



Two Burial Sites in Ebavere, Lääne-Virumaa County

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INTRODUCTION

At the end of the year 2020, the National Heritage Board requested the Archaeological Research Collection of the Tallinn University to assess the cultural value and dating of nearly 300 finds (Tamla 2021). The items were discovered during metal detector searches from two sites in Ebavere that turned out to be very rich in finds (Kurisoo *et al.* 2020, table 1: 124). These sites had not been known before and there was no data about any archaeological sites in Ebavere nor any previous stray finds. Ebavere is known to the wider public from the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia, where a hill with figures of false gods is described in Virumaa, which were chopped to pieces by the Crusaders. It is believed that the chronicler referred to the hill in Ebavere (HCL XXIV: 5, comm. 28) that is located approximately 1.3 km from the newly discovered sites.

OVERVIEW OF TWO SITES

The first finds from Ebavere were handed over to the MA in late autumn 2019. It was agreed with the finder that the site should be re-visited with an archaeologist from the MA and any other search prior to that is not allowed. Sometime later another person declared that he would hand over finds from the same site and introduce the location and find circumstances. MA organised a field survey to Ebavere in December 2019, accompanied by both finders. It turned out that there were two different sites, both discovered in autumn 2018, back then the MA was not notified about the discoveries. A larger number of finds originated from the northern site than from the southern site. Searches on several occasions had led to unearthing hundreds of items from various depths: some almost on the ground surface, others at the depth of up to 30 cm and some in assemblages buried in ca. 40 cm deep concavities (Smirnova & Lillak 2021). The finders had not noticed any skeletal elements, but the finds which were handed over to the TLÜ AT contained tiny pieces of human bones (see below).

Both sites are located on the north-south directional esker at the western end of the Ebavere village (Fig. 1). The northern part of the esker (the so-called northern site) that is 100–102 m high with maximum width 60 m was especially rich in finds. In the central part of the esker there is a ca. 70 × 10 m large and ca. one-metre-deep pit, probably a World War II

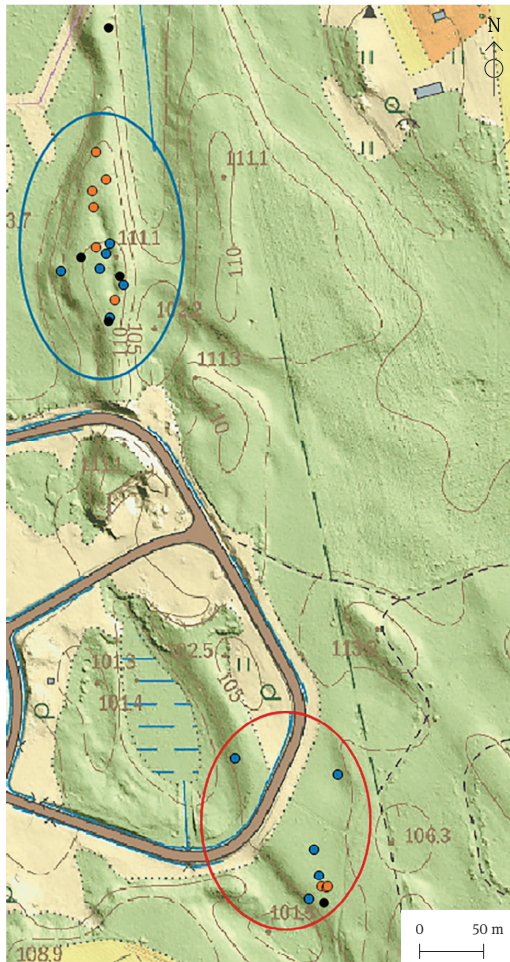


Fig. 1. Ebavere sites. The northern site is marked with a blue circle; the southern site with a red circle. Blue dots indicate find locations showed by the finders; orange dots mark find locations discovered during the MA field survey; black dots show locations of the trial pits.

Jn 1. Ebavere leiualad. Põhjapoolset leiuala tähistab sinine sõõr ja lõunapoolset punane sõõr. Siniste täppidega on märgitud otsijate poolt kätte näidatud leiukohad; oranžid täpid tähistavad Muinsuskaitseameti välitööde ajal avastatud leide; mustad täpid näitavad proovišurfe.

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items from the southern site at the depth to up to 25 cm (Figs 1–3: orange dots) were found. The finds included a fragment of a bracelet, an iron hook, a horseshoe nail, a 16th century coin fragment and small fragments of unspecified objects, some of which had been in fire (Smirnova & Lillak 2021, table 1). These are the only *in situ* documented finds from Ebavere.

foxhole. Fewer finds were revealed ca. 500 m towards south-south/east, which may provisionally be called the southern site. Here also the height of the eskers is nearly 100 m, but the ground itself is flatter. The area between the two sites must have been affected by the construction of the training ground and its infrastructure for the Defence forces.

During the field survey, archaeologists of the MA documented the find locations and the find contexts indicated by finders (Figs 1–3: blue dots). At the west side of the northern site, on a plateau lower than the esker, the finders showed a place, where an axe and a spearhead were found in a ca. 20 cm deep depression (for finds see more detail below). From the eastern part of the same plateau a crossbow-shaped brooch had been found, slightly to the north-east fragments of bracelets, a spiral ring and glass beads were unearthed from a ca. 40 cm deep depression. Another spearhead, two knives and a rumbler bell lay close to each other on a clayey surface at the depth of ca. 30 cm, the bracelet fragments were discovered fairly close to the surface. The southern part of the site revealed iron rivets and bracelet fragments almost on the ground (Smirnova & Lillak 2021, 3–4).

On the southern site, the finders showed a place where they found a sickle that lay on the shore of a small swampy water body, with a strap end close by. A deeper depression contained two hooks, another depression revealed two complete and four fragmented bracelets. Five bracelets were found on a 20 × 20 m wide area and a bridle mount almost on the ground at the southern end of the site (Smirnova & Lillak 2021, 10–11).

During the MA survey both sites were re-examined with metal detectors, as a result eight items from the northern site and four

To determine the presence of a cultural layer, five 40×40 cm trial pits were dug during the survey (Figs 1–3: black dots). Three of them were made to the northern site and all three displayed a similar sight: the upper 10 cm thick layer was greyish-brown soil rich in humus, below that was a ca. 30 cm thick brown sandy soil layer where the lowest 10 cm was of a darker colour. At the depth of ca. 40 cm light clayey moraine began, untouched by human activity. From the soil dug out from the third trial pit two fragments of earthenware were found. The fourth trial pit was made to the northern end of the esker, at a distance of approximately 250 metres from the northern site. The esker there displayed some large granite stones at its slope, but they did not seem to form any specific construction. Prior to digging the fourth trial pit, the area was studied with metal detectors, no signals referring to metal objects were detected. The soil in the trial pit was rich in humus and evenly brownish-black in the upper part up to 20 cm, below that a large granite stone came to light, which was not possible to remove. The fifth trial pit was dug to the southern site, at the spot where the finders had discovered burnt and fused pieces of copper alloy items. There the soil was sandy and evenly grey up to 60 cm in depth with no signs of a cultural layer. The soil lifted from the trial pit contained no finds.

FINDS FROM EBAVERE

The majority of the finds from Ebavere were unearthed by the finders and twelve more objects were discovered during the MA survey. The most numerous finds from Ebavere are fragments of copper alloy jewellery, from which the majority are **bracelets** (in total 137, incl 116 fragments).

All the bracelets are fairly bulky cast open-ended items. Four types and variations of the bracelets can be identified by external features. The **first type** (6 items) with their concavo-convex cross-sections, midrib and

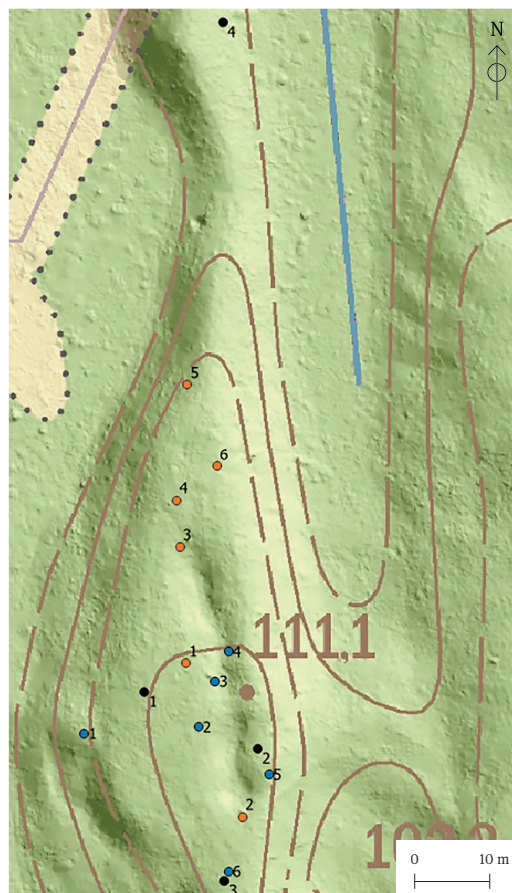


Fig. 2. The Northern site. Find locations showed by the finders (blue dots): 1 – an axe and a spearhead, 2 – a crossbow-shaped brooch, 3 – fragments of bracelets, a spiral ring and glass beads, 4 – a spearhead, two knives and a rumbler bell, 5 – bracelet fragments, 6 – iron rivets and bracelet fragments. Finds discovered during the MA field survey (orange dots): 1 – fragment of a bronze item, 2 – fragment of a 16th century coin, 3 – an iron hook, 4 – fragment of a bronze item, 5 – fragment of a bracelet, 6 – drops of clotted molten bronze. Black dots: locations of the trial pits 1–4.

Jn 2. Põhjapoolne leiuala. Otsijate kätte näidatud leiukohtad (sinised täpid): 1 – kirves ja odaots, 2 – ammu-kujuline sõlg, 3 – käevõrude fragmendid, spiraal-sõrmus ja klaashelmed, 4 – odaots, kaks nuga ja kellukesekujuline ripats, 5 – käevõrude katked, 6 – needid ja käevõrude katked. Muinsuskaitseameti arheoloogide avastatud leiud (oranžid täpid): 1 – pronkseseme katke, 2 – 16. saj mündi fragment, 3 – rauast konks, 4 – pronksesemete fragmendid, 5 – käevõru katke, 6 – hangunud sulapronksi tükid. Mustad täpid: prooviaugud 1–4.

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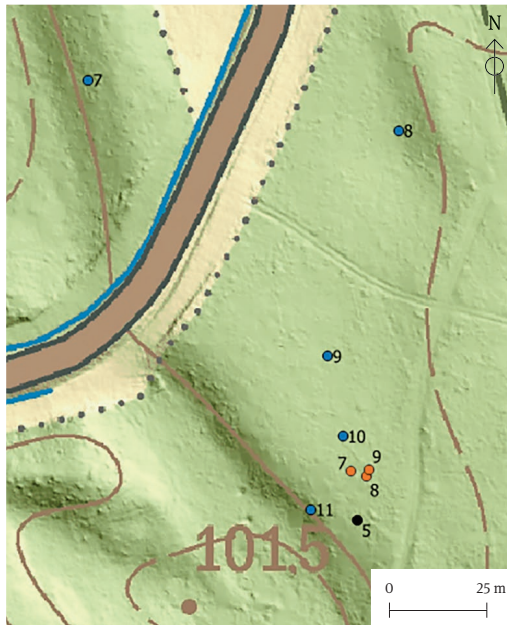


Fig. 3. The Southern site. Find locations showed by the finders (blue dots): 7 – a sickle, 8 – two fire steels, 9 – five intact bracelets, 10 – two intact bracelets and four bracelet fragments, 11 – a bridle mount. Finds discovered during the MA field survey (orange dots): 7 – fragment of an item, 8 – two iron item fragments, 9 – two iron item fragments. Black dot: trial pit 5.

Jn 3. Lõunapoolne leiuala. Otsijate kätte näidatud leiukohad (sinised täpid): 7 – sirp, 8 – kaks tulerauda, 9 – viis tervet käevõru, 10 – kaks tervet käevõru ja neli käevõrukatket, 11 – valjanaast. Muinsuskaitseameti arheoloogide avastatud leiud (oranžid täpid): 7 – esemekatke, 8 – kaks raudeseme katket, 9 – kaks raudeseme katket. Must täpp: 5. prooviauk.

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flaring straight terminals bear a certain similarity to bracelets of the Migration Period hoards (e.g. Tamla & Kiudsoo 2009, nos 8, 10) and burials (e.g. Schmiedehelm 1924, 24, fig. 12; Tvauri 2012, fig. 127: 3). Since the Ebavere bracelets are thinner, more irregularly shaped and have a lower rib (Fig. 4: 1) they may date from a later period. No exact counterparts are known to these specimens, therefore they are dated to the end of the Migration Period and beginning of the Viking Age. The **second type** is represented by fragments of two bracelets with uniformly round flaring terminals. Such bracelets came into use in the 5th–6th century and continued to be used with slight modifications also in the Viking Age, hence a more precise dating without knowing the exact find context is problematic (see Tamla 1991, 141; Mägi-Lõugas 1995, 383, type I: 1). The **third type** is the most numerous (104 items): it includes bracelets with flaring terminals. The cross-section of the ends of these bracelets is usually pointed oval, the terminals are quite thick and decorated with three main motifs (Fig. 4: 2–4). The ornamentation of the terminals frequently displays (1) two to four parallel transverse grooves accompanied by a deep V-shaped longitudinal groove (56 items), (2) parallel groups of lines along the arch, where the ends in the middle part are connected either triangularly or in an arc (32 items) or (3) plaited motifs on the middle

part (12 items). This particular type of bracelets is generally dated to the 10th–11th century (Moora 1931, 43; Selirand 1974, 165; Mägi-Lõugas 1995, 284–294). The **fourth type** is represented by six concavo-convex bracelets with narrowing terminals and an embossed wavy ornamentation along the entire ring. Such items are believed to originate from bracelets that were made in approximately the 10th century and were popular in Scandinavia until the end of the 11th century (Stenberger 1958, 109 ff). The finds from Estonia have been interpreted as items brought along by the East Vikings (Tvauri 2012, 121–122).

Another numerous type of finds consists of different elements of breast-chains. The majority are **chain fragments** (102 items) of quite similar broadness (0.8–1 cm), but different length (2–13 cm). It is probable that they all originate from one or two large multi-row breast chain ornaments. The chain links were made of a thicker wire and connected in pairs. Such breast-chains started to spread in the pre-Viking Age, by the 12th century their size became more modest (Tvauri 2012, figs 108–109; Mägi & Ratas 2003, 217; Kurisoo 2014, 83). Other

jewellery items that may be the components of breast-chain ornaments are six chain-holders and fifteen dress pins. Four openwork **chain-holders** have bird figures at the edges and a depiction of the Tree of Life at the top (Fig. 4: 5). No exact matches to these are known, but at least two similar items can be mentioned from Estonia and Latvia (Jets 2013, fig. 91: 6; Spirģis 2005, fig. 17: 1). Both are finds from burials. The Latvian specimen is more accurately dated and it was found in Salaspils Laukskola in a woman's grave dating from the second half of the 10th century to the first half of the 11th century (Spirģis 2005, 168). Two crescent-shaped chain-holders (Fig. 4: 6) represent a type that became fashionable during the Migration Period and was common in Estonia during the Viking Age (Tvauri 2012, 146, fig. 110: 2). However, such jewellery has occasionally been found also in 11th–12th century hoards (e.g. Kiudsoo 2019, 127, fig. 116). From the fifteen **dress pin fragments**, thirteen can be identified. Twelve are fragments of double cross-headed pins (Fig. 4: 7). These pins were most common from the end of the 10th century to the beginning of the 11th century and they are considered typical to Estonia (Mägi 1997, 44). At the same time there are numerous examples where such pins had been in use also in the 12th century and even in the beginning of the 13th century (Selirand 1974, 146–147, table XXIX: 8). The thirteenth fragment originates from a ring-headed pin. It has been suggested that such pins were in use in the pre-Viking Age and in the beginning of the Viking Age, having reached Estonia from Finland (Mägi 1997, 29).



Fig. 4. Artefacts collected on the find spots of Ebavere. 1–4 – bracelets, 5–6 – chain-holders, 7 – double cross-headed pin, 8 – a neck ring.

Jn 4. Ebavere leiualadelt saadud esemed. 1–4 – käevõrud, 5–6 – keekandjad, 7 – kaksikristpeaga rinnanõel, 8 – kaelavõru.

(AI 8348: 30, 57, 8, 74, 138, 131, 154, 2.)

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Neck rings are represented by nine fragments, four of which originate from rings with flaring and overlapping terminals (Fig. 4: 8). Such neck rings came into use in the 5th century at the latest, being widely used in Scandinavia and around the Baltic Sea even in the beginning of the Viking Age. In Estonia such neck rings have been found in the Migration Period hoards (e.g., Kardla, Paali II, Paluküla, Liivi) and in pre-Viking Age burial sites (e.g., Kirimäe, Lepna), but also in the hoard from Mõigu from the beginning of the 13th century (Tõnisson 1962, no XX). Therefore, the precise dating of the Ebavere neck ring fragments requires further studies. Five fragments belong to the types of neck rings with ends that can be clasped. Such neck rings were common in Estonia and the neighbouring areas mainly in the 10th and 11th century (Selirand 1974, 137–138; Aun 1992, 139–140).

Altogether eight brooches were found: a crossbow-shaped brooch, an equal-armed brooch and six penannular brooches. A big **crossbow-shaped fibula** with poppy-head terminals (22 cm in total length) is completely preserved and almost untouched by fire (Fig. 5: 1). It is possible that such fibulae were worn by elite warriors from the 8th until the 12th century (Mägi 2020, 71, fig. 3: 1). The Ebavere brooch is decorated with an interweaving pattern that was typical to the Borre style, hence it may originate from the 9th–10th century, when such artistic style was at its peak in Scandinavia (Jets 2013, 36). **Equal-armed brooches** are quite rare in Estonia and most of them are recent metal detector finds (Kiudsoo 2016, 62–63). Although Ebavere find is broken in half and partly melted, it is possible to reconstruct the shape and ornament of the brooch (Fig. 5: 2). According to the typology of Finnish equal-armed brooches by Ella Kivikoski, the Ebavere brooch corresponds to type 7, which is considered to be typically Finnish and is dated from the second half of the 10th century to the 11th century (Kivikoski 1938, 20–25, fig. 14–16). From the six **penannular brooches** only two are preserved sufficiently well for identification. Both brooches have an arc with an evenly wide rhombic cross-section and faceted terminals pressed against the arc. Such brooches were common in Latvia, Lithuania, North-West Russia, Finland, Gotland, and central Sweden. They were also widely spread in all Estonia, apart from the island of Saaremaa. These brooches generally date from the 9th–10th century (Mägi-Lõugas 1994, 466–468).

Altogether 18 **finger rings** were found from Ebavere. Seven of them are spiral rings with even strips, they are difficult to date, because such ornaments were first made in the 1st millennium and were used until the 17th century (Valk 1991, 187). Six spiral rings with a broader middle strip may be considered as a sub-type of spiral rings that appear in the hoards and burial sites in Estonia in the 5th century and were in use until the end of the 13th century (Laul & Tamla 2014, 90–91). Three finger rings with double spiral ends have a ribbon-like rear part, which is typical to Viking Age rings (Fig. 5: 3). No finger rings with double spiral ends from a later period than the 11th–12th century are known from Estonia. One shield-shaped ring with overlapping terminals belongs to a widely spread type of jewellery. In Estonia, such rings appear from the 11th century and are in use up to the 14th–15th century. The shield shape of the Ebavere ring is characteristic to finger rings worn in the 12th–13th century (Selirand 1974, 174).

The number of **pendants** is small compared to other types of jewellery. Only four bell-shaped pendants and two rumbler bells can be mentioned. The bell-shaped pendants came into use in the pre-Viking Age and it seems they were marginal in Estonia (Tvauri 2012, 151). Both rumbler bells are small and spherical, they have a cross-shaped slot and a cast loop. No spherical rumbler bells from the Migration Period are known from Estonia (Tvauri 2012, 254), thus the Viking Age date seems more plausible. Furthermore, the rumbler bells from the later periods are larger and mostly decorated with parallel grooves.

Only seven **glass beads** of various shape and colour were found (Fig. 5: 4). Irita Kallis (pers. comm.), an expert on glass beads, dated them to a period from 860 to 940/950. She considers it probable that the beads originated from the same chain. Her dating corresponds with the dating of similar beads used in Scandinavia (Callmer 1977).

Besides ornaments, several types of everyday tools and utensils were found. The majority are knives (in total 12, incl four fragments), which all have a straight back and a berm in transition to the tang both at the back of the blade and the blade itself. Such knives were first made in the beginning of the Viking Age (Tvauri 2012, 69), and they were still made in the last centuries of the prehistory and to some extent also later (Peets 2003, 233 ff). The various sizes (length 10 to 17.5 cm) of Ebavere knives suggest that they had different purposes or users, for instance, the smaller knives may have belonged to children.

A rather rare find is a **chisel** that was used in woodworking. Around a dozen similar chisels are known in Estonia, the earliest is considered to be the find from a Viking Age burnt layer at Iru hill fort (Vassar 1939, fig. 53: 4). The chisel from Ebavere is very similar to the chisel found in Iru. **Sheep shears** are also a fairly unique find, but it is hard to date them. The reason why we assume they are connected with Ebavere burial site, is because they were in fire and have intentionally crossed prongs. Objects connected with farming include fragments of a **scythe** and four **sickles**. These are characteristic to the types that came into use in the second part of the 1st millennium (Laul & Tõnisson 1991, 84–86).

Among Ebavere finds there are six **bridle bits**, with rather large rings, connected by two or three S-shaped links. One pair of bridles has not been in fire and leather fragments of the straps have been preserved. Such bridles were common in Estonia from the 11th to 13th century (Mandel 2017, 75). The found horse equipment also include a **bridle mount** with flaring terminals. Such mounts came into use in the 10th century at the latest and they have also been found from 12th–13th century graves and hill forts.



Fig. 5. Artefacts collected on the find spots of Ebavere. 1–2 – brooches, 3 – a finger-ring, 4 – beads.

Jn 5. Ebavere leiualadelt saadud esemed. 1–2 – sõled, 3 – sõrmus, 4 – helmed.

(AI 8348: 226, 160, 91, 225.)

Photo / Foto: Tarvi Toome

Twenty-one **rivets** of various lengths (1.3–6.6 cm) were also found. It is not clear whether they originate from a boat or a larger box, also their time of origin is uncertain. However, it should be mentioned that no boat rivets have been found in burials since the Viking Age.

The two similar **axes** found in Ebavere represent the type of axes with a straight back, lower lugs, an extended poll and a long bearded blade that was most common in Estonia. Such axes are considered to be battle axes. In Scandinavia and Finland, these axes are dated from the 8th to the 10th century (Petersen 1919, 39, fig. 32; Kivikoski 1973, no 617) and it is assumed that this type reached Estonia in the 9th or 10th century (Tvauri 2012, 125).

Weapons from the Ebavere sites include also a seaxe, a javelin head and four spearheads. The straight and thick back of the **seaxe** and the wedge-shaped cross-section of the blade suggest it to be a weapon used in the second half of the 10th century. More than 40 years ago, around 50 such seaxes were known from Estonia and the majority of them originated from Virumaa (Mandel 1977, 240ff). The **javelin heads** with knife-shaped blades have a broad time range of usage in Estonia and the neighbouring areas: the oldest are believed to date from the 10th–11th century, the most recent from the 12th–13th centuries (Peets & Valt 2011, 4; Mugarēvičs 2008, 114; Artem'ev 1991, 89; Lehtosal-Hilander 1982, 36). All **spearheads** are socketed and represent two different types. Three spearheads (Fig. 6: 1) belong to type E by Petersen (1919, 26–28, figs 12, 13), dating from the 9th–10th century and possible also from the 11th century (Selirand 1974, 110). The longest spearhead (Fig. 6: 2) represents type M by Petersen (1919, 35, fig. 25) and belongs mainly to the 11th century, but it appeared already in the late 10th century and was possibly still in use in the early 12th century (Creutz 2003, 19).

In addition, three pottery sherds were discovered: two from the third trial pit in the northern site (Smirnova & Lillak 2021, table 1) and one was handed over by the finders, its exact find spot is unknown. All three originate from handmade vessels with neatly smoothed, ca. 0.6 cm thick surfaces. One of the fragments has a spot of soot on the outer surface.



Fig. 6. Spearheads of E- and M-type collected on the find spots of Ebavere.

Jn 6. Ebavere leiualadelt saadud E- ja M-tüüpi odaotsad. (AI 8348: 252, 251.)

Photo / Foto: Tarvi Toome

INTERPRETATION OF THE EBAVERE BURIAL SITES

The composition and state of the finds from Ebavere¹ of which ca. 97% have been in fire and ca. 76% have been intentionally chopped, notched, bent or deformed in other ways are characteristic to cremation burials in Estonia during the Migration Period, the Viking Age and the Final Iron Age. Small bone fragments, which according to anthropologist Raili Allmäe are cremated human bones, also indicate that the sites were used for cremation burials. The possibility of some inhumation burials in Ebavere also cannot be excluded, as a pair of bridles have not been in fire. The few Early Modern Period and Modern Period items, such as a 16th century coin and 18th century fragments of pipe cover, are stray finds, not connected to the burials.

The initial dating of the finds suggests that the two burial sites in Ebavere were in use from the end of the Migration Period and beginning of the Viking Age until the Final Iron Age. Items dating from the Viking Age were of clear majority, however it does not give grounds to assume that most of the burials date from that period. Different burial traditions, including the way of the burial and quantity of grave goods, may have changed in time, during the usage of the sites. Because the finders failed to document the exact locations of the finds it is not certain whether both burial sites are concurrent. The free-hand plans of the find locations drawn by one of the finders (Smirnova & Lillak 2021, appendix) did not make the picture any clearer, since it is not possible to identify the find locations of specific objects (e.g., bracelets). The detectorists tried to recall the locations of the finds by memory, during MA field survey, which was equally unhelpful and only a fraction of objects could be associated with specific areas. Consequently, the collected finds are stripped from their context. For example, at the northern site an axe, dating from the beginning of the Viking Age, was collected from the depression at the western lower plateau, however, it remained unclear, which of the two axes was found at that spot. It is also not possible to retrospectively determine, which specific spearhead was found together with the axe. From all the find spots shown by the finders on the northern site, only in two cases specific finds – a crossbow-shaped brooch and a collection of glass beads – can be associated with concrete locations (Fig. 2: 2, 3). From the southern site the iron rivets (Fig. 2: 6) can be connected with a specific burial rite. The finder's observation that the rivets were found almost on the ground surface supports the presumption that occasionally grave goods, which may have included cremated human bones, were scattered on the ground. From the indicated locations on the southern site, only one can be connected with a specific find – the bridle mount – since it was the only such kind of find in the collection (Fig. 3: 11).

The general conclusion is that unearthing such a large amount of finds failing to document their exact locations and describing the find contexts caused significant damage to both archaeological sites, not to mention that this kind of search practices are unlawful. Considering the observations made by the experts of the MA about the thickness of the cultural layer and the distribution of finds in the find areas (Smirnova & Lillak 2021, 4–6, 11–12), we may still be hopeful that there may be locations that have not been tempered with metal detectors. This explains the reason why both find areas in Ebavere need to be taken under state protection as fast as possible.

¹ AI 8348: 1–290.

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KAKS MATMISKOHTA LÄÄNE-VIRUMAAL EBAVERES

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2020. a lõpus toodi Muinsuskaitseametist Tallinna Ülikooli arheoloogia teaduskogusse kultuuriväärtuse määramiseks ligi 300 leidu, mis olid saadud metallidetektoritega tehtud otsingute tulemusel Lääne-Virumaalt Ebaverest. MA korraldatud leiukoha ülevaatusel kaasati ka leidjad. Selgus, et esemed pärinevad kahelt lähestikku paiknevalt ning arheoloogidele varem teadmata matmisalalt. Mõlemad olid avastatud 2018. a sügisel, kuid MA sellest toona ei teavitatud. Luid ei olnud otsijad märganud, kuid üle antud leidude hulka oli üksikuid luukilde siiski sattunud.

Matmisalad jäävad põhja-lõunasuunalisele oosile ja nende vahemaa on u 500 m (jn 1). Rohkem leide saadi põhjapoolselt matmisalalt. Otsijate mälu järgi kätte näidatud leiukohad kaardistati (jn 1–3: sinised täpid) ja leiukontekstid dokumenteeriti nende ütluste järgi. Osa leide pärinesid peaaegu maapinnalt, teised olid olnud kuni 30 cm sügavusel ja mõned kuni 40 cm sügavustes lohkudes kogumitena. MA leiukohtade ülevaatamisel saadi põhjapoolselt leiualalt kaheksa ja lõunapoolselt neli leidu kuni 25 cm sügavuselt. Need on ka ainsad *in situ* fikseeritud leiud (jn 1–3: oranžid täpid). Matmispaikade kultuurikihi uurimiseks kaevati viis prooviauku (jn 1–3: mustad täpid). Kogutud leidude hulgas (otsijate üle antud ja MA kontrollotsingult pärinevaid esemeid käsitleme koos) on kõige rohkem ehteasju, neist omakorda käevõrusid 137 (sh 116 fragmenti). Eristati neli tüüpi, millest 1. ja 2. tüüpi käevõrud dateeriti rahvasterännuaja lõppu ja viikingiaja algusesse. Arvukamalt on kolmanda tüüpi käevõrusid (104 leidu), mille otsad on kaunistatud erinevate mustritega (jn 4: 2–4). Niisugused käevõrud on üldjuhul dateeritud 10.–11. sajandisse. Neljanda tüüpi võrusid peetakse skandinaaviapäraseks ja neid on interpreteeritud idaviikingite vahendusel siia jõudnud esemetena.

Rinnakeedega seonduvad keed, keekandjad ja rinnanõelad. Erineva pikkusega keejupid (102) pärinevad vähemalt paarist rinnakeest ja on valmistamisviisi järgi ilmselt viikingiaegsed. Neli ažuurset keekandjat (jn 4: 5) peakisid kuuluma 10.–11. sajandisse. Poolkuukujulised keekandjad (jn 4: 6) tulid moodi rahvasterännuajal ja olid Eestis laiemalt levinud viikingiajal. Rinnanõelte fragmentidest (15) on enamik murtud lahtiste harudega kaksikristpeaga nõeltest (jn 4: 7), mida kanti kõige enam 10. saj lõpust 11. saj algupooleni. Üks katke on rõngaspeaga ehtenõela pea. Arvatakse, et selliseid nõelu kasutati eelviikingiajal ja viikingiaja alguses.

Teistest ehteliikidest on esindatud kaelavõrud (9 leidu), sõled (8), sõrmused (18), ripatsid (4), kuljused (2) ja helmed (7). Eesti kontekstis tähelepanuväärne on terviklikult säilinud suur ammukujuline ning rikkalikult kaunistatud sõlg. Borre stiilile iseloomulik ornament lubab sõlge pidada 9.–10. sajandil valmistatud ehteks. Üsna haruldaseks võib pidada ka sümmeetrilist sõlge, mis tüübi järgi kuulub 10.–11. sajandisse. Arvatavasti ühest keest pärit erineva kuju ja värviga klaasmassist helmed on teadaolevate analoogsete leidude põhjal ajavahemikust 860–940/950 (jn 5: 4).

Töö- ja tarberistadest on kõige rohkem nuge (12) ja need on ühte tüüpi. Nugade suuruse järgi võib arvata, et neil oli erinev kasutamistotstarve või kuulusid väikesed noad lastele. Üsna haruldane, kuid raskesti dateeritav leid on peitel. Võimalik, et tegemist on viikingiaegse esemega. Raskesti dateeritavaks leiuks on ka lambakäärid. Kuna Ebaverest leitud lambakäärid on olnud tules ja selle haarad on tahtlikult ristatud ning deformeeritud, siis on see kindlalt matustega seonduv ese. Hobuste suuraudadest väärub eraldi tähelepanu üks tules puutumata jäänud leid, millel on valjaklambrite vahel säilinud nahast valjaste jäänused. Leidude hulgas on ka erineva pikkusega neete (22). Pole selge, kas need on olnud paadi või mõne suurema kasti needid ja mis ajast need pärinevad. Samas ei ole Eestis viikingiajast hilisematest kalmetes paadineete leitud.

Relvi on võrreldes teiste esemeliikidega vähe: kaks kirvest, võitlusnuga, viskeodaots ja neli odaotsa. Mõlemad kirved on ühesugused ja esindavad viikingiajal laiemalt levinud võitluskirve tüüpi, mida dateeritakse 9.–10. sajandisse. Võitlusnuga on väliste tunnuste järgi 10. saj teisele poolele iseloomulik relvatuüp ja kõige rohkem on selliseid leitud Virumaalt. Noakujulise lehega viskeodaotse dateering on meil ja naabermaades lai: kõige vanemad arvatakse pärinevat 10.–11. sajandist ja hilisemad muinasaja lõpust. Kõik neli odaotsa on putkega ja kuuluvad kahte tüüpi (jn 6: 1, 2). Kolm ühesugust odaotsa esindavad 9.–10. saj relvi (Peterseni E-tüüp), mida kuigivõrd kasutati veel 11. sajandil. Kõige pikem odaots kuulub Peterseni M-tüüpi. Selliseid relvi hakati valmistama 10. saj lõpus, kuid nende kasutamise kõrge oli 11. sajandil ja võimalik, et need olid kasutusel veel 12. saj alguses.

Ebaverest saadud leidude koostis ja seisukord on iseloomulik Eesti rahvasterännuaja, viikingiaja ja hilisrauaaja põletusmatustega kalmetele: tules on

olnud ligi 97% ja tahtlikult fragmenditud, kõveraks painutatud või muul moel deformeeritud esemeid on 76%. Põletusmatustele osutavad ka leidude hulgas olnud üksikud luukillud. Üksikute põlemistunnusteta leidude, sh hobuse suitsete järgi ei saa välis-tada võimalust, et sinna on sängitatud ka üksikud laibamatused.

Ebavere kaks matmispaika olid leidude esialgse dateeringu järgi kasutusel rahvasterännuaja lõpust või viikingiaja algusest kuni hilisrauaajani. Selges üle-kaalus on viikingiaegsed esemed, kuid oleks ennatlik väita, et selle perioodi matuseid on kõige rohkem,

kuna matmise komme, sh panustamise viis võis aja-pikku muutuda. Ühtlasi pole selge, kas mõlemad mat-miskohad on üheaegsed, sest otsijad jätsid leidude täpsed avastamiskohad fikseerimata. Kokkuvõtvalt tuleb tõdeda, et sedavõrd suures koguses leidude väljavõtmisega rikuti seadust ja tekitati oluline kahju mõlemale matmisalale. Leiukohtade ülevaatamisel ja prooviaukude kaevamisel tehtud tähelepanekud lubavad siiski loota, et seal on säilinud metallidetektoristide tegevusest puutumata alasid. Seetõttu tuleb Ebavere matmisalad võtta võimalikult kiiresti muin-suskaitse alla.