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Preface

This is the 30th anniversary issue of *Archaeologia Baltica*. The journal was launched in 1995. During this time, it has undergone changes in publishing rights and the editorial board has changed and expanded several times, consisting currently of 19 members from eight different countries. In 2020, a new editor-in-chief took over the journal together with a new publishing team comprised of seven members. All published issues have been made freely available on the Klaipėda University online open access journal database.[1] The journal has started to be referenced in the Clarivate Analytics Web of Science and Elsevier's Scopus databases. These changes have increased the journal's visibility internationally, while open access allows it to reach a larger audience.

Archaeologia Baltica focuses on the research of archaeological material from the Baltic region. The published works cover topics ranging from the Stone Age to the archaeology of the modern era. Past issues have frequently been devoted to a specific research topic. The current issue was intended to focus on the theoretical archaeology of the Baltic Sea region. However, in this volume you will encounter not only articles based on this topic but also works based on interdisciplinary research approaches.

The present volume contains six research articles, each dealing with different research aspects. The chronology of the present volume ranges from the Late Mesolithic to the Middle Ages. The main archaeological material studied in all the articles is from the territory of Lithuania, however, links and comparisons with adjacent territories can be observed in each research paper.

The first paper of this volume is prepared by Audronė Bliujienė, Šarūnas Jatautis, Sergej Suzdalev and Gediminas Petrauskas. The authors discuss archaeometrical issues based on data from the analysis of portable (pXRF) and stationary energy dispersal (ED-XRF) spectrometers. As the reference material, the authors analyse five cultural heritage alloy reference materials (CHARM) and their shavings. The paper provides a large amount of data which can be found in the supplementary tables. The two methods (pXRF and ED-XRF) might provide different results based on the slightly different methodological approaches, however, according to the findings provided by the authors, the results of both methods can be directly compared if the technical specifications of both pieces of equipment match.

Hunter-gatherer organic tool technology is analysed in the paper by Tomas Rimkus, Adomas Butrimas, Harald Lübke and John Meadows. The paper focuses on the T-shaped red deer antler axes distributed in the territory of Lithuania. The contribution is part of a long-term international research project, therefore, in this paper only a segment concerning the T-axes from Lithuania is analysed. The authors provide data on their find circumstances, distribution zones and techniques of manufacture. Most importantly, the latest radiocarbon dating of these axes is presented here, which is discussed in relation to the technological features of each axe. Accordingly, their absolute age is compared to the T-axes found in the adjacent southeastern Baltic territories.

The paper by Karolis Minkevičius, Giedrė Piličiauskienė, Vytenis Podėnas, Viktorija Micelicaitė, Darius Kontrimas, Justina Šapolaitė, Žilvinas Ežerinskis, Andrius Garbaras, Agnė Čivilytė, Heidi Luik and Linas Tamulynas discusses the subsistence strategies of the Late Bronze Age communities in the southeastern Baltic region. The paper is based on the archaeobotanical, zooarchaeological and stable isotope data of the material from three fortified sites in the territory of Lithuania — Garniai I, Mineikiškės and Gediminas Hill. The combination of these methods provided new data and insights on the Late Bronze Age intensification of agriculture and husbandry in the region. The authors emphasise the intensive land use for cultivation, which changed the landscape. Domestic animals and different types of crops required open fields, therefore, people engaged in transforming the landscape according to their needs, which also influenced the settlement patterns.

The Late Roman period to Migration period human diet according to stable isotope data is analysed in the paper

[1] https://e-journals.ku.lt/journal/AB

by Edvardas Simčenka, Laurynas Kurila, Justina Kozakaitė and Giedrė Piličiauskienė. For this study, human remains from eastern, western, central and north-central Lithuania were selected. One of the goals of this paper was to demonstrate the possible similarities or differences in human subsistence in different regions of Lithuania at that time. Another interesting aspect of this paper is the differentiation of food types consumed by men and woman. Based on the stable isotope data, authors conclude that in the Late Roman period to Migration period, people relied heavily on terrestrial food resources, while the freshwater fish intake was smaller.

The combination of different types of materials in archaeological artefacts always brings new approaches with regard to methodology and leads to interesting conclusions. At present in the eastern Baltic territory, little research is being conducted on the analysis of the combining of different types of materials. The paper by Audronė Bliujienė, Dalia Kisielienė, Kęstutis Peseckas, Žilvinas Ežerinskis, Justina Šapolaitė, Franz Schopper and Karolis Minkevičius provides new insights on such aspects. Their paper presents a case study from Lazdininkai-Kalnalaukis cemetery in northwestern Lithuania, of graves 8 and 68, dated to the 2nd–3rd centuries AD. Wood remains were found preserved in two artefacts discovered in these graves. The authors approach the wooden remains by applying multidisciplinary studies, related to the analysis of the graves, identification of wood species and radiocarbon dating, yet the most important aspect is the repurposing of the artefacts that previously had different functions. Finally, the authors provide parallels for such artefacts which possibly also had wooden sticks from the territory of Lithuania and the adjacent areas.

The last research paper of this volume is prepared by Arūnas Puškorius, Jurgita Kalėjienė, Medeina Steponavičiūtė and Povilas Blaževičius. The authors present research on leather footwear discovered in Vilnius Lower Castle. The footwear dates to the late 13th century and is made from goat skin. The paper discusses manufacturing techniques. SEM-EDX and ATR-FTIR approaches were used to determine the inorganic residues found on the surface of the leather.

The volume concludes with an In Memoriam tribute to Dr habil. Rimutė Rimantienė. In 2023, Lithuanian archaeology lost a great scholar who pioneered Stone Age research in Lithuania. Rimutė Rimantienė's former students and friends contributed to this final chapter by sharing their memories about her. Her legacy continues with the Stone Age specialists she trained.

We hope in this volume of *Archaeologia Baltica* scholars will find important data for their research. There is also much here for the more general reader to enjoy – we are sure that everyone will find new ideas and insights into eastern Baltic prehistory and early historical period studies. Happy reading!

Tomas Rimkus, Audronė Bliujienė