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VÄLITÖÖD  
EESTIS

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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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# EXCAVATIONS IN THE RUINS OF VASTSELIINA CASTLE AND ON THE HILLFORTS OF URVASTE AND HINNIALA

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In order to establish the chronology of the hillforts of south-eastern Estonia, and to define the ones that were in use during the Latest Iron Age, the University of Tartu carried out archaeological excavations in the castle ruins of Vastseliina and on the hillforts of Hinniala and Urvaste.

Excavations in **Vastseliina** (*Neuhausen*) were a continuation of the work in 2005, which did not answer the question about the possible existence of a Late Iron Age hillfort on the site of the medieval bishop's castle founded in 1342. As the layers turned out to be too thick, the trial pits could reach only the turn of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries (Valk 2006, 132–138). In 2006 a new excavation plot (18 sq. m) was made in the area where the amount of debris and fill was expected to be the smallest – at the northern edge of the hill plateau, behind the external wall of the outer bailey and north-west of the small quadrangular tower.

Close to the tower the upper layers consisted of debris, which had fallen down from it (Figs. 1; 2: 1). In the rest of the plot the excavated layers were disturbed fill (Fig. 2: 2), which contained numerous sherds of pottery (predominantly red-ware, including *grapens*, some with light green or greyish

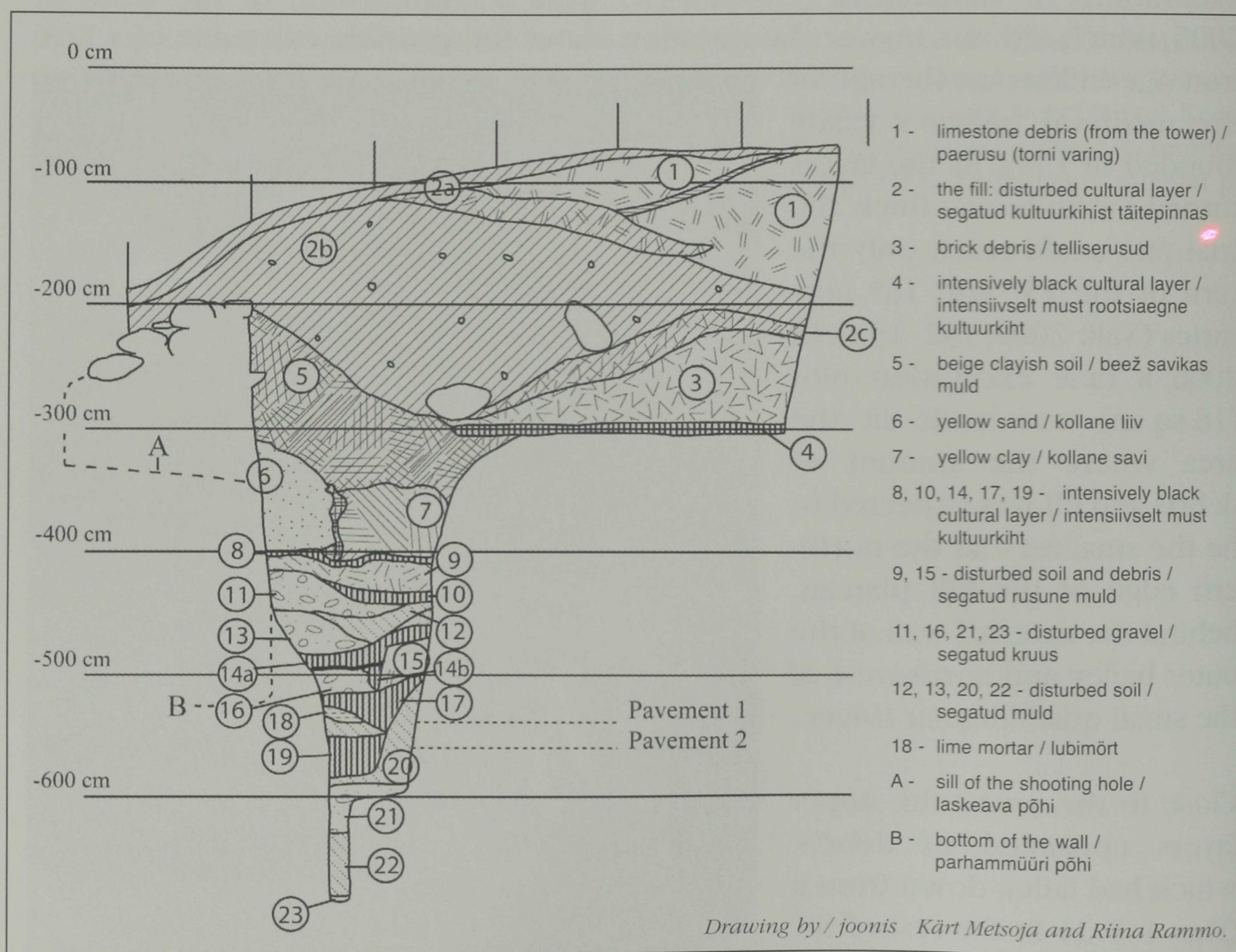


Fig. 1. Vastseliina castle. General view of the excavation plot at the level of 17<sup>th</sup> century cultural layer.

Jn 1. Vastseliina linnus. Kaevandi üldvaade rootsiaegse kultuurikihi tasandil.



green glaze) and stove tile fragments (including some with green glaze).<sup>1</sup> At the foot of the tower, below the upper layer, new debris (Fig. 2: 3) followed. The thickness of the layers of fill and debris reached down to 2.2 m from the ground surface. The character of pottery shows that the fill was composed of disturbed cultural layers dating from the Post-Medieval Period (i.e. from the time of the Livonian War, Polish and Swedish rule), and they had been removed from their original location. Also three coins were found that refer to that period: a Polish shilling of Kasimir Jagello, minted in Danzig (1447-92),<sup>2</sup> a shilling of the Free Town of Riga (1571) and a Polish shilling of Sigismund III, minted in Riga (1621). Finds from the fill include a round brooch (Fig. 3: 1), a signet ring (Fig. 3: 6), a fragment of a lock shield of a casket (Fig. 3: 3), two tin bullets (Fig. 3: 4, 5), a bronze



Drawing by / joonis Kärt Metsoja and Riina Rammo.

Fig. 2. Vastseliina castle. Eastern profile of the excavation plot.

Jn 2. Vastseliina linnusekaevandi idaprofiil.

<sup>1</sup> Finds from Vastseliina: Tü 1499: 1-555.

<sup>2</sup> The coins were determined by Mauri Kiudsoo (AI). According to his oral comment, the Polish coins, although minted in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century or the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, did not come into circulation in Livonia before the Livonian War when the Livonian Order gave up its areas to Lithuania/Poland in 1561.



pin (Fig. 3: 2), a heel iron and some knives (Fig. 4: 2–4). Only one artefact, a poorly preserved lock (Fig. 4: 1), is of medieval origin.

Below the fill there was a sooty cultural layer (5–10 cm), which covered most of the excavation plot (Figs. 1; 2: 4) and had been formed in the course of intensive life activities. The finds – sherds of redware, some of them with greyish green glaze, a fragment of clay pipe, and pieces of baroque tiles with black glaze, date from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the time of the Swedish rule. Below the sooty layer a new fill layer (disturbed soil and clay) followed.

In the course of the excavations at the northern edge of the plot, just at the edge of the hill plateau the lower part of a stone wall (thickness ca. 1.5 m) was unearthed under the turf (Fig. 2: 5). This wall, invisible on the ground, has been depicted also on the maps of Vastseliina castle from the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Alttoa 1978, 292–293). The wall dates, evidently from the turn of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century when both archi-

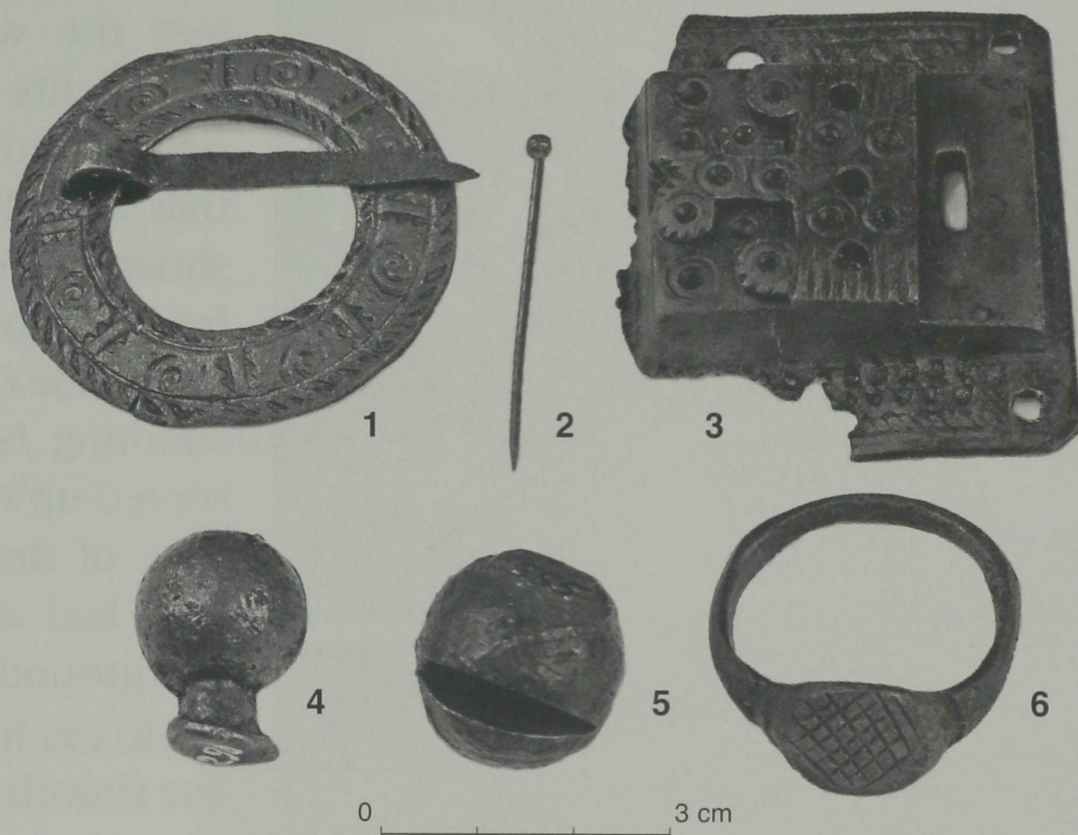


Fig. 3. Vastseliina castle. Finds from the fill of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> cc. 1 - round brooch; 2 - pin; 3 - fragment of a lock shield; 4, 5 - lead bullets; 6 - signet ring.

Jn 3. Vastseliina linnus. Leiud 16.–17. saj täitekihust. 1 - rõngassõlg; 2 - nõõpnõel; 3 - luku ehiskilbi katke; 4, 5 - tinakuulid; 6 - pitsatsõrmus. (TÜ 1499: 80, 403, 136, 290, 555, 415.)

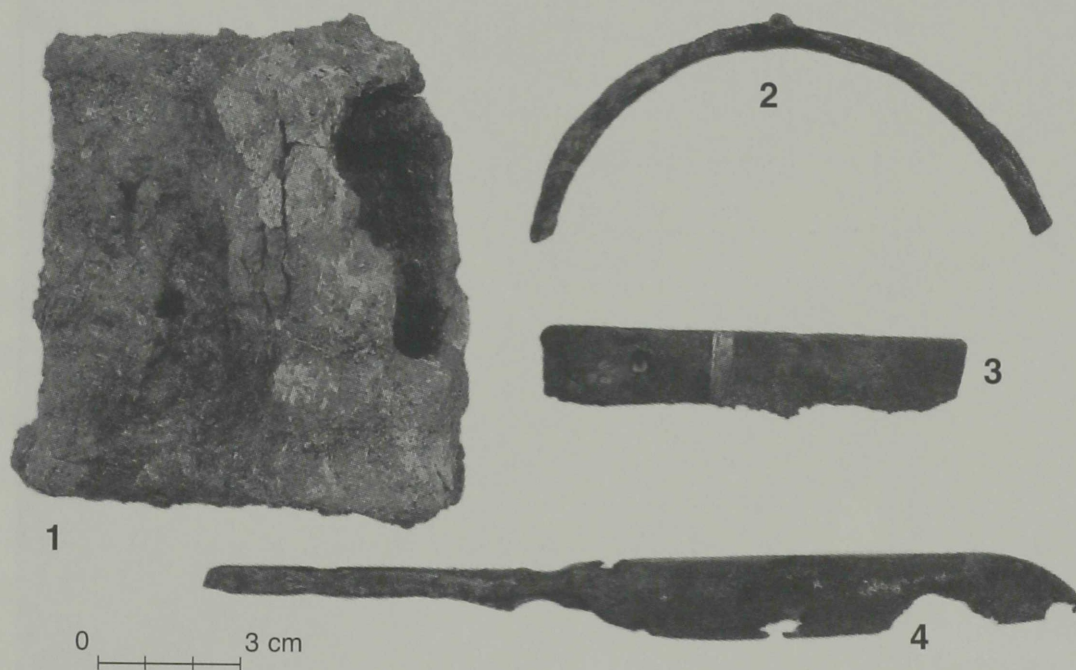


Fig. 4. Vastseliina castle. 1 - lock, 2 - heel iron, 3, 4 - knives.

Jn 4. Vastseliina linnus. 1 - lukk, 2 - kontsaraud, 3, 4 - noad. (TÜ 1499: 289, 24, 326, 41.)





Fig. 5. Vastseliina castle. The shooting hole in the Zwinger wall.

Jn 5. Vastseliina linnus. Laskeava parhammüüris.

tectural history (*ibid.* 300–302) and archaeology (Valk 2006) refer to large fortification works in the castle. Constructing low Zwinger walls to protect the walls of outer baileys from canon fire was common during the refortification of medieval castles at that time. The Zwinger wall also had a shooting hole, which was 10 cm wide from the outer side and 1.45 m in the inner side (Fig. 5). The upper part of the shooting hole was absent, it was preserved up to the height of 0.8 m. By the time of the Swedish rule the shooting hole had already lost its importance – the ground surface of that period was *ca.* 30 cm higher than the lower edge of the shooting hole.

Due to the danger that the walls of the plot (partly loose debris) might collapse, excavations were continued only in the northern part of the plot, close to

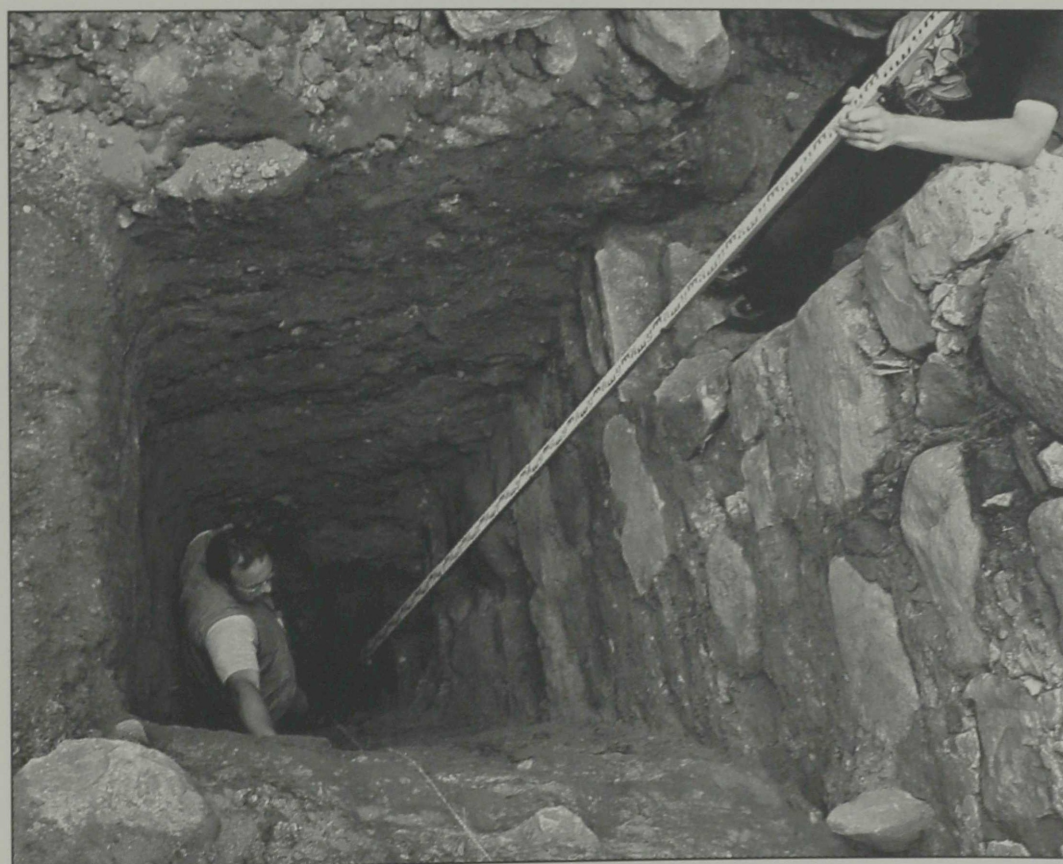


Fig. 6. Vastseliina castle: a pit at the Zwinger wall.

Jn 6. Vastseliina linnus: šurf parhammüüri ääres.

the discovered stone wall (Fig. 6), after having dug the black sooty layer. The pit (surface measures 1.4 × 1.3 m) could be dug until the depth of 3.8 m from the surface of the sooty soil (up to 3.5 m from the sill of the shooting hole).

The ground first consisted mainly of disturbed soil and debris. There, in the depth of 60–80 cm from the sill in the black layer (Fig. 2: 10) some fragments of the 16<sup>th</sup>-



century pottery and a bronze spiral (Fig. 7: 3) were found. At the depth of 0.9 m from the sill under the next fill layers a dark cultural layer (Fig. 2: 14) began. From this layer a penny of Tartu bishop Bartholomaeus Sawijerwe (1441-1459), fragments of an engraved bone plate (Fig. 8) and some profile fragments of blackware pottery (Fig. 9) were discovered. Finds of redware, typical of the post-medieval times were totally absent now. From the same, intensively dark cultural layer a small bronze tube, a fragment of a bronze chain, a bone bead (Fig. 7: 1, 2, 4) and the only stoneware fragment of the excavations, dating from the 2<sup>nd</sup> half or the 14<sup>th</sup> or from the 15<sup>th</sup> century (Siegburg),<sup>3</sup> were obtained. The cultural layers continued also deeper, but due to the small size of the pit no finds were gained. In those layers two cobblestone pavements were discovered. At the depth of 2.4 m from the sill cultural layers ended and were replaced by new fill layers - disturbed gravel, disturbed red soil with minor brick fragments and clean disturbed gravel (Fig. 2: 21-23). Evidently, the fill had been carried to the northern edge of the former hill plateau, in

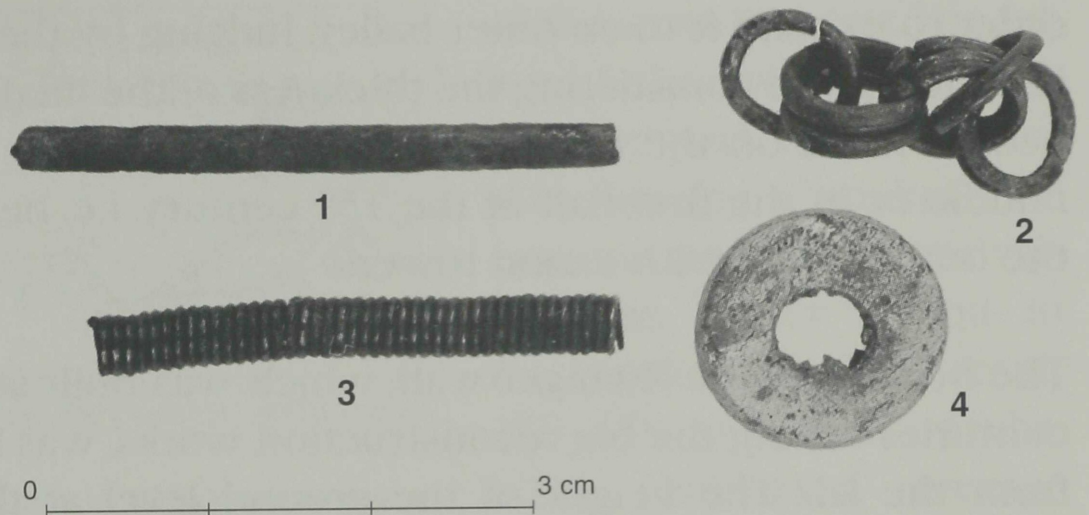


Fig. 7. Vastseliina castle. Finds from layers of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. 1 - a bronze tube; 2 - chain fragment; 3 - bronze spiral; 4 - bone bead.

Jn 7. Vastseliina linnus. Leiud 15. saj kibist: 1 - pronks-pulgake; 2 - pronksketi katke, 3 - pronksspiraal; 4 - luuhelmes. (TÜ 1499: 552, 548, 532, 459.)



Fig. 8. Vastseliina castle. Fragments of an engraved bone plate.

Jn 8. Vastseliina linnus. Luust ehisplaadi katked. (TÜ 1499: 540.)

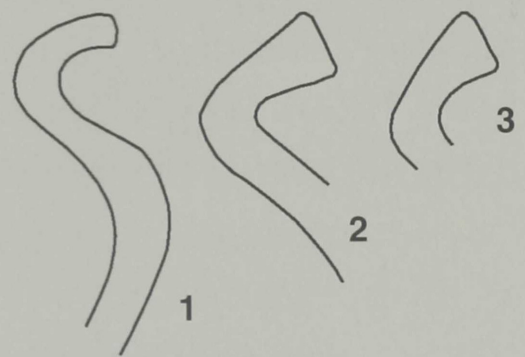


Fig. 9. Vastseliina castle. Blackware profiles from the 15<sup>th</sup> century (Fig. 2, layer 14b).

Jn 9. Vastseliina linnus. Savinõuprofiilid 15. saj kibist. (Jn 2, kiht 14b). (TÜ 1499: 543, 542, 544.)

<sup>3</sup> Determined by Erki Russow (AI).



order to expand it to an outer bailey. Judging by the coin find and its stratigraphic context, and considering the thickness of the medieval cultural layer which had been formed on the fill, these works seem to have taken place probably in the middle or in the first half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, i.e. before constructing the wall of the outer bailey with canon towers.

The bottom of the Zwinger wall, which was built at the turn of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries during the big reconstruction works, was located at the depth of 1.8 m from the sill. The height of the ground level at the time of constructing the Zwinger wall remains unclear. It was probably *ca.* 1 m below the sill of the shooting hole (the surface of layer 12 on Fig. 2). Later the area between the Zwinger wall and the wall of the outer bailey had been filled with disturbed soil upon which the sooty layer (Fig. 2: 4) had formed in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

The upper part of the investigated cultural layer refers to intensive fortification activities in the very final stage of the existence of the castle, at the time when medieval castles of Livonia were fortified with supplementary bastions and earthworks. The fill above the sooty layer (Fig. 2: 4) which consisted of disturbed 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century cultural layers had evidently been formed during a definite period of re-construction works. As a result of these works the area between the main wall of the outer bailey (in between the existing towers) and the outer Zwinger wall was filled with ground, and the Zwinger wall was taken into use as the external wall of a new earthen fortification. Evidently, cultural layers of the settlement which stood south of the castle and was destroyed in the war of 1656–1661 were used for the fill.<sup>4</sup> The fill also included debris fallen from the rectangular tower. The cleanness of these debris (Fig. 2: 1, 3) shows that the broken top of the tower was probably partly demolished during the same fortification works.

The hillfort of **Hinniala**, which was discovered in 1993, is located 4 km north of Vastseliina Castle on a cape stretching from the west into the valley of Piusa River (Kiristaja 1996). Its plateau (Fig. 10) is naturally protected by steep slopes. In the west, it is separated from the land by a *ca.* 25-metres long narrow “neck” the width of which is presently only *ca.* 1–1.5 m. West of the “neck” there is a moat *ca.* 8 m wide and presently *ca.* 2.5 m deep. In the eastern end of the plateau where the steepness of the valley slope is smaller, the hillfort is protected by a rampart with the height of up to 1.3 m (measured from the inside). Specific to the site are two diagonally located lower plateaus on the north-western and south-eastern slope

<sup>4</sup> The suggestion is confirmed by data gained during installing a water pipe north of Piiri inn (north of historical Vastseliina – Pechory road, *ca.* 100 m south of the southern outer bailey) in spring 2007. The cultural layers of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries had been only fragmentarily preserved and were totally absent in most parts of the opened-up area. As below the preserved remains of the 16<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup> cc. layers no original ploughsoil could be traced, but only intact natural sand or gravel, the cultural layers from earlier time had evidently been removed before, either during the Livonian War or in the course of the reconstruction works at the castle in 1500 AD.



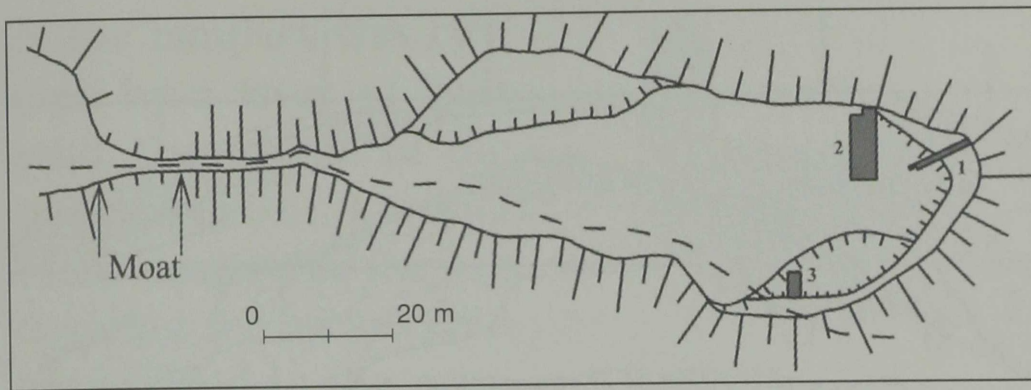


Fig. 10. Hinniala hillfort. Scheme of the plateau with excavation plots.

Jn 10. Hinniala linnamägi. Mäeplatoo üldplaan kaevandite asukohtadega.

of the main plateau. The latter of the two had also a low rampart on the outer side, forming a “pocket”-like construction. A  $^{14}\text{C}$ -analysis from an earlier test-pit in the “pocket” gave the result 230–659 AD (95.4% probability; calibrated average 440/410 AD) (Kiristaja 2004, 171).

A popular name for the hill is *Päevapööramise mägi* (Hill where the Sun Turns). According to oral tradition, big meetings of the Seto population took place there at the time of solstices/equinoxes in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Prants 1937, 252). Also some folk legends about the hill refer to its sacred nature. An old folk tale (Wiedemann 1876, 414) tells that St. Mary had appeared to people there, but being deterred by them, had gone to Pechory where she had founded a church. The deep valley between the “neck” is known among the local people until now as the site of a sunken church.

Excavations took place in 3 trial plots (Fig. 10): one cutting the highest part of the rampart, the second slightly west of it and the third in the south-eastern “pocket” – partly in the rampart, partly on its inner side.<sup>5</sup>

The main, eastern rampart was cut perpendicularly by a trench of 9 × 1 m (Fig. 11). Apparently the rampart, made of sand and fine gravel, had been constructed in two



Fig. 11. Hinniala hillfort. Excavation plot 1 with the stone circle.

Jn 11. Hinniala linnamägi. Vallitranšee kiviringiga.

<sup>5</sup> Finds from Hinniala: TÜ 1500.



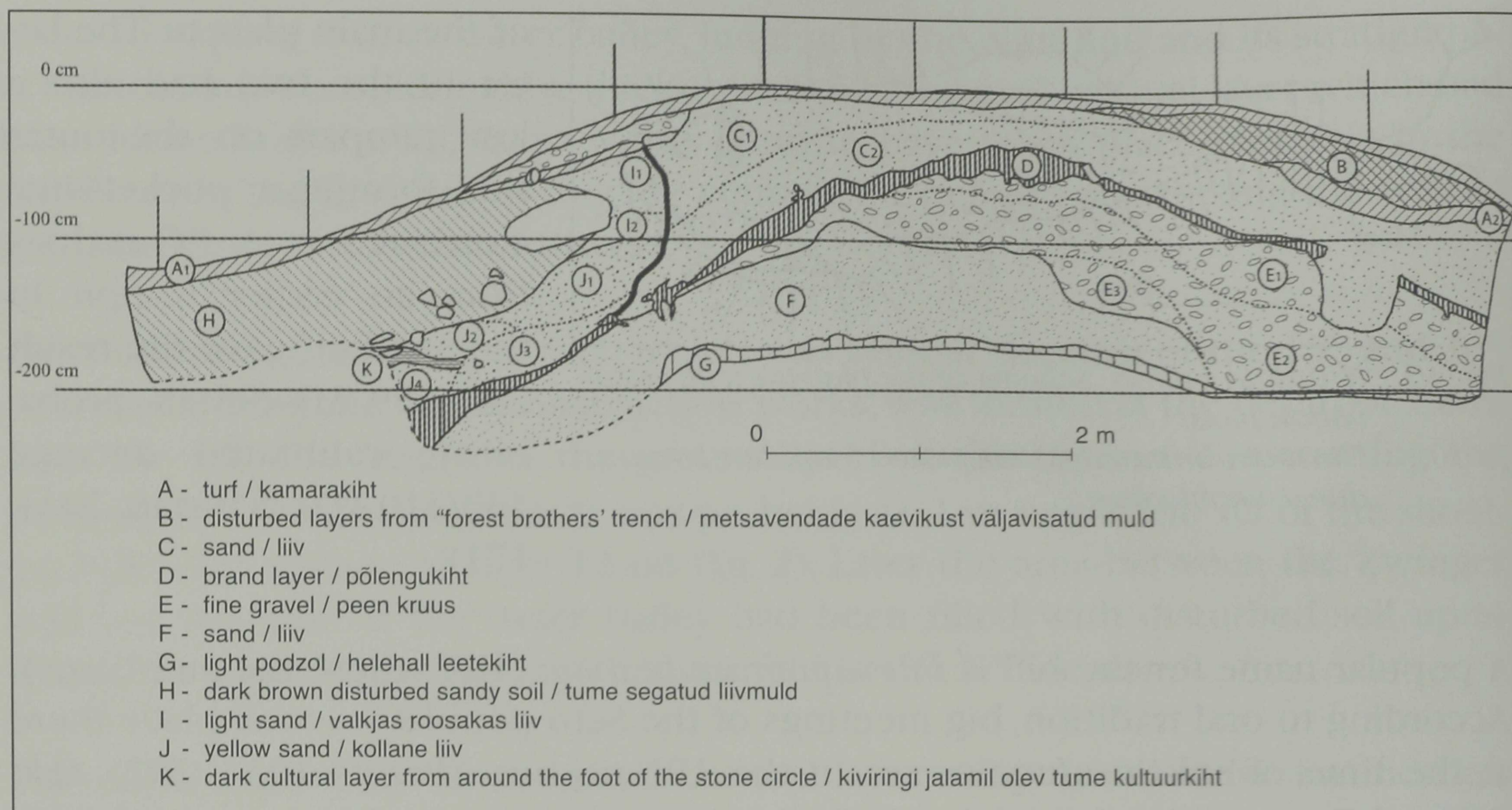


Fig. 12. Hinniala hillfort. Profile of excavation plot 1.

Jn 12. Hinniala linnamägi. Vallitranšee profiilijoonis.

stages, separated from each other by a layer of charcoal and brands (Fig. 12: D). The  $^{14}\text{C}$ -analysis from a brand in that layer gave the result  $1542 \pm 57$  BP ( $408 \pm 57$  AD; cal. 95.4% 417–623 AD; 629–639 AD; cal. 68.3% 435–523 AD, 527–563 AD, 589–595 AD).<sup>6</sup> The total height from the top of the rampart until intact natural ground turned out to be 1.7 m. Under the rampart there was light grey podzol with traces of charcoal on it.

On the inner side of the rampart a stone circle of unknown purpose (external diameter 1.2 m, inner diameter *ca.* 50–60 cm) was unearthed (Fig. 11). It was made of big granite stones (diam. 30–40 cm). The area between the stones was filled with intensively black sooty soil and pieces of small granite stones, cracked by fire. Also the big stones of the circle were cracked by heat. A  $^{14}\text{C}$ -sample from the inside of the stone circle gave the result  $119 \pm 983$  BP ( $752 \pm 83$  AD; cal. 95.4% 671–985 AD).<sup>7</sup> The closest surroundings of the stone circle were paved with small stones (diam. up to *ca.* 10 cm). From the inside of the circle no finds were obtained, but in the black cultural layer above the pavement some fragments of a hand-made vessel of red clay were collected. From that area also iron tweezers (Fig. 13: 3), characteristic of the Middle Iron Age were found.

The stone circle, which had originally been located on the slope of the first stage

<sup>6</sup> Tln 2961.  $^{14}\text{C}$ -analyses were made at the Institute of Geology, Tallinn University of Technology.

<sup>7</sup> Tln 2958.



of the rampart, was covered by a layer of light sand. The profile of the trench (Figs. 11; 12) indicated clearly that the soil covering the stones, had been added to the main rampart in order to avoid the inner side of its second stage from collapsing. Evidently, the original inner wooden lining of the rampart had not withstood the pressure

of soil and had started slanting inside. Judging by stratigraphy, the stone circle dates from a period when the second stage of the rampart was new and had not yet started slanting inside. The  $^{14}\text{C}$ -dating from the brand, as well as pottery finds from the hillfort, suggest that the timber which had burnt in the stone circle, had grown probably in the beginning of the respective  $^{14}\text{C}$ -date range, i.e. in the late 7<sup>th</sup> century. The purpose of the stone circle remains unclear. It is located on a slanting slope and is therefore unsuitable for practical purposes, yet it may have had a ritual function. The construction, half of which remained out of the trench was conserved: it was covered by plastic and reburied for possible further excavations.

The eastern end of the second excavation plot (Fig. 14) was located *ca.* 3.5 m west of the trench. The aim of the plot (4 x 10–11 m, i.e. 42 sq. m) was to get information about the use of the hill plateau and also to trace possible places of popular meetings, which continued on the hill up to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The cultural layer was 30–35 cm thick and consisted of

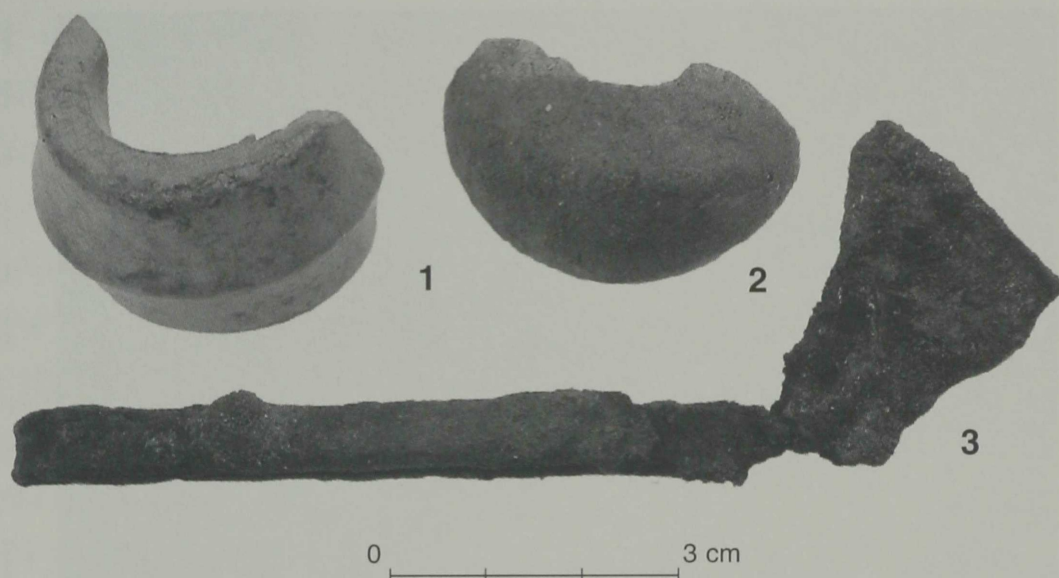


Fig. 13. Hinniala hillfort. 1, 2 - spindle whorls, 3 - tweezers.  
Jn 13. Hinniala linnamägi. 1, 2 - värt nakedrad, 3 - pintsetid.  
(TÜ 1500: 177, 228, 871.)



Fig. 14. Hinniala hillfort. General view of excavation plot 2.  
Jn 14. Hinniala linnamägi. Kaevandi 2 üldvaade.





Fig. 15. Hinniala hillfort. Remains of burnt Early Iron Age or Late Bronze Age fortifications on the northern edge of the plateau.

Jn 15. Hinniala linnamägi. Eelrooma rauaaegsete või hilispronksiaegsete põlenud kaitserajatiste jäänused platoo põhjaserval.

posthole (diam. up to 65 cm; depth 65 cm from the surface of intact natural soil) was discovered. The  $^{14}\text{C}$ -analysis from the charcoal gave the result  $2342 \pm 61$  BP; cal. 95.4%: 221–205 BC; 319–229 BC; 545–349 BC; 589–579 BC; 665–639 BC; 759–683 BC.<sup>8</sup> The charcoal remains evidently originate from the external fortifications of the hill plateau and

light brown sand. The upper layers seemed to have been disturbed by ploughing. The ground contained some irregular clusters of stones, a pit filled with sooty soil (diam. ca. 2.2 m; depth ca. 0.7 m) and traces of a fireplace.

In the bottom of the cultural layer, just above intact natural sand at ca. 1–1.5 m from the outer edge of the plateau a ca. 30-cm wide stripe of sooty soil with fragments of charcoal could be observed, that ran parallel to the edge of the plateau (Fig. 15). From the sooty line also an irregular

may be related to the earliest stage of the hillfort, dating from the Late Bronze or Early Iron Age.

Most of the finds from the excavation plot are tiny fragments of pottery and pieces of burnt clay. The potsherds with reddish and brownish outer surface with usually dark, almost black inside (Fig. 16: 1–3) resemble pottery from the Roman Iron Age, but differ

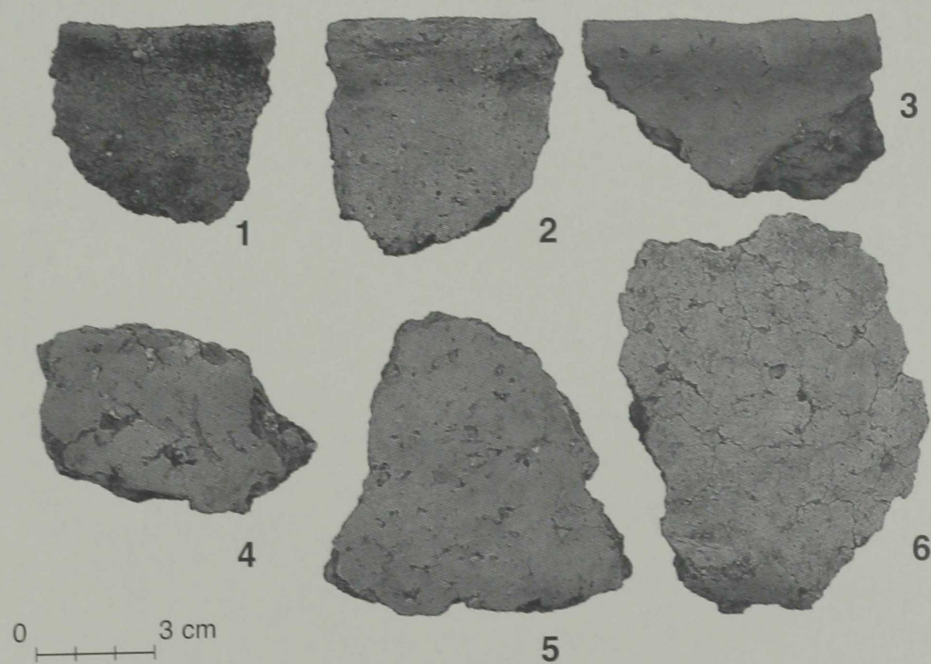


Fig. 16. Pottery from Hinniala hillfort.

1–3 - excavation plot 2; 4–6 - excavation plot 3.

Jn 16. Savinõukilde Hinniala linnamäelt.

1–3 - kaevand 2; 4–6 - kaevand 3.

(TÜ 1500: 167; 572a; 750; 767; 772; 808.)

<sup>8</sup> Tln 2956.



from the mainly dark pottery characteristic of the Viking Age of Southeastern Estonia, including that from the hillfort of Rõuge. Presumably, the pottery may be dated to the time span between the late 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries. Dating the site into the post-Roman Iron Age is also confirmed by the absence of textile-impressed pottery, which is most numerous in Southeastern Estonia until the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD (Laul 2001, 171). The finding of two spinning wheels with a big opening (one wholly and one fragmentarily preserved) (Fig. 13: 1-2) also suggest that the main settlement phase belongs to the Migration Period. The most remarkable find from the excavation plot was a trapezoid bronze pendant with hanging pendants of similar shape (Fig. 17); later versions of such ornaments are characteristic of the Late Iron Age Latgallian culture. Also fragments of a large whetstone and a strongly burnt grinding stone were found.

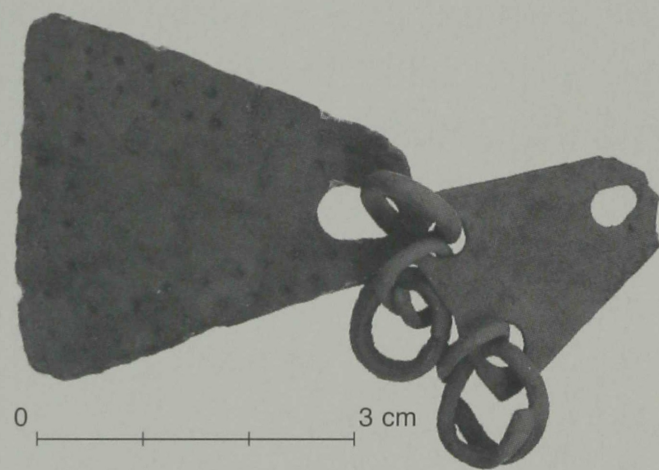


Fig. 17. Hinniala hillfort. A trapezoid bronze pendant.

Jn 17. Pronksist trapetsripats. (TÜ 1500: 501a.)

The third excavation plot (4 × 2 m) in the Southeastern “pocket”, revealed that here also a high rampart had existed. Although presently merely visible (ca. 20 cm), the rampart, made of sand, had originally been at least 1.8 m high (Fig. 18). Differently from plot 1, the rampart seemed to have been heaped up in one stage here. Determining from its height, the rampart may be connected with the later stage of the rampart studied on the main plateau. The dark soil on the inner side of the rampart consisted mainly of disturbed cultural layer with numerous fragments of hand-made pottery and burnt clay. The soil with the finds had been washed down from the slope of the hillfort’s main plateau as a result of erosion. In the deepest 60 cm of the layers on the inner side of the rampart the soil was



Fig. 18. Hinniala hillfort. Excavation plot 3 with section of the rampart in the profile.

Jn18. Hinniala linnus. Kaevand 3: valli lõige.



not homogenous erosion: intensively black cultural layers alternated with sandy layers that had been eroded down from the rampart. The dark layers included also irregular clusters of stones and a presumed short-time fireplace. Pottery was of a similar character as in the higher eroded layers and the higher plateau of the hillfort, but there also some quite big fragments were found (Fig. 16: 4–6). From the bottom of the cultural layer, behind the rampart also a  $^{14}\text{C}$ -analysis ( $1449 \pm 56$  BP; cal. with 95.4% confidence level: 439–449; 465–485; 491–501; 509–517; 531–683 AD) was obtained.

The  $^{14}\text{C}$ -dating from the edge of the main plateau refers to the existence of defence constructions, i.e. of a hillfort on Päevapööramise mägi already in the pre-Roman Iron Age or even earlier. The fort evidently existed only for a short time, since pottery from that period is almost missing. The second stage of Hinniala hillfort started probably at the turn of the Roman Iron Age and the Migration Period. A fire has destroyed the fortifications on the rampart probably in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 5<sup>th</sup> or in the 6<sup>th</sup> century, but it was rebuilt again.

As the finds and  $^{14}\text{C}$ -analysis suggest the second phase of the site dates from the mid-5<sup>th</sup> until the late 7<sup>th</sup> century, the fort evidently belongs to the time of long and round barrows. The closest round barrow was found in 2006 in Väiko-Härmä village 1.6 km NE of the hillfort. Barrows are located also 4.5 km ENE in Ostrova village, 10 km NE in Obinita village (a large group, originally over 40 sites) and 5 km W in Loosi. The Hinniala hillfort can be regarded as a power centre of the society related to these monuments. *Ca.* 400 m NE of the hillfort, on the bank of the Piusa River a cultural layer of a settlement containing hand-made pottery, dating probably from the same period,<sup>9</sup> was found.

The hillfort of **Urvaste** (Järveküla) is located 1.6 km SE of Urvaste parish church, on the high northern bank of Lake Uhtjärv. Preliminary field surveys of the site, archaeologically not investigated and characterized as having no cultural layers, have dated it to the Middle Iron Age and the Viking Age (Jaanits *et al.* 1982, Figs 165; 200). Since the stone church of Urvaste is probably built in the early 14<sup>th</sup> century (EA 4, 158) and as from the churchyard a coin of Visby from 1225–1228 has been found (TÜ 708: 2), the parish centre may have been founded here already shortly after the Christianization of southern Estonia in 1215. Taking this fact into consideration and the presumable continuity of administrative centres at the time of Christianization, the preliminary date of the hillfort needed to be checked by trial excavations.

<sup>9</sup> The finds from Hinniala settlement: TÜ 1501.



The plateau of the hillfort (*ca.* 3000 sq. m) is separated from the embankment of Lake Uhtjärv from both sides by a steep natural valley. Man-made fortifications were mainly located on the northern, i.e. land side of the plateau, consisting here of a rampart and a moat in front of it. Prior to the excavations the rampart reached up to *ca.* 1.5 m from the hillfort plateau. In the SE-end where the moat was deeper, the rampart became lower and almost disappeared for the last 20 meters, although the ground level of the plateau was smoothly rising towards its edge. Here the rampart construction works seemed to have remained unfinished. The relative height from the bottom of the moat to the top of the rampart was up to 3.5 m (in the excavated area *ca.* 2.5 m).

The main trench (18 m) (Figs. 19–21) with the width of 1 m on the plateau and rampart area, and *ca.* 40 cm on the slope and in the moat area was made in the south-eastern end of the rampart where its height, measured from the plateau was only 0.3–0.5 m. In order to check the character of the cultural layers, a few trial pits were made on the hillfort plateau along the trench line.

The ground in the lowering end of the rampart consisted of disturbed sand that contained some rare fragments of handmade pottery. Its maximum height, measured from the original surface below it,

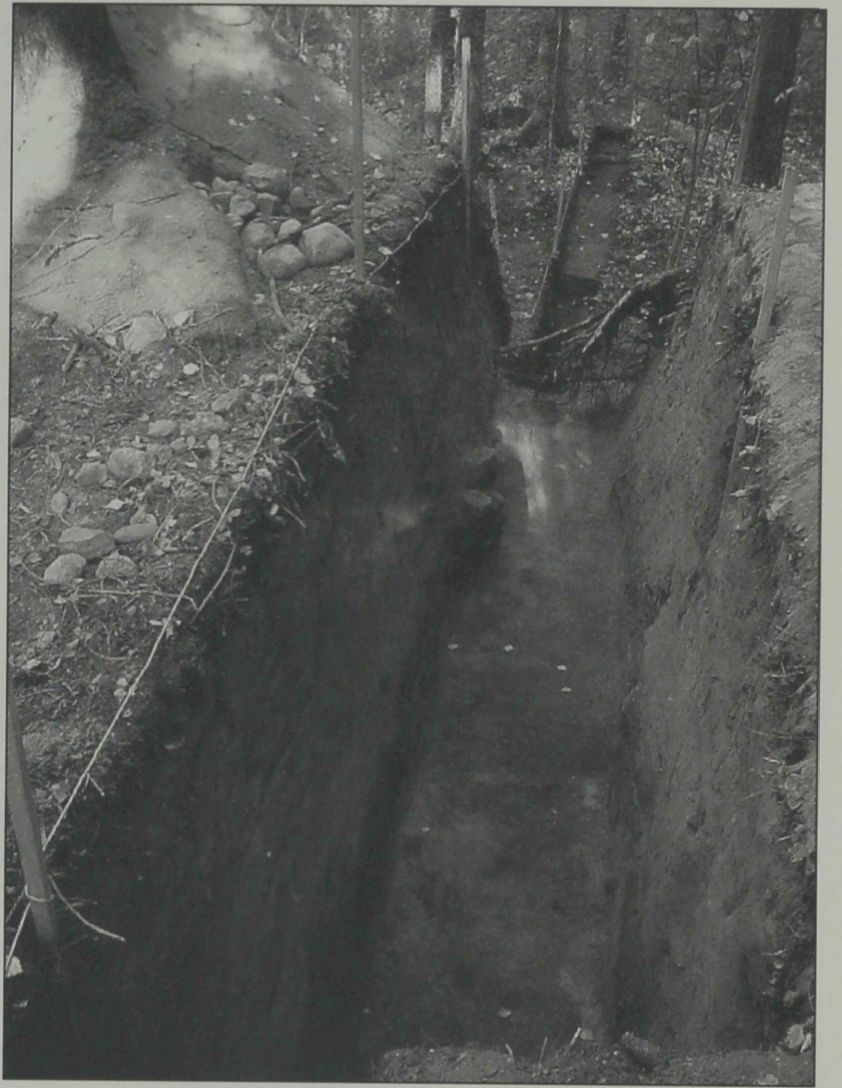


Fig. 19. The rampart and moat of Urvaste hillfort. View from the south.

Jn 19. Urvaste linnamäe vall ja vallikraav. Vaade lõunast.

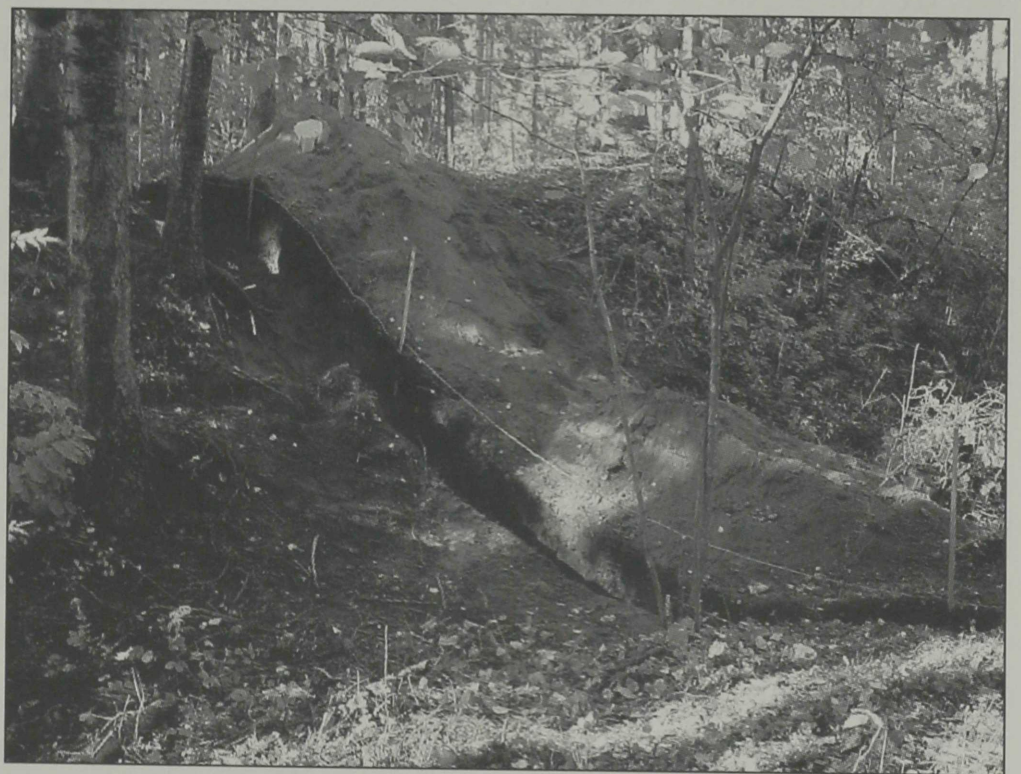


Fig. 20. The rampart and moat of Urvaste hillfort. View from the ENE).

Jn 20. Urvaste linnamäe vall ja vallikraav. Vaade idakirdest.



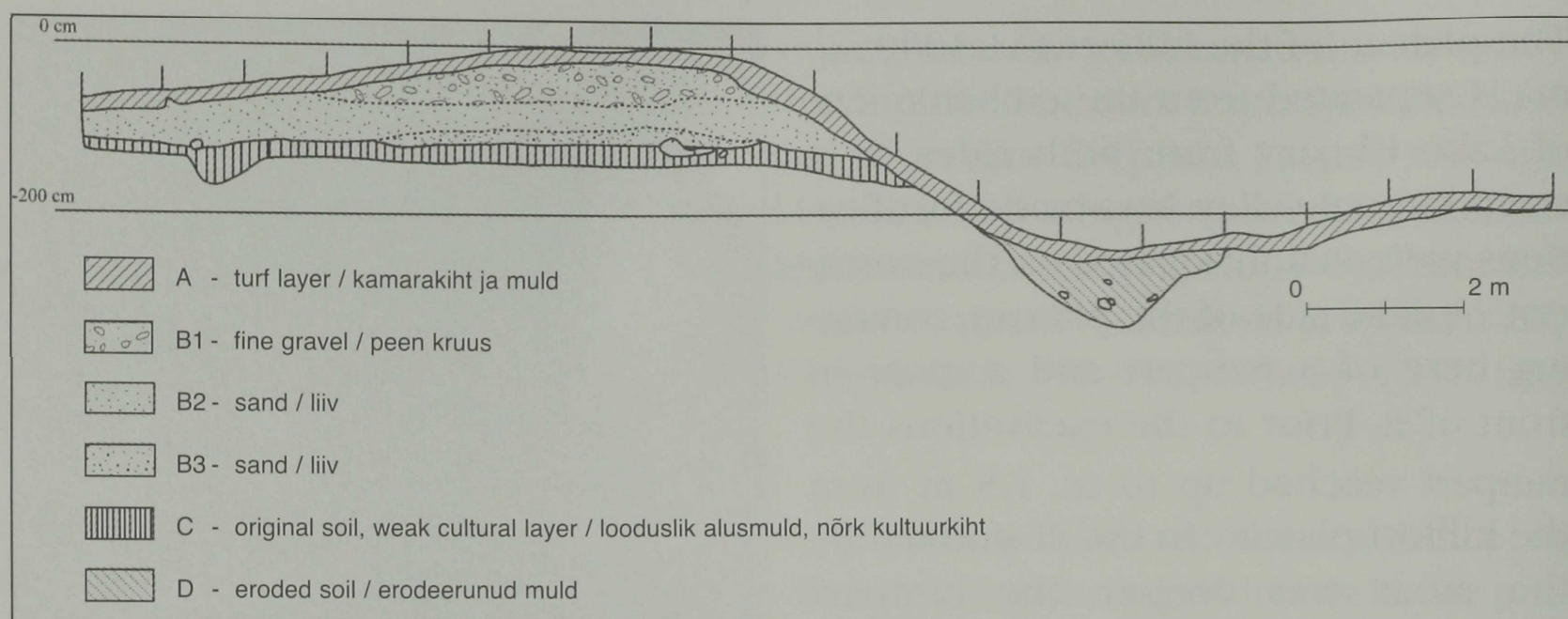


Fig. 21. The profile of the trench in Urvaste hillfort.

Jn 21. Urvaste suure tranšee profiil.

turned out to be *ca.* 1 m in the trench. Under the fill there was a cultural layer of *ca.* 20 cm dark grey soil which contained similar pottery as the disturbed sand above it.<sup>10</sup> Evidently, the soil which was heaped up into the rampart, contained the remains of the same cultural layer, taken from the moat area. In the profile of the trench the total width of the sand zone, which formed the “rampart” above the dark grey layer turned out to be *ca.* 12 m. The excavations confirmed the impression that earthworks had remained unfinished there.

The pottery, both from the body of the “rampart”, as well as from the dark soil underneath it, was of light brown, grey or black colour. It contained mostly fragments of vessels with coarse stone rubble, but also fragments with smoothed surface occurred. The profiles (Fig. 22: 1–5) and consistence of the pottery are characteristic for the Southeastern Estonia in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium AD. Some of the fragments were decorated with dot ornamentation (Fig. 22: 6–10) and one of such fragments had also decorative lines at the edge (Fig. 22: 1). From the grey cultural layer also a clay bead and a glass bead (Fig. 23) were found.

The rampart was partly cut by another trial trench (5 × 1 m) 9–10 m NW of the first one, in order to check the investigation results. The height of the rampart was 1.2 m here before the excavations. The trench stretched from the top of the rampart to its foot on the hillfort plateau. Also here a similar stratigraphy could be observed: the rampart consisted of disturbed sand, containing remains of an earlier cultural layer, and below it there was a dark grey cultural layer with similar fragments of pottery. A <sup>14</sup>C-dating from the top of that layer gave the result 1437±48 BP = 513±48AD (cal. with 95.4% confidence level 537–669 AD).<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> The finds from Urvaste hillfort: TÜ 1503: 1–126.

<sup>11</sup> Tln 2963.



The *ca.* 7 m wide moat had a narrowing bottom (Fig. 21). Its depth was 2 m from the original ground surface and, 3.2 m from the existing top of the rampart. Some stones (diam. 10–15 cm) had fallen to the bottom of the moat.

Although a rampart did not exist at the formation time of the cultural layer, the location of the settlement unit in an area protected from three sides by steep valleys clearly indicates to its fortified character: if not to a hillfort, then, at least, to a fortified settlement of the 6<sup>th</sup> and/or 7<sup>th</sup> centuries. The excavations did not enable, however, to determine the time of digging the moat and constructing the rampart. Since no finds indicate to the Latest Iron Age activities, the rampart also might belong to the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium AD. In conclusion, the cultural layers on the hillfort of Urvaste refer to a centre of short-time use or to weak use intensity. The construction of the rampart in the Latest Iron Age cannot, however, also be totally excluded.

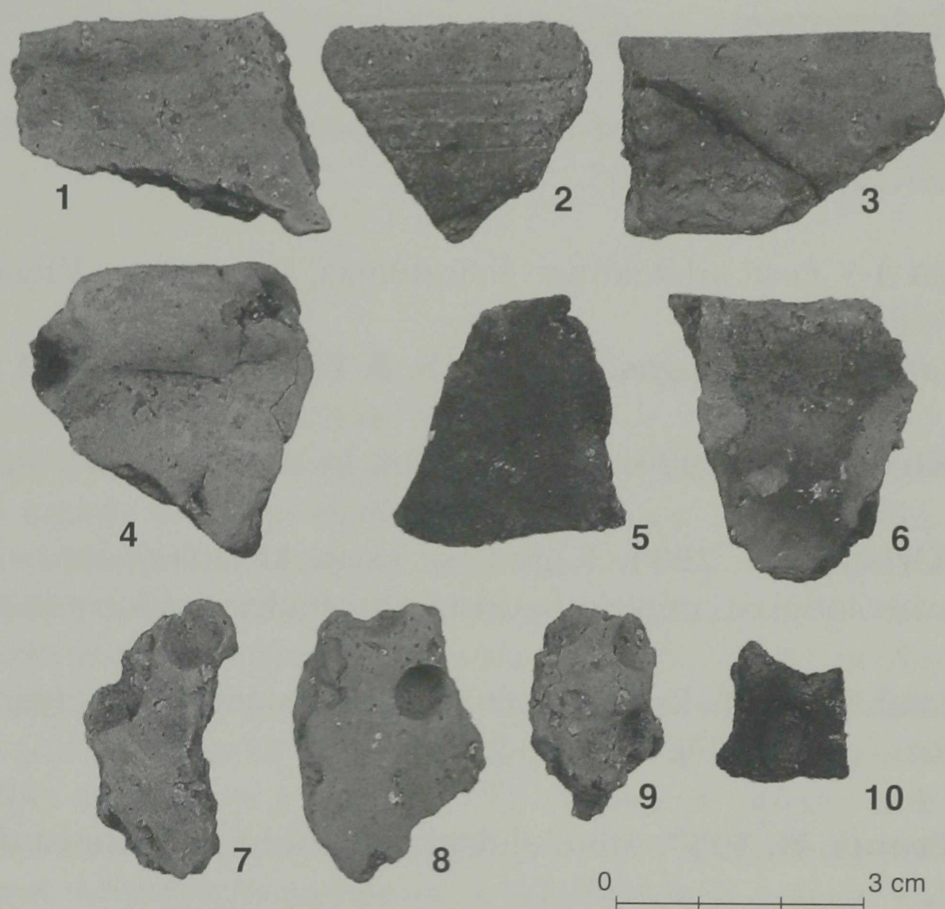


Fig. 22. Pottery fragments from Urvaste hillfort.

1–5 - rims, 6–10 with dot ornamentation.

Jn 22. Savinõukillud Urvaste linnamäelt.

1–5 - servad, 6–10 lohkonnamendiga killud.

(TÜ 1503: 48, 64, 125, 39, 109, 89, 93, 77, 92, 45.)

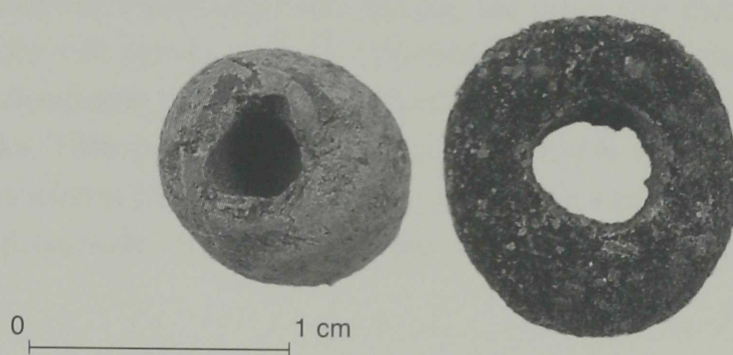


Fig. 23. Beads from Urvaste hillfort. 1 - clay, 2 - glass.

Jn 23. Helmed Urvaste linnamäelt. 1 - savi, 2 - klaas.

(TÜ 1503: 115, 108.)

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## KAEVAMISED VASTSELIINA LINNUSEL NING HINNIALA JA URVASTE LINNAMÄEL

Heiki VALK

### VASTSELIINA LINNUS

2006. a jätkusid kaevamised, mille eesmärk on tuua selgust Võrumaa linnuste kronoloogia küsimusse. Vastseliina linnuse varemetes, kus 2005. a uurimistööd ei andnud oodatud tulemusi, sest üheski kohas ei jõutud sügavamale 15./16. sajandi vahetuse kihtidest, tehti kaevand (18 m<sup>2</sup>) põhjatorni loodenurga juurde, torni ja mäeserva vahele (jn 1). Ilmnes, et pinnase ülemise 2,2 m moodustasid täiteks toodud 16.–17. sajandi asulakiht, mis sisaldas lisaks rohkele keraamikale ka mõne samaaegse metall-leiu (jn 3, 4), ja tornist varisenud rusud (jn 2: 1–3), mille all paiknes 5–10 cm paksune rootsi ajal kohapeal tekkinud intensiivselt must ladestus (jn 2: 4). Mäenõlva välisküljel tuli nähtavale 1,5 m paksune laskeavaga maakivist parhammüür (jn 2, 5), mis kajastub ka rootsiaegsetel linnuseplaanidel. Laskeava laius müüri siseküljel oli 145 cm ja välisküljel 10 cm; ava oli säilinud u 80 cm kõrguselt. Et kaevandi seinad ähvardasid variseda, jätkati kaevamist 1,4 × 1,3 m alal avastatud välismüüri kõrval (jn 6). Siin koosnes pinnas vaheldumisi paiknevatest täitekihtide ja tumeda kultuurkihi ladestustest (sh 2 munakivisillutist), kust saadud vähesed leiud (jn 7–9) pärinevad 15.–16. sajandist. Šurfi põhi ulatus rootsiaegse musta kihi ülaservast 3,8 m ja laskeava aknalauast 3,5 m madalamale, kusjuures aknalauast 2,4 m sügavusel kultuurkihi ladestused lõppesid ja algas täitepinnas (segatud mulla ja kruusa kihid). Ilmselt on täitepinnas algse mäeplatoo põhjaserva toodud selle laiendamiseks. Mullatööd on toimunud arvatavasti 15. saj esimesel poolel või keskpaiku, igatahes enne eeslinnuse kahuritornidega välismüüri rajamist. Parhammüüri rajamise ajaks oli mäeserva kõrgendanud täitepinnasele jõudnud tekkida arvestatav kultuurikiht (sh 2 munakivisillutist), maapind oli siis tõenäoliselt vaid 1 m aknalauast madalamal. Parhammüüri taguse ala täitmine täitepinnasega (sh laskeava mattumine) toimus juba Liivi sõja või poola ajal. 17. sajandi lõpus on parhammüüri ja eeslinnuse välismüüri vaheala uute muldkindlustuste rajamisel lõplikult täidetud ning parhammüür on saanud uue muldkindlustuse välismüüriks. Täitepinnaseks on toodud ilmselt linnuse ees paiknenud 16.–17. sajandi alevi kultuurikihti. Piiri kõrtsi juures 2007. a kevadel toimunud välitööd andsid tunnistust sellest, et selleaegse asula kultuurikiht oli siit peaaegu täiesti eemaldatud; seda oli kohati säilinud vaid väikeste lõikudena.

### HINNIALA LINNAMÄGI

Hinniala linnamägi (ka Päevapööramise mägi) (jn 10) asub Vastseliina linnusest linnulennul 4 km põhja pool, Piusa jõe läänekaldal, jõega kolmest küljest piiratud pika neemiku otsal. Maapoolsel küljel kaitseb linnust u 25 m pikkune 1–1,5 m laiune kaelakoht, mille taga on kuni 2,5 m sügavune ja u 8 m laiune vallikraav. Nii linnamäe kirde- kui kaguküljel on põhiplatooast madalam astang; neist kagupoolsema välisküljel on jälgitav madal vall. Linnamäge on pärimuses peetud ohvripaigaks, kus pööripäevade ajal toimusid päiksekultusega seotud riitused. Mäe sakraalsusele viitab ka pärimus, mille järgi siin on nähtud püha Maarjat, samuti jutt maassevajunud kirikust.

Linnamäele tehti 3 kaevandit: idas asuvale õuepinna suhtes u 1,3 m kõrgusele peavallile, selle lähedale linnuseplatoole ja kagupoolse astangu alale. Idavalli tranšee (9 × 1 m) lõikamisel (jn 11, 12) ilmnes, et looduslikust leetekihist kuni 1,7 m kõrgusele ulatuv liivast ja peenest kruusast vall on



ehitatud kahes, üksteisest põlemiskihiga eraldatud järgus. Ühest tukist saadud  $^{14}\text{C}$ -analüüs andis tulemuseks  $1542 \pm 57$  BP ( $408 \pm 57$  AD; cal. 95.4% 417–623 AD; 629–639 AD; cal. 68.3% 435–523 AD, 527–563 AD, 589–595 AD). Valli siseküljelt leiti suurtest maakividest teadmata otstarbega kiviring (välisläbimõõt 1,2 m, siseläbimõõt u 60 cm), mille sisemus oli täidetud nõgise mulla ja kildudeks põlenud raudkivitükkidega. Tugevalt põlenud olid ka kiviringi raudkivid. Kivide vahelt võetud söeproov andis tulemuseks  $1199 \pm 83$  BP ( $752 \pm 83$  AD; cal 95.4% 671–985 AD). Kiviringi välisküljel oli musta kultuurkihi peal väikestest kividest sillutis. Sellest piirkonnast leiti rauast pintsetid (jn 13: 3). Valli profiilist ilmnes, et kiviring on paiknenud valli I ehitusjärgu nõlval ja et seda katnud liivapinnas oli kuhjatud valli II ehitusjärgu sisekülje vastu, takistamaks püstloodis seina väljavarisemist vallipinnase survele. Arvestades valli stratigraafiat ja kahe söeproovi dateeringuid, võiks kiviringis oleva söe moodustanud puit olla kasvanud 7. sajandi lõpul.

Kaevand platool ( $42 \text{ m}^2$ ; jn 14) algas vallitranshee otsast 3,5 m lääne pool. Väheintensiivsest 30–35 cm paksusest pruunika värvusega, nähtavasti suures osas läbiküntud kultuurkihist leiti rohkesti käsikeraamika ja põlenud savi tükke. Keraamika, mis sarnaneb üldilmelt tarandkalmetes leiduvale ning erineb oluliselt viikingiaegsete asulate ja linnuste omast (jn 16: 1–3), võiks pärineda peamiselt 6.–7. sajandist. Leiti ka kaks suure siseavaga värtnaketra (jn 13: 1, 2). Kultuurkihist leiti veel väike trapetsikujuline pronksripats (jn 17). Mäeservast u 1,5 m kaugusel tuli otse loodusliku aluspinna peal nähtavale kunagiste kaitseehituste põlemisel tekkinud söeviirg (jn 15) ja sellega seotud postiauk. Söeviirust võetud  $^{14}\text{C}$ -proov, mis andis tulemuseks  $2342 \pm 61$  BP; cal. 95.4%: 221–205 BC; 319–229 BC; 545–349 BC; 589–579 BC; 665–639 BC; 759–683 BC, viitab linnuse vanimate kaitseehitiste pärinemisele eelrooma rauaajast või hilispronksiajast.

Kolmandas, kagupoolsele astangule tehtud ja ka vallialale ulatuvas kaevandis (jn 18) ilmnes, et vaeumärgatav vall on olnud algselt vähemalt 1,8 m kõrgune; tema sisekülg on mattunud kõrgemal olevalt linnuseplatoolt ja nõlvalt uhutud kultuurkihi alla. Ühes järgus kuhjatud liivast valli kõrguse põhjal otsustades võiks see seostuda suure idavalli hilisema järguga. Valli siseküljel sisaldas alaosa pinnas ka kohapeal tekkinud tumedat kultuurkihti, mille viirud vaheldusid vallist erodeerunud liivapinnasega. Nii kohapeal tekkinud kultuurkiht kui kõrgemalt alla uhutud pinnas sisaldasid rohkesti käsikeraamikat (jn 16: 4–6). Tumeda kultuurkihi alaost saadud söeproov andis tulemuse viitab rahvasterännuajale või eelviikingiajale ( $1449 \pm 56$  BP; cal. 95.4%: 439–449; 465–485; 491–501; 509–517; 531–683 AD).

Hinniala linnamäe kaevamistulemused lubavad seda seostada ümbruskonnas paiknevate pikk- ja ümarkäabastega, millest lähim avastati 2006. a sügisel 1,6 km kaugusel idas Väiko-Härmä küla metsas. Linnusest u 400 m kirdes avastati ka käsikeraamikaga, tõenäoliselt samaaegne asulakoht.

## URVASTE (JÄRVEKÜLA) LINNAMÄGI

Urvaste (Järveküla) linnamäel, mis asub kihelkonnakirikust 1,6 km kagus, uuriti linnusevalli. Peamine tranšee (18 m; jn 19–21) lõikas valli ja selle ees olevat vallikraavi kohas, kus linnuseplatoo kuni 1,5 m kõrgemale ulatuv vall oli oma kaguotsas madaldudes ja hajudes muutunud vähemärgatavaks (kõrgus õueplatoo u 0,3–0,5 m). Samas oli linnuse kaitse siin tagatud sügavamaks muutuva vallikraaviga: nõlva kõrgus kraavi praegusest põhjast oli nii selgepiirilise valliga alal kui ka uuritud piirkonnas ligi 3 m. Profiilist ilmnes, et vallikuhjatiseks oleva liiva/kruusa kiht oli vallieelse platoopinna peal siiski ligi 1 m paksune ja et seda leidis väga laial alal: valli välisservast kuni 12 m kaugusele linnuseõuele. Võimalik, et tegemist on lõpetamata jäänud ehitise jaoks toodud, valliks kuhjamata jäänud ja aja jooksul laiali valgunud ehitismaterjaliga.



Uuritud lõigus paiknes valli all u 20 cm paksune tumehalli pinnase lade – looduslik alusmuld, mille ülaosa kujutas endast nõrka kultuurkihti. Halli kihi sõelumisel saadi käsikeraamika kilde (jn 22), sh lohkornamendiga kaunistatuid (jn 22: 6–10). Samalaadset keraamikat leidis vähesel määral ka vallikuhjatises, kuhu see oli ilmselt sattunud samast, vallikraavi alalt pärinevast ja vallisse kuhjatud kultuurkihist. Kihist saadi ka üks savist ja teine klaasist helmes (jn 23). Linnuseõuel, tranšee pikendusele tehtud šurfides hallikas kultuurkiht peaaegu puudus.

Kaevamistulemuste kontrollimiseks tehti 5 × 1 m suurune teine tranšee esimesest 9–10 m loode poole, kus vall oli enne kaevamisi siseküljelt jälgitav ligi 1,2 m kõrgusena. Valli stratigraafia oli sama sugune nagu eelmises kaevandis. Siin õnnestus halli kultuurkihi pealt saada söeproov, mis andis tulemuse 1437±48 BP (cal. 95.4%: 537–669 AD).

Vallikraavi profiilis ilmnes, et ligi 7 m laiune kraav (jn 21) on olnud teravneva põhjaga. Algne kraavipõhi ulatus linnuseplatool oleva halli kihi ülaservast ligi 2 m ja olemasolevast valliharjast ligi 3,2 m sügavusele. Vallikraavi välisküljelt oli algne maapind ja hall kultuurkiht ilmselt valli ehitamise aegsete mullatöödega täiesti eemaldatud.

Uuritud väheintensiivne kultuurkiht pärineb vallieelsest ajast ja võiks kuuluda 6.–7. sajandisse. Arvestades paiknemist kahe uhtoru vahelisel neemikul, võib asustusüksust ka valli puudumise korral pidada mitte tavaliseks avaasulaks, vaid kindlustatud asulaks, sealjuures tõenäoliselt üsna lühiajaliseks. Valli kuhjamise aja kohta kaevamistel selgust ei saadud, kuid noorema rauaaja leidude puudumine lubab selleaegseid kindlustustöid pidada vähetõenäoliseks.