

# Zuzanna Posiła: LIVONIAN

(rānda kēļ, Liivo Keelj, Libiešu valoda)



**\*Uralic languages (like Finnish and Estonian);**

**\*Baltic Finn branch of the Fenno-Ugric language group**

**\*Status: minority language (or rather what is left of a language...);**

**\*Dialects: Eastern Livonian (Vidzeme),  
Western Livonian (Kurzeme, Raandalist)**

**Territory: eastern coast of the Livonian Bay; north  
Courland**

**Number of speakers: in 2013 the last native speaker  
died; in 1990 about 35 persons could speak Livonian**

**Other languages spoken: Latvian, Russian**



**Used in family or social life**

**BUT**

**1923-1939 taught as a voluntary subject in  
some Kurzeme schools**

**Nowadays: courses and self-learning**



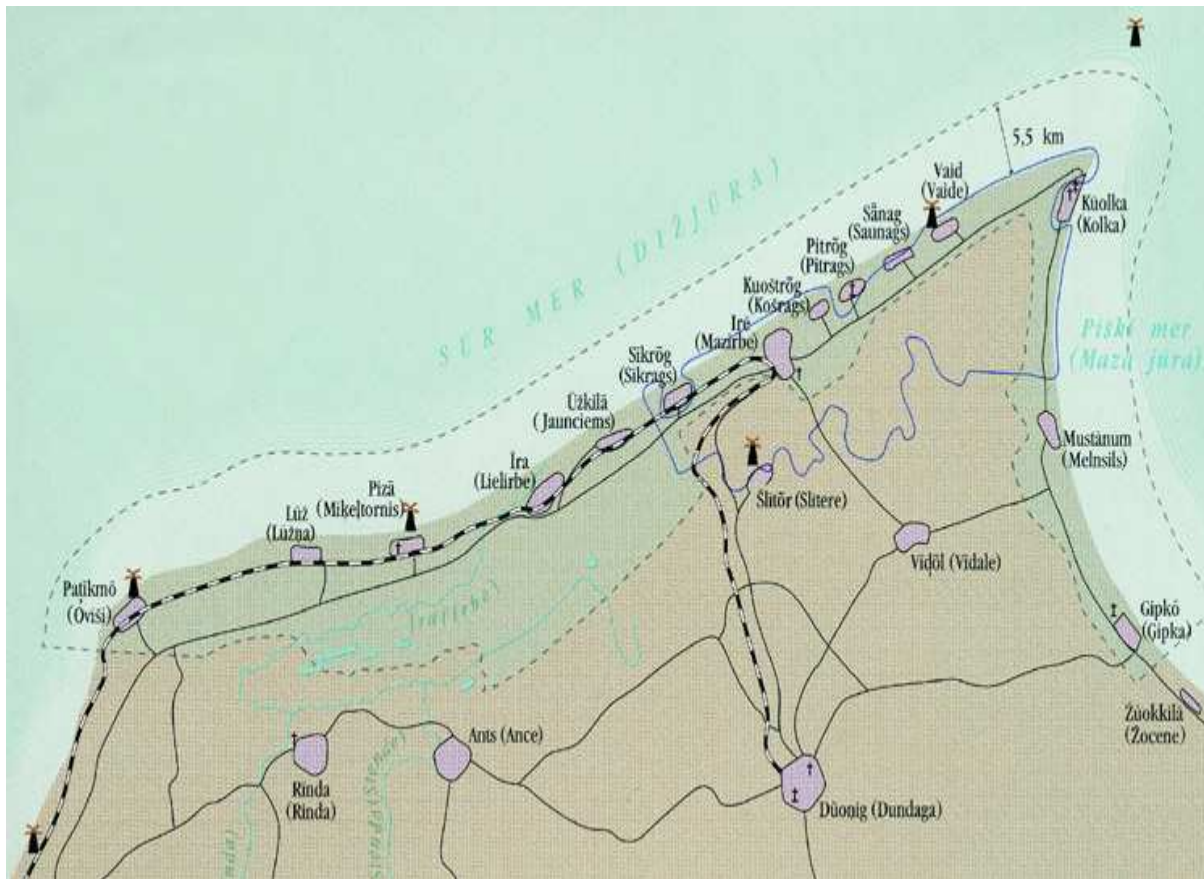


**Livs – who were they?**

**„the indigenous people of Latvia, who little by little, have mixed with Latvians”**

**10<sup>th</sup> century;**

**Livs have their own anthem and flag. The author of the lyrics is Kārlis Stalte, a Livonian poet;**

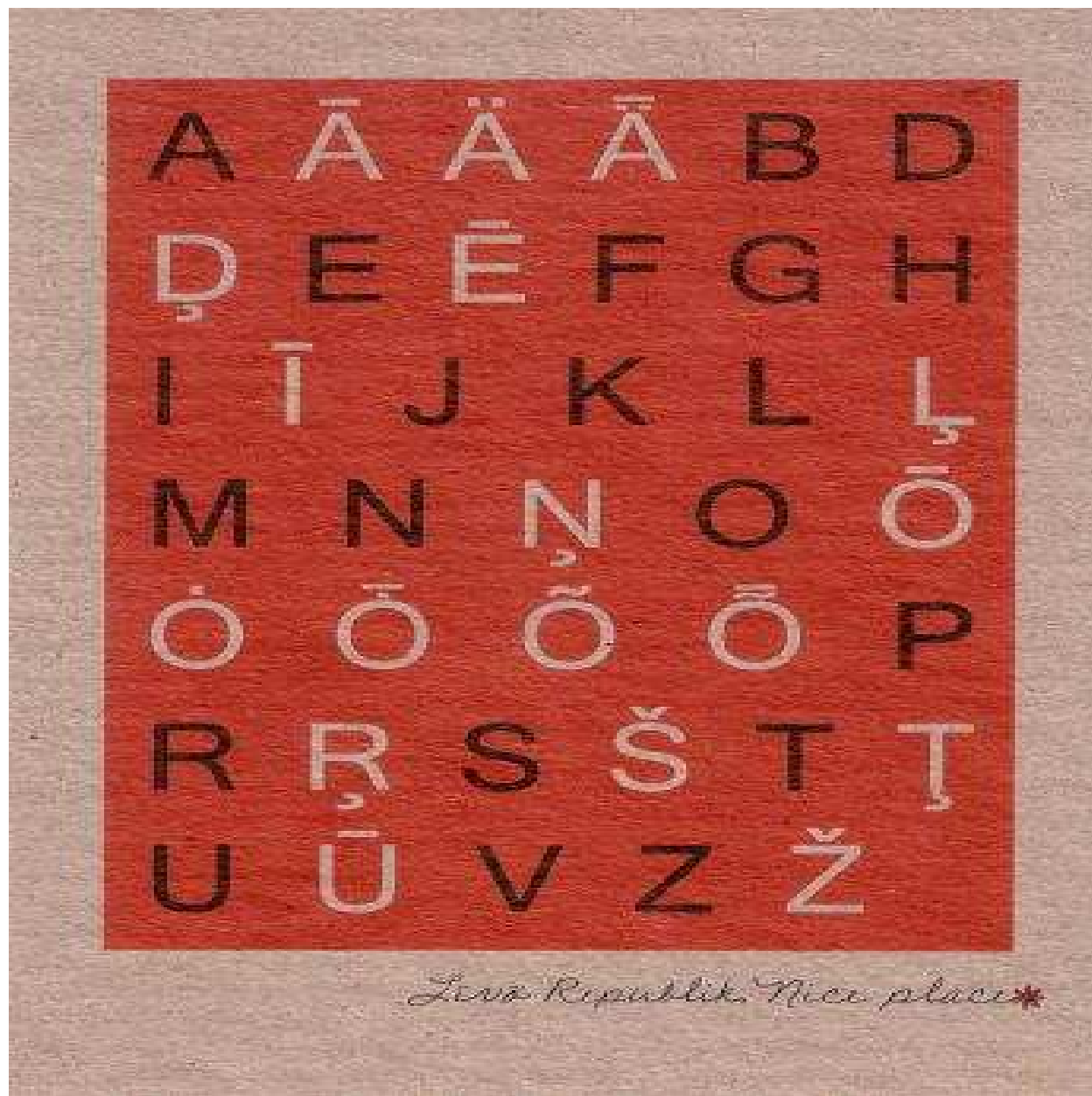


**The Liv written language started to develop in the middle of 19th century;**

**Latin alphabet with some additional letters;**

**A macron above the letter marks the length of a vowel;**

**The stress falls always on the first syllable**



**Grizelda Kristina**  
**the last speaker who had native fluency in the**  
**language.**  
**Died in 2013, in Canada**



## **Overall grade of endangerment:**

### **1; Critically endangered**

#### **a) Proportion of speakers within the overall population**

**1 (critically endangered; „A number of remaining Livonians can be considered heritage speakers, as they picked up bits and pieces of the language in their childhood from grandparents or great-grandparents of the pre-war generations”)**

#### **b) Intergenerational language transmission:**

**1 (only a few elderly speakers)**

#### **c) (Shifts in) Domains of language use**

**1 (not used for communication, present in songs, there still remain some people who study the basics of the language)**



## **d) Response to new domains and media**

**0/1 (some websites exist, there's even a FB profile of the Livonian Language, but no radio auditions, no TV programmes, well, it's no surprise)**

## **e) Availability of material for language education and literacy**

**2 (long tradition of dictionaries, some works of art: poetry, short stories)**

## **f) Governmental and institutional attitudes and policies**

**4/5 (According to the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia: „Since ancient times, the identity of Latvia in the European cultural space has been shaped by Latvian and Liv traditions”, „114. Persons belonging to ethnic minorities have the right to preserve and develop their language and their ethnic and cultural identity.”**

## **g) Community members' attitudes**

**???**

**The language has become endangered due to rapidly dwindling population of Livs.**

# Useful phrases :)

ikš	one
kakš	two
kuolm	three
nēļa	four
vīž	five
kūž	six
seis	seven
kōdōks	eight
īdōks	nine
kim	ten

Tēriņš!

Jōvā ūomōg!

Jōvā pāva!

Jōvā ōdōg!

Kui sinnōn lāb?

Tienū, minnōn lāb jōvīst.

Voiiks lādō jo jōvīst.

Kui tēḑi nutāb?

Min nim um...

Mingi telefon nummōr  
tāddōn um kuonnō?

Mingi telefon nummōr  
tāddōn um tīesō?

Kuonnō māddōn um  
seļi telefon...

Kus tēg jelāt?

Minā jelāb Kūolkas.

Tienū

Pōlaks

Nēmiz pāl!

Ammō jōvvō!

Vōndzistō riekkō!

Hello!

Good morning!

Good afternoon!

Good evening!

How are you?

Thanks, I'm fine.

Could be better.

What's your name?

My name is...

What's your phone  
number at home?

What's your phone  
number at work?

Our home phone  
number is...

Where do you live?

I live in Kūolka.

Thank you

Please

Bye!

All the best!

Have a nice trip!

www,livones,net

[www.virtuallivonia.info](http://www.virtuallivonia.info)