

## INTRODUCTION

The International Union of Prehistoric and Protohistoric Sciences (UISPP) XXXII Commission “The Final Palaeolithic on the Great European Plain” held its conference “Interaction between East and West on the Great European Plain during the Final Palaeolithic. Finds and Concepts” on 16–19 September 2004 in Vilnius. The main goal of the conference was to provide Final Palaeolithic researchers from Western, Central and Eastern Europe with the opportunity to get acquainted with the latest research material, to exchange opinions, and to participate in close, lively discussion. We are pleased that we saw many Final Palaeolithic researchers interested in the conference in Vilnius: Professor Leonid Zaliznyak, Dr. Natalie Mikhailova, Dr. Dmytro Nuzhnyi, the MA student Dmitro Stupak (Kiev), Dr. Madina Galimova and Dr. Konstantin Istomin (Kazan), Professor Michal Kobusiewicz, the MA students Przemysław Bobrowski (Wrocław) and Iwona Sobkowiak-Tabaka (Poznań), Dr. Jan Burdukiewicz (Wrocław), Professor Bolesław Ginter (Kraków), Dr. Zofia Sulgostowska and Professor Stefan Karol Kozłowski (Warsaw), the MA students Marta Połtowicz (Rzeszów) and Marcin Szeliga (Lublin), Professor Erik Brinch Petersen (Copenhagen), Dr. Jürgen Vollbrecht (Reichwalde, Germany), Dr. Gernot Tromnau (Duisburg), Dr. Ilga Zagorska (Riga), Dr. Linas Daugnora (Kaunas, Lithuania), and Dr. Miglė Stančikaitė, Dr. Algirdas Girininkas, Dr. Vygas Juodagalvis and Dr. Egidijus Šatavičius (Vilnius). An extensive four-day excursion programme to the most interesting Lithuanian and Latvian archaeological and cultural sites was offered after the conference. We visited the Margonys and Lake Titnas flint quarries, a few of the better-known Stone Age microregions (Kabeliai and the River Varėnė in south Lithuania, Lake Kretuonas in east Lithuania, and the Lake Biržulis microregion in west Lithuania), the castles of Merkinė, Punia and Kernavė, the Amber Museum in Palanga and the Orvidas Sculpture Museum near Salantai. In Latvia,

we toured the Daugava castles and the Salspils-Laukskola Late Palaeolithic settlement, the Dole Island Museum near Riga, the Baltic Ice Lake shore near Liepāja, and more.

I would like to take this opportunity to at least briefly thank our colleagues who offered their precious time and contributed much to the event’s success. These are the UISPP XXXII Commission’s chairman Professor Michal Kobusiewicz (Poznań), the Latvian History Institute’s Ilga Zagorska and AnDr.ejs Vasks, and, of course, the Lithuanian History Institute’s Jurgita Žukauskaitė, its director Alvydas Nikžentaitis, the head of the archaeology department Algirdas Girininkas, the PhD student Gytis Piličiauskas, and many more.

I am very happy to present the reader with the conference material in this seventh *Archaeologia Baltica*, even though its publication was delayed due to various restructurings and organisational difficulties. The 17 articles presented in this volume cover a wide area, from north Germany (Tromnau, Bobrowski and Sobkowiak-Tabaka) to the middle reaches of the River Volga (Sorokin, Trusov and Galimova), and from the Baltic to the Black Sea. The volume’s broad themes take in research from separate settlements, microregions (Trusov and Cyrek), and separate cultures (Połtowicz and Nuzhnyi), to regional generalisations (Sorokin, Zaliznyak, Libera and Szeliga) and works investigating specialised ancient technologies (Stupak), the evolution of the Late Glacial environment (Stančikaitė), and aspects of reindeer hunters’ outlook in antiquity (Mikhailova).

I hope you will find much interesting information and many ideas for further research in this volume of *Archaeologia Baltica*.

Dr. Tomas Ostrauskas



Photograph: the conference's participants and organisers, by the Lithuanian National Museum's archaeology exhibition.