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THE EARLIEST POTTERY FROM THE LUDZA AREA: NEW NARVA WARE FINDS IN EASTERN LATVIA*

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Early pottery in Latvia is usually discussed with a focus on Lake Lubāns area in the eastern part of the country. This article presents another regional group of Narva Ware finds from Kreiči, Jurizdika I–II, Kubulova, and Ķīšukalns (Šelupinki) sites in the vicinity of Lake Lielais Ludza. This small amount of material (22 sherds in total) corresponds to the technological and morphological characteristics of the Narva Ware, expands the regional view of the Narva stage in Latvia, and enables future discussions in the wider eastern Baltic context. Following the dates and chronologies in the neighbouring areas (mainly Estonia), a timeframe of 5500–3900 BCE is suggested for Narva Ware production in Latvia as well.

Keywords: Narva Ware, eastern Latvia, Lake Lielais Ludza, Stone Age

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Introduction

Pottery technology was adopted by various hunter-fisher-gatherer communities in the Baltic Sea region in the late 6th or early 5th millennium BCE. Depending on the part of the Baltic basin in question, the earliest stage of pottery production has been recognised in the Ertebølle, Sperrings (or Early Comb), Säräisniemi 1, Narva, and Dubičiai (earlier Nemunas) Wares.[1] In the region that is now modern-day Latvia, the earliest pottery is represented by Narva Ware, locally also referred to as (Narva-)Osa Ware.[2] Broadly defined, the distribution of Narva Ware extends across the Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) but is also present in northern Belarus and western Russia. Its emergence can be dated to between 5500 and 5200 BCE based on materials from Estonia, Latvia, and Ingria (western Russia), and its production continued at least until 3900 BCE.[3]

In Latvia, the Narva Ware finds have predominantly been discussed with a focus on Lake Lubāns area in the eastern part of the country. This article presents another regional group of Narva Ware finds from the vicinity of Lake Lielais Ludza, also in eastern Latvia (Fig. 1). A total of 22 sherds of Narva Ware were identified while browsing through the collections of Ludza Museum of Regional Studies (LdNM) in connection with other studies. Since Narva pottery has not been discussed in the context of this area beyond individual and general remarks, publication of our preliminary notes on the finds is justified. These sherds clearly record the presence of Narva Ware in the vicinity of Lake Lielais Ludza, expanding the regional view of the Narva stage in Latvia and enabling future discussions in the wider eastern Baltic context.

Narva Ware finds in the area of Lake Lielais Ludza

The area of Lake Lielais Ludza features, along with Lakes Lubāns and Burtnieks, one of the largest concentrations of Stone Age hunter-fisher-gatherer sites in Latvia, but the area is, nevertheless, sometimes overlooked. Many finds were already made in the second half of the 1950s, and the excavations at Kreiči are perhaps the best known of these.[4] However, equally important are the activities by the archaeologist Rauls Šnore, who conducted numerous surveys and

1 See, e.g., Jordan, Zvelebil 2011; Piezonka 2015; with references for overviews.
2 Zagorskis 1965; 1967; 1973; Vankina 1974; Loze 1988; 2000.
3 Kriiska et al. 2017; Courel et al. 2020; and below.
4 Zagorskis 1961; 1963.

inspections between 1956 and 1959, partially simultaneously with the excavations of Ķīšukalns (Šelupinki) hillfort and settlement by his spouse Elvīra Šnore. These investigations led to the discovery of a large number of finds and settlement sites, and R. Šnore then carried out excavations at two of the newly discovered sites, Budjanka and Jurizdika.[5] In addition, the then-director of Ludza Museum, Jāzeps Timoškāns, was an active figure, and the museum even paid the locals for archaeological finds; the time was favourable for collecting as the lake level had been lowered to drain more land for agricultural use. All the finds presented in this article were delivered to the collections of Ludza Museum of Regional Studies in 1956–1959. Since these are essentially stray finds obtained from local residents, the information about the exact find locations is approximate.

Kreiči. The settlement and cemetery site of Kreiči is located about 400 m southwest of today's Lake Lielais Ludza, on the eastern side of the River Isnauda (Fig. 1: 1). It occupies the western end of a hill and the adjoining flat boggy area, which was partially destroyed by modern land use. The site was discovered during sand quarrying in 1955 (E. Šnore), after which a series of excavations were carried out between 1956 and 1959 (Lūcija Vankina and Francis Zagorskis) and, again, in 2022 (Mārcis Kalniņš and Aija Macāne).[6] The excavations covered approximately 760 m^2. The site consists of a settlement with fireplaces, pits, and wooden remains (in the wet area), as well as a cemetery with at least 23 graves. The recovered find material includes over 300 bone, antler, flint, stone, and amber artefacts, around 4000 animal bone fragments, and around 10,000 pottery sherds. Radiocarbon dating was obtained from a piece of wood collected from the occupation layer, but, due to the large margin of error, the estimated age broadly covers the 4th–2nd millennium BCE.[7] On typo-chronological grounds, the main use period dates to the 4th and 3rd millennia BCE (Typical Comb Ware, Piestiņa Ware, and so-called Porous Ware), but some finds also indicate later (Bronze and Iron Age, Historical period) use of the territory. No actual Narva Ware from the site has previously been described, although Kreiči was linked with Narva in a work in which the entire Stone Age pottery sequence of the eastern Baltic area was identified as different phases of the Narva culture.[8] In the local typological sequence currently used, the materials in question correspond to the Piestiņa

5 Šnore 1959; 1995.

6 Zagorskis 1961; 1963; Macāne, Nordqvist 2021; Zagorska 2021.

7 4020±300 BP (TA-8); Zagorskis 1963; All radiocarbon dates discussed in this paper are calibrated using the OxCal 4.4 programme (Bronk Ramsey 2009) with the IntCal 20 atmospheric curve (Reimer et al. 2020) and given with a 95.4 % probability interval.

8 Girininkas 1994, 105; 2023; see also Brazaitis 2002.

Fig. 1. I – The distribution of Narva Ware (after Kriiska et al. 2017: Fig. 1), the location of research area (Lake Lielais Ludza region, A) and other Narva sites mentioned in the text: B – Osa, Zvidze, Iča, and Zvejsala (Lake Lubāns region); C – Zvejnieki I; D – Dviete; E – Kääpa; F – Narva Joaorg and the Riigiküla sites (Narva region); II – sites with Narva Ware in Lake Lielais Ludza area: 1 – Kreiči; 2 – Jurizdika I–II; 3 – Kubulova; 4 – Ķīšukalns (Šelupinki); 5 – Budjanka; grey dots mark other Stone Age sites in the region. Illustration by Kerkko Nordqvist

1. att. I – Narvas keramikas izplatība (pēc Kriiska et al. 2017: Fig. 1), šajā pētījumā apskatītā teritorija (Lielais Ludzas ezers, A) un citas Narvas keramikas atradumu vietas, kas minētas rakstā: B – Osa, Zvidze, Iča un Zvejsala (Lubāna ezera apkārtne); C – Zvejnieki I; D – Dviete; E – Kääpa; F – Joaorg un Riigiküla apmetnes (Narvas apkārtne); II – atradumu vietas ar Narvas keramiku Lielā Ludzas ezera apkārtnē: 1 – Kreiči; 2 – Jurizdika I–II; 3 – Kubulova; 4 – Ķīšukalns (Šelupinki); 5 – Budjanka; pelēkie simboli apzīmē citas akmens laikmeta apmetnes vai atradumu vietas reģionā. Ilustrācija: Kerkko Nordqvist

type, which, in turn, is considered a successor to the Narva pottery tradition but with Comb Ware influences.[9]

Five sherds of Narva Ware were included among the finds from Kreiči settlement delivered to Ludza Museum in 1956 (LdNM 1279: 3; 1291: 5, 10, 16, 18) (see Table 1 and Fig. 2: 1–2).

Jurizdika I–II. The settlement site of Jurizdika is located on a large cape on the western shore of Lake Lielais Ludza (Fig. 1: 2). Find area I is situated on the sandy lake shore at the northeastern end of the cape, and area II about 200 metres to the south and a few dozen metres inland; stray finds have also been collected elsewhere on the cape.[10] The site was discovered in 1959 (R. Šnore). Small excavations (ca. 35 m^2) conducted at Jurizdika I showed that the occupation

9 Zagorskis 1967; see also Brazaitis 2002.

10 Šnore 1995; Urtāns 2021a.

Table 1. Narva Ware examined in Ludza Museum of Regional Studies (LdNM)

1. tabula. Ludzas Novadpētniecības muzejā (LdNM) analizētās Narvas keramikas lauskas

Site	Collection (LdNM)	Year	Sherds (rim + body)
Kreiči	1279:3; 1291:5, 10, 16, 18	1956	0 + 5
Jurizdika I–II	1388:1, 6, 14, 15, 16; 1389:2, 14; 1850:21, 28	1957, 1959	1 + 8
Kubulova	1401:9, 12; 1425:4, 9; 1473:31, without number (2)	1957	1 + 6
Ķīšukalns (Šelupinki)	1297:2	1957	0 +1

Site	Size class (cm)	Weight (g)	Thickness (mm)
Kreiči	3–6	5–10	5–8
Jurizdika I–II	3–7	8–18	6 (rim), 6–9 (body)
Kubulova	3–6	7–18	7 (rim), 6–9
Ķīšukalns (Šelupinki)	6	13	7–9

Site	Temper (pcs.)	Surfaces (pcs.)
Kreiči	Organic (plant and/or shell) (5)	Outer smooth, inner striated (2), both smooth (1), both striated (1), unkonwn (1)
Jurizdika I–II	Organic (plant and/or shell) (7), organic with little sand (1), crushed rock (1)	Both smooth (6), both striated (3)
Kubulova	Organic (plant and/or shell) (5), organic with little sand (1), coarse sand (1, rim)	Outer smooth, inner striated (2), both smooth (5)
Ķīšukalns (Šelupinki)	Organic (plant and/or shell) (1)	Both striated (1)

Site	Decoration (pcs.)	Rim (pcs.)
Kreiči	A horizontal row of diagonal toothed stamps (2) forming a herringbone pattern (1), undecorated (2)	–
Jurizdika I–II	A row of short diagonal toothed or stick stamps (2), undecorated (7)	Rim straight, rounded, upwards tapering; body curving (2)
Kubulova	A row of long diagonal toothed stamp (2), undecorated (5)	Rim straight, rounded, upwards tapering, neck profiled(?)
Ķīšukalns (Šelupinki)	Undecorated (1)	–

Site	Forming (pcs.)	Other
Kreiči	U-coiling (4), dense fabric and well-fired (5)	2 full coils
Jurizdika I–II	U-coiling (4), N-coiling (1), H-coiling (1), dense fabric and well-fired (9)	3 full coils; two sherds rounded by water
Kubulova	U-coiling (2), N-coiling (1?), H-coiling (1, 1?), dense (6) or hard (1, rim) fabric and well-fired	–
Ķīšukalns (Šelupinki)	U-coiling (1), hard (1) fabric and well-fired	1 full coil

Fig. 2. Some Narva Ware sherds found in the area of Lake Lielais Ludza: 1 – LdNM 1291: 10; 2 – LdNM 1291: 16; 3 – LdNM 1297: 3; 4 – LdNM 1473 (no sub-number); 5 – LdNM 1473: 31; 6 – LdNM 1425: 4; 7 – LdNM 1388: 6; 8 – LdNM 1388: 16; 9 – LdNM 1388: 14. Find locations: 1–2 Kreiči; 3 Ķīšukalns (Šelupinki); 4–6 Kubulova; 7–9 Jurizdika I–II. Illustration by Irina Khrustaleva.
Courtesy of the Ludza Museum of Regional Studies

2. att. Lielā Ludzas ezera apkārtnē atrastās Narvas keramikas lauskas: 1 – LdNM 1291: 10; 2 – LdNM 1291: 16; 3 – LdNM 1297: 3; 4 – LdNM 1473 (nav apakšnumura); 5 – LdNM 1473: 31; 6 – LdNM 1425: 4; 7 – LdNM 1388: 6; 8 – LdNM 1388: 16; 9 – LdNM 1388: 14. Atradumu vietas: 1–2 Kreiči; 3 Ķīšukalns (Šelupinki); 4–6 Kubulova; 7–9 Jurizdika I–II. Foto: Irina Khrustaleva.
Ar Ludzas Novadpētniecības muzeja atļauju

layer (including some wooden constructions) is partially inundated by the present lake. The area of Jurizdika II has been partially destroyed by modern land use. Finds from the site consist of flint, bone, and antler artefacts as well as pottery (mostly Typical Comb Ware). While there are no radiocarbon datings available, the finds show human activity, especially during the 4th but also in the 3rd millennium BCE. No Narva Ware has previously been described from the site.

Nine sherds of Narva Ware were found in assemblages delivered from the settlement in 1957 (LdNM 1388: 1, 6, 14, 15, 16; 1389: 2, 14) and area II

during R. Šnore's expedition in 1959 (LdNM 1850: 21, 28) (see Table 1 and Fig. 2: 7–9, Fig. 3: 1).

Kubulova. Kubulova settlement is located on the southeastern shore of Lake Lielais Ludza, on a cape protruding into the lake immediately southwest of the mouth of the River Ludza (Fig. 1: 3). In addition, many stray finds have been collected in the surroundings, including the banks of the River Kubulova. The settlement is among the sites discovered by R. Šnore in the 1950s, but no archaeological excavations have been carried out.[11] The find material consists mostly of Typical Comb Ware and Piestiņa Ware; no Narva Ware has previously been described from the site.

In total, seven sherds were detected in the material collected from the shores of the River Kubulova and Lake Lielais Ludza (LdNM 1401: 9, 12), vicinity of the River Kubulova (LdNM 1425: 4, 9) and around Kubulova settlement (LdNM 1473: 31 and two without sub-numbers), all of which were deposited in the museum in 1957 (see Table 1 and Fig. 2: 4–6, Fig. 3: 2).

Ķīšukalns (Šelupinki). Ķīšukalns (Šelupinki) hillfort and settlement site is located on one of the two large capes that protrude into Lake Lielais Ludza from the east (Fig. 1: 4). The site was excavated in the 1950s (E. Šnore) and 2015–2016 (Ināra Kuniga).[12] Nearly the entire cape was modified by a hillfort and settlement site of the Late Iron Age and the Middle Ages, which also extends to the adjacent Budjanka cape. The few Stone Age finds may be related to the extensive Stone Age settlement site discovered there (Fig. 1: 5); the total surface area of these sites is around 15 hectares.[13] The find material includes Typical Comb Ware and Piestiņa Ware; no Narva Ware was previously described from the site.

One piece of Narva Ware was included among the finds collected near the hillfort and delivered to the museum in 1957 (LdNM 1297: 2) (see Table 1 and Fig. 2: 3).

Characteristics of Narva Ware in Ludza area

In earlier accounts, the Narva period in Ludza area is mentioned only in passing. Zagorskis notes that, based on Osa finds, similar pottery may be included in the finds from the shores of Lake Lielais Ludza.[14] He also points out that

11 Šnore 1995.
12 Urtāns 2021b.
13 Šnore 1995.
14 Zagorskis 1967, 73.

Fig. 3. Rim sherds of Narva Ware included in the studied material: 1 – LdNM 1388: 1; 2 – LdNM 1473 (no sub-number). Find locations: 1 Jurizdika I–II; 2 Kubulova. Illustration by Kerkko Nordqvist.
Courtesy of Ludza Museum of Regional Studies

3. att. Narvas keramikas trauku augšmalas, kas iekļautas šajā pētījumā: 1 – LdNM 1388: 1; 2 – LdNM 1473 (nav Nr.). Atradumu vietas: 1 Jurizdika I–II; 2 Kubulova. Foto: Kerkko Nordqvist. Ar Ludzas Novadpētniecības muzeja atļauju

the bone and antler artefacts typical of this period are present in the materials collected from the region.[15] In addition, three sherds of "so-called porous pottery belonging to the Narva culture"[16] were reported as found in the courtyard of the medieval – early modern period Ludza castle.[17] Upon examination, it was not possible to clearly assign these small pieces (National History Museum of Latvia, LNVM, VI247: 416) to the Narva type, but, rather, they represent a later phase of prehistory. Furthermore, because the sherds presented in this study were recognised in connection to research with a focus other than Narva Ware, the published finds represent only the minimum amount of Narva material from the area. More finds may be included, particularly in assemblages excavated from the large multi-period settlement sites (Kreiči, Jurizdika I–II, Budjanka, stored in the LNVM), which were not inspected for the present study.

The material examined in Ludza Museum of Regional Studies consists of two rim and 20 body sherds. Their average size was small, with a maximum dimension between 3 and 7 cm, and a weight of 5–18 g. The pottery is tempered with

15 Zagorskis 1973, 57, 62.

16 "Narvas kultūrai piederīgās t.s. porainās keramikas atradumi", Tomsons 2021, 243.

17 Daiga 2011.

organic (plant and/or shell) admixtures, and only two pieces are fully tempered with sand or crushed rock. Most of the sherds are undecorated, but six pieces show ornamentation on the outer surface consisting of diagonal (loose) rows of thin-toothed stamps or stick-like impressions, once a herringbone-like pattern of two rows of stamps (Fig. 2: 1, 3, 9). Otherwise, the surfaces are either smooth or moderately striated. Both rim sherds are undecorated, have a shape that narrows slightly upwards and outwards and are 6–7 mm thick (Fig. 3). The thickness of the body sherds varies between 5 and 9 mm but is usually 7–8 mm. Due to the small number and size of the pieces, information about the vessel shapes is limited, but one rim sherd has weak profiling. U-coils (bands) dominate, although some individual (fragmentary) N- and H-coils are also present. In six cases, a complete coil (or several coils) is present. The clay mass is dense (hard in two cases) and generally well fired.

Narva Ware or "Narva-type pottery" in the original sense, as distinguished by Lembit Jaanits, refers to pottery that mainly pre-dates the Typical Comb Ware. The Narva-type includes pointed or round-bottomed vessels with straight or mildly curving walls, as well as shallow, elongated or round bowls. The vessels are formed by coiling, usually in a U- or N-shape, while H-coils are exceptional and likely represent deformed U-coils.[18] Characteristic of the Narva Ware are narrow coils, the width of which can occasionally even be smaller than the vessel wall thickness. The simple rims are straight or rounded and tapered, i.e. their thickness is usually less than that of the walls. The clay mass is often tempered with crushed shell, plant, or other organic admixtures. With the naked eye, it is, however, difficult to distinguish which of these tempers was actually used, because the admixture is often completely burnt out.[19] Less frequently, sand or crushed rock are used (an exception is the local group on the West Estonian islands, where mineral admixture dominates). Surfaces are striated or smoothed, occasionally nearly burnished. The decoration is usually found only in the upper part of the vessel (but there are exceptions) and comprises zonal compositions with occasional geometric motifs.[20] The ornamentation is executed with pits, notches, stamps, and drawn lines and shows regional variation: toothed or comb stamps, for example, are common, but are particularly numerous in Narva Ware in northeastern Estonia.[21] Although none of these technological, ornamental, or

18 Kriiska 1995, 68 Fig. 5.

19 See, e.g., Kriiska et al. 2021, 45.

20 Jaanits 1959; 1968; Zagorskis 1967; 1973; Timofeev 1993; Kriiska 1995; 1997; Loze 1988; 2000.

21 Kriiska et al. 2021, 46.

morphological parameters is unique in itself – they are part of the variation of Stone Age pottery of the eastern Baltic area – together they form a distinctive typological entity. The sherds of Narva Ware from the shores of Lake Lielais Ludza are distinct from other pottery types found there and, despite the limited information provided by the small number and size of finds, correspond to the overall appearance as well as the individual characteristics of Narva Ware documented elsewhere.

Narva Ware may not have been earlier recognised in Ludza region for three reasons. First, it was not searched for, and the amount of Narva pottery in the assemblages may be small compared to later pottery types. Second, the main period of Stone Age research took place in Ludza region before Narva Ware was defined in the eastern Baltic area, first, using Estonian materials from Narva region[22] and, then, in Latvia based on materials from Osa site in Lake Lubāns area.[23] The third reason might be that Rauls Šnore died prematurely in early 1962 due to poor health, and his work in Lake Lielais Ludza region was never properly completed.[24]

Originally, Zagorskis defined Osa Ware as a regional, east Latvian group of Narva Ware, mostly focusing on differences in decoration.[25] Since then, this Narva or Osa Ware has been associated primarily with eastern Latvia,[26] while the adoption and early pottery use in western Latvia is less (well) defined and, at times, seen as a partially separate development.[27] However, this is still speculation, as there is insufficient knowledge about the possible presence of pottery from late 6th and early 5th millennium BCE in western Latvia. Overall, there is no agreement in the eastern Baltic area concerning which cultural phases (that is, pottery types) are included under the term "Narva" and how long this phase lasts.[28]

Until the Typical Comb Ware and the beginning of the 4th millennium BCE, "Narva Ware" is typologically quite clearly defined. It is true that several regional variants have been distinguished within it, but these nevertheless have much in common.[29] In Estonia and Ingria (Russia), where dozens of settlement sites

22 Jaanits 1959; 1968; see also Gurina 1967; However, as early as 1959 (p. 125) Jaanits assumed that some of the pottery fragments from Iča are Narva Ware.

23 Zagorskis 1965; 1967; 1973.

24 Rauls Šnore conducted the research described here shortly after his 1955 release from a Soviet prison camp for health reasons.

25 Zagorskis 1965; 1967; 1973.

26 E. g., Bīrons et al. 1974; Loze 2001; Brazaitis 2002.

27 See Vankina 1974.

28 See Bērziņš 2008, 40–41 for an overview.

29 Jaanits 1984; Timofeev 1989; Kriiska 1997.

from the 6th and 5th millennium BCE have been discovered and excavated in recent decades,[30] and the collected material is, moreover, relatively well analysed and dated,[31] it has become clear that the Narva Ware was conservative; often no significant changes occurred over the course of a millennium. The situation is quite different in the case of pottery from the early 4th millennium BCE and onwards. The term "Narva Ware" and the archaeological material encompassed by it become diffuse and reduce "Narva" to a mere generic label that no longer refers to a single type of pottery – or even a group of related types.[32] Therefore, we use the term here and elsewhere only in its original meaning, i.e. strictly in reference to the earliest phase of pottery use.

In previous Latvian research, discussion of Narva Ware focuses heavily on Lake Lubāns area, especially on Osa, Zvidze, Iča, and Zvejsala sites.[33] There is additionally a mention of Narva finds from the settlement sites of Dviete and Zvejnieki I in southeastern and northern Latvia.[34] Zagorskis also names some possible similarities with the Sārnate Ware,[35] but as noted, the boundaries of the Narva type are fluid and vary according to the perspective of the researcher. Nevertheless, the finds reported in this publication reveal another group of sites around Lake Lielais Ludza (Kreiči, Jurizdika, Kubulova, and Ķīšukalns). As can be expected from their geographical proximity, the Narva Ware fragments found on the shores of Lake Lielais Ludza are similar to the Narva (Osa) Ware from Lake Lubāns area. Furthermore, fragments from Lake Lielais Ludza region – as has already been shown several times for the pottery from Lake Lubāns area[36] – also display some similarities in decoration with Narva pottery from southeastern (Kääpa) and northeastern (Narva region) Estonia and northwestern Russia (Leningrad region). At the same time, it is clear that more material as well as inter- and intra-regional studies are needed to better clarify the socio-cultural dynamics and timing of events related to the introduction and use of early pottery in eastern Latvia.

30 Kriiska et al. 2016; Sikk et al. 2020, 130.

31 The age of these water-bound sites is often determined by shore-displacement dating.

32 This is also reflected in the diverse terminology used, which includes, for example, Late Narva Ware (Girininkas 1988; Brazaitis 2002) and Post-Narva Ware (Zagorskis 1965; Girininkas 1988; Timofeev 1989; Gurina 1996), which, in turn, are subdivided into various local types.

33 Zagorskis 1965; 1967; 1973; Loze 1988; 2000; 2015.

34 Zagorskis 1965; 1967; 1973; also Bīrons et al. 1974; Loze 2001.

35 But cf. Vankina 1974.

36 Zagorskis 1967; 1973; Kriiska 1997, 18.

Dating of Narva Ware in Latvia

Most radiocarbon dates reliably associated with Narva pottery come from Estonia, where a date of between 5200 and 3900 BCE was recently proposed.[37] In Latvia, Narva-related dates principally derive from two multi-period settlements, Osa and Zvidze. From these sites, a series of conventional (i.e. non-AMS) datings have been obtained from wood and charcoal collected from occupation layers as well as bulk peat and other sediment samples, and cover the period 8200–7610 to 2850–2300 BCE (Osa)[38] and 6690–6250 to 2020–1750 BCE (Zvidze).[39] Acknowledging the many problems with sample and dating quality and the association of samples to the pottery finds, the earliest dates connected with contexts with early ceramics are 5710–5220 BCE in Osa[40] and 5470–5210 BCE in Zvidze[41]. Recently presented AMS-dating from the lowermost layer with pottery at Zvidze provides new support for the view that pottery production in eastern Latvia began around 5500 BCE. This date, 5610–5480 BCE,[42] was obtained from charcoal (*Alnus* sp.) attached to the surface of pottery fabric of Narva Ware.

The upper limit of about 3900 BCE suggested for Narva Ware in Ingria[43] overlaps with the introduction of Typical Comb Ware in the eastern Baltic area.[44] In Latvia, the youngest dating associated with the Narva phase is 4700–4460 BCE in Osa,[45] between 4450–4050 BCE and 4320–4000 BCE in Zvidze[46] but as late as 3940–3530 BCE in Zvejsala.[47] However, the last context date overlaps with

37 Kriiska et al. 2017.

38 8790±80 BP (MGU-1748) and 4000±60 BP (Le-758); Zagorskis et al. 1984; Loze 1988.

39 7650±100 BP (TA-1722) and 3550±40 BP (Le-2354); Loze 1988; Liiva, Loze 1993; Loze, Liiva 2004; Timofeev et al. 2004.

40 6533±120 BP (Ri-272); Zagorskis et al. 1984; Loze 1988; Liiva, Loze 1993.

41 6350±60 BP (TA-1746); Loze 1988; Loze, Liiva 2004.

42 6567±33 BP (KIA-53101); Courel et al. 2020; see also Dolbunova et al. 2022.

43 Kriiska et al. 2017.

44 The date currently proposed for the beginning of the Typical Comb Ware and, thus, of the Middle Neolithic in Latvia, 4200–4100 BCE (Zagorska 2006; Bērziņš 2021; see also Meadows et al. 2018), cannot be considered correct. It predates the onset of Typical Comb Ware in the neighbouring territories from which the phenomenon spread to Latvia, by at least two or three centuries (see Nordqvist 2018; Khrustaleva, Kriiska 2021; Pesonen 2021). Moreover, it is based on dates influenced by the reservoir effect (Zvejnieki burials) as well as bulk dates from geological and palynological horizons (see Nordqvist 2025; Lake Lubāns area).

45 5730±50 BP (Le-850); Zagorskis et al. 1984.

46 5440±80 BP (TA-1594) and 5320±50 BP (TA-1800); Loze 1988; Loze, Liiva 2004.

47 4905±70 BP (TA-395); Loze 1988; Liiva, Loze 1993.

the existence of Typical Comb Ware, which is also ubiquitous at this settlement. No radiocarbon dates are associated with Narva Ware contexts or pottery at other Latvian sites. Consequently, the period of Narva Ware in Latvia can currently be dated to 5500–3900 BCE. Since this age is partially based on data from Estonia and western Russia, more attention must be devoted to the chronology of the Narva phase in Latvia in the future.

Conclusions

The earliest pottery in Latvia is usually discussed with a focus on Lake Lubāns area in the eastern part of the country. This article presents another regional group of Narva Ware finds from the sites of Kreiči, Jurizdika I–II, Kubulova, Ķīšukalns (Šelupinki), which are located in the vicinity of Lake Lielais Ludza. The finds were recognised in Ludza Museum of Regional Studies in connection with research focused on aims other than the Narva Ware. Therefore, it is likely that more Narva Ware can be found in the National History Museum of Latvia collections from the same region, but these were not studied for the present article.

The finds were originally made between 1956 and 1959 by the archaeologist Rauls Šnore and laypeople from the surrounding area(s). Since the finds were made before the Narva Ware was properly recognised and defined in the eastern Baltic area, they have not been considered in previous studies on the period. Although they are few, the finds nevertheless broaden the regional perspective on the Narva stage in Latvia and enable future discussions on the wider eastern Baltic context.

The two rim and 20 body sherds are small in size but correspond to the technological and morphological characteristics of the Narva Ware documented elsewhere. The fragments of Narva Ware found on the shores of Lake Lielais Ludza resemble, as expected, given their geographical proximity, the Narva (Osa) Ware from Lake Lubāns area and, in addition, show some similarities in decoration with Narva pottery from southeastern and northeastern Estonia and northwestern Russia.

Finally, we emphasise that if the term "Narva Ware" is to be understood as a distinctive, coherent typological entity, it must be recognised in its original meaning, as defined by Lembit Jaanits, i.e. it refers only to the earliest pottery used in the region before the emergence the Typical Comb Ware. Based on the dates and chronologies mostly from neighbouring areas (Estonia and western Russia), a timeframe of 5500–3900 BCE is suggested for the Narva Ware production in Latvia as well. However, there is an obvious need for further regional and

inter-regional research to understand the socio-cultural dynamics and chronology of early pottery use both in eastern and western Latvia.

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AGRĀKĀ KERAMIKA LUDZAS APKAIMĒ: JAUNI NARVAS KERAMIKAS ATRADUMI AUSTRUMLATVIJĀ

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Par agrāko keramiku Latvijas teritorijā parasti runā, pamatojoties uz atradumiem no Lubāna ezera apkārtnes valsts austrumdaļā. Šajā rakstā aplūkota vēl viena reģionālā Narvas keramikas atradumu grupa no Kreičiem, Jurizdikas I–II, Kubulovas un Ķīšukalna (Šelupinkiem) Lielā Ludzas ezera apkārtnē. Šis nelielais materiāls (kopā 22 fragmenti) atbilst Narvas keramikas tehnoloģiskajām un morfoloģiskajām īpašībām un paplašina reģionālo skatījumu uz Narvas keramiku Latvijā, kā arī dod iespēju turpmākām diskusijām plašākā Austrumbaltijas kontekstā. Balstoties uz datējumiem un hronoloģiju tuvākajos reģionos (galvenokārt Igaunijā), Narvas keramikas izplatību arī Latvijas teritorijā var attiecināt uz laika posmu no 5500. līdz 3900. gadam pr. Kr.

Atslēgas vārdi: Narvas keramika, Austrumlatvija, Lielais Ludzas ezers, akmens laikmets

Kopsavilkums

Keramikas izgatavošanas tehnoloģija izplatījās mednieku-zvejnieku-vācēju kopienās ap Baltijas jūru 6. un 5. gadu tūkstotī pr. Kr. Izdala dažādus keramikas tipus, un Latvijā agrākais posms tiek saukts par Narvas keramiku, kas pazīstams arī Igaunijā, Lietuvā, Baltkrievijas ziemeļos un Krievijas rietumos. Par agrāko keramiku Latvijā parasti runā, pievēršoties Lubāna ezera apkārtnei valsts austrumdaļā. Šis raksts vēsta par Narvas keramikas atradumiem Lielā Ludzas ezera apkārtnē, kas līdz šim bija maz pētīta, salīdzinot ar bagātīgi pētīto akmens laikmetu Lubāna ezera reģionā.

Narvas keramikas atradumi no Kreičiem, Jurizdikas I–II, Kubulovas un Ķīšukalna (Šelupinkiem) ļauj atpazīt jaunu reģionālo grupu Lielā Ludzas ezera apkārtnē. Šajā pētījumā aplūkotie atradumi tika identificēti Ludzas Novadpētniecības muzejā, pētot citus materiālus. Tāpēc, visticamāk, Latvijas Nacionālā vēstures muzeja krājumos varētu būt arī citi Narvas keramikas atradumi no tā paša reģiona (īpaši no Kreiču, Jurizdikas un Budjankas apmetnēm), kas, šo rakstu gatavojot, nav pētīti.

Pavisam Ludzas muzeja krājumā tika identificētas 22 Narvas keramikas lauskas: piecas no Kreičiem ezera dienvidrietumos, deviņas no Jurizdikas I–II ezera rietumu krastā, septiņas no Kubulovas apkaimes ezera dienvidaustrumu daļā un viena no Ķīšukalna (Šelupinku) pilskalna un apmetnes vietas Lielā Ludzas ezera austrumu krastā. Šie atradumi muzeja kolekcijā ir no arheologa Raula Šnores pētījumiem 1956.–1959. gadā. Palīdzēja arī vietējie iedzīvotāji, kuri muzeja direktora Jāzepa Timoškāna darbības laikā nesa muzejam Ludzas ezera apkārtnē atrastos arheoloģiskos materiālus.

Iemesls, kāpēc Narvas keramika šajā reģionā iepriekš nav atpazīta, ir, pirmkārt, mērķtiecīgu pētījumu trūkums un nelielais Narvas keramikas fragmentu īpatsvars

apmetnēs, kur sastopami vairāki keramikas tipi. Otrkārt, atradumus un pētījumus Ludzas ezera apkārtnē veica laikā, pirms Lembits Jānitss (*Jaanits*) atpazina un definēja Narvas keramiku šajā Austrumbaltijas apgabalā, pamatojoties uz Igaunijas teritorijā atrastajiem materiāliem. Vēlāk Francis Zagorskis noteica agrāko keramiku, pamatojoties uz materiāliem no Osas apmetnes Lubāna ezera apkārtnē. No tā arī cēlies Latvijā lietotais nosaukums – Osas keramika. Līdz ar to Narvas keramikas lauskas no Ludzas apkārtnes iepriekšējos pētījumos netika identificētas. Lai gan šajā pētījumā aprakstīto lausku skaits ir neliels, tās paplašina Narvas keramikas reģionālo izplatību Latvijā un dod iespēju turpmākajām diskusijām plašākā Austrumbaltijas kontekstā.

Ludzas muzeja kolekcijā ir identificēti divi trauku augšmalu fragmenti, kā arī 20 citas lauskas. Lai gan trauku lauskas ir samērā mazas, tās atbilst citur dokumentētajām Narvas keramikas tehnoloģiskajām un morfoloģiskajām īpašībām. Trauki lielākoties izgatavoti no māla ar organisko vielu piemaisījumu, izņemot divus fragmentus, kur veidmasai ir piejauktas smiltis vai zvirgzdi. Trauki veidoti, izmantojot U stiprināšanas metodi, un ir labi apdedzināti. Lauskas pārsvarā ir nedekorētas, bet dažos fragmentos redzamas diagonālas zobainu iespiedumu rindas vai īsas, iespiestas līnijas, savukārt virsmas ir gludas vai daļēji švīkātas. Abi augšmalu fragmenti ir nedekorēti, un tie sašaurinās virzienā uz augšu. Lielā Ludzas ezera apkārtnē atrastie Narvas keramikas trauku fragmenti, ņemot vērā to ģeogrāfisko tuvumu, līdzinās Narvas (Osas) traukiem no Lubāna ezera apkārtnes un uzrāda arī dažas līdzības ornamentos ar Narvas keramiku Igaunijas dienvidaustrumos un ziemeļaustrumos, kā arī Krievijas ziemeļrietumos.

Šajā rakstā ir uzsvērts, ka, ja ar terminu "Narvas keramika" apzīmē atšķirīgu, homogēnu tipoloģisko vienību, tas ir jāuztver tā sākotnējā nozīmē, kā to definēja Lembits Jānitss, respektīvi, tas attiecas tikai uz agrāko keramiku, kas izmantota šajā apvidū pirms tipiskās ķemmes-bedrīšu keramikas parādīšanās. Latvijā līdz šim pieejamie šī perioda radioaktīvā oglekļa datējumi galvenokārt ir no Osas un Zvidzes apmetnēm, taču bieži tie ir sliktas kvalitātes un ar neskaidriem datētajiem kontekstiem. Tomēr datējumi attiecina keramikas parādīšanos uz laika periodu ap 5500. gadu pr. Kr. Balstoties uz datējumiem un hronoloģiju kaimiņu reģionos (Igaunijā un Krievijas rietumos), šajā rakstā ieteikts Narvas keramikas parādīšanos un izmantošanu Latvijā attiecināt uz periodu no 5500. līdz 3900. gadam pr. Kr.

Narvas keramikas atradumi Lielā Ludzas ezera apkārtnē sniedz jaunas ziņas un bagātina mūsu izpratni par agrākās keramikas izmantošanu Latvijā. Lai gan šie atradumi atbilst Narvas keramikas atradumiem arī citos Austrumbaltijas reģionos, tie arī uzsver vajadzību pēc turpmākiem reģionāliem un starpreģionāliem pētījumiem, lai izprastu agrākās keramikas izmantošanas sociāli kulturālo dinamiku un hronoloģiju Latvijas austrumu un rietumu daļās.

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