

***RÄISAKU MAARAHVAS?***  
**ESTONIAN TRACES IN CENTRAL  
AND SOUTHERN LATGALE**

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**Introduction**

Research into the (South) Estonian heritage of Latvia reached a new pinnacle at the end of 2021 with the publication of the first English-language book-length work on the South Estonian language islands – a special issue of the *Journal of Estonian and Finno-Ugric Linguistics*. As two articles in this volume showed, Latvia likely had other South Estonian (Vaba 2021) or at least Finnic (Stafecka 2021) communities beyond those, which have been documented. The current article is a pilot study discussing possible Estonian traces in placenames and in population information found in the 1772 Rēzekne Eldership Revision List, which point to a potential Estonian presence in an area primarily located in modern-day Rēzekne, Varakļāni, and Preiļi municipalities of the Latgale region of eastern Latvia. Figure 1 shows the location of these municipalities (labeled and highlighted in grey) as well as other neighboring municipalities (labeled but not highlighted), which are mentioned in this article.

Many questions remain unanswered and, indeed, even unasked, but nevertheless it is important to tell the story of the patterns that can be identified in maps and other historical records. As Rāisaku is the historical Estonian name for the city of Rēzekne, the name *Rāisaku maarahvas* – the Rēzekne Estonians – is used to refer to any Estonians in areas in or near administrative units historically centering on Rēzekne.

After describing the placenames at the focus of this study, their location and patterns in their distribution are shown on maps. The article then discusses the extent to which Estonians are mentioned in the 1772 Rēzekne Eldership Revision List and provides some thoughts on directions for future work.



Figure 1. The municipalities of Latvia with the core Rāisaku maarahvas area marked in grey<sup>1</sup>

## Background and Methods

This study was motivated by a question I had since the beginning of my work on the Lutsi community in 2012. Korjus (2004) gives a list of Lutsi surnames: Buls, Mekša [elsewhere, Mekšs], Germovs, Jakimenko, Jarošenko, Unda, Paiders, Zeps, Kalva, Poikans, Soikans<sup>2</sup>. As I recorded the family trees of Lutsi descendants, I encountered many of these surnames. Buls and Mekšs were quite common, and I also encountered some of the others – Germovs (and variants like Germans, Germs, Hermans), Jakimenko, and Jarošenko (Balodis 2020). However, there were some, such as Poikāns, Soikāns, and Zeps, which seemed to never occur in Lutsi families, which made me wonder – who are the families that have these surnames if not Lutsis?

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<sup>1</sup> Map created using: <https://data.gov.lv/dati/lv/dataset/atr/resource/0e01f4f3-7709-4467-a8c0-5be8210df14f>.

<sup>2</sup> The final two surnames are often also written with length marked on /a/ as Poikāns and Soikāns.

Over time I also became interested in other names not mentioned in the literature specifically connected with the Lutsis such as *Puisāns*<sup>3</sup>, a Latgalian surname considered to have a likely Finnic or specifically Estonian source (Mežs 2017), and several names linked to historical Latvian ethnonyms meaning ‘Estonian’ – *Ikaunieks*, *Igovens*.

I used the Placename Database maintained by the Latvian Geospatial Information Agency (Latvijas ģeotelpiskā informācijas aģentūra; henceforth, LGIA) to search for villages and farmsteads with these names, in order to see if they clustered anywhere in Latvia. The final list of names selected for this search was: *Ikaunieks*, *Igovens*, *Poikāns*, *Puisāns*.

I excluded *Soikans* ~ *Soikāns*, *Zeps*, and *Igaunis* – the modern Latvian ethnonym meaning ‘Estonian’. *Soikans* is my maternal grandfather’s surname and I knew from earlier searches that there are no villages or farmsteads with this name in Latvia, though one of the Lutsi villages noted by Kallas (1894) has a similar name – Sokāni. The etymology of *Zeps* – and therefore its link to Estonians in Latvia – is unclear. Mežs (2017: 304) writes that *Zeps* is a dialect form of *Jāzeps* (*Jezups*) ‘Joseph’ but that it may also have a Finnic etymology relating to Estonian *sepp* ‘smith’. *Igaunis* is mentioned in discussing the cluster of placenames shown in Figure 6, but since it occurs in placenames across Latvia, it is not otherwise discussed in this article.

The LGIA Placename Database contains – as of November 2022 in its publicly available 8th edition – 110,600 entries on placenames found in the Republic of Latvia. These include not only names of villages, natural features, and landmarks, but also farmsteads and extinct villages. The location of each placename is given in its current municipality (*novads*) and parish (*pagasts*) along with its latitude and longitude coordinates and – for settlements – the current population. Some entries also include the alternate and/or historical names of places as well as names in other languages or regional varieties indigenous to Latvia (e.g., Livonian, Latgalian).

This study has two main parts. First, I searched for the first few letters of each name, to get all results that include that name. So, searching for „ikau” yields not only „Ikaunieki” village, but also the similarly named

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<sup>3</sup> See Table 1 for etymological information on these surnames.

„Ikaunīki” village as well as a hill – „Ikaunīku kalns” – and cemetery – „Ikaunīku kapi”.

In the second part of this paper, I approach the history of the *Rāisaku maarahvas* from a different perspective. I used the source that was immediately available to me – a searchable version of the 1772 Rēzekne Eldership Revision List (henceforth, 1772 list) published online (<https://lat-galesrevizijas.wordpress.com/>) by historian Agris Dzenis with the support of the Latvian Culture Capital Foundation. A future version of the current study should examine not only other revision lists, censuses, and population records, but also the original 1772 list (or images of it).

The 1772 list is written in Russian; the online version also includes commentary written by Dzenis in Latvian on the history of the revision list and some of the manors. Dzenis notes that the revision list – which records information on the manors of Rēzekne Eldership (Latvian: Rēzeknes stārastija), their residents and the villages they inhabited – was compiled from September to December 1772 following the incorporation of Polish Livonia (Latvian: Inflantija) into the Russian Empire.

Dzenis remarks that Estonians are identified with the ethnonym *čuhna* (чухна). In a few records, this ethnonym was spelled as *čehna* (чехна). Thus, I searched for the fragments „чух” as well as „хна” to find all possible versions of these ethnonyms and those associated with them in the revision list. Then, I also searched for the first few letters of the surnames associated with the villages in the first part of the paper as well as two common Lutsi surnames – Buls and Mekšs – in order to see whether these appear in the 1772 list.

## **South Estonian habitation in Latvia**

Several South Estonian-speaking communities have lived in northern and eastern Latvia. Among the most well-known are two of the South Estonian language islands – the Lutsis of the Ludza region and the Leivus near Ilzene. The Lutsi language island is located close to the third South Estonian language island – Kraasna – centering on the city of Krasnogorodsk in Russia just over 30 km from the northeasternmost Lutsi villages. Additionally, South Estonian speakers have also lived in northern Vidzeme near the present-day border with Estonia, for example, near Rūjiena (Estonian:

Ruhja) and Veclaicene (Estonian: Vana-Laitsna). Figure 2 shows the location of the language islands and the South Estonian speech area in Estonia along with other regional languages.

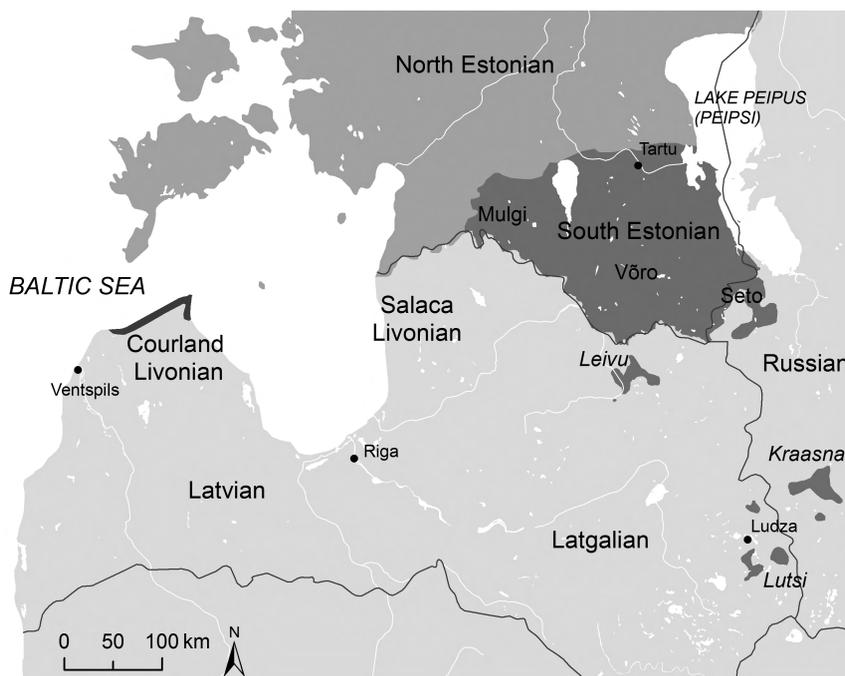
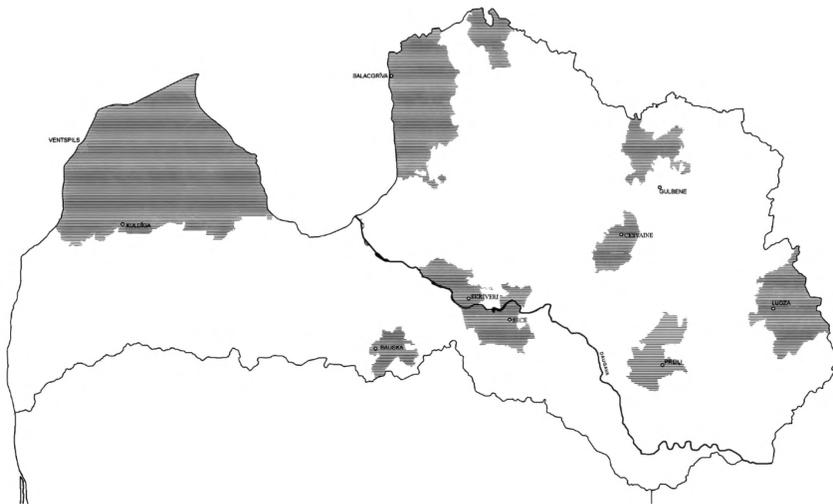


Figure 2. The South Estonian speech area and language islands with regional languages (map from Norvik et al. (2021), map by Timo Rantanen, BEDLAN)

The language islands have been studied since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century beginning with the work of Oskar Kallas on Lutsi and Kraasna (Kallas 1894, 1903) and Heikki Ojansuu (1912) a few decades later on Lutsi and Leivu. More recently, the history and linguistic characteristics of the language islands are discussed in Pajusalu (2014, 2020), Balodis, Pajusalu (2021). The history of the Lutsis is described in Korjuss (2017), while their origins and those of other Estonians in eastern and central Latvia are explored in Braidaks (2007 [1981]) and Lozda (2022). The features of Kraasna are described in Weber (2021) and the present state of the Lutsi community is discussed in Balodis (2019, 2021). Estonian-Latvian language contacts are studied in Vaba (1997, 2011).

The Estonian presence in Latvia extends beyond the areas where the use of South Estonian varieties has been documented. As Vaba (2021) observes in his study of South Estonian traces in Vidzeme found in oral tradition, written accounts, and placenames, there is evidence of South Estonian settlement not only in areas adjacent to the Leivus in northeastern Vidzeme, but also in Bērzaune, Lazdona, Mārciena, and Barkava parishes in the southern part of Madona municipality (see Figure 7 for a map showing their location).

There also exist traces of a possible historical Finnic presence in parts of Latvia where no Finnic-speaking community has been documented. In her study of Finnic-like features in Latvian subdialects, Stafecka (2021) found such features not only in areas known to have historically been home to Finnic speakers – the Courland and Salaca Livonian areas in northern Courland and coastal Vidzeme, the southern Mulgi area near Rūjiena, the Krevin Votic area near Bauska, and the Lutsi and Leivu language islands – but also in several other areas not connected with historically documented Finnic-speaking communities (see Figure 3).



*Figure 3. Possible areas of Finnic influence in Latvian (map from Stafecka (2021), map created by Stafecka, its digital version created by Markus-Narvila.)*

The area of possible Finnic influence on the lower course of the Daugava River may be connected with the Livonians that historically lived along the Daugava, but the other two areas – one primarily south of Cesvaine in southeastern Vidzeme and one mostly north of Preiļi in southern Latgale – are of interest for the current study. The area of possible Finnic influence near Cesvaine is near Barkava parish where Vaba (2021) identifies evidence of historical South Estonian habitation. This area is close to at least one of the placenames discussed below – villages named *Ikaunieki* in Ošupe, Murmastiene, and Dekšāre parishes, which neighbor Barkava parish to its northeast, south, and southeast. The other area around Preiļi is near Riebiņi and Silmala parishes where several individuals identified as Estonians appear in the 1772 list.

## Villages

This section shows the location of the villages based on the surnames selected for the placename search: *Ikaunieks*, *Igovens*, *Poikāns*, *Puisāns*. The etymology of these surnames is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Surname etymology

Surname	Etymology (Mežs 2017)
Igovens	Possibly connected to the ethnonym <i>igaunis</i> ‘Estonian’.
Ikaunieks	Possibly connected to the ethnonym <i>igaunis</i> ‘Estonian’.
Poikāns	Probably based on a word of Finnic origin, cf. Est. <i>poika</i> ‘boy, youth’
Puisāns	Based on a word of Finnic origin, cf. Est. <i>poiss</i> ‘boy’.

Table 2 shows the search results for each surname fragment in the LGIA Placename Database. A description<sup>4</sup> of each placename is given in parentheses. The location of each placename is given in its present-day administrative division along with its latitude/longitude. No placenames were found

<sup>4</sup> These descriptions are given in the LGIA Placename Database search results. The corresponding Latvian terms in the results are: *mazciems* ‘small village’, *mūsdienu kapsēta* ‘modern cemetery’, *skrajciems* ‘scattered village, scattered settlement’, *vēsturiskā kapsēta* ‘historical cemetery’, *viensēta* ‘farmstead’.

based on *Igovens* (i.e., searching for „igov”). The search for „ikau” also yielded several placenames connected with the surname *Bikaunieks*. However, its etymology is not the same as that of *Ikaunieks*. Mežs (2017: 76) states that *Bikaunieks* may originate from a nickname and gives Russian *byk* (бык) ‘bull’ for comparison.

Table 2. Placenames connected to the surnames Ikaunieks, Poikāns, Puisāns

Search index	Relevant Search Results (description of result)	Municipality, Parish	Lat/Long Coordinates
ikau	Ikaunieka kaps (historical cemetery)	Ķekava, Baldone	56° 57' 14" N 27° 41' 15" E
	Ikaunieki (scattered village)	Varakļāni, Murmastiene	56° 38' 48" N 26° 43' 29" E
	Ikaunieki (scattered village)	Madona, Ošupe	56° 44' 41" N 26° 43' 26" E
	Ikaunīki (scattered village)	Rēzekne, Dekšāre	56° 37' 08" N 26° 51' 46" E
	Ikaunīku kalns (hill)	Rēzekne, Dekšāre	56° 37' 15" N 26° 51' 46" E
	Ikaunīku kapi (modern cemetery)	Rēzekne, Dekšāre	56° 37' 19" N 26° 51' 43" E
poik	Poikas (scattered village)	Rēzekne, Dricāni	56° 40' 24" N 27° 15' 37" E
puis	Puisāni (small village)	Rēzekne, Gaigalava	56° 42' 51" N 27° 02' 41" E
	Puisāni (scattered village)	Varakļāni, Varakļāni	56° 38' 16" N 26° 44' 58" E
	Puisāni (scattered village)	Rēzekne, Ilzeskalns	56° 39' 20" N 27° 25' 12" E
	Puisēni (farmstead)	Jelgava, Līvberze	56° 39' 20" N 23° 29' 44" E
	Puisēni (farmstead)	Varakļāni, Murmastiene	56° 38' 54" N 26° 41' 12" E

Several of the locations shown in Table 2 lie outside of Latgale and adjacent parts of Vidzeme. „Ikaunieka kaps” in Ķekava municipality is the grave of astronomer Jānis Ikaunieks, the first director of the Baldone Observatory,

who is buried on the observatory grounds. *puisēns* (as opposed to *Puisāns*) is a diminutive form of *puisīis* ‘boy’ in Standard Latvian. Thus, there may be other reasons for the existence of a „Puisēni” village in Jelgava municipality and its presence in Varakļāni municipality may indicate that it is a newer name due to *puisēns* being Standard Latvian not Latgalian.

Figure 4 charts the location of places shown in Table 2. Mērdzene – the town at the center of the northernmost Lutsi villages – and Krasnogorodsk – the town at the center of the nearby Kraasna language island – are given on the right for reference. It is striking that these places cluster so specifically in this part of Latvia and are at approximately the same latitude as Mērdzene – and therefore also the northernmost Lutsi villages. However, it is important to keep in mind that just as an individual bearing a name such as *Ikaunieks* is not necessarily Estonian, villages can also have names like *Ikaunieki* and *Poikas* and have no historical connection to Estonians. An alternate explanation could be that these are places named after families with this surname in this region. Thus, it is important to look for other evidence suggesting that these placenames could be indicative of a historical Estonian presence there.

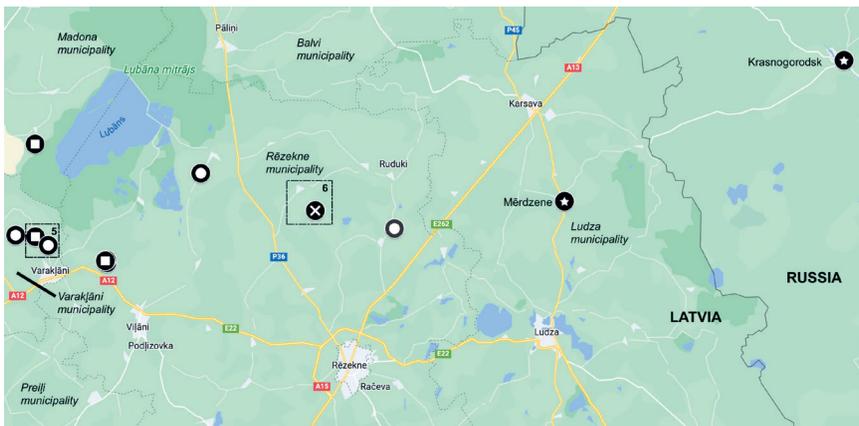


Figure 4. Villages in Latvia named Ikaunieki (square), Puisāni (circle), Poikas (x) shown with Mērdzene (star) and Krasnogorodsk (star); the areas shown in Figures 5 and 6 are identified in the squares marked 5 and 6<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Figures 4, 5, and 6 were created using Google Maps.

Potential evidence for the significance of these village names is shown by two intriguing clusters of other placenames around two of the villages shown in Figure 4. The first of these is shown in Figure 5 where, first of all, *Ikaunieki* village (Varakļāni municipality, Murmastiene parish) is located just to the northwest of *Puisāni* village. To its north is another village – *Sārnas*. Vaba (2018) comments on the corresponding surname *Sārna* (as well as on the related surnames *Sarna*, *Sarnis*, *Sarns*, *Sarnovičs*) observing that it may be etymologically connected to South Estonian *saarnõpuu* ‘ash (tree)’. Due to this possible etymology for *Sārnas* combined with its proximity to *Ikaunieki* and *Puisāni*, these three villages form an interesting cluster of placenames possibly connected to potential Estonian habitation in this area.

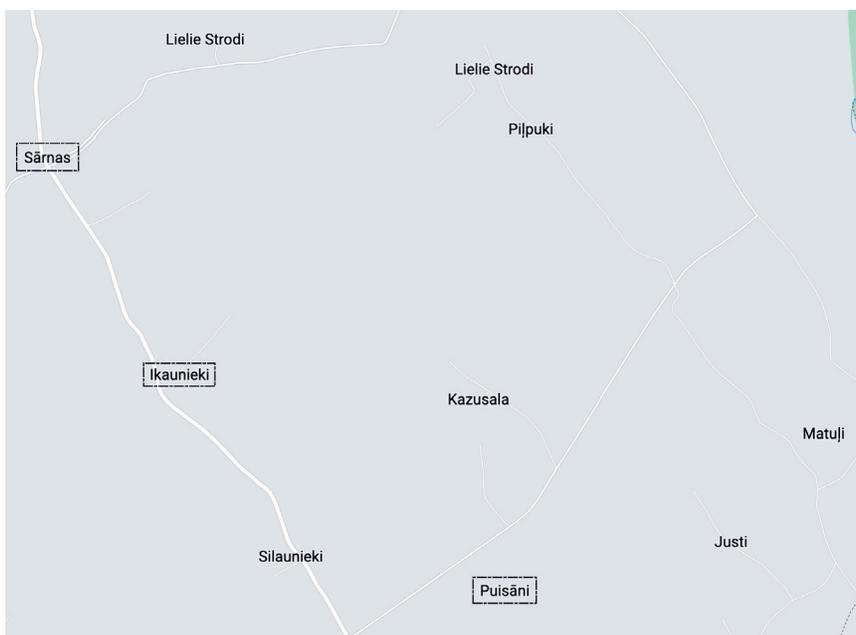


Figure 5. *Ikaunieki* located near *Puisāni*, but also near *Sārnas*

Perhaps relatedly, in his *Placenames of Latgola*, Zeps (1984: 445) groups *Sārnas* village with several other similar placenames in a single entry as *Sārņi*. There he notes that *Sārņi* village in Nautrēni parish – located in northeastern Rēzekne municipality and also mentioned in Table 4 and

Figure 7 of the current study – appears in the 1738 Cadastre of Marnauza or Rēzekne in Polish as *Sarn albo Czuderow* ‘Sarn or Czuderow’. Mežs (2017: 98) gives the Polish surname *Czudor* as a possible etymology for the contemporary Latvian surname *Čuders* (also *Čudars*, *Čudors*). Vaba (2018), however, writes that these surnames, as well as *Čodars* and *Čodors*, are likely of ethnonymic origin and are connected with Estonian *tšuud* and Russian *čud'* (чудь) – an ethnonym historically used in Russian to refer to various Finnic peoples including the Estonians.

Figure 6 shows another intriguing cluster. First of all, *Poikas* village (Rēzekne municipality, Dricāni parish) is located quite close to *Igauņi* village. There are some other potentially interesting placenames also located nearby – *Piziki* and *Esti* villages. *Piziki* resembles Estonian *pisike* ‘small’, while *Esti* resembles an alternate Latvian name for Estonia – *Estija*. Vaba (2018) also notes the similarity of the surname *Pizāns* to *pisike* ‘small’. There are placenames in Latvia named *Pizāni* and *Pīzāni*; this includes one of the Lutsi villages in the eastern part of their historical territory near Nirza.



Figure 6. Poikas village located near Igauņi, Piziki, and Esti villages

However, *Esti* could have a different unrelated source. Mežs (2017: 113) gives the etymology for *Esta* – a surname from this particular area – as: „A rare surname from Ratinīki in Dricāni parish. Possibly connected to the dialect form *este* ‘tail’.” Nevertheless, whether one includes *Esti* or not, the cluster formed by *Poikas*, *Igauņi*, and *Piziki* villages is itself noteworthy.

### **Evidence of Estonian habitation in the 1772 Rēzekne Eldership Revision List**

In the previous section, I charted the location of placenames relating to the surnames either potentially derived from an Estonian source (*Poikāns*, *Puisāns*) or ethnonyms historically used for Estonians in Latvian (*Ikaunieks*, *Igovens*), and then explored how these placenames cluster with other placenames, which also possibly stem from an Estonian source. In this section, I approach the issue of historical Estonian habitation in the greater Rēzekne region from a different direction by searching the online version of the 1772 Rēzekne Eldership Revision List for fragments of the ethnonym *čuhna* (чухна) to find any individuals or families specifically identified as Estonian. I then search for fragments of the surnames associated with the villages discussed in the previous section. I also search for the typical Lutsi surnames *Buls* and *Mekšs* to see if there are any traces of these in the Rēzekne area in the 18th century.

The 1772 list is divided by manor with individuals and families listed with the community in which they lived. Information such as family relationship (son, wife, etc.), occupation, disability, age, and other biographical data is also listed. In general, the village names in the revision list do not correspond to modern village names, but as the location of the manors is known relative to modern parishes, the general area in which these villages were located is clear. Due to some variations in spelling encountered in the revision lists, I give the village names as they appear in the 1772 list and present them with a Latin transliteration.

Searching for fragments of *čuhna* (чухна) in the revision list yielded some intriguing results. The most interesting of the surnames encountered in the 1772 list is that of *Matis"* (Матисъ) *Umelka* in *Zvjani* village at *Ribiniški* manor – located in present-day *Riebiņi* (*Preiļi* municipality, *Riebiņi* parish); see Figure 7 for a map showing the location of *Riebiņi*

parish. Umelka's link with Estonia is established not only because he is listed as Estonian and a newcomer (чухна пришелець),<sup>66</sup> but also through his name. His surname (in the form *Ummelk*) is still found in southern Estonia today and the individuals who have this name (at least as far as an online search can reveal) come from around Haanja in Rõuge parish. In Estonian, the surname *Ummelk* originates from the first name *Omelian*, which is derived from Russian *Omel'jan* (Омельян) (Saar 2016: 49).

Another interesting result – also from Ribiniški manor – is a village identified in the revision list as *Mulciki Čuknovo* (Мулцики Чукново) – seemingly, 'Estonian Mulciki'. This village had two individuals identified as Estonians (*чехна* [sic]) who have the surnames *Pop'* (Попъ) and *Koval* (Ковал). The full list of surnames encountered in this village is: *Leitan* (Лейтан), *Daukšta* (Даукшта), *Muk'* (Мукъ), *Guljan* (Гулян), *Koval* (Ковал), *Abricki* (Абрички), *Pizan* (Пизан), *Pop'* (Попъ). It may only be a coincidence, but two of these surnames – *Abricki* and *Pizan* – appear among the village names of the eastern Lutsi villages – *Abricki* and *Pīzāni*. As noted in the discussion preceding Figure 6, the surname *Pizāns*, in turn, is connected by Vaba (2018) to Estonian *pisike* 'small'.

Table 3 gives the names of the individuals identified as Estonian in the 1772 list along with any relevant descriptors, and their home village and manor as well as their modern municipality and parish location. The only exception is Čedor Čehna; however, he is included as his surname is the same as the variation or misspelling of *čuhna* seen for some Estonians in the revision list. All of the individuals shown in Table 3 are listed with families (wives, children, etc.) in the 1772 list. This as well as the fact that ethnicity is not listed for all people may mean that there were more Estonians there at that time than only these seven men.

Another interesting observation is that most of these men are identified as newcomers (пришелець). The men from Malta and Varakļāni manors are identified specifically as newcomers from Sweden, i.e., the lands of Vidzeme (also southern Estonia) formerly controlled by Sweden. Agris Dzenis defines in his glossary of the online 1772 list that a *пришелець стариннои* is an old newcomer, i.e., arrived before 1761. Thus, it may

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<sup>66</sup> All translations of Russian terms in this article are my English translations of the Latvian translations provided for these terms by Agris Dzenis in the online version of the 1772 list.

be noteworthy that none of the individuals identified as Estonians in the revision list are listed as ‘old newcomers’, which could place an approximate date on their arrival in the area.

*Table 3. Individuals identified as Estonian (чухна/чехна) in the 1772 list*

<b>Name (Age)</b>	<b>Village</b>	<b>Manor</b>	<b>Municipality, Parish</b>
Čedor Čehna (50) Чедор Чехна newcomer (пришелець)	Peneniški Пененишки	Ribiniški	Preiļi, Riebiņi
Matis' Umelka (49) Матисъ Умелка Estonian (чухна) newcomer (пришелець)	Zvjani Звяни	Ribiniški	Preiļi, Riebiņi
Leon' Koval (41) Леонъ Ковал Estonian (чехна)	Mulciki Čukново Мулцики Чукново	Ribiniški	Preiļi, Riebiņi
Ivan' Pop' (42) Ивань Попъ Estonian (чехна)	Mulciki Čukново Мулцики Чукново	Ribiniški	Preiļi, Riebiņi
Nikifor Balicki (50) Никифор Балицки Estonian (чехна) newcomer from Sweden (пришелець из Швецы)	Pigužnevo Пигужнево	Malta	Rēzekne, Sīlmalā
Markel' Balticki (20) Маркель Балитцки Estonian (чухна) newcomer from Sweden (пришелець из Швецы)	Pigužnevo Пигужнево	Malta	Rēzekne, Sīlmalā
Bak' Ermin' (43) Бакъ Ерминъ Estonian (чехна) newcomer from Sweden (пришелець из Швецы)	Oltužu Олтужы	Varakļāni	Varakļāni, Varakļāni

The villages shown in Table 2 do not appear in the revision list. However, the surnames – *Ikaunieks* (Ikavnik', Ikafnik"), *Poika* (Poika), *Puisāns* (Puisan, Puisan') – from which these village names may be derived are found in these records and are shown in Table 4. The surname *Pisan'* (Писань) – i.e., *Pizāns* – was also present in *Dirvany* village. In one of the other households in *Tromany* village there was a man named Andrej Ulbik (Андреи Улбик). In the eastern Lutsi area, this surname – *Uļbiks* – is found in the Lutsi village of Jaunā Slobodka (Lutsi: Lovodina) (p.c. Inta Kušnere). *Uļbiks* is derived from a word meaning ‘potato’ (cf. Latgalian *buļbe* ‘potato’, but dialectally also *uļbiks*). A folk etymology for the common Lutsi surname *Buls* posits that it also is derived from ‘potato’, though Mežs (2017) does not include this among his etymologies for *Buls*.

Table 4. Individuals with the surnames Ikaunieks, Poika, Puisāns in the 1772 list

Name (Age)	Village	Manor	Municipality, Parish
Piter' Ikavnik' (90) Питеръ Икавникъ	Verteljanu Вертеляны	Varakļāni	Varakļāni, Varakļāni
Dedus" Ikavnik' (50) Дедусъ Икавникъ	Verteljanu Вертеляны	Varakļāni	Varakļāni, Varakļāni
Er' Ikafnik" (40) Ерь Икафникъ	Icelniki Ицелники	Varakļāni	Varakļāni, Varakļāni
Er' Ikavnik' (43) Ерь Икавникъ	Buzanu Бузаны	Varakļāni	Varakļāni, Varakļāni
Anč' Poika (40) Анчъ Поика	Kaļjanča Калянча	Sils	?Balvi, ?Bērzpils <sup>7</sup>
Muk" Puisan (30) Мыкъ Пуисан	Tromanu Троманы	Ģaļāni	Rēzekne, Gaigalava
Er' Puisan' (50) Ерь Пуисань	Dirvany Дирваны	Dirvāni	Rēzekne, Gaigalava
Jak' Puisan' (50) Якъ Пуисань	Dirvany Дирваны	Dirvāni	Rēzekne, Gaigalava
Mortus' Puisan' (45) Мортусъ Пуисань	Mazgova Мазгова	Kokovščizna	Rēzekne, Nautrēni

<sup>7</sup> I could not determine the modern location of this manor with absolute certainty. However, based on its location, modern Silamuiža located in Balvi municipality, Bērzpils parish seemed the likely location of this manor.

Another natural question to ask is whether any of the known Lutsi surnames – e.g., *Buls* and *Mekšs* – appears in this revision list. I omitted surnames that began with „Bul”, but had some other ending (*Bulin'* (Булинь), *Bulav"* (Булавъ), etc.). The results of this search are shown in Table 5. It is noteworthy that none of the individuals with these surnames is listed as a ‘newcomer’ (пришелець). This could suggest that even if they have an Estonian connection, they had already been in this region at least long enough for them not to be considered as recent arrivals. While variants of *Buls* are widespread – mostly in parishes near Lake Rāzna – the surname *Mekšs* is uncommon in these records.

Table 5. Individuals with the surnames *Buls* and *Mekšs* in the 1772 list

Name (Age)	Village	Manor	Municipality, Parish
Adam' Bul' (35) Адамъ Буль	Dynkiniški Дынкинишки	Asüne	Krāslava, Asüne
Jozef' Bula (30) Йозефъ Була	Plečneva Плечнева	Asüne	Krāslava, Asüne
Jonek' Bul' (14) Йонекъ Буль	<sup>8</sup>	Dukstigols	Rēzekne, Čornaja
Pavel' Bul' (84) Павель Буль	Kaiprev' Каипевъ	Dukstigols	Rēzekne, Čornaja
Krištuš' Bul' (20) Криштушь Буль	Kaiprev' Каипевъ	Dukstigols	Rēzekne, Čornaja
Antoni Bul' (30) Антони Буль	Račiki Рачики	Dukstigols	Rēzekne, Čornaja
Jan' Bul' (80) Янь Буль	Bulov' Буловъ	Dukstigols	Rēzekne, Čornaja
Jakub' Bul' (40) Якубъ Буль	Bulov' Буловъ	Dukstigols	Rēzekne, Čornaja
Mihal' Bul' (38) Михаль Буль	Bulov' Буловъ	Dukstigols	Rēzekne, Čornaja

<sup>8</sup> No home village given. Listed as a shepherd working at the manor.

Name (Age)	Village	Manor	Municipality, Parish
Bern' Bul' (90) Бернь Буль	Руругово Пыпырово <sup>9</sup>	Dukstigols	Rēzekne, Čornaja
Antoni Bul' (32) Антони Буль	Руругово Пыпырово	Dukstigols	Rēzekne, Čornaja
Andrei Bul' (40) Андреи Буль	Telešev' Телешевъ	Dukstigols	Rēzekne, Čornaja
Bern' Buln' <sup>10</sup> (40) Бернь Бульнъ	Votiš' Malyi Вотишь Малыи	Puša	Rēzekne, Puša
Pavel' Bul' (38) Павель Буль	Votiš' Malyi Вотишь Малыи	Puša	Rēzekne, Puša
Ekub Mekša (46) Екуб Мекша	Ekumu Екумы	Anzeļi	Krāslava, Andzeļi

Figure 7 shows a map of:

- the parishes listed in Tables 3–5 in this section and those in Table 2 in the previous section,
- the parishes in Madona municipality where Vaba (2021) finds evidence of South Estonian settlement,
- and the parishes where the Lutsi villages are located in Ludza municipality – the parish names of these latter two groups are italicized.

Each parish is shown with the table number in which it appears:  
 2 – Placenames connected to the surnames *Ikaunieks*, *Poikāns*, *Puisāns*,  
 3 – Individuals identified as Estonian (чухна/чехна) in the 1772 list,  
 4 – Individuals with the surnames *Ikaunieks*, *Poika*, *Puisāns* in the 1772 list,  
 5 – Individuals with surnames *Buls* and *Mekšs* in the 1772 list.

<sup>9</sup> There are only two families in this village. The patriarchs of both have the surname *Bul'*.

<sup>10</sup> Included in this list because there is no one else with this surname in the revision list and in this same village there is another patriarch with the name *Bul'*, so *Buln'* seems like a possible misspelling of *Bul'*.



Figure 7. Parishes mentioned in Tables 2–5 (plain text – numerical indexes match the table in which they appear) with the parishes mentioned by Vaba (2021) in Madona municipality showing evidence of South Estonian settlement (*italics*) and parishes with Lutsi villages in Ludza municipality (*italics*). Municipality names are given in bold capital letters.<sup>11</sup>

## Conclusion

This study sought to show possible evidence of a historic Estonian presence in the greater Rēzekne region from two directions – the distribution of placenames connected to surnames with a potential Estonian connection and the distribution across this region of individuals either identified as Estonians or ones with surnames possibly connected to Estonians. The first point was approached examining the distribution of placenames relating to the surnames *Ikaunieks*, *Poikāns / Poika*, and *Puisāns* and the second point was approached examining the searchable online version of the 1772 Rēzekne Eldership Revision List.

<sup>11</sup> Map created using: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Latvia\\_administrative\\_divisions.svg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Latvia_administrative_divisions.svg).

The surnames *Ikaunieks*, *Poikāns* / *Poika*, and *Puisāns* as well as placenames based on these surnames are found across the northern part of the region in question at a similar distance north as Mērdzene. Varakļāni parish stood out as it not only had villages named *Ikaunieki* and *Puisāni* in the present day, but that the 1772 list also records families with the surname *Ikaunieks* and at least one individual recorded as an Estonian living at Varakļāni manor.

Other Estonians were recorded in the 1772 list near Preiļi in present-day Riebiņi and Silmala parishes. As shown by Stafecka (2021) and mentioned in Figure 3, there is an area near Preiļi where Finnic-like features are observed in the local Latvian sub-dialects. Riebiņi and Silmala parishes are in generally the same area.

Likewise, Barkava parish – where Vaba (2021) notes evidence for a historical South Estonian presence – is near the area mostly south of Cesvaine where Stafecka (2021) also observes Finnic-like features in local Latvian subdialects. Individuals with the surnames *Ikaunieks*, *Poika*, *Puisāns* in the 1772 list and placenames based on these surnames are also mostly found in the adjacent area. Varakļāni parish, which, as noted above, is recorded as having Estonian habitation in the 1772 list, is just to the south.

These two regions of Finnic-like features discussed by Stafecka (2021) are not attributed to any known historically Finnic-speaking community there. Other work, such as Vaba (2021), and the current study show evidence of an Estonian presence in approximately these areas. This could indicate that a source of this influence on the local Latvian in these two areas could have been historic South Estonian-speaking communities – perhaps like the Lutsis, but ones which were fully assimilated into the local non-Estonian population before it was possible to document their speech or existence.

It is perhaps also noteworthy that none of the Estonians in the 1772 list is identified as an ‘old newcomer’ – those (according to Agris Dzenis) that arrived prior to 1761, and that none of the people with the surnames *Ikaunieks*, *Poika*, and *Puisāns* or the typical Lutsi surnames *Buls* and *Mekšs* are listed as ‘newcomers’ at all. This could place a timeframe on when different groups – those specifically identified as Estonians and the ancestors of those with surnames that may have an Estonian source – arrived in the region.

In this regard, one individual identified as Estonian in the 1772 list stood out in particular – Matis" Umelka of Ribiniški manor in modern-day Preiļi municipality, Riebiņi parish, as his surname still exists in Estonia as *Ummelk* and is found to a limited extent in Rōuge parish. Umelka's name may indicate the area from which he – and perhaps others at the manor – originated.

As far as a connection with the Lutsis is concerned, the distribution of *Buls* and *Mekšs* in the 1772 list did not overlap with parishes where Estonian habitation was recorded. *Mekšs* barely occurred at all and *Buls* mostly occurred in Čornaja parish just west of the Lutsi area. However, it is tantalizing that the villages with the placenames given in Table 2, all generally occur just to the west of the northernmost Lutsi area in Mērdzene. At the time of Oskar Kallas's 1893 Lutsi expedition, the Mērdzene Estonians were nearly fully assimilated into Latvian speakers while the South Estonian speakers of the southern Lutsi region were much more numerous. Breidaks (2007 [1981]) suggests that the Mērdzene Estonians were a product of a separate migration from the Lutsis further to the south. While the connection of the Mērdzene Estonians to people living in areas further west is not explored in this study, it is a valuable topic of further inquiry and should be pursued by examining other historical documents – revision lists, church archives, etc.

Estonians have historically formed an important strand in the multi-lingual and multiethnic tapestry of Latgale and the formation of different Latvian subdialects in this region. The extent and character of their historic presence and the nature of the *Rāisaku maarahvas* should be further explored and understood.

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## **Uldis Balodis: Rāisaku maarahvas?**

### **Eesti keele jäljed Kesk- ja Lõuna-Latgales**

Teadaolevalt on Põhja-Lätis olnud mitu ajaloolist lõunaeesti keelt kõnelevat kogukonda. Neist kõige paremini teatakse kahte lõunaeesti keeleosaart – Lutsi keeleosaart Ludza maakonnas ja Leivu keeleosaart Ilzene lähistel. Lõunaeesti keele kõnelejad on aga ajalooliselt asustanud ka Eesti-Läti piiri lähedal asuvaid piirkondi, näiteks Rūjiena (Ruhja) ja Veclaicene (Vana-Laitsna) ümbrust. Nagu on osutanud Lembit Vaba (2021), on lisaks eelnimetatud aladele eesti keele mõju täheldatav ka Madona piirkonna kohanimesedes. Selles artiklis uuritakse täiendavaid eesti ja lõunaeesti keele ajaloolisi jälgi tänapäeva Rēzekne, Varakļāni ja Preiļi omavalitsuste territooriumidel. Esiteks vaadeldakse (võimalikku)

eesti päritolu perekonnanimede jälgi kohanimedes (Ikaunieks, Poikāns/Poika, Puisāns), teiseks uuritakse 1772. aasta Rēzekne revisjoni nimekirja veebiversiooni, et teha kindlaks, kas selles piirkonnas on sel ajal võinud elada eestlasi.

### **Uldis Balodis: Rāisāku maarahvas?**

#### **Eesti keele jälgi Kesk- ja Lõunõ-Latgalimaal**

Om teedāq, et Põh'a- ja Põh'ahummogu-Lātin om olnuq mitmit lõunõeesti keelekogokundõ. Üteq kõgõ tunnõtumbaq noist ommaq kats lõunõeesti keelesaart Lātin – ludsiq Ludza kandin ja leivuq Ilzene lähkün. Lõunõeesti kiili kõnõlõjaq ommaq elānūq ka Eesti-Lāti piiriallo pääl Rūjjiena (Ruhja) ja Veclaicene (Vana-Laitsna) kandin. Viil ināmb, Lembit Vaba (2021) tähelepandmiisi perrā om jälgi eesti mõjost nātāq ka Madona valla kotusõnimin. Seon kirotusõn otsitas aoluulidsõ lõunõeesti elondusõ jälgi viil tõisigi allo päält, põhilidsõlt täāmbādse ao Rēzekne, Varaklāni ja Preiļi vallost. Tuud tetās ütelt puult uurõn kotussit, midā võimaligu eesti kõūdūssega kotussõnimeq (Ikaunieks, Poikāns/Poika, Puisāns) tähüstāseq, ja tõõsõlt puult uurõn 1772. aastaga Rēzekne revisjoni nimekirā internetiversiuni, et kariaq, kas säält paistus, et säält kandin om tuul aol olnuq eesti elondust.