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Toimetuskolleegium:
Ants Kraut
Erki Russow
Toomas Tamla
Ülle Tamla
Kalev Uustalu
Heiki Valk

Uus 18, Tallinn 10111, Eesti
e-mail: info@muinas.ee

Kujundus ja küljendus:
Jaana Kool

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RING-WALL ENCLOSURE OF LIPA IN PREHISTORIC SOUTHERN HARJUMAA

Marge KONSA, Valter LANG, Karin VIMBERG and Ilmar KELDER
Tartu Ülikool (University of Tartu), Lossi 3, 51003 Tartu, Eesti (Estonia)
marge.konsa@ut.ee

The ring-wall enclosure of Lipa belongs to a small group of archaeological sites, which are characterized by a low, approximately 1 meter high remains of a rampart made of stone or soil, built on level ground and encircling the yard. In Estonian archaeology this type of sites has been referred to as either low or early ring-wall forts. Less than ten of these are known in Estonia, all of them situated in western Estonia or on the islands. Archaeological excavations have been carried out on two of them: in 1973 Vello Lõugas excavated a section of the rampart of the Massu enclosure in former Hanila parish and in 1982 Evald Tõnisson carried out excavations in Päelda enclosure in the central part of Muhu Island. Vello Lõugas continued these excavations a year later. However, the questions about the time of use, purpose and permanent settlement of these enclosures remained unanswered. According to Tõnisson, these sites belonged to the Middle Iron Age and he speculated that they were used as refuge sites (Jaanits *et al.* 1982, 267). Lõugas dated the Päelda and Massu enclosures to the Early Iron Age, based on ceramic finds and comparison to similar enclosures on the islands of Gotland and Öland (Lõugas 1975; 1984).

Archaeological excavations on Lipa enclosure were carried out in 2004–2005 as part of the research project "Settlement and Society in prehistoric South Harju district" (Estonian Science Foundation's grant no. 6451). The goal was to determine the time of construction and use of the enclosure and to understand its function. Päelda and Massu excavations did not reveal the extent settlement traces on the yard areas of these enclosures. In Massu enclosure, a cultural layer was discovered only beneath the ruins of the wall, since the soil in the yard had been mixed by ploughing. Päelda enclosure contained a cultural layer rich in charcoal, but poor in finds. In Estonia, lack of a cultural layer has been interpreted as a characteristic feature of a refuge site, but in Sweden, which is more abundant in this type of enclosures, they have been interpreted as cultic sites. Enclosures with a settlement layer have been classified as fortifications but also as handicraft and trade centres or residences of local elite.

In 2004 a cross-section of the wall of Lipa enclosure was dug and a number of test pits were dug both in the yard and outside the ramparts. In 2005 the ground plan of the enclosure was drawn and more test pits were dug outside the ramparts.

APPEARANCE OF THE LIPA ENCLOSURE

Lipa enclosure is situated about 3 km south-west of Raikküla manor, in Lipa village on the territory of the former Jürasoo farm. It is a rectangular-oval shaped area of 3300 sq. m, encircled by 0.5–1 m high and 6–8 m wide rampart remains (Fig. 1). Former gate can be distinguished in the middle of the western part of the

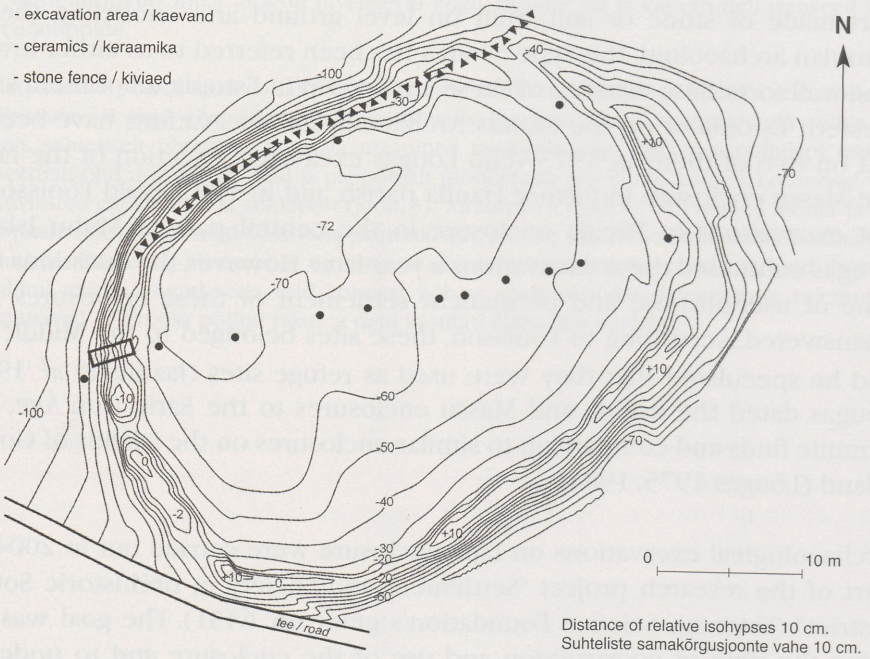

Fig. 1. General plan of the ring-wall enclosure of Lipa.
Joon. 1. Lipa vallsulendiku plaan.

rampart, where there is a clear 2.5 m wide dent in the rampart. The rampart has crumbled to almost ground level and has been damaged at some places. During agricultural activities stones have been piled or a stone fence has been built on it in some places. An agricultural track crosses the enclosure and deforms the rampart in two sections. In spite of all this the enclosure is generally well preserved – the rampart remains are more or less intact and a cultural layer is present in the yard. Enclosure's yard has been used for cattle-herding during the past decades and probably for cultivating crops earlier. No trees are currently present in the yard, but thick brush and some high trees grow on the rampart.

RAMPART EXCAVATION AREA

A 2 m wide and 6 m long cross-sectional trench dug into the western section of the rampart gave a good overview of the rampart that once encircled the enclosure (Fig. 2). 80 cm high remains of the dry wall built of granite and limestone were 3 m wide. The edges of the wall were marked by big granite stones laid in a straight row on both edges. Both of these rows contained big stones as high as the remains of the wall (80 cm in diameter) as well as smaller ones (30–50 cm in diameter). Here and there, big limestone slabs were laid on top of the granite stones. The biggest stones in the edge rows were dug partly into the ground and laid deeper than the inner filling stones of the wall. The rest of the stones in the edge rows lay on the same plane as inner filling stones. Probably the big edge row stones were laid first and then the inside of the wall was filled with smaller stones. The inner filling of the wall was laid straight on top of the natural ground. No humus was present on top of the natural soil; however, charcoal pieces were found under the wall stones. One 45×115 cm spot of burnt soil mixed with charcoal was present as well.

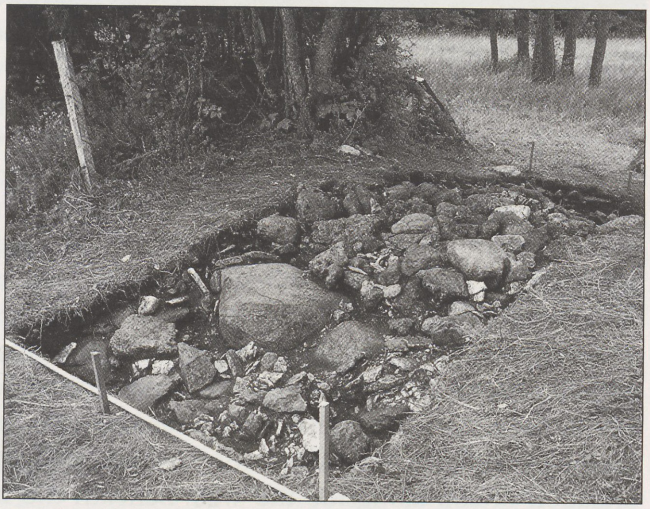

Fig. 2. Rampart of Lipa enclosure.
Joon. 2. Lipa ringvall.

The inner filling of the wall consisted of granite and limestone slabs 50–20 cm in diameter, and smaller stones and shingle between them. The bigger stones were situated in a rather orderly fashion, thus during the excavation it was possible to distinguish four layers of stones. The lowest layer consisted of densely laid rather flat granite stones 30–50 cm in diameter (Fig. 3). A stabile foundation for the wall was necessary, since the ground consisted of rough limestone chunks and had not been flattened before construction of the wall. The second layer contained granite stones as well, but the upper layers were mostly formed of limestone and bioherm chunks. The uppermost layer of the wall consisted of crumbled limestone slabs and pebble, which evenly covered the whole excavation area. Approximately 40 cm thick layer of material fallen from the wall also consisted

Fig. 3. Lowest layer of stones.
Joon. 3. Valli alumine kivikiht.

mostly of limestone, therefore it is fair to assume that the wall was originally higher and the upper parts were constructed of limestone. How high the wall originally was and whether it contained some sort of a wooden construction is difficult to establish.

THE YARD

15 test pits were dug along a straight line across the yard to look for the presence of a cultural layer. In these pits the soil had a brownish tone up to the depth of 15–20 cm from the ground level. Near the inner edge of the wall the layer was somewhat thicker. This is probably caused by ploughing, which resulted in accumulation of soil alongside the wall. Beneath the humus layer the test pits contained mostly light brown subsoil. A sand-clay mixture of scree began at the depth of 30–35 cm from the ground, near the foot of the rampart it began at the depth of 50 cm. Potsherds were found at depths of 8–45 cm from the ground both in the humus layer and in subsoil. In most of the test pits, the upper brown soil layer and the upper layers of the subsoil contained charcoal fragments. They were situated at depths of 15–25 cm on the average. Potsherds were distributed uniformly over the yard, and were found from the total of ten test pits. A 20 m long area rich in finds clearly stood out in the eastern part of the enclosure. Each test pit in that area contained 3–5 potsherds, one contained even 8 potsherds. The cultural layer in that area contained burnt stone fragments and a lot of charcoal pieces.

A number of test pits were dug outside the walls. None of these displayed a clearly distinguishable cultural layer. The only find from these pits was a potsherd located 2 m from the outer edge of the excavation pit on the rampart. Hence it is

reasonable to assume that the settlement layer is concentrated on the area encircled by the rampart and has been deposited only after the walls had been constructed.

THE FINDS

The expedition to Lipa in 2004–2005 yielded 74 potsherds (TÜ 1326), two clay daub pieces and approximately ten chunks of burnt clay. All potsherds originate from hand-made pottery. Most of the 41 potsherds found in the rampart excavation area are small sherds. The potsherds are rather similar to each other. They consist mostly of clay mixed with stone rubble (up to 7 mm fragments), in some cases with sand. The surfaces of the clay vessels have mostly been smoothed; slight striations can be only observed on the surfaces of four potsherds. Baking has been uniform, although weaker and uneven baking can be detected in case of some of the sherds. The biggest amount of potsherds (28) was found on the rampart area, near the inner foot, and they were located at the depth of 15–64 cm from the ground level. Potsherds were present both inside the rampart remains and beneath them. The layer on top of the large stones of the wall's outer edge contained 7 sherds at the depth of 53–58 cm from ground level. Five sherds were found outside the wall's outer foot, they were at the depth of 40–45 cm from ground level. The filling of the wall and the layers beneath the wall did not contain any potsherds. The potsherds found in the yard (40 sherds) do not differ significantly from the ones found in the rampart area; more of them were slightly striated (7 sherds). In addition to the test pits, potsherds were found from molehills in the north-eastern and northern parts of the enclosure. One potsherd from the inner foot of the northern part of the rampart was an edge fragment of the bottom part of a Roman Iron Age clay vessel with a narrow ridge, called *alane* in Estonian (Laul 2001, 175; Moora 1967, 294). Vessels with an *alane* are particularly common to southern-Estonian and northern-Latvian *tarand*-graves, although they have been found in Paide area and elsewhere in central Estonia as well. In northern Estonia only a few of such vessels have been found (Lang 1991, 54).

CONCLUSIONS

Judging by the ceramics found in Lipa, the enclosure can be dated between the end of the Pre-Roman Iron Age and the end of the Roman Iron Age. This date is in accordance with the plausible dates of Massu and Päelda enclosures, as the ramparts of these sites are similar to each other by their construction, and suits also

well with the chronology of Gotlandic and Ölandic fortifications in question. A charcoal sample from Lipa was collected as well, but it was radiocarbon dated to 2982±83 BP (1420–970 BC if calibrated) and thus was probably contaminated, since this date is in contradiction to the archaeological finds obtained from the enclosure.

Most of Estonian early ring-wall forts have no traces of human activity on their yard areas. Only a limited number of finds have been obtained from Massu, Päelda and Mustla enclosures so far. Both in Massu and Päelda a cultural layer containing finds was present immediately next to the rampart, but was absent on the rest of the area encircled by the rampart. Therefore Lipa, where traces of human activity are observable in the entire area of the enclosure, has to be considered an exceptional site among similar ones in Estonia.

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LIPA VALLSULENDIK ESIAJALOOLISEL LÕUNA-HARJUMAAL

Marge KONSA, Valter LANG, Karin VIMBERG ja ILMAR KELDER

Lipa vallsulendik kuulub nende Eestis väikesearvuliste muististe rühma, mille iseloomulikuks tunnuseks on tasasele maale ehitatud kividest või mullast madal vall, mis ringikujuliselt piirab õueala. Eesti arheoloogiakirjanduses on seda linnusetüüpi kutsutud nii madalateks kui ka varasteks ringvallinnusteks. Selliseid muistiseid on Eestis teada alla kümne ning nad kõik asuvad Lääne-Eestis või saartel. Arheoloogiliste kaevamistega on varem uuritud neist Massu ja Päelda linnust. Selliste muististe kasutusaja, rajamisotstarbe ning püsiasustuse kohta esitatud küsimused jäid nende kaevamiste lõppedes siiski avatuks. Lipa linnusel toimunud arheoloogiliste uurimistööde eesmärgik oli määratleda objekti rajamis- ja kasutamisaeg ning saada selgust vallsulendike funktsiooni puudutavatele küsimustele. 2004. a. välitöödel tehti läbilõige (12 m^2) linnuse vallist ning kaevati mitu prooviauku nii linnuse õuele kui ka vallist väljapoole jäävale alale. 2005. a. linnus plaanistati ning jätkati šurfimist vallitagusel alal.

LIPA LINNUSE VÄLISILME

Raikküla mõisast u. 3 km edela poole, Lipa küla endise Jürasoo talu maale jääv Lipa vallsulendik eristub tasasel maal 3300 m^2 suuruse kandilis-ovaalse alana, mida piirab 0,5–1 meetri kõrgusena säilinud ning 6–8 m laiuste rusudega vall (joon. 1). Algset väravakohta võib oletada läänevalli keskosas, kus on selge 2,5 m laiune vallikatkestus.

VALLIKAEVAND

Läänevallist tehtud 2 m laiune ja 6 m pikkune ristlõige andis hea ülevaate linnust kunagi ümbritsenud müüri ehitusest (joon. 2). Kaevandialal 80 cm kõrgusena säilinud raud- ja paekividest ehitatud kuivmüür oli 3 m laiune. Müüri välisservi markeerisid sirgesse ritta asetatud suured raudkivid. Mõlemas servareas oli massiivsete (80 cm läbimõõduga) kivide kõrval kasutatud ka mõnevõrra väiksemaid, 30–50 cm läbimõõduga kive. Kohati oli säilinud nende peale kihiti laotud suuremaid paeplaate. Müüri kõige suuremad servakivid olid süvendatud looduslikku pinnasesse ning ulatusid sisetäidise kividest sügavamale. Ülejäänud servakivid paiknesid sisetäidise põhjakividega samal tasapinnal. Tõenäoliselt pandi valli ehitamisel esmalt paika suured äärekivid ning seejärel hakati laduma sisetäidist. Ka müüri sisetäidise kõige alumine kivilade oli laotud otse looduslikule pinnasele. Huumuskiht loodusliku pinnase peal puudus, küll aga esines vallikivide all söetükikesi ning üks söerohke 45 x 115 cm suurune põlenud pinnasega laik.

Müüri sisetäidis koosnes 20–50 cm läbimõõduga raudkividest, paeplaatidest ja -kamakatest, väiksematest kividest ja paeklibust. Suuremad kivid olid paika asetatud korrapäraselt ja kaevamiste käigus oli hoolikast kivilaost võimalik eristada nelja kivikihti. Kõige alumine kiht koosnes tihedalt üksteise kõrvale asetatud võrdlemisi lamedatest 30–50 cm läbimõõduga raudkividest (joon. 3). Müürile stabiilse aluse loomine oli vajalik, kuna rohketest paekamakatest konarlikku aluspinnast ei tasandatud. Ka järgmises kivikihis oli raudkive, kuid ülemistes olid valdavad paeplaadid ning biohermi kamakad. Valli kõige pealmise kihi moodustas murenenud paepaatidest ja kiviklibust lasund, mis kattis ühtlaselt kogu kaevandit. Kuna ka müürilt jalamile varisenud u. 40 cm paksuses rusukihis oli valdavaks paas, siis võib arvata, et algselt oli müür kõrgem ning selle ülemine osa oli laotud paeplaatidest. Kui kõrge see müür võis omal ajal olla ja kas selle juurde kuulus ka puitkonstruktsioon, on olemasolevate andmete põhjal raske öelda.

ÕUEALA

Kultuurkihi olemasolu väljaselgitamiseks tehti risti üle õueplatoo 15 prooviauku. Enamikes prooviaukudes sisaldas pealmine pruun mullakiht või sisseuhtekihi ülemine osa ka söetükke. Savinõukilde leiti ühtlaselt üle õueala, kokku kümnest prooviaugust, nüüdisaegsest maapinnast 8–45 cm sügavuselt. Selgelt eristus u. 20 m pikkune leiurohke ala linnuse idapoolses osas, kus igast prooviaugust leiti 3–5 savinõukildu ning ühest koguni 8 kildu. Kultuurkiht sellel alal sisaldas põlenud kivipurdu ja rohkelt söetükikesi. Mitmeid prooviauke kaevati ka väljapoole valli, kuid üheski selget kultuurkihti ei eristunud. Vaid ühest prooviaugust leiti savinõukild, teistes leiumaterjal puudus. Saadud tulemustest võib järeldada, et elutegevuskiht piirdub valliga ümbritsetud alaga ning on hakanud õuele ladestuma alles pärast valli ehitamist.

LEIUAINES

Vallikaevandist ja õuealalt leiti kokku 74 savinõukildu (TÜ 1326), kaks savitihendit ning kümmekond põlenud savitükki. Kõik savinõukillud pärinevad käsitsi vormitud nõudest, mille vormimismassi on segatud mõnel juhul liiva, kuid peamiselt kivipurdu. Nõude pinnad on tasandatud või silutud ning mõne pealispind on nõrgalt riibitud. Kõige rohkem savinõukilde leiti valli sisejalami poolsest osast ning neid esines nii vallirusudes kui ka selle all. Müüri sisetäidises ja müüri all savinõukillud puudusid. Õuealalt leitud keraamika (40 kildu) ei erine oluliselt vallikaevandi omast; nõrgalt riibitud keraamikat leiti veidi rohkemgi. Lisaks prooviaukudele leiti savinõukilde ka linnuse kirde- ja põhjaosast mutimullahunnikutest. Üks linnuse põhjavalli sisejalamilt leitud põhjatükk pärineb rooma rauaajale iseloomulikust nõust, mille alaservas on kitsas rant, nn alane.

KOKKUVÕTE

Lipalt leitud keraamika järgi võiks sealne asulakiht kuuluda ajavahemikku eelrooma rauaaja lõpust kuni rooma rauaaja lõpuni. Sellist määrangut toetab nii Lipa valli ehituslike printsiipide suur sarnasus Massu ja Päelda ringvallidega, mille dateering mahub samuti nimetatud perioodi, aga ka sarnasus Ojamaa ja Ölandi vastavate sulendikega. Dateerimiseks koguti Lipa linnuselt ka sütt, kuid kahjuks osutus valli sisejalamilt kogutud söeproov saastunuks: selle radiosüsiniku vanus (2982±83 BP; kalibreeritult 1420–970 eKr) ei ole usutav ning ei ole kooskõlas linnusest saadud leidudega.

Enamikul Eesti varastel ringvall-linnustel pole õuealal inimtegevusest jälgi säilinud. Leiumaterjali on seni vähesel määral saadud vaid Massust, Päeldast ja Mustlast, kusjuures Massus ja Päeldas oli leide sisaldanud tumedam kiht valli vahetus läheduses, kuid puudus ülejäänud valliga piiratud alal. Seetõttu võib Lipat, kus aktiivsele elutegevusele viitav kultuurkiht on jälgitav tervel linnuse platool, pidada Eesti samalaadsete muististe seas erandlikuks.