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Archaeological investigations in the western room of the 'Clergy house' of the Teutonic Order Castle in Viljandi

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INTRODUCTION

Since the late 1990s Viljandi Municipality has organized the conservation of the castle ruins in Viljandi (Germ. *Fellin*). The castle of the Livonian branch of the Teutonic Order (Tuulse 1942, 55–57, 139–149; Alttoa 2015), was founded after the conquest of Sakala province in 1223 and it fell in ruins in the Swedish–Polish war of 1600–1625/29.

Fig. 1. *Location of the research area in the castle ruins of Viljandi.*
Jn 1. *Uurimisala asukoht Viljandi linnusevaremetes. Photo / Foto: Heiki Valk*

In 2022 conservation work, accompanied by archaeological investigations, began in a long building in the first outer bailey, north of the High Castle and south-east of the preserved castle gateway (Fig. 1). This building is depicted on the castle plan from 1656 as having three rooms (Fig. 2). The Polish inventory from 1599 (Viljandi 1599, 158–159) notes in this area six crumbled unroofed vaulted rooms and cellars of stone which once functioned as the dwelling of the Teutonic Order clergy. The walls of 'the Clergy house', although locally preserved up to the height of 1–1.5 metres, had mostly perished until the ground level – to an extent that the contours of the building as a whole could hardly be perceived.

The castle ruins which were still standing in the late 18th century, as depicted on the Fellin District map in the atlas of Ludwig August von Mellin (1798), were demolished, probably, mainly in the first quarter of the 19th century – the owner of Viljandi manor who possessed the land sold stones for building material to the town citizens. As a result, bigger granite stones and well-preserved bricks were reused, but smaller stones, brick fragments and mortar rubble from between them formed a thick layer of debris which filled the cellars of the castle buildings.

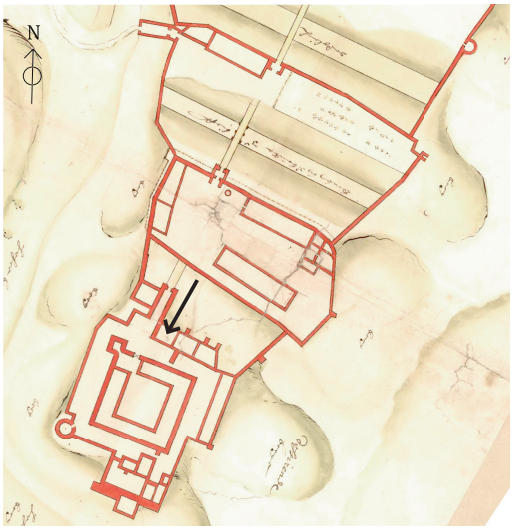

Fig. 2. *Plan of Viljandi High Castle and its outer baileys from 1656.*
Jn 2. *Viljandi ordulinnuse ja eeslinnuste plaan aastast 1656.*
Map / Kaart: Military Archives of Sweden / Rootsi Sõjaarhiiv, KrA/0406/28/014/001

Fig. 3. *Removal of debris from the western room of the 'Clergy house'.*
Jn 3. *Rusueemaldus Viljandi ordulinnuse vaimulikehoone läänеruumist.*
Photo / Foto: Heiki Valk

The first excavations in the 'Clergy house' were undertaken already in 1878 when large-scale excavations took place in the castle ruins (Kodar 1998). An anonymous short article in the local weekly newspaper *Felliner Anzeiger* (FA 1878) tells that the long building north of the Convent house was cleared of debris to the extent of 28 feet (i.e. ca. 8.5 m), measured probably from its west end, but the work remained unfinished due to lack of resources and need to concentrate on the High Castle.

In 2022 archaeological activities began in the western room where the removal of debris had begun in 2006 (Haak & Juurik 2007, 87–89). Although the southern wall had partly been unearthed then for conservation purpose, most of the cellar was still filled with debris. The aim of the work was to clean the inside until a certain depth (84.00 m a.s.l.), and to conserve the unearthed walls. The formerly opened walls had been conserved in 2006–2007 already. The cellar walls were planned to be exposed in the height of ca. 1.5 to ca. 2.5 metres, depending on their state of preservation. Similar work is planned to be continued in two other rooms of the building in 2023 and 2024.

REMOVAL OF DEBRIS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING

Since the castle ruins are a state protected monument, archaeological monitoring took place in parallel to the removal of debris. The aim was also to discover the eastern wall of the room, depicted on the plan from 1656, and to find out the original depth of the cellar by digging two 1 × 1 m trenches.

Debris of rather even composition, consisting of decomposed mortar, granite and brick rubble, as well as some better preserved bricks and roof tile fragments, were removed by a big excavator (Fig. 3). From the rubble also a fragment of hard mortar floor, covered by black layer of soot referring to a great fire was found.

Finds from the debris were not numerous, being represented by a few Late Medieval or Early Modern Times pottery fragments. The most outstanding item was the basket-hilt of weapon, decorated with engraved images (Fig. 4). According to the estimation by Ain Mäesalu (TÜ) it might originate from a sable, according to Jaak Mäll (SALM) from a left-hand dagger – a

civil weapon which belonged to the same set with a rapier. Both estimations date the find to the second half of the 16th or first half of the 17th century. In addition, from the debris a decorative bone plate with engraved plant ornamentation, probably also from the same period (Fig. 5: 1), and some animal bones were found.

The debris also contained six bricks with animal footprints – cat and dog paw prints and sheep/goat hoove prints were all represented with two items (Valk 2022) – and three examples of graffiti drawn on unburnt bricks. The most outstanding, but only partly preserved graffiti find depicts a bug (Fig. 6: 1), but there were also a cross-like image (Fig. 6: 2) and a fragment resembling an eye (Fig. 6: 3). Paw prints are common finds on medieval bricks. For example, in Turaida castle in Latvia over 150 such items have been unearthed (Ose 2015, 119–135; figs 35, 66). From Turaida also different graffiti images were found (*ibid.*, fig. 10).

THE STRUCTURE INSIDE THE 'CLERGY HOUSE'

When removing the debris from the south-eastern part of the room, firstly a corner of a brick structure came to light. Later it appeared to be preserved at the height of 11 bricks. When digging deeper, the top surfaces of ca. 1.2 m wide walls, directing towards the north and the west from the discovered corner of the structure, appeared beside it at the level of ca. 83.90 m a.s.l. The finding of the corner of an unknown building caused changes in further activities. It was decided that cleaning the surfaces of the discovered structure will take place in the autumn. The walls of the 'Clergy house' were conserved soon after archaeological monitoring.

When the wall surfaces were cleaned of debris in September, remains of a quadrangular building of somewhat irregular shape, not depicted on the plan from 1656, appeared (Figs 7–8). The structure was 5.05–5.75 m

Fig. 4. *A basket-hilt of a sword or left-hand dagger.*
Jn 4. *Mõõga või vasakukäepistoda käekaitse.*
(VM 11646: 7.)
Photo / Foto: Riina Rammo

Fig. 5. *Finds from the debris. 1 – a decorative bone plate, 2 – a crossbow bolt.*
Jn 5. *Leiud rusukihist. 1 – kaunistustega luuplaat, 2 – ammunooleots.*
(VM 11646: 15, 26.)
Photos / Fotod: Andres Vindi, Riina Rammo

Fig. 6. *Graffiti images on medieval bricks from Viljandi.*
Jn 6. *Grafiti Viljandi ordulinnuse keskaegsetel tellistel.*
Photos / Fotod: Riina Rammo, Heiki Valk, Mait Raudsepp

Fig. 7. *The western room of the 'Clergy house' in Viljandi with discovered walls inside it and the re-constructed hypocaust mouth in the background. View from the north-west.*
Jn 7. *Viljandi ordulinnuse vaimulikehoone lääneruum sellest avastatud ehitise müüride ja hüpokaustahju rekonstrueeritud suuavaga tagaplaanil. Vaade loodest.*
Photo / Foto: Heiki Valk

long in east–west direction and 4.3–4.65 m wide. Its western wall was less preserved, being destroyed by some earlier excavator work, as shown by Soviet period trash in the backfilled debris. The thickness of walls was ca. 1.2 m in the north, east and south and 1.3 m in the west, and the inner measures of the building were 2.93 m in the north, 2.2 m in the east, 3.3 m in the south and 1.9 m in the west. The walls were made of granite, but for the outer corners and for lining the 1.35 m wide doorway on the west side bricks were used.

The debris between the discovered building walls differed from rubbish removed from above. Most of the debris consisted of unbroken granite stones with the diameter of mostly 25–40 cm, but in some cases up to 60 cm, some of them with sooty surfaces. In the south-eastern inner corner where the wall had preserved at a bigger height two stones on top of each other projected from the inner side of wall lines, indicating either a perished mantel chimney or a vault. Cracked stones in the eastern wall also refer to making a big fire in the building. The inside of the structure was not emptied of stones because of limited resources.

Fig. 8. *The western room of the 'Clergy house' in Viljandi with discovered walls of an unknown building.*
Jn 8. *Viljandi ordulinnuse vaimulikehoone läänеruum ja selles avastatud ehitise müürid.*
Photo / Foto: Heiki Valk. Photogrammetry-based ortophoto / Fotogrammmeetriapõhine ortofoto: Karoline Mai

In front of the doorway a terrace made of bricks projected 75 cm out of the wall line (Fig. 9). It remained unclear how long the structure in north–south direction was, since it was opened only in the width of 1.1 metres. When opened from the west, it appeared that the terrace was 5 bricks (ca. 50 cm) high and its bottom lay on intact light brown clay. A radiocarbon date from some pieces of birch bark from under the wall at the depth of 81.76 m a.s.l.[1]) gave the result 860±30 BP, calibrated age with 95.4% probability 1052–1077 (5.8%) or 1156–1263 AD (89.6%). Both the doorway and the terrace were covered with intensively black sooty cultural layer which contained several up to 3–4 cm thick patches of ash, indicating making fire inside the building, but there were no finds.

Fig. 9. *The doorway of the discovered building and terrace in front of it.*
Jn 9. *Avastatud ehitise ukseava ja astang selle ees.*
Photo / Foto: Heiki Valk

[1] Poz-166090. All radiocarbon samples were calibrated with OxCal 4.4 programme (Bronk Ramsey 2009) and IntCal20 calibration curve.

STRUCTURES IN THE WALLS OF THE WESTERN ROOM

Some formerly unknown structures appeared also in or at the walls of the western room of the 'Clergy house'. In the northern wall of the room seven rectangular openings with the width and height of ca. 35–40 cm and the depth of 78–90 cm – evidently meant for the floor beams of the ground floor – came to light (Fig. 10).

In the southern part of the eastern wall the mouth of a medieval hypocaust was discovered in a 1.2 m wide niche during the removal of debris. The arched hypocaust mouth was 40 cm wide and the inside of the stove was filled with brick and mortar rubble. Debris and soil in front of the stove mouth, unfortunately partly disturbed by the excavator, contained some coarseware pottery fragments characteristic of the second half of the 16th century. From the dark soil in front of the hypocaust also some fish bones and a few mammal bones were found. It seems that the hypocaust was last used during the Livonian War (1558–1583). To conserve the hypocaust mouth, a protective wall imitating the original was built in front of it soon after unearthing (Fig. 7), and the structure was covered with new bricks on the ground level. The hypocaust remains in the next room will be unearthed during the next fieldwork season.

75 cm west of the south-eastern corner a 45 cm wide and 50 cm high opening framed with blocks of travertine came to light (Fig. 11). The opening which had a rising bottom made of carelessly laid bricks, and a rising ceiling, became wider both towards the south-east and south-west. Both its mouth and end were filled with debris. When the opening was discovered and debris had been removed from its mouth, half-decayed maple leaves, referring to recent exposure, came to light.

In the distance of 1.7–3.2 m from the south-eastern corner, the southern wall of the room became lower on the inside, having a slanting surface (Figs 7, 8, 11). Judging by brick remains and pieces of travertine on both broken sides of the lowering part of the wall, a window site can be suggested there. Probably, the opening had been lined with bricks – those, as well as

Fig. 10. *Openings for beams in the northern wall of the 'Clergy house'.*
Jn 10. *Palgipesad vaimulikehoone põhjaseinas.*
Photo / Foto: Heiki Valk

Fig. 11. *An opening of unknown purpose and vault-basis like construction in the south-eastern corner of the room (after conservation).*
Jn 11. *Teadmata otstarbega ava ja võlvikanda meenutav konstruktsioon ruumi edelanurgas (pärast konserveerimist). Photo / Foto: Heiki Valk*

travertine fragments generally did not occur in the walls of the cellar and ground floor made of granite. However, not a single brick from the original surface had preserved. Probably, a window with a staircase-like bottom, similar to those formerly unearthed on the ground or half-cellar floor of the High Castle, had shed light into the cellar from the courtyard of the outer bailey here.

West of the presumed window site a ca. 40 cm thick lining of bricks, with its surface below the bottom of the opening, had been added to the inner side of the cellar wall made of granite (Figs 7, 8). The structure appeared at the depth of 84.34 m a.s.l. and was preserved in the height of seven bricks, i.e. 70 cm until a basis of granite rocks appeared under it. The length of the at least 3 m long structure remained unclear: the heaps of removed soil hindered digging further towards the west. In this brick part of the wall a rectangular opening with the measures of 30 × 35 cm, evidently meant for a beam came to light. Judging by the height of the preserved corner of the building discovered in the room, the other end of the beam must have extended to and rested on its perished wall or on some basis beside it.

In the south-eastern corner of the room also remains of a ca. 1-metre-high brick structure which at first reminded vault basis remains (Fig. 11) was unearthed. The layer of plaster, painted white with limewash, between it and the wall indicated secondary origin of the structure. However, since the south-western vault corner should have been located in the place of the unearthed supposed window site – the cellar west of it was occupied by the unearthed massive foundation with fire traces on its inner side –, the discovered structure cannot originate from a vault, but rather from a brick arch in the eastern wall. In the north-eastern corner of the room a similar brick structure existed, but it seemed not to be a secondary addition to the walls.

THE WESTERN TRENCH

The western trench with the original size of ca. 1 × 1 m was made at the western wall of the 'Clergy house'. This wall beside the trench had been conserved until the depth of 2.45 m from its preserved top in 2007.[2] After discovering the terrace in front of the doorway of the inner building, the trench was extended towards the east until the research areas combined (Figs 7, 8, 12).

The layer of debris was 1–1.5 metres thick. It was mostly disturbed by quite recent excavator work, as testified by various Soviet period and maybe later trash. Probably, the layer of debris was disturbed when the inside of the western wall was unearthed for conservation purposes, presumably in the first half of the 2000s.[3] Just beside the western wall a layer of charcoal and tiny brands, originating from a fire which destroyed the house was preserved above debris which continued also under it – most of the trench areas was disturbed by the excavator work.

The late excavator disturbance did not reach the bottom of the debris. Under it a dark ca. 15 cm thick cultural layer with its top at the depth of around 82.00 m a.s.l. came to light, indicating a medieval floor level. From the black soil two fragments of a Siegburg stoneware vessel (Sieg3b, 1350–1525/50; as Russow 2006) were found, one of them from the very bottom of the layer. In addition, some grayware sherds, a handful of calcined animal bones and some fish bones were discovered by sieving. A radiocarbon analysis from an uncremated animal bone from the bottom of the black cultural layer[4] gave the result 310±30 BP, calibrated age with 95.4% probability 1490–1649 AD. Under the cultural layer there was 10–15 cm of disturbed clay in the bottom of the trench, followed by intact brown clay.

Fig. 12. *The western wall of the 'Clergy house' and the western trench, view from the east.*
Jn 12. *Vaimulikehoone läänesein ja läänešurf, idast.*
Photo / Foto: Heiki Valk

The black cultural layer was homogeneous everywhere between the western wall of the 'Clergy house' and the terrace of the structure within it. In both ends of the trench the dark layer stretched directly until the wall. The fact that it had not been cut by the foundation ditches indicates that it is secondary in relation to the walls. Although both walls are older than the cultural layer and have a similar foundation depth, the lower part of the foundation on the west wall of the 'Clergy house' seemed to have been built in two stages. The very smooth inner surfaces of its two lowest stone rows packed

[2] The western side of this wall was conserved in 2007 (Juurik *et al.* 2008, 76–77).
[3] The time of this work remains unknown because there is no report about archaeological monitoring.
[4] Poz-163960.

with light hard mortar slanted strongly outwards, towards the west, which cannot be said about the higher part of the wall where the wall was vertical and stones were bound with weak light brown mortar. The bottom of the trench (with the bottom of the western wall foundation at the depth of 81.90 m a.s.l.) was ca. 3 metres below the level of the castle gateway cobblestone pavement behind the western wall.

THE NORTHERN TRENCH AND THE WINDOW

The second, northern trench was dug at the northern wall of the 'Clergy house', in a place where the top of a brick arch indicating an opening in the wall appeared after the removal of debris (Figs 7, 8, 13). The trench made between the outer wall of the house and the wall of the discovered inner building measured finally 1.3 × 1.5 metres. From its upper part, filled with light brown debris, similar to those removed by the excavator, a 14th–15th century crossbow bolt[5] (Fig. 5: 2) and some bones of domestic animals were found. At the depth of 0.6–1 m the character of the fill changed. The ground, still consisting mainly of debris, turned dark brown and contained bone fragments, both of domestic and wild animals, represented by elk (7 toe bones, partly with traces of skinning), even-toed ungulates (4), cattle (10), horse (1), sheep/cattle (8), pig (5) and fish.[6] Near the inner wall in the upper part of the dark layer 13 osmund iron bars of Swedish origin[7] and a blacksmithing slag cake were found. The soil contained also tiny particles of forge scale formed during the process of blacksmithing.[8]

Under the dark layer a new, ca. 40 cm thick stratum of demolition debris with no finds appeared. Probably, the debris originates from the period of the Livonian War. The lower debris was followed by a ca. 5 cm thick cultural layer which contained bones of domestic animals, birds and fish and was followed by a new, ca. 10–15 cm layer of debris. A radiocarbon analysis from a bone[9] gave the result 390±30 BP, calibrated age with 95.4% probability 1442–1524 (67.1%) or 1571–1631AD (28.4%).

In the bottom of the trench there was a 3–4 cm thick uneven cultural layer which consisted of patches of petrified mortar and hard-tramped soil. Both on the northern and southern side of the trench there were 'mortar noses' which merged with that layer. Evidently, the original floor of the cellar had been on the level of the 'mortar noses', on the depth of 82.03–82.08 m a.s.l. Under

Fig. 13. *The northern trench, view from the south.*
Jn 13. *Põhjašurf, vaade lõunast.*
Photo / Foto: Heiki Valk

[5] Estimation by Ain Mäesalu (TÜ).
[6] Estimations by Eve Rannamäe (TÜ).
[7] Identified by Ragnar Saage (TÜ).
[8] Identified by MA student Kristo Oks (TÜ).
[9] Poz-163947.

that original floor level disturbed soil/clay which contained smaller granite stones and some animal bones (even-toed ungulates) continued for ca. 30 centimetres, stretching until intact brown clay at the depth of 81.75–81.78 m a.s.l. A radiocarbon date from a bone from the floor level[10] gave the result 590±30 BP, calibrated age with 95.4% probability 1302–1369 (69.1%) or 1380–1412 AD (26.4%) AD. The fact that the bottoms of 'mortar noses' of both walls were on the same level (82.28 m a.s.l.), indicates contemporaneous construction or re-construction activities.

The west side of the upper part of the trench was bordered by a one-stone-thick brick wall. This secondary structure between the walls of the 'Clergy house' and the inner building was evidently made to prevent debris which had formed in the Early Modern Times from falling into the cellar. Evidently, the cellar had lost some of its original size following some large-scale destruction of the castle.

The brick arch which appeared after the removal of debris turned out to belong to a window or embrasure, lined on both sides and on its top with bricks. Its width was ca. 1.4 metres on the inner and only ca. 30 cm on the outer side of the wall. The original inside height of the opening had been ca. 1.1 metres – the innermost bricks had not preserved. The ceiling and bottom of the structure raised towards the outer side of the wall. To save the bricks from falling apart due to weather damages, the debris which filled the window opening was not removed.

The lower part of the northern wall of the 'Clergy House', made of granite, became ca. 30 cm thicker at the depth of ca. 82.76 m a.s.l., i.e. on the level of the bottom of the opening. Both inner sides of the window or embrasure, made of bricks, ended on this broader part of the foundation.

Likewise at the southern wall of the 'Clergy house', also at its northern wall a thickening part of bricks had been added to the inner side of the wall. This addition, located west of the window or embrasure, was based on the wider part of the granite foundation. It was ca. 30 cm thick and merged with the brick lining of the window, indicating the same construction stage. The top surface of the structure was opened at the length of ca. 1.1 metres towards the west; further work was also here hindered by heaps of removed debris. The fact that two bricks of the added wall partly filled one of the seven joist holes in the northern wall also refers to the secondary character of the brick structure.

Thus, both trenches indicate a similar handwriting in masonry. They have a similar depth, the cellar bottom corresponds in both cases to the depth of the wall bottoms, and the lowest part of the cultural layer under the floor level consists of disturbed clay and stones.

DISCUSSION: CONSTRUCTION HISTORY OF THE UNEARTHED STRUCTURES

Excavations did not give a clear answer concerning the function of the building discovered within the western room. It remains unclear whether the walls originate from a huge mantle chimney or a hypocaust for heating several floors above it. The fact that the walls of the building were as thick as those of the 'Clergy house' refers to the notable height of the structure which did not exist anymore in 1656. There are no known parallels to it from the stone buildings of medieval castles in Estonia or Latvia.[11]

The newspaper article from 1878 noted above (FA 1878) describes that during the work the walls of a vaulted *Nothschmiede*, i.e. 'emergency smithy' were unearthed and that its floor

[10] Poz-164255.
[11] Data on Latvia – e-letter of Ieva Ose (Institute of Latvian History of the University of Latvia) from 2.02.2023.

was made of bricks. The floor was not unearthed during the excavations of 2022, since the building was filled with large rocks and debris, but it was noted that at least its threshold floor was made of bricks. Although the text from 1878 does not give any information about the original function of the building, it states that debris was removed from most of the western room of the 'Clergy house', except for its eastern end. This means that most of the debris removed by the excavator, as well as big stones between the discovered inner walls, were not in their original location, but are backfill from the earlier excavations.

The chronological relations between the discovered building and the outer walls of the 'Clergy house' also remained somewhat unclear. Although similar bottom depths and mortar noses of the walls of the inner structure and outer walls, both in the western and northern trench, refer to simultaneous construction of the inner and outer wall, the seven joist holes in the northern wall of the building contradict this interpretation, indicated the secondary character of the inner structure. At the time when the beams existed, they could not cross the whole western room of the 'Clergy house', but must have been hindered by the walls of the inner building. Although, alternatively, the floor beams may have had their other end resting in the perished northern wall of the inner structure, they seem to be too massive for the distance of only 1.3 metres. To the secondary character of the discovered structure refer also its somewhat irregular shape and location (Fig. 8). If constructed simultaneously with the outer walls, a fully regular planning might be expected.

A radiocarbon date from birch bark found under the terrace on the west side of the *Nothschmiede*, however, indicates the high age of the structure – it must have been built not later than around 1263 already. Considering the secondary character of the *Nothschmiede* in relation to the northern wall with joist holes, the latter should be earlier and belong to the earliest phase of the stone castle, i.e. to the second quarter of the 13th century already. In this case, the southern wall of the primary building must have been demolished, and the present-day southern wall must be secondary in relation to the northern one.

The function of the brick thickenings on the inner side of the northern and southern walls remains unclear but they may indicate that the room had no cellar in its initial phase there, i.e. that the brick additions were meant to line the uneven wall foundations, originally buried in the ground. When the cellar was dug, the inner side of the wall foundations had to get a definite surface. In this case, most of the western room had no cellar in its early construction stage and there was only a narrow gap for air under the floor beams with their bottom at the depth of 83.90 m a.s.l. In the south-eastern corner of the room the floor level was, however, deeper at the time when the hypocaust was constructed. For heating the hypocaust, it had to be below the level of 83.60 m a.s.l. Judging by the smoothed inner surface and lack of brick additions, a cellar probably originally existed at the west wall of the 'Clergy house' in the initial stage of the building.

In a later construction stage a cellar with the depth of ca. 2–2.2 metres was dug, probably, under the whole western room. The ceiling of the cellar lay at the depth of ca. 84.00 m a.s.l. or higher, the cellar bottom was 81.80/85 m a.s.l. in the western and 82.10/20 m a.s.l. in the northern trench. It seems likely that the brick parts added to the inner sides of the northern and southern walls (preserved highest point, respectively, 83.90 m a.s.l. in the north and 84.38 m a.s.l. in the south) may also have carried the beams of the new, post-reconstruction floor.

CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological investigations in the western room of the 'Clergy house' of Viljandi castle showed once more that plans from the 17th century do not always provide an adequate picture of the situation in the Middle Ages – by that time some walls may have fully perished. The excavations showed different stages in the history of the room: in the first stage there existed cellar(s) only in limited area(s), at least in the south-eastern corner near the hypocaust and at the western wall. Only in the later stage of the building a cellar with a huge mantle chimney of a large hypocaust in it was dug, probably, under the whole room. Excavation results also show that the northern wall of the building belongs to the earliest stage of the stone castle, being a part of its original circular outer wall.

Evidently, the 'Clergy house' burnt and was strongly damaged in the Livonian War and part of the cellar was filled with debris. In the remaining part, blacksmithing activities based on imported raw iron continued in the era of the Polish rule (1582–1625) in south Estonia.

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ARHEOLOOGILISED UURINGUD VILJANDI ORDULINNUSE „VAIMULIKEHOONE" LÄÄNERUUMIS

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Viljandi ordulinnuse varemete eksponeerimise ja konserveerimise programmi raames toimusid 2022. aastal rusueemaldusega kaasnenud arheoloogilised uuringud konvendihoonest põhja pool asuva, 1599. aasta Poola revisjoni põhjal vaimulikehooneks nimetatud hoone lääneruumis (jn 1–2). Eesmärgiks oli eemaldada rusu kuni sügavuseni 84 m üle merepinna ning välja selgitada ruumi idaseina asukoht ja kahe šurfi abil keldripõranda sügavus. Esimesed kaevamised toimusid siin juba 1878. aastal, mil ruum suures

osas rusudest tühjaks kaevati, kuid hiljem nendega taas täideti. 2006. aastal oli rusu vajaliku sügavuseni eemaldatud ruumi lõunapoolses osast seoses selle ruumiosa müüride konserveerimisega.

Rusu eemaldamisel (jn 3) leiti sellest 16. sajandi II või 17. sajandi I poolest pärinev mõõga või kahekäepistoda käekaitse (jn 4), graveeringuga luuplaat (jn 5: 1) ning veidi loomaluid ja savinõukilde. Kaevamistel saadi ka kuus kassi-, koera- ja lamba- või kitsejäljega tellist ning kolm märjale savile joonistatud grafitiga kivi (jn 6).

Ruumi keskelt avastati 1656. aasta linnuseplaanil mitte kajastuva ehitise alusmüürid. Esmalt tuli nähtavale ehitise tellistest, „tornina“ säilinud kagunurk, mille all jätkusid põhja ja lääne suunas lõhutud maakivimüüride pealispinnad. Sügisel järgnenud uurimistöödel puhastati välja ida–lääne sihis 5.05–5.75 m pikkuse ja põhja–lõuna sihis 4.3–4.65 m laiuse ehitise 1,1–1,4 m paksuste müüride kontuurid ja pealispinnad (jn 7–8). Müürid olid maakivist, vaid välisnurkade ja läänes olnud ukseava vormistamisel oli kasutatud telliseid. Ehitise sisemus oli täidetud rusuga, millest valdava osa moodustasid suured raudkivid, idaseinas oli ka põlemisjälgedega kive. Selle kagupoolses, teistest kõrgemalt säilinud sisenurgas paljandus kaks ülestikku kivi, mis pärinevad võlvikannast või osutavad kõrgemal mantelkorstna taoliselt kitsenevale ehitisele.

Läänekülje asuva ukseava ees tuli nähtavale tellistest pealispinna- ja välisseinaga astang, mis ulatus ehitise lääneseinast 75 cm kaugusele (jn 9). Ligi 1,3 m pikkuselt avatud konstruktsiooni ulatus põhja ja lõuna suunas jäi ebaselgeks. Viie tellise kõrguse esiseina alt leitud kasetohutükkidest võetud radiosüsinikuproov andis kalibreeritud tulemuseks 1052–1077 või 1156–1263 pKr. Osaliselt avatud ukseava ja astangu pinda kattis 15–20 cm paksune must ühtlane nõgine leidudeta kultuurkiht, milles oli 3–4 cm paksuseid tuhalaike.

Vaimulikehoone lääneruumi põhjaseinas paljandus rusueemaldusel seitse põrandatala kandepesa (jn 10) ning seinas oleva ava tellistest silluse ülaserv. Ruumi kagunurgast leiti hoone keskmisse ruumi jääva hüpokaustahju suu. Et konstruktsioon ei laguneks, ehitati selle ette originaali jäljendav uutest tellistest kaitsev sein (jn 7). Kagunurgast meetri kaugusel paljandus lõunaseinas allikalubja plokkidega ääristatud, tõusva põhja ja laega ning müüri sees lõuna poole laienev avaus (u 45 × 50 cm). (jn 11). Veidi lääne pool tuli lõunaseinas nähtavale väga lagunenud ja selged piirjooned kaotanud arvatava keldriakna koht. Viimasest läänes algas maakividest müüri külge laotud u 40 cm paksune ja vähemalt 3 meetri pikkune tellistest seinapaksendus (jn 7–8). Ruumi kirde- ja kagunurgas tulid nähtavale võlvikanda meenutava laotise jäänused, kusjuures viimasel juhul (jn 11) olid kivid laotud varem krohvitud ja lubjatud seinapinnale.

Hoone läänemüüri äärde kaevatud šurfi (jn 7, 8, 12) põhjas paljandus võrdlemisi hiljutiste kopatöödega suures osas segatud rusukihi all tume, u 15 cm paksune kultuurkiht, millest leiti veidi kedrakeraamikat, kaks Siegburgi kivikeraamikakildu (1350–1525) ja kogum põlenud loomaluukilde. Kihis olnud loomaluust võetud radiosüsinikuproov andis kalibreeritud tulemuseks 1490–1649 pKr. Ruumi lääneseina ääres oli rusukiht valdavas osas varasemate kopatöödega segatud ja sisaldas nõukogudeaegset prügi. Läänes, linnusevärava juurde viival teel seisnud kopp oli madalamaks lõhkunud ka avastatud ehitise müüre, kuid polnud sealt kaugemale ulatunud. Linnuse viimase põlemisega seonduvat, rusudel lasuvat põlengukihti oli segamata säilinud vaid väike lõik vahetult lääneseina ääres.

Pärast läänešurfi pikendamist kuni avastatud astangu seinani ilmnes, et tume kultuurkiht, mis kattis ka ehitamisel tekkinud mördininasid, moodustab kahe seina vahelise kompaktse ladestuse ja on neist hilisem. Astang ja hoone läänesein (jn 12) olid sama vundeerimissügavusega, toetudes inimtegevusest puutumata pruunile savile. Kultuurkihi ja puutumata savi vahel oli u 15 cm paksune rusu ja tellisetükke sisaldava segatud savi lade.

Teine šurf tehti lääneruumi põhjaseina äärde, rusueemaldusel paljandunud silluse ja avastatud ehitise põhjamüüri vahele (jn 7, 8, 13). Pealmisest rusukihist, mis kujutas endast kopaga eemaldatud pinnase jätku, leiti 14.–15. sajandi ammunooleots (jn 5: 2). Järgnes u 30–40 cm, lõunaseina ääres kuni 70 cm paksune tume, loomaluid, sealhulgas põdraluid sisaldav rusulade, mille seinaäärsest ülaosast leiti 13 Rootsi päritolu toorraua – osmundi – tükki, ääsišlakikook ja sepatööle viitavaid tagiliblesid. Tumedale rusule järgnesid õhem leidudeta rusukiht ja õhuke rohkete loomaluudega kiht, millest võetud radiosüsinikuproov andis tulemuseks 1442–1524 või 1571–1631 pKr, ning veel üks rusukiht. Seejärel paljandus kunagine keldripõrand – seinte ehitamisel või krohvimisel maha pudenenud mördi laigud ja tume, loomaluid sisaldav muld nende vahel. Radiosüsinikuproov andis põrandakihis olnud loomaluu vanuseks 1302–1369 või 1380–1412 pKr. Sügavamal asus ligi 25 cm paksune vähesel määral rusu sisaldav savi, mis ulatus kuni puhta pruuni loodusliku savipinnaseni. Šurfi lääneservas tuli nähtavale kahe suure müüri vahele ehitatud ühe kivi paksune, linnuse hiliseimast, suurtele purustustele järgnenud kasutusjärgust pärit tellis-

sein. Viimane toetus rusukihile ja tõkestas lääne pool oleva rusu varisemist sepikojaga keldriruumi.

Šurfi kaevamisel selgus, et sillusekaar pärineb väljapoole tõusva põhjaga akna- või laskeavast, mille kaar oli jälgitav ka müüri välisküljel. Aknaava põhja kõrgusel muutus hoone läänemüür ligi 30 cm paksemaks (jn 13). Aknapõsed olid tellistest ja ulatusid soklitaolise müürilaiendi servani, toetudes sellele maakividest alusele. Tellistest müüripaksendus jätkus maakividel ka aknapõsest lääne poole. Juurdelao pealispind paiknes ligikaudu rusueemaldustasandil ning kaks tellist ulatusid ka ühte põhjamüüris olevatest talapesadest, viidates laiendi sekundaarsusele algse, talaaukudega müüri suhtes.

Kaevamistulemused näitavad, et vaimulikehoone lääneruumil on mitu ehitusjärku. Algselt pole keldrit olnud kaugeltki kogu hoone ulatuses – tõdeda võib seda vaid kagunurgas hüpokausti ees ja oletada lääneseina ääres. Hiljem on põhjaliku ümberehituse raames lääneruumi alla tehtud nähtavasti täiskelder ning ruumi keskele on rajatud kas massiivsete seintega väga suure hüpokaustahju kütteruum või mantelkorsten. Keldri lage on nüüd varasemaga võrreldes tõstetud. Kuna hoone põhjaseinas olevatel talaaukudel puuduvad lõunaseinas vasted, võib arvata, et põhjasein pärineb hoone varaseimast ehitusjärgust ning et algne lõunasein on lammutatud ja hiljem hoone laiendamisel uuega asendatud. Kui ruumi sisemuses oleva kütmisrajatise läve ees olev terrass on ehitatud selle seintega samaaegselt, peab hoone talaaukudega põhjaseina alaosa olema varasem ja pärinema, arvestades terrassi serva alt leitud kasetohutüki dateeringut, juba 13. sajandi teisest veerandist.

Vaimulikehoone on saanud väga tugevasti kannatada ja põlenud Liivimaa sõja ajal (1558–1583). Nüüd on osa keldrist täitunud rusudega ning ruumidest on kasutusele jäänud vaid osad. Põhjašurfi kaevamistulemuste põhjal on selle asukohas Poola ajal paiknenud sepikoda. Lääneruumi keskel olev ehitis on juba 1656. aastaks olnud täiesti lammutatud ning selleaegsel linnuseplaanil ei kajastu. Suur osa vaimulikehoone lääneruumist kaevati esimest korda lahti juba 1878. aastal ning sealt 2022. aastal eemaldatud pinnas kujutab endast toonast tagasitäidet.