

Rome, Constantinople and Newly-Converted Europe

Archaeological and Historical Evidence



Volume I

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in cooperation with

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ВВЕДЕНИЕ В ПРОБЛЕМУ**

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EUGENIJUS SVETIKAS

LATIN CHRISTIANISATION IN THE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN GRAND DUCHY OF LITHUANIA IN LATE 14TH AND 15TH CENTURIES: A PUZZLE OF HISTORICAL FACTS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATA

Abstract. *Latin Christianisation in the Orthodox Christian Grand Duchy of Lithuania in late 14th and 15th centuries: a puzzle of historical facts and archaeological data.* After the Grand Duchy of Lithuania accepted Catholic baptism in 1387, a new ideological – cultural process began, i.e. the Latin Catholic Christianisation of a small territory within a large state, accompanied by a confessional confrontation with the influential Byzantine Orthodox Church which was established in a territory ten times larger. The baptism of Lithuania and the Christianisation process that followed occurred during an especially difficult period of 1378-1417 when the Catholic Church was troubled by the Western Schism. It was not clear which of the two, and later three, popes was legitimate. It was during this period precisely that the Bishopric of Vilnius was founded, soon to be followed by the Bishopric of Medininkai. From the death of Grand Duke Vytautas of Lithuania in 1430 until 1500, over 100 parish churches were built in the diocese of Vilnius, more than two thirds of them in Orthodox Slav lands: Black Ruthenia, Podlasie, the duchies of Polotsk and Vitebsk, etc. The tendency was expansion into the south-eastern and eastern Grand Duchy of Lithuania lands, which had long been Orthodox.

In the analysed archaeological material from late 14th-15th century Grand Duchy of Lithuania, all of the archaeological finds which have Christian symbols clearly document a universal acceptance of the Catholic culture in ethnic Lithuania and Samogitia. Ordinary local devotionals were produced in abundance in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania dioceses of Vilnius and Medininkai in the late 14th-15th century. The comparative archaeological material indicates existence of a lively interaction with neighbouring Livonia during the Christianisation of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the late 14th-15th century. Only the multi-bead temple ornaments can be interpreted as definitely Orthodox items in the archaeological material from the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

Introduction

The Christianisation process in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania of the late 14th-15th centuries is not marked by an abundance or a diversity of the written sources. Two sources that reflect this process are the so-called Codices of the dioceses of Vilnius (*cf.* KDKDW) and Medininkai (*cf.* CMSSD). The historiography of the Christianisation of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania at this time consists of historians' works of varying nature and size: monographs, occasional collections of articles and papers, and individual articles. Although a broad spectrum of topics and questions arising from them are investigated in historiography, according to I. Vaišvilaitė, perhaps the least investigated and “most silent” period in the history of Christianity in our region is the century and a half to two centuries from the baptism of Lithuania to the church reforms in Lithuania.

This period is not distinguished by an abundance either of written sources or other evidence, especially if we want to learn about something other than the founding of parishes and monasteries, the endowment of benefices, the appointment of bishops, etc., for example, to learn about what the people believed and how they worshipped, i.e. about Christian practices and “being Christian”. A conviction has long been widespread and still exists that it was difficult to Christianise Lithuania and that only during the Reformation of the Church did Christian practice finally overcome the paganism that had predominated in popular practice until then (Vaišvilaite 2005, 296).

The Christianisation of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania is documented clearly by the appearance in late 14th century of new burials, in which individuals were buried from the very beginning in accordance with Catholic rites. During the 19th-20th centuries, Lithuanian archaeologists achieved a great deal by bringing a vast quantity of archaeological data to the light of day. Two hundred and fifty late 14th-17th century burial sites, in which almost ten thousand burials and over ten thousand finds were unearthed, were excavated on the present-day territory of Lithuania. The late 14th-15th century finds with Christian symbols and symbolic items were analysed in a two-volume monograph (Svetikas 2009). Chronological clusters were first created using the burial assemblages, in which late 14th-15th century coins were found, and it was ascertained what finds from this period they contained. As a next step, finds with Christian symbols and symbolic items (keys, needle-cases) were divided into twenty-seven groups, the symbols depicted on the finds listed, a typological and chronological analysis made, the incidence of the majority of the finds mapped, and their owners and the circumstances of their discovery ascertained. On the basis of the results of the typological and chronological analysis of 27 groups of finds with Christian symbols, the meanings of the symbols discussed, the functional purpose of these artefacts in the process of the Christianisation of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania interpreted, and the specific nature of the Christian culture in the dioceses of Vilnius and Medininkai and their interaction with the neighbouring regions is ascertained. Thus the article has been prepared on the basis of the aforementioned monograph.

The expansion of the catholic dioceses of Vilnius and Medininkai

In 1387 a cathedral and the parish church of St John were erected in Vilnius. In the late 14th century the diocese of Vilnius already had 17 churches: 5 in Vilnius and 12 elsewhere. Starting from 1392, the work begun by King Władysław II Jagiełło was continued by Grand Duke Vytautas, who became his vassal in Lithuania and obligated the state's lay officials to also become involved in this activity, even threatening them with death. A total of 27 parish churches were erected from 1387 until the death of Vytautas in 1430. In the 1430s, i.e. in the first decade after the death of Grand Duke Vytautas, 8 more churches were erected in the diocese of Vilnius. During 1440-1500 the parish network expanded several fold in the diocese of Vilnius and in the late 15th century consisted of 130 parish churches (Ochmański 1972, 55-68).

After the founding of the bishopric of Vilnius and the expansion of its parish network, Samogitia, where the legal situation was causing many problems, remained heathen for another three decades. The cathedral of Medininkai (Varniai) began to be erected in Samogitia in 1416 as were parish churches, which numbered at least 8 in 1417. Somewhat later Grand Duke Vytautas built another 3. A total of 12 parishes had been founded in the diocese of Medininkai prior to the death of Grand Duke Vytautas in 1430, while 27 parishes existed in the diocese of Vilnius at that time. In the 1430s no parishes were founded in the diocese of Medininkai, while during 1440-1500 only 8 parishes were founded. Thus at the end of the 15th century 20 parishes existed in the diocese of Medininkai while six times that number existed in the diocese of Vilnius. In the east, the diocese of Medininkai began with the churches at Ariogala and Betygala on the Dubysa River. Its western border extended to the churches in Medininkai and Kaltinėnai, the northern, to the church in Luokė and the Lygumai manor chapel, and the southern to the Jurbarkas and Veliuona parish churches on the Nemunas. A vast territory which extended to the area between the Dubysa and Nevėžis in the east, the Baltic Sea in the west, and Livonia in the northwest and west, remained without parish churches. Thus the diocese of Medininkai had the smallest territory in all of Catholic Europe. It is worth noting that after the death of Grand Duke Vytautas, the huge territory between the western boundary of the diocese of Vilnius and the eastern boundary of the diocese of Medininkai, i.e. from the Neris – Šventoji to the Dubysa (*cf.* Fig. 1), had no parish churches for a long time.

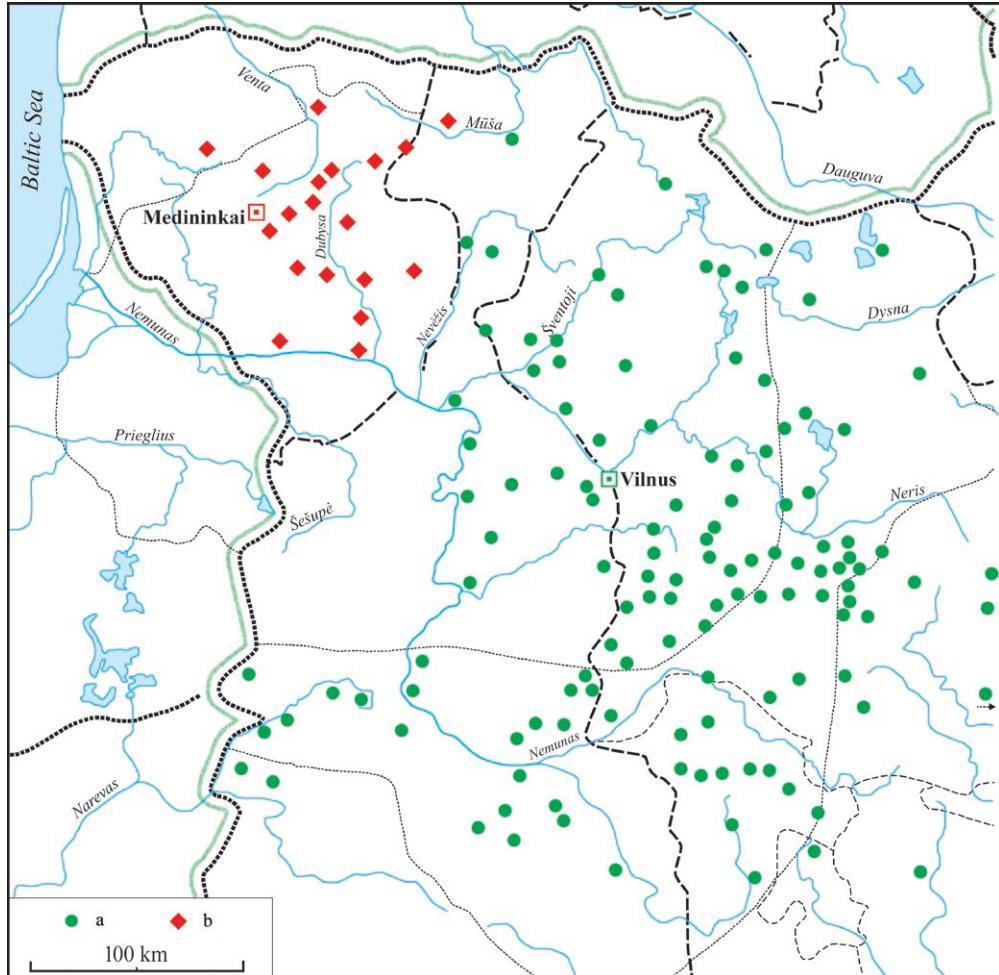


Fig. 1. The Catholic dioceses of Vilnius and Medininkai in 1387-1500; drawn by E. Svetikas.
a – parish churches in diocese of Vilnius; b – parish churches in diocese of Medininkai.

The reception of Latin European devotions

The Catholic Church distinguished between major (*peregrinationes primariae*) and minor (*peregrinationes secundariae*) pilgrimages. A major pilgrimage was made to the Holy Land, Rome, Santiago de Compostela, and several other sites in Europe. Meanwhile, to make a minor pilgrimage it was enough to visit a relic, holy image, etc. preserved in a church in a local or adjacent diocese. From such sites, pilgrims did their best to bring back some item, which would remind them and others of their visit to the holy site and attest to it. The items for such pilgrims were produced in great abundance, distributed not only by the workshops operated by the parish churches and monasteries, but also by secular artisans. There were a great many such items large and small: various badges, pendants, brooches, shells, crosses, etc., which were manufactured from various metals, amber, stone, wood, etc. Thus the absolute majority of the late 14th-15th century finds with Christian symbols are various pilgrims' badges and souvenirs. There is no doubt that initially in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, minor pilgrimages were made in the diocese of Vilnius and, after three decades, also in the diocese of Medininkai. Rosette brooches, wheel brooches, and six-pointed star brooches are finds interpreted as pilgrims' badges in Latin European archaeology. After the Christianisation of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in 1387, similar brooches began to be manufactured also in the diocese of Vilnius.

Rosette brooches

Over 75 rosette brooches from the Grand Duchy, Teutonic Prussia, Livonia, and the countries of Western Europe: Britain, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Germany, have been classified into three types on the basis of the number of petals: 1). six; 2). seven; and 3). eight. On the basis of the shape of the holes forming the petals

and the central disc, each type was divided further into variants, and these into variations based on the chased decorations on the sepals.

The chronology of six-petal rosette brooches is fairly broad. The chronology of the brooch variants and individual variations found in Livonia and Teutonic Prussia is defined as the second half of the 14th-early 15th century. The chronology of six-petal rosette brooches from Western Europe is defined somewhat more broadly, i.e. early 14th to mid-15th century. Meanwhile it is possible to define the chronology of six-petal brooches from the Grand Duchy of Lithuania as not earlier than the 15th century and not later than the first quarter of the 16th century. It is possible to define the chronology of seven-petal rosette brooches as the first half of the 15th century. The chronology of the eight-petal variant 4, variation 4, rosette brooches from Livonia and Teutonic Prussia is defined as the second half of 14th century, and of variant 4, variation 3 brooches, as the first half of the 15th century. In the Grand Duchy of Lithuania eight-petal brooches are later: variant 4, variation 2 – first half of the 15th century, variant 3 – 15th century, variants 1 and 2 – 15th-16th century.

Variant 1 and 3 six-petal brooches and eight-petal rosette brooches have been discovered in the diocese of Vilnius, Livonia, and Teutonic Prussia (*cf.* Fig. 2, 4). Seven-petal rosette brooches have been found only in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (*cf.* Fig. 3), not a single specimen is known to us from Livonia and Teutonic Prussia.

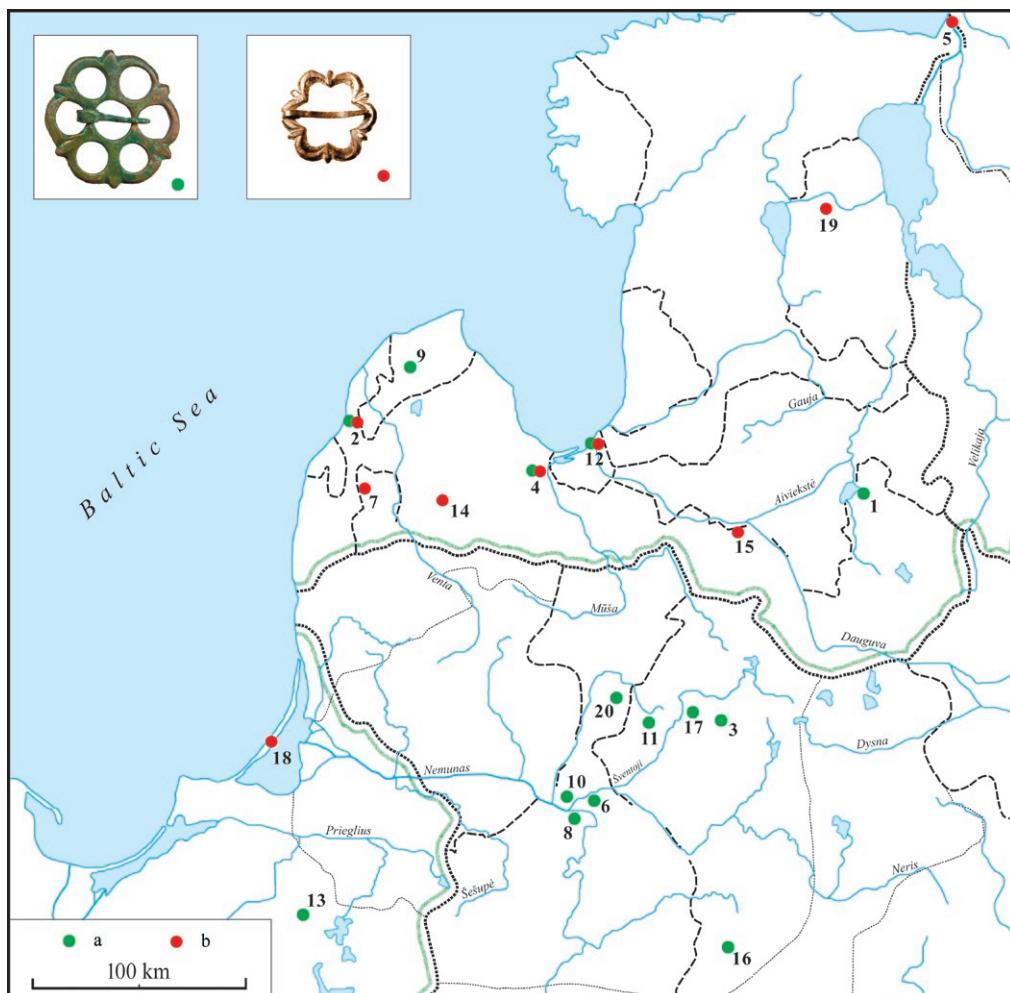


Fig. 2. Distribution of finds of six-petal rosette brooches; drawn by E. Svetikas.
a – variant 1, 2, and 3; b – variant 4.

- 1 – Bērzpils-Iča, Latvia (variant 3); 2 – Darvdedži, Latvia (variant 3 and 4); 3 – Diktarai, Lithuania (variant 3); 4 – Dobele, Latvia (variant 3 and 4); 5 – Jõuga, Ida-Viru maakond, Estonia (variant 4); 6 – Karmėlava, Lithuania (variant 3); 7 – Kazdanga, Latvia (variant 4); 8 – Pakalniškiai, Lithuania (variant 2); 9 – Puze, Latvia (variant 3); 10 – Radikiai, Lithuania (variant 3); 11 – Raguva, Lithuania (variant 3); 12 – Riga, Rīgas apgabals, Latvia (variant 3 and 4); 13 – Równina Dolna, Poland (variant 3); 14 – Saldus, Latvia (variant 4); 15 – Sēlpils, Latvia (variant 4); 16 – Ščuropkai (Щурок), Lithuania (variant 3); 17 – eimyniškėliai, Lithuania (variant 3); 18 – former Stangenwalde, Curonian Spit, Russia (variant 4); 19 – Tartu, Estonia (variant 4); 20 – Uliūnai, Lithuania (variant 1).

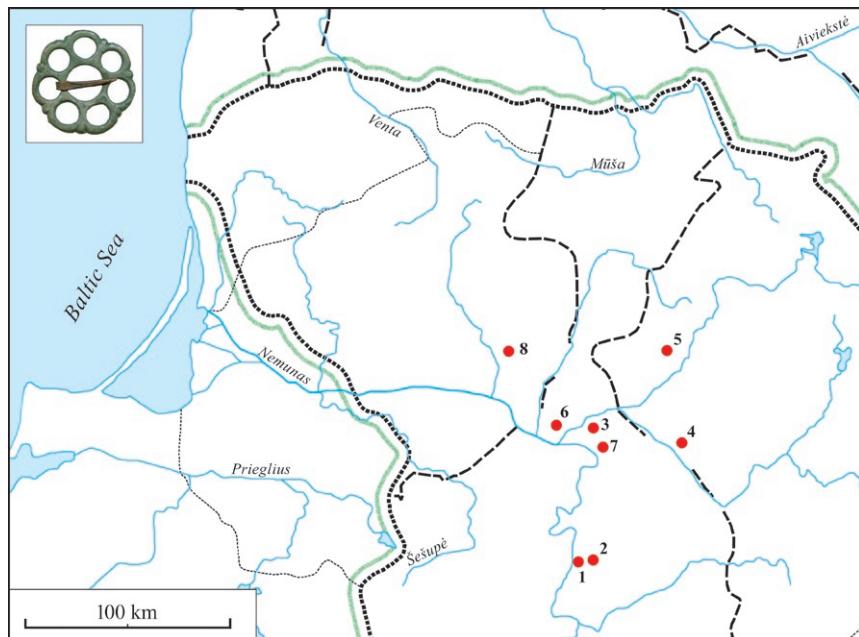


Fig. 3. Distribution of finds of seven petal rosette brooches; drawn by E. Svetikas.
 1 – Alytus, Lithuania; 2 – Bazorai, Lithuania; 3 – Karmėlava, Lithuania; 4 – Kurklintiškiai, Lithuania;
 5 – Kernavė, Lithuania; 6 – Radikiai, Lithuania; 7 – Rumšiškės, Lithuania; 8 – Šulaičiai, Lithuania.

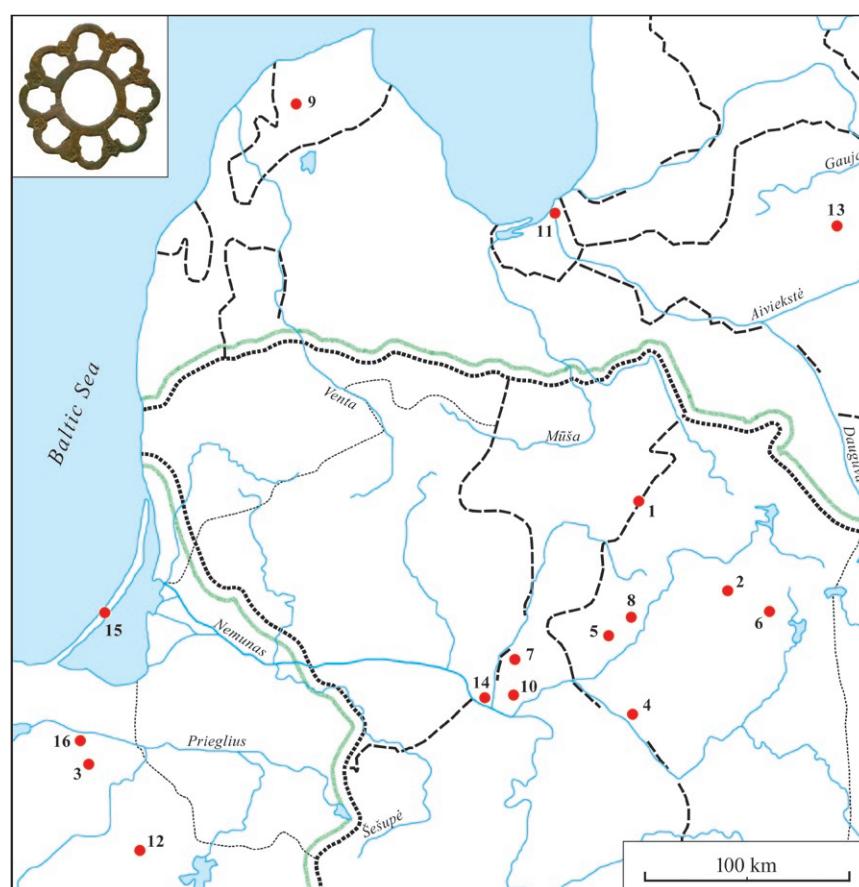


Fig. 4. Distribution of eight petal rosette brooches; drawn by E. Svetikas.
 1 – Aščiagalis, Lithuania; 2 – Diktarai, Lithuania; 3 – former Gerdauen Zhelesnodorosnyi, Russia; 4 – Kernavė, Lithuania;
 5 – Kurklintiškiai, Lithuania; 6 – Liepiniškės, Lithuania; 7 – Masteikiai, Lithuania; 8 – Piktgalis, Lithuania; 9 – Puze,
 Latvia; 10 – Radikiai, Lithuania; 11 – Riga, Latvia; 12 – Równina Dolna, Poland; 13 – Stāmerienas, Latvia; 14 – Šilelis,
 Lithuania; 15 – former Stangenwalde, Curonian Spit, Russia; 16 – former Alt-Wehlau, Znamensk, Russia

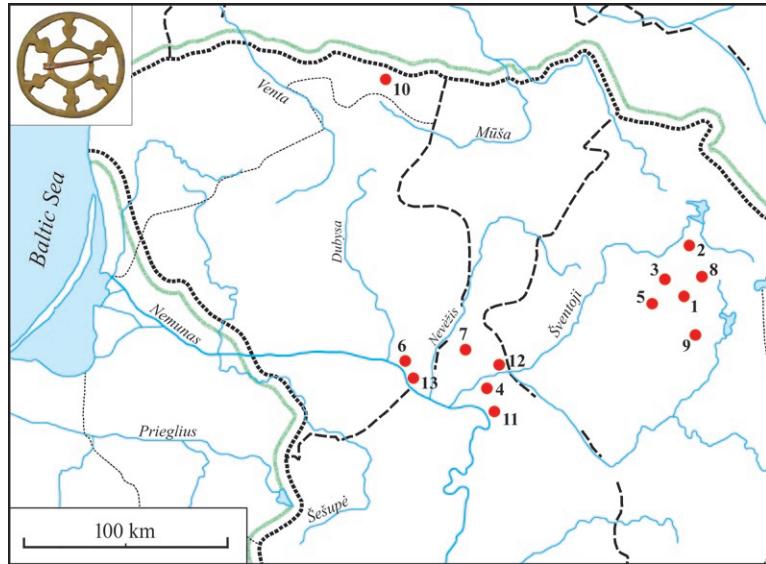


Fig. 5. Distribution of finds of variant 1 wheel brooches; drawn by E. Svetikas.

1 – Ažugiriai, Lithuania; 2 – Bikūnai, Lithuania; 3 – Diktarai, Lithuania; 4 – Karmėlava, Lithuania; 5 – Klevėnai, Lithuania;
6 – Kriemala, Lithuania; 7 – Masteikiai, Lithuania; 8 – Narkūnai, Lithuania; 9 – Pušalotas, Lithuania; 10 – Rukuižiai,
Lithuania; 11 – Rumšiškės, Lithuania; 12 – Skrebinai, Lithuania; 13 – Stanislava, Lithuania.

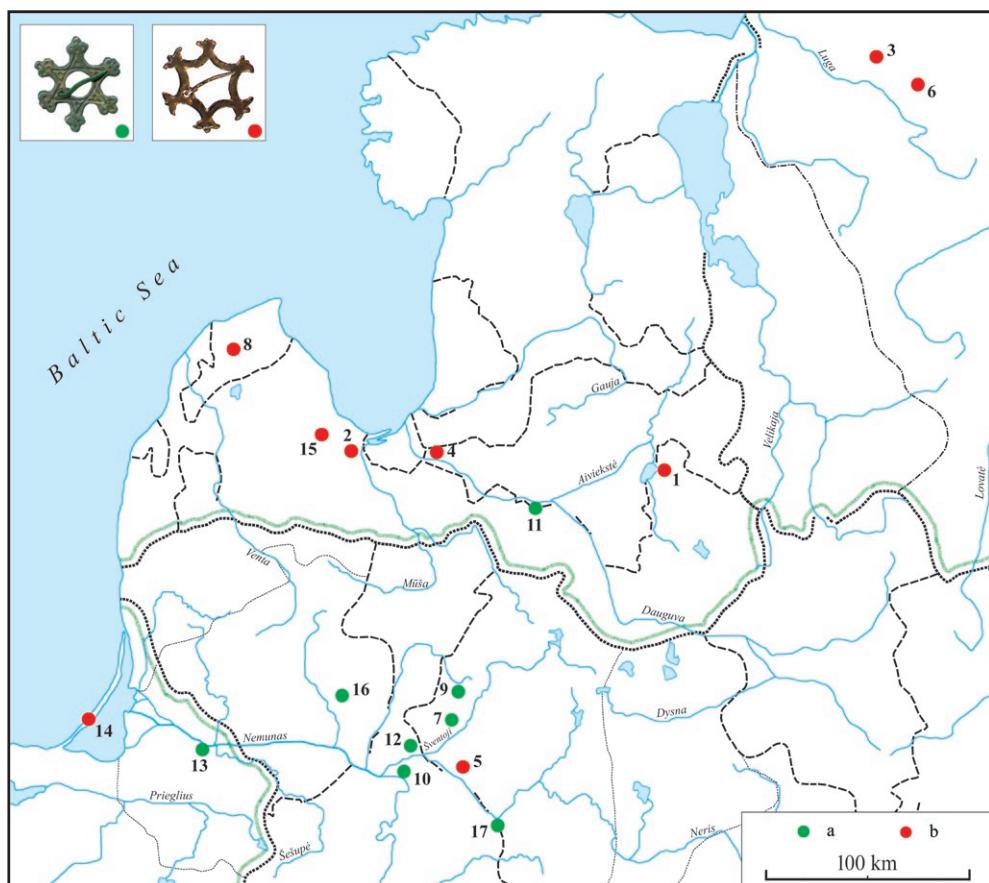


Fig. 6. Six-pointed star brooch find spots; drawn by E. Svetikas.

a – variant 1; b – variant 2.

1 – Bērzpils-Iča, Latvia; 2 – Dobele, Latvia; 3 – Fyuntatovo, Russia; 4 – Ikškile, Latvia; 5 – Kernavė, Lithuania;
6 – Novo-Siverskaya, Russia; 7 – Obeliai, Lithuania; 8 – Puze, Latvia; 9 – Raguva, Lithuania; 10 – Rumšiškės, Lithuania;
11 – Sēlpils, Latvia; 12 – Skrebinai, Lithuania; 13 – former Splitter, Sovetsk, Russia; 14 – former Stangenwalde,
Curonian Spit, Russia; 15 – Tukums, Latvia; 16 – Valatkiškės, Lithuania; 17 – Vilnius, Lithuania.

Not one six-petal brooch is recorded in the diocese of Medininkai. Only a single seven-petal and a single eight-petal rosette brooch was discovered in the eastern part of the diocese of Medininkai, in the area between the Dubysa and the Nevezis. No six-petal variant 4 rosette brooches have been found on the territory of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. This brooch variant is common only in Livonia and Teutonic Prussia (Fig. 2).

Wheel brooches

On the basis of the number of spokes (6-9), the wheel brooches were classified into four variants. A total of 22 brooches were used for the classification. The wheel variant 1 brooches is composed of two rings: an inner hexagonal hub and an outer rim, which are joined by six spokes with sculpted edges. The spoke composition is reminiscent of a Christogram formed by the Greek letters I (iota) and X (chi). This is the most abundant variant of wheel brooch. Just one example has been found of each of the other three variants, the wheels of which consist of: 1). seven straight spokes joining a round rim with a round hub; 2). eight spokes with sculpted edges joining a star-shaped hub with a sculpted edge rim; 3). nine sculpted edge spokes joining a round rim with a round hub.

After mapping the variant 1 brooches it became apparent that they were distributed in several locations in the diocese of Vilnius quite distant from one another, and in the diocese of Medininkai they have only been found on the boundary with the diocese of Vilnius (*cf.* Fig. 5). The lone variant 2-4 brooches were all found in the diocese of Vilnius.

Six-pointed star brooches

These finds were classified into two variants on the basis of the shape of the central hole and next, into variations on the basis of the form of the decoration on the flat area and the ends of the points and on their minor details. The chronology of variant 1 brooches with a round hole is defined as the late 14th-first half of 15th century, and of variant 2 brooches with a star-shaped hole, as the second half of 14th century. Variant 1 brooches mostly have been found in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania diocese of Vilnius and one each in the diocese of Medininkai, Livonia, and Teutonic Prussia (*cf.* Fig. 6). The earlier variant 2 brooches are found mostly in Livonia and the Novgorod Republic, and only one each on territory of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Teutonic Prussia (Fig. 6). In addition, analogous variant 2 brooches have been found in Hungary, where their chronology is defined as 14th century at large. A significantly greater number of six-pointed star brooches have been found in Western and Central Europe. They are distinguished by their diversity, but no brooch similar to the variant 1 brooches from the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Livonia, and Teutonic Prussia, is found among them. Meanwhile, some Western European six-pointed star brooches with a six-pointed star-shaped hole are very similar to variant 2 brooches from Livonia, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and Teutonic Prussia. Their chronology is defined as various periods during the 14th-15th centuries. All of the Western European six-pointed star brooches are interpreted as pilgrims' badges.

Local devotionals

Local devotionals also began to be manufactured from the very beginning of the Christianisation of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Type II cast sheet brooches were the first to be produced in larger number. This is the most common form of a cast sheet brooch in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania after the 1387 baptism. It has a *boss*, a *rim*, and a 4.5-8.5 cm diameter. A total of over 700 type II cast sheet brooches have been found. The absolute majority come from the Grand Duchy of Lithuania dioceses of Vilnius and Medininkai, but over 30 were discovered in Livonian and Teutonic Prussian burials. 650 brooches and 2 production stamps from 81 find spots were used in our classification system (*cf.* Fig. 7). Type II cast sheet brooches were classified into 9 variants and individual brooches. The main criterion selected to classify this brooch form into separate variants was the symbolic image depicted on its boss. They include the fleur-de-lis, the Crown of Thorns, cross, five wounds of Jesus and the Holy Trinity. In addition, some symbols were arranged to represent a different symbol still. Thus, several fleur-de-lis were arranged to form the eleven-pointed star of Bethlehem on variant I brooches. One or two concentric circles were usually embossed on the rim of type II cast sheet brooches. Other symbols were rarely depicted on the rim, e.g. a composition of 11 spirals, a multi-pointed star of Bethlehem, and a crown of roses. Basing on the data from the correlation clusters, which consist of over a thousand and a half finds, it was determined that the absolute majority of type II cast sheet brooches were manufactured during the late 14th through to mid-15th century.

The earliest type II cast sheet brooches were manufactured in the diocese of Vilnius. According to the dies, which have been discovered, the brooches were manufactured at two production sites in the diocese of Vilnius: in Vilnius and in Kernavė. We have indirect evidence on a production centre in the diocese of Medininkai, i.e. from many finds of Samogitian variant 7 brooches recorded in Medininkai (Varniai), the very centre of the diocese.

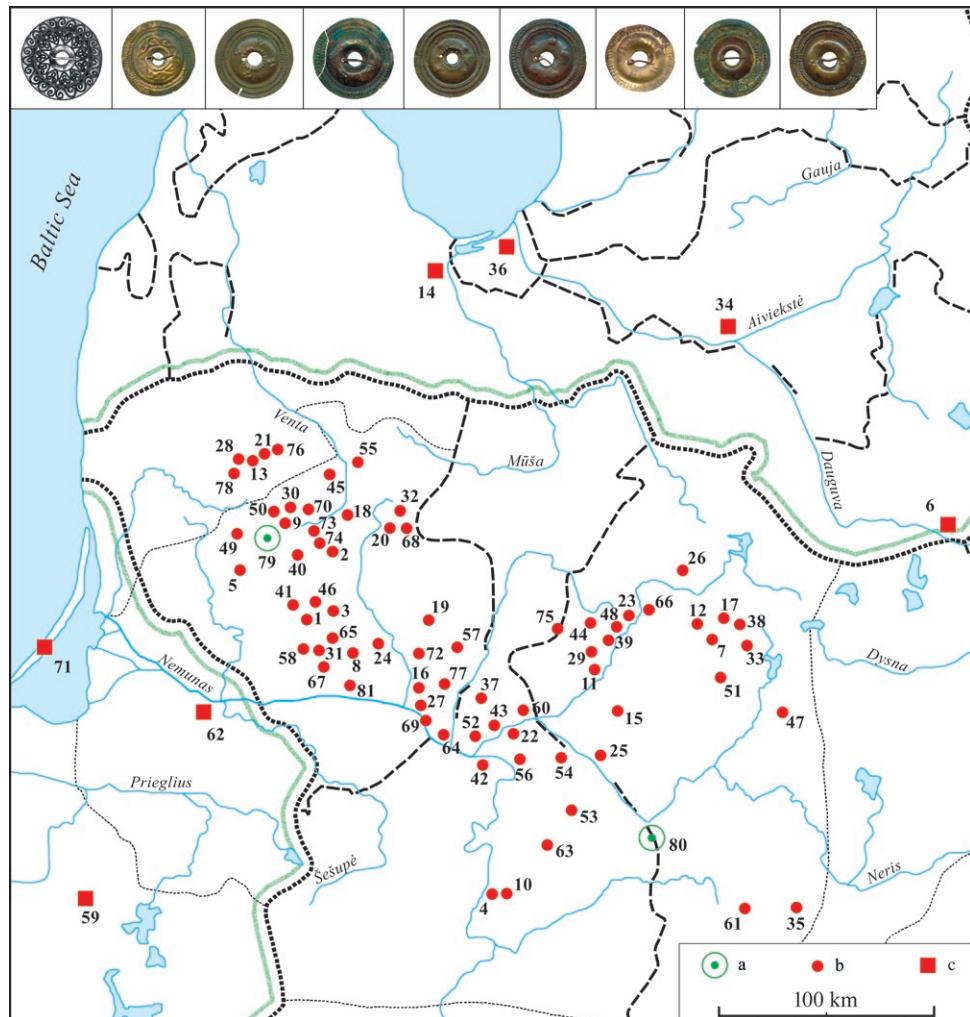


Fig. 7. Type II cast sheet brooch find spots; drawn by E. Svetikas.

a – capital of diocese; b – finds of type II cast sheet brooches in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania;
c – finds of type II cast sheet brooches outside the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

- 1 – Adakavas, Lithuania; 2 – Akmeniai, Lithuania; 3 – Aleknai, Lithuania; 4 – Alytus, Lithuania; 5 – Antininkai, Lithuania;
- 6 – Augustiniški, Latvia; 7 – Ažugiriai, Lithuania; 8 – Balčiai, Lithuania; 9 – Bauželis, Lithuania; 10 – Bazorai, Lithuania;
- 11 – Bečiai, Lithuania; 12 – Diktarai, Lithuania; 13 – Dimaičiai, Lithuania; 14 – Dobele, Latvia; 15 – Gaičiūnai, Lithuania;
- 16 – Gėluva, Lithuania; 17 – Geniakalnis, Lithuania; 18 – Gorainiai, Lithuania; 19 – Grinkiškis, Lithuania; 20 – Jakštaičiai, Lithuania; 21 – Juodosdė, Lithuania; 22 – Karmėlava, Lithuania; 23 – Kavarskas, Lithuania; 24 – Kejėnai, Lithuania;
- 25 – Kernavė, Lithuania; 26 – Kraštai, Lithuania; 27 – Kriemala, Lithuania; 28 – Kumpikai, Lithuania; 29 – Kurklintiškiai, Lithuania; 30 – Kuršai, Lithuania; 31 – Kuršiai, Lithuania; 32 – Lepšiai, Lithuania; 33 – Liepiniškės, Lithuania;
- 34 – Lokstene, Latvia; 35 – Markiniatai, Lithuania; 36 – Mārtinsala, Latvia; 37 – Masteikiai, Lithuania; 38 – Narkūnai, Lithuania; 39 – Obeliai, Lithuania; 40 – Paalksniai, Lithuania; 41 – Pacžeris, Lithuania; 42 – Pakalniškiai, Lithuania;
- 43 – Pakapiai, Lithuania; 44 – Pakritižis (Raguva), Lithuania; 45 – Papelkiai (Vizdergiai), Lithuania; 46 – Paprūdys, Lithuania; 47 – Pašaminė, Lithuania; 48 – Piktgalys, Lithuania; 49 – Pribitka, Lithuania; 50 – Pupiniai, Lithuania;
- 51 – Pušalotas, Lithuania; 52 – Radikiai, Lithuania; 53 – Raistinė, Lithuania; 54 – Rečionys, Lithuania; 55 – Ringuvėnai, Lithuania; 56 – Rumšiškės, Lithuania; 57 – Ruseiniai, Lithuania; 58 – Rūteliai, Lithuania; 59 – Równina Dolna, Poland;
- 60 – Skrebinai, Lithuania; 61 – Skuratovas, Lithuania; 62 – former Splitter, Sovetsk, Russia; 63 – Stakliškės, Lithuania;
- 64 – Stanislava, Lithuania; 65 – Sugintai, Lithuania; 66 – Šeimyniškėliai, Lithuania; 67 – Šiaudaliai, Lithuania; 68 – Šiauliai, Lithuania; 69 – Šilelis, Lithuania; 70 – Šlapgiris, Lithuania; 71 – former Stangenwalde, Curonian Spit, Russia; 72 – Šulaičiai, Lithuania; 73 – Tityviškė, Lithuania; 74 – Tolišiai, Lithuania; 75 – Tulpiakiemis, Lithuania; 76 – Ubiškė, Lithuania;
- 77 – Urniesžiai, Lithuania; 78 – Užgiriai, Lithuania; 79 – Varniai, Lithuania; 80 – Vilnius, Lithuania; 81 – Višpilis, Lithuania.

After the creation of the diocese of Medininkai in 1417, devotionals began to be produced and distributed also in this diocese. Variant 7 cast sheet brooches, the boss of which had a cross composed of four groups of four dots, were produced and distributed in large numbers. This brooch variant from the diocese of Medininkai was also common in the diocese of Vilnius, Livonia, and Teutonic Prussia, but is not found in the area between the Dubysa and the Nevezis. Cast sheet rings, which are found almost five times more often in the diocese of Medininkai than in the diocese of Vilnius, were also manufactured in large numbers. Almost all of the 15th century neck-rings, type III imitation twisted wire, twisted rings, and type IV braided rings, are found in this diocese. Some devotionals, just like in the diocese of Vilnius, were common only in the diocese of Medininkai.

The activities of catholic monks in christianisation of the grand duchy of Lithuania

The Christianisation of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was not limited to the founding of bishoprics and parishes and the expansion of their network. Monastic activities also played a significant role in the success of the evangelisation. We have clear evidence that the Christianisation of Lithuania was a well-thought out and organised. According to the data from various sources this was thanks to the Franciscans, the most influential monastic order in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. In the late 14th-first half of the 15th century they had the highest number of monasteries and churches. Some of the first Franciscans who helped in introducing Christianity were the Penitents of the Holy Martyrs (*Ordo paenitentiae ss. Martyrum*, known in Lithuania as *Atgailos kanauninkai* – the Canons of the Penitence), known as White Augustinians because of their white garments. During 1390-1391 King Władysław II Jagiełło settled the Penitents in Bistritsa (Belarus) and near the Castle at Medininkai. In the early 15th century Grand Duke Vytautas founded a Benedictine monastery at Senieji Trakai. In the mid-15th century the Conventual Franciscans (*Ordo Fratrum Minorum Conventualium*), also known as the Greyfriars, split off from the (Observant) Franciscans (*Ordo Fratrum Minorum {regularis Observantiae}*), also known as the Bernardines. By the early 16th century the latter had founded four monasteries, all of them in the diocese of Vilnius and the Slav territory within the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. But no monasteries were founded in the diocese of Medininkai in the 15th century.

There is no doubt that with the largest number of monasteries and churches, in the late 14th-first half of the 15th century, the Franciscans, were the most influential monastic order in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. From the 14th century onwards, the Holy Cross has been one of the main devotional objects revered by the Franciscans. The Cross Cult is also part of the Passion of Christ cycle (Kantak 1937, 216-217). Thus it is natural that objects with depiction of the cross, the Crown of Thorns, and the five wounds of Jesus, associated with Christ's Passion comprise the largest proportion of late 14th-15th century devotionals from the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

The activities of the Benedictines at Senieji Trakai are documented most clearly by finds of wheel and rosette brooches. The latter are very closely connected with the aesthetic of Gothic art and have the same symbolic meanings as the Gothic rose windows. The use of similar windows in Gothic churches had spread across Europe thanks to the Cistercian Order (Dow 1957, 268), one of the reformed branches of the Benedictine Order. Many Cistercian monasteries had been founded in Poland, Livonia, and Teutonic Prussia long before then. It appears that it was the most influential monastic order in Livonia. Thus it is entirely natural that rosette brooches are also found in Livonia and Teutonic Prussia, but usually the variants not found in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The Senieji Trakai Benedictines also propagated the very widespread medieval cult of St Catherine of Alexandria in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, its manifestation being the wheel brooches (Svetikas 2007b, 13-28).

Meanwhile we do not have conclusive? evidence on devotionals distributed by the Penitents of the Holy Martyrs (Augustinians) in Bistritsa and Medininkai (a village near Vilnius). It is possible that this monastic order was distributing the six-pointed star brooches, but a separate study is necessary to prove it.

The confrontation between the catholic and the orthodox church

After the completion of the Catholic rite of baptism in Vilnius in 1387, King Władysław II Jagiełło published the first privileges, through which he sought to strengthen the newly introduced Catholicism and to protect it from the Orthodox Church, which was well established in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and had a long tradition (Ivinskis 1991, 290-291). Of three privileges published in February that year, the 22 February

privilege, which read: “[...] in wishing to spread the Catholic faith in the lands of our Lithuania and Ruthenia, by agreeing to it and desiring it for our dear brother dukes and all the lords of Lithuania’s lands, we have arranged, ordered, even promised, undertaken and, while touching holy things, sworn to introduce, attract, call, and even forcibly compel all the people of the Lithuanian nation of both sexes, no matter their estate, status, or elevation, who live in our kingdoms of Lithuania and Russia, no matter to what faith they belong, into the Catholic faith and obedience to the Holy Roman Church.” was especially stern (KDKDW, p. 13-15, Nr. 6). In addition, mixed marriages between Catholic and Orthodox Christians were forbidden for the newly baptised people. King Władysław II Jagiełło and Grand Duke Vytautas expressed their concern about converting the Orthodox believers of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania to Catholicism in letters to the universal church Council of Constance, which founded the bishopric of Medininkai in 1417 (CMSSD, p. 36-37, 51-52, Nr. 11, 20).

The main directions of expansion can be seen in the development of the diocese of Vilnius, which had been founded by King Władysław II Jagiełło on 17 February 1387 and had expanded since the late 14th-early 15th century to include 130 parish churches (*cf.* Fig. 1). From 1387 until the death of Grand Duke Vytautas in 1430, 27 Catholic parish churches were built in the diocese of Vilnius (Ochmański 1972, 61-63). During this period the network of churches expanded the most in ethnic Lithuania and four times less on Orthodox Slav territory within the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. In the west, the diocese of Vilnius reached as far as the Nemunas (Kaunas, Merkinė, Gardinas), and the Šventoji (Ukmergė). In the north its boundary was winding and from the east it began at Bratslav, ran through Švenčionys and Dubingiai, and ended in Ukmergė. The southern (Navahrudak, Vawkavysk, Hrodna, and Gonifdz) and eastern (Braslaw, Haina, and Navahrudak) boundaries of the diocese of Vilnius were in the Orthodox Slav lands of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The easternmost parish was created in the land of Vitebsk for Lithuanians living in Obolts on the Orsha (Ochmański 1972, 60). Thus during the first four decades of the existence of the diocese of Vilnius there were still no parish churches in much of ethnic Lithuania. In the west, the area between the Neris – Šventoji and Nevėžis, as well as the so-called Trans-Neman region (Lith. *Utnemunė*) on the left bank of the Nemunas, and the area to the north of the Švenčionys – Dubingiai – Ukmergė parish churches up to the Livonian border remained without Catholic parish churches.

Next to the two Catholic bishoprics founded in the ethnic lands of the Balts, in the 15th century the Catholic dioceses of Kiev (1405) and Lutsk (1425) were founded together with cathedrals in the area of Slav settlement within the GDL, where the Orthodox Church already existed and had a long tradition.

After the death of Grand Duke Vytautas through to 1500, over 100 parish churches were built in the diocese of Vilnius, over two thirds in Orthodox lands: Black Ruthenia, Podlasie, the duchies of Polotsk and Vitebsk, etc. (Ochmański 1972, 65-67). Thus the tendency predominated to expand to the southeast and east in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania lands inhabited by Slavs, where the Orthodox Church had long been established, while the ethnic lands of the Curonians, Semigallians, and Selonians in the western and northern part of the state remained without Catholic parishes throughout the entire 15th century.

Much of the late 14th-15th century archaeological material under analysis are artefacts used during the 13th-14th centuries: brooches with hoof-shaped terminals, five types of omega (penannular) brooches, cruciform pins, type I twisted wire rings, rings with thickened heads, and type I and III braided rings. None of these forms can be interpreted as Orthodox relics since they were used in the area of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania settled by the Balts as well as in Livonia. Meanwhile multi-bead temple ornaments, which had a Byzantine origin, were widespread in the Orthodox Slav lands of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and in the Novgorod Republic during the 13th-14th centuries (Svetikas 2001, 5-19). These forms continue to be present in burials in the diocese of Vilnius and the territory lacking parish churches between Neris – Šventoji and the Dubysa from the very beginning of the Christianisation of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania until the first quarter of the 15th century. In the diocese of Medininkai, from the right bank of the Dubysa to the Baltic Sea, no multi-bead temple ornaments have been found. It is not clear whether chaplets with plates in the late 14th-first half of the 15th century archaeological material from the Grand Duchy of Lithuania diocese of Vilnius can be interpreted as Orthodox relics. On the basis of the available correlation data it has been established that the chaplet plates could have been manufactured not earlier than the second half of 14th century and not later than the mid-15th century. Thus only the multi-bead temple ornaments can be interpreted as certain Orthodox Christian relics.

Резюме. *Латинская христианизация православных земель Великого княжества Литовского в конце XIV-XV вв.: исторические факты и данные археологии.* После принятия крещения по латинскому обряду правящей элитой Великого княжества Литовского в 1387 г. начался новый культурно-идеологический процесс – связанная с католической церковью латинская христианизация новых государственных территорий, сопровождавшаяся конфессиональным противостоянием с могущественной церковью Византийской империи, далеко простиравшей свою власть. Крещение Литвы и последовавшая за этим культурная трансформация пришлись на весьма сложный период 1378-1417 гг., когда Римская церковь переживала «Великий раскол», и власть над христианским миром могла одновременно принадлежать двум-трем папам, причем оставалось неясным, кто из них являлся легитимным. Именно в этот период был основан диоцез в Вильнюсе и началось формирование епархии в Медининкае. После смерти великого князя Витовта в 1430 г. и до 1500 г. включительно более 100 приходских церквей было построено на территории Вильнюсской епархии, причем более двух третей – на традиционно православных землях со славянским населением: Черная Русь, Подляшье, Полоцкое и Витебское княжества и др. Эта тенденция особенно прослеживается в юго-восточных и восточных землях Великого княжества Литовского с традиционно православным населением. Знакомство с археологическими материалами конца XIV-XV вв., несущими на себе христианскую символику и происходящими с территории княжества, позволяет увидеть повсеместное восприятие католической культуры собственно в Литве и Самогитии. Предметы христианского культа и быта во множестве производились в это время на территории Вильнюсского и Медининкайского диоцезов. Сравнительный анализ археологических материалов демонстрирует интенсивное христианское взаимодействие с соседней Ливонией. Только многочисленные височные украшения продолжают оставаться непосредственным отражением православной традиции в археологических материалах на территории Великого княжества Литовского.

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