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The Horse in Baltic Mythology: Funeral and Sacrificial Rites to the Gods

Summary

This article, based on written sources from the 9th-16th centuries, analyzes the functions of the horse in ancient funeral rites and the function of the horse in the pantheon of ancient gods, as well as the image of the horse implied by these functions in the customs, folklore, and beliefs of the 19th-20th centuries.

The conclusion is reached that the status of the horse in the ancient Baltic religion is special. It is an animal of the gods, and at the same time a medium between gods and people, between people and the worlds of dead ancestors.

Keywords: horse, sacrifices, funeral rites.