Estonian Journal of Archaeology, 2007, **11**, 2, 122–140

Heidi Luik and Mirja Ots

BRONZE AGE DOUBLE BUTTONS IN ESTONIA

The article deals with Bronze Age double buttons found in Estonia. About ten of these are known, made of bronze, amber and antler. A survey is given of the known finds, their possible use and meaning is discussed. Without precluding the possibility that double buttons could have also had the function of button, i.e. means of fastening, their symbolic meaning, which was probably connected with the Bronze Age sun cult, was apparently more important.

On käsitletud Eestist leitud pronksiaegseid kaksiknööpe. Selliseid nööpe on teada kümmekond, valmistatud on neid pronksist, merevaigust ja sarvest. On antud ülevaade teadaolevatest leidudest ja arutletud nende võimaliku kasutusvaldkonna ning tähenduse üle. Välistamata, et kaksiknööpidel võis olla ka nööbi ehk kinnitusvahendi funktsioon, oli ilmselt olulisem nende sümboolne tähendus, mis arvatavasti oli seotud pronksiaegse päikesekultusega.

Heidi Luik, Institute of History, Tallinn University, 6 Rüütli St., 10130 Tallinn, Estonia; heidi.luik@ai.ee
Mirja Ots, Institute of History, Tallinn University, 6 Rüütli St., 10130 Tallinn, Estonia; mirja.ots@ai.ee

Introduction

Among Estonian Bronze Age finds objects of different materials – bronze, amber and antler – occur, which are usually named double buttons. The number of such finds is small, only about ten specimens (Fig. 1, Table 1). Bronze double buttons spread mainly in the Scandinavian centre of bronze culture; the two bronze buttons found from the Jõelähtme stone graves in Estonia were probably brought from there. It is interesting that such artefacts have been also made on the eastern shore of the Baltic using local materials – antler and amber. Although they have been named buttons it is not quite clear how they were used. Was their practical function as buttons primary, or was something else more important? Were they ornaments or cult objects, could they possess any symbolic meaning? Deciding by the conspicuous appearance of the buttons they may have been used also for decorative purpose, or as certain symbols in social communication.

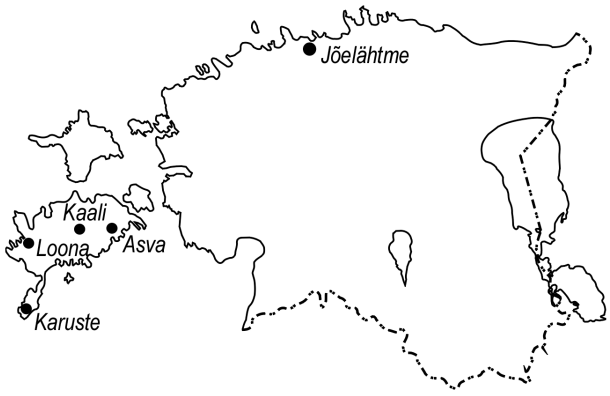

Fig. 1. Finds of double buttons in Estonia.
Joon 1. Kaksiknööpide leiukohad Eestis.

Do the replicas made from local material indicate that meanings, notions or tenets symbolised by these artefacts were also adopted together with artefact types? Perhaps the material double buttons were made from also possessed some meaning? The aim of the article is to give a survey of the finds known at the moment, and discuss their possible use and meaning.

Table 1. Double buttons in Estonia
Tabel 1. Kaksiknööbid Eestis

	Location	Site	Find number	Material	Size*, cm
1.	Jõelähtme	sg	AI 5306: 26	Bronze	1.7 × 1.2
2.	Jõelähtme	sg	AI 5306: 28	Bronze	1.9 × 1.0
3.	Loona	sg	AI 4210: 1421	Amber	1.7 × 3.2
4. (?)	Karuste	sg	AI 3882: 10	Amber	1.9 × 1.7**
5.	Kaali	fs	AI 4915: 157	Elk antler	1.8 × 1.7**
6.	Asva	fs	AI 3658: 500	Elk antler	2.2 × 4.2
7.	Asva	fs	AI 4366: 132	Elk antler	2.5 × 3.8
8.	Asva	fs	AI 4366: 614	Elk antler	1.7 × 3.3
9.	Asva	fs	AI 4366: 663	Elk antler	1.6 × 2.9
10.	Asva	fs	AI 4366: 1591	Elk antler	2.0 × 2.0
11. (?)	Asva	fs	AI 4366: 1111	Bone	1.0 × 1.8**

sg – stone-cist grave; fs – fortified settlement.
* Size gives the largest diameter and height of the artefact.
** Height of the preserved fragment.

Bronze double buttons

Double buttons were usually made from bronze (e.g. Baudou 1960, 87–89; Larsson 1986, 36–38, 58–59) but only a couple of bronze specimens are hitherto known from Estonia. These were found from the stone-cist graves of Jõelähtme, northern Estonia. Both double buttons from Jõelähtme have a small lower plate and a larger flat upper plate, which is decorated with relief concentric circles (Fig. 2). The buttons were found in graves IX and XI and dated to the 9th–8th centuries BC; most likely they were brought to Estonia from southern Scandinavia (Kraut 1985, 349, pl. V: 10, 15; Lang 1992, 22, pl. III: 4; see also Baudou 1960, 88–90, pl. XVIII).[1] The double button in grave IX was found in the cist, together with two spiral temple ornaments and a spade-headed bone pin. According to Valter Lang, the double button belongs to period IV of the Scandinavian Bronze Age; the spiral temple ornaments belong to periods IV–V (1100–900 and 900–600 BC, respectively: Lang 2007a, 22) and on the basis of this he dated this type of spade-headed bone pins also to the same period (Lang 1992, 11, 22, pl. III: 1–4; 1996, 283–284).

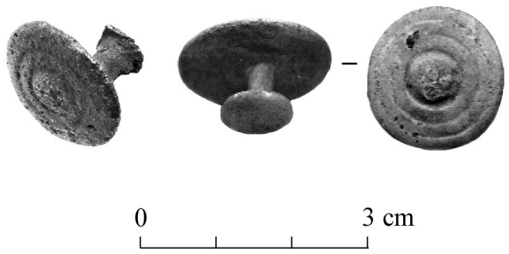

Fig. 2. Bronze buttons from the stone-cist graves of Jõelähtme (AI 5306: 26, 28). Photos by Peeter Kraas (Kriiska et al. 1999).

Joon 2. Pronksnööbid Jõelähtme kivikirstkalmetest. Fotod Peeter Kraas (Kriiska jt 1999).

Amber double buttons

From the stone-cist grave of Loona, Saaremaa, a double button made from amber was found. Its lower plate is flat, the other half is conical, with three grooves decorating the tip (Fig. 3: 1). The button was recovered from between the two stone circles, where it was located near the skull of skeleton XVI. Several more artefacts have been recovered from the Loona stone-cist grave, which are supposed to date from the Late Bronze Age, for example a couple of bone discs and bone pendants, a spade-headed bone pin, some amber artefacts and a bronze awl (Jaanits et al. 1982, fig. 120; Lang 1992, 13; Ots 2006, 74; in print, fig. 3: 17; Luik in print, fig. 10). On the basis of the radiocarbon analysis of

[1] Three toggle-shaped bronze buttons, dated to the same period as the double buttons, were also found from the Jõelähtme cemetery (Kraut 1985, 349, pl. V: 1, 2, 4; compare Baudou 1960, 89–90, pl. XVIII). Two more bronze buttons were found from the hillfort of Iru, but these have not survived. Deciding by the description they were not double buttons but convex, with a loop on the rear side (Lõugas 1970, 128; Lang 1996, 48).

one human bone from the grave[2] the burial site can be dated to the period 900–590 BC (Lang 2007a, 99). According to Lang, the amber double button, as well as other datable finds from this grave resemble the artefact types of period IV of the Scandinavian Bronze Age (Lang 1992, 24; 2007b, 117).

From the Karuste grave at the southern tip of the Sõrve spit, Saaremaa,[3] another presumable fragment of a double button (Fig. 3: 2) was found, which, according to Artur Vassar, was "a round button of amber, with a thick stem" (Vassar 1940/41, 12). In a later writing Vassar (1956, 168) added that it was a button or a knob, which evidently had been a double button. He also alludes to the basic difference between the Karuste knob and double buttons: the transition to the knob is right-angled, not curved as is common with double buttons. It is also possible that it was a knob belonging to a perished artefact made from some other material (e.g. from wood). The find was located in the soil immediately beneath the sod layer, where it fell in the course of the destruction of the grave (Vassar 1940/41, 12). Vassar (1956, 169) dated the grave of Karuste to the 1st–2nd centuries; besides amber, pottery was also found, as well as some bronze bracelets (Lõugas 1970, 389–390). Valter Lang (1996, 297) has expressed an opinion that the grave of Karuste was established already in the Late Bronze Age, which is suggested by the amber button, but it was still used in the Pre-Roman Iron Age and perhaps even later.

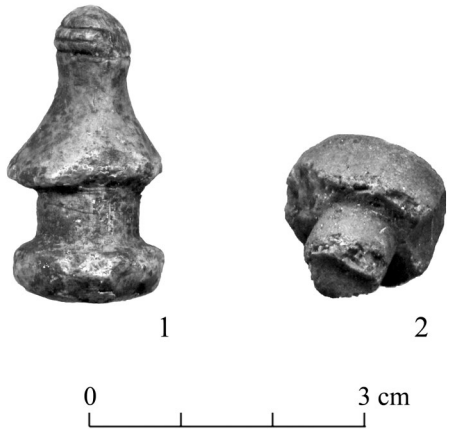

Fig. 3. Amber double buttons from the stone-cist graves of Loona (1 AI 4210: 1421) and Karuste (2 AI 3882: 10). Photo by Mirja Ots.

Joon 3. Merevaigust kaksiknööbid Loona ja Karuste kivikirstkalmest. Foto Mirja Ots.

Antler and bone buttons

Five or six double buttons have been found from the fortified settlement of Asva (Indreko 1939, 43–44, fig. 19: 1; Lõugas 1970, 127, pl. 35: 9–12; Jaanits et al. 1982, fig. 99: 7–10). Five buttons were carved from elk antler, mostly from tine tips, but they vary greatly by the care and level of working (Fig. 4). Their general tutulus shape is the same: one half of the button consists of a plain disc,

[2] 2620 ± 75 (Ua-4823) BP (Lõugas et al. 1996, table II).

[3] The excavations were carried out on archaeological sites of the Karuste village; the grave under discussion was excavated by Vassar under the name of Kahusaadu, or Kahuste.

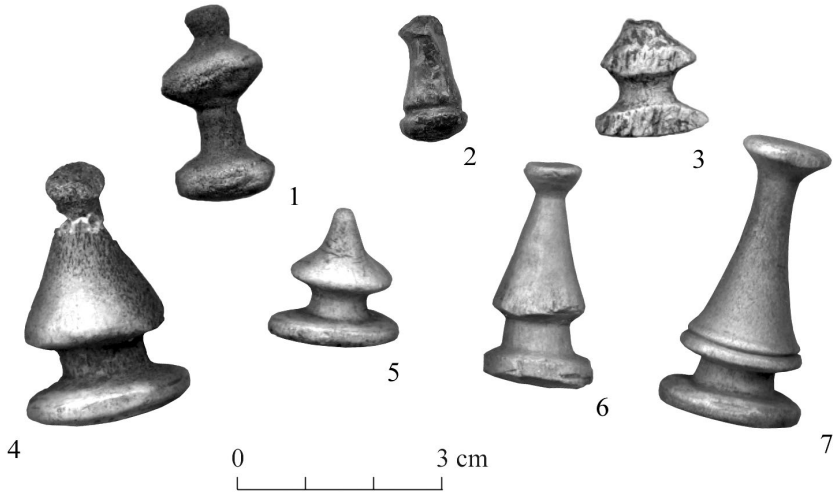

Fig. 4. Antler and bone buttons from the fortified settlements of Asva (1–2, 4–7) and Kaali (3) (1 AI 4366: 663, 2 AI 4366: 1111, 3 AI 4915: 157, 4 AI 4366: 132, 5 AI 4366: 1591, 6 AI 4366: 614, 7 AI 3658: 500). Photo by Heidi Luik.

Joon 4. Sarvest ja luust nööbid Asva (1–2, 4–7) ja Kaali (3) kindlustatud asulast. Foto Heidi Luik.

the other half is conical, mostly with a slightly widening tip. The finest button is very regular, with a groove engraved at the lower edge of the conical part (Fig. 4: 7). Another button, similar by shape but smaller (Fig. 4: 6) is evidently unfinished, since its sides are sporadically faceted, bearing cutting traces, the surface has not been polished. The third button (Fig. 4: 5), smaller than others, is not very regular, its lower half is oval rather than disc-shaped; the surface is polished – probably by use. The fourth button (Fig. 4: 4) is made from antler palmate, not tine tip, and therefore a zone of porous tissue runs through the artefact, being visible also on the surface. At this porous tissue the object is partly crumbled. The fifth button has a relatively long intermediate "stem", the conical upper part is short and ends with a round knob, and porous antler tissue is visible on the greater part of the surface (Fig. 4: 1). The sixth artefact (Fig. 4: 2) is different from the others. It is very small, with one end broken. In the find list (Lõugas 1966) it has been marked as double button but probably it is a broken tip of a bone pin's head (Fig. 5; compare e.g. Граудонис 1967, pl. VIII: 7, 11, 14, 15; Grigalavičienė 1995, fig. 96). It is also conspicuous that, unlike other buttons, the artefact is made of bone – like most pins from Asva. Nevertheless, it should be mentioned that for example in Ķivutkalns, Latvia, amber and bone artefacts of similar shape have been found, which have been interpreted as double buttons (Graudonis 1989, pls X: 5–7, XXV: 17, 18). A rather small, worn and broken button of elk antler was found from Kaali (Fig. 4: 3; Lõugas 1978, 328). It resembles the smallest antler button from Asva (Fig. 4: 5).

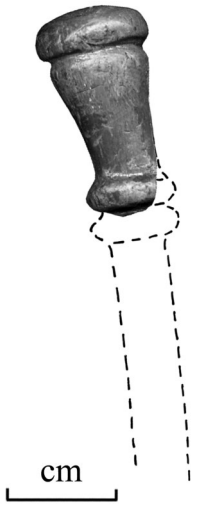

Fig. 5. Small "double button" (AI 4366: 1111) from Asva could more likely be a broken head of a bone pin. Photo by Kersti Siitan.

Joon 5. Asva väike "kaksiknööp" võib pigem olla luust ehtenõela pea. Foto Kersti Siitan.

Richard Indreko (1939, 44) and Vello Lõugas (1970, 127–128) have dated the antler buttons from Asva to period IV of the Scandinavian Bronze Age. According to Valter Lang the double buttons from Asva belong to periods III–IV of the Bronze Age (1300–1100 BC and 1100–900 BC, respectively; Lang 2007a, 22; Lang & Kriiska 2001, 98–99). And yet Lang (1996, 306) suggests also the possibility that double buttons of antler may be later than those of bronze. Uwe Sperling also supports this suggestion: according to him double buttons were found in excavation F (1965–66) of Asva from the earlier (9th–8th centuries) as well as the later (7th–6th centuries) settlement layers. Sperling has expressed an opinion that, notwithstanding certain similarity, direct examples to the antler buttons of Asva cannot be found among the Scandinavian bronze buttons, and, according to him, none of the find groups supports the dating of the beginning of the settlement of Asva to the III and IV periods of the Bronze Age (Sperling 2006, 106–107, 129 ff.). The fortified settlement of Kaali was used in the Late Bronze Age and the early Pre-Roman Iron Age (Lang 2007a, 47).

Analogous finds from the Baltic countries, Scandinavia, etc.

Double buttons of antler are also known from Latvia (Граудонис 1967, pls VII: 12, VIII: 9; Graudonis 1989, pl. XXV: 20, 21; Vasks 1994, 115, pl. IX: 18, 19) and Lithuania (Volkaitė-Kulikauskienė 1986, fig. 39: 1; Grigalavičienė 1995, fig. 100: 1–4). One antler button from Narkūnai has the upper end decorated with three cut lines placed as spokes of a wheel (Bliujienė 2007, fig. 140: 16). In Latvia amber double buttons have been found, some of them with a plain convex upper part but some have the upper part shaped like tutulus (Граудонис 1967, pl. XIX: 6–8, 10; Graudonis 1989, pl. X: 2–5; Bliujienė 2007, fig. 132). From Lithuania amber buttons have been found, which, with certain concessions, could be called double buttons. These are different by shape, with a short middle part and flat convex ends (Klebs 1882, pl. I: 17–19, 21–27; Rimantienė 1999, fig. 47; Butrimas 2001, figs 6: 5; 7: 4–6; Bliujienė 2007, fig. 141). In Latvia blanks of antler and amber buttons or unfinished specimens are also known (Graudonis 1989, pls X: 1, 7, XXV: 19). A tine tip with working traces, probably an unfinished double button, was found from the fortified settlement of Kereliai, Lithuania (Grigalavičienė 1992, fig. 5: 2). Amber double buttons are

known also from Denmark, but bone double buttons have not been found in Nordic countries. The latter were, however, used for example in Germany (Baudou 1960, 87). In Scandinavia, as has been mentioned already, mainly bronze double buttons were spread, different types of which were represented by dozens and even hundreds of specimens (e.g. Baudou 1960, 87–89, pl. XVIII; Lundborg 1972, figs 42, 85, 111b; Strömberg 1982, 142, figs 78: c, g, 80: h, 84: e, 86: c, 92: c; Damell 1985, figs 8¸ 10, 12; Larsson 1986, 36–38, 58–59, fig. 32; Randsborg 1996, fig. 1). A few bronze double buttons have been found also from Finland (Meinander 1954, 49, fig. 36, pl. 12: c, d; Salo 1984, 144, 146).

Find context of double buttons

From Estonia 9–11 double buttons (Table 1) are known at present.[4] All these finds except the two bronze buttons from the Jõelähtme graves come from Saaremaa (Fig. 1). All antler buttons have been found from fortified settlements, most of them from Asva; the few bronze and amber buttons have been found from graves. According to Richard Indreko (1939, 44), double buttons in Denmark and Germany occurred mainly in male burials and only seldom in female graves. According to Evert Baudou (1960, 87), they are found both in male and female burials and also in hoards. For example in the Ingelstorp cemetery, southern Sweden, they are also found in male as well as female graves (Strömberg 1982, 116 ff.). About the few buttons found in Estonian graves it is mostly impossible to establish to whom they belonged. In the grave of Loona the remains of at least 17 skeletons were established (Lang 2007a, 99); the gender and age of skeleton XVI, near which the double button was discovered, were not determined and the skeleton is not preserved. The bronze double buttons of Jõelähtme were, according to Valter Lang, evidently deposited with children's burials. In the cist of grave IX, where one of the double buttons was found, a woman over 50 years of age, a juvenile of 12–13 and a child of 4–6 had been buried; in the cist of the grave XI only children's bones were found (Lang 2007b, 116–117).

Used materials and their possible meaning

Thus double buttons are rare among Estonian Bronze Age finds. Their occurrence in the context of fortified settlements (which were centres of that time) and stone-cist graves (which were burial places of elite) seems to define them as possible prestige items or status symbols, belonging to the elite. Their material also suggests their being highly valued objects. Bronze artefacts of

[4] The fragmentary bone artefact from Asva is, more likely, not a button, and the interpretation as a double button of an artefact found from Karuste is also disputable.

the period are not numerous in Estonia. They are mostly weapons and tools, but some ornaments have also been found, for example decorative pins, fragments of neck-rings, temple ornaments (Jaanits et al. 1982, 151 ff., fig. 105; Lang 1996, 46–48, 283, pl. VII; 2007b, 86 ff.; Sidrys & Luchtanas 1999, 175, fig. 7). It has been supposed that bronze artefacts played an important role in the Bronze Age society, the bronzes constituted one of the ways through which society communicated and reproduced itself (Selling 2005, 41; Earle 2002, 294 ff.). Bronze artefacts as objects imported and/or made by specialised craftsmen were thus prestige items (Selling 2005, 45 ff.; Merkevičius 2005, 48; 2006, 36). Bronze as metal with golden hue is supposed to have been a symbol of the god of sun (Larsson 1999, 14). Amber was also regarded as very valuable material, often possessing symbolic meaning and expressing prestige (e.g. Bliujienė 2007, 532). Compared with the Stone Age it can be observed that amber as material for ornaments gradually lost its importance here in the Baltic countries, but its importance as substance for barter increased and it played a significant role in the Bronze Age trade with central and southern Europe (Kristiansen 1998, 233 ff.; Harding 2000, 187, 189 ff.; Merkevičius 2006, 36, fig. 6; Ots 2006, 105 ff.; in print; Palavestra & Krstić 2006).

Bone and antler artefacts are not rare, elk antler as raw material was easily attainable; from Asva nearly 800 bone and antler artefacts and pieces of production refuse have been found. But in bone and antler artefacts the level of their working was important – whether the artefact was a plain utilitarian object for which a bone of most suitable shape was chosen, or it was a carefully crafted product (Choyke 2005, 131, fig. 2; Luik in print). Antler double buttons undoubtedly belong among the latter. Algimantas Merkevičius has presented a classification of Bronze Age artefacts, in which material occupies an important part. Bone (as well as stone and flint) "copies" of metal artefacts belong to the third group of this classification. He supposes that these artefacts were owned by persons whose social status was higher than the average but lower than the elite; presumably they were not wealthy enough to own metal artefacts, or perhaps they could not use them on account of their status (Merkevičius 2005, 48–49). Antler double buttons imitating Scandinavian bronze ones also belong to this group.

Carefully elaborated bone and antler artefacts could have been valued because of their dazzling white colour, which made a showy contrast against dark fabric or any other material the artefact was attached to (Fig. 6; Becker 2005, 169–170; Luik in print, fig. 6). Possibly rules also existed about who may or may not make or use certain objects and materials (Dobres 1995, 27, 40; 2000, 104; Caple 2006, 10); the making and exploiting of certain artefact types carved from bone or antler could be also limited to a certain group of population. For example Alice Choyke has presumed on the basis of the composition of finds (completed artefacts vs. production refuse) and the location of production refuse (mostly recovered from the central mound) of a Hungarian Bronze Age tell settlement of Jászdózsa–Kápolnahalom, that in the socially differentiated society of the place people of

different social strata could have had different access to antler as valuable raw material, and rules existed about who had the right to gather and store antler, manufacture objects and trade in them; gradually this tendency increased (Choyke 2005, 144). But Timothy Earle (2002, 221, 363) has accentuated that the use of local materials is always more difficult to control than the use of imported ones, and therefore making artefacts from them cannot be monopolised.

Fig. 6. A replica of an antler button (AI 3658: 500) from Asva. Made by Jaana Ratas. Photo by Heidi Luik.

Joon 6. Asva sarvnööbi koopia. Valmistanud Jaana Ratas. Foto Heidi Luik.

According to Colin Renfrew "value" is always, to some extent, "agreed value", it has been determined by people and thus is a social concept. Nothing can be "of value" without being "valued". Although different societies have valued different materials, the latter have been always outstanding for some feature – sufficiently to be noticed and admired (Renfrew 1986, 158; 2002, 133–134). The quality "to be noticed" is certainly characteristic to all three substances used for making double buttons: shiny metal, yellow-orange-red-gleaming amber and dazzling white antler. In the Bronze Age artefacts made from substances brought from afar (bronze, amber) or imitating foreign artefacts became important markers of status (Earle 2002, 51). All double buttons here can be classified to the same category.

Function and meaning of double buttons

Although the function of an artefact itself is also a form of meaning, there could be also meaning as the structured content of ideas and symbols (Hodder & Hutson 2003, 162 ff.; Caple 2006, 6 ff.). What was dominant in double buttons – their practical use or something else?

What were such double buttons used for? One of the suggested possibilities is that they were used to fasten sword belts (Lundborg 1972, 84–85; Harding 2000, 400; Earle 2002, 315), and sometimes, indeed, they occur in the same set with a bronze sword or dagger (e.g. Lundborg 1972, 127–129, figs 23, 82 ff., 95; Strömberg 1982, 116–117, 126, 136, figs 78: a, c, 86: a, c). If this is true, they would also indicate persons of high status. Thomas Larsson, however, suggests that if the function of double buttons was to fasten sword belts, high correlation between double buttons and sword finds should be observable in burials, but in Late Bronze Age Scandinavia burials containing both double button and sword

are quite rare (Larsson 1986, 59). In Estonia the few found double buttons are not connected with sword finds.[5] This field of use would be certainly unsuitable for amber buttons, which are too fragile and would break. Naturally, double buttons could have the function of fastening, i.e. be used just as buttons. But the tutulus shape[6] of the buttons seems to indicate a certain symbolic as well as decorative function. For instance in Lithuania buttons which have one conical half are called *tutulas* (see Grigalavičienė 1995, fig. 100: 1–4, compare also fig. 101: 9). An artefact could have been also shaped as a double button just to attach it to a costume as an ornament and/or symbol. Especially some Scandinavian bronze double buttons seem very impractical because of their length (e.g. Lundborg 1972, figs 18: 2, 111: b; Larsson 1986, fig. 32, on the right; Kristiansen 1998, fig. 85, on the right).[7] The conical shape of tutulus was used on several artefacts in the Bronze Age (e.g. Randsborg 1996, fig. 1; Kristiansen 1998, fig. 86) and evidently it had some symbolic meaning.

In the Bronze Age religion in Scandinavia, the cult of sun occupied an important place. According to Kristian Kristiansen and Thomas Larsson, the bronze discs found in Scandinavian Bronze Age burials could symbolise the sun; women who have bronze discs (which may be also in a shape of tutulus or wheel-cross) placed upon their stomach in the grave are regarded as sun priestesses (Kristiansen & Larsson 2005, 294 ff., figs 135–137). The earlier Scandinavian flat bronze double buttons are often decorated with patterns of relief concentric circles, spiral and star motifs (e.g. Baudou 1960, 87, pl. XVIII; Lundborg 1972, figs 42, 61, 85, 95; Larsson 1986, 37; 1999, 9–10), which probably can be also related to the sun (e.g. Kristiansen 1998, fig. 89; Harding 2000, 324; Larsson 1999; Kristiansen & Larsson 2005, 303). Here it should be recalled that the pattern of a wheel or spokes is engraved on an antler double button found from Narkūnai, Lithuania – the wheel or wheel-cross motif is also related to the sun, it has been presumed that it might symbolise the chariot of the sun god travelling across the sky (e.g. Larsson 1999, 10 ff.; Randsborg 1999, 29; Bąbel 2000, 181, fig. 4: a–g; Bouzek 2000, 346, fig. 1; Hänsel 2000, 334 ff., fig. 1 ff.; Kristiansen & Larsson 2005, 294 ff.). Tutulus-shaped buttons could also express sun symbolism, as well as decorative pins of bronze, with disc-shaped heads decorated with concentric circles, and spiral-headed pins (e.g. Baudou 1960, pls XVI, XVII; Damell 1985, figs 29, 35; Grigalavičienė 1995, fig. 101: 3, 11; Sidrys & Luchtanas 1999, fig. 1: 4; Dabrowski 2004, fig. 10); sometimes decorative pins with tutulus-

[5] In Estonia only two bronze sword fragments are known from the Tehumardi hoard (Jaanits et al. 1982, fig. 106: 1, 2), which was an assemblage of scrap metal meant to be recast, and one whole sword, the circumstances of discovery of which are not known (Lang & Jonuks 2001).

[6] Tutuli occur in quite large numbers e.g. in southern Sweden (Larsson 1986, 38 ff., fig. 16). In Estonia a bronze tutulus was found from Tuula near Keila (Jaanits et al. 1982, fig. 106: 8).

[7] Kristiansen and Larsson have accentuated that the costume and decorations of the Bronze Age Scandinavian elite were rather uncomfortable, whereby even the most grotesque ornaments were used daily, which is suggested by wear traces observable on them (Kristiansen & Larsson 2005, 351).

shaped heads are also found (e.g. Grigalavičienė 1995, fig. 101: 2; Dabrowski 2004, fig. 10). On Estonian Bronze Age ornaments concentric circles and spirals can be observed as well. From Asva and Kaali some decorative pins of the Härnev type, with large disc-shaped head decorated with concentric circles, have been found (Jaanits et al. 1982, 151 ff., fig. 105: 7; Sperling 2006, 118, pl. V: 1); in stone-cist graves, generally poor in finds, bronze spiral temple ornaments are one of the few represented find types (e.g. Lang 1992, 22, pl. III: 2, 3; 2007b, 173). As mentioned already, bronze, being metal of golden hue, could have symbolised the sun god. Amber can be also related with sun symbolism, owing to its particular colour and gleam. In this connection an amber disc attached to a handle and found from Denmark should be mentioned. When looking at the sun through this disc, the wheel-cross – symbol of the sun – on it, otherwise hardly detectable, becomes clearly visible. It has been suggested that this disc symbolises the sun (Kristiansen & Larsson 2005, 302–303). Eduard Šturms (1956, 15) has suggested the relating of amber to the sun already earlier; his supposition is based on amber discs spread in the area of the Globular Amphora Culture, which are ornamented with wheel-cross motifs. He regarded the wheel-cross as well as the dotted zigzags and lines, etc., as symbols of the sun and confirmation of the existence of the sun cult. Later this idea has been expanded to all amber discs and sometimes also to amber in general (Ots 2006, 127 and references there, 137–138; Bliujienė 2007, 532).

In the Late Bronze Age, Scandinavia prevailed among the foreign contacts of Estonian coastal inhabitants, the influence of which appears mainly in the bronze artefacts found here; the unequal mutual dependence between centre and periphery could have induced changes in the society, ideology and economy of the latter (see Lang 2007a, 81; 2007b, 191, 198). The double buttons found here are apparently either brought from Scandinavia (bronze buttons) or manufactured in the Baltic countries following Scandinavian patterns (antler and amber buttons). Double buttons are not the only artefacts coming from Scandinavia as a Bronze Age centre, which were imitated on the eastern shore of the Baltic. There are, for instance, bone pins the shape of which resembles Scandinavian bronze pins of the same period (Lõugas 1970, 129 ff., table 5, pl. 34; Lang 2007b, 191). Some Scandinavian artefact types have been replicated in the Baltic countries also in bronze, e.g. decorative pins of the Härnev type (mould fragments for which have been found in Asva) and axes of the Mälar type (moulds for which occur in eastern Lithuania, for example in the fortified settlement of Narkūnai) (Volkaitė-Kulikauskienė 1986, 33, fig. 49; Lang 2007b, 89–90). Undoubtedly the occurrence of such finds indicates frequent contacts between these districts and one may presume that together with shape and style of material objects notions, meanings or tenets connected with such objects may have been adopted as well.[8] As Ian Hodder and Scott Hutson put it (2003, 140), objects and styles taken over from other groups are given meaning in their new context; these meanings may be relied on meanings from the old context and also may bring these meanings with them.

[8] About adoption or rejection of foreign cultural elements see e.g. Lang 2007b, 196–197.

Double buttons may probably reflect the sun cult, which was widely spread in Scandinavia – presumably it played an important role also in Estonian Bronze Age religion (Jonuks 2005, 90). The formation of the sun cult has been related to the spread of cultivation (Lõugas 1996, 101; see e.g. Данилов 1982) and in Estonia the connection of stone-cist graves with sun symbolism has been supposed. Vello Lõugas has suggested that the orientation of the central cist in the stone-cist graves, where the deceased were buried with their heads towards North – facing the sun – was connected with the worshipping of the sun (Lõugas 1996, 102 ff.). Valter Lang (2007b, 181; compare also Lõugas 1996, 143) has also presumed that the shape of stone-cist grave – a circle with a cist in the centre – could have been regarded as a symbol of the sun.[9] Lang suggests that this presumable sun cult had regressed or transformed already by the end of the Bronze Age. This possibility is indicated for example by the changes in the construction of stone-cist graves (Lang 2007b, 180–181). Kristiansen and Larsson have expressed an opinion that the sun cult, which occupied an important part in the Bronze Age religion and cosmology, particularly in northern Europe, remained basically unchanged until about 600 BC, or perhaps a little longer, when social and economic changes in central and northern Europe led to the decay of the Bronze Age cosmology and institutions (Kristiansen & Larsson 2005, 319).

As was already mentioned, the bronze sun discs were attributes related to sun priestesses. Maybe double buttons in Scandinavia, where they are found in large numbers, were also connected with sun symbolism – although not as markers of very special persons like the large bronze discs were, but nevertheless demonstrating the relation or connection of the wearer with religion. But what was the meaning of Estonian double buttons? Owing to their rarity they could have had a more particular role and meaning here. Maybe the few specimens here marked persons whose status was high in some religious context. However, the opposite is also possible – that an artefact type adopted from abroad acquired a completely different meaning here. Double buttons as imported artefacts or their imitations could have externalised primarily the status and influence of the owner, through his ability to acquire such an artefact. But in regard of the religiousness of people of that time (Lang 2007b, 179) status and position connected with power and religion could have been entwined.

As mentioned before, the find context of double buttons – stone-cist graves and fortified settlements – also indicates their possible belonging to the elite. In Jõelähtme both buttons were found in a central cist of a grave. Their belonging to children has been presumed[10] but in the cist of one of the graves a woman over 50 had been buried alongside with a child and a juvenile. The possibility must

[9] About sun symbolism in Scandinavian Bronze Age graves see e.g. Kristiansen & Larsson 2005, 242, 246, fig. 111.

[10] According to Lang (2007b, 119) children's burials occur, which, relying upon the deposited grave goods (e.g. imported artefacts, including also double buttons) seem to indicate a somewhat higher social status of some children, or particular attention paid to them for some reason during the funeral.

also be considered that grave goods were not the possessions of the buried persons but gifts given by the mourners (Brück 2006, 77). In the Loona grave the skeleton near which the amber button was found evidently belonged to an adult; two star-shaped amber artefacts were also found near the same skeleton (Ots 2006, 74), which suggests his/her special position, or a special attitude towards him/her, although the person was not buried in the central cist. The Loona grave is outstanding for its rich find material, in contrast with the general scarceness of finds in the graves of that period; the same can be said about the graves of Jõelähtme (Lang 2007a, 59, 99). The fortified settlement of Asva was evidently one of the most important centres in Estonia in the Late Bronze Age, which is primarily indicated by the numerous fragments of bronze-casting moulds found there; the Kaali settlement with its relatively few finds and unusual location has been regarded as a cult site rather than a common settlement (Lang 2007a, 44–45, 47–48, 89; 2007b, 44–45, 55–56).

Summary

Double buttons made from different materials are rare finds in Estonia. The find context as well as the appearance of these objects suggest their having belonged to the elite and possessed a certain symbolic value. Probably their material also had a certain meaning. Both bronze and amber were imported goods in Estonia; antler was local raw material but since it was considered valuable, its use has been sometimes regulated. Without precluding the possibility that double buttons could have had the function of a button, i.e. means of fastening, their symbolic meaning was apparently more important. Regarding the shape, material and motifs used for their decoration we presume that it could have been connected with the sun cult of the Bronze Age.

Acknowledgements

The research was financed by the Estonian Science Foundation (grant No 6898). We are grateful to Valter Lang for his comments and advice on the preliminary version of the manuscript. The authors wish to thank Jaana Ratas, who made the replica, Liis Soon, who translated the text, and Kersti Siitan, who prepared and elaborated the illustrations.

References

Bąbel, J. 2000. Rytualne znaczienie niektórych północnoeuropejskich brzytew z epoki brązu. Próba interpretacji. – Kultura symboliczna kręgu pól popielnicowych epoki brązu i wczesnej epoki żelaza w Europie środkowej. (Prace Komisji Archeologicznej, 13. Biskupińskie Prace Archeologiczne, 1.) Eds B. Gediga & D. Piotrowska. Warszawa, 157–182.

Baudou, E. 1960. Die regionale und chronologische Einteilung der jüngeren Bronzezeit im Nordischen Kreis. (Acta Universitatis Stokholmiensis. Studies in North-European Archaeology, 1.) Almqvist & Wiksell, Stockholm.
Becker, C. 2005. Spindle whorls or buttons? Ambiguous bone artefacts from Bronze Age *castelliere* on Istria. – From Hooves to Horns, from Mollusc to Mammoth. Manufacture and Use of Bone Artefacts from Prehistoric Times to the Present. Proceedings of the 4th Meeting of the ICAZ Worked Bone Research Group at Tallinn, 26th–31st of August 2003. (MT, 15.) Eds H. Luik et al. Tallinn, 157–174.
Bliujienė, A. 2007. Lietuvos priešistorės gintaras. Versus aureus, Vilnius.
Bouzek, J. 2000. Versuch einer Rekonstruktion des Pantheons der Urnenfelderzeit. – Kultura symboliczna kręgu pól popielnicowych epoki brązu i wczesnej epoki żelaza w Europie środkowej. (Prace Komisji Archeologicznej, 13. Biskupińskie Prace Archeologiczne, 1.) Eds B. Gediga & D. Piotrowska. Warszawa, 345–354.
Brück, J. 2006. Death, exchange and reproduction in the British Bronze Age. – European Journal of Archaeology, 9: 1, 73–101.
Butrimas, A. 2001. The amber ornament collection from Daktariškė 5 Neolithic settlement. – Baltic Amber. Proceedings of the International Interdisciplinary Conference Baltic Amber in Natural Sciences, Archaeology and Applied Arts, 13–18 September 2001, Vilnius, Palanga, Nida. (Acta Academiae Artium Vilnensis, 22.) Ed. A. Butrimas. Vilnius, 7–19.
Caple, C. 2006. Objects. Reluctant Witnesses to the Past. Routledge, London.
Choyke, A. M. 2005. Bronze Age bone and antler working at the Jászdózsa–Kápolnahalom Tell. – From Hooves to Horns, from Mollusc to Mammoth. Manufacture and Use of Bone Artefacts from Prehistoric Times to the Present. Proceedings of the 4th Meeting of the ICAZ Worked Bone Research Group at Tallinn, 26th–31st of August 2003. (MT, 15.) Eds H. Luik et al. Tallinn, 129–156.
Dabrowski, J. 2004. Ältere Bronzezeit in Polen. Instytut Archeologii i Etnologii Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Warszawa.
Damell, D. 1985. Bronsålder i Södermanland. Undersökta gravar och gravfält från Södermanlands bronsålder och tidigaste järnålder. En kortfattad översikt. (Södermanlands museum. Rapport, 7.) Nyköping.
Dobres, M.-A. 1995. Gender and prehistoric technology: on the social agency of technical strategies. – Symbolic Aspects of Early Technologies. (World Archaeology, 27: 1.) Ed. S. Shennan. Routledge, London, 25–49.
Dobres, M.-A. 2000. Technology and Social Agency. Outlining a Practice Framework for Archaeology. Blackwell Publishers, Oxford.
Earle, T. 2002. Bronze Age Economics. The Beginning of Political Economies. Westview Press, Oxford.
Graudonis, J. 1989. Nocietinātās apmetnes Daugavas lejtecē. Zinātne, Rīga.
Grigalavičienė, E. 1992. Kerelių piliakalnis. – Straipsnių rinkinys. (Lietuvos archeologija, 8.) Mokslas, Vilnius, 85–105.
Grigalavičienė, E. 1995. Žalvario ir ankstyvasis geležies amžius Lietuvoje. Mokslo ir Enciklopedijų Leidykla, Vilnius.
Hänsel, B. 2000. Die Götter Griechenlands und die südost- bis mitteleuropäische Spätbronzezeit. – Kultura symboliczna kręgu pól popielnicowych epoki brązu i wczesnej epoki żelaza w Europie środkowej. (Prace Komisji Archeologicznej, 13. Biskupińskie Prace Archeologiczne, 1.) Eds B. Gediga & D. Piotrowska. Warszawa, 331–344.
Harding, A. F. 2000. European Societies in the Bronze Age. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
Hodder, I. & Hutson, S. 2003. Reading the Past: Current Approaches to Interpretation in Archaeology. 3rd edition. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
Indreko, R. 1939. Asva linnus-asula. – Muistse Eesti linnused. 1936.–1938. a. uurimiste tulemused. Ed. H. Moora. Õpetatud Eesti Selts, Tartu, 17–52.
Jaanits, L. et al. 1982. Eesti esiajalugu. Eesti Raamat, Tallinn.
Jonuks, T. 2005. Principles of Estonian prehistoric religion: with special emphasis to soul beliefs. – Culture and Material Culture. Papers from the first theoretical seminar of the Baltic archaeologists

(BASE) held at the University of Tartu, Estonia, October 17th–19th, 2003. (Interarchaeologia, 1.) Ed. V. Lang. Tartu, 87–95.
Klebs, R. 1882. Der Bernsteinschmuck der Steinzeit von der Baggerei bei Schwarzort und anderen Lokalitäten Preussens aus den Sammlungen der Firma Stantien & Becker und der physikalisch-ökonomischen Gesellschaft. Universitäts-Buch- und Steindruckerei von A. J. Dalkowski, Königsberg.
Kraut, A. 1985. Die Steinkistengräber von Jõelähtme. – TATÜ, 4, 348–350.
Kriiska, A., Jonuks, T. & Kraas, P. 1999. Eesti muinasesemed. Tartu. http://ornament.dragon.ee/muinasesemed
Kristiansen, K. 1998. Europe before History. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
Kristiansen, K. & Larsson, T. B. 2005. The Rise of Bronze Age Society: Travels, Transmissions and Transformations. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
Lang, V. 1992. Eesti labidaspeaga luunõelte dateerimisest. – Stilus, 1, 8–32.
Lang, V. 1996. Muistne Rävala. Muistised, kronoloogia ja maaviljelusliku asustuse kujunemine Loode-Eestis, eriti Pirita jõe alamjooksu piirkonnas. (MT, 4.) Tallinn.
Lang, V. 2007a. Baltimaade pronksi- ja rauaaeg. Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus, Tartu.
Lang, V. 2007b. Pronksiaeg ja vanem rauaaeg Eestis. Tartu. http://www.arheo.ut.ee/EA3.htm
Lang, V. & Jonuks, T. 2001. Vajangu pronksmõõk. – EAA, 5: 2, 148–153.
Lang, V. & Kriiska, A. 2001. Eesti esiaja periodiseering ja kronoloogia. – EAA, 5: 2, 83–109.
Larsson, T. B. 1986. The Bronze Age Metalwork in Southern Sweden. Aspects of Social and Spatial Organization 1800–500 B.C. (Archaeology and Environment, 6.) University of Umeå, Umeå.
Larsson, T. B. 1999. Symbols in a European Bronze Age cosmology. – Communication in Bronze Age Europe. Transactions of the Bronze Age Symposium in Tanumstrand, Bohuslän, Sweden, September 7–10, 1995. (The Museum of National Antiquities, Stockholm. Studies, 9.) Ed. C. Orrling. Statens Historiska Museum, Stockholm, 9–16.
Lõugas, L., Lidén, K. & Nelson, E. 1996. Resource utilization along the Estonian coast during the Stone Age. – Coastal Estonia. Recent Advances in Environmental and Cultural History. (PACT, 51.) Eds T. Hackens et al. Council of Europe, Rixensart, 399–420.
Lõugas, V. 1966. Asva Linnamäe 1966. a. kaevamiste aruanne. Manuscript in the Institute of History, Tallinn University.
Lõugas, V. 1970. Eesti varane metalliaeg (II a.-tuh. keskpaigast e.m.a. – 1. sajandini m.a.j.). Diss. kand. Manuscript in the Institute of History, Tallinn University.
Lõugas, V. 1978. Von der vorläufigen Datierung der Burg Kaali. – TATÜ, 4, 327–329.
Lõugas, V. 1996. Kaali kraatriväljal Phaethonit otsimas. Eesti Entsüklopeediakirjastus, Tallinn.
Luik, H. In print. Dazzling white. Bone artefacts in Bronze Age society – some preliminary thoughts from Estonia. – Colours of Archaeology. Material Culture and Society. Papers from the second theoretical seminar of the Baltic archaeologists (BASE) held in Padvaria, October 20–22, 2005. (Interarchaeologia, 2.) Ed. A. Merkevičius. Vilnius.
Lundborg, L. 1972. Undersökningar av bronsåldershögar och bronzåldersgravar i södra Halland. Höks, Tönnersjö och Halmstads härader under åren 1854–1970. (Hallands museum, 2.) Halmstad.
Meinander, C. F. 1954. Die Bronzezeit in Finnland. (SMYA, 54.)
Merkevičius, A. 2005. Material culture and the East Baltic Bronze Age society. – Culture and Material Culture, 39–52.
Merkevičius, A. 2006. The Vaškai hoard. – Archaeologia Baltica, 6, 32–38.
Ots, M. 2006. Merevaiguleiud Baltimaade kivi- ja pronksiaja muististes. M.A. thesis. Manuscript in the Institute of History, Tallinn University and in the University of Tartu. http://dspace.utlib.ee/dspace/bitstream/10062/190/1/otsmirja.pdf
Ots, M. In print. Changes in the use of amber in Estonia and the neighbouring countries in the Bronze Age. – Amber in Archaeology. Proceedings of the fourth International Conference on Amber in Archaeology in Belgrade, 2006. Eds I. B. Beck et al. Belgrade.
Palavestra, A. & Krstić, V. 2006. The Magic of Amber. (Archaeological Monographies, 18.) National Museum, Belgrade.
Randsborg, K. 1996. The Nordic Bronze Age: chronological dimensions. – Acta Archaeologica, 67. Acta Archaeologica Supplementa, 1, 61–72.

Randsborg, K. 1999. Kivik powers of communication. – Communication in Bronze Age Europe, 23–32.
Renfrew, C. 1986. Varna and the emergence of wealth in prehistoric Europe. – The Social Life of Things. Commodities in Cultural Perspective. Ed. A. Appadurai. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 141–168.
Renfrew, C. 2002. Symbol before concept. Material engagement and the early development of society. – Archaeological Theory Today. Ed. I. Hodder. Polity, Cambridge, 122–140.
Rimantienė, R. 1999. Die Kurische Nehrung aus dem Blickwinkel des Archäologen. Übersetzt von R. Kibelka. Vilniaus Dailes Akademijos Leidykla, Vilnius.
Salo, U. 1984. Pronssikausi ja rautakauden alku. (Suomen historia, 1.) Kivikausi. Pronssikausi ja rautakauden alku. Keski- ja myöhäisrautakausi. Eds E. Laaksonen et al. Weilin+Göös, Espoo.
Selling, S. 2005. At opposite ends? Cairns and bronzes as disparate displais of power in Bronze Age western Sweden. – Lund Archaeological Review, 2003–2004, 8–9, 41–56.
Sidrys, R. V. & Luchtanas, A. 1999. Shining axes, spiral pins. Early metal consumption in the East Baltic. – Acta Archaeologica, 70, 165–184.
Sperling, U. 2006. Die Spätbronze- und früheisenzeitliche Siedlung von Asva in Estland. M.A. thesis. Manuscript in the Freie Universität Berlin and in the Institute of History, Tallinn University.
Strömberg, M. 1982. Ingelstorp. Zur Siedlungsentwicklung eines südswedischen Dorfes. (Acta Archaeologica Lundensia, series in 4°: 14.) Rudolf Habelt Verlag, CWK Gleerup, Bonn.
Šturms, E. 1956. Der Bernsteinschmuck der östlichen Amphorenkultur. – Rheinische Forschungen zur Vorgeschichte. Band 5. Documenta archeologica: Wolfgang La Baume dedicata. Eds H. Kühn & O. Kleemann. Röhrscheid, Bonn, 13–20.
Vasks, A. 1994. Brikuļu nocietinātā apmetne. Lubāna zemiene vēlajā bronzas un dzelzs laikmetā (1000. g. pr. Kr.–1000. g. pēc Kr.). Preses Nams, Rīga.
Vassar, A. 1940/41. Kaevamisaruanne Jämaja khk. Torgu vl. Karuste külas 1940. a. Manuscript the Institute of History, Tallinn University.
Vassar, A. 1956. Lisandeid eesti hõimude uurimisele Lääne- ja Edela-Eestis I–IV sajandil. – Eesti rahva etnilisest ajaloost. Ed. H. Moora. Eesti Riiklik Kirjastus, Tallinn, 160–190.
Volkaitė-Kulikauskienė, R. 1986. Narkunų didžiojo piliakalnio tyrinėjimų rezultatai (Apatinis kultūrinis šluoksnis). – Ankstyvieji šiaurės rytų Lietuvos piliakalniai. (Lietuvos archeologija, 5.) Mokslas, Vilnius, 5–49.

Граудонис Я. 1967. Латвия в эпоху поздней бронзы и раннего железа. Начало разложения первобытно-общинного строя. Зинатне, Рига.
Данилов О. В. 1982. Культ солнца у ананьинцев. – Вопросы этнической истории в первобытную эпоху. Межвузовский сборник. Ed. В. С. Патрушев. Марийский Государственный Университет, Йошкар-Ола, 57–64.

Heidi Luik ja Mirja Ots

KAKSIKNÖÖBID EESTI PRONKSIAEGSES LEIUAINESES

Resümee

Eesti pronksiaegses leiuaineses tuleb ette erinevast materjalist – pronksist, merevaigust ja sarvest – esemeid, mida tavaliselt nimetatakse kaksiknööpideks. Selliste leidude arv on väike, vaid kümmekond eset (joon 1, tabel 1). Pronksist kaksiknööbid olid levinud peamiselt Skandinaavia pronksikultuuri keskuses, kust ilmselt ongi toodud Eesti alale Jõelähtme kivikirstkalmetest leitud kaks pronksnööpi. Huvitav on asjaolu, et selliseid esemeid hakati Läänemere idakaldal koha-

peal valmistama, kasutades selleks kohalikke materjale – sarve ja merevaiku. Kuigi neid on nööpideks nimetatud, pole päris selge, milleks neid ikkagi kasutati. Kas oli peamine praktiline kasutamisvõimalus kinnitusvahendina või oli olulisem miski muu? Olid need ehted või kultusesemed, kas neil võis olla mingi sümboolne tähendus? Nööpide silmatorkava välimuse põhjal otsustades võib oletada, et neid kasutati ka dekoratiivsel eesmärgil või teatud sümbolitena sotsiaalses kommunikatsioonis. Kas kohalikest materjalidest koopiad viitavad sellele, et koos esemetüübiga võeti omaks ka mingeid tähendusi, arusaamu või uskumusi, mida need esemed sümboliseerisid? Võib-olla oli mingi tähendus ka materjalidel, millest kaksiknööpe valmistati?

Kaksiknööpe tehti tavaliselt pronksist, kuid Eestist on praeguseks teada ainult kaks pronksist eksemplari, need on leitud Põhja-Eestist Jõelähtme kivikirstkalmetest. Mõlemad nööbid on väikese alumise ja suurema lameda ülemise plaadiga, mis on kaunistatud kontsentriliste reljeefsete ringjoontega (joon 2). Nööbid on saadud IX ja XI kalmest ning dateeritud 9.–8. sajandiga eKr, tõenäoliselt on need Eestisse toodud Lõuna-Skandinaaviast.

Saaremaalt Loona kivikirstkalmest on leitud merevaigust kaksiknööp, mille kooniline tipuosa on kaunistatud kolme soonega (joon 3: 1). Nööp saadi kalme kahe kiviringi vaheliselt alalt XVI luustiku kolju juurest. Samast kalmest leiti teisigi arvatavasti nooremasse pronksiaega kuuluvaid esemeid. Kalme ühest inimluust võetud proovi radiosüsinikuanalüüsi põhjal on matmispaik dateeritud ajavahemikuga 900–590 aastat eKr. Sõrve sääre lõunatipus asuvast Karuste kalmest on leitud veel üks oletatav kaksiknööbi katke (joon 3: 2). Artur Vassar dateeris kalme 1.–2. sajandiga, lisaks merevaigule leiti keraamikat ja pronksist käevõrude katkeid. Valter Langi arvates rajati Karuste kalme juba nooremal pronksiajal, kuid sinna maeti ka eelrooma rauaaja teisel poolel ja võib-olla hiljemgi.

Asva pronksiaegsest kindlustatud asulast on teada viis või kuus kaksiknööpi. Viis nööpi on nikerdatud põdrasarvest, kuid töötlemise hoolikuselt ja tasemelt on need küllaltki erinevad (joon 4: 1, 4–7). Üldkuju on kõigil sarnane, nn tutulusekujuline: nööbi ühe poole moodustab lihtne kettakujuline osa, teine pool on kooniline. Teistest erinev on kuues, luust ese (joon 4: 2), mida leiunimekirjas on küll nimetatud kaksiknööbiks, kuid pigem võib see olla luust nõelapea murdunud ots (joon 5). Üks väike, kulunud ja katkine põdrasarvest nööp on teada Kaalist (joon 4: 3). Asvas on kaksiknööpe leitud nii varasemast (9.–8. sajand) kui ka hilisemast (7.–6. sajand) asustuskihist, Kaali kasutusajaks oli hilispronksiaeg ja eelrooma rauaaja algus.

Sarvest ja merevaigust kaksiknööpe on teada samuti Lätist ja Leedust, kust on leitud ka sarvest ning merevaigust nööpide toorikuid ja lõpetamata eksemplare. Merevaigust kaksiknööpe on ka Taanist, kuid luust kaksiknööpe pole Põhjamaadest leitud, viimased olid siiski kasutusel näiteks Saksamaal. Skandinaavias olid levinud peamiselt pronksist kaksiknööbid, üksikuid pronksnööpe on leitud ka Soomest.

Eestis teadaolevast kümmekonnast kaksiknööbist on enamik leitud Saaremaalt (tabel 1, joon 1). Kõik sarvest nööbid on saadud kindlustatud asulatest, üksikud pronks- ja merevaiknööbid aga kalmetest. Naabermaades leidub kaksiknööpe nii

mehe- kui ka naisematustes. Eesti kalmetest leitud väheste nööpide puhul pole enamasti võimalik kindlaks teha, kellele need kuulusid. Langi hinnangul on Jõelähtme pronksist kaksiknööbid ilmselt lastele kaasa pandud.

Eesti väheste kaksiknööpide esinemine kindlustatud asulate kui tolleaegsete keskuste ja kivikirstkalmete – eliidi matusepaikade – kontekstis viitab neile kui võimalikele eliidile kuulunud prestiižesemetele või staatuse sümbolitele. Ka nende valmistamiseks kasutatud materjali põhjal võib oletada, et tegu oli väärtuslikuks peetud esemetega. Arvatakse, et pronksesemetel oli pronksiaegses ühiskonnas oluline roll: imporditud ja/või spetsialiseerunud käsitööliste tehtud objektidena olid need prestiižesemed. Pronksi kui kuldse värvusega metalli võidi pidada päikesejumala sümboliks, merevaiku peeti samuti väärtuslikuks, sümboolseks ja prestiižseks materjaliks. Luu- ja sarvesemed ei ole küll haruldased, kuid nende puhul on oluline, kuidas ese on valmistatud: kas tegu on lihtsa, minimaalselt töödeldud tarbeesemega või hoolikalt meisterdatud esemega. Sarvest kaksiknööbid kuuluvad kahtlemata viimasesse kategooriasse. Selliseid luu- ja sarvesemeid võidi väärtuslikuks pidada säravvalge värvuse tõttu, mis tekitas kontrasti tumeda kanga või muu materjaliga, millele ese kinnitati (joon 6). Tõenäoliselt kehtisid reeglid selle kohta, kes mida ja millest tohtis või ei tohtinud valmistada ning kasutada; ka luust või sarvest nikerdatud teatud esemetüüpide valmistamine ja kasutamine võis olla piiratud kindla elanikkonna rühmaga.

Colin Renfrew' väitel on väärtus alati teatud määral kokkuleppeline, see on määratud inimeste poolt ja on seega sotsiaalne mõiste. Kuigi eri ühiskondades on väärtuslikuks peetud eri materjale, on need alati millegi poolest silmapaistvad – nõnda, et neid märgatakse. Omadus "olla märgatud" on iseloomulik kõigile kolmele materjalile, millest kaksiknööpe valmistati: läikiv metall, kollaselt-oranžilt-punaselt kumav merevaik ja säravvalge sarv. Pronksiajal said Euroopas olulisteks staatuse märkijateks esemed, mis olid tehtud kaugelt toodud materjalist (pronks, merevaik), või ka need, mis kopeerisid välismaiseid esemeid. Kõik siinsed kaksiknööbid võib arvata kuuluvaiks nendesse kategooriatesse.

Milleks kaksiknööpe kasutati? On oletatud, et neid võidi tarvitada mõõgavöö kinnitamiseks, sest mõnikord esinevad kaksiknööbid tõesti ühes leiukompleksis pronksmõõga või -pistodaga. Siiski on Skandinaavias teada suhteliselt vähe matuseid, kus leidub nii kaksiknööp kui ka mõõk. Kindlasti ei sobiks selline kasutusvaldkond merevaigust nööpidele, mis on liiga õrnad. Muidugi võisid kaksiknööbid olla kinnitusvahendid, kuid nende välimus võib viidata ka sümboolsele ja/või dekoratiivsele funktsioonile. Esemele antud kaksiknööbi kuju võis olla mõeldud lihtsalt selleks, et seda saaks ehte või sümbolina rõivaste külge kinnitada.

Skandinaavia pronksiaegses usundis oli olulisel kohal päikesekultus. Kristian Kristianseni ja Thomas Larssoni hinnangul võisid pronkskettad Skandinaavia pronksiaegsetes matustes sümboliseerida päikeseketast. Skandinaavia varasematel lamedatel pronksist kaksiknööpidel leidub kontsentrilistest ringidest ja tähekujulist ornamenti ning spiraalimotiivi, mida võib arvatavasti samuti päikesega seostada. Sama sümboolika väljendajateks võib ehk pidada ka tutulusekujulisi nööpe. Päikesesümboolikaga seostatakse ka merevaiku, millele on omane eriline värvus ja läbikumavus. Eduards Šturms pidas päikesesümboliteks ratasristi motiiviga kau-

nistatud merevaigust kettaid, mis olid levinud keraamforate kultuuri alal, hiljem on seda ideed laiendatud kõigile merevaigust ketastele ja merevaigule üldisemalt.

Nooremal pronksiajal oli Eesti rannikualade elanike domineerivaks välisühenduste suunaks Skandinaavia, mille mõju avaldub eelkõige siit leitud pronksesemetes; nn asümmeetriline sõltuvus keskuse ja perifeeria vahel võis viimases esile kutsuda muutusi ühiskonnas, ideoloogias ning majanduses. Siinsete kaksiknööpide puhul on tegu Skandinaaviast toodud või sealsete eeskujude põhjal kohapeal valmistatud esemetega. Kaksiknööbid ei ole ainsad Skandinaaviast kui pronksiaegsest keskusest pärit esemed, mida Läänemere idakaldal jäljendama hakati. Leidub näiteks luunõelu, mis kopeerivad samaaegseid pronksnõelu. Skandinaaviast pärit esemetüüpe on Baltimaades järele tehtud ka pronksist (näiteks Härnevi tüüpi ehtenõelu ja Mälari tüüpi kirveid). Selliste leidude olemasolu viitab tihedale suhtlemisele nende piirkondade vahel ja võib oletada, et koos materiaalsete objektide kuju ning stiiliga võidi üle võtta ka nendega seotud arusaamu, tähendusi või uskumusi. Kaksiknööpides võib ehk kajastuda Skandinaavias laialdaselt levinud päikesekultus – arvatavasti oli see olulisel kohal ka Eesti pronksiaegses usundis. Päikesekultuse tekkimist seostatakse viljelusmajanduse levikuga ja Eestis on päikesega seotud sümboolikat oletatud seoses kivikirstkalmetega. Vello Lõugase arvates on kivikirstkalmete keskse kirstu orientatsioon, kus surnu on maetud peaga põhja suunas – seega näoga päikese poole –, seotud päikese austamisega. Seda, et kivikirstkalme kuju – ringi koos selle keskpunktis oleva kirstuga – võidi pidada päikese sümboliks, oletab ka Lang.

Missugune oli Eesti kaksiknööpide tähendus? Võib-olla olid need vähesed eksemplarid siin religiooni valdkonnas olulist kohta omanud isiku tähistajaks? Importeseme või selle koopiana võisid kaksiknööbid väljendada eelkõige eset omava isiku staatust ja mõjukust – tema võimelisuse kaudu sellist eset omandada. Arvestades tolleaegse inimese religioossust, võisid võimu ja usundiga seotud staatus ning positsioon olla omavahel läbi põimunud. Kaksiknööpidele kui võimalikele eliidile kuulunud esemetele viitab ka nende leiukontekst – kivikirstkalmed ja kindlustatud asulad. Selleaegsete kalmete üldise leiuvaesuse taustal on nii Jõelähtme kui ka Loona kalme leiurohkuse poolest silmapaistvad. Asva oli pronksiajal ilmselt üks olulisemaid keskusi Eesti alal, millele viitavad eelkõige sealt saadud rohkearvulised valamisvormide katked. Suhteliselt vähese leiumaterjaliga ja ebatavalises kohas paiknenud Kaalit on aga peetud pigem kultusekohaks kui tavaasulaks.

Eri materjalidest kaksiknööpide puhul on Eestis tegu haruldaste leidudega. Nii nende leiukontekst kui ka välimus viitab, et need võisid olla eliidile kuulunud ja teatud sümboolset väärtust omanud esemed. Arvatavasti oli tähendus ka materjalidel, millest selliseid esemeid valmistati. Pronksi ja merevaigu puhul on Eestis tegu importmaterjaliga. Sarve kohapeal küll leidus, kuid on teada, et selle kui väärtusliku materjali kasutamist on mõnikord peetud vajalikuks reguleerida. Välistamata, et kaksiknööpidel võis olla ka nööbi ehk kinnitusvahendi funktsioon, oli ilmselt olulisem nende sümboolne tähendus. Kaksiknööpide kuju, materjali ja nende kaunistamiseks kasutatud motiive arvestades oletame, et see võis olla seotud pronksiaegse päikesekultusega.