

## Thanatos

ISSN 2242-6280, vol.4 2/2015

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# Remedies against Revenance: Two Cases from Old Hailuoto (Karlö), North Ostrobothnia, Finland

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### Abstract

Hailuoto is fairly large island in the northern Bothnian Gulf that was settled in the 11th century. A small auxiliary chapel began to operate on the island in the early 15th century and Hailuoto became an independent parish in 1587. Since then Hailuoto has developed its rich own island culture, which includes many tales of apparitions and hauntings. Among them there is a story of the alleged revenance of a man that had hanged himself on the island in the mid-18th century. According to local lore, the deceased could not rest in peace in churchyard consecrated soil and kept wandering about and disturbing people. For this reason his body had to be exhumed and taken by boat and buried in the woods of Hanhinen Island, where a stone setting still marks the grave. Interestingly, the 1761 church registers confirm the burial of the suicided man at that same place. The information about a second unusual burial comes from archaeological research. The excavation of the Hailuoto Church ruins was conducted by Oulu archaeologists during 1985–1987 and produced dozens of late medieval and early modern burials, including a somewhat isolated, coffinless grave that contained the remains of a beheaded adult male. The individual had suffered from severe congenital craniostenosis (premature cranial suture closure), which had led to considerable head and facial deformation. But even more bizarre was the fact that the skeleton was associated with two wooden stakes: one through his chest and the other right next to his detached cranium. This paper describes and discusses the details surrounding these two unusual burials in the light of archaeological, bioanthropological and ethnohistorical data.

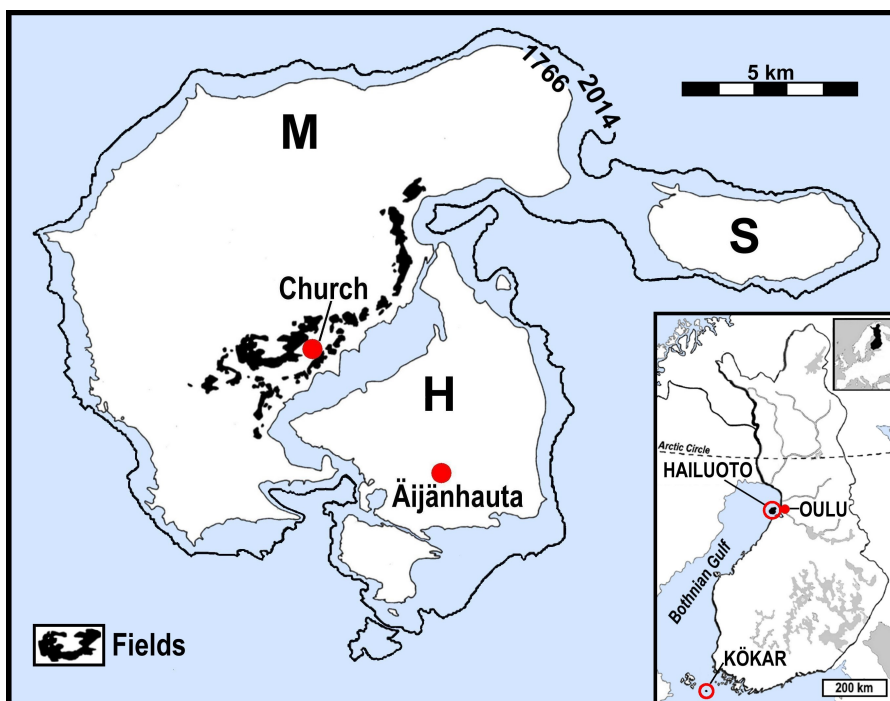
### Introduction

Being an archaeologist specialized in Biological Anthropology, my research deals more with afterdeath than with afterlife. It was nevertheless through my work with human remains that I stumbled into the interesting events described here. Hailuoto (ca. 65°N 24.7°E) is a fairly large off-shore island (ca. 200 km<sup>2</sup>) situated about 20 km west of the city of Oulu, on the North Ostrobothnian coast (Figure 1). Its highest points emerged from the sea early in the 1st millennium AD and, thanks to the region's powerful isostatic uplift (ca. 1 m/century), Hailuoto had grown to a size suitable for farming some 1000 years later, when the first settlers seem to arrive. As the population increased, a local wooden house was turned into an auxiliary chapel of the mainland parish of Salo (Saloinen) in the early 1400s (Mathesius 1843, 140; Pettersson 1972, 8; Paavola 1988, 10–11), and Hailuoto finally received its independent parish status in 1587. Being an island, Hailuoto has since then developed and preserved a rather unique local culture that has caught the interest of researchers (Paulaharju 1914; Paulaharju 1961; Julku and Satokangas 1988; Markkola and Merilä 1998; Merilä 2003).

The local lore contains numerous tales about ghosts and hauntings, including the two unusual burials that will be discussed here.

### The Luukas Man

According to Ahti Paulaharju (1961), the so-called “Luukas man” (*Luukkaan mies*) is supposed to have hanged himself some 250 years ago. The legend tells that, due to his witchcraft (*noituutensa vuoksi*), the dead man could not rest in peace in the consecrated ground of the churchyard and was continuously wandering about and disturbing the living – in other words, hauntings by a revenant. For this reason his body had to be exhumed and taken by boat to be buried on Hanhinen Island. His grave is said to be marked by a stone setting known as Äijänhauta (Geezer’s<sup>3</sup> Grave) or Lukaan Äijänhauta, at the top of Äijänkangas (Geezer’s Hill), on what used to be Hanhinen Island (Figure 1).



**Figure 1.** Map of Hailuoto Island with the configuration of its shores in 1766 and today and the location of sites mentioned in the text: Hailuoto church, Äijänhauta, Kökar, and the city of Oulu, which includes the Haukipudas church. It is based on a 1766 map (Hicks 1988, 38) that depicts the existing settlement and cultivation fields and shows that Hailuoto consisted then of three islands: the main island (M) with the settlement and church, uninhabited Hanhinen (H) with Äijänhauta, and Santonen (S).

Interestingly, the official National Land Survey map of Hailuoto shows that at least the places mentioned in the legend, Äijänkangas and Äijänhauta, are real. There is the bog of Hanhisjärvensuo on what once was Hanhinen Island with the Äijänkangas hill and, on its summit, there is the symbol for ancient monuments denoting the location of the Äijänhauta stone setting<sup>4</sup>. That the place has a spooky reputation is attested by a description of Äijänkangas by a local as “*a real scary place, at least at night time with all its restless phenomena*”<sup>5</sup> (Markkola and Merilä 1998, 40). Even more interesting yet is that some elements of the legend are actually recorded in the church burial records of Hailuoto parish for 1761:

<sup>3</sup> It is difficult to find an equivalent for the term *äijä*. In Swedish it would be something like *gubbe*. In English one possibility would be “old man”, but not quite. The closest I could come up with was “geezer” in the American sense.

<sup>4</sup> The fate of the stone setting is unclear. The archaeologists that were to survey the site in 1976 failed to do it due to bad weather, long distance and the fact that it was less than 500 years based on its position at 5 m a.s.l. (Erä-Esko 1976). Äijänhauta was nevertheless still intact in the 1980s, but Merilä (2003) writes that it now lies under a pile of logs.

<sup>5</sup> Finnish original: *Kaikin puolin pelottava paikka, ainaskin öiseen aikaan rauhattomine ilmiöineen.*

On 25/1 in this parish took place the deplorable event of farmer Henr. Pramila hanging himself; since it was a suicide, on 10/3 he was buried aside in the woods of Hanhis Hill by executioner Rönblad<sup>6</sup> (HisKi Project database, Hailuoto, 25th January 1761).

The entry makes no mention about a churchyard burial and subsequent exhumation, but the final burial on Hanhinen Island is there. The question that arises is whether the first part of the legend dates back to 1761, or if it is just an addition acquired during the past 250 years. The 44-day interval between death and burial would seem long enough for burial, exhumation and reburial. On the other hand, according to the Code of 1734, the corpse of suspected suicide victims had to remain unburied until there was an inquiry and a ruling on the person's state of mind (Persson 1998, 124–125; Miettinen 2012, 109–110), which could take some time. If the “self-murderer” was deemed sane it meant a burial aside in the forest, if not a quiet burial at the churchyard fringes (Luef and Miettinen 2012; Miettinen 2012, 11).

It was perhaps during this waiting period – possibly further stretched by frozen soil – that the legend of the hauntings arose. At any rate, the tales about hauntings and burying the suicide victim on a separate island suggest fear and some sort of preventive measure against the potential revenance of someone that had undergone an unnatural death.

Suicide was regarded as a grave condemnable sin in medieval and early-modern Europe, including the Swedish Kingdom of which Finland was then part (MacDonald and Murphy 1990; Minois 1995; Seabourne and Seabourne 2001; Luef and Miettinen 2012). Self-murder was equated with other severe crimes like arson, bestiality, incest, murder, sodomy and witchcraft. According to King Kristoffer's Law from 1442 (*Konung Kristoffers landslag*), the corpse of self-murderers was to be taken to the forest and burnt in a pyre, but there was a clause allowing those that were not mentally sound when committing suicide to be buried at the fringes of the churchyard (Luef and Miettinen 2012, 107; Werner 1998, 34–38; Oravisjärvi 2011; Miettinen 2012, 8). Although King Kristoffer's Law officially remained in force until the 1734 Code was implemented in 1736, the treatment of self-murderers had begun to become more lenient by the end of the 17th century: corpses were seldom burnt and the executioner merely buried them at an isolated place in a bog or forest (Werner 1998; Jarrik 2000; Miettinen 2012). This was the procedure prescribed for mentally sound self-murderers in the new 1734 Code, and evidently the one applied in 1761 to farmer Pramila, the Luukas man.

It is worth mentioning that rulings in favor of insanity were common in unclear cases (Werner 1998, 73; Miettinen 2012). Nevertheless, the legislation aimed to punish self-murderers by effectively severing all their secular and religious links with the community, and it was supposed to function as a powerful deterrent for future suicides. By prohibiting their burial in consecrated ground self-murderers were denied the possibility of salvation, but at the same time people believed that those individuals became restless souls that could return to haunt the living (e.g. Pentikäinen 1969; Achté and Lönnqvist 1982; Persson 1998, 102). Haavio cites an interesting comment about such souls by a North Ostrobothnian man born in 1862: “*Restless souls are those that have killed themselves, who fly in the air until the actual death date that that had been decided by God.*”<sup>7</sup> (Haavio 1948, 33; see also Nygård 1998, 134)

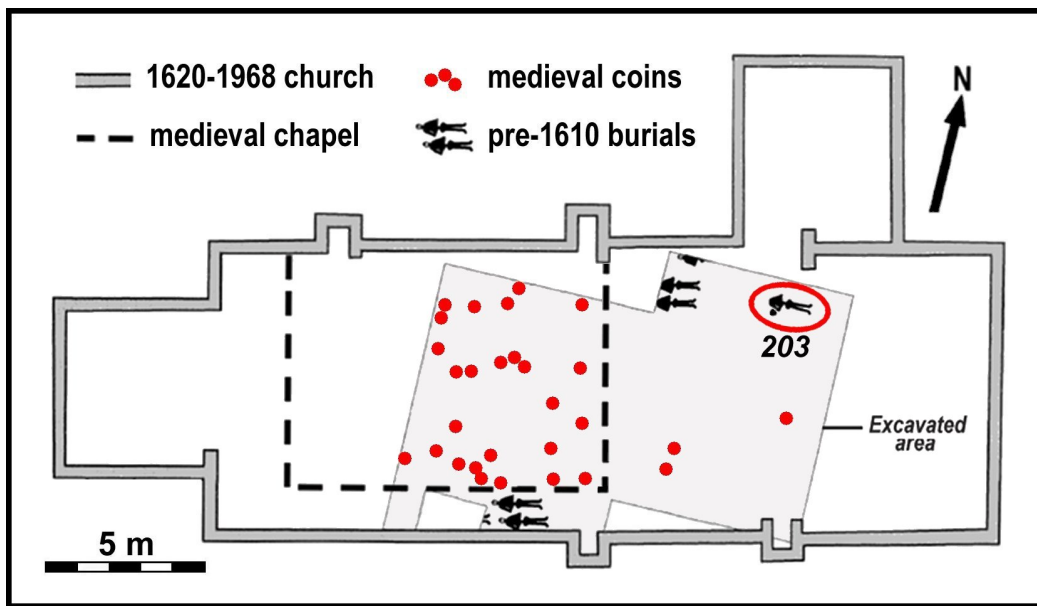
It is possible that the legislators and judges were aware of the people's fears and adopted certain antirevenance elements like burial in isolated places and corpse burning – sometimes even sentencing stakings (Miettinen 2012, 14–15; Sandén 2014, 33–34). The fact that farmer Pramila's corpse did not undergo an apotropaic burning may have contributed to the haunting stories and eerie atmosphere attributed to the place (Äijänkangas) associated with his grave (Äijänhauta).

<sup>6</sup> Swedish original: *D 25/1 skedde wed denne församl. den bedröfweliga händelsen at bd. Henr. Pramila strypte sig sielf hwarföre han d. 10/3 såsom en sielfspillning af skarprättaren Rönblad blef afsides i skogen nedgräfwen på Hanhises backa.*

<sup>7</sup> Finnish original: *Sijattomia sieluja ovat itsensä tappaneet, jotka lentivät ilmassa niin kauan kuin se tulee se oikea kuolinpäivä, minkä Jumala on määrännyt.*

### The Individual in Burial 203

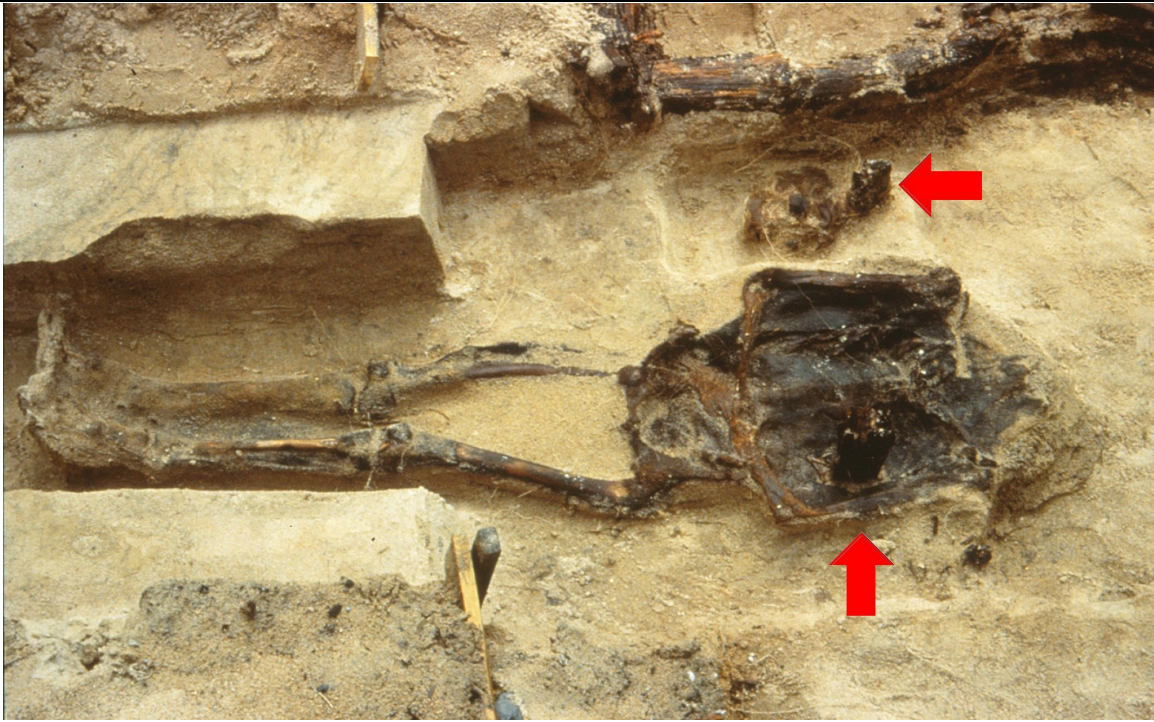
Hailuoto's small early 15th-century wooden chapel was in use until 1620, when the construction of a larger wooden parish church around it was completed. This second church building, albeit with additions and modifications, continued to be used until it was destroyed by fire in 1968. In the 1980s Oulu University archaeologists excavated an area of 155 m<sup>2</sup> within the burnt church ruins (Figure 2). The investigations revealed over 250 burials made there between 1400 and 1756<sup>8</sup> and produced over 400 coins, 29 from the late medieval period (Paavola 1988; Paavola 1991; Paavola 1998). Of particular interest is burial 203, which lies somewhat aloof and furthest to the east of the medieval chapel. The individual there was probably buried at the edge of the churchyard associated with the first wooden chapel from the 1400s and, consequently, it must predate the construction of the larger parish church building in 1610–1620.



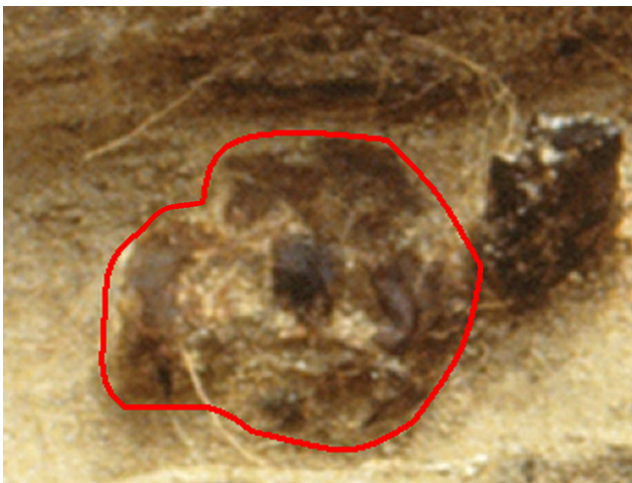
**Figure 2.** Plan of the 1985–1987 archaeological excavations within the foundations of the burnt Hailuoto parish church with the approximate location of the original medieval chapel based on the distribution of medieval coins and pre-1610 graves. Observe the detached position of burial 203 at what could be the edges of the medieval churchyard. Based on Paavola 1988, 27.

A series of peculiarities were observed in this early coffinless grave. One was that the individual in it had been beheaded and the severed head placed near the right arm. But even more surprising was the presence of two wooden stakes: one through the individual's chest, the other by the skull (Figure 3). The second stake was right next to the skull and its position suggests that it may have been pinning down the head by the hair or, more likely, some kind of now-gone material wrapped around it (Figure 4). The first thing that the combination of a wooden stake through the chest and beheading brought to the minds of the excavators in 1987 was popular vampire fiction – something that may have negatively influenced the subsequent study of the exceptional features in grave 203.

<sup>8</sup> The practice of burying important members of the parish beneath churches began in the late 16th century and continued until the late 18th century, when it gradually ceased due to health ordinances – in the case of Hailuoto in 1756.



**Figure 3.** The individual in grave 203 seen from the north. The stakes through the chest and by the skull are shown by arrows. Photo: Laboratory of Archaeology, University of Oulu, 1987.



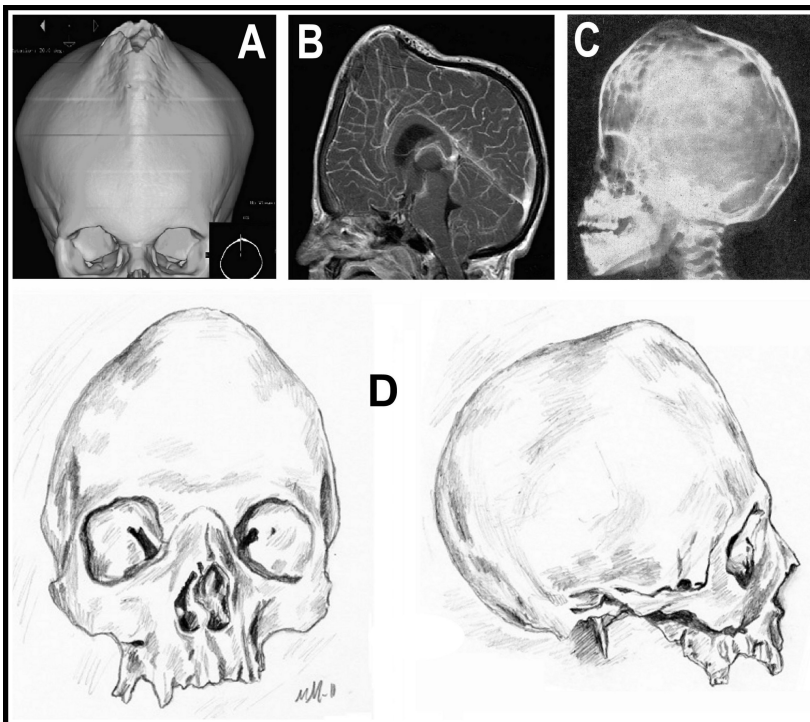
**Figure 4.** Close up of the partially excavated skull in grave 203 (outlined in red) and the stake right next to it. Photo: Laboratory of Archaeology, University of Oulu, 1987.

A closer look at the skull in grave 203 reveals more unusual details (Figure 5). The individual had suffered from a congenital head malformation due to craniosynostosis – that is the premature closure of cranial sutures. We are dealing with an adult male ca. 168 cm tall and aged between 25 and 40 years. He had a congenital cranial deformity characterized by a conical projection in the bregma region and facial dysplasia, with the upper half of the face as if having been pulled upwards and backwards. All this is consistent with oxycephaly, a rare form of multiple craniosynostosis that involves the premature closure of the coronal and, at least, lambdoid sutures (Aufderheide and Rodríguez-Martín 1998, 54). It is possible that the weird looks imparted by the man's craniofacial deformation may have played a role in his being executed and/or the use of wooden stakes in his burial.

Severe oxycephaly is very rare and usually fatal. Premature suture closure limits the rapidly growing infant brain, which then expands towards the still open anterior fontanel – hence the bulge at bregma (Figures 5–6). Unless treated with surgery, severe oxycephaly generally leads to an early death (Figure 6A–C), but there are nevertheless some cases of survival (Figures 5, 6D). In those individuals that survive to adulthood, however, the disorder tends to interfere with their physical and/or intellectual development. This may have been the case with the man in grave 203, whose erratic behavior in life may have led to distrust or fears that materialized as the unusual procedure observed in his burial.



**Figure 5.** The excavated cranium from grave 203. Observe the marked conical bulge in the bregma region and the deformed face, with its upper half as if pulled upwards and backwards. Photo: Laboratory of Archaeology, University of Oulu, 1987.



**Figure 6.** Severe oxycephaly cases: Post-mortem CT (A) and MRI (B) of a Saudi child aged 4 years, showing how the growing brain has expanded into the anterior fontanel and deformed the bones in the bregma region (Jamjoom et al. 2009). Radiography (C) of a Finnish infant aged 1.5 years, showing the “beaten copper” texture typical of the high intracranial pressure caused by the growing brain (Laitinen 1956). Frontal and lateral views (D) of the cranium of an Austrian man that survived the disorder into adulthood (Weber et al. 2008).

Stratigraphically, the stakes clearly form part of the burial. They go through it, and both grave and stakes lie below an undisturbed sandy layer. Moreover the sand separates burial 203 from coffins 12 and 98, which were deposited later beneath the 1620 church floor, most probably after the church had been enlarged by shifting its western wall in 1686 (Paavola 1991; Paavola 1998, 128). Furthermore, the stakes were found precisely through the individual’s chest and right next to his skull (Figures 4–5), as if their function was to pin both body and head to the ground. It is very difficult to see the position of these stakes as merely coincidental.

Despite the strong stratigraphic evidence, until recently the significance of the stakes has been dismissed or ignored (Paavola 1988; Paavola 1991; Paavola 1998; Núñez 2011). There was probably some apprehension about the potential sensationalism, but the main reason was that the conventional radiocarbon date of the chest stake differed from that of the man's left tibia by 230 radiocarbon years<sup>9</sup>:

A sharpened stake had been driven through the dead man's chest, approximately around the heart. There is nevertheless no reason for dramatic interpretations because similar wooden objects were observed nearby and around the excavated area, and because a younger date was obtained from the wooden stake.<sup>10</sup> (Paavola 1988, 19.)

However, the discrepancy in dates can be easily explained by the so-called marine reservoir effect. It consists of an offset between the radiocarbon ages of organisms that derive their carbon from terrestrial environments and those that obtain their carbon, fully or partly, from marine environments. This generally causes marine-derived samples to erroneously yield older dates than contemporaneous terrestrial samples. Scientists have been aware of this phenomenon for some time (e.g. Olsson and Eriksson 1965; Olsson 1980; Stuiver et al. 1986), but the determination of the actual age offset of specific samples has remained problematic due to the many variables involved (e.g. Jull et al. 2013; Lougheed et al. 2013; Neves Fernandes 2013).

One would expect an age offset from the bones of the individual in grave 203. The  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$  of his right tibia was  $-19.6\%$  (Jungner and Sonninen 1996, 55), which suggests a mixed terrestrial-marine diet when compared with the  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$  values of roughly contemporaneous populations from the region. The mean  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$  of 10 individuals from Haukipudas, Oulu, just 25 km east of Hailuoto, was  $-21.2 \pm 0.7\%$  (Arosén 2014), which corresponds to the more terrestrial diet typical to the upper class individuals buried beneath the Haukipudas church floor in the 17th and 18th centuries. On the other hand, the mean  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$  of  $-18.0 \pm 0.4\%$  from 22 individuals buried between 1400 and 1700 in the Kökar churchyard, points to a diet with an important marine component as one would expect from the Åland archipelago (Núñez et al. 2006, 340). The  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$  value of  $-19.6\%$  falls halfway between those of Haukipudas and Kökar and agrees well with the idea that the individual from grave 203 had a mixed terrestrial-marine diet. This in turn would lead to dates erroneously older with respect to the contemporaneous, fully terrestrial wooden stake ( $\delta^{13}\text{C} = -28.3\%$ ).

Although it is not possible at this point to estimate the actual age offset of the tibia from grave 203, one can get a rough idea from the radiocarbon date yielded by a fully marine, Bothnian Gulf ringed seal that had died in 1906 and showed an age offset of 355 radiocarbon years (Olsson 1980, 668; Oinonen 2011, 85–86). The problem of the reservoir effect and age offset of the skeleton from Hailuoto grave 203, will be discussed in more detail in a forthcoming paper, but this brief discussion will suffice to show that there are no reasons to believe that the individual and the stakes in grave 203 are not contemporaneous. To echo the words of my good friend and colleague, Dr Gunilla Eriksson from Stockholm University, the offset of 230 radiocarbon years between the stake and the tibia is absolutely reasonable (personal communication).

Having established the likely contemporaneity of the individual and the stakes, we can now turn to the actual date of grave 203 itself. Since the radiocarbon age of the tibia is erroneously too old, we must rely on the date of the stake: 1430–1680 cal AD. However, burial 203 must have taken place while the small medieval chapel was in use and before

<sup>9</sup> The date of the tibia was  $550 \pm 80$  BP (Hel-2481) or calibrated ( $2\sigma$ ) 1276–1484 cal AD, while that of the stake was  $320 \pm 80$  BP (Hel-2476) or calibrated ( $2\sigma$ ) 1433–1682 cal AD.

<sup>10</sup> Finnish original: *Vainajan rinnan läpi, suurin piirtein sydämen kohdalle oli työty kärjestään teroitettu puu. Dramaattisen tulkintaan ei kuitenkaan ole aihetta, koska samanlaisia puita oli myös lähituntumassa ja siellä täällä kaivausalueella, ja koska puulle saatiin nuorempi ajoitus.*

the construction of the new larger church building during 1610–1620 (Figure 2), which would place burial 203 roughly between 1430 and 1610. Allowing a couple decades for the age of the wood, the date most probably falls within 1450–1610 AD.

The presence of wooden stakes in grave 203 can be seen as a clear attempt to keep the strange-looking individual in his grave. Both staking and beheading were described as measures for neutralizing Scandinavian revenants by Saxo Grammaticus in his *Gesta Danorum* some 800 years ago. Book I relates that Odin had gone to Pheonia (Finland?), where he had been killed by the locals, and about the events following his burial:

Even in his death his abominations were made manifest, for those who came nigh his barrow were cut off by a kind of sudden death; and after his end, he spread such pestilence that he seemed almost to leave a filthier record in his death than in his life: it was as though he would extort from the guilty a punishment for his slaughter. The inhabitants, being in this trouble, took the body out of the mound, beheaded it, and impaled it through the breast with a sharp stake; and herein that people found relief. (Elton 1894, 32.)

The same treatment is also given to Aswid's corpse by Asmund in Book V: "I cut off his head with my steel, and impaled his guilty carcass with a stake" (Elton 1894, 201). Furthermore, the beheading and/or burning of corpses to stop revenants (*draugr*, *haugbúi*) are sometimes described in the Icelandic sagas (e.g. Ström 1942, 168; Chadwick 1946, 55; Sayers 1996, 245–246; Kanerva 2015).

Unfortunately, it is not possible to determine whether the man in grave 203 had been beheaded through an execution, or whether the head had been severed postmortem as a precaution against revenance<sup>11</sup>. One possibility is that he was executed for a crime and that the unnatural death compounded by his weird looks prompted the staking to keep him in his grave. An execution would at least agree with the location of the burial somewhat aside from the early chapel (Figure 2), in what could be the fringes of the medieval churchyard (Paavola 1988; Oravisjärvi 2011). Another possibility is that the man had died of natural causes and was beheaded and staked at his burial because of fears generated by his looks and, possibly, erratic behavior in life. An even more interesting, though less likely, variation would be that, due to alleged hauntings after his burial, the corpse had been unearched and then beheaded and staked to stop the revenant activity.

One may wonder about the contradiction of why a man feared enough to prompt the staking of his corpse would be buried in the fringes of the churchyard. There were certainly plenty of woods either on the main island or the other two ones, which already existed in by 1400 AD (Hicks 1988). The reason may be that, despite the fear he inspired, the unfortunate man from grave 203 was after all a member of the Hailuoto community. He was a fellow islander and belonged there regardless of his possible offense, unnatural death, and the fear that his deformity may generate. Possibly in addition to the fear there was a feeling of pity for this unfortunate deformed, possibly mentally backward, man that had grown up on the island and was known to all. Furthermore, though rightly judged and punished according to the law, people may have felt that he did not have fully comprehended the committed offence.

In any event, the stakes through the chest and by the skull of the deformed beheaded man in burial 203 are a clear and deliberate attempt to keep him in his grave, regardless of whether the reason was his crime, deformity, unnatural death, hauntings or a combination of these.

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<sup>11</sup> Unfortunately the excavated human remains have been returned to the Hailuoto parish and reburied.



## Dread of the Dead

Ethnohistorical sources suggest that the dead were both revered and feared by Finland's inhabitants before their Christianization, which was a gradual process spanning from the 12th to the 18th century. The dead relatives continued to form part of the kin group and there was a series of rituals that the living were to perform in order to reinforce and preserve this relationship; dead ancestors were in turn expected to help insure the wellbeing and continuity of their surviving kin. (Waronen 1898; Krohn 1915, 40–58; Paulaharju 1924, 69–143; Harva 1948, 488–511; Holmberg 1964, 3–71; Kempainen 1967: 27–49)

At a time when some pre-Christian traditions were fresh in peoples' memories, even still being practiced in non-Christianized areas, Bishop Mikael Agricola wrote: "Food was brought to the graves of the dead, where people mourned, wailed and wept."<sup>12</sup> (Agricola 1551, 15)

On the other hand, neglect of the responsibilities towards the dead could incite their anger and even retaliation (Waronen 1898, 20–46; Paulaharju 1924, 130–131, 176–177; Holmberg 1968, 17–36; Pentikäinen 1969; Achté et al. 1985, 64–68; Pentikäinen 1990, 27–31). There were nevertheless a series of preventive measures that could be taken to insure that the dead would stay away from the living before their burial and that they remained in their graves afterwards (Paulaharju 1924, 69–143; Holmberg 1964, 17–36; Pentikäinen 1990, 44–81; Vilkkuna 2001).

The most significant ceremonies arise out of a desire to do everything possible for the departed on their last journey, and from precautionary measures by the living against the dead, as these are believed to seek companions with whom to enter the other world (Holmberg 1964, 17).

Safety from the buried dead is probably behind the widespread prehistoric and historic tendency of placing both temporary and permanent burial grounds separate from dwelling places: often on islands, but also on the far shores of rivers or lakes, or on wooded hills surrounded by cultivated fields (e.g. Paulaharju 1924, 162–169; Cleve 1943; Manker 1944; Pentikäinen 1990, 11–12, 35–43; Laitinen 2001; Mönkönen 2001; Ruohonen 2002; Ruohonen 2010; Wessman 2010, 70–71; Núñez 2015). Referring to Eastern Carelia, where the Orthodox Church allowed the utilization of the old family and village cemeteries well into the 19th century, Jokipii (2001, 19) states that the dead were buried at cemeteries located usually on islands and, where there were no water basins, on wooded hills surrounded by fields – some sort of islands on dry land. Dwellings and burial grounds were not very far from each other due to the mentioned periodical rituals connected with the dead relatives, but there was a clear and deliberate physical separation between them.

The advent of Christianity brought the dead to the consecrated "islands" of churchyards. Supposedly those buried there were peacefully awaiting Doomsday, but pre-Christian traditions continued to influence how people perceived and related themselves to death and the dead. Possibly a certain guilt about not performing the traditional ancestor rituals (cf. Vilkkuna 2001) made people uncomfortable around the dead and those things related to them. The fear of the dead may have lingered long after any possible guilt about ancestor betrayal had been forgotten, as suggested by the following comment from an early 20th-century context:

*When I was a child people were afraid of ghosts, of the buildings where corpses had been kept, even those where the coaches used to transport them were stored. At night one would run when passing such places, like by the churchyard*<sup>13</sup> (Koski 2011, 89).

<sup>12</sup> Old Finnish original: *Coolludhen hautijn Rooca wietin, ioissa walitin, parghutin ia idketin.*

<sup>13</sup> Finnish original: *Monet lapsuuteni aikaiset ihmiset pelkäsivät kummituksia, riisiä ja aittoja joissa säilytettiin hautaamattomia ruumiita, jopa ruumisvaunujen säilytysluonetta. Varsinkin pimeässä niiden paikkojen ohi piti ihan juosta niin kuin hautausmaankin ohi.*

It must have been difficult when weather conditions often forced people to live close to the corpse of relatives for weeks/months before it could finally be buried in the churchyard (Núñez 2015), and the situation would have been much worse when a suicide corpse had to remain unburied until there was a court ruling. The dread of the dead is known to have been greater in the case of unnatural deaths. It was believed that the souls of those that had undergone unnatural deaths became trapped between the realms of the living and the dead and could then end up haunting, even harming the living (Paulaharju 1924, 174–178; Haavio 1948; Pentikäinen 1969, 126–131; Achté and Lönnqvist 1982; Pentikäinen 1990, 88–95). Apparently the most dreaded were those individuals that had committed suicide. “[Sweden’s] folkloric archives are full of stories from the 1800s and early 1900s about the fear that those restless spirits could generate and the measures that the living took to reduce their harmful effects. The most feared of all were the suicides, those who had deliberately abandoned the path that God had set out for them.”<sup>14</sup> (Persson 1998, 102)

Similar apprehensions about the dead may be responsible for certain unusual features observed in some graves from Finland’s late Iron Age. Finnish archaeologists have described the occurrence of stones<sup>15</sup> or weapons in positions that suggest that they were meant to secure the deceased to the ground (e.g. Nordman 1924, 79–82; Pälsi 1938; Cleve 1943, 58; Cleve 1948; Keskitalo 1950; Kivikoski 1955, 67; Kivikoski 1963, 36–37, 42, 58, 60–61, 68–69; Kivikoski 1964, 200, 249; Hirviluoto 1976; Cleve 1978, 86–89; Lehtosalo-Hilander 1982, 21; Sarkki-Isomaa 1986; Lehtosalo-Hilander 1988, 194–196; Edgren 1993, 251; Purhonen 1999, 165, 253; Wickholm 2006; Wickholm 2009; Wessman 2010, 98–107), and parallel manifestations have been reported from the Circum-Baltic region (e.g. Gräslund 1980, 76; Nordberg 2002; Mägi 2004; Artelius 2005; Artelius 2009; Gardela 2013). Since the proportion of such “deviant” burials is small, they probably have to do with specific individuals that were for some reason feared by the community. These “dangerous dead” (cf. Blair 2009) may have been, as in more recent times, evil doers, sorcerers or persons that had suffered unnatural deaths.

### Final Remarks

I have described two cases of unnatural deaths on Hailuoto that were apparently connected with preventive measures against revenance at burial. One has to do with the burial of a suicide victim in the forest of an uninhabited island in 1761. Local folk tales blame haunting for this measure, but it is not clear if they arose then or afterwards. The other case concerns securing the corpse of a beheaded and congenitally deformed man to the ground with wooden stakes sometime between 1450 and 1610 AD.

Since both cases come from a small island that held a population of only a few hundreds, one cannot help wondering how many more such events would have taken place and may be awaiting discovery on the Finnish mainland. On this basis I would advise Finnish archaeologists to pay more attention to post-medieval features and encourage archive researchers to keep their eyes open for this sort of data.

<sup>14</sup> Swedish original: *Folkminnesarkiven är fyllda av berättelser från 1800-tal och tidigt 1900-tal om den fruktan som dessa osaliga andar kunde ge upphov till och de åtgärder som de levande i sin tur vidtog för att minska deras skadliga verkningar. Allra mest fruktade var självspillingarna, de som självmant hade avbrutit den väg som Gud hade utstakat för dem.*

<sup>15</sup> The widespread use of burial cairns and stones in level-ground cremation fields could also be connected with the idea of keeping the dead in their graves.

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### Abstrakti

*Kummittelunvastasista keinoista: kaksi tapausta vanhasta Hailuodosta (Karlö) Pohjois-Pohjanmaalta*

Hailuoto on suurehko, 1000-luvulla asutettu saari Perämerellä. Pieni sivukappeli aloitti toimintansa saarella 1400-luvun alkupuolella, ja Hailuodosta tuli itsenäinen seurakunta vuonna 1587. Näistä ajoista lähtien Hailuodossa on kehittynyt oma rikas saarikulttuurinsa, johon kuuluvat osana myös monet kuolleiden ilmestymisestä ja kummittelusta kertovat tarinat. Yksi näistä on kertomus saarella itsensä hirttäneen miehen väitetystä kuolemanjälkeisestä palaamisesta 1700-luvun puolivälissä. Paikallisen perinteen mukaan edesmennyt ei voinut levätä rauhassa kirkkomaan siunatussa mullassa vaan kuljeskeli ympäriinsä ja häiritsti ihmisiä. Tämän vuoksi miehen ruumis piti kaivaa ylös, ja se kuljetettiin veneellä haudattavaksi metsikköön Hanhisen saarelle, missä on säilynyt haudan paikkaa merkitsevä kivimuodostelma. Myös vuoden 1761 hautausrekisteri vahvistaa itsemurhan tehneen miehen hautaamisen juuri tuolle paikalle. Tieto toisesta epätavallisesta hautauksesta on peräisin arkeologisesta aineistosta. Oululaiset arkeologit suorittivat Hailuodon kirkon raunioiden kaivaukset vuosina 1985–1987. Tuloksena oli kymmenittäin myöhäiskeskiaikaisia ja varhaismoderneja hautauksia, mukaan lukien yksi jossain määrin muista eristetty, arkuton hauta. Se sisälsi jäänteet, jotka olivat kuuluneet aikuiselle miehelle, jolta oli katkaistu pää. Kyseinen yksilö oli kärsinyt vakavasta synnynnäisestä kraniosynostoosista (kallon ennenaikaisesta luutumuksesta), mikä oli johtanut huomattavaan pään ja kasvojen epämuodostumaan. Vielä omituisempi yksityiskohta oli se, että luurankoon oli liitetty kaksi puista sauvaa: yksi lävisti sen rinnan ja toinen oli aivan irrotetun kallon vieressä. Tässä katsauksessa kuvataan ja tarkastellaan näihin kahteen epätavalliseen hautaukseen liittyviä yksityiskohtia arkeologisen, bioantropologisen ja etnohistoriallisen aineiston valossa.