



## SCIENTIFIC FINAL REPORT

Regnr Östersjöstiftelsen: 2010-0005

Project manager: Martin Wottle

Project title: *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie. The Urban Arenas of the Baltic Middle Classes. A "Long 19th Century" Study.* (Borgarklassens diskreta charm. Stadens borgerliga arenor i Östersjöområdet. En studie om det långa 1800-talet.)

### 1. Purpose of the project

The project examines various urban arenas, or spaces, where different aspects of a class formation, or class identity, of the middle classes – in some respect the bourgeoisie – can be identified and studied, during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Three distinct sub-projects study

- the private home as a social and semi-public arena (Kekke Stadin);
- the importance of culture and voluntary associations as a vehicle for movements between the private and public spheres, and in building a civil society (Martin Wottle);
- and the sphere of leisure and vacationing as an arena for ethnic, gender and class formation as well as distinction (Christina Douglas).

### 2. The three most important results of the project and what conclusions can be drawn from them

*The private home as a social arena (Stadin)*

A key element of the social life of the bourgeoisie in the Baltic area was the combination of the morning call, and evening receptions. These were all events surrounded by elaborate rituals (also causing contemporary debates). The emerging image – until the end of the century – is one of the “private” home as an intense social arena, challenging the popular notion of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as the birth of the “separate spheres” (male and female respectively). Men were just as busy making morning calls, which seemed to have played a more important part in social networking, than just a passing of time for under-stimulated upper-class women (an image frequently encountered in the literature). That is not to say, though, that the home as a social arena was not gendered. Home furnishing was an important part in the process of staging the right combination of private and public. There were clear, and gendered, divisions between different parts of the home, e.g. between the salon and the dining room. The home as such though, was to constitute a central arena for bourgeois class formation through socializing.

Through this socializing in the private home, common norms and values were shaped, negotiated and reshaped. A central feature was the morning call – the sentinel of the bourgeois world, to which only those with the right amount of cultural capital had access.



The morning call was one of the rituals forming the bourgeois habitus, constituting the gateway into the salons proper.

This form of social life was influenced by primarily England and France, and also proved to be very cosmopolitical in its expressions. In the course of the 19th century, a bourgeoisie grew and found a central position in the towns and cities around the Baltic Sea Area. Despite different circumstances, they adopted a lifestyle quite resembling that of its French and British counterparts, seen through common practices and personal experience.

Through journals, novels and not least journeys, a common bourgeois culture took shape in the region, imitating the bourgeoisie in London, Paris and other cities in western Europe. Trips abroad, whether as tourists or on business, or for any other reason, always included networking in the towns and cities visited. Even if a person just stayed a couple of days, he or she was incorporated in the social life of the bourgeoisie. The hospitality was overwhelming, and “everybody” wanted to get acquainted with the newcomers – provided they belonged to the right class, and hence conformed to the rituals.

#### *Civil society and the cultural sphere (Wottle)*

Musical life constituted an important part of the civil society that would prove to be a backbone of bourgeois culture, especially in the first half of the 19th century. Music and musical training were integral parts of bourgeois life and education (not least for women), reaching from the private home, over the semi-public salon, to public concerts.

Here though, we may discern a shift from the 1840s-50s, as new modes of communication (railways), expanding specialised media (journals) aimed at culture and music, and new arenas (theatres and, eventually, concert halls) paved the way for an increasingly professional and commercial urban music scene.

Up until that change is clearly visible, a key player in the city’s musical life was the amateur-based musical society. These societies, including both orchestras and choirs, performed the role as mediators between the private and public spheres, providing an interface between amateurs and (the relatively few) professional musicians.

These societies also tried to combine the role as “havens” for music-lovers across the social spectrum (although the working class was never a readily visible entity here), with some social obligations, such as music-schools for children and charity events. In all, there was a well-founded notion, that their love of music should be for the benefit of society.

The status as amateurs – “music lovers” or “dilettantes” – was an important one, for understanding the special notion of acting for the “love of music”, rather than for bread and butter. The bourgeois musical arena was supposed to be an inclusive one, and the participation of amateurs at public concerts was the general rule.

This development fits in with what has been labelled the “double process of emancipation”, where the bourgeois cultural societies and associations provided new fora, or spaces, for music and the arts, for themselves but simultaneously for artists and musicians who were in the process of freeing themselves from the old bonds to princely courts and noble patrons. In line with the ideas of Jürgen Habermas, and the emergence from the 18<sup>th</sup> century of a bourgeois public sphere, bourgeois society adopted an idealistic musical dilettante-culture that had hitherto been a prerogative of the nobility.



In this, the amateurs would eventually collide with those who saw themselves as representatives of l'art pour l'art, usually with reference to German Romanticism. For those, the persistence of the amateurs as a prominent feature of public musical life was proof of the backwardness of the Northern music scene. The gradual emergence of dedicated concert halls and new forms of concert programming point to what research has seen as the “victory” of a more upper-class based bourgeois dress-suited culture, epitomising the late 19<sup>th</sup> century bourgeoisie.

The preconditions for consumption in the public urban space were rapidly changing from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and new ways of shopping and eating and entertaining oneself became an ever more important part of urban life. One way of looking at this post-revolutionary picture is through the concept of publicization, where evermore activities and institutions manifested themselves in new public forms, not least within culture and music. For bourgeois musical life steeped in a post-revolutionary, inclusive amateur culture, this presented yet another challenge, as the public came to turn its gaze to an expanding market for touring soloists, sometimes with an international star quality far beyond the means of the dilettante.

The expansion of public musical life, that would eventually alienate parts of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century bourgeois culture, also took on physical forms – changes in the urban space – with dedicated theatre buildings, new cafés and restaurants with musical entertainment. Finally, the emerging fashion of the male choir, frequently an extension of the emerging labour movement, proved a formidable competition.

However, the amateurs did not disappear, and even though the musical societies of the earlier 19<sup>th</sup> century disappeared or transmuted, this older expression of a more unassuming bourgeois musical culture persisted, in parallel with later, more high-brow forms. As such the cultural sphere continued to act as an important part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century civil society, notwithstanding growing class conflict and post 1848 bourgeois anxiety.

#### *Seaside spaces and leisure as part of ethnic, gender and class formation (Douglas)*

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a combination of Russian imperial power and an emerging Latvian nationalism posed a challenge to the Baltic Germans, and their hitherto status as a privileged bourgeois elite. The increased tensions between various ethnic and cultural groups also took on special expressions, and one of these concerned the geography and topography of the seaside resorts (in this case *Rigaschen Strand* – today's *Jurmala*), and the access to certain areas.

Much of the perceived threat against the Baltic Germans conflated conceptions of gender, class and ethnicity, something that transpired into their everyday life, not least when it came to their leisurely summer dwellings by the sea. The seaside resorts outside Riga were noticeably segregated along lines of ethnicity and class. This mix of notions of gender, class and ethnicity created a vacational life somewhat plagued by incessant debates and negotiations regarding the official statutes, regulating access to the beach for the different groups, the right to (German) nude, gender segregated bathing etc.

All this must be understood as something expanding far beyond a general aversion to change, but rather as an extension of an ongoing, basically political struggle to preserve the privileges and standing in society for the German-speaking bourgeois elite.



### **3. The project's contribution to the international research frontline**

There are few international studies focussing on the morning call, and its importance for shaping the European 19th century bourgeoisie. The rise of the bourgeoisie has frequently been covered through studies of male-only spheres, such as business, politics, education, clubs etc. It has been an important task to extend the study of the bourgeoisie beyond homo-social relations and include the arenas where both women and men were prominent actors.

Scholarship on the emergence of a civil society in post-revolutionary Europe has to a large extent focused on the sphere of politics and public opinion, and not least the route to larger social movements (e.g. the labour movement). The research here has tried to highlight the importance of music (and other similar cultural expressions) as a central part of the formation of a presumably progressive bourgeois culture.

The project has also illuminated the importance of adding the fields of gender- and post-colonial studies to the study of the Baltic German culture and history. Adding to that, the study per se of summer life and vacationing in the Baltic area provides new knowledge in the field of tourism studies.

### **4. New research questions that the project has led to**

An area that would need further research with reference to the issue of cultural and musical life, is that of philanthropy and charity, as part of a bourgeois identity formation, especially for the earlier part of the century.

In general, there is room for more research into the relationship between the different ethnic groups and classes with respect to the forms of social and leisurely life in the multi-cultural Baltic area. The sources are sparse and erratic, but obviously rewarding and still relatively unexplored.

### **5. The contribution of the research to the knowledge of the Baltic Sea Region and Eastern Europe**

The research into the home as a social arena provides an attempt at approaching the Baltic Sea region as a comprehensive cultural sphere on the fringe of a German culture often perceived as dominant vis-à-vis Scandinavia and the Baltic area, whereas the relation to a British and French bourgeois culture proves equally important.

Alongside a Continental musical culture – where Germany took on a leading role – there was an alternative international route for musicians and musical influences along a path from St Petersburg, via the Baltic area and Finland/Helsinki, to Sweden/Scandinavia, forming much of the public music scene. Stockholm and Helsinki were thus important nodes in the “catching up” on the Continental development, also affecting the cultural formation of the bourgeois groups.

The use of hitherto sparsely explored source material regarding the leisurely life of the Baltic German bourgeoisie has provided new insights into an important and crucial political



phase, which includes a change in ethnic power relations, where the Germans' position as an undisputed social and cultural – colonial – elite was being challenged.

## 6. The contribution of research to multidisciplinary knowledge formation

The study of the emerging bourgeois lifestyle and forms of socializing makes use of several sources and methods from disciplines such as Fashion studies, History of Art, and Sociology, in order to present a comprehensive image of bourgeois culture.

The research into the bourgeois musical culture, and the emerging musical scene from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century in Stockholm and Helsinki, combines an empirical field hitherto mainly covered by musicological scholarship, to the realm of historical science, especially with reference to the concept of civil society.

The use of spatial theory and the concept of intersectionality has proved fruitful for illuminating a new field of knowledge with regard to ethnic and class formation (of, in this case, the Baltic Germans) from a spatial perspective.

## 7. Dissemination of the results of the project within and outside the research community

### *Publications*

#### *Monographs*

- Stadin, Kekke, *En herre på visit. Bourgeoisens formering i Östersjöområdet och den europeiska visitkulturen*, monograph, c. 250 pages. Manuscript under review (fc. Autumn 2020–Winter 2021).

#### *Articles, peer reviewed*

- Douglas, Christina (2019) "En kolonial elits sista strid. Tyskbalternas sommartillvaro vid Rigaschen Strand runt sekelskiftet 1900", *Tidskrift för Genusvetenskap*, vol. 40, nr 2, s. 5–27.
- Open access: <http://ojs.ub.gu.se/ojs/index.php/tgv/article/view/4847/3785>
- Wottle, Martin (2019), "'... bland sina harmoniska vänner var han människa'. Harmoniska sällskapet i Stockholm 1820–1865, musiken och det civila samhället", *Historisk tidskrift*, vol. 139, nr 4, s. 689–716.
- Open access: [http://www.historisktidskrift.se/fulltext/2019-4/HT\\_2019\\_4\\_689-716\\_wottle.htm](http://www.historisktidskrift.se/fulltext/2019-4/HT_2019_4_689-716_wottle.htm)

#### *Book-chapters (anthologies, conference-reports)*

- Stadin, Kekke (2020), "Baltic bourgeoisie hospitality in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century", in *Baltic hospitality 1000—2000*, Runefelt, Leif (ed.), c. 20 pages (fc. Autumn 2020).
- Wottle, Martin (2020a), "Dilettanten: Musikälskare och virtuoser i Stockholm och Helsingfors under 1800-talet", in Josephson, Peter & Runefelt, Leif (eds.), *Historiska typer*, Gidlunds förlag, Möklinta (fc. May-June 2020).



- Wottle, Martin (2020b), "Konserten som salong: om närhet och avstånd i musikens urbana rum", in Dackling, Martin & Nauman, Sari (eds.), *Hushåll i stort och smått: kön, makt och relationer 1600—2000*, Makadam förlag, Gothenburg 2020 (fc, June 2020).

#### *Others*

- Christina Douglas, *Vetenskapsradion Historia P1*, September 5, 2017, "Nya leksaksmuseet lyfter lekandets kulturhistoria" + havsbadens konfliktfyllda historia. (Interview and discussion concerning seaside resorts – *Rigaschen Strand* outside Riga around 1900.)

#### **Conferences**

##### *Transnational Civil Society: Origins, Early Development and the Case of Temperance Movements*

- Workshop at the Institute of Contemporary History and CBEES, Södertörn University, 24–25 March 2011, with kind support of the Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation (convenors: Norbert Götz and Jörg Hackmann).
- Project Presentation: Kekke Stadin and Martin: Baltic Urban Arenas and Transnational Links in the Long 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

##### *Urban Variation. Utopia, planning and practice.*

- 19-22 February 2013, Gothenburg, Sweden.
- Paper/presentation: Kekke Stadin, "The formal call and the drawing room".

##### *Gender in the European Town. Medieval to modern.*

- University of Southern Denmark, Odense, 22-25 May 2013.
- Paper/presentation: Christina Douglas, "Seasonal gendering in Riga: the Baltic German middle class, 1860-1914" (Martin Wottle, discussant).

##### *10th Conference on Baltic Studies in Europe*

- Tallinn, Estonia, June 16-19, 2013.
- Paper/presentation: Christina Douglas, "Seasonal Gendering in Riga: the Baltic German Middle class, c. 1860-1914."

##### *10th European Social Science History Conference*

- Vienna, April 2014
- Paper/Presentation: Kekke Stadin, "The formal call".



*Svenska historikermötet,*

- Stockholms universitet, May 2014
- Paper/presentation: Kekke Stadin, "Det rituella umgänget. Borgarklassens identitet och distinktion i Östersjöområdet 1800–1914".

*Nordiska kvinno- och genushistorikermötet*

- Stockholms universitet/Södertörns högskola/CBEES, August 2015
- Paper/presentation: Kekke Stadin, "Maskulina matsalar och feminina salonger".

*Svenska historikermötet*

- Sundsvall, May 2017
- Session: "Borgarklassens diskreta charm. Stadens borgerliga arenor under det långa 1800-talet" (conv. Martin Wottle, Christina Douglas & Kekke Stadin).

*Papers/presentations:*

- Christina Douglas, "Stadens pendang: rumsliga gränsdragningar inom den tyskbaltiska borgerlighetens sommarhusområden".
- Kekke Stadin, "Vängåvan, Kungsträdgården och andra borgerliga sällskapsrum".
- Martin Wottle, "Dilettanten och konstnären. Borgerligheten som kulturproducent och kulturkonsument".

*Det 29:e Nordiska historikermötet*

- Aalborg, Denmark, August 2017
- Paper/presentation: Christina Douglas, "Nakenbadande tyskbalter vid Rigaschen Strand: ett partiellt motstånd mot moderniteten".

*Svenska historikermötet*

- Växjö, May 2019
- Session: "Musiken och den moderna staden. Perspektiv på det offentliga musiklivet under det långa 1800-talet" (conv. Martin Wottle, Anne Reese Willén & Mia Kuritzén Löwengart).
- Paper/presentation: Martin Wottle, "Harmoniska sällskapet i Stockholm under 1820—1840-talen".