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PLACE-LORE AS A TOOL TO IDENTIFY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

In this article I present an analysis of how place-lore has and can be used as a tool to identify archaeological sites. The focus was upon three types of sites: prehistoric strongholds; burial sites on dry land; wetland sites with potential human remains. In the first part, the prehistoric strongholds in historical Võrumaa County are discussed, followed in the second part by the burial sites in Karula Parish. The aim was to answer the questions “How many of these sites had been identified using folklore (including place names)?”, “How did this place-lore form and what kind of information does it pass on?” and “How did identifications in folklore or on the basis of folklore relate to the archaeological evidence at these places?” In third part my own fieldwork, undertaken at wetlands selected on the basis of folklore that referred to human remains, is presented. Analysis of the prehistoric strongholds showed that in general they were identified on the basis of folklore. However, other potential stronghold sites that occur in place-lore remain unconfirmed by archaeological evidence. In the case of some of these sites, a lack of confirmation may be owing to inadequate archaeological investigation. Almost all burial places in Karula Parish have been identified using place-lore, usually describing unearthed human remains. Unlike in the case of strongholds, the place-lore concerning burial sites is less likely to refer to the original use of sites, which indicates that many of them were “forgotten” by locals after the end of use. The fieldwork in the wetlands did not uncover any new archaeological finds. The main reason could be the difficulties of doing wetland archaeology. The place-lore may also be misleading with regard to all three types of archaeological sites, but it is also not possible to state categorically that in the past people did not interact with these sites. The results of this study show how important place-lore has and can be in determining archaeological sites. However, one has to keep in mind how place-lore emerges and the character of the information it tends to pass on.

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Introduction

Archaeologists studying landscapes tend to be outsiders, who visit areas of interest mainly during fieldwork. Their experience cannot be compared with local people’s conceptions of their surroundings. For local people archaeological sites

can be part of their everyday environment, even if they do not acknowledge them as archaeological sites. Some places and or finds are significant and noticed by locals, while others have not attracted attention. For ~150 years archaeological sites have been recorded in Estonia (see Lang 2006), and this information gives the primary basis to our understanding of the past. The identification of archaeological sites may be based on e.g. maps, their visual character, orthophotos, or accidental artefact finds, and usually owing to a combination of these different factors. My focus during the current study was on the use of place-lore in identifying archaeological sites, i.e.: “How many sites have been identified using place-lore (including place-names)?”, “How did this place-lore form and what kind of information does it pass on?” and “How identifications in folklore relate to the archaeological evidence?” Analysis of these topics helps to estimate the character of folkloric and also archaeological data. Understanding the nature of place-lore provides us with enhanced knowledge of how to best use such information for finding new archaeological sites in the future and to be critical of the actual information gained based on place-lore.

Conception of ‘place-lore’ and its relation with archaeological sites

Folklore connected with specific landscape sites is called ‘place-lore’ (read more: Rimmel 2014). Place-lore can be connected with either natural or anthropogenic objects. The focus for this paper was on place-lore connected with archaeological sites. Active recording of Estonian folklore (including place-lore) started during the second half of the 19th century and continues to this day. This work has resulted in a very valuable and extensive collection, the largest in the world per capita (Valk 2006, 311). The place-lore collected earlier tends to be more valuable to archaeologists, as it is closer in time to when archaeological sites were originally used, and thus represents a more traditional world view. However, even today the knowledge of locals can be very useful, especially in determining the exact location of place-lore sites within the landscape. Folklore connected to archaeological sites mirrors how local people perceived these places during the recent past, though sometimes place-lore may not be connected with a site’s archaeological character. Place-lore reflecting the heritage of archaeological sites can be divided into two: 1) a continuous lore, originating from the time period of the construction and original use of the site; 2) a secondary lore, connected with a site’s visual appearance, finds, or people’s secondary activities/experiences regarding archaeological sites. Although making this distinction can be difficult, it is useful to estimate whether the place-lore being studied is likely to be continuous or secondary. This separation is important for understanding how and when a place-lore was formed. In doing so, we can ascertain the character and limitations of such information that has been passed on orally. The place-lore about archaeological sites (especially that has been collected more recently) can be affected by the activity of archaeologists (see Kalda 2014, 289 f.) and

literature about history – but generally the influence of the latter on the place-lore under study was rarely detectable.

The term ‘place-lore’ is used in different contexts and the term’s limitation depends on the researcher (Remmel 2014, 31). In this paper, toponyms are also referred to as place-lore, but in detailed descriptions it is always specified if the place-lore in question is just a place-name or a place-lore narrative. Place-names and place-lore narratives should not be regarded separately, as narratives can affect place-names and vice versa; place-names can inspire narratives or attract wider spread place-lore motives. Archaeological finds, if lost, but described orally by locals, are also categorized as place-lore, not as archaeological evidence. In this paper I specify when a place-lore only consists of a description of finds. There usually seemed to be no reason to doubt that the find did exist, but such information cannot be considered as sufficient archaeological evidence to confirm archaeological sites. We usually do not know how many intermediates were between the unearthing of an archaeological find and the recording of each place-lore. Locals interpret finds in their own way, and if information is passed on orally, it tends to change. Sometimes the precise find spot may be remembered incorrectly. However, none of this means that folklore cannot pass on accurate and objective information about past events. We should not make separation between ‘folklore’ and ‘real information’. Folklore may, but does not have to, contain precise information of past actions, events, and finds.

It is impossible to determine, based on archaeological surveying that past people have not interacted with a place-lore location. There are many human activities that leave no archaeological evidence on the landscape (but may be reflected in folklore) and therefore are not available to study in archaeology (Taylor 1983, 113). If human interference left behind material evidence, such material may be destroyed over time. If no archaeological finds are discovered at a site, we still cannot be certain there are none, because the entire soil of sites is almost never studied. However, archaeological investigation decreases the likelihood that a site contains unknown archaeological evidence.

Archaeological sites can be identified at different levels; which can be divided into three groups based on by whom these identifications are made. First, the site may be identified by locals. Today we know about local identifications mainly via place-lore. The local identifications may differ from ones made by archaeologists (e.g. church foundation versus *tarand* graves). It is also possible that a site is not identified as archaeological site by locals, but the information in place-lore gives local historians and archaeologists a basis for the identification of a site. For example, we do not know if locals considered sites with burial-related names to be burial places (see below). The second kind of the identification is the work of local historians, who have generally identified sites using folklore. In some cases they have also visited sites, described them, and noted any visible characteristics of the archaeological site. The local historians can be situated between locals and professional archaeologists, having bits of knowledge from both sides.

The third group of identifications are made by archaeologists, who may use place-lore to identify sites but also practise other methods. In case of place-lore sites, sometimes archaeologists localize these within landscapes and describe them, but have not collected finds to confirm they are actually archaeological monuments. In other cases, archaeologists collect more definite evidence, mainly in the form of finds.

Data collection and methodology

There were three kinds of places under study closely connected with folklore: prehistoric strongholds; burial places on dry land; wetland sites where place-lore refers to possible human remains. There are some types of archaeological sites that are commonly not represented in place-lore, for example numerous settlement sites and the remains of ancient fields (Remmel & Valk 2014, 325). For this article, prehistoric strongholds and burial places were analysed mostly from a retrospective viewpoint, in order to bring out the importance of place-lore regarding the identification of these sites. In the case of wetland sites, my own fieldwork is presented, i.e. areas identified by place-lore were studied in the hope of gaining new archaeological evidence. The analysis of folklore related to strongholds and burial sites on dry land helped to place the results and experience of the wetland fieldwork into a larger framework of how place-lore has and can be used in the searching for archaeological sites.

Only prehistoric strongholds, i.e. those established by the local population before or during the Baltic Crusades¹ of the 13th century, were analysed. For the selection of sites, the catalogue composed by Evald Tõnisson and Heiki Valk (Tõnisson 2008), with some recent additions of Madsa and Värtemäe² hill forts (Kama 2014a, 15; 2016a, 2 ff.), was used. The ‘Database of archaeological and place-lore sites’³, as well as the archaeological archives of the Institute of History and Archaeology at the University of Tartu, were used to specify how the sites had been discovered. The study area of prehistoric strongholds encompassed the historical Võrumaa County, located in present day south-eastern Estonia (Fig. 1). There are 20 strongholds in the study area that have yielded archaeological evidence. The hill forts of south-eastern Estonia have been rather thoroughly studied by Valk (2014, 93 ff.). In addition, I present places in Karula Parish where no archaeological evidence exists for sites referred to as strongholds in folklore.

¹ This conquest marks the beginning of the historical times in Estonia.

² Known also as Sibula hill fort.

³ The database is developed by the Centre for Archaeological Research and Infrastructure (*Arheoloogia Kabinet*), Institute of History and Archaeology, University of Tartu. This database contains copies of notes from archaeological archives throughout Estonia and is linked to the database of Estonian place-lore, which is developed by the Estonian Folklore Archives at the Estonian Literary Museum. In the studied areas, the archaeological and place-lore notes were connected with certain sites within the landscape.

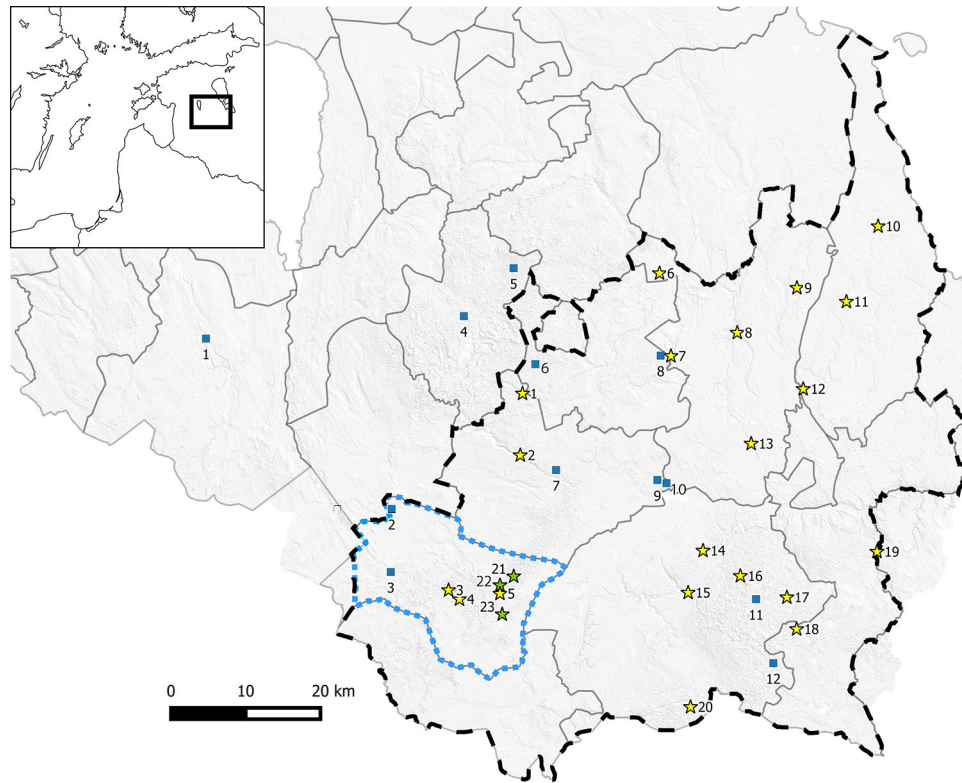


Fig. 1. The border of historic Võrumaa County is marked with a black dotted line, and the area of Karula Parish with a blue dotted line. The confirmed strongholds are marked with yellow stars (1–20, see Table 1), and the folkloric strongholds without archaeological evidence (21–23) with green stars. The studied wetland sites are marked with blue squares (1–12, see Table 3); the wetlands that were not in southern Estonia (13–15, see Table 3) are not mapped here.

For the burial sites on dry land within Karula Parish, I studied all the identifications of the sites, i.e. with and without archaeological evidence. The selection was based on the ‘Database of archaeological and place-lore sites’ and on original archive documents that clarified the details of how the sites had been identified. Compared to hill forts, only a proportionally small number of identified burial sites have been studied archaeologically. One reason is that there are many more identified burial places compared to strongholds. The identification of burial sites was studied in Karula Parish, which is part of historical Võrumaa County (Fig. 1). It is my home parish, where I have conducted various fieldworks. Some examples in this article come from my own first-hand experience. As a result of fieldwork conducted over the last twenty years⁴, Karula Parish is archaeologically

⁴ Valk 1996; Vindi 1996a; 1996b; Konsa 2001; 2003; 2008; Haak 2003; Kama 2012a; 2012b; 2012c; 2013a; 2013b; 2014a; 2014b; 2015a; 2016a.

rather well studied compared to other parts of Estonia, but there are still plenty of sites whose archaeological character is under question. Altogether 39 sites identified as burial places on dry land are known in Karula Parish⁵. In a few cases, it is not entirely clear if the place-lore describes the same burial place or those nearby, but such mild inaccuracies should not affect the overall picture.

The studied wetland sites were situated across mainland Estonia, although the majority were in the south-east (Fig. 1). For the fieldwork, 15 wetlands classified in folklore as ‘ponds’, ‘swamps’, and ‘bogs’ were chosen. The selection of wetlands was based on their prevalence in place-lore, but in conducting fieldworks also practical reasons were important (see Table 3). The documentation of wetland place-names is almost lacking. Therefore the most important selection criterion was the possibility of locating the place described in folklore within the landscape. In historical Võrumaa, place-names can be searched from the map based database of historic landscapes toponyms (AVKA⁶). This is one reason why the studied wetlands were mostly situated in south-eastern Estonia. The other reason was that the wetlands in southern Estonia are usually smaller and thus more practical in terms of fieldwork.

In the context of the analysis presented in this study, it was possible to mostly use information that had already been written down. When working with archive notes, it can be difficult to determine exactly what factors occurred regarding the discovery of an archaeological site, especially ones identified in earlier years. In the case of more recently discovered sites, the details were asked from the involved archaeologists. When analysing place-lore, one always has to bear in mind that the amount of recorded data depends on how intensively the folklore was collected, and that place-lore information depends on what folklore collectors thought important and asked from local people.

The use of place-lore to identify archaeological sites

The identification of prehistoric strongholds

Sites that can be grouped as prehistoric strongholds are far from homogeneous. Their function, usage period, and importance have been very different in the past. Also, one site could have had a different meaning or function during its time of use. Every individual who interacted with a stronghold in the past had a unique relationship with it. For example, a stronghold could have been a place for living, working and trading, defence during difficult times, or a symbol of the elite. A blend of themes and meanings is also transferred to us through place-lore, although it usually represents a somewhat collective meaning among the local people.

⁵ I left out the description of stone heaps by local historian Elviire Kerem (1942). Her description of the heaps might refer to stone graves, but neither she nor anyone else identified them as such. I also left out the medieval churchyard around the parish church, the 18th–21st century cemeteries and burial places of Baltic German nobility.

⁶ Ajaloolise Võrumaa Kohanimede Andmebaas.

In general, all the strongholds with archaeological evidence in historical Võrumaa (20 sites) were identified using folklore. However, there are probably more unknown prehistoric strongholds not mentioned in place-lore and therefore have not yet been discovered. Place-lore can directly state the existence of an old stronghold, or folklore can indirectly indicate the existence of an archaeological site.

Over half of the known prehistoric strongholds of historical Võrumaa (12 sites) had already been reported in the 19th or beginning of the 20th century (mostly by Jaan Jung's⁷ correspondents). There can be a long time between the first recorded identification and archaeological evidence for a stronghold. For example, Rebäse hill fort in Karula Parish was documented by one of Jung's correspondents (Mss 33) and there is a place-lore note in Jakob Hurt's⁸ collection (H I 9, 704 (128)). Both notes were written circa 1900. The site name *Liinamägi*, is a common toponym of old strongholds, and probably why it received attention. Hurt's note states that local people did not know anything else about the Rebäse hill fort or its past, except the place-name. The hill was described again by the local historian Kerem in 1942 (Kerem 1942, 13), but the first archaeological evidence was unearthed by Andres Tvauri and Andres Vindi in 1996 (Vindi 1996a, 1), i.e. it took ~100 years for the site to be confirmed as a prehistoric stronghold.

Another example, the story of the discovery of nearby Madsa hill fort, is more complicated. The site was first identified by Kerem in 1942. It is not known why its toponym *Liinamägi* did not catch the attention of the earlier correspondents as the nearby and visually similar Rebäse hill fort had. Following Kerem's note Tvauri and Vindi visited Madsa hill fort, but their test pits on top of the hill did not show any signs of anthropogenic activity (Vindi 1996a, 5 ff.), and the site was considered a 'pseudo stronghold'. However, archaeological fieldwork in 2012–2013 revealed a prehistoric settlement at the base of the hill (Kama 2012a, 3 ff.; 2013a). The location of the settlement layer seemed atypical, as it was a narrow area at the northern side of the hill, where people would have lived in the shadow of the hill. Considering the toponym and the hill's visual appearance, new test pits were dug on top of the hill. Those in the highest flat area of the hill did not show any anthropogenic activity, but the pits dug in a smaller terrace of the hill slope, exposed a rather rich occupation layer in this small area (Kama 2014a, 5 ff.). This example raises the question: "How many other such sites, which seemingly lack archaeological evidence, simply need additional fieldwork?"

The direct indications of the presence of prehistoric strongholds were place-names (Table 1). Toponym *Liinamägi* 'town/fort hill' of 17 of the sites referred directly to strongholds (some sites have more than one place-name). *Liin* means 'town' or 'fort', as the word transferred from prehistoric strongholds to towns in historical times (Valk 2014, 100). *Kants* is another term for 'fort' and was combined

⁷ Jaan Jung (1835–1900) was an Estonian schoolteacher who organized, with the help of local correspondents, the first Estonian-wide registration of archaeological sites.

⁸ Jakob Hurt (1839–1907), who among other things initiated the first Estonian-wide campaign to collect folklore.

Table 1. List of the known strongholds in historical Võrumaa, with local toponyms and place-lore motifs regards them

No.	Name of the stronghold (in italic is the local toponym)	Name indicating a stronghold*	Place-lore narrative	Place-lore about a town/fort	War related place-lore	Place-lore about treasure	Place-lore about a mystical or supernatural experience
1	Truuta Nahalinn, Nahalinn, <i>Tsirkõmägi, Sirkõmägi</i>	Y	X	X	X	X	
2	Järveküla Liinamägi, vana linnaase, Liinakants, Liinusmägi, <i>Lossi mägi</i>	X	X	X	X	X	
3	Rebäse Liinamägi	X					
4	Madsa Liinamägi, Liinumägi	X	X	X			
5	Värtemäe Liinamägi	X	X	X			
6	Kõrista Liinamägi	X	X	X	X		X
7	Tilleoru Kantsimägi, Maakants, <i>Matsikants</i>	X	X	X	X		
8	Rosma Liinamägi	X	X	X	X	X	
9	Kauksi Liinamägi, Liinamäe palo, <i>Leetimägi</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X
10	Kureküla Liinamägi	X	X	X		X	X
11	Võuküla Linnamägi, Kinkralihaud	X	X	X	X	X	
12	Vareste Suur Liinamägi	X	X	X			
13	Mõrgi Kuningamägi	I	X		X		
14	Tallima/Nooska Liinamägi	X					
15	Rõuge Linnamägi, Kantsimägi	X	X	X		X	
16	Katoga Jaanimägi	Y	X	X	X	X	X
17	Paloveere Liinamägi	X	X	X	X	X	
18	Luhthõ Liinamägi, Liinmägi	X	X	X	X	X	X
19	Himmiala Liinamägi, <i>Päevapööramise mägi, Hobuseseljamägi, Päivakände mägi, Taevatõusmise mägi</i>	X	X	X			X
20	Korneti/Druski Liinamägi	X	X	X	X		

* X = a name directly indicating a stronghold; I = a name indirectly indicating a stronghold; Y = a name of a nearby site indicating a stronghold.

into the name of a stronghold in three cases. One stronghold's place-name, *Nahaliin* 'fur town/fort', could originate from the Viking Age and refer to a collecting and processing fur in there (Valk et al. 2012, 33 ff.). The name *Kuningamägi*, 'king's hill', situated in Mõrgi, may originate from prehistoric nobility, but could also come from war-related activities on the hill during historical times. Archaeological excavations showed that the plateau of the hill was protected using a wooden wall for a short period in the 16th or 17th centuries (Valk et al. 2014, 75).

In some cases, it is possible that the visual appearance of a rampart may have led to a secondary place-lore concerning a site, but generally the hilly landscape of Võrumaa already offers naturally well protected areas, and stronghold earthworks have not changed landscapes much. Seven strongholds (Madsa, Paloveere, Truuta, Värtemäe, Rebäse, Kõrista, and Nooska) have small scale earthworks that are very hard to recognize as such (especially to non-archaeologists), and we can be relatively certain that their place-lore originates from the time of each stronghold's use. Continuous place-lore such as this also shows a continuous population in the surrounding areas, and evidence that place-lore may have been passed on orally for hundreds of years. This was first acknowledged by Valk (2008, 45) regarding Luhtõ hill fort, which was used for a short period during the Roman Iron Age and was abandoned at the beginning of the 3th century AD. In the cases where only a toponym refers to a stronghold, locals may not have acknowledged the meaning of the place-name (as was the case with Rebäse hill fort), but they still passed on the name of an archaeological site.

Of the 20 studied sites, 18 had place-lore narratives in addition to a stronghold place-name. Some strongholds are widely known and connected with various narratives, whereas others are only mentioned briefly in place-lore. The scope of place-lore depends on the activity of folklore collectors, but it can also be affected by strongholds having hinterlands of different size. If fewer people were connected to a site due to its smaller hinterland, the possibility of folklore regarding a stronghold being preserved is lower.

The widespread element in place-lore were descriptions of old forts/towns on hill forts. Eighteen strongholds had place-lore narratives with the concept *liin*: these described an intention to build a town/fort, the ruins of a town/fort, or a town/fort that had sunk underground. Some of this place-lore could derive from the place-name *Liinamägi*, and not originate directly from the original use time of the sites. Some narratives have been strongly affected by elements of towns during historical times, which are not characteristic of prehistoric strongholds, e.g. the mentioning of streets, bells, or cellars.

Twelve strongholds are connected with folklore describing war activities. It shows that people connected these places with one of their original function, although in some cases the wars mentioned in place-lore took place during historical times. It tends to be a common process in place-lore that older historical events are replaced with more recent ones, although the narrative may stay the same (Remmel 2014, 50 and the literature cited therein). However, it cannot be ruled out that there were war activities at prehistoric strongholds during historical times (as in Mõrgi hill fort), as these are often well protected areas.

Ten sites have folklore describing a hidden treasure and sometimes people trying to find such hoards. Folklore about treasure marks significant sites in landscape (Kalda 2014, 266). In the case of hill forts, these stories can reflect real finds of valuable artefacts from strongholds, but also show the overall importance of these archaeological monuments. Six strongholds are connected with a mystical experience on the site, e.g. people getting lost in an otherwise familiar place or seeing strange visions. This place-lore is another indication of the significance of the sites, showing these areas being different from peasants' everyday environment. In addition, stories of supernatural experiences may originate owing to the possibility that strongholds had been used as a place for ritual practices, or connected with holy sites. For example, there are two holy springs and one holy bolder near to Järveküla hill fort. In Kauksi *Leerimägi* and Hinniala *Päevapööramise mägi* there is said to have been a church. The connection between prehistoric strongholds and holy places in Estonia is also suggested by Valk (2007, 157 f.), and the connection between these two seems to be even more evident in neighbouring areas, for example in Semigallia (Urtāns 2001) or Scandinavia (Andrén 2014, 87 ff.). The local name of Hinniala hill fort is *Päevapööramise mägi* 'Hill of the Turning of the Sun/Day', and there is a folklore regarding people having celebrated the summer equinoxes there, until forbidden by the church (Prants 1937, 252). Many other prehistoric Estonian strongholds are popular sites for Midsummer's Day celebrations, and in some cases this may originate from prehistory. In the case of Võuküla stronghold, it has been suggested that its main function was ritual not military (Valk et al. 2011, 63).

In addition to strongholds with archaeological evidence, there are the so-called 'pseudo strongholds', i.e. places with a toponym or even place-lore narrative that indicates a stronghold, for which archaeological evidence, should it exist, has yet to be found. There are approximately 60 sites in Estonia known as strongholds among locals without any archaeological evidence (Tõnisson 2008, 39). The missing archaeological record in some cases may be because these strongholds could have been used only for a short period of time, and if no large earthworks were conducted, traces of use can be very hard to detect. For example, excavations of a 34 m² area at Võuküla stronghold did not grant any archaeological artefacts, even though the entire surface of the excavated area was sieved (Valk et al. 2011, 59 ff.). Nevertheless, radiocarbon dating of charcoal from a rampart, a fireplace, and a post hole inside the rampart showed human activity at the site during three periods of prehistory (ibid.). The actions at Võuküla stronghold included the building of the rampart, the burning of it, the reconstruction of it, and the burning of it again. If an enclosed area was defended with a mere wooden palisade, instead of a rampart, it would be much more difficult to detect any signs of human activity by digging test pits.

There are also sites that had probably not been strongholds, even though place-lore refers to one. In case of Karula Parish, there are three hill forts confirmed by archaeological evidence (Rebäse *Liinamägi*, Madsa *Liinamägi*, and Värtemäe *Liinamägi*), but three other places also have the place-name *Liinamägi* and place-

lore notes mention that there was an old stronghold, a large town, or a town that has sunk there, i.e. similar place-lore that is told about strongholds with archaeological evidence. These sites have been visited by archaeologists and no cultural layer or visible earthwork detected (Vindi 1996a, 9; Kama 2012b, 8 ff.). In addition, these places are not naturally easily defensible, which also reduces the likelihood of them being undiscovered strongholds. However, it is not possible to state that there has been no human activity on those hills during prehistory or later that could somehow be connected to strongholds. If there had been no archaeological surveys conducted in Karula Parish, we would have six sites called *Liinamägi*, of which half could be proven to be strongholds in archaeological terms.

The identification of burial places on dry land

39 sites in Karula Parish had been identified as burial places on dry land by locals or archaeologists (Fig. 2). Only one stone grave was discovered by archaeologists based solely on it being noticeable within the landscape (Konsa 2001, 4). All the other graves were identified based on folklore.

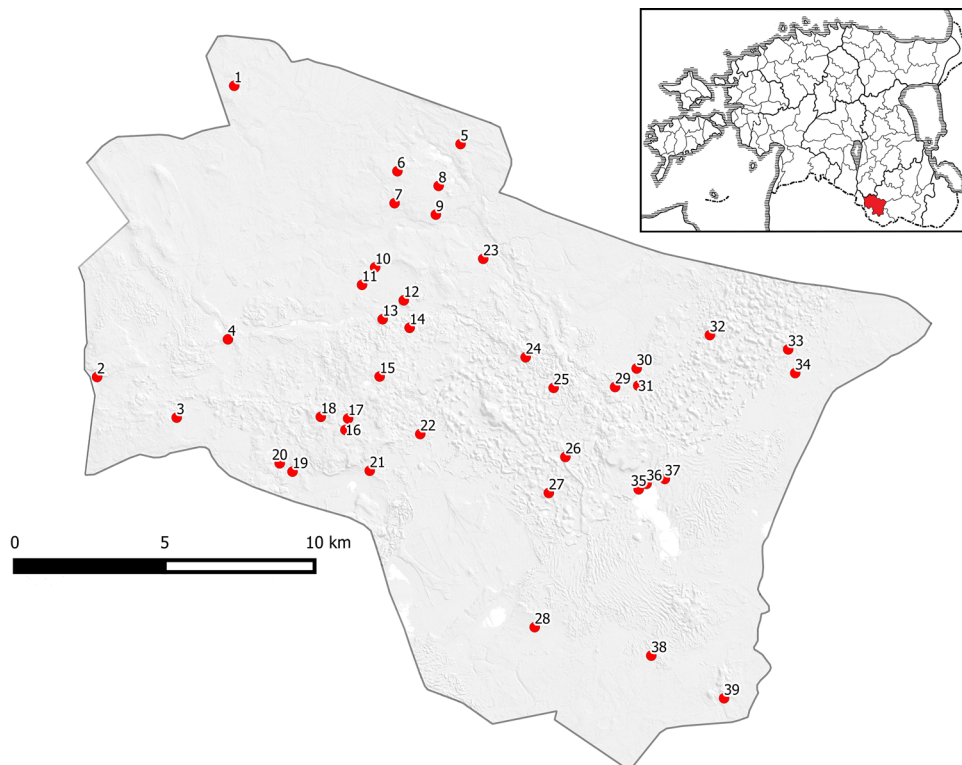


Fig. 2. Distribution map of the 39 identified burial sites in Karula Parish (see Table 2 for sites names).

There are burial sites where the folklore probably originates from the time of active use (i.e. continuous place-lore). This is evident mostly in the place-names (Table 2). However, a site could get such a name also due to the unearthing of human remains (i.e. secondary folklore). This scenario is mentioned in the case of the Jõeperä burial site, as the place-lore describes it was named *Kalmistu mägi* ‘burial hill’ due to the finding of human remains (ERA II 243, 505/6 (5)). Fourteen (35%) of the identified sites have a toponym that directly refers to a burial ground: variations of the names *Matusmägi* and *Kalmete mägi* were most evident (both can be translated as ‘burial hill’). Additionally, six sites (15%) had a place-name that referred indirectly to a burial ground. The most common indirect place-names referring to burials are toponyms of *kirik* ‘church’. These could originate from the Catholic period, when there could have been chapels on village cemeteries (Valk 2001, 24 f.). The burial site in Kaagjärve village called *Niklusmägi*, at the western border of Karula Parish, is one of the few cases where archaeological excavations have confirmed the place-lore about a church/chapel on the site (Valk et al. 2013, 125 f.). However, place-lore regarding churches is also connected to prehistoric *tarand* graves, because the rectangular structure of their stone walls is often thought to be the foundations of a church (Lõugas & Selirand 1989, 71). Burial site toponyms can also reflect the names of saints from Catholic times, for example a chapel in Niklusmägi was allegedly dedicated to St Nicholas (Valk et al. 2013, 126 f.). Five sites in Karula were identified by local historians or archaeologists based only on a toponym indicating a burial site. We do not know whether locals considered these sites to be burial places. For example, there is one description in place-lore about a site called *Kalmõ* or *Kalmõtõ* ‘burial/burials’, stating that nobody among locals knew what the toponym meant until cultivation on the hill revealed human remains (Mss 156 (1)).

Ten burial grounds in Karula Parish were thought to be origin from the time of war. Over a quarter of southern Estonian village cemeteries have place-lore relating to wartime⁹, and this folklore motive is thought to originate from the time period of the last use of these sites (Valk 1995, 502; 2001, 38). However, this folklore can also be secondary place-lore, as it may be a popular explanation by locals for the occurrence of human bones. In the case of the Ähijärve Sarik-Siimani burial place, human bones were found during the building of a farm at the beginning of the 20th century and it was mentioned that the construction of a cellar under a house was halted because skeletons were found (Karopun 1922, 10). It would seem therefore that the burial place had been unknown to locals. The explanation for the bones developed later. I remember hearing this story during my childhood, with the added reasoning that it was an old wartime burial place. If the burial had been continuously remembered, it is unlikely that anyone would have decided to build a house there. Or if they did not care about disturbing a burial place, they would have finished the cellar of the house despite the human remains.

⁹ Mostly the place-lore is referring to the Great Northern War (1700–1721).

Table 2. List of all identified burial sites in Karula Parish, with place-names, and other factors related to their identification

No.	Name of the burial site	Place-name connection to the burial site?*	Disturbed by locals?	Awareness of burial site?***	Archaeological evidence?	Inhumation or cremation (based on place-lore or archaeological evidence)***
1	Iigaste burial site	N	X	B		I
2	Kaagjärve burial site	I	X	B	X	I, C
3	Pugritsa burial site	X	X	B		
4	Vissi burial site	0	X	D		I
5	Korijärve burial site	0	X	D		I, C(?)
6	Matu burial site	N	X	D		I
7	Väheru burial site	0	X	D	X	I
8	Tsili burial site	X		0		
9	Meiga burial site	X	X	B		I
10	Soka burial site	X	X	B		I
11	Tarsilla burial site	X	X	D	X	I
12	Emandamäe burial site	X	X	B		I
13	Kirbu burial site	0	X	D		I
14	Nahapesjä burial site	X		0		
15	Tollari burial site	0	X	D		I
16	Kiberi burial site I	0	X	D		I
17	Kiberi burial site II	N	X	D		I
18	Kiberi burial site III	N	X	D		I
19	Ringiste burial site I	N	X	D		I
20	Ringiste burial site II	I	X	B		I
21	Kiiviti stone grave	0		0		
22	Herani burial site	0	X	D		I
23	Valtina burial site	X		0		
24	Patuperä burial site	X		0		
25	Luukina burial site	X		0		
26	Lajassaare burial site	X		0		
27	Karküla stone grave	N		0	X	C
28	Apja burial site	0		0		
29	Mähkli burial site	X		0		
30	Mähkli stone grave	0	X	B		
31	Mikilä burial site	I	X	B		I
32	Köödre burial site	X		0		
33	Jõepera burial site	X	X	D	X	I
34	Latika burial site	N	X	D		I
35	Ähijärve stone grave	I	X	B	X	I(?), C
36	Ähijärve burial site	0	X	D		I
37	Ähijärve Sarik-Siimani burial site	0	X	D		I
38	Aruküla burial site	I	X	B	X	I
39	Koemetsa burial site	I	X	B	X	I

* X = a name directly indicating a burial site; I = a name indirectly indicating a burial site; N = a place-name not indicating a burial site; 0 = the site has no recorded place name.

** D = probably known about owing to disturbance; B = probably known about before disturbance; 0 = not disturbed.

*** I = inhumation burials; C = cremation burials.

Unlike with prehistoric strongholds, the identification of burial sites in Karula was greatly affected by finds of archaeological record made by locals. Twenty-seven (64%) burial sites had earthworks that unearthed human remains¹⁰ and of these human remains were accompanied by artefacts at 13 sites. Amongst other earthworks, ploughing, excavating gravel or sand, and the digging of potato holes at burial places have been mentioned. It seems evident that unearthed human skeletons and grave goods are more noticed by locals compared to the finds from the cultural layers of strongholds. There are likely more burial places about which we have no information, because they have either been undisturbed and thus not noticed by locals, or some disturbances have not been documented via place-lore or other means. In case of nine sites the archival notes only describe archaeological finds, but in other cases the archival notes contained also information reflecting continuous place-lore, or the local interpretation and or experiences concerning burial places.

Carrying out earthworks at old burial places can be a sign that they had been forgotten by local people. If this is the case, the memory about burial sites could disappear over a short period of time. For example, digging sand in Väheru during the second half of 19th century revealed human bones, however, the excavation of sand continued and five more skeletons were found in 1925 (Vares 1927, 137). A coin minted in 1813 was collected from burial site (ERM A 517: 6), providing evidence of rather recent human activity at the burial ground. We cannot be certain that this coin was related to burials, but also other finds from there seem to date to the Early Modern Age (ERM A 517: 6–8). It may be that knowledge of the Väheru burial place was forgotten by locals after only a hundred to two hundred years. The exact location of Väheru burial place is again unclear; some of the older locals interviewed did not know anything about the existence of cemetery or bone finds (Kama 2012c, 10 f.). The shortness of memory concerning other burial places in Karula is hard to determine, because in most cases we do not know how old these sites are or when they were last used. In general, the use of village cemeteries ended at the beginning of the 18th century (Valk 2001, 90 f.), and if the majority of bone finds are from village cemeteries, this would mean it took less than 200 years for people to “forget” about old burial places.

Another possibility to explain the disturbance to graves in Väheru and in other cases, is that people did not care about exposing the burials or it was even the purpose of the earthwork. For example, at Korijärve burial site, a local man unearthed many skeletons for his personal interest after the site was discovered during gravel digging (Kirschbaum 1921, 20). Of *Simmukerikumägi* burial ground in Aruküla, it is mentioned that people dug there to find skeletons and grave goods; one note even mentions selling the finds (probably circa the beginning of the

¹⁰ In addition, there is a site in Pugritsa village where an archaeological survey detected several old diggings at the identified burial site, but such disturbance is not reflected in the place-lore and we do not know if the earthworks revealed human remains.

20th century) (Karopun 1922, 17). Some southern Estonian village cemeteries were allegedly sacred, as there is folklore regarding taboos related to the harming of the old burial ground, or other descriptions confirming their special character (Valk 1995, 502 ff.). There is only one note from Karula Parish, i.e. that it was forbidden to pick berries from an old graveyard (Kama 2012c, 21 ff.). Of two sites (Mikilä and Kaagjärve burial ground), folklore describes the supernatural experiences of hearing voices or seeing visions, which suggests some burial places were considered of a different nature than other environments, but despite this these sites were still disturbed by locals. Studied place-lore gives evidence that activities “harmful” to old burial sites were not forbidden or extraordinary. If locals had “forgotten” the sites after their active use, and the exposing of human remains was accidental, it shows that these old burial sites were not significant enough to be remembered through place-lore. There has not been any cataclysm (i.e. wars, great famines or epidemics) which could cause discontinuity to place-lore after the beginning of the 18th century (when village cemeteries were last used), but to some extent the reason may have been the resettlement of local people and rapid social changes to peasant society over the 19th–20th centuries. Continuity of local populations was influenced by the Second World War and subsequent repressions; Karula municipality had high rates of people deported to Siberia (Kriiska et al. 2006, 115, 124). In case of memory about archaeological sites, one has to remember that the actual number of “forgotten” sites is most likely greater and they are unknown because they are not mentioned in place-lore. The loss of memory concerning burial places compared to strongholds may seem greater, because inhumation graves are more likely to be rediscovered by locals due to recognizable human remains, and interpreted accordingly to the sites original use.

Of the 39 burial sites in Karula, only eight have archaeological evidence in the form of human remains or artefacts. Ten sites are protected by the state (not all protections have required archaeological finds). The low number of burial grounds with archaeological evidence is partly due to a lack of research, thus this number could rise with future fieldwork. One important problem is that the exact location of some sites described as burial places was not documented, which makes it hard to locate them and find archaeological evidence. Furthermore, the exact site of the place-lore narrative can be mixed up by locals. This was the case with *Niklusmägi*, where the cemetery’s location was documented based on information from a local resident¹¹, but the actual burial place was a distance of ~140 m apart on the same hill. Owing to this mix-up, a wrong area was taken under protection, and the real site was only discovered by archaeologists due to a massive looting. *Niklusmägi* is the site with the largest amount of place-lore compared to the other burial sites in Karula, but this did not mean there was evidence about its exact location.

Some burial places described in place-lore may not have been burial locations. For example, a hill in Pugritsa village is named *Matusmägi* ‘burial hill’. Place-

¹¹ Oral information from Heiki Valk.

lore collected in 2012 describes locals' memory of a man with special abilities, to whom it was shown in a dream that people have been buried there (Kama 2012c, 12 ff.). This is a rare case where we can determine the source of a place-lore narrative, although the place-name is probably older than man's interaction with the site. The site's location was determined with the help of locals, but neither trial pits nor the use of a metal detector showed any signs of burials (Kama 2012c, 11, 16 f.; 2016a, 26 f.). It is not possible to state that there had been no burials, but the archaeological survey decreased the probability. It can be that the real site is somewhere nearby, but this can be an occurrence when a place-lore about the site is not connected with a particular site even indirectly.

Archaeological identification of wetland sites connected with place-lore regarding human remains

Sometimes folklore can give quite a different depiction of the past compared to the knowledge gained from archaeological finds. One example is the archaeological record of 'bog bodies', which also includes human bones and other types of wetland (van der Sanden 2013, 401). The distribution area of bog bodies is generally limited to northern and north-western Europe (ibid.); closest to Estonia are finds of human remains from wetlands recorded in central Scandinavia (Fredengren 2015) and also evident in Finland (Wessman 2009). In Estonia there is only one academically acknowledged and archaeologically documented bog body found during peat cutting from Rabivere (Laid 1936; Rammo 2010; Kama 2016b), but the term can be used for a few other finds as well.

An analysis of Estonian place-lore suggests that there may be many more human remains in wetlands. Folklore notes concerning bog bodies are thoroughly analysed in one of my previous articles (Kama 2016b). Similar to dry land burial places, there is secondary place-lore about the unearthing of human remains from wetlands. These identifications in folklore have not received similar attention from archaeologists as dry land burial places. In addition to secondary place-lore, there are possibly continuous folklore notes about burials and drowning in wetlands that may originate from real incidents that may also have left behind archaeological traces.

I found 28 sites where place-lore described drowning and 28 sites where burials are mentioned, plus 19 swamps or bogs where human remains are supposedly interned. What is more, there are many wetlands with a name referring to burial places. For my previous article (ibid.) I only studied wetlands that were indicated in place-lore as swamps, bogs, bog pools, or peat holes, but when considering all possible wetlands (e.g. ponds, depressions, or springs) the total number would be larger. However, this number would be still essentially smaller compared with the identifications in place-lore concerning burial places on dry land. For example, in Karula Parish there are 39 burial sites identified on dry land and two wetlands where place-lore mentions burials or finds of human remains. During the analysis of dry land burial sites, it was apparent that the majority of recorded information

comes from the unearthing of human remains, but earthworks in wetlands have been in lesser extent and therefore the possibility of discovering archaeological finds during e.g. ploughing is much smaller. However, there are considerable collections of artefacts from wetlands that have been found during digging, for example 25 wealth deposits from watery conditions from 1st–13th century (Oras 2006, 64; 2015, 95). Archival notes sometimes mention that bones were found with artefact deposits in wetlands, but these were neither collected nor studied. In the case of fragmented human remains from cremation burials, the chance of local people noticing these in wetlands, is very small.

In order to test the hypothesis that folklore regarding wetlands may indicate archaeological sites (as often shown by archaeological studies of strongholds and burial sites on dry land), I decided to study place-lore sites in wetlands with archaeological methods (Table 3). This is the first time wetlands with possible human remains have been searched from the perspective of place-lore. The fieldwork was carried out over 2013–2016 (Kama 2013b; 2014b; 2014c; 2014d; 2015b; 2016a).

Table 3. List of the studied wetlands and reasons (from folkloristic and practical aspects) for their selection

No.	Name of a wetland site (in italic is the local toponym)	Place-name indicating a burial site*	Finds of human remains	Place-lore about drowning/execution	Place-lore about burials	Small area of wetland	Open surface in wetland
1	Ala-Järvere <i>Kella-lump/Kirikutiik</i>	I		X		X	
2	Järvere <i>Sannasoo palu</i>	N			X		
3	Hargi <i>Kalmetelump</i>	X				X	
4	Jaska <i>Leerisoo</i>	N	X			X	
5	Laatsi kirikulohk	0		X		X	
6	Hurmi <i>Kalmõtlomp</i>	X				X	
7	Kaagjärve <i>Kalmõtsuu</i>	X					
8	Lüütsepä <i>Hatasuu</i>	N			X		
9	Trolla <i>Kalmatsuu</i>	X			X		
10	Kirikuküla <i>Kalmetu lomp</i>	X	X			X	
11	Neeruti <i>Luulomp/Luulelond</i>	X			X	X	
12	Lõve <i>Kalmõtsuu</i>	X		X			
13	Vankse <i>Triinulaugas</i>	I		X			
14	The find spot of Rabivere bog body	0	X	X	X		
15	Area of Rabivere peat excavations	0	X				X

* X = a name directly indicating a burial site; I = a name indirectly indicating a burial site; N = a place-name not indicating a burial site; 0 = the site has no recorded place name.

The first task during fieldwork was to get an overview of the current state of the wetlands under study, as place-lore does not often describe their character. When the exact location of the place-lore site could not be determined based on the archival notes, locals were questioned, and additional folklore collected. Test pits were dug (Fig. 3) and soil samples taken using a 2 m long soil probe. Test pits were more useful for examining the surface to a greater extent, but it was hard to go deeper than one metre, especially in wetter places. The 2 m soil steal probe made especially for this fieldwork made it easier to study deeper peat layers, but the diameter of these holes was only 3 cm. Visual survey of the surface was made in areas of peat extraction, and a metal detector used on a few occasions.

One thoroughly investigated place during our fieldwork in Karula Parish is called *Leerisoo*, ‘encampment swamp’. Place-lore describes the unearthing of human bones and iron artefacts (ERA I 6, 477/9 (2), E 63001/2). Folklore mentions that the finds were revealed when shrubs were cleared and a tunnel dug through the swamp, which suggests that archaeological evidence should not be in very deep. The use of a metal detector was hypothetically beneficial, as in this case iron artefacts had been found with the human bones. It was also a good place to study, because the size of the area is ~6700m². We made 12 test pits (Kama 2013b, 16 ff.) and took 14 soil samples (Kama 2014b), but found only pieces of modern bricks. During collaboration with metal detectorists, modern garbage, a 19th–20th century axe and pieces of rusted metal were found, which after cleaning in a laboratory turned out to be pieces of bomb shells from the Second World War (Kama 2016a, 32 f.).



Fig. 3. The digging of a test pit near the find spot of the Rabivere bog body. Photo by Pikne Kama.

In south-eastern Estonia, there is a depression called *Kellalump* or *Kirikutiik*, ‘bell’s pond’ and ‘church’s pond’ respectively, in Urvaste Parish. Place-lore describes a church with a nearby pond where people who had not obeyed the laws of the church had been drowned. It was mentioned that even children were thrown into the water (ERA II 245, 167/73 (6)). Another narrative stated that it was an execution place of children and also that the church’s bell had fallen into the pond (Valk 1991, 1). The depression is rather small (19 × 7 m), which presented the possibility of studying it more thoroughly. The pond contained no open water at the time of surveying, although water came into some of the test pits. We made trial pits spaced 2 m apart; all of the 26 test pits were deep enough to penetrate the peat layer to mineral soils. We only found modern finds and nothing that could be connected with the place-lore. In the spring of 2016, an Iron Age cemetery was discovered on the other side of the road (Juus 2016), and it cannot be excluded that the pond’s place-lore is connected to this burial site.

No archaeological finds were discovered during the wetland fieldworks. One way to interpret this result is that the place-lore did not refer to actual archaeological sites, or that the folklore and archaeological finds did not engage as tightly as expected. Another explanation is that the methods used during the wetland survey were not effective and the use of other methods should be considered. Finding evidence could also be a matter of luck. Again, we do not know if there were no archaeological finds in the wetlands under investigation, or whether they were simply not found. In the case of burials and drownings in wetlands, it is uncertain if these hypothetical actions described in place-lore have left behind archaeological finds as the archaeological record may be destroyed over time. What makes wetlands harder to study is that the finds may be in very deep layers of peat, which are difficult to reach. Visual surveying of the surface to detect archaeological finds cannot be used as much on dry land, it is only possible in case of recently dug drainage ditches or in the areas of peat extraction. Some place-lore referred to quite large areas, which made a thorough study of these places untenable with the available resources. The location of place-lore sites in dry land is usually smaller and there the burying within a small area may have continued for centuries, leaving behind several layers of human remains. Depositing human remains into wetlands may have been practised only seldom and the finds described in place-lore interpreted as stray finds. Therefore, place-lore could give very valuable information about the previous unearthing of archaeological record and the circumstances connected to them, but the place-lore does not guarantee that there are more human remains to be found at these sites.

In addition, the characteristics of the wetlands with purported human remains may be very different. We have to remember that the described fieldwork was the first attempt to use wetland-related place-lore for finding archaeological evidence. The scale of the fieldwork described in this article cannot be compared with the archaeological identification of sites on dry land, which have occurred for over a hundred years and involved numerous activists and researchers. Theoretically, the more we know about sites of the same kind, the easier it is to predict the

location and character of undiscovered ones. To find new human remains from wetland sites, fieldwork needs to be continued and new methods tested. Collaboration with metal detectorists is also important, especially in wetlands that have been drained and the peat layer is shrunken, because this may mean that any archaeological evidence has been brought nearer to the surface. Furthermore, communicating with local people is important as they may have information about recent bog body finds (see, for example, Kama 2015b); this is also the case for peat diggers, who may reveal archaeological finds during their work.

Discussion

Strongholds and burial places on dry land in southern Estonia are both reflected in folklore, but the character of the place-lore connected with these site types differs. Strongholds are often connected with continuous lore originating from the initial use of the site, although continuous lore can be combined with secondary folklore that has occurred owing to a site's discernible features or finds of valuable items. There could also be an accidental factor why the site of an old stronghold was later connected with place-lore referring to a stronghold (as it may be the case of some 'pseudo stronghold') – but overall the strong pattern of prehistoric strongholds mentioned in folklore seems to reduce this possibility. The continuous place-lore is really remarkable and at the same time common in the case of strongholds. This folklore indicates population continuity in the many areas of historic Võrumaa, which has made the passing on of place-lore possible; in the case of Luhtõ hill fort, a duration of ~1700 years (see Valk 2008, 45).

The folklore concerning burial places in most cases describes unearthed human remains, sometimes with grave goods. There are two reasons for the disturbances of graves: 1) burial grounds were unknown and the people carrying out earthworks did not expect to find human remains, which seems to be the case with 16 disturbed sites (Table 2); 2) locals knew of the existence of burial sites, but did not care about disturbing the graves, or did it on purpose to find skeletons or items. Anthropogenic activities at a known burial site can be assumed for 12 of the 28 disturbed sites (Table 2). With regard to the first explanation, dating of most of the burial grounds is unclear, and we do not know how soon after use they were forgotten. The example of Väheru burial site shows that it could happen over as little as two hundred years, which is very different compared to the long-lasting place-lore connected to strongholds. Burial places were used by much smaller communities compared to those of the hinterlands of strongholds, which may be one reason why burial places were forgotten. Continuous folklore concerning burial sites is mostly evident in place-names that refer to burials, but the names and place-lore narratives may also be secondary place-lore that occurred due to the unearthing of human remains.

Valk (1995, 505 f.; 2001, 40 f.) has emphasized the sacredness of village cemeteries. Data collected for the current study showed that in Karula at least, the opposite attitude towards out of use burial places appeared more common.

Data about sacredness have only been recorded of 5.8% of rural cemeteries in southern Estonia, and sacredness often occurred only after a site was disturbed (Valk 2001, 40). The sacred nature of cemeteries expressed in folklore may represent an ideal culture, i.e. how things should be, but in reality people may have been more pragmatic (Honko 1998; Jonuks 2009, 56 f.; see also Hurt 2015, 43). It could be that different burial sites were differently situated on the profane–sacred scale. Moreover, the meanings of burial places were almost certainly different to each individual, and we should not consider all burial places a priori to have been sacred. The sacredness of burial sites differs in different areas, for example in Hanila, Karuse, and Martna parishes in western Estonia, there is no recorded place-lore reflecting the sacredness of village cemeteries¹².

Our current knowledge about dry land burial sites in southern Estonia is based mainly on information from locals who found human remains. In Karula there is information about 23 graves with inhumation burials, one with cremation burials and three sites where probably both kinds of burials are represented (Table 2). This classification of types of human remains is mainly based on folklore and as mentioned before, the oral information must be treated cautiously. If place-lore describes found human bones, I have classified this as inhumation burials. Overall we can see that inhumation burials are by far more documented. In the ‘Database of archaeological and place-lore sites’ and in the National Heritage Board register¹³, unburned human bone finds are automatically designated as originating from historical times village cemeteries, even if there are no artefacts to confirm this dating. Currently, there is no data on how the majority of people were buried in prehistoric Estonia (Lang 2011). It is estimated that we can only see the burials of 20% of the Late Iron Age population, and the proportion of missing burials is especially notable when comparing the number of Late Iron Age burial places with ones from historical times, when presumably almost all people were inhumed in churchyards or village cemeteries (Lang 2011, 111 f.). Our current understanding may change if we do not consider all bone finds without artefacts to automatically date from historical times. The problem of the dating of inhumation graves has also been noted by Tõnno Jonuks, who suggested that there could be more inhumation burials in pit graves from the Iron Age, but we only have information about those with remarkable grave goods (Jonuks 2009, 275). Some of the human remains described in place-lore could also date to the Stone Age, a time period from which we only know of inhumation burials. Potential greater temporal distance can be one reason why some of these burial grounds were unknown to locals before earthworks. Cremated human remains most likely suggest the burial place origin from the Bronze or Iron Age, but cremation burials may occur also in medieval times (Valk 1993). Grave good descriptions from 13 sites in Karula seem to indicate either Iron Age or historical times artefacts. However, the finds

¹² Personal comment of Heiki Valk.

¹³ The register of the National Heritage Board contains information about those archaeological sites that are under state protection.

are often lost and we only have the description as a guide for dating, and it may not be suitable.

It seems unlikely that lay people would recognize burned human bones, which could be another significant reason why so few Iron Age burial places have been identified, especially if cremation was the main practice. In addition, even unburnt bones tend to be fragmented. The identification of prehistoric burial places is more likely if they have a visible structure and/or grave goods. It has been suggested that in areas with a limited number of stone graves in south-eastern Estonia, the main type of grave during the Late Iron Age was an underground cremation burial, which are very difficult to detect (Valk 1992, 38; Lillak 2008; see also Valk & Allmäe 2010, 51).

There are wetland sites that have similar place-lore as dry land burial places: finds of human remains, stories of people having been buried, or toponyms that indicate burials. There are also incidents of drowning in place-lore. In the current study, the attempt to gather archaeological finds from selected wetland sites was unsuccessful. There may be several reasons for this, the most important of which is probably the overall difficulties of conducting archaeological studies in wetland areas, i.e. the wetlands tend to be large and archaeological evidence may be sparsely situated in deep soil. As this was the first attempt to use place-lore in conjunction with an archaeological study to identify archaeological wetland sites, the results cannot be compared with the long-term archaeological surveying of dry land sites.

Even if in some cases place-lore is misleading to archaeologists trying to determine the exact location of an archaeological site within a landscape, it still provides knowledge about the past. Even if, for example, a hill in some concrete place has not been a stronghold or a burial place – even though place-lore describes it as such – there are still plenty of other sites where place-lore indicates a confirmed site and therefore folklore provides information about broader past cultural phenomena, i.e. in the case of the current study information about strongholds or inhumation burials, and people's perceptions of them in more recent times. The same can be said about place-lore that indicates bog bodies. Even if a concrete wetland does not contain archaeological finds, place-lore is affected by other cases of depositions of human remain in wetlands and finds of bog bodies in the past.

It has been suggested that the overwhelming majority of Estonian strongholds, medieval burial places, chapel sites, and Iron Age burial sites, have been discovered using folklore (Valk 2006, 313). However, in the current study I presented the first systematic analysis of the role of place-lore in the identification of archaeological sites. Despite site type based biases and differences in the success rate of identifying archaeological sites using place-lore, it was found to be a useful tool for determining past human activities. The connection between some types of archaeological sites and folklore also seems to be evident in neighbouring areas. Hill forts of Livonians in Latvia are often reflected in folklore (Vītola & Urtāns 2014). Importance of place-lore in discovering archaeological sites has been pointed

out in Lithuania (Vaitkevičius 2006) and also used same way in Scandinavia (Westerdahl 2006). Nico Roymans (2005) brings out the strong link between folklore recorded in the 19th century about urnfields and barrows (origin from 1100–450 BC) in southern Netherlands and northern Belgium – although folklore is not treating these sites as burial places. Therefore one could expect that the potential importance of place-lore for archaeologists is similar in a larger area in Europe – however, the more concrete usage and place-lore connections with different types of sites still need extensive research.

Conclusions

The aim of this paper was to clarify the role of place-lore in the identification of archaeological monuments and analyse how such folklore is formed. The study of prehistoric strongholds from historical Võrumaa and burial places from Karula Parish showed that almost all these sites were identified based on folklore. Many factors affect the identification process, and it may be hard to detect, on the basis of archival sources, exactly how some archaeological sites were discovered, but overall the importance of folklore is hard to overestimate.

Place-lore about some Estonian wetlands can give a basis for the identification of archaeological monuments that could contain human remains. The archaeological survey to gain new archaeological finds from wetlands was unsuccessful, and shows the difficulties of combining folklore sources and archaeological methods in a wetland context.

The results of this study show the great value of place-lore in improving our knowledge of our archaeological heritage. Archaeological surveys at place-lore sites are beneficial, and hopefully future fieldwork in wetlands will produce archaeological finds. However, it is important not to rely upon place-lore alone. Equally important is to regard and get hold of the archaeological information that is not reflected in place-lore and therefore not yet found.

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Pikne Kama

KOHAPÄRIMUS KUI TÖÖRIIST MUISTISTE IDENTIFITSEERIMISEKS

Resüme

Artikli eesmärk on uurida kohapärimuse rolli muististe identifitseerimisel. Arheoloogiliste kohtade tuvastamisel võib eristada kolme tasandit: 1) paiga identifitseerimine kohalike poolt, mis enamasti väljendub pärimuses, 2) muististe identifitseerimine koduloolaste poolt, mille aluseks on valdavalt kohalik info, kuid neil

võivad olla ka arheoloogilised teadmised, 3) paiga identifitseerimine arheoloogide poolt. Uurimuses vaatlen ajaloolise Võrumaa linnamägesid, Karula kihelkonna kalmeid kuival maal ja märgalaobjekte, mille puhul viitab pärimus potentsiaalsetele inimjäänuste leidudele liigniiskes pinnases. Lisaks küsimusele, mis roll on kohapärimusel nende paikade identifitseerimisel, on ka vaadeldud, mis tüüpi kohapärimus nende muististe liikidega haakub. Võib eristada järjepidevat kohapärimust, mille juured on muistise aktiivses kasutusajas, ja sekundaarset pärimust, mille tekkeaeg on muistisest hilisem, olles inspireeritud näiteks koha välimusest, arheoloogilistest leidudest või tegevustest/kogemustest muistisel pärast selle algupärase kasutusaaja lõppu. Kohapärimuse mõiste all on vaadeldud ka toponüüme ja suulisi leiuteateid. Arhiiviallikate põhjal võib olla raske täpselt selgitada, mis põhjusel on paiku identifitseeritud, kuid üldiselt on raske kohapärimuse mõju üle hinnata.

Kõik ajaloolise Võrumaa 20 muinaslinnust on kohapärimusega seotud. 17 paiga kohanimi *Liinamägi* viitab otseselt linnamäele, esineb ka *kants*-iga seonduvaid toponüüme. 18 linnamäe puhul on lisaks kohanimele üles kirjutatud ka kohapärimusjutt. Populaarsemad motiivid on sõjategevus, linnaga/linnusega seotud teave, peidetud varandus ja müstiline/üleloomulik kogemus muistisel. Lisaks arheoloogiliselt tõestatud linnustele on ajaloolisel Võrumaal veel mägesid, mille nimi või kohapärimuse narratiiv viitab linnusele. Osa paikade puhul võib (täiendav) arheoloogiline uurimine tõestada, et tegemist on siiski muistisega. Teiste pärimusteadete puhul tundub tõenäoline, et pärimusteaded on arheoloogide jaoks eksitavad.

Karula kihelkonnas on 39 paika, mis on identifitseeritud kalmena, kuigi arheoloogiliselt on see ainult üheksal juhul tõestatud. Ühe matmispaiga on arheoloogid leidnud välimuse põhjal, kõigi teiste kohtade identifitseerimisel on oluliseks osutunud pärimus. Kõik folkloorsed matmispaigad ei pruugi päriselt kalmed olla: sarnaselt linnamägedele võib esineda kohapärimust, mis ei viita arheoloogilistele leidudele. 27 matmispaigaga seonduv pärimus kirjeldab pinnasetöödel leitud inimluid. Linnamägede kultuurkihiga võrreldes on kalmete arheoloogilised leiud üldjuhul silmatorkavamad. Järjepidevast pärimusest võib tunnistust anda 14 koha otseselt kalmele viitav toponüüm. Samas võib esineda ka juhtumeid, kus arheoloogilised leiud on olnud kalmele viitava kohanime inspiratsiooniks. Kümnet matmispaika seostati sõja ajaga. See motiiv võib pärineda kalmete viimasest kasutusest sõdade perioodil, samas võib tegemist olla rahvapärase seletuse ja sekundaarse kohapärimusega, mis oli põhjustatud juhtudest, kui maapinnast leiti inimluid. Matmispaiga kahjustamine (kündmine, kruusavõtmine, kartuliaukude kaevamine jne) võis tuleneda järgnevalt: 1) kalme oli kohalikele teadmata ja luude paljastumine seega ootamatu, 2) kohalikud teadsid, et tegemist on matusepaigaga, kuid nad kahjustasid seda ikkagi. Teadliku lõhkumise põhjuseks võis olla praktiline kasu (näiteks uus põllumaa) või siis oligi pinnasetööde eesmärgiks luustikke või esemeid leida. Tõik, et folkloor on matmispaikade kohta valdav teabeallikas, võib olla üheks põhjuseks, miks muinasaegsete matmispaikade kohta on nii vähe infot: 1) luuleidude kirjelduste puhul, millega ei kaasne leide, ei ole teada, kui vanad need päriselt on; 2) tavainimesed tõenäoliselt ei märganud pinnasetöödel põlenud luid ja kui nendega ei kaasnenud märkimisväärsed hauapanused, siis on

laibamatustega võrreldes väiksem tõenäosus, et teave fragmenteerunud inimjäänustest on arheoloogideni jõudnud.

Artikli kolmandas osas analüüsin enda välitöid märgaladel, mille aluseks oli inimjäänustele viitav pärimus. Märgala objektidega seostub samasugune pärimus kui matmispaikadega kuival maal: on jutte inimjäänuste leidudest ja matmisest märgaladel, lisaks on paljudel soodel matmispaigale viitav toponüüm. Inimjäänustele võivad viidata ka sohu vajumise/uppumise lood. Välitööde käigus külastati 15 objekti, kus liigniiskesse pinnasesse kaevati prooviauke, võeti proove 2-meetrise pinnasesondiga ja/või kasutati metalliotsijat. Välitööd võimaldasid kohapärimuspaiku dokumenteerida, kuid kahjuks ei andnud senised välitööd uusi arheoloogilisi leide. Põhjusi selleks on mitu: 1) kohapärimuse teated võivad muististe identifitseerimiseks (sarnaselt linnamägede ja kalmetega) eksitavad olla, 2) märgalade pindalad võivad suured olla ja täpsema uurimisala lokaliseerimine on raske, 3) märgaladel on harva avatud pinnast, 4) leiud võivad sügaval paikneda, 5) puudub leidmise kogemus.

Artikkel näitab kohapärimuse suurt potentsiaali teatud liiki muististe avastamisel ja suulise kultuuri pikka järjepidevust. Samas nõuab paljude kohapärimuspaikade olemuse selgitamine uusi arheoloogilisi uuringuid. Lisaks on oluline, et mineviku asustuspildis kajastuksid ka objektid, mille kohta ei ole pärimust.