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NEW FINDS FROM THE SETTLEMENT SITE OF TAMMIKU

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The village of Tammiku is situated in the south-eastern part of Ambla parish, on the north-eastern border of Järvamaa. After uniting the villages in 1976–77, Tammiku temporarily bore the name Roosna-Tammiku, and was located in the south-eastern part of this united village. The parish of Ambla has been archaeologically one of the least investigated parishes among the North Estonian ones. The descriptions of the ancient monuments of the parish, compiled in 1920ies (Hindrikson 1922; Rebane 1929), were the main source of the ancient history of the region for a long period. The situation improved in the mid-70ies, when archaeological inventories were carried out here by A. Lavi, K. Jaanits, V. Lõugas, A. Kraut, M. Mandel and Ü. Tamla, searching for stone graves and cup-marked stones in the areas of intended soil improvement. Many cup-marked stones and stone graves were saved and a few settlement sites were also discovered. These inventories seldom concerned the periphery of the parish. The same can be said about the vicinity of Tammiku village where, a farmer, Toomas Lemming, had collected pottery, coins and other finds from the garden of his Uustalu farm for quite a long time. The first archaeological survey of that site took place in 1992 (Lõugas & Kuiv 1992). It appeared that the cultural layer of the settlement site mostly lay on the lands of the Uustalu farm.

The cultural layer of the settlement site lies on the western shore of an ancient water body, grown over with turf. This water body was once connected with the rivers of Soodla and Jägala, and through them, with the Gulf of Finland. The western shore of the water body, where the settlement site was located, is sporadically quite steep, but slopes gently near the Uustalu farm and thus, most convenient for a settlement site. The cultural layer is most intensive near the present dwelling of the Uustalu farm, in the area between the old farmyard (byre and other household buildings), and the granary and the drier of the former collective farm. The area of the settlement site is approximately 5000 m². From the core of the settlement site we found a rhomboid pendant (AI

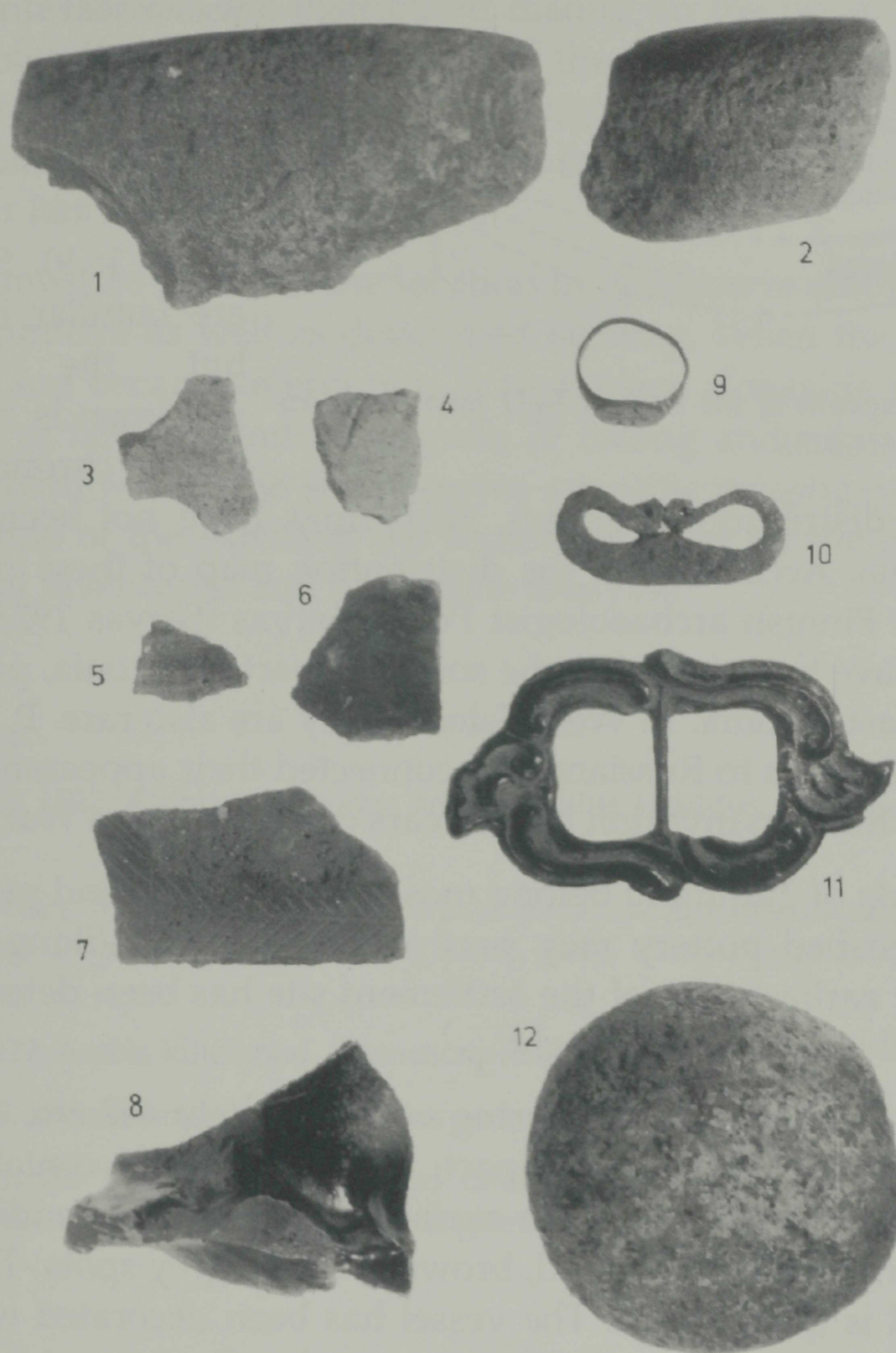


Fig. 1. Collection of finds from Tammiku settlement site. 1,2 – fragment of stone axes, 3–7 pottery, 8 – fragment of flint, 9 – ring, 10 – strike-a-light, 11 – buckle, 12 – grinding stone.

5973: 1) and some plain potsherds. Besides pottery, a part of which may belong to the Late Iron Age, T. Lemming found a fragment of an oval strike-a-light (Fig. 2), and a fragment of a whetstone. An analogous strike-a-light was found from the Lindora barrow (Schmiedehelm 1965, 28, Fig. 8) and it dates to the third quarter of the 1st millennium. The discovered stoneware and wheel pottery prove that the site was inhabited also in the Middle Ages. Many of burnt fragments of granite stones and stone rubble occur on the site.

At the end of 1997, T. Lemming demonstrated new finds from the settlement site of Tammiku in the Institute of History (Fig. 1). Among them

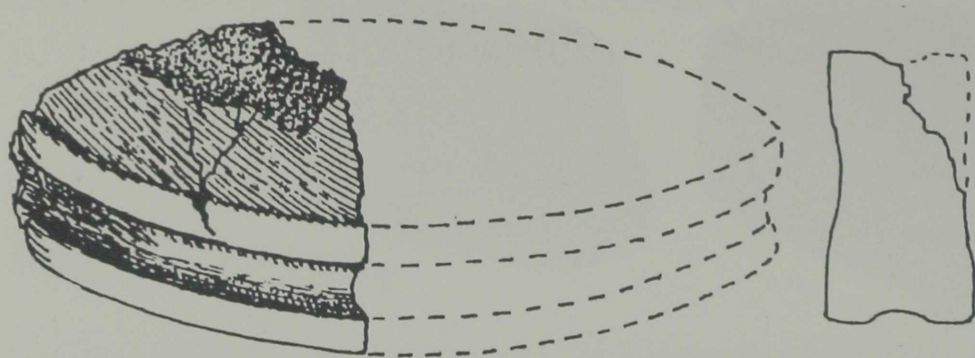


Fig. 2 – The fragment of the strike-a-light from Tammiku settlement site (AI 5973).

was a seal ring with the impression of a bird with a long neck and long feet, and the fan-shaped tail outspread (Fig. 1: 9). Such rings are familiar in Estonia, but the Tammiku specimen is remarkable in the chronological as

well as the distributional aspect. Such rings have not been found in North Estonia. According to the distribution map of these rings, compiled by the Finnish archaeologist Pekka Sarvas (Sarvas 1973), most of such rings have been found in the southern part of Estonia, primarily in the South-East Estonia. In West Estonia they are also rare. P. Sarvas attributed these rings to Russians and connected their appearance in Estonia with the Russian invasion in the years of the Livonian War.

The potsherds of Tammiku belong mostly to medieval and modern vessels. The polished pottery may partly belong to the Viking Age also. Hitherto the earliest date of the settlement site has been determined on the basis of the oval strike-a-light.

A rare find is a potsherd measuring approximately 4x7 cm, 1 cm thick (Fig. 1: 7), well baked and compact. The greyish clay contains an admixture of fine sand. The interior surface of the vessel is reddish brown, the outer surface well smoothed, brownish, with grey spots. The surface of the vessel is quite rough. The vessel has been decorated with a herringbone motif, at least 2 cm wide, between three horizontal lines, which at one edge terminates with an analogous belt in a vertical position. Only half of this belt is preserved. Ornament of this type, probably describing ears of corn, often occur on Estonian Neolithic corded pottery (see Villa, Sope). Rare is the arrangement of such an ornament belt in the vertical position. This potsherd is presently the oldest find from the Tammiku settlement site, dating probably from the III millennium B.C.

Among the stray finds from this site are a couple of broken stone artefacts, evidently fragments of cutting edges of stone axes (Fig. 1: 1, 2), which could be roughly dated to the same period as the aforementioned potsherd. One of these edges might belong to a flat-butted axe (Fig. 1: 1). These axes are dated to the end of the Neolithic or the beginning of the Bronze Age in Estonia. All are stray finds, none of them has been found together with datable pottery. L. Jaanits has already claimed

(1982) that these axes are distributed mainly on the upper and middle reaches of the Dnieper, on the banks of the Väina River and further to the middle reaches of the Volga. The original appearance of the other axe (Fig. 1: 2) is difficult to determine on the basis of the fragment, since it is smaller and the edge is damaged.

In brief, it must be said that the location in question is naturally favourable for primitive as well as developed farming. When the water body shallowed and became overgrown, it took place alongside with the development of farming and the regress of fishing and other subsistence connected with water. The site deserves scientific investigations and the determination of the extent of the settlement layer by the means of archaeological inventories and phosphate analyses.

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UUSI LEIDE TAMMIKU ASULAKOHALT

Vello LÕUGAS

Viimastel aastakümnetel on Järvamaa kirdenurgas asuva Ambla khk. kaguosas paiknevalt Tammiku asulakohalt toodud Ajaloo Instituuti arvukalt, peamiselt kesk- ja uuema aja leide. Seni oli vanim leid siit I aastatuhande teisest veerandist pärinev ovaalne tuluskivi (joon.2). Koha oluliselt varasemat, võimalik, et isegi III aastatuhandest e.Kr. pärinevat asustust, näitavad aga 1997. aastal põllutöödel päevavalgele tulnud leiud: kivikirveste katked (joon.1: 1–2), tulekivikild (joon. 1: 8) ja nn. viljapeamustriga nõorkeraamika kild (joon.1: 7). Osa kiilapinnaga keraamikast (joon.1: 3,6) pärineb viikingiajast. Kesk- ja uuema aja leidude hulgas väärrib tähelepanu venepärane pitsatsõrmus (joon.1: 9), milliste levikut uurinud P. Sarvas dateerib Liivi sõja aega. Tammiku sõrmus on esimene selline leid Põhja-Eestis.