

PREFACE

The range of underwater archaeological studies, the foundations for which were laid in Lithuania by a group of researchers from Klaipėda University's Institute of Baltic Region History and Archaeology, headed by Professor Vladas Žulkus, gets wider every year, and covers investigations both in fresh water and in the Baltic Sea. Having accumulated the required scientific and technical facilities for scientific research, scientists at Klaipėda University and their foreign counterparts have commenced studying the cultural and natural landscape under water in the Baltic Sea. Researchers from the underwater archaeology group work hand in hand with geologists, and are continuing to build up a database containing geological, geophysical and palaeogeographical information, as well as archaeological,

bioarchaeological and archival data. This data is vital for the future, as it will help to track the development of the cultural and natural landscape of the former coast of the Baltic Sea, investigate the factors that determined the unique mode of life of communities in the Baltic Sea region during Prehistoric and Early Historic times, and communication models and trends in the economic development of these communities, and, last but not least, the relations between the changing nature and the society of Prehistoric and Early Historic times.

Therefore, on 8 and 9 October 2009 an international conference devoted exclusively to underwater archaeology was held for the first time at Klaipėda University, under the title 'Underwater Archaeology in the



Vladas Žulkus presents the latest results of underwater archaeological research in the Baltic Sea (photograph by E. Ubis).

Baltic Region: Challenges and Perspectives’. The conference was organised by Klaipėda University, the Icomos Lithuanian National Committee, the Society for Lithuanian Archaeology, and the Department of the Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture. During the conference and parallel with it, a meeting of the Monitoring Group on the Cultural Heritage in the Baltic Sea States Underwater Culture Heritage Group was held, the members of which also presented reports to the conference. Ralf Bleile (Germany), the chairman of the group, and Vladas Žulkus, the rector of Klaipėda University, opened the conference with welcoming speeches. The conference was attended by researchers from Sweden, Finland, Latvia, Russia, the Kaliningrad region, Belarus and Lithuania. Some of the reports delivered by the researchers constitute the basis for articles published in Volume 14 of *Archaeologia Baltica* dedicated to the 65th birthday of Professor Vladas Žulkus, a pioneer of underwater archaeology in Lithuania.

Most of the reports delivered in the maritime archaeology section of the conference were devoted to studies of shipwrecks. Riika Alvik (Finland) presented a study of the 18th-century ship *Vrouw Maria* to the conference (‘Interpreting the 18th-Century Shipwreck Site “Vrouw Maria”’). Studies pertaining to a vessel dating from the 19th century were presented by Irina Boykina

(Kaliningrad region), who also presented video material (‘The Archaeological Finding “The Ship of the 19th Century”’). The results of the Nord Stream project were discussed in the report delivered by Petr Sorokin and Ayvar Stepanov (‘The Underwater Archaeological Search Project in the Eastern Part of the Gulf of Finland between 2006 and 2009. The Shipwrecks in the Russian Zone of the Nord Stream Project’). Rokas Kraniauskas discussed the subject of the evolution of boats on the basis of the boat recently discovered in Lake Rašia in ‘The Rašia Boat: From Logboat to Boat (A Case Study)’. Jim Hansson (Sweden) highlighted the impact of scuba diving and natural factors on shipwrecks in the course of time and the future prospects (‘How does Scuba Diving Affect our Wrecks?’). Olga Druzhinina (Kaliningrad region) delivered a report on issues related to the development of the Baltic Sea and the evolution of early human settlements in the east Baltic region, as well as discussing the results of a current project and future prospects (‘Investigations of the Evolution of the Baltic Sea and Early Human Settlement in the Eastern Baltic Area [Based on Materials from the Kaliningrad Region]’). Minna Leino (Finland) shared her experience in the area of underwater objects from the Late Period (18th to 20th century) in her report entitled ‘Reusing a Log-Barrier Embankment at the Suomenlinna Sea Fortress Islands’.



Participants in the conference in Klaipėda Old Town (photograph by E. Ubis).

Studies of wetland archaeological objects were presented by the Belarussian scientists Mikola Kryvaltsevich ('Wetland Archaeological Research of the Stone and Bronze Age Site in Belarussian Palesse: Some Results and Perspectives') and Maksim Charniauski and Mikhail Charniauski ('The Excavation of Kryvina Peat-Bog Settlements in Northern Belarus between 2000 and 2009'). Elena Pranckėnaitė summarised Lithuanian underwater archaeological research in freshwater basins ('Inland Water Archaeology in Lithuania: Investigations and Prospects'). Andrej Mazurkevich and Ekaterina Dolbunova (Russia) shared their experience in the area of pile-dwelling research ('The Results of Underwater Excavations at Serteya II, and Research into Pile-Dwellings in Northwest Russia'). Juris Urtans (Latvia) delivered a report on the subject 'Aerial Reconnaissance Methods for the Investigation of the Underwater Heritage in Latvia'.

Ayvar Stepanov (Russia) surprised everyone with the complicated conditions of underwater work and the unique archaeological material when he delivered a report and a short video on research on the River Volkhov in Velikiy Novgorod ('"Great Bridge" Archaeological Explorations in the River Volkhov'). The conference was concluded by Vldas Žulkus, who summarised the latest underwater archaeological research in the Baltic Sea ('Recent Finds in the Baltic Sea').

The conference was a meeting point for the scientific community interested in the exchange of new information and ideas about diverse aspects of the underwater heritage from different methodological and theoretical points of view. More broadly, it sought to indicate the challenges and pinpoint the possible development of research and conservation technologies. The conference also explored ways to define the region to make comparisons across it more feasible. During the meeting, the momentum and experience of the research of the last decades was discussed, which should generate more interest in underwater archaeology among students and researchers.

The introductory article in *Archaeologia Baltica* under the title 'Shipwrecks off the Coast of Lithuania' is by Vldas Žulkus, who is celebrating his jubilee. In his article, he reviews the findspots of shipwrecks discovered in Lithuanian territorial waters during underwater research in the Baltic Sea, and presents numerous historical facts dating back to the early 14th century and later times pertaining to information in written sources on ships that were wrecked in the Baltic Sea close to the Lithuanian coastline. The article presents methodological instructions and possibilities for searching for and dating shipwrecks. Professor Žulkus' article will undoubtedly serve as a major source for future re-

searchers in their studies of the history of Baltic Sea shipping from the Early Middle Ages to the 20th century.

Beside articles discussing underwater (Andrej Mazurkevich, Ekaterina Dolbunova, Jolaine Maigrot, Daria Hookk, Elena Pranckėnaitė, Niklas Eriksson, Rokas Kraniuskas, Andrzej Kola) and wetland (Michail Charniauski, Maxim Charniauski, Algirdas Girininkas, Audronė Bliujienė) archaeological research, Volume 14 of *Archaeologia Baltica* presents articles by Marika Mägi, Krista Karro, Minna Leino and Ulrica Söderlind highlighting research into the landscape of the Baltic coast in Prehistoric and Historic times.

Relations between the tribes who lived on the coast of the Baltic Sea in Prehistoric times are the subject of articles by Bartosz Kontny, Olga Homiakova and Wojciech Nowakowski.

Olga Druzhinina and Ivan Shkodnov present the latest data on the evolution of the formation of the Baltic Sea and early human settlements in the Kaliningrad region. Before the start of construction work on the Nord Stream pipeline on the bed of the Baltic Sea, Russian researchers working in underwater archaeology surveyed the area of the pipeline in Russian territorial waters, and they present here the results of their research.

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