

# LATVIA



# HANSEATIC CITY RĪGA



VIDEO



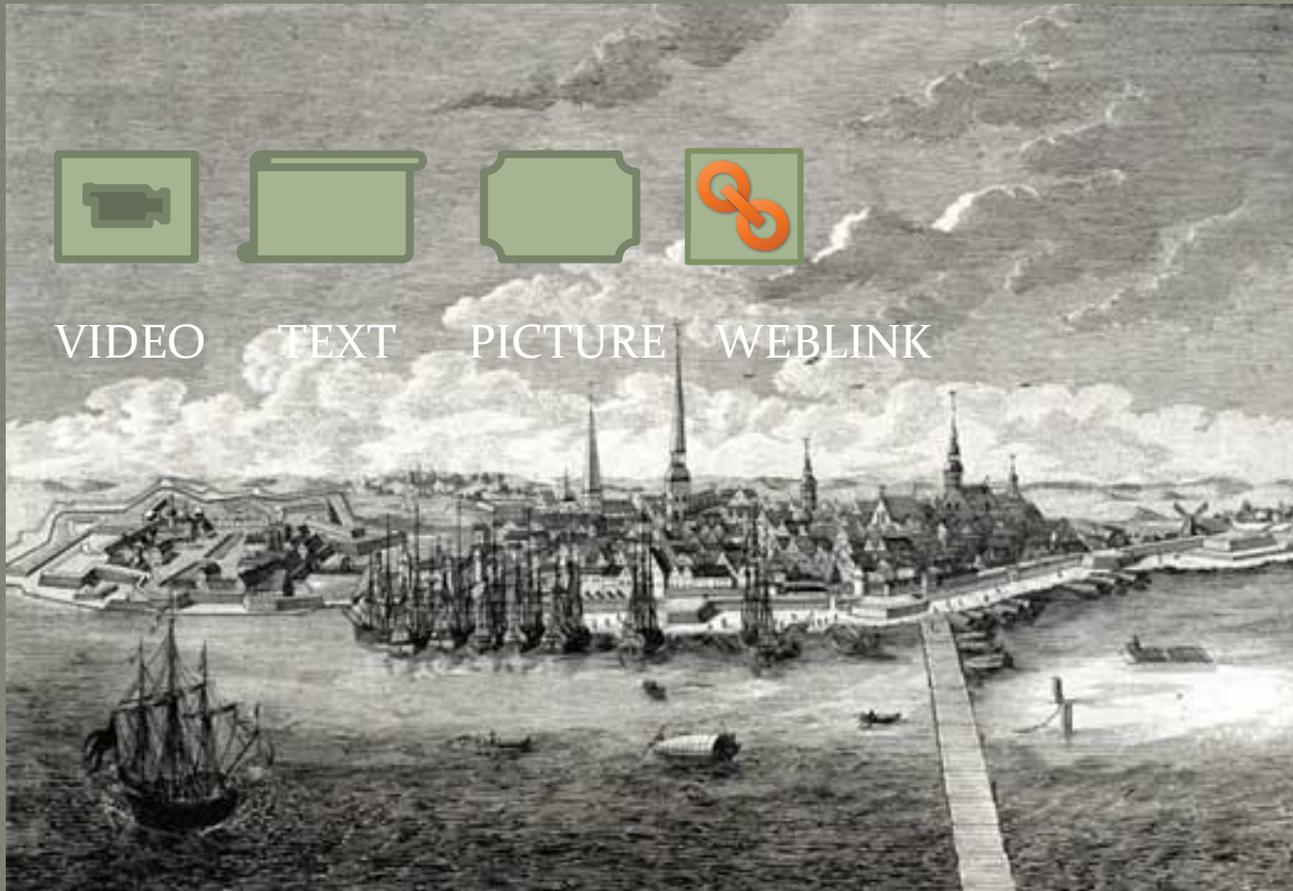
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The inclusion of Riga in the Hanseatic League in 1282 would have accelerated its development as an important trading town with vital seaward connections to Europe



# Rīga in Hanseatic League

Rīga was officially founded by the German Bishop Albert in 1201, though the area was populated already long before that. Rigans themselves originated from the ancestors of the Latvian people who settled here in the 11th and 12th centuries. During the Middle Ages Rīga was a mighty seaport, the largest city in the Swedish Empire during the 17th century, a leading port for the Russian Empire in the 18th and 19th centuries, and a powerhouse centre for commerce and trade in the entire region.

This status was facilitated by Riga's membership in the Medieval Hanseatic League. In the Middle Ages Riga was one of the most developed cities in the Hanseatic League, and is still active in the International Modern Alliance of Hanseatic cities. The Hanseatic days are remembered in Old Riga through the historical Great Guild and Small Guild, as well as the rebuilt House of the Blackheads – all of them artisans' and craftsmen's guilds in the booming city. The House of Blackheads was built in 1334 as a meeting and celebration hall, but a mostly German brotherhood of foreign merchants called the Blackheads bought the building in the 17th century. Since 1999 Rigans can again be proud of their newly reborn House of Blackheads.



# HOUSE OF BLACKHEADS



# RIVER ROUTE DAUGAVA



VIDEO



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# SEA ROUTE RIGA - DANCIG



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# LAND ROUTE RIGA - PSKOV



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# RIVER ROUTE GAUJA



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# RIVER ROUTE **VENTA**



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# River DAUGAVA

- Daugava waterway began at Riga port at Rīdzenes river entry, where all the goods were stored, evaluated, weighed, packaged and handled. Next largest commodity storage place was Koknese town, where happened to be land trade routes to Vidzeme. Daugava travel destination was initially Smolensk, Polotsk and later Vitebska.
- To guard and monitor these roads, there were built Daugavgrīva (1305), Rīga (1201), Salaspils (1186), Ikšķile (1185), Lielvārde (1201), Aizkraukle (after 1209), Koknese (1209), Altene (14. century.), Sēlpils (1373), Lakstene (1354), Krustpils (1297), Dignāja (1366), and Daugavpils (1279) fortresses.



# River VENTA

- Venta waterway started in Kurzeme near Ventspils and was accessible to ships till Ventas rumba near Kuldīga, which was an important overland intersection. There was a project to extend the road but it was never finished.
- To guard and monitor the road there were built Ventspils (1290), Piltene (1309) and Kuldīga (1242) fortresses.



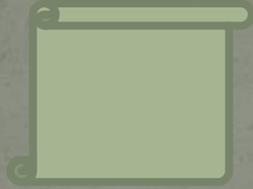
# River GAUJA

- The ancient Gauja waterway through Turaida and Cēsis led to Tartu, which at the time of Hansa was mostly used as a way to trade land with the cities of Pskov and Novgorod.
- One branch of the road went along the Gauja to Cēsis city, from which began overland road along Rauna, Smiltene, Gaujiena and Alūksne castles to Izborsk and Pskov cities.
- Second branch from Turaida went to Limbaži, along Burtnieki and Rūjiena castles to Vīlande city. Third branch through Straupe city led to Valmiera city, further along Valka castle to Tērbata city.
- To guard and monitor there were built Sigulda (1207), Cēsu (1209), Turaida (1214), Limbaži (1223), Valmiera (1224), Straupe (1300), Alūksne (1342), Valka (1345) and a lot of smaller fortresses.



# HANSEATIC CITY

## CĒSIS (Wenden)



TEXT



PICTURE



# CĒSIS (Wenden)

- The planning of the town of Cēsis was done in the second half of the 13th century. The marketplace with a church was in the centre of the town. The centre of housing was the stone castle of the Livonian Order with its three fortified towers. The town was also encircled by a dolomite stonewall with eight towers and five gates. Buildings from the medieval ages include St. John's Church (built 1281–1284), the ruins of the Order's castle, Cēsis Castle and fortification walls, fragments of which can still be seen at Vaļņu iela and Palasta iela. In addition, ancient road networks and building plots have survived from medieval times, although many of the buildings themselves have been ruined (the last destroyed in 1748).



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# HANSEATIC CITY

## LIMBAZI (Lemsahl)



TEXT



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# LIMBAŽI (Lemsahl)

In ancient times, Limbaži was a Livonian settlement known as Lemisele, part of Metsepole. In the early 13th century, Bishop Albert and the Teutonic knights destroyed the village while conquering Metsepole, and built a castle, around which formed the new city, Lemsahl. Until the beginning of the 16th century, Lemsahl could be reached by seagoing vessels travelling up the Svētupe. Ships came from as far as Lübeck and Copenhagen to trade for honey, wax, lumber, grain, and furs. The small trading camp surrounding the castle grew into a large town, and was admitted to the Hanseatic League. Each year, Lemsahl hosted a conference attended by barons from all over Livonia, and the city hosted at least three other fairs throughout the year as well. During these fairs, the town may have held as many as 20,000 people at once. In addition, the Bishop of Riga made Lemsahl his spring residence, which became a walled city to protect both the bishop and the trading center. In population, Lemsahl was second only to Riga.



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# HANSEATIC CITY

## VENTSPILS (Windau)



TEXT



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# VENTSPILS (Windau)

Ventspils is a town in northwestern Latvia in the historical Courland region of Latvia, and is the sixth largest city in the country. Ventspils developed around the Livonian Order Ventspils Castle, built along the Venta River. It was chartered in 1314 and became an important mercantile city of the Hanseatic League. As part of the Duchy of Courland, Ventspils blossomed as a shipbuilding centre. 44 warships and 79 trading ships were built in the town, and it was from Ventspils that the Duke's fleet set out to colonize Gambia and Tobago. Metal, amber, and wood-working shops also became important to the city's development.



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# HANSEATIC CITY **KULDIGA**



TEXT



PICTURE



# KULDĪGA (Goldingen)

Kuldīga is the pearl of Kurzeme, Latvia's western region. It is an ancient town with unique, distinctive architecture. Kuldīga was first mentioned in 1242. It joined the Hanseatic League in 1368. In the 17th century, Kuldīga (along with Jelgava (Mitau)) was one of the capitals of the Duchy of Courland. The origin of the ancient town Kuldīga can be explained by its location on the crossroads: the waterways of River Venta and land routes joining the Prussian lands with the lower reaches of River Daugava. The ancient Kuldīga town of Couronians – a fortified castle mound and a settlement were located 3,5 km to the North down the River Venta on its left bank. The castle mound can be observed nowadays still. It is located on a bank of the River Venta on the foreland between the deep gully of the River Veckuldīga and the ancient valley of the Venta. The Site of the Castle itself is located in the several hectare wide area, but together with the Old City of Kuldīga – the area of more than ten hectares. There might have been a port by the River Veckuldīga.

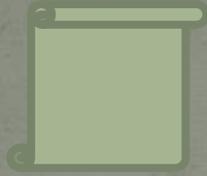


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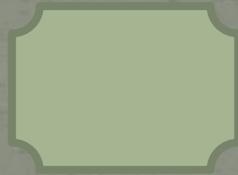


# HANSEATIC CITY

## KOKNESE (Kokenhusen)



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# KOKNESE (Kokenhusen)

- The site of Koknese was originally a Latgalian and Selonian settlement named Kukenois. The town, known in German as Kokenhusen, received its town privileges in 1277. During the 14th century, Koknese flourished as part of the mercantile Hanseatic League. Archbishop John V of Wallenrodt was able to resolve the conflict with the Teutonic Order and restore the territory to the church in 1397.



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# HANSEATIC CITY

## VALMIERA (Wolmar)



TEXT



PICTURE



# VALMIERA (Wolmar)

- Valmiera and its surroundings have been one of the longest-inhabited regions of Latvia. Archeological evidence indicates the site was inhabited 9,000 years ago. In 1224 after partition of Tālava trade roads along the Gauja river became property of Livonian Brothers of the Sword who erected a castle which is today known as Valmiera Castle. After the Battle of Saule in 1236 Valmiera Castle and nearby lands became the property of the newly established Livonian Order. Valmiera was a member of the Hanseatic League from the 14th–16th centuries. Involvement in the Hansa brought significant trade and movement into the town's life. During the 14th-16th centuries several regional assemblies (landtags) were held in Valmiera. After the Livonian War in 1583 Valmiera was heavily devastated and was incorporated into the Duchy of Livonia as part of Wenden Voivodeship.



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