

**Heiki Valk**

## **NEIGHBOURING BUT DISTANT: RURAL BURIAL TRADITIONS OF ESTONIA AND FINLAND DURING THE CHRISTIAN PERIOD**

### *Abstract*

Although considerable similarities can be observed in the burial traditions of Estonia and Finland at the end of prehistoric times, marked differences both in the kinds of cemeteries as well as in the burial customs emerge from the beginning of the Christian period. These dissimilarities can be observed in the rural areas throughout the whole Christian period, pointing to a noticeable contrast between these neighbouring and ethnically closely related countries.

*Heiki Valk*, Department of Archaeology, Tartu University, Ülikooli 18, EE2400, Tartu, Estonia.

In the whole of Fennoscandia, the end of the Iron Age and the beginning of the medieval period are connected with the transition to Christianity. In both Estonia and Finland, which are similarly located on the boundary of East and West, the beginning of the Middle Ages, however, differed from developments in Scandinavia – along with Christianization it was also marked by the establishment of foreign rule.

Although certain traces of Orthodox missionary activity can already be observed in Estonia in the 11th–12th centuries (Loorits 1962; Selirand 1974, 186–187; 1979), the formal Christianization of the country took place gradually in the course of the German-Danish conquest between 1208 and 1227 (HCL; Vahre 1990). Only the extreme south-eastern region, inhabited by the Setu ethnic group, and evidently a part of the Orthodox cultural area since Christianization, remained under Russian rule until 1920. In the course of the conquest, most of Estonia was divided between the Livonian Order, Denmark, and the bishoprics of Tartu and Ösel-Wiek. The confederation of small medieval feudal states, called Old Livonia (Denmark sold its territories to the Order in 1346), collapsed in the Livonian War in 1561. After ensuing conflicts between Russia, Sweden and Poland, Estonia became part of the Swedish realm (northern Estonia in 1583, southern Estonia *de facto* 1625, *de jure* 1629). In the Northern War (events in Estonia in 1700–1710), the country was conquered by Russian troops. From

the beginning of the medieval period until the 19th century, foreign landlords held power in Estonia. Also the clergy consisted of foreigners, and a marked distinction existed between the Estonians, belonging to the lower classes of society, and the German-speaking nobility.

The Christianization of Finland took a longer time. Written sources mention three crusades launched from Sweden: in 1155 to Finland Proper, in 1238/39 or 1249 to Häme, and in 1293 to Karelia. As a result of the crusades, Finland came under Swedish rule. Karelia and the eastern parts of Finland, however, had belonged to the sphere of interest of Novgorod and the Orthodox Church since the 11th–12th centuries. It was only after the third crusade that the supremacy of the Catholic Church was established in eastern Finland. After the following period of wars, the eastern border of Finland was determined for the whole of the Middle Ages in the Treaty of Pähkinäsaari in 1323. This treaty made most of the territory of modern Finland part of Catholic (in post-Reformation times, Lutheran) Sweden. The eastern part of Karelia (to the north and east of Lake Ladoga) remained under the power of Novgorod and in the sphere of the Orthodox religion. In spite of wars with Russia in the second half of the 16th and the beginning of the 17th century and in the period known as the Great Wrath (1710–21), Finland belonged to Sweden until 1809 when the country was annexed into the Russian Empire.

The borderlines of East and West were thus already established in the areas of modern-day Finland and Estonia in the period of Christianization. The political borders also began to function as religious ones: in both cases, west of them no traces of Orthodox mission are known from the medieval period and the areas west of the border of 1323 seem to have been quickly integrated into the Catholic Church.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, affiliation with different religions or confessions was a major factor in dissociating peoples in the medieval context (Suvanto 1985, 222).

The political and ecclesiastical division, causing isolation between the ethnically closely related eastern and western areas, also had a great influence on cultural development within the borders of modern Estonia and Finland. With regard to the ethnological folk culture of Estonia and Finland, the easternmost Orthodox areas greatly differ from the Lutheran majorities of both countries. The existence of two different confessions also had a significant influence on the nature of burial customs. In the genuine Orthodox regions of Setumaa and Karelia the peripheral geographical situation and the relative tolerance of the Orthodox Church permitted various archaic Balto-Finnic burial traditions to persist much longer than in the main areas of Estonia and Finland, which were included in the Western cultural sphere.

However, not only in Orthodox Karelia but also in the eastern parts of Lutheran Finland, remote from cultural centres and mostly unsettled in the medieval period (Savo, Central Finland, Kainuu, Lutheran Karelia), ethnological burial customs differed from those in the western regions of Finland (Pentikäinen 1990, 11, 77–81). The folk culture of this area with its sparse settlement and different economy greatly differs from that of the western parts of the country (Talve 1990, 395–412). The dissimilarity between eastern and western Finland already derives from the Iron Age (Huurre 1990, 158–164, 169–171). Thus, in burial customs, the eastern part of Lutheran Finland, with its mostly relatively late settlement, seems to form a somewhat intermediate territory between the western Finnish and the Orthodox Karelian cultural areas.

## 1. THE CEMETERIES

### 1.1. Finland

In the archaeological material of western Finland, considerable changes can be observed around the transition to the Christian period. As the main sign

of the beginning of a new epoch, the desertion of the Crusade Period village cemeteries must be noted. The latter were abandoned circa A.D 1200 (Sarvas 1971) and replaced by consecrated Christian cemeteries. From the time of Christianization the burial traditions of western Finland followed those of medieval Catholic Europe (Rimpiläinen 1971, 15–75). According to these, cemeteries were always situated in churchyards, or at least in connection with chapels. The unity of the cemetery and the church building, though already deeply rooted in earlier practices, was clearly expressed as obligatory in canonical law in the middle of the 13th century (Nilsson 1989, 47, 73). As in the rest of Europe, the deceased were also buried inside the churches in medieval and post-medieval times. Using the interiors of churches for burial became more common in the 16th century and was extremely popular in the 17th and 18th centuries (Rinne 1922, 842–847; Varjola 1980, 119). The churchyards of parish churches were thus the main burial grounds during the whole Christian period.

Only a few burial grounds not situated in churchyards are known from the rural areas in the sphere of western culture. Sometimes such places were surrounded by a stone fence (Rinne 1909a, 1909b), serving as the border of the consecrated area. Only limited data on non-churchyard burial grounds of the Christian period can be found in archaeological surveys in the archives of the Department of Archaeology of the National Board of Antiquities of Finland. In addition to data on non-churchyard bone finds there are sometimes also more detailed items of oral tradition concerning deserted cemeteries, old chapel burial grounds, graves connected with soldiers or certain historical events (i.e. the War of the Clubs in 1596–97 and the Great Wrath in 1710–1721) or graves of individuals. However, a special list of such sites has not yet been compiled. Data on historical stray artefacts or coin finds from deserted rural burial grounds is almost completely lacking in Finland. Thus, as mentioned above, the tradition of using local village cemeteries seems, as a rule, to have disappeared at the transition to the Christian period in the area of the Western church.

Only the peripheral eastern territories of Lutheran Finland can be regarded as exceptions. In these areas the local village cemeteries, similar to those of Orthodox Karelia, remained in use until late times (Pentikäinen 1990, 11; Koivunen 1991, 45; Huurre & Turpeinen 1992, 174). These include, for example, the cemeteries of Kirkkosaari, Puolanka (Northern Pohjanmaa, Kainuu)<sup>2</sup>, Ämmänsaari and Kirkkosaari in Suomussalmi (Huurre & Turpeinen 1992, 173, 174). The genesis of this type

of cemetery remains unclear. In most probability, it cannot be connected with the prehistoric traditions originating from Western Finland but with a Lapp background, or with the eastern sphere of culture and the Orthodox traditions. The latter may derive from both the medieval and the post-medieval period and could have been introduced by new settlers from Ladoga Karelia where the tradition of village cemeteries was deeply rooted. Furthermore, after the 1640s, following the Reform of the Orthodox Church, thousands of old-believer refugees left Russia for the areas under Swedish rule. The *kirkko* (i.e. church) place-names refer to the links of such cemeteries with the Christian tradition. However, the genesis of the local cemeteries in the peripheral areas of Finland has also been explained as resulting from a decline of Christian customs and the wish to avoid burial fees (Lempiäinen & Nickels 1990, 11).

In the sparsely populated northern and eastern areas of Lutheran Finland, where the parish churches were situated far apart, a specific type of burial ground, the temporarily used, so-called summer cemeteries (Fi. *kesäkalmistot*) must also be mentioned (Pentikäinen 1961, 1990, 35–45; Oja 1969; Koivunen 1991). Such cemeteries were unconsecrated sites (Lempiäinen & Nickels 1990, 11). They were used for temporary burials in poor traffic and weather conditions, especially in hot summer weather. In winter the deceased were exhumed and removed to consecrated cemeteries. Although the number of temporary burial grounds is unknown, there were probably several hundred of them.<sup>3</sup> The summer cemeteries are frequently located on islands in lakes and often have names such as *Ruumissaari* or *Kalmosaari* (Corpse island). Graves at such sites can often be identified as low oblong pits laid E-W. In addition to emptied grave-pits the summer cemeteries sometimes contain graves with the remains of corpses that were not reburied. Temporary cemeteries were used in Finland until the beginning of the twentieth century. In some cases they went out of use only with the construction of modern roads after World War II (Lempiäinen & Nickels 1990, 11; Pentikäinen 1990, 37).

The pre-Christian Lapps practised occasional single burials not connected with cemeteries (Pentikäinen 1990, 35; Kopisto 1971). In such burials, the grave was later deserted and forgotten. Consecrated cemeteries were founded in Keminmaa and the Kuusamo district probably only as late as the 1680s (Pentikäinen 1990, 35; Arponen 1993, 10) but alongside them unconsecrated cemeteries were used even as late as the middle of the 19th century. The old Lapp cemeteries were often situ-

ated near lake shores on hillsides or on islands in lakes (Pentikäinen 1961, 99; Arponen 1993, 10). In the Lapp cemeteries of the Orthodox regions burial customs preserved a mostly pre-Christian atmosphere until the present century: the deceased were provided with numerous grave goods and small log-built houses of the dead were erected on the graves (Storå 1971, 136, 176–183). In many cases the summer cemeteries may probably originate from earlier, unconsecrated Lapp burial grounds which became temporary ones as a result of the activities of the Lutheran Church (Pentikäinen 1990, 35).

Few archaeological excavations have been carried out at rural cemeteries of the Christian period in Finland. In this context we must first of all mention excavations in connection with restoration works in the existing medieval churches of Renko, Lempäälä and Espoo (Hiekkänen 1985; 1986; 1987; 1989, 68–76; 1993). Major earlier works include those carried out at the church ruins of Koroinen (Rinne 1941, 53–58; Koivunen 1979, 47–48). In the Åland Islands, medieval burials have been studied at the churches of Finström, Saltvik, Jomala, Kökar and Föglö (Dreijer 1979, 63–64, 306–310, 319; Gustavsson 1988; Nunez 1990).

Excavations have also taken place in northern Finland at the deserted church sites of Keminmaa (Koivunen 1982) and Hailuoto (Paavola 1988a, 1988b). In the churchyard of Untamala in Laitila two early Christian burials connected with an erected gravestone have been studied (Kivikoski 1956). Reconstruction works of several churches in Finland have also revealed stray artefact finds which are not directly connected with burials (Tapio 1966; Hiekkänen 1986). In the present context, the late stages could be represented by opened graves of the first half of the 19th century in Tamela churchyard, south-western Häme (Vilkuna 1930).

Corresponding to the small number of known sites, only a few archaeological investigations have been carried out at rural burial grounds not adjacent to existing churches. Here, firstly, excavations at the cemetery of Kirk'ailanmäki in Hollola parish must be mentioned.<sup>4</sup> There, the Crusade Period inhumation cemetery was in continuous use also in medieval times (Hirviluoto 1985). In Savo in Eastern Finland the cemeteries of Kappelinmäki in Kauskila and Kappelinpelto in Remonjärvi (in the parishes of Lappee and Juva) have been studied to a small extent (Salo 1957; Huurre 1992). More extensive investigations have taken place in the deserted medieval cemetery of Liikistö in Ulvila parish where more than 200 burials were opened (Kronqvist 1938; plan published in Hiekkänen

1994, 240, fig. 213); small trial excavations have been conducted at the chapel cemeteries of Hiittinen (Nordman 1940) and on the island of Räfsö near Porkkala (Rinne 1909b). In the present context also the excavations at the Late Crusade Period – early medieval cemetery of Ristinpelto in Lieto (Cleve 1952) must be mentioned.

Archaeological data on the summer cemeteries is still very scarce. Only trial excavations at the cemeteries of Säynätjärven Hautasaari in Etu-Ikola, Leivonmäki, Central Finland (Vilkuna 1981, 48, 86) and at Kalmasaari in Joroinen, Savo can be mentioned.<sup>5</sup> Within the area of Lapp settlement, the Todd'suel cemetery of the Orthodox Skolt Lapps, dating from the 16–20th centuries, has been excavated (Storå 1971). The known Lapp graves include a late-16th-century single burial of a shaman in Kuusamo (Kopisto 1971).

In the Orthodox area, the burial traditions of the Christian period differed greatly from those of western Finland. A cultural peculiarity of this area is the existence of numerous village cemeteries, covered with brakes often connected with small Orthodox chapels (Salenius 1908, 53). Within the modern borders of Finland, the existence of such cemeteries is strongly reflected in the archaeological surveys of North Karelia: the area east of the 1323 Pähkinäsaari border which was inhabited from Ladoga Karelia in the 15th and 16th centuries (Suvanto 1980). In Ladoga Karelia, not within the modern borders of Finland, village burial grounds were used until the twentieth century. A characteristic feature of the Karelian ethnographical village cemeteries, is a small log house with a door and a window (*kropni'ca*) which was built on the grave (Harva 1948, 490). In some cases, this custom has been preserved until the present time (Ortodoksinen, 1980, 319). The burial traditions of Orthodox Karelia have preserved various archaic features deriving from the pre-Christian period (Hirsjärvi 1937; Kempainen 1972, 265–272; Pentikäinen 1990, 77–81). In the Orthodox area, no archaeological excavations have taken place within the contemporary borders of Finland at the burial grounds of the Christian period.

## 1.2. Estonia

In the Christian period the burial traditions of Estonia differed greatly from those followed in Finland. Although the country was formally converted in 1215–1227 and parish churches and churchyards were already established during the period of conquest (HCL XXVI:8), only minor changes took place in burial traditions. Thus, along with the

churchyards also the local village burial grounds remained in use until the late 17th and early 18th century in spite of a contradiction with the Christian traditions (Valk 1990, 1992b). The Estonian non-churchyard rural burial grounds are highly varied and their status seems to have been rather vague in the Catholic period. They appear to range from the cemeteries of assistant churches and official chapels to “wild” sites which were not connected in any way with the Church, and even a Christian connection may possibly be outruled. Most of the local burial grounds were probably somewhere between these two poles, belonging to both the Catholic and the traditional pre-Christian cultural contexts.

The number of the village cemeteries is very large in Estonia, evidently exceeding 2,000. Their existence is repeatedly reflected in the written sources of the 17th century (Hausmann 1903 140–149; Westrén-Doll 1926, 21–24). While especially numerous in the southern districts of the country, the local burial grounds were also common in northern Estonia, situated near Finland. In regard to these areas, the Synod of Tallinn complained in 1627 that many people bury the deceased “not in churchyards but in an occasional way” (Hausmann 1903, 147). In the parish of Keila, west of Tallinn, the intensive use of the village burial grounds in the 1620s is evinced by the ratio of baptisms and burials marked in the church records. Thus, in 1620–21, the numbers of baptized and buried persons are 127 and 22; in 1621–22, correspondingly, 108 and 28, in 1622–23 127 and 47, and in 1624–25 117 and 16 (Hausmann 1903, 144). The situation was similar also in Virumaa: in Jõhvi parish the number of village cemeteries was as large as that of the villages in 1698; there were also complaints about numerous village cemeteries in the same year from Viru-Jaagupi parish (Hausmann 1903, 147).

Eighty-five cemeteries of the Christian period have been archaeologically investigated in Estonia to varying extent. However, only some of the excavation results has been published.<sup>6</sup> With respect to the rural churches and churchyards, only field work carried out in Kambja can be mentioned as major investigations<sup>7</sup>. Smaller excavations have been conducted at the churchyards of Valjala (Selirand 1975), Viru-Nigula (Tamlä 1991, 1993) and Käina (Selirand 1991). The majority of the medieval and post-medieval cemetery investigations, mostly of a rescue nature, have been connected with the village cemeteries. In northern Estonia the most extensive field work has been carried out at the cemeteries of Kaberla and Varbola (both in Harjumaa), as well as at Tamme (Virumaa). In north-eastern Estonia, large excavations



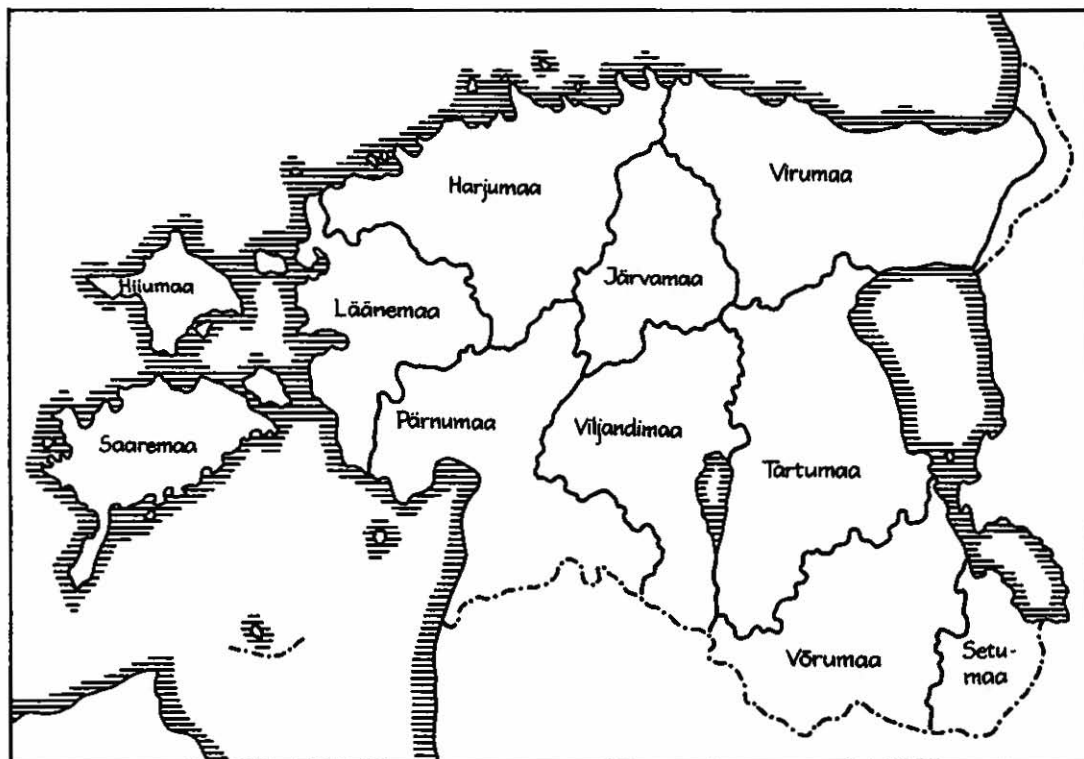


Fig. 1. The historical districts of Estonia.

have taken place at the Votic cemetery of Jõuga (Ligi 1993). There have been especially numerous excavations in the village cemeteries of south-eastern Estonia. Here, the sites with the largest numbers of investigated burials are the cemeteries of Otepää I and II, Vana-Kuuste, Mäletjärve and Ervu (Tartumaa district), as well as Koikküla, Kõrgepalu and Vaabina (Võrumaa). Of special importance is the cemetery of Siksali (south-eastern Võrumaa), investigated by Silvia Laul in 1980–1993<sup>8</sup>. At that burial ground clearly pre-Christian rites were in evidence until the 15th century. In eastern Estonia (Tartumaa district) the cemeteries of Kusua, Välg, Mäksa and Makita, belonging to the Votic immigrants (Ligi, Valk 1993), and in Northern Viljandimaa the cemeteries of Tääksi and Kärevere must also be mentioned. In western Estonia, numerous but mostly relatively late burials of the Christian period were discovered in the Iron Age cemeteries of Mõisaküla Margu (Pärnumaa) and Kõmsi (Läänemaa). In Saaremaa the cemetery of Karja from the beginning of the Christian period has been investigated.

### 1.3. Different attitudes

With respect to the local burial grounds, the problem of cemeteries in newly settled areas should first be discussed. Both Finland and Estonia had regions which were not permanently settled until the medieval/post-medieval period. In medieval Finland colonization gradually spread from the main areas of prehistoric settlement in Southwestern Finland and Häme to the extensive wilderness tracts to the north and east; the region of Savo was mostly colonized only as late as the 16th century (Kaukiainen 1980, 30–43; Suvanto 1985, Fig. p. 220). Also the northern coast of the Gulf of Finland was unpeopled in late prehistoric times (Huurre 1990, Fig. XX), and it was only in the medieval period that it was populated by Swedish settlers and came to have a chain of churches (Hiekkänen 1994, 14). The process of settlement distribution can also be observed in medieval Estonia. Here, internal colonization was directed into peripheral unsettled areas between the centres of prehistoric settlement (Tarvel 1992, 136–139).

In both countries, the spread of settlement to new areas during the medieval and post-medieval periods resulted in a need for new burial grounds. In this context, however, a principally different attitude towards non-churchyard burials can be observed. In Finland, the growth of settlement seems to have been followed by the establishment of new churches and chapels, accompanied by Christian cemeteries. This process is particularly evident along the mostly Swedish-populated southern coast of the country. However, to the north and east of the prehistoric settlement areas the distances between churches and chapels, mostly wooden ones, remained great (Hiekkanen 1994, 14, 255). Correspondingly, the network of new Christian cemeteries could not satisfy the needs for burial grounds. Here, as mentioned above, temporary summer cemeteries were established in case of considerable distances, bad roads or unfavourable weather conditions when the transport of the corpses to churchyards was impossible or greatly complicated.

The time when the summer cemeteries emerged remains mostly unclear. Although their foundation can be connected to the new Church Act of 1686 which strictly forbade burials at unconsecrated sites, the tradition may also have roots in the medieval period. There is, however, insufficient archaeological data for determining the emergence of the summer cemeteries. Of the few available radiocarbon dates, those from Leivonmäki must be mentioned. There, a grave with two skeletons was determined as being most probably from the second half of the 17th century (Vilkuna 1981, 86, note 127)<sup>9</sup>. The dating of bones from Joroinen Kalmasaari gave the result "modern"<sup>10</sup>. Two coins from 1637 and 1749 have been found at Kirkkosaari in Puolanka<sup>11</sup>.

In Estonia, the growth of population and internal colonization in the medieval and post-medieval period resulted in another solution. Although also here new churches and assistant churches/chapels with consecrated cemeteries were established, the inhabitants of new villages often kept to the former local burial grounds. In addition to the latter, also a large number of new village cemeteries appear to have been founded in the Christian period. Many of the archaeologically investigated village cemeteries bear no evidence of dating from prehistoric or early Christian times. Instead, artefacts and coin finds indicate origins in the later medieval or even post-medieval period. The example of the large parish of Saarde in the Pärnumaa district of south-western Estonia, with its more than 50 village cemeteries and almost no traces of Iron Age settlement, provides good evidence of such development. Finds from the Kärevere cemetery in northern

Viljandimaa (Sokolovski 1986) show that new village burial grounds were established even as late as the early 17th century.

The tradition of temporary burial grounds is totally unknown in Estonia. Instead, in situations of long distances or poor transport conditions, the local village cemeteries were used. In the church visitation materials of the 17th century bad roads, long distances and the lack of horses are mentioned as often mentioned as reasons for the use of these cemeteries (Hausmann 1903, 144–146; Westrén-Doll 1926, 22). In Kolga-Jaani parish (north-eastern Viljandimaa) where settlement is mostly located on higher islands within a low boggy area, local burials were allowed by the pastor in the early spring when roads could not be used. This occurred as late as the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries (Reiman 1914, 135). Exceptional data on special means for transporting the corpses to church cemeteries occurs only in the relatively lately settled western parts of the Kõpu and Suure-Jaani parishes (north-western Viljandimaa). There, the body was smoked in the sauna with the aim of embalming to preserve it while better traffic conditions were awaited.<sup>12</sup>

In summary, a principally different approach can be observed in Estonia and Finland with regard to burial grounds in newly settled areas. In the last case, the problem of the disposal of the dead was solved not by the foundation of new burial grounds but, in spite of several difficulties, by transporting the corpses to remote Christian cemeteries. In Estonia, on the other hand, in spite of relatively shorter distances, old village cemeteries were used, or new ones were established. With respect to geographical conditions, the situation in Finland and Estonia directly contradicts possible expectations – it is precisely the northern and eastern areas of Finland with their sparse network of churches where the question of alternative burial grounds might have been more acute than in Estonia.

The use of temporary burial grounds in these peripheral areas reflects a great and principal difference in the evaluation of Christian cemeteries. While in Finland the summer cemeteries evince the Christian ideas of the unity of a cemetery and a church or chapel, the majority of people in Estonia placed primary importance on the proximity of the home when choosing a burial site (Valk 1992b, 220, 221). The pre-Christian idea of the connections of the deceased person and the place of burial can be regarded as the main background factor in this context (Valk 1994, 181–184). A considerable difference in attitudes regarding local burials also appears to be reflected during the period of the Nordic War, which was difficult for both peoples.

The population of Finland dropped from 500 000 in the mid 1650s to not more than 320 000 in the 1720s (Talve 1990, 235). In Estonia, the corresponding numbers are estimated to be about 375–400 000 in the middle of the 1690s and 130 000–150 000 persons after the end of the great plague of 1710–1712 (Palli 1980, 81, 133; Vahtre 1987, 29). Although population losses were great in absolute numbers in both countries, the “Great Wrath” in Finland seems to be reflected considerably less in the non-churchyard burial grounds than in the Estonian “Swedish” or “Nordic War” period.

#### 1.4. Connections with chapels

As mentioned above, in medieval Catholic Europe the cemeteries may have been connected with chapels or assistant churches. There is a great deal of such data from both Estonia and Finland. In Finland corresponding toponyms and other data occur in connection with most archaeologically investigated medieval non-churchyard rural cemeteries. Such connections are evinced by the toponyms of Kirk’ailanmäki in Hollola, Kappelinmäki in Kauskila and Kappelinpelto in Remojärvi. In Hiittinen the stone foundation of a chapel was disinterred (Nordman 1940) and the Liikistö cemetery in Ulvila has traditionally been regarded as a church site (Kronqvist 1938; Taavitsainen 1992, 9)<sup>13</sup>. Considering such a background, it has been suggested that in Catholic Finland all non-churchyard rural cemeteries, in fact, served as official ecclesiastical chapel cemeteries and that the possibility of “semi-legal” village cemeteries should be excluded here<sup>14</sup>.

As shown by artefact finds from Kappelinmäki in Kauskila and Kappelinpelto in Hollola, the genesis of the medieval chapel-connected cemeteries of Finland may extend as far back as the Crusade period. Excavation results from Ristinpelto in Lieto and Myllymäki in Nousiainen show that already at that time chapels may have existed at inhumation cemeteries (Cleve 1952). Such chapels can possibly be regarded as the first centres of the Christian parishes<sup>15</sup>. The final time of using the chapel cemeteries remains mostly unclear. According to coin finds from graves, the chapel-connected cemeteries of Kirk’ailanmäki in Hollola and Kappelinmäki in Kauskila were in use until the 14th century. Thus, at Kirk’ailanmäki the fill of a grave contained a coin from the 1360s (Hirviluoto 1985, 32). The latest coin from the graves of Kauskila is, according to new datings, from the first quarter of the 14th century (Taavitsainen 1990b, 329, note 8). Also known from the same cemetery are two stray finds

of coins from 1573 (Salo 1957, 50), but the latter may with equal probability be regarded as offerings. The disappearance of coin finds from graves is, however, an insufficient basis for dating the final use of the chapel cemeteries. In addition to furnished graves at both cemeteries, also numerous unfurnished and undated burials occur and some of them may be younger than the coin-dated ones. Corresponding evidence is provided by the Remonjärvi cemetery where no artefacts have been found although there is a C14 date from a coffin plank, the calibrated age of which is A.D. 1398 (1431) 1468 (Huurre 1992)<sup>16</sup>. The reasons for rejecting the chapel cemeteries mostly remain unclear. Some of them were probably abandoned already in the medieval period in connection with the development of the network of churches. Thus, in the case of Kirk’ailanmäki it has been suggested that it was deserted around 1400 when a new administrative division of south-eastern Häme was introduced<sup>17</sup>. Some of the chapel cemeteries were probably deserted also after the Reformation in the 16th century.

According to both oral and written data, there was a close connection between the village cemeteries and Catholic chapels in medieval Estonia. Thus, the village cemeteries are often known under the name of *Kabelimägi* (Chapel hill) or the tradition characterizes the cemetery as the burial ground of the formerly adjacent chapel. In addition to larger chapels, there were also several small chapels of local importance. There is a great deal of folklore and toponymical data referring to chapels in southern Estonia, which belonged to Catholic Poland until 1629 (*de facto* 1625). According to preliminary research results, data referring to chapels occur here at about a quarter of the village cemeteries. Written sources of the 17th century contain recurring data on secret burials by peasants at deserted chapels or chapel ruins, and the Lutheran Church had great problems in abolishing this custom which had originated in the Catholic period (Hausmann 1903, 142–145; Westrén-Doll 1926, 22–23).

However, in the relations of chapels and rural non-churchyard burial grounds a considerable difference can be suggested between Estonia and Finland. Although the problem of Catholic chapels deserves a more thorough study in both countries, the non-churchyard rural cemeteries of Estonia seem to have been of a more vague status than the consecrated chapel cemeteries of Finland. Quite probably, a large number of the Estonian village cemeteries were not connected with chapels at all, at least in the first Christian centuries, and the chapels themselves may have had a different status in Esto-

nia. Seemingly, in Estonia, especially in its southern areas, the majority of chapels did not belong to the "official" network of sanctuaries but can be regarded as local and self-made ones. Written sources show that there existed in Old Livonia a large number of illegal or semi-legal chapels built without due episcopal permission. In 1428 the Provincial Council of Riga condemned the existence of such chapels, prohibited the erection of new ones, and ordered those built without permission to be demolished within one year (LUB VII, 690:29). As late as 1627 in the surroundings of Rāpina (northeastern Võrumaa), as in most of the Tartumaa district, soon after the area had passed from Catholic Poland to Lutheran Sweden, each peasant was noted to have his own small special chapel (*sein klein Sonderliche Cappellen*) for worshipping his saint (Kõpp 1959, 86). Thus, when trying to estimate the status of the Estonian village cemeteries in the medieval Catholic cultural context, the vagueness of the borderline between the cemeteries of ecclesiastically recognized chapels and the local unofficial or semi-legal village burial grounds must be recognized.

Secondly, we can also suggest a difference in the question of primariness. Which was founded first – the chapel or the burial ground? Taking into consideration the relatively low evaluation of churchyards and the high popularity of village cemeteries in Estonia, the chapels connected with the latter may often have been constructed later. In such cases the possibilities of 1) the consecration and ecclesiastical "legalization" of local cemeteries and 2) the erection of peasant-made and perhaps often unconsecrated chapels, must both be taken into consideration. In Finland, on the other hand, with the exception of former Crusade period cemeteries equipped with chapels already in the mission period, the primariness of chapels can be suggested. Thus, while in Finland the chapel cemeteries seem to have served, first and foremost, as consecrated Christian burial grounds, in Estonia the connections with Christianity seem to have been of secondary importance. Although by the late medieval period many of the village cemeteries were connected with chapels in Estonia, factors of primary importance for their genesis were probably not consecration and a connection with the chapel but locations near homesteads.

### 1.5. Registration and identification

Although there is an evident difference between Estonia and Finland in the number of rural non-churchyard burial grounds of the Christian period,

a conclusive comparative estimation of the situation will be possible only after a systematic and comprehensive survey of all existing sources in both countries. The Estonian experience evinces that a survey of the non-churchyard burial grounds of the Christian period requires, in addition to archaeological archives, a study of folklore and toponymic collections. Depending on the methodology and aims of registration, the nature and amount of information can be considerably dissimilar in different sources. A similar situation cannot be excluded with respect to the Finnish material. Here, an example can be presented from the survey materials of the communities of Juva and Mikkeli, (Southern Savo). In the surveys of 1984, 1985 and 1992, no data on burial grounds of the Christian period can be found.<sup>18</sup> On the other hand, earlier field work notes the existence of 13 (!) burial grounds, dating presumably from the Christian period (Sarasma 1938, 18–26). This cautionary example points to possible methodological differences in registration work at different times. It cannot be excluded that some of the newer surveys are influenced by the attitude that only prehistoric sites are of archaeological interest. Probably, the number of medieval and post-medieval sites can, in some cases, be considerably larger after a total study of all the existing source materials.

In view of the interpretation of popularly held datings of deserted rural burial grounds it must also be noted that in Estonia only their last stage of use is reflected. Thus, the sites are very often connected in popular memory with the Swedish Period, the Nordic War, or the ensuing plague. As mentioned above, both archaeological data and written sources show that the village cemeteries went out of use in Estonia by the middle of the 1720s. Although the cemeteries were also used in earlier times, popular datings referring to "the Polish era" (in Southern Estonia from 1582 to 1625) are extremely rare in Estonia. At least in the material of Southern Estonia, the name "Monks era" (*muuga aeg, munga aeg*) never occurs. This was popularly used in speaking of the Catholic and medieval period. It cannot be excluded that in a similar way, the Finnish tradition connected with the Great Wrath or the plague really reflects only memories of the last burials and that some burial grounds regarded as episodic or late ones may, in fact, be connected with earlier times and a considerably longer timespan. Although connected in popular memory with relatively late historical events, the archaeologically investigated Estonian village cemeteries have always turned out to be burial grounds that were used for long periods. As the only exception, a cemetery of Russian soldiers from the Nordic War



can be mentioned (Kriiska 1991). The existence of a similar situation cannot be excluded in Finland. Thus, folk tradition characterizing the local uninvestigated burial grounds as episodic ones, cannot in any way disprove the possibility of their earlier long-time and permanent use – the cemeteries from the times of the Great Wrath may, in fact, in some cases turn out to be medieval chapel-connected ones.

## 2. BURIAL CUSTOMS AND GRAVE GOODS

### 2.1. Finland

In addition to different types of burial grounds, a dissimilarity between Estonia and Finland can also be observed in burial customs. In this respect, archaeological data from the medieval cemeteries of Finland bears witness to considerable changes at the transition to Christianity. While different grave orientations occur in the inhumation burial grounds of the Crusade Period, the deceased in the medieval cemeteries of Finland were, as a rule, buried with the head towards the west. The few burials with other orientations (e.g. Rinne 1908, 152; Rinne 1909a, 10–11; Gardberg 1966, 35; Dreijer 1979, 319; Hiekkänen 1994, 240, fig. 213) cannot change the existing general picture. The only more important indication of the persistence of old pre-Christian burial traditions is the sporadic occurrence of cremation burials. These have been discovered, for example, in the Keminmaa churchyard (Koivunen 1982, 50), and in the late Crusade Period – early medieval cemeteries of Kirk'ailanmäki in Hollola, Suotuiemi in Käkisalme and Toppolanmäki in Sääksmäki, as well as in the Christian cemetery of Liikistö in Ulvila (Taavitsainen 1992, 9). At Kirk'ailanmäki, unfurnished cremation burials often overlay inhumations and a 13th-century coin was found in one such inhumation grave (Hirvilohto 1985, 32).

On the whole, the Finnish cemeteries, however, point to a rapid transition to Christian burial customs. By and large, this process came to an end by the close of the 12th century.

Changes in customs at the transition to the Christian period are especially evident in grave goods. Unlike the village cemeteries of the Crusade Period, the medieval graves only rarely contain artefacts. Thus, the excavated cemetery of Hiittinen, the churches of Espoo and Renko and the northern churchyard of Hailuoto have revealed no medieval artefacts directly connected with burials. Medieval ornaments or dress accessories are represented by

single examples – in this context a few finds from the churches of Saltvik and Finström in the Åland Islands (Dreijer 1979, 306, 309). At any rate, the connection of stray artefact finds with burials remains mostly unclear – the items could also be lost objects. In the case of stray finds, the possibility of secondary origin cannot be excluded – the finds could be from the earth with which the open family graves were filled after the ending of the custom of burying the deceased inside the churches (Hiekkänen 1986, 100). A larger group of medieval ornament stray finds consists of four round brooches of the 13–14th centuries from Tyrvää Church (Tapio 1966). However, these finds are most likely connected not with the church but with a former chapel or village cemetery – the construction of the stone church of Tyrvää is dated to between the 1490s and 1530s (Hiekkänen 1994, 229).

The general lack of dress accessories of metal shows that in the churches and churchyards of medieval Finland the deceased were, in accordance with the European tradition, not dressed, but in most cases wrapped in shrouds. In Finland the disappearance of artefacts and burial garments has been regarded as the main indicator of the Christian burial rite (Sarvas 1971, 52). Furthermore, in the Finnish churchyard graves, as a rule, no coins are found. Although 548 coins have been discovered in Espoo Church, only 20 of them are medieval and not a single one of them could be connected definitely with burials (Hiekkänen 1989, 49). In the case of the 29 medieval coins from Hailuoto, a similar picture can be observed (Paavola 1988a, 25). The 287 13th- and 14th-century coins from the excavations of Koroinen church were also mostly found as stray finds – only a few of them were recovered from the vicinity of skeletons (Koivunen 1979, 47, 48; Pihlman 1994, 89). From the Liikistö cemetery in Ulvila, with over 200 opened graves, only in one case a purse with bracteates, dated to the second half of the 14th century, was found (Kronqvist 1938, 55). It thus appears most likely that the stray finds of coins from the rural churches and churchyards of Finland can be regarded as lost or offered items. Nor were medieval burials accompanied with artefacts in the town of Turku. Exceptions here are a burial in the Cathedral with a purse containing 33 silver coins, and another one with a bracteate in the corpse's mouth from the cemetery of St. Olaf's Church (Pihlman 1994, 89).

However, a considerable change can be observed in the burial customs of Finland in the 17th century, when artefact finds again appear in the archaeological material of the cemeteries. From this time onwards, various dress accessories often occur in the cemeteries. Thus, although in Renko Church

the medieval burials contained no artefacts, three graves from after middle of the 17th century contained beads. Post-medieval stray finds from Renko include brooches, buttons, pins, rings and glass objects (Hiekkänen 1985, 202, 203; 1993, 76, 77). In a similar way the beads, belt buckles, rings and brooches from Espoo (Hiekkänen 1989, 47, 48, 72–75) seem to originate mostly from the post-medieval period. The dress accessories and ornaments from Hailuoto Church also date from the late 17th and the 18th century; the burials of earlier times included no grave goods (Paavola 1988a, 28). Dress accessories of the same period have been found as stray finds also in the medieval church of Tyrvää (Tapio 1966). The occurrence of festive costumes is a general feature characteristic of the Nordic countries since the 16th but especially in the 17th and 18th centuries (Rinne 1922, 843, 844; Pylkänen 1955; Pihlman 1994, 89). The costumes of the deceased of the nobility greatly corresponded to contemporary fashion in the 17th century (Pylkänen 1970, 400). As a result of immoderateness in burial costumes, the Church Act of 1686 prohibited burial in festive clothes and luxury coffins (Rimpiläinen 1971, 208). Evidently, the appearance of artefacts was caused by the cultural changes of the Renaissance period, when the medieval custom of burying the naked body was replaced by a dressed burial (Wallin 1951, 105–108; Pihlman 1994, 89). Quite probably, the Reformation also contributed to the disappearance of the customs of the Catholic Middle Ages: in Germany the re-emergence of grave goods in the 16th century can be clearly observed in the Lutheran Crailsheim area (Fehring 1987, 80).

Burial customs of the few investigated non-churchyard rural cemeteries of Finland seem to evince, however, a certain dissimilarity with church and churchyard burials: according to the present data, small artefacts seem to be more frequent in the village cemeteries than in the churches. Thus, at Kirk'ailanmäki in Hollola almost a seventh of the burials were provided with a knife; in the graves also brooches, belt fittings and coins of the 13th – early 14th centuries have been found (Sarvas 1971, 61; Hirviluoto 1985, 32–34). At Kappelinmäki in Kauskila, a knife, a belt ring, two flint pieces and even an axe were found together with an early 14th century coin; smaller artefacts were discovered in other graves (Salo 1957). Thirteenth-century coins have also been discovered in other burial grounds of the Savo-Karelian region (Taavitsainen 1990a, 84). As mentioned above, also the round brooches from Tyrvää could be connected with a village or chapel burial ground that preceded the stone church.

If the difference in the furnished state of the graves between church/churchyard and non-churchyard burials really exists and is not conditioned by insufficient source material and occasional factors, a possible reason for it is the dissimilarity in the burial customs of the communities using churchyards and local burial grounds respectively. However, the difference might more likely be conditioned by geographical or chronological factors. Thus, as important factors determining the occurrence of grave artefacts, regional cultural peculiarities must be taken into consideration: with the exception of Tyrvää, all the above-mentioned furnished non-churchyard graves are in Häme and the Savo-Karelian region. In this way, artefacts occur in graves in eastern Finland for a longer time than in the west of the country (Taavitsainen 1990a, 84). Also in the case of medieval artefacts from churches and churchyards their regional distribution would need to be studied in the future.

With regard to chronological factors, the furnished burials of Hollola and Kauskila are not later than the 14th century, but the investigated medieval church cemeteries with exclusively unfurnished graves are from later times. Thus, Espoo Church was completed by the 1490s and Renko Church was probably built as late as between 1500 and 1550 (Hiekkänen 1994, 250, 252). As the few published medieval churchyard finds of Finland (more precisely Åland; see Dreijer 1979, 306, 309) seem to date from the 13–14th centuries, their sporadic occurrence might be regarded as a relic custom, surviving only in the first Christian centuries and disappearing by the second half of the medieval period.

In later medieval and post-medieval times, as mentioned above, data on burials with artefacts is connected only with churchyards – there is no corresponding data from the excavated non-churchyard cemeteries and corresponding stray finds are almost missing. This situation can be explained both by the rejection of local cemeteries and by the disappearance of the custom of grave goods.

The example of the Vanantaka find (Janakkala parish, Häme) where six skeletons and two necklaces of beads were discovered in a sand pit (Saukkonen 1984, 302), shows, however, that the possibility of artefact burials cannot be excluded even in the late 17th or 18th century. These finds can easily be connected not with a permanent cemetery but with a single occasional burial of the Great Famine (1695–1697) or Great Wrath (1710–1721) period. Nevertheless, as in churchyards also in the non-churchyard burials of the 17th–18th centuries the possibility of the re-appearance of artefacts should be taken into consideration.

In general, in spite of the relatively low number of investigated sites and the need to study artefact chronology, grave goods seem to have disappeared from the Finnish rural burial grounds during the first Christian centuries. As also in the 17–18th centuries, when artefacts again appear in church burials, almost no corresponding finds from non-churchyard graves are known. The local chapel cemeteries already seem to have been deserted by that time in western Finland. It has been suggested that the disappearance of grave goods in the eastern areas of Catholic Finland can be connected with the Pähkinäsaari Treaty of 1323 (Taavitsainen 1990b, 329). While the political and ecclesiastical status of these territories was rather unclear at the end of the 13th and the beginning of the 14th century, the new fixed border included them rapidly into the sphere of Western culture for the whole medieval period. However, the archaeological surveys of Orthodox Northern Karelia, a region with numerous ethnological village burial grounds, contain no data on stray finds.

## 2.2. Estonia

Changes in burial customs at the transition to the Christian period are not so clearly expressed in Estonia as in Finland. Although the western orientation was typical in Estonia during the Christian period, the opposite orientation of men and women occurred parallel to it in Võrumaa until the late 17th century (Valk 1992a, 91–100). Burials of non-western orientation are also frequent in other regions of Estonia. In southern Estonia rare cremation burials sporadically occur until the 16th century (Valk 1993). The difference between Estonia and Finland is particularly evident in the artefactual record. In Estonia grave goods occur often in the rural cemeteries of the Christian period. Coins, knives and various artefacts (mostly brooches, beads and rings) are found in both village burial grounds and churchyards. The existence of artefacts in churchyards from the medieval period to the 18th century is evinced, for example, by numerous finds from Tarvastu (Viljandimaa), Rõngu and Kambja (both in Tartumaa)<sup>19</sup>. There are also individual stray finds from several other churches and churchyards. Excavations at the Viru-Nigula churchyard (Virumaa) show that in the 13th century richly ornamented burials, similar to prehistoric ones occurred there (Tamla 1991, 1993). Among the finds from the Estonian village cemeteries are both ornaments and metal fittings of the costume as well as “real” grave goods – objects laid in the grave for certain religious purposes (Valk

1992a, 128–156). The items may also have had a symbolic background, manifesting the age or status of the deceased.

On the grounds of archaeological, written and folklore data, the custom of grave goods can be observed in Estonia continuously from prehistoric times to the late 19th and 20th centuries. Sometimes it appears at present, and in the Orthodox Setumaa district it is widely practised. The burial customs of Setumaa can in general be characterized as especially archaic and conservative (Rihter 1979).

In regard to grave artefacts, differences can be observed between the southern and northern/western parts of Estonia. While in northern Estonia graves of the 13th century can contain several artefacts (Kustin 1958; Selirand 1962; Tamla 1990; 1991; 1993, 18–20), the number of artefacts is low there and ornaments are almost totally missing in the 14th–16th centuries. It is only from the 17th century that artefacts reappear in the graves of northern and western Estonia. With regard to the low number of medieval grave goods and an almost total lack of ornaments, northern and western Estonia, adjacent to the coast, greatly resembles Finland and Sweden. In southern Estonia, however, a totally different picture can be observed: ornaments occur there numerous in both village cemeteries and churchyards until the 18th century. On the grounds of the existing material, no principal difference can be observed in the grave goods of the village cemeteries and the peasant graves of the churches and churchyards.

In connection with archaeological finds also the problem of grave goods, known from the Finnish folklore data should be discussed. Although grave goods are only poorly represented in Finland during the first Christian centuries and seem to be totally missing in the second half of the medieval period, there is information from several Finnish localities on the laying of food, coins, utensils etc. in the grave. As a rule, the custom seems to have disappeared by the middle of the 19th century (Varjola 1980). A similar contradiction between archaeologically investigated rural cemeteries of the medieval period and data from the 17–19th centuries can also be observed in Sweden. While the medieval graves of the cemeteries of Västerhus, Lagmanshejdan, Helgeandsholmen and Löddeköpinge contain almost no artefacts which can be interpreted as grave goods (Gejvall 1961, 109–113; Redin 1976, 96–105; Dahlbäck 1982, 116–123; Cinthio 1980, 117), the existence of the latter can be followed in the ethnographic and folklore material of Sweden (Hagberg 1937).

In explaining the origin of grave goods as known

in folk tradition, two possibilities must be considered: 1) a constant hidden persistence of the custom since prehistoric times and 2) its reappearance.

In the first case, a contradiction between the archaeological data and the folklore material must be noted. However, the archaic nature of some of the folk grave goods and parallels in the Estonian, Votic, Karelian and eastern Finno-Ugrian tradition suggest the possibility that the present archaeological picture of the unfurnished graves of the medieval period may, in the countryside, change to some extent in some regions of Finland in the future. It cannot be excluded that in the preservation of pre-Christian customs certain regional differences, not reflected in the existing archaeological material, were also present. The folklore data makes it possible to suggest that many of the post-medieval stray finds from church cemeteries may easily derive from disturbed burials. Thus, to interpret such finds, a survey and distribution mapping of the folklore data on grave goods would be required. The areas with the highest concentration of folklore data would probably indicate the regions with the highest expectancy of archaeological grave goods.

The second possibility, the reappearance of grave goods as an explanation of the folk custom, must be given even more weight. As mentioned above, the revival of the furnished burial tradition in the post-medieval period seems to be a custom of international character. Most probably, its background was in the secularization of the medieval religious mentality which accompanied the Renaissance.

### 3. DISCUSSION

As mentioned above, a great difference in the rural burial traditions of Finland and Estonia can be observed in the Christian period. The archaeological material of the Estonian village cemeteries is rather expressive: the number of finds, gathered both as stray items and in the course of archaeological excavations is high, and the burial grounds are often remembered by the local inhabitants. In Finland, on the other hand, only a few non-churchyard cemeteries of the Christian period are known and the existing data evince, with a few exceptions, an almost total absence of grave goods.

In comparing the situation in Estonia and Finland, considerable differences between the two countries can be observed in the speed of cultural transformations connected with the transition to Christianity. In Finland these changes were rela-

tively rapid. Thus, in Southwest Finland, only half a century after the first crusade, from around A.D. 1200, the pre-Christian burial traditions, as a rule, can no longer be observed in the archaeological material (Sarvas 1971).

Although a great shift in the burial traditions and the decline of clearly pagan features (cremations, stone settings, large grave goods) also occurred in Estonia in the period of Christianization, the break was not complete. In spite of partial acceptance of the Christian rites, the Estonian traditions remained half-way between pagan and Christian ones. Thus, the features characteristic of the transitional period, were conserved and could be observed in the countryside until the 19th century. In their essence, the Finnish inhumation cemeteries of the Crusade Period and the Estonian medieval and post-medieval village cemeteries represent the same cultural phenomenon – a type of burial ground, characteristic of the period of transition to Christianity.

The difference between Estonia and Finland is clearly expressed in the second half of the medieval period (in the first Christian centuries there were also burials with smaller artefacts in the rural cemeteries of Finland). As a general feature in both countries, the reappearance of grave artefacts, especially dress accessories in Post-Reformation times and the 17–18th centuries must be noted. This cultural change is especially marked in Finland where medieval graves at church cemeteries were, as a rule, unfurnished. In Estonia, however, the new impact can mostly be observed in towns and the northern/western districts – in the rural cemeteries of southern Estonia artefacts occurred in graves throughout all the medieval centuries.

In reviewing the profound changes that occurred in the burial traditions of Finland at the threshold of the Christian period, one more fact must be taken into consideration: at the transition to medieval times, not only in the graves but also in the folk-culture as a whole we can observe an almost total disappearance of ornaments, especially of those based on former local traditions. The present author knows of no medieval peasant hoards in Finland that contained ornaments, and the number of corresponding stray finds of ornaments is also very limited. In Estonia, on the other hand, there is a large number of peasant ornament hoards cached during the wars of the 16th and early 17th centuries, though probably accumulated already in the medieval period. In the same way, ornaments of the Christian period occur often both as cemetery and stray finds in Estonia.

Interesting parallels from later Estonian history can be presented to explain the disappearance of



grave goods and ornament finds in Finland at the threshold of the medieval period. When the Pietist movement of the Herrnhut brothers reached Estonia in the 1730s, extensive and intensive religious awakenings broke out in several regions of the country, causing considerable changes in material folk culture. At that time, festive folk costumes and ornaments were abandoned and musical instruments were destroyed along with the destruction of many pagan or semi-Catholic cult sites. In Hiiumaa, for example, women threw their beads, silver ornaments, brooches decorated with coloured glass and even hair ribbons into rivers and bog pools (Pöldmäe 1935, 127–128). A new wave of ecstatic movement, similar to that of the 1730s–40s, burst out in the second and third decades of the 19th century. Also at that time ornaments were burnt or sold very cheaply to wandering Jewish pedlars (Pöldmäe 1935, 154, 155).

As Finland witnessed an almost total chronological coincidence of Christianization, as known from the written sources, with changes in the archaeological material, the existence of similar events cannot be excluded. Such processes could greatly be supported by the ideology of poverty, strongly expressed in Christianity and church ideology in the High Middle Ages (Gurevich 1992, 180–186). Thus, changes in burial customs and the disappearance of artefacts could be explained as a manifestation of changes in mentality – as a sign of extensive and intensive religious awakening which totally changed not only beliefs and behaviour but also the ways of dressing and wearing ornaments. This perspective can also apply to the disappearance of ornaments in late post-Viking Age Scandinavia.

In Estonia, however, no traces referring to such profound changes neither in the burial customs nor material culture can be observed at the period of violent Christianization. Although, evidently in connection with the latter, a shift in burial customs can be observed (the stone settings with cremations were replaced with inhumation burial grounds and large grave goods disappeared as a rule), these changes cannot be described as very radical. According to the present research situation, the same trends already appeared before the period of wars in 1208–1227. Thus, the conquest and Christianization seem only to have contributed to the decline of evidently pagan burial rites and promoted the developments which already began in late pre-Christian times.

The difference in the respective cultural development of Estonia and Finland is especially remarkable because of similar cultural backgrounds. Both countries, separated by the Gulf of Finland, are close in ethnological and linguistic terms. Evi-

dently, 800 years ago these discrepancies were considerably smaller than in modern times. In the medieval period both countries were spiritually governed by the same Catholic Church and when Estonia became part of Sweden after the wars in the 16th and early 17th century, and, as previously in Finland, Lutheranism was established in the version of the Swedish State Church. Superficially, great similarities can also be observed in the manner of Christianization: in both cases the new religion was imposed or, at least ecclesiastical organization was established in the course of violent conquest and the acceptance of Christianity brought along foreign rule.

However, in spite of the same preconditions, the developments following Christianization and the emergence of church organization were greatly different in Estonia and Finland. The main reason can be suggested to have most probably resided in differences in the neophytes' attitudes towards cultural innovations, the newly created church organization and the clergy. These differences could have been caused mainly by dissimilarities in the methods of Christianization: the mission seems to have been executed in a much less violent way in Finland than in Estonia. Thus, the conversion of Southwestern Finland took place gradually, without dramatic events. The supposedly violent Christianization of Häme has been a subject of discussion (Taavitsainen 1990, 164–168). However, there is no data on prolonged belligerent activities concerning Finland – the limited written sources mention only individual crusades in brief contexts.

In Estonia, on the other hand, the attitude of the natives towards Christianity was greatly influenced by the violence of conversion. Baptism was always preceded by bloody plundering raids (HCL) and throughout the period of wars of 1208–1227 the idea of political conquest clearly dominated over that of real mission.

It is probable that in addition to the violence of the mission the process of Christianization was also hindered by other factors in Estonia. In this respect, one possible reason lay in the peculiarities of the ecclesiastical organization of Old Livonia and its attitude towards the neophytes. It is only in this way that we can explain the strong preservation of the village cemetery tradition among the voluntarily Christianized Latgals of central and eastern Latvia, who were the military allies of the Germans in conflicts with the Estonians in 1208–1227.

Differences in the burial traditions of Estonia and Finland also point to profound dissimilarities in mentality and the way of thinking. Thus, the archaeological material reflects greatly different

evaluations of Christian burial and, in a broader sense, the Christian cultural tradition and religion in general. Though neighbours, the countries followed different patterns of cultural development during the medieval and post-medieval period. Finland adhered to the model of Scandinavia, expressed in the relatively rapid disappearance of pre-Christian traditions at the transition to Christianity and a quick integration into the cultural context of medieval Western Europe. Estonia, however, displays great similarities with the Baltic areas of Latvia and Lithuania to the south, as well as with the eastern Finno-Ugrian peoples. The considerable cultural dissimilarity of Estonia and Finland is reflected not only in burial traditions, but, for example, also in the architecture of medieval stone churches (Hiekkanen 1992). This shows that different cultural orientations existed also among the spiritually dominant strata of both countries.

Within Finland, adherence to the European pattern of development is clearly expressed in the western areas, densely settled already in the prehistoric period and having a relatively close network of medieval churches. Although the number of cemeteries connected with chapels or local wooden churches of the early Christian period may turn out to be somewhat larger here than appears at the moment, the use of "wild" village cemeteries, which were possibly unconsecrated, not connected with ecclesiastical buildings and not accepted by the Church, seems to be of a very low probability in western Finland. The only possible exceptions here are the episodic burial grounds connected with plague, famine or war<sup>20</sup>. However, in the eastern parts of Lutheran Finland, where the network of churches was sparse in the Middle Ages and where both western and eastern cultural traditions occur in the ethnological burial customs and folk culture as a whole, a somewhat different situation cannot be excluded.

In summary, the Estonian cemeteries of the Christian period have proven to be a large and informative body of source material on several aspects of historical, cultural and religious development. In Finland the corresponding archaeological material is considerably poorer, pointing to a greatly different cultural situation. However, non-churchyard cemeteries exist also in Finland and some archaeological materials have been obtained from church and churchyard excavations. This source of information, which until now has been considered mostly in a traditional way as being too "late" for archaeology, would require a new special study. Corresponding ideas concerning early Christian burial grounds of Finland have already been expressed over two decades ago (Sarvas 1971, 62).

Nevertheless, some basic questions must be answered to establish a more thorough and profound comparison of the cultural situation in the two neighbouring countries. How large was the number of non-churchyard burial grounds, including those connected with Catholic chapels, and what was their density of distribution? What regional differences were there in burial traditions during the Christian period? What is the state of artefact chronology? Concerning the latter, the Estonian material sometimes offers rather good coin-dated possibilities. For a comparative analysis of the situation at a qualitatively new level of knowledge, a complex study of the existing scattered archaeological, folklore, historical and toponymic data both in Finland and Estonia would be needed. The problem of the folk burial traditions of the Christian period would deserve a new analysis also on a broader geographical basis. However, the examples of Finland and Estonia already now point to great cultural diversity within the Nordic and Baltic region in medieval and post-medieval times.

#### NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Data on Finland was provided by Dr. Markus Hiekkanen and Dr. Jussi-Pekka Taavitsainen. The author wishes to express his gratitude for their kind consultations and remarks concerning the medieval archaeology of Finland, and for access to unpublished radiocarbon dates.
- <sup>2</sup> Data from J-P. Taavitsainen.
- <sup>3</sup> J-P. Taavitsainen, oral communication.
- <sup>4</sup> In the local dialect *Kirk'ailanmäki* means 'Churchyard Hill'.
- <sup>5</sup> J-P. Taavitsainen, oral communication.
- <sup>6</sup> References to publications concerning village cemeteries are given in Valk 1992b, 203-204.
- <sup>7</sup> The west part of the nave was excavated by Ken Kalling in 1993-1994.
- <sup>8</sup> Only the results for 1980-1982 have been published (Laul 1981, 1983).
- <sup>9</sup> Su-962 220±80 BP, cal AD 1636 (1660) 1955\*. New calibration according to Stuiver & Pearson 1986.
- <sup>10</sup> Sample Hel-1288.
- <sup>11</sup> J-P. Taavitsainen, oral communication.
- <sup>12</sup> Oral data from Udo Tiirmaa (architect in the Tartu bureau ARC Project) and Aivar Reidla (student of archaeology at Tartu University).
- <sup>13</sup> The identification of the building remains as a church has recently been doubted, but not disproved (Hiekkanen 1994, 240, 241).
- <sup>14</sup> As suggested by J-P. Taavitsainen and Markus Hiekkanen.
- <sup>15</sup> Comment by Markus Hiekkanen.
- <sup>16</sup> Hel-1272 480±90
- <sup>17</sup> Comment by Markus Hiekkanen.
- <sup>18</sup> Archives of the National Board of Antiquities, Helsinki, Finland.
- <sup>19</sup> Finds from Tarvastu: AI 1861, Institute of History of the Estonian Academy of Sciences; the finds from Kambja will be delivered to Tartu University; on Ringu, see Hausmann 1902.

<sup>20</sup> After the present article was submitted for publication, a paper on numerous unfurnished Christian burials at the Iron Age cemetery of Luistari (SW Finland) was presented by Dr. Pirkko-Liisa Lehtosalo-Hilander at the conference "Rome and Byzantium in the North. Missionary work and change in faith in the eight to fourteenth centuries" (Kiel, September 18-25, 1994). This unpublished data has not been used here. The idea of possible burials of the Christian period at Luistari (the final period of use ca. 1070-1130; see Lehtosalo-Hilander 1982), however, has been expressed in print (Taavitsainen 1990, 209, note 4).

## REFERENCES

- Arponen, A., 1993. Inarin hautuumaasaaret. *Metsähallituksen luonnonsuojelujulkaisuja. Sarja A.* No 16.
- Cinthio, H. 1980. The early medieval cemetery. The Löddeköpinge investigation III. *Meddelanden från Lunds universitets historiska museum 1979-1980. New series.* Vol 3.
- Cleve, N., 1952. En kyrkogård från korstagstiden. *Corolla archaeologica in honorem C. A. Nordman.* Helsinki.
- Dahlbäck, G. (red.), 1982. *Helgeandsholmen. 1000 år i Stockholms ström.* Borås.
- Dreijer, M., 1979. *Det åländska folkets historia I:1. Från stenåldern till Gustav Vasa.* Mariehamn.
- Fehring, G. P., 1987. *Einführung in die Archäologie des Mittelalters.* Darmstadt.
- Flood, D. (ed.), 1975. Poverty in the Middle Ages. *Franziskanische Forschungen* 27. Heft.
- Gejvall, N., 1961. *Westerhus. Medieval population and Church in the light of skeletal remains.* Stockholm.
- Gurevich, A. 1992. *Keskaja inimese maailmapilt.* Tallinn.
- Gustavsson, K., 1988. Medeltida gravar vid Kökars kloster. *Sankt Olof* 1988.
- Hagberg, L., 1937. *När döden gästar. Svenska folkseder och svensk folktro i samband med död och begravning.* Stockholm.
- Harva, U., 1948. *Suomalaisten muinaisusko.* Porvoo-Helsinki.
- Hausmann, R., 1902. Ueber Alterthümer gefunden auf dem Hofe der Kirche zu Ringen. *Sitzungsberichte der Gelehrten Estnischen Gesellschaft* 1901.
- Hausmann, R., 1903. Ausserkirchliche Begräbnisplätze im Estenlande in christlicher Zeit. *Sitzungsberichte der Gelehrten Estnischen Gesellschaft* 1902. Jurjew (Dorpat).
- HCL = *Henrici Chronicon Livoniae. Henriku Liivimaa kroonika.* Tallinn. 1982.
- Hiekkanen, M., 1986. Archaeology of the medieval stone church of Lempäälä in Satakunta, Finland. Finds from prehistorical and historical times. *Fennoscandia archaeologica* III.
- Hiekkanen, M., 1987. In formam octangularem extructum. Rengon kirkon pohjakaava. *Muistomerkki. Kirjoituksia Antero Sinisalolle.* Helsinki.
- Hiekkanen, M., 1989. *Här ha släkte efter släkte... Ur Esbo kyrkas framgrävda förflytet.* Esbo.
- Hiekkanen, M., 1992. Near but far. Finnish and Estonian Church Architecture in the Middle Ages. *Suomen Museo* 1991.
- Hiekkanen, M., 1993. Rengon kirkon historia. *Rengon historia.* Jyväskylä.
- Hiekkanen, M., 1994. The Stone Churches of the Medieval Diocese of Turku. A systematic classification and chronology. *Suomen Muinaismuistoyhdistyksen Aikakauskirja* 101.
- Hirviluoto, A.-L., 1985. Hollolan vaiheet ennen kristinuskon tuloa – kivikaudesta keskiaikaan. Rautakausi (Krs. – 1200/1300 JKr.). *Hollolan kirkko. Asutuksen, kirkon ja seurakunnan historia.* Hämeenlinna.
- Huurte, M. 1990. *9000 vuotta Suomen esihistoriaa.* Keuruu.
- Huurte, M. 1992. Remojärven kappelin jäljillä. *Juvmalle. Juhlakirja Juvan täyttäässä 550 vuotta.* Juva.
- Huurte, M., Turpeinen, O., 1992. Leipä luonnosta. *Suomussalmen historian kymmenen vuosituhatta.* Keuruu.
- Kaukiainen, Y., 1980. Suomen asuttaminen. *Suomen taloushistoria I. Agraarinen Suomi.* Helsinki.
- Kivikoski, E., 1956. "Kalevasonens liebyrne". *Finskt Museum* 1955.
- Koivunen, P., 1979. Koroisten keskiaikaiset rahalöydöt. *Turun kaupungin historiallinen museo. Vuosijulkaisu* 1976.
- Koivunen, P., 1982. Keminmaan kirkonpaikan tutkimukset Valmarinniemellä kesällä 1981. *Faravid* 5.81.
- Koivunen, P., 1991. Kesähautoista ja vihkimättömistä ruumiskalmistoista. *Faravid* 14.90.
- Kopisto, A. 1971. Kuusamon lappalaihauta. *Suomen Museo* 1971.
- Kriiska, A., 1991. Der Siedlungsplatz und die Grabstätte zu Lehmja-Pildiküla. *Eesti Teaduste Akadeemia Toimetised. Ühiskonnateadused*, 1991, 4.
- Kronqvist, I., 1938. Varhaisen keskiajan hautamerkeistä. *Suomen Museo* 1938.
- Kustin, A., 1958. Kalmistu XIII-XIV sajandist Karjas, Saaremaal. *Eesti NSV Teaduste Akadeemia Toimetised. Ühiskonnateadused*, 1958, 1.
- Köpp, J., 1959. Kirik ja rahvas. *Sugemeid eesti rahva vaimse palge kujunemise teelt.* Lund.
- Laul, S., 1981. Kurgannyi mogul'nik pozdnego zhelezno-veka v Siksali. *Eesti NSV Teaduste Akadeemia Toimetised. Ühiskonnateadused*. 1981, 4.
- Laul, S., 1983. Poseleniye i mogul'nik v Siksali. *Eesti NSV Teaduste Akadeemia Toimetised. Ühiskonnateadused*. 1983, 4.
- Lehtosalo-Hilander, P.-L., 1982. Luistari I. The Graves. II. The Artefacts, III. A Burial Ground Reflecting the Finnish Viking Age Society. *Suomen Muinaismuistoyhdistyksen Aikakauskirja* 82:1-3.
- Lempiäinen, P. & Nickels, B., 1990. *Viimeiset leposijamme. Hautausmaat ja hautamerkit.* Imatra.
- Leppäaho, J., 1937. Savukosken Mukkulan lappalaiskalmisto. *Kotiseutu* 3-4/1937.
- Ligi, P., 1993. Vadjäpärased kalmed Kirde-Eestis (9.-16. sajand). *Muinasaja Teadus* II. Vadjäpärased kalmed Eestis 9.-16. sajandil.
- Ligi, P., Valk, H., 1993. Vadjäpärased kalmistud Tartumaal (13.-15. sajand). *Muinasaja Teadus* II. Vadjäpärased kalmed Eestis 9.-16. sajandil.
- Loorits, O., 1962. Zur Christlichen Terminologie bei den Esten, Liven und Letten. *Issanda kiriku tööpõllul.* Uppsala 1962.
- LUB = *Liv, Ehst und Curländisches Urkundenbuch.* Bd. VII. Riga, Moskau, 1881.
- Nilsson, B., 1987. Död och begravning. Begravnings-skicket i Norden. Tanke och tro. Aspekter på medeltidens tankevärld och fromhetsliv. *Studier till det medeltida Sverige* 3.
- Nilsson, B., 1989. De sepulturis. Gravrätten i Corpus Iuris Canonici och i medeltida nordisk lagstiftning. *Bibliotheca Theologiae Practicae. Kyrkovetenskapliga studier* 44.
- Nordman, C.O., 1940. Medeltidskyrkogården i Hitis. *Finskt Museum* 1939.
- Nunez, M., 1989. Skelettfynd från Kökar och Föglö. *Åländsk Olding* 1989.

- Oja, A., 1969. Evijärven Ruumissaaresta ja muista Järvi-seudun vanhoista hautapaikoista. *Kotiseutu* 4–5/1969. *Ortodoksinen kirkko Suomessa*. Lieto 1980.
- Paavola, K., 1988a. Domus pro templo. Hailuodon kirkon varhaisvaiheet. *Studia Historica Septentrionalia* 15.
- Paavola, K., 1988b. Hailuodon kirkkohaudat. *Faravid* 12. 88.
- Palli, H., 1980. *Yestestvennoje dvizeniye selskogo nase- leniya Estonii 1650–1799 I–III*. Tallinn.
- Pentikäinen, J., 1961. Kuusamon vanhat ruumikuljetus- reitit ja hautapaikat. *Kotiseutu* 4/1961.
- Pentikäinen, J., 1990. *Suomalaisten lähtö. Kirjoituksia pohjoisesta kuolemankulttuurista*, Helsinki.
- Pihlman, S., 1994. Begravnigar i Åbo under slutet av 1500-talet och början av 1600-talet. Tolkningsspro- blem kring Helgeandskyrkans gravar. *Finskt Museum* 1992.
- Pyllkänen, R., 1955. Grävdräkter från 1600-talet i Åbo domkyrkomuseum. *Åbo stads historiska museums årskrift* 17–18 1953–54.
- Pyllkänen, R. Barokin pukumuoti Suomessa 1620–1720. *Suomen Muinaismuistoyhdistyksen Aikakauskirja* 71.
- Pöldmäe, R., 1935. Taevakäijad. Kaleviste mailt. *Op- etatud Eesti Seltsi Kirjad* III.
- Redin, L., 1976. Lagmanshejdan, Ett gravfält som speg- ling av sociala strukturer i Skanör. *Acta Archaeologi- ca Lundensia. Series in 4o*. No. 10.
- Reiman, H., 1914. Eestlaste matusekombed. *Eesti Kultu- ra* IV.
- Rihter, J., 1979. Nekotoryje osobennosti pogrebal' nogo obrjada setu. *Sovetskaja etnografija* 2/1979.
- Rinne, J., 1908. P. Olavin luostari ja rauniot Kaskenka- dun ja Ison Hämeenkadun yhtymän tienoilla Turussa. *Lännetär. Uusi jakso* I.
- Rinne, J. 1909a. Forna begravningsplatser i Kyrkslätt. *Suomen Museo – Finskt Museum* 1909.
- Rinne, J., 1909b. Begravningsplatsen på Kyrkogårdsön vid Porkala. *Suomen Museo – Finskt Museum* 1909.
- Rinne, J., 1921. Hautaamisesta. *Oma maa* II.
- Rinne, J., 1941. *Turun tuomiokirkko keskiaikana I*. Tuomiokirkon rakennushistoria. Turku.
- Rimpiläinen, O., 1971. Lättiläisen perinteen mukainen hautauskäytäntö Suomessa ennen isoavihaa. *Suomen kirkkohistoriallisen seuran toimituksia* 84.
- Salenius, E. 1908. Menneitten aikojen taikausko Kar- jalassa. *Suomen Museo – Finskt Museum* 1908.
- Salo, U., 1957. Lappeen Kauskilan varhaiskeskiaikainen kalmisto. *Suomen Museo* 1957.
- Sarvas, P., 1971. Ristiretkiajan ajoituskysymyksiä. *Suomen Museo* 1971.
- Sarasmö, E., 1938. Mikkelin ja Juvan seutujen kiinteitä muinaisjäännöksiä. Unpublished manuscript in the archives of the Archaeological Department of Finland's National Board of Antiquities.
- Saukkonen, J., 1984. Janakkalan inventointikertomus 1984. Manuscript in the archive of the Archaeological Department of Finland's National Board of Antiquities.
- Selirand, J., 1962. Kaberla maa-alune kalmistu (13.–17. sajand). *Muistsed kalmed ja aarded. Arheoloogiline kogumik* II. Tallinn.
- Selirand, J., 1974. *Eestlaste matmiskombed varafeodaal- sete suhete tärkamise perioodil (11.–13. sajand)*. Tallinn.
- Selirand, J., 1975. Über die Grabfunde bei der Kirche zu Valjala. *Eesti NSV Teaduste Akadeemia Toimetised. Ühiskonnateadused* 1975, 1.
- Selirand, J. 1979. Von der Verbreitung der ersten Ele- mente des Christentums bei den Esten. *Rapports du IIIe Congrès International d' Archéologie Slave*, Bratislava, 7–14 septembre 1975. Bratislava.
- Selirand, U., 1991. Über Steinlabyrinth und späte Grab- funde auf der Insel Hiiumaa. *Eesti Teaduste Aka- deemia Toimetised. Ühiskonnateadused* 1991, 4.
- Sokolovski, V. 1986. Raskopki srednevekovogo klad- bishcha v Kärevere. *Eesti NSV Teaduste Akadeemia Toimetised. Ühiskonnateadused* 1986, 4.
- Storå, N., 1971. Burial customs of the Skolt Lapps. *Folk- lore Fellows Communications* 210.
- Stuiver, M. & Pearson, G. W., 1986. High-precision Cal- ibration of the Radiocarbon Time Scale AD 1950 – 500 BC. *Radiocarbon* 28, No. 2B.
- Suvanto, S., 1985. Keskiaika. *Suomen historia* 2.
- Taavitsainen, J.-P., 1990a. Ancient hillforts of Finland. Problems of analysis, chronology and interpretation with special reference to the hillfort of Kuhmoinen. *Suomen Muinaismuistoyhdistyksen Aikakauskirja* 94.
- Taavitsainen, J.-P., 1990b. Mikkelin Visulahden kum- mitteleva "härkäuhri". *Historiallinen Aikakauskirja* 4/1990.
- Taavitsainen, J.-P. 1992. Cemeteries or refuse heaps. Ar- chaeological formation processes and the interpreta- tion of sites and antiquities. *Suomen Museo* 1991.
- Talve, I., 1990. *Suomen kansankulttuuri*. Helsinki.
- Tamla, T., 1990. Hauariüstajad muinaskalmel. *Horisont* 7/1990.
- Tamla, T., 1991. Zur Datierung der Kirche von Viru- Nigula. *Eesti Teaduste Akadeemia Toimetised. Ühiskonnateadused* 1991, 4.
- Tamla, T., 1993. Viru-Nigula kirik ja Maarja kabel. *Stilus. Eesti Arheoloogiaseltsi Teated* 4. 1993 (1).
- Tapio, O., 1966. Varhaisia esinelöytöjä Tyrvään vanhan kirkon kaivauksista. *Suomen Museo* 1966.
- Tarvel, E. 1992. Asustus ja rahvastik. *Eesti talurahva ajalugu* I. Tallinn.
- Vahtré, S., 1987. Jooni eesti rahva demograafilisest areng- ust ja vaimse palge kujunemisest feodaalajal. *Tartu Riikliku Ülikooli Toimetised*. Vihik 789. Etnilisest ühendusest sotsialistliku rahvuseeni. *Eesti NSV Ajaloo Küsimusi* X.
- Vahtré, S., 1990. *Muinasaja loojang Eestis. Vabadus- võitlus 1208–1227*. Tallinn.
- Valk, H., 1990. Hednisk gravskick ger rikaste fynden. *Populär arkeologi*. 4/1990.
- Valk, H. 1992a. Lõuna-Eesti talurahva matmiskombestik ja selle uskumuslikud tagamaad 13.–17/18. sajandil. *Magistritöö*. Manuscript in the Library of Tartu University.
- Valk, H., 1992b. The burial grounds of Estonian villages from the 13th to the 18th centuries: pagan or Christian? *Tor* 24.
- Valk, H., 1993. Põletusmatustest keskaegses Lõuna-Ees- tis. *Kleio. Ajaloo ajakiri* 7.
- Valk, H. 1994. The reflections of pre-Christian beliefs in the Estonian medieval and post-medieval village cem- eteries. *Mitteilungen für Anthropologie und Reli- gionsgeschichte*. Bd. 8.
- Varjola, P., 1990. Vainajan matkavarusteista. *Kotiseutu* 4/1980.
- Vilkuna, J., 1981. Leivonmäen alueen asuttaminen ja väestö. Leivonmäen kirja. *JYY:n kotiseutusarja* N:o 18.
- Vilkuna, K., 1930. Muudan lisätieto Tammelan vanhasta miesten pukuparresta. *Lounais-Hämeen kotiseutu- ja museoyhdistyksen vuosikirja* VI.
- Wallin, C. 1951. *Gravskick och gravtraditioner i syd- västra Skåne*. Stockholm (Ystad).
- Westrén-Doll, A., 1926. Abgötterey zu Ausgang der schwedischen und Beginn der Russische Zeit. *Sit- zungsberichte der Gelehrten Estnischen Gesellschaft* 1925.