

# THE EXILE OF THE FRENCH HUGUENOTS AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW EUROPEAN TRADING NETWORKS

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**Abstract:** *In the seventeenth century and especially after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685), many French Huguenots left France and chose to take refuge in the Protestant countries of Northern Europe (United Provinces, Great Britain, Prussia, Hanseatic cities, Denmark, Sweden). Many of them chose a commercial activity and took advantage of the links they have retained to develop commercial relations between France and the host countries. This paper intends to study the settlement of these Huguenot communities abroad, the acceptance of these exiles by the authorities and the populations of the North, and the formation of commercial networks at a European level. The question of the nationality and the membership of these Huguenot migrants naturally arose both in the country of origin and in the host countries.*

**Keywords:** *Merchants; Huguenots; Northern Europe.*

**Resumo:** *No século XVII e especialmente após a revogação do Édito de Nantes (1685), muitos Huguenotes franceses deixaram a França e optaram por se refugiar nos países protestantes do norte da Europa (Províncias Unidas, Grã-Bretanha, Prússia, cidades hanseáticas, Dinamarca, Suécia). Muitos deles escolheram uma atividade comercial e aproveitaram os vínculos que mantinham para desenvolver as relações comerciais entre a França e os países que os receberam. Este artigo pretende estudar a fixação dessas comunidades Huguenotes no exterior, a aceitação desses exilados pelas autoridades e as populações do Norte e a formação de redes comerciais a nível europeu. A questão da nacionalidade e da filiação destes migrantes Huguenotes surgiu, naturalmente, tanto no país de origem como nos países de acolhimento.*

**Palavras-chave:** *Mercadores; Huguenotes; Europa do Norte.*

The Huguenot was usually perceived as a deeply religious man, persecuted by the discriminatory measures and violence of the French authorities. It was a man who ran away from France with great difficulties, especially after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. He found refuge in countries where there was religious tolerance such as the Dutch Republic, England, the German principalities or Scandinavia. If the representation of the persecuted migrant was close to the truth for many Protestants, the study of Huguenot merchants living in Northern Europe gives another image of the Refuge and the reality was more complicated<sup>1</sup>. The Huguenots who settled in Hamburg, Stockholm or Copenhagen were not always refugees or native French. A number of them came from countries where their families had been established for several generations and

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<sup>1</sup> YARDENI, 1985: 10.

where they were not persecuted, as Switzerland or the Dutch Republic<sup>2</sup>. If they fled it was also to create or develop a commercial activity like all other European merchants<sup>3</sup>.

Two points are thus to be emphasized. First of all, the reason of the migration. «After the first wave of Huguenot emigration around 1685, a second wave to the North, this time responding to essentially commercial motivations, took place between 1720 and 1750 in connection with the rise of colonial trade»<sup>4</sup>. Then, the problem is to know if one speaks about «French of France» or reformed Calvinists whose language was French<sup>5</sup>. The frequent relocations from one country to another and marital unions do not allow to answer this question. It is very difficult to know precisely the origin of the individuals of the Huguenot community. It must therefore be considered as a whole, that is to say all the individuals belonging to the French Calvinist Church. The importance of the merchants was small comparatively to the number of migrants and their case should not be generalized, especially since it concerns only the elite of this group for whom the historian has sources. Like all migrants, these Huguenots then tried to integrate into their host community after being successful in business.

## THE RECEPTION OF HUGUENOT MERCHANTS IN THE NORTH

The development of maritime trade between Northern Europe and France had played a significant role in the immigration of French Reformers to the German ports. The French Reformed Community of Hamburg gathered about two hundred people in the 1770s<sup>6</sup>. Thus, parallel to German immigration in Western European ports the Calvinists came to settle in the hanseatic city. Some members of the Hamburg Reformed community like Jacques de Chapeaurouge or Pierre His, arrived from the protestant cities of Basel and Geneva where they were naturally not persecuted<sup>7</sup>.

Hamburg, city of strictly Lutheran observance, did not accept Calvinists within the bourgeoisie of the city and the Huguenots did not have the permission to possess their own church, their own cemetery and had no political rights. They were also penalized in their commercial activities and did not benefit from tax exemptions like the bourgeois of the city. They had the inferior status of foreigners if they remained Calvinist and, in that case, kept French nationality generally for several generations even if they often had no contact with France. In case of problems with the Hamburg Senate these Calvinists had the possibility to take refuge in the neighboring Danish city of Altona where the installation conditions were less severe and where they could continue their

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<sup>2</sup> POUSSOU, 2008: 31-71.

<sup>3</sup> «Some of these foreigners had been driven by religious persecution, others by economic interest only» (WEBER, 2006: 56).

<sup>4</sup> PELUS-KAPLAN, 1997: 117.

<sup>5</sup> YARDENI, 1985: 11.

<sup>6</sup> WEBER, 2001: 261.

<sup>7</sup> WEBER, 2001: 261.

business without great difficulties<sup>8</sup>. It seems that the Huguenots chose to keep their religion, an element which at the same time differentiates and gathers the community. The foreign agreement could also have advantages. In the 1780s, the important company «Boué & son» asked to benefit from the advantages that the French government had just granted to French companies established in the Hanseatic city. In his request, the son of Pierre Boué indicated that his father and grandfather were born in Bordeaux and that he and his family «were not bourgeois and regarded themselves as French». It should be noted that he used the term «regarded as French» which seems to show that he did not consider himself really French but rather as an inhabitant of Hamburg.

The kingdoms of Denmark-Norway and Sweden-Finland were countries where the reception of the Calvinist migrants was without difficulties.

In Sweden, economic needs had allowed Huguenots to settle since the early seventeenth century. The country had significant mineral resources but did not have the technology to exploit them effectively. The authorities asked for help to Walloon Protestant steel technicians from the Liège region, specialists in the manufacture of weapons. Among them, the banker Louis de Geer built a real industrial empire and he is considered as the father of the Swedish industry<sup>9</sup>. Despite the opposition of the Lutheran Church<sup>10</sup>, these migrants could practice their Calvinist faith and gradually tolerance was allowed. The King Charles XI condemned the revocation of the Edict of Nantes and offered his help to all craftsmen and merchants who would come to settle in his kingdom<sup>11</sup>. The Swedish legation in Paris facilitated the departure of these migrants and the King authorized the christening of children in Lutheran churches. In 1724, Frederick I, originally a Calvinist prince of Hesse-Cassel, invited the Huguenots to come and take refuge in Sweden. The Royal Act of August 10, 1741 authorized the free exercise of the Calvinist religion. A temple was inaugurated in 1751 in Stockholm. Subsequently several other communities established on the Swedish territory as for example in Vadstena where a colony from Picardie created a lace factory and built a temple to practice the Calvinist religion<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> KOPITZCH, 1992: 283-295.

<sup>9</sup> LINDBLAD, 1995: 77-84; COURTOIS *et al.*, *dir.*, 2003.

<sup>10</sup> SERFASS, 1924: 7. Nicholas Bergius, Swedish theologian wrote in 1695 in *L'infaillible pierre de touche de la religion apostolique luthérienne*: «Messieurs de la religion prétendue réformée verront par ce traité qu'ils n'ont pas sujet d'avoir en horreur notre foi, nos églises et nos autels. Moins encore de chercher la malheureuse liberté d'exercer une fausse religion au préjudice de la véritable»; PUAUX, 1891: 62-63 quote the same Nicolas Bergius who declared in another work, *Abrégé des articles de la foi de l'Écriture Sainte à l'usage de la jeunesse suédoise* (1694): «e condamne Genève qui n'envise que la conquête de l'Église du nord, qui pendant tout un siècle n'a presque été occupée qu'à se défendre de ses atteintes».

<sup>11</sup> PUAUX, 1891.

<sup>12</sup> CALLÉVILLE, 1784: 16. The author was a pastor at the French Reformed Church from 1781 to 1809.

In Denmark in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the doctrine of Calvin was considered as a dangerous heresy<sup>13</sup> and the Lutheran priests prevented the arrival of Huguenot migrants<sup>14</sup>. Everything changed with the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. The King Christian V was committed to welcoming the fugitives and allowed them to build temples where they could freely practice their religion. However, the refugees had to take an oath of loyalty to the sovereign and agreed to raise the children in the Lutheran religion. Through the intercession of the Queen, the Calvinist princess Charlotte Amelia from Hesse-Cassel<sup>15</sup>, these restrictions were removed and only children from mixed marriages should be raised in Lutheranism<sup>16</sup>. At the same time, the Queen worked to welcome the persecuted despite the hostility of the clergy and a part of the population. A temple was built in Copenhagen in 1688 where prestigious members of the Huguenot diaspora came to preach. Another important community developed in the south of the kingdom in the duchies of Schleswig-Holstein which was a possession of the king of Denmark.

Thus, the persecuted Huguenots had the opportunity to come to Northern Europe where they could find a great tolerance towards their religion as well as advantageous conditions to exercise their activities. In the absence of accurate information, it is often impossible to say whether economic motives outweigh religious motives. It can be noted that the Huguenot settlement was the consequence of multiple factors.

In the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Magnus Gabriel de la Gardie, grandson of a soldier of French origin, became the favorite of Queen Christina of Sweden (1644-1654) and one of the most important figures in the kingdom. Patron and man of great education, he was particularly attracted by French culture. He called in the Scandinavian kingdom artists like the jeweler Valentin Toutin or the tailor André Lefebure. Many of them were Huguenots and many of their descendants got into business and gave birth to some of Sweden's largest trading families of the 18<sup>th</sup> century<sup>17</sup>. After the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the French Calvinists arrived in great number. In 1700, Pierre Boué came to Hamburg where he joined members of his family who had taken refuge there. Jean Bedoire, a former wigmaker from Saintonge, arrived in Stockholm in the 1670s. His son, also named Jean, was with Jean Henry Lefebure one of the founders of the French Reformed Church of Stockholm.

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<sup>13</sup> WEISS, 1853: 141.

<sup>14</sup> WEISS, 1853: 142. Statement of the Bishop of Sealand to the King Christian V: «Quand Dieu jugera à propos de relever ce pauvre pays et d'en redresser les colonnes, je suis persuadé qu'il inspirera à Votre Majesté d'autres mesures que le mélange des religions».

<sup>15</sup> WEISS, 1853: 142. Statement of the Bishop of Sealand to the King Christian V: «Quand Dieu jugera à propos de relever ce pauvre pays et d'en redresser les colonnes, je suis persuadé qu'il inspirera à Votre Majesté d'autres mesures que le mélange des religions».

<sup>16</sup> YARDENI, 1985: 92.

<sup>17</sup> BEDOIRE, 2009: 135.

In Denmark, Reinhard Iselin (1715-1781), a Huguenot from Basel, settled in Copenhagen at the invitation of his cousin who was the preceptor of the children of Johann Jacob Fabritius-Tegnagel, a business agent at the court<sup>18</sup>. He became very rich in business and throughout his life made generous donations to the French Reformed community including the school and the orphanage. His compatriot from Geneva Pierre Peschier (1739-1812) became a finance tycoon handling the affairs of the wealthy Finance Minister Ernest Schimelmann. Frederick de Coninck was born in The Hague in 1740 and became an employee of an English trading house in Amsterdam. After a disappointment in love, he emigrated in 1763 to Copenhagen where he created one of the biggest companies of international trading of the kingdom. In Norway, Jacques Buttaud, a native of Saint-Martin-de-Ré fled to Bergen where he created a company importing French wine and salt. A few years later, in 1716, the King of France appointed him consul of the French nation in the Norwegian port<sup>19</sup>. Reinhard Iselin, a Huguenot from Basel, arrived in Copenhagen at the invitation of his cousin who worked as a business agent at the court.

## THE ACTIVITIES OF THE HUGUENOT MERCHANTS

The Huguenots had a lot of assets to organize commercial business on a European scale, especially with France. They had family or personal relationships in all French ports and the members of the diaspora were present in all major European trade centres such as London, Amsterdam or Hamburg. All these relations allowed the community to build a continent-wide network to make business. Furthermore, during the eighteenth century, marriages strengthened the links between members of this network and the exchanges were facilitated by the use of French, which was the language of the elites. Thus, Huguenot merchants emigrated abroad but remained in relation with their country of origin and could create profitable business between France and Northern Europe. Then, after making a fortune, they diversified their activities in all areas as most of the great merchants of the eighteenth century. Jean Bedoire in Stockholm and Pierre Boué in Hamburg are two examples of the success in business of the Huguenot diaspora.

In Stockholm, Jean Bedoire Junior (1683-1753) developed the company of his father which became one of the first exporting firms of the country. Bedoire specialized in trading between Sweden and France: exports of metals (brass, copper and iron bars) and forest products (timber, tar and pitch), imports of salt and wine. The firm had also commercial relations with Baltic ports like Wolgast in Swedish Pomerania, Danzig or St. Petersburg<sup>20</sup>. In Sweden, Bedoire participated in all major projects of the kingdom. In 1739, he became a founding member of the Swedish maritime Insurance Company and invested in the Swedish East India Company (SEIC) and the Levant Company.

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<sup>18</sup> FRIIS, 1975.

<sup>19</sup> WIESENER, 1916: 33-43.

<sup>20</sup> BEDOIRE, 2009: 231.

His son, Frederik Bedoire (1719-1748), associated with his brother-in-law Hermann Petersen became one of the wealthiest men in the kingdom. He developed business with France. His company was the exclusive supplier of the *Compagnie Française des Indes* for all materials from Sweden, including iron, pitch and tar. He served as a relay to the French authorities when the Navy wanted to purchase Swedish products. The company invested its accumulated profits in the big international trade, in the production of brass and the refining of sugar<sup>21</sup>. Finance was another area of activity of the enterprise. A part of the profits was placed in a bank to help the activities of the family and members of the Calvinist community. Gradually, Bedoire became one of the leading financiers of the Swedish capital's trading elite.

Jean-Henry Lefebure (1708-1767), another one of Stockholm's great merchants was married with his cousin Charlotta Bedoire. He pursued the international business activity created by his father. In 1730, at the age of 22, he became bourgeois of Stockholm and developed a very flourishing business, one of the most successful of the 1730-1760 period. He became one of the leaders of iron export<sup>22</sup>. He bought forges (Västanfors, Gimo and Robertsfors) and properties to secure his fortune like most of the great traders of the time.

Lefebure was actively involved in the affairs of the trading community. He was one of the directors of the «Salt Bureau» (*Saltkontoret*) and a member of the association of iron masters. He was interested in monopoly companies: he was one of the twelve principal shareholders of the Swedish East India Company and one of the founding members of the *Compagnie des Canaries*. With Bedoire and several other merchants he was actively involved in the largest shipyard of Stockholm<sup>23</sup>. The multiplicity of its activities is reflected in the distribution of its fortune:

- 34% in working capital (advances, goods in stock etc.);
- 11% in investments in companies;
- 10% in shares of ships;
- 5% in properties in town;
- 30% in forges and domains<sup>24</sup>.

In 1765, Lefebure lost a part of his reputation when he appeared as one of the speculators who caused a serious currency crisis in Sweden. Like the other defendants, he was imprisoned by the authorities<sup>25</sup>. After Jean-Henry's death, the company disappeared.

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<sup>21</sup> LINDBLAD, 1982: 51. Unlike other large Swedish companies, the firm had marginal contacts with Amsterdam.

<sup>22</sup> MÜLLER, 1998: 123.

<sup>23</sup> MÜLLER, 1998: 202.

<sup>24</sup> SAMUELSSON, 1951: 122.

<sup>25</sup> *Archives Nationales*, Paris, B1 620, Courrier de Hambourg du 7 mai 1765: «Les srs Kiermann et Lefebure... sont depuis quelque temps détenus prisonniers. On les accuse de tirer de grosses sommes de la banque de l'Etat sous prétexte de faire baisser le cours d'espèces».

His son Jean (1736-1804) left the city for the pleasures of the countryside and adopted the name of his wife, the Countess of Lillienberg, a niece of John Jennings, another member of the French Reformed Church. The continuity of the lineage was broken by the enrichment brought by the commercial success and the desire to integrate the aristocracy, usual evolution for the big traders of Stockholm in the eighteenth century<sup>26</sup>.

A lot of families linked with the Bedoire's family were also in the trading business. They represented a quarter of the Swedish capital's exports in 1740 and half in 1750.

**Table 1.** The trading elite of Stockholm in 1760 (% of market share)

Exporters		Importers	
Names	%	Names	%
<b>Jennings</b>	19	Brandell	5
<b>Lefebure</b>	12	<b>Schröder</b>	4
<b>Petersen</b>	7	Neuman	3
<b>Tottie</b>	7	Seton	3
Bohman	6	Liedroth	2
<b>Grill</b>	4	<b>Koschell</b>	2
Wahrendorff	3	Kanzau	2
Alnoor	3	Lefebure	2
<b>Hebbe</b>	3	<b>Nettelblad</b>	2
Graber	3	<b>Wahrendorff</b>	2
	67		28

Source: SAMUELSSON, 1951: 234-235 (in bold families linked with the family Bedoire)

In 1700, Pierre Boué (1677-1745), a calvinist from a family of merchants and financiers native from Clairac-sur-Lot near Agen, arrived in Hamburg. He joined his sister Anne-Marie and his uncle Pierre who had taken refuge there after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and was one of the pioneers of the Huguenot colony in the Hanseatic city<sup>27</sup>. He received a good education in trading particularly in Amsterdam

<sup>26</sup> LINDBLAD, 1982: 52.

<sup>27</sup> *Hamburgisches Geschlechterbuch* Bd 13, p. 43-44. The story said that Pierre Boué was hidden in a barrel of sugar to leave France and go to Holland.

and Copenhagen. When arriving in Hamburg, he established himself as a merchant and shipowner specializing in maritime trade with France and England and as a financier. He also managed together with his brother the largest shipbuilding yard of the Hanseatic city. Between 1719 and 1723 his company supplied the main part of the fleet of the second French East India Company i.e. seventeen ships. After Pierre's death, the family estate continued with his descendants under the name «Boué & fils». In 1765, the company got shares in the first maritime insurance company of Hamburg.

Pierre Boué maintained excellent relations with France. In 1718, he participated in the activities of the «Company of Senegal» and speculated on rubber<sup>28</sup>. He was the correspondent of the East India Company in Hamburg to which he provided ships, masts and other products of the North. From 1729, he did business on sugar with Bordeaux. These relations with Bordeaux opened up the market of the «Compania Guipuzcoana de Caracas» in San Sebastián in Spain to his Company, which meant Spanish America, to which he delivered canvases, tar, hemp and other goods<sup>29</sup>.

**Table 2.** Importers of sugar in Hamburg (value in marks-banco)

Place	1753		1755	
	Name	Value	Name	Value
1	<b>P. His</b>	662 600	<b>P. His</b>	1 017 710
2	<b>P. Boué</b>	471 800	<b>P. Boué</b>	777 350
3	Lutkens & Engelhardt	272 900	Klug	435 400
4	G. Clamer	147 500	G. Clamer	263 200
5	<b>Bosanquet</b>	294 800	<b>Boyer</b>	128 600
6	H. C. Lienau	80 700	<b>Loreihe &amp; Diodati</b>	125 800
7	J. N. Lienau	70 500	<b>Bosanquet</b>	96 400
8	Tamm	61 660		

Source: WEBER, 2001: 270-271 (in bold the families of huguenot origin)

Pierre Boué is a businessman with excellent qualities for public relations. In 1727, a memoir on the Northern trade praised him: «I am convinced that it will be difficult to find in the North a smarter, more exacting and more honest commissioner... Of all the

<sup>28</sup> WEBER, 2001: 263.

<sup>29</sup> CAVIGNAC, 1967: 220.



merchants that I know he is the safest and the most reasonable»<sup>30</sup>. The Count de Plelo, who met him in 1729, was equally impressed: «It seems to me that he is a good man who has great intelligence of commerce and who, by his relations in the North and the Baltic, can usefully help the supplying of the king's navy»<sup>31</sup>.

## THE INTEGRATION IN THE NEW COUNTRY

Once established, the nature of foreign merchants was, as Pierre Jeannin wrote, «a transitory state»<sup>32</sup> that is to say in a process of integration into the local society characterized by different steps.

The first step was matrimonial alliances. For the first generation there was a very strong tendency to look for a wife of Huguenot origin. Jean Bedoire married in 1680 with Maria Carré, daughter of a silk merchant from Calais. In 1770, Frédéric de Conninck moved to The Hague in Holland and married to the Calvinist Marie de Joncourt. In Stockholm, marriages between French people accounted for 40% of all marriages registered at the French Reformed Church, while Franco-Swedish marriages were estimated for only 17.5%<sup>33</sup>. From the second generation, marriages could very often be with people outside the community. These alliances were marked by strong homogamy<sup>34</sup>, the success in business favoring integration into the local elite. The Bedoire family is an exceptional example of the construction of a merchant network by matrimonial alliances. The first generation, born in Sweden, married with migrant families of Stockholm which had big success in business Pauli, Lefebure, Toutin and Jennings. Then the Bedoires continued their alliances with the Stockholm merchant elite whether Swedish or other nationalities. Jan Thomas Lindblad talks about a clan evoking the Bedoire family<sup>35</sup>.

Religion was not a problem. By becoming member of the Bedoire Clan, some traders took the Calvinist religion like Jennings. On the contrary, Herman Petersen was Lutheran even he was a central figure of the company. However, we can notice that gradually many Huguenots left their Calvinist convictions to merge into the Swedish society. In 1767, the pastor of the French Reformed Church noted that Ms. Bédouire' son became Lutheran and that «Monsieur Lefebure had almost changed» while these two characters were among the most devoted to the Calvinist church of Stockholm. Thus, a number of Huguenots of the second or third generation abandoned their Calvinist convictions to merge into Swedish society. These merchants, who had converted to

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<sup>30</sup> *Archives Nationales*, Paris, B1 451, 05/08/1727.

<sup>31</sup> *Archives Nationales*, Paris, B1 451, 08/04/1729.

<sup>32</sup> JEANNIN, 1980: 9-16.

<sup>33</sup> TRABUT, 2002: 163. However, in case of a change of religion, a number of Franco-Swedish marriages were held at the Lutheran Church.

<sup>34</sup> In this regard, see GUTIERREZ-OBADIA, 1987: 103-114.

<sup>35</sup> LINDBLAD, 1982: 52.

Lutheranism, did not give up their community of origin and continued to regularly pay subsidies to the French Reformed Church<sup>36</sup>.

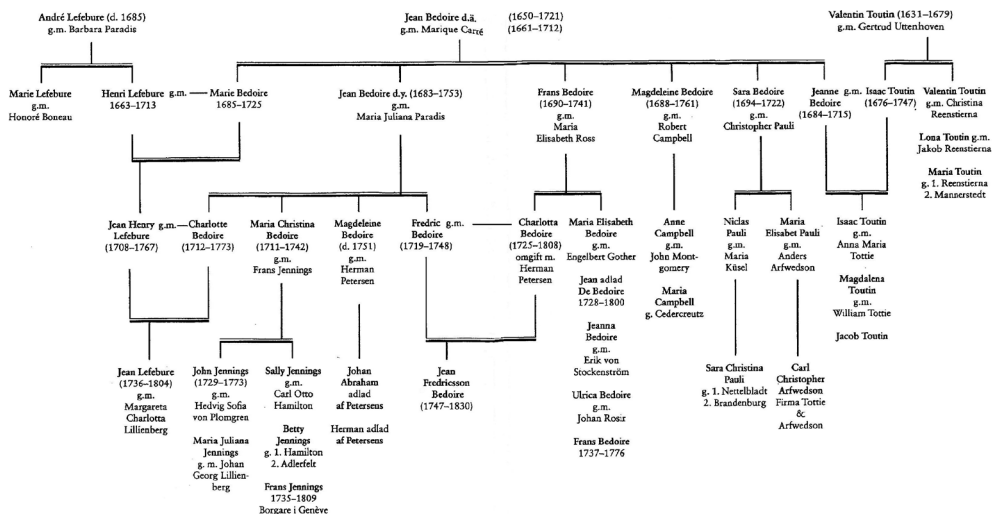


Fig. 1. The «Bodoire clan». Source: BODOIRE, 2009: 232-233

These marriages also allowed the merchants to build networks at an European scale. The Boué family network was an example of the international ties created by the Huguenot diaspora. In 1705, Pierre Boué married with the daughter of a German merchant Rudolph Bardewisch. His sisters were the wives of the merchants Isaac Balguerie of Bordeaux and Moses Boyer of Hamburg. One of his daughters married with Guillaume Nairac, member of one of the great fortunes of Bordeaux, installed in Amsterdam<sup>37</sup> whose brother-in-law, Pierre Eyma was an important commissioner of the Dutch city also married to a woman from the Boué family. Another woman married Jean-Pierre Chaunel, a Huguenot from Montpellier, an esteemed businessman and banker from the Hanseatic city<sup>38</sup>. Their daughter will become the wife of the important Amsterdam businessman Pierre Texier. During the 1790s, when the French colonial power was weakened, the family entered into marriages with British families<sup>39</sup>.

The second step of integration was the acquisition of buildings. The large buildings and palaces belonging to the merchant elites and among them the Huguenot families

<sup>36</sup> TRABUT, 2002: 157.

<sup>37</sup> A branch of the Nairac family founded a company in Hamburg under the name «Loreilhe & Nairac».

<sup>38</sup> HUHNS, 1962.

<sup>39</sup> WEBER, 2001: 275.

were situated in the streets of old Stockholm (Gamla Stan), the country's business centre, or the beautiful neighbourhoods. Most of the major Huguenot merchants acquired huge estates dedicated to the mining industries where magnificent manors were built (Lefebure in Gimo, Jennings at Forsmark etc.). The greatest artists of the time came to decorate their interiors or to make portraits of members of the community<sup>40</sup>. In 1795, after the great fire in Copenhagen, Pierre Peschier built a new mansion after the plans of the famous architect C. F. Harsdorff. Several members of the royal family were present for the inauguration of the building. Today, this edifice is the headquarters of one of the largest Danish banks and is a jewel of the architecture of the city.

The third step was the integration of Huguenot merchants into the political institutions of their new country. Lefebure was actively involved in political life. He represented Stockholm's burghers at the Swedish diet. A Bedoire of the third generation, named also Jean became in 1757, consul of Sweden in Lisbon<sup>41</sup>, and was ennobled in 1777.

The French language continued to be widely practiced by this elite, which was not a problem in a francophile country where the elite of the society looked for everything that touched France (valets, cooks or governesses were often French). Their children could attend the many private lessons and schools that taught the language of Molière<sup>42</sup>. The French characteristic of the Huguenot community could therefore continue to persist despite the remoteness.

## CONCLUSION

According to Herbert Lüthy the revocation of the edict of Nantes generated the «constitution of a Protestant society of French origin rejected outside the laws of the kingdom and, for its most active part, out of French nationality. It was a truly international society whose citizens were spread out in France and outside France»<sup>43</sup>. This finding clearly applies to the Huguenot merchant communities of Northern Europe. Religion was initially the cement of this minority which has «an ardent desire to succeed and to distinguish»<sup>44</sup>. Thus, the arrival in the North was often due to economic reasons, even if the persecutions suffered by the French Calvinists remained in mind. Another characteristic of the Huguenot merchants was the cosmopolitan character of the community which, from its foundation, was composed of French but also Swiss or Dutch members.

<sup>40</sup> BEDOIRE, 1995: 147-162. In this regard, see the magnificent portrait of the Lefebure family by Alexandre Roslin (1769), exhibited at the Nationalmuseum in Stockholm.

<sup>41</sup> MÜLLER, 2004: 104. Jean Bedoire is frequently absent from his post (1759-1769, 1769-1775) and seems to live in Sweden at the time.

<sup>42</sup> TRABUT, 2002: 158: «E. hammar ne dénombre pas moins de 16 cours privés et 14 écoles dont la majorité a été ouverte à Stockholm. 12 de ces cours privés sur 16 sont assurés par des Français et 9 écoles sur 14 ont un fondateur ou une fondatrice d'origine française». (Elisabet Hammar, *Le portrait d'un corps enseignant. Les introducteurs de la langue française*, manuscript).

<sup>43</sup> LÜTHY, 1959: II, 773.

<sup>44</sup> YARDENI, 1985: 37.

Once they had made a fortune, the Calvinists seemed to be diluted in the host society, even if they continued for the most part to assert their Huguenot identity and they all remained very attached to their origins.

If France has lost valuable people, one could however wonder if the effect was not finally beneficial because these immigrants who settled in the Protestant countries, maintained links with their country of origin. The Huguenots gave birth to commercial networks between France and Northern Europe and were at the origin of the arrival of French products on the markets of Northern Europe. For example, the export of colonial products that made the fortune of the French colonial trade was partly due to the Huguenot community settled in the port of Hamburg and the supply of French shipyards was partly made by the Calvinists settled in Scandinavia.

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