

Department of Archaeology 2023

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Head – Prof. Albinas Kuncevičius

STAFF

Professors: Dr. A. Kuncevičius, Habil. Dr. M. Michelbertas (professor emeritus), Dr. G. Motuzaitė Matuzevičiūtė Keen (part-time, from 01/03/2023).

Associate professors: Dr. A. Luchtanas (0,75), Dr. A. Merkevičius, Dr. G. Motuzaitė Matuzevičiūtė Keen (part-time, until 28/02/2023), Dr. G. Piličiauskienė (part-time until 31/08/2023; 0,75 from 01/09/2023), Dr. J. Poškienė, Dr. E. Šatavičius, Dr. G. Vėlius.

Assistant professors: Dr. J. Kozakaitė (part-time), Dr. K. Minkevičius (part-time).

Lecturers: A. Žilinskaitė (part-time).

Teaching assistants: R. Augustinavčius (part-time).

Doctoral students: I. Brindzaitė, J. Čičiurkaitė, L. Muradian (until 16/08/2023), A. Zagurskytė (academic vacation from 01/11/2023), Kyriaki Karanikola and Meirzhan Abdrakhamov (both from 01/11/2023).

RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Prehistoric and historical archaeology of Lithuania and neighbouring countries (research of material and spiritual culture, landscape studies)
- Archaeology of the Balts
- Methodology of archaeological research
- Bioarchaeology
- Zooarchaeology
- Archaeological heritage management

RESEARCH PROJECTS CARRIED OUT IN 2023

National Research Projects

- Research Council of Lithuania. **Functional Development of Mounds: From the Fortified Settlement to the Residence of the Duke** (No. S-MIP-21-22). Assoc. Prof. G. Vėlius. 2021–2024.
- The main object of this research is a complex of 4 hillforts located in the UNESCO-protected Kernavė archaeological site. The aim of the project is to identify and precisely chronologise the functional development of the Eastern Lithuanian hillforts and the activities carried out on them during the Iron Age and the Middle Ages (8th century BC - 14th century AD). At the same time, an attempt was made to reveal the dynamics and chronology of the transformation of the natural, uninhabited landscape of the Kernavė hillforts into a cultural

landscape. The main research strategy was to obtain as much data as possible using none or minimal invasive research methods such as geophysics and drillings. In 2023 three geophysical methods were used: magnetometry, GPR and ERT. These surveys were followed by archaeological coring. Over 400 boreholes were drilled and sampled for ^{14}C dating. The interdisciplinary research data were synthesised to determine the evolution of the hillforts' residential and defensive functions. The new ^{14}C dates obtained have significantly extended their chronology. To date, 70 samples taken from the cultural layers and the objects recovered have been dated by AMS ^{14}C . The dates obtained cover the period from the 8th century BC to the 14th century AD. During previous archaeological investigations a large amount of zooarchaeological material, and soil samples were taken for palaeobotanical studies. In 2023 zooarchaeological analysis has been carried out. The final calculations have been made, and it is already possible to make the first insights into the economy and diet of the inhabitants of Kernavė from the 8th century BC to the 14th century.

International Research Projects

- HORIZON ERC-2022-COG; MILLWAYS: 101087964 **Past and Future Millet Foodways**. Led by Prof. Dr. G. Motuzaitė Matuzevičiūtė Keen (2023–2028).
- Assoc. prof. G. Piličiauskienė is a partner in the project “*Genetic and cultural history of domesticates in Northeastern Europe from the arrival of animals to modern day*”. Project is funded by Cultural Foundation in Finland, implemented by University of Helsinki and led by dr. Laura Kvist. 2023–2025.
After carrying out genetic and zooarchaeological studies of various types of domestic animals, their appearance, distribution and further development in North-Eastern Europe was reconstructed.
- Assoc. prof. G. Piličiauskienė is a team member (together with the scientists from Poland, Latvia and Estonia) in project „*Life and death written in bone*“. Project is funded by the National Science Centre (NCN) in Kraków (Poland) The project is implemented by Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń (Poland) and led by dr. hab. Grzegorz Osipowicz. 2023–2026.
The main goal of the project is to gather comprehensive knowledge about the bone-horn products, their production and use, used by hunter-gatherer-fisher communities living in Mesolithic-Subneolithic period in the South-Eastern Baltic region.
- Prof. Dr. G. Motuzaitė Matuzevičiūtė Keen is a team member in project „*Fields under the Hoof: A comparative analysis of crop cultivation investment and labor strategies of communities in Inner Asia (3rd–1st mil. BC)*“. Project is funded by National Science Foundation of the USA and led by Melissa Ritchey. 2022–2027.

MAIN R&D&I (RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND INOVATION) PARTNERS

- University of Helsinki (Finland)
- University of Copenhagen (Denmark)
- University of Tartu (Estonia)
- University of Latvia (Latvia)
- Institute of Archaeology University of Wrocław (Poland)
- University of Stockholm (Sweden)
- Administration of the State Cultural Reserve of Kernavė (Lithuania)

OTHER RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Prof. A. Kuncevičius –

- member of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, <https://www.lma.lt/akademijos-nariai>.
- board member of The Society of Lithuanian Archaeology, <http://lad.lt/lietuvos-arheologijos-draugija/vadovybe>.

- editor-in-chief of the journal *Archaeologia Lituana*, www.journals.vu.lt/archaeologia-lituana/about/editorialTeam;
- editorial board member of the journal *Archaeologia Baltica*, <http://journals.ku.lt/index.php/AB/about/editorialTeam>;
- editorial board member of the journal *Lituanistica*, www.lmaleidykla.lt/ojs/index.php/lituanistica;
- editorial board member of the journal „Archaeologia Baltica“, <https://e-journals.ku.lt/journal/AB>.

Prof. emeritus M. Michelbertas –

- foreign corresponding member of the German Archaeological Institute (Deutsches Archäologisches Institut);
- editorial board member of the journal *Archaeologia Lituana*, www.journals.vu.lt/archaeologia-lituana/about/editorialTeam;

Assoc. Prof. A. Merkevičius –

- editorial board member of the journal *Estonian Journal of Archaeology*, <https://kirj.ee/estonian-journal-of-archaeology-editorial-board>;
- editorial board member of the journal *Acta Archaeologica*, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/page/journal/16000390/homepage/editorialboard.html>;
- editorial board member of the journal *Archaeologia Lituana*, www.journals.vu.lt/archaeologia-lituana/about/editorialTeam;
- editorial board member of the journal *Lietuvos archeologija (Lithuanian Archaeology)*, www.istorija.lt/leidiniai/mokslo-zurnalai-ir-testiniai-leidiniai/lietuvos-arheologija/674#tab-editorial_board;

Assist. Prof. Dr. Karolis Minkevičius –

- member of the Scientific Committee of the International Work Group for Palaeoethnobotany

Assoc. Prof. Giedrė Motuzaitė Matuzevičiūtė Keen –

- editor of a special issue: *Motuzaitė Matuzevičiūtė, G. & Liu, X. Editor: “Millet and Pseudocereals: New Insights into Archaeobotany, Plant Domestication and Global Foodways”*. MDPI:https://www.mdpi.com/journal/agronomy/special_issues/millet_archaeobotany_domestication_foodways.

Assoc. Prof. E. Šatavičius –

- editorial board member of the journal *Archaeologia Lituana*, www.journals.vu.lt/archaeologia-lituana/about/editorialTeam;
- member of Union of Prehistorical and Protohistorical Sciences Commission *The Final Paleolithic of Northern Eurasia*, www.uispp.org.

Assoc. Prof. G. Vėlius –

- editorial board member of the journal *Archaeologia Lituana*, www.journals.vu.lt/archaeologia-lituana/about/editorialTeam.
- member of the Organizing Committee of the International Scientific Conference „Strategies and methods in archaeological research“ of „Readings of prof. Jonas Puzinas XII“ (19-20 October, 2023), <https://www.if.vu.lt/naujienos1/renginiai>

A. Žilinskaitė –

- chairwomen of The Society of Lithuanian Archaeology, <http://lad.lt/lietuvos-arheologijos-draugija/vadovybe>.

- member of the Organizing Committee of the International Scientific Conference „Strategies and methods in archaeological research“ of „Readings of prof. Jonas Puzinas XII“ (19-20 October, 2023), <https://www.if.vu.lt/naujienos1/renginiai>

BEST REPORTS DELIVERED AT CONFERENCES ABROAD

- XXIX European Congress of Archaeologists (EAA), Belfast (Northern Ireland), August 30 – September 2, 2023. Report: Gintautas Vėlius (with co-authors: Rokas Vengalis, Mindaugas Pilkauskas) *The hillforts of Kernavė: more boreholes – more knowledge.*
- XXIX European Congress of Archaeologists (EAA), Belfast (Northern Ireland), August 30 – September 2, 2023. Report: Giedrė Piličiauskienė (with co-authors: Gintautas Vėlius, Karolis Minkevičius, Rokas Vengalis, Mindaugas Pilkauskas) *Animal welfare in Lithuania in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period: exploited and sometimes perhaps loved.*
- XXIX European Congress of Archaeologists (EAA), Belfast (Northern Ireland), August 30 – September 2, 2023. Report: Karolis Minkevičius (with co-authors: Gintautas Vėlius, Rokas Vengalis, Giedrė Piličiauskienė, Mindaugas Pilkauskas) *Changes in chop cultivation during the Bronze Age and the Iron Age in Southeastern Baltic: a case study of Kernavė.*
- Congress of the North European Archaeobotany Group, Lund (Sweden), September 14, 2023. Report: Karolis Minkevičius (with co-author Dalia Kisielienė) *Agrarian landscapes of the Roman Period: Interactions between humans and the environment in 1st – 4th c. AD in Lithuania.*

MOST IMPORTANT PARTICIPATION CASES OF RESEARCHERS IN WORKING GROUPS OR COMMISSIONS SET UP BY STATE AUTHORITIES, STATE AND MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS, ORGANISATIONS, BUSINESS ENTITIES

Assoc. Prof. A. Luchtanas –

- member of 4nd Assessment Council for Immovable Cultural Heritage, Department of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture, <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/3c41c1517bff11e98a8298567570d639?jfwid=zjgvs4rs8>.

Assoc. Prof. A. Merkevičius –

- member of 4nd Assessment Council for Immovable Cultural Heritage, Department of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture, <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/3c41c1517bff11e98a8298567570d639?jfwid=zjgvs4rs8>.

Assist. Prof. Dr. K. Minkevičius –

- member of Scientific Commission of Archaeology of the Department of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture, <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/4d6e7402d25911ed9b3c9397e1236c2a?jfwid=2r1mnh0a>

Assoc. Prof. J. Poškienė –

- chairwoman of the Board of the State Cultural Reserve of Kernavė, www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/4bf93a30174c11ebb0038a8cd8ff585f;
- chairwoman of the Steering Group for the Management Plan of the UNESCO World Heritage Kernavė Archaeological Site, www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/140637e0fde611ec8fa7d02a65c371ad.

MOST IMPORTANT RESEARCH DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES

Assoc. Prof. G. Piličiauskienė –

- Open lecture „Animals in medieval Vilnius Lower Castle“ in the **National Museum – Palace of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania (April 13, 2023).**

Assist. Prof. Dr. K. Minkevičius –

- Open lecture “What Tacitus saw: Baltic landscapes in Roman times” (in the fourth cycle of lectures “The history of the City and the World” jointly organized by the National Museum of Lithuania and the Faculty of History of Vilnius University, November 9, 2023).

MAIN CONFERENCES ORGANIZED IN 2023

- **The 12th International Scientific Conference „STRATEGIES AND METHODS IN ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH“ of “Readings of prof. Jonas Puzinas” (19–20 October, 2023),** https://www.if.vu.lt/external/if/files/Puzinas_Readings_Programe.pdf

The following scientific reports were read:

- **Welcome speech**

Loreta Skurvydaitė (*Dean of the Faculty of History, Vilnius University*)

Albinas Kuncevičius (*Head of the Department of Archaeology, Vilnius University*)

- **Interdisciplinary hillfort studies at the Daugava river: merging and decoding archaeological, environmental and linguistic data (INHILLDAUGAR)**

Jens Schneeweiss (*Centre for Baltic and Scandinavian Archaeology, Cluster of Excellence ROOTS, Kiel University*), Timo Ibsen (*Centre for Baltic and Scandinavian Archaeology*), Piotr Kittel (*University of Lodz, Faculty of Geographical Sciences*), Jerzy Sikora (*University of Lodz, Institute of Archaeology*), Vanda Hafnerberga (*University of Latvia*), Hans Whitefield (*Centre for Baltic and Scandinavian Archaeology*)

- **‘Speed-dating’ hillforts in the Kaliningrad region of Russia**

Timo Ibsen (*Centre for Baltic and Scandinavian Archaeology*)

- **Investigating lake Wierzchovo in Pomerania, Poland: an integrated non-invasive, archaeological and palaeoenvironmental approach to landscape study**

Kamil Niedziółka (*University of Gdansk*), Joanna Święta-Musznicka (*University of Gdansk*), Piotr Wroniecki (*Montefortinio Prospection and Digitalization, Switzerland*), Maciej Marczewski (*GLSUM Archaeological Company, Poland*)

- **Reconstruction of the original deposition place of artifacts from site 24 in Poręba Dzierżna (Małopolskie voivodeship, southern Poland) using spatial analysis. Geoarchaeological search for flint workshops related to the mine in the Udorka Valley**

Hubert Binnebessel, Magdalena Sudoł-Procyk (*Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń*)

- **Searching for unknown Lithuanian hillforts: methods and results**

Edvardas Naujalis (*Independent researcher*), Gintautas Zabiela (*Klaipėda University, Institute of Baltic Region History and Archaeology*), Zenonas Baubonis (*Public Institution „Cultural Heritage Preservation Forces“*), Jurgita Viršilienė (*Department of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture*)

- **Interdisciplinary research on the Kernavė hillforts**
Rokas Vengalis (*Lithuanian Institute of History*), Gintautas Vėlius (*Vilnius University*), Mindaugas Pilkauskas (*Lithuanian Institute of History*)
- **Survey methods and techniques in underwater archaeological research in Lithuanian inland waters**
Elena Pranckėnaitė (*Klaipėda University, Institute of Baltic Region History and Archaeology*), Rokas Kračiauskas (*Klaipėda University, Institute of Baltic Region History and Archaeology*), Zenonas Baubonis (*Public Institution „Cultural Heritage Preservation Forces“*)
- **Locating partisan warfare heritage sites using LiDAR & GIS (case study of an archival KGB file)**
Jovita Sinkevičiūtė (*Vilnius University, Institute of Geosciences*)
- **Association „Metal Detectors Users Club“ and archaeological research - cooperation experiences**
Tadas Jakubėnas (*Association „Metal detector users club“*)
- **Hillfort research in Eastern Latvia: the example of Baltinava micro-region**
Jānis Meinerts (*Institute of Arts and Cultural Studies, Latvian Academy of Culture*)
- **European Iron Age hillforts mapping and open data**
Gatis Kalnīns (*Citizen science project Hillforts.eu, Latvia*)
- **Archaeological research strategies of the postmedieval sites: from source studies to excavations to preservation issues**
Andris Šnē (*Department of History and Archaeology, Faculty of History and Philosophy, University of Latvia*)
- **A bird's eye laser view. Lidar surveys of Iron Age ringforts on Öland, Sweden**
Ludvig Pappmehl-Dufay (*Linnaeus University, Sweden*), Maciej Marczewski (*GLESUM Archaeological Company, Poland*), Piotr Wroniecki (*Montefortinio Prospection and Digitalization, Switzerland*), Kamil Niedziółka (*University of Gdansk*)
- **Ground penetrating radar survey of the Lithuanian part of Medzhybizh Castle**
Viktor Vietrov (*State Historical and Cultural Reserve „Mezhybizh“, Ukraine*), Kseniia Bondar (*Institute of Geology of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine*)
- **Experimental technology of exploration archaeological objects by the method of drilling**
Viktor Vietrov (*State Historical and Cultural Reserve „Mezhybizh“, Ukraine*)
- **Field research of the Baltic migrant cemetery Ostriv (Ukraine). Problems and perspectives of interpretation**
Vyacheslav Baranov, Dimitro Diatchenko, Vsevolod Ivakin (*Institute of Archaeology of the National Academy of Science of Ukraine*), Roman Shiroukhov, Jens Schneeweiss (*Centre for Baltic and Scandinavian Archaeology*)
- **Methods of studying surface cremation burials of the second half of the 1st millennium AD in the northwestern Belarus: an attempt to comprehend the results of excavations in 2017–2021**
Mikalai Plavinski (*Department of Medieval and Early Modern Archaeology, Faculty of Archaeology, University of Warsaw*)