

L I E T U V O S

ARCHEOlogija 50

Lietuvos istorijos institutas

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ARCHEOlogija 50

LIETUVOS
ISTORIJOS
INSTITUTAS

VILNIUS 2024

Leidybą finansavo

LIETUVOS MOKSLO TARYBA

PAGAL VALSTYBINĘ LITUANISTINIŲ TYRIMŲ IR SKLAIDOS 2016–2024 METŲ PROGRAMĄ
(Finansavimo sutarties numeris S-LIP-22-44)

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Sekretorė / Secretary Sigita Mikšaitė

Redakcijos adresas / Editorial Board address:
Lietuvos istorijos institutas, Archeologijos skyrius
Tilto g. 17, LT-01101 Vilnius
Tel. (+370) 5 2614436, fax (+370) 5 2611433
e-mail: lietuvosarheologija@gmail.com;
civilytea@gmail.com

Žurnalas registruotas: EBSCO Publishing: Central and Eastern European Academic Source European Reference Index for the Humanities and Social Sciences (ERIH PLUS)

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FOREWORD

It is with great pride and a profound sense of responsibility that I write the foreword for the 50th volume of *Lietuvos archeologija*. This milestone represents not only the continuation of a cherished academic tradition but also the enduring relevance of archaeology as a dynamic and interdisciplinary field of study. Each volume of this distinguished journal encapsulates the breadth and vibrancy of scholarly research, interweaving diverse themes such as archaeological innovations, intellectual debates, philosophy, art, language, and reflective memoirs.

As editor-in-chief for the past six years, I have been privileged to oversee the evolution of this journal, ensuring that it continues to reflect the highest standards of academic excellence. This volume's publication also marks a personal milestone, as my connection to *Lietuvos archeologija* dates back to my childhood. My father's passion for the subject ensured that every issue graced our home library, sparking my own appreciation for the field long before I considered pursuing it professionally. It is therefore deeply gratifying to celebrate this anniversary and reflect on the journal's remarkable journey.

A half-century of publication invites reflection: Is fifty years a significant duration for the continuous publication of a scientific journal? It certainly is. In a constantly evolving academic landscape, the continued relevance of *Lietuvos archeologija* is a testament to its ability to adapt while remaining anchored in its foundational principles. Amid the pressures of rapid technological advancement and shifting research priorities, the journal has upheld its dual commitment to tradition and innovation.

One of *Lietuvos archeologija*'s most distinguishing features is its bilingual approach, publishing articles in both Lithuanian and English. This duality not only broadens accessibility but also underscores

the importance of preserving academic discourse in the Lithuanian language. The encroachment of linguistic homogenization in scholarly publishing makes this commitment all the more vital. By fostering terminology and maintaining linguistic diversity, the journal safeguards an essential aspect of cultural heritage while contributing to global scholarly dialogue.

Critics may point to the journal's modest citation indices, but such metrics fail to capture its true significance. Contributions from international scholars affirm its reputation and credibility within the academic community. While many Lithuanian scholars aspire to publish in prestigious foreign journals to meet qualification requirements, *Lietuvos archeologija* remains a vital platform for showcasing local scholarship and fostering international collaboration. Its reputation, built over decades, continues to attract contributions from researchers across Europe and beyond.

Another important point pertains to the scope and structure of the texts published in *Lietuvos archeologija*. I firmly believe that the essence of effective scholarly communication lies in brevity and clarity. Consequently, the journal does not prioritize the publication of overly lengthy articles, although exceptions are made for particularly comprehensive studies. At present, there is a notable gap in bibliometric research on humanities journals, particularly in assessing how the characteristics of published texts evolve over time. In this context, I am reminded of Vilius Dranseika's sentiment: "I want a small cabinet of curiosities in every issue of the journal. I do, but I don't know if/how many others want it" (Dranseika 2024). To my colleague Vilius, let me assure you—your "Wunderkammer" has long been a cherished feature of *Lietuvos archeologija*.

These concise and focused essays are designed not only for professional archaeologists but also for those with a casual interest in the past. This inclusive approach extends to the “Otherwise on Archaeology” section, which features perspectives on archaeology from contributors outside the discipline. Time and again, I am struck by the depth of insight, sharp irony, and imaginative interpretations offered by these contributors. Their reflections challenge conventional thinking and reaffirm the value of interdisciplinary dialogue.

This 50th volume exemplifies the journal’s dedication to interdisciplinary exploration and academic rigor. Highlights include Gintautas Zabiela’s thought-provoking analysis of the current state and future trajectory of archaeological science in Lithuania. His reflections on the integration of archaeology with other disciplines underscore the need to maintain its identity as a humanities science amid the pressures of the “Third Scientific Revolution.”

Other notable contributions include a study on funerary ceramics in the Eastern Baltic region by Vanda Haferberga, Joakim Wehlin and Uwe Sperling, which combines macroscopic studies with petrographic analysis to reveal insights into societal structures and cultural exchanges during the Bronze and Early Iron Ages. Agnė Čivilytė and her colleagues provide a groundbreaking examination of Bronze Age clay axe molds, employing 3D modeling to uncover previously unknown technological details.

Roman Shiroukhov’s research into slate spindles in Kievan Rus’ burials offers a compelling interpretation of their economic and symbolic

significance, while Saulius Sarcevičius and his co-authors present a fascinating archaeometric analysis of medieval bricks, revealing historical connections between Kievan Rus’ and early Lithuanian craftsmanship. Aurelija Zagurskytė’s exploration of dietary practices in medieval Lithuania provides valuable insights into urban social stratification and culinary traditions during this period.

The discussion section includes Alexander Gramsch’s innovative perspective on the human body’s role in social archaeology. By moving beyond traditional osteological analysis, Gramsch emphasizes the phenomenological dimensions of human remains, offering a holistic understanding of their significance within cultural and ritual contexts.

Finally, the “Alternative perceptions of archaeology” section continues to push boundaries by inviting reflections from outside the discipline. These contributions challenge conventional perspectives, emphasizing the role of imagination and interdisciplinary thinking in advancing archaeological scholarship.

As we celebrate this milestone, I extend my deepest gratitude to the authors, reviewers, and editorial team whose dedication has been instrumental in achieving this success. I am particularly indebted to Mindaugas Maskoliūnas, Head of the Publishing Department, and Sigita Mikšaitė, whose unwavering support has been invaluable.

On behalf of the editorial board, I congratulate the readers and contributors of *Lietuvos archeologija*. May this journal continue to thrive, embracing new challenges while preserving the traditions and ideas that have defined its legacy.