

ARHEOLOOGILISED
VÄLITÖÖD
EESTIS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL
FIELDWORK
IN ESTONIA

2006

Koostanud ja toimetanud
Ülle Tamla

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Esikaas: 2006. a Palutaja külast avastatud aardes sisalduv
hõbedatud hoburaudsõlg.

Cover: Silver-plated penannular brooch from Palutaja hoard,
discovered in 2006.

Tagakaas: Krõllid Palutaja aardest.

Back cover: Silver beads from Palutaja hoard.

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS ON THE SKI-JUMPING HILL IN VILJANDI

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The ski-jumping hill of Viljandi has been excavated previously in 1999, 2002 and 2005 (Valk 2000, 2003 and 2006). Research was continued in 2006 to collect new data about the cultural layer and activities on the hill. Excavations were carried out by the University of Tartu and the Learned Estonian Society and were financed by the town of Viljandi.

The excavation plot covered an area of 24 sq. m on the western part of the hill (E-W 3 m; N-S 8 m). Its northern edge adjoined with the excavation plot of 2002 and the southern part of the eastern edge lied next to the excavation plot of 2005 at the extent of 4 meters.

CULTURAL LAYER

The cultural layer consisted mainly of mixed soil where two thicker layers – a darker brown and a lighter brown layer – dominated. The darker layer (containing humus and sandy soil) stretched until 20–50 cm below the ground level and it covered the lighter one (containing Devonian sand). The thickness of the latter was 40 cm on the plateau of the hill and up to 70 cm on the slope. Both layers contained finds from different periods – from the Viking Age, the Late Iron Age and a few finds also from modern times. The soil has been partly disturbed in the



Fig. 1. The cluster of stones on Viljandi ski-jumping hill.

Jn 1. Viljandi suusahüppemäe kaevandis paljandunud kivilade.

Soviet time during the building of a ski-jumping trail and probably also in the 18th century in the course of designing the park.

In the NE-part of the excavation plot a darker splodge, which contained charcoal and a large amount of clay daub fragments was unearthed in the depth of 20–30 cm. The splodge that was most intensive in the depth of 30–40 cm, ended with a pit stretching into the virgin soil. In the bottom of the hole there was a very thin cultural layer, probably dating from the Viking Age. The sooty soil and the clay daubs in the splodge might be connected to the burnt house remains, which were discovered during the excavations in 1999 (Valk 2000, 42).

In the NE-corner of the excavation plot some pink-reddish soil was discovered in the depth of 20–30 cm. The soil ended up in a hole that was wedged with stones. A similar hole was located in the middle of the northern part of the excavation plot. The soil was apparently the same that was found in the postholes during the excavations in 2005 and that covered the remains of the houses, which were burnt in 1223 (Valk 2006, 120).

Already in the depth of the first 10 centimeters a stone cluster was revealed. The cluster, most intensive in the depth of 20–30 cm (Fig. 1), continued until the very virgin soil, with the highest concentration in the middle part of the excavation plot. A number of stones, seemingly fallen from the main stone cluster, also occurred on the slope of the hill. The revealed cluster is a part of a bigger one that was already detected during the excavations in 2005 (Valk 2006, 119 ff).

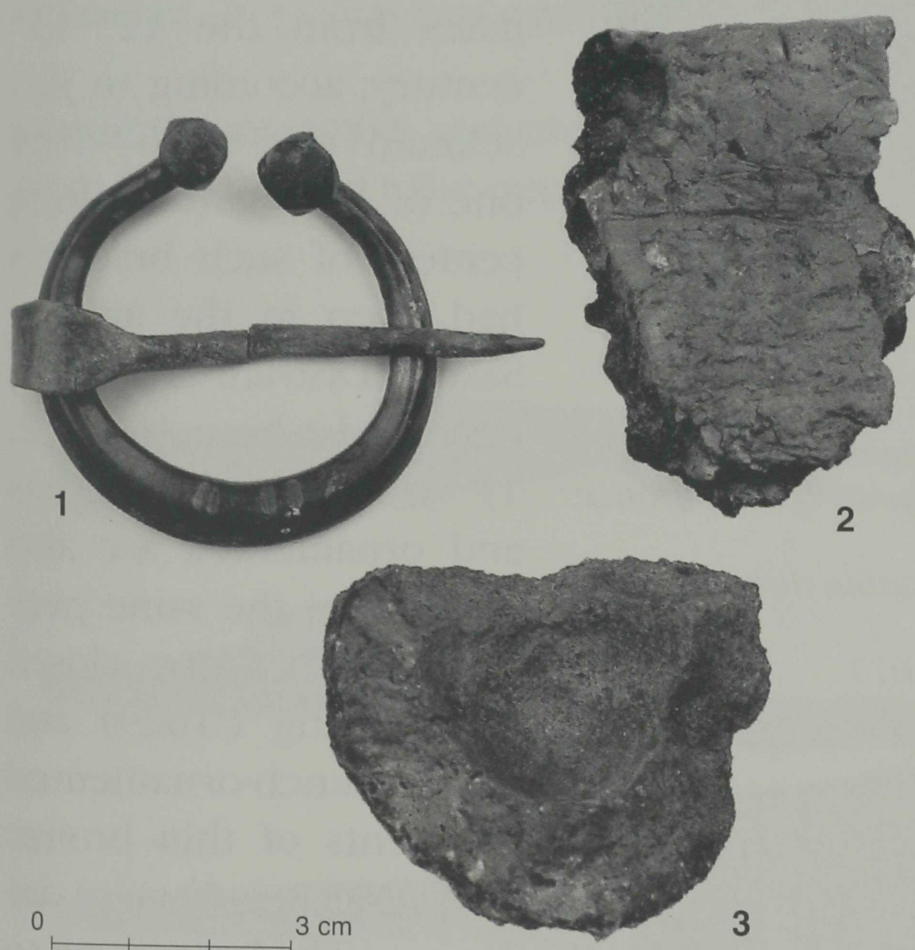
On the edge of the slope two postholes that may be connected to the stone cluster, were found in the southern part of the excavation plot. The holes may have belonged to a wooden construction that was intended to keep together the stones and soil, which were carried to the hill to widen the plateau for the besieging machine(s). This hypothesis is supported by the fact that the two holes were located next to each other as if the post in lower hole was probably intended to secure the main post of the construction. It is rather obvious that an extra wooden construction must have been necessary to keep the stones and soil from falling down the hill, similarly the posts might have been a part of a besieging machine construction as well. The postholes found in the southern part of the hill during the excavations of 2005 may have had a similar function (Valk 2005, 13).

Beside the above mentioned postholes, seven other holes were discovered on the hill plateau. Two of them (one in the middle of the northern part and the other in the north-eastern corner of the excavation plot) can be considered as the

traces of besieging constructions, e.g. of a trebuchet, since they were wedged with stones. No stones were detected directly upon the postholes and the holes were filled with pink-reddish soil. Similar postholes, which were discovered during the excavations in 2005, were interpreted as trebuchet's (Valk 2006, 121).

A hole in the northern edge of the excavation plot dates probably from the Iron Age. It contained small fragments of burnt stones and slightly burnt bones, also pieces of charcoal. The upper part of the other hole in the eastern edge of the excavation plot was lined with preserved timber remains (marking of the spring-board construction). Under the modern posthole a pit with the remains of the Late Iron Age cultural layer – yellow-black soil with some potsherds from that period was detected. The function of the two last mentioned holes is somewhat unclear. Three other postholes in the western edge of the excavation plot originate from the 20th century and seem to mark the constructions of the ski-jumping springboard.

FINDS



The majority of finds included the Viking Age and the Late Iron Age potsherds, both handmade and wheel pottery. Also a huge amount of clay daubs and some metal items from the Late Iron Age. Almost all the finds came from mixed cultural layers and no pure stratigraphy could be detected (the only exception was in the hole at the eastern part of the excavation plot where undisturbed prehistoric cultural layer was preserved).

The earliest potsherd dates from the Late Bronze Age or the first half of the Early Iron Age and represents so-called Lüganuse-type pottery (Fig. 2: 2; Lang 2007, 25). Most sherds belong to the

Fig. 2. 1 - penannular brooch, 2 - sherd of Lüganuse-type pottery, 3 - fragment of a crucible.
Jn 2. 1 - hoburaudsõlg, 2 - Lüganuse-tüüpi ke-
raamika kild, 3 - savitiigli katke.
(VM 11134: 987, 1225, 760.)

Viking Age pottery with coarse surface, but also to the wheel pottery from the Late Iron Age with both wave and line ornament. One example of a Viking Age hand-made pottery with fingernail impressions (: 123) also occurred.

The total of 5 coins or their fragments earlier than the 20th century were collected during the excavations. The two most impressive pieces were fragments of an Arabic dirhem from the Abbasidian dynasty (8th-10th cc.) (Fig. 3: 2) A counting penny of Louis XIII (1610-1643) (Fig. 3: 1) and a fragment of a silver coin that could not be determined (: 371) had been worn as pendants. A Russian *polushka* (: 191) from 1851 and several coins from the 20th century were also discovered.

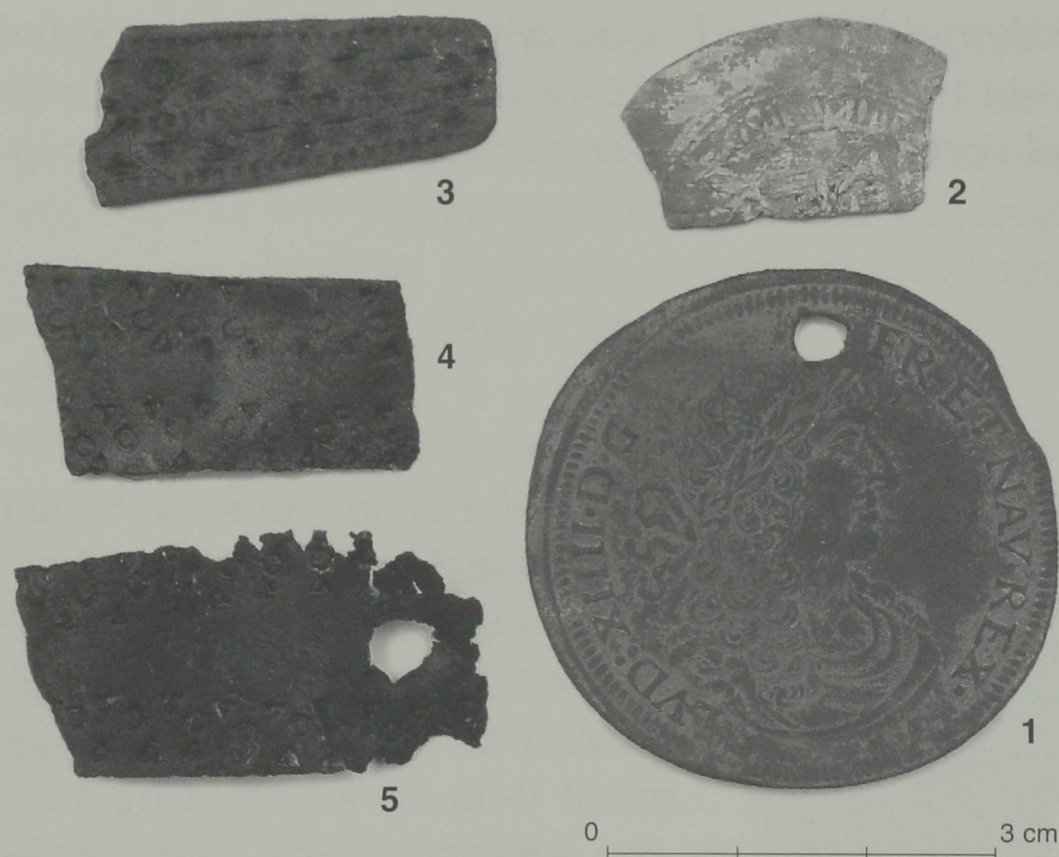


Fig. 3. 1 - French counting penny, 2 - fragment of an Arabic dirhem, 3-5 - fragments of ornaments of thin bronze sheet.

Jn 3. 1 - prantsuse arvestuspenn, 2 - araabia dirhemi katke, 3-5 - pronksplekist ehete katked. (VM 11134:66, 524, 1013, 859, 816.)



Fig. 4. A silver-plated bronze bracelet.
Jn 4. Hõbetatud pronkskävõru katked. (VM 11134: 120, 249.)

The finds included numerous ornaments and their fragments. Two halves of the same silver-plated bronze arm ring (Fig. 4) were discovered, one from the stone cluster, the other close to it. The arm ring dates from the 12th-13th century; according to Jüri Selirand (1974, 167-169) one of the manufacturing centers of such bracelets had been in the ancient Sakala District. A bronze penannular brooch (Fig. 2: 1) with faceted endings and ornamented arc also dates from the same period. Also a narrow closed bronze ring (:1029) and three punch-ornamented fragments of thin bronze sheet (Fig. 3: 3-5) were discovered. The latter seem to be fragments of bracelets (two of them show the same ornamentation), although they are rather



Fig. 5. Iron ploughshare.
Jn 5. Rauast adratera.
(VM 11134:1118.)

narrow and one of the fragments has a hole in the end, which might indicate that it originates from a pendant. The finds also included three bronze spirals (:796, :858, :955), a loop-shaped twisted bronze wire (:845) and a bronze belt buckle (:1113).

Among iron finds the most remarkable item was a ploughshare, found on the slope

(Fig. 5). Knives and their fragments dominated among the iron artefacts – all together eight finds were discovered. Three crossbow bolts reflected the military activities during the first quarter of the 13th century. Two of them belonged to the group AI: one AI: 1 (Fig. 6: 2) the other AI: 2 (Fig. 6: 1) (Mäesalu 1991, 170), the third one (:785) could not be identified. Two ice-nails (:218, :1269), two nails (:219, :860) and some knives (Fig. 6: 3–5) were also discovered. A fragment of crucible (Fig. 2: 3) suggests smithing activities.

Beside the ceramics and metal finds a number of clay daubs and animal bones were found all over the excavation plot.

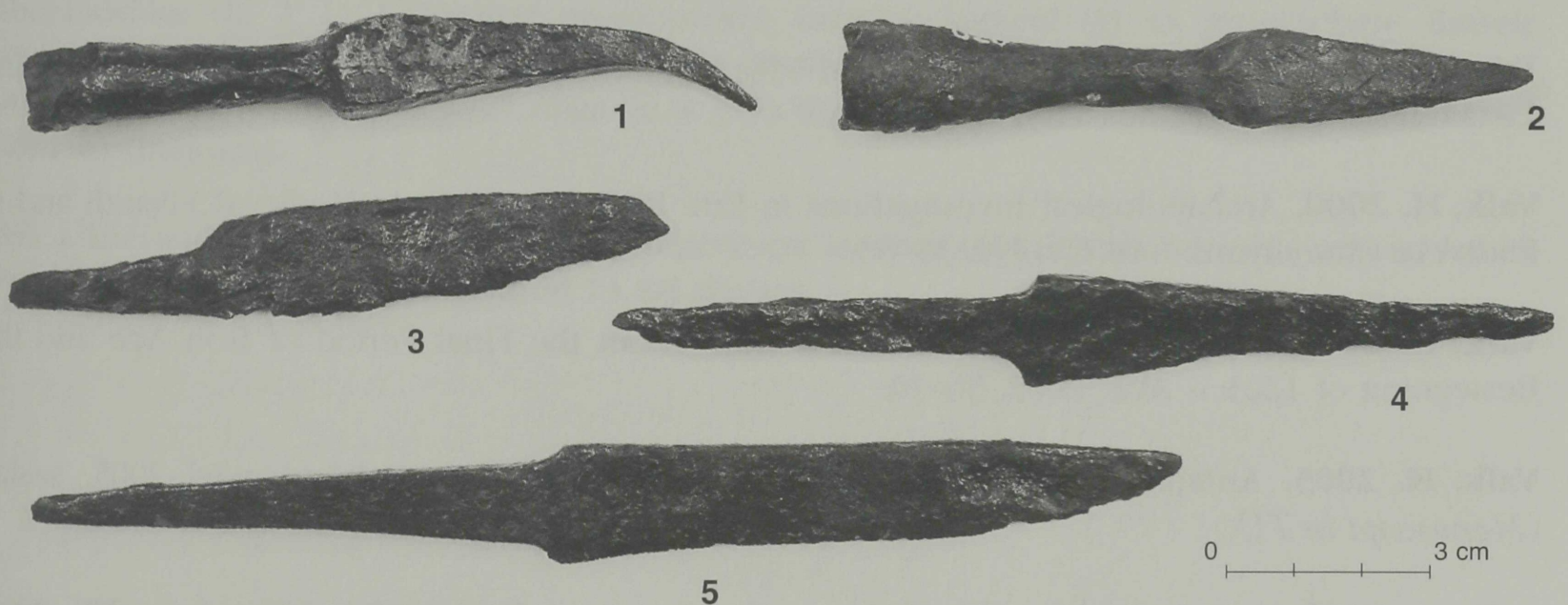


Fig. 6. Crossbow bolts (1–2) and knives (3–5).
Jn 6. Ammunooleotsad (1–2) ja noad (3–5).
(VM 11134: 46, 930; 1143, 701, 643.)

CONCLUSIONS

In the excavation plot of 2006 no original Late Iron Age cultural layer was discovered, except for at the bottom of two postholes. As in the excavation plots of former years, earlier settlement cultural layers had been either removed or heavily mixed. Former excavations suggest that the earth-works related to the removal of the earlier layers have taken place somewhere between the Viking Age and the last phase of the Late Iron Age (Valk 2003, 65). Considering the thinness of the Latest Iron Age cultural layer the removal of the earlier layers might have occurred not long before the beginning the intensive short-time life activities on the hill in the early 13th century.

Some earth-works have also taken place in the 18th century during the creation of the manor park, and also in the 20th century, in connection with the construction of the ski-jumping hill. This is indicated by the fact that fragments of clay pipes and a coin from the beginning of the 20th century were found close to the virgin soil.

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ARHEOLOOGILISED KAEVAMISED VILJANDI SUUSAHÜPPEMÄEL

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2006. a jätkusid arheoloogilised kaevamised Viljandi suusahüppemäel, mida varem on uuritud 1999., 2002. ja 2005. a. Kaevamiste eesmärk oli koguda uut informatsiooni kultuurikihi iseloomu ja mäe kasutuse kohta. Kaevand (24 m²) külgnas 2005. a kaevandi läänekülje ja 2002. a kaevandi lõunaküljele.

Kultuurikiht koosnes peamiselt kahest kihist, millest pealmine (20–30 cm) sisaldas huumust ja liiva; alumine (u 30 cm) oli heledam, punakam ja devoni liiva sisaldusega. Mõlemas kihis oli nii viikingi-, hilisraua- kui ka uusaegseid leide. Leidudest nähtub, et kultuurikiht on eriaegsete mullatööde käigus segatud.

Silmatorkava pinnaseerisusena paljandusid kaevandi põhjaosa idaküljel tume laik, mis sisaldas suurel hulgal savitihendeid, ning kirdenurgas ja kahes postiaugus roosakaspunane savika liiva kiht. Viimane oli sarnane 2002. a avastatud mahapõlenud majajäänuseid katnud ja 2005. a kaevandi postiaukudes esinenud pinnasega.

Juba esimese 10 cm kaevamisel tuli nähtavale kivivare, mis jätkus loodusliku pinnaseni ja oli kõige tihedam kaevandi keskosas 20–30 cm sügavusel (jn 1). Sama kivilade ilmnes 2005. a kaevandis ja seda võib seostada mäelae laiendamisega 13. saj alguse sõjategevuse käigus.

Kaevandialalt leiti kümme sissekaevet, enamasti postiaugud, millest kahte (vooderdatud kiilukividega) võib pidada 13. saj piiramistehnika kinnitamiskonstruktsiooni, nelja aga 20. sajandi suusahüppemäe rajatise jäänuseks. Kaks auku on tõenäoliselt muinasaegse tekkega, millele osutab neist leitud ladestunud kultuurikiht.

Enamiku leidudest moodustavad noorema rauaaja käsi- ja kedrakeraamika killud; erandiks on rauaaja esimesest poolest pärinev Lüganuse-tüüpi savinõukild (jn 2: 2). 20. sajandist varasemaid münte leiti kokku viis; neist tähelepanuväärsemad on Araabia dirhemi fragment Abbassiidide dünastia (8.–10. saj) ajast (jn 3: 2) ja Prantsuse arvestuspenn (jn 3: 1). Ehetest märgitagu tervena säilinud hoburaudsõlge (jn 2: 1), hõbetatud pronksplekist käevõru katkeid (jn 4), pronksehete, ilmselt käevõrude katkeid (jn 3: 3–5) ja lihtsat pronksist vitssõrmust. Lisaks leiti terve adratera (jn 5), kolm putkega ammuoleotsa (jn 6: 1–2), nuge (jn 6: 3–5), tiiglikatke (jn 2: 3), jäänaelu ja märkimisväärsel hulgal savitihendeid.

2006. a kaevandist ei leitud hilisrauaaja elutegevusest ladestunud kultuurikihti, välja arvatud kahes süvendis. Arvatavalt on see eemaldatud 13. saj alguses.