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## **THE HILLFORTS OF KERNAVĖ: MORE BOREHOLES - MORE KNOWLEDGE**

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In recent years, Vilnius University and the Kernavė State Cultural Reserve have been carrying out the project "Functional Development of Hillforts - from the Fortified Settlement to the Residence of the Duke". The main object of this research is a complex of 4 hillforts located in the UNESCO-protected Kernavė archaeological site. The aim of the project is to identify and precisely chronologise the functional development of the Eastern Lithuanian hillforts and the activities carried out on them during the Iron Age and the Middle Ages (5th century BC - 14th century AD). At the same time, an attempt was made to reveal the dynamics and chronology of the transformation of the natural, uninhabited landscape of the Kernavė hillforts into a cultural landscape. The main research strategy was to obtain as much data as possible using none or minimal invasive research methods such as geophysics and drillings.

Three geophysical methods were used: magnetometry, GPR and ERT. These surveys were followed by coring and archaeological excavations. Over 300 boreholes were drilled and sampled for 14C dating. The excavations were carried out on the basis of the geophysical surveys and the drilling information. The interdisciplinary research data were synthesised to determine the evolution of the hillforts' residential and defensive functions. The new 14C dates obtained have significantly extended their chronology. The aim of this report is to highlight the importance of coring in such multi-method investigations. The advantages and disadvantages of this method will be revealed and discussed.

### **Keywords**

coring, geophysical methods, fortifications, hillforts, Kernavė

### **Note/comment**