



Archaeological studies in the church of Haljala

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INTRODUCTION

The rural parish church of St. Maurice in Haljala (Germ. *Halljall*) is situated in the western part of the historic province Virumaa, ca. 12 km north-west from Rakvere, the historic capital of the province. The church (Fig. 1) has been standing on a strategic location, on the crossroads where once met the historic roads from Tallinn to Narva and from Rakvere to the northern coast, also to Toolse, the medieval harbour of the province.

The archaeological research in Haljala church (for a short summary in Estonian, see Kadakas 2017) was undertaken because of the replacement of the rotten timber floor with a new stone floor in the nave (Figs 2–3). Ca. 25–30 cm thick layer of upper soil, consisting of various demolition and construction debris, mixed burial soil and remains of the recent timber floor was removed. It was decided to remove the upper soil, which had been contaminated by fungus, to keep the contamination from spreading and to provide a solid base for the new floor. Some small-scale test pits were dug deeper with the aim to get a basic idea about the underlying deposits and to find remains of a previous church. In the eastern half of the nave a ground penetrating radar (GPR, fieldwork organised by Kaarel Orviku and Hannes Tõnisson, Institute of Ecology, Tallinn University) was used to locate the stone walls of a supposed previous church.



Fig. 1. Haljala church from south-east.

Jn 1. Haljala kirik kagu suunast.

Photo / Foto: Villu Kadakas

HISTORIC BACKGROUND

Haljala village with a church has been mentioned in the Danish Census Book (1241), but Haljala parish was formed and the first church built probably in the 1220s already (Johansen 1933, 196, 344–345). Nothing is known about the medieval events or building campaigns of the church based on written sources except that in 1485 a chantry of the Holy Cross was established (Johansen 1933, 344). In the very beginning of the Livonian War (1558–1583), in February 1558 Russian troops plundered the whole province of Virumaa, except the parishes of

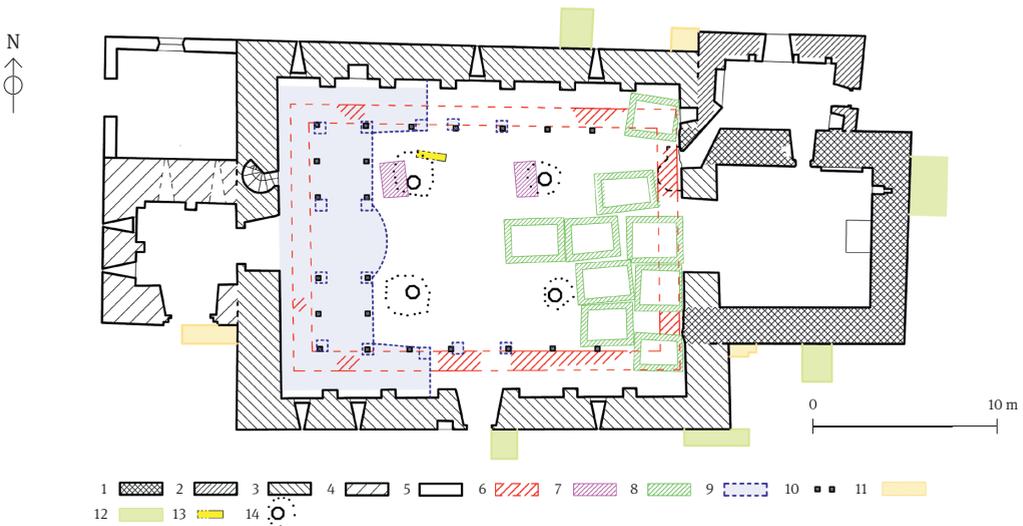


Fig. 2. Plan of Haljala church. 1 – building stage I: chancel, 2 – building stage II: sacristy, 3 – building stage III: nave, 4 – building stage IV: western tower, 5 – early modern additions, 6 – remains and reconstruction of the walls of the earlier nave, 7 – foundations of side altars, 8 – burial chambers, 9 – discovered post foundations and reconstruction of the extent of the earlier organ gallery, 10 – posts of the existing gallery, 11 – test pits of 1959, 12 – test pits of 1987, 13 – burial with timber coffin, 14 – pillars with the extent of their foundations.

Jn 2. Haljala kiriku plaan. 1 – ehitusetapp I: kooriruum, 2 – ehitusetapp II: käärkamber, 3 – ehitusetapp III: pikihoone, 4 – ehitusetapp IV: läänetorn, 5 – varauusaegsed lisandid, 6 – varasema pikihoone seinte jäänused ja rekonstruktsioon, 7 – kõrvalaltariite vundamendid, 8 – hauakambrid, 9 – leitud postide vundamendid ja varasema orelivääri ulatuse rekonstruktsioon, 10 – praeguse vääri postid, 11 – 1959. aasta šurfid, 12 – 1987. aasta šurfid, 13 – matus puitkirstus, 14 – piilarid ja nende vundamentide ulatus.

Drawing / Joonis: Villu Kadakas



Fig. 3. Interior of Haljala church nave from the organ gallery.

Jn 3. Haljala kiriku pikihoone interjäär oreliväärilt.

Photo / Foto: Villu Kadakas

Kadrina and Haljala (Renner 1876, 171). Later the same year, when the Russian troops conquered the whole province, Haljala church was probably burnt as well, although no written evidence exists. During the Great Northern War (1701–1721), in September 1703 Russian troops plundered large areas of Virumaa, including Haljala parish (Kelch 1875, 350). One corps also burnt down Haljala church and vicarage (... *ist die schöne Halljallsche Kirche ... von einem Corpo Russen abgebrannt wird, zusamt dem Pastorathe ...*) (RA EAA.1224.3.3, 9).

Building history of Haljala church has been thus far most thoroughly studied by Estonian art historian and church archaeologist Villem Raam. According to him the present church has been built in several stages during the 15th century. He has concluded that the church was planned as a whole at one time but built in three mayor stages. At first, ca. 1430–1440, the chancel with the sacristy was built, probably in the third quarter of the 15th century the three ailed nave in a form of a hall church was added, and finally in the end of the century the western tower was erected (Fig. 2: 1–4;

Raam 1997). The four eight-sided pillars of the nave support nine cross vaults (Figs 2–3). The interior of the nave lacks any dressed masonry details except the western portal with a pointed arch and simple geometric forms. The southern portal of the nave is thought to be a secondary breakthrough of uncertain time. The tower portal is not positioned in west as customary, but in the southern wall, supposedly in order to avoid direct shooting through both doors. The lower part of the remarkably high tower (*ca.* 34 m) has a rectangular, the upper part an octagonal plan. The building has been brought into connection with Tallinn's school of late gothic masonry. The baroque pulpit was built next to the northern side of the chancel arch in the 1730s (Raam 1997).

The lower part of the side walls of the nave and the tower is partitioned into large segment arched niches (Figs 2–3). Three niches of both side walls, located asymmetrically, have a narrow loophole-like splayed window which has been closed in the interior. These windows have been interpreted as a unique system of embrasures, meant for using light firearms. The church functioned also as a signal tower and an outpost for the castle of Rakvere (Tuulse 1945, 235–238; see also Alttõa 2003, 53–54).

Later Kaur Alttõa has dated the nave, based on the loopholes located in the lower zone, into an even later period – the turn of the 15th century, and the tower into the first decades of the 16th century (Alttõa 2003, 54–55).

The benches of the nave together with a large organ gallery were replaced in 1896–1898 with new ones in Gothic Revival style. The new floor was made some steps deeper than the previous one (Sandberg 1959, 14).



Fig. 4. Drawing of the previous organ gallery from 1757.

Jn 4. Varasema orelivääri joonis 1757. aastast.

(RA EAA.1224.1.171, 10.)

PREVIOUS FIELD RESEARCH

In 1959 some test pits were dug outside the building (Fig. 2: 11), in the corners between the chancel, the nave and the tower. The sequence and chronology of the building parts was specified: 1. chancel, 2. sacristy, 3. nave, 4. tower (see above) (Raam 1959, 21–28).

In 1987 four additional test pits were excavated outside the church wall in order to specify, how much soil, which had accumulated during the centuries around the church, could be removed (Fig. 2: 12). Specifics about the foundations were documented. Raam came to a

conclusion that after the completion of the church an up to 1.3 m thick layer of soil was deliberately laid around it. A burial with two bracelets was discovered in a test pit next to the eastern wall of the chancel and was dated to prehistoric period (Raam 1987)¹. Subsequently part of the upper soil was removed, mostly on the southern side of the church. In 1992 a trench in the churchyard for central heating pipes was monitored, but nothing is known about the results (Selirand & Tamla 1994, 15).

In the churchyard a trench for a power cable was monitored in 2010. Four foundations of early modern grave structures were discovered. A decorative pin with a cross shape from the 11th–13th centuries can be highlighted among the 36 artefacts. Among the 21 early modern Swedish and Russian coins was one *örtug* of Gotland from the 14th century (Kadakas 2010).

Based on stray finds, the existence of an Iron Age settlement site has been identified in Haljala village, but it is not a protected site. Stray artefacts have been found at different times and locations. A coin from Germany (973–1002 AD; AI 5000: 45), a sword of H-type (RM 4402: A84), a spearhead of E-type (AI 2712: 4) probably come from a cremation grave and indicate to the significance of the site during the Viking Age (Kiudsoo 2017, 4).

RESULTS OF THE FIELDWORK

Remains of early modern galleries, pews and floors

Very little visual information exists about the nave interior prior to the late 19th century reconstruction. A drawing of a baroque style gallery from 1757 (Fig. 4), a schematic plan of burial chambers from the middle of the 18th century (Fig. 5), and one photo from the 1880s or 1890s survive (AM.8534.5645).

During the excavation some small uneven, more or less rectangular or even square foundations were discovered. The axonometric drawing from 1757 (Fig. 4) depicts an organ gallery on six posts resting on rectangular bases, but has no context depicted. Therefore, it is not easy to bring this image into connection with the nave plan, even with the discovered foundations, especially because part of the old foundations has been reused to support the post of the new gallery. Despite several irregularities, most of the discovered foundations can be brought into connection with the posts of the organ gallery, depicted on the drawing of 1757 (Fig. 2: 9). It appears that the old gallery has probably had an extra row of columns in the west, which have not been depicted. Judging by the size of the foundations, the square bases of the posts could not have been wider than 0.6 m. The northernmost and the southernmost rows of the foundations have been positioned not in parallel to the side walls but at a slight angle: the short side galleries were slightly wider in the west than in the east. This deviance is in accordance with the 1757 image. What could be taken as poor axonometry at first glance, might have been an intended deviance.

The pair of square foundations in front of the south portal, as well as a similar pair across the nave do not fit the gallery depicted in 1757. Furthermore, these four have been built in a slightly different manner, using a lot of square dressed limestone floor slabs (*ca.* 53 × 53 cm). These four foundations also support posts of the present gallery, but the posts are so much offset that the original foundations had to be extended to support the new posts. It is not possible to bring these four foundations into connection with any known structure. The gallery of 1757 might have been extended later along both side walls or a separate, rectangular entrance like structures built.

¹ The fieldwork was carried out by Erki Nuut, but consulted by Toivo Aus and V. Raam; the report was written by Raam. There is no data about the fate of the bracelets and no images exist of the burial or the artefacts. Possibly two unprovenanced bracelets in the Museums of Virumaa (RM 6512 A 112: 4; RM 6514 A 106: 3) can be brought into connection with these.

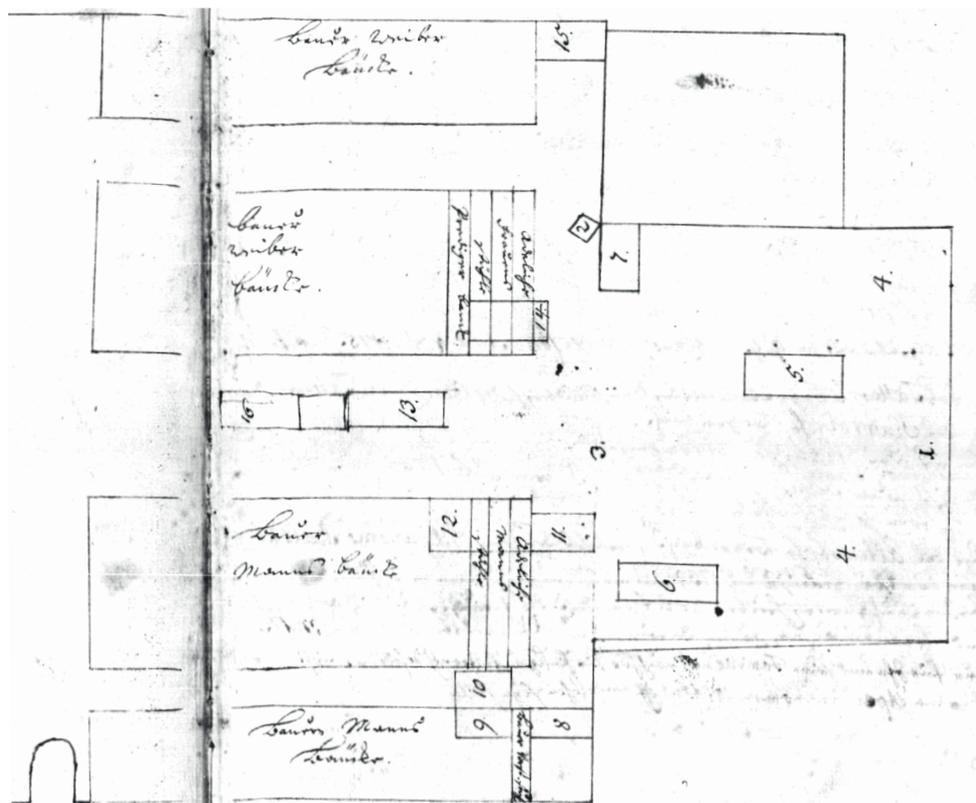


Fig. 5. A schematic plan of the pews and burial chambers from the middle of the 18th century. Eastern part. 1 – altar, 2 – pulpit, 3 – crucifix, 4 – burial places of pastors, 5–16 burial chambers of manors of Haljala parish: 5 – Aaspere, 6 – Kavastu, 7 – Kavastu, 8 – Idavere, 9–10 – unmarked, 11 – Metsiku, 12 – Tatruse, 13 – Karula, 14 – Vihula, 15 – Sauste, 16 – Vanamõisa.

Jn 5. Pingistiku ja hauakambrite skemaatiline plaan 18. sajandi keskpaigast. Idaosa. 1 – altar, 2 – kantsel, 3 – krutsifiks, 4 – pastorite hauaplatsid, 5–16 Haljala kihelkonna mõisate hauakambriid: 5 – Aaspere, 6 – Kavastu, 7 – Kavastu, 8 – Idavere, 9–10 – märkimata, 11 – Metsiku, 12 – Tatruse, 13 – Karula, 14 – Vihula, 15 – Sauste, 16 – Vanamõisa. (RA EAA.1224.3.3, 8.)

Among the rotten underlay beams of the existing floor some reused material was found. Several edge beams of pew platforms were discovered and documented (Fig. 6: 1). The beams have rectangular hollows for attaching 4.5 cm thick, 40 cm wide pew ends, with ca. 54 cm distance from each other. One fragment of timber possibly comes from a decorated upper part of a simple rustic pew end (Fig. 6: 2) from the 17th or 18th century. By the time of the interior reconstruction of the end of the 19th century, the middle walkway had different – rectangular pew ends (AM.8534.5645). Unfortunately, no edge beam or floor slab could be recorded in its original place. One can get an idea of the system of pew platforms of Haljala church from a schematic plan of the burial chambers from the middle of the 18th century (Fig. 5). There were central walkways on the main east-west axis and on the line of the south portal on the north-south axis.

Probably the walkways between the pew platforms of the 17th–19th centuries were covered with square dressed limestone slabs. Although since the end of the 19th century the whole nave has been covered with timber floor, some older square floor slabs measuring ca. 53 × 53 cm (ca. 1 ell of Tallinn) have preserved, reused for the floor of the wall niches.

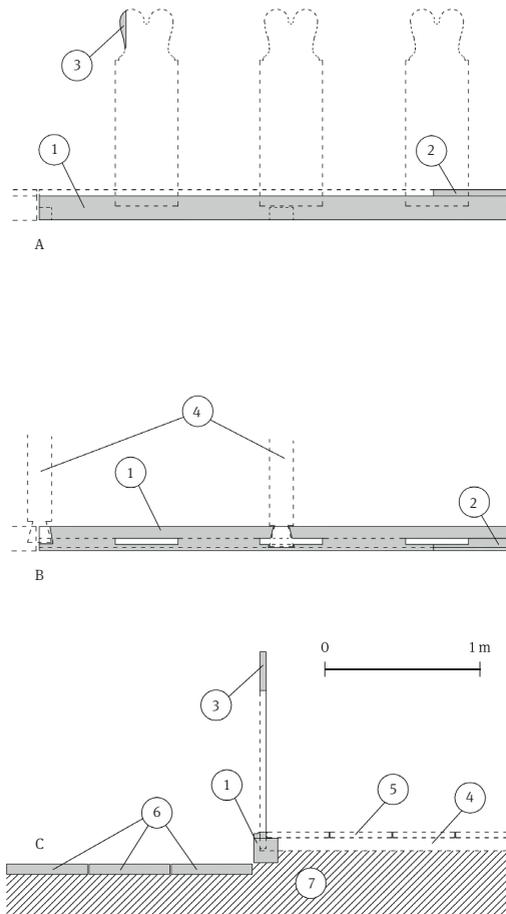


Fig. 6. Reconstruction attempt of the previous pew system: A – side view with pew ends, B – plan, C – section, 1 – preserved edge beam with dovetail joints for crossing joists and rectangular joints for pew ends, 2 – profiled corner strip fragment with wear marks between the pew ends, 3 – preserved fragment of supposed pew end, 4 – crossing joist with dovetail joint, 5 – floor boards under the pews, 6 – limestone floor slab, 7 – soil.

Jn 6. Varasema pingistiku rekonstruktsiooni katse: A – külgvaade pingi otstega, B – plaan, C – lõige, 1 – säilinud servapalk kalasabatappidega risttalade ja neljakandiliste tappidega pingi otste jaoks, 2 – profileeritud nurgaliistu fragment kulumisjälgedega pingi-otste vahel, 3 – säilinud oletatav pingi otsa katke, 4 – risttala kalasaba tapiga, 5 – põrandalauad pinkide all, 6 – paest põrandaplaat vahekäiguis, 7 – pinnas. Drawing / Joonis: Villu Kadakas

Burial chambers and single burials

Limestone walls of nine rectangular burial chambers were discovered in the eastern part of the nave (Figs 2: 8; 3; 7). These are all similar to each other, with 30–40 cm thick walls, on the average ca. 1.5 × 2.5 m large. The chambers must have gone out of use in the 1770s due to the laws of 1771–1772, that ordered to stop burying the dead inside churches (Polnoye 1830, 409, 500, 691). These have been filled with soil and debris by the end of the 19th century. The last grave slabs which once covered the chambers were probably removed and the chambers filled, when the timber floor was made. In 2016 the plan contours of the chamber walls were cleaned for documentation but the filling debris was not studied. Only in some cases the building sequence of neighbouring chambers could be established but no data was got to understand the absolute chronology. The chambers on the central axis are probably older than the peripheral ones. The chambers which once belonged to the manorial estates of the parish, probably come from a wide range of time: 15th–18th centuries. Most likely the earliest burial chambers are not located in the nave but in the chancel. Therefore, it is doubtful if any of the discovered chambers comes from the Middle Ages. Several small fragments of limestone grave slabs from various periods were found among the debris, but none of these is large enough to identify or otherwise bring into connection with a discovered chamber.

As an exception in Estonia, a schematic map of the burial chambers of Haljala church has preserved from the middle of the 18th century (Fig. 5). Based on this, most of the discovered chambers can be brought into connection with the manor names marked on the plan. Some which cannot, might have been built later or had fallen out of use by the mid-18th century already.

During the removal of soil a lot of human stray bones, which have been dug up when digging later graves, were gathered. Surprisingly, a preserved grave was discovered very high, ca. 30 cm below the floor level, next to the north-western pillar. Probably an adult woman has been buried with her head towards west in a plank coffin made with iron nails (Fig. 2: 13). It has had a necklace of simple glass beads. The burial can be dated to the time before the present church nave, because the leg part has been removed when building the pillar.

Remains of the medieval church elements: floor, pillar foundations and side altars

It was clear before the excavations, based on the portal thresholds and wall niches that the original floor of the nave has been exactly on the same level as the present one. Therefore, no element of former floors was on its original place and only underground foundations of the demolished interior structures could be studied.

The four octagonal pillars (Figs 2: 14; 3), which have been built of one piece dressed limestone blocks, have large, more than 2 m wide foundations with approximately the same shape. It appeared that some fragments of similar octagonal dressed limestone details have been used for building the foundations as well. This peculiar situation could be explained in various ways. Some octagonal blocks originally meant for pillars could have broken during manufacturing already and used just for foundations. It is also possible that the pillars themselves have been built of reused octagonal blocks already. This possibility is supported by the fact discovered during the excavations that the four pillars are built of blocks of two different sizes.² It suggests that the blocks of one size standard, either the smaller or larger ones, come from some older building and have been reused for erecting the present four pillars. This issue needs analysis of comparative material of other churches with octagonal pillars.

Remains of two side altars – elements typically removed after Reformation – were discovered on the western sides of the northern pillars. Only foundations, of ca. 1.2 × 1.9 m size, have been preserved (Figs 2: 7; 8). Both have been positioned not in parallel to the walls but askew as are also the pillars. It cannot be excluded that the southern pillars had side altars as well but nothing has



Fig. 7. Burial chambers in the eastern part of the nave. View from north-west.

Jn 7. Hauakambrid pikihoone idaosas. Vaade loodest. Photo / Foto: Villu Kadakas



Fig. 8. Foundation of the side altar on the western side of the north-eastern pillar.

Jn 8. Kõrvalaltari vundament kirdepoolse piilari lääneküljel.

Photo / Foto: Villu Kadakas

² This fact was noticed by archaeologist Armin Rudi (MA) who visited the excavations.

preserved of these. Another typical location of side altars would be next to the eastern wall of the nave, at the end of side aisles (e.g. as discovered in Risti church in 2010–2011, see Kadakas *et al.* 2012, 182–183), but these locations had been later disturbed when building the burial chambers. The military function of the windows in the side wall niches has been questioned (Alttoa 2015, 118). It is possible that there were side altars located at least in some of these niches, as supposed in the case of similar wall niches of the round chapel of Haapsalu Cathedral (Mänd 2016, 112). Although the issue was kept in focus during the fieldwork, no remains of such side altars in Haljala wall niches could be detected. The bottom masonry of the niches has been badly damaged and any such remains removed long ago.

Remains of a previous stone nave

In the case of a large parish of Haljala, it would be logical to assume, that the congregation was not content with a timber church for the full long period of the 13th and 14th centuries. Usually, in the case of late medieval parish churches in Estonia, it has been assumed, that it was the first stone church on the site, and has replaced the original timber church. As an exception, in the case of Haljala, Raam has presented a hypothesis, that the direct predecessor of the present nave was already built of stone (Raam 1959, 27–28).



Fig. 9. Foundation of the southern wall of the previous church nave. View from west.

Jn 9. Varasema pikihoone lõunaseina vundament. Vaade läänest.

Photo / Foto: Villu Kadakas

GPR showed signals of possible foundations which run in the east-west direction on several lines. After removal of the upper soil, several groups of erratic boulders, laid without mortar, appeared only in two narrow zones, located 1–2 m from the both present side walls (Fig. 2: 6). A group right east of the southern portal is especially long: *ca.* 6 m (Fig. 9). This group has a long straight northern edge, the preserved southern edge is much shorter. This group of boulders forms a 1.0–1.2 m wide foundation. There is no reason to suggest that a structure, which would need such a foundation, has existed in the interior of the present church. Therefore, it must be older than the present building. Smaller groups of erratic stones were discovered from an area located 1–2 m from the present northern side wall as well. Also some boulders were recorded near the eastern wall, preserved between the burial chambers and under the pulpit. There are almost no erratic stones in the rest of the nave. Probably the groups of erratic stones were the foundations of a previous nave. Only the location of its western wall remained problematic, because

only some single erratic stones are preserved in this area. No information to prove, if the previous nave had a chancel next to its eastern wall before building the existing one was obtained.

Much of the foundations of the old nave have been destroyed, because the areas have been extensively excavated later to build burial chambers, foundations for pillars, posts and innumerable single graves. In test pits it appeared that only one layer of boulders has preserved. The existence of a grave only *ca.* 30 cm deeper than the floor (see above) indicates that the floor level of the previous nave or the natural ground level even before it was probably higher than the present floor. The initial small timber church might have been built on top of a small natural knoll, which was removed when replacing it with a larger nave.³

The 1–1.2 m wide foundation is too wide for a timber wall, but would support a stone wall not thicker than *ca.* 90 cm. It cannot be excluded that the wall was even slightly thicker than the foundation, but hardly the wall could have exceeded 1.2 m. This is thin compared to the preserved rural churches in Estonia, but within reasonable limits. For example, some walls of Lügänuuse church are only 0.9–1.0 m thick (Kadakas & Jonuks 2014, 136). Lügänuuse church nave was initially planned without vaults, and also in the case of Haljala the thin walls might be one of the main reasons why the older nave has been demolished, not reconstructed later. The 0.9–1.2 m thick walls of the older nave of Haljala would have been probably too thin to carry stone vaults.

Because of the lack of the western foundation the ground plan of the previous nave could be reconstructed with considerable probability only regarding the side walls and the eastern wall. Technically, such a location 1 m apart from the walls of the present nave is rational and expectable. Building the new walls with a 1 m distance from the old nave enabled to keep using the old nave until the new walls had been fully completed. It was a rather large nave (*ca.* 21 × 14 m) among the rural parish churches of Estonia (length-width ratio 3:2). Such large and simple naves, with timber ceiling, inspired by church architecture of the mendicant brothers, were built among the rural parish churches of Northern Estonia during the 14th century (e.g. Jõhvi, Lügänuuse, Keila), but none is known from the 13th century. Probably the discovered older nave of Haljala was also built during the 14th century.

Discovery of the foundations of the older nave in Haljala church is unique in the research history of medieval rural parish churches in Estonia. There has been a ubiquitous concept for decades that as a rule, medieval churches of Estonia have not been completely demolished and replaced by new ones during the Middle Ages. It has been explained, for example, so with very sparing building policy: during a rebuilding campaign as much as possible of the old building was preserved and reused in the new building. If the existing church is dated into the late Middle Ages, for instance, the 15th century, it has been supposed by default, that the preceding building has been of timber. Excavation can change this concept, especially opening large areas vs. small test pits. Small size is probably not the only reason why a stone church might have been demolished. The old nave of Haljala was not considerably smaller than the new one. Replacing the old nave (interior space *ca.* 230 m²) with a new one (*ca.* 350 m² without niches) offered only about 1/3 of extra space. It seems that the height of the nave was another aim, but the low and thin walls of the old nave did not enable to achieve the expected result. It is possible that there has been quite a number of church naves with thin and low walls. Besides small size the main reason why such buildings have not preserved, might be that it was not possible to rebuild these effectively into higher vaulted buildings. Foremost, such a development could explain the lack of 13th and 14th century buildings in the province of Virumaa.

³ This hypothesis was presented by Kaur Alltoa when visiting the excavations in July 2016.

Building sequence of the eastern part of the present church

Raam supposed that walls of the older nave might be partly preserved inside the eastern wall of the nave. It includes several otherwise unexplained irregularities, such as boulders sticking out of the surface of the side aisles, a peculiar niche in the eastern wall of the southern aisle (Fig. 2) *etc.* Raam planned fieldwork to provide evidence but never came to realize it (Raam 1959, 27–28).

Fieldwork of 2016 revealed part of the inner surface of the foundation of the eastern wall of the nave, so that some of the irregularities could be studied. It appeared that the foundation of the eastern wall has three different sections both in the northern and southern aisle (Fig. 2). In most cases no clear vertical joints or building sequence could be identified, especially because much of the surface is hidden by the burial chambers. Nevertheless, three sections built in different manner and of different material were clear: 1. the foundations of the chancel arch, 2. foundations on the line of the side walls of the chancel, and 3. foundations of the corners of the nave. It appeared that in case of no. 2 the wall surface directly above the foundation is not built of regular limestones with straight surface. Instead there are erratic boulders, which stick so far out of the wall that even thick plaster cannot hide it. It looks like these wall parts could not be finished with straight surfaces, because the eastern wall of the earlier nave was still standing. Consequently, the side walls of the chancel were built against the old nave.

This is in accordance with the conclusion of Raam, that the chancel was built before the present nave, and later the eastern wall of the new nave has been attached to it from two sides (Raam 1959, 6–9). However, the masonry of the chancel arch has a straight western surface of orderly laid limestones. It means that when the lower masonry of the chancel arch was built, there was no disturbing older nave wall on its western side any more. Therefore, it seems that the chancel arch was built at the same period with the new nave. There was no need for it in this place before, because a previous chancel arch must have existed inside the eastern wall of the older nave. There is no information, if there existed a previous chancel or not, i.e. if the chancel arch existed in the eastern wall of the older nave initially or was made only after the new chancel was built.

In conclusion, there are no remains of a previous nave preserved inside the eastern wall of the nave. The three walls of the chancel are the oldest part of the present church. The irregularities in the south-eastern corner of the nave could be probably explained by some kind of specifics of building process or an unknown interior element.

ARTEFACTS

Building remains

Archaeological fieldwork of 2016 brought to light *ca.* 540 artefacts. The collection of finds contains remains of the present and probably also the previous church building. Windows are represented by fragments of stained glass, mostly unpainted, also one painted piece, and fragments of lead comes. Two fragments of dressed stonework of medieval windows were identified. These probably come from the windows of the present nave, because all windows, except the eastern one of the chancel, have lost their dressed stonework. Other limestone masonry is composed mostly of small floor and grave slab fragments, but also two pieces of a baptismal font, of a simple round undecorated basin.

The removed soil contained a large mass of roof tile fragments. Two types could be identified: tiles of beaver tail type (Fig. 10: A), with surface glazed in three different tones and peculiar

very large flat tiles with a curved edge, called in German *Kremptziegel* (Fig. 10: B). The glazed tiles could be gathered from the upper layer of soil which was also present in the upper filling in the burial chambers and was completely removed. Therefore, it looks like the beaver tail tiles come from the last historic stone roof, probably from early modern period. The *Kremptziegel* tiles were scattered in a deeper layer, which was not excavated but reached in several test pits about 40–50 cm below the floor. In several spots the blackened fragments of *Kremptziegel* were recorded lying as a compact layer mixed with a lot

of charcoal, which indicates the end of this roof in a fire disaster. It did not come clear what kind of empty space had been filled with this fire debris, because all other evidence indicates that the floor level of both the present and previous naves have not been so deep. Large quantities of burnt tiles could have collapsed during fire directly onto the nave floor only when the vaults did not exist yet. This indicates that the *Kremptziegel* roof either was burnt before building the vaults or the fragments have been brought inside through the doors.

Some fragments of *Kremptziegel* tiles were discovered also in the masonry of one of the pillar foundations. This indicates that the *Kremptziegel* tiles were already in use when the foundations of the pillars were built. At first glance this would suggest that the *Kremptziegel* come from the roof of the previous nave, but it does not mean automatically that the roof of *Kremptziegel* tiles had been burnt already when the pillars were built. Single fragments of *Kremptziegel* might have found their way into the pillar foundations when the roof existed. The pillars and vaults were probably built only after the roof of the new nave had been completed, in order to finish the interior without disturbing rainfall. During the building process of the roof some tiles might have broken and their fragments used in the foundations.

Both types of roof tiles are very rare in Estonia, at least in rural church context and therefore comparative material and additional research is needed to present well founded dates. The *Kremptziegel* have been found in Estonia only in St. Bridget's Nunnery where these have been dated to the first half of the 16th century (Tamm 2002, 126). This dating would fit well for the initial roof of the present nave of Haljala. Beaver tail tiles cannot be excluded in medieval Estonia but these would be more expectable during the early modern period. Beaver tail tiles have been found from the ruins of the Franciscan Friary of Viljandi, but their medieval origin is disputable (Tamm 2002, 126). It can be concluded that the beaver tail tiles in Haljala probably come from an early modern roof, but the *Kremptziegel* from a medieval roof. The latter was either the initial roof of the nave which was burnt down in the start of the Livonian War, or a roof of the present nave which burnt down already before building the pillars and vaults or even come from the previous nave. It is also possible that this roof burnt down and the original pillars and vault collapsed. In such a case the pillars were later built up again, and part of the old octagonal blocks which survived, were reused, but new blocks of slightly different size were made to replace the damaged ones. This could explain the two sizes of the pillar blocks.

A single fragment of a Renaissance style stove tile with black glaze probably comes from the vicarage, as the parish churches of Estonia lacked stoves in this period.

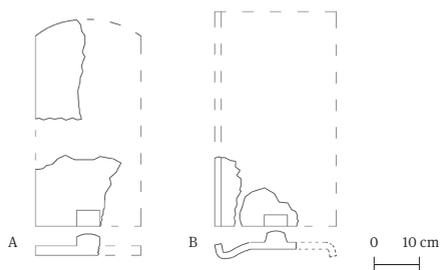


Fig. 10. Reconstruction of the roof tile types: A – beaver tail, B – *Kremptziegel*.

Jn 10. Katusekivi tüüpide rekonstruktsioon: A – koprasaba, B – *Kremptziegel*.

Drawing / Joonis: Villu Kadakas

Small finds from the Middle Ages and Early Modern Period

The soil was removed systematically, with thin layers, checking each layer of soil with a metal detector. Among hundreds of simple coffin nails, which were not gathered, the collected finds include *ca.* 540 small metal artefacts and their fragments, including at least⁴ 392 single coins. The rest include various buttons, small hooks, decorative nails from various periods. The collection needs further research, but at first glance it is possible to say, that it contains finds of all last ten centuries.

There are a lot of small medieval and early modern artefacts or fragments identified, which are in most cases difficult to date with accuracy: from clothing 3 buttons (Fig. 11: 1–2), from movable inventory: two bottoms of blown glass bottles, a piece of a clay pipe, three lead bullets and a sherd of a redware tripod pot. A round pendant of thin sheet silver from the second half of the 15th or the first quarter of the 16th centuries (Fig. 11: 3), two small round brooches (Fig. 11: 4), a ring with seven glass gems (Fig. 11: 5), a ring with entwined hands (Fig. 11: 6), six various belt mounts or book bosses (Fig. 11: 7), a clasp of sheet brass, from a hook-clasp fastening (Fig. 11: 8), typical for the 15th century books with wooden board binding (Szirmai 1999, 251–258), and a mount with a figure of a cat (Fig. 11: 9), a piece of wall chandelier (Fig. 11: 10), a glass bead (Fig. 11: 11) deserve attention in this category.



Fig. 11. Various medieval and later artefacts.

Jn 11. Kesk- ja varauusaegseid leide.

(AI 7743: 94, 214, 409, 470, 492, 199, 217, 89, 453, 380, 511.)

Photo / Foto: Villu Kadakas

⁴ The numbers of identified finds may increase during the conservation process.

Finds from the 11th–13th century

About 20 artefacts, mostly of copper alloy, stand out as a separate group, dating from a period of Late Iron Age (in Estonia 11th–12th centuries) or the beginning of medieval period (13th century). Among copper alloy jewellery there are two braided bracelets (Fig. 12: 1), a ring (Fig. 12: 2), pieces of three decorative pins with cross-shape (Fig. 12: 3), a small chain, two fragments of spiral tube decoration. There are also several copper alloy artefacts from sword or knife belts: a mount (Fig. 12: 4), two belt buckles (Fig. 12: 5), a buckle plate, a three-spoked strap distributor (Fig. 12: 6), also a scabbard chape of a seax (Fig. 12: 7). Some pieces of wheel thrown local pottery probably also belong to this complex. The earliest coin found in Haljala church – a penny minted in Exeter during the rule of king Ethelred II (*ca.* 966–1016 AD) – can also be connected with these early finds.



Fig. 12. Finds from the 11th–13th century.

Jn 12. 11.–13. sajandi leide.

(AI 7743: 440, 487, 509, 489, 86, 109, 442.)

Photo / Foto: Villu Kadakas

The majority of these finds have nothing to do with the church or churchyard but probably originate from an Iron Age burial site, which was once located on the spot of the church. All the finds had lost their original context: these were gathered from mixed soil. None of these finds show marks of fire or damage caused on purpose. Therefore, it seems, that there was probably a cemetery of inhumation graves. Similar material of 11th–13th century has been found from several churchyards of Virumaa, and existence of a prehistoric cemetery or settlement site has been concluded, for example, in neighbouring Viru-Nigula (Tamla 1991) and Lügánuse (Kadakas & Jonuks 2014, 135–136, 144).

Some of these finds are difficult to date because of limited knowledge or long period of production and use. Such artefacts might come from any of the centuries (11th–13th), which makes it impossible to bring it into connection with the Christian churchyard or the prehistoric burial site in particular. Some rather come from the prehistoric centuries (e.g. some of the belt parts), but some from burials of the early church period (13th century), for instance, probably the pins with cross-shape. Then the medieval Christian tradition of burying without goods was not rooted by ethnic Estonians yet. Nevertheless, the finds show a continuity of using the burial site in all these centuries, including the transition from pagan habits to Christianity.

Coin types and dates

Very few coins represent the early church period: only some foreign ones – a penny from Gotland and other two from northern German towns – date from the 13th–14th centuries. The accumulation of coins in Haljala church has started in the end of the 14th century (Table 1). The medieval coins are mostly from local mints of the local lords, for example, the Livonian Order in Tallinn and the Bishopric of Tartu in Tartu, with very few exceptions. The earliest group of coins (19) from Haljala church comes only from the late 14th–early 15th century: *seestlings* and *lübische* pennies, minted before the monetary reform of Old Livonia (1422/1426). Conveniently these can be brought into connection with the previous church nave. A larger group (*ca.* 35), mostly pennies and *scherfs*, comes from the period between this reform and the Livonian war (1558). A single Swedish *örtug* from the first half of the 16th

Table 1. Coins until the Livonian War (1558) from Haljala church.

Tabel 1. Liivi sõja eelsed müündid Haljala kirikust.

Compiled by / Koostaja: Villu Kadakas

State / provenance	Unit	Date	Amount
Kingdom of England, Ethelred II the Unready, Exeter	penny	1003–1006	1
Gotland, Visby	penny	13th–14th c	1
Northern Germany	penny	13th–14th c	1
Hamburg	penny	14th c	1
Livonian Order, Tallinn	lübische	1398–1420	3
Livonian Order, Tallinn	seestling	1398–1420	9
Livonian Order, Tallinn	penny	1426–1555	15
Livonian Order, Tallinn	scherf	1426–1480	8
Bishopric of Tartu	lübische	1399–1422	7
Bishopric of Tartu, Bartholomäus Sawijerwe	penny	1441–1459	2
Bishopric of Tartu, Bartholomäus Sawijerwe	scherf	1441–1459	1
Bishopric of Tartu, Helmich von Mallinkrodt	penny	1459–1468	1
Bishopric of Tartu, Andreas Peper	scherf	1468–1473	1
Bishopric of Tartu, Johannes II Bertkow	penny	1473–1485	3
Bishopric of Tartu, Dietrich V Hake	scherf	1485–1498	3
Bishopric of Tartu, Johannes V Blankenfeld	penny	1518–1527	1
Bishopric of Tartu, Johannes VI Bey	shilling	1528–1543	1
Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Alexander Jagiellon	penny	1492–1506	2
Kingdom of Sweden, Sten Sture the Younger or Gustav Vasa	örtug	1500–1550	1

century and two Lithuanian pennies from the turn of the 15th century make up the collection of late medieval foreign coins. Most of the coins of this period have probably dropped into the floor of the existing nave already.

The turmoil of the period of the Livonian War and the following wars between Sweden and Poland is represented by a single shilling of Duke Magnus of Saare-Lääne Bishopric (1562–1564), two shillings of the free city of Riga (1561–1581), two shillings of Poland minted in Riga in the beginning of the 1620s, but the majority (at least 20) are various Swedish coins (Erik XIV, Johan III, Charles IX, Gustav Adolf II): schillings, pennies, 1/2 öres and 1 öres. Like in Risti church where a large part of the nave was excavated some years ago (Kadakas *et al.* 2012, 183–185) the number of coins in the Haljala church floor rapidly increased from the start of the Livonian War period.

The following period of the Swedish rule from the Livonian War until the Great Nordic War is represented by 5 Swedish silver öres, but the majority (115) are copper coins: 1/6 (82) and 1/4 (32) öres (mostly Christina, Charles XI), a single 1/2 öre, which make up more than a fourth of the total number of coins gathered. A single 1/6 öre from 1708 marks the rule of Karl XII and the end of the Swedish rule in Estonia.

The period of the Russian Empire is represented by 163 coins. A small number (8) are early silver wire kopecks (mostly Peter I), and a large number (*ca.* 130) of copper coins, mostly polushkas (47) and dengas (76), also some 1 (14) and 2 (4) kopecks of the 18th century (Anna Ivanovna, Yelizaveta Petrovna, Catherine II). Dropping of coins under the floor seems to have ended rapidly sometime around 1800, because the whole 19th century is represented only by 18 pieces: Paul I – 2, Alexander I – 2, Alexander II – 3, Alexander III – 1.

Like in Risti church (Kadakas *et al.* 2012, 183–185) also in Haljala most of the coins were the lower denominations in circulation in the period, as also, for example, in Sweden (Klackenberg 1992, 336). Among the dozens of pennies there was only one shilling during the whole Middle Ages, among the volume of 1/4 and 1/6 copper öres of the Swedish rule there was only one 1/2 öre and a few silver 1 öre coins.

How coins got into the church floor

In principle there have been four different ways for a coin to end up in or under the church floor. Former grave goods have come up during excavation of pits for new structures and secondary burials. Congregation members have lost these incidentally one by one, either during the confusion of the donation or offering process or just through the holes in the pockets and purses. Coins might have been brought inside with soil from the vicinity of the church. Coins have been placed one by one, hiding these as offerings between floor slabs or dropping through the slots between boards.

The first two ways are natural and have happened in every church where dead have been buried and donations gathered. The last two ways need specific argumentation. In the nave of Haljala there is only one clear indication that soil (collapse or demolition debris) has been brought from outside. The fragments of roof tiles, at least of the beaver tail type, could be brought inside only through the doors (see above). It does not mean automatically that also soil with former grave goods or offering coins has been brought in together with roof tiles.

Accumulation of coins in the church floors has been explained in the medieval Roman Catholic context of the Nordic countries, for example, in Sweden as coins lost one by one during offering process. A connection between the accumulation areas of coins with altars and alms boxes has been detected. The accumulation of coins in Sweden has rapidly

decreased during the first half of the 16th century, which has been explained by the effect of Reformation (Klackenberg 1992, 35–38).

The situation of Risti and Haljala churches seems to be similar to that of the Finnish churches where a similar increase from the second half of the 16th century and rapid decrease in the end of the 18th century has been noticed (Ehrnsten 2013, 29, 37). Accidental loss of large copper coins of the 17th century, especially in big quantities has been considered somewhat unlikely (Ehrnsten 2013, 37). While trying to explain the large amount of early modern coins in churches, Frida Ehrnsten has recently noted that continuation of Catholic offering traditions cannot be excluded among possible reasons (Ehrnsten 2013, 39).

Recently also in Estonia coin offering has been considered to be among the reasons of large accumulations of coins in churches (Kadakas *et al.* 2012, 185; see also Kadakas & Toos 2013, 190–191). There is a lot of information in written sources of the 16th–18th centuries about offering of food, wax, textiles and various items, also coins by Estonian peasants, in and around functioning churches and chapel ruins among other places. In contrast with Lutheran doctrine, such vernacular practices often took place on the day of a specific Catholic saint, but healing and fertility magic was as important as the honouring of Christian saints (Russow 1587, 32; Winkler 1900, 5–8; Eisen 1920, 103–107; Kõpp 1959, 218–240; Jonuks & Johanson 2015, 129–131). Such vernacular practices were often without a background directly originating in the official Christian doctrine, and were demonised by Lutheran priests (Jonuks & Johanson 2015, 125, 132).

Extensive customs of offering among Estonian peasants have been recorded even before the Livonian War (Russow 1587, 32), but it is thought that it got a boost during the period of wars (1558–1629). The message of Reformation had virtually not got to the peasants during only some decades of the Lutheran church. During the wars much of the rural areas were without pastors and any professional religious teaching for at least a generation. In such conditions the illiterate peasantry developed their Christian principles and practices into a noninstitutional vernacular version of Christianity which carried very little influence of protestant doctrine but probably inclined further away even from the official Catholic doctrine. After the country had been finally secured by Sweden, the Lutheran church started a long fight with these semi-religious, semi-magic traditions, but it took centuries to gain success (Winkler 1900, 5–8; Eisen 1920, 103–107; Kõpp 1959, 218–240).

No specific references in documents to the parish church of Haljala have been published about coin offerings. Nevertheless, the large number of coins indicates that coin offering as a tradition with both heathen and Catholic roots, has probably played its part in the accumulation of coins in the nave of Haljala church as well. It is not possible to estimate, how a specific individual coin got into the floor or which or how many of these got into the floor in a specific way. Coins from former burials probably played a very small part because burials with a lot of coins have not been common in Estonia in any period in question. There is no clear indication of soil with coins been brought into the church. There are no dense concentrations of coins of any period which could indicate a place of, for example, a leaking alms box. Therefore, the vast majority of coins have got into Haljala church nave probably via one by one spillage or offering.

The extensive accumulation of coins has stopped in the nave of Haljala church around the turn of the 18th century. This is in full correspondence with the result of Risti church (Kadakas *et al.* 2012, 184). At this time in both churches one could bring forth no technical change in the floor structure which would hinder further dropping of coins. This sharp decline of

accumulated coins is one of the strongest arguments that a significant number of the discovered coins have got into the floor as an offering not meant for an alms box.

Development of school network, spread of literacy, intense work of pastors for the better understanding of Lutheran doctrine among peasants, and spread of *Herrnhut* movement (Moravian Church) contributed to the sharp decrease of the vernacular traditions of offering. Coin offering tradition has never stopped among Estonians and has even seen renewal periods in the course of national awakening and rehabilitation of paganism. However, based on the excavations in Risti and Haljala churches, it looks like that at least in the church buildings the custom of coin offering really stopped about the turn of the 18th century, possibly also in abandoned chapel ruins. This conclusion needs confirmation by supplementary fieldwork both in functioning churches and chapel ruins.

Coin distribution

The coins were marked on the nave plan (Fig. 13) to learn if the distribution has some correspondence to architectural elements or if it can be used to describe usage of interior space in different periods. The lack of earlier coins in the area of burial chambers and also in the western part of the middle nave is caused by later disturbances, but in the side naves the layer with coins existed almost everywhere. The few coins from the previous nave period have a small concentration near the southern portal, but these were probably not in their original locations, because some were even located on top of the old nave's foundation (Fig. 13: A). The late Catholic period coins, of which most have probably accumulated into the present church, tend to be distributed mostly in the eastern part of the middle bay. There does not seem to be a clear connection with the discovered side altars nor with any of the wall niches, but 12 coins were located within a 2 m radius from

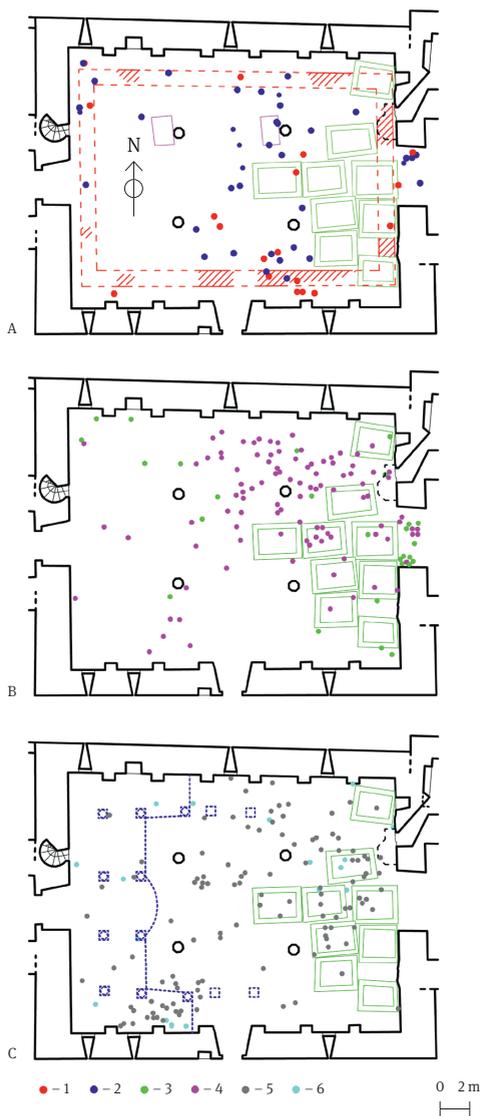


Fig. 13. Distribution of coin finds. A - 1200-1558, B - 1559-1708, C - ca. 1700-1917. 1 - medieval coins before the monetary reform (1200-1422/1426), 2 - medieval coins after the monetary reform (1422/1426-1558), 3 - coins from the war period (1559-1629), 4 - Swedish coins from 1630-1708, 5 - Russian coins of the 18th century, 6 - Russian coins from 1801-1917.

Jn 13. Mündileidude levik kirikus. A - 1200-1558, B - 1559-1708, C - u 1700-1917. 1 - keskaegsed mündid enne rahareformi (1200-1422/1426), 2 - keskaegsed mündid pärast rahareformi (1422/1426-1558), 3 - sõdade perioodi mündid (1559-1629), 4 - Rootsi mündid 1630-1708, 5 - Vene 18. sajandi mündid, 6 - Vene mündid 1801-1917.

Drawing / Joonis: Villu Kadakas

the altar of the north-eastern pillar. While analyzing the distribution of coins, it must be taken in account that the layer with medieval finds was not reached or it is not preserved in all areas.

A concentration of *ca.* 20 late medieval and early Swedish period coins under the chancel arch (Fig. 13: A, B) can be connected with a rood altar although no remains of it were found. This is the only notable concentration of the coins from the period of the wars between 1558–1629. The chantry of the Holy Cross, established in Haljala church in 1485 (Johansen 1933, 344; see above), could be connected with the rood altar.

The coins of the next period – peace under the Swedish rule (*ca.* 1630–1710), are distinguishably distributed mostly in the north-eastern part of the nave (Fig. 13: B). There was no observable difference in the preservation of the soil layer with coins between the northern and southern areas, which would explain the difference in coin distribution. This is the first period when the pew platforms and a pulpit probably existed already. There might be a correspondence of the coins with the pew area. It is not known who used the pews of the north-eastern part of the nave in the 17th century, but on the plan from the middle of the 18th century (Fig. 5) the pews have been divided into two large areas. Pews of the northern part of the nave have been marked for peasant women (*bauer weiber leute*) and of the southern part for peasant men (*bauer manns leute*). Probably this reflects the situation of the 17th century as well. The abundance of 17th and 18th century coins in the north-eastern part of the nave, in the women's area to the contrary of other areas may indicate a more intense habit of offering coins in the church among peasant women. However, it is risky to make conclusions about the social meaning of coin distribution even within a specific church, let alone to make generalizations based on one case. For example, in Finland in some churches most of the coins of specific periods have been located in the northern, in some churches in the southern part of the nave, in some cases in chancel area (Ehrnsten 2013, 39). There is a smaller concentration of *ca.* 30 mostly 18th but also some 17th century coins in an area with a diameter of 5 m in the southern aisle, west of the southern portal. Assuming that the back (*i.e.* western) benches might have been mostly used by peasants of lower social status, it could be supposed that differences of coin abundance on the east-west axis might reflect differences of habits among different social groups of peasants. Shifts of usage of different pew areas in different periods by different social or gender groups are also expectable.

CONCLUSIONS

A rare possibility to research the upper soil layer of a whole medieval rural church nave offered varied information about the destroyed elements of both the present and the previous church nave, about outfit and equipment carried with by congregation members, about circulation of coins, about social habits, customs and usage of space, as well as about a Late Iron Age settlement site or a cemetery, once located on the same spot. This work can be considered the largest systematic archaeological study of a rural parish church in Estonia. The artefacts found of Haljala church make up a unique complex, the deeper study of which mostly lies ahead. The statistics of the artefacts and find distribution will enable to draw many more conclusions in the future, after comparable fieldwork has been done in at least some other rural parish churches. It will enable to get new knowledge not only about the congregation and church of Haljala during different periods, but also contribute to the history of congregations and church buildings of Old-Livonia in general.

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ARHEOLOOGILISED UURINGUD HALJALA KIRIKUS

Villu Kadakas

Uuringud kirikus võeti ette, sest pikihoone mädanenud põrand tuli asendada kivipõrandaga, mis mh eeldas põrandaaluse pinnasekihi eemaldamist 20–25 cm ulatuses.

Haljalat on kihelkonna keskusena mainitud juba 13. sajandil. Villem Raami järgi ehitati praegune kirikuhoone (jn 1) mitmes etapis: esimesena kooriruum koos käärkambriga u 1430–40 (jn 2: 1–2), teise-na kolmelööviline nelja kaheksakandilise piilariga pikihoone (jn 2: 3; 3) tõenäoliselt sajandi kolmandal veerandil ja viimaks läänetorn sama sajandi lõpul (jn 2: 4). Kiriku põletasid Vene väed tõenäoliselt Liivi sõja alguses 1558. aastal ja samuti Põhjasõjas 1703. aastal. 1896.–1898. aastatel asendati vanad baroksed väärid ja pingistik neogooti stiilis uutega. 1959. ja 1987. aastal on kaevatud kiriku välisküljele hulk šurfe (jn 2: 11–12) hoone osade ehitusjärjekorra ja selle ümber sekundaarselt ladestunud täitepinnase pakuse kindlaks tegemiseks.

Leitud neljakandilised vundamendid ja 1757. aastast pärinev barokk-stiilis orelivääri joonis (jn 4) võimaldasid rekonstrueerida 18. sajandil rajatud väärisüsteemi põhiplaani (jn 2: 9). Senise põranda mädanenud laagide hulgast leiti sekundaarses kasutuses mõned varasema põranda elemendid: pingistiku platvormi servatalad, milles on pingi otste ja platvormi risttalade tapipesad; samuti üks oletatav dekoreeritud pingi otsa fragment (jn 6).

Pikihoone idaosas fikseeriti paemüüridega hauakambrite asukohad, kuid neid ei avatud (jn 5). Üksteisega sarnased, paest 30–40 cm paksuste müüridega hauakambriid on keskmiselt 1,5 × 2,5 m suurused (jn 7). Lisaks leiti väikseid hauakivide tükke, mis ei võimalda dateerimist ega määramist. Loodepoolse piilari idaküljelt avastati ootamatult kõrgelt (u 30 cm põrandapinnast) poolik naise matus naeltega puitkirstus (jn 2: 13).

Varasematest interjööri elementidest olid säilinud vaid maa-alused jäänused. Kõigi nelja piilari all avastati laiad, üle 2 m eenduvad vundamendid (jn 2: 14), mille ladumiseks on kasutatud samasuguste kaheksatahuliste plokkide tükke, millest on piilarid laotud. Samuti selgus, et piilarite juures on tarvitatud kahes eri suuruses plokkide, mis osutab, et praeguste piilarite tegemisel on vähemalt osa kaheksakandilisi plokkide tõenäoliselt sekundaarses kasutuses. Katolikuaegse interjööri elementidest leiti kahe kõrvalaltari jäänused: põhjapoolsete piilarite lääneküljel on neist säilinud vaid neljakandilised, u 1,2 × 1,9 m plaaniga vundamendid (jn 2: 7; 8).

Uuringutel avastati kiriku praegustest külgseinest 1–2 m kaugusel maakividest kuivlaona ehitatud struktuurid (jn 2: 6), mis tõenäoliselt on varasema kivist pikihoone külgseinte vundamentide jäänused. Kõige pikemana on säilinud u 6 m pikkune lõik maakivivundamenti lõunaportaali lähedal (jn 9). Varasema pikihoone põhiplaan on suurema tõenäosusega rekonstrueeritav vaid külgseinte ja idaseina osas, läänesein on pigem oletuslik (jn 2: 6). Vundamenti pikkuse ja vähese paksuse tõttu (1–1,2 m) on selge, et eelneva pikihoone u 0,9–1,2 m paksused seinad tõenäoliselt ei kandnud võlve. Hoone põrand pidi olema vähemalt sama kõrgel kui praegune, kuid võis paikneda isegi kõrgemal, otsustades vaid ühe maakivide kihina säilinud vundamentide ja ülal kirjeldatud matuse väga vähese sügavuse järgi. Tegemist oli oma aja kohta suure hoonega, mille põhiplaan oli u 21 × 14 m (pikkuse laiuse suhe 2:3). Taolised suured puitlagedega dominiiklaste jutluskirikute arhitektuurist inspireeritud pikihooneid on Põhja-Eesti kihelkonnakirikutena seniste teadmiste järgi rajatud 14. sajandil (nt Jõhvi, Lüganuse, Keila).

Eesti keskaegsete maakirikute uurimisel on valitsenud seisukoht, et Liivi sõja alguse seisuga olemas olnud kivist pikihoone oli oma asukohal esimene kivikirik, mis on ehitatud puitkiriku asemele. Haljala näide osutab, et teatud juhtumitel võidi asendada ka varasem kivist pikihoone uuega juba keskaja jooksul. Lammutamise põhjuseks võis lisaks vana kiriku väiksele pindalale olla ka soov saada kõrge võlvlaega pikihoone, mida vana pikihoone õhukesed ja madalad müürid ei võimaldanud. Selline arenguskeem võib olla seletuseks 14. ja eriti 13. sajandi kirikuhoonete vähesusele esijoonel Virumaal.

Koguti u 540 esemeleidu, millest enamuse moodustavad metalloobjektid. Neist vähemalt 392 on mündid. Ehitusjäänustest leiti tahvelklaasi ja aknataina fragmente, kaks tahutud paest akna ehisraamistiku tükki ning hulgaliselt väikeseid põranda- ja hauaplaadi katkeid. Tähelepanu vääriks kaks pae-kivist ristimisvaagna tükki. Pinnas sisaldas ohtralt kaht erinevat tüüpi keraamiliste katusekivide kilde: pinnase ülaosas leidus kolmes eri toonis glasuuriga nn koprasaba tüüpi katusekive (jn 10: A) ning alaosas suuri lamedaid, pööratud servaga katusekive, mida saksa keeles nimetatakse *Krempziegel* (jn 10: B). Tõenäoliselt katsid koprasaba tüüpi kivid Haljala pikihoonet millalgi varasel uusajal ja *Krempziegel* tüüpi kivid hiliskeskajal.

Väikeste, tihti raskesti dateeritavate keskaegsete ja varauusaegsete leidude hulgas on 3 nõöpi (jn 11: 1–2), puhutud klaaspudelite põhju, savipiibu katke, tina-kuule ning punasest savist glasuuritud graapeni kild. Tähelepanu väärivad ümar hõbeplekist ripats (jn 11: 3) 15. sajandi teisest poolest või 16. sajandi esimesest veerandist, kaks väikest vitssõlge (jn 11: 4), seitsme klaasist kiviga sõrmus (jn 11: 5), põimitud kätega sõrmus (jn 11: 6), erinevad vöönaastud (jn 11: 7), hilis-keskaegne raamatu lukkum (jn 11: 8), kassikujuline naast (jn 11: 9), tinast seinalühtri kaheksakandiline jalg (jn 11: 10) ja klaashelmes (jn 11: 11).

U 20 eset moodustavad omaette leiurühma, mis erinevalt ülejäänutest pärineb hilisrauaajast (11.–12. sajand) ja 13. sajandist (jn 12). Enamus neist on tõenäoliselt kiriku kohal rauaajal paiknenud maa-alusest kalmistust või asulakohast, kuid osa võib viidata ka varaseimatele kirikuaia matustele.

Vanimad kiriku ajastu müntid on mõned Gotlandil ja Põhja-Saksa linnades löödud pennid. Müntide suurem ladestumine sai alguse 14. sajandi lõpust ja esimene müntide rühm pärineb 14.–15. sajandi vahetusest, seega varasema pikihoone ajast. Nagu 2010.–2011. aastal kaevatud Risti kirikus, langeb ka Haljala pikihoone põranda alt leitud müntide hulk järsult umbes 18. sajandi lõpul (Tabel 1). Suur enamus Haljala kirikust leitud müntidest (jn 13) on tõenäoliselt kas kaotatud või ohverdatud, kuigi üksikud võivad pärineda ka matustest. Ehkki konkreetset Haljala kiriku kohta andmeid ei ole, on Eestis laiemalt kirikutes ja kabelivaremetes ohverdamise kohta hulgaliselt kirjalikke allikaid 17.–18. sajandist. Haljala kiriku müntide statistika ja levik osutub palju kõnekamaks pärast seda, kui Eestis on veel mõnede keskaegsete maakirikute põrand samas mahus ja sarnase meetodiga läbi uuritud.