

Maritime landscapes: Introduction

This is a thematic issue of the Estonian Journal of Archaeology, dedicated to the settlement archaeology of coastal areas, one-time harbour sites and early urban centres, and to the activities of prehistoric and medieval people on the sea, coasts and riverbanks. Although the main focus will be on the Estonian coast and islands, the coast of present-day Poland on the southern shore of the Baltic Sea has also been taken into consideration. This is the first collection of articles in the framework of the project “Coastal Settlements on Prehistoric and Medieval Saaremaa” (Grant No 5432 of the Estonian Science Foundation), and the settlement archaeology research group of the target-financed project *Land, Sea and People: Estonia on its way from the Iron Age to the Medieval period. North-Estonia, West-Estonia and Estonian islands 600–1600 AD* in the Institute of History in Tallinn.

It is difficult to overestimate the role of maritime activities in the everyday life of people inhabiting coastal areas. In prehistoric times, the activities comprised fishing and seal-hunting, barter and trade, as well as piracy. Nevertheless, agriculture remained the main source of subsistence, and the presence of arable land in the vicinity was vital. In archaeological terms, such lands are marked by dwelling sites, prehistoric graves and cult places, as well as field remains, hill-forts and early stone churches. Maritime activities are primarily indicated by harbour sites and shipwrecks. All these remains mark human impact on the landscape – the cultural landscape. When agrarian activities forming the landscape are complemented with maritime ones, the result can be defined as a maritime cultural landscape. The articles in this issue consider different types of the latter.

In Pomerania, the southern coast of the Baltic Sea inhabited by West-Slavic people, a state-like society was formed earlier than in the countries further North. One of the earliest signs of the forthcoming social processes was the appearance of trading ports, *emporía*, at the end of the 8th century. The latter are described in an article by Polish archaeologist **Mateusz Bogucki**. His attention is concentrated on the reasons why the trading ports emerged, on the background to their appearance, on the essential role that international trade and social circumstances played in their development. A somewhat surprising circumstance for Estonian archaeologists that appears in Bogucki’s research is the direct connection he makes between the emergence of trading ports and ethnic aspects, more particularly, the spread of the western Slavic population to the shores of the Baltic Sea. In any case, the main criteria for choosing a place for a trading port seem to be universal;

on the northern coast of Poland, similarly to other areas, naturally well-protected places on the estuary of a river or on a small bay, or at the crossroads of trade routes, were selected for this purpose. Several ports of trade that had started to function in the Viking Age developed into towns in later periods, and still exist today.

Whether early urban centres also existed in pre-conquest Estonia, is a matter for debate. It is primarily the development of our larger towns – Tallinn and Tartu – that have been discussed in this respect. A Viking Age or even earlier predecessor of present-day Tallinn was probably the Iru hill-fort with several surrounding settlements. The location of the Iru site complex in a bend of the Pirita River, at the distance of 4 km from the estuary, was clearly a more suitable location for a Viking Age harbour and market place than the place 9 km westwards where the later medieval town was founded and still stands.

The move of harbour sites and trading ports from their former locations to places closer to the coast, where later medieval towns often developed, has been noted in several neighbouring countries. In Bogucki's article, this pattern of development is expressively illustrated by the abandoning of Truso at the end of the 10th century, while international trade concentrated in Gdańsk instead. Another subject is the connection between international trade and large hill-forts that sometimes comprised hundreds of dwellings. In Pomerania, the hill-forts of Bardy and Kołobrzeg-Budzistowo, in Latvia for instance Daugmale, in Estonia the large 12th century hill-forts Varbola, Pöide and Pada can be cited as the best examples.

Early urban centres, though, similar to those that existed on the southern or western coast of the Baltic Sea, have not been found nor excavated in Estonia so far, and the research here is, accordingly, concentrated on smaller harbour sites, which were only of local or regional importance. Maritime landscapes on pre-historic and medieval Saaremaa are the subject of **Marika Mägi's** article. The bulk of her article concentrates on methods for detecting earlier harbour sites and on the special connection between harbours and the rest of a cultural landscape. Proceeding from the methods developed with the help of foreign colleagues and building upon local experiences, the first district level prehistoric harbour sites on Saaremaa have now been recorded, and trial excavations have been carried out on some of them. This work has confirmed that Estonian harbour sites often changed their location at the end of the 10th century and also in the 11th century; the Viking Age harbour of Tornimäe, at least, had been abandoned around this time. The most overt reason for this process may be seen in the land mass upheaval, which has strongly influenced the development of northern Baltic coastal areas – old harbours simply became too shallow for ships. Still, parallel processes in Poland and Scandinavia point to probably more complicated, and in any case more comprehensive reasons. In addition to the increased speed of land mass elevation, the 10th–11th centuries were also the time of the appearance of large cargo-carrying ships, as well as the period of thorough changes in social systems and international trade.

Analysing the location of harbour sites on Saaremaa, it is obvious that they can always be found in the vicinity of fertile arable lands. What is more, the symbiosis between arable lands and coastal sea with topographic features suitable for safe landing can be pointed out as essential preconditions for the development of centres. The seaman's perspective on the coastal landscape, disembarking and finding suitable places, are examined in the article by **Kristin Ilves**. She maintains that perspectives from land and from sea are equally important for interpreting maritime cultural landscape; the perspective from the side of water requires good knowledge of local waters and seafaring skills; the practical use of a sea vessel could improve the understanding even more. Ilves also emphasizes another, currently under-represented aspect in Estonian archaeological research – the dependence of northern cultural landscapes on seasonal changes. In wintertime, when the coastal sea freezes, water expanse disappears from the minds of coastal inhabitants for months, it being impossible to use water vessels. Inland, the winter landscape also had in many aspects the same effect; the role that winter routes over frozen bodies of water played in local trade even as late as the beginning of the 20th century is well known.

Ilves suggests her own terminology for distinguishing landing sites of different types, which is directly connected to ship-building technology. In her opinion, landing sites that can be considered harbours appeared on the coasts of the Baltic Sea only in the 9th–10th centuries, the so-called proto-harbours starting with the 7th century. The term *harbour* used by Ilves is, accordingly, parallel to Bogucki's trading ports or *emporia*. Mägi has used the term *harbour/harbour site* in a much broader sense, considering the quite limited opportunities to detect harbours or landing places archaeologically.

In her article on riverside settlement in North Estonia, **Gurly Vedru** concentrates on the relationship between man and river. In a broader sense, the article also deals with coastal areas, since the districts under discussion often remain at the distance of only a few kilometres from the North Estonian coast. Settlement, its continuity and/or discontinuity is considered in a longer perspective, from the Mesolithic to medieval periods. Much attention is paid to the settlement shift caused by the invention of agriculture.

Vedru emphasizes the continuity of cultural landscapes and the mental connection a community has with places used by its predecessors. Riverbanks, especially the ones near naturally attractive objects like waterfalls, often remained in use after the onset of the farming economy, even if there were no arable lands in the vicinity. In such cases, new living quarters were erected closer to cultivated fields and the old dwelling sites were used for erecting stone graves or as cult places. Even if the former settlements were completely abandoned, people sometimes moved back to live there centuries later.

Harbour sites, the connecting points between the land and bodies of water, have their own role to play in the continuity of cultural landscapes, as well as in the impact of landscape objects on local identity. On Saaremaa, like in Scandinavia,

villages were often founded in the location of late prehistoric harbour sites, even in cases when the coast, as a result of land mass upheaval, was several kilometres away. Sometimes, there was a gap of several centuries between these settlements. Similar development can be suggested on several riverbanks, where river harbours might have existed at one time. The memory of long-ago abandoned prehistoric harbour sites in the local tradition as manor sites or hill-forts also refers to continuity, in this case expressed through the hierarchic interpretation of the landscape. The former function of the site is forgotten while the knowledge of the importance of it on the cultural landscape has remained.

Estonian history is directly connected to the geographical location of the country on the Baltic Sea, at the crossroads of international trade routes. Throughout the ages, the everyday life of both the islanders and the inhabitants of coastal districts has been dependent on the sea and the activities connected with it – even when people actually lived several miles away from the coast. The comparatively modest interest in Estonian archaeology as far as the maritime aspect is concerned has probably been caused solely by the political situation in the 20th century. The above-mentioned projects have been called upon to fill this gap in our knowledge, and the first results of this research are presented in this publication.

Marika Mägi

Merenduslikud maastikud: sissejuhatus

Teie ees on Eesti Arheoloogiaajakirja temaatiline erinumber, mis seekord on pühendatud rannäärsete alade asustusarheoloogiale, kunagistele sadamakohtadele ja varalinnalistele keskustele, muistsete inimeste töödele-tegemistele merel, rannas ja jõekallastel. Ootuspäraselt on põhitähelepanu pööratud Eesti rannikule ja saartele, kuid vaatluse alla on võetud ka tänapäeva Poola rannikuala Läänemere lõunakaldal. Tegemist on maastikuarheoloogia-alase uurimisgrupi esimese artiklikogumikuga projekti “Saaremaa rannaasustus muinas- ja keskajal” (Eesti Teadusfondi grant nr 5432) ja Ajaloo Instituudi sihtfinantseeritava teema “Maa, meri ja rahvas: Eesti teel muinasajast keskaega. Põhja-Eesti, Lääne-Eesti ja saarte areng 600–1600 pKr” raames.

Rannaaladel elavate inimeste igapäevaelus on merendusliku tegevuse rolli raske ülehinnata. Muinasajal oli see eeskätt kala- ja hülgepüük, kohalik ja rahvusvaheline kaubandus, aga ka röövretklus. Põhitoidus saadi siiski põllumajandusest, seepärast paiknesid lähikonnas ka sobivad põllumaad. Viimaseid tähistavad arheoloogi jaoks asulakohad, muistsed kalmed ja kultuspaigad, kunagiste põldude

jäänused, linnamäed ja varased kivikirikud. Merendusliku tegevuse mälestusmärkideks on peamiselt muistsed sadamakohad ja laevavrakid. Nii ühed kui teised annavad tunnistust inimese mõjust maastikule, kultuurmaastikust. Juhul kui tegemist on agrarise ja merendusliku tegevuse koosmõjuga, võib rääkida merenduslikust kultuurmaastikust. Käesolevas erinumbris publitseeritud artiklid keskenduvadki viimasele.

Pomeraanias, lääneslaavlastega asustatud Läänemere lõunarannikul, kujunes riiklik korraldus välja varem kui siinmail. Üheks varaseimaks märgiks toimuvatest ühiskondlikest protsessidest oli kaubasadamate – *emporium*'ide – teke 8. sajandi lõpul. Viimaseid kirjeldab oma artiklis Poola arheoloog **Mateusz Bogucki**. Ta pöörab tähelepanu kaubasadamate tekkimise põhjustele, nende arengu tagamaadele, rahvusvahelise kaubanduse ja ühiskondlike olude määravale rollile nende kujunemisloos. Eesti arheoloogia jaoks mõjub mõnevõrra üllatuslikult kaubasadamate tekkimise otsene seostamine etniliste oludega, lääneslaavi asustuse levimisega Läänemere rannikualadele. Kaubasadamate asukoha valiku kriteeriumid näivad siiski olevat universaalsed: ka Poola põhjarannikul valiti selleks eeskätt looduslikult hästi kaitstud koht jõesuudmes või väikese merelahe ääres kaubateede ristumiskohas. Mõnest viikingiajal alguse saanud sadamakohast kujunesid hiljem linnad, mis eksisteerivad tänapäevalgi.

On vaieldud varalinnaliste keskuste olemasolu üle vallutuseelses Eestis, eriti puudutab see siinsete suuremate linnade Tallinna ja Tartu arengulugu. Tallinna viikingiaegseks eellaseks on küll pigem Iru linnus koos kõrval asuvate asulakohtadega. Kompleksi asukoht Pirita jõe käärus, 4 km kaugusel suudmealast, oli viikingiaegseks kaubasadamaks vaieldamatult sobivam kui keskaegne linn 9 km lääne pool. Kaubasadamate nihkumist varasemalt asukohalt n-ö merele lähemale, kuhu seejärel tekkis ka keskaegne linn, on täheldatud ka naabermaades. Bogucki artiklis illustreerib sellist arenguskeemi kõige ilmekamalt Truso mahajätmine 10. sajandi lõpul ning rahvusvahelise kaubanduse kontsentreerumine Gdańskisse. Omaette teema on suurte, vahel sadu eluhooneid mahutanud linnuste seos rahvusvahelise kaubandusega. Pomeraanias on sellisteks näideteks Bardy ja Kotobrzeg-Budzistowo linnus, Lätis Daugmale, Eestis Varbola, Põide või Pada.

Läänemere lõuna- ja läänekalda varalinnalistele keskustele sarnanevaid kohti Eestis siiski kaevatud ei ole ning seepärast keskendub sinne uurimistöo väiksematele, üksnes piirkondliku tähtsusega sadamakohtadele. **Marika Mägi** artiklis on võetud vaatluse alla merenduslik maastik muinas- ja varakeskaegsel Saaremaal. Siin on põhitähelepanu pööratud võimalike sadamakohtade väljaselgitamise meetoditele, nende seosele ülejäänud kultuurmaastikuga. Viimasest lähtuvalt on esimesed piirkondliku tähtsusega sadamakohad praeguseks juba leitud ning mõnes on teostatud ka proovikaevamisi. Need on kinnitanud, et siingi muutsid sadamakohad 10. sajandi lõpul või 1000. aasta paiku asukohta. Vähemalt Tornimäe viikingiaegne sadamakoht on just sel ajal maha jäetud. Läänemere põhjaosa rannikualade kujunemist tugevasti mõjutanud maatõus pakub siinkohal kõige käegakatsutavama põhjenduse: vana sadam jäi laevadele lihtsalt liialt madalaks. Ometi

osutavad Poola ja ka Skandinaavia maade paralleelid ilmselt sügavamatele, igal juhul hoopis laiemal levikuga põhjustele. Lisaks maatõusule tulid 10. sajandil kasutusele suurema süvisega laevad ning ühiskondlikus korralduses ja rahvusvahelises kaubanduses toimusid põhjalikud muutused.

Saaremaa sadamakohtade paiknemises on ilmne, et need asusid viljakamate põllumaade läheduses. Veelgi enam, keskuste kujunemises on olnud vajalikuks eeltingimuseks põllumaade ja sadamakohaks sobiva rannalähedase topograafiaga mere sümbioos. Vaadet rannamaastikule, randumisele ja selleks sobivatele kohtadele meremehe vaatevinklist valgustab **Kristin Ilvese** artikkel. Tema arvates on merendusliku kultuurmaastiku mõistmiseks vajalik selle vaatlemine nii maa kui mere poolt, mis omakorda on võimalik üksnes kohalike vete ja meresõiduuskuste hea tundmise ning soovitatavalt veesõiduki olemasolu korral. Ühe Eesti arheoloogias seni vähe uuritud aspektina rõhutab Ilves põhjamaise kultuurmaastiku sõltuvust aastaegadest – talvel, rannikumere jäätudes, kaob meri rannaelanike elust mitmeks kuuks ning veesõidukite kasutamine muutub võimatuks. Sarnaselt muutub maastik ka sisemaal, taliteede osakaal veel 20. sajandi alguse kohalikus kaubanduses on ajaloolastele hästi teada.

Ilves pakub välja omapoolse terminoloogia eri tüüpi randumispaikade eristamiseks, seostades neid otseselt laevaehitusega. Sadamatest Läänemere ruumis võib tema arvates rääkida alates 9.–10. sajandist, nn protosadamatest alates 7. sajandist. Termin *sadam* on tal seega võrdsustatud Bogucki poolt käsitletud kaubasadamate ehk *emporium*'idega. Lähtudes võimalusest sadama-, resp randumiskohti arheoloogiliselt maastikul eristada, on Mägi poolt kasutatud mõistet *sadam/sadamakoht* hoopis laiemas tähenduses.

Inimese ja veekogu, seekord küll jõe suhetele keskendub **Gurly Vedru** Põhja-Eesti jõgede äärset asustust käsitlev artikkel. Laiemas tähenduses on siingi tegemist rannaaladega, merest vahel vaid mõne kilomeetri kaugusele jäävate piirkondadega. Asustust, selle järjepidevust ja/või katkemist on vaadeldud pikas perspektiivis: alates mesoliitikumist kuni keskajani. Suur osa autori tähelepanust keskendubki põlluharimise kasutuselevõtuga seotud asustusnihele.

Vedru artiklis rõhutatakse kultuurmaastiku järjepidevust, vaimset seost esivanemate poolt kasutatud aladega. Jõekaldaid, eriti kui läheduses paiknes mingi looduslikult silmatorkav objekt, näiteks juga, kasutati inimeste poolt pärast viljelusmajandusele üleminekut sageli edasi ka juhul, kui vahetus läheduses sobivaid põllumaid ei leidunud. Otsene elukoht nihkus sellisel juhul küll mujale, põldude lähikonda, vanadesse asulapaikadesse püstitati aga kalmeid või jäid need kasutusse kultuskohana. Ka varasema asula ala täielikul hülgamisel pöörduti vahel sajandeid hiljem samasse kohta tagasi.

Kultuurmaastiku järjepidevuses, selle elementide seoses kohaliku identiteediga on oma osa ka sadamakohtadel. Nagu on teada Saaremaal ning näiteks ka Skandinaavias, tekkisid muinasaja lõpu sadamakohtadesse hiljem sageli külad, kuigi meri võis maatõusu tagajärjel olla taandunud juba kilomeetreid eemale. Eri asustusjärgude vahele võis jääda isegi mitme sajandi pikkune paus. Tõenäoliselt

toimus selline areng ka mitme jõe kallastel, kus mingil ajahetkel võis olla tegu jõesadamaga. Ka ammu maha jäetud ning praegusest rannast kaugemale jäävate muistsete sadamakohtade mäletamine kohalikus folklooris mõisakohtade või linnamägedena viitab järjepidevusele, sedakorda läbi maastiku hierarhilise mõtestamise. Koha kunagine funktsioon on ununenud, teadmine koha olulisusest kultuurmaastikul on aga jäänud.

Eesti ajalugu on vahetult seotud geograafilise paiknemisega mere ääres, rahvusvaheliste kaubateede ristumiskohal. Nii saarte kui ka mandri rannalähedaste alade asukate igapäevaelu on läbi aegade sõltunud merest ning sellega seotud tegevusest, isegi kui elati rannast mitmeid kilomeetreid eemal. Et merenduslik aspekt on siinses arheoloogias seni vaid vähest käsitlemist leidnud, on ilmselt 20. sajandi poliitiliste olude süü. Seda tühikut on nüüd asunud täitma eelnimetatud uurimisprojektid, mille esimeseks üllitiseks ongi käesolev erinumber.

Marika Mägi