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HUMANITAARTEADUSTE DISSERTATSIOONID

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DISSERTATIONS ON HUMANITIES

Inna Põltsam-Jürjo

**A LIVONIAN SMALL TOWN IN THE EARLY MODERN
AGE: A STUDY OF NEW PÄRNU IN THE FIRST HALF
OF THE 16TH CENTURY**

Abstract

 **TLÜ KIRJASTUS**

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IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE 16TH CENTURY**

Abstract

Chair of Estonian History, Institute of History, Tallinn University, Estonia.

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LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

- I. Inna Põltsam-Jürjo 2006. Käsitöölised ja nende osa Uus-Pärnu majanduselus orduaja lõpul [Craftsmen and their role in the economic life of Uus-Pärnu during the late Middle Ages in Livonia]. – *Tuna*, 1, 33–52.
- II. Inna Põltsam-Jürjo 2005. Uus-Pärnu ja orduvõim 16. sajandi I poolel [Uus-Pärnu and its sovereign in the first half on the 16th century]. – *Acta Historica Tallinnensia*, 9, 210–235.
- III. Inna Põltsam 2004. Saare-Lääne piiskopkonna vasallide ja ametnike karjäär ning tegutsemine Uus-Pärnus 16. sajandi esimesel poolel. – *Saare-Lääne piiskopkond. Artiklid Lääne-Eesti keskajast*. Haapsalu, 99–113. / Die Laufbahn und Tätigkeit der vasallen und Beamten des Bistums Ösel-Wiek in Neu-Pernau in der ersten Hälfte des 16. Jahrhunderts. – *Bistum Ösel-Wiek. Artikelsammlung zum Mittelalter in Westestland*, 275–287.
- IV. Inna Põltsam 2004. Die soziale Stellung der Frauen zu Neu-Pernau in der ersten Hälfte des 16. Jahrhunderts. – B. Jähnig, K. Militzer (Hg.). *Aus der Geschichte Alt-Livlands. Festschrift für Heinz von zur Mühlen zum 90. Geburtstag*. Schriften der Baltischen Historischen Kommission. Bd. 12. Münster: LIT, 307–328.
- V. Inna Põltsam 2003. Das Alltagsleben in den Kleinstädten Estlands im Mittelalter. – N. Angermann (Hg.). *Städtisches Leben im Baltikum zur Zeit der Hanse. Baltische Seminare*. Bd 10. Lüneburg: Verlag Carl Schirren Gesellschaft, 157–176.
- VI. Inna Põltsam, Aldur Vunk (koost). 2001. Pärnu linna ajaloo allikad 13.–16. sajand. I osa. / I. Põltsam, A. Vunk (Hg.). *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Pernau 13.–16. Jahrhundert*. Pärnu.
- VII. Inna Põltsam 2001. Zur Baugeschichte von Neu-Pernau in der Amtszeit des Bürgermeisters Johann von Lynthem (1519–1548). – *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropaforschung*, 50, 337–369.
- VIII. Inna Põltsam 2001. Einfluß der lutherischen Reformation auf den Alltag in Livland. – R. Altnurme (Hg.). *Estnische Kirchengeschichte im vorigen Jahrtausend*. Kiel: Friedrich Wittig Verlag, 73–86.
- IX. Inna Põltsam 1997. Reformatsioonist Uus- ja Vana-Pärnus [On the Reformation in New- and Old-Pärnu]. – *Pärnumaa ajalugu*. Vol. 1. Pärnu, 63–74.

MAIN CONCLUSIONS OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS

Problem statement

In the Middle Ages there were nine bylaw towns on the territory of Estonia, two of them big – Tallinn and Tartu – the others small: New and Old Pärnu, Haapsalu, Viljandi, Narva, Rakvere, and Paide. The numerical dominance of the latter has not motivated researchers enough to focus their interest primarily on the history of small towns. Tallinn and Tartu, like Riga, were influential agents in shaping the statehood of Livonia playing major roles in the political, economical and cultural life of the territory, greatly due to their membership of the Hanseatic League. The reasons for studying big cities have been seemingly abundant and substantial. The histories of smaller towns have looked as less interesting, less significant.

Arrogance or disinterest in the history of small towns is by no means a unique characteristic of the Estonian history research. As Peter Clark has critically observed, a major study on European urbanization in 1500–1800¹ bypasses small towns entirely.² Jan De Vries, basing his research on towns with their population 10,000 or more, has excluded from his study not only small towns but also those in the European “periphery”. Elsewhere in Europe the small town as an autonomous research object of the Middle and the Early Modern Age has also been recognized for a few decades only.³ These have been mostly studied by English, German, Belgian and French historians.⁴

To ignore small towns altogether, be them with or without bylaws (e.g. Lihula, Keila, Valga, Kuressaare et al.) would mean still to impoverish considerably the Livonian town culture. Moreover, a small town of Estonia and/or Livonia is an important chapter in the European history of urbanization and city culture. A small town has to be paid more attention to than customary in the Estonian history research, and so for many reasons. There can be no hope to have a proper idea about the towns and town culture of the Middle and Early Modern Ages in Estonia/Livonia excluding their small towns. Limiting one’s research to stating their political and economical insignificance would be an insular and limited approach indeed of no justification in the context of the vigorous research being carried out on the small towns of other regions of Europe.

The present study is about Uus-Pärnu, a small town in Livonia at the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the Early Modern Age. The decision to limit the research to Uus-Pärnu (New Pärnu) excluding the Episcopal Vana-Pärnu (Old Pärnu) on the opposite side of the Pärnu River has been deliberate emphasizing the fact even professional historians tend to forget: in the Middle Ages these two were separate towns. The history of Vana-Pärnu would be more telling if studied independently or together with the other towns of the Saare-Lääne bishopric. Of course, the phenomenon of the double city cannot be ignored but that would imply the study of contacts and communication between the two. It is only in this context that

¹ Jan De Vries. 1984. *European Urbanisation 1500–1800*. Cambridge, Massachusetts.

² Peter Clark. 1995. Introduction. — P. Clark (ed.). *Small Towns in Early Modern Europe*, 3. Cambridge.

³ Clark, Introduction, p. 3.

⁴ See *Small Towns in Early Modern Europe* (Ed by Peter Clark). Cambridge, 1995; Christopher Dyer. 2000. *Small Towns 1270–1540*. — DM Palliser (ed.). *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain*. Vol. 1, 600–1540. Cambridge, 505–537; Alan Dyer. 2000. *Small market towns 1540–1700*. — P. Clark (ed.). *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain*. Vol. 2, 1540–1700, Cambridge, 425–451; Martina Stercken. 2006. *Städte der Herrschaft. Kleinstadtgenese im Habsburgischen Herrschaftsraum des 13. und 14. Jahrhunderts*. Städteforschung A/68. Köln, Weimar, Wien.

Vana-Pärnu has been discussed also in the present thesis. The present study aims at a closer look at the functioning of a small town and its role in the development of Livonia in the first half of the 16th century giving at that more gist to the notion “a small town”, reduced often to a town with just small population and/or graded low in the hierarchy of local towns.

The time frame for the discussion is by and large the first half of the 16th century (1500–1558/62). The period is initiated by the victorious war of Wolter von Plettenberg, the master of the order, against Russians, and it comes to its end together with the end of Livonia’s independence and the annihilation of the government of the Order at the outbreak of the Livonian War (1558–1562). The last fifty years of the independence includes a number of momentous events in the history of Livonia, and of Europe. The most important among these is undeniably the Reformation, shattering the foundations of the church, the state and the society in Europe. It challenged also the Livonian estates and the statehood that left the challenge unanswered unable to realize it to the benefit of their country. So the Reformation and secularisation has to be the axis of the study determining one of its aims: to describe and analyze the process of secularization in the small town and its impact on the mode of life. The time frame of the research enables one to look for the possible changes in Uus-Pärnu hinting at the initiation of the Early Modern Age. A specific study on the transition of the Livonian society from the Middle to the Early Modern Age and an analysis of the questions the society faced, however, is still waiting ahead asking for conceptual research.

The thesis is divided into seven chapters with their contents determined largely by the availability of sources, i.e. researching the fields recorded sufficiently in the town register books. Another concern has been to have as integral a survey of the life and citizens of a small town as possible. At the same time the thesis tries to spot and explain the role a small town could play in the social, economical and cultural processes in Livonia at the late Middle and the Early Modern Age. Chapter 1 is on Uus-Pärnu and its citizens in the first half of the 16th century, or to be more precise, on the look of the town and the developments in its space. It also studies the social and national composition of the citizens and their regional background. Relations with the landlord were of key importance for any town, so the next chapter is about the relations between Uus-Pärnu and the Livonian Order or the Pärnu Commander as the Order’s local representative. Next the focus is on the composition and activities of the municipal government, the town council. The central issue is to characterize the government and administration of a small town. The next two chapters are dedicated to the two dominant estates, the merchants and the craftsmen. They characterize the trade and the handicraft of Uus-Pärnu. Representatives of other Uus-Pärnu estates and social layers (noblemen, wageworkers, et al.) have not been given a separate chapter but discussed within the others. The chapters to follow are on family, marriage and women in the city community. The final chapter of the thesis is about ecclesiastical and religious life before and after the Reformation, and about the events of the Reformation in Uus-Pärnu.

One of the goals of the thesis is to demonstrate the research potential of the town register books, primarily the inheritance registers. Their significance for the social topography of a town has been repeatedly underlined and can be substantiated by their character. As we know, the inheritance registers record the real estate transactions in a town giving this way a systematic picture of all the registered immovable and their owners in a town. The registers contain often detailed descriptions of the immovable that is of effective help in researching the architectural history. The town registers highlight also the activities of the town government. Separate attention has to be paid to the importance of the inheritance registers and notebooks as sources of the citizens’ personal data. The town registers can record the name, the occupation, the age, the marital status, the children, the relatives, and the financial state of the inhabitant. They reflect the fields of occupation of the town population, their business and trade

contacts, even details of the everyday. These data enable to analyze the mode of life as well as the population of the town from different aspects. True, the town registers include inevitably just a fraction of the population. Common people, including Estonians/non-Germans, are only seldom met in the city management records and in correspondence. In this regard the sources have their limits but they are the best we have, highlighting a considerably big part of the population during a considerably long time span: the town registers have been kept for decades (or even centuries). Integrating these data with those coming from other sources creates new knowledge. The versatile information we get from town registers about the life and the people in a town enables us spot and analyze the impact the pivotal social, political, etc. events and/or developments could have.

Historiography and sources

A town, be it big or small, has to be taken as a significant factor in the Estonian medieval history. It played an important role in the economic, cultural, political and social development of the medieval Livonia. Estonian historians, however, have previously been reluctant to study the town: a medieval town has been treated as a stronghold of an alien culture, an alien phenomenon, which has little to do with the history of peasants, the indigenous population.⁵ In towns Estonians were assimilated and therefore the historical research done in the national spirit treated them as negative. So it is not surprising that the town on the Estonian territory under the rule of the Livonian branch of the Teutonic Order and the Saare-Lääne and the Tartu Bishop has been rather a research object of Baltic German than Estonian historians.

These have been the Baltic German researchers who laid the foundations for the study of the early history of small towns. The tradition goes back to the local research societies of the 2nd half of the 19th century.⁶ By today we have, of all the Estonian small towns, professional histories for Uus- and Vana-Pärnu⁷ and Narva⁸. Mention must be also made of the history of Viljandi by Friedrich Amelung that is, however, of lower quality than those listed above, and outdated by today.⁹ In recent years research into the history of small towns, greatly due to local initiatives, has gained considerable momentum: there have been published many thematic collections, articles, and source material. Vigorous is the study of the early history of Haapsalu, greatly thanks to the work of Anton Pärn and Kalev Jaago.¹⁰ Jüri Kivimäe has recently issued

⁵ For comparison see *Eesti rahva ajalugu*, 1932. Vol. I. (Ed by Juhan Libe, August Oinas etc.) Tartu, 515–516, 525.

⁶ See Hellmuth Weiss. 1986. Die historischen Gesellschaften. — Georg v. Rauch (ed.). *Geschichte der deutschbaltischen Geschichtsschreibung*. Köln, Wien, 121–141. See also Peter Wörster. 2001. Einige Bemerkungen zur Arbeit der Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Altertumskunde in Riga. — M. Romang (ed.). *Das Dommuseum in Riga*. Marburg, 30–43; Inna Pöltsum. 1997. Pärnu Muinasuurimise Selts. — *Pärnumaa ajalugu*. Vol. 1. Pärnu, 10–18.

⁷ Carl Friedrich Wilhelm Russwurm. 1880. *Nachrichten über Alt-Perna*. Reval; Heinrich Laakmann. 1956. *Geschichte der Stadt Pernau in der Deutsch-Ordenszeit (bis 1558)*. (Wissenschaftliche Beiträge zur Geschichte und Landeskunde Ost-Mitteleuropas, 23). Marburg/Lahn.

⁸ Arnold Süvalep. 1936. *Narva ajalugu. Taani ja orduaeg*. Narva.

⁹ Friedrich Amelung. 1898. *Geschichte der Stadt und Landschaft Fellin von 1210 bis 1625*. (Jahrbuch der Felliner litterarischen Gesellschaft 1890–1895). Fellin.

¹⁰ Anton Pärn. 1997. Haapsalu linn Saare-Lääne piiskopkonna keskuste kujunemisloos. — *Läänemaa Muuseumi Toimetised I*. Haapsalu, 26–48; Anton Pärn. 2001. Über die Hausbauentwicklung in Westestland im 13. bis 15. Jahrhundert. — M. Gläser (ed.). *Lübecker Kolloquium zur Stadtarchäologie im Hanseraum III: Der Hausbau*. Lübeck, 595–604; Haapsalu kodanikeraamat 1496–1797 (1999). / Hapsaler Bürgerbuch 1496–1797. Ed by Kalev Jaago. Tartu.

many interesting articles on the small towns of Saare-Lääne bishopric and Narva.¹¹ Medieval Viljandi has been studied by Heiki Valk and Arvi Haak.¹² Odette Kirss has written on the early history of Rakvere.¹³

The decisive impetus to research the history of Pärnu was given by the establishment of the Pärnu Antiquity Society (*Pärnu Muinasuurimise Selts*, PMUS) in 1896.¹⁴ The society was active in many fields: it arranged the historical archives of the town, established the museum with its collections and catalogues, compiled a library, executed archaeological excavations, published its proceedings, organized and developed research and research contacts. Of importance is that alongside with local enthusiasts and amateur historians the society could rope in also professional historians.

The revival and acknowledgement of the heritage of the PMUS, especially since 1996, meant a new impetus to research the older history of the town of Pärnu. The conference dedicated to the centennial of the PMUS resulted in the conference proceedings entitled “The History of Pärnumaa” (*Pärnumaa ajalugu*).¹⁵ In 1998 the book “The Seaside Town of Pärnu” (*Merelinn Pärnu*)¹⁶ was published including as much as possible written on Pärnu’s historical dependence on the sea. The book includes chapters dedicated to medieval Pärnu, like that by Jüri Kivimäe entitled “Pärnu as a Hanseatic Town” (*Pärnu kui hansalinn*).¹⁷ The historiography of Pärnu has been considerably enriched by research based on the archaeological data. Aldur Vunk, the archaeologist and historian, has published within the last decade many articles on the medieval Pärnu discussing as versatile subjects as the city planning, the glazed tiles for stoves, and the pilgrimages connected to Uus-Pärnu.¹⁸ Liina Maldre has analyzed the condition of domesticated animals in the 14th–15th century Uus-Pärnu using the archaeological evidence.¹⁹ The most recent study relying on the archaeological findings of Uus-Pärnu is that by Erki Russow who discusses import ceramics in West-European towns in the Middle and Early Modern Ages.²⁰ Research has been accompanied by the publication of archival sources for the

¹¹ Jüri Kivimäe. 1998. Iuravit iuxta formam prescriptam. Zur Rechtslage der Kleinstädte des Bistums Ösel-Wiek am Ausgang des Mittelalters. — *Festschrift für Vello Helk zum 75. Geburtstag. Beiträge zur Verwaltungs-, Kirchen- und Bildungsgeschichte des Ostseeraumes*. Tartu, 119–137; Jüri Kivimäe. 2004. Medieval Narva: Featuring a Small Town between East and West. — Karsten Brüggemann (Hrsg.). *Narva und die Ostseeregion. Narva and the Baltic Sea Region*. Narva, 17–29.

¹² Heiki Valk. 2005. The Genesis of Viljandi (Fellin): archaeological data. — Ilgvars Misāns, Horst Wernike (ed.). *Rīga und der Ostseeraum. Von der Gründung 1201 bis in die Frühe Neuzeit*. Marburg, 95–108.; Arvi Haak. 2005. Viljandi linna kujunemisest peamiselt arheoloogiliste allikate põhjal. — *Narva Muuseumi Toimetised* 5. Narva, 17–28; vt ka Kaur Altoa. 1978. Viljandi linna kujunemisest. — *Ehitus ja arhitektuur*, 2, 48–54.

¹³ Odette Kirss. 2005. *Rakvere ajalugu: kõige vanemast ajast 1944. aastani*. Tallinn.

¹⁴ See Pölsam, *Pärnu Muinasuurimise Selts*, 10–18.

¹⁵ *Pärnumaa ajalugu*. Vol. 1. Pärnu, 1997.

¹⁶ Jüri Kivimäe, Aivar Kriska, Inna Pölsam, Aldur Vunk (eds.). *Merelinn Pärnu*. Pärnu, 1998.

¹⁷ Jüri Kivimäe. 1998. Pärnu kui hansalinn. — *Merelinn Pärnu*. Jüri Kivimäe, Aivar Kriska, Inna Pölsam, Aldur Vunk (koost). Pärnu, 58–77.

¹⁸ Aldur Vunk. 1994. Excavations in the New-Pernau Quarter of Artisans. — *Eesti Teaduste Akadeemia toimetised. Humanitaar- ja sotsiaalteadused*, 43, 1, 60–67; Aldur Vunk. 2000. Mentaliteedi peegeldus Pärnu kahlileidudel. Linnaarheoloogia teoreetilisi aspekte. — *Eesti arheoloogia ajakiri. Journal of Estonian Archaeology*, 4, 2, 151–174.; Aldur Vunk 2005. *Jeesus läks maale kõndimaile. Ristisõjad ja palverännakud Eesti keskajal*. Tallinn.

¹⁹ Liina Maldre. 1997. Koduloomad keskaegses Pärnus. — *Pärnumaa ajalugu*. Vol. 1. Pärnu, 99–123.

²⁰ Erki Russow. 2006. *Importkeraamika Lääne-Eesti linnades 13.–17. sajandil*. Tallinn.

early history of Pärnu. It was in 1996 when the source collection project was launched reaching to its envisaged result in 2001 with the publication of its first volume.²¹

The scantiness of sources makes the research of small towns on the territory of Estonia in the Middle and the Early Modern Age a convoluted and sometimes even an impossible task. Although the absence of written records can be at times compensated by archaeological findings, there are fields and subjects that are reflected in written records only. Tallinn is the only Estonian town possessing rich archival sources on its early history. Even Tartu, another hanseatic town, has been left with only little material. The situation is even worse with older archives of other small towns. The case of Uus-Pärnu, however, is lucky in the sense it has several town registers of the 16th century. Of course, the town registers are not the only written sources documenting relevant information about a town; but to lack records of municipal government means inevitably to lack also the chance to have a compact and comprehensive survey of the town population and many an aspect of its way of life.

The prerequisite to write the present thesis was the composition of Volume One for *The Sources of Pärnu's History (Pärnu linna ajaloo allikad)*. These are the records published there that are the major data for the research. The first volume of *The Sources of Pärnu's History* contains the town registers of Vana and Uus-Pärnu, the city privileges, the correspondence between the Order Commander of Pärnu and the Tallinn town council. The most remarkable of these is the oldest town register of Uus-Pärnu. Initially the parish register of St. Nicholas Church, it was adopted by the Uus-Pärnu town council as its register after the 1524 fire and the 1525 secularization of the church property. The register encompasses almost the whole of the 16th century: the first entries date back to 1502/1505, and the last ones are from 1588 while additional notes have been put down also later. The town register consists of several independent parts like the parish register of St. Nicholas's, the copies of the city privileges, the list of the town council, the memoirs of the burgomaster Johann van Lynthem, and the notebook and the account book of the town council. The inheritance register begun in 1543 is the continuation of the corresponding register of St. Nicholas's parish register. So in principle there is consistent information about Uus-Pärnu for the entire first half of the 16th century.

Additional information can be obtained from the minute books of the Uus-Pärnu town council from the late 16th century, and the older part of the archives of the Great and the Small Guild preserved in the Estonian Historical Archives in Tartu.²² A lot of material on Uus-Pärnu can be found in correspondence of various characters. The Tallinn City Archives has the letters of the Uus-Pärnu town council to the Tallinn council,²³ and some letters of Uus-Pärnu citizens to the Tallinn town council or the Tallinn citizens.²⁴ Occasional hints or notes on Uus-Pärnu are in different documents of the archives of the Tallinn town council and guilds – in wills, account and register and safe-conduct books as well as guilds' registers and elsewhere. Material of significance for the history of Pärnu can also be found in the archives of Denmark, Sweden, Germany and Latvia that have been used also, even if partially. The archives of the bishop of Saare-Lääne are in Copenhagen, including a few letters to the Uus-Pärnu town council.²⁵ The

²¹ Inna Põltsam, Aldur Vunk (eds.). *Pärnu linna ajaloo allikad 13.–16. sajandini. Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Pernau 13.–16. Jahrhundert.* Pärnu, 2001.

²² Eesti Ajalooarhiiv (= EAA) f. 1000 (Pernauser Magistrat), n. 1, s. 711: Protokolle 1583–1602; EAA, f. 5100, n. 1, s. 92: Altes Bruderbuch; EAA, 5156, n. 1, s. 1: Ordnung des Pernauser Stadtrats betreffend Vermählungen und andere Festlichkeiten.

²³ Tallinna Linnaarhiiv (= TLA) f. 230 (Tallinna magistraat/Der Revaler Magistrat), n. 1, s. B. D. 5 I b: Korrespondenz von Pernau an Reval 1505–1598.

²⁴ TLA f. 230, n. 1, s. B. B. 48: Privatbriefe an dem Revaler Rat.

²⁵ Dansk Rigsarkiv (= DRA), Livland, Øsel Stift, Registrant 3B.

Order's correspondence concerning Uus-Pärnu was found in the Swedish State Archives.²⁶ Valuable information has been found from the archives in Germany, e.g. the oldest written record on the Uus-Pärnu Merchants' Company. Alongside with the archival sources use has been made of the chronicles of Balthasar Russow²⁷ and Johann Renner.²⁸

Methodology and main results

The present research is based mainly on the critical analysis of archival sources relying also on the methods and/or data of the neighbouring disciplines like historical demography, art history and archaeology. To surpass a narrow compass treating Uus-Pärnu as a thing-in-itself the town has been compared to other smaller or bigger Livonian towns, and to other cities in Europe. It is only the wide comparative basis that enables to find and state the major traits typical of the Livonian small town and its way of life. The comparison of Uus-Pärnu to its European counterparts, however, has not been a specific aim of the research.

Considering the size of the population (1,000–1,200 people) in its European and Livonian contexts, Uus-Pärnu was a small town. Approximately comparable was the population in Viljandi, Volmari and Võnnu. The population size is a clear and uncontroversial indicator but the figure alone says little about the character of a borough. A more substantial criterion or characteristics is the composition of the population, i.e. the ways in which the members of the town community were distributed according to their social and national category. The population of Uus-Pärnu was principally no different from that of big cities. The upper and middle classes were merchants and craftsmen of German origin. Lower professions, wageworkers and servants were prevalingly non-German. In the first half of the 16th century the number of citizens of noble birth increased in the town including both those who went to live there and others who just purchased immovables. The “invasion” of local nobility (without tighter contacts with the town) was primarily a distinctive feature of small towns. In Uus-Pärnu there lived many hanseatic merchants, potentates of the Order, officials of the Bishop and local liegemen, persons belonging to the social and economical elite of Livonia.

Although there were probably more Germans in Uus-Pärnu than non-Germans, it cannot be taken as a typical feature of a borough: in Narva, for example, the situation was the other way round. The records we have show no considerable population increase in Uus-Pärnu in the first half of the 16th century. Thus it can be said: it is the dynamics of the population increase that differentiates the small and the big towns of Livonia at the end of the Middle and the beginning of the Early Modern Age doing it better than the national or the class composition. The population increase of a small town, in both absolute and index values, was smaller even under the general demographic explosion of the first half of the 16th century. It was partially dependent on the restrictions imposed on Livonian peasants' freedom of movement since the 14th century, topical also in the early 16th century. It threatened to rob towns of the steady uninhibited inflow of inhabitants, the workmen the town needed. A borough dependent on the landlord could not easily defend its rights, including the right to admit peasants freely as inhabitants of the town. Taking into account the constant in- and outflow of people, it is clear that a small town was not a closed or stagnant unit but a movable and mutable community. The small town was open, open to new developments and changes.

²⁶ Riksarkivet Stockholm (= SRA), Livonica I:17.

²⁷ Balthasar Russow. 1848. *Chronica der Prouintz Lyfflandt. — Scriptorum rerum Livonicarum. Sammlung der wichtigsten Chronisten und Geschichtesdenkmale von Liv-, Ehst- und Kurland.* Bd. II. Riga, Leipzig, 1–195.

²⁸ *Johann Renner's Livländische Historien.* Richard Hausmann, Konstantin Höhlbaum (Hg.). Göttingen, 1876. See also Johann Renner. 1995. *Liivimaa ajalugu 1556–1561.* Tallinn.

Uus-Pärnu looked in principle like the big cities of Livonia: the town was surrounded by a circular wall outside which were suburbs; prior to the mid-16th century the town was dominated by stone buildings; reconditioning was an important aspect of life; defences were adapted to meet the contemporary requirements, i.e. following the principles of horizontal defence, etc. However, there were differences like the presence of gardens and pubs inside the city wall. Remarkable is that there were vacant sites with no buildings in Uus-Pärnu even near the market place. Big towns, at that, experienced the shortage of space, especially in their most prestigious part, the downtown. This testifies once again to the fact that the population of Uus-Pärnu, a borough, did not increase unlike that of Riga or Tallinn. While many small towns found no financial means to erect their fortifications, Uus-Pärnu could afford to restore its fort even thrice, after every fire. There can be no doubt that the cause was the strategic importance of the town for the Order, the fortifications of Uus-Pärnu were the concern of the landlord as the stronghold of the Order and the town at its foot formed a unitary defence system. Thus the influential role of the Order could affect even the outward look of Uus-Pärnu.

Privileged as a hanseatic town, Uus-Pärnu was on the top of the hierarchy of the small towns of Livonia. The privileges were the foundation of the prosperity and well-being of the town and its merchants as expressed also in the looks of the town. Private houses, especially the residential buildings of the prosperous citizens of Uus-Pärnu, did not differ in principle from the dwellings of big cities. The differences were bigger in public buildings. There were not many of them in small towns, just the town hall, the guild, and the workhouse. These were too smaller and less grand than the respective buildings in cities. The town-hall of Uus-Pärnu was a simple two-storey stone house hardly meant to compete with the grandiose Tallinn building. At the same time its very presence was a significant sign because many Livonian small towns did not have a town hall at all. In the first half of the 16th century the life-style of the Uus-Pärnu citizen is characterized by strivings for privacy and greater comfort. The citizen had finances to channel into the improvement of his living conditions and welfare: the dwelling house of a prosperous citizen was a house of stone, or at least of a stone dornse with a number of glass windows, its rooms heated by posh tiled stoves, etc. The good standards of life of the citizens of the small town can be guessed by the dowries of their daughters, the number of their housekeeping utensils, expensive dishes, clothes and jewellery. A small town did not imply the absence of neither prosperity nor influential elite. The parents living in Vana-Pärnu, the so-called agrarian town, could afford to sustain their offspring through their university studies abroad.

A closer look at the government of Uus-Pärnu gives every reason to state that those governing the town as well as the way they managed it reveal the major characteristics of a small town. First, in case with Uus-Pärnu the great influence of the landlord, i.e. of the Order is evident. Great dependence on the landlord is typical of all the small towns in Livonia. The places without the rights of a town depended on the landlord in this respect that the latter had not conferred the rights on them. Although the council of Uus-Pärnu was free to elect its members, the pressure of the Order in the elections is clear. Those favoured by the landlord could make a rapid career in the town council and a few years' membership in the latter could take one already to the position of the mayor. In Uus-Pärnu, however, we find no trivial careerists for the Order patronized only those possessing qualities needed to govern a town. Not all the aldermen related to the Order became the leaders of the town. Conspicuous is also the great role of an individual in the town government that could be possible only in a small community. In a big city a person could never attain the absolute power in the city government. The influence of the landlord and the limits of the autonomy of the town is manifest also in the fact that half of the court taxes paid by the citizens went to the Order. A considerable part of the political and economic elite of Uus-Pärnu was related to the Order and through them the latter could indirectly direct and influence the town. The issue, however, was not the total absence of

independence or of self-consciousness from the part of the town community: it resisted resolutely the Commander when the latter asked for equal trade rights in the town. The positive role of the landlord cannot be ignored in the development of Uus-Pärnu, suffering repeatedly from fires: it was the Order that invested in the town and gave many a time loans or donations.

The communal economy of a small town was considerably simpler, less differentiated and less complicated than in a big city. Because of that the administration documents were few, and there were fewer town registers. In the first half of the 16th century Uus-Pärnu kept its land register and the town council notebook, the latter containing also accounts with notes on the expenditure, seldom on revenue. The registers and correspondence in Uus-Pärnu were kept primarily by burgomasters, not by council secretaries as customary in big cities. Modest standards of communal economy and administration, keeping the jobs in the town council less differentiated, was another peculiarity of a small town. The city government of Uus-Pärnu like that in Tallinn or Tartu included mostly merchants. But there were exceptions, aldermen with the background of an artisan or nobility. The so-to-say more open character of the city government was again distinctive of a small town. The development of financial and market economy at the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the Early Modern Age set new demands to the town government. As administration asked now for greater bureaucratic expertise, first men with legal education could become members of the Uus-Pärnu town government in the first half of the 16th century. Clerks that had worked for the Livonian Order or the Saare-Lääne Bishop constitute a new group of go-ahead persons eligible by their education or service for inclusion in the Uus-Pärnu elite or even the town government that was no longer strictly for those marked by their birth and class. This testifies to the fact that the new social mobility and diversification of social strata characteristic of the Early Modern Age holds good also in Livonia.

The population of a small town was less organized and less differentiated. A professional organization of Uus-Pärnu was the Company of Merchants (mentioned first in 1474) including local merchants, shopmen from abroad and seamen staying in the town. The company was founded probably at the beginning of the 15th century. Compared to Tallinn, the elder's position in the merchants' guild of Uus-Pärnu was not as high: it was not a prerequisite of getting a position in the town council. All the records we have confirm that there was no umbrella guild for craftsmen in Uus-Pärnu prior to the Reformation, and probably prior to the Livonian War neither. As to the corporations of individual crafts, there are records on the shoemakers' guild only (mentioned first in 1431) but with high probability there had to be also others in the first half of the 16th century. Anyhow, the loose organization of craftsmen is a peculiarity of a small town. Besides there were church guilds with written records preserved for three of them in Uus-Pärnu. Unfortunately there are no data about the membership of the church guilds; probably one of them included also non-Germans. The absence of vocational organizations and their formation in the 16th century only was instrumental in shaping the life-style of the small town. The Middle Age guilds were controlling and regulating not only vocational activities but the entire lives of the professionals. The citizens of a small town were unfamiliar with living and observing the norms fixed in detail by the statutes of professional bodies in a big city. In this regard the life in a small town was freer having perhaps less restrictions and norms fixed in the written form. It can be said that while the life-style of a big city was shaped by professional organizations, in a small town it was done by their absence. At the same time, in the first half of the 16th century a non-German must have found it more difficult to become a citizen of a small than that of a big town. The decisions important for the life in Uus-Pärnu depended on the consent of the community, primarily that of the elders of the Company of Merchants (*unser oldesten*) or, in some cases, of the whole of the company. The absence of

vocational organisations meant that the craftsmen had no institution to represent them in the town government and affect its decisions. However, it is noteworthy that there are records of two aldermen in Uus-Pärnu that came from the class of craftsmen.

The scale and character of the business of a merchant in Uus-Pärnu is principally different from that of a merchant in a big city. The major peculiarity was that a Uus-Pärnu merchant focused his business on the export of agricultural produce of Livonia and so for him the peasant trade was of key significance. The biggest articles of export the merchants sent to West were grain and flax. The principal Western trade partners of Uus-Pärnu in the period were Lübeck and numerous Prussian cities. During the first half of the 16th century the Livonian domestic market was a field of serious competition among big and small towns, the vassals and the officials working for the bishop all wanting to sell their grain and flax to West. The tough competition turned the final years of the Order era a period of decline for trade in Uus-Pärnu. The Uus-Pärnu artisan was producing mostly for the domestic market that could not often guarantee him his living and made him earn his perquisites by brewing beer or speculating. In the first half of the 16th century there were about 25 productive and service handicraft industries in Uus-Pärnu with only shoemakers/tanners having left written records about their vocational guild. The number of different vocational options in Uus-Pärnu is smaller than in the big cities of Livonia but the share of craftsmen in the population of the city is still considerably big. There was no production for foreign market (the situation was in principle the same in the bigger Livonian cities) but this does not imply the poor development of handicraft or its insignificance for the economic life of the town.

Based on the information of the town registers the sum modal family profile in Uus-Pärnu is typical of the pattern prevalent in Europe north of the Alps, i.e. the age of marriage was relatively high for both men and women, and the nuclear, or more frequent, the extended nuclear family included two generations plus servants and maids. In addition the Middle Age and the Early Modern Age town knew another viable form of life and housekeeping seldom met in the countryside – households at the front of which were single or widowed persons. The data in the Uus-Pärnu registers say that every marriage in the town gave birth to approximately 2–3 legal successors that reached adulthood. The average lifetime of a citizen of Uus-Pärnu is due to the absence of statistics difficult to guess while it is remarkable that there were men and women living very long, i.e. 75 years or more. Alongside with legal marriages there were cohabitation partnerships that were not formalized in the first half of the 16th century Uus-Pärnu. In the town there lived the partners and children of many a member of the Order or of Catholic clerics. These partnerships and the children born of them were socially acceptable and highly tolerated in Uus-Pärnu as in Livonia at large. One of the reasons for that could have been the high social status of the Order and the clergymen. The mass violation of the celibacy vow was favoured and justified by the Reformation. Women were responsible for the domestic household providing care for the family but they also had their role in the economy of Uus-Pärnu. Women were cherished as auxiliary labour force in big households where they could earn their living as housekeepers, maids, wet nurses or childminders. There are records of widowed ladies who continued with the business of their husbands or took up their own.

In the early 16th century there were six churches in Uus-Pärnu and at least three religious brotherhoods. It is conspicuous, however, that there was no cloister. There are data from the early 16th century about attempts to found a Franciscan and/or a Dominican monastery but these were turned down by the citizens. A medieval attraction of Uus-Pärnu was not only its market and the port but also the holy relic, the Black Cross. It was preserved in St. Nicholas Church, the destination of local pilgrims. Saints were revered in Uus-Pärnu like in other Livonian towns with no local differences (excluding the presence of the local relic). There were, however, a few general tendencies in the observance of cults like the veneration of St. Anna gaining momentum

during the late Middle Ages throughout Europe. The religious life of Uus-Pärnu was dominated by the German Order as the cults of the saints favoured by the Order (the Virgin Mary, St Barbara) were highly subsidized in Uus-Pärnu. In addition, the Order gave considerable contribution to the relic of the Black Cross. It is also noteworthy that the non-Germans of Uus-Pärnu had their preacher already prior to the Reformation.

There are no doubts that the pivotal axis for the history of Uus-Pärnu in the first half of the 16th century was the Reformation converging not only important ecclesiastical and religious processes but also major social, political and cultural developments in the city. These are the written records of Uus-Pärnu, occasioned by the Reformation, that testify to the significance of the latter: burgomaster Johann van Lynthem put down his memoirs, the register of St. Nicholas church became the town register writing up the rent charges for plots taken over from the church. The key social force of the Reformation in Livonia was its towns, to be more exact, their citizens. The ideas of the new teaching were carried and spread first by a narrow circle of intellectuals, primarily clergymen. The driving force of the Reformation in Uus-Pärnu was also the preacher disseminating the evangelical message. He was supported by the members of the merchants' guild whose pressure appointed him into the employ of St. Nicholas church. The attitudes and principles of merchants favoured saving and minimum taxes paid to the church, restrictions on squander and luxury, and the increase of the town revenue at the cost of the church. The consent by the majority of the Uus-Pärnu citizens was sufficient to secularize the church property. There were about 70 citizens in Uus-Pärnu. Thus the Reformation rested on a very thin but nevertheless the dominant class in the town. The 1525 secularization of the church property did not mean the victory of the evangelical doctrine or of the Lutheran teaching. The purified Word of God and the cheap church was in Uus-Pärnu an outcome of the iconoclast. In other words the Reformation was achieved only through a "ritual process". The iconoclast of Uus-Pärnu was clearly an act of faith, the manifestation of the citizens as there was no property in the church anymore that could be stolen or dispersed. The altars, the pictures and statues of saints were smashed because in the light of the new doctrine these had lost their meaning. In the Uus-Pärnu iconoclast there took part both the upper and the lower classes. The Reformation in Livonia was accompanied by various collisions. A sign of deepened social antagonism in Uus-Pärnu after the iconoclast was the resentment of the people turned against the town council. This conflict, however, was resolved quite quickly, with the Order in the role of the in-between. In 1530s–1540s the artisans of Uus-Pärnu were gradually ousted from more prestigious districts of the town and the merchants moved their company from the so-called artisans' quarters – this can be also seen as a sign of sharp social antagonism in the town. Confessional discords must have been also present but these caused no implacable conflicts in Uus-Pärnu, at least there are no records of them. It is noteworthy that there was no clear confessional conflict with the powers of the Order. This testifies to the changes in the branch of the Livonian Order and shows that the members of the Order remained faithful to their old religion often only formally. The Reformation brought to an end the spiritual supremacy of the Order in Uus-Pärnu but the Order, however, preserved its authority in ecclesiastical matters.

The Reformation made its changes in the corporate organization of the inhabitants of Uus-Pärnu. The church guilds were dispersed and this is what probably triggered the formation of the guild of the craftsmen. The secularization and the changes it brought along were revealed in the statutes of the guilds. There has been preserved the 1588 charter of the Uus-Pärnu merchants' company that is totally void of religious elements. Prayers for the salvation of their deceased comrades were insignificant in the light of the new ideology and in comparison with the teaching of the medieval church. The new ideology changed many rituals accompanying the life of a citizen. It can be guessed that under the influence of secularization the religious

service attached to the election procedure of the town council was now rather a ceremony of thanksgiving than that asking for blessing for the successful election. First and foremost, however, the Reformation in Uus-Pärnu changed its religious life and church organization. It meant first the imposition of the so-called economy regime or the annihilation of small temples: after the 1525/1526 events only St. Nicholas Church of the former six churches was still working. It had also changed a lot, and not only because of the fire: there were no side altars, no services at them, instead of the former six priests there were now only two pastors, the expensive candles were not burning round-the clock, there was no image worship, the holy relic, the Black Cross, had lost its former meaning, the position of the clergymen had changed. This all resulted in the “cheap” church without luxury and its admiration, and with everything testifying to the importance of the Word. The Protestant reformers wanted to redirect attention to the Word, thereby replacing sight as the privileged sense with hearing. The course of the Reformation and its impact on Uus-Pärnu illustrates vividly that the Reformation in Livonia concerned not only religion but also social, cultural, etc changes bringing along in its core secularization and separation from the established system of the traditional medieval ideology. No doubt, it was the most important factor before the Livonian War affecting the politics and the culture, the private and the public spheres in Livonia.

Analysis of the application of the results of the doctoral thesis

With the exception of its small population, it would be difficult to point at the one specific trait characterizing the small Livonian town at the late Middle and the Early Modern Age. As a result of the present research one can name as essential criteria the underdeveloped infrastructure, the great influence of the landlord, the uncomplicated and undifferentiated nature of the town management, and the minimum corporate organization of its inhabitants. It would be wrong, however, to say that in a small town everything was just poorer and simpler than in a city; more progressive and profitable for the research would be to depart from the position that the life in a small town was in many fields different, organized in another way. Moreover, it was not in every field where the small town was so-to-say lagging behind. In a small town the career options were often wider: the town council included both men of noble birth and of artisan background, former clerks for the Order or for the bishop, and just those favoured by the landlord. The study of the history of small towns gives us not only richer and more versatile knowledge about the town history but enables also to have a more comprehensive picture about the society and its operational mechanisms together with the social, cultural, etc development in Livonia.

The history of Uus-Pärnu in the first half of the 16th century is a part of the history of the Reformation in Livonia giving an idea about the introduction of the evangelical doctrine in Livonia. One of the most intriguing aspects of the Livonian Reformation is the speed on which it reached and spread in Livonia. The phenomenon is not easy to explain and it would be naïve to suppose that a closer look at the events in Uus-Pärnu can reveal the one and the only truth. But it can give additional possibilities for interpretation. Probably there was no single cause for the quick and triumphal progress of the Reformation dependent as it is on versatile factors. First, of significance is what had happened in Livonia prior the Reformation, i.e. the mental atmosphere that surrounded and shaped the minds of the potential performers/receivers of the Reformation ideas. Here one cannot bypass the influence of the Renaissance and the humanist ideas. The Reformation was an aspect of the more general mental “awakening” initiated by the Renaissance. The impact of the latter concerned in Livonia not only the high culture and the arts. There are only a few style samples of the Renaissance art in

Uus-Pärnu: one stone window jamb, a few gravestones and the gable of a court-hall, all of them perished by today. At the same time, the fortifications of Uus-Pärnu followed the principles prevalent in the early 16th century Renaissance defence constructions. The Renaissance ideology can be intuited in the daily life of the citizens. The levels of housekeeping and living conditions in Uus-Pärnu were in harmony with the general progress of consumption habits depending in their turn on the increased role of comfort and personality in the Europe of the late Middle and the Early Modern Age. The reform attempts of the medieval church and the critique of the Holy Seat were probably familiar fields for the Uus-Pärnu elite. It must have been this, with high probability, which made in the early 16th century the citizens oppose the idea of having a monastery of their own in the town. Their familiarity with the subjects important and concerning the social and religious life in the Christendom was an outcome of tight communication beyond Livonia. Of greatest importance in shaping the ideological convictions and enabling lively discussion and dispute were no doubt the universities. At the late Middle Ages merchants were more and more willing to invest in education. There are data about many a merchant of Uus-Pärnu that had attended a university. During the Early Modern Age the European cities gradually developed a new type of their elite characterized also by university education.

The scanty written records turn the research into the history of the small towns in Livonia in the Middle and Early Modern Age into a complicated task. The missing records of the town government eliminate the chance of having a compact and comprehensive survey of the population of the town. Fragments are not reliable to compose a unified picture enabling general statements. Considering the limited nature of archival sources on the history of small towns any study is of principal significance: once we have as comprehensive a picture of a small town as possible, we can interpret the fragments of another small town more easily shaping of them a whole. Relying on the practices of big towns, the risks of misinterpreting the circumstances and phenomena of a small town are great. Moreover, the studies of small towns shed light on the important and central themes of the history of medieval Livonia, like the intercity communication and the contacts between the town and the other estates, the vassals, the Livonian Order and the bishops.

LIIVIMAA VÄIKELINN VARASE UUSAJA LÄVEL. UURIMUS UUS-PÄRNU AJALOOST 16. SAJANDI ESIMESEL POOLEL

Kokkuvõte

Eesti territooriumil oli keskajal üheksa linnaprivileegidega linna, neist kaks suurt – Tallinn, Tartu – ülejäänud väikesed: Uus- ja Vana-Pärnu, Haapsalu, Viljandi, Narva, Rakvere ning Paide. Arvuline ülekaal pole ajaloo uurijaid siiski piisavalt motiveerinud tegelema spetsiaalselt väikelinnade ajalooaga. Nagu Riia, nii oli ka Tallinna ja Tartu puhul tegu mõjukate Liivimaa riiklust kujundanud teguritega ning neil oli oluline roll maa poliitilises, majandus- ja kultuurielus, seda eriti tänu nende kuulumisele Hansa Liitu. Nii on leitud küllalt kaalukaid põhjuseid, miks uurida suuri linnu. Väikelinnade ajalugu on peetud vähem huvitavaks või oluliseks. Ometi tähendaks väikelinnade, olgu siis linnaprivileegidega või privileegideta (nagu Lihula, Keila, Valga, Kuressaare jt), ignoreerimine Liivimaa linnakultuuri olulist vaesestamist. Veelgi enam, Eesti ala *resp.* Liivimaa väikelinn on oluline peatükk Euroopa urbaniseerumise ja linnakultuuri ajalooos. Väikelinn vajab Eesti ajaloo uurimuses senisest suuremat tähelepanu ja seda mitmel põhjusel. Ilmselt pole võimalik väikelinnu kaasamata saada õiget ettekujutust Eesti ala *resp.* Liivimaa kesk- ja varase uusaja linnast ja linnakultuurist. Kui väikelinnade uurimine piirdub vaid nende poliitilise mõjuvõimu tühisuse ja väikese majandusliku tähtsuse nentimisega, siis on see selgelt ühekülgne ja piiratud lähenemine ning kindlasti ei rahulda enam tingimustes, kus Euroopa teiste piirkondade väikelinnade ajaloo uurimine jõudsalt edeneb.

Käesoleva töö uurimisobjekt on Liivimaa väikelinn Uus-Pärnu 16. sajandi esimesel poolel. Teadlikult on piiratud ainult Uus-Pärnuga. Pärnu jõe vastaskaldal asunud piiskopilinn, Vana-Pärnu, on vaatluse alt kõrvale jäetud, rõhutamaks muu hulgas isegi ajaloolaste hulgas ununema kipuvat tõsiasja, et keskajal oli nende puhul tegu kahe omaette linnaga. Antud uurimuse eesmärk ei ole siiski selgitada, miks ühest või teisest linnast keskaja Liivimaal sai väike ja mitte suur linn, vaid uurida lähemalt väikelinna funktsioneerimist ning tema osa Liivimaa arengus 16. sajandi esimesel poolel, ühtlasi anda mõistele “väikelinn” mõnevõrra tuumakam sisu, kui seda on lihtsalt väikearvulise elanikkonnaga või kohalike linnade hierarhias n-ö madalamale hierarhiapulgal kuulunud linn.

Töö ajaline raam on üldjoones 16. sajandi esimene pool (1500–1558/62). Käesoleva töö aja- raamistik lubab seega küsida võimalike varase uusaja algusele viitavate muutuste järele Uus-Pärnus. Samas see, milline oli konkreetsemalt Liivimaa ühiskonna tee keskajast varasesse uus- aega, ehk milliste küsimuste lahendamiseks tuli vastastikku seista, alles ootab eraldi põh- jalikku uurimist ning mõtestamist.

Käesolev väitekiri koosneb seitsmest peatükist, mille teemad on suuresti määranud olemas- olev allikmaterjal, s.t vaatluse all on valdkonnad, mille kohta pakuvad Uus-Pärnu linnaraa- matud kõige põhjalikumad informatsiooni. Teisest küljest on teemade valikul olnud taotluseks haarata uurimusse võimalikult palju linnaelu tahke. Eelistatavalt on tähelepanu pööratud linna igapäevaelu aspektidele, nagu linnakodaniku elamu ja elukeskkond, perekond, naise positsioon linnas jms. Mõistagi ei ole pretendeeritud ammendada kõiki Uus-Pärnu vanema ajaloo võimalikke teemasid. Et käsitlus ei jääks liiga kitsastesse raamidesse, on Uus-Pärnut võrreldud Liivimaa teiste väike- või suurte linnadega. Ainult piisavalt laiapõhjaline uurimus laseb välja selgitada ja sõnastada Liivimaa väikelinna ning väikelinliku eluviisi peamised iseloomulikud jooned.

Uurimuse üks oluline eesmärk on ka demonstreerida linna-, peaauglikult pãrusraamatute potentsiaali linnaajaloo uurimisel. Et need on olulised linna sotsiaal-topograafia kãsitlemisel, sellele on korduvalt tãhelepanu juhitud ning see tuleb ka raamatute iseloomust selgemalt vãlja. Teatavasti kanti pãrusraamatusse linnas toimunud kinnisvaratehingud. Rohkem aga vajab esiletoomist ja rõhutamist, et need raamatud sisaldavad hinnalist isikuloolist ja demograafilist informatsiooni, nagu teateid abiellumiste, surmade, laste arvu, eluea jms kohta. Selliste andmete kokkukogumine ja analüüs lubab teha jãreldusi (vãike)linna elanikkonna koosseisu, demograafilise situatsiooni jms kohta. Tõsi küll, linnaraamatutes kajastub paratamatult vaid osa linnaelanikest. Rae asjaajamispaaberitesse ja korrespondentsi eksisid harva ära lihtsad linnaelanikud – palgatõõlised, sulased, kãsitõõsellid, teenijatõõdrukud jne. Selles suhtes on need allikad mõistagi puudulikud, kuid ikkagi parimad, mis on olemas: nendes kajastub suhteliselt suur osa linnaelanikest, suhteliselt pika aja vãltel. Kãesoleva tõõ uurimuslikult kõõige tãhtsam eesmärk ongi panna pealtnãha ühekõõlgse allikmaterjali põõhjal kokku võõimalikult hea ja tãhenduslik pilt Liivimaa vãikelinnast, sealsetest inimestest, nende igapãevasest elust ja tegevusest umbes poole sajandi vãltel. Uus-Pãrnu linna- ja pãrusraamatu sissekanded kãtkuvad endas informatsiooni rae tõõst, kinnisvaratehingutest jms ebaisikulist, aga kogu selle materjali “taga” on sajad linnaelanikud, nende elu ja inimsuhted, mida raamatute sissekanded tahtmatult ning paraku ka juhuslikult ja fragmentaarselt peegeldavad. Vaadelda just sellise informatsiooni “vãljanõõppimise” ja analüüsamise abil vãikelinna elu n-õ seestpoolt, inimese tasandilt, ongi antud uurimuse kõõige peamistem ja tãhtsam eesmärk.

Liivimaa vãikelinna hiliskesk- ja varase uusaja algul ühte kindlat iseloomustavat tunnust on raske vãlja tuua, vãlja arvatud linna elanikkonna vãike arv. Kãesoleva uurimistõõ tulemusena saab sisulisematest kriteeriumitest nimetada veel vãhe arenenud infrastruktuuri, maahãrra suurt mõõju, linna asjaajamise vãhest komplitseeritust ja diferentseeritust, elanikkonna suhteliselt nõõrka korporatiivset organiseerumist. Oleks aga vããr arvata, et vãikelinnas oli kõõik lihtsalt kesistem ja tühistem kui suures. Tunduvalt edasiviivam ja uurimuslikult tulusam on lãhtuda seisukõõhast, et vãikelinna elu oli paljudes asjades teistsugune, teistmõõdi korraldatud. Pealegi mitte kõõiges ei olnud vãikelinn n-õ mahajããja rollis. Vãikelinnas olid sageli avaramad sotsiaalse karjããri võõimalused, nimelt leidsid seal tee linnavalitsusse aadli soost ja kãsitõõlise pãritolu isikud, samuti endised ordu- võõi piiskopiametnikud võõi lihtsalt maahãrra soosikud. Vãikelinnade ajaloo uurimine mitte ainult ei rikasta ega mitmekesista teadmisi linnaajaloost, vaid see aitab luua terviklikumat pilti Liivimaa ühiskonnast ja selle toimimisest, samuti Liivimaal aset leidnud sotsiaalsetest, kultuurilistest jm arengutest.

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