

Collections of the museum represented archaeological finds dating from the 10th millennium B.C. to the 16th-17th century. This museum exhibits the most exhaustive and comprehensive exposition of Lithuanian archaeology. At present, arrangement is being finalized of a new archaeological exposition which will be displayed in a new location, the territory of Vilnius castles. Extensive archaeological collections are kept at Vytautas the Great War Museum (over 43 000), History Museum of Lithuania Minor (Klaipėda, Klaipėda county, nearly 28 000), Nalšia Museum (Švenčionys, Vilnius county, 15 000), Kernavė State Archaeological and Historical Museum-Reserve (10 000), Trakai History Museum (10 000), Museum "Sėla" of the Biržai Area (Biržai, Panevėžys county, over 7000), Mažeikiai Museum (Mažeikiai, Telšiai county, 6000), Šiauliai "Aušra" Museum (over 5000), Daugyenė Cultural History Museum-Reserve (Šiauliai county, over 5000), Lithuanian Art Museum (over 5000). During the recent years, more close relations have been established between archaeologists and municipal museums. A commendable tendency has been observed to leave finds with museums located in the area of the find spot.

The only one historical and archaeological museum-reserve is situated in Kernavė, not far from Vilnius. The museum studies, safeguards and exhibits the archaeological, historical and cultural monuments of Kernavė reserve. There are 48 archaeological and historical monuments in the territory of the reserve (199.2 ha) and its preventive zones, including the largest in Lithuania defensive complex of five hill-forts. Close to the complex a wooden mediaeval town was found, currently excavated by archaeologists of the museum and Vilnius University. The excavations are headed by Dr. A.Luchtanas, archaeologist from Vilnius University. Finds from the town, hill-forts and other sites, recovered during excavations, are attributed to different periods of the Lithuanian prehistory. They are kept at the museum and displayed in an exhibition of "The Prehistory and Middle Ages in Kernavė".

Archaeological finds are being exhibited in practically all the museums of a historical or folkloric profile. Archaeological exhibitions are being staged both in Lithuania and abroad. The first exhibition of Lithuanian archaeological finds organized in a foreign country was arranged by the National Museum of Lithuania (1989, Pavia, Italy).

The number of Lithuanian museums which have the potential to organize and carry out archaeological excavations is continually increasing and now encompasses national museums - the National Museum of Lithuania, the Lithuanian Art Museum, republican - Trakai History Museum, the Kernavė Archaeological and Historical Museum-Reserve, Šiauliai "Aušra" Museum, Vytautas the Great War Museum, municipal - museums of



Alytus, Kėdainiai, "Nalšia", Panevėžys, Utena, Biržai, Kretinga, Mažeikiai, Lithuania Minor (Klaipėda), and the Žemaičiai Museum "Alka".

Pursuant to the information of the section of scientific investigation of collections in the association of Lithuanian museums, archaeological collections in all the Lithuanian State museums are handled by specialists with higher education.

Approximately 70% of archaeological finds kept at museums have been conserved. Most of the archaeological finds are conserved at a branch office of the Lithuanian Art Museum, Pranas Gudynas Centre for Restoration of Museum Artefacts (Vilnius). This restoration workshop was established in 1946 and has by now developed into a centre which provides services to all the Lithuanian museums. In 1985, an archaeological division was founded at the centre. The division is headed by Laima Vedrickienė, restorer of the highest category. Most of the archaeological restorers in Lithuania are pupils of this division. In 1995, a new speciality, conservation of archaeological finds, was introduced at the Department of Archaeology of Vilnius University.

The changing world forces to modify the attitude towards museum visitors, especially young people and children. The personnel of Lithuanian museums believe that it is necessary to use the historical and cultural evidence collected in the depositories of museums and displayed in expositions, as well as the knowledge of specialists working at museums, for the education of the growing generation.

Special educational programmes are being arranged for this particular group of visitors. They are coordinated with school curricula, and favourable conditions are worked out to help young people and children gain a better understanding of the history of Lithuania and their own locality, as well as the sources of the country and its cultural heritage. This undertaking is coordinated by the information, publishing and education section of the Association of Lithuanian museums, headed by Nideta Jarockienė, head of the art cognition centre at the Lithuanian Art Museum.

● Archaeology and aerial photography in Lithuania

Romas Jarockis

Photographing of archaeological sites from aeroplanes in Europe began immediately after World War I. General V.Nagevičius, then director of the Vytautas Magnus War Museum in Kaunas, was the first to employ this novelty in our country in the years 1931-34, while excavating Apuolė and Impiltis hill-forts in north-western Lithuania.

Following World War II, archaeological sites in Lithuania were not photographed in a comprehensive manner.

The rest of Europe however made substantial progress in this area. After World War II, centres of aerial photography were set up at a number of west European universities and institutions involved in preservation of ancient monuments which to date have accumulated archives containing millions of photographic negatives.

In Lithuania comprehensive photographing of archaeological sites from the air as a means of monument preservation has only commenced recently. In 1996, the Centre of Cultural Heritage of the Department of Cultural Heritage Protection allocated funds for implementing a programme of aerial photographing of archaeological sites.

The main objective of this programme is a search for new archaeological monuments and accumulation of additional data on monuments that are already known.

Another important aspect of the programme consists in deciphering and mapping the aerially photographed archaeological monuments with the use of state-of-the-art computer technology.

The programme is aimed at setting up a centralised archive of aerial photographic negatives of Lithuania's archaeological monuments. The data of the archive could be used for purposes related to artefact preservation and for illustrating scientific and popular publications.

● Protection of Archaeological Sites

Rimantas Kraujalis

Interest in the protection of Lithuanian archaeological sites arose only in the 19th century. In 1855, due to the initiative of Count E. Tiškevičius (1814-1873), the founder of Lithuanian archaeology, the Vilnius Temporary Archaeological Commission and the Museum of Antiquities were founded. The said Commission, which, among other undertakings, was also engaged in registration of archaeological sites, was an influential and popular organization, but its activities were cancelled after the uprising of 1863.

In the period when Lithuania was part of the czarist Russian Empire, archaeological sites were within the responsibility of the Imperial Archaeological Commission, founded in 1859, which controlled archaeological excavations in the Russian Empire, and the Archaeological Society of Moscow, founded in 1864. On the initiative of the latter, archaeological conventions were arranged in different regions. One of these conventions, arranged in Vilnius in 1893, had a very significant impact on protection of archaeological sites in our country. Prior to the

convention, a special questionnaire for description of archaeological sites was prepared and sent out to teachers and public authorities in the peripheral areas. Replies to the questionnaire combined with other collected information, enabled F.Pokrovski to prepare and publicize archaeological maps of Vilnius (1893), Gardin (1895) and Kaunas (1899) provinces. In 1908, a map of Lithuanian archaeological sites covering East Prussia and some monuments in western Lithuania was published by E.Hollack.

After restoration of independence, protection of archaeological sites was undertaken by the State Archaeological Commission under the Ministry of Culture, founded in 1919, and later transferred to a special division for protection of monuments at Kaunas Vytautas the Great Museum of Culture. The two institutions accomplished a lot in organizing archaeological excavations and recording monuments. In this connection, a very significant undertaking was the catalogue and map of archaeological sites, Archaeological Material of Lithuania, published by P. Tarasenko in 1928. Protection of archaeological sites in pre-war Lithuania was aggravated by a few factors - the absence of relevant legislation on protection of cultural monuments and attribution of a large number of archaeological sites to the ownership of private arable land. The first Lithuanian law on protection of cultural monuments, the bill of which had been drafted in independent Lithuania, was passed only in 1940, when Lithuania had already been invaded and occupied by the Soviets.

In the soviet post-war Lithuania, protection of cultural monuments was regulated by special laws enacted in 1967 and 1977. The work of protection and supervision of cultural monuments was headed by the Board of Museums and Protection of Cultural Monuments under the Ministry of Culture, as well as special divisions of relevant executive authorities in districts. The soviet law of protection of monuments was based on the contract of commitment, which the then user of an archaeological site (collective-farm, forest administration, etc.) was forced to sign. From the year 1967, registration of cultural monuments was undertaken by the Scientific Methodological Council of Protection of Cultural Monuments. In 1972, archaeological associates of the Council prepared and published a register of archaeological sites of Lithuania (the sites were divided into objects of republican and local significance), and some time later they cartographed and defined the territories and preventive zones of many archaeological sites, marked them on maps and on location. Nevertheless, the soviet pyramid administration system, and public (collective) land ownership with no direct accountability, enabled the authorities to make drastic decisions regarding cultural monuments (a very obvious illustration being the project of the then government of soviet Lithuania to establish the so-called Friendship Museum of Nations of the USSR in the territory of the castles of Vilnius, which had not been investigated by archaeologists yet).

When perestroika started, the movement for protection of monuments, as well as the green movement which had just started at that time, were especially active, and it was due to this particular reason, that an inter-departmental Inspection for Protection of Cultural Monuments, directly subordinate to the Parliament of the Republic, was created after restoration of independence with a view to ensuring direct public control in

the field of protection of monuments. Practical decisions showed that such an isolated body for control of protection of monuments, independent and not related with relevant executive authorities, was not justified.

After the Law on Protection of Immovable Cultural Valuables was passed, the State Commission for Protection of Cultural Monuments and the Department of Cultural Heritage Protection under the Ministry of Culture were established. The State Commission for Protection of Cultural Monuments is accountable to Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania and is responsible for the formation of state policy on protection of cultural valuables as well as control of the implementation thereof. It serves as an expert on issues of state policy on protection of cultural valuables for Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, the President, and the government.

Pursuant to this law, the Department of Cultural Heritage Protection under the Ministry of Culture is a state institution responsible for administration of protection of cultural valuables. The Department implements state policy on protection of immovable cultural valuables (including archaeological sites), prepares guidelines of this policy and strategy, carries out state accounting of valuables, supervises administration, use and disposition of cultural valuables, as well as other work related to their maintenance, emergency repairs, application, investigation, conservation, restoration, etc. Furthermore, the Department of Cultural Heritage Protection collects, systematizes and spreads information about immovable cultural valuables as well as methods of their protection, and prepares state programmes on accounting, scientific research, propagation a/o.

The Department of Cultural Heritage Protection has several structural divisions, including the Cultural Heritage Centre. This Centre has a division of archaeology, which virtually performs registration of archaeological sites, prepares documentation for entering archaeological objects into the register of immovable cultural valuables of the Republic of Lithuania, collects and systematizes the cartographic and archival evidence of archaeological objects. Besides, archaeologists of the Cultural Heritage Centre do a lot of field work (prospecting investigations), the objective of which is to establish the value, chronology and territorial boundaries of archaeological sites to the greatest possible precision.

The Cultural Heritage Centre, in its turn, has 10 structural divisions, set up in centres of counties. These centres carry the largest load of work in protection and maintenance of immovable cultural valuables, including archaeological sites, situated in their territory.

At present, there are about 3000 archaeological sites in Lithuania, which fall into three groups: archaeological objects of local importance; the most significant archaeological sites affirmed as cultural monuments; archaeological sites included in the register of immovable cultural valuables of the Republic of Lithuania.

According to Article 47 of the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, archaeological sites of state importance are treated as exclusive ownership of the Republic of Lithuania. These objects cannot be subject to private property. A list of such archaeological objects has been prepared, but it has not yet been con-

firmed by Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania. The list is expected to be confirmed in the nearest future. The number of archaeological objects suggested for the list exceeds 500.

The government of the Republic of Lithuania has already declared the most significant archaeological sites monuments of culture. The list of cultural monuments includes about 900 archaeological objects. The list is being constantly replenished as new archaeological sites are found.

In 1997, the Scientific Archaeological Commission was founded at the Department of Cultural Heritage Protection, comprising archaeological scholars and specialists in protection of monuments. This Commission confirms the lists of investigated archaeological sites, carries out expertise of submitted archaeological programmes and approves these programmes, issues permits for archaeological excavations and controls accountability for the excavations, qualifies archaeologists as experts, solves problems and disputes related to archaeological investigations.

Apart from that, the Department of Cultural Heritage Protection provides methodical assistance and maintains close cooperation ties with municipalities and regional administrations, which have separate divisions for protection of cultural valuables.

The Department of Cultural Heritage Protection has been using its budget for a number of years to finance programmes on registration, protection and investigation of archaeological sites. For registration purposes, some 150 archaeological sites of ambiguous significance and more than 120 disrupted archaeological sites have been excavated, and 34 deteriorating hill-forts have been straightened up during the last three years.

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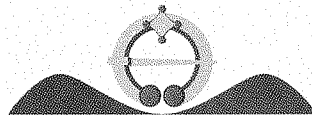
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LITHUANIAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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