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ANTA TRUMPA, *VALTS ERNŠTREITS* (Rīga)

REEXAMINING LATVIAN LAKE NAMES ENDING IN *-eris*, *-ēris*, AND *-ieris*[1]

Abstract. This article discusses Latvian lake names ending in *-eris*, *-ēris*, and *-ieris* as names of possible Finnic origin. The article is an inventory of limnonyms — names of lakes and ponds — ending in *-eris*, *-ēris*, and *-ieris*, i.e. lake names in Latvia already earlier noted by linguists to be connected with Courland Livonian *jāra*/*jōra* (LiV *järu*) 'lake' or Estonian *järv* 'id.'. Limnonyms not mentioned in other studies in this context are also compiled and analysed. In analysing the latter, an effort was made to separate words with a clear alternative origin (usually Latvian, but sometimes also, for example, German) from those that hypothetically could be connected with Livonian or Estonian lake names. The article concludes that not all earlier etymologies are plausible, because 1) some of these etymologies were provided by linguists lacking knowledge of Finnic languages, and 2) the origin of the first component of the place name has not been identified in all cases. The limnonyms and place names with existing etymologies, but for which Finnic etymologies are proposed for the first time in this article, form a fairly uniform area — Vidzeme, Latgale, and to a lesser extent Sēlija — and only rarely occur in Courland. The infrequency of this limnonym type in Courland may be a result of two parallel place name systems existing due to long-term bilingualism.

Keywords: hydronyms, limnonyms in Latvia, Finnic traces, substrate.

1. Introduction

Lake names ending in *-eris*, *-ēris*, and *-ieris* possibly having a Finnic source have attracted the attention of linguists numerous times; already in the first half of the 20th century, Baltic and Finnic language researchers — especially onomasts — wrote extensively on this subject. Linguists are interested in the fact that at least some of Latvia's lake names, or limnonyms, with these endings may have arisen with the ending derived as the second component of a compound based on LiC *jāra*/*jōra* (LiV *järu*)[2] 'lake' or Est. *järv* 'id.' (for more on this see, e.g., Balode 2015).

[1] The article also includes several grammatically feminine names ending in *-ere*, for example, *Āstere*, and grammatically masculine plural genitive forms with *-eru*, for example, *Vieveru ezers* and *Ismeru ezers*.

[2] The LiC western subdialect uses *jāra*, the eastern dialect — *jōra* (*ā* > *ō* is a relatively recent change in the LiC eastern subdialect).

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Though already in the 19th century, August Bielenstein and other Baltic Germans mentioned some of these place names as having a possible Finnic origin, the first linguist who drew special attention to limnonyms with these endings must have been the Lithuanian linguist Kazimieras Būga. He was very inspired by the first volume of Jānis Endzelīns' *Latvijas vietu vārdi — Vidzemes vārdi* (The Place Names of Latvia — The Names of Vidzeme) and considered it an inexhaustibly rich source, providing considerable insight into the Latvian language and into the contacts that Latvians had with other nations in antiquity. In 1923, in a review of this work in the journal *Tauta ir žodis*, Būga mentioned, among other things, possible Finnic traces in Latvian place names and also devoted a small section to place names ending in *-eris* (*-ēris*). Though Būga (1961 : 614), who acknowledged that he did not speak any Finnic language and called himself a layman in this area, had viewed Vidzeme place names intuitively — based on the word for 'lake' in Estonian or Livonian — by associating the ending *-eris* with *järvis* 'lake', he almost never provided an explanation for the origin of the first component. Of the 23 Latvian limnonyms with this ending that had previously been noted by linguists as having a Finnic etymology, five of these etymologies were first mentioned by Būga.

In 1934, in the journal *Zeitschrift für slavische Philologie*, in an article about Latvian hydronyms, Endzelīns also mentioned several names of possible Finnic origin in addition to hydronym forms with *-er-* (*-ēr-*) and *-ar-*, mostly confirming Būga's proposed etymologies, but also noting several other hydronyms as possibly Finnic, which Būga had not previously mentioned. Endzelīns (1934 : 114, 134), however, refrained from providing etymologies for their first components. He also hypothesised a connection between several lake names and LiV *järu* 'lake' or Est. *järv* 'id.' in the first volumes of *Latvijas vietvārdu vārdnīca* (Latvian place name dictionary; Lvv I, II), in which hydronyms of Finnic origin had not previously been considered. Additionally, he also provided explanations for the first component of several limnonyms, thereby initiating a tradition continued by later authors of this dictionary up to the present day, namely, to find at least one limnonym ending in *-eris*, *-ēris*, or *-ieris* in every volume of the place name dictionary for which an etymology had not previously been proposed.

Valentin Kiparsky (1939) also gave etymologies for some Latvian limnonyms with these endings in his 1939 monograph *Die Kurenfrage*.

In her 1968 article *Somugriskie hidronīmi Latvijas PSR teritorijā* (Finno-Ugric hydronyms in the territory of the Latvian SSR), Marta Rudzīte (1968) included a place name list in alphabetical order, which also included limnonyms ending in *-eris*, *-ēris*, and *-ieris*, though these are primarily place names of possible Finnic origin appearing in earlier publications by other researchers.

Two decades later, linguist Vallija Dambe was already bolder in proposing etymologies for hydronyms. She investigated and published etymologies also for the first component of all the limnonyms with the aforementioned endings included in her article. Dambe (1987 : 34) not only mentioned several etymologies given by earlier researchers, but also offered several new ones.

In the early 1990s publication *Madonas kalendārs 1994* (Madona calendar 1994), linguist Jānis Kušķis published a popular-scientific article about the spelling of certain place names around Madona, also proposing hypotheses for the source of several limnonyms which had not been mentioned earlier

— or later — as words of Finnic origin, but for which a Livonian or Estonian source is not entirely impossible. Kušķis (1993 : 78, 79) drew attention to fact that there is no shortage of place names — not just limnonyms — near Madona with the ending *-ere*, *-eris*, *ēre*, and *-ēris*, 'at the base of which may be the Estonian word *järv*, which means lake'.

Antons Breidaks (1983 : 196; 1989 : 329; 2003 : 14) and Valdis Juris Zeps and Jill Rosenshield (1995 : 349) discussed the etymology of one particular limnonym in several articles — the Latgale lake name *Sīvers*. In their 1995 article, the latter two researchers gave several other Latgale limnonym etymologies relevant to the topic of this article, which were not previously connected to Finnic languages by other linguists, and also often provided parallels with place names in Estonia (Zeps & Rosenshield 1995).

Along with growing interest in Finnic influence on the Baltic languages, onomasts have also touched upon this topic in our millennium. Onomasts Laimute Balode and Ojārs Bušs were drawn to Latvian place names — including limnonyms — of possible Finnic origin not previously mentioned in linguistic literature by their work on several volumes of *Latvijas vietvārdu vārdnīca* (LVV I—IV; Balode 2007; Balode & Bušs 2009). In the two most recent volumes of *Latvijas vietvārdu vārdnīca*, Valts Ernštreits describes the etymology of place names of Estonian and Livonian origin and also updates several limnonym etymologies published earlier, as well as uncovers several new possible limnonyms of Finnic origins ending in *-eris*, *-ēris*, and *-ieris* (LVV V—VI).

In recent years, several articles have been published summarising place names of Finnic origin in Latvia's toponymy. These include Balode's (2015 : 62, 63) article on the criteria for identifying possible words of Finnic origin in Latvia's toponymy, which includes lake names ending in *-(j)eris*, *-(j)ēris-*, and *-(j)ieris* (the author, taking into account the possible origin of these names, refers to these as the second components of compound toponyms) and also mentions some of them explicitly. Also important to highlight is the section on Finnic-origin place names in the Latvian onomasticon by Bušs and Ilga Jansone (2019) in the book *Latvija: kultūru migrācija* (Latvia: Migration of Cultures), which also mentions place names of possible Finnic origin ending in *-eris*, *-ēris*, and *-ieris* identified by other linguists (Būga, Endzelīns, Dambe, etc.). These names include those for which a possible etymology is provided for the first component of the place name, as well as those, which 'are acknowledged as Finno-Ugricisms, though a specific origin is not given' (Bušs & Jansone 2019 : 236, 237).

Still, it is not impossible that there are more lake names of such origin in Latvia with the corresponding endings, because the Latvian onomasticon — based on the data in the Latvian Geospatial Information Agency's database (LĢia 2025) — contains a number of other limnonyms ending in *-eris*, *-ēris*, and *-ieris*, which do not appear in the aforementioned studies together with other place names of Finnic origin. This includes names found near the Estonian border or in the speech area of the Livonic dialect of Latvian, which are areas where one might especially expect to find Finnic-origin place names. Location is, in fact, one of the additional criteria mentioned by Balode (2015 : 63) for identifying place names having this origin.

In her thesis, onomast Sanda Rapa (2013 : 157) mentioned that the ending based on the Finnic word for 'lake' 'became a stable topoformant in hydro-

nyms and even in other place names, for example, *Piniers* in Liezere, the name of the homestead Poņeri in Pitlane'.

This article's goals are 1) to compile information about limnonyms ending in *-eris*, *-ēris*, and *-ieris*[3] which one or more linguists have etymologised as being based on Liv. *jāra*/*jōra* (*järu*) 'lake' or the Finnic stem **järvi* 'id.', attempting to evaluate these etymologies critically, based on data from historical sources, which, for objective reasons, was done unsystematically in the period before the major digitisation of sources;[4] 2) to analyse those Latvian limnonyms with *-eris*, *-ēris*, and *-ieris*, which have not been mentioned in studies by other linguists in the context of Finnic-origin place names; and 3) to try to separate words with clearly different origins (usually Latvian, but sometimes also, for example, German) from place names which may be associated with the word for 'lake' in Livonian or Estonian, including location — as mentioned above — among the selection criteria, and where possible, to give an origin for the first component and parallels with place names in Estonia and Finland.

2. Limnonyms ending in *-eris*, *-ēris*, and *-ieris*, which are described in linguistic studies as Finnic-origin place names[5]

This section compiles those Latvian limnonyms which at least one researcher has connected with the Estonian or Livonian word for 'lake'. In some cases, linguists' opinions have differed about the origin of a particular limnonym; the authors of this article have also made edits and corrections based on their own insights. As already noted, there are 23 limnonyms of this sort. For some of these, etymologies are also provided for the first component, for others not. For the majority of the place names for which an etymology has been provided for the first component, this is a Finnic-origin appellative or a comparison is given with an Estonian or Livonian place name.

2.1. Limnonyms with a first component that is possibly a Finnic-origin word

Āstere in Pāle[6] — referencing August Bielenstein, Būga (1961 : 622) associates the limnonym *Ãstere* with *Asti-gerwe*, *Astiyerwe*, which is mentioned in ancient documents and which is also the Estonian name (*Astijärv*) of Lake Burtnieks; Endzelīns agrees with Būga (Endzelīns 1934 : 134; also Rudzīte 1968 : 179; Bušs & Jansone 2019 : 237). Kiparsky (1939 : 204) also connects *Aystere*, *Aysteren* with the Finnic languages, considering it to be an altered form of **Hais*[*t*] *järvi* 'stinking lake', drawing parallels with the Finnish place names *Haislahti* and *Haisuneva*, and linking it with Salaca Liv. *aiš* 'to smell', Fin. *haista* 'id.', and Est. *haiseda* 'id.'; however, the village name *Aystere*, *Aysteren* mentioned in the 13th century (UB I 324) most likely is

[3] The article primarily analyses the limnonyms found in LĢia 2025. If a limnonym is mentioned by a linguist but is not found in LĢia 2025, then it is separately identified with a footnote.

[4] This has already been done several times, but none of these lists is complete (e.g. Balode 2015; Bušs & Jansone 2019).

[5] Several helonyms also occur in the list as a result of referencing, for example, data from Būga.

[6] Locations in this article follow the tradition of Latvian dialectology and onomastics, i.e. they are given according to their location in the administrative parishes of 1939.

not connected with the name of Lake *Āstere*. Kiparsky refers to Manfred von Vegesack (1932 : 20), who holds the view that the manor name *Āstere* was taken from the Hastver family, who owned the manor from 1526 to 1741. The name of the manor and lake being relatively new may also be shown by the fact that 15th-century sources mention a different name for the lake: *Peikerne erw* in 1419, *see to Poyker* in 1492 (BHO II 477). The name *Āsteres ezers* 'Lake Āstere' is also absent from maps before the early 20th century, though it should be noted that on many older maps the lake appears without any name at all (primarily on 17th—19th-century maps, a village named *Poiker* or *Poikern* appears next to the lake); on a 17th-century Swedish manor map: *Peuker Eser*.[7]

In the 1752—1835 atlas of Livonia, the lake's name is not mentioned at all, but marked next to it are the village *Poikern* and manor *Ahster M.*;[8] on an 1839 map, the lake and manor appear without a name, and only the village *Poikern* is mentioned.[9] The first map showing the name *Āsteres ezers* is the 1920—1940 Latvian army map.[10]

Thus, as the village name *Aystere*, *Aysteren* mentioned in the 13th century most likely refers to some other inhabited place, it is possible that the lake and village name *Āstere* is relatively new and developed as a result of the phonetic transformation of the German surname *Hastver*; however, that is also only a hypothesis. In any case, the origin of this limnonym, which regularly appears in lists of Latvian place names of Finnic origin, still remains unclear.

Jūseris in Sakstagals (the current official name in Latgalian: *Jiusers*) — Endzelīns (1934 : 134) mentions it with other hydronyms containing *-er-*, but does not provide an etymology. Edīte Hauzenberga (1932 : 120) allows for the possibility that this form may have arisen as a result of progressive assimilation from a place name with a second component, which is Latv. *ezers* 'lake', but she does not give an etymology for the first component. Based on this article, Endzelīns provides a hypothetical etymology for this name marked with a question mark **Jūs-ezeris*? (Lvv I 409). However, this etymology does not seem very convincing, because there is no other place name in the entire Latvian place name dictionary based on the pronoun *jūs* 'you (pl.)' and its forms. Furthermore, a form containing Latvian *ezers* in this lake's name has not been recorded even in the oldest sources, for example, the names recorded in German in 1542 are *Uswersche sehe* and *Uxerversche sehe* (LGU 2 : 586, 587).

Zeps and Rosenshield compare the form *Jyûsers* with an apparently corresponding Estonian limnonym *Juusa järv*; however, in sources from 1542, the German *Uxerversche sehe* is given as a Sakstagals limnonym. According to Zeps and Rosenshield (1995 : 349), if *x* is believable, then this contradicts any link with the Estonian place name.

The aforementioned form *Uxerversche sehe*, recorded in 1542, may be comparable to the Finnish limnonym *Yksjärvi*, which is most likely based on Finnish *yksi* 'one' + Finnish *järvi* 'lake'. In that case, this particular place

[7] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=15/57.62688/24.72535&l=J/8&q=%C4%81stere.
[8] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=12/57.58122/24.81726&l=J/LF&q=%C4%81stere.
[9] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=12/57.58122/24.81726&l=J/LV&q=%C4%81stere.
[10] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=14/57.61024/24.74369&l=E/KDW/OST/LA75&q=%C4%81stere.

name may also be based on Estonian *üks* 'one' + Estonian *järv* 'lake', but subject to phonetic changes which occurred over the centuries. The consonant cluster *ks* was apparently already on the verge of disappearing when this form was recorded, because a parallel form without *ks* — *Uswersche sehe* — was also recorded. The cluster *ks* also does not appear in later mentions of this limnonym in historical sources, for example, the name *iezioro Iusier* recorded in Polish in 1599 and the form *oz. Ovsery* recorded in Russian in 1784 (Zeps 1984 : 575). The form *оз. Вусеры* is dominant on 19th-century Russian maps, for example on the 1866 three-verst map of Russia,[11] on the 1914—1919 map of western Russia in German — *Wußery-See*.[12] On maps from the 1930s, forms with *v* also likely occur due to Russian influence, for example on the 1933 large map of Latvia there is a settlement called *Vusari*,[13] while on the 1928—1936 Latvian army map the form *Useru ezers*[14] is recorded, which is already more similar to the form *Jiusers* that occurs in popular speech and is now the official name of this lake.

Thus, the connection of this limnonym with the Finnic languages is quite plausible.

Juveris in Dzērbene — Būga (1961 : 622) connects it with the village *Уверь* in the Principality of Novgorod, and provides a hypothetical derivation of it from a Finnish proto-form **Juv(o)järvi* (or **Juveri*) (1961 : 644). Endzelīns agrees with Būga (Endzelīns 1934 : 134; also Rudzīte 1968 : 181), while Dambe (1987 : 35) connects the first component of this word with Liv. *juvà* [more precisely: *juvā*/*jõvā* V.E.[15]] 'good'. Balode and Bušs adjust the etymology of the first component and associate it with the Estonian dialect form *jüvä* 'grain' [cf. also Est. *iva* 'grain', Liv. *jov* 'flour' V.E.], comparing it in terms of place name semantic typology with the Latvian hydronym *Graudupe* (lit. 'grain river') (Balode & Bušs 2007 : 37; Balode 2015 : 63; Bušs & Jansone 2019 : 237).

As a relatively small lake, it has not always been marked on older maps, but already on the 17th-century Swedish manor map a form similar to the modern one — *Juwar Esfar*[16] — appears, though with the vowel *a* instead of *e*. The form *Juwan S.*[17] is found on the 1839 map of Vidzeme, but it is most likely incorrect. 20th-century maps show names, which mostly conform to modern ones; for example, a form without an ending — *Juwer*[18] — appears on a 1914—1919 map in German, while the 1920—1940 Latvian army map in Latvian shows the name *Juveris*,[19] which corresponds entirely to the modern one. Thus, data from historical sources do not contradict the aforementioned etymological explanation.

Kaņieris in Sloka — referencing Bielenstein, Būga associates this word with *Canygerwe* (*Kangersee*) located near Sloka and mentioned in ancient

[11] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=14/56.62286/27.29446&l=J/LF/KN/X/Y/G100/8A/GB/ZD/ME/LV/RK/WI/L/0&q=Jiusers.
[12] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=14/56.61107/27.31869&l=J/LF/KN/X/Y/G100/8A/GB/ZD/ME/LV/RK/WI/L/0/4/7/KDW&q=Jiusers.
[13] See https://kartes.lndb.lv/viewer/map?b=7&x=3036613&y=7682476&z=15&h=75877.
[14] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=16/56.61579/27.29274&l=J/LA25&q=Jiuser.
[15] Here and henceforth V.E. — Valts Ernštreits.
[16] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=16/57.22075/25.67510&l=J/8&q=juve&r=57.221324/25.673434/Juveris.
[17] See https://kartes.lndb.lv/viewer/map?b=7&x=2856841&y=7805094&z=14&h=50746.
[18] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=14/57.21261/25.68543&l=J/KN/X/Y/0/OST&q=juve.
[19] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=14/57.21603/25.69307&l=J/LA75&q=Juver.

documents (UB I 325, Būga 1961 : 622). Endzelīns, who even publishes several limnonyms in the place name dictionary — *Kaņieŗa ezers* in Nīca and *Kaņiẽris* in Sloka — does not provide an etymology for the first component, but connects the ending *-ieris* to Liv. *järu* 'lake' or Est. *järv* 'id.' (Lvv II 42; also Rudzīte 1968 : 182). Kiparsky (1939 : 213, 214), referring to the etymology provided by Hermann in 1896, connects the first component with Liv. *kanā* 'hen'. Balode and Bušs (2007 : 38) agree with this view, mentioning several typologically analogous forms in Latvian hydronymy, for example, *Gaiļezers* (lit. 'rooster lake') in Rīga, *Gaiļu ezers* near Daugavpils, *Vistu ezers* (lit. 'hen lake') near Cēsis. Dambe connects the first part of the hydronym with Liv. *kanà* [more precisely: *kanā* V.E.] or Est. *kana* 'hen' and, referring to the South Estonian speaker Silvija Raģe, allows for the possibility that this word refers to a duck [more precisely: North Estonian and South Estonian *hani* 'goose' V.E.] (Dambe 1987 : 34; also Balode 2015 : 63; Bušs & Jansone 2019 : 236).

However, the word *kana* is not palatalised in the Finnic languages; therefore, Est. *kaań* 'leech, bloodsucker' can be considered etymologically more suitable, as it still maintains palatalisation. Cf. seven lakes in Estonia, the names of which are either partially or entirely *Kaanjärv*; by contrast, there are currently no lakes in Estonia named *Kanajärv* (BM). This typological analogy, where the lake's name is based on an appellative meaning 'leech, bloodsucker', also occurs in Latvia, for example, the lake *Dēlene* in Alsunga (LĢia 2025), cf. Latvian *dēle* 'leech, bloodsucker', and in Lithuania, for example, the lake *Dėlinis* near the settlement of Obeliai (BM), cf. Lithuanian *dėlė* 'leech, bloodsucker'. Apparently, such limnonym semantics are not unusual in the Baltic region; therefore, a connection between the name *Kaņieris* and Estonian (?) *kaań* 'leech, bloodsucker' + *järvi* 'lake' is quite plausible.

Another less plausible hypothesis regarding the origin of the limnonym *Kaņieris* is the following: in previous centuries, the German name for this lake has been given as *Kanger See* or *Kangern See*. For example, the German name for the lake in the 1752—1835 Vidzeme atlas[20] and in the 1820 geographical atlas of the Russian Empire[21] is *Kangern See*; on the 1839 special map of Vidzeme — *Kanger See*;[22] on the 1859 Latvian-language map — *Kangarue* (a lake or settlement?);[23] on the 1905 special map of European Russia in Russian — *Оз. Кангеръ*;[24] only on the 1917 map of Kurzeme in German is there a form without *g* — *Kanjer See*;[25] on maps published in Latvian beginning in the late 19th century, only the forms *Kaņieris* or *Kaņiera ezers* are found, for example, *Kaņeeris*[26] on Siliņš's 1896 map, but *Kaņiera ez.*[27] on the 1920—1940 Latvian army map.

Thus, based on the lake's German name and the fact that Baltic Germans pronounced *g* as [*j*], it is possible to propose the hypothesis that the lake's name could have also been based on Livonian *kāngaŗ* 'sandy coastal hill;

[20] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=10/56.92699/23.50662&l=J/LF&q=Ka%C5%86ie.
[21] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=10/57.00759/23.79547&l=J/X&q=Ka%C5%86ie&r=57.003487/23.466319/Ka%C5%86ieris.
[22] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=12/57.05250/23.55795&l=J/8A/GB/ZD/ME/LV&q=ka%C5%86ier.
[23] See https://kartes.lndb.lv/viewer/map?b=7&x=2581761&y=7744832&z=10&h=34423.
[24] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=12/57.05250/23.55812&l=J/LF/Y&q=ka%C5%86ier.
[25] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=14/57.02396/23.49451&l=J/WI/L&q=ka%C5%86ier.
[26] See https://kartes.lndb.lv/viewer/map?b=7&x=2622089&y=7746557&z=11&h=34255.
[27] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=14/56.99991/23.48403&l=J/LA75&q=ka%C5%86ier.

petrified dune', especially considering that the lake is located near the sea and *kāngaŗ*-type formations — long, narrow dunes between swampy hollows — could have been found nearby. Presently, at least two other lakes named *Kangaru ezers* are found elsewhere in Latvia, for example, in Ropaži and Veclaicene (LĢia 2025; BM). Most likely, the former *Kaņieŗa ezers* in Nīca was also located near the sea, and its etymology may therefore also be the same. But this too is only one of the possible hypotheses, and the names *Canygerwe* and *Caneierwe*, which are mentioned by Bielenstein and recorded in old documents, cannot be ignored, as these, after all, point directly to a link with the Finnic word for 'lake'.

Kasteris in Kapiņi[28] — Endzelīns connects this limnonym with the loanword *kasteris* 'brome (grass)', < Russian *костéрь* 'id.' (EH I 592; Endzelīns 1934 : 134), while Zeps and Rosenshield (1995 : 349) permit a Finnic origin, though they do not provide a specific etymology, but note that the German *Schostevern sehe*, given in 15th-century sources, makes this hypothesis less likely, though does not disprove it. Taking into account the location of the limnonym — i.e. very close to Lake Sivers, the name of which has a generally accepted Finnic origin — it may be that this place name can indeed be compared with the Estonian limnonym *Kastjärv* (in Jõhvi parish).[29] However, this place name is unfortunately not included in the Estonian place name dictionary, though it can be found in the Estonian place name card file, where the informant explained that the lake derives its name from its box-like shape (EKIKNK); there is also a lake named *Kastijärv* in Põlva parish in Estonia, which has not yet been etymologised. Taking into account that Est. *kast* 'box' as well as Latv. *kaste* 'id.' are borrowings from Middle Low German, they could not be based on ancient Finnic borrowings such as those found among the place names of southern Latgale. Perhaps the etymology of these words could be connected with Est. *kaste* 'dew', *kastma* 'to sprinkle' (ILV), and Liv. *kastõ* 'id.' (LILV). However, if the limnonym mentioned by Endzelīns still appears on 18th-century maps with the root *Kast-*, for example, *Кастырь* on a 1785 map, but in the present day, as well as on the majority of maps and in place name lists beginning from the start of the 20th century, it appears with the root *Kust-*, for example, *Kustaru ezers* (LĢia 2025), then perhaps the name changed as a result of folk etymology.

Kaučers[30] in Preiļi — Endzelīns lists the limnonym *Kàučęrs* in the Latvian place name dictionary, but does not give an etymology for it (Lvv I 61), while Zeps & Rosenshield (1995 : 349) connect this place name with the Estonian limnonym *Kaugjärv* and Est. *kaug-* 'far' < 'long'. The Estonian limnonym *Kaugjärv* is considered an ancient name, which is based on the root *kaug-* 'far' < 'long' (EKNR); this lake's distinctly elongated form can be seen in BM.

Old maps show a rather unclear situation with respect to this lake's name. From the 18th to the 20th century, this name or a similar one was used on maps to refer to two lakes: the current *Kaučers* and a nearby lake, the official name of which is *Stūponu ezers*. On the 1785 Russian-language Dinaburg map, the current *Kaučers* is given as *озе: Кавчеръ* (LĢia 2025); on an 1866

[28] This place name does not occur in this form in LĢia 2025; however, the form *Kustaru ezers* does occur.
[29] Zeps and Rosenshield (1995 : 349) connect this Estonian place name to the lake name *Kastirs* in Jasmuiža, which is not discussed in this article.
[30] This place name is not included in LĢia 2025.

Russian-language map as *Оз. Сюдово*;[31] and on a 1905 Russian-language map as *Оз. Слудавас*, but *Stūponu ezers* (cf. the nearby village name *Stupāni*)[32] is labelled *Кавчар*. On the 1915 German-language three-verst map of Russia, it appears as *Oz. Ljudowo*;[33] however, on the first map written in Latvian, the 1920—1940 Latvian army map, the current *Kaučers* is marked as *Sjudavas* ez., while the current *Stūponu ezers* is marked as *Kaučaru ez*.[34] As recently as the 1960s, on a Russian-language map, the two lakes are found next to each other with similar names, likely from the same source — *оз. Каучер* (now *Kaučers*) and оз. *Кавчар* (now *Stūponu ezers*). On a 1986 Russian-language map, both lakes are recorded with the same name, *оз. Каучер*.[35] Both lakes received their current names only in recent times, apparently as a result of intentional place name standardisation.

Returning to a discussion of this place name's source, though formally *Kaučers* is not easily connected with place names such as Estonian *Kaugjärv*, nevertheless it is possible that this place name came into use before modern varieties of Estonian became differentiated from Proto-Finnic, and that phonetic changes, which began with historic **-k-* in the Finnic root **kauk-* 'long' and, subsequently, the sound changes *k* > *ķ* > *č* are possible in the Latgalic subdialects of Latvian. However, taking into account the lake's shape and, therefore, its connection with the Estonian word *kaug-* 'far' < 'long', it should be noted that present-day *Kaučers* is not especially long, but compared with neighbouring lakes, including present-day *Stūponu ezers*, it does have an elongated shape. By comparison, similar forms, i.e. not long but elongated, also include the typologically corresponding lake *Ildzis* in Vītiņi parish in Latvia, which is connected with the Latvian word *ilgs*. One of the oldest meanings of *ilgs* is 'long', which has been preserved up to the present day in the Lithuanian word *ilgas* 'id.'.

Taking into account the linguistic as well as geographic aspects, Zeps's and Rosenshield's hypothesis is not impossible.

Musteris in Lejasciems (the current official name is *Mustera ezers*) — *Musteŗa ez.* — Endzelīns (1934 : 134) considers this place name to be a loan from Est. *Must-järv* 'black lake'. However, he does not mention this place name in the place name dictionary — only the name of a ditch *Musteŗa grāvis* in Sinole and a limnonym *Mustur-ezers* in Lizums — and also does not connect the second component of these place names with *järv*, but only with a borrowing from Estonian *mustis* 1) 'black dog', 2) 'a dismissive term for a person with a dirty face' (ME II 672; Lvv II 459). The Estonian dialect dictionary,[36] however, does not show such a meaning for this word. In present-day Estonia, based on the official Estonian place name register, there are 32 lakes with the name *Mustjärv* (RKAT 2024).

Lejasciems is also located in the Leivu South Estonian language area (for more on this see, e.g., Jansone 2021; Zemzare 1940); therefore, a Finnic source

[31] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=13/56.25572/26.91301&l=I/LF/KN/X/Y/G100/8A/GB/ZD/ME/LV/WI/L/0&q=kau%C4%8De.
[32] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=13/56.27005/26.88801&l=E/LF/KN/X/Y/G100/8A/GB/ZD/ME/LV/RK&q=kau%C4%8De.
[33] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=12/56.24545/26.93573&l=J/4&q=kau%C4%8Der.
[34] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=14/56.26177/26.88964&l=O/LF/KN/X/Y/G100/8A/GB/ZD/ME/LV/RK/WI/L/0/4/6/7/KDW/OST/LA75&q=kau%C4%8Der.
[35] https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=14/56.26665/26.87965&l=O/LF/KN/X/Y/G100/8A/GB/ZD/ME/LV/0/4/6/7/KDW/OST/LA75/LA25/GE3&q=kau%C4%8Der.
[36] https://arhiiv.eki.ee/dict/ems/index.cgi?Q=mustis&F=M&C06=et.

for this lake's name is highly plausible. The lake [*Mus*]*ter* is mentioned in a 1564 document written in German (LVA VI 255), and the phrase *aus der Musterschen seehe* occurs in a 1588 document in connection with this lake (LVA VI 310). With respect to the semantic motivation — at least in the present day, it is surrounded by trees, and the lake's water looks dark, even black.

Ninieris in Priekuļi — Endzelīns hypothesises a connection between this lake name and the Estonian village name *Nina* and Est. *järw* 'lake' (Lvv II 480; also Rudzīte 1968 : 188). Hauzenberga (1932 : 134) also recognised a connection with *järv*, while Dambe connects the first component of the place name with Liv. *nīn* 'castle', Liv. *nī'n* 'wide belt' [more precisely: *nīn* 'wide belt, bast' V.E.], or also Est. *nina* 'nose' (Dambe 1987 : 34; also Balode 2015 : 62; Bušs & Jansone 2019 : 236). As there is no record of a castle or castle mound near the lakeshore,[37] it is more plausible that this limnonym is connected with Est. *nina* 'nose; peninsula' or Liv. *nīn* 'wide belt; bast'. No peninsulas appear on the map of the lake, though one of the lake's bays has a shape reminiscent of a nose; however, the Ninieris swamp, which directly abuts the lake, is divided into several parts with long peninsulas (see Figure 1).



Figure 1. **Lake Ninieris on a current map (BM).**

We would like to propose a hypothesis that several centuries ago, the lake included the current swamp, with the lake and current swamp forming a single larger lake with peninsulas. That a lake was located in the place of the current swamp may possibly be evidenced by an 1839 map, on which two lakes are visible: Ninieris and a smaller lake in the middle of the swamp. Neither this, nor any other historical map records the name of Ninieris or this smaller neighbouring lake.

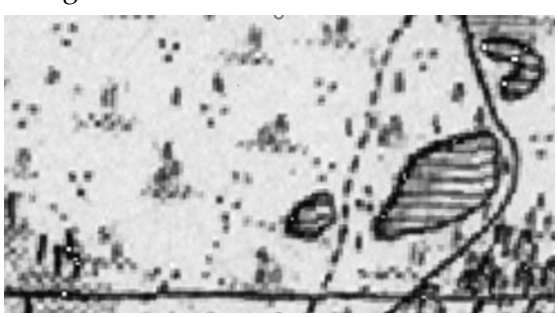

Figure 2. **Lake Ninieris and the smaller neighbouring lake on the 1839 special map of Vidzeme.**[38]

[37] No castle mounds are marked on the shore of Lake Ninieris on the Latvian Castle Mound Map, see: https://www.latvijas-pilskalni.lv/pilskalnu_karte.html.
[38] See https://kartes.lndb.lv/viewer/map?b=7&x=2814799&y=7829376&z=15&h=50746.

The time when the lake was not overgrown was most likely an even earlier period, which is not recorded on maps, but based on available maps, the hypothesis that the name of Lake Ninieris is connected with Est. *nina* 'nose; peninsula' or Liv. *nīn* 'wide belt; bast' and Est. *järv* 'lake' or Liv. *jāra/jōra* (*järu*) 'id.' is quite plausible.

Piksteres ezers in Vārnava — Endzelīns (1934 : 134) mentions the place name *Piksteres ęz.* among hydronym forms with *-er-* but does not provide an etymology. 19th-century maps record the limnonym much as at present, for example, *Pixter See* on the 1846 German-language map of Courland[39] or *Оз. Пикстернъ* on the 1866 Russian-language three-verst map of Russia.[40] In *Latvijas vietvārdu vārdnīca*, the Courland hydronyms *Pikstere/Pīkstere* — a river — and *Piksteres ezers* — a lake — are hypothetically etymologised as Finnic-origin place names, though without providing specific etymons and adding that 'Finno-Ugricisms are not characteristic of the area' (LVV I 374—375; LVV II 100). In an article on possible Finnic-origin place names in Latvia, Balode (2007 : 55, 56) posits a hypothetical connection between these place names and Liv. *pīk* or Est. *piik* 'pike, spear' and Est. *järv* or Liv. *jāra/jōra* (*järu*) 'id.'; she also states that for this etymology, the lake name is older and the river name is derived from it. As the lake has an elongated shape, a connection with Est. *pikk* 'long' (ILV; Balode 2004 : 8) and Liv. *pitkā* 'id.' cannot be ruled out, considering the *-s-* component found in Livonian compounds, cf. *õdõgspūol* 'evening (time)' and *võidagslēba* 'sandwich' (LILV). However, on the whole, the connection between this limnonym and the Finnic languages is rather tenuous.

Piniers[41] — a meadow, formerly a lake in Liezēre — in *Latvijas vietvārdu vārdnīca*, this toponym is etymologically linked to the Latvian dialect form *pine* 'female dog' (ME III 219), which, in turn, is most likely a borrowing from Liv. *piņ* 'dog' or South Est. *pini* 'id.'; the second component is linked to Est. *järv* or Liv. *jōra* (*järu*) 'lake' (LVV II : 50). Balode (2007 : 54; 2015 : 63) also supports this etymological analysis, noting hydronyms with analogous semantics in the Lithuanian and Old Prussian onomasticons, for example, *Šunupis* — a river, < Lith. *šuo* 'dog' (Vanagas 1981 : 336), *Kãlupis* — a river, < Lith. *kalė* 'female dog', *Sune* — a lake, < OPr. *sunis* 'dog' (Gerullis 1922 : 176).

Sāsēris in Lubeja — Būga (1961 : 622) mentions the limnonym *Sàsēris* and helonym — a bog, marsh, or swamp name — *Soseris* among Finnic-origin place names with *-eris* and *-ēris*; referencing Būga, Endzelīns mentions the form *Sàsēris* as Finnish-like (Endzelīns 1934 : 134; also Rudzīte 1968 : 191; Balode 2015 : 63; Bušs & Jansone 2019 : 237). Ernštreits hypothesises a connection for the first part of the limnonym with Est. *saast* 'dirt, scum' or Liv. *sastā* 'mucous, earwax', and for the second part with LiC *jāra/jōra* 'lake', Salaca Liv. *järu* 'id.', and Est. *järv* 'id.' (LVV VI 282).

It is possible that the second part of the limnonym, recorded on the 17th-century Swedish manor map as *Saa Eser*,[42] is connected with Latvian *ezers*, in which case the name developed as a result of the combination and shortening of both components. Though maps from the Swedish period are not sufficiently plausible, because the Latvian-language knowledge of

[39] See https://kartes.lndb.lv/viewer/map?b=7&x=2836556&y=7643975&z=12&h=34479.
[40] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=14/56.44771/25.57175&l=J/0&q=pikster.
[41] This place name is not included in LĢia 2025.
[42] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=16/56.94169/26.06011&l=J/8&q=s%C4%81s%C4%93ris.

those drawing the maps was most likely not especially good, and it cannot be ruled out that the word *Eser* was added there as a result of phonetic similarity. On 18th-century maps, Lake *Sasēris* appears without a name, which was often the case for small lakes. The 1866 Russian-language three-verst map of Russia gives the name as *Оз. Сассарь*,[43] while the 1916 German-language aerial navigation map gives it as *Sassar S*.[44] The first Latvian-language map — the 1920—1940 Latvian army map — records the same name for the lake as that used in the present day — *Sasēris*.[45]

Taking into account these later records, a connection between the limnonym and a Finnic source cannot, nevertheless, be ruled out.

Sedziers in Zvirgzdene — Hauzenberga considers the forms *Sedzers*, *Sedzērs*, and *Sedziers* to be changed from **Sedezeris*, where an unstressed root vowel has been lost in the second part, comparing the first part to the Latvian place names *Sęduli* and *Sęduoli* and the Lithuanian place names *Sedos m*[*ies*]*t*[*as*], *Sedūnų k*[*ai*]*m*[*as*] (Hauzenberga 1932 : 120; cf. also LVV IV 301), while Zeps and Rosenshield (1995 : 349) connect this place name with the Estonian limnonym *Särgjärv* and Est. *särg* 'roach (a species of fish)'.

This lake is also small and almost never appears on old maps; in the historical sources where it does appear, forms with *rg* are not found. For example, it is recorded, perhaps incorrectly, as *oz. Seder(')* in Russian in 1784, and as *Seder* in Russian in 1906 (Zeps 1984 : 448). The first maps recorded in Latvian already show forms with *dz* — *Sedzera ez*., for example, on the 1928—1936 Latvian army map,[46] which apparently prompted researchers to think that a form with *g* — *Seg* — had existed earlier, because the sound change *g* > *dz* is characteristic of the Latgalic subdialects. This does not, however, explain the loss of *r*; therefore, this explanation can be considered rather hypothetical.

Siveris in Dagda (the current official name is *Sivers*) — Endzelīns (1934 : 134) mentioned it among hydronym forms with *-er-*, though it has not been etymologised. Breidaks seems to have been the first to etymologise this as a Finnic-origin place name, comparing it to the Finnish lake names *Syväri* and *Syvärijärvi*, which Max Vasmer (1934 : 393) connects with the Finnish adjective *syvä* 'deep', but which has a more plausible link with Finnish *syväri* 'eddy; whirlpool; the deep' (Breidaks 1983 : 196; 1989 : 329), while Dambe links the first part of this Latgale limnonym with Est. *süva* 'deep', noting that this lake really is deep — in some places reaching a depth of 24.5 m (Dambe 1987 : 35; also Balode 2015 : 63; Bušs & Jansone 2019 : 236). Zeps and Rosenshield (1995 : 349), however, propose that this limnonym is connected with the Estonian lake name *Suur-*, which apparently is based on Est. *suur* 'large' + *järv* 'lake'; though Breidaks (2003 : 14) considers this explanation of its origin incompatible with Latgalian historical phonetics, and one must agree with this view. This lake name occurs in historical sources already from the 16th century: in 1595 in Polish — *Sever*, in 1599 in Polish — *Siewior*, in 1739 in Polish — *Siewierz al. Siwer*, and in 1792 in Russian — *Siver* (Zeps

[43] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=14/56.94529/26.09719&l=J/0&q=s%C4%81s%C4%93ris.
[44] See https://kartes.lndb.lv/viewer/map?b=7&x=2901463&y=7747077&z=13&h=50945.
[45] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=14/56.93701/26.07652&l=J/LA75&q=sas%C4%93r&r=56.940584/26.063173/Sas%C4%93ris.
[46] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=15/56.55385/27.58111&l=J/LA25&q=sedz%C4%Be&r=56.556737/27.554829/Sedziers.

1984 : 455). The historical names also do not contradict Breidaks's proposed explanation of its origin.

2.2. Limnonyms with a Latvian or Germanic first component

Some limnonyms with an etymologised first component are connected with a Latvian word, sometimes also a loan from German. Dambe has provided an especially large number of such etymologies.

Dūņieris in Sloka — Dambe considers this word to be based on Latv. *dūņas* 'sludge, mud' + *-eris*, which resulted from the borrowed word for 'lake' (Dambe 1987 : 34—35; also Balode 2015 : 62; Bušs & Jansone 2019 : 237).

Hauzenberga (1932 : 134) had also noticed the similarity with *järv* even earlier. Names recorded on historical maps, however, do not confirm this hypothesis, as forms without the ending are found in earlier sources: on the 1791 German-language map of Rīga District — *Duhne See* (or incorrectly as *Dahne See*);[47] on the 1839 German-language special map of Vidzeme — *Duhne S.*;[48] and on the 1866 Russian-language three-verst map — *Оз. Дуня*.[49] Forms with the ending begin to appear on maps only around the early 20th century, for example, on the 1908 One-verst map of Russia as *Оз. Дунер*[50] or in Latvian on the 1920—1940 Latvian army map as *Dūņera ez.*[51] Therefore, we would like to propose that *Dūņieris* in its current form is a relatively new name and that the topoformant *-ieris* was added to it as a result of influence from the neighbouring lake *Kaņieris*; earlier its name was most likely *Dūņu ezers*.

Gulbēris in Mēdzūla — Būga (1961 : 622) does not consider the limnonym *Gùlbēris* to be a Finnic-origin name. Dambe was the first to link this word etymologically with Livonian, connecting the ending *-ēris* with 'the borrowed concept of a lake', but the first part to Liv. *gul'b* 'swan', which is a borrowing from Latvian (Dambe 1987 : 34; also Balode 2015 : 63; Bušs & Jansone 2019 : 237). The etymology of the first component is doubtful, as this name is a relatively new borrowing, which is found only in Vidzeme Livonian (LiC *klūkõz*; Est. *luik*).

Historical sources reveal an interesting situation, where a German description in 1600 gives the name of the lake as *Gulbenn* (LVA 214). If it is recorded correctly, then the source of the lake's name really is Latvian, i.e. connected with the Latvian word *gulbis* 'swan', and the topoformant *-ēris* may have been added later as a result of influence from other nearby limnonyms. Confusing, however, is the name recorded on the 17th-century Swedish manor map — *Gullbergs Lacus*,[52] though it may be incorrect. Nevertheless, it still allows us cautiously to propose another hypothesis, namely that the

[47] See https://kartes.lndb.lv/viewer/map?b=7&x=2618445&y=7754206&z=13&h=50911.
[48] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=13/56.99569/23.50001&l=J/LF/LV/PGM/8&q=d%C5%AB%C5%86ieris.
[49] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=14/56.97441/23.50619&l=J/0&q=d%C5%AB%C5%86ieris.
[50] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=15/56.99259/23.50167&l=J/LF/KN/X/Y/G100/8A/GB/ZD/ME/LV/RK/WI/L/0/4/5/6/7&q=d%C5%AB%C5%86ier&r=56.988800/23.499300/D%C5%AB%C5%86ieris.
[51] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=15/56.99259/23.50167&l=J/LF/KN/X/Y/G100/8A/GB/ZD/ME/LV/RK/WI/L/0/4/5/6/7/KDW/OST/LA75&q=d%C5%AB%C5%86ier&r=56.988800/23.499300/D%C5%AB%C5%86ieris.
[52] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=15/56.99162/25.99198&l=J/8&q=gulb%C4%93ris.

lake's name may have come from the name of a nearby manor recorded in 1681 — *Gulbergz hoff* (BHO 207) — and not the other way around; the name of the manor, however, may be based on a surname. In recordings of the lake's name on later maps, *-berg-* does not appear, for example, *Gulbern* on the 1839 Vidzeme Special map in German, which may indicate that the names recorded on the Swedish maps were incorrect.

Spicieris in Valka — Dambe was also the first to provide an etymology for this hydronym, hypothetically connecting the first component with either the Latv. loanword *spics* 'pointed, sharp' or with Est. *pikk* 'long' with an added *s*; the onomast considers the second hypothesis to be more plausible, because the lake is long and narrow (Dambe 1987 : 34; also Balode 2015 : 63; Bušs & Jansone 2019 : 236). However, this limnonym's phonetic structure and recorded forms make one consider the first hypothesis more probable.

17th- and 18th- century maps do not record this lake's name; the form *Spitzer S.* dominates on 19th-century German-language maps, for example, on the 1839 special map of Vidzeme in German,[53] and *Спицеръ* on the 1867—1881 map of Russia.[54] Noteworthy is the form recorded on Siliņš's 1891 Latvian-language map — *Spiz=ef*,[55] which may confirm that along with having a name of likely Estonian origin, the lake was also called *Spicezers* in Latvian.

The connection between the origin of this group of limnonyms and the Finnic word for 'lake' should be treated with caution. However, a phenomenon can be observed in at least some of these place names, whereby, as a result of influence from Finnic-origin limnonyms, the endings *-ieris* and *-ēris* may have begun to function as a means of word formation in certain regions in Latvia, which were later used as topoformants also in forming lake names of Latvian or other origin (for this see Rapa 2013 : 72, 103, 157). Cases such as these — where a place name is formed according to a certain example, in this case, using a particular formant in the names of similar objects — are studied by toponymic model theory, one of the originators of which was the Czech linguist Rudolf Šrámek (1972—1973).

2.3. Limnonyms for which no etymology is given for the first component

Seven of the limnonyms with the corresponding ending have no etymology given for their first component; however, specifically due to their ending and possibly also because of the location of these place names, they are considered to be Finnic-origin names. Kušķis has been the strongest proponent of this hypothesis.

Jumīzeris in Lazdona (the current official name is *Jumīzelis*) — Kušķis (1993 : 79) associates the second component of this place name with an Estonian lake name but does not provide an etymology for the first component. No one else has given this explanation either before or since Kušķis's publication. Endzelīns references Hauzenberga's publication in the *Filologu biedrības raksti* (Publications of the Society of Philologists), where she connects this form with the Latvian word *ezers* 'lake' and explains the change in the word with the loss of an unstressed vowel in the root of the second compo-

[53] https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=13/57.42032/25.95745&l=E/LV/8&q=spicieris&r=57.420321/25.957451/Spicieris.
[54] See https://kartes.lndb.lv/viewer/map?b=7&x=2883302&y=7843669&z=12&h=50908.
[55] See https://kartes.lndb.lv/viewer/map?b=7&x=2883302&y=7843669&z=12&h=34255.

nent of the compound; however, she does not explain the origin of the first component (Hauzenberga 1932 : 120; Lvv I 403). In her publication, Hauzenberga (1932 : 142) mentions the lake name *Jūmīzeris* along with a swamp name — *Jūmīzels* — found in the neighbouring Mārciena parish. She explains the swamp name as a result of dissimilation, whereby *r* > *l*, and gives similar examples in Latvian, including the place names *Kapšeļa kalns* < *Kapšeŗa kalns*, *Tosmales ezers* < *Tosmares ezers*, and *Zīguļi* < *Zīgurs*.

Apparently, this same process later also occurred with this limnonym, bringing its ending *-eris* closer to the — productive in Latvian — ending *-elis*. Similar processes are also known to have occurred in other Baltic languages, for example, Lithuanian *revolveris* > dialectally *levorvelis*.

The lake is so small that it does not always appear on historical maps, and the name never appears on any of them. This and other etymologies provided by Kušķis for Madona-area limnonyms should probably be viewed with caution, though they also cannot be entirely ruled out, taking into account that several other linguists posit a connection with Est. *järv* 'lake' in their etymologies for a number of other Madona-area limnonyms (for example, *Piniers* — a meadow, a former lake in Liezēre, and *Sezēris* — a lake in Liezēre).

Ķeiseris in Mālpils[56] — Endzelīns allows for a hypothetical connection between the second part of the limnonym *Ķeĩseris* and Liv. *jāra*/*jōra* (*järu*) 'lake', but does not provide an explanation for the origin of the first component; he also compares this place name to *Ceisars* [a meadow in Virbi] (Lvv II 202; also Rudzīte 1968 : 184; Balode 2015 : 63; Bušs & Jansone 2019 : 237).

Liezēris near Madona — Kušķis (1993 : 79) connects the second component of this place name with the Estonian word for 'lake', but does not give an etymology for the first component. Būga (1961 : 622), however, does not consider this limnonym to be Finnish-like, though he also does not provide an alternate etymology. Endzelīns, for his part — and based on Hauzenberga's study — allows for the hypothetical possibility that the Madona-area manor name *Lìezẽris*/*Liezẽre*, the forest name *Liẽzeris* in Skaņkalne, the house name *Liẽzeŗi* in Ādaži, and the lake name *Liezeru ezers* in Krustpils derive from **Lielezeris* 'big lake' (Hauzenberga 1932 : 120; Lvv II 340).

The lake and manor name *Loeser* is mentioned already in 1600 (LVA 214), while other historical sources record the manor name *Laesers hoff* in 1681 (BHO 362). On the 17th-century Swedish manor map, the forms *Siöön* and *Lesars* occur (parallel names?);[57] the lake is not mentioned on the 1839 special map of Vidzeme, but the name of a settlement next to it is recorded in German as *Löser*;[58] on the 1866 three-verst map of Russia the lake's name is *Лёзеръ*;[59] the lake's name is not mentioned on an 1859 Latvian-language map, but the settlement next to it is *Leefere*;[60] and Siliņš's 1896 Latvian-language map records it as *Leeferes ef*.[61] Data from historical sources, including historical maps, show that the name of the lake (as well as the manor and settlement) has been similar to its modern name since at least the end of the 16th century, which does not confirm Hauzenberga's hypothesis regarding *Lielezeris* being its original form. If the limnonym truly were

[56] This place name is not included in LĢia 2025.
[57] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=16/57.00639/26.05863&l=J/8&q=liez%C4%93ris.
[58] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=14/57.00843/26.08669&l=J/LV&q=liez%C4%93ris.
[59] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=14/57.00138/26.06772&l=J/0&q=liez%C4%93ris.
[60] See https://kartes.lndb.lv/viewer/map?b=7&x=2883721&y=7752489&z=11&h=34423.
[61] See https://kartes.lndb.lv/viewer/map?b=7&x=2893694&y=7760361&z=12&h=34255.

based on the Latvian words *liels* 'large' + *ezers* 'lake', then this would imply more than 400 years of phonetic changes. As the possible Finnic origin and semantics of the first component are also not clear, this hypothesis should be treated with caution, and this place name can for now be considered unetymologised. Still, this lake's location — near Madona — favours a Finnic origin, as other place names of such origin are found there.

Līdēris (the current official name is *Lielais Līdēris*, and nearby there is also a lake named *Mazais Līdēris*) in Lubeja — Kušķis (1993 : 79) connects the second component of this place name with the Estonian word for 'lake', but does not provide an etymology for the first component. Būga (1961 : 622) does not consider the limnonym *Lìdēris* to be Finnish-like and also in this case does not provide an alternate etymology. Endzelīns proposes a hypothetical connection for this lake and manor name in the Latvian place name dictionary with the personal name *Lidija* (Lvv II 318).

Though linguists mention only one lake in connection with this limnonym, this has nevertheless been the name of two neighbouring lakes for at least six centuries. Already in 1408, two neighbouring lakes are mentioned in a document in German: *kleine Liederwe* and [its inflected form] *in der grossen Liederwer see* (LGU I 190), which correspond to the modern *Mazais Līdēris* and *Lielais Līdēris*. Though the word forming this limnonym's first component is still not clear, these records confirm Kušķis's intuitively stated hypothesis regarding its Finnic origin. Apparently, the Latvianisation process of the limnonym had already begun in the 15th century with the disappearance of the consonant *j*. On the 17th-century Swedish manor map, the modern lake name *Lielais Līdēris* corresponds to the German name recorded in Latin, *Gross Lijder Lacus*, while the name *Mazais Līdēris* corresponds to the Latvian name recorded in Latin — *Masa Lijder Lacus*.[62] Apparently, the consonant *v* had already disappeared by the 17th century. The 1792 Rīga District map shows the Russian form *Лидернъ*,[63] the 1866 three-verst map of Russia — *Оз. Бол. Людернъ* — and the apparently incorrect form recorded with *o* — *Оз. Мал. Лодернъ*,[64] while the 1889 Latvian-language map records the form *Lihders*.[65] The manor name *Lydershoff* is mentioned in 1681 (BHO 366); a document from 1600 mentions the river name *Liedershe grenntzbeche* (LVA 214). Most likely, the lake name is the source of the manor and river names, and they therefore also have a Finnic origin. The name's first component could be connected with the South Estonian word *leed'e* 'low, marshy, infertile land' and the Estonian surname *Leedjärv*. This discovery allows us to speak with more certainty of the Madona area as a region with place names of Finnic origin, including those based on Est. *järv* 'lake'.

Nīzeris — a swamp in Lēdurga — Būga (1961 : 622) mentions it among other possible borrowings from Finnic languages, which may be based on the appellative *järv*. *Nīzeris* is not mentioned in later scientific publications on this topic, possibly because it is not a lake name, but perhaps also because Hauzenberga (1932 : 120) includes it in her study on the visibility of phonetic changes in place names, where she gives *Nīzere* < **Nī-ezere*? among the

[62] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=14/56.94472/26.02501&l=J/LF/KN/X/Y/8&q=l%C4%ABd%C4%93ris&r=56.947398/26.026929/Lielais%20L%C4%ABd%C4%93ris.
[63] See https://kartes.lndb.lv/viewer/map?b=7&x=2878229&y=7745417&z=11&h=49515.
[64] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=12/56.92665/26.08526&l=J/0&q=l%C4%ABd%C4%93ris.
[65] See https://kartes.lndb.lv/viewer/map?b=7&x=2878229&y=7745417&z=11&h=34314.

examples. It should be noted that the researcher herself was not very convinced of this etymology, because she appended a question mark to it. One cannot rule out a connection between the component *Nī-* or *Nīz-* and LiC *nīstõn* 'moist, wet', Est. *niiske* 'moist' or LiC *nīskõ* 'to snuff, to snort' (EES), cf. *Sulgmō* 'Sniffle hollow'?, a coastal hollow in Pitrõg/Pitrags village (LPND), cf. also *Nīzere* village in Stelpe parish (LĢia 2025).

Sezēris in Liezēre — Ernštreits considers this limnonym to be a Finnic-origin word due to its ending *-ēris*; he does not etymologise the first part of the place name, but connects the second part with LiC *jāra/jōra* 'lake', Salaca Liv. *järu* 'id.', or Est. *järv* 'id.' (LVV VI 343). It may also be possible that the lake name has a connection with LiC *sõzār* 'sister' (LILV), South Estonian *sõsar* 'id.' (VEVS), taking into account the fact that the lake is located quite near Lake Liezēre.

This lake name is mentioned in historical sources at least since the end of the 16th century. A document from 1600 within the current area of Liezēre records a lake named *Zeesser* (LVA : 214). The 17th-century Swedish manor map records the possible form *Lacus Widutz*,[66] based on the name of a nearby house. The house name *Viduci* can still be found in this spot in the present day (LĢia 2025). As the lake is small, it is marked but not named on many 18th- and 19th-century maps. However, on the 1839 special map of Vidzeme, the name recorded in German is *Sehser*,[67] while on the Russian-language three-verst map of Russia it appears as *Оз. Сезеръ*.[68] On the 1920—1940 Latvian army map it appears as *Sezēres ez*.[69] As the origin of the first component is unclear and its connection with the Finnic languages is rather hypothetical, such an origin is nevertheless not impossible.

Ūbēris in Mēdzūla — Būga (1961 : 622) connects the form *Ùbēris* with the Estonian or Livonian word for 'lake', and Endzelīns agrees with Būga (Endzelīns 1934 : 134; also Rudzīte 1968 : 193; Bušs & Jansone 2019 : 237).

This limnonym is also found on maps at least since the 17th century. Noteworthy is the name *OBERS LACÙS*,[70] which is recorded on a 17th-century map. Ūbēris is next to a lake named Graustiņš, which has shrunk and is now overgrown, but in the 20th century both lakes were connected by a small river. In the 17th century, Graustiņš was apparently not overgrown and was located closer to the other lake, and Ūbēris is depicted on the map as being located above Graustiņš. Perhaps, based on this record, it is possible to consider this name to be a Germanism and to connect it with German *ober* 'upper, over'. In German-speaking countries, *Obersee* is a fairly common name, which is given either to a mountain lake or to one of a pair of lakes. Evidently, it may be that the name *OBERS LACÙS* is incorrectly recorded, because maps from the end of the 17th century and later no longer show *o* in the lake's name. For example, in his analysis of the place names contained in the large Swedish cadastre (1681—1710), historian Edgars Dunsdorfs (1974 : 242) connects the house names *Vbe Heren*

[66] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=16/57.00005/26.08615&l=J/LF/8&q=sez%C4%93ris.
[67] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=12/56.97206/26.01477&l=E/LV&q=sez%C4%93ris.
[68] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=14/56.99438/26.08047&l=I/0&q=sez%C4%93ris&r=57.000277/26.081520/Sez%C4%93ris.
[69] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=14/56.99302/26.08811&l=E/LA75&q=sez%C4%93ris&r=57.000277/26.081520/Sez%C4%93ris.
[70] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=16/56.96680/25.98464&l=J/8&q=%C5%ABb%C4%93ris&r=56.969271/25.982088/%C5%AAb%C4%93ris.

and *Uhber Ahr* with the limnonym *Ubēris*. This limnonym begins with *u* also on maps from later centuries, for example, cf. on the special map of Vidzeme in German — *Uber S*.[71] In any case, the origin of this limnonym remains unclear for now.

Considering all 23 limnonyms together, it must be said that all of these place names are located either in Vidzeme or Latgale, and to a lesser extent in Sēlija, with only one limnonym (*Kaņiera ezers* in Nīca and Sloka) in Courland (see the parishes marked with triangles in Figure 3).

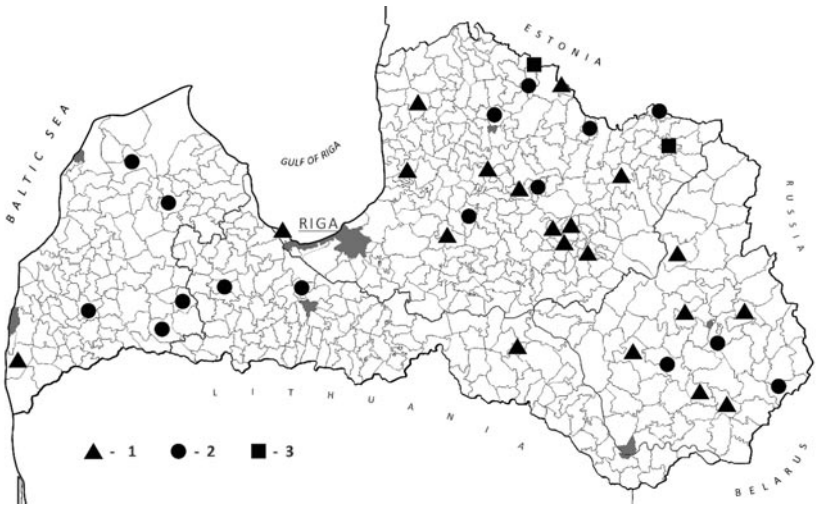

Figure 3. **The location of Latvian limnonyms ending in *-eris*, *-ēris*, and *-ieris* discussed in the article. 1 — limnonyms ending in *-eris*, *-ēris*, and *-ieris*, which linguists consider to be of Finnic origin. 2 — limnonyms ending in *-eris*, *-ēris*, and *-ieris*, which most likely are not connected with Liv. *jāra*/*jōra* (*järu*) 'lake' or Est. *järv* 'id.'. 3 — limnonyms ending in *-eris*, *-ēris*, and *-ieris*, which hypothetically may be connected with Liv. *jāra*/*jōra* (*järu*) 'lake' or Est. *järv* 'id.'.**

Here, one can see the proximity of Estonia and the Vidzeme Livonic dialect area of Latvian, as well as the traces of the Leivu community near Lejasciems and the Vidzeme Selonic subdialects of Latvian, in which there is no shortage of various Finnic traces (authors who have written about this include, e.g., Maija Poiša and Bušs; see Bušs 2019; Poiša 1985 : 5; 1994; 1999 : 4), and Latgale as the location of an ancient Finnic substrate, which has been discussed, for example, by Breidaks (see, e.g., Breidaks 1977; 1989; Breidaks 2003), and also as an area with other, possibly more recent but undocumented Finnic communities, the traces of which are found in local Latvian subdialect features and population records (Balodis 2023; Stafecka 2021). It is interesting that the distribution of Finnic-origin place names is broader than just the range where limnonyms ending in *-eris*, *-ēris*, and *-ieris* are encountered. This can be seen, for example, on the map created by Balode (2015 : 52, 53) for an article she published in Finland.

As already noted, the LĢia database contains a string of other such lake names beyond those ending in *-eris*, *-ēris*, and *-ieris*, which are analysed above. The next two sections of this article are devoted to examining these and providing explanations for their origin.

[71] See https://kartes.lndb.lv/viewer/map?b=7&x=2891759&y=7752739&z=14&h=50746.

3. Limnonyms ending in *-eris*, *-ēris*, and -ieris, which, most likely, are not connected with Liv. *jāra*/*jōra* (*järu*) 'lake' or Est. *järv* 'id.'

In order to identify other possible Finnic-origin place names, which have thus far not been noted, it is necessary to first examine those Latvian limnonyms ending in *-eris*, *-ēris*, and *-ieris*, which have an undeniably different origin, i.e. those which have an etymology not connected with Liv. *jāra*/*jōra* (*järu*) 'lake' or Est. *järv* 'id.'. Endzelīns (1934 : 134) provides etymologies for numerous limnonyms not connected with the Finnic languages in the aforementioned article about hydronyms with *-er-* (*-ēr-*) and *-ar-*. Place names, including those in this group, have been etymologised in the volumes of the Latvian place name dictionary up to the letter *S* (Lvv; LVV).

Cieceres ezers in Brocēni — Endzelīns considers the river and lake names to be hypothetically linked with Latv. *ciẽcere* 'a small forest' and *cieceris* 'mound, knoll (a swampy area)' (EH I 276; Lvv I 170).

Diņģeru ezers in Ģibuļi parish — this limnonym is not found in the Latvian place name dictionary; it may possibly be connected with the Pastende house name *Diņģeri,* which is included in the Latvian place name dictionary, but not etymologised (Lvv I 215); it may be linked with Germ. *Dinger* 'judge, magistrate', and other meanings (DWB).

Dižiere in Puze — Rudzīte (1968 : 180) states that the river name *Irve*, which is the source of the limnonyms *Dieżiere* and *Maziere*, is connected with Liv. *īrva* 'doe, roe deer' [more precisely: a reconstructed Liv. form **īrva*, cf. Est. *hirv* and Finnish *hirvi*, because documented Livonian does not include such a word; only *tikā* or *mõtsātikā* V.E.] (see also Lvv I 374). At the same time, a connection cannot be ruled out with the local word *iẽre*, *ieris* 1) 'a niche or hollow in the wall of a stove', 3) 'a small stone or brick wall' (ME II : 57), which may also be connected with numerous place names in Courland, for example, the swamp name *Ieres purvs* / *Ieru purvs* in Ance (which itself may be the source of the river names *Dižiere* and *Maziere*, as well as *Veciere* in Stikli in Puze).

Domēru ezers, Domeris in Nītaure — this limnonym is not mentioned in the Latvian place name dictionary; it may be associated with the Nītaure house name *Duõmēŗi*, which Endzelīns hypothetically (using a question mark) links with MLG *domer* 'judge, magistrate' (Lvv I 248).

Elderis in Kursīši — this limnonym is not mentioned in the Latvian place name dictionary, but it does mention *Eĺderis* — a pond in Kursīši, the name of which Endzelīns connects with Latv. *elderis* 1) 'a garbage pit (by a barn)' or 2) 'a rash, foolish person' (ME I 567; Lvv I 268).

Ezeris in Valmiera — this limnonym is not mentioned in the Latvian place name dictionary, but it does mention the house name *Ezeris* in Valmiera, which is connected with Latv. *ezers* 'lake' (Lvv I 279).

Glēzeris in Ērģeme — its Estonian name is *Piirijärv*, the first component of which is based on Est. *piir* 'border'. The form *Glēzeris* is mentioned in the Latvian place name card file in 1951, but the origin of this place name is not explained. This limnonym could hypothetically be connected with Germ. *gläser* 'glazier, glass cutter' (WN).

Ģēģeru ezers in Kalvene — this place name is also not mentioned in the Latvian place name dictionary, but it does mention the house name *Ģẽģeŗi* in Kalvene, which, in turn, is connected with the Latvian apellative *ģẽģeris* 'hunter', < Germ. *Jäger* 'id.' (ME I 697).

Ismeru ezers in Rēzna — the Latvian place name dictionary includes the village name *Ismeņi*, which is given with the parenthetical note *ar ezeru* ('with a lake'); however, an etymological explanation is not provided (Lvv I 367). Though its etymology is unclear, a Finnic origin also does not seem likely. The earliest mentions of this place name are *in lacu Ismariensi* in 1599 and *oz. Vyzmer / oz. Izmerž* in 1784 (Zeps 1984 : 170).

Kaņcieris in Pasiene parish — this limnonym is not included in the Latvian place name dictionary, but it does include other place names with this root from other inhabited places, for example, *Kancera-dīķis*, though none of these are accompanied by an etymology (Lvv II 35). It may be that this limnonym is connected with the surname *Kancers*, which, however, is not widespread in Latgale (Mežs & Jansone & Kovaļevska & Rapa 2022 : 300), but which can also be compared with the Lithuanian surname *Kañceris* and the Polish surname *Kącior* (LPŽ I 908).

Maziere in Puze — Rudzīte (1968 : 180) explains that the river name *Irve* is derived from Liv. *īrva* 'doe, roe deer' [more precisely: from the reconstructed Liv. form ***īrva*** V.E.] (see also Lvv I 374). See also *Dižiere*.

Mellīzeris in Jaunpils and Valgunde — Hauzenberga (1932 : 121, 122) explains this form as having originated from *Mellizeris* < *Mellezeris*, where *e* > *i* (see also Lvv II 409).

Palpieris on the border of Veclaicene and Jaunlaicene — *Palpírs* — Kārlis Plukšs (1935 : 71) associates the place name with Est. *palu* 'pine forest' and Est. *piir* 'border' (see also Rudzīte 1968 : 188; LVV I 97). A Finnic origin for this place name is highly plausible, because the lake is located right next to Estonia in an area that was still recently inhabited by Estonians. Cf. the Estonian place name *Palupera* 'end of high dry pine forest', between Tartu and Valga (historically *Paloperä*) (EKNR).

Šķesteris in Dzērbene — it may have acquired its name from a house located nearby, cf. *Šķesteri* farmstead in Dzērbene (LĢia 2025), the names of which, in turn, are most likely connected with the Latvian appellative *šķesteris* 'sacristan' (ME IV : 29), < *ķesteris* with an added *s*, < MLG *koster* 'id.' (ME II 371).

Šķeteris in Šķaune — possibly based on Latv. *šķetere*, which has several meanings and the first of these is 'a collection of yarn or thread wound in equal loops' (MLVV); however, in Mīlenbahs' *Latviešu valodas vārdnīca* (Dictionary of Latvian) it is identified as a word also referring to wild ducks in folk songs (ME IV 30).

Valdieris in Drusti — possibly connected with the surname *Valders* (Mežs 2017 : 257) or also Germ. *Waldherr* 'forest owner' (WN).

Vēderis — *Vêdere* in Zvārtava — Endzelīns (1934 : 134) compares this place name to the Old Prussian limnonym *Wedere* and the Lithuanian stream name *Vedera*.

Vieveru ezers, ***Vēveru ezers*** in Silajāņi — this limnonym most likely arose from a village name, cf. *Vèveņi* village in Silajāņi (Endzelīns 1925 : 187).

The words in this group differ in their origin, but are united by the similar endings *-eris*, *-ēris*, and *-ieris* and the fact that they are, most likely, not connected with the Finnic word for 'lake'.[72] Many names in this group

[72] As these limnonyms are not the main focus of this article's research, they are not analysed as deeply as names of possible Finnic origin based on the Finnic word for 'lake'.

are loans from German, for example, *Diņģeru ezers*, *Domēru ezers*, *Glēzeris*, *Ģēģeru ezers*, and *Šķesteris*. The source of some of these names is Latvian *ezers* 'lake', for example, *Ezeris* and *Mellīzeris*, or a different word of Latvian origin, for example, *Cieceres ezers*. There are also limnonyms with a Livonian origin, for example, *Dižiere* and *Maziere*, or based on a word of Estonian origin, for example, *Palpieris*. The origin of some of the limnonyms in this group is unclear, for example, *Kaņcieris* and *Ismeru ezers*. They are identified in Figure 3 with a circle and, unlike the words in the first group, are found across all of Latvia.

4. Limnonyms ending in *-eris*, *-ēris*, and -ieris hypothetically connected with Liv. *jāra/jōra* (*järu*) 'lake' or Est. *järv* 'id.'

Finally, two limnonyms will be analysed, which have the corresponding ending, but which do not appear in earlier studies with etymologies linked to Liv. *jāra/jōra* (*järu*) 'lake' or Est. *järv* 'id.', though their location and comparison with individual place names in Estonia make it possible to posit such a connection.

Indzeris in Alūksne — though Būga (1961 : 644) does not mention this place name among Finnic-origin lake names, he does hypothetically connect the house name *Indzeri* (cf. *Indzeņi* farmstead in Alūksne; Endzelīns 1922 : 66) with the river name *Ижора*, which he derives from the Fin. **Ingera* (?) / *Inkeren joki*. Hauzenberga (1932 : 120), for her part, classifies both the house name and lake name as compounds in her article, with the first component containing the place name element *Ind-* (the author also compares it to the Estonian village name *Inda*), which is characteristic of Livonian areas, but the second component — Latv. *Ezers*, with the change in the word explained by the loss of an unstressed vowel in the root of the second part of the compound. However, based on these facts and the lake's geographic location, we would like to propose the hypothesis that the second component of this limnonym could also be Est. *järv*, while the first component should instead be compared with the southern Estonian place names *Indsikurmu* near Põlva, *Intsu* near Viljandi, or *Hinsa/Hindsa*, *Hindsiko* in southeastern Estonia near the Latvian border. The Estonian place name dictionary mentions that the village name *Inda* in Rapla County may be based on the male name *Hind* or *Hint* (EKNR).

The form *Jnser* dominates in 18th- and 19th-century historical sources, for example, on the 1793 German-language map of Valka District — *Jnser See*;[73] the forms *Jnser S.* for the lake and *Jnser* for the settlement next to it on the 1839 special map of Vidzeme;[74] on Siliņš's 1896 Latvian-language map — *Inseref*. The 1920—1940 Latvian army map already shows a name closest to the modern one — *Indzeru ez.*[75]

Suķieris in Ērģeme (near the Latvian-Estonian border) — on 19th- and early 20th-century German and Russian maps, it is recorded as *Sukker* (in 1839), *Суккер* (in 1905), and on Latvian maps from the 1920s to the 1940s as *Sukeru ezers*. Several parallel forms are recorded in the Latvian place name card file dating to the mid-20th century: *Suķu ezers*, *Suķiera ezers*,

[73] See https://kartes.lndb.lv/viewer/map?b=7&x=3003601&y=7837051&z=13&h=50914.
[74] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=14/57.38057/27.03478&l=J/X/LV&q=Indzeris.
[75] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=13/57.39414/27.03938&l=J/LA75&q=Indzeris&r=57.380693/27.001640/Indzeris.

Suķiēris, *Suķvēris*, *Suķvēra ezàrs* (LVVK). Taking into account its location, perhaps — with considerable caution — the forms *Suķiera ezers* and *Suķiēris* could also be added to those formed on the basis of Est. *järv* 'lake', while the first part of the place name could — with two question marks — be connected with Est. *sukk* 'sock' or the Est. dialect term *sokk* 'marsh grass', which is connected to the limnonym *Sokkjärv* (*Sokyerve* in 1386, *Sokyerve* in 1419) located near Rõuge in southern Estonia (EKNR).

As this lake is small, it appears on many historical maps without a name; however, on the 18th- and 19th-century maps where it does appear in German, the dominant form is *Sukker*, for example, on the 1839 German-language special map of Vidzeme — *Sukker S.*,[76] in Russian — *Суккеръ*, for example, on the 1908 Russian-language One-verst map of Russia — *Оз. Суккеръ*.[77]

Though historical sources do not give convincing evidence of a Finnic origin, these two newly re-etymologised limnonyms are located within the area inhabited in earlier times by Estonian ancestors and within the same territory as other limnonyms with Finnic etymologies and are marked with a square in Figure 3.

5. Conclusions

There are many studies of possible Finnic-origin Latvian limnonyms ending in *-eris, -ēris, and -ieris*; however, not all of the proposed etymologies are plausible, because 1) a portion of these have been proposed by linguists lacking knowledge of Finnic languages; 2) the origin of the first component of the place name has not been identified in all cases; and 3) studies are not always based on research of historical sources, including historical maps.

Research into historical sources, including 17th—19th-century maps, has made it possible to review etymologies for this group of limnonyms previously provided by linguists, casting doubt on some (e.g. *Dūņieris*, *Sasēris*), confirming others (e.g. *Līdēris*, *Ninieris*), and leaving others, especially those where the origin of the first component is still not possible to determine, to future researchers.

Recordings of the limnonym *Līdēris* in historical sources from various centuries show that the place-name Latvianisation process has been gradual, with some signs of *järv* still being preserved in the 15th century but no longer found on 17th-century maps, because the change *järv* > *ier/ēr/er* had already occurred. Thus, in many hypothetical cases, a Finnic origin — even if it does exist — is still not possible to prove based on records in historical sources, because relatively few lakes appear in sources from the 15th century and earlier. Nevertheless, historical sources from the 17th century and later also show place-name development trends, for example, on a 17th-century map, the limnonym *Sasēris* was formed with the Latvian word *ezers*, thereby confirming that the place name has at least a partial Latvian origin.

The recording of the limnonym *Līdēris* as *Liederwer see* at the beginning of the 15th century makes it possible to speak with certainty of the Madona area as a region with Finnic-origin place names.

[76] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=13/57.85051/25.85673&l=J/LV/PGM&q=su%C4%B7ieris.
[77] See https://vesture.dodies.lv/#m=14/57.85223/25.89837&l=J/7&q=su%C4%B7ieris&r=57.850513/25.856726/Su%C4%B7ieris.

A portion of the limnonyms with the corresponding endings, which have thus far not been etymologically connected with Liv. *jāra*/*jōra* (*järu*) 'lake' or Est. *järv* 'id.' — including place names which Hauzenberga considered to have been derived from Latv. *ezers* 'lake', explaining the change in the word with the loss of an unstressed vowel in the second part of the compound — can at least hypothetically be linked with the Livonian or Estonian word for 'lake' where this is permitted by the place name's location and where it does not contradict data from historical sources.

The limnonyms and place names with existing etymologies given earlier by linguists, but for which Finnic etymologies are proposed for the first time in this article, form a fairly uniform area — Vidzeme, Latgale, and to a lesser extent Sēlija — and only rarely Courland.

The distribution of the limnonyms and the analysis of historical sources lead to the conclusion that in certain regions in Latvia — near Līdēre and Liezēre, which are located within the Vidzeme Selonic subdialect region of Latvian, and Sloka, which is located to the west of Rīga — the endings *-eris*, *-ēris*, and *-ieris* spread and became generally used as topoformants, also for limnonyms of Baltic or other origin. It is possible that this phenomenon is even more widespread.

For now, it is unclear why the distribution area for Finnic-origin limnonyms ending in *-eris*, *-ēris*, and *-ieris* is considerably smaller than the distribution area of other place names of this origin and why such limnonyms are so rare in Courland. It may be that this is connected with the considerable length of contacts in Courland and the existence of long-standing bilingualism, which led to the existence of two parallel place name systems, as can still be seen in the present day (*Nurmuiža*/*Lauciene* near Talsi; *Melnsils*/*Mustānum*, *Trumpe* / *Piški Joug* / *Nabāl joug* / *Lūžupe* on the Livonian Coast); however, this nevertheless demands further study.

Problems in the research history and the examined material show that, most likely, there are still other limnonyms or former limnonyms based on Liv. *jāra*/*jōra* (*järu*) 'lake' or Est. *järv* 'id.' in the Latvian onomasticon beyond those described in this article. It may be that ancient lake names are also preserved in the names of former lakes having the corresponding endings, which have since turned into swamps.

Data availability statement.
Data are contained within the article.

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Addresses

Anta Trumpa
Latvian Language Institute, Faculty of Humanities of the University of Latvia
Email: anta.trumpa@lu.lv

Valts Ernštreits,
University of Latvia Livonian Institute
Email: valts.ernstreits@lu.lv

Abbreviations

Est. — Estonian, **Fin.** — Finnish, **Germ.** — German, **Latv.** — Latvian, **LiC** — Courland Livonian dialect, **Lith.** — Lithuanian, **Liv.** — Livonian, **LiV** — Vidzeme Livonian dialect, **MLG** — Middle Low German, **OPr.** — Old Prussian.

BHO — Baltisches historisches Ortslexikon. Teil II. Lettland (Südlivland und Kurland), Köln 1990; **BM** — Baltic Maps. https://balticmaps.eu/lv/; **DWB** — Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jacob Grimm und Wilhelm Grimm, digitalisierte Fassung im Wörterbuchnetz des Trier Center for Digital Humanities, Version 01/23. https://www.woerterbuchnetz.de/DWB; **EES** — Eesti etümoloogiasõnaraamat, Tallinn, https://arhiiv.eki.ee/dict/ety/; **EKIKNK** — Eesti Keele Instituudi kohanimekartoteek. https://www.eki.ee/kohanimed/index.php?khk=jqh&d_info=ka-ko&om=es1&st=603103&a=91; **EKNR** — Eesti kohanimeraamat, Tallinn. https://arhiiv.eki.ee/dict/knr/; **ILV** — Igauņu-latviešu vārdnīca. Eesti-läti sõnaraamat. http://www.ee-lv.lv/lv/vardnica/; **LLD** — V. Ernštreits (ed.-in-chief), T.-R. Viitso, S. Vāvere, P. Damberg, M. Kurpniece, U. Balodis, T. Tuisk, G. Kūla, M. Tomingas, S. E. Soosaar, A. Sedláčková, T. Jurgenovskis, Livonian lexicographic database, Riga 2024. https://livonian.tech/; **LĢia 2025** — Latvijas Ģeotelpiskās informācijas aģentūras Vietvārdu datubāze, Rīga. https://vietvardi.lgia.gov.lv/vv/to_www.sakt; **LILV** — Lībiešu-igauņu-latviešu vārdnīca. http://www.livonian.tech/; **LPND** — V. Ernštreits (ed.-in-chief), T. R. Viitso, P. Damberg, B. Šuvcāne, S. Vāvere, Signis, Livonian place name database, Riga 2024. https://livonian.tech/; **LPŽ** — A. Vanagas, V. Maciejauskienė, M. Razmukaitė, Lietuvių pavardžių žodynas I, Vilnius 1985; **LGU** — Livländische Güterurkunden I (aus den Jahren 1207 bis 1500); II (aus den Jahren 1501 bis 1545), Riga 1908, 1923; **LVA** — Vidzemes saimniecības vēstures avoti. 1553.—1618. g. Latvijas vēstures avoti, 6. sēj., Rīga 1941; **Lvv I** — J. Endzelīns, Latvijas PSR vietvārdi I, Rīga 1956; **Lvv II** — J. Endzelīns, Latvijas PSR vietvārdi II, Rīga 1961; **LVV I** — Latvijas vietvārdu vārdnīca. Paaglis—Piķu-, Rīga 2003; **LVV II** — Latvijas vietvārdu vārdnīca. Pilaci—Pracapole, Rīga 2006; **LVV III** — Latvijas vietvārdu vārdnīca. Pracirika—Puožu-, Rīga 2010; **LVV IV** — Latvijas vietvārdu vārdnīca. R, Rīga 2013; **LVV V** — Latvijas vietvārdu vārdnīca. Saba—Sēža-, Rīga 2017; **LVV VI** — Latvijas vietvārdu vārdnīca. Sagajevski—Sļukuma-, Rīga 2024; **ME** — K. Mīlenbahs, Latviešu valodas vārdnīca I—IV, Rīga 1923—1932; **MLVV** — Mūsdienu latviešu valodas vārdnīca, Rīga 2003—2024. https://mlvv.tezaurs.lv/; **RKAT 2024** — Riikliku kohanimeregistri avalik teenus. https://xgis.maaamet.ee/knravalik/#; **UB** — Liv-, est- und kurländisches Urkundenbuch I, Reval 1853; **VEVS** — Võro-eesti-võro sõnaraamat. https://synaq.org/; **WN** — Wörterbuchnetz. Version 01/25. https://woerterbuchnetz.de/.

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АНТА ТРУМПА, ВАЛТС ЭРНШТРЕЙТС (Рига)

ЕЩЁ РАЗ О НАЗВАНИЯХ ОЗЁР ЛАТВИИ НА *-eris, -ēris, -ieris*

В статье рассматриваются латышские названия озёр на *-eris, -ēris* и *-ieris* как возможные следы финно-угорского языкового субстрата. Авторы анализируют лимнонимы, ранее связывавшиеся исследователями с ливским *jāra/jōra* (LiV *järu*) и эстонским *järv* ’озеро’, а также названия, не рассматривавшиеся в этом контексте. Особое внимание уделяется проблеме разграничения исконно латышских названий и тех, для которых возможна финно-угорская этимология. Авторы подвергают сомнению часть ранее предложенных этимологий. Названия вероятного финно-угорского происхождения сосредоточены главным образом в Видземе и Латгале.

ANTA TRUMPA, VALTS ERNŠTREITS (Riia)

LÄTI *eris-*, *ēris-*, *ieris-***LÕPULISTE JÄRVENIMEDE TAASKÄSITLUS**

Artiklis käsitletakse nii neid läti *eris-*, *ēris-*, *ieris-*lõpulisi järvenimesid, mille keeleteadlased on juba varem seostanud Kuramaa liivi sõnaga *jāra/jōra* (Salatsi liivi *järu*) ’järv’ või eesti sõnaga *järv*, kui ka neid, mida teistes uurimustes pole läänemeresoome keeltega seostatud. Viimaste analüüsimisel on püütud eristada teistsuguse, enamasti läti, kuid mõnikord ka saksa päritoluga nimesid neist, mille aluseks võiksid hüpoteetiliselt olla liivi või eesti järvenimed. Autorid on seisukohal, et mitte kõik varasemad etümoloogiad pole usutavad, sest 1) osa neist on esitanud keeleteadlased, kes läänemeresoome keeli piisavalt ei tundnud, ning 2) kohanime esikomponendi päritolu ei ole kõigil juhtudel kindlaks tehtud. Järvenimed, millele selles artiklis läänemeresoome etümoloogia esmakordselt esitatakse, on koondunud üsna ühtlasele alale Vidzemes ja Latgales.