

Reckoning counters found in a 15th-century landfill of the Kalamaja suburb of Tallinn

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ABSTRACT

In 2018–2019, at least 35 000 finds were gathered from the plot at Jahu 6 in the medieval and early modern suburb of Kalamaja in Tallinn, which had been transported to the disposal site together with waste and garbage from the walled town. The 249 coins that were unearthed suggest that most of the garbage was disposed of in the 1470s and 1480s. It seems that waste disposal may have ceased sometime before 1490.

Late medieval and early modern reckoning counters, which were produced at first mainly in France and then in Nuremberg, and were meant for calculating on lines, are common finds in Estonia. They have been discovered both as stray finds in fields and during archaeological excavations in village cemeteries and towns. The majority of such counters date back to the 16th–17th centuries, while earlier finds are rather rare.

The garbage layer of the plot at Jahu 6 has yielded at least 61 jetons, of which only four date from the 17th–18th centuries. All the other tokens came from the layers dating back to the end of the 1480s at the latest. Thus, the assemblage of the counters from the plot at Jahu 6 is unique and enables us to specify the dating of several counters previously described in the literature. Forty-eight of the medieval counters are likely to have been produced in Nuremberg and 12 in France, but it was impossible to determine the origin of one coin. In addition, there are only four perforated reckoning counters from the Middle Ages, one of which is supplied with a bronze suspension loop. It suggests that in towns, counters were used for their intended purpose, i.e. for calculation and not for decoration.

KEYWORDS

archaeology, Middle Ages, counters, reckoning, Livonia.

Introduction

The years 2018 and 2019 witnessed archaeological salvage excavations in Tallinn, in the district between Jahu and Väike-Patarei streets on the plot at Jahu 6. The studied area is located at a distance of about 500 m from the northernmost gate of the medieval city, the Great Coastal Gate. In the Middle and Early Modern Ages, the Kalamaja suburb (Low German *Vysschermagen*, German *Fischerмай*) was located here, between the walled town and the sea.

The cultural layer from the 15th century was excavated in an area of 780 m². In addition, the cultural layer was peeled away in an area of 2974 m² by means of an excavator and then searched manually. The removed soil was searched with a metal detector. At least 35 000 finds were uncovered from the layers of medieval latrine waste, construction waste, gravel, sand, wood chips and hay. In fact, it is highly likely the largest 15th-century archaeological find assemblage from a single site in Estonia and the entire Baltic Sea region.

Both the composition of the fill and its finds show that in the 15th century latrine waste and garbage were deposited here from the intra-muros sites (Russow et al. 2019). The yielded 249 coins suggest that most of the garbage was disposed of at the site in the 1470s–1480s. It seems that garbage disposal may have ceased sometime before 1490 (Leimus & Tvauri 2021). The site includes objects made of various materials – wood and textile as well as non-ferrous metals, including gold. There was construction, household, food, and handicraft waste; all kinds of objects and their fragments: pieces of clothes and textiles, footwear, dress accessories, jewellery, fragments of weapons and protective armour, household tools and their fragments, pilgrimage badges, cloth seals, etc. Among other artefacts, also a considerable number of medieval reckoning counters were found.

Counters

Metal reckoning counters were introduced by government departments in France and England during the second half of the 13th century. From the late 13th century onwards, they started to be widely used for performing manual arithmetic calculations. Reckoning counters acted as pieces of the medieval abacus – calculation tokens that were moved along the lines cut in the table or drawn in chalk. Jetons achieved their greatest popularity during the 16th century. However, by then the role of jetons had started to evolve in several different directions. Some of them retained the role of reckoning counters, while others became gaming counters. In the course of the 16th–17th centuries, written calculation largely replaced manual accounting (Mitchiner 1988, 17, 20; Fig. 1).

For eastern Europe, French counters, especially those from Tournai, were most important at the early stage of their distribution. Later, starting from the late 15th century, the counters produced in Nuremberg, Germany, started to penetrate the European market and took over the dominant position of Tournai (Mitchiner 1988, 26).



FIG. 1. A woodcut from the book *Margarita Philosophica* by Gregor Reisch shows the competition between written calculation and manual accounting as early as 1503.

The sources leave no doubt that calculation on the line abacus was also known in this part of the world. The Estonian equivalent is already listed in Heinrich Göseken's dictionary published in 1660 (*arwo laud* – *Rechen-tisch* 'abacus'; Leimus 2002, 223). Hence the need for the corresponding tokens. In fact, 16th-century sources in Tallinn provide evidence that local merchants sometimes possessed them in large numbers. For example, the estate of Mattis van Lange, who died in 1534, included 11.5 pounds (almost 5 kg) of counters (Tallinn City Archives (TLA), 230.1.Ae1, fol. 45). Hans Schotteler, who died in 1547, left half a lispound or over four kilograms of counters (TLA, 230.1.Ae2, fol. 99). The property of Hans Steffen, who passed away in 1553, included a case of counters (TLA, 230.1.Bt1, fol. 379). The estate of Hans Menneken, which was taken stock of in 1557, included seven pounds or almost three kilograms of counters (TLA, 230.1.Ae3, fol. 37). In 1559, 9700 pieces or at least ten kilograms of counters were listed in the warehouse of Claus Eilers (TLA, 23.1.Ae4, fol. 13v).

Thus, this does not come as a surprise that brass counters have been found in Estonia in such large numbers that no one has even tried to count them. However, one has to draw a clear line between the Middle Ages and the premodern era. Counters earlier than the 16th century have rarely been discovered in Estonia.¹

Regarding rural areas, the most noteworthy find of this kind comes from the Mäksa village cemetery near Tartu, where at least 11 pendant coins and counters, which probably formed a head wreath, were excavated from a single burial site (Valk 1989, 342; Kiudsoo 2008, 121; AI 5765: 66–78). Four of them represent counters struck at the end of the 14th century–15th century (Mitchiner 1988, 476 var.?, 488–492, 665–706, 683), one brass token is unidentifiable, and the coins date from the second half or the end of the 14th century. The piece of jewellery is likely to date back to the first decades of the 15th century.

Also, three 15th-century French pendant counters were discovered in the Makita grave near Otepää (VMA 39: 139a–c); they were part of a child's necklace (Ligi & Valk 1993, 192). Another rather early Nuremberg counter was found in the Nõuni grave (AI 5843: 36). Mitchiner (1988), however, dates the 'French shield' type to the beginning of the 16th century, ca 1500–1525 (according to Mitchiner 1082–1090), but as will be shown below, the occurrence of similar tokens in the find from Jahu Street (Table 1: 41, 42) enables us to date back the beginning of their production as early as the end of the 15th century.

A 'Mouton' type pendant counter (University of Tartu, not numbered), struck in Bourges, France (1418–1437), was found as a detector find in the village of Oe in Võru County. Its obverse matches Mitchiner 554–557, the reverse has not yet been described.

Later on, counters represent common detector finds in our rural context. Counters from the 16th–17th centuries have found their way into national archaeological collections as part of hoards or as excavation, stray or detector finds from settlements either as single pieces or attached to jewellery. The Andre hoard (*tpq* 1573), which was unearthed in Võru County, included a necklace with 46 counters (Kiudsoo & Kallis 2014). The hoard from Metsla (Ellavere) in Järva County (*tpq* 1600?) contained 23 counters and 50 coins, which together could also have formed a necklace (Russow 2023). Small quantities of counters, in addition to coins and jewellery, were found in the Päinurme hoard in Järva County, lying in the ground from the second half of the 16th century, the Austre (*tpq* 1572) and Tirma hoards (*tpq* 1633) in Tartu County, Ellavere (*tpq* 1603?) in Järva County (Russow 2023), Kabala (*tpq* 1636) in Viljandi County (Kiudsoo 2000, No. 73), Pahtpä (*tpq* 1664) in Võru County (Kiudsoo 2000, No. 109), the Mäo hoard (*tpq* 1666) in Viru County (Kiudsoo 2000, No. 121), the Salevere hoard (*tpq* 1693) in Lääne County (Kiudsoo 2000, No. 137) and the Nutu hoard (*tpq* 1702) in Harju County (Vedru 2014).

1 The authors thank Mauri Kiudsoo for bringing to our attention the following pre-16th-century finds.

A smaller number of pendants with counters from the 16th–17th centuries have been found in rural cemeteries. Counters worn as pendants were found in village cemeteries in Ervu (TÜ 2: 18, 24), Vana-Kuuste (ERM A 457: 55) and Kaho (AI 3342) in the historical Tartu County, in Tääksi (AI 5776: XXII/1), Valgita (TÜ 48: 2–4), Leebiku (VM 8886: 11) and Kuhjaverre (AI 6317: 7) in Viljandi County, in Kaubi (TÜ 700: 13, 121) in Pärnu County and in Ubasalu (ERMA 453: 61, 68) in Lääne County.

It has to be stressed that among the counters found in rural areas, there are very few that are not attached to jewellery or are without a hole. Thus, the peasantry appreciated them only as ornaments; brass spangles with golden glitter must have provided a good opportunity for this purpose. For example, the holdings of the Estonian History Museum include a complete necklace made of counters (AM 8152), which dates back to the 17th century. Such use of counters by Estonian women was mentioned by Adam Olearius in his travel account from the 1630s: ‘behind [skirts] hang small brass chains with counters’ (Olearius 1996, 120). H. Göseken mentioned such decoration in his dictionary (*ketten der Baurdirnen umb den Leib / röcht / röhhu*; Göseken 1660, 255). A hip decoration of this type was widespread in the Modern Age, mostly in northern and western Estonia. Such an item has been fully preserved in the previously mentioned Salevere hoard, which also consists of early modern Nuremberg counters. However, as noted, the counters found in cemeteries have also been used for head and neck jewellery.

Counters are rather rarely found in Estonian towns, and so far, none of them is older than the 16th century. For example, the Nuremberg counter with a hole (AI 4122: 6) found near Tallinn Cathedral and the perforated counter found in the churchyard of St Nicholas Church (TLM 17409: 258) were probably lost by a churchgoer wearing the ornaments. Some perforated counters or perforated counters together with inserted chainlinks have occasionally been found in the downtown of Tallinn (e.g. AI 6326: 47; TLM A 39: 260–263) and on the outskirts of the Harju Gate (e.g. AI 6004 III: 270; 6456: 381; 6477: 15; 7766: 1050; 8562), in the town of Tartu (e.g. TMA 107: 8; 178: 10766) and its Riga suburb (e.g. TMA 40: 282; 122: 679; 126: 246), in Viljandi (Selirand 1982), Lihula (AM A 808: 90) and Rakvere (e.g. RMA 75: 161; A 150: 2), in the hillforts of Toolse (RMA 89: 1) and Paide (PMA 81: 55). Counters are even less common in the grave goods of urban cemeteries. A necklace with seven 16th-century Nuremberg counters was discovered in a grave of St Barbara cemetery in Tallinn (Sokolovski et al. 1996, 82). The cemetery of St John’s almshouse in Tallinn yielded a perforated counter with an inserted ring (AI 6477 IV: 1071/1). Peasants were also buried in the above-mentioned suburban cemeteries of medieval and early modern Tallinn.

Thus, the counters found until now in both urban and rural areas mostly date from the 16th–17th centuries, since earlier tokens are, as a rule, rare in the Baltic Sea region. For example, so far 49 counters from different periods have been registered in Riga, but only four of them could belong to the 15th century (Berga 2018, 31, fig. 3: 3–4, 5–6, 11–12; 33). The Hanseatic town Gdańsk is an exception. By 2013,

132 tokens had been discovered, but they span a long period from the 13th to the 19th centuries (Paszkievicz 2013, 285–292, 333–334). The years 2013–2017 witnessed extensive archaeological excavations at the Haymarket of Gdańsk, which yielded additionally 185 counters. They were also found in other districts, so that by 2021, the total number of counters found in Gdańsk had reached at least 371. About half of the tokens found at the Haymarket could date from the pre-16th-century period if one considers the more recent dating presented below (Milejski & Sroka 2021, 481–538). However, this figure is a rough estimate because the production of these types that emerged at the end of the 15th century definitely continued into the first decades of the 16th century as well.

Counters found in the Kalamaja landfill

The plot at Jahu 6 in Tallinn has yielded at least 61 counters (see Table 1), of which as many as 57 originate from a layer containing coins that date back to the end of the 1480s at the latest (see Leimus & Tvauri 2021). Thus, the assemblage of counters from Jahu Street is unique and enables us to refine the previous dating of a number of counters described in the literature (Mitchiner 1988).

Twelve of the counters found in Jahu Street originate from France; all but the earliest of them (No. 1) were struck in Tournai. Surprisingly, two Tournai tokens (Nos 9–10) are dated to ca 1497–1521 according to the currently valid dating, which, however, is questionable in the context of Jahu Street.

It is likely that all the other tokens (with the exception of one) may have been struck in Nuremberg. According to the literature, at least 17 of them are dated to the post-1490 period. This dating has to be revised now as well. In addition, the Nuremberg counters include a number of tokens that have not been described so far or are somewhat different from the previously described ones (Nos 13–25, 27–31, 33–36, 38–42, 49–54). Unfortunately, the poor or even very poor condition of the tokens does not enable us to illustrate all of them, but one can find photos of the best-preserved specimens in illustrative Plates 1 and 2.

One token (No. 56) differs from all the others in its smaller diameter (17 mm, it can be that the token was later trimmed with scissors) and design. Its obverse shows the word AVE between two parallel lines. The text on the reverse is illegible, but presumably it should read MARIA. By comparison with the other tokens, its metal composition is also different – gunmetal; as a rule, such counters were made of brass (Ragnar Saage’s email communication to the author on 7 December 2020). In the light of the available knowledge, the origin of this token remains open.

As regards secondary signs of the tokens, only four of them are perforated and one has a copper alloy suspension loop. In addition, one token has stab traces in the middle. Thus, one has to conclude that in towns counters were used for their intended purpose. For example, a Nuremberg counter was attached to the leather cover of a Tallinn mill token book (TLA, 230.1.Ad57), which was started in 1553;

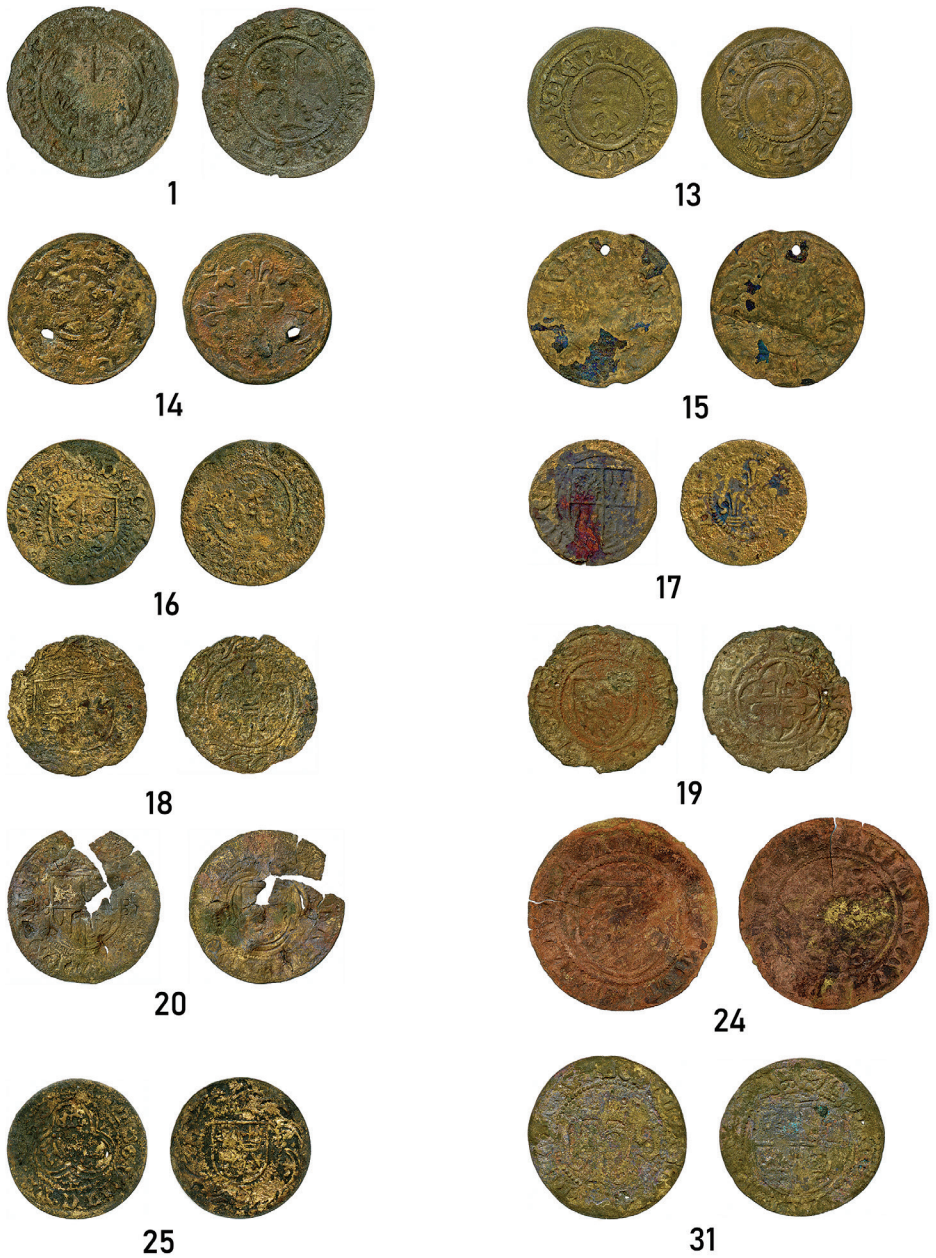


PLATE 1. Counters found in Jahu Street. Photo by Ivar Leimus.

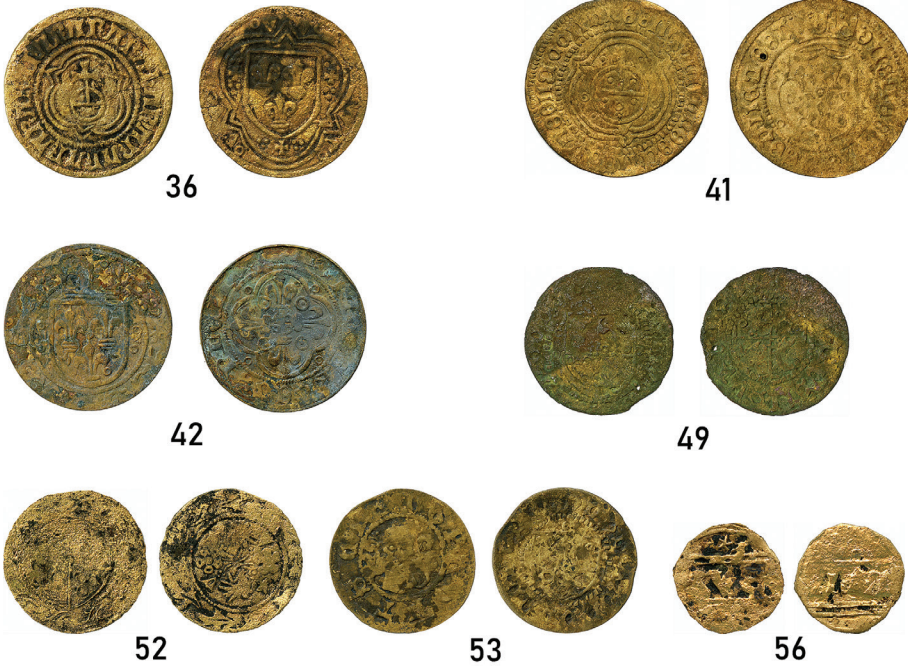


PLATE 2. Counters found in Jahu Street. Photo by Ivar Leimus.

in this case, it should be interpreted as a symbol of meticulous accounting. In towns they were rarely attached to pieces of jewellery.

The four early modern tokens date back to the 17th–18th centuries. Three of them originate from the Lauffer workshop of the well-known Nuremberg dynasty of masters, while the fourth token cannot be further specified due to its poor condition. Judging by the style of the bust depicted on the obverse, it should be dated to the 18th century. Only one early modern token is perforated. However, this period witnessed a major change in their use. Instead of counting pieces, tokens started to be used as gaming jetons. Apparently, they were used for the same purpose in Tallinn as well.

TABLE 1. Counters found in Jahu Street.² Inv. – inventory, var. – variant, rev. – reverse, obv. – obverse, fr. – fragment

No.	Town	Time (approximate)	Reference, description	Diameter (mm)	Inv. No. AI 7909:	Notes
1*	Bourges	1418–1437	Mitchiner 558 var., rev. +GETES*BIEN* SAGEN(?)	27	23195	
2	Tournai	1447–1461	Mitchiner 576 var., different legend	27	379	
3	Tournai	1447–1461	Mitchiner 642	29	2674	
4	Tournai	1447–1461	Mitchiner 686–7	29.5	2678	
5	Tournai	1447–1461	Mitchiner 665–705	28	12217	
6	Tournai	1447–1461	Mitchiner 665–705	29	74	
7	Tournai	1447–1461	Mitchiner 665–705	29	2679	
8	Tournai	1447–1461	Mitchiner 665–705?	25	16910	
9	Tournai	1447–1461	Mitchiner 665–705?	28	16908	
10	Tournai	1497–1521	Mitchiner 747	26	10286	Hole in the edge
11	Tournai	1497–1521	Mitchiner 749–63	26.5	383	
12	Tournai?		Unspecified		12139	A piece cut off from the edge
13*	Nuremberg	1415–1437	Mitchiner 972 var., rev. without a shield	23	10285	
14*	Nuremberg	1415–1437	Obv. cf. Mitchiner 980 rev., rev. a lily cross, a quatrefoil	23	2677	Hole in the edge
15*	Nuremberg	1415–1437 or 1440–1493	Obv. an escutcheon, rev. Mitchiner 980, 1017	24	2683	
16*	Nuremberg	1440–1493	Obv. cf. Mitchiner 986–7, rev. three rosettes	23	2675	
17*	Nuremberg	1440–1493	Obv. Mitchiner –, rev. Mitchiner 989–90, 1023 obv.	20	2107	
18*	Nuremberg	1440–1493	Obv. Mitchiner –, a different coat of arms, rev. Mitchiner 991	22	12353	
19*	Nuremberg	1440–1493	Obv. Mitchiner 999, rev. a lily cross, a quatrefoil	23	12183	

Continued on the next page

2 The counters marked with an asterisk are illustrated in Plates 1–2.

TABLE 1. *Continued*

No.	Town	Time (approximate)	Reference, description	Diameter (mm)	Inv. No. AI 7909:	Notes
20*	Nuremberg	1440–1493	Cf. Mitchiner 992–5, obv. a different coat of arms, rev. a lion, same as the next one	24	11721	
21	Nuremberg	1440–1494	Cf. Mitchiner 992–5, obv. a different coat of arms, rev. a lion, same as the previous one		25151	fr.
22	Nuremberg	1440–1493	Obv. cf. Mitchiner 992–5, rev. an escutcheon	21.5	2676	Two stabs in the middle
23	Nuremberg	1440–1493	Obv. cf. Mitchiner 992–5, rev. 998		2067	fr.
24*	Nuremberg	1440–1493	Obv. Mitchiner 996, 999 var., rev. cf. 998, ringlets on two sides of lilies	30	758	
25*	Nuremberg	1440–1493	Obv. Mitchiner 997, rev. a 4-field coat of arms, a cross and a star alternately	22	66	
26	Nuremberg	1440–1493	Mitchiner 1004–5	21	3496	One hole in the edge, another in the middle
27	Nuremberg	1440–1493	Obv. Mitchiner 1012–3?, rev. a lily cross on a square	21	10284	
28	Nuremberg	1440–1493	Obv. cf. Mitchiner 1091, rev. cf. 1026		254	fr.
29	Nuremberg	1480–1490s	Mitchiner 1050–56 var.		2024	fr.
30	Nuremberg	1480–1490s	Mitchiner 1061 var., ringlets	21.5	23199	
31*	Nuremberg	1480–1490s	Obv. Mitchiner 1064–6, rev. a crowned 4-field coat of arms, a crown and a lily alternately	25	3495	
32	Nuremberg	1493–1519	Mitchiner 1027, 1028	25	2685	
33	Nuremberg	1493–1519	Obv. Mitchiner 1027–30 rev., rev. 1031, same as the next one	26.5	4479	
34	Nuremberg	1493–1519	Obv. Mitchiner 1027–30 rev., rev. 1031, same as the previous one		23210	fr.

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TABLE 1. *Continued*

No.	Town	Time (approximate)	Reference, description	Diameter (mm)	Inv. No. AI 7909:	Notes
35	Nuremberg	1493–1519	Obv. Mitchiner 1027–30 rev., rev. 1031, same as the previous one		11938	
36*	Nuremberg	1493–1519	Obv. Mitchiner 1027–30 rev., rev. 1031, same as the previous one	26.5	704	
37	Nuremberg	1493–1519	Mitchiner 1031	27	756	
38	Nuremberg	1490–1550	Obv. Mitchiner 1121–89, rev. 998, same as the next one	24	2068	
39	Nuremberg	1490–1550	Obv. Mitchiner 1121–89, rev. 998, same as the previous one		1452	fr.
40	Nuremberg	1490–1550	Obv. Mitchiner 1121–89, rev. 998, rosettes in corners	24.5	4806	
41*	Nuremberg	1500–1525	Cf. Mitchiner 1069–92, rev. dots and rings in the imperial orb and around it	28	23820	
42*	Nuremberg?	1500–1525	Obv. cf. Mitchiner 1069–92, pseudolegend, rev. 573 (Tournai)	26	2670	
43	Nuremberg	1525	Mitchiner 1187–9	22	12354	
44	Nuremberg	1525	Mitchiner 1187–9	23	716	
45	Nuremberg	1525	Mitchiner 1187–9		16907	fr.
46	Nuremberg	1525	Mitchiner 1187–9?	21	23787	
47	Nuremberg	1500–1550	Mitchiner 1190, etc.	24	20671	
48	Nuremberg	1500–1550	Mitchiner 1190, etc.	24	2066	
49*	Nuremberg?		Mitchiner –, obv. a 4-field coat of arms, rev. a long cross with broad ends that form a 4-field coat of arms, same as the next one	23	4480	
50	Nuremberg?		Mitchiner –, obv. a 4-field coat of arms, rev. a long cross with broad ends that form a 4-field coat of arms, same as the previous one	22	2680	

Continued on the next page

TABLE 1. *Continued*

No.	Town	Time (approximate)	Reference, description	Diameter (mm)	Inv. No. AI 7909:	Notes
51	Nuremberg?		Mitchiner –, obv. a 4-field coat of arms, rev. a long cross with broad ends that form a 4-field coat of arms, same as the previous one	22	11968	
52*	Nuremberg?		Mitchiner –, obv. a 4-field coat of arms, with three rings in 4/4, rev. two rosettes with a rooster or peafowl below	22	1899	
53*	Nuremberg?		Mitchiner –, obv. a bust of bishop?, rev. an escutcheon with a ringlet above	22.5	251	
54	Nuremberg?		Mitchiner –, obv. three lilies with a star above, rev. a quatrefoil, above and beneath A, a trefoil?	23	23196	With a bronze suspension loop
55	Nuremberg?		Unspecified	22.5	2681	
56*	Unknown	14th–15th c.	Mitchiner –, obv. AVE between two double lines, a star above, rev. illegible (MARIA?) between two double lines	17	2686	Edges cut with scissors
57	Blank?		Completely worn out or not minted	23	23813	
58	Nuremberg	1658–1711	Cornelius Lauffer, Mitchiner 1777?	17	23788	
59	Nuremberg	1658–1711	Cornelius Lauffer, Mitchiner 1777?	17	21993	
60	Nuremberg	1637–1668	Conrad Lauffer?	25	2687	A hole in the edge
61	Nuremberg?	18th c.	Obv. a bust, rev.?	27	16909	

Conclusions

Estonia has yielded numerous late medieval and early modern counters, copper alloy tokens, which were produced from the end of the 15th century mostly in Nuremberg, but earlier also in France. While 16th–17th-century counters have been found as occasional finds and during archaeological excavations, such tokens from earlier periods are rare.

At least 61 counters have been unearthed in Jahu Street in Tallinn, of which only four date back to the 17th–18th centuries. All the other tokens originated from the layer containing coins that date back to the end of the 1480s at the latest. Thus, the assemblage of the counters from Jahu Street is unique and enables us to refine the previous dating of several counters described in the literature. Among medieval counters, 48 are likely to have been struck in Nuremberg and 12 in France; it is impossible to determine the origin of one counter. Of the medieval counters, only four are perforated and one is supplied with a bronze suspension loop. It appears that in Tallinn counters were used with the intended purpose as late as the end of the 15th century, which means that they were used for calculation and not for decoration, the latter was the Estonian custom in the Late Medieval and Early Modern Ages.

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Tallinna Kalamaja eeslinnast

15. sajandi prügilast leitud arvepennid

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RESÜMEE

Tallinnast kesk- ja varauusaegse Kalamaja eeslinna alalt Jahu 6 krundilt koguti 2018.–2019. aastal vähemalt 35 000 leidu, mis on nende ladestuskohta toodud koos jäätmete ning prügiga linnamüüri piiratud linnast. Saadud 249 mündi põhjal näib, et suurem osa prügist toodi kohale 1470.–1480. aastatel. Prügi ladestamine näib olevat lakanud enne 1490. aastat.

13. sajandil hakati Prantsusmaal ja Inglismaal valmistama messingist mündilaadseid žetoone ehk arvepenne, mida kasutati abivahendina joontel arvutamiseks. Alates 15. sajandi lõpust toodeti arvepenne peamiselt Saksamaal Nürnbergis. Nagu vähesed 14.–15. sajandi leiud näitavad, levisid prantsuse arvepennid ka Eestis, niihästi maal kui ka linnas. 16.–18. sajandi arvepennid on Eestis väga tavalised. Neid avastatakse niihästi juhuleidudena põldudel kui ka arheoloogiliste kaevamiste

käigus külakalmistutest ja linnadest. Arvepennide suur levik tuleneb asjaolust, et Eesti talurahvas kasutas neid ripatsitena ka ehte küljes.

Jahu 6 krundilt prügikihist leiti vähemalt 61 arvepenni, millest vaid neli kuuluvad 17.–18. sajandisse. Kõik ülejäänud žetoonid pärinevad kihist, kust leitud mündid kuuluvad hiljemalt 1480. aastate lõppu. Seega on Jahu 6 krundi arvepennide koostus unikaalne ja lubab täpsustada nii mõnegi kirjandusest teada olnud arvepenni varasemat dateeringut.

Jahu tänavalt leitud arvepennidest 12 pärinevad Prantsusmaalt, v.a vanim neist (nr. 1) on need kõik vermitud Tournais. Kaks Tournai žetooni (nr. 9–10) peaksid kehtivate määrangute kohaselt kuuluma aastaisse u 1497–1521, mis aga Jahu tänava kontekstis on küsitav.

Kõik ülejäänud žetoonid (v.a üks) on tõenäoliselt valmistatud Nürnbergis. Vähemalt 17 neist on kirjanduse andmeil dateeritud aega pärast 1490. aastat. Ka need ajamääratlused tuleb nüüd ümber hinnata. Lisaks on Nürnbergi arvepennide seas terve rida kas seni kirjeldamata või kirjeldatuist mõnevõrra erinevaid žetoone (nr. 13–25, 27–31, 33–36, 38–42, 49–54).

Keskaegsetest arvepennidest vaid neli on augustatud ja üks varustatud pronksist kannaga. Sellest järeldub, et linnas kasutati arvepenne sihipäraselt: arvestamiseks, aga mitte ehtimiseks.