

## 2 Making of a Merchant

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### 2.1 In Memoriam Luetkens

On one of the grey walls of the magnificent *Kleines Zimmer* of the Hamburg city hall hangs a painting, a large three-quarter portrait of a man wearing a robe, a wig and a white ruff, gallantly dangling one of his hands over a chair. This portrait depicts the merchant Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens in his official attire as a senator and as a member of the *Commerz-Deputation* of the free imperial city of Hamburg in 1776.

The *Commerz-Deputation* was the advocacy group of the local merchants on the Hamburg city council and thus the predecessor of today's Hamburg chamber of commerce.<sup>1</sup> The sad truth about this portrait is, though, that hardly anyone visiting the city hall today will stop to look at it when walking through the *Kleine Zimmer* because hardly anyone still recognises this man. This fact reflects the level of knowledge that we have today about Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens. As a telling side note in this regard, in 2015 another portrait of Luetkens, an original copperplate engraving of the painting on display in the town hall, was on offer at an antiquarian bookshop for only 140 Euros. This portrait now hangs in the entrance area of my family home.<sup>2</sup> As a merchant and senator, Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens was therefore certainly no John Doe of history, especially not with regard to the history of Hamburg, yet still he fell into almost complete obscurity over the last centuries.<sup>3</sup>

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1 See Handelskammer Hamburg, *Handelskammer Hamburg*, 21-24, and 42-65. See Baasch, Ernst. *Die Handelskammer zu Hamburg. Band 1, 1665-1915*. Hamburg: Gräfe & Silem, 1915. See Handelskammer Hamburg, ed. *Wir handeln für Hamburg. 350 Jahre Handelskammer Hamburg*. Kiel/ Hamburg: Wachholtz Verlag, 2015, 28-65, chapters "1665-1712" and "1712-1792." See Reißmann, *Die hamburgische Kaufmannschaft*.

2 The same portrait can be found in Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg (SUB), Sonder-sammlungen, Portrait 22: L 94. A third version of this portrait hangs in the Kleine Zimmer of the historical town hall of Hamburg.

3 See for a short introduction "Luetkens (Nicolaus Gottlieb), 601-602." In *Lexikon der Hamburgischen Schriftsteller*, 598-602. See ibid. for biographies of other merchants and senators with the same name, however, coming from different families, such as Johann Heinrich Lütkens, Peter I. Lütkens, Hendrich (Heinrich) Luetkens. For information on these merchants see Weber, *Deutsche Kaufleute*, 211, 249, 260. See Voss, Peter. "Hendrich Luetkens, marchand allemand à Bordeaux (1691-

Figure 5: Portrait of Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens (1716-1788), engraved by Charles Townley, painted after a model by Rudolf Christian Schade, 1790.



Source: privately owned.

1722)." In *Présence de l'Allemagne à Bordeaux du siècle de Montaigne à la veille de la Seconde Guerre mondiale*, edited by Alain Ruiz, 31-45. Bordeaux: Presses Universitaires de Bordeaux, 1997.

Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens' daughter Cäcilia Ilsabe married the reputable merchant Johann Jakob Böhl. Their son was the famous merchant and consul Johann Nikolas Böhl von Faber. Luetkens' daughter Henriette married Heinrich Wilhelm von Schwartz. See Moldenhauer, Dirk. "Böhl von Faber, Johann Nikolas." In *Hamburgische Biografie*, vol. 5, edited by Franklin Kopitzsch and Dirk Brietzke, 56-57. Göttingen: Wallstein, 2010.

This book on the merchant Luetkens' establishment phase, his archive and his letters, will remedy this deficiency. It will free him from his shadowy existence, so that maybe in future some people will again stop at his portrait and recognise him or at least recognise in him a person from whose example we can learn a lot about Hamburg and its people in the past. Such a result would certainly be desirable because his example is telling especially about the group of people that once made Hamburg into the economic and cultural centre that it still is today: the merchants. These merchants that today's Hamburg still refers to with great pride as its forefathers did not only live during the time of the Hanseatic League but also and especially during the 18th century, and the fame and fortune that these merchants once brought to the city was not only the achievement of renowned merchants and large firms like the famous Voght, Sieveking, Godeffroy, Jenisch, Boué, Louis, Jencquel or Luis families, but it was also the accomplishment of the many other merchants whose names and stories have been swallowed by the tides of history.<sup>4</sup> This book therefore also opens up a new chapter in the history of Hamburg and its mercantile people. As must be clear though, this new chapter will of course not have the ability to rewrite the long history of Hamburg, but it adds a new story and component to it. It is a book about the establishment phase of a Hamburg merchant, about his letters, and about the ways and means of Hamburg's trade participation in the Atlantic market during the 18th century, a time when Hamburg merchants were often forced to find mercantile strategies and pursue practices that pushed the boundaries of what was legally permissible at the time.<sup>5</sup> The significance of this new story is in the end comparable to the significance of the Luetkens' portrait in the city hall. Of course, there are dozens of other portraits of other people hanging in the city hall, mostly men, unfortunately. Yet, only if we allow ourselves to know about the stories behind each and every person depicted in these portraits and therefore also allow us to get to know the manifold facets of mercantile life in the past, not only the ones we already know, including both the good and the bad, the clearly illuminated and

4 See Schramm, Percy Ernst. "Hamburger Kaufleute in der 2. Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts." *Zeitschrift für Firmengeschichte und Unternehmerbiographie* 4 (1957): 307-332. See Schramm, Percy Ernst. *Gewinn und Verlust. Die Geschichte der Hamburger Senatorenfamilien Jencquel und Luis (16. bis 19. Jahrhundert). Zwei Beispiele für den wirtschaftlichen und sozialen Wandel in Norddeutschland* Hamburg: Christians, 1969. See Schramm, Percy Ernst. *Neun Generationen*. See Ressel, Magnus. "Von der Hanse zur Hanseatischen Gemeinschaft. Die Entstehung der Konsulatsgemeinschaft von Bremen, Hamburg und Lübeck." *Hansische Geschichtsblätter* 130 (2012): 127-174. See Woelk, Susanne. *Der Fremde unter den Freunden. Biographische Studien zu Caspar von Vogth*. Hamburg: Weidmann, 2000. See Czech, Hans-Jörg, Kerstin Petermann, and Nicole Tiedemann-Bischop, eds. *Caspar Voght (1752-1839). Weltbürger vor den Toren Hamburgs*. Petersberg: Imhof, 2014. See Brietzke, Dirk. "Sieveking, Georg Heinrich." *Neue Deutsche Biographie* 24 (2010): 387-389. See in general Brietzke, Dirk, and Franklin Kopitzsch, eds. *Hamburgische Biografie. Personenlexikon*. 6 volumes. Göttingen: Wallstein, 2001-2012.

5 Regarding the history of Hamburg during the Early Modern Period see Kopitzsch, Franklin. *Grundzüge einer Sozialgeschichte der Aufklärung in Hamburg und Altona*. 2 vol. Hamburg: Hans Christians Verlag, 1982 (2. edition, 1990). See Steiger, Johann Anselm, and Sandra Richter, eds. *Hamburg. Eine Metropolregion zwischen Früher Neuzeit und Aufklärung*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2012. See Kopitzsch, Franklin, and Daniel Tilgner, eds. *Hamburg-Lexikon*. Hamburg: Zeise, 1998 (4. edition 2010). See Handelskammer, *Handelskammer Hamburg*, 28-65, chapters "1665-1712" and "1712-1792." See Herzog, Arno. *Das alte Hamburg: 1500-1848/49. Vergleiche, Beziehungen*. Berlin: Reimer, 1989.

the hidden, we eventually arrive at the bigger picture, which Hamburg today refers to as its mercantile history.<sup>6</sup> Each and every person portrayed in the town hall and everyone else who once lived and worked in Hamburg but who did not have the honour of being portrayed, once had his or her share in the long history of this city, and that also means that each and every one of these people would deserve to have a book written about them. The Luetkens archive provides the unique opportunity to learn in detail about a merchant and his early career during the 18th century as a representative example of an Early Modern merchant's life. This example is accompanied by an abundance of further stories and voices of dozens of other merchants living in Hamburg, France, Spain, England, the Netherlands and in other parts of Europe, known and unknown, whose letters have also survived in the archive. Since these unique "sources offer us the possibility of reconstructing not only indistinct masses but also individual personalities, it would be absurd to ignore it", to borrow the words of pioneer microhistorian Carlo Ginzburg.<sup>7</sup>

In the first part of this chapter, I will compile all the information from other types of sources that I found relating to the merchant Luetkens, apart from those found within the Luetkens archive. There are several other traces and puzzle pieces that this man has left behind apart from his portrait in the town hall and his archive. However, these traces today mostly appear without any obvious reference to one another. They have survived in a rather dispersed manner and therefore have attracted only little attention. Furthermore, these traces almost exclusively refer to Luetkens' later life as a well-established merchant and senator and thus as an already highly-respected member of the Hamburg community and senate. These traces present us with his later legacy and the achievements of his later years in life. Little, however, do we learn from these sources about the long and stony path that had led him there. Nonetheless, these sources at least provide us with the certainty, which is crucial for this book, that Luetkens' early life eventually led him to a successful career and life afterwards. In the second part of this chapter, I will hence complete and refine the picture of him, his person and career, filling in the missing gaps in his biography by drawing on the valuable information from the Luetkens archive and from the court records of the High Court of Admiralty relating to the case of the captured ships *Hope* and *Post van Hamburg*. During these court hearings, a lot of information was requested in writing from the Hamburg authorities about Luetkens and his trade and gathered by the court in London. These records are a gold mine with regard to their informative value about the Hamburg merchant. The information from these records represents mostly first-hand knowledge from testimonies, attestations and written statements. As must be clear, though, each and every one of

6 See Handelskammer Hamburg, *Handelskammer Hamburg*, 208-242. This history must also include Hamburg's involvement in slave trade and colonialism. See Zimmerer, Jürgen, and Kim Sebastian Todzi, eds. *Hamburg: Tor zur kolonialen Welt. Erinnerungsorte der (post-)kolonialen Globalisierung*. Göttingen: Wallstein 2021. See Husen, Sebastian. "Schimmelmann, Carl Heinrich." In *Hamburgische Biografie 2*, edited by Franklin Kopitzsch and Dirk Brietzke, 370-372. Göttingen: Wallstein, 2003. See Brahm, Felix and Eve Rosenhaft, eds. *Slavery Hinterland. Transatlantic Slavery and Continental Europe, 1680-1850*. Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2016. See <https://lehre.dsm.museum/heinrich-carl-von-schimmelmann-von-sozialem-aufstieg-und-menschlichen-schicksalen>, accessed September 3, 2020.

7 Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms*, 17.

the court statements once also served the purpose of having a positive impact on the outcome of the court case and was therefore biased. Bias notwithstanding, some of the information from the court records will still pass the test of providing reliable information about the Hamburg merchant. Following this section, in the third part of the chapter I will outline the requirements and demands of an 18th century mercantile establishment phase and Luetkens' specific situation when leaving Hamburg for France.

*Figure 6: Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens' later Bel Etage in his merchant house in the Katharinenstraße Hamburg as displayed today in the Hamburg Museum of Arts and Crafts, Period Room "Louis-Seize-Room."*



Source: By courtesy of the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg, photo: Roman Raacke.

The impressive second trace that Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens left in today's Hamburg apart from his portrait can be found in the *Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe* near Hamburg's main train station. There we can find on the second floor, and advertised as a historical "Period Room", the *Bel Etage*, Luetkens' splendid reception and display room of his merchant house in the Katharinenstraße, Huxter Fleet, in Hamburg.<sup>8</sup> This *Bel Etage*, which was completed in the French *Louis Seize Style* that was popular and very expensive at the time, was so well-known and prominent in Hamburg in the 18th and also the 19th century that later even the young composer Johannes Brahms gave a private

<sup>8</sup> Period Room "Louis Seize Room", *Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe*, Hamburg, ca. 1775, Hamburg, Louis Seize style room with boiserie (Bordeaux) once installed in of the house at Katharinenstraße 17. See the chapter on Luetkens' marriage preparations. See "Louis Seize Raum": <https://www.mkg-hamburg.de/de/sammlung/sammlungen/period-rooms/louis-seize-raum.html>, accessed February 06, 2019.

concert in this hall. This happened after the time Luetkens had owned it, presumably while the house was inhabited by the Jencquel family, who had bought the house from Luetkens.<sup>9</sup>

The period room as it is displayed in Hamburg today still provides a fairly precise image of the Bel Etage as Luetkens must have used it at the time when he was a Hamburg senator, as original architectural drawings from 1778 prove, which can be found in reproductions of the original MK&G images in the holdings of the Hamburg state archive.<sup>10</sup> As we know from the Luetkens archive, however, and as will be discussed in detail in the last two chapters of the book, Luetkens moved into this house already in 1745 on his return from France. In fact, his trading partners Hertzer & von Bobartt had already rented this residence in the "Huxter Fleet" area for him nine months prior to Luetkens' return. The boiserie for the Bel Etage was bought later, in the 1770s. However, even the furnishing of his first merchant house in Hamburg was already very precious and splendid as we will learn from the letters exchanged between him and his brother which deal with the orders that his future wife, Ilsabe Engelhard, had placed beforehand, including furniture, mirrors, candles, tableware. Many of these items Luetkens would keep until the time when the Bel Etage, too, arrived at his house in the Katharinenstraße.

The next items that we can find regarding Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens are smaller in size but nonetheless very valuable. Still being offered by auctioneers today at the price of 12,500 euros, we find one silver and one golden Portugaleser medal, showing Luetkens' profile or mentioning Luetkens' name or initials and showing his family coat of arms. Such commemorative medals were coined and donated in the past on special occasions like jubilees or senator consecrations. In Luetkens' case, the first medal was coined and donated by himself in 1763 on the occasion of the peace agreements of Versailles and Hubertusburg. The other medal was coined after his death to honour his memory and his achievements and the merits he brought to Hamburg. These commemorative medals again show us the high appreciation of his person in Hamburg especially during his later life.<sup>11</sup>

In order to clarify the question of what these merits that the medals refer to consisted of exactly, however, we have to consult further sources other than the medals and here we can make a find if we also extend our search to other printed sources.

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9 Ibid.

10 Katharinenstraße 17 Festsaal von 1778, Staatsarchiv Hamburg, Hbg.-Altstadt 102, Stich, MK&G Repro C13, DA 3504.

Wohnhaus Catharinenstraße 17 Jenisch-Haus, Giebelansicht [...] 1738, Staatsarchiv Hamburg, Hbg.-Altstadt 102 Katharinenstr. 17, Jenischhaus, Aufriss von 1738, MK&G Repro C10, DA 3544 P 1232 DA.

11 No. 10 Denkmünze auf den Senator Nic. Gottlieb Lütkens. This commemorative medal is listed in *Hamburgische Münzen und Medaillen*, edited by Ausschusse des Vereins für Hamburgische Geschichte und redacted by O.C. Gaedechens, vol. 1, Hamburg: Meissner, 1850, 245-246. 417 Goldener Bankportugaleser zu 10 Dukaten 1763, von Oexlein, Gaedechens 1904. Geschichte in Gold 210, PiN 606 (Ag), Slg. 1660 (ag), Slg. Julis 2466, Fr.u.S. 4464. 49mm, 34, 77. Prachtexemplar. Fast Stempelglanz, 12.500,- WAG, Westfälische Auktionsgesellschaft für Münzen und Medaillen, Auktion 79, September 2017.

With regard to Luetkens, we can find three types of such printed sources in which his name appears. First, there is a printed article written by him and Johann Schuback in conjunction with a bank reform for which they together were substantially responsible in 1768. While Schuback, however, is mentioned and appreciated today as the author of this important article, as for instance in an anniversary book on 350 years of the *Handelskammer Hamburg*, Luetkens on the other hand has simply been forgotten and does not get mentioned even though he was the co-author of the article.<sup>12</sup> After its first edition of 1768, this article was reprinted again in 1791 after his death due to the article's importance for the Hamburg bank, or, as a respective contemporary statement put it, printed in the "Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung, Numero 322" from 1791, due to its "right and plausible arguments" with regard to the bank reform.<sup>13</sup> Secondly, there still exists a print of the contemporary speech that was delivered in Hamburg on the occasion of Luetkens' inauguration as a Hamburg senator on the 11th of January 1771. Alongside the dedication to Luetkens, however, the text of this 32-page-long speech given by Christian Ziegra mainly deals with the history of Hamburg and general character traits of Hamburg senators, "Die Eigenschaften Hamburger Ratsherren: in vier Abhandlungen erkläret".<sup>14</sup> More informative is the third kind of printed source material: four contemporary short biographies and obituaries of Luetkens in contemporary biographical dictionaries, and these sources again mainly refer to the article mentioned above and the corresponding reform as his main achievement.<sup>15</sup>

All four kinds of source material – the medals, the article, the inauguration speech and the biographies and obituaries – can be combined to illustrate his merits from a

12 See Handelskammer Hamburg, *Handelskammer Hamburg*, 62.

13 Luetkens, Nicolaus Gottlieb, and Johann Schuback. "An die sämtliche Herren Kaufleute, welche die gemäßigte Vorstellung und Bitte wegen Abänderung der bey der hiesigen Lehnbanco eingerissenen Missbräuche an die löbl. Deputation des Commerciis unterschrieben haben." In *Drey Schriften über Geld und Banken, besonders über die Hamburgische Bank. Zweyte Auflage*; edited by Hamburgischen Commerzdeputation. Hamburg: Treder, 1791. "Dieser Aufsatz war bereits im Jahr 1768 geschrieben, und im Druck erschienen, und wurde durch seine richtigen und einleuchtend dargestellten Gründe damals, nebst dem folgenden dritten Aufsatz [Schuback] die Hauptveranlassung zu der schon oben unter No. 39 erwähnten Zurückführung der Hamb. Bank auf feste und unabweichliche Grundsätze. Als Vf. ist der im Jahr 1788 verstorбene Hamburgische Senator Lütkens bekannt, ein Kaufmann von tiefer Handlungseinsicht, und von unvergesslichen Verdiensten um seine Vaterstadt." *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung*, Numero 322, Dienstags, den 6. December 1791, 463-464.

14 See Ziegra, M. Christian. *Die Eigenschaften Hamburgischer Rathsherren: in vier kleinen Abhandlungen erklärt, als der Hochadelgeborenen und Wolweise Herr Nicolaus Gottlieb Lütkens den 11 Januar 1771, zu solcher Würde erkoren ward*. Hamburg: Schröders Schriften, 1771.

15 "2374 Lütkens (Nicolaus), 598-601; 2375. Lütkens (Nicolaus Gottlieb), 601-602." In *Lexikon der Hamburgischen Schriftsteller bis zur Gegenwart*. edited by Hans Schröder, 598-602. Hamburg: Perthes-Besser u. Mauke 1870 (vol. 4, 1866). "Lütkens (Nikolaus Gottlieb)." In *Lexikon der vom Jahre 1750 bis 1800 verstorbenen teutschen Schriftsteller*, vol. 8, edited by Johann Georg Meusel, 413. Leipzig: Gerhard Fleischer, 1808. "Nicolaus Gottlieb Lütkens." In *Denkwürdigkeiten aus dem Leben ausgezeichneter Teutschern des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts*, edited by Christian Gotthilf Salzmann, 721-722. Schnepfenthal: Verlag der Erziehungsanstalt, 1802. "Nicolaus Gottlieb Lütkens." In *Hanseatisches Magazin* 5, no. 1. V. Proben einer Bildergallerie Hamburgischer Männer des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts, edited by Johann Smidt, 148-149. Bremen: Friedrich Wilmans, 1801.

contemporary perspective. As the text of the *Denkwürdigkeiten aus dem Leben ausgezeichneter Teutschen des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts* from 1802 went, Luetkens' main merit lay in the fact that Hamburg "owes to him, together with Johannes Schuback, the salvage of the Hamburg bank during the time of its most severe crisis in 1786 and the restoring of this bank on the basis of solid and ineluctable principles [...] [which he had set out] in his essay 'An die Kaufleute, welche die gemäßigte Vorstellung und Bitte wegen Abänderung der bey der hiesigen Lehnbanco eingerissenen Missbräuche an die Deputation des Commercii unterschrieben haben'".<sup>16</sup> This is the article referred to above, which is also still available in the Staatsbibliothek Berlin in the original.<sup>17</sup> It mainly addresses the issue and benefits of free markets.<sup>18</sup> All other short biographies and obituaries mention the exact same article and reform as Luetkens' main achievement in life, consequently calling him a noble Hamburg patriot or the "restorer of the Hamburg bank which made him immortal".<sup>19</sup> It is therefore reasonable to state that this act and the bank reform had created the fame and reputation on which his memory was to rest in the future.<sup>20</sup> It also represents the main reason why his face went on to adorn a gold Portugaleser coin worth 12,500 euros and why his portrait hangs in the *Kleines Zimmer* of Hamburg's town hall.

In addition to the information about his main printed work and the reform that emanated from it, the short biographies and obituaries also provide us with the main data regarding his life. Furthermore, as is typical and characteristic of this kind of source, the biographical entries and obituaries in the contemporary biographical dictionaries also provide us with a depiction of his character. Since the short biographies and obituaries serve as a kind of blueprint for my analysis, I will cite large parts of them in their entirety, nonetheless double checking the information against the information from the letters and court records stored in London. Before coming to that, however, this first section of the chapter can be concluded by putting together the last five traces and references to Luetkens that I found apart from his archive in London.

The first of the last five hints on Luetkens are entries that I found about Luetkens' merchant house, "Luetkens & Engelhardt", in the Hamburg Admiralty customs books, the *Entry Books of the Hamburg Admiralty and Convoy Duties, Admiralitaets Zoll und Convoy Einnahme Bücher* stored in the Hamburg state archive.<sup>21</sup> The tables in these books im-

<sup>16</sup> "Ihm und Johannes Schuback verdankt die Hamburgische Bank vorzüglich die Rettung aus der misslichsten Lage im Jahr 1768 und die Zurückführung der Bank auf feste und unabweichliche Grundsätze [...]." *Denkwürdigkeiten*, 722.

<sup>17</sup> Schuback/Luetkens, *Drey Schriften über Geld und Banken*. SBB-PK Berlin, 46 MA 1537, Berlin: Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, 2011. Online-Ausg., 2011, VD18 digital, <https://dig.ital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht/?PPN=PPN66702932X>, accessed December 11, 2019.

<sup>18</sup> *Proben einer Bildergallerie*, 149. See also Lindemann, Mary. *Patriots and Paupers. Hamburg, 1712-1830*. New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990, 36.

<sup>19</sup> "unsterblicher Restaurator der Bank [...]" *Proben einer Bildergallerie*, 149.

<sup>20</sup> Regarding this bank reform see in detail Von Heß, Jonas Ludwig. *Was darf und was darf nicht in Hamburg geschehen?* Hamburg: auf Kosten des Verfassers, 1799, 34-73.

<sup>21</sup> *Admiralty records of the Staatsarchiv Hamburg, Entry Books of the Hamburg Admiralty and Convoy Duties, Admiralitaets Zoll und Convoy Einnahme. Staatsarchiv Hamburg, Admiraltätskollegium*, 371-2, F6, vol. 18 (De Anno 1753) and vol. 25 (De Anno 1769).

pressively show that Luetkens and his firm quickly rose to become one of the largest and most successful merchant houses trading in French sugar after his establishment phase due to the strong trading connections he established during his early career. We can find his name occurring at regular intervals in several of these entry books for several years. Just as frequently as in the Hamburg Admiralty books, we also find his name in later court records and books of the High Court of Admiralty from later stages in his life. As a senator and member of the *Commerz-Deputation*, with considerable experience and knowledge of maritime law, particularly regarding the dealings with the court in London, we often find Luetkens as the Hamburg representative and senator signing official documents from Hamburg addressed to the Admiralty Court in London. We therefore also find him in his role as deputy of the *Commerz-Deputation* in the minutes and protocols of the *Commerz-Deputation* stored in the Hanseatic Business Archive, *Hanseatisches Wirtschaftsarchiv*.<sup>22</sup>

The third trace of Luetkens can be found in the form of contemporary book dedications to him that again stem from his time as a senator, representing signs of honour. Moreover, these dedications provide us with further information about his later role and significance in Hamburg during the second half of the 18th century. The first of these dedications can be found in the book *Betrachtungen über den gegenwärtigen Zustand der französischen Colonie zu San Domingo* by Michel René Hilliard d'Auberteuil from 1779. The German translation, by Johann Andreas Engelbrecht, of this originally French book mentions Luetkens in its foreword and dedicates the book to him for the reason that he is "very familiar with the situation and the condition of the colony, since his lines of business were directly tied to it."<sup>23</sup> During his establishment phase, Luetkens started to trade in French sugar from St. Domingue. Since foreign merchants were forbidden to trade directly with the French colonies, he was active in commission trade and as a re-exporter and redistributor of French sugar from France to Hamburg and its hinterland. Naturally, this business segment still provided him with extensive knowledge of the French colonial system and its products. Luetkens later continued this trade very successfully during his career as an established merchant, basing the activities of his merchant house in Hamburg on his long-standing contacts in France. The second dedication can be found in Johann Melchior Goeze's "Verzeichnis seiner Samlung seltener Bibeln und merkwürdiger Bibeln" from 1777. Goeze was minister of St. Catharine's Church in Hamburg. From this dedication we can learn that, living next door to the church, Luetkens had later on been one of the main supporters and representatives of the parish of St. Catherine (St. Katharinen).<sup>24</sup> This assumption can be confirmed by the

<sup>22</sup> Protokolle der Commerzdeputation nebst Anlagen. *Hanseatisches Wirtschaftsarchiv*, S/599. I would like to express my gratitude to Kathrin Enzel for her support.

<sup>23</sup> "mit dem Zustand der Colonie gewiß sehr bekannt, indem einige Dero größten Handelszweige mittelbar dahin gehen." Hilliard d'Auberteuil, Michel René. *Betrachtungen über den gegenwärtigen Zustand der französischen Colonie zu San Domingo*, translated by Johann Andreas Engelbrecht. Leipzig: J.F. Junius, 1779, 3-4.

<sup>24</sup> This book is dedicated to Heinrich Rücker and "Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens beyderseits hochverdienten Senatoren [...] und hochansehnlichen Kirchspiel-Herren der Hauptkirche zu St. Catharinen daselbst." Goeze, Johann Melchior. *Johann Melchior Goezens Hauptpastors zu St. Catharinen in*

only records in the catalogue of the Hamburg state archive mentioning Luetkens' actual name and his "testament", although this document only related to legal steps taken in the 20th century regarding his charity work, the "mildtätigen Stiftungen".<sup>25</sup> A third book in which his name can be found is a small, contemporary edition of Luetkens' letters and merchant records as part of a submission to the Hamburg senate, published by himself and featuring a preface. This book dealt with a big trade deal in weapons and the peace negotiations with Morocco, Salé and Mogador, and was called "Pro Memoria an E. Hochlöbliches Collegium der Herren Sechziger abseiten meiner Nicolaus Gottlieb Lütkens" from 1770.<sup>26</sup> The deal failed in the end, yet still Luetkens' letters related to it were printed with the approval of the senate to show his significant efforts in this regard for the sake of Hamburg.<sup>27</sup>

A further trace of him, or rather of his family, can be found in the Hamburg Ohlsdorf cemetery, where we can locate a family grave of the families Luetkens and Kaehler. Joachim Kaehler, also spelt Kähler, had been one of Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens' maternal uncles.<sup>28</sup> This grave was bought after Nicolaus Gottlieb's death, so it is unfortunately still unclear whether he was reburied there in the family grave. A safe and more reliable hint to the actual reverberation effects after his death can be found, however, in another document, the last trace of him. In the already mentioned list of all the *charitable donors* of Hamburg, the "Mildtätigen Stiftungen", he appears with a generous donation in his testament to "twelve poor humans living in Billwärder" together with financing a scholarship for a clergyman in Billwärder for four years.<sup>29</sup> His father before him, as we can learn from one of the obituaries about him, was highly active in poor

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*Hamburg Verzeichnis seiner Samlung seltener Bibel und merkwürdiger Bibeln in verschiedenen Sprachen mit kritischen und literarischen Anmerkungen.* Halle: Johann Jacob Gebauer, 1777, 2.

- 25 The file "Nicolaus Gottlieb Lütkens-Testament, 1957-1970" today stored in the Staatsarchiv Hamburg, unfortunately does not include Luetkens' original testament.
- 26 Luetkens, Nicolaus Gottlieb. *Pro Memoria an E. Hochlöbliches Collegium der Herren Sechziger abseiten meiner Nicolaus Gottlieb Lütkens.* Hamburg: (no publisher given), 1770.
- 27 Regarding this deal see Baasch, Ernst. *Die Hansestädte und die Barbaren.* Kassel: Brunnemann, 1897, chapter "Der Lütkens'sche Auftrag für Marokko", 80-88. See Baasch, Ernst. *Die Hansestädte Hamburg, Bremen und Lübeck und ihre Beziehungen zu Algier und Marokko.* Kassel: Brunnemann, 1897.
- 28 Grabmal Luetkens/Kähler. Friedhof Ohlsdorf, im und beim Heckengarten. For further information regarding this tombstone see <https://fredriks.de/ohlsdorf/h28.php>, accessed February 17, 2018.
- 29 Testament of "Nicolaus Gottlieb Lütkens. Geb. zu Billwärder am 10. Mai 1716, Senator 1771 Jan. 11 [...] [gestorben] 1788 Jan. 10. Das Testament ist vom 20. Jan. 1781, cum additamento de 10. Dec. 1785, 15. Dec. 1785, 2. Mai 1786, und publicirt 16. Jan. 1788. Zweck: Gleiche Vertheilung der Zinsen von Bco. Mark 3000. an zwölf arme Leute in Billwärder an der Bille. Der Prediger erhält für die Vertheilung 6 Mark, die beiden Kirchgeschworenen jeder 3 Mark. Ferner ein Stipendium von 150 Mark auf 4 Jahre. Verwaltung: Der Prediger und die beiden ältesten Kirchgeschworenen zu Billwärder an der Bille." In *Die milden Privatstiftungen zu Hamburg*, edited by the Verein für Hamburgische Geschichte, no. 112. Hamburg: Perthes-Besser u. Mauke, 1845. The file "Nicolaus Gottlieb Lütkens-Testament, 1957-1970" today stored in the Staatsarchiv Hamburg, unfortunately does not include Luetkens' original testament, but only deals with legal steps taken in the 20th century regarding the above-mentioned "mildtätigen Stiftungen", his charity work. See "Nicolaus Gottlieb Lütkens-Testament, 1957-1970." *Staatsarchiv Hamburg, Stiftungen. Buchstabe L (1918-1988)*, 131-1 II\_5452 Nicolaus Gottlieb Lütkens-Testament, 1957-1970, Aktenzeichen, 922.31-43.

relief and had worked as a catechist at the “Zuchthaus”, the poorhouse, in Hamburg.<sup>30</sup> Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens followed in his father’s footsteps in this regard, although in a more mercantile way, namely by donating money through his testament.

## 2.2 Biography

There are several biographical entries in biographical dictionaries of the 18th century and obituaries relating to the merchant and senator Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens. These entries serve as a kind of basic framework and grid to which we can subsequently add the information provided by the Luetkens archive and the court records in London in order to arrive in the end at biographical information about Luetkens that is as complete and accurate as possible. For this purpose, I will however not list and repeat all the information that we have already gained through the previous explanations of Luetkens’ historical legacy, and I will also bundle together all the numerous overlaps between the biographical entries and the obituaries into one continuous text for the sake of conciseness. The aim of this part of the chapter is to lay the groundwork and put together the relevant information about Luetkens, his childhood, youth and education, to which we can subsequently connect the explanations about Luetkens’ establishment phase. Linking the information of the biographical entries with the records in London will in this regard help not only to arrive at a more nuanced picture of Luetkens and his life, but it also helps to correct certain impressions and hasty reductions created in the biographical entries and obituaries. Although the general biographical data as regards the dates given is correct, the following biography therefore still has to be understood as not representing the whole picture. It will be supplemented and further enriched in the later explanations in this chapter.

Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens “was born in Billwärder at the river Bille on the 10th of May 1716”.<sup>31</sup> He was the “son of a country parson”, but “committed himself to the mercantile profession”.<sup>32</sup> “In the year 1754 he was elected a Commerz-Deputierter [member of the Commerz Deputation], in 1761 he became Bank-Bürger [member of the Hamburg Bank] and at the 11th of January 1771 he was elected and ennobled as a senator. From 1776 to 1778 he was also Praetor of the senate [...].”<sup>33</sup> The exact same information is given in the legend under his portrait. Regarding his private life we learn that “he married his first wife Ilsabe Engelhardt on the 22nd of November 1745, who bore him four daughters. After this woman died on the 1st of May 1770, he married his second wife Cornelia Overmann and had 5 more children with her. He died on the 10th of January 1788.”<sup>34</sup> Of all his children, only a miniature portrait of his daughter Cornelia has survived, which today is in the *Museum für Hamburgische Geschichte* and a later portrait

30 See “2374 Lütken (Nicolaus).” In *Lexikon der Hamburgischen Schriftsteller bis zur Gegenwart*. edited by Hans Schröder, 598-601. Hamburg: Perthes-Besser u. Mauke 1870 (vol. 4, 1866).

31 *Lexikon der Hamburgischen Schriftsteller*, 601-602.

32 *Proben einer Bildergallerie*, 148-149.

33 *Lexikon der Hamburgischen Schriftsteller*, 601-602. *Denkwürdigkeiten*, 721-722.

34 *Lexikon der Hamburgischen Schriftsteller*, 601-602.

of his daughter Henriette von Schwartz, born Luetkens.<sup>35</sup> With regard to Luetkens' personal character it is said that "his life was a perfect example of patriotic aspiration and blessed efficacy."<sup>36</sup> "He was an independent thinker and an independent actor, as it can be said about only a few; a patriot in the most noble sense of the word."<sup>37</sup> In this regard it is remarkable that "although he was without any scientific culture, and without knowing it, he was in his verbal explanations the most shrewd and a practical teacher of pure political science."<sup>38</sup> "Just as the famous proverb by Goethe goes, one can say about him that when a person is blessed by nature, it should not come as a surprise if he is successful. Because by nature alone he was equipped with the wonderful dispositions of his astuteness and his power of judgement, which enabled him, despite the fact that he had not enjoyed any academic or scientific education, to arrive nonetheless at deep and thorough insights into political science and commerce, and therefore, through his practical activities and his writings, he was able to obtain merits for his hometown."<sup>39</sup>

The image created in these biographies, biographical entries in biographical dictionaries and in the obituaries, as becomes obvious in these compiled statements, is apparently the image of a self-made man. The narrative structure that the authors, who all unfortunately remain anonymous, chose to draw on for this purpose to structure their words of honour is mainly the classical rhetorical element of antithesis or comparison. The message conveyed is that despite the fact that Luetkens faced many obstacles he was still able to succeed in his life.<sup>40</sup> Such a narrative structure is typical for biographies and obituaries because it served the purpose of demonstrating by means of the obituary the exceptionality and the successfulness of the social advancement of the person in question.<sup>41</sup> This is also the impression created by the biographical entries and obituaries of Luetkens. They evoke admiration on the part of the reader. At the same

35 Portrait of Cornelia Poppe, born Lütkens (daughter of N.G. Luetkens). *Museum für Hamburgische Geschichte*. Portraitminiaturen, Inv. Nr. 1914, 92. Cornelia Lütkens was born on April 2 1760, married to David Christian Böhl in 1778, after his death, she married Daniel Poppe in 1781. See Roberts, Richard. *Schroders, Merchants & Bankers*. Basingstoke, UK: Macmillan Press, 1992.

36 "patriotischen Strebens und segensreicher Wirksamkeit." *Denkwürdigkeiten*, 721.

37 "Selbstdenker und Selbstandler, wie wenige; Patriot im edelsten Sinne des Worts." *Proben einer Bildergallerie*, 148.

38 „[...] ohne alle wissenschaftliche Cultur, und ohne es selbst zu wissen, in seinen mündlichen Darstellungen der scharfsinnigste und practischte Lehrer reiner Staatswissenschaft; ohne das Wort Theorie zu kennen, der scharfsinnigste Theoretiker der bis dahin im Dunkel liegenden Bank- und Geld=Lehre.“ *Ibid.*, 149.

39 "Von ihm galt, was Göthe sagt: Wenn einen Menschen die Natur erhoben, ist es kein Wunder, wenn ihm viel gelingt! Denn mit den herrlichsten Anlagen des Scharfsinnes und der Urheilskraft von der Natur begabt, gelangte er, ohne alle gelehrte und wissenschaftliche Ausbildung, zu den tiefsten und gründlichsten Einsichten in die Staats-Wissenschaft und das Handlungswesen, und erwarb sich durch seine praktische Wirksamkeit und durch seine treffenden und meisterhaften Schriften, in welchen aber nur die Ideen sein Eigenthum, die Einkleidung von einer in der Schriftstellerey geübten Feder war, unvergeßliche Verdienste um seine Vaterstadt." *Denkwürdigkeiten*, 721-722.

40 See Ueding, Gert, and Bernd Steinbrink. *Grundriß der Rhetorik: Geschichte – Technik – Methode*. Stuttgart/Weimar: J.B. Metzler, 2011, 309, 314. See also Knape, Joachim. *Was ist Rhetorik?* Stuttgart: Reclam, 2000.

41 See Etzemüller, Thomas. *Biographien*. Frankfurt/New York: Campus, 2012, 102-131.

time, this admiration oscillates in the special case of Luetkens with a kind of actual amazement: How could this man have come so far? How did he succeed as a merchant although he did not have an extensive school education and although his father was a priest and no merchant?

Another characteristic feature of biographies and obituaries but also of funeral sermons or occasional poems is that the descriptions given most of the time do not necessarily completely coincide with the actual career path that had taken place, in other words they sometimes omit information for the sake of a coherent narrative.<sup>42</sup> This is also a feature that can be observed with regard to the Luetkens biographies and obituaries. Interestingly though, no general corrections need to be made in the biography. However, the perspective of this book brings about significant changes in the evaluation and the concrete explanation for Luetkens' successful career. By including his establishment phase into the picture, in this book Luetkens' career will no longer appear as surprising and unexpected as it is depicted in the contemporary biographical entries and obituaries. Quite on the contrary, his course of education and career development will be revealed as rather typical of a young man from a middle class family who became a wholesale merchant in the 18th century.<sup>43</sup> This correction should, however, by no means lead to be misunderstood as intended to diminish his achievements in any way as his career path was still remarkable, but it should serve the purpose of correcting the story and image of the self-made man or rather putting it in an adequate contemporary context. Of course, Luetkens owed his success to his commitment and ambition, but in order to achieve his goals he nonetheless primarily made use of and benefitted from the social and cultural conditions and benevolent circumstances that he found himself embedded in during his childhood, during his education and apprenticeship in Hamburg and during his travels in England, the Netherlands and during his establishment phase in France. His constant coping with these different life stages and conditions ultimately paved the way for his successful career as wholesale merchant and later as a senator in Hamburg. His career was therefore certainly neither a coincidence nor a surprise, but can ultimately be ascribed first and foremost to his perseverance. The story and the image that will be created in this book of the person Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens is the story and image of a person who became a string-puller rather than the story of

42 See Bogner, Ralf Georg. *Der Autor im Nachruf. Formen und Funktionen der literarischen Memorialkultur von der Reformation bis zum Vormärz*. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2006, particularly 1-41 as well as chapter 9-12. See Drux, Rudolf. "Art. Gelegenheitsgedicht." *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik* 3, edited by Gert Ueding, 653-667. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1996. See Lenz, Rudolf (vol. 1-4), and Eva-Maria Dickhaut (vol. 5). *Leichenpredigten als Quelle historischer Wissenschaften*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1975-2014.

43 See Earle, *Making of the English Middle Class*, 107-157; Ruppert, *Bürgerlicher Wandel*. See Jeannin, "Distinction des compétences", Kansikas, "Career Paths". For comparable examples see Henniger, Bethmann, 69-94; Hancock, *Citizens of the World*; Doerflinger, *A Vigorous Spirit of Enterprise*, 45-59. See as another very comparable example the biography of Hinrich Christoph Lienau, with whom Luetkens was also acquainted, <http://www.hamburgerpersoenlichkeiten.de/hamburgerpersoenlichkeit/en>, accessed July 8, 2017. See "Memoriam viri amplissimi Danielis Lienau, Hamburgensis Reipublicae magnifici nuper consulis." Obituary of Daniel Lienau by Carolus Fridericus Hipp. Hamburg: Johanneum, Friedrich Schniebes, 1817. Lienau's career reads very similar to the career of N.G. Luetkens, and he was also awarded a medal of honor, a Portugaleser.

a self-made man. In essence this also amounts to a much more accurate version of the self-making of an 18th century merchant and of a life story of a merchant that was typical of the 18th century.

In adding the complementary pieces of information to the contemporary biographies and obituaries as provided by the Luetkens archive and its related court records about Luetkens' life in the next part of this chapter, it will become apparent that many of the factors mentioned in the biographies and obituaries that initially appear as hindrances or hurdles were exactly the opposite as these factors and conditions did in fact foster and support his career. One can even say that the conditions represented in a way a rather typical initial situation for contemporary middle-class men who were coming of age in the 18th century. What the story of this book therefore will change with regard to the presented narrative of Luetkens' life in contrast to the contemporary biographies and obituaries is that I will omit the element of the antithesis when speaking about his life and his establishment phase and instead insert the element of continuity and contemporary typicality, which will explain much better why and how this man could come so far in life. The Luetkens archive and the court papers stored in the National Archives in London provide the necessary information for this change in perspective and help to create a much more detailed, as well as more accurate, complementary picture of this person's life than the contemporary biographies and obituaries.

### 2.3 Parental Home and Early Education

Nicolaus Luetkens (1675-1736), Nicolaus Gottlieb's father, was indeed more than merely a simple village priest living in a suburb of Hamburg as two of the biographies and obituaries indicated. Just like his son later, Nicolaus Luetkens was a well-travelled man. During his own youth and establishment phase and before settling down in Hamburg Billwärder, he had visited and even lived for several years in Berlin, Frankfurt and Leipzig, which were the booming intellectual cities of the 17th and 18th century. Later he also visited Halle and Jena, amongst others. He was also a highly educated man and a renowned scholar, a master of philosophy and an orientalist, who would later work as a teacher, catechist and scholar in ecclesiastical history and Hebrew philosophy and at the Hamburg *Zuchthaus*, the poorhouse. During his own studies at the *Akademische Gymnasium Hamburg*, Nicolaus Luetkens was supported by the renowned scholar Vincent Placcius. This notwithstanding, Nicolaus Luetkens was also a man with far-reaching contacts in Hamburg and beyond, who was deeply involved in the cultural and social life of Hamburg's academic and scholarly elite and whose contacts were not limited to his congregation but rather extended to the highest circles of Hamburg.<sup>44</sup>

44 See "2374 Lütkens (Nicolaus)." In *Lexikon der Hamburgischen Schriftsteller bis zur Gegenwart*, edited by Hans Schröder, 598-601. Hamburg: Perthes-Besser u. Mauke 1870 (vol. 4, 1866). As for his work see for instance Nicolaus Luetkens' works Luetkens, Nicolaus. *Zōhar, Antiquum Iudeorum monumentum : dissertatione philologica [...] submittet [...] M. Nicolaus Lutkens [...] respondente Petro Westhusen*. Leipzig: Titius, 1706. Luetkens, Nicolaus. *Yāhîd mešîhâ ben Dâwid solus Davidis filius Messias*. Rostock: Schwiegerovius, 1701. See the portrait of Nicolaus Lütkens, M. Nicolaus Lütkens, Pastor an der Nicolai Kirche in Billwärder vor Hamburg: Portrait of Nicolaus Luetkens, engraved by Christian Fritsch,

Nicolaus Luetkens was a prime example of a scholar who did not just live during the early Enlightenment in the Elbe city but actively fostered the early Enlightenment there and accordingly he was not merely a simple village priest.<sup>45</sup> Highly revealing in this regard is who Nicolaus senior appointed as two of his estate executors for the case of his death. The first executor was Nicolaus Jante, at the time the renowned deacon of St. Petri church in Hamburg and member of the *Council of Sixty* (Sechziger), which formed an important part of the Hamburg senate. The other one was the famous philosopher of the early Hamburg Enlightenment Barthold Heinrich Brockes, who is primarily known for his philosophical and ecclesiastical works.

None of this is mentioned in any way in the contemporary biographies or obituaries, but evidence and proof for it can be found in the Luetkens archive in letters regarding Nicolaus Gottlieb's inheritance from his father and in the form of probate records, on the basis of which Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens requested payouts for the sake of his shipping activities.<sup>46</sup> The other three estate executors that Nicolaus senior appointed were likewise appointed the legal guardians for his sons in the case of his death, who later actually ended up having to take on this role after Nicolaus' death in 1736. The first guardian was Christoph Seydeler, a reputable merchant in Hamburg, who was also one of the Hamburg witnesses examined during the court case of the captured ships Hope and the Post van Hamburg. The second guardian was the brother of Nicolaus' first wife Catharina Elisabeth, Joachim Kaehler, who had once been a ship's captain before becoming a ship-owner and merchant in Hamburg, with whom Nicolaus Gottlieb continued to keep close contact even after his mother had died and his father had married his second wife.<sup>47</sup> As the third legal guardian Nicolaus senior ap-

1739. Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek – Sondersammlungen, Portrait 22: L 93. Legend: "M. Nicolaus Lütkens, Pastor an der Nicolai Kirche in Billwärder vor Hamburg Gebohren an: 1675 d. 17. April: Gestorben an: 1736 d. 1 Mai. Gegründte Wissenschaft durch Gottes-Furcht erhöht, Der Wörter Starcke Kraft, so an das Hertze feht. Die laßen uns allhier den rechten Abriß lesen von dem, was Lüttckens Mund und Feder ist gewesen. Dieses setzte unter das Bildnis seines alten Freundes M. Jo. Christoph Krüsike, Prediger an der Haupt Kirche St. Petri."

45 Regarding the Enlightenment in Hamburg see in general Kopitzsch, *Grundzüge einer Sozialgeschichte*. See Stephan, Inge, and Hans-Gerd Winter, eds. *Hamburg im Zeitalter der Aufklärung*. Berlin/Hamburg: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 1989. See Handelskammer Hamburg, *Handelskammer Hamburg*, 44-48. Regarding merchants and the Enlightenment see Schrader, Fred. E. "Handel und Aufklärungssoziabilität in Hamburg und Bordeaux. 1750-1820." In *Lumières et commerce. L'exemple bordelais*, edited by Jean Mondot and Catherine Jean, 67-87. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2000.

46 "3/m Mark in Janten und 2/m Mark in Herrn Brocksen Erbe werde gebrauchen können." Letter from Luetkens, Nicolaus Gottlieb to Luetkens, Anton, July 7, 1744, TNA, HCA 30/232, Letter Book I, No. 219. See also letter from Luetkens, Joachim to Luetkens, Nicolaus Gottlieb, May 25, 1744, TNA, HCA 30/235. Regarding Jante see Suhr, Jürgen. *Beschreibung der Sanct Petri Kirche zu Hamburg [...] nebstd einem chrono-logischen Verzeichnis des hochlöblichen Kirchen-Kollegiums und der Herren Prediger*. Hamburg: Perthes-Besser u. Mauke, 1842. Regarding Brockes see Loose, Hans-Dieter, ed. *Berthold Heinrich Brockes. Dichter und Ratsherr in Hamburg. Neue Forschungen zu Persönlichkeit und Wirkung*. Hamburg: Christians, 1980. Braun-Egidius, Erich, eds. *Barthold Hinrich Brockes. Brockes-Tage 1997 in Hamburg. Eine Dokumentation*. Hamburg: Kultur in Hamburg Verlagsges. mbH, 2000.

47 See letter from Luetkens, Nicolaus Gottlieb to Kähler, Joachim, June 16, 1743, TNA, HCA 30/232, individual letter copy including *Copia von zwey obligation an Herr Kahler gesandt unter dato 16 Juny 1743*.

pointed his brother Anthony Luetkens, Nicolaus Gottlieb's paternal uncle. Anthony was living in London as a renowned wholesale merchant. In the court records regarding the Post van Hamburg, Anthony Luetkens was referred to as "Anthony Luetkens of the parish of All Hallows the Great London Merchant". Anthony usually took up the role as his nephews' legal representative in London before the High Court of Admiralty. The latter two, Anthony Luetkens and Joachim Kaehler, would furthermore not only appear as the legal guardians for Nicolaus' sons but had also obviously been the namesakes for Nicolaus' second son, Joachim, and his third son, Anton. His first son he had named after himself, complemented by the religiously inspired middle name "Gottlieb": Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens. More relevant to Nicolaus Gottlieb's career is, however, the profession that both of Nicolaus Gottlieb's uncles practised, namely the mercantile profession, which in turn makes Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens' decision to become a wholesale merchant a much clearer, logical and more obvious option instead of the surprising and unexpected choice it had appeared in the obituaries.

In general, it was a rather typical custom in bourgeois families of the 18th century that the different sons of a family choose different professions, though remaining in the realms of typical professions of the Early Modern middle class by becoming merchants, public administrators, lawyers, notaries or priests.<sup>48</sup> As such, it is also not surprising that Joachim, the middle son, would become a catechist and then a priest just like his father. At the time when Joachim Luetkens was appointed pastor in Hamburg Steinbeck in 1754, after he himself had been on travels in London and Cambridge during the same years as his older brother, it was none other than the famous composer Georg Philipp Telemann who had composed a cantata and played at his ceremony.<sup>49</sup> In the case of Nicolaus Gottlieb himself, it had, however, been predictable and appropriate that he would instead become a merchant, considering the profession of his uncles.

His father a renowned priest, scholar and private lecturer; his mother a daughter from a wealthy bourgeois family; both his uncles respectable merchants in international trade: the main illusion from the contemporary short biographies and obituaries that we are able to contradict through this new information and the Luetkens archive, is the illusion that Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens had been in any way an uneducated and unschooled man. It is indeed true that we cannot find Nicolaus Gottlieb amongst the pupils, amongst the matriculation record of students enrolled at Hamburg schools of

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48 See Habermas, Rebekka. *Frauen und Männer des Bürgertums: Eine Familiengeschichte (1750-1850)*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2002, 3-5. See Van Dülmen, Richard. *Kultur und Alltag in der Frühen Neuzeit. Erster Band. Das Haus und seine Menschen 16.-18. Jahrhundert*. Munich: C.H. Beck, 2005, 114-122. See Hunt, *The Middling Sort*, 22-72. See Roeck, Bernd. *Lebenswelt und Kultur des Bürgertums in der Frühen Neuzeit*. Munich: Oldenbourg, 1991, 31-33, 60-61.

49 See "Text zur Music als der wohlerwürdige und hochgelahrte Herr Joachim Lütken m 8 October 1754 zum Prediger der Gemeine [sic] zu Steinbeck in der Marien Magdalenen Kirche in Hamburg eingesegnet ward, aufgeführt von Georg Philipp Telemann, Chori Musici Directore." Hamburg: Piscator, 1754. Berlin: Staats-bibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Germany, 2010, Historische Drucke, 47 in: Mus. T 2408, online <http://resolver.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/SBB000054E600000000>, accessed March 5, 2017. See Reipsch, Ralf-Jürgen. "Mein Hertz ist voll." In *Klangfarben. 25. Telemann Festtage Programmheft* (2020): 111-117.

the time.<sup>50</sup> That fact, however, still does not mean or provide us with enough evidence for the assumption that he was uneducated. Instead, it ultimately shows us that Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens must have followed a different educational pathway to, for instance, his brother Joachim, whom we can in fact find listed on the roll of both the Johanneum grammar school and the Hamburg Gymnasium.<sup>51</sup> Nicolaus Gottlieb instead went down an educational path that was far more common for the mercantile profession to follow during that century as well as the centuries before.<sup>52</sup> Yet, he still received an extensive education as can be reasonably assumed, for instance, by comparing his example with the typical educational path of other Hamburg merchants. Using our knowledge about his parental home we can also assume that he was first privately educated in his early days by his father, who also taught other children during that time as a private teacher and catechist.<sup>53</sup> Furthermore, we can find evidence from the Luetkens archive that he had additionally also been educated by a private tutor, which was also common practice during that time with regard to a typical mercantile upbringing.<sup>54</sup> In an address list, a list of contacts and correspondents, that has survived in the Luetkens archive we can find at least one name of a well-known tutor of the time living in Hamburg, who taught French and whose name also reappears in a register of addresses of all "Standes-Personen", all persons of rank, living in Hamburg in 1722: Jean Ferri.<sup>55</sup>

Secondly, as complies with the typical educational programme and standard practice for young men aiming to become merchants, the next important stage during his educational path was that he entered directly into an apprenticeship in the house of a respectable merchant at the age of 12 or 14 at the latest.<sup>56</sup> Nicolaus Gottlieb served his apprenticeship in the compting house of the Hamburg merchant David Speelmeyer, where he later also served as a merchant clerk.<sup>57</sup> In none of the biographical entries or

<sup>50</sup> Sillem, Karl Hieronymus Wilhelm. *Die Matrikel des Akademischen Gymnasiums in Hamburg, 1613-1883*. Hamburg: Lucas Gräfe und Sillem, 1891.

<sup>51</sup> "2381. Joach. Lütkens, Billwerdea Hamburg., Th. st. Pastor Steenbeck. Jenam abier. 1740 Apr., ex Johanneo." *ibid.*, 110.

<sup>52</sup> As it was also popularized in Early Modern merchant manuals such as Defoe, Daniel. *The Complete English Tradesman*.

<sup>53</sup> See Henninger, *Bethmann*, 69-83.

<sup>54</sup> See Grassby, *Business Community*, 189. See Van Dülmen, *Kultur und Alltag*, 79-120.

<sup>55</sup> This list of correspondents can be found in TNA, HCA 30/232. The address register of Hamburg: Beuthner, Arnold Christian. *Jetzt-lebendes Hamburg: worin von den Namen, Charakteren und Wohnungen aller [...] Standes-Personen [...] Nachricht ertheilet wird*. Hamburg: (no publisher given), 1722 (1723, 1725). See "Sprachmeister nach alphabetischer Reihenfolge, Mr. Jean Ferri Französischer Sprachmeister, hinter dem neuen Wall," *ibid.*, 103. Regarding private language tutors in the French language, see Kuhfuss, Walter. *Eine Kulturgeschichte des Französischunterrichts in der frühen Neuzeit: Französischlernen am Fürstenhof, auf dem Marktplatz und in der Schule in Deutschland*. Göttingen, V&R unipress GmbH, 2014, chapter 7 "Französisch für Berufe des Kaufmanns, des Handels und des Gewerbes", "Galanter Französischunterricht für Bürgersöhne", "Lehrwerke für Kaufleute in galanter Zeit.", 349-467.

<sup>56</sup> See Ruppert, "Bürgerlicher Wandel," 76-86. See Hancock, *Citizens of the World*, 43. See Earle, *Making of the English Middle Class*, 85-105, on "Apprenticeship".

<sup>57</sup> See several of the testimonies and attestations of Hamburg citizens at the hearings regarding additional interrogatories of the case of the ship *Hope*, which took place in Hamburg, January 03, 1748. See in detail in the following footnotes.

obituaries though, this time and his apprenticeship was mentioned in any way. However, the one fact that still appears in some way related to his mercantile education in the biographies and obituaries is that Luetkens was primarily known to be a practically skilled man. In the light of a typical commercial education this appears to be rather symptomatic of a mercantile path of life. Up until far into the second half of the 18th century, when the Hamburg *Handelsschule* was founded, and even beyond that, young merchants learned their skills and mercantile business primarily in practice in the houses of other already well-established merchants in their hometown or even in other cities or countries, primarily in the form of a learning-by-doing process.<sup>58</sup> Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens represented a textbook example of a practically trained man of trade. He was a “practical man of affairs”, as David Hancock put it, as was typical for Early Modern merchants.<sup>59</sup>

## 2.4 Apprenticeship and Business Travels

As regards Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens’ time of apprenticeship, we can consult the information that the British court records provide us with, in order to complete our picture about Luetkens’ education. The reason that these records contain personal information about Luetkens is due to the British authorities of the High Court of Admiralty making extensive enquiries into the backgrounds of all the persons involved in the captured ships in order to prove associations with the French enemy and thereby also to prove the rightfulness of the captures. Especially Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens therefore became the main target of the investigation in the cases of both ships because the Admiralty suspected and, as we already know, later revealed him to be the real ship-owner of the *Hope* and also of the *Post van Hamburg*, who had lived and traded for several years in enemy land. The most compelling and informative record in this regard is a 100-page collection of witness testimonies and attestations relating to the ship the *Hope* that were commissioned by the British High Court of Admiralty from the Hamburg Senate for the purpose of verifying the identities of the persons involved, their origin and their status of citizenship, in the case of the *Hope*.<sup>60</sup> Similar but shorter examinations had been conducted in the case of the *Post van Hamburg*, which are almost identical in content and as regards the included witnesses. The cases relating to the *Hope* and the *Post van Hamburg* were conducted together in London.

<sup>58</sup> Regarding the founding of the Hamburg *Handelsschule* see Kuhfuss, *Kulturgeschichte des Französisch-unterrichts*, 468-472.

<sup>59</sup> Hancock, *Citizens of the World*, 32. See in this regard also, with a reference to Defoe’s *Complete Travelsman* emphasizing the importance of practical training, Shinagel, *Daniel Defoe*, 201-245.

<sup>60</sup> Additional Hearings and Attestations of Hamburg Witnesses and Deponents based on additional interrogatories of the English High Court of Admiralty regarding the case of the *Hope*, taken place in Hamburg, January 1748. The court file comprises of two books (one in translation) of notarised attestations and affidavits taken before the authorities in Hamburg, with exhibits attached, and brought into court on 26 February 1747, with a translation dated May 1747 as well as 4 sets of eight attestations, affidavits and translations taken and sealed by the ruling authorities of Hamburg (as well as Rotterdam), brought into court in March 1748, TNA, HCA 32/115/14.

The large collection of witness statements, as part of the additional hearings in the case of the *Hope*, originally drawn up in High German but then translated, comprises a total of sixteen examinations of respectable Hamburg citizens, who were examined in order to contribute to the clarification of the situation behind the ship *Hoffnung*, otherwise *Hope*. The records therefore contain primarily questions about the life and background of Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens, who had already been identified as the actual owner of the hidden chest containing a merchant archive with many French letters found onboard the ship, which had cast suspicion on him. From a Hamburg point of view, these examinations should naturally prove and provide the evidence for Luetkens' close bond and association with the free and imperial, but most of all neutral city of Hamburg and not with France, which should of course lead to the release of the ship. The same held true for the additional hearings in the case of the *Post van Hamburg*. All witness statements are far from unbiased, but nonetheless contain valuable information about Luetkens because the witness statements on the whole must have withstood an examination. The fact that these examinations based on additional interrogatories from the High Court of Admiralty took place in January 1748, which was more than two and a half years after the capture of the ship *Hope* in August 1745, is further proof of the eventful history of this ship and it shows how intensively and painstakingly the Admiralty conducted their research. Since this collection also provides further information about Luetkens' life after his apprenticeship, I will also elaborate on this later part of his life in greater detail in the following explanations.

The examinations of the people in question took place in Hamburg, were presided over by the praetor of the Hamburg senate at that time, Johann Joachim Boetefeuer, and were furthermore attended by two public notaries acting as interpreters and by a minute writer. Individuals from a variety of professions and backgrounds appeared as witnesses in this case. They were interrogated and were asked a set of standardized questions provided by the High Court of Admiralty and sent to Hamburg. They could then answer these questions in a more or less extensive way depending on their relationship with Luetkens and their profession. Among the sixteen deponents we can find persons from the Hamburg chancery, in order to verify the passport of the ship *Hope*. We also find ships' husbands of the ship in order to verify the hiring contract of the ship, and last but not least we find merchants and clerks associated or known to the accused persons, who were familiar with the merchant Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens, his partners Hertzer & von Bobartt and Anton Luetkens. The deponents called before the Hamburg court were all defence witnesses.

The most informative witness statements regarding Nicolaus Gottlieb's biography are those of the merchants and the interrogated merchant clerks. Although almost all witnesses claimed that they "know very well that Nicholaus Gottlieb Lutckens some years ago, had been a travelling, but [...] [they] did not know that this Lutckens has had his habituation in France or had been in possession there in one place or other of compting houses of trade or warehouses [...] [and] that the said Nicholas Gottlieb Lutckens has learned his trade not in France but here in Hamburg", the merchants and clerks can be regarded as the most reliable sources in this regard, because they could provide detailed information about Luetkens' prior history, since they were familiar

to him.<sup>61</sup> In their answers regarding the questions “Do you know Nicholas Gottlieb Lutkens? For how long have you known and been acquainted with him? And where hath he lived and resided during your knowledge of him? [...] And was he not notoriously known to carry on a Business or Trade as a Merchant in France? Speak the truth as You are upon your Oath”, we can find information about Nicolaus Gottlieb’s apprenticeship and his further development as a merchant.<sup>62</sup>

In the witness statement of Christopher Seydeler for instance, one of Luetkens’ legal guardians, we can read “that Luetkens had learned his trade in the house of David Speelmeier, [...] with whom he served his full time out, where & during the time that Nicolaus Gottlieb Lutkens was in the service of the said Speelmeier, this deponent [Seydeler] has often times spoken with him.” Later he repeated that Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens had “entirely served out his apprenticeship here in Hamburg [and adds that he] has served the said David Speelmeier here in Hamburg 6 or 7 years.”<sup>63</sup> Such a long period of an apprenticeship was nothing particularly unusual or exceptional during the Early Modern Period. Rather, it was due to the custom that young men first received a decent level of initial education and basic training, only to be subsequently quickly integrated into the daily businesses of the respective merchant house, taking on more and more responsibilities and responsible tasks within and for the smooth running of the merchant house, such as bookkeeping.<sup>64</sup> Again this shows the highly practical nature of mercantile education in the 18th century. As a second stop the young apprentices were then promoted and took on the role of merchant servants or merchant clerks, in German “Handelsbedienter” or “Handelsdiener” in the merchant houses, being for instance mainly responsible for the correspondence activities of the trading house.<sup>65</sup> This typical path can also be assumed for Luetkens for the time that he spent in the house of David Speelmeyer, for which we can find further proof in the statements which give references to him not only as an “apprentice” but also as a “clerk”. In the additional hearings regarding the Post van Hamburg, John Martin Lambrecht stated for the records that he “has known the said Nicolaus Gottlieb Lutkens above already six years and already at

61 Examination and attestation of Andreas Fischer, “a sworn Ships Husband in the Trade of this City”, as part of the *Additional Hearings and Attestations*, TNA, HCA 32/115/14. See also examination and attestation of Andreas Fischer Diederich Glashoff, “ships husband”, as well as Alexander Arnold Lambrecht, “an Inhabitant & merchant” and Daniel Richter Junior, *ibid.*

62 “Interrogatorys administered and to be administered on the part and behalf of Nicholas Craven,” TNA, HCA 32/115/14: “5 ... Item let each witness be asked, Do you know Nicholas Gottlieb Lutkens? For how long have you known and been acquainted with him? And where hath he lived and resided during your knowledge of him? And for how long at each particular place? Let auch witness be asked jointly and severally and of everything? 6 ... Item Had er had not the said Nicholas Gottlieb Lutkens while he lived and resided in France a Compting House or Compting Houses and one or more Warehouse or Warehouses at Brest St. Malos or Nants or one or other and which of them or at some other and what [...] Port or Place in France? And was he not notoriously known to carry on a Business or Trade as a Merchant in France? Speak the truth as You are upon your Oath.”

63 Examination and attestation of Christoph Seideler, “a telmonger”, as part of the *Additional Hearings and Attestations*, TNA, HCA 32/115/14.

64 See Earle, *Making of the English Middle Class*, 100-111.

65 See Deges, “Handelsdiener,” XV-LXI; see Ruppert, *Bürgerlicher Wandel*, 66. See as a contemporary source Marperger, *Getreuer und geschickter Handelsdiener*.

that very time when he was apprentice to a merchant here at Hamburg named David Speelmeyer". According to the statement of Andreas Fisher, a Hamburg ship's husband, "the said Nicholas Gottlieb Luetkens has learned his trade not in France but here in Hamburg in the house of the later merchant David Speelman newly deceased, in whose Compting house he had often seen & spoken to with him the said Lutckens as Clerck."<sup>66</sup> Albert von Bobartt, himself a clerk in the merchant house of Mess. Hertzner & von Bobartt in 1748, confirmed both other statements in almost the same words through his witness statement.<sup>67</sup>

Unfortunately, the concrete information about Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens' apprenticeship from these witness statements stops at this point. David Speelmeyer unfortunately represents another example of a person who has sunk completely into oblivion. However, we can at least still conclude what the further course of Nicolaus Gottlieb's time in the compting house of David Speelmeyer was on the basis of another statement given in the witness testimonies regarding his further course of education after his apprenticeship. Again referring to Seydeler, the further knowledge that we can get from his statements is that "afterwards he [Nicolaus Gottlieb] sett out on is travells at his own expenses & has been in several places as a travelling merchant, to gett himself some correspondence", which is again backed up by the other witness statements.<sup>68</sup> In the case of the Hope, in his attestation before court, Anthony Luetkens specified the stations of Luetkens' travels as "England, Holland, France and Spain at which places he had bought up cargos of goods to be sent to Hamburgh as occasion offered, either for his own account or for the joint account of himself and other merchants in Hamburg". As becomes clear from his attestation, Anthony's aim already at this stage was to proclaim his nephew's innocence as regards trading with the enemy.

The information about Luetkens' travels at the same time point us at the fact that Luetkens had finished his apprenticeship with a certain stock of capital of his own, which in turn points us to another usual practice with regard to an Early Modern apprenticeship. Towards the end of their apprenticeship or often already right from the moment when the young men took up the role of clerks in the merchant houses, aspiring wholesale merchants would for the first time also be given the opportunity to obtain shares in the business affairs of the respective merchant houses. This served the purpose, apart from naturally also yielding benefits for the merchant houses, that the young merchants would accumulate capital of their own that provided them with a solid first basis for their future career as a merchant.<sup>69</sup> Naturally, this custom simultaneously also further fostered their practical skills and competences in business practices, because

<sup>66</sup> Examination and attestation of Andreas Fischer, "a sworn Ships Husband in the Trade of this City", as part of the *Additional Hearings and Attestations*, TNA, HCA 32/115/14.

<sup>67</sup> Examination and attestation of Albert von Bobartt, "Clerck in the Compting House of Mess. Hertzner & von Bobartt", as part of the *Additional Hearings and Attestations*, TNA, HCA 32/115/14.

<sup>68</sup> Examination and attestation of Christoph Seideler, "a telmonger", as part of the *Additional Hearings and Attestations*, TNA, HCA 32/115/14. See also attestations by Albert von Bobartt or Hinrich Stöver, "a clerck of chancery", *ibid*.

<sup>69</sup> Regarding the conditions for the creation of "an inital stake" see Hancock, *Citizens of the World*, 241. See Grassby, *Business Community*, 82-84, 401. See Earle, *Making of the English Middle Class*, 100-111. See Deges, "Handelsdiener", LIV-LXII.

through taking on responsibilities the men learned directly about the consequences of their actions and trading activities. It trained them in internal accounting, trade execution, sales procedures and last but not least fostered their competences and knowledge in the dealings and interrelationships amongst the merchant community, including learning from their own experience about typical trading customs, written and unwritten rules of conduct, typical language use, international mercantile habits but also about the culture of conversing and dealing with each other.<sup>70</sup> Consequently, they also learned how to write appropriate letters. This happened, however, not by means of being thrown in at the deep end and instead within the relatively sheltered environment of the life and status as a clerk in an already established merchant house, which is yet another remarkable feature of the Early Modern mercantile educational system.

Most often, the capital stock they accumulated during their time in the merchant houses would then be used by the young men to go on a journey through Europe's booming trading cities to further enhance their skills and knowledge and to build up and extend their networks.<sup>71</sup> This is the pathway that Nicolaus Gottlieb, too, chose as his next challenge to foster his career. As several witness statements confirm, Nicolaus Gottlieb went on several long business trips or merchant trips after he had finished his apprenticeship although, as the statements also emphasise, without the intention of establishing himself or keeping a warehouse in any foreign country. Any other statement in this regard in these court testimonies would have carried the risk that the English Admiralty would have had concrete reason to contest Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens' neutral status as a Hamburg merchant. In the statement of Daniel Richter junior for instance we read about Nicolaus Gottlieb's last journey to France which ended in 1745, of which Richter knew "very well that the said Lutckens stayed in France as a stranger & a Hamburg merchant, who ordered goods to be bought for him, & payd commission for the same."<sup>72</sup> Quoting Alexander Arnold Lambrecht again, he put it on record that Nicolaus Gottlieb had been "on his travells in France to see his ffriends & correspondents there on account of his trading affairs in one or other towns of trade, but was never established there in one place or other."<sup>73</sup> Last but not least, in the statement of Seydeler, too, we can read of Luetkens' travels, and he added that he also knew "very well [...] [that Luetkens] has made a tour to Spain."<sup>74</sup> Surprisingly none of the attestations in the case of the ship Hope mention Luetkens' first journey to England. In the case of the Post van Hamburg it is Anthony Luetkens only who refers to this journey. I know about it for sure due to a detailed pocketbook of expenses that Luetkens kept during the years 1739-1742, in which he recorded all the private running costs of his travels.<sup>75</sup>

<sup>70</sup> See *ibid.* See Savary, *Der vollkommene Kauff- und Handelsmann*, 3-38. See Defoe, *Complete English Tradesman*, 5-6.

<sup>71</sup> Regarding mercantile business trips as an important career step for young merchants see Ruppert, "Bürgerlicher Wandel," 86-94. See also Deges, "Handelsdiener," XLVIII-LIV.

<sup>72</sup> Examination and attestation of Daniel Richter Junior, "an inhabitant & subject of this city", as part of the *Additional Hearings and Attestations*, TNA, HCA 32/115/14.

<sup>73</sup> Examination and attestation of Alexander Arnold Lambrecht, "an Inhabitant & merchant", as part of the *Additional Hearings and Attestations*, TNA, HCA 32/115/14.

<sup>74</sup> Examination and attestation of Christopher Seideler.

<sup>75</sup> Pocketbook of expenses in TNA, HCA 30/232.

Either the other witnesses in Hamburg deliberately concealed this information, which is however rather unlikely because this information might potentially even have propitiated the British Admiralty members when looking into this case. Or, the omission of this fact is ultimately revealing with regard to the actual state of knowledge that the deponents actually had about the life and business of Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens and thus also about the partiality and the bias of the witnesses. How much did these deponents actually know?

One thing at least is certain: that these men tried everything in their power to help to make this case end with an acquittal. For this purpose, they knew exactly what they had to testify before court, and they naturally limited their statements exactly to the kind of information that they could confirm all together with a clear conscience.<sup>76</sup> It is therefore highly doubtful that each and every witness, maybe apart from the merchant Seydeler, actually knew Luetkens very personally or in depth, but they still knew very well what they had to testify about him before court in order to support the defence. The missing information about his stay in England in the testimonies regarding the Hope is a telling and conducive piece of evidence. This information was known only to actual insiders, which the majority of the deponents no longer appear to be. The nature and character of their statements subsequently took on the form of an interweaving of exactly that part of their own personal story and background that they were able to link in any way with the kind of common knowledge that we can assume the Hamburg elite had about the merchant Luetkens and his career. They also knew that the defence council would build the defence strategy upon their statements because these were the only established facts that the defence could draw upon at all. As such common knowledge about Luetkens can be considered those aspects that each witness referred to, namely that Luetkens served his apprenticeship in Hamburg in the house of David Speelmeyer, where some people met him and some others "had very often and frequent conversations with" him.<sup>77</sup>

It served as common knowledge that Luetkens went on travels, in very general terms, after his apprenticeship. And even if it might be just the smallest straw of proof and substantiation for this general narrative, the deponents referred to it in their statements, hoping that their statement would underpin the defence strategy, and at the same time satisfying and assuring themselves that they did not commit perjury.

What these additional hearings and attestations therefore mainly inform us about and provide relatively solid and reliable information about is the kind of common knowledge and information that prevailed in Hamburg about the merchant Luetkens as a person and about his career, and that is also exactly the point where the court records are most significant. Although the personal overlapping areas and presented stories with regard to Luetkens' person and career may indeed only be sparse and not

76 See in this regard in general Zemon Davis, Natalie. *Fiction in the Archives: Pardon Tales and Their Tellers in Sixteenth-Century France*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987. See Blauert, Andreas, and Gerd Schwerhoff, eds. *Kriminalitätsgeschichte. Beiträge zur Sozial- und Kulturgeschichte der Vormoderne*. Konstanz: UVK, 2000, "Einleitung," 11-20.

77 Translation of the examination and attestation of Christoph Seydeler, as part of the Additional Hearings and Attestations of Hamburg Witnesses and Deponents based on additional interrogatories of the English High Court of Admiralty regarding the case of the Post van Hamburg, taken place in Hamburg, brought into court 24 February 1747, TNA, HCA 32/143/17.

always entirely verifiable, still all deponents could at least refer in one way or another to the general narrative and story used by the defence and the representatives of the Hamburg senate, thus substantiating it. In the light of this, it is maybe even better that we find for the most part only relatively sparse general information about Luetkens' apprenticeship and his subsequent journeys through Europe in the witness statements because at least this basic information that reappears in every single witness statement can be considered the most reliable. Any information going beyond that point, that is, exceeding the more general state of knowledge about Luetkens, however, can then only really be regarded as reliable information if the deponents could also produce hard evidence for their respective statements. Statements of this kind can in fact also be found in the witness testimonies, which at the same time also represent the sections in the court records in which the personal narratives made the most sense and actually helped to support the defence. This is for instance the case when the deponents could explicitly refer to specific other documents and records, which I regard as further fragments of an assured knowledge prevailing about Luetkens that can be found in the court records. On the other hand, all those statements that seem to refer only to hearsay must be regarded as mostly unreliable. The latter fact refers particularly to all the information given about Luetkens' intention not to establish himself in France or to keep a warehouse there, as was the third kind of information provided in the statements of the deponents, which surely must be seen as rather vague evidence in comparison to the other information. The reason for this is that having such information would have required intensive contact with Luetkens, which in turn would have also left a trace in the merchant archive found on board of the ship *Hope*. Of the sixteen witnesses examined in the case of the *Hope*, however, only one, Seydeler, kept regular correspondence with Luetkens, and this fact was also known to the Admiralty. As we will learn in the book, as a matter of fact, Luetkens did have the strong intention to establish himself and settle down in business in France. But this information, whether it was known or not known to the deponents, had of course no place at all in hearings that were intended to prove the exact opposite.

Returning to Luetkens' biography, the most reliable and concrete source of information with regard to Luetkens' travel activities after his apprenticeship and in connection with the hearings in Hamburg, is the statement of a bookkeeper who worked in Hamburg for several compting houses during that time and as such was also entrusted with reviewing Luetkens' merchant books. This witness provides us with extensive and concrete information about Luetkens' travel activities, even though this bookkeeper's statement surely was also biased not at least because he himself had been on Luetkens' payroll. His case nevertheless constitutes one of the more reliable kinds of witness statement in comparison to the other sources because he was able to provide hard evidence for his statements. This man could meticulously prove and list all the different travel destinations that Luetkens had visited during the years 1741 to 1745 because he could find this information in his own records and his first-hand knowledge of Luetkens' merchant books, which he would also be able to produce in court if necessary. This was, however, not even necessary due to the fact that regarding the information provided by him the court personnel would also be able to perform a kind of litmus test for themselves by looking at Luetkens' books in the Luetkens archive.

I am not sure if the court in the end went to this effort, but I did. The only thing one has to do to double-check the bookkeeper's witness statement is to compare the information given by him with the information in Luetkens' letter copy books and the letter address lines on all the letters that were stored in the Luetkens archive because they mention the respective cities where Luetkens was reachable for his correspondents at the different stages during his travels. This matching process also provides the opportunity to add the merchant houses where Luetkens stayed and worked during the time he spent in these cities to the respective travel destinations because these houses were often mentioned on the letters as part of the postal addresses. A typical postal address would for instance read "Monsieur N.G. Lutkens / Negotiant à Hambourg / chez Mons. d'Egmunth à Lorient."<sup>78</sup> This form of an address allowed both Luetkens himself and Monsieur d'Egmont in Lorient to pick up the letters at the local post office, which was the typical way of collecting one's letters in the Early Modern Period.

Whether this litmus test was performed by the court or not, it would have proved that none of the bookkeeper's explanations lacked substance. It is therefore the witness statement by the bookkeeper "Ludolph Jochim Köster, a Bookkeeper in several Compting houses of this City [Hamburg] & Burgher. 32 year old" from which we can compile, in a very comprehensive manner, all the travel destinations and locations that Luetkens visited during the years 1741 to 1745. I will cite large parts of his testimony and will furthermore add, in square brackets within the quote, the information about the respective houses where Luetkens stayed during the relevant time periods based on the information provided in the address lines of the incoming letters. This information will become significant in the chapter on commission trade, too, where I will explain in detail Luetkens' reasons for visiting these different merchant houses. In that chapter, we will also find a map of Luetkens' actual travel route.

Regarding the 5th interrogatory with the questions "Do you know Nicholas Gotlieb Lutkens? For how long have you known and been acquainted with him?", Köster "answered, that he has been employed & engaged in the Compting House of Nicholas Gottlieb Lutckens as Bookkeeper since September 1746. However that he had known him already some time before." Regarding the 6th interrogatory with the questions "Had or had not the said Nicholas Gotlieb Lutkens while he lived and resided in France a Compting House or Compting Houses and one or more Warehouse or Warehouses at Brest St. Malos or Nantes or one or other and which of them or at some other and what [...] Port or Place in France? And was he not notoriously known to carry on a Business or Trade as a Merchant in France? Speak the truth as You are upon your Oath", Köster answered

"that the Merchant Books of Nicholas Gottlieb Lutckens showd, that he had been in the year 1741 at Nantes [Pieter Luttman & Elart von Bobartt], 1742 in the month January at St. Sebastian [Nicolas and Jean Daragorry] in the month of March of the same year at Bilbao [Jean Baptiste Lacoste], in the Month of April of that year at Bayonne [Jean-Pierre Lichigaray Jeune] & in August at Bourdeaux [Johann Jakob Bethmann &

78 Letter from Bethmann, Johann Jakob to Luetkens, Nicolaus Gottlieb, August 10, 1744, TNA, HCA 30/234. A typical German address line reads "Herrn N.G Lutkens, Bey d. Herren Hertzner & Van Bobartt, Geg[enwärtig] in Hamburg." Letter from De Meyere & Zoonen, to Luetkens, Nicolaus Gottlieb, November 09, 1743, TNA, HCA 30/234.

Jacques Imbert]; In the year 1743 in the Month February again at Bayonne, in June of the same year at Bordeaux, in the Month 7ber at London [Anthony Luetkens], in the Month of October at Amsterdam [Albertus de Meyere] & that from thence he arrived again here in Hamburg. That the said Nicholas Gottlieb Lutckens, set out again from Hamburg in the year 1744. That he was in the Months of May & June at Bordeaux, in the month of July at L'Orient, in the month of December at Brest [François Jourdain]; In the year 1745 in the month of July at L'Orient [Jean Jacques d'Egmont] in the month of December at Brest; In the year 1745. In the month of May at St. Malo [Jacques Du Buat] & in the Months of July & August in Brest, on the 28th of August at Paris. From which last mentioned city the said Nicolas Gottlieb Lutcken, as it appears by his Books of Correspondence, sett out the 3d of September, & arrived here in Hamburg on the 19th of the said month of September.<sup>79</sup>

Probably the only person who could have given an even more precise and accurate version of his travels than this list presented by Köster would have been the accused merchant Luetkens himself. Unfortunately, though, this opportunity was denied to him in the case of the Hope. Therefore, Luetkens simply had to put his trust in the credibility and reliability of his bookkeeper. Fortunately for us though, the situation in the case of the ship Post van Hamburg was different. In the court records relating to this ship, we find an original attestation given by the merchant Luetkens himself from the time when he had already returned to Hamburg. Though this attestation does not add more detail to the presented story and travel destination, it offers a concise summary in Luetkens' own words of all the essential points presented in the above explanation. This special record stated that

"Appeared [before court in Hamburg] Mr. Nicolas Gottlieb Lutkens a Burgher and merchant of this place ... is the son of one Nicolas Luetkens who was minister att the Billwarder which is under the jurisdiction of Hambro and consequently by his birth is a subject of this place and further that he dwelt with and served during the space of 7 years one David Speelmeyer a burgher and a merchant here as a servant in his business ["Handlungsbedienter"] but after the expiration of this time of service in order to prove himself in trade ["sich in der Handlung habilitiren"] he travelled into foreign countries to wit Holland England, France and Spain and so forth and after finishing his travels he returned back again to this place further that he having thereupon resolved once more to take a voyage into foreign countries in order to make friends and settle a correspondence in foreign parts ["sich Correspondenten und Freunde in auswärtigen Örtern zu erwerben"]. He did, before he went away pass a full power before a Notary here dated the thirty first January one thousand seven hundred fourty four to messieurs Hertzner & van Bobartt Burghers and merchants of this city to take care of and manage his affairs and thereupon in the month of February of the said year [...] he sett out again from hence on his journey in pursuit of the affairs of his trade and went as well in Germany and Flanders as into France but for the most part of the time of his absence he remained in the French cities on the sea coast to witt Bayonne, Bordeaux, S. Lorient, Vannes, Brest,

79 Examination and attestation of Ludolph Jochim Köster, "a Bookkeeper in several Compting houses of this City", as part of the *Additional Hearings and Attestations*, TNA, HCA 32/115/14.

Morlaix, and Saint Malo, as a travelling merchant, but he never settled himself in any place whatsoever either in France or in Spain, and never had any intention of settling himself there on the contrary he caused, above nine months ago, a house to be hired and taken for him in this city of Hamburg by the said merchants Hertzner & van Bobartt in order to inhabit the same at his return, and afterwards appeared Messieurs Jobst Henning Hertzner and Christoph von Bobartt [...] and confirmed the same.”<sup>80</sup>

The Admiralty did not buy into all the details presented in his attestation, particularly not with regard to the purpose of his stay in France. Their version of events given by both the proctors for the captor in the case of the ship *Hope* and the *Post van Hamburg*, in almost exactly the same wording stated that

“in fact and reality he the said Nicholas Gotlieb Lutkens did on the breaking out of the present war between England and France to wit in or about the months of April or May 1744 got to Brest and other parts in France not on his travels to visit any friends or correspondents but with a premeditated design to trade and traffick there in ships and goods taken from the English by the French and brought into their Ports and condemned there as Prize and he the said Nicholas Gotlieb Lutkens did accordingly continue to live and reside in France and carried on such Trade and Commerce there to the mutual Profit and advantage of himself and of the subjects of the french king and to the great encouragement of their privateers untill in or about the month of September 1745 and this was and is true and well known to the said Nicholas Gotlieb Lutkens and Anthony Lutkens of Hamburgh and so much doth and will most fully and manifestly appear from the preparatory examinations had and taken in this cause and from the severall ships papers found on board the said ship *L'Esperance* otherwise *Hoffnung*.”<sup>81</sup>

The truth surely lay somewhere in between both statements. It was a fact that Luetkens traded actively in France. However, he did that ultimately for the sake of his own business, which was a Hamburg business, and furthermore in both the cases he, as a matter of fact, involved neutral Hamburg merchants as shipowners. Interestingly, the court in the end came to see this, too, and decided in a rather similar, divided manner. Both ships were restored as neutral by the court. Most of the cargo however was condemned as legitimate prize.<sup>82</sup>

80 Original translation by the court of the attestation of Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens and Hertzner & von Bobartt, “Summarische Deposition des erbaren Nicolaus Gottlieb Lutkens und der erbaren Hertzner & von Bobartt”, as part of the as part of the *Additional Hearing and Attestations*, TNA, HCA 32/143/17, CP 9a/b.

81 It even continues “Item that in or about the month of August 1744 the said ship *L'Esperance* otherwise *Hoffnung* then called *the L'Upton* being an English Ship taken and condemned as Prize by the French was sold in the court of the admiralty of the Bishoprick of Vannes to Mr. Peron of Port Louis in France and was bought by him for the account of the said Nicholas Gotlieb Lutkens.” Allegation given by Stevens brought in 21st Nov. 1747, referred to in the catalogue as allegation of the captor Nicholas Craven, 30 May 1747, TNA, HCA 32/115/14. The allegation in the case of the *Post van Hamburg* in the same wording was brought into court 16 March 1748, allegation, *Post van Hamburg*, brought into court 16 March 1748, HCA 32/143/17.

82 See Perl-Rosenthal, “Reading Cargoes.”

## 2.5 A Travelling Merchant

Another specific record within the Luetkens archive allows us to add in the next step to the general life data and the information on Luetkens' travel route, as well as concrete information about his lifestyle and the typical costs and activities of a merchant on travel apart from his business activities. The information provided, however, does not relate to his business trip through France, but to one of his earlier trips to England. This information on his earlier travels already starting in 1738 thus expands the knowledge we gained about Luetkens travels between 1741-1745 given in the statement by book-keeper Köhler. It can be assumed that his personal travel expenses during his voyage through France were, however, comparable in terms of what would have been listed, yet higher in terms of the amounts, due to longer travel distances and the increased cost of living not with relatives but in other merchant houses.

Within the Luetkens archive we can find a pocketbook of expenses that lists all the private expenses that Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens incurred between the years 1738 and 1742, strictly separated from his business expenses.<sup>83</sup> This book provides us with a profound insight into the life of a merchant on travel. If we only take the total amount of his expenses, which is given at the end of the book after he had listed, down to the last Pound Sterling, each and every one of his expenses of the preceding years in an ongoing order and counting, this book is impressive. In total, his first voyage cost him 7,900 Pound Sterling, which is a good indicator why it was such a necessity for young merchant apprentices first to acquire a certain capital stock before they went on travels. However, the merchants on travel would naturally also have earnings during their travels and were furthermore supported by their peers.<sup>84</sup> For comparison please note that this amount is approximately equivalent to three quarters of the price of a regular three-masted vessel at that time, of which Luetkens also bought several during that period as reflected in several sales contracts and advertisements that can be found in the archive.<sup>85</sup>

This shows the immense significance that was attributed to travel activities during that time and also to adhering to a specific lifestyle while travelling. The expenses book enables us to further complete our existing picture of the merchant Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens, and in the following explanations, I will compile all the information about Luetkens' travel activities gathered from it. The informative value and content of the book can be divided into three kinds of expenditures and therefore three fields of knowledge. Firstly, it provides further information regarding accommodation and sightseeing excursions. Secondly, it contains information regarding the cultivation of a bourgeois lifestyle, particularly as regards expenditure on clothing, food and leisure

<sup>83</sup> Pocketbook of expenses in TNA, HCA 30/232.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> See for instance the sales contract, *Factura*, for the ship Margretha Elisabeth, bought in Bilbao in July 1743, which costed 12,641 Pound Sterling. See *Printed advertisements* for the purchase of the prize ship L'Upton of London (later the *Hope*) and its cargo, at Port Louis 5 August 1744 [bought by Luetkens], TNA, HCA 30/232. See *Printed advertisements* for the purchase of prize ships and cargo in Spain and France, e.g. *La Plaisance, L'Aigle Volant*, TNA, HCA 30/232.

activities during a merchant tour that will also reflect the influence of the early Enlightenment on a burghers' life.<sup>86</sup> Last but not least, we are provided with information about the daily running costs a merchant had during his travels. All three fields of knowledge taken together lead over to the last part of this chapter, which deals with the concrete demands of a mercantile establishment phase.

First of all, the pocketbook contains a variety of information that help us to further pin down the stations of his travels. The very first entry reveals to us that he arrived in London, as the very first station of his travels, in October 1738, because he noted that "A[nn]o 1738 October 8, the hard cash" that he brought with him to London amounted to 197 Reichstaler and 15 Pound Sterling.<sup>87</sup> In addition to that he received from his uncle Anthony Luetkens and from Christopher Seydeler, a name that rings a bell with us, a total of 254:6 Reichstaler, 30 Pound Sterling for his conto current, his current account. This amount, in turn, was topped up by further cash remittances by the same two people over the following months. These two merchants thus reveal themselves to be important sponsors and supporters of Luetkens' travels, which once again undermines the illusion of Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens being an entirely self-made man. In fact, without the financial support and general assistance of his uncles and other kin, his travel activities would simply not have been possible. This represents another typical characteristic of a mercantile upbringing.<sup>88</sup> Apart from this information about his account status, the information that Luetkens arrived in London in 1738 also enables us to exactly work out at what age and in what year Luetkens apprenticeship ultimately must have once started. Since we know from the court records that his time in the house of Speelmeyer had lasted seven years, we can conclude that his apprenticeship and his service as a clerk in the merchant house of Speelmeyer must have lasted from around 1731 to 1738. And this information in turn reveals that he must have started his apprenticeship, as was rather typical, at the age of 14.<sup>89</sup> Regarding the end of his first business trip through Europe, we are likewise able to designate the exact date and year. At the very end of his pocketbook Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens gave as the date of his last entry on his travels "today the 21st of August 1742".<sup>90</sup> At this date, he arrived back in Hamburg from the last station of his first journey, which was Bilbao in Spain, of which we know, apart from the entries in the court records, since he had also recorded the costs for this last trip in the previous entry. "On the 24th of August [he noted as the] expenses for a round trip to Spain since February 1742, 3200 Pound Sterling."<sup>91</sup> With the help of the costs given for passages, coaches, horses, and even drinking money he had given to seamen listed in

<sup>86</sup> See in this regard Leibetseder, "Educational Journey." Regarding the bourgeois lifestyle see North, Michael. *Material Delight and the Joy of Living: Cultural Consumption in Germany in the Age of Enlightenment*. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2008. See Van Dülmen, Richard. *The Society of the Enlightenment. The Rise of the Middle Class and Enlightenment Culture in Germany*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992.

<sup>87</sup> Pocketbook of expenses in TNA, HCA 30/232.

<sup>88</sup> See Grassby, *Business Community*, 82-84, 92, 195. See Hancock, *Citizens of the World*, 43.

<sup>89</sup> See Earle, *Making of the English Middle Class*, 43-44. See also Ruppert, *Bürgerlicher Wandel*, 76-82. See Van Dülmen, *Kultur und Alltag*, 121-122.

<sup>90</sup> Pocketbook of expenses in TNA, HCA 30/232.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

the book, we can furthermore exactly establish the intermediate stops of his travels. His stay in London lasted from October 1738 till April 18th, 1740. We know this because he noted that he bequeathed at the time of his departure a certain amount of "Reichstaler to the children of his uncle, the maidservants of his uncle as well as to the maidservants in the house of the merchant Well and his boy servants as well as to a certain Crullenberg and several others as well as to the churches of London". He then travelled by ship to Caen, France, arriving on the 10th of June, where he and then continued by horse and coach to Nantes in France, which we all can account for through respective entries in his pocketbook. In October 1741, he continued his journey by travelling to L'Orient, where he spent money on accommodation in the house of the merchant Gloye but also for instance on visits to the local coffee house. From L'Orient he travelled to Bordeaux, from where he then took the coach to Bilbao at the beginning of February 1742, where he would stay another 6 months until returning to Hamburg.<sup>92</sup> This character of his travels was typical for Early Modern travel. Combining this information with the other information that we already gained regarding his business trip to France and the information about his childhood and apprenticeship, we are now able to compile a concise biography that comprehensively and significantly extends our picture of Luetkens and his early life beyond the picture offered in the contemporary biographical entries and obituaries. This concise version of his educational path therefore serves in the following as the fundamental basis and background to my analyses.

Born in 1717 in Hamburg Billwärder, Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens was first home-schooled by his father and was furthermore educated by a private tutor. He entered into an apprenticeship at the age of 14 in the house of the Hamburg merchant David Speelmeyer, where he served seven years during which he was also appointed a merchant clerk in the same house. After his apprenticeship, Luetkens went on his first business trip through Europe, supported by his legal guardians and uncles, after his father had died in 1736. This business trip started in 1738 in London, where his uncle Anthony Luetkens ran a merchant house, continued in France from 1741 onwards (Nantes, Bordeaux) and finally ended in Spain in 1742 (Bilbao). His second business trip eventually took him to France. It started in autumn 1743 and lasted two years, during which he visited several important trading cities as a travelling merchant until finally returning to Hamburg by land in September 1745 for his marriage to Ilsabe Engelhardt, which took place in November 1745. Ilsabe was the sister of Ehrenfried Engelhardt, with whom Luetkens entered into a partnership and opened up his merchant house in Hamburg. The further course of his life is presented in detail in the contemporary biographies and obituaries on Luetkens.

The information about the general course and route of his travels, is, however, not the only information that we can gain from the pocketbook about Luetkens' first trip through Europe. Rather, we have arrived at the point where we are slowly but steadily shifting our perspective from the level of dates and travel stations to the more private and personal sites of Luetkens' stay abroad and his experiences during his travels. The

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92 See *ibid.*

pocketbook of expenses allows us, for instance, to learn about sightseeing trips that Luetkens undertook in England and France. Unfortunately, no similar information is given with regard to Spain. Furthermore, the pocketbook reveals the accommodation he chose and paid for during his travels. In London for instance he lived in the house of a certain "Sam[ue]l Highmore in Mortlake", Surrey, who was a priest, a "minister of a dissenting congregation" as we find in a description of this man in the Gentleman's Magazine of 1790, who also accommodated travellers in his house, and to whom Luetkens paid a monthly rate.<sup>93</sup> A rather funny side note to this is that if we compare the location of Luetkens' lodgings in London with a map of London today, we realise that during his stay in England Luetkens actually lived quite near to the place where his letters are stored today. Samuel Highmore's house would have been in walking distance to the current location of the National Archives in Kew. The small excursions that Luetkens undertook during his stay in England took him, as the pocketbook shows, inter alia to Windsor ["Winsor"], to Kingston ["Kingsen"], to Hampton Court ["Hemtenkort"], to Saint Tabborn ["St. Tabborn"] and of course to the city centre of London.<sup>94</sup> Later in France, during his first trip, he lived, as we already heard, in the house of the merchant Gloye, whose children received some money later and some "confecturen", jam, as gifts in 1740.<sup>95</sup> In Bordeaux he probably stayed at the house of a certain Madame Sabenyoll, to whom he also paid rent, according to his pocketbook. He undertook smaller excursions in France, too, which took him for example to Bourgneuf, which was an important place for buying ships during that time. We learn three things through this information which are significant and meaningful with regard to the more personal demands and the general characteristics of a mercantile business trip during that time.

First, we learn that apart from the strategy Luetkens chose with regard to accommodation for his second trip through France, which was to work and live in the houses of established merchants in France, it was also common practice to look for accommodation in local inns, lodges or taverns. Staying in the houses of already established merchants in foreign countries always harboured a later risk of being accused of collaborating with the enemy in any prize case, which was, of course, an impression that the merchants tried to avoid if at all possible. This is the reason why many of the defendants in the case of the Hope and the Post van Hamburg referred to Luetkens in their witness statements as a merchant on travel, "as a Traveller", who would "sett out on his travells at his own expenses & has been in several places as a travelling merchant, to gett himself some correspondence", because this meant that Luetkens could refer to himself as and maintain the image of a free and independent traveller between the worlds of the belligerent parties of that time.<sup>96</sup> Naturally, this image most of the time was an illusion in view of the merchants' everyday life on travel, even when they chose neutral

93 Pocketbook of expenses in TNA, HCA 30/232. Samuel Highmore is mentioned in "Obituary of considerable persons." *Gentleman's Magazine* 67 (1790): 274-282, here 280.

94 Pocketbook of expenses in TNA, HCA 30/232.

95 Ibid.

96 Examination and attestation of Christopher Seydeler. See also Examination and attestation of Georg Christian Geerts, "a merchant", as part of the *Additional Hearings and Attestations*, TNA, HCA 32/115/14.

places to live during their stays abroad. For example, even though Luetkens stayed in the house of Samuel Highmore during his first trip to London, he spent most of his time in the merchant house of his uncle Anthony Luetkens and Anthony's business partner Hinrich Well. This fact becomes obvious through the many gifts and donations to the maids and servants at the merchant house that we find among Luetkens' expenditures. In a way, this can however also be even seen as a rather self-evident fact. Taking part in their business introduced him to the customs and mercantile practices of London-based trade, which was highly important to further enhance his skills in business.

During his establishment phase in France, Luetkens still mostly lived and traded in the houses of already established merchants, both French and from other countries such as the Netherlands, Switzerland and Germany. The particular reason for the latter will be presented in detail in the chapter on commission trade. As the example of the time that he had spent in the house of Madame Sabenyoll shows, he on occasion also made use of neutral accommodation. In a way, this latter custom can be regarded as almost a kind of compromise settlement prevailing among all the parties involved that ensures that, at least, the young merchants kept up the appearance and fulfilled the formal requirements were that they ought to act and live separately and independently from the local trading markets. Nonetheless, at the same time it was common currency that they simply could not avoid being involved in the local trade and working together with the local merchants. How would they otherwise have got the chance to learn about the rules and customs of international trade? Using the example of the choice of accommodation, it thus becomes vividly clear how the young men found peculiar and appropriate ways and means to find a kind of a middle course between personal independence and active engagement and involvement as merchants that would suit their situation. This constant tightrope walking was a characteristic feature of almost all areas of Luetkens' life during this time and, as one of the main challenges he had to cope with, it eventually lasted for the whole duration of his stay abroad.

The second noteworthy fact that we learn from the information on his travels is the fact that Luetkens chose the house of his uncle Anthony Luetkens in London as the very first address to turn to after his apprenticeship. Once more we see that young merchants were meant to be provided, as far as possible, with the opportunity of a kind sheltered environment for growing up and for getting a smooth introduction into the hazardous world of trade. By turning to his uncle as his first point of contact for his stay abroad and by working in his house and the houses of Anthony's business partners in London, he enjoyed once again the benefit of what was in essence a secure training ground which put him in a stronger position to set out on his way into self-employment.<sup>97</sup> It is therefore surely also no surprise that this period in London ended up lasting almost two years, but this was rather symptomatic, too. His stay in London could be seen ultimately as an extended version of his employment phase in the house of Speelmeyer, only that he would now have been given even more responsibilities in order to further pave his way into his own establishment. This in theory clear requirement to act on one's own

<sup>97</sup> See also Grassby, *Business Community*, 195, 293. Hancock, *Citizens of the World*, 124. See furthermore Häberlein, "Trading Companies." See also Ditz, "Shipwrecked," 63. As a comparable example see also Müller, *The Merchant Houses of Stockholm*, 24-27.

during one's mercantile travels was thus once again thwarted or circumvented because naturally the young men would seek to profit from their existing contacts in foreign lands and equally naturally visit and work for their contacts. This was especially true if it was family, no matter whether these contacts had affiliations with foreign countries and their economic markets. To a certain extent, this sheltered dipping into foreign markets can surely be seen as another unwritten law of an Early Modern establishment phase.

The third characteristic feature of mercantile years of travel visible in Luetkens' expenditures with regard to his general travel activities is that we learn of Luetkens' manifold small excursions. These excursions show us that it was not only regarded as important to visit foreign lands and their cities in general but also to get to know these cities and their cultural and historical sights. This trained and fostered the young merchants' urbanity and their experiences in the ways of the world. Contrary to the aristocratic or bourgeois Grand Tours, however, these small excursions did not serve merely the purpose of joyrides but most of the time they also had very concrete practical purposes. Apart from visiting Hampton Court or Windsor castle, which are still very popular sights for visitors to London today, the small trips for instance to Kingston or central London, or to Bourgneuf in France always also served the purpose of visiting and meeting other local merchants there in order to establish further contacts and to get to know local usances. Even the trips to places such as Hampton Court can be seen as a kind of networking and bonding activity because Luetkens visited these places together with fellow travellers or members of the Luetkens family. In London, for instance, he undertook other entertainment activities with his aunt, like participating in the local lottery.<sup>98</sup>

The reason for the fact that we cannot find a comparable book of expenses for the time between 1743 and 1745 in France is simply that Luetkens must have kept this most current book of expenses with him as part of his most personal belongings together with his most current Letter Book and presumably also most personal letters, which he would carry with him and not store it in his mercantile archive. As we know of the witness testimony and attestation of the bookkeeper Köster, Luetkens did not accompany his archive on its way to Hamburg by ship in August 1745 as he still had to settle some last business matters in France with another stop-over in Paris before returning home.<sup>99</sup> It can therefore be assumed that he had also taken his most current pocketbook of expenses and other most personal items with him personally during this last trip, maybe in a travel bag, which was an item that we can also find among the expenses between 1738 and 1742.

98 See Ruppert, *Bürgerlicher Wandel*, 86-90. See Leibetseder, "Educational Journey." See also Grosser, "Kavalierstour – Patrizierreise – bürgerliche Bildungsreise," 135-176.

99 Examination and attestation of Ludolph Jochim Köster, "a Bookkeeper in several Compting houses of this City", as part of the *Additional Hearings and Attestations*, TNA, HCA 32/115/14.

## 2.6 A Bourgeois Lifestyle

Another field of insights that we can gain from Luetkens' pocketbook of expenses is the detailed information about Luetkens' clothing habits and leisure activities as these expenses represent the effort he went to in order to uphold a bourgeois mercantile lifestyle during his travels. From this we can also draw first conclusions about the demands of an Early Modern mercantile establishment phase. Such a lifestyle, reflected in expenditure not only on clothing, but also on books, gifts or leisure activities, represented a major asset and cultural capital as well as a clear requirement for a mercantile establishment phase. It fostered and underpinned the aspiring merchants' self-perception as a merchant and his claim to becoming acknowledged as a respected member of the merchant community at home and abroad because he could demonstrate through his expenditures that he knew how to behave, how to dress and what to consume as a merchant in an appropriate and socially approved manner. The pocketbook of expenses shows us a young man who knew exactly how he had to present himself in public and private in order to be deemed a respected representative of his métier and his craftsmanship. For us, he represents an appealing textbook example of a commercial man living during the early Enlightenment.<sup>100</sup>

It can be assumed that Nicolaus Gottlieb had in essence learned and internalised this bourgeois lifestyle ever since his childhood days in a parish priest's house, but especially also during his youth and apprenticeship in Hamburg. During the end of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th, Hamburg was one of the booming cities of the early Enlightenment and, importantly, also famous for its bourgeois civil life shaped by a very strong middle class and merchant elite.<sup>101</sup> Growing up in this city, especially between the 1720s and 1730s, therefore meant quite literally that Nicolaus Gottlieb enjoyed the

<sup>100</sup> A good comparable example regarding mercantile lifestyle can be found in Spalding/Spalding. *The Account Books of the Reimarus*. See also Fulda, Daniel. *Galanterie und Frühaufklärung*. Halle (Saale): Mitteldeutscher Verlag, 2009. Regarding European Fashion in general during the Early Modern Period see the introduction by Mentges, Gabriele. "European Fashion (1450–1950)." *Europäische Geschichte Online (ECO)*, edited by the Leibniz-Institut für Europäische Geschichte (IEG), Mayence 2011. <http://www.ieg-ego.eu/mentgesg-2011-en>, accessed June 4, 2019. Regarding 18th-century bourgeois lifestyle in general see North, *Joy of Living*; Van Dülmen, *Society of the Enlightenment*. See also Ilmakunnas, Johanna, and Jon Stobart, eds. *A Taste for Luxury in Early Modern Europe: Display, Acquisition and Boundaries*. London: Bloomsbury, 2017. For France, see also Roche, Daniel. *The Culture of Clothing: Dress and Fashion in the Ancien Régime*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

<sup>101</sup> Kopitzsch, *Grundzüge einer Sozialgeschichte*, vol. 1, 247–451. See for a good overview Kopitzsch, Franklin. "Zwischen Hauptrezeß und Franzosenzeit 1712–1806. Geistiger Aufbruch. Die Aufklärung." In *Hamburg. Die Geschichte der Stadt und ihrer Bewohner*, edited by Werner Jochmann and Hans-Dieter Lohse, 351–414. Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1982. Regarding the role of the mercantile elite in Hamburg see Hohendahl, Peter Uwe. *Patriotism, Cosmopolitanism, and National Culture: Public Culture in Hamburg 1700–1933*. Amsterdam/New York: Rodopi, 2003. See Kopitzsch, Franklin. "Sozietäten und Literatur in der Hamburger Aufklärung." In *Hamburg im Zeitalter der Aufklärung*, edited by Inge Stephan and Hans-Gerd Winter, 124–136. Berlin/Hamburg: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 1989. See in general *ibid.*; see Steiger/Richter, *Hamburg*. See Trepp, *Sanfte Männlichkeit und selbständige Weiblichkeit*. See Lindemann, Mary. *Patriots and Paupers. Hamburg, 1712–1830*. New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.

full privilege of being socialised in a city in which the bourgeois lifestyle was representing the status quo. In Hamburg, the first coffee houses opened in the late 17th century and then spread all over the city to become important meeting places for the burghers of the city. Here the first German moral weekly, the *Patriot*, was published, when Nicolaus Gottlieb was eight years old.<sup>102</sup> The Hamburg printing press and literature market in general was one booming during the time. Hamburg also had a very lively academic life and was one of the leading parts of the early “republic of scholars” and the corresponding republic of letters, of which his father and his acquaintances were important members. The Hamburg schools and universities were well known far beyond regional borders.<sup>103</sup> Last but not least, the Hamburg merchant houses enjoyed the highest international reputation.<sup>104</sup> It was amidst this impressive bourgeois public sphere and society that the young Nicolaus Gottlieb grew up.

When Nicolaus Gottlieb took to the road for his travels to England, the Netherlands, Spain and France, he was already carrying quite a bit in his luggage, not only with regard to his actual travel baggage, but also with regard to his manners of bourgeois appearance and his habitual skills. These skills would subsequently be enhanced further during his travels.<sup>105</sup> In addition, he would also familiarise himself with the customs and civil life of other cities and countries, and he should of course improve his language skills in the foreign lands. On all these aspects, the pocketbook provides valuable insights and hints and likewise also provides us with the evidence for how crucial this habitual knowledge apparently was for a mercantile establishment phase.

In the pocketbook, we therefore find, amongst others, the following items that Luetkens purchased during his travels. First, we find entries about visits to the local coffeehouses, every time he first arrived in a city or on special occasions such as Christmas. Apart from that, he purchased, as the entries show tea and sugar, coffee, tobacco, snuff tobacco, for which he also bought a small box, green tea, sugar, brandy and even milk. This shows us that he bought goods that were consumed in the coffee houses also for his personal use.<sup>106</sup> As a merchant, who traded as a commission agent in these commodities and goods, he naturally also had to present himself as an expert and connoisseur of these goods. Apart from that, these items were natural parts of a bourgeois

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<sup>102</sup> *Der Patriot* nach der Originalausgabe Hamburg 1724-1726, 4 volumes, edited by Wolfgang Martens, Band IV: Kommentarband. Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 1984.

<sup>103</sup> See Briezke, Dirk, and Franklin Kopitzsch and Rainer Nicolaysen, eds. *Das Akademische Gymnasium. Bildung und Wissenschaft in Hamburg 1613-1883*. Berlin: Reimer, 2013. See Rathje, Jürgen. “Gelehrten-schulen. Gelehrte, Gelehrtenzirkel und Hamburgs geistiges Leben im frühen 18 Jahrhundert.” In *Hamburg im Zeitalter der Aufklärung*, edited by Inge Stephan and Hans-Gerd Winter, 93-123. Berlin/Hamburg: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 1989.

<sup>104</sup> See already Baasch, Ernst. *Der Einfluß des Handels auf das Geistesleben Hamburg*. Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1909.

<sup>105</sup> Regarding the French lifestyle see Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*, Part II “The Economy of Ward- robes”, particularly 184-258. See also Viala, Alain. *La France galante. Essai historique sur une catégorie culturelle, de ses origines jusqu'à la Révolution*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2008. Regarding language learning see Kuhfuss, *Kulturgeschichte des Französischunterrichts*, 349-476.

<sup>106</sup> Book of expenses in TNA, HCA 30/232.

lifestyle during the age of Enlightenment.<sup>107</sup> Secondly, we find entries regarding visits not only to the cultural sights of the cities but also to other cultural offerings and events. As such could be considered for instance masquerades that Nicolaus Gottlieb had visited. This becomes apparent from his expenditures on these occasions as well as from his preparations for these events. He for instance borrowed a costume and bought a mask. We can also consider as parts of such habitual training the dancing lessons that he took at a local dancing school and with a master, which presumably was intended to prepare him to fit in on occasions such as the masquerade.<sup>108</sup> Dancing was furthermore not limited to public occasions but was also quite usual in more private settings and contexts, such as the typical tête-à-têtes, which bourgeois families often shared with each other, and of which we can also read in the Luetkens letters.<sup>109</sup> Developing and showing skills and knowledge of such cultural activities formed an important asset that a young man had to incorporate during his education and his establishment phase. Thirdly, we find lots of entries about gift and presents. During the entire Early Modern Period, gift-giving was one of the most crucial practices of social life representing an important tool of mutual recognition and esteem within the hierarchical social structure of the era.<sup>110</sup> It not only represented good form and manners but literally belonged to the standard repertoire of sociability, which especially young people had to comply with, who would have been dependent on the goodwill of others, such as supporters and patrons. Finding a lot of gifts and presents among the entries in the pocketbook shows that Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens also knew what befitted him in this regard and also what would suit his needs. He would often bestow gifts and presents, such as financial donations, jam ["confecturen"], chestnuts ["castanien"] or valuable "drinking glasses", upon his uncles and aunts, his first trading partners, as well as his landlords, their family, servants and maids, to ensure their benevolence and affection for him. But he also sent his two brothers several gifts such as silver buckles for their shoes or silver buttons.<sup>111</sup>

<sup>107</sup> See North, *Joy of Living*. See the HERA project Intoxicating Spaces: <https://www.intoxicatingspaces.org>, accessed October 19, 2020. See Withington, Phil. "Intoxicants and the Invention of 'Consumption'" *The Economic History Review* 73 (2020): 384-408.

<sup>108</sup> Regarding *Masquerades*, particularly in France, see Wahrman, *Making of the Modern Self*, "The Eighteenth-Century Masquerade," 157-311. See in general Stollberg-Rilinger, Barbara. *Europa im Jahrhundert der Aufklärung*. Stuttgart: Reclam 2000, 114-144.

<sup>109</sup> See letter from De Meyere, Albertus to Luetkens, Nicolaus Gottlieb, August 20, 1744, TNA, HCA 30/234. "Am Don[n]erstag morgen war ich bey Kähler u. des nachmittags muste ich mit ihm [...] [und seiner] Tochter nach den Garten fahren, allwo H. von Schwechelsen u. [die] Muhme Heusch u. die Krauses nebst ihren Töchtern [waren]." Letter from Luetkens, Joachim to Luetkens, Nicolaus Gottlieb, May 25, 1744, TNA, HCA 30/235.

<sup>110</sup> See as an introduction Kettering, Sharon. "Gift-Giving and Patronage in Early Modern France." *French History* 2, no. 2 (1988): 131-151. See also Krausman Ben-Amos, Ilana. *The Culture of Giving: Informal Support and Gift-Exchange in Early Modern England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011, "The Economy of Giving," 143-306. See in general Mauss, Marcel. *The Gift. Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*. London: Routledge Classics, 2002 (first edition, in French, *Essay sur le don*, 1950).

<sup>111</sup> Pocketbook of expenses in TNA, HCA 30/232.

A fourth category of expenses is books. We find amongst his expenditures for instance a history book [“Historienbuch”], an English bible, an English letter manual [“Engl. Br:Buch”], and three French books, among them the famous Robinson Crusoe [“R. Crusoe”]. Reading and erudition were among the prime cultural assets and cultural capital during the Enlightenment, especially for the middle class.<sup>112</sup> Luetkens’ choice of books, however, obviously also served more practical reasons. Arriving in England, he needed to get more familiar with English letters and get used to writing and reading them, so he bought an English letter manual. The same reason applied to his purchase of an English bible. Arriving in France, he needed further literacy skills in French, so he bought Robinson Crusoe and the two other books, presumably also a letter-writing manual, which would, however, also serve his recreational pleasure.

### Dressing like a Merchant

The last area of expenses with regard to his habitual advancement and skills, which is also the one group of items that accounts for the major share of expenses in the book, regards his expenditure on clothing. With the help of all these entries regarding clothing, we are able to reconstruct and gain a very detailed and vivid picture of Luetkens’ well-groomed outward appearance.<sup>113</sup> The pocketbook even provides us with the opportunity to undertake the experiment of fitting out a mannequin today as if we were facing Luetkens himself in the clothing that he was wearing during his travels.

Starting at the top, the mannequin would need a typical 18th-century wig [“Parucke”], of which Luetkens purchased six between the years 1738 and 1742, of which one is more specified as a “round” wig. The book furthermore shows that each year one or two wigs would be purchased to replace the older ones. For the cold nights in England and France, Luetkens also bought nightcaps, but our mannequin still keeps its wig on as that was the typical headdress worn in public. Under the wig, Luetkens would wear a “hear-bonet” [“Haarbeutel”] in order to tame his hair. Sometimes he would also wear a hat [“Hutt”]. The next items that can be found in the book are scarves and neckerchiefs, of which he bought several. As underwear, Luetkens would wear “white skivvies” and “silk stockings” or alternatively “cotton stockings” [“weiß unterzeug, Seiden Strümpfe, Baumwollstrümpfe”]. Over this, he would then wear white shirts or shirt blouses, of which he bought “six new” ones. We also find a reference in the book to “red sheets”, which could have been used for revamping his shirts. As the next item on the list, and this time one of the more flamboyant pieces of his outer appearance, we find a “golden waistcoat” [“goldene Weste”] which he combined with a camelot [“chamelot”, Kamelott, Schamlott in German] skirt, a dark red satin “camisol” jacket garnished with damast [“Camelot zum Rock, Seiden Camisol [...]”, Damask

<sup>112</sup> See Cavallo, Guglielmo, and Roger Chartier, eds. *A History of Reading in the West*. Cambridge: Polity, 1999. See Chartier, Roger. *Lesewelten. Buch und Lektüre in der frühen Neuzeit*. Frankfurt a.M./New York, Campus, 1990.

<sup>113</sup> See Welch, Evelyn. *Fashioning the Early Modern. Dress, Textiles, and Innovation in Europe, 1500-1800*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

*Figure 7: Dressing like a merchant. Reconstruction of Luetkens' outward appearance based on the items listed in his pocketbook of expenses.*



Source: Illustration by Anne van Stormbroek.

zum Camisol"] and a red frock coat [“ein rothen Mantellrock”].<sup>114</sup> In winter, he would equip his frock coat and jacket with further lining. More representative items of his expenditure list were valuable silver buttons and a knife [“vor silberne Knöpfe und Meßer”], handkerchiefs [“Schnupftücher”], a silver rapier [“silberne Degen”] and last but not least, as the most expensive item we can find in his pocketbook, Luetkens wore a “golden pocket watch” worth 14 Pound, which he would tie to his clothes with a chain [a particular “Pinschbecken Uhrkette”].<sup>115</sup> Completing our mannequin, Luetkens would wear buckled shoes, of which he owned several pairs and which he would replace more or less on a monthly basis. He stored all his clothing during his travels in a

<sup>114</sup> Tailor's bill, Gottfried Walter, 1743, HCA 30/232.

<sup>115</sup> All items mentioned in his pocketbook of expenses in TNA, HCA 30/232.

“chest”, his travel chest. In fact, as the court records in the case of the Hope reveal, some of these cloths, some “wearing apparrol” were still stored in his travel chest at the time the English officers found the hidden archive in the after-hold of the ship.<sup>116</sup> Unfortunately, Luetkens’ clothes, have not survived in the National Archives in London. Most probably, they were thrown away or sold by the English authorities in 1745.

All in all, looking at our mannequin, we realise that Luetkens must have cut quite a stately figure in terms of his appearance during his travels. His dress and appearance matched other portraits of merchants of the time as well as actual miniature mannequins of merchants.<sup>117</sup> Not least these similarities show that by wearing such clothes Luetkens clearly underpinned and demonstrated his claim to become or even already to be a respectable member of the merchant community. This appears to have been another important asset for a young merchant on travel. On the other hand, we can also find entries in his pocketbook with regard to his clothing habits that point us once again to the special hybrid status of a merchant during his establishment phase. These entries show that, even though he surely needed to present himself as a well-dressed man, he was required not to exceed reasonable limits with regard to his outward appearance. It is thus very telling that apart from the listings for a golden waist coat or clocks we find numerous entries in his pocketbook that underpin that Luetkens was very committed to ensuring that his dress style would not seem excessive or lavish. Multiple times he noted for instance that a tailor named “Feldman” had patched his old clothes or he simply noted that his “shirts had been patched”. In France, he had his clock beaten out. As a merchant on travel, he had to show that he was also able to reasonably budget for himself. In the end, he was therefore also complying adequately with a more general contemporary demand of young men, which was that they had to be thrifty and frugal in their lifestyle.<sup>118</sup>

Again, as we look at both sides together, we see the difficult starting situation that the young men had to face during their travels, even with regard to how they dressed. Again, we find the fine line between exaggeration and understatement that the young men had to master for the purpose of their career advancement. Thus, the search for an appropriate middle way obviously was the order of the day and will also reappear repeatedly with regard to the business requirements and needs of an establishment phase

<sup>116</sup> “[...] the deponent found a [--] large Trunk almost full of papers in the after Hold of the said ship and saith that the same trunk was so blockt in with Barrolles that they were forced to work near half a day to get at the same and there were some wearing apparroll as well as papers in the said trunk.” Examination of James Doran, September 10, 1745. *Instance and Prize Courts: Examinations and Answers*, Examinations 1744-1747, TNA, HCA 13/90.

<sup>117</sup> Miniature mannequins, clay statuettes, produced of merchants from the same period, like the famous portrait figure, a miniature of Joseph Collet, which was once a present to his daughter, today displayed in the National Portrait Gallery of London. *Joseph Collet*, by Amoy Chinqua, painted unfired clay statuette, 1716, 33 in. (838 mm) high. Given by the sitter’s descendant, W.P.G. Collet, 1956, National Portrait Gallery, London, Primary Collection, NPG 4005. On display in Room 14 at the National Portrait Gallery. As an example of a portrait see portrait of “Johann Hinrich Gossler (1738-1790).” *Heritage* 2 (2004): 32.

<sup>118</sup> See Münch, Paul. *Lebensformen in der frühen Neuzeit: 1500 bis 1800*. Berlin: Ullstein, 1998, 233-272. See in general Münch, Paul. *Ordnung, Fleiß und Sparsamkeit. Texte und Dokumente zur Entstehung der bürgerlichen Tugenden*. Munich: DTV, 1984. See Levi/Schmitt, *A History of Young People*.

in the next part of this chapter. Even the requirement for a proper outward appearance will once again reappear in the following explanations, this time in connection with an appropriate contact to partners and customers. Before coming to that, however, I will also take a look at the third field of knowledge for which we can gain insights through the pocketbook because this will provide a direct and smooth transition to the next part. The third field of knowledge regards the typical daily or monthly running costs of a merchant on travel, which shows the link between the personal and the business demands of an establishment phase by demonstrating that these two spheres in the end always have to be seen as permanently interlinked with each other.

## Running Costs

In the pocketbook of expenses, we find regular expenditure for the tailor and for shoes, of which Luetkens bought 19 pairs in total during the years of his first stay abroad. Reasons for the former have already been given. The reasons for the latter were, maybe contrary to the first impression, not only that Luetkens had a particular liking or weakness for shoes, but also that shoes during the Early Modern Period generally had a short lifespan if worn and used intensively. The increased demand for shoes by Luetkens literally tells us that Luetkens had been carrying out a lot of his mercantile errands on foot. Yet, the high number of shoes and in particular the high cost per pair surely also tells us without question that he put considerable emphasis on the importance of a good and cultivated appearance. This fact is furthermore confirmed by entries that list costs for shoe cleaning. The third and fourth regular expenses also fit in with this picture: he regularly spent money on having his clothes washed and on visiting the barber.<sup>119</sup> The fifth common regular expenses are on medicine. Even though we only find one concrete entry regarding medicine in the pocketbook, actually mentioning medicine [“medicin”], it can nevertheless be assumed that he had actually purchased more, or that he simply made use of medicine he found for instance in his uncle’s house. As we know from other contemporary sources such as merchant manuals or travel instructions, it was vital for merchants to stay healthy, especially during their travels, because anything else would have meant losses in business.<sup>120</sup> The last and at the same time most striking item that we can find in the pocketbook showing regular expenses is postage for letters. At first sight, the costs for postage [“Briefporto”] appear hardly noticeable or worth mentioning, especially because they are often mentioned together with other “smaller expenditures” [“kleine Ausgaben”]. As soon as one notices, however, the frequency of the occurrence and the total cost of postage per year [1739: 13,67 £ in total], it becomes highly apparent how important conducting a regular correspondence was for young merchants. Postage was paid during the entire Early Modern Period by the receiver when collecting letters

<sup>119</sup> Regarding the demand for keeping an orderly appearance while travelling see also Marperger, Paul Jakob. *Mentor oder des Reisenden Telemachi kluger Hofmeister [...]*. Dresden: Autoris, 1725, 4.

<sup>120</sup> See Defoe, *Complete English Tradesman*, 282. See Marperger, *Hofmeister*, 4. Regarding the 18th century discourse on the importance of “health” and on bodily practices see Piller, Gudrun. *Private Körper: Spuren des Leibes in Selbstzeugnissen des 18. Jahrhunderts*. Cologne/Weimar/Vienna: Böhlau, 2007, 47-69, 174-185. See Raapke, Annika. *Dieses verfluchte Land. Europäische Körper in Brieferzählungen aus der Karibik, 1744-1826*. Bielefeld: transcript, 2019.

in the local post office, at the harbour or when they were brought directly to the merchant house. Luetkens must have had expenses for postage every single week of his stay abroad and the overall costs in the end amounted to a sum comparable to the cost of 6 weeks rent in a lodging house [“3 Wochen Logie at Saml. Highmore in Mortlake”: 7,18 £].<sup>121</sup> The sheer number of letters that we find in the actual mercantile business and letter archive of Luetkens 1743-1745 provides us with further hard evidence in this regard.

The cost of postage furthermore ultimately represents the one special item in the pocketbook that exceeds most clearly the scope of personal or private expenditures, as it needs to be regarded as a crucial part of his expenditure for business purposes, which leads over perfectly to the next part of this chapter. It becomes apparent how interwoven the costs for personal and business expenditure ultimately were. Of course, also all his other expenses surely will have had their repercussions with his business activities, but with regard to postage this interconnectedness becomes tangible. “Tending to correspondence was a pressing demand and an ordinary fact of life for every merchant”, and therefore also most certainly one of the most pressing demands of an Early Modern mercantile establishment phase.<sup>122</sup> Therefore Luetkens will surely more or less willingly have paid the cost of postage from his private expenses during his travels because it signified and fostered his personal advancement in the world of trade. This tells us therefore that all the listed expenditure on postage actually refers to the cost of paying for his incoming letters, which would certainly have increased his willingness to pay because the more letters he received the more he could rest assured that his efforts were bearing fruit.<sup>123</sup> Each trip he took to the local post offices or trading houses to pick up his letters ultimately stood for nothing other than another step forward towards his establishment as a merchant, which surely made it reasonable for him to risk wearing out another pair of shoes. In the next part of this chapter, I will continue my explanations on the requirements and demands of an 18th-century mercantile establishment phase with regard to business enterprises, but just as with regard to postage costs these explanations will often also refer back to private expenses listed in the preceding chapter.

## 2.7 The Demands and Requirements of a Mercantile Establishment Phase

What were the main contemporary demands and requirements for a merchant during his establishment phase? In order to answer this question, there exists an extensive

<sup>121</sup> Regarding these costs see *Detailed bill for a post chaise*, May 1744, in TNA, HCA 30/232. Regarding the typical costs for postage see furthermore Marperger, *Der allzeitfertige Handels-Correspondent*, 498. See also Whyman, *Pen and the People*, 46-71. See Behringer, Wolfgang. *Im Zeichen des Merkur. Reichspost und Kommunikationsrevolutionen in der Frühen Neuzeit*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003. See O'Neill, *The Opened Letter*, 19-46.

<sup>122</sup> Trivellato, *Familiarity of Strangers*, 170.

<sup>123</sup> See Whyman, Susan. “‘Paper Visits’: The Post-Restoration Letter as seen Through the Verney Archive.” In *Epistolary Selves: Letters and Letter Writers 1600-1945*, edited by Rebecca Earle, 15-36. Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999, here 22. See also Whyman, *Pen and the People*, 61-64.

body of contemporary literature from the 17th and 18th century dealing with this matter. Unfortunately, we cannot find any concrete document dealing with this matter in the Luetkens archive itself that helps us to directly answer this question. Even though it had been quite common during the entire Early Modern Period to equip young men with mercantile advice literature, merchant manuals on mercantile business and concrete written instructions during their travels and coming of age or, we search in vain for such a record in the Luetkens archive.<sup>124</sup> We find no merchant handbooks or instructions, no travel literature or similar documents among the surviving records in London. Therefore, in this book, I will derive and reconstruct the concrete activities and steps necessary for an Early Modern establishment phase directly from the analyses of the letters and business records, the letter conversations and the business enterprises found in the Luetkens archive. As a basis for these analyses, however, I will prepend these chapters and analyses with a chapter on the most crucial demands and requirements for an 18th century mercantile establishment phase as they are presented to us in contemporary mercantile advice literature, in merchant manuals or guidebooks. This chapter serves as the basic foundation for the analytical chapters providing us with the fundamental knowledge about the necessary skills, competences and character traits paving the way into establishment as seen from the perspective of contemporary advice writers and merchants. The combination of the present chapter with the analytical chapters focussing on Luetkens' business and letter practices provides a comprehensive picture of the making of a merchant in the 18th century.

## On Advice Literature

The Early Modern Period, particularly the 18th century, experienced a true boom in publications of advice literature. Such books included a variety of guidebooks: letter-writing manuals for learning how to write letters appropriately; gallant conversation manuals for how to converse gallantly; and merchant manuals for how to conduct trade. In this present book, all three kinds of advice literature will be used as intertextual resources. I have read over 40 books of advice literature in order to be able to analyse the letters and business enterprises in the book. In this current chapter, I have based my explanation, on the most prominent literature on mercantile education of the age. These works allow us to reconstruct a catalogue of challenges that Luetkens had to pass during establishment, and they help to compile a catalogue of virtues of a merchant that the merchant had to show and incorporate during this crucial time of his life.

It can be assumed that Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens was familiar with these books or at least with comparable literature. An indication for this is that he had purchased an English letter-writing manual during his travels, as we have learned above. Secondly, these books were generally widely read, known, popular and in wide circulation among

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<sup>124</sup> See for instance Hörmann, Georg. *Memorial und Recorda für mein Eniklen Antoni Christof Hörmann*, 1588, edited by Luitpold, "Aus dem Bildungsgange eines Augsburger Kaufmannssohne vom Schlußse des 16. Jahrhunderts." *Zeitschrift des Historischen Vereins für Schwaben und Neuburg* 1 (1874): 137-182. See Meder, Lorenz. *Ein Büchlein von der Kauffmannsschafft*, 1511, HAB 18.4 Aug. 4°, fol 2r.

merchants.<sup>125</sup> The third, most telling and valuable hint for the fact that Luetkens must have known these books is, however, that the wordings and expressions he used in his letters are often similar or often follow the wording in advice literature. This will be a major finding of my analyses in the chapters.<sup>126</sup> All these reasons certainly justify listing the major statements and pieces of advice that these books offered for young merchants, who tried their luck in the field of trade, in the following explanations.

The first book that I am citing in this regard is Jacques Savary's *Le Parfait Négociant* [The Perfect Merchant] from 1675, which went through three reprints until 1752, with more to follow, and which was translated into Dutch, English, Italian and German, increasing the number of editions to over thirty between the years 1676 and 1800.<sup>127</sup> This book can surely be called the most important and famous merchant manual of the Early Modern Period. It was the "quintessential merchant manual against which all others were measured".<sup>128</sup> The second merchant manual that I am referring to and the contents of which match most closely the mode and ways of expressions in the Luetkens letters, is Paul Jacob Marperger's *Der getreue und geschickte Handelsdiener* [The faithful and skilled merchant clerk] which ranks as one of the most prominent German merchant manuals of the 18th century. This is often referred to as the German counterpart to Savary, not least because of the fact that Marperger explicitly refers to, cites and puts himself into the line of tradition of Savary.<sup>129</sup> In order to complete the picture with an English merchant manual, thus covering the three main places of residence of Luetkens' establishment phase, I will also cite from Daniel Defoe's *The Complete Tradesman*, which enjoyed a similar reputation during the 18th century as the other two manuals.<sup>130</sup> The three manuals under investigation in fact represent merely the tip of the iceberg of over 3,200 merchant manuals that were written and printed in total during the 18th century.<sup>131</sup> The 18th century can therefore not only be called the age of the letter, it was surely also an age of merchant manuals.

<sup>125</sup> See in general and very detailed the three volumes of Hoock/Jeannin/Kaiser, *Ars Mercatoria*.

<sup>126</sup> See also Van der Wal/Rutten, "The Practice of Letter Writing," 18-32. See Van der Wal(Rutten. *Letters as Loot*. See Van der Wal, Marijke, and Gijsbert Rutten. "Ego-documents in a historical-sociolinguistic perspective." In *Touching the Past. Studies in the Historical Sociolinguistics of Ego-Documents*, edited by Marijke van der Wal, and Gijsbert Rutten, 1-18. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2013.

<sup>127</sup> Savary, *Der vollkommene Kauff- und Handelsmann*, in the French original: Savary, Jacques. *Le Parfait Négociant*. Paris: Billaine, 1675.

<sup>128</sup> Harreld, Donald J. "An Education in Commerce: Transmitting Business Information in Early Modern Europe." Paper given at the XIV International Economic History Congress, Helsinki 2006, Session 1, 8.

<sup>129</sup> See Marperger, *Getreuer und geschickter Handelsdiener*. See Deges, "Zusammenfassende Übersicht."

<sup>130</sup> Defoe, *Complete English Tradesman*. See as a good introduction Di Renzo, Anthony. "The Complete English Tradesman: Daniel Defoe and the Emergence of Business Writing." *Journal of Technical Writing and Communication* (JTWC) 28 (1998): 325-334.

<sup>131</sup> See all the merchant manuals listed in the impressive volumes edited by Hoock, Jochen, Pierre Jeannin, and Wolfgang Kaiser, eds. *Ars Mercatoria: Handbücher und Traktate für den Gebrauch des Kaufmanns: 1470-1820: Eine analytische Bibliographie* (=Manuels et traités à l'usage des marchands), 6 volumes. Paderborn: Schöningh, 1991-2001. See as an introduction Kaiser, Wolfgang. "Ars Mercatoria – Möglichkeiten und Grenzen einer analytischen Bibliographie und Datenbank." In *Ars Mercatoria: Handbücher und Traktate für den Gebrauch des Kaufmanns, 1470-1820*, edited by Jochen Hoock, Pierre Jeannin, and Wolfgang Kaiser, vol. 3, 1-26. Paderborn: Schöningh, 2001, here 2-3.

The main target group and the purchasers of these books were young merchants, as is often even explicitly mentioned on the title page, in the introductory words or depicted in the frontispiece as in the case of Savary. They were targeted by these books to be provided with useful information, tips and tricks for their career advancement in trade. The books therefore served as helpful guidebooks that the young men could draw on and learn from for their business activities. The books provided information on “everything that a merchant needed to know for his profession”, as historian Jochen Hoock phrased it, or in the words of the contemporaries, they compiled “all things necessary to be known by all those who would thrive in the world; and in the whole art and mystery of Trade and Traffick.”<sup>132</sup> Consequently, these books also entail and explicitly list the concrete demands and tasks for young merchants and the qualities that these men had to acquire and exhibit in order to establish themselves and comport themselves in the world of trade.

## Business Skills and Qualifications

As the general competences, skills and necessary qualifications, but first and foremost the virtues that a young man had to bring with him after having completed his apprenticeship, Savary lists, firstly, “piousness”, the “love and fear of God, for if he is without those, God will not bless his work, and he will never succeed in his endeavours”.<sup>133</sup> Secondly, he lists loyalty to his patrons, later also including his trading partners and the servants, and “obedience” and “respect” towards higher-ranking persons, such as later on his creditors.<sup>134</sup> As the “primary quality that a merchant should have with regard to the sale of his goods is to [be] an honest man. This will ensure his salvation and his reputation, and without a good reputation, a merchant will never make his fortune. Being an honest man means being of good faith and cheating no one.”<sup>135</sup> As crucial for a merchant’s advancement after his apprenticeship Savary then advises the young man to gain deep knowledge and deep expertise [“vollkommene Wissenschaft [...] große Erfahrung [...] und alle darzu benötigte Vollkommenheit”] in the wares and goods that he is going to trade with, for if he plans to trade in foreign goods while staying in foreign lands.” For this, Savary urges the young men to further enhance their skills in the house of a long-distance wholesale merchant, who deals with these wares and goods, which would also have entailed visiting the foreign lands.<sup>136</sup> Only this prerequisite would then

<sup>132</sup> “Was ein Kaufmann von Berufswegen eigentlich wissen musste.” Hoock, Jochen, and Pierre Jeannin. “Einleitung.” In *Ars Mercatoria: Handbücher und Traktate für den Gebrauch des Kaufmanns*, 1470-1820, edited by Jochen Hoock and Pierre Jeannin, vol. 1, I-XIII. Paderborn: Schöningh, 1991. Second quote: H.N. (anon.) Merchant in the City of London. *The compleat tradesman: or, the exact dealer's daily companion*. London: T. Norris, 1721, title page. See also Hoock, Jochen, and Wilfried Reininghaus, eds. *Kaufleute in Europa. Handelshäuser und ihre Überlieferung in vor- und frühindustrieller Zeit*, Dortmund: Ardey-Verlag GmbH, 1997.

<sup>133</sup> Savary, *Der vollkommene Kauff- und Handelsmann [Le Parfait Négociant]*, 64. See also ibid., 56.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

<sup>135</sup> “Zum ersten muß er ein ehrlicher Mann seyn dann dieses ist das Mittel durch welches er seinen Wolstand schmieden und Reputation [...] erlangen kann.” Ibid., 70.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid., 22.

allow a young man to gain the necessary skills and knowledge to start his career as a wholesale merchant. As the most crucial competence in this regard Savary lists “prudence”.<sup>137</sup>

All the aforementioned qualities will then also remain valid and inevitable with regard to the merchant who seeks to establish himself on his own footing, which becomes apparent when we compare these qualities with the qualities that Savary lists for the “complete merchant”. As crucial for the “happiness and welfare” [“Glück und Wohlfahrt”] of established merchants Savary notes that they would need to possess this kind of perfect knowledge in all areas crucial for a merchant’s occupational advancement and day-to-day business.<sup>138</sup> *Le Parfait Négociant* had to show perfect knowledge of his businesses, for which he needed “extensive experiences, which he had gained through working for other merchants”.<sup>139</sup> He needed to demonstrate “good order in his books”, had to show and exercise caution and prudence with regard to his trading activities, his purchases and loans. He had to show “diligence” with regard to collecting debts.<sup>140</sup> As the last qualities Savary lists industriousness, willingness to work and thrift [“fleißig, hurtig, arbeitsam, emsig”].<sup>141</sup> When we compare these qualities with other merchant manuals as they circulated already in the centuries before, of which one of the most famous instructions is the *Handel-Buch* by Lorenz Meder, we see that these demands and catalogue of virtues for merchants had stayed relatively stable during the whole Early Modern Period.<sup>142</sup> Through Savary’s guidebook, however, these qualities now became the official standard for every merchant seeking establishment in the 18th century, and as such Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens’ career path, too, was measured against it. As we know from the previous explanations, at least with regard to the suggested educational path, Luetkens completely met and complied with the criteria. As we will learn in the analytical chapters, he furthermore also complied with the more behavioural provisions that Savary proposed, or least Luetkens would refer to them with regard to his self-image and for the purpose of delineating his career aspirations.

The last two pieces of information that we can extract from Savary’s merchant manual regard the concrete challenges for and tasks of life in the foreign lands and the career steps that would, according to Savary, appropriately conclude an establishment phase. In this regard, too, Luetkens appropriately fulfilled his obligations. First, Luetkens displayed a high level of commitment during his travels to learn at the several place that he visited about “1. the wares that were traded in these foreign lands, [...] but also about the commodities that would grow there and were manufactured there”, “2. [...] about the tradings usances and the trading routes [...] in the foreign lands”, 3. [...] about licenses and custom duties”, “4. [...] about the weights and measurements [...] and cur-

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., 57.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid., 43.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., 56. “Sparsamkeit”, ibid., 43. See also „Sorgfalt und Emsigkeit“ as well as „Vorsichtigkeit“, ibid., 352.

<sup>142</sup> See Meder, Lorenz. *Handel-Buch* [...] Nuremberg: Johann vom Berg, 1558.

rencies" in foreign lands.<sup>143</sup> Secondly, as we know from Luetkens' biography, he also complied with the proposed finishing steps of his establishment phase as Savary specified it. In 1745, Luetkens returned to Hamburg "in order to enter into a partnership and company with an already established merchant", as was Savary's suggestion. Luetkens' future business partner was Ehrenfried Engelhardt, who in contrast to Savary's suggestion was not much older than him.<sup>144</sup> Luetkens would also return to Hamburg to marry the daughter of the Engelhardt family, which was the second proposed step that Savary listed. The only thing that Luetkens did not comply with completely concerning Savary's recommendations was the "appropriate age" for establishing himself. In this regard, Luetkens was running a little bit late. He married Ilsabe Engelhard in 1745 in the age of 29, whereas Savary had suggested the age of 25 as the most suitable age for a man to marry and settle down.<sup>145</sup>

Paul Jacob Marperger's merchant manual is mainly intended for young merchants going travelling while still in the service of a merchant patron as a commission agent or factor, which is also the reason why its title is *Der getreue und geschickte Handelsdiener* [The faithful and skilled merchant clerk].<sup>146</sup> However, as the author emphasises on the title page and preface of his book, his book is also intended as a practical instruction for young merchants "3) off duty and 4) [for young merchants] who plan to start their own business soon."<sup>147</sup> Therefore, it represents a perfect source of information regarding the requirements that Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens had to face during his years of establishment.

The book by Marperger obviously shows many parallels to the work by Savary, which is no coincidence since the author himself points to Savary as his intellectual mentor.<sup>148</sup> His own work therefore serves as confirmation for the aforementioned catalogue of virtues and requirements but furthermore also provides us with additional information. This enables us to get the complete picture especially with regard to concrete actions as prerequisites for an establishment phase. His explanations regarding the basic main knowledge of young men after their apprenticeship still largely coincides with Savary's statements. With regard to the travel activities of young men, however, he adds the elements of physical strength ["volle Leibeskräfte"], as a crucial quality that young men had to have to "bear the exertions of travelling", which, however, would only be a sufficient basis for a successful career when combined with the "development of a sharp mind and good comprehension" ["so kan es nicht fehlen der Verstand und das Justicium müssen sich bei ihm auch äussern"].<sup>149</sup> He also emphasised that the young men had to be in-

<sup>143</sup> Savary, *Der vollkommene Kauff- und Handelsmann* [Le Parfait Négociant], "anderer Theil" [second part of the same book], 57.

<sup>144</sup> "die bequemere Gelegenheit [nutzen] [...] indem sie entweder sich mit erfahrenen alten Kaufleuten sich vergemeindern oder mit derer Töchter verheurathen können." Savary, *Der vollkommene Kauff- und Handelsmann* [Le Parfait Négociant], 276.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., 276.

<sup>146</sup> Marperger, *Getreuer und geschickter Handelsdiener*.

<sup>147</sup> "(3) ausser Dienst lebenden und (4) ihre eigne Handlung bald anzufangenden Handelsdiener." Marperger, *Getreuer und geschickter Handelsdiener*, 2.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid., 448.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., 244.

dustrious and act skilfully. His explanations furthermore show great parallels with, and can be supplemented by, his explanations in another book of his, which dealt more generally with the challenges of travelling, the *Hofmeister*.<sup>150</sup> In this latter book, Marperger elaborates in greater detail especially on the necessary robustness travellers had to have and he also adds an age he considers appropriate for taking to the road. The perfect age to travel is therefore “between the age of 20 and 30” because during that time young man would be “robust enough in their physical strength to brave the elements of heat and cold, hunger and thirst, snow and rain”.<sup>151</sup> In this book, he also provides a detailed list of all the travel requisites that a young man had to take with him, which again corresponds in great parts with those we find listed in Luetkens’ pocketbook of expenses.<sup>152</sup> “A sturdy and clean travel coat [...] along with clean linen undergarments, a good rapier and some pistols, a pocket watch, a compass, a writing tablet, a circle, a lighter, and also some useful books, could make out the whole equipage”.<sup>153</sup> Another item that Luetkens carried with him during this travels was his toothbrush and toothpaste, which we however cannot find in his pocketbook of expenses, but about which we can learn because of the fact that Luetkens once forgot it at Johann Jakob Bethmann’s house.<sup>154</sup>

Returning to the book *Der getreue und geschickte Handelsdiener*, the next two important paragraphs again concern the question of the qualities that a young man had to demonstrate if he “seeks to start his own business”, in chapter VII. This adds to the previous picture in particular with regard to the important aspect of the demand to maintain human relationships. This aspect also includes the catalogue of virtues because having and showing such virtues ultimately constitutes the necessary condition for upholding relationships. As important assets of a young man’s establishment phase Marperger here lists, apart from piousness and industriousness, which Savary also emphasised, as well as physical strength, especially the “cultivation and maintenance of the relationships with your blood relatives”.<sup>155</sup> He furthermore advises the young men to “pay attention to and take good care of the relationships to [...] Patrons, which they had developed during their years of apprenticeship and youth. [...] One also has to pay special attention to the help, the abetment and credit that one already enjoys from good friends and benefactors, but that one also hopes to keep or gain anew in the future, the place one has chosen as the place to establish oneself and settle down [...] and if one

<sup>150</sup> Marperger, *Hofmeister*.

<sup>151</sup> “Da hingegen ein Alter von den zosten bis ins 30ste Jahre die bequemste Reiß-Zeit, eines der die Welt besehen will, seyn kan. An solchen seynd die Jugend-Kräfftē Hitz und Kälte, Hunger und Durst, Schnee und Regen auszustehen [...] am besten.” *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>152</sup> Pocketbook of expenses in TNA, HCA 30/232.

<sup>153</sup> “Ein starckes und sauberes Reiß-Kleid, [...] samt sauberen Leinen Zeug, einen guten Degen und paar Pistolen, eine Sack-Uhr, Compaß, Schreib-Tafel, Circul und Feuerzeug, samt ein paar nützlichen Büchern, können bei manchen die ganz Equipage ausmachen.” *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>154</sup> “anlagende dero Zahnsalbe, so ist solche in der Comode, wozu E.E. die Schlüssel haben, verschlossen, demnach sich E.E. solcher entbären müßen, ich könnte wohl bey dem hießigen zahnartzt andere kauffen wüste ich nur zum vorauß dero gedancken damit zu treffen.” Letter from Meinicken to Luetkens, Nicolaus Gottlieb, October 24, 1744, TNA, HCA 30/234.

<sup>155</sup> Marperger, *Getreuer und geschickter Handelsdiener*, 427.

is ready and prepared to start one's own business independently or together in a joint partner company with another associate".<sup>156</sup>

The latter propositions once again correspond with the suggestions by Savary. At the same time, Marperger's suggestions far more take the shape of concrete milestones a young man had to reach in contrast to Savary's instructions, which mainly refer to and generally take the form of instructions with regard to the moral way of life of a merchant. This becomes clearer still with respect to the probably most accurate and concise paragraph regarding the requirements of a merchant establishment phase that we can find in contemporary literature. In chapter XIV titled and dealing with "The merchant clerks who started their own business with small capital but then profited that much that they would become rich and noble persons afterwards", he writes:

"Let us now examine and turn to the appropriate ways and means and reasons that lead a qualified merchant clerk into his Establishment ["Etablissement"]. These are (1.) that he is candid, loyal and zealous and that he had earned a good reputation through his obeisances, his affability, his civility and politeness, (2.) that he had righteously learned his business und as a part of this the art of how to support yourself and your family through your business and how one accumulates a capital that will once inure to the benefit of your heirs, (3.) that he would also have conducted his business honestly, even when his own fortune was still small, (4.) that he would look out in a timely manner for suitable patrons, who will assist him with his undertakings, and furthermore look out for good customers, good commissions and these kinds of good wares that will promptly attract new customers and promise good profits, whereupon one needs to look out for a business partner, which brings in his own fortune to the company, or marry a decent wife, through which one comes into more ready money or more credit, the latter being most often better than ready money."<sup>157</sup>

156 "Acht geben auf [...] Patronos, bey denen er seine Lehr- und Jungen-Jahre erstanden [...] Nicht weniger hat er auch acht zu geben auf die Hülffe / Vorschub und Credit welche er bereits bei guten Freunden und Gönnern schon hat / und noch künftig zu haben und zu erlangen / Hoffnung hätte / auf den Ort / wo er sich zu etabliren entschlossen [auch ob er] die neue und intendirte Handlung zu unternehmen besugt sey auch ob er solche vor sich allein /oder mit Zuziehung eines Handels-Gesellschafters / anfangen wollte." Ibid., 427-428.

157 "Cap. XIV Von denen Kauffmanns-Diener / die ihren eigenen Handel / mit geringem Capital angefangen / durch Gottes Seegen aber / mit der Zeit so viel haben profitiret / daß sie reiche und vornehme Leut hernach geworden [...]: Laßt uns aber auch jetzt die ordentliche Wege untersuchen / welche einen qualifizierten Kaufmanns-Diener / zu seinem künffftigen Etablissement führen können / solche seynd (1.) daß er sich redlich / getreu und dienstfertig halte / und sich durch Ehrerbietigkeit / Leutseelig- und Höflichkeit einen guten Ruhm zu wege bringe. (2.) Daß er was Rechtschaffenes lerne / und unter solchen / die Kunst / wie man durch Handlung / sich und die Seinigen ehrlich ernehren / und ein Capital künffigt seinen Erben zu hinterlassen / sammeln soll. (3.) Daß er auch die Gelegenheiten, sein Stück ehrlicher Weiß zu machen / verabsäume/voraus / wann sein eigenen Vermögen nur schlecht ist. (4.) Daß er sich bey Zeiten nach Patronis, welche ihm unter die Arme greiffen können / nach guter Kundschaft / einträglichen Commissionibus und solche Waaren umsehe / welche ihn auf einmal in gute Kundschaft setzen / und einen guten Profit abwerfen können / worzu man hernach auch / entweder einen guten Handels-Consort / der sein Vermögen in der Handlung wollte rouilren lassen / oder gar eine anständige Heyrath /

This paragraph can be seen as the blueprint for Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens' establishment phase, which will also be reflected in the analytical chapters, as this quote condenses all that was previously said into a clear agenda and directive for Luetkens' personal advancement in business as a wholesale merchant during his "Etablissement".

The third author within the triumvirate, Daniel Defoe, too, states the "general maxims of trade as are fit for [...] instruction" of young men.<sup>158</sup> His instructions in *The Complete Tradesman* aggregate into just three crucial pieces of advice. Of these, especially the last one has not yet been discussed in this chapter because it was not listed in such a degree of clarity and precision in the aforementioned quotations as Defoe presents it. As a matter of fact, however, this crucial skill and competence nevertheless represented a key element and important core issue in the books of Savary and Marperger. I will therefore take Defoe's quotation as the starting point to which I will then also add the respective statements by Savary and Marperger.

## Correspondence

As the crucial "degrees by which the complete tradesman is brought up, and by which he is instructed in the principles and methods of his commerce, by which he is made acquainted with business, and is capable of carrying it on with success [...]" Defoe lists as the "qualifications [...] that renders him [the young tradesman] a finish'd or complete man in his business. 1. That he has a general knowledge of not his own particular trade and business only, [...] but [...] ought to understand all the inland trade, growth and product of his own country. [...] 2. That he not only has a knowledge of the species or kinds of goods but of the places and peculiar countries where those goods, whether product or manufacture, are to be found [...]." <sup>159</sup> These requirements apparently resemble the statements by Savary and Marperger. Defoe then adds as an important asset for a young man of trade, however, "3. That [he] understands perfectly well all the methods of correspondence, returning money or goods for goods, to and from every country; in what manner to be done, and in what manner most to advantage; [...] what for present money, and what for time; what are sold by commission from the makers, what bought by factors, [...]." <sup>160</sup> In this regard, he adds in the further course of his book that "a merchant's letters [should] never come in and are unanswer'd" and he stresses the importance of language skills: "a merchant should understand all languages, at least, the languages of those countries which he trades to, or corresponds with". <sup>161</sup> As we already know, Luetkens did his best to meet the latter demand by learning to speak, read and write not only German, but also French, Dutch and English. As the last point of advice regarding correspondence practice, Defoe recommends the benefits of mingling and socialising with like-minded people. He states that young men "should take all occasions

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durch welche man entweder ein Stück Geld in die Hand oder doch Credit bekäme / der offtmal besser als baares Geld ist / sich ausersehen könnte." *Ibid.*, 481-482.

<sup>158</sup> Defoe, *Complete English Tradesman*, 6. See also *ibid.*, Preface, iii. "The Title of this Work is an Index of the Performance. It is a collection of useful instructions for a young Tradesman."

<sup>159</sup> Defoe, *Complete English Tradesman*, 5-7.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, 152, 41.

to converse within the circuit of his own sphere [...] and converse among tradesmen as much as he can; as writing teaches to write, scribendo discis scribere, so conversing among tradesmen will make him a tradesman.”<sup>162</sup>

What therefore ultimately makes a merchant a merchant is, as Defoe puts is, the skill and ability of conversing with other merchants, in person or, as he explicitly highlights, by means of correspondence. A merchant’s capital consisted not only of his money or credit, not only of his virtues or bodily dispositions, but very concretely also of his network of correspondents, which Defoe defines accordingly, in one of this other works, as persons “with whom one had regular business relations, which were marked by extensive letter-writing and long-distance exchange.”<sup>163</sup>

Keeping a good and extensive correspondence is emphasised as a crucial element and prerequisite of mercantile advancement not only in the book by Defoe, but also in those by Savary and Marperger. From Savary we learn that it was also indispensable for a merchant to keep Letter Books [“Brief=Kopier=Buch”] and to keep and store all your correspondence, incoming and outgoing, in order to keep track and to keep order in your businesses.<sup>164</sup> We learn of the importance of the practice of bundling letters for the same reason, and we learn as a further example that letters were used to collect or recover your debt because letters had been attributed powers of attorney.<sup>165</sup> Also Marperger dedicated many pages of his book to letters and the necessity of accuracy in letter practice for young merchants. From him, we learn how apprentices learned to write letters, namely by copying the letters of their masters or by being dictated letters by the master, and by the same practice he also learned how to write bills of exchange or other “scripturen”.<sup>166</sup>

As an accurate style for merchant letters Marperger advises that business letters need to be “short, which is made necessary because of the manifold businesses and the great correspondence that merchants conduct in general, which would not allow for sweeping letters, which is also the reason why mercantile letters must not be ambiguous or unclear, but short and showing a delicate distinctness.”<sup>167</sup> Such a style is also suggested by Daniel Defoe, who writes that “a tradesman’s letters should be plain, concise, and to the purpose; no quaint expressions, no book-phrases, no flourishes, and yet they must be full and sufficient to express what he means, so as not to be doubtful,

<sup>162</sup> Ibid., 47.

<sup>163</sup> Defoe, Daniel. *Colonel Jack*. London: Roberts, 1722, 13. See Hancock, David. “The Trouble with Networks: Managing the Scots’ Early-Modern Madeira Trade.” *Business History Review* 79, no. 3 (2005): 467-491, here 472. See also Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers*, 168.

<sup>164</sup> Savary, Savary, *Der vollkommene Kauff- und Handelsmann [Le Parfait Négociant]*, “anderer Theil” [second part of the same book], 8, 13.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid. 14, 52.

<sup>166</sup> Marperger, *Getreuer und geschickter Handelsdiener*, 228. See in general Bruchhäuser, Hanns-Peter. *Kaufmannsbildung im Mittelalter: Determinanten des Curriculums deutscher Kaufleute im Spiegel der Formalisierung von Qualifizierungsprozessen*, Cologne/Weimar/Vienna: Böhlau, 1989.

<sup>167</sup> “als wann Kauffleute vor allen im Brief=Schreiben kurtz seyn müssen / solches wird zwar erforderl / wie es dann auch ihre vielfältige Geschäften und grosse Correspondenz nicht anderst leiden wollen / darum aber müssen sie nicht unvernehmlich [undurchdrinlich, undeutlich] und dunckel seyn / [...] sondern man behalte bey der beliebten Kürze auch eine zierliche Deutlichkeit / und vermeide so viel als möglich zweydeutige Redens=Arten [...]” Ibid., 194.

much less unintelligible.”<sup>168</sup> On the other, hand, as Marperger again notes in his central letter manual, it still seemed legitimate to take inspiration for your letter style from other literature “through reading good books, spiritual or secular in nature as well as through historical or moral books, [...] because these provide a good source of inspiration and teach how to use and concatenate for instance typical expressions or proverbs or how one skilfully finds appropriate answers regarding certain matters”.<sup>169</sup> What this meant in practice and consequence and how this idea was actually implemented concretely in the letters will be presented and analysed in detail in the analyses of the letter episodes presented in the five analytical chapters.

All three writers, Savary, Marperger and Defoe, in their manuals finally also supply numerous example letters, which further illustrated the appropriate letter style to the aspiring merchants. These letters served the concrete purpose of providing the merchants with examples and thus the opportunity to learn the letter style by imitation or to use and employ the respective sentences and phrases, the typical letter formulae, in their correspondence, if wished. Merchant manuals, therefore, as the authors emphasise, were meant to serve as reference works, guides and encyclopaedias for both mercantile business practices and mercantile letter practices, including the appropriate form and style of accurate business letters. Yet until today it represents a research desideratum to show to what extent Early Modern letter writers actually used these manuals in practice. In this respect, in this book I am offering at least some first indications with regard to the letter practice of the merchant Luetkens and his merchant correspondents.<sup>170</sup> The practice of offering example letters, as seen in the three authors mentioned here, was not an exception. It is fair to say that almost every merchant manual of the period entailed such example letters. Furthermore, the young merchant could draw on an extensive pool of literature which was solely dedicated to dealing with appropriate letter styles and the practice of letter writing. These letter-writing manuals also provided a multitude of further examples for an appropriate letter style, including example letters for almost every occasion and addressee imaginable.<sup>171</sup> These letter-writing manuals were, as Georg Steinhäusen, a pioneer in the research on letter writing, already noted, “almost encyclopedias of everything knowledgeable. For every imaginable life situation, they provided example letters” and a veritable “arsenal of formulaic expressions”.<sup>172</sup> Paul Jacob Marperger himself had also published such a letter manual in addition to his merchant manuals, which had an equally large readership than his other books. This letter-writing manual called *Der allzeitfertige Handels=Correspondent* [The ever-ready merchant correspondent] will be reviewed and consulted further in the

168 Defoe, *Complete English Tradesman*, 25. See also example “Letter III of the trading style” in which Defoe writes that “in my last I gave you my thoughts for the instruction of young tradesmen in writing letters with orders, and answering orders, and especially about the proper stile of a tradesman's letters, which I hinted should be plain and easy, free in language, and direct to the purpose intended.” *Ibid.*, 32.

169 Marperger, *Der allzeitfertige Handels=Correspondent*, 7.

170 See as the pioneer works in this this regard Van der Wal/Rutten, *Letters as Loot*, Furger, *Briefsteller*. Gurkin Altman, *Epistolarity*, Nickisch, *Stilprinzipien*, See Furger, *Briefsteller*, 209-212.

171 See Furger, *Briefsteller*, 145-146; Nickisch, *Stilprinzipien*, 204-223, Gurkin Altman, *Epistolarity*, 3-12.

172 Steinhäusen, *Geschichte des deutschen Briefes*, 302. See Vellusig, *Schriftliche Gespräche*, 43, 53.

analytical chapters, since it will become obvious that Luetkens was strongly influenced and shaped in his writing and his letter style by such kinds of manuals – whether this happened consciously or unconsciously.<sup>173</sup>

### Postal Conditions

A last important aspect and condition crucial for a mercantile establishment phase covered by the merchant manuals, but one which was also crucial for mercantile activity beyond the early career, was knowledge of postal conditions and the working of postal services, both national and international, and of regularities such as post times. In fact, the surviving letters of the Luetkens archive constitute an example of a very effective postal system. As was typical during the times, business letters usually started with a reference to preceding letters, sent and received, in order to both continue the conversation at a particular point but also to make sure that the respective letter interaction was in fact unbroken and without gaps. Reading these letters alternatingly, one is captivated by the impression that the actual time gaps between sending and receiving the letters, which resulted from the postal dispatch, almost disappear as regards the letter content and also that the contemporaries were very used to this particular time delay in letter exchanges. They even deliberately planned in these time gaps when making predictions or referring to ongoing enquiries. It is another strong hint at the fact that letters were regarded as their own sphere of communication, of conversation and interaction.

A typical phrase at the beginning of business letters was for instance that Luetkens “received your pleasant letter on the 25 passato with a lot of pleasure”.<sup>174</sup> The dates were then usually added as notes on the top page of the unfolded stored letters after the letters had been answered, as mentioned above. Comparing these lines in the letters during the reconstruction of the letter episodes with the surviving material letters in the archive, it becomes astonishingly clear that most of the letters sent by the contemporary letter writers actually reached their destination and addressee. In fact, to express this in figures, of all the business letters that I read it seems that only approximately 5% went missing along the way. All the other letters arrived, which is a find quite contrary to the impression that the Prize Papers collection with over 160,000 intercepted letters creates. The Luetkens archive shows that the postal services used by Luetkens and his correspondents were for the most part effective.

This can be attributed to the very sophisticated postal system of mounted mail in France that was based on a fixed system of relay stations regularly served by post rid-

<sup>173</sup> The question of whether Luetkens had or had not concretely used such kind of manuals during his letter writing process cannot be clarified beyond doubt. However, as the letter formulae he used suggests, which show parallels to the manuals, he might have read or learned from these books during his apprenticeship or later on. He also bought an English letter-writing manual during his first business trip as his pocketbook of expenses reveals. Another explanation for finding these parallels could be that both the manuals and the letters in the end represented common vocabulary used by merchants in practice.

<sup>174</sup> “dein angenehmes schreiben von 25 passato habe mit vielen vergnügen empf[angen]”, Letter from Luetkens, Nicolaus Gottlieb to Luetkens, Joachim, June 6, 1744, TNA, HCA 30/232, Letter Book I, No. 179.

ers; a system which provided a largely reliable service.<sup>175</sup> “The mounted or equestrian mail, ‘la Poste au chevaux,’ consisted of a group of relay stations managed by postmasters who kept a certain number of horses groomed for use by the postal system. Letter mail (“la Poste aux lettres”) referred to the group of post offices where customers sent or received their mail which had been routed there from the nearest relay station.”<sup>176</sup> But also in transnational, sea-borne mail sent over short sea distances and particularly during peace times, the postal dispatch was relatively reliable.

Whether sent via land or sea, mail was sent and received during the Early Modern Period on fixed days, so called post days, “Posttage” in German, on which mail could be picked up or sent off from the local post offices spread around the city, from other dedicated stores in the different city quarters or at the harbour. Postage was paid by the receiver of a letter on arrival or pickup.<sup>177</sup> The week of a merchant was structured around the post days. These days literally served as fixed days in the lives of the merchants. As Marperger noted in his manual, “merchants wrote 20-30 letters per post day”.<sup>178</sup> They picked up letters or had them picked up for them by merchant clerks, usually three times a week. The respective weekdays on which post days took place depended on the location and were announced by the respective national postal service and the stations. Today, we still find original postal plates, some of them showing the respective post days, in museums or even on house fronts.<sup>179</sup> These post days could also be found in printed advertisements or in merchant manuals. In these sources, we also find international routes and costs for international postage. To give an example of international post days, in the case of London, where Nicolaus Gottlieb’s uncle Anthony lived, in 1731 mail from London to France was dispatched on Mondays and Thursdays while mail to the German cities in the North left on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays. The postage costs for letters that crossed several borders can also be found in merchant manuals.<sup>180</sup> As an international merchant, Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens was always well-informed about the postal services and how to use them for his business purposes and for private matters. He knew the local post days in all the cities he visited and the quickest or the safest routes for his letters in national and international mail. He knew when it was better to trust in hand-to-hand delivery of letters, particularly as regards long-distance communications, for instance with ships’ captain, which was a common practice about which we will hear more in the chapters. Luetkens even knew, and concocted

<sup>175</sup> See Nicolas Verdier, and Anne Bretagnolle. “Expanding the Network of Postal Routes in France 1708-1833.” In *Histoire des réseaux postaux en Europe du XVIIIe au XXIe siècle*, 159-175. Paris: HAL, 2007.

See Arbellot, Guy. “Le réseau des routes de poste, objet des premières cartes thématiques de la France moderne.” *104e Congrès national des Sociétés savantes, Bordeaux 1979, Section Histoire Moderne*, 97-115, Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1982.

<sup>176</sup> Verdier/Bretagnolle, “Postal Routes in France,” 159.

<sup>177</sup> See Whyman, “Paper Visits”, 22. See Whyman, *Pen and the People*, 61-64.

<sup>178</sup> Marperger, *Getreuer und geschickter Handelsdiener*, 185.

<sup>179</sup> See Haasis, “Materialität.” See Haasis, Lucas. “Noch bleibt mir ein Augenblick Zeit um mich mit Euch zu unterhalten’. Praxeologische Einsichten zu kaufmännischen Briefschaften des 18. Jahrhunderts.” In *Diskurse – Körper – Artefakte. Historische Praxeologie in der Frühneuzeitforschung*, edited by Dagmar Freist, 87-113. Bielefeld: transcript, 2015.

<sup>180</sup> See Marperger, *Getreuer und geschickter Handelsdiener*, 489.

plans with his correspondents, as to which were the best routes to choose when sending secret letters or letters with precious hidden contents. In short, post days structured his daily routine, and postal routes provided his existential nourishment. The most interesting postal route to be found in the Luetkens archive is that taken by a letter packet that enclosed Luetkens' marriage jewellery hidden in cotton and wrapped in corduroy. In order to make sure that this letter reached its destination safely, the letter was first sent from London to Amsterdam, from where it was sent to Hamburg, because as his brother Joachim advised Nicolaus Gottlieb, sending the letter via "Holland [...] was the best way to send such precious items".<sup>181</sup> The letter with its precious content did in fact reach Hamburg safely.

All the different elements and characteristic features of 18th century correspondence, taken together, show that letter writing was attributed an immensely high significance and an important role for the daily activities but also the career development of a merchant, especially for a merchant during his establishment phase, when he had to prove and demonstrate his skills. The information extracted from the merchant manuals and the letters in the Luetkens archive in this regard completely coincide with the most current historical research on business letters. As Francesca Trivellato put it aptly and highly accurately, during the 18th century at the latest letters had become "the primary tool for weaving webs of commercial relations across space and social groups." Correspondence was the "cement that enabled distant agents to create solid webs across distant localities and wide cultural gulfs, [...] the backbone of European long-distance trade long past that time. [...] Business correspondence was a crucial instrument [...] in forging and maintaining [...] informal cross-cultural networks".<sup>182</sup> Or, as already Max Weber had stated, in "the eighteenth century, business depended on the organised exchange of letters". It again becomes clear that business practices and letter practices of merchants of the 18th century cannot be considered separately from each other when analysing mercantile culture in the 18th century. Instead, letter practices and business practices always need to be considered as intertwined processes. There is simply no way to think of mercantile wholesale business in the 18th century as separate from letter practice as Defoe, too, demonstrated when he wrote about "extensive letter-writing and long-distance exchange" in the exact same breath.<sup>183</sup>

Accordingly, we cannot find a single letter in the Luetkens archive that does not also refer to a particular business practice or that was at least interlinked with one. Almost all the letters that we can find in the Luetkens archive, as Trivellato stressed, "fulfilled [...] purposes for which merchants could not rely on other printed [or oral] sources: they [the letters] responded to specific questions and concerns that a merchant might have about market conditions; they informed about the aptitude and reliability of

<sup>181</sup> "der beste Weg sie über zu machen und die Weise hier solche Kostbarkeiten weg zu senden ist daß man sie auf Holland schickt. Dahero will ich sie an die Herrn de Meyer zuerst senden und sie ersuchen von da an Hertzner u. von Bobart zu schicken." Letter from Luetkens, Joachim to Luetkens, Nicolaus Gottlieb, March 12, 1745, TNA, HCA, 30/235.

<sup>182</sup> Trivellato, "Merchants' letters," 81-82 and 84, as well as Trivellato, *Discourse and Practice*, 19.

<sup>183</sup> Defoe, *Colonel Jack*, 13.

associates, commissioners and suppliers; when necessary, they also assured secrecy.”<sup>184</sup> As Toby L. Ditz highlights, almost all letters had “immediate pragmatic goals” tied to, and representing, commercial practices, for instance “appeals to others for practical assistance – for example, to transport and sell cargoes, to obtain loans or to extend the time for their repayment”. This fact even applies and holds true with regard to Luetkens’ more personal letters written for the purpose of his marriage initiation.<sup>185</sup> When Defoe therefore concluded in his merchant manual regarding letter writing that ultimately it was conversing “among tradesmen [that] will make him a tradesman” Defoe in essence put into contemporary words the major statement of this book.<sup>186</sup>

Analysing the Luetkens letters we will gain an impressive and comprehensive insight into how letters and correspondence worked and how they shaped and forged a life in trade, the life as a wholesale merchant during the 18th century. The book also shows us explicitly a merchant’s efforts to be convincing in his words and actions to promote his career by means of business and letters. Of course, although we can read his letters, we will still not be able to meet Luetkens in person or observe him during his travels and neither will we get an insight into all his daily activities and the daily business he conducted at the local sites. However, we are still able to illustrate, demonstrate, investigate, explain and cover large parts of his mercantile and personal activities and enterprises during that time because many of these activities actually happened on the basis of letters.

Completely in line with Daniel Defoe, the firm conviction of this book is that Luetkens was made a merchant by correspondence, which provided him with the ways and means, the tool and medium, to tackle important mercantile and private undertakings and enterprises. Correspondence provided him with the opportunity to convince the people surrounding him of his quality and his entitlement as a merchant, and it provided him with the opportunity to win over his fellow men for his business enterprises and plans. How he succeeded in this regard, what concrete ways and means he found to master his challenges in life and business, how he performed his business by means of letter writing, and how he concretely used letters to win people over for his plans and aspirations – in short, how he used the powers of persuasion provided by letters to turn himself into a successful wholesale merchant – is the subject of the five analytical chapters.

## 2.8 On the Powers of Persuasion and Practical Eloquence

As a last important piece of information regarding an Early Modern mercantile establishment, the merchant manuals even provide us with clear assessments and propositions regarding the most crucial and quintessential of all requirements and demands that aspiring merchants had to meet during this decisive phase of their life. The authors of the merchant manuals make concrete recommendations and suggestions as to how

<sup>184</sup> Trivellato, *Familiar of Strangers*, 172.

<sup>185</sup> Ditz, “Formative Ventures,” 62.

<sup>186</sup> Defoe, *Complete English Tradesman*, 47.

they envisage the most advisable and most effective way for young merchants to learn how to become convincing as merchants. All three authors share a definite view on how they thought wholesale merchants should behave and learn their profession and what factors decide whether or not a young man would stand the test of becoming a reputable merchant, how the powers of persuasions would work best for a merchant during the 18th century. These recommendations encapsulate a particular contemporary idea and understanding of rhetoric during the 18th century that was also essential, inspirational and in fact helpful for the idea and concept developed in and underlying the present book.

The science of persuasion most probably belongs to the oldest sciences of mankind. Under the name of rhetoric, the analysis of how people influence each other on the basis of the spoken or written word has fascinated and moved people, philosophers and scientists alike, since antiquity. In this book, however, I do not focus on rhetorical traditions, linguistic forms or theories of rhetoric, although the letter-writing manuals often include theoretical thinking and concepts, for which Janet Gurkin Altman has coined the apt term of *epistolarity*. Instead, this present book is primarily focused on a very specific form of historical rhetoric. It deals with *practical* powers of persuasion as they were used and are recognizable in letter practices and business practices of the 18th century. The book is therefore less about sophisticated learned ways and means and theorized forms of rhetoric, but about a rhetoric practically performed, learned and materialized in practice. In the book, we will therefore learn about incorporated forms of the powers of persuasion. This form of persuasion is indeed by no means an artificial concept, but it was already known and even conceptualized among thinkers and philosophers of the 18th century. It was also popularized among practical professions such as the mercantile profession, which fact helped to develop the particular focus of the book. That means, the rhetorical concept behind the book in the truest sense of the word corresponds with a historical idea and concept. This idea is the concept of *practical eloquence*, “Beredsamkeit” in German, “l’eloquence” in France, as a typical variant of the power of persuasion in the daily lives of the people of the 18th century.<sup>187</sup>

Having said that, authors and philosophers particularly of the first half of the 18th century distinguished between rhetorics as theory and rhetorics as practice, or rhetorics as seen in a theoretical sense and rhetorics as learned and performed in practice. For the latter they used and coined the term of practical eloquence, or volubility. With this they delineated a form of rhetoric in which the powers of persuasion were seen as a practical skill rather than a theory to adhere to. The former, on the other hand, the pure theory, was usually referred to as “oratory”, “Oratorie” in German, in the 18th century. Famous philosophers of this idea were the German Enlightenment authors Christian Friedrich Hunold (Menantes), who in 1709 published his *Teutsche Oratorie* [German Oratory] and Johann Christoph Gottsched, who in 1736 published his *Ausführliche Redekunst* [Complete Rhetoric] and only two years later in 1738 his *Proben der Beredsamkeit* [Samples of Eloquence], and who was also the publisher of the famous German moral weekly

187 Rapin, René. *Réflexion sur l’Usage de l’Eloquence de ce temps*. Paris: Barbin & Muguet, 1671.

*Die vernünftigen Tadlerinnen*.<sup>188</sup> Both authors also published letter-writing manuals cited in this book.

Practical Eloquence, “Beredsamkeit”, represented a form of practical knowledge and understanding of how to be convincing in one’s words and actions that was learned by experience and not primarily from books.<sup>189</sup> Oratory, on the other hand, was learned from books and based on theory. As Gottsched wrote “there is a difference between oratory [“Redekunst”] and practical eloquence [“Beredsamkeit”]. The former is theoretical in nature, the latter is practical in nature. The former provides the fundamental doctrine and rules of rhetorics; by means of the latter, however, one actually carries out [“übt aus”, performs] the power of persuasion. It is possible to understand the former without ever having worked on a speech or without having given a speech; it is however, not possible to perform the latter [Beredsamkeit] without a great deal of practice and plenty of exercise in writing and speaking.”<sup>190</sup> The mentioned theory of rhetorics which Gottsched refers to was taught in the schools and universities of the time, and particularly the Hamburg schools were renowned for their rhetorical classes with prominent teachers such as Johann Albert Fabricius.<sup>191</sup> As Dirk Rose concludes in his book *Conduite und Text*, “rhetoric was a basic subject of Early Modern academic education”.<sup>192</sup> Thus, already since the Middle Ages, rhetorics in the classical sense was taught as one of basic subjects taught in the elementary and the grammar schools of the period during the trivium, and later in life it was also taught as a subject in the universities of the period.<sup>193</sup> It was especially also a subject taught by private tutors – a way of education that was sometimes chosen for children of bourgeois and elite families. I am mentioning this because we have learned that Luetkens was first homeschooled by his father and later by a private tutor.

188 Hunold, *Deutsche Oratorie und Brief-Verfassung*. Gottsched, Johann Christoph. *Proben der Beredsamkeit* [...]. Leipzig: Bernhard Christoph Breitkopf, 1738. Gottsched, Johann Christoph. *Die Vernünftigen Tadlerinnen*. Halle 1725, Leipzig 1727, Leipzig und Hamburg 1738 and Hamburg 1748, reprint, 2 volumes, edited by Helga Brandes. Hildesheim/Zurich/New York: Olms-Weidmann, 1993.

189 Regarding 18th-century eloquence, “Beredsamkeit” see in particular Ueding/Steinbrink, *Grundriß der Rhetorik*, 102-135. See in particular also Rose, Dirk. *Conduite und Text. Paradigmen eines galanten Literaturmodells im Werk von Christian Friedrich Hunold (Menantes)*. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 2012, 221-238. See Barner, Wilfried. *Barockrhetorik. Untersuchungen zu ihren geschichtlichen Grundlagen*. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2002, 167-175, 190-192. As contemporary sources see furthermore Hunold, *Deutsche Oratorie und Brief-Verfassung*; Gottsched, *Proben der Beredsamkeit* and *Ausführliche Redekunst*.

190 “Aus diesem allen wird man sattsam erkennen, daß die Redekunst mit der Beredsamkeit nicht für einerley zu halten, und wie eines von dem andern unterschieden sey. Jene ist theoretisch, diese ist praktisch. Jene gibt die Grundlehrnen und Regeln der Beredsamkeit; diese hergegen übt selbige aus: jene kann man verstehen, ohne jemands eine einzige Rede ausgearbeitet oder gehalten zu haben; diese aber kann man nicht anders, als durch eine lange Uebung im Schreiben und Reden erlangen.” Gottsched, *Ausführliche Redekunst*, 75.

191 Häfner, Ralph. “Die Vorlesungsskripte des Hamburger Philologen Johann Albert Fabricius.” In *Die Pluralisierung des Paratextes in der Frühen Neuzeit: Theorie, Formen, Funktionen*, edited by Frieder von Ammon and Herfried Vögel, 283-299. Münster: LIT Verlag, 2008, here 283.

192 Rose, *Conduite und Text*, 221.

193 See *ibid.*, 221-238. See the detailed study by Barner, *Barockrhetorik*.

The fact that Dirk Rose refers to 18th-century rhetorics in his book dealing with gallant literature of the 18th century furthermore points us to the decisive fact that rhetorics was also an important and intrinsic part of the contemporary behaviour model of *Gallantry* and the discourse on gallantry still prevailing during the 18th century.<sup>194</sup> This behaviour model, which promoted a gallant way of life as the regulative ideal of social conduct, was decisively influenced by rhetorics and particularly by the practice of eloquence, “Beredsamkeit”. The practical side of rhetorics, the eloquence [“Beredsamkeit”], however, to which Gottsched refers, was primarily regarded by contemporary philosophers as a matter of practice, a matter of exercise and practical experience. Thus, “Beredsamkeit” was nothing that could be learned solely on the basis of book knowledge, although books were written about it. Rather, it was a habitual skill learned in practice and by means of a learning-by-doing process. As Gottsched highlights, eloquence was a practical “skill, to persuade your audience to act and to think as you want them to act and to think. This should be your ultimate goal; this is what you need to be capable of.” And it was precisely this form of practical learning and experience that the authors of the merchant manuals, too, had in mind and regarded as advisable for young merchants when speaking of the best form of mercantile education and the appropriate form of powers of persuasion for a merchant, which they first and foremost regarded as a practical profession rather than a theoretical profession.<sup>195</sup>

Savary expresses his view in the most drastic manner. In his work *Le Parfait Négociant*, he strictly advises parents who wish their sons to become merchants to explicitly not send them to schools or universities because school subjects such as philosophy or rhetoric would be detrimental and would only have negative effects on the young men’s capabilities of becoming good merchants. He instead praised practical training as the most beneficial form of education for aspiring merchants. A school or university environment would not be beneficial for young merchants because the only “science” in which they should gain proficiency in is the mercantile science, and this science can only be learned in practical training and actual practice.<sup>196</sup> Marperger and Defoe concurred with this opinion. The merchant’s art of being convincing in their words and actions, in person and in business, was learned by doing and practical training and by adopting the mercantile rules of conduct and interaction by practice and by imitation. This would then turn them into complete, competent and capable representatives of their profession: into eloquent merchants. This approach in particular applied to the process of learning how to write and correspond by letters. The authors had good reason to advise the young men to stick to a learning-by-doing approach by means of either imitating letter examples or by copying the letters of their masters because these good examples would show them the most accurate style of mercantile letter writing. This style featured

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<sup>194</sup> As for the consequences see in particular Rose, *Conduite und Text*, 221-238.

<sup>195</sup> See in particular Defoe, *Complete English Tradesman*, 41-48. See in this regard Shinagel, *Daniel Defoe and Middle-Class Gentility*.

<sup>196</sup> See Savary, *Der vollkommene Kauff- und Handelsmann* [*Le Parfait Négociant*], chapter 4, “Daß Die Kinder einigen Beruff zu erlernen | nicht sollen genöthiget werden | und welches die Eigenschaften | so wohl des Leibes als des Verstandes sind | die zur Kauffmannschaft erfordert werden,” 44-49, here particularly 47-48.

“no quaint expressions, no book-phrases, no flourishes”, but instead teaches them the “knowing how to write their letters of correspondence in a free, plain, and trades-man like stile”.<sup>197</sup> Such a tradesman like style therefore stood for a practical, pragmatic style of letter writing different to rhetorically sophisticated or philosophical letters, as the latter would only be detrimental to the purpose and goal of business letters, namely to do business. With a suggestion of sarcasm and also a hint of condescension, Defoe notes in this regard that “[he] that affects a rumbling and bombastic stile, and fills his letters with long harangues, compliments and flourishes should turn poet and not tradesman, and set up for a wit, and not a shopkeeper”.<sup>198</sup> In their opinion, not visiting a university or enjoying academic schooling would therefore not be to the detriment of a merchant like Luetkens. In fact, it was not seen as disadvantageous in any way by the authors. Quite on the contrary, practical training, learning by practice, was regarded as the most appropriate and advisable educational path for a young man who wanted to become a merchant. It is therefore certainly also no surprise to find in the Luetkens letters somewhat disparaging statements made by the merchants regarding university education. The merchants Hertzter & von Bobartt for instance wrote in March 1745 that during their youth they “haven’t been able to learn and get any legal knowledge [“die Jura”] or Latin into our heads, which is, however, what the advocates need to learn.”<sup>199</sup>

Practical training and experience was what turned these young men into eloquent men of trade. A young merchant was advised to learn his business from scratch. He learned by experience and in practice what it meant to be convincing in his words and deeds as a merchant and as a merchant letter writer. He learned by means of practical experiences and thus learnt by himself the skills and strategies for being convincing in his words and actions by means of practical incorporation. This is exactly what we find represented in Luetkens’ educational path and later in his letter and business practice.

Of course, the recommendations regarding writing appropriate letters as a merchant do not automatically mean that we will not find any flourishes, compliments, or rambling speeches in Luetkens’ letters – we will find those. After all, Luetkens was also a child of the early Enlightenment and of the polite and often still gallant bourgeois culture prevailing in Hamburg as well as in the cities he visited in France.<sup>200</sup> This fact also impacted on his typical ways of conversing and dealing with other people while at the same time, however, he still in many ways adhered to a typical tradesman like letter-writing style. Of course we will also find in his letters the “rhetoric of candour” and the virtues of “fidelity and honesty”, polite compliments, tittle-tattle, gallant babbling,

<sup>197</sup> Defoe, *Complete English Tradesman*, 25 and 12.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>199</sup> “Wir haben die Jura und das lateinische nicht in der Jugend im Kopf bekommen können, welches denen advocaten zu wissen nötig sein soll.” Letter from Hertzter & von Bobartt to Luetkens, Nicolaus Gottlieb, March 5, 1745, TNA, HCA 30/234.

<sup>200</sup> See Rose, *Conduite und Text*; see Viala, *La France galante*; see Fulda, *Galanterie und Frühaufklärung*. See also Duchêne, Roger. *Madame de Sévigné et la lettre d’amour. Réalité vécue et art épistolaire*. Paris: Bordas, 1970. See particularly Rollin, Charles. *De la Manière d’Enseigner et d’Etudier le Belles Lettres*. Paris: Estienne, 1726. For England see also Bryson, Anna. *From Courtesy to Civility: Changing Codes of Conduct in Early Modern England*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998. See Langford, Paul. *A Polite and Commercial People: England 1727-1783*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989.

all serving the purpose and premises of winning people over for his plans.<sup>201</sup> However, there are also classical rhetorical elements in his letters, such as the Aristotelian elements of ethos, logos and pathos, as the fundamental cornerstones of persuasive speech in classical rhetoric. According to Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, the art of persuasion is based on three fundamental principles, the three modes of persuasion of ethos, pathos and logos (delighting/delectare, moving/movere, teaching/docere). Aristotle wrote that of "the modes of persuasion furnished by the spoken word there are three kinds. The first kind depends on the personal character of the speaker [ethos]; the second on putting the audience into a certain frame of mind [pathos]; the third on the proof, or apparent proof, provided by the words of the speech itself [logos]."<sup>202</sup> The first mode, *ethos*, relates to the personal character and credibility of the speaker, who should be able to convince other people on the basis of his competence, his good intention and his empathy. The second mode, *pathos*, aims at exerting an emotional influence on the audience. Often, the speaker would use the rhetorical devices of metaphors, analogies, similes and passionate delivery to persuade the audience by means of sparking emotions. The merchant Luetkens also made use of such analogies, similes and metaphors particularly in the letters to his youngest brother, from whom he demanded loyalty in order to put a plan into practice, calling on his brother's emotions and his sense of honour. The third and last mode of persuasion, *logos*, is based on and draws on the appeal to logical reason. To quote Aristotle, this mode represents the situation "when we have proved a truth or an apparent truth by means of the persuasive arguments suitable to the case in question."<sup>203</sup>

Despite the focus on practical powers of persuasion, these classical elements can nonetheless also be found and reappear in the Luetkens letters. This is because the reason for their usage was not necessarily due to rhetorical or theoretical training or intention and these elements were not necessarily deliberately applied as rhetoric devices by the letter writers. Rather, these elements appear as natural parts of the practical principles of persuasion performed in letter exchanges, which are governed by multiple elements and contexts. The elements furthermore also naturally appear in the letter-writing manuals of the time. Gottsched himself, for instance, admitted after citing Aristotle's definition of rhetorics as "the capability to do everything that is necessary for the purpose of persuasion" that "this description is not contrary to our definition [of rhetorics]" ["diese Beschreibung ist der unsrigen nicht zuwider"].<sup>204</sup> However, he understood this idea of rhetorics and Aristotle's work more as a "general doctrine" ["als eine Lehre

201 See Ditz, "Secret Selves, Credible Personas," 223. See Klein, Lawrence E. "Politeness and the Interpretation of the British Eighteenth Century." *The Historical Journal* 45, no. 4 (2002): 869-898. See Beetz, Manfred. *Frühmoderne Höflichkeit. Komplimentierkunst und Gesellschaftsrituale im altdeutschen Sprachraum*. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1990.

202 Aristotle, *Rhetic*, 1356a. I am quoting the English translation and edition of Edward PJ. Corbett.

203 Aristotle, *Rhetic*, 1356a. Regarding Aristotle see Ueding/Steinbrink, *Grundriß der Rhetorik*, 23-27. See furthermore Oksenberg Rorty, Amélie, ed. *Essays on Aristotle's Rhetoric*. Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 1996. See also Knape, Joachim. *Was ist Rhetorik?* Stuttgart: Reclam, 2000.

204 "ein Vermögen in jeder vollkommenen Sache wahrzunehmen, was zur Überredung dienlich seyn kann" cited in Gottsched, *Ausführliche Redekunst*, 73.

angesehen"] than a practical instruction.<sup>205</sup> Therefore in his books, representing the general tenor and discourse on rhetorics during the 18th century, he introduced and presented a second level, a second form of rhetorics. This second form focuses more on the practical side and elements of the art of persuasion, the practical eloquence. In short, the classical rhetorical elements will play a part in the analyses, but will reveal themselves primarily as evolving in practice and from necessity. Thus, they appear as tied to and reacting to practical purposes in the Luetkens letters and in the contemporary fashion of the said practice of eloquence, "Beredsamkeit".

Many of the letter-writing manuals themselves drew on long-established rhetorical traditions dating back to antiquity, for instance by referring to the classical scheme of antique rhetoric called the *ars dictaminis*, the art of prose composition, and more specifically also to the classical art of writing letters, "*ars dictamen*".<sup>206</sup> The crucial question in this regard is, however, how much of the actual theory behind these elements had a concrete bearing on Luetkens' letters and how much knowledge about the antique origins of persuasive speech can be assumed on the part of Luetkens, or put more bluntly, had interested him. This connection is only poorly verifiable. Rather it must be assumed that Luetkens must have to a large extent either simply accepted or copied the respective offerings from the 18th-century letter-writing manuals, or as is more likely and probable, he had learned and formed his letter-writing styles in practice and by experience and used his elements of letter practice as a natural skill. In support of this assumption, even the *ars dictaminis* can be regarded in a more general perspective as a kind of standard already – a common standard and scheme of the epoch at least until the second half of the 18th century – that was sometimes more or less routinely applied and performed in the practice of letter writing, without the need to know about its origins. Luetkens would therefore encounter this scheme in many or even most of the letters that he received during his education and travels. What matters most for Luetkens with regard to rhetorics was ultimately the efficacy of the rhetorical elements and at least in this regard we are also decidedly able to investigate them, because we have access to the product of his efforts: his letters.

Coming back to the typical form of learning how to be convincing in life and letters as a merchant and the clear message of the three authors of the merchant manuals in this regard, as a researcher I will have to not only consult advice literature, books and other contemporary forms of literature to understand and explain Luetkens' powers of persuasion, but I have to investigate and put a special focus on Luetkens' practical skills and knowledge. My focus has to be to try to understand and recreate from his letters directly – from their material and text – how Luetkens' power of persuasion worked. I further must be aware of the fact that this practical knowledge was practically learned and incorporated and as such was also first and foremost also practically effective and not scrutinized by the writers themselves, just as the authors of the advice literature had

<sup>205</sup> Ibid., 73.

<sup>206</sup> See Camargo, Martin. "Art. Ars dictandi, dictaminis." *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik* 1, edited by Gert Ueding, 1040-1046. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1992. See Furger, *Briefsteller*, 149. Regarding the origins of the *ars dictaminis* see Patt, William D. "The Early *Ars dictaminis* as Response to a Changing Society." *Viator* 9 (1978): 133-55.

intended and stipulated it. What I will primarily focus on in this regard in this book is Luetkens' practical eloquence in his letter practice. This eloquence was borne from practice and shaped by experiences and as such it promises, as is my firm conviction, direct and revealing insights into the typical ways of letter writing and correspondence and typical practical principles of exerting influence on each other through letters as they prevailed during the 18th century. This is how I will not only tell the story of Luetkens and his letters in this book, as "ethnographic miniatures" but also as a microhistorical cut-out of the "wall-sized culturescapes", as Clifford Geertz put it, of the 18th century during which this young man grew up and made himself into a successful merchant.<sup>207</sup>

With this assumption and goal in mind, I can conclude this chapter. We are well equipped to start the analyses of the business and letter episodes during Luetkens' establishment phase because we are provided with all the necessary background information about Luetkens' life, his education, his life situation on his travels and the demands and requirements he faced during his establishment phase. Thus, we can now delve deeply into the analysis of the concrete steps of his establishment phase and into the letter conversations shaping and promoting it.

As the final remark of this chapter, I will quote another merchant manual that helps to aptly announce and summarize the content of the following chapters. We will see that "young men prosper best, when they have either served as journey-men [...] [or] have the happiness to be taken in as partners unto such, whereby, as bears by their grown cubs they are taught to catch their prey with the greatest cleverness and certainty."<sup>208</sup> Luetkens enjoyed the privilege of experiencing and benefitting from both being a journeyman and being a business partner. The former will mark the beginning of the following analytical part, the latter will mark its end and in between we will read the story how the young merchant Nicolaus Gottlieb Luetkens became a reputable man of trade.

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<sup>207</sup> Geertz, "Thick Description," 21.

<sup>208</sup> H.N. (anon.) Merchant in the City of London, *The exact dealer's daily companion*, 9.