There are some 470 hill-forts in Latvia, 80 of which have seen large- or small-scale excavation (Vasks, 2005, p. 38–42). The majority of these 80 hill-forts are located in eastern Latvia, and only nine have been excavated in the western part of the country. Out of these nine, only Talsi Hill-Fort has been excavated on a large scale, while the rest have been subject only to limited excavation. Accordingly, archaeological research in western Latvia, including hill-fort research, has been given greater attention in recent years. Since 2002 the Department of Archaeology and Ancillary Historical Sciences of the University of Latvia has organised the excavation of several archaeological sites in western Latvia in the frame of student field courses. The excavated sites include three hill-forts: Beltes, Mežīte and Puze (Fig. 1).

Beltes Hill-Fort

The most extensively excavated of these, Beltes (Pađures) Hill-Fort, is located on the left bank of the River Venta. It was established on a promontory separated on the north and south sides by deep ravines, and on the east side by the steep bank of the Venta. On the open western side a ditch had been dug, and a 4-m-high bank thrown up on the plateau. To the west and south there was an adjoining settlement site covering about 3 ha (Fig. 2). In terms of its topographic location and the character of the system of defences, Beltes Hill-Fort belongs to the type of hill-fort most common in western Latvia.

Excavation was undertaken at Beltes Hill-Fort in 2003, 2005, 2006 and 2007 (Asaris & Vasks, 2004, p. 19–23; Vasks, 2006 a, p. 64–75; Vasks, 2008, p. 63–70). During this period an area of 279 m² was excavated on the hill-fort, out of a total area of about 1900 m² (14.7 % of the plateau). On removal of the cultural layer, 0.6–0.7 m thick and up to 1.0–1.3 m in places, a series of features relating to the structures on the hill-fort were uncovered (hearth, stoves, various pits, post-holes, etc.). In the course of the excavation 624 objects were recovered, as well as 8460 pot-sherds. Bones of mammals, birds and fish were collected as well.

Beltes Hill-Fort was inhabited in two phases. The early phase included the Late Bronze and Pre-Roman Iron Age, while the late phase included the second half of the Middle Iron Age and the Late Iron Age. The fort and the settlement that had grown up around it went out of existence in the second half of the 12th or the early 13th century.

Pollen analysis of the deposits indicates two periods of human economic activity. The first begins in the final part of the Atlantic (AT3), 5500–4800 BP. In terms of archaeological periodisation, this corresponds to the Middle Neolithic. During this period there was alder-birch forest growing in the environs of the hill-fort, with a significant amount of wych elm, lime and hazel. At the beginning of the Subboreal (Middle Neolithic) the proportion of spruce increased, and agriculture evidently began in the environs of the hill-fort (oats and hemp pollen in the deposits), resulting in the development of a partially open landscape with meadows and pasture.

The second period of greater activity occurs in the Subatlantic, which begins at 2800 BP, corresponding to the Bronze and Iron Age (SA1, SA2), namely the time when Beltes Hill-Fort developed. At this time the hill-fort was no longer surrounded by forest and, judging from the rapid rise in pollen of ruderals, meadow and pasture plants, and various herbs, compared with the earlier period of activity, there was major agricultural activity in the environs of the hill-fort. Rye is also recorded, in addition to oats and hemp (Vasks, Kalniņa, Daugnora, 2011).

Radiocarbon dates indicate that the fortified habitation developed on the headland at the bank of the River Venta, delimited by ravines, at the end of the 2nd mill. BC, when a wooden palisade was erected (1220–
New Data on Hill-forts of North-Western Latvia

Beltes Hill-Fort is so far the only one in western Latvia where Late Bronze Age occupation is confirmed by radiocarbon dating. This also indicates that the earliest hill-forts developed in western Latvia approximately at the same time as in eastern Latvia and eastern Lithuania (Grigalavičienė, 1995, p. 27). The area of the hill-fort delimited by the palisade (Fig. 3) constituted about half of the area that the hill-fort occupied during the Late Iron Age. However, it seems that already in the early phase of occupation, as the population rapidly increased, the inhabited area of the plateau was extended, moving the palisade further to the south-west. The data on the structures of this phase is scanty: we can only say that they were above-ground post-built structures with internal stone-lined hearths.

Fig. 1. The hill-forts of western Latvia.
I pav. Vakarų Latvijos piliakalniai
An interesting feature was discovered when the cultural layer was removed. Two stones were found at the level of the natural subsoil, one of which, fairly large (60 × 80 cm), had a flat surface, while the one next to it was smaller and elongated, with a sloping polished surface at one end (Fig. 4). The significance of this feature was quite clear: this was a place or ‘workshop’ for grinding stone and bone tools. As the members of the excavation team could ascertain for themselves, the person engaged in this work could sit comfortably on the large, flat stone, holding the object to be worked in both hands and grinding it against the end of the elongated stone, which was firm in the ground. Judging from the presence nearby of three or four post-holes, the ‘workshop’ had been located within a shelter or even a building of some kind.

The oats and hemp identified in the pollen indicates cultivation. Although the presence of two-row barley and emmer wheat is not definitely confirmed, since the identification is simply of cultivated cereals as such (*Cerealia*), nevertheless the idea that these two cereals in particular were cultivated at Beltes Hill-Fort should not be abandoned, considering that both are characteristic of many Late Bronze Age hill-forts of the East Baltic (Rasiņš & Tauriņa, 1983, p. 152, 163). Further palynological research is required.

Almost 78 % of the faunal remains were from domestic stock (Table 1). This figure corresponds ap-
Fig. 3. Beltes Hill-Fort. Excavation Area III, with uncovered belt of posts of palisade (photo A. Vasks).


Fig. 4. Beltes Hill-Fort. A ‘workshop’ for grinding stone and bone tools.

4 pav. Beltes piliakalnis. Akmeninių ir kaulinių įrankių gamybos „dirbtuvė“
proximately to what has been found at other hill-forts
in the East Baltic (Vasks, 1994, Table 7). Judging from
the bone count, horses were consumed the most. These
are followed by pig and cattle and then by sheep/goats.
Such a ranking of domestic stock in terms of their im-
portance for subsistence is somewhat unusual, since
cattle were generally the most common at Late Iron
Age hill-forts, with pigs and sheep/goats ‘sharing’ sec-
ond and third place, and horses coming after that (cf.
Graudonis, 1989, Table 9). However, it has to be con-
sidered that the number of domestic animal bones from
the first occupation phase is small (147 fragments), so
the proportions of the different species could be for-
tuitous. Among wild animals, aurochs was hunted the
most: aurochs bones constituted half of all wild animal
bones (Vasks, Kalniņa, Daugnora, 2011).

Cultural affiliation in the early occupation phase is
indicated by the character of the pottery. Striated pot-
tery predominates, and so the hill-fort can be included
among the sites with this kind of pottery (Table 3). As
at other sites in western Latvia from this time, right
from the beginning of occupation, early rusticated pot-
tery was present at Beltes Hill-Fort. This is the first
hill-fort in western Latvia where textile-impressed pot-
tery has been found (one more site where such pot-
tery later has been found is open settlement of Pried-
nieki; see Vasks, 2006 a, p. 66).

The hill-fort has not produced any evidence of
habitation in the Roman Iron Age or the beginning of
the Middle Iron Age, so it may be presumed that the
hill-fort was not occupied at this time. Habitation re-
commenced in the second half of the Middle Iron Age,
the 6th–7th century, as indicated by some finds of ar-
tefacts characteristic of this period. The most activity
occurred at the hill-fort in the 9th–12th century, and it
is possible that the major defensive bank, the entrance
terrace along the outer slope of the bank, and the ditch
were created at this time. At this time a settlement
with an area of about 3 ha formed next to the hill-fort.
During this late period of occupation the hill-fort pla-
teau was densely built-up, mainly with above-ground
buildings (probably log structures), although there
were sunken buildings as well. In some cases round
pits used for household purposes were dug beneath the
above-ground buildings. These measured about 1 m in
diameter and had a flat bottom. Heating was provided
by stoves – both stoves of piled stones and clay stoves
– and to a lesser extent by stone-lined hearths.

The economy is characterised by the finds of tools:
knives, awls, shears, warp weights, a spindle whorl,
a scythe fragment, crucible fragments, etc. The late
phase of occupation exhibits two characteristic that
differ from those observed in eastern Latvia. In the
first place, pottery has not been used as much, some-
thing that might be explained in terms of the wider use
of wooden and bark vessels. This, in turn, could be the

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Table 1. Bone fragment counts of animal species, early phase of occupation*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Animal</th>
<th>Cattle</th>
<th>Sheep/Goat</th>
<th>Pig</th>
<th>Horse</th>
<th>Wild animals</th>
<th>Aves</th>
<th>Fishes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bos taurus</td>
<td>Ovis aries/capra hircus</td>
<td>Sus sforca</td>
<td>Equus caballus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>20.11%</td>
<td>9.52%</td>
<td>23.81%</td>
<td>24.34%</td>
<td>16.40%</td>
<td>3.17%</td>
<td>2.65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>77.78%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Bone fragment counts of animal species, late phase of occupation*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Animal</th>
<th>Cattle</th>
<th>Sheep/Goat</th>
<th>Pig</th>
<th>Horse</th>
<th>Wild animals</th>
<th>Aves</th>
<th>Fishes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bos taurus</td>
<td>Ovis aries/capra hircus</td>
<td>Sus sforca</td>
<td>Equus caballus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>34.07%</td>
<td>28.60%</td>
<td>16.62%</td>
<td>6.44%</td>
<td>14.66%</td>
<td>3.27%</td>
<td>11.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>70.47%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The bone material was determined by Dr. L. Daugnora

Gyvūnų kaulus identifikavo dr. L. Daugnora

Andrejs Vasks
reason for the second characteristic, namely the late introduction of wheel-made pottery into the everyday life of the people at Beltes Hill-Fort and the settlement site (Table 4).

Agriculture, about which scanty data has been obtained (and it is thought that rye appeared at this particular time), as well as stock-keeping provided the basis of subsistence. Domestic stock constituted 70 % of all the bones from the late phase of occupation (Table 2). Judging from the number of bones, beef was used most for food (evidently along with milk products), followed by sheep/goat and pigs. Compared with the early occupation phase, the consumption of horse meat had fallen considerably. This can be explained in terms of the increased role of these animals in various kinds of labour, and possibly in war as well. Chickens were also kept. A proportion of subsistence was also provided by wild animals: aurochs, elk, red deer and beaver. The last, along with the fox, was also hunted for its fur (Vasks, Kalniņa, Daugnora, 2011).

Table 3. Pottery wares from Areas I and III, Beltes Hill-Fort (early phase of occupation) (number of sherds and %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Smooth</th>
<th>Striated</th>
<th>Rusticated</th>
<th>Early rusticated</th>
<th>Polished burnished</th>
<th>Pinched</th>
<th>Textile-impressed</th>
<th>Wheel-made</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>880</td>
<td>1449</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31,7 %</td>
<td>52,1 %</td>
<td>4,0 %</td>
<td>8,1 %</td>
<td>0,5 %</td>
<td>0,9 %</td>
<td>0,7 %</td>
<td>100 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eight radiocarbon dates fall in time interval between 820 and 1220 cal. AD, and three of them indicate the period between 1100 and 1220, i.e. the 12th and early 13th century (Bērziņš et al., 2009). Taking this into consideration, the time when Beltes Hill-Fort went out of existence as a centre can be dated to the second half of the 12th or the 13th century. However, it should be taken into account that some of the finds have a fairly broad chronological range, the 11th to 13th century, so it is not possible to date the end of the late phase of occupation on the basis of the artefact dates.

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ments found on the hill-fort (Fig. 5). Most of them have analogies among the material of northern Kurzeme, Saaremaa, the Livs of Vidzeme and the Vends, i.e. in the Finnic cultures in general. In view of these similarities, the inhabitants of the hill-fort during the Late, and possibly also the Middle Iron Age can be identified as belonging to one of the Finnic groups, possibly to the Vends mentioned in the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia. As indicated by the research undertaken to date, the Couronian expansion, pushing into northern Kurzeme, began in the 11th century and continued in the 12th. This can be seen very clearly from the spread of characteristic Couronian flat cremation cemeteries in northern Kurzeme, in the area where in the 11th–12th century inhumation had generally been practiced. Quite possibly, Beltes Hill-Fort and settlement site, the material culture of which does not show the influence of Couronian culture, was destroyed in the second half of the 12th century by the incoming Couronians. Then a new centre developed at Veckuldīga on the bank of the Venta, 6 km upstream from Beltes Hill-Fort.

**MEŽĪTE HILL-FORT**

Mežīte is a complex of archaeological sites centring on a hill-fort, which is surrounded by a settlement with an area of about 4 ha. The complex of sites also includes three cemeteries and a cult site – Elkakalns. The hill-fort is located on an isolated hill of glacial till: the slopes were steepened and a 2.5-m-high bank thrown up along the southern margin of the plateau. Although only 24 m² of the total area of 2500 m² of the hill-fort plateau have been excavated in the course of trial excavation in 2008 and 2009, the material recovered was very interesting. In the cultural layer, up to 2 m thick, the location of an above-ground structure was found, with the remains of an oven of piled stones. Beneath part of this building there was a cellar pit measuring 2 × 3 m, with a depth of 80 cm. The sides of the pit were quite steep and were lined with stones. The stratigraphy of the layers in the cellar, viewed in cross-section, indicates that the wooden covering of the cellar, covered with grey clay, had been renewed at least once (Fig. 6). Even though only a small area was

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*MEŽĪTE HILL-FORT*

Fig. 6. Mežīte Hill-Fort. A cellar pit beneath the above-ground structure (photo A. Vasks).

6 pav. Mežīte piliakalns. Duobė po antžemine struktūra (nuotrauka: A. Vasks)

New Data on Hill-forts of North-Western Latvia

excavated, a rich and diverse artefact assemblage was recovered, consisting of bronze ornaments, weapons and tools (Fig. 7). There are a string of finds indicative of trading activities. In the first place, there were seven coins. These include four Anglo-Saxon coins (Aethelred and Cnut) from the first half of the 11th century, as well as 13th century coins. The finds of the mechanism of collapsible scales (Fig. 7:12), as well as weights and a hacked-off piece of a forged silver bar indicate that trading was active. It should be noted that the people living in the settlement also engaged in trading activities: four weights and a coin of Cnut, from the first half of the 11th century, were found in Area I (Guščika & Vasks, 2010, p. 40–43)

Although the faunal remains from the hill-fort have not been precisely determined yet, it is unusual that in some samples fish bones constituted 60–80 % of the total number of bones. Such a predominance of fish is not observed in the material from the settlement site. Nowadays there are no natural open water-bodies in Mežīte, but there are a number of bogs in the immediate vicinity of the hill-fort. Evidently, a thousand years ago there were lakes rich in fish.

The presence of the cult site of Elkukalns, the three cemeteries and the extensive settlement site surrounding the hill-fort on all sides, with a cultural layer up to 1.5 m thick, all indicate that in the 11th–13th century Mežīte was an important centre for this area, with well-developed trade. What caused the abandonment of this centre is evident from the finds of five crossbow bolt heads (more of which were found in the settlement site; Fig. 7:1, 2). Evidently the hill-fort and settlement were destroyed in a crusader attack in the 13th century. It is possible that this is the location of the central site of castellatura Lodgie, mentioned in a document from 1234, and the population centre Ladze, recorded in a document of 1253.

**PUZE HILL-FORT**

Puze Hill-Fort differs from the two above-described hill-forts in terms of its small dimensions: its plateau measures only 600 m², of which 34 m² have been excavated in 2002. Another difference is the absence of a settlement site next to Puze Hill-Fort. On the plateau the cultural layer was 0.3 m thick. The locations of two buildings, extending down into the subsoil by up to 30 cm, were discovered (Fig. 8). One of these was located by the slope of the hill and is regarded as belonging to structures built along the perimeter of the plateau, or to the outer wall of the defences. In the central part of this log structure, measuring 3.5 x 4 m, was a stone-lined hearth. On the site of the building and also outside it a large quantity of burned grain was recovered (soft wheat and rye, with a smaller quantity of barley; also field beans, peas, a small quantity of oats, as well as weeds among the charred plant remains). The location of the other building on the plateau was marked
by a pit in the natural subsoil, with a width of 1.6 m and a length of 2 m within the excavated area. It is possible that this was a cellar, similar to those discovered on Mežīte Hill-Fort, and that the building itself was larger. The iron objects recovered include a cylindrical key, an awl with a twisted mid-part, rivets and knives. Bronze artefacts include fragments of ribbon-like bracelets and fragments of fittings, as well as a finger-ring with a twisted head. The dating of the finds indicates that the hillfort was inhabited in the 12th–13th century. The majority of artefacts were strongly burned, and some had been transformed into amorphous lumps of molten bronze. This suggests that the fortification was destroyed in a major fire. A cache of bronze ornaments, constituting a set of women’s jewellery, was also found in this structure (Fig. 9). It consisted of a neck-ring, chains with pendants, penannular brooches and an annular brooch, as well as finger-rings (Vijups, 2003). Strangely enough, Couronian ribbon-like bracelets, a very common form of jewellery at this time, were not present among the ornaments. It is possible that such bracelets were worn on an everyday basis, 6–12 on each arm, and consequently there were not removed and placed in the ‘jewellery chest’ that we found in Puze. This jewellery can be interpreted as a stock of additional ornaments, kept in the storehouse and used to augment the set of jewellery on festive occasions. A sample of charred grain from the burned layer indicated the time of destruction of the defences: between 1220 and 1275 cal. AD, i.e. around the middle of the 13th century (Bērziņš et al., 2009). This hillfort, too, was most probably destroyed in the course of the crusades.

CONCLUSIONS

This research on hill-forts, even though it has so far been undertaken on a small-scale, has generated several new ideas concerning the prehistory of western Latvia, which has still not been extensively researched.

1. As indicated by the radiocarbon dates for Beltes Hill-Fort, fortified settlement sites or hill-forts developed in western Latvia at the beginning of the Late Bronze Age, i.e. at the close of the 2nd millennium BC, approximately at the same time as they appeared in eastern Latvia and Lithuania. The finds from Beltes Hill-Fort and the open settlement of Priednieki indicate that north-western Latvia can also be included in the area of distribution of textile-impressed pottery.

2. In the Late Iron Age Beltes Hill-Fort, and especially Mežīte Hill-Fort can be described as major centres, with large settlement sites, or early towns, next to them. If we compare the evidence of trade from Beltes Hill-Fort, located by an important waterway – the
River Venta, with that obtained from the hill-forts of Talsi and Mežīte, where there is no such waterway, then we must admit that more evidence of this kind has been obtained from the other two hill-forts. At Talsi Hill-Fort, 13 Western European, Arabic and Byzantine coins have been recovered, as well as a fragment of scales, weights, silver bars and cowrie shells (Berga, 1988, p. 84). At Mežīte Hill-Fort a small excavation area (24 m²) produced seven 11th and 13th century coins, the mechanism of a set of collapsible scales and a fragment of a wrought silver bar (in addition to which an 11th century coin and weights were found in the settlement site). This is somewhat surprising, since there are objectively greater opportunities for trading activity at centres located next to waterways. It is possible that trade had less importance at the centre represented by Beltes Hill-Fort and the settlement site, compared with Mežīte, while other functions, such as administrative power functions, were more important.

3. The small Puze Hill-Fort, established in the 12th century, and burned down in the middle or second half of the 13th century, can be regarded as the residence of a local leader and his household. No settlement or village ever developed next to Puze Hill-Fort, so the village of Puze mentioned in 13th century written sources may be thought to have been located about 1 km from here, at the later site of Puze Manor.

4. Judging from the ornaments found at Beltes and Mežīte Hill-Forts, and the material recovered from the burial sites at Mežīte, the Late Iron Age inhabitants of this site can be identified as belonging to a separate Finnic group – possibly the Vends, mentioned in the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia.

5. The research to date indicates that the Couronian expansion, in the course of which they pushed into northern Kurzeme, began in the 11th century and continued in the 12th. This is clearly seen from the spread of characteristic Couronian flat cremation cemeteries in northern Kurzeme, in an area where inhumation had predominated in the 11th and 12th century. It is quite possible that Beltes Hill-Fort and settlement site, the material culture of which does not reflect Couronian influence, was destroyed in the 12th century by the advancing Couronians. At this time a new centre was established at Veckuldīga, on the left bank of the River Venta, 6 km upstream from Beltes Hill-Fort.

6. Another previously disregarded phenomenon is observable in the material culture of the late phase of occupation, namely that less use was made of pottery vessels than in eastern Latvia. This is very apparent if we compare the quantity of potsherds found on various hillforts with the number of other artefacts recovered. At Puze Hill-Fort the number of potsherds was seven times greater (Vasks, 2004, p. 41), at Beltes Hill-Fort five times greater and at Mežīte Hill-Fort only twice as great as the number of other artefacts (Guščika & Vasks, 2010). Talsi Hill-Fort presents a very unusual case: the number of potsherds is only a quarter of that of other artefacts. The situation is completely different in the eastern part of Latvia. Thus, at Ķente Hill-Fort and settlement site the number of sherds was 12 times greater, at Asote and Lielkalni Hill-Forts 17 times greater (Šnore, 1961, p. 109, prilozenije II; Tora, 1996, p. 113), and at Dignāja Hill-Fort as much as 44 times greater than the number of other artefacts (Vasks, 2006 b, p. 111, 114). More examples could be found, but it is clear that the number of potsherds found at Iron Age residential sites in eastern Latvia is many times greater in relation to the number of other artefacts than it is in western Latvia. In other words, pottery vessels were used in greater quantities in eastern than in western Latvia. There are several possible explanations for such differences in material culture. One of these is that in the western part of Latvia vessels made of organic materials (wood, bark and leather) were much more widely used. The charred remains of turned wooden vessels and bark containers from Talsi Hill-Fort provide some indication of this (Karnups, 1938, 88). Of course, this does not mean that vessels of similar materials were not used in the eastern part of Latvia: it is simply a matter of the proportion of such vessels within the overall corpus of household vessels.

7. Significantly, in the Late Iron Age and at the beginning of the Middle Ages wheel-made pottery constitutes only 4–10 % of pottery on the hill-forts inhabited at this time in western Latvia, and is completely absent at Puze Hill-Fort. Only at Talsi Hill-Fort, inhabited right up to the 15th century, does the proportion of wheel-made pottery reach 33 %. In eastern Latvia wheel-made pottery appeared in the second half of the 10th and the 11th century. Thus, at Oliņkalns, wheel-made pottery constituted 51–60 % in the 11th century (Mugurēvičs,
At Asote Hill-Fort it made up 78% (Šnore 1961, p. 115) and at Jersika Hill-Fort as much as 90% (Vilcâne, 2004, p. 54). At the Liv cemetery of Laukškola wheel-made vessels began to appear in graves in the second half of the 11th century, and in the second half of the 12th and 13th century they constitute all the pottery (Zariņa, 2006, p. 312). Although the Late Iron Age and Early Medieval pottery from residential sites in western Latvia is so far quite scanty, it does seem that wheel-made pottery appeared later here, and hand-formed vessels remained in use longer. Perhaps the fact that in western Latvia wooden vessels were used to a greater degree in relation to pottery vessels can explain the slower introduction of the potter’s wheel.

Translated by Valdis Bērziņš

ABBREVIATIONS


LITERATURE


Nuo 2002-ųjų metų Latvijos universiteto Istorijos ir filosofijos fakulteto Archeologijos ir istorijos mokslų katedra organizavo kasinėjimus keliose Vakarų Latvijos vietove. Jų metu archeologiją studijuojuantys studentai atlikdavo praktiką. Vyko trijų: Beltes, Mežīte ir Puze, piliakalnių archeologiniais kasinėjimais (1 pav.).


Keramika sudarė didžiąją dalį radinių, datuojamų ankstyvosios gyvenvietės. Buvo rasta keletas tokių keramikos, kurios buvo rastos abiejose piliakalnio pusėse. Šios keramikos rastos, kurios buvo rastos šios gyvenvietės, pasakojimai apie 2 %.

Sprendžiant pagal keramikos rastos, kuriuos kuriuose židiniuose, tipus, pirmasis piliakalnio apgyvendinimo etapas buvo kultūrinėje gyvenvietėje. Pirmasis piliakalnio apgyvendinimo etapas datuotas 1220–930 m. prieš Kristų, tai yra žalvario amžiaus vidurio. Ankstyvajious apgyvendinimo metu buvusius pastatus žymi židiniais iš kruotų akmenų ir stulpaviečių, išsiskiriančios sviesios spalvos žemėje. Vis dėlto nepavyko nustatyti tikslsno pastato išsistatymo.

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4. Sprendžiant pagal Beltes ir Mežite piliakalniuose rastus papuošalus ir pagal Mežite kapinių radinius, gali būti daroma prielaida, kad šios vietose įsikūrusios vėlyvojo geležies amžiaus gerbėjos įtvirtino žemės ūkio sujungimą su miškų žiemojimu. Šios galėjo būti atsakingos už šios kultūros įtaką, kai kurios medinių kapinynų, kurie buvo išlikę ankstyvame amžiuje, buvo apibrėžti kaip „mežiniškos kapinynos“. Šioje regiono dalyje jau XIII amžiuje pastebėjo daugėjimą miestų ir miestelių, kurie turėjo didelį poveikį regioniniam prekės žmonių gyvenimui.