

People have been living in Juuru Parish for thousands of years and left traces on both physical and spiritual landscapes. In Juuru one can find ancient fields, cup-marked stones, settlements, strongholds, hideouts and sacred groves, sacred stones, springs and trees. Sites in Juuru are alive and tell their stories to aware and open-minded listeners.

The route introduces some of the natural sites of Juuru parish that have been given a special meaning by people who lived in the past. It is especially suitable for visitors who wish to get acquainted with local nature and the non-material heritage of native Estonians in the landscape.



Information about the road conditions: normal roads (usually paved, sometimes gravel or dirt roads)



Information about the length of the route and hours: total route length: 50 km; time: 4.5–10 hours (car or bus) or 6–11.5 hours (bicycle)

### 1. PAE KARST AREA, FOOTSTEPS OF THE DEVIL

Kehtna borough, Pae village

Take the Juuru – Rapla road that leads to Pae village. Continue along the gravel road to the south of the village for 1.4 km until you reach a deciduous forest between Sepa and Lame farms. Access along a barely visible walking path

✦ X: 6539996 Y: 552175.1

There are a number of dolines and concavities, small caves and corries that are all located in a fairly small area covered with deciduous forest. In the Eastern part of the wilderness preserve, on the border of the one-time edge of the Baltic Ice Lake. The area of the wilderness preserve is 11 ha. According to a folktale on Pae karst area there was once a city with iron gates that sank into the ground. Later on the sound of churchbells was often heard on the same spot. The corries and cracks in the surface

have been believed to be the traces of the Devil's fingernails and footsteps.

### 2. REHE CUP-MARKED STONE OF HÖREDA VILLAGE

Juuru borough, Höreda village

75 m to the left of the Juuru – Höreda – Rapla road along a dirt road. 5 m to the north of the dirt road on an untended grassland. Buses must be left by the road, cars can stop on the dirt road by the stone

✦ X: 6542486.2 Y: 553142.9

Length 4.4 m, width 4.1 m, height 1.6 m. Reddish stone with grey spots. 46 cup-marks with a diameter 5–9 cm, depth 1–3 cm. According to scientists making of the marks is connected to land cultivation. A few cup-marked stones have also been used for sacrificing. According to very few folk stories the marks were made to remember the dead. Also, the marks have been rubbed with sheep wool and fat for good fortune.



### 3. THE OAKS OF JUURU

Juuru borough, at the southern edge of Juuru hamlet

Behind the dwelling house at Staadioni 10, on the field by the small gardens. 110 m to the north of the Purila – Kaiu highway. Parking: by the road. Access across the grassland and field. No road

✦ X: 6546690.6 Y: 554982.7

Two sacred trees. 1st oak: perimeter 375 cm (diameter 1.3 m), height 18 m; 2nd oak: perimeter 420 cm (diameter 1.3 m), height 16 m. According to folk tales ribbons have been tied to Juuru oaks and they are remains of an ancient sacred oak grove. It is said that Juuru church was built between the roots of oak trees and was, therefore, named Juuriku or Juuru ('of the root'). According to another story, a church had been standing between the two oaks but it sank to the ground.



### 4. JÄRLEPA CROSSROADS

Juuru borough, Järlepa village

Crossroad of Mahtra – Järlepa road and Lõiu – Järlepa road

✦ X: 6554652.4 Y: 552103.9

Women have visited the Järlepa crossroad in secret to follow ancient traditions. They were dressed in white and carried a spinning wheel with them. Järlepa is special because even though any crossroad in Estonia might have been used for witchcraft in the past, in Järlepa the traditions have remained. The preferred time for practicing witchcraft has been full moon Thursday.

### 5. IIDA CAVITIES (ALSO KNOWN AS KUIMETSA KARST, IIE HILLS, IIE CAVERN, HIIDE SPRUCE GROVE)

Kaiu borough, Kuimetsa and Vaopere villages

On both sides of the Kose – Purila highway. The area is located on both sides of the road. There is a road sign directing to the parking lot of the nature preserve and the hiking trail. Access along an unpaved trail and paths directly from the road or from the parking lot. The more exciting caves form a hiking trail marked on the map of the info stand

✦ X: 6547058.1 Y: 565488.3

Many karst formations can be observed at one of the biggest and most unique karst area of Estonia: dolines, karst valleys, corries, canals and caves. 5 caves are big enough to enter. One of the most exciting ones is a 12 m long and 8 m wide cave located in the bottom of a doline and shaped in the form of a bandstand. During high water it is possible to observe water running in the cracks and canals and listen to the sound of it underground, during low water it is barely visible. It is assumed that during the crusade of 1220 tragic events described in the chronicles took place in the

lida cavities: "The loot of the Livonians was enormous because they besieged the caves of the Harju people where they were used to hide, and they suffocated all men and women by making fires in the entrances of the caves for several days and nights. And if anyone came out of the cavities alive, they killed some of them and imprisoned the others and took all their belongings and clothes and money and everything else. And there were more than 1000 people of both genders who suffocated in the cavities. And afterwards the Livonians returned together with the Germans and praised the Lord for having submitted the arrogant hearts of the Harju people to Christianity" (Livonian Chronicle of Henrik, 2005, page 141). "During the ancient times of independent Estonia, there was the city of Iida in this area. After the Germans came and Estonians

lost their freedom, the city sank into the ground. But it will rise again when Estonians win back their freedom." – It is said that Estonians in serfdom of the German feudals strongly believed in this story. Going to work every morning before sunrise, they had a look in the direction of the lost city to check whether its lights could be seen yet as a sign that the city would rise again and they would be free again." The passages of Iida cavities are often regarded as the streets of the lost city of Iida.

## TOURISM INFORMATION

### Rapla Tourism Information Centre

Viljandi mnt 4, Rapla  
+372 489 4359  
turism@raplamaa.ee  
www.raplamaa.ee/en/tourist\_information

### North Estonia Tourism Centre

+372 5330 8130  
info@northeastonia.eu  
www.northeastonia.eu/en

### Mahtra Peasantry Museum

Muuseumi 1, Juuru alevik,  
Juuru vald, Raplamaa  
+372 484 4199  
info@mahtramuseum.ee  
www.mahtramuseum.ee/Mahtra\_Peasantry\_Museum\_119.htm

### Estonian Nature Information System

Overviews of protected areas and habitats of protected species  
http://loodus.keskkonnainfo.ee/WebEelis/infoleht.aspx?lang=eng



## OTHER SACRED PLACES IN THE REGION TO VISIT

Cup-marked stones have borne witness to the history of domesticated agriculture and settlement in Estonia. Approximately 1,750 cup-marked stones have been found in Estonia and they are mainly located in three counties in northern Estonia: Lääne – Viru, Ida – Viru and Harju. Historical Juuru parish in Harju County is particularly rich in cup-marked stones, with 30 cup-marked stones featured in this list. Cup-marked stones have small cup-marks with a diameter of 3–10 cm and a depth of 0.5–5 cm. A cup-marked stone usually has from 1–10 cup-marks. Nõiakivi (Witch's stone) in Assaku near Tallinn has the most, with 405 cup-marks. Boulders of all sizes and appearances can be cup-marked stones. The smallest cup-marked stone found thus far could almost fit into a pocket. As a rule, the cup-marks have been carved on to the surface of the stone, and in some cases, on its side. No folklore is generally associated with cup-marked stones and they have been found solely according to their external characteristics, the cup-marks. No archaeological finds were made around cup-marked stones that could be associated with the making of the

cup-marks or the use of the cup-marked stones. Scholars associate the making of the cup-marks on the stones with slash and burn agriculture and settlement in the late Iron Age. The cup-marks were probably made 2,000–3,000 years ago. The greatest share of the cup-marked stones is currently located on land under cultivation. The cup-marks could have a religious function, or some practical purpose unknown to us. The suppositions that the cup-marks are related to folk astronomy, a sun cult, honouring ancestors or sacrifices have not yet been proved. The development of research into the cup-marked stones is reflected by the changes in name for the phenomenon over the last century: In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century they were called ohvrikivid (sacrificial stones), during the Soviet period they were called cult stones, and from the late 20<sup>th</sup> century they were known as cup-marked stones. A few of the cup-marked stones were used for sacrifices as well. According to a few traditional sources, the cup-marks were made to remember the dead. The cup-marks were also rubbed with sheep's wool and lanolin for good luck with sheep farming.

### 6. PAE CUP-MARKED STONE

Pae village

At the Eastern edge of the gravel road leading to Pae village from the Juuru – Rapla road, 105 m directly along the village road towards the village. Parking for cars or bus by the side of the road

✦ X: 6541121.1 Y: 552033.6

2 m long, 1.5 m wide, 0.7 m high, greyish. 5 cup marks, diameter 5–6 cm, depth 1–1.5 cm.

### 7. PAE CUP-MARKED STONE

Pae village

Directly along the village road and entry road of the Järve farm on the green area. Parking for cars or bus by the side of the road

✦ X: 6541042.9 Y: 552068.6

Length 2.4 m, width 1.8 m, height 1.55 m, grey, with pink spots.

### 8. HÖREDA CUP-MARKED STONE 1

Höreda village

75 m to the East of the Juuru – Höreda – Rapla road, on pastureland. Parking for cars by the side of the road

✦ X: 6542789.1 Y: 553270.5

2<sup>nd</sup> (starting from the right) of the four cup-marked stones. Pink, with grey spots. Length 3.25 m, width 2.8 m, height 0.5 m. Trapeze shaped, flat-topped. Two boreholes (distance from each other: 7 cm) in the middle

of the stone. 4 cup-marks (diameter 5–7 cm, depth 1–1.5 cm) to the South and South-West of them.

### 9. HÖREDA CUP-MARKED STONE 2

Höreda village

70 m to the East of the Juuru – Höreda – Rapla road, 20 m to the North of the ditch, on pastureland. Parking for cars by the side of the road

✦ X: 6542770.4 Y: 553261.1

1<sup>st</sup> (starting from the right) of the four cup-marked stones. Length 2.5 m, width 1.5 m, height 40 cm, flat. Cup-marks have disappeared together with the top layer of the stone.

### 10. HÖREDA CUP-MARKED STONE 3

Höreda village

85 m to the South-East of the Juuru – Höreda – Rapla road, on pastureland. Parking for cars by the side of the road

✦ X: 6542835.9 Y: 553301.7

4<sup>th</sup> (starting from the right) of the four cup-marked stones. Pinkish, with grey spots. Length 2.98 m, width 1.7 m, height 0.65 m. Curved shape. In the middle of the stone there is a borehole from where start three crannies – explosion marks. There are 7 cup marks (diameter 4–6 cm, depth 0.5–1 cm).

### 11. HÖREDA CUP-MARKED STONE 4

Höreda village

50 m to the East of the Juuru – Höreda – Rapla road, on the field in a bird cherry (Padus avium) bush. Parking for cars by the side of the road

✦ X: 6542804 Y: 553255.7

3<sup>rd</sup> (starting from the right) of the four cup-marked stones, in the bird cherry (Padus avium) bush. Grey, with pink spots. Length 2.6 m, width 2.2 m, height 1.35 m. Top layer and cup-marks have disappeared.

### 12. MÄNNIKU BIG STONE

Härgla village

From Juuru – Höreda – Rapla road, 60 m down a forest path. Parking for cars by the side of the road

✦ X: 6550409.4 Y: 550883.1

Dark grey, one part has broken off. Length 6 m, width 4 m, height 3.4 m. The separated part is 4.6 m long, 2.6 m wide, up to 1.5 m high. It has a cup mark (diameter 7 cm, depth 1.5 cm).

### 13. HÄRGLA CUP-MARKED STONE

Härgla village

60 m to the East of the soil path that leads from the Pirgu – Juuru road to Härgla village, on the field. Parking for cars by the side of the road

✦ X: 6550805.1 Y: 551084.8

Beneath a bird cherry bush (Padus avium). Reddish, 2.5 m long, 2 m wide, 1.5 m high. One side covered with fist-sized fieldstones. On the upper top there are 10 cup marks (diameter 5–6 cm, depth 2–4 cm).

### 14. PIRGU CUP-MARKED STONE

Pirgu village

10 m to the North of the Juuru – Järlepa road, on pastureland

Parking for cars by the side of the road

✦ X: 6555861.2 Y: 549398.8

2.8 m long, 1.95 m wide, 0.8 m high, grey. In the lower part of the stone there are 3 cup marks, diameter 5–6 cm, depth 1–2 cm.

### 15. PIRGU CUP-MARKED STONE

Pirgu village

40 m to the South-East of the crossroad of Seli – Angerja road and Pirgu manor road, on a grassland. Parking for cars by the side of the road

✦ X: 6554276.1 Y: 548051.4

4.34 m long, 3.2 m wide, 1.31 m high, greyish pink. In the higher North-Western part of the stone there is a cup mark with a diameter 7 cm, depth 2 cm.

## ABOUT HIITE MAJA FOUNDATION

Hiite Maja Foundation was established in 2008 to research, introduce and preserve the cultural and natural heritage of native Estonians. Until now the main activities have included the implementation of activities foreseen in the national development plan for natural sacred sites of Estonia. Hiite Maja has compiled a database of sacred sites, ordered a legal analyses of their situation and prepared a draft to make changes to the law concerning them, ordered public opinion polls and participated in the organization of lectures in Tartu University and Estonian University of Life Sciences. Fieldwork has been carried out in Muhu,

Juuru, Kuusalu and Põlva parishes. In the framework of the international project Cult Identity Hiite Maja was in charge of preparing a document including guidelines for protection and management of sacred sites. Hiite Maja has also participated in the making of a documentary about sacred groves, organization of a photo exhibition about sacred sites and many other activities connected to sacred sites.



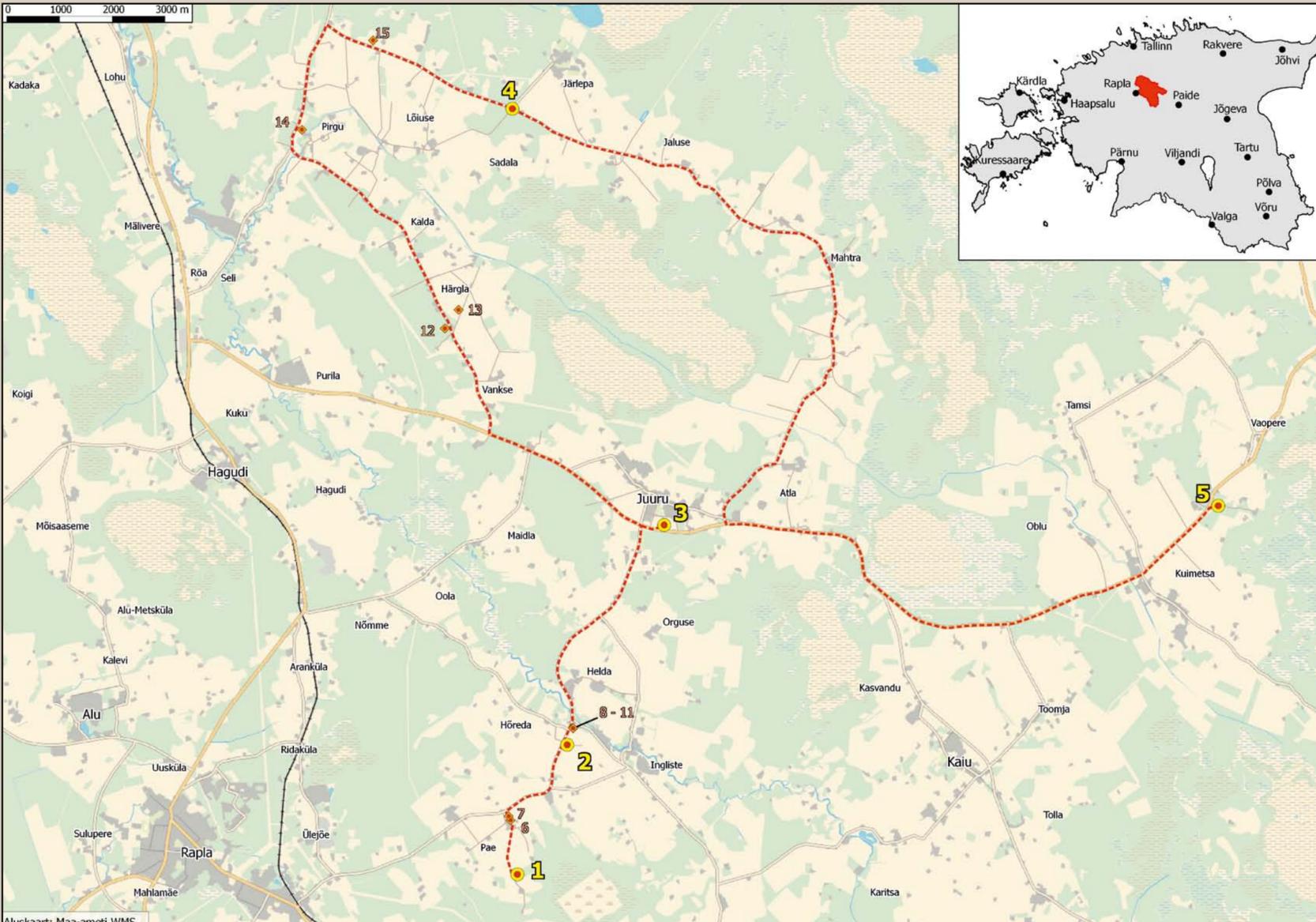
Contact Information [www.hiis.ee](http://www.hiis.ee), e-mail address: [juhatus@hiis.ee](mailto:juhatus@hiis.ee)



# Ancient natural sacred sites

## JUURU PARISH

### TOURISM MAP



Aluskaart: Maa-ameti WMS

### GOOD PRACTICES

People usually go to sacred sites to contemplate, gather strength, ask for health and advice, pray and give offerings. Sacred sites bring comfort and help to people who come there with respect towards the site and native people and follow historic practices.

#### CLEANLINESS

Come to sacred site sober, with clean body, clothes and mind and do not leave trash or filth behind. Like churches, sacred sites are accessed on foot and animals are not brought along.

#### INTACTNESS

Folk tales say that living beings – person, animal, tree, bush or earth – must not be hurt with thought, word or action in sacred sites. Branches must not be broken, flowers, berries and mushrooms must not be picked, fish must not be caught, other gifts of nature must not be gathered.

#### PEACE

Peace and quite is kept in sacred sites not to disturb their inhabitants or visitors. Each tree, stone, water body and site has a soul or an elf.

#### OFFERINGS

Ribbons and yarn tied to trees as offerings should be made of natural fiber. It would be the best if the ribbons were white or red and made by the person him/herself. The ribbon should not be made of artificial fibre or tied too tightly. Coins, objects of value and silver dust are also appropriate offerings. Some fresh food and drink may also be left behind as offering.

#### BREAKING THE RULES

Most probably, places with special power have become sacred sites. Therefore, they may bring misfortune to people who behave wrong there. Both from the past as well as the present there are a lot of examples of people who have disturbed or spoilt sacred sites and later got hurt, ill or even died. Therefore, ancient traditions should be treated with respect – better safe than sorry.

### TRADITIONAL FESTIVALS/CELEBRATIONS IN THE REGION



#### SHROVE TUESDAY (VASTLAPÄEV)

Shrove Tuesday is a moving holiday, here are the dates for the next 5 years – 2013: 12.02. • 2014: 04.03. • 2015: 17.02. 2016: 09.02. • 2017: 28.02. No specific location, people go sledging to whatever hills nearby

A day for merry sledging, eating green pea soup and buns and making traditional toys. Sledging gives health and happiness to the people who do it as well as their households. Even though Shrove Tuesday is not a public holiday, many schools and offices go sledging together.

#### ST. JOHN'S EVE (JAANILAUPEEV)

23.06. No certain location, bonfires are made on festivity grounds of towns and villages. For more specific information turn to the tourism information centre in Rapla (see below)

The day before summer solstice. Towns, villages and very many families make bonfires. St. John's bonfire's warmth and smoke have got healing and blessing powers and everybody should bring at least one small piece of wood into it.



#### ALL SOULS' DAY (HINGEDEPÄEV)

2.11. Candles are lit on cemeteries and at homes On the night of All Souls' Day candles are lit on the cemeteries and homes of Estonia. Estonians believe that from autumn until Christmas, during the all souls' time, our ancestors' souls can come to visit us and that keeping a bond with them brings us luck.

#### ST. MARTIN'S EVE (MARDILAUPEEV)

9.11. On St. Martin's Eve peculiar looking people with faces covered with paint or hid behind masks and dressed in weird clothes can be met in villages and town streets. They impersonate souls and go from door to door, sing, dance, give riddles and ask for treats. They give their blessing to generous families and households. A couple of weeks later (24.11.) people celebrate St. Catherine's Eve and go from door to door dressed in white.



Throughout all times people have been fascinated by the power and captivation of nature. It is possible to establish balanced relationships between people and nature by knowing and using the environment with responsibility as well as respecting it. Such attitude has led Estonians through thousands of years to becoming one of the oldest nations in Europe. Estonian landscape, water bodies, stones, and ancient trees form a part of the non-material heritage of native Estonians. Cup-marked stones tell us about the beginning of land cultivation, places connected to supernatural beings narrate ancient stories and natural sacred sites maintain the knowledge that nature and life are sacred.

International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and World Wildlife Fund (WWF) confirm that natural sacred sites are the oldest nature conservation areas of humankind. Estonians have protected nature in sacred groves since ancient times. The varied landscape and rich biological diversity of Estonia today are - at least partly - a result of that. Compared to the rest of Europe, natural sacred sites as well as traditions and beliefs connected to them in Estonia have survived to great extent until today.

Already our ancestors perceived that peculiar might manifested itself in natural sacred sites. When treated with respect, they may bring health, fertility, success, inner wisdom and peace of mind. Such might of nature also manifests itself during certain sacred times of the year that we also celebrate today: All Souls' Day, Christmas, Shrove Tuesday and St. John's Day.

This brochure gives a slight insight into the heritage of Juuru parish.

[www.ancientsites.eu](http://www.ancientsites.eu)



Publisher: SA Hiite Maja  
[www.hiis.ee](http://www.hiis.ee)

Photo: A. Kaasik; Arne Ader; © O. Lebedeva, © B. Calkins (Dreamstime.com)

Cover photo: © Sborisov (Dreamstime.com)

Prepared by: Karsu Izdevniecība Jāņa sēta, [www.kartes.lv](http://www.kartes.lv)



The booklet has been developed within the scope of the project of the Central Baltic Sea region cross-border cooperation programme INTERREG IV A 2007-2013 "Ancient Cult Sites – Common Identity of the Shore of the Baltic Sea. The content of the publication reflects the authors views and the Managing Authority cannot be held liable for the information published by the project partners.