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E. MARKUS

CHANGES ON THE ESTO-RUSSIAN ETHNOGRAPHICAL FRONTIER IN PETSERIMAA

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Changes on the Esto-Russian Ethnographical Frontier in Petserimaa.

By E. M a r k u s.

I. The Ethnographical map of Petserimaa.

The first ethnographical map of Petserimaa was drawn by Dr. J. H u r t¹ (scale about 1:200.000). This map was prepared with great care and shows, fairly accurately, the Setu settlements as well as the Russian communities in contact with the Setus. To the prepare a new ethnographical map, the writer worked in the summers of 1933 and 1934 in Petserimaa and in the winter of 1934—35 in Tartu; in the summer of 1933 he surveyed the Esto-Russian frontier districts, determined the districts in which the nationalities have become changed and settled the principles for the making of the map, fixing as the basis of the map-making the ownership of farms and lands. Subsequently he did the technical work of drawing the map.

In the beginning the idea was to gather all the necessary data about the Setu nation through stipendiaries. But as that would have demanded extraordinary expenses, the Home Investigation Committee advised the use, for the preparation of the abovementioned map, of the material of the second national census co-ordinated according to villages by Prof. Dr. A. Tammekann. The abovementioned material was used for marking purely national districts, while the data about the Esto-Russian frontier line were gathered by the author personally.

¹ J. H u r t Setukeste laulud (Helsingfors 1904) I.

The original material for the map was a real estate map, scale 1:5000, in the possession of the Petserimaa Real Estate Commission. On this map, that is, on the corresponding pieces of land, there were inserted the constant inhabitants — land owners, tenants, etc. The names and nationality of the inhabitants in certain districts were taken from materials of the second national census. According to the documents in the hands of the Real Estate Commission these data were all transferred to the abovementioned large-scale map on which were marked the constant inhabitants and their nationality. In doing this, however, those individuals who had temporarily settled in certain places during the census, were omitted. So, during the census there were in the village of Kiksuva 39 Estonians and 15 Russians, the latter having come there for road building. The village named, however, is a purely Setu village. The data on the frontier line inserted on the map were checked by the author on the spot.

On the basis of the large-scale map (1:5000), there was prepared a generalised map of the whole of Petserimaa on a scale of 1:35000, which was published with a scale of 1:130000. On this were marked separately purely national and Esto-Russian mixed areas and there were also approximately noted the sporadic Latvian settlements. The purely national districts were replaced by mixed districts when most of the land settled by any one nation was intermixed with localities inhabited by members of other nations covering at least one-tenth of the area.

The method chosen for making the map has both advantages and disadvantages in comparison with other methods. With the help of the point method the maps prepared show the national numerical relations lacking in the former map. However, the points do not cover the map steadily, but sporadically, and are unsuitable for the preparation of a large-scale map. Therefore the points do not show the exact national frontier lines which are necessary for the investigation of changes of national limits. Only by taking into consideration the land areas settled by nationali-

ties is it possible to conceive such details as the Russian settlement in the neighbourhood of Puravitsa which has pushed out far to the north like a peninsula, or, further, the Petseri island of Russians at Leeska adjoining the Russian zone. The marking of state-lands on the map presents certain difficulties. However, these lands are situated for the most part in purely national districts, the constant inhabitants of which are members of one nation. The state-lands in the environments of Kesksaare on the Esto-Russian ethnographical boundary are joined partly with Estonian and partly with Russian areas of distribution.

It must be remarked that the material of the national census is not accurate enough and that the discrepancies can be seen on the large-scale map, scale 1:5000. But these discrepancies are not to be noticed on the generalised map. Also, a firm distinction has not been made in the census material between Estonians and Setus, i. e., between the Petseri Estonians. Therefore these data cannot be employed for the separation of the Setus from the Estonians.

The names of the Setu villages were put on the map from archive material in the possession of the Academic Mother-Tongue Association checked by Prof. Dr. J. Mägiste and partly from the work of Dr. J. Hurt¹, as well as from data supplied by the linguist, N. Rimmel, Esq., who was born in Setumaa. For the sake of uniformity the author at first thought of entering the Russian settlements by simply transcribing the Russian names of the localities. But the fact that we have no names of the Russian villages written down in the Setu language had to be taken into consideration. But as it would not be right to ignore the names taken for official use (Linnaste — Gorodištše, Irboska — Isborsk etc.), these Russian villages, the corresponding names of which were known, are marked with Setu names.

The preparation of the third ethnographical map is one of the tasks of the future; the necessary data will have to be collected locally by experts specially trained for this purpose.

¹ J. Hurt op. cit. I.

P. Päts, Esq., M. A., raised the question of making this ethnographical map of Petserimaa and drew the attention of the writer of these lines to the suitable map-making material in the shape of real estate maps to be found in the government offices located in Petseri. R. Rägastik, Esq., marked the nations on the real estate map and V. Voore, Esq., drew the ethnographical map. All the expenses connected with the making of the map (wages of two draughtsmen, drawing materials, the material of the national census, etc.) were borne by the Home Investigation Committee of the Estonian Literary Society. A committee of three (J. Aul, Esq., M. A., G. Ränk, Esq., M. A. and the undersigned) was chosen by the above named Home Investigation Committee to discuss the beginning of the making of the map referred to. Dr. A. Luha, the editor of "Eesti", very obligingly looked after the economical side of the preparation of the map. The author of these lines obtained the necessary data through the kindness of the head of the Petseri Monastery, Bishop N. Leisman, the head priest N. Raag, the Petseri County Council, the Real Estate Commission and district and church officials. The Estonian Learned Society kindly bore the expenses of publishing the map. The manuscript was translated into English by Mr. H. Harris, B. A., Lecturer in English at the University of Tartu. I should like here to express my deep thanks to all those people whose assistance enabled me to prepare the present ethnographical map of Petserimaa.

II. Intermixture along the ethnographical frontier.

Method of investigation. In order to determine the direction of the movement along the Esto-Russian frontier, I questioned the oldest inhabitants who gave me information about national relations in their home villages from their personal recollections and information obtained from their own parents. The very oldest of those questioned was a ninety-year-old blind man in Sahnova and a man 99 years of age in Uusvada, who died in the summer of 1934. I was

enabled to check the accuracy of the data obtained from the old people with the help of soil investigation methods at Alatskivi in the Selgus forest ¹. There I collected information about the former farm-lands, confirmed the extent of the area by soil-analysis and compared the information obtained from the inhabitants with the age of the forest growing on the former farm-lands; this reached back 100—150 years. It turned out that by means of questioning it was possible to collect trustworthy enough information from the oldest inhabitants about the last 100—150 years.

In applying the method of questioning the investigator meets certain difficulties the chief of which is the concealment of national origin. In such cases the investigator has to prove very ingenious in order to make sure of the origin of the parents of the individual he is interested in.

Stages of change. As regards the stages of ethnographical movements, one of the most interesting villages, so far as change of nationalities is concerned, is Koväslova in the district of Vilo near Irboska. There we find 7 pure Setu families. In three families the grandfather of the present farmer had married a Russian and their children and grandchildren became russified. In the fourth family the russification had become so strong that only owing to the data obtained from their Setu neighbours could the investigator come to the conclusion that the land, at present belonging to the Russian families, might have been the property of their former Setu forefathers. Thus during the last century russification has flourished in Koväslova, where Russian wives have been taken into pure Setu families and so has been laid the foundation of the change of nationality (table 1).

As Koväslova was formerly a Setu village in which at present there are living Setus as well as Russians, we may say that in this village we notice the middle stage of russification.

¹ E. Markus Die Grenzverschiebung des Waldes und des Moores in Alatskivi. Acta et Comment. Univers. Tartuensis (Dorpat.) A XIV (1929).

Table 1. Russification in Koväslova.

The number of farms	7	3	4
The father's father . . .	+	+	+0?
The father's mother . . .	+	0	+0?
The mother's father . . .	+	0	0
The mother's mother . . .	+	0	0
Man	+	0	0
Wife	+	0	0
Children	+	0	0

+ Setus.

0 Russians.

+0? nationality of the father's parents difficult to ascertain: the son himself maintains that his parents were Russians, while his Setu neighbours assert that they were Setus.

70—100 years ago there were in the village of Küllatüva a few Setu families amidst many Russians. With the marriage of the Setu women into Russian families the latter gradually became estonianized. Even now there are in several families of pure Russian origin older people who speak the Setu language and whose children consider themselves to be Setu. Only one, a woman of about 70 years of age, does not know the Setu language. Thus in Küllatüva we see the middle stage of estonianisation.

3—5 years ago there lived in Kuusenitsa near Koväslova 4 men who spoke the Setu language and among whose forefathers there were Setus. A few decades ago there were over ten such persons in Kuusenitsa. In 1933 I spoke to the only 75-year-old man who spoke the Setu language. He gave an account of the Setus among his forefathers and speaks the pure Setu language. It seems that Kuusenitsa was formerly a Setu village, though at present we find the last traces of Setu nationality there. Taking this into con-

sideration we might call the degree of the change of nationality in Kuusenitsa the last stage of russification.

According to the Petserimaa real estate map and the explanations of the 99-year-old man mentioned before, Uusvada was divided into three parts, one part of which was called the free or *voolä*-village (*voolä-küla*), while two parts belonged to estates (Saalesja, Osimovo), forming a so-called estate or serf village. In *voolä-küla* there lived Setus who paid taxes to the district council. But in the estate village there lived Russians who paid for the use of the land by going to work on the estates. Slowly the Russian families became Setus and 30—50 years ago there died in Uusvada the last Russians. Here we determine the last stage of estonianisation.

Finally we notice villages where only a few single families have started to change nationality. Here we see the estonianisation or russification in its first stages (*Poodlisa*).

Summing up we might say that in the case of the middle stage of the change of nationality there are representatives of two nations living in close proximity in a given village. In the last stage we see a purely national village where there are found traces of former nationalities which formerly inhabited the village but have now become extinct. In the first stage we notice the first signs of the transfer of nationality. It is perceptibly more difficult to determine the first stage of this metamorphosis than, for instance, to determine the first stage of a forest becoming marshy. Thus we cannot consider as a metamorphosis such individual examples which do not call forth in certain settlements either estonianisation or russification, for instance, the appearance of a member of a foreign nation in a purely national village and his assimilation with the nation of the village. For the considerations mentioned the first stage of estonianisation or russification has not been marked on the map. Such cases, where in former purely national districts the foreign nations compose at least $\frac{1}{10}$ of the population, have been marked as the middle stage.

Assimilation with a changing tendency, that is russification following estonianisation or vice versa, can be seen in Sumilova, Poduvja, Sirkova, V.-Krohova and Vohina.

Direction of the Change. During the middle of last century russification was especially strong in the south-eastern boundary of the Setu areas, that is the most important belt. It begins in Pankjavitsa, passes through Koväslova, and reaches Mantsi. In this district there are places which have become partly or completely russified. Thus in the middle stage of russification are Kuurakese, Ugavere, Olohkuva, Tseronde, Potalova, Saptja, Koväslova and in the last stage Pruutsa, Kuusenitsa, Sahnova-Miitina, Vilbe, Suhlova, Mantsi. Smaller degrees of russification are found in Herkova, Väike-Kuuliska and other villages. Russification early began to diminish in the environments of Paaglova.

In former times estonianisation took place chiefly in those Russian localities which were situated among Setu settlements. Uusvada, Pliia and Rookina are completely estonianised and estonianisation is passing into its last stage in Küllatuva.

The former Russian island in the district of Meremäe has been dismembered as a result of estonianisation (Kuksina, Meremäe, Varkali, Ruutsi). The penetration of the inland Estonians into Petserimaa began during the last decade, and became more intensive as a result of the formation of the Independent Estonian Republic. Thus the inland Estonians have founded plenty of farms in the fertile rolling country of the region between Laaseruva and Pankjavitsa and play a definite part in the estonianisation of the town of Petseri.

Half a century ago (in 1890) there lived in Petseri only 3 Estonian families¹. In 1900 there were already about 50 Estonians. At the beginning of the World War the Estonians in Petseri numbered already 150. But according to the data

¹ E. Piipenberg Die Stadt Petseri in Estland. Acta et Comment. Univ. Tart. (Dorpat.) A XXV (1933).

of the national census in 1922¹ the Estonians formed one-third of the population in Petseri (33%), and in 1934² more than half (55%). Thus at present we note in Petseri the middle stage of estonianisation, because next to 1745 Russians there live altogether 2337 Estonians, on the 1st of March 1934 the whole population consisting of 4274 persons³. The outward appearance of the town also shows signs of estonianisation: next to the old town, consisting of houses in the Russian style, during the last 18 years there has sprung up a new part of the town with modern houses inhabited chiefly by Estonians.

Upon the whole we see that in Petserimaa the Esto-Russian ethnographical frontier is moving both in the Estonian as well as the Russian direction, whereas during the last century russification was in the ascendant, though later it began to diminish. Since Estonia has become independent estonianisation is becoming more intensive.

The methods of the change. The movement along ethnographical frontiers employs four methods. The most frequent during the last century has been assimilation through mixed marriages. A Setu marries a Russian; the children become either Russian or Setus. In certain cases the assimilation proceeds in a definite direction, that is, a Setu village, for instance, with the addition of people of Russian nationality slowly changes into a Russian village. It is necessary to mention, that through mixed marriages the metamorphosis takes place only very slowly: frequently it is possible to see that 3—4 generations have not succeeded in completing this process of assimilation (russification in Koväslova).

50—70 years ago inland Estonians began to emigrate into Petserimaa and to own farmland there: a sum

¹ Data of the general national census in 1922. V. II (Tallinn 1924) 64.

² II national census of Estonia. V. II (Tallinn 1935) 47.

³ II national census of Estonia. V. II (Tallinn 1935) 47.

of money was paid to the holders of the communal land and thereby the newcomers became members of the community, though such cases also occurred where a community with plenty of arable land invited landless people to become members. In bigger settlements (the town of Petseri, Pankjavitša, Irboska, etc.) there live people not connected with farming — officials, merchants, professional people and others who increase the number of members of certain nationalities. In some settlements the number of people has begun to diminish owing to migration. Such tendencies can be noticed, for instance, in V.-Kuuliska (J. Mägiste's data) where part of the population has gone to places situated farther away, or, during the Russian times, even to Siberia.

Observing the tracks of the movement along the ethnographical frontier we notice, on the one hand, the russification of the Setus and the estonianisation of the Russians and, on the other hand, places where the Setus and Russians do not mix, that is, in such cases, next to a purely Setu village there lies a purely Russian one (Lääpa and Nutretsa-Raagošina). It has to be noticed here that russification is especially strong among the Setus on the south-eastern boundary opposite the Great-Russian settlements, while estonianisation during the last century took place chiefly in those Russian localities which were situated among Setus.

One has to take as a reason for the facts mentioned the inner energy which is hidden in certain homogeneous communities. In the south-east the Setus came into contact with the Great-Russian settlements, which began here and stretched far to the east and which in former times evinced expanding inclinations in different directions. In former times the Russian nation received the energy for further advances from its great and sufficiently strong state. To the small Russian islands in western Petserimaa there were, as a counterbalance, the surrounding, constant, and sufficiently large settlements of the Setus which at that time were directly connected with cultural Estonia. Under the influence of the surrounding Setus the Russians started slowly to

change their nationality. At present Petserimaa forms a part of the Estonian state, receives its assimilating energy from Inner Estonia and into the whole district, but especially into the bigger settlements (Petseri, Väraska, Irboska, Laura, etc.), there flow the inhabitants of the other districts of the state.

Latvians. The Latvians began to penetrate into Petserimaa about 50—100 years ago, acquiring suitable land and becoming farmers. To an especially great extent they have migrated to the southern part of Petserimaa. But during the last decade the Latvians have started to withdraw a little, that is, to sell the farms belonging to them, etc.

There cannot be any question of a movement along the Esto-Latvian ethnographical frontier, because the Latvians have penetrated into the Russian area of distribution and only in rare cases have reached the Setus (Tsilli, Tiklatsi).

III. National Areas of Distribution.

With regard to its nationalities Petserimaa is divided into three parts: in the west are the Estonians, in the east are the Russians, while their frontier area is occupied by the Esto-Russian mixed area, which is especially extensive, in the Vilo and Petseri districts forming a polygon, the Kunitsagora—Mantsi—Ojaveri—Sirkova. This is the Vilo—Petseri zone of mixture.

In northern and western Petserimaa the Estonians are distributed compactly, while in Vilo they form a national island among the Russians, which again is divided into smaller islands — Kosselka and Jaaska. We find small Estonian islands in the Truba, Pankjavitsa and Korski districts.

The Russians are situated in eastern and southern Petserimaa and form a great Slav island between Petseri and Pankjavitsa, while smaller Russian islands are found in Kuksina and at the same time Laptjuva is also becoming Russian.

The Latvians appear sporadically in the southern part of the country, being found to a greater extent in the Rootova district.

We may presume with certainty that in former times the Setus lived unbroken in the north-western part of Petserimaa and reached as far as the Luhamaa—Ojaveri—Kuuse-nitsa—Mantsi—Popovitsa line. As a result of the colonising activity of the monastery there originated a big Slav island in the surroundings of Petseri¹. Smaller Russian islands sprung up among the Setus in Meremäe, Uusvada, Küllatuva. Among the Russians there remained rare Estonian islands (Truba, Korski). Smaller national islands soon began to change their nationality (estonianisation in Küllatuva) or were divided into parts (Kuksina, Meremäe, Varkali, Ruutsi)

As a result of the ethnographical movement there are being formed many mixed settlements such as the russianized Koväslova, Herkova and other boundary communities or the estonianized Meremäe, Küllatuva, etc. The Laaseruva—Pankjavitsa mixed area was formed in earlier times by russification (Riiskova) and in more recent times by the colonizing activity of the Estonians. The Setu communities of Luhamaa being entirely separated from the other Setus have been joined since the establishment of Estonian independence to Võrumaa (Misso district).

As seen from the map, the areas of distribution of the national minorities form a mosaic in the Vilo—Petseri zone of mixture. In this zone the assimilation of both Estonian and Russian settlements, which goes back into the distant past (monastery colonisation activities of past centuries), is still going on. In the formation of this zone the chief part was played by the Russian urge to the west, while the Esto-Russian movement along the line towards the east is less extensive.

Map. The Nationalities of Petserimaa
(The South-East of Estonia).

Estlased — Estonians
Venelased — Russians

¹ E. Markus Geographische Kausalität. Acta et Comment. Univers. Tart. (Dorpat.) A XXX (1936).

- Lätlased — Latvians
Eesti-vene segaala — Esto-Russian mixed area
Eestistumine — Estonianisation
Venestumine — Russification
Keskaste — the middle stage
Lõppaste — the last stage
Eestistumine ja venestumine vahelduvad — Estonianisation and
Russification alternately
Praegu vene, varem arvatavasti eesti küla — Now a Russian,
but formerly probably an Estonian village.
Asulad — Settlements
Kirikud — Churches
Maanteed — Roads
Raudteed — Railways
Riigipiir — State borders
Maakonnapiir — District borders
Vallapiir — Community borders
27°30', 28° — Longitude East of Greenwich

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