

Studies into the Balts' Sacred Places

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Lithuanian Institute of History

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Preface

Balts' sacred places, the old common name of which is *alkai*, are one of the most interesting monument groups. They have not been properly protected or investigated for many years for various reasons: ideological, methodological, and financial.

A sacred place is not only a hill or a stone. Usually they have their own names and are shrouded in place-legends and beliefs. Sometimes people still believe these sites bring happiness and health. They immortalise the contact between nature and culture, the history of gods and humans. So sacred places are one of the most amazing realia of prehistoric world and this monograph is intended for those who seek more knowledge about it.

From the bottom of my heart I devote this monograph to the memory of the ancient Balts. Many of them perished in the whirlpools of historic events and religious changes, were scattered to faraway regions, or were forced to change their faith. The sacred places, their cult places, that are examined in this monograph have become shrouded in secrecy and buried in time.

December 2003

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Fig. 1. Sacred oaks of Joskaudai (Kretinga district). Photo by author, 1993.

1 Introduction

Little attention is paid to the subject of sacred places in scientific works because it is customary to analyse the realia of mental culture (including mythology) separately from sacred places. There have been ten studies devoted to Balts' sacred places. In these, the sacred places are usually described according to the few known written sources, referencing mostly the same few examples of investigated monuments.

The non-systematic view of the various and plentiful information on the sacred places that is provided by several sciences is the main problem that prevented us from using this valuable base of sources for the investigation of the Balts' religion and mythology.

The aim of this work is to examine various scientific information, to classify the Balts' sacred places in Lithuania according to type, to point out the main types and groups of sacred places, and moreover, to analyse their religious and historic contexts.

The Balts' sacred places are examined systemically: they are examined typologically, according to complex archaeological, historic, ethnologic, linguistic, folkloristic scientific methods and the cartographic analysis of monuments. The results of these examinations are compared to other data about the Balts and their neighbours the Slavs, Germans and Finno-Ugrians.

1.1 Terms and definitions

Alka or *alkas* is an Indo-European word used by the Balts to define their sacred places. However, scientific works that analyse the subject of sacred places use a wide variety of terms and definitions. The common definitions can be divided into two main groups.

The first group consists of terms that usually denote the sacred places of natural origin, e.g.: *sacred place*, *sanctuary*, *der Kultplatz*, *das Naturheiligtum*, *świątynia pogańska*, *šventvietė*, *svētvieta*, *священное место*. Terms defining sacred places that contained constructions, artificial elements of the environment or other equipment belong to the second group, e.g.: *temple*, *der Tempel*, *das Heiligtum*, *šventykla*, *svētīca*, *святимище*.

More specific definitions of the terms denoting sacred places were not provided even in the World Congress of Archaeology "Sacred sites, sacred places and sites of significance" held in Venezuela in 1990 (Carmichel et al, 1994).

In the works of Lithuanian authors, such terms defining Balts' sacred places are used: *alka*, *the cult place of the old belief*, *pagan temple*. In 1990 the term *mythological-sacral object* was introduced; after a while the concept *mythological place* was offered.

A more obvious difference between the terms *sacred place* and *cult place* has not been singled out yet (also the terms *holy place/sacred site*, *der Kultplatz/der Opferplatz* are used in parallel, cf. Wilson, 1996; Ernst, 1998). So in this work the sacred and cult places are simply called *sacred places*; cult constructions - *temples* or *sanctuaries*; complexes of sacred places situated in a certain territory - *sacred sites*. The existence of one kind (type, group) of sacred places in a certain region is called a *tradition of sacred places*.

1. 2 Sources

Data from about 1200 sites in Lithuania were used for the classification and cartography of the sacred places. 420 monuments were localised and data about them recorded by the author of this monograph during his surveys in 1990–1999. These data have already been widely used in the first part of the catalogue of Lithuanian sacred places (Vaitkevičius, 1998a). In the process other data that are kept in archives and researchers' information published in monographs and periodicals were used. The aim was to use factual data that are confirmed by several independent sources of the same kind or by several sources in different sciences.

Archaeological sources. The majority of the data are taken from manuscript survey reports stored in the archive of the Lithuanian Institute of History. There are detailed or short descriptions of sacred places that contain the geographical location, size, and certain features, motives of the place-

legends and other characteristics of the monuments. No bigger doubts about the reliability of this group of sources arise.

Professional excavations of the sacred places have only started a couple of decades ago (see Daugudis, 1992 pp.52–3). Since 1970, when the cult place of Šilalė¹ was the first to be investigated (Fig. 2), about 70 cult places have been excavated. Most of them are stones and their groups – in 53 cases. Monuments of other kinds are hardly excavated (nine hills, three island-peninsulas, one field, one wetland and a spring) or not investigated at all (e.g. groves, hollows). For various reasons, in many places excavations of only small areas were carried out, usually around 1–30 m². Only in eight places have areas of 100 and more square metres been excavated.

Among the excavated cult places it is worth noting the one in Palanga (the Birutė hill), also the cult places by stones in Antakmenė, Katinai, Kutiškiai, Padievaitis, Stabulankiai, Šaukliai, Trumponys (Fig. 3). Various archaeological objects and finds have been found in 40 monuments (in about 55% of all the monuments excavated).² In most of the cases there were found fireplaces, pits, some individual finds and remains of the cultural layer.

¹ For further information see Appendix D.

² It should be mentioned that in many cases the ground was not sifted or checked with a metal detector.



Fig. 2. Investigations of Šilalė cult place (Skuodas district). Photo by E. Jurgaitis, 1970.



Fig. 3. Investigations of Trumponys cult place (Molėtai district). Photo by V. Urbanavičius, 1972. LIH-32958.

So the statistics obviously show that a very small number of sacred places have been investigated so far. In most of the cases it was done only for prospecting purposes. However, the opinion is frequently expressed that it is worthless to investigate sacred places archeologically. The association between research into sacred places and archaeology is, unfortunately, still influenced by the Lithuanian understanding of this concept.

It should be noted that several pre-Christian cult places have been found during the excavations of other kinds of archaeological monuments (e.g. settlements, cemeteries) (cf. Butrimas, 1983 pp.34–5; Genienė & Genys, 1993 pp. 69–70; Vaitkunskienė, 1995). Sometimes there is no united opinion about the objects (e.g. pits with burns, fireplaces, stone pavement) found during such excavations. For instance, it is disputed whether the pits found in the cemeteries of Kukiai, Gintališkė, and Godeliai had some religious purpose or were cremations. It is still discussed whether the “sacred places” in Kernavė (Luchtanas, 1990), Dauglaukis (Malonaitis, 2000), and beneath Vilnius Cathedral (Kitkauskas, 1989 pp.115–125) are real sacred places, or whether they were really separate parts of the excavated settlements. It is disputed whether Obeliai Lake (Urbanavičius & Urbanavičienė, 1988 pp.35–6) was a place for burying or sacrificing and the like.

Historical sources. A. Mierzyński (1892, 1896) and W. Mannhardt (1936) completed two first collections of the written sources considering the Balts’ religion and mythology. The new supplemented collection of such sources has been completed by N. Vėlius (1996, 2001) and is widely used in this monograph. The latter collection also contains comprehensive comments about the reliability and scientific

value of each of the sources. It is important that in these sources, apart from abstract knowledge about the Balts’ religion, several sacred places that existed until the conversion in 1387 are mentioned.

Quite a number of sacred places are mentioned in various documents of the 16th c. Usually these are just place-names, which are now said to be the names of sacred places. The Annals of Lithuania (*Литовская летопись, Хроника Быховца*) of the 16th c., where some better-known sacred places are described (the Pajauta Grave hill in Guronys, the Kukavaitis hill in Baraučizna, the Spėra Lake, the Šventaragis valley in Vilnius) should be mentioned separately. In the records of the Catholic Church of the 17th–18th c. and the descriptions of the Jesuits’ missions, several pre-Christian cult places (stones, trees) that were still worshipped by people are also mentioned.

Unfortunately, many of the historic sources, chiefly descriptions of the possessions of land, inventories and others from the 16th c. and especially from the 17th–18th c. are not published yet, which is why they are hardly used in this work.

Language sources. Not many sacred places names were recorded until the 20th century. In the questionnaires of the *Lietuvos Žemės Vardynas* (Onomastics of Lithuanian place-names) of 1935–39 that were usually filled out by teachers, thousands of place- and water-names from almost all of Lithuania of that time were written down. Among the variety of place-names provided in these questionnaires there is a number of names of sacred places that are usually followed by additional valuable information about the location of the site and its features. No bigger doubts appear about the reliability of this source.

The place-names that were written down after the Second World War provide a considerably smaller amount of information about the sacred places because the main purpose at this time was to record the linguistic facts but not more general (i.e. cultural) facts.

The card files of thousands of place- and water-names are kept in the Institute of the Lithuanian Language.

Folklore sources. The sacred places often appear in the sphere of the narrative folklore. Place-legends usually tell about the real or mythical history of these places, about their features and origin. Some of these texts are stored in libraries, the majority in the Lithuanian Folklore Archive.

The authenticity of the folklore sources is quite a big problem. The sources that are critically evaluated (cf. Jonynas, 1984) or that were published in scientific publications (cf. Balys, 1940 pp.223–7; Balys, 1949 pp.49–56; Sauka et al., 1967 pp.598–604, 642–49) were mainly used in this study. When using the unpublished folklore sources the critical selection made by researchers is taken into account.

When using the place-legends, tales, and beliefs that were written down by the author, firstly the catalogue of the motives of Lithuanian narrative folklore (Kerbelytė, 1973; 2001) and the authenticity of the texts were considered.

Ethnological sources. At the end of the 19th and during the 20th c. a number of sacred places continued to be revered. They had much in common with various customs and beliefs; moreover, certain rites (usually of the syncretic type) took place there. Unfortunately, such data are considerably rare and episodic. They are usually found in the manuscript-legacy of land researchers: Balys Buračas, Ignas Jablonskis, Antanas Mažiulis, Juozas Mickevičius, Juozas Šliavas and others.

While concluding the review of the sources it should be said that it is a pity that except for investigations of humanities, other kinds of research into sacred places are still very rare. So far only a couple of ethnoastronomic researches of pre-Christian cult places have been carried out. Biophysical measurements near the sacred stones have been episodic and the results have not been announced. So far the water of only a few springs that are said to be sacred has been tested chemically and analysis of the geological structure of only a few tens of stones that are said to be sacred has been made. They have not been examined more widely and have not yet been interpreted in the cultural context.

1. 3 Review of investigations

Sacred places in the Lithuanian territory caused interest in the Romantic era. T. Narbutt broadly discussed this topic in *Dzieje starożytne narodu Litewskiego* (History of the Lithuanian Nation, 1835). Sacred places were also mentioned in the historic and geographic studies of various authors that were published later (cf. Tyszkiewicz, 1842 pp.43–4; Kirkor, 1855 p.452; Buszinski, 1874 p.119; Volter, 1886 p.66). The manuscript *Lituanica*, completed by the priest A. Kossarzewski 1857–63, which contains a lot of important information about sacred places, should be mentioned separately. There are also a number of sacred places mentioned in the annual publications 1845–1915, published by the government statistics committees of Vilnius and Kaunas (cf. Gukovskiy, 1890 pp.427–8; Yaunis, 1897 pp.89–90).

So in the middle of the 19th c. some of the sacred places (e.g. Medžiokalnė hill in Kražiai, Puntukas stone in Dvaronys) were described in historical and geographical literature. It seems that at those times the landowner F. Wilczyński was even excavating near the Mokas stone in Sukiniai.

The registration of all the sacred places of the country, like that of other monuments, is connected with the preparation of archaeological maps by the Russian governments. F. Pokrovskiy organised the information that was provided in a lot of questionnaires and compiled the archaeological maps of Vilnius (1893), Grodno (1895) and Kaunas (1899) governments. They contain a lot of important data, also about sacred hills and stones.

During the late 19th and early 20th c., all kinds of prehistoric monuments, including sacred places, began to be surveyed more actively. This was connected with the initiative of individual researchers as well as activities of the members of *Lietuvių mokslo draugija* (Lithuanian Science Society) and *Mokslo bičiulių draugija* (Science Friends Society) (cf. Szukiewicz, 1900, 1901 pp.32–4; Totoraitis, 1908 pp.186–7; Žiogas, 1909 p.330). The results of L. Krzywicki's surveys in Samogitia (1906) should be mentioned separately.

From 1920 the investigation and protection of sacred places are connected with Colonel Petras Tarasienka. His articles were published one after another (1922, 1923). They described the surveyed sacred places, and the author made the first scientific assumptions about the issues of the “old Lithuanian sacred places” and sacred stones. P. Tarasienka also encouraged the gathering of information about prehistoric monuments (1926, 1927). After summarising what has been written earlier, including the information obtained by him and his colleagues, P. Tarasienka completed in 1928 *Lietuvos archeologijos medžiaga* (Lithuanian Archaeological Materials). It contains a lot of information about sacred places all around Lithuania.

In 1930 P. Tarasienka started a series of articles devoted to sacred stones (1933a–d, 1934). Later these articles formed the basis for the monograph about historic stones (1958). There is not much information about other archaeologists' interest in the Lithuanian sacred places at the same time.

In 1943 a study *Pagoniškosios laidojimo apeigos Lietuvoje* (Pagan burial rites in Lithuania) by Marija Gimbutas (Alseikaitė) was published. One chapter in it (pp.65–71) was dedicated to sacred places. The author broadly used the research results of Elka hills in Latvia and she was one of the first people to employ archaeological, historic and folklore sources for the investigation of the purpose of sacred places and to solve the research problems. M. Gimbutas has examined and compared them carefully.

In 1946 a study *Die Alkstätten in Litauen* (Sacred places in Lithuania) by Eduard Šturms, an archaeologist who had emigrated from Latvia was published. This first special work devoted to Lithuanian sacred places (stones and springs were not described) consisted of several parts: a list of sacred places (224 sites), general characteristics of sacred hills, forests, rivers, fields and villages having theophoric names. E. Šturms organised the sacred places according to their kinds for the first time; his aim was to find common geographical and cultural features of these monuments.

In P. Tarasienka's book *Pėdos akmenyje* (Footprints in Stone) published in 1958, as has already been mentioned above, the concept of sacred stones formulated in the 1930s was visible. Even though the book was supplemented by new data, the list of “historic Lithuanian stones” (255 stones), questionnaire and methodical directions. Later R. Volkaitė-Kulikauskienė described general characteristics of the sacred places (1958 pp.109–112, 124–5). During that time, the surveying and

registration of archaeological monuments was quite widespread.

From 1970 the researches of Balts' sacred places in Lithuania were linked with Vytautas Urbanavičius. In 1970–1972, 1975 and 1977 he excavated about 40 “supposed cult places of the old Lithuanians”, mostly close to sacred stones. The articles of V. Urbanavičius (1972b, 1977, and 1979) did not become a wider generalising work; however, in 1993 a chapter of the researcher's habilitation paper was devoted to sacred places (pp.1–3).

The excavation of the Birutė hill in Palanga in 1983–84 is worth pointing out. During the excavation a cult place and remains of posts for observing the Sun and Moon were found on the plateau of the hill (Klimka & Žulkus, 1989 pp.35–56, 73–93). Thanks to this event and the interpretation of the results of the excavation beneath the Cathedral in Vilnius in 1984–86, the subject of sacred places was often discussed in the scientific and public press of that time.

In 1992 a study by V. Daugudis *Pagoniškujų šventyklų Lietuvoje klausimu* (Concerning pagan sacred places in Lithuania) was published. He offered to subdivide sacred places into “wood and stone constructions” and “various mythological stones”. Later T. Šidiškis announced the descriptions of some dozens of sacred places (1994, 1995) and most of the ideas that are presented in this monograph - by its author (cf. 1997, 1998b, 1999).

After the Second World War the topic of Balts' sacred places began to be discussed in works on history, mythology, religion, and ethnology (cf. Balys, 1948 pp.20–25, 32–42; 1966 pp.17–22, 31–40; Kerbelytė, 1970 pp.67–85; Vėlius, 1987 pp.67–9; Greimas, 1990, pp.212–7; Laurinkienė, 1996, pp.33–45, 73–86). The sacred sites are mentioned usually in order to supplement the descriptions of tree, water, stone and hill cults, to illustrate the functions that were given to one goddess or another or just when analysing the sources of history, folklore and language. In this sphere of research there have been both over- and non-critical approaches (cf. Jurginis, 1976 pp.47–73; Dundulienė, 1990 pp.159–172).

To sum up, it is obvious that until the end of the 19th c. there was a tendency to describe sacred places that were better known, to provide some narratives about them and to point out the preserved ancient beliefs and customs. More important are the efforts to involve the sacred places in a broader area of research – the investigation of the Balts' religion and mythology by T. Narbutt (1835) and S. Daukantas (1976). The late 19th c. and the early 20th c. are best described by the comparatively professional survey and registration of sacred places.

The P. Tarasenko article *Senovinės lietuvių šventovės* (Ancient Lithuanian Sanctuaries) in 1926 and especially the series of his articles devoted to the sacred stones in 1933–34 mark new stage of research into sacred places. It was sought to evaluate the collected material problematically as much as

possible and analyse it also in the context of other countries. Soon after that, in 1943 and 1946, one of the most important contributions in solving the problem of the research of sacred places was made by M. Gimbutas and E. Šturms. The study of E. Šturms (1946), unlike other works published earlier, is valuable because of the author's ideas. Evidently *Die Alkstätten in Litauen* was a kind of scientific project in which E. Šturms sought to demonstrate the ways of investigating sacred places and to show their scientific perspective. The fact that the study was written by a well-known archaeologist of the time was highly important for the recognition of the Lithuanian sacred sites. (However, the study published in Germany in 1946 did not reach Soviet Lithuania and for about 50 years it could not influence the research on sacred places.)

A new period in the investigation of sacred places was the beginning of archaeological excavations in 1970. V. Urbanavičius later professionally presented these results in the context of the relicts of the pre-Christian religion after introduction of Christianity in the 14th century. Unfortunately, the archaeological excavations initiated were not continued systematically.

When talking about the contemporary level of the research of sacred places it is possible to assert that usually these monuments belong to that part of the inheritance of mental culture that is the least investigated and evaluated so far. The data about the sacred places are not widely used in the investigations of the Balts' religion and mythology, even though, they are much more informative and much broader than the base of written sources which is usually used for this purpose. Such circumstances perfectly illustrate the present interest of this study.

The researches of pre-Christian sacred sites in other countries have old traditions. In their works, the scientists from Eastern and Northern Europe talk about the sacred places of Balts, Slavs, Germans, or Finno-Ugrians and in some cases Lithuanian parallels are mentioned in various contexts.

The concept of Balts' sacred places in Latvia is very similar to those in Lithuania. However, the neighbouring country has deeper traditions of the investigation of sacred places (cf. Kurtz, 1924; Šturms, 1936b, 1938; Caune, 1974; Urtāns J., 1977, 1990, 1993). In 1988 Juris Urtāns summarised all the data considering them and defended his thesis for a degree *Yazicheskiye kultoviye pamiatniki na teritoriyi Latviji* (The Pagan Cult Monuments in the Territory of Latvia).

Some information about sacred places in the Kaliningradskaya oblast (Eastern Prussia) is found in the literature of the 19th and early 20th c. (cf. Beckherrn, 1893; La Baume, 1927; Gronau, 1938), as well as episodically after the Second World War (cf. Wenskus, 1968; Smirnova, 1989; Gusakov & Kulakov, 1991 pp.170–5). However, there are no wider studies.

The great variety of sacred places in Belarus has received little attention from scientists so far. They only began to be more actively surveyed and excavated in the 1990s (cf.

Levkov, 1992; Duchits, 1993 pp.16–20, 30–35; 2000; Zaikovskiy, 1998; Levkov et al., 2000). Much deeper traditions of research of the sacred places (both Balts' and Slavs') have developed in Russia and Ukraine (cf. Tretyakov & Shmidt, 1963 pp.11–18, 26–29, 59–61, 96–99, 102–103; Ribakov, 1994 pp.285–352; Rusanova & Timoshchuk, 1993; Panchenko, 1998; Shorin, 1998).

The cult places of Western Slavs in Poland and Germany have received significant historic-religious and archaeological researches (cf. Herrmann, 1971, 1998; Makiewicz & Prinke, 1980 pp.64–74; Gieysztor, 1984; Makiewicz, 1988; Słupecki, 1994). The sacred places of the early Scandinavians should be also mentioned (cf. Olsen, 1970; Müller-Wille, 1984, 1999; Graichen, 1988; Fabech, 1992; Stjernquist, 1992; Ernst, 1998). A lot of valuable information is received by the investigation of sacral place-names there (cf. Benson, 1990; Holmberg, 1990; Andersson, 1992; Sandnes, 1992; Sørensen, 1992).

2 Alka, Alkas (general meanings)

Alka or Alkas are terms that researchers usually use to describe all the Balts' sacred places in general. However there are several hundreds of sacred places that have a proper name containing the word *alka* as well as *olka*, *elks* and their variety provides an opportunity to notice important features of sacred places.

2.1 Linguistic data

The Lithuanian word *alka* (*alkas*), the Latvian *elks*, Prussian **alka* belong to the linguistic inheritance of Indo-Europeans. They correspond to the Germanic and Gothic *alhs*, Anglo-Saxon *ealh*, Saxon *alah*, and Greek *αλκη* (cf. Markey, 1972 p.371). In the Indo-European parent language **alku/ *elku* meant curve, bending-elbow: **alk-/ *elk-* “bend, curve”, **alka-/ *elka-* “curved, stooped” (Toporov, 1975 pp.72–4; Mažiulis, 1988 p.68) both in the meaning of curve and lift because the Lithuanian *alk-* or *auk-* are directly connected with the words *auk(u)oti* “to lift the child up/down”, Latvian *auklet* “to look after a child, to hold him in hands and swing”, Gothic *auhuma* “taller”, the Prussian *ucka-* denoting the highest degree (Fraenkel, 1955 p.24).

Like Lithuanian *alkūnė*, Latvian *elkons*, Prussian *alkunis*, Slavic **olkb-t-* and later *lakb-tb* “elbow” vary in these languages also *alkas*, *elks*, **alka* and *олку* “sacred place” (the latter form is found in the documents of the 16th c., see Jablonskis, 1941 p.138). In Latvian place-names the only known root is *elk-*. It is also found a couple of times in Northern and Southern Lithuania. In Lithuania, as in the rare notes from East Prussia, the root *alk-* predominates in place-names. In Eastern Lithuania there are some place-names that have the root *olk-*.

Indo-European **al-* or **alk-/ *elk-* acquired a religious meaning and was used as a certain sacral term. For this reason, Lithuanian and Prussian *alka* mean “a sacred grove; a place where sacrifices were burnt; sacrifice” (Bezenberger, 1877 p.73; Fraenkel, 1955 p.7; Būga, 1958 p.356), Latvian *elks* - “fetish, idol” (Toporov, 1975 pp.72–74; Karulis, 1992 p.264), Belarussian *гальконнік* - “the one who collects sacrifices” (Sanko, 1996 p.73). Gothic *alhs*, Anglo-Saxon *ealh*, and Saxon *alah* mean “temple”, Anglo-Saxon *ealgian* - “to protect, defend” (Wesche, 1932 pp.29–30; Pokorny, 1959 p.32; Ljunggren, 1966; Brink, 1992), Greek *αλτίς* and *αλκη* - “the sacred fencing in Olympia” and “defence” (Holthausen, 1934 p.5).

The meaning of Lithuanian *alkas* “fetish, idol” (Balčikonis, 1941 p.84) is verified only in M. Miežinis' Lithuanian-Latvian-Polish-Russian vocabulary (1894 p.3) and is connected with the Latvian word *elks* which corresponds with *alkas* and really has the meaning “fetish, idol”.

It is worth mentioning the meaning of *alkas* and *auka* “sacrifice” (Balčikonis, 1941 p.84). But *auka* “sacrifice” is said to be a neologism, newly created by S. Daukantas (Balčikonis,

1941 p.386). The latter used it in the middle 19th c. instead of the loan word *afiera* (from the Polish *ofiara* “sacrifice”).

In S. Daukantas' times the word *auka* was used only as a proper noun, in the names Alka/Auka hill which are described as places where offerings for the gods were made in pre-Christian times (Būga, 1958 p.357). The alternations *alka/auka* (correspondingly Alka/Auka hill, also *alkūnė/aukūnė* “elbow”, *sodžialka/sodžiauka* “swamp”) were pointed out and discussed a long time ago (Kossarzowski, 1857/1863 p.112v; Bezenberger, 1877 pp.72–3; Būga, 1958 p.358; Ermanyte, 1967 p.42). So S. Daukantas did not invent *auka* and just took the *alkas* or *auka* used in Samogitia, one of the meanings of which was “the thing that is given” (cf. Balčikonis, 1941 p.84).

In *Lietuvių kalbos žodynas* (The Dictionary of Lithuanian Language) such meanings taken from writings of the word *alka* are also given: “burial mounds, graves of giants” or the derivative *alkakapis* “Alka grave” (Balčikonis, 1941 p.84). These words are not illustrated by examples from the spoken language. The derivative *alkinė* “the place of alka” is said to be a neologism but it must be noted that in 1595–1653 in Gaižuvėlė near the Striūna River *Анструнос калнас алкине*, *Анструнос кална алкине* are mentioned (Sprogis, 1888 p.11). Even though the sacred place in Gaižuvėlė is not known now, the mentioned *alkinė* (*алкине*) of Antstrūna hill really might have meant “the place of alka”.

In conclusion, it is obvious that the Indo-European **al-* or **alk-/elk-* “curve” in the meaning of a curve and lifting was certainly a sacral term. *Alka* or *alkas* in Lithuanian, apart from the fixed common meanings “sacred grove”, “the place for sacrifice”, are often found in the proper names of sacred places.

The research into the latter provides a lot of significant information, so in the following part of this work historic, folklore and archaeological data considering the sacred places called Alka will be shortly presented.

2.2 Historic data

Balts' sacred places called Alka and settlements having the roots *alk-/elk-* in their names are often mentioned in the written sources and historic documents. At the earliest, in 1253 the sources mention the unknown settlement *Elkene* in Northern Courland (Būga, 1961 p.160), in 1312 - the Alka settlement in Samland (*Alkayne, Alkayn*) (Gerullis, 1922 pp.8–9; Blažienė, 1995 pp.93–4). In 1478 a sacred grove called Alkai (*sylva Helki*) in Šešuoliai was mentioned (Fijałek & Semkowicz, 1948 p.364), in 1503 also - “hilliger Busch, genomt Elkewalke” in Lipaiķi-Turlava, in Northern Courland (Kurtz, 1924 p.77; Urtāns, 1993a pp.19–20).

In the documents of the 16th–17th c. several tens of sites called Alka have been mentioned (Sprogis, 1888 pp.4–5; Jablonskis, 1941 p.138). However, they are often mentioned as place-names that are not special, for example: “the Alka hill - a mowed meadow in the Beržai estate” (Sprogis, 1888 p.4). The

additional data often show that these are the sacred places. An important source that talks about the relicts of the Balts' religion after the conversion is the *Postilla* of the Wolfenbüttel library, completed in 1573. In several parts of it *alka* is also mentioned (Gaigalat, 1900 p.418; 1901 p.150).

Firstly, the mention of *alka* in this source together with all other natural objects that are worshipped (stones, hills, trees, rivers) show that *alka* means not one kind of sacred site, but it probably denotes certain sacrifice places. Secondly, in the 16th c. the sacred groves that were called Alkai began to be called Gojai (from Slavic *gaj* "nice, sacred grove") (also see Chapter 3.3).

There are also two translations of the Ledesma Catechism into Lithuanian to be mentioned. In that part of the Catechism where it is said, "who used to worship idols", in 1595 in M. Daukša's *Postilla* it is said, "who used to worship fire, earth, snakes, grass snakes, thunder, trees, alkai". In 1605 in the translation of Catechism of an unknown author it is said, "who used to worship fire, snakes, grass snakes, earth, goddesses, thunders, trees, elkus" (according to: Balčikonis, 1947 p.815; Toporov, 1975 p.73; Ivinskis, 1986 p.400).

In the 16th–17th c. historic sources from Latvia often mention the Elka gods (*elka deves, alke devs*) that are worshiped by people (Straubergs, 1941 pp.628–9). That was already a general name for gods, which was probably directly connected with the fact that pre-Christian gods were worshipped in the sacred places called *elka* or *alka*. On the other hand, when considering the general meaning of the Latvian *elks* "fetish, idol", the name of *elks* might have been given to different gods that were worshipped in certain sacred places.

2.3 Folklore data

Place-legends telling that in Alkos "in the old times sacrifices were made" or that "the holy fire was burnt there" are quite common. There are 43 such Alka hills recorded in Lithuania at the moment. However, only about six of the 52 Alka fields have place-legends like that, and the nine Alka islands have about 5. Various tales about pre-Christian gods and goddesses worshipped on the Elka hills and the sacrifices made there are also known in Latvia (cf. Urtāns, 1993a pp.37–38, 56).

2.4 Archaeological data

Only the Alka hill in Reizgiai, in Samogitia and the Elka hill near the solitary farm of Elka/Pekši near Durbe in Northern Courland are more widely excavated. All the other excavations in the sacred places called Alkai - in the Alka hill of Mikytai, Alka island-peninsula of Kurėnai, Alka peninsula of Mažasis Palūkstis, were of the survey kind and did not provide significant results. During the investigations of the Dapšiai hill fort that is called Alka hill, a cultural layer of a settlement and a castle dating back to the late 1st millennium BC - early 2nd millennium AD was found.

The experience of archaeological investigations shows that usually in a place called Alka (for example, a hill or a field) the exact place of sacrifice - "alka", which has given the name to the site has already been forgotten. Small-scale investigations cannot provide significant information in these cases.

3 Classification of monuments

Together with other sacred places that have sacral names there are 203 places in Lithuania, 69 in Latvia, seven in the Kaliningradskaya oblast that are called Alka (Jurkschat, 1898 p.109; Gerullis, 1922 pp.8–9; Kurtz, 1924; Ziesemer, 1936 p.112; Endzelīns, 1956 p.269; Rusmanis & Vīks, 1993; Blažienė, 1995 pp.93–4). Of the 203 such sacred places in Lithuania, 74 are hills, 52 fields, 32 rivers, 15 lakes and fens, 11 groves, 10 wetlands, 9 islands (in Latvia accordingly: 42, 17, 1, 2, 1, 5 and 1; in Kaliningradskaya oblast accordingly: 2, -, 3, -, 2, -, -). (Moreover, the names containing the roots *alk-* and *elk-* have some tens of settlements where the sacred places existed and also some current cemeteries).

These statistically illustrated tendencies show several circumstances that are important for the research of sacred places. Firstly, the distribution of sacred places having a uniform name Alka demonstrates some different traditions of the sacred places. In Western Lithuania hills having these names predominate. In Middle Lithuania - fields near rivers and swamps, in Eastern Lithuania - fields near rivers and lakes, moreover, fens and islands in the lakes (see Chapters 3.1, 3.2 and 3.5, Maps I, VI and XIX). Secondly, the fact that there are no sacred stones, trees or springs known by the name of Alka shows they were single elements of the sacred places in the woods, fields, hills or settled areas.

So the data about the sacred places called by the sacral term *alka*, which is of Indo-European origin, implies that they were situated in naturally different places. This fact supposes the classification model of sacred places according to the kinds of natural objects.

In 1946 E. Štrums was already classifying the Balts' sacred places according to the kinds of natural objects (pp.13–33). He discussed them in the chapters: "Hills", "Woods", "Rivers", "Lakes", "Fields", and also in "Villages". Latvian researchers now employ an analogous classification of sacred places. They distinguish these kinds of sacred places: hills, waters, trees, caves, valleys, fields, stones and stone statues (*teļi*) (Urtāns, 1978 p.76).

The Balts' sacred places are presented in this monograph according to the same principle (hills, fields, woods and trees, stones, waters (lakes, wetlands, rivers, springs), hollows, faults and caves). This scheme is followed when presenting the variety of sacred places, not taking into account the fact that several combinations of natural objects might belong to only one sacred site.

3.1 Hills

Sacred hills are of various forms and sizes, but their area usually does not exceed 50–60x100 metres. Usually there is no plateau on the top of them, their top has the form of a dome or cone or it ascends/descends to one side. Some of the Alka hills are high, quite often they are the highest point in the locality, and others are just small mountains.

The data about the Balts' sacred hills is found in historic sources. For instance, in 1394 the Rambynas sacred grove is mentioned (Hirsch, Töppen & Strehle, 1863 p.677). The sacred meaning of the Rambynas hill by Bitėnai was testified several times starting in 1595 (see Thomas, 1887 pp.113–8). Documents mention also *Laumygarbis* (The hill of Fairy) 1339, *Swentegarben* (Sacred hill 1351, *Sawliskresil* (The hill-'chair' of the Sun) 1369/1423 (Gerullis, 1922 pp.85, 178; Nepokupny, 2002 pp.254–5) in Prussia, *Percunecalve* (The hill-island of Thunder) 1300 in the Liepāja Lake (Kurtz, 1924 p.75).

The variety of sacred hills is represented by the natural and mythical-religious realia and not by the results of human activities. That is why general features of separate groups of sacred hills are revealed only when their location, names and place-legends are examined.

Alka hills³. There are 74 of them recorded in Lithuania, mostly in Courland and Samogitia. There is an exception - four Alka hills in South and two in Middle Lithuania (cf. there are 42 Elka hills known in Courland and Latgale in Latvia and two in the Kaliningradskaya oblast) (Map I).

Alka hills are usually high; the tops of them often dominate their surroundings (Fig. 4). Frequently there are also Alka wetlands, lakes or swamps, rivers or springs near Alka hills. The interesting ones are the Alka hills in the localities where bigger rivers run out from lakes and the so-called hills in the watershed areas. The latter circumstance might have given additional mythical meaning to the sacred places or might have been the main motive for founding a cult place there.



Fig. 4. Alka hill of *Vieštovėnai* (Plungė district). Photo by A. Kubilas, 1963. CHC-3821-23.

The biggest Alka hills take up an area of 2–3 hectares (Muitaičiai, Pabiržulis), however, usually their size varies from 20x40 metres to 60x100 metres. In some rare cases there are naturally flat plateaus (Alkas-Salantai, Joskaudai), sometimes the hills have a naturally emerging (Alsėdžiai, Eivyčiai) or descending (Gilaičiai, Mikytai) plateau.

³ In this and the following sections the author freely chooses the sequence of the groups of monuments.

The most broadly investigated site is the Alka hill in Raizgiai, the subject of a study by V. Urbanavičius in 1972. During the investigation remains of two posts of 0.9 m and 1.65 m were found on the plateau of the hill in the holes, which were as deep as 0.9 m and 1.05 m. Stones also covered the posts. Other kinds of finds were not found (Urbanavičius, 1974 pp.104–106). The cultural layer that is being destroyed was found on the plateau of the Alka hill in Joskaudai (Vaitkevičius, 1998a pp.69–70).

Latvian archaeologist P. Stepiņš in 1937 investigated the Elka hill near Elka/Pekši solitary farm. There were still preserved circular ramparts that are quite characteristic of the Latvian Elka hills. During the excavations a lot of pots sherds, clay plaster, parts of two knives and a spindle were found. Moreover, the owner of the field gave the archaeologists a cruciform pin with silver-plated head he had found here. Remnants of a wooden building were also found. When interpreting the investigation results it was thought that this was a meeting place (Šturms, 1938, pp.126–8).

Some Latvian researchers suppose the Elka hills that are surrounded by circular ramparts to be cult places (Apals et al., 1974 p.184; Urtāns, 1993a pp.17–9). Even though such an Elka hill in Aizviki is only a couple of kilometres away from the Lithuanian-Latvian border, it seems there are no such monuments known in Lithuania so far. Before the Second World War E. Šturms provided his opinion that is now being discussed that the Latvian Elka hills surrounded by circular ramparts were the meeting and court places (1936b pp.90–1, 1938 pp.131–2). Probably following the opinion of E. Šturms, V. Kulakov believes that the hill forts in the Kaliningradskaya oblast that have their plateaus surrounded by circular ramparts belong to the group of hills-cult places (*Alkhügel*) and thinks that these were the places for religious rites and meetings (1994 p.139).

Alkai mentioned in the *Postilla* of the 16th–17th c. among gods and worshipped natural objects (see Chapter 2.2) should probably firstly be associated with the cult places on the hills. Sometimes at that time on the Alka hills small chapels were built (Erkšva, Puokė). At various times on these hills wooden crosses were built as well (Račiai, Vilkai (Plungė district)). On the other hand, in documents of the 16th c. the name of the Alka hills dominates as a common place-name (Blandžiai, Karūžiškė) (Sprogis, 1888 p.4).

In the variety of place-legends about Alka hills standard texts run as follows: “Old people used to tell, that there were sacrifices burnt on the hill that is why it was called Alka hill” (Naujoji Įpiltis) (Sauka et al., 1967 p.623). The motive of the “Church that was on the Alka hill in the old times” is common as well. Sometimes also original stories are known, as for instance: “A Miss called Aglona lived in the hill. She has been burning the holy fire on the hill through her whole life. When she got old she burnt a funeral pyre during one celebration day and died in it herself” (Kesiai) (SACA 27 p.52).

The complexes of archaeological monuments that contain Alka hills are dated to 450–1350 AD. They are known nearby hill forts (Betygala, Gudeliai, Mikytai, Šarnelė), open settlements (Juknaičiai, Naujoji Įpiltis) and cemeteries (Antininkai, Pakalniškiai (Šilalė district), Vilkų Kampas) of the contemporary period. Moreover, from the southern part of Courland in Latvia, Elka hills spread into those lands of the Livs (in the north) to which the expansion of the Couronians was taking place from the late 11th up to the middle 13th c. (Asaris, 1996).

So the Alka and Elka hills are typical sacred places of the Samogitians and the Couronians of 450–1350 AD, even though some exceptions exist. In some localities the Alka hills probably had their functions even after the conversion until the rites that took place there became of syncretic or entirely Christian type.

Apart from the Alka hills on dry land there are nine **Alka islands** recorded in the lakes of various sizes in Eastern Lithuania. The Elka Island in Valmiera near the Gauja River (Straubergs, 1960 p.140; Urtāns, 1993a p.56) also belongs to this group if certain extra conditions are not considered (Map I).

In Lithuania Alka islands are said to be islands of average size, usually they take up an area of about 0.5–1 hectares and part of them become peninsulas when the level of the water falls. In the lakes of Avilys and Mituva there are two pairs of two islands called Alkas and Alkelis (bigger and smaller one). Moreover, the Alka island-peninsula in Sudeikiai is sometimes called Dievaalkis (Alka of God) (CF). The Rakšteliai Alka island-peninsula is in Šventas (Sacred) Lake and the island in Kurėnai Lake that is north of the Alka island-peninsula is called Bažnyčia (Church).

North of Alka peninsula in Ūsiai Lake is the Kupriai group of barrows and south of Alka island in Vidinkstas Lake is the Pakalniiai hill fort accompanied by an open settlement. This suggests that the cult places in Alka islands existed already in the second half of the 1st millennium AD.

About some of the monuments of this type there are place-legends saying that in the old times sacrifices were made there, e.g.: “Alka peninsula (*Alkaragis*), because sacrifices were made there. It is probably Sacrifice peninsula. Old people used to say that a credence stood there” (Ūsiai) (LFA 6226 no.135).

Sacred places in the islands are a kind of sacred places known from the old times. The Liepāja lake island that is called Perkūnkalvė (The hill of Thunder) is mentioned since the late 13th c. (e.g.: “Die in der Lyva belegene Insel Percunecalve” - Kurtz, 1924 p.75, Biezais, 1972 p.152). A small low island in the Nemunas estuary in Curonian Bay has the same name - Perkūnkalvė. Coastal islands of rivers, lakes and the sea that are said to be sacred are known all over the Baltic Sea region (cf. Straubergs, 1960 p.143; Witkowski, 1970 pp.372–3; Vėlius, 2001 pp.348–9; Zaikovskiy & Duchits, 2001 p.71). It is thought that in Sweden, during the rising of the State and in its early

period sacred islands (*Helgö*) played an important religious, juridical and commercial role (Calissendorff, 1964; 1971 pp.2–7; Brink, 2001 pp.94–5).

Dievas hills (Hills of God). There are 12 sacred hills recorded in Lithuania that have the names with the word *dievas* (God) (four or five cases in Latvia - Kurtz, 1924 pp.57, 84, 86, Straubergs, 1960 p.146). The hills of God are mostly found in Eastern Lithuania (between Zarasai and Ukmergė), there is also one hill in each of the districts of Alytus, Lazdijai, and Telšiai (Map II).

The hills of God usually are small, round hills of approximately 20 metres diameter (Duobužėlė, Karališkiai (Ukmergė district), or they have an oval form of the size of 20x60 metres (Šlapelės). Usually their slopes are up to 10 metres high. It should be pointed out that in Jakštai there are two hills - Dievaičiukas (God) and Dievaitytė (Goddess) - next to each other. Moreover the latter name *Dievaitytė* is unique, because in Lithuanian onomastics the masculine form of the word *dievas* (God), *dievaitis* (Son of the God) are still found.

The oral tradition shows that in some cases the hills of God discussed here were the places for worshipping the God (it is not clear whether pagan or Christian one) or the God used to appear here.

There are no data about dating this group of sacred hills. So far it can only be mentioned that the Dievo Krėslas (the Chair of God) hill situated in the watershed area in Vilkai forest (Telšiai district) in a narrow unpopulated streak between Courland and Samogitia might have had the status of an important religious centre.

Perkūnas hills (Hills of Thunder). There are 26 such hills recorded (Map III). The size of the Perkūnas hills usually does not exceed an area of 60x80 metres. Some of them are situated in highlands and steep riverbanks (Akmeniai, Kastriskės), some of them more remotely in forests (Kaukinė and Sasnava forests). The Perkūnas hills that occur in the middle of agricultural fields are very much destroyed by ploughing and that is why it is difficult to recover their real picture (Pocelonys, Užupušiai).

Perkūnas hills often belong to sacred sites, e.g.: south of the Perkūnas hill in Pikeliai there is the Bažnyčia (Church) hill. North of Perkūnas hill in Pocelonys there is Šventkalnis (Sacred hill). North of Perkūnas hill in Juodeikiai there was a sacred oak grove.

The Perkūnas hill in Pupasodis-Žilvia is situated near the hill fort. The Perkūnas hill in Pakalniškiai (Raseiniai district) is associated with Betygala complex of archaeological monuments. Also hill forts in Cirkliškis, Luponiai (Fig. 5), and Anduliai-Ėgliškės typical of 1000–1400 AD have the name of Perkūnkalnis (Hill of Thunder). They have not been excavated yet, but there probably have been cult places near or on them. It is said that Thunder was worshipped there and sacrifices made (LFA 4920 p.21; also see Pokrovskiy, 1893 p.53).

There are no more specific data about dating the Perkūnas hills, but it may be suggested that sacred places of this type were in use at the beginning of the 2nd millennium and later - after conversion. Additional information about the Perkūnas hills might be obtained from the complex analysis of all the place-names in Lithuania that have the root *perkūn-*. Place-names of this kind, especially names of villages, are known in Latvia (Straubergs, 1960 p.146; Biezais, 1972 pp.152–3), in Eastern Prussia (Gerullis, 1922 p.120) and in other countries (cf. Gimbutas, 1973 p.467).

Aušrinė hills (Hills of the Goddess of Dawn). In Lithuania these are found in 28 sites (Map IV). It is only possible to talk about these hills in the light of a couple of descriptions because most of the Aušrinė hills are not surveyed yet. There is an opinion, which states that there is no reason to talk about sacred places devoted to the cult of the Goddess of Dawn by the Balts (Biezais, 1972 pp.34–66). Data from Lithuania obviously questions this position.

The Aušrinė hill in Kaušai belongs to a sacred site; there were sacred oaks and the Rotužė River that is said to be sacred next to it. According to the finds from the Kaušai cemetery, which dates back to the 13th–15th c., and the neighbouring Pagrybis cemetery that dates back to the 5th–13th c., it may be assumed that the sacred place in Kaušai already existed before the conversion of Samogitia in 1413. Moreover, the statue of Christ that was later put into the sacred oak of Kaušai and was thought to be miraculous, attracted huge crowds of believers and in the 19th c. Kaušai competed with the local Church in Kaitinėnai (see Vaitkevičius, 1998a pp.397–9).

The Aušrinė hill in Karaligiris forest was also famous. Here in the watershed area between the Dubysa and Nevėžis Rivers in the late 16th c. *Девагола* (Site of God) site is mentioned (Sprogis, 1888 p.92).

The collection of original tales about the Aušrinė hill in Kaušai should be mentioned separately. “In the old times people used to pray on that hill, to burn sacrifices for the Goddess of Dawn and ask her blessing. When it began to become light the Morning star [this same - Dawn star] would descend there



Fig. 5. Perkūnas hill of Luponiai (Šiauliai district). Photo by M. Michelbertas, 1968. LIH-21900

and would bless the praying people <...>. The Goddess of Dawn used to visit this hill, illuminates it and it is so nice to watch” (Vaitkevičius, 1998a pp.395, 396).

Saulė hills (Hills of the Sun). There are 21 of them known (Map V).

The *Sawliskresil* site (Chair of the Sun) in the environs of Elbląg in Prussia was mentioned as early as 1369 (see Gerullis, 1922 p.153; Mažiulis, 1995; Nepokupny, 2002 pp.254–5) (cf. the Saulės krėslas hill in Radžiūnai).

On the plateau of *Sauleskalns* (Hill of the Sun) in Krāslava, Latvia, three hoards of archaeological finds of the 9th–11th c. were found at different times. These were neck-rings, bracelets, rings, axes with a narrow blade and a blunt end and other artefacts (Apals et al., 1974 p.221; Urtāns V., 1977 pp.75, 164, 176–80; Urtāns, 1993a pp.93–5) (Fig. 6). This sacred hill dominates the area and belongs to a sacred site: at the foot of it there is a field called the Dieva dārzs (Garden of God), Velna ezers (the Lake of the Devil) and the stone of the Devil. Not long ago people used to celebrate the Janis feast (St John) on this Saulė hill.

In the middle of Samogitia there are closely distributed Saulė hills and exact data about them exist. There are small pieces of land on the high banks of rivers (Indija, Driežai) or hills in the valleys near them (Norkaičiai). The most important feature of the Saulė hills is that they match the directions of the move-

ments of the Sun in one way or another. For instance, according to the lighting of the Saulė hill in Indija during the first days after the summer solstice the people used to guess about the weather of the second half of the summer. If the Sun did not light the hill people expected bad, rainy weather (Vaitkevičius, 1998a p.387). It is said that the Saulė hill in Driežai is the first one the Sun illuminates when rising and the last one when setting (Vaitkevičius, 1998a p.372). These and some other data show that people used to gather in the Saulė hills to celebrate the summer solstice. It is difficult to say how old this tradition is, but in some cases it is reasonable to associate the Saulė hills with the hill forts and burial sites of Samogitia of 450–1350 AD.

Evidently, one local group of Saulė hills consists of the Saulė hills in Stasiūniečiai, Sauliakalnis, and Saulėkalnis. The above-mentioned Sauleskalns in Krāslava, in south-eastern Latvia should also belong to this area. This allows discussion of one group of sacred places, which is characteristic to the Selonian tribe.

It is interesting to compare the latter cult places with other sacred places that according to the obtained information do not exceed the ethnic borders of Lithuania and which were the places where people used to gather to celebrate the summer solstice (Kupolė and Šatrija hills). The characteristic places for celebrating the summer solstice in Latvia are Jana kalni (Hills of Janis). There are more than 75 of them (Straubergs, 1960 p.145).

Kupolė hills (Kupolė is a feast period similar to St John's day). There are 18 Kupolė hills recorded, mostly in Eastern Lithuania (Map V).

This group of sacred hills is too little surveyed. When summing up what is already known, it may be asserted that the Kupolė hills are heights and hills in plains. They are of different sizes, and usually a broad and picturesque view of the surrounding area may be observed from the top of them (Pypliai, Ringailiai). It has been recorded that even in the 20th c. people used to gather here to celebrate during the holidays of Pentecost or St John. In the places where these traditions have been forgotten long ago, place-legends tell about devils that used to gather at the Kupolė celebration. “Handsome guys used to come to the dances on the hill, but while dancing girls noticed that they have no nostrils in their noses and there are hoofs in their shoes... these dances were called Kupolės” (Rubikonys) (CF).

Some of the Kupolė hills are near to hill forts or belong to the sacred sites. Moreover, it is easy to notice that Kupolė hills are situated near or in the area of villages that were founded in the course of the middle and second half of the 16th century. Narratives about one of them near Vaikučiai perfectly represent the character of the old feast of a community. “Neighbours in a village use to make Kupolė (during Pentecost or St George's day in Vaikučiai) in the old times: people would gather, women would bring food, men brought vodka” (LFA 6582 no.109).

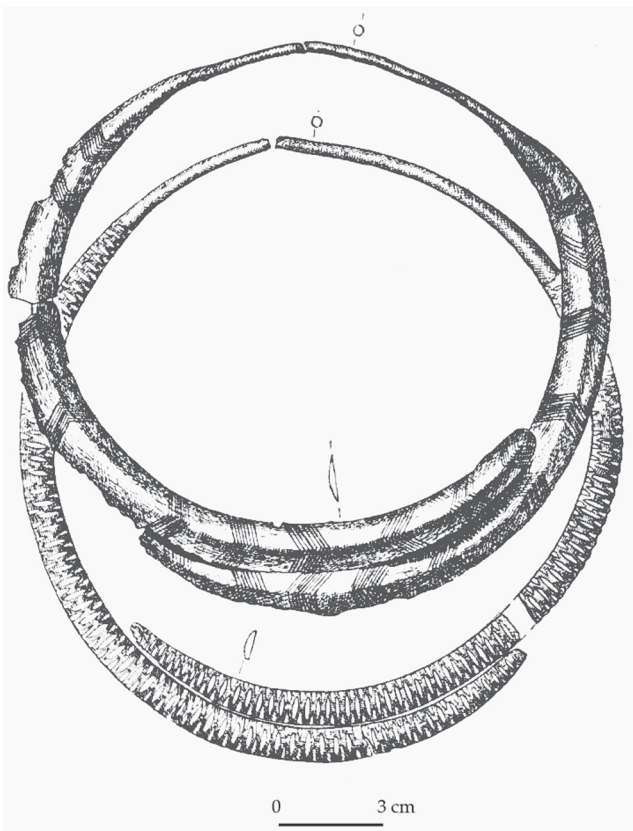


Fig. 6. Two neck rings typical of the 9th–11th c. found on Saulė hill in Krāslava (3rd hoard). After V. Urtāns (1977).

The ancient origin of the Kupolė feast and a compact group of Kupolė hills in Eastern Lithuania allow the suggestion that some sacred hills of this type might be in use even before conversion.

Šatrija hills (Šatrija is sometimes the epithet of the Witch). They are recorded in 22 sites in Western and Middle Lithuania (Map V) (Fig. 7). The Šatrija hill in Sidariškis (Rokiškis district) is a bit distant from the main group and the Šatrija hill in Andriūniškiai (Šakiai district) is not quite clear. So far only a couple of these hills have been surveyed so there is only a little information about them.



Fig. 7. Šatrija hill of Pašatrija (Telšiai district) (on the left). Photo by K. Navickas, 1964. LIH-16644.

The map of distribution of the Šatrija hills and some other additional data suggest that the summer solstice holiday was also celebrated on Šatrija hills. Moreover, sacred places that have such names were typical of Northern Samogitia and Middle Lithuania. Thus the Šatrija hills as it were fill the geographical gap between the Saulė hills in the west and the Kupolė hills in the east. Unlike to the Saulė hills and Kupolė hills, tales about witches that used to celebrate the summer solstice there surrounds Šatrija hills. Due to the lack of information, questions about the origin and age of these cult places cannot be answered at the moment.

Mergakalniai and **Bobkalniai** (Hills of Girls and Women). There are about 160 hills recorded, which have the name of Merga (Girl), Boba (Woman), Pana (Maiden), and Nuotaka (Bride) (Fig. 8). So far only some ten of these places have been surveyed. The obtained information suggests that there are sacred places among these hills. Future explorations will make it possible to identify their features and be more precise about their numbers.

Sometimes place-legends tell that girls and women would gather at the mentioned hills for their celebrations, to wail about their dead husbands, to hide or for other reasons. Sometimes the “girls” and “women” of the place-legends mean the mythical beings, e.g.: “The Merga hill used to be the meeting place of the witches, they used to dance and sing there” (Pažzuoliai) (Onom.).

It is reasonable to think that some of the Merga hills and hills that have similar names are related to some real rituals of girls/women communities. (The oneness of the Merga hills is illustrated also by the fact that there are only four Bernas (Boy) and two Vyras (Man) hills recorded.)

Much valuable information on this topic about Dijokalnis (Hill of Dances?) in Zasinyčiai was collected. The rites on this hill were associated with the physiological maturity of the girls (13–14 years) of the local villages. This mythical relation between the sacred hill and the girls/women probably existed later as well. The *užkurys* (a man who would live in his wife’s home after their marriage) was sent to the Dijokalnis to dance. It seems a married woman who did not go to her husband’s home maintained a particular tie with Dijokalnis. That is why a husband living in his wife’s home was sent to this cult place for performing certain rites as well.

Place-legends and names of the Panų suolai (Benches of Girls) hills would suggest that the functions of these places might also correlate with the sayings “to sit on the bench”, “sitting on the bench” which have the meaning of “to get married, to be married” (Ulvydas et al., 1986 pp.186–7).

The Merga hills (*Дзявочая гара, Дзевіная гара*) are also distributed in Western and Middle Belarus. In some cases sacred hills are called Merga hills, in some cases - hill forts (Duchits, 1993 pp.20–1). The place-legends told about them correspond to the motives of the Lithuanian place-legends about the Merga and Boba hills.

Girls, women and especially brides occur in place-legends about sacred places (hills, meadows, lakes, or swamps) in other countries as well (cf. Rimmel, 2001). It is supposed the motive may be related to the cult of the goddess Nerthus (Laur, 1948 pp.47–48).

Hills of Heroes. There are hills in Lithuania whose sacredness is motivated by the historical or oral tradition, which states that famous people or heroes were buried there after people started to worship those places. By the way, the most famous of those places are described in the legendary part of



Fig. 8. Moteraitis hill of Didieji Burbiškiai (Telšiai district). Photo by B. Buračas, 1935. CHC-3468.

the Annals of Lithuania (*Хроника Быховца*) of the 16th century. For instance, it was told that the Duke Kukavaitis loved his dead mother Pajauta greatly and made an idol in her image (*балван*) and put it near the Žasliai Lake. The idol of Pajauta was worshipped (*образ хвалили и за бога его мели*). Later the statue putrefied, lime trees grew up in its place and people started to worship them (Vėlius, 2001 pp.518–9). The hill named Pajauta Grave (otherwise - the Church of Hare) on the south side of Žasliai Lake is still preserved (Fig. 9). The place-legends recorded during the 20th c. say that the hill is the grave of the soldier Pajautas (male) (Batūra, 1966 pp.269–70).



Fig. 9. Pajauta's Grave of Guronys (Kaišiadorys district). Photo by author, 1991.

Data about the sacred hills that relate to the worshipping of heroes show a relatively specific establishment, development and further motivation of sacredness of these cult places. The names of heroes both in historic sources and place-legends often correspond to the names of the gods that were worshipped there. Furthermore, the names of the gods often correspond to the names of rivers, lakes or settlements (cf. the Duke Spėra and the Spėra Lake; the Nemakštė sacred grove and the Nemakščiai village).

Sacred places that would have similar motivation of their sacredness are distributed in other European countries as well (cf. Naumann, 1927 pp.331–3).

Sacral importance was given to the above-discussed places of heroes even until the 19th c. This could be very well illustrated by the case of the Birutė hill in Palanga. The sacredness of the hill according to the data of M. Strykovsky in the 16th c. (see Vėlius, 2001 pp.528, 561) was usually motivated by the virtues of queen, priestess or goddess Birutė. The excavations of the hill and its base in 1983–84 by V. Žulkus pointed out that when the wooden fortifications dating to the late 14th - early 15th c. were burnt, two sand ramparts of 2.5 metres high were built on the hill. On their interior side eight posts of 16–18 cm diameter were dug in and fires periodically were burnt near them. At the same time a shed-like building 9 metres long and 2 m wide was standing on the hill (Fig. 10). This cult place is thought to have had a special astronomical facility (the system of posts), which was meant to determine the dates of the summer and winter solstice and other calendar holidays. It was abandoned at the end of the 15th - beginning of the 16th

century. In 1506 or 1596 the first St George's chapel was built on the Birutė hill. In 1709 this chapel was still called *Capella Birutta* (Klimka & Žulkus, 1989 pp.35–56, 73–93; Žulkus, 1997 pp.16–54).

3. 1. 1 Hill forts/temples

There is no data that would allow a more detailed description of the hill forts/temples. The visual-exterior features that would allow us to define the suitability of a hill fort for the needs of a pre-Christian cult without exploring the hill fort in more detail are not known. Meanwhile it is stated that circular cult buildings on the hill-forts were characteristic of tribes of the Eastern Balts in the 1st millennium BC - 1st millennium AD (Michelbertas, 1986 p.25).

Probably the most famous hill fort/temple in Lithuania has been excavated in Bačkininkėliai. Its plateau was only of 15x20-m in size and had a small rampart on the western side. A slogged clay ground of 7x12 m was found. In the middle of this ground 23 post-holes of 20–35 cm width and 20–60 cm depth almost forming a circle were found. They were the remnants of a building of 4x6-m size. The entrance of this building was from the western side. Inside the building close to the entrance a hearth of 50-cm width and 15 cm depth was found, the sides of it were lined with stones. These remains of the building - supposed temple - originate from the first centuries AD (Navickaitė, 1959 pp.106–7; Daugudis, 1982 pp.34–6).

Some researchers suppose that in Kurmaičiai (cf. Daugudis, 1982 p.37; Michelbertas, 1986 p.25) and Kereliai hill forts (Grigalavičienė, 1992 pp.86–7; 1995 pp.50–3) remains of the cult buildings were found as well. (Critical approaches see Zabiela, 2002).

This allows the suggestion that in the territory of Lithuania circular or oval cult buildings characteristic to the Eastern Balts were prevalent. Some buildings of this type are explored in the hill forts of the Smolensk region - the former territory of the Eastern Balts (see Tretyakov & Shmidt, 1963 pp.11–8, 26–9, 31–2, 59–61, 65, 96–9, 102–3; Shmidt, 1992 pp.115–6) (Fig. 11).



Fig. 10. Birutė hill of Palanga in early 15th c. Drawn by S. Stripinis and V. Žulkus. After V. Žulkus & L. Klimka (1989).

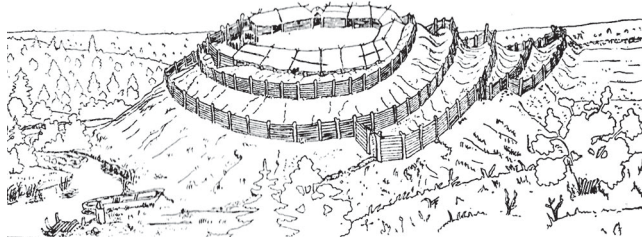


Fig. 11. Hill fort/temple of Tushemia in the mid-1st millennium AD. After P. Tretyakov & E. Shmidt (1963).

There are many hill forts in Lithuania that had certain mythical and religious significance. For instance, as has been already mentioned, the hill forts of Luponiai, Cirkliškis and Anduliai-Ēgliškės are associated with the worshipping of Perkūnas (Thunder) in the place-legends. Food products are still sacrificed on the 10th Sunday after Easter by the cross on the Stajėtiškis hill fort. The huge number of crosses on the Jurgaičiai hill fort illustrates that it has been a sacred place for a long time (Fig. 12). Such and similar cases are also found in neighbouring countries (cf. Urtāns, 1998; Zaikovskiy, 1998).



Fig. 12. Hill fort of Jurgaičiai (Šiauliai district) during St John's feast. Photo by B. Buračas, 1935. CHC-2671.

Future archaeological excavations will answer the question how the certain dwelling and defence functions of a hill fort correlate with its supposed religious functions. The example of the Birutė hill in Palanga was already mentioned in this chapter. When talking about the hill forts that have not been explored in more detail and that have sacral meaning, it is only possible to guess whether the hill fort itself was a cult place or whether there was a sacred place next to it; also whether the cult place was in use on the hill before or after its use as a defensive place.

3.2 Fields

There are about 100 fields and meadows in Lithuania that have various sacral names. Fields are quite a problematic type of sacred place but the fact of their existence is confirmed by historic sources. The category of such sacred places is also known in neighbouring countries and Scandinavia (cf. Wessén, 1929/30 p.98; Calissendorff, 1971 p.10; Brink S., 1996 pp.264–5).

Peter of Dusburg, when defining the “idolatriy of Prussians” in the Chronicle of the Prussian land of 1326, states that the Prussians had sacred fields in which nobody dared to cultivate the land (Vėlius, 1996 p.344). Later in the documents of Prussia also certain sacred fields were mentioned. For instance, the sacred field situated in the west of the Samland was frequently mentioned in the 14th century. The sources say that the field took up an area of about 6.5x12 kilometres and was suitable for the pasture of horses and for mowing. In one part of it the sources mention the “burning place” (*Brandstat*) but researchers dispute the purpose of it. Moreover, this sacred field bordered the Romainiai (supposed sacral place-name of the Balts) village that was “all by itself in the fields” and had a sacred grove next to it (Voigt, 1827 pp.640–4; Wenskus, 1968 p.321; Vėlius, 1996 pp.323–4).

Some of the Lithuanian sacred fields that are called Alkas are mentioned in the documents of the 16th–17th centuries. For instance, in 1593 a border in one locality of Pavandenė surroundings is described, it goes from a sacred oak that grew near the Ringė River in Alka field (*нива Алкас*) to the Alka grove (Jablonskis, 1941 p.138).

The general features of the sacred fields that are known now from the first site can differ from those possessed in the past because the field easily turns into a wood, or a ploughed hill can turn into a plain field. However, the oldest sources suggest those sacred fields were 1) suitable for cultivation but not cultivated; 2) suitable for pastures of cattle; 3) suitable for mowing. The sources of the 16th–17th c. mention Alka fields both as cultivated fields (*нива*) and mowed meadows (*сеножат*).

Consequently, the existence of sacred fields and meadows was directly related to mythical and/or religious realia. For instance, it was traditional to gather herbs during the celebration days; there are fields in Lithuania and especially in Latvia that were called the Dievo daržas, Dieva dārziņš (Garden of God) (cf. Straubergs, 1960 p.146). The general image of the Garden of God expresses Lithuanian proverbs, e.g.: “Have I pastured God’s Garden?” which means: “I have not done anything to anyone, I am right” (Balčikonis, 1947 p.305). It is worth noting the presence of sacred gardens and their use in Southern Estonia. These small sacred areas surrounded by a fence, without any visible characteristics, existed at old farms. Such gardens were taboo; they were visited only for the purpose of making an offering (Valk, 2003 p.573).

Sacred fields often belong to sacred sites. On the other hand, certain sacrifice places might have been also in the territory of such fields.

The data about the sacred fields of Eastern Prussia provide additional possibilities for the interpretation of these sacred places. R. Wenskus states the fact that in densely settled Samland the sacred groves and fields separated settlements from each other. Moreover, the coast of the Baltic Sea in

Samland where most of the amber is found bordered two sacred fields and probably sacred groves from the land side (1968 p.322).

There are no place-legends or beliefs about most of the fields and meadows that have various sacred names recorded. Just a few of them have been surveyed. So this study presents the Alka and Šventas (Sacred) fields only.

Alka fields. There are 52 of them found in Lithuania (17 in Latvia) (Map VI). Sometimes small meadows of only 0.1–0.3 hectares are called Alka fields; sometimes their areas are not defined and extended even to 20–25 hectares (Fig. 13). Alka fields in Middle and Eastern Lithuania are found near the lakes, rivers and often near the confluences of rivers. Most of the Alka fields in Samogitia and Elka fields in Courland are in the neighbourhood of other groups of objects called Alkai (hills, groves, wetlands).

The Alka fields are often found near archaeological sites, for instance, near the cemeteries of the 1st millennium - the begin-



Fig. 13. Alka field of Biržų Laukas (Šilalė district). Alka hill - on the left. Photo by author, 1994.

ning of the 2nd millennium AD in Žviliai and Kulautuva. Also near Anykščiai open settlement of the second half of the 1st millennium, near the hill forts of Antatilčiai, Vaitkuškis, Piliakiemis, and Zujai of 1000–1400 AD.

There are actually no place-legends known about the Alka fields. It should be mentioned that the pre-Christian customs on the Alka field in Ruošičiai were described in a document of 1596. It says that on Sunday - the next day after St Peter's holiday - people would gather in Alka and bring half of a barrel of beer for themselves and for their friends (Jablonskis, 1933).

Šventas fields (Sacred fields). In 20 localities of Lithuania there are fields and meadows recorded that have the root *švent-* in their names (Map VII). However, the Šventas fields have not yet been explored in more detail. The place-legends are known only about a couple of them. It could be pointed out that fields having such names are found in surroundings where archaeological sites of the 1st and early 2nd millennium are situated (Antininkai, Jurgionys, Pagrybis).

3.3 Forests, groves

The cult of trees and groves has received considerable attention from the researchers of religion and mythology (cf. Balys, 1948 pp.56–65; Dundulienė, 1979; Ivinskis, 1986; Slaviūnas, 1997 pp.316–9). That is because the written sources provide quite a lot of information on this topic. It is obvious from the sources that in the Baltic region there were sacred forests and groves (cf.: “Sunt qui lucos incæduos & nemora Numinis instar venerantur” - Annvæ, 1611 p.684). Tacitus also mentions two types of sacred woods describing the Germans (“lucos ac nemora”, see Słupecki, 2000 p.41).

The trees in Balts' sacred groves, and the animals and birds that lived there were untouchable (Vėlius, 1996 pp.249, 344, 507, 508, 555–6, 576, 580–1). There were local cult places in sacred groves, holy fire was burnt there and sacrifices made (cf. Vėlius, 1996 p.225). Yan Dlugosh in the second half of the 15th c. says that there was a separate group among the Lithuanian sacred groves - particular groves (*speciales silvas*) and the bodies of the dead used to be cremated there (Vėlius, 1996 pp.556, 576).

The sources of the 14th–15th c. say that sacred forests and groves have various names. Apart from the sacral definitions of these sites (some of them were preserved till the 20th c.) there were also proper names of sacred groves. There are mentioned such names of sacred groves in Samogitia: *Asswyiote*, *Nemaxste*, *Sautum*, *Wentis* (Hirsch, Töppen & Strehlke, 1863 p.668, 678, 669–70, 687–8; Šturms, 1946 p.3) as well as *Wyssekyn*, *Scayte*, *Alsune* in Prussia (see Wenskus, 1968 pp.314, 317).

There are about 40 sacred forests and groves known in Lithuania. Their sacral meaning or religious significance verifies various data. Moreover, approximately 520 place-names of *gojus* in certain cases also mean the sacred groves. The number of sacred groves and trees in Latvia exceeds 250 (Urtāns, 1978 p.77).

E. Šturms correctly observed that in spite of the fact that sacred groves in the territory of the Balts are mentioned in historic sources from the early 13th c., they were shifting and in terms of time are the most transient of all the sacred places (1946 pp.20–6).

Even though real data about the trees of sacred forests and groves does not exist, it is thought that oaks grew there. Narratives sometimes mention this as well: “Oak is a sacred tree, because there used to be sacred places in oak groves in the old times” (LFA 2376 no.34).

The most obvious feature of sacred forests and groves is that they existed together with other kinds of sacred objects (e.g. hills, stones) that were situated in some part of the territory of the sacred forests. In some cases their area even corresponded to the size of the sacred grove itself. Besides, it is known that the central (and most sacred) part of the grove was sometimes in the place where the oldest and thickest tree



Fig. 14. Former site of the Kukavaitis grove (Širvintos district). Photo by author, 2002.

grew. According to Enea Silvio de Piccolomini (early 15th c.), in the sacred grove in Samogitia there was a very old oak in the middle. “It was more sacred than any other trees” and it was said to be “the residence of gods” (according to Vėlius, 1996 p.595).

There are 13 forests and groves mentioned in the sources of the 14th–17th c., those places could be approximately localised. Having in mind additional data it might be asserted that parts of the sacred forests were situated near the borders of the lands and tribes of the mid-1st millennium – early 2nd millennium AD (see Žulkus, 1989 pp.109, 112; Zabiela & Baranauskas, 1996 p.7; Vaitkevičius, 1998a pp.11–4). The variety of examples of the 14th–15th c. show that in Prussia sacred forests and groves were also situated between populated localities such as villages, castles, and lands (Wenskus, 1968 pp.316–8; compare one Swedish case by Brink, 2001 p.100).

On the other hand, there were sacred forests and groves that were situated close to the settlements of the same period. For instance, Yan Dlugosh says that the *Kokiveithus* grove, in which the Grand Duke Algirdas was solemnly burnt after his death in 1377, was not far from the Maišiagala castle and settlement (Vėlius, 1996 pp.556, 577). In this place, 3.5 km north of Maišiagala, stood the solitary farm of Kukavaitis during the 16th–18th centuries (Fig. 14). The historical documents state that there was also a grove of sacred lime trees near Trakai (Baliulis, Mikulionis & Miškinis, 1991 p.85). There is the Šventinė (Sacred) forest near Jokšai that extends to the southwest from Šiūpariai hill fort (Vaitkevičius, 1998a p.648). The oral tradition recalls the Šventas (Sacred) grove in Kalnelis (CF) where the Sidabrė castle of the 13th c. is located. This same view is implied by written sources from Prussia (see Wenskus, 1968 pp.314–7).

The cult places in the groves where holy fire was burnt and sacrifices made have already been mentioned. These rites are confirmed by historic sources. Yan Dlugosh (in the second half of the 15th c.) wrote that the people in Samogitia “would gather the crops at the beginning of October and together with their wives, children and employees would go to the

groves that they thought to be sacred. Three days in turn they would sacrifice oxen, rams and other cattle for their gods - they would burn them” (Vėlius, 1996 pp.555–6, 576). In 1768 S. Rostowsky wrote about the Jesuits’ visit to Žemaitkiemis (Ukmergė district) in 1583: “Following the priestesses of the Romans they would burn holy fire for the Perkūnas (Thunder) in the groves without any breaks” (Ivinskis, 1986 p.407).

Šventas groves (Sacred groves). There are 13 forests and groves recorded that have names with the root *švent-*. Most of them are situated in Samogitia (Map VIII). Besides this area extends to the north including Courland and Vidzeme (Urtāns, 1989 p.62).

When analysing the geographical location of the forests and groves that are called Šventas it is easy to notice that they are often situated near the confluences of rivers (Daubariai, Romainiai, Rukšiai). Some forests take up an area of as much as 1500 ha; groves occupy an average of 5–20 ha (Fig. 15).



Fig. 15. A fragment of the map drawn by Caspar Hennenberger 1584 where the Šventas grove (originally - Heiligwald) is shown in the environs of Žemaičių Naumiestis (Šilutė district).

The descriptions of the forests and groves that are called Šventas in the historical sources usually include a note that they are untouchable: “*Heyligwald* (Sacred grove) <...> beautiful trees grow there, tall birch trees and junipers underneath. Samogitians still think it to be sacred, it is forbidden to cut trees there so that the gods that live in the wood would not be injured” (Venckai) (Vėlius, 2001 pp.326, 339). On the other hand, rites took place in these groves. It is said that in the old times people used to go to pray in the Šventas grove in Dvariškiai (Vaitkevičius, 1998a p.373).

Alka groves. There are 11 of them recorded (Map VIII) (Fig. 16).



Fig. 16. Sacred oak in the Alka grove of Alkūnai (Molėtai district). Photo by author, 1999.

In 1478 the Alka grove by the Šešuoliai Lake was mentioned (*Helki*), explaining this name by the Polish *swiati lasz* (Fijałek & Semkowicz, 1948 p.364). In 1588 the Alka forest (*Алькагирь*) near Tendžiogala is mentioned (Sprogis, 1888 p.4). Also the Sacred (Šventas) River flows there. The barrow cemetery dated to the mid-1st millennium and cult stone are known in the Alka grove near Alkaičiai.

In the case of the Alka groves the historical sources are quite important. Three sources clearly show that the Lithuanian word *alka* during the 16th century became *gojus* (of Slavic origin). According to the dictionary of the Lithuanian language the

latter term means “a small, beautiful grove” (Ulvydas et al., 1956 p.479), however, the primary meaning have the Slavic *gaj* (*gai*) corresponds to the meaning of *alka* “sacred grove” (see Šlupecki, 1994 p.162; 2000 p.42; also see Chapter 2.1).

Gojus grove. There are approximately 520 forests and groves recorded in Lithuania that have the name Gojus (Vanagas, 1985 p.871). As has been mentioned before, the groves that had the name of Alka (probably, other sacral names too) eventually took the name Gojus. One of the first Gojus groves is mentioned in 1478 (“*gaium dictum Gudnow*”), in the Latin foundation of Bijutiškis church (see Wojtkowiak, 1980 p.118). In the 16th c. place-names of this type had not become popular yet (cf. in Sprogis, 1888).

In the documents of 1521 and 1535 the same sacred grove, which was northeast of Trakai, is called both the Sacred Lindens (*Lezu Swiato Liepie*) and the Lindens grove-Gojus (*lipowyj haj*) (Jablonskis, 1941 p.206; Baliulis, Mikulionis & Miškinis, 1991 p.85). In the document of 1573 or 1575 from Viduklė, when describing the situation of the fields it is said that the second field is “near Alka - the Gojus of birches” (*под олкоm, гаемъ березовым*) (Jablonskis, 1941 p.138). In the *Postilla* of 1573 of the Wolfenbüttel Library it is said: “Believing in <...> Gojus groves (they call them Alkai)” (Gaigalat, 1901 p.150). More precise circumstances of *gojus* coming into the Lithuanian language (also in onomastics) should be indicated by linguistic research.

It may be that in the places where the Gojus groves were situated there were already cultivated fields and meadows at the end of the 19th - beginning of the 20th century. For instance, in 1930 V. Juozaitis wrote to P. Tarasenska about one such place in Vladislavava. “I came to know from the owner of the estate that in the fields called Gojus there were a lot of oaks in the old times. It has already been two years since shepherds burned the last oak. The father of the owner told that there has been a sacred oak grove of pagans here” (LIH 2231 p.68).

In order to find out whether the Gojus groves are real sacred places, which are related to the old rites, it is necessary to examine concrete data and investigate separate micro-regions. Attention should be paid to the Gojus groves where the Eastern Lithuanian barrows of the 1st - beginning of the 2nd millennium AD are found (Degsnė-Labotiškės, Kloniniai Mijaugonys, Geruliai, Skėriai).

3. 3. 1 Trees

Together with sacred woods, sacred trees are also mentioned in historic sources. Most of them must have grown in the area of the sacred groves. However, there are sacred trees that do not belong to woods. For instance, in the document of the division of Courland in 1291 a single growing sacred tree *Ouse warpe* (ash tree) was mentioned (Būga, 1961 pp.163–4; Klimka & Žulkus, 1989 p.18).

The 16th–17th c. sources talk more about the worshipping of trees. In 1547 the Grand Duke Sigismund August in his letter to the chancellor of Poland S. Maciejowski wrote that “the ordinary dark people worship groves, oaks, lime trees as gods”, they sacrifice “cattle and offerings” for them in public and at home (Ivinskis, 1986 p.402). The bishop M. Giedraitis in 1587 wrote that in the greater part of the Samogitia diocese people “sacrifice for the Thunder collectively, worship grass snakes and think oaks to be sacred” (Ivinskis, 1986 p.406).

The data about the sacred trees provided in historic sources as well as written down in the 19th–20th c. provides important information about the nature of their worship and particular transformations during the period after the conversion. For instance, in 1684 in the *Deliciae Prussicae* (The Curiosities of Prussia) M. Prätorius wrote about the sacred trees worshipped by Lithuanians and inhabitants of Eastern Prussia. “They showed me an oak in the surroundings of Ragainė/Ragnit, the branches of it were grown together and people thought it to be sacred. <...> I stayed overnight in the nearest village, which was not far from the oak. My landlord was old and rich but also a witty and superstitious farmer <...>. He thought that they do not commit a sin if they do not harm the tree. And that was the worshipping, as he understood it <...>. His ancestors taught him that God often sends an angel near such trees. The angel does good things for the godly people and bad for the bad people. As they are taught like that, he said, there is nothing bad if something is sacrificed, because it is not sacrificed for the trees, but for the angel or the God who sent the angel here <...>” (Mannhardt, 1936 pp.524–5).

There is most information about the sacred oaks in Lithuania. Data about sacred lime trees, pine trees, spruces, birches and ash trees forms a comparatively small part of this type of information. (But there are a big variety of sacred trees in Latvia. These are oaks, lime trees, birches, pine trees, spruces, junipers, willow trees, elm trees, hazels, aspens, rowans, alder trees and apple trees - Urtāns, 1978 p.77.)

The trees that are said to be sacred are found in woods, waysides, farms, and cemeteries, near churches and in the area of sacred sites. Various natural and cultural contexts of sacred trees sometimes correlate with the motivation of the sacredness of sacred sites in general. For instance, the sacredness of the Visdievai sacred lime tree is directly related to the sacred site that existed in this place in the old times. The pair of oaks that grew near the sacred Dvaronys stone was also famous.

There are a lot of reasons for the sacredness of trees. Sometimes they have also a transformed - that of Christian holiness - forms. For instance, trees are associated with the rites of the pre-Christian religion (Alkas-Salantai, Joskaudai). It is told that holy pictures were found in trees (Beržoras, Kena). Insurgents of the 1863 uprising used to pray near these trees (Kegriai, Šaravai), and also innocent people are turned into trees (Balniai, Linkavičiai).

The natural motivations are not so various but they are also known. For instance, it is easy to notice trees that are old, gnarled, having several trunks or hollow. The trees that were hollow at the bottom of the trunk and were grown together at the top were very famous. In 1870 in a forest near Makrickai an ash tree that had such a look “appeared” and it interested everyone: “Even the church was empty on holy days. All the people were near the ash tree or dancing in a pub. People used to bring a lot of offerings to the ash tree: wool, cloths, corn, money, eggs, etc.” (Gudeliū, 1914 pp.412–3).

Oaks. There are 50 of them recorded, mostly in Samogitia. Most of the sacred oaks should be associated with the sacred groves that grew there in the past. The oldest oaks near which the rites were performed until conversion were probably cut when Christianity was introduced or disappeared in later times. However, there is a possibility that several of them disappeared only in the 19th c. (Ažuolija, Pagirgždūtis) or reached the 20th c. (Lenkaičiai, Vieštovėnai) (Fig. 17) and received particular attention from the community. It should be mentioned also that in the hollow of an old oak in Užuperkasis a hoard of silver Lithuanian ingots dating to the end of the 14th - beginning of the 15th c. was found (Dukša, 1981 p.122). Also a hoard of Verseka (34 silver coins dating to the 14th–16th c.) was found when an old oak fell down (LIH, 2250 pp.55–6); there is still an oak of the width of 1.7 m growing in that village. Certain religious respect is given to it.



Fig. 17. Sacred oak of Vieštovėnai (Plungė district). Photo by author, 1995.

The data of the 19th c. about the sacred Kaušai oak is very valuable. It was probably a huge oak, underneath which sacrifices were made in the old times. Later, a figure of Christ was nailed to the oak. People still went on gathering there, at first on Fridays, later on Sundays. The rites were performed as follows: a ram was brought here on Sunday mornings and it was slaughtered, then people would go to a church to pray. They would come back, would cook the ram and celebrate (Buszinski, 1874 p.117; Gukovsky, 1892 pp.212–3; cf. Šmits, 1936 pp.267, 277).

In the Balts' mythology, as in the mythology of other Indo-Europeans, oak is associated with the Thunderer (Lithuanian *Perkūnas*). Most of the sources say that the rituals near the

oaks were dedicated to the Perkūnas specially (accordingly, to the *Perun* of the Slavs, *Tor* of the Germans) (cf. Biezais, 1972 pp.151–2; Gimbutas, 1973 p.467; Ribakov, 1987 pp.210–1; Šlupecki, 1994 pp.160–1). However, sacred oaks grew not only in the cult places dedicated to the Thunderer.

Lime trees. There are ten places known in Eastern, Middle, Southern and especially Western Lithuania where lime trees are associated with the Balts' religion and mythology (Fig. 18).



Fig. 18. Sacred lime tree of *Visdievai* (*Rokiškis* district). Photo by author, 1999.

The grove that was still growing in the 16th–18th c. near *Trakai* and was called the Sacred Lindens grove (*Lezu Swiato Liepie*) is extremely interesting. When defining its area “three big stones” are mentioned. The area of the grove was the domain of the Grand Duke and not later than the end of the 15th c. it was given as a gift to the nobles of *Tottori* origin (Ivinskis, 1941 pp.150–1; Baliulis, Mikulionis & Miškinis, 1991 p.85). In the *Annals of Lithuania* of the 16th century it is said that in the sacred place called *Pajauta's Grave* lime trees were worshipped (Vėlius, 2001 pp.518–9; also see Chapter 3.1).

It seems that the sacredness of lime trees is related to the goddess *Laima* (goddess of fate, fortune, and childbirth). This is proved by the samples from *Samogitia* (*Sakūčiai*, *Juodkrantė*). The *Laima* lime tree that had three trunks was still growing in the 19th c. at the foot of the sacred *Rambynas* hill and was held in “greatest respect” (Vaitkevičius, 1998a p.646). The relation between *Laima* and lime trees is very evident in *Latvian* beliefs, songs (cf. Biezais, 1955 p.256), and partly in place-legends (Šmits, 1936 pp.270–1).

Pine trees. There are 27 pine trees recorded. Not long ago special respect was shown for them or is still preserved. There is a big concentration of them in *Samogitia*; they are rarely found in other regions (Map IX).

The pine trees that are regarded as sacred grow in the woods, waysides and crossroads (Fig. 19), in cemeteries, villages. There are usually crosses, little shrines or holy pictures nailed to the pine trees. The local people or passing travellers pray

near these trees, ask for luck and health, use parts of the bark for magical purposes, offer small coins there. There are various tales told about these trees.

In the 19th and first half of the 20th c. the sacred pine trees, springs and some other places in *Samogitia* were the most cherished and respected of all the sacred places typical of the pre-Christian religion. The fact that the pine tree does not have a long life clearly shows that the recorded sacred pine trees can only be a tradition of sacred places, which “adapted” to the new ideology after the conversion. Such pine-trees have analogies in other countries as well (Marzell, 1929/30; Duchits, 2000 pp.58–9; Eninš, 2000).

Anyway, the evergreen pine trees and spruces are closely related to the Balts' mythic views of death, funeral, and souls existing after death, also the mythical participation of the Sun in these actions. “I dreamed a dead woman. She said God appointed me to swing on a pine tree. Is it good for you? Asked I. It is hard for me, very hard on a pine tree. And I hear squeaks from the pine tree - many souls used to swing on a pine tree and perform penance in that way” (Marcinkevičienė, 1997 p.20).

The data about sacred pine trees does not contradict latter assumptions and even reveals new aspects of it. It is told that sacred pine trees grow up in the places where innocent people die or are buried (*Gėluva*, *Svilė*), or people are buried near

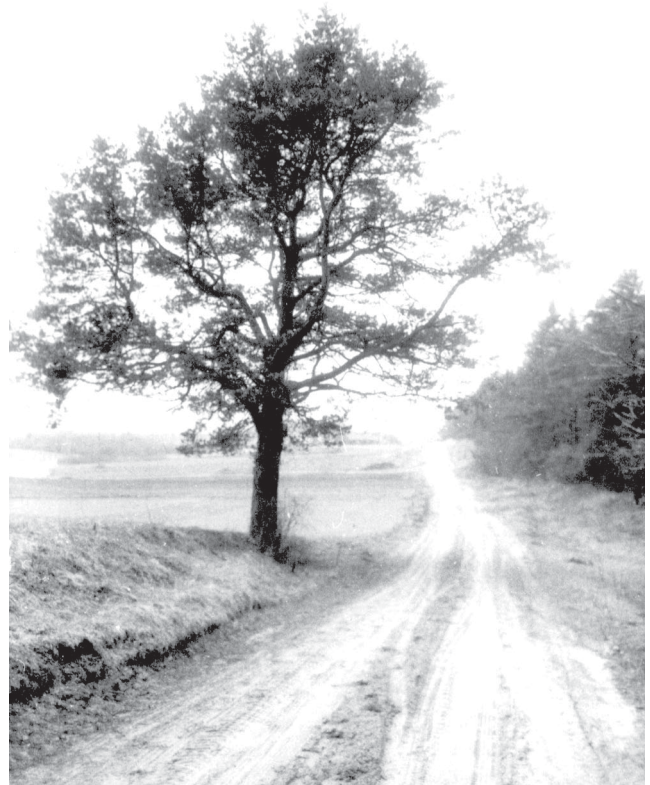


Fig. 19. Sacred pine tree of *Pamedžiokalnīs* (*Kelmė* district). Photo by author, 1995.

such pine trees (Balniai, Kairiškiiai). When you try to cut them, blood appears (Linkavičiai).

3.4 Stones

An important role is given to this kind of monument in the context of the Balts' religion and mythology. However, historic sources provide little information about sacred stones and usually just state that those stones are worshipped (cf. Ivinskis, 1986 pp.400, 402). Most and at the same time most valuable information on the topic of cult stones is provided in the sources of the 17th–18th c. They describe the remains of paganism and the struggle with them in villages after the introduction of Christianity (Lebedys, 1976 p.204; Ivinskis, 1986 pp.406–7).

The sacred stones came attention of the researchers comparatively early and received much attention from scientists (cf. Beckherrn, 1893; Szukiewicz, 1900; Baruch, 1907; Tarasenko, 1923, 1933a–d, 1958; Urbanavičius, 1972b, 1977, 1979; Dakanis, 1984; Matulis, 1990).

Traditionally it is thought that there are about 300 sacred stones in Lithuania (cf. Tarasenko, 1958 pp.66–81). According to the data of the author of this monograph there should be not less than 500 sacred stones in Lithuania. In 1988, 328 stones were recorded in Latvia (Urtāns, 1988a pp.5–8), little more than 400 natural sacred stones in Estonia (Valk, 2003 p.573). The number of cup-marked stones alone in Estonia exceeds 1750 (Tvauri, 1997 p.48).

At present in Belarus there are about 340 sacred stones known (Levkov et al., 2000 p.49) but this number is still increasing. In 1893 about 50 sacred stones were found in Prussia (Beckherrn, 1893). All the statistics are quite conditional because the number of sacred stones differs when reiterating the exact numbers and receiving new data. Moreover, the statistics directly depend on different researchers' definitions of sacred stones.

The author of this work thinks that the concept of sacred stones should not include all the stones that are valuable in their historic, memorial or cultural sense. In the context of the Balts' sacred places, only the stones that are directly related to the Balts' religion and mythology should be considered.

The experience of classifying sacred stones shows that it is a challenging task. During the 50 years of this scientific discussion a united classification has not been created. That is because the "internal" variety of sacred stones is very wide and is influenced more by natural and mythical reasons than by people's activities.

The features of sacred stones according to which the stones might be classified form two main groups: 1) visual features; 2) features distinguished according to mythical and religious data (place-legends, stories, beliefs, rites).⁴ So far the experience of classification shows that researchers disagree about the classification itself when trying to match the features of two kinds or of one kind. So, there is an alternative suggested

by author of this monograph. It is based upon the creation of many groups of monuments of this kind.

Sacred stones have a set number of various features, and each of them can become the reason for grouping stones with the same features. The group of sacred stones that has at least one of the features becomes the object of scientific research. The more features the group of stones has in common, the more information is obtained during the research. Even though this kind of stone classification is only a project so far, the work that has already been done shows that there is an opportunity to create various - temporary and permanent - models of classification if you keep to these principles. This approach does not make any requirements in advance and does not restrict the researcher. In order to deal with a certain question the researcher may organise the stones that have certain features (for instance, sacred stones in rivers; stones split by thunder; stones fragments of which are used for healing the cattle; stones that are called Mokas (Teacher).

The variety of sacred stones is much bigger than the several groups of them that are traditionally modelled. So the more the sacred stones are divided according to their meaningful features and the reasons for this division are analysed the more benefit science will receive. At this point it is worth remembering the notice of semiotician and mythologist A. J. Greimas, "The main mistake and the difficulties that follow arise from the fact that we want to explain the worshipping of stones as a global fact without considering the forms of single stones, types and their relations to one god or another and one sphere of sacredness or another" (1990 pp.214–5).

3.4.1 Visual features

These are geological structure, form, and certain features (for instance, cups, bowls, and special marks). The site where the stone lies is also very important. As there has not been many excavations made near sacred stones and they do not always answer the questions of chronology, the evaluation of the stone's environment became one of the few ways to date cult stones at least initially. The experience of foreign researchers in this area is the same (see Shorin, 1987; Makarov & Chernetsov, 1988).

3.4.1.1 Geological structure

Most of the sacred stones in Lithuania are granite boulders. An important feature of their meaning that directly depends on their structure is colour. The coloured stones, e.g., white, grey, black, red and blue have an important role in the mythology of the Balts. This feature of stones, which seems to be objective from at first sight, is represented in mythological outlook. For instance, people believe the red stones are

⁴ The results of the excavations should also be attributed to this source's group. For instance, information about the foundation of a certain cult place, about the fire that was burned near a stone, because that is directly related to the mythical meaning of the cult place and the religious functions it carries.

splashed with blood (LFA, 6167 no.106). White or grey admixtures of quartz are said to be the marks of tears (Senasis Strūnaitis) (LFA, 6810 no.212). It is believed that Thunder usually crashes into red stones and does not crash into black (Balys, 1937 p.159). White stones influence the fecundity of land (Grinbalt & Gurski, 1983 p.293), they were very important also in beliefs of the countries of Western Europe (see Olbrich, 1930/31).

The Lithuanian stones that are named according to their colour should be mentioned - the Baltasis (White) stone of Vaivadiškiai, the Juodasis (Black) stone of Žibikai, the Raudonasis (Red) stone of Jociūnai. The natural origin (red granite) and the mythical motivations of sacredness (people found a murdered woman near the stone) of the latter stone do correlate semantically with each other.

Apart from granites there are several sacred stones that are conglomerations. These are usually huge blocks of cemented sand and gravel that stick on the top of the land (Antakmenė, Pajogus) (Fig. 20) sometimes have special sacral meaning (cf. Levkov, 1992 pp.131–5).

3.4.1.2. Form

Due to their form, stones of “natural forms” are often variously interpreted. For instance, they are called and thought to be houses, bathhouses, smithies, churches, tables, chairs, beds, bedding, ploughs, quern, chests, wallets, saddles, shoes, coffins and so on. These forms of stones acquire cer-



Fig. 20. Sacred stone of Antakmenė (Ignalina district). Unknown photographer [1960–70]. LIH.

tain meanings in mythical perspective. For instance, there is a tale about a stone in Senmiestė forest. The stone has the form of a plough that devils made from nails of the people who cut their nails and throw them away without making a cross. Using this plough “devils wanted to make Hell for themselves, they were ploughing for only one night because the cock crowed in the morning” (Vaitkevičius, 1998a p.184). Or at midnight on Saturday shepherds went to the Velnio pirtis (Devil’s bathhouse) stone in Rudžiai stone, “looked through the hole into the inside of the stone, - devils were flogging themselves like in the bathhouse and screaming” (LFA, 2368 no.487).

In the religious context the stones having an almost flat surface (like **tables**) are very intriguing. There are 27 of such monuments known in Eastern, Middle and Southern Lithuania, and more in better surveyed Western Lithuania (Map X) (Fig. 21). These stones as well as their surfaces are of different sizes, from the average of 1x1.5 m (Imbarė, Benaičiai) to 3.5x4.5 m (Rinkšeliai, Žibikai). The fact that the stones discussed often belong to sacred sites and the place-legends associate them with non-Christian ceremonies is obvious.

Moreover, the flat sacred stones are sometimes called just



Fig. 21. Sacred stone of Kraujeliai (Molėtai district). Photo by author, 1991.

the tables of Laumė (Fairy), Velnias (Devil) (Alešiškės, Nolėnai). At the beginning of the 20th c. people sometimes still used to gather near such “tables” for celebrations. “People used to bring a lot of food and drinks to that stone during Pentecost and old women would lift their skirts and dance around it” (Paindrė) (LFA, 1420 no.150).

The fact that the name of the sacred stone “table” might have meant the function of sacrificing is proved by the example of the Šašaičiai stone which is called the Dievo stalas (Table of God). This famous stone has the big, ascending form of an irregular pyramid. On the top of the stone a small wooden chapel was in the old times. According to the data of the 20th century it was common to offer small coins in that chapel (Vaitkevičius, 1998a pp.251–2).

The stones where it is told that devils used to eat, or the king or the soldiers prepared dinners might also have the purpose of “the table for sacrifices” (Navikai, Sudota).

Here the religious sources of the early Scandinavians should be mentioned as well. They show the important relationship between the word *stallr*, *stalli* “stand” and the word *vestallr* (*ve* “a cult place, sacred place”). The word *stallr* also corresponds with the Lithuanian *stalas* (table) and some words of other languages that originate from the Indo-European **sta-* “to stand” (Sabaliauskas, 1990 p.61) might have meant some stand-construction, used for placing the sacrificed cattle or part of its body to sacrifice for the god. Or there might have been some signs of god on those stands (see Hultgård, 1993 pp.230–1, 234–5).

Apart from the tables there are stones that are called **chairs** or armchairs. They are recorded in 25 sites (Map XI). There are a lot of sacred stones in Lithuania on which, as it is told, gods and mythical beings sat for a while, had a rest or worked while sitting (Fig. 22). The stone “chairs” have one special feature, which is natural (or in exceptional cases, artificial) hollows or indents; it seems as if they originated when someone was sitting or leaning on the stone. Another feature is that together with hollows there are “footprints” on the stones (Lenčiai, Mačiūkiai).



Fig. 22. *Velnio krėslas* (Devil’s Chair) stone of *Guostagalīs* (Pakruojis district). Photo by V. Urbanavičius, 1971. LIH-32857.

The place-legends about this group of stones represent some features of the old goddesses, e.g., Laumė (Fairy), Ragana (Witch). Apart from these, Mary, Devil, “Madam”, “Queen” or “King” also appears in the place-legends. Latter mythological beings used to sit and work on the stones, here they showed themselves to people. In some place-legends one can find original references of a ceremonial type. For instance, there was a school of devils in *Padievaitis* - an old Devil used to sit on the *Velnio sostas* (Devil’s Throne) stone and teach his kids of “devil things”. It has also been noticed that while sitting on the throne of the Devil a speaker’s voice became several times louder if it was heard from the plateau of the hill fort, which is nearby (Vaitkevičius, 1998a p.413).

There are also ten stone **beds** in Lithuania (Map XI). A compact group of four such stones is recorded in the region of *Kretinga* and is associated with the existence of the *Senoji*

Ipiltis political administrative centre in ca. 12th–13th centuries (Fig. 23). Moreover, the *Ponios lova* (Bed of Madam) is situated in *Antsieniai*, the *Laumės lova* (Bed of Fairy) in *Rudikai* and so forth. There are a lot of stones in *Rokiškis* region that are called beds, for instance, the *Meškos lova* (Bed of a bear) in *Papiliai*, the *Kiškio lova* (Bed of a hare) in *Zablotiškis*. However, it is not clear yet if the latter stones should be associated with sacred places.



Fig. 23. *Karalienės lova* (Queen’s Bed) stone of *Senoji Ipiltis* (*Kretinga* district). Photo by author, 1993.

It is noted that the form of the sacred stones (the top of them is hollow or flat) is reminiscent of a bed, but the epithet “bed” (as with “table”) might have also represented ceremonial functions of these stones. Place-legends usually associate these stones with female goddesses and mythological beings. It is also known that when shepherds took their herds to the *Sauginiai* stone “bed” of 2.5x3 m size and 1.5 m height, the older shepherds would lay some boy and girl on the stone and “marry” them in that way (Onom.).

Apart from the sacred stones that are interpreted as certain constructions, furniture or utensils there are stones that “correspond” with certain parts of the body of gods or humans, e.g., head, ear, tail, heart (*Keturakiai*, *Urkuvėnai*).

The **tall** stones, i.e. menhirs, should be discussed separately. The oral tradition usually says they are damned or godless people turned into stones: wedding participants, hunters and soldiers. 35 stones of this group are recorded in Lithuania (Map XII). The same motive is prevalent in Middle and Western Belarus as well (Levkov et al., 2000 pp.47–8). Frequently there are two, several, even up to 12 stones of this kind in one place. There is no precise data about the size of the tall stones because most of such stones are already destroyed. The obtained data says that the average height of these stones was similar to the height of a man, and the monuments that still exist show that their height was from 0.5 to 1.2 m (Fig. 24).

The distribution of tall stones allows us to assert that the tradition of these sacred places was distinctly realised in *Laukuvā* land at the very beginning of the 2nd millennium AD and later in the south part of *Varniai* (*Medininkai*) land. The *Kaštaunaliai* sacred stone belonged to this group was



Fig. 24. Two tall stones of Noreikiškės (Prienai district). Photo by author, 1993.

situated in the area of a cemetery dating to the mid-1st - beginning of the 2nd millennium AD. In Ivoniškiai where two stones were situated there was also an Iron Age cemetery.

Much bigger but no less compact is a local area of tall stones in south-eastern Lithuania. Its boundaries actually correspond with the distribution of the barrows covered by stones of the 3rd-6th c. AD and typical to the Yotvingians (Sudovians). Certain features of dialectology and phonetics are found in water-names typical of the Western Balts found in the same area (cf. Vanagas, 1968 p.152). (Moreover, apart from the tall sacred stones that are said to be people turned into stones, there are a lot of sacral stones of natural forms in that area that has similar tales told about them - see Chapter 3.4.2.)

When analysing the cultural environment of tall stones there is a clear common relation between these stones and the cemeteries of the 1st millennium AD (Dieveniškės, Kaštonaliai, Migliniškės). It correlates to the oral tradition (place-legends and beliefs that these stones represent Balts' mythological views about the posthumous state of souls). In several cases the sacral meaning of the tall stones was preserved until the 19th-20th centuries.

It is also worth noting the conclusion made by Kazimieras Būga which states that the Samogitian name of tall sacred stones, 'Stabakūlis' meant a stone that was worshipped: "Stabo kūlis, i.e., a stone, an idol of which was made (in the old times)" (1958 p.147).

Tall stones of a similar size to those in Lithuania are found in many Middle European countries as well (cf. Kirchner, 1955). It is also said that they are people who turned into stones. The chronology of these stones is not quite clear but they are referred to as menhirs in the common background of megalithic culture (cf. Krzak, 1994 p.286).

Most probably the tall stones in Lithuania (primarily in its southern part) are dated back to ca. the 3rd-5th c. AD and stay in close connection with the tall stones presented in the 1st-3rd c. AD in the Vistula basin (Kmieciński, 1962 pp.92-103;

Chyżnewska-Sułowska, 1971).

Tall stones are also found in Belarus, Latvia, and Prussia (Beckherm, 1893; Urtāns, 1979; Levkov, 1992 pp.135-7). There are also cases when anthropomorphic and zoomorphic features were artificially granted to the tall stones (see Urtāns, 1988a pp.7-8; Levkov, 1992 pp.95-8). In Latvia the oral tradition says that these stones of natural forms and having anthropomorphic features are idols (*elku tēli*) and note that various sacrifices were made near them (Urtāns, 1979 p.108). The data from Belarus shows that the earliest stone crosses found in this region and dated to the early 2nd millennium AD were made of the "anthropomorphic stones" that had a similar shape (Duchits, 1997 pp.35-6).

The Prussian stone statues named Bobos (Dames) (for a list of them see La Baume, 1927) (Fig. 25) are widely discussed and have also to be mentioned. Usually it is noticed that they were important for the Prussians in terms of their world outlook (Žulkus, 1989; Kulakov, 1994 p.21). However, already in the A. Holtz study a conclusion was made that stone statues imitating people holding horns for drinking, jewellery and weapons in their hands should be associated with the nomads of Eurasia whose route of campaign in 1240-41 stretched through the territory of Prussia (1966 pp.25-30).



Fig. 25. Stone statues originated from territory of former Prussia. After V. Kulakov (1994).

Apart from the tall stones that resemble people, there are stones (a great number of them were found in river beds) whose forms resemble various animals: a bear, a cock, and the back of a goat, a horse and others. Their names are usually inspired by these peculiarities of shape. The place-legend motive about oxen and other animals that were turned into stones is known only in neighbouring countries (Latvia, Belarus) (cf. Levkov et al., 2000, 54). The relation of such stones to sacred places is a problematic issue. The possibility of such associations should probably be analysed separately in each case. For instance, there are hollows that have the form of a goat hoof on the Ožakmenis (Goat Stone) in Siponiai. These hollows are said to be the footprints of a devil (Tarasenska, 1928 p.101).

The stories about the Gaidys (Cock) stone in Būdys (Prienai district) tell that it resembles a cock or that “some cock used to dwell” on it. Shepherds used the water that gathered on the top surface of the stone for washing their feet. They believed this would benefit their health. Moreover, a stone in a field near a river was the centre of attraction during the haymaking or harvest time. People used to gather there just “to be” - to have a rest and to enjoy themselves (LIH, 2231 pp.25–6). It is recorded that in the old times in this region “a cock was necessarily slaughtered” on similar occasions (Balys, 1986 p.200).

3. 4. 1. 3 Peculiarities (specific marks, hollows, bowls)

The “special marks” of natural origin, such as parts of rocks of different kinds, for instance, white or grey seams of quartz in granite boulders, are sometimes interpreted as marks of “sewed” stones or even cross marks (Kubiliai, Skudutiškis). Parts of other rocks or weathered parts that differ in colour or in their relief are also known. There is a story about such a stone in Šventabačkė (Holy Barrel) site. The stone has a crumbled part that resembles the form of a heart. It is said that monks were bringing a barrel of holy wine, stumbled upon the stone, and fell down and broke it (LIH, 302 p.16). The curved lines “serpents” on the Žaltys (Grass snake) stone in Raguva must have also been of natural origin (Fig. 26). However, this stone has been respected since the old times (Tyszkiewicz E., 1867).

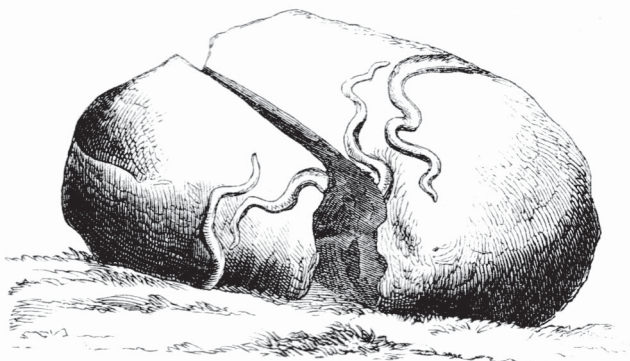


Fig. 26. Žaltys (Grass snake) stone of Raguva (not preserved). After E. Tyszkiewicz (1867).

The splits in stones that are natural or appeared because of thunder should also be mentioned. They are usually interpreted mythically, as marks left by Thunder who was “shooting” at the Devil. Such stones are sometimes referred to as the Perkūnas (Thunder) stones (Kareiviškis, Papiškės) (Fig. 27). They are also found by the Perkūnas hills (Luponiai, Novinkai).



Fig. 27. Perkūnas (Thunder's) stone of Kareiviškis. Photo by M. Michelbertas, 1968. LIH-21896

Footprint-shaped hollows should start the presentation of hollows and bowls in stones. The mythological description of footprints is important in all cases, because footprints in stones are associated with the mythical origin of the stones themselves. The real origin (natural/artificial) of the footprints in stones played in this case no important role at all (Vaitkevičius, 1997 p.45, Shorin, 1998 p.218).

According to the calculations of the author, there are no less than 150 stones with footprints in Lithuania. Their number exceeds 100 in Latvia (Urtāns, 1988b p.94) as well as in Belarus (Levkov et al., 2000 p.46). In the regions of Pskov and Novgorod the number of stones with footprints exceed 60 in each (Aleksandrov, 1995 pp.166–7, Shorin, 1998 pp.217–8). The density of stones with footprints in Belarus (the same as of other sacred stones) decreases in the east and south (Levkov, 1992 pp.172–3; Kurbatov, 2000 pp.168, 182). Probably that is the reason why the worshipping of stones itself is thought to be a Balts' substrate in this later area of the Slavs (Sedov, 1970 pp.177–8).

In Lithuania most of the stones with footprints are situated in woods (Čelniukai), in wet meadows and marshes (Antakalnai), on the banks of rivers (Plaštaka), and in rivers themselves (Eivydai) (cf. Urtāns, 1988b p.94). They are also found in sacred sites (on the hills, near springs, in groves), moreover, they are built into the floors of chapels and churches (Gvaldai, Marioniai).

The sizes and form of the stones with footprints are extremely varied. The hollows that are called footprints are also of various sizes and forms. Some of them resemble the footprints of people and animals; others, on the contrary, are very irregu-

lar. The number of footprints on one stone varies from one to several. The footprints are found on the top and sides of the stones. There is very little data about their orientation in respect to compass directions and elements of the surrounding landscape.

Most probably, following foreign researchers (cf. Formozov, 1965 pp.135–8), it used to be stated that the Lithuanian stones with footprints date from the Bronze or even Stone Age (Tarasenko, 1958 pp.30–2; Daugudis, 1992 p.54). However, it is hard to define this group of monuments chronologically. The archaeological surveys near these stones did not provide any significant results (Medoliškės, Mikytai, Voronėliai) (Urbanavičius, 1972a pp.15–7, 29–30). While analysing the cultural environment of the stones with footprints, it is obvious that these stones are typical to sacred sites. In different regions of Lithuania, stones with footprints are situated near burial sites dated to the 1st - beginning of 2nd millennium AD (Pakalniškiai (Kaišiadorys district), Pašilė, Šeimatis).

The relation between stones with footprints and burial sites correlates with the mythological and religious functions of the discussed stones. It can be observed by the analysis of the data of corresponding type. In spite of the owner of the footprints in the place-legends (God, Mary, the Devil or others) these hollows are universally said to be feet or heels and, only in rare cases, prints of fingers or palms. According to place-legends the footprints in the stones appeared when the Devil was running to hide in hell, while God was stepping into heaven or when Mary descended from heaven. Thus, these stones are the last obstacles for the Devil while running to hell, for God - the last step when entering heaven or the first pedestal for Mary on earth (Fig. 28). In the mythical sense the function of such footprints is to serve the journeys



Fig. 28. *Vilkeliai stone (Panevėžys district) with footprint-shaped hollows. Photo by A. Merkevičius, 1968. LIH-20762.*

of gods (and also souls), to provide them with the opportunity to move up/down, to pass from one world to another (Vaitkevičius, 1997 p.43).

The latter assumption is confirmed also by the fact that the same footprint on a stone is sometimes regarded to be both the Devil's and God's (Pašilė, Plaučiškės). In some cases there are even some footprints on the same stone. For instance, there are two footprints on the Žalpai stone: the bigger one is God's and the smaller one the Devil's. There are footprints of God, the Devil and an angel on the Bajorai-Pakriaunis stone. This destroys the traditional division of stones according to the owners of the footprints, e.g. God, Mary, the Devil, a horse, a cow or someone else. The division of stones with the footprints of animals is less accurate, as the footprints of animals are most often associated with the gods: the footprint of an ox would be attributed to the Devil (Plaštaka) (Fig. 29), the footprint of cow to the Fairy (Kartena) and so on.

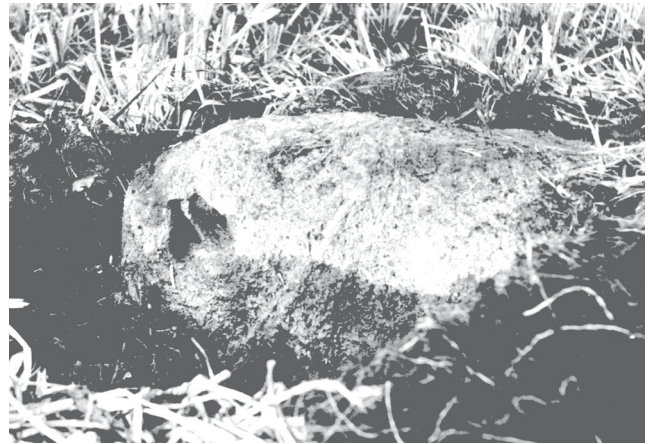


Fig. 29. *Plaštaka stone (Anykščiai district) with footprint-shaped hollow. Photo by A. Tautavičius, 1970. LIH-29759.*

In the yearbook of the pastoral activities of the Vilnius Jesuits' College of the year 1723, the worshipping of one stone with footprints is described. "A big crowd of people scorned the home of God, each Sunday when the moon was new they came near that stone from all the sites, worshipped it or stooped, kneeled, or offered bread, wool, flax or money to the stone. But most often this god was worshipped by sticks, which were left by all those who by promise came to that stone on foot with a stick <...>. Sick people would make various promises and would come from different sites hoping to get their health back. The strength of their sore foot, eyes, hands... They used to repeat a footprint on the stone belongs to St Mary, even though the shapeless hollow in that stone does not have any resemblance to the footprint of St Mary and is more similar to a mark of a dog's foot <...>" (Lebedys, 1976 pp.210–1).

At least some circumstances are important in this report. Firstly, on Sundays when there is new moon, people used to visit the stone with the footprint but not the church. If these were the Sundays when the new moon would rise that would be several times a year, and if they were waiting for a Sunday when there was a new moon, such a case could happen each

month. Secondly, the Church did not know about a hollow in the stone that resembles the footprint of a dog, which people take to be a footprint of St Mary.

The information of the 19th–20th c. on when people visit the stones with footprints shows that the stone is primarily regarded to be an institution that can provide help. For instance, near the Mītkiškės stone “people used to go <...> the ones who had sore feet said that they healed” (LFA, 4113 no.132), near the stone in Genaičiai childless women used to ask for children (Onom.). However, the sources are usually limited to stating that the stones received the greatest respect.

Money, clothes, and wool that are offered on the stone are related to promises to visit the stone with footprints after you recover and leave sacrifices there. For the purposes of treatment moss was picked from the stone or the footprints, or some parts of the stone were chopped, they served as talismans (Skudutiškis, Šiluva). Sometimes the stones were a little bit chopped because it was believed that parts of a stone that is too big for an animal to step over, when crushed help to cure the illnesses of cattle, or dogs (Čelniukai).

The selection of visual features provides an opportunity to accurately single out a group of sacred stones with **cup-marks**. Monuments of this kind are distributed all over the Baltic Sea region, including Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, Kaliningradskaya oblast - a relatively compact area whose epicentre seems to be modern Estonia (Map XIII).

There are 34 cup-marked stones recorded in Lithuania. Most of them are in the western and central parts of it (Map XIV). One more stone like that is on the very border of Lithuania and Belarus, near the Drūkšiai Lake, but on the Belarus side.

The cup-marked stones are situated in the neighbourhood of various water deposits - on the banks and valleys of rivers (Dvaronys), picturesque highlands of river valleys (Pavaiguvis) (Fig. 30), in some cases also in marshy sites (Šniūraičiai). The stones are usually red heavy-grained granites and there are only few exceptions - bluish small-grained are both stones of Pavirvytis. Most of the cup-marked stones are big, massive boulders that are irregular in shape or have a flat upper surface.

The cup-marks are found on the irregular, descending upper and side surfaces of stones or on the flat top surface. It should be noted that in some cases all the cup-marks were concentrated on the northern, moreover, the highest sides of the stones in Laukagalīs and Pavaiguvis. The absolute majority of 89 cup-marks on the Pelėkiai stone were concentrated on the southern side, actually in the area of 1m². The cup-marks of the Gošteliškiai stone also were on the single southern side of the stone; those of Švendubrė were on the eastern side.

The data about the size of cup-marks of 21 stones shows that the cup-marks are usually of 3–6 cm width, about 1 cm depth,

flat. Usually cup-marks of different sizes are found on the same stone and together with average cup-marks there are bigger ones - up to 7 cm, 7.5 cm, 9-cm in diameter (Apuolė, Kleboniškiai). It has not been observed that the depth of the cup-marks would always be matched with their diameter.

From the data about the number of cup-marks on 30 stones it is obvious that 14 stones have up to 10 cup-marks, 8 stones have 10–20, 4 stones have 20–30, 3 stones have 50–80 and the Pelėkiai stone has no less than 89 cup-marks. There are only a few schemes of the disposition of cup-marks on the stone known (see Vaitkevičius, 1996 p.8). Sometimes attempts are made to interpret the distribution of cup-marks on the stones as the patterns of constellations. The cup-marks of the Gošteliškiai stone were “similar to the structure of the constellation of the Great Bear” (Černiauskas, 1974) as well as the disposition of the Laukagalīs stone cup-marks (see Tarasenko, 1923). So far the most successful parallel is between the 14 cup-marks of the Drukšiai stone on the Lithuania - Belarus border with Cassiopeia, Andromeda, Pegasus, and the only galaxy visible to the naked eye: M31. The disposition and number of cup-marks to that of stars completely correspond (Vaiškūnas, 1997 pp.34, 38).

The study of Andres Tvauri of more than 2000 stones of the discussed group in Estonia and Finland revealed some important features of these monuments found on the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea. It was identified that the cup-marked stones prevail only in those sites where the natural (climatic) conditions were benevolent for agriculture. In prehistoric times these stones used to be among cultivated fields, on the sides of the fields, gardens and fallow. So A.Tvauri draws the

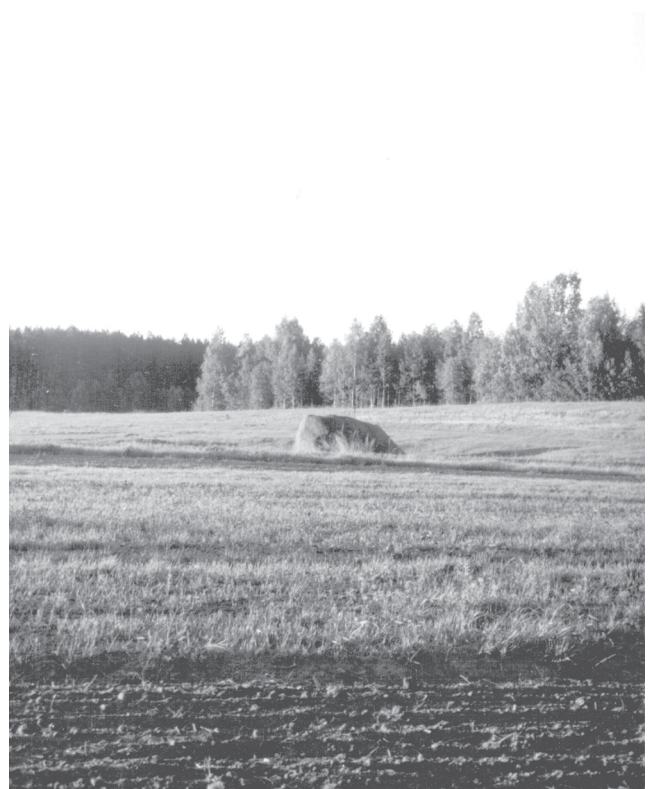


Fig. 30. Cup-marked stone of Švendubrė (Varėna district). Photo by author, 1999.

conclusion that cup-marked stones are directly related to the culture of agriculture. Moreover, there is a relation between the intensity of agriculture in certain localities and the large number - over ten - of cup-marks on the stones that is in cultivated pieces of land (1997 pp.50–2).

According to the obtained data, the mythological meaning of the stones with cup-marks is most similar to the stones with footprints. Often the cup-marks are regarded to be the footprints and heels of the Devil, the marks of Mary kneeling. In three cases together with cup-marks on stones there are elongated hollows called the footprints of the Devil (Jakštaičiukai, Kadarai, Žvirbliai).

The tales told about cup-marked stones are the same as the ones about the stones with footprints: the cup-marks are left by devils dancing, celebrating a wedding, coming to the human world from hell, etc. Moreover, in some cases the cup-marked stones in the 20th c. still had religious significance. "The stone in Paežeriai (Radviliškis district) is still (1929) said to be holy, people chip parts of the stone and use them for treatment" (LFA, 4901 p.38). The rainwater that gathered in the cup-marks of Paežeriai stone (Pakruojis district) was used for treating eyes (VU, 152–12 p.112).

Archaeological surveys near the cup-marked stones did not answer the questions of their dating. Maybe an exception is the first stone of Imbarė (Fig. 31). The researcher V. Daugudis dated it to the 1st millennium BC - i.e., the period when the Imbarė hill fort was first settled (1992 pp.56–7). These conclusions cause some doubts, because the location of the stone was excavated when the stone was already gone. During the exploration an intense cultural layer of a settlement dating from the beginning of the 1st millennium BC was found and the provenance of the cup-marked stone was attributed to an area of 6x6 m covered with small stones and burns and coal without other finds (LIH, 1158 pp.41–9).

So the cup-marked stones in Lithuania can only be dated considering the individual finds in their surroundings and

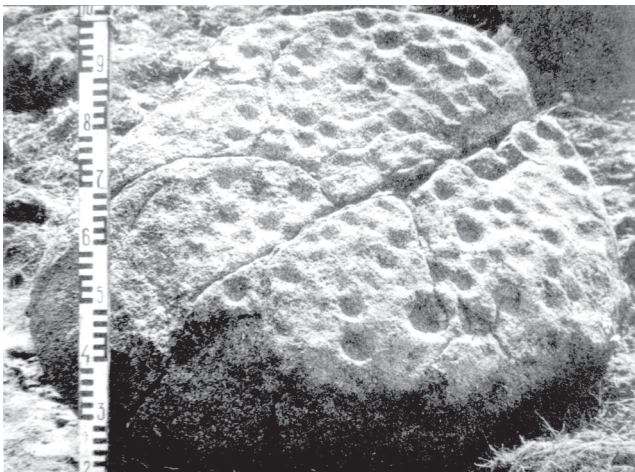


Fig. 31. Cup-marked stone of Imbarė (Kretinga district) (not preserved). After V. Daugudis (1984).

the chronology of the settlements and cemeteries known in the same localities. Not far from the Puntukas stone in Dvaronys some flint tools were found (Rimantienė, 1974 p.21). The Antakščiai stone is associated with the Kveciai barrows of the Western Balts' Barrow Culture of the 1st millennium BC; the Pelėkiai stone is associated with the same barrows in Sūdėnai. The third stone in Imbarė is also associated with the Western Balts' barrows in Žvainiai. Some finds from open settlements of the Bronze Age were found near the cup-marked stones in Švendubrė and Šnipaičiai. Ground stone axes dating from the same period were found near the stones in Dapkaičiai and Kadarai.

There are also some monuments of the Roman Iron Age in the surroundings of the cup-marked stones (Apuolė, Gošteliskės, Šniūraičiai). Archaeological monuments of the later period that were near the cup-marked stones are known only in rare cases.

In Western, Northern and Central Europe, cup-marked stones are regarded as monuments of the Neolithic and Bronze Age (cf. Hansen, 1937; Brøndsted, 1960 p.348; Hadingham, 1974 pp.43–80; Burenhult, 1980 pp.133–140; Coles, 1994 p.22; Krzak, 1994 p.55). In Estonia the appearance of cup-marked stones and the existence of this tradition dates from the beginning of the 1st millennium BC up to the very first centuries AD (Lõugas, 1970 pp.77–8; Tvauri, 1997, 52). Up to now, the cup-marked stones of Lithuania and Latvia were ascribed to the same monument group of Estonia (Dakanis, 1984 p.109; Urtāns, 1987 p.72; Vaitkevičius, 1996 p.7). However, this hypothesis has some shortcomings: there are thirty cup-marked stones known in Lithuania and only few in Latvia. In recent years the number of cup-marked stones in western Belarus, in Neris basin has greatly increased (cf. Zaikovkiy, 2000). It now exceeds ten.

If the Lithuanian group of cup-marked stones were a periphery of the Estonian group, in Latvia there should be a similar number of cup-marked stones as in Lithuania. So, it is possible that Lithuanian (also Belarusian) cup-marked stones might belong to some other local group of these monuments on the eastern coast of the Baltic Sea.

The cup-marked stones in the coast area near the barrow cemeteries of the Western Balts should be dated the earliest - approximately to the second half of the 1st millennium BC. Their origin in the Central and Northern Lithuania is related to the moving of population groups in this region in the 2nd–3rd c. (Michelbertas, 1986 pp. 192–4). The appearance of cup-marked stones in Middle Nemunas and Upper Neris basins is not clear enough. Most probably these monuments should be dated back to the 1st millennium BC.

In 1970 there were several tens of cylinder-shaped stones found in Lithuania. On top of them there are **flat-bottomed** bowls. Meanwhile, 35 stones like that are known in Lithuania (as well as seven or eight in Latvia, see Caune, 1974 pp.90–1; Urtāns, 1992) (Map XV).

Stones with flat-bottomed bowls are usually heavy-grained red granites, the form of which can be precisely defined only when the stone is brought out of the ground or excavated. While observing the stones that were brought out from their original place, it seems that the irregular bottom part of them is not tooled because it was in the ground. The proportion of tooled and natural parts of the stones varies: for instance, the Renavas stone is tooled to a height of 60 cm (the total height exceeds 1.1 m). The Udraliai stone is tooled to a height of 35 cm (the total height exceeds 1.1 m) (Fig. 32).



Fig. 32. Cylinder-shaped stone of Pubžibiai (Plungė district) with flat-bottomed bowl with gutter. Photo by author, 1994.

Chiselling the sides of the upper part of a stone formed a stone-ball. The marks of chiselling are usually obvious - they are clear grooves. Such grooves are also made at present by masons while carving a stone with an iron chisel or hammer.

The grooves of the Sakališkės stone are 2–2.5 cm wide and 0.5 cm deep; the grooves of the Pubžibiai stone are accordingly 3–4 and 1 cm. It is important to emphasise that while tooling a boulder it was intended that the diameter of the ball would be close to 1 metre. In both distribution areas in Lithuania and Latvia the diameter of the upper part-ball of the 32 stones varies from 0.9 m to 1.3 m. Only five stones have a slightly bigger diameter (e.g.: 1.2–1.5 m, 1.5–1.8 m).

The upper surfaces of the stones in which the bowls were chiselled have not been compared much. The sides of this surface are usually crumbled, cleaved and give an impression of rough work. The bowls are usually made in the centre of the surface. They usually have the shape of a slightly elon-

gated circle, for instance, 29x33 cm, 30x35 cm, 49x57 cm, 54x58 cm. In the same way while carving a bowl it was sought to make the average diameter close to 50 cm. The average diameter of stone bowls of even 34 stones varies from 30 to 60 cm. 16 stones have bowls of 30–45 cm diameter and 18 stones of 45–60 cm. The sides of the bowls are usually steep. In some cases they slope a little bit so the diameter of the bottom of a bowl is smaller. Moreover, in five cases gutters going from the bowls to the side of the stone were made. The gutter of the Sūdėnai stone is 16–20 cm wide, of Katinai - 22 cm, and of Pubžibiai - 35 cm. 28 bowls in the stones are about 10 cm deep, and the bowls in six stones range from 13 to 17 cm deep.

In 1970–72 and 1975 V. Urbanavičius excavated the surroundings of 11 cylinder-shaped stones with flat-bottomed bowls. The results of all the excavations are similar in that under the stones were small “cradles” of stones so that the main ‘bowled’ stone would be stable and would stand level (Katinai, Lūžos). Close to the ‘bowled’ stones single coals, hearths or fireplaces were found. Next to the Šilalė stone there was a hole of 1.5-m diameter and 50 cm depth, where a fire had been burnt (Urbanavičius, 1972c pp.77–9) (Fig. 33). Close to the first stone of Šaukliai there was a flat-bottomed hole of 2 m diameter also showing traces of fire. In three sites in the fireplace, fragments of broken clay dishes were found. All the potsherds date back to the 16th–18th centuries and even to the beginning of the 19th c. However, it should be noted that the potsherds found do not necessarily indicate the time of establishment of such cult places. Due to the fact that potsherds were found in only three of the 11 places that were excavated, these artefacts can have no associations with sacrificing (cf. Colpe, 1970 pp.18–9). Apart from potsherds, by the Katinai stone was found an iron link of 6-cm diameter that can hardly be dated. By the Paduobužė stone was found little bronze pear-shaped bell typical of the 13th–14th c.

So, data shows that the stones with flat-bottomed bowls had at least a double function. Firstly, sacred water used to gather



Fig. 33. Šilalė cult place (Skuodas district) during excavation. Photo by V. Urbanavičius, 1970. LIH-32722.

in the bowl of level horizontally placed stone (till the 20th c. it was thought to be sacred - Busiškis, Kirdiškis). Secondly, holy fire was burnt near the stone. The information that the Šilalė stone was situated in the Mosėdis sacred grove (mentioned 1523 - Salys, 1930 pp.13, 86) strengthens the assumption that holy fire used to burn near the stones with flat-bottomed bowls.

The first religious realia - “sacred water on the stone” - from a mythological point of view is associated with the god Perkūnas (Thunder). In comparison with stones, which have various hollows, usually of natural origin, the cylinder-shaped stones seem to be special “equipment” of the cult places of Perkūnas, created according to certain requirements. This is like an expression of the same religious tradition but it has a new quality and is really modern.

The second realia of the discussed places (“the holy fire”) is universal in most cases and sometimes is also defined as a characteristic part of rites dedicated to Perkūnas.

The first area of the ‘bowed’ stones in North-western Lithuania/Western Latvia is much denser than the second one (see Map XV). The borders of the first area more accurately meet the defined borders of the Couronian territory than the borders of the second area meet the borders of the Lithuanian tribe (Lithuanian in the narrow sense). Moreover, some of the sacred places in the first area belong to archaeological sites of the 13th c.; this cannot be said about the stones with flat-bottomed bowls belonging to the second area. So the cylinder-shaped stones with flat-bottomed bowls most probably represent a tradition of the Couronian cult places that prevailed in their ethnical lands in the early 2nd millennium AD. The distribution of such sacred stones in Eastern Lithuania corresponds with the area of the Lithuanian State of the 13th c. Since about the mid-13th c. the Couronian refugees were settled there by the Grand Duke (see Vaitkevičius, 1999).

Apart from the discussed stones there are 250 stones with **narrow-bottomed** bowls (cf. Matulis, 1990 pp.48–94). In Latvia, which belongs to the periphery of the area, there are 12 of such monuments recorded (Urtāns, 1994). Stones with narrow-bottomed bowls are common in two main areas: 1) in the Central and Northern Lithuania/Central Latvia, 2) Eastern Lithuania. Only a couple of such stones are found in Samogitia (Map XVI).

The latter discussed stones usually do not exceed the size of 0.8x1 m and the height of 30–50 cm. Their upper surface is flat. A narrow-bottomed bowl that is usually of 20-cm diameter and 15–20 cm depth is screwed or carved to it (Fig. 34). According to the form as many as nine types of such bowls are distinguished (Matulis, 1990 p.98) (Fig. 35), however, their shapes can be divided into two main kinds: inverted cone and hemisphere.

Usually the stones with narrow-bottomed bowls are situated in farms: near houses, barns, and cattle-sheds or inside them, quite often at the base of the buildings. Today these stones adorn the farm, serve as steps, or perform a decorative function. Moreover, it is fixed that most of these stones have been moved to their places from the farms of parents and grandparents of the owners or from farms that were demolished during reclamation in the 1970s and 1980s. Often there are 2–3 or sometimes even 4–5 stones with narrow-bottomed bowls preserved in the modern villages (Montviliškis, Vaiduloniai, Vileikiai). In natural surroundings there are only single stones like that (Beinorava, Vabalai). The cases when the stones with narrow-bottomed bowls belong to sacred sites are rare (Bartašiūnai, Kosakai). Sometimes these stones are still used at churches for storing holy water (Dotnuva).

Archaeological surveys were carried out near nine stones with narrow-bottomed bowls. In Radikiai and Ratkūnai nails, glass, glazed potsherds from the village’s cultural layer of the 16th–17th c. were found (Urbanavičius, 1972a pp.26–9, 31–2, 34–5; 1972b p.17). After removing the Vabalai stone with narrow-bottomed bowl and bringing it to another place, a silver coin of 1616 was found on the side of it. Data from Griūčiai also show that two stones with narrow-bottomed bowls were in a village of the 17th c. (Zabiela, 1995a pp.145–6).



Fig. 34. Stone with narrow-bottomed bowl of Kaimalė (Kelmė district). Photo by V. Daugudis, 1967. LIH-20425.

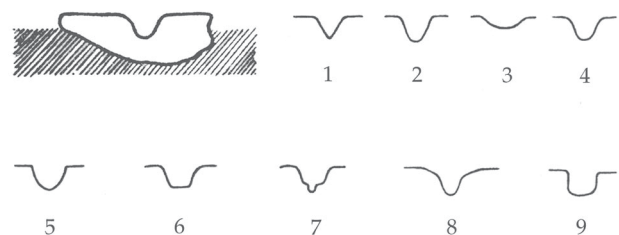


Fig. 35. Variations of narrow-bottomed bowls. After R. Matulis (1990).

During excavation near Montviliškis stone, two holes of about 1-m width were found. Inside them ashes, coals, some bones of cattle, potsherds dated to the early 2nd millennium AD, and fragments of glazed pots of the 16th–18th c. were found (Urbanavičius, 1972a pp.34–5, 1972b p.18).

While summarising the results of excavations near the first Vaidulioniai stone M. Černiauskas asserted that rites might have been performed there in the 16th–18th c., during which fire was burnt and “meat of the front part of usually young cattle and beasts was used” (1972 p.10).

It seems that at the beginning of the 17th c. in Lithuania Jesuits have described namely the stones with narrow-bottomed bowls, calling them the *Deivių akmenys* (Stones of Goddesses) (cf. Volter, 1897). In the report of the Jesuits of 1600 it is written: “In stores big stones are kept, they are dug into the ground, flat facet up (put), covered by straws; they are called Goddesses (*Deives*) and faithfully worshipped as the protectors of cereal and cattle” (according to Greimas, 1990 p.215). In 1605 it was reported: “Some very uneducated village people due to our efforts got rid of the bad habit of worshipping one stone which they thought to be the god of granary, fruitfulness, and happiness of home” (Lebedys, 1976 p.206).

Even though it is not mentioned that the sacred stones are ‘bowed’, there is much in common between the stones described by Jesuits and stones with narrow-bottomed bowls. Firstly, their location in farms or buildings; the top facet of the stones was also flat; the stones were appointed the function of a cereal, cattle, home-happiness provider, that is, actually sacral function.

About the stones with narrow-bottomed bowls it is usually said that in the old times they were used for milling, grating or pounding. There is also a motive of place-legends about a devil, milling tobacco in the bowls (*Vėriškiai*). Moreover, there are some beliefs recorded about stones with narrow-bottomed bowls. “The father of J. Briedis used to store holy water in the bowl and in the mornings before going to work would soak his fingers and cross himself” (*Radikiai*) (LIH, 505 p.44). “D. Brajienė told stories she heard from her parents that people used to pour milk into bowls of these stones for the grass snakes and called them ‘bowls of grass snakes’” (*Staćiūnai*) (Treškevičius, 1979 p.33).

V. Urbanavičius associates the stones with narrow-bottomed bowls with domestic grass snakes recorded by Jesuits in the 17th c. as gods *Pagirmiai* (*pagirnis* “one who lives under quern”). V. Urbanavičius said stones were a kind of substitute similar to querns that corresponded to the details of the grass snakes’ way of life (it seems bowls were used by grass snakes for drinking water or milk). In the religious sense, stones with narrow-bottomed bowls were most likely sacrifice places for the god of home, in a utilitarian sense – a place for keeping a grass snake (1985, 1993 p.3).

However, this interpretation has some weak sides. V. Urbanavičius did not take into account the report of the Jesuits of 1725–26. According to that the gods *Pagirmiai* “still come outside from their corners in the shape of grass snakes, even though they spend most of the time as invisible, penetrated into the ground so much as metal rings inlaid into a shield. This ground is stored in clay or wooden dishes or without a dish under the quern” (according to Greimas, 1990 p.428).

So the question of stones with narrow-bottomed bowls remains open. There is no explanation for their distribution in two quite compact areas. A detailed examination of the size and shape of the bowls of all of these stones has not been carried out. Meanwhile, it may be assumed that the sources of the 17th c. mention namely the stones of the described group (archaeological data does not contradict that) and they were appointed the sacral function of assuring the guarantee/provision of cereal, cattle, and home-happiness for a certain farm (family, kinship).

One more group of stones with hollows should be mentioned - stones on the top of which there are not deep **bowls-plates** with a slightly risen middle part. There is one such monument known in Lithuania and at least four in Northwestern Belarus. On the stones of *Korgovdi*, *Poditva*, and *Vėžionys*, there are two hollows of the average of 25–33 cm width and 2–3 cm depth. Apart from these there are somewhat in distinct marks of a third hollow on each (Matulis, 1990 pp.38, 101) (Fig. 36).

There are no bigger doubts about the origin of the hollows in these stones. Stones that have a hollow honed in circle in them are known from Late Neolithic–Bronze Age monuments. Stone axes were polished in such hollows (cf. Gaerte, 1929 pp.57, 58; Rimantienė, 1984 pp.250–1). In Latvia in a settlement of the Late Neolithic period in the *Vecates Rinnukalns*, a similar stone

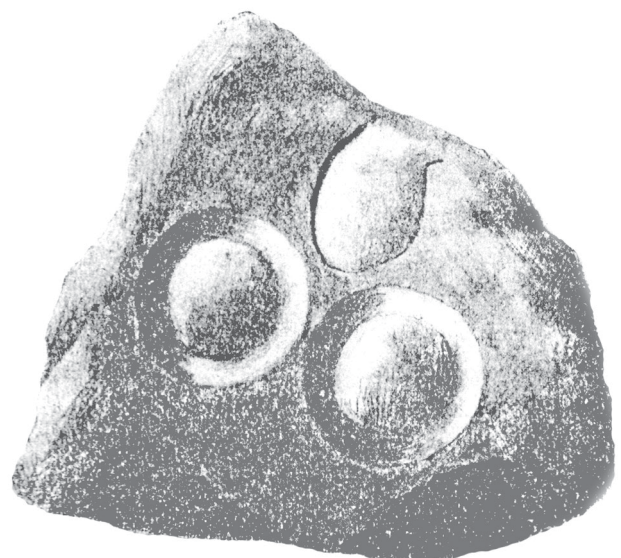


Fig. 36. Stone with bowls-plates of *Vėžionys* (*Šalčininkai* district). After W. Szukiewicz (1900).



Fig. 37. *St John's stone with irregular bowl of Kunigiškiai (Šilalė district). Photo by V. Ramanauskas, 1936. CHC-2824.*

with two hollows of 30x32-cm and 30x39-cm width and 3–4 cm depth is still preserved (Caune, 1974 p.91 Fig.3).

In single cases these stones can be associated with sacred places due to the fact that people appointed sacral meaning to them. For instance, the Korgovdi stone was called the Dievo bliūdas (Bowl of God) and among the people of the locality it had the status of an untouchable stone (Grinbalt & Gurski, 1983 p.351).

Apart from the above-discussed stones there are sacred stones known that have natural or artificial hollows. These are different in every case and it seems that the geological structure, natural splits or other circumstances primarily influence them (Antakmenė, Intuponys, Kaušai) (cf. Lidén, 1938 p.88, Urtāns, 1993a pp.66–68) (Fig. 37).

Beyond geological structure, form, hollows and bowls various carved marks such as crosses of some kinds, figures, single letters and notes, numbers and dates are also appointed to be visual features of sacred stones.

However, J. Urtāns while summarising the data from Latvia points out that most of such (namely - cross-marked) stones do not have the features of the cult monuments. For instance, the number of cross-marked stones in Latvia exceeds 200, but there are only 18 cases of people performing non-Christian rites near such stones (Urtāns, 1988a p.7). Moreover, usually these cases are very specific and hardly allow e.g. the grave monuments of the counts Pliateriai (they were buried in

Ilzenberg, in 1585–87) to relate to the sacred places. This could be done if all the possible information about a site could be proved in each case.

On other hand there really have been crosses, letters or dates in historic times carved on the sacred stones. For instance, on the Apuolė cup-marked stone there is the date 1818 and the letters "Mt" carved. On the Nikronys sacred stone while marking the borders of land, probably in the 17th century, two crosses were carved. At the end of the 18th or beginning of the 19th c. - again the letters "MOPT" e.g. M. Odyniec - podkomorzy trocki (officer in Trakai) (Gudavičius, 1982 p.85). So it seems that most of the marks that were carved on sacred stones are not directly related to their sacral or religious meaning. Only a couple of exceptions can be mentioned.

There are sometimes various carved crosses found on the tall stones distributed in South Lithuania and North-western Belarus that are usually said to be people turned into stone (see Chapter 3.4.1.2). Very similar marks are found on the stones of the same region that were erected on the graves of the Yotvingians (see Kviatkovskaja, 1998 pp.30–5) who in the 11th–17th c. used to live in the countryside, were baptised but remained faithful to the pre-Christian religious traditions. The discussed sacred tall stones are not found in this group of cemeteries. Part of them, as has already been mentioned, belongs to the complexes of archaeological monuments of the 1st millennium AD. It suggests that various crosses on the tall stones were carved not at the same time when the cult places were founded. We should note that the shepherds tried to

carve a cross on the Migliniškės stone even in the 20th century. On the sacred stone in Kameno, in Belarus, there is a double cross like the ones that were carved on the sacred stones when Christianity was introduced (cf. Tyszkiewicz K., 1867 p.159). If the cross and carved words on this stone are really associated with the Duke of Polotsk Boris Vsiaslavich (ca. 1102–28) it may be asserted that the cross on this cult stone was carved in 1128 (Levkov, 1992 pp.105, 117–8; Zaikovskiy, 2000 p.17) (Fig. 38).



Fig. 38. Stone of Kameno (Vileyka district) with some carved symbols. Photo by author, 2003.

The geographical situation of the sacred stones in the landscape is another important feature evaluated visually. However, the location of the sacred stones (on a hill, in the valley, in the water, etc.), the orientation of the stone and its specific marks in respect to compass directions and cultural environment have not been investigated separately. In order to carry out research of this kind, it is necessary to record accurate and detailed data during the surveys. However, the participants of surveys and the authors of reports paid little attention to that for the last few decades and usually there is too little information about the sacred stones. The same situation also applies to the other kinds of sacred places in the reports of surveys.

3.4.2 Mythical and religious features

Mythical and religious realia may also become important features for the classification of sacred stones. Unfortunately, there is very little data of this kind. The information, which is recorded in Lithuania in comparison with Latvian or Belarussian data, is not really varied, detailed or accurate. There is most information on mythical realia, because they are reflected in proper names, place-legends, beliefs, sometimes even in proverbs that are associated with these stones. There are usually several motives of place-legends about one stone, which explain its origin, specific features and so on. The number of motives partially depends on how widely the stone is known. On the other hand, there are cases when, for instance, there are absolutely no narratives about cylinder-shaped stones with flat-bottomed bowls and, naturally, a question arises whether they existed at all, whether they are forgotten or the data about them has not been recorded in time.

About fifty place-legends motives with their variations are recorded about the Balts' sacred stones (Beckherrn, 1893; Šmits, 1936 pp.258–63; Balys, 1940 pp. 223–7; Ancelāne, 1991 pp.67–97; Sauka et al., 1967 pp.598–604; Kerbelytė, 1973 pp.13–7; Grinbalt & Gurski, 1983 pp.351–64). People usually believed the stones had been brought, lost, built, or had fallen from the sky or appeared when people or animals turned into stones. The gods of the Balts' religion figure in the place-legends as well: Perkūnas (Thunder), Ragana (Witch), Laumė (Fairy), Laima (Goddess of fate, fortune, and childbirth) also such beings as: Senelis (Grandfather), Kunigas (Priest), Karalius (King), Ponia (Madam). Quite often Jesus Christ, the Mother of God, angels, saints, also Napoleon and other famous persons used to appear in place-legends as well. One very evident example is the syncretic image of the god of the underworld (and also of the dead?) Velinas that later become the Christian evil spirit. All these characters are in many ways associated with stones: they used to dwell there, show themselves to people, are met, sit, lie, work or rest, protect the wealth, etc. Stone names and epithets, as has been already mentioned (Chapter 3.4.1.1), are often related to this kind of place-legend (Cf. the Wallet of the Devil (Pilotiškės), the Quern of the Devil (Šiluva), the Smithy of the Devil (Upninkai), the Stove of the Witch (Noreikiškės), and the Coffin of God (Pašilė)). The special features of the stones such as hollows, bowls, or curves are often referred to in legends as stepped, pressed, kicked, smashed, jumped, sat, lain, carved or twisted by the personage of place-legends.

It is believed that sacred stones have one more feature, namely is that they can talk, walk, give advice, lend money, make shoes, provide happiness, and moreover, that they cry and bleed. The stones themselves, their fragments, water or dew collecting on them, moss and lichen growing on them, water spurting from underneath the stone can cure people and cattle of various eye diseases, warts, rose, freckles, toothache, traumas, sterility.

Beliefs indicate that the sacred stones cannot be touched, moved, taken away, split, or buried (nor can people stop sacrificing for them) (Šmits, 1936 p.261). Stones can avenge by fire, diseases and deaths of people or cattle, or horrible dreams.

It may be asserted that each of the shortly described motives (or single segments of them) could become a feature of a mythical kind that would single out some sacred stones. The biggest problem is the lack of information, so usually when classifying sacred stones according to some certain mythical features, only small groups of monuments can be organised. More attention will be paid to some of them below.

Sacred stones that according to the place-legends have fallen from the **sky** (Fig. 39) illustrate the content of the Lithuanian mythological tales asserting that the stones originated from the sky (see Vaitkevičius, 1997 p.32). For instance, about the Buveinė (Residence) stone in Lapynai it is said that it fell from the sky when times were hard for people and the stone brought joy and happiness: the weather became warm and the land became fertile and happy years started. That is why



Fig. 39. Surroundings of the Čimbariškiiai (Molėtai district) sacred stone fallen from the sky. Photo by author, 1999.

people started to worship it (LIH, 2244 pp.35–6).

There are also stones known that are associated with the god of the **underworld**, who often appear as the Senelis Dievas (Grandfather-God) (see Vėlius, 1987 pp.163–74). Communication between him and people takes place near the sacred stones. For instance: “On that (Vadonys) stone people used to see an old man sitting. They would go to borrow money from him” (Tarasenko P., 1933c p. 622). In the transformed and more popular variants of this motive people usually borrow money from the Velnias (Devil) (Daukšiai, Lembas, Palobė, Stabulankiai).

The Velnias (Devil) usually appears in other motives as well, which tells about making shoes (only in a single case the Grandfather or an unnamed being is still mentioned).

The shoes made on the stones are very special. “In autumn the Devil used to turn into a shoemaker and would sit on this (Legiškis) stone and make nice red shoes, which he used, for seducing girls. A girl who would take the shoes and put them on would start dancing but could not stop and would dance until she would fall dead” (Tarasenko, 1958 p.50).

The Šiaučius (Shoemaker) and Kriaučius (Tailor) stones in Western and Central Belarus are discussed at length (Mialeshka, 1928 pp.167–9; Levkov, 1992 pp.79–84; Duchits, 1993 pp.17–8). Sacred stones of this specific group are still not found in Eastern and North-eastern Belarus (Panchenko, 1998 p.195). This sug-

gests that they are related namely to the Balts' religion and mythology. There are three stones known in Belarus that sew shoes and seven stones that sew clothes (Levkov et al., 2000, 48-9); in Lithuania - correspondingly twelve and one (Map XVII).

The data from Belarus is rich in mythological and religious aspects. Usually these are texts, which tell about shoemakers and tailors that were turned into stones. Besides, in place-legends the stones themselves are said to be beings that sew. It is widely told that people used to leave material on the stone and the stones would sew overnight. At the end of all these tales it is asserted that stones stopped sewing after one woman came to them and asked them to sew “neither this nor that”. The stones fulfilled her wish but that was their last time. People used to bring money, drinks and food to the stones in return for sewing (Grinbalt & Gurski, 1983 pp.295, 353–5).

The stone-shoemakers and stone-tailors, if place-legends and beliefs are taken into account, belong to a bigger group of stones, which is said to be people turned into stones. These monuments have already been mentioned when describing tall stones (Chapter 3.4.1.2). The stones of natural forms thought to be damned people have not been discussed yet.

The stones - **damned people** - are recorded in 41 sites (Map XII). Their area actually corresponds to the distribution of the tall stones. By the way, sometimes stones of both these groups are found next to each other (e.g. Dieveniškės and Žižmai).

There is quite often 2–3, several, 9,11 or even 13 “damned people” stones found in one site. They may be located close to each other or the distance between them may be a bit bigger. In the territory of Vilnius City 12 enchanted stones were situated in a circle, in the middle of them were one or two stones - “young marrieds”.

In some cases these sacred stones that belong to sacred sites stay in relationship with the archaeological sites of the 1st millennium AD (Jociūnai, Nemaitonys, Šereitlaukis).

The mythical and religious data about the discussed stones is quite numerous and varied. For instance, it is believed that the Didžiuliai stone cries. While splitting the Karvys stone group blood started running from them. There was also an opportunity to turn the Karvys stones back into people but nobody could guess the names of the damned wedding participants.

The **Mokas** (Teacher) families, distinguished by their specific religious meaning, are known in Sukiniai (Fig. 40), Šeimatis and Naurašiliai. Apart from them, single Mokas stones are situated in Dieveniškės forest and in Macki, in Belarus.



Fig. 40. Mokas (Teacher's) stone of Sukiniai (Ukmergė district). Photo by author, 1999.

The Mokas families usually consist of three stones: Mokas (father), Mokienė (mother) and Mokiukas (child). In Sukiniai and Šeimatis Mokas and Mokiukas are next to each other but Mokienė is located under water - respectively in the Šventoji (Sacred) River and Tauragnas Lake. Whether these stones exist in reality it is not absolutely clear. The Naurašiliai stones were a bit further from each other but in the area of the same village.

In surroundings of the Mokai in Sukiniai and Šeimatis archaeological sites of the 1st - early 2nd millennium AD are known. The Mokas stone in Dieveniškės forest is situated already by a stone covered barrow dated to the mid-1st millennium AD (see also Chapter 3.4.1.2).

During excavation near the Mokas of Sukiniai, a hole full of coal and ash of 0.5-m width and 0.55 m depth, with one brushed potsherd (dated to the first centuries AD?) in it was found. In written sources the Mokas of Sukiniai is mentioned already in 1580.

The place-legends about Mokas stones in Sukiniai and Šeimatis associate them with the pre-Christian religion (cf. Gukovsky, 1890 p.428). Even though their main feature is that they have teaching powers that come into play in various forms during hard times, in accidents, or when people do not know how or cannot do something. It was typical to Mokas in Sukiniai to help childless women to have children. Women would place their shirt on the Mokas stone after pronouncing a certain prayer (Tarasenko, 1933c p.622). They would go to the Mokienė in Naurašiliai with sacrifices as well. The sacrifices were put on the stone. If they vanished it was believed that the “good goddess” that dwelt here took them (Witort, 1899).

Lately an opinion has been expressed stating that the name Mokas would be directly linked with the name of the Slavic goddess Mokosh (*Мокoшa*), just “made Lithuanian and clarified” (Mokosh is mentioned in the pantheon of Kiev Russia of 980 AD - Ribakov, 1987 pp.414–4). The relationship between the Mokas stones and women who ask for children is explained here in the same way (Kerbelytė, 2000 pp.32–3).

According to the place-legends, the people turned into stones often have names. Apart from the above-mentioned Mokas, the names such as Boba (Old Wife), Džiugas (“One who is Cheery”), Jankelis (proper name originated from Jonas - John) are recorded. Also the names of the saints (for instance, John, Joseph, Martin) are given to the stones after consecrating them. Probably such stones also had their old deities' names.

Among the sacred stones there is another big group of monuments called **Laumė** (Fairy's) stones. They are recorded in 44 sites (Map XVIII). Most of these stones are associated with water. With some exceptions the Laumė stones are found in wet, marshy meadows, near springs and rivers and also in rivers and lakes (Nolėnai, Sudokiai, Ukrainai) (Fig. 41). This



Fig. 41. Laumė (Fairy's) stone of Laiviai-Salantai. Photo by author, 1994.

partially explains also why these stones stay in association with Laumė, because researchers usually say she is of a watery nature (cf. Būgienė, 1999 pp.54–5). On the other hand, these stones are associated with Laumė in quite different ways. Apart from the well-known motive of the Laumė doing laundry there are place-legends recorded about Laumė washing itself, singing, drowning people, leaving their footprints in stones, even conjuring or killing people's sheep (Mozūriškės, Salantai, Trumponiai). Due to the fact that the image of the Laumė is sometimes mixed with Velnias (Devil), Ragana (Witch) and other deities or beings, it may be asserted that the Laumė stones in general terms reflect the topic of sacred stones known near water and especially in water.

The distribution of the Laumė stones make one pay attention to their local area in North-western Lithuania. Here the Laumė stones occur in sites famous for their archaeological monuments. For instance, the Laumė stone of Naujoji Iplitis lies on the bank of the Juodupis River, east of the Alka River and the Alka hill. The Laumė stone of Laiviai is in the Bubinas River between the Laiviai hill fort and a cemetery of the mid-1st - beginning of the 2nd millennium AD. The Laumė stone of Kartena is west of the hill fort.

Thus there is cause to propose that one of the groups of the Couronian sacred places are sacred stones situated in water surroundings or directly in water. Apart from them there are more sacred stones in North-western Lithuania that have this same feature, although oral tradition does not associate them with Laumė. In this same natural environment are known Prussian sacred stones of the god of fertility Kurka (cf. Voigt, 1827 pp.589–90; Dentler, 1865).

Sacred places of this group might have expressed various mythical values; however, their real recognition is a challenge that requires detailed research into mythology. An image of the Balts' mythology "a stone in water" in its general sense means a mythical combination of fire and water, because it consists of both water (when the stone divides, sea appears) and fire (from which, according to the tales, angels were created). This combination has more opposition implied in it, the main part of which is to be born/to die (Vaitkevičienė, 2001 pp.144–7). The nature of Laumė, in the case of the recorded Laumė stones, correlates with it. So Laumės (Fairies) were doing the washing in the confluence of the Šakys and Šakutė Rivers (Pakalniškiai, Jurbarkas district), they were good and blessing for good people and bad and punishing for the bad ones (Vaitkevičius, 1998a pp.622–3).

As has already been mentioned, the obtained data provide only fragmentary information about religious realia that are connected with the Balts' sacred stones in Lithuania. But actually these stones reveal the real religious ceremonies (the time and type of rites, the character of sacrifices, etc.) connected with certain mythical content.

For instance, it was believed that the Mokienė stone in Nauraišiliai whose form resembled that of a woman, could make childless women fertile. That is why they came here with

prayers and sacrifices (Witort, 1899 p.206). The Genaičiai stone that had a hollow that resembled the footprint of a child was "magic for childless families", because "after praying near the stone and making promises there a child would be born" (Onom.). East of the Nuotaka (Bride) stone in Migliniškės that is believed to be a damned bride, there is one more Bride stone. On the latter before (or after) the wedding "the crowd of wedding guests used to dance: the matchmaker used to invite the bride for a dance, they would dance on the stone and he would give her to the groom. Then he used to invite his matron of honour and also dance, and give her to *maršalka* (head of wedding celebration). And the matchmaker used to invite all the women in this way and to find partners for them" (LFA, 6810 no.398).

Most of the data from the late 19th - 20th c. show that the sacred stones were visited at any time when there was a cause, for instance, when people got sick, during the church holidays and so on. The Antakmenė, Mitkiškės, and Zigmantiškės stones were usually visited in the period of Corpus Christi Day; the Skudutiškis stone was visited on Trinity Sunday; the Šiluva, Maironiai, and Gelvonai ones were visited on the 8th September. By comparison, the sacred stones in Belarus were usually visited on St George's Day, Pentecost, Easter, Trinity Sunday and St John (Duchits & Levkov, 1989 p.57). Probably these dates/periods approximately correspond to the dates of the old feast days. Moreover, in some cases the dates of the non-Christian rites near the stones are indicated by the place-legends, e.g. witches used to dances by the Maugarai stone during the night of March 25th (LFA, 1044 no.122).

There is very little data about what and how was sacrificed by the stones. The finds such as single potsherds, coal and ashes that have been found near the stones could hardly enrich the data.

The narratives or descriptions of ethnologic type, with very few exceptions, are usually of a general type, not detailed or fragmental.⁵

In ethnologic sources the offering of money, wool, flax (cloth), flowers, food, and a single things on/near sacred stone is recorded (Akmuo, Būdos (Trakai district), Mitkiškės, Zigmantiškės) (Fig. 42). These sacrifices were usually handed over to the closest or parish church later, in some cases the beggars would take them. Also the important note made by the Jesuits in 1603 should be mentioned. It says that in the land that belonged to the Vilnius Chapter, people appointed the stones some kind of divinity and offered "the tenth part of all the things" to them (Lebedys, 1976 p.204). However, the nature of the sacrifices was not described here.

⁵ Compare the ritual of calling the rain near the Kramianets stone in Belarus (Levkov, 1992 pp.66–7; Zaikovskiy & Duchits, 2001 p.54); the ritual of treating children near the Kimershi stone and river in Russia (Zolotov, 1981).



Fig. 42. *Mitkiškės stone (Trakai district) with footprint-shaped hollows. On the ninth Thursday after Easter the stone was ornamented with nine small wooden crosses and two crowns made from flowers. Photo by A. Tautavičius, 1950. LIH-1442.*

3.5 Waters

The data about the Balts' sacred waters are more plentiful and multifaceted, so they have received quite a lot of attention from the researchers (cf. Šturms, 1946 pp.26–9; Balys, 1948 pp.32–42; Johansons, 1968; Kerbelytė, 1970 pp.170–4; Slaviūnas, 1997 pp.312–6; Būgienė, 1999).

Adam of Bremen in 1075 wrote: “In the Prussian land <...> it is forbidden to visit woods and springs which in their opinion would be foul by the visits of Christians” (Vėlius, 1996 p.191). According to Peter of Dusburg (wrote in 1326) the Prussians “have sacred <...> waters where nobody dared <...> to fish” (Vėlius, 1996 p.344). P. Callimachus wrote in 1479–80 about Lithuanians that they worship lakes (Vėlius, 1996 p.604). And in the preface of the Catechism of M. Mažvydas of 1547 it is said that Lithuanians perform “pagan rites and keep to paganism in public: they worship trees, rivers <...> as gods” (according to Vėlius, 2001 p.184).

Since the 16th c. written sources provide a bit more concrete information. According to N. Hussovianus (wrote in 1525) Lithuanians drop fruit into the river, worship gods of rivers and believe that the benevolence of destiny and the fertility of their herds depend on the will of these gods (Slaviūnas, 1997 p.315). M. Strykovsky wrote in 1582 that people used to sacrifice a white pig for the god Upinis (River God) so that the water would be clean and bright (Vėlius, 2001 p.513). In the yearbook of the Jesuits College in 1605 it is said that the village people who still keep to the ancient religion “worship a lot of gods, and bring sacrifices to them at the time defined by the customs of the village <...>. They also used to sacrifice a goat for the god called *Nosolum* and pour out its blood into the river so that the gods would provide a good harvest of corn” (Lebedys, 1976 p.206).

There are about 100 sacred lakes, 50 rivers and 150 springs in Lithuania (in Latvia accordingly 70, 40 and 88 - Urtāns, 1978 pp.77–8, and 1995 p.40). The names, place-legends, beliefs and rituals testify their sacral meaning. This information clari-

fies some important mythical features that are common to sacred waters in general.

It is believed that water in any form (lake, river or some other) has its god-“proprietor”. “The masters of waters are similar to old gentlemen. If someone is meant to drown, this old man drowns that person. The god delegates these old men. Each lake and river has its own proprietor and the water of each of them differs <...>. The name of the river or lake is the same as the water and the waters do not mix” (according to Balys, 1948 p.35). Apart from old men other beings are known, for instance, the kings of fish, shepherds of fish, snakes of water, mermaids, girls and so on (Būgienė, 1999 pp.49–55). In consequence of their contacts with people, a ritual tradition is formed. By the way, “the sacrifices of waters” - people and animals - also acquire a sacral status because they fall into the mythical world and become intermediaries between the human and divine spheres. Due to religious practice, waters provide people with health, beauty, fertility, harvest, knowledge and happiness.

Apart from “proprietors”, “water sacrifices” and the values provided by waters, the sacredness of lakes and rivers could also be influenced by human souls because water is one of the forms of purgatory. So the sacredness of lakes, rivers or springs has cultural connotations, that is, the waters become sacred due to the rituals (Vaitkevičienė, 1996 pp.59–61, 64).

V. Toporov singled out that in the Baltic region, names with the root *švent-* (sacred) very often belong to lakes and rivers. The primary meaning of the *švent-* according to V. Toporov was the lustre and shine of the water's surface. The researcher did not point out clearer boundaries between the *šventas* waters that belonged to the religious sphere and the ones that only were of *šventas* beauty (Toporov, 1988 pp.28–30). Sometimes researchers absolutely neglect any relationship between the *Šventas* (Sacred) waters and the pre-Christian religion. It is asserted that under the influence of the Latin *sanctus* “holy” (which was introduced together with Christianity) the semantic field of the sacred which is common to the Balts and the Slavs has changed (Kowalczyk, 2000 p.33). However, it is not explained how or why this happened.

Émil Benveniste and a couple of other researchers express another opinion. They originate the Lithuanian *šventas* and the related Latvian *svēts*, Prussian *swints*, the old Slavic *svetŭ*, Russian *святой* from the Indo-European **k'wento-* “sacred” (Benvenist, 1995 pp.344–6; also see Mallory & Adams, 1997 pp.493–4).

Data about the lakes and rivers that have the root *švent-* in their names (*Šventoji*, *Šventupis*, *Švenčius*, etc.) usually show that such deposits of water belong to sacred sites together with hills, groves and fields that have other sacral names. Moreover, in some cases the motivation of the sacredness of the *Šventas* waters also seems to be more convincing than the natural - glittering and shining - nature of water. For instance, the *Šventas* Lake near *Girutiškės* is unique from the point of view of nature. It lays in the watershed area, no river

flows into it and no river flows out of it. The lake is fed by precipitation and the water in the lake is particularly clean. There are a lot of place-legends known about this site; moreover, it requires annual sacrifices - "does not freeze until it has taken a life. Someone has to drown each year - at least a dog if not a person" (LFA, 1252 no.340). 0.9 km north of the lake there is the Rusteikiai barrow group of the East Lithuanian Barrow Culture of the 1st millennium AD and 1.4-km east are the Gailutiškė barrows of the same culture.

Further sections of this chapter deal with some typical groups of sacred lakes, wetlands, rivers and springs.

3. 5. 1 Lakes

Lakes (or parts of them) and little swamps called **Alka** are recorded in 15 sites (Map XIX) (Fig. 43). Such names usually have separate parts of lakes or small (up to 10 ha) swamps called *bala* in Lithuanian (and especially by inhabitants of Central Lithuania).



Fig. 43. *Alka* little swamp of *Alkas* (Plungė district). *Alka* hill - in the background. Photo by A. Kubilas, 1963. CHC.

The *Alka* lakes and swamps usually belong to sacred sites (Blandžiai, Kurėnai). Some of them mention historic documents (cf. Būga, 1961 p.403). Unfortunately, very little concrete data exists about the sacredness of these sacred places.

The **Šventas** Lakes (Sacred Lakes) are recorded in 17 sites in Lithuania (there 19 lakes in total). About ten of them are known also in neighbouring countries (Map XX) as well as in other European countries (cf. Wessén, 1929/30 p.98; Witkowski, 1970 pp.374–5; Rajewski, 1975 pp.115–6; Holmberg, 1990 p.389; Zaikovskiy & Duchits, 2001 p.60).

The Šventas Lakes are found particularly in Eastern and Middle Lithuania; their area actually corresponds to the western expansion boundary of the late period of Brushed Ware Culture (first centuries AD) and of the further East Lithuanian Barrow Culture (ca. 3rd–12th c.).

The Švenčius Lake (*Swente Azere*) near Stakliškės is mentioned as early as 1375 (Vėlius, 1996 p.421). The Šventas Lake of Krivasalis is mentioned in 1554 (Jablonskis, 1934 p.94).

In Latvia "Helige see to Dovzare" (most probably the same is called Liepāja or Pape Lake now) was mentioned already in 1253 (Kurtz, 1924 p.75). "Hillige see" near the castle of Limbaži - in 1385 (Kurtz, 1924 p.58) and "Hillige see" near Rozbeki - in some documents of 15th–16th c. (Kurtz, 1924 p.59). All the Šventas Lakes known in the territory of the Prussian tribes occur in the sources of the 13th–15th centuries (Gerullis, 1922 pp.179–180).

The Šventas Lakes usually lie in areas where there are many lakes and do not stand out for their size. Their average size is 30–40 ha (Antašventė, Janonys, Krivasalis). Bigger Šventas Lakes form the very few exceptions (e.g. the Šventas Lake near Girutiškė takes up an area of 440 ha).

In the areas around the Šventas Lakes there are archaeological settlements and burial sites mostly of the middle - second half of the 1st millennium AD (Janonys, Krivasalis, Žydiškės).

The place-legends and beliefs known about Šventas lakes are actually typical to all sacred waters. It is told that in the place of the lake there was once a church, or that a boat with gold once floated in the lake, or that the lake is asking for sacrifices, also that people were baptised in the lake (Šventežeris, Žydiškės). Only a few texts are of a different nature, for instance: "Švenčius was a very beautiful lake, the old-fashioned people took good care of it. Maybe it was really sacred. People used to respect the lake at that time <...>" (Bakaloriškės).

The most prevalent explanation of the origin of the Šventas lakes name says that a priest drowned in such a lake. "Once a priest with the Holy Sacrament was going to an ill person and drowned. That is why the lake is Šventas (Sacred)" (Krivasalis) (LFA, 6226 no.123). The analysis of this motive shows that drowned men - "victims of water" - in such a way acquire a sacral status and become mediators between human and deity spheres. That is why a sacral person (priest) always figures in place-legends like the one mentioned above (Vaitkevičienė, 1996 p.52).

There is not much information about certain religious rites in the case of the Šventas lakes. The fact that these lakes often belong to sacred sites shows indirectly that such rituals existed. For instance, on the bank of Švenčius in Žydiškės there is a sacred stone with an irregular bowl. On the bank of Švenčius in Nečiūnai there is a hollow called the Devil's hollow. In the Šventas Lake in Rakšteliai there is the *Alka* island-peninsula, etc. Moreover, there are beliefs that these lakes do not freeze until they take a sacrifice for themselves, that "someone has to drown in the lake at least once every few years" (LFA, 6167 no.250).

There are also 32 **sacrifice-requesting** lakes known in Lithuania (Map XXI). Beliefs of this kind are also prevalent in Latvia (Kurtz, 1924 pp.76, 85), Belarus (Zaikovskiy & Duchits, 2001 p.73) and other countries (Hunnerkopf, 1929/30 p.1691; Johansons, 1968 pp.46–9).

It is usually believed that these lakes do not freeze unless someone drowns that year. "It (the Dysnai Lake) is so special that it does not freeze if no one drowns in it. Each winter a man drowns in it. Maybe it is damned and wants something from people. The old people used to say the lake asks for offerings, prayers" (LSSC, 184 no.13). There are cases known when people used to sacrifice "something live" themselves. "The Dusia Lake asks for two sacrifices - two people have to drown during a year. So people drop some two animals, for instance, horses, and the lake is pleased with that - he does not ask for human sacrifices" (LFA, 1434 no.146). "There is a pig sacrificed for the Siesikai Lake each year because otherwise the lake pulls a person into its depths" (Buračas, 1996 p.46; cf. Hunnerkopf, 1929/30 p. 1691; Johansons, 1968 p.54).

Sometimes the exact part of the lake that requests sacrifices is known. For instance, such a place in Rubikiai Lake has the name of Šventavartė (Holy Gate). It is told that here underneath the water there is "the greatest altar of church with monstrance" preserved (Balys, 1949 p.84).

The sacrifice-requesting lakes and fulfilment of such a request is a complex of mythological views that has not been analysed in more detail yet. It is not clear what mythic meaning has been given to the frozen lake, at what time of the year the sacrifice were performed and so on. It is also difficult to talk about the historic context of giving offerings to the lakes. The mentioned sources of the 16th–17th c. (see Chapter 3.5) confirm sacrificing to rivers; the popular beliefs show that sacrifices for lakes were still given in the 19th–20th centuries.

On the other hand, the lakes that used to request sacrifices are usually situated in the surroundings of archaeological sites of the 1st millennium - beginning of the 2nd millennium (Dusia, Rubikiai, Vilkokšnis) (Fig. 44). Some of the lakes that request sacrifices also lie in towns of the 14th–17th c. area (Šiauliai, Telšiai, and Trakai).

The Bala (Little piece of water; we will use the word 'swamp' to describe them) have an intermediate position between lakes and wetlands. As has been already mentioned, they usually take up an area from 0.5 to 15 ha (Fig. 45).



Fig. 45. Ragana (Witches') swamp of Žemaitkiemis (Kaunas district). Photo by author, 1998.



Fig. 44. Vilkokšnis Lake (Trakai district). Photo by author, 2001.

There is quite a lot of information available on the sacral meaning of Bala. There are place-names, place-legends and beliefs known which show their sacredness. There are also data about special behaviour there. For example, the Stebuklinga bala (Miracle swamp) in Kloviniai is so-called because it is magic. If water runs from it in summer, a bad year is expected (Onom.). It is told about the Šventinė bala (Sacred swamp) in Martnoniai that “while visiting crop on holidays people used to drink and eat beside this swamp” (Onom.). The next part of this section presents some groups of swamps, which evidently illustrate the mythic significance of these waters.

In six sites of North-western Lithuania the motive of a vanished bathhouse is associated with the little swamps. It is told that people used to flog themselves while bathing in the bathhouse on a holiday, at the mass time, in the evening of the Great Saturday or on Christmas Eve and that is why the ground opened and swallowed up the bathhouse with people. Instead of bathhouses, swamps sprang there. It is believed that one can still hear people flogging themselves (Kadžiai, Račiai, Žemaičių Kalvarija).

This motive of place-legends is also associated with the hill called Pekla (Hell) in Užpelkiai. The Pekla itself is a hollow place, a quagmire of 1 ha at the north-east foot of the hill. There in this same region other swamps called Pekla are known (Uogučiai, Alsėdžiai forest). It is important that all these places called Pekla (Hell) are not far from swamps called Čysčius (*čysčius* “a place for cleaning up of souls, purgatory” - Balčikonis, 1947 p.90).

Moreover, Pekla with Čysčius in Užpelkiai are situated near the Dovainiai cemetery of the mid-1st millennium - beginning of the 2nd millennium AD. Graves of the mid-1st millennium AD have been explored in Uogučiai cemetery, as well as ones of the early 2nd millennium AD in Žemaičių Kalvarija.

So the little swamps found in the local area of North-western Lithuania (part of the Couronian land) have had a certain mythological meaning. The recorded names, place-legends and their location in close relationship to the burial sites suggest that they express the Balts' view of the posthumous mythical state of souls. In the popular beliefs the motive of souls' *čysčius* (cleaning) is widely known. Views about souls are frequently associated with bathhouses (cf. Lasickis, 1969 pp.23–4).

There are ten small swamps in Middle Samogitia that are associated with the motive of a vanished tavern (in some cases this is recorded together with the motive of a vanished church). It is usually said about these places that at the time when the procession was walking around the church on Easter morning the drunkards who were having fun would walk around the tavern. God was punishing the latter and the tavern vanished. It is often asserted that later one could hear cocks crowing in that place (Balsiai, Pajūralis, Senasis Obelynas).

Meanwhile the relationship between the above-mentioned places and burial sites is notable. The Karčiamvietė (Tavern-

sites) in Šiaudaliai and Senasis Obelynas are situated directly in the areas of the cemeteries of the mid-1st - beginning of the 2nd millennium AD, in Paupynys - near that of the mid-1st millennium AD. In Balsiai and Pajūralis Karčiamvietė sites are situated in the surroundings of the barrow groups of the first centuries AD.

According to preliminary information there is also a group of swamps in Middle and Northern Lithuania. Among the many sites there the Velniabala (Devil's Swamps) are notable. The narratives about them show that people believed devils used to dwell in or visit these places (Kriaušiskiai, Lenčiai).

Two more features describe the Velniabala sites. Firstly, sacred stones with footprints are found there (Daukonys, Radviliškis district; Titoniai, Guostagalis - both in the Pakruojis district) (about such stones see Chapter 3.4.1.3). Secondly, in some cases the Velniabala sites are in the surroundings of the cemeteries (Šašiai, Gulbinai - both in the Radviliškis district; Linkuva, Pakruojis district).

So three examples of local groups of the latter type of sacred place show that there have been sacred waters (swamps, in this case), which expressed the Balts' views about the posthumous state of souls. On the whole, the existence of such views does not cause bigger doubts because the other life (of the dead) in a mythical sense was imagined as being of a watery type (cf. Greimas, 1990 p.367). By the way, there are a lot of water-names in Latvia that are made up from the word *elle* “Hell” and this fact does not match with the Christian concept about hell (Straubergs, 1960 pp.143–4; cf. Johansons, 1968 pp.72, 74).

The mythical relationship between the dead and the waters reflect also waters whose names are made from Lithuanian *vėlė* or Slavic *dūša* “soul of the dead” (Būga, 1958 pp.515–8; Vanagas, 1981 pp.370–1). Even though rivers will be discussed later, it is logical to discuss here both Vėlė Lakes and Vėlė Rivers together.

There are three **VĒLĒ** (Souls of the dead) Lakes and nine Vėlė (Souls of the dead) Rivers known in Lithuania. Analogous water-names prevailed in Latvia (no less than nine) and Prussia (one) (Kurtz, 1924 pp.56, 62, 84, 86; Endzelin, 1934 pp.116, 124; Būga, 1958 pp.515, 517) (Map XXII). Unfortunately, precise data are known only about some of them. It seems that the area of such lakes does not exceed 30 ha. The rivers, as a rule, are small, of 1–5 km length.

According to the place-legends about the Vėlė Lake situated near the hill forts of Vėlionys and Mažulonys, this lake had a sacral significance. It is said, “a mountain was in the place of the lake, a church was standing there” and “on Sundays at twelve o'clock one could hear bells ringing at the bottom of the lake” (LFA, 2626 no.58). It might be that the vision of the “hill and church” that vanished in the place of the lake is related to the image of the hill that one will have to climb after death. The latter one is known from a legend recorded in the 16th c. about the funeral of the mythical Duke Šventaragis.

There are no data about the meaning of the Vėlė Rivers. One can only guess that they correlated to certain views about souls and primary elements of nature: water, fire, also stone, tree. The rivers become important in this concept because water might clean souls.

3.5.2 Wetlands

Lakes and wetlands are often similar in the physical sense. They are also associated in the mythical sense. It is believed that wetlands are enchanted lakes: "All lakes that are now turned into wetlands are enchanted" (LFA, 1045 no.123). Actually it has been already mentioned that swamps have an intermediate position between lakes and wetlands.

The place-legends known about wetlands are typical of other sacred waters as well. Wetlands are often associated with mythical beings. Usually these are Laumė (Fairy), Ragana (Witch), and Velnias (Devil): "Where the wetlands are inaccessible it is the favourite place of devils" (LSSC, 474 no.738). There are also wetlands of the Dievas (God), Perkūnas (Thunder), and Kaukas (one of the chthonic Lithuanian souls, also a soul of a dead person) (Debeikiai, Gailiešionys, Merkinė). Stories are often told about cities, estates, and churches that vanished on the site of the lake, about drowned armies or drowned weapons (cf. Sauka et al., 1967 pp.627–8, 648, 657, 662). The specific motives associated with wetlands tell about lakes that lay there or that were enchanted or "left" later.

There is not so much data about the rites that took place near sacred wetlands. However, place-legends and beliefs, and also some archaeological findings, show that they have existed. It is said that the wetland near Žiliniai "does not freeze until some animal drowns" (LFA, 1406 no.414). A story about a wetland near Kvėšai tells: "In the wetland close to Kvėšai village once was a lake. There used to live bitterns - the ones who howl. Each bride when got married had to drop a length of linen into that lake. If she did not do that these birds would howl very much so that it was not possible to sleep at night. As soon as she would drop it the bitterns would stop howling at once" (LFA 4909 no.70). In 1907 Antanas Žukauskas wrote about the Karalienės liūnas (Queen's Wetland) near Ažuožeriai. "Even though the Queen's wetland does not have a good name among the people they still respect it a lot and visit frequently. In the old times each Sunday people after the mass from church <...> used to go and sit around the wetland, to eat butter, cheeses, pies and would drown the crumbs and remainders of food in this Queen's wetland" (1907 pp.143–4).

In the case of the Raigardas wetland there is some data about certain ritual behaviour of people that is associated with the sacral meaning given to this site. It is told that underground bells used to ring in the Raigardas wetland during the mass or at Easter. Even though mythically the drowned bells represent only the sacredness that lies in a particular site (see Vaitkevičienė, 1996 p.55) it is also told how people used to listen to that ringing. "I lay, listened, can hear, ringing, a church used to be here, that is why it rings" (LFA, 6595 no.11).

The assumption that remains of certain ritual behaviour in this site is reflected in the place-legends is confirmed by narratives that parents used to take their children to listen to the bells ringing in Raigardas on the first day of Easter (LFA, 6595 no.6). Analogous actions performed by the village communities of the eastern Slavs near the sacred hills and springs were a constituent part of holiday rituals as well (see Panchenko, 1998 p.128).

Supposedly, the village name Auksūdys, made of the word *auka* "sacrifice" and *sūduva* "wetland", is associated with pre-Christian rites by wetlands as well as the hoards of sacrificed goods. The number of artefacts in such hoards varies from a couple to some hundreds. Such hoards were found while working in marshy localities, cultivating drained marshes and wetlands, and digging drainage ditches in Daugalaičiai, Draustiniai, Jucaičiai, Užpelkiai, Vaineikiai, and Palanga (Rimantienė, 1977 pp.131–3) (Fig.46). The hoards of Šliktinė and Černaūžyna are more famous; equipment of warriors and male jewellery were found there.

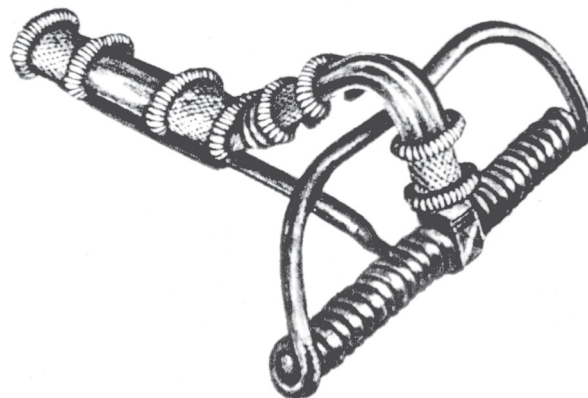


Fig. 46. Gilded silver crossbow brooch decorated with ringlets typical of the mid-1st millennium AD found in Užpelkiai wetland (Plungė district). After L. Vaitkunskienė (1981).

The "military" sacrifices in Northwest European wetlands are perfectly verified by archaeological data. In 1992 there were 27 such sites known, they date back to the late 1st millennium BC - 6th c. AD (see Fabech, 1992 pp.145–7). The most famous of these sites are Illerup, Nydam and Vimose in Denmark; Thorsberg in Germany; Skedemosse in Sweden (cf. Müller-Wille, 1999 pp.41–63; Hagberg, 1987; Fabech, 1992 pp.144–8). The conclusions in this field of research suggest that since the mid-1st millennium AD when the sacrifice of military equipment in water in South Scandinavia stopped, this custom was still expanding in the countries in the north and north-east. Artefacts that were sacrificed in the second half of the 1st millennium - beginning of the 2nd millennium AD were found in as many as four sites of the Gotland Island (Stenberger, 1943; Müller-Wille, 1984 pp.188–95). As has already been mentioned, such sacred places are also known among the Balts.

From the hoard of Černaučyzna, found in 1928 in a marshy field called Gudė (made from *gudas* “somebody like stranger”) are known 43 burned items dating to 1250–1300 AD. After lifting one stone “a pile of well-preserved” things was found under it, like spearheads, knives, awls, razors, bindings of a belt, axes, fire irons, spurs, stirrups, also a sword, the key of a cylindrical lock, several potsherds (Ribokas & Zabiela, 1994) (Fig. 47).

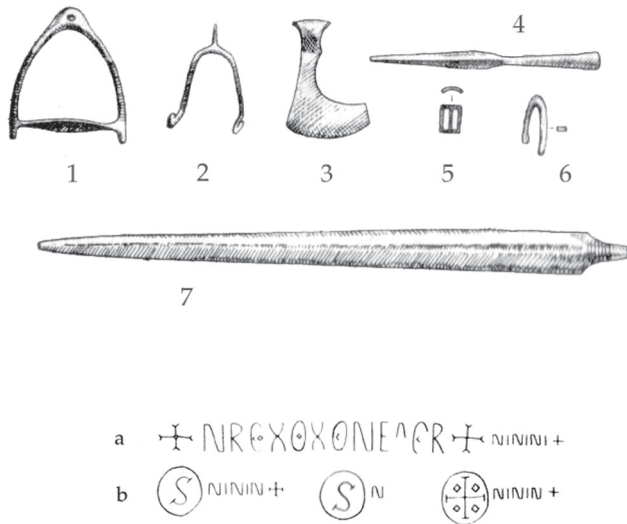


Fig. 47. Some artefacts found in Černaučyzna (Anykščiai district) and inscriptions on the sword (below). After D. Ribokas & G. Zabiela (1994).

The first Šliktinė hoard that was found in a marshy valley of the Šata River 0.3 km away from the Mikytai hill fort typical of 1000–1400 AD consisted of no less than 200 items of the 1000–1100 AD. Among them were 113 spearheads, also battle knives, axes and some jewellery. These articles were found in one place under an oak log (SACA, 20 pp.155–64). From the second hoard that was found about 50 m north of the first site, there are about 80 goods typical of the period 900–1000 AD preserved, including penannular fibulae, bracelets, spurs, buckles and parts of their bindings, spearheads, battle knives. They were collected from the ground that was thrown away while digging a ditch, in a small area of 30–40 m width (LIH, 314). In sum, the Šliktinė hoards consisted of men’s equipment, jewellery, and weapons. That is why it is thought that this was a sacrifice made by warriors, probably after a war campaign (Volkaitė-Kulikauskienė, 1958 p.119; Tautavičius, 1972; Rimantienė, 1977 pp.132–3).

Such hoards are found also in Latvia, Northern Courland (Moora, 1938 pp.32, 71–2, 90; Apals et al., 1974 p.185). For instance, in the Tīras wetland, jewellery, artefacts of men’s clothes and weapons dating back to the second half of the 1st millennium - beginning of the 2nd millennium AD were found. They were found in one place, covered with cloth, pressed down under a pole. Around that place poles with burned ends were dug (Urtāns V., 1977 p.163). In Vilkmuiža Lake in total 3000 goods of 900–1400 AD were found: swords, axes, spearheads, knives, neck-rings, bracelets, brooches and oth-

ers (Šturms, 1936a). It is not finally evident whether the artefacts originate from the cremations or were sacrificed.

It is difficult to answer the question whether there is any connection between the wetlands where the sacrificed articles were found, and the wetlands, which have sacral names. There was no such information about most of the sites where archaeological objects were found until people started to make ditches and cultivate.

The Gudėniškės archaeological site should be mentioned in this context. In reports this locality is described as a little wetland or a swamp. In 1977 it had already been drained but the expedition recorded that while cleaning up its southern side people used to find axes and spearheads. One of them - a narrow-bladed axe with broken blade, typical of the mid-1st millennium AD is in the Utena regional museum. In 1985 it was suggested that the mentioned finds might have originated from a nearby barrow (LIH, 1376 pp.115–6). Nevertheless, the note that among the people a place-legend about a chest of gold drowned and the weapon having been dropped by soldiers into the Gudėniškės swamp is very intriguing (LIH, 548 p.70). The opinion that such narratives come up after people have found axes and spearheads is at least partially contradicted by the fact that wetlands shrouded in such place-legends are frequently found near the barrows of East Lithuanian Barrow Culture (Balceriškės, Baltadvaris, Strėva) (cf. Zaikovskij & Duchits, 2001 p.73).

In some of Lithuania’s sites **Alka** wetlands are also recorded (Map XXIII). These often belong to sacred sites - Alka wetlands are situated near Alka hills or in Alka groves (Mikytai, Rūdaičiai). The Alka wetlands are usually of the size of 5–35 ha. In some cases they are situated also in the sites where other kinds of sacred places are not known.

It should be noted that there might have been more wetlands called Alkai - because of the alternation of *alka* and *auka* (see Chapter 2.1) their name sometimes becomes Aukai. Wetlands, which have such names, are found in Kėdainiai and Panevėžys districts (Miegenai, Naujieji Lažai).

Šventas wetlands (Sacred) are situated in ten sites (Map XXIII). Often these wetlands belong to sacred sites together with sacred hills, rivers.

There are not many place-legends and beliefs recorded about the Šventas wetlands. A place-legend is associated with the Šventas wetland in Stoniai, about a priest who drowned with the Holy Sacrament. About the Šventa Bažnytėlė (Holy Church) wetland in a grove near Dvilonys it is said: “The Church is called a deep wetland as old people used to tell. People used to pray there when there were no churches yet” (LFA, 6810 no.258).

It should also be mentioned that one “wetland overgrowing with grass” called Šventoji (Sacred) is known in Švendūnai. It is situated approximately on the site where the sacred Nemarkštė grove mentioned at the end of the 14th c. is located.

3.5.3 Rivers

Alkupiai (Alka Rivers). There are 32 of them recorded in all Lithuania (Map XXIV). Already E. Šturms noted that Alka Rivers are usually small; their length rarely exceeds 5–10 km (1946 p.36). The Alka Rivers in Samogitia are often found near Alka hills or settlements called Alkai (Naujoji Įpiltis, Paežeris, Vilikai (Plungė district)). There are no other kinds of sacred places found near the Alka Rivers in Middle Lithuania.

Usually there are neither place-legends nor beliefs known about Alka Rivers. Only in rare cases are they associated with the pre-Christian rites (Kengiai). Already in the documents of the 16th c. the Alka Rivers were mentioned between other ordinary place-names (Sprogis, 1888 p.4).

Šventupiai (Sacred Rivers). There are 53 of them recorded in Lithuania and about ten in neighbouring countries (Map XXV) as well as in other Northern and Western European countries (cf. Johansons, 1968 pp.39–40; Witkowski, 1970 p.374; Holmberg, 1990 p.389; Kowalczyk, 2000 p.33).

The Šventas Rivers are mentioned in written sources of the 14th c.: *Heiligene* (Skuodas and Kretinga districts), *Swente* (Akmenė district), *Swintove* or *Swentoy*n (Jurbarkas district) (Salys, 1930 pp.35, 68, 83).

Only length and basins distinguish the Šventoji River in Eastern Lithuania (249 km in length, a right tributary of the Neris) and the Šventoji River in Western Lithuania (74 km in length, flows into the Baltic Sea). Other Šventas Rivers are much shorter; they rarely exceed the length of 15–25 km.

There is plenty of information about the sacral, religious and historic significance of the Šventas Rivers. This information can be divided into several parts. Firstly, after examining the data of Western Lithuania it was stated that the Šventas Rivers flow there were tribal boundaries at least in the beginning of the 2nd millennium AD. For instance, the territory of the Samogitians bordered at least the Šventas Rivers of Kejėnai and Vadžgirys; the Couronians bordered the Šventas River of Brizgai and Užlieknė (Šimėnas, 1995 p.150; Vaitkevičius, 1998a p.17).

Some of the Šventas Rivers very likely separated small territorial units; for instance, the Couronian lands Duvzare and Mėguva, the Samogitian districts Laukuva and Kaltinėnai and the Aukštaitian districts Paštuva and Pieštė. This same presumably represents Nalšia districts according to barrow groups' distribution dated to 1000–1200 AD. The Šventas Rivers and Lakes lie between supposed districts or on their sides (Map XXVI). At first sight it might seem that the exceptions are the Šventas Lake of Lazdiniai and the Šventelė River of Andreikos (Fig. 48). However, south-west of the Šventas Lake of Lazdiniai, hill forts were recently found in Adutiškis and Stajėtiškis.

The headwaters of the Šventas River of Andreikos are in quite a wide watershed area. Most probably the eastern border of the settled districts corresponded with the watershed. Recently announced material suggests that actually near the Šventas River of Andreikos a royal estate dated to 13th–14th c. was situated and might have given its name to the whole Švenčionys district as well as to the later town of Švenčionys. This would finally allow us to guess the origins of the Švenčionys and would encourage discussion about the mythical meaning that might have been appointed to the Šventelė River whose headwaters are an impressive “crossing” of the Žeimena, Neris and Dysna basins.

The second realia, which became vivid dealing with Šventas Rivers, is that these rivers (or parts of them), together with other kinds of sacred places, often belong to sacred sites. For instance, the Šventas River in Stoniai rises at the Šventas wetland. The Šventas River in surroundings of Tytuvėnai rises near the sacred oak of Mosteikiai. Near the mouth of the Šventas River in Raizgiai there is an Alka hill.

Irrespective of the two discussed realia (or in parallel with them) the Šventas Rivers or some parts of them (e.g. headwaters) have had a religious significance. It was believed that the water of the Šventas Rivers has some extraordinary features and special respect was shown for it. Sometimes also beliefs about requests for sacrifice were associated with the Šventas Rivers - the part of the Šventoji River west of Sūdėnai used to take “a life of a person” each year.

Apart from the latter river, as in the case of lakes (see Chapter 3.5.1), the rivers Žižma, Gauja, Ūla, and Merkys were **requesting sacrifices** (Map XXI). It is said that Žižma annually takes a couple of people: a man and a woman (LFA, 6447 no.496). Analogous beliefs were associated with the rivers in Latvia (cf. Ancelāne, 1991 p.178). In order that the deity of the river would not drown anybody, the Finno-Ugrians in North Estonia each year on the day of St Elias (13th July) used to sacrifice a sheep or an ox, or parts (e.g. heads) of them. People would throw sacrifices into those parts of the river where the deities lived. If such rituals were not performed, people used to drown (Haavio, 1963 pp.86–8).



Fig. 48. Šventupis (Sacred) River of Andreikos (Švenčionys district). Photo by author, 2002.

About particular parts of the rivers (e.g. pools) there are also tales of the type “It is the time, the person is not here” known. A voice from the water says, “It is the time, the person is not here” and at that moment someone runs to the water, rushes to go for a swim and drowns (Ariogala, Budriai).

There are various mythical views associated with particular parts of the rivers. For instance, in the Vyžuona River near Kaliečiai there is the place called Dievo bliūdelis (Bowl of God). In the Varduva River in Žemaičių Kalvarija there is Velnio bliūdelis (Bowl of the Devil). In the Kražantė River, in the environs of Kražiai, there is a pool called Šventvandenis (Holy Water) where according to the place-legend a priest drowned while going to visit an ill man (Vaitkevičius, 1998a p.472) (Fig. 49).

Some important aspects of the sacred river concept are shown by the behaviour of raftsmen while floating wood. Going through a shoal called Velnio tiltai (Bridges of the Devil) in Nemunas near Dvareliškės “in the old times a lot of navigators and raftsmen used to sacrifice to the deities of water, dropping copper, pieces of bread and beads ‘for the fairies to adorn themselves’. One place where most of the sacrifices was made called Stikliukai or Sklianki (Glass Beads)” (Baliūnas, 1939; cf. Johansons, 1968 p.26) (Fig. 50).



Fig. 50. Shoal of Dvareliškės (Kaunas district). After P. Kežinaitis (1958).

It is worth noting that responses about ritual behaviour (bathing and washing oneself) in sacred parts of rivers might be found by examining sites called **Raganinės** (Witches' depths). There are 12 places like that recorded in the basins of Mūša and Nemunėlis, and one each in Venta and Nevėžis basins (Map XXVII). The names with the word *ragana* “Witch” usually belong to depths, pools. The origin of these names is explained variously. Place-legends mention that witches used to dwell here, to wash, bathe, and drown people. Sometimes narratives tell that witches themselves used to drown there in the old times. “In Tatula there is a huge Witches' depth. It is said that in the old times there were lots of witches. If one wanted to know which one was the witch they would drop her into it. The one who would drown was not a witch” (Mykolinė) (Balys, 1949 p.37).

According to the researches of this kind of place-legends it might be asserted that there appear real women picture (cf.



Fig. 49. Upytė River in Ramygala (Panevėžys district). According to well-known place-legend a bell was drown here. Photo by A. Vaitkevičius, 1997.

Kerbelytė, 1997 pp.72–3). They were faithful to old customs and offend the norms of the Christianity. That is why they become witches.

It is told that somebody saw witches diving in the Raganinė of Mykolinė on St John's night at 12 o'clock (VU, 213–205 no.10). In parallel the ethnological data shows that bathing and washing oneself on St John's night would lend people youth, beauty and health (see Balys, 1993 pp.226–7). The bishop M. Valančius mentions the custom of bathing on St John's night, which was still prevalent in the mid-19th c. near Biržai (this same region of Raganinės depths). “Women would go to a river or swamp on that night, bathe, wash their clothes and comb. They did all this in order that they would find a husband during that year. The grandparents of our grandparents believed that fairies were bathing during that night. The custom of those fairies is still fulfilled by the girls around Biržai and Pabiržė” (1863 p. 61).

According to S. Daukantas who was writing in the mid-19th c. before the St John “people themselves used to go to bathe and wash in the sacred rivers and lakes in order to become young. Who did all that in the right way would become extremely clever for one hour and would see which one were the angry people, magicians or witches” (1976 pp.542–3).

In this context (washing/bathing on the night of St John provides one with youth, beauty, health, marriage (=happiness), knowledge) it is important to emphasise that a place similar to the above-mentioned Raganinės - “deeper and wider” - in the Beržtalis River is called Laimiškis. Hence presumably when the view of Laima (the goddess of fate, fortune, and child-birth) was disappearing, her place in the water-names of Northern Lithuania might have been taken by witches (but not by fairies as it happened in other parts of Lithuania). Such a shift might be illustrated also by Latvian data (see Urtans, 1993a p.83).

The links between the goddess Laima and water has not been analysed in more detail. But in the mythology of the Balts it is quite clear. It is most significant in the contexts of health (=youth, beauty) and happiness (Šmits, 1936 pp.308–9, 310–1, 314, 322; Ancelāne, 1991 pp.147, 148, 263, 269; Urtans, 1993a pp.82–4; Vaitkevičius, 1998a pp.293, 475, 537). As has been already shown, with this particular intention people faithful to the old customs used to bathe in those parts of the rivers that nowadays are known by the name Raganinė (Witches’ Depths).

3. 5. 4 Springs

The sacred springs of Lithuania have not received much attention so far. In 1971 there was an unsuccessful attempt to excavate the former site of a sacred spring at the Alka hill of Mikytai.

The experience of researchers from other countries shows that the multifaceted research of sacred springs provides a lot of valuable information (Zimmermann, 1970; Muthmann, 1975; Bords, 1987 pp.174–86; Stjernquist, 1987, 1992; Golabiewski-Lannby, 1992; Löthman & Schön, 1994; Urtans, 1995; Urtans & Bernate, 1995; Zaikovskiy & Duchits, 2001).

Sacred springs have been situated in most famous Lithuanian sacred places (Alkas-Salantai, Kražiai, Pakapiai, Pasruojė, and Račiai) (Fig. 51). Apart from that they are found in the surroundings of the hill forts typical of 1000–1400 AD and open



Fig. 51. Sacred spring of Alkas-Salantai (Kretinga district).
Photo by author, 1993.

settlements of the same period (Bartkūnai, Karališkiai, Narkūnai, Palazduonis, Senoji Įpiltis, Seredžius, Simėnai) (cf. Zabiela, 1995a p.153).

The historical documents mention sacred springs since the late 16th c. (Gaižuva, Ugionys). The very first list of sacred springs in Eastern Lithuania made S. Didžiulis (1884). Later A. Mažiulis completed a much longer list of them (1948).

In a natural sense, springs have much in common with rivers - the flowing water of a spring usually forms a river. There are also cases when the headwaters of some sacred rivers actually are springs (Indija, Padievytis). However, except for the common mythical images that are given to flowing water, springs have some specific features. The most important of them is the well-known belief that springs are eyes.

As tears have a mythical power both to split and unlock (e.g. stone, ground), so the water that springs from the ground is also said to be tears, cf.: “Springs that do not freeze in winter are the tears of old people” (LSSC, 474 no.596). This mythical feature in the case of springs allows us to guess at the motivations of ritual behaviour.

Tears have a mythical power to wake up and animate the dead. That is why the sacred springs are also considered to be Gyvybės vanduo (Water of Life) (Augzeliai, Kulskiai). Springs confirm this status while moving, boiling and never becoming frozen.

Water of Life greatly expresses the vital power. It influences growth and fertility, because “when you water earth with it grass grows at once and trees produce fruit” (Balys, 1966 p.38). In this way the sacred springs also help childless women (Savičiūnai).

According to the general view, spring water is most necessary for eyes because it heals them, “makes them wider and brighter”. Vision and blindness represent the states of life and death: “You have not opened your eyes yet and you have to close them again”, means a very short life (Kruopas et al., 1970 p.35). So the Water of Life, according to A. J. Greimas is primarily not a “cure by means of which life for a body is provided” but it is “live water, it being water is being life” (1990 pp.154).

Apart from the above-mentioned abilities of water to move, boil and never become frozen, another important feature in this context is to flow “**against the Sun**”. What is meant here is the flow of springs in the direction opposite to the rise of the Sun, “from west to east”.

There are 22 such sacred springs recorded in Lithuania (Map XXVIII) and they are also known in Latvia (Ancelāne, 1991 p.314; Urtāns, 1993a pp.104–5) and other countries (cf. Nick, 1921 p.19).

Already S. Daukantas in the mid-19th c. when writing about the ways people used to cure in the old times noted “when

the eyes hurt, in a spring flowing before the sunrise they would wash their eyes" (1976 p.477). It is said, "where the springs flow to the east they are magical and sacred" (Balys, 1946 p.40). By the way, place-legends about the Latvian Gauja River (flowing east it suddenly turns to north-west) say that the Gauja started to flow west after other rivers got angry and put her eyes out (!) (Ancelāne, 1991 p.177).

The direction of the water flow "against the sunrise" clearly expresses the vital character of the sacred springs that has been related above. That is because the sunrise also means the beginning/birth, cf.: "Cattle do not die for a long time when the Sun is rising - the Sun brings life" (Mažiulis, 1937 p.135). When you wash with water flowing east you do not feel sleepy. In a mythical sense sleep is very close to death.

Water from sacred springs flowing to the east also possesses special qualities: "Old people used to say that when a spring runs from west to the east the water is very healthy", "when I wash myself there I become as if young" (Uogučiai) (LFA, 6414 no.172, 260).

The variant of the motive "to flow against the Sun" when it means to flow south should be discussed separately. Such springs are found in seven sites, five of which are in the surroundings of Plateliai, Plungė district (Map XXVIII). The mythological motivation of the shifting east/south is not sufficiently clear. Moreover, sometimes the springs, which according to people "flow to the east" are flowing south in reality (Uogučiai).

The chemical content of the water of the springs that are looked upon as sacred and their effect on human health, have not been analysed yet. A. Kondratas, after analysing the water of some sacred springs (Alksnėnai, Kavarskas, Užpaliai), stated that "the worshipping of springs whose chemical content does not differ from other springs of Lithuania seems to be strange" (1995. Also compare results of another kind considering sacred springs - Geschwendt, 1972 pp.66–89; Urtāns, 1995 p.41; Zaikovskiy & Duchits, 2001 p.20). The characteristics of water of the sacred springs that are under geological protection have not been discussed in more detail (cf. Linčius, 1994) and without the comparative data it does not provide much information.

From a medical point of view the water of the sacred springs was and sometimes still is used for the treatment of eyes that are weak, discharging pus, or suppurating. This water is used also for washing ill legs, wounds. Small stones from springs are used to heal toothache. Drinking the water would cure stomach and other internal diseases also nervous breakdowns.

Various goods were sacrificed to sacred springs and this was done in various ways. Usually coins were dropped into the spring or left nearby (compare Roman coins found in springs - Makiewicz, 1988 pp.108–10, Teegen, 1999 pp.253–6). In Latvian springs coins mostly of the 16th–17th c. were found (Urtāns, 1995 p.43), in Belarussian springs, coins also of 18th c. were found (Zaikovskiy & Duchits, 2001 p.35). Apart from coins, food was frequently sacrificed by dropping it into

springs. It is said about the Milašius spring that people would bring offerings (eggs, etc.) to it "at twelve o'clock during the whole month of May" (LSSC, 184 no.10).

Also often found were cloths and towels used by ill people to dry themselves, various promise bands, threads that were usually tied on the trees growing next to the spring.

3.6 Hollows

In natural sense the name of hollows was used for describing various "lower sites" or "deeper places" of the landscape where at least partially a closed space is formed. Often this type of hollow has water in it or the bottom is marshy. Hollows are close to waters also in a mythical sense. They are associated with devils; vanished estates, churches, taverns or some other building that used to stand in that particular place, explain their origin.

There are quite a lot of place-legends about hollows recorded but most of them have not been surveyed yet. For instance, about the Velnio duobė (Hollow of the Devil) of Bryzgiai it is said, "at Easter, during the mass a church drowned. Father tells when he went to pasture and would lie at lunchtime he would hear bells ringing. And during the mass he could even hear organs playing" (VU, 213–136 no.3).

In the north of Plungė district the hollows are usually said to be the places of homes that vanished on the morning of Easter. Moreover, it is believed that somewhere there is salt and the level of water in the bottom of hollows foretells the weather for the whole year. One such hollow near Gegrėnai is simply called a Calendar (Fig. 52).

Usually hollows are associated with devils as well as fairies and witches that used to stay in the hollows, come, have fun or mislead people there. This study presents a group of 12 Velnio duobės (Hollows of the Devil), which are known in one local region of Southern Lithuania. This monuments group may be distinguished because of some common natural and mythical features. The most famous hollow there is the Velnio duobė of Škilietai forest. It has the shape of a funnel; it is of 40x60-m size at the bottom and 200x250 m at the top. The hollow is 40 m deep; the bottom of it is marshy. It is guessed that the hollow can be of glacial or thermo-karst origin. Other Devil's hollows in this region are a little bit smaller but they have this same appearance (steep slopes, deep, marshy).

Place-legends and beliefs known about these hollows are varied. It is told that the hollows originated in the place of vanished churches or even in a place of a house of "some magician" (Škilietai). The crosses of churches have still protruded from the hollows for a long time; one could hear bells ringing (Antaveršis, Klėriškės, Vindziuliškės). It is told that devils used to gather for dances in the hollow of Škilietai. People used to observe beings that resembled wolves (Šafarnia) and have found a toad "with a rose on its head" there (Vindziuliškės).



Fig. 52. Hollow of Grigaičiai (Plungė district). Photo by D. Vaitkevičienė, 1996.

The Velnio duobė hollows are situated close to sacred hills in Antaveršis and Užukalnis, Šventas Lake in Nečiūnai, hill forts in Pamiškė and Strėva, barrows in Akmeniai and Drabužinkai. The Velnio duobė in Vindziuliškės forest has to be mentioned separately. Near it, already on top of its northern slope there is a group of East Lithuanian barrows of the mid-1st millennium AD.

Most likely the discussed hollows in South Lithuania together with tall stones (see Chapter 3.4.1.2) and Šventas Lakes (see Chapter 3.5.1) recorded there represent traditions of sacred places that were developed here in the mid-1st millennium AD.

The geological faults in northern Lithuania, mostly in the districts of Biržai and Pasvalys, may be considered to be a cause of hollows. For natural reasons faults used to originate here from the old times, usually unnoticed. These sites do not exceed a width of 15 m and depth of 3–8 m. Most of them are dry and only a few of them (that are deeper than the underground level of water at a depth of about 9–10 m) have water at the bottom.

There are place-legends known about some of the faults. The most famous of them is the Šventa duobė (Sacred fault) of Karajimiškis. This fault originated at a depth of about 8–12 m when the stratum of gypsum collapsed. Rocks that were at the top fell into that underground burrow; the clods fell on each other and formed an irregular vault. Through the vault by several steps that were formed of limestone and gypsum, one could get near to the water deposit, which lay in the

bottom of the fault and the river that was flowing to the south there. The people used to bathe, draw water, and offer coins there. On the surface, on the banks of the Šventa duobė, people used to leave shoes, hang their clothes, bright scraps of wool, flower garlands and other things on the bushes. The crowds would come here on Trinity Sunday and on 16th July (Yaunis, 1897 pp. 89–90; Witort, 1899).

3.7 Caves

On the banks of the rivers of Lithuania there are some caves whose sacral meaning is known. One of them, of karst origin, called Velnio Pilis (Castle of the Devil) is on the bank of the Nemunėlis River, in the exposure near Padvariečiai. The cave is 2.7 m high and 1 m wide. At its deepest point it is 4.3 m deep (Linčius, 1994 no.33).

A lot of similar caves are recorded in Latvia. Among them there are 27 sacred caves in Courland and Vidzeme (Urtāns J., 1977 pp. 86–7). Since 1641 it is verified that people used to offer coins and other various sacrifices in these caves. In the most famous, Lybieši Upurāla (Cave of Sacrifices), there were 628 coins of the 14th–19th c., small jewellery, accessories of clothes, fragments of Dutch pipes and other finds found (Urtāns J., 1977 pp.87, 92; 1988a p.12).

On the bank of the Neris River near Lučionys in the Quaternary exposure the Šventoji (Sacred) cave is known. Here, from a horizontally laid clod of conglomerate, water exudes and leaks all the time which by washing the ground eventually formed a cave of almost 3 m height, about 12 m width and 2–4 m depth under the vault of conglomerate (Fig. 53). It was believed that Gyvybės vanduo (Water of Life) leaks here. People used to visit this cave at Easter or on St John's day. They used to pray here, wash, and take water home because it was believed that "it helps with diseases, and on the whole, so that the house would be happy if it was sprinkled" (LIH, 2249 p.120).



Fig. 53. Sacred cave of Lučionys (Vilnius district). Photo by author, 1997.

4 Links between sacred places

The classification of sacred places that is based on their differentiation according to the types of natural objects usually singles out the features of only one group of sacred places. Naturally, it poorly represents the links between different kinds (types, groups) of sacred places.

The mythical and religious significance of sacred places is related to several of the Balts' and Lithuanians' gods and goddesses, pre-eminently, with Saulė (Sun), Aušrinė (Goddess of Dawn), Perkūnas (Thunder), Laima (Goddess of fate, fortune, and childbirth), Laumė (Fairy), and Ragana (Witch). In terms of sacred places so prevalent is the picture of the Velnias (Devil) that attempts to identify it with the Balts' God of the underworld and the dead (see Vėlius, 1987) still remain in sheets of mist.

The oral tradition does not record some other gods, for instance, Andojus (cf. Neptune), Žvėrūna-Medeina (cf. Diana), Veliuona (Goddess of Souls), but the connotations and functions of some sacred places may belong to the spheres of their sacredness. Moreover, in some particular cases the place of the major gods is probably taken by minor deities or changed by generic terms like “devils”, “fairies” (also compare Valk, 2003 p.574). The sacred places such as groves, trees, stones, and waters, whose meanings are associated with the views about the underground world of the dead or the posthumous state of souls, should be mentioned separately.

Still-preserved complexes that consist of sacred places of different type, for instance, Alka hill/sacred stone/sacred spring (Alkas-Salantai, Mikytai, Padievytis), represent the direct links between all the sacred places.

Beyond different complexes there are known that complexes of the sacred places of the same kind usually composed in pairs. Their ties express particular natural environments and they are also motivated by mythical or religious realities. For instance, there are the Alka and Alkelis islands in the Mītuva Lake (Kupiškis district) and the depth between them called Tarpualkis (“Between Alks”). There are the Perkūnas (Thunder) and Merga (Girl) hills in Pakalniškiai (Raseiniai district) (Fig. 54), Dievaičiukas (God) and Dievaitytė (Goddess) hills in Jakštai. In Kirkliai there are Gaidys (Cock) and Višta (Hen) hills. In the Ilgis Lake (Zarasai district) there are stones of the Dievas (God) and the Velnias (the Devil). Near Valatkoniai - stones of the Angelas (Angel) and the Velnias (the Devil). Examples of sacred places of different deities being situated in pairs are also found in other countries (cf. Wessén, 1929/30 p.111; Laur, 1948 pp.95–8; Witkowski, 1970 pp.369–70; Brink, 1996 pp.241–242; 1999 p.428).

Sacred places of different kinds situated quite long distances one from another can also be linked directly by land or water routes as well as mythically by place-legends or beliefs. Peculiar sacred places of the Molėtai region express such links, probably in the most interesting way. In place-legends their

relations are stated by an example of performing polyphonic songs (*sutartinės*). In different places (there may be more than 10 km distance between them) Laumės (Fairies) or Raganos (Witches) used to sing the same song at the same time, responding to each other. Now there are three such complexes of sacred places known: 1) Laumikonys hill, Ankšta hollow and Rožakmenis stone; 2) three hills in Savidėnai; 3) Ažuluokesa, Šlavingalis and Kamučėlis hills. The map of the Molėtai region shows that above-mentioned complexes are related also to other sacred places (Map XXIX). Presumably they might have originated from the 1st or beginning of the 2nd millennium AD.

Sacred places that are far apart can be linked not only by place-legends but also by real or mythical roads. Mythological beings usually use them (the Balts' mythology also includes roads of souls). These roads usually lead to (or through) the sacred places. For instance, the Velnio takas (Devil's path) near Urkuvėnai joined Kipšai (Devil's) hill with Laumakiai (Fairy's) wetland. It is said that the Devil who was proposing to the Fairy made it. Moreover, among the stones on this path there are stones called Velnio Širdis (Heart of the Devil) and the Laumė (Fairy) stone.

Such roads might have had a ritual purpose. Firstly, this might be illustrated by the sacred places to (through) which the road leads. Secondly, it is usually said that such roads (also bridges) were built for weddings that are directly connected with the ritual journey to church. Thirdly, ritual purpose of the road is sometimes indicated when explaining their names or sacral status (cf. Šventkelis (Sacred road) in Svencelė, Perkūnelis (Thunder's road) near Eržvilkas). By the way, near Låssa (in Upland, in Sweden) there is a road that is related to the burial site so probably with the funeral rites at the same time. This road is in total 540 m long, 3.3–3.6 m wide, orientated in a north-south direction, and was established in ca. 815 AD. It begins at the foot of the biggest barrow. At the other end of the road a 6x9 m construction of oval-shaped stones was found (Damell, 1985).



Fig. 54. Sacred hills of Pakalniškiai (Raseiniai district): Mergikalnis (Girl's) hill (on the left) and Perkūnas (Thunder's) hill (on the right). Photo by D. Vaitkevičienė, 1996.

5 The status of sacred places

There are no doubts that the religious and social role, i.e. status, of the sacred places is different. Mostly it is difficult to answer this question precisely due to the lack of data. However, some observations are provided here based on already discussed material.

Home/family. From the sites discussed in this study, stones with narrow-bottomed bowls (Chapter 3.4.1.3) are the most vivid example of sacred places that were in domestic use. Because of their specifics, other domestic sacred places were not examined in more detail. As distinct from the sacred hills, groves or springs situated in nature, the domestic sacred places together with the farm were established in a certain place, which was chosen for living, and a lot of other aspects were taken into account.

Ньнадеевич “God of the House” was already mentioned in 1252 in the list of gods that were worshipped by King Mindaugas (Greimas, 1990 p.395; Vėlius, 1996 pp.260–1). In the sources of the 16th–17th centuries *Deus domesticum* “God of Home” also occur (Mannhardt, 1936 p.432). The gods and goddesses, such as Dimstipatis, Gabjaujis, Pagirniai Gods, Žemėpatis, Žemynėlė (see Johansons, 1964; Greimas, 1990 pp.425–49) had defined spheres of sacredness. They were guardians of the farm, the people who live there, their property, personal happiness and work. Naturally, in a set way in particular place rituals were performed for them.

For instance, for Pagirniai Gods (*pagirmis* “one who lives under quern”) in some corner of a house under the quern small sand grounds (*pauxillum arenae*) were made, the mother had to take care of them and when her death was approaching she entrusted the wife of the younger son to do it; at a certain time women used to sacrifice a hen and the remains of food for Pagirniai (described by Jesuits in 1601, see Mannhardt, 1936 p.432). In granaries big flat stones were kept, they were dug into the ground, covered by straw and called Deivės (Goddesses). These stones were worshipped as the guardians of grain and cattle, their place was devotedly protected so that nobody would dare to come and touch them because they

would be struck. Usually a black pig was sacrificed for Goddesses. It would be boiled and eaten by the father and mother together with the grandmother, who also participated in performing the sacrifice. The grandmother used to take the small remainders of the pig and other food together with three times nine pieces of bread to the granary and when everyone left she would pray for the Goddesses (ca. 1600; Mannhardt, 1936 p.433).

The numerous Latvian sources on this topic show that the residence of the Home God (*Mājas kungs*) and at the same time the sacred place was situated in various places around the farm: at the home, in the yard, garden, bathhouse, granary, and fields. In some cases the offerings for this god were sacrificed near some stone, a pile of stones or a tree on the farm (Šmits, 1936 pp.249–83).

In the meantime there is no serious reason to talk about the exceptions to the religious practice of a family/kin. Only Yan Dlugosh informs (the second half of the 15th c.) that the farms, houses and families in Lithuania (“*singulae villae et qualibet domus atque familia*”) have their fireplaces in sacred groves meant for cremating the dead (Vėlius, 1996 pp.576, 580). This case staying in close relationship with the funeral does not appear to be an exception to the family’s religious practice. After all the dead were not buried in the farm as well.

The religious competence of the family members was differentiated considering certain needs. It used to be stated that the old had the greatest religious commissions, however, the complicated actions of passing over this mandate show that it is difficult to talk about a uniform model.

Village/community. There are grounds for assuming that the sacred places discussed in this work, mostly in surroundings of the prehistoric settlements and the burial sites, represent the cult places of small communities (see Chapters 3.1-3.3, 3.4.1.2, 3.4.1.3, 3.5.1, 3.5.3, 3.5.4, 3.6) (Fig. 55).

The links between communities and their cult places are well represented also by the proximity of sacred places and villages that have theophoric names (cf. Andersson, 1992 pp.241–2; Sandnes, 1992 p.257). For instance, Nemakščiai are situated



Fig. 55. Hill fort (on the left) and sacred hill (on the right) of Naukaimis (Raseiniai district). Photo by A. Tautavičius, 1967. LIH-20186

near the former sacred grove Nemakštė. Šventai-Žadeikiai are near the Šventinė (Sacred) forest; Šventupiai are on the bank of Šventupis River; Laumėnai are by the Laumė (Fairy) hill, etc.

It occurs in neighbouring countries as well. For instance, near the Šventas Lake with a sacred stone in the water there was a settlement Kurken, named after the god Kurka (Voigt, 1827 p.58). In other sites in Prussia there are settlements called Perkūnai (of Thunder), Vėluva (of Souls). In Latvia villages and bowers also have special names, e.g. Elku site, Pērkoņciems (of Thunder) (Endzelīns, 1956 pp.269, 272; Straubergs, 1960 p.146).

An approximate view of the rites and gods worshipped in the community can be composed with the help of comparatively late historical documents, ethnological and folklore sources. For instance, in 1684 in the *Deliciae Prussicae* (The Curiosities of Prussia) M. Prätorius described in detail a festival in a community, which took place before the autumn sowing near Metirkviečiai. The ritual took place under an oak, near a stone. A tall pole was built there; the skin of a goat put on it, a bouquet of corn and various herbs tied above the goatskin. At the beginning of the celebration the head of the ritual Vaidilutis (*Weydulut*) with a scoop in his hands was thanking god who gave them food, to eat and to drink. Later the young people would hold hands and dance around the oak and pole. Vaidilutis would pray again with the scoop in his hands and then everyone would go, take off the pole and grab the bouquet. The goatskin would go to Vaidilutis, and he would carefully distribute the herbs from the pole among the people. Then Vaidilutis would sit on the goatskin on a stone and tell about old customs, belief and gods to the people who gathered. Later everyone would lay their heads on the ground and Vaidilutis would walk among them. At the end of the celebration everyone would treat themselves to food and drinks (Mannhardt, 1936 pp. 539–40). Compare the ritual, described in 1610, of calling the rain in the woods of Vidzeme, where the neighbours (“*plurimi ex vicinia*”) would gather (Mannhardt, 1936 p.458).

It is important to emphasise that religious interaction between the members of the community were also realised in the settlement area or in a set place near it. Compare parties during the holidays, after Christmas (*šventvakariai*), collective meals after sowing, visiting the fields or after the harvest (*sambariai*), meetings when the issues of the community are being discussed (*krivūlės*) and others.

Exceptionally large buildings within settlement areas sometimes provided space for these community needs. Such wooden buildings among the Western Slavs and early Scandinavians could be as big as 15x85 m (see Olsen, 1970 pp.273–4, 277; Słupecki, 1993 pp.269–78; Brink, 1996 pp.242–8). The information, which is not repeated in other sources about Balts' religion, should probably be evaluated in the same context. In 1384 in Vandžiogala land Lithuanians, who were taken by surprise near the temples (*edes sacras*), ran to hide inside them and were captured by Teutons. There were 36 men captured from one building and 60 from another (women

and children were not counted) (Vėlius, 1996 pp.463, 469).

It is not absolutely clear who was the performer of a community's rituals. The most prevalent opinion is that these were the oldest members of the community. For instance, Wigand of Marburg (14th c.) says that in 1336 when Teutons besieged the Pilėnai castle, its protectors did not want to surrender alive, so they destroyed all the things that were in the castle. All women and children were strangled and a hundred men let an old idolater (*vetula pagana*) kill them with an axe (Vėlius, 1996 pp.458, 464).

The data of the 16th–17th c. about the community festivals and rituals that were held according to the old customs in villages shows that people of senior age performed rituals. However, their direct relation with the community is not always defined. They are often defined also as the high oracles (*primus augur* - Lasickis, 1969 p.42), commonly called magician (*schwenta burtinikie* - Slaviūnas, 1997 p.306), Viršaitis (Senior?) (*sacrificulus, quem Vurschayten appellat* - Mannhardt, 1936 pp.272, 294) and so on.

It could be suggested that these performers of rituals might be associated with the Lithuanian *diedai* (Old men, beggars) examined by A. J. Greimas. They may represent “the fallen, degraded but authentic stratum of priests of the old Lithuanian religion” (1990 p.405). In the 19th–20th c. these beggars did not usually have a permanent home (or used to stay with the families of one village in turn), their main activity was to pray for the dead relatives of people who give them food in return.

Regional sacred places. Many sacred places are recorded in administrative and/or defensive centres of the 13th–14th centuries (e.g. Alsėdžiai, Biržvėnuose, Gandinga, Kartena, Paštuva, Raseiniai, Viešvėnai). For instance, in Senoji Įpiltis, in the centre of the Couronian Duvzare land, there is a sacred stone called Aukuras (Sacrifice stone) and a spring that is said to be sacred comes from underneath the stone. East of the hill forts of Senoji Įpiltis and close to the open settlement are an Alka hill, Alka River and Laumė (Fairy) stone. In Karužiškė, in the centre of Samogitian Medininkai land, there is an Alka hill. In the centre of Samogitian Šiauduva land lays a sacred Dievytis (God's) Lake, and there also are the Dievytis sacred hill and Šventas River. Compare the detailed analysis of the monument complexes that are situated in the administrative and political centres of Semigallia of the 13th c. (Urtāns, 2001).

It is difficult to talk about the status of the sacred places used in administrative and/or defensive centres because of the relatively poor knowledge about the old territorial structures themselves. However, the fact that there is a reason to associate these sacred places with the complexes of monuments (settlements, defence, and burial sites) within the above-mentioned centres shows the connection between the centres and sacred places, eventual regional cult centres in this case (cf. Brink, 1996 p.261; 1999 p.427). The sacred places recorded in the former centres represent some types of sacred places (hills, groves, and waters). The oral tradition used

to associate these sacred places with the pre-Christian religion generally. However, the place-legends usually do not show to which god's or goddess's cult they were related. The names of sacred places do not illustrate that either, because they usually originate from the words *alka*, *šventas* (Sacred), *dievas* (God). Nevertheless, there are examples provided (see Chapter 3.1) that some hill forts typical of 1000–1400 AD are called hills of Thunder. Names of some other administrative and defence centres themselves also stay in connection with the Balts' mythology and religion, for instance, Veliuona (Goddess of Souls), Vilkmėgė (Girl of Wolves; this same goddess Medeina-Žvėrūna), and Švenčionys (Sacred site).

Who maintained the sacred places of regional significance is not absolutely clear. It is usually assumed that the offices of chieftain and priest coincided. Even though this opinion may also be discussed with reference to the Balts it is beyond the scope of this study. This study stops short of drawing the conclusion that near the former centres of Lithuania and in the immediate surroundings of some sacred places, the priests of the pre-Christian religion used to live in villages. Such settlements might have also existed among the early Scandinavians (Brink, 1999 pp.426, 433; also see Brink, 1996 pp.266–7).

Hermann of Wartberge in the *Chronicon Livoniae* (ca.1358–78) mentions that on 25th January 1362 a campaign in the Šėtėjai village (*Sethen*), which was called sacred (“que dicitur sancta”) was organised (Vėlius, 1996 pp.419, 420). Wigand of Marburg writes that on 26th January 1364 the Teutons managed to catch a sacred man (*sanctum virum*) in the Šėtėjai village (*Seten*) (Vėlius, 1996 pp.461, 467). There is evidence to suggest that these two notes are correlated. Wigand of Marburg used the *Chronicon Livoniae* and the year of the related campaign is only slightly different, the month and the day correspond, the name of the village and its location are also the same (cf. Šturms, 1946 p.33; Łowmiański, 1983 p.320).

The *Seten* mentioned together with the Neris River and Sviloniai site should be identified with Šėtėjai (Kaunas district). 5 km north-east of Šėtėjai the Šventas (Sacred) River flows, moreover, there are two Žinėnai (Priest's site) villages situated.⁶

It is attempted to associate the name *Seten*, *Sethen* with the Latvian *sēta* “fence; yard; farm” (Straubergs, 1960 p.140) even though Lithuanian *sat-*: *set-* is associated with *šėtas* “fat, obese”, *šėtoti* “romp, frolic, gambol” (Vanagas, 1981 pp.326–7). It is worth noting that not only one “sacred village” Šėtėjai stays in relationship with the Balts' religion. Southwest of Šėtės in Skuodas district there is a village called Burviai that is again associated with the Latvian word *burvis*, *burve* “magician; sorcerer; wizard”. Moreover, in one of the sacred groves in Prussia a site called *Zetyn* is mentioned in 1377 (Gerullis, 1922 p.156).

⁶ So far *Seten* was identified with Šėta in Kėdainiai district (cf. Šturms, 1946 pp.4, 33).

Peter of Dusburg wrote in 1326 that in about 1294–1300 the *Romene* village in the Aukshtainian land was burned down, “it was thought to be sacred according to the pagan customs” (Vėlius, 1996 pp.339, 350). In the *Kronike von Pruzinlant* of Nicolaus of Jeroshin that was written in about 1340 after Peter of Dusburg, it is said that the *Romein* village was powerful and rich, due to the silly custom of Aukshtaitians it was thought to be sacred (Vėlius, 1996 pp.365, 375).

The *Romene* is identified with Romainiai near Kaunas (cf. Salys, 1930 p.65). In 1398 in the region of the confluence of the Nemunas and Nevėžis Rivers, a Šventas (Sacred) grove is also mentioned (Mannhardt, 1936 p.127).

There may also have been sacred villages in other localities. There are the villages of Žyniai and Žyneliai (of the Priests) in Courland on the Baltic Sea, where Adam of Bremen (ca. 1075) says, “all Couronian houses are full of priests, soothsayers and magicians” (1961 pp.454–5). The Vaidilai village (*vaidila* “priest”) is situated in Samogitia, north of the sacred grove. Besides, in this part of Samogitia at the end of the 17th c. there were still priests and priestesses (*Weydullis*, *Weiduluttin*) (see Mannhardt, 1936 pp.527–9, 530–1) who performed various functions typical of the old stratum of priests.

The name of Burveliai village is associated as related above with the Latvian *burvis* or *burve* “magician; sorcerer; wizard”. The Burveliai site is situated behind the Nevėžis River vis-à-vis of the hill fort typical of 1000–1400 AD. South of Burveliai a cemetery of 1200–1400 AD has been explored. At the confluence of Nevėžis and Lielupis Rivers near Burveliai there is a hill that is supposed to be sacred, called Kopylyčia (Chapel).

It is difficult to discuss sacred places of **inter-regional** significance. Firstly, a regional sacred place may also have supposed significance for other regions and may in this way claim an inter-regional status. Secondly, it is important for how many regions, and of what size and significance, such a sacred place had its power.

The sacred places that are situated between the territories administered from different centres probably best represent the inter-regional sacred places. In other countries such cases are discussed quite reasonably (see Calissendorff, 1971 pp.4–9; Fabech, 1994 p.175, 1999 p.464; Urtāns, 1998 pp.172–3; Brink, 2001 p.100).

The old territorial units themselves are too poorly known in Lithuania. After comparison between the distribution of archaeological sites of the early 2nd millennium AD and historical data of 13th–14th c. it has been noticed that the sacred sites are often situated on the sides of the territorial units (lands, districts) or between them (Šimėnas, 1995; Vaitkevičius, 1998a pp.11–4). The same has been concluded in this work as well (see Chapters 3.1–3.3, 3.5.3). Meanwhile, it is difficult to distinguish particular features of these sacred sites. But one more vivid geographical feature of them can be singled out:

they are frequently found in woody highlands and marshy lowlands of the watersheds. Usually sacred places belong to complexes here; they also stand out in their size and variety and their abundance of place-legends, as well as in some other natural as well as cultural features (Fig. 56).



Fig. 56. Sacred hill of Girnikai (Šiauliai district). Photo by B. Buračas, 1935. CHC.

Sacred sites of this kind might have been associated with some mythological views, primarily images about the world of gods and the dead, which starts behind the cultural space controlled by humans. Compare the Senmiestė wetland regarded to be the “Hell of devils”; the Dausynai (*dausos* “other world”) wetland near a village having the same name and the Vėlė (Souls) River there; Peklalė (Hell) and Čysčius (Purgatory) swamps in Alsėdžiai forest; the Dievarastis (God’s) wetland in Dabužiai forest. All these places are situated in watershed areas.

There is little to say about how the inter-regional sacred places functioned. The written sources only allow one to imagine that at a certain time and place, people used to gather from different villages, districts and lands (cf. Łowmiański, 1983 pp.317–20).

In such a context E. Šturms evaluated the note that on January 26 in 1364 in Šatijai village the Teutons managed to catch a sacred man (*sanctum virum*) and he promised to take them to the place in the woods where they would find a lot of pagans gathered. The next day the man took the Teutons to Varluva land where in a horrible forest people gathered from all the three villages of Varluva land were taken unawares (Šturms, 1946 p.33; Vėlius, 1996 pp.461, 467).

This note could mean that the place in the forest was a sacred or meeting place (compare meeting places called Sacred in Scandinavia - Calissendorff, 1971 pp.4–9, Andersson, 1992 p.253). However, it is difficult to interpret the event of 1364. All this took place in the days of the Teutons’ attack.

When trying to answer the question of how the inter-regional sacred places operated it is worth taking into account the functioning of the Catholic churches and the holy places in

nature. Some of them are, by the way, in the former centres and watershed areas (Gvaldai, Joskaudai, Kražiai, Paringys, Raseiniai, Trakai, Tverai, Žemaičių Kalvarija). People from distant parishes or even other dioceses still abundantly visit places that are famous for miracles during the church feasts.

Presumably the Romuva site in Nadrovia, in Prussia, has inter-regional, or more precisely, **intertribal** significance. In 1326 Peter of Dusburg tells about it in the *Chronicon terrae Prussiae*. “In the middle (of the populated lands) of this perverse nation - in Nadrovia - there was a place which was called Romuva which was named after Rome. A person lived there who was called Krivė (‘Fuit autem in medio nacionis hujus perverse, scilicet in Nadrowia, locus quidam dictus Romow, trahens nomen suum a Roma, in quo habitabat quidam, dictus Criwe, quem colebant pro papa’). He was respected as a Pope because in the same way as his Holiness manages the Church, Krivė has power not only among the mentioned tribes but also among Lithuanians and other nations living in Livonian lands. His authority was so great that not only he himself, and his tribesmen, but also his messenger with a stick (‘nuncius cum baculo’) or other well-known sign when travelling <...> received greatest respect from the dukes, nobles and populace (‘regibus et nobilibus, et communi populo’). <...> Inappropriate jokes would happen about the dead. For instance, parents of the dead would go to the mentioned Pope-Krivė and when they asked whether he had seen anyone going to their house on such a day and such a night he would answer without doubt what were the clothes, weapons, horses and relatives of the dead <...>. After a victory they sacrifice their gods an offering of gratitude from all the spoils that were won during the war, one third of it was given to the already mentioned Krivė which he would burn” (Vėlius, 1996 pp. 334, 344–5).

It is even difficult to discuss everything that has been written by researchers about Romuva (Batūra, 1985 pp.355–60; Vėlius, 1996 pp.330–1, also with references). So far, different points of view are expressed in historiography on this topic. One opinion is that in Nadrovia there was an intertribal religious centre of the Balts, which in the second half of the 13th c. was moved to Lithuania, to Romainiai near Kaunas (Łowmiański, 1983 pp.319–20). Another opinion is that in Nadrovia there might have been a sacred grove that was called Romuva, however, it did not have such a great significance as it is described in the “Chronicle of the Prussian lands”. There was no Krivė-Pope, because Peter of Dusburg invented him so that the Balts’ religion would be more similar to the “contra-church” (Rowell, 1994 pp.38, 126).

In spite of the ideological prism and compilation, those were revealed lately (cf. Rowell, 1994 pp.38, 125–6) there is reason to presume that the story of Peter of Dusburg is based on the Prussian oral tradition (cf. Mannhardt, 1936 p.90).

An institution of meetings existed among the Balts; the most important issues were always solved this way. As the comparative data shows, the meetings of representatives of all lands/tribes in 8th–13th c. in the Baltic Sea region usually had

a set place in the middle of the lands. Compare *Marklo* in Saxonia (Hauck, 1964; Hofmeister, 1967), *Raigele* in Estland (Łowmiański, 1983 p.319), Skara, Uppsala (Liedgren, 1956; Nordahl, 1996), and Roma in Sweden (Peel, 1999 pp.29), Viborg in Denmark (Levin Nielsen, 1974), *Rethra* and Arkona in Polabien (Herrmann, 1974; Schmidt, 1974; Dralle, 1984; Ślupecki, 1994 pp.24–44, 51–65) (Map XXX). Depending on historic time and environment, these places played a political, administrative, economic, and religious role; that is, they really performed the role of centres.

It may be assumed that the representatives of the lands and tribes met once a year (or once every few years) in Romuva to re-establish political and legal agreements, to discuss their amendments and other important topics. Most likely the Romuva site also has the highest intertribal status of sacred place or such a site was situated near to the major meeting place.

All aspects of the origin of Romuva in Nadrovia and its period can only be defined by overall research of Prussian political history and culture. Meanwhile there is evidence to suggest that the Romuva centre existed in Nadrovia until 1274–77. Later it was moved to Lithuania, to the Romainiai site (the same name as Romuva) (cf. Łowmiański, 1983 pp.319–20, Gudavičius, 1983 p.63, 1999 p.179).

The parallels between Romuva (*Romow*) in Nadrovia and Roma (*Rumum*) in Gotland Island (see Müller-Wille, 1984 p.211; Östergren, 1992; Peel, 1999 pp.13, 29, 34) deserve additional attention. As places for meetings and rituals, both of them functioned according to the same model:⁷ both of them were in the “middle”, representatives of all the lands used to gather here. *Krivè* issued invitations to meetings in Romuva sending the *krivè* or *krivùlè* (“the stick-sign with crooked head”) around the people. It is not clear who issued invitations to the *Althinget Gutlandia* (Major Meeting of Gotlanders) at the Roma site. But the explorations of the Halla-Broe, Björke cemeteries in the surroundings of Roma and the hoards found there (Thunmark-Nylén, 1995 Figs.127–137; 2000 pp.313–50, 583–92, 1050–1) show that in the Viking Age people of a high (highest?) social stratum used to live near Roma.

In the continental part of Sweden meeting places usually have names that include *ting-* or *thing-*, so Roma (*Rumum*) in Gotland Island is one of the exceptions.

Linguists suppose the Germanic *rum-* and the Baltic *ram-*: *rom-* are of different origin and meaning (cf. Pokorny, 1959 pp. 864, 874). But in Gotland *Rumum* was pronounced as *rämme* [ro: m] (Olsson, 1984 p.47). And the name of the village near the sacred field in Samland, for instance, varied in the 14th c. as *Romehnen/Romaynis/Rummove* (Vélius, 1996 pp. 320, 323). It shows that the old Scandinavian *rum* “open place; field” and the Baltic *ram-*: *rom-* “calm, serene and so on” in place-names can still be related semantically.

⁷ For the Viking and Couronian connections in the perspective of social geography see: Žulkus, 1999 pp.135–7.

The data also allow discussion of sacred places that had a **national** status. Such a rank resembles the regional or interregional sacred places in many ways; however, the particularity of the supposed State’s cult places is a bit different. Firstly, they usually are situated in the centres of the State period. It is also reasonable to assume that the sovereign or people appointed by him founded these sacred places in a centralised way, developing and establishing the ideology of the State in the periphery. Moreover, the mythological meanings of these sacred places were directly associated with the content of the religion of the State itself.

The religion of the Lithuanian State (from circa 1180–1230 AD) is still a topic of discussion (cf. Toporov, 1980 pp.34–40; Greimas, 1990 pp.17, 357–9). However, it is supposed that a common religious system, oriented to the leading stratum and expressing its ideology, was established (see Vaitkevičienė & Vaitkevičius, 2001); when burying a uniform, funeral ritual was followed and particular State cult places existed. Some sacred places were also associated directly with the leading military stratum of the 13th–14th c. (the Grand Duke and nobles). They existed in (nearby) their domain areas: residences, estates. By the way, it is typical that the State’s cult places are in use in the Grand Duke’s domain (Sorensen, 1992 pp.234–5).

An interesting example is the Padievaitis sacred place with a stone “throne” (Fig. 57). It belongs to the archaeological complex that consisted of hill fort, open settlement and cemetery of the 1st - beginning of the 2nd millennium AD. Here used to stand an important castle administrated by a viceroy of the Grand Duke Gediminas (1316–41) and destroyed by the Teutons in 1329 (Dubonis, 1998 pp.53–5). During the excavation near the sacred stone in 1971 by V. Urbanavičius some



Fig. 57. *Velnio sostas* (Devil’s Throne) stone of Padievaitis (*Šilalė* district) during excavation. Photo by V. Urbanavičius, 1971. LIH-32685.

potsherds dating from the beginning of the 2nd millennium AD were found as well as a fireplace, and some stones standing around a major stone “throne”.

It is worth noting that a typical element of the environment of the sacred places called Kiškio bažnyčia (Church of the Hare) and Vilkpėdė (Footmark of the Wolf) (Map XXXI) are State castles, royal estates or the place-names related to the domain of nobles. Most of the above-mentioned sacred places (hills, groves, stones, and small swamps) are situated within 10 km of the castles and estates (Birštonas, Daugai, Stakliškės, Valkininkai, Žiežmariai). These sacred places may be ascribed to cult places of the State goddess Žvėrūna-Medeina (from *medis* “wood; tree” and *žvėris* “beast”). Her servants were wolves and hares. The goddess herself might be visualised as a wolf. A hare seems to be a typical sacrifice offered for Medeina-Žvėrūna (see Vaitkevičius, 2003).

However, the most vivid example of the State's sacred places are sites called Šventaragiai (from *šventas* “sacred” and *ragas* “horn; peninsula; fire”). They are recorded in nine localities of Eastern and Western Lithuania. One more village of Šventaragis is situated in the district of Marijampolė (Map XXXII).

Some landscape elements: highlands in the confluences of rivers (Anykščiai, Čiuželiai, Dvarviečiai, Vilnius), lake peninsulas (Aigėlai, Girsteitiškis), groves (Dvarviečiai, Vilnius) and wetlands (Papreniškiiai) have preserved the name Šventaragis. They usually lie behind the river vis-à-vis of the dwelling/defence sites (Anykščiai, Dvarviečiai, Vilnius) and often 0.5–3 km distance from sacred places called Alkai (Aigėlai, Anykščiai, Papreniškiiai) typical of the tribal period (see Chapters 3.1-3.3).

Place-legends tell that holy fire used to burn in the sacred places called Šventaragiai, people used to pray there, a church used to stand there or that dead dukes and nobles were burned there (see Vėlius, 2001 pp.380). The latter purpose is also the main supposed function of these sites (Vaitkevičienė & Vaitkevičius, 2001 pp. 317–8).

Three sacred places called Šventaragiai are associated with the State's early centres in Vilnius, Anykščiai, and Ukmergė. State castles and/or the royal estates were sited there, there is also a political, military and social *leičiai* institution recorded here. The location of two Šventaragiai in the Molėtai region is not so eloquent but the Girsteitiškis site is supposedly related to the son of King Mindaugas Girstukas/Girsteikis.

The Šventaragis of Dvarviečiai is in the part of Samogitia that King Mindaugas was already disposing in the mid-13th c. Later, when the 13th c. was coming to an end, the Grand Duke Traidenis settled the refugee Semigallians here (Dubonis, 1998 pp.61–3). The power of the Grand Duke reached Kražiai also in the mid-13th c. after one of the Dukes of Samogitia, Vykintas, was defeated. It is more complicated to describe the historic context of the Šventaragis of Čiuželiai, but it is reasonable to think that in the early and mid-13th c. the western border of the Lithuanian State was here.

The distribution of Šventaragiai sites correlates with the distribution of the early political centres in the core of the State and in its periphery. That illustrates not the national policy in the personality of the Grand Duke but its spread/development through his servants - *leičiai*. The latter institution, which already existed in the early 13th c., is a particular “development mechanism” of the central power and the ideology of the State (Dubonis, 1998 pp.85–6, 92–9).

The northern line of the Lithuanian border, with natural obstacles, fortifications like ramparts and castles (including ones in Ukmergė and Anykščiai) protected by *leičiai*, was moulded in 1230–35. The Grand Duke established his authority in Samogitia (including Betygala and Kražiai) after the victory in the civil war of 1248–52. This allows us to assume that the sacred places called Šventaragiai might have been founded in a centralised way during the short period 1200–1250 AD. As the previous research concluded, two of the Šventaragiai (in Dvarviečiai and Vilnius) possessing the status of the State's cult places, were in use up to the conversion of Lithuania in 1387 and Samogitia in 1413 (Vaitkevičienė & Vaitkevičius, 2001 pp.312–8).

Data about sacred places of State significance could be weightily supplemented by the results of the investigations into sacred places situated in the historic capitals of the Lithuanian State. However, not enough attention has been paid to them so far and so they can be discussed only partially.

The State's eventual sacred places in Kernavė, Trakai and Vilnius are sacred groves. This must have been a particular sacral space where some elements that belonged to it were combined, for instance, trees, stones, springs, ritual holes or fireplaces related to cults of different gods.

The supposed sacred grove called Gojus is situated south-east of Kernavė, a city of the 13th–14th c., in the lower reaches of the Kernavė River. According to the data of 1935 it occupied an area of approximately 10 ha. On the side of it at that time there was still a dry oak, which could hardly be embraced by five people, a cross has been carved on it and some “old Lithuanian signs”. “People from far places would come to see this oak, they would go solemnly, their hats off” (Onom.).

The already-mentioned grove of sacred lime trees (see Chapters 3.3, 3.3.1) was situated north-west of Trakai. There was a royal domain, which was later presented to the nobles of Tottori origin. At the end of the 15th c. the right of Tottori to this land had already been confirmed (Baliulis, Mikulionis & Miškinis, 1991 p.85).

In the Chronicle of M. Strykovsky (published in 1582) the stories about the mythical Duke Šventaragis, the hunt of Grand Duke Gediminas and others were presented in detail. It was also said that in Vilnius, west of the Grand Duke's Palace (behind the Vilnia River) there used to be a sacred grove (Map XXXIII). The grove (or the part near the so-called Puškarnia) corresponded with the area attributed to the Vilnius Šventaragis. It seems that there, near the supposed old centre of extraction

and processing of iron, there used to be a place for burning the dead dukes and nobles.⁸ By the way, as in Trakai, the Grand Duke also divided the Lukiškės site for Tottori.

This and other sacred places in Vilnius have so far received just a little bit more attention from the researchers of the Balts' mythology (Toporov, 1980; Greimas, 1998). The only exception is the heated discussion about the remains of the Perkūnas (Thunder) sanctuary beneath Cathedral and the interpretations of the results of their research (Kitkauskas, Lisanka & Lasavickas, 1986; Kitkauskas, 1989 pp.115–25; Urbanavičius, 2000; Katalynas, 2000 pp. 213–5; also see Dubonis, 1997). To get one's bearings in this discussion was not easy from the very beginning, even for the heads of the excavations. Naturally the results of the research are being verified for a while and will probably be verified again in future.

In the meantime it is certain that on the place of Vilnius Cathedral until Lithuania's conversion there was a sacred place of State significance, most probably with certain equipment and idols. Pope Urban IV in his bull of 1388 says that the Grand Duke Jogaila, before starting the conversion of Lithuania, demolished a temple (*fanum*) in the above-mentioned site, where he and other pagans used to worship gods and idols before (Vėlius, 1996 pp.447–8). Yan Dlugosh (the second half of the 15th c.) also tells about a temple ("templum et ara") on the site of Vilnius Cathedral (Vėlius, 1996 pp.572, 574). Since the 16th c. this sanctuary, which was founded by the Grand Duke's Palace, was attributed to the god Perkūnas (Thunder).

To sum up, it might be maintained that the Balts' sacred places in Lithuania were differentiated according to what social role and religious functions they performed. The sacred places have been in use at home, in the village, in the centres of various ranks and also between the areas administrated from some different centres. They were related according to the religious needs of a family/kin, community, several communities or tribe (compare research into Swedish sacred places by Vikstrand, 2001 pp.428, 410–7).

The Romuva in Nadrovia - an intertribal sacred place - is a unique case among the Balts but not in the Baltic Sea region. A specific group of sacred places is formed by the State's cult places. Most of them are found in the centres of the State period and expressed the religious interests of the leading stratum.

⁸ About the god Kalvelis (Smith; Son of the Smith) in the State's pantheon and the hypothetical participation of smiths while burning the dead see Vaitkevičienė & Vaitkevičius, 2001 p p. 318-22.

6 Sacred places and the cult of the dead

While analysing sacred places whose mythical meanings are associated with view of an afterlife and the posthumous state of the soul, the problem of links between the sacred places and cult of the dead has not been mentioned yet.

Written sources often say that the Balts used to solemnly burn their dead. However, only two sources define the place where such rituals were performed. Ghillebert de Lannoy, a French noble, wrote in 1413–14 that among the baptised Couronians there was still a “sect” whose dead members were burnt “in the nearest grove” (Vėlius, 1996 pp.513–4).

Yan Dlugosh in *Historia Polonica*, written in the 15th century, provides the data that in the sacred woods of Samogitia families used to have fireplaces that were meant for burning the bodies of dead relatives. According to the author, the Samogitians used to believe the same woods were the “abode of gods”, where offerings were sacrificed for souls as well as for Thunder (Vėlius, 1996 pp.560, 580–1). In another part of the same book it is said that Lithuanians used to have special groves (*speciales silvas*) in which farms, houses and families had certain fireplaces (*speciales focos*) meant for burning the bodies of the dead. Yan Dlugosh says that according to the same custom (“in hunc quoque morem”) the Grand Duke Algirdas was solemnly burned in 1377 in the *Kokiveithus* grove not far away from the Maišiagala castle and settlement (Vėlius, 1996 pp.556).

So according to the data of the two sources of the 15th c., the dead of the Couronians, Samogitians and Lithuanians were burned in groves close to the settlements. According to Yan Dlugosh, these specific groves were thought to be sacred; one of them had the name of *Kokiveithus*.⁹ Considering the Kukavaitis that was mentioned in the Annals of Lithuania of the 16th c., this grove has so far been groundlessly identified with the site of the same name in the environs of Deltuva (cf. Batūra, 1966 p.272; Zabiela & Baranauskas, 1996 p.7).

Place-names including the words *Kaukas* and *Kukas* are often recorded near the hill forts and open settlements (Budeliai, Garniai, Jogvilai, Merkinė, Paverkniai, and Trakiniai) (Fig. 58). In some cases, however, settlements were directly related to so-called sites - an ancient road lined with trees led from Beižionys hill fort through the Kukiškės wetland to the two Kukiškės hills (LIH, 2231 pp.24–5). An ancient road paved with stones led from Varnupiai hill fort through the Palios wetland approximately in the direction of the Kaukai hills (Totoraitis, 1908 p.179).

The examination of the name Kukumbalis (Kukas' wetland) and other analogous place-names has shown that the word *kukas* “Devil” together with *kaukas* “one of the chthonic souls” also “soul of the dead” are words of the same origin.

⁹Other variations of this place-name in documents of the 16th–18th c. are *KaKoweytis*, *Kukaweytis*, *Kukowajtyš*.

They most likely derive from Indo-European **keuk-/*kuk-* “to bend, make curvy, crooked” (Karaliūnas, 1970 p.259).

There are a lot of words in Lithuanian that are derived from *kauk-/kuk-*. The most famous one is *kaukas* “chthonic soul which brings riches, elf”. But such a meaning, which *kaukas* usually possesses, does not explain the mythological meaning of the sacred places called Kaukai at all. The “special grove” for burning the dead (not singling out the dukes) called *Kokiveithus* suggests that the meanings of the words *kaukas*, *kukas* were related to the dead. A. J. Greimas revealed this association by showing that the *kaukas* concept is surrounded by “representations of death” (1990 p.61). Also burial sites of various periods of the Iron Age often have names with *kauk-/kuk-* (Domančiai, Gasparai, Kauksnujai).

This implies that behind the cultural space of the ancient settlements there were natural woods, wetlands or hills that have specific mythological meanings which were related to *kaukai* “souls of the dead” (also see Greimas, 1990 p.66). The example of *Kokiveithus* shows that these mythological meanings directly correlated with the ritual of burning the dead. In other cases (not considering whether or not the places of burning the dead had names similar to *kauk-/kuk-*)¹⁰ there is a direct relation between the status of the sacred grove and the rituals performed there, in this case, the burning of the dead.

The links between the burial sites and the sacred places have not been much examined in Lithuania so far. Many burial sites of various periods are known, whose sacredness is well motivated by the place-legends, historic data, shown by the sacred trees or stones that are situated in their area (Kairiškiai, Onuškis, Paegliuonis). In some places the cemeteries are just called Alkai (Kamščiai, Pakalniškiai (Radviliškis district)).

¹⁰ Let us say that these might have also been names with the root *vel-* in them.



Fig. 58. *Kaukas hill of Jogvilai (Ukmergė district)*. Photo by author, 2002.

The easiest way for explaining such a fact is that in Christian times people started to bury their dead in the area of former sacred places (cf. the Alka hills in Alkai, Erkšva, Puokė). On the other hand, the fact that the old rituals in the context of the cult of the dead were performed in the existing burial sites does not cause any doubts. That is verified in various sources, including archaeological and historical ones (Gimbutas, 1943 pp.58–65, 72–7; Lasickis, 1969 p.24; Genienė & Genys, 1993 pp.69–70; Vaitkunskienė, 1995).

So the most important cause is to note the clearer boundary between the sacred places - landscape details of various kinds related to certain deities (also views about the souls of the dead) and ritual places of the cult of the dead in burial sites near family/kin/community ancestors' graves. This theoretical boundary, which should be consistently followed, is destroyed probably by only one specific group of sacred places. These are the sacred places that are interpreted as burial sites and that motivates their sacredness (see Chapter 3.1).

Having in mind the information provided by M. Strykovsky in 1582 (Vėlius, 2001 p.561; also see Vaitkevičius, 1998a pp.107–9) the sample of the Birutė hill in Palanga would suggest that such sacred places were not burial sites. Near the chapel on this hill there were found only four graves dating back to the late 17th - 19th c. (Žulkus, 1997 pp.25–8).

The excavation of the Kušleikiai barrow without any results confirms the same. The description of this site in 1853 expressively presents the features of sacred places of this kind. It is said that in this huge barrow a person of good will and a liberator of this land is buried – a hero giant who defeated the enemies, dug rivers and mowed the woods with a scythe. Later some of his successors told his sons by testament to respect this grave and that they would tell their children “to respect this grave as sacred” as well. In Christian times (“maybe about 1700”) offerings were brought there: mead, bread, eggs and other things. The poor people and beggars would take them. This custom stopped only when priests damned visitors to this place, did not let them into the church and called the hill itself the *Velnių kapai* (Devils' graves) (Kossarzewski, 1857/1863 p.155v).

This implies that the burial sites of circa the 14th–18th c. called *Velniakalniai* (Hills of the Devil) might also have acquired such a name because people used to perform the old rituals there (*Kriaušiškiei*, *Masiuliškiai*). But on the whole the problem of the sacred places that are called by the name of the *Velnias* (Devil) is highly complicated and has not been examined in more detail so far.

The *Velnias* hill (*Czarthowahora*) in Vilnius is mentioned in maybe the earliest written source - in 1441. Much more frequently the name of the Devil occurred in the period of the Reformation in the 16th c. (Vėlius, 1987 pp.235–8). There are quite a lot of sacred places whose names include the word *velnias* (the Devil). The same may also be said about the neighbouring countries (see Ziesemer, 1938 p.14; Witkowski, 1970 p.379; Urtāns, 1993b; Levkov et al., 2000 pp.50–1). In or-

der to define in which cases the Devil is the old “owner” of the sacred place and in which cases he just “took over” the place of someone else, detailed complex research is necessary. In the process of preparing this monograph about Lithuanian sacred places, various examples were found. For instance, Devil is found in the context of the dead and their world (cf. Devil's swamps, Devil's hollows), however, it can be assigned to some atypical sacral spheres, for instance, health.

7 The traditions of sacred places: chronology and distribution

All groups of sacred places that are known at present have been presented in this monograph. This classification of sacred places based on the analysis of about 1200 monuments, undoubtedly reflects only the present extent of knowledge about sacred places and will be clarified and added to in the future.

Apart from the investigations of the social role and religious significance of the sacred places, the chronological and spatial dimensions of sacred places should also be briefly discussed.

Firstly, all sacred places are the expression of mental culture so it is difficult to define their sacredness chronologically. Also, the chronological terms usually used investigating worldly culture can be only partially applied to sacred places.

The Balts' sacred places have not been examined so far in such aspects as the development of their traditions, their chronological sequence or modification. The present data provide an opportunity to talk accurately only about the distribution of certain sacred places and their local areas. They will play a really important role because we have only a small number of chronological indicators.

The generalised scientific information and the examining of the distribution of the monuments show that local traditions of the sacred places are usually typical to regions or small areas that are associated with archaeological cultures, territorial units like districts, lands or tribes.

In **Western** Lithuania, in the territory of the Couronian and Samogitian tribes, a lot of common traditions of sacred places were noticed. Most probably in the mid-1st millennium AD while developing, these tribes preserved a lot of common mythological and religious dimensions. In this region a lot of Alka hills, Aušrinė (Goddess of Dawn) hills, Saulė (Sun) hills, a lot of Šatrija (this same Witch) hills, Šventas (Sacred) fields, Šventas (Sacred) groves, sacred oaks and pine trees, and various sacred stones are recorded. Most of these sacred places are associated with the archaeological sites of 450–1400 AD.

It is reasonable to associate the cup-marked stones with the Barrow culture of the Western Balts (by the sea) and the Barrow culture of Northern Lithuania and to date them back accordingly to the late 1st millennium BC and 2nd–4th centuries AD. Other groups of sacred stones usually associated with archaeological sites of 450–1400 AD are frequently distributed in comparatively small local areas (stone “tables”, stone “beds” in the Couronian Keklis land, the Laumė (Fairy) stones, cylinder-shaped stones with flat-bottomed bowls - in the Couronian Duvzare, Keklis and Mėguva lands, tall stones - in the south of Samogitian Medininkai land).

Near the Samogitian cemeteries of 450–1350 AD there are a lot of swamps called Karčemvietės (Tavern's sites). The Pekla

(Hell) and Čyščius (Purgatory) swamps are situated near the Couronian cemeteries of the same period in Keklis land. For the latter, sacred springs flowing “against the Sun” are also typical. The Alka Rivers are recorded in South and Middle Samogitia as well as in Middle Lithuania.

Middle Lithuania, the cultural area of Aukshtaitians is like a crossroads of some different traditions of the sacred places or the transitional zone between them in east and west. Such monuments as cup-marked stones stay in association with the Barrow culture of the 2nd–4th centuries AD. Šatrija hills, stone “chairs”, Alka fields, Alka and Velnias (Devil) swamps, and Alka Rivers are sometimes related to the burial grounds of Middle Lithuania of the late 1st - early 2nd millennium AD.

Stones with narrow-bottomed bowls were widely distributed in Middle Lithuania supposedly in the 16th–17th c. (only one area of them with its epicentre in the Utena region is known in Eastern Lithuania) and did not cross the borders of the Courland Principality in the north.

In **Eastern** Lithuania, in the territory of the Lithuanian tribe, Alka islands, Alka fields, Šventas (Sacred) and sacrifice-requesting lakes, and Šventas (Sacred) Rivers are recorded. Sacred places of these groups are often associated with the archaeological sites of the mid-1st millennium - early 2nd millennium AD. There are also a lot of Kupolė (celebration period similar to St John's Day) hills, stone “damned people” (Mokas (Teachers) stones among them), stone “chairs”, stone “tailors”, and cylinder-shaped stones with flat-bottomed bowls recorded in this region. The latter are linked to the Couronian refugee who used to settle in Eastern Lithuania from the mid-13th c.

The area of stone “tailors” includes the lands of North-western Belarus as well. It allows the suggestion that this tradition of sacred places might have developed in the period of the Brushed Ware Culture before it ended in the 2nd–3rd centuries AD. Also, hill forts/temples with circular or oval cult buildings dating back to the 1st millennium BC - early 1st millennium AD are typical to the territory of the Brushed Ware Culture as well as to that of Dnieper-Dauguva Culture.

In addition, Dievas (God) and Laumė (Fairy) hills, Laumė (Fairy) stones, Alka swamps are recorded in relatively small local areas of Eastern Lithuania (Anykščiai, Molėtai, Ukmergė, and Utena regions). These monuments are dated back to the mid-1st - early 2nd millennium AD without more accurate chronology.

In **South/Southeastern** Lithuania the traditions of the sacred places of Eastern Lithuania are partially repeated, however there occur also some specific groups. That is because of the specific ethno-cultural situation in this region during the 3rd–6th centuries AD. There are notable Velnias (Devil) hollows, Šventas (Sacred) and sacrifice-requesting lakes, tall stones and stone “damned people” which often stay in relationship with archaeological sites of the mid-1st millennium AD.

Moreover, some stone “damned people” with Christian symbols carved on them, found in South Lithuania and North-western Belarus, are related to the Yotvingian population of around the 11th–17th c.

In quite compact but as yet not precisely dated cultural areas in South Lithuania there are recorded Perkūnas (Thunder) hills and sacred springs flowing “against the Sun” (Alytus region, the environs of Kazokiškės).

From chronological and spatial points of view these conclusions show that certain sacred places are more or less characteristic to particular cultural areas. Even when the monuments belonging to a certain group of sacred places at first sight seem to be evenly distributed, deeper analysis usually points out local areas where some very characteristic traditions of sacred places used to exist (cf. Perkūnas (Thunder) hills, Alka fields, Laumė (Fairy) stones). So there is reason to maintain that the traditions of the Balts’ sacred places defined and discussed in this work developed in the period before the formation of the Lithuanian State, that is, when the certain cultural areas existed. After the conversion some of these traditions were still recognised and used in their original or transformed form (Fig. 59) (cf. Alka, Saulė, Kupolė, and Šatrija hills, Šventas and Gojus groves, sacred oaks, lime and pine trees, stones with footprints, cylinder-shaped stones with flat-bottomed bowls, Šventas and sacrifice-requesting lakes, Šventas Rivers,

Raganinė (Witches’) sites, and sacred springs). There is too little information on the traditions of sacred places that originated in the period after the introduction of Christianity. One of the most vivid examples among them is probably group of stones with narrow-bottomed bowls.

The data about **South-western** Lithuania (Užnemunė; it became depopulated after the Teutons’ attack in the late 13th c. and gradually became settled again in the early 16th c.) is very helpful in the chronological research of sacred places. Quite a small number of sacred places are known here. It could only be compared with some of the areas in the Klaipėda and Vilnius regions or with regions that are not settled for natural reasons.

Most of the sacred places recorded in other parts of Lithuania are not known in Užnemunė. There is not even one sacred place called Alka. There are only single Dievas (Gods), Perkūnas (Thunder), Saulė (Sun), Aušrinė (Goddess of Dawn) hills, Šventas (Sacred) Rivers, Šventas (Sacred) Lakes, sacred springs and some other monuments actually concentrated in several micro-regions. These small regions are Vištytis - Bartinkai, Daukšiai, Simnas - Seirijai - Veisiejai, and on the left bank of the Nemunas River: Liškiava, Krikštonys, Pakuonis, and Zapyškis. There are also some hill forts, burial sites of the early 2nd millennium AD, and estates dating back to the 15th–17th c. So sacred places in the enumerated micro-



Fig. 59. Sacred stone of Akmenė (Raseiniai district) and wooden chapel built on it. Photo by author, 1994.

regions might be a part of the heritage of the pre-Christian period or they could be connected with the process of colonisation of Užnemunė, which started in the 16th c.

A partly similar situation is observed in Scalovia (**Lower Nemunas** region), Selonia (in **North-eastern** Lithuania) and Semigallia (in **Northern** Lithuania). In fact there are quite a number of various sacred places found in Northern and North-eastern Lithuania. Some monument groups such as Saulė (Sun) hills, Alka fields, stone “chairs” have been discussed. More vivid are the traditions of the Velnias (Devil’s) swamps, Vėlė (Souls) waters, Raganinė (Witches’) sites, stones with narrow-bottomed bowls, but it could hardly be agreed that this is the whole spectrum of sacred places in the Semigallian Žagarė and Upmale lands (moreover, stones with narrow-bottomed bowls were distributed in the 16th–17th c.).

Furthermore, the people newly settled in the part of Semigallia that was inserted into the Lithuanian State in the 15th–16th c. brought some of their own traditions. That these settlers used to have them may be judged also by S. Rostowskiy’s communication (wrote in 1768, with reference to Jesuits acted in the late 16th c.). There is said that while spreading of the Reformation “the populace especially in Samogitia and Semigallia or the ones who forgot the Christian laws or did not understand them came back from their villages to the groves to pray to both oaks and the Thunderer-Jupiter” (Ivinskis, 1986 p.406).

8 Conclusions

1) The use of the sacral term *alka* (*alkas*) in place-names and the tendencies of their spreading are an expression of several different traditions of the Balts' sacred places. Sacred places were in use on the hills, in the fields and meadows, in the forests and groves, on the shores of the lakes, wetlands and rivers, also by single trees, stones, springs, hollows, faults, and caves.

2) Different traditions of the sacred places are characteristic to different regions or local areas that are associated with the areas of archaeological cultures, lands or tribes. Those show that such traditions originated prior to the rise of the Lithuanian State.

Typical of **Courland** are Alka and Aušrinė (Goddess of Dawn) hills, cup-marked stones, cylinder-shaped stones with flat-bottomed bowls, stone "tables", stone "beds", Laumė (Fairy) stones, Pekla (Hell) and Čyščius (Purgatory) swamps, springs flowing "against the Sun". Typical of **Samogitia** are Alka, Aušrinė, Saulė (Sun), and Šatrija (this same Witch) hills, Šventas (Sacred) fields and groves, sacred oaks, pine trees, cup-marked stones, stone "chairs", tall stones, Karčemvietė (Tavern) swamps, Alka Rivers.

Typical of **Aukshtaitia** are Šatrija hills, Alka fields, cup-marked stones, stone "chairs", Alka and Velnias (Devil) swamps, Alka Rivers. Those of Semigallia are Alka fields, stone "chairs", Velnias swamps, Vėlė waters, and Raganinė (Witch's) sites.

Typical of **Lithuania** in a narrow sense (current Eastern Lithuania) are Alka islands, Dievas (God), Laumė (Fairy), and Kupolė (St John) hills, Alka fields, Šventas (Sacred) and sacrifice-requesting lakes, Alka swamps, stone "damned people" (including Mokai), stone "tailors", Laumė (Fairy) stones. **Yotvingia** has Perkūnas (Thunder) hills, Šventas (Sacred) and sacrifice-requesting lakes, Velnias (Devil) hollows, tall stones and stone "damned people", springs flowing "against the Sun".

In the **Selonia** region there is only one group of sacred places recorded: Saulė (Sun) hills. It is hard to talk about sacred places traditions in **Scalovia**.

In the period of the Lithuanian State (13th–14th c.) sacred places of tribal origin were still in use as well as new cult places founded near the royal estates or in the Grand Duke's domain while establishing uniform State's religion in the periphery.

After the introduction of Christianity a number of the ancient traditions of the sacred places existed in their pure or transformed form. Probably the most vivid example of the non-Christian sacred places that originated after the conversion is the stones with narrow-bottomed bowls.

3) Sacred places frequently belong to the archaeological sites' complexes that consisted of hill forts, open settlements, and burial sites. Sacred places also existed in complexes themselves (in pairs, several of them of the same or different kind type/group).

In the social perspective the status of sacred places was related to their religious functions. Sacred places on farms were meant for worshipping home/family/kin gods. Most of the sacred places existed in settlements or their neighbourhood and served the religious needs of the community. In the administrative and (or) defence centres of the districts, lands or tribes regional sacred places existed and between the territories administrated from these centres there were sacred places of inter-regional significance.

The sacred place Romuva, situated in Prussia, most likely was of intertribal importance in Nadrovia.

The State's cult places that were situated in the capital of the country and in centres in the periphery administered by the Grand Duke or the nobles are directly related to the State religion. So primarily they served the religious needs of the ruling class.

4) The sacred places are a unique expression of the Balts' religion. Their mythological meanings are associated with many gods and goddesses. Most notable are Perkūnas (Thunder), Saulė (Sun), Aušrinė (Goddess of Dawn), Laima (Goddess of fate, fortune), Ravana (Witch), Žvėrūna-Medeina (equivalent of Diana), Senelis Dievas (The old God). As well as "fairies", "devils", some of the souls and local deities that represent particular spheres of sacredness (e.g. the "proprietors" of woods or waters), and souls of the dead.

The sacredness of the sacred places, which are related to the dead, is specific. It is motivated by associations between the mythical state of the soul after death and the primary elements - water, tree, stone, and fire.

5) The Balts' sacred places are an integral part of the heritage of Lithuanian culture, the multifaceted research of which provides a wonderful opportunity to shed light on the Balts' religion and mythology through those details of the landscape that have sacral status.

References

Abbreviations

Abh. d. Akad. d. Wiss.	Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften (Göttingen)
AltM	Altpreuussische Monatsschrift (Königsberg)
ATL	Archeologiniai tyrinėjimai Lietuvoje (Vilnius)
AE	Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija (Riga)
GK	Gimtasai kraštas (Šiauliai)
HDA	Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens (Berlin)
KP	Kultūros paminklai (Vilnius)
LA	Lietuvos archeologija (Vilnius)
LKŽ	Lietuvių kalbos žodynas (Vilnius)
LZAV	Latvijas PSR Zinātņu akadēmijas vēstis (Riga)
MADA	Lietuvos TSR Mokslų akademijos darbai, ser. A (Vilnius)
MG	Mokslas ir gyvenimas (Vilnius)
MiIG	Mitteilungen der litauischen literarischen Gesellschaft (Heidelberg)
MK	Mūsų Kraštas (Vilnius)
TD	Tautosakos darbai (Vilnius)

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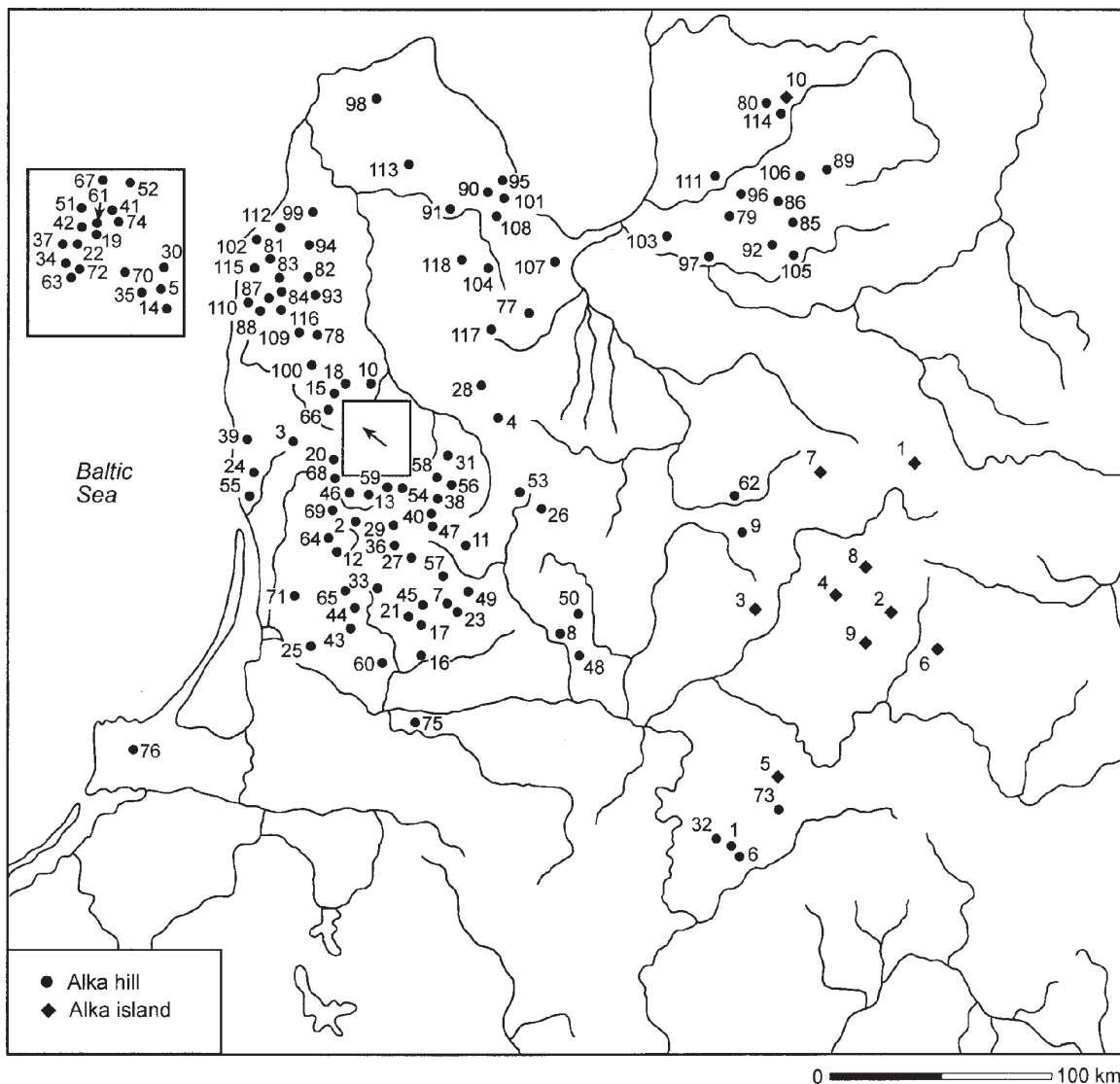
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Map I

Distribution of the Alka hills (■) (according to author (1998b) with additions)

Lithuania

1. Alka (Alytus district); 2. Alkai (Plungė district); 3. Alkas-Salantai; 4. Alkiškiai; 5. Alsėdžiai; 6. Andriūnai (Varėna district); 7. Antininkai; 8. Betygala; 9. Budrioniai; 10. Dapšiai; 11. Daugėliškės; 12. Didieji Mostaičiai; 13. Dilbšiai; 14. Eivydai; 15. Erkšva; 16. Eržvilkas; 17. Gaidėnai; 18. Gedrimai; 19. Getaučiai; 20. Gilaičiai; 21. Griguliai; 22. Gudaliai; 23. Gudeliai; 24. Joskaudai; 25. Juknaičiai; 26. Jusiaičiai; 27. Karūžiškė; 28. Kesiai; 29. Kliokai; 30. Kubakiai; 31. Leilėnai; 32. Lelionys; 33. Lembas; 34. Mačiūkiai; 35. Makščiai; 36. Mažasis Palūkstis; 37. Mikytai; 38. Muitaičiai; 39. Naujoji Įpiltis; 40. Pabiržulis; 41. Pabradaumė; 42. Padegimė; 43. Paežeris; 44. Pajūralis; 45. Pakalniškiai (Šilalė district); 46. Parkerai; 47. Pavandenė; 48. Pernarava-Blandžiai; 49. Plūščiai; 50. Pryšmantai; 51. Puokė; 52. Račiai; 53. Raizgiai; 54. Rubežaičiai; 55. Rūdaičiai; 56. Ruišėnai; 57. Rukšiai; 58. Sakalai 1; 59. Saušilis; 60. Siaurkampiai; 61. Šarnelė; 62. Tiltagalai; 63. Uogučiai; 64. Užupiai; 65. Užvėnai; 66. Vabalai (Skuodas district); 67. Vadagiai; 68. Vydeikiai; 69. Vieštovėnai; 70. Vilkai (Plungė district); 71. Vilką Kampas; 72. Visvainiai; 73. Žalioji-Alkaičiai; 74. Žemaičių Kalvarija.

Kaliningradskaya oblast

75. Alka/Alk/Morozovka; 76. Galbrasčiai/Livenskoye.

Latvia

77. Annenieki; 78. Asīte; 79. Auļi; 80. Buka; 81. Cīrava; 82. Dižlāņi; 83. Dunalka; 84. Durbe; 85. Ērgļi; 86. Eži; 87. Gausēni; 88. Gavieze; 89. Jaun-Piebalga; 90. Kampara; 91. Kandava; 92. Kastrāne; 93. Gravenieki; 94. Kupši; 95. Mežīte; 96. Mālpils; 97. Ogre; 98. Pāce; 99. Pliķi; 100. Priekule; 101. Ratnieki; 102. Saka; 103. Sala; 104. Sāti; 105. Skubiņi; 106. Skujene; 107. Slagūne; 108. Strasde; 109. Šilderi; 110. Tadaikši; 111. Turaida; 112. Turlava-Līpaiķi; 113. Usma; 114. Valmiera-Dīvelīņ; 115. Vērgale; 116. Vārtaja; 117. Zebrenē; 118. Zemīte.

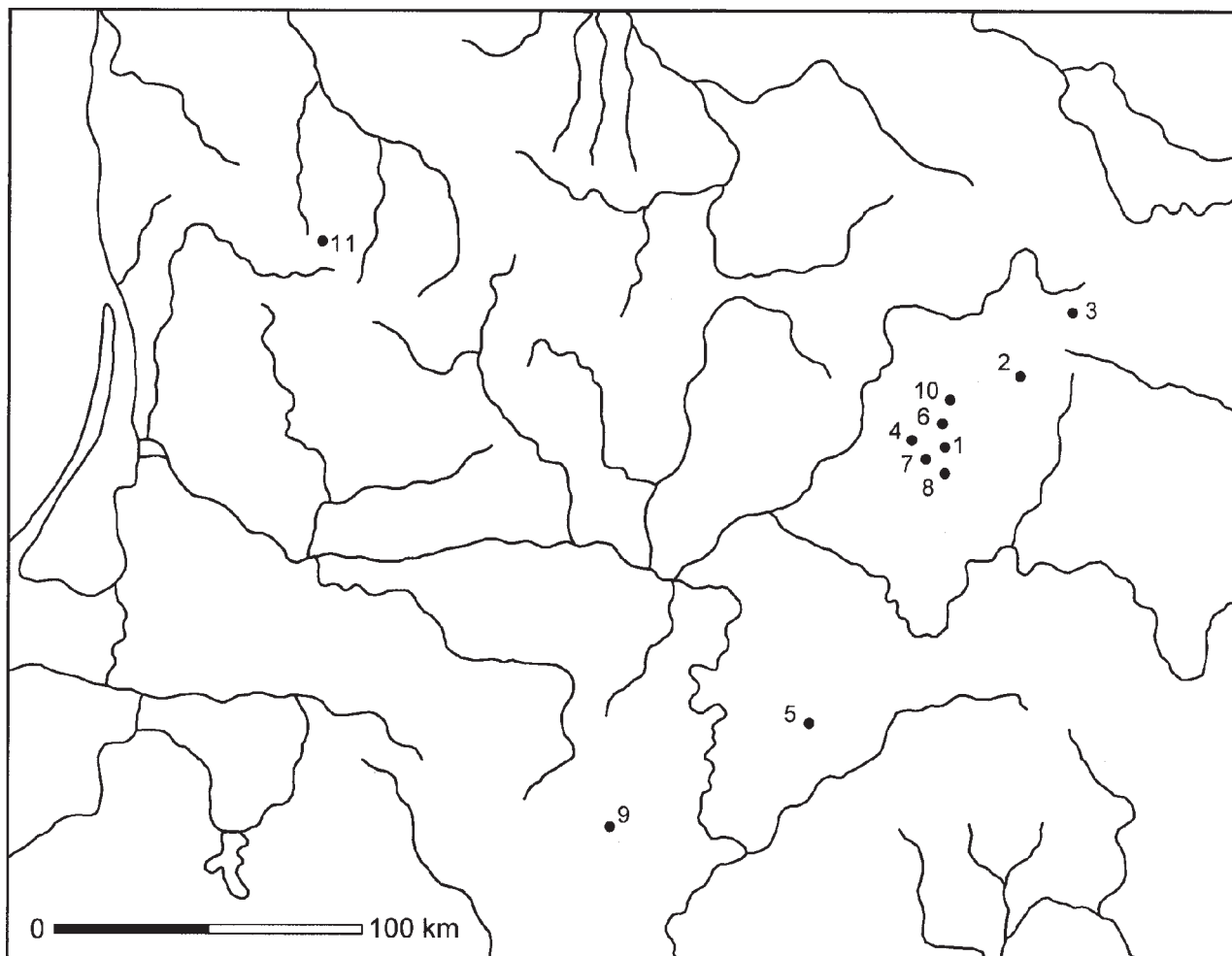
Distribution of the Alka islands (◆) (according to author (1998b) with additions)

Lithuania

1. Imbradas (two islands); 2. Kupriai; 3. Kurėnai; 4. Pakalniai; 5. Petkėniškiai; 6. Rakšteliai; 7. Skapiškis (two islands); 8. Sudeikiai; 9. Taitiškis.

Latvia

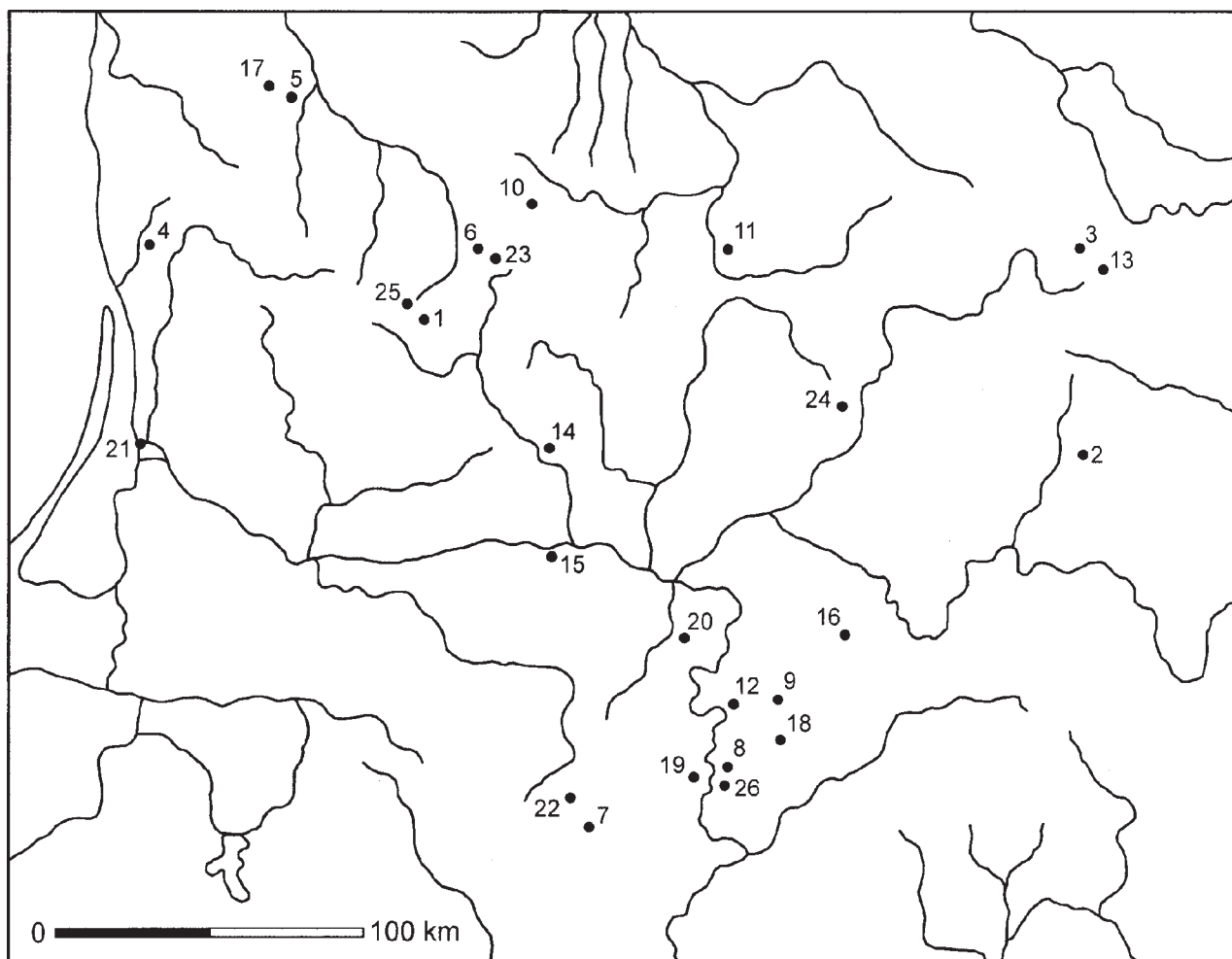
10. Valmiera.



Map II
Distribution of the Dievas hills (Hills of God)
(drawn by author)

Lithuania

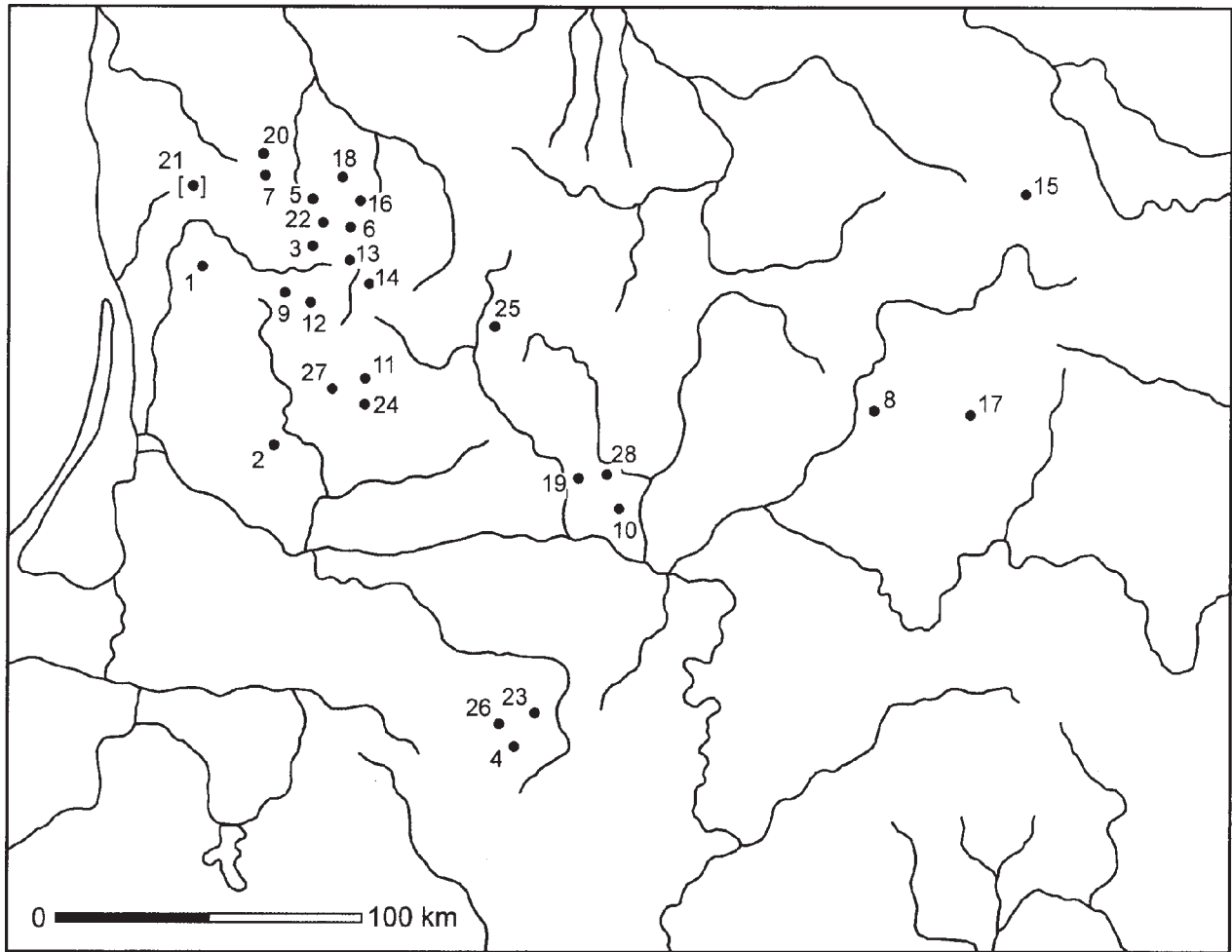
1. Duobužėlė; 2. Daunoriai; 3. Jakštai (two hills); 4. Karališkiai (Ukmergė district); 5. Kazimieravas; 6. Laumenkėliai; 7. Petrikiškės; 8. Pušalotai; 9. Spartai (Lazdijai district); 10. Šlapelės; 11. Vilnai (Telšiai district).



Map III
 Distribution of the Perkūnas hills (Hills of Thunder)
 (drawn by author)

Lithuania

1. Akmeniai (Kelmė district); 2. Cirkliškis; 3. Dītkūnai (Zarasai district); 4. Ēgliškės-Anduliai; 5. Juodeikiai; 6. Jurgoniškės; 7. Kalniškė; 8. Kastriskės; 9. Kaukinė; 10. Lūponiai; 11. Moliūnai; 12. Nemaniūnai; 13. Novinkai 3; 14. Pakalniškiai (Raseiniai district); 15. Palankinė; 16. Perkūnkiemis-Elektrenai; 17. Pikeliai; 18. Pocelonys; 19. Pupasodis-Žilvia; 20. Purvininkai; 21. Rusnė; 22. Sasnava; 23. Trauleiniai; 24. Užupušiai; 25. Užventis; 26. Vangelonys.

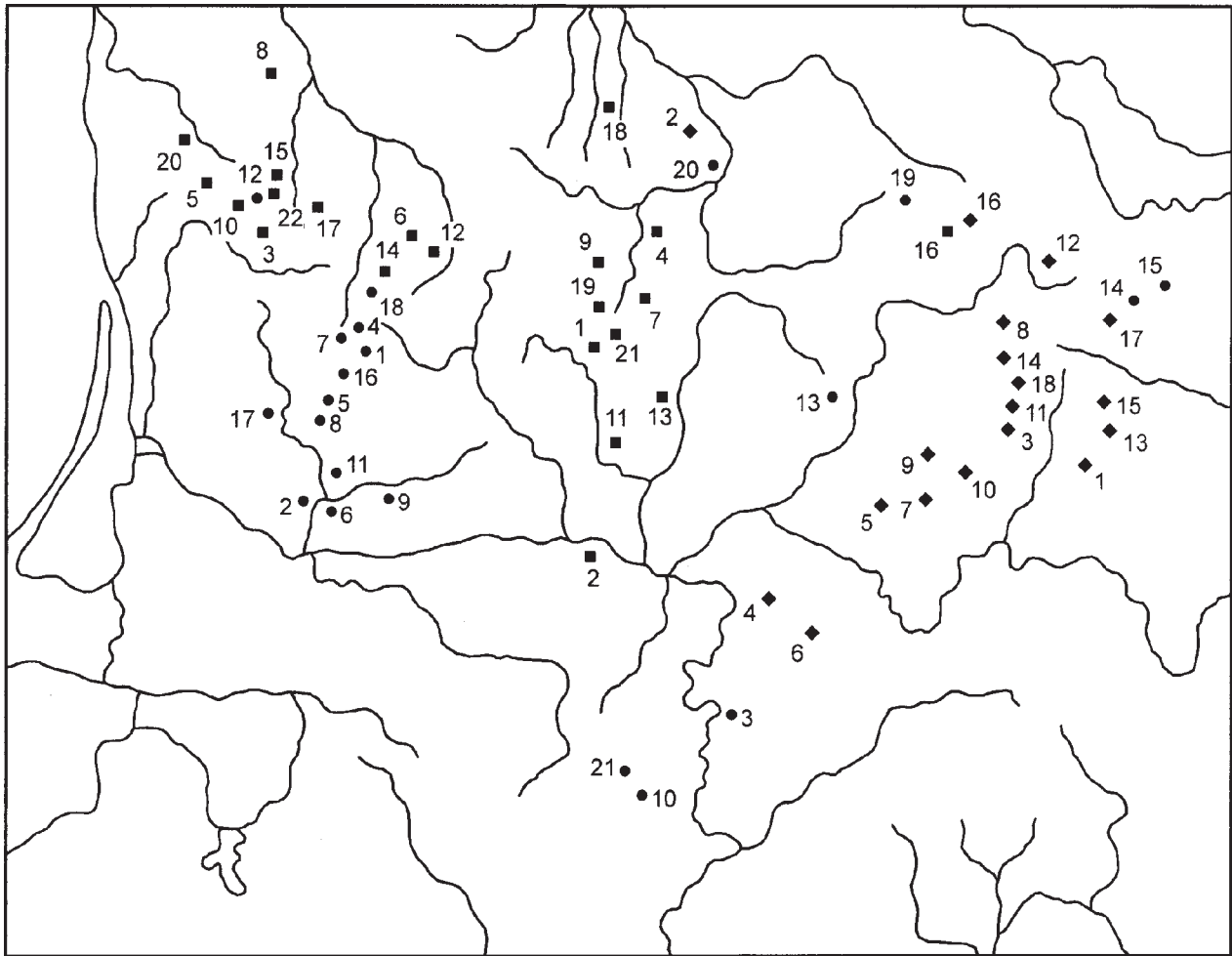


Map IV

Distribution of the Aušrinė hills (Hills of the Goddess of Dawn) (drawn by author)

Lithuania

1. Anužiai; 2. Bikavėnai; 3. Brazdeikiai; 4. Drausgiris; 5. Eivydai; 6. Feliksavavas; 7. Gudaliai; 8. Jogvilai; 9. Kapsūdžiai; 10. Karalginis; 11. Kaušai; 12. Kontaučiai; 13. Kreipštai; 14. Kuršai; 15. Maneivos; 16. Mediniai; 17. Mockėnai; 18. Nevardėnai; 19. Padubysis; 20. Paparčiai; 21. [Salantai]; 22. Sendvaris; 23. Šakiai; 24. Šiauduva; 25. Tolučiai; 26. Totorkiemis; 27. Vidutiškė; 28. Vytautėliai.



0 100 km

Map V

Distribution of the Saulė hills (Hills of the Sun) (●)
(according to author (1998a) with additions)

Lithuania

1. Bartlaukis; 2. Beigeriškės; 3. Birštonas; 4. Daktariškė; 5. Driežai; 6. Dvarelis; 7. Gelžyčiai; 8. Indija; 9. Lenkčiai; 10. Meteliai; 11. Norkaičiai; 12. Pučkoriai; 13. Radžiūnai; 14. Saulėkalnis; 15. Sauliakalnis; 16. Sauliškės; 17. Sauslaukis; 18. Simutiškė; 19. Stasiūniečiai; 20. Teterviniai; 21. Žuvintai.

Distribution of the Kupolė hills (Kupolė is a feast period similar to St John's day) (◆)
(drawn by author)

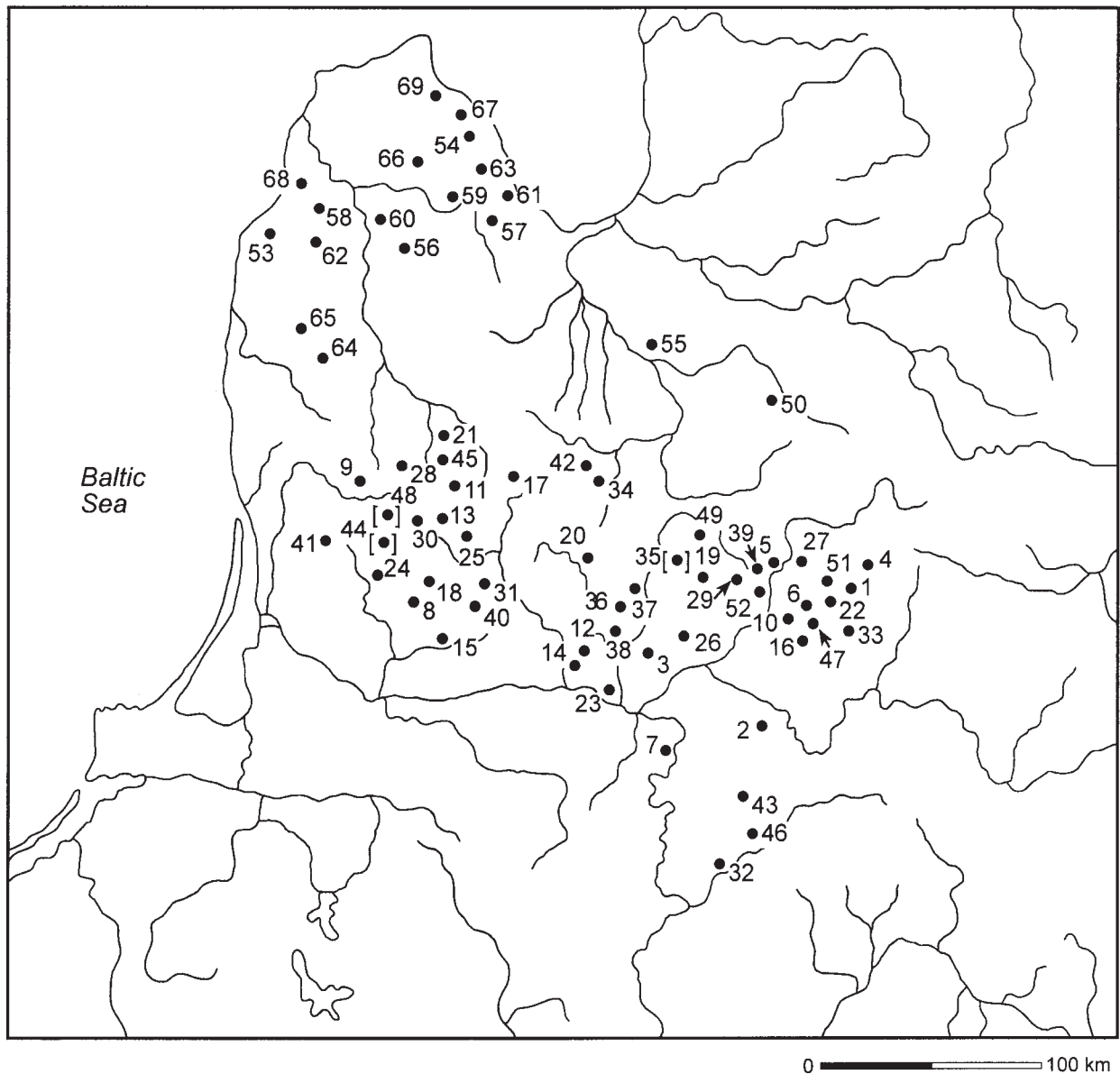
Lithuania

1. Dotenėnai; 2. Keliuotiškiai; 3. Mineiškiemis; 4. Naujasodis; 5. Pypliai; 6. Ringailiai; 7. Rubikonys; 8. Rukliai; 9. Sauginiai (Ukmergė district); 10. Sodėnai; 11. Stripeikiai; 12. Šaltamalkiai-Pempės; 13. Šileikiškės; 14. Tauragnai; 15. Vaikučiai; 16. Varpeliškės-Jūžintai; 17. Vilkuočiai; 18. Vyžiai.

Distribution of the Šatrija hills (Šatrija is sometimes the epithet of the Witch) (■) (drawn by author)

Lithuania

1. Andriūnai (Radviliškis district); 2. Andriūniškiai; 3. Babrungėnai; 4. Beržyniai; 5. Derkinčiai; 6. Girininkai; 7. Kairiai; 8. Kentaučiai; 9. Liaudiškiai; 10. Medsėdžiai; 11. Meironiškis; 12. Paežeriai; 13. Pakruostė; 14. Pašatrija; 15. Rimoliai; 16. Sidariškis; 17. Skyplaičiai; 18. Stoniūnai; 19. Šarkiškis; 20. Šatės; 21. Vainiūnai; 22. Žemaičių Kalvarija.



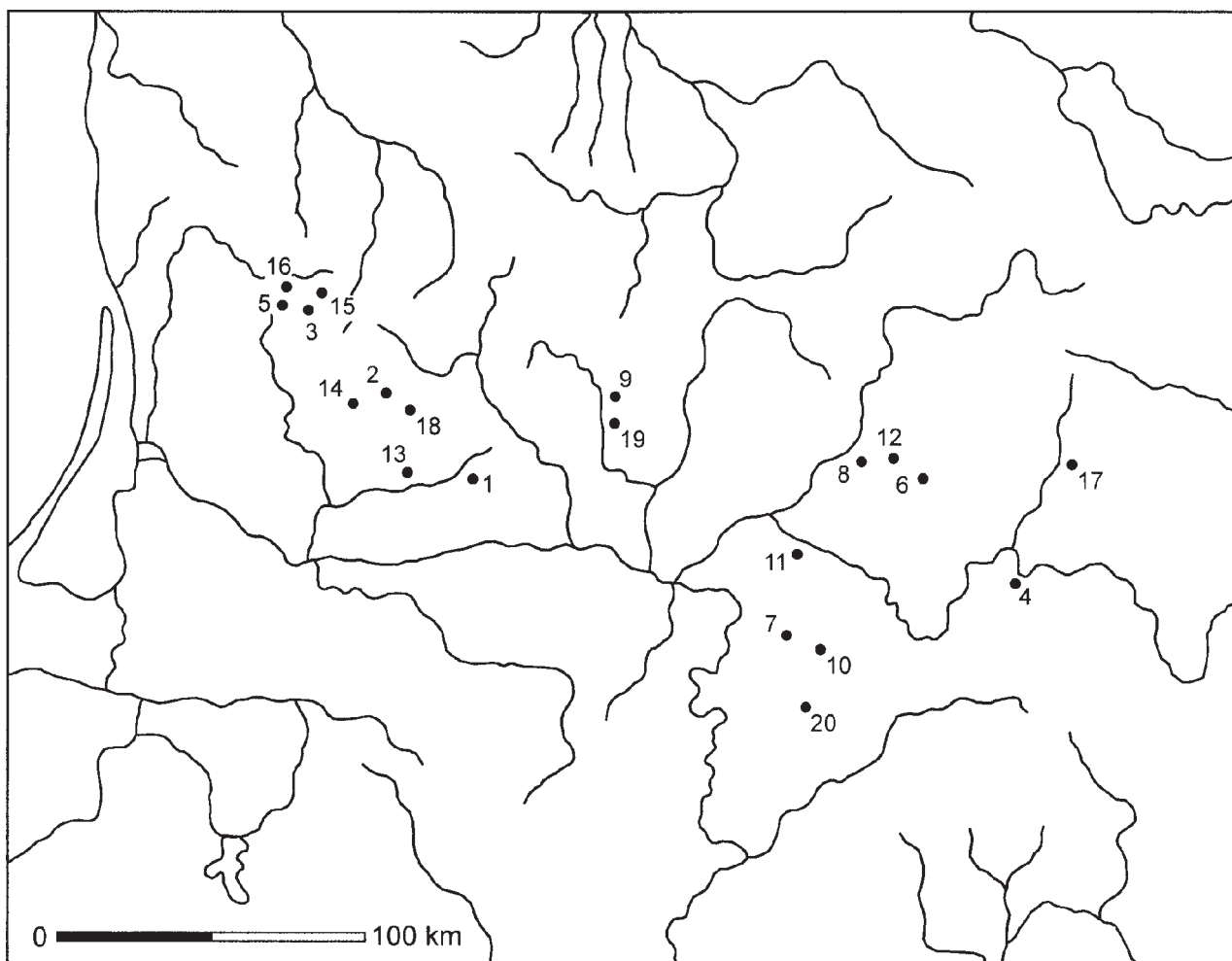
Map VI
Distribution of the Alka fields
(according to author (1998b) with additions)

Lithuania

1. Alanta; 2. Aleksandrija; 3. Alksnėnai; 4. Ančėnai; 5. Anykščiai; 6. Antatilčiai; 7. Bačkininkėliai; 8. Biržų Laukas; 9. Dalgai; 10. Deltuvėlė; 11. Dirmeikiai; 12. Dokiai; 13. Domeikiai; 14. Eikščiai; 15. Eržvilkas; 16. Gailiūnai; 17. Gilvyčiai; 18. Gimbūčiai; 19. Grigaliai; 20. Grinkiškis; 21. Kairiščiai; 22. Karališkis; 23. Kulautuva; 24. Lembas; 25. Liubišiškės; 26. Margiai; 27. Naujoniai; 28. Nevardėnai; 29. Obeliai; 30. Pabiržulis; 31. Palėkinis; 32. Perloja; 33. Piliakiemis; 34. Poškiečiai; 35. [Ramygala]; 36. Ruoščiai; 37. Stuomeniščiai; 38. Sviliai; 39. Šalnos; 40. Šienlaukis; 41. Šlepštikos; 42. Šukioniai; 43. Telėtninkai; 44. [Telšiai]; 45. Ubiškė; 46. Valkininkai; 47. Varkalės; 48. [Varniai]; 49. Velžys; 50. Virškupėnai; 51. Zizda; 52. Zujai.

Latvia

53. Apriķi; 54. Ārlava; 55. Buļeņi; 56. Griķi; 57. Jaunsāti; 58. Ivande; 59. Kandava; 60. Kuldīga; 61. Lamiņi; 62. Lipaiķi; 63. Pastende; 64. Priekule; 65. Raiba; 66. Renda; 67. Sili; 68. Užava; 69. Zentene.

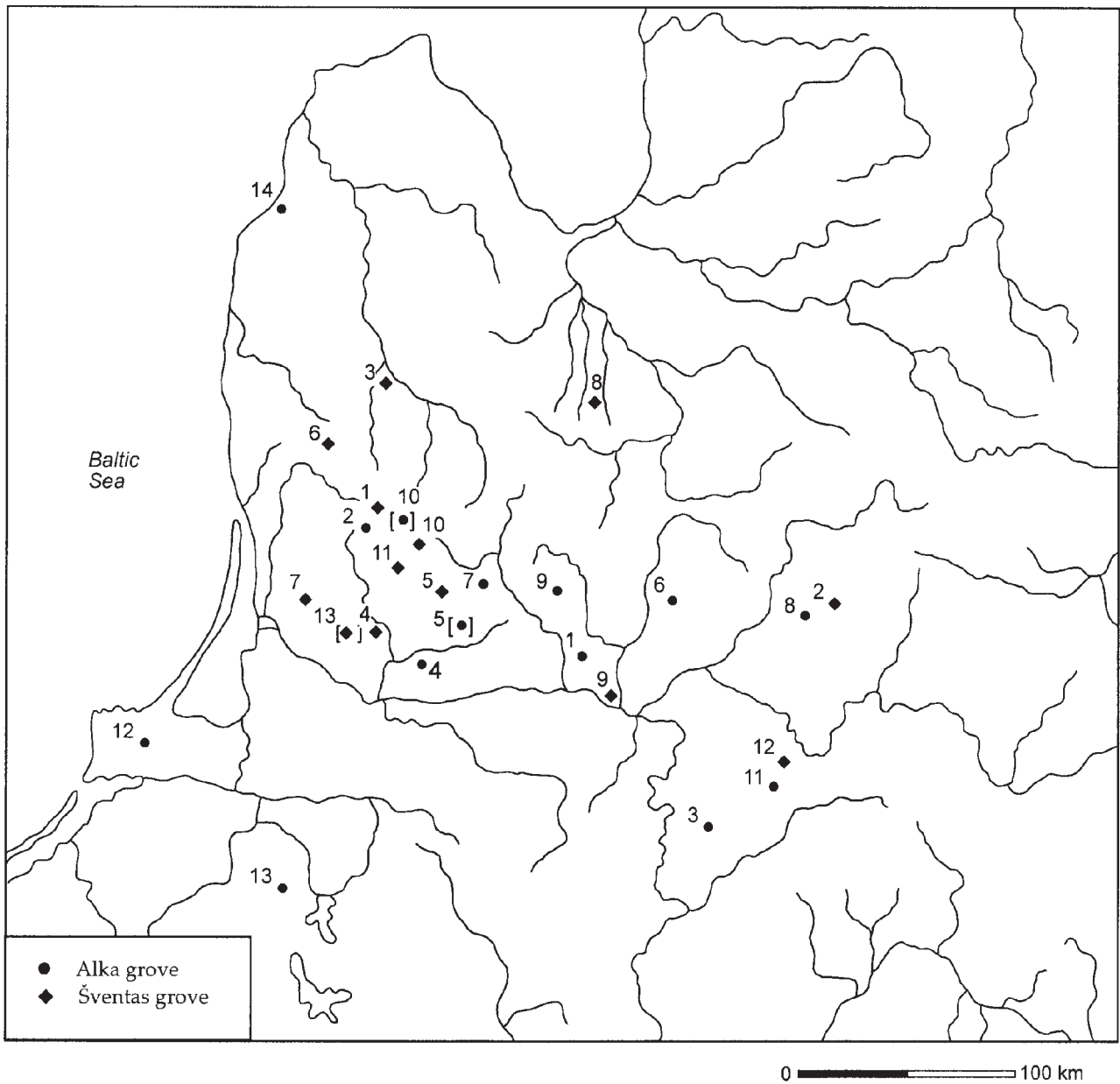


Map VII

Distribution of the Šventas fields (Sacred fields)
(drawn by author)

Lithuania

1. Akmeniškiai; 2. Antininkai; 3. Baltininkai; 4. Buivydžiai; 5. Eidininkai; 6. Girsteitiškis; 7. Grikapėdis; 8. Jačionys; 9. Juodupiai; 10. Jurgionys; 11. Lėliai (Kaišiadorys district); 12. Mateikiškiai; 13. Pagojai; 14. Pagrybis; 15. Panavadis; 16. Patyris; 17. Reškutėnai; 18. Sugintai; 19. Valynė; 20. Vėžioniai.



Map VIII

Distribution of the Alka groves (●) (according to author (1998b) with additions)

Distribution of the Šventas groves (Sacred groves) (◆) (drawn by author)

Lithuania

1. Krūvandai; 2. Labardžiai; 3. Lelionys; 4. Mantviliai; 5. [Nemakščiai]; 6. Okainiai; 7. Palėkinis; 8. Šešuoliai; 9. Tendžio-gala; 10. [Varniai]; 11. Žalioji-Alkaičiai.

Lithuania

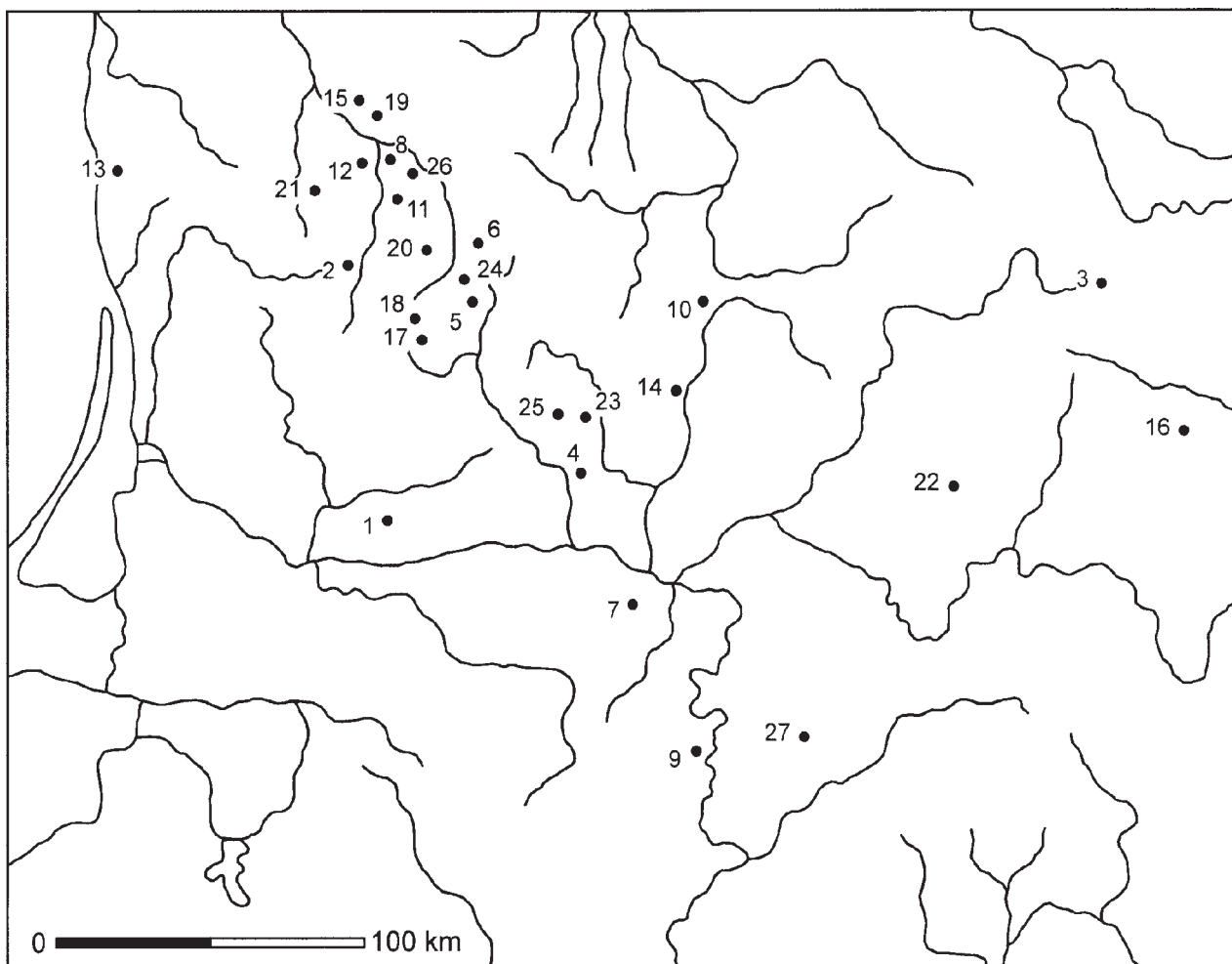
1. Alkas (Plungė district); 2. Budriškės; 3. Daubariai; 4. Dirvėnai; 5. Dvariškiai; 6. Gintališkė; 7. Jokšai; 8. Kalnelis; 9. Romainiai; 10. Rukšiai; 11. Stumbriai; 12. Trakai; 13. [Žemaičių Naumiestis].

Kaliningradskaya oblast

12. Alka/Alk/Morozovka; 13. Trempai/Novostroyevo.

Latvia

14. Apriķi.

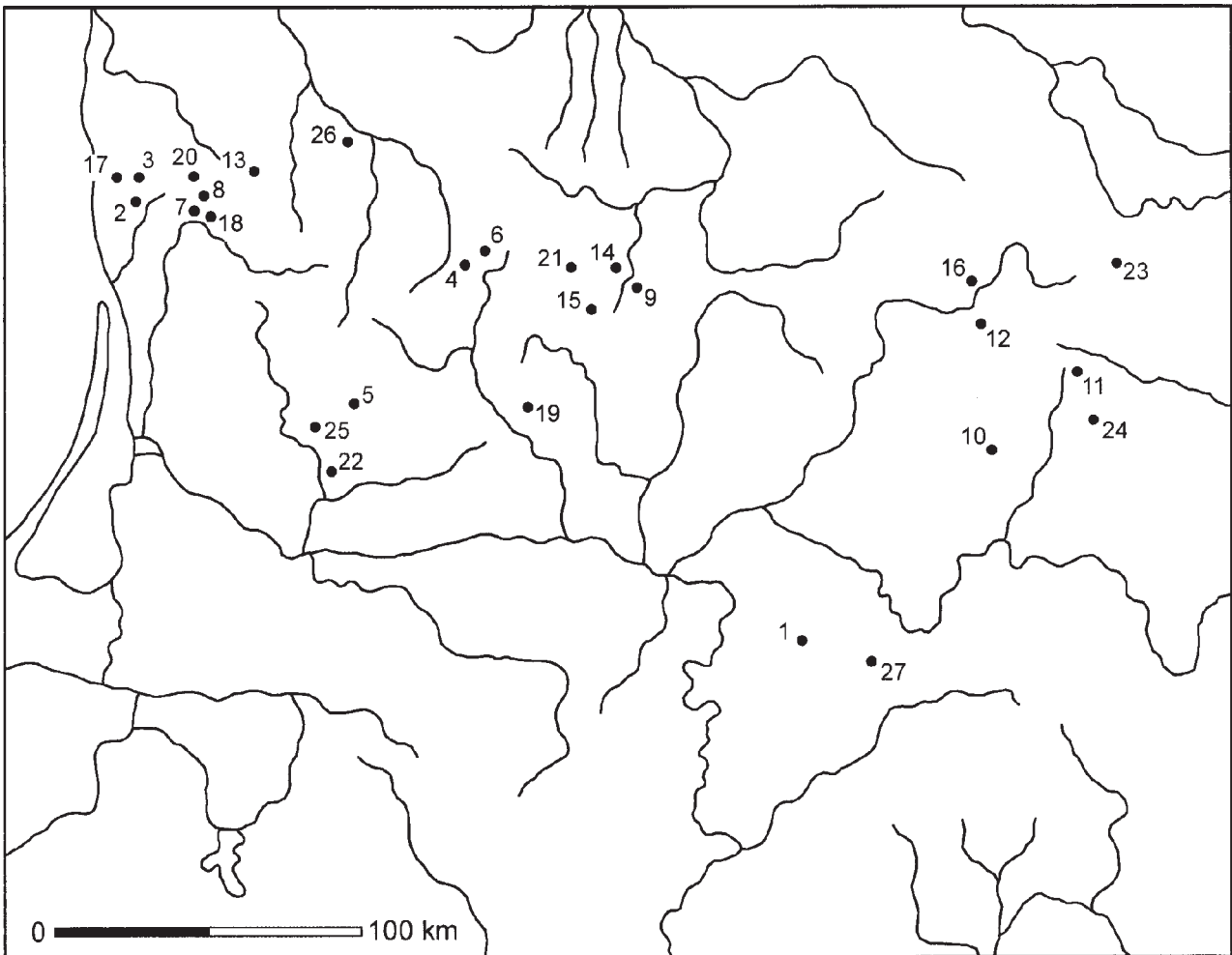


Map IX

Distribution of the sacred pine trees (drawn by author)

Lithuania

1. Balniai; 2. Biržuvėnai; 3. Dumblynė; 4. Gėluva; 5. Giriškiai; 6. Gimikai; 7. Giminkai I; 8. Gyvoliai; 9. Jurgiškiai; 10. Jutiškiai; 11. Kairiškiai; 12. Kegriai; 13. Lenkimai; 14. Linkavičiai; 15. Maigai; 16. Mociškė; 17. Oreliškės; 18. Pamedžiokalnis; 19. Peiliškiai; 20. Plikšilis; 21. Plinkšiai; 22. Purviniškiai; 23. Ropkečiai; 24. Svilė; 25. Šiluva; 26. Uogiškiai; 27. Žvirgždėnai.

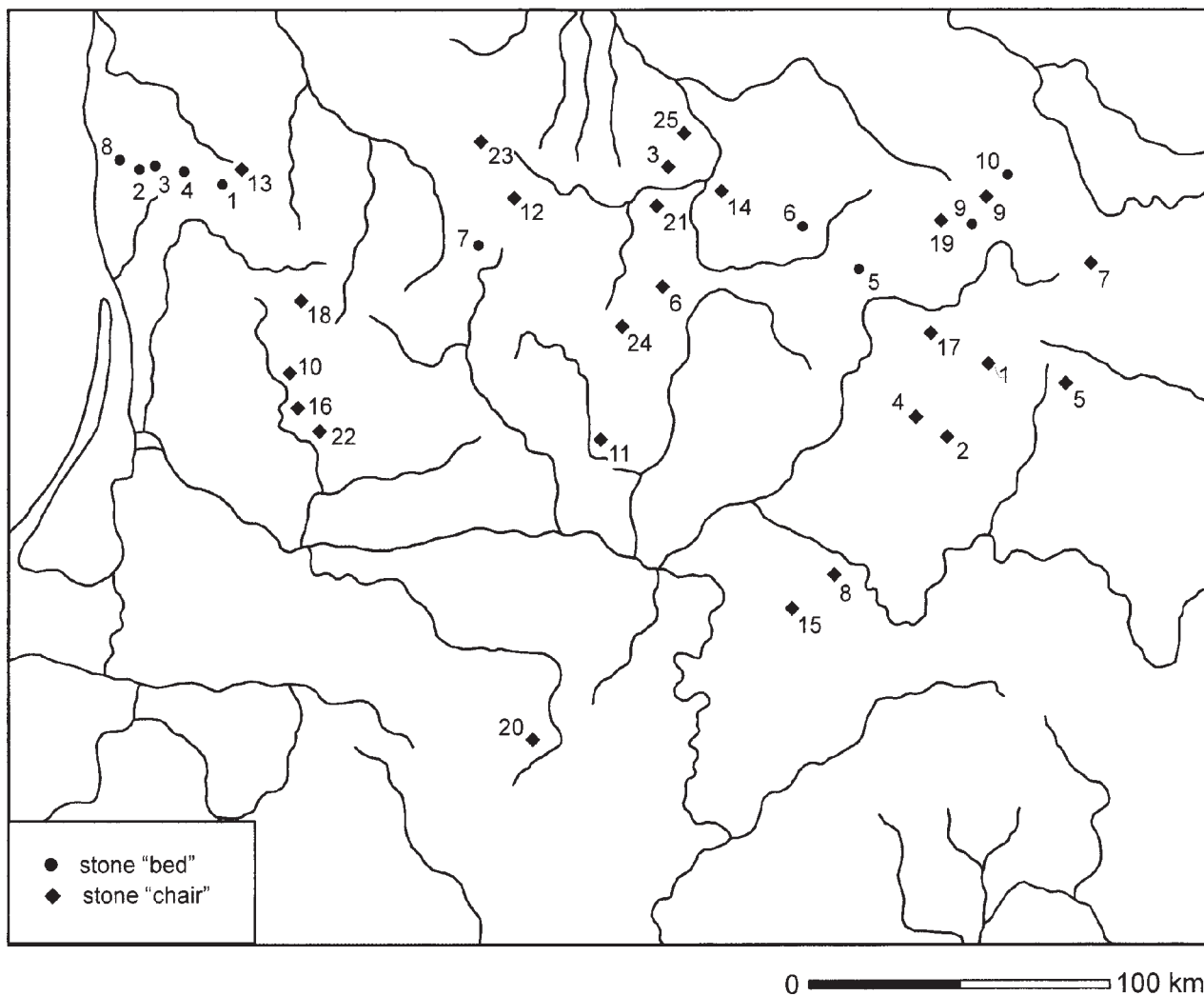


Map X

Distribution of the stone "tables" (drawn by author)

Lithuania

1. Alešiškės; 2. Auksūdis (Kretinga district); 3. Benaičiai; 4. Dukurniai; 5. Eitydaičiai; 6. Jakštaičiukai; 7. Imbarė; 8. Imbarė-Žvainiai; 9. Klebonišķiai; 10. Kraujeliai; 11. Kukariškė; 12. Nolėnai; 13. Mockaičiai; 14. Paežeriai (Pakruojis district); 15. Paežeriai (Radviliškis district); 16. Paindrė; 17. Pelėkiai; 18. Prystovai; 19. Rinkšeliai; 20. Salantai; 21. Šniūraičiai; 22. Tamošaičiai; 23. Tilžė; 24. Vaikučiai; 25. Vaitimėnai; 26. Žibikai; 27. Žuklijai-Alkaičiai.



Map XI

Distribution of the stone "beds" (●) (drawn by author)

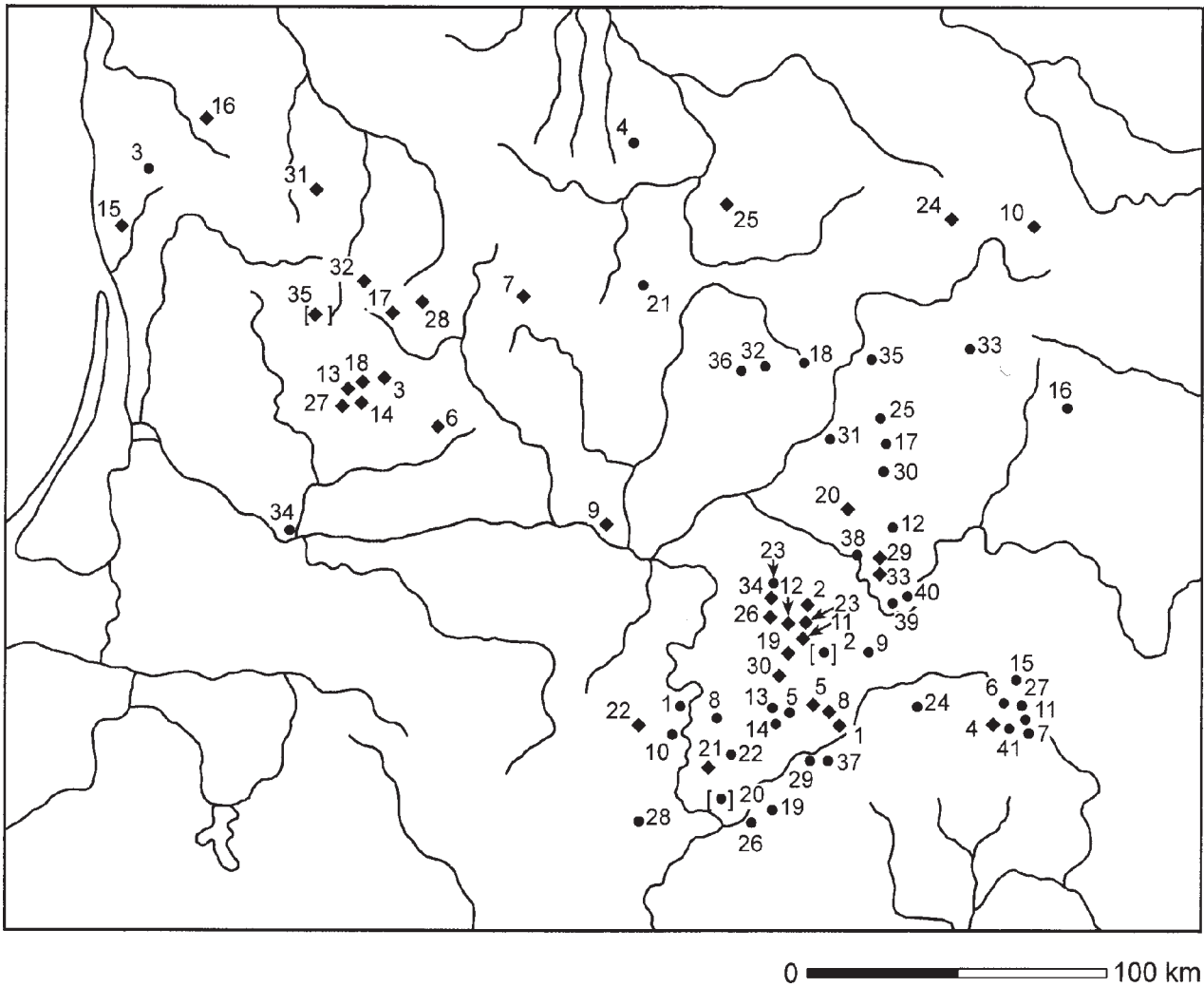
Lithuania

1. Antsieniai; 2–3. Benaičiai; 4. Grūšlaukė; 5. Kinderiai; 6. Rudikai; 7. Sauginiai (Šiauliai district); 8. Senoji Įpiltis; 9. Sidariškis; 10. Užubaliai.

Distribution of the stone "chairs" (◆) (drawn by author)

Lithuania

1. Alžiutėnai; 2. Antatiškis; 3. Guostagalis; 4. Jaurai; 5. Kukariškė; 6. Kundrėnai; 7. Lapeliškės; 8. Laukagalys; 9. Legiškis; 10. Lembas; 11. Lenčiai; 12. Luponiai; 13. Mačiūkiai; 14. Miesteliškiai; 15. Noreikiškės; 16. Padievaitis; 17. Pamaleišys; 18. Plauskiniai; 19. Taraldžiai-Verksnionys; 20. Tarašiškiai; 21. Titoniai; 22. Vaitimėnai; 23. Vegerė; 24. Vėriškiai; 25. Zyčiai.



Map XII

Distribution of the stone “damned people”. Tall stones (◆). (According to author (1995) with additions.)

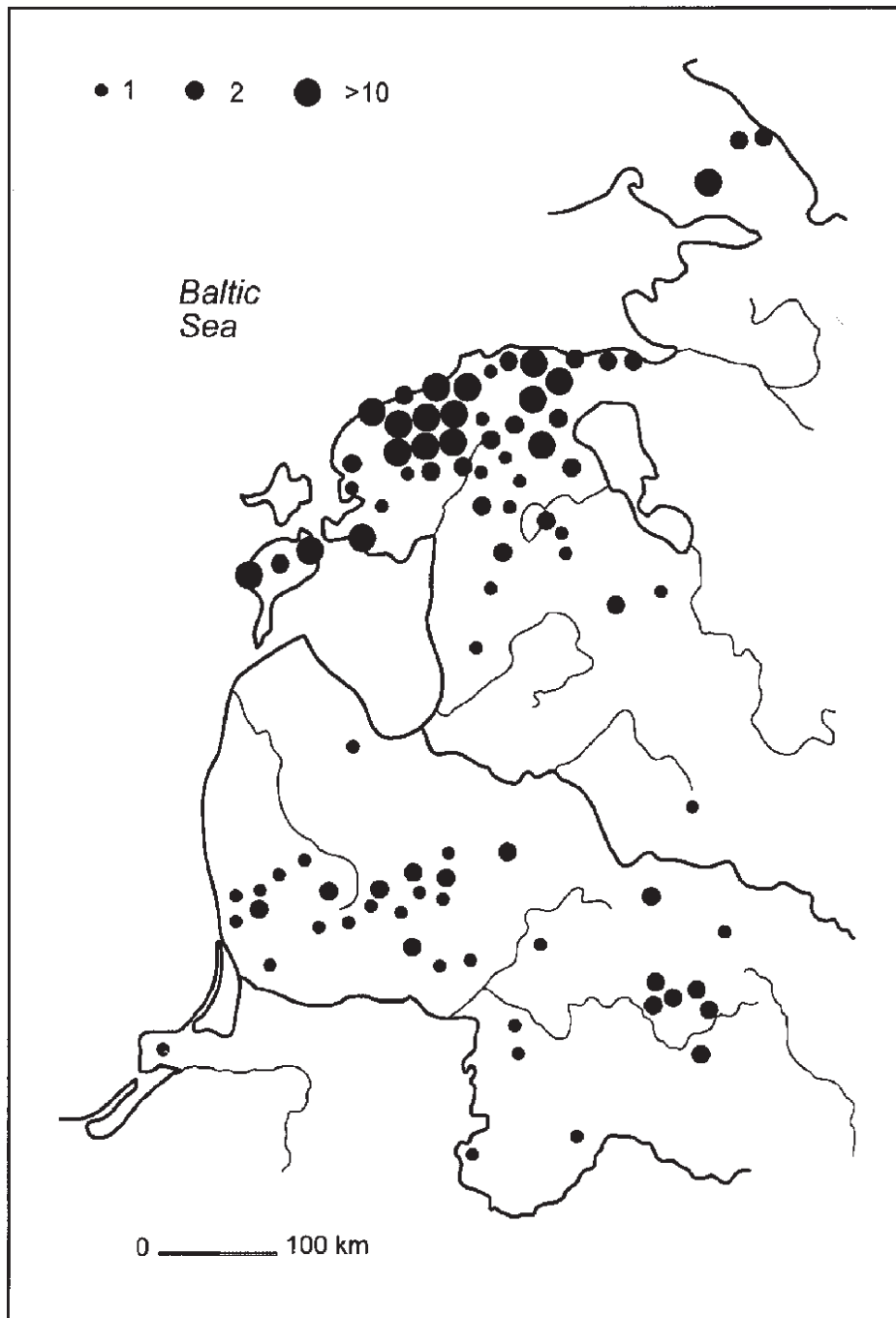
Distribution of the stone “damned people”. Stones of natural forms (●). (According to author (1995) with additions.)

Lithuania

1. Akmuo; 2. Beižionys; 3. Bijotai; 4. Dieveniškės; 5. Geidukonys; 6. Geišiai; 7. Graužai; 8. Jakėnai; 9. Jučioniai; 10. Junkūnai; 11. Jurgionys; 12. Intuponys; 13. Ivoniškiai (two stones); 14. Kaštaunaliai; 15. Kluonaliai; 16. Krakės-Nevočiai; 17. Kražiai; 18. Kuliškiai; 19. Lavariškės; 20. Liukonys (two stones); 21. Masališkės; 22. Mergalaukis; 23. Migliniškės; 24. Mikniūnai; 25. Moliūnai; 26. Noreikiškės (two stones); 27. Padievytis; 28. Petrikaičiai; 29. Pylimai; 30. Pivašiūnai; 31. Repšiai; 32. Stabinė; 33. Šiauliškės; 34. Varkalės (Kaišiadorys district); 35. [Varniai].

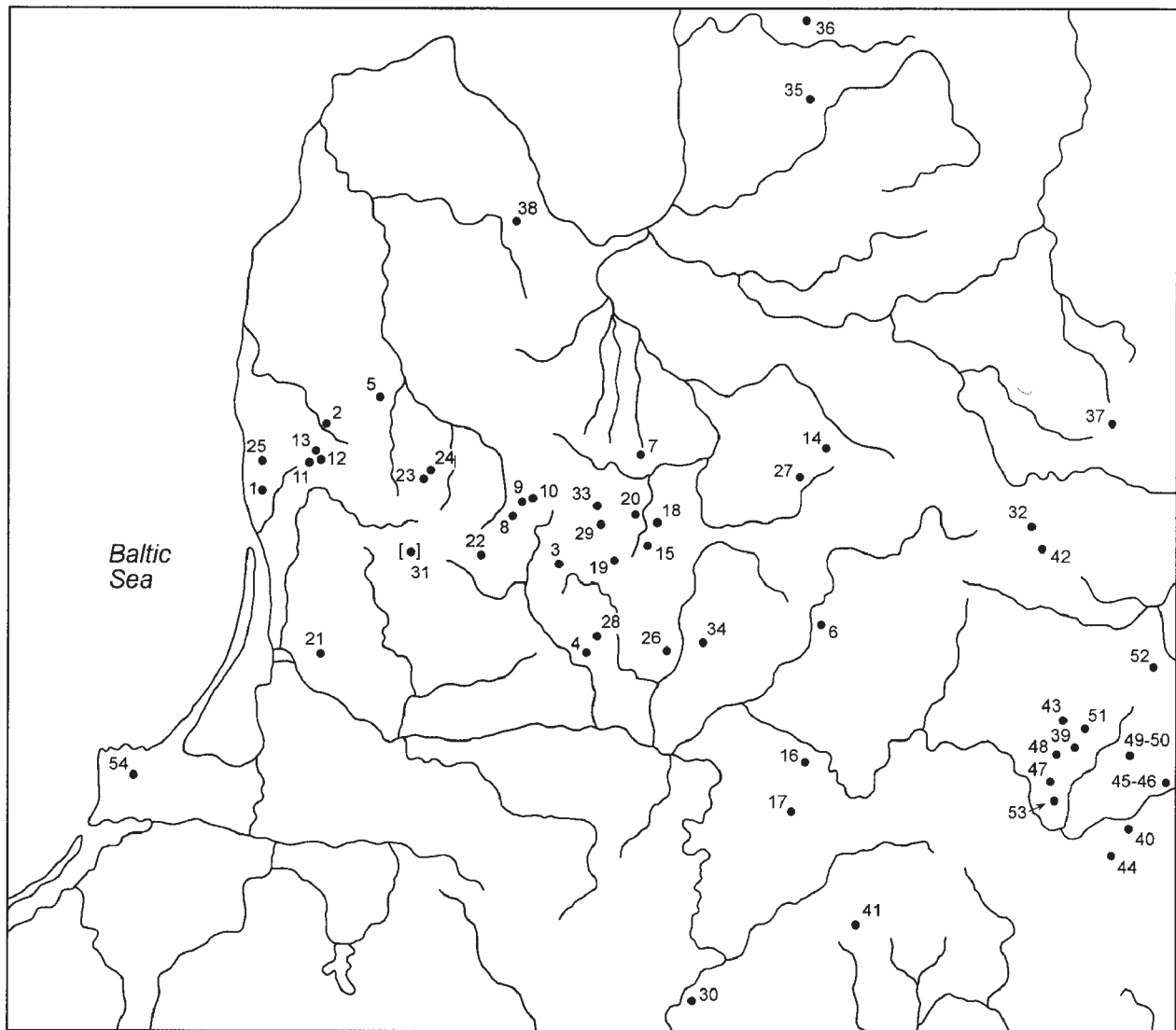
Lithuania

1. Alytus (two stones); 2. [Aukštadvaris] (two stones); 3. Benaičiai; 4. Bulėtiškis; 5. Daugai-Sala; 6. Didžiuliai (two stones); 7. Dvariškės; 8. Einorai (three stones); 9. Grendavė; 10. Jociūnai-Balkasodis; 11. Kalviai; 12. Karvys (nine stones); 13. Korliškės-Mergos Akmuo; 14. Korliškės-Aukrakštis; 15. Kurlionys; 16. Lepšiai; 17. Levaniškės; 18. Mackeliškės; 19. Mančiagirė; 20. [Merkinė]; 21. Naurašiliai (three stones); 22. Nedzingė; 23. Nemaitonys; 24. Papiškės (Šalčininkai district); 25. Pušalotai; 26. Puvočiai (two stones); 27. Ramoškai; 28. Rusoniai; 29. Senoji Varėna; 30. Stebuliai; 31. Sukiniai (two or three stones); 32. Šambališkiai; 33. Šeimatis (two or three stones); 34. Šereitlaukis; 35. Šlavėnai; 36. Užuraistis; 37. Varėna forest; 38. Verksnionys (five stones); 39. Vilnius (Ukmergė Street) (thirteen stones); 40. Vilnius-Verkiai; 41. Žižmai.



Map XIII

Distribution of the cup-marked stones in Estonia (according to A. Tvaari, 1997), Latvia (according to J. Urtāns, 1987), former Prussia (according to C. Beckhern, 1893), Belarus (according to E. Zaikovskiy, 1997 and 2000 with author's additions), and Lithuania (according to author, 1996 with additions)



0 ————— 100 km

Map XIV

Distribution of the cup-marked stones in Lithuania (according to author (1996) with additions), Latvia (according to J. Urtāns, 1987), former Prussia (according to C. Beckhern, 1893), and Belarus (according to E. Zaikovskiy, 1997 and 2000 with author's additions)

Lithuania

1. Ankštakiai; 2. Apuolė; 3. Baranaučizna; 4. Dapkaičiai; 5. Dapšiai; 6. Dvaronys; 7. Gaižiūnai; 8. Gošteliškės; 9-10. Jakštaičiuokai; 11-12. Imbarė; 13. Imbarė-Žvainiai; 14. Kadarai; 15. Klebonišķiai; 16. Laukagalis; 17. Mergiškės; 18. Moniūnai; 19. Paežeriai (Radviliškis district); 20. Paežeriai (Pakruojis district); 21. Papjauniai; 22. Pavaiguvis; 23-24. Pavirvytis; 25. Pelėkiai; 26. Senkoniai; 27. Siauriai; 28. Šnipaičiai; 29. Šniūraičiai; 30. Švendubrė; 31. [Šventai]; 32. Tilžė; 33. Žadžūnai; 34. Žvirbliai.

Latvia

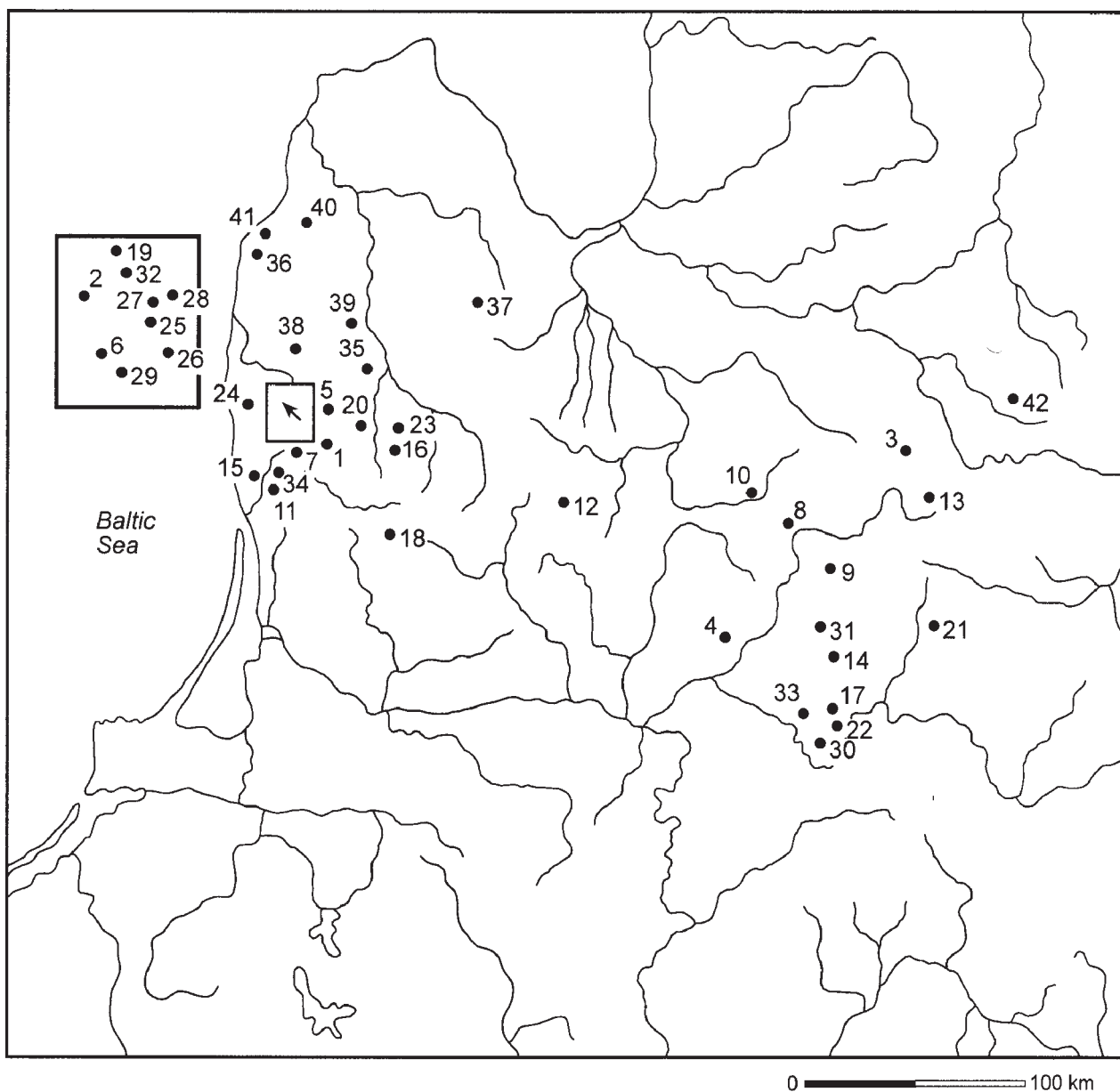
35. Dāviņi; 36. Kalnalammiki; 37. Ruskulji; 38. Zviedri.

Belarus

39. Barauvtsi/Баровцы; 40. Budishche/Будище; 41. Dainova/Дайнова; 42. Drisviati/Дрисвяты; 43. Dvorec/Дворец; 44. Esmanovtsi/Есьмановцы; 45-46. Kameno/Камено; 47. Kanstanpol/Канстанполл; 48. Mishuti/Мішуты; 49-50. Tsintsevichi/Цинцевичи; 51. Utki/Утки; 52. Vialets/Вялец; 53. Voideni/Войдени.

Kaliningradskaya oblast

54. Kramava/Grachovka.



Map XV

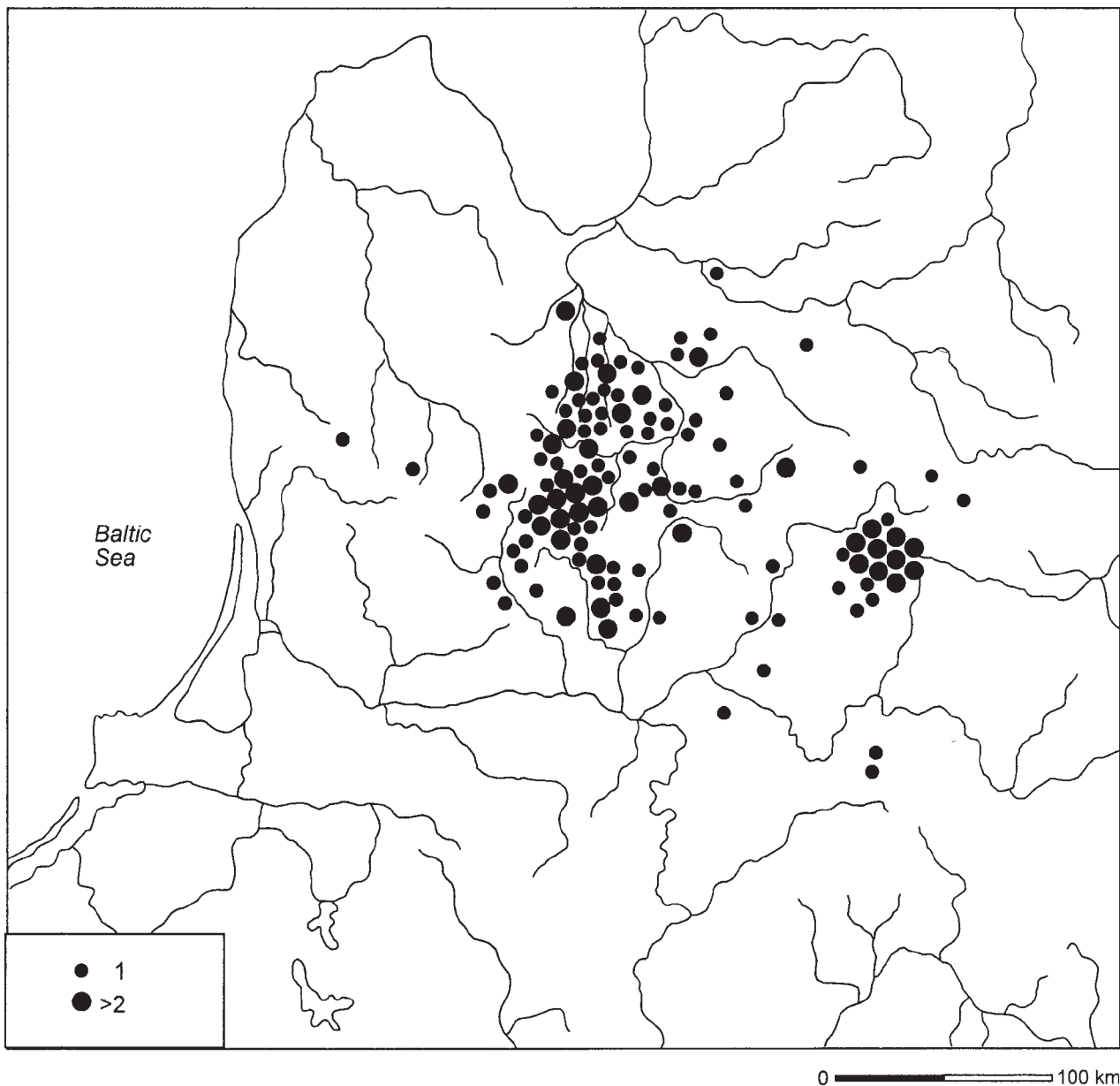
Distribution of the cylinder-shaped stones with flat-bottomed bowls in Latvia (according to J. Urtāns, 1992) and Lithuania (according to author (1999) with additions)

Lithuania

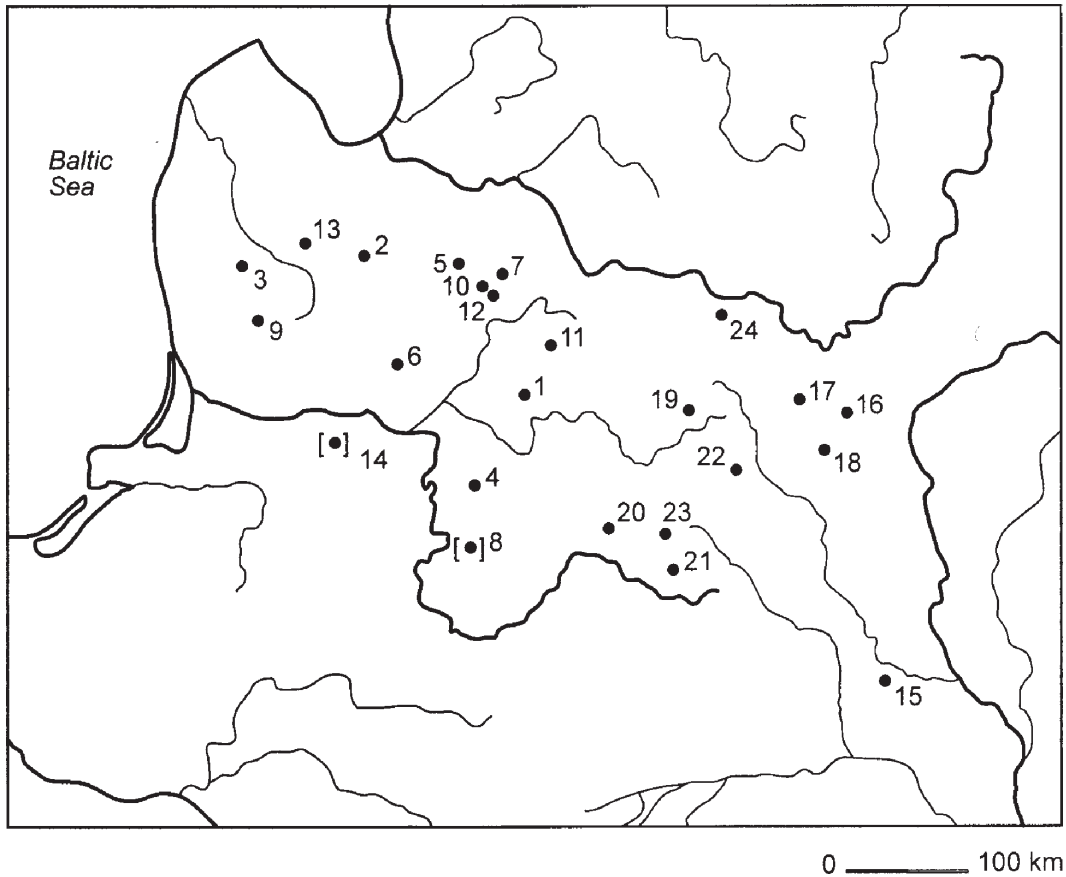
1. Brotykai; 2. Budriai; 3. Busiškis; 4. Deltuva; 5. Ersla; 6. Igariai; 7. Gargždelė; 8. Katina; 9. Kilėviškis; 10. Kirdiškis; 11. Klibiai; 12. Kutiškiai; 13. Lūžos; 14. Paduobužė; 15. Padvariai; 16. Petraičiai; 17. Pikeliškės; 18. Pubžibiai; 19. Puodkaliai; 20. Renavas; 21. Reškutėnai; 22. Sakališkės; 23. Skuodiškiai; 24. Sūdėnai; 25-26. Šaukliai; 27-28. Šerkšniai; 29. Šilalė (Skuodas district); 30. Švedai; 31. Trumponiai; 32. Udraliai; 33. Vėlebiškės; 34. Voveraičiai; 35. Žibininkai.

Latvia

36. Dzeņi; 37. Laimdotas; 38. Mazgramzda; 39. Meldzere; 40. Naiži; 41. Pinnas; 42. Solkas.



Map XVI
Distribution of the stones with narrow-bottomed bowls in Latvia (according to J. Urtāns, 1994) and Lithuania (according to R. Matulis, 1990 with author's additions)



Map XVII

Distribution of the stone "tailors" (according to Levkov, 1992 and author)

Lithuania

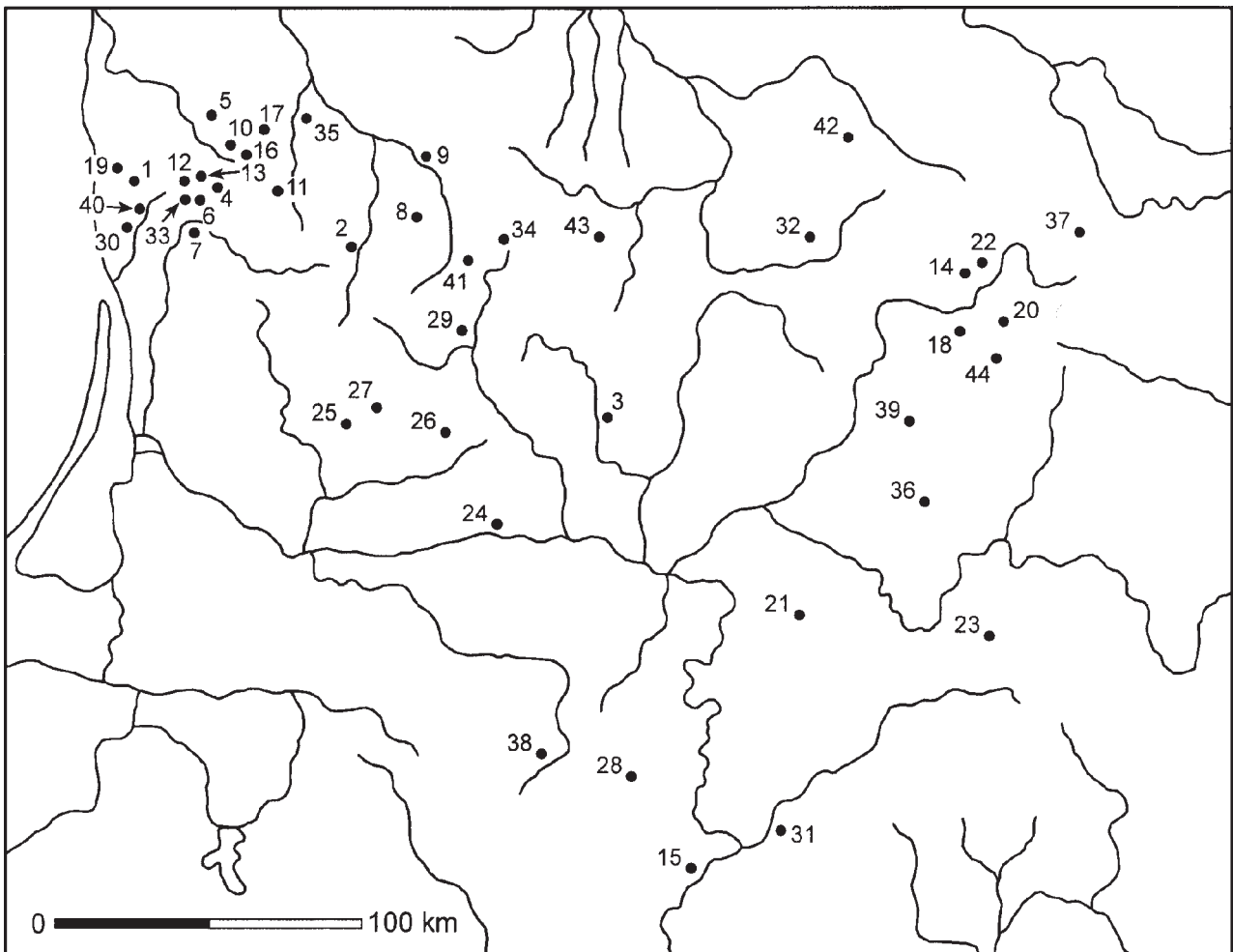
1. Antatiškis; 2. Butniūnai; 3. Ketūnai; 4. Kruncikai; 5. Kundrėnai; 6. Kunioniai; 7. Legiškis; 8. [Merkinė]; 9. Plauskiniai; 10. Rimšionys; 11. Šeimatis; 12. Taraldžiai; 13. Žiogeliai.

Kaliningradskaya oblast

14. [Ragainė/Ragint/Neman].

Belarus

15. Babruisk/Бабруйск; 16. Varonin/Варонін; 17. Virkava/Віркава; 18. Visokiye Garatsi/Высокие Гарадцы; 19. Zaborye/Заборье; 20. Kanvelishki/Канвельішкі; 21. Kamen/Камень; 22. Krasnalutsk/Красналуцк; 23. Ratinci/Ратынцы; 24. Stary Pagost/Стары Пагост.

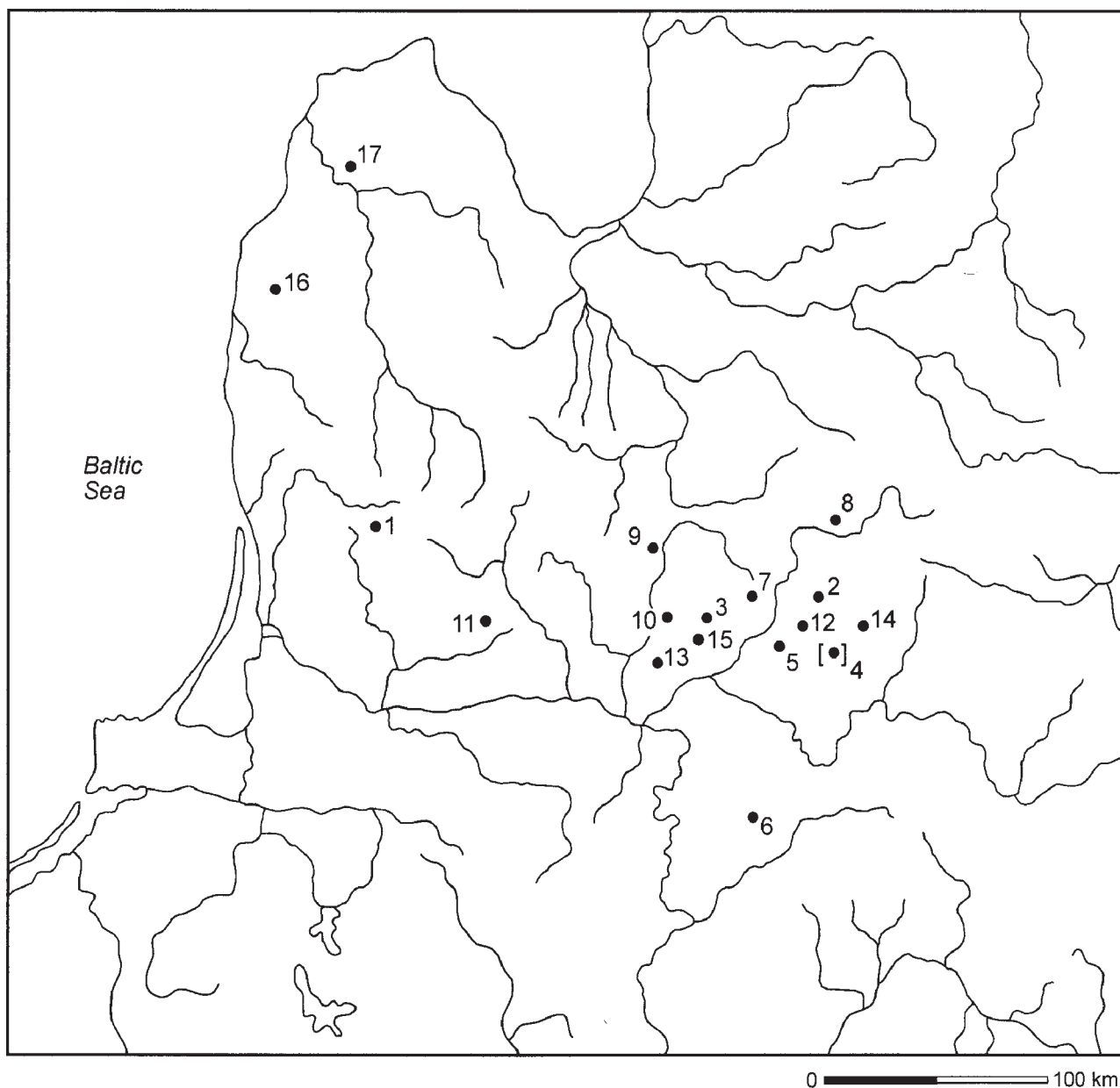


Map XVIII

Distribution of the Laumė (Fairy's) stones (according to author (1998a) with additions)

Lithuania

1. Benaičiai; 2. Biržuvėnai; 3. Dirvoniškės; 4. Gintališkė; 5. Guntinas; 6. Imbarė; 7. Kartena; 8. Kerežiai; 9. Krakiai; 10. Kruopiai; 11. Kulskiai; 12. Laiviai-Salantai (two stones); 13. Laiviai; 14. Lėliai (Utena district); 15. Liškiava; 16. Mačiūkiai; 17. Mikytai; 18. Mozūriškės; 19. Naujoji Įpiltis; 20. Nolėnai; 21. Noreikiškės (two stones); 22. Paindrė; 23. Pagojus; 24. Pakalniškiai (Jurbarkas district); 25. Pakoplyčis; 26. Palendriai; 27. Palokystis; 28. Parečėnai; 29. Petrošiai; 30. Pryšmančiai; 31. Puvočiai; 32. Rudikai; 33. Salantai (two stones); 34. Sauginiai (Šiauliai district); 35. Sudintai; 36. Sudokiai; 37. Šiukščiai; 38. Tarašiškės; 39. Trumponiai; 40. Tūbausiai; 41. Urkuvėnai; 42. Valiuliškės-Einoriai; 43. Vilūnaičiai; 44. Žiezdriai.



Map XIX

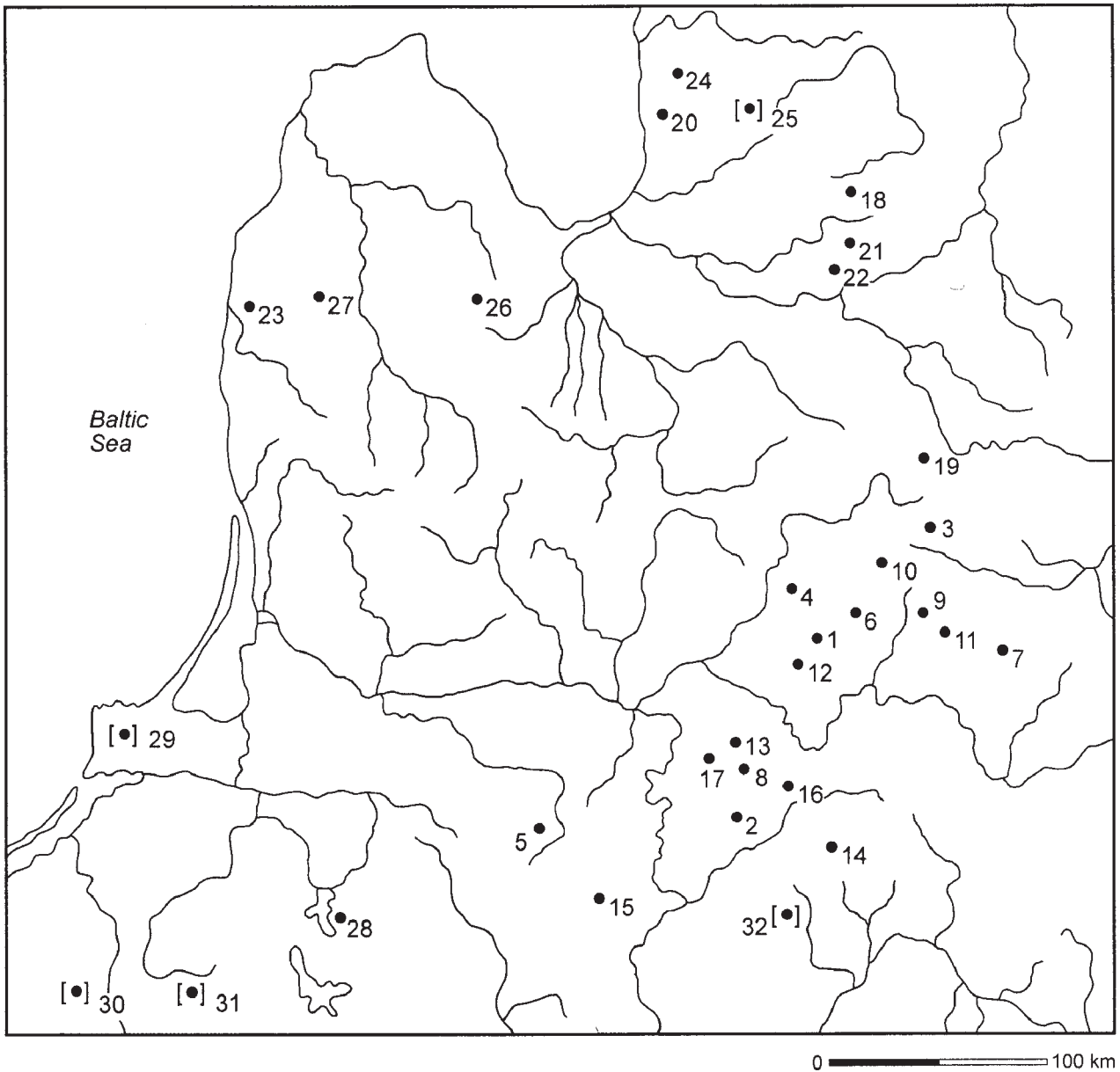
Distribution of lakes and swamps called Alka (according to author (1998b) with additions)

Lithuania

1. Alkas (Plungė district); 2. Baruvka; 3. Čereliai; 4. [Dubingiai]; 5. Jurdonys; 6. Kareivonys; 7. Kurėnai; 8. Kušliai; 9. Molainiai; 10. Okainiai; 11. Palendriai; 12. Petrašiūnai; 13. Šilainiai; 14. Taitiškis; 15. Trakučiai.

Latvia

16. Vērgale; 17. Zlēkas.



Map XX

Distribution of the Šventas (Sacred) lakes (drawn by author)

Lithuania

1. Antašventė; 2. Bakaloriškės; 3. Girutiškė (two lakes); 4. Janonys; 5. Jusevičiai; 6. Krivasalis; 7. Lazdiniai; 8. Nečiūnai; 9. Pašaminė; 10. Rainiai; 11. Rakšteliai; 12. Stavarygala; 13. Šuoliai (two lakes); 14. Švenčius; 15. Šventežeris; 16. Šventininkai; 17. Žydiškės.

Latvia

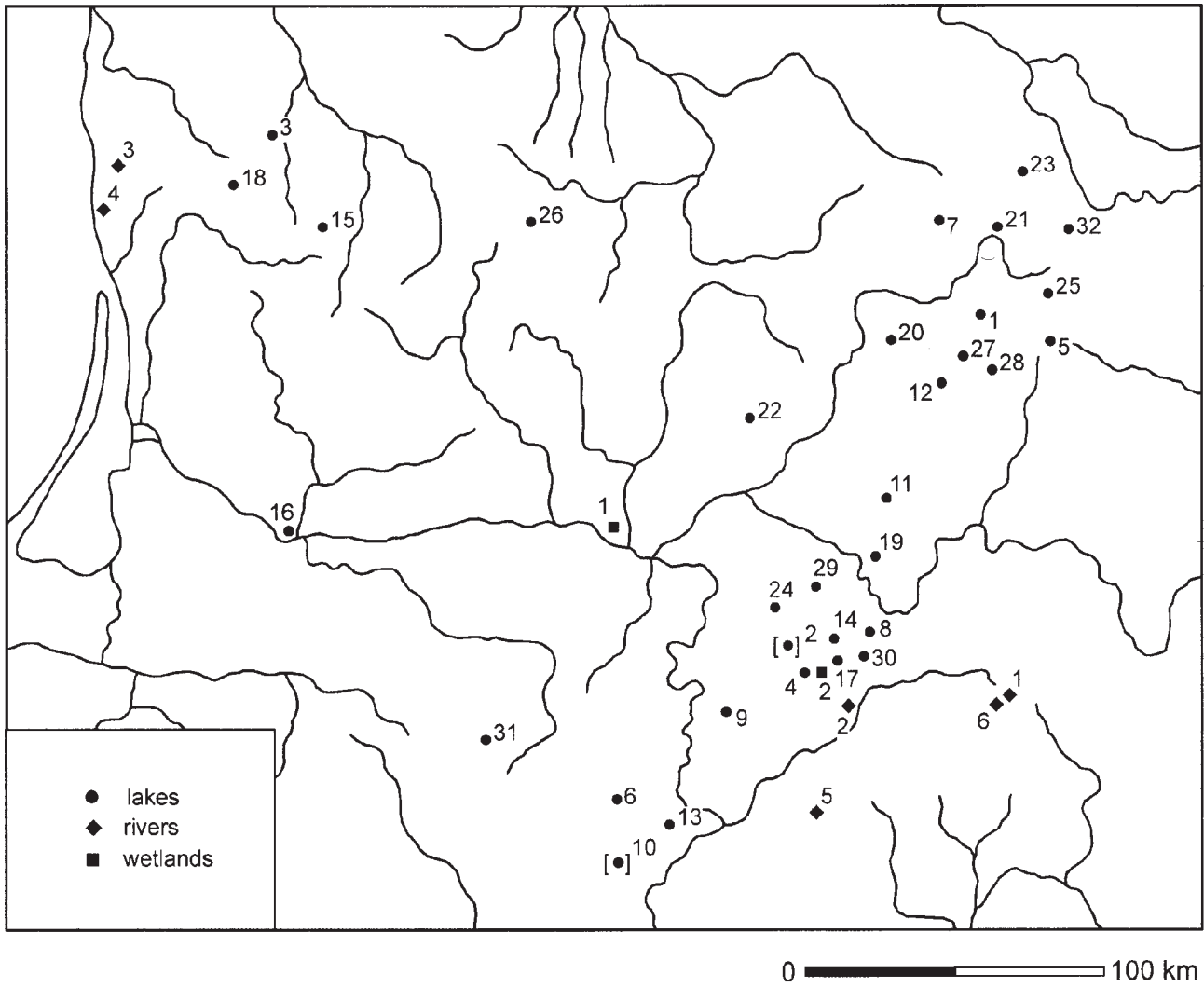
18. Jaun-Piebalga; 19. Jaun-Sventa; 20. Limbaži; 21. Lubeja; 22. Mārciena; 23. Pape; 24. Puikule; 25. Rozbeķi; 26. Upe; 27. Žvārde.

Territory of Prussia

28. Węgobork; 29. [Samland, *Swentgriff*]; 30. [voyavodstvo Ołsztyn, *Swyntheynen*]; 31. [voyavodstvo Ołsztyn, *Swintingen*].

Belarus

32. [Lida, *Swietoje*].



Map XXI

Distribution of the sacrifice-requesting waters: lakes (●).
(Drawn by author.)

Lithuania

1. Alaušas Lake; 2. [Aukštadvaris]; 3. Balynos Lake; 4. Daugai Lake; 5. Dysnai Lake; 6. Dusia Lake; 7. Dviragis Lake; 8. Galvė Lake; 9. Ilgis Lake; 10. [Leipalingis]; 11. Kiaukliai Lake; 12. Lamėstas Lake; 13. Liškiavis Lake; 14. Margis Lake; 15. Mastis Lake; 16. Merguva Lake; 17. Galvožeris Lake; 18. Plateliai Lake; 19. Riešė Lake; 20. Rubikiai Lake; 21. Sartai Lake; 22. Siesikai Lake; 23. Subatinis Lake; 24. Švenčius Lake (Žydiškės, Kaišiadorys district); 25. Šventas Lake (Girutiškė, Zarasai district); 26. Talša Lake; 27. Tauragnas Lake; 28. Utenis Lake; 29. Vievis Lake; 30. Vilkokšnis Lake; 31. Vištytis Lake; 32. Zarasas Lake.

Distribution of the sacrifice-requesting waters: wetlands (■). (Drawn by author.)

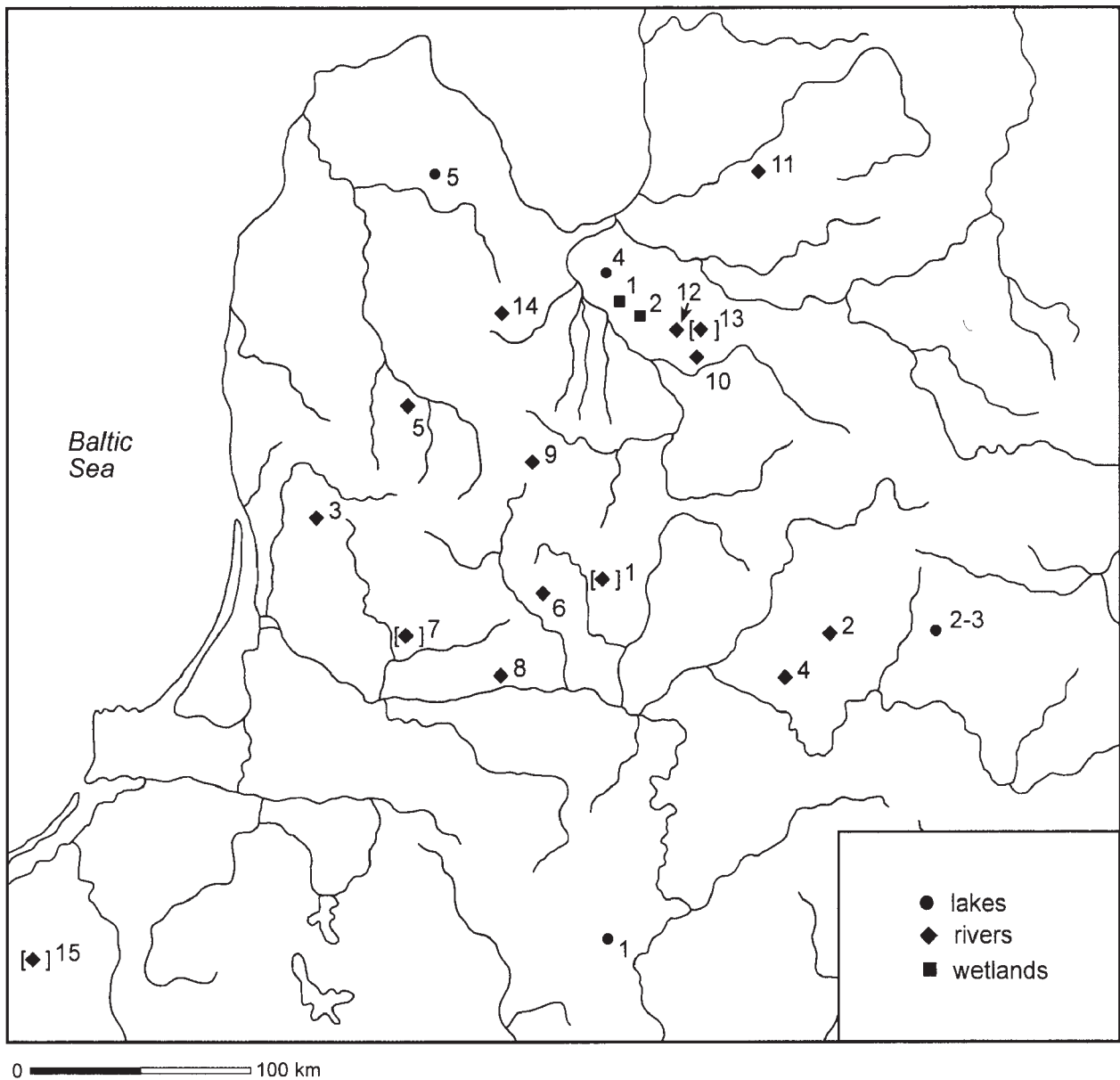
Lithuania

1. Kvēsai Wetland; 2. Žiliniai.

Distribution of the sacrifice-requesting waters: rivers (◆).
(Drawn by author.)

Lithuania

1. Gauja River (Dieveniškės); 2. Merkys River (Pamerkiai); 3. Šventoji River (Sūdėnai); 4. Šventoji River (Šventoji, Palanga); 5. Ūla (Kriokšlys); 6. Žižma River (Dieveniškės).



Map XXII

Distribution of the Vèlè (Souls) waters: lakes (●). (Drawn by author.)

Lithuania

1. Bajoriškiai; 2-3. Vėlionys.

Latvia

4. Paltmale; 5. Spāre.

Distribution of the Vèlè (Souls) waters: rivers (◆). (Drawn by author.)

Lithuania

1. [Baisogala]; 2. Ciūniškiai; 3. Endriejavas; 4. Karališkiai; 5. Lėlaičiai; 6. Šiluva; 7. [Tauragė]; 8. Veliuona; 9. Vinkšnėnai.

Latvia

10. Brunava; 11. Drabeši; 12. Emburga; 13. [Bauska]; 14. Rumbinieki.

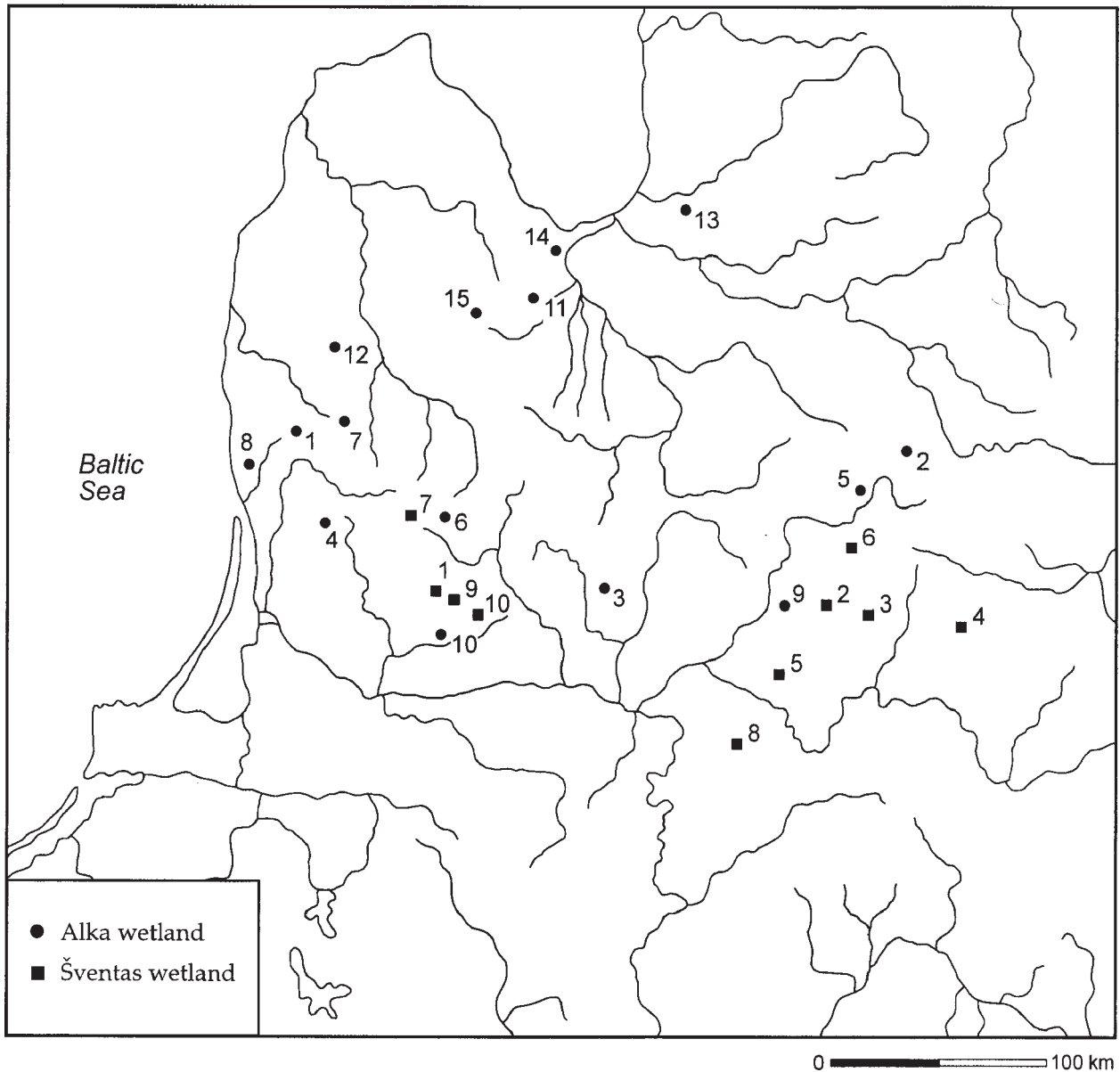
Territory of Prussia (modern Poland)

15. [voyavotsvo Elbląg, *Welle*].

Distribution of the Vèlè (Souls) waters: wetlands (■). (Drawn by author.)

Latvia

1. Lakstigali; 2. Garoza.



Map XXIII

Distribution of the Alka wetlands (●) (according to author (1998b) with additions)

Lithuania

1. Alkas (Kretinga district); 2. Antanašė; 3. Antanava; 4. Didieji Mostaičiai; 5. Kalbutiškės; 6. Laugiriškės; 7. Mikytai; 8. Rūdaičiai; 9. Skominai; 10. Taubučiai.

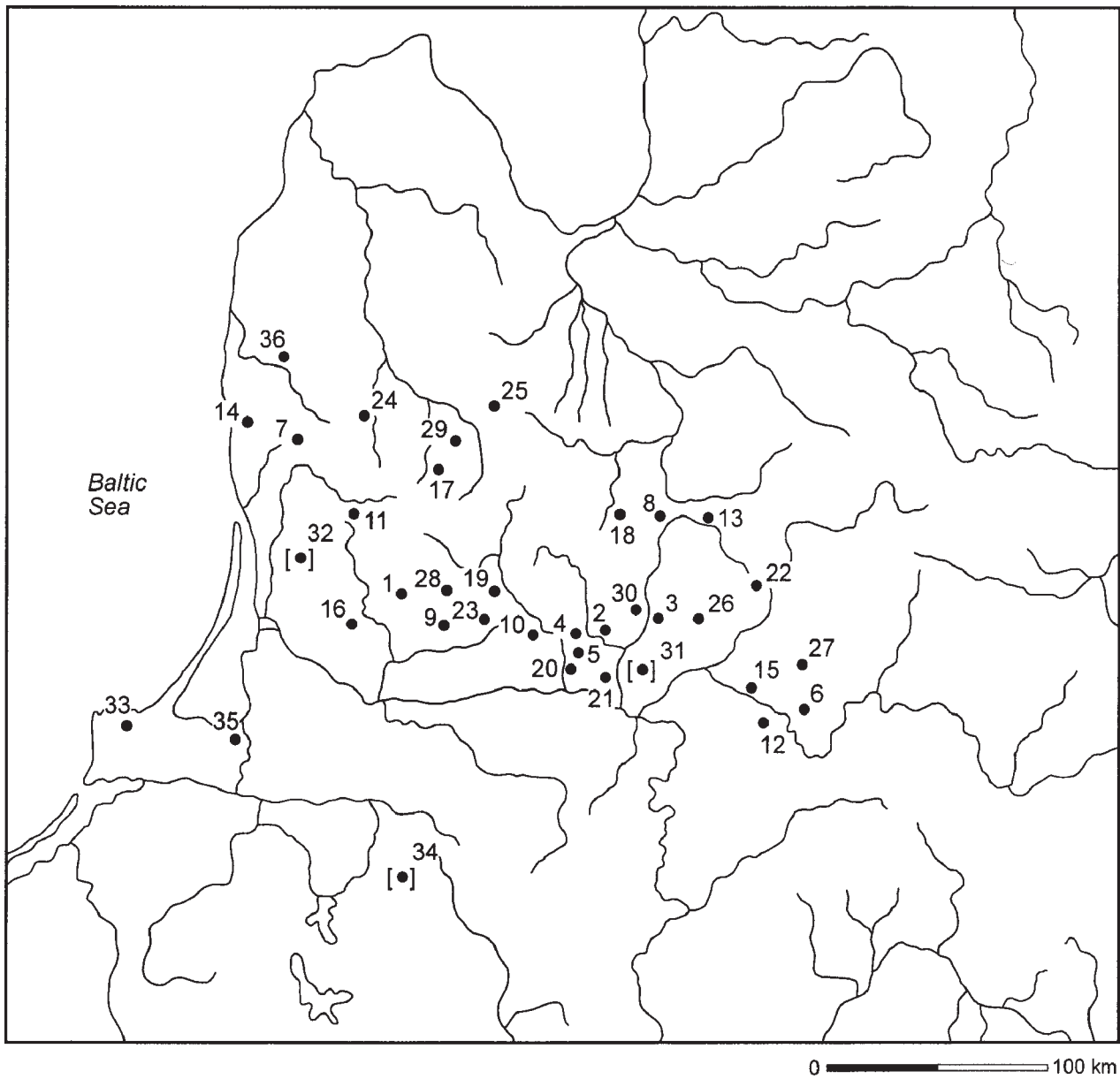
Latvia

11. Annenieķi; 12. Krote; 13. Sidgunda; 14. Slagūne; 15. Zebrene.

Distribution of the Šventas wetlands (■) (drawn by author)

Lithuania

1. Antininkai; 2. Balninkai; 3. Budriškės; 4. Dvilonys; 5. Jaskaudžiai; 6. Klevėnai; 7. Mediškiai; 8. Ringailiai; 9. Stoniai; 10. Švendūnai.



Map XXIV

Distribution of the Alka rivers (according to author (1998b) with additions)

Lithuania

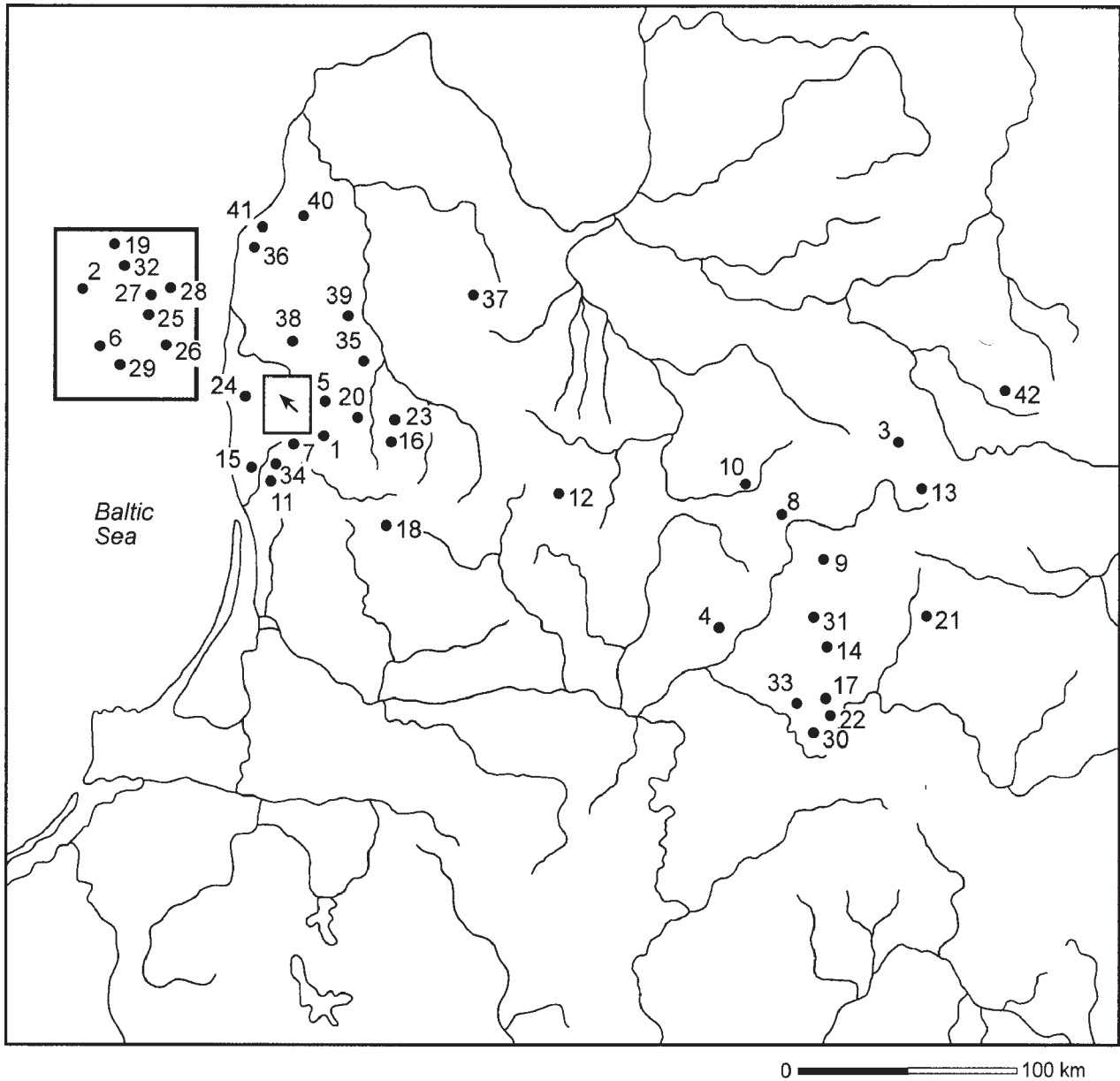
1. Alkapis; 2. Angiriai; 3. Apytalaukis; 4. Blandžiai; 5. Čekiškė; 6. Elniakampis; 7. Gargždelė; 8. Gustonys; 9. Juškaičiai; 10. Kengiai; 11. Kungiai; 12. Mičiūnai; 13. Miežiškiai; 14. Naujoji Įpiltis; 15. Padaigiai; 16. Paežeris; 17. Pagirgždūtis; 18. Pakalniškiai (Radviliškis district); 19. Palėkinis; 20. Pašiliai; 21. Piepaliai; 22. Radžiūnai; 23. Raseiniai; 24. Skirpsčiai; 25. Suginčiai; 26. Šėta; 27. Šeiniūnai; 28. Šienlaukis; 29. Užpelkiai (Akmenė district); 30. Vaidatoniai; 31. [Vandžiogala]; 32. [Veiviržėnai].

Kaliningradskaya oblast

33. Alkikiai/Pribrezhnoye; 34. [Darkiemis/Ozersk]; 35. Laukiškiai/Saranskoye.

Latvia

36. Bārta.



Map XXV

Distribution of the Šventas (Sacred) rivers
(drawn by author)

Lithuania

1. Akmenė (Kupiškis district); 2. Akmenė district; 3. Alanta; 4. Altonišķiai; 5. Andrušķoniai; 6. Ardzijausķai; 7. Bėčionys; 8. Brizķai; 9. Budrišķė; 10. Dvaronys; 11. Genėtiniai; 12. Grimķiai; 13. Jašiūnai; 14. Išlaužas; 15. Kačėnišķė; 16. Keķėnai; 17. Kliokai; 18. Kreiviai; 19. Kurmėgala; 20. Mėzionėliai; 21. Mikalina; 22. Mikliūnai; 23. Norgalviai; 24. Paberžė; 25. Padievytis; 26. Padubysis; 27. Pamusis; 28. Pašaminė; 29. Pašušvys; 30. Pašventupys; 31. Raizķiai; 32. Rakšteliai; 33. Ringovė; 34. Ritikiai; 35. Sekioniai; 36. Skroblė forest; 37. Skuodas/Kretinga districts; 38. Stoniai; 39. Šuoliai; 40. Šventarečius; 41. Šventežeris; 42. Šventupiai (Panevėžys district); 43. Tarosai; 44. Tauragnai; 45. Tytuvėnai; 46. Traknišķė;

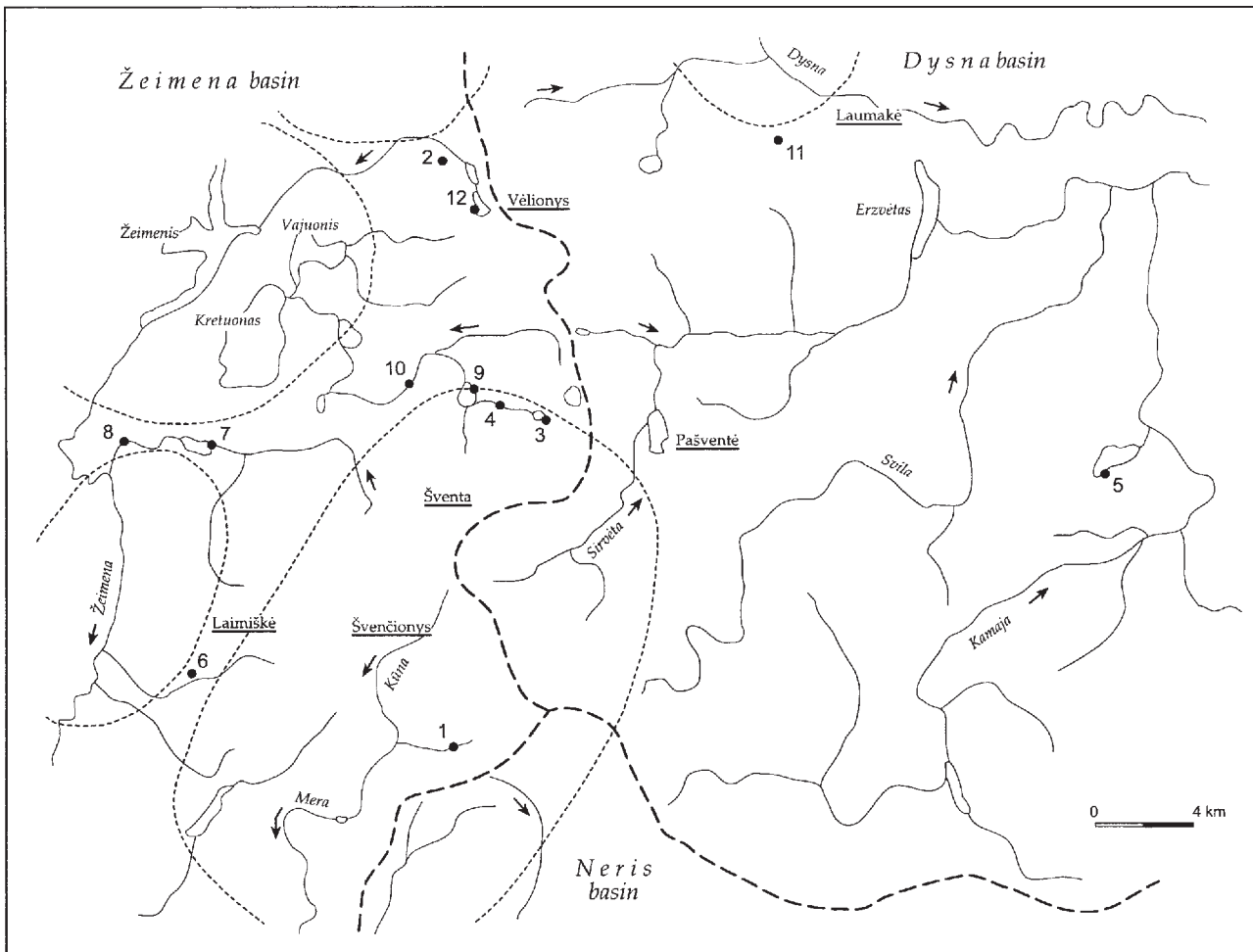
47. Užlieknė; 48. Vadžgirys; 49. Vaireikonys; 50. Viešvilė; 51. Zarasai-Utena-Anykšćiai-Ukmergė-Jonava districts; 52. Žadeikiai; 53. Žemgyala.

Latvia

54. Galtene; 55. Jaunpagasts; 56. Katlakaln; 57. [Liepāja]; 58. Mārciena; 59. Pāle; 60. Žvārde.

Territory of Prussia

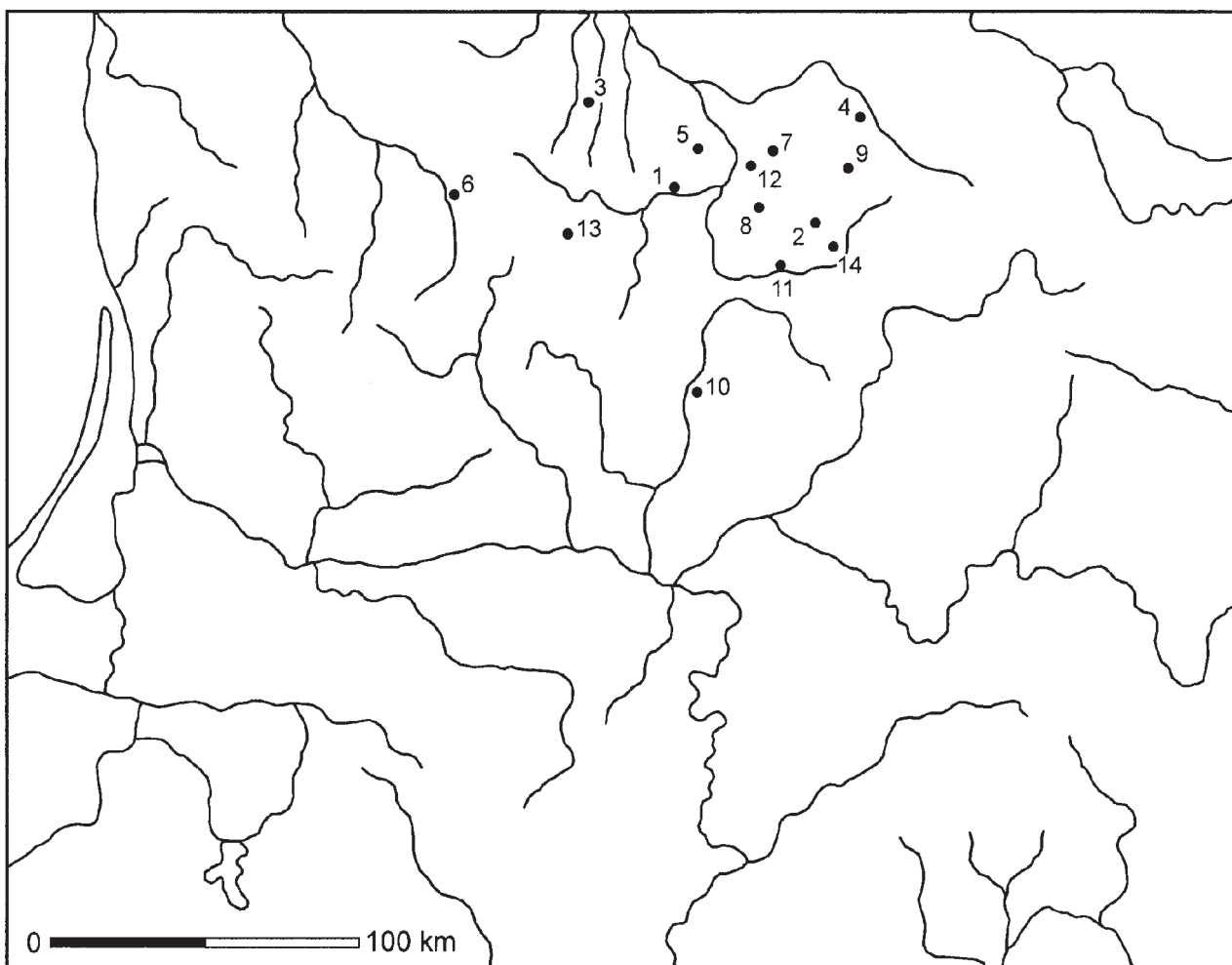
61. Tolminkiemis/Chistiye Prudi; 62. Labguva/Polessk; 63. [voyavotsvo Olsztyn].



Map XXVI

Distribution of the sacred places in Švenčionys region and supposed boundaries of the former Nalšia land districts in the 11th–13th centuries (according to G. Zabiela, 1992) (dotted line); theophoric names of settlements (underlined) and rivers, lakes, and little swamps called Šventa (Sacred) (drawn by author)

1. Andreikos Šventas (Sacred) River; 2. Bėčionys Šventas (Sacred) River; 3. Garniai Mergos (Girl's) otherwise Perkūnas (Thunder's) Lake; 4. Garniai Šventas (Sacred) River; 5. Lazdiniai Šventas (Sacred) Lake; 6. Mėžionėliai Šventas (Sacred) River; 7. Pašaminė Šventas (Sacred) Lake; 8. Pašaminė Šventas (Sacred) River; 9. Rakšteliai Šventas (Sacred) Lake; 10. Rakšteliai Šventas (Sacred) River; 11. Trakniškė Šventas (Sacred) River; 12. Vėlionys Vėlė (Soul's) Lake.

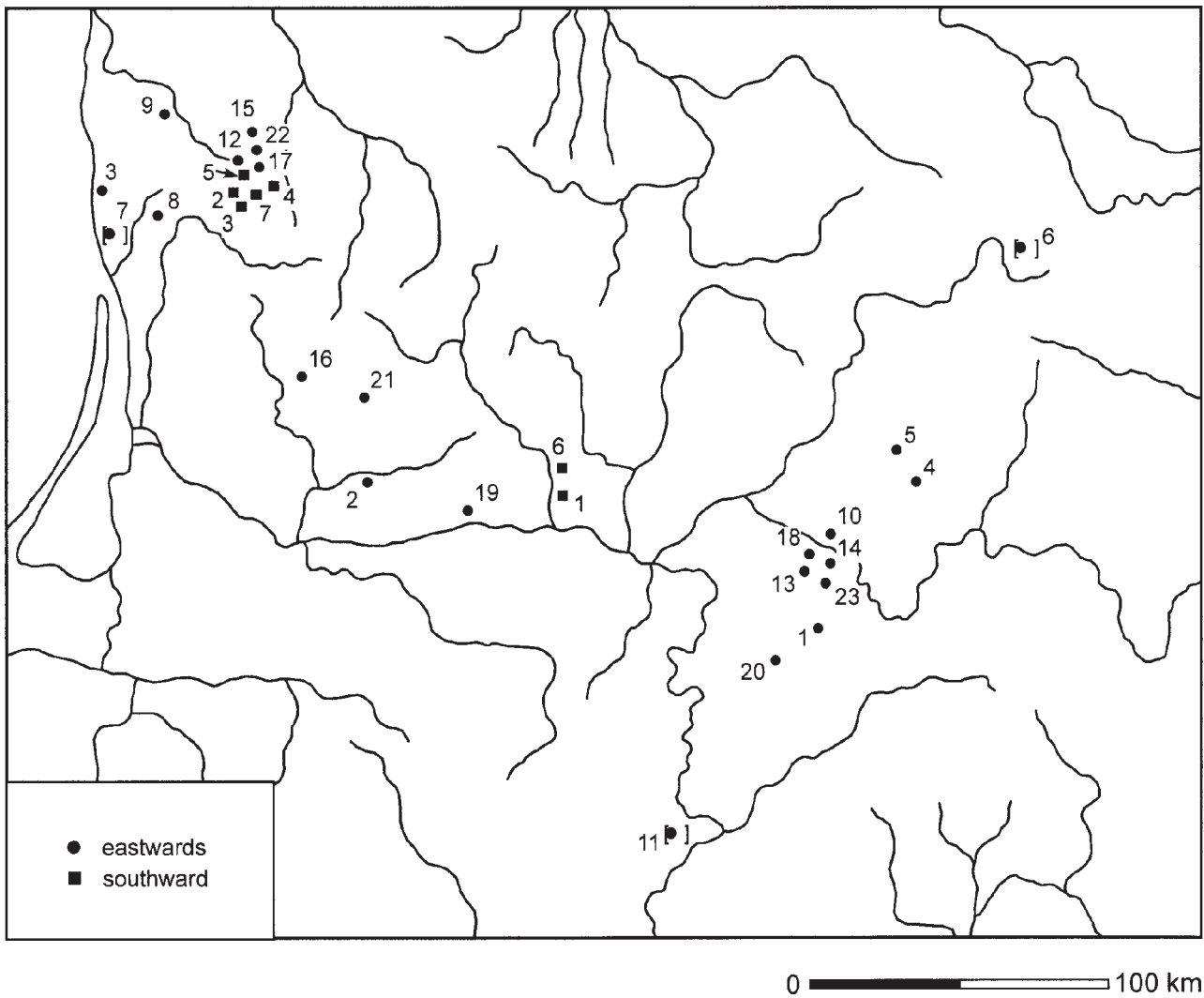


Map XXVII

Distribution of the Raganinė (Witches') sites (drawn by author)

Lithuania

1. Dvariukai-Mūrdvaris; 2. Gyvakarai-Rudikai; 3. Mitkūnai; 4. Nemunėlis; 5. Paisykis; 6. Papalskiai-Graudušiai; 7. Patatuličiai-Pabiržė; 8. Petriškiai; 9. Savučiai-Galvokai; 10. Šambaliočiai; 11. Tiltgaliai; 12. Trečionėliai; 13. Vantainiai; 14. Vėžionys (Kupiškis district).



Map XXVIII

Distribution of the springs flowing “against the Sun”:
eastwards (●) (drawn by author)

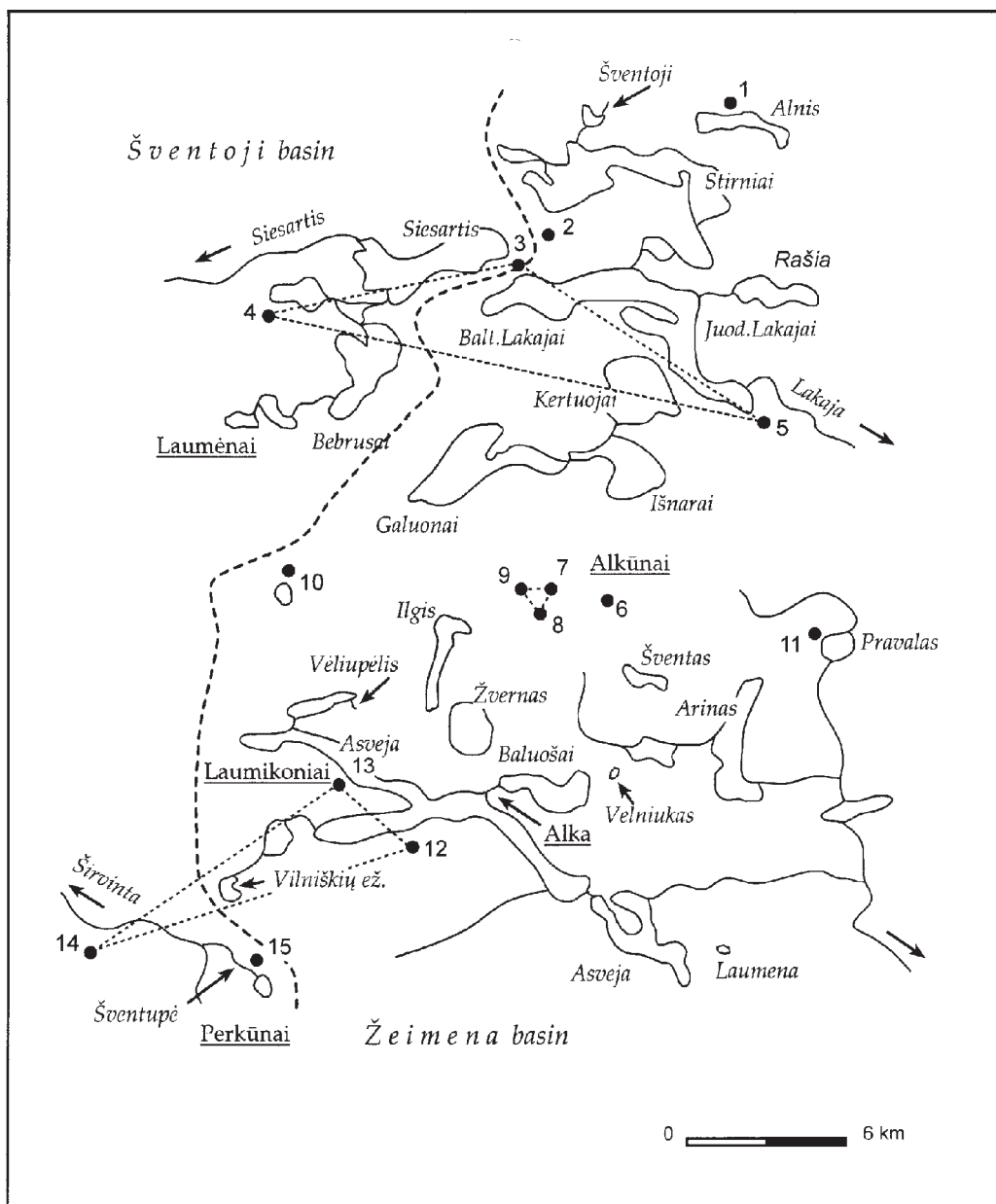
Lithuania

1. Aleksandrava; 2. Baciai; 3. Būtingė; 4. Ciezariškiai; 5. Daubariškiai; 6. [Dusetos]; 7. [Klaipėda]; 8. Kretinga; 9. Kulai 1; 10. Lapelės; 11. [Liškiava]; 12. Mačiūkiai; 13. Maskoliškiai-Versukra; 14. Mitkiškės; 15. Mockaičiai; 16. Padievytis; 17. Paežerės Rūdaičiai; 18. Pakalniškiai-Panorai (Kaišiadorys district); 19. Pakalniškiai (Jurbarkas district); 20. Rangava; 21. Simėnai; 22. Uogučiai; 23. Zabarija.

Distribution of the springs flowing “against the Sun”:
southwards (◆) (drawn by author)

Lithuania

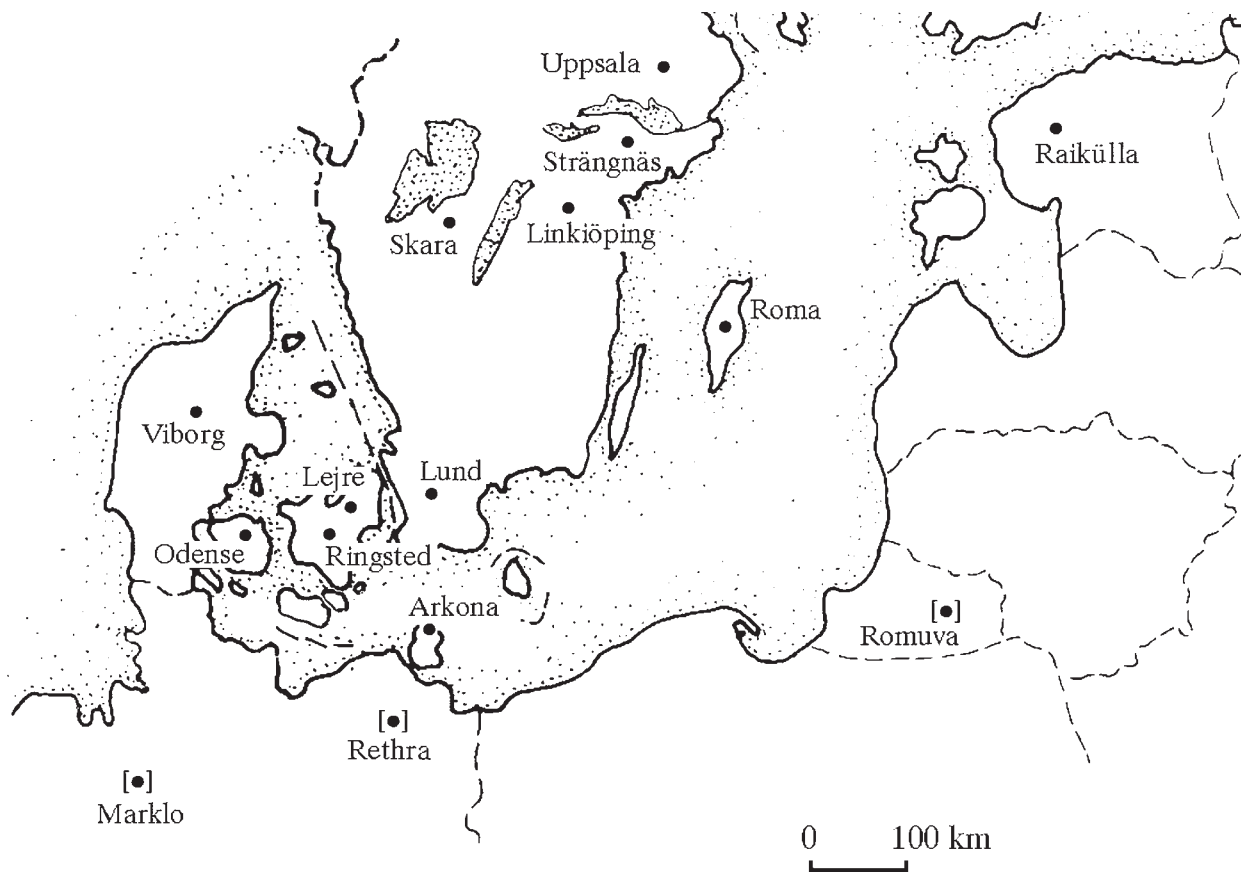
1. Besmerčiai; 2. Godeliai; 3. Kadaičiai; 4. Plokščiai; 5. Stirbaičiai; 6. Ugionys; 7. Videikiai.



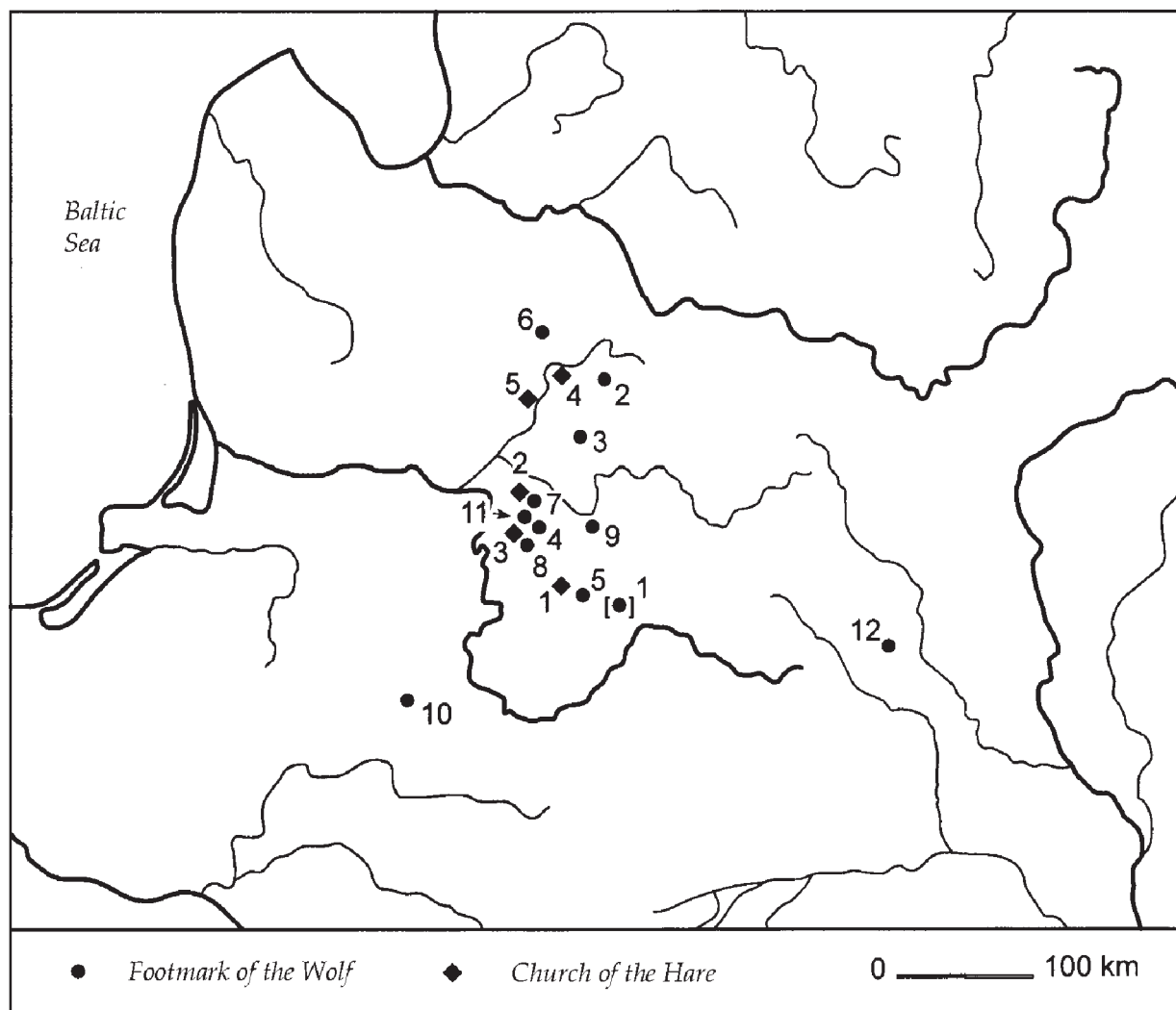
Map XXIX

Complexes of sacred places associated with *laumės* (fairies) and *raganos* (witches) in Eastern Lithuania, in the environs of Molėtai and Dubingiai (jointed by dotted line), as well as more important hydronyms (*italics*) and names of settlements (underlined) (drawn by author)

1. Alnė Ragana (Witches') Hill; 2. Pažuoliai Mergos (Girl's) Hill; 3. Kamužėlis Lake; 4. Ažuluokesa Mergos (Girl's) Hill; 5. Šlavingalis Hill; 6. Meškalydymis Ragana (Witches') Wetland; 7. Savidėnai Vaidulas (Spook's) Hill; 8. Savidėnai Ragana (Witches') Hill; 9. Pažuoliai-Savidėnai Hill; 10. Bijutiškis Ragana (Witches') Wetland; 11. Pavandenė hill fort called Ragana (Witches') Hill; 12. Ankšta Laumė (Fairy's) Hollow; 13. Laumikonys Laumė (Fairy's) Hill; 14. Rožakmenis sacred stone; 15. Gruodžiai Ragana (Witches') Meadow.



Map XXX
Baltic Sea region and sites cited in Chapter 5



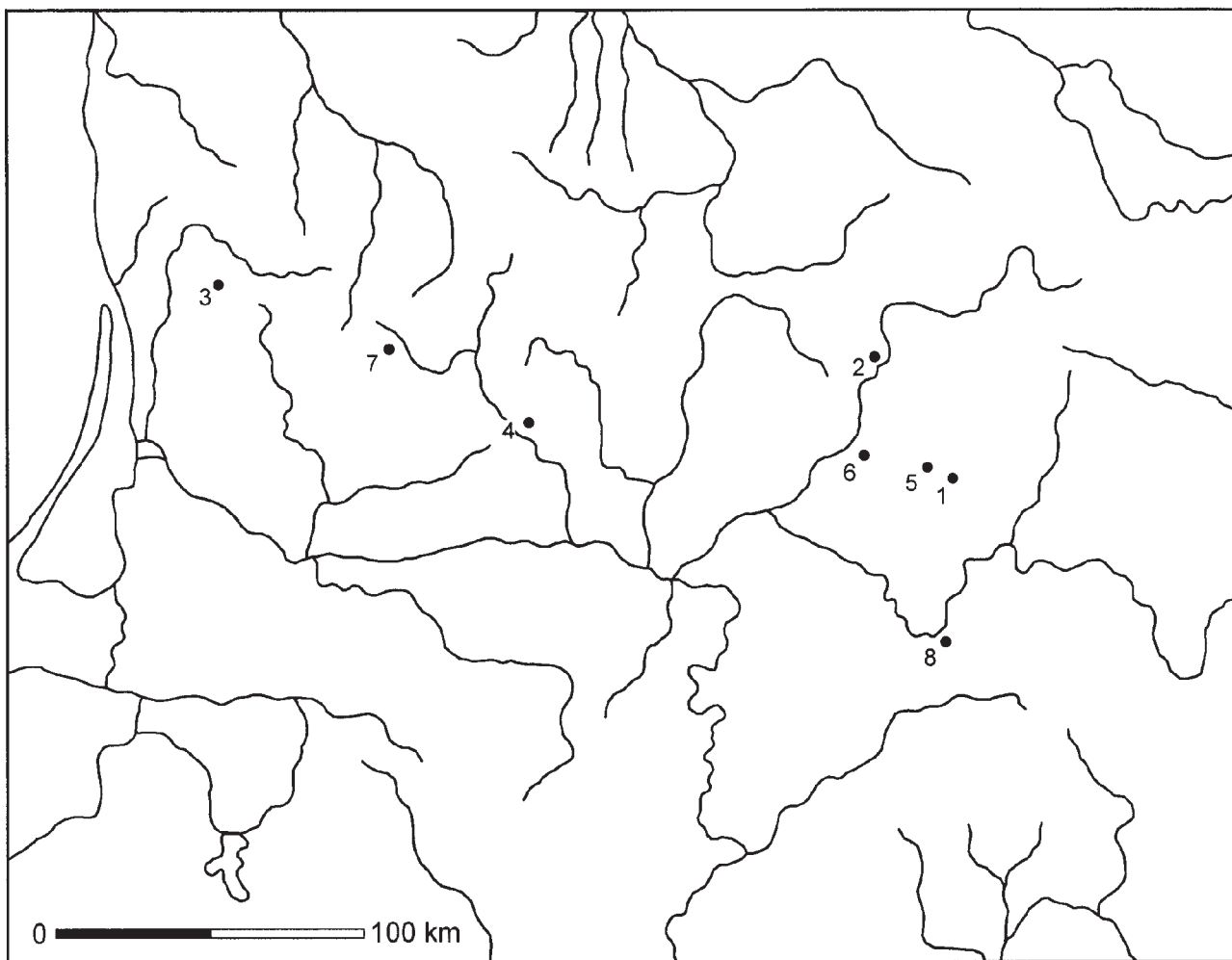
Map XXXI

Distribution of the sacred places called Vilko pėda (Footmark of the Wolf). Stones with wolf-footprints (3–9, 12) and sites called Vilkpėdė (1, 2, 10, 11) (according to the author, 2003)

1. Beniakoni/ Беньяконі; 2. Čižiškės; 3. Gudeliai, Molėtai district; 4. Guronys, Trakai district; 5. Jakėnai; 6. Kalviai, Rokiškis district; 7. Kareivonys, Kaišiadorys district; 8. Sabališkės; 9. Vilkpėdė; 10. Wilkopedzie; 11. Žostautai; 12. Zhuravets/ Журавец.

Distribution of the sacred places called Kiškio bažnyčia (Church of the Hare): hills (2, 5), stone (1), field (3), grove (4) (according to the author, 2003)

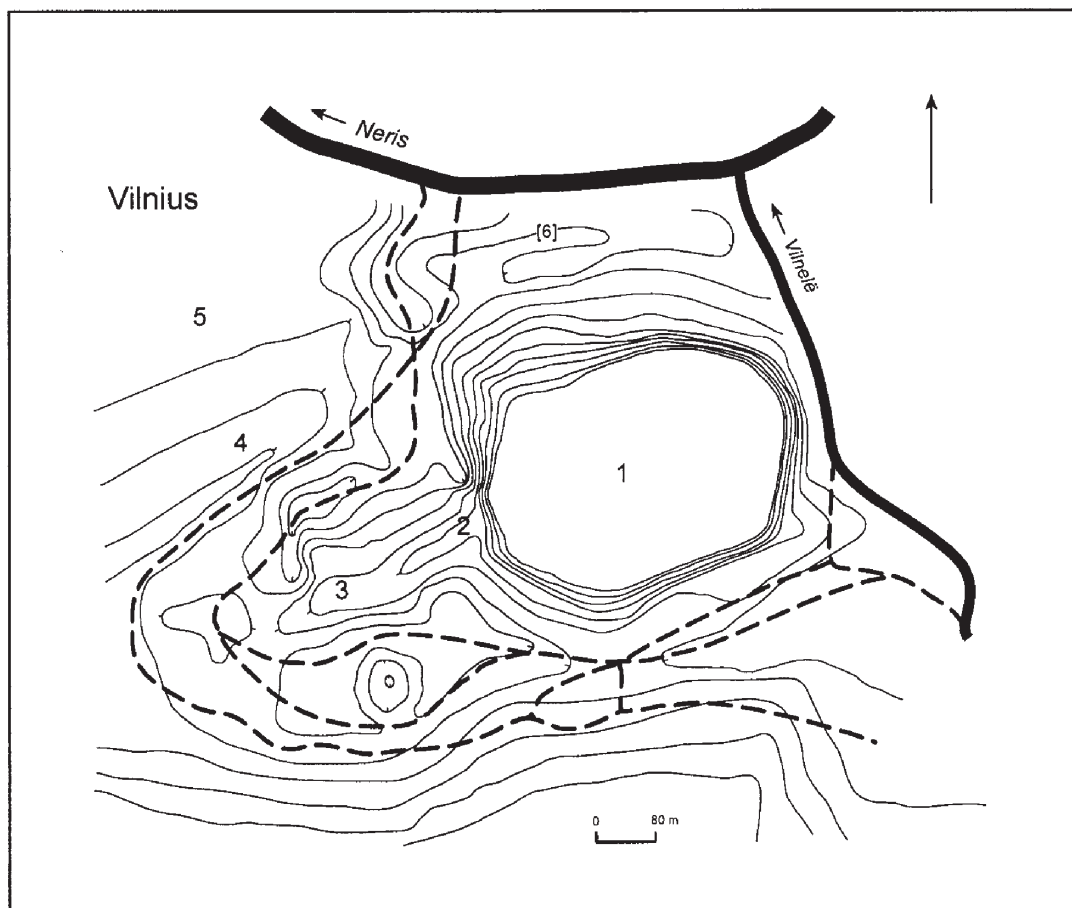
1. Genionys; 2. Guronys, Kaišiadorys district; 3. Liciškėnai; 4. Mičionys; 5. Purveliai.



Map XXXII

Distribution of the sacred places called Šventaragis
(according to author (2001) with additions)

1. Aigėlai; 2. Anykščiai; 3. Čiuželiai; 4. Dvarviečiai; 5. Girsteitiškis; 6. Paprėniškiai; 7. Šventragiai; 8. Vilnius.



Map XXXIII

The area of Vilnius Šventaragis (drawn by author). (The horizontals are drawn in 1 m interval according to N. Kitkauskas and S. Lasavickas).

1. The Upper Castle; 2. The Lower Castle (Grand Duke's Palace); 3. The Perkūnas sanctuary; 4. Puškarnia; 5. Lukiškės sacred grove; 6. Šventaragis grassland mentioned in 1738.



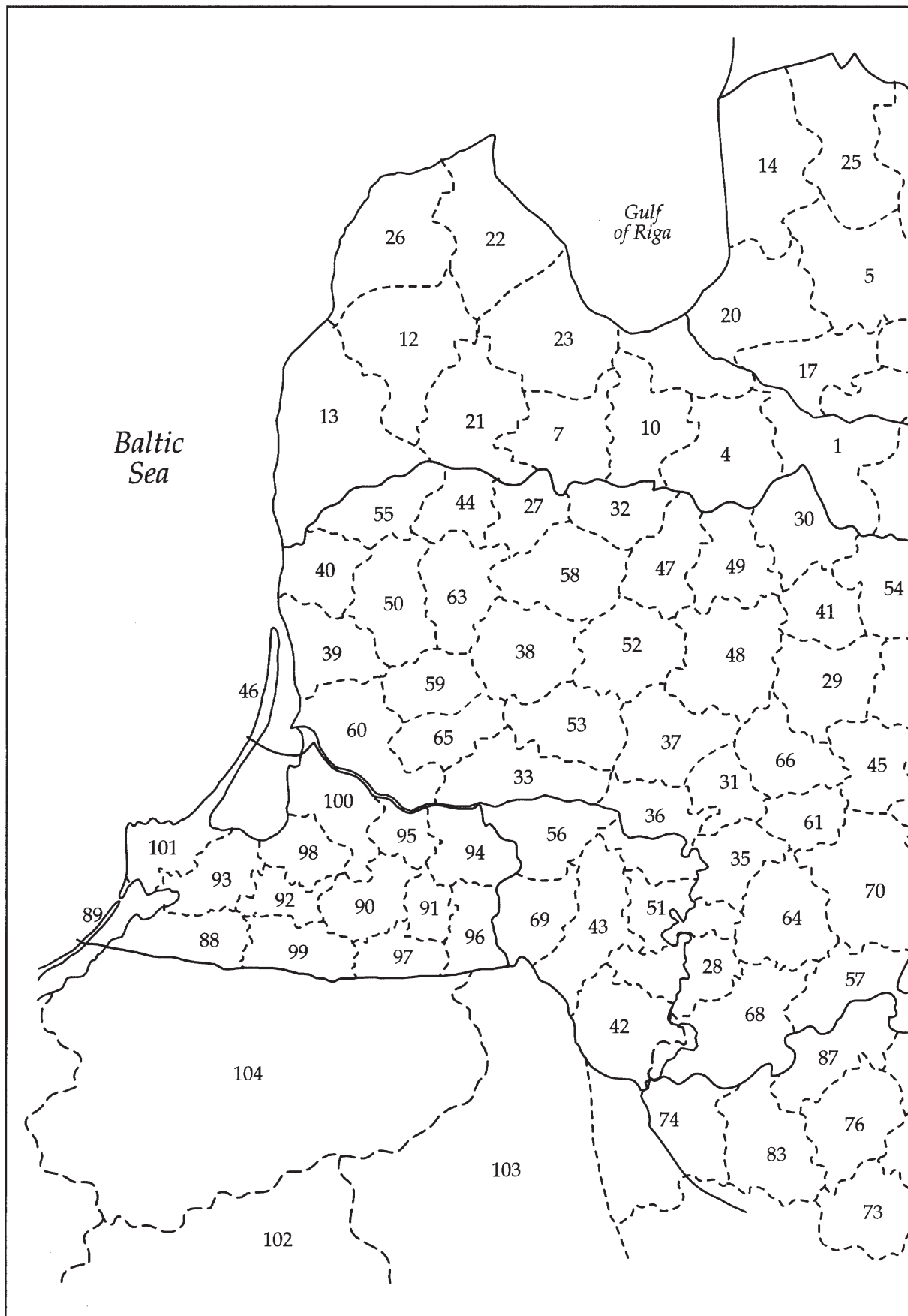
Appendix A

The Balts in the late 1st - early 2nd millennium AD (according to P. Gaučas, 2001)



Appendix B

The Balts' tribes in the investigated area in the late 1st-early 2nd millennium AD (according to P. Gaučas, 2001)



Appendix C

Administrative map of the investigated area



Appendix D

Sites cited and analysed in the monograph

Lithuania

Adučiškis (Švenčionys district)
Aigėlai (Molėtai district)
Akmenė
Akmenė (Kupiškis district)
Akmenė (Raseiniai district)
Akmeniai (Kelmė district)
Akmeniai (Trakai district)
Akmeniškiai (Raseiniai district)
Akmuo (Varėna district)
Alanta (Molėtai district)
Alaušas (Utena district)
Aleksandrava (Trakai district)
Aleksandrija (Trakai district)
Alešiškės (Trakai district)
Alka (Alytus district)
Alkai (Plungė district)
Alkas (Kretinga district)
Alkas (Plungė district)
Alkaičiai (Trakai district)
Alkas-Salantai (Kretinga district)
Alkiškiai (Akmenė district)
Alksnėnai (Kėdainiai district)
Alksnėnai (Vilkaviškis district)
Alkūpis (Šilalė district)
Alkūnai (Molėtai district)
Alnė (Molėtai district)
Alsėdžiai (Plungė district)
Altoniškiečiai (Kaunas district)
Alytus
Alžiutėnai (Utena district)
Andreikos (Švenčionys district)
Andriūnai (Radviliškis district)
Andriūnai (Varėna district)
Andriūniškiai (Šakiai district)
Andruškoniai (Kaunas district)
Anduliai-Ėgliškės (Kretinga district)
Angiriai (Kėdainiai district)
Anykščiai
Ankšta (Vilnius district)
Ankštakiai (Kretinga district)
Antakalniai (Varėna district)
Antakmenė (Ignalina district)
Antakščiai (Kretinga district)
Antanašė (Rokiškis district)
Antanava (Kėdainiai district)
Antašventė (Molėtai district)
Antatiličiai (Ukmergė district)
Antatiškis (Molėtai district)
Antaveršis (Trakai district)
Antininkai (Šilalė district)
Antsieniai (Plungė district)
Anužiai (Kretinga district)
Ančėnai (Molėtai district)
Apuolė (Skuodas district)
Apytalaukis (Kėdainiai district)
Ardzijauskai (Marijampolė district)
Ariogala (Raseiniai district)
Augzeliai (Skuodas district)
Auksūdys (Akmenė district)
Auksūdys (Kretinga district)

Avilys Lake (Zarasai district)
Ažluokėsa (Molėtai district)
Ažuoliuja (Šilalė district)
Ažuožeriai (Anykščiai district)

Babrungėnai (Plungė district)
Baciai (Jurbarkas district)
Bačkininkėliai (Prienai district)
Bajorai-Pakriaunis (Rokiškis district)
Bajoriškiai (Lazdijai district)
Baisogala (Radviliškis district)
Bakaloriškės (Trakai district)
Balceriškės (Trakai district)
Balniai (Jurbarkas district)
Balninkai (Molėtai district)
Balsiai (Šilalė district)
Baltadvaris (Molėtai district)
Baltininkai (Telšiai district)
Balynos Lake (Mažeikiai district)
Baraučižna (Ukmergė district)
Baranaučižna (Radviliškis district)
Bartašiūnai (Utena district)
Bartlaukis (Telšiai district)
Bartkūnai (Ukmergė district)
Baruvka (Ukmergė district)
Beigeriškės (Tauragė district)
Beinorava (Radviliškis district)
Beižionys (Trakai district)
Benaičiai (Kretinga district)
Beržai (Šilalė district)
Beržyniai (Pakruojis district)
Beržoras (Plungė district)
Beržtalys River (Pakruojis district)
Besmerčiai (Kaunas district)
Betygala (Raseiniai district)
Bėčionys (Ignalina district)
Bijotai (Šilalė district)
Bijutiškis (Molėtai district)
Bikavėnai (Šilutė district)
Birštonas (Prienai district)
Biržai
Biržų Laukas (Šilalė district)
Biržuvėnai (Telšiai district)
Blandžiai (Kėdainiai district)
Brazdeikiai (Telšiai district)
Brizgai (Telšiai district)
Brotykai (Skuodas district)
Bryzgiai (Rokiškis district)
Budeliai (Kaišiadorys district)
Būdos (Prienai district)
Būdos (Trakai district)
Budriai (Skuodas district)
Budrioniai (Panevėžys district)
Budriškės (Molėtai district)
Buivydžiai (Vilnius district)
Bulėtiškis (Pakruojis district)
Burviai (Skuodas district)
Busiškis (Rokiškis district)
Butniūnai (Pakruojis district)
Būtingė (Kretinga district)

Ciezariškiai (Molėtai district)
Cirkliškis (Švenčionys district)
Ciūniškiai (Molėtai district)

- Dabužiai** (Anykščiai district)
Daktariškė (Telšiai district)
Dalgai (Plungė district)
Dapkaičiai (Raseiniai district)
Dapšiai (Mažeikiai district)
Daubariai (Mažeikiai district)
Daubariškiai (Molėtai district)
Daugai (Alytus district)
Daugai Lake (Alytus district)
Daugai-Sala (Alytus district)
Daugalaičiai (Joniškis district)
Daugėliškės (Kelmė district)
Dauglaukis (Tauragė district)
Daukonys (Radviliškis district)
Daukšiai (Marijampolė district)
Daunoriai (Utena district)
Dausynai (Klaipėda district)
Debeikiai (Anykščiai district)
Degsnė-Labotiškės (Molėtai district)
Deltuva (Ukmergė district)
Deltuvėlė (Ukmergė district)
Derkinčiai (Skuodas district)
Didieji Burbiškiai (Telšiai district)
Didieji Mostaičiai (Plungė district)
Didžiuliai (Šalčininkai district)
Dieveniškės (Šalčininkai district)
Dievytis Lake (Šilalė district)
Dilbšiai (Plungė district)
Dirmeikiai (Telšiai district)
Dirvėnai (Tauragė district)
Dirvoniškės (Radviliškis district)
Ditkūnai (Zarasai district)
Dokiai (Kaunas district)
Domančiai (Pakruojis district)
Domeikiai (Kelmė district)
Dotenėnai (Švenčionys district)
Dotnuva (Kėdainiai district)
Dovainiai (Plungė district)
Drabužninkai (Trakai district)
Drausgiris (Vilkaviškis district)
Draustiniai (Kėdainiai district)
Driežai (Šilalė district)
Drūkšiai Lake (Zarasai district)
Dubingiai (Molėtai district)
Dukurniai (Šiauliai district)
Dumblynė (Zarasai district)
Duobužėlė (Molėtai district)
Dusetos (Zarasai district)
Dusia Lake (Alytus district)
Dvarelis (Tauragė district)
Dvareliškės (Kaunas district)
Dvariškės (Šalčininkai district)
Dvariškiai (Šilalė district)
Dvariukai-Mūrdvaris (Pakruojis district)
Dvaronys (Anykščiai district)
Dvarviečiai (Raseiniai district)
Dvilonys (Švenčionys district)
Dviragis Lake (Rokiškis district)
Dysna River (Ignalina district)
Dysnai Lake (Ignalina district)
- Eidininkai** (Plungė district)
Eikščiai (Kaunas district)
Einorai (Alytus district)
Eitvydaičiai (Šilalė district)
Eivydai (Plungė district)
- Elniakampis** (Vilnius district)
Endriejavas (Klaipėda district)
Erkšva (Skuodas district)
Ersla (Skuodas district)
Eržvilkas (Jurbarkas district)
- Feliksavas** (Telšiai district)
- Gaidėnai** (Šilalė district)
Gailiešionys (Utena district)
Gailiūnai (Ukmergė district)
Gailiutiškė (Zarasai district)
Gaižiūnai (Pakruojis district)
Gaižuva (Kaunas district)
Gaižuvėlė (Kaunas district)
Galvė Lake (Trakai city)
Galvožeris Lake (Trakai district)
Gandinga (Plungė district)
Gargždėlė (Kretinga district)
Garniai (Ignalina district)
Garniai (Utena district)
Gasparai (Panevėžys district)
Gauja River (Šalčininkai district)
Gedrimai (Skuodas district)
Gegrėnai (Plungė district)
Geidukonys (Varėna district)
Geišiai (Raseiniai district)
Gėluva (Raseiniai district)
Gelvonai (Širvintos district)
Gelžyčiai (Telšiai district)
Genionys (Varėna district)
Genaičiai (Klaipėda district)
Genėtiniai (Panevėžys district)
Geruliai (Prienai district)
Getaučiai (Plungė district)
Gilaičiai (Plungė district)
Gilvyčiai (Šiauliai district)
Gimbūčiai (Šilalė district)
Gintališkė (Plungė district)
Girininkai (Šiauliai district)
Giriškiai (Kelmė district)
Girmikai (Šiauliai district)
Girninkai 1 (Kaunas district)
Girsteitiškis (Molėtai district)
Girutiškė (Zarasai district)
Godeliai (Plungė district)
Gošteliškiai (Šiauliai district)
Graužai (Radviliškis district)
Grendavė (Trakai district)
Grigaičiai (Plungė district)
Grigaliai (Panevėžys district)
Griguliai (Šilalė district)
Grikapėdis (Prienai district)
Grimziai (Kelmė district)
Grinkiškis (Radviliškis district);
Griūčiai (Utena district)
Gruodžiai (Vilnius district)
Grūšlaukė (Kretinga district)
Gudaliai (Skuodas district)
Gudeliai (Kelmė district)
Gudeliai (Molėtai district)
Gudėniškės (Utena district)
Gulbinai (Radviliškis district)
Guntinas (Skuodas district)
Guostagalis (Pakruojis district)
Guronys (Kaišiadorys district)

- Guronys (Trakai district)
Gustonys (Panevėžys district)
Gvaldai (Šilalė district)
Gyvakarai-Rudikai (Kupiškis district)
Gyvoliai (Akmenė district)
- Igariai (Skuodas district)
Ilgis Lake (Alytus district)
Ilzenbergas (Rokiškis district)
Imbarė (Kretinga district)
Imbarė-Žvainiai (Kretinga district)
Imbradas (Zarasai district)
Indija (Šilalė district)
Intuponys (Prienai district)
Ivoniškiai (Šilalė district)
Išlaužas (Prienai district)
- Jačionys (Ukmergė district)
Jakėnai (Varėna district)
Jakštai (Zarasai district)
Jakštaičiukai (Šiauliai district)
Janonys (Molėtai district)
Jaurai (Molėtai district)
Jaskaudžiai (Širvintos district)
Jašiūnai (Šalčininkai district)
Jociūnai (Alytus district)
Jociūnai-Balkasodis (Alytus district)
Jogvilai (Ukmergė district)
Jokšai (Šilutė district)
Joskaudai (Kretinga district)
Jucaičiai (Šilalė district)
Jučioniai (Kaunas district)
Juknaičiai (Šilutė district)
Junkūnai (Rokiškis district)
Juodeikiai (Mažeikiai district)
Juodkrantė (Neringa city)
Juodupiai (Radviliškis district)
Jurdonys (Ukmergė district)
Jurgaičiai (Šiauliai district)
Jurgionys (Trakai district)
Jurgiškiai (Alytus district)
Jurgoniškės (Kelmė district)
Jusaičiai (Šiauliai district)
Jusevičiai (Marijampolė district)
Juškaičiai (Tauragė district)
Jutiškiai (Panevėžys district)
- Kačėniškė (Švenčionys district)
Kadaičiai (Plungė district)
Kadarai (Biržai district)
Kadžiai (Plungė district)
Kaimalė (Kelmė district)
Kairiai (Panevėžys district)
Kairiškiai (Akmenė district)
Kalbutiškės (Rokiškis district)
Kaliečiai (Utena district)
Kalnelis (Joniškis district)
Kalniškė (Lazdijai district)
Kaltinėnai (Šilalė district)
Kalviai (Rokiškis district)
Kalviai (Šalčininkai district)
Kamščiai (Šilalė district)
Kamuželis (Molėtai district)
Kapsūdžiai (Plungė district)
Karajimiškis (Biržai district)
Karalgiris (Kaunas district)
- Karališkiai (Ukmergė district)
Karališkiai (Molėtai district)
Karališkiai (Širvintos district)
Karališkis (Molėtai district)
Kareiviškis (Pakruojis district)
Kareivonys (Kaišiadorys district)
Kareivonys (Varėna district)
Kartena (Kretinga district)
Karūžiškė (Šilalė district)
Karvys (Vilnius district)
Kastriškės (Alytus district)
Kaštaunaliai (Šilalė district)
Katinai (Anykščiai district)
Kaukinė (Kaišiadorys district)
Kauksnujai (Pakruojis district)
Kaunas
Kaušai (Šilalė district)
Kavarskas (Anykščiai district)
Kazimieravas (Alytus district)
Kazokiškės (Trakai district)
Kegriai (Akmenė district)
Kejėnai (Raseiniai district)
Keliuotiskiai (Pasvalys district)
Kena (Vilnius district)
Kengiai (Raseiniai district)
Kentaučiai (Mažeikiai district)
Kereliai (Kupiškis district)
Kerežiai (Akmenė district)
Kernavė (Širvintos district)
Kesiai (Akmenė district)
Keturakiai (Plungė district)
Ketūnai (Mažeikiai district)
Kiaukliai Lake (Širvintos district)
Kilėviškis (Anykščiai district)
Kinderiai (Kupiškis district)
Kirdiškis (Kupiškis district)
Kirkliai (Šiauliai district)
Klaipėda
Kleboniškiai (Radviliškis district)
Klevėnai (Anykščiai district)
Klėriškės (Kaišiadorys district)
Klibiai (Kretinga district)
Kliokai (Telšiai district)
Kloniniai Mijaugonys (Kaišiadorys district)
Kloviniai (Utena district)
Kluonaliai (Kretinga district)
Kontaučiai (Plungė district)
Korliškės-Aukrakštis (Alytus district)
Korliškės-Mergos Akmuo (Alytus district)
Kosakai (Ukmergė district)
Krakės-Nevočiai (Skuodas district)
Krakiai (Mažeikiai district)
Kraujeliai (Molėtai district)
Kražantė River (Kelmė district)
Kražiai (Kelmė district)
Kreipštai (Telšiai district)
Kreiviai (Ukmergė district)
Krekenava (Panevėžys district)
Kretinga
Kriaušišiai (Pasvalys district)
Kriokšlys (Varėna district)
Krivasalis (Ignalina district)
Kruncikai (Trakai district)
Kruopiai (Skuodas district)
Krūvandai (Kaunas district)
Kubakiai (Plungė district)

Kubiliai (Kelmė district)
 Kukariškė (Ignalina district)
 Kukavaitis (Vilnius district)
 Kukiai (Mažeikiai district)
 Kulai 1 (Skuodas district)
 Kulautuva (Kaunas district)
 Kuliškiai (Šilalė district)
 Kulskiai (Plungė district)
 Kundrėnai (Kupiškis district)
 Kungiai (Plungė district)
 Kunigiškai (Šilalė district)
 Kunioniai (Kėdainiai district)
 Kupriai (Ignalina district)
 Kurėnai (Ukmergė district)
 Kurėnai Lake (Ukmergė district)
 Kurmaičiai (Kretinga district)
 Kurmelionys (Šalčininkai district)
 Kurmėgala (Jonava district)
 Kuršai (Telšiai district);
 Kušleikiai (Kelmė district)
 Kušliai (Anykščiai district)
 Kutiškiečiai (Radviliskis district)
 Kveciai (Kretinga district)
 Kvėšai (Kaunas district)
 Kvėšai Wetland (Kaunas district)

Labardžiai (Plungė district)
 Laiviai (Kretinga district)
 Laiviai-Salantai (Kretinga district)
 Lamėstas Lake (Utena district)
 Lapelės (Širvintos district)
 Lapeliškės (Zarasai district)
 Lapynai (Tauragė district)
 Laugiriškės (Kelmė district)
 Laukagalys (Kaišiadorys district)
 Laukuva (Šilalė district)
 Laumėnai (Šilalė district)
 Laumenkėliai (Molėtai district)
 Laumikonys (Molėtai district)
 Lavariškės (Trakai district)
 Lazdijai
 Lazdiniai (Švenčionys district)
 Legiškis (Rokiškis district)
 Leilėnai (Telšiai district)
 Leipalingis (Lazdijai district)
 Lėlaičiai (Mažeikiai district)
 Lėliai (Kaišiadorys district)
 Lėliai (Utena district)
 Lelionys (Alytus district)
 Lembas (Šilalė district)
 Lenčiai (Kėdainiai district)
 Lenkaičiai (Plungė district)
 Lenkčiai (Jurbarkas district)
 Lenkimai (Skuodas district)
 Lepšiai (Ignalina district)
 Levaniškės (Molėtai district)
 Liaudiškiai (Radviliskis district)
 Liciškėnai (Prienai district)
 Linkavičiai (Panevėžys district)
 Linkuva (Pakruojis district)
 Liubišiškės (Kelmė district)
 Liukonys (Širvintos district)
 Liškiava (Varėna district)
 Liškiavis Lake (Varėna district)
 Lučionys (Vilnius district)
 Luponiai (Šiauliai district)

Lūžos (Zarasai district)

Mackeliškės (Anykščiai district)
 Mačiūkiai (Skuodas district)
 Maigai (Mažeikiai district)
 Maironiai (Kelmė district)
 Maišiagala (Vilnius district)
 Makrickai (Marijampolė district)
 Makščiai (Plungė district)
 Mančiagirė (Varėna district)
 Maneivos (Rokiškis district)
 Mantviliai (Jurbarkas district)
 Margiai (Kėdainiai district)
 Margis Lake (Trakai district)
 Martnoniai (Ukmergė district)
 Masališkės (Varėna district)
 Masiuliškiai (Panevėžys district)
 Maskoliškiai-Versukra (Trakai district)
 Mastis Lake (Telšiai city)
 Mateikiškiai (Ukmergė district)
 Maugarai (Kupiškis district)
 Mažasis Palūkstis (Telšiai district)
 Mažulonys (Ignalina district)
 Mediniai (Telšiai district)
 Mediškiai (Telšiai district)
 Medoliškės (Zarasai district)
 Medsėdžiai (Plungė district)
 Meironiškis (Kėdainiai district)
 Mergalaukis (Alytus district)
 Mergiškės (Trakai district)
 Merguva Lake (Šilutė district)
 Merkinė (Varėna district)
 Merkys River (South Lithuania)
 Meteliai (Alytus district)
 Meškalydymis (Molėtai district)
 Mėžionėliai (Švenčionys district)
 Mičionys (Anykščiai district)
 Miegenai (Kėdainiai district)
 Miesteliškiai (Pasvalys district)
 Miežiškiai (Panevėžys district)
 Migliniškės (Trakai district)
 Mikalina (Lazdijai district)
 Mikliūnai (Kaunas district)
 Mikniūnai (Rokiškis district)
 Mikyčiai (Plungė district)
 Mičiūnai (Kaišiadorys district)
 Milašius (Ignalina district)
 Mineiškiemis (Utena district)
 Mitkiškės (Trakai district)
 Mitkūnai (Joniškis district)
 Mituva Lake (Kupiškis district)
 Mociškė (Švenčionys district)
 Mockaičiai (Skuodas district)
 Mockėnai (Molėtai district)
 Molainiai (Panevėžys district)
 Molėtai
 Moliūnai (Pasvalys district)
 Moniūnai (Pakruojis district)
 Montviliskis (Kėdainiai district)
 Mosėdis (Skuodas district)
 Mosteikiai (Kelmė district)
 Mozūriškės (Anykščiai district)
 Muitaičiai (Telšiai district)
 Mykolinė (Biržai district)
 Mūša River (North Lithuania)

- Narkūnai (Utena district)
Naujasodis (Kaišiadorys district)
Naujieji Lažai (Kėdainiai district)
Naujoji Įpiltis (Kretinga district)
Naujoniai (Anykščiai district)
Naukaimis (Raseiniai district)
Naurašiliai (Panevėžys district)
Navikai (Ignalina district)
Nečiūnai (Trakai district)
Nedzingė (Varėna district)
Nemaitonys (Kaišiadorys district)
Nemakščiai (Raseiniai district)
Nemaniūnai (Prienai district)
Nemunas River (Middle Lithuania)
Nemunėlis (Biržai district)
Nemunėlis River (North Lithuania)
Neris River (East Lithuania)
Nevardėnai (Telšiai district)
Nevėžis River (Middle Lithuania)
Nikronys (Trakai district)
Nolėnai (Utena district)
Noreikiškės (Prienai district)
Norgalviai (Plungė district)
Norkaičiai (Tauragė district)
Novinkai 3 (Zarasai district)
- Obeliai Lake (Ukmergė district)**
Okainiai (Kėdainiai district)
Onuškis (Rokiškis district)
Oreliškės (Kelmė district)
- Paąžuoliai (Molėtai district)**
Paberžė (Vilnius district)
Pabiržė (Biržai district)
Pabiržulis (Telšiai district)
Pabradaumė (Mažeikiai district)
Padaigiai (Jonava district)
Padegimė (Skuodas district)
Padievaitis (Šilalė district)
Padievytis (Šilalė district)
Padubysis (Kaunas district)
Padubysis (Kelmė district)
Paduobužė (Molėtai district)
Padvariai (Kretinga district)
Padvariečiai (Biržai district)
Paėgluonis (Tauragė district)
Paežerės Rūdaičiai (Plungė district)
Paežeriai (Pakruojis district)
Paežeriai (Radviliškis district)
Paežeriai (Šiauliai district)
Paežeris (Šilalė district)
Pagirgždūtis (Telšiai/Kelmė districts)
Pagojai (Jurbarkas district)
Pagojus (Vilnius district)
Pagrybis (Šilalė district)
Pagrybis (Šilalė district)
Paindrė (Zarasai district)
Pajūralis (Šilalė district)
Pakalniai (Utena district)
Pakalniškiai (Jurbarkas district)
Pakalniškiai (Kaišiadorys district)
Pakalniškiai-Panorai (Kaišiadorys district)
Pakalniškiai (Radviliškis district)
Pakalniškiai (Raseiniai district)
Pakalniškiai (Šilalė district)
Pakapiai (Telšiai district)
- Pakerai (Plungė district)
Pakoplyčis (Šilalė district)
Pakruostė (Kėdainiai district)
Palanga
Palankinė (Šakiai district)
Palazduonis (Kaunas district)
Palendriai (Raseiniai district)
Palėkinis (Kelmė district)
Palobė (Rokiškis district)
Palokystis (Šilalė district)
Pamaleišys (Anykščiai district)
Pamedžiokalnė (Kelmė district)
Pamerkiai (Varėna district)
Pamiškė (Trakai district)
Pamusis (Varėna district)
Panavadis (Plungė district)
Papalskiai-Graudušiai (Šiauliai district)
Paparčiai (Skuodas district)
Papjauniai (Šilutė district)
Papiliai (Rokiškis district)
Papiškės (Varėna district)
Papiškės (Šalčininkai district)
Paprėniškiai (Ukmergė district)
Parečėnai (Alytus district)
Paringys (Ignalina district)
Pasruojė (Telšiai district)
Pašaminė (Švenčionys district)
Pašatrija (Telšiai district)
Pašilė (Kelmė district)
Pašiliai (Jurbarkas district)
Paštuva (Kaunas district)
Pašušvys (Radviliškis district)
Pašventupys (Prienai district)
Patatuličiai-Pabiržė (Biržai district)
Patyris (Plungė district)
Paupynys (Šilalė district)
Pavaiguvis (Kelmė district)
Pavandenė (Molėtai district)
Pavandenė (Telšiai district)
Paverkniai (Prienai district)
Pavirvytis (Telšiai district)
Payslykis (Pasvalys district)
Peiliškiai (Akmenė district)
Pelėkiai (Kretinga district)
Perkūnkiemis-Elekrėnai (Trakai district)
Perloja (Varėna district)
Pernarava-Blandžiai (Kėdainiai district)
Petkėniškiai (Trakai district)
Petraičiai (Telšiai district)
Petrašiūnai (Ukmergė district)
Petrikaičiai (Kelmė district)
Petriškės (Molėtai district)
Petriškiai (Pasvalys district)
Petrošiai (Kelmė district)
Piepaliai (Kaunas district)
Pikeliai (Mažeikiai district)
Pikeliškės (Vilnius district)
Piliakėmis (Molėtai district)
Pilotiškės (Prienai district)
Pivašiūnai (Alytus district)
Plaštaka (Anykščiai district)
Plateliai Lake (Plungė district)
Plaučiškės (Pakruojis district)
Plauskiniai (Plungė district)
Plikšilis (Kelmė district)
Plinkšiai (Mažeikiai district)

Plokščiai (Plungė district)	Salantai (Kretinga district)
Plūščiai (Kelmė district)	Sartai Lake (Rokiškis district)
Pocelonys (Alytus district)	Sasnava (Marijampolė district)
Poškietčiai (Pakruojis district)	Sauginiai (Šiauliai district)
Prystovai (Kretinga district)	Sauginiai (Ukmergė district)
Pryšmančiai (Kretinga district)	Saulėkalnis (Zarasai district)
Pryšmantai (Raseiniai district)	Sauliakalnis (Zarasai district)
Pubžibiai (Plungė district)	Sauliškės (Šilalė district)
Puodkaliai (Skuodas district)	Sauslaukis (Šilalė district)
Puokė (Skuodas district)	Saušilis (Telšiai district)
Pupasodis-Žilvia (Alytus district)	Savičiūnai (Zarasai district)
Purveliai (Anykščiai district)	Savidėnai (Molėtai district)
Purvininkai (Prienai district)	Savučiai-Galvokai (Biržai district)
Purviniškiai (Švenčionys district)	Sekioniai (Kaišiadorys district)
Puvočiai (Varėna district)	Senasis Obelynas (Šilalė district)
Pučkoriai (Plungė district)	Senasis Strūnaitis (Švenčionys district)
Pušalotai (Molėtai district)	Sendvaris (Telšiai district)
Pylimai (Vilnius district)	Senkoniai (Kėdainiai district)
Pypliai (Širvintos district)	Senmiestė (Mažeikiai district)
Račiai (Mažeikiai district)	Senoji Įpiltis (Kretinga district)
Radikiai (Pasvalys district)	Senoji Varėna (Varėna district)
Radžiūnai (Ukmergė district)	Seredžius (Jurbarkas district)
Raguva (Panevėžys district)	Siauriai (Kupiškis district)
Raigardas (Varėna district)	Siaurkampiai (Tauragė district)
Rainiai (Ignalina district)	Sidariškis (Rokiškis district)
Raizgiai (Šiauliai district)	Siesikai Lake (Ukmergė district)
Rakšteliai (Švenčionys district)	Simėnai (Šilalė district)
Rambynas (Šilutė district)	Simutiškė (Telšiai district)
Ramoškai (Šalčininkai district)	Siponiai (Kėdainiai district)
Ramygala (Panevėžys district)	Skapiškis (Kupiškis district)
Rangava (Trakai district)	Skėriai (Rokiškis district)
Raseiniai	Skirpsčiai (Plungė district)
Ratkūnai (Joniškis district)	Skroblė (Plungė district)
Renavas (Mažeikiai district)	Skominai (Ukmergė district)
Repšiai (Mažeikiai district)	Skudutiškis (Molėtai district)
Reškutėnai (Švenčionys district)	Skuodiškiai (Mažeikiai district)
Riešė Lake (Vilnius district)	Skyplaičiai (Plungė district)
Rimoliai (Mažeikiai district)	Sodėnai (Molėtai district)
Rimšionys (Rokiškis district)	Spartai (Lazdijai district)
Ringailiai (Kaišiadorys district)	Spėra Lake (Širvintos district)
Ringovė (Kaunas district)	Stabinė (Telšiai district)
Rinkšeliai (Raseiniai district)	Stabulankiai (Utena district)
Ritikiai (Radviliškis district)	Staciūnai (Pakruojis district)
Romainiai (Kaunas district)	Stajėtiškis (Švenčionys district)
Ropkečiai (Radviliškis district)	Stakliškės (Prienai district)
Rožakmenis (Vilnius district)	Stasiūniečiai (Rokiškis district)
Rubežaičiai (Telšiai district)	Stavarygala (Širvintos district)
Rubikiai Lake (Anykščiai district)	Stebuliai (Molėtai district)
Rubikonys (Širvintos district)	Stirbaičiai (Plungė district)
Rūdaičiai (Kretinga district)	Stoniai (Šilalė district)
Rudikai (Kupiškis district)	Stoniūnai (Joniškis district)
Rudžiai (Rokiškis district)	Strėva (Trakai district)
Ruišėnai (Telšiai district)	Stripeikiai (Ignalina district)
Rukliai (Utena district)	Stumbriai (Plungė district)
Rukšiai (Šilalė district)	Stuomeniškiečiai (Panevėžys district)
Ruoščiai (Kėdainiai district)	Subatinis Lake (Rokiškis district)
Rusnė (Šilutė district)	Sudeikiai (Utena district)
Rusoniai (Lazdijai district)	Sūdėnai (Kretinga district)
Rusteikiai (Zarasai district)	Sudintai (Mažeikiai district)
Sabališkės (Prienai district)	Sudokiai (Širvintos district)
Sakalai I (Telšiai district)	Sudota (Švenčionys district)
Sakališkės (Vilnius district)	Suginčiai (Akmenė district)
Sakučiai (Šilutė district)	Sugintai (Raseiniai district)
	Sukiniai (Ukmergė district)
	Svencelė (Klaipėda district)

- Svilė (Kelmė district)
Sviliai (Kėdainiai district)
Sviloniai (Jonava district)
- Taitiškis (Molėtai district)
Talša Lake (Šiauliai city)
Tamošaičiai (Tauragė district)
Taraldžiai (Rokiškis district)
Taraldžiai-Verksnionys (Rokiškis district)
Tarašiškės (Marijampolė district)
Tarosai (Raseiniai district)
Taubučiai (Jurbarkas district)
Tauragė
Tauragnai (Utena district)
Tauragnas Lake (Utena district)
Telėtninkai (Alytus district)
Telšiai
Tendžiogala (Raseiniai district)
Teterviniai (Pakruojis district)
Tiltagaliai (Panevėžys district)
Tilžė (Zarasai district)
Titoniai (Pakruojis district)
Tolučiai (Kelmė district)
Totorkiemis (Vilkaviškis district)
Trakai
Trakiniai (Anykščiai district)
Trakniškė (Ignalina district)
Trakučiai (Kėdainiai district)
Trauleiniai (Šiauliai district)
Trečionėliai (Pasvalys district)
Trumponiai (Molėtai district)
Tūbausiai (Kretinga district)
Tverai (Plungė district)
Tytuvėnai (Kelmė district)
- Ubiškė (Telšiai district)
Udraliai (Skuodas district)
Ugionys (Raseiniai district)
Ukmergė
Ukrinai (Mažeikiai district)
Uogiškiai (Akmenė district)
Uogučiai (Plungė district)
Upninkai (Jonava district)
Urkuvėnai (Šiauliai district)
Ūsiai
Ūsiai Lake (Ignalina district)
Utena
Utenis Lake (Utena district)
Užlieknė (Mažeikiai district)
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Žvārde (Kuldīga district)

Estland

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Belarus

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Barauvtsi/Баровцы (Vileyka district)
Beniakoni/Беняконі (Voronov district)
Budishche/Будище (Vileyka district)
Dainova/Дайнова (Lida district)
Drisviati/(Braslav district)
Dvorec/Дворец (Vileyka district)
Esmanovtsi/Есьмановцы (Vileyka district)
Grodno
Kamen/Камень (Valozhin district)
Kameno/Камено (Vileyka district)
Kanstanpol/Канстанполл (Vileyka district)
Kanvelishki/Канвешішкі (Voronov district)
Korgovdi/Корговді (Voronov district)
Kramianets/Крамянец (Logoysk district)
Krasnalutsk/Красналуцк (Barisauk district)
Lida
Macki/Мацкі (Ostrovec district)
Mishuti/Мішуты (Vileyka district)
Poditva/Подитва (Voronov district)
Polotsk
Ratinci/Ратынцы (Valozhin district)
Stary Pagost/Стары Парогост (Miersk district)
Tsintsevichi/Цинцевічы (Vileyka district)
Utki/Утки (Vileyka district)
Varonin/Варонін (Senensk district)
Vialets/Вялец (Glibotsk district)
Virkava/Віркава (Chashnitsk district)
Visokiye/Garatsi Высокіе Гарадцы (Talachinsk district)
Voideni/Войдены (Vileyka district)
Zaborye/Заборье (Vileyka district)
Zhuravets/Журавец (Asipovich district)

Russia

Kimershi (Central Russia)
Smolensk
Tushemlia (Smolensk oblast)

Kaliningradskaya oblast

Alka/Alk/Morozovka (Zelenogradsk district)
Alkikiai/Pribrezhnoye (Zelenograd district)
Darkiemis/Ozersk
Galbrasčiai/Livenskoye (Krasnoznamensk district)
Kramava/Grachovka (Svietlogorsk district)
Labguva/Polessk
Laukiškiai/Saranskoye (Polessk district)
Ragainė/Ragnit/Neman
Romainiai/Romehnen (Samland)
Tolminkiemis/Chistiye Prudi (Nesterov district)
Trempai/Novostroyevo (Ozersk district)

Poland

Elbląg
Olsztyn
Wilkopedzie (vojewództwo Suwałki)
Węgobork (vojewództwo Olsztyn)

Germany

Arkona (Rügen island)
Marklo (Niedersachsen land)
Rethra (Mecklenburg-Vorpommern land)
Südbrarup-Thorsberg (Schleswig-Holstein land)

Denmark

Illerup (Jutland)
Nydam (Jutland)
Viborg (Jutland)
Vimose (Fyn)

Sweden

Björke (Gotland county)
Halla-Broe (Gotland county)
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