

# ANTHROPOMORPHIC AND ZOOMORPHIC STONE AGE ART IN LITHUANIA, AND ITS ARCHAEOLOGICAL CULTURAL CONTEXT

MARIUS IRŠĖNAS

## Abstract

This article draws a comparison between the Stone Age zoomorphic and anthropomorphic images that have been found in present-day Lithuania and similar finds from across the Baltic region. Both the attribution of these artefacts to archaeological cultures and their dating are discussed. The article raises the question whether the different archaeological culture that each artefact belongs to is reflected in its form and style. The article also questions if the concept of archaeological culture is necessary when writing about Stone Age art.

Key words: zoomorphic and anthropomorphic images, Stone Age, Baltic region, Lithuania, archaeological culture.

When using the term culture, archaeologists must often consider the sum total of similar artefacts and other features that are characteristic of a certain period of time and geographical location. It is easier to describe the history of the Stone Age using the names of archaeological cultures, as in this case it resembles more closely a written history in which states, nations, tribes and their various unions are mentioned. The concept of an archaeological culture not only summarises archaeological material which at first glance looks chaotic, but also creates an illusion of a social community that existed at one time. In certain periods, specialists have attempted to relate archaeological cultures to ethno-linguistic groups, for example, Comb Ware culture to the Finno-Ugric linguistic group, or Corded Ware culture to the Indo-European linguistic group. However, such connections have often been criticised, and a growing interest in the reconstruction of processes and states has assumed prominence (Hodder 1994). This growth in the interest in reconstruction might be manifested in the study of the organisation of societies, the natural environment, nutritional habits or technologies (Renfrew, Bahn 2008). Art itself could also become such a category of studies. However, when writing about Stone Age figurative art from Lithuania, we inevitably collide with the concept of archaeological culture. Known finds have been attributed to Narva and Baltic Coastal (Pamarių) cultures. This article, therefore, poses the question whether this attribution reflects some kind of stylistic peculiarity of the artefacts under discussion, and helps to explain the origins of these objects and their spread across the Baltic region and its historical development.

## Elk-head antler staffs

The best examples of Stone Age art to be found in Lithuania are the two curved elk antler staffs with figures of elk heads carved at their tops that were found in the third settlement at Šventoji around 1972 (Fig. 1.4,5). We can ascertain the species of the depicted animal only from one staff, as this staff was carved most realistically, with the proportions and details characteristic of an elk's head: a humped nose, protruding lips, nostrils and prominent eyes (Rimantienė 1979, p.106). In 1989, in the Šventoji 4B settlement, one more staff, this time flat, of only 14 centimetres in length, was found (Fig. 1.6). At the curved top of the staff, the schematic silhouette of an animal of the deer family was carved (Rimantienė 1996, p.56). The sites at Šventoji have been dated to 4000–3000 cal. BC, and ascribed to Narva culture.

Three staffs of the same type, however, were also found in the Olenii Ostrov burial ground in Russian Karelia (Fig. 1.1-3) (Gurina 1956), and these have been dated to the period ranging from late 7000 to mid-5000 cal. BC (Grünberg 2000, p.250). According to an analysis of geological layers and pollen, a wooden elk's head found in the Lehtojärvi site near Rovaniemi has also been ascribed to the Mesolithic Period (Erä-Esko 1958). One further small staff, only this time curved slightly differently, was found in grave 274–278 in the Zvejnieki burial ground in Latvia (Fig. 1.7). This staff is linked to Comb Ware culture, and has been dated to 4000 cal. BC (Zagorskis 1987, pp.57, 76-77, Fig. 28).

All of these finds are undoubtedly related by subject and stylistic similarity, although they are separated by

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Fig. 1. Elk-head horn staffs: 3 Olenii Ostrov (after Gurina 1956, Figs. 114, 113, 119.4); 4, 5 Šventoji 3B (after Rimantiėnė 1979, Figs. 85, 86); 6 Šventoji 4 (after Rimantiėnė 1998, Fig. 43.2); 7 Zvejnieki (after Zagorskis 1987, Table XXX.6); 8 Turganika (after Morgunova 1984).

date and cultural dependence. In reference to the staffs from the Olenii Ostrov burial ground which have the earliest attribution, we could surmise that those staffs were already well known during the Mesolithic Period, and that their area of distribution was the northeast coast of the Baltic Sea. This presumption is confirmed by petroglyphs found on Kareckii Nos (Ravdonikas 1939) and Zalavruga (Savvateev 1973) rocks in Karelia, and also on the Nämforsen (Hallström 1960), Bossekop-Bergheim (Tromnau 1993, pp.213-222, Fig. 8) rocks in Scandinavia. On these engravings, we see people holding staffs in their hands that are identical to those found during archaeological investigations. The aforementioned petroglyphs have not been accurately dated; however, they are unquestionably related to the Stone Age tradition, while their geographic spread transfers the spread of such staffs to the west coast of the Baltic Sea. A staff of a similar shape, only without zoomorphic elements, which was found accidentally in Vedbæk in Denmark, confirmed the wider spread of such staffs in the Baltic region. It is decorated with geometrical elements characteristic of Maglemose and Ertebølle cultures (Mathiassen 1941, pp.125-134, Figs 2;3). Finds which destroy the scheme of a comparatively homogenous spread in the Baltic region are also known. These include the wooden elk head found in the third Ivanovska site in the Yaroslavl' district in central Russia (Krainov *et al.* 1995); two antler elk heads, which may have been parts of curved staffs that were found in the Shigir peat bog in the Yekaterinburg district in the Urals (Eding 1940); a grave found in the southern Urals in the Orenburg district near the River Tok; a staff identical to the finds from both the Olenii Ostrov burial ground and Šventoji that was found between the knees and the chest of a human skeleton in a crouched position (Fig. 1.8) (Morgunova 1984); and a similar, only more schematic and smaller, item that was found in the Krasnoyarsk district in Siberia (Maksimov *et al.* 1974).

An explanation for such an extensive geographic range might be sought in older epochs, for example, in the West European Palaeolithic Age. Although the so-called spear throwers from the Mas d'Azil, Ariège, Montastruc and Tarn-et-Garonne sites in France (Sandars 1995, Figs 31, 34, 36) do not depict an elk head, their form is rather similar to that of the finds in the Baltic region. Examples of similar finds are the 'staffs of command' (*bâtons de commandement* in French), which were found in La Vache rock in France (Tromnau 1993, pp.213-222, Fig. 10).

The examples mentioned show that the curved antler staffs with elk heads from the Šventoji settlement belong to a more ancient cultural tradition, which cannot be related to Narva culture. During the Mesolithic and

Palaeolithic periods, staffs of such a type were known throughout the Baltic region, and even further afield. Thus, they reflect common features which are related both to a certain outlook and to a form of subsistence that prevailed at that time, hunting and fishing.

### Anthropomorphic images

Ten figurative human images have been found in Lithuania. According to the circumstances and the form of their discovery, they can be divided into three groups: images from Šventoji, Juodkrantė and Kretuonas. Each group deserves a separate discussion.

#### Šventoji

One find from the Šventoji 2B settlement can be called both a sculpture and an idol: it is a small 195-centimetre-long stick with a primitively hollowed head at one end (Fig. 2.1). The archaeologist Rimutė Rimantiene called it a pillar sculpture, and ascribed it to Middle Neolithic Narva culture (4000 cal. BC) (Rimantiene 1979, p.111ff, Figs 90, 91). A small stick of a similar length (167 cm) was found in the Sarnate settlement in Latvia (Fig. 2.2) (Vankina 1970, p.102ff, Figs. 18-21, Table XXXVII). It is also ascribed to the same period and culture as the Šventoji example. Another sculpture, from the Pohjankuru site in Finland (Fig. 2.3), of which only the head and upper part of the body were found, may have been the same size. Here, samples of pollen were taken from the ground layer, an analysis of which showed that this piece of wooden sculpture might be ascribed to the Littorina Sea period, or even to the middle of the period (Leppäaho 1936, p.38ff, Fig. 1). The Littorina Sea period covers around 6,000 years, from approximately 8800 to 4800 BP. Thus, this sculpture might belong to both the Late Mesolithic and Early Neolithic periods. Sculptures of a similar size are known from the Urals, the Shigir (Dmitriev 1951, p.58 and p.59, Fig. 4.1) and Gorbunov peat-bogs (Eding 1940, pp.66, 67, Fig. 64). A sample taken from the Shigir sculpture was dated to the Mesolithic period (Arkheologicheskie ... 2001, p.107). Many further similar sculptures, only of a much smaller size, are known. The 14-centimetre-high sculpture that was found at the mouth of the River Malmuta in Latvia should be mentioned here as well (Fig. 2.6) (Loze 1970, pp.9-30). An even smaller wooden pillar figurine was found in the Asavets II settlement in Belarus (Cherniavskii 1967, p.291ff, Fig. 1). Researchers ascribe the Asavets II settlement material to Narva culture, and date it to 3000 cal. BC (Girininkas 1994, p.277, Table 2). Due to its similar shape, I. Loze dates the River Malmuta find to the same period as the Sarnate and Šventoji sculptures

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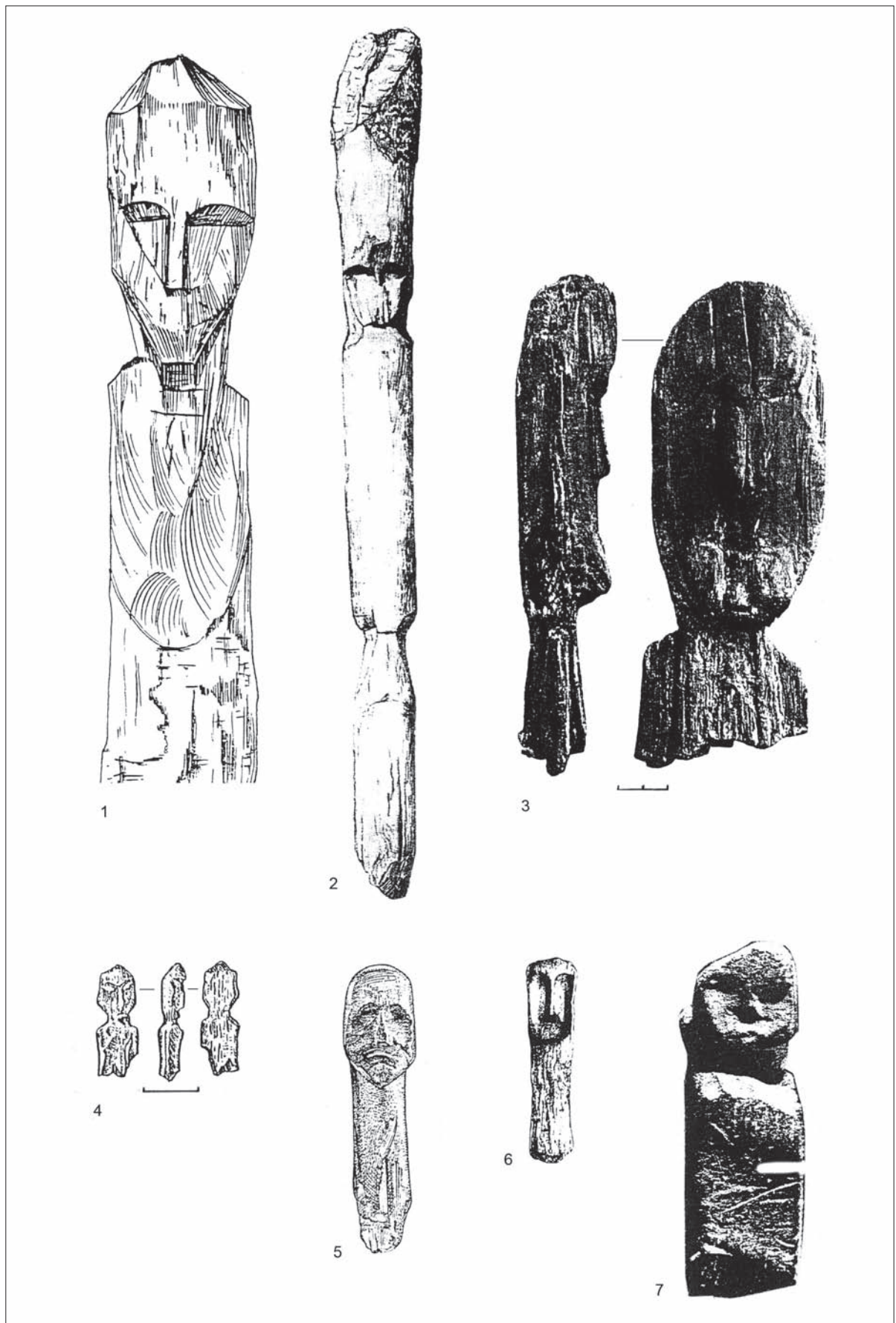


Fig. 2. Anthropomorphic figurines: 1 Šventoji 2B (after Rimantienė 1979, Figs. 90, 91); 2 Särnate (after Vankina 1970, Table XXXVII); 3 Pohjankuru (Skuru) (after Leppäaho 1939, Figs. 1, 2); 4 Besov Nos IV (after Lobanova 1995, Fig. 2.1); 5 Asavets 2 (after Cherniavskii 1967, Fig. 1); 6 Malmute (after Loze 1970, Fig. 3.1); 7 Niskala (after Purhonen 1975).

(Loze 1970, pp.9-30, Table 2), although the sculpture may have been made in a settlement near the mouth of the river which has been ascribed to Late Neolithic Narva culture by A. Girininkas (Girininkas 1994, p.138). One more piece of a miniature bone figurine was found in Karelia in the Besov Nos IV site (Fig. 2.4), and this has been ascribed to the Mesolithic period (Lobanova 1995, p.32ff, Fig. 2.1). A pillar sculpture made of sandstone was found at the Niskala site in Finland (Fig. 2.7), together with corded and Pöljä pottery. It has been dated to 3600-2800 to 1900 cal. BC, and is related to Comb Ware culture (Purhonen 1975, p.54ff).

Pillar sculptures are known to have existed in West European mobile art from the late Palaeolithic Age (Mirimanov 1973, p.121) and in Stone Age La Tène art (Sandars 1995, Fig. 386). The elementary rendering of facial features is also characteristic of Iron Age wooden sculpture from the Grimstad site in Norway, dated to 290 AD (Johansen 1981, pp.69-89, Fig. 2). We can see a face with deep eyeholes in a wooden head from the Nydam Bog in Denmark, which has been dated to around 320 to 350 AD (Hvass 1997, p.7ff). In the early 20th century, similarly formed wooden idols were still worshipped by Samoyedic peoples of the Kanin Peninsula (Ramsay 1906, pp.1-12) and by other northern tribes (Ivanov 1970).

Having examined finds from the Baltic region that are similar to the sculpture from Šventoji, it becomes clear that three more similar finds that have been dated to the Neolithic Age may be ascribed to Narva culture, although sculptures of the same type are known from earlier periods and from places which are not related to Narva culture. Thus, there are no specific grounds for envisaging a peculiar style of Narva culture in the Šventoji sculpture, as here we can see the use of an elementary method for rendering human facial features that is common among carvers belonging to a diversity of historical periods and geographical locations.

#### The 'Juodkrantė hoard'

The amber anthropomorphic figurines from the 'Juodkrantė (formerly Schwarzort) hoard' were for a long time the only examples of Stone Age art from the eastern Baltic region. The four anthropomorphic images that were found during excavations for amber in the Bay of Juodkrantė, and one image that was found near Nida, were made public by R. Klebs in the late 19th century (Fig. 3) (Klebs 1882, pp.30 and 73, Table IX.4). The two flat amber figurines, which were made in a similar manner and which both depict upright human figures, stand out in the collection. One more figurine from the collection is more rounded and reminiscent

of a torso, as instead of legs only small roundish protuberances can be seen. This collection also contains a pendant depicting a human head. As it was made from a large piece of amber, it has a deep relief. The figurine found close to Nida is distinguished by its elongated head and small pierced holes on the surviving upper part of the body. Although the finds from Juodkrantė are traditionally attributed to the Stone Age, it is still difficult to say anything regarding their archaeological context, or to ascribe them to one culture or another. In trying to explain them, it is worth seeking finds that are similar to them in the material from the Baltic region.

The same year as Klebs, the St Petersburg professor A.A. Inostrantsev described an anthropomorphic bone figurine which was found near Lake Ladoga (Fig. 4.1) (Inostrantsev 1882, pp.162 and 205, Table. XI: 1). A figurine similar to the latter and dated to the early Neolithic was discovered in a child's grave in the Zvejnieki burial ground (Fig. 4.2) (Zagorskis 1987, pp.41, 43, 75-76, Fig. 25). These figurines, although they are flat, like those from Juodkrantė, are in a completely different style. Figurines with prominently depicted hands were found in the Olenii Ostrov sites (Fig. 4.3,5,6) (Gurina 1956) and Tamula (Fig. 4.7-9) (Jaunits 1965; 1984), and also in the Usviaty IVB settlement (Fig. 4.11), Pskov district (Mikliaev 1967, p.287ff, Fig. 1), and in the Abora I settlement (Fig. 4.4), Latvia (Loze 1979, p.110ff, Table LI.1,5). The latter two are dated to 3000 cal. BC. These figurines bear no stylistic similarity to the finds from Juodkrantė. Only part of a bone figurine found in the Tamula settlement slightly resembles the find from near Nida.

Images of an entire human figure have been found in the northwest Baltic region. Three sculptures were discovered in the north of Norway, on the southern shore of the Varanger Fjord. One of them was found on the Advik site (De Første Nordmenn ... 1975), the two others in Karlebotn (Fig. 4.12,13) (Schanche 1990, pp.53-71, Fig. 9). In Sweden, a full-figured fragment of an anthropomorphic pendant was discovered in the Korsnäs site (Fig. 4.14) in the Södermanland province (Wyszomirska 1984, pp.56-57, 240, 271, Plate I). The latter find is most similar in form to the figurines from the Juodkrantė collection.

Similar images were also found in territories further from the Baltic Sea, for example in the Sakhtysh 2A grave in central Russia in 1991 (Fig. 4.10) (Krainov *et al.* 1994, p.103ff, Fig. 1), and also in the Gorbunov burial ground in the Urals (Eding 1940, p.66, Fig. 63). The existence of other images resembling the figurines from the Juokrantė collection is so far unknown, although the depiction of the whole human figure was

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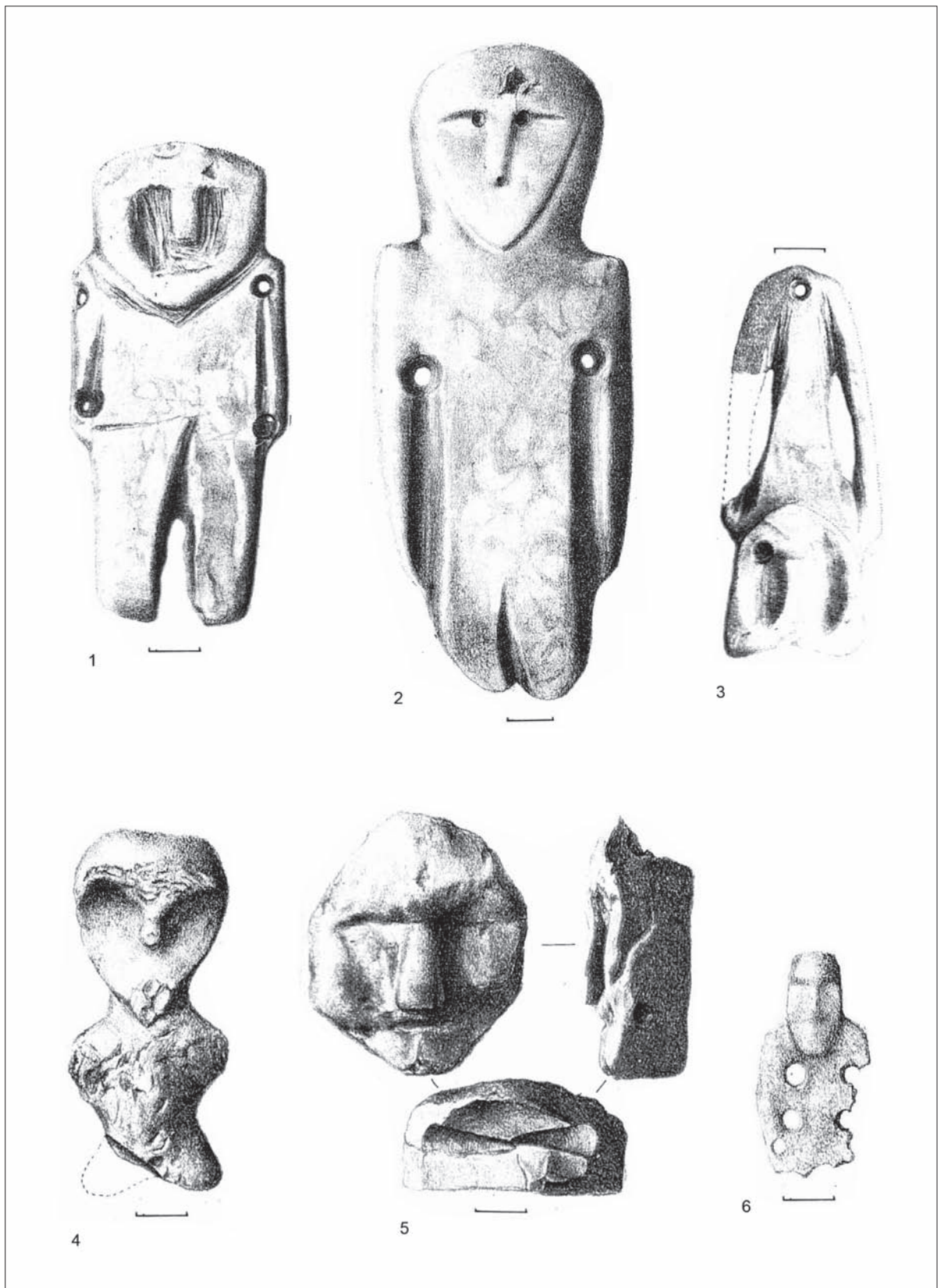


Fig. 3. Anthropomorphic figurines: 1-5 Juodkrantė (formerly Schwarzort) (after Klebs 1882, Tables IX, X); 6 Nida (after Klebs 1882, Table X.6).



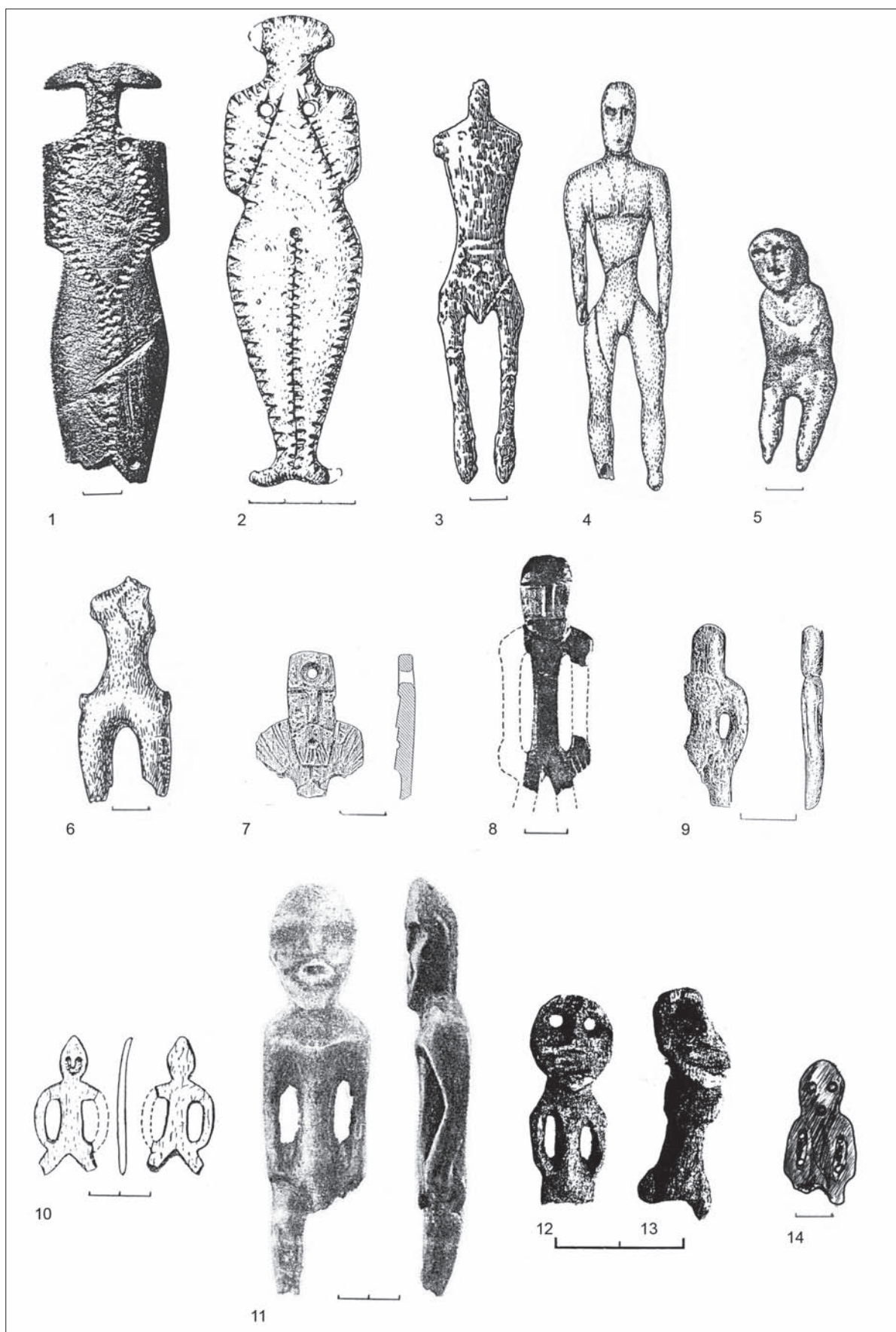


Fig. 4. Anthropomorphic figurines: 1 Ladoga (after Inostrantsev 1882, Fig. XI.1); 2 Zvejnieki (after Zagorskis 1987); 3, 5, 6 Olenii Ostrov (after Gurina 1956, Fig. 134); 4 Abora I (after Loze 1979, Table LI.5); 7-9 Tamula (after Janits 1954, Fig. 23.1, 2; Jaanits 1965, Fig. 15.4); 10 Sakhtysh (Krainov *et al.* 1994, Fig. 1); 11 Usviaty IVB (Mikliaev 1967, Fig. 1); 12, 13 Karlebotn (after Schanche 1990, Fig. 9); 14 Korsnäs (after Wyszomirska 1984, Table I).

common in the Baltic region during both the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods.

### Kretuonas

One head-shaped pendant from the Juodkrantė collection has so far not been discussed (Fig. 3.5). Although the four bone pendants found in the Kretuonas 1C settlement in eastern Lithuania, which have been dated to 1700 cal. BC and are attributed to Narva culture, are typologically closest to this pendant (Fig. 5.1-4) (Girininkas 1994, pp.232-233 and p.227, Table 2), the Juodkrantė pendant is not similar to them. Thus, when searching for analogies, we should consider the amber pendants from the Finnish sites of Metsäpirtti (Fig. 5.14) (Hackman 1899, pp.1-40, Fig. 12), the Kukarkoski burial ground (Fig. 5.15) (Torvinen 1978), and Lake Saimaa (Fig. 5.16-18) close to the Astuvansalmi rock paintings (petroglyphs) (Grönhaugen 1991, p.73ff). From these sites only grave 1-1a from the Kukarkoski burial ground has been dated to 4050–3350 cal. BC and attributed to Comb Ware culture (Torvinen 1978). The finds from Lake Saimaa have been related to the Astuvansalmi rock paintings, which with the help of geology and archaeology have been dated approximately to both the Stone Age and the Bronze Age. Researchers, however, have not yet succeeded in establishing a clear connection between the amber figurines and rock paintings. A pendant from the Metsäpirtti site has been attributed to the Stone Age by making reference only to a few indirect features. One more amber pendant depicting a head, whose deep relief most resembles that of the Juodkrantė example, was found on the surface of the soil near the Stone Age Romi-Kalnini site in western Latvia (Fig. 5.19). The Romi-Kalnini site had two layers, early and late Neolithic. Unfortunately, however, none of the amber finds can be reliably related to them (Vankina 1983).

The number of human head images discovered that were made from antler or bone is no less significant in number. For example, five small discs with schematic head shapes were discovered in a grave and a layer of the settlement of the Tamula site in Estonia (Fig. 5.7-12). L. Jaanits related the Tamula site's extended position burials to late Comb Ware (Jaanits 1957, p.82, Fig. 4.11-13; 1965, p.22 and p.27, Fig. 15.2). However, after establishing a radiocarbon date from a sample of bones from burial XI, the date 4248–3997 cal. BC came as a surprise (Lõugas *et al.* 1996, pp.399-420). It corresponds to the typical period of Comb Ware. Two bone pendants, one of them made from a sturgeon, were found in Latvia, in the Zvejnieki burial ground, in burial 228 (Fig. 5.5,6). F. Zagorskis attributed this

burial to Comb Ware culture of the late Neolithic period (Zagorskis 1987, Table XXVIII. 2, 3).

After surveying head-shaped pendants and figurines found in the eastern Baltic region, we can see that they are stylistically rather diverse. This diversity is determined by the form and qualities of the material. In most of the examples, facial features such as the eyes and nose are depicted in a manner akin to pillar sculptures: by carving out the material along both sides of the nose up to the curve of the eyebrows (Juodkrantė, Zvejnieki, Kretuonas, Metsäpirtti, Astuvansalmi, Romi-Kalnini). The eyes of one of the Juodkrantė figurines were made more distinct by drilling small round holes. In the schematic pendants of Tamula, the eyes were made with round holes, and we can see the same solution used in the two pendants from the Kretuonas 1C settlement.

The majority of the pendants and figurines (Kukarkoski, Metsäpirtti, Astuvansalmi, Tamula, Romi-Kalnini, Zvejniekai) are related to the cultures of Comb Ware. Individual finds from Norway, Sweden and central Russia have many stylistic similarities with the figurines found in the eastern Baltic region; but there are no grounds to maintain that this was a feature of Comb Ware culture.

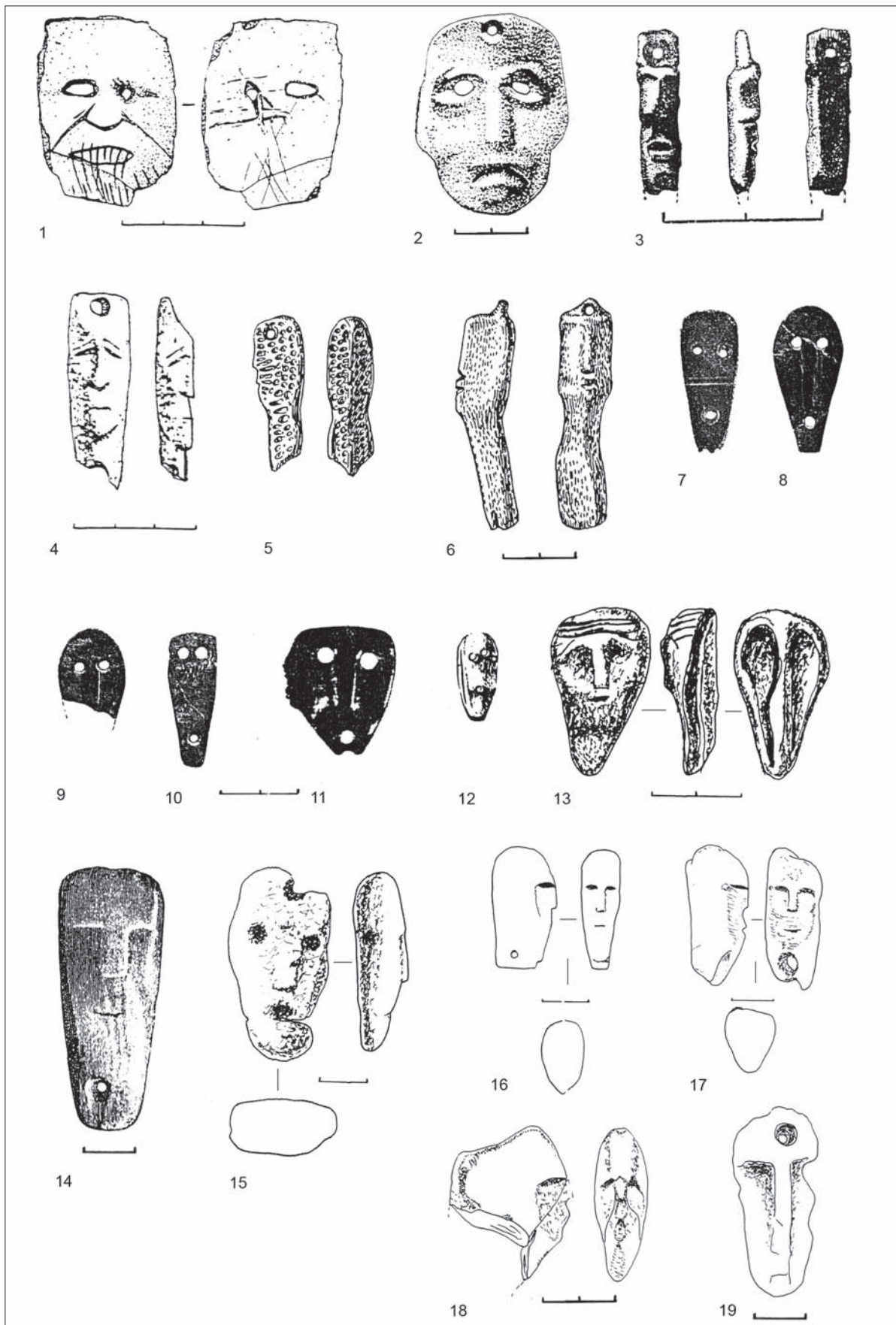
### Zoomorphic pendants

In Lithuania, finds of this type are known only from the 'Juodkrantė hoard' (Fig. 6.1) (Klebs 1882, p.28, Table VIII.21) and the Kretuonas 1C settlement (Fig. 6.4) (Girininkas 1994, p.223ff). A figurine from the 'Juodkrantė hoard' with a hole drilled in its tail for hanging is unquestionably of a zoomorphic type, although the object it depicts remains unclear. A pendant from Kretuonas depicts a large cloven-hoofed animal, perhaps a bison or an auroch. A more exact description is not possible, due to the pendant's lack of a head.

In the second half of the 20th century, many zoomorphic amber and bone figurines-pendants were found at Tamula (Fig. 6.3,5) and Valma in Estonia (Jaanits 1957, p.85, Fig. 4.19; 1965, p.16ff, p.27, Fig. 7.2,4,5; Fig. 15.3,6), in sites in the Lake Lubāns Depression (Zvidze, Nainiekste, Dzedziekste, Iča, Abora, Malmuta) (Fig. 6.6), eastern Latvia (Loze 1975, pp.49-82, Loze 2000, pp.63-78), and the Sārmate site in western Latvia (Vankina 1970).

In the figurines-pendants from these localities, we can discern the semblances of waterfowl, elk, bears, wild boar and beavers. A number of these images are rather schematic, and because of this it is not possible to identify their exact species.





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Fig. 5. Anthropomorphic pendants: 1-4 Kretuonas 1C (after Girininkas 1994, Fig. 273); 5, 6 Zvejnieki (after Zagorskis 1987, Table XXVIII.2,3); 7-12 Tamula (after Jaanits 1984); 13 Alvared Gabrielsgården (after Almgren 1907, Fig. 9); 14 Metsäpirtti (Äyräpää 1945, Fig. 2); 15 Kukkarikoski (after Torvinen 1978, Fig. 11); 16-18 Astuvansalmi (after Grönhagen 1991, Figs. 1-3); 19 Romi-Kalnini (after Vankina 1983, Fig. 1).

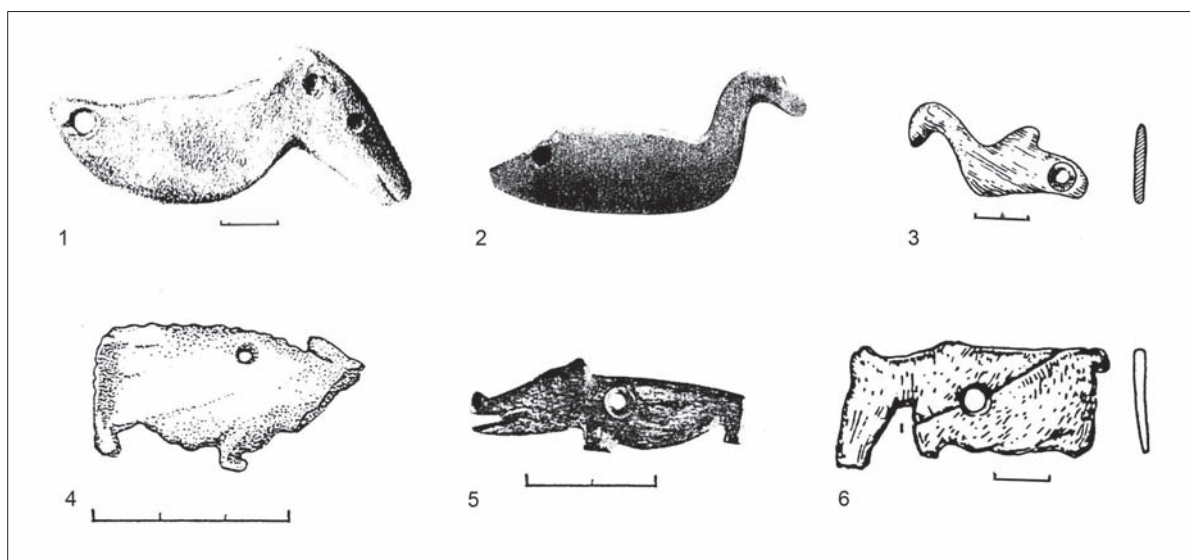


Fig. 6. Zoomorphic pendants: 1 Juodkrantė (after Klebs 1882, Fig. VIII: 21); 2 Solsemhulen (after Petersen 1914, Fig. 6); 3, 5 Tamula (after Ianits 1954, Fig. 12.6; Jaanits 1965, Fig. 15.3); 4 Kretuonas 1C (after Girininkas 1994); 6 Malmute (after Loze 1969, Fig. 3.3).

The majority of the zoomorphic pendants from the Baltic region found in the Tamula, Zvidze, Nainiekste, Dziedziste, Sārnatē, Volosov and Popov sites are associated with Comb Ware culture.

#### Wooden vessels with zoomorphic handles

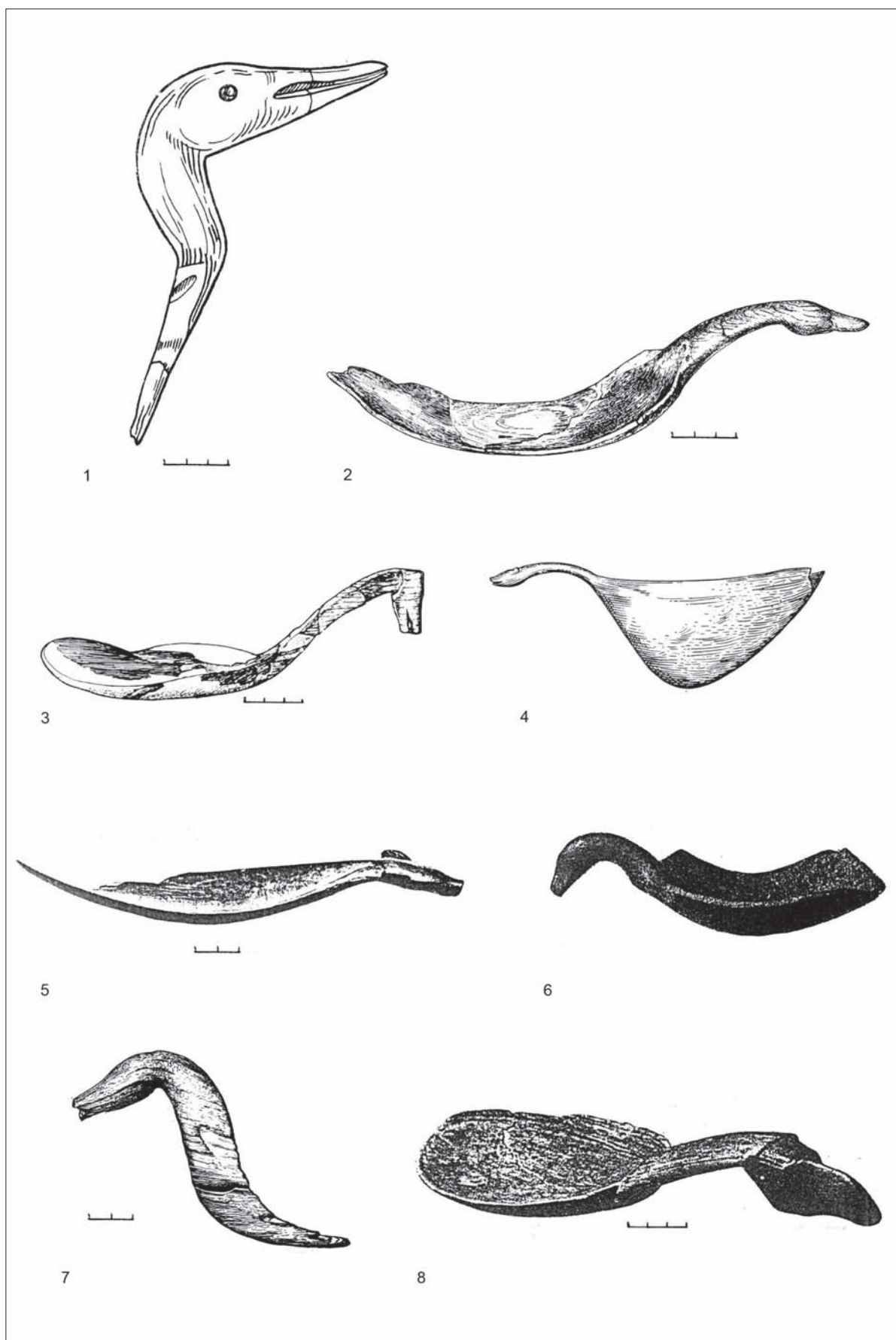
The wooden head of a waterfowl which was found in the 23rd settlement of Šventoji (Fig. 7.1) from the late Neolithic period may have served as a handle for a wooden vessel, because in sites in Latvia, Finland and Russia a considerable number of wooden and antler vessels, with handles decorated with carved heads of animals and waterfowl, have been found.

The first knowledge of vessels decorated with zoomorphic heads appeared in Finland. In 1912, J. Ailio described a wooden spoon with a handle in the shape of an animal's head found in the Laukaa site (Fig. 7.5) (Ailio 1912). Subsequently A. Äyräpää and later E. Kivikoski presented finds from Pielisjärvi (Europaeus 1929) and Kittilä (Fig. 7.6,8) (Kivikoski 1935, p.8ff, Figs. 1-3). Two zoomorphic ladles and fragments of them were found in the peat-bog settlement of Sarnate (Fig. 7.2,3) in Latvia between 1939 and 1955 (Vankina 1970, p.50 and p.103, Fig. 76, Table. XXXIX). Vessels with zoomorphic handles are also known from Russia: from the Usviaty IV site (Fig. 7.4) in the Pskov district (Mikliaev, Minasian 1968), and the Repishche settlement (Fig. 7.7) in the Novgorod district (Zimina 1983). Similar artefacts were found in the Urals, in the Gorbunov and Shigir peat bogs. Four vessels with waterfowl-shaped handles were even found in the Gorbunov

peat bog, and two (one with an elk-shaped handle) in the Shigir peat bog. In the Gorbunov peat bog, two wooden figurine-vessels depicting elk were also found. In both of the aforementioned peat bogs, a significant number of broken zoomorphic heads, which may have been decorated vessels, were discovered (Eding 1940, pp.35-38, 45 and 49, Figs. 23-41, 47).

Only artefacts from Sārnatē, Usviaty IV and Repishche were found during the archaeological excavations. M.P. Zimina attributes the material from the Repishche site to late 4000 to mid-3000 (Zimina 1983). This corresponds to the dating of the Sārnatē site. The finds from Laukaa, Pielisjärvi and Kittilä are chance finds; however, taking into account the technique of their production (stone instruments) and the pollen traces detected in the layers, researchers have attributed them to the Stone Age. Taking into consideration the context of their discovery, the vessels from Sārnatē have been attributed to Sārnatē or Narva cultures; although it is worth mentioning that buildings attributed to Comb Ware culture have also been discovered in this site. The Usviaty IV site has been also associated with Narva culture (Girininkas 1994, p.15). In a layer of the Repishche site, in which a fragment of a ladle was found, Comb Ware prevails (Zimina 1983).

The context of finds similar to that of the wooden handle in the shape of a waterfowl head from Šventoji point towards finds of both Comb Ware and Narva cultures, and also to finds from further afield, such as those from the Urals, for example. From a stylistic point of view, all these finds are similar to each other: this similarity can be explained by the already-mentioned common hunting and fishing economy and the outlook related



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Fig. 7. Wooden vessels with zoomorphic handles: 1 Šventoji 23 (after Rimantienė 1979, 110, Fig. 14); 2, 3 Sārņate F (after Vankina 1970, Fig. XXXIX.5,2); 4 Usviaty IV (after Mikliaev, Minasian 1968); 5 Laukaa (Ailio 1912, Fig. 6); 6 Pielisjärvi (after Europaeus 1929, Fig. 2); 7 Repishche (after Zimina 1983); 8 Kittilä (after Kivikoski 1935, Fig. 1.2).



to it. The similarity may also have been determined by the function of a utensil, as in northwest Russia water-fowl-shaped wooden ware was manufactured until the 19th century (Kruglova 1983, Figs. 153-160)

### Ceramic images

In Lithuania, anthropomorphic images on ceramic ware are known from the Šventoji 3B and Nida settlements. All of them are different. In the fragment of a pot from the Šventoji 3B settlement, we can see the relief of a schematic human figure (Fig. 8.3). Similar anthropomorphic and zoomorphic images have been found only in southern European sites, for example, in Csepa in Hungary (Sandars 1995, Fig. 167A). Relief images and perhaps zoomorphic images may have existed on other pots from the settlements of Šventoji. Rimantienė writes that a rider was depicted on potsherds found in the 23rd and 24th Šventoji settlements, while on another shard it was 'as if the top of a leg or some animal's tail' had been depicted. The Šventoji 3B site has been attributed to Narva culture and dated to 3340–2890 cal. BC (Rimantienė 1979, pp.114, 115). Although in the Baltic region there are no analogues, such an elementary linear depiction of a human is known from the graphic images on ceramics from the Zvidze (Fig. 8.4) (Loze 1988), Rääkkylä Nieminen Kylmäpohja (Fig. 8.6) (Taavitsainen 1982, p.13ff, Fig. 2), Lieksan Paaterista (Fig. 8.7) (Huurre 1986, Fig. 1), Reimannsfelde (Gaerte 1927, Fig. 40), Asavets 2 (Fig. 8.5) (Charniauski 1987), Juravichi III (Isaenko 1976, p.126), Kolomtsy (Fig. 8.8) (Gurina 1972) and Nida sites.

We will now turn to a discussion of the finds from the latter site (Fig. 8.1,2). While investigating the Nida Baltic Coastal culture settlement, which has been dated to the Late Neolithic period, shards of two pots with images of anthropomorphic figures imprinted with a cord (Rimantienė 1989, p.173ff) were discovered. From a stylistic point of view, the images from Nida form one group. Just as in the majority of anthropomorphic images on ceramics, the depiction of a body is rendered by one line (with an imprint of a cord in this case), although the head is depicted with a circle, as in the example from Kolomtsy. A human image of similar stylistics, unfortunately in poorer condition, is depicted on a shard from the Asavets 2 Late Neolithic Narva culture settlement.

If we have not yet found adequate comparisons for the relief image from Šventoji, we can find quite a few analogies for the examples of Nida ceramics in the surviving examples of pottery from Comb Ware culture. The images from Nida are imprinted with a cord, and

this is one of the most important *decorative* elements of the ceramics of Baltic Coastal culture.

### Zoomorphic clay figurines

The extant fragment of a bird figurine from the Žemaitiškė 2 (Fig. 9.1) settlement can be compared to finds from sites in Latvia, Estonia, Finland, Sweden and Russia. Since zoomorphic clay images from Žemaitiškė and other sites are rare, and in many cases fragmentary and very primitive, any natural differences or similarities are difficult to ascertain.

The Žemaitiškė 2 site in eastern Lithuania is dated to the Late Neolithic and attributed to Narva culture, but displays a significant influence of Comb Ware culture (Girininkas 1990, p.94ff, Fig. 115.13). As an aside, the majority of zoomorphic clay figurines from other Baltic region sites from the Stone Age can be attributed to the latter culture: Vāntsi (Äyräpää 1941, p.99 and p.121, Fig. 35), Pothio III (Janzon 1983, Fig. 2.5), Vīgainovalok I (Fig. 9.3, 3) (Zhuravlev 1972, p.92, Fig. 1.6).

### Conclusions

Having compared those images found in Lithuania and attributed to Narva and Baltic Coastal cultures, and also anthropomorphic and zoomorphic images from "the Juodkrantė hoard", with images found in the Baltic region or even further, we may maintain that those finds from Lithuania which have been attributed to Narva culture of the Neolithic period (the elk-head antler staffs, the anthropomorphic pillar sculpture from the Šventoji settlements and the anthropomorphic and zoomorphic pendants from the Kretuonas 1C settlement, and the clay bird figurine from the Žemaitiškė 2 settlement) are not only characteristic of Narva culture but are also known in Mesolithic settlements in the Baltic region, and also in Neolithic sites of Comb Ware culture. Attention must be drawn to the fact that the distribution of such finds is not confined to the Baltic region, as many have been found in central Russia and the Urals region. Such a wide distribution can only be explained as a phenomenon related to the way of life of hunters and fishermen, and to their common outlook. Stylistic similarities are determined by the primitiveness of the representation, i.e. by the use of the most elementary means of expression such as a dot, a line or a generalised silhouette, and by the lack of such elements as organisation, refinement and technical accomplishment (Rhodes 1994, p.13); while the differences are determined by the variety of the material that was used.

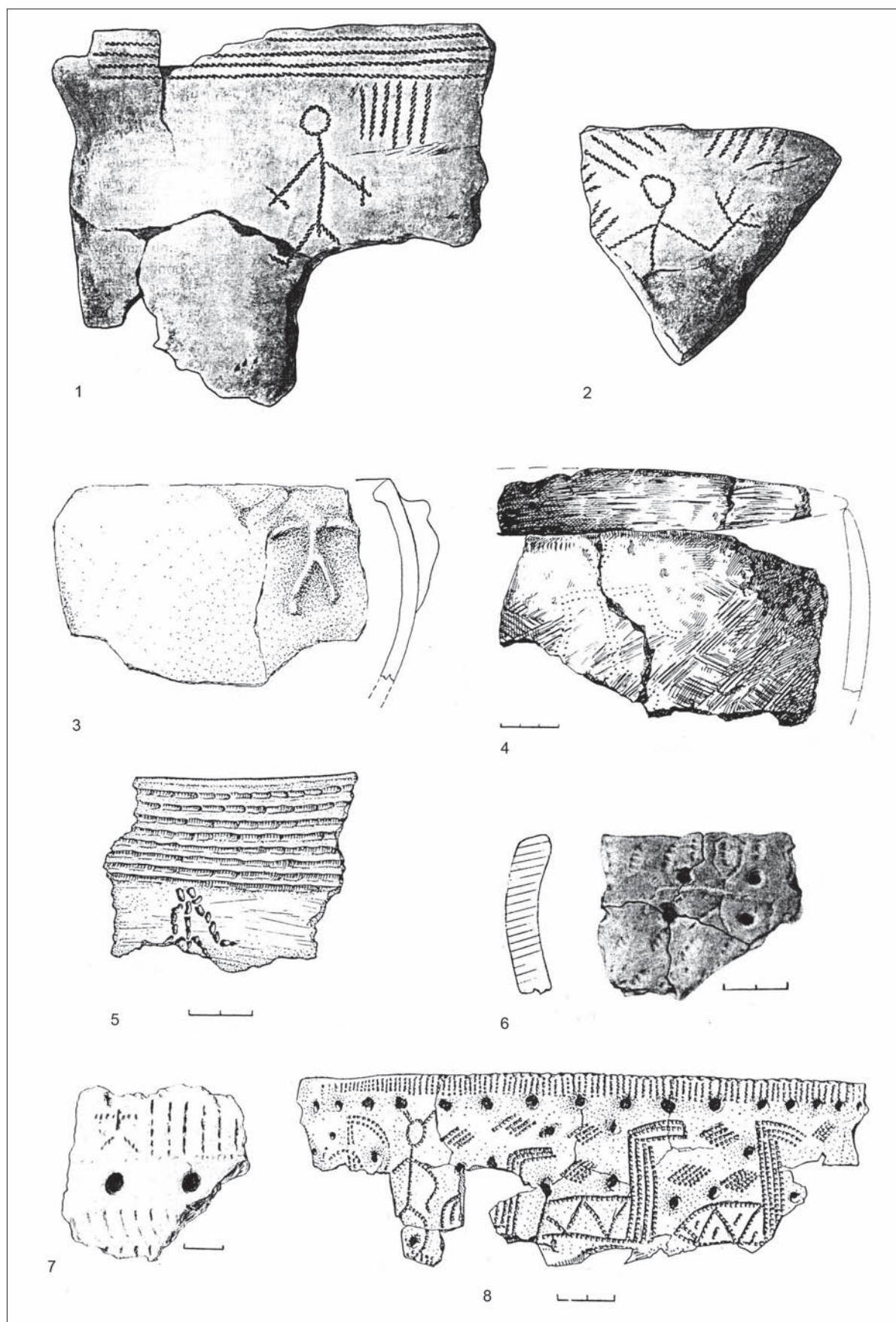


Fig. 8. Anthropomorphic images on ceramics: 1, 2 Nida (after Rimantienė 1989, Figs. XXIII, XXIV); 3 Šventoji 3B (after Rimantienė 1997, Fig. 93); 4 Zvidze (after Loze 1988, p.101); 5 Asavets 2 (after Charniauski 1987, p.25ff); 6 Rääkylä Nieminen Kylmäpohja (after Taavitsainen 1982, Fig. 2); 7 Lieksan Paaterista (after Huurre 1986); 8 Kolomtzy (after Gurina 1972, Fig. 10.10).

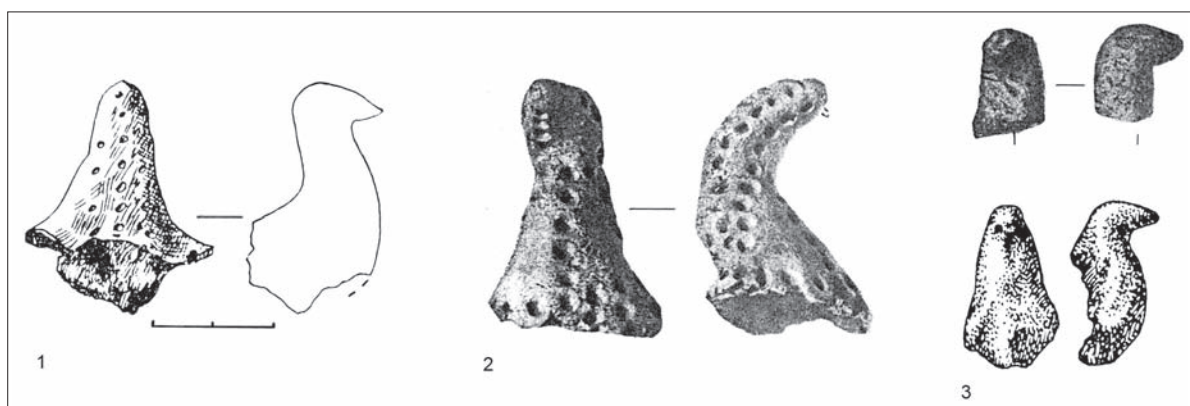


Fig. 9. Zoomorphic clay figurines: 1 Žemaitiškė 2 (after Girininkas 1990, p.94, Fig. 115.13); 2, 3 Vigainovalok (after Zhuravlev 1972, p.92, Fig. 1.6).

The images of human figures on ceramics associated with Baltic Coastal culture also have analogies in the ceramics of Comb Ware culture, although the cord which was used for their imprinting displays a peculiarity related to the ceramics of Baltic Coastal culture.

A search for analogies of the anthropomorphic and zoomorphic figurines from the 'Juodkrantė hoard' has revealed that stylistically similar finds have not yet been discovered in the prehistoric material of the Baltic region. However, pre-existing amber and bone figurines of the same type do not give grounds for distinguishing the Juodkrantė collection as a separate stylistic group.

The forms and the stylistic peculiarities of the figurative anthropomorphic and zoomorphic images found both in Lithuania and in the Baltic region do not support the thesis that they might be attributed to one or another archaeological culture. Also, neither formal nor stylistic differences are reflected in the finds belonging to the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods. Therefore, the concept of archaeological culture is of little value when discussing zoomorphic and anthropomorphic figurative images from the Stone Age in the Baltic region. The commonalities of form and style witnessed in the finds can be explained by way of the same economic structure and primitive technique, which thus created an impression of style.

In the context of the last conclusion, the finds which have been attributed to Narva culture and discovered in Lithuania do not differ from finds which have been attributed to Comb Ware culture and found in most of the Baltic region.

Translated by Ignė Aidukaitė

#### Abbreviation

SA – Sovetskaia arkeologija (from 1957 to 1991; from 1992 Rossiskaia arkeologija).

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Marius Iršėnas  
Institute of Art History  
Vilnius Academy of Arts  
Dominikonų street 15  
LT-01131 Vilnius  
Lithuania  
E-mail: Marius.irsenas@vda.lt

## ANTROPOMORFINĖ IR ZOOMORFINĖ AKMENS AMŽIAUS DAILĖ LIETUVOS TERITORIJOJE IR JOS ARCHEOLOGINIS KULTŪRINIS KONTEKSTAS

**MARIUS IRŠĖNAS**

### Santrauka

Lietuvos teritorijoje rastus Narvos ir Pamarių kultūroms priskiriamus antropomorfinius ir zoomorfinius atvaizdus, taip pat Juodkrantės rinkinio antropomorfinius ir zoomorfinius atvaizdus palyginus su Baltijos regione ar dar plačiau rasta panašiais atvaizdais, galima konstatuoti, kad neolito laikotarpio Narvos kultūrai priskiriami radiniai iš Lietuvos teritorijos, t. y. raginės lazdos su briedžių galvomis (1: 4–6 pav.), antropomorfinė stulpinė skulptūra iš Šventosios gyvenviečių (2: 1 pav.), antropomorfiniai ir zoomorfiniai kabučiai iš Kretuono 1C gyvenvietės (5: 1–4 pav.) bei molinė paukščio figūrėlė iš Žemaitiškės 2-osios gyvenvietės (9: 1 pav.), yra būdingi ne tik Narvos kultūrai, bet žinomi ir mezolito laikotarpio Baltijos regiono gyvenvietėse, taip pat neolito laikotarpio šukinės duobelinės keramikos kultūros paminkluose. Pastebėta, kad tokių radinių paplitimas neapsiriboja vien Baltijos regionu, nes nemažai jų rasta Vidurio Rusijoje bei Uralo kalnų regione. Tokį platų paplitimą galima paaiškinti tik kaip su medžiotojų bei žvejų gyvenimo būdu ir pasaulėžiūra susijusį fenomeną. Stilistiniai panašumai yra nulemti

vaizdavimo primityvumo, o skirtumus lėmė naudotos medžiagos įvairovė.

Pamarių kultūrai priskiriami žmonių figūrų atvaizdai ant puodų sienelių taip pat turi analogų šukinės duobelinės kultūros keramikoje, tačiau jų įspaudimui panaudota virvutė rodo su Pamarių kultūros keramika susijusį savitumą.

Juodkrantės rinkinyje esančių antropomorfinių ir zoomorfinių figūrėlių analogijų paieškos parodė, kad stilistiškai panašių radinių Baltijos regiono priešistorinėje medžiagoje kol kas nėra, tačiau rastos gintarinės ir kaulinės figūrėlės neteikia pagrindo Juodkrantės rinkinį laikyti atskira stilistine grupe.

Antropomorfinių ir zoomorfinių figūrinių atvaizdų, rastų tiek Lietuvos teritorijoje, tiek Baltijos regione, formos bei stilistinės ypatybės nerodo priklausomybės vienai ar kitai archeologinei kultūrai. Taip pat nei formos, nei stiliaus skirtumai neatsispindi ir tarp mezolito bei neolito laikotarpiams priklausančių radinių. Tad archeologinės kultūros sąvoka nereikalinga aptariant zoomorfinius ir antropomorfinius akmens amžiaus figūrinius atvaizdus Baltijos regione. Minėto tipo radinių formos ir stiliaus bendrumas paaiškinamas vienoda ekonomine sankloda ir primityviu atlikimu, kuris ir sukuria stiliaus įspūdį.