Zigmantas Kiaupa, Jūratė Kiaupienė, Albinas Kuncevičius. **Lietuvos istorija iki 1795 m.** [The History of Lithuania Before 1795].

Lietuvos istorijos institutas, Vilnius, Lituanistikos tyrimo ir studijų centras, Vilnius: Valstybinis leidybos centras, 1995. Pp. 444, 12 maps, 62 ill. ISBN 9986-09-082-2;

Lietuvos istorijos institutas; Vilnius: Arlila, 1998. Pp. 381, 13 maps, 66 ill. ISBN 9986-810-09-4;

Lietuvos istorijos institutas; Vilnius: A. Varno personalinė įmonė, 2000. Pp. 381, 13 maps, 66 ill. ISBN 9986-491-52-5.

Zigmantas Kiaupa, Jūratė Kiaupienė, Albinas Kuncevičius. **The History of Lithuania Before 1795.** Lithuanian Institute of History; Vilnius: Arlila, 2000. Pp. 402, 15 maps. ISBN 9986-810-13-2

The books (three Lithuanian and one English editions), comprised of three major parts, present a general survey of the history of Lithuania from the first settlement of its territory until the fall of the Lithuanian state in 1795.

Albinas Kuncevičius is the author of the first part ('Lietuvos proistorė/Lithuanian Prehistory'), consisting of the following sections: Primaeval Settlement of the Country, The First Sedentary People of Lithuania, Formation of the Baltic Tribal Units, Unions of the Baltic Tribes and On the Eve of the Lithuanian State.

The second part 'Lietuvos Didžioji Kunigaikštystė nuo valstybės susidarymo iki Liublino unijos'/'The Grand Duchy of Lithuania from the Establishment of the State to the Union of Lublin' and the third part 'Lietuvos Didžioji Kunigaikštystė Abiejų Tautų Respublikoje 1569-1795'/'The Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the Republic of the Two Nations, 1569-1795' were written by Jūratė Kiaupienė and Zigmantas Kiaupa. These two parts comprise the following sections: The Establishment of the State, Gediminid Lithuania Before Christianization, The Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the Times of Vytautas and Jogaila, Lithuanian Society Between Vytautas and the Union of Lublin, The Political History of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania up to the Union of Lublin, The Country and its People, Nations, Religions and Culture, Aspects of the Political History of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania from Sigismund Vasa up to Augustus III, and The Breakdown of the Reforms and the State. The publications

also contain a survey of the related research of the prehistory and history of Lithuania.

The authors made attempts to avoid radical assessments and generalizations and to show that important issues, in particular those debated in historical scholarship, could be interpreted variously. The books place emphasis on the major aspects of the socio-political development of the Lithuanian tribes, the emergence of the nation and of the old Lithuanian state in their various historical periods, they reveal the formation and development of Lithuanian statehood and the concomitant social, confessional and cultural phenomena. The studies disclose the peculiarities of the existence of the Lithuanian pagan state and the causes and aftermath of its belated baptism in 1387. Lithuania's joining Christian Europe and the choice of its Western doctrine was a radical turn in the history of the country, conditioning the progress of its social structure, culture and the way of life. Much attention is paid to the multilateral ethnical and confessional structure of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, its relations with the neighbours, in the first place with the Teutonic Order (subsequently Prussia), the Muscovy state (afterwards Russia), Poland, the rapprochement with the latter, and the life under the circumstances of the union. The authors argue that in the union with Poland, in the framework of the Republic of the Two Nations, Lithuania preserved the status of a sovereign state until the disintegration of the Commonwealth.

Z. K.