



## ARCHAEOLOGICAL STUDIES IN RISTI CHURCH AND CHURCHYARD

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### INTRODUCTION

In 2010 conservation works started at the medieval church of Risti (Cross in English; also known as Harju-Risti referring to the historic name of the region). Those works included the conservation of the interior of the chancel and the floor of the nave. The present article gives an overview of the archaeological investigations related to the conservation works which took place in autumn 2010 and summer 2011. Besides the aforementioned works in 2008 an underground electric power cable and lamp-posts were installed in the churchyard around the building and the aerial power cable was replaced with an underground one in summer 2011. The article briefly covers the monitoring results as well.

In the Middle Ages Risti church (Fig. 1) was known as a Holy Cross chapel (also mentioned as a church), which belonged to the Cistercian monastery of Padise (LUB 1905, 503, 527). The function of the church is not clear as in the medieval sources it is never mentioned as a parish church. The parish church on the monastery's lands was situated at Harju-Madise. After reformation the situation did not change – the centre of the parish remained in Harju-Madise and Risti was an affiliated church. This arrangement lasted up to the end of the 19th century when an independent Risti parish was established (Ederma & Jaik 1939, 66). There has been a considerable ethnic Swedish settlement on the coastal areas of the parish.



*Fig. 1. Church of Risti.*

*Jn 1. Risti kirik.*

*Photo / Foto: Kaire Tooming*

The building history of Risti church has been thus far most thoroughly studied by art historian Villem Raam who has dated the present church to the first half of the 15th century. He has divided the building process of the church into three major stages. At first, around the 1330s, a lower part of the chancel was erected. Those works were interrupted and the building of Risti church continued around the first quarter of the 15th century. Raam sees this building activity in two different stages. At first the chancel was completed and the nave was erected. He assumed that nave was vaulted and the tower was built during next building stage which took place at the second quarter of the 15th century at the latest (Raam 1997, 14–15).

The only previous archaeological works prior to 2008 took place in 1985 and 1986 in the churchyard when a layer of soil up to 1.5 m thick was removed from the vicinity of all sides of the church building with a purpose to keep off moisture from the walls. Also some test-pits were dug right outside the church walls. No finds were recorded, except some limestone masonry fragments that are stored inside the church (Raam 1987).

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING IN THE CHURCHYARD

In the autumn of 2008 an underground electric cable and lamp-posts were installed in the northern, western and southern sides of the churchyard, close to the stone wall surrounding it (Fig. 2). As the trenches were dug in marginal areas and were quite shallow (40–60 cm deep, ca. 50 cm wide, ca. 100 m long), no historic structures or preserved burials were discovered. 13 coins, including two 15th century silver coins were gathered from the excavated soil with the help of a metal detector – the first ‘proper’ archaeological finds from the site.<sup>1</sup> In 2011 a 11 m long trench was dug from the southern

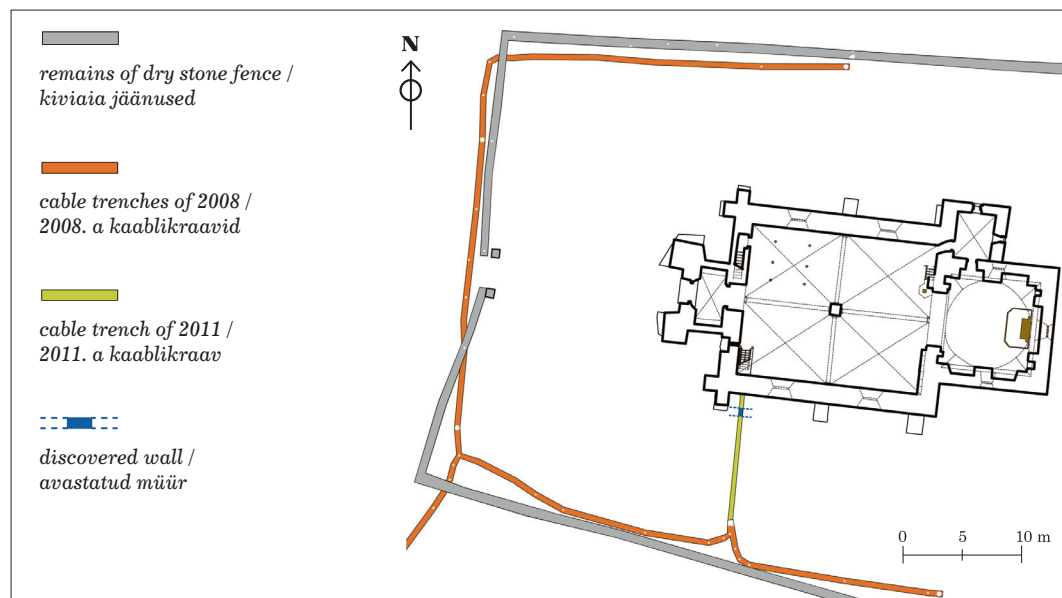


Fig. 2. Plan of churchyard. Monitoring of cable lines.

Jn 2. Kirikuaia plaan. Kaablitrasside järelvalve.

Drawing / Joonis: Villu Kadakas

<sup>1</sup> HMK 8820: 1–13.

border fence straight to the southern wall of the nave near the south-western corner. A Livonian Order coin from the 1530s came to light. A more interesting discovery was a 70 cm wide foundation, running parallel to the nave's southern wall in a 125 cm distance from it. The small extent of the excavation does not leave much room for speculations about the date and function of it.

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS INSIDE THE CHURCH IN 2010–2011

The monitoring and excavations during the replacement of the rotten timber floors of the nave took place in two stages: in September 2010 in the northern and in May 2011 in the southern aisle (Fig. 3).<sup>2</sup>

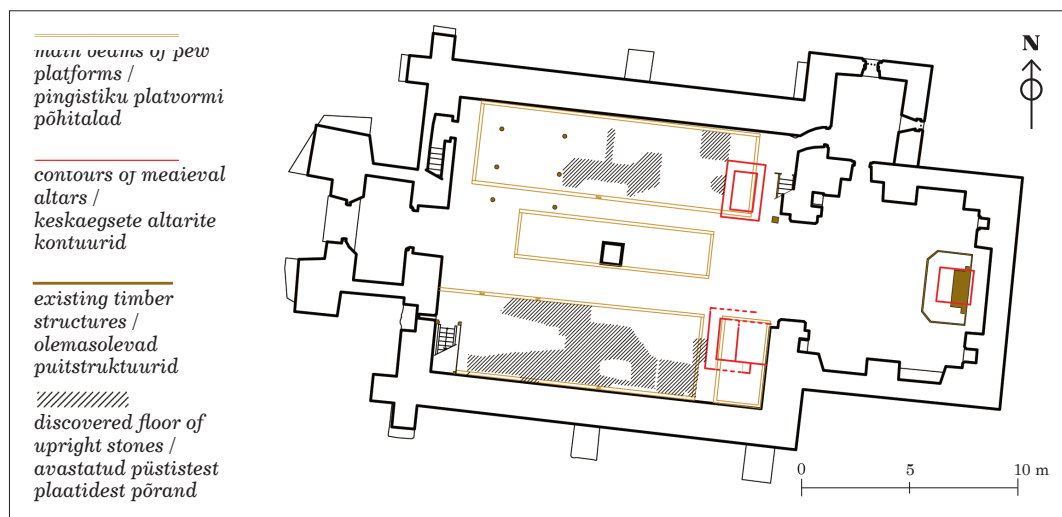


Fig. 3. Plan of church. Remains of medieval altars and floors.

Jn 3. Kiriku plaan. Keskaegsete altarite ja põrandate jäänused.

Drawing / Joonis: Villu Kadakas

In the northern aisle the necessity for archaeological works came as a surprise in September 2010. During the removal of the fungi-infested upper part of soil – various demolition and construction debris – several coins were gathered under the removed timber pews. During the following monitoring of soil removal several hundreds of copper and silver coins were gathered with the help of a metal detector, in addition to a number of smaller metal artefacts and pieces of window glass. Under the ca. 15–20 cm thick soil layer remains of a peculiar limestone floor or pavement with stones laid upright came to light (Fig. 4). In the eastern part a rectangular limestone platform which was identified as remains of a side altar was discovered.

In May 2011 in the southern aisle the work was already organized as archaeological investigations. After removing the pews and the floorboards from the platform the area was divided into 14 zones for attributing the finds. The 15–20 cm thick layer of demolition and construction debris was removed systematically, trying to discover all the finds, mostly coins, with the help of metal detectors.<sup>3</sup> From under the debris a

<sup>2</sup> In Figs 2–3 the church plan has been drawn on the basis of plans and measurements from architect Illar Kannelmäe, who unfortunately passed away between the two stages of the project.

<sup>3</sup> Many thanks to Mihkel Tammets and Gunnar Haljak for help and consultations during metal detecting.





Fig. 4. Southern aisle. Remains of a medieval floor (1) and the side altar (2).

Jn 4. Lõunalööv. Keskaegse põranda (1) ja kõrvalaltari jäänused (2).

Photo / Foto: Villu Kadakas



Fig. 5. Interior of the nave. View towards the chancel arch.

Jn 5. Pikihoone interjäär. Vaade võidukaare suunas.

Photo / Foto: Kaire Tooming



very similar situation – the floor of upright limestones and remains of a side altar in the eastern part of the nave – were discovered and cleaned. The limestone floor in the southern aisle appeared to be much better preserved than in the north. Some small-scale test pits were dug deeper with the aim to get some idea about the underlying deposits, but the floor was not damaged.

In addition to the works in the nave some works concerning the chancel area, covered with a floor of limestone slabs were also undertaken. Some slabs were removed and a small test pit was dug near the southern jamb of the chancel arch. The existing 19th century timber altar was removed from its place on the floor of limestone slabs and a test pit dug to locate the remains of the original stone altar. A total of *ca.* 1800 coins were gathered from both the northern and southern aisles, some from the chancel.

### Pews

The pews of the nave (Fig. 5) have been fixed on three similar wooden platforms, leaving two uneven limestone slab covered pathways running from the western portal to the chancel arch. The oldest parts of the pew systems are the underlay beams of the platforms.<sup>4</sup> The present pews originate from the 19th century together with the rotten floor boards, which existed until the present conservation works. There are mortises on top of the underlay beams, now mostly futile and filled, to which the ends of previous pews have once been attached. Thus obviously the underlay beams are carrying a secondary set of pews already. The underlay beams have a baroque edge profile on the pathway sides. The accurate interface between the pew platforms and the floor of limestone slabs under the pathways allows assuming that these were planned and built at the same time. In the eastern end of the northern aisle there was a larger area without pews covered with a limestone floor around the pulpit. In the corresponding area in the eastern end of the southern nave there was a separate pew-box isolated from the rest of the pews.

An end of an old pew, namely, its upper part, was discovered from lying under the northern platform (Fig. 6). Its top form, both technology and design, refer to the 17th century. Pew ends with somewhat similar decoration have been preserved in the Ruhnu older church with pews from the mid-17th century. Most probably the underlay beams of the pew platforms and the discovered pew end of Risti come from the church restoration activities of the period after 1622, when the areas of the former Padise monastery were bestowed to Thomas Ramm (Johansen 1933, 540).



Fig. 6. The end of an old pew discovered from under the floor platform.

Jn 6. Põrandaplatvormi alt leitud vana pingi pösklaud.

Photo / Foto: Juhan Kilumets

<sup>4</sup> The underlay beams had been in their original position until the present restoration. These had to be removed temporarily during the works because of damage by fungi and partly replaced and adjusted. Only the beams of the middle platform remained in their original position, because the middle pews were not restored.



Fig. 7. Northern aisle. Remains of the medieval floor and the side altar.

Jn 7. Põhjalööv. Keskaegse põranda ja kõrvalaltari jäänused.

Photo / Foto: Kaire Tooming

### ***Floor of upright limestones in the nave***

The floor remains discovered in both aisles have been made of roughly worked limestone slabs with varying diameters mostly 10–20 cm. It seems that it has been made of quarry waste – stones which were probably considered too small for using in the walls – economically utilised after the completion of the building. The stones have been laid upright in varied directions. Nevertheless the builders seem to have followed some kind of a plan. In the middle of the northern aisle the stones in the preserved floor fragments have been laid generally in the north–south direction, but in the eastern part in the east–west direction (Fig. 7). In the much better preserved floor of the southern aisle the general direction has been north–south, with small areas also in the east–west direction. Still, only some areas show a very regular pattern, but in some patches there seems to have been no direction at all.

The rough and irregular limestone floor is in contrast with the overall high quality of masonry and architectural planning of the church building. Perhaps the floor was built by the local peasants only after the masons had left. This idea is supported by some areas of the floor around which quite straight and clear interfaces can be followed – perhaps borderlines of plots parcelled out to different farms to lay the floor. In some places an area laid in rather significant quality, where stones have been carefully chosen and positioned, sharply borders with an area where stones of very different size and form have been laid without any direction at all. The clear differences in the floor pattern might also be the result of burials upon which the floor has later been patched. It is quite impossible to identify such patches without removing the floor and locating the real burials, although several places looked suspicious. Probably several

people have been buried through this floor in a later period when repairing the floor was not considered necessary any more. For example, among bigger lacunas of the floor in the southern aisle a distinct area roughly with the size and shape of a coffin, laid in the east–west direction, could be observed close to the eastern window. In one case a timber joist has been laid between two such patches of pavement in the north–south direction. Perhaps it was originally a temporary element for keeping the stones on one side in place before continuing the construction, later forgotten to take up. Otherwise these might be remains of an unknown timber interior structure.

Although in the beginning of the fieldwork there was some doubt if the floor might even come from a period before erecting the present nave of the church, it was identified in several places that the floor had been laid secondarily towards the foundations of the walls. The confusion about the relation of the foundations of the nave walls and the stone floor was aroused mainly because in many places the protruding foundation of the walls stands generally more than 10 cm higher than the floor, in the eastern end of the southern nave even 30 cm higher. Partly it could be explained by the sinking of the floor due to sparse soil deposits underneath, but there was no evidence of the floor ever existing on top of the protruding foundation. Partly the top layer of stones of the foundation has been removed later, probably while building the timber pews.

The absolute dating of the limestone floor came quite clear both in southern and northern aisles after several coins were discovered between the floor stones with metal detectors. As the debris above the floor contained coins from the 15th to the 18th, some even from the 19th century, almost all the coins from between the floor stones come from the 15th century, several among them even from the very beginning or the first half of the century. Most probably the floor has been built right after erecting the nave of the church. Finding early 15th century coins between the floor stones corresponds rather well to Villem Raam's assumption that the nave was built during the first half of the 15th century. Even more distinctive is the absence of earlier coins than the turn of the 14th–15th centuries, although it could be partly explained by coin distribution specifics of the period as well. The very few exceptions – two 13th–14th century pennies of Visby (see below, Fig. 8) and one possibly from Mecklenburg – can be explained by bringing up soil from earlier deposits while burying the dead through the floor. Before erecting the stone nave the area was probably used as a cemetery, situated around the stone chancel or there was a timber nave in the same place, explaining the finding of the early coins. There is yet no data to verify the existence of a previous timber nave.

As medieval *in situ* preserved church floors are very rare in Estonia even as fragments, the original floor of Risti church should be considered a rarity. The historical context probably has played an important part in the floors preservation. In most of regular rural parish churches the medieval floors have been undone while building



Fig. 8. The earliest coins from the debris between stone and timber floors.

Jn 8. Varaseimad mündid kivi- ja puitpõranda vahelisest prahikihist.

Photo / Foto: Mauri Kiudsoo





*Fig. 9. Southern aisle. Remains of the medieval side altar. View from the south-west.*

*Jn 9. Lõunalööv. Keskaegse kõrvalaltari jäänused. Vaade edelast.*

*Photo / Foto: Villu Kadakas*

burial chambers of manor owner's families, as well as burying commoners until the second half of the 18th century. Risti church has had a special fate without operating as a proper parish centre during the decisive centuries. There were no manors during the Middle Ages as the area belonged to Padise monastery. The owners of all the early modern manors in the later Risti parish area used to bury their dead in Harju-Madise church. Probably therefore no manorial burials are known in Risti church. The pew platforms installed already in the 17th century prevented the area from subsequent peasant burials and thus protected the medieval floor as well. The upright limestone floor has been in use probably until the 17th century when the timber platforms for the pews, described above have been built.

### ***Medieval altars***

Under the pew platforms and the thin layer of debris the remains of the medieval side altars were found in the nave at the easternmost parts of the northern and southern aisles.

The northern side altar (Figs 3, 7) has been a freestanding structure (distance from the eastern wall is *ca.* 100 cm and from the northern wall *ca.* 155 cm) with the main body of approximately 109 × 182 cm. Around it runs a step (39–46 cm wide) with a plastered outer surface and it is paved with rectangular limestone slabs. There are

only few slabs preserved, but by the imprints of the slabs in the mortar it can be said that the size of the slabs has varied. This step has been added later to the main body of the altar as it has been built on the floor of upright limestone and there is a layer of plaster between those two parts of the construction.

The southern side altar (Figs 3, 9) differs considerably from its northern counterpart. It has been built next to the eastern wall (distance from the southern wall is *ca.* 164 cm). It is significantly bigger than the northern side altar with the main body of approximately  $147 \times 182$  cm. The southern side altar has two additions to its original structure. At first a construction (*ca.* 89 cm wide) was added to the main body of the altar. The function of this addition is not clear. It could have been a rebuilding of an existing altar or adding a platform to the front of the altar. Probably at the same time as to the northern altar the paved step around the whole construction was added to the southern altar as well. Similarly the step has been built on the floor of upright limestone and the limestone slabs used to pave the step have the same character as the ones found in the northern side. The step has been about 50 cm wide. This addition enlarged the side altar to the extent that it protruded to the opening of the chancel arch.

Both side altars have been preserved at approximately the same extent and the range of the demolition of both altars considers the height of the pews' platforms. It allows us to assume that the demolition has occurred prior to the construction of the pews.

In the chancel the 19th century altar rail was moved from its usual location due to the conservation works and it enabled to dig a test pit to investigate the possible location of the medieval high altar. It appeared that the remains of the original high altar lay under the present 19th century altar and rail (Fig. 3). The medieval high altar has been a structure of *ca.*  $162 \times 162$  cm. It has been built of limestone and granite and lined with bricks. The altar has been plastered.

The knowledge of medieval altars, especially side altars, is scarce in Estonia. There are a number of medieval high altars to be found, but side altars have been removed from the churches without leaving any traces of them.<sup>5</sup> Even the foundations of the side altars have perished by rebuilding or burials and burial chambers. The finding of the remnants of the side altars in Risti can therefore be considered very rare.

### ***Coins and other artefacts***

The fieldwork brought to light dozens of small metal artefacts and their fragments, some bone artefacts, as well as pieces of window glass (Fig. 10: 5), glass beads, fragments of limestone masonry etc. The find material needs further research, but at first glance it was possible to say that it contains finds of all last six centuries. Among metal artefacts, probably things attached to clothing and jewellery dominate: lead and bronze belt buckles, belt mounts and ends (Fig. 10: 7), various decorative pins, small pins, a small bell, chain pieces, a bronze spiral, various buttons, hooks, heel irons, simple rings and various pendants. A lead jug, a possible pilgrimage badge of lead with St Anthony's cross (Fig. 10: 4), decorated bronze book clasps (Fig. 10: 1, 2), decorative copper nails and innumerable coffin nails should be mentioned among other things.

Fieldwork in Risti church brought to light also the total of 1180 single coins – the largest find of this type ever discovered in Estonia. The era after building the floor until the end of Old Livonia (the start of the Livonian War in 1558) – the 15th and the first half of the

<sup>5</sup> A set of medieval side altars is preserved at the church of Kaarma. It is unique considering that other medieval side altars in Estonia are mainly known from written sources only.



Fig. 10. Samples of artefacts from the debris between stone and timber floors.

Jn 10. Valik leide kivi- ja puutpõranda vahelisest prahikihist.

Photo / Foto: Villu Kadakas

16th centuries – is represented by *ca.* 70 coins, mostly minted by the local lord, the Livonian Order (49), almost all in Tallinn. Coins of the bishops of Tartu (16) and the archbishops of Riga (6) are represented as well. The turmoil of the period of the Livonian War and the following wars between Sweden and Poland are represented by a variety of coins from Lithuania and Poland (36), the free city of Riga (11) and bishop Magnus of Saare-Lääne bishopric (2). The following period of Swedish rule from the Livonian War until the Great Nordic War (1700–1721) is represented by *ca.* 460 various Swedish coins, making up more than a third of the total number.

An intense concentration of late 17th and 18th century copper coins, *ca.* 50 pieces was discovered in a small area of *ca.* 1 m<sup>2</sup>, exactly under the north-eastern corner of the pew platform in the southern aisle. Possibly there had been a leaking alms box attached to the pew platform corner.<sup>6</sup> A somewhat similar collection of 29 17th and 18th century copper coins on a few square meters was discovered in 2007 in

Paide church, next to the foundation of the 18th–19th century altar (Kadakas 2011, 216). In Paide it was supposed that the coins, heavily burnt during the 1845 fire, which destroyed the interior, had been stored in some kind of a box connected to the altar.

People kept adding to the collection even through the gaps between the floorboards as indicated by hundreds of coins from the second half of the 17th and the 18th centuries. *Ca.* 570 Russian coins, starting from Peter I, make up more than a half of the total number. The habit of dropping coins under the pew platforms seems to have ended sometime around 1800, because the entire 19th century is represented only by *ca.* 20 pieces.

Contrary to the Scandinavian countries, coin finds discovered in Estonian churches and handed over to public collections have been scanty and fragmentary. While in Finland alone more than 11671 coins were known in 1992 (Klackenberg 1992, 305–332), in Estonia hardly a thousand single coins connected with churches had been recorded by 2010. Since Estonian medieval hoards do not contain small nominals characteristic to sacrificial sites, Finnish finds have helped to solve several problems related to Old Livonian coinage. For example, the earliest type of *seestling*, which was minted in Tallinn by the Livonian Order, has been hitherto found only in Finnish churches (Nemirowitsch-Dantschenko & Pärn 1980, 76; Leimus 2001, 79).

The earliest coin found in Risti church was minted in Visby, Gotland, before 1260/70 (1288?), the latest belong to the 20th century. From the aspect of the studies of coin circula-

<sup>6</sup> Special thanks to Mihkel Tammet for the hypothesis.



tion in Livonia the most interesting specimen is undoubtedly a W-bracteate (Fig. 8) from Gotland (1270/80–1361), which was most likely minted approximately in the middle of the 14th century (Lagerqvist 1970, Grupp XXXIV: A: 1c). Although Gotland coins, the influx of which to Livonia ceased after the renewal of local minting in 1260 (Leimus 2004a, 64; Kiudsoo & Tamla 2006, 278–279), reappear *en masse* in the composition of Estonian hoards of the third quarter of the 14th century (Kiudsoo 1999, table; Kiudsoo 2001, 69), these are already invariably gotes, the first nominals larger than a penny in the Nordic countries. No Gotland pennies of the 14th century had been previously found in Estonia.

Simple explanations to finding coins from between different church floors are former grave goods brought up during secondary burials or random losing one by one by the congregation members. Large numbers of coins have been also interpreted as accumulation of single sacrifices by individuals, especially in the Nordic countries (Klackenberg 1992, 305–332). A very large number of coins in Risti church make the interpretation of sacrifice plausible, although there is no support from written or folklore sources at the present stage of study. Incidental losses and grave goods brought up have obviously played their role as well. Analyzing the known coin finds from other Estonian churches it can be assumed that consistent and frequent sacrifice of coins in these churches has started only at some time around the turn of the 14th and 15th centuries (Kiudsoo 2011). The collection of coins from Risti cannot be used to confirm this argument because most probably, relying on the architectural knowledge, the nave was erected only during the first half of the 15th century. Although the coinage with its three nominal values developed in Livonia by the end of the 14th century was one of the most advanced in the Baltic region (Leimus 2002, 129–130; Leimus 2004b, 1101), coin finds with ritual background indicate rather the low level of monetarization of the society than the intensity of circulation (Kiudsoo 2008, 125). Hence the beginning of mass offerings in churches of northern and western Estonia could be related sooner with the so-called depression period that sorely distressed the local population at that time (see Leimus 2005a, 81; Leimus 2005b, 42–55).

The coin find of Risti is a complex of considerable importance for Estonian history. It is unique for its entirety, composition, total number, as well as the accurate documentation of the situation and context of the discovery. Estonian coin finds with ritual background have already previously indicated the necessity to include also coins from outside the hoards in the establishing of distribution areas of coins, but until spring 2011 it was not possible.

## CONCLUSION

The archaeological monitoring in the Risti churchyard during laying cables in 2008 and 2011 revealed the first known finds, several late medieval and early modern coins. The excavation inside the church, during the timber floor replacement in the nave in 2010 and 2011 was the first case in Estonia when such works in a medieval church have been done in a more or less proper archaeological way. Several medieval structures were revealed in a rather well preserved state.

Two medieval side altar foundations with a step covered with rectangular limestone slabs, were recorded in the eastern part of the nave. The layout of the main altar was uncovered in a special test pit in the chancel. Discovery of a rather well preserved original floor, built of small limestones laid vertically, laid probably right after the erection of the

stone nave is unique in Estonian medieval churches. New data was obtained about the original timber pews, probably made in the 17th, but replaced with new ones in the 19th century. *Ca.* 1180 silver and copper coins mostly from *ca.* 1400–1800, with some earlier and later exceptions were gathered from the debris between the original stone floor and the later timber floors. The largest collection of coins ever gathered from a medieval church in Estonia was got, enabling to date the floor and to support the previously applied date of the nave (*ca.* first half of the 15th century) and to draw conclusions on coin circulation history as well as changes in habits of the congregation members throughout the centuries.

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## ARHEOLOOGILISED UURINGUD RISTI KIRIKUS JA KIRIKUAIAS

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2010. a sügisel ning 2011. a suvel toimusid keskaegse Risti (tuntud ka kui Harju-Risti) kiriku koori interjööri ja pikihoone põranda restaureerimistööde ning kirikuaias kaablitrassi kaevetööde ajal arheoloogilised järelevalvetööd. Artikkel käsitleb lisaks eeltoodud uuringutele põgusalt ka varasemaid uurimistöid. Risti kiriku (jn 1) vanemast ajaloost on teada, et tegemist oli keskajal Padise tsistertslaste kloostri omandusse kuuluva Püha Risti kabeliga, mida on kirjalikes allikates nimetatud ka kirikuna. Risti kiriku ehituslooga on kõige põhjalikumalt tegelenud Villem Raam, kes dateeris kolmes etapis ehitatud hoone valmimise 15. saj esimesse poole.

2008. ja 2011. a kirikuaeda paigaldatud elektrikaabli kraavidest (40–60 cm sügavad, u 50 cm laiad, kogupikkus u 110 m) matuseid ei avastatud, kuid kokku leiti 14 münti, millest kolm olid 15.–16. saj hõbemündid. 125 cm kaugusel kiriku lõunaseinast leiti sellega paralleelselt kulgev u 70 cm laiune tundmatu ehitise vundament (jn 2).

Pikihoone mädanenud põranda vahetusel toimunud arheoloogilisel uurimisel avastati metalliotsijaga pinnasest ligi 1170 vask- ja hõbemünti, lisaks muid väiksemaid metallesemeid. Mõlemast löövist leiti 5–20 cm paksuse pinnasekihi alt omapärase, püsti asetatud paekividest põranda jäänused (jn 4). Kummagi löövi idaosas leiti neljakandilised kiviplatvormid mis osutusid kõrvalaltari jäänusteks. Lisaks pikihoonele kaevati keskaegse peaaltri jäänuste lokaliseerimiseks šurf võidukaare lõunaotsa juurde ning teine kooriruumi praeguse puidust peaaltri kohale (jn 3).

Pikihoone pingistiku (jn 5) vanimaks osaks osutusid nende aluste puitplatvormide alustalad. Praeguste põrandalauade aluste talade peal avastati varasema pingistiku põsklaudade valdavalt täis plommitud tapipesad. Ühe, ilmselt 17. saj pingistiku põsklaua ülemine ots (jn 6) leiti põhjapoolse platvormi alt.

Mõlemas löövis avastatud põrandajäänused (jn 4, 7) on laotud sideaineta mitmesuguse, enamasti 10–20 cm läbimõõduga rohmakalt töödeldud paekividest. Kivid on laotud püsti erinevates suundades. Korratu põrand on selges kontrastis kirikuhoone regulaarse planeeringu ja üldiselt väga kvaliteetse raidkivitööga. Võib-olla on põranda ehitanud kohalikud talupojad, millele osutavad mõned selgete piirjoontega põrandalad. Osa selgete piiridega alasid võivad olla matuste järel laotud lapid. Mitmed põrandas olevad kirstukujulised tühemikud osutavad, et hilisemal ajal ei peetud matustejärgset põranda taastamist enam ilmselt vajalikuks.

Et paepõrand kuulub 15. saj, osutavad mitmed põrandaplaatide vahelt leitud mündid. Arvatavasti laoti põrand vahetult pärast pikihoone ehitamist. Kuna keskaegsed *in situ* säilinud kirikupõrandad on Eestis väga haruldased isegi fragmentidena, siis tuleb Risti kiriku põrandat lugeda erakordseks. Põranda säilimisel mängis rolli Risti kiriku ajalooline kontekst. Ilmselt säästsid keskaegset põrandat mõisnike hauakambrite puudumine ning juba 17. saj rajatud pingistiku platvormid.

Kooriruumis liigutati restaureerimistööde käigus 19. saj altarit ja altariaeda, mille alt leiti keskaegse peaaltri jäänused. See oli segakivist, tellistega vooderdatud ning krohvitud ehitise, suurusega 162 × 162 cm.

Pikihoone põranda restaureerimistöödel leiti pikihoone idaosast kõrvalaltarite jäänused. Põhjapoolne kõrvalaltar (kehand 109 × 182 cm) on rajatud seintest eemale (jn 7). Kehandi ümber kulgeb 39–46 cm laiune nelinurksete paeplaatidega kaetud aste, mille välispiind on krohvitud. Aste on altari põhiosale lisatud hiljem. Lõunapoolne kõrvalaltar (jn 9) on rajatud vastu pikihoone idaseina. Selle altari põhikehandi mõõtmed ulatuvad ligikaudu 147 × 182 cm ning algset kehandit on hiljem laiendatud. Esmalt ehitati altari põhikehandi läänepoolsele küljele 89 cm laiune lisandus. Tõenäoliselt samal ajal kui põhjalöövi altarile, lisati 50 cm laiune sillutatud aste ka lõunapoolsele kõrvalaltarile.

Eesti keskaegsetest altaritest teatakse võrdlemisi vähe. Säilinud on hulk keskaegseid peaaltareid, kuid kõrvalaltarid on kirikutest eemaldatud. Kõrvalaltaritest pole tihti säilinud isegi vundamente, kuna hilisemad matused ja hauakambrite ehitused on need täielikult lõhkunud. Seega on Risti kiriku altar haruldane ja oluline leid.

Välitöödel leiti kümneid väikseid metallesemeid ja nende tükke, üksikuid luuesemeid, maalitud ja talvalisi aknaklaasi kilde, klaashelmeid, raidkivitükke jne (jn 10). Metall-leidude hulgas on ülekaalus rõivastusega seotud esemed ja ehted: tinast ja pronksist vööpandlad, vöönaastud, mitmesugused ehtenõelad, nõõpnõel, kuljus, ketilülid, pronksspiraal, mitmesugused nõõbid, haagid, kontsarauad, lihtsad sõrmused ja mitmesugused ripatsid.

Risti kirikust avastati kokku u 1180 münti – läbi aegade suurim mündileid Eesti kirikuist. Põranda rajamise ja Liivi sõja vahelist ajajärku esindavad 71 münti, enamasti löödud Tallinnas kohaliku maaisanda –



Liivi Ordu – poolt (49). Leidus ka Tartu piiskopi (16) ja Riia peapiiskopi (6) münte. Liivi sõja ja järgnenud Poola-Rootsi sõdade ajajärku iseloomustavad mitmesugused Poola ja Leedu (36), Riia vabalinna (11) ja Saare-Lääne piiskop Magnuse (2) münti. Pikka Rootsi võimu aega esindavad u 460 erinevat Rootsi münti.

Lõunalöövi pingistiku platvormi kirdenurgast leiti u 1 m<sup>2</sup> suuruselt alalt tihe 17. saj teise poole – 18. saj vaskmüntide kontsentratsioon (u 50 tk). Võimalik, et seal on olnud pingistiku nurga külge kinnitatud rahakassa.

Müntide lisandumine on jätkunud isegi läbi puidust pöranda pragude, nagu näitavad sajad 17. saj teise poole ja 18. saj mündid. Üle poole müntide koguarvust moodustavad mitmesugused vene vermingud (u 570) alates Peeter I valitsemisajast. Müntide kogunemine pingistiku platvormide alla näib olevat lõppenud 18.–19. saj vahetuse paiku, sest kogu 19. saj esindavad vaid 20 münti.

Risti kiriku kõige varasemateks müntideks on kaks Gotlandil 13. saj teisel poolel ja 14. saj keskpaigas löödud raha (jn 8). Kuigi Ojamaa münte kohtab massiliselt Eesti 14. saj kolmanda veerandi aaretes, on nende näol tegemist gootidega, ehk Põhjamaade esimeste pennist suuremate nominaalidega. 14. saj Gotlandi penne Eestist siiani veel avastatud polnud.

Lihtne on seletada müntide leidmist kirikupörandate alt varasematest matusest välja tõmmatud hauapanuste ja ühe kaupa juhuslikult kaotamisega. Suuri mündikoguseid on seletatud ka ohvrimüntide ükshaaval kogunemisega, eeskätt Põhjamaades. Müntide suure hulga tõttu on müntide ohverdamise versioon usutav ka Risti kirikus, kuigi praeguses uurimisseisus kirjalikud allikad ja folkloor seda ei toeta. Ilmselt on ka Risti kiriku kollektsiooni kujunemisel olnud oma roll müntide kaotamisel ja hauapanustel. Kuigi 14. saj lõpuks oli Liivimaal välja kujunenud mündisüsteem oma kolme nimiväärtusega üks Läänemere piirkonna arenenumaid, osutavad rituaalse tagapõhjaga mündileiud tavaliselt pigem ühiskonna vähestele monetariseerituse astmele kui raharingluse intensiivsusele. Seega võiks massilise ohverdamise algust Eesti põhja- ja lääneosa kirikutes seostada pigem nn depressiooniperioodiga, mis sealset elanikkonda tollal valusalt tabas. Risti mündileid on Eesti ajaloo oluline nii oma unikaalsuse terviklikkuse, koostise, üldarvu kui ka leiutsituatsiooni ja -konteksti korrektse fikseerimise poolest. Eestist leitud kultusliku tagapõhjaga mündileiud on juba varem osutanud vajadusele kaasata vermingute käibearealide väljaselgitamiseks ka väljastpoolt aardeleide pärinev mündimaterjal. Kuni 2011. a kevadeni puudus selleks võimalus.

Risti kirikuaias kaablikraavide kaevamise käigus saadi esimesed sellelt mälestiselt teadaolevad leiud. Kaevamised kiriku pikihoone pöranda vahetamise käigus olid esimesteks sellelaadseteks enam-vähem korralikult arheoloogiliselt läbi viidud töödeks Eestis. Leiti mitme keskaegse rajatise unikaalselt hästi säilinud jäänused – peaaltar, kõrvalaltarid ja pikihoone püsti paekividest pörand. Saadi uusi teadmisi ka puidust pingistiku kujunemise kohta. Ligikaudu 1180 hõbedast ja vasest münti enamasti 15.–18. saj kivi- ja puitpöranda vahelt moodustavad suurima Eesti keskaegsest kirikust seni kogutud kollektsiooni, mis võimaldab dateerida nii leitud pörandat kui kinnitada kivist pikihoone varasemat dateeringut, samuti teha järeldusi mündiringluse ajaloo ja koguduseliikmete harjumuste muutuste kohta läbi sajandite.