

The Livs* of Svētciems *Pagasts*** in the Late 18th and 19th Century

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In 5–22 June 1846, Andreas Johan Sjögren, Academician of St. Petersburgs Academy of Sciences, visited Svētciems estate and, helped by Karl von Fegesack, owner of the estate, met 22 people, who to a certain extent still knew the Liv language. In his report on the trip published in 1849, the researcher published the names and surnames of the people, mentioned their places of residence, described his observations, and drew conclusions (Sjögren 1849: 467–483). The above Livs of Vidzeme, to put it more precisely – of village Svētciems, were the first and only ones, who were mentioned by their names and who had awoken the interest of scientists, as were the only ones who had remained known till nowadays. The people had 17 surnames, which belonged to 18 families.

The surnames found around 1826 have purely Latvian or German origin. The majority of them – 11 – are Latvian: Āboltiņš (perhaps Ābols?) in Ķulmaki farmstead, Ādmīdiņš in Lielķuiķuļi farmstead, Bērziņš in Dišleri farmstead, Bisnieks in Pūrnavi farmstead, Kalējs in Minniki homestead, Kariņš in Karas homestead, Lēniņš in Klāvi and Sprundes farmsteads, Lielnors in Lielnori farmstead, Pļaviņš in Ķirpaki farmstead, Priediņš in Puriņi farmstead, and Ūdriņš in Ķulles farmstead; but fewer – 6 – are German: Feldmanis in Ķirpaki farmstead, Gīze in Lielķuiķuļi farmstead, Jākobsons in Mustanci farmstead, Jirgensons (perhaps Girgensons?) in Alkšnoti farmstead, Mihelsons in Dzeņi farmstead, and Zīlemanis in Ķeguļi farmstead. The above surnames do not carry any Liv ethnic information and are not found among surnames of the Kurzeme Livs, which they for the first time got around 1834. Rather widespread names of the Liv families of Kurzeme, such as Bērtulis, Bille, Brancis, Didriķis, Gēde, Inne, Klāvs, Nēze, Niks, Janis, and other names (Latvian State Historical Archive (LSHA, fund 235,

* Widely-used form is “Livonians”.

** A small rural district.

registration books of people from Irbe-Ģipka parish), are rarely found in the Liv families of village Svētdciems.

Academician Sjögren had unfortunately distorted the names of farmsteads, personal names and surnames, and had transformed them in German manner that usually did not correspond to the true names of farmsteads and to the true names of people. Instead of farmstead Lielķuikuļi, he, for instance, had farmstead Lielkuikul, farmstead Dzeņi was turned into farmstead Dzenne, farmstead Puriņi into farmstead Purring, etc. Jānis Ādmīdiņš was transcribed as Jān Ādemiding, Gusts Bisnieks as Gust Bīstniek, Kristis Lēniņš as Krist Lēning, etc. Anna Mihelsone and Anna Zilemane, who were the mistresses of farmstead Dzeņi and farmstead Ķeguļi, were not named at all. The lists of the *pagasts'* farmsteads do not give Alkšnoti farmstead, as well as surnames Ābolting and Jürgenson, recorded by Sjögren. Registration lists give records of rather branched families of the Ābols and the Girgensons with their members living in several farmsteads.

Of 22 Livs who knew the Liv language, six were characterised by Sjögren according to their social position and called “farmstead mistress”, “farmstead head”, and “mistress’s mother”, while four – according to their position in the family with words “mother”, “mistress’s mother”, and “wife”. Thirteen of them were not given any person’s characterisation.

The recorded by Sjögren 22 speakers of the Liv language, are unlikely a true number as 1) on 6 June 1846 at Svētdciems estate Academician met only “five Liv men of the estate’s vicinity, of whom three turned out to be aged men” (Sjögren 1849: 468). They could possibly be Kristis Kariņš of Karas farmstead, Andres Lēniņš of Klāvi farmstead, Kristis Ģīze and Jānis Ādmīdiņš of Lielķuikuļi farmstead, and Gusts Bisnieks of Pūrnavi farmstead. Sjögren met the other 17 speakers of the Liv language only some days later. 2) Six women were only mentioned among 22 speakers of the Liv language. The material of the Kurzeme Livs shows that their women, being the most immobile and the least social part of the rural inhabitants of the day, preserved their native tongue for the longest period. 3) The 1861 census of Vidzeme that was 15 years newer than Sjögren’s data, had recorded 24 Livs in the Province of Vidzeme (Sjögren in 1846 – 22 speakers of the Liv language), but 2313 Livs – in the Province of Kurzeme (Grass 1863: 9). To our regret, the origin and places of residence of the 24 people are presently unknown.

I have until now available no document of Western Vidzeme of the

18th century and of the first half of the 19th century, which would have recorded the nationality (ethnic belonging) or language skill of a named person using words “Liv” and “the Liv language”. The ethnic belonging was not considered significant then, but rather their capacity for work and social position (landowner, citizen, peasant, etc.). In the late 19th century, when the first general census of Russian Empire of 1897 marked the native tongue, the Livs of Vidzeme had already went over to Latvians. However, for the sake of precision it should be mentioned that in documents the words “a Liv” and “of the Livs” are used in generalised expressions, which do not characterise definite people, but rather group phenomena and clusters of phenomena. The same principle of expression is also characteristic for Northern Kurzeme, which had compact and large Liv population (2180 people in 1850 (Archives of the Russian Academy of Sciences (ARAS), fund 94, descr. 1, file 137, pp. 1–2)). Because of the above conditions, the initial data on the concrete Livs of Svētciems village are the names and surnames of the people, recorded by Sjögren in 1846. Following them it is possible to search information on the above year, more distant past, and on recent period in different sources.

It is presently possible to single out four basic groups of such primary sources.

1. Descriptions of parishes of Western Vidzeme, including the neighbouring ones of Aloja, Liepupe, and Salaca (Svētciems *pagasts* belonged to the parish of Salaca), which were compiled by parsons in 1802 and around 1816 as answers to the inquiry forms compiled by Otto von Huhn, physician and historian (LSHA, fund 6810). According to their understanding and assessment of the Livs and of the Liv territories of Western Vidzeme of the day, German parsons have recorded in them different scale information – on their business activity, wellbeing, way of life, traditions, language, ethnic psychology, negative traits, etc.

2. Registration lists of the 1795–1850 inspection made of the souls or people of Svētciems estate and *pagasts* (LSHA, fund 1232, descr. 1, file 32). They have recorded inhabitants of named peasants’ farmsteads, estates and of other inhabited places, indicating their names (since 1826, also surnames), age, position in the family, rather often social belonging and sometimes even the ethnic one, and the previous place of residence. The lists sometimes mention newcomers from other areas, as well as serfs exchanged or bought in other places. On people above 13 years of age the registration lists of 1795 also provide data for 1782.

This for the time being is the most distant year, which allows us to follow the destinies of the Liv families mentioned by Sjögren.

3. The registration lists of Svētciems *pagasts* made for the 1897 first general census of Russian Empire (LSHA, fund 2706, descr. 1, file 228), which provide each recorded person's name, patronymic, surname, sex, social status (estate), position in the family and farmstead, age, place of birth, place of registration, place of permanent residence, temporal leave or arrival, denomination, native tongue, ability or disability of reading, indicate the kind of education or institution of education, basic and additional occupation, and obligation to military service. In spite of a large number of misrecordings, the registration lists still allow to make different calculations and characterise processes, as, for instance, migration of people, educational level of different generations, proportions among different fields of occupation, new phenomena of social character, which in the latter half of the 19th century came into the life of people, as well as other things.

4. Documents of the interconnected Svētciems and Vecsalaca estates that characterise their business activities, as well as court protocols of both *pagasts* (LSHA, funds 1779 and 1184), which provide complex information on inhabitants of Svētciems and Vecsalaca *pagasts* of the 1840s–'90s.

Within a brief introductory article it is impossible to give a full survey of the enormous quantity of facts provided by six inspections of people. I will therefore motivate generalisations against the background of the Liv speaking families met by Academician Sjögren in 1846. It is only possible to doubt, decline, supplement and say something new by using such examples and groups of examples.

Krists Gīze, farmstead head, and Jānis Ādmīdiņš, with no social characterisation both were mentioned by Sjögren as speakers of the Liv language in Lielkuiķuļi farmstead of village Svētciems. According to documents the Gīzes turn out to be an old and branched Liv family of farm masters.

In 1795, the head of Lielkuiķuļi farmstead was Pēteris, 42 years old. With him there were: wife Dārta, 41; six daughters from 6 to 20 years old, and four sons from half a year to 8 years old. Kristis, the eldest of them, 8 years, later became the farmstead head. One of the brothers died in 1798.

In 1811, the farmstead was still run by Pēteris, who died in 1812 at the age of 59. Together with him resided four sons, of whom one was born in 1799, i.e., after the inspection of 1795. All six daughters had

presumably been married off, while there was no mention of the wife.

In 1816, Kristis was the new farmstead head, who had superceded the deceased father. His mother Dārta, 69, who died in 1825, wife Grieta, son Jānis and daughter Dārta, as well as brothers Jānis and Ādams resided with him. Brother Juris had died, whereas brother Pēteris, 25, had become the new head of Utkas farmstead and resided there with his wife and daughter.

In 1826, Kristis continued running Lielķuiķuļi farmstead, had acquired surname Gīze, and was considered to be 39 years old. His family included wife Grieta, 33; three underaged sons and a daughter named Katrīna. In addition to the above people, there were his brother Ādams, 27, with his wife Grieta, 20, and daughter Dārta, 2 years old. Brother Jānis together with his wife Anna resided as farmhands at farmstead Blanki headed by Andress Brasmanis. In 1826, Pēteris, the head of Utkas farmstead, was not registered in village Svētciems any more.

In 1834, too, Kristis continued running his father's farmstead. He was together with the above-mentioned wife, three sons and daughter Katrīna. In addition, daughter Grēta was born. The family also included foster-son Jēkabs Hildebrands, who in 1839 left for Ķirbiži farmstead. In the 1840s, daughter Katrīna married off to Pāle. Brother Jānis with his family, previously a farmhand of Blanki farmstead, was then a farmhand of Sprundes farmstead, and had become the father of two sons. He died in 1846. Brother Ādams had become the head of Dambji farmstead and died in 1846 at the age of 47. In 1834, he had a wife, two sons and three daughters.

In 1850, four years after Sjögren's expedition, Kristis Gīze, 63, together with his wife Grieta, 57, and the second son Jēkabs, 29 years old and actually the farmstead head then, was still residing at Lielķuiķuļi farmstead. Jēkabs had wife Anna, 27, and a daughter named Katrīna. The family also included the third son, 24 years old Fricis, his wife Trīne, 29, and their little son Ernsts. Daughter Grieta, 18, who likewise her eldest sister Katrīna, married off to Pāle 1852, also resided together with Kristis. Kristis' first son Jānis, 37, together with his wife and three daughters resided in Blanki farmstead of village Svētciems with the farmstead head Andress Brasmanis, where his father's brother Jānis lived in 1826.

Kristis Gīze died in 1855 at the age of 68, his wife Grieta – in 1854 at the age of 61. Their descendants were three vigorous sons in Svētciems village and two daughters in Pāle. Descendants of the Gīzes family are still residing in the vicinity of Lielķuiķuļi farmstead.

Jānis Ādmīdiņš, lodger of Lielķuiķuļi farmstead, who was mentioned by Sjögren in 1846, died in 1847 as a 76 years old farm labourer. Because of coincidence in people's names and patronymics and incomplete recordings, the roots of his family can be only traced to 1811, when Kristis, his 20 years old son, resided in Postreiteri farmstead (later renamed Posti) of village Svētciems as a farm labourer.

In 1816, 45 years old Jānis Ādmīdiņš, mentioned as Kristis' son Jānis, a surnameless person, together with his wife Anna, 55, were farmhands at Skrēdeļi farmstead headed by Andres. They had two sons – the above Kristis, born around 1791, and Jānis with no other references. In 1826, Jānis, Anna, and Kristis, having acquired family name Ādmīdiņš, were farmhands in Pricumi farmstead headed by master Ange Priekulis.

After 1826, the family witnessed changes. Wife Anna had died. Jānis had married Dārta, ten years senior, and in 1834, together with her daughters Trīne and Anna, was still residing in Pricumi farmstead. In the period between 1834 and 1847 the family had turned to Orthodoxy and had left Pricumi farmstead for Lielķuiķuļi. As it is generally accustomed, the transition to Orthodoxy was associated with the change of the name. Dārta had become Darya, Trīne – Yekaterina, etc. In 1850, Lielķuiķuļi farmstead was inhabited by 89 years old Darya, Jānis Ādmīdiņš' widow; daughter Yekaterina, 19 years old, Nataliya, 8 and a half, and son Aleksandrs. Darya died in 1857, but Yekaterina went to Ķirbiži in 1856. In 1834, Jānis Ādmīdiņš' son Kristis, 43, together with his wife Ieva, 37, and Juris, their newly born son, were farmhands in Mazķuiķuļi farmstead. In 1850, Kristis Ādmīdiņš together with his wife lived in Sārtiki farmstead as farmhands, whereas son Jānis – in Ķulmaki farmstead. The above Liv speaking landless peasant thus also had descendants.

Kristis Lielnors, Lielnori farmstead head, was also mentioned by Sjögren among the speakers of the Liv language in 1846. In 1795, Kristis, 14 years old, resided in Klāvi farmstead as the fourth son of farmstead head Kristis, 51. He had 40 years old mother Maija, and three brothers – Fricis, Gusts, and Jāks. Fricis later became the head of Klāvi farmstead, Gusts – firstly the head of Ķulmaki and later of Lielnori farmstead, while Jāks was recruited. Father died in 1803.

Several years on from 1811, Kristis, 30, was the young head of Salat Jennas farmstead and lived there together with his son Gusts, 2 and a half. Wife is not mentioned. In 1816, Kristis, 35, and his wife Ilze, 34, were farmhands in Klāvi farmstead that after the death of brother Fricis was run by Gusts, the other brother. Together with Kristis and Ilze there

were the following people: Gusts, their eldest son, 7 and a half; daughter Ieva, 11, who later ran away from Svētciems village; and daughter Dārte, 3. Kristis' wife Ilze died around 1821, and Kristis got married for the second time.

In 1826, Kristis, 45, had already acquired surname Lielnors and resided in Lielnori farmstead as a farmhand. His second wife Babe, 45; son Kristis, 3; Andres, 2; Dārte, 13, daughter of the first wife; and foster-daughter Anna, 7. Gusts, 17,5, son of the first wife, had become a labourer of the estate.

In 1834, Kristis Lielnors, 53, had already become the head of Lielnori farmstead. He lived together with his wife Babe, 53; eldest son Gusts, 25,5, who had come to Lielnori farmstead from the estate; Gusts' wife Ieva, 21, who in 1834 gave birth to son Kristians. Kristis' other son Kristis, 11; Andres, the youngest son, 10; as well as Kristis' sister Anna, 15; also lived with the family.

In 1850, 69 years old Kristis Lielnors with his wife Babe, of the same age, lived with the family of his eldest son Gusts, 41, head of Lielnori farmstead. It also included Gusts' wife Ieva, 37; son Kristians, 16; son Augustīns, 3,5; and daughter Anna, 14. Kristis senior's other son Kristis, 27; his wife Trīne, 28,5; and Miķelis and Mīne, their little children, were registered as the people of Svētciems estate. Anders, 26, Kristis senior's youngest son; and his wife Trīne, 24,5; resided in Ķulles farmstead headed by Miķelis Mežgailis.

It is noteworthy that Juris, 15, recruited in 1854, son of Liv speaking Jānis Ādmīdiņš, also lived in Lielnori farmstead. Ķulles farmstead in its turn was the residence of the family of Liv speaking Anders Ūdriņš, 54, mentioned by Sjögren in 1846. He was a descendant of an ancient family of landless peasants of village Svētciems. Anders Ūdriņš' family consisted of five people: wife Anna, 40; son Miķelis, 10,5; daughter Dārte, 13; and foster-daughter Anna, 25,5. Likewise the Ādmīdiņš, the Lielnors had turned to Orthodoxy. Gusts, farmstead head, was re-christened as Augustīns, whereas his eldest son Kristians – as Kirils. Kristis Lielnors senior died at the age of 72 in 1853, but his wife Babe – at the age of 76 in 1857. After their death, the families of their three sons, and of at least three grandsons and two granddaughters, including of the mistress of Jespars farmstead, stayed in village Svētciems. Descendants of the Lielnors family are also today residing in the vicinity of the former farmstead.

In a similar way it is possible to follow the lives of all 22 families, speakers of the Liv language mentioned by Sjögren.

Until now available information allows me to make the following nine generalisations.

1. Likewise all Estonians, Latvians, and the Livs of Kurzeme, in 1795–1850 the Livs of village Svētciems lived under conditions of rapidly disintegrating feudal order, and in the first decades after the abolition of serfdom, when peasants had not complete personal freedom to chose a field of occupation and a place of residence. Such a choice still required landowners' consent. They only acquired the freedom of occupation and of the place of residence, with some liens though, after the reforms of 1860. All members of the Liv families of village Svētciems, known until now, had the juridical status of peasants. Their actual position and occupation (crafts, seafaring, serving for the estate, fishing, etc.), as well as their place of residence were not considered. They lived in their own farmsteads and in the Latvian ones together with the Latvians or in their neighbourhood and rapidly became Latvianised. At the same time they tried to preserve their ethnic consciousness, traditional culture, and language. Around 1816 Franz Hackel, the unfriendly to the Livs parson of Salaca parish, in this connection wrote: "One can still meet the Livs here. They speak their peculiar language and most often marry among themselves" (LSHA, fund 6810, descr. 1, file 14, pp. 168–169). The description of Salaca parish, drawn up around 1822, among the other gives the following information: "Some feel proud of speaking a special language, not understandable to other people" (LSHA, fund 6810, descr. 1, file 15, p. 205). In 1849 Academician Sjögren admitted that "15 years ago the Livs must have rather widely used their mother tongue even during the corvee labour of the estate, whereas now the Liv language can be only heard, when one endeavours to find its speakers, some scattered people, and persuades them to demonstrate their hidden knowledge" (Sjögren 1849: 470).

2. In the late 18th century and in the first decades of the 19th century, village Svētciems was of mixed ethnic composition. The content of sources unfortunately does not allow us to define precise proportion of each ethnic group. Village Svētciems had the following residents: a) Latvian families having resided there for many generations; b) people having arrived there from other areas, including Latvian families and perhaps even the Liv ones (in sources usually marked as "a Courlander" (in Latvian *kurzemnieks*)), early 17th century incomers from Kurzeme; c) Liv families having resided there for many generations and their Latvianised descendants; d) the Estonians having arrived during differ-

ent decades mainly from Eastern Estonia and less from Estonian islands, Central and Northern Estonia; e) the Russians; and f) the Germans.

Until 1850, the Livs mainly changed their places of residence (farmsteads) within Svētciems estate and *pagasts*. In search of jobs, getting married, and in some other connection members of the Liv families, however, rather often moved to neighbouring *pagasts* and even to some more distant ones, such as Ainaži, Ķirbiži, Pāle, Rozēni, Unguri or Ungurpils (later Aloja), Vecmuiža, Vecsalaca, and Viļķene.

In the latter half of the 19th century the number of inhabitants in Svētciems *pagasts* rapidly increased, new places of residence (farmsteads) were established and the ethnic composition of people saw considerable changes: descendants of the last Liv families became Latvianised, dozens of Latvian families and many individuals (singles) arrived from neighbouring *pagasts*, as well as from rather remote ones, and from very distant *pagasts* of Latvia, including from the above mentioned *pagasts* Ainaži, Ķirbiži, Pāle, Rozēni, Unguri, Vecmuiža, Vecsalaca, and Viļķene, as well as from *pagasts* Bauņi, Burtnieki, Dikļi, Katvari, Kocēni, Lāde, Limbaži, Līvi, Mežotne, Pociems, Puikule, Trikāta, Unguri or Ungurpils, Vecate, Veļķi, Vilzēni, and others. The influx of the Estonians and Russians intensified, and the Jews also settled in the *pagasts*. Mixed families were formed in village Svētciems, including of the descendants of the Liv families, and families of the Estonians, Russians, and the Latvians having arrived from other areas.

In 1897 no resident of Svētciems *pagasts* acknowledged the Liv language as his native tongue. Except for some individuals, the Livs had melted within the majority of neighbouring Latvians. Basing on the relationship of the languages, some speakers of the Liv language could have possibly be registered as Estonian speaking people during the census of 1897.

3. Likewise the Estonians and the Latvians, the Livs of village Svētciems had many-branched occupations. They were engaged in agriculture, cattle-breeding, fishing, crafts, gardening, seafaring, trade, and wood cutting, and they also rafted timber, loaded firewood and timber in special big transport boats with flat bottoms and in sailboats, and also worked in other fields. Farmsteads inhabited by the Livs were situated in the eastern part of the *pagasts*, the most fertile and the richest in wood area (Blanki, Dambji, Dišleri, Ķulles, Lielnori, Mustanci, Pricumi, Puriņi, Skrēdeļi, and Utkas), on the coast of the Riga Bay (Dzeņi and Ķeguļi), of the River Salaca (Karas, Posti, and Salat

Jennas), River Svētupe (Dzeņi, Klāvi, Ķirpaki, Ķulmaki, Lielķuiķuļi, Mazķuiķuļi, and Sprundes), and of the River Jaunupe (Pūrnavi).

On the coastline of the Riga Bay near Lāņi, Svētciems estate had arranged a large timber-yard and had built an inn, Vadloms, where there was also a terminal, *sedums*, for fishing sea boats and transport boats, and a warehouse for transportable goods. In the first decade of the 20th century the inn was transformed into a residence for estate labourers and woodsmen. Near the mouth of the River Salaca on its left-hand bank, there was another large timber-yard, but the third one, the so-called “Upmute”, – at the mouth of the River Svētupe. At all three timber-yards firewood and timber was loaded in sailships and in big transport boats, which took firewood and agricultural products to Pärnu (Pērnavā), Riga, and to other ports. Under the favourable conditions, commodity-money economy came to the Liv farmsteads earlier than to the farms, which were situated far away from the seacoast and rivers.

Around 1816, the above mentioned parson Hackel of Salaca parish apparently with good reason wrote about the Livs of village Svētciems the following words: “They deserve praising and are the best and well-off peasants” (LSHA, fund 6810, descr. 1, file 14, pp. 168–169). It is to be added that, judging from the purchase contracts of the 1870s, the Livs ran rather large old farms (LSHA, fund 218).

In 1815, of 9 official peasants-fishermen’s farmsteads no less than five were managed by the Livs. In the summer of 2002, when visiting the remnants of farms inhabited by the Livs, it turned out that they had strived to locate their farmsteads in the most picturesque places – on hills, near river bays, and on steep river coasts. Their houses had large yards and were surrounded by orchards, while gardens, yards and driveways were enclosed by birches, maples, lime-trees, ashes, oaks and other trees, including lilac.

In the decades of the study, the Livs of Kurzeme were also engaged in the above-mentioned fields. However, because of natural conditions, mainly because of sandy coastline soil, swampy meadows, and large tracts of forest, as well as because of the lack of natural pastures, gardening, cattle-breeding, and agriculture were much weaker there than on the Liv farms of village Svētciems. Whereas the Livs of Kurzeme were better in seafaring, trade, and in fishing than the Livs of village Svētciems. Having rather great density of constructions and small yards, farmsteads of the Kurzeme Livs were comparatively scarcely planted with greenery and were less picturesque than those of

the Livs of village Svētciems. Likewise inhabitants of Vidzeme planted lilac, the Courlanders usually saved birches, lime-trees, oaks, pines and other trees, which had naturally grown near their buildings and yards and had acquired expressive forms.

4. Speakers of the Liv language, mentioned by Academician Sjögren in 1846, mainly belonged to the middle-aged and elderly generation of village Svētciems. The majority of them died in the latter half of the 1840s and the '50s. The speakers of the Liv language overwhelmingly came from ancient, large, and branched families of village Svētciems, the roots of whom could be traced as far as the inspection of people of 1782. Aside from the people mentioned by Sjögren, different farmsteads of the *pagasts* were also inhabited by their children, brothers, sisters, sisters-in-law, brothers-in-law, and sometimes also by their aged parents. Unfortunately we may only express guesses about their ethnic consciousness and language skills. Sjögren did not meet them and could not therefore leave any information, but the records of registration lists and other available documents say nothing about the features of those people. In the future, some useful knowledge might be provided by the documents of Salaca parish. Nowadays it has been established that in 1846 the Livs of Svētciems inhabited at least 25 farmsteads instead of 16 as mentioned by academician Sjögren (Sjögren 1849: 469). Such a conclusion follows from the people registers of 1834 and 1850 (LSHA, fund 1232, descr. 1, file 32, pp. 118–218). Isolation of the Livs was not so pronounced as was supposed by academician Sjögren and other authors who wrote about the Livs of Svētciems. The farmsteads Dišleri, Ķirpaki, Mustanci, Priecumi, Skrēdeļi, which were located in the eastern part of the *pagasts* formed one cluster of comparatively close neighbours, and another cluster was formed by the farmsteads Blanki, Dambji, Ķulles, Lielnori, Puriņi, Utkas. On the opposite sides of the Svētupe mouth at the Riga Bay the closest neighbouring farmsteads were Dzeņi and Ķeguļi, and slightly upper the river – Ķulmaki and Sprundes. Very close farmsteads were also Klāvi on the bank of the Svētupe River and Pūrnavi on the bank of the Jaunupe River. Close neighbours were Karas, Posti and Salat Jennas on the bank of the Salaca River. The relatives of the Liv language speakers, mentioned by Sjögren, inhabited also other farmsteads, which were not named by the above scholar, and either in this article.

5. In the second half of the nineteenth century a part of the above-mentioned and other Liv families reduced in number by death. Others experienced a shortage of male heirs and thus the number of the family

name carriers decreased. It seems that members of several families moved to other places in countryside or towns. Some families, for instance Kariņš, very likely split up into branches. This process needs to be studied more. Presently it can be said with certainty that after the known 22 Liv language speakers of the Svētciems *pagasts* passed away, their sons and daughters, who were in the prime of their life, their grandsons and granddaughters survived them. The survivors maybe didn't know the language, but surely retained memories about the Liv families.

During the above-mentioned census taken in 1897, all seventeen surnames of the Livs, which were known since 1846, were entered in the registration lists of the Svētciems *pagasts*. However, only the surname Feldmanis was registered in the same farmstead Ķirpaki, where it was registered in 1846. The carriers of the remaining sixteen surnames lived in estates, half-estates and peasant farmsteads different from those recorded in 1846. In 1897, however six families – carriers of the Liv surnames, namely Ābols, Ādmīdiņš, Bērziņš, Bisnieks, Jirgensons, Kariņš, lived in farmsteads Dzeņi, Karas, Klāvi, Ķeguļi, Ķirpaki, where in 1846 other Liv families had lived. In the second half of the nineteenth century, some former farmsteads of the Livs – Karas, Klāvi, Ķeguļi – were transformed into the dwelling houses for the estate's farmhands, and others, at least in winter time, were used for lodging woodsmen, who came from other districts and towns. In 1897, in Mustanci, for instance, thirteen woodsmen – sleeper cutters were accommodated. The latter came from remote and even rather far-off places as Burtnieki, Kauguri, Kārķi, Kocēni, Rauna, Rīga, Smiltene, Valmiera (LSHA, fund 2706, descr. 1, file 228, pp. 229–232). Presently, we have at our disposal documentary evidence, that in 1897 at least a part of the carriers of the former Liv surnames where direct offsprings of the Liv language speakers known in 1846. Nowadays, there are many people in the Northern Vidzeme who are, to some extent, aware of their belonging to the old Liv families, and still carry their surnames (Bisnieks, Gīze, Kariņš, Lielnors, and others). The carriers of other (non-Liv) surnames also recall their Liv origin.

6. The data acquired from the whole scope of sources, particularly references of relationship ties, which can be found in six people registers (1795, 1811, 1816, 1826, 1834, 1850) and the record lists of the census of 1897, parish inventories, the record books and other documents of the Svētciems parish court, and the notes taken during expeditions, all these provide strong testimony that the number of Liv

language speakers was much larger than 22 persons, a number given by Sjögren. There is no doubt, however, that ethnic consciousness of the Livs grew narrower and the language was rapidly disappearing because of the lack of daily application. In the second half of the nineteenth century the Liv language lost its function as a means of public communication, and ethnic consciousness narrowed to a such extent that only individuals realized themselves to be the Livs. Several persons are known to have told that some of their relatives even in the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century still knew, to some extent, the Liv language. Today, there is a certain part of people, who still realize that they are descendants of the Livs. The described easing of ethnic consciousness and rejection of the Liv language was characteristic also to the Kurzeme Livs in the twentieth century. The above process cannot be thoroughly described there owing to the scope of the present work.

7. The disappearance of ethnic consciousness and language of the Livs occurred owing to many circumstances taking place in the eighteenth century and the first decades of the nineteenth century. These were: 1) Sharp decrease of the number of people because of the epidemics of smallpox, diphtheria, measles, plaque and scarlatina. According to the estimations of associate professor J. Bērziņš, during the plaque epidemic of 1710–1711 more than 79,8% of the population of the Salaca parish died (Bērziņš 1936: 26719–26720). However, the knowledge acquired during the studies of the Kurzeme Livs shows that any number referred to in one source or by an individual author for interpreting the disaster caused by the epidemic of plaque need to be checked (Cimermanis 2001). 2) A very high infant and juvenile mortality, which particularly increased during the exacerbation of infectious diseases, when several children or even all children of one family died within a short period of time. 3) Living under depressing conditions of ethnic minority. 4) Increase of the absolute number and the percentage of mixed marriages. 5) Indifferent, and sometimes even hostile attitude of local pastors, landlords and local authorities towards the Livs. 6) Virtual disuse of the Liv language: it was not taught at schools, was not used in public institutions and was not spoken during public events and elsewhere. 7) Use of the Liv language as a colloquial speech only in a family or during contacts with the near-by or distant families living in farmsteads, where often people of both ethnic groups – Latvians and the Livs – lived. 8) Unwillingness of parents to speak with their children in the Liv language.

In the twentieth century, the above-mentioned and several other reasons brought to an ethnic catastrophe the Kurzeme Livs, too.

8. In 1823–1826, or perhaps later a wide movement of the inhabitants (maybe displacement?) of the Svētciems *pagasts* from one farmstead to another took place. Such process affected the Liv families, too. Movement of people can be followed up in the record books of people registers (LSHA, fund 1232, descr. 1, file 32, pp. 59–171), which unfortunately don't bring out the reasons of the process. Up to now no document has been found to tell about the reasons of such behaviour. The displacement of 260 Livs (for the time being the verity of this number is not corroborated by documents) and their dispersion among Latvian farmsteads was very likely aimed at assimilation. The latter was heard and described in writing by Heinrich Georg von Jannau, a pastor, historian and scholar of Estonian language. He was of the opinion that the Svētciems estate had carried out such action before 1828 (Jannau 1828: 154). With reference to Jannau, academician Sjögren wrote about it in 1849 (Sjögren 1849: 471).

However, the number of the Svētciems inhabitants urges to question the possibility of such assimilation. In 1816, there were 528 inhabitants who lived in the estate and 34 farmsteads (LSHA, fund 1232, descr. 1, file 32, pp. 1–21). The likely number of the Livs – 260 people then would constitute 49,24 percent of all inhabitants. In 1826, the Svētciems estate and 38 farmsteads were inhabited by 646 people (LSHA, fund 1232, descr. 1, file 32, pp. 64–95), and at that time the above-mentioned number of the Livs – 260, constituted 40,24 percent. Such proportions of ethnic groups – 49,24 percent to 50,76 percent in 1816, and 40,24 percent to 59,76 percent in 1826, cannot serve as evidence of purposeful and rapid trial of assimilation and, consequently, of noteworthy outcome. Moreover, in reality the numerical proportion of Latvians and the Livs differed from the above-mentioned in favour of the latter, because of the parish was inhabited also by several dozens of Estonians, Russians and Germans. For clearing up the matter more documentary evidences are needed.

9. The Liv families of that time, in the same way as the Estonian and Latvian peasants, were groups of people that were stratified by material and social position. The members of the Liv families, even members of one family, belonged to every social group of peasants existing in the Svētciems *pagasts*. There were permanent and traditional farmhand and farm labourer families, which lived in farmsteads, and farmstead head families, which, in fact were farm tenants. In these families one

son could inherit his father's farmstead, and others could become farmhands or farm labourers in their father's or other farmsteads, as well as they could become estate servants. In 1870s, the Svētciems estate launched selling of farmsteads for heirloom. In the found contracts on selling the Liv and other farmsteads, i.e. in farmstead sales contracts of 1875 only two names and surnames of the Liv families can be found – Mārtiņš Gīze in the farmstead Liepiņas and Jermolajs (?) Bērziņš in the farmstead Priecumi. The rest of the known former farmsteads of the Livs were purchased by the carriers of non-Liv surnames (LSHA, fund 218, descr. 2, file 10678–10702), including newcomers from other *pagasts*.

The members of the known Liv families can be also described according to the branches of their economic activity, for instance, craftsmen, sailors, husbandmen, fishermen, and those combining different or several trades – craftsmen and husbandmen, sailors and fishermen, husbandmen and fishermen and others.

Within these groups a dynamic social process was taking place, which was often directed by the Svētciems estate. Depending on the landlords will the farmstead head's family, which was in fact a farm tenant, was transformed into 1) a farmhand or farm labourer family still living in the same farmstead, which was now run by another person and family; 2) a farmhand, farm labourer or farmstead head family in some other place; 3) a family of an estate servant, farmhand and farm labourer or worker at an industrial enterprise (brewery, distillery, tar-works, brick-kiln, glassworks). The families of farmhands and farm labourers retained their usual position, were transformed into families of estate domestics, who were further categorised, or farmstead heads (tenants).

These changes became apparent in a variety of forms. Of great importance was the landlord's regulatory action, personal qualities of people, failures and successes, their abilities to utilize their skills, their mutual understanding and other qualities in a situation, when up to the seventies of the nineteenth century all power and land in the *pagasts* actually belonged to the landlord of the Svētciems estate.

The Kurzeme Livs, who inhabited the lands of the Dundaga and Pope estates, experiences similar situation. For the present the following differences are known; 1) the Kurzeme Livs inhabited a narrow coastal zone of the Baltic Sea and the Riga Bay, which was separated from the districts inhabited by Latvians, by a wide tract of swampy forests and meadows. It hampered daily contacts between the two

ethnic groups. Only the Ģipka and Žocene inhabitants were less isolated from Latvians because of a narrower belt of forests and meadows. 2) the Kurzeme Livs were numerically much greater ethnic unit than the Svētciems Livs, they lived in villages and were in much closer contacts that then helped them to preserve their language and traditional culture. 3) In comparison to the Svētciems Livs, the Kurzeme Livs were more occupied in sea transport, trade and fishing. They were less involved in corvee and servant works at the Dundaga and Pope estates if compared to the Livs at the Svētciems estate. For this reason the inhabitants of Kurzeme didn't have intense daily contacts with people from other ethnic groups, the process of losing language and traditional culture was much slower and it was rather affected by coming in of other ethnic groups or leaving the villages by the Livs themselves.

The study of documents about the Svētciems Livs and their descendants is being continued. We do hope that in the future we'll be able to tell you in more detail about other spheres of their work, life style and social relations, for instance, about their endeavours to acquire knowledge, to improve their living conditions, economic activity and others. The next publication will be a book *The Livs and their culture in Latvia*, which is expected to be finished in 2003.

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