



PRELIMINARY ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS IN THE AREA OF THE MEDIEVAL AND POST-MEDIEVAL HARBOUR OF TALLINN

RAGNAR NURK

OÜ Agu EMS, Roosikrantsi 17, 10110 Tallinn, Estonia; ragnarnurk@gmail.com

VILLU KADAKAS

Tallinna Ülikool, Ajaloo Instituut (Tallinn University, Institute of History), Rüütli 6, 10130 Tallinn, Estonia

GUIDO TOOS

OÜ Agu EMS, Roosikrantsi 17, 10110 Tallinn, Estonia

INTRODUCTION

In 2010–2011 the Cultural Heritage Department of Tallinn Municipality initiated preliminary archaeological investigations on the site of the intended new building of the Town Hall. At the moment the area is divided into several plots such as Põhja Ave. 31a, 33, 33a and others. The new building would be located between the Old Town and the sea (see Figs 1–2). According to the project its two underground storeys with the area of 11 000 m² will reach to the depth –3.3 m below the sea level, whereas the present-day ground level is 3–5 m above the sea level. At the moment only a gas station and a parking lot are located on the site. No extensive building activities have taken place on the site during the 20th century, which could have damaged the cultural layer. The neighbouring building on the western side is an old power plant, which is presently reconstructed for a cultural centre *Kultuurikatel*, and on the north-eastern side the concert and sports complex *Linnahall* from the Soviet period. The latter is now out of use and waiting the officials' decision about its future. Historically this whole area has been closely connected with the harbour, which is still functioning and is now called the Old Harbour. The site is located next to the most important road leading to the harbour – the present-day Sadama (Harbour) street. The area of the intended new building remains inside the protection zone of the historical Kalamaja suburb.

NATURAL CONDITIONS AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Most likely the harbour emerged north-east of the Old Town, in front of the Great Coast Gate and Small Coast Gate, concurrently with the development of the town in the 13th–14th centuries. Originally only a narrow strip of land remained between the town and the harbour. Nowadays, as a result of land uplift and filling of the coastal sea the coastline together with the harbour have shifted to a distance of nearly a kilometre from the Old Town. Architect Rein Zobel studied thoroughly the natural topography of Tallinn Old Town and its closest vicinity, mainly on the basis of the data from the geological boreholes. According to his interpretation

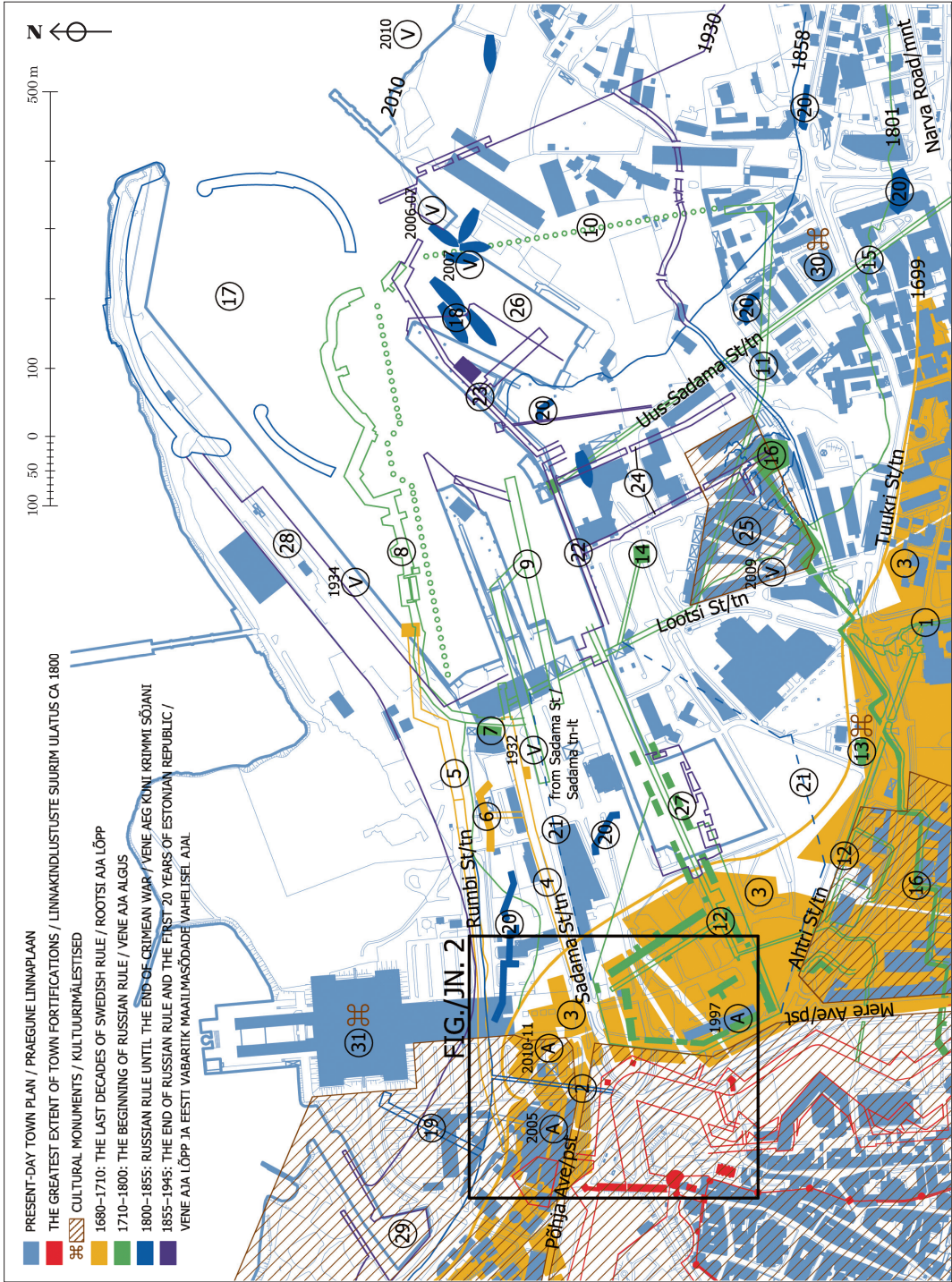


Fig. 1. The development of Tallinn Old Harbour between 17th–20th cc, according to the historical maps.

- A** – archaeologically investigated cultural layer,
V – wreck finds (with the year of discovery),
1 – Härjapea river,
2 – ditch between the moat in front of town fortifications and the sea,
3 – blocks which existed in 1699,
4 – wooden quay together with the customs house (some maps depict two houses),
5 – stone mole and another wooden quay together with defence tower Blockhaus,
6 – Kessel battery (1691, reconstructed 1854–1855),
7 – harbour guard/administrative house (walls partly preserved?, this and the next built in ca. 1714–1725),
8 – NW-mole of the Naval Port of Peter the Great,
9 – the original wooden Merchant' Quay,
10 – obstacle made of stakes (?) closing the harbour from E,
11 – dam closing the harbour from S & W,
12 – workshops and canals of Admiralty (later Ship Repair and Metal Works),
13 – the orthodox church of Simeon and Hanna (1752–1755, reconstructed in 1827 & 1870, preserved),
14 – the tar house (the 2nd half of 18th c),
15 – water conduit (the end of 18th century), later railway in the same place,
16 – zigzag rampart (retrenchment) and Isolie redoubt (ca. 1791),
17 – the New naval port together with its W, N & E mole (built respectively in 1807, 1813–1818 & 1813–1844),
18 – ship wrecks depicted on 1825 map,
19 – the quay of Kalaranna (1854–1855),
20 – coastal batteries from the period of the Crimean War (1854–1855),
21 – extensions of the Admiralty territory until the middle of 19th c,
22 – Baikov's jetty (1878–1892),
23 – Victoria quay (1846–1856) and grain elevator on it (1892–1893),
24 – private canals of merchants (this and the next from the second half of 19th c),
25 – the area of warehouses,
26 – the New Harbour (ca. 1880–1885),
27 – Ship Repair and Metal Works (Admiralty) basin (1899–1902),
28 – W mole (first half of the 20th c.),
29 – Fishing harbour (first half of the 20th c),
30 – the Seamen's Home (1924–1925),
31 – concert and sports centre Linnahall (1980–1981).

- Jn 1. Tallinna Vanasadama areng 17.–20. sajandil ajalooliste plaanide põhjal.
A – arheoloogiline kultuurkiht,
V – vrakileiud (avastamise aastaga),
1 – Härjapea jõgi,
2 – kraav vallikraavist merre,
3 – eeslinnakvartalid 1699. a seisuga,
4 – sadamasild tollimajaga (mõnel kaardil on ka kaks maja),
5 – kivimuul ja seda jätkav sadamasild koos kaitsetorniga (blokkhaus),
6 – Kesselpatarei (1691, rek. 1854–1855),
7 – sadama vahimaja/haldushoone (müürid osaliselt säilinud?, see ja järgnevad u 1714–1725),
8 – Peeter I sõjasadama lääne-loodemuul,
9 – algne puust Kaupmehe sild,
10 – sadamat idast piirav postidest tõke (?),
11 – sadamat lõunast ja läänest piirav tamm,
12 – Admiraliteedi (hilisema Laevaremondi- ja Metallitehase) töökojad ja kanalid,
13 – Siimeoni ja Hanna kirik (1752–1755, ümber ehitatud 1827 ja 1870, säilinud),
14 – tõrvaköök (18. saj II p),
15 – sadama veejuhe (18. saj lõpp), 20. saj I p samal kohal kitsarööpmeline raudtee,
16 – siksakiline vall (retranšment) ja Isolie reduut (u 1791),
17 – Uus sõjasadam selle lääne-, põhja- ja idamuuliga (ehitatud vastavalt 1807, 1813–1818 ja 1813–1844),
18 – laevakered 1825. a plaanil,
19 – Kalaranna sadamasild (1854–1855),
20 – Krimmi sõja aegsed rannakaitsepatareid (1854–1855),
21 – Admiraliteedi territooriumi laiendused 19. saj keskpaigaks,
22 – Baikovi kallas (1878–1892),
23 – Viktoria sild (1846–1856) ja sellel olnud teraviljaelevaator (1892–1893),
24 – kaupmeeste erakanalid (see ja järgmine 19. saj II p),
25 – lahoonete piirkond,
26 – Uussadam (u 1880–1885),
27 – Laevaremondi- ja Metallitehase (Admiraliteedi) basseini (1899–1902),
28 – Läänemuul (20. saj I p),
29 – Kalasadam (20. saj I p),
30 – Meremeeste Kodu (1924–1925),
31 – Tallinna Linnahall (1980–1981).
 Reconstruction drawing / Rekonstruktsioonijoonis:
 Ragnar Nurk

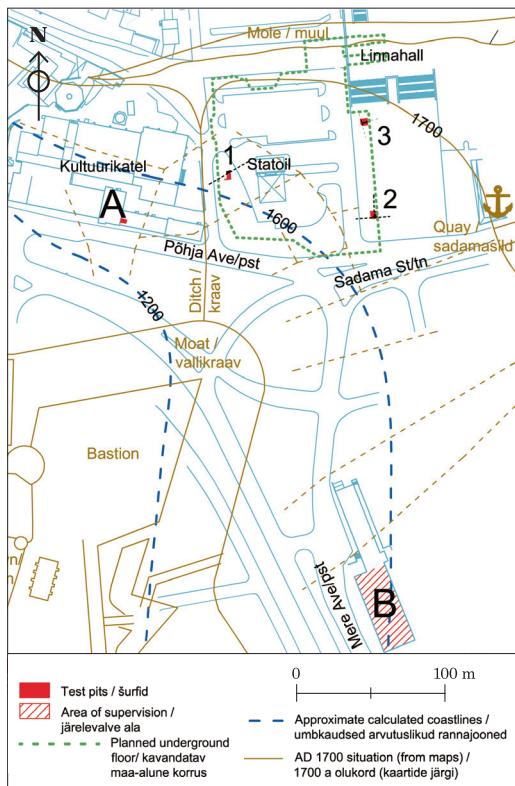


Fig. 2. Location plan of the archaeological investigations in the area of Tallinn Old Harbour with a partial reconstruction. A – Põhja Ave. 31 pit (2005), B – Mere Ave. 8–10 archaeological supervision (1997), 1–3 – test pits of preliminary archaeological investigations (2010–2011).

Jn 2. Tallinna Vanasadama piirkonnas toimunud arheoloogiliste uuringute asendiplaani koos osalise rekonstruktsiooniga. A – Põhja pst 31 šurf (2005), B – Mere pst 8–10 järelvalve (1997), 1–3 – arheoloogiliste eeluuringute šurfid (2010–2011).

Drawing / Joonis: Ragnar Nurk

(Zobel 2008, figs 20–21) the harbour was founded at a relatively sharp turn of the coastline, between the steep sandstone cliff in the north-west and very flat shore in the south-east. Moreover, he has concluded that a cape extended into the sea at that location. At present a new reconstruction of the natural relief of the neighbourhood of Tallinn Old Harbour is developed, ordered by the National Heritage Board.

From the point of view of heritage protection the status of the Old Harbour area is problematic. Most of the medieval and post-medieval harbour area has never been officially recognized as an archaeological site. During the preliminary archaeological investigations OÜ Agu EMS attempted to relate the historical maps with the present-day town plan in the whole Old Harbour area in order to get a better overview of the historical development of the harbour (Nurk & Kadakas 2010; Nurk 2012). This work was undertaken at the request of the National Heritage Board. An earlier attempt was made by Zobel in 1990 (originally added to the manuscript Zobel 1991, but a simplified version published in Zobel 2008, fig. 129). Now 12 maps from Estonian, Swedish and Russian archives from the period of 1634 – ca. 1930 were digitally analysed. For the purpose of comparing different maps most important lines were redrawn. As a result, the general development of Tallinn harbour during the last four centuries is visible now on the present-day town plan (Fig. 1), assisting heritage protection officials to make better decisions about the area.

The earliest maps (e.g. Fig. 3) and town views depicting the surroundings of the harbour show a very dense suburb around it. It is possible that the situation at the end of the Middle Ages did not differ much. This area was generally characterised by an irregular, probably sporadically developed net of streets and by small plots. We can imagine that it could have looked similar to a later view of fishermen's settlement Kalaranna (Fig. 4) – slightly westwards from the site. This was painted by a local 19th century artist Carl Friedrich Christian Buddeus, who is well-known by his lively and realistic town-views. Here, close to the harbour, stood probably inns, craftsmen's workshops, storehouses belonging to merchants, and maybe also

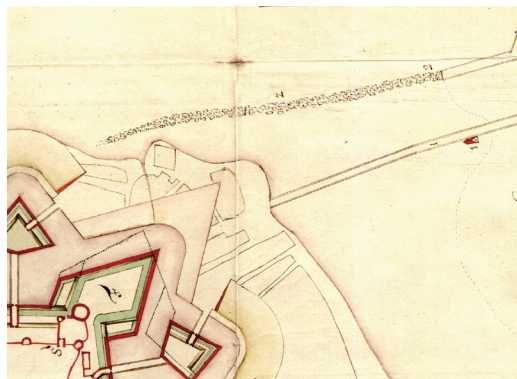


Fig. 3. Tallinn harbour on the fortification project by Paul von Essen from 1683.

Jn 3. Tallinna sadam Paul von Esseni 1683. aasta kindluseprojektil.

(RKA 0406:28:040:006.)



Fig. 4. C. F. C. Buddeus. Fishmarket and dwellings in Kalamaja. First half of the 19th century, coloured drawing.

Jn 4. C. F. C. Buddeus. Kalaturg ja elamud Kalamajas. 19. saj I pool, koloreeritud joonistus.

(AM G 7043 a.)

I

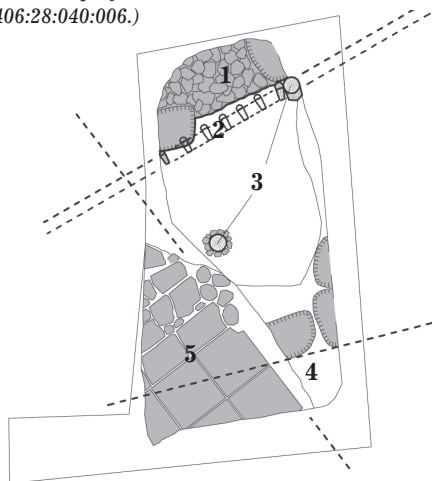


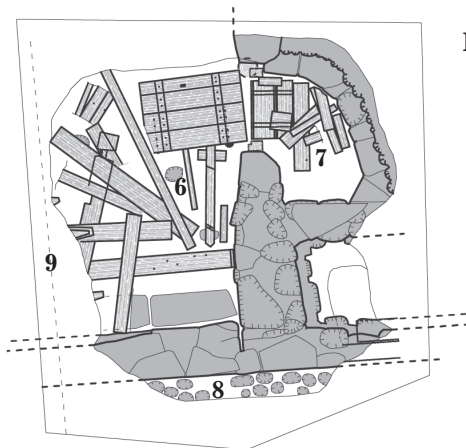
Fig. 5. Plans of test pits (see location at Fig. 2). I – test pit no. 1.

1 – presumable landfill-retaining structure of stones, 2 – supporting wall of small split posts, 3 – thick posts of indistinct purpose, 4 – large granite stones and the remains of a wooden floor south of them. II – test pit no. 3. 5 – late pavement of limestone slabs, 6 – cellar, 7 – stairway to the cellar, 8 – cobblestone pavement, 9 – eastern edge of the later cobblestone pavement. III – pit of Põhja Ave. 31. 10 – wooden barrel (cesspit), 11 – stakes, 12 – loose planks.

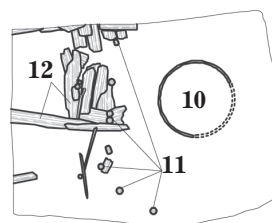
Jn 5. Šurfide plaanid (asukoht jn 2). I – Šurf nr 1. 1 – kividest arvata kindlustus, 2 – väikestest lõhestatud postidest tugisein, 3 – täpselt teadmata otstarbega jämedad postid, 4 – suured raudkivid ja puutpõranda jäljed neist lõunas. II – Šurf nr 3. 5 – hiline paeplaatidest sillutus, 6 – kelder, 7 – trepikoda keldrisse, 8 – munakivisillutus, 9 – hilisema munakivisillutise idaserv. III – Põhja pst 31 šurf. 10 – tõrs (prügiauk), 11 – vaiad, 12 – lahtised plangud.

Drawing / Joonis: Ragnar Nurk, Villu Kadakas, Ekke Lepp

II



III



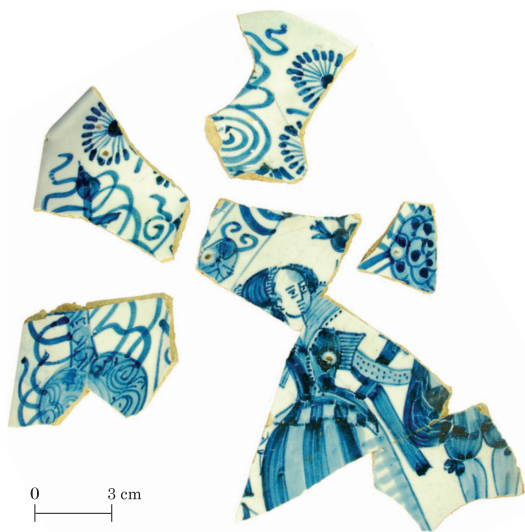


Fig. 6. The sherds of 17th century faience plate from the wooden barrel found from the Põhja Ave. 31 pit.

Jn 6. 17. saj fajanssavaagna killud Põhja pst 31 šurfist leitud puust tõrrest.

(AI 7053: 1–9.)

Photo / Foto: Sander Nittim

it was known from ca. 50 m west of the site. These were identified in late February 2005 by archaeologists Villu Kadakas and Guido Toos (OÜ Agu EMS) in a single pit at Põhja Ave. 31 (Fig. 2: A). A profile and structures in the pit were cleaned and recorded. Part of a wooden fence and a wooden barrel (Fig. 5: III), originally probably buried underground to be used as a cesspit, containing 17th and 18th century finds¹ were discovered. It included sherds of faience plates (Fig. 6), glazed redware pipkins and bowls, also fragments of a single clay pipe, a full wooden spoon and some remains of leather footwear. The lowermost deposit in the profile contained two pre-Livonian War (1558–1583) ceramic finds – sherds of 15th–16th century Siegburg stoneware and a local earthenware pot.



Fig. 7. Some sherds of 15th–17th c stoneware from Mere Ave. 8–10 archaeological supervision.

Jn 7. 15.–17. saj kivikeraamikat Mere pst 8–10 arheoloogiliselt järelevalvelt.

(AI 6330: 9, 24, 41, 50.)

Photo / Foto: Sander Nittim

dwelling of fishermen, boatmen and other harbour workers, who in Tallinn were mostly of non-German origin (i.e. Estonians, Finns or Swedes). Also, the locations of the chapel and port tower are still unknown. According to written sources and town views these buildings were located somewhere in the neighbourhood of the harbour in the late medieval and early post-medieval period.

EARLIER ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

Before the preliminary archaeological investigations discussed here archaeologists had been involved only in two minor digging works (Fig. 2: A–B), both unpublished so far. In addition to those only some occasional shipwreck finds could be mentioned (Fig. 1: V) and only two of them are published (Mei 1938; Ilves 2008).

Previously, the presence of the cultural layer of the 17th and 18th centuries, as well as a probably Late Medieval depos-

¹ AI 7053.

Probably the layer has deposited in the Late Middle Ages, but its overall context remained unclear, as the natural layers were not reached.

Further away, about 250 m southwards of the discussed site, a small-scale excavation was carried out in late November 1997 at Mere Ave. 8/10 (Mäll & Toos 1998) (Fig. 2: B). Due to bad weather and a water pipe accident, research conditions were severe and most of the finds² were collected from the soil after it was removed from the original context by an excavator. Besides various glazed redware, fragments of 16th–18th century stoneware from Siegburg, Westerwald, Frechen, Waldenburg and Duingen (Fig. 7) were gathered. Two Waldenburg sherds seem to come from the 15th century, and some local earthenware might be of medieval origin. Therefore it was supposed that the bottommost deposit might have developed in the Middle Ages, although it cannot be excluded that even most of the material was indeed brought from the Old Town and dumped at the site.

Finally, in 2011, partly simultaneously with our preliminary investigations, OÜ Muinasprojekt team carried out archaeological supervision work in connection with the reconstructing of *Kultuurikatel* (results so far unpublished).

TRIAL PITS OF THE PRELIMINARY ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION

Deciding by the maps the site of the new building of the Tallinn municipal government is planned right on the shore of the 17th century final decades. This site constitutes a considerable part of a territory, once quite clearly outlined: in the north and east by sea, in the west by the ditch connecting the moat and the sea, and in the south by the road from the town to the harbour. Three trial pits were dug, one in the western and two in the eastern part of the area. The cultural layer and constructions of archaeological interest came to light at a depth of about 1.2–1.5 m from the ground. The original intact soil – hard greyish clay in the western part and grey sand in the east – was reached at a depth of about 3 m from the present-day ground level.

In the first pit (Figs 2: 1; 5: D) we came across the southern edge of a construction consisting of loose stones, with posts supporting them on the land side (Fig. 8). The presumable landfill-retaining structure, running more or less in the same direction as the coastline, consisted mostly of smaller granite and limestone pieces, but there were also some large granite stones. Among the stones an impressive collection of stove tiles³ from the first half of the 17th century⁴ (Fig. 9) was recovered. These might even be the fragments of the same stove, brought for instance from the Old Town. Soil deposits on the southern side of the construction were characterised by the alternation of humus-rich layers (including dung) with



Fig. 8. The southern or landward side of presumable landfill-retaining structure in test pit 1. Some posts have been already removed during the excavation.

Jn 8. Arvatava kaldakindlustuse lõuna- ehk maapoolne külg 1. šurfs. Mõned postid on kaevamise käigus eemaldatud.

Photo / Foto: Ragnar Nurk

² AI 6330.

³ Finds of preliminary archaeological investigations deposited in AI 6984, total of 594 pieces.

⁴ Determined by Erki Russow (AI).



Fig. 9. Selection of 17th century stove tiles from test pit 1.

Jn 9. Valik 17. saj ahjukahleid 1. šurfist.

(AI 6984: 9–26, 33–43, 57–64.)

Photo / Foto: Sander Nittim



Fig. 10. Building walls and wooden details in test pit 2. View from the north-east.

Jn 10. Hoonemüürid ja puitdetailid šurfis 2. Vaade kirdest.

Photo / Foto: Erki Russow

partly covered with lime mortar. The foundation of the southern wall of the building ran across the whole excavation, with another wall running northwards from it. To the west of the transverse wall was a part of the semi-basement and to the east was a small stairway leading to the cellar. The floor of the cellar had been about 70 cm below the level of the same-time cobbled street or courtyard, which was well preserved south of the building. The small scale of the test pit does not allow to detect reliable connections with the maps yet. The orientation of the building correlates with the direction of Sadama St., but the house is relatively far from it, remaining more likely inside the former block.

In both rooms a lot of remains of wooden constructions were discovered, including presumable floor and stair fragments, but also a small door (125 × 88 cm) with doorposts and a sill between the two rooms. Some of the timber was of secondary use, which was suggested by nails and cut-in tenons. Two square beams were probably preserved in their

sea sand, which suggests recurrent submersions. The southern, landward side of the stones was supported by a row of split posts with a diameter of about 10 cm. Two larger, nearly vertical posts, with a diameter of 15–20 cm, were also discovered in the excavation. By visual estimation they were of pine wood.⁵ One of these posts was in the same row with the small split posts, but the other was located about 1 m landwards from the stone structure. It seems likely that these larger posts were supporting a pier or some similar construction, but it is impossible to fathom its precise nature without more extensive excavations. In the same pit, a little higher, some large granite stones lay side by side, and to the south of these a layer of decayed wood was preserved. This suggests the existence of a wooden floor or platform. Finds discovered upon this layer dated approximately from the 18th century. The pavement of rectangular limestone slabs at a depth of about 1.5 m from the ground belonged most likely to the 19th century.

In the second pit (Figs 2: 2; 5: II), dug in the south-eastern part of the site, we came across some mixed limestone and granite walls of a building, at a depth of about 1.5 m from the present-day ground (Fig. 10). These were bound mainly with clay and only the uppermost parts were

⁵ Unfortunately the dendrochronological dating of samples was not possible, due to the small number of tree-rings (according to Alar Läänelaid, TÜ).

original position as part of the floor construction of the cellar. One tenoned beam, thrown carelessly on the bottom of the cellar at the time of filling it up indicates that the over-ground part of the building was made of wood. East of the north–south directional wall a curving stairway came to light in the excavation, where a wooden staircase had led up to the ground floor or directly to the street or yard. Basement walls and the foundations of the building were preserved 2 m high in the ground and were built upon a raft of beams lying in the same direction with the wall. The raft, in its turn, was built upon a dung layer containing a few finds from the second half of the 17th century e.g. a fragment of a clay pipe. As dendrochronological dating of wooden details was not possible four samples for radiocarbon dating were taken.⁶ According to the calibrated datings three samples from wooden details with different location (raft, floor construction and loose tenoned beam) gave very similar results, belonging most likely to the period *ca.* 1461–1697 cal. AD. The most probable calibrated dating of one beam under the floor which had even visible marks of secondary use as part of a roof-construction was 1415–1530 cal. AD. Despite the early radiocarbon dates of some details, the find material and stratification suggest that the house was most probably built during the second half of the 17th century.

From the bottom part of the sandy soil filling the cellar, and particularly from between and upon the wooden details, an impressive collection of finds from the 17th century – first half of the 18th century was recovered. These included porcelain (Fig. 11) and faience, a great number of clay pipes with different master's marks, and also a bird-shaped whistle of clay with coloured paintings. Other finds included also a Russian *denga* minted in 1712. Sporadically



Fig. 11. Sherds of 17th–18th century Chinese porcelain tableware from the fill of the cellar in test pit 2.

Jn 11. 17.–18. saj Hiina portselanmõude kilde 2. šurfi keldri täitest.

(AI 6984: 186–199, 205–216, 229–232, 457.)

Photo / Foto: Sander Nittim

⁶ Tln-3351, Tln-3352, Tln-3357 & Tln-3358. Financed by the National Heritage Board.

a charcoal layer suggesting fire could be observed upon the walls, but the wooden details at the bottom of the cellar lacked traces of burning. So, taking into consideration the find material from the fill it is possible that the destruction of the building and filling the cellar took place during the Great Nordic War (1700–1721). Swedish-held Tallinn capitulated to the Russian troops after a short siege at the end of September 1710. As no destruction during the siege has been recorded (Palli 1976, 305–306) it is therefore more likely that the building was demolished later, rather under the Russian rule already. Maybe it was connected with the extensive construction work of a new naval port started by Russian Czar Peter I in 1714.

The third pit (Fig. 2: 3) was dug in the north-eastern part of the site in front of the stairs of Linnahall. This revealed a limestone building. The foundation part in the excavation was the north-western corner of the earlier phase of the building. Later, an extension had been built to the northern side (see Fig. 12). Although the building had no cellar, its foundations had been built upon a wooden raft deep upon natural sand. Dung beside the foundations, probably brought for fill while building the house, contained finds from the



Fig. 12. Building walls discovered in test pit 3, built in two stages. View from the north.

Jn 12. Šurfist 3 leitud kahes järgus ehitatud hoone müürid. Vaade põhjast.

Photo / Foto: Ulla Kadakas

17th–18th centuries. Thus the building may be dated to the end of the 18th or beginning of the 19th century. At the western side of the excavation a pavement of large rectangular limestone slabs was preserved, which may be contemporaneous with the building. The thick charcoal layer upon the walls suggests a fire accompanying the destruction. While clearing the walls, a *kopek* of Nikolai I (reigned 1825–1855) came to light among other finds. Still, as a building of the same shape is continuously depicted on maps after the Crimean War (1853–1856), it cannot be probably connected with the war events. More likely the fire took place at the end of the century or the beginning of the next.

CONCLUSIONS

The territory of the planned new building of the municipal government has emerged from water mainly in the 17th century, aided by the filling of the coastal sea and construction of landfill-retaining structures. There are well preserved foundations and cellars of houses as well as other constructions from the 17th–19th centuries on the site. In trial pit 1 remains of a presumable waterfront structure built in the middle or the second half of the 17th century was discovered. In trial pit 2 a stone-walled cellar, probably dating from the second half of the 17th century and demolished in the years of the Great Nordic War (1700–1721), with many well-preserved wooden details, came to light. In trial pit 3 foundations of a house built in the 18th century and destroyed approximately at the end of the 19th century were discovered. Further discoveries of traces of harbour constructions and wrecks of boats or sailboats cannot be precluded. In the south-eastern part of the site the presence of the cultural layer of a medieval harbour settlement is also possible. By spring 2012 the beginning of the construction

of the new building of Tallinn municipal government had been postponed and the archaeological excavations accordingly. These would be one of the largest excavations ever undertaken in Tallinn and the first in the historic harbour area.

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ARHEOLOOGILISED EELUURINGUD KESK- JA VARAUUSAEGSE TALLINNA SADAMA PIIRKONNAS

Ragnar Nurk, Villu Kadakas ja Guido Toos

2010.–2011. aastal viidi Tallinna Kultuuriväärtuste Ameti tellimisel läbi arheoloogilised eeluuringud linnavalitsuse kavandatava uue hoone asukohas. Tegu on vanalinnast kirdesse jääva umbes 11 000 m² suuruse alaga vana katlamaja ja Linnahalli vahel, kus praegu paikneb Statoili tankla ja autoparkla (jn 2). See ala jääb kaitsealuse Kalamaja asulakoha idaserva Tallinna kesk- ja varauusaegse sadama vahetusse lähedusse, mille tuumikala (Sadama tänava ümbrus) praeguse seisuga kaitse all pole. Varem on toimunud väikesemahulised arheoloogilised tööd u 50 m läänes Põhja pst 31 (2005) ja u 250 m lõunas Mere pst 8–10 (1997) (jn 2: A ja B; 5: III). Mõlemal juhul moodustas valdava osa leidudest varauusaegne materjal u 16.–18. sajandist (jn 6 ja 7), kuid kummaski kohas võis kultuurikihi alumine osa olla keskaegne.

Muinsuskaitseameti tellimisel analüüsiti paralleelselt väljuurimistega sadamat ja selle lähikonda kujutavaid 17. sajandist – 20. saj I poolest pärinevaid plaane (jn 1). Plaanide põhjal võiks arvata, et hiljemalt Rootsi aja lõpuks oli valdav osa kavandatava hoone maa-alast juba mere alt vabanenud, siin oli kujunenud küllaltki ebakorrapärane tänavatevõrk ja kvartalid olid jagatud suureks hulgaks peamiselt üsna väikesteks kruntideks. Seda territooriumi piirasid idast vallikraavi ja mere vaheline kraav, lõunast Suurest Rannavärvast sadamasse viiv tee (praeguse Sadama tänava eelkäija) ning ülejäänud külgedest meri, kusjuures läände jäi sadam ja põhjas ulatus ligikaudu kuni eelnevalt nimetatud kraavi suudmeni sadamat kaitsev kivimuul. Tõenäoliselt oli sinne elu suuresti seotud sadamaga. Looduslike kihtide pealipinna kõrgusi ja jääajajärgse maakerke keskmist kiirust arvestades võttes on krundi kaguosas võimalik keskaegse kultuurikihi olemasolu. Samuti ei saa välistada vrakleide.

Linnavalitsuse hoone eeluuringute raames kaevati kolm proovišurfi (jn 2) mõõtmetega u 5 × 5 m ja sügavusega u 3 m. Laias laastus 17.–19. saj pärinevate hoonemüüride ja sillutisteni jõuti vaid u 1–1,5 m sügavusel maapinnast. Puutumatu loodusliku pinnase ülemiseks kihiks oli ala lääneosas savi ja idaosas liiv.

Ala lääneosas tehtud 1. šurfi (jn 2: 1; 5: I) põhjapoolses osas satuti konstruktsioonile, mille moodustas kivikuhjatis koos seda lõunapoolselt (!) küljelt toetavate väikeste keskelt lõhestatud kaldus postidega (jn 8). Lõhestatud postidega samal, maapoolsel küljel oli jälgitav, kuidas mitme aasta jooksul oli meri kandnud üle kivide liiva, mille õhukesed kihid vaheldusid huumusekihtidega (sh sõnnik). Kivide vahel saadud ahjukahlite komplekti (terviklikumaid näiteid jn 9) põhjal võiks arvata, et see tõenäoline kaldakindlustus pole tehtud enne 17. saj keskpaika või sajandi teist poolt. Kuna see paikneb tunduvalt lõuna pool plaanidel u 1700 a paiku näidatud rannajoonest, siis võib see viidata mere eriti intensiivsele ja süstemaatilisele täitmisele 17. saj II poolel. Leiti ka kaks jämedamat, savisse rammitud teritatud otstega posti, mis ilmselt moodustasid osa suuremast, meile praegu tundmatust konstruktsioonist (nt sadama- või paadisillast). Kõrgemal jäid šurfi mõned suured kõrvuti asetsevad raudkivid. Nende vastu ulatus lõuna poolt kõdunenud puiduviirg, mille alt saadi 18. saj leide. Seega võib tegu olla Põhjasõja järgse hoone jäänustega.

Sadama tänava lähedusse kaevatud 2. šurfiga (jn 2: 2; 5: II) satuti hästisäilinud kivist seintega poolkeldrile ja sinna viivale kumeralt keeravale trepikäigule, mille mõlema allosas oli hästi säilinud väga suur hulk puitdetaile (jn 10), kuigi need olid mõnevõrra laiali paisatud. Raud- ja paekivi segatehnika ja peamiselt saviga laotud keldrimüürid ja vundamendid olid maa sees säilinud kuni 2 m kõrgusena. Müür oli rajatud puitparvele, mis omakorda oli tehtud üksikuid u 17. saj II poole leide (sh valge savipiibu varrekatke) sisaldavale sõnnikukihile. Vastu lõunapoolse keldrimüüri väliskülje ülaosa ulatus samaaegse tänava või hoovi hästisäilinud munakivisillutis. Keldri allosa täitest, eriti puitdetailide vahelt ja pealt saadi esinduslik kollektioon 17.–18. saj I poole leide: maalintega portselan- ja fajanssnoode kilde (jn 11) ning savipiipude katkeid, aga ka näiteks linnukujuline värviliste maalintudega savivile ja 1712. aastal vermitud Vene denga. Seetõttu näib, et kelder on täis aetud Põhjasõja perioodil, millalgi üsna pea pärast Tallinna alistumist Vene vägedele, ehk siis ühtlasi ajal, mil Peeter I korraldusel algasid sadamas suured ehitustööd.

Kõige põhjapoolsemas, 3. šurfis (jn 2: 3) tulid päevavalgele hoonevundamendid, mis olid laotud valdavalt paekivist ja seotud lubimördiga (jn 12). Kuigi hoonel puudus šurfi kohal kelder, olid vundamendid rajatud sügavale, looduslikule liivale ja ka siin oli nende alla tehtud veel palkidest parv. Müüride vaheline ala põranda tasapinnast madalamal oli täidetud kõigepealt meetripaksuse sõnnikukihiga (sisaldas kuni 18. saj leide) ja sellele oli omakorda toodud paks kiht liiva.

2012. a kevade seisuga oli Tallinna Linnavalitsuse uue hoone ehituse alustamine edasi lükatud ja vastavalt ka arheoloogilised kaevamised, mis oleksid ühed suuremad Tallinnas läbi aegade ja ühtlasi esimesed sadama piirkonnas.