

Department of Archaeology 2022

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Head – Prof. Albinas Kuncevičius

STAFF

Professors: Dr. A. Kuncevičius, Habil. Dr. M. Michelbertas (professor emeritus).

Associate professors: Dr. A. Luchtanas, Dr. A. Merkevičius, Dr. G. Motuzaitė Matuzevičiūtė Keen (part-time), Dr. G. Piličiauskienė (part-time), Dr. J. Poškienė, Dr. E. Šatavičius, Dr. G. Vėlius, Dr. R. Tučas.

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

Lecturers: A. Žilinskaitė (part-time), Dr. R. Kačkutė, Dr. L. Kurila, Dr. V. Lukšėnienė, E. Remecas, Dr. A. Strimaitienė, Dr. R. Vengalis.

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

Doctoral students: S. Ardavičiūtė-Ramanauskienė, I. Brindzaitė, E. Marcinkevičiūtė-Šatavičė, L. Muradian, A. Rusteikytė, A. Zagurskytė.

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 2022

National Research Projects

- Research Council of Lithuania. **Functional Development of Hill-Forts: From the Fortified Settlement to the Residence of the Duke** (No. S-MIP-21-22). Assoc. Prof. G. Vėlius. 2021–2024.
- In 2022, a trench of 40 m² was excavated near the eastern slope of the Aukuro hill-fort in Kernavė. A large electromagnetic anomaly was detected in this area by geophysical surveys. Remains of a 13th–14th century building and a defensive rampart from the same period were found here. During archaeological investigations, a large amount of samples were collected for AMS ¹⁴C dating, as well as a large amount of zooarchaeological material, and soil samples were taken for palaeobotanical studies. To date, 4280 animal bone fragments have been identified, including 76 fish bones, and preliminary zooarchaeological analysis has been carried out. The final calculations have not yet been made, but 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. Plant remains in the Kernavė Museum collections were reviewed and data on material from the Aukuro Hill Hillfort and its surroundings were analysed. 1503 burnt plant macro-residues were identified in the samples, the majority of which are cultivated plants (91.08%, n = 1369). To date, 30 samples taken from the cultural layers and the objects recovered have been dated by AMS ¹⁴C. The dates obtained cover the period from the 8th century BC to the 14th century AD.

- Research Council of Lithuania. **Dogs in Lithuania during the 13th-18th C.: Origin of the Breeds, Function and Breeding Culture** (No. S-MIP-20-5). Dr. P. Blaževičius. 2020–2022.
In 2022, the project participants have analyzed all received zooarchaeological, historical and archaeological data received and already submitted one paper about the hunting dogs in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The authors are currently working on another publication on dogs' diet and a monograph about the Medieval and early Modern Period dogs in Lithuania, which will be published in early 2023.

International Research Projects

- Assoc. prof. Giedrė Piličiauskienė is a team member in project „*Life and death written in bone*“.
Project is funded by the National Science Centre (NCN) in Kraków (Poland) No. N2021/43/B/HS3/00500. The project is implemented by Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń (Poland) and led by dr. hab. Grzegorz Osipowicz. <https://biotrapbones.umk.pl/team/>
The main objective of the project is to construct comprehensive knowledge of the manufacturing of products made of osseous raw materials (bone, antler and animal teeth) and the ways in which they were used among hunter-gatherer-fisher communities (Mesolithic and Subneolithic = Ceramic Mesolithic), inhabiting the area of the East Baltic Plain (territories of Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and the north-eastern part of Poland) in the Early and Middle Holocene. The limit date that closes the chronological scope of the project is the end of the 4th century cal BC, when as a result of the expansion of the Globular Amphora Culture (GAC) and the Corded Ware Culture (CWC), Subneolithic communities started to disappear. The area to be analyzed is unique not only due to archaeological sites discovered there, with perfectly preserved Stone Age artefacts made of organic raw materials (long awaited to be examined and made accessible to a broader spectrum of readers – which is the main objective of the project). Its significance also lies in the fact that throughout the Early and Middle Holocene (i.e. from about 11.6 to 4–5 thousand years ago), it was situated as if on the borderline between two realms, namely, the Eastern European and the Western European, not only allowing ideas of each of these worlds to be transferred to the other, but also absorbing them. Therefore, it is a perfect place for studying the intensity, characteristics and profile of cultural changes occurring in the early- and mid-Holocene hunter-gatherer communities, whereas the use of artefacts made of osseous materials to this end will allow us to obtain previously unattainable information in this regard.

Contractual Research

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

- 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 –**

- board member of The Society of Lithuanian Archaeology, <http://lad.lt/lietuvos-archeologijos-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.

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;
- editorial board member of the journal *Kultūros paminklai (Cultural Monuments)*, www.paveldas.lt/leidiniai.

Assoc. Prof. A. Merkevičius –

- member of the organizing committee of the international scientific seminar *Baltic archaeological seminar (BASE)*;
- 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 *Interarchaeologia*, <https://researchportal.helsinki.fi/en/activities/inter-archaeologia-journal>;
- editorial board member of the journal *Lietuvos archeologija (Lithuanian Archaeology)*, www.istorija.lt/leidiniai/mokslo-zurnalai-ir-testiniai-leidiniai/lietuvos-archeologija/674#tab-editorial_board;
- editorial board member of the journal *Kultūros paminklai (Cultural Monuments)*, www.paveldas.lt/leidiniai.

Assoc. Prof. G. Motuzaitė Matuzevičiūtė Keen

- editorial board member of the journal *Frontiers in human evolution and environment. Special issue: Effects of Novel Environments on Domesticated Species*; <https://www.frontiersin.org/research-topics/26304/effects-of-novel-environments-on-domesticated-species>;
- editorial board member of the journal *Historical and Cultural Studies / Історико-культурні студії. Lviv Polytechnic National University (Ukraine)*;
- editor of a special Issue “*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;
- scientific adviser of a project by Shinya Shoda MEROS: JSPS Grant-in-Aid for Transformative Research Areas (A) 20H05820.

Assoc. Prof. E. Šatavičius –

- editorial board member of the journal *Archaeologia Lituana*, www.journals.vu.lt/archaeologia-lituana/about/editorialTeam;
- member of UISSP Commission *The Final Paleolithic of Northern Eurasia*, <https://www.uispp.org/>.

Assoc. Prof. G. Vėlius –

- editorial board member of the journal *Archaeologia Lituana*, www.journals.vu.lt/archaeologia-lituana/about/editorialTeam.

A. Žilinskaitė –

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

BEST REPORTS DELIVERED AT CONFERENCES ABROAD

- Meeting of UISSP Commission *The Final Paleolithic of Northern Eurasia*, Warsaw (Poland), 28th-30th of September 2022. Report: Egidijus Šatavičius *Swiderian sites in Southern and Eastern Lithuania*.
- XXVIII European Congress of Archaeologists (EAA), Budapest (Hungary), August 31 – September 3, 2022. Report: Giedrė Motuzaitė Matuzevičiūtė (with co-authors) *Detection of miliacin in archaeological deposits illustrates the extent of broomcorn millet cultivation in ancient Central Asia*.
- XXVIII European Congress of Archaeologists (EAA), Budapest (Hungary), August 31 – September 3, 2022. Report: Karolis Minkevičius *Hillforts revised: integrated legacy data into a modern archaeobotanical research*.
- International Workgroup for Palaeoethnobotany (IWGP), Českobudějovické, (Czech Republic). June 13–17, 2022. Report: Giedrė Motuzaitė Matuzevičiūtė *Pioneer crops in the high altitude mountain zones of Central Asia*.

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

Prof. A. Kuncevičius –

- chairman of the Board of the Research Council of Lithuania, www.lmt.lt/lt/apie-taryba/kontaktai/86-valdyba/d1;
- chairman of the working group of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education for preparation of Description of Archaeology Studies.

Assoc. Prof. A. Luchtanas –

- Chairman 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>;
- member of the working group of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education for preparation of Description of Archaeology Studies.

Assoc. Prof. G. Motuzaitė Matuzevičiūtė Keen -

- ICOMOS & ICAHM expert;
- Comitee board member for the Scientific Archaeological comitee of Lithuania.

Assoc. Prof. J. Poškienė –

- chairwoman of the Committee of Humanities and Social Sciences, Research Council of Lithuania, www.lmt.lt/en/about-the-research-council/vice-chair/2684;
- 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, <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/140637e0fde611ec8fa7d02a65c371ad>.

MOST IMPORTANT RESEARCH DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES

- Giedre Motuzaitė Matuzevičiūtė Keen: *Invited lecture at Washington University of St. Louis, March 30, 2022: GLOBALIZATION IN PREHISTORY: REFLECTION AND PERSPECTIVES*

MAIN CONFERENCES ORGANIZED IN 2022

- Session organization by Giedrė Motuzaitė Matuzevičiūtė (together with *Lukasz Pospieszny, University of Bristol*): Beyond the chronology and pathways of dispersal: reasoning the use and abandonment of broom-corn millet cultivation across Eurasia. ID 58849: *at the European Association of Archaeologists (EAA) Budapest, September 2022*

MAIN SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2022

- **Motuzaitė Matuzevičiūtė, G.**, van Unen, M., Karaliūtė, R., Tabaldiev, K. 2022. The resilience of pioneer crops in the highlands of Central Asia: archaeobotanical investigation at the Chap II site in Kyrgyzstan. *Frontiers in Ecology and Evolution* 10. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fevo.2022.934340>.
- **Motuzaitė Matuzevičiūtė, G.**, Ananyevskaya, E., Tabaldiev, K. 2022. The earliest evidence of millet integration into the diet of Central Asian populations. *Antiquity*. <https://doi.org/10.15184/aqy.2022.23>.
- Taylor R. Hermes, Clemens Schmid, Kubatbek Tabaldiev, **Giedre Motuzaitė Matuzevičiūtė**. 2022. Carbon and oxygen stable isotopic evidence for diverse sheep and goat husbandry strategies amid a Final Bronze Age farming milieu in the Kyrgyz Tian Shan. *International Journal of Osteoarchaeology*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/oa.3103>.