



## 16th century Mõdriku hoard from Vetiku village, Virumaa

**Erki Russow**

*Tallinna Ülikool, arheoloogia teaduskogu* (Tallinn University, Archaeological Research Collection), Rütli 10, 10130 Tallinn, Estonia; erki.russow@tlu.ee

### INTRODUCTION

The year 2021 was rather eventful for the advisers of the National Heritage Board (MA), working closely with the local detecting community. Among hundreds of usual find reports also a considerable number of hoards were found here and there in Estonia: an intriguing early 13th-century find complex in western Estonia (see Leimus & Saage, this volume) and a large coin hoard in Tartumaa, southern Estonia (Kiudsoo 2022) are some of the most noteworthy discoveries. This ‘harvest’ of wealth deposits continued until the end of the year. In late November 2021, the MA received a call from a licensed hobby searcher fieldwalking in the Vetiku village in Virumaa (NE Estonia) that he had unearthed an iron handle of a pot and cleaned out the mouth of a tripod, which highly likely hides an assemblage of other artefacts. The next day the site was inspected by the finder and Krista Karro from MA to document the find spot and to collect the possible hoard as an earth block to be further investigated in a controlled environment of the laboratory of Archaeological Research Collection of Tallinn University (TLÜ AT). As it turned out, not all of the items were in the tripod but a considerable amount of finds was scattered outside, around the pot (Karro 2021). Thus next to the well-defined hoard container a large volume of loose things was picked up and later on handed over to TLÜ AT, now stored there with inventory number AI 8554. In early 2022, the hoard was subsequently excavated (the content of the tripod pot) and cleaned in the laboratory of TLÜ AT by Aive Viljus. Later on expert opinion on the hoard was compiled for the MA (Russow 2022). Here, the main results of the research will be published.

### THE SITE

The hoard discovered in the Vetiku village in Lääne-Viru County was found in close vicinity of the Sõmeru River on the present-day agricultural land (Fig. 1). The area under discussion was merged into Vetiku village only in the late 1970s, after the large-scale administrative reorganisation of Soviet Estonian rural districts in 1977. Before this reform, the site belonged to the Mõdriku village that had three distinctive parts: Vanaküla in the north, Metsaserva in the south and Kunela in the west (KNR 2016, ‘Mõdriku’). It is the Vanaküla (Eng. ‘Old village’) section of Mõdriku from where the hoard was collected but the current landscape does not show any visual signs of the former rural settlement core. Unfortunately, older data concerning the village is also relatively poor. From the written sources we know that Mõdriku was first mentioned in the Danish land inventory *Liber Census Daniae* (LCD) in 1241 as *Modrigas*,



Fig. 1. The find spot of the Mõdriku hoard.

Jn 1. Mõdriku aarde leiukoht.

Photo / Foto: Estonian Land Board / Maa-amet



Fig. 2. The approximate find spot of the hoard on the map of 1884. Mõdders is the area of the Mõdriku manor.

Jn 2. Aarde umbkaudne leiukoht 1884. aasta Eestimaa kaardil. Mõddersi juures asub Mõdriku mõis.

Map / Kaart: Estonian Land Board / Maa-amet

the local manor appears in the documents in 1470 and by 1583 at the latest the village was divided between two parts called Upper and Lower *Mõdderkas* (Johansen 1933, 504). Thus the local settlement goes back at least to the late prehistoric period (i.e. 12th century) as it was one of the largest villages of the region described in LCD; during the medieval and post-medieval times, it was situated next to the alternative road between the towns of Rakvere and Narva (Bruns & Weczerka 1967, Karte 37; viabundus.eu). However, the first topographical documentation comes only from the late 19th century, apart from the very vague depiction on earlier maps (such as Mellin 1798, *Der Wesenbergsche Kreis*), and from there we can conjecture that quite possibly the hoard was buried in the outskirts of Mõdriku (Fig. 2). To some degree this is affirmed with oral information: according to the finder, there had been a building on the find spot not too long ago (Karro 2021, 2). Even so, neither the aerial photographs nor the composition of the soil in the 80 × 100 cm large excavation pit offer solid confirmation to that claim, except apparently the broader area under discussion has been levelled up prior to its use as a field in the 20th century (*ibid.*, 2).

## THE MÕDRIKU HOARD

The investigations established no distinctive cultural layer on the find spot: the soil was loose earth that was mixed with occasional pieces of limestone seemingly with the greatest concentration of stones around the tripod, possibly to support the pot. The tripod itself was dug into the ground, the depth of the pit was up to 60 cm from ground level, and during ascertaining the limits of the hoard container it became evident that a notable quantity of the finds laid freely outside the pot. This was initially interpreted either as the sliding of the artefacts from the top of the tripod or as ornaments deliberately buried close to the pot (beads and pendants) that were wrapped into a piece of cloth (Karro 2021, 1–2). Although this might be the case, also an alternative explanation seems plausible: the find complex comprised also a heavily disintegrated pewter jug that had dispersed around the tripod. Thus it is probable that the artefacts found outside the pot were originally in the pewter jug. If so, then we can separate the Mõdriku hoard into two sets (Fig. 3): the finds outside the cooking utensil form an assemblage named find complex I and the rest, deposited in the tripod can be handled as find complex II (Russow 2022).



**Fig. 3.** The hoard was hidden in two containers: a pewter jug and a copper alloy tripod pot. Close-ups show the marks on the artefacts.

**Jn 3.** Aare oli maetud kahes anumas: tinakannus ja kolmjalgnoõs. Lähivõtetel on esemetel asuvad märgid.  
(AI 8554: 84–89.)

Photo / Foto: Jaana Ratas

### Find complex I

There is not too much to say about the pewter jug. Based on the surviving remains, it is a common late medieval or post-medieval drinking vessel that was widely used in northern Europe in its widest sense. Similar finds occur both in Estonian urban and rural contexts, in the latter case they were occasionally used also as hoard containers in the late 16th and 17th centuries like in Adavere (ERM A 372: 1), Kärkna (ERM A 359: 29), Rutikvere (ERM A 388: 3) and Võhma (ERM A 479: 66) among many others. There is one surviving stamp inside the base of the jug depicting a rosebud. Whether this can be interpreted as a quality mark of pure English pewter as was regulated in the early 17th-century Livonia (Gahlnbäck 1929, 43) at the latest, will be left unanswered at the present stage of the research since the item should be many decades older (see below) than the known regulation.

What is even more interesting, is the composition of the first find complex. This comprises various types of artefacts, some surviving intact and others not. Visually and aesthetically, perhaps the most attractive are three silver sheet pendants decorated respectively with the Calvary group, the Maltese cross, and the Cross of St Anthony. Two of the pendants have inscriptions, in one case *ihesvs nasarenvs rex ivls*, and on the other, *MONKENVRGHE*.<sup>1</sup> Another group of items of precious metal are six silver beads, apparently from one necklace (Fig. 4).

<sup>1</sup> Transcription of the texts on the artefacts were consulted with Anu Mänd (TLU).



**Fig. 4.** A selection of finds from the I complex: silver sheet pendants and silver beads.

**Jn 4.** Valik esimesest leiukogumist pärit leide: hõbedast rinnalehed ja kröolid.

(AI 8554: 19–27.)

Photo / Foto: Jaana Ratas

Both belong to the typical peasant jewellery used in Estonia throughout the 16th–17th century (Kirme 2002; Reidla 2012). The same applies to the tiny (up to 3 mm) ring-shaped glass beads usually known as seed beads. As these, mainly yellow and green beads were found in thousands, it is possible that they came from some kind of garment decoration (e.g. head-dress, apron, overgarment) and/or necklace similar to other 16th-century hoards like the one from Sargvere (*tpq* 1567; Tvauri *et al.* 2012, 249). Still, several of the same beads might belong to crumbled necklaces or head decorations with copper alloy spiral tubes (a 14th-century example: Rammo & Ratas 2019, photo 12), also represented in the first find complex with 51 pieces.

While the above-described adornments characterise local folksy crafts, there are also several artefacts that even though being more or less usual details of peasant garments, reflect the rural populations' appeal to the foreign products distributed through long-distance trade networks. Here, the first to mention are different types of early modern period trade glass beads (Fig. 5): blue-coloured *Nueva Cadiz* group of square-sectioned beads with corner faceting (Deagan 1987, 162–164) and green, red, white and blue faceted Chevron beads (class 4k by Karklins 2012; Deagan 1987, 164–167) that were made *en masse* in Venice from 1500 onwards and later on in Dutch centres (Blackwell & Kirk 2015, 380–381) but also elsewhere. Whereas the *Nueva Cadiz* beads have been found both in the Estonian countryside and amongst the native-speaking urban community in more than a dozen cases, the Chevron beads are rare, known thus far only in the Harju suburb of Tallinn and the southern Estonian burial site at Nõuni (pers. comm. Andres Tvauri, TÜ).

Also another category of finds – thin mounts of copper and lead-tin alloy, a distant echo of silvery and golden bling on religious and secular textiles (Russow 2021) – belong to the

well-known details of late and post-medieval peasant attire. Although originally meant for the decoration of clothes, belts, and purses, they were alternatively applied as additional components in necklaces or parts of other hanging ornaments, similarly to the reckoning tokens. In the Mõdriku hoard, the mounts have attachments that indicate their function as pendants, either separately or in necklaces together with coin pendants (Fig. 6). Their decoration complies with the design that was common in a much wider region than Estonia and thus the mounts are probably imports from abroad, perhaps from one of the largest places of manufacture – Nuremberg (Cassiti 2021, 151–162).

Next to the mounts also five coins (Fig. 6) have been secondarily used as pendants, giving us the best chance to estimate the hiding time of the hoard. Out of the four coins<sup>2</sup> that were determinable, one was a late 15th century Tallinn schilling minted during the reign of the master of the Livonian Order Bernd von der Borch (1480/1–1483), another from the times of the master Wolter von Plettenberg (1494–1535) struck in Cesis, one Russian kopek from the 1560s (Novgorod, Ivan IV, 1533–1584) and finally a 1566 schilling of Riga Free town (1561–1581). Thus the possible *terminus* after which the hoard was deposited should be the late 1560s or



**Fig. 5.** A selection of beads from the find complex I: Nueva Cadiz and faceted Chevron beads.

**Jn 5.** Valik esimesest leiukompleksist pärit helmeid: Nueva Cadiz ja fassetitud otstega poliirkroomsed helmed. (AI 8554: 66–68.)

Photo / Foto: Jaana Ratas



**Fig. 6.** Mounts, button and coin pendants from the find complex I.

**Jn 6.** Esimese leiukogumi ehisnaastud, ripatsnõbid ja -mündid.

(AI 8554: 29–45, 47, 49–52.)

Photo / Foto: Jaana Ratas

<sup>2</sup> All coins were identified by Mauri Kiudsoo (TLÜ AT).



**Fig. 7.** Coral beads and silver pendant with the St Anthony cross, possibly details of the same rosary.

**Jn 7.** Korallhelmed ja Antoniuse ristiga ripats, arvatavasti ühe palvehelmekee detailid.

(AI 8554: 28, 65.)

Photo / Foto: Jaana Ratas



**Fig. 8.** Silver button and monogram pendant from the find complex I.

**Jn 8.** Esimesest leiukogumist pärit hõbenööp ja monogramripats.

(AI 8554: 48, 46.)

Photo / Foto: Jaana Ratas

later. This will be discussed more thoroughly below.

In addition, the first find complex included a few unusual artefacts that are not regular elements of the rural hoards. Here, the most striking is a collection of coral beads (19 items) and a silver pendant with the cross of St Anthony (Fig. 7). While the rosaries with coral beads, frequently with the St Anthony's cross were relatively common in late medieval urban centres of Livonia, especially during the first half of the 16th century (Mänd & Russow 2022, 14–15), it is the first known archaeological example of a coral rosary from a rural context, likely moved to a peasant milieu after they fell out of fashion in towns because of the religious changes between the 1520s and 1540s. This hypothetical transfer of the components of the urban material culture is further illustrated with a find of a silver button, a monogram pendant (Fig. 8) and a handful of miniature (Ø 4 mm) buttons (on Fig. 6). The monogram pendant is the first such kind of example in Estonia and could be either a detail of a 16th-century buckle or a dress hook (for parallels see Fingerlin 1971, 452–453 and Lightbown 1992, fig. 58–60).

## Find complex II

The second find assemblage has much firmer limits as it was found intact inside a copper alloy tripod pot (Fig. 3). The pot itself is a classic late medieval cooking vessel that was a standard utensil in urban and rural households, and, as abundant evidence shows, was often used as hoard container – already 20 years ago about 25 examples were known in Estonia (Leimus 2001). But what makes this ordinary commodity special, is the mark on the shoulder of the pot as such a sign of the producer has been registered hitherto only in two other cases: in Süderlügum in Schleswig-Holstein (Drescher 1969, fig. 10: 10) and in Porkuni in western Virumaa (Russow 2016) which is about 20 km from Mõdriku as the crow flies. Unfortunately, the origin of the production place remains presently unidentified.

The soil that filled the pot was carefully removed in the laboratory of TLÜ AT. As a result, one can say that the artefacts were packed loosely inside the tripod as some of the finds were in a horizontal position and others were placed vertically. This uneven placement might be alternatively explained with some organic material that has decayed – interestingly, the substance inside of the pot comprised a fragment of a straw item or loose straw, hay as well as a small amount of sand and a handful of charcoal. As the upper half of the pot was filled with ordinary soil it is perhaps safe to say that the owner packed the personal possession with hay on the bottom of the tripod and after the decomposition of the organic matter the space was gradually filled with the surrounding earth.

Generally, the content of the tripod resembles the above described first assemblage. Here, too, we have a selection of silver sheet pendants (altogether 16 items) as well as two made of copper (Fig. 9). The decoration of the pendants falls broadly into three categories that are all characteristic of the 16th-century Estonian peasant jewellery and have been quite often



**Fig. 9.** Silver and copper sheet pendants from the find complex II.

**Jn 9.** Teise leiukogumi hõbedast ja vasesest rinnalehed.

(AI 8554: 1–18.)

Photo / Foto: Jaana Ratas



**Fig. 10.** Different beads from the find complex II.

**Jn 10.** Eri tüüpi helmed teisest leiukogumist.

(AI 8554: 53–55, 59–64, 69–70, 73–74.)

Photo / Foto: Jaana Ratas

discovered both in nearby locations such as Haljala church (Kadakas 2017, fig. 11: 3) or in a hoard from Vaiatu (*tpq* 1572(?), Kiudsoo 2018, 81, and figs 2, 6). All the collected beads originate from the necklace(s) as no seed beads were found inside the tripod. The surviving specimens are again of foreign origin, be it larger opaque rock crystal ones or red-coloured glass beads that are deformed, but were originally gilded (Fig. 10), confirming yet again the yearning for imported trade glass pearls. Three examples of rectangular ornament link(?) / dividers that are heavily oxidised and visibly deformed – probably damaged in fire. These are slightly problematic as such artefacts are typical in 12th–13th-century contexts with a sporadic

appearance later in up to 14th-century contexts, these may occur, however, even in late 16th-century deposits (one example being a handful of dividers (AI 7072: 32) in Puru I hoard, *tpq* 1572, Kiudsoo 2012). Since no other related items were collected from the pot, it remains unclear if the outdated ornament dividers were used as supplementary details of the necklaces or had some other purpose. Uncertainty surrounds also the last find – an unworked tooth of a sheep or goat (pers. comm. Lembi Lõugas, TLÜ AT). Perhaps it is also a later random addition due to the decomposition processes inside the pot.

## MÕDRIKU HOARD IN ITS HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Mõdriku hoard is an interesting find assemblage that gives a lot of food for thought. Since the find collection includes only a handful of narrowly datable artefacts, it is relatively difficult to offer a more definite dating, when exactly the hoard was concealed and to what kind of historical event(s) it can be related. The coin pendants in the Mõdriku hoard give us the approximate timeframe – the treasure was buried in the second half of the 1560s at the earliest, but considering the secondary use of the currency as an ornament as well as the degree of wear and tear it might be even slightly later, i.e., the 1570s.

On a general level, it is not a very essential issue. This is a period of great political instability around the Baltic Sea that for the area called Old Livonia culminated with the outbreak of the Russian – Livonian war in January 1558. Already in August 1558 the Russian troops captured the castle of Rakvere (Germ. Wesenberg) together with the adjacent town (Renner 1995, 56) and managed to keep these in their possession until March 1581 (Russow 1993, 320–321). Both the medieval castle of the Livonian branch of the Teutonic Order and the small market town are about 7–8 km NNW from Mõdriku village, therefore the political and military actions in and around Rakvere during these decades should be the most relevant events when handling the reasons behind abandoning of one's valuables in Mõdriku.

Usually, the cause of the concealment of the hoards in the second half of the 16th century has been associated with different raids during the Livonian – Russian war (1558–1583). In the broader region, especially west of Rakvere, the routine explanation (e.g. Kiudsoo & Russow 2011, 228–229; Tvaauri *et al.* 2012, 250; Kiudsoo 2018, 81) is the looting of Järvamaa

and the military campaign against Paide by Russian forces led by Tsar Ivan IV Vasilyevich, that started in mid-December 1572 from the Rakvere castle (Russow 1993, 212–216). Indeed, quite often both the historical context and the coins within the hoards allow such interpretation. However, in the case of Mõdriku, this seems improbable rationale at first sight, even if it sounds chronologically plausible. First of all, the Russian troops headed in another direction, and, taking into account the vicinity of Rakvere, the village located likely within the power sphere of the Russians. For that reason, alternative historical events and players should be examined as well.

Beyond any doubt, not all acts of violence were documented back in the third quarter of the 16th century and thus we can operate only with historically known affairs. Still, there is a sizeable number of warfare episodes to choose from. Chronologically, the most suitable are two or three. Thus, for example, in the autumn of 1568, the Junkers (members of rural gentry) from the Pärnu area in western Estonia attacked Virumaa, and besides burning down Rakvere borough they also plundered the countryside (Russow 1993, 165–166). This, in turn, led to a Russian punitive expedition against the local peasants as they supported the deeds of their fellow compatriots (Laidre 2015, 345). A few years later, in spring 1571 the peasants from Harju and Järva County ransacked Russian-governed Virumaa until eliminated by the Russians (Russow 1993, 205), and in September 1572, Swedish-German mercenaries raided Virumaa, after the unsuccessful siege of Rakvere castle (*ibid.*, 212). The same situation repeated between January and March 1574 when the Swedes could not conquer the castle (*ibid.*, 222–226), and sporadic, small-scale havoc happened at least in 1576 and 1577 (*ibid.*, 252, 272). Finally, in March 1581 the town and castle fell to the hands of the Swedes (*ibid.*, 320–321) and with this also the neighbouring regions achieved relative peace for a while. However, for the last few events, the gap between the possible concealment of the hoard and the siege looks too long, thus more plausible dates are either 1568, 1571 or 1572.

Be that as it may, the Mõdriku hoard offers an excellent glimpse into the material environment of the late medieval or early post-medieval peasant attire. For a start, the relative proximity to Rakvere provokes the question of the relation between the urban and rural settlements – how much the latter was influenced by the former. Although a more in-depth analysis will be left to future research, it is rather evident that the hoard reflects lively cultural networking beyond the borders of the village community. For example, a systematic study of the sheet pendants should help to establish that at least some (e.g. the one with the Calvary group, for instance) of these belong to a regional group made in Virumaa, or even in Rakvere from where we have indirect written evidence on local goldsmiths (Russow 1993, 114). Likewise, both the beads of foreign origin, as well as the mounts used in the necklaces, illustrate very well that the late medieval/post-medieval pan-European trade of simple adornments reached Mõdriku, perhaps via the shops or market in Rakvere that were actively visited by the neighbouring gentry, yeomen and peasants (*ibid.*, 114). This interconnectedness is finally grounded with finds that were characteristic to urban/Low German-speaking households such as the coral rosary, the monogram pendant and the silver button. Why and how these items ended up in the overall traditional peasant treasure complex will remain an unanswered question presumably forever.

## CONCLUSION

The Mõdriku hoard that was found in late 2021 is an important addition to the ever-growing number of 16th-century treasure finds from the tumultuous period in Estonian history. The find assemblage offers another excellent insight into the material world of the post-medieval rural household, more closely to the ornaments used by the native-speaking population. As in many other cases, also this time the wide-reaching trade networking is well perceptible, starting from the hoard containers (a pewter jug and a copper alloy tripod pot) and ending with the mounts and glass beads that at least partially originate from the southern and central European workshops. The solid amount of silver sheet pendants should be highlighted as well, as the further in-depth analysis will probably confirm the regionality of the artefacts, and might at some time in the future pinpoint some individual masters working in nearby Rakvere, for example. It is only to be hoped that exemplary handling of the discovery by the hobby metal detectorist will be followed by many other individuals using searching devices. Once again, the detailed fieldwork documentation of the find contexts makes the given collection of artefacts an excellent contribution both to the material culture studies, and to local settlement history.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This article was written with the support of the research project PRG29 of the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research. The author is grateful for all the insightful conversations as well as correspondence with colleagues Irita Kallis, Mauri Kiudsoo, Stefan Krabath, Lembi Lõugas, Anu Mänd, Riina Rammo, Andres Tvauri and Aive Viljus. My sincere gratitude goes to Jaana Ratas for the excellent find photos.

## REFERENCES

- Blackwell, A. & Kirk, S. 2015.** Seventh century or seventeenth century? Identifying glass beads from Scotland. – Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland (2015), 371–399.
- Bruns, F. & Weczercka, H. 1962.** Hansische Handelsstrassen. Atlas. *Quellen und Darstellungen zur hansischen Geschichte. Neue Folge Band XIII, Teil 1.* Köln; Graz.
- Cassiti, P. 2021.** Nürnberger Waren. Herstellung, Handel und Konsum europäischer Buntmetallprodukte in Mittelalter und früher Neuzeit. *Zeitschrift für Archäologie des Mittelalters, Beiheft, 27.* Bonn.
- Deagan, K. 1987 (2002).** Artifacts of the Spanish Colonies of Florida and the Caribbean 1500–1800. Volume 1: Ceramics, Glassware and Beads. Washington.
- Drescher, H. 1969.** Mittelalterliche Dreibeintöpfe aus Bronze. Bericht über die Bestandsaufnahme und den Versuch einer chronologischen Ordnung. – Neue Ausgrabungen und Forschungen in Niedersachsen, 3, 287–315.
- Fingerlin, I. 1971.** Gürtel des hohen und späten Mittelalters. *Kunstwissenschaftliche Studien, XLVI.* München.
- Gahlnbäck, J. 1929.** Zinn und Zinngiesser in Liv-, Est- und Kurland. *Quellen und Darstellungen zur hansischen Geschichte. Neue Folge, Band VII.* Lübeck.
- Johansen, P. 1933.** Die Estlandliste des Liber Census Daniae. Kopenhagen, Reval.
- Kadakas, V. 2017.** Archaeological studies in the church of Haljala. – AVE, 2016, 109–130.
- Karklins, K. 2012.** Guide to the Description and Classification of Glass Beads Found in the Americas. – Beads: Journal of the Society of Bead Researchers, 24, 62–90.
- Karro, K. 2021.** Arheoloogiliste leidude üleandmise-vastuvõtmise akt nr 5.1-15/257. Tallinn. (*Field documentation, archived in MA.*)
- Kirme, K. 2002.** Eesti rahvapärased ehted. Tallinn.
- Kiudsoo, M. 2012.** Puru aare. Ekspert hinnang. (*Manuscript in TLÜ AT.*)
- Kiudsoo, M. 2018.** New archaeological monuments on the upper reaches of the Loobu River, Lääne-Virumaa County. – AVE, 2017, 79–84.
- Kiudsoo, M. 2022.** Keskaegne mündiaare Elva vallast. Ekspert hinnang. Tallinn. (*Manuscript in MA.*)
- Kiudsoo, M. & Russow, E. 2011.** Hoards discovered in 2010. – AVE, 2010, 225–232.
- KNR 2016** = Eesti kohanimeraamat. Tallinn.

- Laidre, M. 2015.** Domus belli. Põhjamaade Saja-aastane sõda Liivimaal 1554–1661. Tallinn.
- Leimus, I. 2001.** Keedupott rahapajaks. Grapenid Eesti muuseumides. – Muuseum, 2001, 20–23.
- Lightbown, R. W. 1992.** Mediaeval European Jewellery. With a Catalogue of the Collection in the Victoria & Albert Museum. London.
- Mellin, L. A. 1798.** Atlas von Liefland, oder von den beyden Gouvernementern u. Herzogthümern Lief- und Ehistland, und der Provinz Oesel. Riga. Online version at the Library of Congress: <https://www.loc.gov/item/75572471/> (last accessed 17.06.2022.)
- Mänd, A. & Russow, E. 2022.** Palvehelmed ja isiklik vagadus keskaegsel Liivimaal. – Kunstiteaduslikke uurimusi, 31/1–2, 9–41.
- Rammo, R. & Ratas, J. 2019.** Spiral tube decorations on garments: Restoring a lost technique. – Studia Vernacula, 11, 124–146. <https://doi.org/10.12697/sv.2019.11.124-147>
- Reidla, J. 2012.** Eesti ehtekultuur muinasajast uusajani. Tallinn.
- Renner, J. 1995.** Liivimaa ajalugu 1556–1561. Translated by I. Leimus. Tallinn.
- Russow, B. 1993.** Liivimaa kroonika. Translated by D. and H. Stock. Tallinn.
- Russow, E. 2016.** Metallnõu Lääne-Virumaalt Tamsalu vallast Porkuni külast Karujärve kinnistult (78701:004:0055). Eksperdi hinnang. Tallinn. (*Manuscript in MA.*)
- Russow, E. 2021.** Erandlik leid Läänemaalt – keskaegne ehiskraekaat Erja külast. – Läänemaa Muuseumi toimetised, 23. Haapsalu, 113–131.
- Russow, E. 2022.** Varauusaegne aardeleid Lääne-Virumaalt Vetiku külast (KÜ 90002:001:2620). Eksperdi hinnang. Tallinn. (*Manuscript in MA.*)
- Tvauri, A., Rammo, R., Vindi, A. & Kiudsoo, M. 2012.** Livonian war time hoard from Sargvere settlement site, Järvamaa. – AVE, 2011, 245–252.
- Viabundus.eu:** Pre-modern street map. <https://www.landesgeschichte.uni-goettingen.de/handelsstrassen/index.php> (last accessed 17.06.2022.)

## 16. SAJANDI MÕDRIKU AARE VIRUMAALT

Erki Russow

2021. aasta pakkus Eesti arheoloogidele mitmeid põnevaid aardeleide, alates 13. sajandi kogumeist Lääne- ja Tartumaal ning lõpetades käesolevas artiklis käsitletava hiliskeskaegse-varauusaegse leiukompleksiga.

Kõnealune aare leiti 2021. aasta novembri lõpus Lääne-Virumaalt Vetiku külast Rakvere–Rannapungerja maantee põhjaküljelt, Sõmeru jõe lähedusest. Otsinguloaga leidja käitus avastamisel eeskujulikult: vahetult pärast leiukohal metallist potisanga ning pronksist potisuu päevavalgele tulemist teavitas ta muinsuskaitset, ja juba järgmisel päeval toimus võimaliku aarde välja kaevamine ameti esindaja juuresolekul. Esmalt oli eesmärk kogum välja võtta monoliidina, kuid tööde käigus selgus, et lisaks aardepotile leidub esemeid ka ümbritsevas pinnases. Seetõttu uuriti põhjalikumalt ka lähemat ümbrust ning kokkuvõttes toodi Tallinna Ülikooli arheoloogia teaduskogu laborisse konserveerimiseks kaks kompleksi: väljapool metallist kolmjalgpotti asunud esemed ning kolmjalgpott ühes selles oleva täitepinnasega.

Aardeleiukoha ajalooline taustateave ei ole ülearu rikkalik. Tänapäeval Vetiku küla territooriumile jääv koht oli enne 1977. aasta haldusreformi hoopis Mõdriku küla ala ning paikneb ilmselt kolmest osast kuulunud asula nn Vanaküla maal. Vanema kaardimaterjali järgi jäi Mõdriku aarde leiukoht arvatavasti küla äärealale ning tänapäeval ei ole omaaegsest hoonestusest seal midagi alles – leid saadi praegu põllumaana kasutatavalt alalt (jn 1–2).

Mõdriku aarde võib peitmiseks kasutatud anumate abil jagada kaheks osaks (jn 3). Väljaspool metallpotti asunud leidude seas oli äärmiselt lagunenud tinakannu tükke, mistõttu võiks arvata, et leidmishetkel irdselt paiknenud esemed olid algselt hoopis kannus, moodustades seega tinglikult esimese leiukogumi. Seevastu teine leiukogum on hõlpsalt piiritletav, sest selle asjad asusid metallist kolmjalgnõus.

Leiukogumite lähem analüüs osutab, et Mõdriku aare on üldiselt üpris tüüpiline 16. sajandi teise poole peitvara. Esimesest leiukogumist leiame lisaks varauusaegse tinakannu katkeile veel mõned hõbedast rinnalehed ja krõllid (jn 4), maarahva rõivaid kaunistanud kudrused, rohkem või vähem eksootilisi klaashelmeid (jn 5) ning samuti traditsiooniliselt Eesti talupojahete sekka kuulunud vasesulamist naaste ja ripatsmünte (jn 6). Viimastest noorim on 1566. aastal vermitud Riia vabalinna veering. Leidub ka esemeid, mis võiks viidata linnakultuuri jälgedele. Nii sisaldas esimene kogum korallhelmeid ja hõbedast Antoniuse ripatsit (jn 7), mis olid 16. sajandi algupoolel suhteliselt tavalised linnarahva palvekeede osised. Samuti tuleks linna või „saksa“ mõjudega seostada kompleksis olevat kiviga hõbenõopi ja monogramripatsiti (jn 8).

Samamoodi pakub huvi teine leiukogum. Aardeanumana kasutatud tüüpilisele keskaegsele metallist kolmjalgnõule on seni teada kaks lähemat paralleeli, üks Saksa-Taani piirialalt ning teine Mõdrikust paarikümne kilomeetri kaugusele jäävast Porkunist.

Graapenis asunud ehtekogumi moodustavad aga Eesti maapiirkonnile iseloomulikud rinnalehed (jn 9) ning suhteliselt laialt levinud helmed (jn 10).

Mõdriku aarde peitmise aeg ja asjaolud pole üheselt määratavad. Leidude seas on vaid mõned, mida õnnestub lähemalt dateerida – ripatsmündid. Nende põhjal näib, et vara peitmine toimus kas 1560. aastate teisel poolel või 1570. aastatel. See on aeg, mil Eesti alal leidis Liivimaa sõja (1558–1583) tõttu aset sagedasi sõja- ja rüüsteretki. Kui hindame Mõdrikust 7–8 km

kaugusele jääva Rakvere linnuse ja linnaga seotud sündmusi, siis võiks kõne alla tulla nii 1568., 1571. kui 1572. aasta, aga ka mitmed hilisemad seigad. Kuid igal juhul on Mõdriku aarde puhul tegemist väga huvitava talurahva peitvaraga, mis osutab linna ja küla ainelise kultuuri omavahelisele seotusele. Aarde leidja eeskujulik käitumine ning leiukoha korrektne dokumenteerimine aitavad meid tublisti edasisel eseme- ja kohaajaloo uurimistööl.