

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN OLDER AND NEWER SETTLEMENT NAME LAYERS

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Abstract: The age, origins and structure of the settlement names in Kose Parish in Estonia are examined in this paper. A classification is provided for the age-based groupings of the settlement names (the main groups are older or indigenous names, on the one hand, and newer names, on the other). Moreover, the division of the names based on their origins and structure is also introduced. Then the disparities between the origins and structure of the settlement name layers are discussed in order to determine the differences and similarities that appear in older and newer settlement name layers and to understand which aspects of the names are more enduring through various periods and which aspects can change as a result of the conditions during these periods.

Keywords: toponyms, name classification, etymology, name structure.

Introduction

This article deals with the settlement names of Kose Parish (Estonia): older or indigenous names, on the one hand, and newer or later names, on the other. The older name layer is formed by the indigenous names, that is, place names that existed before the year 1700, when the Great Northern War started (Laansalu 2015: 102). The first written records of Estonian place names date back to the 13th century. Therefore, the oldest name layer includes settlement names recorded between the 13th and 17th centuries and the newer layer includes all the later names. The source materials come primarily from the place name catalogue of the Dialects Archives at the Institute of the Estonian Language. Place names from Kose Parish, the area under examination, were collected for 40 years (from 1929 to 1969). There are about 2,500 settlement names among them. However, there are many repetitions, since they were collected at different times by different people. Thus, the actual number was reduced by about half.

Kose Parish, which is located in the southeast of Harju County in Estonia, has clear natural boundaries. And these have not changed much during the last thousand years. The parish developed as a logical whole already during ancient times, probably between the 9th and 11th century. The parish was already densely populated at that time. The first churches were built in Kose Parish and in the other areas conquered by the Crusaders, starting in the 13th century. These were located on the holy places of the local indigenous Estonians. The first manors in the region date from the 13th to 14th centuries.

Classifying settlement names by age

Determining the age of a place name can be a very complicated task. If names appear in old documents or are indicated on old maps, this only means that the name already existed at that time. However, it is not possible to determine when the name developed (Ainiala et al. 2012: 88). The closer to the present a name is, the more data can be discovered and the more exactly the age of a name can be determined.

The first written records related to the place names of Kose Parish can be found indirectly in the Danish Census Book¹ (*ca* 1241, *Liber Census Daniae*, LCD). It seems that many of the indigenous villages existed at that time. Therefore, their settlement dates back to this ancient era. Since the current form of the village names had already developed by that time, it is very difficult to identify the initial form of the names.

Of the 131 village and manor names in Kose Parish, 27% are mentioned in the LCD. This also includes village names that have been replaced by newer ones in time. This means that the age of the village name used today may not correspond to the age of the village itself. However, one can assume that there are also villages with names that are just as old as the settlements themselves. When the Great Northern War (1700) started, another 28% of the settlement names had been recorded. The remaining 45% of the village and manor names were added in the 19th century or later. There have definitely been more village names (or parts thereof) in use. However, since the purpose of the earliest records was not to fix all the popular place names, no proof of these places exists (Laansalu 2015: 104)².

There is no information about when farm names as such developed. The first records of Estonian farm names date back to the 16th-century registers of socage holdings and audit registers, which listed individuals. The usual form for identifying the peasants was cognomen + first name. Initially, the cognomina were related to a definite person, but in time, they were handed down from generation to generation and became family names. The scattered farms, which were located away from the villages and operated as independent settlement units, were the first to get permanent names. In the case of village farms, a greater number of older names have survived from the more sparsely settled parts of the villages. On the other hand, in the densely settled villages and parts thereof, the cognomina changed faster due to stronger social ties and new names were continuously adopted. This also changed the name combinations in the villages. In the more densely populated settlements, the number of surnames and farm names based on the first names of individuals, primarily loan names, increased. However, in the more dispersed settlements the number of names based on natural objects, etc. increased. By the end of the 18th century, cognomina had become attached to almost all Estonian farms (Troska 1995: 92–93).

¹ Paul Johansen's "Die Estlandliste des Liber Census Daniae" (Johansen 1933) has been used to identify this data.

² Compared to the referred article, the number of indigenous names has slightly increased, since some new additional information has been found. In the case of old toponyms it is obvious that there is always a possibility that new data will be found, certain details get specified and so on.

Based on the total number of Kose Parish farm names in the place name archive, a database was created of approximately a thousand names. Some of them can be linked to the village names that were recorded in the early 13th century through name chains. For instance, a former village name, which is recorded in the LCD as *Tapawolkæ*, has partially survived in the farm name *Tabase*. A total of 63 indigenous farm names (i.e. 6% of the farm names) can be found in the material. The remaining 94% of farm names belong to the later layer.

The origins of the settlement names in Kose Parish

It is very common for various structural or phonological changes to develop in place names in time and therefore names become opaque for name users (Ainiala et al. 2012: 87). Slowly, the language's vocabulary usage also changes. The concepts may change and, along with the concepts, the word meanings. However, when the meaning of a word has changed or actually disappeared from active use in the language, other mechanisms start to function – the special developments in place names. Without considering the possibility of special developments in place names, it is not possible to find valid earlier forms.

The special development of place names

Several different name forms or parallel forms may be in use at the same time. If different forms occur at different times, we may be dealing with name changes. But variations of the same name may also be in use simultaneously. It is not always possible to tell whether we are dealing with place-name change or simple variations in the form, because these phenomena may partially coincide (Ainiala et al. 2012: 82–83). Today, the development of name variations into permanent name changes is also hindered by the written language. The use of the often officially established written form is usually considered to be more correct.

The development of parallel forms may be caused by a desire for economy, dialectic differences, language changes or a vagueness of the name form. The name forms based on a desire for economy are most numerous in the parallel forms of the Kose settlement names. The language economy principle is often implemented in place names when the name element has lost its independent semantics. Parallel forms should not be confused with parallel names. Parallel names are names that designate the same place for different reasons. For example, the following farm names: *Aasamäe*, parallel form *Aasume*, parallel name *Vitresteni*; *Aedveere*, parallel form *Aedvere*, parallel name *Lageda*.

The special developments in place names may be caused by structural variations, which resemble epexegeses. An epexegetis (Finnish *epeksegeesi*, German *Verdeutlichung*) is a tautological phenomenon in which case a generic term that indicates the reference is added (Ainiala et al. 2012: 83; Saar 2008: 41). Epexegetic forms usually develop when it is necessary to specify the type of place. A repetition resembling an epexegetis is sometimes caused by the shortening of the generic term of a compound name. This can easily happen when one is dealing with a name chain – that is, the type of object

being indicated has changed. For example: *Harjuva oja*, in which *-va* < *-oja* 'stream', therefore, *Harju-* + *-va* ('stream') + *oja* ('stream'); name chain: *Harjuoja* > *Harjuva* (as the settlement name) > *Harjuva oja*.

Compared to place names in the other Balto-Finnic languages, Estonian place names are characterised by substantial irregular shortening. One of the probable reasons for this special development is the separation of the name from the place of departure or the break in the link between the proprium and the appellative, and also an attempt to make the name more comprehensible to language users. Various types of special developments can appear in names individually or in groups.

Irregular shortening. In Estonian name research the shortening typical of place names, which occurs over time and cannot be explained by means of general phonetic rules, is called irregular shortening. Substantial irregular shortening occurs in old place names far more often than in the general vocabulary. Irregular changes can mostly be noticed in the second component of the words with compound stems, in which often only a few phonetic elements of a word with several syllables have survived. At the same time, irregular shortening also occurs in the first component of compound names. The precondition for the shortening of the final component of a compound name develops when the corresponding part of the name is left without a semantic load. This means that the shortening is more typical of secondary names. If the final component of a compound name is the generic term of a place name or the determinant functions have survived, it usually endures in the shortened form. Thus, irregular shortening occurs primarily in settlement names. Some examples:

Hansuni < *Hansu-Jaani*; late 17th century *Hanßo Jahn*. The place name is derived from the personal names *Hans* and *Jaani*, of which the latter is substantially shortened: *-Jaani* > *-ni*.

Eeveski < *Hiieveski*; second half of the 17th century *Iweske Thomaß*, 1782 *Hiewesk*. The name is probably comprised of the words *hiis*: *hiie* 'sacred grove' and *veski* 'mill'. The first part of the compound name is substantially shortened: *Hii-* > *E-*.

Kuie < *Kuivajõe*; 1796 *Kuivajoggi*. The name of the farm is derived from a bridge of the same name on the lower reaches of the *Kuivajõe* River. The name *Kuie* is shortened from the name *Kuivajõe* (*kuiv*: *kuiva* 'dry' + *jõgi*: *jõe* 'river').

Kurena < **Kurenoja*; ca 1241 *Kurkenoy*. *Kurena* < *Kurg*: *Kure* 'stork' + genitive ending *-n* + *oja* 'stream'. The former genitive specifier *-n* has survived in the name. The last part of the compound name has shortened: *-oja* > *-a*.

Nooreli < *Noorejüri*. The second part of the name that is derived from a personal name has been substantially shortened: *-jüri* > *-li*. The name ending *-ri* has been replaced, for phonetic reasons, by *-li* (it is too difficult to pronounce two *r*-s in one word and the second usually does not survive).

Uueda < *Uuetoa*. *Uueda* < *uus*: *uue* 'new' + *tuba*: *toa* 'dwelling house'. The second part of the compound name has been shortened: *-toa* > *-da*.

Group transition. Another type of special development is group transition.

In this case, when name components with similar phonetic forms vary, they may replace each other. The most frequent group transition is the interchange of the name endings *-mäe* 'hill' and *-ma(a)* 'land, ground'. However, one cannot always be sure which the original is. Other endings that can be interchanged include, for example, *-aia* 'garden; fence' and *-oja* 'stream', *-selja* 'ridge (geo.)' and *-silla* 'bridge' etc. Some examples:

Lenderma – *-mäe* ~ *-ma(a)*; ca 1241 **Lendelemece*, 1468 *Lendermeke*, 1636 *Lendramah*, 1726 *Lendermeggi*, 1796 *Lenderma*.

Neitsimäe – *-mäe* ~ *-ma(a)*; second half of the 17th century *Neitzimege Mart*, 1871 *Neitsema*, 2014 *Neitsimäe*.

In time, the interchange of the name endings *-mäe* and *-ma(a)* can be noticed in the recordings of these names – that is, the names have transferred from the *mäe*-group to the *ma(a)*-group, and vice versa.

Folk etymology. The third type of special development is folk etymology, which in brief means the reinterpretation of the name. This phenomenon is not caused by any phonetic changes in the language's general vocabulary, but rather the linguistic perception of language users. Folk etymology occurs as the result of an attempt to make the name more understandable to the user. Therefore, this phenomenon is the opposite of name component shortening and series transfer. Here a word that has fallen out of active use in the language may be replaced by a familiar word. Some examples:

Heebrea < *Hieepere*; 1462 *Idenpere*, 1726 *Hieper*. *Heebrea* ('Hebrew') < *hiis*: *hiie* 'sacred grove' + *pere* 'family; household'. Folk etymology has played a role in the development of the name form *Heebrea*. Name chain: *Hieepere* > *Eepere* > *Heebrea*.

Karjatüma < *Karja-Tooma*; 1935 *Karjatooma*. Here *-Tooma*, the personal name (*Toomas*: *Tooma*) at the end of the farm name, has been replaced by the word *tüma* 'a soft, boggy place in the ground'.

Adaptation. Adaptation is the accommodation of a foreign place name to the phonetic structure of the target language, as is also done when borrowing appellatives. For example:

Kalsberi < *Karlsbergi*; 1782 *Carlsberg*. The sub-manor was named after Karl XII, whose army had camped in the vicinity. The name is derived from the personal name *Karl* and the German word *berg* 'mountain'; this has been adapted to suit the Estonian language phonetic system.

Katsina < *Gattšina*; 1900 *Гатсина*. The name is a transplant from Russia, having been adapted from the city name *Gattšina*. The history of the name is the following: in the mid–19th century, a group of workers and peasants from Triigi Manor travelled to Russia, hoping to find free land and escape the yoke of the manor owner. They arrived in *Gattšina*, but they were sent back, because migrants had to have permission and an

assigned destination. Thereafter the manor owner established a village for them, which was called *Katsina*.

Triigi < *Stryk*; 1732 *Triki*. The current name form has developed from the adaptation of a German name. The name is derived from *Stryk*, the manor owner's family name.

Origin of indigenous settlement names

A definite etymology can very seldom be assigned to the oldest village names. More often than would be expected, the centuries-old name forms can be juxtaposed with old personal names. For example:

Hiipeere < *Yddo, Ydy*; *Lööra* < *Lühr, Lüer*; *Nutu* < *Knut, Nuudo~Nuut*; *Vilama* < *Vile, Wylle*

The most transparent village and manor names are often based on names of natural features. For example:

Kivioja 'stone' + 'creek'; *Kose* 'waterfall'; *Laukataguse* 'behind the bog (pool)'; *Oru* 'valley'; *Sömeru* 'grit'

The names of indigenous farms are mostly based on personal names – the further back in time, the more recordings of first names we find, for example:

Hansoni – 17th century *Hanßo Jahn*. *Hansoni* < *Hans: Hansu + Jaan: Jaani*
Nigula – 1694 *Nicola Jack* ja *Nicola Michel*. *Nigula* < *Nigul(as): Nigula*

However, many of the indigenous names remain opaque. There are several reasons for this: for instance, the words that the names contained may no longer be in use or the names changed so much in time that, without being able to trace the development of the name in written sources, finding the original form is almost impossible. Moreover, in many cases the classification of the names remains very approximate, because the names cannot be explained with only one equivalent. However, many of the settlement names that are now opaque are probably based on personal names.

When studying Estonian place names, abundant correlations with Germanic personal names have been discovered (Tiik 1976, 1977; Kallasmaa 1995, 2000, 2008). Juxtaposing the place names with Low German and Frisian names has helped to found possible explanations for the names that are difficult to trace. Most are short names of one or two syllables, which may have reached us in an already adapted form. Finnish place name researchers consider it probable – or even confirm – that numerous settlement names are derived from Germanic personal names; the reason lies in the various Germanic influences starting in the Bronze Age (Ainiala et al. 2012: 88). From the wealth of names in Kose Parish, names like *Saia* and *Villika* could be juxtaposed with ecclesiastic names (< ?*Jesaja* and ?*Wilhelm*). These juxtapositions do not claim to provide the absolute truth and it would be easy to look past them, because almost all

of these names can be explained by means of folk etymology. Yet, these are derivative possibilities that must be considered with researching the corresponding names. For, as mentioned above, most of the indigenous farm names are derived from personal names, and this is proven by the archival data.

Origins of later settlement names

Analysis shows that the percentage of names with origins related to personal names (anthroponymic origin) have decreased considerably since the mid-19th century. At the same time, the percentage of names not related to personal names (non-anthroponymic origin) has increased accordingly. There is an especially large number of farm names derived from names of natural features. The same phenomenon has been detected before (Laansalu 2010: 116–117). The sudden decrease in farm names derived from personal names was probably related to the liberation of peasants from serfdom. Thereafter, only the farms and land were owned by the manor, not the peasants. Until that time, farms had been named after farmers, and subsequently the need for farm names developed. For the older farms, the cognomen that was already used as a farm name was suitable. One can assume that names characterising the farm itself rather than the farmer were chosen for the newer farmsteads, for which the former cognomen had not become fixed as a farmstead name.

The farm names in the later layers are characterised by the abundance of secondary names and names referring to natural objects. Vernacular or popular names for homesteads were mostly derived from family names and often changed with the owners. To a lesser extent, the popular name was the owner's first name. In some cases, the homestead derived its name from a manor building, if it was located nearby or the farm was located on its land: for example, *Rehe* 'threshing barn' and *Veski* 'mill'.

Farm names in later layers also differ from old farm names due to the numerous parallel names. Newer dwellings were almost always named after owners, although properties also had an official name. In addition to the abundance of parallel names, the later farm names were also declined differently. The farm name *Juhani* is usually declined as *Juhanile* (where? allative case), but the name of a farm separated from the original farm is declined as *Kohvi-Juhani juurde* ('to') – instead of a case ending an adposition is used. The name *Kohvi-Juhani* indicates a farmstead that was still very strongly associated with the owner.

The classification of settlement names based on structure

The word stem division method, which divides names into simple and compound names, has been used for classification. Compound names also include shortened names that were originally compound names but which current language users – not knowing the background – may think is a simple name: for example, the farm name *Väljari*, which is shortened from the name *Välja-Jüri*. This means that the names that seem like simple names at first glance, for which the exact origin is unclear, could

initially have been compound names. The more opaque names that appear as later farm names are often also derived from owners' names.

The majority of Kose settlement names were simple names: 54% of the farm names and 66% of the village and manor names. There were 4 presumably abstracted names (*Aratsi, Sagadi, Soosti, Videsi*) and 9 names with collective suffixes (*-ste*), such as *Ojaste* and *Paunaste*. The settlement names with locative and collective suffixes were distributed as follows: 13 names with the *la*-suffix (for example, *Jõgila* and *Ojala*), 28 with *-iku, -stiku* (such as *Aaviku, Kaasiku, Kivistiku, Kuristiku*) and 19 with *-vere* (such as *Kanavere* and *Võivere*). The distinctive feature of the names with the *-vere* suffix is that 80% are indigenous names.

In Kose, 46% of the farm names were compound names as were 34% of the village and manor names. The most numerous components in a settlement name was four (in two later names), as in *Maanteeääre I: maa* (+ the historical genitive case ending *-n*) + *tee* + *äär* + *esimene* (in English the 'first village on the side of the road'). Settlement names with three components were also only found among the later names. They totalled 15: for example, *Tammetsa-Mäe: tamm* 'oak' + *mets* 'forest' + *mägi* 'hill'; *Ülesoosepa: üle* 'over' + *soo* 'swamp, bog' + *sepa* 'smith'. The remaining compound names had two components.

The most frequent initial components were *Uus-/Uue-* 'new', *Vana-* 'old', *Nõmme-* 'moorland, heath', *Suur(e)-* 'big', *Aru-* 'dry grassland, meadow', *Pika-* 'long', *Taga-* 'behind, back', *Kivi-* 'stone', *Mets(a)-* 'forest', *Soo-* 'swamp, bog' and *Välja-* 'field'. It appears that the words used most often for the initial component are *uus* and *vana*. The binary opposition of *Uue-* versus *Vana-* forms a toponymic microsystem. This has been caused by the need to differentiate between two names with the same components (Toporov 2008: 285; Laansalu 2011: 120). Of all the components in the second position, the one that appears most often by far is *-mäe*. This has been explained by the fact that throughout history people have tried to settle in higher places.

The main similarities and differences of the settlement name layers

Indigenous settlement names have often undergone special developments and their forms may have changed to the point that the names are unrecognisable. At the same time, later settlement names are more transparent. A considerable number of settlement names from the older layer have no definite etymology. Most of the initial centuries-old recordings of village and manor names can be juxtaposed with old personal names. The more transparent village and manor names are often derived from names of natural features. The names of indigenous farms are mostly derived from personal names.

The settlement names in Kose Parish have undergone all types of special developments that are characteristic and inherent to Estonian and other Balto-Finnic languages. Sometimes, the special development reflects a name form used at a specific time. At other times, the place name has suffered a permanent change and the form resulting from the special development is the only one used today. The changes that

have occurred provide confirmation of the fact that irregular shortening occurs mostly in settlement names (such as *Kuie* and *Kurena*, which are secondary names, derived from hydronyms). Sometimes, the special development has changed the name to such an extent that its initial point of departure is no longer visible in the name form.

Although special developments are especially characteristic of older settlement layers, the trend for special development can also be seen in later (especially oral) settlement-name usage. If names were not fixed by the current practice of writing names down (particularly in the case of official names), the development of place names would also continue today.

Indigenous and later settlement names are linked by the fact that their origin is often a personal name. At the same time, the percentage of names related to personal names has decreased considerably since the mid-19th century. Instead, a large number of farm names derived from names of natural features have been added. This trend has probably developed as a result of the liberation of peasants from serfdom, after which a need developed for farm names as such. It seems that farmsteads for which the cognomen of a former owner was not established as a farm name were more likely to be named after features of the farm rather than the owner. This is an example of how the changing conditions in an era can alter name templates and usually direct one from paths that have developed in time to others.

Another difference between farm names of the later layer and older farm names is that many more parallel names occur in the former. In popular use, newer homesteads were almost always named after owners' family names, less often first names, but properties also had official names (and these were often not related to personal names). Most of the new settlement names, which were named after owners, were declined in the usual way – that is, the same way as the indigenous names. However, differences appear in some of the very late names, since the names were very strongly connected to the owners. Therefore, the usage of these names differs from the usual usage in certain situations.

In summary, we can say that, to a great extent, the name layers of different ages observe the same basic template, but each displays its distinctive features that need to be kept in mind in name research.

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