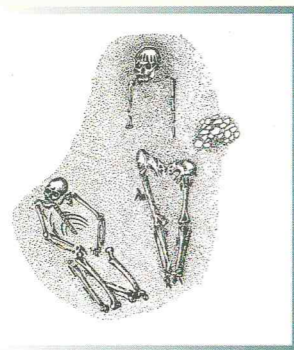


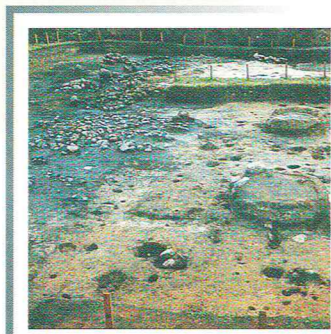
● **DOUBLE BURIAL OF A "SEER" FROM DONKALNIS**  
Adomas Butrimas

Donkalis is a cemetery and ritual complex of the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods, found and excavated in Telšiai district, Varniai area, Kalniškiai village, on a former island in the Biržuliai Lake, which turned into a low hillock in the course of land reclamation. An area of 1024 sq.m. was excavated here in 1981-1983. 14 inhumation burials were found, six of which had been disturbed. Some of the buried individuals were sprinkled with red ochre. Burial goods included pendants made of animal teeth, flint artefacts and fragments of jaws of wild animals. In the eastern part of the island a site of Stone Age rituals was found, and a double "seer's" burial was unearthed near at hand, to the west of it. Oval contours of the burial, filled with brownish ochre and measuring 220x160 cm, were fully exposed in the depth of 25-30 cm from the earth surface. The burial revealed an extended male skeleton, thickly sprinkled with red ochre, particularly in the area of the head, and a female, buried in a crouched position beside him. On the northern verge of the contour of the double burial, just 12-30 cm below the earth surface, a small heap of chipped stones sprinkled with red ochre was uncovered, which must have been a symbolic hearth. The buried individual, a 20-25 year-old male, was decorated with 57 pendants of perforated teeth of elk, boar and aurochs, arranged in a very symmetrical pattern, especially in the sectors of the head and legs. The burial of a 25-30 year-old female, laid beside him, did not yield any grave goods, and had considerably less ochre. The burial should be most probably dated to the Mesolithic period. On the basis of burial items and radiocarbon dates, the remaining burials are attributed to the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods.



● **THE NARKŪNAI HILL-FORTS**  
Regina Kulikauskienė

The Narkūnai hill-forts, - the Major, called Utenis' Castle, and the Minor, called Utenis' Grave, - are 3 km southwest of the town of Utena. They are separated by a ditch, 3-4 m wide and 13 m deep. The hill-forts were excavated by Regina and Pranas Kulikauskai in 1975-1978. Especially valuable data were obtained during excavations of the Major hill-fort. Two cultural layers were found there. The lower layer belongs to the first millennium B.C. and the first centuries A.D. Investigations have revealed that during this period the hill-fort was inhabited by people of the Brushed Pottery Culture. Scattered quadrangular buildings of post construction with round-shaped stone hearths inside had been built at the settlement. The whole settlement had been surrounded by a defensive barrier built of two rows of vertical poles woven over with branches. At the bottom, the barrier was reinforced with stone pavements of several layers. Stock-breeding was the main occupation of the population. The excavated remains of a metal melting furnace point to the existence of a bronze production centre at the site. The upper cultural layer (12th-14th centuries) was badly disturbed. There are no other remains of the wooden castle left except for former fortifications - a 2 meter high rampart, which surrounded the hilltop in the northern part. Furthermore, the Minor hill-fort had been finally arranged and turned into a forework by that time. The time of adjustment of the Minor hill-fort coincides with the period of the castle on the Major hill-fort.



In the western part of the hill-fort, the cultural layer of an old settlement has survived.



**IRON AGE**

Albinas Kuncevičius

During the Old Iron Age (1st-4th cent. A.D.) and the folk migration period, the economic and social organization of the Baltic tribes underwent considerable change. Early in this period they learned how to extract iron from local swamp ore, which allowed iron tools and weapons to be used in everyday work activities. Iron technology facilitated agricultural work, and farming became the primary mode of subsistence. Trade with neighboring countries intensified, as did, most importantly, contacts with the Roman Empire. Large quantities of non-ferrous metal (bronze, silver) were imported into the Baltic lands. In turn, the Balts exported raw goods and commodities such as furs, leather, wax and amber -- known as "northern gold" to the Romans -- as well as some craft goods made by artisans. Archaeological artifacts and the number of ancient sites indicate that at this time the population was increasing, new settlements were being established, and Baltic tribal units were developing in size and complexity.

On the basis of burial type, archaeologists recognize a number of smaller cultural areas in the Old Iron Age, which are identified with tribes known from written sources. The sea coast, previously representing the Barrow tradition of the west Balts, is now characterized by inhumation burials in flat graves. At this time, Prussia becomes the wealthiest sector of the western Balts, with Sambia standing out as a particularly distinctive region. Later written sources indicate it was the homeland of Sambian, Natangian and Varmian tribes. Another distinctive tribal unit is the western Balts of the Lithuanian coast, extending from the mouth of the Minija in the south to the Šventoji in the north, and Lake Plateliai and the Jūra river, in the east. The custom of burial mounds disappeared in the coastal zone by the 2nd century. In the new practice, the local inhabitants inhumed individuals in flat burials, which, like the earlier barrows, were encircled by rings of stone, sometimes in concentric arrangements. Up to four concentric rings were sometimes constructed around the grave pit and then filled in with stones. The stone circles of neighboring graves were often interconnected.

The custom of burying inhumated individuals in stone encircled barrows soon diffused to the west, to the territory of present-day Samogitia and southern Latvia. This is associated with the arrival of new settlers from the coastal area. By the 4th century, the large culture-zone of Lithuanian and Latvian barrows, which had formed in the Old Iron Age, now broke into three smaller units: Samogitia, Semigallia and Selonia. Their burial patterns remained largely unchanged until the 11th-13th centuries, a time when their tribal names begin to appear in written sources.



Barrows dated to the 1st century found in Samogitia usually include one inhumation, sometimes later joined by several other inhumations.

During the 2nd to 4th centuries, cremation burials in cairns were practised in southern Lithuania (from the middle reaches of the Nemunas to the Mozurian lakes). These are the lands of the tribal union of the future Jatvingians, who also include the Sudovians mentioned by Ptolemy.

In central Lithuania and the Lower Nemunas are distinctive flat cemeteries, which some analysts attribute to proto-Upland Lithuanians, while others believe them to represent proto-Samogitians. This area includes the famous cemeteries of Eiguliai, Sargėnai and Veršvai (all in the present town of Kaunas), and which were excavated before World War II. Recent excavations in this region, at the Marvelė cemetery on the left bank of the Nemunas in Kaunas, have uncovered a unique cemetery with a continuous burial tradition of about one thousand years.

It is more difficult to identify distinct small tribal areas in eastern Lithuania and the eastern part of present Belarus, where the Stroked Ware Culture continues. Initially, this huge region appears to be undifferentiated. By the middle of the 1st millennium A. D., however, a new East Lithuanian Barrow Culture starts to form here. It seems to represent a natural evolution out of the earlier Stroked Ware Culture. The first such burial sites appear in the 3rd or 4th century, represented by barrows of two types: 1) earth piles with a stone circle at the foot, 2) with piles of earth and stones. Burial goods in the graves are rather poor.

The cultural situation of Baltic lands in the Middle Iron Age (5th-9th centuries) takes a new turn. This is the result of both domestic and external factors. By the 5th century, the Roman Empire was collapsing, nomadic tribes were raging across Europe, and traditional economic and political centers were facing strong new competitors. It is possible that isolated groups of Goths and Huns reached the western Baltic lands. Evidence of this is a very rich 5th century male grave recently found in the cemetery of Vidgiriai (District Šilutė). It features a symbolic offering of two horses, a grave with an atypical cross-section, and exotic grave wealth: a silver-decorated drinking horn, five brooches (one is gilded) and a silver neck-ring. This suggests the burial of a wealthy warrior, perhaps the participant of a remote expedition. Further to the east, nomadic style arrowpoints have been found in two graves at the Plinkaigalis cemetery (District Kėdainiai) and at the hill-forts of Aukštadvaris, Kernavė, and Pajevonys.

Extensive socio-political changes also took place to the east and south of Baltic lands. In the east, the Slavic tribal units of Dregoviches and Kriviches formed and began to expand into the lands of the Eastern Balts, while Western Slavs were penetrating into Jatvingian territory and Old Prussians lands in the west. In the 6th-7th centuries, the Slavs reached the present

