

Truls Hoj – A Passage Grave and Related Monuments*Magnus Andersson***Abstract**

According to an old oral tradition, there were once two burial mounds in the southwestern part of the Barsebäck foreland in West Scania, Southern Sweden, although no traces of the mounds can be observed above the topsoil. Since Svenska Kraftnät AB (an electricity transmission system operator in Sweden) planned to build a new substation in the area, archaeologists were given the opportunity to examine the authenticity of the oral tradition. When the topsoil was stripped off by machine, an area with stone impressions in earth and stone packings was revealed. The subsequent manual excavation revealed that the structure constituted the bottom layer of a destroyed and ploughed-out passage grave. Years of agricultural work had seriously damaged the structure, but traces of two kerbstone chains, a chamber and the passage as well as a pit could be discerned. Former archaeological investigations have only investigated surfaces around dolmens. At Barsebäck, the picture is supplemented because this is the first time we could also study larger areas around a passage grave. The monument at the location, just like the dolmens at other places, was surrounded by ritual activities in the form of façades (standing stones), a cult house and a flat-earth grave. This article presents the site and the remains are placed in a Scandinavian perspective.

Introduction

According to an old oral tradition, two now destroyed and ploughed-out mounds, referred to as Truls Hoja (Truls Mounds), were located in the southernmost part of the peninsula at Barsebäck (Fig. 1 and Fig. 2) (Sjöstedt 1951). No traces of the mounds have been observed above the topsoil. On a historical map from 1831, there are no markings of mounds in the area concerned. However, on the same map, six burial mounds are plotted on a line along the coast immediately east of the area. Four of them still exist today.

Since Svenska Kraftnät AB planned to build a new substation immediately outside the Barsebäck nuclear power plant in the area in question, archaeologists were given the opportunity to examine the authenticity of the oral tradition. During the unusually warm late summer of 2016, The Archaeologist at the Swedish National History Museum conducted an archaeological excavation at the site.

There are quite a number of archaeologically investigated megalithic graves and megalithic monuments of the Neolithic in Southern Sweden, not least in Western Scania (Andersson 2004a; Andersson et al. 2016). For a long time, the investigations focused only on the still well-preserved and visible monuments. However, extensive developer-funded excavations during the last 10–15 years have included a relatively large number of destroyed and ploughed-out monuments. This has radically expanded our knowledge of monumental

Article history:

received April 2017

reviewed July 2017

published November 2017

Keywords: Early Neolithic, Scania, passage grave, façade, flat-earth-grave, cult house, landscape, society

Cite as: M. Andersson 2017: Truls Hoj – A Passage Grave and Related Monuments. *JNA* 19, 2017, 23–114 [doi 10.12766/jna.2017.2]

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graves and other types of ritually used structures, which are usually connected to the megalithic graves. In some cases, an indication of the former existence of a megalith is provided by land names or markings on older maps, which render an approximate location of the graves and aid their identification in the field.

Moreover, the large number of destroyed and ploughed-out monuments excavated in some regions of Scania strongly suggests the existence of many more Early and Middle Neolithic burial monuments in the area than hitherto presumed, changing our view of the society and the landscape for this period (Andersen 2010; 2013; Andersson/Wallebom 2013a; Brink/Hammarstrand Dehman 2013).

The excavations of large areas have shown that there are structural differences between sites. Small clusters of earthen graves, long barrows, façades (freestanding stones or wooden poles) and megaliths are the most common types of site features, but a limited number of sites with larger concentrations of these structure types is also known. This can be interpreted as an indication of a hierarchical difference in organization, whereby the small clusters represent local ritual centres placed close by the settlements and the large concentrations represent regional gathering sites for several local Funnel Beaker Culture groups (for a discussion see Rudebeck 2010; Andersson/Wallebom 2011; 2013a; 2013b).

Previous archaeological excavations have, however, only investigated surfaces around dolmens. At Barsebäck, the picture is enhanced because this is the first time we also were able to study larger areas around a passage grave. There proved to be similarities between



Fig. 1. The excavation site analysed in this paper: Barsebäck in Western Scania, southernmost Scandinavia.

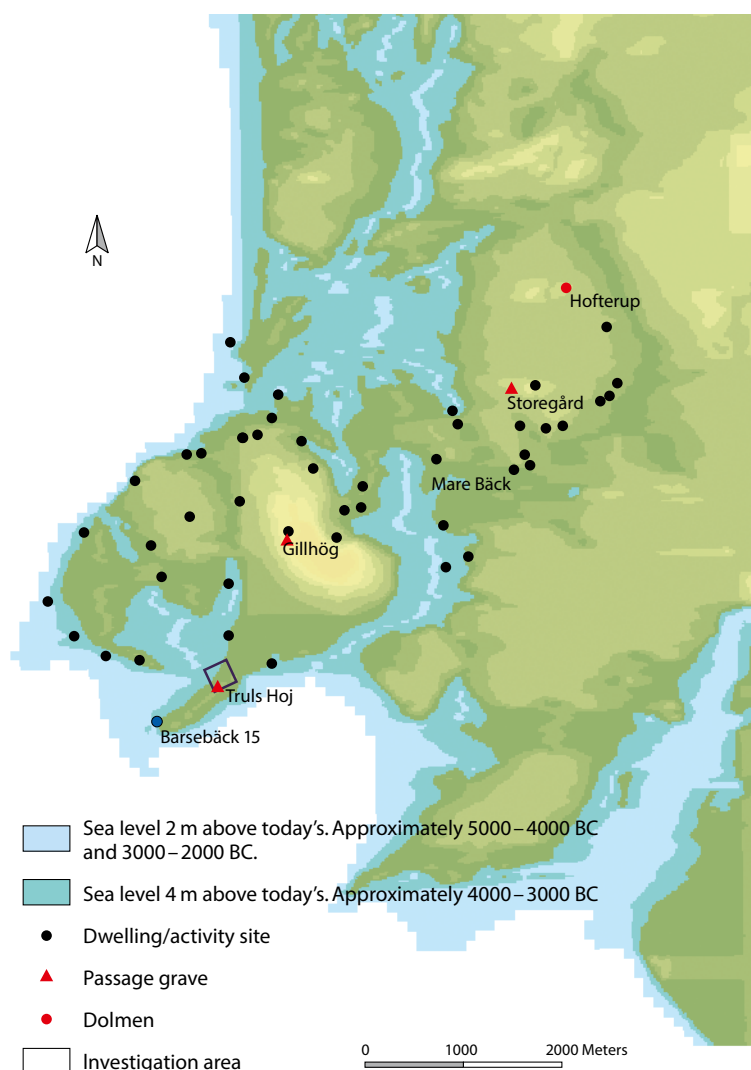


Fig. 2. Settlements from the Early and Middle Neolithic.



Fig. 3. View towards Barsebäck bog. Photo taken from the hill at the passage grave at Gillhög.

locations with dolmens and the passage grave site at Barsebäck. The monument at the location, just like the dolmens in other places, was surrounded by traces of ritual activities, in this case in the form of façades (standing stones), a cult house and a flat-earth grave.

The Neolithic Landscape

In Scania, megalithic graves can be found above all in the coastal regions, where they occur in a number of concentrations. These coincide with areas of settlement density and sacrificial sites from the same time and probably correspond to the settlement regions at the start of the Neolithic. A concentration of megalithic graves can be found in West Scania and particularly at the headland of Barsebäck (Karsten 1994; Andersson 2003; Andersson et al. 2016). The area is topographically demarcated to the south by the bay formed by the estuary of the stream Lödde Å, to the west by the Öresund Strait, and to the north by wetland areas at Hofterup. The terrain is flat, interrupted only by the distinct ridge on which the Gillhög passage grave is located. Apart from Gillhög, the megalithic tombs of Storegård and Hofterup are also located in the area. During the Neolithic, the foreland at Barsebäck was a peninsula connected to the mainland by a narrow isthmus. Within this area and along the stream Mare Bäck, there are several coastal dwelling sites (Fig. 2).

Reconstructions of vegetation in the area are mainly based on pollen diagrams from the bog of Barsebäck Mosse (Fig. 3) (Digerfeldt 1975). The results there agree in large measure with analyses performed in other parts of Scania. The general picture verifies that the proportion of elm pollen decreased at the start of the Subboreal. At the same time or slightly later, a tendency is observed that other stands of deciduous woods, such as oak, ash and lime, declined in favour of grass pollen. The increase in cereals and grass pollen can probably be

attributed to human impact on the environment, which began in the Late Mesolithic. This can be interpreted as signs of gradually increasing grazing and cultivation pressure.

The surroundings in the vicinity of the investigation site are mainly dominated by a large number of sites from the Stone Age and burial mounds (Figs. 2 and 4). Some archaeological excavations have been conducted in the neighbourhood. In connection with the construction of the Barsebäck nuclear power plant, excavations of three burial mounds from the Bronze Age and a large settlement from the Stone Age were conducted during the early 1970s. Here, the settlement areas show a continuity from the opening phase of the Early Neolithic into the Middle Neolithic V phase (Nagmér 1970; 1974).

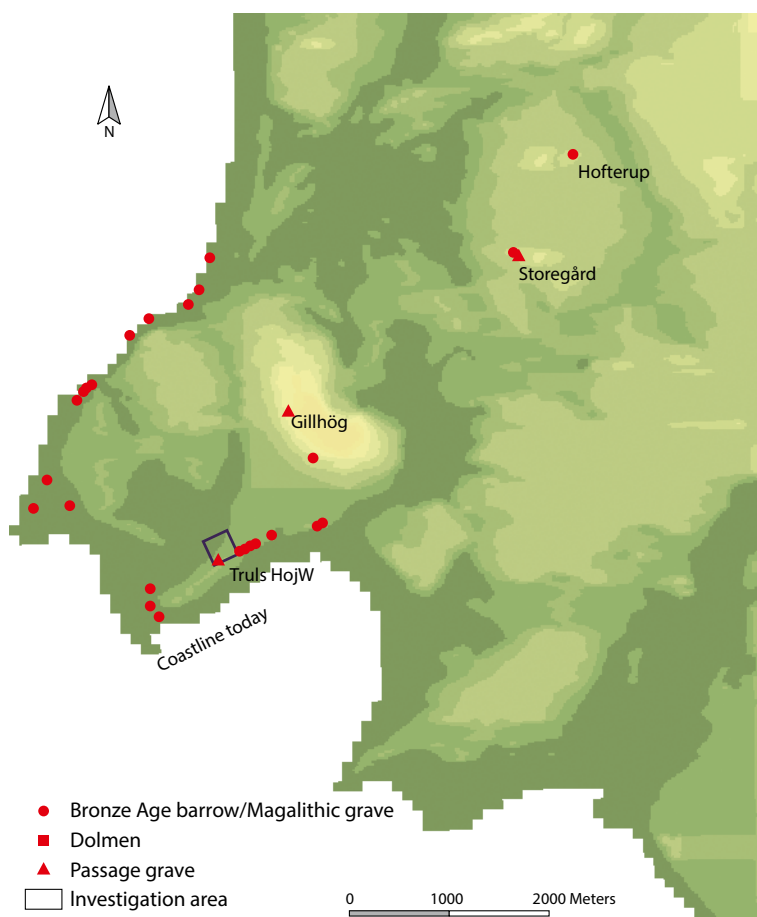


Fig. 4. Bronze Age barrows/megalithic graves.

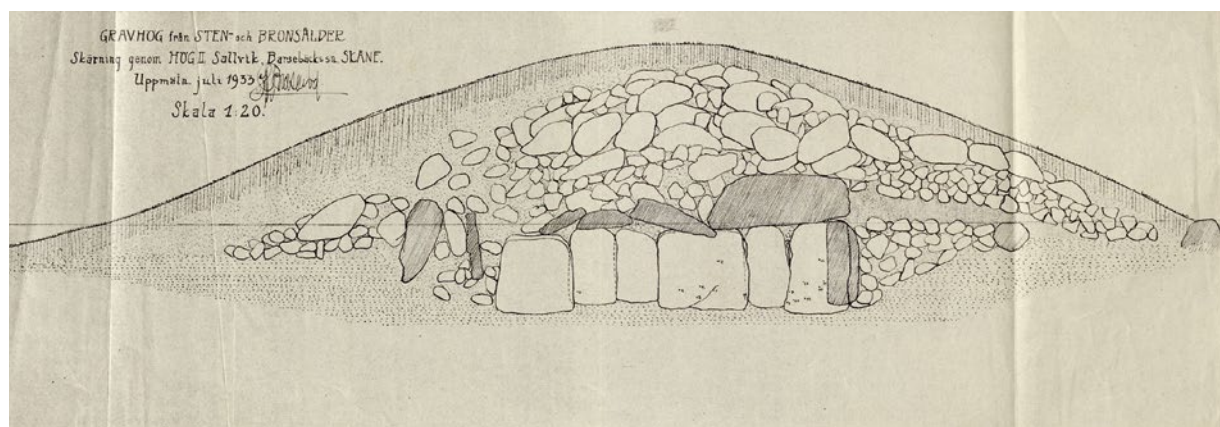


Fig. 5. Section of the barrow investigated during the 1930s.

In the 1930s, the four existing mounds east of the investigation area were excavated by the Lund University Historical Museum under the direction of J.-E. Forssander. Three of them were had already been completely destroyed at that time. The fourth (i.e. the second mound from the east of the four) was found to be almost undisturbed. The mound consisted of lump stones covered by a soil mantle. The central grave consisted of a stone cist with split slabs measuring 3.2×0.8 m and oriented WSW–ENE (Fig. 5). Bifacial arrowheads and a pendant of slate were found in the coffin (Forssander 1934). A dating of the central grave to the Late Neolithic seems reasonable. As mentioned, the remaining three mounds were already destroyed. In the remains of the easternmost mound, however, a number of finds were made, including flake axes and pottery with cord decorations below the rim (Forssander 1934). The finds suggest a dating to the Early Neolithic and that the mounds might have originally consisted of a megalithic grave. Interestingly, excavations of barrows in the vicinity reveal various dates for their original construction.

The Archaeological Investigation

The investigation area is located on arable land on the north shore of the Saltviken Bay, about 400 m north of today's shoreline, which lies between 5 and 10 metres above sea level (Fig. 6). The natural environment is characterized by the open flat coastal scenery at the Öresund Strait characterized by the Littorina Sea shoreline, Järavallen. This formed about 6,000 years ago when the water level was up to 4–5 metres higher than it is today (Risberg/Regnell 2006). During this time (from the end of the Mesolithic to the middle part of the Neolithic, ca. 7000–3000 BC), the Barsebäck foreland was a peninsula connected to the mainland only by a narrow strip of land.

Passage grave

When the topsoil was stripped off by machine in the southwestern part of the excavation, an area with stone impressions in the earth and stone packings was revealed. The subsequent manual excavation showed that the structure indicated the bottom layer of a destroyed and ploughed-out passage grave. The passage grave had suffered some degree of damage, but it was still possible to distinguish various construction details. All the wall slabs and roof slabs in the chamber and in the passage were missing, as were almost all of the kerbstones. However, dark impressions in the earth showed where



Fig. 6. View towards the investigation area, located under the power lines. The nuclear power plant in the background. Photo taken from the hill at the passage grave at Gillhög.

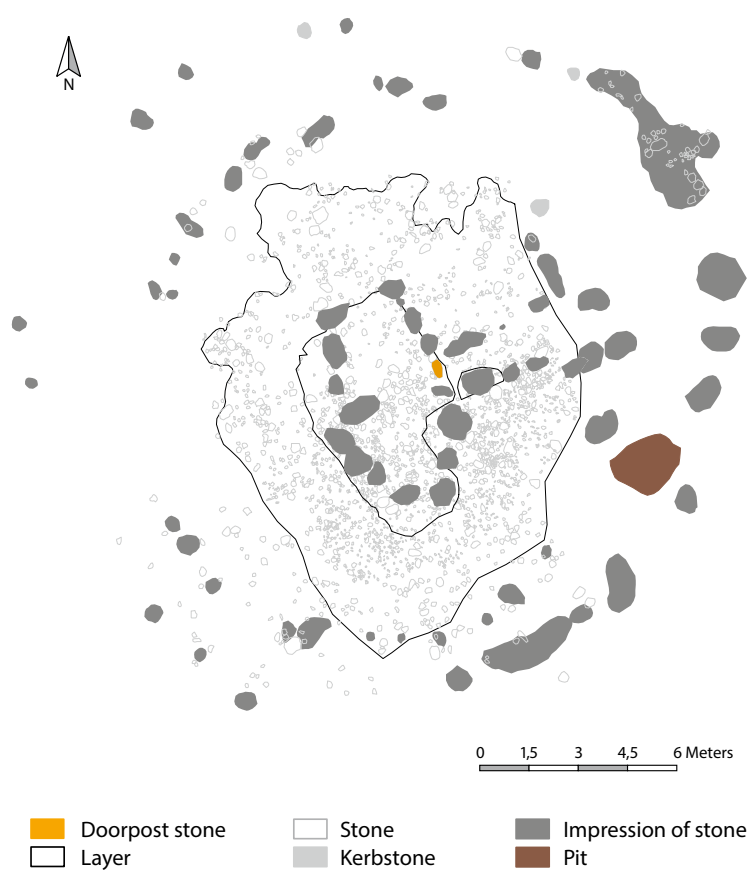


Fig. 7. The passage grave. Scale 1:150.

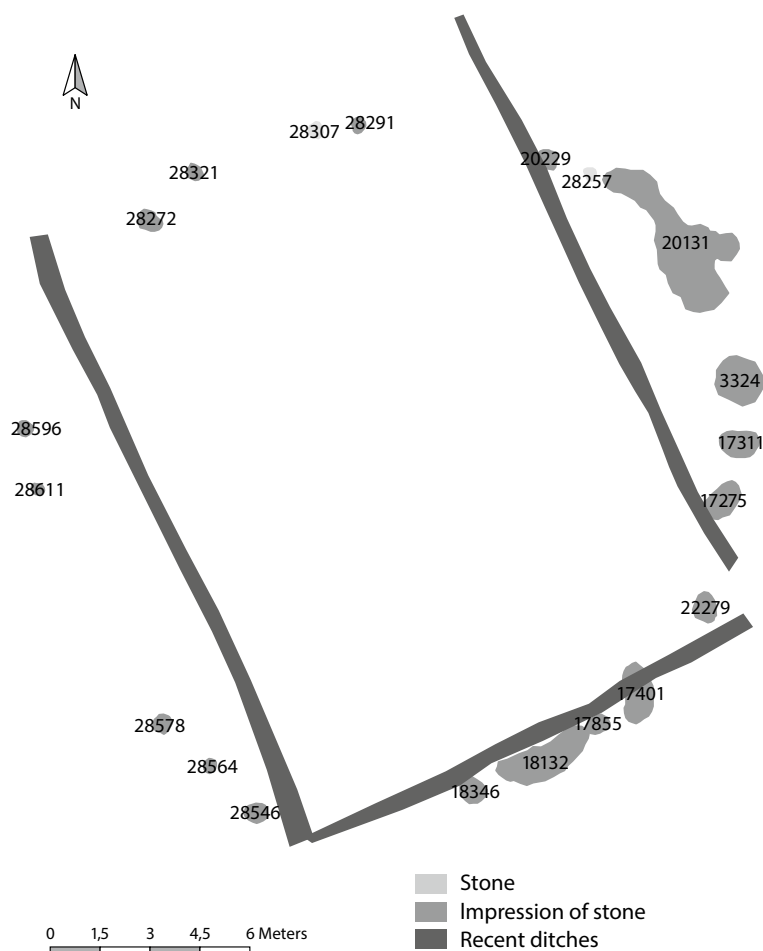


Fig. 8. The outer kerbstone chain. Scale 1:150.

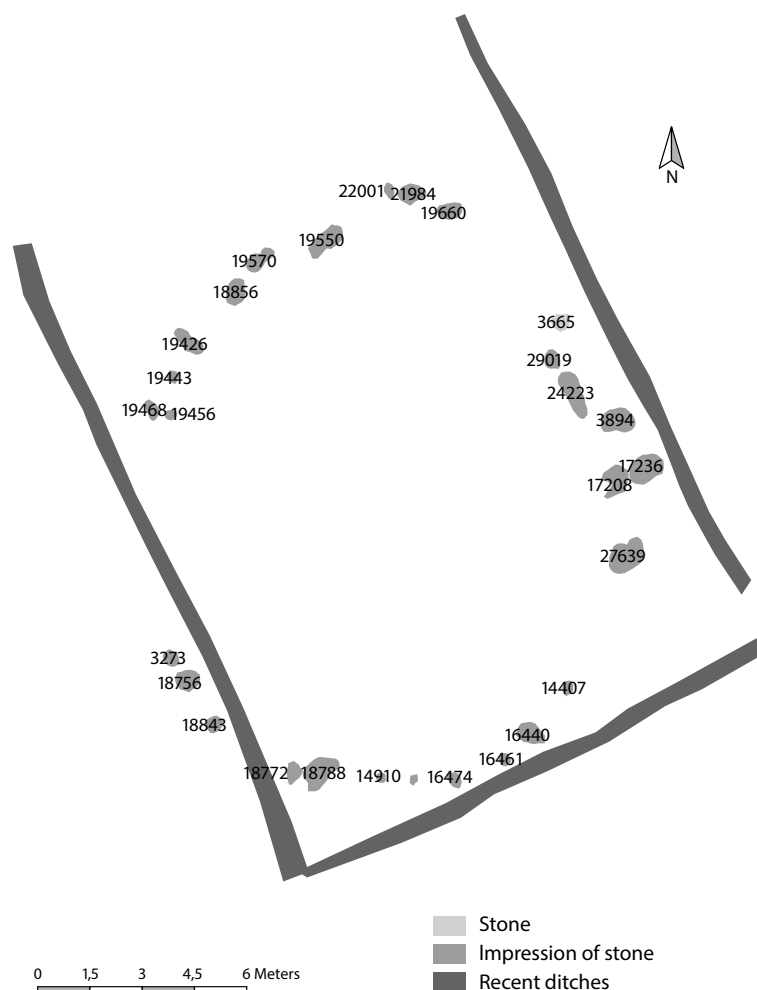


Fig. 9. The inner kerbstone chain.
 Scale 1:150.

the chamber stones and the kerbstones had been placed. Traces of two kerbstone chains, the chamber and the passage as well as a pit could be discerned (Fig. 7).

Thus, we had discovered one of the two burial mounds, which according to the oral tradition were denoted as *Truls Hoja*. Henceforth, I therefore choose to name the Barsebäck monument *Truls Hoj* (the singular form).

The outer kerbstone chain consisted of 20 stone impressions and 2 stones and measured about 21 m in diameter (Fig. 8). The outer kerbstone chain was nearly circular. Recent drainage ditches had disturbed some parts, which meant that not all the stone impressions could be identified. The stone impression was on average 0.21 m deep and 0.9×0.7 m large.

The inner kerbstone chain had a round oval shape, measuring 17×14 metres in a north–south direction. Twenty-seven stone impressions and one stone were documented. As with the outer kerbstone chain, the structure was partly disturbed by recent drainage ditches (Fig. 9). Stone impressions were on average 0.15 m deep and 0.7×0.5 m large, thus significantly smaller than those of the outer kerbstone chain.

The chamber, which measured 5×2.3 m and consisted of 16 stone impressions, formed a slightly rounded oval arrangement. The chamber was oriented longitudinally in a SSE–NNW position. The passage consisted of eight stone impressions and one doorpost stone and measured 5.3 m long and 1.3 m wide. It is oriented at approximately right angles to the longitudinal direction of the chamber, which it enters at the ENE (Fig. 10). Stone impressions in the chamber were on average 0.82×0.65 m large and 0.19 m deep and in the passage

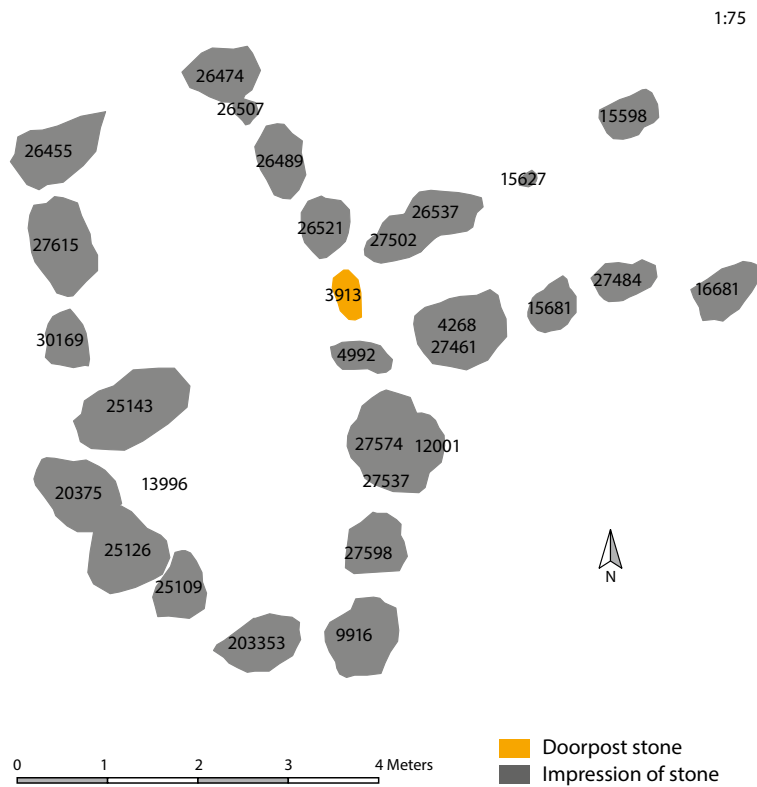


Fig. 10. The chamber and the passage.
 Scale 1:75.



Fig. 11. Section of a stone impression from the chamber.

0.78 × 0.52 m large and 0.11 m deep. The shape of the stone impressions in the passage, however, was different from that in the chamber. They were rather rectangularly formed and flat bottomed, while the chamber stone impressions were rounded. Obviously, slab-like stones stood in the passage, while the chamber stones consisted of lump stones (Fig. 11). The floor of the passage was much harder packed than the surrounding ground.

The finds from the passage grave highlight how badly the construction had been destroyed and ploughed-out. Only small fragments of depressed pottery were found, whereby intact or larger fragments of flint artefacts were missing. Despite this, the flint material was rather extensive. In total, nearly 2 kg of flint was collected. The vast majority consists of flakes and debitage. There were a few flint tools in the chamber, including some cores, knives and scrapers. No traces of human

remains were found, which is easily explained by the generally poor preservation conditions for organic material on the site. Two charred grains have been identified from a stone impression in the chamber, one of which could be identified as emmer, while the other was unspecified. Between the chamber stones, an original packing of split flagstones existed, which survived at some places. The sparse amount can be attributed to the destruction of the monument by ploughing.

A packing of small stones covered the chamber floor. In the centre of the chamber, in line with the passage, the packing was denser and was made of elements of larger stones, up to 0.4 m in diameter (Fig. 12).

Between the chamber and the inner kerbstone chain, a layer containing a packing of small stones (Fig. 7) and also large quantities of crushed flint were recovered (Fig. 13). This type of crushed flint was also found, for example, in the nearby passage grave at Gillhög. Studies of passage graves have shown that in both the chamber and the passage the gaps between the orthostats are often filled with a carefully built-up packing of thin, horizontally laid flagstones. The spaces between the protruding parts of the orthostats are sealed on the outside with a mixture of clay and crushed flint in order to stabilize the chamber structure (Ebbesen 2011, 268–269).

It is clear that the finds were concentrated in or immediately outside the tomb. Probably most of the finds originally belong to the chamber so that the scattering may be interpreted as an effect of ploughing (Fig. 14).



Fig. 12. The excavated passage grave. The chamber limits are marked with black lines and the passage with red lines. Note the doorpost stone at the end of the passage and the larger stones in the centre of the chamber.



Fig. 13. Crushed flint from the passage grave.

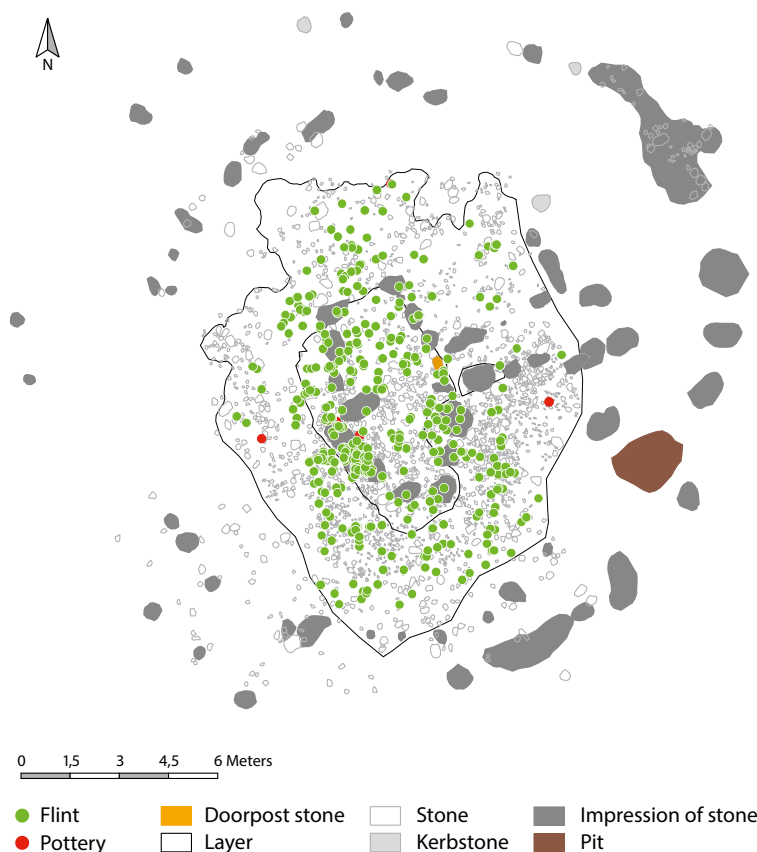


Fig. 14. Distribution of finds in the passage grave. Scale 1:150.

Chronology

A problem with analysing megalithic graves, in general, is the lack of scientifically valid absolute datings. Based on the find material, we can outline a rough picture of the chronological situation, but to obtain absolute dates we need other methods. ¹⁴C-dating of monumental structures may, in the relatively few cases where there are preserved closed contexts such as a chamber with human bones, provide us a good idea of when they were built. However, when it comes to destroyed and ploughed-out monuments, we encounter significant problems. Finds and ¹⁴C datings from destroyed megalithic graves inform us about different phases of activities in and around the monuments as well as about the construction phase(s).

The finds from the passage grave Truls Høj at Barsebäck were pressed down in the bottom layer and they certainly belong to the monument. However, it is uncertain to which phase of the monument's biography the finds can be linked to, and consequently they do not help us in attaining a detailed date for the construction phase. The pottery is too fragmented in order to be identified to any vessel shape and decorations are missing. The combinations of tempering and fabric quality, however, correspond with what was found in the adjacent façades, which could be dated to the late Early Neolithic or early Middle Neolithic. The similarities are so obvious that it seems to have been made in the same craftsmanship tradition, although perhaps not during the same generation.

Large amounts of flint material from the passage grave lead to the impression that they were the remains of tool manufacture. A chronological assessment of the flint shows that there are relatively few chronological markers in the processed material. A polished fragment from an axe was found, although too small to be typed. The finds mainly reflect material we usually find at Neolithic sites of »settlement character«, or at least objects that can be attributed to activities associated with daily living. This composition of flint from

a megalithic tomb is not uncommon and there are similarities to the flint material that was found, e.g., in the monuments at the megalithic site of Döserygg in Southwest Scania (Andersson/Wallebom 2011; 2013a; 2013b).

From structures included in the Truls Høj passage grave, there are seven ^{14}C datings (Table 1). Five analyses from stone impressions in the chamber can be associated with the Middle Neolithic A phase or at the transition to the Middle Neolithic B phase (3340–2925, 3020–2880 and 2870–2500 cal BC) and with the Middle Neolithic B/Late Neolithic phase (2580–2450 BC and 2410–2140 cal BC). Adjacent to the doorpost stone is a dating to the transition between the older and the younger Bronze Age (1060–900 cal BC). An Iron Age dating adjacent to the inner kerbstone chain (660–870 AD) indicates later activities in the area. From the outer kerbstone chain, we have a ^{14}C analysis which provided a result extending from 3705–3635 cal BC, i.e., during the Early Neolithic. As discussed above, the diverse results are not surprising. It is a rule that the ^{14}C results of destroyed megalithic graves vary significantly and span several prehistoric periods. These show activities that took place in and around the monuments for a long time and do not pinpoint the construction phase(s).

Based on new studies of ^{14}C analyses from Southern Scandinavia, a new picture of the chronological relationship between dolmens and passage graves has been suggested. The current dominant hypothesis is that these two types of megaliths were more or less contemporaneous. Certain passage graves actually have ^{14}C -dated material that places them at the same time as the first dolmens in the time range around 3600–3500 BC, i.e. during a late part of the Early Neolithic, and that there might have been a regional difference regarding which type of megalith was preferred (Schulz Paulsson 2010; Sjögren 2011). In Southwestern Scania, long dolmens completely dominate the picture, while in Western Scania there is a mix between long dolmens and passage graves. Round dolmens are quite rare in the entire region.

Several of the ^{14}C dates from Truls Høj show that the monument was used during different periods of the Neolithic as well in the Bronze Age and perhaps even during the Iron Age. Two of the dates, 3340–2925 and 3020–2880 cal BC, indicate a construction phase during the early Middle Neolithic. From the other archaeological remains on the site, and from what we already know about the chronology of passage graves, a broader timeframe for the construction extending to the end of the Early Neolithic or the early Middle Neolithic seems reasonable.

The Bronze Age date also indicates activities in the chamber during this period. The larger stones in the central parts of the chamber could be linked to a cairn from this period. The outer kerbstone chain, with its larger kerbstones, could possibly be associated with an additional mound in the Bronze Age. Bronze Age mounds sometimes, and probably quite often, were built on a megalithic grave. This is known from several other locations in Scania (Hansen 1923, 1930, 1931; Forssander 1932; Jacobsson 1986).

Overview

With regards to its size and structure, Truls Høj is comparable to other excavated passage graves in Scania. A frequently used distribution map shows five areas of megalithic tombs in Scania (Fig. 15) (Tilley 1999; Andersson 2004b): the river valleys of Saxån-Välabäcken/Löddeå-Kävlingeån in West Scania; Southwest Scania; the Österlen region in Southeast Scania and the lake district Hammarsjön-Ivösjön-Vramsån in Northeast Scania (Andersson 2003; 2004a). In most cases, the new finds of destroyed and ploughed-out megaliths have been made in these key areas. Through archival studies, the second sur-

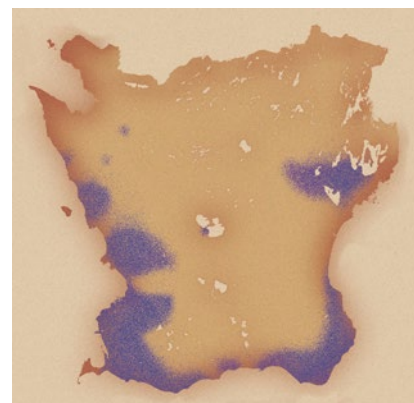


Fig. 15. Distribution of megalithic graves in Scania, Southern Sweden. Denser hatching indicates concentrations (revised after Andersson 2004b, 170).

vey from 1985–87 supplemented this distribution picture with data on removed megalithic tombs and showed that they were spread along virtually the entire coastal region (Holmgren/Tronde 1990; Sandén 1995). Clear concentrations are primarily noticeable in the five areas stated above. The accumulated votive sites likewise display a geographical distribution concentrated within the coastal zone in its areas of megalithic tombs and only a few examples in the interior (Karsten 1994). The survey of ancient monuments together with the excavations of recent decades have demonstrated that the area around the river valleys of Saxån-Välabäcken and Lödde Å-Kävlingeån also reveal a large number of Neolithic sites in addition to the megalithic tombs and votive finds. Truls Hoj lies in the valley landscape around Saxån-Välabäcken and Lödde-Kävlingeån.

One long barrow, nineteen round or long dolmens and eleven passage graves are securely documented in the area. Eight of the passage graves have been excavated to variable extents (Forssander 1932; 1936; 1937; Hansen 1919; 1923; 1930; 1931; Hårdh 1990a; Edring 2007). Apart from the megalithic tombs, a flat-earth cemetery consisting of 17 securely attested graves has been excavated in Borgeby (Fig. 16).

The chamber size in the passage graves varies greatly from one monument to another – from Lackalänga measuring just over 6 m² to Gillhög, Storegård, Västra Hoby and Södervidinge, all measuring 13 m². The chamber of the passage grave at Odarslöv was never subject to investigation (see below). In the cases where the shape is known, three of the graves have a rectangular chamber and three an oval chamber. The double passage grave of Annehill has one oval and one rectangular chamber. The chamber is usually oriented northeast-southwest, sometimes with a slight shift to either side of this axis. The passage, which is intact at six of the passage graves, is 5–5.8 m long. In general, the passage graves were carefully built and technically sophisticated. An interesting structural detail is that some of the wall slabs in the passage grave of Ljunghög did not reach up to the desired height, which was therefore increased with extra slabs surmounting the lower slabs (Petré/Salomonsson 1967). The

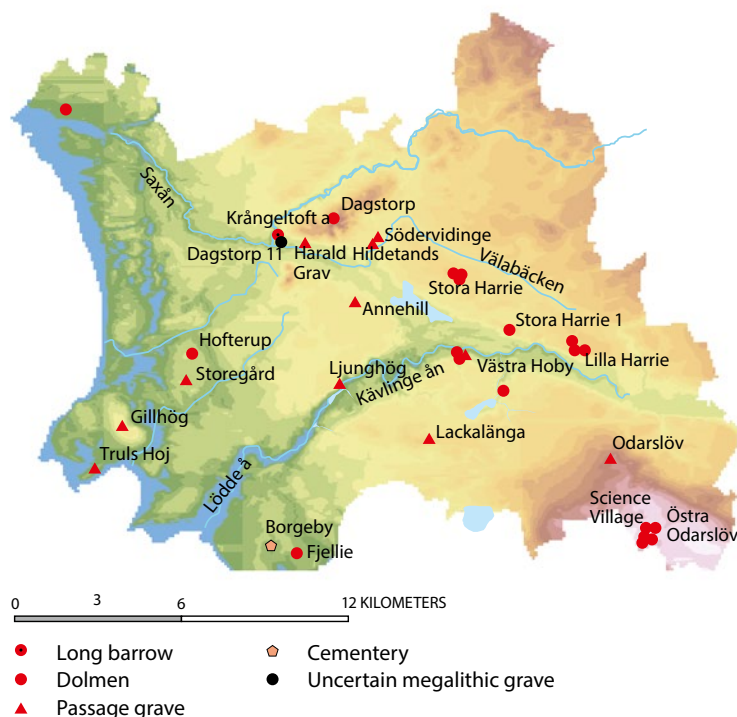


Fig. 16. Megalithic graves in West Scania.

passage at Odarslöv however, was oriented towards the east. Several of the passage graves (Gillhög, Hög, Lackalänga, Odarslöv, Södervidinge and Västra Hoby) have a more or less massive find-bearing cairn in front of the passage. It is not possible to determine whether Annehill and Harald Hildetand's Grave had a similar cairn, since recent cultivation and road construction have destroyed all traces. The excavations suggest that these cairns were accumulated in several phases and that deposits outside the graves were carried out during the Middle Neolithic A I– Middle Neolithic A IV periods, with a concentration in the periods Middle Neolithic A I – Middle Neolithic A III (Hårdh 1990b). Based on the design of the chamber in the passage graves, they have sometimes been divided into different phases. The oval shape is believed to be older than the rectangular shape (Strömberg 1971; Hårdh 1990a).

The size of the chamber at Truls Hoj (about 11.5 m²) is similar to the other passage graves in the region, just slightly smaller than the largest. The shape is oval, which would indicate that it belongs to the older phase of the passage graves. The passage of Truls Hoj, which was about 5.3 m long, lies within the range of values for the other passages, i.e. between 5 and 5.8 metres. The direction of the passage, however, differs slightly in that Truls Hoj had an ENE direction while the others were oriented southeast or east. One explanation for this may be that the monument in Barsebäck is included in the ENE-oriented line of burial mounds along the coast (see below). It is difficult to say anything about the deposition practice at Truls Hoj as modern agriculture has essentially ruined the structure.

Gillhög, Storegård, Ljunghög and Lackalänga, like Truls Hoj, were expanded with a larger new mound built on the older one during the Bronze Age. The size of the mounds varied between 25 and 36 metres in diameter. The mound at Truls Hoj was slightly smaller with a diameter of about 21 metres. The remains of a cairn in the chamber in Truls Hoj could be the residue of a Bronze Age burial. The date of the doorstep stone, which lies at the transition to the Late Bronze Age, verifies this. The diameter of the inner kerbstone chain at Truls Hoj measures about 14–17 metres. Västra Hoby and Södervidinge, where no traces of a Bronze Age mound existed, have a diameter of 15 and 10 metres respectively. This is similar to the inner kerbstone chain at Truls Hoj, i.e. the supposed border of the original mound on the passage grave.

One problem for the interpretation of sites with passage graves is that few have been investigated by modern excavation methods, since a large share of them were already excavated at the start of the twentieth century. Often, these excavations focused on finds and paid no attention to features adjacent to the monuments. In the early summer of 2006, a ploughed-out passage grave at Odarslöv, north of Lund, was excavated. The investigation, however, was limited to the eastern parts of the passage grave and an area of about 300 m² around it. In the centre of the monument was a small road, which divided the grave into an eastern and a western part. The area of the chamber was below the road, and whether or not the chamber is preserved, could not be determined by the archaeological survey (Edring 2007).

However, excavations of the last two decades in Southwest Scania have started to reveal the complexity of this monumental landscape. Single monuments, small groups of monuments as well as large sites with many monuments were part of the landscape (Gidlöf et al. 2006; Andersson/Wallebom 2011; 2013a; 2013b; Edring 2015; Brink/Hammarstrand Dehman 2013; Kronberg 2016; Andersson et al. 2016). These archaeological efforts verified that at least dolmens were no solitary phenomenon, but that usually several dolmens were erected together in larger or smaller groups. The surveys also show that the

number of long barrows and the megaliths in Southern Sweden was apparently much greater than previously assumed. The numbers of known monumental tombs from the Neolithic have multiplied. This shows a far more intensively utilized landscape and probably also a greater population density in the Early and Middle Neolithic.

The Place around a Passage Grave

Previous archaeological investigations have excavated large areas around dolmens. At Barsebäck, the picture is completed because this is the first time we can study larger areas around a passage grave in Sweden.

We know that gravesites often have a long continuity, where graves and monuments from different eras come together at one place. However, it is not very common that different types of Early and Middle Neolithic monuments are located at the same place, even if it is occasionally observed. At Almhov in Southwest Scania, long barrows existed along with dolmens and at Västra Hoby (Fig. 16) in West Scania, two dolmens and a passage grave exist side by side. That this does not occur more often is probably because few major excavations have actually been carried out around the monuments. However, it appears more common that later grave forms, e.g., Late Neolithic stone cists, were built into passage graves or that Bronze Age barrows were built on existing megalithic graves. Of course, we know this because the stone cists and Bronze Age mounds constitute parts of the same monument as the passage graves and they were directly affected when the burial mounds were excavated. No large excavation areas were required to detect various types of monuments. Maybe it was not uncommon for various types of Early and Middle Neolithic monuments to be erected at the same site even if there seem to be regional differences.

However, we have no evidence that more than one passage grave was built at each location, in contrast to the dolmens that seem to occur in clusters. Truls Hoj at Barsebäck seems to be no exception. One explanation for this may be that the passage grave, with its large chamber and the associated passage, was intended for the burials of several people. Dolmens, conversely, are chiefly assumed to have been tombs for a single person in the small sealed chamber. This may reflect a difference in the meaning of the monuments. Although only the leading stratum of society is buried there, a passage grave perhaps included a larger population, i.e. a community consisting of several farms or small villages. In contrast, the dolmen would then possibly be linked to the leader(s) of just a single large farm. Hence, a plausible interpretation for the large number dolmens in relation to passage graves can be delineated. This situation may indicate partially different social systems over time, where the passage grave would be a slightly younger phenomenon. It can also represent different contemporaneous regional traditions. For example, the dolmen dominates in Southwest Scania, while the passage grave is more common in Western Scania (Fig. 16). In some regions/times, larger farms erected their own grave monuments (dolmens), whereas in other parts of the province or in other periods the rituals were concentrated at larger monuments (passage graves). By extension, the latter suggests a more centrally controlled society with a stronger leadership.

The excavation area at Barsebäck thus revealed only one certain megalithic grave. However, the monument did not stand there as a lone grave. The flat-earth grave in the vicinity shows that at least one more, albeit different burial practice occurred in the area nearby.

It should also be remembered that it is located only 600 metres from Truls Hoj to the easternmost of the four existing burial mounds

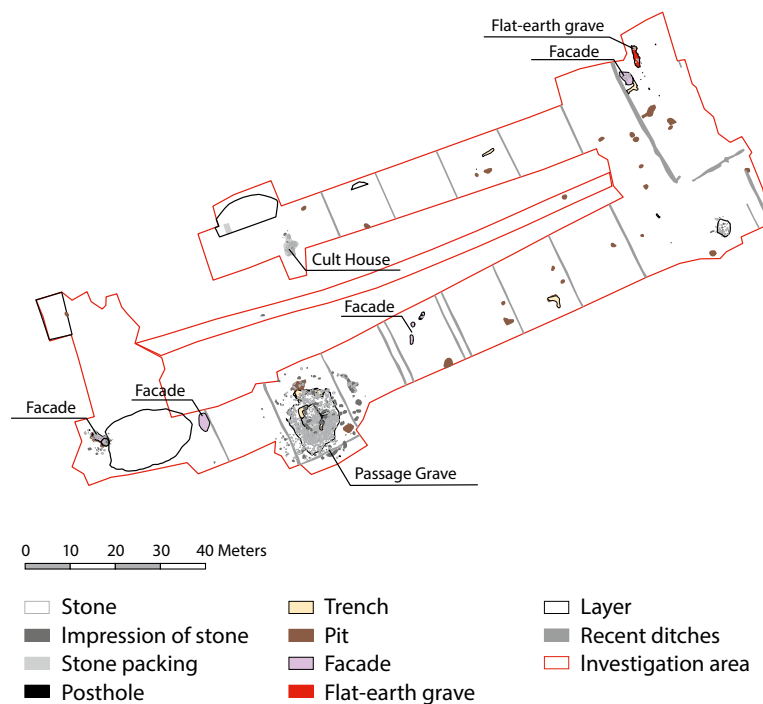


Fig. 17. Façades, Cult House and Flat-earth grave in the investigation area. Scale 1:1 150.

to the east. Thus, there were at least seven funerary monuments (all the burial mounds on the historical map from 1831 included) that we know within a distance of 600 metres. We know that Truls Høj could be dated to the Early Middle Neolithic and one of the previously excavated mounds to the Late Neolithic.

The archaeological excavation at Barsebäck is the first study where large areas have been investigated next to a passage grave in Scania. It was found that the passage grave at Barsebäck, which was denoted as Truls Høj, was once surrounded by various ritual structures similar to those we find in connection with dolmens. All structures that could be linked to the ritual activity surface at Barsebäck had been dismantled, destroyed and then ploughed-out.

Façades

Extensive, developer-funded excavations during the last 10–15 years have revealed new kinds of monuments, such as free-standing façades (standing stones or wooden poles) without graves, both in connection with other monuments and in settlements of different size and complexity (Rudebeck 2010; Brink/Hammarstrand Dehman 2013; Kjällquist/Kronberg 2014; Andersson et al. 2016). Four façades were erected at Barsebäck (Fig. 17). Two of the façades at Barsebäck were built with wooden posts and the other two with stones.

Next to the façades built of stones, we unearthed a great many interesting finds. The most common finds were flint objects, including fragments of axes, scrapers and blades. We also found a lot of pottery of Funnel Beaker character, whereby the total impression provided a dating late in the Early Neolithic. The decoration of the excavated pottery material was carried out with cord and stick imprints around the rim (Fig. 18 and Fig. 19). The wooden-built façades, conversely, almost totally lack finds.

From the façades, there are ^{14}C results that place them in the late Early Neolithic (Table 1). The façades are situated 15–90 metres west or east of the passage grave (Fig. 17), but it is worth mentioning that the passage grave was not built when the façades were erected. The position of the façades should perhaps be considered in light of the coastline. On other sites, we have seen how façades seem to



Fig. 18. Pottery from the façades.



Fig.19. Fragments of a thin-butted flint axe and a preform for a chisel.

have been raised along water systems (Andersson/Wallebom 2013a; 2013b; Kjällquist/Kronberg 2014).

Usually, the façades are connected to long barrows, where wooden structures in the form of raised wooden poles in one side seem to have been a common feature. In most cases, the façade was placed at the eastern end. The mounds were of varying size and dimensions, whereby the heights also seem to have varied (e.g. Rudebeck 2010; Andersen 2013).

The façades in Barsebäck were thus constructed with both wooden poles and standing stones in parallel. This indicates that there may have been different functions and symbolic meanings for this type of monument. The orientation of the façades varied somewhat but within the range NE/NW–SE/SW.

The idea that façades built of stone and that those built of wood may have had different functions and symbolic significance is evidenced by the presence of finds in the structures at Barsebäck. Next to the façades consisting of standing stones, large amounts of finds were discovered. Obviously, the façades incorporated the scene of ritual acts, where deposits of objects, and perhaps food offerings, were included in the ceremonies. The wooden façades at Barsebäck, however, almost entirely lacked finds. The ceremonies at these may not have been as intensely associated with the deposition of objects. Perhaps the monuments of wood and stone represented different aspects of life and death. The stability of the stone monument stood in sharp contrast to the perishable wood monument and the ephemeral events of daily life. Megaliths were in a way not only a link to the past but also to the future; they built a bridge between genera-



Fig. 20. Cult house from the south.

tions. Perhaps the standing stones were intended for ancestor worship, while the wooden poles represented daily life. Therefore, rituals connected to the different monuments appeared in different ways. A similar picture is observed at the Östra Odarslöv site in Southwest Scania, where the stone-built façade was rich in finds that were almost completely lacking at the wood façades (Andersson/Artursson 2017).

Cult House

Approximately 40 metres north of the passage grave, we found a feature covered by stone packing. The structure was square and estimated to measure 3.5×3.5 m (Fig. 20). In the north gable of the feature, the structure was supplemented with a narrow extension, probably an opening, measuring 2×1.5 m. The feature was about 0.4 m deep with a flat bottom. The filling consisted of large stones up to 0.2 m in size all the way down to the bottom.

The finds from the feature consisted of flint flakes and debitage, a flint scraper and a few pottery sherds. The ceramic sherds are undecorated but of the same character as the pottery in the façades and can probably be dated to the Early Neolithic. In a macro-analysis, 14 charred grains were found (including 9 unidentifiable grains, 3 naked barley grains and 2 emmer grains). A ^{14}C dating from one of the naked barley grains provided the time span value from 3635–3370 cal BC, i.e. late Early Neolithic (Table 1).

The shape and size of the building resembles a traditional pit house. In the bottom of the structure, five major stones formed a circle that measured two metres in diameter. In addition, one more stone was found in the centre of the circle. The function of the stones is unclear, but their presence means that the persons who erected the house had some relation to them.

Due to the context and construction details, I choose to refer to the building as a cult house. Specific criteria have previously been discussed that classify a building as such (see Victor 2002; Rudebeck 2006). According to these arguments, such a house should not be intended for secular activities (living, cooking, manufacturing etc.), but for acts of a sacred kind. It should have a different direction, incorporate different building materials and have a different location in comparison with ordinary houses. Most often, the walls, a roof and an entrance are missing and ordinary settlement finds are absent. Moreover, cult houses often have similarities to secular buildings in shape and size. Cult houses are not located at the settlements but in connection with graves or other ritual sites.

A number of the above-mentioned criteria correspond well with the cult house in Barsebäck. The lack of ordinary settlement material suggests that the building did not serve as a dwelling, but that it had a specialized function. Correspondingly, tombs and several façades occur at the site, which we now know could be associated with monumental megalithic sites (see Andersson et al. 2016; Andersson/Artursson 2017). In this context, it is thus not implausible to classify the structure as a cult house. Its shape and size are largely the same as the so-called ordinary huts (Andersson/Artursson 2017). However, there is no secure trace of roof or wall supporting structures in the cult house at Barsebäck.

Parallels to this structure have been documented at some places in Denmark. In Jutland, for example, there are a number of features of varying size, which have been interpreted as cult houses. The remains consist of wall trenches with post-holes and are of rectangular/square form with an opening in one of the gables. The walls were supported by stones. They have been dated to early in the Middle Neolithic. Potsherds and flint axes have been found in most of them and they are, like the Barsebäck building, located close to megalithic tombs (Becker 1993; Andersen 2000). An interesting feature regarding the Danish cult houses is that they seem to have been destroyed after use, and the houses were sealed with layers of stone (Becker 1996, 236–237; Juel et al. 2015). The cult house in Barsebäck has some similarities to the Danish counterparts: 1) the square shape with an entrance/opening in the end; 2) some stones may well have had a function as a foundation for the walls; and 3) the location is close to a megalithic grave. It is also remarkable that the building, like several of the Danish ones, was filled with stones. The house seems to have been destroyed and sealed with stones after use. We possibly observe a form of a closing ritual that either marks the abandonment of the house or that the building was assigned a new function (cf. Friman/Skoglund 2009). The cult house in Barsebäck is slightly older than the Danish one, but according to dating, it still falls within the so-called megalithic period (Early Neolithic II–Middle Neolithic II). Unlike the Danish counterparts, however, there are no finds of votive ceramics. One explanation for this, of course, is that later ploughing has dislodged and/or destroyed the deposits.

Few Neolithic structures in Scania have been interpreted as cult houses. A problem is, of course, the definition (see above). At Dagstorp in Western Scania, a U-shaped, partly stone-lined trench, with external dimensions of 3 × 1.4 m was excavated in 1998. The width of the closed western end was about 0.6 m, while other parts were roughly 0.2–0.3 m wide. The flint was mainly composed of flakes and debitage, but a blade and two flake cores were also found. The pottery consisted of small, undecorated sherds. A charcoal sample from the eastern patch of soot in the feature has been ¹⁴C-dated, yielding the value 4590±55 BP (3500–3120 cal BC), which corresponds to the Early Neolithic II–Middle Neolithic A I period. To the northwest and south of the U-shaped trench, two accumulations of

stone were found. Both features consisted of single layers of stone located in diffuse colourings. The stones varied in size, but the majority measured 0.2–0.3 m. A chronological link between the trenches and the stone collections cannot be ruled out. One possible interpretation is that these features are part of the activities performed beside a removed megalithic tomb. An indication that there may have been a megalithic tomb in the area is the place name Dösjebro. »Dysia« was the medieval name for the Välabäcken (Olsson 2000, 26) and it may be connected to a megalithic tomb through the word for a dolmen (Swedish *dös*, Danish *dysse*).

The finds in the cult house in Barsebäck are limited and it is difficult to speculate about associated activities. However, 14 charred grains emerged from a macro sample (the only one analysed from the feature). There is no hearth or oven in the structure, which means that cooking was probably not carried out here. Perhaps, the food was carried there as part of a ritual food offering. The stone circle in the middle of the house may have served as seating, with the »altar stone« in the middle.

Flat-earth grave

About 95 m northeast of the passage grave, a rectangular construction was found (Fig. 17), measuring 4.8 × 1.5 m, positioned in a north-south direction and situated 0.43 m deep. The long sides were straight, while the ends were slightly rounded. Occasional small stones were found in the northern and southern parts of the feature. The digging edges were clear and the bottom relatively flat. The finds are limited to a few flint flakes and highly fragmented pottery sherds. However, a flake axe was found in the northern part of the structure (Fig. 21). The rectangular shape, with clear digging edges and the relatively flat bottom, enables an interpretation of the structure as a flat-earth grave. In light of these circumstances, the flake axe can be regarded as a grave gift.

A charcoal from oak has provided a ¹⁴C dating to 3350–3090 cal BC, i.e. corresponding to the Early Neolithic II–Middle Neolithic II period (Table 1). This is entirely in line with the context and the find material.

Parallel to the construction of monumental burials, more simple inhumations or »earthen graves« were in use in Scandinavia during the Early and Middle Neolithic. In most cases, these inhumations have no elaborate structures above ground, but in a few cases, the inhumations were covered with stone structures, low barrows or marked with wooden poles or more extensive wooden structures (Ebbesen 1994; Sjögren 2011). In addition, some inhumations have wooden chambers and quite large stone cists, which can be interpreted as signs of status.

Since no skeleton was preserved and the coffin is missing, the interpretation of the earthen grave at Barsebäck, however, must be considered uncertain. It should be noted that no bone material was found at the site, suggesting poor preservation conditions for organic material.

Based on the form and context as well as comparisons with previously examined Neolithic flat-earth graves, the interpretation of the structure at Barsebäck as a grave seems reasonable. Early and Middle Neolithic flat-earth graves from Scania, however, are relatively rare (Andersson et al. 2016). From Denmark, several Early Neolithic flat-earth graves are known, and a comparative study of these can broaden our understanding of the Scanian features. The majority of the graves were found in Jutland. The grave forms vary from simple, flat-earth graves without special structural details, to burials with various kinds of stone structures and/or adjacent post-holes. In



Fig. 21. Flake axe from the flat-earth grave.

K. Ebbesen's (1994) analysis of Early Neolithic graves, he distinguishes eight types (A–H). Type A is defined as a simple oblong pit with no stone structure. The pit is usually a long oval or rectangular feature with rounded corners. A body was buried in a wooden coffin, wrapped in skins, or just laid in the earth. The orientation of such a grave varied greatly, although east–west alignment is most common. The length of such graves ranges from 1.6 to 3.0 m and the width from 0.45 to 1.5 m. The graves are between 0.45 and 0.6 m deep. At some of the features, there were lone stones, whereas some have post-holes at the corners. The graves are dated to the entire Early Neolithic. This form of grave is most commonly found under flat earth. The grave at Barsebäck could be categorized as type A, that is, a flat-earth grave without stone structures (Ebbesen 1994). The flake axe in the structure should probably be regarded as a grave gift.

It cannot be ruled out that the flat-earth grave belongs to the same phase as Truls Hoj. A passage grave and a flat-earth grave at the same place and perhaps from the same period raise interesting questions about the importance of the difference between being buried in a passage grave and in a flat-earth grave. The question is also raised concerning how many individuals actually had a funeral in our sense of the word during this time period. Perhaps just a few individuals were buried in a more traditional way, based on social and political status. Where and how the rest of the population was buried is not known, but their remains might have been deposited in watercourses, lakes or in the sea, maybe after first having been cremated, although no traces of this have been found so far. In a society witnessing growing tensions, which expanded during the Neolithic period and resulted in increased inequality (see Ch. New ideas and different customs), it is of course tempting to think that social rank had a bearing on whether a person was buried in a passage grave, a flat-earth grave or, maybe not buried at all.

Building phases

Even if there seems to have been continuous utilization at Barsebäck, it is possible, based on the archaeological findings, to divide the site into three building phases (Fig. 22). On the site, no traces of any settlement activities, which occurred before or after the construction of the ritual structures, were discovered. The ritual activity area itself was expanded and used successively.

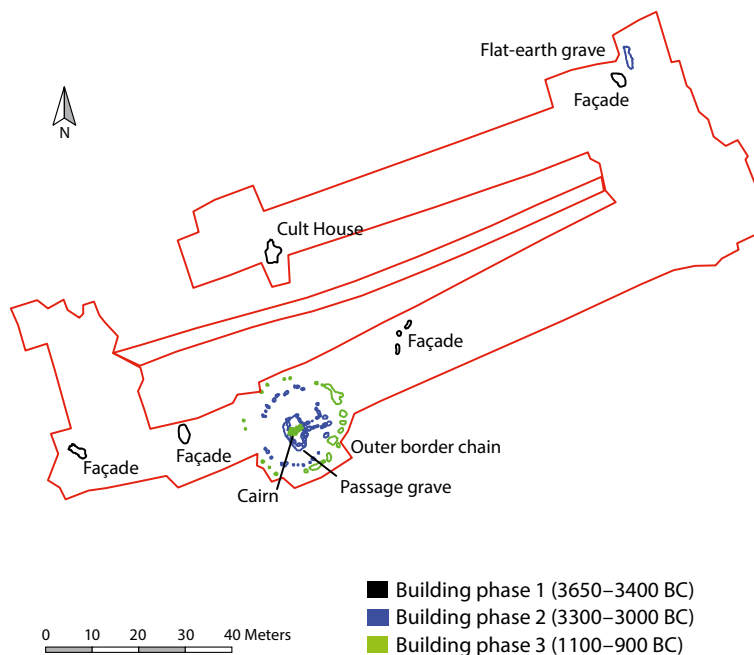


Fig. 22. Building phases at the site.
 Scale 1:1,250.

Table 1. ^{14}C analysis.

Lab no.	Feature	Material	Species	^{14}C BP	^{14}C cal. 2 σ	Period
Ua-54515	14537. Stone impression, close to the inner kerbstone chain.	Charcoal	Oak	1262 \pm 31	660–870 AD	Late Iron Age.
Ua-54516	25126. Stone impression in the chamber.	Charcoal	Oak	4311 \pm 31	3020–2880 BC	MNA II–V
LuS 12271	25126. Stone impression in the chamber.	Cereal	Emmer	4445 \pm 45	3340–2925 BC	MNA I–II
Ua-54517	27537 (27574). Stone impression in the chamber.	Charcoal	–	3983 \pm 31	2580–2450 BC	MNB
Ua-54557	27461. Stone impression in the chamber.	Charcoal	Deciduous tree	3820 \pm 28	2410–2140 BC	MNB/SN
Ua-54519	27615. Stone impression in the chamber.	Charcoal	Ask	4099 \pm 30	2870–2500 BC	MNA/MNB
Ua-54518	3913. Below the threshold stone.	Charcoal	Oak	2822 \pm 29	1060–900 BC	Bronze Age
Ua-54558	17275. Stone impression, in the outer kerbstone chain.	Charcoal	Oak	4879 \pm 29	3705–3635 BC	EN I
LuS-12124	14376. Cult House.	Cereal	Naked barley	4725 \pm 40	3635–3370 BC	EN II
Lus 12206	4483. Façade.	Charcoal	–	4825 \pm 40	3695–3520 BC	EN I
Ua-54854	4112. Façade.	Charcoal	Oak	4891 \pm 29	3710–3635 BC	EN I
Ua-54855	8886. Façade.	Charcoal	Plant parts	4118 \pm 28	2870–2570 BC	MNA/MNB
Ua-54856	3059. Earth grave.	Charcoal	Oak	4495 \pm 28	3350–3090 BC	EN II–MNA II

EN=Early Neolithic, MN=Middle Neolithic

The first phase that can be distinguished on the basis of ^{14}C analyses and the find material could be dated to the late Early Neolithic in the time span from 3650–3400 BC. During this stage, probably all the façades on the site were erected. The finds and ^{14}C dates place the façades within this period. This agrees well with dates from other known sites with freestanding façades. At Östra Odarslöv, remains of five façades and three dolmens were found. The façades were constructed during different stages of the Early Neolithic, ranging between 3800 and 3300 BC (Andersson et al. 2016). On the neighbouring site at Science Village, the remains of two dolmens and three façades were found. ^{14}C -analyses from one of the façades provided the value 3950–3660 cal BC (Kronberg 2016). At Skegrie in Southwest Scania, a dolmen and a façade were found that could be dated to 3950–3690 cal BC (Söderberg 2014). At Vintrie outside of Malmö, two ploughed-out dolmens and one façade were found and dated from 3660–3510 cal BC (Brink/Hammarstrand Dehman 2013). The foundation pits for standing stones at Döserygge have also been dated to the Early Neolithic (Andersson/Wallebom 2011; 2013a; 2013b).

During the same phase when the façades were constructed at Barsebäck, a cult house was also erected. ^{14}C dating extending from 3635–3370 cal BC also places this structure in the second half of the Early Neolithic.

Whether the façades were constructed over a short period of time or during a phase of some hundred years cannot be concluded from the material. It is clear, however, that the place was established as a ritual arena in the second half of the Early Neolithic and that no actual traces of older operations could be found here. These can, of course, be in the vicinity along the coastal strip. The façades, two of which contained large quantities of deposited items, should therefore plausibly have been built before the passage grave. Thus, the ritual activities at the site started with the construction of façades. Ceremonies were accordingly performed on the site before it was used as a burial place. So far, no traces of any older monuments have been found.

The next phase, the second, is represented by a flat-earth grave. The radiometric dating of this feature (3350–3090 cal BC) does not overlap, but immediately follows the datings of the façades. Sometime during the late Early Neolithic, or more likely at the beginning of the Middle Neolithic, the site also began to function as a burial place.

Moreover, it is probable that the passage grave was erected during this second phase. The dates of the stone impressions from the chamber (3340–2925 and 3020–2880 cal BC) suggest that a construction phase during the Middle Neolithic A I–II is reasonable.

The third and final phase that we can discern on the site encompasses the building of a cairn in the chamber, the creation of a new and larger mound over the old one, and the building of the outer kerbstone chain that limits the new mound. A ^{14}C dating of a sample from below the doorstep stone would define this phase to the transition between the Early and the Late Bronze Age.

New Ideas and Different Customs

The new picture that has emerged through recent years of archaeological investigations at monumental sites suggests the existence of more extensive open cultivation and pastureland during the Early Neolithic with a large number of long barrows, freestanding façades and possibly also megalithic tombs of different types. This shows that the population and population density in central areas was probably much larger than previously assumed and that resulting social and political structures were probably more complex.

As mentioned, a central region during the Neolithic constituted the river valleys of Saxån-Välabäcken and Löddeå-Kävlingeån-Råån in Western Scania, including a concentration of settlements, graves and other ceremonial sites. In the southwestern part of this area, on the Barsebäck peninsula, a particularly distinctive densification of Neolithic settlements is observed (Andersson 2003; 2004b) (Fig. 23), consisting of one or more local communities. By a community, I mean a group of people and their locations within a defined area – a landscape space – in which a group's seasonal and annual activities were maintained. The people within a society are considered to have a common identity, which is different from that of the surrounding communities. The various groups or local communities probably maintained mutual contacts to varying degrees, which were necessary for their survival, thus forming a cohesive district or region.

Apart from Truls Høj, the passage graves of Storegård and Gillhög are also located in the area. Within this area, it is possible to distinguish smaller spaces. In the Neolithic, the foreland at Barsebäck was a peninsula connected to the mainland by a narrow isthmus. Within this area and along the stream Mare Bäck, there are several coastal dwelling sites and some main settlements, i.e. settlements where the habitation areas (the sites with the houses) are found, where everyday life took place, including the elements required for this life such as storehouses and various activity areas.

The three passage graves may each be connected to a main settlement (Barsebäck 15, Barsebäck 48, Löddeköpinge 40), with a distance between the main settlements and the passage graves of about one kilometre (Fig. 23). All three main settlements have been archaeologically investigated and yielded a large amount of archaeological material from the Early and Middle Neolithic (Nagmér 1974; Knarrström/Wallin 1999; Andersson 2003). One hypothesis is therefore put forward that the three passage graves with their main settlements represent three different local societies on the Barsebäck foreland.

Previous studies have shown that a period of settlement expansion began when the agricultural economy established itself in Scania during the Early Neolithic with increasingly settled ways of living together with a probable population increase (Andersson 2004a; Brink et al. 2014; Andersson et al. 2016). When more stable and new settlement districts were established, the creation of landscape spaces was required; in other words, the group had to mark its social identity in the area by setting up new places, possibly at previously known topographical landmarks. It is in this context that the Western European tradition of building megalithic tombs was adopted. For the first time, major interventions were made outside of the settlements and the cultivation plots. The construction of the monuments meant that large areas were cleared and that the landscape acquired a different profile. Not only the building activities but presumably also the clearance of the vegetation meant that special bonds to the places were forged and much of the landscape was »socialized« through these measures. The consolidation of local societies is possibly linked to increased power for the leaders (Fig. 24).



Fig. 23. Settlement on the Barsebäck foreland in the Early Neolithic II–Middle Neolithic II phase.

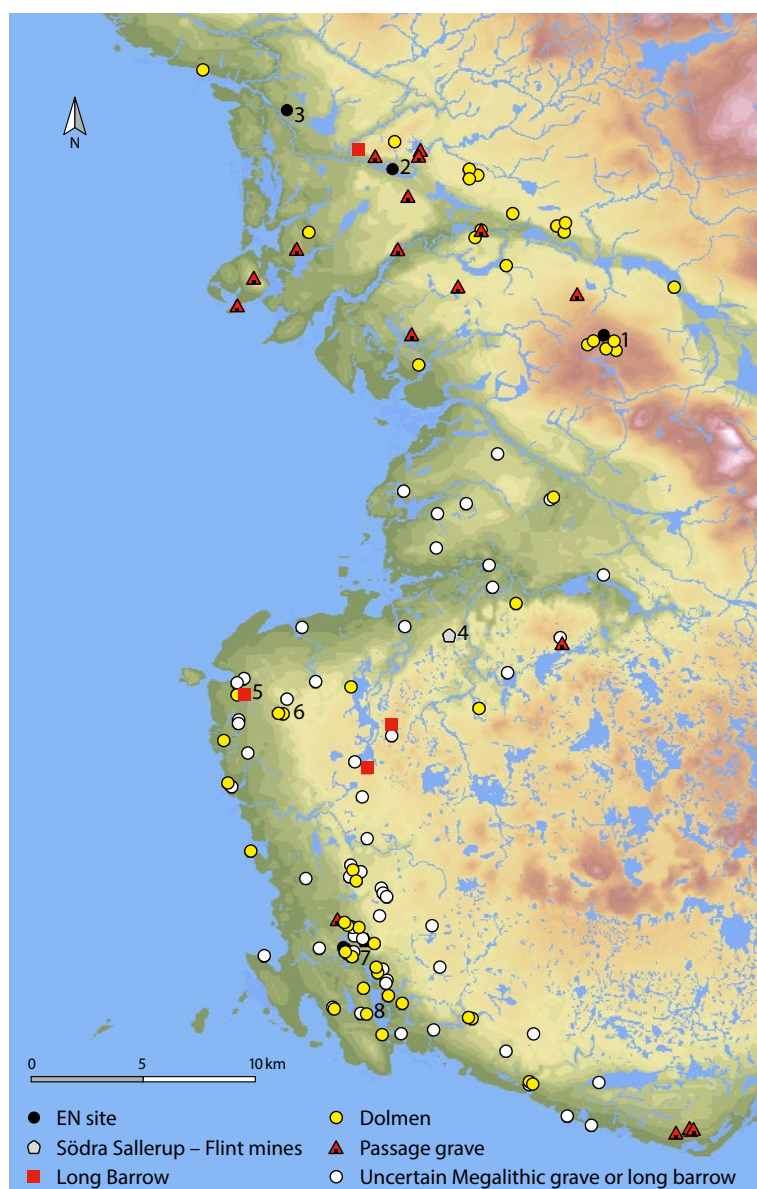


Fig. 24. Early Neolithic sites in Southwest Scania. Places discussed in the text are marked with numbers: 1 Östra Odarslöv; 2 Dagstorp 19; 3 Saxtorp; 4 Södra Sallerup; 5 Almhov; 6 Vintrie; 7 Döserygg; 8 Skegrie (megalithic tombs in West Scania, see figure 16.)

There are several elements in the archaeological remains from the Early and Middle Neolithic in Western and Southwestern Scania, which characterize an emerging hierarchical society: 1) *Increased permanent settlement*. It is clear that larger settlement is already noticeable at the end of the Mesolithic and continues during the Early Neolithic. There are now several excavated settlements from the Early Neolithic with remains of stable longhouses that indicate more permanent settlement, for example, at Dagstorp, Saxtorp and Östra Odarslöv (Andersson 2003; Artursson et al. 2003; Andersson et al. 2016); 2) A *surplus-producing, domestic economy* can be discerned in the archaeological material in Northern Germany and Southern Scandinavia (Müller et al. 2013; Andersson et al. 2016). From ca. 3800–3600 cal BC onwards, evidence suggests more stabilised agriculture/horticulture in the region, at least at some sites such as Östra Odarslöv. The extensive analytical work on material from the site (osteology, palaeoecology, lipid analysis, micro-wear analysis, etc.) shows clear indications of a well-developed agricultural economy during the Early Neolithic (Andersson et al. 2016); 3) There were obvious *prestige objects* in circulation, for example, high-quality flint axes, copper flat axes or polygonal battle-axes. These are artefacts, which were deposited in graves or in specific places of sacrifice in ceremonial forms. The existence of human sacrifice must be seen as the

ultimate gift to the gods, and an indication that some people had absolute power over the lives of others (for a discussion see, e.g., Nilsson/Nilsson 2003; Fischer 2002; Klassen 2004; Berggren 2010; Sørensen 2014); 4) Associated with the construction of long barrows and megalithic graves, a *differentiated burial tradition* was established in Scania during the Early Neolithic. It is visible in Barsebäck in the form of a flat-earth grave at the same location as a passage grave. In addition, monument building requires labour to be mobilized (Andersson/Wallebom 2011; 2013a; 2013b; Andersson et al. 2016); 5) *Flint mines* from the Early Neolithic (Berggren in press) in Södra Sallerup outside Malmö in southwest Scania show interventions in the landscape of an almost industrial character. As a raw material, flint circulated between different communities and it is possible that these regions established long-distance contacts early on through flint trading – even southwards with continental agricultural cultures. The perception of flint extracted from deep mine shafts implies special properties beyond the purely physical and granted this raw material special exclusivity. Consequently, proficiency in mining and flint technology furnished local experts with authority in these areas, which contributed to the establishment of a social hierarchy, clearer here than in other regions.

Monuments, mining and sacrificial ceremonies are phenomena showing that common social activities were coordinated under strong leadership. Carrying out cooperative construction work instead of producing for the common supply required an organization similar to chiefdom, i.e., a political and social system of permanent status positions. Chiefdom communities usually have the necessary capacity to mobilize resources to construct larger buildings. First, a sufficient population must be available so that labour can be mobilized. Second, solidarity within the community should exist in order to carry out cooperative operations under a single management. Finally, a system of redistribution must be implemented, in which an elite deploys the necessary resources that create the economic conditions essential for the formation of labour (cf. Nordquist 2001; Beck 2003).

Perhaps regions where passage graves are common can be regarded as more centralized, such as on the Barsebäck peninsula, than areas with dolmens as the dominant monument form. The ceremonies associated with passage graves may have included an entire local community or even the whole region and not just an individual large farm. A larger population group was thus controlled.

Destruction

There is no trace of Truls Hoja on the historical maps from the early 1800s. On the map from 1831, there are six burial mounds east of the studied area but nothing within the area. This is an indication that the monuments were demolished even before that time.

We know that the proportion of removed megalithic tombs, at least in some areas, is very high. Today there are about 4,000 megalithic tombs existing or known to have existed in Denmark. Based on intensive investigations of certain limited areas, the original number is estimated to be about 25,000 (Ebbesen 2007, 2011). Ulf Sanden carried out a systematic study of the frequency of megalithic tombs in Scania. He shows that probably two-thirds of the original number of tombs was destroyed (Sandén 1995). The excavation of Döserygg, for example, with remains of at least twenty dolmens, showed that this number probably underestimates reality (Andersson/Wallebom 2011; 2013a; 2013b).

The destruction of monuments can mainly be linked to two historical phases – partially in connection with the construction of churches

in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and partially associated with land reclamation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Sjögren, 2003, 82). There is reason to believe that the first demolition came with the introduction of Christianity and that in some places the new religion in its missionary zeal wanted to eradicate old cultic sites. A good deal of stone was without a doubt used to build the many churches that manifested the new religion. Conversely, the use of slabs from the megalithic graves to build churches may also have symbolized continuity with older traditions. The best-documented destruction of megalithic tombs took place in the eighteenth century and from the early to the mid-nineteenth century (Sandén 1995, 68). Above all, a lot of stone material was needed for the construction of new farms due to the enclosures. At the same time, several megalithic tombs were cleared because they were regarded as an obstacle to agriculture when new arable fields were broken and a district became fully tilled.

In comparison, the destruction of Truls Hoja can probably be related to some of the various harbour-building projects. The modern harbour in Barsebäck was completed in 1880, but there are several forerunners. Before the modern harbour existed, different protections for boats were built in the water in the form of long stone piers. Large boulders were transported onto the ice during winter, which then fell to the bottom of the harbour when spring came. Thus, an effective breakwater was formed in which boats were protected. Perhaps stones were shipped from the megalithic monuments to build these stone piers. An indication of their age is communicated by Christer Bonde, president of the Board of Trade. He was sent on an inspection trip to the newly acquired provinces of Scania in 1658. He issued a report (1818) about trade and other industries of the region. Here he wrote, among other things, about Barsebäck that »en hel farlig redd och ingen hamn« (a stone pier and no harbour) existed (Sjöstedt 1951).



Fig. 25. Remains of a stone pier along the coastline.

Yet it might be more reasonable to associate the destruction of Truls Hoj with the older construction projects that apparently were carried out closer to the monument. South of the existing port, the coastline turns to the southeast, forming a shallow bay, about a kilometre long. The bay ends at what is called Tjyvahamn-sören (thief-harbour pier), which was a broad *stenör* (pier) built with large and small stones reaching far out into the water. It was probably used in connection with fishing. It was destroyed when the nuclear power plant was built at the location. South of this bay, there is a broader bay known as Saltviken (Figs. 1 and 2). The coastline here bears the name Tjyvakrogen (thief inn) where Truls Hoj is located. Here, a number of stone piers existed. One of these was called Stendyssen (stone dolmen) (Sjöstedt 1951). The names Tjyvahamn-sören and Tjyvakrogen can probably be traced back to the illegal trade that was apparently conducted here. A decree of 1521, issued by King Christian II, testifies to this. It prohibits any kind of »købmands-skaft bedriff« (merchant activity). Barsebäck was declared an »ulegelig haffn« (illegal harbour) (Holmberg 1972, 36). The decree is also an indication that the stone piers may have an age of several hundred years. Truls Hoj is very close to the stone piers, which then were built long before the 1800s (Sjöstedt 1951). Remains from several of these stone piers are found along the coast today. During a field inspection, we could observe five that are more or less preserved. The westernmost preserved stone pier protrudes 25 m into the sea, located about 500 m southwest of Truls Hoj (Fig. 25 and Fig. 26). Particularly interesting was that on one of the stones, a block of about 1 m in diameter,



Fig. 26. The boulder with cup marks and Truls Hoj.



Fig. 27. The boulder with cup marks.



Fig. 28. Cup mark 1. Viewed from the north.



Fig. 29. Cup mark 2.
 Viewed from the north.

there were two suspected cup marks. These marks were about 5 cm in diameter, circular and clearly carved into the block (Fig. 27, Fig. 28 and Fig. 29). The block has been chipped so that its original size cannot be judged. It is very tempting to think that this stone was one of the blocks in the chamber at Truls Hoj. Carvings on megalithic blocks are known from several locations (Tilley 1999). A reasonable assumption is that the monument was regarded as an asset in a relatively stone-poor landscape and the stones were removed when needed, for instance, to build stone piers along the coast. Truls Hoj probably disappeared in connection with the construction of these piers and perhaps one of the chamber blocks is still out there in the water today¹.

¹ English revised by Alan Crozier and the editorial staff.

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