

EXCAVATIONS AT TÕNIJA TUULINGUMÄE TARAND—GRAVE WILL BE CONTINUED

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A tarand grave consisting of four tarands was unearthed at Tõnija near Valjala, southern Saaremaa, 1995–1997 (Mägi-Lõugas 1996; 1997). A two-week dig in July 1997 was organised to complete the earlier trench by widening it 1–2 metres outwards from the grave and to determine the border of the stone layer outside the tarands. The earlier (1995–1996) trench was widened south and eastwards in 1997. The total area of this years excavations was 21 m². The finds were continuously magazined in the Museum of Saaremaa, SM 1466: 703–847.

The southern trench

Eight additional square metres were opened on the southern edge of Tarands III and IV. A layer of smaller limestone slabs, characteristic of the area directly outside the tarands, was unearthed here. The layer was thinner and sparser in the southern part of the squares. Some potsherds and bones, both cremated and unburnt, were found in this layer, especially at the eastern end of the trench.

The eastern trench

Our eastern trench covered 13 m² eastwards from the southern half of the eastern wall of Tarand I. Directly north of it, there remained a later pit that was filled with cemented soil. The pit had probably been used for mixing cement for a vaulted cellar or the foundation of a sauna building, which were built next to the grave at the beginning of this century. In section, the pit was bowl-like, and some of the structure of the grave survived under the edges of it, where the pit was shallower.

The upper layers of the squares next to the eastern wall of Tarand I were filled by fallen limestone slabs, collapsed from the wall. The lower layers

consisted of small limestone slabs, which were characteristically found everywhere directly outside the grave.

Ca 1 m eastwards from the eastern wall of Tarand I, structures from another grave appeared. As far as it was possible to determine from so small a trench, it had also been a tarand grave, but of an earlier type. The enclosures in this type of tarand-grave were smaller and not erected in line, but apparently haphazardly. Similar earlier tarand-graves have been unearthed at Kurevere in western Saaremaa, Mäla on the island Muhu and Kõmsi in West Estonia, and they have all been dated to the 1st century AD (Lõugas 1977;1986).

The later and earlier tarand-graves were not linked within the area of our trench. We also found no signs of the earlier grave extending under Tarand I, but they could have been destroyed during the building of the later tarand. It should be noted here that the evidence of some earlier stone grave under a later tarand-grave at Tuulingumäe was especially clear in Tarand I (Mägi-Lõugas 1996, 428).

As proved by excavations in 1996, the southern wall of Tarands I-IV, built of limestone slabs and not of large granite stones like the other walls, was earlier than the eastern and western walls (Mägi-Lõugas 1997, 30). The theory that remains from some earlier stone grave had been used for the southern wall of the later tarands was now supported by the earlier grave, which had been built entirely of limestone.

The earlier tarand-grave

Our trench touched two rectangular enclosures and a structure whose shape could not be determined from so small a trench. All the structures were called provisionally Tarands V – VII. The latter two tarands continued into the eastern part of Tuulingumäe hill, not opened by us this year.

The best preserved structure was Tarand V. Ca 2 m² of it, with a 2 m long southern wall, were unearthed in 1997. The wall was built of limestone slabs, which had survived in two or three layers. Part of the wall had collapsed outwards. The filling of the enclosure was also of limestone, but the upper part of it, like the northern part of the whole construction, had been destroyed by the cement-pit. Two similar broken vessels with burnt and unburnt bone fragments and with a great number of child's teeth were found in the tarand: one from the middle and another from the western end of the surviving structure. An iron crook-shaped pin had been thrust between the slabs of the southern wall.

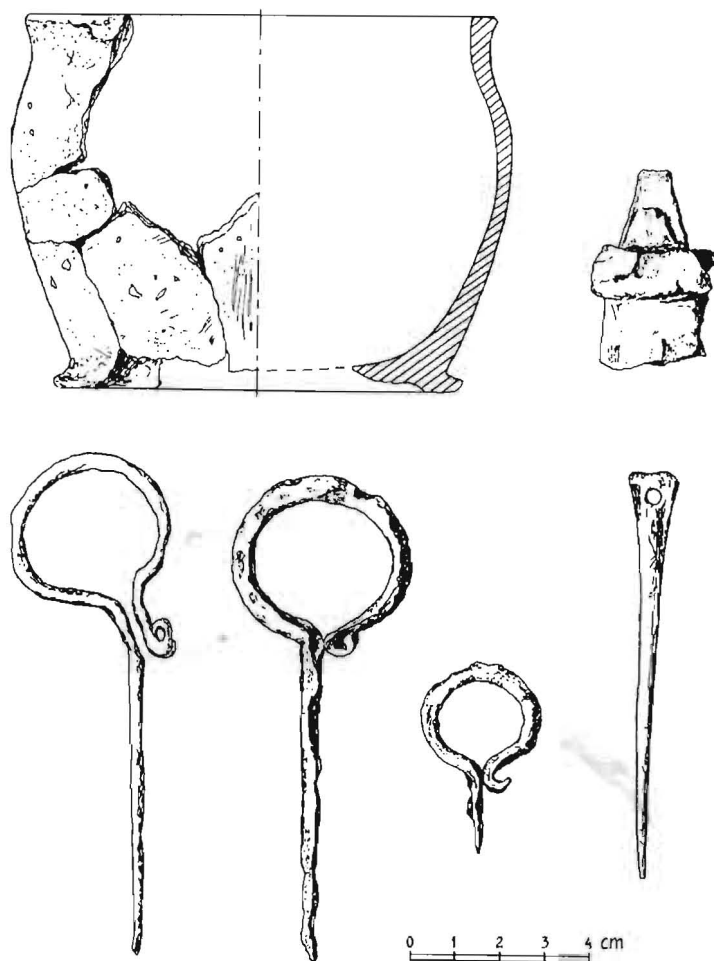


Fig. 1. Tõnija grave. Finds from the earlier tarand-grave.

Sherds of a pot similar to those mentioned above were found, together with bones and two crook-shaped pins (Fig. 1), between Tarand V and the eastern wall of Tarand I. All these finds can be dated to the 1st century AD.

Only ca 1.5 m² of the so-called Tarand VI were unearthed this year. It was actually just a construction of limestone slabs, in our trench 1.5 m long and 1 m wide, without any bones or finds. The southern and western borders of the structure were nevertheless very clear and even 3–4 layers of slabs with their straight side outwards were preserved there.

Tarand VII also covered ca 1.5 m². From so small an area it was actually impossible to determine whether it had been a tarand or some other

grave type. In any case, Tarand VII differed from all the other tarands at Tuulingumäe. It consisted of granite stones of medium size almost devoid of smaller stones between them. The soil between the stones was dark and grainy. Almost all the bones found in this area were cremated, but had not been in a fierce fire i.e. they were black and had survived in bigger pieces. There were also some potsherds, but unfortunately neither datable finds nor charcoal came to light in this grave.



Fig. 2. Tõnija grave. The new tarand-grave, found in 1997.

The finding of the new grave at Tõnija Tuulingumäe was unexpected and means that the excavations have to be continued there. Since plans for the next summer were already made before the digs at Tõnija, the further excavations remain to be pursued – it is to be hoped in 1999.

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KAEVAMISED TÕNIJA TUULINGUMÄE TARANDKALMEL JÄTKUVAD

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Aastatel 1995–96 puhastati Tõnija Tuulingumäel välja nelja tarandiga kivist kalme. 1997. aasta uurimistööd olid mõeldud selle kalme välja puhastamata jäänud äärevare läbikaevamiseks. Üllatuslikult leiti kaevamisel tarandkalmest vahetult idas teine kalme (joon. 2). Seegi oli tarandkalme, mis oli ehitatud väikeste, ilma selge korrapärase paiknevate taranditena. Sellised tarandkalmed on teada Kureveres, Mälas ja Kõmsis, kus need dateeriti 1. saj. p. Kr.

1997. aasta kaevand, mille suuruseks oli 13 m², haaras kalmest kolme konstruktsiooni. Esialgselt nimetati need taranditeks. Kalme jätkub ida suunas kaevamata alale. Põhja suunas on kalme lõhutud sinna kaevatud auguga.

V tarand oli säilinud 2 m² suurusel alal koos 2 m pikkuse lõunamüüri. Paeplaatidest müürid olid säilinud 2–3 kihi paksuselt ning osaliselt varisenud väljapoole. Ka sisetäidis koosnes väiksemast paeklibust. Tarandist leiti kahe savipoti killud koos põlenud ja põletamata luudega, sh. lapse hammastega. Kolmas sarnane pott leiti I ja V tarandi vaheliselt alalt. Lisaks saadi mõned rauast karjasekeppnõelad (joon. 1).

VI tarand kujutas enesest tihedalt laotud paeplaatidest neljakandilist konstruktsiooni, mis oli säilinud u 1,5 m² alal selgelt jälgitava lääne- ja lõunapiiriga. Leide sealt ei saadud.

Ka VII tarand oli väga tinglik, kuna kalme tegeliku tüübi üle ei saa veel välja puhastatud 1,5 m² põhjal otsustada. Kalmet iseloomustasid keskmise suurusega raudkivid, mille vahel väiksemad kivid peaaegu puudusid. Muld kivide vahel oli must ja sõmer. Saadi üksnes musta värvusega põlenud luid, mis olid säilinud suurte tükkidena. Dateerivaid leide ega sütt ei leitud.

Uue kalme avastamine Tuulingumäel oli ootamatu ning näitab, et kaevamisi tuleb kindlasti jätkata. Varasema, osaliselt lõhutud kivist kalme paiknemist hilisema tarandkalme all oli oletatud juba eelnevatel kaevamistel. Kuna plaanid 1998. aasta suveks olid tehtud juba enne Tõnija kaevamisi, saab töid Tuulingumäel loodetavasti jätkata 1999. aastal.

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