

PREFACE

The subjects of the articles in volume 19 of *Archaeologia Baltica* are related to landscape on one hand, and on the other to specific parts of it: burial monuments and rare grave finds.

Therefore, from the point of view of their subject matter, the articles in this volume are divided into two sections, the first of which, 'Societies of the Past: Approaches to Landscape', deals mostly with ancient communities' attitudes towards the landscape, and our attempts to understand the symbols left behind in the landscape by people of the past.

The second section, 'Societies of the Past: Approaches to Burial Customs and Grave Goods', discusses the diversity of burial customs in east and southeast and eastern Baltic Sea regions, and deepens our understanding of other functions of burial monuments, mostly related to deposits of valuable articles in them.

So volume 19 of *Archaeologia Baltica* presents articles by 11 authors, which discuss from different points of view the landscape, burial monuments, burial customs, deposits of artefacts in burial grounds, and rare grave finds.

In the article by Edvin B. Saltsman 'Dwelling Construction Materials from Pribrezhnoe in the Context of the Formation of Primorskaya Culture', the emphasis is on the importance of the settlement of Pribrezhnoe, on the shore of the Vistula Bay, which has been excavated for 15 seasons, in the formation process of Bay Coast culture. Based on the finds and stratigraphy of this settlement, the author makes the assumption that the course of the development of Bay Coast culture, including the previously unknown stage of its development, was much more complicated than has been thought until now, because this culture took shape on the basis of Waldburg-type monuments, and monuments of Globular Amphora, Narva and Zedmar cultures.

The article by Raili Allmäe 'Observations on Estonian Iron Age Cremations' discusses bones from cremation graves in Estonia's burial monuments collected during archaeological excavations between 1997 and 2011. The study covers not only bones, but also the cremation process and peculiarities of burial practices pertaining to cremation graves, such as the concentration of bones, their being spread on the surface, or the deliberate crushing of the bones of the dead.

Krista Karro in her article 'Ruptured Space and Time in Lahepera Burial Site in Eastern Estonia' discusses features of Lahepera burial site which have survived in the landscape to this day. However, in the landscape that surrounded the burial site, we can observe a temporary non-burial period, or a peculiar termination of the development of the landscape as a burial monument. This article discusses the general history of the landscape of the burial site.

The purpose of the article 'East Baltic Middle Iron Age Wealth Deposits in Burial Areas: An Example of Regional Cultural Practice' by Ester Oras is to supplement evidence that burial sites not only served as the last resting place of the dead, but also as a place for other activities by ancient communities. Certain collections of artefacts that bore various symbolic meanings were deposited in the areas of some burial sites.

Marius Ščavinskas poses some important questions in 'Some Notes on the Issue of the Development of Balt Society in the Ninth to the 13th Centuries in the Context of the Socio-Political Structures of the Baltic Region', for example, whether the social élite that stood out during the Viking epoch was also the political élite at the same time. The author maintains in the article that only after answering this question is it possible to discuss further what kind of chiefdom we can assume existed during Viking and later times. In his opinion, the political élite predetermined the emergence of a

state in the territory of the East Balts. In the societies of the West Balts, however, the activities of the political élite did not lead to statehood.

In 'The Origin of Burial Sites in Eastern Latvia Consisting of Typical Stone Graves', Jānis Čiglis discusses material from northern Vidzeme burial monuments that are piled up with stones: bracelets with a rectangular cross-section, bracelets with bud terminals, bent-out tin band bracelets, trumpet-shaped neck-rings with hollow ends, and profiled brooches. On the basis of his analysis, the author maintains that graves piled up with stones (stone graves), also known as *tarand* graves, should be dated to the second half of the first century, and not to the second century, as was believed before.

In his article 'Warrior Burials with Knives-Daggers: Socio-Cultural Aspects of Research. A Comparative Analysis of Early Migration Period Warrior Graves in the Sambian-Natangian Group Area (the Kaliningrad Region of Russia)', Jaroslaw Prassolow, after summarising a large number of battle knives and shoulderbelts (*baltei Vidgiriiai* type), claims that shoulderbelts appeared as early as the end of the Late Roman Period, earlier than the 'classic' battle knives. The author maintains that in Sambian-Natangian culture, battle knives were a weapon of the 'ordinary' free individual.

In 'New Traces in Old Barrows. A Reinterpretation of Particular Finds from Barrow 2 at Szwajcaria Cemetery (Sudovian Culture)', Bartosz Kontny returns to the Sudovian culture princely grave in the barrow burial field at Szwajcaria (near Suwałki), which is well known in historiography. The author believes that various metal mountings are parts of a saddle and a leather pail-shaped box. An analysis of these nobleman's finds from Szwajcaria allows us to claim that the Sudovian élite maintained close relations with the Scandinavians and people of the corresponding stratum of Przeworsk culture.

Audronė Bliujienė in her article 'Armed People of East and Southeast Lithuania in the Geocultural Context of the Migration Period' analyses the geopolitical and geocultural situation in southeast Lithuania during the Migration Period, and the confrontational atmosphere in the region at that time.

In 'Rare Brooches from Viešvilė Cemetery III Lithuania', Ugnius Budvydas discusses rare brooches similar to symmetrical ones, and a so far unique brooch decorated with two stylised animal heads. The article discusses the origin and chronology of the brooches.

Marika Mägi in 'Late Prehistoric Societies and Burials in the Eastern Baltic' tries to actualise ideas of egalitarianism in society. In order to support her conclusions, the author makes a large-scale review of the burial rites

of East Baltic communities of the Late Prehistoric period and the Early Middle Ages.

I sincerely hope that readers will find some important insights in the articles published in this volume of *Archaeologia Baltica*.

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