

**ASPECTS OF SETTLEMENT
IN THE KLAIPĖDA DISTRICT (MEMELLAND)
IN THE LATE-FIFTEENTH AND EARLY-SIXTEENTH CENTURIES**

Stephen C. Rowell

The history of the town and district of Klaipėda (Memel) in the late Middle Ages and Early Modern Period remains shrouded in mystery. J. Sembritzki used legal documents from the now destroyed Memel Archive to eke out an outline of life in the area in the late fifteenth century¹. His work forms the basis of archaeological account offered more recently by V. Žulkus². However, most attention has been paid to the period after the mid-sixteenth century. The Teutonic Order's Königsberg Archive (now in the Preussische Kulturbesitz building in the Dahlem district of Berlin) is the largest surviving repository of manuscripts dealing with mediaeval Klaipėda, mainly in the form of reports sent by the commander of the local garrison to the grand master or other officials of the Order. Many of these texts are undated and deal with details of business for which we lack a general context. Some of these have already been published in such collections as F.G. von Bunge's Livonian *Urkundenbuch*³. The otherwise abundant records of the city of Gdańsk contain no information about mediaeval Klaipėda. One document catalogued as referring to Memel in fact deals with the case of a Vilnius merchant⁴.

Sources for understanding who lived in Klaipėda-Memel and its hinterland as the Teutonic Order's giant monastery became a secular state owing allegiance to the Polish Crown within the Jagiellonian monarchy in the late Middle Ages and sixteenth century seem only to add to the general confusion created by an obsession with the a-historical question 'were they German or were they Lithuanian?' (to which, of course, the short but complicated answer is that they were Memellanders). The available source base comprises mainly documents from the Teutonic Order's archive and the records of the Hohenzollern Duchy of Prussia that are largely the bare bones of accidental survivals distant from one another in time and application and open, like the Scriptures, to interpretation from many sides. Further confusion is added by a failure to appreciate sufficiently that the language of record has no inevitable bearing on the nationality of the recorded. In an attempt to provide an overview of developments in a region which was not limited by the official border (which remained the same for almost five centuries between 1422 and 1923) we will be restricted here to the use of unpublished tax records from the second decade of the sixteenth century, the last years of the Teutonic Order's rule, and 1540, the middle of the first generation of

¹ J. Sembritzki, *Geschichte der Königlich See- und Handelsstadt Memel*, Memel, 1906; a Lithuanian translation by J. Putrius, F. Tiškus and R. Adomavičius was published in 2002 as *Klaipėdos karališkojo Prūsijos jūrų ir prekybos miesto istorija*, t. I, Klaipėda, 2002, p. 59–64; J. Sembritzki, *Geschichte des Kreises Memel*. Festgabe zum Andenken an die 34-jährige Verwaltung des Kreises durch Geheimen Reg.-Rath Cranz, Memel, 1918, S. 8–11 (see – Sembritzki, *Geschichte des Kreises Memel...*); J. Sembritzki, A. Bittens, *Geschichte des Kreises Heydekrug*, Memel, 1920, S. 13–24 (later – Sembritzki, Bittens...).

² V. Žulkus, *Viduramžių Klaipėda. Miestas ir pilis. Archeologija ir istorija*, Vilnius, 2002.

³ F. G. von Bunge, *Liv-, Esth- und Kurländisches Urkundenbuch*, nebst Regesten, I Abt., Bd 1–12, Reval–Riga–Moscow, 1853–1914, Aalen, 1968–1981. Other material is published in S. C. Rowell, „Smulkios žinios iš XV amžiaus Klaipėdos“ (in this book, p. 47–69, later – Rowell, „Smulkios...“).

⁴ Gdańsk, Wojewódzkie Archiwum Państwowe, 300 D-62, 105, written on the back of a folio intended originally as a record of a letter sent to Memel from the city fathers of Gdańsk for inclusion in the *libri missivarum*. Records from 1530 to 1792 bear the shelf mark 300 53/525.

people living under the secular rule of the dukes of Prussia. The object of our survey is the settlement of people in the region during a period when good lordship (*Herrschaft*) rather than ethnic origin was the main preoccupation of politics and officials on both the Žemaitijan and Prussian sides of the border were involved in encouraging migratory settlement and living conditions remained harsh.

Historians generally agree that the surrender of Western Prussia to the Poles in 1466 after the Thirteen Years' War gave an extra impulse to the Order's settlement policy in eastern and north-eastern Prussia, as evidenced by the creation of new administrative districts such as at Rhein (1468). East Prussia hitherto had been a military hot-spot and a poor region, judging by the reports of fifteenth-century commanders who found difficulty in housing and feeding Skalvian and Curonian refugees or paying contributions to the grand master's coffers⁵. The Žemaitijans would hinder communications along the coast, while at the same time asking for help with obtaining salt for treating their fish and pledging to be good neighbours⁶. From undated texts (of the second half of the century) we learn of the difficulties encountered in building work on the Order's castle: the burghers helped the Order, as did towns in other parts of Prussia, notably Königsberg, Balga and Brandenburg. Oak, bricks and tiles are mentioned among the resources supplied and problems caused by moving sands near the castle, high water levels, the need for sluices, poor workmen and shortages of time and timber⁷.

In the fourteenth century Lithuanian refugees had received plots of farmland from the Teutonic Order in various parts of Prussia in return for military service, but these were usually far from the recipient's home region. After 1400 not only "higher level" colonists came to Prussia but also ordinary land-hungry farmers. Like noblemen, yeomen were liable to change their minds and return home. Some time around 1470-80 the grand master and the Lithuanian authorities attempted to establish procedures for dealing with Lithuanians who came to Prussia to gain a wife and property and subsequently returned to the land of their birth. Children from such marriages, if left behind in Prussia were to be regarded as freeborn, whilst those who fled with their family were to lose all rights to property in Prussia⁸. Complaints over such tergiversation were a frequent occurrence in both Ducal Prussia and Žemaitija. In eastern and central Europe population shortages are much more significant than land famines. It is hardly coincidental that from the late fifteenth century direct competition between the Order's officers and the lord lieutenant (*starosta*) of Žemaitija over border districts and their inhabitant increased. In May 1480 at the time when Lithuania was waking up to the need to form a strong alliance with Livonia and Prussia against Moscow, an outbreak of violence, theft and murder and poaching soured relations on the border as the Order settled Lithuanian subjects there (in the Ragnit, and Memel commanderies) to the detriment of the grand duke's interests⁹.

Ironically, as competition to settle the region increased and interaction became more strained, correspondence cast relations between both sides increasingly in the mould of good

⁵ Rowell „Smulkios...“, Nos. 2, 6, 9, 10, 22, 24.

⁶ Berlin, Geheimes Staatsarchiv, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Ordensbrief Archiv [OBA] 27881 – Rowell, „Smulkios...“, No. 13.

⁷ OBA 28187, 28189, 28190, 28200 – Rowell, „Smulkios...“, Nos. 18, 19, 20.

⁸ OBA 27874 (undated, the watermark fits the period 1469/72), see – Rowell, „Smulkios...“, No. 7.

⁹ OBA 16881: May 17 1480: “so... unsern große schade gesthaen ist, unnd noch geschit vonn denn salbigenn unsern eygen layten ap groß dyberey, bluthstorczung, morderey unnd beneanenn wylt yachte bebern yachte hannten”; the following January (OBA 16938), the Ragnit problem was to be discussed by representatives of both the Prussian and Žemaitijan sides: Feb. 4 1481, Kešgaila was on good terms with the commander of Ragnit (OBA 16948) and prepared for negotiations with the commanders of Ragnit and Memel.

neighbourliness and friendship¹⁰. Most settlement continued peacefully without royal or magisterial intervention or directive, as in 1510 when the Geverlaukai Forest near Beinigkehmen in south-eastern Prussia was purchased by two local Balts, Mikas and Butvilas from the “Prussian” village of Lenkininkai. Four years later another local, Tautkus, together with two new arrivals from Žemaitija, Normantas and Milkintas built a village nearby in Galbrostas Wood. Some disputes seem to have developed from practical need rather than planned skulduggery. The peasants who struggled to sow and reap crops in contested areas such as Šveškna (1549) or Šventoji (1552) were seeking their daily bread and not the aims of central policy. Bernard Pohibel informed the Prussian duke in July 1547 that paupers from his land could scrape a living only from collecting wood and making ash from it¹¹.

In the course of centuries the region’s inhabitants, best summed up by the Polish term *tutejszy*, “locals” (which was used in contemporary Lithuanian texts of Prussian ducal decrees¹²) came to define themselves, as one would expect, by relation primarily to locality and prince, rather than race or language: to speak Lithuanian, practise Lutheranism and call oneself “Lithuanian” did not lessen the population’s loyalty to the Brandenburg duke of Prussia. Mutual service, not blood or language, is the mainstay of political maturity.

Denis Hay’s comment that “the [Anglo-Scottish] Borders were a region and remain a region” fits our case too¹³. Preussisch Litauen, for which an Amt was established in 1525, and Western Žemaitija, maintained their specific regional character as late as the Second World War and its aftermath¹⁴.

The ethnic composition of that border society is a very thorny issue, not least for the implications it has borne since genetic foundations for statehood were invented in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Lubricious appeals to “historical ethnic composition” dominate certain discussions of the Kaliningrad (Königsberg) Region’s status today¹⁵. Given its crusade past, Eastern Prussia could hardly be other than ethnically diverse. Lithuanians, Žemaitijans, Curonians, Skalvians and Prussians dwelled in the region’s villages and border areas, whilst German settlers were commoner in the towns of the western districts. The ethnic composition of Memel is markedly different from that of the surrounding region. In such places as Mohrunen and Preussisch Holland settlers were invited from the Netherlands. In other words, the colonisation of

¹⁰ OBA 16338 (June 29 1472), 16569 (Sept. 1475), 16948 (Feb. 4 1481), Ordens Folianten [OrdF] 18b fo 271r-v (July 15 1490), OBA 17737 (Nov. 2 1492), 20909 (June 27 1516). On the prevalence of the choice of this formulaic means of address in relations between officials in the Grand Duchy and the Teutonic Order, see S. C. Rowell, “Social developments in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania the mid- to late-fifteenth century as reflected in Lithuanian correspondence with the Grand Master in Prussia”, *Kancelarie krzyżackie. Stan badań i perspektywy badawcze. Materiały z międzynarodowej konferencji naukowej, Malbork 18-19 X 2001*, ed. J. Trupinda, Malbork, 2002, l. 211–223. This choice of expressions of friendship, love and neighbourliness in social relationships is not necessarily a matter of personal sentiment, but more an accepted proper mode of conducting business – see J. Bossy, *Christianity in the West, 1400–1700*, Oxford, 1985.

¹¹ H. and G. Mortensen, “Der Streit un die Beinigkehmer ‘Lange Wiese’ in Jahre 1526 als siedlungskundliches Dokument”, *Preussenland und Deutscher Orden. Festschrift für Kurt Forstreuter zur Vollendung seines 60. Lebensjahres dargebracht von seinem Freunden*, Würzburg, 1958, S. 173–191; on peasant activity, see Albert’s letters to the border *tivuni*, June 8 1549 (OstFolianten 53, p. 832–834), Jan. 16 1552 (OstF 54, p. 319–320).

¹² Sept. 22 1589: *Prūsijos valžios gromatos, pagraudenimai ir apsakymai lietuviams valstiečiams*, ed. P. Pakarklis, Vilnius, 1960, Plate 1.

¹³ D. Hay, “England, Scotland and Europe: the problem of the frontier”, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society 5th Series*, XXV, 1975, p. 87.

¹⁴ General history: J. Jakštas, „Mažosios Lietuvos apgyvendinimas iki XVII a. pabaigos“, *Lietuvių katalikų mokslo akademijos Metraštis*, IV (1968), p. 1–49, V (1970), p. 359–414.

¹⁵ Summaries of the present problem: J. M. Swerew, *Rußlands Gebiet Kaliningrad im neuen geopolitischen Koordinatenfeld = Berichte des Bundesinstituts für ostwissenschaftliche und internationale Studien*, No. 6, 1996; *Potsdamas ir Karaliaučiaus kraštas*, ed. D. Bakanienė, Vilnius, 1996.

north-eastern districts should be viewed in the light of general resource exploitation and appropriation rather than as the lurid scenario of *specific* anti-Lithuanian Teutonic skulduggery.

Fifteenth-century sources are reticent on ethnic matters. Letters from the commander of Memel speak of Curonians there and Skalvians around Ragnit and Tilsit¹⁶. The ethnic composition of the region was prone to variation on the Lithuanian side too, where in Žemaitija, the north-western areas were home to Curonians. In Eastern Prussia we find some Poles and Germans, although it is difficult to distinguish ethnicity clearly from a bare list such as the cadastres of 1540 or the earliest surviving list of Memel District villagers from c. 1510-1520. It is impossible to tell whether part of this population was indigenous to this region or not, although a study of surnames might support the view that a stable basic population was replenished by newcomers, especially in the colonising drives of the Prussian duke, Queen Bona and the starostas of Žemaitija. We know little or nothing of the ethnic composition of Wildnis villages mentioned in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century documents¹⁷. However, we do have records from Žemaitija in 1537-38, which record men, who paid dues on grand-ducal estates in that region. Unfortunately there are no clear coincidences of names and surnames in the Lithuanian record and this list compiled by an official of the Teutonic Order (as possible examples of (re-)immigration to Žemaitija, for example), even though there are common names (Darge, Dargaitis, Rupeike, Rupeikovich and so forth¹⁸).

It is difficult to be precise over the numbers of migrants or even when migration was most prevalent. This may be due to the sparse nature of our sources - we rely on general complaints, specific reported incidents and irregularly preserved taxation cadastres. The evidence is slanted and leaves room for fanatical nationalist sketches on both German and Lithuanian sides. The material, as it stands, appears to indicate that a peak was reached in around 1540-60. According to Gertrud Mortensen's unpublished, but frequently cited figures there were 5,000 peasant families of Lithuanian origin in Eastern Prussia in 1540, making 30,000-40,000 settlers in all. Since this figure is enormous in relation to the estimated population of western Lithuania at the time, which was by no means emptied by westward migration, it is difficult to accept it as evidence of migration, if of anything at all. In the Insterburg Amt (one of several such districts) the number of Lithuanians rose from 713 in 1553/4 to 1,085 in 1564/5. Naturally enough, no figures are available for the number of peasants who *returned* to Lithuania, but that some did so must be borne in mind. Similarly Prussian subjects chose to settle in the Grand Duchy. In the Memel Region c. 1520 there were 384 male villagers (as opposed to 1,050 in 1540) liable for taxation, of whom some 360 have Lithuanian (or Baltic) names, but there is no indication of when or how they came to dwell in the region or to which Baltic ethnic group they belonged¹⁹. The number of their dependants is unknowable, but if they each had a wife and at least three children, the total population would be 1,920.

Taking cadastre evidence for Agluonėnai as an example, it appears that families spread over neighbouring settlements (such as Pawel the "Žemaitijan" who held land also at Misyčiai) and that most inhabitants were of Baltic origin with one possible German, Jorgelle Rastenbach. The village seems to have maintained its size over this generation with eighteen households in 1510-20 and eighteen in 1540. The later cadastre has seven families identical with those in the first list, five possible convergences of surnames and six, which were definitely different (through the marriage

¹⁶ OBA 28156; 28183 – Rowell, „Smulkios...“, Nos. 10, 14.

¹⁷ Cadastre of 1510/1520: OBA 27670, see below Appendix No. 1; cadastre of 1539/40: OstF 911a 19.

¹⁸ A. Mackavičius, *Žemaitijos valsčių surašymas 1537–1538 m.*, ed. K. Jablonskis, prepared for publication by A. Baliulis, with an introduction by A. Tyla, Vilnius, 2003.

¹⁹ Insterburg: O. Barkowski, „Die Besiedlung des Hauptamtes Insterburg unter Herzog Albrecht und Markgraf Georg Friedrich von Ansbach 1525–1603“, *Prussia*, XXIX, 1933, S. 161–243. For Prussians in Lithuania – see the 1561 Jurbarkas census and another document of 1562 which records a settler at Sartyninkai from Prussia owning one hide and rights to use the forest, meadow and moor on the Prussian border – *Akty Vilenskoj komissii*, XXV, Vilno, 1898, p. 88, 89.

of a daughter, perhaps, disaster or natural extinction). Pawel was not in Agluonėnai in 1540, nor was Rastenbach²⁰.

Setting the Aglona river complex aside for a while, we should review the tax records available for 1510-20 and 1540 which allow us to make certain general empirical observations (but not laws of Nature) about settlement in this district in the early sixteenth century. The 1520 list contains 42 settlements; in 1540 cadastre 48 are recorded (as given by Ehmer). Not all the 42 places of the first list appear on the second. For example, Pressaw, which had 16 households in 1520, disappears altogether, but some of its people's names occur in the Eketė list, which increases from 15 men in 1520 to 32 a generation later. The number of households is generally stable - 17 in Minge (Prekulė) and Kretingalė in both years, although only eleven surnames in both cases appear on both lists. In Agluonėnai eleven surnames (of which six Christian names coincide) are repeated in the lists, which record eighteen households in both years. In Eketė we find five out of fifteen 1520 households still there in 1540, when the area has 32 households (including five that were previously in Pressaw - the proportion of a third of names surviving remains true here). In Kalotė five of the twelve names from 1520 re-appear among the nine households of 1540; nine of the fourteen Rubežiai men of 1520 (or their kin) appear among the fourteen households of the later list. A similar development in population can be discerned in the Insterburg Amt for which we have tax registers for 1539 (with 145 settlements) and 1540 (115). On average the number of households is stable and changes occur in around half the places. This is perhaps no surprise given the frequency of plague in the first half of the sixteenth century - in 1531, 1537 and 1539, not to mention outbreaks in 1546 and 1548. In some cases the difference in the names of inhabitants is more extreme, as at Alde Begeyth, where there are seven households in the earlier period as opposed to four in 1540, but none of the names coincide. The importance of the site remains and it was re-colonised. Sometimes a family name spreads over more than one area - such as Mattes from Jan Zaucken's patrimony (*erbe*) in Misyčiai (1520), although Jan Zaucken does not figure in the list himself - he seems to have been a householder in Agluonėnai (Agluonėnai and Misyčiai both have a Paul Samaite too). The areas are adjacent (Misyčiai lies on the opposite bank of the Mingė to the north-west of Agluonėnai). Sometimes a man distinguished as "uffe erbe" belongs to the same village as the owner of the estate (*Mattes uff Strols erbe* in Dituva, for example). The largest and/or richest groupings of households are not always the same, as is the case with Aisė, which only had four households in 1520 but these paid the largest sum in taxes in the whole region - 24 marks and three of these four names appear in 1540. However, such groupings as Mingė, Kretingalė, Agluonėnai, Aisė, Eketė, Rubežiai share one characteristic - they lie either on river routes (west-east) or the dry route from Livonia via Memel south. Rich but diminishing communities such as Alde Begeyth were also frontier posts. It is surely no coincidence that by the early decades of the sixteenth century several of these communities include an innkeeper (who could provide horses, beer and accommodation for travellers, merchants and messengers). From other sources we know that a charter was granted for an inn at Prekulė (Minge) in 1511 and that the keeper during the time covered by our document was Merten Kewenn²¹. Jan Danskorn was innkeeper at Garsden, where he was noted as a tax-payer. Sometimes the innkeeper of the village lives in another such as Jorge

²⁰ Villagers from Agluonėnai: Peter Jodeycke, Kantwain, Nayssels, Kusleycka unnd Kebel, Tautsch Grefuch, Math uff Jan Sutkiß erbe, Maschwille Kyschenn, Beise Kelle, Nantwith, Woitkus kyn Pecher Borner, Grische Nicles bruder, Saugel Marghe, Pawel Samaith, Jorge Jaiske, Jorgelle Rastenbach, Jan Sawgk, Mascheick Narwolle; in 1540: *Grytsch Niclas*, Jutsch Agolon, *Kusseleka*, *Endres Kantweyen*, Meckys Raxill, Grytsch Kagel, Gedemyn Gelschyn, *Woytkus Mergus*, Peter Marge, Gerkandt Gytkandt, Endres Wyssgyn, *Mastwyll Kyschmyn*, Woytko Judeka, Merten Jokschs, Symon Deutz, *Mescheck* Strebel, *Jhan Sauck*, Peter Rock - taken from A. Ehmer, "Die Einwohnerschaft des Hauptamts Memel im Jahre 1540", *Der Grenzgarten. Heimatkundliche Beiträge aus dem Memelland und den Grenzgebieten, Beilage des Memeler Dampfboots*, 1933, Nr. 4 (April 26), 6 (July 28), 7 (Aug. 25 1933) [here Nr. 6].

²¹ Sembritzki, *Geschichte des Kreises...*, S. 8 (citing Berlin, GSA Foliant 233, No. 174).

Dorge kruger uff Czysse in Hynder Werden das dorff (Paverdainé) further along the river from Šyšiai. Jan Metracke of Schuse was owner of the local inn in 1515, while our source notes Jan Rimsch as 'kruger uff der Wewerße', where Foliant 135 material says Stanko Budevik held the inn in 1511²². The area to the south of Lankupiai (the modern Šilutė (Heydekrug) District) appears to have had fewer settlements, centring on Šyšiai, Verdainé and Arytten.

Imagining the size of these farmsteads is almost impossible. However, given the tax outline provided by Sembritzki (per horse, ox, cow: 2/-; per foal, calf: 1/-; per pig, goat, sheep: 3d or 6d; per larger stock: 9d; per *kumetis* without animals: 3/- for himself and wife; farmer without animals: 5/- for himself and wife) and bearing in mind that there were 60/- to the mark, payments of two or four marks (120/-, 240/-) or exceptionally, five or six marks, suggest that the farms were well-stocked and staffed.

We know from the 1540 cadastre more about the breakdown of farm dwellers: the master, his children or brothers, his *kumečiai* (labourers), *bendrai* (co-owner, often a brother or son); men are classified as in 1520 by familial relationships to one another - *swoger*, *kind*. Some are noted as refugees - in Karschauschen Heyde we come across Reynes entlauffen.

The old requirement to provide horses for the order was still in force on householders in 1520. The Kalotė men Strebulis and Šlanetas who obtained land in 1483 had to provide horses²³. They, or kin with similar names do not appear in 1520.

Village foundation and cross-border migration are similar on both sides of the frontier. It is not a poor Žemaitija / rich Prussia phenomenon, a cliché inherent in older German writing on the subject. Villages appear to have grown up later on the holdings of local farmers, such as Jodicken-Wittke (once owned by Woytko Judeka) and Szauken-John - the Soucken Erbe mentioned c. 1520. In Budelskiemis we find Jorge Rube "uff Buttels erbe" and Paul "uf Butkus erbe". Perhaps the fact that Rube was a tax payer (and there fore richer?) explains how his erbe was the one that gave the village its name. The transformation of large farms into villages is also typical of new villages in Žemaitija - Kontaučiai founded on the Kantautas estate or Tubausiai near Kretinga. Colonists, free or refugee peasants, passed to and fro across the border. Albert complained that Lithuanians had come to him and received land and rights of bequest and subsequently fled back to Žemaitija. He names several fugitive *rustici* and then bemoans the fact that the majority were Lithuanians, whose names he does not have at hand, these were tillers of the soil for the most part, but also included a scribe who also dabbled in trade. The Insterburg elder, Alex, reported in 1554 that a Lithuanian boyar had come to him in search of renegades²⁴. The Lutheran pastor at Labguva, Johann Bretke, threatened to migrate to the Grand Duchy, because he could not make ends meet on his stipend of 60 florins per annum. Agricultural life was not necessarily easier in Prussia than in the other Jagiellonian territories - judging from refugee peasants and the complaints of Lutheran ministers whose farmland was too infertile to meet their needs²⁵. Certain migrants knew enough of competition between various administrative structures to claim that a man had different allegiance when he committed a crime and should be tried therefore by a different (and distant) legislation. In 1542 Stanislav Iushkevich of Kuršuva complained of a serf woman who had robbed him and

²² See Appendix and Sembritzki, *Bittens...*, S. 11, 22.

²³ V. Vileišis, *Tautiniai santykiai Mažojoje Lietuvoje ligi Didžiojo karo istorijos ir statistikos šviesoje*, Kaunas, 1935, p. 89.

²⁴ OstF 51, p. 19–21, March 25 1539: "Ihonnell Diacks, Kletinckus scriba et qui mercaturam exercet, Iohan Petri frater, Schoppen, Peckuss, Iatzus, Ischwilckyas, Ihonnellis, Cardiuschkun, filius stani cum uno servo Iuschka, Martini Aschungern adfinis, Andreas Iudas cum duobus filiis, qui primum hac in parte sedes habuere, postea vero iterum aufugerunt. Reliqui non potuerunt cognosci, maior tamen pars communes Lythani fuere. Et hii coloni meę terę quondam fuere hereditario ad me iure spectantes"; for Alex, see Barkowski, "Die Besiedlung...", l. 235.

²⁵ J. Bretkūnas, *Rinkiniai raštai*, ed. J. Palionis and J. Žukauskaitė, Vilnius, 1983, p. 320, 323 (letters of March 27 1587 and July 17 1595).

subsequently fled to Prussia²⁶. Workmen were recruited in disputed areas for work on projects elsewhere; they could also be kidnapped and settled across the border by either side. On a domestic level spouses were sought across the border, as the preacher Martynas Mažvydas complained to the duke in 1551. We might cite a Tauragė woman who married a Tilsit man and quickly fled back to Lithuania, abandoning her husband, or a Königsberg youth who dallied with the daughter of a local merchant and then fled to Vilnius in search of a better offer²⁷. Mažvydas, who held land in the Lithuanian border village of Virbalis in 1561 and maintained contacts with his kinsmen in Lithuania, was in the habit of employing at Ragnit servants “ex Samogithia aut Lituania..., alios enim habere nequeo”²⁸. Whether this was because only Lithuanians would work for the pastor - who was not very popular in Ragnit - or because he could afford only their labour, is unclear.

H. Mortensen sought in the 1920s and 1930s to base German imperial claims to the Memelland on ethnicity and noted that those who migrated knew what they were doing and that they understood migration meant subjection to the separate state of Ducal Prussia²⁹. In that the settlers understood that they were moving to a different jurisdiction, Mortensen was correct, as we have seen. Duke Albert himself was even prepared to treat the villagers of Katyčiai as subject to Lithuanian, rather than Prussian law, while the question of allegiance remained in doubt. However, migrants were also inclined to leave if they wished, and the density of their arrival seems to have increased after 1525, that is, when Ducal Prussia was a fief of the Polish Crown, the sister jurisdiction with Lithuania in the Jagiellonian monarchy. Prussia was alien but little more so now than Polotsk or Lwów (major centres of Lithuanian and Crown Rus') and the duke himself exploited the legal status of his land very nimbly - arguing that to grant land to Lithuania rather than to Prussia was to rob the Crown of Poland (suzerain of Prussia) of territory.

In conclusion, the population of the Memel District in the first half of the sixteenth century seems to be quite stable despite changes that may have been influenced as much by natural disaster as grand migration movements as a result of economic improvement or seigniorial land-settlement policy. The population was ethnically mixed with Balts dominant in villages and “Germans” more noticeable in Klaipėda. Žemaitijans and Poles become noticeable from surnames/nicknames, although there is no indication of when or why they moved. Movement to Žemaitija is also not a rarity. Memel was a fortress town without access to a broad hinterland within the same state. However, the border between Memelland and Žemaitija was more important to Königsberg and Vilnius than it was to those living in the natural region, which encompassed southern Livonia, Western Žemaitija and Hauptamt Memel.

²⁶ *Lietuvos Metrikos (1528–1547) 6-oji teismų bylų knyga (kopija – XVI a. pabaiga) I*, ed. S. Lazutka et al., Vilnius, 1995, No. 376, p. 258–259.

²⁷ Martynas Mažvydas, *Katekizmas ir kiti raštai*, ed. G. Subačius, Vilnius, 1993, p. 679–680 (later – *Katekizmas...*); the Tauragė-Tilsit case is recorded in OstF 54, p. 776 (Aug. 2 1554); Königsberg youth, Jacobus Hoffman, OstF 51, p. 568–569 (May 12 1541).

²⁸ 1558 letter to Albert, *Katekizmas...*, p. 698–699.

²⁹ “Die Litauen waren sich somit völlig darüber klar, daß sie sich im fremden Land ansiedelten und eine neue Staatsangehörigkeit erwarten”: H. Mortensen, „Die Litauische Einwanderung nach Ostpreußen“, *Prussia*, XXX: 1, 1933, S. 136.

Appendix

Ca 1511-1520. A list (or two lists) of villagers from the Klaipėda (Memel) District with a record of the taxes they have paid.

Ms. A. Berlin, Geheimes Staatsarchiv, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Ordensbrief Archiv, XX HA OBA 27,670. Paper, five folded sheets, 21.8 x 32.5 cm, joined at top to form a brochure of ten pages. Dating according to watermark in paper, which was in use in the region in the second decade of the sixteenth century – a five-pointed closed crown with a fleur de lys on the end and central points; the crown is closed by curved, budded branches topped by a ball surmounted by a cross, which according to E. Laucevičius, *Popierius Lietuvoje XV-XVII a.* (Vilnius, 1967), Nos 1592 and 1595 dates to 1507, 1516-20; H. and G. Mortensen, "Kants väterliche Ahnen und ihre Umwelt", *Jahrbuch der Albertus Universität zu Königsberg Pr.* III (1953), p. 35, n. 66 refer to its as "undatierte Stücke 89" from the period 1511-1518. It may be that we have two separate lists which were later joined together. This would explain the small discrepancies which appear in this manuscript. For example, men appear as resident in different villages, while some pay taxes but do not appear previously as residents. The same hand wrote both parts of this manuscript.

Reg.: E. Joachim, W. Hubatsch, *Regesta historico-diplomatica. Ordinis S. Mariae Theutonicorum 1198-1525. pars I: Regesten zum Ordensbriefarchiv, vol.3: 1511-1525*, p.472;

H. and G. Mortensen, "Kants väterliche Ahnen", 35.

Messittenn [Misyciai]

Andreas Reunande, Jackuschs Bretolt, Peter Jackusths, Georg Rewnaudes schwoger, Peter Spage, Merten Tumpe, Caspar Katko, Urban Sparres, Jan Spage, Paul Samaite, Jorge, Gedemyne, Mattes uff Jan Zaucken erbe, Mertenn Janusch

Gurssaw

Narweyll unnd Wyßmar, Taritzcs, Peter Jodickes, Mertenn Durwyth, Suntkusch, Grittze Saukant schwoger.

Karschauschen Heyde [near the south-western borders of Žemaitija]³⁰

Michel Clossch, Reynes entlauffin, Steffan Waytke, Rupeycke, Bartolth Kyndtth, Pawel Illgawd, Jan Pawpel. ||

Aglonn [Agluonėnai]

Peter Jodeycke, Nantwain, Nayssels, Krisleycka unnd Kebel, Tautzsch Grefuch, Math uff Jan Sutkiß erbe, Maschwille Kyschenn, Beise Kelle, Nantwith, Woitkus kyn Pecher Borner, Grische Nicles bruder, Saugel Marghe, Pawel Samaith, Jorge Jaiske, Jorgelle Rastenbach, Jan Sawgk, Mascheick Narwolle

Dythwe [Dituva]

Herman Stroell, Mattes uff Strols erbe, Jorgen Dytter, Hans Grethen, Thomas Huße, Georg Jawneck, Marten Munteynn, Jacuff Dytter.

Garsdenn [Gargždai]

Gaudent und Handrey, Jan Condthe, Peter Rewnande, Claus Reppelein, Peter Andrym und Toden son, Jan Raychanm, Jan Danskorn Kruger zw Garsden, Kerstann Jode, Jacuff Jode

Hinder Garsdenn

Jorgenn Hausman, || Hedeicke, Gedemyne

Languppe [Lankupis, Lankupiai]

Saniko unnd Traman, Stanick Gebroith, Bertzka.

Ayße, daß dorff in Wiltnisse [Aisé in the Wildnis, south-east of Agluonėnai?]

Jan Pesath, Mattis Reynaude, Symon Pesath, Perkyntth Genthwidt.

Alde Beyeth [Senieji Begėdziai]

³⁰ In the tax list these settlements are listed as Hinter Messeten.

Stanis, Lucas J. Maschecka, Georg Surbe, Beinisch Denwulle, Pictute, Naruschs Wilcke.
Thcuse [Schiess, Šyšiai, Šilutės raj.]
Pawel Swirmach, Peter Jawnels, Kawkritte, Vailentyyn Kanth, Herman Lule, Jan Weisse, Andre Wißte, Schritze, Hans Bischoff, George Mystaycke, Rudewille, Herman Ployns, Jan Warkyke, Marius Talutcz, Schmidt.
Hinder Thchuse das dorff [Pašyšiai]
Jan Myleycke, Jan Kupuschs, Peter Remodthe, || Sargusch Reymundt, Peter Wylm unnd Jacuf Reynnanth, Jorgen Eydusche und Waydrische, Peter Waybuch, Matheus Kyntschus, Nylcke Jann
Werdenn [Werden, Verdainé]
Jan Henne, Mattis^a Dropick, Mattis Kelp, Herman Lele, Hans Pupsch, Jacuff Juscky, Jan Wanayks, Kynchk Januß, Peter Dawgill, Jan Warnsch, Mattis, Merten^b Lynkol.
Hynder Werden daß dorff [Paverdainé]
Peter Paculerte, Meyße, Renth, Claus Werßs³¹, Jußke Jacupse, Mertenn Gaydrim, Jan Missutthe, Jorge Dorge Kruger uff Czysse, Jan Thußkuschs.
Arytten [Aurithen, Vorytė]
Tantarym dyde, Egtandt, Matheus Mischutte, Jorge Wantwide, Gedmynen, Peter Janis, Kyßmyne Tanteryym, Tarwidis Horne, Jan Tarwith, Jan Weyße Pictutte, || Peter Dutschs, Myneicke, Gantkanth, Pawell Buthwill, Rupeycke, Peter Luetcz, Jan Darge, Tarwidt. Manicke, Johan Dawtkunth, Pawel Willicks, Jan Tautkus.
Schusth [Schust, river flowing into Tenne River; near Šilutė?]
Mußel Darge, Pawel Lawzcus, Jan Metrack³², Mischutte, Darge Meischis.
Ruyle
Bartoldt Krikes, Manwith, Matte Manttrim, Darpusche Olscheke.
Wylkes [Vilkyčiai]
Kawp Wirbule, Jacuff Wyppyr, Pawel Gicke.
Wyseckenn [Vyžeikiai, near Vilkyčiai]
Hinckman³³, Jan Wiseycke, Herman Bersenigk, Wercke Trug, Janus Papelkis, Jorgenn Jusky, Peter Dyrupe, Janus Lankop.
Mengeslauckenn [Menklaukai, 3 km south-west of Pašyšiai?]
Michel Brede, Rupeyck Grumbliß, || Narwillins.
Uff der Wewerße [Veivirža]
Jorge Jutzsche, Mickita Rackschis, Sargusch Manschudt, Matehko Narigell, Pawel Keyher, Jan Rymsh Kruger uff der Werwerße³⁴, Stantzen Stanell, Juchens Georg, Peter Gibbith, Rymeicko Generndt.
Sylincke [Silleniken, Kammeramt Kreuzburg]
Gregor Goylath, Barthol Wiper, Jan Griße, Claus Scablode, Peter Peßat.
Menighe [Minge - Priekulė]
Henrich Druske, Andres Strapye, Andre Piße, Andres Gybbeschyle, Jan Precoll, Jacuff Janalk, Groppe, Peter Lepße, Matthes Puchennyn, Andre Mittelh, Lynde Matherrs, Waltenn Lydenßon, Mertenn Clumke, Gregor Thaladt, Merten Kewenn Kruger uff Menighe, Jorge Gretthenn, || Jan Stanicker.

^a Nattis.

^b Nerten.

³¹ A Claus Werßch lived in Auritthen in 1540 – Sembritzki, Bittens..., S. 22.

³² Sembritzki, Bittens..., S. 15, say that in 1515 Metrack had Magdeburg rights to inn there.

³³ In 1519 one Georg Hinckmann kept the inn in Rusn?

³⁴ According to Sembritzki, *Geschichte des Kreises Memel...*, 11 in 1511 this inn was held by Stancko Budewil. According to this manuscript one Stantzell Budweyll lived near Eketė – see below.

Cratingenn [Kretingalé]

Jorgenn Sperre, Niclis Hußner, Pickanis Kayell, Thomas Pholenn, Hans und Bartoldt Hige, Jorgelle Frey, Bartolt Szreyp^c, Kaul Jorgenn, Peter Sperre, Gerkanth, Jan Wittenn, Jacob Sperrge, Jacob Polenn, Pawel Sardt, Hans Swnkalis, Darge Bayor, Jacob Schucky, Metricke, Steffenn Sube.

Hinder Crathynge neben der Darge

Pawel Sadtwagenn, Schadus Inder undt Waydrisch.

Bebrun Grensath [Bebruhne]

Gedemyn Pymkall.

Uff Cratinger Wege

Matth Mynlycke, Darguse Swreball, Jorgenn unnd Dargusse Swirboll, Nicolai Wiskayth.

Yckyttenn [Eketé]

Hans Jacuschs, Claus Pellep, || Andres Kyerkuth, Jacob Gaßche, Hans Letzman, Claus Plutzit, Niclas Dandßenn, Jorgenn Weruth, Kyrstan Danßen, Peter Jockusch, Andres Undmyseyck, Hans Nawterth, Kyntelsch, Jan Stendt, Herman Pauer.

Hinder Yckyttenn an der Beynote [River Bahne near Kretingalé]

Janusch Barneqk, Stantzell Budweyll, Dauge Pruß, Joan Parpel, Juckuschs, Andres Scelleles mith Peynem, Maczko Schobraitis.

Hinder Icktenn [also known as Am Samaitischen Gansden]

Michaile, George Juckuschs.

Callathen daß dorff [Kaloté]

Mattis Kunighe, Bartoldt Slawyndt, Herman Wayßenede, Herman, Jacob Krusche, Gregor Werßenodt, Kerstan Sperre, Mertenn Sepuße, Mattis Spruden swog[er], Kerstan Sperre (*sic!*), Bartoldt Plaß, || Jenne Sedeicke.

Abelsadt daß dorff [Abelseté]

Matth Puße, Niclaus Rueß, Herman Raug, Peter Kuperck, Cristaff Dargis, Janis Janiko, Jan Putter, Jan Kawlpisenys, Tomas Sudaicke, Urban Pistkaw.

Meskarkel [Meškerkelis]

Jan Polenn, Jacob Delyn, Hans Perkam, Urban Maschiß, Herman Kunkyth, Andres Wesatczs, Georg Dargusch, Rudewille.

Rubisenn [Rubežiai]

Jorgenn Huße, Hans Huße, Claus Wete, Mertenn Syrnekul, Jorgenn Kicka, Simon Dargusche, Jan Koyke, Peter Gybbeys, Gerkant Reyße, Jan Raymunth, Andres Pickim, Hans Schoppe, Thomas Huße, Perfyntz ||

Pressaw daß dorff

Andres Gawll, Hans Kaule, Jacob Holbycke, Jacob Kecke, Pawel Narmunth, Matth Galpier, Alde Galpyer, Hans Stirinck, Math Gyndol, Gyndell Szan, Mertenn Lule, Andree Appallo, Michel Kunlen schwoger, Andres Mylseck, Hans Laßarath, Bartholt uff Nutzenn.

Tawrlackenn [Tauerlauken, Tauralaukis near Klaipėda]

Niclus, Darguschs Misseicke, Hans Schmidt, Math Stendt, Metrich Gadynga, Hans Pfluger, Jacob Schmidt.

Bagmanslandt [Backmanns, Bachmanas – Paupys near Klaipėda]

Jacob Junge Peserw, Peter Daugul, Clement Gaddesperre, Jaccub Kaule, Jan Prekun, Peeter Pesach, Hans Pawr, Myggn, Jan Karpunß, Maycke Kuckill und Peter Peckenn, || Hans Rawle, Merten Pawsche.

Iutschen das dorff

Jorgen Punge, Jan Dutsche, Gaseicka und Stancko, Claus Myle.

^c Kaw struck out.

Ratterslandt [Žardininkai, Budrikai]

Hans Gibbeis, Math Gibbeis, Budrack, Gedmynne Harde.

Callin [Kalėnai]

Jorge Kischka, Jorge Laischspisen, Daufkuen, Paul Picketasche, Wuckite, Peter Pelze, Gedwil Nawsede.

Sardenn [Žardė]

Jacob Schmidt, Lemesche, Peter Pladick, Anders Margenburg, Paul Talles, Hans Waissee, Math Gibbeis, Bretoldt Trunen, Hans Stabecke, Jan Peter, Jan Titter, Hans Kischske, Jorgen und Paul Kunthe, Peter Gibbeis.

Buttelsdorf [Budelkiemis?]

Jacob Taleicka, Peter Gregus, Paul uf Butkus erbe, Jorge Rube ufs Buttels erbe.||

Dise nachgeschreibene zcu wisenn gelt, uund am jeder ist vorpflicht am pferdt zu haldenn:

Messitenn

II mrgk. George, II mrgk. Gedmynne geheidt.

Hinder Messitenn

III mrgk. Math uf Sauken erbe³⁵, III marg. Jan Pawpel³⁶.

Dittwe

III mrg. Meren Maintain.

Garsdenn

Jhan Karthan³⁷ II mrg.

Hindere Garsden

Jorgen Hausman II mr., II mrg. Satheicka, II mr. Gedmynne.

Ayse

VI mrg. Jan Pesat, VI mrg. Math Rewnande, VI mrg. Simon Pesat, VI mrg. Prekynt Gewtkant.

Alde Beger

III mrgk. Lucas, III mrg. Mascheika, III mrg. Darguschs³⁸, III mrg. Georg Strebe || III mrg. Pictute.

Czuse

III mrg. Georg Mistaite³⁹, III mrg. Herman Ployns.

Werdenn

III mrg. Jhan Wannags, II mrg. Mattis.

Hinder Werden

III mrg. Rencz, III mrg. Juschke Jacupsche, III mrg. Georg Darge, II mrgk Jan Thauszkus.

Arittenn

III mrg. Stanislauff, III mrg. Jan Darge, III mrg. Jan Daudtkant, III mrg. Paul Willeicks, II mrg. Jan Tautkus.

Ufir Schust

III mrg. Musel Darge, III mrg. Pawel Lawzcus.

Mergeßlawken

III mrg. Rupeick Grumblis.

³⁵ In the first list he appears as living at Messitenn.

³⁶ In the first list he appears as living on the moor – Karschauschen Heyde.

³⁷ This man does not appear on the earlier list, although men with tis surname do appear in Meskarkel, Rubisenn and Tawrlackenn.

³⁸ Not on earlier list.

³⁹ Not on previous list.

Ufir Wewirse
 III mrg. Mickita Rackschis.

Cratingen
 III mrg. Gerkant, III mrg. Paul Sardt, III mrg. Hans Suenkalis, III mrg. Darge Baior, III mrg. Metricke, III mrg. Steffan Sube.

Ufnn Teuski
 III mrg. Paul Sadtwagen, III mrg. Schodus und Waiduschs, III mrg. Gedmyn Girmkal.

Uf Cratinger Wege
 Drei mrg. Mats Myneicka.

Irkitenn
 III mrg. Andre Kirkit, II mrg. Andre und Miseicke⁴⁰, II mrg. Hans Nawtert, II mrg. Jan Kaithan⁴¹.

Hinder Irkitenn
 III mrg. Januschs Berneck, III mrg. Stenczel Butweil, II mrg. Daug Pruß, II mrg. Jan Paupel, II mrg. Jackuschs, II mrg. Ander Stalles, II mrg. Maczko Sabraitis ||

Am Samatischenn Gansden
 III mrg. Mickaile, III mrg. Georg Jackuschs.

Callaten
 II mrg. Jenne Sadeicke.

Abelsatt
 II mrg. Niclaus Rues, III mrg. Cristof Dargs, III mrg. Peter Kupeick, III mrg. Jan Patter, III mrg. Jan Kawlepisins, II mrg. Thomas Sadeicka.

Mesekarkel
 II mrg. Georg Darguschs.

Rubissenn
 III mrg. Jan Raymunt, II mrg. Georg Sadeick⁴², III mrg. Hans Sceippe, III mrg. Thomas Husen.

Presaw
 III mrg. Hans Strinck, III mrg. Math Gyndel, III mrg. Andre Milseck ||

Thawerlaeckenn
 III mrg. Niclus, V mrg. Hans Schmidt, II mrg. Darguschs, II mrg. Metrick Gadynge, III mrg. Hans Pflugke, II mrg. Paul Pictaschis⁴³.

Backmanslandt
 III mrg. Hans Pawer, II mrg. Jacob Laxtigel⁴⁴.

Ratterslandt
 I mrg. Underick, III mrg. Gedmyn Harde.

Callin
 III mrg. Georg Laischspisen.

Sarden
 III mrg. Lemeschs, III mrgk Hans Kischsk.

Puttelsdorf
 III mrg. Georg Rube ||

Folios 9v-10 are empty

⁴⁰ Not listed on previous list here, but appear in 1540 list.

⁴¹ Not on previous list.

⁴² Not on previous list; Jenne Se(a)deicke appears as resident and taxpayer from Callaten (Kaloté).

⁴³ Listed previously at Callin.

⁴⁴ Not on previous list.

Klaipėdos krašto apgyvendinimas XV a. pab. – XVI a. pr.

Santrauka

Iki šiol Klaipėdos XV–XVI a. sandūros istoriją išsamiau nušviečia J. Sembritzkio darbai ir paskelbti F. G. Bunge'ės šaltiniai. Daugiausia išlikusių autentiškų dokumentų saugoma Vokiečių ordino Karaliaučiaus archyve (šiuo metu Berlyno rajone Dahleme). 1530–1792 m. Klaipėdos istorijai svarbių dokumentų yra Gdanske. Šaltiniai apie XV–XVI a. Memelio-Klaipėdos gyventojų etninę priklausomybę yra ne mažiau komplikuoti nei susijusieji su XX a. pr. apsisprendimais. Vietiniai gyventojai save įvardydavo „šišioniškiais“, t. y. čionykščiais, o XX a. ir klaipėdiškiais – memelenderiais.

XVI a. vid. išnyko karta, gyvenusi dar Ordino valdoma. XV–XVI a. sandūroje gyvenimo sąlygos išliko sunkios, ir Ordino bei Žemaitijos gyventojai labiau vertino sugebėjimą gerai valdyti nei politinę priklausomybę. Tai skatino migrantų mainus. 1466 m. Vakarų Prūsiją prijungus prie Lenkijos, Ordino vadovybė nukreipė dėmesį į Rytų Prūsijos šiaurę. Dokumentai liudija Ordino administratorių balansavimą tarp valstybės, vietos gyventojų ir žemaičių interesų. Ordino pareigūnams nuolat trūko žmogiškųjų bei žaliavų išteklių, o pajūrį kontroliavusiems žemaičiams reikėjo druskos, žuvies ir kitų dalykų. XIV a. perbėgėliai iš LDK į Ordiną buvo aprūpinami valdomis įvairiose Prūsijos vietovėse ir grįždavo atgal atlikdami karinę tarnybą. Po 1400 m. pagausėjo neturtingų perbėgėlių, kurie tikėjosi Prūsijoje ūkininkauti. Dalis jų vėliau ketino grįžti atgal. 1470–1480 m. Ordino ir LDK vadovams teko nustatyti tokiems sugrįžėliams sąlygas. XVI a. Ordino komturai Klaipėdoje ir Ragainėje konkuravo su Žemaitijos seniūnu dėl pasienio sričių gyventojų. Tai tęsėsi ir Prūsijai tapus pasaulietine valstybe. Dažnai judėjimą tarp sienų ar pasienio nesutarimus lemdavo ne politiniai, o praktiniai vietos gyventojų sprendimai. Nuolatinis judėjimas į abi pasienio puses, vertybių kaita suformavo specifinį pasienio gyventojų identitetą. Jį galima būtų apibrėžti sąvoka „šišioniškis“, t. y. čionykštis. Priklausymas regionui, o ne kalbai ar etnosui išliko svarbus iki pat Antrojo pasaulinio karo. Prūsijos šiaurėje etninę įvairovę lėmė lietuvių, žemaičių, skalvių, kuršių, prūsų apsigyvenimas kaimuose ir vokiečių – miestuose. Vokiškoji bei olandų migracija labiau palietė vakarinę Prūsijos dalį. XIV a. šaltiniai mini kuršių bei skalvių migraciją tiek į Prūsiją, tiek į Žemaitiją. Išsamesnį proceso vaizdą padeda susidaryti 1510–1520 m. Memelio-Klaipėdos komturijos bei 1540 m. Klaipėdos valsčiaus gyventojų sąrašai. XVI a. šaltiniai mini Prūsijos valdovo ir karalienės Bonos pastangas kolonizuoti pasienio sritis. Būta abipusės migracijos, nors apie asmenis, persikėlusius ar grįžusius į LDK, duomenų mažiau. Prūsijos šiaurinės dalies apgyvendinimas pasiekė aukščiausią intensyvumo tašką 1540–1560 m. Daugiausia čia apsigyveno valstiečių baltiškais asmenvardžiais, tačiau tiksliau apibrėžti jų etninę priklausomybę būtų sunku. 1510–1520 m. ir 1540 m. Memelio-Klaipėdos srities mokesčių mokėtojų sąrašai bei kiti dokumentai pateikia duomenų ir apie šių kolonistų tarpusavio ryšius. XVI a. migraciją lėmė ne kliše „Turtinga Prūsija ir neturtinga Žemaitija“, o įvairūs buitiniai veiksniai bei kolonizacija suinteresuotų administratorių iniciatyva. Vidinė kolonizacija tarsi ignoravo sienas. Ji padidėjo po 1525 m., kai Prūsija įėjo į Jogailaičių įtakos zonos valstybių sistemą. Šiuose procesuose būsimojo Klaipėdos krašto ir Žemaitijos siena buvo svarbesnė Vilniui ir Karaliaučiu nei Pietų Livonijai, Vakarų Žemaitijai ar administratoriams Klaipėdoje.