

METSEPOLE LIVONIANS FROM THE 14TH TO THE 17TH CENTURY

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Abstract. The topic of this paper is the history of Metsepole Livonians (later called Salaca Livonians) from the 14th to the 17th century. The paper refers to academic works from the 17th (by Thomas Hiärm) and later centuries dealing with the linguistic borders of Livonians in Salaca Parish. Also considered are rarely used papers such as the research by Manfred von Vegesack, who has investigated the population history of Livonians in the northern part of Vidzeme through place names found in church registers, ploughland revisions, revenue district registers etc. Information from some sources that have not been used before is presented here as well. As a result of different historical processes, the identity of Metsepole Livonians gradually weakened from the 14th to the 17th century. Livonian linguistic identity faded due to both the loss of its ancient status and the area of communication that expanded in the Middle Ages and the modern age. The number of language users became a strong precondition for the expansion of the area of use of a language, and there was not a vast number of Livonians. The history of these Finno-Ugric people is unusual due to the historical background of Livonia, but there are similarities in the rules of preservation of languages worldwide.

Keywords: Metsepole Livonians, Salaca Livonians, Livonian language, Medieval Livonia, Vidzeme, Limbaži, Vainiži, schools, vernacular books, manors of Salaca Parish, 17th century revenue districts

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1. Introduction

There are written sources created with the crusade reaching the territory of Livonians at the end of the 12th century and the formation of countries in the 13th century. Information included in these sources has enabled researchers to determine that Metsepole county or province was inhabited by Livonians. At this point, due to the relative scarcity of archaeological material, the study is mostly based on interpreting the written sources and focusing on the northern border of Metsepole (see Sutrop and Pajusalu 2009: 254–259). Some sources

from the same time period have explicitly stated that Livonians controlled the Salaca River delta and that in the middle of the 13th century they lived on both banks of the river up to Lake Burtnieks (Astiierwe) and on the western bank up to the delta of the river Briede/Līdace (Ledeze) (see Perlbach 1886: 21–22). After the most intense period of the Livonian Crusade, which ended in 1227, the habitation pattern started to change. People settled in border areas that used to be too dangerous for permanent habitation, and, due to the needs of the settlers and Christian customs, fishing areas became strategically vital. There are no data of fishing villages dating back to before Christianization (Moora and Ligi 1970: 17); in the 13th century, fishing was an essential topic in various charters. Fishing has been mentioned in border disputes on both the northern and north-eastern border of the former Metsepole county (Perlbach 1886: 21–22).

The dissolution of ancient county borders and formation of new bishoprics and order countries instead of these created preconditions for the blending of local nations. The first area where the linguistic boundary regressed was probably the southeast corner of Metsepole, where in the 13th century Augstroze was joined into one church parish with the county of *Ydumea* or *Idumea*, which had mixed settlement. The parish church was Straupe (*Ropa*) church in *Ydumea*, built in approximately 1207, located less than 20 km from Augstroze (HCL X, 15). The new parish had alternative but to become a multilingual community. However, on the coast, in the southwestern corner of Metsepole, the revenue district of fishermen of Turaida was formed, where the percentage of Livonians became prevailing. Their linguistic identity was preserved due to the strong community of Gauja Livonians of Turaida.

The Metsepole Livonians' territory spread northwards along the coastline primarily due to the establishment of permanent fishing villages. Also, a new settlement with mixed population began to form between traditional settlement areas of Livonians and Estonians, and these inhabitants paid their taxes to the Tartu Bishop and the Teutonic Knights. A new situation was created for the preservation of the language of Livonians who had remained outside of the borders of the archbishopric territory after the delimitation of the domains of the Archbishop of Riga and the Teutonic Knights. For a long period of time, they stayed on the sparsely populated coastline north of Salaca and another mixed settlement of Livonians, Estonians and Latgallians was formed in the northeast part of the former Metsepole county.

2. Territory inhabited by Metsepole Livonians from the 14th to the 17th century

In the 14th century, the largest centre of Metsepole county, Limbaži (Lem[b]sel), was the second largest trading town after Riga in the southern part of Old Livonia and was at the peak of its prosperity. Livonians had special privileges in trading as early as the turn of the 12th and the 13th century, and unlike other native settlers, they were entitled to be members of the Riga Merchant Guild (Bulmerincq 1903: 550; Renner 1953: 109), which also operated in Limbaži. Evidently, guild members blended with the Germans, but they had to have connections with the wide-spreading networks of “[business]friends” or retailers. In the Middle Ages, peasants were still entitled to trade using the produce of their own households and the local trading also presumed an extensive network for reselling import goods in rural areas. The Hanseatic town Limbaži functioned as a commuting centre, offering employment not only to merchants and traders, but also to craftsmen and transport entrepreneurs. The latter were highly significant on the Limbaži trading scene, since the port was located on a lakeshore and connection with the sea was available by the 47 km long river Svētupe. It is logical to presume that the population of the town, which had grown rather large, consisted primarily of peasants from surrounding areas, most of whom may have initially been Livonians, but their linguistic identity was not preserved in the town. Furthermore, the influence of the multilingual town may have hindered the persistence of Livonian in the areas surrounding Limbaži, and linguistic shift spread in the territory that communicated with the town more frequently.

Manfred von Vegesack has investigated the population history of Livonians in the northern part of Vidzeme through place names known from the 14th to the 17th century. In 1922–1933, Vegesack worked as the assistant professor of finance and economics in the Herder Institute in Riga, and in his research, he made conclusions about the ethnic formation of settlements on the basis on place and personal names found in church registers, ploughland revisions, revenue district registers etc. According to his data, the Latgalian settlement reached Katvari (Wannisch) Lake, located near Limbaži, less than 30 km from the sea, as early as the 14th century (Vegesack 1932: 16; LGU I: 84–86 No. 82). According to Vegesack, almost all place names used in the description of the borders of Katvari manor (Kayktver) from 1357 were characteristic of modern Latvian. Although there were toponyms among the 26 that were clearly Livonian, for example the streams *Griweurge* and *Walgeurge*, there are seven-

teen place names that had parts characteristic of Latvian (*tetz(e)*, *purwe*, *kalln*, *uppe*) (LGU I: 84–86 No. 82). The upper course of Brasla River has been termed *Stropuppe*, although the name of Roperbeķ (Roperbeck) manor located on the bank of the river reflected the name of the River *Ropa* as it was known in the 13th century. No data is available indicating that Katvari (Kadfer) manor had been a separate Latgallian territory; instead, it has been associated with the completely Livonian origin of the family of Jacob Liwe, who owned the manor in the 14th century as the vassal of the Archbishop of Riga. Since by roadway Katvari was located less than 10 km from Limbaži, where the house belonging to the manor was situated, the expansive transformation of place names into Latvian was evidently related to the influence of the town. Whether it took place through the new peasants who were brought there in place of the people who had left to town, or through the workforce brought in for the purpose of simply managing the manor more intensely, remains as of yet unanswered.

There is no reason to refer to the people of Vainiži (Wainsel) Parish as the ones who abandoned Livonian first and most quickly, because this region could be considered the border point of the Livonian language area even at the end of the 17th century. In 1670–1675, Thomas Hiärn (1794: 4) wrote that Livonians could still be found in some villages around Vainiži (*Wainsel*). Archaeologists know of a presumed Livonian hill fort in the centre of Vainiži from the beginning of the second millennium and specific Livonians' burials – sand barrow groups – in surrounding areas. This makes it possible to connect the persistence of a linguistic isle also with an old and dense Livonian settlement. In the Middle Ages, Vainiži was a separate region where the castle of the Archbishop of Riga, Fromhold Vifhusen, built in 1349, and the Church of St. Mary were located (Hagemeister 1836: 143–144). The centre was in the southern region of Vainiži and in the earlier centuries the northern part around Katvari manor may have been more sparsely inhabited.

The additions in Livonian (*Usmes*) and Latvian (*Jauns wirs*) that follow the names of new farmers found in revenue district registers from around 1550 have enabled Vegesack (1932: 17) to assume with some hesitation that according to the use of language, 17 of the peasants appointed as new farmers in Vainiži at the time spoke Latvian and 5 Livonian. The largest of the six revenue districts in the Vainiži area was the one with 46 farmsteads in the northern part of the area that was led by Heine *Jaunswirs*, whose name featured a Latvian addition (Vegesack 1932: 23–24). These new farmers were apparently appointed through the following process. At the turn of the 15th and

the 16th century, trading in Old Livonia faced great changes, but Limbaži could not adjust to these changes and new, more capacious ships did not sail to this port on the lake anymore. The additions in Livonian and Latvian (*Usmes, Jauns wirs*) in revenue district registers from around 1550, entered there at the time of the decline of the town and the decrease of the number of residents, indicate that around 1550 there were at least 12 Latvian and 4 Livonianspeaking new farmers in the farmsteads in Limbaži Parish (Vegešack 1932: 17). In addition to the downfall of trading in Limbaži, the second half of the 16th century brought devastating wars, and in the years from 1558 to 1602 the town was thoroughly ruined several times. With any luck, the former residents of the town became peasants again. In Limbaži and Vainiži parish revisions from 1599 and 1601, the titles of musicians and craftsmen are given in Low German, and the additions noting new peasants or fishermen are in Latvian (see ŽD 24: 32–37; Švābe 1933: 393–403, 409–412). This gives reason to believe that the people who spread from the ruined Limbaži town into villages had better command of these languages.

The centre of the new Lutheran parish in the Vainiži region was taken into a new location, Umurga (Ubbenorm) manor in the central part of the parish, where a church was built in 1496. However, this did not necessarily mean that the parish centre was taken to a Latvian-speaking environment. At the beginning of the 17th century, both Latvians and Livonians lived in the territories surrounding Umurga (Annales: 167). In addition to being influenced by Limbaži, Vainiži Parish, the southern part of which had only a few Livonian-speaking villages in the second half of the 17th century, was also influenced by the language use of Straupe parish, bordering with Vainiži to the east and south. Straupe Parish was formed in the 13th century by uniting the county of *Ydumea* or *Idumea*, which already had mixed settlement, and the southeast part of Metsepole (the areas surrounding Augstroze). By the beginning of the 17th century, this parish had already become Latvian-speaking because according to the visitation in 1630 the preacher of Straupe Parish Church was a Latvian who did not even speak German (Hagemeister 1836: 93).

Apparently, by the beginning of the 17th century, there was only one village around Limbaži, previously the largest centre of Metsepole Livonians, which stood out for its more intense use of Livonian. In any case, in the revision of 1624 the village is called Village of Livonians (*Lybetzem*) (Vegešack 1932: 16). Here the Latvian suffix (-*zem* meaning 'village') obviously marked the language used predominantly in the region, since in the metrics book of Katriņ parish from 1716 the name of the village is still in Livonian: *Lübesck Külla*

(LVVA 235.3.158: 10). The village called Libbesch on Rücker's map (1836) was located on the territory of Škirstiņ (Napküll) manor on the left bank of the upper course of Svētupe River. The name of the village Lībieši has remained up to date. The location of the Village of Livonians also lines up well with the information left by Thomas Hiärn that in his time (i.e. in 1670–1675) the Livonian-speaking settlement in that region reached from the seaside by a strip towards inland over Limbaži (Hiärn 1794: 17).

A list of the Livonian revenue district (*Liebische wacke*) belonging to the Burtnieks castle domain has remained from 1601 (Švābe 1933: 563–564). The vast revenue district, which judging by its name was settled by Livonian-speaking peasants at the time of formation, was located in the territory that around the year of 1230 was granted by the legate of Pope Gregory IX and Bishop of Semigal, Baldwin of Alna, to the Teutonic Knights, i.e. on the shore of Lake Burtnieks, an area of three Roman miles (4.5 km) in width extending up to Kiruma (*Kyriama*) Lake (Perlbach 1886: 22). West of there, from the northern part of Kiruma Lake to Iġe River, was *Zeipianische wacke* (comp. *Zeipenek* – Rücker 1836), which consisted of territories later seized by military order from Riga Archbishopric. The southern border of these revenue districts reached the river Pinte (*Pinte* – Rücker 1836) and up to the mouth of Briede/Līdace (see Švābe 1933: 561–564). Livonian toponyms have also persisted on the territory of the third revenue district (*Drawesche wacke*) located south from Pinte River (Švābe 1933: 559). These were used even in the 19th century (*Wiekul, Juckul, Peiwa* – Rücker 1836). T. Hiärn did not associate this region with Livonian identity during the second half of the 17th century, and evidently there was a shift toward Latvian in the eastern part of the former Metsepole county at the beginning of the 17th century. In all likelihood, the Livonian identity persisted longer in this particular part, on the shore of Lake Burtnieks, and the shift to a new language began in the central part of the former Metsepole county. Evidently, it also took place along the Salaca River, downward from the upper course of the river.

Latgallians reached the middle course of the Salaca River in the middle of the 15th century at the latest. In 1455, a village was explicitly called the village of Salaca Latgallians (*Salcze Letten*) (Vege-sack 1932: 15). The Village of Latgallians, Livonian name *Letekyle*, was established on the northern bank of the middle course of the Salaca River by the Black Mire and it apparently grew into such a large settlement unit in the second half of the 17th century that it was marked on several general maps of Livonia and Courland (Valck 1673; Witt 1680; Weigel 1698; Lotter 1756). Moreover, the scale of

said maps has made it possible to mark down only parish centres in this region, and as an exception a few larger manor centres. *Letekyle* was located approximately 15 km from the mouth of the river and the nearest manor centre was *Koddiack* (Rozēni), located upstream from the village. The latter was the domain of the Archbishop of Riga, enfeoffed in 1508, and in 1601 it included 28 farmsteads (Hagemeister 1836: 142; Švābe 1933: 392). Thus the Village of Latgallians has been established in the domains of the Archbishop of Riga and it evidently took place even before the feoffments of the 16th century.

Another known village with a name referring to Latgallians was located in the eastern part of the medieval Salaca parish that already had Teutonic Knights as its immediate neighbour during the determination of borders that took place in 1279. The military order seized lands from Riga Archbishopric at every opportunity by leaning on its military dominance. In 1531, Vīķi (Zarnau) Manor had risen in the eastern part of Salaca Parish, in the later Aloja Parish, which was later enfeoffed to the Orgis family by the Master of the Livonian branch of the Teutonic Knights (Hagemeister 1836: 141). The village of “Black Latgallians” (*Schwartt Letten*) was mentioned for the first time in 1542 in the composition of this manor (Vegešack 1932: 15). In 1738, the village was named *Mustelets zeem* – ‘Black Latgallians’ in Livonian and ‘village’ in Latvian. The village itself was located apart from other settlement units, by the roadway passing through a dense forest, halfway from Aloja Parish centre to Vīķi Manor. The name *Mustlet* persisted in the records of the poll tax revision of 1795 and after the revision of 1811 there are two to three farmsteads that have retained the name *Muslet* (LVVA 199.1.525: 6, 14).

In the middle of the 16th century, the supposed distribution of the use of language of new farmers was 11:6 in favour of Metsepole Livonians (Vegešack 1932: 17). This ratio does not take into account the landless fishermen living on the coast. Naturally, this kind of distribution does not enable one to explain the ethnic division of farmers, but it shows that the use of language among the Livonian peasants in Salaca Parish was diverse even before it was divided between the new Salaca and Aloja parishes. This could have been one of the reasons why the border of the Lutheran parishes was drawn the way we know it today. Rozēni Manor, on the northern bank of the Salaca River, was the starting point of the territory separated in the 17th century from the old Salaca Parish upon formation of the new Aloja (Allendorf) Parish. The nearby Vīķi Manor was attached to the same new parish. Thus, on the basis of current data, Aloja parish included the territories where essential conditions had been created for the spreading of the Latvian

language and apparently it was more widespread there, at least as a second language, than in the western part of the old parish.

3. Disappearance of Livonian from official use

In the 13th century, the high social status of Livonians clearly raised the social status of their language as well. When during the 13th century colonists and clergy became the ruling stratum, German became the most prestigious language in Old Livonia. Representatives of the native settlers who had become allied to the ruling social class also started to speak in German. Native languages were used for communication on a local level and in lower courts, so-called “friends”-trading sale of [indulgences], indulgences and in several other areas where practical necessity required it.

At the beginning of the 16th century, Livonian was one of the three most important local languages in Old Livonia, apparently due to tradition. In 1525, Lutheran books confiscated in Lübeck before being taken to Riga were in three local languages – Livonian, Latvian and Estonian (*in vulgari Livonico, Lettico ac Estonico*) (ShRU XII: 252 nr 1639). During the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, command of the peasants’ language and translation skills were highly necessary for the Protestant ministers and Jesuit priests, and there is a Lutheran and Catholic catechism in Estonian, Lithuanian and Latvian preserved from 1535–1586. It is possible that there was a critical turn in the use of Livonian language in the middle of the 16th century and that is the reason why we do not know of a catechism in Livonian.

The fact that Livonians were deemed to be a national minority as early as the beginning of the 17th century is evident from the chronicle *Annales collegii Rigensis Societatis Jesu*, initiated by the Riga Jesuits in 1604. Priest Erthmanus (Tolgsdorff) had a good command of Latvian and referred to the Livonians around Riga and Limbaži always together with Latvians; he apparently acquired his knowledge precisely by the means of Latvians. He referred to Livonians as “Estonians” twice and as Livonians only once (*Annales*: 153, 154, 167). In the conclusion of the work conducted in the area surrounding Riga in July, August and September 1613, the Jesuit priest referred to local nations as Latvians and “Estonians” (*populum Lotavicum et Esthonicum*). The second time recorded in annals dates from the same year, stating that around Riga the local native settlers (*Lotavis et Liviis*) were exceptionally happy about the return of the Catholics. This joy may have been based on the possibility of restoring old customs, since he described in 1615, while already

working in Cēsis (Wenden), that in Umurga, near Limbaži (*Ubner prope Lemselium*), both Latgallians and “Estonians” (*tam Lothavi, quam Esthones*) had insisted on blessing their fishing boats and nets, because they learned this custom from their ancestors and they always felt a special divine power when using the blessed items (*Annales*: 167).

The fact that priest Erthmanus, who spoke Latvian very well, referred to Livonians as Estonians more than once has a deeper explanation. In the Middle Ages, there was no need for native peoples to have a literary language, due to the class model of the society according to which the elite among native settlers had to give up inter alia their linguistic identity in order to remain in the medium and upper classes of the society. During the Counter-Reformation, Jesuit schools (*collegio*) established in Livonia began to teach the languages of Latgallians and South Estonians, but Livonian was not included in the languages taught. The situation remained broadly the same also in Protestant gymnasia and in the Swedish university *Academia Gustaviana* opened in Tartu in 1632.

In the era of vernacular literature, it was vital for the persistence of the languages of the native settlers of Livonia that these languages could be used as literary languages. The linguistic pursuits of the academic men of the new era could not have found wide enough planes to extend over social class borders and reach peasants directly without mediators. A uniting link should have been formed of the literary men closest to rural people, i.e. ministers, but they were not ready for it. In 1633–1635, a diplomat from Holstein, Adam Oelschläger (*Olearius* 1663: 110), who travelled through Livonia and Estonia, found that the poor capability of the local ministers was caused by the fact that landlords, who were church patrons, appointed their children’s private teachers to these positions and the teachers’ level of education was insufficient or poor (*Schlect*) for such a task.

Only a few clergymen, the most erudite of them, committed themselves to spreading the written word. The academic teaching of the languages of Latvians and South Estonians began in a Jesuit school established in Tartu and continued in the Protestant Academy (*Academia Gustaviana*). Georgius Mancelius (1638), who worked there as a theology professor, published a Latvian dictionary soon after going from the academy to the service of the Duke of Courland. Johannes Gutsclaff, who came to *Academia Gustaviana* a year later to finish his education, started to work as a minister in Urvaste (Anzen) in 1641 and soon started to translate the Bible into South Estonian. Gutsclaff (1648) also compiled the first grammar of the language, which was published in the printing house of *Academia Gustaviana*.

In North Estonia, which was under consistent Swedish rule the longest, the local language was North Estonian and the Lutheran church led the way there in transforming it into a literary language. The superintendent of Narva (Narwa), Heinrich Stahl (*Staal*), together with Reiner Brockmann, Timotheus Polus, and Johannes Kniper, finished a North Estonian grammar (Stahl 1637) before language rules for Latvians and South Estonians were compiled. H. Stahl translated Lutheran catechisms as well as gospels and epistles into North Estonian, and in the 1630s Lutheran chorales and Psalms translated by R. Brockmann, the professor of Greek in Tallinn (Reval) Secondary School and the minister of an Estonian-speaking rural congregation, were used (Olearius 1663: 111).

There are no religious texts translated into Livonian at that time that have reached us, nor is there any evidence that Livonian was used in courts. To put it more precisely, judicial authorities took part in creating the literary languages in Estonia and Livonia. There is a witness's oath from the 1630s in North Estonian (see Olearius 1663: 111) the title of which (*Die Forma eines Lettischen oder Undeutschen Eydes*) allows us to presume that this type of oath existed in other local languages as well. In the foreword of his grammar book, Gutsclaff (1648) expresses gratitude towards six local officials and landlords, half of whom worked in courts.

In the 17th century, language borders were fundamentally laid down amongst the local people of Livonia. In the 17th century local people in Livonia were deemed to be only Estonians and Latvians, as is vividly demonstrated by Nicolas Sanson's (1663) map *La Livonie Duché divisée en ses Princip[al]es Parties Esten et Letten etc*, where the areas inhabited by Livonians are completely marked as the territory of Latgallians (*Letten*). If this can be regarded as a division spread by scholars that did not directly influence local people, then the school network began to perpetuate the literary languages already taken into use by that time. In Sweden, church authorities had suggested in 1655 to establish a school network also outside of towns, in every parish, and in the 1660s and 1670s peasant schools were set up in a few districts (Pöldvee 2010: 62). Local ministers and parish clerks had a decisive role in the establishment of peasant schools and in giving substance to the studies there. However, they cannot even be compared with the exceptional linguists mentioned earlier. In 1662, the problem of the lack of education of the ministers and parish clerks in Livonia was taken to the State Council of Sweden by superintendent Johann Georg Gezelius, who is known as the initiator of the founding of peasant schools and who set the goal of translating the Bible into Latvian and Estonian (Glück and Polanska 2005: 25).

The first local schools for native inhabitants of Livonia were established in towns. The first school intended for Estonian children, which was also the first peasant school located outside of Riga, was founded in Pärnu (Pernau) on 28 September 1666 (EAA 1279.2.1: 30). The main concern was the lack of educated parish clerks who knew the local language. For example, in Pärnu the first teacher was the minister of St. John's Estonian congregation and the inspector of the school Johannes Vestring; only in 1669 was parish clerk Christian Kusmann from Helsinki (Helsingfors), from the other Finno-Ugric region of the Swedish national church, found for the position. Garrison troops in Pärnu were primarily Finns, and the parish clerk ministered them as well. It could be presumed that finding a duo of a Livonian-speaking parish clerk and a minister encouraging him to teach in this language would have been much more difficult for Salaca Parish. In 1675, Johannes Fischer was appointed the general superintendent of Livonia; upon starting in this position he made a suggestion to the king to finance the establishment of peasant schools in rural areas together with publishing literature in Latvian and Estonian necessary for the studies (Pöldvee 2010: 64). He also proposed to establish charity schools (*Armenschule*) in towns for the children of soldiers and orphans, as had been done already in Riga. Although the sums of money allocated for the orphans' schools under the king's order were half the amount than Fischer had deemed necessary, development of the school network in Swedish Livonia became visible starting in 1683, when the teaching of children of Latvian peasants was initiated in Alüksne (Marienburg) and two more schools were opened in the following years (Pöldvee 2010: 65–68). The teaching of children of Estonian peasants also started in Risti (Kreutz) pastorate in the Duchy of Estonia in 1683. At the end of the 17th century, there were no peasant schools established in the Livonian language region determined by T. Hiärn (1794: 17). Two of the 25 schools in total established in the Latvian-speaking part of Livonia were close to the Livonians' settlement (see Glück and Polanska 2005: 39–40). The first was a school founded in 1686 in Mazsalaca (Waltenberg) on the northeast boundary of the ancient Metsepole county, and the second school was established a year or two later in Raiskums (Raiskum), behind the southeast boundary of the former Metsepole county. How the establishment of peasant schools would have influenced the persistence of the Livonian language remains unknown. By that time, Livonian had already been driven out of the pulpit; in the middle of the 17th century, the superintendent of Courland, Paul Einhorn, confirmed that services of congregations consisting of Livonians were to be conducted in Latvian (1649: 2). Half a century later, T. Hiärn (1794: 17) deemed it

important to record that alongside their own language, Livonians use the language of Latvians living around them almost daily (*fast täglich*) and services were held in Latvian. ABC-books, small catechisms and hymnals that were sent to peasant schools from the publishing house in Riga at the end of the 17th century were only in Latvian and Estonian (Pöldvee 2010: 73–74).

The ministers who had learned to communicate in the mother tongue of the congregation regarded such minimal local language proficiency to be merely a professional skill and did not see the need to develop the language as a literary language. This was the concern of a confined circle of literates with academic interests. Even at the beginning of 1713, ministers in Estonia believed that the publication of the New Testament in Estonian was only due to the ministers who lacked basic skills in the local language (Andresen 2004: 103). This indicates complacency with the level of one's knowledge and does not show any aspiration to improve it. Rural people did not have a chance to say much about improving their own language because the class model of the society did not create any preconditions for social mobility. The few people who managed to break through from the peasantry to a higher class took over the new identity and did not manifest their origin, thus losing the link to their former status.

4. Livonian language territories on the eastern shore of the Gulf of Livonia in the 17th century

In the 17th century, Livonian language had been eliminated from official use in the territories of the former Metsepole county, which evidently accelerated the breaking of the formerly contiguous language region into linguistic islands. Around the same time, regions larger than only one village were being referred to by the name Livonian. In 1601, the revision of Salaca castle district has an entry of Village of Livonians (*Liebische dorff*) which included at least three villages (Švābe 1933: 372, 385). The aforementioned list the Livonian revenue district (*Liebische wacke*) belonging to the Burtnieks castle domain has also remained from that time.

In the revision from 1624, the Salaca castle domain was been divided into Latvian or Latgallian and Livonian revenue districts (*Lettische Wacke, Liwische Wacke*) (RA f. 55410/15: 206–212). While the name of the Livonian revenue district on the shore of Lake Burtnieks may have indicated an older name tradition, since the names of neighbouring revenue districts (*Zeipianische wacke, Drawesche wacke*) do not refer to linguistic identity, the names of revenue

districts in the Salaca region refer to the use of two different languages as early as the beginning of the 17th century. The Latvian revenue district includes nine villages with 57 farmsteads and the Livonian revenue district includes eight villages with 53 farmsteads, with 27 $\frac{3}{4}$ ploughland units and 49 $\frac{1}{2}$ ploughland units of cultivated land respectively (RA f. 55410/15: 206–212). Therefore, Livonian villages in the Salaca castle domain were considerably larger at that time. Revenue districts were integral regions; their border ran along the lower course of the Salaca River and Korge River. The Latvian revenue district to the north also included the fishing village of Svētupe (*Schwettup*) with ten peasants and only 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ ploughland units of fields (RA f. 55410/15: 208). According to its name, the village should be positioned in the mouth of River Svētupe, but another village with the same name (*Schwettop*) was located there and in 1624 it belonged to the Livonian revenue district. This village was of almost equal size in 1601 and in 1624 – consisting of 12 peasants (4 $\frac{1}{4}$ ploughland units) and 13 peasants (4 $\frac{1}{4}$ ploughland units) respectively – and division of the village had not taken place (Švābe 1933: 387; RA f. 55410/15: 211op-212). The name “New Salaca” (*Nya Salis* – Danckerts 1680) was recorded for the village in the 17th century and in 1738 the centre of Neu-Salis (Svēciems) manor was founded there.

According to the revision list, the Latvian-speaking Svētupe fishing village, formed in the first quarter of the 17th century, was situated in the same area where in 1601 the Salaca (*Saliß*) village including seven farmsteads was located. The latter had been divided between several villages by 1624: there was “Manor Village” (*Moysetzem*) with its sandy soil at one edge feeding just three sub-tenants or lodgers and at the other edge Kuiviži (*Kuiwing*) village with also three peasants and merely $\frac{1}{4}$ ploughland unit (Švābe 1933: 389; RA f. 55410/15: 208–209). *Schwettup* fishing village with its rather thoroughly described farmsteads lay between these two. The fact that this village was indeed located in the mouth of the Salaca River and not the river Svētupe is further confirmed. The largest farmstead (*Karre*) in Svētupe fishing village listed in 1624 was an integral part of the sub-manor or holding of *Fersenhof und Karra* two centuries later and belonged to the Vecsalaca manor (Bienenstamm 1826: 247). According to the map, it was located on the northern bank of the lower course of the Salaca River (Rücker 1836). In the 19th century the simplified name “River Village” (*Uppeszeem*) was used for the former Svētupe fishing village that lay between Jaunupe and the mouth of the Salaca River (Rücker 1836), and today all these farmsteads fall under the territory of Salacgrīva town. In the 17th century, the mouth of the Salaca River was known as an entry to the waterway extending to

Limbaži (*Lemsael oste Sales* – Goos 1666) running mostly along Svētupe. The name of the river Svētupe may have been used as the name of the new fishing village because the four-metre wide channel (Jaunupe) dug from the lower course of the Salaca up to Svētupe in the first quarter of the 17th century was considered a part or the new mouth of Svētupe. The maps from the 17th century, on which the mouth of the Salaca River was already a gateway to Limbaži (Olearius 1659, Blaeu 1662, Danckerts 1680 jt), do not have a separate marking for Jaunupe River, nor has the former mouth of Svētupe been drawn out. Even the Livonian name “Sacred River”, on the bank of which one of the last sacred places of Livonians (Bertul’s Cave in village of Kuiķule) was located, had been translated by that time and was recorded in literary sources in Latvian (Svētupe).

By the turn of the 16th and the 17th century, the village of Kuiķule/ Kuiküll (*Kulkill*) together with two neighbouring villages (*Lembßkull, Toschen*) had remained the most dense Livonian settlement unit in Salaca Parish, since in the 1601 revision it was referred to as Livonian Village (*Liebische dorff*) (Švābe 1933: 372, 385). The list of the Livonian revenue district has been initiated in this region as well. Only *Kulcküll Andreas* of the three peasants in Kuiķule (*Kolcküll*) has been recorded with his name (RA f. 55410/15: 210), and similarly to other farmers mentioned by their names, he was not a serf at that time. None of the five peasants in the next village, *Lembsküll*, was recorded by their name; however, *Külle Hans*, childless *Pretzembs Andres* and *Marten Matzken* have been recorded from the nine farmers in Tošēn (*Toschne*) Village (RA f. 55410/15: 210op). Farmstead names from the beginning of the 17th century have persisted in the names of two farms (*Lele Kulkull, Mass Kulkull*) in the village of Kuiķule and in the names of two farmsteads (*Kulle Land, Prezum*) in Tošēn village even in 1811 (LVVA 199.1.400: 49op–51). Moreover, the names of all three villages (*Kulkul, Lemkull, Toschendorf*) were remembered as well. In addition to these three villages, the settlement unit called Livonian Village included in 1601 at least one farmstead (*Kecker*) from the neighbouring *Kleetzem/Kletzemb* village and the same village (*Kleezeem*) covered this farm (*Kekker*) also even in 1811 (Švābe 1933: 385; RA f. 55410/15: 210op; LVVA 199.1.400: 51op–52). Apparently “Barn Village” (*Kleezeem*) gained its name due to the barn of the manor, where *Marcuß Kleettnick* was the storeman in 1601 (Švābe 1933: 385).

In 1624, the Livonian revenue district included the entire *Kletzemb* village. It also included the neighbouring villages *Mehms* and *Percküll*, which in 1811 were called *Memkull* and *Parkull* (RA f. 55410/15: 211; LVVA 199.1.400: 52op). The first, the name of which

may have been similar to the form Mēmķule, was situated on the south bank of Svētupe. According to the definition by the correspondents of August Ludwig von Schlözer (1771: 303), farmsteads from this village may have remained in the Livonian-speaking area, which in the second half of the 18th century reached along the river banks towards inland one mile (7.5 km) from the natural mouth of the river Svētupe. Another village together with the large Lipas (*Lippo*) Village was situated on the banks of Arupīte, the southern branch of Svētupe, and formed a Livonian settlement in the southern part of the parish. However, there are no immediate data on the language use of these villages after the 17th century. The name of Lipas Village (*Lippen*) has persisted even in the 19th century, but by 1811 only two farmsteads had remained of the 14 in 1624 (LVVA 199.1.400: 53).

The next large village that belonged to the Livonian revenue district was *Schwettop* Village, located between Jaunupe and the natural mouth of Svētupe, with its 13 peasants and 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ ploughland units of fields (RA f. 55410/15: 211op). Two of the five peasants recorded by their names, *Muggere Matz* and *Senge Marten*, were the only ones who bore the names of farmsteads that had persisted also in 1811 as *Mugger* and *Senge* (RA f. 55410/15: 211op; LVVA 199.1.400: 54op–55). In 1738, the centre for a new manor Neu-Salis (Svēcīems) was established in this village, which may have joined the peasants in Salaca parish who still used Livonian at that time. It has been suggested that the plague in 1710–1711 sharply decreased the number of residents in the Salaca parish, but this needs further confirmation (Cimermanis 2003: 23). Mainly Livonian communication has seemingly given the name to the Livonian revenue district described in 1624 and the same linguistic isle probably persisted without major changes even in 1738, since the territory of Neu-Salis/Svēcīems manor was evidently formed on the Livonian-speaking region. However, the status of Livonian in the Latvian revenue district in the northern part of the Salaca castle domain remains the topic of assumptions for the time being. It cannot be ruled out that revenue districts were formed of more or less equal size and thus the area of the mouth of the Salaca River and the coastal area northwards from there as a whole were included in the Latvian revenue district, even though several Livonian-speaking villages were located there at the time.

5. Livonian linguistic islands in Salaca outside of the southern part of Salaca Parish

Thomas Hiärn has stated that in 1670 to 1675, the Livonian language area stretched from the centre of Salaca parish southward along the coastline up to the river Liepupe (Perni[g]el) (Hiärn 1794: 17). Hiärn has mentioned Liepupe and Nabe (Nabben) as the border points in the south. Similarly to the districts of Salaca and Limbaži, a Livonian Village has existed also in this region, since in the revision from 1624 a village called *Lebezem* has been mentioned near Liepupe (Vegešack 1932: 16). The mouth of Liepupe was the southwest corner of the ancient Metsepole county, southward of which was a smaller region of Livonians called *Adia/Adya* which in the 13th century ran independent policy. In the Middle Ages, the region of the priest serving at the St. Petri (*Peetrus*) Chapel was formed there (Hupel 1782: 92) and the peasants of St. Petri constituted a separate Turaida coastal revenue district (Vegešack 1932: 17). By the year 1322, Liepupe (Pernigel) Parish consisted of the coastal area between the large Salaca Parish and the small St. Peter's. In the 14th century *Sander Perneyögel* was the owner of the central manor in the parish and evidently the Livonian name of Liepupe/Pernigel River has persisted in his name (Hagemester 1836: 151). In the middle of the 16th century, when the Archbishop of Riga established his Skulte (Adiamünde) Manor in the mouth of Aġe River and distributed lands, there were a lot of new farmers in the region. Judging by the Livonian or Latvian notes (*Usmes, jauns wirs*), there were 25 Livonian and 9 Latvian peasants (Vegešack 1932: 17). Thus there were clearly more Livonians, but some of them, the peasants in the Turaida coastal revenue district who were joined with the Skulte Manor, were apparently Gauja Livonians.

Similarly to the Turaida coastal revenue district located near the aforementioned St. Peter's Chapel, there may have been a settlement of Livonian fishermen in Metsepole by Hädemeeste River (Gudmannsbach). In 1601, when this area belonged to Salaca castle district pursuant to the new administrative division, there were two ploughland units by Hädemeeste River (*Gudemansbecke*) with 14 farmsteads located on them (Švābe 1933: 391). It is mentioned in the revision entry that there was a good fishing point and a good tavern there and the fishermen in the village paid taxes to Salaca castle district for owning drag-nets as well as for each caught salmon. It is expressly stated in the revision entry from 1624 that a village neglected by that time (*Gudemans Becke*) had belonged "since the old days" (*vor altters*) to Salaca castle (*hause Saliss*) (Laakmann 1914: 221, 230;

Roslavlev 1967: 24). It is evident from the materials of the next revision, in 1638, that at first the cattle manor in the mouth of Häädemeeste River (*Godemansbekh*) belonged to the castellan of Pärnu, and since the era of the Polish king *Stephani*, it belonged to the district official of Salaca (Roslavlev 1969: 7). Thus the definition of “since the old days” by the executors of the previous revision meant less than half a century before the administrative restructuring during the 1624 revision when medieval borders were abolished. As a result of the administrative reform conducted in 1582 during the reign of the Polish king Stephan Bathory, the Pärnu and Salaca districts included under the presidency of Pärnu were delimited so that Häädemeeste and the coast south from there belonged to Salaca. If a Livonian-speaking community had persisted there, then the communication range in this language expanded. Namely, according to the new administrative division, the entire area of historic Metsepole county and the areas north of it were joined under Pärnu presidency (from 1598 voivodeship). In the wars between Poland and Sweden, the administrative division depended primarily on engaged lands. As the result of the offensive of the Swedish armed forces that began in 1600, the Pärnu district of Sweden was formed, also including Salaca Manor. A permanent administrative division was established only after military activities had ceased. In 1630, authorities established Pärnu district (*kreis*) as a part of Swedish Livonia with its southern border running beyond the then language border of Estonian and Latvian. In 1693, the Salaca, Mazsalaca, Rūjiena, Ērgeme and Valka-Lugaži parishes were removed from Pärnu district, as a result of which some Estonian-speaking areas were merged with Riga district. The new revenue district register of Tahku (*Tackerort*) manor, started in 1699, includes letters which were written to draw the attention of the Governor-General to the situation where peasants of the manor remained partially in Salaca (*Salis*) parish and it is suggested that peasants in Tahku, Häädemeeste (*Gutßmannsbach*) and Ainaži (*Hainis*) area should become an integrated community (EAA 567.3.132: 3–3op). The administrative division of the Russian Empire initially united Salaca and the other parishes mentioned above with Pärnu county (Russischer: Nr 3).

Ecclesiastically, Tahku, Häädemeeste and Orajõe were in Tori parish, and Salaca parish united the coast dwellers in the southern region. However, the new administrative division that evolved in the second half of the 16th century had formed stronger ties between Häädemeeste and Salaca. Judging by the maps from the 17th century (Witt 1680; Danckerts 1680), Salaca tavern (*Salis Krog, Salis Kroch*) was located between Häädemeeste and Orajõe. It was one of the four

taverns in the Salaca castle district and in 1624 three of them were operating: the first one in front of Salaca castle, the second in Ainaži (*Aynes*) village and the third in the Häädemeeste region. According to an entry in the revision from 1624 the Salaca tavern was located in Häädemeeste cattle manor (Roslavlev 1967: 32). Evidently, the population had decreased by that time because of the war – both the Polish and Swedish troops used this coastal road several times. In 1624, landless coastal fishermen still lived in Kabli (*Kabbel Jegge*), but peasants had left Häädemeeste sub-manor.

Changes in the constitution of the population are expressed indirectly by the discontinuation of ecclesiastical tradition in the 17th century, which is reflected in the fact that the location of the former chapel and its patron saint were forgotten. By 1680, the Chapel of St. Margaret, a branch of the Lutheran parish church, was erected in a new location in Suurküla, which had formed in the mouth of Häädemeeste River. Taking into account the customs of this age, St. Margaret may refer to the name of a donator, because in 1645–1691 the owner of Häädemeeste manor was Margarethe Eckhoff/Spengler/de la Chaigneraye (see Laakmann 1926: 103; 1936: 11; Roslavlev 1969: 7). This chapel did not become familiar to the peasants living south of Häädemeeste, in Orajõe and Ikla, who belonged to Salaca church even in the 19th century. For example, on 21 January 1862, during the period of formation of the independent Häädemeeste church parish, the minister of Salaca buried the farmer of Orajõe Laose, Tiit Tammann, who was born in Tori (Torgel) Parish and therefore could not have had any association with Salaca church before moving to Orajõe (LVVA 235.7.347: 151).

The existence of the Livonian-speaking community in Orajõe that persisted from the 13th century to at least the 17th century, maybe even longer, explains the influence of Livonian on the local Estonian language. To put it more precisely, Livonian has had a great influence on the evolution of the local variety of Estonian (Sutrop and Pajusalu 2009: 260–264). There are no direct notes preserved about a Livonian-speaking settlement in the areas surrounding Orajõe before or after the 13th century. Ainaži village, alongside the Orajõe region, did not belong to the Livonian revenue district in 1624 (RA f. 55410/15: 209). Yet it was the only territory outside of the revenue district that was united with the new manor in 1738. This coastal village did not have any connection through the mainland with the area of the Livonian revenue district south of the Salaca River, yet there were a few people in the middle of the 19th century who spoke Livonian (Sjögren 1849: 469). This gives reason to assume that communication in Livonian persisted in Ainaži village longer due to the fact that this village was a

part of a greater linguistic isle. This linguistic isle must have been northwards, toward Orajõe.

6. Summary

The identity of Metsepole Livonians gradually weakened from the 14th to the 17th century and it has been a later custom to refer to them as Salaca Livonians on the basis of the last linguistic islands that remained in the Salaca River region. Livonian linguistic identity faded due to both the loss of its ancient status and the area of communication that expanded in the Middle Ages and the modern age. The number of language users became a strong precondition for the expansion of the area of use of a language, and there was not a vast number of Livonians. They were able and willing to acquire other languages due to their areas of activity, but the new undemanding workforce seemingly was not. By the time of the establishment of literary languages and foundation of the peasantry school network that began in the 16th and the 17th century, Livonian had already been reduced to a minority language. There was not a sufficient number of educated people who could have created literary materials in the language. Livonian was preserved mainly in the native villages and in the second half of the 17th century several linguistic islands had formed. The linguistic islands among these surrounded by the Latvian language region were mentioned by T. Hiärn. Apparently, he did not differentiate the linguistic islands of Livonians that remained near the linguistic border of Estonians who spoke a similar language.

Since research into the history of Livonians in the 14th to the 17th century is based on relatively scarce materials, there are numerous areas of doubt and uncertainty. The present article contains information from some sources that have not been used before. I would like to express gratitude to Kaspar Kolk for his help in translating the texts in Latin. I would also like to thank Marten Seppel for practical assistance that enabled me to use the materials from the National Archives of Sweden.

The volume of the article did not render it possible to describe either the evolution of Metsepole county and its reformation during the establishment of Riga archbishopric as a state in the 13th century or the diminishing of the last linguistic islands of Salaca Livonians in the 18th and particularly the 19th century, which is even better documented in written sources. These issues, together with the topic of the names of Salaca Livonians, are parts of a more integrated treatment that is already being prepared.

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Archive notes

EAA = Eesti Ajalooarhiiv, Tartu (reference codes of) Records. Inventory series.
Archives: Pages.

LVVA = Latvijas Valsts vēstures arhīvs, Rīga (reference codes of) Records. Inventory series. Archives: Pages.

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1931/32*, 13–24.

Kokkuvõte. Aldur Vunk: Metsepole liivlased 14.–17. sajandil. Artikli teemaks on Metsepole liivlaste (hiljem tuntud kui Salatsi liivlased) ajalugu 14.–17. sajandil. Käesoleva artikli maht ei võimaldanud kirjeldada Metsepole maakonna kujunemist ja selle ümberkujundamist Riia peapiiskopkonna kui riigi rajamise käigus 13. sajandil. Samuti kirjalike allikate kaudu paremini dokumenteeritud Salatsi liivlaste viimaste keelesaarte kahanemist 18. ja eriti 19. sajandil. Need teemad koos Salatsi liivlaste nimede teemaga on osadeks juba ettevalmistamisel olevale terviklikumale käsitlusele. Artikkel toetub akadeemilistele kirjutistele alates 17. sajandist (T. Hiärn) ja hilisemast ajast, kus kirjeldatakse liivlaste keelepiiri Salatsi kihelkonnas, samuti harvakasutatud Manfred von Vegesacki tööle, kes uuris Vidzeme põhjaosa rahvastikulu-
lugu kirikuraamatute, adramaarevisjonide, vakuraamatute ja muude oma-
aegsete allikate põhjal. Artikli koostamisel on kasutatud ka allikaid, mis seni
olid läbi töötamata. Mitmesuguste ajalooliste protsesside tulemusel on Metse-
pole liivlaste identiteet 14. sajandist 17. sajandini oluliselt nõrgenenud.
Põhjused keelilise identiteedi hääbumiseks on olnud nii liivlaste muinasaegse
staatuse kadumine kui ka keskajal ja uusajal avardunud suhtluspiirkond, mille
tõttu keelte kasutajate arv muutus oluliseks teguriks. Liivlasi polnud kuigi
arvukalt ja nad olid oma tegevusaladest tulenevalt valmis omandama teisi
keeli. 16. ja 17. sajandil alanud kirjakeelte loomise ja talurahvakoolide võrgu
rajamise ajaks oli liivi keel jäänud vähemuskeeleks. Samuti ei leidunud
piisavalt haritlasi, kes selles keeles kirjavara oleksid loonud. Selle soome-
ugri hõimu ajalugu on küll omapärane Liivimaa ajaloolise tausta tõttu, kuid
keele hääbumise põhjustanud asjaolud on sarnased teistegi kadunud keelte
omadega palju laiemas kontekstis.

Märksõnad: Metsepole liivlased, Salatsi liivlased, liivi keel, Vana-Liivimaa, Vidzeme, Lemsalu, Vainiži, koolid, maakeelsed trükised, Salatsi kihelkonna mõisad, 17. sajandi vakused

Kubbõvõttõks. Aldur Vunk: Metsepole līvlizt 14.–17. āigastsadā āigal.

Kēra temātõks um Mõtsāpūol līvlizt (obbõm tundtõd kui Salāts līvlizt) istõrij 14.–17. āigastsadā āigal. Kēra alīzõks ātõ akadēmilizt kēratõkst 17. āigastsadāst (T. Hiārñ) ja obāzõmõst āigast, kus kēratõb iļ līvlizt kēležā Salāts pagāsts. Nei iž um kēra alīzõks Manfred von Vegesack tē, mis tuņšliz Vidzeme pūojrov luggõ pivākuodārõntõd, addõrmõrevīzijd, vakrõntõd ja munt ovātõd abkõks. Sīe kēra kubbõpanmizõks attõ kõlbatõd ka seļlizt ovātõd, mis attõ siedaigsõņõ ienõd tuņšlõmõt. Setsuglimizt istõrij suggimizt pierāst um Mõtsāpūol līvlizt eņštīedami 14.–17. āigastsadā āigal nõrkõn. Kīelliz eņštīedamiz võrgimiz pūojõks vòļtõ nei līvlizt muinizaigiz kõrda mõitanti mi kui ka kubsõkēmizarā ovārtimi sidāmtāigal ja ūžāigal. Līvlizt lug iz ūo sūr ja ne vòļtõ vaļmõd oppõm mūđi kēļi. Kērakīeld lūomiz ja talrovsķūolõd võrgõ pūojtimiz īrgandõksõks 16. ja 17. āigastsadā āigal vòļ līvõ kīelstõ iend veitimit kīelkõks. Nei iž iz tāut opātõd rovžti, kis vòlkstõ sīes kīels lūond kēravillõ. Sīe sūomõ-ugrõ rov istõrij um set Līvõmõ istõrijs eņštīvīti,