

Place names and places in Latvia

Vietvārdi un vietas Latvijā

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The first part of this article is devoted to the Latvian lexeme *vieta* ‘place’, which is a rather rare place name – approximately 200 such toponyms (mostly microtoponyms) occur in the card index of Latvian place names of the Latvian Language Institute (University of Latvia). This is a peculiar generic lexeme, used as the second of what is referred to as an independent component of compound names or collocations, to some extent semantically empty so that without prior knowledge, it is not obvious what type of geographic object is being named. However, it cannot be claimed that the toponymic component *vieta* has no meaning, as its most common meaning is ‘the place, where some object or phenomenon has existed earlier’ (*Šķūņa vieta*, *Cepļa vieta*), reflecting memories of the past. A rarer alternative is the type of names that are associated with an object that exists at present. Even fewer toponyms with the second component *vieta* are related to some person (expressing possessive meaning), to some processes, associations, etc. Furthermore, it is surprising that a massive concentration of those *vieta*-names are found in Eastern Latvia or Latgale. The second part of the article introduces the study of Latvian place names that indicate a location regarding another place name. These are compound names and collocations that have as their first component *Augš-* ‘upper-’, *Apakš-* ‘below’, *Virš-* ‘over, above’, *Starp-* ‘between’, *Zem-* ‘under-’, etc. Place names with *Kalna-/Kaln-* ‘hill-, upper- and *Lejas-/Lej-* ‘valley-, lower-’ are very often used as toponymic antonyms (*Lejasteteri* – *Kalnteteri*). The most prevalent prefixes, which help to navigate regarding other topo-objects, are *Aiz-*, *Pa-*, *Pār-*; only a few examples have been recorded with the formants *Starp-*, *Iekš-*, *Priekš-*. For this latter type of toponym, another place name or nomenclature word usual serve as an etymon.

Key-words: onomastics; place; toponym; microtoponym; derivation of place names; location.

¹ The first part of the article is based on the paper by Ojārs Bušs “Latvian place names having the component *vieta* ‘place’” that has been presented at the International scientific conference entitled “The Baltic languages and white nights. Local meaning in language”, Rīga, June 20–21, 2016. Ojārs Bušs passed away on 3 January, 2017. The main features of his presentation have been preserved.

1. Latvian place names with the component *vieta* ‘place’

A place name is the proper name for any place or geographical entity (UN 1974, 68). The main function of a proper name is to separate or distinguish one specific item from other similar items. Thus, the primary function of a place name is to separate or distinguish one specific place from other places. The relatively unspecified lexical meaning of the Latvian common noun *vieta* ‘place’ seems not to be highly appropriate for distinguishing places, and thus is used as a place name or a part of a place name.

However, the card index of the Latvian place names of the Latvian Language Institute (University of Latvia) contains approximately 200 names (predominantly compound microtoponyms) that have *vieta*² ‘place’ as the second component.

Of these names, 85% constitute collocations that have the noun *vieta* as the last, independent component. This means that this lexeme – *vieta* – functions as a generic term in these names, namely, as a highly unspecified, generic term, leaving the burden of distinguishing to the dependent, most onomastic, part of the compound place name or collocation. For example, the following occur: *Šķūņa vieta*³ (Latv. *šķūnis* ‘shed, barn’ + *vieta* ‘place’) and *Šķūņa pļava* (Latv. *šķūnis* ‘shed, barn’ + *pļava* ‘meadow’); from the last of those place names – *Šķūņa pļava* – we can understand clearly that this is a name of a meadow (although there used to be some exceptions, and *Šķūņa pļava* can occasionally be an exception, such as a pasture), while, if we do not have previous knowledge, it is not obvious what type of geographic object *Šķūņa vieta* is. Thus, usually the generic part of a compound microtoponym incorporates the generalizing part of the meaning of this name. Even so, this is not the case for microtoponyms that have *vieta* as the second component.

Nevertheless, we cannot assert that in toponyms, the highly specific generic term *vieta* is devoid of meaning. Instead, this meaning is reflected by the typical etymological semantics or motivation of the place names with the component *vieta*, and the semantics are the following:

² The first two meanings of Latv. noun *vieta* ‘1. an area, place, territory in which there is, happens to be, was, will be, or could happen something’; ‘2. space of the room, the area, part of the space intended for a specific purpose’ (after *Tēzaurus*).

The etymology of the word Latv./Lith. *vieta* is compared with Church Slavonic *bumamu*, Russ. verb *bumamь* ‘to live, reside’ etc. and comes from Ide. root **uei* with the meaning ‘to bent, to turn’ + *-t* > ancient Baltic **ueit* > **ueitā* > *vieta*. From Ide. **ueit* derived also substantives with the meaning ‘which is bent, pliable’ → ‘pliable twig’ → ‘twig, branch’ (cf. Russ. *ветвь* ‘twig, branch’). Perhaps this can explain primary meaning of Latv. substantive *vieta* ‘area fenced or marked with potted or braided twigs’, cf. Latv. *dārza vieta* ‘fenced garden area’, Latv. *mājas vieta* ‘the building with the surrounding fenced area’ (Endzelīns DI II, 1974, 343; Karulis II, 1992, 526–527).

³ The examples in this article are from the card-index of Latvian Language Institute (*Latviešu valodas institūta Vietvārdu kartotēka*), from published volumes of the *Dictionary of Latvian place names* (Lvv I–II, Lvv III–VI), as well as from *Geographical Names database of Latvian Geospatial Information Agency* (*Latvijas Ģeotelpiskās informācijas aģentūras Vietvārdu datubāze*) /https://vietvardi.lgia.gov.lv/vv/to_www.sakt?p_mode=1/, and other publications, e.g., *Latvijas ciemi* (http://map.lgia.gov.lv/index.php?lang=0&cPath=3&txt_id=137&0&ap=59).

1. A place where some object or phenomenon has existed earlier, such as *Pļavas vieta* ‘a boscaje, where a meadow has been’, as this is connected to some former object or feature and it is the most typical motivation for the place names with the component *vieta*. At least 70% (and probably even more) of all *vieta*-place names have had this type of motivation. This conclusion is based on the informants’ comments on the cards in the card index at the Latvian Language Institute. Examples of this are *Ustobeņis vīta* (dial. form from Latv. *istaba* ‘room’, also obs. ‘house in the countryside’ + *vieta* ‘place’) – name of a field in the Aizkalne civil parish⁴: „Šinī tīrumā kādreiz bijusi neliela istabiņa, mājiņa uzcelta ‘A small room, cottage was built in this field’”. Additional analogical examples are: *Kaudžu vieta* (Latv. *kaudze* ‘pile, heap; haystack’) – a meadow-name in the Vecpils civil parish: „Tā sauc pļavu pakalnā [...] kur muižas ļaudis krāvuši sienu stirnām ‘The meadow on the hillock [...] where manor people stacked the hay for roe deer’”; *Rejys vīta* (dial. form from Latv. *rija* ‘threshing barn’ + *vieta* ‘place’) – name of the field in the Dviete civil parish: „Tīrums mežmalā: te senāk atradusies muižas rija ‘Field on the edge of a forest: a threshing barn of the manor used to be located here’”. However, although a majority of names containing the component *vieta* have not been commented on in the card index, it seems that they are also motivated.

Place names in this subgroup most often reflect memories related to objects, phenomena, or features that are not highly familiar to a modern city-dweller, such as some former lime kiln or brick kiln (Latv. *ceplis*) located in a particular place: *Cepļa vieta* – a hill in the Kalupe civil parish (the card index contains eleven names of such topo-objects). In our context, the second most popular former object that is highly familiar both in cities or in towns or the country-side, is a tavern or pub (Latv. *kruogs*, East. Latv. *krūgs*), and there are eight place names *Krūga vīta* or *Kroga vieta* in all of Latvia. The third most popular toponym of this type is clearly Latgalian, as it reflects memories of a former farmstead called *sāta* (cf. Latv. *sāta* 1) ‘der Zaun (fence, hedge)’; 2) ‘das Bauernhaus, das Bauerngesinde, der Bauernhof (peasant house, a family house)’; 3) ‘der Hof (yard, court)’ ME III 833), there are six place names *Sātys vīta* in the eastern part of Latvia. An additional object that is remembered and mentioned relatively frequently is the above-mentioned shed or barn (Latv. *šķūnis*) – there are five recorded toponyms of the form *Šķūņa vieta*, and an additional one with the East. Latv. dial. lexeme *piuneite* [*pūnīte*] (cf. Latv. *pūne*, also *pūnis* ‘eine Scheune (shed, barn), ein Anbau [...] zum Heuaufbewahren (wing for hay storage)’ (ME III 447), although the memories in the last case – dial. toponym *Pyun’eišu vīta* – a swamp and a forest in the Malta civil parish – are dissolved, the informant has stated: „Nekādas pyun’es nabeja ‘There was no shed at all’”. Sometimes it is difficult to determine whether the real object originally associated with the motivation of the place name has been forgotten (as *Pyun’eišu vīta*) or some fictional or even mythological motivation has been created. For example, *Cepļa vīta* – a field in the Malta civil parish, was commented on by an informant in dialectal speech as „Valnc cepļi būviejs ‘Devil has built a kiln’”.

⁴ The location of toponyms in the first part of this article is provide according to the administrative division of Latvia into civil parishes before World War II (which was used by Jānis Endzelīns in the *Dictionary of Latvian Place names* (Lvv I–II)).

The most typical memorial motivation for place names that have *vieta* as the second component is connected to some former, now extinct, building. Some buildings are recorded only once in the place names of this type, such as *Kambara vieta* (Latv. archaic lexeme *kambaris* ‘separate (usually small) room; dwelling house; separate room or house for optional activities’ (Tēzauris)), *Majaka vīta* (Latv. dial. lexeme *majaks* ‘outlook tower, lighthouse’ (Tēzauris) – a word of Slavonic origin), *Smēdes vieta* and *Kaļvis vīta* (lexeme of Latvian standard language *smēde* ‘forge, smithy’, and East. Latvian form from lexeme *kalve* ‘forge, smithy’). Some of the mentioned buildings do not reflect real memories, but instead express a testimony on legends, such as *Baznīcas vieta* (Latv. *baznīca* ‘church’) – a hill in the Ērgļi civil parish, where they – as in the legend – had begun to build a church, however each night someone had torn down the parts of the building erected during the day (thus, we can conclude that this was not the best site for the church). Nonetheless, the hill is still referred to as *Baznīcas vieta*. Some other former objects are also remembered and mentioned in *vieta*-place names, such as East. Latv. *dzerauņa* ‘village’: *Dzerauņas vieta* – a place in the Malta civil parish; *ceļš* ‘road’: *Reigys ceļa vīta* (Latv. *Rīgas ceļš* ‘road to Rīga’) – a toponym in the Nautrēni civil parish; *tilts* ‘bridge’: *Tilta vieta* – place name in the Birzgale civil parish (there was a bridge cross the River Daugava, used during WWII for a very short time), etc.

All other motivations of the *vieta*-place names are far less frequent, even sporadic:

1. Occasionally, although less frequently than anyone would expect before conducting an analysis of real recorded toponyms, a place of an existing object at the time being is called *vieta*: *Baraviku vieta* (Latv. *baravika* ‘penny bun cap’) – a name of a forest; *Ozolvieta* (Latv. *ozols* ‘oak’) – a name of a forest, *Omūta vīta* (East. Latv. dial. *omuts* < Russian *омут* ‘whirlpool’) – a fishing place.
2. When a place belongs to some person, this can be referred to as *vieta*, that is, one can see a possessive meaning: *Laurina vieta* – a name of the field that has belonged to a man named *Laurins*.
3. A place that is connected in some other way to some person can also be called *vieta*: *Pītera vieta* (cf. East. Latv. anthroponym *Pīters*) – a name of a hill.
4. Sometimes a place that is located close to an object is called *vieta*: *Bērza vieta* (Latv. *bērzs* ‘birch’) – a deep place in the River *Vārtāja* where a large birch grows.
5. A place where some processes use or used to take place: *Smeļamā vieta* (Latv. verb *smelt* ‘to draw water’ – a name of the whirlpool in the river from which the water is taken when the well is dry), *Pieguļas vieta* (Latv. *pieguļa* ‘night-watch’) – a name of a meadow.
6. A place associated with some fictional personage, such as *Raganu vieta* (Latv. *ragana* ‘witch’).
7. A place connected with some real event: *Uguņvieta* (Latv. *uguns* ‘fire’) ‘a burned out place’.
8. A place associated with some associations, that is, a metaphorically constructed toponym: *Zača vīta* (East. Latv. form from *zaķis* ‘hare’) – a farmstead and a small piece of land in the forest, so small that only a hare could live there.

9. A place that is characterized by some specific features or peculiarities, which is expressed by an adjective: *Vecā vieta* (Latv. *vecs* ‘old’) – a name of the place where a village that now has been transferred but has existed here before), *Tumšā vieta* (Latv. *tumšs* ‘dark’) – a name of a forest.

As mentioned earlier, a nomenclature word, *vieta*, as a component of a place name is a peculiar generic lexeme, which to some extent is semantically empty. Of course, to quote a Latvian proverb *zārks jau nevar palikt tukšā* ‘the coffin can’t stay empty for a long time’, and this *vieta* obtains a lot of meanings, as there are many types of topographical objects named by *vieta*-place names. Most frequently *vieta* – as a component of a place name – is a field (49 of approximately 180 analysed place names), 18 × *vieta*-place names are names of meadows, 9 × are names of hills and 6 × are names of forests. Only seven *vieta*-place names are described as names of what is referred to as uninhabited places, which seems to be a feature most suitable to be called *vieta*. Some more very suitable features are former, more or less destroyed farmsteads and ruins.

Thus, a place name that contains the common noun *vieta* is predominantly motivated by some reference to a bygone era and only occasionally these types of place names reflect an existing situation. The most impressive reminiscences are connected to both a lime-kiln or a brick-kiln and a tavern or pub. For examples, *Cepļa vīta* as a field in the Malta civil parish, and *Krūga vīta* as a field in the Brigi civil parish can probably be mentioned once again as some of the most prototypical among those place names.

When analysing these toponyms from an areal aspect, it appears *a priori* that Latv. *vieta* is an exceedingly common word that belongs to the core of the Latvian lexis, and *vieta*-place names should not exhibit peculiarities of their location. However, they do. We have an extremely high concentration of those names (one can say in the Eastern dialect: *vīta*-names) occurring in Eastern Latvia or Latgale, a relatively respectable number of *vieta*-place names in Western Latvia or Kurzeme, and only some sporadic names of this type in Northern Latvia or Vidzeme.

How do we account for this situation? This remains enigmatic to onomasticians, and this means that we fortunately have the opportunity to continue the research of Latvian place names (they still incorporate many enigmas).

2. Place name regarding another place

It is a self-evident truth or axiom that each place name (the name of the geographical location) refers to a place. We live in a world of functional dependencies (Malik 2008; Šķilters, Raita 2015), and the derivation of the place names also fulfil the same regularities and rules. This study has focussed solely on place names, indicating the location with respect to another place name in Latvia. The following place names are under review – compound names and collocations – that contain the first component:

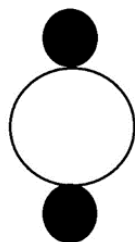
Augš- ‘upper-’ / *Virs-* ‘over, above’ / *Kalna-/Kaln-* ‘hill-, upper-’;

Apakš- ‘below-, ‘under-’ / *Zem-* ‘under-’ / *Lejas-/Lej-* ‘valley-, lower-’;

Vidus-/Vidējais- ‘middle-’ / *Starp-* ‘between?’.

The location of the geographical object can be illustrated graphically by geometrical relations as follows (see Figure 1 and 2):

Augš-, Virs-, Kalna-/Kaln-



(= toponym or geographical appellative //
nomenclature word in the middle)

Apakš-, Zem-, Lejas-/Lej-

Figure 1.

**Vidus-/Vidējais-
Starp-**

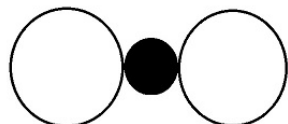


Figure 2.

Augš- ‘upper-’ – a fair number of these examples have been recorded, with approximately 25 toponyms occurring in all Latvia. Examples of these are: the farmstead *Augšbriņķi* in Ogresgals⁵ – cf. farmstead *Briņķi* in the same civil parish; the farmstead *Augšjaunzemi* in Tome – cf. farmstead *Jaunzemi*; the village *Augšlīgatne* – cf. town and river *Līgatne*; village *Augštūja* – cf. an inhabited place *Tūja*; part of the village *Augšmukti* in Rožkalni – cf. *Mukti*, the River *Augšdedze* in Rožkalni.

Virs- ‘over, above’ – semantically close to the toponyms with *Augš-* (see Figure 1), but very few examples have been reported in Latvia: *Virskalne* – a farmstead in Galgauska, *Virskalni* – two farmsteads in Jērcēni and Pilskalne.

***Apakš-** ‘below-, ‘under-’ – although theoretically could be Latvian place names containing this component (as an antonym to the toponyms with *Augš-* or *Virs-*), but no such place names are currently used in Latvia.

It seems that the most common in this category of Latvian toponyms are the toponymical derivatives with the first component **Kalna-/Kaln-** ‘hill-, upper-’ – approximately 870 place names occur, as well as **Lejas-/Lej-** ‘valley-, lower-’ – which account for approximately 440 place names. These can be considered as toponymic antonyms. Often toponyms that have the first component *Kalna-/Kaln-* / or *Augš-* and *Lejas-/Lej-* are used in pairs like antonyms, cf. the farmsteads *Lejas Pēterēni* – *Kalna Pēterēni* in Līgatne; the farmsteads *Lejas Bites* – *Kalna Bites*

⁵ In the second part of this article, the location of toponyms is given according to the administrative division of Latvia into civil-parishes nowadays (after 2008).

in Launkalne; the farmsteads *Lejasteteri* – *Kalnteteri* in Limbaži; the farmsteads *Lejasvirlapi* – *Kalnvirlapi* in Liepupe; the villages *Lejas Sloboda* – *Kalna Sloboda* in Sakstagals; the lakes *Lejas Bužezers* – *Kalna Bužezers* in Vireši, etc.

To a great extent, the semantics of the toponyms that contain *Vidus-* and *Starp-* are similar:

Vidus-/Vidējais ‘middle-’ (see Figure 2) – this component does not commonly occur in place names (approx. 60 recordings), and it is used more often in official toponymy (in documents) than in colloquial language, such as the farmstead *Vidus Aščuki* – cf. villages *Aščuki* in Višķi and Dubna; the farmstead *Vidus Bebri* in Cesvaine – cf. the farmstead *Bebri*; the farmstead *Vidus Bākšāni* in Sarkaņi civil parish – cf. the farmstead *Bākšāni*; the lake *Vidējais Garezers* in Carnikava – cf. lakes *Ziemeļu Garzezers* and *Dienvidu Garezers* in the same place, *Vidējais ezers* in Ņukši – cf. *ezers* ‘lake’; the lake *Vidus ezers* in Svente – cf. *ezers* ‘lake’; the river *Vidusupe* in Ģibuļi – cf. *upe* ‘river’.

Starp- ‘between’ – with rather close semantics to *Vidus/Vidējais-*; only one toponymical example is known in Latvia: the lake *Starpezers* in Prauliena (cf. *ezers* ‘lake’). However, not one toponym with the formant *starp-* coined from another place name has been attested.

Some rather rare toponymic examples recorded in Latvia with the formants/ former prepositions *Priekš-* and *Iekš-* are:

Priekš- ‘in front’ (see Figure 3) – only five place names (compound names) are used: *Priekšāres* – the farmstead in Viesīte (cf. farmstead *Āres*); *Priekškājas* – the farmstead in Salaspils (cf. farmsteads *Lielkājas* and *Mazkājas* in the neighbouring civil parish of Stopiņi); *Priekšosta* – the aquatorium of the Liepāja Port (cf. *osta* ‘port’); *Priekšpiltene* – part of the town of Piltene; *Priekšsalas* – the farmstead in Mārkalne (cf. *Salas* in the neighbouring civil parish of Zeltiņi or Latv. common noun *sala* ‘island’).

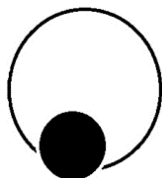


Figure 3.

Iekš- ‘within, inside’ – an extremely rare component in Latvian toponyms, with only two examples: *Iekšandrini* – a farmstead in Kārķi (cf. farmstead *Andriņi* < personal name *Andriņš*, *Andris*); *Iekšezers* – the bay of the lake in Alūksne (cf. the nomenclature word *ezers* ‘lake’).

In this connection, it is important to mention prefixal derivatives (etymologically they proceeded from prepositional collocations) with the following prefixes/prepositions:

Aiz- ‘behind, across’ (see Figure 4) – this is a very widespread formant in Latvian toponymy.

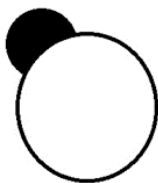


Figure 4.

It seems that *Aiz-* is the most common formant among the prefixal derivatives (approx. 655 toponyms). Examples of these are the following: *Aizazari* / *Aizezeri* (11 ×) < *aiz-* + *ezers* ‘lake’; *Aizkalni* (44 ×), *Aizkalniņi* < *aiz-* + *kalns* ‘hill’; *Aizmeži* (15 ×) < *aiz-* + *mežs* ‘forest’; *Aizgārša* < *aiz-* + *gārša* ‘rich deciduous forest’; *Aizsili* / *Aizsiles* < *aiz-* + *sils* ‘pine forest’; *Aizpļavas* < *aiz-* + *pļava* ‘meadow’; *Aizpori* / *Aizpuri* / *Aizpurvi* (81 ×) < *aiz-* + *purvs* ‘swamp’; *Aizupi* / *Aizupji* / *Aizupes* (124 ×) < *aiz-* + *upe*, dial. *ups*, *upis* ‘river; brook’; *Aizvalki* < *aiz-* + dial. *valks* ‘brook’ – for all these toponyms the etymon is the nomenclature word, such as a generic noun that indicates the category of the named object. Other common nouns (sometimes also considered as nomenclature words) can be seen in the following place names that are not widespread: *Aizalkšņi* (2 ×), *Aizalkne* (2 ×) < *aiz-* + *alksnis* ‘alder-tree’, *Aizbirži* (1 ×) < *aiz-* + *birzs*, *birze* ‘grove’, *Aizpriedītes* (1 ×) < *aiz-* + *priede* ‘pine-tree’, *Aizcirtums* (1 ×) < *aiz-* + *cirtums* ‘cleared space’, *Aiztilte* (3 ×) < *aiz-* + *tilts* ‘bridge’, *Aizpilskalni* (1 ×) < *aiz-* + *pilskalns* ‘castle mound’. At the same time many examples have been recorded, the etymon of them is another place name: the farmstead *Aizdriksnas* – cf. the lake *Driksnis* in Ļaudona, the farmstead *Aizdaugavas* – cf. the River *Daugava* in Laucesa, inhabited place, contemporary town *Aizkraukle* – cf. the river *Kraukle*, the farmstead *Aizpērses* in Koknese – cf. the river *Pērse*. Nevertheless, in all examples – which have been coined from a nomenclature word (generic noun) or from some other toponym – the formant/prefix shows the precise location regarding the etymon.

Ap- ‘around’ (or the far rarer preposition *Apkārt-* with the same meaning ‘around’) (see Figure 5) rarely occur in Latvian toponymy, for example, the farmstead *Apkalni* (5 ×) < *ap-* + *kalns* ‘hill’; the river *Apkārtupe* (< *apkārt* + *upe* ‘river’) in Litene; the meadow of *Apkārttecis* (< *apkārt* + verb *tecēt* ‘to flow, to stream’) in Kazdanga,

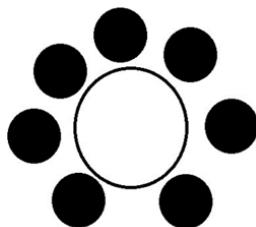


Figure 5.

Pa- with an ancient semantics ‘under’, synonymous to the prefix *zem-*, the meaning of the derivatives ‘a place under or lower some other thing’ (Nītiņa, Grigorjevs 2013, 218). Examples of this are: a pasture *Paezere* in Rucava <

pa- + *ezers* ‘lake’; the forest name *Papriede* in Sāviena < *pa-* + *priede* ‘pine-tree’; farmstead *Padambji* (9 ×) < *pa-* + *dambis* ‘dike, dam’, even though mostly toponyms with this prefix have been coined from prefixal appellatives, such as the road name *Pagrāve* in Odziena < *pagrāve* ‘edge of the ditch’; different types of topographical objects, such as *Pakalne*, *Pakalnes*, *Pakalni* < *pakalne* ‘slope; bottom of the hill’; *Paliēna*, *Paliēnes* < *paliēne* ‘flood-lands; alluvial lands’; *Pasiekse* < *pasiekste* ‘place under the roots in a river’; *Patilte* < *patilte* ‘place under the bridge’. There are also some examples derived from other toponyms with the help of this prefix, for instance: the inhabited place *Pastende* < town *Stende*; the farmstead *Pabeži* < farmstead *Beiži* in Bebrene, etc.

Pār- ‘across’ (see Figure 6), these are predominantly names of the topographical objects located on the other bank of the river, such as: part of the city *Pārdaugava* (< *pār-* + *River Daugava*) – part of the city of Rīga; *Pārgauja* (< *pār-* + *River Gauja*) – part of the city of Valmiera; *Pārventa* (< *pār-* + *River Venta*) – part of the city of Ventspils; *Pārabava* (< *pār-* + *River Abava*) – part of the town of Sabile; *Pārlielupe* (< *pār-* + *River Lielupe*) – part of the city of Jelgava; *Pārogre* (< *pār-* + *River Ogre*) – part of the town of Ogre; *Pārolaine* (< *pār-* + *River Olaine*) – part of the town of Olaine, etc. There are many examples of the etymon of which the generic noun is *upe* ‘river’: *Pārupe*, *Pārupes*, *Pārupītes*, *Pārupji* (37 objects), etc.

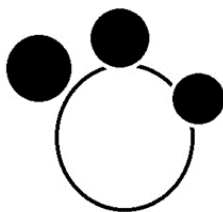


Figure 6.

Pie- ‘near, by, close to’ (see Figure 7), toponyms are coined from appellatives as well as from other place names, such as: several farmstead names: *Piekalni* (11 ×) < *pie-* + *kalns* ‘hill’; the village *Piebalgas* < the *River Balga*; the farmstead *Piedaugavas* (2 ×) < *pie-* + *River Daugava*, village *Piedruja* < the *River Druja* (Belorussian Дрыўка) and small town of *Druja* (Belorussian Друя) in the Vitebsk Region (Belarussia).

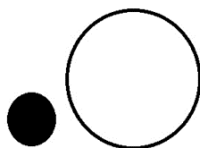


Figure 7.

Zem- ‘under’ (see Figure 8): it is difficult to determine the semantics of the derivatives coined with formant/component *zem-*, such as the farmstead of *Zemkalni* < *zem kalna* ‘under a hill’ or < *zemie kalni* ‘low hills’ (in this case,

the first component is the root of the Latv. adjective *zems* ‘low’); the farmstead of *Zemozoli* < *zem ozola* ‘under an oak’ or *zemie ozoli* ‘low oaks’. There is no recorded example of an etymon occurring as another toponym.

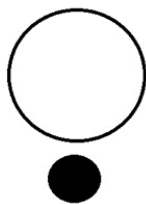


Figure 8.

In addition, when citing examples of this group under review, it is important to mention place names that have the following as their first component: *Upes-* / *Up-* ‘river-’, *Ezera-/Ezer-* ‘lake’, *Meža-/Mež-* ‘forest-’, *Lauka-/Lauk-* ‘field-’, *Purva-/Purv-* ‘swamp, bog’ + *-gals* ‘end; side, edge’, *-mala* ‘end; side, edge’, for example, farmstead names *Upmaļi*, *Mežmaļi*, *Laukmaļi*, *Purmaļi*; *Ezergali*, *Laugaļi*, *Mežgaļi*, *Silgali*, *Purgaļi*, and *Ciemgali*.

This article presents a brief glimpse into the place name world of Latvia and demonstrates that with the help of grammatical resources (prefixes and prepositions), place names can indicate the precise location of the geographical objects. The most common formant among the prefixal derivatives is the prefix *aiz-* ‘behind’, with very few examples having been coined using *starp-*, *iekš*, *priekš-*. According to Austrian onomastician Peter Jordan (2009, 1), one of the functions of place names is to enable a search for places: without place names this would not be possible.

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Kopsavilkums

Raksta pirmajā daļā tiek apskatīta leksēma *vieta*, kas nav visai bieži sastopama kā otrais toponīmu komponents – Latviešu valodas institūta Vietvārdu kartotēkā ir apmēram 200 šādu toponīmu, galvenokārt tie ir mikrotoponīmi. Leksēma *vieta* ir ļoti vispārīgs, nekonkrēts, gandrīz semantiski tukšs nomenklatūras vārds – bez iepriekšējām zināšanām nav iespējams noteikt šāda ģeogrāfiskā objekta veidu. Tomēr nevar apgalvot, ka vietvārds šim komponentam nepiemīt nekāda pirmatnējā nozīme. Visizplatītākā no tām – ‘vieta, kur agrāk ir bijis kāds objekts vai parādība’ (*Šķūņa vieta, Cepļa vieta*), resp., atspoguļo pagājušo laiku. Ievērojami retāk šāda veida nosaukumi saistīti ar objektu, kas eksistē mūsdienās. Vēl mazāk vārdkopu/saliekteņu ar otro komponentu *vieta* saistīti ar piederību kādai personai, darbības procesu, asociācijām u. c.

Raksta otrā daļa ir veltīta vietvārdiem, kas norāda lokalizāciju attiecībā pret citu vietvārdu, resp., tādiem saliekteņiem un vārdkopām, kuru pirmais komponents: *Augš-, Apakš-, Kalna-/Kaln-, Lejas-/Lej-, Zem-, Vidus-, Starp-* u. c. Ļoti bieži vietvārdi ar *Kaln-* un *Lej-* tiek lietoti kā toponīmiskie antonīmi (*Lejasteteri – Kalnteteri*). Visizplatītākie prefiksi, kas palīdz orientēties attiecībā pret citu topoobjektu, ir *Aiz-, Pa-, Pār-*; tikai daži piemēri reģistrēti ar formantiem *Starp-, Iekš-* un *Priekš-*. Nav reģistrēts neviens toponīms, darināts ar formantu *Apakš-*. Parasti šāda veida toponīmu etimons ir kāds cits vietvārds vai arī nomenklatūras vārds.



Pārdaugava – part of the city of Rīga. (Photo from https://www.inyourpocket.com/riga/The-Left-Bank-Pārdaugava_70355f#&gid=1&pid=1)