



Kudruküla historical village in Ida-Viru County

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INTRODUCTION

The estuary area of the Kudruküla stream in northeast Estonia has been of archaeological interest for decades, primarily in relation to the study of Neolithic settlements and burial sites (e.g. Efendiev 1983; Kriiska & Nordqvist 2010; Kriiska *et al.* 2015). However, in 2023, the focus of research shifted to the historical village located there. With the support of the Narva Kant Foundation, small-scale fieldwork was conducted on the outskirts of the Narva-Jõesuu town, on the Narva River terraces, bordered by the Narva River from the northeast, the Kudruküla stream from the southeast, J. Poska street from the southwest, and Kalda street from the northwest (Fig. 1). This is one of the locations where archaeological finds were discovered during the archaeological field survey in the town of Narva-Jõesuu and the Kudruküla village in 1999 (Kriiska 1999; Fig. 1B). At that time, only molehills could be examined in this location,



Fig. 1. A – research area in Narva-Jõesuu in 2023, B – locations of archaeological finds from 1999 in Narva-Jõesuu and Kudruküla, C – test pits excavated at the discovery area III.

Jn 1. A – 2023. aasta uuringuala Narva-Jõesuus, B – 1999. aasta arheoloogilised leiukohad Narva-Jõesuus ja Kudrukülas, C – leiualale III kaevatud prooviaugud.

Base maps / Aluskaardid: Estonian Land Board / Maa-amet

Maps / Kaardid: Aivar Kriiska, Ragi-Martin Moon

leaving the preservation and extent of the cultural layer unclear. Now these aspects were clarified by digging test pits.

In this article we compile the discoveries of fieldwork carried out in 1999 and 2023, offer a brief overview of the finds and their dates, compare the identified sites with historical maps, and provide a concise summary of other Middle Ages and Early Modern Period sites in the lower reaches of the Narva River (Riigiküla II, IV, XVIII, XIX and Vasa).

RESULTS

During the fieldwork of 1999, finds were collected from seven locations, which were consolidated into three larger areas (Fig. 1B and 1C). These areas were allocated as three separate settlement sites, named after the modern-day Kudruküla village and marked with Roman numerals (Kriiska 1999). Based on new knowledge, these 'settlement sites' are renamed into three discovery areas in this article: the earlier Kudruküla II site corresponds to area I, Kudruküla IV to area II, and Kudruküla III to area III, as it is unnecessary to distinguish separate settlement sites within one historical village (Fig. 1B).

At discovery area I, a total of 35 artefacts were obtained from three ploughed fields in 1999 (TÜ 839: 1–2): 18 sherds of simple wheel-thrown pots, two fragments of glazed redware vessels, one fragment of stoneware, seven flint chunks (Fig. 2: 4), three pieces of clay pipes, one fragment of a clay net weight, one piece of slag, and one cartridge case. At the discovery area II, two sherds of simple wheel-thrown pots, a flint chunk, and one piece of animal bone (TÜ 841) were found in 1999 from molehills and in 2023 from test pits.

Discovery area III, on both banks of the Kudruküla stream (Fig. 1B), is the richest in finds. From molehills, two ploughed fields, and 12 test pits, a total of 20 pieces of animal bones and 108 artefacts (TÜ 840: 1–3; TÜ 3182) were collected during fieldwork in 1999 and 2023.

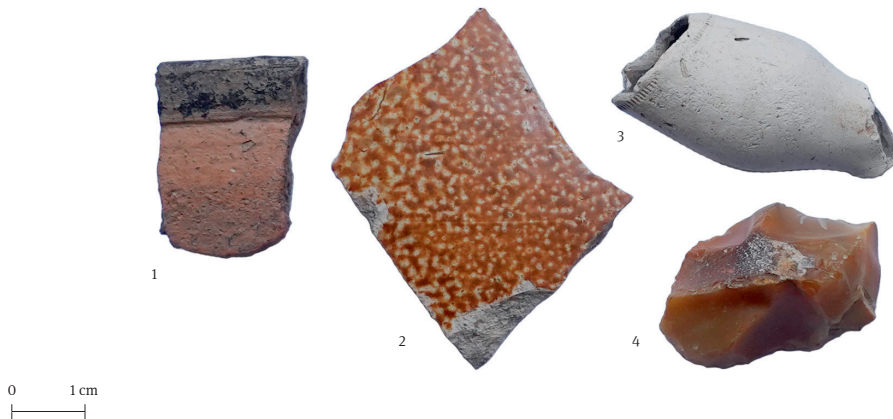


Fig. 2. Archaeological finds collected from the Kudruküla historical village. 1 – a fragment of wheel-thrown pottery of type 3; 2, 2 – a fragment of Frechen stoneware, 3 – a Dutch-type biconical clay pipe bowl, 4 – a flint chunk as a fire striker. Items 1 to 3 from discovery area III and item 4 from discovery area I.

Jn 2. Kudruküla ajaloolise küla alalt kogutud arheoloogilised leiud. 1 – 3: 2 tüüpi lihtkedrakraamika kild, 2 – Frecheni kivikeraamika kild, 3 – Madalmaade kaksikooniline savipiibu kaha, 4 – tulelöömise tulekivi. 1 kuni 3 leiualalt III ja 4 leiualalt I.

(TÜ 840: 1a, 1b, 1c; TÜ 839: 1.)

Photo / Foto: Irina Khrustaleva

Among them are 72 sherds of simple wheel-thrown pots (Fig. 2: 1), 12 sherds of redware vessels (including two fragments of tripod vessels legs), four fragments of stoneware (Fig. 2: 2), two fragments of faience vessels, one fragment of whiteware pot, a sherd of a hand-moulded vessel, three fragments of white clay pipes (including one whole bowl; Fig. 2: 3), five flint chunks, two burnt clay pieces, two sherds of sheet glass, one broken iron knife, one piece of slag, one round lead bullet, and one projectile fragment. In 2023, 12 test pits were excavated in discovery area III on two terraces of the Narva River (Fig. 1C). A cultural layer with artefacts and animal bones occurs on the upper southwestern terrace in all excavated test pits. The cultural layer is most likely mixed due to the Soviet-era agricultural activities, but in some places its lower undisturbed part has been preserved below the plough horizon. On the lower northeastern terrace, there is also a cultural layer containing sporadic finds, but it has been much more damaged by later human activity.

According to the historical maps, all described discovery areas are located within the historical Kudruküla village and manor. The oldest known maps date back to the mid-17th century. In Kudruküla (variations of the name: Kutruküll, Kutterkylä, Kutterküll, and Kutterkül), several households and buildings are depicted (Fig. 3). The village was situated on both sides of the Kudruküla stream, mostly southeast of the estuary. In 1688, there were 12 households, and in 1725/1726, 11 families lived there (Eestimaa 1725.–1726. aasta adramaarevisjon 195; Orav 1991, 83).

DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY

Among the finds from Kudruküla, pottery sherds predominate. The oldest, presumably from the Iron Age, is a fragment of a hand-moulded vessel found at discovery area III. Most of the sherds are simple unglazed wheel-thrown pottery. Unfortunately, these are mostly small fragments of walls and occasional rim and base fragments that cannot be precisely dated. The exception is two rim fragments (Fig. 2: 1 and TÜ 840: 2), which, based on their shape, belong to Type 3: 2 of wheel-thrown pottery made in Estonia in the northwestern Russian ceramic tradition, which was produced from the mid-12th century to the late 13th century (Tvauri 2000, 101, fig. 6). The location or locations of the simple wheel-thrown pottery workshops in Narva or its immediate surroundings are not known, but likely they were somewhere nearby, and thus such pottery can tentatively be considered as local.



Fig. 3. Kudruküla on historical maps. A – Kudruküla on the map of 1754 (based on the map from 1676), B – Kudruküla on the map of 1652, C – Kudruküla on the map of 1768.

Jn 3. Kudruküla ajaloolistel kaartidel. A – Kudruküla 1754. aasta kaardil (aluskaart aastast 1676), B – Kudruküla 1652. aasta kaardil, C – Kudruküla 1768. aasta kaardil. Maps / Kaardid: RA, EAA.2072.9.623 f. 1 (A), RA, EAA.1646.1.2638 f. 1 (B), RA, EAA.1646.1.3449, f. 1 (C).

The proportion of imported pottery is small, as is typical for the material found in other Estonian Medieval and Early Modern period villages (Russow & Haak 2023, 7ff.). One identifiable fragment of a Frechen stoneware vessel (Fig. 2: 2) can be dated from the second half of the 16th century to the late 17th century (Russow 2006, 64–65, 288). One sherd of whiteware pot can be associated to the pottery produced mainly in Moscow¹, Russia. It probably spread to Estonia only during the Livonian War in the second half of the 16th century (Tvauri 2004, 401 and references therein). In the Narva region, whiteware has been found abundantly, notably originating from the Ivangorod fortress established as a stronghold of the Grand Duchy of Moscow (Petrenko & Kildyushevsky 1989, 37). However, in Narva itself, the most extensive excavations in Medieval and Early Modern period layers, conducted at Suur Street 22, 24, and 26 plots, completely lack whiteware sherds (Haak & Kriiska 2006, 97). A common feature shared by Kudruküla and the mentioned excavation plots in Narva is the absence of pots with a short turned-out rim (Haak & Kriiska 2006, 97), which were used during the Livonian War period by both Russian military personnel and civilians, and are abundant in waste deposits in Estonian towns, fortresses, and villages (Tvauri 2004, 400). It is surprising because Narva and its surroundings were conquered in the early stages of the Livonian War as early as in 1558 (e.g. Selart 2008). However, based on the limited archaeological material available, it is not yet possible to provide a reasoned explanation.

From the found clay pipe fragments, one bowl and all stem fragments can be dated to the 18th century based on surface treatment and the diameter of the smoke channel. One large bowl fragment is possibly even originating from the 19th century. The oldest is a small Dutch-type pipe bowl from discovery area III. It is generally biconical in shape with notched ornamentation along the rim (Fig. 2: 3). Based on its shape and size, it dates back to the 17th century (Duco 1982, 111; for information on pipes in the Baltic States, see e.g. Russow 2005; Kriiska 2008; Žvirblys 2021). The majority of the datable pipes found in Narva town belong to the same century (Kriiska 2008, fig. 27), and from the mid-17th century onwards, tobacco was one of the main commodities in Narva, with pipes also being imported in bulk (Kriiska & Küng 2008 and references therein). Of course, the single pipe bowl from Kudruküla is not sufficient evidence to claim that villagers around Narva were already smoking at that time, but it cannot be ruled out. Overall, our knowledge about the beginnings of smoking among the rural population in Estonia is inadequate, and thus, the pipe fragments collected from the cultural layer of villages will be an important source of information in the future.

A relatively large number of flint chunks were found, in nine cases it was possible to identify the geological deposits from which flint originates: four are from the Carboniferous and five from the Cretaceous deposits. The edges of four artefacts have characteristic traces of fire damage (Fig. 2: 4). On the edges of the two Carboniferous flint chunks, in addition to the fire-struck marks, retouching is also visible (Fig. 2: 4). These could have occurred randomly, but the reuse of Stone Age items cannot be ruled out either, as there were numerous Stone Age settlement sites in the lower reaches of the Narva River, which were used as fields during historical times. In fact, traces of agricultural land use are found in most of the currently known Stone Age settlements in Riigiküla and Narva-Jõesuu (e.g. Kriiska & Rappu 2008, 16; Kriiska *et al.* 2021, 44–45), and these open areas were perfectly suitable for collecting flint for strike-a-lights. On the other hand, Kudruküla is also located near another secondary flint source – flint nodules brought as ballast on ships. During the Middle Ages and Modern Period, Narva,

¹ Whiteware pottery was produced during the Middle Ages and Early Modern Period elsewhere besides Moscow, including in Ladoga-Karelia, where suitable clays containing kaolin are also found (Summanen 2018, 20, fig. 1).

which actively participated in overseas trade, likely received flint nodules in large. In the 20th century, Narva-Jõesuu was mentioned as one of the places where people collected flint from ship ballast on the beach for use as strike-a-lights (Saar 1975, 175).

Thus, the age of the settlement in Kudruküla can be determined based on archaeological material only by pottery and clay pipe fragments. The only hand-made potsherd collected so far may indicate that the settlement was located there or nearby already in the Iron Age. Regarding the two simple wheel-thrown potsherds, it is also possible that these originate from the end of the Iron Age. The existence of a settlement site during the medieval and modern periods is unequivocally clear there. This is not surprising, of course, as the oldest written sources mention Kudruküla (Kudderendorp) already in 1503 (Orav 1991, 83), but archaeological finds indicate that the village actually existed more than a century earlier.

In conclusion, the comparison of the results of archaeological surveys with maps demonstrates that the cultural layer has been preserved in multiple areas and extensively within the historical Kudruküla village. As the banks of the Narva River are an attractive area for construction, for the preservation and investigation of the village's cultural layer it is essential to designate the area as a national archaeological monument to the extent depicted on a map made in 1752 (based on data from 1676). Considering the abundance of metal detectorists in Ida-Viru County, this would also be the only way to prevent the depletion of the settlement's cultural layer from metal objects.

In addition to Kudruküla, finds from the Middle Ages and Early Modern Period have been collected from the lower course of the Narva River, on its western bank during the excavations at the Riigiküla II and IV, and Vasa prehistoric settlement sites, as well as through landscape surveys conducted in their vicinity (Riigiküla XVIII and XIX; Fig. 4; Kriiska *et al.* 2019).



Fig. 4. Locations on the lower reaches of the Narva River on the western bank, where finds from the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period have been collected.

Jn 4. Kohad Narva jõe alamjooksul jõe läänekaldal, kust on kogutud kesk- ja varauusaegseid leide.

Base map / Aluskaart: Estonian Land Board / Maa-amet

Map / Kaart: Aivar Kriiska, Ragi-Martin Moon

While a single sherd of wheel-made pottery found in the relatively large open landscape on the ridge of Riigiküla (Riigiküla XVIII) can be, for example, carried onto a field with manure, in most cases, the large amount of finds does not leave reasons to question the presence of settlements there.

In all cases, find material is fairly standard, mostly consisting of sherds of simple wheel-thrown pots and glazed redware fragments, flint chunks as strike-a-lights, fragments of clay pipes, sometimes also burnt clay pieces and individual metal objects (Kriiska 1996, 417; Kriiska *et al.* 2021, 45). A burned bone from the Riigiküla IV prehistoric settlement site was AMS dated, resulting in an age range of 1470–1640 cal AD (Kriiska *et al.* 2021, 45). None of the specific locations described above can be unequivocally linked to the buildings depicted on historical maps, but even a cursory examination of the maps indicates that the inhabited areas have undergone multiple changes over time. Therefore, a systematic survey is in order in the lower reaches of the Narva River to identify patches of cultural layers. In Estonia as a whole, there is a significant need to develop archaeological studies of rural areas from historical times, the value of which, alongside scarce written sources, has been demonstrated on several occasions in the Nordic countries (e.g. Heinonen 2021). Currently, in Estonia, the archaeology of historical rural areas primarily focuses on the investigation of burial sites (e.g. in Ida-Viru County, see Malve & Vilumets 2021). Hence the picture is unbalanced in understanding the history of rural populations.

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- RA, EAA.1646.1.3449, f. 1.** Plan von der Grenze des Gutes Kutterküll. (*Map in RA.*)
- RA, EAA.2072.9.623 f. 1.** Charta öfwer Narfwa Staden och dess NäromRing liggande Ägor Tillika med Joala Hoff och By Råds Gamla och Nya Hoffläger med dess underliggande Gods och Byar nemligan Lächtenpä, Lägerserg en Gard vid Hakelwarket, Alakyla, Lilla och Stora Waenkyla, Saren och Kytterkyla. (*Map in RA.*)
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KUDRUKÜLA AJALOOLINE KÜLA IDA-VIRUMAAL

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Kudruküla oja suudmeala Kirde-Eestis on seoses neoliitiliste asulakohtade ja matmispaikade uurimisega olnud arheoloogide huvisfääris aastakümneid, kuid 2023. aastal oli uurimise all sealne ajalooline küla. Väikese välitööd tehti Narva-Jõesuu linna servas Narva jõe kaldaterrassidel (jn 1A), kust 1999. aastal toimunud leirega koguti arheoloogilisi leide. Kuna toona oli selles kohas võimalik läbi vaadata vaid mutimullahunnikuid, jäi kultuurikihi säilivus ja ulatus ebaselgeks. Seda täpsustati nüüd prooviaukudega (jn 1C).

1999. aasta välitöödel koguti leide seitsmest kohast, mis koondati kolmeks suuremaks alaks (jn 1B). Toona eristati need kolme eraldi asulakohana. Uutest teadmistest lähtuvalt on käesolevas artiklis need „asulakohad“ nimetatud ümber kolmeks Kudruküla ajaloolise küla piires asuvaks leiualaks.

2023. aastal kaevati kahele Narva jõe terrassile leiukohal III 12 prooviauku (jn 1C). Ülemisel terrassil esines kultuurikihti kõigis kaevatud prooviaukudes ning koguti leide ja loomaluid. Kultuurikiht on enamasti tõenäoliselt nõukogude ajal toimunud põlluharimise käigus segatud, kuid kohati on säilinud puutumatu künnihorisonidist sügavamale ulatunud kultuurikihi alaosa. Ka alumisel terrassil on paiguti leide sisaldavat kultuurikihti, kuid see on hilisema inimtegevuse tõttu palju enam kahjustatud.

Vanadelt kaartidelt näeme, et kõik kirjeldatud leiualad paiknevad ajaloolise Kudruküla küla ja mõisa kohal (jn 3). Küla paiknes mõlemal pool Kudruküla oja, suurem osa suudmest kagus.

Kudruküla leidude hulgas on ülekaalus savi-nõukillud. Vanim, küllap rauaaegne, on leiualalt III

saadud üks arvatavasti käsitsi valmistatud savinõu kild. Enamasti on tegemist väikeste küljetükkide ja üksikute põhja- ja servakatketega, mida ei ole võimalik täpsemalt dateerida. Erandiks on kaks servatükki (jn 2: 1), mis kuju järgi kuuluvad Loode-Vene keraamikatradiitsioonis valmistatud kedrakeraamika Eestis eristatavasse tüüpi 3: 2, milliseid tehti 12. sajandi keskpaigast 13. sajandi lõpuni. Lihtkedrakeraamika valmistamist Narvas või selle lähiümbruses ei tunta, kuid tõenäoliselt olid keraamikatöökojad kusagil lähialal ja nii võib niisugust keraamikat tinglikult käsitleda kohaliku toodanguna.

Importkeraamika osakaal on väike, nagu see on omane Eesti kesk- ja varauusaegsete külade leiumateterjalile. Ühe määratava küljetüki puhul on tegemist Frecheni kivikeraamikaga (jn 2: 2), mida võib dateerida 16. sajandi teisest poolest 17. sajandi lõpuni. Üks kild on valgesavikeraamika. Niisugune Venemaal, peamiselt Moskvast, toodetud keraamika levis Eestis tõenäoliselt alles Liivi sõja ajal 16. sajandi teisel poolel. Narva piirkonnas on valgesavikeraamikat arvukalt leitud Moskva suurvürstiriigi tugipunktina rajatud Ivangorodi kindlusest.

Leitud piibutükkidest võib ühe kaha ja kõik varrekatted pinnatöötuse ja suitsukanali läbimõõdu järgi dateerida 18. sajandisse ning üks suure kaha fragment kuulub ehk isegi 19. sajandisse. Vanim on väike Hollandi tüüpi kaksikkooniline piibukaha (jn 2: 3)

leialalt III, mille võib dateerida 17. sajandisse. Suhteliselt arvukalt leiti tulekivitükke, mis pärinevad Karboni ja Kriidi ladestutest. Neist osade servadel on tulelõõmisest tekkivad iseloomulikud kasutusjäljed (jn 2: 4).

Arheoloogilise uuringute tulemuste ja kaardimaterjali kõrvutamisel on näha, et ajaloolise Kudruküla küla alal on kultuurikiht säilinud mitmel pool ja ulatuslikult. Kuna Narva jõe kallas on atraktiivne ehituspiirkond, on küla kultuurikihi säilimise ja uurimise huvides hädavajalik võtta piirkond riikliku kaitse alla arheoloogiamälestisena. Arvestades detektoristide rohkust Ida-Virumaal, oleks see ka ainus võimalus vältida asulakoha kultuurikihi tühjendamist metallesemetest.

Lisaks Kudrukülale on Narva jõe alamjooksult, jõe vasakkaldalt kogutud kesk- ja uusaegseid leide Riigiküla II ja IV ning Vasa esiaegsete asulakohtade kaevamisel ning ümbruskonnas tehtud maastikuleiretel (Riigiküla XVIII ja XIX; jn 4). Kõigil juhtudel on tegemist üpris standardse leiuainesega, enamasti moodustavad selle kedra- ja glasuurkeraamika killud, tulelõõmise tulekivitükid ja savipiipude katked ning vahel ka põlenud savi tükid ja üksikud metallesemed. Enamikest paikadest on leide kogutud sedavõrd arvukalt, et ei ole põhjust kahelda mingite majapidamiste paiknemises neis kohtades.