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Place names in the historic cadastral plan of Dinaburg County: localisation of place names in order to complete the place names database of Latvia

Keywords: Daugavpils, Dinaburg, feature type, geographical feature, geographical name, Latgale, man-made geographical feature, natural geographical feature, place name.

Summary: The historic cadastral plan of Dinaburg county was prepared more than 200 years ago (in 1784). This paper discusses the place names of the cadastral plan of Dinaburg county in order to complete the Place Names Database of Latvia. The place names have been georeferenced, summarized in a table and entered into the Place Names Database if the geographical feature still exists. In some cases the geographical object has disappeared. For example, to the north of the village *Nīcgale* a lake had been located, but this lake does not exist anymore. Names of small rivers have often disappeared or differ from the present listing the Place Names Database. Lake names have survived better, for example, *Kosinis / Koša ezers* (oze: *Кожь*), *Vabales ezers* (oze: *Ваболь*). However, also lake names have been changed, for example, *Dublinīku ezers*, which earlier had the name oze: *Донашунь*.

Introduction

After the first partition of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (*Rzecz Pospolita*) in 1772 Latgale was joined to Russia (Jēkabsons 2005). In accordance with the manifest of 1765 by Catherine the Great the General Land Survey of Russia (including Latgale) had been carried out over nine years (1775-1784). The cadastral plan of Dinaburg County had been prepared. For the late XVIII century, the methods the surveyors used were a bit obsolete.

Due to the lack of geodetic instruments and qualified staff, the Survey Department chose not to use map projections and geodetic coordinates; generally, the methods the surveyors used dated back to the medieval Russian “land-measuring”. However, a significant influence of the French survey techniques should be mentioned (Golubinsky et al. 2013). The aim of the present study is to examine how geographical features and their names have changed over time.

Material and methods

The place names of the cadastral plan of Dinaburg county are located in the vicinity of Jēkabpils (Kūku parish) and Daugavpils (Ambeļi, Biķernieki, Dubna, Kalupe, Līksna, Maļinova, Naujene, Nīcgale, Vabole, Viški parish), compared with the place names used on the present topographic maps, and entered into the Place Names Database as one of the place name sources, if the geographical feature still exists. The names of lakes are summarized in a table because they have changed less than

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the names of other geographical features. The place names on the cadastral plan of Dinaburg county are written in Russian. Sometimes it is difficult to read the names because of indistinct scrip.

Feature types on the cadastral plan of the Dinaburg county

On the cadastral plan of Dinaburg county we find names of the man-made features (names of populated places and post offices) as well as names of the natural features, such as lakes, rivers, ravines.

Man-made features indicated on the cadastral plan of Dinaburg County are:

- towns – *gorod*, such as *городъ Дюнабургъ*, now the city of *Daugavpils*;
- hamlets – *mestečko*, such as *местечко Крейцборгъ*, now the town *Jēkabpils* with a part of the town *Krustpils*;
- villages – *selco*, for instance, *сел: Езефово*, now the village *Juzefova* (see Figure 1);
- villages – *dzerevna*, for instance, *д: Дудали*, now the village *Dūdeļi* (see Figure 1);
- villages – *sloboda*, for instance, *Кабылова Слобода*, which does not exist now;
- populated places smaller than a village - *zascenok*, for instance, *Застенокъ Стронской*, now the village *Stropica* (see Figure 1);
- post offices - *pošta*, for instance, *почта Кирубская*, the post office *Ķirupe* in Līksna parish shut down a few years ago;
- inns – *karčma*, on the cadastral plan of Dinaburg county only the feature type *карчма* is written, not the name.



Figure 1: Territory of Naujene parish and the city Daugavpils on the Cadastral Plan of Dinaburg county.

Natural features found on the cadastral plan of Dinaburg County are:

- lakes – *ozero*, for instance, *озе: Стронъ*, now *Lielais Stropu ezers*;

- rivers – *reka*, for instance, *pe: Прудына*;
- streams – *ručei*, for instance, *py: Стропъ*, now *Strope Naujenes pag.*;
- ravines – *ovrag*, for instance, *овр: Вейшовка*, the ravine bearing the name *Veišovka* at Naujene parish does not exist now (see Figure 1).

Changes of natural features and of their names

The most important task during this examination has been to check the location of each geographical feature on map and to see if the same feature corresponds to contemporary maps. The largest lake of Vabole parish *Boltazars* (48,5 ha) is not drawn at all on the cadastral plan of Dinaburg county. It is likely that the surveyors often did not inspect the distant and uninhabited territories (Golubinsky et al. 2013). At the city Daugavpils (see Figure 2), approximately at the place where the river *Meļņička* is located nowadays, we find the small, short river *Strupica* (*pe: Струпица*) on the cadastral plan of Dinaburg. Most likely its name is connected with Latgalian *strups* ‘short’.

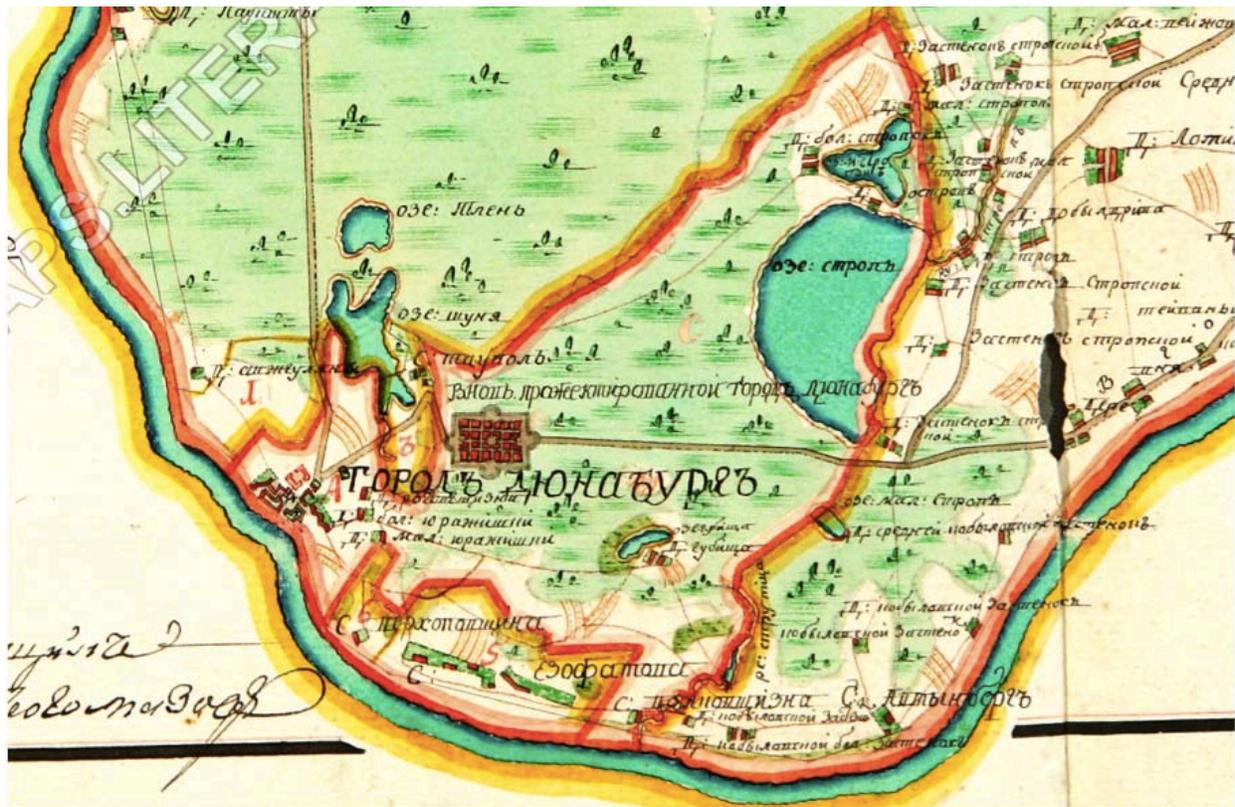


Figure 2: The territory of *Daugavpils* (городъ Дюнабургъ) on the cadastral plan of Dinaburg county.

Names of small rivers have often disappeared or differ from the present names in the the Place Names Database. Lake names have survived better, for example, *Kosinis / Koša ezers* (озе: *Кожь*), *Vabales ezers* (озе: *Ваболь*), see overview in Table 1. Lake names which are not changed are in bold. However, not only river names, but also lake names have changed, for example, *Dublinīku ezers*, which earlier had the name *озе: Донашунь*. Also other names differ slightly (see Table 1).

Place name in Latvian (2016)	Place name in Latgalian (2016)	Place name in Russian (1784)	Parish or city
Gluhoje	Gluhoje	озе: Глухое	Ambelī parish
Galvānu ezers	Galvānu azars	озе: Глухое	Ambelī parish
Raudinkas / Putānu ezers	Raudinkas / Putānu azars	озе: Путочь	Ambelī parish
Šekšineits	Šekšineits	озе: Шешкино	Ambelī parish
Gubišces ezers	Gubišces azars	озе: Губица	Daugavpils
Lielais Stropu ezers	Lielais Stropu ezers	озе: Стропъ	Daugavpils
Mazais Stropu ezers	Mazais Stropu ezers	озе: М. Стропокъ	Daugavpils
Stropaka ezers	Stropaks	озе: Мал. Стропъ	Daugavpils
Plocins	Pluocins	озе: Плень	Daugavpils
Šuņazars	Šuņazars	озе: Шуня	Daugavpils
Veirūgnes ezers	Veirūgnis azars	озе: Долгое	Dubna parish
Kosinis / Koša ezers	Kuosins / Kuoša azars	озе: Кожь	Līksna parish
Ļūbasts	Ļūbasts	озе: Лубастъ	Līksnas parish
Lielais Kolupa ezers Mazais Kolupa ezers	Lelais Kolupa azars Mozais Kolupa azars	озе: Калупское	Kalupe parish
Krīvānu ezers	Krīvānu azars	озе: Кривань	Kalupe parish
Seiļu ezers	Seiļu azars	озе: Сейло	Kalupe parish
Dublinīku ezers	Dublinīku azars	озе: Донашунь	Vabole parish
Vabales ezers	Vabalis azars	озе: Ваболь	Vabole parish
Ārdavas ezers / Vordives ezers	Vuordivis azars	озе: Ордова	Višķi parish
Dotka	Dotka	озе: Дотка	Višķi parish
Kiureņu ezers	Kyuriņš	озе: Кивринь	Višķi parish
Lubanecs	Lubanecs	озе: Лубань	Višķi parish
Luknas ezers	Luknas azars	озе: Лукна	Višķi parish
Rogūciets	Rogūciets	озе: Рогань	Višķi parish
Višku ezers	Vyšku azars	озе: Вышки	Višķi parish

Table 1. Lake names today and on the cadastral plan of Dinaburg county in 1784

Changes of man-made features and of their names

Also names of man-made features, including names of villages, have changed over more than 200 years. And new village names have appeared. The number of villages has increased significantly. For instance, from the area of Nīcgale parish there are 26 village names in the present Place Names Database of Latvia, whereas there are only 8 village names on the cadastral plan of Dinaburg county, of which only a half have survived: *Kalvāni* (ð: *Колваны*), *Molagols* (ð: *Малясна*), *Rasnači* (ð: *Ресначи*), *Sotugols* (ð: *Самы*). (see Figure 3).



Figure 3: Territory of Nīcgale parish on the cadastral plan of Dinaburg County.

Landscape changes

During the span of more than 230 years the landscape has changed. Lakes have disappeared and the flow of rivers has changed. In some cases the geographical feature has disappeared. For example, to the north of the village *Nīcgale* a lake is located on the cadastral plan of Dinaburg county, but this lake does not exist anymore (see Figure 3). Maybe it has to do with the building a railway line from Rīga to Daugavpils, opened in 1861 (Altbergs et al. 2010:9). Because of an overgrowing process during the last decades the lake *Lubaņecs* (озе. *Лубань*) has disappeared. It still exists on the topographic map, scale 1:25 000, which was prepared during the Soviet Period with the lake name оз. *Лубанцы* (see Figure 4).



Figure 4. Territory of Nīcgale parish on the cadastral plan of Dinaburg County and on the topographic map, scale 1:25 000.

Conclusions

Numerous geographical features and their names have changed during time. This is especially the case in the area of the city Daugavpils. We also see that several names of the small lakes have disappeared, mainly due to overgrowing. The cadastral plan of Dinaburg county is an important source to ascertain which place names are the oldest ones, and which name variants have survived as preferred names.

And last, but not least, in compliance with my title: By exploiting older sources like cadastral plans it is possible to contribute to the completion of the Place Names Database of Latvia. At the same time it is, modestly expressed, a cultural and historical contribution.

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