

THE PROMINENT LITHUANIAN ARCHAEOLOGIST VYTAUTAS KAZAKEVIČIUS

ALGIRDAS GIRININKAS

For already a year now, Vytautas Kazakevičius, an archaeologist and a sincere friend, has been missing from our ranks. We gathered at Klaipėda University to honour the memory of this scientist and the work he accomplished, and at the same time to continue the direction of his work. Consequently, our conference topic “Weapons, Weaponry and Man” was selected.

Vytautas Kazakevičius was born on 11 October 1951 in the small town of Marijampolė in the region of Suvalkija. In 1969 he left secondary school, and in 1974 he graduated from Vilnius Pedagogical University. Beginning in 1974, he worked in the Archaeology Department at the Lithuanian Institute of History as a research fellow, and from 1987 to 1994 he was the head of this department. In 1984 he defended his history dissertation “Arms and Armour of the Baltic Tribes of the Sec-

ond to Eighth Centuries in the Territory of Lithuania”, and in 1998 he defended his second thesis and received his habilitation degree “Weaponry of the Baltic Tribes in the Iron Age”.

Beginning in 2005, Kazakevičius began to work at Klaipėda University’s Institute of Baltic Sea Region History and Archaeology.

Kazakevičius devoted all of his creative energy to researching the weaponry of the Baltic cultures, and reflections of the Migration Period in the territory of the Baltic tribes. He wrote about 150 scientific articles and four monographs on those topics. Many of the articles investigated artefacts from the material culture of the Baltic tribes, as well as their origin and development, and analysed the weapons of the various Baltic tribes and their neighbours.

His principal works are the monographs: “Arms and Armour of the Baltic Tribes of the Second to Eighth Centuries in the Territory of Lithuania”, 1988, “The Plinkaigalis Burial Ground”, 1993, “Ninth to 13th Century Baltic Swords”, 1996, and “Iron Age Arrows in Lithuania in the Second to 12th/13th Centuries”, 2004.

Being interested in the Migration Period in Lithuania, Kazakevičius excavated several Lithuanian cemeteries and barrows. He studied thoroughly the cemeteries at Plinkaigalis (Kėdainiai district), Kalniškiai (Raseiniai district), Kejėnai (Raseiniai district), Ližiai (Tauragė district) and the barrows at Visietiškės, Miškiniai (Anykščiai district) and Pažobrys (Raseiniai district), and also carried out fieldwork surveys in his native Suvalkija region. He published the research material in scientific studies and articles.

He also had to devote a great deal of his energy and time to making sure issues of *Archaeologica Baltica*, of which he was the editor in chief, appeared. He participated in the work of the board of editors of *Lietuvos archeologija* and *Istorija*, was a member of the board of editors of *Eesti arheoloogia ajakiri*, and managed scientific programmes. He studied at Helsinki, Stock-



Vytautas Kazakevičius (1951–2005)
(photograph by R. Mičiūnas)

holm, and Frankfurt am Main, and managed doctoral studies.

His main hobby was fishing, to which he devoted the greatest part of his leisure time. On holidays he could be found in the most unlikely places around Lithuania with his fishing friends.

Vytautas Kazakevičius was principled, friendly, exacting and industrious. All his scientific work was characterised by thoroughness, depth, and scientific conclusions substantiated by sources, which included the latest research work by Lithuanian and foreign scientists. I will remember Vytautas Kazakevičius (11.10.1951–7.9.2005), like everyone else here, as a noble and humane person (Plate I. 1–4).