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“Swedish Freemasonry in the Caribbean: How St. Barthélemy turned into an Island of the IXth Province”

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Resumen

Este artículo examina la organización de la masonería en San Bartolomé, sus relaciones con la Gran Logia de Suecia, su estructura y actividades. Relaciones que hasta ahora nunca han sido analizadas. El estudio se centra principalmente entre los años 1797-1807, periodo en donde abundan documentos acerca de los rituales de trabajo, la organización y las ideologías de las logias. Por último, un aporte fundamental de esta investigación está en que por primera son utilizadas fuentes acerca de la orden masónica sueca presentes en los archivos de la logia *La Sudermanie* de la capital de San Bartolomé, Gustavia.

Abstract

This paper deals with the establishment of freemasonry on St. Barthélemy, its connections to the Swedish Grand Lodge, its membership structure and activities mainly between 1797 and 1807. There are plenty of documents which describe ritual work, organisation and ideology. These connections have hitherto never been analysed and the paper will for the first time present source material from the Archive of the Swedish Order of Freemasons on the lodge *La Sudermanie* in the capital of the island, Gustavia.

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“Swedish Freemasonry in the Caribbean: How St. Barthélemy turned into an Island of the IXth Province”*

Andreas Önnersfors

A peculiar present in the Caribbean: St. Barthélemy

In 1784, the Kingdom of Sweden received a peculiar present from the French king: the volcanic island of St. Barthélemy in the Caribbean Sea. St. Barthélemy covers a surface of 21 square kilometres and is situated between the islands of St. Martin to the east, St. Kitts to the southwest and Barbados at the southeast. St. Barthélemy is an archipelago, the largest island of which has a length of ten and a depth of five kilometres. This little strip of land squeezed in between other and far more prosperous Caribbean islands, was the scene for one of the few colonial endeavours of the Swedish crown and lasted only about one hundred years. Its importance for trade and the conflict between the great colonial powers might be questioned on good grounds. As a basically neutral player the Swedish colony played perhaps the most important roll as intermediary towards the U.S.A., and its neutrality made the island also popular for fugitives from the French revolution or British persecution. However, the history of freemasonry on St. Barthélemy is an important piece of a puzzle of freemasonry in the Caribbean in general. It is a micro-history of cultural encounters and mobility, of ritual development and sociability.

Since Spanish exploration of Latin America in the 15th century, European countries established economical interests in the area. Natural resources such as metals, sugar, tobacco and salt were important elements in international trade. Cheap labour from Africa was imported and exploited in a complicated slave trade. Colonisation erased local cultures but encouraged at the same time cultural encounters. Conflicts between the European Great Powers, first Great Britain and Spain, later on between Great Britain and France, were transferred to the Caribbean area, leading to devastating sea warfare and constant piracy. Since the revolution and independence of the United States of America in 1776 the situation became even more intricate. It is from this perspective we should interpret the French gift to the Swedish crown. Already on the European scene, Sweden during the 18th century was one of the most important allies of France. To include the poor country of Scandinavia in West Indian trade was a reward of loyalty and a guarantee for continuing anti-British engagement. The Ancient Regime however, was at the verge of breakdown and after 1789 the French revolution turned both the domestic and colonial situation up and down. Sweden did reject the idea of the legitimacy of violent revolution in the case of France (whereas it actively had

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backed up American independence). Suddenly the small island of the Caribbean became a place for French refugees that escaped from persecution and execution both in their homeland and in the colonies. It is in these exile circles we find the first initiatives for the foundation of Masonic lodges on St. Barthélemy.

This paper deals with the establishment of freemasonry on St. Barthélemy, its connections to the Swedish Grand Lodge, its membership structure and activities mainly between 1797-1807 where we have plenty of documents that tell us about ritual work, organisation and ideology. These connections have hitherto never been analysed and the paper will for the first time present source material from the Archive of the Swedish Order of Freemasons on the lodge *la Sudermanie* in the capital of the island, Gustavia.

Introduction: Sweden's political situation in the 18th century

The Kingdom of Sweden is not known as one of the major players in the colonisation process so typical for the European states in the 17th and 18th century. However, Sweden's history is also a history of territorial expansion and an endeavour to take part in international trade and world politics as it was determined by the two major powers France and England. The Kingdom of Sweden, that was formed in the 15th century and comprised of large parts of the Scandinavian Peninsula as well as what today is Finland and beyond, made entrance as a European Great Power at the time of the 30-years War in 17th century Europe. Being convinced by his divine mission, the Swedish king Gustav II Adolf entered the war on the side of the protestant coalition against the catholic under command of the Roman-German Emperor. Sweden brought the protestant side to victory and more important, played an active roll in the first large international peace negotiation, taking place in Osnabrück ending with the important Peace of Westphalia in 1648. Sweden together with its ally France made out signatory powers of the treaty and guaranteed its validity, hence providing a framework for political order in Europe up to the Vienna Congress in 1815. Within political science, the emerging territorial and later on national state in its typical European fashion is counted from this date, denominated as "Westphalia state". From this time on, the Swedish realm consolidated its position around the Baltic Sea. With the acquisition of German territories as a basis, large parts of eastern Denmark as well as the Baltic states came under Swedish dominion. But the ambitions of the Swedish crown reached also beyond the borders of Europe. Between 1638 and 1655 a Swedish colony existed on the banks of the Delaware-river in North America. The motifs for the acquisition of territory overseas were of course triggered by the prospect of trade and surely also a symbolic question for an emerging European Great Power. However, the further development of the Swedish realm clearly proved an imbalance between ambitions and capacity. At the end of the 17th century, Sweden was drawn into the European controversies of succession to the Spanish throne. Swedish king Charles XIIth saw his chance to prove himself a great military leader and attacked the Russian empire. Since a disastrous defeat in the Ukraine in 1709, it was only a matter of time when the Swedish realm would collapse. Nine years later, Charles XII was killed in the trenches outside Fredrikshald

in Denmark-Norway during his last campaign: an attempt to attack England on the side of a pro-jacobite coalition.

In the subsequent peace negotiations, Sweden tried to reconstruct as much as possible of its former status. But it was only due to French intervention a total split of the country was prevented. Out of the dominions abroad, only a small piece on the German Baltic shore remained: Swedish-Pomerania and the port town of Wismar. Sweden's economy was ruined after twenty years of warfare and much effort was invested in how to rebuild a solid basis for national growth. One of the major issues was to use science as a means of progress. In 1738, the Royal Academy of Science was founded with the goal to produce knowledge that could be used in the transformation of society. Swedish trade was internationalised through the establishment of the East Indian Company in 1731 that ensured Sweden's participation in the growing economical relevance of import of luxury goods from East and Southeast Asia. Sweden's tight political connections with France promoted many cultural contacts. A Swedish regiment under French flag, Swedish ambassadors to France, noblemen and travelling students on their Grand Tour established many personal contacts. Freemasonry as a distinct feature of French sociability was therefore a given platform of encounters.¹ In the 1730-ies the first Swedes were initiated into French lodges and freemasonry imported to Sweden in 1735 with a charter of the exiled pro-jacobite Charles Radclyffe of Derwentwater. Swedish freemasonry developed slowly during the 1730-ies and 40-ies. However there is no evidence whatsoever for an often-presumed prohibition of freemasonry by the Swedish king in 1738, and there are in contrary plenty arguments against it. During the 1750-ies the involvement of Swedes in continental lodges was growing and in Sweden the organisation of freemasonry was consolidated at the latest in 1760 with the formation of the Swedish Grand Lodge. Masonic documents were now translated from French to Swedish; a first adaptation to a "national" context took place, although there were also existed lodges working in French and German. Recruitment figures boosted and the largest groups of members were officers and merchants. Freemasonry most surely was seen as a potential to increase social capital and to create new contacts. The use of Masonic passports long time before the invention of Identity papers by national states proves international ambitions of the craft to promote mobility of its members. By 1767, freemasonry was established in all parts of the realm including the German possessions. It was also here we find the first move to export Swedish freemasonry outside the Swedish borders again.²

¹ Compare with Pierre-Yves Beaurepaire, *L'espace des francs-maçons: une sociabilité européenne au XVIIIe siècle* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2003) and Charlotta Wolff, *Vänskap och makt: den svenska politiska eliten och upplysningstidens Frankrike* (Helsingfors, 2004)

² Unfortunately there is no standard work on the history of Swedish freemasonry to refer to. The most reliable source is still a short account of archival evidence that was edited between 1892 and 1898 by Carl Ludvig Henning Thulstrup, "Anteckningar till svenska frimureriets historia berörande tiden från frimureriets införande i Sverige till hertig Carls af Södermanland öfvertagande af styrelsen öfver svenska frimurareorden" and "Anteckningar till svenska frimureriets historia berörande tiden från 1774, då hertig Carl af Södermanland öfvertog styrelsen öfver svenska frimurareorden, till och med år 1800", in *Meddelanden från Svenska stora landslogens arkiv och bibliotek* (Stockholm, 1892-1898)

Swedish Freemasonry outside Sweden

In large parts of the Roman-German Empire the system of the so-called Strict Observance was spread from 1754/1763 on. The Strict Observance taught in its higher degrees that freemasonry was a descendent from the Order of Knights Templars and that this order existed hidden within the lower degrees of freemasonry. The idea of an international brotherhood in a borderless Europe appealed the educated and political elites of the continent. Soon several provinces were founded building upon the tradition of the mediaeval knight orders. Swedish freemasonry also contained higher chivalric degrees from a somewhat different source. But many believed that the Swedish rite was more perfect than the Strict Observance. Hence, a German army doctor, Zinnendorff, who not was content with this system, wrote to Sweden in order to obtain a warrant and a translation to German of the Swedish rite. After several approaches, finally in 1765 the rite in its current version, the version as translated from French to Swedish by Carl Friedrich Eckleff, was transferred to Berlin and the documents subsequently called the “Acts of Eckleff”. With those as a basis, in 1770 the Grosse Landesloge der Freimaurer von Deutschland was founded. However, also Sweden showed an interest in the Strict Observance. After the brother of the reigning king Gustav III, duke Charles of Sudermania, was installed as Swedish Grand Master in 1774, he tried to establish close connections with European freemasonry. His strategy during the 1770-ies was to get control over the Strict Observance that in its inner circles now counted a thousand members of the functional elites in many European countries. However, the strategy failed and Sweden in 1780 simply founded a province of its own, the so-called IXth province of the Order. In 1782 the system of the Strict Observance was abandoned at an international congress of freemasonry, the Convent of Wilhelmsbad. The Swedish rite was now one of the only remaining that continued freemasonry in the created tradition of the Order of Knight Templars. This distinctly Christian outset mixed up with esoteric and alchemical content attracted still many outside the Swedish borders and an attempt was made to create chapters of Swedish freemasonry in the Russian Empire, St. Petersburg and Moscow. Once imported to Russia, Swedish freemasonry developed however independently and formal relations never came into power.³

This is a short sketch of the very complicated interrelations between different systems of freemasonry in Europe at the time. It is impossible in this paper to present all details of the development. Most important is to understand that Swedish freemasonry also had an international dimension. It fits well into this dimension that a lodge under Swedish constitution, St. Elisabeth, was founded in 1787 in Canton, China. Canton was the major port

³ A short historical account on Swedish freemasonry in English and French is to found in Andreas Önnersfors, “Franc-maçonnerie et autres sociétés secrètes reliant les élites éclairées de France d’Allemagne et de Suède au XVIIIe siècle”, in *Le prisme du Nord*, ed. Michel Espagne (Tusson: Editions Du Lérot, 2006) and “From Jacobite Support to a Part of the State Apparatus-Swedish Freemasonry between Reform and Revolution”, in *Franc-Maçonnerie et politique au siècle des Lumières: Europé-Amériques* (Bordeaux: Lumières 7, 2006) as well as “The Swedish Order Exported – Freemasonry as a conduit for Swedish and German educated elites during the Enlightenment and early Romantic period”, in *The Social Impact of Freemasonry on the Modern Western World*, ed. Matthew Scanlan (London: The Canonbury Papers 1, 2002)

town for foreign trade with European countries of the time. And it was among the circles of the Swedish East India Company we find the initiators of the new lodge. Meetings were even held on board of Swedish vessels on their way to Asia. With this example in mind, a foundation of a lodge that also promoted Swedish encounters with tradesmen, seafarers and merchants overseas, it is not surprising that the idea was born to establish a lodge on the newly acquired island of St. Barthélemy.

Sweden's economical interests in the Caribbean

Swedish West-Indian Company was founded in 1786. It was the company together with a Swedish governor that ruled the island until 1805, when the company was dissolved. The Swedish king Gustav III personally held stocks in the trade organised by the company. It received privileges to take part in slave trade from Africa to America. The capital of the island Gustavia was declared a toll free port for further transportation to the Central and North American colonies. On the island itself slaves did not make out a significant part of the economy, which was dominated by five salines and a number of plantations. Swedish expectations on profit from the newly acquired colony were high, but the company was obliged to re-invest a certain percentage to construct and maintain the port and buildings on the island and some of the public functions. Due to the Russian-Swedish war between 1788 and 1790 further obstacles aroused. Of major importance was trade with the United States. As the British initially tried to prevent trade with the independent former colony, ports in the Caribbean allowing North-American vessels to land were attractive. During the French revolution St. Barthélemy was a popular place for French emigrants attempting to escape persecution from the revolutionary government. How did St. Barthélemy look like in the years around 1800? According to a map engraved in 1801 by Fredrik Akrel, the island was divided into the capital city, named Gustavia after the Swedish king Gustav III, and fourteen further districts. The town of Gustavia was placed on the western side of the volcanic island around the port called Le Carénage. Gustavia was subdivided into 48 rectangular quarters and another 16 quarters without this division. Those 64 quarters were divided into 375 properties with 873 larger and smaller houses as well as 32 cisterns. In 1785 the population of the island counted 542 white and 408 slaves. Until 1812, this number had grown fivefold to around 5500 inhabitants, 2400 of which were slaves and 1130 liberated. About 3900 inhabitants lived in Gustavia only.

Swedish freemasonry in the Caribbean

First traces

We do not know whether there has been any Masonic activity on St. Barthélemy previous to the Swedish take-over. As freemasonry was spread all over the Caribbean, it is however most likely. My paper is based upon evidence taken from Swedish sources and they confirm that there must have been a potential circle of persons that could form the basis to establish a lodge. The first document that mentions a Swedish plan to establish freemasonry

on the island is dated 22nd of March 1790, the commemoration day of the Swedish Order of Freemasons. It is the copy of a interim-constitution issued to the first supercharger of the Swedish West-Indian Company *Johann Petter Brahelin* to establish a lodge or to quote from the source: “to use the privilege given by the General laws of the Order of freemasons to Scottish masters to spread light in the royal art as well as pass on the three first degrees in the St. Johns lodge [...] and is brother Brahelin entitled to find and receive competent workers for the erection of the Temple.”⁴ This right was given to Brahelin under three preconditions: first, he was only entitled to do on St. Barthélemy together with eight brethren that he could “create” as freemasons if the right number was not present. Secondly, the laws of the order concerning religion, origin and conduct had to be followed. Nobody was allowed as a member who not was Christian or born by non-Christian parents; slaves were excluded from membership as well as people of bad reputation. Thirdly, Brahelin was free to decide upon a convenient fee from which 50% together with an annual return and a membership record had to be sent to the Swedish Grand Lodge in Stockholm. If the annual returns would proof that a lodge could be erected, this lodge would be constituted legally under the Swedish Grand Lodge. Another document, unfortunately without date, in the same pile of manuscripts is titled “Humble Project for an Act of Constitution”. It contains basically the same formulations amended with “although the members of the lodge already now originate from several nations, the master and deputy master of the lodge shall always be Swedish subjects”.⁵ Perhaps does this document refer to further correspondence between Brahelin and Stockholm? Wholesaler Johann Petter Brahelin was initiated on 28th of April 1784 in the lodge *St. Jean Auxiliaire* in Stockholm. He was passed to the Second degree of the same lodge in November and raised in the Third degree in December of the same year. In 1785 he received his Scottish apprentice and fellow degree and in the following year the Scottish master’s degree (which the constitution refers to) in the Scottish lodge *L’ Innocent* in Stockholm.⁶ Apparently, Brahelin was not promoted further within freemasonry and we have hitherto not been able to trace more biographical evidence or whether his business was successful or not. We have also been unable to confirm whether Brahelin at all opened a lodge on St. Barthélemy.

As I stated earlier, it is however likely that among the inhabitants of the Swedish island was a group of active freemasons that might have come into contact with Brahelin. Otherwise it is very hard to explain why we find a perfectly kept membership record and an extract of a protocol dated between February and November 1797 in the collections of the Swedish Grand Lodge. In a currently disappeared manuscript, the confirmation of constitution by the Swedish Grand Master is dated 7th October. The first membership record suggests a date of formal constitution the 11th of July 1797.

⁴ Archive of the Swedish Order of Freemasons (SFMO), Box 44, Sign 000197

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Compare with Önnorfors, *Mellan mystik och makt: studier i det svenska 1700-talsfrimureriet* (Lund, 2006), 173

“Almanac portative”

A printed source for the history of Swedish freemasonry

In 1798 the first printed pocket diary for Swedish freemasons in the capital of Stockholm was printed in a cheap octavo format. Despite of the fact that at that time none of the lodges worked in French, the pocket diary carries the title *Almanac Portatif Pour l'Année 1798 à l'usage des Sociétés, Qui s'assemblent dans l'Hôtel des Franc-Maçons au Riddarholm à Stockholm*. It contained meeting dates of the lodges based in Stockholm as well as a list of officers of all Swedish lodges. During the decades to follow, this publication was amended with further information: on the officers of the Swedish Grand Lodge, lists of lodges of foreign grand lodges and also a couple of essays and speeches on Masonic topics, some of them with almost a political or social content. The existence of a list of officers from St. Barthélemy suggests that information was submitted in 1797, which would make sense. In April 1798 the lodge, out of which a majority of members were of French nationality, elected new officers and the 24th of June of the same year a brother *Martin de Clarencieux* in his function as master opened the lodge, installed the new officers and a brother Touron was installed as Worshipful master. At this meeting, a letter of the Swedish Grand Lodge was recited concerning the acceptance and constitution of the lodge. The Caribbean brethren also were informed about the list of officers of the Swedish Grand Lodge as well as of lodges under Swedish constitution to which the lodge *Södermanland, la Sudermanie*, was added with the number 35.⁷ A peculiarity with this list is that it did not reflect reality but rather an ideal scenario for the spread of Swedish freemasonry. There were not 35 lodges in the Swedish realm, but rather fifteen. The origin of this fictive list is a provincial convent of 1787 summoned to in the Swedish capital. Many of the lodges invited did not even exist and it has been suggested that the fictional mentioning of chapters and lodges under Swedish constitution represented a strategic plan for further development.⁸ FN Lars Otto Berg AM 10 Its occurrence still in 1798 proofs that the plan for development still was in force and not was a mere fantasy. Otherwise it is not possible to explain why the lodge in Gustavia would have received the number 35. At the meeting was also read a letter from the Grand secretary of the Swedish Grand Lodge count Battram, who promised that constitution documents needed, soon would be issued and sent to the West Indies through a returning Swedish brother Flodberg. At the table lodge that followed the meeting, toasts were raised for the Swedish throne and Grand master duke Charles.⁹

Between 1798 and 1801 the same list of officers was inserted in the above-mentioned *Almanac portatif*. We read under number 18 “Södermanlands Loge på Barthelemi i Westindien”:

Worshipful Master: *John Martius de Clarencieux*

⁷ Thulstrup, 123

⁸ See a forthcoming article on this topic by Lars Otto Berg, “En frimurerisk framtidsvision. 1787 års frimurarkonvent”, *Acta Masonica Scandinavica* 10 (2007)

⁹ Thulstrup, 123

Deputy Master: *Claude François [T]erasse*
 Senior Warden: *Alexandre Vardrobe*
 Junior Warden: *Louis Joyeau*
 Secretary: *Pierre Antoine Enjalbert*
 Treasurer: *Joseph François Bernier*

This list does however not correspond to the membership record returned to Stockholm, that present different names and further offices: “Tableau des [Officiers et] Membres qui Composent le R[espectable] L[oge] de Saint Jean, Sous le titre distinctif de La Sudermanie [No. 35] à l’Or[ient] De Gustavia Isle St. Barthélemy [, constituée par la M[ere] L[oge] de Suède en vestic du Planche du Serenissime G[rand] M[aitre] Duc de Sudermanie du onzieme jour du 7me moix Mac[onnaque] 5797.]” This title is composed by the headings of 1797 and 1799 to give an idea of the varieties that existed in the annual returns: “List of Officers and Members that make out the Respectable lodge of Saint John, under the distinct title of La Sudermanie No. 35 at the Orient of Gustavia on the Island of St. Barthélemy, constituted by the Mother Lodge of Sweden by the patent of its Most Worshipful Grand Master the Duke of Sudermania the twelfth day of the seventh month of the Masonic year of 5797 [1797].” This list contains around fifty names, presented in detail further on and transcribed in the appendix to this paper (Appendix 1).

List of officers

Office in the lodge	Almanac portatif (AP) 1798-1802	Names 1797	1799	AP 1803 - 1809	AP 1810-1812
Vénérable	J.M. de Clarencieux & deputy M C.F. [T]erasse	P.R. Thouron	L. Joyau	L. Joyau	Samuel Fahlberg
Ex-Vénérable	Not listed	M. de Clarencieux	P.R. Thouron	Thouron [as deputy]	J.M de Clarencieux [deputy]
1er Surveillant	A. Vardrobe	L. Joyau	J. Garrou	Enjalbert	G. Ekerman
2 ^d Surveillant	L. Joyeau	C. Dreyer	R. Hodge	Gaschet	A. Furuträd
Orateur	Not listed	E. Berger	L. Devonne	Not listed	JE Forsström
Sécrétaire	P A Enjalbert	J. Garrou	B. Dihin	St. Helène Gaschet	J Schürer
Trésorier	J.F. Bernier	L. Videloup	A. Nestolat	Fischéer	J Azevedeo
Garde des Sceaux	Not listed	A. Nestolat	G. Ekerman	Not listed	
Maitre des Cérémonies	Not listed	F. Gereao (1er) G. Ekerman (2d)	J.B Boubers Ponthieu A. Ebbenre	Not listed	F Gereao
1er Expert	Not listed	H. Baugin ?	L. Videloup	Not listed	-
2d Expert	Not listed	?	J. Romney	Not listed	-
Intendent et Tresorier des Pauvre	Not listed	?	D. Villegente	Not listed	-
Introduktions-broder / “Brother of Introduction”	Was not an office	-	-	-	CF Werdermann

Just to continue with the treatment of the lodge in *Almanac portatif* that in 1810 changed its name to *Frimurare Orders Calendar*, “The Almanac of the Order of Freemasons” it is interesting to find that in 1813 a short notice was presented “The workings of this lodge are until further announcement cancelled” which is a slight difference in terminology to the lodge St. Elisabeth in Canton/China that was declared “resting”. Between 1817 and 1819 we find only the name of a new Worshipful master, Lieutenant Colonel and Esq. of the Swedish Order of the Sword *Johan Samuel Rosensvärd*. Since then and up to 1834 the lodge still was listed and in 1826 a short historical account on all Swedish lodges, including *La Sudermanie* inserted. But the most active period of the lodge is to be found between the French Revolution and about twenty years onwards.

I have so far not found out why there are differences between the printed list in the *Almanac portatif* and the written documents that actually were returned to Stockholm. Apparently there was a lack of communication between the receiver (generally the Grand Secretary) and the redaction of the *Almanac portatif*. What we however can guess from the handwritten membership records and the *Almanac portatif* is that there was an annual change between the officers of the lodge and that there was an office for the ex-venerable, as in the English system with annual changes and the office of the past master. This was not the rule in Sweden. Rather contrary, Worshipful masters were elected on an at least five year basis and promotion in the offices regulated strictly. It existed and exists, also no separate degree for a past-master. Something else also obviously differed from the Swedish system, namely the higher degrees. In the annual return of 1799 we find for the first time a membership record of the Chapter of Rose Croix, according to the heading: “Tableau des officiers & membres Composant le S[ouverain] Chapitre de R[ose Croix] Etablie dans La R[espectable] L[odge] La Sudermanie à l’Orient de Gustavia Isle St. Barthélemy.”, “List of officers and members that make out the Sovereign Chapter of Rose Croix Established within the Respectable Lodge La Sudermanie at the Orient of Gustavia on the Island of St. Barthélemy.” This list contains forty names, around the half of the members listed as “Absents par Congé”, absent by agreement.

Comparison between the members of the St. Johns lodge and the Rose Croix Chapter

A first comparison of the names and degrees of the members reveals a strange fact. Although more than 90 percent of the members of the St. Johns lodge carry higher degrees than the first three this does not make them automatically members of the Rose Croix chapter. And the other way round: Out of 40 members of the Rose croix chapter, only twelve are members of the St. Johns lodge, all of them officers of the chapter and three of them carrying the leading offices of master and wardens in the St. Johns lodge. If we don’t count the absent members of the Chapter out of which nobody is listed as member of the St. Johns lodge, however only five members of the Chapter remain with no affiliation to *La Sudermanie*. Eleven out of the twelve are also listed as founders of the St. Johns lodge. This suggests following chain of events: The group of eleven, all carrying the Rose croix degree, establish a chapter before 1797 and start to admit people that have received their first three degrees in other lodges than and previous to the establishment of *La Sudermanie*. Secondly, large

proportions of members of the chapter leave St. Barthélemy before 1797, but are still listed by agreement. Hence they do not form the new St. Johns lodge and are not members of it. When in 1797 the St. Johns lodge is established, the eleven out of twelve together with another group of twelve (perhaps arriving around that year), a majority of which in 1799 carried the Chevalier de l'Orient degree, make out the founding members of *La Sudermanie*. The only strange case remains *Pierre Antoine Enjalbert*, born in 1757. He is listed as a Chevalier de l'Orient in the membership record of the Chapter (and also as one of the absent brethren) and he is listed as Secretary of the St. Johns lodge in the *Almanac Portatif* between 1798 and 1803 and between 1803 and 1809 as Senior Warden. However, his name does not occur on the 1799 membership record of *La Sudermanie*. The confusion triggered by diverging information on the lists suggests that Caribbean freemasonry was very much influenced by the mobility of its members. In the case of the Rose Croix chapter and *La Sudermanie*, among Swedish, not only Jewish and most certainly American names remind us of the diversity of the Caribbean brotherhood, but also notes as “a la Guadelope”, “Ancien Venerable de Eustache” and of course the brethren absent by agreement suggest that mobility across the Caribbean islands was a significant part of freemasonry of the time and we will come back to that aspect later on.

The social composition of *La Sudermanie* is dominated by wholesalers which make out 27 out of 46 members, followed by 11 burghers with no profession specified, three state employees (Sweden and the French Republic), three craftsmen (baker, musician and goldsmith) and two medical doctors. Out of the 40 members of the Rose croix chapter, only 25 have details on their profession listed. However, of the remaining 15, 14 also are members of *La Sudermanie* and hence it is easy to retrieve the missing information. We find again 27 wholesalers, followed by four burghers, two medical doctors, two craftsmen (the baker from above and another goldsmith), two sea captains and one employed by the Swedish West India Company. The average age of members in *La Sudermanie* was 38 ½ years, in the Chapter about 1 ½ year lower.

Swedish attempts to control the situation

Of course, the situation on St. Barthélemy must have been strange for the Swedish Order of Freemasons. Duke Charles, the Grand Master, had on the one hand signed a constitution for the lodge on the Caribbean island, however he and the leadership of the order had apparently no idea about what was going on in the Swedish colony. Between 1798 and 1800, Duke Charles was on an important travel to the European continent and worked on the final reform of the Swedish rite that was put in place in 1800 (and that is practiced in this fashion ever since). New rituals were printed and disseminated to the Swedish lodges and inspections were carried out in the subsequent years to see if the lodges adapted the new reforms. We could describe this period as a period of growing central control over the inner work of the lodges. The reforms launched by Duke Charles almost immediately resulted in boosted membership figures and a couple of new lodge establishments in the Swedish provincial capitals. This tendency towards a stronger central control and homogenisation of

Masonic work also was extended to the Swedish lodges on German soil. The process culminated in the establishment of the Order of Charles XIII, an entirely Masonic decoration, as one of the official Swedish state orders, in 1811.

It follows this logic that when a new governor of St. Barthélemy, *Hans Henrik Anckarheim* (1748-1814), was appointed in 1800, duke Charles not only appointed him supervisor of the lodges on the Swedish island but also provided him with a secret instruction. Both documents were issued in October 1800. It was a part of Swedish governmental appointments to demand the submission of *curricula vitae* of applicants. We find one of Anckarheims CV:s dated 1798 in the collections of the Royal library in Stockholm.¹⁰ It is interesting to notice that the CV not only contains information on Anckarheims career in the Royal Swedish Navy, but that he also mentions his engagement in different orders and societies. In 1771, Anckarheim was initiated in the *Ordre des Charpentiers*, without doubt a pro-masonic order, and made career in its degrees and offices. In the same year he entered an order called *Coldinu*. He also mentions that he in 1766 already (at the age of 18) was made freemason in Havre de Grâce (a prominent harbour on the coast of the Normandy) in France and that he as well there as in other French lodges received a couple of degrees. In 1792, he entered an Order called “The Old Goths”, the following year the social and mixed *Order of Amaranths*. In 1796 he entered an order called *Order of Alexandrians* where he received a couple of degrees. Anckarheims multiple membership in different orders proofs that social capital was created and augmented through multiple affiliation. Most certainly, membership in different orders created different networks and opportunities and served different purposes.¹¹ Anckarheims encounter with freemasonry in France is a typical element of the Grand tour that a Swedish nobleman had to perform during the 18th century. It is also very likely that Anckarheims reception in Le Havre has to do with his navy career and hence it was a typical feature of the educated navy officer. The *Order of Amaranths* was on the other hand a more socially oriented association of women and men in the urban life of Sweden, arranging banquets and balls. Other orders might Anckarheim just have joined out of curiosity or because friends of him invited him.

Anckarheims position and degrees in the Swedish Order of Freemasons are not clear. He is not listed as a member of a Swedish lodge during the 18th century, but might have been listed in the new membership record that was commenced during the year of 1800. However, Duke Charles apparently was confident that Anckarheim would be able to judge the quality of freemasonry on St. Barthélemy. His secret instruction contained six distinct elements: Anckarheim should find out how many degrees that were conferred and what differences there were compared to the Swedish rite (this suggests that Anckarheim was initiated in a couple of degrees in Sweden, otherwise he would have been unable to make up his mind about this task), he should make a copy of the rituals of the first three degrees, he should provide with sensitive intelligence on the members of the lodge, on who had most influence,

¹⁰ Kungliga Biblioteket, “Biographica A, Anckarheims CV”

¹¹ A very good case study of the societal life, including overlapping membership patterns, of the Swedish port town of Gothenburg is Anders Simonsen, *Bland hederligt folk. Organiserat sällskapsliv och borgerlig formering i Göteborg 1755–1820* (Göteborg, 2001)

about the personal character regarding morals and political attitudes and “what profit they can create for the order and in general”. Duke Charles also wanted information on the economical situation of the lodge, he recommended Anckarheim to create confidence and friendship towards the brethren as well as establish respect for Swedish freemasonry and last but not least to get informed as often as possible.

However, the geopolitical situation caused severe delays to Anckarheims mission. Due to the war between the United Kingdom and the French Republic, the Caribbean turned into a scene of action of naval and colonial confrontation between those two grand powers. At that time of the Napoleonic wars, Sweden was still neutral. It entered the continental alliance against France in 1805. But regardless of its status, the British navy occupied St. Barthélemy in 1801. Due to the changed situation the lodge *La Sudermanie* held a meeting in February 1801, when it was decided to suspend all further meetings until more peaceful times. The lodge was used as a hospital facility during British invasion, its acts and belongings were sealed and hidden away. The lodge met however annually for discussions and in October 1803 it was decided to re-open the work in the subsequent year on the name day of Duke Charles, the 28th January.

Between March 1802 and 1805 there is preserved an interesting suite of letters between Anckarheim and the Swedish envoy to the United Kingdom, Ulrich Silfverhjelm. Those letters have a very interesting political and economical content on the Caribbean in general and St. Barthélemy – “this small volcanic cliff” in particular. Anckarheim heavily criticises British colonial politics and expresses his deep disgust of economical/capitalist interest in the sensitive Caribbean area from a neutral position. He is also outraged about the behaviour of the British navy in the area and calls British naval officers “pirates with a royal licence”. As those letters don’t contain anything masonic, I have however not focussed on them for this presentation.¹²

Governor Anckarheims account of the situation on St. Barthélemy 1804

A letter with an extensive appendix from Anckarheim to duke Charles dated April 1804 is of greatest interest to understand the masonic development on the Swedish island.¹³ The letter is a general description of the situation, the appendix “Humble account” attempts to answer the secret instruction of 1800 in detail. In the following sections, I only present a summary translation of the letter and account with few direct quotes but in the form of Anckarheim as the narrator.

With this letter I want to tell what I have done and was able to do during the time that has passed for the existence of the lodge *La Sudermanie*, as this island partly was under the possession of a foreign power, partly the members of the lodge scattered and the few present even after the re-establishment of the

¹² Kungliga Biblioteket, ”Anckarheim to Silfverhjelm 1802-1805, Ep S 16”

¹³ SFMO, Box 44, Sign 00197

colony are occupied with profane activities and concerns for their own existence and welfare.

The 20th of March was the unhappy day, when I was forced to hand over this island to a foreign power, which until this day not was known as an enemy. Regardless of the reputation FM has in England, I believed it was better not to expose this lodge, the majority of members besides some native Swedes, were French, to a treatment that perhaps and especially in the beginning – before the intruders and the peaceful inhabitants of this island got to know each other – could have turned out to become less pleasant; and in order not to risk a possible infringement upon the instruction [...] conferred to me [...], I decided rather to suspend our work for a while about which I immediately reported to you. All archives of the lodge were during the time of suspension under my control and its decorations and further belongings in the care of a known and reliable Swedish brother and hence all things in complete security.

In order to defend the right of the lodge to its legal constitution, I have called to an annual meeting of some of the brethren in my premises in order to dictate in a legally erected protocol the reasons that have caused the continuation of suspension, which you will find in the protocols attached to this letter.

The 10th of July 1802 this colony was returned to our king, when I re-took control and charge over the island. However, a large proportion of the brethren were scattered and a large part of the French that earlier had immigrated to this island, were prepared to return to the French colonies in order to get access to their property following the permission to do so. This lodge hence lost the majority of its members and also its Worshipful master, Brother Louis Joyeau, who with perfect industriousness had carried out this office. And without these hinders, the few remaining brethren were occupied with their own activities and still insecure in what condition this small colony would turn that cannot exist without trade. As short time thereafter a new war broke out, which unhappy consequences in this part of the world always are experienced first and most intensely, too unsure about their own existence to be asked to reopen the workings up till the end of the last year, when besides the normal captures of vessels that England during the war took part in, it was not strange to ask [them about to reopen the lodge]. The prospects had changed so far that not only our own merchants saw an opportunity to remain in the colony but also foreigners moved to here, among which a large part were freemasons and through the naturalisation of which we in this lodge were in the situation to start our workings. I hence decided with the consent of the old brethren to suspend the suspension and to re-establish the lodge in its vigour. Unanimously the 28th of January was decided upon as the day when this was to happen and it was decided to celebrate this day annually, because it carries the name of our Grand master, to interpret the endless love, respect and inner devotion of the Swedish West Indian Freemason Brethren for their High master and their zeal for the best and growth of the Order of Freemasons in general and this lodge *La Sudermanie* in particular.

For this great occasion, I gathered all freemasons in this government to prepare for a reopening of the lodge. First of all, a worthy Master had to be

elected. Out of gratefulness and general friendship the first choice was the former master of the lodge, Martin de Clarencieux. But as the age and weakened health of the brother most likely would not enable him to lead all sessions, brother and R+ Louis Devonne was elected as his deputy master. This brother is one of the town's eldest and most respected inhabitants. He is the one who has invested most in the construction of this town and has drained and filled humid and unhealthy places, which has contributed to a clear and healthy air. Among a great variety of classes of inhabitants of the West Indies in general he also has the favour to be an offspring of the renowned French family de la Bauchardiere in Tourrain. A name he honours with his knowledge that proofs a good and applied education, his exemplary life and his patriotic zeal as a Swedish subject and citizen. [...] Other vacant offices were also elected.

When everything was prepared duly, I called for an assembly for the lodge to meet on the 28th of January at 12 am. And as almost all present freemasons that still not were members of this lodge declared their desire to be present at this solemn act and to be naturalised, I called them to be present as visiting brethren after they in front of a special committee of the lodge had presented their certificates and according to the statues had proved to be real freemasons.

At sunrise the 28th of January, a salute consisting of three times three times three was fired from the inside of the locked yard of the lodge. And as all brethren at full midday were assembled in the lodge room, where the regular order not could be arranged as the lodge had not been opened properly, I was received by a deputation consisting of two brethren of each degree, led by the deputy master, in the outer room and led into the lodge. And after your decree issued for me to supervise and control the working of this lodge was recited, I took my seat on the throne and after a short speech on the reasons for this gathering, I read the protocol on the election of the master and other officers and subsequently I installed them and dressed them with their signs and decorations and after they had taken their places, I passed the mallet as well as the seat to the new master of the lodge and sat down to the right of him. The lodge was opened according to the statutes at the occasion of which canons fired another salute of three times three. And after some workings, the lodge closed with the regular ceremonies.

After a good meal, at which perfect order was observed, a table lodge was opened in the usual fashion. All present members and visiting brethren toasted to their highest master and the royal throne under the firing of canons, after which the other regular toasts were raised and all parted in the afternoon giving the public a proof of the unity of freemasons and a temperance that at larger assemblies in this part of the world is very seldom. The lodge *La Sudermanie* hence again is in full activity.”

So far reads the letter from Anckarström. Interesting to notice is that he added a cross (+) to his signature, which was a typical habit of Swedish freemasons.

The “Humble account” that fulfilled the secret instruction of Duke Charles is also a very interesting description of masonic life in the Caribbean. Again, the subsequent passages are a summary translation with Anckarheim as the narrator.

In accordance to the instruction given to me, I have tried to gain as complete knowledge as possible about this lodge in particular and French freemasonry in its complete range, at least as it is performed in this part of the world. I am obliged to report that the thoughtlessness of this nation also has gone back on the most holy oaths, something proven best by that their whole freemasonry including the sixth degree is printed and sold in all bookshops and that so real and true that not a word is missing when those books are compared with the ceremonies performed during receptions in their lodges. What could be made with people that are so indiscrete to please women with the ceremonies they have undergone in certain degrees?

This first passage requires a short comment. From the Swedish perspective it was and still is totally out of question to publish any ritual texts in printed form for a public outside freemasonry. But Anckarheims outrageous comment provides us with interesting information on the book market of the time. We can assume that Anckarheim had seen the rituals for sale at least in Gustavia (he speaks of “bookshops” in plural). Secondly, he states to have compared the printed text with the performed text and finds no difference between them. This suggests that the ceremonies were performed in a much standardised manner. Thirdly, we find an indirect assumption that the main reading public and hence consumer of books at the time was female. The pleasure to read about masonic ceremonies lies on the side of women.

The next passage deals with the history of the lodge, “before it received your constitution to work in the first three degrees in freemasonry or the St. Johns lodge”.

In the beginning of the French revolution, when a number of inhabitants of the French colonies that still not were affected by the general disease but were loyal and faithful towards their legal king, started to emigrate, almost all of them to here, besides a few that in the beginning went to the Danish isles but later in majority moved here; among them a majority if not all were freemasons. According to the French statutes a Chevallier de Rose Croix [R+] has the right to create freemasons up to the sixth degree, but the last degree only in a regular chapter. Of those emigrants many carried the R + degree and formed among themselves an R + Chapter and agreed to establish a Masonic lodge. I have carefully tried to receive information if this autonomously created chapter ever has received a constitution to do so from le Grand Orient de la France and have from its first founder, a Mr Thouron, received the answer that this was not necessary for those entitled to form a complete R+ Chapter, but that they later on had applied for this from Your Royal Highness in order to receive a legal protection for their workings.

This passage requires again a short comment as it confirms the analysis of the membership record. It is a core group of twelve emigrants carrying the R+ degree that initiate Masonic activities in Gustavia (Joyau, Garrou, Hodge, Thouron, Cadet, Videloup, Clarencieux, Terrasse, Rapault, Berger, Baugin and Santinier). They first establish a chapter and start to admit people to it. Anckarheim goes on:

I leave to your own high opinion to decide upon in how far this lodge that in this way was constituted first might be regarded legal and how strictly those should be treated that were made members before receiving constitution and even more with those who totally against its instruction later have been promoted to higher degrees including the sixth according to French ritual. However, I have to inform you most humbly that if those – although in my mind illegally conferred degrees – would be judged [as illegal] and persecuted by law, I am concerned that it could lead to severe consequences for the future existence of the lodge, as not only all present Swedes are under this predicament but all French would be made discontent and if they would leave the lodge, there are reasons to believe that it would cease totally. (...)

During the time I had the archive in my hands, it was sealed not only with mine but also with the grand seal of the lodge together with the seal of the master and archivist. At that time it was impossible for me to see neither the ceremonies of the degrees nor the statutes according to which this lodge works, not even the general rules. And during the seven weeks I was here before the unhappy conquering of this island, not more than one reception in the Apprentice degree was carried out. I almost had no idea about the workings in the lodge until it was reactivated again and the archive re-opened. Herein were found the reception ceremonies of the first four degrees that I copied and attached to this letter.

This lodge is still poor and is barely capable to cover its expenses. The majority of Swedish members are employed by the crown and barely own their daily bread. Some of the others are young French or English that don't own much more and the rest that are rich merchants are as all of this class of citizens, at least here in the West Indies, more devoted to gain money than to do a good deed with them. However it has been resolved that the annual fee for the Grand lodge, one Spanish piaster, has to be paid on the commemoration day. Reception fees in the first three degrees were set to 24 Spanish piasters. The secretary does not receive remuneration for his work. This is what I can report in particular on the lodge *La Sudermanie*.

I now will describe what knowledge I have received concerning the French degrees of freemasonry that not were found in the archive of the lodge.

After the colony was returned and before I could think about to reactivate the lodge and as well as the master of the lodge Joyeau and the majority of the emigrated Frenchmen that carried the highest masonic degrees prepared to leave the island, I decided, in order to receive a complete knowledge of French freemasonry, to undergo reception in the higher degrees, during the time they [Joyeau and others] still were here, convinced that I never would not receive them otherwise. [...] The degree following the Scottish master's degree in French freemasonry was the one I should have received first. It is called Chevailler de L'Orient and is the sixth in order. This degree was conferred to me by Jouyeau and Thouron by instruction, as a formal reception was impossible to carry out at that time. This instruction was delivered from a printed book, and as I not had the opportunity to see it later on, the largest part has fallen into oblivion, besides that in the ceremonies for a real reception a bridge is displayed over running water, at the crossing of which the recipient is attacked from behind but walks victorious over it. This degree

contains the history of Serubabel and if a reception is carried out properly, it should be very beautiful. [...] I was almost on the way not to receive further promotion when I managed to gather brethren R + in the government to open a chapter of that degree at which I according to the rules was created Chevallier R+ and received the letter for this degree that is inserted in the Cahier attached to this letter.

The degrees of French freemasonry are following:

- 1° Apprentif
- 2° Compagnon
- 3° Maitre
- 4° Maitre Parfait
- 5° Maitre Ecossais and Élu
- 6° Chevallier de L'Orient
- 7° Chevailler de R +. The highest and lasts.

From these degrees I have attached rituals for reception for the first four and the R+ degree.¹⁴ I had the fifth previously and thought that I would find it in the archive. I have given account of the sixth degree as far as my memory allowed me to do. [...] Hence I am able to present me to you as a French R+. What I have won with that in Swedish Freemasonry is up to you to decide. However, I find the transcription of this degree from the original ceremonies of le Grand Orient de France valuable, and hope to have fulfilled the instruction on this point.

From the ceremonies in each degree I have sent, you will be able to judge how French freemasonry as performed here is different from that beyond all doubt True and Right Swedish [freemasonry]. And if you find it necessary, I apply to receive new ceremonies to follow in the degrees this lodge is constituted to work in. There are no other statutes and general laws than those issued by the first founders of the lodge and that presumably are derived from their memory and adapted to local circumstances of the time. They are however so detailed that I fear that our secretary, who is a merchant here and hence very occupied with his own activities, not will have the time to copy them. I also apply to receive the Scottish or St. Andrews degrees for this distant lodge as a reward for the faithfulness and zeal of their members.

In a sense, Anckarheim contradicts himself in this description. He is outraged of the existence of printed ritual texts, but unable to get a copy of the very book containing them. But Anckarheim also presents himself as an honest man who does not break the seals of the lodge archive during its time of suspension. It is also impressing that he is so thorough to undergo reception in the higher degrees of freemasonry by experience. From a theoretical point of view, Anckarheim mentions a very important element of all experience of initiation: *memory*. How much does a candidate memorise from his reception? How much does a

¹⁴ Those transcriptions are still kept in SFMO, Box 46, Sign 00200: "Cahier Des Trois Grades de la Loge de St. Jean Qu'ils ont été donnés dans la Loge de la Sudermannie Suivant Les Rites de la Maçonnerie Française" containing degrees I, II and III as well as "4me Grade Maitre Parfait" and "Cahier du Souverain Chapitres de Rose-Croix" containing the degrees "Prince Maçon Libre d' Héredon" and "Chevailler de L'Aigle du Pelican". On this latter booklet we find the notice: "Verifié et approuvé le present Cahier, et scellé par Nous. Signé D'humainbourg et A. Nestolat"

freemason memorise from oral instruction? The sixth degree was conferred to him by instruction only and what remains in memory from this instruction are vague details of the reception ceremony as well as that the degree was about Serubabel. He also touches upon a very interesting aspect when he mentions that the degree “if performed in reality would be very beautiful”, which implies that a ritual text communicated orally and performed three-dimensionally are two totally different concepts of masonic initiation. This passage is however one of the few descriptions of receptions I have found so far.

Anckarheim had sent his letter with numerous attachments together with a box of cigars to duke Charles as we can understand from the reply sent by the duke in October 1804.¹⁵

He also suggested that *La Sudermanie*, if regarded worth of it, should receive the new laws and ceremonies issued in Sweden. This only if the security of their deliverance could be guaranteed. Duke Charles was more hesitant to issue the right to work in the Swedish higher degrees. As *La Sudermanie* worked according to the “so-called French system, but this is not right” it was impossible to transfer the higher degrees without previous submission under the Swedish rite. If this was impossible to carry out, “the lodge may work as it want to and have the idea that it works in the right way”.

Unfortunately there is no further correspondence between Anckarheim and Duke Charles although Anckarheim was in charge as governor until 1812, two years previous to his death. The last existing annual return was submitted in February 1805. We know that the new rituals issued were copied for the lodge *La Sudermanie*. In the Archive of the Swedish Order of Freemasons there exists a complete set in perfect handwriting for the first three degrees. It is however not known if those documents ever made their way over the ocean to St. Barthélemy and if they ever were performed there. If so, it would have been necessary to translate them to French. Swedish lodges on German soil translated the new ritual to German when they received the copies in Swedish. It is thought provoking to imagine that there might be a French translation of the first three degrees of the Swedish rite somewhere in the Caribbean. Most certainly *La Sudermanie* continued to work despite of the political instability caused by the Napoleonic wars. Sweden was drawn into an alliance against Napoleon and lost its German territories temporarily. Almost at the same time Russia attacked Sweden and conquered Finland during a devastating and ill organised warfare from the Swedish side. As a consequence, Swedish king Gustav IV Adolf was forced to abdicate in 1809 and was succeeded on the throne by his uncle duke Charles, crowned as King Charles XIII. Sweden’s warfare and a decline of West Indian trade causing the dissolution of the Swedish West Indian Company already in 1805 resulted in a loss of interest in the affairs of St. Barthélemy from the Swedish side. How this and other developments influenced upon the lodge *La Sudermanie*, cannot be established properly. In 1809 the lodge sent an annual return to Sweden together with a list counting 84 members, a doubled figure compared to ten years previously. In 1810 a new list of officers was inserted in the publication *Almanac Portatif* that now had changed its name. The list contains a majority of Swedish names and the names of

¹⁵ SFMO, “Duke Charles to Anckarheim, 4th October 1804”, Collection of letters 158.2 “Diverse brev från Hertig Carl m.fl.” “Different letters from Duke Charles and others”

some offices (particularly the existence of a “Brother of Introduction”) suggest that the workings of the lodge now were performed in the new fashion. Until 1812, when Anckarheim left the island, the same list was inserted and in 1813 we find the notice of the suspension of the workings. When in 1816 a new governor – Rosensvärd – was appointed, Charles XIII repeated the pattern of 1800. Rosensvärd was initiated in the Swedish Scottish masters degree (needed to become Worshipful Master) just shortly before he left Sweden and was entrusted with the task to “re-activate the St. Johns lodge *La Sudermanie* that has been constituted by us, and that for unfavourable reasons for several years has been passive.” Since 1820 only the name of the lodge was listed. In a historical account published in 1826, it was not mentioned that *La Sudermanie* had ceased its workings, however it is likely to assume that Rosensvärd not was successful in his potential attempts.

Conclusions

We don’t know if Charles XIII attempt to reactivate the lodge in Gustavia was the final chapter of freemasonry on St. Barthélemy. However, the documents preserved and presented in this paper tell us a part of a story of the preconditions of freemasonry in a colonial context in general and of the Caribbean in particular. First of all we can notice that from Swedish side freemasonry was regarded as an element of establishing connections overseas. Following the logic of the Swedish East Indian Company with its foundation of a lodge in Canton, the first director of the Swedish West Indian Company Brahelin was provided with a warrant to erect a lodge on St. Barthélemy. Most surely the idea was to promote trade relations, but freemasonry in Sweden at this time was also regarded as a tool to foster functional elites into the same framework of values. To establish a Swedish lodge in the colony was also a means of transporting a significant element of accustomed sociability to the foreign territory. A lodge could serve as a natural meeting point for Swedes, but of course also as an important place of cultural encounters, especially in a space predominantly influenced by French associational life. From the beginning we also can notice an attempt to control the development of the situation as it already is formulated in the first draft constitution. It is however unlikely that the initiative for a Swedish lodge establishment on St. Barthélemy was successful. Rather the contrary was the case. French immigrants autonomously formed the first masonic body on the island. Sweden’s cultural competence as a colonial force was not developed and hence the Swedish Order of freemasons was confronted with the fact that they had chartered a lodge within their province that worked according to a different system and moreover that established an R+ chapter totally independent from the Swedish degree structure. Anckarheims mission was to find out more about this and to try to regulate the situation. After initial problems he apparently succeeded. We might interpret this development as a part of a universal struggle on the “right” version of freemasonry. Duke Charles was convinced that the Swedish rite represented true freemasonry.

The history of freemasonry on St. Barthélemy is also a micro-history of mobility, migration and cultural encounters. First of all, the colonial power arrives, secondly French immigrants arrive to the island, some of them leave again and others arrive, another group

leaves and so on. The complex colonial context of the Caribbean and the fact that it is made out of islands where sea travel is the predominant element of transportation promotes frequent mobility not only for trade reasons, but also because of warfare or political instability. The episode described so vividly by Anckarheim when the visiting brethren show their masonic passports and are examined on their masonic competence proofs two distinct features of the brotherhood: first of all the idea of a *legacy of membership* attested by the document that proofs legal initiation, affiliation and origin. Secondly the *principle of shared knowledge*, needed to take part in the ritual work and to undergo reception in further degrees; provided with those two basic elements, only the amount of potential nodes limited mobility within the network of freemasonry. Cultural encounters are difficult to measure qualitatively. In some of the lines of Anckarheims letters he expresses values that allow us to make conclusions about his view upon “significant others”: he criticises the English and the rich for their economical egoism, he is outraged about the irresponsibility of the French. He notices great social divergence on the Caribbean islands and the large consumption of alcohol. If we measure cultural encounters from the membership structure of the lodges founded on St. Barthélemy, we can conclude that merchants regardless of “national” origin make out the dominant proportion. Perhaps their economical interests were a larger binding force than diverging cultural backgrounds. However it is interesting to notice that Swedes, Germans, French, Americans or British as well as Jews and perhaps also East Europeans or even Creoles were taking part in the masonic work. In my studies on Swedish freemasonry on German soil, I interpreted freemasonry as a zone liberated from any cultural or proto-national connotations. If we again turn back to Anckarheims account of the festivities at the re-opening of the lodge in 1804, this ceremony could basically have taken place anywhere in the worlds following the same pattern. Freemasonry created a compatible cultural sign system that was easy to acquire and to access, crossing cultural and social borders.

APPENDIX 1

Transcription of the record of the St. Johns lodge, St. Barthélemy 1799

Tableau des Officiers et Membres qui Composent La R[espectable] L[oge] de Saint Jean, Sous Le titre distinctif de La Sudermanie No. 35 seaute à l'O.: de Gustavia Isle St. Barthélemy Le 29 jour du 5 moins de L' an 5799. / "List of Officers and Members who make out the Respectable Lodge of Saint John, under the distinct name of La Sudermanie No. 35 seated at the Orient of Gustavia on the Island of St. Barthélemy 29th of May 5799 [1799]"

Name	Office	Profession	Degree	Age	Other
1 Louis Joyau	Vénérable	négociant	R +	34	fondateur
2 Joseph Garrou	1er Surveillant	négociant	R +	39	fondateur
3 Robert Hodge	2d Surveillant	négociant	R +	49	Ancien Vble de La R.L. La Concorde à l'O.: des Eustache
4 Pierre Robert Thouron	Ex Venerable	Bourgeois	R +	41	fondateur
5 Louis Devonne	Orateur	négociant	Ch d O	55	fondateur
6 Bernard Dihin	Secrétaire	Bourgeois	M Elu	26	
7 Antoine Nestolat Cadet	Trésorier	Boulangier	R +	55	fondateur
8 Gustave Ekerman	Garde des Sceaux et Archives	négociant	Ch d O	28	
9 Louis Videloup	1er Expert	négociant	R +	49	fondateur
10 Joseph Romney	2d Expert	négociant	M parf	37	
11 J B Boubers Ponthieu	1r M d. Cérém.	Bourgeois	Ch d O	43	
12 Albert Ebeurre	2d M d. Cérém.	négociant	Ch d O	38	fondateur
13 John M. de Clarencieux	adj à l' Orateur	négociant	R +	51	fondateur
14 Abraham B. Howell	adj au Secrétaire	négociant	Maitre	23	
15 Denis Villegente	Intendant & Tresorier des Pauvres	négociant	Ch d O	48 (?)	
[second page]					
16 Joseph Raphael Gautier	-	medecin	Ch d O	36	
17 Claude F Terrasse	-	négociant	R +	49	fondateur
18 Bonuaventure J. Rapault	-	Bourgeois	R +	57	fondateur
19 Eloi Berger	-	Hospitalier, medecin	R +	39	fondateur
20 Hyacinthe Baugin	-	négociant	R +	53	fondateur
21 Alexandre Wardrobe	-	négociant	Ch d O	47	fondateur
22 Charles Gaschet	-	Bourgeois	Ch d O	36	fondateur
23 Joseph Carre	-	négociant	Ch d O	34	fondateur
24 Mathieu Dieudonné	-	Bourgeois	Ch d O	31	fondateur
25 Francois Gérés	-	négociant	Ch d O	29	fondateur
26 Joseph F Bernier	-	négociant	Ch d O	39	fondateur
27 Louis Joseph Bequet	-	négociant	Ch d O	35	fondateur
28 Antoine Paschal	-	Enseigne de Vaisseaux de la Republique	Ch d O	51	fondateur
29 Pierre Thibeaudau	-	négociant	M Elu	37	fondateur
30 Samuel Buzett	-	négociant	M Parf	48	fondateur
31 Charles Dreyer	-	Agent du Roy et de la Comp. de Suède	Ch d O	29	
32 J B Lamontagne	-	musicien	Ch d O	37	
33 Joseph R Bellacq	-	négociant	Ch d O	26	

34 Pierre Perrot pere	-	Bourgeois	M Ecos	63	
35 Bertrand Dukanmorne	-	Ozferze	Ch d O	32	
36 J B Desgranges	-	Bourgeois	M Ecos	45	
37 Jean Ricard	-	Bourgeois	M Ecos	26	
38 Etienne Santinier	-	Bourgeois	R +	53	
39 Adrien Beuker	-	négociant	Maitre	28	
40 William Slater	-	négociant	Comp	28	
41 Francois Robinson	-	négociant	M Parf	31	
42 Claude MacKahnie	-	négociant	App	36	
43 James Berridge	-	négociant	App	28	
44 Joseph Deville	-	négociant	M Elu	23	
45 Alexandre Maisoncelle	-	Bourgeois	M Elu	25	
46 Charles Fischier	-	Adj a l'agent	Maitre	21	

Abbreviations

App = Apprentice / Apprentice
 Ch d O = Chevalier de l'Orient / Knight of the East
 Comp = Compagnon / Fellow
 M Ecos = Maitre Ecosais
 M Elu = Maitre Elu / Chosen Master
 M parf = Maitre Parfait / Perfect Master
 R + = Rose Croix

APPENDIX 2

Transcription of the record of the Rose Croix Chapter, St. Barthélemy 1799

L.S.

Seal of the St. Johns lodge, Ø approximately 3 cm, in a slightly oval shape

Description:

The motto "FELICITAS VIRTUTI" ["Felicity for the virtuous"] is placed in a circle of intertwined branches of laurel or palm leaves (perhaps symbolising the chain of brotherhood) surrounding the central part: two columns framing in a mosaic pavement above which are depicted square and compass beneath a tetragrammaton.

Scellé par nous garde des Sceaux & archivien de La R[espectable] L[odge] [signature of Gustaf Ekerman] / "Sealed by our Guardian of Seals and Archivist of the Respectable Lodge"

On the bottom of the first page we find the seal of the Rose Croix Chapter.

L.S.

Seal of the Rose Croix Chapter

Description:

Surrounding the inner part of seal are the words and symbols SOUVERAIN CHAPITRE DE R .: + .: SEANT A GUSTAVIA A L'ISLE DE ST. BARTHÉLEMY

On a hilly landscape with vegetation a cross breaks through the ground, apparently planted in a square, with a windling and bright shining rose at the centre.

Par mandement du S[ouverain] Ch[apitre] [signature of J. Garrou] / "By request of the Sovereign Chapter"

Tableau des officiers & members Composant le S[ouverain] Chapitre de R + [Rose Croix] Etablie dans La R[espectable] L[odge] La Sudermanie à l'Orient de Gustavia Isle St. Barthélemy. / "List of officers and members that make out the Sovereign Chapter of Rose Croix Established within the Respectable Lodge La Sudermanie at the Orient of Gustavia on the Island of St. Barthélemy"

<i>Name</i>	<i>Profession</i>	<i>Degree/office</i>	<i>Age</i>
1 Pre Rt Thouron		Très Sage	-
2 Louis Joyau		1er Surveillant	-
3 Louis Videloup		2d Surveillant	-
4 Eloi Berger		Orateur	-
5 Joseph Garrou		Secrétaire	-
6 Nestolat Cadet		Trésorier	-
7 Martin de Clarencieux		Garde des sceaux et archives	-
8 Rapault		Mtr des Cérémonies	-
9 Wte Baugin		Illustration of Death skull perhaps symbolising Frère Terrible	-
10 Simmons		Death skull	-
11 Claude F Terrasses		" (?)	-
12 Etienne Santimier		a la Guadeloupe	-
13 Robert Hodge			-
[second page]			
14 André Furustrad	Colecteur	maitre	29
15 Dominique Boulin	negociant	maitre	24
16 Dominique Guerey	Osferse	maitre	38
17 Michel Paschal Lafontaine	negociant	app.	36

Membres absents Par Congé (18-40) / "Members absent by agreement"			
18 Pierre Antoine Enjalbert	negociant	Ch-er de l' Orient	40
19 Pierre Roux	negociant	M. Elu	34 f[ondateur?]
20 Francois Pizany	negociant	Me Parfait	55 f[ondateur?]
21 F. Dawes	negociant	Me Parfait	36
22 André Nicolas Schale	Capitain de Mre	maitre	38
23 Francois Nazzar	negociant	m.[aitre]	22
24 Etienne Larrandouette	negociant	m.	29
25 Joseph Layet jeune	negociant	m.	33
26 Jean Picasse	negociant	m.	29
27 Bernard Tagliafico	negociant	m.	26
28 Lucas Passareviche	Capne de Mre	m.	32
29 Moise Mendes	negociant	m.	35
30 Theodore Logué jeune	negociant	m.	35
31 Jean Jaques Darrasse	negociant	m. Elu	48
32 Antoine Antichan	negociant	m.	25
33 Claude hue	negociant	m.	32
34 Judas Levy fils	negociant	m.	24
35 Josephn Montalegre	medecin	m.	30
36 Pierre Claude Servule Guys	negociant	m.	24
37 Francois René [C?]estu	negociant	m.	37
38 Pierre Blachon	Bourgeois	Ch-er de l' Orient	26
39 Jean Joseph Chambelau	negociant	m.	22
Frere Servant			
40 Gustave Zetterström	Employé au Service de la Comp.	C.	39

Par mandement de la R.L. / "By request of the Respected Lodge"
[Signature]