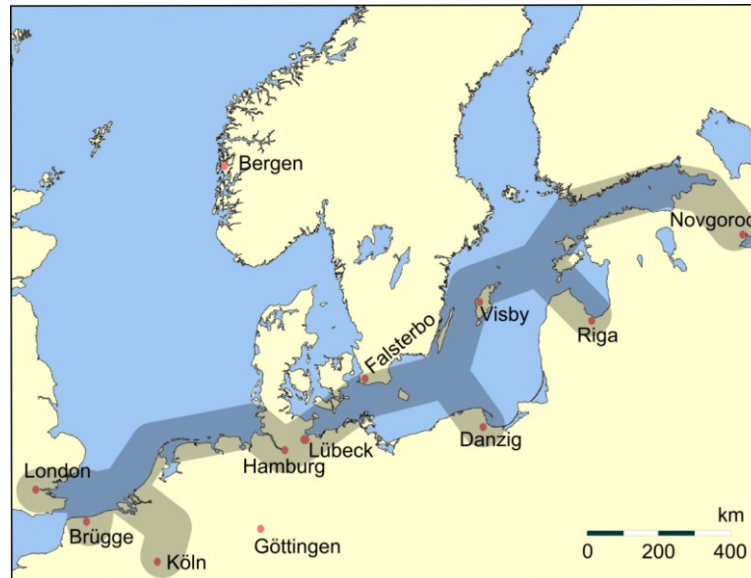Lübeck and Hamburg Treaty, 1241

In the thirteenth century and after the Baltic and North Seas came to form a sort of "northern Mediterranean" in which lands and ports were drawn into connection and trade by sea links. Due to common problems of piracy, excessive customs, and discrimination, some of the trading cities begand to look to each other for mutual aid and protection. In 1241 the ports of of Lübeck and Hamburg signed a treaty of mutal aid. It eventually grew into an entire league of such cities, and an independent power in its own right - the Hanseatic League.

The advocate and common council of Lübeck. . . . We have made an agreement with our beloved friends the citizens of Hamburg.

1. That if by chance robbers or other evil men rise against our citizens or theirs, from that place where the river which is called the Trave flows into the sea to Hamburg, and thence along the Elbe to the sea, and if they assail our citizens or theirs, whatever costs or expenses are incurred for extirpating those robbers we ought to share with them, and they with us.

2. If by chance any criminal should outrageously kill, wound, beat, or, God forbid, in any way ill-treat outside the city any burgess of Hamburg or Lübeck whom be has accused, whatever expense is incurred in taking him and punishing him, we shall share with them and they with us this condition being added, that whatever happens to their citizens near their city, and to our citizens near our city, they with their citizens, and we with ours, shall punish at the expense of the city.

3. Further, if any of the burgesses of their near our city of Lübeck, or burgesses near the city of Hamburg, should be ill-treated, we shall surrender the doer or doers of the deed for punishment, and they will surrender such people to us at the expense of the commune likewise

From Roy C. Cave and Herbert H. Coulson, *A Source Book for Medieval Economic History*, (Milwaukee, WI: Bruce, 1936), pp. 232-33. Reprinted in Leon Bernard and Theodore B. Hodges, eds. *Readings in European History*, (New York: Macmillan, 1958), 115-116