

ARHEOLOOGILISED
VÄLITÖÖD
EESTIS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL
FIELDWORK
IN ESTONIA

2006

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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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THE HOARD OF PALUTAJA FROM THE TIME OF THE LIVONIAN WAR

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THE FINDING AND INVESTIGATION

In June 2006 archaeologists were informed about finding silver beads in Palutaja village in Põlvamaa County (historical Võrumaa, Kanepi parish). When checking the information, it appeared that the finding spot lies *ca.* 100 m west of Ala-Miku farm and *ca.* 130 m NE of Mäe-Miku farm, on a slope slanting down towards a small creek. The place was located in a deserted field, presently grassland, in the area of road construction where soil had been removed from the mineral ground, in order to be replaced by gravel (Fig. 1). When taking humus soil for his garden from a large heap removed from the future road area, the owner of the neighbouring Mäe-Miku farmstead had found a green circular item, which resembled a bottle cover. Having thrown it away into the grass, his attention was attracted by another similar item which turned out to be a spiral ring, covered with green oxide.¹ Also two large hollow silver beads, a chalcedony bead and a coin pendant were found from the soil.

When investigating the find place by the University of Tartu, the heap of soil which had yielded the finds, was spread into thin layers that were reviewed by using a metal detector. In the course of these works no artefacts from the hoard were found; the only finds were, in addition to numerous nails and iron items from the 20th century, some pottery fragments



*Fig. 1. The finding place of Palutaja hoard.
Jn 1. Palutaja aarde leiukoht.*

¹ The first find, a presumed spiral ring could not be found from the grass even by thorough study with the metal detector.



Fig. 2. Picking up the monolith with the board.
Jn 2. Aardega monoliidi ülesvõtmine.



Fig. 3. The cleansed bottom of the hoard.
Jn 3. Väljapuhastatud aardepõhjaga monoliit.

appeared to contain also the bottom of a tin jug with 2 large silver coins on it, a rock crystal bead and 3 smaller pendant coins. Close to the artefacts there were some remains of birch bark.

In spite of finding some medieval pottery fragments, there was still no actual cul-

from the Middle Ages and Early Modern Times.²

By using the metal detector also the area of the road construction was partly examined and beside the heap of soil from which the ornaments were found, the bottom of the hoard was revealed. It was located in a pit of ca. 20 x 30 cm, which stretched for 35–40 cm deeper from the original ground surface, i.e. 5–7 cm deeper than the layer disturbed by ploughing. After unearthing a silver bead, glass bead and a silver brooch *in situ*, the hoard was opened from the edges and it was picked up as a monolith of 30 x 40 x 25 cm (Fig. 2).³ Close to the finding place another silver bead, not in its original position, was discovered.

The monolith was finally cleansed in the University of Tartu in laboratory conditions (Fig. 3).⁴ When opening, it

² TÜ 1518. The set of finds picked from the heap of soil includes also five pieces of quartz, including a fragment of bipolar split (determined by Aivar Kriiska, University of Tartu) and a fragment of flint. Although these 6 finds of unclear context do not enable us to distinguish a Stone Age settlement site, they cannot be neglected either.

³ TÜ 1489: 1–14.

⁴ The monolith was opened by conservator Kristel Luiges (TÜ).

tural layer of a settlement at the finding place: the ploughed layer was ordinary light brown soil. Traces of a weak cultural layer and some pottery fragments⁵ were found from the future road area in the distance of *ca.* 100 m NNW of it but also here we cannot speak of intensive settlement layer.

After picking up the monolith also the soil taken from the finding place to the garden of the neighbouring Mäe-Miku farm was thoroughly studied. When sewing it, some artefacts which had evidently belonged to the hoard – a signet ring with a bird image, 2 coin pendants, a 50-faceted rock crystal bead and some tiny fragments of a tin jug – were found from a limited area.

THE FINDS

The composition of the hoard is most typical for southern and central Estonia in the period of the Livonian War (1558–1583) and such a date is reflected also in the coins from the hoard. The two big silver coins, 1-mark and 2-mark nominals minted by Erik XIV in Stockholm (1564 and 1563) (11.2 g and 23.3 g; Fig. 4: 1, 2), are rather common in the Estonian hoards of that period.⁶ Typical for this group of hoards are also shillings of the Livonian Order from the 2nd quarter of the 16th century: 2 of them minted by Wolter von Plettenberg (in Riga in 1534 and 1535) and 3 by Hermann von Brüggenei-Hasenkamp (in Tallinn in 1540 and 1548, and in Riga in 1539). The latest coin which also gives the date *post quem* for the whole hoard is a shilling of the Free Town Riga from 1569. All the shillings have a small hole in the edge and have been used as coin pendants. In four cases there was a fragment of bronze chain, made of double links, in the hole. Judging by them, the coins are the remains of a larger item, probably a breast chain: such finds quite often occur in the Estonian hoards from the 2nd half of the 16th century.



Fig. 4. Silver marks from Palutaja hoard

Jn 4. Hõbemargad Palutaja aardest.

⁵ TÜ 1518.

⁶ Oral comment by Mauri Kiudsoo (AI) who also determined the coins.



Fig 5. Silver beads from Palutaja hoard.
Jn 5. Hõbekrõllid Palutaja aardest.

The 4 large hollow silver beads (37.1 g, 15.8 g, 12.4 g and 12.4 g) (Fig. 5) and the white semi-transparent chalcedony bead (diam. 23 mm) (Fig. 6: 1) are also common for the group of hoards under discussion. In the opening of one of the silver beads remains of vegetable thread were discovered.⁷ The hollow silver beads (Est. *krõll*) were made in Estonian towns by local masters for the local market (Üprus 1947).

Such beads and chalcedony beads number usually up to ten items in the hoards; the chalcedony beads occur often together with other beads, especially amber ones. The 50-faceted rock crystal beads, represented by 2 finds (Fig. 6: 2, 3) are also not rare in such sets. Their number is, however, usually not high, being limited mostly with some rare items. In one of the beads there were remains of Zsz spun light, probably vegetable thread.

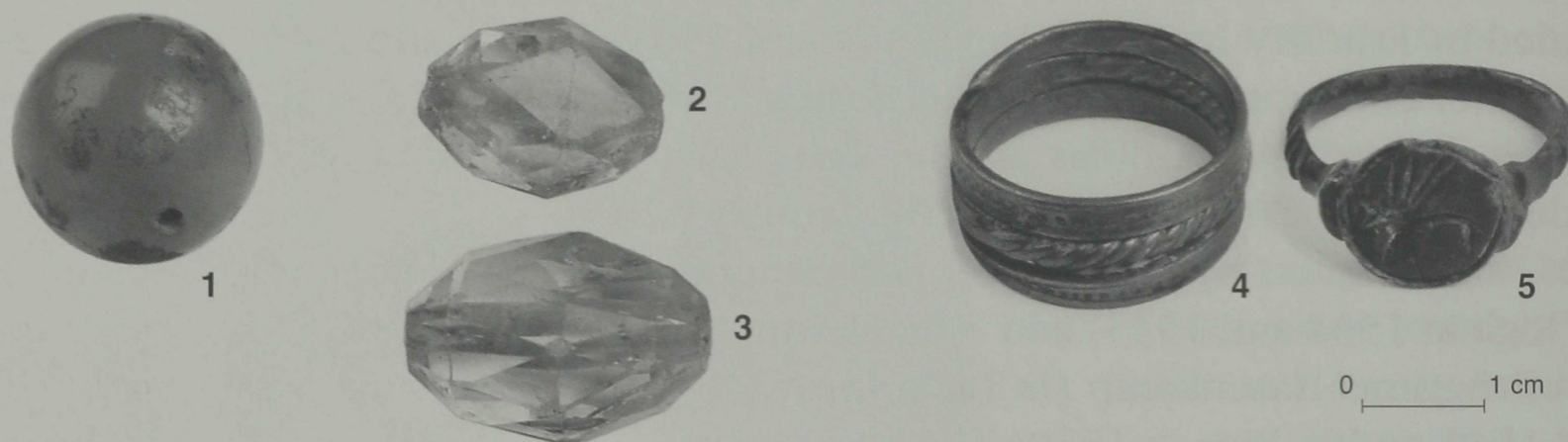


Fig. 6. Beads (1–3) and rings (4, 5) from Palutaja hoard.
Jn 6. Helmed (1–3) ja sõrmused (4, 5) Palutaja aardest.

The penannular brooch with long roll-shaped ends and a twisted arch (Fig. 7), made of bronze and covered with silver, weighed 66.5 g and had the diameter of 8.2 cm. The needle and the ends of the brooch were decorated with diagonal crosses, probably of protective meaning (Valk 2004, 282–286). Brooches of that type are also quite common for the Estonian hoards from the time of the Livonian War. The ends of the brooch were joined with a light Sz-spun thread (probably flax).

From the two finger-rings the silver spiral item with a twisted middle coil (inner diameter 22 mm; Fig. 6: 4) is decorated with small hatches on the arch of rectan-

⁷ Data about the character of threads (here and below) from Kristel Luiges (TÜ).



Fig. 7. Silver-plated penannular brooch from Palutaja hoard.

Jn 7. *Hõbetatud hoburaudsõlg Palutaja aardest.*

gular section. The bronze signet ring (inner diameter 20 mm) had an image of a bird on its shield (Fig. 6: 2). These types of rings are most frequent for the 16th century southern Estonia (Valk 1991, 186–187, 190–192), both in hoards and rural cemeteries. Spiral rings of silver occur, however, only in hoards and are missing in graves where merely bronze items can be found.

All the artefacts were hidden in a jug made of a tin/lead alloy (Figs. 3; 8). The circular bottom of the vessel had the diameter of ca. 10 cm and its walls (thickness 3–4 mm) had been preserved until the height of 2 cm.

THE CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

The investigations gave also some information about the position of artefacts in the hoard. The two large silver coins were in the very bottom of the jug. Above them the large penannular brooch was placed and more higher there had been the silver beads (at least 4). Other artefacts (rings, necklaces and presumed breast chain) had been located in the upper part of the vessel. The jug was standing vertically, probably wrapped in birch bark, and its cover was not deeper than 10 cm from the original ground surface.

The composition and finding context of the hoard show that only remains of it were discovered in 2006. Most likely, the upper part of the hoard had been once cut and turned to the ground by a ploughshare. The fact that in the course of the work almost no fragments of the jug were found in the disturbed soil suggests that the fragile vessel had been cut



Fig. 8. The bottom of the jug of Palutaja hoard (tin/lead alloy).

Jn 8. *Palutaja aarde tinakannu põhi.*



Fig. 9. *Palutaja hoard.*

Jn 9. *Palutaja aare.*

into two pieces by ploughing and that its upper part (evidently in one piece or as quite large fragments) had been picked up together with its contents already earlier by a lucky finder. The lack of the jug fragments in the investigated soil also enables to suggest that no part of the hoard (except for the presumed second spiral ring) had disappeared in 2006 before the archaeological works, e.g. by treasure hunting.

It is difficult to estimate the original size and composition of the hoard. Since from the tin jug only the lowest 2 cm had been preserved (the height of such jugs may have been *ca.* 25–30 cm), a considerable amount of its ingredients may have gone lost. Evidently, the necklace may have comprised, in addition to the chalcedony bead and rock crystal bead also other beads (most typical for the hoards of the period are amber beads and oblong faceted glass beads, although their presence is not obligatory). The largest item was probably a breast chain with coin pendants in the upper part of the jug; maybe it even stretched out of it.

In spite of the fact that the hoard contains several beads from necklace(s), it cannot be regarded as a set of female ornaments – it may also be a family treasure. Although the big silver coins might be interpreted as bridal gifts, the large inner

diameter of the spiral ring refers to its probable male possession. Also the large penannular brooch may have belonged both to men's and women's festive costume. Evidently, the hoard, which was hidden near a farmstead or village during the wartime was buried in good hope to use it once again, but it remained there for centuries. The time of burying the hoard might be quite close to the date of minting the latest coin, i.e. 1569: judging by finds from the village cemeteries, coins from the 1570s which were totally missing in the hoard were in most frequent circulation in Estonia.

The treasure belongs to the period when the area of the former bishopric of Tartu was a possession of Russia (from 1558 until 1582). Although the land had formally a definite ruler, numerous hoards from that time give evidence of a most troubled situation. Both plundering raids as well as the plagues of the wartime may have been the reasons why the hoard was never reused by its former owners.

THE LOCAL INTEREST

A separate phenomenon is the attitude of Palutaja village inhabitants towards the hoard and the whole process of works. The archaeologists were informed about the find merely because of legal and moral obligation to do it. A quite indifferent attitude was replaced in the course of works with interest towards the hoard and history as a whole. From the somewhat sceptic approach towards finding something unknown by the time of cleansing the hoard there emerged the interest of all surrounding farms; to the picking up of the monolith the representatives of almost all of them had gathered. In addition, it could clearly be observed how important it was for the local community to have the hoard exposed in the local museum and not in some central institution. Local enthusiasm should definitely be supported, since it is most effective in terms of heritage protection.

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PALUTAJA AARE LIIVI SÕJA AJAST

Heiki VALK ja Tõnno JONUKS

2006. a juunis teavitati arheolooge, et Põlvamaalt (ajalooline Võrumaa, Kanepi khk) Palutaja külast Miku talu maalt on leitud hõbeesemeid. Kohale mines ilmnes, et leiukoht asub Ala-Miku talust 100 m läänes ja Mäe-Miku talust 130 m kirdes söötis põllul – rajatava talutee alal, kust muld oli mineraalpin-naseni ära kooritud (jn 1). Teekohast eemaldatud mullahunnikust aiamulla võtmisel oli Mäe-Miku talu peremees leidnud hõbedast spiraalsõrmuse ning hiljem veel kaks hõbekrõlli, kaltsedonhelme ja ripatsmündi. Leiukoha järeluuritungel, mida tegid Tartu ülikooli arheoloogid, laotati mullahunnik õhukesteks kihtideks ja otsiti metallidetektoriga läbi. Aardest pärit esemeid rohkem ei leitud, küll aga saadi mõned keskaegsed või varauusaegsed savinõukillud. Metallidetektoriga vaadati üle ka sis-selükatud tee ase, kus avastati teetasandist sügavamal paiknev aardepõhi. See asus u 20 × 30 cm suu-ruses lohus, mis ulatus algsest maapinnast 35–40 cm võrra ja künnikihist (teepõhjast) 5–7 cm võrra sügavamal. Pärast hõbekrõlli, klaashelme ja hõbedast hoburaudsõle väljapuhastamist *in situ* (üks krõll leiti lahtiselt ka lähedusest) võeti aare monoliidina üles (jn 2) ning avati Tartu Ülikooli arheo-loogia kabineti konserveerimislaboris (konservaator Kristel Luiges). Lisaks varemavastatud eseme-tele sisaldas monoliit tinakannu põhja, kaks suurt hõbetaalrit ja 6 väiksemat ripatsmünti. Esemete läheduses olnud kasetoht näitab, et nõu võis olla tohusse mähitud. Kuigi teelalt kooritud mullast leiti üksikuid savinõukilde, polnud aare maetud asulakoha kultuurkihti, vaid tavalisse pruunikasse põllumulda. Nõrka kultuurkihti leiti aardest ligi 100 m põhjakirde poolt, ent siingi oli tõenäoliselt tegemist vaid omaette paiknenud majapidamise jälgedega. Üle vaadati ka Mäe-Miku talu õue viidud aiamuld, mille sõelumisel leiti linnukujutisega pitsatsõrmus, 2 ripatsmünti, 50-tahuline mäekristallist helmes ning mõned tinakannu katked.

Palutaja aare sisaldab Liivi sõja (1558–1583) aegsetele Lõuna- ja Kesk-Eesti peitleidudele iseloomu-likke esemeid. Müntidest (jn 4) saadi kaks Erik XIV suurt hõberaha – Stockholmis löödud 1- ja 2-mar-gane (1564 and 1563; jn 4) – ning 5 Liivi ordu killingit: 2 löödud Wolter von Plettenbergi ajal (1534 ja 1535 Riias) ning 3 Hermann von Brüggenei-Hasenkampi ajal (1540 ja 1548 Tallinnas ning 1539 Riias). Hiliseim münt, mis määratleb aarde võimaliku varaseima matmisaja, on Riia vabalinna killing aastast 1569. Kõik killingid kujutavad endast serva läbiva auguga ripatsmünti, neljal juhul on münti küljes säilinud topeltlülidest pronksketi jupp. Tõenäoliselt pärinevad leiud rinnakeest.

4 suurt hõbekrõlli (jn 5) ja valge poolläbipaistev kaltsedonhelmes on (jn 6: 1) Liivi sõja aegsetes aaretes tüüpilised leiud, mõlemaid esineb keedes tavaliselt kuni kümmekond. Küllalt tüüpilised on kaks 50-tahulist mäekristallist helmest (jn 6: 2, 3). Suure rullotste ja väänatud kaarega hoburaudsõlg (jn 7) kujutab endast samuti aaretes üsna sagedast esemeliiki. Ajastu jaoks tavalised on ka linnu-kujutisega pitsatsõrmus (jn 6: 2) ja tordeeritud keskkeermega hõbedast spiraalsõrmus (jn 6: 4). Ehteid ja rahasid sisaldanud tinakannu põhja (jn 3; 8) läbimõõt oli 10 cm; nõuküljed olid säilinud kuni 2 cm kõrguselt.

Uuringud andsid ka mõningast teavet leidude paiknemise kohta aardes. Kaks hõbetaalrit asusid nõu põhjas, nende peal oli hoburaudsõlg, viimaste kohal aga kaelakeed ja sõrmused. Nõu ülaosas oli tõenäoliselt rahadega rinnakee.

2006. a leiu puhul on tegemist vaid osaga aardest. Tõenäoliselt on 25–30 cm kõrguse tinakannu ülaosa koos oma sisemusega kündmisel pinnale pööratud ja juba varem ära korjatud. Aarde algset suurust on raske hinnata. Võimalik, et kaelakeesse kuulus lisaks kaltsedon- ja mäekristallhelmestele

ja oletatavale rinnakeele (või muule ripatsmüntidega kaunistatud esemele) ka merevaigust või klaasist helmeid. Vaatamata naiseehete domineerimisele võib aare kujutada endast mitte ühe naise, vaid perekonna varandust. Spiraalsõrmuse suur siseläbimõõt viitab võimalusele, et see kuulus mehele ning ka hoburaudsõle puhul võib tegemist olla nii meeste kui naiste ehtega.

Aarde peitmise aeg võib olla lähedane hiliseima mündi dateeringule (1569), sest Lõuna-Eestis tavalisi 1570. aastate killingeid leid ei sisaldanud. Aare pärineb ajast, mil endise Tartu piiskopkonna ala oli Vene valdustes. Tema maassejäämine viitab sõjaaja rahututele oludele ja peitja(te) hukkamisele Liivi sõjas või mõnes sõjaaegses katkuepideemias.

Omaette fenomen oli Palutaja küla elanike suhtumine nii aardesse kui kogu tööprotsessi. Arheoloogide informeerimist leiust ei tinginud mitte ajaloohuvi, vaid kohusetunne. Välitööde käivitumisel tekkis kiiresti huvi nii aarde kui üldse ajaloo vastu. Naabertalunike esialgu mõneti skeptilisest suhtumisest millegi leidmisesse kasvas aarde lahtipuhastamise ajaks välja ümberkaudsete talude huvi-tatus ning aarde ülesvõtmise ajaks olid kogunenud pea kõigi lähikonna talude esindajad. Lisaks oli selgelt näha, kui suurt rolli kohaliku kogukonna identiteedis mängis potentsiaalne võimalus saada aare eksponeeritud lähimas muuseumis.