

THE PLANS FOR MAKING THE PÄRNU-VILJANDI-TARTU WATERWAY NAVIGABLE IN 1630–1680*

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Turning water bodies into inland waterways by using canals has been a part of historical communication and logistics. The waterways have been established for several reasons: first, to ensure a free and faster movement of bulk goods between a market place and its hinterland (sometimes mainland roads could even be absent); second, to ensure the transport and distribution of goods during harsh times via neutral territories. The construction of canals was closely related to political rivalry and economic competition between towns and regions. In addition, there are natural circumstances like water level, climatic impact, etc. to be considered.

In the context of trade history, the economic areas of the Hanseatic League knew several important inland waterways, which connected large trade centres and regions by clearing and expanding rivers, connecting them and turning them navigable. Two canals played a crucial role in the Hanseatic trade. One was established by the Teutonic Order at the end of the fourteenth century and the beginning of the fifteenth century between the River Pregel (Russ. *Преголя*; Lith. *Prieglius*) and the Curonian Lagoon, where the Memel and its tributaries were accessed. The canal facilitated the expansion of the economic influence of Gdansk (Danzig) and Kaliningrad (Königsberg) since it was a gateway for Lithuanian goods. The Stecknitz Canal was even more prominent, flowing into the Trave and thus connecting it with the Delvenau, the tributary of the Elbe. A connection between Lübeck and Hamburg or the Baltic Sea and the North Sea was established. The relevant canal with locks was built in 1390–98 with the main purpose of transporting salt from Lüneburg to Lübeck. It was possible to transport other heavy goods as well, mostly wine, from the Elbe to the Trave and vice versa. The Stecknitz Canal was particularly important during the wars when vessel traffic on the Danish straits stopped. The problem of the

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canal lay in its length since the waterway between Lübeck and Hamburg was twice as long as the mainland road via Oldesloe. In 1448 Hamburg proposed Lübeck to establish a direct canal between the small rivers Alster and Trave. It would have been a predecessor of the much later Kiel-Canal. Although the construction works were started, they were never completed.¹ During the early modern time, in the 1660s, Hamburg was furthermore connected with canals to the Oder, the Havel, the Spree and several other rivers extending the hinterland of the city to inner Germany. As a result, Hamburg gained access to regions which used to be in the influence sphere of the Baltic Sea ports (Lübeck, Danzig, etc.).²

The final decades of the sixteenth century in the Netherlands saw the completion of a canal network between towns and in the direction towards Amsterdam.³ In France the important waterways headed from Lyon to Avignon and from Orléans to Nantes and were interconnected with the Loire River and its canal system. The Seine, flowing through Paris into the English Channel was also accessible from the Loire. During 1750–1820 canals were used to connect Liverpool to 3000 miles of inland waterways in England.⁴ The most important inland waterway in Sweden was the Göta Canal, which connected the Baltic Sea with the North Sea via lakes Vättern and Vänern and the Göta River and Trollhätte Canal. The design of individual canal sections connecting the existing bodies of water was started already at the end of the seventeenth century, but the completion of intact waterway was deferred to the beginning of the nineteenth century.⁵

The most ambitious plan to establish an inland waterway in early modern Estonia and Livonia is related to the idea of establishing a shipping traffic between Pärnu (Pernau) and Pskov (Pleskau) by connecting existing natural rivers and lakes.⁶ The idea served mainly the commercial interests

¹ Philippe Dollinger, *Die Hanse* (5., erweiterte Auflage, Stuttgart: Kröner, 1998), 197–200, 303; *Lübeck-Lexikon. Die Hansestadt von A bis Z*, hrsg. von Antjekathrin Graßmann (Lübeck: Schmidt-Römhild, 2006), 330–331.

² Marian Nilsson, “Öresundstullräkenskaperna som källa för fraktfarten genom Öresund under perioden 1690–1710”, *Meddelanden från Ekonomisk-Historiska Institutionen vid Göteborgs Universitet*, 2 (1962), 6–7.

³ Immanuel Wallerstein, *Das moderne Weltsystem II. Der Merkantilismus. Europa zwischen 1600 und 1750* (Wien: Promedia Druck- und Verl. ges., 1998), 59.

⁴ Mats Bladh, *Ekonomisk historia. Europa och Amerika 1500–1990* (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 1995), 63–64.

⁵ Lars Magnusson, *Sveriges ekonomiska historia* (Stockholm: Rabén Prisma, 1996), 171–172; Ove Torgny, *Göta kanal: en resa på tvärs* (Ängelholm: Skåneförl, 2001).

⁶ Dredging the Gauja waterway (Livländische Aa) and establishing a better traffic system for transporting goods on the river Daugava was under discussion in Livonia in the seventeenth century.

of Pärnu, less the interests of Tartu (Dorpat), as its main purpose was to expand the commercial hinterland of Pärnu to Russia and bring goods from Pskov resp. Russia to Pärnu and from there to the Baltic Sea. The project was first discussed at the beginning of the 1630s. It also received attention during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and even in the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

The following article concentrates on the plans in the seventeenth century to establish such a waterway, the economic considerations and the measures that were taken. In addition the article tries to determine the reasons why all these projects failed.⁷

The issue of making the rivers between Pärnu-Viljandi-Tartu-Pskov navigable has already been treated in earlier historical writings. August Wilhelm Hupel was one of the first to bring forth the idea of a possible waterway connecting Pärnu and Tartu, which had been disrupted during the sixteenth and seventeenth century wars but he considered it a local legend or even a fairy tale.⁸ Later several other Baltic German writers have discussed the issue of such a waterway, concentrating mostly on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁹ Arnold Soom has made the most effective contribution to the study of establishing the inland waterway of Pärnu in seventeenth century¹⁰ and his findings have been used by many other

⁷ The article does not touch upon the topic about the possible use of inland waterway connecting Pärnu, Viljandi and Tartu in relation to medieval Hanseatic trade. Tõnu Raid has studied this issue since he is convinced that Pärnu-Viljandi-Tartu waterway was used during the Middle Ages (Tõnu Raid, *Eesti teedevõrgu kujunemine* (Tallinn: Punnpaap, 2005), 10), at the same time Inna Põltsam-Jürjo points out that relevant evidence concerning the Middle Ages is missing (Inna Põltsam-Jürjo, *Liivimaa väikelinn Uus-Pärnu 16. sajandi esimesel poolel* (Tallinn: Argo, 2009), 38).

⁸ August Wilhelm Hupel, *Topographische Nachrichten von Lief- und Ehtland*, Bd. I (Riga: Hartknoch, 1774), 123–124.

⁹ Carl Albert Rathlef, *Skizze der orographischen und hydrographischen Verhältnisse von Liv-, Est- und Kurland* (Reval: Kluge und Ströhm, 1852), 71, 79, 128, 154–155; Friedrich Amelung, “Einiges über den alten Wasserweg zwischen Narva, Dorpat, Fellin und Pernau”, *Neue Dorptsche Zeitung*, Nr. 105–108 (1893); Friedrich Gustav Bienemann, “Die schwedische Regierung und die Wasserverbindungen Livlands gegen Ende des XVII. Jahrhunderts”, *Düna-Zeitung* (1893), 63–64; Bruno Doss, “Zur Geschichte baltischer Kanalprojekte und Geologisches vom Aa-Düna-Kanal”, *Düna-Zeitung*, Nr. 120 (1902); Georg von Freymann, “Einiges über den alten Fellinischen Wasserweg”, *Jahresbericht der Felliner Litterarischen Gesellschaft 1902–1904* (Fellin, 1905); Paul Schneider, “Pläne zur Schiffbarmachung des Wasserweges zwischen Pleskau und Pernau”, *Sitzungsberichte der Altertumsforschenden Gesellschaft zu Pernau*, VII Bd (1914), 92–116.

¹⁰ Arnold Soom, “Die Politik Schwedens bezüglich des russischen Transithandels über die estnischen Städte in den Jahren 1636–1656”, *Õpetatud Eesti Seltsi Toimetused*, XXXII (Tartu, 1940), 235–237; Arnold Soom, “Der baltische Getreidehandel im 17. Jahrhundert”,

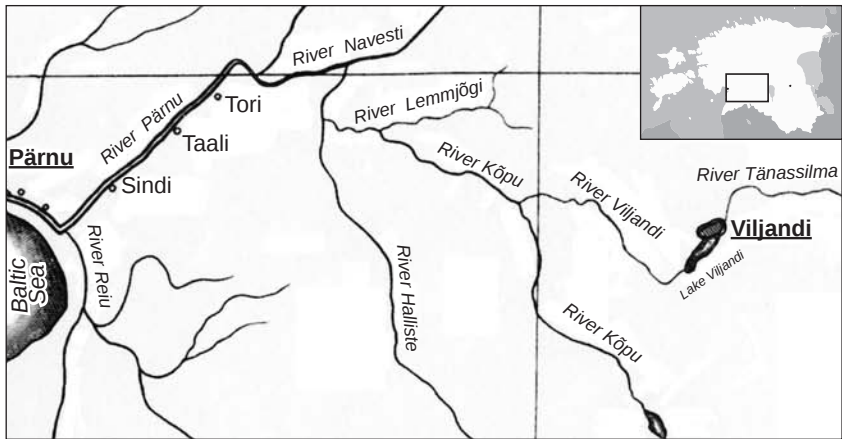


Figure 1. Pärnu-Viljandi-Tartu waterway (left side).

historians.¹¹ Relying on new archive sources, Margus Laidre has pointed out some new facts about the waterway.¹² I have earlier studied the issue of the waterway in the context of Pärnu's timber trade during the 1680s.¹³ Waterway related subjects have been discussed by local historians¹⁴, too, but with an emphasis on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.¹⁵ Regard-

Kungl. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets Handlingar Historiska Serien, 8 (Stockholm, 1961), 111–113.

¹¹ See Jüri Kivimäe, Aivar Kriiska, Inna Põltsam, Aldur Vunk, *Merelinn Pärnu* (Pärnu Linnavalitsus, 1998), 111; Helmut Piirimäe, "Tartu asend linna arengutegurina Rootsi võimu perioodil", *Eesti Loodus*, 11 (1980), 709–715; Helmut Piirimäe, "Dorpats/Tartus Handelsstrassen (bis zum Nordischen Krieg)", *Euroopa kui sild – Euroopalikud teed Tartu ja Pihkva vahel. Europa als Brücke – Europäische Wege zwischen Tartu/Dorpat und Pskov/Pleskau* (Tartu: Adalbert-Stiftung-Krefeld, 1998), 102–104; Helmut Piirimäe, *Ülikoolilinn Pärnu. Pärnu – the University Town* (Tartu Ülikool, Pärnu Kolledž, 1999), 41–42.

¹² Margus Laidre, *Üks hä tru ja öige sullane. Elust Rootsi sõjaväes Eesti- ja Liivimaal 1654–1700* (Tartu: Eesti Ajalooarhiiv, 1999), 84; Margus Laidre, *Dorpat 1558–1708: linn väe ja vaenu vahel* (Tallinn: Argo, 2008), 429–430.

¹³ Enn Küng, "Pärnu metsakaubandusest 17. sajandi viimasel veerandil", *Pärnumaa ajalugu*, vihik 3, artiklite kogumik 2 (Pärnu, 2000), 62–74; Enn Küng, "Liivi sõda. Poola ja Rootsi aeg 1558–1710", *Pärnumaa. Loodus, aeg, inimene* (Tallinn: Eesti Entsüklopeedia-kirjastus, forthcoming).

¹⁴ One of the most prominent reviews is written by Henn Moora: H[enn] Moora, "Kodu-uurimise radadel: Pärnu-Viljandi-Tartu veeteed", *Tee Kommunismile*, 5.1.1960, 3–4.

¹⁵ See Uno Hermann, "Viljandi ja Pärnu vaheline veeteed", *Eesti Loodus*, 4 (1967), 233–234; Mait Talts, "Pärnu - Viljandi - Tartu veeteest", *Jõed ja kanalid*, Eesti Maaparandajate Seltsi Toimetised, VI (2005), 4–10; Anto Juske, "Emajõe, Koiva, ja Väina ühendamise kavad", *Jõed ja kanalid*, Eesti Maaparandajate Seltsi Toimetised, VI (2005), 21–27. A short history of Tartu-Viljandi-Pärnu waterway is also given on the homepage of Emajõe

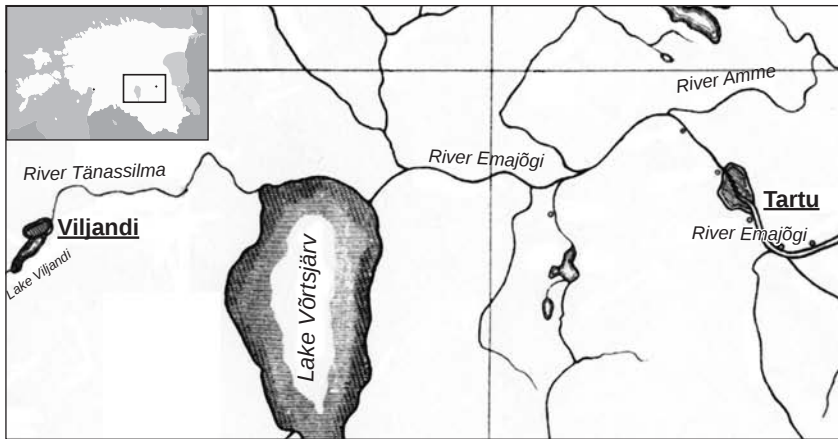


Figure 1. Pärnu-Viljandi-Tartu waterway (right side).

less of considerably capacious historiography on the given subject, sources from different archives allow to observe this ambitious project once more.

Before analysing the Pärnu-Viljandi-Tartu-Pskov waterway, it is important to have an overview of the route (see fig. 1¹⁶). In Pärnu the Pärnu River,¹⁷ which was called *Embach* or *Embecke* in contemporary sources, flows into the Gulf of Riga. About thirty kilometres upriver, the Navesti River flows into it. When moving upstream one can meet the Viljandi River, which also known as *Kõpu*, *Osju* and *Sillavalla* and most commonly as the *Raudna River*, beginning in Lake Viljandi. On the northern side of the lake there was an access to the Tännassilma River via the *Kösti* creek, which flows into Lake Võrtsjärv. From its north-eastern bank the Suur Emajõgi River flows through Tartu to lakes Peipsi and Pskov, which is also the final destination of the *Velikaya River* that flows through Pskov. It is important to keep in mind that the main branch of the Pärnu River in Central-Estonia reached up to Paide (Weissenstein) and therefore it has also been called the *Paide River*.¹⁸

Lodjaselts, <http://www.lodi.ee/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=124&Itemid=1> (28.10.2009).

¹⁶ Source: Schneider, "Pläne zur Schiffbarmachung".

¹⁷ For general data about the rivers of Pärnu-Viljandi-Tartu waterway see *Eesti jõed*, koost. Arvi Järvekülg (Tartu: Eesti Põllumajandusülikooli Zooloogia ja Botaanika Instituut; Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus, 2001).

¹⁸ Paul Schneider has given a good schematic overview of rivers on the waterway: "Pläne zur Schiffbarmachung".

It is also important to have an idea about the commercial hinterland of Pärnu. Historically the main line of communication for Pärnu was the road between Tallinn and Riga running through the city.¹⁹ At the same time Tallinn put economic pressures on Pärnu in such a way that its commercial hinterland had become inevitably reduced. The same kind of pressure came also from Riga although its local Livonian hinterland was narrow and concentrated mostly up the Daugava (Düna) River on the Russian, Belorussian and Lithuanian market.²⁰ In the seventeenth century Pärnu made numerous complaints about neighbouring towns who seized the profitable trade of the region. For example, in 1660 when land customs was established in Pärnu for regional trade, the local merchants complained that the residents of the hinterland did not want to come to Pärnu, but preferred a twenty to thirty miles longer trip to Riga, Tallinn (Reval), Haapsalu (Hapsal) or even Kuressaare (Arensburg). The last two cities also tried to receive goods from the Pärnu hinterland. The citizens of Pärnu complained that corn did not reach them, but went straight to Saaremaa and via the Sound to Western Europe. Due to competition there was often a lack of consumer goods in the town. According to the people of Pärnu, the privileges of the town were ignored to the extent that the town could not function on its own.²¹

Pärnu's economic relation with eastern regions, primarily with Viljandi and Tartu, was complicated due to natural circumstances. The transport of goods used the official road from Pärnu to Tartu via Saarde (Saara), Karksi (Karkus), Helme (Helmet), Rõngu (Ringen) and Nõo (Nüggen). In principle, it was possible to move on from Tartu via Kirumpää and Vastseliina (Neuhausen) to the Russian border.²² A separate issue is the extent to which the merchants of Pärnu visited Russia by mainland roads. Neither Tartu county nor Russia, however, belonged to the economic hinterland of Pärnu due to communication difficulties. Pärnu and Viljandi were surrounded by wide forest and swamp areas. Difficult road conditions during spring and autumn had been the subject of complaints both in the sixteenth and

¹⁹ Otto Liiv, "Die wirtschaftliche Lage des estnischen Gebietes am Ausgang des XVII. Jahrhunderts. I. Allgemeiner Überblick, Getreideproduktion und Getreidehandel", *Õpetatud Eesti Seltsi Toimetused*, XXVII (Tartu, 1935), 26; *Eesti majandusajalugu I*, toim Hendrik Sepp, Otto Liiv, Juhan Vasar (Tartu: Akadeemiline Kooperatiiv, 1937), 166; Põltsam-Jürjo, *Liivimaa väikelinn Uus-Pärnu*, 36–37.

²⁰ Soom, "Der baltische Getreidehandel", 99–109; Vasilii Doroshenko, "Protokolý Rízhkogo torgovogo suda kak istochnik dlya izucheniya ékonomicheskikh svyazi Rigi s russkimi, belorusskimi i litovskimi zemlyami v XVII v.", *Ékonomicheskie svyazi Pribaltiki s Rossieï*, Sbornik stateï (Riga, 1968), 117–145.

²¹ Soom, "Der baltische Getreidehandel", 38–39, 113, 187–188.

²² *Eesti majandusajalugu I*, 166.

seventeenth century.²³ Bad roads and weak connections with remote areas, including Pärnu region around itself, were the reason why Pärnu had a relatively minor role as a port during the seventeenth century. Theoretically, Pärnu could have been the trading centre and port for South-Estonia. In the eyes of contemporaries, establishing a navigable waterway from Pärnu to Pskov should expand the hinterland of the town, increase the trade volume and consequently the wealth of local merchants.

Compared to the first half of the sixteenth century, the position of Tartu in the network of local and international trade routes had significantly weakened in the seventeenth century. At the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the trade between Riga and Pskov began to flow via Alüksne (Marienburg) or Vastseliina. Therefore Russian goods did not reach Tartu anymore and the previous economic basis of the town in the Russian hinterland disappeared. The town struggled throughout the seventeenth century to bring back the Russian trade, but failed.²⁴ Therefore, the waterway passing through the town and flowing into Lake Peipsi was in the interests of the merchants of Tartu as well. The existing rivers in close proximity of both Tartu and Pärnu were used for so-called peasant trade and for short trips anyway. There were several mills and even simple manufactories like sawmills on the riversides. The next necessary step should have been the connection of all the rivers that the contemporaries in general called *Embach*.

Discussions in the 1630s

The first quarter of the seventeenth century was a continuous period of wars in Livonia. Regardless of short-term armistices and the fact that Pärnu became subject to the Sweden on 8 August 1617,²⁵ Tartu was occupied on 16 August 1625.²⁶ A comprehensive reconstruction could only be started after 1629, when from 16/26 September a six years long ceasefire at Altmark was concluded between Sweden and Poland, which was prolonged for 26 years in 1635 at Stumsdorf. On 13 November 1629 Johan Skytte was appointed

²³ Pölsam-Jürjo, *Liivimaa väikelinn Uus-Pärnu*, 37. For example the envoys of Pärnu Hinrich Möller and Johan Georg Franck officially complained to Livonian Governor-General Krister Classon Horn in 1681 about poor road conditions which had resulted in being cut away from Tartu: Ajalooarhiiv [EAA], f. 278, n. 1, s. XVI:27D (The complaint is registered in the office of the Governor-General on 30 July 1681).

²⁴ Soom, "Die Politik Schwedens", 60–72; *Tartu ajalugu I*, koost Raimo Pullat (Tallinn: Eesti Raamat, 1980), 80–86.

²⁵ Ragnar Liljedahl, *Svensk förvaltning i Livland 1617–1634* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1933), 30.

²⁶ Laidre, *Dorpat 1558–1708*, 271–279.

Governor-General of the recently established General Governorate of Livonia, Ingria and Kexholm. His main task was the overall reorganization of Livonia. His instruction (10 December 1629) was extremely extensive. He had to establish the new administration, tax, church, and legal system, carry out a land revision, study the ownership relations of noble estates etc.²⁷

Skytte was also instructed to reorganise and intensify trade in the towns of Livonia, to organise the grain trade of the state, deal with trade revenues, and to facilitate the population growth in towns, etc. One part of Sweden's economic policy was to bring foreign trade – mainly from Russia, Lithuania, Poland, as well as the Orient – to Livonia. The Governor-General was primarily concerned with Riga since it was the most important town of the province. But the town was not interested that its economic life was regulated by the state. For Pärnu the most important issue in the second half of the 1620s was the relationship with countess Magdalena von Thurn, the owner of Pärnu county. Pärnu complained that the countess did not respect the privileges of the town. One of the complaints was that the countess hindered the traffic on the Pärnu River by building dams.²⁸

In 1630 or 1631, the Pärnu City Council addressed several complaints and appeals to King Gustav II Adolf, giving for the first time a comprehensive overview about the Pärnu River issue. The town specifically complained that the flow of the Pärnu River was hindered by the dams built on it and that its water level had fallen. In earlier times grain and other products were brought to Pärnu from Viljandi and Paide, but now the risks involved were considered too big, therefore preventing the trade of the town. Dams and other obstacles made it hard to transport construction timber to the town.²⁹ The King's reaction to the complaint is not known.

The next Governor-General, Bengt Oxenstierna, raised the issue of the Pärnu-Viljandi-Tartu inland waterway in 1636/37. In his report from 24 September 1636 he answered to the inquiry by the government about the measures taken in relation to the waterways. He had instructed the quartermaster Georg (Jöran) von Schwengeln to study the waterway between Pärnu and Tartu and compile a map. According to Schwengeln it was possible to go by large boats from Lake Peipsi to Tartu, from there along the Emajõgi River and Lake Võrtsjärv to Viljandi from where the boats could sail along the Navesti (Swartebeken) to the Pärnu River. The quartermaster

²⁷ Liljedahl, *Svensk förvaltning i Livland*, 275–280; Harry Thomson, *Schweden und seine Provinzen Estland und Livland in ihrem gegenseitigen Verhältnis 1561–1710: Materialien und Betrachtungen* (Schliersee, 1969), 105–108.

²⁸ Liljedahl, *Svensk förvaltning i Livland*, 470.

²⁹ Riksarkivet [RA], *Livonica II*, vol. 152, Pärnu City Council to Gustav II Adolf, undated, §9.

believed that this waterway could be made navigable with little costs and this endeavour would be profitable for Pärnu, Tartu and the whole country. For confirmation the Governor-General promised to send Schwengeln's drawings (*affricktingen*)³⁰ to the government. Oxenstierna returned to this issue also during the autumn of 1637.³¹

The government's instructions from 10 January 1638 to Oxenstierna include the answer to the Pärnu-Tartu waterway issue. The Governor-General was expected to study the situation on site, make sure whether the canal locks were necessary and calculate the total price. Oxenstierna was suggested to find necessary means on site, as the waterway would have been profitable to the country in the future.³²

The issue of the waterway in the 1650s

It is very likely that no steps were taken in the issue of an inland waterway reaching from Pärnu to Lake Peipsi at the end of the 1630s. The post-war economic situation in Livonia did not allow this. The next attempt was taken in the 1650s, since the first part of the decade was characterised by fast economic growth of the Baltic Sea region. There were three different initiatives. The Pärnu City Council presented one on 2 August 1650, when the town deputies Heinrich von Damm and Johan-Günther Gerlach were in Stockholm. Among other issues, an appeal was made to Queen Christina to clean the rivers from Pärnu to Lake Võrtsjärv as they had overgrown with bushes and silted up during the previous long war period. Pärnu wished for an opportunity to transport Russian and local goods from Tartu to their port as it had been done earlier. The waterway was seen as a new way of development for both Pärnu and Tartu, promising an increase in the state income in the form of license fees and customs.³³ The answer of the

³⁰ RA, Livonica II, vol. 67, B. Oxenstierna to Christina's government on September 24, 1636 from Riga, §-7. This fact has been mentioned also by A. Soom (Soom, "Der baltische Getreidehandel", 112). A map compiled by G. von Schwengeln is stored in the Swedish Military Archives (Krigsarkivet (KrA), Utländska kartor, Rysslan, Bd. 34:XLI). The images on the map have been published: *Topographica Estoniae: handritade kartor och ritningar över Estland i svenska offentliga samlingar. Handgezeichnete Karten und Zeichnungen von Estland in schwedischen öffentlichen Sammlungen*, hrsg. von Ulla Ehrensverd, Eesti Teadusliku Seltsi Rootsis Aastaraamat, XII (Stockholm, 2001), 62, 64–65.

³¹ RA, Livonica II, vol. 67, B. Oxenstierna to Christina's government on September 19 (§16) and November 4, 1637 (§5).

³² RA, Livonica II, vol. 628, Instructions to Oxenstierna, §-9.

³³ RA, Livonica II, vol. 152, Pärnu City Council to Queen Christina on August 2, 1650, §10. The two drafts of this application letter are in Pärnu City Archives: EAA, f. 1000,

Queen was generally supportive, but if the towns and other interested parties wanted to make the rivers between Pärnu and Tartu navigable they had to co-operate, as the state could not support this endeavour.³⁴

Another initiative came from a private person, the Amsterdam merchant Johan van Wickevoort, who did not address his idea to the City Councils of Pärnu or Tartu, but directly to Queen Christina through his representative Christian Meys. The queen issued a public announcement upon Wickevoort's proposal on 22 March 1652. It appears that the Amsterdam merchant with his business partners wanted to open various manufactures in Pärnu which would be based on local raw material and establish trade relations with Russia both from Pärnu and Tartu. For that purpose, he asked for the same rights for himself, his successors and co-partners as the citizens of Pärnu, who were Swedish subjects. Since the Queen believed that Wickevoort's activities would benefit Pärnu, bringing in trade and ensuring prosperity of the town, he and his successors and co-partners were to have the same right as local citizens to establish on their own or through representatives (trading posts) manufactures in Pärnu and trade there with local and Russian goods. He had to pay the town of Pärnu 200 riksdalers annually, which gave him exemption from all the duties and taxes except the licence fee and portorium tax. In the same letter the Queen announced that in the interest of transit trade Wickevoort wanted to cover the expenses for cleaning the rivers from Pärnu to Lake Võrtsjärv and further to Lake Peipsi in order to bring different goods from Russia to the Baltic Sea. The Amsterdam merchant received a royal permission for his plans. In order to cover his expenses Wickevoort was allowed to take small fees from the vessels moving along the river.³⁵ Annexed to the royal announcement was a copy of J. van Wickevoort's application,³⁶ where the merchant expresses his opinion that Pärnu had an ideal geographic position in the middle of Livonia and was suitable for trading with Western-Europe and Russia. The appeal also reveals that Wickevoort requested total exemption from customs as well, but as said before that request was denied.³⁷

n. 1, s. 1730. P. Schneider has dated the letter of Pärnu envoys to Queen Christina ambiguously into 1651: Schneider, "Pläne zur Schiffbarmachung", 94.

³⁴ Latvijas Vālsts vēstures arhivs [LVVA], 7349. f., 1. apr., 177. l., Queen Christina's resolution to the City of Pärnu in Stockholm on 26 November 1650, §-9. Soom has also referred to the Queen's letter: Soom, "Die Politik Schwedens", 235, reference 71.

³⁵ LVVA, 7349. f., 1. apr., 197. l., Queen Christina's announcement from 22 March 1652. For Johan van Wickevoort and his project see also: Soom, "Die Politik Schwedens", 235–236; Soom, "Der baltische Getreidehandel", 112.

³⁶ LVVA, 7349. f., 1. apr., 197. l., A copy of J. van Wickevoort's project, no dates.

³⁷ *Ibidem*.

It is not clear when the royal announcement reached Pärnu. In any case, a year later, on 31 January 1653, the town addressed this issue to the Governor-General of Livonia Gustaf Horn. In the letter, Pärnu City Council claimed that they were informed about Wickevoort's intentions by his servant on 12 October and 23 December 1652 when he presented the Council the royal privilege issued to Wickevoort. The Council did not have any direct questions to Horn concerning the issue and the project was neither approved nor rejected. However, there was a request to expand and fortify the town, if the merchants from Amsterdam settled there, since the town space was too small for additional buildings.³⁸

At the end of 1653 the issue of the Pärnu-Viljandi-Tartu inland waterway was passed over to Johann von Weydenhain, who had been appointed commercial director of Livonia and burgrave (*Burggraf*) of Pärnu.³⁹ His main task was to improve trade in the towns of Livonia, including Pärnu.⁴⁰ On 16 December 1653 Weydenhain wrote from Riga to Pärnu City Council about his meeting with Johan van Wickevoort's son Jürgen, whom he reminded of his father's promise to establish manufactures in Pärnu and clean up the river, for which he was issued a royal privilege, and suggested to start with the process.⁴¹ That is the last time when the sources of Pärnu and Livonia mention the father and son Wickevoort. It is possible that their reason for leaving was the sea war that broke out in 1652 between England and the Netherlands, when the English blocked the Sound for the Dutch. The coast of the Netherlands was also blocked. It is known that the Netherlanders were excluded from trading on the Baltic Sea.⁴²

Subsequently, the initiative went to the Commercial Director of Livonia Weydenhain. His letter from 29 April 1654 to Tartu City Council reveals that he had informed the Council about his intention to clean the River Emajõgi already on 10 January the same year, since being a Commercial Director he was looking for possibilities to boost the economic life in Tartu. He introduced the idea to use Tobias Königfels' engineering and construction expertise during the preparation works for dredging

³⁸ LVVA, 7349. f., 1. apr., 197. l., Pärnu City Council to Gustaf Horn on 31 January 1653, §2.

³⁹ J. von Weydenhain (also Weidenheim) received an instruction for his work as a commercial director of Livonia on 16 September 1653. In the same year he also performed the duties of the burgrave of Pärnu: Soom, "Die Politik Schwedens", 59, reference 90. In Queen Christina's statement about J. von Weydenhain's appointment, his main priorities include facilitating trade and manufactures in Livonia: EAA, f. 995, n. 1, s. 27849.

⁴⁰ EAA, f. 1000, n. 1, s. 4828, Weydenhain to Pärnu on 12 December 1653 from Riga.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, Weydenhain to Pärnu on 16 December 1653 from Riga.

⁴² Jonathan I. Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade 1585-1740* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 207-213.

the river, since the latter was supposed to travel from Riga to Narva at the end of May for dredging the port there. Weydenhain had already written to Pärnu City Council suggesting to request from Riga City Council a permission for Königfels to visit Pärnu before Riga and to travel from there to Tartu in order to become familiar with the rivers between these towns and to compile a map. The Commercial Director promised to come to Tartu from Pärnu along the waterway. Weydenhain's request to Tartu City Council was that it should ask permission from Riga City Council to use Königfels' expertise in the study of the waterway and to cover half of the engineer's travel expenses.⁴³

Tartu City Council was not very enthusiastic about supporting the waterway project. Weydenhain's letter was discussed at the Council meeting on 3 May. It was concluded that within the district of Tartu the River Emajõgi up to Lake Võrtsjärv was navigable and there was no need for dredging. Fishnets and other obstacles in some places were easily removable from the waterway, but this was the task for the regions themselves. Basically, Tartu City Council refused to write to Riga, although they were ready to cover smaller costs related to Königfels' trip.⁴⁴ As can be seen from a letter of Tartu City Council to Weydenhain, the Council was of the opinion that dams, fish corrals and other obstacles should be removed by the respective landowners. Other Livonian landlords had to participate as well by contributing money according to the size of their property. Such an order, however, could have been given only by the Queen.⁴⁵

The following correspondence shows that Königfels had no time to get familiar with the rivers between Pärnu and Tartu before going to Narva. On 23 June 1654 two letters were sent to Governor Horn, one by Weydenhain and the other by Pärnu City Council. They both expressed the wish that Königfels should travel back from Narva to Riga via Tartu and Pärnu and study whether it was possible to clean up the rivers between those towns and turn them navigable and give an approximate cost of the whole project. In addition Pärnu requested that Königfels should study the town port and compile a map. In order to make it possible for Königfels to perform both jobs Pärnu addressed Riga, who employed the construction master. The Governor-General was asked for support to guarantee

⁴³ EAA, f. 995, n. 1, s. 27849, Weydenhain to Tartu City Council on April 29, 1654 from Riga. P. Schneider has dated all the materials concerning T. Königfels into 1651: Schneider, "Pläne zur Schiffbarmachung", 95.

⁴⁴ EAA, f. 995, n. 1, s. 27848, An abstract from the minutes of Tartu City Council from 3 May 1654; the Council's undated answer to Weydenhain is at EAA, f. 995, n. 1, s. 27849.

⁴⁵ EAA, f. 995, n. 1, s. 27848, Tartu City Council to Weydenhain on July 21, 1654, § 9.

Riga's approval.⁴⁶ After Riga's approval was received, Pärnu City Council addressed Königfels directly on 3 July.⁴⁷

In July 1654 Tobias Königfels began his work. According to his research the dredging works would benefit the region. Therefore Pärnu City Council decided to undertake the work, knowing they would need monetary resources and soldiers from the authorities of Stockholm. At the Council meeting on 18 January 1655 it was decided to ask the new king, Charles X Gustav, for 300 soldiers to be employed for up to three years. In addition, it was agreed that the King should order local noblemen and their peasants to remove their fish corrals. The noblemen were also obliged to support the soldiers.⁴⁸ According Soom both noblemen and peasants, who lived within fifteen miles from the river, had to pay two riksdalers for every ploughland (*Haken*), half the sum from the estates and the rest from the peasants. The same understanding was reached also in Tartu City Council.⁴⁹ Weydenhain promised to present these proposals to the authorities on his forthcoming trip to Stockholm.⁵⁰ But that was the end of the endeavour as Sweden was at war with Poland since March 1655 and in 1656 the overseas provinces Ingria, Estonia and Livonia were attacked by Russia.⁵¹

A new start in 1667

The beginning of the 1660s was harsh for Livonia. In 1661 the Kärde (Kardis) peace treaty ended the Russian occupation in Tartu and eastern Livonia. Post-war reconstruction works were lingering. Since 1660 Sweden was led by a weak government. The state treasury was empty. All this had an impact on the economic development of Livonia. However, in 1667 Livonians once again turned to the idea of cleaning the rivers running through the province and turning them navigable. The Livonian nobility were the first to reintroduce the idea at the Diet at the beginning of 1667. They wished the

⁴⁶ LVVA, 7349. f., 1. apr., 197. l., Pärnu City Council to Gustaf Horn on 23 June 1653; Weydenhain to Horn on June 23, 1653. Analogical letter was sent by Pärnu City Council to the Governor-General on July 4, 1654: *ibidem*.

⁴⁷ Soom, "Die Politik Schwedens", 236, reference 75. It should be mentioned that on the date referred by A. Soom the minutes of Pärnu City Council do not contain any reference to the discussion about inviting Königfels: EAA, f. 1000, n. 1, s. 720.

⁴⁸ EAA, f. 1000, n. 1, s. 720, Minutes of Pärnu City Council from 18 January 1655.

⁴⁹ Soom, "Die Politik Schwedens", 236–237.

⁵⁰ EAA, f. 1000, n. 1, s. 4828, Weydenhain to Pärnu City Council on January 26, 1655, from Pärnu.

⁵¹ Göran Behre, Lars-Olof Larsson, Eva Österberg, *Sveriges historia 1521–1809: Stormaktsdröm och småstatsrealiteter* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1992), 110–113.

Gauja and the Pärnu River running through Livonia to be cleaned. The idea was presented to the Governor-General Clas Tott. In his resolution from 26 January 1667 Tott promised to support their request, but before the final decision he asked for a detailed project.⁵²

It is unclear what role their initiative played cleaning up the waterway from Pärnu to Tartu, but anyway later that year first steps were taken. It is likely that Tott appointed lieutenant colonel Christian Thumb for this job, since his name rises once again during the next three years in relation to the waterway. On 5 September 1667 Thumb presented his ideas to the Governor-General. He believed that cleaning the waterway was doable (*wohl thunlich*) and that this endeavour would benefit the whole country and in particular the towns, pointing out also new possibilities for Viljandi. Thumb argued that the waterway was necessary, pointing out that every spring large quantities of forest products and timber from the regions of Viljandi, Karksi, Põltsamaa (Oberpahlen) and Paide were transported to Pärnu. As the next step Thumb suggested to instruct Pärnu City Council and the land owners of Pärnu, Põltsamaa, Karksi, Viljandi and Tarvastu (Tarvast) regions, to order their peasants living along the rivers to remove obstacles built into the river by the middle of October and to clean the riverbed completely so that it would be up to 12 ells or 4 fathoms wide (ca 7.1 m). The peasants had to be well assisted during the works. The works had to be continued in the spring of 1668. Pärnu had to find the necessary funds to employ an engineer (*Kunstmeister*) with a lifting device (*Hebzeug*) for large rocks. In addition the ground (in the text *Klinten*) had to be dug through in three different places. Thumb had explained the need for these actions and mentioned that dredging the waterway was also the King's wish. If the country did not wish to participate in these works, the king could order soldiers to execute the work and implement a relevant tax for supporting them. If the locals agreed, Thumb was ready to point out the section of work for everybody according to the valid construction plan.⁵³

On 28 September 1667 Governor Tott issued an ordinance for landlords, landholders and towns situated by the waterway to clean the riverbeds within October from all kind of obstacles (fish corrals, siltings, etc).⁵⁴ The amount of works performed in October remains unclear. For example, a couple of days later Tartu City Council notified the Governor that they had

⁵² EAA, f. 1000, n. 1, s. 1731, Clas Tott to Livonian nobility on 26 January 1667, resolution made in Riga, §17. See also: Schneider, "Pläne zur Schiffbarmachung", 97.

⁵³ EAA, f. 278, n. 1, s. XVI:15B.

⁵⁴ EAA, f. 995, n. 2, s. 5391.

started cleaning the riverbed by trying to remove poles from the water, but had failed. The town claimed they needed a construction master from Riga for assistance, who should come to Tartu before winter and supervise the works. At the same time Tartu also notified of insufficient funds for performing the works.⁵⁵ According to the minutes of Pärnu City Council, the issue of dredging the waterway from Pärnu to Viljandi was discussed during the last days of October, and even the name of a construction master is mentioned – Caspar von Aken.⁵⁶ It appears that the Governor-General also ordered the Livonian nobility to contribute to it. According to an undated document (1667 or 1668), the nobility promised to participate in the cleaning of River Emajõgi, either with one worker per one cavalry service unit (i.e. 15 ploughlands) during six months or to pay two riksdalers per every ploughland. While confirming that the nobility referred to some promises given by the Governor-General and Pärnu City Council.⁵⁷ The essence of these promises remains unclear, but from the following years it becomes evident that Pärnu City Council was ready to grant plots on the town's new expanded territory to noblemen for participating in dredging the river's waterway upon the suggestion of the Governor-General.

In the autumn of 1667 the government of Charles XI again discussed the issue of cleaning the waterway of the River Emajõgi. On 9 October the deputy of Tartu Samuel von Akerbohm was presented a resolution, stating the government's intention to forward an ordinance about the waterway from Tartu to Pärnu to the Governor-General of Livonia, calling for the members of the Livonian nobility whose estates were located by the waterway to participate in the endeavour.⁵⁸ However, the government changed its position about the matter. In the ordinance issued on 19 November it stressed the need for help from the whole nobility, but as it was clear that the noblemen were reluctant to assist there was a risk that works would linger. Therefore it was agreed that the government had to assign 300 soldiers for dredging and cleaning works. The soldiers were to come from Livonia or Finland. Their upkeep was the responsibility of the Governor-General of Livonia.⁵⁹

It might be assumed that the royal resolution was a good basis for initiating the cleaning works in Pärnu-Viljandi-Tartu waterway. The works between Pärnu and Viljandi could have started in the spring of the following

⁵⁵ EAA, f. 278, s. 1, n. XVI:15B, Tartu City Council to Clas Tott on October 5, 1667.

⁵⁶ EAA, f. 1000, n. 1, s. 723, Minutes of Pärnu City Council from October 29, 1667.

⁵⁷ EAA, f. 278, n. 1, s. XVI:15B, Confirmation letter of Livonian nobility, undated.

⁵⁸ EAA, f. 995, n. 2, s. 625.

⁵⁹ EAA, f. 278, n. 1, s. V:11.

year, in 1668. But it did not go that way. By mid-May the work had not begun. Pärnu City Council was waiting for the arrival of the construction master. There was no device for lifting rocks out of the river nor people who could have done that work.⁶⁰ At the beginning of June the situation was unchanged. The Council confirmed its willingness to pay to the construction master Aken for lifting the rocks out of the river, but the man himself was not in Pärnu.⁶¹ Even by August 1668 the cleaning of the river had not started.

The noblemen did not rush to remove fish corrals and other obstacles from the river either. A letter from O. Stackelberg to Governor-General Tott shows that the latter had received a complaint from someone called Johann Stahlen, who had been punished by the police court (*Ordnungsgericht*) for not removing the fish corrals and dredging the river. Stahlen argued that his peasants had removed some obstacles and wanted all the charges to be dropped. Nevertheless Stackelberg confirmed the Governor-General that the committee, who had studied the waterway from Pärnu to Viljandi, found a number of obstacles in the river, including in the area of Stahlen's estate.⁶²

On 1 October 1668 Pärnu City Council finally signed an employment contract with the construction master Aken. The Council mentioned that during the last Livonian Diet they had agreed with the nobility upon hiring him. Starting from the summer of 1669 Aken had to supervise the cleaning and dredging of rivers between Pärnu and Viljandi. In return the City Council promised to pay him 400 riksdalers, to be paid out in three parts. Aken was supposed to receive equal sum from the Crown as well.⁶³

Due to the lack of sources it remains unclear how much work Aken completed in 1669. The account books of the Governor-General of Livonia reveal only that 300 silver dalers (= 150 riksdalers) were allocated for the renovation of the River Emajõgi (*till Embeck Strömmens renovation hielp*) already in 1668, and 324 silver dalers (= 162 riksdalers in 1670).⁶⁴ In 1669 and 1671 no allocations were made.

⁶⁰ EAA, f. 278, n. 1, s. XVI:15B, Philip Sack to Clas Tott on May 19, 1668 from Pärnu.

⁶¹ EAA, f. 278, n. 1, s. XVI:15B, Pärnu City Council to Clas Tott on 16 June 1668.

⁶² EAA, f. 278, n. 1, s. XV:51, O. Stackelberg to Clas Tott on 22 August 1668 from Naukšēn estate.

⁶³ EAA, f. 1000, n. 1, s. 723.

⁶⁴ Helmut Piirimäe, *Rootsi riigimajandus Eesti- ja Liivimaal XVII sajandil* (Tartu: Eesti Üliõpilaste Selts, 2009), 210; in 1668 the waterway received allocations from Riga *Anlage*-customs (EAA, f. 278, n. 1, s. XXII:35) and in 1670 Riga *Anlage*-customs 144, from Riga granary 105 and Pärnu granary 75 silver dalers (EAA, f. 278, n. 1, s. XXII:37).

There is a letter to Governor Tott from an otherwise unknown person, Matthis Duderberg describing the works in 1669 and 1670. According to that letter Duderberg performed the so-called preparatory works before the arrival of the construction master. He mentions that in the autumn of 1669 he reached a place called *Osjo*⁶⁵, where the works had stopped. On 25 August 1670 he continued with thirty-six men. By 8 September Duderberg had reached the mill at Sauga (*Saukesche Mühle*).⁶⁶ Thus they were moving from Viljandi towards Pärnu. In this section trees and rocks were removed from the water and both banks were cleaned from bushes and trees approximately within one fathom (=1.78 m). The river was relevantly shallow and pouch. Duderberg had to mark places where it was possible to deepen the riverbed. He pointed out that fifty more men were needed for performing the works.⁶⁷

In 1670 the river was cleaned also near Sindi (Zintenhof) and Tori (Torgel). The curator of this area was lieutenant colonel Thumb, who in a letter sent to the City Council mentioned that Pärnu had decided to appoint, in addition to Aken, one more citizen with ten men to perform the works, who had to contribute with necessary chains, ropes and other tools. The army provided twenty men. The work remained the same – removing rocks and trees from the river and dredging the riverbed.⁶⁸ The Council's answer reveals that sending those ten men was yet to be confirmed. Meanwhile, the construction master Aken, as well as some members of the City Council, were occupied with other obligations. Sources mention participation in the work of some border committee. Therefore the Council decided that as the preparatory works were only in their initial phase, there were no tools at the site and autumn was approaching, the beginning of works should be postponed to next year.⁶⁹ At the same time it is quite likely that the cleaning of the Pärnu-Viljandi-Tartu waterway was not continued during the following period. In 1668–70 only minimal works were performed.

⁶⁵ Probably the area near the River Raudna, next to Päre village.

⁶⁶ About 10 km down the River Raudna, near Tohvri village.

⁶⁷ EAA, f. 278, n. 1, s. XVI:16C, Matthis Duderberg to Clas Tott on 8 September 1670 from Sauga mill in Viljandi County.

⁶⁸ EAA, f. 1000, n. 1, s. 1273, C. Thumb to Pärnu City Council on 19 July 1670.

⁶⁹ EAA, f. 1000, n. 1, s. 1273, Friedrich Löwenstein on behalf of Pärnu City Council on 26 July 1670.

The issue of the waterway in the 1680s and Dutch timber trade in Livonia

Some evidence has survived about the plans to clean the waterways of Pärnu and Emajõgi in the 1670s. The main task of the magistrates was to observe that no illegal obstacles were built on the river neither for fishing nor for damming. At the same time no evidence can be found about the comprehensive plans to clean up the waterway. Only in 1682 the issue of making the rivers navigable was once again put on the agenda by Pärnu City Council due to the fortification works in the city. The area of the city that needed defending was expanded and the Council told the authorities of their willingness to give land to the nobility in return for participation in works.⁷⁰ It is very likely that this time the initiative was not developed any further.

For some time in mid-1680s Pärnu trade was under intense attention of the government, when the establishment of a port of timber export in Pärnu was under discussion.⁷¹ The idea had started in business circles of Amsterdam. The Dutch interest in Swedish timber was due to a conflict of political and economic interests between them and Denmark-Norway that started at the beginning of the 1680s.

In 1683 Denmark imposed customs tariffs against the Netherlands and in 1685 export duty on Norwegian forest products was raised. The years 1683–88 are referred to as a trade war in the Danish-Dutch relations. The Dutch countered the Danes by suspending the import of Norwegian timber and other forest products (mainly pitch), and fish, and were looking for a possibility to buy these goods from Sweden and its provinces.⁷²

The Royal Chamber of Commerce became aware of Dutch interest in Swedish forest products in September 1684 but only in February 1686 the issue was given full attention. Pärnu port, as an alternative offered by the Amsterdam merchants, was considered a good choice since foreign timber trade did not harm local merchants. It did not pose any competition to the timber trade of Riga and Narva either. There were no saw-mills in Pärnu,

⁷⁰ RA, Livonica II, vol 152, Pärnu's supplication to Charles XI on 8 August 1682; LVVA, 7349. f., 1. apr., 177. l., The resolution of Charles XI to Pärnu from 18 September 1682 in Stockholm.

⁷¹ See more details in Küng, "Pärnu metsakaubandusest", 62–74.

⁷² Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade 1585–1740*, 302–304; J. Thomas Lindblad, "Evidence of Dutch-Swedish Trade in the 17th Century", *Baltic Affairs. Relations between the Netherlands and North-Eastern Europe 1500–1800*, ed. by J. Ph. S. Lemmink and J. S. A. M. van Koningsbrugge (Nijmegen: Instituut voor Nord- en Oosteuropese studies, 1990), 217–218.

but the town was surrounded by forests that the locals could neither process nor export, therefore being only the agents involved in the sale of logs to foreign merchants. The interest of the Dutch in Pärnu arose from the fact that the timber industry and timber trade in Riga and Narva was in the hands of local traders. Pärnu did not have that kind of monopoly. The Chamber decided unanimously that the Dutch could run their forest export business from Pärnu and could even receive appropriate building and storage sites necessary for establishing saw-mills and other facilities. However, the issue of Pärnu timber trade in 1686 did not develop any further.⁷³

The Dutch timber trade was on the agenda of the Chamber once again on 7 April 1687. Now the time was ripe for the idea that Pärnu – similarly to Narva and Nyen – might start importing the timber produce that the Dutch were interested in, straight from Russia. For this end the Pärnu River had to be dredged and the waterway between the river Emajõgi and Lake Peipsi made navigable. On 14 April the discussions about dredging the Pärnu River continued.⁷⁴

In 1687 the waterway of Pärnu was discussed with Charles XI and on 21 April the King addressed a letter to Governor-General Jakob Johann Hastfer, emphasising his wish that the rivers Pärnu and Emajõgi, as well as Gauja and Salaca (Salis) should be made clean and navigable in order to be used for transporting forest products. He had to notify the authorities of the organisation, time schedule and cost of the project. Since Hastfer was not quick to respond, the king reiterated his wish on 11 October. Only on 27 February 1688 Hastfer revealed his plans to Pärnu City Council who had to find donors for his rather costly project among the local citizens.⁷⁵ On 27 March 1688 Hastfer received a new royal order. He was asked to compile the drawings of all the relevant rivers.⁷⁶

On 15 March 1688 Hastfer presented Charles XI a comprehensive report of the commercial situation of Pärnu.⁷⁷ One of the topics was the water-

⁷³ RA, Kommerskollegium, huvudarkivet, kungliga brev och remisser, E.I.a., vol. 6, Charles XI to the Chamber of Commerce on September 11, 1684, April 10 and June 16, 1685; *ibidem*, Kommerskollegium, huvudarkivet, protokoll, A.I.a.1, vol. 32, February 11, 1686; *ibidem*, Kommerskollegium, huvudarkivet, registratur, B.I.a., vol. 25, Royal Chamber of Commerce to Charles XI on 11 February 1686.

⁷⁴ RA, Kommerskollegium, huvudarkivet, protokoll, A.I.a.1, vol. 33, 7 and 14 April 1687.

⁷⁵ EAA, f. 1000, n. 1, s. 127.

⁷⁶ LVVA, 7349. f., 1. apr., 140. l.

⁷⁷ RA, Kommerskollegium, huvudarkivet, protokoll, A.I.a.1, vol. 32, 9 June 1688. J. J. Hastfer's letter to Charles XI from 15 March 1688 see: RA, Livonica II, vol. 90. This report has also been mentioned by A. Soom: Arnold Soom, "Der ostbaltische Holzhandel und die Holzindustrie im 17. Jahrhundert", *Hansische Geschichtsblätter*, 79 (1961), 98.

way of Pärnu River. The Governor-General had delegated the work to Pärnu Commandant Colonel Erik Pistohlkors.⁷⁸ Charles XI 's letter from 5 September reveals that Hastfer had notified him of Pistohlkors's recruitment on 2 July, by which time the man had already organised the cleaning of the Pärnu river within fifteen miles.⁷⁹ Already in September Hastfer could inform the King that the waterway between Pärnu and Viljandi was clean enough so that the forest material from the nearby estates could be rafted to Pärnu and the future development lay with the Dutch – how much timber would they receive, without storing it on site.⁸⁰

It remains unclear whether the logs could be rafted down the waterway to Pärnu and what kinds of forest products were discussed. From Hastfer's report it could be assumed that they did not have enough time to turn the river completely navigable. Otherwise he would have mentioned it. Besides it was inevitable that the time was too limited for such large-scale works. Later in the summer of the same year (1688) the Royal Chamber of Commerce turned once again to the topic of Pärnu timber trade. The discussion was evoked by Hastfer's report, but nevertheless the Chamber did not discuss the issue of dredging the waterway of Pärnu River.⁸¹ In the same year the Dutch lost their interest in Pärnu timber since they had restored the possibility to acquire it from Norway. From the end of the seventeenth century onwards there is no evidence to suggest that on the local or central level the issue of making the rivers between Pärnu, Viljandi, and Tartu navigable was ever discussed again.

Conclusions

The issue of cleaning the rivers between Pärnu, Viljandi, and Tartu and making them navigable was posed several times during the seventeenth century. The need for creating such a waterway arose from Pärnu's wish to expand its economic hinterland in Livonia and extend it to Russia in order to increase its trade volume and at the same time to market profitable Russian goods in Western Europe. These initiatives, however, were never carried out. The main obstacle was a lack of money. Furthermore there was lack of will as well, particularly in the case of estate owners, who constantly ignored orders to clean the rivers of obstacles. The inadequate

⁷⁸ LVVA, 7349. f., 1. apr., 140. l., Charles XI to J. J. Hastfer on 16 April 1688.

⁷⁹ LVVA, 7349. f., 1. apr., 140. l.

⁸⁰ RA, Livonica II, vol. 90, J. J. Hastfer to Charles XI on September 17, 1688 in Stockholm.

⁸¹ RA, Kommerskollegium, huvudarkivet, protokoll, A.I.a.1, vol. 32, 9 June 1688. For J. Hastfer's letter to Charles XI from 15 March see: RA, Livonica II, vol. 90.

behaviour of Pärnu City Council harmed the whole project as well since considering the geographical position of the town it should have shown a more active interest. Again and again the issue of cleaning the rivers was raised. The project was technically primitive, besides cleaning the rivers and dredging them, no comprehensive works were foreseen, e.g. the building of locks. In the second part of the 1680s the discussion about dredging the rivers reached the highest levels – the King and the Chamber of Commerce – whereas this time the issue of the waterway was mostly at the mercy of international, mainly Dutch trade interests.

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KOKKUVÕTE: *Pärnu-Viljandi-Tartu veeteelaevatatavaks muutmise kavad 1630.–1680. aastatel*

Artiklis käsitletakse varauusaegse Eesti- ja Liivimaa peamist ja mastaapseimat siseveeteelaevatatavaks muutmise projekti, mille eesmärgiks oli luua looduslike jõgede ning teiste veekogude ühendamise, puhastamise ja laevatatavaks muutmise abil ühendus Pärnust Viljandi ja Tartu kaudu Pihkvasse. Mõõda Pärnu, Navesti ja Raudna jõge Viljandi järve, sealtn Tännassilma jõe kaudu Võrtsjärve ning Suurde-Emajõkke suunduva veeteelaevatatavaks muutmise küsimusega tegeleti 17. sajandil korduvalt. Vajadus sellise ühendustee järele tulenes eelkõige Rootsi kohapealsete võimude soovist laiendada Pärnu majanduslikku tagamaad Liivimaal ja pikendada kaubateed Venemaani, et suurendada linna kaubakäivet ja turustada suurt kasumit pakkuvaid Venemaa kaupu Lääne-Euroopasse. Ometi jäid kõik sellesuunalised initsiatiivid ellu viimata. Peamiseks takistuseks oli raha ja muude vajalike vahendite nappus. Puudu jäi ka tahtest. Nii näiteks ignoreerisid jõgedeäärsete mõisate omanikud korraldust kõrvaldada veeteelaevatatavaks muutmiseks (kalatõkked, veskitammid jms). Kõige intensiivsemalt tegeleti jõgede puhastamise küsimusega 1650. aastate alguses ning 1660. aastate lõpus ja 1670. aastal. Samas oli projekt tehniliselt primitiivne, peale vee puhastamise ja jõgede mõningase süvendamise ei olnud põhjalikumaid töid ette nähtud, rääkimata näiteks veeteelaevatatavaks muutmise ehitamisest. 1680. aastate teisel poolel sekus

jõe süvendamise arutelusse kuninglik majesteet ja kommertskolleegium, kusjuures sel korral oli siseveetee küsimus kõige enam seotud rahvusvahelise (Madalmaade) kaubandushuviga.