THE LAND BETWEEN PÄRNU AND SALACA – A CONTACT OR BORDER ZONE FOR ESTONIAN-AND LIVONIAN-SPEAKING PEOPLE?

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Abstract. The land from Salaca to Pärnu was already divided into two language areas before the Middle Ages because of 40 km of uninhabitable terrain. This paper is about the pattern that habitation took as it developed between the 16th and 19th centuries and contemporary information about possible Livonian settlers in this area. The unification of the districts of Pärnu and Salaca during 1582–1693 was the culmination of intensive contacts between neighbours. The war-time setbacks and diseases during the 17th and 18th centuries led to a closer connection with Ruhnu and other islands in the Gulf of Rīga. Additional factors were also involved in the development of a unique form of the language spoken in this area. From the 18th century, most contacts were halted due to serfdom and thus only some details of possible communication between the Livonians and Estonians are given in this paper from this later period.

Keywords: Livonian language, Pärnu, Tahkuranna, Häädemeeste, Ainaži, Ruhnu

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1. Introduction

The coastal area north of the Salaca River is a lowland between the ancient bank of the former Baltic Ice Lake about 10–15 km east of the present-day seashore and the sand dunes on the coast of the former Littorina Sea. The Littorina Sea transgression culminated about 7300 years ago and left the area wet or flooded with its transformation into a marshland starting about 4000–4400 years ago (at minimum as a geologically modelled lagoon at the location of the present-day Tolkuse Bog) (Rosentau et al. 2011: 182–184). Isostatic uplift, expansion of turf, and drainage by rivers gradually changed the landscape, but the first maps of the area from the 17th century still show a large swamp or wetland called the Black Mire (*Musta soo / Musta Moras*) on the coast from Ainaži to Võiste (Witt 1680; Danckerts 1680; etc). Abundant marshlands or fen woodland with birch trees covered the area behind the coastal dunes and only strips of ploughland near the farmhouses along the road are drawn on the first detailed map from 1684 (EAA 308.2.14: 1). The marshland was approximately 40 km long (N-S) and 10–15 km wide (W-E), leaving only the sandy coast for traversing the area. Thus, the northern frontier of pre-Christian Livonian settlement developed because of this uninhabitable territory resulting from its unsuitability for agriculture and due to the security conditions at that time. From the Viking Age to the first centuries of the Middle Ages, all of the coastal farms and villages had to prevent raids and were located in places undetectable from the sea. After Christianisation, the situation changed and coastal areas became important for fishing.

2. Data collected from the pre-Christian period

All along the coast from Ainaži to Võiste, i.e., for about 40 km of shoreline, the solid ground was covered by sand and pine forest and only 200-400 metres wide, and thus the beach area was too narrow and unsafe for habitation especially during the Viking Era and up to Christianisation. An archaeological field survey along the Rail Baltica corridor in 2015 found a lack of remnants of human activity in this area apart from on the coast (Kriiska et al. 2015: 739). Archaeological finds from the Iron Age in the area between Ainaži and Võiste are extremely rare. However, we have an interesting theory about the sand barrows in Treimani (Dreymannsdorf) published in 1842 by Friedrich Kruse in Necrolivonica. This University of Tartu history professor identified barrows where charcoal was found at a depth of 15 cm from the surface along with Greek or Roman¹ coins as Tumuli Polyandrien, i.e., Greek or Roman grave barrows on an ancient military road (Kruse 1842a: 10, 22, Pl. 56/1; Kruse 1842b: 2–3). Kruse writes about urns, bronze fragments, and iron artefacts found in the sand in Treimani and in Kapsede, but more detailed maps - to locate the tumuli and for reconstruction

¹ Treimani was later excluded from the list of places where Roman coins had been found (see Goebel 1842: 19–20).

of the ancient seacoast beside the "barrows" - were drawn only for the Kapsede near Liepāja, not for the Treimani seashore. A schematic cross section of the "barrows" published in Necrolivonica is not very informative (see Kruse 1842a: Pl. 59/7). In 1839, a clipped coin fragment (consisting of a quarter of a full coin) was found in the sand in Treimani under other artefacts and was chemically analysed. University of Tartu professor Friedemann Goebel specified that the bronze consisted of 73.47% copper, 7.02% tin, 19.51% lead, and no zinc (Goebel 1842: 7). Kruse dated the coin fragment to the 3rd or 2nd century BC and described the badly oxidised figures on the fragment as follows: a round altar and letter K on the obverse, the Horn of Plenty (Cornu*copiae*) surrounded with the letters $...A[\Lambda?]AI$ and ΩN on the reverse. The inscription was identified by Kruse as $KYPANAI - \Omega N$ and thus this quarter of a coin was believed to originate from North African Cyrenaica. As a result, we have some information about the Treimani coin fragment, but no reports about the research techniques or evidence proving that the location of the find was not, in fact, the sand dune. It remains unanswered how an ancient tomb barrow could be erected in a flooded area 2200 years ago and how a sand barrow in Treimani withstood erosion by wind and water for 2000 years before it was discovered. F. Kruse visited this place during his trip from Salacgrīva to Ainaži, Treimani, Orajõe, Häädemeeste, Tahku, and Pärnu between the 15th and 17th of August in 1839 (Kruse 1842a: 2). There are no further reports on the Treimani "barrows" and Kruse already mentions that the Treimani and Kapsede sites were damaged by wind or by peasants digging potato pits. Orajõe Manor was rented by Löwis of Menars in the first half of the 19th century and because this family had relatives in local academic circles, the information about finds from Treimani located near Orajõe Manor - might have come from them. Professor Kruse mentioned the placename Treimani (Dreymannsdorf) once more, reporting the discovery of Ottonian and Heinrich coins from the 10th century in Treimani and Aizkraukle (Kruse 1842a: 18). These coins are presented on the illustration plate and the legend, added by the curator of the University of Tartu Museum Gotthard Hansen, indicates they were actually found in Vecate (Alt-Ottenhof Manor near Mazsalaca) and Aizkraukle. Thus, giving Treimani as the location of the find was seemingly an error by Kruse in the text (see Kruse 1842a: 17–18, Pl. 57/17).

We do not have any cultural layer, as there is no archaeological evidence of permanent settlement in the area from the pre-Christian period with the sole and still only "probable" exception of a grave in Häädemeeste (Juurik 2007: 18, 43). Only the "flat road near the sea" (via plana iuxta mare) north from the Salaca River was mentioned in the Livonian Chronicle, a primary source on the Livonian Crusade (HCL: XXI, 7). No raids were described against the settlers living along the road or on the coast north to the Salaca River. On the contrary, in the winter of 1210/11, the Crusaders were to march and ride "day and night by the direct way along the sea" (directa via secus mare die ac nocte euntes – HCL: XIV, 10) and in the next year the raiders passed an apparently uninhabited area, moving "three days along the sea" (ibant itinere trium dierum iuxta mare – HCL: XV, 7) to reach the estuary of the Pärnu River. In the spring of 1218, the frontier camp of the Livonian Crusaders was near the Salaca River (ad Saletsam - HCL: XXI, 6) and, after the Crusaders moved to the north and met the pagan army, they had to follow them "the whole day and the next day" (totum diem illum et sequenti die) to reach the area inhabited by the Estonians.

The first documented territorial dispute over the northern boundary of the Salaca Livonian area relates to fishing. Christianisation was the catalyst for development and the 13th century was the beginning of coastal fishing settlements as a result of the new habit of having seafood during the Easter and Christmas fasts as well as weekly on Fridays.² Henricus, the priest of Rubene (*Papendorpe*) and the presumed author of the above-mentioned Livonian Chronicle, testified in 1259 before a commission chaired by Heinrich von Lützelburg, Bishop of Courland: *Dominus Henricus plebanus de Papendorpe iuratus dixit, quod a tempore quo sedit in parrochia Sontakela, vidit frequenter, quod Lyvones sine contradiccione habeuerunt terminos suos usque in fluvium, qui dicitur Orwaguge, in quo ipse cum Lyvonibus sepe piscepatur et traxit cum eis sportas murenularum. Preterea audiuit eos assidue dicentes, quod termini eorum adhuc protenderentur usque ad locum, qui dicitur Laddekeriste, similiter Salezam habuerunt ex utraque parte in quieta*

² The fishing villages were not established prior to Christianisation (Moora & Ligi 1970: 17) and, according to Evald Tõnisson, fishing was also a seasonal activity for the Livonians (Tõnisson 1974: 165). Professional fishermen were first mentioned in the Livonian Chronicle in 1201 (HCL V, 3).

possessione (Perlbach 1886: 21–22). Thus, the elderly priest of Rubene remembered the time he was also at the parish of *Sontakela* (in the late 1220s) and had participated in a fishing camp with the Livonians. According to his testimony, the Livonians held their boundary at *Orwaguge* (Orajõe) River several times "without opposition" (*sine contradiccione*). In addition, he was constantly told the bounds of Livonian territory reached a place called *Laddekeriste*, i.e., the Cape of Laigiste or Laigaste near present-day Orajõe. It is interesting to note that the priest of Soontagana – i.e., a resident of the neighbouring parish – was eligible to take part in fishing camps with the Livonians. This might show the beginning of a long tradition of joint fishing camps for the whole region, which is mentioned in the 1760s and survived up to the 20th century (Zange 1764: 421, Käsebier 1930: 113).

In 1259, the peace between local tribes had already lasted for more than 30 years and a new situation encouraged newcomers to occupy the borderlands between past chiefdoms, which supposedly had been too dangerous to inhabit in earlier times. The level of confidence was even so high that in 1251 Bishop Henricus of Osilia-Maritima built his cathedral city in an open place – very close to the sea at the mouth of the Perona River (the present-day Sauga River). Such practices had been avoided up to that point and Rīga, for example, was built at a good distance from the estuary of the Daugava River. Less than 12 years later, in February 1263, when pagan Lithuanians raided Christianised territories, the newly established Osilian-Maritiman cathedral city -Perona – was plundered and burnt down. Therefore, it was made clear that only military force and strong castles could give a guarantee of peace and security. A strong argument for the Livonian Order was the military power they possessed, and so in subsequent border disputes and agreements between local landlords, the military landlord of the Estonians made more gains. The Archbishop of Rīga, who was the landlord of the Livonians, had fewer effective troops among his vassals. The 1276 border agreement between the Archbishop of Riga and the Livonian Order specified that the new border was 14 km south of the Cape of Laigiste along the rivers *Coddevogge* (Koddiak, Līvupe/ Glāžupe) and Hainejecke (Haynasch, Ainaži) (see Berkholz 1886: 45; Hildebrand 1880: 376-377).

2. Early settlers

Social and economic needs predetermined the spatial distance between villages and farmsteads, which joined to form communities. The 40 km distance from Ainaži to the Rannametsa area was far enough to separate these linguistically linked population groups. Communication was the core of identity, but moving on foot limited the communication range and covering 10 km was a serious trip taking several hours. The research to establish the greatest distance ratio between the communication centre and the most distant farms belonging to the village - over a period of 1500 years (from 200 to 1700) - was carried out in Gotland: the distance between farmhouses was mostly 196 m on average and never exceeded 3.37 km (Svedjemo 2014: 172). Measuring the distances between medieval churches on another edge of the European language area, in eastern Transylvania, led to the conclusion that the distance between a parish church and the *filia* village was less than 5 km, i.e., within an hour's walk (Botár 2019: 176). It is hard to imagine the hamlets or villages from pre-Christian times existing separately without connections to marketplaces or religious centres. The persistence of such places in a Christianised form would be expected as a normal development, but the first parish centre between Ainaži and Pärnu was established only in the second half of the 19th century.

The Livonian Order established Tahkuranna Manor with the manor centre about 60 km from Salaca and 50 km from Ainaži. Throughout the medieval period the southern end of the permanent habitation area of the Estonians was somewhere in the area of the Rannametsa dunes or even in Häädemeeste 20 km south of the manor centre. The distance was 5 km from the manor to Võiste village and 11 km to Muhu village (Muho means 'of a hill'). The latter was almost too far from the manor for the central chapel to be built there and so the chapel was built in Võiste (see EAA 308.6.27: 1). We only have fragmentary information about the chapel and graves in Võiste and presently we do not know much more about the cemeteries in Muhu and Häädemeeste villages. The ancient burial places of Sõjamägi ('War Hill') and Veskimägi/ Keldrimägi ('Mill Hill/Cellar Hill') in Muhu village are found (Reg. No. 11818, 11747) in the registers of the Board of Antiquities. The distance between the cemeteries is less than 1.5 km. Until the sites are excavated methodically, it is difficult to date or classify these burial

places, similar difficulties exist for the presumed site for sacrificial offerings at Tõotusemägi ('Promise Hill'; Reg. No. 11748) about 1.5 km south of Sõjamägi. Upon the initiative of the local amateur researcher Anton Suurkask, these places have been surveyed since the beginning of the 20th century. Artefacts from the pre-Christian era have been found at Sõjamägi and fragments of burned bones - which are evidence of cremations – have been unearthed in Muhu village and at a burial site in Häädemeeste about 7 km south of Tõotusemägi, but without any archaeological reports. Cremating the dead was quite common in western Estonia and also practiced by the Livonians - in both cases, before as well as after Christianisation. Thus, the hills near Muhu village may have had a religious significance for the permanent inhabitants occupying the area possibly as late as the medieval period with presentday Häädemeeste nearby. In addition to the chapel in Võiste, a little chapel without any land was established in Häädemeeste in the medieval period "during the reign of the master of the [Teutonic] Order [in Livonia]" (Zeit der Hermeister Regierung) according to the revision report of 1638 (Roslavlev 1969: 7). It was visited by the priest from Pärnu who also served the distant chapel of Kastna. The registers on the rural people living in southern Pärnumaa during the medieval period have not survived. We have only suggestions about the size of the rural population in villages; however, the number of people inhabiting the coastal area was guite small, judging from the lack of medieval archaeological sites or even loose finds between Ainaži and Võiste, despite the importance of the route through this area. In light of meagre archaeological data, very little can be said regarding the spatial distribution of the population, but archaeological artefacts have been found in the villages of Muhu, Võiste, and Häädemeeste. Summarising known locations of finds, the southernmost point of Estonian medieval settlement on the coast of the Gulf of Riga may have been near Häädemeeste.

The Livonian Order's commander in New-Pernau (Pärnu) established Tahkuranna Manor as an administrative centre. Storing dried fish as the food supply for the military order provided an opportunity for the development of the villages along the sea. They came into existence within a few centuries following the Crusades and so this area had to be fortified; however, the only stone structure to survive in Tahkuranna until modern times was the older half of the manor house mentioned in 1713 (EAA 567.3.132: 11). No castles were built on the coast between the ancient Metsepole and Soontagana provinces, but a stronghold near the mouth of the Pärnu River – on the edge of former Soontagana – was built shortly before 1265 by the Livonian Order. The town of New-Pernau (Pärnu) – located in front of the stronghold – became a member of the Hanseatic League and began to expand and attracted new residents. The situation in the newly colonised area favoured the Livonians having traditional privileges in trade and joining guilds (see Bulmerincq 1903: 550; Renner 1953: 109). Other native settlers were more tied to a specific piece of land and the feudal system advanced rapidly, leaving only the positions of servants and labourers for peasants.

Moving into towns was the desire of many people, but this process is difficult to study due to the lack of medieval materials surviving in archives. The Germanisation of names by individuals who were at a higher social station than townspeople makes following this process even more difficult. It is uncommon to find foreign names in municipal sources from Pärnu and difficult to isolate background data on the medieval citizens of New-Pernau after the fire of 1524, which destroyed the archives. Fortunately, the unique name of a particular property owner in New-Pernau was written down in 1513 on a page of the oldest fragment of the surviving register of the St. Nicholas Church (Põltsam & Vunk 2001: 127). His name – Lelekaghe – was translated with the Latvian words *liels* ('big') and $k\bar{a}ja$ ('foot') by Heinrich Laakmann (1956: 202). We do not know more about this person but it was a time for local traders to move into more gainful positions and the whole trading network changed in the 16th century. The closing of the Hanseatic Kontor in Novgorod during 1494–1514 left the merchants in Old Livonia in need of finding more rural goods to trade and smaller towns had difficulties because of reduced business. The decline of Limbaži (Lemsal), the only Hanseatic town in the middle of the traditional Livonian territory and a neighbour of New-Pernau, was due to several reasons and the port on the Great Limbaži Lake fell out of reach for more capacious modern ships. As a result, people started to leave the declining town and are identifiable only by urban professions – as craftsmen, musicians, etc. – in the rural registers (see Vunk 2014: 41). By the 16th century, Limbaži seemingly had two common languages and neither was Livonian; notes about professions were given in Low German or Latvian. For this reason, names of Low German and Latvian origin can also originate from historical Livonian territory. Livonian origin is logical because contemporary unprivileged Latvians and Estonians could not move into towns without the permission of landlords. Very limited information allows us to link this non-German name to a southern origin and the Latvian language, but the exact origin of *Lelekaghe*, this citizen of New-Pernau documented in 1513, remains unknown.

3. Livonian settlers of the 16th–17th centuries

As a result of the Polish administrative reform conducted in 1582, both the Pärnu and Salaca districts became parts of the presidency of Pärnu and the parish centre for people living on the coast up to Rannametsa was the church of Salaca (Roslavlev 1969: 7). As was mentioned in the land revision of 1624, the village of Häädemeeste belonged to the parish of Salaca "since the old days", i.e., for more than a generation at that time (Laakmann 1914: 221, 230, Roslavlev 1967a: 24). This village located about 10 km north of Orajõe is not known from earlier sources as a village, the estuary of Häädemeeste River was only mentioned as a stop on the route from Pärnu to Salaca in 1530 and as a port in 1560 (Johansen 1933: 239). In 1601, Häädemeeste (Gudemanßbecke) Manor consisted of 14 farmsteads and had 2 units of ploughland in total as well as "a good fishing spot" and tavern (Roslavlev 1967b: 191). Häädemeeste was a large village compared to Ainaži (Hainsell), which only had ¹/₄ units of ploughland, 3 farmsteads, and 14 smallholders. The origins of the first workforce in Häädemeeste Manor is unknown, but it is hard to imagine they were "collected" from the surrounding area with its low population density. The first landlord under the Polish king Stephen Báthory was the Starost of Salaca, Thomas ab Embden (see Roslavlev 1969: 7). It is a strong possibility that he brought fishermen from the coast near Salaca to Häädemeeste Manor, because the Polish tax censors recorded the gardeners (hortulanis) and fishermen (piscatoribus) as a part of Embden's possessions in Salaca (Roslavlev 1973: 497). The next landlord was Jürgen Albrechts from Courland, followed by Jurgen von Tiesenhausen from Puikule, and in 1598 the manor was sold to Albrecht Feldthausen, the Burgomaster of Pärnu (Roslavlev 1969: 7). After the wars, the famine of 1601–1603, and the plague, the village of Häädemeeste (Gudemans Becke) was left empty - as it was described in the revision registry of 1624 (Laakmann 1914: 221, 227). Feldthausen left the manor to his daughter and her husband Arendt Eckhoff, the Burgomaster and later the Burggraf of Pärnu (Laakmann 1926: 103, 105). The possible community of Livonians did not last more than some decades and the origin of the new population is possibly connected to Tori, north of Pärnu. This is due to the fact that restarting the manor was led by Eckhoff from Pärnu, who was the owner of both the Häädemeeste and Tori Manors beginning in 1621 and until the latter became part of Pärnu County in 1627 (Küng 2010: 101). In 1638, Häädemeeste is referred to as the manor farm (*Viehoff*) and consisted of a tavern or coaching inn and 4 farmsteads having one unit of ploughland in total; the main activity for peasants, however, was fishing (Roslavlev 1969: 7).

Häädemeeste Manor split the northern and southern parts of Tahkuranna Manor. The northern settlement was older and almost certainly at the location of the medieval manor, so the question remains regarding the formation and populating of the southern part of the manor, i.e., the villages of Kabli, Treimani, and Orajõe. The name Kabli or Kabbel Joegge ('Chapel River') suggests a connection with a new chapel built 5 km to the north of Orajõe – identified as the Livonian fishing camp in the earlier dispute in 1259 and left more accessible for the Livonians beginning in 1582. It could be argued that the only way to fulfil pastoral duties from Salaca after the administrative reform of 1582 was building a chapel in a distant part of the parish. Unfortunately, this argument is not supported by any firm evidence confirming that a chapel had been built by the parish of Salaca on the bank of the Kabli River, about 30 km from Salacgrīva, at the end of the 16th century. Considering the clergy used horses and carriages to reach distant places, 30 km was practically the limit for regularly visiting a place (Bünz 2000: 106). Using a separate chapel presumably reshaped communication and the community of the southern part of Tahkuranna Manor became more connected to the rest of the parish than to the manor centre past the territory of Häädemeeste Manor. The new identity of a presumably multilingual society is shown by the naming of the inn on the road between Häädemeeste and Orajõe the Salaca tavern (Salis Krog, Salis Kroch), as can be seen on maps from the 17th century (Witt 1680; Danckerts 1680). The Orajõe Manor (Orraja, Orra mois) was called Menning Muiža in Latvian in the 18th century (Hupel 1782: 342).

Hard times and deadly events at the beginning of the 17th century significantly reduced the size of the coastal population and only 5 peasants and 13 fishermen were counted in the villages of Tahkuranna (Tackerorth), Võiste (Weist), and Kabli (Kabbel Joegge) in 1624 (Laakmann 1914: 221, 227). Both parts of Tahkuranna Manor belonged to the merchant Hans Plate from Pärnu and its donation by Swedish king Carl IX was confirmed in 1620 but mentions only Võiste (Vuaitz) and Kabli (Kablicke) (Küng 2010: 101). The number of the farmsteads in both manors rose from 10 (1624) to 17 (1638), i.e., by 41% in 14 years, and the newcomers can be assumed to have been quite influential on these small communities, bringing their culture, language, and manners with them. For example, a farmer in Treimani had the name Letti Johan ('Latvian Johan') (EAA 308.6.275: 5op). Newcomers could maintain relations or remain open to contacts from their homeland. For example, a farmer from this very place - Letteja Hans - had a farmhand who was born in Baldone, as was reported a century later in 1724 (EAA 567.3.132: 40). New dividing lines were introduced by the church administration and by 1680 Tahkuranna was linked to Tori and detached from Häädemeeste. Until 1693 when the situation had changed again with the separation of the parishes of Salaca, Mazsalaca, Rujiena, Ērģeme, and Valka-Lugaži from Pärnu District by Swedish authorities. In subsequent years, the supposedly multilingual southern community of peasants and fishermen in Häädemeeste, Kabli, and Orajõe, which for more than a century had belonged to the parish of Salaca, was called to integrate with the northern community of Tahkuranna Manor (see EAA 567.3.132: 3-3op). At the end of the 17th century, the district administrator (Creisvogt) Johann Christopher Bayer von Weissfeldt from Pärnu rented Tahkuranna and Häädemeeste Manors and had to establish a real boundary between Tahkuranna and New-Salaca Manors, and the districts of Pärnu and Rīga at the same time (Liiv 1935: 22). Elderly peasants from the New-Salaca Manor farm of Ainaži (Hainis) were driven back from the land of Käbbra (Kobbra Landt), which they had cultivated, "to their former desolate area" (in ihre wormahlige wüstigkeit) as a result (EAA 567.3.132: 1-10p). This process continued in Rīga during the Great Northern War. Judging by the names of the witnesses in 1708 - Kamma Peter, Kamma Heinrich, and Poia Peter the disputed land with 1/4 units of ploughland was near Orajõe (EAA 567.3.132: 4 op). This case was only dismissed after the peasants died in 1710/11. For the inhabitants of the coastal area north to Ainaži and up to Häädemeeste, the dual subordination continued from the 17th century onward: the church parish was still in Salaca and the manors were included in the registers of Saarde parish.

The language areas in the southern part of present-day Pärnumaa were mixed during the 17th and 18th centuries. The local languages spoken in Pärnu (*Pernaw*) in the beginning of the 18th century were Latvian and Estonian (*Lettisch u. Estish*) according to the description of Hans Moritz Ayrmann, a Swedish diplomat (Schreinert 1937: 31). The settlement pattern from Ainaži to Võiste is identified on the map from the end of the 17th century (see Figure 1; EAA 308.2.14: 1).



Figure 1. An extract from a map from the end of the 17th century (*Geometr. Charta öfwer Förste Dehlen af Pernau-Gebiet* – EAA 308.2.14, 1) with farms in the location of the present-day villages of Ikla (7), Treimani and Orajõe (8), Kabli (9), Jaagupi and Häädemeeste (10), Muhu (6), Piirumi (5), Pikla (4), and Võiste (3).

The chain of eight villages or hamlets along the coast had very limited farmland and three fishing hamlets in the Rannametsa region operated completely without fields. The largest village was Häädemeeste and a new chapel was built there by 1695. Dedication of the chapel to St. Margaret identifies the true head of the manor – Margaretha Eckhoff, the daughter of Arendt Eckhoff and the widow of Lieutenant Colonel Olivier de la Chataigneraye. The chapel in Kabli village, less than 10 km to the south, was not abandoned as a result and was still standing in the 18th century. It became the only religious building in the region for some years after the fire at the chapel of Häädemeeste on Christmas Eve in 1732. The former main sanctuary in Võiste was burnt down at the beginning of the 18th century (see EAA 308.6.27: 1) and was in ruins until the rebuilding of the chapel on the initiative and with the practical help of the merchants of Pärnu in 1733.

4. The 18th and 19th centuries

The processes of interest to us today are not represented in oral tradition and even the locations of the first chapels were forgotten. This may be the result of several interruptions of cultural continuity and the most extreme famine of 1695–1697, the Great Northern War (1700–1721), and the plague of 1710/11, which almost depopulated the area once again. It was remembered that the Russian troops of Lieutenant General Rudolph Felix Bauer, moving from Rīga to Pärnu in the summer of 1710, robbed and destroyed all the farms on the way (EAA 567.3.132: 60p). It is hard to imagine how huge the losses were for roadside communities and how many people managed to escape by using fishing boats or hiding out in the forest. Beginning with the second decade of the 18th century, indigenous people became the minority in the coastal area between Salaca and Pärnu (Rosenplänter 1816: 42).

According to oral tradition collected at the end of the 19th century by Jaan Jung, only four peasant families around Häädemeeste were related to local people living here before the plague of 1710 (Jung 1898: 61). Jung identifies the origin of the Jürgens family at Köstri, the Bernstein family at Aru, the Jaanson family at Kuuse, and the Meerens family at Hansu farmsteads as "Livonians or [local] descendants" without identifying these families by nation. The lineage of the tenant

farmers of the aforementioned farmsteads between 1782 and 1858 is possible to investigate by using the soul revision registries. Only the Bernstein and Jaanson families had continuous ownership of their farms during this period (see EAA 1865.5.153: 5op, 7op; 1865.5.154: 4op; 1865.3.275/1: 5op, 7op). The Jürgens family from Köstri farmstead replaced the former tenants of the neighbouring Virga farm and one of the members of the Jürgens family was educated in Pärnu and became the parish sexton (*Küster*) in 1869 (EAA 1865.5.153: 4; 1865.5.154: 5; 1865.3.275/1: 12op). These three families are local but the Meerens family was brought to the Hanso Mardi farmstead of Häädemeeste from Orajõe before 1811 and acquired the family name Märem here (EAA 1865.5.154: 5; 1865.3.275/1: 8op). As researcher Jaan Jung did not identify this specific family as having Livonian roots, we have no foundation for more detailed supposition and it is only because we have information about the Livonian peasants living in the southern part of the Tahkuranna Manor for centuries that we can consider the Meerens family to be the possible "Livonians" mentioned by Jung. In addition, we know about the free and skilled persons moving between Salaca and Pärnu during Russian rule (1710–1918). The postmaster of Salacgrīva -Georg Johann Niemann – became a citizen of Pärnu in 1711 and the merchant Johann Andreas Neumann followed him in 1725 (Laakmann 1936: 33, 40).

The emptied rural area was in need of a workforce, and it seems that even Ruhnu Island was providing workers - despite also having considerable losses from the plague: in 1710, the island's population had decreased from 293 to 80 (Tooming 1936: 4). Firstly, the refugees were free to resettle after the war and they supposedly returned from villages on the islands and other neighbouring places. The historical contacts with villages along the sea would be established during the seasonal fishing camps on the shores of Pärnu Bay and seal hunting in wintertime. Fishermen from quite distant places were working in the waters here and may have visited the coastal villages on occasion. There were three fishing seasons lasting from spring to autumn and there were even more contacts between the peasants of Ruhnu and Häädemeeste when hunting seals on the ice. Both activities were reported as traditional in the pages of the very first geographical overview of the Pärnu region, written in 1760 (Zange 1764: 421). These relations were even closer and it was reported by a landlord before 1730 that the farmers from Ruhnu Island and Sõrve Peninsula were cutting firewood in places between Tahkuranna and Häädemeeste Manors (EAA 567.3.132: 61–62). Additionally, the farmers from Ruhnu were integrated into running the manors on the coast and in 1725 the manor overseer's name – Runu Rein (with a special remark: "free [man]") – was mentioned in the documents of Tahkuranna Manor (EAA 567.3.132: 55op-56, 58). The southern part of Tahkuranna and Häädemeeste were better areas to settle, because Tahkuranna Manor was given to the garrison of Pärnu after the Great Northern War and the outpost was placed in the northern part of the manor. The units of the Semyonovsky Lifeguard Regiment had left the chapel burnt down, the manor house ruined, and the entire manor economy halted except for the brewery and the burning of charcoal for garrison troops. Fishing on a larger scale was also difficult to revive during the first half of the 18th century.

It is quite possible that most of the people left behind during the Great Northern War took refuge in the woods on the other side of the dunes. New villages were established, initiating a shift in the settlement pattern in the 18th century. Pastures were formed on former marshland and especially on the banks of rivers or ancient islands in the middle of the marshland as well as in the forest along the meadows. In the 18th century, the manor farm of Soo ('Moss' or 'Mire') was established on the cultivated land on the banks of the Soo River (Soo Jöggi – EAA 1365.1.31: 10). Moving people from one manor to another was quite common in the 18th and 19th centuries in addition to trading and changing the workforce between manors. From the middle of the 18th century, peasant escapes became widespread, due to the active measures used to bring them under serfdom - a process supported by the Russian authorities. The forest behind the coastal dunes became a popular place to hide and escapees from the Livonian and even Estonian provinces populated the wooded areas as well. The peasants on the run from Viljandi and Põltsamaa region, as well from the southeastern corner of Pärnumaa, were remembered in oral tradition for 6–7 generations as the new residents of distant hamlets in the woods (Bekker 1930: 335). Johann Heinrich Rosenplänter, the editor of the linguistics journal "Beiträge zur genauern Kenntniss der ehstnischen Sprache" – published in Pärnu from 1816 to 1832, described newcomers to Pärnumaa according to persistent differences in their dialects (kelemurde järgi – Rosenplänter 1816: 44). He mentioned Tartu dialect speakers, arrivals from Saarmaa Island, and

newcomers from Harjumaa who were remembered as originating from local close-knit rural communities (Rosenplänter 1816: 42–45). Such distinctions had already lasted for several generations: the farmholder Peter in Saarde parish, still speaking the Tartu dialect, was the grandson of a peasant from the Tartu area; in Treimani, where farmer Letti Johan's name was recorded in the 17th century, the popular baptismal name for Livonians – Ansche – was given to the farmer's son at the abovementioned Lettina farmstead in 1806 (EAA 308.6.275: 50p; 1865.3.247/6: 880p). People from Saaremaa – living in two farmsteads both bearing the name *Saarlane* – and peasants from Harjumaa (the so-called *Tallina harjakad*) – living at Harjaka farmstead – moved to empty lands after the plague of 1710–1711 and were mentioned by J. H. Rosenplänter (1816: 42–45). The newcomers from Muhu Island were also mentioned and we can find the name of *Muhilasse Hans* from Kabli (*Kabling*) village in the registers of 1744 (EAA 567.3.132: 890p).

With the chapels in Tahkuranna and Häädemeeste located in his parish, the pastor of Pärnu-Elisabeth – J. H. Rosenplänter – had at least some contacts with people of Livonian origin and he published the Lord's Prayer in Livonian in his journal (see Rosenplänter 1818: 30). He saw the "old Livonians" (Alt-Lieven) as the closest relatives of the Estonians, describing both nations in one section of a paper about the Finno-Ugric peoples (Rosenplänter 1818: 24–33). Heinrich von Jannau argued on the pages of Rosenplänter's journal that the Livonians are an older tribe than the Estonians (Jannau 1828: 89). All remaining Livonian-speaking areas were also listed by Rosenplänter and according to his description the Livonians settled on the banks of the Salaca River and that the inhabitants of the seashore "at the Island of Ruhnu by the bay, known by the name 'Livonians' to learned people", i.e., on the northeastern coast of Courland opposite Ruhnu Island (1818: 25). Ten years later, in 1828, the remaining area inhabited by the Livonians (Liwi/Libi rahwas) was in "Livonia and on the beach of Engure (angernsche Strande)" according to Jannau (1828: 14, 23, 36-37). The Messima farmstead - as it relates to newcomers - is even more relevant to the topic of the present paper. The place name of Messima at the Räägu River, north of Pärnu, is translated as 'Honeyland' by Rosenplänter (1816: 44-45). Although its meaning could easily be derived from Estonian, the linguist and pastor Rosenplänter linked the name to Latvian origin for some reason and in this way pointed to the Livonian translation using the same words with their exact meaning and pronunciation. It is understandable that Livonian people were looking for work and a place to live in the northern area after the Great Northern War. As Russian troops destroyed all the farms they found on their way in 1710, the coastal areas of Livonian settlement suffered in a similar way as roadside villages south of Pärnu and even the surviving families struggled for decades. This situation prompted the move to new places as well as nearby farms still operating after 1710. For example, a boy and maid from New-Salaca Manor were working in the farms of Orajõe in 1715 and 1725 (EAA 567.3.132: 200p, 580p-59).

We have no list of Livonians from any manor in Pärnumaa, but in the Tahkuranna Manor registers from 1761, the name of a young innkeeper - Jacob Liefländer - is marked in place of the former innkeepers – Johann Matz, Erich Schwed, and Tönnis (see EAA 567.3.132: 50p, 930p). Liefländer was not a family name, and the next generation did not use it. Having a nickname referring to the Livonian Governorate in the middle of the very same governorate seems purposeless. There are more grounds to think that the name of Liefländer refers to Livonian origins or his arriving from the neighbouring region, historically recognised as the territory of the Livonian people. The name of the earlier innkeeper - Erich Schwed or 'Eric the Swede' - was probably formed in a similar way.³ In 1782, Jacob Liefländer was 36 years old and was living in a tavern together with his wife Kert, their four sons (Diedrick, Jack, Jahn, Johann) and daughter Anno (EAA 567.3.132, 50p). Their second daughter Liso would be born some years later, but their eldest son Maddis was working at the manor, becoming an adult in 1788 and earning the position of farm manager of Kusiko farmstead some years later (EAA 1282.2.2: 68op; 1282.1.21a: 261). There is no doubt that the innkeeper was an influential communicator and his family operated the Kutzikas Inn of Võiste for several generations. Diderick was married to the daughter of the manor's overseer and was appointed the tenant farmer of Kallakutzi oder Metzle (Metste)⁴ farmstead in Lülle

³ The name Schwed became the family name later in Kükupp Weber Gesinde in Kuiviži village of Vecsalaca and spread to Ainaži in 1833 (LVVA 199.1.399: 79op, 91op; 199.1.134: 36–37).

⁴ The name of the farmstead was corrected to *Kallakutzi oder Metzte* in the soul registry of 1834 and afterwards the name Metzte/Metste remained.

village before 1811 (EAA 1865.3.272/10: 8; 1865.3.272/16: 1110p-112). The second generation of 5 boys and 2 girls had the capacity to have an effect on the community's culture more than Jacob Liefländer, as Jaan was the manor's innkeeper and his two older brothers ran the inland farms (EAA 1865.3.272/16: 15, 32). The family name taken in the 1820s by the children of Jacob Liefländer was Fischer (EAA 1282.1.21a: 231). It is not related to their main occupation directly and the prominent members of the family had no need to show a connection with this profession. The logic of giving surnames typically involved a connection to the family patriarch or their occupation. Therefore, the name Fischer may have arisen due to the family traditions of Jacob Liefländer before he became an innkeeper, which once again points to Livonian origins. Livonians were the core of the fishing communities in the Salaca region and although we have no exact parallel, the German (Fishmann) and Latvian (Sweineek) forms of this name were taken as the surnames by Livonian families in Salaca and Ainaži (LVVA 199.1.400: 64op, 76, 95; 235.15.358: 17, 87).

After the release of the peasants of the Livonian Governorate from serfdom in 1819 and the lifting of the final restrictions on freedom of movement by 1833, the time to find the right place to live had only just begun. However, there were very few Livonian-speaking peasants in the villages of Salaca and the Estonian language lecturer at the University of Tartu Diedrich Heinrich Jürgenson found only 17 remaining speakers of Salaca Livonian in 1839 at Svētciems Manor (Jürgenson 1846: 24). So, the situation in the historic borderland between these Finno-Ugric linguistic relatives had changed. Most Livonians spoke Latvian or Estonian and linguistic and cultural identity gained a new meaning, which was to be turned into a political one.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, one may say we do not have enough sources for reconstructing the identity and language areas of the rural population living north of the Salaca region. However, we still have enough information for a general overview. Written sources surviving from the 13th century indicate that there was an uninhabited zone between the Livonians and Estonians and mention only a road on the sandy strip along the coast. The Christianisation of the local population was once the main guarantee for building hamlets in more open places. The Christian period also introduced professional fishing because of obligatory fast days, thereby becoming a two-fold motivator for establishing fishing villages on the coastal strip. Having professional fishermen was a necessity for the Livonian Order's Tahkuranna Manor in order to fulfil the duty of storing a strategic food supply. The fishermen at the manor occupied the territory as far as Häädemeeste. Since they had landlords who were militarily weak compared to the Livonian Order, the Livonians living on the territory of the bishopric were not allowed to move freely to the north along the coast in medieval times.

The unification of the districts of Pärnu and Salaca during 1582–1693 was the culmination of intensive contacts between the communities and the settlement of empty territories. The southern part of Tahkuranna Manor (Orajõe, Kabli, Treimani) was seemingly settled during this time. The area became multilingual and, in addition to Estonian, Latvian was the second local language spoken in Pärnu. The first real map showing the location of hamlets and villages was drawn at the end of the 17th century and the density of the settlement on the coast was documented then and is presented below (see Figure 1). By the end of the 17th century, the population had recovered from the wartime setbacks and the difficulties of the first decades of the 17th century, but more cataclysms followed in 1695–1711. The contacts with Ruhnu and other islands in the Gulf of Riga intensified in the aftermath of the emptying of roadside areas. During Russian rule and facing deepening serfdom, district authorities were tasked with monitoring and preventing the movement of peasants between manors and especially from the New-Salaca Manor farm of Ainaži to the Orajõe village of Tahkuranna Manor. However, incorporation of people from Salaca into the Tahkuranna and Häädemeeste communities was still occurring. Jacob Liefländer - the Võiste innkeeper who was presumably of Livonian origin - was added to the registers of Tahkuranna Manor in 1761. He enjoyed wealth and status for decades, leaving an even more influential next generation of seven offspring to join the manor community.

In response to the question in the title, the coastal area between Pärnu and Salaca was a border zone for four centuries and a space for contact for little more than a century. Very likely the area between Salaca and Pärnu was inhabited by Estonians from the north to Häädemeeste in the

Middle Ages. And Salaca Livonians moved up to Kabli village from the south during the period from the end of the 16th century up to the demographic catastrophe of 1710/11. More than five centuries as close neighbours and one century of active communication must have left a shared linguistic heritage. The newcomers functioned as ambassadors of culture and language and presumably were influential for the relatively small population in the coastal area. It would be interesting to determine how the new terms of the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries or the loanwords adopted into the Estonian and Livonian spoken here compare to other regions. The recorded history of the territory between Salaca and Pärnu spans more than 800 years and many developments remain unknown to us. One can hope that interdisciplinary research will find the methodology and additional sources necessary for discovering in more detail how these small communities responded to and communicated in situations where free movement was possible as well as those where it was not. There are likely some commonalities, but every small community may have had its own ways of adapting to the extreme processes and changes in the background.

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Kokkuvõte. Aldur Vunk: Maa Pärnu ja Salatsi vahel – kas eesti ja liivi keele kõnelejate segunemis- või piirivöönd? Salatsist kuni Pärnuni ulatunud ala oli juba enne keskaega jagatud kaheks keelevööndiks liivlaste ja eestlaste vahel. Ajalooline rajajoon oli moodustunud kuni 40 km ulatuses asustamata ala tõttu: liivane rannariba Ainažist Võisteni oli elukohaks liiga kitsas ja liivaluidete tagant algas Musta soo nime kandnud soine ala. Artiklis on lühidalt kirjeldatud selle piirkonna maastiku kujunemist; sellele järgneb ülevaade arheoloogiliste uuringute hetkeseisust ja 13. sajandist säilinud allikate tõlgendus asustusloolisest aspektist. Kirjeldataval alal polnud arvatavasti märkimisväärset asustust ajani, kui rajati kalurikülad ja keskaegse Saksa Ordu Liivimaa Tahkuranna mõisas alustati kalapüüdmist ja -kuivatamist strateegiliseks toiduvaruks maakaitseväele. Põhiosa artiklist kirjeldab asustusmustri arengut 16. sajandist kuni 19. sajandini ja kaasaegset informatsiooni võimalikest liivi asukatest selles piirkonnas. Pärnu ja Salatsi maakondade ühendamine ajavahemikuks 1582–1693 oli tihedate kogukondlike kontaktide kulminatsioon kogu piirkonnas ja eriti Tahkuranna mõisa lõunapoolse osa (Orajõe, Kabli, Treimani) ja Uus-Salatsi kõrvalmõisa Ainaži vahel. 17. sajandi esimestel kümnenditel ja aastatel 1695–1711 piirkonda tabanud tagasilöögid viisid nendest taastunud elanikkonna lähedaste kontaktideni Ruhnu ja teiste saartega Liivi lahe ääres. Nii kaasati veelgi naaberkeeli kohaliku murde välja-kujunemisse. Alates 18. sajandist on enamus varasemaid sidemeid pärisorjuse süvenemise tõttu katkenud ja seetõttu on artiklis sellest ajast olnud käsitleda vaid üksikuid detaile võimalikest kontaktidest eesti- ja liivikeelsete inimeste vahel.

Märksõnad: liivi keel, Pärnu, Tahkuranna, Häädemeeste, Ainaži, Ruhnu

Kubbõvõttõks. Aldur Vunk: Mō Pārnov ja Salāts vaisõ – ēsti ja līvõ kīel rőkāndijizt kubbő sieggimiz agā rubīž ārā? Arā Salāts ja Pārnov vaisõ jõbā jedmõl sidāmtaigõ vol jagdõd kodõ kīelarro līvlizt ja estlizt vail. Istorili rubīžarā voļ suggõn pigā 40 kilomētõrt laigā, sīestõ, ku sāl iz ūo jelānikīdi: jõugi randavīrki Ainažõst Võiste soņo vol jelamiz pierast il aiga odoz ja jõugõ konkad tagan kuodon irgiz Musta suo. Kera litold nižob il sie ara monit suggimi, tāmikšõb arheologlizt tuņšlimizt tieutod iļ sīe kuož tampo, ja vaņtlob ka 13. āigastsadāst pīlõnd ovātõd pāl leb istoriliz jelāmiz aspekt. Se arā iz ūo tädzi jeldõbkūož sīe āiga soni, ku sugīzt kalāmīed kilād ja sidāmtaigi Saksā Orden Tahkuranna moizõs īrgiz kalā vejjimiz ja kūjastimiz, až se voļ vajāg suodāmīedon siedoboks. Kēra amā jemiņ nižob iļ rovzt sies randas 16. aigastsadāst 19. āigastsadā soņi ja tāmikšob tampiži tieutidi iļ sīe, voi tas aral jelīzto ka līvlizt. Pārnov ja Salāts mōkõrd ītimi 1582.–1693. āigastis voļ kubbõpūtimizt kulminātsij amāl arāl, īžkizt Tahkuranna moizo jedālpūoliz jag (Orājoug, Kabli, Treimani) ja Ūd-Salāts kilgizmoizõ Ainaži vaisõ. Pierrõ 17. āigastsadā ežmizt āigastkimmõd āigal ja 1695.–1711. āigastis suggõn lälamt aigõ īrgiz jo sūr arā jelānikād kubbõpūtimi Rūnõmō ja munt Piškīz mier kolad jelānikādoks. Nei kūožpēļizt kīeldmūrdõd sizzõl tuļtõ täpiņtõkst ka mūšti kēļšti. Pierrõ 18. āigastsaddõ vanād sidīmõd ātõ kaddõnd ja siepierāst kēras sōb vaņtõltõd set mūnda kubbõpūtimi ēsti- ja līvõkēļiz rovzt vail.