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ARHEOLOOGILISED VÄLITÖÖD EESTIS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELDWORK IN ESTONIA

2002

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SETTLEMENT SITE III OF LINNAALUSTE FROM ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMPLEX OF KEAVA

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The settlement Site III of Linnaaluste was discovered 100 m north of the Keava hill-fort in spring 2002 during the routine field investigations carried out in connection with the project Keava – Hand of the Sun (see Lang *et al.*, this volume, Fig. 1). The site is situated on a low (2.5 m high) ridge used as a pasture today and located 200 m northeast of the northernmost top of Site I of Linnaaluste, and 500 m south of the recently discovered hill-fort II. To the west of the ridge there was once a low and wet area that is now meliorated – it is called Verevainu (Meadow of Blood). The vere-toponym is often interpreted as an indication of natural iron ore (Lauringson 1995, 63), and maybe numerous finds of iron slag from the opposite side of this meadow (at the NW edge of Site I of Linnaaluste) clearly indicate the use of this iron by the dwellers of Linnaaluste.

The cultural layer of Site III was discovered on an area 100 x 40 m (Fig. 1). The trial pits dug prior to the excavations proved that the thickness of the cultural layer might vary between ca 20 and more than 70 cm in this area, and the thickest layer is to be found at the western part of the ridge. It seemed that the area used once for the habitation had never been cultivated and, therefore, the cultural layer is relatively well preserved and not mixed or disturbed by later activities. Some potsherds gathered from the trial pits indicated a Viking Age date. As this relatively small site was situated close to the hill-fort we were excavating but being, at the same time, naturally separated from settlement Site I, a question about its function arose. Could it be interpreted as a part of an ordinary village or did it have any specific purpose in connection with the hill-fort, for example a kind of a fore-fort? It was also important to examine the sequence

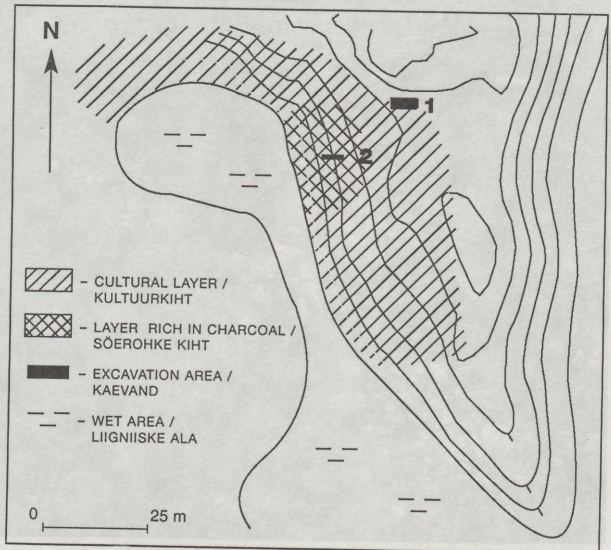


Fig. 1. Settlement Site III of Linnaaluste.

Joon 1. Linnaaluste III asulakohd.

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of the site deposits and its correlation with settlement Site I of Linnaaluste that was investigated in 2001 and dated from the Pre-Viking to the Viking Ages (Konsa *et al.* 2002). To clarify these questions the archaeological excavations of the site were carried out by opening two trenches.

LINNAALUSTE III: 1

The first area of excavation covering 15 m² was situated on the northern and uppermost part of the settlement area. As indicated by the excavations, the research area happened to be in a peripheral zone without permanent buildings. The cultural layer was thin, being 20–40 cm on the average. In the northern part of the excavation area the natural limestone bedrock became visible already at a depth of 15 cm. The cultural layer was thicker in the southern part of the study area, where also a 70 cm deep pit for household refuse was discovered. The pit was 180 cm wide and extended up to 35 cm into the original ground; it contained sherds of hand-made pottery of the Viking Age, pieces of clay daub, and fragments of animal bone. In addition, some fragments of crucibles for casting metal were



Fig. 2. Remains of the constructions in the excavation area of Linnaaluste III: 1. View from N.
Joon 2. Konstruktsioonide jäänused Linnaaluste III: 1 kaevandis. Vaade põhjast.

also found. The only stone structure was a small (1 m in diameter) pile of stones, which were partly burned, discovered in the western part of the excavation area (Fig. 2). Interesting was an area measured 170 x 100 cm in the southeastern part of the excavation: there were a number of pieces of clay daub and burned clay. This structure with pieces of burnt clay had been slightly deepened into the original ground; it was oval in shape and made of branches covered with clay. However, the exact nature and function of this structure is unclear. Due to lack of charcoal, the area could not be interpreted as an ordinary clay oven. It was probably somehow connected with bronze casting.

Finds (TÜ 1114: 1-512) were sparse and consisted mostly of pottery. Altogether 539 sherds of hand-made pots were found; some of them were decorated with lines or had a carinate shape. Only 2.6 % of potsherds were decorated. The inside surface of some of the potsherds found from the pit for household refuses was covered with organic carbonized matter.

LINNAALUSTE III: 2



Fig. 3. Remains of the stone construction in the excavation area of Linnaaluste III: 2. View from west.

Joon 3. Kivivare jäänused Linnaaluste III: 2 kaevandis. Vaade läänest.

In the second trench (5 x 1 m) made into the western part of the site, 17 m southwest from the first excavation area, the character of the cultural layer was completely different from the latter. The thickness of the cultural layer reached there 1.20 m. Beneath the uppermost erosion layer (30-40 cm) there was a 25-60 cm thick black layer extremely rich in charcoal, and under that was a settlement layer (15 cm thick). The black layer with charcoal contained microscopic pieces of iron, indicating that we probably were dealing with remains of an ancient smithy (Peets 1991, 97). Iron slag also occurred in small numbers (216.6 g).

At a depth of 60 cm, a structure consisting of burnt stones was discovered in the western part of the trench (Fig. 3). This was probably a part of an oven built after or at

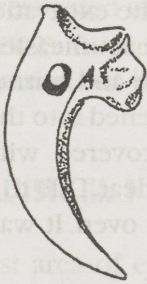


Fig. 4. Pendant made from eagle's claw (TÜ 1115: 188).

Joon 4. Kotkaküümisest ripats.

the end of the period of the smithy. A portion of this structure remained outside the excavation area.

Finds from the trench (TÜ 1115: 1–238) consist mostly of pottery (584 fragments) and are characteristic of the Pre-Viking and Viking Ages. Only a few potsherds (5.5 %) were decorated: simple horizontal lines, zigzag and cord impressions were present. In addition, some awls or burins of bone and a pendant made of an eagle claw were also found (Fig. 4). The rest of the material consists of burned and unburned animal bones and pieces of slag.

SUMMARY

The archaeological investigations clearly indicated that Site III of Linnaaluste belongs to the Pre-Viking and Viking Ages (ca 8th–11th centuries) being contemporary with settlement site I but not with the hill-fort I. Data collected with the excavations indicate that this part of the settlement site was connected with metal working (a smithy and a place for bronze casting). Due to the danger of fire, this place was located at some distance from the rest of the site.

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LINNAALUSTE III ASULAKOHT KEAVA ARHEOLOOGILISES KOMPLEKSIS

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Keava linnusest 100 m põhja pool paiknev Linnaaluste III asulakoht avastati 2002. aasta kevadel. Linnamäe talu kirdepoolseima heinamaa väikestele kõrgendikule jääv 100 m x 40 m suurune asulalaik jääb Linnaaluste I asulakoha põhjatipust 200 m kirdesse ja Keava II linnusest 500 m lõunasse (joon. 1). Otsustades prooviauukude põhjal, oli asulakoha piires kultuurkihi paksus 20–70 cm ning oli kõige intensiivsem kõrgendiku lääneservas. Kuna linnusele küllaltki lähedal paiknev asulalaik oli väike ning looduslikult eraldatud Linnaaluste I asulakohast, siis tekkis küsimus, milline võiks olla selle väikeasula iseloom: kas tegemist on n.ö. tavalise külakohaga või oli sellel mingi linnusega seotud eriline otstarve, näiteks kas seal võis olla eelkaitsepost? Asulakoha iseloomu ning ajalise kuuluvuse väljaselgitamiseks avati kaks kaevandit.

LINNAALUSTE III: 1

15 m² suurune kaevand rajati asulakoha põhjaossa. Kaevamistel selgus, et uuritav ala jäi asula perifeersesse tsooni, kus kultuurkiht oli keskmiselt 20–40 cm paks. Tüsedama kultuurkihiga lõunaosas avastati looduslikku pinda süvendatud 180 x 35 cm suurune majapidamis- või jäätmeauk. Lohu kultuurkihist leiti savinõukilde viikingiaegsetest anumatest, savitihendeid ning loomaluud, lisaks veel üksikuid katkendeid metallivalamisest kasutatud savitiiglitest. Ainsa kivistruktuuri moodustas 1 m läbimõõduga osaliselt põlenud kive sisaldav kivikuhelik kaevandi lääneosas (joon. 2). Huvitav oli 170 x 100 cm mõõtmetega ovaalse kujuga ala kaevandi kaguosas, mis sisaldas arvukalt savitihendeid. Jäljed savitihenditel osutavad mingile saviga kaetud vitstest ehitusele. Söetükikeste puudumine ei võimalda seda tõlgendada saviahjuna ning võimalik, et sellel kohal oli mingi metallivalamisega seotud otstarve. Vähene leiumaterjal (TÜ 1114: 1–512) koosnes valdavalt keraamikast: leiti 539 kildu käsitsi vormitud nõudest, millest mõnel oli joonornament ning mille hulgas esines üksikuid kilde ka nivendiga nõudest. Ornamendiga kildude hulk moodustades vaid 2,6% keraamika koguarvust.

LINNAALUSTE III: 2

Teises, asula lääneossa rajatud kaevandis (5 x 1 m) oli kultuurkihi iseloom hoopis erinev. Kultuurkihi paksus ulatus siin kuni 120 cm. Kuni 40 cm paksuse erosioonikihi all oli 25–60 cm sõerohket kultuurkihti, mis oli ladestunud 15 cm paksusele tumepruunile asulakihi. Asulakihi peale kuhjunud söekiht sisaldas rohkelt rauatagi laaste, mis osutab, et tegemist võiks olla muistse sepikoha asemega. Kultuurkihi ülaosas, tänapäevasest maapinnast 60 cm sügavusel, avastati peale “sepikoha perioodi” või selle eksisteerimise viimasel etapil rajatud koldeaseme jäänused (joon. 3). Kultuurkihist kogutud leiuaines (TÜ 1115: 1–238) koosneb valdavalt eel- ja viikingiaegsest keraamikast (kokku 584 kildu). Vaid 5,5% kildudest olid kaunistatud joon-, siksak- ning ühel killul nöörornamendiga. Lisaks leiti paar luust voolitud naasklit või teravikku ning kotkaküünisest ripats (joon. 4). Ülejäänud leiumaterjali moodustavad loomaluud ning šlakitükid.

Uurimistulemused osutasid, et Linnaaluste III asulakoht kuulub eelviikingi- ja viikingiaega (8.–11. saj.) ning on seega samaaegne Linnaluste I asulakoha, kuid mitte Keava I linnuse kasutusperioodiga. Kaevamistega saadud informatsioon lubab oletada, et Linnaaluste III asulakoha näol võiks olla tegemist põhiasulast (Linnaaluste I) eemal paiknenud, üsnagi tuleohtliku metallitöötsooniga, kus võis olla sepikoda ning kus on tegeletud pronksivalamisega.