Archaeological excavations on the plot of the old department store in Tartu, Riia Street 2

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INTRODUCTION

From July to November 2014 archaeological excavations took place on the plot Riia Street 2 / Aleksandri Street 2 (Fig. 1), when the old department store was demolished to make room for a new commercial centre. The work began with preliminary investigations on 3–14 July, carried out by archaeologist Peeter Piirits (MTÜ AEG). These investigations showed that archaeologically interesting layers in the northern part of the plot had been destroyed in the first half of the 1960s during the construction of the department store. Yet, some medieval and Early Modern deposits had survived in a *ca*. 4000 m² large area in the central and southern part of the quarter. Therefore it was necessary to conduct both archaeological surveillance and research parallel to the digging at the construction. Earlier layers in the studied area had in places been destroyed due to the building activities in the quarter during the second half of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century. A large part of those buildings, destroyed in World War II, had had cellars, also the log rafts of the building foundations extended into earlier layers. In addition, three larger ponds were documented in the central part of the excavation (see e.g. plan from 1767 – EAA 2623-1-2049, sheet 49), the construction of the ponds in the second half of the 19th century had removed earlier depositions. Therefore machinery was used during archaeological excavations to remove the upper debris layers, the filler deposits of the ponds and the stone constructions of buildings that had been destroyed during World War II until archaeologically valuable layers. From there the soil was studied manually until the natural peat layer, which towards Aleksandri street was located at absolute height 34.90 m, and towards Turu street at absolute height 33.90 m a.s.l. In total an area of 1330 m² was studied (Fig. 2), the work was conducted by archaeologists Rünno Vissak, Eero Heinloo and Silja Möllits from MTÜ AEG. Find material collected during the excavations will be handed over to Tartu City Museum (collection number TM A-221).

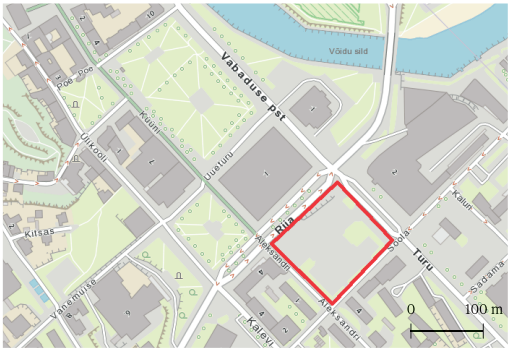

Fig. 1. *Location map of the investigated area (plot of the old department store) in Tartu.*

Jn 1. *Uuritud ala ehk Tartu Vana Kaubamaja kvartali asendiplaan.*

Figure / Joonis: Silja Möllits

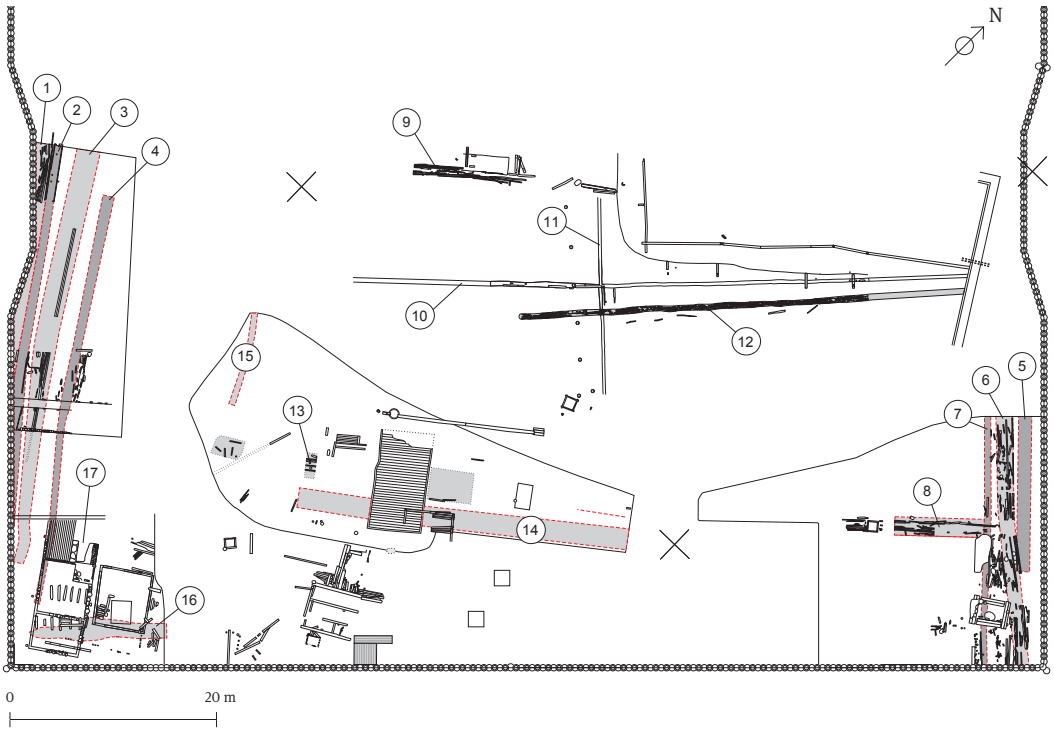

Fig. 2. *Constructions revealed at the excavations at Riia Street 2 in Tartu. 1–15 – ditches distinguished on the excavated area, 16 – palisade constructed onto the former ditch, 17 – base of a three-room building from the 18th century.*
Jn 2. *Tartu Vana Kaubamaja kvartali kaevandis välja puhastatud objektid. 1–15 – läbi uuritud alal eristatud kraavid, 16 – püstpostidest tara varasema kraavi peal, 17 – Põhjasõja-järgse asustusega seotud kolmeruumilise hoone alus.*
Figure / Joonis: Andres Tepper

SOUTHERN PART OF THE QUARTER

The earliest settlement in the area

The earliest layers connected with human activities came to light in the southern corner of the quarter at an area of *ca*. 15 × 15 m (see Fig. 3).[1] The early cultural layer (thickness 10–15 cm) consisted of dense peaty dark soil that included some organics and a few pieces of charcoal, formed directly on the natural peat layer. The layer contained rather few finds, but was of remarkably early date. In addition to local wheel-thrown pottery a couple of dozen fragments of imported ceramics were discovered, with the Siegburg type proto-stoneware and stoneware and fragments of proto-stoneware and stoneware from the South Lower Saxony region dominating (see Fig. 4). The imported wares date the layer to the end of the 13th century / first quarter of the 14th century. A 20 cm deep depression was discovered in the layer (diameter *ca*. 60 cm), which probably had been a waste hole (Fig. 3: 1). Fragments of a fairly complete wheel-thrown pot[2] and a bone needle were discovered from the depression. A northeast–southwest directional ditch (width 1–1.5 m, in places up to 2 m), built into the natural peat layer, was connected with the early settlement (see Fig. 3: 2). The ditch was slightly dropping towards the River Emajõgi and contained yellowish-white sand lines,

[1] The early cultural layer extends probably out of the excavation area towards south and west.
[2] Type of simple wheel-thrown pottery 3: 3, according to the typology of Andres Tvauri (2000, 104).

sediments from the flowing water. The ditch was most probably used for draining the area, but it could also have marked the existing plot borders. Along with the depression and the ditch also approximately thirty small stake holes (diameter 5 cm) and a couple of larger ones (diameter 20–25 cm), filled with light sand, may be connected with the early settlement (see Fig. 3: 3). The posts did not stand in one line, therefore they could not be remains of a palisade. However, it is possible that a timber construction that had partly sunk into the peat, made of rods and logs, which was discovered in the western profile (see Fig. 3: 4), was also connected with the early settlement. The layer of the early settlement was for the entire southern corner of the quarter covered by yellowish-white sand that had probably been brought to the site to fill/level the area.

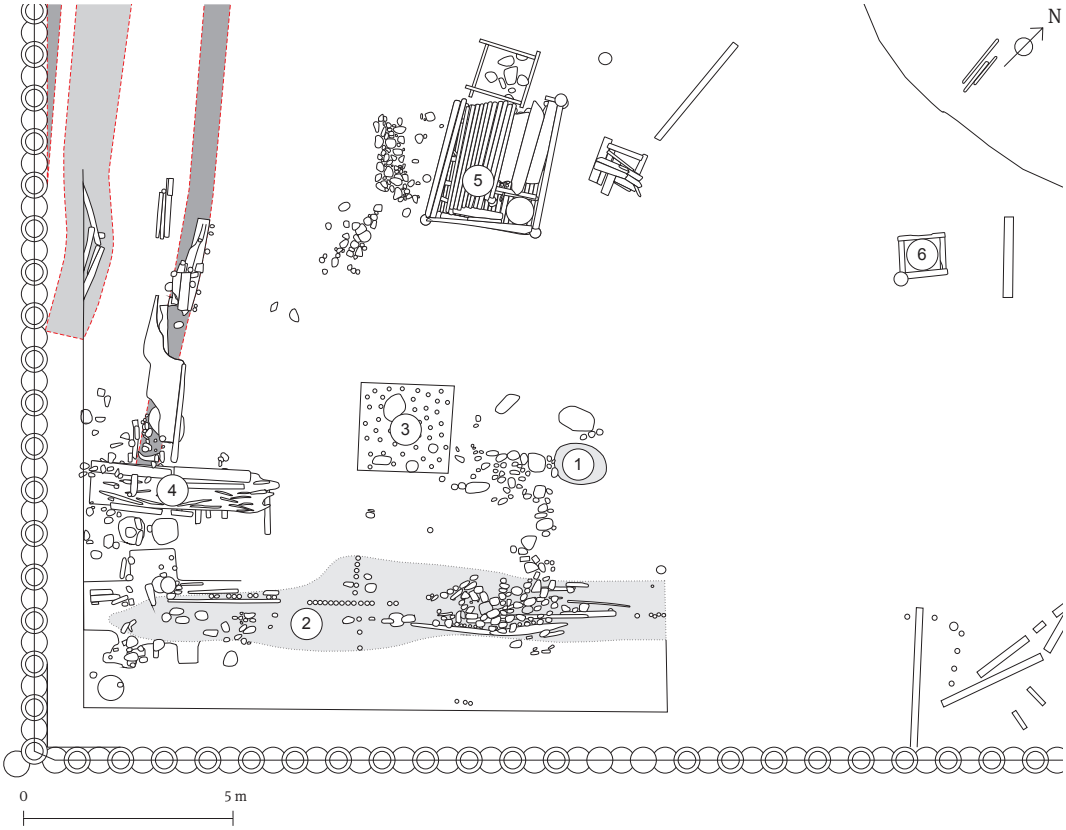

Fig. 3. *Early cultural layers of the south-west corner of the excavations at Riia Street 2 in Tartu. 1 – Residue hole from the end of the 13th century / first decades of the 14th century, 2 – ditch dug into natural peat layer, 3 – area with stake holes in natural peat layer, 4 – twig and log construction partly sunken into natural peat layer. 5 – base of the oldest documented building, used from the mid-15th century, 6 – timber log formwork well, in use simultaneously with the oldest documented building.*

Jn 3. *Tartu Vana Kaubamaja kvartali kaevandi edelanurk varaste ladestustega. 1 – jäätmeauk 13. sajandi lõpust / 14. sajandi I veerandist, 2 – loodusliku turba sisse rajatud kraavi süvend, 3 – ala, kus loodusliku turba sees on eristatavad vaiaaugud, 4 – osaliselt loodusliku turba sisse vajunud vitstest ja palkidest puitkonstruktsioon, 5 – kaevamistel dokumenteeritud vanima hoone põhi, kasutusel hiljemalt 15. sajandi keskpaigast, 6 – puitraketistega salvkaev, kasutusel üheaegselt ala vanima hoonega.*

Figure / Joonis: Andres Tepper

Medieval settlement until the Livonian War

The sandy planning layer was covered with darker greyish-brown soil, richer in organic material, designating the next period of usage. During that period three drainage ditches had been dug in the area, one of which was only visible in the west profile of the pit (Fig. 2: 3), and two parallel ditches in the southern part (Fig. 3: 2).[3] Conjointly a palisade had soon been erected over the northern northeast–southwest directional ditch that continued to mark the border of the earlier plot. Prior to ramming the stakes of the palisade (diameter 10–15 cm) into the earth a 1.5 m deep ditch had been dug, therefore the stakes were supported from the sides with various timber thrown into the ditch. On the line of the fence there were two massive pine posts (diameter 40 cm), also another line of posts was documented crossing the east-west directional fence (survived in the length of 2.5 m) that similarly to the east-west directional ditch had been erected into a trench deepened into the ground. A ^{14}C sample was taken from the timber construction on the eastern side of the ditch (Fig. 3: 2) for dating the time of the construction. The analysis dated the timber to the period cal AD 1190–1294.[4]

Layers connected with the second period of habitation were considerably richer in finds than the cultural layer of the preceding settlement. The majority of finds included local wheel-thrown pottery, supplemented by imported ceramics like stoneware from the South Lower Saxony Region (LASX3[5]) and the so-called Siegburg ash-glazed stoneware (SIEG3b). In the upper part also pottery made in the Langerwehe (LANG3) and Raeren (RAER1) areas occurred in addition to the Siegburg stoneware. In addition to ceramics a large amount of leather items were found in the ditches, incl. fragments of footwear, leather strips, and residues of leather processing. The numerous finds connected with leather may refer to craftsmen in the area, yet it is equally possible that material referring to leather processing was brought to the area as a secondary deposit. In addition to leather finds the layer displayed also residues from boring bone buttons.

The layer is also connected with the oldest timber building that was documented during the excavation (Fig. 3: 5), from which two periods of usage were distinguished. The earlier period of the building featured a one-room timber construction of horizontal logs, partly deepened into the ground (measurements 3 × 4 m), from which only the lowest row of logs had survived. The ends of the side logs had been hewed and fastened into the rebates of massive vertical posts in the corners. The floor consisted of round logs with the diameter of 6–8 cm, placed over a natural peat layer. The construction had no hearth. From the find material connected with the timber construction a few brass items stand out, such as brooches and thimble (see Fig. 5).

It is possible that also the well with timber formwork (Fig. 3: 6) east of the building was connected with the early period of habitation. The well, measuring 115 × 115 cm, had survived up to the 12th row of logs. The depth of the well from the highest survived log down to the lower brim of the lowest log was 184 cm. There were only a few finds in the even fill of the well, like a small number of pottery fragments and side boards of a small wooden vessel. A brass thimble was found from the outer side of the uppermost survived log of the formwork.

[3] The figure depicts only one trench that stood out clearly in the soil. The second trench is noticeable only on the profile drawing. The trenches stood directly next to each other.

[4] TA 3067, processed in the radiocarbon laboratory of the University of Tartu and calibrated with 2σ uncertainty using the IntCal09 calibration curve (Reimer *et al.* 2009) and the OxCal v.4.2 program (Bronk Ramsey 2009). The result of the analysis, however, does not support the dating of the layer based on the stratigraphy and find material, but gives a somewhat earlier dating. Since the analysed peg was rather thin (diameter less than 5 cm), it is not likely that it had been re-used. Therefore, the result of the analysis is considered to be incorrect.

[5] The typology of imported ceramics follows the study by Erki Russow on the 13th – 17th century imported ceramics in west Estonian towns (Russow 2006).

The log was located in the southern side of the well. Also four closely lined palisade posts were unearthed 1.5 m east and north-east from the well, originating from the same period as the well itself.

The find material suggests that the building and the well were constructed in the mid-15th century, the first period of using the building ended probably shortly before or during the Livonian War (1558–1583).

Early Modern settlement until the Great Northern War (1700–1721)

On the site of the building that was abandoned after the Livonian War a new one-room construction was built (measurements 3 × 4 m), on top of the previous building (see Fig. 6). The location of the previous building has clearly been considered when erecting the new one, yet a new floor and new side and corner constructions have been made for the new building. The new building had survived to the height of two rows of logs and similarly to the previous building, the side logs had been placed to the rebates of new vertical corner posts. The floor of the new building was made from round logs that rested on perpendicular logs below, in addition soil and stones had been carried under the new floor level, i.e. upon the old floor. In the east side of the building three 35 cm wide boards could be distinguished in addition to the round logs. Those boards did not, however, reach until the south wall of the building, since a bottomless cask was placed in the new floor level, from where some boards of small wooden vessels and a couple of bottom sides of bowls were found. The end of the usage period of the building is marked by a sandy fill on the floor level; finds from that layer suggest that the building may have been in use until the end of the 17th century.

Reddish loam extended against the lower logs of the west and south sides of the new building, hence connected with the usage period of the building. Right below the loam

Fig. 4. *Proto- and near-stoneware from Siegburg, near-stoneware and stoneware from South Lower Saxony.*
Jn 4. *Siegburgi protokivi- ning varakivikeraamika, Lõuna-Alam-Saksi varakivi- ja kivikeraamika.*
Photo / Foto: Eero Heinloo

Fig. 5. *Brass objects found from the south-west corner of the quarter.*
Jn 5. *Kvartali edelaosast leitud messingist esemed.*
Photo / Foto: Eero Heinloo

Fig. 6. *Base of the earliest building (end of the 14th century) found in the quarter. View from the north-east.*
Jn 6. *Kvartali varaseima, 14. sajandi lõpul rajatud hoone alus. Vaade kirdest.*
Photo / Foto: Silja Möllits

a level layer of medium-sized field stones had survived, which had been better preserved in the south and west side of the building. It is also possible that the level field stones layer had existed also during the previous usage period of the building. Directly on top of the reddish loam there was brownish soil, marking the cultural layer of the later building. Compared with medieval deposits the brown soil contained slightly more debris impurities (mortar, brick). The typical finds from the layer (Early Modern glazed redware, fragments of NW-Russian grey field bottles covered with green glaze, fragments of stove tiles covered with green glaze, stems of clay pipes in the upper part of the layer) date the layer connected with the building to the fourth quarter of the 16th century until the end of the 17th century. Also the ditch with horizontal logs at the east side that ran slightly diagonal to the Aleksandri street (Fig. 2: 4) possibly originates from the same period. Along with the north-south oriented ditch also the east-west oriented vertical fence could be associated with the mid-17th century. The fence was located at a previous ditch and as such continued to mark the former plot border (Fig. 2: 16; 3: 2).

Settlement after the Great Northern War

The cultural layer that designated the second usage period of the building was in the entire excavation area covered by debris soil. This fill was brought to the area after the Great Northern War. On the levelled ground a larger dwelling building with at least three separate rooms had been erected (Fig. 2: 17; 7). The contours of the building could be read from foundations made of medium or small size field stones and occasional bricks, later construction activities had severely damaged the basement which therefore had survived only in fragments. Considering the modest load capacity of the stone basement, the building had probably been a timber construction. The west, south and east side of the building could be distinguished, the north side had been destroyed by the construction of a later stone building that in turn was destroyed in World War II. Excavations established that the central room (measurements 5 × 4.65 m) and the northern room had had wooden floors made of planks. At places (e.g. in the central room) the space under the floor had been filled/levelled with red Devonian sand. The eastern part of the building displayed stone constructions, that stood out from the rest of the building both construction wise (binding material being either clay or lime mortar) and for the material used (massive field stones, regularly laid bricks). The massive construction and load capacity of the structure suggests that it had probably been the basement construction for a stove and chimney. The mouth of the probable stove opened north, with a stone level in front of the mouth that may have been used as a hearth. A chimney had been in the back of the stove, with a rectangular stone basement (160 × 160 cm) preserved.

Fig. 7. *Three-room building from the 18th century. View from the north-west.*
Jn 7. *18. sajandil rajatud kolmeruumilise hoone alus. Vaade loodest.*
Photo / Foto: Eero Heinloo

The building has been destroyed in fire as indicated by charred floor boards documented in the central and northern rooms. Traces of fire and soot were also present on the layer of

smaller field stones and broken bricks marking ground level at the outer sides of the building. The building in the south-western corner of the plot, on the corner of Aleksandri and Soola streets has been marked already on the town plan from 1732 (EAA 995-1-6843, sheet 2). The building was destroyed not earlier than the first quarter of the 19th century[6], since it was still marked on the 1811 town plan.

Ditches discovered in the south part of the plot

In between the central and southern part of the plot depressions of several mainly north-west/south-east directional ditches were found. The earliest of those depressions was a narrow (up to 60 cm) north-east/south-west directional ditch that had survived only to a low degree (Fig. 2: 15), observable just for 9 metres. No traces of timber construction, vertical posts or post holes were discovered from the inside and sides of the ditch. Find material from the ditch allows to date the construction time of the ditch to the end of the 14th century. A mid-18th century depression (width 2.6 m and depth 1.2 m) could be documented in a 22 m long section (Fig. 2: 13). There were timber constructions in the fill or sides of the ditch. The latest of the ditches was a 2 m wide and up to 90 cm deep ditch filled with red sand (Fig. 2: 14). The massive layer of red sand was the same that was documented on the entire studied area – the large-scale fill layer brought to the area in connection with erecting later densely located buildings in the turn of the 19th and 20th century. A similar layer of red sand covered earlier layers west of the studied objects up to Kalevi street. Most probably the sand originated from the east slope of Lillemägi hill.

CENTRAL PART OF THE PLOT

In the central part of the construction area, i.e. northern part of the excavated area, mainly depressions that had been used as drainage and border ditches were studied. Two ditches, crossing one another, could be distinguished as traces of the earliest human activities. The north-east/south-west directional depression (Fig. 2: 10) could be followed in the length of *ca*. 60 m; the north-west/south-east directional depression (Fig. 2: 11) could be documented in the length of 20 m. The survived width of the ditch was 30–50 cm, the depth 20–50 cm. Unfortunately the layer inside the ditches lacked any find material, which made dating of the ditches difficult. The depression of a ditch (Fig. 2: 12) that was slightly later than the above-mentioned ditches was documented for the length of 34 m. The ditch had been filled with brushwood; find material from the soil between the brushwood dated the ditch to the 14th – 15th century. Edges of an even later ditch (Fig. 2: 9) were fringed with thin horizontal logs, placed mainly on top of each other, fastened with vertical posts in the inner sides of the ditch. Only two side fragments of local pottery were found from the ditch, which do not allow dating the ditch accurately.

In the central part of the plot, by the ditches, also some timber constructions were documented. For example, a well of hewed logs (measurements on the outside 1.2 × 1.2 m, depth 1.2 m) (Fig. 2: 18) was unearthed in the central part of the plot. Finds from the fill layer of the well originate from the 15th – 16th centuries. Also a row of thicker vertical posts (diameter 30 cm) (Fig. 2: 19) was located in the same area. The survived 50–70 cm long lower parts of the posts stood in a row with 3.5–3.9 m wide intervals. Most likely horizontal logs had been placed between the posts, forming a border fence that was located 2–3 m north-west from the north-west/south-east directional border ditch.

[6] Find material from the destruction layer included fragments of industrial wares, white-glazed tiles and porcelain dishes, etc.

EAST AND WEST PART OF THE PLOT

At the east and west side of the studied area, the present western part of the Turu street and the eastern side of the Aleksandri street sidewalk respectively, depressions of a number of ditches came to light. The cuts into the ditches and their fill layers demonstrated that the width, depth and location of the ditches varied in different stages and periods of usage, several earlier ditches functioned as subterranean drainage during later usage periods.

West side of the plot

Depressions of four more or less parallel and at places overlapping north-south directional ditches from different periods (see Fig. 8) were documented in a *ca*. 44 m long section (at an up to 8 m wide area) at the east side of the Aleksandri street, i.e. in the west side of the plot.

Fig. 8. *Ditches at the western edge of the investigated area. View from the south.*
Jn 8. *Kraavid uuritud ala lääneservas, vaade lõunast. Photo / Foto: Rünno Vissak*

The earliest of the ditches (Fig. 2: 3) could be observed at the length of *ca*. 40 m (20 cm wide and 60–65 cm deep), filled with overlapping layers of darker grey soil, lines of purer sand and natural peat. In the upper part of the ditch, fill logs placed in the longitudinal axis of the ditch had survived. The longer logs were placed straight next to each other in groups of two or three, thus forming a launder-like construction.

Another ditch, at least 90 cm wide and 50 cm deep (Fig. 2: 2) was located 130–140 cm west of the earliest ditch, with longer thin horizontal logs placed at its sides. Next to the logs in the east side of the ditch, in the inner side of the ditch, a few vertical posts were documented in the middle part of the ditch. Logs lying in the direction of the ditch were observed in the upper part of the fill in the southern section of the ditch. Apparently the ditch had been dug deeper on several occasions, its location at different stages had varied slightly and the timber discovered from the ditch area originated from different periods of usage.

The construction of the next drainage ditch (Fig. 2: 1) had damaged the timber constructions of the west side of the ditch described above. The depression was observable for the length of 22 m; its width at the upper part in the border of the excavation was 140 cm with the depth of up to 70 cm. The upper survived part was filled with numerous horizontally lying logs, placed along the direction of the ditch, many of which were with sharpened ends. Below and between the upper timber, tightly compressed brownish soil was found, below the logs and at their sides whitish sand could be seen. In the east side of the ditch whitish-greyish postholes filled with sand were clearly visible in places. In the last usage period of the ditch, its filled up depression functioned as drainage. Logs placed tightly next to each other had to cover the closed ditch in order to keep the water moving and stopping the timber from clogging up.

The latest of the ditches in the west side of the plot (Fig. 2: 4) was a 120 cm wide and *ca*. 60–70 cm deep depression, with brownish debris rich fill, and in places larger stones and pieces of brick in the deeper end.

In addition to the north-south directional ditches an east-west directional ditch was documented in the west side of the plot. The ditch could be observed only in a 2 m long section,

because later digs had seriously damaged it. The survived width of the ditch was 50 cm, the depth up to 40 cm. It is possible that a section of the same ditch to the south-east was unearthed at a later stage of the excavation (Fig. 2: 13).

From the drainage ditches at the east side of the Aleksandri street the earliest was dated to the end of the 14th century and the latest to the 17th century.

East side of the plot

Three depressions of ditches from different periods that ran parallel to the Turu street and a depression perpendicularly located in regard to those (see Fig. 9) were excavated in a 24 m wide and 4.5–5 m long area in the west side of the Turu street, i.e. in the east side of the studied area.

Fig. 9. *Area of ditches in the western side of Turu street. View from the east.*
Jn 9. *Kraavide ala Turu tänava lääneküljel, vaade idast. Photo / Foto: Rünno Vissak*

The earliest of the drainage systems (Fig. 2: 7) was a ditch that demonstrated two stages of usage. The depth of the gently slanting ditch dug at the earlier period was 45–50 cm, its width was 1.9–2 m. At a later stage another 60 cm wide ditch had been dug at the same location into the depression of the earlier ditch, with logs placed as single logs or in groups of two and three in the bottom of the ditch and that after filling the ditch functioned as drainage.

Yet another depression followed the above ditches, with the width of 1.9–2 m and depth of 1.1 m. The depression could be seen for the length of 24 m; several thinner logs had been placed on top of each other into the ditch during its construction. The logs had been placed in a manner that the middle log was situated lower than the logs placed on its both sides, thus forming a launder like construction. It is obvious that also here the logs functioned as drainage after the depression had been filled; this is also confirmed by the layer of pure sand that had collected by the logs.

An even later ditch was located in the easternmost part of the plot (Fig. 2: 5). The ditch with the width of 1.3–1.4 m and 50 cm deep could be observed at the length of *ca*. 15 m and had been filled with a layer containing Early Modern Times debris. No timber constructions that could be connected with an open ditch were found by the depression, neither any logs used for drainage after filling the ditch were discovered.

Crosswise to the above-described ditches, a north-west/south-east directional ditch (Fig. 2: 8) was discovered, with the maximum width at the upper edge up to 2 m. A timber construction in the middle part of the ditch consisted of two parallel walls from logs placed over each other (slightly deviating). It is possible that this ditch was used in a similar way to the ditch no. 2 (see Fig. 2).

The earliest draining ditch on the west side of the Turu street may be according to the find material dated to the second half of the 14th century, the latest ditch to the 17th century.

The find material from the studied area included a fragment of a tin 'tau' cross or St Antony's cross and a half of a lead seal (see Fig. 10). The lower fork of the St Anthony's cross was found in the south-east part of the excavation, from the Modern Times layer on top of the peat layer that contained earlier finds – from the layer, which earlier excavations had

relocated from the vicinity. The fragment depicts partly the body and legs of the crucified, based on analogy of the decorations at the edges and the knob that had preserved on the end of the fork the item may be dated to the 15th – 16th century (Jonuks & Joosu 2013). It is known from historic sources that in the Middle Ages a St Antony's chapel stood in the vicinity of the studied area, on Lillemägi hill, therefore the fragment of the cross can be connected with the chapel.

Half of a lead seal was discovered from the layer deposited on the ditch fill in the area between ditches nos. 2 and 3 (see Fig. 2) in the west side of the plot. The stratigraphy and accompanying finds allow dating the find to the end of the 16th or to the 17th century.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DITCHES

The ditches from the end of the Middle Ages and beginning of the Modern Times are significant indicators about the development of the southern suburb of Tartu or the Riga suburb. The ditches discovered at the west side of the studied area are located on the border between the lower meadows of the River Emajõgi (which were covered by an average of 1 m thick peat layer) and a higher sandy slope descending from the Lillemägi hill. The area suffered from rainwater oozing down from the higher area and from excess damp coming from springs running towards the River Emajõgi. The lower eastern part of the studied area endured also the rise of water level during floods.

In connection with the ditches in the east side of the Aleksandri street it should be pointed out that studies just across the street, at Riga Street 1 revealed similar structures (Vissak & Heinloo 2003). That has led to the conclusion that the ditches had a significant role in taking a larger area into use and their construction in the 14th – 15th centuries had been a major project of developing infrastructure in the area. The proposed hypothesis that the earlier ditches directed water into the Poriveski pond near the south-east corner of the town wall will be either confirmed or disproved by excavations in the next years. The studies at the Uueturu street (Piirits 2004) demonstrated that the erection of earthen fortifications may have caused to re-direct water from the artery ditch at the border of the higher slope and the lower meadows rather via the ditch at the south side of the street to the River Emajõgi at a later period. The period of constructing central ditches to dredge the southern suburb ended most likely soon after the Great Northern War.

SETTLEMENT PATTERN OF THE AREA

Archaeological studies at the plot of the old department store demonstrated that a comparatively early cultural layer exists above natural peat in the south-east part of the plot, dated according to finds to the end of the 13th century until the first quarter of the 14th century. Hence the area was in use in the Early Middle Ages and the naturally moist ground was attempted to turn more user-friendly by building a ditch towards the River Emajõgi. It cannot be excluded, either, that there were other similar ditches in the area, but they have not survived. Besides ditches, the early use of the area is indicated by a dump hole, dozens of post holes and a timber construction that has sunk into peat. It is noteworthy that the drainage system built in the turn of the 13th and 14th century presumably as a border ditch had been considered also at later periods, i.e. the new drainage ditches and plot borders followed the system from the Early Middle Ages. Earlier archaeological studies have documented a cultural layer from the fourth quarter of the 13th century to the first quarter of the 14th century in the

Riga suburb in Tartu north of the Vanemuine street. According to archaeological material, the area had been in active use for brick burning and metal treatment (see Heinloo 2006). Although the two areas were connected in the same time period, the character of the cultural layer does not allow associating the early settlement of the old department store plot with activities in the southern suburbs of Tartu and it is possible that it was a modest detached settlement or a single farm.

The use of the plot of the former department store started to become more intense again in the end of the 14th century, when the existing border ditches were re-constructed, new ditches were built and the first timber house(s) erected. Also the number of finds connected with this period increased. Similar tendencies were observed in earlier archaeological excavations also in the development of the rest of the southern suburb of Tartu, the so-called Riga suburb (Heinloo 2006). The plot of the old department store is also characterized by north-south directional water systems that were in use for a long time period, the earliest of which was dated to the fourth quarter of the 14th century. Typically to a suburb, there were no dwelling houses on the plot, yet a few modest timber constructions used as outhouses (e.g. barns), wells and palisades that marked the plot borders existed. The area was probably used in the Middle Ages as gardens or pasture land, however, the find material included a significant amount of copper items (round brooches, a thimble, wire rolls from copper alloys, a couple of ring blanks). Some fairly simple ornaments from thin copper have also been found at Riga Street 1 excavations (see Vissak & Heinloo 2003), and also during rescue excavation at the Küüni and Vanemuise streets (see Aun 2004), which may refer to a local Estonian craftsman in the area. The same can be said about leather and bone work found at the plot (Luik & Maldre 2003) (see Fig. 11).[7] In conclusion the borders of the Riga suburb in Tartu may according to the results of archaeological studies on the plot of the old department store be extended at least until the Soola street.

Fig. 10. *1 – fragment of St Anthony's Cross (Tau Cross), lead, 15th – 16th century. 2 – fragment of a lead seal with an eagle figure, lead, end of the 16th century – 17th century.*

Jn 10. *1 – Tau risti ehk Püha Antoniuse risti katke, plii, 15. – 16. sajand ja 2 – kotka kujutisega kaubaplommi pool, plii, 16. sajandi lõpp – 17. sajand.*

Photo / Foto: Rünno Vissak

Fig. 11. *Residue of bone crafting from the northeast-southwest ditch in the south corner of the quarter.*

Jn 11. *Luutöötlemisjäägid kvartali lõunanurga kirde–edela-sihilisest kraavist.*

Photo / Foto: Eero Heinloo

A short-term break occurred in the settlement of the area probably in the period of the Livonian War, as testified the abandoning of a timber outhouse. Yet the settlement continued to exist probably throughout the 17th century as the above described one-room outhouse was restored and the basic ditches preserved.[8] Another break in the settlement took place during the Great Northern War, but at least by the year 1740 a new timber house had been erected to the plot – now used as a dwelling house, which was in use at least until the mid-19th century.

[7] Traces of leather and bone work have been also found e.g. from the Tartu Gate suburb in Viljandi (Haak 2006).
[8] New borders were established with slight deviations.

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ARHEOLOOGILISED UURINGUD TARTU VANA KAUBAMAJA KVARTALIS RIIA 2 KINNISTUL

Rünno Vissak, Eero Heinloo ja Silja Möllits

2014. aasta juulist kuni novembrini toimusid Tartus, Riia 2 / Aleksandri 2 kinnistul (jn 1) arheoloogilised uuringud seoses sinna planeeritava uue ärihoone ehitamisega. Peeter Piiritsa (MTÜ AEG) tehtud eeluuringute järel selgus, et ala põhjapoolses osas olid arheoloogiliselt huvipakkuvad kihid Tartu Kaubamaja ehitamisega hävitatud, kuid kvartali kesk- ja lõunaosas tuli korraldada arheoloogiline järelevalve ja uuringud. Kokku kujunes uuringuala (jn 2) suuruseks 1330 m², uuringuid juhatasid MTÜ AEG arheoloogid Rünno Vissak, Eero Heinloo ja Silja Möllits. Kaevamistel kogutud leiumaterjal antakse üle Tartu Linnamuuseumile (leiukogu TM A-221).

Huvipakkuvamaks kujunes kvartali lõunaosa, kus loodusliku turba peal tuvastati vähesel määral orgaanikat ja söetükke sisaldav 10–15 cm paksune tume kultuurkiht, mis dateeriti 13. saj lõppu ja 14. saj I veerandisse. See kiht sisaldas kohaliku kedrakeraamika kõrval umbes paarkümmet importkeraamika katket (sh Siegburgi varakivi- ja kivikeraamika, Lõuna-Alam-Saksi varakivi- ja kivikeraamika; vt jn 4). 20 cm sügavuselt maapinda süvendatud lohust (jn 3: 1) leiti kogum kedral valmistatud savipoti katkeid ning üks luunõel. Inimtegevusele piirkonnas viitavad kirde–edela-sihiline kraav loodusliku turbakihi sees (vt jn 3: 2), paarkümmend ebakorrapärast vaia- ja postiauku (vt jn 3: 3) ning osaliselt turba sisse vajunud vitstest ja palkidest puitkonstruktsioon kaevendi lääneprofiili juures (vt jn 3: 4).

Eelkirjeldatud ladestusel paiknes kollakas-valge liivakiht, millele oli kujunenud orgaanikarikkam hallikas-pruun kultuurkiht, mis seostub keskaja teise poole (s.o 15.–16. saj I pool) asustusetapiga. Selle etapiga seostuvad kolm drenaažikraavi (jn 2: 3; 3: 2), osaliselt maapinda süvendatud puithoone koos seda kahest küljest ääristava kivitasapinnaga (jn 3: 5) ning hoonest ida poole jäänud puitraketisega salvkaev (jn 3: 6). Leiumaterjal oli selles kihis rikkalikum, sisaldades kohalikku kedrakeraamikat ja importkeraamikat. Kraavidest leiti luunõõpide puurimise jääke ning suurel hulgal nahkesemeid, sh jalatsite katkeid, nahast nööre ning nahatöötlemise jääke, mis võivad viidata piirkonnas tegutsenud käsitöölis(t)ele. Hoone ja kaevuga seonduva leiumaterjali hulgas esines üksikuid messingist esemeid (sõled, sõrmkübarad), puitnõusid ning keraamikakatkeid (vt jn 5).

Keskaja lõpus maha jäetud hoone kohale on Vene-Liivi sõja järel rajatud uus üheruumiline hoone. Varasemat hoonet ümbritsenud kivitasapind on kaetud tihke punaka liivsavi kihiga, mida katab hilisema hoone kasutusaegne 16. saj lõpu – 17. saj lõpu leide sisaldav pruunikas kultuurkiht. Samasse etappi võib paigutada Aleksandri tänava suhtes kergelt diagonaalis asetseva kraavi (jn 2: 4), mille idaküljel paiknesid horisontaalsed palgid. Järgnev rusukiht on tasanduseks toodud ilmselt Põhjasõja sündmuste järel ning selle peale rajatud vähemalt kolme eraldiseisva ruumiga puidust eluhoone (jn 2: 17; jn 7), millest olid osaliselt säilinud maakividest ja tellistest rajatud alusvundamendid. Hoone idapoolses osas eristusid ilmselt ahju ning korstna kivikonstruktsioonid. Hoonet on kujutatud veel 1811. aasta linnaplaanil, seejärel on hoone millalgi tulekahjus hävinud.

Ülejäänud uuringuala iseloomustavad peamiselt kraavisüsteemid. Kvartali kesk- ja lõunaosas fikseeriti kolm eriaegset kraavi, millest varaseim loode–kagu-sihiliselt kulgev süvend (jn 2: 15), paigutati leiumaterjali alusel 14. sajandi lõppu; ajaliselt järgmine 18. sajandi keskpaika (jn 2: 13); hiliseim 19. ja 20. saj vahetusse (jn 2: 14).

Uuritava ala põhjapoolses osas dokumenteeriti neli nii drenaaži- kui ka piirikraavina kasutusel olnud süvendit, millest kahes varasemas (jn 2: 10–11) puudusid puidust konstruktsioonid, leiumaterjali alusel 14.–15. sajandisse dateeritud kraav (jn 2: 12) oli täidetud hagudega ning hiliseim oli servadest ääristatud ülestikku paigutatud horisontaalsete palkidega (jn 2: 9). Samuti leiti tahutud palkidest 15.–16. sajandi salvkaev (jn 2: 18) ning jämedamate postide rida (jn 2: 19), tõenäoliselt piiritara. Ka uuritud ala ida- ja lääneservas paljandusid mitmete kraavide süvendid. Selgitati, et mitmed varasemad lahtised kraavid funktsioneerisid viimasel kasutusperioodil maa-aluste drenaažikraavidena. Aleksandri tänava idaküljel kaevati ning dokumenteeriti u 44 m pikkuses lõigus (kuni 8 m laiusel alal) nelja ligikaudu paralleelse üksteise kõrval ja kohati mõnevõrra kattuva eriaegse loode–kagu-sihilise kraavi süvendeid (jn 2: 1–4) ning kvartali lääneosas ka üks ida–lääne-sihiline kraav (jn 2: 13). Aleksandri tn idaküljel avastatud drenaažikraavidest varaseim on dateeritav 14. sajandi lõppu ning hilisem 17. sajandisse.

Uuritud ala idaservas kaevati 24 m pikkuses lõigus 4,5–5 m laiusel alal kolme Turu tänavaga paralleelselt kulgevat ning ühe nimetatutega risti paikneva kraavi süvendit (jn 2: 5–8). Nimetatutest varaseim on leiuainese põhjal dateeritav 14. saj II poolde ning hilisem 17. sajandisse.

Kogutud leiuainesest väärib esiletoomist seatinast valatud tau risti ehk Püha Antoniuse risti alumine haru (jn 10: 1), mis leiti kvartali kaguosast, uusaegse kihi peal paiknenud varasema leiuainesega, ilmselt mujalt toodud kihist. Antud eseme võib analoogide põhjal dateerida 15.–16. sajandisse ning seostada Lillemäel keskajal asunud Püha Antoniuse kabeliga. Kvartali lääneservast, kraavide 2 ja 3 vahelisel alal kraavitäidetele ladestunud kihist leiti kotka kujutisega seatinast kaubaplommi pool (jn 10: 2), mille võib stratigraafia ja kaasleidude põhjal dateerida 16. sajandi lõppu või 17. sajandisse.

Aleksandri tänava idaservas paiknenud kraavide ning Tartu Hansakvartalis toimunud uuringutel avastatud sarnaste kraavide seostamisel jõuti järeldusele, et kraavide rajamine 14.–15. sajandil oli oluline piirkonna kasutuselevõtuga seoses. Hüpotees, et varasemad kraavid juhtisid vett linnamüüri kagunurga lähistel paiknenud Poriveski tiiki, vajab tulevaste uurimistöödega selgitamist. Nagu näitasid 2004. a Uueturu tänava kohal toimunud uuringud, võidi muldkindlustuste rajamisega seoses nõlvaosa ja madalama luhaala piiril paiknenud magistraalkraavide vesi suunata Emajõkke Uueturu tänava lõunaküljel asunud kraavi kaudu. Uuritud ala läänepiiril avastatud kraavid paiknevad Emajõe-äärse madala luhaala (mida kattis keskmiselt 1 m paksune turbakiht) ja Lillemäe poolt laskuva kõrgema liivase nõlva piiril. Uuritud piirkond kannatas kõrgemalt alla valguvate sadevete ning allikatest Emajõe suunas voolava vee tõttu liigniiskuse all. Uuritud ala madalamat idapoolset serva ohustas lisaks sellele ka Emajõe veetaseme tõus suurvete ajal. Tartu lõunapoolse eeslinna kuivenduskraavide kasutusaeg lõpeb suure tõenäosusega varsti pärast Põhjasõda.

Arheoloogilised uuringud Tartu Vana Kaubamaja kinnistul tuvastasid, et kvartali edelanurgas on säilinud turba peal asuv kultuurkiht, mille saab leidude põhjal dateerida 13. sajandi lõppu ja 14. sajandi I veerandisse. Looduslikult niisket pinnast üritati Emajõe suunas kulgeva kraaviga kasutuskõlbulikumaks muuta. Ühtlasi ei saa välistada, et sarnaseid kraave oli piirkonnas veel, aga need pole säilinud. Tartu Riia-eeslinna varasematel arheoloogilistel uuringutel on 13. saj IV veerandisse ja 14. saj I veerandisse dateeritud kultuurkihti leitud Vanemuise tänavast põhja pool, tellisepõletuse ning metallitöötlemisega seostatud piirkonnast. Vana Kaubamaja kvartalist leitud varajast asustust ei saa kultuurkihi iseloomu põhjal otseselt seostada eeslinnas toimunud tegevustega ning võimalik, et siin asus tagasihoidlik eraldiseisev linnalähedane asum või üksiktalu.

Vana Kaubamaja kvartali kasutus intensiivistus 14. saj lõpus, mil uuendati juba olemasolevaid ning rajati uusi piirikraave, samuti ehitati puithoone(d). Sarnaseid arenguid on varem täheldatud Riia eeslinna ülejäänud osa kujunemisloos. Ka Vana Kaubamaja kinnistule on iseloomulikud eriaegsed põhja–lõuna-sihilised veejuhtimissüsteemid, millest varasemad võib dateerida 14. saj IV veerandisse. Kinnistutel puuduvad eluhooned, esineb üksikuid tagasihoidlikke puidust abihooneid, veekaeve ning krundipiire tähistavad postidest tarad. Ilmselt kasutati piirkonda keskajal peamiselt aia- või karjamaana, leitud vasesulamist esemed võivad viidata siin tegutsenud eestlasest käsitöölisele. Kinnistult leiti ka naha- ja luutööle viitavaid töötlemisjääke (vt jn 11).

Piirkonna asustuses toimus lühiajaline paus ilmselt Vene-Liivi sõja perioodil, mil abihoonena kasutusel olnud puithoone oli maha jäetud. 17. sajandil taastatud üheruumiline puithoone ning kraavide põhisuundade säilimine viitab asustuse järjepidevusele. Uus asustuskatke leiab aset Põhjasõja ajal, kuid juba hiljemalt 1732. aastaks on kinnistule ehitatud uus, nüüd juba eluhoonena kasutusel olnud puithoone, mis püsib kasutusel vähemalt 19. sajandi keskpaigani.