

The 2nd international scientific conference

From Paganism to Christianity II:

Life and Death During the Transition Period

November 14–15, 2024

The Old Arsenal (National Museum of Lithuania),
Arsenalo St. 3, Vilnius

PROGRAMME



CONFERENCE ORGANIZER:



CONFERENCE PARTNERS:



Lietuvos
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WYDZIAŁ
ARCHEOLOGII
Uniwersytet
Warszawski



ІНСТИТУТ
АРХЕОЛОГІЇ
НАН УКРАЇНИ

THURSDAY 14 NOVEMBER

8:30–9:00 **Registration**

9:00–9:20 **Welcome**

9:20–9:45 **Rytis Jonaitis, Irma Kaplūnaitė** (Lithuanian Institute of History). From Paganism to Christianity. Burial Rites During the Transition Period: Presentation of a Publication.

I. Daily life

Moderated by **Irma Kaplūnaitė**

9:45–10:05 **Dmytro Diachenko** (online) (Institute of Archaeology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine). Women's Funeral Dress at the Ostriv Burial Ground

10:05–10:25 **Rūdolfs Brūzis** (Institute of Latvian History of the University of Latvia), **Roberts Spirģis** (independent researcher). Material of the Male Burials in the Liv Cemetery Ogresgala Chabas in the XI–XIII Centuries: Changes and Continuity

10:25–10:45 **Olena Chernenko** (Faculty of Archaeology, University of Warsaw). "At Saint Saviour's": The Medieval Necropolis of the Transfiguration Cathedral in Chernihiv

10:45–11:00 Discussion

11:00–11:30 Coffee break

II. Pagans versus Christians?

Moderated by **Tomasz Nowakiewicz**

11:30–11:50 **Aleksandra Rzeszotarska-Nowakiewicz** (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology, Polish Academy of Sciences). From Christianity to Paganism. The earliest Christian (?) motifs in the pagan imagery world (with selected examples)

11:50–12:10 **Bartosz Kontny** (Faculty of Archaeology, University of Warsaw). Pre-Christian Watery Deposits from the Territory of Poland

12:10–12:30 **Viktoryia Tarasevich** (PhD student, University of Warsaw). "Water Cult"? Preliminary Conclusions on Special Characteristics of the Smolensk-Polack Long Barrows Culture Barrow Cemeteries' Space Organization

12:30–12:50 **Dariusz Błaszczuk** (Faculty of Archaeology, University of Warsaw), **Julia Malinkiewicz** (Faculty of Archaeology, University of Warsaw). The Provenance of Individuals Buried in Medieval Chamber Graves from Polish Lands in the Light of Isotopic and Molecular Research Results

12:50–13:10 Discussion

13:10–14:30 Lunch break

III. Chamber Graves or Chamber-like Graves?

Moderated by **Gediminas Petrauskas**

14:30–14:50 **Dmytro Bibikov** (online) (Institute of Archaeology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine). "Quasi-chamber" Burials as a Transitional Link in the Development of the Funeral Rite of Southern Rus'

14:50–15:10 **Viktoryia Makouskaya** (PhD student, University of Warsaw). Skrabaniec Barrow Cemetery as an Example of Burial Rites in the Period of Social Transformation: Chronology and Details of Barrow Construction

15:10–15:30 **Mikalai Plavinski** (Faculty of Archaeology, University of Warsaw). Chamber-graves, Chamber-like Graves, Graves like Chamber-Like: Development or Degradation of One Burial Tradition on the Example of North-Western Regions of Belarus

15:30–15:50 **Sławomir Wadył** (Faculty of Archaeology, University of Warsaw). A Candle for the Lord and a Candle-Stump for the Devil. Mysterious Funeral Rites in Pomerania in the Light of Research on Orzeszkowo-Type Burial

15:50–16:10 Discussion

16:10–16:30 Coffee break

IV. Post-medieval and early modern archaeology

Moderated by **Rytis Jonaitis**

16:30–16:50 **Saulius Sarcevičius** (Lithuanian Institute of History), **Ričardas Taraškevičius** (Nature Research Centre), **Gražina Skridlaitė** (Nature Research Centre). The Craft of Vilnius Brickmakers during the Pagan Period

16:50–17:10 **Mindaugas Pilkauskas, Dovilė Baltramiejūnaitė** (State Cultural Reserve of Kernavė). From Prominent to Ordinary Town: Kernavė's Structure in the 15th Century

- 17:10-17:30 **Hubert Lepionka** (Museum of Podlasie in Białystok). Mogiłki-Post-medieval Stele Cemeteries in North-Eastern Poland. Current Studies and Perspectives
- 17:30-17:50 **Ignas Sadauskas, Ramūnas Šmigelskas** ("Igra"). Evangelicals Reformed and Lutherans: Investigations of the XVI-XX c. cemeteries in Vilnius
- 17:50-18:00 **Edita Gilė** ("Vikingų kaimas"). Presentation of medieval costume.
- 18:15 Educational event-medieval food degustation

FRIDAY 15 NOVEMBER

- 9:00-9:30 Welcome coffee

V. Anthropological and archaeobotanical approach

Moderated by Rimantas Jankauskas

- 9:30-9:50 **Oleksandra Kozak** (Institute of Archaeology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine). Children of Kievan Rus'
- 9:50-10:10 **Natalia Khamaiko** (The Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe (GWZO), Leipzig; Institute of Archaeology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine). Christianity's Influence on Dietary Practices in Kyivan Rus': An Historical and Archaeological Perspective
- 10:10-10:30 **Justina Kozakaitė** (Faculty of Medicine, Vilnius University), **Agnieška Rudinska** (Faculty of Mathematics and Informatics, Vilnius University), **Audronė Jakaitienė** (Faculty of Medicine, Vilnius University), **Rimantas Jankauskas** (Faculty of Medicine, Vilnius University). Trauma and socioeconomic status: patterns and correlations in late medieval-early modern Vilnius
- 10:30-10:50 **Rūta Karaliūtė** (PhD student, Lithuanian Institute of History). Facing the Little Ice Age: Archaeobotanical Approach to Medieval Agriculture in Vilnius
- 10:50-11:00 Discussion
- 11:00-11:20 Coffee break

VI. Religious symbiosis

Moderated by Elžbieta Jaskulska

- 11:20-11:40 **Marcin Wołoszyn** (online) (Institute of Archaeology, University of Rzeszów, Poland, Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe [GWZO], Leipzig, Germany). Were the Inhabitants of the Cherven Towns Christian in the 10th and 11th centuries?
- 11:40-12:00 **Vyacheslav Baranov, Vsevolod Ivakin** (online) (Institute of Archaeology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine). Religious Symbiosis on the Southern Border of Kievan Rus'. Paganism and Christianity on the River Ros' Area
- 12:00-12:20 **Marius Ščavinskas** (Klaipėda University). Changes in the Daily Life of Slavic and Baltic Societies during Christianization Based on Written Sources, 11th-15th centuries
- 12:20-12:40 **Tomasz Nowakiewicz** (Faculty of Archaeology, University of Warsaw). Prussians and Christianity in the Middle Ages: Principles of Coexistence
- 12:40-13:00 Discussion
- 13:00-14:30 Lunch break

VII. Cremations and diversity of the burial rites

Moderated by Mikalai Plavinski

- 14:30-14:50 **Gediminas Petrauskas** (Klaipėda University, Institute of Baltic Region History and Archaeology), **Gytis Piličiauskas** (Lithuanian Institute of History). Cremation Graves of the Vilūnai Cemetery: a Glimpse into Medieval Lithuanian Burial Practices
- 14:50-15:10 **Ludwika Jończyk** (Faculty of Archaeology, University of Warsaw). Mosiężysko. Cemetery with Dispersed Burials in the Szurpiły Settlement Complex
- 15:10-15:30 **Elżbieta Jaskulska** (Faculty of Archaeology, University of Warsaw). A Burial Enigma: Investigating the Diversity of Cremation Practices of Early Medieval Societies in North-Eastern Poland
- 15:30-15:50 Discussion
- 15:50 Afterword.
- 17:00 "Kyivan Rus'. Origins". An International Exhibition (House of Histories, T. Kosciuszkos St. 3).

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITTEE:

Dr Irma Kaplūnaitė, Lithuanian Institute of History
Dr Rytis Jonaitis, Lithuanian Institute of History
Dr Rūta Kačkutė, National Museum of Lithuania
Dr hab. Tomasz Nowakiewicz, Faculty of Archaeology, University of Warsaw
Dr Mikalai Plavinski, Faculty of Archaeology, University of Warsaw
Dr Vsevolod Ivakin, Institute of Archaeology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine
Dr Gediminas Petrauskas, Klaipėda University, Institute of Baltic Region History and Archaeology

CONFERENCE PARTNERS:

National Museum of Lithuania
Faculty of Archaeology, University of Warsaw
Institute of Archaeology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine

Dmytro Diachenko (Institute of Archaeology
of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine)

Women's Funeral Dress at the Ostriv Burial Ground

The Ostriv burial ground covers an area of approximately 10 ha on the first floodplain terrace of the high right bank of the Ros River between the settlements of Puhachivka and Ostrov in the Bila Tserkva district of the Kyiv region. Between 2017 and 2023, a total of 2557 m² were excavated. The investigation revealed 119 burial complexes of varying degrees of preservation. The preliminary results of the comprehensive study of the necropolis have enabled the monument to be dated to the 11th century. Furthermore, the cemetery population has been identified as representing a multi-ethnic group, in particular, representatives of medieval West Baltic tribes. The emergence of this population is associated with the state activities of the great Kyivan princes Volodymyr Sviatoslavovych and Yaroslav Volodymyrovych. The political agenda of the period was focused on the defensive construction and economic development of the lands to the south and west of Kyiv in the first half of the 11th century.

One of the most striking aspects of the funerary rite is the prevalence of a considerable array of equipment in burial complexes, particularly for women. The distribution of items in the burials demonstrated that they were employed in funerary practices by their functions in everyday life, as part of a costume. The comparative characteristics of the composition and structure of the identified clothing elements provide evidence for the existence of a well-established traditional system of funerary dress in this ancient community. This system correlated with the deceased's age and social and ethnocultural affiliation.

A systematic comparison of the materials of the Ostriv necropolis with medieval monuments of the East Baltic region has shown that despite the tangible Baltic context, the material culture of the migrants is syncretic. Consequently, the materials of the Ostriv burial ground reflect the traditions of medieval Western Baltic women's dress, whose composition has undergone considerable modifications as a result of the migration and cultural adaptation of the East Baltic migrants.

Rūdolfs Brūzis (Institute of Latvian History of the University of Latvia),
Roberts Spirģis (independent researcher)

Material of the Male Burials in the Liv Cemetery Ogresgala Čabas in the XI-XIII Centuries: Changes and Continuity

The proposed paper will examine the male graves of the Ogresgala Čabas burial ground. In total, among the 38 investigated at the site burials, the remains of adult males were found in 10 graves, one grave contained a young male aged 17–22, along with one cenotaph, furnished with weapons. The deceased had been placed in an extended supine position and were mostly oriented with heads to the north or north-west. The excavation showed that there had been a barrow cemetery. The barrows were no longer visible in the relief, having been ploughed out. In total, it is possible to identify 4–5 mounds with male burials. Unlike women's and children's graves, among them there were paired burials; men's burials were individual.

The Christianization of the population of the lower Daugava area, which began already before the appearance of German missionaries at the end of the 12th century, could not but influence the funeral ritual. The referents propose to discuss the dynamics of changes in the appearance of Liv weapons burials, including pagan ground cremations, burial mounds with inhumations, and ground inhumations. The problem of preserving weapons and clothing in Christian burials will also be discussed.

Saulius Sarcevičius (Lithuanian Institute of History),
Ričardas Taraškevičius (Nature Research Centre),
Gražina Skridlaitė (Nature Research Centre)

The Craft of Vilnius Brickmakers During the Pagan Period

Historical sources do not provide direct knowledge of the first brickmakers in Vilnius. The historiography is based on the opinion that the first brickmakers came to Vilnius from Riga. This opinion is based on the well-known historical fact that Grand Duke Gediminas, the founder of Vilnius (1323), maintained close relations with the citizens and the Archbishop of Riga. To what extent can this opinion be accurate? This question is attempted to be answered by using XRF and SEM analysis of bricks. Brick samples were taken from the earliest buildings or fragments of buildings, such as the Cathedral, the Lower Castle and St. Nicholas Church. All of them were built in the 13th – 14th centuries, before the acceptance of Christianity in the GDL (1387). Comparison of the data from the bricks obtained during the research has revealed at least a few different brickmaking techniques. This would indicate that at least several waves of brickmakers arrived in Vilnius during the period under consideration. The earliest of them produced the bricks for the old Cathedral, while the bricks for the Lower Castle of Gediminas were produced by another 'wave' of brickmakers.

Marcin Wołoszyn (Institute of Archaeology, University of Rzeszów, Poland, Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe (GWZO), Leipzig, Germany)

Were the Inhabitants of the Cherven Towns Christian in the 10th and 11th centuries?

The scarcity of written records means that archaeology is playing an increasingly important role in the study of East Central and Eastern Europe in the 10th and 11th centuries. This also applies to the study of the Christianisation of Poland and Rus'.

In my paper I will discuss the state of research on Christianisation of the region along the middle part of the Bug River with special attention to the earliest finds.

I would like to explain their small number in comparison with many other finds from the territory of Rus'. I will also refer to the problem of the earliest devotionals from the territory of Piast Poland.

Bartosz Kontny (Faculty of Archaeology, University of Warsaw)

Pre-Christian Watery Deposits from the Territory of Poland

Polish waters hide probably hundreds of offerings dated to the Iron Age, but only a few have been identified so far. This is due to the small number of underwater archaeologists and poor conditions for making survey and excavations (including bad visibility, silted bottom, low water temperature, etc.). Nevertheless, in recent years developments have changed this image and at the moment one may report ritual activity of the Celts, Germans and Balts dated to the La Tène, pre-Roman, Roman and Migration Periods. The author will present some of the latest sites of aforementioned character discovered in Poland (Lake Lubanowo, Śniardwy and Jezuickie), as well as research recommendations regarding future research.

Gediminas Petrauskas (Klaipėda University, Institute of Baltic Region History and Archaeology), **Gytis Piličiauskas** (Lithuanian Institute of History)

Cremation Graves of the Vilūnai Cemetery: a Glimpse into Medieval Lithuanian Burial Practices

Archaeological investigations carried out in Lithuania between 2020 and 2021 as part of the Gas Interconnection Poland–Lithuania project (GIPL) have provided a wealth of data on the archaeological heritage of Southern Lithuania. Dozens of new archaeological sites and findspots have been uncovered and recorded, and thousands of archaeological finds have been collected during these investigations. In the village of Vilūnai (in the Kaišiadorys district) alone, four Stone Age, Bronze Age, Early Iron Age and Roman Iron Age settlements, as well as a medieval and post-medieval village settlement and a cemetery are presently known. In the spring of 2020, burnt and melted cremation graves goods were found during the investigation of the 15th–17th century Vilūnai cemetery along the pipeline route and the unauthorised excavation of the surrounding area by a local metal detectorist. In the same year, a 14 m² area was excavated and about 3500 m² were examined with a metal detector in search for a presumed medieval cremation cemetery outside the pipeline route. Two 13th–14th century cremation graves were unearthed, and a 25–55cm thick collective cremation layer with cremated bones, burnt grave goods and small potsherds were recorded. Archaeological research has revealed that the Vilūnai cemetery was in constant use from the 13th to the 17th century, and after the Christianisation of Lithuania, the custom of cremation was replaced by inhumation burial. This paper presents the research and results of the Vilūnai cemetery, examines the custom of cremating the dead in medieval Lithuania, and discusses the peculiarities of regional burial practices.

Elżbieta Jaskulska (Faculty of Archaeology, University of Warsaw)

A Burial Enigma: Investigating the Diversity of Cremation Practices of Early Medieval Societies in North-Eastern Poland

The Early Medieval Period in present-day North-Eastern Poland has long intrigued researchers investigating the mortuary practices of pagan societies. While the prevailing scientific consensus identifies cremation as the dominant funerary rite, the limited

number of burials and the diverse archaeological contexts suggest a range of varied and possibly ephemeral rituals. This presentation will offer an insight into the cremation process based on osteological analysis of cremated human remains from eight sites: Czekanów st. II/2, Daniłowo Małe st. 1, Szadzkie, oddz. 387 D, Szczekotowo, oddz. 214 C, D, Zbucz st. 1, 2, and Zbucz st. 3, Pasym st. 1, and Szurpity st. 8. By examining the differences in the findings, this study aims to reconstruct the possible diversity of these mortuary rituals, drawing on the author's extensive experience in analysing cremated remains.

Dmytro Bibikov (Institute of Archaeology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine)

“Quasi-chamber” Burials as a Transitional Link in the Development of the Funeral Rite of Southern Rus’

“Quasi-chambers” or “imitation chambers” are ancient Rus’ burials that combine the features of both elite chamber burials of the Viking Age and ordinary Christian burials of the beginning of the first millennium AD. On the territory of Southern Rus’, the author identifies four main types of quasi-chambers: 1) chambers with coffins; 2) above-ground chambers; 3) “earthen” chambers with wooden ceilings, but without wall cladding; and 4) “large grave pits” without wooden structures.

According to the composition of the burial inventory and analogies from neighbouring territories, their construction can be dated from the end of the 10th century to the first half of the 11th century.

According to the composition of the burial inventory their construction can be dated from the end of the 10th century to the first half of the 11th century. The vast majority of quasi-chambers contain movable coffins inside stationary wooden structures, which contradicts the basic idea of classical chamber tombs as “houses of the dead” and indicates an undoubted Christian influence. Comprehensive analysis of the design features and funerary inventory of the imitation chambers does not allow us to definitively associate them with representatives of the Old Rus’ elite.

Viktoryia Makouskaya (PhD student, University of Warsaw)

Skrabianiec Barrow Cemetery as an Example of Burial Rites in the Period of Social Transformation: Chronology and Details of Barrow Construction

The barrow cemetery of Skrabianiec (Hlybokaje district in the Vitebsk region of Belarus) has been known in scientific literature since the end of the 19th century. The first excavation in Skrabianiec was carried out by Ludmila Duchyc in 1992 and six burial mounds were investigated. Skeletal burials were found, which were dated by the researcher to the 11th century. The bodies of the deceased were buried in pits under the barrows, the size of which far exceeded the dimensions required for sanitary reasons. This fact drew our attention to the Skrabianiec necropolis.

The aim of the excavations in 2022 was to collect more precise information about the burial rite and the dating of the cemetery, which was not completely clear based on

previous research. Six barrows were examined, containing seven skeletal burials, most of them oriented to the west, dating from the second half of the 11th century to the first half of the 12th century. The grave goods consist only of elements of costume and jewellery, which were relatively rich in female burials. In almost all cases, the burial pits were covered with wood. In some cases, traces of wooden structures were found inside the barrows.

Materials from both excavations allow us to conclude that a Christian burial rite that was embodied in a pseudo-chamber tradition functioned in the cemetery of Skrabianiec. It seems that those buried in Skrabianiec belonged to the local society of the rural administrative centre within the borders of the Polack Principality.

Dariusz Błaszczuk, Julia Malinkiewicz (Faculty of Archaeology, University of Warsaw)

The Provenance of Individuals Buried in Medieval Chamber Graves from Polish Lands in the Light of Isotopic and Molecular Research Results

The presentation will concern the so-called chamber graves. In medieval Poland, these types of burials were constructed in the 10th and 11th centuries and contained interments of men, women, and children. Most scholars agree that they were the final resting places for members of the social elites. The controversy is triggered by the ethnic affiliation of those individuals. Some archaeologists believe that individuals buried in chamber graves were non-locals, namely of Scandinavian origin. Others see them as representatives of the local Slavic population.

The presentation will collect, present and interpret the results of isotope and DNA analyses that have been carried out so far for individuals buried in chamber graves on the territory of medieval Poland (the Oder and Vistula basins). On the basis of these results, the author will try to answer the question of the origin of the individuals buried in these grave structures.

Mikalai Plavinski (Faculty of Archaeology, University of Warsaw)

Chamber Graves, Chamber-Like Graves, Graves like Chamber-Like: Development or Degradation of One Burial Tradition: the Example of Northwestern regions in Belarus

During the last two decades, the study of the peculiarities of the elite burial rites of the realm formation era has noticeably intensified among specialists in the archaeology of Rus’. One of the forms of elite burial rites in Rus’ was the inhumation in chambers under barrows. This rite was practiced in the 10th century, first of all, by the population of the largest early urban centres – emporiums, in which the descendants from Scandinavia played a predominant role.

At the moment, most specialists have no doubt that the rite of burial in chambers had its development in “chamber-like” graves. Various forms of such burials are known from the late 10th to the mid-12th century, primarily in the north-western, northern and

north-eastern borderlands of Old Rus'. In these regions, chamber-like burial rites were practised by representatives of local elites, who initially probably tried to imitate the most significant external features of chamber graves of the emporium population.

At the same time, it can be assumed that the chamber-like graves of local elites became an example for the surrounding rural population, which could try to imitate this burial rite itself by making graves that were chamber-like.

The paper considers the possibility of identifying the features of chamber-like graves and graves that were chamber-like based on the example of the north-western regions of Belarus settled in the late 1st to the early 2nd millennium by the Slavs.

Mindaugas Pilkauskas, Dovilė Baltramiejūnaitė (State cultural reserve of Kernavė)

From Prominent to Ordinary Town: Kernavė's Structure in the 15th Century

The end of the 14th century marks a significant turning point in the history of Kernavė. Previously one of the most important centres of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Kernavė was relegated to a status as an ordinary town by the 15th century after attacks by the Teutonic Knights. Due to the insufficient material from this period, this transformative period has remained largely unexplored. However, during archaeological excavations in 2023, the remains of a precisely dated 15th-century homestead were found. This provided the opportunity to identify mass findings from this period and, based on them, delve into the structure and changes of Kernavė in the 15th century.

Hubert Lepionka (Museum of Podlasie in Białystok)

Mogiłki – Post-Medieval Stele Cemeteries in North-eastern Poland. Current Studies and Perspectives

The post-medieval period in Polish archaeology mainly focuses on excavations at cities, towns, manors, and temples, providing valuable insights into the lives of the nobility, burghers, and clergy. However, there has been a noticeable lack of information about the lives of peasants during this era.

Addressing this gap is the Mogiłki project undertaken by the Podlaskie Museum, which aims to identify and document stela cemeteries in the Podlasie Region. Mogiłki represents one of the post-medieval cemeteries of commoners, commonly found in the rural landscapes of today's Podlasie region in north-eastern Poland. These cemeteries are characterized by standing erratic tombstones and are mostly situated on hilltops within view of the village, dating from the late 15th to the late 18th century. The project, initiated in 2018 and led by the Podlaskie Museum, intends to present recent results of archaeological and anthropological research.

Ignas Sadauskas, Ramūnas Šmigelskas ("Igra")

Evangelicals Reformed and Lutherans: Investigations of the XVI-XX c. Cemeteries in Vilnius

The beginning of the Reformation in Vilnius is marked by the arrival of Lutherans in the beginning of the 16th century. They settled in the southwestern part of the city. In 1556 Mikalojus Radvila Juodasis donated a land in the park of his palace for a cemetery. It was situated in what today is Liejyklos Street. The cemetery remained there until 1805. This area was surveyed in 2008 and 2013. Burials with luxurious grave goods from the 16th and 17th centuries can be found here. In the second half of the 16th century, Vilnius witnessed a significant increase in number of Reformed Evangelical. In 1582 Eustachijus Valavicius granted Lutherans part of the land to open a new cemetery and a hospital. By the end of the 18th century the cemetery was overcrowded, but it remained open until 1830. Extensive research was carried out between 2018 and 2020. Remains of buildings from the 17th-20th centuries that stood on the property of Evangelicals Reformed were uncovered. A large number of undisturbed graves were discovered. The third phase of the Evangelical Reformed cemetery in Vilnius was marked by the establishment of a new Lutheran cemetery on Tauras Hill at the end of the 18th and in beginning of the 19th centuries. From 1830 Evangelical Reformed believers were buried here also. From the mid-19th century, the cemetery was described as a cemetery with burials of various nationalities and denominations. Extensive research was carried out in 2022. Some human remains were buried in decorated metal coffins. A group grave of soldiers from the Napoleonic army stood out. In conclusion, the Lutheran and Evangelical Reformed cemeteries in Vilnius were distinctive and stood out from other cemeteries in the city because of their multi-ethnicity, and the subtlety of their layout.

Oleksandra Kozak (Institute of Archaeology
of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine)

Children of Kievan Rus

The burials of children from the period of Kievan Rus' provide a valuable source for bio-social reconstructions of the medieval population of Ukraine.

The proportion of subadults in cemeteries can be indicative of the population's well-being. The ratio of children of different ages demonstrates the specific aspects of the demographic structure of the medieval rural and urban population. Frequency of various pathological signs allows us to determine the diet, infectious loads, and the level of adaptation of the population to environmental conditions.

The study comprised 180 child burials, representing an average of 22% of the total number of identified individuals from more than 20 cemeteries and collective graves located on the territory of Kievan Rus'. The pathological signs of deficiencies (such as scurvy, rickets and anemia), inflammatory processes and injuries was studied macroscopically.

It was anticipated that the proportion of pathological signs would vary between children from different social groups. Indeed, dental caries and infections, in particular tuberculosis and meningitis of undetermined etiology, were characteristic of the urban

population. Traces of rickets were detected in only 3% of the children. The frequency of scorbutic lesions was high and not dependent on the type or location of the settlement. The number of anemia cases is unexpectedly low in the south of the Kyivan state. Injuries are relatively uncommon, which is likely due to poor bone preservation.

The limited sample size and the condition of the bones may influence the results. Nevertheless, they may be correlated with archaeological and historical sources.

Natalia Khamaiko (The Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe (GWZO), Leipzig; Institute of Archaeology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine)

Christianity's Influence on Dietary Practices in Kyivan Rus` : An Historical and Archaeological Perspective

It is not only written sources that allow us to talk about the diet of medieval people, but also archaeological data and the study of archaeozoological and palaeobotanical remains that provide additional information. The archaeological study of dietary practices in Kyivan Rus` offers a unique perspective on the influence of Christianity and Byzantine culture on food consumption during the Middle Ages. Such research uncovers not only what people ate, but also provide insights into household management, spatial organization, and religious customs.

The presence of beef, pork, small cattle, and poultry in the urban diet reflects the availability of these meats in local markets, while the rearing of chickens in monasteries and rural areas suggests a connection between religious institutions and food production.

Furthermore, the prevalence of fasting practices in medieval Christianity is evident in dietary remains, with certain foods such as fish being favoured during religious observances. Importantly, the diversity of imported commodities like walnuts, plums, grapes, and figs highlights Kyiv's extensive trade connections and the influence of distant regions on local dietary habits. Byzantium served not only as a distributor of goods but also as a conduit for religious and cultural practices, shaping dietary habits and customs in regions like Kyiv.

Rūta Karaliūtė (PhD student, Lithuanian Institute of History)

Facing the Little Ice Age: An Archaeobotanical Approach to Medieval Agriculture in Vilnius

Vilnius, as the capital of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania, was founded during an enormous period of transition. In addition to political, cultural, religious, demographic and other changes, the whole region faced a difficult climatic transition from the Medieval Climatic Optimum to the Little Ice Age. At the beginning of the 14th century, the harsh climate reduced crop yields and led to a series of famines across Europe. In order to ensure the well-being of the local population by preventing crop failure due to unfavourable climatic conditions, it was necessary to employ a variety of long-term agricultural strategies.

By analysing the spectrum of archaeobotanical remains and changes in the isotopic values of cereal grains, we aim to reveal the diachronic agrarian transformations in medieval Vilnius. Recorded changes in crop composition, functional weed ecology, and isotopic values indicate methods of intensive cultivation that contributed to the successful population growth and prosperity of the city of Vilnius.

Justina Kozakaitė (the Faculty of Medicine, Vilnius University), **Agnieška Rudinska** (the Faculty of Mathematics and Informatics, Vilnius University), **Audronė Jakaitienė** (the Faculty of Medicine, Vilnius University), **Rimantas Jankauskas** (the Faculty of Medicine, Vilnius University)

Trauma and Socioeconomic Status: Patterns and Correlations in Late Medieval-Early Modern Vilnius

The aim of this study was to evaluate the impact of socio-economic and cultural factors on skeletal trauma in a large sample from 13th-18th century Vilnius, which was a multi-cultural and multi-confessional city that experienced a period of expansion (16th c.) and devastation (17th and 18th c.).

The database consisted of more than 2000 individuals with known archaeological contexts, religious denominations, and social status, including an individual biological profile (age at death and sex). All fractures were recorded by type, i.e., antemortem (AM) and perimortem (PM), and by the skeletal element affected (skull, axial skeleton, pectoral girdle, upper limb, pelvis, and lower limb). Kaplan-Meier survival curves and Cox proportional hazards models were used to estimate survival by sex, age at death, religious denominations, time period, and social status or their combination.

Results indicated several factors: (1) age had a significant cumulative effect on AM trauma, while the majority of PM trauma occurred in young adults; (2) sex differences were significant, with males predominating, although the most significant differences occurred for ribs and skull; (3) the lower status individuals experienced more injuries, but skull lesions (blunt or sharp force injuries) showed that higher status individuals had a significantly higher risk of experiencing them; (4) Protestants had a slightly lower incidence of trauma.

The study did not reveal any significant secular trends. The majority of recorded injuries and fractures were the result of daily activities, reflecting differences in lifestyles of people from different social backgrounds.

Vyacheslav Baranov, Vsevolod Ivakin (Institute of Archaeology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine)

Religious Symbiosis on the Southern Border of Kievan Rus. Paganism and Christianity in the River Ros` Area

Porosia is a unique region. The constant threat from nomads led to the formation of a special policy of the Grand Princes to protect the southern borders of their state. They not only built a complicated system of fortification lines (Snake Ramparts) and fortified hillforts, but also carried out the relocation of multi-ethnic groups to the region. The religious situation in Porosia was also complex. Its political center, the city of Yuriev (Bila

Tserkva), was awarded an episcopal cathedral before 1072, which underlined the important role that the princely administration assigned to the Christian church. The evidence of chronicles is confirmed by archaeological data. The rite of Christian burials is mainly characterised by a small amount of inventory and the Western orientation of the buried, with some burials containing objects of personal piety.

At the same time, in relation to the nomadic population of Porosia, the chronicler uses the term 'their pagans', which rather indicates the pagan affiliation of part of the population. Archaeological sources confirm the presence of cremation in the region (Karypysh, Yablunivka, and Mala Skvirka), but not all the discovered inhumations can be confidently attributed to Christianity. Many funerary goods have been found in the burials of nomads, Poles (Mykolaivka), Western Baltic migrants (Ostriv) and some other. Burials with Christian items here are often accompanied by amulets of pagan origin.

The analysis of the sources rather shows that the ethnically diverse ancient Rus' population of Porosia, being under constant threat from the Steppe, was quite tolerant of pagans.

Marius Ščavinskas (Klaipėda University)

Changes in the Daily Life of Slavic and Baltic Societies During Christianization Based on Written Sources: From the 11th to the 15th century

The 11th-century chronicler Thietmar of Merseburg described the proper Christian way of life for the Polabian Slavs who had converted to Christianity. He condemned the Western Slavs' belief that the resurrection of bodies from the dead was impossible and that it was necessary to place grave goods with the deceased in the grave. In the 12th-century hagiographies of St. Otto of Bamberg, it is also explained how to live a Christian life - not to cremate the dead, to have burials in cemeteries, not in fields, not to have more than one wife, to baptize infants, etc. At the beginning of 1249, the Christburg Act states that the Prussian nobles surrendering to the German Order must renounce the burning of the dead, polygamy, and other customs. In the first half of the 14th-15th centuries, the decrees of Warmia, Sambia, and other bishops also write about what everyday life customs Prussian converts should abandon. All this shows that during Christianization, important and radical changes took place in Western Slavic and Baltic societies. Based on the comparative method, the presentation will examine the changes in everyday life during Christianization, and dealing with differences and similarities.

Aleksandra Rzeszotarska-Nowakiewicz (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology, Polish Academy of Sciences)

From Christianity to Paganism. The Earliest Christian (?) Motifs in the Pagan Imagery World (with selected examples)

Some motifs found in pagan-barbarian iconography testify to the entry of images and symbols in an earlier period of Late Antiquity, that preceded the triumph of Christianity in barbarian Europe in the early Middle Ages. The pictorial representations of Christian art could be described as bilingual, since they used symbols as well as anthropomorphic images,

some elements of which were incorporated and sometimes also modified in pagan imagery. However, many of these motifs had by then acquired possible pagan interpretations.

On the basis of selected examples from the 3rd to the 7th centuries (e.g. the Nidajno bog deposit, the Lida hoard, and the Linz-Sislau burial), different ways of using these motifs will be presented in iconographic representations decorating metal parts of personal equipment, along with a preliminary interpretation of these images in a pagan context.

Tomasz Nowakiewicz (Faculty of Archaeology, University of Warsaw)

Prussians and Christianity in the Middle Ages: Principles of Coexistence

The guiding theme of the conference ('From Paganism to Christianity') refers to a broad spectrum of phenomena, which is a part of complex and usually long-lasting processes significantly shaping the image of the medieval world. However, bearing in mind that in the reality of that era there was not only one 'paganism' or 'Christianity', it is easy to discern an original element in them, which is a compilation of their own cultural traditions and the nature of the new religion and the strength of the influence of its adherents.

From such a perspective, the Prussian lands stand out in particular, being in the 13th century the arena of confrontation of maximally opposing forces, i.e. autochthons and ethnically foreign invaders, which created the state of the Teutonic Order with a clearly formulated religious doctrine within the conquered territories.

The analysis of archaeological sources from the area makes it possible to observe the process 'From Paganism to Christianity', which theoretically should follow a "model" (as part of an externally designed cultural transformation). The picture obtained, however, is quite surprising, revealing the persistence of manifestations of the old "pagan" tradition in various aspects of the everyday life of de iure Christian Prussians. Although it will be impossible to discuss this topic in detail in a short presentation, it will probably be possible to present the most important issues related to it.

Olena Chernenko (Faculty of Archaeology, University of Warsaw)

"At Saint Saviour's": The Medieval Necropolis of the Transfiguration Cathedral in Chernihiv

The Chernihiv Transfiguration Cathedral was founded in the 1030s. According to chronicles, it served as the burial place for the Chernihiv princes from the Rurik dynasty. However, an attempt to find their tombs in 1923 (with excavations carried out by N. Makarenko) was unsuccessful.

During the research conducted from 2012 to 2014, it was established that the extensions of the cathedral had a burial purpose. Here, the remains of stone sarcophagi and burial niches (arcosolia), were discovered. The architectural features allow for the dating of these extensions and proposing their interpretation. The northern chapel was built simultaneously with the foundation of the cathedral. According to the Byzantine tradition, adopted by the Rurik dynasty, it might have been intended for the burial of the cathedral's founder, Prince Mstislav Vladimirovich (1036). In the 1070s, a second chapel

(southwestern) was constructed. It is possible that Prince Sviatoslav Yaroslavich (1076) was buried here. The two-tiered southeastern chapel, built in the early 12th century, might have been intended for the burial of Prince Oleg Sviatoslavich (1115).

Inside the cathedral, medieval burials were discovered only in the narthex, to the right of the entrance. Here, the remains of 12th-century stone sarcophagi were found. In Rus', this burial place was considered especially honourable. It was in the southern section of the narthex that the sarcophagi of Saints Boris and Gleb were installed in Vyshhorod. By analogy, it can be assumed that Prince Igor Olgovich (1150) and Metropolitan Constantine (1151), canonized by the Orthodox Church, were buried in the narthex of the Chernihiv Transfiguration Cathedral.

Viktoryia Tarasevich (PhD student, University of Warsaw)

“Water Cult”? Preliminary Conclusions on Special Characteristics of the Space Organization of the Smolensk-Polack Long Barrows Culture Barrow Cemeteries

The union of the Eastern Slavs, known from written sources as the Kryvičy, are associated with the group of archaeological sites that in modern literature are called the Smolensk-Polack Long Barrows Culture (SPLBC). The culture was formed in the Smolensk Dnepr Region and the northeastern regions of Belarus no later than in the middle of the 8th century, and existed until the 10th century (in the Smolensk Dnepr Region) and the beginning/first half of the 11th century (in the Belarusian Dzvina Region and in the interfluvium of the Dzvina and Nioman).

The most studied sites of this culture are burial mounds. There are some mentions about the obligatory conditions for choosing the location of the burial mound in the publications devoted to the analysis of SPLBC archaeological sites. Crucial among them is the presence of water (a river, lake or stream) near the barrow cemetery. The researchers also admit that water objects (their shoreline) influenced the orientation of the barrows inside the cemetery. The researchers came to these conclusions for the eastern part of the SPLBC area (the Smolensk Dnepr Region).

This report includes preliminary observations on special characteristics of the organization of the space of the Smolensk-Polack Long Barrows Culture barrow cemeteries, which are based on the analysis of burial sites of the entire area of the culture. The research allows one to get closer to answering the question of how the SPLBC population incorporated the world around them into their religious/symbolic beliefs.

Ludwika Jończyk (Faculty of Archaeology, University of Warsaw)

Mosiężysko. Cemetery with Dispersed Burials in the Szurpiły Settlement Complex

For many years, the understanding of the funeral customs practiced by the Early Medieval Old Prussians relied primarily on data derived from the Sambian Peninsula, while cemeteries from other Old Prussian territories remained largely unknown. Until 20

years ago, it was believed that the funeral rituals of the Yotvingians were archaeologically elusive. This paper provides an overview of the results from the archaeological investigations of the Mosiężysko cemetery, discovered in 2008 at site 8 in Szurpiły in northeast Poland. The main aim of the paper is to present a reconstruction of the burial rites practiced at the Mosiężysko cemetery, based on the archaeological data.

Significant quantities of burnt human bones (approximately 6.9 kg), pottery sherds (around 10,000 fragments), and metal objects (about 3,500 finds) were found in the humus layer, revealing the site to be a cemetery with dispersed burials situated in close proximity to a settlement inhabited in the same period (12th and 13th centuries). The necropolis was established near the edge of a pond, partially in an area of moraine till. Some stones from the till were used to construct an L-shaped cobbling. All grave goods were destroyed (cut, broken, bent) and burnt on the funeral pyre. The act of cremation likely took place locally.

The results are compared with other cemeteries featuring dispersed burials and collective cremation graves in the Czarna Hańcza Group (a cluster of sites dated to the 9th to 13th centuries, within the borders of Yotvingia as delineated by historians), and other Baltic and Finno-Ugrian sites.

Sławomir Wadył (Faculty of Archaeology, University of Warsaw)

A Candle for the Lord and a Candle-stump for the Devil. Mysterious Funeral Rites in Pomerania in the Light of Research on Orzeszkowo-type Burial Mounds

Orzeszkowo type barrows are one of the most intriguing problems of early medieval archaeology in Poland. The term comes from a cemetery in Orzeszkowo in Łobez County which was excavated from 1921 to 1924. In their classic form, they occur only in Pomerania. Barrows of the Orzeszkowo type are basically four-sided, usually square embankments “closed” with a stone surround. Inside the mound, there are various stone constructions in the form of burial chambers or stone pavements. They are usually the burial place of several people. They are characterized by bi-ritualism – apart from the prevailing inhumation, cremation was also used. The grave goods in most cases are very modest. Although the Orzeszkowo-type graves belong to the more intriguing category of funerary objects, they have not been studied in recent decades.

In 2022, excavations were initiated at the cemetery in Nowy Chorów. Six barrows were examined during three research seasons. Each of the examined burial mounds has a different funeral story. The excavation allowed us to initially establish the dating back to the 11th century. There are 17 mounds at the site. They form two clusters – the larger (Western) consisting of 10 and the smaller (Eastern) with 7 barrows.

During the research, in several cases the opening of inhumation graves was recorded, which occurred in the early Middle Ages. In two of them, the remains of the deceased were cremated and buried in the same place. This is evidence of unknown funeral practices of Pomeranians. It is possible that political changes could have influenced the treatment of the remains of the deceased, who were ultimately buried in the same way as their ancestors treated the dead.

