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2002

Koostanud ja toimetanud Ülle Tamla

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EXCAVATIONS AT VILJANDI CASTLE OF THE TEUTONIC ORDER

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INTRODUCTION

In 2002, small-scale excavations in the Convent Building at Viljandi Castle of the Teutonic Order continued. In order to fulfil both investigational and conservation-related purposes, three excavation plots were laid out (Fig. 1). The first one (21.5 m²) was located in the yard of the first outer bailey, between the Convent Building and the eastern wing of the outer bailey, the so-called officials' building (Fig. 1: D). The southern staircase leading to the cellar of the eastern wing of the Convent Building was investigated with the second plot (ca 12 m²); the northern staircase and its surroundings, including a part of the cloister, by the third one (ca 25 m²). The work at the two former plots was directed by Arvi Haak, at the latter – by Kahrut Eller, both of whom have contributed to the excavation report (Haak & Eller 2002). The two latter plots were initiated directly by the conservation activities, currently focusing on the western wall of the eastern wing of the building. In addition to that, the outer side of the latter wall was cleaned from debris and sandy loam down to the alteration of 83.70 m in Baltic system under archaeological supervision.

The objectives of excavation plot 1 (Fig. 1: 1), crossing the yard of the first outer bailey, were as follows: to determine the exact size of the eastern addition to the eastern wing of the Convent Building, previously interpreted as the Sacristy (Fig. 1: B); to determine the stratigraphic sequence in the yard of the outer bailey, especially in connection with a proposal for removal of construction debris from there; to investigate the distribution and the characteristics of the prehistoric cultural layer. In addition to that, the excavations were expected to locate the wall which E. Raadik had previously interpreted as the primary outer wall of the Castle, and to ascertain its construction. Raadik had also assumed that the original outer wall followed the border of the then existing plateau (Raadik 1960, 19).

In all the excavation plots, settlement traces from two periods could be distinguished. The earliest cultural layer, presumably originating from the Viking Age, was covered with 1.5-1.8 m of medieval and early modern deposits. The latter were rather different in composition and structure in the three excavation plots and should thus be treated separately. The former can be summoned in a general overview. The numerous construction remains unearthed resulted in virgin ground being reached in less than half of the total area excavated.

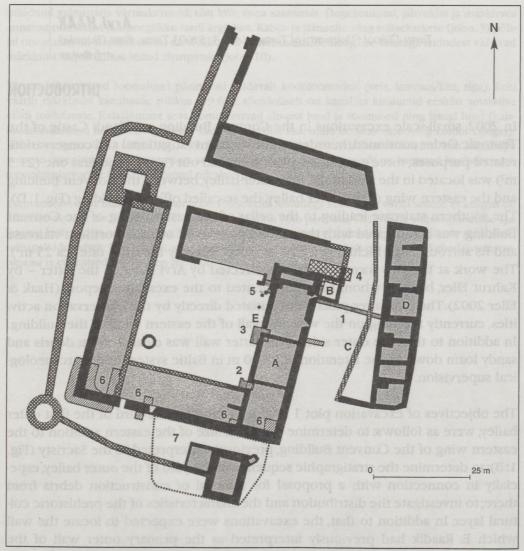


Fig. 1. Excavation plots at Viljandi Castle of the Teutonic Order.

Joon. 1. Arheoloogilised kaevandid Viljandi ordulinnusel.

1-3 - excavation plots I-III of 2002 / 2002. aasta kaevandid I-III, 4-5 - excavation plots of 2001 / 2001. aasta kaevandid, 6 - excavation plots of 1998-2000 / 1998-2000. aasta kaevandid,

7 - approximate area excavated in 1939 / ligikaudne 1939. aastal avatud ala.

A - Eastern wing of the Convent Building / konvendihoone idatiib, B - Sacristy / käärkamber, C - probable original outer wall of the castle / linnuse oletatav esialgne piirdemüür, D - so-called officials' building / nn. ametnikemaja, E - cloister / ristikäik.

THE PREHISTORIC SETTLEMENT TRACES

The existence of a prehistoric cultural layer in the area excavated in the outer bailey was unclear before the excavations: in 2000 a rather intensive layer had been found (Haak 2001a), the settlement remains unearthed in 2001 were of rather low intensity (Haak & Valk 2002). During the current investigations, the prehistoric deposits were excavated in an area of approximately 20 m². Results from dif-

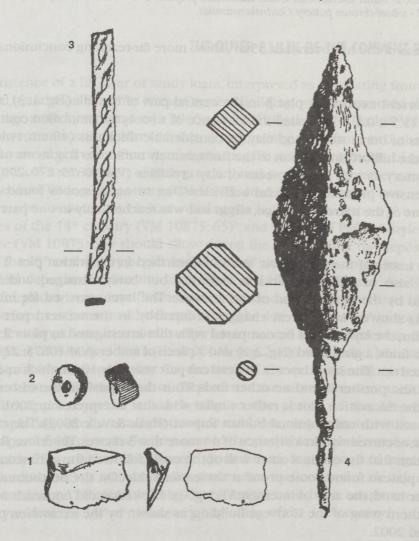


Fig. 2. Artefacts found in the excavations of 2002. Joon. 2. 2002. aasta kaevamiste leide.

^{1 -} flint blade / tulekivilaast, 2 - bead of blue glass / sinine klaashelmes, 3 - decorative bone plate / kaunistatud luuplaat 4 - crossbow arrowhead / ammunooleots.

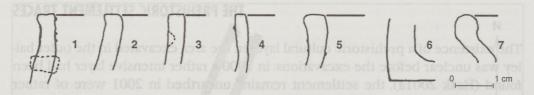


Fig. 3. Pottery finds from the excavations of 2002 (VM 10875: 279, 272, 44, 33, 18, 271, 58). Joon. 3. 2002. aasta kaevamistel leitud savinõude profiile. 1–6 - hand-made pottery / käsikeraamika, 7 - wheel-thrown pottery / kedrakeraamika.

ferent areas of the hill, overall ca 35 m², allow more far-reaching conclusions to be drawn.

In the current excavation plot 3 in the central part of the hill (Fig. 1: 3), a deep sondage $(1.5 \times 0.5 \text{ m})$ revealed the existence of a sooty accumulation containing fragments of burnt stones and clay. Its considerable thickness (40 cm, twice the usual in the hillfort) in addition to the finds, namely numerous fragments of handmade pottery as well as two pieces of clay crucibles (VM 10875: 270, 277), indicate intensive prehistoric human activities. Due to many stones found in the lower part of the narrow sondage, virgin soil was reached only in one part of the trench.

The few traces of the prehistoric stratum unearthed in excavation plot 2 (Fig.1: 2) were also of rather remarkable intensity, but badly damaged and largely destroyed by the construction of the staircase. The layer searched for in plot 1 (Fig. 1: 1) showed rather great changes in intensity. In the western part of the excavation, the layer could be compared with that investigated in plots 2 and 3. As to the finds, a glass bead (Fig. 2: 2) and a piece of amber (VM 10875: 22) could be pointed out. The same layer in the eastern part was only 10 cm thick and yielded very few potsherds and no other finds. Thus the deposit in the easternmost part of the excavation plot is rather similar with that interpreted in 2001 as natural subsoil with only minimal human impact (Haak & Valk 2002). The change, however, occurred within a distance of no more that 3 metres. Therefore, Raadik's assumption that the original outer wall of the castle followed the perimeter of the original plateau found some proof at the eastern side. On the northern side, on the other hand, the area of intensive Viking Age habitation did not reach as far as the northern wing of the Convent Building, as shown by the excavation plots of 2001 and 2002.

As the finds from all the excavation plots can only be dated to the Viking Age, the excavations gave no new information about the late prehistoric hillfort. The total

absence of wheel-thrown pottery from the prehistoric stratum does not allow a later dating than the first half of the 11th century.

Of the finds from the layers associated with the prehistoric settlement, special reference should be made to the existence of three flakes (VM 10875: 68, 80, 189) of low-quality light grey flint, unsuitable for fire-making, and a fragment of a flint blade (Fig. 2: 1). The finds indicate Stone Age human activity at the same plateau.

THE OUTER BAILEY OF THE CONVENT BUILDING

The existence of a fill layer of sandy loam, interpreted as originating from the cellars and foundation trenches of the Convent Building, was documented above the Viking Age settlement remains in 2000 and 2001 (Haak 2001a, Haak & Valk 2002). The current excavations showed that the layer originates from two chronologically separated activities. On top of the earlier fill red clay, fragments of limestone slabs and a 1-3 cm deposit of dark grey soil had deposited, the latter contained a few sherds of Viking Age pottery (VM 10875: 48-51). Fragments of two coins, one of them a bracteate minted in Tartu during the last decades of the 13th or the first decades of the 14th century (VM 10875:65)1, and a sherd of Paffrath-style imported ware (VM 10875: 61)2 should allow dating the formation of the deposit to the end of the 13th or the very beginning of the 14th century. The upper layer of sandy loam had deposited above the latter layer and did not produce datable finds. Three fireplaces were identified on top of the sandy loam. On the basis of a sherd of glazed red earthenware, the fireplaces might date from the 16th century. At the same elevation, a layer extraordinarily rich in animal bones, present in the excavation plots of 2000 and 2001 (Haak 2001b, Fig. 2: 11), was found, but only in the central part of the outer bailey. On the basis of the extraordinary concentration of animal bones, the existence of fireplaces at the same elevation, and the finds from the upper layers, it could belong to the period of the Livonian War. Stratigraphically later was a 3-metre-wide cobblestone pavement, situated in the eastern part of the outer bailey just next to the probable original outer wall of the castle, only 20 cm below the present ground level. It consisted of larger (up to 30 cm in diameter) as well as smaller stones, and was covered with a thin debris layer containing 17th century finds. Thus it might have been constructed during the very end of the 16th or at the very beginning of the 17th century.

Inside the sacristy the brick floor, documented in 2001 (Haak & Valk 2002, 93-94), was found to have been removed next to the southern wall of the sacristy. In the part of the sacristy unearthed, the floor was covered with a few cen-

timetres of a black cultural layer, extremely rich in fish bones. It also filled the upper part of the intrusion through the sacristy floor, containing seven profile bricks and their fragments. On the basis of such situation, as well as the finds (VM 10875: 217–237), the layer could be dated to the second half of the 16th or the very beginning of the 17th century. Inside the circular intrusion, a 3–4 cm stratum of lime, covering the whole intrusion, was traced. The lower part of the intrusion, penetrating a few centimetres into the virgin sand, was filled with a layer of brown mixed sandy loam, rather poor in finds but containing a few animal bones.

Of the construction remains identified, the wall, interpreted above as the original outer wall as the castle, was seen to be the oldest in the current excavation. A layer of lime that in all likelihood had deposited during its construction was covered with the sandy loam originating from the cellars of the Convent Building. The sandy loam above the intermediate layer, containing finds from the late 13th or early 14th century, is likely to originate from the cellars of the so-called officials' building (Fig. 1: D). Thus the art historical dating of the Convent Building to the turn of the centuries was substantially supported, yet the classification of the officials' building as late medieval could not be specified. The brick lining on the eastern side of the one-time outer wall of the castle seems contemporary with the latter construction. The sacristy of the Convent Building is of later (late 15th or even 16th century) origin, as its foundation trench cuts the upper layer of the sandy loam. In the part of the eastern wall of the Convent Building inside the Sacristy, no constructional change could be traced. Thus the northern and eastern wings have been erected simultaneously (see also Haak & Valk 2002, 94).

THE STAIRS LEADING INTO THE EASTERN WING OF THE CONVENT BUILDING

In the northern staircase, stairs of granite stones were unearthed and documented already in 1987 (Alttoa *et al.* 1989, Fig. M-4). The current excavations showed that the granite stones were all positioned on a layer of debris and humus, and thus could by no means be the original staircase of the Convent Building. In order to prove this, the lower granite stones were removed and the excavation was extended up to the part of the western wall of the eastern wing that was laid higher for conservational purposes in 1987. Below the debris, the earlier stairs were unearthed. These were constructed of bricks, having dimensions usually $26 \times 13.5 \times 8.5$ –9 cm (Fig. 4). Four steps could be identified in the current excavation. Except for the lowest one, each step was formed by two rows of bricks, seated flat wise, the upper row projecting the lower for 2–3 cm. The lowest step was constructed of one row of bricks placed edgewise. Judging by the single row



Fig. 4. The northern staircase with brick stairs unearthed. Joon. 4. Põhja-trepikäik väljapuhastatud tellistrepiga.

of broken bricks *in situ*, it seems possible that the staircase walls had a brick lining. The floor of the cellar of the eastern wing had not been preserved next to the staircase.

The southern staircase had been constructed of granite stones and limestone slabs, as shown by its remnants. Three steps could be distinguished. As for the northern stairs, bricks seated edgewise were used in constructing the lowest step. On the basis of a Hamburg penny³, found from between the stones forming the foundation for the steps, the construction of the stairs took place during the 14th century. At the location where the prehistoric cultural layer was found, the foundation stones were partially sunken into the latter layer. The inner sides of the walls of the staircase had not been preserved. Judging by the foundation, the thickness of the northern wall was 90 cm, while the southern wall of the staircase was actually formed by the northern wall of the southern wing of the Convent Building.

INVESTIGATIONS INSIDE THE CLOISTER

On the basis of test pit 2 of 2001 (Haak & Valk 2002, 94-95), the upper 60-70 cm just below the turf were considered of little interest to archaeology and the removal of the sandy loam was started under archaeological supervision. Thus the existence of construction remains as well as layers associated with human activity was rather surprising. In the corner formed by the western wall of the eastern wing of the Convent Building and the southern wall of the northern staircase, fragments of a brick construction were recognised, while the layers at the same elevation had not been preserved in the southern part of the eastern cloister.

In the southern wall of excavation plot 3 (Fig. 1: 3), a construction was discovered. It was built of granite stones, cemented with lime mortar that also covered the surface of the structure. As a preliminary interpretation, this structure might be the foundation of the pillar of the cloister. A few bricks, situated on a thin layer of gravel above the stove (see below), might be interpreted as the pavement of the cloister, on the basis of a structure unearthed in 1987 (Alttoa *et al.* 1989, Fig. M-1).

The greater part of the brick construction, found next to the southern wall of the northern staircase, was identified as remnants of a brick stove (Fig. 5). The stove was built of bricks with rather unequal dimensions $(26.5-30 \times 11-14 \times 7.5-8 \text{ cm})$. The opening of the heating chamber was directed to the south and was 60 cm wide. Of the walls, only two rows of bricks had been preserved. Two bricks,



Fig. 5. Remains of the stove in the cloister. Joon. 5. Ristikäigust avastatud ahjujäänused.

cemented with clay inside the stove, were interpreted as a later modification of the stove. The stove proved to be later than the western wall of the eastern wing, and presumably earlier than the pavement of the courtyard.

In front of the stove, a layer of lime mortar with a few small fragments of bricks was unearthed. It was slightly rising towards the East (wall of the eastern wing of the Convent Building) and the South, *i.e.* the stove. It seems plausible to interpret the floor as contempo-

rary with the stove and the entire complex as a temporary lodging of the construction period. The layers below the floor and above the prehistoric layer can be interpreted as a fill, in all likelihood from the period of the construction of the Convent Building.

THE FINDS

The finds collected (VM 10875: 1-307) were not numerous, which is understandable if the great amount of fill (natural sandy loam mostly) is considered. Especially in excavation plots 2 and 3, most of the finds could only provide limited support to the interpretation based upon construction remains. As usual, pottery formed the largest group of finds (129 find numbers). Of hand-made pottery (Fig. 3: 1-6), coarse-grained vessels dominated, while only some fragments (VM 10875: 50, 83, 275) belong to fine-grained vessels. Some of the rim sherds had holes under the upper edge, thus being rather similar to the Rõuge type (Fig. 3: 1, 3). Fragments of wheel-thrown pottery (Fig. 3: 7) were less numerous. The debris layers of late 16th – early 17th century contained far more pottery than layers of the Medieval Period. Among imported pottery, products of Paffrath (VM 10875: 52 etc.), Lower Saxony (VM 10875: 193), and Siegburg (VM 10875: 141, 183) were present.⁴

Among construction details, profile bricks (VM 10875: 230–236) were most numerous. The existence of bricks with a brown glaze (fragment e. g VM 10875: 144) was not known previously. In 16th–17th century layers, fragments of stove tiles and lead window-frames, as well as window-glass, were present.

Of iron objects, nails (61 finds) were most numerous. Among other finds of iron, a crossbow arrowhead (Fig. 2: 3), a fragment of a knife (VM 10875: 77), and a hook (VM 10875: 125) were of medieval origin. Fragments of horse equipment, a hammer and a key were found from the construction debris inside the eastern wing of the building. Bronze items were less numerous: fragments of a chain (VM 10875: 191), pendants (VM 10875: 85, 142), and a pin (VM 10875: 264) were of greater interest. Three coins (identifications mentioned above) were found, yet two of them were fragmentary and in rather poor condition. Among the five bone objects there were a probable button (VM 10875: 214), fragments of three rings (VM 10875: 82, 226, 227), and a decorated plate (VM 10875: 289). Of other objects, two fragments of amber (VM 10875: 22, 283), and the above-mentioned flint objects should be pointed out.

The identification of animal bones (Järv 2003) showed an unusually great proportion of bones of sheep or goat (47.9%), especially fragmented bones of the head. The share of bovine (44%) was usual and the amount of pig extremely small (4.6%). The small number of bones of elk, roe, rabbit, duck and goose indicate hunting. The fractioned bones of domestic animals, especially from the head but also the legs had traces of usage for food.

As in earlier excavations, most of the finds originate from the second half of the 16th century, which makes the few medieval finds even more valuable. The few pottery finds indicate a different usage pattern from the town just next to the castle. Viking Age finds are scarce and Latest Iron Age (12th – early 13th century) objects still absent.

SUMMARY

The excavations of 2002 yielded new information about both prehistoric and medieval structures on the plateau. The thick, sooty cultural layer with traces of metalworking, dating from the Viking Age, indicates greater human activity in the central part of the plateau in comparison with its eastern edge. Of medieval constructions, the wall in the eastern part of the outer bailey was found the oldest construction. The hypothesis that it should belong to the first constructional phase found considerable support. However, the yard of the outer bailey could have had only minimal functions during the 14th and 15th centuries as it formed a slope steeply dropping toward the east. The settlement traces from that period are extremely thin and poor in finds. During a later stage, most likely in the second half of the 15th century, it was levelled and subject to more intensive use. The Livonian War brought along massive meat preparation for food, indicated by the animal bones and probably connected with the needs of some conquering army. The stone pavement unearthed dates to the latest usage of the castle as a defensive structure at the very end of the 16th century.

Of constructional details connected with the Convent Building, the stove unearthed was unexpected and might be connected with the period of construction of the building. Of special interest is the stone basement found in the cloister, interpreted as the foundation of a pillar. The fact that the cloister is blocked by two projecting staircases on the ground floor level necessitates complementary investigations. The stratigraphic sequence of the courtyard showed differentiation through several pavements and accumulations. On the basis of the results of 2001 and 2002, the northern and eastern wings of the Convent Building

were built simultaneously, in all likelihood around the turn of the 13^{th} – 14^{th} centuries. Thus the character of construction remains and habitation deposits that could be dated not only to the 11^{th} – 12^{th} , but also to the 13^{th} century is yet unknown.

Notes

- ¹ Identified by Ivar Leimus (Estonia History Museum).
- ² Identified by Erki Russow (Institute of History).
- ³ Identified by Mauri Kiudsoo (Institute of History).
- ⁴ All identifications of imported pottery are based on consultation with E. Russow (Institute of History).

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ARHEOLOOGILISED UURINGUD VILJANDI ORDULINNUSEL Arvi HAAK

2002. aastal rajati Viljandi ordulinnusele kolm kaevandit, et lisaks konvendihoone idatiiva lääneseina konserveerimistöödest tulenenud küsimustele selgitada esimese eeslinnuse õuel ladestunud kihtide seost sealsete ehitusjäänustega. Kokku kaevati 58,5 m² suurusel alal, millest üle poole jäi mitmete säilitatud konstruktsioonide tõttu põhjani kaevamata. Esimene kaevand rajati risti läbi I eeslinnuse õue, teine ja kolmas konvendihoone idatiiva keldrisse viivatesse trepikäikudesse ja nende lähiümbrusse ristikäigu alal.

Kõigis kaevandites asus looduslikul aluspinnal muinasaegne kultuurkiht, mis linnuseõue keskosas oli silmapaistvalt paks ning leiurohke. See sisaldades lisaks käsikeraamikale ka savitiiglite tükke, põlenud kive ning savi. Kultuurkihi õhenemine ning leiutühjus 1. kaevandi idaosas lubab oletada, et kaevandi vanimaks kiviehitiseks osutunud ordulinnuse esmane piirdemüür (joon. 1: C) rajati algse platoo äärele. Leidude põhjal kuulub kiht viikingiaega. Eraldi tuleks mainida kolme helehalli tulekivi kildu ning ühte laastu (joon. 2: 1), mis võiksid osutada kiviaegsele inimtegevusele.

Esimesel eeslinnusel oli muinaskihi peale kuhjatud kaheosaline saviliivast täitekiht. Suure tõenäosusega konvendihoone keldritest pärineva alumise täitekihi ülaserv langes järsult järve poole. Õhukese kalaluuderohke vahekihi võib leidude põhjal dateerida 13.–14. sajandi vahetusse, mis sobib ka konvendihoone rajamise arhitektuuriajaloolise dateeringuga. Saviliiva ülaosa võiks seostuda nn. ametnikehoone rajamisega hiliskeskajal, täpsemat dateeringut võimaldavad leiud puudusid. Tasase pinnaga õuel võis eristada kolme tuleaset ning nendega arvatavalt üheaegset loomaluuderohket kihti: mõlemad võib oletamisi dateerida Liivi sõja aega. Nende kohale oli rajatud 3 m laiune munakivisillutis, mille peal oli arvukalt 16. saj. lõpu ja 17. saj. leide. Tänapäevase maapinna all paiknes 20–50 cm paksune rususe mulla kiht, suurem osa varingurusust oli nähtavasti eemaldatud.

Kaevamistega lokaliseeriti ka käärkambri (joon 1: B) lõunamüür ning uuriti käärkambri tellispõrandat läbinud 17. sajandi sissekaevet. Käärkambri põrandale tekkinud kultuurkiht sisaldas märkimisväärsel hulgal kalaluid. Vundamendikraavi stratigraafilise asendi põhjal otsustades on käärkamber rajatud alles 15. sajandi lõpus või 16. sajandil.

Põhja-trepikäigus (joon.1: 2) eemaldati rusudele rajatud graniittrepi alumised kivid ning puhastati välja linnuse kasutusaegse tellistrepi alaosa (joon. 4). Selgitati trepi ehitusviisi: trepikäigu maakividest ja allikalubjast laotud seinad olid siseküljel tellisvoodriga. Trepiastmed koosnesid kahest kivireast, millest ülemine astus alumisest 2–3 cm ette. Vaid kõige alumise astme tellised olid asetatud serviti. Konvendihoone idatiiva keldripõrand oli enne käesolevaid kaevamisi üles võetud.

Trepikäigu ülaosast vahetult lõunas, ristikäigu alal avastati konvendihoone idatiiva läänemüüri suhtes sekundaarne, kuid hoovisillutisest eeldatavalt varasem tellisrajatis, mis osutus ahjujäänuseks (joon. 5). Viimase suu ees tuli nähtavale lubimördist põrand. Ahjust hilisemat tellislaotist tõlgendati ristikäigu põrandana ning ahju ennast linnuse ehitusaegse ajutise rajatisena. Sellest eemal avastati maakividest, rohke lubimördiga müüritise nurk, mida asukoha põhjal tõlgendati ristikäigu piilari vundamendina.

Lõuna-trepikäigu väljapuhastamisel selgus, et trepikivid olid halvasti säilinud. Säilinud oli vaid kolm astet: esimene koosnes maakividest ja serviti tellistest, teine maakividest, kolmas – paeplaatidest. Ülemiste astmete aluse kivitäite vahelt leiti 13. sajandi II poole – 14. sajandi Hamburgi penn.

Kaevamistel saadud leiumaterjal (VM 10875: 1–307) polnud arvukas ning trepikäikude kaevanditest kogutud materjal pärines peamiselt 16.–17. sajandist. Muinaskihist päevavalgele tulnud käsikeraamika hulgas võib märkida ülaserva aluse läbiva auguga, nn rõuge tüüpi keraamikat (joon. 3). Keskaegset lihtkedrakeraamikat leiti vähe, importnõude hulgas oli Paffrathi, Siegburgi ja Alam-Saksimaa tooteid. Ehituskeraamikast olgu mainitud pruuni glasuuriga tellisetükid, mille kasutamisest varem teateid polnud. Käärkambri sissekaevesse oli visatud seitse profiiltellist. Metall-leidudest mainitagu rauast ammunooleotsa (joon. 2: 3), pronksist ketikatket ripatseid. Leitud kolmest mündist olid kaks fragmentaarsed juba leidmishetkel. Veel leiti kaunistatud luuplaadike (joon. 2: 4) ning kaks muinaskihiga seonduvat merevaigukatket. Luuleidudest väärib esiletoomist kitse- või lambaluude suur (47,9%) ja sealuude väga väike (4,6%) osakaal. Veiseluudest oli 44% purustatud, eeldatavalt toiduks kasutamiseks nii pea- kui ka jäsemete luid. Lamba- või kitseluude puhul esines ülekaalukalt tugevalt fragmenditud pea piirkonna luid. Nagu varasematel uuringutel, puudusid ka 2002. aastal täielikult hilisrauaaja (11.–13. sajandi alguse) leiud.

2002. aasta välitööde olulisema tulemustena võib esile tuua linnuse esialgse piirdemüüri väljapuhastamist, konvendihoone põhja- ja idatiiva ehitamise üheaegsust ning tõenäolist dateeringut 13.–14. sajandi vahetusse. Seega on endiselt teadmata nii 11.–12. sajandi linnuserajatiste kui ka 13. sajandi ehitiste asukoht ning säilivus.