

PREFACE

The international conference 'At the Origins of the Culture of the Balts', which was dedicated to the 60th birthday of Prof. Habil. Dr Algirdas Girininkas, was held on 23 September 2009. In reading their papers and offering their congratulations, colleagues, students and friends honoured a researcher who has created the unique 'Kretuonas School', generated new ideas, and used the expertise of researchers in various fields in order to carry out new projects. Modern laboratories devoted to archaeology and with the latest equipment will be set up in the future 'Sea Valley', which is just one of the recent projects that will soon become a reality thanks to the energy and self-sacrificing work of Algirdas Girininkas. It should be noted that Girininkas was the teacher who represented the origins of the culture of the Balts in every possible sense to many of those who were in attendance, and to some he still is. Girininkas is capable of seeing the research potential in a young person, leading some 'akmenologai' (or 'stoneologists') to choose the difficult vocation of an archaeologist thanks to him (Fig. 1). These thoughts were reflected not just in the papers and opening remarks, but also in the documentary film made by Olijardas Lukoševičius and Algis Kuzmickas 'Looking for the Origins of the Balts'.

The conference heard papers read by Tomas Ostrauskas (The Kretuonas School and its Influence on Early Prehistoric Investigations in the East Baltic Region), Ilga Zagorska (Burial Traditions in the East Baltic Stone Age), Ilze Loze (New Investigations at the Zvidze Settlement Site), Andrejs Vasks (Latvia as Part of a Sphere of Contacts in the Bronze Age), Egidijus Šatavičius (The Latest Archaeological Investigations Near Lake Kretuonas), Marius Iršėnas (The Figural Art of Narva and Pit-Comb Ware Cultures: Similarities and Differences), Linas Daugnora (Skeletal Analysis and Butchering Techniques in the Lake Kretuonas Settlements) and Gytis Piličiauskas (Flint Processing and Use in the Metal Ages. A Few Cases from Lithuania's Kernavė and Naudvaris Sites).

One feature of the conference 'At the Origins of the Culture of the Balts' was the presentation of Girininkas' monograph *Akmens amžius* (The Stone Age). This is the first in a series of six volumes on Lithuanian archaeology prepared by Klaipėda University's Institute of Baltic Region History and Archaeology.¹ This volume on the Stone Age, which appeared on the eve of his birthday, is the crowning achievement of the author's huge output (Fig. 2).

And, by happy coincidence, after 79 years, the Apuolė hill-fort site and cemetery finds from the 1928–1932 excavations by Eduards Volters, Birger Nerman and Vladas Nagevičius were returned to Lithuania, through the dedicated efforts of the Swedish researcher Dr Jan Peder Lamm and Klaipėda University's Dr Romas Jarockis and Dr Gintautas Zabiela. The research material returned in the form of the monograph *Apuolė Ausgrabungen un Funde 1928–1932* (Fig. 3). Meanwhile, the preserved finds from the Apuolė excavations, as was intended in 1931, were returned to the Vytautas the Great War Museum in Kaunas.

Thus, volume 13 of *Archaeologia Baltica* (subtitled 'At the Origins of the Culture of the Balts') is dedicated to the 60th birthday of Prof. Habil. Dr Algirdas Girininkas. The volume is divided into two sections, in the first of which Edigijus Šatavičius describes the work of A. Girininkas and his contribution to the research into Lithuania's Stone Age. This comprehensive article should be augmented by one fact, namely that Girininkas, together with his colleagues Audronė Bliujienė and Vladas Žulkus, are winners of the 2009 Lithuanian Research Award in the Humanities and Social Sciences, for their series of articles and monographs 'The Balts in the Space of the Baltic Sea' (1994–2008).

As is fitting for *Festschriften*, it would have been inconceivable to omit a complete bibliography of the subject's work. Gintautas Zabiela has prepared a list of Girininkas' monographs, research articles and publica-

¹ Algirdas Girininkas, *Akmens amžius*. Lietuvos archeologija, t. I. Vilnius: Versus aureus, 2009. 328 p.



Fig. 1. Participants in the conference 'At the Origins of the Culture of the Balts' marking the 60th birthday of Prof Habil. Dr Algirdas Girininkas (photograph by A. Žilinskaitė).

tions, including those edited by him, and *varia* encompassing the period 1970 to 2009, which reflects fully his work since he completed his studies up to the year 2010.

In the second section 'People at the Crossroads of Space and Time', 16 researchers from Estonia, Latvia, Sweden, Poland and Lithuania presented articles, and consequently the topic examined encompasses chronologically a huge period from the Stone Age to the Late Bronze Age. The articles examine the latest research results of ancient MtDNA from Lithuanian sites, and discuss intercultural ties, aspects of Mesolithic and

Neolithic fishing, exchanges and their nature, the investigation of individual sites, exceptional Stone Age burial complexes, technical research into flint processing, artistic aspects of the expression of Neolithic communities, and much more.

Rimantas Jankauskas, in the article 'Ancient Mitochondrial DNA from Stone Age Lithuania and the Possible Origins of the First Inhabitants', asserts that of four Lithuanian samples from which there was definite success in extracting mtDNR, one belonged to the U4 haplogroup and three to U5b2. The U5 and U4 haplogroups are rare among Lithuania's modern inhabitants.



Fig. 2. The presentation of Prof Dr Girininkas' monograph *Akmens amžius* (The Stone Age). Left to right: G. Zabiela, A. Girininkas and V. Žulkus (photograph by A. Žilinskaitė).



Fig. 3. The presentation of the monograph *Apuolė Ausgrabungen un Funde 1928–1932* at the conference ‘At the Origins of the Culture of the Balts’. Left to right: V. Žulkus, A. Girininkas, J.P. Lamm and G. Zabiela (photograph by A. Žilinskaitė).

Valdis Bērziņš, in the article ‘Fishing Seasonality and Techniques in Prehistory: Why Freshwater Fish are Special’, shows that freshwater fish could have provided a stable resource base that made permanent settlements possible in lake basins during the Mesolithic and Neolithic of the east Baltic region, but the utilisation of this resource required the development of a body of cultural knowledge and techniques for fishing in the different seasons.

Tadeusz Galiński and Zofia Sulgostowska, in the article ‘Younger Dryas Tanged Point Key Sites in Western Pomerania’, states that the Younger Dryas flint artefacts of Western Pomerania have features characteristic of Ahrensburgian culture, and compares this material with data from other Polish, Lithuanian and Latvian sites.

Normunds Grasis, in the article ‘A Mesolithic Dwelling: Interpreting Evidence from the Užavas Celmi Site in Latvia’, suggests that a temporary shelter was erected here during the Mesolithic. The author emphasises that this conclusion is largely hypothetical, however, and alternative interpretations are possible.

Katarzyna Januszek, in the article ‘Small Polished Flint Tools in Rzucewo Culture in Poland’, gives an overview of the most diverse assemblage of small pol-

ished flint tools found in the settlements left by Rzucewo culture in the Żuławy region.

Lars Larsson, in the article ‘A Double Grave with Amber and Bone Adornments at Zvejnieki in Northern Latvia’, discusses double burial 316/317, of a male and a female, which proved to be the cemetery’s most richly furnished burial in terms of amber pendants.

Ilze Loze, in the article ‘Iča Neolithic Settlement in the Lake Lubāns Wetland’, presents the site’s topography, stratigraphy, traces of habitation and disturbed human burials, the bones of which were found throughout the excavated area.

Gytis Piličiauskas and Grzegorz Osipowicz, in the article ‘The Processing and Use of Flint in the Metal Ages. A Few Cases from the Kernavė and Naudvaris Sites in Lithuania’, attempt to answer the questions how and why flint was used when metal production and processing techniques were already widespread. The flint artefacts were analysed with respect to their raw materials and typology-technique.

Dariusz Manasterski, in the article ‘Exchanges between Syncretic Groups in the Mazury Lake District of Northeast Poland and Early Bronze Age Communities in Central Europe’, discusses how the Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age communities that existed in the

Mazury Lake District interacted with the transcontinental trading system and, on the basis of recent finds from the analysed region, discusses alternative communications ties.

Uwe Sperling and Heidi Luik, in the article 'Arrowheads, Palisades and an Attack Scenario. Ridala Bronze Age Hill-Fort Revisited', discusses the fortification nature of the double-ring palisade structure at Ridala. On the basis of a comprehensive analysis of the archaeological material, the authors present a new interpretation of the fortified settlement at Ridala, which sees the function and purpose of the palisades as being more of a symbolic nature (religious, political) than a response to military threats.

Andrejs Vasks, in the article 'Latvia as Part of a Sphere of Contacts in the Bronze Age', discusses Bronze Age exchange contacts in Latvia, focussing on the routes by which bronze arrived and the mechanisms by which the objects spread.

Heidi Luik and Valter Lang, in the article 'Scapular Artefacts with Serrated Edges from Late Bronze Age Fortified Settlements in Estonia', focus on artefacts with serrated edges that were made from scapulae and occur in assemblages from Late Bronze Age fortified settlements in Estonia. The authors give an overview of these finds, both in Estonia and elsewhere, and discuss possible areas of their use.

Marius Iršėnas, in the article 'Anthropomorphic and Zoomorphic Stone Age Art in Lithuania, and its Archaeological Cultural Context', shows that anthropomorphic and zoomorphic images found both in Lithuania and in the Baltic region do not show artefact forms and stylistic features that belong to any particular Mesolithic or Neolithic archaeological culture in the Baltic region.

Audronė Bliujienė

Translated by Jeffrey Arthur Bakanauskas