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**Distance, presence, absence and *memoria*.**  
Commemoration of deceased Livonian merchants  
outside their native cities during the late Middle Ages

by **Gustavs Strenga**

c a l l i d u s .

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## **Distance, presence, absence and *memoria*. Commemoration of deceased Livonian merchants outside their native cities during the late Middle Ages**

by Gustavs Strenga

**Abstract:** Hansekaufleute bildeten in der Regel wirtschaftliche Netzwerke, die unter anderem Familienmitglieder und enge Freunde einschlossen. Zu diesem Zweck waren sie häufig gezwungen, sich anderswo niederzulassen. Daher liefen sie Gefahr, außerhalb oder sogar weit entfernt von ihrem Geburtsort und von ihrer Familie, Gilde, Kirchen- und Stadtgemeinde zu sterben. Wie für das Mittelalter üblich, war auch für diese – meist reichen und mächtigen – Männer das Gebetsgedenken nach dem Tod ganz wesentlich und zwar sowohl für das eigene Seelenheil als auch mit Blick auf die Stärkung ihrer familiären Zugehörigkeit. Die „*Memoria*“ ermöglichte es den Abwesenden zudem, an weit voneinander entfernten Orten präsent zu sein: Auch wenn der Körper beispielsweise in Brügge bestattet worden war, konnte eine Person durch das Gedenken am anderen Ende des Hanseraumes, zum Beispiel in Riga, gegenwärtig sein.

Wie dieser Beitrag zeigt, äußerten Kaufleute aus Livland – aus Riga, Reval oder Dorpat –, die Vorsorge für einen Todesfall trafen, zumeist den Wunsch, dass ihrer in ihrer Heimatgemeinde gedacht werden sollte. Die Testamente von Richard Zemelbecker (1390), von Mitgliedern der Familie Veckinchusen (frühes 15. Jahrhundert), Johann Cavolt (1434), und Tydeman Remlincrode (1501) zeugen von den Bestrebungen dieser Einzelpersonen und Familien, die eigene *Memoria* fest in ihren Heimatgemeinden zu verankern. Es sind jedoch auch Fälle belegt, in denen Personen kein Interesse daran zeigten, ihre *Memoria* in der Stadt ihrer Herkunft zu errichten, wie etwa Jan Durcop (1495) aus Riga, der fast sein gesamtes Berufsleben in Brügge verbracht hatte. Der Fall Durcops macht deutlich, dass die persönliche Entscheidung über die Sorge für das eigene Gebetsgedenken durch die langfristige Entwicklung der Identität einer Person bestimmt wurde.

The Hanse was a mighty merchant network, which reached from London to Novgorod and from Bergen to Bruges. These cities harboured the *kontore*, the principal Hanseatic foreign trading centres. As Ulf Christian Ewert and Stephan Selzer have described it ‘Hanseatic merchants functioned as commercial mediators by transferring furs, wax, timber and grain from the East to the West, cloth and luxury goods from the West to the North and to the East, and dried cod and herrings from the North to everywhere.’<sup>1</sup> Livonian merchants and their urban communities in Riga, Reval (Tallinn), Dorpat (Tartu) and smaller Hanseatic towns had been part of the Hanse since the thirteenth century and they exploited to the full the opportunities offered by the network.<sup>2</sup>

In the late medieval Hanse, travelling from town to town, leaving family and native communities behind, was an integral part of a merchant’s experience.<sup>3</sup> During their active years, merchants were constantly on the move, not only within the Hanseatic heartland – the Baltic Sea region and Northern Germany – but also to the foreign outposts of this merchant network, the *kontore*.<sup>4</sup> Hanseatic merchants not only travelled, but often also resettled in a new town and adapted to new environments.

Resettlement and adaptation were unescapable because each Hanseatic merchant built up his own commercial network(s), which usually involved family or close friends. The existence of such networks meant that they did not need to accompany their goods in person, since they could rely on representatives in important commercial centres within the Hanse and beyond.<sup>5</sup> The Livonian merchants who were chosen to represent the network moved from the towns in the Eastern Baltic to the largest Hanseatic cities (Lübeck or Cologne), or the *kontore* (London, Bruges, Bergen, Novgorod). For example, the merchant network of the famous Veckinchusen family, which originated in Livonia, was represented in Ghent, Bruges, Cologne, Lübeck, Reval, Riga and Dorpat in the early-fifteenth century.<sup>6</sup> The late-fifteenth century merchant Bernd Pael, a resident of Reval, was involved in a network that stretched from Narva in the East to London in the West.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ewert/Selzer 2006, p. 1–2.

<sup>2</sup> Johansen 1940/1941, p. 1–55; Arbusow 1944, p. 212–239.

<sup>3</sup> Maschke 1980, p. 16.

<sup>4</sup> On Hanseatic *kontore* in Bruges, Bergen, London and Novgorod, see Henn 1998, p. 216–222; Müller-Boysen 1998, p. 223–233; Angermann 1998, p. 234–241; Jenks 1998, p. 210–215; Graßmann 2005; Jörn 2000; Wubs-Mrozewicz 2013.

<sup>5</sup> Jahnke 2010, p. 192, 194.

<sup>6</sup> Seifert 2000, p. 46; Militzer 2003, p. 239.

<sup>7</sup> Jahnke 2010, p. 194–195.

Travel was perilous. Many merchants drowned during sea journeys, were killed by pirates or robbers, or died unexpectedly away from family and friends. These constant risks found expression in the spirituality of the Hanseatic merchants, in their wills, which reflect a preoccupation with the afterlife and make elaborate provisions for commemoration.<sup>8</sup> Merchants acquired not only goods and income on their travels, but also experiences and attitudes.<sup>9</sup> Those in turn influenced their choices and preferences in the field of *memoria* – the commemoration of the dead.

The death of a merchant also played a part in the Hanseatic economy of travel. Because the transportation of a corpse over long distances was expensive and complicated, Hanseatic merchants were usually buried where they died. Death meant leaving this world and being physically absent, but the merchant's corpse remained present in the place of burial around which *memoria* usually focused. According to Otto Gerhard Oexle the essence of medieval liturgical and non-liturgical *memoria* was to make present those who are absent, both living and dead ones.<sup>10</sup> Evoking an absentee's name was, in a sense, to evoke his or her real presence.<sup>11</sup> In Hanseatic society the dead were frequently physically absent from community, kin and friends. In these circumstances, remembrance in the native community had to be ordained for lack of a tomb,<sup>12</sup> and it compensated for the absence of the corpse. Thus the commemoration of the physically absent dead was essential to the Hanseatic communities and merchant families in order to sustain their identities and memories.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, for the merchant families active in the government of the town (*Ratsfamilien*) commemoration of those absent was important, because *memoria* was a tool for the legitimation of their political power.<sup>14</sup> In the case of Hanseatic *memoria* we can observe the totality of the phenomenon<sup>15</sup> – its legal (drawing up of testaments and their execution), economic (allocation of resources for *memoria* in different cities), artistic and cultural (commissioning of tombstones, liturgical objects and altarpieces), religious (measures for the

<sup>8</sup> Graßmann 2009, p. 113; on the testaments of the Hanseatic merchants, see von Brandt 1973b, p. 336–358; Noodt 2000.

<sup>9</sup> Selzer 2001, p. 108–109.

<sup>10</sup> Oexle 1976, p. 84–86; Oexle 1983, p. 25.

<sup>11</sup> Oexle 1983, p. 31.

<sup>12</sup> Oexle 1984, p. 385.

<sup>13</sup> On *memoria* and group identities, see Oexle 1982; on the *memoria* of the Hanseatic merchants outside of their native towns, see Rössner 2000; Rössner 2001.

<sup>14</sup> Lusiardi 2001, p. 685.

<sup>15</sup> For *memoria* as 'total social phenomenon' (*totales soziales Phänomen*), see Oexle 1994, p. 301.

repose of the soul of the deceased; choice of a burial place, commemorators and memorial rituals), and social aspects (wish to be remembered by one's native community, family and kin).

The Livonians – merchants from Riga, Reval, and Dorpat – were not the largest group amongst Hanseatics. Only a handful of sources – last wills and documents reflecting commemoration of these merchants in their native cities and outside Livonia, have survived. Yet research on Livonian merchants shows how Hanseatic long-distance *memoria* functioned, bringing together individuals and their families separated by vast distances – the ones buried in Bruges, were, through *memoria*, present in Riga, Reval or Dorpat. The aim of this article is to explore how merchants adapted plans of remembrance to their dynamic lives, how Hanseatic merchants from periphery of the Hanse (Livonia) combined remembrance in their Livonian hometowns with the *memoria* in their cities of residence, and how merchant families organized remembrance of deceased family members separated by the distance. How did the Hanseatics commemorate those who died while travelling?

### **Livonians and Hanseatic *memoria* in Bruges**

The Hanse was created as an economic and political network of communities and merchants. It also became a cultural network of social and religious practices expressed in rituals and material culture. As elsewhere, remembrance of the dead was a social practice crucial to Hanseatic identity/ies within and beyond networks. When resident outside the Hanse, for example in the *kontore*, the Hanseatic merchants fostered their identities with the aid of *memoria* and created their own memorial spaces. Such memorial spaces were created in all four Hanseatic *kontore*, and there merchants were buried and commemorated.<sup>16</sup>

'Hanseatic identity' – a shared a feeling of togetherness – was most explicitly manifested by those physically separated from the Hanse itself.<sup>17</sup> A common identity helped merchants to survive in foreign environments. Still, each regional group, Prussians or Livonians for example, had a distinct identity constructed in the region of their origin.<sup>18</sup> The *kontore* were the spaces where these different identities were confronted and also united. As Renée Rössner has pointed out, Hanseatic *memoria* was a specific manifestation of

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<sup>16</sup> Rössner 2001; Rössner 2000, p. 27–44; on charity in the Bergen's kontor, see Grassmann 2005, p. 78–93; on testaments of the Hanseatic merchants in London, see Jenks 1986, p. 35–111.

<sup>17</sup> Behrmann 1997, p. 158.

<sup>18</sup> On regional identities in the Hanseatic space, see Henn 1992; on regional and Hanseatic identity of the Prussian merchants, see Czaja 2000, p. 91–101.

death, burial and commemoration for individuals from different social and geographical backgrounds.<sup>19</sup> Death and *memoria* were experiences which united these communities of merchants. This communal identity was strikingly demonstrated when 70 Hanseatics were killed during the Burgundian-English war in 1436 in Flemish Sluis, and a memorial chapel was erected there to commemorate the victims.<sup>20</sup>

As a leading commercial centre in late medieval Northern Europe, Bruges had, since the thirteenth century, attracted greater numbers of Hanseatic merchants than the other three *kontore*.<sup>21</sup> In the later Middle Ages the Hanseatics shared their presence there with Venetian, Spanish, English, and Scottish merchants.<sup>22</sup> Although Bruges was located far from Livonia and the journey took between six and ten weeks, Bruges attracted many Livonian merchants, beginning in the early stages of Hanseatic activity.<sup>23</sup> It has been suggested that the Rigans were more widely represented in the western *kontore*, yet in case of Bruges, more information about the Revalians has survived.<sup>24</sup> The merchants involved in long-distance trade held key positions in their hometowns. Several city councillors and members of the urban political and economical elites appear among the Livonian merchants in Flanders.<sup>25</sup> As a report on ships, goods and men lost when captured by the English in 1404 shows, almost half of the merchants on the voyage between Riga and Bruges were city councillors or came from Riga's ruling families.<sup>26</sup>

Hanseatic memorial culture was particularly rich in Bruges from the beginning.<sup>27</sup> Merchants co-founded the Carmelite friary in Bruges, where Hanseatics were later buried. They also made many memorial arrangements and donated money to local churches and institutions.<sup>28</sup> The other burial space for the Hanseatics in Bruges was the Augustinian friary.<sup>29</sup> While most

<sup>19</sup> Rössner 2001, p. 24–25.

<sup>20</sup> Poeck 1991, p. 176–178.

<sup>21</sup> On history of the Hanseatic kontor in Bruges, see Henn 1998, p. 216–222.

<sup>22</sup> Henn 1999, p. 134.

<sup>23</sup> As the correspondence of the early fifteenth century merchants shows, it could take from 47 to 73 days to travel from Riga to Bruges, but from Lübeck to Bruges the journey took only 20 days, see Stieda 1921, p. XVI; on the communication between Riga and Lübeck, see Mahling 2017; on Flanders as the destination for the Rigan merchants, see Brück 1999, p. 244.

<sup>24</sup> Militzer 2003, p. 236; Rössner 2001, p. 107.

<sup>25</sup> Brück 1999, p. 246.

<sup>26</sup> Militzer 2003, p. 252; on the political elites of medieval Riga, see Czaja 2005.

<sup>27</sup> Rössner 2000a, p. 38.

<sup>28</sup> Rössner 2000b, p. 85–96; Asmussen 1999, p. 244.

<sup>29</sup> Paravicini 1992, p. 134.

Hanseatics chose the friaries as their resting place, those who spent a long period in Bruges and had become integrated in the local society, were buried in the city's parish churches.<sup>30</sup> Hanseatics who made memorial requests in their wills divided their donations between the local churches, friaries, hospitals and even the prison (*donckercamer*); they also spent large sums on alms for poor.<sup>31</sup>

Livonian merchants, like other Hanseatics in Bruges, participated in the creation of different memorial foundations and financed funeral monuments within the city designed to commemorate their kin. Three merchants of Livonian origins – Tydeman Remlincrode (Dorpat and Reval), Heyndric Witte (Dorpat or Reval) and Lodewijc van der Crost (Reval) – together with other Hanseatics (*hoosterlingen*) were patrons of the stained-glass-windows in the convent of Sint Trudo in Bruges.<sup>32</sup> In return the nuns of Sint Trudo promised to maintain the *memoria* of the Hanseatics forever (*bliven zoude in eeuwigher memorie*).<sup>33</sup>

These memorial foundations were part of the commemorative strategies of Hanseatics in Bruges, many of whom indeed died there. For example, Tydeman Remlincrode, to whom the priests of the Our Lady (*Onser Vrouwen*) church in Bruges referred as 'a merchant of German Hanse, born in Dorpat, in Livonia' (*coopman vander Duutscher hanzen ghebooren van Dorpaten in Lijffland*), requested burial in that church shortly before his death in 1501.<sup>34</sup> Within the document acceding to Remlincrode's request, the priests of Our Lady also granted that any future member of Remlincrode's kin who wished to, could be interred next to Tydeman.<sup>35</sup> This prospective granting of burial to future kinsmen demonstrates Remlincrode's consciousness of the ties that bound merchant kinsmen.

The *memoria* of Hanseatic merchants in Flanders was also determined by region. For example, Breslau (Wrocław) merchants in Antwerp during the late-fifteenth century had their own altar; commemorative services were

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<sup>30</sup> For example, two Livonians Jan Durcop and Tyman Remmlyncroode were buried in the parish churches of Sint Gillis and Our Lady, see Rössner 2001, p. 139–141, 142, 459.

<sup>31</sup> On the fifteenth century Hanseatic memorial foundations and donations for the churches and poor in Bruges, see, Rössner 2001, p. 142–157; Paravicini 1992, p. 134–135;

<sup>32</sup> Remlincrode contributed to the financing of the stained glass windows in the church of Sint Trudo in 1483 and 1501; van der Crost was a patron of the stained glass windows in 1495. Heyndric Witte's origins are obscure, but he most probably was a Livonian. Declerck 1975, p. 252, 253; Rössner 2001, p. 386–387, 314, 440.

<sup>33</sup> Declerck 1975, p. 252.

<sup>34</sup> '[...] ghebrukene een sepulture inde voorkerke bijden outaer vna Onser Vrouwen van Gracie ende Sinte Godelieve [...]' Rössner 2001, p. 459–460.

<sup>35</sup> Rössner 2001, p. 459.

held in the chapel of St Erasmus.<sup>36</sup> There are no such traces of the collective *memoria* of the Livonians: Rigans, Dorpatians or Revalians in Bruges or other Flemish towns. The Livonians did not have as distinct a collective regional identity as the merchants from Breslau, who even considered the possibility of leaving the Hanse. Still, there are numerous surviving last wills drawn up in Bruges which demonstrate memorial relationships of Livonian Hanseatics with their hometowns. These wills, however, show individual rather than collective strategies of creating personal remembrance in the native environment.

### **Remaining present while absent. Remembrance of Livonian merchants between Bruges, Lübeck, and Riga**

Merchants who travelled from town to town usually wished their remains to be present in three types of places through their *memoria*: in the town where they died, in the town where they had been born, and in the town where they had been commercially active.<sup>37</sup> This meant that *memoria* was simultaneously undertaken in numerous locations, sometimes spread over vast distances, and that the merchants sometimes ‘returned home’ after their death.<sup>38</sup> The wills of Hanseatics created networks of remembrance, requiring *memoria* from geographically distant institutions and individuals, spread out all over the Hanseatic region, including the outposts – the *kontore*.<sup>39</sup>

Even after spending long periods of time in the cities of North West Europe, Livonian merchants still considered their native communities to be important spaces for *memoria*. Few wills drafted by Livonians in Bruges or Lübeck have survived, but those we have show how remembrance was balanced between their current place of residence and their Livonian homeland. Johann Cavolt’s will provides a telling example: a merchant and burgher of Riga, active in Bruges between 1404 and 1424, he dictated his will in Bruges in the presence of the Hanseatic aldermen shortly before his death 1434.<sup>40</sup> In his will, Johan Cavolt created his remembrance in Bruges and his native Riga.<sup>41</sup> He referred in it to twenty-five friends (*vrende*) and

<sup>36</sup> Rössner 2000b, p. 43.

<sup>37</sup> Asmussen 1999, p. 240–244.

<sup>38</sup> An example for *memoria* of a certain fifteenth century merchant spread between the Hanseatic cities – Lübeck and Munster, see Schilp 1998, p. 30.

<sup>39</sup> Poeck 1991, p. 211.

<sup>40</sup> Cavolt was involved in settlement (1406) between the Livonian and Prussian merchants on one side and the English crown after the already mentioned capture of the ships and merchants. Rössner 2000b, p. 90; Rössner 2001, p. 304, 456–457, no. 8; HASTK Hanse IV; HUB 5, no. 1097.

<sup>41</sup> Rössner 2001, p. 456–457, no. 8; HASTK Hanse IV.

relatives (*maghe*), and seamen who had drowned, enjoining remembrance for their souls.<sup>42</sup> Cavolt then requested that the aldermen present organize a perpetual chantry, to be celebrated daily at the Carmelite church in Bruges, for his own soul and for the souls of his friends and relatives as well as all kin (*mach*) before him. His parents were not explicitly mentioned in this particular request of remembrance in Bruges.

Next, Cavolt made donations to the churches in Riga, donating £5 gr. both to the cathedral of Riga (*Unser Leyven Vrowen*) and the parish church of St Peter; £2 gr. to St Jacob's parish church; and £1 gr. each to the Dominican St Johannes church, the Franciscan St Catherine's church, the Cistercian nuns, the churches of the Holy Spirit and St George.<sup>43</sup> In this way Cavolt covered the whole sacral topography of Riga, involving the town's most important religious institutions in *memoria*.

These donations to Riga's churches were explicitly to be employed to commemorate the testator (*Johans Kavolds zeyle*), his parents – her Brun Cavolt and Margarete (*zyner vaders und moder zeyle*) – and all his acquaintances in Riga (*aller der ghene daer he de bet van hevet gehat*).<sup>44</sup> Johan's father, Brun Cavolt (*Bruno Kovelde*) had been a city councillor in Riga and active as the city's envoy in the 1370s.<sup>45</sup> The remembrance of Cavolts in Riga was additionally important because the family belonged to the local ruling elite. The stipulation of his father's *memoria* also fostered the Rigan *Ratsmemoria*. So Cavolt kept his and his parents' *memoria* in Riga alive, in the town where they had lived and had friends and relatives.

Yet the centre of Johan Cavolt's remembrance was Bruges. Accepting the fact that he had been far away from his hometown for so long, Cavolt named the Carmelite friary in Bruges – the Hanseatic memorial space – as his place of burial (*to ligghende ten Carmers*).<sup>46</sup> After expressing his wishes for himself and his parents' remembrance in Riga, Cavolt made requests for remembrance in Bruges in parish churches, friaries and from the local poor. He allocated more resources to his *memoria* in Bruges than to that in Riga, donating £22 gr., in contrast to £17 gr. for the institutions of Riga. Remarkably, Cavolt did not stipulate remembrance of his parents in Bruges.

Cavolt's strategy of remembrance, both in his new and his old hometown, was part of a wider pattern. Other Livonian merchants who had moved

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<sup>42</sup> This issue in detail is discussed below.

<sup>43</sup> Rössner 2001, p. 456; HASTK Hanse IV.

<sup>44</sup> Rössner 2001, p. 457.

<sup>45</sup> Böthführ 1877, no. 210.

<sup>46</sup> Rössner 2000b, p. 90; Rössner 2001, p. 457.

overseas created similar remembrance within their hometowns.<sup>47</sup> One example is the late-fourteenth century Rigan merchant Richard Zemelbecker, who had moved to Lübeck where he traded with Flanders.<sup>48</sup> In contrast to Cavolt, Zemelbecker was not descended from a family of city councillors.<sup>49</sup> His last will, drafted on 1 January 1390 in Lübeck, directed 61% of the value of the testament (2178 Lübeck marks) to *memoria*.<sup>50</sup> Lübeck merchants usually spent around 30% of their estates for this purpose, but Zemelbecker, without wife or children, invested more.<sup>51</sup> 986 marks were to be spent in Lübeck, where he created numerous chantries, and a smaller sum – 284 marks to engender his *memoria* in Riga.<sup>52</sup>

Like Johan Cavolt, Zemelbecker stipulated remembrance of his parents in their native community.<sup>53</sup> 100 Lübeck marks were to be spent on *memoria* for himself and his parents (*mei et meorum parentum*) in the Rigan parish of St Jacob, and all its priests were to receive a stipend. In addition, a perpetual rent for wine and offerings (*per perpetuis redditibus oparandis ad uini et oblatas*) was to be acquired.<sup>54</sup> An additional 34 marks were to be spent on a light (*ad lumen ardens*) for the Corpus Christi altar in St Jacob's church, supplementing the liturgical *memoria* celebrated there.

Zemelbecker also made donations to all the main churches and monasteries of Riga: 10 marks to support the fabric (*ad structuram*) of St Jacob, the cathedral and St Peter; and 10 marks each for the Cistercian nuns (*ad monialibus*), the Dominicans, the Franciscans (*fratribus predicatoribus et fratribus minoribus*), and the beguines by St Peter (*begginis apud sanctum Petrum*).<sup>55</sup> He also allocated 10 marks for the inhabitants of the two hospitals of St George and Holy Spirit, and 100 marks to be distributed to the poor in Riga (*domesticis pauperibus et aliis pauperibus in Ryga*).<sup>56</sup> By making bequests to all the principal ecclesiastical institutions in Riga, Zemelbecker sought to involve the whole community of his native town in his *memoria*.

<sup>47</sup> Asmussen 1999, p. 92.

<sup>48</sup> Asmussen 1999, p. 92; Asmussen 2000, p. 301.

<sup>49</sup> Asmussen 1999, p. 92.

<sup>50</sup> AHL Zemelbecker; Asmussen 1999, p. 238.

<sup>51</sup> Asmussen 1999, p. 237–238.

<sup>52</sup> Asmussen 1999, p. 238.

<sup>53</sup> The memorial chantries, which Zemelbecker founded in Lübeck were meant only to commemorate his own soul (*salute anime mee*). Asmussen 1999, p. 239; AHL Zemelbecker.

<sup>54</sup> AHL Zemelbecker.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> [...] *leprosorium apud sancti Georgium in Ryga et infirmis hominibus in domo Sancti Spiriti* [...], AHL Zemelbecker.

Many Livonians who had moved to Lübeck and were commercially active there also expressed a wish to be remembered in their Livonian hometowns in their wills.<sup>57</sup> For example, in 1361 in Lübeck, Johan van der Waghe, who most likely hailed from Livonia, made bequests to the churches and hospitals in Reval (Holy Spirit and St George) and Dorpat (Holy Spirit and St George).<sup>58</sup> Bertold Russenberg, also with roots in Livonia, made a large bequest of 200 Riga marks for the poor in Dorpat (*ad usus pauperum*) in his last will (1364), and a smaller one for the churches and friaries in Dorpat and Reval. He also willed smaller amounts to the three churches in Dorpat (*ecclesie B. Marie in Darbato, S. Johanni, S. Katarine*) and the two hospitals there, in addition to the Dominicans and the Cistercian nuns in Reval (*cantantibus dominabus in Revalia*).<sup>59</sup>

These examples, which show how the Livonian merchants residing in Bruges and Lübeck created their *memoria* in their hometowns, are not fully representative. The wills of Johan Cavolt and Richard Zemelbecker show how the merchants making wills attempted to maintain their bonds with their communities of origin, wishing to be perpetually commemorated there. However, there were also Livonian merchants who in their wills no longer expressed a desire to maintain bonds with their native communities.

### ***Memoria* and identity: Jan Durcop and his remembrance**

*Memoria* can serve as an indicator of a merchant's relationship with his past, family, and native community. Although we can discern a tendency to divide *memoria* between one's town of origin and one's (later) place of settlement, not all merchants who left Livonia for Lübeck or Bruges stipulated a posthumous *memoria* in their Livonian hometowns. The absence of *memoria* in the hometown may reflect tensions between the individual abroad and the family in the hometown. Long years of separation from the native environment could have resulted in alienation from the family and the community or changed a merchant's sense of identity.

Such alienation is evident in the case of the Rigan merchant Jan Durcop (*Durcoop, Diercoop, Duercoop*) who died in Bruges in 1495.<sup>60</sup> Durcop's family had belonged to the political and economic elite of Riga for several

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<sup>57</sup> Poeck 1991, p. 211.

<sup>58</sup> Von Brandt 1973a, no. 874; Asmussen 1999, p. 92.

<sup>59</sup> Poeck 1991, p. 206, 211.

<sup>60</sup> Rössner 2001, no. 84, p. 321.

generations (*Ratsfamilie*)<sup>61</sup> by the time he arrived in Bruges in the 1450s and began trading in furs. There he represented the Livonian merchants and was eight times the leader of the Hanseatic merchant community in Bruges.<sup>62</sup> Shortly before his death, Durcop re-wrote his will, revising an already existing one which has not survived.<sup>63</sup> Durcop's will focuses on his plans for *memoria*. It clearly shows how the testator imagined his remembrance after death and thus it provides us with an insight into his identity.

Durcop began his will by identifying himself as a member of the Hanseatic community (*coopman [...] natie van Oosterlinghen*).<sup>64</sup> Yet he did not request his burial and remembrance to take place in the Carmelite friary – the commemorative centre for Hanseatics in Bruges<sup>65</sup> – choosing instead 'his parish church of St Giles' (*van sinte Gillis zijne prochiekerke*).<sup>66</sup> This is one of several ways in which Durcop's approach to *memoria* differed from that of other Hanseatics in Bruges.

In a will written, not in Middle Low German – the language of the Hanseatics – but in Middle Flemish, Durcop stipulated that his *memoria* would be limited to Bruges exclusively. He created a foundation at Sint Gillis to ensure regular liturgical commemoration to be performed close to his tomb in the northern aisle of the church.<sup>67</sup> Durcop also arranged an annual commemoration of his death (*jaerghetijde*), with a vigil and a memorial mass (*messe van requiem*) in St Giles with a 'full choir' (*vulle chore*).<sup>68</sup> Commemoration was to be accomplished by burning lights, which were to be placed at his grave on the mass days and feasts of chosen saints.<sup>69</sup> He donated money to several commemorators in Bruges, including the poor (*elcker aermen menssche*), and made smaller donations to the local churches, friaries, nunneries, hospitals,

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<sup>61</sup> Jan Durcop was son of the city councillor Godeke Durkop, brother of the Rigan city councillor Cord Durkop. Altogether seven Durcops served as the councillors in Riga, see Böthführ 1877, no. 208, 227, 233, 298, 361, 436, 449; HUB 11, no. 879; on the political elites in the Livonian cities, see Czaja 2005.

<sup>62</sup> Rössner 2001, p. 129.

<sup>63</sup> HUB 11, no. 821, p. 530.

<sup>64</sup> HUB 11, no. 821, p. 530.

<sup>65</sup> Rössner 2001, p. 241; Poeck 1991, p. 178.

<sup>66</sup> HUB 11, no. 821, p. 530.

<sup>67</sup> HUB 11, no. 821; Rössner 2001, p. 138–139.

<sup>68</sup> HUB 11, no. 807, 520; Rössner 2001, p. 138.

<sup>69</sup> HUB 11, no. 821, p. 531.

even a madhouse (*dulhuus*) and a prison (*donckercamere*).<sup>70</sup> In addition, he arranged payment to the priests of St Giles for prayers for his soul (*over zijn ziele bidden*).<sup>71</sup>

Riga, Durcop's hometown and the place where his family had held political and economic power for generations, is not mentioned at all.<sup>72</sup> Durcop transferred his family's *memoria* from Riga to Bruges, requesting remembrance not only for himself, but for his father and mother and kin (*zijnder ziele, zijnds vaders ende moederen ende alle andere zine vrienden zielen*) in the parish of St Giles.<sup>73</sup> His father, the city councillor Godeke Durcop had already died in Riga (before 1442)<sup>74</sup> and supposedly had been buried in one of the city's churches. Also Jan's brother Cord, a city councillor as well, had died (†1472) and was buried in Riga cathedral.<sup>75</sup> Jan's wishes contrast with the actions of the previously mentioned Rigan merchants, Richard Zemelbecker and Johan Cavolt, who had kept the remembrance of their parents and families exclusively in Riga, and not in Bruges or Lübeck, where they lived.<sup>76</sup> Durcop's parents and family (*vrienden*), who had in fact resided in Riga, were, by way of *memoria*, made to be present in the Bruges, the city where Jan Durcop had been active for 40 years.

It seems that Jan Durcop was well integrated in Bruges.<sup>77</sup> He had a house, which set him apart from other Hanseatic merchants, who lived in hostels provided for foreigners.<sup>78</sup> Durcop was even a churchwarden of Sint Gillis and this office offered opportunities for further integration.<sup>79</sup> More significantly,

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<sup>70</sup> 'van onser vrouwen in Brugghe 10s. groten. Item der kerke van sinte Salvatoirs aldar ooc 10s. groote. Item den zusters in de Gansstrate 10s. grote. Item den yusters ten Castaengenboome 5s. grote. Item den Bonenfanten tsint Jacobs in Brugghe 5s. grote. Item den dullen int dulhuus in Brugghe 5s. grote. Item den ghevanghene in de donckercamere in Brugghe ooc 5s. grote. Item den broders van den observanten buuten Brugghe 10s. grote. Item den graeuwen zusters in Ezelstrate 5s. grote. Item de Carmelijnen biij den Vlaminckdam 10s. grote. Item der zuster Lauwerentie clusenersse ten Bogarde in Brugghe 5s. grote. Item den sellebroeders in sinte Kathelijnestrate 10s. grote. Item die van sinte Godelieven twee ponden grooten. Item den zusters Bethanien in Brugghe 10s. grote.' HUB 11, no. 821.

<sup>71</sup> HUB 11, no. 821, p. 533; Rössner 2001, p. 142–143.

<sup>72</sup> I am grateful to Rūta Brusbārde, PhD candidate at the Kiel University, who helped to reveal family ties of Jan Durcop in Riga.

<sup>73</sup> The names of his mother and father – Godeke and Margarethe – do not appear within the testament. HUB 11, no. 807, p. 520, no. 879; Napiersky 1888, EB I, no. 796.

<sup>74</sup> Napiersky 1888, EB I, no. 796.

<sup>75</sup> Cord Durcop's (II) tombstone had an inscription: 'Anno M CCCC LXXII in deme d.....te kiliani do... Kort Durkop.' NKMP IC, Nr. 6, no. 49; Böhthführ 1877, no. 208.

<sup>76</sup> HUB 5, no. 1087, p. 565; Rössner 2001, p. 456–457; AHL Zemelbecker.

<sup>77</sup> Rössner 2001, p. 241.

<sup>78</sup> On the hostels for the Hanseatics in Bruges, see Greve 1994.

<sup>79</sup> Rössner 2001, p. 180, 241.

he was married to a local woman named Elysabeth Walvis, had a son named Gossin, and was member of local confraternities.<sup>80</sup> Nevertheless, Durcop never became a citizen of Bruges, nor did he break his ties with the Hanseatic *kontor* there.<sup>81</sup> Indeed, he made large bequests to the officials of the Bruges *kontor* in his will.<sup>82</sup>

Jan Durcop not only ignored Riga in his *memoria*, but also bequeathed his wealth to his family in Bruges, leaving out his Rigan kin. This alarmed other Hanseatic merchants there, who saw in this a violation of their privileges and a threat to their autonomy, which was predicated on keeping a certain distance from local society.<sup>83</sup> Durcop's family in Riga also protested vigorously, claiming to have rights to the inheritance.<sup>84</sup> Jan Durcop's choice of *memoria* seems to be strategic and not coincidental.

Jan Durcop was not the only merchant from Livonia who refrained from making bequests to institutions in his hometown. Gerd Lentzendijck, who was born in Soest but later moved to Dorpat where he became a burgher, drafted his will in Flanders in 1439.<sup>85</sup> Like Durcop, Lentzendijck had been commercially active in Flanders for several decades, particularly in Bruges, where he owned two houses and where he died in 1439/40.<sup>86</sup> In his will Lentzendijck made some bequests to friends and relatives in Livonia, but concentrated his *memoria* in Bruges, donating money to numerous local churches and monasteries.<sup>87</sup>

The wills and memorial provisions of both Gerd Lentzendijck and Jan Durcop demonstrate the loss of ties with their native towns, Riga and Dorpat respectively. In Jan Durcop's case this alienation is even more explicit. At the time when Durcop drafted the will, his father and probably also his siblings in Riga were already dead.<sup>88</sup> Durcop's *memoria* was rooted in Bruges, and it expressed the remembrance of a Hanseatic merchant in Bruges, who had lost his regional identity. After 40 years spent in Bruges, Jan Durcop no longer considered himself a burgher of Riga anymore. His *memoria* also testifies to this apparent loss of affinity. What is, however, unclear is how attached Durcop was to the Hanseatic community, which is only briefly mentioned in his will.

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<sup>80</sup> Rössner 2001, p. 122, 320–321, 322.

<sup>81</sup> Rössner 2001, p. 122.

<sup>82</sup> HUB 11, no. 807.

<sup>83</sup> HUB 11, no. 947; Rössner 2001, p. 116, 322.

<sup>84</sup> HUB 11, no. 879.

<sup>85</sup> Rössner 2001, p. 353–354; HUB 8, no. 434.

<sup>86</sup> Rössner 2001, p. 353–354.

<sup>87</sup> HUB 8, no. 434.

<sup>88</sup> Bøthführ 1877, no. 361.

## The Veckinchusen family and its memorial practices

Maurice Halbwachs has pointed out that remembrance of the dead “allowed the family the chance to reaffirm its bonds, to commune periodically with the memory of departed kin, and to reaffirm its sense of unity and continuity.”<sup>89</sup> This kind of reaffirmation of familial bonds was even more essential for Hanseatic merchant families, which were often separated by vast distances, and testified to the danger of mutual oblivion and loss of emotional ties, which despite the separation were important for sustaining the family as a group.

Dispersal of family members over vast distances was essential for business, because it enabled the creation of effective networks based on kinship, with representatives situated in important Hanseatic commercial centres.<sup>90</sup> Family merchant networks had numerous advantages: they were based on familiarity and trust, the ability to place members in strategic locations and inner control.<sup>91</sup> In order for these networks to function, family ties and family identity were crucial. The death of a family member entailed both the loss of a relative and of a business partner. The commemoration of family members helped sustain the identity of a merchant family.<sup>92</sup> Actually, late medieval merchant families used the liturgical *memoria*, and memorial foundations in particular, to foster their social aspirations to ‘nobility’. The best example for such use of *memoria* is the best known merchant family, the Fuggers from Augsburg.<sup>93</sup>

How were these memories and identities sustained when family members died and were buried within the Hanse’s ambit? To what extent was *memoria* sustainable at all in such circumstances? How did families organize their *memoria* of individuals when most of their members had permanently left the family’s city of origin, which no longer played an important role in its business activities? Did such networks have commemorative centres?

The family network of Veckinchusen family offers a good example of the place of *memoria* in a social network defined by kinship, the demands of trade, and conditioned by distance between the family members. Hildebrand Veckinchusen (c. 1365–1426) is one of the best researched Hanseatic merchants.<sup>94</sup> Both his correspondence, amounting to several hundred letters, and his merchant

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<sup>89</sup> Halbwachs 1992, p. 65.

<sup>90</sup> Jahnke 2010, p. 194.

<sup>91</sup> Jahnke 2010, p. 198–199.

<sup>92</sup> Oexle 1983, p. 27; Maschke 1980, p. 15.

<sup>93</sup> Oexle 1998, p. 341–356.

<sup>94</sup> On Hildebrand Veckinchusen, see Stieda 1921; Irsigler 1985; Afflerbach 1991; Noodt 2003, p. 41–74; Seifert 2000, p. 45–53; Böcker 1999, p. 143–152.

account books have been edited.<sup>95</sup> These sources shed light not only on the social history of the whole Veckinchusen family, but also on late medieval Hanseatic mercantile life.

The Veckinchusens utilized the advantages and possibilities offered by the Hanse to the full, yet they remained closely bound to Livonia. Of Westphalian descent, by the mid-fourteenth century family members were present in numerous Livonian towns.<sup>96</sup> The first Veckinchusen mentioned in Livonia was Bertoldus Veckinchusen (*Vickynchusen*) in Reval; he was a city councillor and a burgomaster between 1342 and 1353.<sup>97</sup> Series (*Zeries*) Veckinchusen, was a city councillor in Dorpat in the 1360s and one Rotger Veckinchusen (*Vockinchusen*) is mentioned in Reval in 1383.<sup>98</sup> The Veckinchusens belonged to the political and economic elites of the Livonian towns. By the fifteenth century they had developed a broad network based on ties of kinship along the main Hanseatic trading route from the Baltic to Bruges.<sup>99</sup>

The branch of Veckinchusens to which Hildebrand and his siblings belonged, originated in the Livonian city of Dorpat.<sup>100</sup> Series Veckinchusen was Dorpat's city councillor and father of a large family: the brothers Hildebrand, Caesar, Hans, Ludwig, Gottschalk, and Sivert and their sisters Dedeken, Drude (Gertrud), Schweneke and Rixe.<sup>101</sup> Most of these siblings left Dorpat. Only Ludwig, a priest, and one sister, Dedeken, married to Hildebrand van dem Bokel, remained in the city.<sup>102</sup> Caesar Veckinchusen was a city councillor in Riga from 1385 and a burgomaster there from 1402 to 1408, while Hans lived in Reval.<sup>103</sup> Sivert Veckinchusen (c. 1365–1433) steered the family business,

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<sup>95</sup> Hildebrand Veckinchusen's correspondence had survived in the City Archives of Tallinn and it is published by Wilhem Stieda, see Stieda 1921; Veckinchusen's account books also have been edited, see Lesnikov 1973 (Lesnikov/Stark 2013); on Veckinchusen's letters, see Schweichel 2001, p. 341–342.

<sup>96</sup> Stieda 1921, p. IX; Bunge, Rathslinie, p. 138; Seifert 2000, p. 46.

<sup>97</sup> Stieda 1921, p. IX.

<sup>98</sup> LUB 6, no. 2895; Stieda 1921, p. X.

<sup>99</sup> Noodt 2003, 55; on kinship based networks, see Plakans 1984, p. 217–240.

<sup>100</sup> Although Hildebrand Veckinchusen spent some time in Dortmund, he was most likely was born in Livonian Dropat. Still, there is a tradition in the research that considers Dortmund or Radevormwald as a place of origin of Veckinchusen brothers. Noodt 2003, p. 54; Asmussen 2000, p. 299.

<sup>101</sup> Rixe is considered to be part of this family, however, her name does not appear in a charter that divided their father's property among the siblings. Heckmann 1995, no. 57; Seifert 2000, p. 47; Noodt 2003, p. 54.

<sup>102</sup> Irsigler 1985, p. 81.

<sup>103</sup> Böhthführ 1877, no. 224; Irsigler 1985, p. 81.

moving first to Bruges, later to Lübeck, then to Cologne and back to Lübeck.<sup>104</sup> Hildebrand himself also left Dorpat, spending some time in Dortmund during his youth, and then moving on to Lübeck and Bruges.<sup>105</sup>

Although there is an abundance of source material relating to Hildebrand Veckinchusen, little is known of his commemorative plans, since his will has not survived, and evidence about only one foundation, which he made with his wife in 1406, is known.<sup>106</sup> The wills of Hildebrand's brothers – Ludwig and Sivert – in addition to a testament that of relative, Engelbrecht Veckinchusen of 1434, reveal more about what spaces the Veckinchusens chose as centres for their own *memoria* and for the remembrance of their family.<sup>107</sup>

The Veckinchusen brothers' wills were drawn up within four days of one another; Sivert on 9 May and Ludwig on 13 May 1406.<sup>108</sup> In his testament Ludwig describes himself as *propst* – a provost.<sup>109</sup> Yet his exact vocation when drawing up the will remains unclear, though it shows Dorpat to have been his native town.<sup>110</sup> Ludwig expressed a wish to be buried (*keyse ik meyne graft*) in the cemetery of a cathedral (*op den domes wrythofe*), presumably the one in Dorpat, with a tombstone on his grave.<sup>111</sup> At the same time he specified that were he to die in Lübeck, he should be commemorated in the church of Our Lady with a sung vigil and a commemorative mass (*my I vigilien nasynge unde I seylemysse*). Were he to die in Lübeck, the local bishop (*byscop*) was to be involved in his remembrance. The rest of Ludwig's remembrance was to be performed in Livonia. His brothers Hildebrand and Sivert were to donate a new missal (*nye myssebok*) in his remembrance for 'a poor church' (*ene arme kerke*) preferably in his chapel (*in myne capellen*) in the church of Our Lady in Dorpat, where Ludwig most likely served as a chantry priest.<sup>112</sup> Ludwig also requested a donation to the unspecified poor (*husarmen*) of 2 Lübeck marks.

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<sup>104</sup> Noodt 2003, p. 55–56; Irsigler 1985, p. 80, 84, 85; Seifert 2000, p. 47, 49–50; Asmussen 1999, p. 801–810.

<sup>105</sup> Hammel-Kiesow 1993, p. 129–132; Asmussen 1999, p. 791–801.

<sup>106</sup> Heckmann 1995, no. 77.

<sup>107</sup> Testaments of Sivert, Ludwig, Engelbrecht and Hildebrand (II) Veckinchusens have survived, see Stieda 1921, no. 9, no. 10, no. 416, no. 424.

<sup>108</sup> In case of Ludwig Veckinchusen it is not known where exactly his testament was created. Ibid., Stieda 1921, no. 9, no.10.

<sup>109</sup> Ludwig's name also cannot be found among the names of the Livonian clergymen. See Stieda 1921, no. 10, p. 8; Arbusow 1902, p. 53.

<sup>110</sup> It has been speculated that at the time Ludwig, when he created his testament, he was resident in Riga or Dorpat, see Stieda 1921, p. xii.

<sup>111</sup> Stieda 1921, no. 10, p. 8.

<sup>112</sup> Stieda 1921, no. 10, p. 8.

Ludwig also wished to bequeath small sums and objects to numerous individuals in Dorpat and elsewhere; relatives, fellow clergymen, and acquaintances. He bequeathed to the priest Johan Swager a gray cloak and a hood; to Wulfard Scaden a compendium of theological works (*Theologica veritate*), and to his brother Johan Scaden two books, one a collection of canon law written on parchment (*bock over canones, op perment gescreven*).<sup>113</sup> He likewise bequeathed one Lübeck mark to *her* Hinric Holthousen, a chantry priest in the church of Our Lady, where he wished to have his *memoria*, should he die in that city.<sup>114</sup> Although no specific intentions were expressed with these small bequests, they were clearly also memorial donations intended to sustain Ludwig Veckinchusen's remembrance in Dorpat, in Livonia and the other places where he had been active.<sup>115</sup>

If Ludwig Veckinchusen saw Dorpat as the central location for his future remembrance, his brother Sivert positioned his *memoria* differently. Sivert was a merchant, and he led the family network.<sup>116</sup> The will he made in Lübeck shows a similar memorial strategy. Sivert intended to foster the *memoria* of his brother, promising that, should Ludwig predecease him, he would create a perpetual chantry (*eyner ewigen vicarien*) in the place where Ludwig would have wished it to be (*dar he do levest hebben wil*).<sup>117</sup> The location of the *memoria*, as Ludwig's will shows, would most likely have been Dorpat.

Sivert Veckinchusen's will indicates that Lübeck was intended as centre for his own commemoration. He stipulated donations for the church of Our Lady in Lübeck and to other churches. He additionally bequeathed 20 Lübeck marks for the Carthusian monastery of Ahrensböök (*den carhuseren to der Arnesboken*) near Lübeck, for the purpose of his remembrance (*to ener ewighen dechnisse miner sele*). Sivert also involved his sister Rixe, a nun in Zarrentin, near Ratzeburg (*clostervrouwen to Cerntyn*), in his *memoria*, asking for her prayers. Like his brother Ludwig, Sivert saw Dorpat as an important space for his *memoria*. Accordingly, for remembrance of his soul (*miner selen to guder dechnisse*) he bequeathed 10 marks to each of three churches in Dorpat – the chapel of St Anna in the parish church (*sunte Johannis*), Our Lady's church (*unser vrouwen kerken*) and to the Dominican church (*prediker broderen*).<sup>118</sup> He chose commemoration in the churches of Dorpat which contained pre-existing commemorative links to his family.

<sup>113</sup> Stieda 1921, p. 9.

<sup>114</sup> Stieda 1921, no. 10, p. 9.

<sup>115</sup> On objects as memorial donations, see Maschke 1980, p. 15.

<sup>116</sup> Stieda 1921, no. 9, p. 6.

<sup>117</sup> Stieda 1921, no. 9, p. 6.

<sup>118</sup> Stieda 1921, no. 9, p. 6.

Dorpat remained the commemorative space for the next generation of Veckinchusens, although they had not been born there. Engelbrecht Veckinchusen, probably related to Sivert,<sup>119</sup> drew his will up in 1434. He made most of the commemorative bequests to churches in Lübeck, where he was a burgher, and to north German monasteries.<sup>120</sup> But Engelbrecht, like Sivert before him, also made donations to Dorpat's friaries and nunneries. 100 Lübeck marks went to the Dominicans for the fabric of their church (*to erem buwe*), and one mark to each ordained friar in return for prayers (*God truwelken vor my bidden*).<sup>121</sup> Engelbrecht also involved the Cistercian nuns of Dorpat (*vrowenklostere to Darpete*) in his *memoria*, with 10 marks for the fabric of the church, 8 shillings for each professed nun (*gekroneden*) and 4 shillings for each unprofessed nun (*unghekroneden*) in return for their prayers.<sup>122</sup> Engelbrecht's brother Hildebrand (II) had been a city councillor in Dorpat at the time when Engelbrecht made the will and so he had another reason for creating remembrance there.<sup>123</sup>

The wills of Sivert, Ludwig, and Engelbrecht Veckinchusen were not much oriented towards the past; no *memoria* of parents was recorded in them. Sivert, Ludwig and Engelbrecht sought to create a future *memoria* for themselves, rather than a retrospective *memoria* for their family. Because of the family ties, Dorpat was the memorial space of the Veckinchusens. Ludwig's close bond with Dorpat is self-evident, since he served as a priest in the city which saw the rise of his family. His brother Sivert's memorial preferences were similar, showing that their origins lay in Dorpat or that they had at least adopted it as their hometown.<sup>124</sup>

Merchant *memoria* involved spaces beyond Lübeck and Dorpat, namely the locations where they had been active in the course of their lives.<sup>125</sup> For the Veckinchusens this was Flanders; in 1406 Hildebrand Veckinchusen and his wife Margarete made a donation to the Carthusian monastery in Ghent (*Vallisregalis*); in return which the two were to be included in the monastery's masses, prayers vigils and other good deeds in perpetuity.<sup>126</sup> Some twenty

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<sup>119</sup> Stieda and Asmussen have suggested that Sivert was not Engelbrecht's father. Stieda 1921, p. XIII–XIV; Asmussen 1999, p. 802; Irsigler 1973, p. 305.

<sup>120</sup> Stieda 1921, no. 416, p. 427.

<sup>121</sup> Stieda 1921, no. 416, p. 427.

<sup>122</sup> Stieda 1921, no. 416, p. 427.

<sup>123</sup> von Lemm 1950, p. 148.

<sup>124</sup> In contrast to this, for example, Georg Asmussen claims that the Veckinchusens originated from Westphalia, see Asmussen 2000, p. 299; Asmussen 1999, p. 791, 801.

<sup>125</sup> Asmussen 1999, p. 244.

<sup>126</sup> Heckmann 1995, no. 77; Rössner 2001, p. 430; Noodt 2003, p. 59.

years later, Conrad Visch, a city councillor of Riga and Hildebrand's brother-in-law and business partner, who had traded with Flanders, made memorial bequests to institutions in Flanders,<sup>127</sup> giving £ 5 gr. to the Carthusian monastery in Ghent (*karthuseren tho Gend*).<sup>128</sup> In the 1420s the Veckinchusen family continued to maintain its contacts with the Carthusians in Ghent. In the 1430s Lübeck merchant brothers Engelbrecht Veckinchusen and Hildebrand (II), stipulated in their wills commemoration (*in ere dechnisse nemen*) by the Carthusians of Ghent.<sup>129</sup>

The Veckinchusens' network linked the Hanseatic east (*kontor* in Novgorod and Livonia) and its west (Lübeck and Bruges). The *memoria* of this network took place in the city of their origin – Dorpat – as well as all the other towns where the Veckinchusens had been active: Lübeck, Bruges and other Flemish cities. Although by the early-fifteenth century the centre of this merchant network was no longer in Dorpat, but rather in Lübeck, Dorpat was still favoured by the Veckinchusens as a commemorative space. The donations of the Lübeck Veckinchusens in the 1430s demonstrate that even at some distance from Dorpat, the family still maintained its long-term *memoria* in Dorpat.

### Commemoration of those who had drowned at the sea

The sea not only divided people, but also connected them, as travel by sea was an effective form of transport in the Middle Ages.<sup>130</sup> Yet sea voyages were also perilous. Merchants, skippers and crewmen frequently failed to reach their destinations. The fate of the souls of those Hanseatic sailors and merchants who had drowned at sea exercised their comrades. Having no grave to serve as a site of commemoration, they depended on *memoria* delivered by their friends and partners. Special commemorative services for those who were lost at sea are described in our sources.

The Riga merchant resident in Bruges, Johan Cavolt, whose personal *memoria* I have already analysed, as drafted in his will of 1434, also requested remembrance for twenty five dead friends (*vrende*) and relatives (*maghe*), who 'had fallen over board' (*de over bart geworpen*) while at sea, sailors (*boosmans*) and skippers (*scipmans*).<sup>131</sup> Cavolt described them 'as children of good people' (*guder lude kindere*). He arranged for their *memoria* together

<sup>127</sup> Böhführ 1877, no. 236; Rössner 2001, p. 429.

<sup>128</sup> LUB 7, no. 372.

<sup>129</sup> Stieda 1921, no. 416, no. 424; Noodt 2003, p. 59.

<sup>130</sup> On medieval travel at sea, see Ohler 2010, p. 37–50.

<sup>131</sup> HASTK Hanse IV; published in Rössner 2001, p. 456; published partly in HUB 5, no. 1087.

with the souls of his parents in numerous churches in Riga and Bruges.<sup>132</sup> Cavolt's request, a charitable deed and commemoration of these anonymous men, was part of his family's *memoria*.

Johan Cavolt was concerned for the souls of individuals who were close and dear to him, yet as a merchant, who sent men off to sea and profited from their hazardous activities, he felt obliged to provide compensation if they died at sea. On 6 July 1476, Oleff Neselunck, a merchant from Königsberg, and the skipper Herman Wessel from Hamburg, appeared in front of Reval's city council and declared that they would pay 370 Riga marks for the remembrance for the deceased sailor Thewes Luttiken.<sup>133</sup> The ship, under the command of Wessel and with a cargo of Neselunck, had been underway from Königsberg when Thewes Luttiken had drowned (*uth deme schepe vordruncken was*) during a storm (*storme*). The merchant and skipper requested a sung vigil and soul mass (*eyne singende vigilie und zelemysse tor bogenknisse*) to be celebrated in St Olaf's church in Reval.<sup>134</sup> The record in the town register does not state the frequency of commemoration, but if all 370 marks were invested into the memorial foundation, this was surely meant to be a long-term enterprise. The death of Thewes Luttiken placed an obligation upon Wessel and Neselunck to commemorate the dead sailor; according to Hanseatic shipping customs, a ship's owner and captain were responsible for the crew and after death had to pay their wages.<sup>135</sup> In this case *memoria* served as an effective tool to compensate for loss of life and freed the merchant and the skipper at least from moral responsibility for Luttiken's death.<sup>136</sup>

The sailors, merchants and skippers who drowned at a sea, still received commemoration from their contemporaries. This was a charitable act to commemorate those who otherwise would have been completely forgotten. Johan Cavolt's request to commemorate twenty-five drowned friends and relatives, shows that drowning at sea was always a clear and present danger for sailors, skippers and merchants. Remembrance of the drowned seamen was also used to compensate for the loss of life.

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<sup>132</sup> Rössner 2001, p. 456–457.

<sup>133</sup> TLA Aa7, fol. 32.

<sup>134</sup> TLA Aa7, fol. 32.

<sup>135</sup> Friedland 1995, p. 261.

<sup>136</sup> For the role of *memoria* as a tool for reconciliation, see Poeck 1996, p. 113–136.

## Conclusion

The late medieval Hanse was not only a commercial network of merchants and their communities, but also a network of *memoria*. Remembrance bound Hanseatic merchants with their native communities and families. Hanseatic *memoria* operated not only within the Hanse, but outside of it, too, especially in the Hanseatic *kontore* of Bruges, Novgorod, Bergen and London. Livonian merchants played an active part in creating their *memoria* in these *kontore* of the Hanse, especially in Bruges.

*Memoria* reflects both emotional attachment and distancing from one's own social bonds and family roots. Most of the surviving wills drafted by the merchants from Livonia show that when arranging for remembrance they wished to be commemorated in their Livonian hometowns. The Rigan merchant Johan Cavolt made many memorial bequests to the churches and monasteries in Bruges, and also fostered his own and his parents' remembrance in his native town. The case of Richard Zemelbecker, who drafted his will in Lübeck, suggests that Hanseatic merchants sustained the *memoria* of their parents in their native communities. Although these merchants died abroad and were buried there, they still expressed a wish to be commemorated in their native communities.

Yet, the case of Jan Durcop – a Rigan who had gone to Bruges in his youth – shows that memorial choices can manifest clear unwillingness to associate oneself with one's native community. Although he belonged to Riga's *Ratsfamilie*, in his will Durcop founded his *memoria* wholly in Bruges, ignoring Riga and even leaving his family there no bequests. It can only be guessed what the reasons for such choices were. However, the absence of Durcop's *memoria* in Riga may reflect that his identity was no longer Rigan, but that of a Hanseatic merchant in Bruges.

Within the Hanse trade functioned through networks on the basis of kinship. As the example of the Veckinchusen family reveals, *memoria* played an important role in these networks. As the wills of Sivert and Ludwig Veckinchusens show, the *memoria* of them and apparently also the family was based in two places: in Lübeck, the network's centre, and in Dorpat, the Livonian town from which the Veckinchusens originated. Dorpat remained an important memorial space for future generations of the Veckinchusens, and during the 1430's some representatives of the family also made donations for remembrance in Dorpat.

The Hanse was a network of merchants and communities that criss-crossed the sea. During their sea travels many Hanseatic merchants, skippers and sailors lost their lives. Those who drowned at the sea could not receive proper burial, so friends and colleagues felt obliged to arrange some form of

commemoration. The Riga merchant Johan Cavolt stipulated in 1434 that not only his family was to be commemorated, but also those merchants, skippers and sailors who had drowned at the sea. Remembrance of the drowned sailors was an act of charity. As the *memoria* of a sailor Thewes Luttkien in Reval shows, remembrance of drowned sailors was also an obligation of skippers and merchants who had chartered a ship.

Did the memorial practices of the Livonian merchants, who foresaw their death abroad, differ from the other Hanseatics? In the most cases they did not. Yet what can be seen here is how memorial networks, connecting cities separated by almost 2000 kilometres, functioned or sometimes malfunctioned. The *memoria* separated by vast distances brought people together and after the death made them present in place where their mortal remains were not. However, sometimes, as the case of Jan Durcop shows, rifts that had occurred during life precluded ‘memorial repatriation’.

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HASStK Hanse IV – Historisches Archiv der Stadt Köln, Hanse IV, Nr. 58, Rapellarius de reyses ex parte mercatorum factis [...], 1430, Testament von Johan Cavolt.

NKMP IC – Nacionālā kultūras mantojuma pārvalde. Informācijas centrs, Rīga. Doma baznīcas un klostera ansamblis. Kapa plāksnes – apraksti, fotofiksācija. Nr. 6.

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