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## **CERAMIC FINDS FROM AKADEEMIA STREET IN TARTU**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

In July 2009 archaeological monitoring was carried out in Tartu in the area around Akadeemia street. Partial reconstruction of the existing heating pipelines took place in Akadeemia street in the stretch between Vanemuise and Riia streets. The new branches of the trace were built by AS Giga perpendicular to Akadeemia street to service the building of the Tartu City Children's Centre at Akadeemia Street 2 and for some other buildings.

In Tartu's townscape Akadeemia street is a new street laid out after World War II in the centre of a building zone. In the pre-war period the building area surrounded by Vanemuise (former Aia), Riia, Pepleri and W. Struve (former Tähe) streets had lengthy plots and dwellings with many gardens. The buildings were located in a row at the street side, inside the area there were only some single wooden houses. Under the Akadeemia street's basic layers there is a layer in some places that reaches partly geological subsoil and contains 19th – 20th century household findings. These later findings had appeared in this layer during the levelling of the ruins of the buildings destroyed during World War II.

### **EXCAVATION RESULTS OF 2009**

On the territory between the buildings at Akadeemia Street 2 and Vanemuise Street 26 (Fig. 1) a ditch of about 30 m long, 1 m wide and 1 m deep was dug. Before the war there were no buildings in this area that would provide information about the earlier land use. The geological subsoil at the depth of about 100–110 cm from the plane of the concrete kerb consisted of reddish-brown loamy Quaternary sand. On the sand there was a darker brown 50–60 cm thick soil with a uniform structure. On top of it there was a dark, rich in coal, cultural layer about 10–20 cm thick which contained household waste from the times of World War II, including fragments of faience tableware from the Russian Kuznetsov factories. The basic layers of the asphalted entrance drive between the buildings were on an upper level.

In the place located from the end wall of the building at Vanemuise Street 26 at the distance of 15 m in the south-eastern direction and at the distance of 8 m from the fence of Akadeemia street in the direction of the building at Akadeemia Street 2 the builders made an unexpected discovery in the above-mentioned dark brown soil layer. Ten-fifteen centimetres higher from the level of the geological subsoil sand, in the absolute height value of about 58.00 m, 20 fragments of a wheel-thrown clay vessel, belonging to the period prior to the conquests of German crusaders, were discovered (Fig. 1: 1).

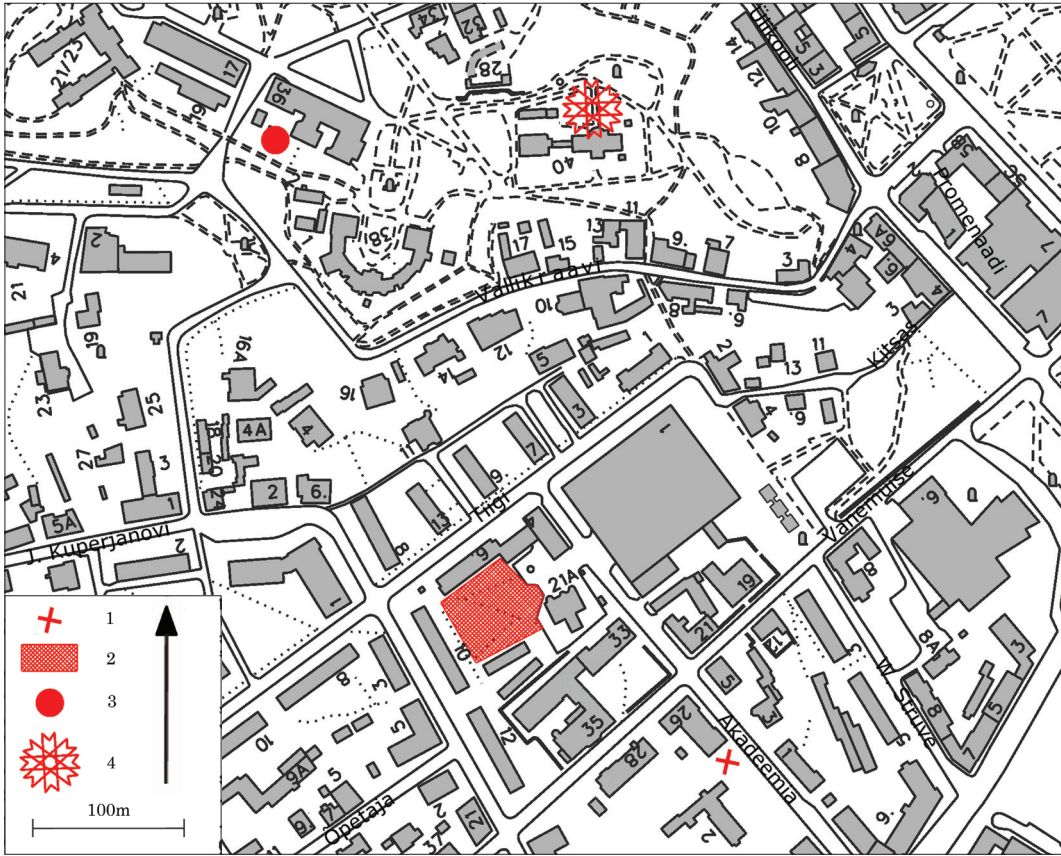


Fig.1. Location plan. 1 – the site of ceramic finds in July 2009; 2 – the settlement site discovered in 1995; 3 – the site of the Dome Gates in the Middle Ages; 4 – the location of the Tartu hill fort.

Jn 1. Asukohaplaan. 1 – keraamika leiukoht juulis 2009; 2 – 1995 avastatud asulakoht; 3 – keskaegse Toomevärava asukoht; 4 – Tartu muinaslinnuse asukoht.

Drawing / Joonis: Hele Luigujõe

Potsherds were close to each other and belonged to one and the same vessel, the upper part of which had a rim evenly sloped outside, the diameter of the mouth being 17.5 cm. The pot's shoulder part was covered with an irregular dense line ornament (Fig. 2). On the bottom piece it was possible to have an inkling of the bottom mark rather common during this era. Such fragments of clay vessel are rather usual among the ceramics collected from the pre-conquest cultural layer of the Old Town of Tartu. Archaeologist Andres Tvauri distinguishes them as of the north-west Russian style wheel-thrown clay vessels of Type 2, which are mostly dated to the 11th century and the first half of the 12th century (Tvauri 2005, 40–45).

Along with potsherds there were also some pieces of rock containing pyrites, one pinkish fist-size granite stone and a thin slate of limestone. The dark brown layer did not contain coal either in the above mentioned place or farther away, which excludes the possibility of the existence of the hearth-place. The cultural layer, characteristic to a set-



Fig. 2. Early wheel-thrown ceramics of the 11th and the first half of the 12 century.

Jn 2. Varane kedrakeraamika 11.–12. sajandi algusest.

(TM A 184: 1–2.)

Photo / Foto: Andres Tvauri

Drawing / Joonis: Romeo Metsallik

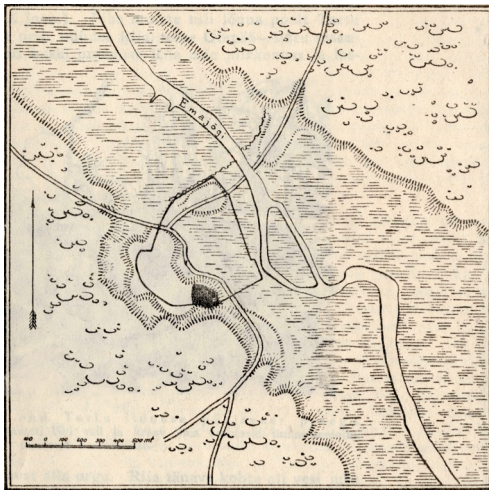


Fig. 3. Position of prehistoric road by Harri Moora.  
Jn 3. Tartu muinaste skeem Harri Moora järgi.  
(Moora 1935, 194.)

burnt clay, in some places iron dross and granite stones, which had been in the fire. There were also potsherds of early wheel-thrown ceramics decorated with line and wave ornaments (Metsallik 1996, 469–471). On the basis of the studied cultural layer we may consider that the size of the settlement, which was founded at the distance of 300 m south from the hill fort (Fig. 1: 4), could be about 3000 m<sup>2</sup>. Possibly it might have been somewhat larger.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to know how much the ancient cultural layer has been destroyed at different times as a result of erecting stone buildings in the area. On the basis of the results of the monitoring carried out so far, it seems that the settlement layer did not extend in the direction of Riia street. It is probable that the south-eastern land was already extensively used for agricultural purposes. Also, the soil layers with analogous location and structure unearthed during the excavations made near the north-eastern buildings of Akadeemia street seem to

lement, was totally absent. The stratigraphy of the soil layers shows that the clay vessel was not dug into the earth with the purpose of hiding objects, but was rather discarded after a household activity. The broken vessel's fragments evidently remained near the surface of that time to wait for archaeologists to pick them up in the distant future.

The thick dark brown soil layer with a uniform structure seems to hint about the long-term agricultural land use in the area under discussion. It is also confirmed by the fact that on top of the layer a part of the handle of a late medieval stoneware jug covered with green glaze and made centuries later was found.

### DISCUSSION

The present ceramic finding is of interest from the point of view of establishing the ancient settlement landscape of Tartu because the find spot is located farther away from the centre of the settlement between the hill fort of Tartu and the River Emajõgi. The find is connected with the end of the pre-conquest period settlement located at the distance of about 150 m to the north-west, discovered in 1995 during trial excavations in the central part of the section surrounded by Tiigi, Pepleri, Vanemuise and Akadeemia streets (Fig. 1: 2). There was a cultural layer, characteristic to settlements, on the sandy subsoil containing animal bones,

confirm it. It is difficult to be more exact about the character of this settlement in the present state of research. Most probably a farmstead stood between the fields, at some distance from the centre of ancient Tartu, that was engaged with local iron smelting (Metsallik 1996, 470).

### **CERAMIC FIND IN THE CONTEXT OF PREHISTORIC ROADS**

The researchers of Tartu have generally agreed that two major roads from the South entered Tartu and joined in the area of the Riia Hill (Moora 1935, 194; Fig. 3). These roads connected ancient Tartu with the southern important centre Otepää in the County of Ugandi and other remote centres towards the south-east direction of Estonia. From the Riia Hill the road continued to the centre in the direction of Ülikooli street and then across the River Emajõgi in the direction of Vooremaa (Jaanits *et al.* 1982, fig. 265). At that time in the area of the Riia Hill the valley with a notch-like bottom, formed as a result of the eroding activity of water, was used for easier access up and down the hill. There are different opinions concerning the direction of the road within the borders of the centre (Tvauri 2001, 209).

The road of the settlement surrounded by Tiigi, Pepleri<sup>1</sup>, Vanemuise and Aka-deemia streets had to be to the north/north-west of the settlement. When crossing the area of Tiigi Street, the road could enter the centre near the later Dome Gates through the branch of Vallikraavi street perpendicular to the present J. Kuperjanovi street from the direction of Pepleri street (Fig. 1: 3). The area of the Dome Gates is also considered to be linked with a major ancient road. According to art historian Kaur Altoa, the road on the Dome plateau passed the ancient Tartu hill fort and turned, contrary to the opinion of other researchers, to the juncture in the Riia Hill on the upper slope of the River Emajõgi primeval valley (1995, 147). Andres Tvauri interprets it as a possible side-road of the ancient road (2001, 210). In this connection it is important that the road located out of primeval valley gives a logistic explanation to the selection of the location of the described farmstead. Researcher Ago Vallas has also suggested that the starting point of the local roads was near the Dome Gates (1987, 11).

There were definitely more roads and forks of local importance around the centre connecting the closely located farms. Architect Udo Tiirmaa has mentioned the possibility of the present Tiigi and Kitsas streets, which could also be used in entering the centre. The ancient Dome Hill was split with valleys of different depth which helped crossing it (Metsallik 1990, 64). They were made by the ground water flowing from the Central Devonian aleurolite into the porous sediments (Lõokene 1976, 22). The branch of the Vallikraavi, Lossi and Kitsas streets were all founded in the places with the eroding activities of water.

### **CONCLUSION**

In spite of the small number of objects the above described ceramic find provided significant information for interpreting the settlement in the southern side of ancient Tartu.

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<sup>1</sup> After the Russian- Livonian War (1558–1583) the land between Riia and Vallikraavi Streets belonged to the merchant Wilhelm Pepler. The city of Tartu bought this land in 1641 (Raendi 1987, 60). From the courtyard of Riia 15B, located near the crossroads of Pepleri and Riia, tiles from the 17th century were found during construction works.

The complex find discussed above supports the author's opinion published earlier that in the close neighbourhood of the centre of Tartu there were smaller settlements connected with it via different fields of activity and property relations i. e. single farmsteads and villages. This statement is also confirmed by the settlement layer containing 11th–13th century finds in the area of the Raadi manor house (Metsallik 1991, 384–386), and the fragments of early wheel-thrown ceramics having line ornament from the cultural layer of the centre of the Tähtvere estate, namely in the north-western bank of the bed of the rivulet in the area of Kreutzwaldi Street 54. The discovery of the place of the ancient settlement on the territory of former Tähtvere estate could give explanation to the direction of the branch road given by Harri Moora in the area of the present Jakobi Hill or on its slope (Fig. 3). Among the randomly found archaeological finds there were bronze bracelets with braid ornaments, found in the plot of Tähe Street 95 and also hoards and numerous early coin finds from Raadi, Tähtvere, Ropka and elsewhere in the vicinity of the centre of Tartu (Metsallik 1995, 26–30; Tõnisson 1962, 199, No. 80, etc.) confirm the statement as well.

In establishing the ancient settlement structure, one of the most important considerations is the direction of ancient roads passing through Tartu, which were mainly fixed already by Harri Moora. Also, the area of the later centres of estates is helpful. As the settlements near the centre have merged with the city and the cultural layer has been destroyed to a large extent, the random finds and careful supervision of excavations obtain a bigger importance.

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## **KERAAMIKALEID TARTUST AKADEEMIA TÄNAVALT**

### **Romeo Metsallik**

Juulis 2009 teostati arheoloogilist järelevalvet tehnovõrkude ehitamise ajal Akadeemia tänava piirkonda. Vanemuise 26 ja Akadeemia 2 hoonete vahel (jn 1: 1) satuti ootamatule leiule. Geoloogilise alusliiva peale ladestunud tumepruunist mullakihist leiti 20 kildu keskaegse vallutuse eelsesse perioodi kuuluvat varast kedrakeraamikat. Killud pärinevad ühest nõust ja kuuluvad 11. või 12. sajandisse (jn 2). Tartu vanalinna kultuurkihis on selline nõutüüp üsna tavaline.

Nimetatud tumepruun mullakiht ei sisaldanud keraamika leiukohas ega ka kaugemal sütt, mis välistab koldekoha olemasolu. Asulatele iseloomulik kultuurkiht puudus selles piirkonnas täiesti. Savinõu polnud maasse kaevatud esemete peitmise otstarbel, pigem jäeti see maha pärast mingit olmetegevust. Nõukillud jäid ilmselt üsna toonase maapinna lähedale ootama kuni arheoloogid need kauges tulevikus üles korjavad.

Käsitletud keraamikaleid seostub Tiigi, Pepleri, Vanemuise ja Akadeemia tänavate vahelise kvartali keskosas 1995. a avastatud ristirüütlite vallutuste eelse perioodi lõpu asulakohaga (jn 1: 2). Riia tänava poole asustuskiht ei ole laienenud. Mitmetes Akadeemia tänava piirkonda tehtud ehituskaevandites täheldati alusliival ühtlase struktuuriga tuseda tumepruuni mulla kihti. Kagupoolset maad võidi kasutada juba siis ulatuslikult vaid põllumajanduslikul otstarbel. Tõenäoliselt asus Tiigi, Pepleri, Vanemuise ja Akadeemia tn vahelisel alal mõni muinasaegse Tartu keskusest veidi eemal asuv talu.

Uurijate poolt üldiselt omaksvõetud seisukoha järgi tulid lõuna suunast Tartusse kaks tähtsat

teed, mis ühinesid Riiamäe piirkonnas (jn 3). Need sidusid muistset Tartut Ugandi lõunapoolse tähtsama tugipunkti Otepää ja teiste tagamaa keskustega. Riiamäel kasutati ära vee erodeeriva tegevuse tagajärjel tekkinud salkorgu, mis kergendas laskumist ja tõusu mäele. Riiamäe alt läks tee praeguse Ülikooli tänava suunal keskusse ning sealt edasi üle Emajõe Vooremaa poole. Tee liikumissuuna kohta keskuse piires on esitatud erinevaid seisukohti.

Tiigi, Pepleri, Vanemuise ja Akadeemia tänavate vahelise asulakoha tee pidi jääma sellest loodepõhja poole. Tiigi tänava piirkonda läbivana võis tee suubuda keskusesse näiteks praeguse J. Kuperjanovi tänavaga ristuva Vallikraavi tn haru kaudu hilisema Toomevärava juurest lähtudes Pepleri tn suunalt (jn 1:3). Toomevärava piirkonda on seostatud ka peamise muinasteega. Kaur Alttoa järgi moodus Toome platool kulgenud tee Tartu muinaslinnuse lähistelt ja suundus erinevusena teiste uurijate skeemidest ühinemiskohani Riiamäel Emajõe ürgoru ülemist nõlva pidi.

Tee väljaspool Emajõe ürgorgu annaks logistilise seletuse ka kirjeldatud talukoha asukohavalikule. Kohaliku tähtsusega teede lähtekohale Toomevärava juurest on ühe võimalusena osutanud ka Ago Vallas.

Vaatamata väikesearvulisusele andis kirjeldatud keraamikaleid olulist teavet muistse Tartu lõunakülje asustuse iseloomu selgitamiseks. Tartu muinasteede naabruses asusid veel väiksemad asustusüksused näiteks Raadil, tõenäoliselt ka Tähtveres jm.