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Ülle Tamla

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Esi- ja tagakaas: 2001. aastal Haapsalust leitud ahjukahlid. 16. saj. esimene pool.
Cover and back cover: Stove-tiles found from Haapsalu in 2001. The first half of the 16th century.

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THE HILL-FORT OF KEAVA

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In 2001, the archaeological field work started at Keava, central North Estonia, ancient district of Harju (Rapla County today), organised by the Chair of Archaeology of the University of Tartu. According to recent discoveries, the Keava complex consists of two open settlement sites, Linnaaluste I and II, and a hill-fort, all of them having a Viking and Late Iron Age date (see Konsa et al., this volume pp. 74–81, Fig.1). Keava was mentioned already in the old Russian chronicles around the year 1054, when Prince Izjaslav captured a fort called Kedipiv [1]; as the village of Keava was still in 1410 called Kedempe, the historians agree in connecting these two names and places (Johansen 1951, 70; Vahtre 1992). The main aim of this project was to investigate by archaeological means the settlement sites and hill-fort of Keava, and to establish whether it really was the place captured by Izjaslav in the 1050's. In addition, it was planned to carry out thorough surveys in the surroundings of Keava as well, in order to obtain more updated information about the whole ancient fort district.

The surveys in southern Rapla County in spring 2001 yielded 23 new sites (see Ots and Konsa, this volume pp. 192, Fig. 1) . They are mostly settlement sites, except for one cup-marked stone and one village cemetery of the Middle Ages. Based on the materials gathered during the field-walking from the surface of the cultivated fields, the majority of the sites belong to the Middle and Late Iron Ages; only a few of them had ceramics of earlier times. This indicates that at least in the beginning of the second millennium, Keava and its surroundings were densely populated, attracting the attention of foreign princes.

The excavations were carried out at three places. Two of them were located at settlement site I of Linnaaluste and are treated in a separate paper (Konsa et al., this volume). The third and main excavation (44 m²) was situated on the western edge of the hill-fort's plateau. It involved both a cross-section of the rampart (3 x 4 m) and an area of the yard (8 x 4 m) behind the rampart (Fig. 1). Due to the limitations of both time and finances, the excavation of the uncovered area was not completed in this session.

The rampart of the hill-fort was covered with a layer of stones, mostly medium-sized limestones. No pattern was discerned in the location of these stones; as they all had clear traces of burning, one can conclude that (the last phase of) the fort

[1] Kedipiv was then translated into Russian as "The Hand of the Sun".

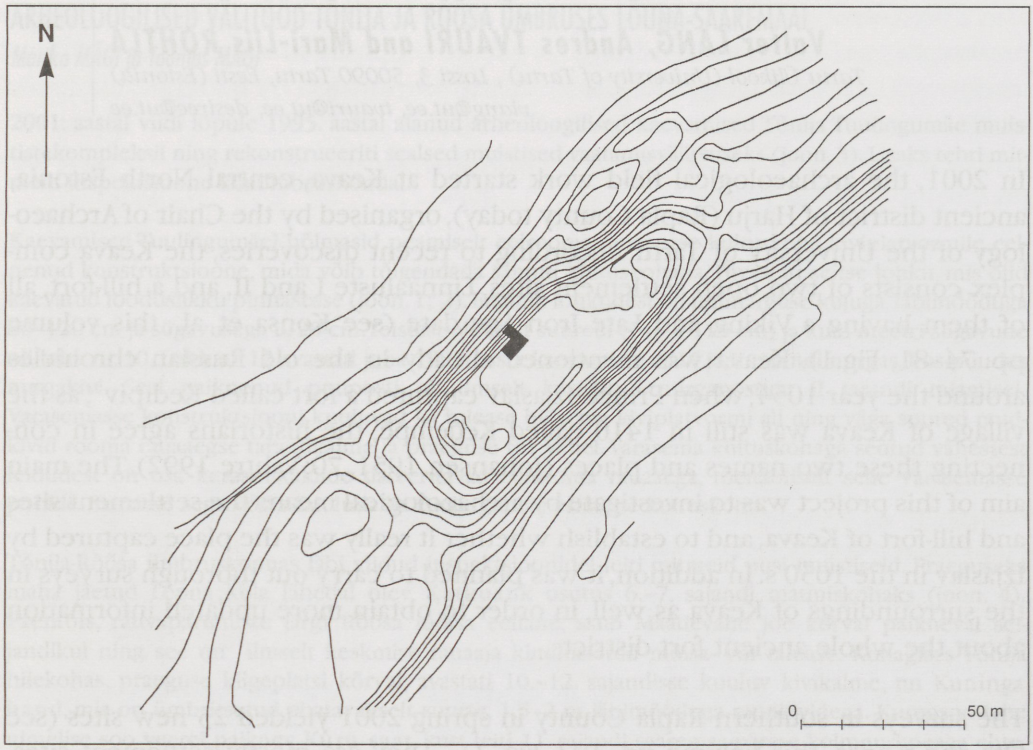

Fig. 1. The hill-fort of Keava and location of the excavation plot of 2001.
Joon. 1. Keava linnus ja 2001. a. kaevandi asendiplaan.

was destroyed by fire. The stones on the rampart originate from the filling of wooden constructions, the remains of which were uncovered beneath the uppermost stone layer. Four post-holes were discovered, two of them located on the outer and two on the inner edge of the rampart (Fig. 2). The distance between the post-holes on the edges was 1.25 (the outermost ones) and 1.85 m; the distance between the innermost and outermost post-holes was 2–2.2 m. Between the innermost and outermost post-holes, remains of wooden cross-walls were discovered; one post on the outer edge was relatively well preserved.

According to the excavation results, the rampart was built so that both the inner and outer wooden walls were connected with cross-walls made of timber; the rectangular box-like structures thus formed were filled in with sand and stones. Some kind of wooden palisade was probably located on the top of such a rampart. This technique of building ramparts was very widely distributed in ancient times; it has also been found at many places in Estonia (Moora 1939, Plate IX; Jaanits et al. 1982, Plates XVIII and XIX). The two radiocarbon dates obtained from the wooden remains of Keava rampart differ slightly from each other:

Fig. 2. Post-holes and remains of timbers on the rampart of the hill-fort. View from the NE.
Joon. 2. Postikitilustikud ja palgijäänused linnuse vallil, pildistatud kirdest.

Fig. 3. Remains of the ovens and the clay floor on the plateau of the hill-fort. View from the SE.
Joon. 3. Ahjupõhjad ja savipõrand linnuse platool, pildistatud kagust.

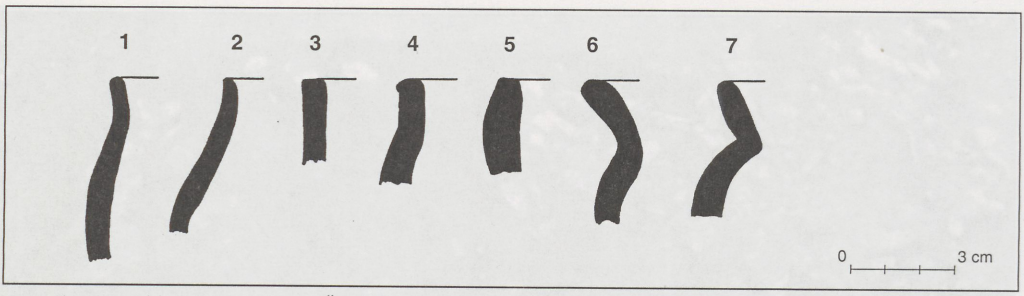

Fig. 4. Profiles of pottery. (TÜ 1026: 350, 173, 370, 103, 313, 308, 444.)
Joon. 4. Savinõude servaprofiile.

977±46 (Tln-2605; taken from the post on the outer edge) and 1079±45 (Tln-2604; remains of the cross-wall). The calibrated age of these dates indicates to the 10th–12th centuries.

Immediately behind the rampart there had been **dwellings** (Fig. 3). At least partly the houses had a stone wall against the wooden rampart; the other walls were probably built of timbers. The stone wall was observable behind both of the ovens that were unearthed, and can be explained as protection against the fire hazard from the ovens. One of the ovens was built completely of stones: the walls were laid of limestone slabs and covered with a pile of cobblestones. This kerisoven measured 1.20 x 0.55 m and there was a large granite stone at its end. Ovens of this type are common in Estonian hill-forts and settlement sites of the Late Iron Age. Rather unusual is the other oven found one metre northwest of the latter: its round-shaped bottom (90 cm in diameter) was laid of stones but the heating chamber on top of it was formed of clay. Clay ovens like this have been reported from many places in Eastern Europe, among others from Staraya Ladoga and Ryurikovo hill-fort in NW Russia (Nosov & Petrenko 1986), the Livian areas of Latvia (Zariņa 1978) and also from a few places in Estonia: Pada (Tamla 1983), Tartu and Rõuge (Tõnisson 1980, 73–74).

There was one more feature that can be connected with either heating or simply making of fire. Its remains were found in the southern corner of the excavation area but the main part of it was located outside the excavation. Therefore the exact nature of this feature remained unclear. Numerous pieces of animal bone, burnt clay (some of them with traces of metal slag) and ceramics were found around this structure. One may suppose that this feature was somehow connected with manufacturing activities (metal working). Traces of an extensive clay floor were discovered in the southernmost portion of the excavated area but its limits and shape were not observable.

One may conclude that there were at least two dwellings (two different ovens) in the excavation area behind the rampart. Unfortunately it was not possible to determine the exact limits and shape of these houses. On the basis of both the location of the ovens and the distribution of the sherds of two different clay vessels, one may think that one of the houses was situated in the southwestern and the other in northeastern corner of the excavated area.

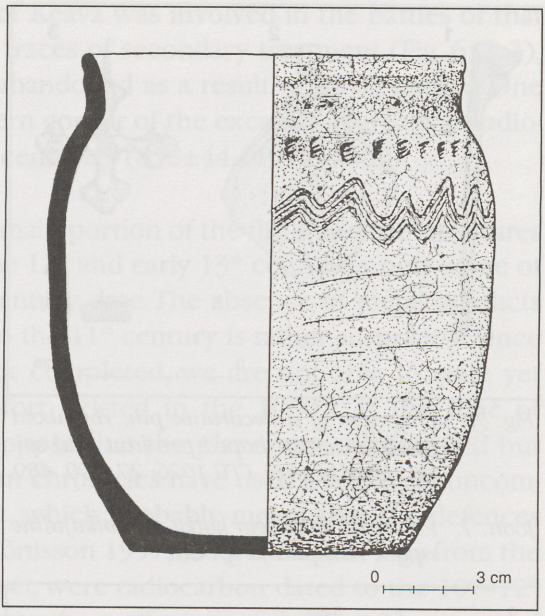

Fig. 5. Reconstructed wheel-made pot. (TÜ 1026: 260 et al.)
Joon. 5. Kedral valmistatud savinõu rekonstruktsioon.

The finds (TÜ 1026) consist mostly of pottery, 460 sherds altogether. The number of artifactual finds and their fragments (aside from ceramics and pieces of burnt clay) totals 71. This gives 1.61 finds per square metre but, as the area under question was not excavated completely, this number is going to increase. In any case, the cultural layer of Keava hill-fort seems to be among the richest cultural layers of our Late Iron Age hill-forts (for instance, the corresponding density at Lõhavere was 1.51, and that at Soontagana – 2.04).

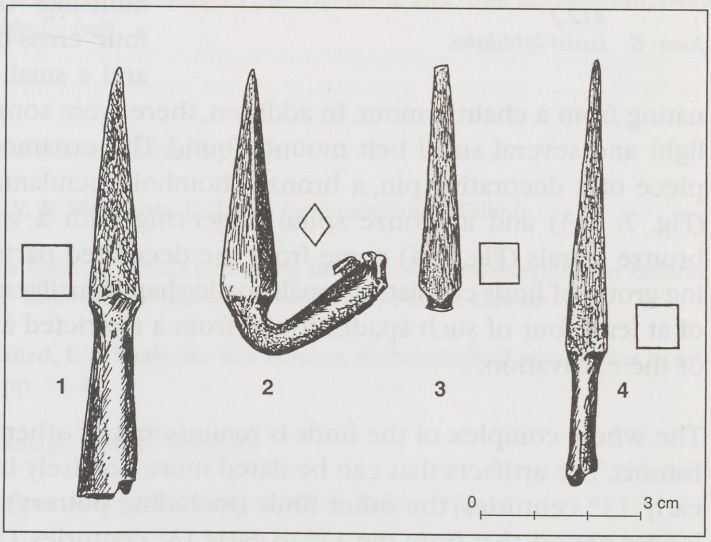

Fig. 6. Cross-bow arrowheads. (TÜ 1026: 411, 295, 417, 87.)
Joon. 6. Ammunooleotsad.

The majority of potsherds comes from hand-made pots with a straight neck. The form of some of the hand-made pots seems to follow that of wheel-made ceramics of the

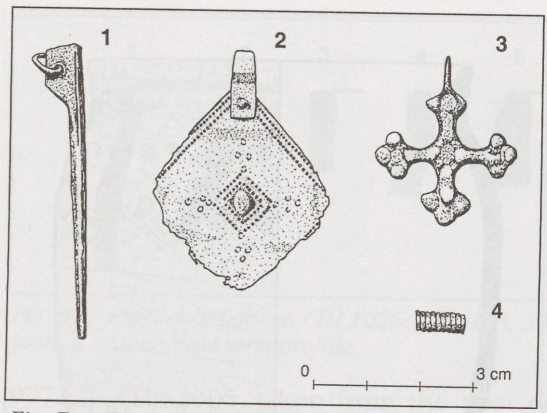

Fig. 7. Fragment of a decorative pin, rhomboid pendant, cross-shaped pendant and spiral. All of bronze. (TÜ 1026: 27, 290, 489, 487.)

Joon. 7. Pronksist ehtenõela katke, rombikujuline ripats, ristripats ja spiraal.

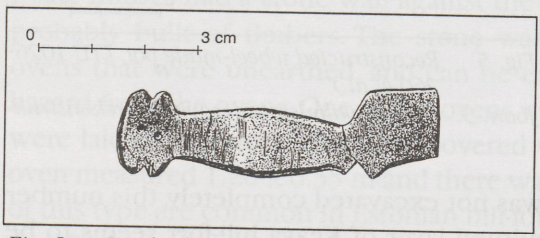

Fig. 8. Spade-shape artifact of bone. (TÜ 1026: 412.)

Joon. 8. Luust labidake.

so-called Slavonic type (Fig. 4: 6). In general, the hand-made pottery can be divided into two groups, one consisting of fine-tempered smaller vessels with carefully polished surfaces (Fig. 4: 2; one of them decorated with a net-like ornament), the other consisting of larger pots made with coarse-grained temper (Fig. 4: 1, 3–5). Both of the groups can be dated to the 11th–12th centuries. One wheel-made pot was preserved well enough to be reconstructed (Fig. 5). To some extent similar pots can be found among the materials of Birka, dated to the Late Viking Age (Arbman 1940, Pl. 237: 7) but precisely exact parallels are unknown to us at the moment, however.

Among the artifactual finds there are several characterising late prehistoric warfare: a spearhead with a knife-like blade and twisted tang, four cross-bow arrowheads (Fig. 6) and a small iron ring possibly originating from a chain armour. In addition, there were some knives, an iron strike-a-light and several small belt mounts found. The ornaments were presented by a piece of a decorative pin, a bronze rhomboid pendant, a cross-shaped pendant (Fig. 7: 1–3) and a bronze spiral finger-ring with a wide central shield. Small bronze spirals (Fig. 7: 4) come from the decorated parts of clothing. An interesting group of finds consists of small spade-shaped artifacts (Fig. 8): there are pieces of at least four of such spades found from a restricted area in the eastern corner of the excavation.

The whole complex of the finds is reminiscent of other Late Iron Age hill-forts in Estonia. The artifacts that can be dated more precisely belong to the late 12th and early 13th centuries, the other finds (including pottery) were characteristic for a longer period, that from the 11th to early 13th centuries. The cross-bow arrowheads have been made, according to Ain Mäesalu (1991), in the first quarter of the 13th

century. They prove that the hill-fort of Keava was involved in the battles of that time. As two of the arrowheads wear traces of secondary treatment (Fig. 6: 2, 3), one may think that the fort was not abandoned as a result of those battles. One of the timbers found in the southeastern corner of the excavation area was radiocarbon dated to the late 12th and 13th centuries (818±44 BP, Tln-2602).

In conclusion one can note that the main portion of the finds and the structures of Keava hill-fort seem to belong to the 12th and early 13th centuries; only some of the pottery might also have an 11th century date. The absence of metal artefacts which could have been firmly dated to the 11th century is rather surprising. Since the excavation at the hill-fort was not completed, we are not able to state yet whether, and in what form, the hill-fort existed in the 1050's, at the time of Izjaslav's campaign. One may only suppose that the place was still fortified but not inhabited permanently. The Russian chronicles have used a relatively uncommon name Ocek for the fort of Keava, which probably meant that the defences consisted of wooden constructions (Tõnisson 1997, 357). The burnt logs from the rampart, located beneath the stone layer, were radiocarbon dated to the 10th–12th centuries (see above) and might indicate the earlier use of this fort. The continuation of the excavations will hopefully answer the question about the existence and use of the fort in the 11th century.

Acknowledgements

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KEAVA LINNUS

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2001. aastal algasid TÜ arheoloogia õppetooli organiseerimisel välitööd Keavas. Seal, muistse Harjumaa lõunaosas (praegu Rapla maakond) on teada linnusest ja kahest asulakohast (Linnaaluste I ja II) koosnev kompleks. Ilmselt on Keavat Kedipivi nime all mainitud vanades vene kroonikates juba aasta 1054 paiku, mil Novgorodi vürst Izjaslav selle koha vallutas. Et kõnealune kompleks oli siiani täielikult uurimata, otsustati seda lähemalt tundma õppida; ühtlasi sooviti saada üksikasjalikumat teavet kogu muistse Keava linnusepiirkonna kohta.

Maastikuinspektsiooni tulemusena avastati Raplamaa lõunaosas 23 uut muistist, millest enamik on asulakohad I at. teisest ja II at. esimesest poolest. Varasemaid asulakohti oli nende seas vaid mõni üksik. Lisaks leiti ka üks lohukivi ning laibamatustega kalmistu. Need leiud näitavad, et I ja II at. vahetusel on Keava ja selle ümbruskond olnud tihedalt asustatud.

Linnamäel uuriti 44 m² suuruse kaevandiga platoo läänepoolset osa ja läänevalli (joon. 1). Vallil avanes mättakihi all tihe kivilade, mis koosnes korrapäratult paiknevatest ja tugevasti põlenud paekividest. Kive leidus vaid ühes-kahes kihis, nende all paljandus liivavall, milles avastati neli tugevatest plaatidest postikiilustikku (kaks valli välis- ja kaks siseserval) ning söestunud palgijäänuseid (joon. 2). Linnust oli külje pealt kaitsnud palkidest ehitatud tarandilaadse konstruktsiooniga 2–2,2 m laiune vall, seest täidetud liiva ja kividega. Palgijäänuste dateerimine radiosüsiniku meetodil andis nende kalibreeritud vanuseks perioodi 10.–12. sajandini.

Valli sisekülje vastas avastati rohkesti jälgi elutegevusest ja eluhoonetest (joon. 3). Puhastati välja kahe ahju põhjad. Neist üks oli Eesti hilis-rauaaja linnustele iseloomulik kerisahi mõõtmetega 1,2 x 0,5–0,55 m, selle ees veel leease (50 x 40 cm). Sellest meetri kaugusel leiti aga kividest laotud ümarovaalse põhjaga saviahi (läbimõõt 90 cm). Viimased on Eestis haruldased, neid teatakse veel Rõugest, Tartust ja Padalt. Ahjude piirkonnas oli vastu valli sisekülge laotud paekividest sein, mis ilmselt pidi kaitsma puitehitisi tuleohu vastu. Kaevandi lõunanurgas paljandus ühe elamu savist põrand,

mille täpset kuju ja suurust ei õnnestunud fikseerida. Ahjude ja keraamika leviku põhjal võib arvata, et kaevatud alal oli olnud kaks elamut, mis ei tarvitsenud olla üheaegsed.

Linnuse leiumaterjal on rikkalik: selles on 71 esemeleidu ja 460 savinõukildu. Viimasest moodustab enamiku 11.–12. sajandile iseloomulik käsitsikeraamika (joon. 4: 1–5), sh. saadi üks võreornamendiga kaunistatud kild. Kedrakeraamika hulgas õnnestus üks nõu peaaegu täielikult rekonstrueerida (joon. 5). Esemeleidudest on olulisemad tordeeritud rootsu ja noakujulise teraga odaots ja neli ammunooleotsa 13. sajandi teisest veerandist (joon. 6). Viimased näitavad, et Keava linnus osales Muistses Vabadusvõitluses, kuid kuna kahel nooleotsal avastati ümbersepistamise jälgi, siis võib oletada, et linnus nendes võitlustes veel ei hävinud. Ehetest saadi ehtenõela katke, üks rombikujuline ja üks ristikujuline ripats (joon. 7: 1–3), spiraalsõrmus ja katked vähemalt neljast labidakujulisest luuesemest (joon. 8). Kõik need leiud, nagu ka üks platoolt saadud ^{14}C-dateering kuuluvad 12. sajandisse ja 13. sajandi algusse.

Kuna uurimiseks avatud ala ei jõutud esimesel uurimisaastal lõpuni kaevata, siis puudub esialgu ka vastus küsimusele, kas ja millisel kujul oli linnus olemas Izjaslavi sõjakäigu ajal. Viikingiaegne leiumaterjal näib siin igatahes puuduvat. Võimalik, et linnamäel oli 11. sajandi keskpaiku mingi tagasihoidlikum puulinnus, mis tollal hõlpsasti vallutati. Põhiline elutegevus koos kaitsevallide rajamisega langeb linnusel aga muinasaja viimastesse sajanditesse.