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CIVITAS RUTENICA VILNIUJE XIII-XV A.

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Introduction

“Civitas Rutenica” or Ruthenian city as a separate part of Vilnius has so far not received the in-depth interest either of historians or archaeologists. Furthermore, in different periods any research in connection with “Civitas Rutenica” had much depended on a political situation. It occurred that some historians took bare notice of the role of “Civitas Rutenica” in the history of Vilnius (e.g. Soviet Lithuania historians) and kept emphasizing the role of the Catholic culture. Meanwhile, the others tried to exalt Orthodoxy and the orthodox as exclusive prophets of a trustworthy religion and culture (e.g. Vasilevskyj, P. Baltushkov, J. Krachkovskyj). Still others, on the contrary, tried to diminish “Civitas Rutenica” and the orthodox contribution to the history of Vilnius (e.g. T. Narbutas, I. Krashevskis). It should be noted that within the historiography content that part of the town is also known as the Russian town or Rusenai. The mentioned above names should be connected with confessional but not ethnic dependence. In our case, it is Orthodoxy. In medieval Lithuania confessional dependence prevailed. Confession, be it paganism, orthodoxy or Christianity, was considered to be of the highest importance. Thus at the early beginning, i.e. at the end of the 13th and start of the 14th century, the Civitas Rutenica community consisted exclusively of orthodox newcomers but later, with the passage of time and spread of Orthodoxy, that area started to be inhabited by local people who had adopted the Orthodox religion. Therefore, the area had retained the above names. We shall stick to “Civitas Rutenica” recorded in the Teutonic Order chronicle of 1383 by Wygand Marburg and its Lithuanian equivalent “Rusenai” used by modern Lithuanian historiographers. Obviously, the concept of town should be considered qualified and means a certain area inhabited by people of the same confession. Russian historiographers use still another term that defines the area with inhabitants of a definite confession (конец).

Relevance of Research. The subject of the present research aims at realising development of Vilnius as a multicultural city. The latest research reveals that Vilnius had been initiated by the Grand Duke,
who incorporated not only local inhabitants, pagans in this case, but also the entire potential of educated Christian, orthodox or catholic newcomers. Such versatile disposition of the three confessions had impacted further development of Vilnius as a city or, that is more important, as a capital city. The present research deals with issues in relation to the area inhabited by the Orthodox community known as “Civitas Rutenica”. A comprehensive research shall enable to realise principles and consistent patterns of medieval Vilnius development. The newest archaeological findings as well as proper evaluation of environmental factors that serve as relevant supplement to historical sources encourage addressing the issue.

**Subject of Research.** There is no question about the existence of “Civitas Rutenica” as it had been recorded in the Teutonic Order chronicle of 1383 by Wygand Marburg. No major arguments arise in connection with the area occupied by “Civitas Rutenica” because it can easily be traced following concentration of orthodox churches within the area. The main problem lies behind “Civitas Rutenica” development that started with construction of first churches up to upbuilt of orthodox burial places. Neither the role of “Civitas Rutenica” in establishment and development of Vilnius has been properly investigated. Furthermore, the mentioned above issues had been too much politicized and there were few ways for objective analyses. Nowadays, with due understanding and investigations that are being carried out at Bokšto St. burial place, there emerged proper conditions for source based investigations of “Civitas Rutenica” as an urban, social, cultural, political and confessional phenomenon.

Within its space aspect the present work covers the area of Vilnius Old Town that is supposed to have been a settlement of Orthodox incomers dating back to the midst up to the second half of the 13th century. The material from the burial place at Bokšto St. 6 that was discovered in 2005 enables to come to hypothesis that settlers of the Civitas Rutenica had not exceptionally been orthodox incomers from Slavonic territories but also local inhabitants that had turned to Orthodoxy.
The burial place enables to conduct analysis of the community from within alongside with a socio-cultural analysis of the Orthodox community of Vilnius, which is very well traced in burial rites. Obviously, according to A. Musin (Мусин), in connection with burial rites, it should be observed a very important detail of the burial rites related to the entirety of the habit, which does not characterise the attitude of the dead but that of the burial actors. Therefore, versatile analysis of the burial findings enables to reflect everyday life of the Orthodox community.

**Goal of the Research.** The goal of the research lies in understanding of reasons that coursed emergence of “Civitas Rutenica” in Vilnius, to show its development and various aspects of its integration into the whole of the city.

The following work tasks should help to achieve the Work Goals:
1. Critic assessment of historiography propositions about “Civitas Rutenica”;
2. Compile the “Civitas Rutenica” data base, i.e. systemize historic, archaeological, geomorphologic and other data;
3. Conduct analysis of the “Civitas Rutenica” emergence circumstances in Vilnius as well as its development within the period of the 13th -14th centuries;
4. Define the role of the “Civitas Rutenica” within Vilnius urban environment paying special attention to localisation of churches;
5. Conduct a thorough analysis of Bokšto St.6 burial place and, based on it, carry on analysis of the “Civitas Rutenica” community;
6. Systemize the received data and define the place of “Civitas Rutenica” as a unique phenomenon in the history of Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Vilnius.

**Novelty of the research and methods applied.** Based on archaeological findings development of the “Civitas Rutenica” from its start at the end of the 15th century up to the beginning of the upbuilt of the Orthodox burial places shall be defined.

The preset work aims at being a new start to using C14 research data. The data received by the above method help to accurately specify the development of the medieval burial place as well as do
define the date of the jewellery found in the graves. In such a way the
date of the burial place was defined: samples had been taken from
different burials, horizons, from both “waste” and rich burials.

With the present work we shall, for the first time, based on actual
material and any political interpretations rejected, try to define the
start of the “Civitas Rutenica”, to show its development and its
importance in the history of Vilnius. A study of “Civitas Rutenica”
development requires much attention to be paid to generalizing and
analysis of the results received by archaeological, architectural as well
as geological investigations.

A detailed anthropologic analysis of the burials enables to define
more exactly the place of arrival of first orthodox believers. The
present research applies methods of analysis, synthesis, cartography,
comparative methods (“Civitas Rutenica” itself and findings are
compared with artefacts from Lithuania as well as those from abroad).
A considerable part of the work is devoted to analyses of results
received by applied investigations (archaeology, architecture).

**Propositions to be defended by the present work:**

1. The orthodox believers settled in Vilnius during the rule of
   Traidenis.

2. The orthodox were the first to settle within the present area of
   Vilnius Old Town as a separate community (“Civitas Rutenica”) due
to objective historical processes (circumstances).

3. “Civitas Rutenica” was an open community within unfortified
   settlement which development could have been regulated.

4. Location of churches reflects the development of “Civitas
   Rutenica” and marks the territory occupied by a Russian town.

5. The burial place at Bokšto St.6 represents burial rites of the
   “Civitas Rutenica” ordinary members (or, in general, citizens of
   Vilnius) and enables to perfectly trace the socio-cultural aspect of the
   community.

6. “Civitas Rutenica” was one of the three cornerstones that
determined development of Vilnius as a city.

The present work consists of an introduction, ten parts of the
investigative chapter, conclusions, a list of sources and literature, and
appendixes. The appendixes include iconography sources, city plans of Vilnius and Kernave of the 13th century, division of Vilnius by zones, primary relief of “Civitas Rutenica”, network of roads and waterways, models of wooden buildings, “Civitas Rutenica” development maps of different periods, maps of church localisation, plans of the Bokšto St.6 burial place, photos of grave goods, C14 material, and the development plan of the burial place reproduced on the grounds of the said material.

**Historiography.** Historiography is divided into three parts depending on the investigators of Vilnius history in general and “Civitas Rutenica” specifically. Such a method has been chosen in order to better reveal different investigators’ attitude toward the town of Rusenai town as, for example, Polish investigators nearly overlooked “Civitas Rutenica” role in the history of Vilnius and put special emphasis on the catholic culture. Historians of the czarist Russia, on the contrary, did their best to highlight Orthodoxy and “Civitas Rutenica”, and in such a way tried to justify the occupational policy of the Czar. Lithuanian historiographers, in relation to Rusenai, state the fact of the orthodox believers’ presence and do not indulge into a deeper study. However, Lithuanian historiographers could not avoid political sentiments either. Especially, that is characteristic of early works on the history of Lithuania and Vilnius. Obviously, this does not apply to the works of the latest two decades as the main focus here is on archaeology and including of new data into scientific circulation.

**Iconography.** No plans reflecting the “Civitas Rutenica” existence period remained. Therefore, one must turn to later iconographic sources that picture a few objects in the town of Rusenai. They are: George Brown and France Hogenber plan of 1581, Thomas Makovskyj engraving of 1600, a schematic plan of Vilnius Metropolis of 1672 and the so-called Fiurstenhof plan of 1737. The latter presents valuable information as it depicts the eastern part of Old Vilnius. Its eastern part is washed by the River Vilnia; Bernardinai St. (now, Sent Michel alley) comes from the northern side; Sent John and University streets lie in the west and Stikliai St. and the Town Hall square mark
the southern line of the plan. The plan marks 13 orthodox churches that belonged to “Civitas Rutenica” and two more churches, of which one was in Rasos (Sent George) and the other (Spas) built later in 1505. The plan gives an approximate view of the “Civitas Rutenica” territory and it had served as a start point for investigators, Russian in particular, describing the orthodox churches in Vilnius.

**Historic context**

As Baltic and Slavonic tribes had always been neighbours, they obviously could not have escaped various processes such as migration, trade, armed clashes etc. In order to understand how orthodox incomers happened to arrive in Lithuania, one should go back to the 11th century and discuss shifting in Lithuanian-Russian relations starting with two-way military marches with the only goal of gaining booty up to concluding peace treaties and providing wholesome assistance.

The two ethnic groups had constantly maintained trade and cultural relations, which are proved by archaeological findings, some linguistic borrowings that remain in the Lithuanian language and reflect religious, trade and economic character of the relations. It should also be remembered that those relations had not always been peace-loving. So, booty attacks within the period of the 11th and the 12th centuries lie in the basis of Baltic-Slavonic relations. At the beginning of this period Russian dukes were more active, which is recorded in Russian chronicles with the first mention of Lithuania in the midst of the 11th century. It must be said that such booty campaigns did not much influence the ethnic situation in Lithuania. In all probability, exchange of war prisoners did take place but it had not been of great significance. Neither Lithuanian colonies in Russia, nor Slavonic presence in ethnic Lithuania are noticed at this period. It might be suggested that few orthodox families might have stayed living in Lithuania, however, that is only one of prepositions that is not reflected in archaeological materials. There were no proper conditions for the orthodox to settle within the upspringing state of Lithuania as Lithuania was far away from trade ways of Europe.
In order to understand the circumstances that had determined first orthodox settlements in Lithuania, one should bear in mind historic-political situation at the time of establishment of the Lithuanian state, especially following the death of King Mindaugas. Thus, there are known two political formations of major importance, which were Kernave and Vilnius.

Reasons for the orthodox believers to start settling in Lithuania should be looked for from the III quarter of the 13th century, or, to be more exact, from the year 1263 following King Mindaugas murder. After the murder a young Lithuanian state found itself in a political chaos that lasted up to the year 1268 when Grand Duke of Lithuania Traidenis came to power. A series of bloody upheavals did not end with the murder of King Mindaugas. In 1264 King Mindaugas’ followers murdered Treniota. It is supposed that Vaishelga stood behind this plot. Thus Vaishelga came to the throne thanks to King Mindaugas’ warriors. Close relations with Halič-Voluine had also contributed to his success. However, Vaishelga’s rule did not last long. Prior to his entrance to the throne Vaishelga promised to return to ministerial life, which he did in 1267 giving up the throne of the Grand Duke to Švarnas. Švarnas’ brother Levas Danilovičius was mostly aggrieved with such a situation within the Grand Dukedom of Lithuania.

Under the above circumstances, Traidenis becomes a prominent figure within Lithuania’s political arena. However, it must be pointed out that his coming to the throne was largely influenced by Lev Danilovič. According to felicitous comment by A. Dubonis, Lev Danilovičius by successfully breaking the union among Vasilko, Švarnas and Vaishelga, cleared Traidenis his way to power and entangled him into the war with Vasilko. At this point it is very important to stress the rise of Traidenis and his links with Halič-Voluine because it might be quite possible that early orthodox incomers made their way from Halič-Voluine through Black Russia’s orthodox settlements to ethnic Lithuania.

*Traidenis and Kernave.* Until his coming to power in 1268 information about Traidenis had been rather scarce as news of him
appear only after coming to rule. Traidenis was brought to the throne by Lithuanian establishment. Still another hypothesis could be suggested that proposes that Traidenis might have been a protégé of Levas Danilovič. The peace treaty signed between the two dukes in 1268 may serve a proof to that suggestion. No doubt that Kernave was the principle residence. Despite that Traidenis took care both of Lithuanian border security and centralisation of the state. Establishment of militarised institutions (leičiai) within the most insecure border areas could serve as example of such centralisation. Establishment of the ruler subordinate yards and their growth into towns required attracting foreign-born professionals. It might be that Levas Danilovičius conveyed his assistance by providing with human resources, which influenced both the ruler’s as well as other social layers’ environment. The fact that Traidenis’s brothers Barza, Liesis and Svalkenis turned to Orthodoxy serves as a proof to the above hypothesis.

Within the period under discussion Kernave consisted of five castles (Mindaugas throne, Lizdeika, Altar, Pilies and Kreiviškės), lower (in Pajauta valley) and upper (on the castle hill) towns and burial places. Recently the above memorials were supplemented with one more burial where the dead would be burned and buried in the Kernavele stream. Tradesmen and craftsmen did not enjoy good living conditions as settlements of the valley had constantly suffered from heavy floods brought by the River Neris. There must have been very strong reasons for newcomers to settle in such adverse places, which require proper investigations.

What were the reasons for such a prompt rise of Kernave? Here we should point out several reasons. First of all, Kernave had been Traidenis’s domain. Secondly, constant aggression on behalf of hostile Orders required strengthening of Kernave military-defensive potential. Thirdly, certain economic grounds were necessary that could be developed by qualified tradesmen and craftsmen. As changes appeared to be sudden enough, we arrive at the hypothesis that they were predetermined by incomers bringing new ideas and experience. Lithuania’s ruler had to understand beneficial contribution of
newcomers. Therefore, first colonies of newcomers appeared on the initiative of the ruler. In case of Kernave, all investigators agree that a settlement of tradesmen and craftsmen grew up in the valley of Pajauta. Traidenis called his subordinate tradesmen “countrymen and dogs”, which made some investigators attribute them a rather low social status. They would be often compared with slaves. It would be purposeful to assign them to the family stock. The grave goods from the burials of Kriveikiškis show them to be rather wealthy society members. The crisis that struck Russia in the mid of the 13th century had been one of the reasons for orthodox believers to move to Lithuania. Russia occurred to be in the centre of the Tartar-Mongol invasion. This period coincides with a prompt growth of Kernave. One more reason for orthodox believers to settle in Lithuania had been the so-called “assistance” provided with human resources by Lev Danilovič to Traidenis. A hypothesis that Lev Danilovič might have had his own interests in Lithuania should not be ignored either. Beside their direct functions (trade, crafts, administrative service) newcomers might have conducted sort of supervision over the ruler or provided Traidenis with advice beneficial to Lev Danilovič. But such “supervision” could not last very long as Traidenis had firmly taken his rule and escaped influence of the Halič-Voluine duchy. In summary, it may be stated that first orthodox incomers within ethnic Lithuania, specifically in Kernave, settled on the ruler’s initiative in the second half of the 13th century, which was the beginning of Traidenis’ rule. However, presupposition that first orthodox incomers might have appeared in Kernave at the time of rule of Vaišelga and Švarnas should not be ignored either. Thus first orthodox believers had to start settling in Lithuania with a growing influence of Halič-Voluine duchy, as well as with strengthening and centralisation of the Lithuanian state. At the same time Russian territories continued to be devastated by tartar-mongol assailants, which made best craftsmen and professionals escape devastated territories and look for better conditions. Thus from Halič-Voluine, via Slavonic settlements of Black Russia, orthodox believers might have appeared in ethnic Lithuania. The growth of Kernave coincided with the decline of
Russian towns. In this case one question remains open whether the orthodox believers escaped or were they sent to Kernave. We believe that further investigations will help to solve this problem.

**Vilnius.** We believe that the most grounded and archeologically confirmed theory of Vilnius origin is linked with the rule of Traidenis. In accordance with dendrochronology data, the earliest upbuilt of the northern foot of Gediminas Hill dates back to the eighth decade of the 13th century. At the close of the 13th century and the beginning of the 14th century there were two separate habitable territories in Vilnius that undoubtedly interacted with each other. Primarily, it was the Grand Duke’s residence on Gediminas hill. The other habitable territory was situated at the northern foot of Gediminas Hill. It was 1.5 hectare area surrounded with natural barriers. The most intensive upbuilt of the northern foot began in the end of the 13th century following construction of the residential castle. The topographic position of Vilnius perfectly suited zoning of such territories – all zones seemed to be separate but this did not prevent their interacting with each other. One of such zones covering the area of 1.7 hectare was situated at the south-western foot of Gediminas Hill. At the beginning of development this was a manufacturing zone, later a confessional zoning took place. At junction of the 13th and 14th centuries the place was inhabited by a small catholic community (catholic craftsmen and Franciscan monks). The forth very significant habitable zone-the Crooked town- covered the territory of 12 hectares and was surrounded with natural barriers. Within the period discussed there dominated two mounds – the Table hill and the Crooked or Bare hill. The altar territory had been a strategically important point that protected the residential castle on Gediminas Hill. The fifth zone, presently the most densely inhabited place of Old Town, was situated beside trade routes leading to the East. It was inhabited by orthodox believers.

**Interrelation between Vilnius and Kernave.** Within the period discussed, i.e. the midst and second half of the 13th century, Vilnius as well as Kernave was a courtyard of the Grand Duke. However, in comparison with Kernave, Vilnius was a smaller and less secured
settlement. At their primary stage of development both Vilnius and Kernave were the courtyards of Traidenis with one decade time difference in their origin. At that time Kernave covered a larger territory. So, in the mid of the 13th century 13.5 hectares of Kernave had been inhabited, meanwhile Vilnius at the end of the eighth decade of the 13th century might have covered the area of about 1.95 hectares. As to topographic position Kernave and Vilnius have quite a number of similar characteristics. First of all, the ruler’s residence was situated inside perfectly fortified castles. The residences had been secured by firmly fortified defence systems. In Kernave they were “Mindaugas throne” and “Lizdeika” castles, and in Vilnius it was the Crooked castle. Both formations had lower towns (Pajautos valley in Kernave and the northern foot of Gediminas Hill in Vilnius). There were also upper towns (Castle Mound in Kernave and Crooked town in Vilnius). Burial places dating back to the end of the 13th and the 14th centuries were discovered both in Kernave and Vilnius. The burial places are situated almost within a similar distance from early habitable areas and are arranged on high terraces. Despite that, one can see essential differences within the topography of the said centres. Thus Vilnius seems to be divided into separate zones where members of different confessions could live remote from each other. Kernave’s relief seems to be more ordinary and there are no signs that point at separate zones such as those in Vilnius. The other essential difference is absence of incineration burials such as in Kernavele stream in Kernave. There might have been such a place for pagans to be buried but due to dense upbuilt it might have been destroyed or not discovered as yet. From the point of view of poliorketiks Vilnius and Kernave differ as well. The territory of Vilnius is smaller but is better secured due to natural obstacles. The reasons for the development of Vilnius and Kernave are essentially different. This becomes obvious when one compares occupation of the inhabitants. Kernave was inhabited by the orthodox tradesmen and craftsmen, whereas warfare had been the principal motivation among Vilnius inhabitants. Here no imported goods, silver debris or any other trade related findings had been found. Fixed crafts were mostly linked with warfare. Development of Traidenis
courtyards had differed, too, as crafts and trade concentrated in Kernave, meanwhile Vilnius turned to become a military stronghold. First orthodox incomers arrived both at Vilnius and Kernave under the growing influence of Halič-Voluine. They could have arrived either from the Halič-Voluine duchy or from Slavonic territories of Black Russia. One more moment should be noted – either in Kernave or in Vilnius the orthodox incomers did not form any separate administrative unit similar to “Civitas Rutenica” formed afterwards. The main residence of Traidenis with the orthodox element within had not developed into a capital city after his death. There exist several reasons for that. One of them was a change in warfare tactics that defence potential of Kernave could not withstand (attacks in 1365 and 1390). A new dynasty of rulers (forthcoming Gediminičiai) appeared on the political arena of Lithuania. Vilnius was their domain and they had no wish to invest into Traidenis’ Kernave as he had left no descendants. Vilnius that was not of great importance during the rule of Traidenis developed into the capital of Lithuania, which was largely predetermined by its geopolitical position and natural conditions. In such a city the orthodox believers were in possession of a separate territory with plenty of orthodox churches and stood out within that period of Vilnius.

**Historic situation following Traidenis’ death.** The analysis of “Civitas Rutenica’s” emergence as a separate area requires describing Lithuania’s political situation after Traidenis’ death. Without doubt, Butigeidis and Butvydas were progenitors of the Gediminičiai dynasty as during their rule construction of a huge wooden castle or reconstruction of the former one on Gediminas Hill had started. Vytenis was one of Lithuanian rulers who perfectly understood and took advantage of the potential brought to Lithuania by Christian incomers. He did not hesitate to employ resources of subordinate lands, which, first of all, had been human resources. Warriors were not the only source of employment. Craftsmen and tradesmen were in great demand, too. Christians could settle in a pagan habitat provided there were places of worship for Christians, which also meant arrival of clergy. The Catholics would arrive on the ruler’s invitation,
whereas the orthodox could arrive as the ruler’s subordinates without any official invitation. Polock becomes the most important trade centre and gates to Lithuania. Minsk, Turov, Pinsk, later Vitebsk, had also fallen under the sphere of influence of Lithuania. Trade relations with Novgorod and Pskov were being maintained via Polock. Rich trade centres, such as Naugardukas, Grodno and Volkovysk, situated in the upper reaches of the Nemunas, had also fallen under Lithuanian power. However, from the mid of the 13th century the said centres became destitute and were destroyed.

Grand Duke Gediminas not only continued his brother’s eastern policy but had considerably extended it. Apparently, Gediminas had fully realised not only military but also professional benefits of newcomers. Similarly to Vytenis, he would invite people from catholic countries of West Europe but people from Russian territories subordinate to Grand Duke of Lithuania could freely enter Lithuania. Newly opening markets and trade possibilities with West Europe attracted newcomers to Vilnius. In order to define ways of movement of orthodox believers and their settlement within the territory of “Civitas Rutenica”, we should discuss the two directions of Lithuanian expansion to Russia. The first direction was oriented to the southwest of Russia, the second – to the north-western territories. Despite the fact that Lithuanians kept two important orthodox trade centres – Naugardukas in the South and Polock in the North-East, a top priority must have been given to the expansion direction towards the North-West of Russia. Firstly, expansion to the North-West of Russia had been peaceful enough. Secondly, the Dauguva’s potential, as that of a trade artery, was greater, because Lithuania was able to obtain access to Pskov, Novgorod and Livonia, whereas the Nemunas had remained a peripheral trade rout.

“Civitas Rutenica” within the East Baltic Region Context. The “Civitas Rutenica” of Vilnius is not an exceptional case in connection with different religion people’s settlement within a medieval town. Similar colonies existed in a great number of European towns. This is especially characteristic of the East Baltic region that had been a marginal zone among the Catholics, orthodox and pagans. The activity
of the Hanseatic League had also greatly influenced development of foreign colonies. Newcomers’ presence in Hansa cities is traceable with the help of archaeological sources and it is perfectly documented by various treaties. In this respect, Novgorod may serve as a good example. There were two separate courtyards (дворы), that belonged to Germans and merchants of Gotland. Similarly, merchants of Novgorod were in possession of trading posts in other cities. So, prior to the 1191-1192 agreement signed between Novgorod and Gotland, the tradesmen of Novgorod had their colony in Visby, Gotland. In the 14th-15th centuries there were Russian towns (концы) inhabited by Russian tradesmen in Vilnius, Ryga, Revel (Talin), Derpt (Tartu). Traces of the said settlements have remained in the street names: Vene (Russian) in Talin, Krievu (Russian) in Ryga. At this point it seems to be appropriate to discuss the size of the said colonies as well as their upbuilt. So, the German courtyard in Novgorod equalled a rich homestead and covered the area of 2000 m². There was a church within the courtyard in Gotland as well as within the German courtyard. The church had been largely used as a well-secured storehouse. The existence of foreign colonies within medieval towns was a frequent and quite ordinary phenomenon. It is obvious that in their size such colonies or yards literally equalled one big courtyard. As a rule, a courtyard included a place of worship (church), a storehouse, some living and household buildings. Within the East Baltic region context Vilnius is unique due to its structure, purpose, development and significance. The analysis that follows reveals that “Civitas Rutenica” had not been a typical courtyard of newcomers but had developed as a large and separate region with its own infrastructure and a number of churches.

**Zoning of Vilnius**

The topographic position of Vilnius suited very well zoning of separate territories. Within each of such zones members of separate social layers or confessions could develop independently from each other. At the time of rule of Vytenis one of such strategically significant zones began to be developed around the Altar mound. It
was a fortified structure at the foot of the castle. The Crooked castle was located on the present Bare hill or the hill of Three Crosses. Nowadays its relief has considerably changed. The castle stood there up to the year 1390 and then was burnt during the crusaders’ attack. At the close of the 13th century, a south-west foot of Gediminas Hill had been another very important zone with a wooden Franciscan church and the Franciscan mission within. The eastern part of modern Vilnius Old Town is of special interest to us. Within the period under discussion, it had been the most suitable territory to live: it was situated not far from the ruler’s castle (approximately 550 m), i.e., close to a security post, separate from territories inhabited by local pagans, this part contained groundwater and had been a various direction crossroad. As it had been stated earlier, the orthodox believers could freely settle provided they were protected by the ruler. The crossroad lying nearby the orthodox settlement raises a question whether its presence determined formation of the Rusenai town or the “Civitas Rutenica” was the reason for the crossroad and, as we shall see later, for the first market place of Vilnius to come into being. We tend to believe that “Civitas Rutenica” had been some centre of attraction that stimulated formation of new roads leading from and to that centre as well as transformation of the already existing road network. Infrastructure had to match changing conditions. All investigators agree that “Civitas Rutenica” emerged at a passing across the River Vilnia. By summing up all the said above circumstances we can reconstruct the following communication-economic situation: during the period under discussion, the “Civitas Rutenica” was established on the initiative of the ruler within the most convenient area, nearby a peculiar corridor (presently Pilies /Didzioji streets) between the third and the second terraces. The very first St. Paraskeva (Pyatnica) church was built at the same place where the present one is situated. In Russian towns (with the exception of Kiev) St. Paraskeva church would be built close to the market square.
Topography of “Civitas Rutenica”

We believe that the focus of attention within the territories such as “Civitas Rutenica” lay on road network and drinking water, which had to secure normal functioning of the community.

Road network of “Civitas Rutenica”. All roads in relation to “Civitas Rutenica” could be divided into two groups, i.e., roads of primary and secondary importance. With reference to archaeological data the “Civitas Rutenica” territory was bounded by sections of the present Latako, Išganytojo, Bokšto, Rusų streets and the Vilnia River that flew along the present Maironio St. Today Latako St. stretches over the highest point between two pockets extending from Bokšto St. towards the Vilnia River. This street had been a transit section of the former secondary importance road leading from Trakai to the Altar territory. Approximately, 50 m. off, in the South direction, there ran another street (now Išganytojo) along a dry slide. Somewhat unnatural curve of the street divides it into two parts - western and eastern. We suppose that the two parts do not belong to the same period and might be rudiments of different roads, of which the eastern one must be older. Urban laws propose that the curve might have been a crossroad of secondary importance. Another road that had been of no less importance and at first bounded “Civic Rutenica” but later became its internal road is the present Bokšto street. It began at a crossroad close to St. Paraskeva church. This street is a branch-line of a southern road leading to Slavonic lands. The eastern side of the street had been rugged with a steep slope towards the Vilnia. Instead of the present Rusų Street there ran an internal rout of “Civitas Rutenica”. At the church of the Virgin Mother of God it had a junction with the northern road leading to the East. Later that junction lost its significance and Rusų Street turned into a road of secondary importance. The present Maironio Street was built at the end of the 19th century. The street makes queer curves at the church of the Virgin Mother of God as if trying to bypass it. Therefore it makes us suppose that Maironio St. had been a watercourse of the Vilnia River. In the course of development of the “Civitas Rutenica” territory its road network extended as well, however its western boundary remained unchanged.
and coincides with the axis of the present Pilies and Didžioji streets. The town of Rusenai had never overstepped that boundary, which confirms that development of the orthodox area had been subject to regulation. Between Bokšto and Didžioji streets there was the third street running to the north-south direction. Its fragment has remained as Augustijonų Street. Now it looks as if incomplete, without any beginning or end. In the heyday of “Civitas Rutenica” it stretched from the square at the St. Paraskeva church in the northern part towards Subačiaus Street in the South. One more street that at first sight looks having no end is the present Subačiaus Street. It is a continuation of the present Stiklių Street, crosses the northern part of the Town Hall Square and runs forward towards the Vilnia. That had been one of the streets connecting territories inhabited by Catholics (west direction road from/to town) with the orthodox part of Vilnius (east direction road). Considering a primary relief and taking a look at the present upbuilt of the 43rd section of Old Town, we may arrive at hypothesis about the former existence of two secondary importance roads running in the west-east direction. The roads in the southern part of “Civitas Rutenica” had been branch-lines of transit roads. Thus the present Literatų Street is one of the sections forming the road network of Vilnius and crossing Old Town from east to west. The present Rusų Street is a section of the transit road from Trakai to the Altar area and to Smolensk and Polock. In Užupis there was the only main street – the present Užupio Street. The earliest horizons of the cultural layer dating back to merge of the 14th and 15th centuries are being discovered alongside the street.

**Waters.** The “Civitas Rutenica” development is connected with the Vilnia and its valley between the present Polocko Street and the church of St. Michel. Archaeological research within the territory shows that the valley has always been a damp place. Due to high positioned groundwater investigators failed to reach lower horizons of the cultural layer. A lot of springs and rivulets brought their waters to the Vilnia. There is a steep slope to the east from Bokšto St. between the street and the Vilnia. The height difference between the street and the Vilnia amounts to over 10 m., from $H_{abs}$ 95.00 m to 108.00 m of
height. The slope is seamed with pockets (former springs and rivulets). They all concentrate within the central or, as it is supposed, the earliest part of “Civitas Rutenica”. The 39th and the 42nd sections of Old Town point at especially damp places within the former territory of “Civitas Rutenica”. The south-eastern part of the 39th section, the eastern part of the 40th section and the central part of the 41st section are described as three places of onetime rivulets/springs and a bog. It is supposed two rivulets or springs to have been in the 39th section of the present Old Town. The start of the northern one might have been at the point where the present Literatų St. crosses A. Volano St. and ran to the Vilnia (now Maironio St.). Another spring might have been located at some distance in the southern direction, presumably, at Maironio 13, which presently is the courtyard of hotel buildings. The spring must have started in the centre of the yard and ran to the Vilnia (now Maironio St.). The beginning of one more spring must have been in the eastern part of the 42nd section (presently the inside yard at Rusų St.3), cut the crossing of Latako and Rusų streets and flew to the Vilnia (now Maironio St.). The archaeological atlas of Vilnius marks the central part of the 41st section as a marshy place with two pockets on both sides (now Latako and Išganytojo streets). A topographic review of the eastern part of Old Vilnius, where “Civitas Rutenica” had been established, makes us come to the conclusion that “Civitas Rutenica” had been established at the most convenient place of the present Old Town of Vilnius.

Buildings

Within the present work the terms ,“sodyba” (homestead) and ,“sklypas” (site) are used as synonyms in relation to the Russian term ,“усадьба“. Within the Russian historiography the term ,,sodyba” (homestead) means a built up site.

In relation to homesteads situated on a town territory, it is necessary to define the area they covered, as its size usually reflects a social status of the owner. Though only a few wooden buildings have been discovered on the territory of “Civitas Rutenica”, they provide with a lot of information. One of such constructions (a ground-based
abode) was found at Augustijonų St.3. The investigator dates it back to the end of the 14th century. The tradition of such constructions might have come from Halič-Voluine where ground-based abodes had been typical for a long time. Some more remains of wooden constructions were found during investigations of the territory at the corner of Bokšto and Latako streets. Wooden constructions had likely been erected there prior to or simultaneously with the cemetery period. Remains of wooden constructions were also recorded within the southern parts of the 45th and 46th sections. Several lines had shown up there, which supposedly were remains of wooden enclosure. Similar findings were recorded at Bokšto St.6. Some of them could be linked with wooden constructions or enclosures. Best results were achieved during investigations of the plot where the bell tower of the Virgin Mother of God church stood. The investigator dates back the earliest horizon of the upbuilt to the end of the 14th and the first half of the 15th century. Due to lack of data, the upbuilt of “Civitas Rutenica” could be analysed on the analogy with Kernave or closely situated Slavonic settlements. Thus in Naugardukas, till its decline in the eighth decade of the 13th century, both overground and ground-based constructions prevailed. In Tver that was the birthplace of Grand Duke Algirdas’ wife curb construction dominated within the period of the 13th-14th centuries. In Novgorod that is characteristic of damp places, which helps to preserve wooden constructions, investigators succeeded to define town homesteads both according to their size and to the upbuilt. In Novgorod townsmen’s homesteads and their upbuilt had been both steady and changeable. It was due to various circumstances, which were change of site boundaries, movement of owners or different planning of a homestead. In some other cases neither the site nor constructions or planning of a homestead remained unchanged.

Summing up the above ideas related to the size and upbuilt of homesteads in Vilnius, Kernave and Russian towns it becomes obvious that each upbuilt had been developing individually. There were falls and rises dependant on a political situation that a town had to live through. The size of town homesteads is a very delicate issue,
therefore it is difficult to define a single tendency characteristic of the whole set of examples presented above. One common feature could be that that homesteads would be isolated from each other or from a street by various type of enclosure. Each town is typical of general regularities that are dependent on local traditions and, without doubt, on topographic positioning. Besides, investigation of wooden constructions much depends on circumstances that determine survival of wooden material within the cultural layer.

**Development of “Civitas Rutenica”**

The “Civitas Rutenica” development should be analysed in two aspects. First of all, it should be done through defining the spread and concentration of churches, because we are of the opinion that churches are the best sign that points out the size of the “Civitas Rutenica” territory. Another indicator that helps to define the size of the territory is a spread of the cultural layer. So far, the earliest findings dating back to the second half of the 13th and the beginning of the 14th century within the territory of the present Old Town of Vilnius were discovered only in two spots – at the corner of Bokštų and Latako streets and at Bokštų St.6. Alongside early burials there was also found the earliest cultural layer. At the corner of Bokštų and Latako streets samples of pre-Gothic ceramics were found, which makes believe that the first settlers on the territory had to be people having different trade traditions, perhaps they were Rusenai (Russians). The earliest territory of “Civitas Rutenica” reminds a triangle with three Orthodox churches in the corners: St. Paraskeva (Pyantnitsa), the Virgin Mother of God and St. Nicholas (Uspenia). They all date back to the midst of the 14th century, which is the beginning of Grand Duke Algirdas’ rule. However, archaeological sources, especially findings from burials at Latako and Bokštų streets, though rather scarce, alongside a new assessment of the political situation of that time, enable specifying the appearance of the above churches. Those three churches did not emerge in Vilnius by coincidence. St. Nicholas is a patron of merchants, St. Paraskeva was especially worshiped by tradesmen, craftsmen and travellers, and the Virgin Mother of God is
a patroness of the Russian nation. The largest expansion of “Civitas Rutenica” was in the times of Grand Duke Algirdas, which was due not only to his eastern policy but also because the construction of churches was particularly patronised by both Orthodox wives of Algirdas. They were Maria of Vitebsk and Juliana of Tver. The construction of churches reflects the largest expansion of “Civitas Rutenica” that in accordance with development of the cultural layer within the territory dates back to the midst of the 14th and the first half of the 15th century. The greatest tempo of church construction has been recorded in the time of rule of Grand Duke Algirdas.

Findings on the “Civitas Rutenica” territory that date back to the 14th century are numerous enough (about 20 places). The exact time of construction of the Elijah the Prophet church is not known. It is supposed that the church had already been constructed in the time of rule of Grand Duke Algirdas, i.e. in the midst of the 14th (3rd decade) century. The location and time of construction of the Nativity Church remain vague. Archaeological excavations conducted at Bokšto St.6 enable to propose a probable localisation of the church. Considering the concentration of burials and original relief of the site the church might have been located at the protrusion of the present Išganytojo St. The time of construction of St. Michael the Archangel church might be the second half of the 14th century. By summing up the available data it may be stated that the St. Michael church stood at the crossing of Latako and Pilies streets. The church of St. John the Baptist as well as that of St. Michael was built in the second half of 14th century. The time of construction of St. Ekaterina church is not identifiable. It might be the second half or the very end of the 14th century. The Sts. Cosmas and Damien church was firstly mentioned in written sources in 1503. Presently there stands the church of St. Marija Ramintoja. As Sts. Cosmas and Damien are patrons of blacksmiths and because some archaeological material related to smithery and dating back to the second half of the 14th century had been found near the place where the church is supposed to have been located, so the time of construction of the church might be the second half of the 14th century. The present brick church of St. Nicolas (Removal of the remains) was
built in 1514 in place of the wooden one. The time of construction of the Sts Peter and Paul church is not clear. Reconstruction of the original relief points out presence of a terrace on the slope of the courtyard at the present-day Užupio St. 16. Therefore, it is logical to presume that this had been the place of the Sts Peter and Paul church. A review of the cultural layer in Užupis makes us suppose that the church might have been built in the end of the 14th or beginning of the 15th century. It is likely that one more church of the Virgin Mother of God was built on the “Civitas Rutenica” territory in the end of the 14th or beginning of the 15th century. It could have been located to the north of the church of St Ekaterina, which is the eastern part of the 38th section or the crossing of the present-day A. Volano and St Mykolo streets.

Two brick churches that are still standing at the places, where they had been built, do not fall into the “Civitas Rutenica” area but are of major significance due to their localisation, require special mention. In 1347, at the spot, where the Holy Trinity Church stands, three martyrs of Vilnius, Anthony, John and Eustache, were put to death. In 1374, a wooden church was built at the place of execution. The other church outside the “Civitas Rutenica” territory, the Christ’s Resurrection Church, is the only one built to the west of the Pilies and and Didžioji streets’ line. Therefore, we suppose that the construction time of the Christ’s Resurrection Church might be the first half or mid of the 15th century.

Attention should be paid to the present-day Subačiaus St. area that is the southern line of the “Civitas Rutenica”. A specific regularity is characteristic of the archaeological data obtained from the said area: the 14th -15th century layers (excluding household pits at Subačiaus St.11) are being recorded beside the crossing of Subačiaus and Aušros Vartai streets as well as in the south-eastern part of the quarter. This area was being reclaimed “overleaping” the territory beside the former Subačiaus Gate as well as the manufacturing area within the present-day 45th and 46th sections. It had most likely happened due to the inconvenient topographic position and presence of the fire using manufacturing area. But had that territory indeed been “overleapt”? It
might be presumed that the said territory had been reclaimed separately with the Holy Trinity Church being the core of it.

Summing up localisation of former Orthodox churches as well as archaeological explorations carried out within the surroundings of those churches, it becomes obvious that archaeology does not help to define their exact localities but provide with some data as to their existence. Human bones from destroyed burials point implicitly out former churchyards. Archaeological material or, to be more exact, the cultural layers within different areas allow to define the time of a church construction with several decades accuracy.

“Civitas Rutenica” had its beginning as well as its end after Lithuania had turned to Catholicism. The close of “Civitas Rutenica” as that of a separate town unit began in 1387 when Lithuania officially became a catholic state and Grand Duke Jogaila issued several privileges. This period lasted from christening in 1387 till issue of the privilege by Žygimantas Augustas in 1434 that equated most of the rights enjoyed by the orthodox and catholic nobility.

From archaeological point of view the beginning of “Civitas Rutenica” close could be considered to be from the midst to the second half of the 15th century when upbuilding of the orthodox burial places began. Visually “Civitas Rutenica” as a territorial unit disappeared after the war of 1655 when all wooden churches were swept off the surface. However the townsmen of Vilnius for a long time had been keeping in their memory a picture of once functioning orthodox cemeteries.

“Civitas Rutenica” community with reference to data obtained at Bokšto St.6

In 2005, during an archaeological field survey conducted at Bokšto St.6 in Vilnius a medieval burial place was discovered. The destroyed burial place lay at the depth of 250-450 cm from the surface. 500 burials have been discovered till the year 2012. The burial place is situated on one of the upper terraces of the Vilnia River and supposedly, it covers the area of about 2473 m². In accordance with
available data it is maintained that the size of the area much depended on the natural condition and relief of the place, therefore, much effort was given to maximum use of the complicated relief. There might be approximately marked the eastern and southern boundaries of the burial place.

All burials were mostly done at the depth of about 70 cm. A number of burials contain wooden rot that must be remains of wooden structures. All burials are oriented in W-E direction with a head to the west. The deceased would be buried on the back. The orientation of graves is not exactly W-E as there might be a few degrees error. Four graves that were discovered in the eastern part outside the burial place fall out of the general context. They are characteristic of free orientation. It is not clear, why these four had been buried on the slope outside the cemetery disregarding the traditional orientation. One more burial falls out of the general context. It is a grave of a woman about 40-45 years of age buried lain on her stomach. In accordance with C^{14} data the grave dates back to the 16\textsuperscript{th} century.

Proportionally, female and male burials are almost the same. In this respect one peculiar element should be mentioned, which is a somewhat odd concentration of children’s graves in some sectors of the cemetery when in one place it exceeds by 3 graves. Division of burials in accordance with age groups reveal a peculiar regularity, i.e. is a rather high death-rate among individuals under eighteen, which amounts almost to half of all burials. This points to hard living conditions such as poor nutrition, hard physical work, etc. In the burial place, especially in its central part, there were discovered burials laid one on top of another, which means that the deceased would be buried in the same pit. As examples, here may be named the following double graves: No 18 and 25; 33-34; 36-37; 38-39, etc. Thus some landmarks must have been left on the surface marking the place of a grave. Furthermore, double burials point to strong family connections as relatives would be buried in the same grave. Another group of double graves contain an adult and an infant or a child or two children in the same grave, which also speaks about firm family connections. Alongside the landmarks that would mark a grave there must have
been lanes. This could be judged by geography of the cemetery both of the central as well as of the peripheral part of the cemetery.

The burial place at Bokšto St. stands out of other cemeteries of the same period due to abundance of stones. In accordance with arrangement of stones and considering their functional and practical purpose graves with stones could be divided into several groups. To the first group there belong graves where a skeleton is neatly surrounded with four or more stones. In the second group one or several medium or big size stones are put on a skeleton, whereas both features mentioned above are characteristic of the third group of graves.

Only 42 graves (8%) containing grave goods were discovered. The largest part of grave goods consisted of decorations such as chaplets, earrings, necklaces, bracelets and all type of rings. Thus the grave goods consisted of 24 various types of rings, 19 chaplets, 6 earrings, 5 bracelets and 4 emblematic keys. Comparison of graves with grave goods showed that the largest part of grave goods consisted of chaplets, whereas 2 rings were found in each of 5 graves and even 3 in one grave. So far the largest amount of grave goods (7 units) was found in grave No.114. Two burials contained 5 grave goods and in one burial there were found 4 items. The number of grave goods in other burials range from 1 to 3 items. Summing up the statistics in respect of the grave goods discovered at the burial place, we must admit that no special regularities could be defined as to burials in connection with grave goods enclosed. Female’s burials contain the largest amount of grave goods (25 items or 57%). After correlating the grave goods from the female’s graves with the age of females a very interesting regularity shows up: out of 24 graves with burial goods 20 graves were those of females who had been over 25 years of age. Bearing in mind that children would be buried with female individuals it becomes obvious that rich grave goods are found either in children’s or in adult female’s graves. It is likely that the community honoured not only young girls, the would-be-mothers, but also the mature females who had probably given birth to a good many babies. Thus burial rites of the community reflect its respect to motherhood.
Most of burials with chaplets in them were found in the central, the oldest, part of the cemetery. After correlating the number of caplets with the age of females who had worn them it also becomes obvious that the major part of chaplets were found in the graves of females who had been over 25 years of age. A review of all chaplets found in the cemetery showed that all plates differ both in their form (triangle, quadrangle, square, pentagonal, a heraldic lily form) and in the ornamentation (herbal, geometric, heraldic lily). They are probably all gilded, made of silver from a thin cast sheet, domed using dapping punches. This method might have been introduced by orthodox newcomers. The chaplets found in the burials date back to the second half of the 13\textsuperscript{th} and midst of the 14\textsuperscript{th} century.

Two multi-beaded and one three-beaded earring were found at the burial place. Considering geography of graves at the Bokšto St. 6 burial place the multi-beaded earrings that had been found there must date back to the junction of the 13\textsuperscript{th} and 14\textsuperscript{th} centuries and the first half of the 14 century. In summary, it must be stated that a multi-beaded earrings more likely reflect confessional than ethnic dependence.

The 6 earrings found in the burials are of two forms – looped and a question-mark shaped. The looped ones might date back to the first half of the 14\textsuperscript{th} century – the first half of the 15th century, whereas the question-mark shaped earring comes from the junction of the 14\textsuperscript{th} and 15\textsuperscript{th} century and midst of the 15\textsuperscript{th} century.

Two well preserved necklaces and fragments of one more necklace were discovered in the burials. They are made of glass, bone beads, cowries and bells.

Out of 5 bracelets discovered at the Bokšto St. 6 burial place two were band-tin, two braided, one was cast with an imitation of twisting. The bracelets were discovered in two graves. During investigation carried out at Bokšto St.6 a supposition was confirmed that in the 14\textsuperscript{th} century the tradition of wearing bracelets began to fade. Considering other grave goods of the grave as well as topography of the grave the bracelet found at the Bokšto St. burial place must date back to the second half of the 13\textsuperscript{th} and the first half of the 14\textsuperscript{th} century.
Finger rings make the largest part of decorations found in the burial place. They are of different forms: braided, encrusted with glass, with a wide head and with hollow hulls (box). Out of 23 rings 11(46%) were braided, 5(21%) were encrusted with glass, 3(13%) were with a wide head, 2 (8%) signet rings, 1 (4%) with a hollow box and two rings (8%) were undefined. Most of the rings come from female’s graves.

Three symbolic keys and fragments of one key were found at the Bokšto St.6 burial place. Beside the symbolic keys an iron key to a cylindrical lock was found in a child’s grave. There were also found two iron case knives.

Considering all grave goods, especially decorations, some typical features of the burial place could be discerned. Most of the decorations are characteristic of Slavs although some local features are observed as well.

Three findings are directly related to Christianity, which are two items of grave goods and one finding within the overground layer. They are: a cross made of copper alloy found in a child’s burial, an amber cross as part of a necklace and the upper part of the encolpion of Old Russia dating back to the 12th century.

The burial rites in Lithuania within the period of the 13th -14th centuries are too complicated to be described in short as the problem is still under investigation. It raises a lot of discussions and a question of capital importance whether Lithuanians burned or buried the deceased within the period of the 13th-14th centuries. The burial place at Bokšto St. brings some clarity into the problem. Presently three burial places are known in which the deceased had been buried unburned long before christening of Lithuania in 1387.

Recent findings also provide much information about burial rites in pagan Lithuania. The hypothesis of V. Urbonavičius about burials in water in the 13th-14th centuries has been confirmed. Excavations carried out in 2006-2011 at Bajorai cemetery alongside the findings from Semeniškès cemetery within the territory of Kernave cultural reservation reveal that the deceased would be burnt and buried in water. Summarising of the available material it might be presumed
that in the 13th-14th century some of the pagan citizens could burn and bury their deceased in water, whereas Christians, the orthodox, buried the deceased in the burial places unburned. Christians buried the dead in a pit. The same must be said about orientation. Most archaeologists agree that orientation W-E is also connected with Christianity.

After defining criteria of Christian burial rites we can also analyse the burial place at Bokšto Street. We think that Christians buried in this cemetery belonged to the Orthodox community. The dead not necessarily could have been arrivals from Slavonic lands. They could have been local people who had turned to Orthodoxy.

Anthropologic data allows understanding the life of Vilnius citizens in the second half of the 13th and beginning of the 15th century, to reveal certain regularities of their way of life, nutrition.

People buried in the cemetery suffered of such diseases as anaemia (especially children and young women) periosteum, arthritis (mostly men), osteoarthritis and other. There were identified remains of 9 men over 40 with diffuse idiopathic skeletal hyperostosis (DISH) symptoms that show good nutrition and possible obesity.

In three graves men were buried who had died of the head trauma. It was identified that the injury was done with a sword. In one of the graves an invalid of about 25-30 was buried. In the grave No 252 was buried a woman who had a cured broken bone of the pelvis and a broken thigh-bone. It is a very complicated trauma that nowadays could be done in a car accident. It is interesting how such injuries could have happened in the 14th century and how she could live after that. This means that other members of the community took care of the injured.

A well preserved osteological material enabled to apply C14 (AMS) method. 27 specimens were taken from Bokšto Street cemetery and from a grave found in Verkiai for C14 investigation. Specimens were taken from the graves that could provide with maximum information. Thus these were graves from the supposed periphery of the cemetery, graves with grave goods, double graves, graves beyond the boundary of the cemetery and one grave in which the dead was buried in uncommon position. Both calibrated and no calibrated dates were
received. As in case of the Middle Ages no calibrated dates give a more notable error, it is expedient to analyse calibrated dates. Four chronological periods were received nearly from all specimens. Dates of each specimen consist of two parts: some dates show 68, 2% accuracy, others 95, 4%. Each of these parts also consists of one or two credibility variants that may fluctuate. Thus very wide chronological limits are received that can be narrowed. As the number of specimen is big enough, the method of narrowing limits becomes more reliable because the specimens supplement each other. Besides, dating of some specimens showed rather narrow limits at once. While applying this method other data is also considered, for example, stratigraphy of similar grave goods.

The earliest graves of the Bokšto St. 6 cemetery, from all investigated applying $^{14}C$ method whose credible dates do not overstep $13^{th}$ century, are 5. Other 7 graves that could also be ascribed to the $13^{th}$ century are situated in the central part of the cemetery with the exception of the grave No 334 that is beyond the eastern boundary of the cemetery. Three graves that could be ascribed to the end of the $13^{th}$ century and the first half of the $14^{th}$ are widely recorded in various places of the cemetery. Two graves that in accordance with $^{14}C$ data belong to the first half of the $14^{th}$ century are in the centre, slightly on the eastern side. 9 graves that are ascribed to the second half of $14^{th}$ century are widely spread on the whole territory. The grave No 347 in which the dead is laid on her stomach falls out of the entire context. It is dated 1521-1592, i.e. the $16^{th}$ century. The newest data have corrected our previous suppositions. At the beginning of the cemetery existence burials were conducted from the second half of the $13^{th}$ century on the entire territory. This allows raising a hypothesis that the territory of the cemetery had been planned beforehand. The $^{14}C$ investigation data shows that most of the graves with grave goods in them (7 out of 10) belong to the second half of the $13^{th}$ century. Out of those 7 graves 3 are ascribed to the $13^{th}$ century great credibility dated group. Availability of the newest data enables to clarify the problem of dating jewellery of the $13^{th}$-$14^{th}$ century. Thus now it can be safely stated that jewellery (chaplets, necklaces, bracelets, braided rings,
symbolic keys) had been worn and put inside the grave from the mid of the 13\textsuperscript{th} century, i.e. more than 100 years prior to the official christening of Lithuania.

The grave from the cemetery of Verkiai contains similar grave goods and is considered to belong to the same period as those of the Bokšto St.6 and the Kriveikiškio cemetery of Kernave. However, one detail is of special interest: grave goods here are numerous but they are not made of silver, like most grave goods from Bokšto St.6 and Kriveikiškio, but of copper alloy. Thus it is supposed that the community living outside Vilnius was not as rich as that living in the centre. The decorations found in the periphery look as if they were cheaper copies of decorations from Vilnius and Kernave. It could be that two types of chaplet plates (silver and brass) had been designated for different markets.

Considering C\textsuperscript{14} dating of the Bokšto St. 6 cemetery and comparing it with other archaeological material of early Vilnius, it is possible to analyze the role of the cemetery and that of the dead buried there in early history of Vilnius. The date points to the second half of the 13\textsuperscript{th} century. Similar material had been obtained from the northern foot of Gediminas Hill – a balk was found of a tree cut in 1271. Nowhere else in Vilnius there was found any earlier dated material. C\textsuperscript{14} dating confirms our supposition that first Orthodox believers might have been invited to Vilnius by Traidenis. Presumably, they could have been living at the northern foot of Gediminas Hill and buried their dead at the Bokšto St. 6 cemetery. Later, at junction of the 13\textsuperscript{th} and 14\textsuperscript{th} centuries, they might have moved to the would-be territory of “Civitas Rutenica” but continued to bury their dead at the same burial place.

Considering the material obtained from the burial places of the end of the 14\textsuperscript{th} century and the 15\textsuperscript{th} century, the archaeological literature in Lithuania maintains that the process of catholic Christianization had been on the way within the Grand Dukedom of Lithuania and it began with christening of Lithuania in 1387. However, the results of newly carried out investigations, especially those of Bokšto St.6, allow us proposing another way of Christianization, which is the orthodox one.
In this respect we should agree with A. Musin who claims that Christianization means a specific period covering the time from the very first contact with a new religion up to establishment of ecclesiastical organization. Thus according to this scheme the upper limit of Lithuania’s Christianization period is the year 1387. More questions arise as to the beginning of Christianization. Is it appearance of first Christian missions within the Baltic territories or could it be Lithuanians’ first encounter with Byzantine culture? Orthodoxy had been closer to Lithuanians and a considerable part of the then elite had turned to the Orthodox religion. Besides, the earliest bulk of Christian terms in the Lithuanian language had been borrowed from the Russian language. Thus it is obvious that still before official christening of Lithuania the Orthodox Christianization had also been in progress. The same is confirmed by archaeological material. Christian symbols were discovered among the grave goods at the burial places of early ethnic centres of Lithuania such as Kernave and Vilnius.

Conclusions

1. The archaeological material from the Bokšto St.6 burial place and from the northern part of Gediminas Hill proves the fact of first Orthodox newcomers’ arrival in Vilnius. The newly obtained data allows postponing the appearance of the Orthodox newcomers to the time of Traidenis rule. The newcomer’s arrival is connected with the ruler’s courtyard phenomena. During the rule of Traidenis there were known two types of such formations within the ethnic territory of Lithuania. They were Kernave and Vilnius. They emerged at the same time and the Orthodox element is traced in both of them, however, their emergence circumstances are essentially different. While Kernave was Traidenis’s domain, where economic and trade potential had concentrated, Vilnius was a military centre. During the rule of Traidenis Vilnius had just been in the stage of development and the Orthodox newcomers did not compose a separate territorial unit.

2. A new structure in Vilnius, known in historic sources as “Civitas Rutenica”, began to develop during the rule of Vytenis and Gediminias, which is the end of the 13th and the beginning of the 14th
starting with this period it is possible to speak about the Orthodox believers as a separate community on a separate territory. Differently from the time of rule of Traidenis, the core of the community consisted of ordinary townsmen, tradesmen, craftsmen and clergy.

3. With the growing significance of Vilnius grand dukes of Lithuania realised the benefit brought by incoming Christians. Catholic tradesmen and craftsmen had to be invited and their rights had to be secured, meanwhile the Orthodox newcomers’ arrival was the result of the rulers’ eastern policy. Immigration directions also depended on that policy. The earliest Orthodox incomers arrived via Slavonic towns of Black Russia from Halič-Voluine. Later, in the midst and second half of the 14th century, they were coming from north-western towns of Russia. Immigration had also been fostered by a complicated situation in Russia after tartar-mongol attacks. In Vilnius the Orthodox incomers felt secure.

4. The Orthodox newcomers were under the ruler’s protection. The “Civitas Rutenica” development was regulated by the ruler. It was an open community. Its clergy could freely proclaim their religion. The choice of the area shows that security was not a basic criterion. Although various life requirements were satisfied, from the point of view of poliorketik, the place was not good enough. It is not known if “Civitas Rutenica” was fortified. The upbuilt of the territory could be judged from a wooden upbuilt in upper and lower towns of Kernave as well as in Slavonic towns such as Naugardukas, Pskov, Polock, Tver.

5. Churches are the best indicator of the “Civitas Rutenica” territory. Traditionally they would be built within the perimeter of the living territory. Comparison of the churches localisation with spread of the cultural layer enabled to more exactly define locality of some churches as well as the time of construction, which also allowed better specifying development of “Civitas Rutenica”. At the end of the 13th century and at the beginning of the 14th century three churches were built on the territory of “Civitas Rutenica” that had been of a triangle form. The greatest development of “Civitas Rutenica” began in the midst and second half of the 14th century during the rule of Grand
Duke Algirdas, which is explained by the fact that his two wives were the orthodox believers (Maria from Vitebsk and Juliona from Tver). With the growth of the territory the number of churches also increased. 12 churches stood within the territory of “Civitas Rutenica” and 2 beyond its boundaries. At an early period of “Civitas Rutenica” development it covered the area of 3 hectares, whereas at the beginning of the 15th century it enlarged up to 15 hectares. Despite all restrictions related to construction and repair of the churches that were introduced following christening of Lithuania, the Orthodox believers remained a very significant unit of the community of Vilnius and even at the beginning of the 16th century continued to construct new as well as repair their old houses of worship.

6. The material from the Bokšto St. 6 cemetery was chosen because it best represents the „Civitas Rutenica“ community in all its aspects. The cemetery was explored within the period from 2006 to 2012. The cemetery is situated in the centre of “Civitas Rutenica” and the dead had been buried there from the second half of the 13th century up to the beginning of the 15th century. A great number of investigated graves (up to 500) enable making a credible statistic picture. A well preserved osteological material allowed using radiocarbon (C14) data for the investigation (27 specimens had been taken), enabled specifying dating of grave goods as well as development of the cemetery itself. The cemetery reflects burial rites of the orthodox community that intervene with local traditions. The Bokšto St. 6 cemetery represents an ordinary townsmen’s community as no grave goods typical of the elite had been found. The dead would be buried on their back in coffins or wooden boxes at about 50 cm depth. The grave orientation is not exactly W-E as a few degree errors are noticed.

Great mortality of individuals under 18 had been recorded. Graves of 2-12 year old children made one quarter of all the buried at the cemetery. In some parts of the cemetery there is great concentration of children’s graves. The burial rites reveal strong family connections within the Orthodox community. Topography of graves allows proposing that they had markings on the surface and there were lanes
in the cemetery. Burials with stones must be connected with „žalnikai” tradition and the burial rites of the Yotvingians.

Out of 500 graves only 5% contained grave goods the greatest part of them being decorations such as various chaplets, earrings, necklaces, bracelets and all types of rings. Some of decorations are characteristic of Slavs (multi-beaded or three-beaded earrings) others are of local origin such as rings with hollow boxes and encrusted with glass. A great number of elaborate chaplets allow proposing that tin plates were locally produced but their production was influenced by Slavonic culture. Grave goods prove a high enough level of jewellery. Similar but less elaborate decorations found in peripheral cemeteries (Bečiai, Obeliai, Pušalotas, Sariai, Verkiai etc.) show that Kernave and Vilnius had been fashion centres. Considering a complex of findings the Bokšto St. cemetery has more common features with the Slavonic lands then with the Yotvingians. However, the found decorations rather more relate to the townsmen’s fashion of that time then to their confessional or ethnic dependence.

Anthropologic data reveal everyday life of the community. Townsmen suffered of diseases typical of medieval cities. The analysis of graves shows absence of social differentiation at the cemetery as the rich and the poor had been buried at the same cemetery. The disabled that had been taken care of serve as proof of social responsibility. Members of the Orthodox community participated in defence of the city.

7. Considering the entire complex of elements typical of Christian burial rites, it could be maintained that at Bokšto St. 6 the Orthodox believers had been buried. We guess that beside newcomers there had also been buried local townspeople who had adopted the Orthodox religion. Orthodoxy was more popular among local townsmen then Catholicism. At introduction of Catholicism in Lithuania in 1387, half of Vilnius citizens were the Orthodox believers. It is true that the newly christened still retained their ethnic burial rites. It is especially reflected in the grave goods tradition. From the earliest period of the cemetery existence graves with grave goods are more numerous, meanwhile in its peripheral part dating back to the end of 14th and the
first half of the 15th century such graves are very few or are not found at all.

8. The “Civitas Rutenica” appearance and development cannot be dissociated from development of Vilnius as a city. The “golden age” of the Ruthenian town falls to the period of Grand Duke Algirdas rule. With adoption of Catholicism the situation of the orthodox community of Vilnius began to change. First of all, the rights of townsmen of all religions were equated. In addition, it was forbidden for the Orthodox believers to construct new and repair old churches. With the beginning of the 15th century churchyards started to be upbuilt. Naturally, disappearance of the “Civitas Rutenica” as a separate part of Vilnius was not a momentary process and might have lasted up to several hundred of years.

9. Systematisation of the available data enabled to restore the picture of “Civitas Rutenica” as a unique and at the same time not a random unit in Vilnius. The research revealed its logic and regular development that was influenced by historic, political, economic, environmental as well as everyday life factors. Investigations of the Bokšto St. 6 cemetery provided with all kind of data about life peculiarities of Vilnius citizens, their attitude towards life after death and their traditions. The research has brought to light a number of issues and hypothesis. Some of them were confirmed, others still require purposeful future investigations.

Translated by Birutė Jonaitienė
Santrauka


Darbas erdviniu aspektu apima „Civitas Rutenica“, kaip aiškiai apibrėžta dabartinio Vilniaus senamiesčio teritoriją, kurioje, spėjama, nuo XIII a. vidurio ir antrosios pusės kūrėsi ir gyveno stačiatikių tikėjimo bendruomenė. Remiantis faktyne archeologine medžiaga apibrėžta „Civitas Rutenica“ raida nuo pat jo įkūrimo iki XV a. pabaigos, kai pradėtos užstatyti stačiatikių kapinės. Be kultūriniu sluoksniu paplitimo, aiškus Rusėnų miesto užimamos teritorijos markeris yra cerkvės. XIV a. pabaigoje, kada Rusėnų miestas igavo didžiausių plėtros mastų, stačiatikių gyvenamojo teritorijoje stovėjo 12 cerkvių ir 2 cerkves už šios teritorijos ribų.
Šiame darbe pirmą kartą, atmetus bet kokias politines interpretacijas, remiantis tik faktine medžiaga, nustatytą „Civitas Rutenica“ kūrimosi pradžia, parodytas šios miesto dalies augimas ir svarba Vilniaus miesto istorijoje.

Tyrinėjant „Civitas Rutenica“ raidą šiame darbe didelis dėmesys buvo skiriamas taikomųjų tyrimų – archeologijos, architektūros, iš dalies geologijos – rezultatų analizei ir jų apibendrinimui.


Be kitų tikslų, šiuo tyrimu siekta atkreipti dėmesį į istoriografijoje pamirštą faktą apie stačiatikiškąją Lietuvos Christianizaciją. Christianizacija čia suprantama ne kaip laikotarpis nuo 1387 m., o kaip procesas, vykęs dar iki oficialaus katalikiško Lietuvos krikšto. Daugiau klausimų iškyla dėl Christianizacijos pradžios: kurį laikotarpį laikyti Christianizacijos pradžia – pirmųjų krikščioniškųjų misijų atsiradimą baltų kraštų baltų kraštuose ar pirmuosius lietuvių susidūrimus su bizantiškajá kultūra?

Stačiatikybė buvo artimesnė lietuviams – nemaža dalis to meto valdančiojo elito buvo patys priemę stačiatikų tikėjimą. Be to, seniausią lietuvių kalbos krikščioniškų terminų sluoksni sudarė rusiški skoliniai. Taigi, matyti, kad dar iki oficialaus Lietuvos krikšto vyko ir stačiatikiškųjų Christianizacija. Tą patį patvirtina ir archeologijos
duomenys. Pirmųjų etninės Lietuvos centrų Kernavės ir Vilniaus kapinynuose (Krīveikiško ir Bokšto g.) aptikta įkapių su krikščioniškais simboliais.

Atliktas tyrimas leido padaryti šias išvadas:

1. Pirmųjų stačiatikų kūrimą Vilniuje reprezentuoja archeologinė kapinyno Bokšto g. 6 ir Gedimino kalno šiaurinės papėdės medžiaga. Šie nauji duomenys leidžia nukelti stačiatikų atsiradimą Vilniuje į Traidenio valdymo laikotarpį. Naujų žmonių atvykimas siejamas su valdovo kiemo fenomenu. Valdant Traideniui Vilnius, kaip miestas, dar tik kūrėsi, ir pirmieji stačiatikiai atskyro teritorinio vieneto (galo) dabartinio Vilniaus senamiesčio teritorijoje nesudarė.


4. Stačiatikiai kūrėsi Lietuvos didžiojo kunigaikščio globoje. „Civitas Rutenica“ plėtra buvo reglamentuojama valdovo. Tai buvo atvira bendruomenė, jos dvasininkai galėjo nekliudomai mieste skelbti savo tikėjimo tiesas. „Civitas Rutenica“ vietos pasirinkimas rodo, kad saugumas nebuvo pagrindinis kriterijus. Išpildomų įvairūs gyvenimui
svarbūs poreikiai, tačiau poliorketikos požiūriu vieta nepatogi. Nėra duomenų, kad „Civitas Rutenica“ buvo įtvirtinta


Kapinyno fiksuojamas didelis individų iki 18 metų mirtingumas, iš kurių 2–12 metų vaikų kapai sudarė ketvirtadalių visų palaidotųjų

Iš 500 kapų tik 8% buvo su ikapėmis. Pagrindinė ir didžiausią ikapų dalį sudaro papuošalai – įvairūs apgalvių, auskarai, kaklo vėriniai, apyrankės bei įvairių tipų žiedai. Dalis papuošalų būdingi slavams (daugiakarolii ir trikarolii auskarai), dalis vietinės kilmės (žiedai su tuščiavidurėmis dėžutėmis ir stiklo akimis). Didelis puošnių apgalvių kiekis leidžia teigti, kad apgalvių skardelės buvo gaminamos vietoje, tačiau veikiant slavų kultūrai. Visos ikapės rodo aukštą juvelyrikos lygį.


8. „Civitas Rutenica“ atsiradimas ir augimas neatsiejamas nuo Vilniaus, kaip miesto, tapsmo. Rusėnų miesto „aukso amžiumi“

9. Susisteminti duomenys leido atkurti „Civitas Rutenica“, kaip unikalaus ir kartu neatsitiktinio darinio Vilniuje, vaizdą. Tyrimas atskleidė logišką ir dėsningą šios miesto dalies raiddą, kuriai įtakos turėjo politinė šalies istorija, ekonominė raída, gamtinė situacija ir net kasdieniai miestiečių poreikiai. Bokšto g. 6 kapinynas suteikė visokeriopų duomenų apie to meto vilniečių gyvenimo ypatumus, požiūrį į pomirtinį gyvenimą, tradicijas. Imantis šio tyrimo buvo iškelta daug hipotezių ir probleminių klausimų. Dalį jų šis darbas patvirtino, kitos hipotezės dar reikalauja kryptingų tyrimų ateityje.
Topic related Scientific Publications
Mokslinės publikacijos disertacijos tema


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