in Aletophilus, p.57: "jagh dem (remonstrationer och probationer) medh möyeligest Kortheet författet och medh inga många Latin Sententier och Gloser förblommerat och än mindre främmande Leges allegeret hafvar."

¹³⁹¹ Breuer's second instance, 15th October, in Aletophilus, p.58. "lad dennem tage alt sammen bort, saa er der Ende paa, naar det er oppe, saa kunde de intet meere tage.." Krabbe's Second Statement, p.95. A figment of Basch's imagination according to Krabbe.

his dues to the Swedes. When it was the matter of paying the Danes, he had managed to come up with surprising sums but every time the Swedes wanted their taxes Krabbe started grumbling. As evidence of this Breuer showed up a series of letters from the baron that had been censured by the Swedish authorities. At this point extracts from the letters quoted by Breuer were read aloud in the courtroom. According to Breuer they proved that Krabbe was unwilling to pay taxes, ungrateful to the king and that he refused to obey orders. To Breuer correspondence with the If he had been a true patriot then he would have gone to Sweden with his family and servants like all other true patriots in Scania. That would have saved him from having to trouble his Danish relatives and friends with pleas for help: pleas that in themselves constituted evidence of treason since connivance with the enemy was not allowed. Unnecessary contacts with the other side were “totally suspect and neither suitable nor recommendable for any true subject”. It was evidence of an inclination towards the enemy. The baron was even more to be suspected of since he had been in touch with the Danish Commission in Kristianstad (here: Christianstadh).¹³⁹² Consequently it was not only the matter of private correspondence. Breuer thought that extracts 8 and 9 proved that Krabbe had been in touch with “yet another person whose name he does not mention.” To judge by the extract, it seems as if Krabbe had written to the Danish king to try and recuperate his sister’s property.¹³⁹³ Furthermore Breuer thought it seemed as if Krabbe had tried to “appropriate himself of Swedish property” and that he “rejoiced in the destruction of a true Swedish patriot”.

Extract 10 contained a phrase that would become fatal to Krabbe: “For if we become Swedish, it might do me harm....”. Breuer concluded that this phrase proved that the baron considered himself Danish and that he had given his heart to the Danes and their king.¹³⁹⁴ The usage of the future form of the verb was evidence enough to conclude that Krabbe no longer considered himself as “bound by oath and duty to the king of Sweden.”¹³⁹⁵ Someone who wrote that he might become Swedish in the future could not possibly be so at the time of writing.

¹³⁹² Extract 8

¹³⁹³ Fulltofta (Fulletofte) that had been confiscated by Niclas Jonsson.

¹³⁹⁴ Breuer’s second instance, 15th October, in Aletophilus, p.60. Danish original quote: ”Thi om vi blifver svensk, så kand det gjøre mig skade...”

¹³⁹⁵ Breuer’s second instance, 15th October, in Aletophilus, p.61.

Breuer declared that he was not charging the baron with having *ordered* his employees to join the snaphaner. It could not be proved that Krabbe had known where his men were at the time of Basch's abduction but Breuer concluded that it was "worth to ponder upon the fact that four of the baron's men had been with the snaphaner, at night, with their guns and in three different places when Herr Basch and his followers were caught and the fifth came out and betrayed Captain Klingspor."¹³⁹⁶ What Breuer thought to have enough evidence of was that Krabbe had found out what had happened at an early stage and omitted or delayed reporting it to the authorities. It also seemed obvious that Krabbe was not telling the truth when he claimed that his bailiffs had been forced to go along with the snaphaner.

Another point on which Breuer had found that the baron was telling less than the truth was that of the two "boys" who had been present when Klingspor was captured.

Krabbe had described one of them as a poor little boy of 15 or 16 whose task it was to pick fruit in the garden. Unfortunately, the bailiff had found out that the boy was twenty and as tall as himself and that he carried a rapier and pistols. As for the gamekeeper's lad Krabbe claimed that he was 10 or 12 but the bailiff had found out that he was 16 and carried a huge rifle with him everywhere. According to Krabbe the boys and Rasmus had been forced to accompany the snaphaner. In a letter to Sperling, Krabbe had explained that the boys had said "You rascals!" to the snaphaner when they met. Then the snaphaner said: "We know very well that he is at Taastrup or Bullarp. Now you will have to come with us so that you will not warn him."

Whereupon they all rode to Tosterup (Taastrup) castle to look for Basch. They ate all his food and drank all his beer and then they said he would have to come with them too. Rasmus and the two boys begged that they might be left behind so that they would not end up in trouble but the snaphaner forced them to come along.¹³⁹⁷

Unfortunately for Krabbe, Christopher confessed that the boys had joined the snaphaner "of their own free will." They were both riding with him on the way to Tosterup (Taastrup) when he met the *snaphaner* and then they had left Bollerup

¹³⁹⁶ These five were the bailiffs, the two "boys" and the sharpshooter. Breuer's second instance, 15th October, in Aletophilus, pp.62-63: "ehuru wel dhett heelt eftertänckligt er at fire aff Velb. Her Baronens Folck om Nattertijdhen medh Geweehr på tre åthskiellige Ortår och licka som uthi et Moment waro medh Snaphaannerne dher Her Basken och hans föllie blefva fast tagen och dhen femte kom än dher uth hofl. och gaff Anslag paa Ritmester Klingspor..."

¹³⁹⁷ Breuer's second instance, 15th October, Letter from Jørgen Krabbe to Jöran Sperling, Extract Nr. XVI, pp.83-84.

(Bullarp) in the company of the snaphaner during the night and came back early in the morning claiming that they had been on a "raid": "they joined the snaphaner of their own free will and rode with them... the bailiff (Christopher) admits that they left Bollerup (Bullarp) with the snaphaner at night and returned with them early in the morning and said that they had been on a party and that they had helped arrest the Quarter master and the physician and they were quite merry and happy and stayed with them when the bailiff and vice-bailiff took their leave".¹³⁹⁸ Christopher had "confessed" all this. By what means this "confession" had been extracted was not mentioned. Breuer felt that he had caught the baron in a blatant lie and that that lie had given the "boys" time enough to disappear: "since the baron himself pretends to be a true and steadfast Patriot and Subject then he should have had them (the boys) arrested and brought in here right from the start when the deed was recent and he had only just found out so that they could have been punished as they deserved..." Those of Krabbe's people who were on his estates and felt that they were in danger had disappeared quickly. Rasmus had gone missing and so had the garden boy.¹³⁹⁹ According to the other witnesses Christopher was not treated like a prisoner at all by the snaphaner but rode about "free and proud" with his rapier by his side.¹⁴⁰⁰ He had used this rapier as deftly as any of the snaphaner and all the witnesses agreed that he had eaten and drunk and been as merry as any of the snaphaner after their "feat."¹⁴⁰¹ The witnesses also claimed that it was Rasmus who had insisted that the prisoners be shot so that they would not cause any trouble in the future.¹⁴⁰² Eggert the coach boy had also testified about the occurrences during those fatal September days when Krabbe, Klingspor and Basch all arrived in Malmö (Malmö). He had run to Klingspor with messages several times and of having given him money on account of the baron. He admitted that he had tried to "bribe" Klingspor.¹⁴⁰³

¹³⁹⁸ This passage is not very clear: "dhe komma til Snaphannerne goedwilligen, och redha medh, dher Fougden medh dhem war begrepen på Veigen åth Taastrup, Ja Fougden bekiännar, at dhe om Natten droegge medh Snaphaannerne ifran Bollerup, aff igien, och komme om Morgennen biitijde medh dhennom igien, seyandis sigh at hafva warit medt på Partie, som dhe och warit medh, och hiulpet at fängbla Quartermestern, och Feeldskiäraren, beteendis sigh i alt öfrigt lystige och glade, och blifvandhes än hoes dhem dher Fougden och Ladefougden togga Afffskeed..." Breuer's Second instance, 15th October, pp.63-64.

¹³⁹⁹ Breuer's second instance, 15th October, in Aletophilus, p.63.

¹⁴⁰⁰ Breuer's Second instance, 15th October, p.62.

¹⁴⁰¹ Breuer's Second instance, 15th October, p.62.

¹⁴⁰² Breuer's second instance, 15th October, in Aletophilus, p.63.

¹⁴⁰³ Breuer's Second Instance, 15th October, p.67.

Krabbe claimed that he only discovered that his employees had been involved in the business after a “strict interrogation” after the kidnapping of the Swedes and then they insisted that they had been constrained to join the snaphaner. This interrogation took place two or three days later.¹⁴⁰⁴ Krabbe claimed that he immediately after this sent a report to governor general Fersen about what had happened.¹⁴⁰⁵ Fersen died soon afterwards. Unfortunately, there was no trace of such a letter in the archives.¹⁴⁰⁶ As Breuer saw it Krabbe had simply tried “to sweep the whole business under the carpet”.¹⁴⁰⁷ Breuer asked the baron to stop bragging about his great friendship with Klingspor and Basch because it seemed to be a rather one-sided friendship. Krabbe had claimed that his wife and the other women were crying because they were so sad that Basch and Klingspor had ended up in the hands of the rascals.¹⁴⁰⁸ However, the Swedish captives had reported to the court that the women had been laughing and making fun of them from the window when they were brought into Krageholm (Krogholm) castle “in spite of the fact that up until then Basch had always been treated with respect on the estate”.¹⁴⁰⁹ It also seemed evident that Krabbe was not telling the truth when he claimed that Basch had been maltreating his peasants. The peasants who had been called to the stand had unanimously agreed that Basch had been very kind to them and that he had not even tried to collect all the taxes he was entitled to.¹⁴¹⁰ When Basch met Krabbe in the Central Square in Malmö (Malmö) Krabbe had tried to sound him out in order to find out which way he was leaning. On this occasion Krabbe had admitted that his bailiffs had called Basch a “*Schwedscher Hund*” and maltreated him.¹⁴¹¹ Basch then signed an accord that said that he and Rasmus were even.¹⁴¹² Breuer declared he guarded the interest of His Majesty the King and did not care about personal squabbles like the one between Rasmus and Lorentz Basch.¹⁴¹³

¹⁴⁰⁴ Breuer’s Second instance, 15th October, in Aletophilus, p.64.

¹⁴⁰⁵ Krabbe’s second Indleg, 11th October 1677, in Aletophilus, pp.24-28.

¹⁴⁰⁶ Breuer’ Second Instance, 15th October, p.66.

¹⁴⁰⁷ Breuer’s second instance, 15th October, in Aletophilus, p.65. (“Sacken döllia och under Bencken stickia”)

¹⁴⁰⁸ Krabbe, in Aletophilus, p.130.

¹⁴⁰⁹ Breuer’s Second Instance, 15th October, p. 65: “...dher dogh Basken uthi förstonne wel warit antaggen dher på Gärdhen...”

¹⁴¹⁰ Breuer’s Second Instance, 15th October, p. 66.

¹⁴¹¹ Breuer’s second instance, 15th October, p.66: “...och uthleetha hans Mienningh, hvar hän han inclinerede...” Krabbe himself denied this fiercely and said that he had never taken such words into his mouth.

¹⁴¹² Breuer’s second instance, 15th October, p.67.

¹⁴¹³ Breuer’s second instance, 15th October, p.67.

To Breuer the *cardo totius negotii* was the following: "Apart from this the Baron totally ignores what I have written towards the end of all my petitions, as if it did not regard him that he, knowingly and willingly, had employed people who were best friends with the snaphaner and both had given them an excuse to and had participated himself in tracking down, arresting, maltreating, plundering and shooting His Majesty's servants and soldiers..." Breuer called this problem the "*nodus gordius*" the Gordian knot of the whole business. Krabbe had not replied to these accusations at all, and Breuer could not but take his silence as a confession.¹⁴¹⁴ Breuer then referred to the Royal decree on the snaphaner in which it was expressly stated that those who harboured or hid snaphaner would be treated as snaphaner themselves by the Swedish authorities. Breuer claimed that Krabbe knew this decree all too well, and that he was aware that every hundred or village that harboured snaphaner would be laid waste. And yet Krabbe had not reported the goings on in time, nor had he sent for help from Malmö (Malmø): "Which the baron did not do, but kept quiet from 20th July until 7th September when he informed his Highness, General Lieutenant and Vice-Governor General thereof, since the Snaphaanner now had started (as he claims) to attack and maltreat his estate and peasants..."¹⁴¹⁵

It was undeniable that Krabbe still had people in his service who had gone over to the enemy. Breuer and his men had made impressive efforts to bolster up the prosecution with this second main line of accusations. In order to prove that Krabbe had lived surrounded by "enemies" Breuer divided the evidence into eight groups.

1. Two of Krabbe's bailiffs namely his main steward Hindrich Peersøn at Krageholm (Krogholm) and his bailiff Mogens Peersøn¹⁴¹⁶ at Högestad (Høgested), had both gone over to the enemy. Hindrich had left Krabbe's service

¹⁴¹⁴ Breuer's second instance, 15th October, p.67: "Uthan alt dhetta gaar Velb. Her Baronen dhet som jagh uthi Slutningen aff minna Inlagge skriffver aldeelis forbi, liggesom dhet hannom intet anginge at nemlig Velb. Her Baronen weettandes, och williandhes hollit uthi sit Bröedt sådant Folck, huilcka hafva varit uthi Flock och Föllia medh Snaphaannerne, och giffvet dhem een deels Anledning, een deels och sielff varit medt, til at opleeta, fängsla illa tractera, plöndra, och ihielskiutta Kongl. Majest. Betiendta och Kriigs-Folck..."

¹⁴¹⁵ Breuer's Second Intercession, 15th October, p.67: "Huilcket Velb. Her Baronen nu intat hafver giort, uthan teeget dher medh ifan den 20. Julii indtil den 7. Septembr. da han dhet först hans högVelb. Excell. Her General Lieutenanten och Vice-General Gouverneuren lät weetta, formedelst dhet Snaphaannerne nu och begyndta som wil forregifvas, hans Goeds, och Böndher at angrippa och illa medhfarra, som tilförne ähr sagt..."

¹⁴¹⁶ Also called Hindrich Pehrsson, Hendrich Peersson and Hendrich Pedersøn. In "Blood Crying for Revenge" he is called Hendrik Persön. Hindrich and Mogens were obviously not brothers because Breuer just called them "good friends and comrades" (Second Intercession, p.71). Mogens is also called Mons Peersson in the same text.

before the Danish invasion with the excuse that he was going to dedicate himself to business in the nearby town of Ysted. However, after the Danish invasion he had presented himself to the baron with a certificate that proved that he had taken service as a Danish crown bailiff. The baron had admitted all this to the court. Breuer claimed that he could prove that Hindrich had been working as a bailiff up until the beginning of June 1677 (some weeks before the abduction of the Swedes). Christopher had only started his service around 6th or 7th July and before that the position had been empty for a month. Which meant that even if Hindrich had taken his leave officially before the summer of 1676, he still occupied his post as a bailiff a year later. Breuer then pointed out that Krabbe had claimed that Hindrich had saved his peasants from the ravages of the Danish soldiers and that he had been lenient as regarded tax extraction etc. At the same time Breuer had found a passage in one of Krabbe's letters in which he stated that he and his peasants had paid the Danes three times more than the Swedes. Basch on his side had declared that "Hindrich Pehrsson" had put the peasants under hard pressure and maltreated them terribly. In this paragraph Breuer concluded that Krabbe had already defined himself as a Dane once and he did so again now, albeit involuntarily.¹⁴¹⁷

2. Krabbe had two girls in his service who were highly suspect. Anne Andersdaatter was not only the sister of a Danish tax-collector (crone-fogde) called Anders Dolmer¹⁴¹⁸ but also the fiancée of Hindrich Peerssön. Sperling defined Dolmer as a scoundrel and one of Krabbe's best friends. Bengte Börgisdaatter was the fiancée of a vice-bailiff (ladufoged) called Rasmus who had run away. Breuer conceded that the two girls might be of good and honest character but their mere presence on Krabbe's estate was a risk: "Occasion might be given for unnecessary and illegal correspondence with the servants and supporters of the Enemy, of which every honest and true subject who wishes to persist in his Fidelity ought to feel particular disgust, in order to prove his Fidelity in public, and to avoid

¹⁴¹⁷ Breuer's Second Intercession, 15th October, pp.70-71.

¹⁴¹⁸ Dolmer's activity was intense during the war. Numerous orders from him directly to captains of the friskytter have been preserved in the National archives of Copenhagen and Stockholm. Sperling called him a "persecutor of the Swedish nation" and claimed that Krabbe and he were quite "thick." See also M. Weibull, *Skånska samlingar*, II:1:4 (Åtskilliga danska påbud) where several of His Majesty's Tax Collector Dolmer's orders are printed.

righteous Suspicion...”¹⁴¹⁹ Breuer was convinced that the two girls attracted “vermin” (Skaddediure) like Hindrich Peerssön and Rasmus to the estate. According to one of the witnesses Hindrich used to come and visit on a regular basis. The last time had been eight days earlier (7th October or so) when he had ridden “from Lands Cronna to Krogholm and Marsvinsholm in the company of fifty snaphaner” in order to “speak to his fiancée and conspire a little.” Breuer kindly asked the court that the two girls should be ordered to betake themselves to Malmö (Malmøe) and that the property of “Hendrich Peersson” and Rasmus that was to be found on Krabbe’s estate was to be confiscated.¹⁴²⁰

3. On the same day as Basch was brought to Kragholm (Krogholm) as a prisoner a man called Simon arrived there on his russet horse. Simon was “Hendrich Peersson’s” groom but the snaphaner wanted to confiscate his horse anyway. Fortunately, Eggert and the groom interfered and saved the horse from being “kidnapped.” Breuer declared that by doing so they defended the property of the enemy and “betrayed all that was Swedish.” He asked the baron to explain what kind of business Simon had had at Krageholm (Krogholm) and why he had not been arrested and sent to Malmö (Malmøe).¹⁴²¹
4. Then Breuer came to the case of Krabbe’s parson Christopher Corvinus. Breuer declared that Corvinus had behaved like a “hypocrite and servant of two masters” which in itself “went against the word of our Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ.” Krabbe had always supported Corvinus, and Breuer saw this as further evidence of how “eager and willing the Baron has been to defend criminals and all others who had violated their oath.”¹⁴²² Breuer concluded that Corvinus should be summoned to Malmö (Malmøe).

¹⁴¹⁹ Breuer’s Second Intercession, 15th October, pp.70–71.: “Tilfälle kan gifvas til een undwiickelig och stadigh olofligh Correspondence meh Fiendes Betiendte och Anhängiarre, för huilcken liickwähl hwar reedeligh och troegen Undhersätte som åstundher at staae fast i sin trooheet billigt böer dragga een synnerligh Affsky, så wähl til at offentligen wiissa sin Trooheet som och at undwicka all rätmåttigh Suspicion...”

¹⁴²⁰ From this passage we learn that Hindrich Peerssön who was a tax collector (Crone Foged) was also at the same time the leader of a troop of snaphaner. Hindrich seems to have taken his refuge to the Danish enclave around Landskrone by this time and he seems to have been working from there, making forays out into the countryside. Landskrona is situated some 120 kilometres from Krageholm.

¹⁴²¹ Breuer’s Second Intercession, 15th October, p. 72. Breuer had a clear perception of a Swedish-ness that could be defined by actions and ways of thought

¹⁴²² Breuer’s Second Intercession, 15th October, p.73.

5. Krabbe and his father Iffuer had had a man called Hack Søfrenson¹⁴²³ in their service for a long time. Breuer designated Søfrenson as “the baron’s old and faithful friend and servant and right-hand man with whom he always discussed all his business in order to have his approval.” In Breuer’s opinion Søfrenson was an “unfaithful subject of the king” who had committed serious offences.¹⁴²⁴ When the Swedes were after him, he had fled to Krageholm (Krogholm) where the baron had taken him under his wings. Some time later Søfrenson died, and Breuer claimed that he had left all his earthly belongings at Krageholm (Krogholm). Søfrenson’s wife had admitted that her things were there during a visit to Malmö (Malmö) in June 1677.¹⁴²⁵ On 22nd May the governor general had written to Krabbe asking about Søfrenson’s belongings: according to what Krabbe had written in his last letter it seemed to Fersen that Søfrenson had left everything on his estate. On 24th May Krabbe replied in a rather offended tone. He declared that Søfrenson had fallen ill shortly after his arrival at Krageholm (Krogholm) and that all he had brought with him were the clothes he wore and had been taken away by Søfrenson’s wife together with the corpse. Krabbe had two old horses (*Hopper*) that had once belonged to Søfrenson, but he had received them in restitution of a debt.¹⁴²⁶ However, Breuer had evidence to the contrary on his hands or so he thought. In a letter from Krabbe to Søfrenson that had been intercepted by the Swedish authorities Krabbe had written as follows: “My wife received your letter today. You are welcome to leave your belongings here on the estate.”¹⁴²⁷ Another letter, from as early as 25th April 1675, proved that Krabbe had had business transactions with Søfrenson.¹⁴²⁸ Breuer insisted that further enquiries be made into the matter.
6. Søfrenson’s son Mogens Hacksen had been in the Krabbes’s service too but was now following “his Father’s evil example in that he is trying to damage His Majesty’s interests with great zeal and to extort taxes and contributions from the

¹⁴²³ Also written as Søfrensen (p.99), Söffrensson, Söffrinson and Sörensen.

¹⁴²⁴ “Velb. Her Baronens gamle, oc troegne ven, och Tiennare, och liika som hans andra Hånd, medh hvilckan Her Baronen uthi alle sinne Anlägenhetter aldtied sigh rådtförda, och des gotfinnande indhemptede...” “een sådan utroegen Konnungens Undersåtterer”

¹⁴²⁵ Breuer’s Second Intercession, 15th October, p.74.

¹⁴²⁶ Letter from Krabbe to Fersen, Marsvinsholm 24th May 1677, Breuer’s Second Intercession, 15th October, p.89.

¹⁴²⁷ Letter from Krabbe to Hack Søfrenson, Kroegholm 27th January, 1676, Breuer’s Second Intercession, 15th October, p.90. This extract is wrongly referred to as No.29 in stead of 20 in the text.

¹⁴²⁸ Letter from Krabbe to Hack Søfrenson, Kroegholm April 25, 1675, Breuer’s Second Intercession, 15th October, p.90.

subjects as if he were an enemy.”¹⁴²⁹ In other words, he had gone into Danish service and worked as a sheriff in the hundred of Färs (Fers).¹⁴³⁰ Mogens seems to have been an enemy indeed. In a letter that was used as evidence he declared that the Swedes that had maltreated the peasants in Färs (Fers) would get an “infernal” punishment and that he would make many a Swedish child weep.¹⁴³¹ Breuer concluded that everyone who had been in service with the baron and had been in favour with him had then gone over to the Danes and were now the worst persecutors of the Swedish nation and tried to cause damage to “His Majesty’s Subjects”.¹⁴³² And what was even worse, they were still friends with the baron. At this point Breuer reckoned that it was obvious that the baron was guilty on the following points: 1) of having spoken harsh words against the king, 2) of having been unwilling to pay contributions to the Swedes but not to the Danes, 3) of “confessing himself to be completely Danish..”, 4) of “persecuting a true Swedish Patriot and servant and trying to lay hands on his goods...”, 5) of illegal correspondence with friends and family on the other side, 6) of letting his servants go into Danish service, 7) of having protected delinquents, 8) of having people in his service through whom connivance with the enemy and the snaphaner could be maintained, 9) of having had people in his service who collaborated with the snaphaner without reporting it to the authorities, 10) of having been “on such good terms with the Snaphaner that he allowed them to have meetings on his estate.”¹⁴³³ These ten charges were extremely serious and Breuer considered them as already proven. To Breuer Krabbe had broken the faith he had sworn His Majesty the King, and he had broken the (Swedish) law. Now it was for the commissarial court to pronounce its verdict.

¹⁴²⁹ “...och söckier efter sin Fadhers ondhe Exempel medh all Fliid, Kongl.Maiest. Interesse at förhindra, och som een Fiendhe Skat, och Contribution aff Undersaatterne at uthprässa.” Mogens/Mons Hacksøn/Hacksen and his brother Johan are mentioned several times in the chapter on the snaphaner and friskytter.

¹⁴³⁰ Røndahl (1996), p.438.

¹⁴³¹ “det skal blifve Anders Gramß, sampt de andre Svenske (som nu sidst var i Feerßherred til at pjne, och plage Almuen,) een Helfvedes Straff, och mangel et Svensk Barn, i Sverrige skal græde...” Lit. XXIII, Feerßherred, 3rd August Anno 1677. From Mogens Hacksøn, addressee not known. Possibly it was Krabbe.

¹⁴³² “alle dhe som hos Velb. Her Baronen för uthi Tiennesta, och hans egne Creaturar warit, nu sedan dhe sich til Fienden begifvat, dhe wärreste, som dhen Suenske Nation förföllia, och Kongl. Majest. Undersaattere all tort och Skadhe tilföya, och alle dese haffva stadigt warit, och ännu ähro Velb. Her Baronens besta och förtrogneste Venner.”

¹⁴³³ For these accusations, see also: Fabricius III, pp.128-129. Translations in this passage: p.75: “bekiännandes sigh fulkommeligen Dansk...”, p.76: “warit med Snaphaannerne uthi sådant Förtroende, at han dhem tilstådt på hans gaard at holla dheras Tilsammenkompst...”

Krabbe was now ordered to deposit his rapier in the courtroom and then he was brought to a cell in the fortress (without “citation.”) He was allowed to keep one servant with him, but this man was sent away three or four times and was eventually substituted by a little boy from the countryside. Krabbe asked that he might be sent means and articles from Krageholm (Krogholm) but he was refused this and had to live “on the charity of others.”¹⁴³⁴ When he received the prosecutor’s second report he was told by the commander of the fortress that he had to hurry with his reply and so he did; it was his firm belief that he would receive a reply from the prosecutor and in his turn be given a better chance to defend himself but this was not the case. The prosecutor’s second report contained serious accusations but did not refer to any paragraphs or clauses of the Swedish law which made it more difficult for the baron to defend himself. The prosecutor also mentioned several witnesses whose identity was kept from Krabbe. It was obvious that it was the matter of Krabbe’s own employees or tenants. The baron’s employees had all been arrested and taken from Krageholm (Krogholm) to Malmö (Malmøe) where they were guarded by the High Guard. According to Rosencrantz Krabbe was made to understand that the court had started elaborating his death sentence. At this point the baron wrote to the High Court (konglige retten) and pleaded that he might appear in front of it in person so that he might “deducere” himself. In this letter he pleaded his case as well as he could and begged that his “confession” might be handed over to the king, but he received no reply whatsoever.¹⁴³⁵

In a curious little letter from 16th October 1677, written in his own handwriting, Sperling told Charles XI that he was now convinced of Krabbe’s evil intentions or at least evil inclination and that the whole court agreed with him.¹⁴³⁶ It was Krabbe’s censured letters that had persuaded them. Things had taken a serious turn and the court felt that Krabbe no longer should be allowed to carry his rapier or to remain in house arrest. It was better to assure oneself of Krabbe’s person, Sperling added. Sperling then added a short extract from one of Krabbe’s letters to the “frivolous rogue Hack Sörensen, who was Krabbe’s best and closest friend.” The extract in question was the passage in which Krabbe expressed his doubts as to whether they

¹⁴³⁴ p.52: ” har hand icke maatte faa sit nödtorfftige Underhold fra sit Gods men maatte leffve aff andres Naade.”

¹⁴³⁵ pp.49-50.

¹⁴³⁶ An extract of this letter is to be found in Cronholm, p.203.

were to remain Swedish. To Sperling it was obvious that Krabbe had defined himself as Danish: “whereas he *reipsa* was or at least, should have been, Swedish, but nevertheless considered it a *futurum contingens*, that he might become Swedish...then this fact alone is enough to convict him”.¹⁴³⁷ The Danes knew what the Swedes were up to. The Danish War Commissary Jens Harboe reported the following to Copenhagen: “Mit Jørgen Krabbe gehet es Schlecht in Malmøe her. Sie wollen ihn endlich den Kopf herunter haben. Er wird beschuldigt, daß er mit den Snaphanen gehalten...”¹⁴³⁸

At the beginning of October Holger Thott came to Sperling on the verge of tears.¹⁴³⁹ In his letter from the 16th of that month, Sperling expressed his doubts and fears as regarded Holger Thott. He was offering Sperling enormous sums of money in exchange for permission to stay in Scania or emigrate to Lübeck with his family. Sperling did not trust Holger Thott at all. He warned the king that there was something suspicious about him and that he had him followed everywhere. According to Sperling Thott was doing what he did out of fear, especially so since Krabbe had been arrested. For exactly that reason Sperling felt tempted to accept the deal “because it might just be that Your Royal Majesty could profit somewhat thereof, if Tott would be condemned of something that originated in infidelity.” More than anything Sperling was concentrating on the “highly useful emigration of the nobility.” But he still felt that he had to inform the king that Thott’s “offers” could be extremely useful in those hard times.¹⁴⁴⁰ It seems undeniable that the judge and the jury were spurred on by the hope for material gains. As indeed they were in the whole business of the deportation of the nobility.

¹⁴³⁷ ”dher han dock reipsa då war eller åthminstone borde vara swensk, men hölt dhet lickwäll för ett futurum contingens, att han kunde blifwa swensk...så åhr doch dheta allene sufficient till att öfwertyga och convincera honom.”

¹⁴³⁸ Jens Harboe to Arensdorff, October 1677, Indkomne breve 1677, DRA.

¹⁴³⁹ Sperling to the King, GG, SRA.

¹⁴⁴⁰ ”så drages och intales iagh om så myckit mehr, till att antaga dhene handelen medh honom, ty kunde hända, att Eders Kongl. Mayt torde i något kunna profitera dheraf, om Totten något, som af otrooheett skulle saka, blifwa öfwertygat.”

Krabbe's Reply to the Prosecutor's Second Statement (23rd October)

"I do not know whom except God Almighty in heaven, that I could call to witness that I have never written or said anything illegal or insincere against my gracious king but only what was worthy of a righteous Patriot, as I can assure with the oath of my innermost soul"

Krabbe to the Commissarial Court, 23rd October 1677.¹⁴⁴¹

The same themes pervade Krabbe's writings throughout. The key words of those themes are all present in the quote above, namely: "God", "king", "patriot", "oath" and "honour". To Krabbe, a true patriot always pursued the interests of his king. In the same manner, an untrue patriot ignored his oath of allegiance and duty towards his Lord and King.¹⁴⁴² At the core of everything was the oath of allegiance that Krabbe, like all other Scaniaans, had sworn to the Swedish sovereign some time after the conquest.

In the court statement from 23rd October Krabbe's tone had become humbler but he still insisted that he had the law on his side. Some of his arguments were based on foreign law but exclusively when in accordance with Swedish law. He then added: "I wish and presume in all humility that Your Highness wellborn Excellency and the honourable Royal Commissarial Court will let me enjoy the *Beneficia* that the law entitles me to..."¹⁴⁴³ Soon enough Krabbe let his bitterness transpire. He declared that it was better to "save paper" and not fill it with "unnecessary chatter" such as Breuer's endless quibbles.¹⁴⁴⁴ Krabbe then quoted several Swedish law treatises and excused himself for having to say that Breuer "prostituted himself" when he permitted Basch to act both as plaintiff and witness.¹⁴⁴⁵ He stressed that he had always "willingly paid his dues to His Majesty and the army of the realm as was suitable and fitting for a righteous Patriot."¹⁴⁴⁶ Krabbe owned the Swedish king his "life, property and honour" for the honours that he had bestowed upon him, especially the baronetcy.

¹⁴⁴¹ Aletophilus, p.100

¹⁴⁴² Krabbe, in Aletophilus, p.101.

¹⁴⁴³ Aletophilus, p.94: "Ønskendis jeg, och alligevel hørsommeligt vil formode, Eders Høy – Velb. Excell. och den høyloflige Kongl. Commissarial-Rættten lader mig de *Beneficia* som Louen i alle Maader tilegner til gode kommer..."

¹⁴⁴⁴ Aletophilus, p.94: "hvorføre, och at spare Papiret, och det ey med saadanne unødvendig Snack opfyldte, Jeg mig eenfoldig til min forrige Exception och Loufaste instantiam referere..."

¹⁴⁴⁵ Aletophilus, p.95: "prostituerendis sig Her Prosecutoren (med permission at sige) intet lidet naar hand imod all formam Juris Actorem Principalem...her bruger til et Vidne..."

¹⁴⁴⁶ Aletophilus, p.99: "jeg med en goed Villie, mine Udlegger, altid, til Hans Kongl. Majest. och Rigens Armee contribuereet hafver, det och een retskaffen Patriot vel eigned och anstoed..."

Or at least, that was what Krabbe claimed at this point in time. He stressed this by assuring that “the only thing one gets from all one’s pains and labour in this sinful world is an honest name.”¹⁴⁴⁷ Krabbe promptly denied having spoken ill of the Swedish king but not having said that he could not pay two armies at the same time.¹⁴⁴⁸

Krabbe had to pay ninety *daler* in silver a month for Ingildstropgaard in war contributions. In the Land Register (Jordebog) it was registered as a farmstead with no more land than an average farmstead inhabited by peasants. Yet ninety *daler* was what twelve farmsteads paid in contribution. In the same way Baldringe that had belonged to Krabbe’s maternal great-grandfather and was inhabited by two peasant families was taxed at forty-five *daler* a month in war contributions. (Krabbe and his ancestors had never paid more than forty *daler*, one *mark* in silver in Land tax (landgille) for it). Tosterup (Taastrup) was equalled to eighteen farmsteads, “Kroegeholm” to sixteen farmsteads and Högestad (Høgested) to ten. By these standards Krabbe had to pay more in war contributions a month than what he earned in four months. Krabbe had appealed to Fersen for help and Fersen told him to turn to Johan Gyllenstierna. In two months’ time more than twenty of Krabbe’s farms had been abandoned by their tenants, because of their “poverty and utter misery.”¹⁴⁴⁹ Against Breuer’s accusation that he had corresponded with the Royal (Danish) commissariat in Kristianstad (Christianstad) Krabbe admitted that this was the case, but only because the new (Danish) Lehnsmand or sheriff was putting the peasants under far too heavy tax-pressure and there was no way to get in touch with the Swedish authorities.¹⁴⁵⁰

As regards the phrase “if we become Swedish” that Breuer had given such great weight to, Krabbe responded that Breuer simply did not understand the nuances of the Scanian tongue. The verb “blifver” could mean either “become” or “remain” in Scanian, though it only had the first significance in Swedish. Krabbe had meant the

¹⁴⁴⁷ Aletophilus, p.99: ”mand haffver intet meere for all sin Umage her i denne syndige Verden end et Erligt Nafn...”

¹⁴⁴⁸ Breuer’s second instance, 15th October, in Aletophilus, p.58. ”lad dennem tage alt sammen bort, saa er der Ende paa, naar det er oppe, saa kunde de intet meere tage...” Krabbe’s Second Statement, p.95. A figment of Basch’s imagination according to Krabbe.

¹⁴⁴⁹ Krabbe’s response to Breuer’s second statement, Aletophilus, pp.97-98.

¹⁴⁵⁰ Aletophilus, p.101: jeg hafde skrefvet Cörbiß, och den Kongl. Commissariat om den letfærdige Lehnsmands Actioner til...”

phrase to mean “if we remain Swedish”. This is the one and only passage in the court records where linguistical problems are well documented.¹⁴⁵¹

As regards the garden boy and the game-keeper’s lad, Krabbe’s only comments were that he found it hard to remember the precise age of young boys but if the “fiscal” saw them as men and not boys then they should answer for their own actions like men. And yes, he admitted that the gamekeeper’s lad was wont to take his rifle with him into the parlour.¹⁴⁵²

Hindrich Peersøn had resigned his job on 1st May which was the day when Krabbe’s bailiffs were wont to hand in their accounts of the past year. Krabbe had allowed him to go on living at Krogholm for the time being. Some time after Hindrich Peersøn’s resignation Krabbe sent him to the Danish army camp to ask for a *sauvegarde* letter for Krabbe’s estates. Then one day when Krabbe was out walking in the garden Hindrich came back and said: “There was no way I could obtain a safeguard letter, but I have decided to become a Danish tax collector and here is His Majesty of Denmark’s authorisation” At which Krabbe replied: “Do you want to sell yourself to the devil? For you have to prepare yourself for becoming an exile and a fugitive and after this day you will have to look for somewhere else to stay because you cannot come here to my estate anymore.” After that Hindrich went to the village of Bromma (Bromme) to stay with the Lehnsmand there and he only ever came to Krageholm (Krogholm) again to collect taxes for the Danes.¹⁴⁵³

Krabbe only had good things to say about the two girls that Breuer criticised him for keeping on in his service. Anne Andersdatter was “his dearest’s chambermaid” and could be found with the baroness in Malmö (Malmø) right then. She had been with them for ten years and was not engaged to be married to anyone; it might be that she was friends with Hindrich Peersøn, but Krabbe did not know very much about that and saw no reason to send her away. As for the other girl, she had been in Krabbe’s service for seven years and could now be found at Krageholm (Krogholm). She had

¹⁴⁵¹ Krabbe, in Aletophilus, p.103: ”Thi enten jeg skreff, blifve Svensk som det Skaanske Sprock falder, (blifve) I stedet som den Svenske Stiil falder/ (forblifver). Tyckis mig at de Ord, hafver een Meening...”

¹⁴⁵² Krabbe, in Aletophilus, p.127 (107).

¹⁴⁵³ Krabbe, in Aletophilus, p.135: ”Salvagarde Breff kunde jeg nu intet bekomme, mens jeg hafver antaget nu jeg var borte at være Danske Cronefouget och her hafver jeg Hans Kongl. Majest. aff Danmarckis Breff der paa, daa jeg hannem svarede, som jeg veed Gud i Himmelen hermed kand contestere... Vilt du nu Fanden i Vold, det du maa forsickre dig, och bereede dig til, at blifve Landflyctig, och en Rømnings-Mand, och efter denne Dag, skalt du see dig om een anden Ort, mens paa min Gaard hafver du intet meere at komme...”

always behaved well too and Krabbe had nothing to say about her and her supposed fiancé Rasmus. If Hindrich or Mogens Peersøn had left any belongings at Krageholm (Krogholm) well, then Krabbe was utterly ignorant thereof and pleaded Sperling and the jury to let “War Commissary Olluff Hermand and Crown Sheriff Niels Skaaning” inquire into the case.¹⁴⁵⁴ What Krabbe knew was that Hindrich still had quite a few important letters and documents that belonged to him that he would like to get back. As for Mogens Pedersøn, Krabbe did not think that he had ever been in the service of the Danes. As far as he knew he had been working for Field Marshal Banér until he went missing.¹⁴⁵⁵

Krabbe claimed to know absolutely nothing of the episode with the russet horse. He knew who the servant Simon was and that he was the son of a burgher in Malmö (Malmøe) that Hindrich Peersøn had taken into his service while he was still working for Krabbe. Obviously Hindrich had hoped that the baron would foot the bill for the servant boy but that was not the case; Krabbe had promptly told him to let the boy (fougde dreng) stay somewhere else and so he did.

Krabbe’s parish minister Christopher Corvinius had only read out the Danish proclamations in church because he had been forced to do so by Danish troops. As for Hack Søfrensøn, he had come to Krageholm (Krogholm) one evening in order to hand over some accounts to the baron; he was then supposed to go on to his sister and brother-in-law at Ystad (Ysted) the morning after but fell ill and had to stay at Krogholm. As soon as possible his wife joined him there and then his sister and brother-in-law too. Mester Bertel from Ystad (Ysted) came to try and help him with his medicines and the minister came too. But it was all in vain; some days later Søfrensøn passed away and was buried at Hørsby¹⁴⁵⁶ where he had resided. Krabbe had had no second thoughts about letting Søfrensøn stay; as far as he knew then Søfrensøn had never committed any crimes or showed himself “untrue.” During

¹⁴⁵⁴ “Olluff Hermand” is the Danicised version of Olof Harman’s name. Harman was first mayor of Ystad under the Swedes, then he became a well-known snaphane hunter. The hundreds of Ingelstad and Järrestad passed to the county of Kristianstad (Christianstad) in 1675. The word used for Nils Skåning’s position here is “Cronens fougde”. Alf Erlandsson (p.164) mentions him as a “befallningsman”. Under the Danes the county of Christianstad comprised eastern and western Göinge (Gyng/Gønge), Villand (Willanz), Gärds (Giers) and Albo. During that time there were three to four “fögderier). Under the Swedes there was first one, then two. See also: Krabbe in Aletophilus, pp.136-137.

¹⁴⁵⁵ Mogens Pedersøn had not been in Krabbe’s service since April that same year when Krabbe had had to cede the Högested estate to the Swedish Field Marshal and Councillor of the realm (rigsraad) Gustaf Banér. Mogens had stayed on in Baner’s service under Hauptmand Monsieur Donner.

¹⁴⁵⁶ Modern-day Hörby?

Søfrensen's illness Krabbe went to Malmö (Malmøe) to talk to the governor general who wanted some information about the Søfrensen and his family. The governor general asked Krabbe if Mogens Hacksøn was in his service and if it was true that Krabbe had helped him to a position as a Danish crown bailiff ("Crone fouget")? Naturally, Krabbe denied all this. Krabbe then concluded that "if he has been untrue then he is now in those places where he will have to take responsibility for his actions."¹⁴⁵⁷

Krabbe admitted that he had told Søfrensen's wife that they could leave their things at Krageholm (Krogholm) if they liked; this did not mean that Krabbe had lied when he swore that he did not keep any of the Søfrensen's things at Krageholm (Krogholm) because in the end they had not accepted his offer.¹⁴⁵⁸ As for their son Mogens, Krabbe promptly denied that he had ever been in his service.

On 4th November 1677 Simon Bengtsson, the commander of the troops at Krageholm (Krogholm), reported to Sperling that Holger and Tage Thott and their family and servants had been "collected" by Danish troops. It was the matter of a mixed force of regular soldiers and snaphaner under Colonel Bahl that had set out from Landskrona (Landscrone). This was the second time Bengtsson communicated this, but he wanted to make sure that the governor general had received this news. Moreover, he had received further information to the point that a Swedish party had surprised the Danes near Getinge (Giddinge) and that the Danes had been beaten and most of them killed. Unfortunately, the Thott brothers had managed to escape on their horses, but Mrs (Holger) Thott and the children and all their belongings had been captured by the Swedes.¹⁴⁵⁹ As it turned out, Bengtsson's information was not correct because Mrs Thott and the children had managed to escape on horseback at a heavy cost in lives for the Danish soldiers.

Sperling only waited two days to explain to the king that he thought it highly unsuitable that old Dorthe Rosencrantz should keep the Sövde (Söfwede) estate. On the paper it belonged to her son Holger who was a "traitor". And Dorthe's mere presence there would constitute an excuse for connivance with the. Sperling proposed

¹⁴⁵⁷ Krabbe, in Aletophilus, p.139: "Mens hafver hand været utroe saa er hand nu paa de Stæder hvor hand det skal ansvare."

¹⁴⁵⁸ Krabbe, in Aletophilus, p.140.

¹⁴⁵⁹ Holger Thott's youngest child was born around the middle of September. See his letter to the Offuer Commissarius among Sperling's letters from 30th October 1677. GG, SRA.

that Dorthe and her sister Mette (who was also the mother of Holger's fiancée) either be sent "across the border" or be brought to Malmö (Malmø). The old ladies were "pretending" they did not wish to go to Denmark. In any case the point of Sperling's letter was that the Sövde (Söfwede) estate, including Ågarp, should be left in the hands of a competent person who had worked hard but lived under tight financial circumstances. That is Jöran Sperling himself.¹⁴⁶⁰ He was granted his wish. Holger Thott's house in Malmö (Malmø) was given to Buschovius who was Chief Military Prosecutor (general auditor) and a member of the Commissarial Jury. According to Cronholm, Holger Thott's house in Malmö was instead expropriated in order to become a custom house and the senior customs officer Nils Arfwidson Hägerflycht was granted part of both Holger and Tage Thotts' town property as a guarantee for their debts.¹⁴⁶¹ Buschovius also received the estate of another fugitive: namely Hans Walkendorff's Brønneslöv. Sperling's deputy Hans Cock von Crimstein received Marsvinsholm.¹⁴⁶² Tage Thott's estate Trolleholm (Eriksholm) went to general major von Buchwald. Field marshal Henrik Horn received Knud Thott's Trolleås (Næs). Colonel Axel Wachtmeister received the entire property of Ove Rommel. That good patriot Niklas Jonsson was allowed to keep Karen Krabbe's Fulltofta (Fulletofte). The Skabersjö (Skabersjø) estate had temporarily passed from the Thotts to the Fersens, although it would eventually be returned to the Thotts after the war.¹⁴⁶³

Conclusions:

During the first part of the court case, it was Basch's word against Krabbe's. The word of one of his Majesty's servants against that of a native Dane. Naturally Krabbe did not see it that way. His was a somewhat antiquated view of the world in which the squire still was the true lord of the land on his domains. He also believed that the word of a gentleman should be worth more than that of a "commoner" like Basch and that the "nationality" or occupational position of the adversaries was of less importance. Unfortunately for Krabbe the Swedish authorities seemed to share Basch's standpoint. Just as in the case of Niklas Jonsson they gave more credit to

¹⁴⁶⁰ Sperling to the King, 5th November 1677, GG, SRA. This letter is also referred to by Cronholm, p.206.

¹⁴⁶¹ Cronholm, p.207.

¹⁴⁶² According to the local legends the Thotts and their snaphane friends filled the impressive renaissance castle with cowdung before they left. Although the Swedish reports do not expressly mention cow dung, they nevertheless made clear that the castle was in a frightful state: the war Prosecutor declared that it looked like "the destruction of Jerusalem". (Fabricius III, s. 143).

¹⁴⁶³ Cronholm, p.207. Skabersjö still belongs to the Thotts.

Basch because he was one of his Majesty's servants and a true Swedish patriot. Krabbe lied to his king. But only because he felt that he had to protect "his people." He stood for values that were rapidly becoming outdated in a world where absolutism and centralisation were becoming the rule and where there was no room left for squires and barons who lived for their own little worlds only. Basch described Krageholm (Krogholm) as an estate where the lord of the manor was keeping an eye closed to the fact that so many of his employees were participating in anti-Swedish activities. He also hypothesised that the lord of the manor had instigated his servants to kidnap a man he owed money. These employees seem to have occupied all sorts of ranks from bailiff to garden-boy. The anti-Swedish activities ranged from regular jobs in the Danish army to passive support of the Danes. The baron himself could be included in this latter category or possibly in an even worse one if one is to trust Basch's conclusions. What is also of interest is that he claimed that on Krabbe's and his wife's estates those of the employees who wanted to participate in "snaphaneri" did so with the lord's good conscience as long as nobody (Swedish or Swedish minded) found out. At that point, but not earlier, they had to leave and join the "real" snaphaner. To Basch being a true Swedish man meant being prepared to give up everything for the king. More than anything it meant *not* loving one's lands and own little squiredom more than one's duty to the sovereign. It meant obeying the king the way one obeyed one's God.

Philip Michel Breuer was considerably more careful than Basch but then he had no personal relationship to the baron and as a professional he was confident that the evidence was crushing. He did not need to insinuate that Krabbe was the mastermind behind the snaphaners' operations because he could prove that Krabbe had found out what had happened at an early stage and *per se* that fact was enough to condemn Krabbe for collusion with the enemy. Breuer stressed that Krabbe insisted on avoiding the "*nodus gordius*" of the whole affair, namely that Krabbe spent most of his time with snaphaner and other traitors or enemies and that he lied on behalf of them even in court, so that those who were at risk could get time to escape from the (Swedish) law. The list of suspect friends of Krabbe's that the court presented was quite impressive and included famous names as Mogens Hacksen who by some were considered an arch-snaphane. Breuer also observed that in his personal correspondence Krabbe used a different tone from his public protestations and that

was obviously what he was wont to do when speaking in private because all the witnesses claimed that he had said disparaging things about the (Swedish) king. Krabbe never quite replied to most of Breuer's affirmations. However, he went back on important points like the presence of snaphaner in the immediate surroundings. Instead, he based his defence on the illegality of the Swedish court proceedings and that on the lacking transparency of it. After all he had a European degree in law and knew what his rights should have been according to international procedures. He explicitly accused Breuer of having prostituted himself and he also claimed that magistrates that were willing to do service in that kind of tribunal only did it for the money. It is obvious from Krabbe's account too that there was a lot of social life in the area, across apparent barriers between different ranks and that several of the involved had been in the habit of dining together. But then social life made part of the court proceedings too, or almost, because Krabbe also revealed that several of the peasants that had been taken to Malmö (Malmøe) to give evidence had also been to Henning Olsen's for a dram in the company of Basch. Krabbe implied that these persons who were now apparently so friendly with the Swedish "party" knew a whole lot about the snaphaner. Eleven of the fourteen questions he put to them regarded the snaphaner. With the passing of time Krabbe's tone became less professional and more openly bitter. He communicated to the court that he had been *constrained* to cede Högstad (Högsted) to Gustaf Banér and that he and his sister had been *constrained* to cede the Fulletofte estate to Niklas Jonsson. He also provided the court with ample evidence of how his farms and estates had been ruined because of the taxes that had been imposed on them. Taxes that were quite unrealistic and that had forced some of his tenants to abandon their homes. He also claimed that the Swedish billeted troops had misbehaved grossly and Basch who had also been violent. Nor did he deny having said that he was unable to pay taxes and contributions to two armies and overlords at one time.

The Verdict

Introduction

In this section I will analyse what took place after the verdict had fallen and how Krabbe's reaction to it should be seen. Today it might seem implausible that someone should sincerely believe that turning to God instead of more practical means in that situation would be the best solution. But religion did occupy another place in society

in those days and at least some people, like Krabbe, expected that communication with others (the Swedish authorities in this case) be facilitated by the common experience of trust in God and knowledge of the Bible.

The Last Weeks

On 6th November 1677 a verdict dated __ November was sent to the king. However, it was not pronounced officially until 21st or 22nd November.¹⁴⁶⁴ In the verdict Krabbe was found guilty of six charges:

- 1) “Baron Krabbe has uttered words that on the one hand demonstrate very little respect for His Majesty and on the other a particular desire not to pay war-contributions.”¹⁴⁶⁵
- 2) Krabbe had people in his service who might “give cause for connivance with the enemy and the snaphaner” and he himself had corresponded with Danish ministers.
- 3) Krabbe had “not only lodged and entertained, protected and excused those of his people who had been associating with the snaphaner, but he had even offered to pay bail for some of them.” A comment to the paragraphs of the verdict concluded: “...and so *Summarum Summa* all those who used to be in Milord the Baron’s Service and who have been his Creatures, now that they have betaken themselves to the Enemy, they have become the worst of all those who persecute the Swedish Nation and cause His Royal Majesty’s Subjects wrong and damage, and all those have always been and still are Milord the Baron’s best and closest friends.” According to Swedish law those who associated with snaphaner were snaphaner themselves.
- 4) The servants at the house had cultivated a “particular intimacy and friendship” with snaphaner and other enemies.
- 5) Krabbe was not only guilty of laxity towards his servants but also of connivance with them; a connivance that had led to the abduction of Klingspor and Basch, and the murder of two other men.
- 6) “In two letters from Kroghollm from 19th August 1676 and 28 *dito* (he had) more than all too clearly and obviously declared and said that he was a good

¹⁴⁶⁴ SRA, Generalguvernementet över Skåne, Halland och Blekinge 1677–78. The date of the day is blank.

¹⁴⁶⁵ Verdict of 6th November 1677, Sperling’s letters, GG, SRA.

Dane as if he already then were freed from all obligations to the Swedish Nation, and in that manner, he ignored his oath and the duties that he owed his king; an oath that he had sworn together with all the estates of the realm...” The punishment for all these crimes was “the loss of honour, life and property.” These points corresponded to the accusations that Breuer had drawn up on the basis of the evidence that he had collected: the one point that was missing in the verdict was that of having persecuted “a true Swedish Patriot and trying to lay hands on his goods...”¹⁴⁶⁶ The king wanted the execution to take place as soon as possible but Sperling could not get hold of the executioner who was busy in north-eastern Scania.

It is unclear whether Krabbe was aware of how far things had gone. On 14th November he sent a petition to the Commissarial Court in which he pleaded that he might be allowed to appear in court before a final verdict was reached.¹⁴⁶⁷ He reminded Sperling and the jury that he had left the king of Denmark and his fatherland in order to become a subject of the Swedish king and that he had always felt true and sincere love for Sweden. He also reminded them that he had left a good position in Denmark for vain hopes of a similar job in Sweden.¹⁴⁶⁸ Why did they accuse him of trying to subtract the property of a true Swedish patriot? (i.e., Niklas Jonsson's) Did they not know that he had saved the gardens of the Bjärsjöholm (Biersøholm) estate for its owner Mortaigne who was Chancellor of the Realm?¹⁴⁶⁹ Then, Krabbe declared that he would confess his innocence to God both in public and to his confessor that same week. He wanted to explain that if he had sinned, then it had been out of human frailty and not wickedness or a treacherous heart. Perhaps he owed God a death, but that debt was an old one. He was and had always been a sincere Swedish man.¹⁴⁷⁰ Krabbe humbly offered the King's Court to swear his most solemn “*Juramentum*.” Oaths were important at the time. One of the first accusations that were flung at a Scanian in Danish- or snaphane service was that he was a perjurer (*edsbrytare*). Official Swedish propaganda informed the Scanians that breakers of

¹⁴⁶⁶ p.75: ”bekiännandes sigh fulkommeligen Dansk...”, p.76 (“he had admitted to being completely Danish): ”warit med Snaphaannerne uthi sådant Förtroende, at han dhem tilstådt på hans gaard at holla dheras Tilsammenkompst...” (he had been in such confidence with the snaphaner that he had allowed them to keep their reunions at his place).

¹⁴⁶⁷ 14th November 1677. Petition from Krabbe to the Royal Commissarial Court.

¹⁴⁶⁸ Krabbe, in Aletophilus, p.143. (diurehafven), (Rigs-Canceller).

¹⁴⁶⁹ Krabbe, in Aletophilus, p.147. Krabbe speaks of a “dyre have”.

¹⁴⁷⁰ Krabbe, in Aletophilus, p.148: “een oprictig Svensk Mand”

oaths all went to hell. The Danish authorities took the same view but emphasised that any oaths that the Scanians had sworn to the Swedes had been annulled by the Swedes themselves since they had not respected the Peace Treaty between the two countries.¹⁴⁷¹ Krabbe ended his plea by assuring the Royal Court that he would live and die a true patriot, the same as he had been all since he came under the Swedish Crown and that he would remain his Majesty's true and honest subject and servant for ever.¹⁴⁷²

On 18th November later Krabbe sent a petition to Sperling in which he declared that he had confessed his sins in public the preceding Friday and that his confessor Willum Laurenberg had accepted his confession. One of the things that hurt him most and that made him want to cry was that he was accused of collusion with the snaphaner, which brought the greatest *dishonour* and shame over his whole family, estate and ancestry. His only hope was that one day, God would let the truth shine through. How many times would he have to repeat that he had never ever tried to betray his King and Country. On the contrary, Krabbe had always loved his King and wished him well. He begged His Excellency the governor general to be so much of a Christian as to realise that Krabbe did not care so much about worldly things as to risk ending up in hell. Because if he had confessed anything but the truth that was where he would end up. Then he asked Sperling to be allowed to defend himself in court. As a final touch he assured Sperling that he had always been assured that His Excellency had favoured him with his affection.¹⁴⁷³.

On 22nd November 1677, Sperling reported to the king that Krabbe's death sentence had been pronounced and that the executioner was back in town so that, God willing, the execution could take place the following Saturday or Monday.¹⁴⁷⁴ The baron was trying to stall the execution by claiming that he wanted to be shot instead of decapitated and that in any case he had to order new funeral clothes and a coffin.

¹⁴⁷¹ Fabricius (III, p. 31, footnote 3.) pointed out that the Danish decree of 1st July 1676 had been corrected by the king himself because the original version did not explain to the Scanians that they were free from obligation to the Swedes since the Swedes had annulled the oaths of allegiance by their own misbehaviour. The Danish "*pater patriae*" as Christian V called himself, also added the piece about the happy days that Scania had enjoyed in the olden days under the kings of Denmark.

¹⁴⁷² Krabbe, in Aletophilus, p.151.

¹⁴⁷³ 18th November 1677 Krabbe's Petition to Sperling (Skriffvelse Lit K) Krabbe, in Aletophilus, p.154: "Och saa som Eders Excell. altid hafver været mig med all Affection bevaagen..."

¹⁴⁷⁴ SRA, Generalguvernemetet över Skåne, Halland och Blekinge 1677–78.

When the final verdict had been read out aloud to Krabbe he declared that the thing that perhaps hurt him most and brought tears to his eyes was that he was accused of collusion with the snaphaner. That was the most humiliating part of it all for it brought the greatest *dishonour* and shame over his whole family, (social) estate and ancestry.¹⁴⁷⁵ Krabbe's friend Olluf Rosencrantz proudly declared that people of quality did not value anything higher than their honour -it was almost dearer to them than their lives.¹⁴⁷⁶

Meanwhile Krabbe's friends and family tried to pull all strings they could think of. Jytte Thott appealed to Sperling "with sorrow and tears" but there was no way she could appease his "hatred and bitterness." To her supplications Sperling promptly replied: "Even if he had had 100 lives he would had lost them."¹⁴⁷⁷ On 25th November Sperling wrote to the king that Krabbe's wife had come to him but she had left town almost immediately again: "no doubt in order to bother Your Royal Majesty although I told her frankly that her journey would be in vain."¹⁴⁷⁸ Then Krabbe composed an appeal to the king that was handed over by his wife. Despite Jytte's "sad sighs and sorrow" the king made her understand that she was "locked out from the royal grace and favour that she had hoped for."¹⁴⁷⁹ It seemed as if the Swedes had their minds set on a bloody outcome. Towards the end of November, a Swedish politician by the name of Johan Paulin Olivekranz decided to intercede in Krabbe's favour. He had been friends with Krabbe since his parliamentary days. Paulin Olivekranz felt that it was his duty as a Christian to do something.¹⁴⁸⁰ Now Paulin was on his way to the Nimwegen conference to confront the Danish ambassador Just Høgh (who was Krabbe's brother-in-law) and the rest of the Danish legation. Krabbe wrote a new petition to the king in which he begged that he might be allowed to plead his cause in person. Paulin handed over the petition to the king and added a letter in which he commented that it had never been heard of that an appeal was denied in a capital case.

¹⁴⁷⁵ Krabbe, in Aletophilus, p.154: "Och saa som Eders Excell. altid hafver været mig med all Affection bevaagen..."

¹⁴⁷⁶ Rosencrantz (1679), p.38.

¹⁴⁷⁷ "...lod sig plußeligen forstaa paa adskillige städer at om hand haffde 100 Liff skulde hand miste dem." p, 14.

¹⁴⁷⁸ Cronholm, p.205.

¹⁴⁷⁹ See p. 15: "...med inderste hiertens Bedröfvelse fornam sig at være udeluct fra den Kongl. gunst oc Naade som hun sig der haffde forventet."

¹⁴⁸⁰ Johan Paulin Olivecrantz to an unknown councillor (Hoff Råd), 29th November 1677, Biographica: J. Krabbe, SRA.

It would be the first time that a Swedish king denied such a plea. In case Krabbe was denied an appeal the Danish ambassador at the Nimwegen conference, Just Høgh (Krabbe's brother-in-law) would be sorely upset and cause serious trouble for the whole Swedish legation. Denying Krabbe an appeal would be the same as "declaring him an atheist and blasphemer against God and his sacred sacraments...and according to public opinion he is a good Christian." The Swedish commentator also added that Professor Weiser had been pardoned although he had openly gone over to the Danes. People might think that "His Royal Majesty was only harsh on those who owned big estates in the country."¹⁴⁸¹The execution was postponed, and the king declared that he would look the case over again.

Danish spies reported that Krabbe's and Christopher's coffins were ready and that they should both have been executed a few days earlier but that during the night before the execution a messenger from the king had arrived with a reprieve. As gossip had it in Malmö (Malmö) the baron and his bailiff would surely be pardoned or maybe exiled.¹⁴⁸² On 1st December it was reported to the Danish headquarters about Niklas Jonsson and Krabbe and of the following words being uttered: "...become Swedish? I hope you have not become Danish, give me my money." Though it is not clear who said what or if it was simply gossip. In any case it shows that the quotations from Krabbe's letters and especially the fact that he had said (or not said) "if we become Swedish" had become public knowledge. The same report states that a drummer had announced that the Thott brothers were summoned to court. If the brothers did not turn up their sister Jytte (Krabbe's wife) would have to pay the consequences.¹⁴⁸³

Krabbe prayed that God might protect him against his persecutors: "for they have set their minds on ruining me without reason, and they have prepared a grave for me...help me escape these lions' jaws and let those feel ashamed of themselves who

¹⁴⁸¹ Handlingar till Sweriges historia under K. Carl XI, quoted by Cronholm, p.204. Cronholm believed (but was not sure) that it was B. Oxenstjerna who had interceded in Krabbe's favour.

¹⁴⁸² Herman Hermansen's deposition from the beginning of December 1677 and Didrich Hafebundt's deposition of 10th December 1677, DRA.

¹⁴⁸³ Depositiones, 1st December 1677, DRA.

are injuring me without reason.”¹⁴⁸⁴ On Boxing Day Krabbe sent a long petition to King Charles but apart from that he turned to God in Heaven for salvation and asked if he could have a minister of the church help him prepare himself for death.¹⁴⁸⁵ He was obliged and Wilhelm Laurenberg who was a clergyman in Malmö (Malmö) was sent to him. Krabbe then asked for permission to be allowed to go to the city centre to say good-bye to his wife who was ill in bed. According to Rosencrantz she was suffering from “a broken heart and bodily weakness” and was so weak that she could not manage to visit her “master.” Jens Harboe reported to Copenhagen that “the wife” was “mortally ill.”¹⁴⁸⁶ Krabbe was not granted this favour, so he sent Laurenberg in his place and with him his testament, addressed to his wife. From this point onwards the baron and the baroness started saying farewell through letters and messages. In January the king confirmed the death sentence but allowed the widow to inherit what was due to her. Krabbe was to be shot on 16th January 1678. According to some historians he was offered pardon if he confessed that he had committed crimes against “the Swedish crown”.¹⁴⁸⁷

On the execution day Krabbe said farewell to the commander of the fortress and to Lillehög and Captain Piller and insisted once more on his innocence. He then went to mass (presumably in the chapel of the fortress) and kneeled in front of the altar and cried out his innocence in the presence of the whole community. He swore to God that he had never corresponded with snaphaner and in no other way caused Basch and Klingspor to be imprisoned by them and he had never ever had it in his mind or heart or thoughts to try to denigrate His Majesty or the Kingdom of Sweden. Then a psalm was sung, and the minister preached on the topic of 2. Tim.4: “I am being sacrificed already and it is time to part”, in which Saint Paul complained how everybody abandoned him when he had to face court charges but that he forgave them all. Saint Paul in his turn alluded to Daniel in the lion’s den and of how Daniel’s king eventually realised that he was innocent. Then it was time for communion and after that the baron greeted the whole community and went out of the church and into his carriage in the company of Laurenberg and a Swedish clergyman by the name of

¹⁴⁸⁴ “A Confession and prayer that I wrote in my prison at Malmö Castle, and in which I confessed my sins and my innocence to God and my confessor, during the sad lawcase that has been brought upon me by my persecutors, written on 16th December 1677”, Bönnebog, DKB.

¹⁴⁸⁵ p.16.

¹⁴⁸⁶ Harboe’s reports, January 1678, Indkomne breve, DRA.

¹⁴⁸⁷ Johnsson (pp.121–122) quotes Fryxell.

Nicolaus Hambräus. The carriage stopped in the middle of the central square where the firing squad was waiting. Krabbe discovered that not only the four musketeers who were to shoot him had come, but also many of his friends and “burghers of some standing” from all over Scania had come to express their sympathy and say good-bye. Krabbe gave them all his hand and said “Goodnight.”¹⁴⁸⁸ He then told Colonel Lillehög to send his greetings to Sperling and to ask him to stop the bloodshed. He also wanted Sperling to know that he wished that the blood that was to be shed on the cloth that had been spread out on the pavement must not cry vengeance on anybody.¹⁴⁸⁹ Krabbe then went on repeating his innocence to all the people who were present and said that he ended his life as a “good Swedish patriot.” He then read a prayer about dying with serenity that he had composed in prison and sang a psalm. After that he asked the musketeers to shoot at a sign of his hand and so they did. Some days later he was buried in the little church at Tosterup (Taastrup) where his elegant silver coffin is still to be seen.

After Krabbe’s Death

Contrary to earlier decisions, Jytte Thott was allowed to keep her husband’s property. Unfortunately, all their belongings had disappeared from Krageholm (Krogholm) by then. Rosencrantz insisted that this had been done upon the orders of Sperling and his Swedish officers in spite of the fact that the Swedish king had promised the widow that she could keep it.¹⁴⁹⁰ Dorthe Rosencrantz also had some of her things at Krageholm (Krogholm) and in a complaint to the authorities she claimed that Rutger von Ascheberg and his men had taken them.¹⁴⁹¹ When Simon Bengtsson arrived on 2nd July 1678 Krageholm (Krogholm) was already in a miserable state. He had hurried very much because he was so afraid the snaphaner would find out his intentions and ruin Krageholm (Krogholm) even more, but he was lucky. He found that “the floors and the ceilings and some tables and old chairs are still here, item the palisades, but many other things like the locks etc have been taken away from the

¹⁴⁸⁸ pp.17–18.

¹⁴⁸⁹ p, 18: ”...og ynskede at det Blod som hand nu skulde udgyde ey maatte komme länger end paa det Klåde som nu dertil var udbridt oc at det ey maatte raabe Heffn offver nogen som til deß Udgydelse vare Aarsage.”

¹⁴⁹⁰ Aletophilus, p.79. See also Cronholm (p.207, footnote 17) who reports the same thing on the basis of Sperling’s letters to the Swedish king.

¹⁴⁹¹ Cronholm, p.207.

doors. Nobody is to be seen on the grounds...I enclose a letter from Thott who brags about his virtues, and I found it in one of the chambers here.”¹⁴⁹²

At the end of the war Krageholm (Krogholm) was little more than a burnt-out shell. Jytte Thott failed to pay her husband's debts and was forced to sell out. Olluf Rosencrantz insisted that greed was one of the reasons behind Krabbe's death and the deportation of the nobility. It is difficult not to believe that it did play a certain role. However, Högstad (Høgested), a huge country house somewhat to the north-east of Krageholm (Krogholm), was given back to Jytte Thott after the war and she lived there for several years. According to legend she had her room painted black and walled up the windows from where Krageholm (Krogholm) could be seen. At night she would go out and cry on the hills between the two estates.¹⁴⁹³ The letters in the Swedish National Archives show that much of Jytte Thott's time and energies must have gone to lawsuits because she was in constant conflict with the Swedish authorities over the next twenty years. Eventually she lost almost everything she had and spent her last days on the farm Baldringe. Krabbe's prayer-book was handed over to Jytte Thott after his death.

Jytte's three brothers were executed in effigy together with a couple of other Scanian noblemen who had gone over to the Danes. Their property was confiscated by the Swedish authorities and distributed among more faithful subjects. Knud Thott burnt his bridges and accepted a position as district governor of Landskrona (Landskrone) for the duration of the war. The Danish king had offered him the career opportunities that he was excluded from in Sweden. Knud declared that it was the Swedish king who had broken the pact between subject and ruler in his case. After the end of the war Knud started a long and glorious career that would take him to the pinnacles of Danish politics: eventually he was nominated Chancellor of the Realm. Knud's fight for his possessions in Scania was less successful. He was still trying to get the harbour of Barsebäck (Barsebæk) back at the beginning of the 18th century. Throughout his long career Knud Thott continued to work for the Scanian cause. He was reported to be in close touch with Johan Patkul who tried to provoke a Baltic rebellion against Swedish rule and Patkul came to meet him in Copenhagen.¹⁴⁹⁴ Tage Thott was

¹⁴⁹² Letter from Bengtsson to the governor general, 1678, LA, Lund, quoted by Johnsson, p.160.

¹⁴⁹³ Stefan Isaksson. *Skånska spöken. Gastar och gengångare i bondesamhällets folktro*, (Scanian Ghosts. Spirits and Apparitions in the Popular Beliefs of the Agrarian Society), Kristianstad 2007. See p.241 and p.243.

¹⁴⁹⁴ Patkul failed and was later crushed on the wheel by the Swedes.

eventually pardoned. In 1719, Krabbe's niece Karen Krabbe fought a long but ultimately unsuccessful court case against Christina Piper who had bought Krageholm (Krogholm) together with her husband.

Conclusions:

Once the verdict had been issued, Krabbe turned to God rather than to the earthly powers and he spent his time composing prayers and religious reflections that he wrote down in his little prayer book. Even when he once more appealed to the Swedish authorities for grace or at least to be allowed to see the king, he appealed to them on the basis of his religious worldview. Having confessed his sins both in public (in church) and in private he felt that the Swedes should be more ready to accept his sincerity and maybe even his excuses. Sperling and Breuer did not appreciate Krabbe's appeal to common religious values and they thought it ridiculous to call God to witness all the time as Krabbe did. A Swede who used the same strategy as Krabbe was Johan Paulin Olivekranz who tried to intervene in Krabbe's favour, claiming that it would be a sin not to respect Krabbe's confessions and excuses. Paulin Olivekranz was a sincere Christian himself and on a par with Krabbe he concluded that the jury (and implicitly the king) could not be so if they refused to show mercy. Both Krabbe's confession and his execution were very much public ceremonies that should be interpreted as the transformation of the main actor of these rituals into a redeemed sinner who could go straight to heaven. This was also the case when criminals were accompanied by a clergyman to the scaffolds and their execution was considered a sort of public purification of their souls. In Krabbe's case he confessed his sins and so to speak, tried to take charge of the ritual. By presenting himself at the execution as someone who had already cleared his conscience (in public) and felt sincerely contrite of his sins, he also transformed into a victim. Like Daniel in the lion's den and Saint Paul in the Roman dungeons he felt that his own purity of spirit, achieved by sincere contrition and penance, blackened the actions of his persecutors. In fact, they did that themselves by refusing to show compassion and mercy.

Booklets and Pamphlets Regarding the Krabbe Case

Sperling and His Deduction

Sperling was on leave when Krabbe was executed. He was Governor General from 1st August 1677 until December 1678. Contrary to many other Governor Generals and high officials he did not delegate his work to his inferiors and spend his time on his estates. Apart from a brief period all documents in the chancellery were signed by Sperling himself during these years; it was only in January 1678 that General Major Hans Christoffer Kock von Crimstein took Sperling's place for a while. As Alf Erlandsson stresses, this was exactly the period during which Krabbe was executed.¹⁴⁹⁵ Alf Erlandsson does not agree with Fabricius that the "Krabbe case" made Sperling so unpopular in Scania that the king had to send him to another part of the reign in stead. However, Sperling did complain to the king about the nasty rumours that were spreading about him because of the "Krabbe case." According to Alf Erlandsson the Swedish king wanted someone a bit more "experienced and powerful" than Sperling to reconstruct the Scanian provinces after the war and so he chose Johan Gyllenstierna and gave the region of Western Norrland to Sperling as a compensation.¹⁴⁹⁶ Almost two years had passed since Krabbe was executed by the time Sperling was substituted by Gyllenstierna who was not particularly popular either. The war had been won and Scania had to be reconstructed by a competent person. That does not mean that the unpopularity that Sperling had won himself because of Krabbe did not further diminish his chances of being allowed to stay on in the province.

Shortly after Krabbe's death Sperling issued a "black list", the decree that included a list of the clergymen, public officials and burghers that were to be charged with high treason by the special tribunal that had condemned Krabbe, included the clergymen Jakob Ernstsén Baden, Christen Gjersing, Niels Pedersen Hundorph, the sheriffs Peter Klein, Iver Ravn, Mogens Haksen, Henrik Persen, Jörgen Hansen Horst and Knud Knudsen Rönnov plus 82 Helsinborg burghers including mayor Piill/Pihlcrona, his

¹⁴⁹⁵ Alf Erlandsson, p.103.

¹⁴⁹⁶ Alf Erlandsson, p.104.

son-in-law Herman Schlyter and brothers Jeppe and Svend Piill, Sofie the widow of Pihlcrona's predecessor Eggerts, and some twenty burghers from other towns.¹⁴⁹⁷

The Swedish king ordered Sperling to write a public explanation of the reasons for which Krabbe had to lose his life.¹⁴⁹⁸ Immediately after the execution Sperling wrote a so-called *Deduction* of about 30 pages in which he justified his (and indirectly, the king's) actions. Sperling felt so pleased with his little pamphlet that he thought his detractors would have to "eat their own puke" after its publication.¹⁴⁹⁹ But the *Deduction* had only just been published when the king banned it. According to Sthen Jacobsen, who was Knud Thott's dean (at Kågeröd/Kogered) and a Danish spy, the pamphlet was banned because "those who were clear-sighted realised that it would give Krabbe's friends an opportunity to reply and prove his innocence."¹⁵⁰⁰ Fabricius hypothesised that the court records disappeared at the same time as Sperling's defence pamphlet was withdrawn from circulation.¹⁵⁰¹ Someone had realised that many people might interpret what had happened in a very different light. But by then "some copies (of the book) ... have already been smuggled out from here with extraordinary artifice".¹⁵⁰²

In vain had the Swedish king tried to win the love and loyalty of the Scanians for himself and the fatherland.¹⁵⁰³ They would persist in having a "loving mind and inclination, obeisance and predilection" for anything Danish. This kind of behaviour spelt treason to Sperling. According to him it was not only the nobility but the other estates as well who suffered from this illicit love. I think we should respect that statement as long as we keep in mind that whatever the gamekeeper's lad thought "being a Dane" meant, it had different connotations from what a young "roligan" (football fan of the nice kind) would think "being a Dane" means today, or at least in

¹⁴⁹⁷ Fabricius, III, pp.145-146. It should be noted that the Ravens were also related to the Piill/Pihlcrona clan.

¹⁴⁹⁸ In a letter to the king from 14th March 1679 (SRA) Sperling expressly says that he had written on the king's orders.

¹⁴⁹⁹ Sperling's *Deduction*, "måste dhe sedhan upätha dheras Spyor och således medh Skam och Blygzell taga sitt uthkastadhe Giff till sigh igen."

¹⁵⁰⁰ Jacobsen, p.154. About Jacobsen's activities as a spy, see: Bengt Nordahl, "Kyrkoherden Sthen Jacobsen i Kågeröd", (Reverend Sthen Jacobsen at Kågeröd), in *Släkt och Bygd* 1997:1, <http://home.swipnet.se/w-32106/sloff/sobb/97-1/sthen.htm>.

¹⁵⁰¹ See Fabricius III: p.122. The Swedish authorities were very conscientious at the time (as they still are) and it was *not* common that documents disappeared.

¹⁵⁰² Letter to the king, 14 March 1679, SRA.

¹⁵⁰³ Sperling's *Deduction*, p.8.

part so. Sperling believed that, deep down the whole nobility had the same kind of hearts as Krabbe. And his was a “completely Danish heart” that had grown “cold and embittered” towards Sweden. Sperling also believed that their true colours had shone through when they refused to come to Malmö (Malmøe) three times in a row. That meant that their hearts were Danish and that they needed to be protected from themselves in safer surroundings if nothing else for the safety of the realm. The nobility would be much safer in Sweden and the Swedes in Scania would not have to worry about their potential unfaithfulness.¹⁵⁰⁴ Sperling accused the Scanian nobility of endangering the security of the realm. The Swedish and Danish nations were conceived of as diametrically opposed to each other. This was so because of the “natural hatred and suspicion” that reigned between them. So far both my Danish and Swedish sources agree.¹⁵⁰⁵

The gulf between the two “nations” was experienced as equally great by Sperling who claimed that it was impossible to combine the characteristics of each nation in the same person. Krabbe did not seem to realise that he was letting Swedish and Danish characteristics compete inside of him. One just could not do that. An example of the impossibility of combining “the characteristics of both nations” was the way Krabbe had managed to save the Fulltofta (Fulletofte) estate from (Danish) confiscation. Krabbe claimed he had done it because he was a “sincere and honest Swede “who wanted to help another patriot. But the only reason for his being able to stop the army from taking it over was that he counted as a Dane and therefore Fulltofta (Fulletofte) passed as “Danish goods.” He had tried to act both like good Swede and a native Dane, and that combination did not work, according to Sperling.¹⁵⁰⁶ In any case Krabbe had revealed which one was his nation by calling the Swedes “our men” in his letters to Swedes but not in his letters to Danes.¹⁵⁰⁷ The Fulltofta (Fulletofte) case illustrates how blurred the distinctions between Swedish and Danish had become.

¹⁵⁰⁴ Sperling’s *Deduction*, p.22: ”att guarantera sigh sielff för wijdare despect och dher aff flytande desaventage och Skadha som en sådan continuerligh olydna i längden effter sigh draga kunde...”

¹⁵⁰⁵ Rosencrantz, (1679), p.36: ”at lide Nød oc tvang hos et Folck hos hvilcket hand for den allmindelige begge disse Nationer imellemværende naturlige had oc mißtancke.”

¹⁵⁰⁶ Sperling’s *Deduction*, p.11: ”at bägge Nationerne Swenske och Danske nu för Tjdhnen ähre twenne sådanne contraria, och som hwar andra è diametro ähre opponerade, och för dhen skuldh bägges egenskaper widh dhenne Tjdhernes beskaffenheet icke så lät uti ett Subjecto kunna concurrera?” For Rosencrantz’s comments on the Fulltofta (Fulletofte) case see *Aletophilus*, p.76.

¹⁵⁰⁷ In one of his letters, he had even written that his peasants who had been to the Swedish camp reported that “the Swedes are leaving, and the way things are going in their camp they will collapse from illness.” Letter from Krabbe, addressee unknown, in Sperling’s *Deduction*, p.30: ”de Svenske vil gaa bort oc som de gaa udi Leyeren saa styrte de aff Sygdom.”

There were no precise guidelines for what should be considered Danish or Swedish property – it was decided on a case-to-case basis.

Sperling claimed that the king had tried to win the love and loyalty of the Scanians both for himself and the Fatherland, but they had all acted like their “*antesignanus*” Krabbe.¹⁵⁰⁸ Krabbe was besotted with Denmark and had proved himself a “complete Dane.” And his example was inviting others to follow him. If the Scanians were busy doing their bit of play-acting so that they would not be suspected by the “Swedish nation” then they had certainly been encouraged by the fact that Krabbe had been playing a role all the time.¹⁵⁰⁹ Later Sperling would admit that that Krabbe’s bitter end was supposed to constitute a deterrent to the “evil and disloyal rabble” so that terror would force their evil hearts to remember the oaths they had sworn. And on the contrary, all just and faithful subjects would be encouraged in their good intentions by the punishment of criminals like Krabbe.¹⁵¹⁰ And they must have experienced it as if Krabbe was the most important obstacle to the plans for the “highly useful emigration of the nobility.”¹⁵¹¹ Sperling was not the kind of man who would miss a chance if he was offered one. And being able to incriminate the leader of the nobility with collusion at the precise moment when leaderless and sapped nobility was most needed must have seemed like a gift from heaven.

A year later, Sperling complained to king that he had been “given the blame and declared an unjust, bloodthirsty and money-grabbing man to the four corners of the world” when he had only been following orders all along.¹⁵¹² He felt that Krabbe, the Thotts, Magister Weiser, Professor Schwartz and some others were unfaithful criminals, delinquents and criminals that had had to be punished. Now Dr Schwartz had written a “shameless *scriptum*” in which he defended Krabbes “illegal acts and disloyal procedures”, and the “*scriptum*” had not only been published at home but also abroad! Sperling feared that people in foreign countries might take him for the “most unjust, ferocious and sinful man on earth”.¹⁵¹³

¹⁵⁰⁸ Sperling’s *Deduction*, p.8.

¹⁵⁰⁹ Sperling’s *Deduction*, p.5: ”att han ifrån dhetta bedröfwelige Kriigets begynnelse alt bårth åth har burit Kappen på bådhe Axlerne...och ändtlich bådhe uthi Ordh och Gierningar declarerat sigh för fullkobligh Dansk.”

¹⁵¹⁰ Sperling’s *Deduction*, p.27: ”dhe som dhenne senare onde och Otrogne Hopen tillhängia af sådhan Alfvarsam procedur kunde taga sigh en genomträngande Skräck och dheraf flytande warningh...”

¹⁵¹¹ Sperling to the king, GG, SRA. October (no date), 1677.

¹⁵¹² Sperling to the king, GG, SRA, 14th March 1679.

¹⁵¹³ Sperling to the king, 14th March 1679, GG, SRA.

Rosencrantz's Counter-Pamphlet

But Professor Schwartz was not the first to try to defend Krabbe. Almost immediately after the publication of the *Deduction* Olluf Rosencrantz wrote a scathing critique of it that was published under the title of *A truthful REPLIQUE against the false Deduction that has been made up in order to cover the Murderous and Tragic Process through which General and Vice-governour Baron Jörgen Sperling condemned the Noble and Honourable Baron Jörgen Krabbe on the 16th January 1678.*¹⁵¹⁴

The *Replique* contained both Sperling's *Deduction* and Rosencrantz's own critique and all the most important court records. Rosencrantz had very firm views. He accused Sperling of imposing a terror regime and of being a latter-day Caligula. He did not bother to try to hide that the Swedish king was behind Sperling's deeds. He also made very clear distinctions between the Danish and Swedish nations that both had their innate characteristics. When Scania was taken back in 1676 the Danish king, according to the habit of the "Danish nation", treated the Scanian noblemen well from the very first moment.¹⁵¹⁵ The Danish nation was generous and courteous and treated subjugated peoples with rationality and delicacy, especially if they were of noble extraction: "Since all realms and governments ought to be based more upon the good will and affection of its subjects than upon constriction and force on the side of the authorities."¹⁵¹⁶ Rosencrantz went on to explain that the Swedes were no different from all other nations that had conquered new lands: they did not trust the loyalty of the inhabitants.¹⁵¹⁷ They differed from all other nations in that this "suspicion and mistrust" had become so exaggerated that they decided to send the whole Scanian nobility into "arrest" in Sweden. Instead of trying to reconcile the two nations and construct a peaceful future together, men like Sperling were raising their children to become full of venom and hatred of Danes. The Danes on the contrary, raised their

¹⁵¹⁴ Copenhagen 1678

¹⁵¹⁵ Aletophilus, p.68: "Bärer hand dermed oc först Vidnissbyrd om Hans Kong. Mayss af Danmarck store Naade Fromhed oc Mildhed som saa uforskyldt i Naade optog den lange Ophold de aff bestandig Troskab imod deris egen Herre oc Konge haffde giort imod den udgangne Kongl. Befalning at indstille sig for Hans Kongl. Mayst. Dernest den Danske Nations sädvanlige store Generositet oc Höflighed med Fornufft och fiinlighed at beegne undertvungne fremmede Folck som befindis at være aff Fornemme Stand oc Condition.

¹⁵¹⁶ Rosencrantz quotes Cicero: *Nam pessimus est custos diuturnitatis metus. Cicero.*" Aletophilus, p.74: "Undersaatternis troskab som ellers hos alle Genereuse Nationer med lemfeldigghed bör at sögis..."

¹⁵¹⁷ See Aletophilus, p.7: "...formedelst den Suspicion oc Defiance som de Svenske lige saa vel som alle andre Nationer almindelig bäre om Undersaatternis bestandige Troskab i de Lande som de sig nyligen hafver erworben oc undertungen."

children in the fear of God and educated them to love of their others, including Swedes.¹⁵¹⁸ Rosencrantz was convinced that the Swedes nurtured “National Hatred” against the Scanians and that it did not matter what one did, it was enough to be of Danish extraction to be condemned as a traitor. The way Olluf Rosencrantz saw it lands and provinces were sometimes lost because of the sins of the monarch or the nation and that was what had happened to Denmark. The Swedes were committing much worse sins than the Danes in that they had not contented themselves with the Lands and Kingdoms that God had ascribed to them. Instead of listening to God they had taken what rightly belonged to others.¹⁵¹⁹

Rosencrantz was open about his critique of the Swedish king. He gave Charles XI the whole blame for Krabbe’s untimely death. Sperling was a latter-day Caligula, a cruel tyrant who had committed tyrannical murder¹⁵²⁰ and ruled through terror and persecution; but Sperling was the king’s responsibility. He derided Charles XI by speaking of his “fugacious absence or invisible presence” when the Danes reconquered Scania.¹⁵²¹ The Swedish monarch of had failed his new subjects. It was “the duty of every Christian Potentate in the world who needs good advice and viceroys” to “choose good, pious and righteous men who feared God, loved the truth and hated greed...”¹⁵²² Rosencrantz claimed that the Commissarial Court had been instituted at direct orders of the king and that both the king and several councillors of the realm had signed the death sentence. When the king signed that document, he had not only made little of Swedish law but also forgotten his duty towards his subjects.¹⁵²³ Monarchs that rule with harshness and unrighteousness tend to die at an early age!¹⁵²⁴ I have stressed Rosencrantz’s view on the subject in order to illustrate the currents of thoughts that pervaded the circles Krabbe was moving in on the Danish side.

Olluf Rosencrantz also claimed that all Swedish civil servants were suspicious of Scanians. Consequently, Krabbe had not been allowed to embark upon a public

¹⁵¹⁸ See: Aletophilus, p.9. Rosencrantz hoped that the “young Sperlings would not be able to fly so high on their poisoned wings that the Danes would not be able to shorten them.”

¹⁵¹⁹ See: Aletophilus, p.36.

¹⁵²⁰ Rosencrantz (Aletophilus, p.11 and p.80) also compared Sperling to Sulla and called him a cruel tyrant who had committed tyrannical murder.

¹⁵²¹ Aletophilus, p.71: ”fluctige Undvigelse eller usiunlig Närvärelse”

¹⁵²² Aletophilus, p.80. This critique became even clearer in the booklet that he (presumably) wrote in defense of the Thott brothers: “God has given the Authority the sword in order to punish the Evil and to defend the innocent; wherefore they in due time will pay their dues to God”, Rosencrantz (1679), p.3.

¹⁵²³ See Aletophilus, pp.53-56.

¹⁵²⁴ See Aletophilus, p.60.

career. In the case of Krabbe the Swedes had faked “sincere friendship” and that they preferred him to all other Scanian noblemen. But it had all been the matter of “dissimulation”. Deep down they loathed Krabbe as much as all other Scanians. The simple reason for this hatred was that Krabbe was of Danish origins and that his family had been sworn enemies of the Swedish Kingdom. Naturally the outbreak of the war in 1675 exacerbated the situation. Native Danes were excluded from service during the Scanian war (according to Rosencrantz). It was the Swedes themselves who pushed noblemen like the Thotts and Krabbe towards the Danish camp. They had had all the best intentions in the world but had found themselves frozen out. Tage Thott had first applied to the Royal Lifeguards without luck, and then he volunteered to fight in Pomerania but decided not to go in the end (because the pirates blocked the sea between Scania and Pomerania). Then he joined the Swedish king and his court in Malmö (Malmö) but was left behind when they fled to Sweden. Young Tage then offered his services to governor general Fersen but was told that they were not needed because “*ich werde alle Unnützigte innerhalb zwey stunde von der Stadt abjagen.*” It had not escaped Tage’s notice that Fersen was only too willing to accept the services of the numerous “native Swedes” that were flooding into Malmö during those days.¹⁵²⁵ It is obvious that these “native Swedes” feared that the Danes would persecute them rather than their Scanian neighbours who stayed in their homes. Fersen’s line of thought seems to have been that native Swedes were a whole lot more reliable than sworn-in Swedes of Danish origins. In this situation it was one’s birth and not one’s oath that mattered. And I believe that this line of thinking was prevalent during the Scanian war.¹⁵²⁶

Rosencrantz explained that “some Swedish high officials who never before had trusted the Scanian nation very much were driven to show their true faces during the Scanian War, and they were looking for an opportunity to reveal and give vent to the hatred of the Scanian nobility and all other estates that they had been hiding in their hearts. They started out with the Baron...who was the leader of the Scanians, both the nobility and the other estates.”¹⁵²⁷ The Swedish officials were persecuting anyone of

¹⁵²⁵ Rosencrantz (1679), p.44. “I will chase all useless people out of this town within two hours.”

¹⁵²⁶ Rosencrantz (p.28) also claimed that native Swedes of different social backgrounds had been called to the Danish camp to pay homage to the king just like Krabbe and the Thotts but that none of them had ever been accused of treason for this. Only native Danes ended up in trouble for having submitted to the will of the Danish king.

¹⁵²⁷ See Aletophilus, p.8: “Anseendis at en deel aff de Svenske Höye betienter som aldrig tilforen haffde hafft nogen ret fortroelighed til de Skaanske nation ved de tidens oc tilstands conjunctures

Danish family and extraction, and they were burning to “exterminate and expel the whole Scanian nobility from the country.” Sperling was said to thirst for the blood of Danes and this thirst was the one and only true reason for Krabbe’s death.¹⁵²⁸ Rosencrantz compared Sperling to Caligula and maintained that his hatred was unquenchable and his cruelty towards the ”remaining Scanians of Danish extraction” so great that he would have liked to do away with them all in one blow.¹⁵²⁹ The Swedes were not only after the nobility but sent members of all estates off to humiliating executions in their persecution of all native Danes.¹⁵³⁰ It was a case of what was then called ”national hatred”. It was national hatred that cost Krabbe his life. It was also the origin of the terror regime that forced the Scanians to live in daily fear. Ultimately it was this innate hatred of Danes that lay behind the deportation of the nobility.¹⁵³¹

Blood Calling for Revenge

At about the same time another person from Krabbe’s circles wrote another pamphlet in Krabbe’s defence: “Blood Calling for Revenge for the false trial that led to the capital punishment of the noble and well-born Baron Jørgen Krabbe.” Fabricius concluded that the author of this pamphlet was unknown but that it could not be Olluf Rosencrantz: it diverged from Aletophilus on two major points: that of Krabbe’s relations with admiral Tromp and that of the lawsuit between Krabbe and Jonsson. Consequently, it cannot be ascribed to Olluf Rosencrantz.¹⁵³² It differs from Aletophilus on many other points. The language is less elegant, and the rhetoric and terminology more openly pro-Danish. An example of this latter tendency is that the author of “Blood Calling for Revenge” used the term “friskytter” and not “snaphaner”

begyndte at aabne maschen oc søgte Leylighed til Aabenbarligen at udgyde sit hadske Sind oc gemytte som de tilforn altid hemmelig i Hiertet hafde forborgen imod det Skaanske Ridderskab oc andre Ständer: Oc giorde sin förste begyndelse paa den Sl. Baronen som iblant dem alle for sin Alder oc rang blef holdet oc aktet den Eldste oc Fornemste oc som general. Leut: Sperling ham i den der om forfattede Apologiske Deduction lader Naffngiffve en Antesignanus for alle andre Skaanske Adel oc Indbyggere.”

¹⁵²⁸ See Aletophilus, p.12 and p.25: ”det naturlige Had oc Blodgierighed imod alle Danske Affkomst oc Extraction, hvilcket alleeniste er den rette Aarsag som dem til saadan et Mord oc Tyranniske Medfart haffver operret.”

¹⁵²⁹ See Aletophilus, p.32: ”den Sl.Barons Efftertractere aff et umettelig Had oc Grumhed til de fleeste aff de offverbleffne Skaanske Indbyggere aff Danske Biurd oc Extraction gierne skulle ville efterfølge Caligulae Exempel, oc intet heller see oc ynske end at de allesammen haffde ickun et Hoffvet oc en Halß at de tillige paa engang med en Haand oc med et Hug kunde mordis oc affhuggis.”

¹⁵³⁰ See Aletophilus, p.32.

¹⁵³¹ See Aletophilus, p.55 and p.74: ”Undersaatternis troskab som ellers hos alle Genereuse Nationer med lemfældighed bör at sögis...”

¹⁵³² Fabricius III: p.123.

like Rosencrantz. It was not Olluf Rosencrantz who wrote “Blood Calling for Revenge” but it must have been someone who was very close to Krabbe...at one point the author wrote “we, his brothers-in-law, family and friends” and from that passage I believe that one might conclude that it is rather likely that the pamphlet might be ascribed to a member of the first mentioned category. A brother-in-law could at the time include acquired relatives of a more distant degree than the spouses of siblings, but “Blood Calling for Revenge” is to be found in a stack of documents that used to belong to Knud Thott, in the Rostgaard collection. There are also papers and documents that had belonged to Krabbe, Jytte Thott and other relatives. Sperling mentions a pamphlet by Knud Thott. It is a possibility, but the handwriting doesn't look like Knud Thott's. There is a pencilled note on this booklet that states that the well-known writer and clergyman Anders Matthiessen Hjørring was the author and have I accepted that attribution, but with reservations.

“Blood Calling for Revenge” was written from a deeply religious point of view: a righteous Old Testament God would punish all sinners, whereas Krabbe himself had advocated a more lenient New Testament God that did not want innocent blood to be avenged. He had already punished the Scanians with the Swedish yoke. But he also would punish the Swedish monarch and nation that were responsible of the shedding of innocent blood like that of Baron Krabbe unless they repented themselves immediately...On this point I believe that Fabricius's conclusion that the author of “Blood Calling for Revenge” was clever enough to presume that the Swedish king was innocent should be contestant. Just like Rosencrantz the author accused the Swedish monarch in a less than subtle way. Rosencrantz kept repeating that sooner or later someone would have to pay for the evil that had been unleashed on Scania and a monarch is always responsible for the sins of his subjects. The difference was that Rosencrantz toned down the religious background and saw it more in the light of international law and rights. It was would-be tyrannicides rather than the Old Testament God that threatened the Swedes and their king. “Blood Calling for Revenge” was probably never published.

The author's views are almost identical with Rosencrantz's e e has more sympathy for the snaphaner whom he respected enough to call friskytter. He had less respect for the Swedes whom he considered worse than Turks and heathens. Krabbe had been a “highly privileged Swedish baron under Scanian law” who ought to have been entitled

to a proper trial according to the Scanian law.¹⁵³³ According to the author, Krabbe knew Sperling hated everyone who was of Danish extraction. Krabbe had also found out that Sperling's friends in the court circles were threatening those who tried to speak in Krabbe's defence to the king that they would be accused of criminal actions themselves. The author was convinced that Sperling had done everything to prevent Krabbe from gaining an audience with the king. He concluded that greed made certain people turn into bloodhounds who destroyed honest people's honour and lives.¹⁵³⁴ According to both the author of this booklet and Rosencrantz the Scanians were involuntary Swedish subjects who had all the rights in the world to rise against their evil overlords. Through war and bloodshed, the Swedes had put a humiliating yoke on the shoulders of the Scanians. Rosencrantz wished that the Swedes had listened to their conscience and returned Scania to Denmark so that further wars could have been avoided.¹⁵³⁵ Krabbe and the people on his lands "were Swedish since they had been subjected to Swedish domination by force of violence." But the mercenaries that arrived after the Danish invasion considered themselves entitled to loot the estate: "the soldiers were Danish and were there on the lookout for Swedish people and goods."¹⁵³⁶ Krabbe's ex (?) bailiff Hindrich Peersøn who was now in the service of the Danish king saved Krabbe and his people from the German mercenaries that considered them enemies. Peersøn had persuaded the mercenaries that non-voluntary Swedes were not Swedes at all.¹⁵³⁷

¹⁵³³ See Hjørring, p.59: "Icke heller maatte hand som en høyprivilegerede svenske Baron effter Skonske Low paa caution eller paroll komme ud"...

¹⁵³⁴ See Hjørring, pp.65–67, quote p.66: "her vidste oc den Sl. Baron vell att Guberneuren Sperling var ett hadsk menniske imod dem som var aff danske familie..."

¹⁵³⁵ See Hjørring, p.36

¹⁵³⁶ See Hjørring, p. 55: "Byerne vare svenske, landsotterne, efftersom de med gevalt var hverffvett og lagtt under svensk dominio tillige med Krabben var svenske, dett Mönsterske folck var danske, alt kommen att söge svenske folck og godtz som deris fiender, de vare svenske folck oc godtz mechtig." Technically most of the soldiers in the feared Münster regiment were Germans but it seems as if a mercenary soldier in the service of a foreign country could be said to be of that nationality, in the sense of being on that side. One of my points is that very often "being Danish or Swedish" was used in the sense of "siding with the Danes or Swedes."

¹⁵³⁷ The regiment that was posted in the Krogholm area was the so called "Mönsterske" (from Münster) that was widely feared for the ruthlessness of its soldiers. When this regiment were consigned winter quarters in Zealand in 1678 the local population was desperate. On one occasion three peasants had been shot simply because they tried to oppose the mercenaries of the "Mönsterske." And those were peasants who could by no means in the world be considered enemies. (Report from a spy in Copenhagen, 3rd October 1678, Sperling's letters, GG, SRA.)

The author of “Blood Calling for Revenge” felt that Sperling had framed Krabbe for two reasons: his hatred of anyone of Danish descent, and greed.¹⁵³⁸ The author kept stressing that Krabbe had been a true Swedish patriot and a Swedish baron, but that at the same time he was hated by some because he came from a Danish family. The idea existed that a “Swede” or “Dane” was something that depended on who the sovereign was, but so did the idea that one was born a “Dane” or “Swede” and that there was no way to change that.

Krabbe, Rosencrantz and the author of “Blood Calling for Revenge” all appealed to common Christian, European and universal morals, and values. They also appealed to Swedish and Scanian law. The way they saw it they clearly belonged to the same moral community as the Swedes and the general community of Swedes was part of Christendom and Europe. Breuer and Sperling took quite a different view. They did not appeal to common Christian values, nor did they want to get mixed up in legal niceties in Swedish and Scanian law books, since Krabbe was facing some sort of court-martial, although it was never explained to him and his friends exactly what procedures and criteria that court would follow. From the day when Krabbe was ordered not to leave Malmö (Malmö) he was excluded from the group, or community, that Sperling belonged to; a group that had officially included Krabbe for about fifteen years. Krabbe had long felt that he was not totally accepted as an in-group member because some people would not accept noblemen of Danish descent into their group, but that was not the dominant way of thinking during the inter-war period. But now he was treated as a member of an out-group.¹⁵³⁹

Among the letters that the snaphaner intercepted from the Swedes there is one from May 1678 that a member of the commissarial court called Lars Törnschiär sent to the French resident “Ms Le Commissaire Jean Stridbeck a Stockholm”.¹⁵⁴⁰ In it he reported that some of the Scanian noblemen had behaved outrageously of late:

“Herr Jøren Krabbe betrayed the love that he used to have, in order to save himself, his estate and his servants, and for that reason he proved himself somewhat lame in proving the loyalty that he had sworn to our most gracious king and that he owed him. Consequently, he had to accept his punishment last

¹⁵³⁸ Hjørring, pp. 65-66.

¹⁵³⁹ Marcella Ravenna, *Carnefici e vittime. Le radici psicologiche della Shoah e delle atrocità sociali*, Il Mulino, Bologna 2004, pp.12-16, for an overview of the concepts of in-group and out-groups.

¹⁵⁴⁰ Opsnappede breve, Danish National Archives, 28th May 1678. The letter was written by a Dane who transcribed Swedish as best as he could. He wrote Törnschiär's name as “Tørneschiør” which is approximately what it sounds like to a Scanian or Danish ear today too.

winter and he was shot in the square here in Malmøe and so he died with the confession that he was an honest Swedish man who never had wanted to damage His Royal Majesty.”¹⁵⁴¹

Törnschiär also reported that the Thott brothers, Ove Rommell and Hans Walkendorff had all behaved “frivolously” and were now to be found in Denmark. For that reason, they had all been executed in effigy. Two heads had been placed on poles on the “Søndre port” (southern entrance to Malmøe) and three on the “Østre port” (the eastern entrance). Rommell’s puppet’s body had been impaled and pitched in front of the eastern entrance gate since he had joined the enemy administration and had “done them all sorts of favours”. Possibly because he had participated in the fighting, his puppet’s right hand was quartered in four parts that were stuck onto the city wall. Consequently, Rommell’s puppet got the end of a snaphane although he was as noble an aristocrat. Another nobleman, Otte Lindenow, had ended up in the hands of the Commissarial Court because he had written a letter to his Danish brother-in-law, admiral Juel, that “these are such evil times that nobody who is a Jute, sc. born Danish, can find an excuse in innocence...they are all judged by the same standards so that it is better to be a Danish prisoner than to stay here, if only it could be done by legal means...” Lindenow’s letter was intercepted by the Swedes and Lindenow himself was arrested. It was for the king to decide what his fate would be.

The Prayer-book

*En Confession og Skriftebön, hwilcken jeg udi mit fengsel paa Malmøe Slot haver sammenskrevet og der udi bekient foer Gud og min Skriftefader mine synder og uskyldighed, udi min nu ulyckelige paaförde sag, af mine foerfølgere forfattet d 16 Decemb: Ao 1677*¹⁵⁴²

In his prison cell Krabbe composed a little prayer-book in which he wrote down his thoughts and reflections. He also wrote prayers and psalms in honour of friends and foes. Krabbe thanked the Lord for all the blessings that had been bestowed upon him: he had grown up in a noble and strictly religious family. He had been allowed to study various subjects in prestigious schools and at foreign universities. He had travelled all over Europe and had finally married a virtuous young woman. The subject of the

¹⁵⁴¹ “huadh vår skånske adellsmen wedkommer, så är dät intet uthan, at dhe till en deel hafver skammelig illa försedd sig, H Jøren Krabbe har bedragit dän kärleck han har haft till att conservera sig siælf, sitt godtz och tjänstfælck, och foer dän skuldh wist sig något lam uthi dän troohet than har swurit vår allernådigste konung och war skyldig præstera. Huorfør han och uthi foerleden winter har fådt sitt straff, och här på Malmøes tårg är blefwen arcubuseret, män døde därpå och med dän bekännelsen att han war en ährlig swensk Man som alldrig har ment hans Kgl. Mt ille.”

¹⁵⁴² Jørgen Krabbe’s prayer-book, KB.

annexation of Scania and the change of “nationality” was touched upon by Krabbe in his prayer-book. He wrote that he had served His Majesty the king of Denmark in his youth and that he had been beloved and honoured by the king and that he always would be grateful for that. The king had been gracious enough to give him a good position in the Royal Chancellery where he had worked hard for the fatherland until the Lord decided that Scania should come under Swedish rule. Krabbe then declared that it had pleased the Lord that Scania should be ceded to the crown of Sweden and he himself become a subject of the King of Sweden. He was grateful for the blessings he had obtained “here in Sweden” and had worked hard for “our country and estate” and he stressed that it would be easy for the prosecution to prove this through some archival work. It was ridiculous that the Swedes should accuse him of treason when he had been “suspected of and then under arrest under his Royal Majesty of Denmark.”¹⁵⁴³ However, Krabbe never wrote a harsh word against the Danish sovereigns. On the contrary, he stressed that he had been offered important positions in the Danish administration and his constant emphasis on this point must have grated a little on the ears of the Swedish sovereign. Now, Krabbe had always served the king and the fatherland although God had seen to it that the objects of his service had changed. First the fatherland had been Denmark then it was Sweden. Krabbe did not comment upon the transition from Denmark to Sweden in a personal manner. It had pleased Almighty God that Scania should be ceded to the crown of Sweden and he himself should become a subject of the King of Sweden. It had all been the will of God. Now, Krabbe was convinced that God wanted to punish him for his sins. He admitted that he owed God a life but not when or why that had come about. He also admitted that he had committed innumerable sins during his travels abroad. If God let him out of prison he would fast and remain a virtuous man for the rest of his life.

In his prayer-book Krabbe thanked God for the blessings he had obtained “here in Sweden” and not the least for the fact that the Swedish king had been gracious to a foreigner like him.¹⁵⁴⁴ After fifteen years, Krabbe still considered himself a foreigner

¹⁵⁴³ ”...jeg hafver derhos aldtid hos min allernaadigste herre og konge, og dets høye betiente, taldt wel for dette Land og des Indbyggere, og wed alle Rigsdager, Kongl: holdne commissioner og Landdager her udi Landet, altid sagt woris Lands og Stands interesse beste og forkofring, som wed Kongl: skriftlige resolutioner kand erfaris...”

¹⁵⁴⁴ ”...saa kand jeg i ligemaade aldrig nocksom fuldtacke min gode Gud og herre for ald sin velsignelse og godhed, som hand imod mig her udi Suerrig hafver...bewiist, og synderlig ladet mig faa,

in Sweden. He also took it for granted that others saw him as one. Not even the nobility of two neighbouring countries like Sweden and Denmark were so united as not to treat foreigners in a special way. A fact that indicates the difference between noblemen from the two countries was that in the 1680s the Swedish nobility was much annoyed with the members of the Scanian élite who insisted on following the Danish fashion and using Danish manners in Stockholm.¹⁵⁴⁵ So we have seen that Krabbe hinted that one had to be grateful for the little signs of favour that one received; for after all, one was only a foreigner. He knew very well that many of the Swedish potentates were of foreign origins. Perhaps he also noted that on a lower level, the Swedish authorities employed all kinds of nationalities in the administration. Native Swedes had precedence but plenty of Germans, Dutchmen, Poles, and other countrymen found good positions. Not Danes though.

A frequent theme of the prayer-book was the *snaphaner*, regarding which Krabbe expressed his position in the following terms:

” I have not had anything to do with those false rascals the *snaphaner* during this war, on the contrary they have caused me great damage and offence, and I have had to live in greatest danger under their continuous threats, which you dear God and the whole neighbourhood know...”¹⁵⁴⁶

Krabbe was at great pains to make the Swedish authorities understand that the *snaphaner* considered him an enemy. Unfortunately, he could not deny having had employees who had “been with the *snaphaner*”, but he insisted on having reported all that he knew to the Swedish authorities. Krabbe had to admit that he had known that some of his men had been present on the scene of the kidnapping but that they had told him that they had been forced to come along. In any case he would not have dared take his men into custody because of the “continuous presence and evil doings of the *snaphaner* on my lands.” No other nobleman had been dealt with so harshly by the *snaphaner*.

saa som en fremmed mand udi Suaerrig, største yndest og Naade for hans Kongl: Mayts, saa og saa for hendes Mayts enkedronningens öyne.”

¹⁵⁴⁵ Fabricius, I, p.69.

¹⁵⁴⁶ This passage comes from the prayer-book but might just as well be taken from Krabbe’s court insertions. (no pagination)”...” *...ej heller hafver jeg haft noget at bestille udi denne Kriigstiid med disse skelmske snaphaniske Parthier, mens liid største fortraed og vidervedighed af dennem, og levet udi største fare for deris continuerlige trussler, hwilcket du gode Gud of heele Landet omkring hos mig er bewist...”*

Krabbe knew (and hoped?) that chances were that the Swedish authorities would read the Prayer-book. He was writing it in a prison cell in a town under Swedish rule. Everything that left the prison could only be expected to be subjected to censure. No one can tell what his prayers would have sounded like if he had written them in Denmark. It is obvious that Krabbe was more cautious in the Prayer-book than in his letters. Krabbe's letters were not written with an eye to the Swedish authorities. It is worth noting, though, that Krabbe wrote the Prayer-book in Danish whereas he always addressed Swedes in his best Swedish. In his letters he wrote in Danish to Danes and in Swedish to Swedes.

Krabbe and the King

Krabbe denied having spoken ill of the Swedish king but not having said that he could not pay two armies at the same time. On several occasions Krabbe had been overheard saying: "Let them take everything away so that there will be an end to it, when this is up there's nothing more for them to take."¹⁵⁴⁷ And of course, he had written to his friend Hack Sjøfrensen that he did not care about the baronetcy at all.¹⁵⁴⁸ To the commissarial court and eventually to the king himself this was enough to constitute the first and foremost charge against Krabbe, namely that of having showed "very little respect for His Majesty" and of a "desire not to pay his war-contributions."¹⁵⁴⁹ Naturally Krabbe insisted that he owed the Swedish king his "life, property and honour" for the honours that he had bestowed upon him, especially the baronetcy.¹⁵⁵⁰ And yet it is hard not to interpret his words as those of a man who had lost faith. He seemed frustrated and he seemed to have thought that the Swedish king should have tried to put up a fight. According to Swedish standard this was the same as saying that the king's courage was not all in the right place. A man who implied that the King was a coward must have been desperate indeed. Nevertheless, it was an idea that circulated at the time. Olluf Rosencrantz derided the king by speaking of his

¹⁵⁴⁷ Breuer's second instance, 15th October, in Aletophilus, p.58. "lad dennem tage alt sammen bort, saa er der Ende paa, naar det er oppe, saa kunde de intet meere tage..." Krabbe's Second Statement, p.95. A figment of Basch's imagination according to Krabbe.

¹⁵⁴⁸ Krabbe to Sjøfrensen, January 27, 1676: "I came back from the king some days ago, I received a gracious reply to all that I wanted.... against my will I had to accept the title of baron and other great Royal promises..."

¹⁵⁴⁹ Verdict of November 6, 1677, Sperling's letters, GG, SRA.

¹⁵⁵⁰ p.99: "mand haffver intet meere for all sin Umage her i denne syndige Verden end et Erligt Nafn..."

“fugacious absence or invisible presence” when the Danes reconquered Scania.¹⁵⁵¹ He was accusing the Swedish monarch of having failed his new subjects and of cowardice. The difference was that Krabbe just might have said something in the heat of the moment whereas Rosencrantz was philosophising in safety on the other side of the Sound.

Rosencrantz was open about his critique of the Swedish king. He claimed that it was “the duty of every Christian Potentate in the world who needs good advice and viceroys” to “choose good, pious and righteous men who feared God, loved the truth and hated greed...”¹⁵⁵² By that time Rosencrantz had already accused Sperling of greed, lies and blasphemy so what he was really saying was that the king of Sweden was not doing his duty.¹⁵⁵³ The accusations became even more overt when Rosencrantz claimed that the Commissarial Court had been instituted at direct orders of the king and that both the king and several councillors of the realm had signed the death sentence. When the king signed that document, he had not only made little of Swedish law but also forgotten his duty towards his subjects.¹⁵⁵⁴ Rosencrantz then concluded that monarchs that rule with harshness and unrighteousness tend to die at an early age.¹⁵⁵⁵ To me it is obvious that Rosencrantz gave Charles XI the whole blame for Krabbe’s untimely death. He saw Sperling as a latter-day Caligula who only knew how to rule through terror and persecution; but Sperling was the king’s responsibility.

I doubt whether it will ever become possible to understand what Krabbe really thought of Charles XI. I have stressed Rosencrantz’s view on the subject in order to illustrate the currents of thoughts that pervaded the circles Krabbe was moving in (on the Danish side). However, there can be no doubts as to whether Krabbe was frustrated or not. It is enough to look at his petitions to the king and the *riksdrots* from the inter war years to realise that he felt that the Swedish king had not fulfilled his promises. In 1673 he complained that he was now over forty and had wasted away twelve years in the countryside without an “*employe*.” Perhaps the baron felt that

¹⁵⁵¹ Aletophilus, p.71: ”fluctige Undvigelse eller usiunlig Närvärelse”

¹⁵⁵² See p.80.

¹⁵⁵³ This critique became even clearer in the booklet that he (presumably) wrote in defence of the Thott brothers: “God has given the Authority the sword in order to punish the Evil and to defend the innocent; wherefore they in due time will pay their dues to God”, Rosencrantz (1679), p.3.

¹⁵⁵⁴ See pp.53-56.

¹⁵⁵⁵ See p.60.

foreigners did not quite have the same chances as native Swedes. After all, that was the way things worked in Denmark too.¹⁵⁵⁶ In his prayer-book he thanked God for the blessings he had obtained “here in Sweden” and not the least for the fact that the Swedish king had been gracious to a foreigner like him.¹⁵⁵⁷ Krabbe seems to have considered himself as a foreigner in Sweden and that that was the way he was seen by others. Naturally Krabbe was writing about Parliamentary circles and the court, which implies that not even the nobility of two neighbouring countries like Sweden and Denmark was so united as not to treat foreigners in a special way. A fact that indicates the difference between noblemen from the two countries was that in the 1680s the Swedish nobility was much annoyed with the members of the Scanian élite who insisted on following the Danish fashion and using Danish manners in Stockholm.¹⁵⁵⁸ So we have seen that Krabbe hinted that one had to be grateful for the little signs of favour that one received; for after all, one was only a foreigner. He knew very well that many of the Swedish potentates were of foreign origins. Perhaps he also noted that on a lower level, the Swedish authorities employed all kinds of nationalities in the administration. Native Swedes had precedence but plenty of Germans, Dutch people, Poles, and other countrymen found good positions. Not Danes though. According to Olluf Rosencrantz this was also the reason why Krabbe had not been able to embark upon a public career in Sweden; he claimed that all Swedish civil servants were suspicious of Scanians. It had all been the matter of “dissimulation”. Deep down they loathed Krabbe as much as they hated all other Scanians. The simple reason for this hatred was that Krabbe was of Danish origins and that his family had been sworn enemies of the Swedish Kingdom. Naturally the outbreak of the war in 1675 exacerbated the situation.

Reports to Copenhagen

Krabbe was guiltier than the Swedes ever knew. In a letter to General Meijer in Copenhagen from around 20th September 1677, War Commissary Jens Harboe reported that the Swedes had broken up from Daxstrup (Dagstorp) and were now

¹⁵⁵⁶ Lind, pp.98-100. The normal order of preference was native noblemen, other natives, foreign noblemen, other foreigners.

¹⁵⁵⁷ ”...saa kand jeg i ligemaade aldrig nocksom fuldtacke min gode Gud og herre for ald sin velsignelse og godhed, som hand imod mig her udi Suerrig hafver...bewiist, og synderlig ladet mig faa, saa som en fremmed mand udi Suaerrig, største yndest og Naade for hans Kongl: Mayts, saa og saa for hendes Mayts enkedronningens öyne.”

¹⁵⁵⁸ Fabricius, I, p.69.

retreating. As soon as that happened the nobility sent a delegation to Lands Crone.

Harboe continued:

“The nobility have sent some of their best men here, and particular the Thotts and Krabbe sounded as if Judgement Day was near and begged Your Majesty to grant them the great grace of a party of 100 or 200 cavalry that could collect them and bring them here. The reason for this is that His Majesty the king of Sweden does not consider them anything but traitors and disobedient subjects...the latest communication was that they should all betake themselves to Malmö, but they did not wish to obey that order...now they have to go to Stockholm before 1st October with whatever they can bring along. Whoever does not obey and proves themselves contrary, will be fettered by the hands and feet and transported there by force. They all live in the constant hope and trust that Your Majesty will show them grace and extract them from this labyrinth.”¹⁵⁵⁹

This report has not come to the light until now. The scholars have been unaware of the fact that Krabbe had asked the Danish king for help. Harboe’s reports are detailed and contain information that is not to be found in other sources, about the movements of the snaphaner, about Holger and Tage Thott’s actions during the autumn of 1677 and not the least about Krabbe. A conscientious scholar like Fabricius would not have skipped an important piece of information like that of the Thotts’ and Krabbe’s appeal to the king of Denmark. I have chosen to add Harboe’s letter and the information it contains after the main part of the text of this section, although it preceded most of the events that are described in this chapter. My main reason for doing so was that my sources ignore, or pretend to ignore, Krabbe’s decision. Naturally the Danes knew that Krabbe wanted to be saved from the maze, just like his kinsmen, but they also knew that it would be fatal to him if it came out. Asking the Danes for help was outright treason. Sperling and Breuer could have saved themselves much work if they had had Harboe’s letter in their hands. Afterwards, nobody would have dared admit that the Thott-Krabbe clan had asked the Danes for help for the simple reason that they wanted their confiscated property back and some of them wanted amnesty. It would not have made things easier for Jytte Thott if it came out that her husband and her brothers all had gone over to the Danes. Otte Lindenow’s letter to admiral Juel made quite clear how important it was that “abductions” like that of the Thotts took

¹⁵⁵⁹ Jens Harboe to Meijer, app. 20 September 1677, War College Collections, Krigsetaten, Indkomne breve 1677-78. Original: “der adel hat alsoforth einige ihren beste herrir geschickt, undt lassten sie Insonderheit die Totten und Krabbe uns Jungste Gericht willen bitten, Ihrer Königl: Maytt: ihnen doch die Groste Genade erzeigen wolten , und senden einer partei von etwa 100/200 pferde hir aus der ihnen abholen und hier in führen möchte, Angesehen Ihrer Königl: Mt: von Schweden ihnen nicht anders als vor verräther und ungehorsahme unterthanen hielt, weil sie ... Jungsten ausgesanten befehl daß sie sich nach Malmøe alsoforth verfügen solten, nicht haben nachleben wollen, ... ihnen amtzo, wieder... ange..., daß sie sich alsoforth und zwar innerhalb den 1 Octob: nach Stockholm mit allen was sie mitführen können hinauf begehen sollen; wer solches nicht nachlebt und sich dawiedersetzt, sol an hender und füssen geschlossen, dahier geführt werden, Sie leben in der Stetigen Suversucht Ihre Königl: Mt: ihnen die grösste genade erweisen und aus diesen laborint auszehen.” My translation.

place according to the rules.¹⁵⁶⁰ It had to look as if the victims of these abductions became prisoners of war. Else it would not be possible to work out amnesty for them during the peace tractations that would come at one point or another. With these facts in mind, I chose to add Harboe's letter to Meijer at the very end. All my Danish/Scanian sources were written by people who had a lot to lose by declaring themselves Danish or pro-Danish, or even by lashing out against the Swedes. It is important to keep that in mind.

Conclusion of Part II: Was Krabbe guilty?

Was Krabbe guilty then? Were the Swedes right in executing him? Had he "collaborated with the Danes a little" as the present-day lord of the manor put it the last time, I went on a guided tour of modern day Krageholm? Those are questions that have been asked repeatedly since Krabbe's own day. There are no simple answers. Asking if Krabbe was guilty is like asking whether the Swedes were right in taking Scania from Denmark. Both Thott and Rosencrantz saw the Scanians as involuntary Swedish subjects who had all the rights in the world to rise against their evil overlords. Krabbe and the other Scanians "were Swedish since they had been subjected to Swedish domination by force of violence." Through war and bloodshed, the Swedes had put a humiliating yoke on the shoulders of the Scanians. The Swedes had sinned against God even if worldly laws maintained that conquerors could keep their prey. Rosencrantz wished that the Swedes had listened to their conscience and returned Scania to Denmark so that further wars could have been avoided.¹⁵⁶¹ The Scanians had pledged loyalty to the Swedish king because they had to, but an oath always implied a mutual agreement. When the Swedish sovereign failed them through his "fugacious absence" in 1676, they were free from any kind of obligations to Sweden.¹⁵⁶² Knud Thott wrote to Sperling that both the laws of God and of nature entitled a "subject" to liberate himself of his oath and duty if his lord and liege had declared him an enemy.¹⁵⁶³ According to this line of thinking the Swedes had no business in Scania and Krabbe was not guilty because you cannot commit treason against a sovereign or nation that has dissolved its pact with you. It could also be

¹⁵⁶⁰ See p.442 of this thesis.

¹⁵⁶¹ p.36

¹⁵⁶² Knud Thott declared so in a letter to the Swedish King, See: Aletophilus's pamphlet in defense of the Thotts.

¹⁵⁶³ Knud Tott to Sperling, 19th May 1678, in Rosencrantz (1679), p.21.

questioned whether a pact that had been imposed “by force of violence” had ever had any validity at all. Maybe in the eyes of European power politics but not in the eyes of God.

Krabbe still declared himself a Swedish patriot when he was about to be executed. In the same manner, Tage Thott called himself a Swedish patriot in May 1678 when he had already been executed in effigy.¹⁵⁶⁴ The accusations against the Swedish king (and nation?) are implicit in these statements. Krabbe and Tage Thott had both done everything they could to stay true to the oath they had sworn. *They* had not stopped being Swedish patriots. The Swedes had precluded them from that category. From a Danish point of view Krabbe was not guilty, although the six points of the final verdict spoke the truth.

Nevertheless, the Swedes could claim that Krabbe was guilty. It was a claim that was contestant and doubted of, not the least at the Nimwegen conference, but it was acceptable. Krabbe could have betaken himself to Sweden like the neighbouring estate owners of Swedish origins. Nobody forced him to stay in Scania to try to save his lands and his tenant-farmers. Officially the Swedish king had not betrayed his Scanian subjects by leaving the whole country prey to the Danes. In the official version there was no “fugacious absence”. Consequently, the Swedish king had not broken the pact first. Or at least, that was what he wanted the world to believe. The version that was offered the public was that Sweden had retrieved its lost Scanian provinces and that the evil-minded inhabitants of those provinces had risen against their righteous lord and king.

Harboe’s report to Meyer makes quite clear that Krabbe had chosen Denmark. At that moment in time there were two options for the nobility from the Ystad (Ysted) area: either they went to Sweden where most of them would be interned in a camp at Vimmerby just across the border, or they could try to escape to the other side. Both options were highly insecure. They had nothing in Sweden. As most of them would find out, conditions in the camp were not all too favourable and not all of them would get out from there.¹⁵⁶⁵ Massive troops were needed to be “abducted” from Swedish

¹⁵⁶⁴ Tage Tott to Sperling, 19th May 1678, in Rosencrantz (1679), p.60. Knud Thott on the contrary, considered himself free from all bonds to the Swedish king and crown from the day his execution (in effigy) was confirmed.

¹⁵⁶⁵ See: *II Till Skånes historia under öfvergångstiden 1658–1710, Skånska kriget och snapphanefejden* 5, 1-2, <https://www.ra.se/lla/dokument/>

territory. An outright escape meant that chances of being pardoned became infinitesimal. But the Danish king promised them that those who lost their lands in Scania would be compensated (in case of a Danish defeat). He also offered excellent positions to Scanian noblemen who were willing to take the full step and declare themselves pro-Danish. The Thotts and the Krabbes were anti-absolutists, but they had always revered the bond between sovereign and subject. They had always been held in high esteem by the Danish kings. Forced exile meant dishonour and shame. Denmark meant physical safety and, perhaps, the professional opportunities that they had always dreamt of. In that situation Krabbe eventually chose to side with the Danes. If possible, he would like to keep it a secret from the Swedes because it would increase his chances of gaining amnesty after the war and it would save his relatives in Scania from trouble. It was very much the matter of practical considerations, just like when Iffuer Krabbe divided his lands between the two sides of the Sound after the cession of the Scanian provinces. “What are our chances of survival?” is the ultimate question that one is likely to ask in a situation of chaos and war. Politically, it was important to break the backbone of the Scanian resistance. Charles XI wanted to get rid of the baron who was looked up to by so many people. In his reports to the king from September 1677 Sperling seemed overjoyed that they might be able to bring charges against Krabbe.¹⁵⁶⁶ The king and Sperling knew they had to build up a case and that they were risking their “image” among the people. Most of Sperling’s reports from late September until Christmas 1677 express a desire to get the “business” over and done with as soon as possible. In 1677 the snaphaner constituted a major problem in the Scanian provinces. The estates were considered “snaphane-nests”. If their inhabitants were sent off into exile or died the mansions and castles could be used as army bases from where the snaphaner could be fought on their own ground. So why was it so important to get Krabbe’s neck? The Swedes wanted to use Krageholm (Krogholm) as a fortress but Härkeberga, Svaneholm, Näsbyholm, Glimmingehus, Tunbyholm and Sövdeborg were occupied at the same time and their proprietors did not have to die. The Swedes could appropriate themselves of Danish property without trouble anyway.

¹⁵⁶⁶ Naturally it might have been a question of personal antagonism. Sperling and Krabbe went a long way back. They had worked together in the Swedish diet in the 1660s. It is possible that their dislike of each other could be traced back to those days, but the king was pressing on too.

I believe that part of the answer lay in the fact that Krabbe was considered the leader not only of the nobility, but of all Scanians. It was commonly held that important personages like Krabbe and Countess Parsberg influenced ordinary people's views. This attitude also regarded officials and clergymen who were seen as carriers of evil influence. Good Swedes were needed for such important posts. In times of peace, one could try to drive people of the sort into exile. In times of war, one might have to statute examples.

The strongest argument in Rosencrantz's and Hjørring's writings is that all Scanians were involuntary Swedish subjects. The Swedes had imposed a humiliating yoke (an image that appear again and again in Danish rhetoric from way back then) on their shoulders and they had all the rights in the world to free themselves of that yoke. Rosencrantz wished that the Swedes had listened to their conscience enough to return Scania to Denmark: so much violence could have been avoided in that manner and the Swedes would have saved their sinful souls.¹⁵⁶⁷ Krabbe would never have ended up in trouble if the Swedes had feared God. The Danish historian Hanne Sanders who works in Lund has commented that God (and his relation to humanity) was fundamental to one's "national" identity at the time.¹⁵⁶⁸ To traditional nationalists it is the relation to the nation that is fundamental to one's identity. The last words that Krabbe uttered before he died was not that he was a Swedish patriot. It was "Lord Jesus receive my soul".¹⁵⁶⁹ It was the heavenly and not the worldly powers that the baron called out to.

¹⁵⁶⁷ *En sandfærdig replique*, p.36.

¹⁵⁶⁸ Hanne Sanders, "Religiøst eller nationalt verdensbillede? Skåne efter overgangen til Sverige i 1658" (A Religious or a national view of the world? Scania after the transition to Sweden in 1658), s.231–252 in *Mellem Gud og djævelen. Religiøse og magiske verdensbilleder i Norden 1500–1800*, ed. Hanne Sanders, 2001. See pp. 251–252.

¹⁵⁶⁹ Fabricius III, p.135. When Krabbe had already been shot and had fallen halfway off the chair he exclaimed: "Herre Jesu anname min ånd."

Conclusion of This Thesis

“War does not occur in a vacuum”

Joanna Bourke¹⁵⁷⁰

The Military Background

During a war people enter a normality that is far from normal. What has until then been unthinkable or horrifying becomes the order of the day. Military agents take on an exceptional role and so do sometimes people who, in a different situation, would be called criminals. After a war it is difficult to leave that state of absurd normality.¹⁵⁷¹ On a practical level the war-torn country has to be rebuilt and restructured because both buildings and social structures do get razed to the ground in a war. Time has been interrupted and when it is never easy to get it going again. The more profound the rift between before and after, the harder it becomes. Once time has begun again shattered structures take on new forms and people have to try to create something like a “normal normality” again. The inherent difficulty in recreating a world that has been lost is what can make a comparatively short war so consequential. The period of “absurd normality” remains an interruption of time, a black hole that influences the conception of whatever takes place afterwards and consequently influences the restructuring of a new “normal” world. That is why a long inter-war or post-war period might seem of minor importance compared to a comparatively short war.

In the modern world war zones are often pacified according to strategies that could very well be applied to the Scanian war. In a situation of chaos like that in Scania or in Bosnia in more recent times it is usually a question of monopolising, or trying to monopolise, violence. At one end of the spectre there is a group of people who do politics through parliamentary methods. At the other end we find the people who do politics with guns. Violence is and always has been an efficient way of doing politics and when the structures of the “normal” state start crumbling, much more space is left for violent politics. In a war zone, where politics are done with bombs and guns, any kind of pacifying force should focus on the primary military actors, but what is most

¹⁵⁷⁰ Joanna Bourke, “Barbarisation vs Civilisation in Time of War”, pp.19-28 in *The Barbarisation of Warfare*, George Kassimeris (ed.), New York University Press 2006. Quote p.24.

¹⁵⁷¹ The background to these conclusions is Håkan Gunneriusson’s presentation of his research at the Swedish Military Academy “Försvarshögskolan” on warfare at the Swedish national historians’ conference at Lund University, 25th April 2008.

important is to interrupt or redirect the war time structures and any informal economies that might have arisen during the war.¹⁵⁷² The aim of the “pacifying” force is usually to make the objects of their efforts choose second best. It should be noted that a “pacifying force” in this context might mean an international force that is sent in order to try to mediate between two or more warring parties, but it might also mean one of two warring parties. The aim is to try to make the enemy abstain from its ultimate goal. Most enemies are not particularly keen on renouncing on what they have dreamt of and fought for, but the “pacifying force” should then try to change what Gunneriusson calls the “structure of the social field”¹⁵⁷³ so that what was second best becomes the best option, and the objects of the pacifying mission/the enemy should be persuaded that that is the case. A war-time social field changes rapidly, the parameters of power, prestige and know-how are in constant flux, and it is the task of the intelligence service of the “pacifying force” to identify the social field, which is much the same as identifying the main actors in it. Identification and control of the social field allows the pacifying force to take the situation in its hand and to get into a position to offer “carrots” in the form of second-best options. Logically enough, “carrots” can only be assumed to interest enemies with a political agenda. In any war zone there will always be groups that have no other goal than smuggling, plundering or other shady pursuits that lead to personal gratification but nothing else. Some groups create legitimacy for plundering through claims of doing so for queen and country or some other idealistic cause. It is the aim of the “pacifying force” to destroy these groups. Physically so if necessary. Groups have a political agenda but will not let themselves be persuaded to a second-best option are, according to Bordieu’s and Gunneriusson’s theories, to be blocked out from the field, whatever that means. During the Scanian War the land was plunged into a situation where the state no longer existed except in a few barricaded enclaves. The social field was dominated by belligerents of dubitable authority. Be they Danish or Swedish regular soldiers, Danish irregular troops (*friskytter*), *snaphaner* of various kinds, or Swedish *snaphane* catchers and *carpetbaggers*, it was far from obvious who the righteous lord of the land was and who had the right to claim the power of authority. The Swedish policy in Scania followed the categories that Gunnerius have analysed. The main aim of the

¹⁵⁷² Gunneriussons’s analyses are based on Pierre Bordieu’s theories.

¹⁵⁷³ The war zone seen as a scene of conflict in which different actors with different motivations must act reciprocally or against each other.

Swedish “pacifying” troops was to make the enemy abstain from violence without having attained their ultimate goal (Danish supremacy). Through identification of the actors on the local social field the *snaphaner/friskytter* were singled out and tamed with promises of acceptable second bests (amnesty, a safe future in this life and paradise in the next). Those who were deemed to have been acting for personal gratification were destroyed. However, the weaknesses in this system also become evident in the case of the Swedish policy during and just after the Scanian War. It is next to impossible to judge who is sincere in their wishes to fight for queen and country or the fatherland. It is but too easy to impute that someone is not sincere in these wishes, or that all those who are born in a certain area cannot be sincere in these wishes since they have not realised who their true queen/king and country are and that consequently all pretences of patriotic fighting are an excuse for crime. The Swedes systematically classified groups that were *not* primarily fighting for personal gratification as criminals, in order to free the field from their presence and to deter others from supporting them.

Guerrillas and the Absolutist Armies

Richard Clutterbuck points out that invasions and subjugations of one people by another belong to the order of the day of history. And very often guerrilla resistance against foreign invaders could (at least with the passing of time) just as well be seen as resistance against an indigenous government: the English came to regard Scottish and Welsh guerrilla warriors as rebellious subjects, while the English (or the Saxons as the Welsh still call them) were certainly still seen as foreign invaders by the Scots and Welsh.¹⁵⁷⁴ In the same manner the Swedes felt they had a right to consider the *snaphaner* as rebellious subjects, traitors and criminals but those who were branded as “*snaphaner*” by the Swedes and actually participated in some kind of resistance felt that they were fighting a foreign invader, and they were supported in this belief by the Danish authorities. Far from being a particular case, the *snaphaner* were in this sense quite typical and so was the Swedish crackdown on them: guerrilla movements almost invariably get deemed illegitimate by the government they are opposing and all those who support the guerrillas tend to get treated as criminals. Throughout history this has

¹⁵⁷⁴ Clutterbuck, p.24.

been the case innumerable times.¹⁵⁷⁵ Another classical aspect of guerrilla warfare that can easily be applied to the situation in Scania 1676-79 is the fact that guerrilla movements normally incorporate an element of “terrorism.” Exactly because it is so extremely dangerous to support guerrillas, these usually see themselves constrained to resort to terror in order to survive, even in cases where popular support is widespread. If the local population is not in fear of them it tends to get too difficult to find hiding places and provisions, and more people are *not* afraid of supporting the government.¹⁵⁷⁶ To be able to function, guerrilla movements need to act in areas where public opinion is at least not hostile and where they can be sure that those who give them refuge and/or food will not be reported to the authorities. Terror will often be needed in order to deter government supporters from reporting those who give shelter to guerrillas.¹⁵⁷⁷

Another parallel to the Scanian War could be drawn through a study of the initial phases of the American War of Independence 1775-1783 when the British under General Sir Henry Clinton followed what Richard Clutterbuck has characterised as “an enlightened policy to attract people to the willing support of ‘law and order’ with considerable success; he encouraged rebel soldiers to defect by a generous system of granting parole on an undertaking that they would not take up arms against the British”. Sir Henry’s strategy was so successful that the rebellion in the southern states was practically at an end, and he handed over responsibility to Lord Cornwallis and moved the headquarters to New York. Cornwallis chose not to continue Clinton’s “soft” policy. Guerrilla movements grew and so did popular support for them.¹⁵⁷⁸ Guerrilla actions provoked reprisals, which in its turn, increased support among the local inhabitants. By 1781 the situation was completely changed, and Cornwallis was besieged and defeated at Yorktown by a combination of regular American troops and

¹⁵⁷⁵ Clutterbuck, p.20.

¹⁵⁷⁶ See: Clutterbuck, p.20: “Thus, whatever the true sympathies of the majority of the population, the proportion prepared to take the risk of supporting the guerrillas will usually only be a small minority so, to survive at all, the guerrillas will have to put the population at large in sufficient fear to induce an adequate proportion to support them and to deter the remainder from supporting the government – in other words, to impose an element of terror.”

¹⁵⁷⁷ Clutterbuck, p.26.

¹⁵⁷⁸ Clutterbuck, p.27: “Guerrilla movements grew, and so did support for them. Guerrilla actions provoked reprisals, which further increased this support. Within a year the situation was totally transformed, and Cornwallis moved northwards, harassed both by regular American forces and by the guerrillas, to be besieged and defeated at Yorktown.”

guerrillas.¹⁵⁷⁹ In that war, repression made resistance explode. The local population was outraged and support for the rebels multiplied, whereas Clinton's parole system had managed to disarm large numbers of rebels and to maintain people's trust in "the law". The same game of alternating "carrots" with the whip was played by the Swedes in Scania during their attempts at making the Scanians submit to Swedish law and order, with equally varying results. At the time of the conflict, Sthen Jacobsen identified the increasingly harsh reprisals around the end of 1677 and the beginning of 1678 as the spark that lit the spark that caused the fiercer part of the snaphane rebellion.¹⁵⁸⁰ Fealty pledging campaigns and general parole offers had the opposite effect. It was consequently the "gentler" approach that won out in the long run.¹⁵⁸¹

It should be remembered that in most wars most of the population have no desire whatsoever to get involved in a war. When faced by a gun most people conform to the dictates of any kind of regime. Richard Clutterbuck assesses the average of people who are prepared to risk their lives for either guerrillas or the government in most conflicts to approximately one per cent, whereas another ten per cent or so might be persuaded by activists on either side to participate. The vast majority or around 80% try to stay clear of the conflict and do so as long as possible.¹⁵⁸² In this sense the Scanian War and the Snaphane Feud were no exceptions to the rule. Nor was it so when it came to the importance of maintaining or reducing popular support, depending on which side you were on. According to Clutterbuck a pattern can be traced in the way guerrilla warfare has been countered by governments throughout the ages: up until the Enlightenment might was the only means of punishing insurgents, and as often as not punishment meant not only death but also torture. From the Enlightenment onwards a more lenient attitude towards rebels took the upper hand as governments began to realise that "the most important battle in guerrilla warfare was the battle for the support of the people".¹⁵⁸³ The Swedish military historian Gunnar

¹⁵⁷⁹ Clutterbuck, p.27.

¹⁵⁸⁰ Jacobsen, p. 89.

¹⁵⁸¹ Cf. Jens Christian Vesterskov Johansen's recent article on the Swedification (Vesterskov Johansen 2008, pp.39-42) in which he claims that the Swedish authorities eventually managed to persuade the Scanians that the new regime was preferable to the old one through the lenient introduction of the new legal system and law. In his presentation of the article at the meeting of the Historical Association of the Diocese of Lund on 25th April 2008 Vesterskov Johansen declared "the carrot" as the ultimately winning weapon in the Swedification process.

¹⁵⁸² Clutterbuck, p.25.

¹⁵⁸³ Clutterbuck, p.25. Clutterbuck also informs us of Mao Tse-Tung's wise saying that the guerrilla is the fish, and the people are the sea.

Åselius stresses much the same point in his claim that “guerrilla wars are won through the conquest of the trust of the people”.¹⁵⁸⁴ It is important for the government to manage to transmit the message that they (the government) stand for law and order. In a situation like the one during the Scanian War when two governments were transmitting the same claim the question of trust became even more complicated. It should also be pointed out that Clutterbuck’s timeline is not quite correct. The authorities were aware how important it was to win over the population to their side during the Scanian War and that was before the Enlightenment. The authorities today tend to crack down on popular insurgents quite violently. The situation in Iraq and the treatment of prisoners in the Abu Ghraib prison is an example of very traditional treatment of guerrillas.¹⁵⁸⁵ Maybe the alternation between gentle persuasion and sheer might should be seen as parallel traditions that can be resorted to in different situations instead of as a linear development.

Consequently, the *snaphaner/friskytter* were far from as unique or as exclusively Scandinavian as most Swedish historians would like to think. The European dimension is essential. I believe that the *snaphane* movement developed out of the troops that were raised in every parish, in part because Scandinavian peasants had always defended their homes with arms, partly because of the *defensio patriae* movement. In their turn, the *friskytter* were a professionalised version of the *snaphaner* and the peasant troops. “Professionalised” because they were very much the work of the Army Board and constituted an important tool for it during the Scanian War. Naturally the men that conducted the Scanian War did not get the idea of turning their *snaphaner* and peasant troops into *Friskytte* troops from out of the blue. It was part of the general trend that rendered the massive Absolutist armies dependent on swift irregular contingents. In the 20th century startling progress in arms and communications technologies undoubtedly changed the face of guerrilla warfare. Nevertheless, modern guerrillas and their early modern predecessors have surprisingly much in common. The US Army manual “Guerrilla Warfare and Special Forces Operations” from 1961 might just as well have described the *friskytter* as modern-day guerrillas:

¹⁵⁸⁴ Quote from a presentation on “War, Culture and Economy 1700-2000” at the Swedish National Historians’ Conference at Lund University, 25th April 2008.

¹⁵⁸⁵ Once again, I refer to Åselius.

“Guerrilla warfare is the responsibility of the United States Army... Guerrilla warfare is characterised by offensive action. Guerrillas rely upon *mobility, elusiveness, and surprise*. In addition to these traits, there are other characteristics that should be mentioned: civilian support, outside sponsorship, political aspects, legal aspects, tactics and developmental aspects.”¹⁵⁸⁶

In order to be able to come to terms with the idea that somebody is opposing us and (as it might seem to us) our whole style of life, that somebody is threatening our families, our religion and our country, it is all but too easy to consider that someone a thug. Well, actually someone capable of as much could not possibly be human. Putin wisely concludes that the cruelty of the rebels proves them to be wild beasts. Just like the Swedish judge who made a Danish rebel admit that he had indeed been living like a wild beast while he was with the “snaphaner”. I certainly do not know for sure if the Chechnyans are all scoundrels and wild beasts, but I do not think so. I do think, however, that sometimes it becomes all too easy to demonise and/or denigrate those whom we feel constitute a menace to our own big or small world. Sometimes human beings need to think of their opponents as animals in order to be able to crush them all the easier. It is far easier to dismember a pig than a fellow Christian. Joanna Bourke sustains that the difference between a bandit and a non-mercenary soldier is that the former kill for money whereas the latter kill for a sense of duty, but they still trade in violence and may indeed, share many aspects of their lives with each other.¹⁵⁸⁷ The difference between bandits and mercenaries (“contractors”) is primarily that bandits work for themselves and are not condoned by a state whereas mercenaries tend to function as representatives of a state although the soldiers themselves have no personal connection to that state whatsoever. But still, they all trade in violence. It is their job to kill other people in order to obtain something.

Social banditry

Eric J. Hobsbawm argues that popular movements of defence against foreign invaders in the early modern era were spurred by social and religious ideologies, but not national ones.¹⁵⁸⁸ In accordance with Hobsbawm’s beliefs I do not think that national ideologies existed then in the sense of nationalism or nationalist ideology. But if “national” is understood in the sense of “for one’s nation” or “against another nation”

¹⁵⁸⁶ Grenkevich, p.21. *Guerrilla Warfare and Special Forces Operations*, FM 31-21, Washington, DC, Headquarters, Department of the Army, 1961, p.3 and p.8. My italics.

¹⁵⁸⁷ Joanna Bourke, “Barbarisation vs Civilisation in Time of War”, pp.19-28 in *The Barbarisation of Warfare*, George Kassimeris (ed.), New York University Press 2006.

¹⁵⁸⁸ Hobsbawm (1990), p.75. In a somewhat ambiguous manner, he then declares that such movements could become “the basis of a broader popular national patriotism.”

then I disagree with Hobsbawm. Nor can I find that the Danish snaphaner/friskytter had much in common with the peasants in Hobsbawm's examples:

"Peasants appear to have argued that they had been betrayed by the nobles whose duty as *bellatores* should have been to defend them against the Turks. Perhaps they had a secret agreement with the invaders? It was thus left to the common people to defend the true faith against paganism means of a crusade."¹⁵⁸⁹

Perhaps Krabbe's bailiffs and the snaphaner were out to "accomplish the will of God, to make the truth prevail, or to advance the interests of a dynasty, or perhaps simply to defend their own against aggression." I am quoting Elie Kedourie's definition of the kind of patriotism that might have existed in early modern Europe because I believe it fully possible that he described the situation of the snaphaner/friskytter with these words. I am convinced that most snaphaner felt that they fought for their own families and their future. They definitely fought for the truth. Perhaps they accomplished the will of God. If they believed the official Danish propaganda well then yes, they were indeed fighting for God too. If they believed the Swedish propaganda, then they were preparing themselves to roast in the life after this. Many snaphaner/friskytter were deeply religious and risked their lives to go to church. Scanians in general were also critical of the Swedification of the whole liturgy and language in the churches, although on a spiritual level there is little or no difference between the Danish and Swedish church. The snaphaner/friskytter did not have to change religion but they might have been annoyed by the formal differences between the two state churches and that might have provided them with yet another reason for rebellion. Furthermore, it is clearly fastidious to be threatened with the flames of hell and of doing the Devil's business if you are a Christian. Religion was continuously used as propaganda during the Snaphane war. It wouldn't have been so if people in general and snaphaner/friskytter, had not been expected to believe in it. However, religion does not seem to have been particularly important to the snaphaner as a motivating force for their actions. Their focus was centred on expelling what they perceived as invaders from their land and on restoring the righteous monarch. They felt threatened and bereaved of their rights. They fought for the Danish king and defended Danes and their right to the land. In some ways, this corresponded to advancing a dynasty, but only in a way. They were definitely not out to manifest the genius of a particular

¹⁵⁸⁹ Hobsbawm (1990), p.75. In a somewhat ambiguous manner, he then declares that such movements could become "the basis of a broader popular national patriotism." However, there is strong evidence that the Danes felt betrayed by the nobles in 1658-60 when the Scanian provinces were lost.

nation as Kedourie felt that latter-day freedom fighters did,¹⁵⁹⁰ but there was an aim and a purpose to their fight that involved early modern patriotism and certain ideas of what constituted righteous kingship.

The fact that so many Scanians from all social categories decided not to heed their oaths of allegiance indicates that either oaths were regarded of little importance or that the Scanians thought that the Swedes had broken their part of the pact first. Loyalty to the king might have been the most important issue but I believe that the sources that have been analysed here show that national/ethnic dividing lines mattered too. There is ample evidence of the frequency with which ethnicity and names connected to ethnicity were used as arguments in the conflict between Sweden and Denmark. The *Dannebrog* was a symbol that meant something to peasants in the wilds of Blekinge. I believe that one should listen to how ordinary people explained their actions. Miller Anders from Kristianstad (Christianstad) did not say that he was fighting for his village or for his religion when he volunteered to help the Danish army in 1676: he did it because he had been waiting for them to come back for fifteen years and was sick and tired of the Swedes.¹⁵⁹¹ I am not saying that he might not have grown tired of the Swedes because his business was going down; but that he saw the Swedes as the root of his evils and did not consider himself one of them. The mere fact that Baron Krabbe's employees did not try to stay neutral indicates that patron/client bonds were not always important in the conflict. The foot soldiers who fought the battle of Lund were actually encouraged to fight "for king *and* fatherland" and if this kind of battle-cry was thought to be useful it was probably because it was taken for granted that it would encounter some kind of emotional response.¹⁵⁹² My point is that among the loyalties and identities that mattered to many Scanians was also that of being Danes and perhaps Scanians.

¹⁵⁹⁰ Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism*, Hutchinson & Co LTD, London 1974, p.75.

¹⁵⁹¹ Letter from Anders Möller's widow to the King, 11th June 1677, Indkomne breve, DRA. She was writing because her husband had died of fright when the Swedes came back.

¹⁵⁹² *Relation och Continuation Om dhet blodiga Slaget som emellan dhe Swenske och dhe Danske förelupen i Skåne widh Lund den 4. Decemb. 1676 til the Swenskes största Avantagie* (An Account and a Continuation of the bloody battle that has taken place between the Swedes and the Danes in Scania near Lund the 4th December 1676 to the great Advantage of the Swedes), Lund 1676, p.3.

I see the snaphane-movement both as the result of social discontent and as a form of protest against abuse and maltreatment.¹⁵⁹³ Did not Captain Keldsøn say so himself when he claimed that the task of the friskytter was to wipe out all native Swedes and the *privileges* they enjoyed?¹⁵⁹⁴ In Scandinavia both Fabricius and Alf Åberg supported this view. Nevertheless, the snaphane/friskytte movement was far from a case of typical social banditry. Contrary to Hobsbawm's social bandits the friskytter/snaphaner were not restricted to peasant communities: the majority of them seem to have been of peasant origins but we also have cases of snaphaner/friskytter of all other social groups (including the gentry). How could they have been against the rich? Hobsbawm believed that "resistance to the rich, to foreign conquerors or oppressors, or to other forces destroying the traditional order of things" were the principal motivations of social bandits and that all these were blurred in their minds.¹⁵⁹⁵ Now, I have not found any traces of a desire to fight the rich in my sources but very often I have found statements that seem to prove that the snaphaner/friskytter wanted to get rid of the foreign yoke and that they wanted things to be as they were in the good old Danish days.¹⁵⁹⁶ The biblical image of "the foreign yoke" they were suffering under recurs in rhetoric from all strata of society, from the king to courtiers to servants, millers and farmhands and so do references to Babylonia and the Babylonians and suffering in a foreign land.

Matias Skaanlund was the son of the bailiff of the Ellinge estate. He was sent to school at the prestigious Latin School in Lund (modern-day Katedralskolan) but dropped out because the teachers were Swedish, and he could not suffer "the Swedish yoke" as he later declared in his memoirs. Instead, his parents found a "nice Danish teacher" for him.¹⁵⁹⁷ When Skaanlund had finished school he went into service with a Swedish nobleman, but he quit his job since he could not stand "det svenske Væsen" i.e., the innermost nature, or character of the Swedes. Skaanlund then found a job in Copenhagen with Monsieur Georg Borch, in whose service he did not have to get into too close contact with Swedes. In fact, Skaanlund greatly enjoyed his job as a lackey and together with his master he visited Scania and stayed with the most famous

¹⁵⁹³ Or at least, of what people *experienced* as such.

¹⁵⁹⁴ See p. 47 of this thesis.

¹⁵⁹⁵ Hobsbawm (2000), pp.21–22.

¹⁵⁹⁶ Hobsbawm (2000), p.24.

¹⁵⁹⁷ Fabricius II, p. 63. "en smuk dansk Skolemester."

(Danish-Scanian) noblemen such as the Thotts, Jørgen Krabbe and the Rantzaus, then they also went to see King Charles XI of Sweden during this sovereign's visit to Malmö (Malmö). He consequently found it pleasant enough to come to Swedish Scania as a visitor, but he found it too hard to live under Swedish rule and having to deal with Swedes on a permanent basis.

Yet I believe that some of the *snaphaner* could be classified as social bandits.

Hobsbawm characterises social bandits as "peasants who refuse to submit, and in doing so stand out from their fellows...men who find themselves excluded from the usual career of their kind, and therefore forced into outlawry."¹⁵⁹⁸ Indeed, a number of *snaphaner/friskytter* were peasant boys who had run away from Swedish conscription or military service. Captain Severin had served 13 years in the Swedish army before he ran away and became a leading *friskytte*. He was an outlaw according to the Swedes, but certainly not according to the Danes with whom Severin identified.

Although Hans Severin was a particular case in that he managed to betake himself from the other side of the Baltic to Copenhagen and then to Scania, he did not differ much from many other Scanian "deserters" from the Swedish army in that he did not simply run away to become an outlaw, but he went to the Danish army headquarters to offer them his services. Even after the Scanian War many Scanian boys ran away to do service in the Danish army. Many Scanians enrolled in the Danish army during the last decades of the 17th century. Danish recruiters had a special route between the promontory of Kullen in north-western Scania and Zealand. Åberg cites a case from this late period when six farm boys from Bjäre were caught by the Swedes after having served a year in the Danish fleet. They were condemned to death but at the last moment they were deported to Pomerania.¹⁵⁹⁹ From a Danish point of view this kind of young men were certainly not outlaws. But from a Swedish point of view, they were.

In the same manner *friskytter* like Pieter Sten, Nicolaus Hermansen, Hans Severin, Hendrik Frederik Dreyer, Simon Andersen and Jakob Wesseltoft might have been outlaws in Sweden but they were definitely *not* outcasts from Danish society. Some Danes admired the *friskytter/snaphaner*, some had patience with them, others loathed

¹⁵⁹⁸ Hobsbawm (2000), p.28.

¹⁵⁹⁹ Åberg 1958, p.117. In 1688 300 Scanians were conscripted for service in Pomerania but most of them deserted before the ship set off. In 1700 Charles XII finally allowed Scanians to apply for service as dragoons in the local regiments.

them, but they were outlaws neither to the law nor to the imagination of the people whose opinions we encounter in the sources. According to Hobsbawm the “programme” of social bandits is the “defence or restoration of the traditional order of things”.¹⁶⁰⁰ Which I believe applies perfectly to all kinds of snaphaner and friskytter except maybe those who were criminals. From a Danish point of view, we have no evidence at all that any of the registered friskytter should have been criminals and very vague evidence that any of the snaphaner should have been so. The Neapolitan bandits and peasants rose “for the ideal of the ‘good old’ society naturally symbolised by the ideal of the ‘good old church and ‘good old’ king.”¹⁶⁰¹ In the same manner the Scanian snaphaner and friskytter, and maybe the whole population, hankered for all that was symbolised by good old Denmark.¹⁶⁰²

The Parallel Discourse

In this thesis I have tried to show that those who sided with the Danes during the Scanian war simply adhered to a different discourse that provided them with a motivation and explanation for not wanting to be Swedish: that of the Danish authorities. According to the Danish discourse it was the duty of the Scanians, as patriots and as Christians to fight the foreign invader. The anonymous author of the *Ny beretning* from 19th February 1677 explained that the snaphaner owed their loyalty to Meerheim and that it was their duty to obey him.¹⁶⁰³ This was certainly not the kind of duty outlined by the Swedish state, but it was nevertheless a kind of loyalty that was called for by official instances of the highest ranking (e.g. the king of Denmark and the official Danish discourse). The famous Danish poet and writer Anders Bording expressed this sentiment and the expectation or even demand that was fuelled by it, in a poem in the newsheet *Danske Mercurius* (The Danish Mercury) on 1st January 1677: “Let him rage with plunder and fire//He cannot subdue people’s hearts unto love for him//The old faith and duty remains steadfast in their minds and hearts//Still remains and is too deeply impressed on them.”¹⁶⁰⁴ The same sentiment

¹⁶⁰⁰ Hobsbawm (2000), p.29.

¹⁶⁰¹ Hobsbawm (2000), p.31.

¹⁶⁰² Both the Swedish king and the Governor General claimed that all Scanians had immediately chosen to side with the Danes and that they were enamoured by all things Danish.

¹⁶⁰³ *Ny beretning*, stanza 6.

¹⁶⁰⁴ ”Lad ham rase frit med plyndring og med lue,
Til kaerlighed han ej kan hjerterne dog kue,
Den gamle troskabs pligt jo fast i folkets sind,
Vedbliver end, og alt for dybt er prentet ind.”

was expressed by Major Harlof in his desperate petition for help from the state of 18th November 1679 in which explained that he and his men had become friskytter because they had been summoned by their king and country. Seen from this point of view the Scanians owed their lealty to Denmark and it was consequently the *duty* of Scanian men of the right age and physical conditions to take up arms against the enemy.¹⁶⁰⁵ Harlof also clearly stressed that the friskytter obeyed orders. If they were denigrated and maltreated it was only because they had obeyed the orders of those to whom they were duty-bound.¹⁶⁰⁶ The basis of this line of thought was the official Danish discourse as expressed in its calls for support for the Danish cause from the Scanians and for support for the war efforts from the (other?) Danes. The Babylonian yoke theory was an essential component of this discourse. This way of thinking was also represented by Anders Bording as well as the anonymous author of the *Ny beretning* and they expected other Danes to share it with them. The same can be said for Knud Thott who explained that the friskytter had only done their natural duty and that both the laws of God and those of nature entitled them to turn their arms against the king of Sweden and his people.¹⁶⁰⁷

The Territorial Extension of the Snaphane/Friskytte Movement

I do not quite believe in the idea of a peaceful border area where Swedish and Danish farmers lived in a world of their own.¹⁶⁰⁸ The local peace treaties that were concluded between villages on both side of the border have attracted much attention and they most certainly did exist and most certainly testified of the existence of a trans-border community. Naturally it is very interesting that the villagers decided that they wanted to stand outside major conflicts and keep their good relations with their neighbours on the other side. No one could oppose the fact that villagers and peasants in Småland and Göinge (Gønge) belonged to the same cultural area and that they had and have much in common. But I feel that the realities of the “snaphane”-fights have been largely overseen by many scholars. There were local peace treaties but also local wars that were based on ethnic distinctions. The snaphaner from Göinge (Gønge) made

¹⁶⁰⁵ See Appendix A: Aage Harlof's letter: "...our dutiful faithfulness to our lawful King and Master and to our dear Fatherland."

¹⁶⁰⁶ See Appendix A: Aage Harlof's letter: "on the written Orders of the Gentlemen (of the Army Board) ...".

¹⁶⁰⁷ Knud Thott to Sperling, 19th May 1678, in Rosencrantz (1678), p.21. See also "Det hefnraabende blod": "...at tiende deris retteste herre effter Naturens Plict."

¹⁶⁰⁸ Åberg 1958, p.79.

incursions into *Swedish* villages, not just any village that might render booty. There is very little evidence that indicates that the snaphaner/friskytter stood outside the peasant communities in any part of Scania or Blekinge (Bleging). In all legends, negative and positive alike, many snaphaner are either farmers or sons of farmers. Very often still existing and impressive farms like Simon Andersen's. The Swedish authorities certainly did not consider them as outsiders to the local communities. Nor did the Danish authorities. And in all sources the concepts of snaphaner/friskytter and peasants are mixed up with each other in a way that tends to identify the first group with the second in many passages from both sides.

By and large Fabricius analysed the friskytter and snaphaner correctly. But I believe there is ample evidence that it was not a "movement" that concerned the borderlands only, especially during the later parts of the Scanian War the border territories became too dangerous and the operations of the friskytter moved west and south. In the case of the friskytter they were not even centred on the border area since the whole Gøinge and Blekinge (Gønge and Bleging) area had been lost to the Swedes by the time the King's Friskytter Corps was established. The King's Friskytter made forays into that area, but they were based in the Danish enclaves on the west coast and during wintertime also on Zealand and Bornholm. Certainly, in general the friskytter and snaphaner preferred keeping to the woods, at least when they travelled. The friskytter that operated in the modern-day Ystad-Österlen area were based in Landskrona (Landskrone) and used the stripes of woodlands that cross the plains between Söderslätt and Österlen (back then it was called Östreslätt)¹⁶⁰⁹ to travel safely from the headquarters to their area of action. The woodlands in the Sövdeborg area were one base along this track and it was reported to be "infested" with snaphaner. The Färs (Fers) area occupied much the same function and worked as a link to the south-east that contrary to what is believed today, was the centre of intense snaphane/friskytte activity. At the time, this fact was well-known, and it was not forgotten by all latter-day history writers: in his political history of Scania from the middle of the 19th century, Abraham Cronholm stressed the fact that in 1678 Governor General Sperling claimed that the "safest nest" of the snaphaner was

¹⁶⁰⁹ Söderslätt and Österslätt simply means "the southern plains and the eastern plains". Österslätt is known as Österlen, the road east, today. I do not believe that denomination existed in the 17th century.

Simrishamn.¹⁶¹⁰ Other south-eastern centres of activities that have been mentioned in this thesis are Tunbyholm (Tundbyholm) and Ingelstorp (Ingelstrup) and Nygård. During the whole Snaphane War the sources mention snaphaner and friskytter in the whole of Scania and Blekinge (Bleging). I think it can therefore be firmly established that what is generally called the snaphane “movement”, including the operations of the King’s Friskytter Corps concerned the whole of the area, at least of Scania and Blekinge. Somehow the snaphaner/friskytter outside the Gønge area have been ignored by later times. They turn up in legends in the south-eastern area, but sometimes they are not called snaphaner in these legends. It is a well-known legend that is being told to tourists in the Marsvinsholm area that the “men there” filled the castle with cow dung before surrendering it to the Swedes and that the “men” in some of the villages east of Ystad were lined up along the church wall, told to kneel and pray the Lord’s Prayer and then shot down. Also, I had heard stories of the feats of the courageous Captain Bendix but had absolutely no idea that he was what the Swedes call a snaphane. In that sense a “snaphane” is a construction.

One of Eric Hobsbawm’s most important points in *Nations and Nationalism* is that he stresses the multiplicity and compatibility of collective identities:

“Men and women did not choose collective identification as they chose shoes, knowing that one could only put on one pair at a time. They had, and still have, several attachments and loyalties simultaneously, including nationality, and are simultaneously concerned with various aspects of life, any of which may at any one time be foremost in their minds, as occasion suggests.”¹⁶¹¹

In this case I think Hobsbawm has brought the essence of the “machinery” of collective identities to the fore. I believe that he has characterised the way the diverse layers of identities and loyalties interplayed in early modern Europe, and still interplay today. Although the friskytter/snaphaner were generally judged to be patriotic peasants and farmers in early modern Denmark and Scania, the nexus “pirates and snaphaner” was nevertheless frequent enough to appear in the “Dictionary of Old Danish”. And the Swedes contradicted themselves constantly during the Scanian war by boasting about the majors and other officers of the friskytter they had met in combat. On the one hand the snaphaner were just a bunch of criminals, on the other hand their military ranks were recognised when one had vanquished them in combat. Grey zones, contrary opinions and the like have always

¹⁶¹⁰ Cronholm, p.193.

¹⁶¹¹Hobsbawm (1990), p.123.

existed, even in the case of the fearsome snaphaner. And I think it is important that we remember that.

Epilogue

The feeling of community with the Danes runs deep in Scania. *Det gamle land* (the old country) is sometimes spoken of in the same terms as American immigrants speak of their or their ancestors' country of origin.¹⁶¹² Some time ago one of my older relatives asked me why I was still at university. I tried to explain that I was trying to write a dissertation and then my aunt wanted to know about what. I said that it was all about the guerrillas and the barons and counts of the Danish times. "Well," my aunt said "If you've studied so much, maybe you could tell me why the hatred won't go away"

"The hatred?"

"Yes. Deep down it's always been there you know" she concluded.

This little episode is as un-academic as can be. There is no way I could prove that every single generation since 1658 or 1679 has lived with hatred and bitterness. What I can prove is that some Scanians today are convinced that this is the case.

¹⁶¹² Cf. The lyrics of Danne Stråhed's song "Vi bygger en bro" (We are building a bridge) from 2000. The refrain goes "we are building a bridge to the old country".

Appendix A. A Translation of Major Aage Harlof's letter to the King, November 1679:

“Great King, Most Gracious Lord!

With the very deepest Humility I Major Aage Harlof now appeal to Your Majesty, on behalf of all my subordinates, and with the greatest Sigh, and with melancholy I have to communicate that we have appealed many Times to the Gentlemen of the Army Board in the humble Hope of obtaining Winter quarters and Remuneration, all since we and our men came to this Land on the written Orders of the Gentlemen: 8 Companies, and at the time we were all fully equipped with Horses, Guns and all other accessories. But since we now, together with our Men, Horses and Grooms have consumed all that we brought with us, and we left the best things we had with our People in Scania, and now we have been told that the Swedes have confiscated it all, in this manner we have become Freaks and Exiles because of our dutiful faithfulness to our lawful King and Master and to our dear Fatherland; nobody wants to take us in or restore us who have rudely sneaked away from our Wives, Children, Families, Property and Patrimony, who of our own Fault are now living in great Poverty, yes some of them are being arrested and miserably executed in the Manner practised by tyrants only, all this have we suffered and lived through in the Hope that we might be saved from the Swedish Yoke and that, in times of Grace, we will be rewarded by our Most Gracious King.

For these reasons we fall to Your Great Majesty's gracious feet, begging for gracious Royal Merciful Mildness, that we poor exiled People, who have been ordered to come here in Your Royal Majesty's Service, may obtain Payment and Lodgings just like the rest of the Cavalry and that we may stay with our own People, so that we in this cold Winter of Hunger and Frost might not perish. Your Royal Majesty and the whole rightful Royal House will be rewarded such Royal Grace upon the resurrection of the Righteous in front of God's gracious tribunal.

Your Royal Mightiest Majesty's most subservient humble Servant

Aage Harlof
Major of the Friskytter

Copenhagen
18th Nov. 1679¹⁶¹³

¹⁶¹³ Krigskollegiet, Incoming Mail (Indkomne Sager), 1679 No:413, DRA, published by Sörensson, pp.59-60.

Appendix B. The Contents of Aletophilus' *A Truthful Replique*:

1. The actual Replique that was written as a response to Sperling's pamphlet against Krabbe.
(80 pages)
2. Petition from Lorenss Basck to Jöran Sperling, September? 1677 (3 pages). The letter that Basck wrote in order to denounce Krabbe.
3. Jørgen Krabbe's first letter of defence to the Royal Commissarial Court, October 5, 1677, (14 pages).
4. Lorenss Basch's Reply to Krabbe, October 8, 1677, (8 pages).
5. Jørgen Krabbe's second court statement and reply to Basch, October 11, 1677, (10 pages).
6. The Prosecutor's First Court Statement, October 5, 1677, (8 pages).
7. Jørgen Krabbe's Reply to the Prosecutor, October 9, 1677, (16 pages).
8. The Prosecutor's Second Court Statement, October 15, 1677, (20 pages).
9. Extracts from Krabbe's correspondence, read in court on October 15, 1677, (16 pages).
10. Jørgen Krabbe's Reply to the Prosecutor's Second Statement, October 23, 1677, (24 pages).
11. Jørgen Krabbe's Petition to the Commissars, November 14, 1677, (9 pages).
12. Jørgen Krabbe's Petition to Sperling, November 18, 1677, (3 pages).
13. Jørgen Krabbe's Petition to His Royal Majesty of Sweden, Boxing Day 1677, (24 pages).
14. Jöran Sperling's Explanation of the reasons for prosecuting and executing Krabbe, January 1678, (32 pages).

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