

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD WORK IN SETUMAA

Heiki VALK

Tartu Ülikool (University of Tartu), Ülikooli 18, EE-2400 Tartu, Eesti (Estonia)

In 1994 trial excavations were carried out on the newly-discovered settlement sites at Võmmorski and Vasla in the municipality of Petseri (Pechory).

At Võmmorski the cultural layers lie between the Obinitsa—Petseri road and the Piusa River, in the historical village area. The rather thin cultural layer, mostly mixed by ploughing, occurs both east and west of the road to Orava. The cultural layer, lying as patches of irregular size and shape at the bottom of the ancient river valley, consists of sandy soil. A trial plot (5×3 m) was made in the area with the darkest cultural layer, i. e. in the eastern end of the village, some 60 m SE of the sauna belonging to Olli Alaveer. The cultural layer consisting of sooty sandy soil was almost totally ploughed through. The layer contained small pieces of burnt clay but almost no burnt stone rubble. No construction remains were discovered. From the cultural layers only weakly burnt reddish or brownish wheel-pottery (Fig. 1, 1—4), mostly having a coarse surface and containing small stone rubble, was found.¹ One sherd of a well-burnt vessel was decorated with wave and line ornament (Plate XXII, 1, 1). Also some fragments of pottery with glazed inner surface (Fig. 1, 5—7) were found. Most of the pottery seems to originate from the post-medieval period, probably from the 17th—19th centuries.

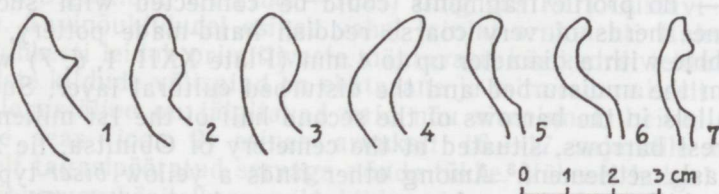


Fig. 1. Pottery from Võmmorski. (TU 202: 1, 2, 4, 34, 39, 38, 40.)

In Vasla the cultural layers are lying east of the Päikeste farmstead. The village is situated in a flat field area where in earlier times serious problems with water supply existed. According to oral tradition, before the modern wells were bored drinking water was taken from ponds and in winter also obtained by melting snow.

The cultural layer of the excavation plot (7×2 m) had a thickness of some 30—40 cm and was mostly ploughed through. Only at the bottom some undisturbed hearth-places could be observed (Plate XXII, 2). The cultural layer consisting of dark soil contained fragments of burnt stones and numerous sherds of wheel pottery.² Among the wheel pottery primitive greyish, brownish, or black sherds, made probably at the hand-wheel,

¹ The finds: TU 202.

² The finds: TU 203.

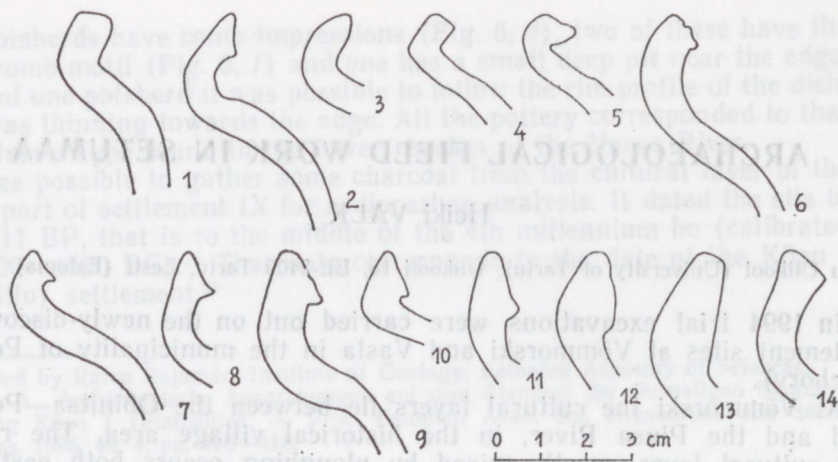


Fig. 2. Pottery from Vasla. (TÜ 203: 209, 282, 68, 299, 252, 60, 346, 279, 161, 17, 1, 18, 166, 95.)

predominated. The outer surface of such sherds looked like that of hand-made vessels, being coarse and smoothed in different directions. On the inner side, on the other hand, horizontal traces, indicating to the potter's wheel, could be observed. The profiles (Fig. 2) were represented with different types. Some of the sherds were decorated with wave ornament (Plate XXII, 1, 2—5). The wave-ornamented fragments and simple profiles (Fig. 2, 1—4) might come from the 12th—13th centuries. Profiles with a sharply turned triangular edge (Fig. 2, 7—10) can be dated mostly to the 16th—17th centuries. Also derivate forms of the last-mentioned group were found (Fig. 2, 11, 12). The dating of the presumable hand-wheel pottery remains unclear — no profile fragments could be connected with such sherds. Also some sherds of very coarse reddish hand-made pottery, including stone rubble with a diameter up to 4 mm (Plate XXII, 1, 6, 7) were found both from the undisturbed and the disturbed cultural layer. Such pottery has parallels in the barrows of the second half of the 1st millennium AD. The nearest barrows, situated at the cemetery of Obinitsa, lie 2 km east of the Vasla settlement.³ Among other finds a yellow *biser*-type bead of the 12th—14th centuries, a fragment of a sandstone disk (Plate XXII, 1, 8) and of a clay pipe, as well as three silver coins minted in Riga must be mentioned. The coins included two solidi of the Polish king Sigismund III (1587—1629), one of them from 1617, and a solidus of Riga of the Swedish king Charles X Gustav (1654—60).

Some settlement sites discovered by Ali Kikkas, an amateur archaeologist, were examined in the municipality of Väraska (Põlva County) in the spring of 1994. In Väike-Rõsna the cultural layers lay in two areas, one of them dating from the 12th—14th centuries, the other, probably, from later medieval and post-medieval period. A settlement seems to have existed on the eastern shore of Väraska Bay since the 12th—13th centuries. At Väraska also an old deserted cemetery of medieval origin, lying at a distance of some 100 m from the edge of the cultural layer, was registered. In the cemetery three granite gravestones were found. Two of them were decorated with a cross, standing on a circle and having crossed ends (Plate XXIII, 2). These gravestones, dated on the grounds of the design of

³ Аун М. Археологические памятники второй половины I-го тысячелетия н. э. в Юго-Восточной Эстонии. Таллинн, 1992, pp. 108—110.

cross-ends to the 12th—14th centuries, have up to now no parallels in Estonia. Into the third gravestone a simple cross was cut. In the village of Lobodka, lying opposite Värška on the other side of the bay, no cultural layer was found in spite of good conditions for inspection.

In the village of Matsuri, near the Koidula customs point, a medieval village cemetery, according to a local legend the grave of Swedish soldiers, was surveyed. In the cemetery area a rectangular barrow (5×5 m) with a height of some 10—15 cm, marked with a granite cross (Plate XXIII, 1), could be observed. In front of the granite cross there was a loose foot of another stone cross.

In July 1994 folklore/ethnological field work aimed at getting material about the disappearing traditional Setu folk religion, beliefs, and mentality was carried out in the surroundings of Meremäe and Obinitša. In the course of the expedition also data of archaeological interest concerning the ethnological burial customs, medieval/post-medieval village cemeteries, votive places, and the local village chapels (*tsässovna*) were collected.

ARHEOOGILISTEST VÄLITÖÖDEST SETUMAAL

Heiki VALK

1994. aasta suvel toimusid proovikaevamised Võmmorski ja Vasla asulakohal. Võmmorskis on laiguti esinev kultuurkiht õhuke ja suuresti läbi küntud ega sisalda peaaegu üldse põlenud kivitükke. Uuritud 15 m² suuruselt alalt saadud keraamika (joon. 1; tahv. XXII, 1, 1) näib pärinevat valdavalt 17.—19. sajandist.

Vasla külas paikneb keskmise intensiivsusega ja põlenud kivitükke sisaldav kultuurkiht Päikeste pere aiamaadel. 14 m² suuruselt kaevandist leiti rohkesti kdrakeraamikat, 12.—14. sajandi kollane kudrushelmes, liivakivist eseme (tahv. XXII, 1, 8) ning savipiibu varre katke ja 3 hõbekillingit — 2 Sigismund III (1587—1629) ning üks Karl Gustavi (1654—1660) raha. Savinõukildudel esineb vahel lainjat ornamenti (tahv. XXII, 1, 2—5). Rohkesti leidub primitiivsete, nähtavasti käsikedral tehtud nõude tükke. Selliste kildude välispind on ebatasane ja mitmesuunaliselt silutud; kedra pöörlemisjäljed on jälgitavad vaid nõu sisepinnal. Leitud profiili-fragmentide seas (joon. 2) esineb arvukalt 16.—17. sajandile omaseid kolmnurkselt tagasipööratud servaga nõude tükke. Vähesel hulgal leiti ka jämeda kivipurruga käsitsikeraamika kilde, mis sarnanevad I aastatuhande teise poole kääbastes esineva keraamikaga (tahv. XXII, 1, 6—7).

On tegeldud ka kinnismuististe otsimisega. Omaette toimunud, setu rahvausundit talletava ekspeditsiooni raames koguti muu hulgas andmeid ka matmiskombestiku, asustusajaloo ja muististe kohta.

ПОЛЕВЫЕ РАБОТЫ В СЕТУМАА

Хейки ВАЛК

Пробные раскопки проведены на поселениях Вымморски и Васла. В Вымморски культурный слой расположен пятнами в северной и восточной частях деревни. Слой почти полностью перемешан вспашкой. Керамика из раскопа площадью в 15 кв. м (рис. 1; табл. XXII, 1, 1) относится в большинстве своем к 17—19 вв.

В дер. Васла культурный слой средней интенсивности, содержащий обломки пережженных булыжников, расположен на площади около 40

кв. м. В раскопе (14 кв. м) обнаружено большое количество гончарной керамики, бусина (бисер) 12—14 вв., обломок предмета из песчаника (табл. XXII, 1, 8), фрагмент глиняной трубки и три рижских серебряных шиллинга: два — чеканки Сигизмунда III (1587—1629) и один — чеканки Карла X Густава (1654—1660). На черепках иногда встречается волнистый орнамент (табл. XXII, 1, 2—5). Сосуды изготовлены, видимо, на ручном гончарном круге. Поверхность таких сосудов неровная, сглаженная в разных направлениях. Следы круга проявляются только внутри сосудов. Среди фрагментов венчиков (рис. 2) многочисленны образцы, характерные для горшков 16—17 вв. В небольшом количестве обнаружена лепная керамика, по своему составу напоминающая сосуды из курганов второй половины I тыс. (табл. XXII, 1, 6, 7).

В Сетумаа проведены и полевые инспекции, в ходе которых обнаружены культурные слои поселений, отдельные курганы и каменные кресты (табл. XXIII, 1). На средневековом кладбище в Вярска найдены три каменных надгробия с крестами (табл. XXIII, 2). Собраны материалы о верованиях сету, их погребальных обрядах, археологических памятниках и истории заселения края.

HEIKKI VALK