

# VILNIUS'S TILTO STREET: LEGENDS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATA

IRMA KAPLŪNAITĖ\* AND RYTIS JONAITIS

Lithuanian Institute of History, Urban Research Department, Tilto St. 17, 01101, Vilnius

---

## Keywords

Vilnius, Tilto Street, Swintoroša Valley, Radziwiłł Palace, Puzskarnia

## Abstract

Since the 15th century, present-day Tilto Street and the surrounding area in Vilnius have long been an integral part of the suburb of Łukiszki, which has experienced many changes over several centuries. It was the west road leading to the castles, the site of the camp of the late 14th-century Crusader army that attacked Vilnius, and was close to the site of the Radziwiłł Palace of the late 15th–16th century. This wet, swampy northeastern part of Łukiszki was not very hospitable for habitation, its significance coming from its natural situation and topography, i.e. its location near the confluence of the Neris and Vilnia Rivers, as well as its roads leading west. In addition, a hypothesis has been raised in the historiography that it may have been part of the Swintoroša Valley, a legendary centre of pagan worship. This entity, its likely location, and even its very existence raises many questions, which, in the absence of written sources, archaeological data can help to answer. Recent decades have seen an increase in archaeological research in this part of the city. Particularly useful has been the project in the vicinity of the former Radziwiłł Palace, in the northeast of the suburb, which yielded information that provided a very good reflection of the period when this area was an integral part of the Radziwiłł estate and supplemented and corrected the knowledge historical sources have provided about the development of Tilto Street and the surrounding area, which is especially important in recreating the area's earliest history, on which written sources have shed little light.

---

## Introduction

Vilnius's Tilto Street (formerly Kafedralna and Mostowa Streets) has an important historical past connected with many of the city's legends (Fig. 1). Although it has lost some of its former importance, nobles and craftsmen once resided along this street, which connected the castles of Vilnius with the western–northwestern part of the city. Its long history as an integral part of the suburb of Łukiszki (in Lithuanian Lukiškės) began in the 15th century, with the name Puzskarnia (in Lithuanian Puškarnia) being acquired in the first half of the 16th century. The Radziwiłł Palace, which written sources already mentioned in the late 15th–16th centuries and which featured the gardens where Barbara Radziwiłł (1520–1551) met Zygmunt II August (1520–1572), stood nearby. The area can be linked even earlier with the legendary Swintoroša (in Lithuanian Šventaragis) Valley, i.e. the earliest knowledge of this location dates to the 14th century when it is thought the cre-

mation site of the pagan dukes and a sacred grove could have existed somewhere there.

The territory analysed in the current article includes not only Tilto, but also present-day Radvilų (Bogusławska) and Žygimantų (Świnna Zygmuntońska) Streets as well as parts of T. Vrublevskio (Antokolsko), K. Sirvydo (Św. Jerska), and Ž. Liauksmino Streets. Recent decades have seen an increase in archaeological research in this part of Vilnius, including large-scale projects. The various excavations, field evaluations, and field surveys have yielded large quantities of material, especially recent research on the grounds of the Radziwiłł Palace in the suburb's northeastern part, which has provided the basis for this new article devoted to the presentation and interpretation in a historical context of the archaeological research on Tilto Street and the surrounding area.

The collected information supplements and corrects that found in historical sources about the area's development

\* Corresponding author. E-mail: [irma.kaplunaite@gmail.com](mailto:irma.kaplunaite@gmail.com)



Figure 1. On Tilto Street in Vilnius. Photo by the authors.

and provides a very good reflection of the Radziwiłł estate era. It is also especially important for recreating the area's earliest history as the written sources reveal few details about it. The historiography associates this area at that time with the Swintoroha Valley but this centre of pagan worship, its probable location, and even its very existence pose an especially large number of questions, which archaeological material can help to address given the lack of written sources.

This article's aim is to present the history and development of Tilto Street and the surrounding area from the first signs of habitation to its heyday in the 16th–17th centuries. It primarily uses data from the archaeological research conducted at this site, the stratigraphy of the cultural layers, and the accumulated factual material to examine the area's development, to discuss the former natural environment and landscape, and to supplement the information about the area's buildings and infrastructure.

## 1. The historiography

The part of Vilnius to the west of the castle grounds is closely connected with the Radziwiłł family and has certainly received considerable attention in the historiogra-

phy, as well as being marked on old plans of Vilnius (Fig. 2). Various authors have also mentioned it, especially in the 19th-century historiography, but usually only in the context of the legend of Swintoroha (Balinskis 2007, pp. 107–108). Due to the abundant material, this article discusses only those studies connected with Tilto Street and the surrounding area, i.e. the area most relevant to the topic under consideration.

Vladas Drėma (1910–1995) collected and published a rich source of iconographic materials (Drėma 1991, pp. 155–158). This valuable iconographic source includes a plan of the Vilnius panorama of 1600 depicted by Tomasz Makowski with a detailed presentation of the Radziwiłł Palace (Fig. 2.1). Various drawings of the palace are kept in the Radziwiłł Archive of the Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw<sup>1</sup>. Besides palace depictions, the city's old plans show this area's fairly dense development and the location of various palace buildings, gardens and ponds<sup>2</sup>, some of which have been identified during archaeological investigations (Fig. 2.1, 2, 3).

<sup>1</sup> They are more thoroughly discussed by Vitkauskienė in 2010.

<sup>2</sup> The already mentioned Vilnius city plan by Makowski, as well as the 1737 one by von Fürstenhoff, the 1798 one by Chomentovski, and the 1808 one by Grunert.

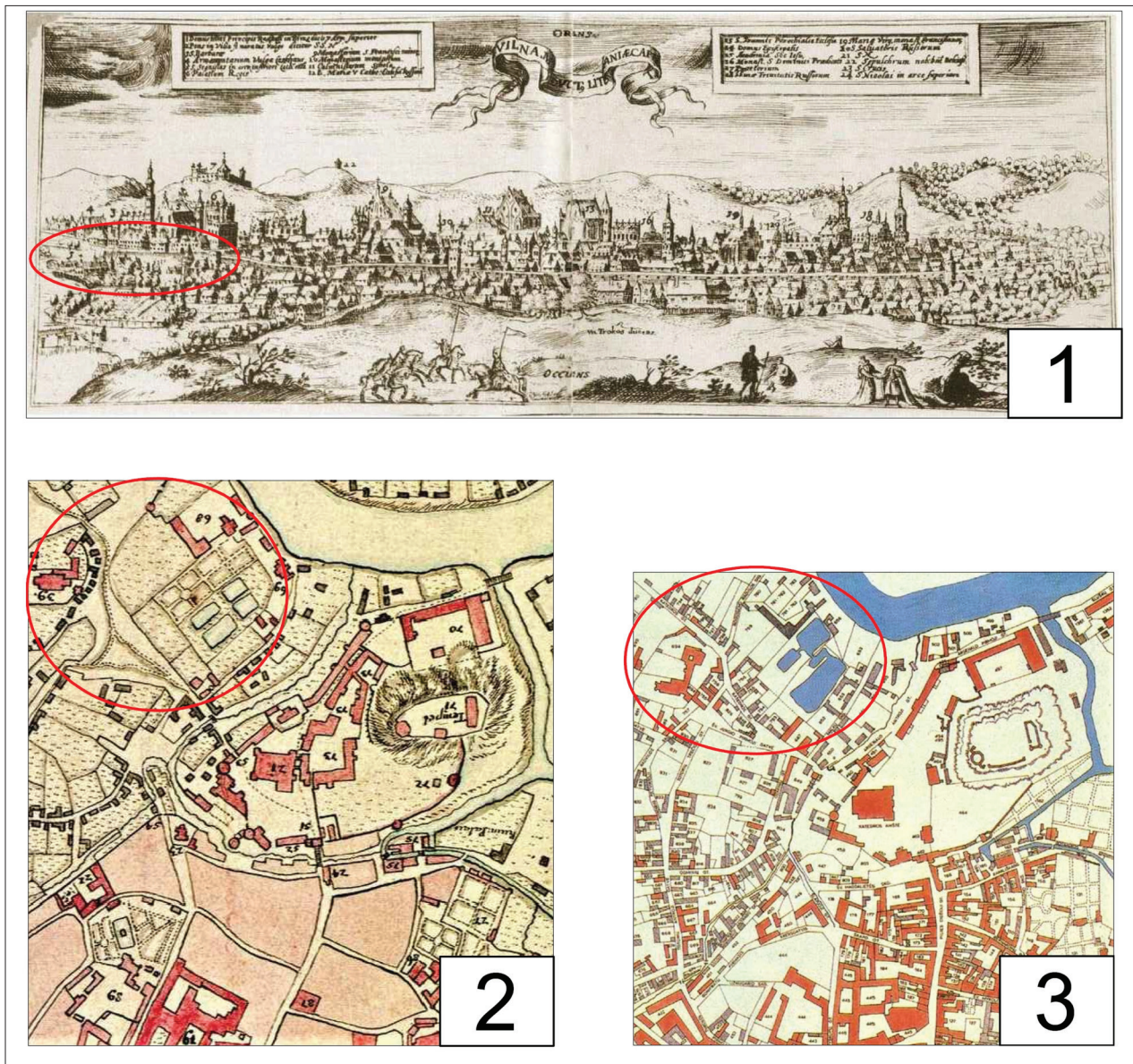


Figure 2. Old plans of Vilnius: 1. Tomasz Makowski's 1600 panorama of Vilnius; 2. An excerpt from von Fürstenhoff's 1737 plan; 3. An excerpt from Karl Grunert's 1808 plan. The investigated area is marked.

The territory of Łukiszki suburb has been fairly extensively examined in the historiography and has also been a focal point for historians and a subject of discussion for urbanists studying Vilnius's suburbs (e.g. Dijokienė 2002; Markevičienė 2002). It was presented the most thoroughly in the 2008 monograph by Vytautas Jogėla, Virgilijus Pugačiauskas and Elmantas Meilus, which discusses the history of this part of the city during the 15th to the early 20th century, mainly on the basis of historical sources, which causes it to focus more on the later period (from the 17th century), for which more written information is available. It does, however, briefly discuss the early period when the suburb emerged in the late 14th–15th centuries and, in examining its urban development, also mentions the archaeological material (Jogėla et al. 2008, pp. 17–18).

Birutė Rūta Vitkauskienė's article in 2010 on the basis of written sources discusses the development of Łukiszki and Puszkarnia, location of the Vilnius cannon foundry, which is shown in numerous documents: the accounts of Zygmunt II August's manor, the Lithuanian Metrica, jurisdiction descriptions, etc. (Vitkauskienė 2010). As the author noted, 'No one researching Puszkarnia, can complain about a lack of sources' (Vitkauskienė 2010). Nevertheless, as observed, abundant data only begins in the 16th century, but, as the monograph on Łukiszki states, the Łukiszki mentioned in the mid-15th century was still 'an abstract territory along the Neris' in the 16th century (Jogėla et al. 2008, p. 20). Consequently, in order to trace the suburb's earliest development, which is not covered by written sources, one needs to use the information supplied by the archaeological research conducted in this part of Vilnius.

In 2012 Saulius Sarcevičius examined the suburb of Łukiszki, or more precisely, its eastern part, on the basis of archaeological data, presenting its development during the 15th to mid-17th centuries and focusing especially on the identification of manufacturing sites as well as the original relief and topography. This eastern suburb's southern part (present-day Vilnius, Odminių, and L. Stuokos-Gucevičiaus Streets), where various manufacturing sites were concentrated, is presented in greater detail (Sarcevičius 2012). While the article was based on 2004–2005 archaeological research, more intensive later research in the suburb's northeastern part, especially on the grounds of the Radziwiłł Palace, is examined here.

Kęstutis Katalynas (2006, pp. 106–107) summarises the research conducted in Vilnius up to 2006, presenting the suburb of Łukiszki and brief data from the archaeological research there. A map of archaeological research conducted in Vilnius which forms an appendix in Oksana Valionienė's monograph on the spatial evolution of Vilnius presents the latest conclusions (Valionienė 2019).

## 2. Links with the Swintoroha Valley

A hypothesis has been raised in the historiography that part of the Swintoroha Valley, a centre of pagan worship, may have been located in the northeastern area of Łukiszki in the 14th century. The (16th-century) *Bychowiec* or *Lithuanian Chronicle* states: 'And Grand Duke Swintoroha chose a very beautiful place in a pine forest by the Neris, where the Vilnia flows into it, and asked his son, Skirmont (born around 1190) to create a pyre site there.' (Lietuvos metraštis 1971, p. 60). Because Tilto Street and the surrounding area were a 'horn' or 'interfluvium' between the Rivers Neris and Vilnia (old riverbed), in the historiography it is primarily associated with the mythical Swintoroha Valley. According to Michał Baliński, author of an 1836–1837 history of Vilnius (translated into Lithuanian in 2007), the Swintoroha Valley comprised the wedge-shaped area between the Neris and Vilnia while sacred oaks grew in the suburb of Łukiszki (Balinskis 2007, pp. 107–108) (Fig. 3). Maciej Strykowski also associated this location with the Swintoroha Valley (Strykowski 1846). According to an interpretation of Strykowski by historian Marius Ščavinskas, the pyre site was on the grounds of the cannon foundry on present-day Tilto Street (where a pine forest once stood) (Ščavinskas 2021, p. 242). We can also find a similar opinion in the book by Adam Honory Kirkor (1889, p. 10). This correlates with the information, mentioned in the *Inventory of the Vilnius Castle caretaker* (1738), which locates the meadow of Swintoroha around the site of the present-day monument of Gediminas (in Latin *Gedeminne*, *Gedeminus*), Grand Duke of Lithuania from 1315 or 1316 until his death. Thus, the main part of

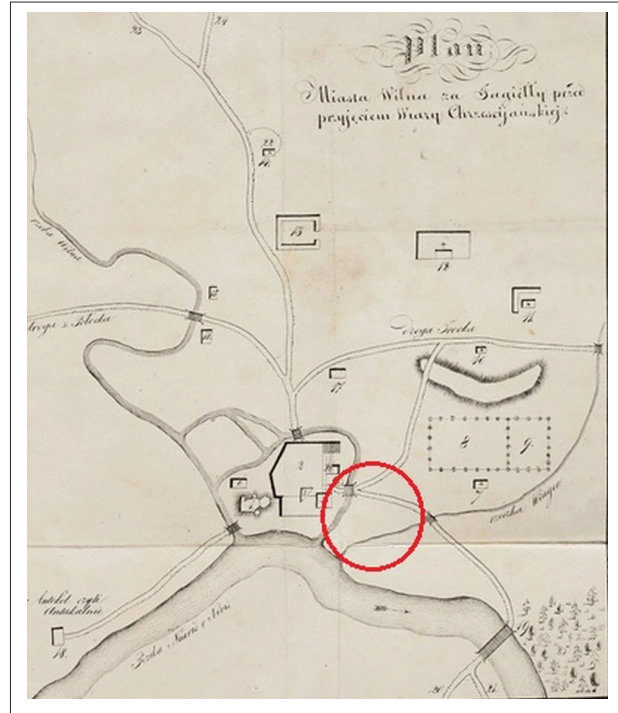


Figure 3. Baliński's pre-Christian Vilnius city plan (Balinskis 2007, p. 202). The investigated area is marked.

the Swintoroha Valley could have been at the site of Vilnius Cathedral, while sacred oaks and the pyre can be linked with present-day Tilto Street.

In addition to the question of the existence of this valley as a place of pagan worship and the identification of its location in Vilnius, further questions arise about Swintoroha himself and his reform whereby cremation was practised only by the ruling elite, their ordinary pagan subjects being interred uncremated. It is questionable, however, whether the society's ordinary members would have abandoned cremation for interment if the ruling elite practised cremation. Usually, fashion and innovation reach the upper class first, e.g. when Christianity first appeared in the territory of present-day Belarus, the first to accept the inhumation tradition were the ruling elite and their entourage, this burial method spreading to the other classes later (Voitekhovich 2019, pp. 98–102).

One must remember that Swintoroha and his reform are a legend and, more precisely, part of the legend of Lithuania's Roman origins. Both the myth of Sovijus and the legend of Swintoroha are viewed ambiguously, their reliability being doubted with good reason (Lietuvos metraštis 1971, p. 213). Swintoroha and his reform are mentioned in the *Lithuanian* or *Bychowiec Chronicle* (1971, pp. 60–61)<sup>3</sup>, but, according to Rimantas Jasas, who studied this book, Swintoroha is not mentioned in any other reliable sources (Lietuvos metraštis 1971, p. 213). Since such a

<sup>3</sup> This legend is repeated by Maciej Strykowski and Albertas Vijūkas-Kojalavičius (Strykowski 1846, pp. 308–311; Vijūkas-Kojalavičius 1989, pp. 129–130).

study would require a deeper assessment of the historical sources, which is not this article's purpose, we can only hypothesise that it seems more likely that in the period before the Christianisation of Lithuania, at least the majority of the pagans must have still cremated their dead<sup>4</sup>. Therefore, in speaking about pagan burials in Vilnius, we probably have to look for cremation remains, suspected burials, etc.

It must be noted that absolutely no pagan burial site, neither inhumation nor cremation, has been discovered in the city so far. They must have existed, of course, but the current archaeological data has not allowed any to be identified. One possible explanation for this is the hypothesis in the historiography of a pagan practice of burying cremation remains in wetlands (e.g. Urbanavičius and Urbanavičienė 1988, p. 46; Grinkevičiūtė and V. Vaitkevičius, 2007, pp. 146–153; V. Vaitkevičius and Grinkevičiūtė 2008, pp. 192–198; V. Vaitkevičius, 2009, pp. 134–140; 2010, pp. 128–135; 2010–2011; 2011, pp. 116–123; 2012, pp. 136–147). According to archaeological research data, at least some pagans might have interred their dead in the 13th to early 15th centuries. Judging from Kernavė where a cremation cemetery was found in an old riverbed and an inhumation burial site on high ground (Baltramiejūnaitė and Vengalis 2010, pp. 99–105; Vengalis 2011, pp. 124–127; 2013), it can be assumed that a site where cremation remains were buried in water could have also existed in Vilnius, especially considering the damp Vilnia valley and the many streams that flowed in the eastern part of present-day Vilnius old town. The question is, could such a burial site have existed in the part of the city beside the Neris and Vilnia? At present, the lack of data, especially an archaeological basis for such a burial site, is preventing this and other questions from being answered.

### 3. The development of the northeastern part of the suburb of Łukiszki

Although written sources first mention Vilnius only in 1323, according to the so-called Grand Duke's Gediminas letters (2003, p. 47), the city's development began earlier. The historical context and new archaeological data allow the roots of this settlement to be traced back to the last decades of the 13th century; traces of human activity from this period having been found on Gediminas Hill and at its foot, in the *Curvum Castrum*, and in the eastern part of present-day Vilnius old town (Vaitkevičius, G. 2010, pp. 63–94). Vilnius grew rapidly throughout the 14th century, with people settling in ever more of the present-day old town. Tilto Street falls within an area that is quite far from the earliest inhabited parts of Vilnius, although still

fairly close to the castles (just a few hundred metres to the west). Despite its inhospitableness, its natural situation at the confluence of the Neris and Vilnia and the proximity of another, earlier, stream bed must have made the north-eastern part of future Łukiszki important. In addition, a road/roads running west from the castles passed through it.

Tilto Street and the surrounding area were wet and swampy in the Middle Ages (Sarcevičius 2012). The new suburb was bounded in the north by the Neris, in the east by the old bed of the Vilnia (near present-day T. Vrublevskio Street), which separated the suburb from the castle grounds from the first half of the 14th to the 19th century, in the south by craftsmen's settlements that had formed on present-day Odminių (Garbarska) and L. Stuokos-Gucevičiaus (Bonifraterska) Streets (Sarcevičius 2012), and in the west (to the west of present-day Vilnius Street) by the Tatar part of Łukiszki, the settlement of which could have already begun in the 15th century. Vilnius Street (Wileńska) is thought to have begun taking shape only in the late 15th century (Sarcevičius 2012). The settlement of Tilto Street and the surrounding area has been archaeologically traceable only from the 15th century (Sarcevičius 2012). Thus in the 14th century this was probably still an uninhabited area near water where a forest could grow and possibly the site of some archaeologically untraceable entities that were connected with the pagan faith (such as a sacred grove).

One source, Wigand of Marburg's (German: Wigand von Marburg) Chronicle, illustrates the 14th-century activities of people in the northeastern part of the new suburb of Łukiszki. Based on his description, the camp of the Crusader army that attacked Vilnius was established somewhere in the vicinity of present-day Tilto Street in 1394 (Marburgietis 1999, p. 213). As Sarcevičius notes, based on a reconstruction of the original relief at the time of the battle, the area was very suitable for organizing a defence, especially due to the possible existence of a ford (one of several?) across the Neris (Sarcevičius 2012), besides being, as mentioned above, the site of a road/roads leading to the west and southwest.

The early settlement of the northeastern part of Łukiszki began along the roads (Sarcevičius 2012), future Tilto Street, which runs east–west, becoming especially important. It is thought that this is the road sources mention in 1546 as being in front of Lord Kiszka's house<sup>5</sup>. As Vitkauskienė shows, in later documents it is called the road or street running through Puzkarnia towards the Lower Castle and brick bridge, or Pilies Street (Vitkauskienė 2010). At roughly the location of the present-day intersection of Tilto and Radvilų Streets, a 17th-century schematic drawing shows the Great, or Radziwiłł, Gate with the Radziwiłł

<sup>4</sup> The issue of burial rites in Lithuania in the 13th–15th centuries is examined in greater detail in the monograph by the present authors (Jonaitis and Kaplūnaitė 2020, pp. 16–64).

<sup>5</sup> *Item pro licostracionis vie ante domum domini Kiska <...>* (Vitkauskienė 2010).

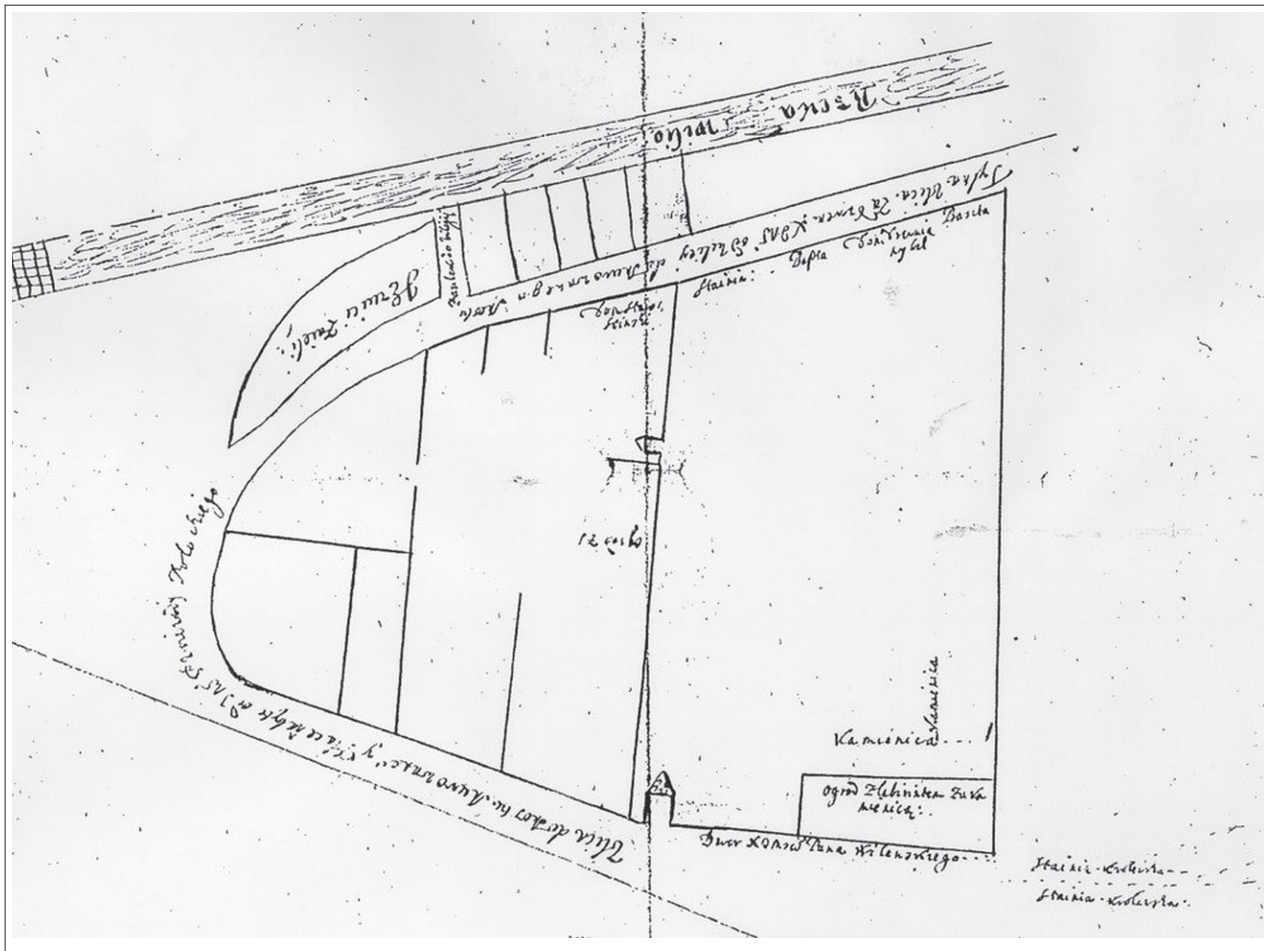


Figure 4. A plan, drawn after 1623, of the Radziwiłł jurisdiction. AGAD, Archiwum Radziwiłłów, dz. XVIII, sign. 19. The Great, or Radziwiłł, Gate can be seen at the bottom.

estate on the right and the Polotsk Voivode's plot on the left (Fig. 4). Janusz Kiszka (1586–1654) assumed this position in 1621, selling the plot with its garden in 1623 to the widow of Janusz Radziwiłł (1579–1620), Elisabeth Sophia of Brandenburg (1589–1629) (Vitkauskienė 2010). As can be seen in the plan, present-day Radvilų Street did not yet exist, only an alley being shown there.

The part of the developing city near the Neris and Vilnia was definitely connected with various bridges over the Neris. These are also mentioned in Wigand of Marburg's Chronicle: 'The Livonian master chose a camp site near the Neris below the castle and built two bridges ...' (p. 213). The first bridge over the Neris is thought to have been built in 1536 at the site of the present-day Green Bridge (Sarcevičius 2012). It is nevertheless hypothesised that an earlier bridge over the Neris existed elsewhere. Marian Morelowski (1940–1942) points out that even prior to the 16th century a bridge over the Neris stood near the Vilnia's mouth, which is confirmed by the presence of an archaeological layer (Valionienė 2019, p. 97). It is currently agreed in the historiography that the old bridge may have been located near present-day King Mindaugas Bridge at the confluence of the Neris and Vilnia and the site of a former

ford (Valionienė 2019, p. 97). One of the large River Neris islands marked in late 18th-century city plans was located very near the area under discussion (Jurkštas 1990, p. 25).

The first definite mention of Łukiszki in sources dates to 1441 (Jogėla et al. 2008, p. 13). Settlement intensified from the second half of the 15th century, especially, as is shown in the historiography, in the northeastern part, i.e. future Puzskarnia, where magnates began to create estates (Jogėla et al. 2008, p. 19). According to Vitkauskienė, during the rule of Zygmunt II August the construction of manor outbuildings spread towards the northwest and Tiltó Street while nobles and craftsmen who had won the ruler's favour settled in the area between the Tatar Gate, Vilnius Street, and the Neris (Vitkauskienė 2010). From the late 15th century, the suburb began to be associated with the Radziwiłł family after the 1493 acquisition of a plot near the Neris by Mikołaj Radziwiłłowicz (1404–1509) (Lietuvos Metrika, Vol. 3 1998, pp. 73–74). The cannon foundry was first mentioned in the accounts of Zygmunt II August's manor in 1546 and the settlement of various magnates in this part of the city is reflected in the abundant information in 16th-century written sources (Vitkauskienė 2010). The area's later development (from

the 16th century) is closely connected with the Radziwiłł Palace complex, its construction, and various reconstructions. It is known that a park with ponds was created near the palace. As noted in the historiography, these ponds, some of the oldest and largest in Vilnius, existed until the 19th century (Jurkštas 1990, p. 12).

Who built the Radziwiłł Palace has not been determined, but it is thought to have already been mentioned in the 1544–1548 royal accounts and Jerzy Radziwiłł (1556–1600) could have built (or inherited) it (Vitkauskienė 2010). The 1599 will of Krzysztof Radziwiłł (1585–1640) describes the palace as being of brick, and its subsequent development is well reflected in surviving maps, inventories of the Radziwiłł jurisdiction and various written sources<sup>6</sup>. The large, luxurious palace was bordered on the east by a garden, where, it is often emphasised in the historiography, Barbara Radziwiłł met with Zygmunt II August (e.g. Drėma 1991, p. 155). Large fish ponds existed further east (Vitkauskienė 2010), with various outbuildings and homes in the western part of the grounds (Drėma 1991, p. 155). The palace's disappearance began in the second half of the 17th century, with it being completely demolished circa 1820 (Vitkauskienė 2010). The winter palace of Jan Józef Tyszkiewicz (1867–1903), which is marked in the 1883 Vilnius city plan, was erected north of the Radziwiłł Palace site in the second half of the 19th century.

Another element in the investigated area that is connected with the Radziwiłł name is the present-day Church of St George the Martyr on K. Sirvydo Street. In 1506, Mikołaj Radziwiłł founded the Carmelite Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary of the Snow, which already in 1524 was called the Church of St George (Vitkauskienė 2010). As Sarcevičius notes, the church's construction at this location shows the area's qualitative development, i.e. that the immediate area was the most densely developed at that time (Sarcevičius 2012). The historiography posits the hypothesis that fortifications existed at the church site (see Morelowski 1940–1942; Markevičienė 2002, p. 35; Sarcevičius 2012). Unfortunately, no archaeological research has yet been conducted on the church grounds and so the situation there remains unclear.

#### 4. The investigation of Tilto Street and the surrounding area

The area in the vicinity of Tilto, Radvilų, and Žygimantų Streets has been under archaeological investigation since 1976 (Tebelškis 1976), with over 30 different investigations (excavations, field evaluations and field surveys) having been conducted at over 17 locations. The research itself varies greatly, from field surveys tens of centimetres deep to large-scale excavations. This article focuses more

on those investigations which reached a valuable cultural layer and discovered artefacts and building remains. Those that yielded no valuable scientific information (did not reach sterile soil; recorded only surface layers of 19th–20th century date, etc.) are not presented in detail.

Several main archaeological excavations, which yielded the most information, can be distinguished (Fig. 5). First, a small-scale field survey investigation — several test pits and a field survey in the vicinity of the courtyard fountain — which was conducted in 1997 by Sarcevičius on the plot at Tilto Street 17<sup>7</sup> with the aim of locating the bottom of the building's foundation (Sarcevičius 1997). The four test pits (6 m<sup>2</sup>) yielded a 19th-century layer from the period of the building's construction, the foundation's bottom being discovered at a depth of 1.6 m. The excavated cultural layer was up to 2.7 m thick<sup>8</sup> (Sarcevičius 1997, pp. 3–4). The investigation revealed no earlier layer or finds.

The next investigation at Tilto Street 17 was conducted in 2002 by Linas Kvizikevičius (Kvizikevičius 2002) to find a former water reservoir that was created in the southern part of the plot in the 19th century, was shown in a 19th-century map, and existed until the mid-20th century. A total of three test pits (12.7 m<sup>2</sup>) were excavated and a field survey was conducted around the reservoir of the existing fountain, which yielded a cultural layer dating from the mid-16th to the 20th century up to 3.2 m deep (Kvizikevičius 2002, pp. 5–10). According to the finds (ceramics), the earliest cultural layer discovered during the investigation can be dated to the 16th century, but the masonry structure is traceable only to the 17th century. (Kvizikevičius 2002, p. 7). The investigation yielded the remains of mid-17th-century masonry buildings as well as structural ceramics and stove tile fragments. As the investigator notes, the stove tile finds attest that the owners belonged to the noble class, according to the written sources, the Radziwiłł family (Kvizikevičius 2002, p. 10). This is not in question since, as has been mentioned many times, the area has belonged of the Radziwiłł estate since at least the 16th century. Subsequent construction there is shown in both the 1737 and 1808 plans.

The plot at Tilto Street 17/Radvilų Street 4 was investigated again in 2003 prior to the reinforcement of the 1958 shower foundation (Vaicekauskas 2003)<sup>9</sup>. The six test pits (35.83 m<sup>2</sup>) excavated to a planned depth of 1.3 m yielded a fragment of a mid-15th-century masonry wall as well as the remains of a 17th-century masonry wall attached to it (Vaicekauskas 2003, p. 228). It is thought that these struc-

<sup>7</sup> The building at Tilto Street 17/Radvilų Street 4 currently (as of the winter of 2021) houses the Lithuanian Institute of History.

<sup>8</sup> The boreholes in test pit 4 determined that the peaty soil continues down to a depth of up to 3.4 m, under which lies sterile soil – sand (Sarcevičius 1997, p. 4).

<sup>9</sup> A bathhouse stood there from 1898 (Vaicekauskas 2003, p. 228).

<sup>6</sup> Discussed in detail by Vitkauskienė in 2010.

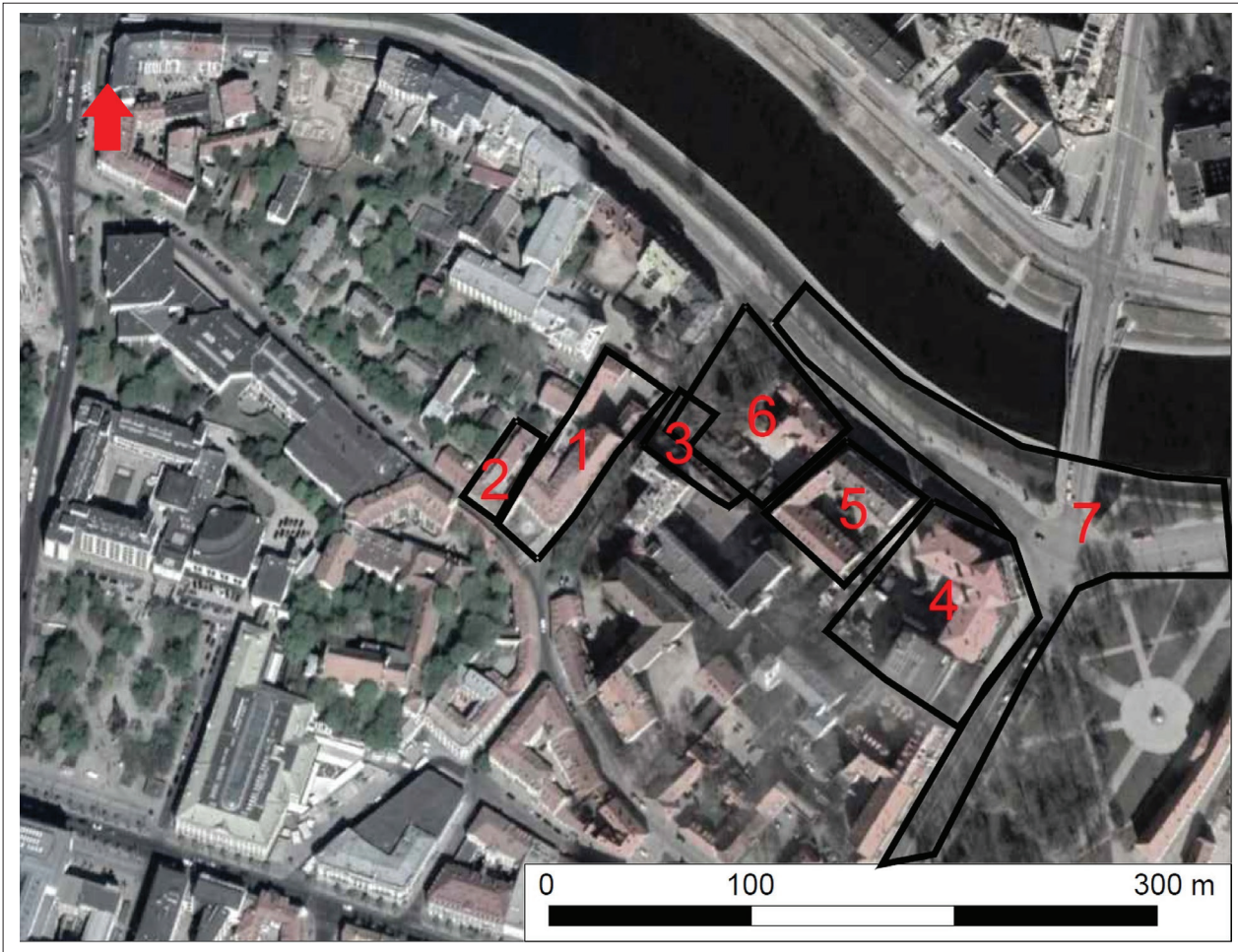


Figure 5. The archaeological research on Tilto Street and the surrounding area. A Google Earth map modified by the authors: 1. Tilto Street 17 (investigated in 1997, 2002, 2003 and 2015); 2. Tilto Street 19 (investigated in 1999); 3. Radvilų Street 5 (investigated in 2012); 4. Žygimantų Street 1 (investigated in 2017); 5. Žygimantų Street 2 (investigated in 2003); 6. Žygimantų Street 3 (investigated in 2019); 7. Žygimantų and T. Vrublevskio Streets (investigated in 2002).

tures are connected with the Radziwiłł Palace complex (Vaičekauskas 2003, p. 228). Based on historical sources, in the 18th–19th centuries, when the site no longer belonged to the Radziwiłł family, the one-storey wooden manors of nobles mostly stood on Tilto Street, one of which was at the site of present-day Tilto Street 17 (Vaičekauskas 2003, p. 228).

The last investigation conducted at Tilto Street 17 occurred in 2015 (Duderis 2015) in connection with the waterproofing of the fountain foundation in the building's courtyard. Only 20.4 m<sup>2</sup> was excavated around the fountain to a planned depth of 1.7 m (Duderis 2015, pp. 6–8), at which depth 17th-century stone paving was discovered and left undisturbed (Fig. 6). No earlier cultural layer was found, but fragments of somewhat earlier household and structural ceramics dating to the late 16th century were encountered (Duderis 2015, p. 9).

In summarising the work at Tilto Street 17, it must be stated that almost all the investigations conducted there were small-scale and often not down to sterile soil. By excavating to only a planned depth, no earlier cultural layers

were reached. Nevertheless, based on the situation recorded so far, greater human activity began there only in the 16th century in close connection with the development of the Radziwiłł complex in this part of the city. The earliest object found there is a mid-15th-century masonry wall fragment discovered in 2003. Because only a fragment has been excavated, the structure's purpose remains unclear. Also, for at least the time being, no data exists for talking about the site's earlier settlement nor do any finds allow the site to be linked to the 14th-century Swintoroha Valley or any other pagan-era human activity.

In addition to the plot at Tilto Street 17, a field evaluation was also conducted to its west on the adjacent plot at Tilto Street 19 (Sarcevičius 2000) where four test pits (20 m<sup>2</sup>) were excavated prior to the lowering of the basement floor, revealing a second half of the cultural layer from the 16th–19th centuries up to 2.8 m in depth, and the remains of a wooden semi-basement from the mid-17th to the early 18th century (Sarcevičius 1999, pp. 5–13). As with the 1997 investigation at Tilto Street 17, it was also determined that the bottom layer above the sterile soil was





Figure 6. Stone paving from the 17th century near the fountain (Duderis 2015).

peaty, contained no finds, and became thicker towards the River Neris (Sarcevičius 1999, p. 14). Thus archaeology shows that, as already mentioned, the area in question was a wet, swampy place in the Middle Ages. The upper cultural layers contained 17th-century finds (some perhaps even dating to the late 16th century): household ceramics, stove tiles, metal artefacts and coins. Some of the ceramics had been in a fire (Sarcevičius 1999, pp. 11–12). Like Tiltos Street 17, this adjacent site, based on the situation identified during archaeological investigation, was settled no earlier than the 16th century.

This 1999 field evaluation at Tiltos Street 19 has gone down in history as the investigation that yielded the largest coin hoard in Lithuania to date. Test pit 4 above the aforementioned semi-basement revealed a pitcher containing coins (Sarcevičius 1999, pp. 10–11): roughly 16,000 copper Jan II Kazimierz Waza (1609–1672) shillings, silver Polish and Prussian six-groats, three-groats, orts, etc. dating to 1623–1698 (Remecas 2012, p. 380). According to historical sources, in the 17th century this was the site of a one-story house, which, based on the discovered coins and archaeological data, must have burned down in 1702–1708 (Remecas 2012, p. 380). As Eduardas Remecas notes, the

coins could have been accumulated by a person with only a small income (2012, p. 381).

Archaeological investigations have also been conducted near Tiltos Street. During a 2012 field evaluation at Radvilų Street 5 (Girlevičius 2013) in order to more precisely determine the location of the former Radvilų Palace as well as the nature and chronology of the cultural layer, seven trenches and five test pits (105 m<sup>2</sup>) were excavated, revealing a cultural layer that was up to 2.5 m deep in this area, the remains of the Radvilų Palace extension that stood there, fragments of a brick floor, the remains of a stove and layers of rubble connected with the demolition of the manor's brick buildings and other structures (Girlevičius 2013, pp. 8–20) (Fig. 7). Mainly 16th-century layers were excavated and an abundant, diverse collection of finds was discovered, including 16th-century panel stove tiles with the Radvilų coat of arms and pipe fragments dating to the 17th and 18th centuries (Girlevičius 2013, pp. 8–20). The layer of grey sandy soil discovered at a depth of 120–140 cm in field evaluation trench no. 1, according to the investigator, can be dated to the 15th century (Girlevičius 2013, p. 9). Nevertheless, the lack of finds in this horizon makes this dating (shown as the (14th?) 15th century in the conclusions) only speculative. The peaty layers, which



Figure 7. Radziwiłł Palace fragments excavated in 2012 (Girlevičius 2013).

were found in some of the test pits, like in those at Tiltos Street 17 and 19, likewise attest to the area being wet and swampy.

A great abundance of later building remnants and finds, especially from the 17th century, were discovered on the plot of Radvilų Street 5. It is interesting that the earliest cultural layer horizon in test pit no. 11 at the intersection of Tiltos and Radvilų Streets contained a ball-shaped bullet with a sprue (Girlevičius 2013, pp. 18–20), which would confirm in part that the site belonged to the historic suburb of Puzzkarnia, which was involved in the production of weapons and armaments.

In 2012, an investigation was conducted at Žygimantų Street 1 (Šmigelskas and Sadauskas 2013). According to historical sources, the Radziwiłł Palace garden and ponds existed at this location (Šmigelskas and Sadauskas 2013, p. 519). Eight test pits (32 m<sup>2</sup>) were excavated at the site of a future storage building and new gas pipeline, revealing a 17th-century cultural layer up to 5 m deep and fragments of wooden structures. The layer of black, peaty soil found in all of the test pits reflects the situation that this location and the buildings there now are at the site of the former Radziwiłł Palace's garden ponds (Šmigelskas and Sadauskas 2013, p. 520).

During a large-scale 2017 investigation at Žygimantų Street 1 on the former Radziwiłł estate (Kontrimas 2018) prior to the laying of utility lines, ten test pits (41.8 m<sup>2</sup>) were excavated during a field evaluation and nine trenches and six test pits (415 m<sup>2</sup>) during an excavation while 910 m<sup>2</sup> were surveyed. The discovered cultural layer was up to 2.6 m in depth. Its earliest horizons (16th–17th century) were best preserved in the plot's central and south-eastern parts, the 17th-century horizons being especially rich. Fragments of wooden structures from the 17th and 18th centuries were also discovered (Kontrimas 2018, pp. 9–38). As the investigator pointed out, based on the location of the excavated structures, it is possible to conclude that the plot's central part, where there had been a garden with ponds, had not been developed in the 17th–19th centuries (Kontrimas 2018, p. 39).

A 2017 investigation identified the site of the former ponds of the 17th and 18th centuries which were filled in using imported soil, probably from adjacent Vilnius locations, in the 19th century (Kontrimas 2018, pp. 9–38). Because this imported soil was a Vilnius city cultural layer from various periods, it contained many finds from the 16th–19th centuries as well as isolated 14th- and 15th-century potsherds, 18th- and 19th-century coins, and cloth seals

and pipes from the 16th–18th centuries (Kontrimas 2018, pp. 39–40). It should be noted that the earliest cultural layer on this site dates to only the 16th century, the earlier finds (including isolated human bones) having reached the area from other parts of Vilnius when the ponds were filled. Therefore, this investigation supplied no information about any possible life in the vicinity of the Radziwiłł Palace prior to the 16th century.

A large-scale investigation — 19 trenches and two test pits (totalling 1568.2 m<sup>2</sup>) — was conducted on the grounds of the Radziwiłł Palace in 2017–2018 (Sadauskas 2018, pp. 231–236) in order to determine/clarify the plot's archaeological situation. This revealed a cultural layer dating from the 15th/16th to the 21st century up to 3.5 m deep, abundant masonry structure fragments of the early 16th–19th centuries, remains of the Radziwiłł Palace (foundations, partition walls, stoves, columns, and an interior brick floor), and a collection of finds from the 15th–20th centuries (Sadauskas 2018, pp. 231–236) (Fig. 8). The earliest, 15th-/16th-century cultural layer is in fact not rich, being reflected by only isolated finds. As Ignas Sadauskas, the head investigator, notes, it may have been the plot's original surface (Sadauskas 2018, p. 233). Thus, based on the archaeological data, it is perhaps impossible to identify any human settlement at this location prior to the 14th century. Even the existence of 15th-century human activity there raises doubts. Of course, this may be the result of the extremely large-scale earthwork that occurred during the construction of the Radziwiłł Palace complex, which may have destroyed any earlier horizons.

Inhumation burials from the 17th–19th centuries must be mentioned as exceptional finds of the 2017–2018 archaeological investigation. The individuals (four male, one undetermined) were interred in wooden coffins laid irregularly west–east without grave goods (only one heel plate having been found) and are thought to perhaps belong to a cemetery not mentioned in historical sources (Sadauskas 2018, p. 233).

During the latest investigation (in 2019) of the former Radziwiłł estate (later the site of the Jan Józef Tyszkiewicz Palace) (Šmigelskas 2020) prior to the installation of waterproofing, six test pits (10 m<sup>2</sup>) were excavated and nine areas (80.6 m<sup>2</sup>) were surveyed. The cultural layer there (17th–20th century), was up to 2.6 m deep with some finds even dating to the 16th century (Šmigelskas 2020, pp. 7–22). The investigation yielded fragments of a masonry structure from the first half of the 17th century, remains of the Radziwiłł Palace, more peat and sediment layers probably connected with the former ponds, and, in test pit no. 1, the suspected edge of one of the former ponds (Šmigelskas 2020, p. 10). As mentioned, the existence of ponds on the estate is shown in written sources and old plans of Vilnius (Vitkauskienė 2010).

Also worthy of mention is the 2002 archaeological investigation on Žygimantų and T. Vrublevskio Streets when an area of up to 4,500 m<sup>2</sup> was excavated to a planned depth (of often up to 70 cm) and surveyed prior to the construction of the King Mindaugas Bridge, the reconstruction of the access streets, and the installation/replacement of utility lines and street surfaces (Gendrėnas and Ožalas 2008, p. 65). While sterile soil was often not reached, the geological investigation conducted at that time managed to determine that the ground's original surface at the site of T. Vrublevskio Street was 1.4–5.2 m below the former 2002 street level, as well as to discover in the original surface five to six erosional channels parallel to the street: nameless streams, springs, erosion ditches or ravines, or perhaps artificial channels dug in the direction of the former Vilnia riverbed (Gendrėnas and Ožalas 2008, p. 65).

This 2002 investigation revealed 18th- and 19th-century utility lines, the foundations of masonry and wooden buildings dating to the 17th/18th–early 19th century, fragments of 19th-century street paving, three stages of masonry drainage and sewer lines of the 17th–19th centuries (on T. Vrublevskio Street between Gedimino Avenue and Tilto Street), and fragments of a Gothic masonry wall from the 15th and 16th centuries (in front of the former clinic building on Žygimantų Street) (Gudynaitė 2008, pp. 1–2).

The investigation opposite T. Vrublevskio Street 6 yielded a pit with fragments of 16th-century stove tiles and dishes. It is thought that they were tossed into a former erosion ditch, in which a stream may have flowed into the Vilnia from the west (Gendrėnas and Ožalas 2008, p. 25). The investigators speculate that these artefacts could have come from the repair or demolition of buildings on the Radziwiłł estate (Gendrėnas and Ožalas 2008, pp. 25–26). Some of the ceramic artefacts are production related, i.e. production equipment and defective items.

In summarising the archaeological investigation on Tilto Street and the surrounding area, it can be seen that the cultural layer there is up to 5 m deep and dates to the 15th–21st centuries. Although the earliest items (ceramics) date to the 14th century, they are only isolated finds. This raises questions about the area's use during this period of the city's development. Although Tilto Street and the surrounding area are sometimes associated with the legendary Swintoroha Valley in the historiography, no evidence has been found to support this. Archaeologically, this remains an unanswered question, at least for now.

Although no connection with the Swintoroha Valley was found, it is nevertheless impossible to completely rule out the assumption that this area could have been connected with the burial of cremation remains in the 14th century. In light of the topography and natural situation discussed in the article, it seems a very suitable location for a



Figure 8. The palace's brick floor, which was excavated in 2017–2018 on the grounds of the former Radziwiłł Palace (Sadauskas 2018).

cremation cemetery or the burial of cremation remains in water. Unfortunately, the archaeological research revealed no traces of such activity there, which of course, may have been the result of the specifics of the research, which focused on the investigation of the Radziwiłł Palace, much of the other investigations being small-scale and just to a planned depth, not down to sterile soil and often not even down to the bottom cultural layers. It can also be speculated that if a burial site, cemetery, or place connected with paganism existed at this location, all the remains could have been destroyed by the constantly growing and evolving city.

## Conclusions

Present-day Tiltó Street and the immediate area, i.e. the northeastern part of the former suburb of Łukiszki, saw many changes over several centuries. Although the place was wet and swampy, its importance must be noted from the very start of the city's settlement as it was the western road leading to the castles and the site of the camp of the late 14th-century Crusader army that attacked Vilnius. It

is no accident that a search was made there for part of the legendary Swintoroha Valley, the pagan burial site, but the archaeological investigations have yet to reveal any early, pagan-era cultural layer or to link the area to a pagan religious site. The settlement of Tiltó Street and the surrounding area dates to the 15th century, its heyday occurring in the 16th century with the formation of the Puzkarnia District and the construction of the Radziwiłł Palace.

To date, over 30 diverse archaeological investigations have been conducted on and near Tiltó Street, revealing a cultural layer of the 15th–21st centuries up to 5 m in depth. Although the earliest finds (ceramics) come from the 14th century, they are only isolated items, with material from the 16th–18th centuries predominating. The generalised archaeological data best reflects the 16th–19th centuries when the area's development was closely connected with the history of the Radziwiłł estate and its former palace. The situation shown in old Vilnius city plans with respect to the area's fairly abundant development has been confirmed by the archaeological research, which has revealed the remains of various masonry structures, the earliest dating to the 15th–16th centuries, but only two such

early fragments have been found (at Tilto Street 17 and on Žygimantų Street) and their purpose has yet to be determined. The best surviving and most numerous remains come from 16th- and 17th-century buildings connected with the Radziwiłł Palace complex. Various subsequent reconstructions have been traced, the grounds of the former Radziwiłł Palace Park investigated, and the location of some ponds identified or refined.

Although isolated pottery finds do date to the 14th century, no contemporary cultural layer has been recorded in the area. Even the 15th-century layer has survived only fragmentally and this period's dating is only speculative. It is likely that in the 14th century (and even in the 15th, especially the first half) this part of the city was not very densely inhabited and the sporadic activities that may have occurred there did not leave any pronounced traces in the archaeological record.

The possibility also exists that the earlier cultural layer may not have survived due to subsequent activity in this part of the city, especially in connection with the construction and extensive reconstructions of the Radziwiłł Palace complex, as well as intensive construction in the 18th–19th centuries. The results may have also been affected by the nature of the archaeological research, i.e. only small-scale field evaluations having usually been conducted in the vicinity of Tilto Street, in addition to the limitations of excavating to a planned depth and using field surveys. Thus sterile soil and the earlier cultural layer that might exist above it were not reached. The research in the northeastern part of the area was influenced by a desire to correct the diagrams of the Radziwiłł Palace and to find former buildings, which led to the selection of corresponding investigation sites, as well as by the needs of the construction and reconstruction work to be performed.

Life on and around Tilto Street prior to the 16th century has so far only been reflected in isolated ceramics finds, cultural layer fragments, and the remains of several former buildings. No 14th-century layer was detected during any investigation. The conjectured burial site in the vicinity of present-day Tilto Street either did not exist or no traces of it have survived due to human activity in later centuries. Nevertheless, the increasing number of archaeological investigations means a possibility still exists that traces of earlier pagan human activity, albeit not intense, will be found in this part of the city.

#### Abbreviations

ATL – Archeologiniai tyrinėjimai Lietuvoje .... metais / Archaeological Investigations in Lithuania in ..., Vilnius  
LII f. 1, b. – cipher of unpublished archaeological excavations reports stored in Lithuanian Institute of History, Vilnius

Lietuvos Arch. – Lietuvos archeologija

#### References

##### Manuscripts

- Dijokienė, D., 2002. *Istoriniai priemiesčiai: genezė, raida, vertė, tvarkymas (Lietuvos miestų pavyzdžiu)*. Thesis (PhD). Vilnius Gediminas Technical University.
- Duderis, K., 2015. *Vilniaus senamiesčio (16073) teritorijos, Tilto g. 17, detaliųjų archeologinių tyrimų 2015 m. ataskaita*. Vilnius. Unpublished excavations report. In: LII, f. 1, b. 7400.
- Gendrenas, G., Ožalas, E., 2008. *Vilnius 2002. Karaliaus Mindaugo tilto prieigos. Žvalgomieji archeologiniai tyrimai. Ataskaita VIII/I dalis (tekstas, priedai)*. Vilnius. Unpublished excavations report. In: LII, f. 1, b. 8112/8d.1.
- Girlevičius, L., 2004. *Archeologinių tyrinėjimų ir žvalgymų, vykdytų Žygimantų g. Nr. 2, Vilniuje, 2003 metais ataskaita*. Vilnius. Unpublished excavations report. In: LII, f. 1, b. 4100.
- Girlevičius, L., 2013. *Radvilų g. 5, Vilniuje, Vilniaus senajo miesto su priemiesčiais (25504) teritorijoje, 2012 metais atliktų žvalgomųjų archeologinių tyrimų ataskaita*. Vilnius. Unpublished excavations report. In: LII, f. 1, b. 6137.
- Gudynaitė, B., 2008. *Vilnius 2002. Karaliaus Mindaugo tilto prieigos. Žvalgomieji archeologiniai tyrimai. Ataskaita. VIII/III dalis (atkastų mūrų įvertinimas)*. Vilnius. Unpublished excavations report. In: LII, f. 1, b. 8112/8d.3.
- Kontrimas, D., 2018. *Vilniaus senajo miesto su priemiesčiais (25504) ir Vilniaus senamiesčio (16073), Žygimantų g. 1, žvalgomųjų ir detaliųjų archeologinių tyrimų 2017 m. ataskaita*. Vilnius. Unpublished excavations report. In: LII, f. 1, b. 8286.
- Kvizikevičius, L., 2002. *2002 m. žvalgomieji tyrimai Vilniuje, Tilto g. Nr. 17*. Vilnius. Unpublished excavations report. In: LII, f. 1, b. 3908.
- Morelowski M. 1940–1942. *Vilnius prieš 1655 metus. Rekonstrukcinio plano 318 numerių paaiškinimas*. Vilnius. Unpublished manuscript. In: Office of the Chief Archivist of Lithuania, corpus 1019, inventory 11, file No. 4358.
- Sarcevičius, S., 1997. *1997 m. Vilniuje Tilto g. Nr. 17 geologinių tyrimų metu vykdytų mažos apimties archeologinių tyrimų ataskaita*. Vilnius. Unpublished excavations report. In: LII, f. 1, b. 2891.
- Sarcevičius, S., 2000. *1999 m. Vilniuje, Tilto gt. Nr. 19-27 žvalgomųjų archeologinių tyrimų ataskaita*. Vilnius. Unpublished excavations report. In: LII, f. 1, b. 3363.
- Šmigelskas, R., 2020. *Vilniaus senajo miesto ir priemiesčių archeologinės vietovės (25504) ir Jono Juozapo Tiškevičiaus rūmų (1087) teritorijos, Vilniaus m. sav., Vilniaus m., Žygimantų g. 3, žvalgomųjų archeologinių tyrimų ir archeologinių žvalgymų 2019 m. ataskaita*. Vilnius Unpublished excavations report. In: LII, f. 1, b. 9649.
- Tebelškis, P., 1976. *Vilniaus m. Tilto g. Nr.6 geologinių tyrimų archeologinės priežiūros darbų ataskaita*. Vilnius. Unpublished excavations report. In: LII, f. 1, b. 474.
- The Inventory of Vilnius castle caretaker*. 1738. In: Lithuanian State Historical Archives, corpus 11, file No. 1058, page 23.
- Vaitkevičius, V., 2010–2011. *Bajorų kapinyno (Elektrėnų sav.) archeologinių tyrimų 2010 m. ataskaita*. Vilnius. In: LII, f. 1, b. 5613.
- Vengalis, R., 2013. *Kernavės senovės gyvenvietėje (16316), Kernavės senajo miesto vietoje (24567) ir Semeniškių senovės gyvenvietėje II (24574) (Širvintų r.) 2010 m. vykdytų archeologinių tyrinėjimų ataskaita*. Vilnius. In: LII, f. 1, b. 5940.

## Published sources

- Gedimino laišakai [Letters of Gediminas], 2003. *Chartularium Lithuaniae res gestas magni ducis Gedemine illustrans*. Ed. S. C. Rowell. Vilnius: Vaga
- Lietuvos metraštinė, 1971. *Bychovco kronika* [Bychowiec Chronicle]. Lituanistinė biblioteka, Vilnius: Vaga.
- Lietuvos Metrika* [Lithuanian Metrica], 1998. Kn. Nr. 3 (1440–1498). Užrašymų kn. 3. Vilnius: Žara.
- Vygandas Marburgietis, 1999. *Naujoji Prūsijos kronika* [Cronica nova Prutenica]. Vilnius: Vaga.

## Literature

- Balinskis, M., 2007. *Vilniaus miesto istorija* [Historia Miasta Wilna]. Vilnius: Mintis.
- Baltramiejūnaitė, D., Vengalis, R., 2010. Tyrinėjimai Semeniškėse. In: *ATL 2009 metais*. Vilnius: Lietuvos archeologijos draugija, pp. 99–105.
- Drėma, V., 1991. *Dingęs Vilnius*. Vilnius: Vaga
- Grinkevičiūtė, A., Vaitkevičius, V., 2007. Bajorų kapinynas. In: *ATL 2006 metais*. Vilnius: Lietuvos archeologijos draugija, pp. 146–153.
- Jogėla, V., Meilus, E., Pugačiauskas, V., 2008. *Lukiškės: nuo priemiesčio iki centro (XV a. – XX a. pradžia)*. Vilnius: Diemedžio leidykla.
- Jonaitis, R., Kaplūnaitė, I., 2020. *Senkapis Vilniuje, Bokšto gatvėje. XIII–XV a. laidosenos Lietuvoje bruožai*. Vilnius: Lietuvos istorijos institutas.
- Jurkštas, J., 1990. *Senojo Vilniaus vandenys*. Vilnius: Mokslas.
- Katalynas, K., 2006. *Vilniaus plėtra XIV–XVII a.* Vilnius: Diemedžio leidykla.
- Kirkor, A. H., 1889. *Przewodnik po Wilnie i jego okolicach*. Wilno.
- Kitkauskas, N., 1989. *Vilniaus pilys: statyba ir architektūra*. Vilnius: Mokslas.
- Markevičienė, J., 2002. Pamiršta hipotezė, arba Vilniaus miesto sandara XIV–XV amžiuje. *Menotyra*, 3 (28), 30–45.
- Narbutas, T., 1997. *Lietuvių tautos istorija*, t. 4. Vilnius: Mintis.
- Remecas, E., 2012. The Tiltos Street hoard in Vilnius (1698/1999). In: G., Zabiela, Z., Baubonis, E., Marcinkevičiūtė, eds. *Archaeological investigations in independent Lithuania (1990–2010)*. Vilnius: Society of the Lithuanian Archaeology, pp. 380–381.
- Sadauskas, I., 2018. Radvilų rūmai Puškarnioje. In: *ATL 2017 metais*. Vilnius: Lietuvos archeologijos draugija, pp. 231–236.
- Sarcevičius, S., 2012. Lukiškių priemiesčio rytinė dalis iki XVII a. vid. archeologijos duomenimis. In: G. Vaitkevičius, ed. *Miestų praeitis*, 3. Vilnius: Lietuvos istorijos institutas.
- Strykowski, M., 1846. *Kronika Polska Litewska* *Żmódzka i wszystkiej Rusi. T. 2*. Warszawa: Gustaw Leon Glücksberg.
- Šmigelskas, R., Sadauskas, I., 2013. Žygimantų gatvė 1. In: *ATL 2012 metais*. Vilnius: Lietuvos archeologijos draugija, pp. 519–520.
- Ščavinskis, M., 2021. *Kristus prieš Belialą. I tomas. Lietuvių anapusinio pasaulio vaizdinių christianizacija Viduramžiais*. Klaipėda: Klaipėdos universiteto leidykla.
- Urbanavičius, V., Urbanavičienė, S., 1988. Archeologiniai tyrimai. *Lietuvos Arch.*, 6, 9–63.
- Vaicekuskas, A., 2003. Žvalgomieji tyrinėjimai Vilniuje. In: *ATL 2003 metais*. Vilnius: Lietuvos archeologijos draugija, pp. 227–229.
- Vaitkevičius, G., 2010. *Vilniaus įkūrimas* (=Vilniaus sąsiuviniai, t. I). Vilnius: Lietuvos nacionalinis muziejus.
- Vaitkevičius, V., 2003. Senosios Vilniaus šventvietės. *Šiaurės Atėnai*, Nr. 676–677, 10–11.

- Vaitkevičius, V., 2009. Bajorų kapinynas. In: *ATL 2008 metais*. Vilnius: Lietuvos archeologijos draugija, pp. 134–140.
- Vaitkevičius, V., 2010. Bajorų kapinynas. In: *ATL 2009 metais*. Vilnius: Lietuvos archeologijos draugija, pp. 128–135.
- Vaitkevičius, V., 2011. Bajorų kapinynas. In: *ATL 2010 metais*. Vilnius: Lietuvos archeologijos draugija, pp. 116–123.
- Vaitkevičius, V., 2012. Bajorų kapinynas. In: *ATL 2011 metais*. Vilnius: Lietuvos archeologijos draugija, pp. 136–147.
- Vaitkevičius, V., Grinkevičiūtė, A., 2008. Bajorų kapinynas. In: *ATL 2007 metais*. Vilnius: Lietuvos archeologijos draugija, pp. 192–198.
- Valionienė, O., 2019. *Viduramžių Vilniaus erdvės evoliucija (XIII a. vidurys – XVI a. pirmas ketvirtis)*. Vilnius: Lietuvos istorijos institutas.
- Vengalis, R., 2011. Semeniškių kapinynas. In: *ATL 2010 metais*. Vilnius: Lietuvos archeologijos draugija, pp. 124–127.
- Vijūkas-Kojelavičius, A., 1988. *Lietuvos istorija*. Vilnius: Vaga.
- Vitkauskienė, B.R., 2010. Vilniaus pabūklų liejyklos teritorija (Puškarnia) XVI–XVIII a. šaltiniuose. Istoriniai tyrimai. In: G. Vaitkevičius, ed. *Miestų praeitis*, 2. Vilnius: Lietuvos istorijos institutas.
- Voitechovich, A. V., 2019. *Pogrebal'nyi obriad naselenia Poldotskoi zemli v X–XII vv.* Minsk: Beloruskaia nauka.

## TILTO GATVĖ VILNIUJE – LEGENDOS IR ARCHEOLOGINIAI DUOMENYS

### IRMA KAPLŪNAITĖ, RYTIS JONAITIS

#### Santrauka

Dabartinė Tiltos gatvė (anksčiau vadinta gatve, vedančia iki Žaliojo tilto, Katedros gatve ir pan.) Vilniuje ir jos aplinka nuo XV a. buvo ilgalaikė sudėtinė Lukiškių priemiesčio dalis, per kelis šimtus metų išgyvenusi ne vieną pokytį. Ši gatvė buvo šiaurvakarinis kelias, vedęs iki pilių, čia XIV a. pabaigoje buvo įsikūrusi Vilnių puolusios kryžiuočių kariuomenės stovykla. XV a. pabaigoje ar XVI a. netoli Tiltos gatvės buvo pastatyti Radvilų rūmai. Istoriografijoje keliami hipotezė, kad čia galėjo būti Šventaragio slėnio – legendinio pagonių kulto centro – dalis. Nors vieta buvo drėgna ir pelkėta, ne itin patogi gyventi, reikšmės jai teikė gamtinė situacija ir topografija. Pastaraisiais dešimtmečiais šioje miesto dalyje dažniau pradėti vykdyti archeologiniai tyrimai. Ypač informatyvūs darbai vyko šiaurinėje teritorijos dalyje, buvusių Radvilų rūmų aplinkoje. Surinkta informacija papildoma ir koreguoja istorinių šaltinių žinias apie Tiltos gatvės ir jos aplinkos raidą, kartu itin gerai atskleidžia laikotarpį, kai vietovė buvo sudėtinė Radvilų valdų dalis.

Apibendrinus archeologinius tyrimus nustatyta, kad kultūrinio sluoksnio storis čia siekia iki 5 metrų, o intensyvesnis jo formavimasis prasideda tik XV a. antrojoje pusėje – XVI a. Tiltos gatvės ir jos aplinkos suklestėjimas

siejamas su laikotarpiu, kai jau formavosi Puškarnios rajonas, buvo pastatyti Radvilų rūmai. Tokia situacija kelia klausimų dėl vietovės paskirties miesto kūrimosi laikotarpiu. Nors Tiltu gatvė ir jos aplinka istoriografijoje kartais siejama su legendinio Šventaragio slėnio dalimi – giraitė ar deginimo vieta, tai patvirtinančios medžiagos nebuvo aptikta. Vis dėlto negalima atmesti prielaidos, kad nagrinėjama teritorija XIV a. galėjo būti susijusi su degintinių palaiškų laidojimu. Vietovės topografija ir gamtinė situacija atrodo tinkama degintinio kapinyno ar sudegintų mirusiųjų laidojimo vandenyje vieta. Deja, archeologinių tyrimų metu čia neaptikta jokių tokios veiklos pėdsakų. Galima spėti, kad jei čia ir buvo laidojimo vieta, kapinynas ar kokia nors su pagonišku kultu susijusi vieta, visos liekanos galėjo būti sunaikintos nuolat augančio ir besiformuojančio miesto. Vis dėlto, daugėjant archeologinių tyrimų, išlieka galimybė, kad šioje miesto dalyje pavyks apčiuopti ankstyvesnių, dar pagoniškų laikų, žmonių veiklos pėdsakų, nors ir neintensyvių.