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Results of archaeological fieldwork of 2002

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ARHEOLOOGILISED VÄLITÖÖD EESTIS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELDWORK IN ESTONIA

2002

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THE HILL-FORT OF RIPUKA PUNAMÄGI

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In the district of Vooremaa in former North Tartumaa 14 hill-forts are known on a relatively small territory. On half of them small-scale archaeological excavations have been carried out (Lavi 2002a, 236). In the NW nook of Vooremaa, in the region of Kärde - Vaimastvere - Kõola, a relatively compact agricultural settlement area can be observed, separated from its neighbours by the extensive Endla marshes and the wide flat valley of the Pedja River. Notwithstanding intensive land improvement, archaeological monuments of different periods have survived here, finds have also been recovered from destroyed or damaged sites (Fig. 1). The oldest finds, the stone axe and hoe from Kärde date from the Neolithic Period. Stone graves and settlement sites suggest permanency of agricultural settlement since the Iron Age.

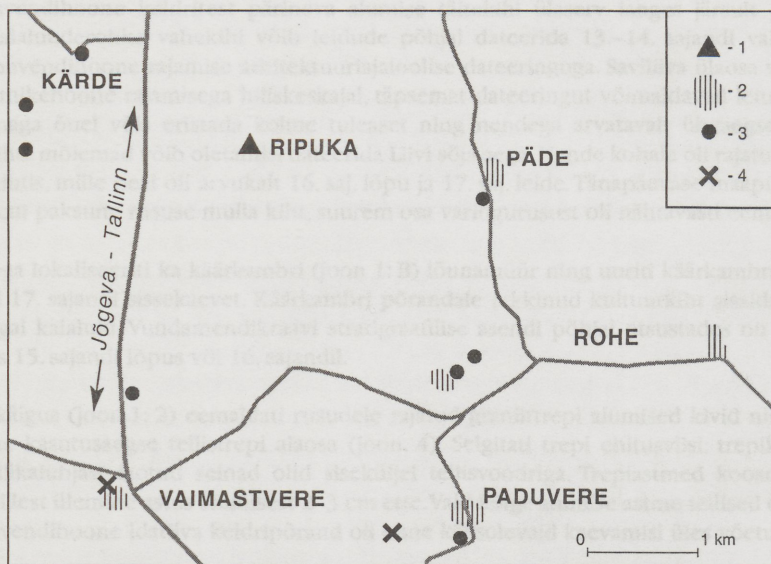


Fig. 1. Archaeological sites of the Kärde-Vaimastvere-Kõola district. 1 - hillfort, 2 - settlement site, 3 - stone grave, 4 - sacrificial site.

Joon. 1. Kärde-Vaimastvere-Kõola piirkonna muistised. 1 - linnamägi, 2 - asulakoht, 3 - kiviakme, 4 - ohvripaik.

The Kärde drumlin is one of the large drumlins characteristic of the relief of the northern part of Vooremaa. Its appearance, however, has been greatly changed by several ravines created by waters from melting ice (Remmel 1976, 16). In the SE part of the large drumlin the Linnamäe esker is discernible, with the Ripuka

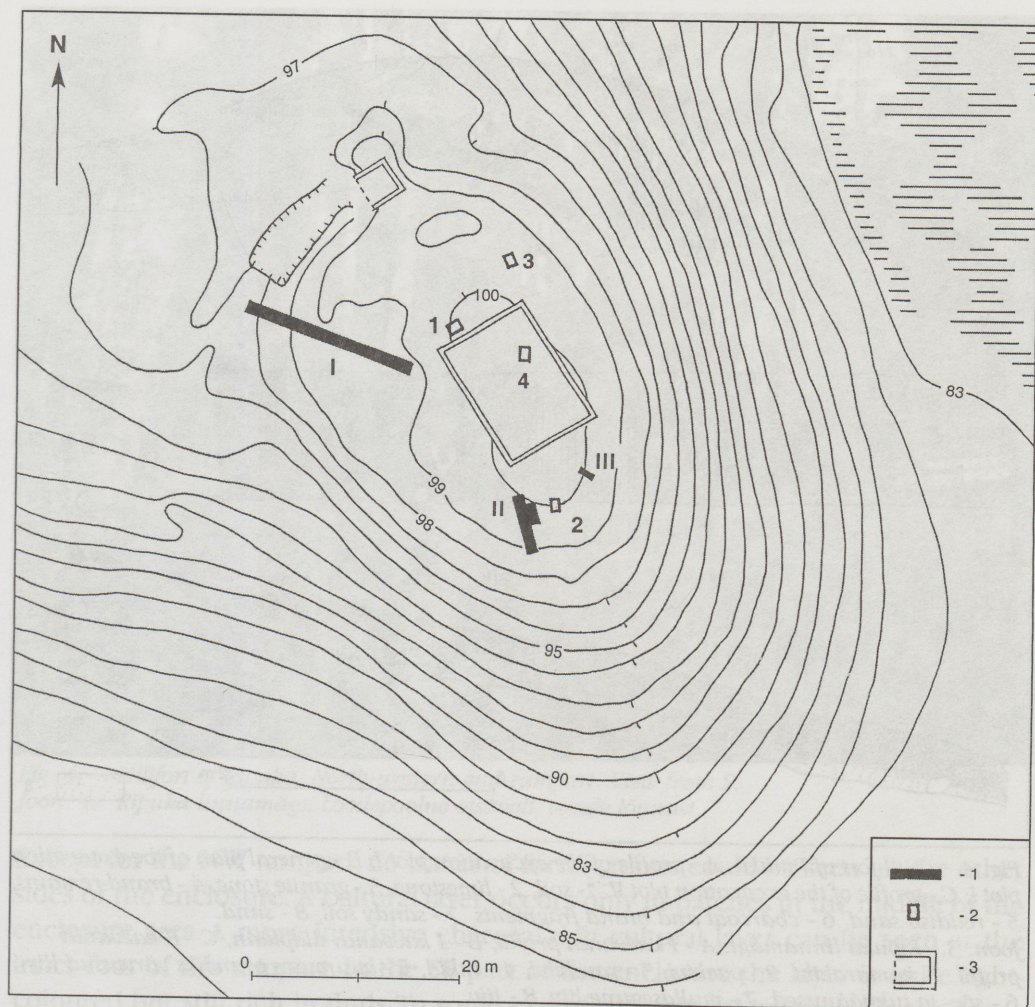


Fig. 2. Plan of the hill-fort of Ripuka. 1- excavation plots of 2002, 2 - test pits of 1953, 3 - remains of summer cottage from the beginning of the 20th century.

Joon. 2. Ripuka linnamäe plaan. 1 - 2002. aasta kaevandid, 2 - 1953. aasta proovikaevandid, 3 - 20. sajandi alguse suvemaja vundament.

Punamägi hill-fort on it. The location of the hill-fort has been chosen on the higher SE projection of the esker, with high and steep slopes on three sides making the ancient fortifications more effective (Fig. 2). In this respect the eastern side is especially remarkable: in addition to the very steep 18 m high slope a marshy area lies at the foot of the elevation. The southern and western slopes of the hill-fort were also 17-18 m high but the western side was considerably more sloping. On the NW side of the hill-fort the esker is sloping so gently that stronger fortifications were required. Nowadays the traces of ditches and quite a clear rampart are still discernible.

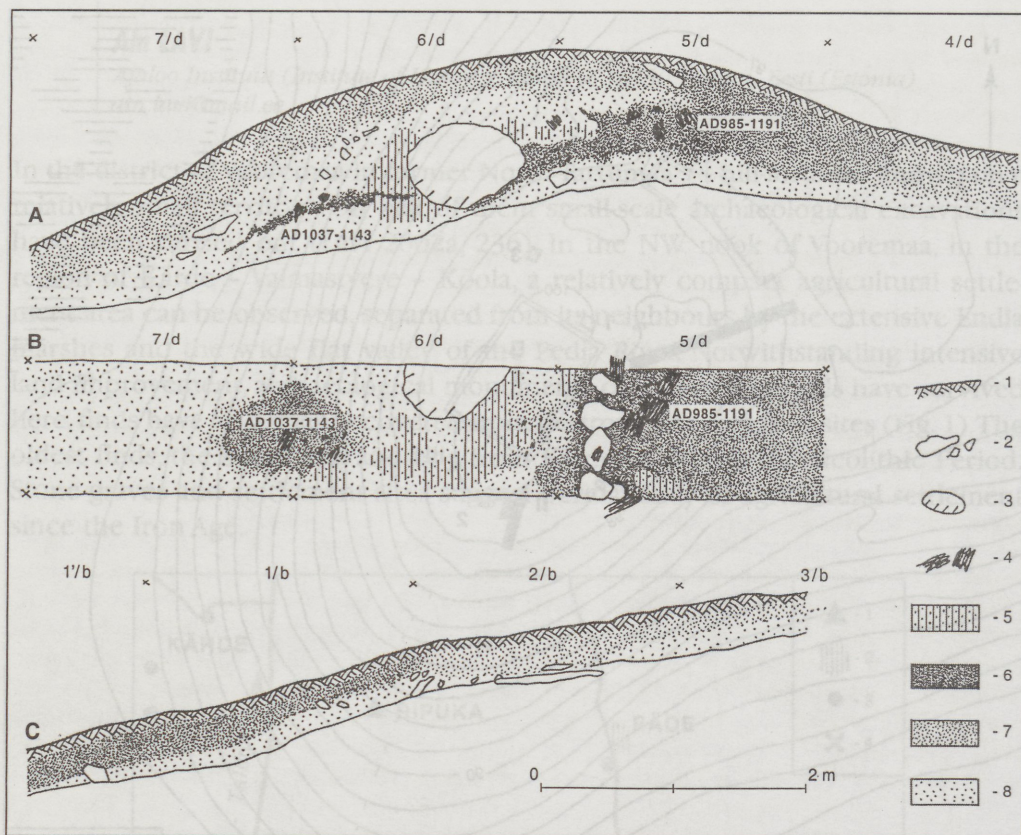


Fig. 3. Hill-fort of Ripuka. A - profile of the excavation plot I; B - general plan of the excavation plot I; C - profile of the excavation plot II. 1 - sod, 2 - limestone, 3 - granite stone, 4 - brand remains, 5 - reddish sand, 6 - charcoal and brand fragments, 7 - sandy soil, 8 - sand.

Joon. 3. Ripuka linnamägi. A - I kaevandi profiil, B - I kaevandi üldpild, C - II kaevandi profiil. 1 - kamarakiht, 2 - paekivi, 3 - raudkivi, 4 - tukid, 5 - kuumuses oranžiks värvunud liiv, 6 - söe- ja tukijäänused, 7 - mullasegune liiv, 8 - liiv.

The north-western end wall (Fig. 4) runs across the ridge of the esker, its lower ends turn towards the enclosure of the hill-fort in a crescent. The height of the 29 m long rampart is ca 1 m from the inner foot, while at the outer foot, from the bottom of a ditch the height is 2-3 m. The ditch at the outer foot of the rampart is not an even entrenchment, it consists of three oblong hollows lying side by side, with higher ridges separating them. The width of the ditch is 2-3 m, and the depth 0.5-1 m. The ditch lies immediately at the outer foot of the rampart, following its crescent line. The enclosure (20-25 x 30-31 m) is not flat, it descends, in accordance with the natural slope of the ridge of the esker, 1.7 m from the higher NE end westwards.



Fig. 4. Hillfort of Ripuka. North-western end rampart. View from S.
Joon. 4. Ripuka linnamägi. Loodepoolne otsavall, vaade lõunast.

Except for the NW rampart, no traces of fortifications could be seen on the other sides of the enclosure. A cultural layer occurs only in patches in the middle of the enclosure area. A more intensive charcoal-rich cultural layer can be seen at the inner foot of the rampart. In the SE part of the enclosure the layer is quite light-coloured but still rich in finds. To some extent the cultural layer of the enclosure was damaged at the beginning of the 20th century with the construction of the summer cottage of the estate. Its foundation of granite stones is still visible. The later vernacular name of the hill-fort, *Prouamägi* (Madam's Hill), is also connected with this summer cottage of the estate.

RESULTS OF INVESTIGATIONS

In connection with the investigation of the hill-forts of the eastern part of Central Estonia, trial excavations were carried out on Ripuka Punamägi. This time we

clearly discernible than in the enclosure area. To get information about the cultural layer of the NW rampart and the SE part of the enclosure, trial pits I-III were dug (Fig. 1: I-III).

Excavation I was dug in the SW end of the NW rampart. The 1 m wide and 16 m long trench penetrated the rampart from the outer foot to the inner foot, covering also a section of the SE part of the enclosure (Figs. 2; 5). In the rampart traces of two different phases of fortifications of different periods could be observed. Since pit I produced no artefact finds, the dating can be based only on ^{14}C analyses.

The earlier burnt layer came to light beneath the rampart, at a depth of 70–80 cm. The thickness of the early layer beneath the outer side of the rampart was only 7–8 cm. Most likely it consisted mainly of ancient plant remains. In the middle part of the rampart the layer became 10–15 cm thick and further it fused



Fig. 5. Hill-fort of Ripuka. Profile of the excavation plot I. On the outer side of the rampart there is a layer of sand from the fortifications. The burnt layer on the inside comes from the buildings behind the rampart. View from SSE.

Joon. 5. Ripuka linnamägi. I kaevandi profiil. Valli välisküljel kaitseehitistest pärit liivakiht, siseküljel vallitaguste ehitiste põlengukiht. Vaade lõuna-kagust.

middle part of the rampart the layer became 10–15 cm thick and further it fused into the burnt layer of the fortifications belonging to a stratigraphically later period (Lavi 2002b, 14). In the burnt layer in the middle of the rampart traces of transverse brands came to light, as well as patches of orange-burnt sand, both belonging to the fortifications destroyed in fire.

The later burnt layer, covering the earlier one, preserved in the rampart was much thicker – 50–80 cm and it consisted of two basic parts. At the inner side of the rampart the burnt layer contained brands, lots of charcoal, orange-burnt limestone fragments and some crumbled granite stones from a hearth or a *keris*-stove, but at the core and the outer part of the rampart sand containing limestone fragments prevailed. The latter was 70–80 cm thick at the line of the top of the rampart, while the layer fallen to the outer side of the rampart became thinner, 10–30 cm. A sand layer, 10–20 cm thick, had also dribbled onto the burnt layer on the enclosure side.

Most likely the sand layer of the rampart comes from the filling of former timber framework of the defence line, which had shelters and other corner-jointed buildings leaning to its backside (Lavi 2002a, 256). The sand filling the timber framework of the defence line was quite loose and probably came from the ditches at the outer foot of the rampart. After the hill-fort was destroyed by fire, the filling fell off, to some extent also into the enclosure, but mostly outwards. The cultural layer in the area towards the enclosure from the burnt layer on the inner side of the rampart was quite light and thin.

Excavation II (9 m²) was dug on the highest knoll of the enclosure of the hill-fort (Fig. 2). A 7 m long side area of the enclosure up to the steep slope was investigated. The aim was to obtain information about the fortifications of the hill-fort in the places where visible traces of a rampart and other fortifications were missing. It must be mentioned that although the brownish-black cultural layer of the SE knoll of the hill-fort seemed slight and resembled the layer without finds at the middle part of the enclosure, it contained lots of finds, including pottery. 117 potsherds gave the density of 13 potsherds per sq. m. An essential observation was made that on the very edge of the enclosure area, in a belt ca 2 m wide, the cultural layer turned into a considerably darker burnt layer containing small charcoal pieces and brand remains (Fig. 3: C). Potsherds, primarily of wheel pottery, puffed very light in secondary heat, were mostly found from this belt with coal. Most likely the dark belt of the marginal area originates from the buildings which surrounded the enclosure area. It seems that these could have been corner-jointed buildings, located side by side thus forming a defence line around the enclosure.

Since the high slopes here provided adequate natural defence, the building of a substantial defence line of timber framework filled with sand was not necessary. The empty buildings were quite completely destroyed by fire, leaving no rampart line that could be observed even nowadays.

FINDS

Among the materials found a cross-headed decorative pin with connected terminals should be mentioned (Fig. 6: 1). Such pins are dated to the 2nd half of the 12th – beginning of the 13th centuries (Selirand 1974, 147–149). The majority of the finds consists of pottery. A separate group of finds consists of thick-walled pottery of archaic appearance, which is characterised by relatively abundant coarse sand and fine rubble temper, uneven baking and, in some cases, slight striation of the surface (Fig. 6: 2–5). The vessels had upright edges with deep hollows pressed into the surface. These potsherds resemble pottery of the earlier phase of the hill-fort of *Alatskivi Kalevipoja säng*, which has been dated to 2200±200 BP, cal. 360–180 BC (Aun 1974, 90–93). It seems that the archaic pottery of Ripuka might also belong to the earlier settlement phase of the hill-fort dating from the Roman Iron Age. I must admit that no layer has thus far been discovered in Ripuka which could be connected with the earlier settlement phase. The archaic pottery occurs together with pottery from the early 2nd millennium. Although fragments of relatively fine-grained hand-moulded pottery with smooth surfaces have been found also (Fig. 6: 6, 7), wheel pottery prevails among the finds. Special mention should be made of potsherds with a heavily profiled rim (plain wheel pottery) which, in Estonia, has been dated to mid- 12th– late 13th centuries (Tvauri 2001, 107–108).

At the present stage of investigations of the Ripuka hill-fort we can identify the following settlement phases:

1. Foothold of the middle of the Pre-Roman Iron Age, probably only slightly fortified. Hitherto no cultural layer connected with the earlier phase has been discovered and no ¹⁴C analyses have been made. It is only suggested by archaic pottery, partly slightly striated, which has been found only from the higher knoll of the enclosure area. It is possible that earlier fortifications had been located only on the highest ridge of the esker. In the vicinity of Ripuka the cup-marked stones of Tirma and Vaimastvere could be connected with this settlement phase.

2. More than a thousand years later a new fortress was erected on the Linnamäe esker. This time the fortifications enfolded the whole area of the hill-fort. The main

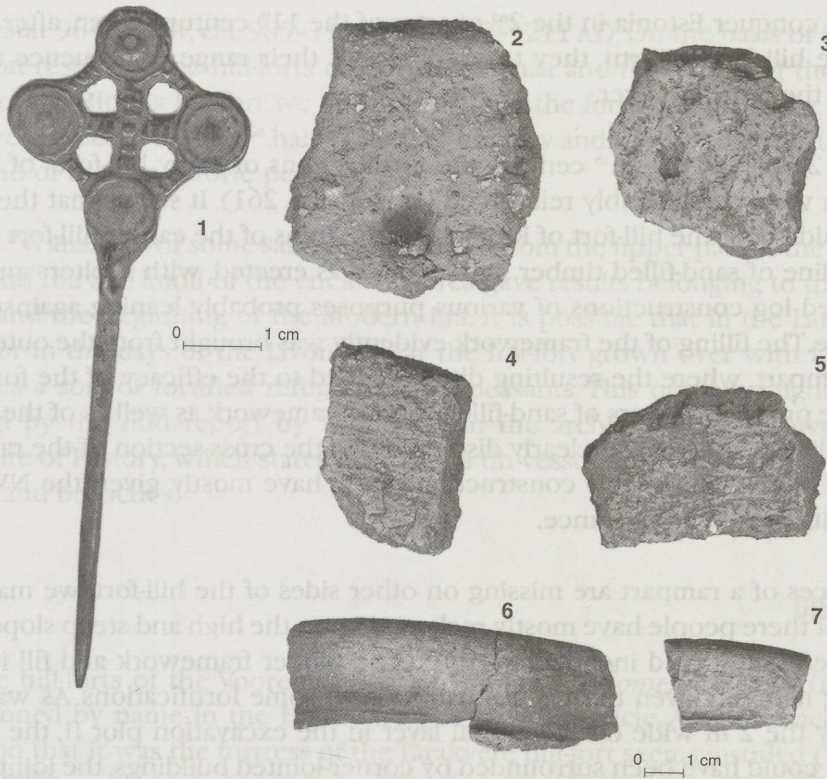


Fig. 6. Finds from the hill-fort of Ripuka Punamägi. 1 - double-crossheaded pin with connected terminals (bronze), 2-5- hand-made pottery, 6,7 - wheel pottery (AI 6551: 3, 12, 17, 8, 7, 19, 21).

Joon. 6. Leiud Ripuka Punamäelt. 1 - ühendbarudega ristpeaga pronksist rinnanõel, 2-5 - käsi-
keraamika, 6, 7 - kedrakeramika.

caused by the effort to take advantage of the natural merits of the high slopes of the esker. This fortress is connected with the earlier horizon of the cultural layer with charcoal traces, discovered beneath the rampart, which most likely also extends into the bottom part of the burnt layer discovered at the inner side of the rampart. In this period the defence line apparently consisted of timber framework without filling, which were so thoroughly destroyed in fire that only a thin coal layer has preserved. The ^{14}C dating of the latter gave the result 863 ± 50 BP. cal. (2 sigma) 1037-1143 and 1151-1263 AD. Regarding the location of the layer in question beneath the later layer in the rampart, the dating of the earlier fortifications to the 1st half of the 11th century seems more likely. The fortifications of many other hill-forts of North Tartumaa have also perished in fires at about the same time (Lavi 2002a, 260-261). Most likely it is connected with the attempts of Kiev

Russia to conquer Estonia in the 2nd quarter of the 11th century when, after occupying the hill-fort of Tartu, they tried to extend their range of influence to the North of the Emajõgi River.

3. In the 2nd half of the 11th century the fortifications of many hill-forts of North Tartumaa were considerably reinforced (Lavi 2002a, 261). It seems that the same can be said about the hill-fort of Ripuka. On the ruins of the earlier hill-fort a new defence line of sand-filled timber framework was erected, with shelters and corner-jointed log constructions of various purposes probably leaning against their inner side. The filling of the framework evidently was brought from the outer foot of the rampart, where the resulting ditches added to the efficacy of the fortifications. The preserved layers of sand-filled timber framework as well as of the buildings inside the rampart are clearly discernible in the cross-section of the rampart (Fig. 3). The remains of this construction phase have mostly given the NW end rampart its present appearance.

Since traces of a rampart are missing on other sides of the hill-fort, we may presume that there people have mostly reckoned upon the high and steep slopes and it has been considered inexpedient to erect a timber framework and fill it with sand. But naturally even these sides had to have some fortifications. As was suggested by the 2 m wide coaly cultural layer in the excavation plot II, the enclosure area could have been surrounded by corner-jointed buildings, the joint outer walls of which formed a defence line. Most likely these buildings were not quite ordinary ones, there must have been some sort of defence facilities located on them. Among these buildings there must have been also some dwelling-houses. This is suggested by the habitation layer containing pottery and animal bones. The investigation of the burnt layer of building rests revealed also fragments of wheel pottery, puffed in secondary heat, which means that clay vessels have been left behind in a burning house.

The traces of permanent settlement have been also found on the SE end of the hill-fort. The relatively light colour and low intensity of the cultural layer indicate either a short duration or a low density of the habitation. Deciding by the rather small area of the Ripuka hill-fort it could be regarded as a fortress of a local nobleman of the above-mentioned Kärde-Vaimastvere-Kööla district, where he apparently lived only in times of peril, his permanent residence must have been located further off.

The ¹⁴C analysis of the sample of the building rests of this settlement phase gave the result 964±57 BP, cal. 985–1191 and 1199–1211 AD. On the basis of the inves-

the result 964 ± 57 BP, cal. 985–1191 and 1199–1211 AD. On the basis of the investigation results of the hill-forts of North Tartumaa and the nature of the cultural layer of the Ripuka hill-fort we may suggest that the fortifications of the later hill-fort were erected in the 2nd half of the 11th century and the fortress was used until the end of the prehistoric period.

4. The ^{14}C analyses of some samples recovered from the upper part of the end rampart and the SSE knoll of the enclosure area gave results belonging to the Middle Ages and the beginning of the Modern Era. It is possible that in the Late Middle Ages or in the days of the Livonian War the hill-fort grown over with forest was used as a sort of fortified refuge by local peasants. This opinion might be confirmed by the find report by K. Mengel in the archaeological archives of the Institute of History, which states that once a tin vessel was found here, containing coins and brooches.

DISCUSSION

Of the hill-forts of the Vooremaa district, only two – *Somelinde* and *Riole* – are mentioned by name in the Heinrich's Livonian Chronicle. About Somelinde the opinion that it was the fortress of the Tarakvere hill-fort seems justified (Tõnisson 1987, 50).

About the year 1220 the chronicler mentions that Riole was the farthest hill-fort of Vaiga, where 500 people, both men and women, were baptised, and then the crusaders proceeded to Virumaa (HCL, XXIV: 1). On the basis of these notes both Reastvere and Ripuka hill-forts might be identified as Riole: they were both located on the border of Vaiga and Virumaa. In 1896 an opinion was published that Riole "...*mag es mit dem Burgberg Rippoka identisch gewesen sein* ..." (Löwis of Menar 1896, 137). R. Kenkman (Kenkman 1933, 36) and H. Moora (Moora 1955, 82) were of the same opinion. E. Tõnisson (Tõnisson 1987, 44) has considered this identification unproven – however, not motivating his doubts. Besides the above-mentioned arguments the author considers it necessary to keep in mind also the location of the hill-forts with regard to the ancient connecting roads. In 1220 a real rivalry of baptising took place between Germans and Danes on the territory of Central Estonia. It is likely that in such situation Heinrich and his attendants preferred to use main roads passing through more densely populated places, to baptise as many people as possible and thus annex them to the Order's range of influence. The road from the Reastvere hill-fort towards Kärü has been of local importance throughout the times. The main road from Tartumaa to Virumaa and

further to other North Estonian centres has been, up to the mid-20th century, the Piibe Road, which is still used. Its earlier tracks, however, did not cross the ridge of the high drumlin, they ran slightly westwards, along the lower western slope of the hill (Remmel 1976, 124). Even now the border of Virumaa runs not far from Ripuka-Kärde, but in the 13th century it was still closer. Namely, the village of Villakvere (nowadays Laiuse parish) belonged to Virumaa in the 13th century, and the ancient border of Vaiga and Viru ran on the south side of the village along the Pedja River (Kenkman 1933, 36). In accordance with the aim of priest Heinrich he apparently used the ancient connecting road, which ran from Ripuka on to South Virumaa, towards the densely populated villages of the agricultural district of Emumäe-Rakke. The hill-fort of Ripuka lay east of it, at a distance of just a little over a kilometre. Since on the basis of the investigation results the hill-fort was still used at the beginning of the 13th century, the connecting of Riiole with Ripuka Punamägi seems more plausible. It is possible that the hill-fort was destroyed by fire soon after 1220.

The ¹⁴C dating (TIn 2686) of the II burnt layer from the SSE side of the hill-fort gave a result 275±55 BP. Such a late date of the burnt layer is not reliable. The fragments of wheel pottery found here, which have been in secondary heat, could puff only in fire together with the building, not laying in the soil for centuries. It seems that there have been buildings on the SSE side of the hill also later, e.g. in the days of the refuge in the 16th–17th centuries. When these burned, their charred remains mingled with the building rests of the beginning of the 13th century, thus causing the late ¹⁴C date.

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RIPUKA PUNAMÄGI

Ain LAVI

Ripuka linnamägi (Punamägi) asub Põhja-Tartumaal, Vooremaa loodenukis vastu Virumaad. Siin eristub Kärde-Vaimastvere-Kõola piirkonnas kompaktne maaviiljeluslik piirkond, mis on eraldatud naaberaladest ulatuslike soodega. Vanimad siinsed muinasleidud pärinevad nooremast kiviajast, rauaajal maaviiljeluslikule asustusele osutavad kivilalmel ja asulakohad (joon. 1).

Linnamägi paikneb Kärde suurvoorest eraldunud WNW–OSO-suunalise oosi kõrgemal kagupoolsel nukil, mida kolmest küljest piiravad kuni 18 m kõrgused järsud nõlvad (joon. 2). Seevastu oosi loodepoolne külg on sedavõrd lauge kallakuga, et nõudis linnuseehitajalt tugevamate kaitseehitiste rajamist. Nendest on tänapäeval nähtavad mitmest ridastikku paiknevast süvendist kraav ja loodepoolne otsavall, mis kulgeb risti üle oosiharja (joon. 4). Kui sisejalamil on valli kõrgus keskmiselt 1 m, siis välisküljel ulatub see kraavipõhjast mõõtes 2–3 m kõrgusele.

Linnamäe hooviala on vastavalt oosi looduslikule reljeefile kirde poolt lääne suunas kaldjas. Peale loodepoolse otsavalli ei ole teistel külgedel näha kindlustuste jälgi. Kultuurikihti esineb hoovialal vaid laiguti, seevastu kõrgem kagupoone nukk on leiurohke. 20. sajandi algul rajas kohalik mõisnik mäele suvemaja, millest on säilinud raudkividest vundament. Selle ehitusega on seotud linnamäe hilisem rahvapärane nimetus “Prouamägi”. 19. saj. lõpul oli linnamägi rahvatraditsioonis juba vähetuntud; balti-saksa uurijatele sai koht enam tuntuks seoses R. Hausmanni 1895. a. kaevamistega Kärde kivilalmel. 1953. a. uuriti H. Moora juhatusel linnamäe hooviala kultuurikihti nelja prooviurfiiga (joon. 2). Leidude hulgas esines riipejälgedega savinõukild, aga ka kedrakeraamikat.

2002. a. uurimistöödel rajati linnamäe loodevalli ja kagupoolse hooviala uurimiseks proovikaevandid I–III (joon. 2). Kaevand I rajati loodepoolse otsavalli edelaossa, kust saadi ülevaade vallist ja selle taha jäävast hoovialast (joon. 2; 5). Vallis võis eristada kahe eriaegse kindlustusjärgu põlengukihti (joon. 3: A–B). Varasem põlengukiht tuli nähtavale valli all 70–80 cm sügavuses. Välisküljel alal 7–8 cm

paksune kiht tüsenes valli keskosas kuni 10–15 cm paksuseks. Kunagistest kindlustusehitustest olid säilinud üksikud ristisuunaliselt paiknevad tukijäänused ja tules oranžika värvuse omandanud liivalaike.

Hilisem põlengukiht oli säilinud 50–80 cm paksuse kihina. Analoožilisel enamiku 11.–13. saj. maalinnuste vallikihtidele koosnes ka siin tolleaegne horisont kahest põhiosast. Valli siseküljel paistis silma tume, tukke ja sõejääneid, koldekive jms. sisaldav põlengukiht (joon. 5). Seevastu vallituumiku alal domineeris paetükke sisaldav 70–80 cm paksune liivakiht, mis välisküljel õhenes 10–30 cm viiruks. Tõenäoliselt pärineb liiv kunagiste palktarandite kaitseliini täitekihist, mis linnuse hävimisel varises laiali.

Kaevand II rajati linnamäe hooviala kõrgemale lõuna-kagupoolsele nukile ja see hõlmas 7 m pikkuse lõigu kuni järsu nõlvani (joon. 2; 3: C). Heledatooniline kultuurikiht sisaldas rohkesti leide, sh. keraamikat (kokku 117 fragmenti). Mäe äärealal tuli nähtavale 2 m laiune põlengukiht, mis tõenäoliselt pärineb linnamäe hooviala vastu kõrget ja järsku nõlva ääristanud kaitsevööndi ehitistest.

Leiumaterjali esines ainult linnamäe kõrgema, kagu-lõunaoolse nuki alal. Metallleidude seas väärib eraldi märkimist väike ühendharuline kaksikristpeaga pronksist rinnanõel (joon. 6: 1), mis on Eestis dateeritud 12. saj. teise poolde ja 13. saj. algusesse. Enamuse leidudest moodustab keraamika, milles eristuvad arhailise ilmega paksuseinalised killud (joon. 6: 2–5). Nende savimassi koostises on jämedateralist liiva ja kivi purdu. Põletus on ebaühtlane, pinnal esineb riipejälgi ja erikujulisi lohke. Sarnast keraamikat on leitud Alatskivi Kalevipoja sängi varasemast kihist, mis pärineb eelrooma rauaaja teisest poolest. Kedranõude kildude seas esineb rohkesti sekundaarses kuumuses porsunud fragmente, mis pärinevad tules hävinud linnuse hoonetest. Eraldi väärivad mainimist tugevasti profileeritud ääreosaga killud (joon. 6: 6, 7), mis on dateeritud 12. sajandi keskpaigast kuni 13. sajandi lõpuni.

Seniste uurimistulemuste põhjal võib Ripuka linnamäel eristada järgmisi asustusjärke:

1. Eelrooma rauaaja II poolest pärinev, veel nõrgalt kindlustatud tugipunkt, millega seostub arhailise ilmega, varasem keraamika.

2. 11. sajandi algul rajati oosile uuesti kindlustus, millega seostub ka loodevallis avastatud varasem põlengukiht. Näib, et siin oli tegemist veel ilma sisetäidiseta palktaranditest kaitserajatisega, mis arvatavasti hävis 11. sajandi teisel veerandil Kiievi-Vene vürst Jaroslavi vallutusretke tõttu.

3. 11. sajandi teisel poolel – 13. sajandi algul oli varasema kantsi vallialale rajatud uue linnuse kaitseehitised, mis koosnesid liivast sisetäidisega palktaranditest. Sisetäidise pinnas võeti loodepoolse otsavalli välisjalamilt, kuhu selle tulemusel tekkis kaitset tõhustada aitav kraavilohkude võõnd. Ülejäänud hooviala ääristasid ridastikku paiknevad hooned (sh. elumajad), mille välimised seinad moodustasid muinaskantsi kaitseseina. Tõenäoliselt just selle ehitusjärgu kindlustus kujutas Riiole linnust, kus Henriku Liivimaa kroonika andmetel ristiti 1220. aastal viissada inimest.

4. Uurimisandmete põhjal võib oletada, et oosiala võidi hiliskeskajal või 16. sajandi teisel poolel kasutada ka kindlustatud pelgupaigana. Seda oletust võiks kinnitada teade, et siit olla kunagi leitud tinanõu, mis sisaldanud münte ja preese.