European Megalithic Studies Group Meeting, 13th to 15th of May 2010 in Kiel, Germany

Megaliths and Identities
Abstracts
MATERIALITY AND SIGNIFICANCE

Colin Richards, Wrapping in stone: rethinking megalithic architecture
In 2002 a paper was published in Antiquity by James Whitley entitled ‘Too many ancestors’, in this paper scholars studying the British Neolithic were criticized for the ubiquitous nature of “ancestors” in interpretative accounts of this period. In this paper I wish to re-address his concerns by examining the way differing relationships between late Neolithic people, ancestors and deities were materialized within monumental architecture. This will include a number of typologically different monuments, e.g. passage graves, stone circles, henge monuments. It will further be suggested that particular relationships bring specific concepts of spatial order. As a heuristic I will invoke the idea of ‘wrapping’ to consider late Neolithic architecture, art and materiality in a slightly different way, this approach will also allow me to relate different areas of evidence which have previously been considered disparate. Importantly, it also highlights boundaries, membranes and interfaces and the transformation incurred through their transgression.

Serge Cassen, Measuring distinction in the megalithic architecture of the Carnac region: from sign to material
La mesure de la distinction au sein des architectures carnacéennes, du signe à la matière. Barely two centuries after the appearance of the first recorded elements that define the Neolithic period in the west of France (towards 4900 cal BC) – that is, new kinds of domestic building, the cultivation of cereals, the manufacture of pottery, the nature of the flint technology, etc., all reflecting the norms of the Paris Basin Neolithic – the southern shores of Brittany suddenly and unexpectedly became a centre of social innovation among the last hunter-gatherer communities. The invention of an extremely inegalitarian social system is reflected in the construction of architectures that were to be unique in Europe at that time. These colossal material achievements consist not only of funerary and non-funerary («symbolic») monuments, associated with the most extraordinary accumulations of rare and distant materials (alpine jade, iberian turquoise and fibrolite), but also of new representations of the world as interpreted by these people. These carvings on massive standing stones are also visible marks of a divided society.

Between these extremes – from sign to material – this communication will set out to assess the nature and extent of the distinction inside this élite, a distinction that can also be discerned between this regional phenomenon and contemporary architecture, and with what came afterwards, inside this protean entity that we call megalithism.

Timothy Darvill, Megaliths, Monuments, and Materiality
Stone, and especially the arrangement of large stones in relation to one another, has long been the focus of attention in megalith studies, a concern reflected in the name itself. It is, however, a blinkered view. Many so-called megalithic monuments embody many other materials in their construction, including soil, turf, and timber. In considering long barrows, Paul Ashbee noted that it was a false distinction to separate earthen long barrows from stone-chambered long barrows as the builders of long barrows inevitably used materials available within their local environments. Writing mainly about the Irish material, Arthur ApSimon suggested that some sites show a development from timber to stone and there may be a chronological consideration to the preferred use of materials. Whether environmental or evolutionary, it is certain that many monuments interchangeably combine stone and wood in their construction in a way that forces us to consider what these materials meant to the megalith builders. Was it simply about what was available? Or what was fashionable? Or were there deeper sets of meanings relating to how the materials themselves were perceived and understood within the cosmological systems that lie behind the design, construction, and use of long barrows, passage graves, dolmens and other related monuments? Focusing upon wood and stone, it is argued here that both were
components of a cyclical world view of life and death that was embedded in the fabric and structure of monuments.

Doris Mischka, Flintbek La 3 – biography of a monument
In 1975 a burial ground was discovered at Flintbek and excavated from 1977 to 1996 almost completely. Almost half of the 84 sites can be dated to the Neolithic. The sites are aligned more or less linear along a moraine ridge in an area well limited by the river Eider and several swamps. Flintbek is mainly known for its early cart tracks underneath the longbarrow Flintbek La 3. In the presented paper I will focus on one of the prehistoric sites of the Flintbek graveyard only, the site Flintbek La 3. It reflects a long history of building, using and manipulating a burial place in the landscape. The quality of research results to be expected for the whole cemetery of Flintbek can be demonstrated at this special site. As a case study concerning the temporal and spatial sequences of manipulations at the Flintbek sites, it provides a basis for the analysis of the landscape perception in the course of prehistory.

MEGALITHS AND SOCIAL SYSTEMS

Johannes Müller, Social space and megaliths: the construction of identities and contradictions
In the course of TRB, construction and use of monuments were quite different: spatial ordering, relation between single graves and megaliths, and the transition of material culture reflect different social phases of these horti- and agricultural communities. Both the speed of transitions as well as the change of symbolic meaning might be explained by a model of social change, for which both the creation of identities as well as the development of contradictions were important.

Jan Albert Bakker, Is a social differentiation detectable in the TRB culture?
Although the TRB culture is uniform in its diversity, none of its aspects displays a distinct social differentiation, whether in the distribution of pottery forms and decoration, or in the contents of flat and megalithic graves. I will do my best to answer the question “Is a social differentiation detectable in the TRB culture?”, which also figures in the title of the DFG Schwerpunkt-program “Early Monumentality and Social Differentiation”. Most of my experience is based on the TRB West Group, which is found to the west of the Elbe, but I think that things are no different in the TRB North Group in Schleswig-Holstein, Denmark and southern Sweden. I’ll give a tour d’horizon of different relevant aspects of the material remains of the TRB culture.

Magdalena S. Midgley, Who was who in the Neolithic?
Death was no great leveller in the TRB. Prominent ancestors reposed in solitude under huge earthen mounds or shared stone chambers with select members of their community. Others were buried in flat graves, settlement pits or otherwise obscured from view – clearly relegated to future oblivion and known to us only through accidents of archaeological discovery. I will explore these apparent differences – can we account for such varying treatment of individuals who apparently belonged to the same community, shared the same daily life, followed the same cultural traditions and espoused the same world views?

Martin Hinz, Who for whom? Ritual architecture in the light of the related population
This paper tries to address what group of the neolithic society erected the megalithic collective burials and which group is the recipient of the message if these monuments are understood as an act of communication. There are good indications to assume that the development of collective burial tradition is connected with a rising complexity of society. The background is model which supposes that before the development of collective burial tradition the society of the living (the village) where the core and atomic element of collective identity. The collective burials reflects a shift in that, ancestry became more important and society were organised according to kinship.
The later reappearance of single graves are of different character, attributing single individuals with signs of status not only because of their biological characteristics (sex, age) but according to their social qualities.

Predictions from that model would be:
- more than one grave is contemporaneous per settlement unit
- needed workforce for a grave is not much more than one settlement unit could deliver
- there are kinship relations between the buried individuals
- graves are not acting as territorial markers between different settlement units
- the composition of the buried collective comparable to a living society

These predictions are tested on different case studies from the distribution area of the funnelbeaker ceramics. The proxies for that could be the distribution of grave goods inside and outside of the graves (remains of the ritual activities), the location of the graves themselves, the workforce needed to erect them and the demographic composition of the buried individuals.

With investigations of the situation in the Wartberg Group in connection with other reference areas it is possible to show that these predictions are fulfilled. In addition to that a agent based computer simulation based on the anthropological data from megalithic graves from the North group shed light on the associated living society of those graves. With this the paper tries to reflect on the character and social significance of the megalithic architecture for the associated population.

**MEGALITHS: FORM, SPACE AND IDENTITIES**

*Chris Scarre, Stone people: monuments and identities in the Channel Islands*

This paper deals with two intersecting issues of identity: the special identity of communities living on the Channel Islands off the coast of northwest France in the 5th and 4th millennia BC, as expressed through monuments and material culture; and the identity that seems to have been attributed to the megalithic blocks of stone incorporated in those monuments. Insular identity is a well-worn theme but in the case of the Channel Island monuments leads directly to questions concerning the particular character of blocks shaped or carved with human characteristics. The Câtel statue-menhir of Guernsey provides the starting point for consideration of the relationship of this unequivocally anthropomorphic representation to the disembodied female breasts found in chambered tombs of mainland France. The paper also discusses how the megalithic monuments of the Channel Islands are both comparable to yet different from those of adjacent regions, a circumstance that emphasises how these and similar island groups may have been places of encounter but also of communities expressing specific social and cultural identities.

*Luc Laporte, Innate and/or Expressed Identities: Their Conceptualisation through Monumentality, Funerary Practices and Grave Goods? Some Examples from the Megalithic Tradition of Western France*

*Identités intrinsèques et/ou affichées: Du projet architectural au mobilier déposé dans les tombes? Quelques exemples dans le mégalithisme de la façade atlantique de la France*

Identity is not unicity – The notion of identity has sometimes been implicitly likened to methodology of classification, which applies to prehistorian’s work in order to better position the subject of his research in time and space, like to be able to compare what has to be compared. Naming each element of each of these classifications indeed already amounts to vest them with an identity. The interconnection of classifications of distinct subjects (e.g. the evolution of funerary architecture and of material culture) is supposed to give a dimension to these identities, shared by the human groups involved in the past. This is, on the other hand, debatable. Concerning megalithism in Western France, a model of unilinear development has now prevailed for about fifteen years, drawing a parallel between the classification of architectures – though often criticised – and what appeared to be new suggestions concerning the periodisation of material culture. Well in advance, it has been pointed out that this model struggles in accounting for the entire diversity of the observed facts. Therefore, one has to accept the idea of multiplicity.
of identities or of multifaceted identities, sometimes coexisting within the same place. As a working hypothesis, one may consider that this is partly owing to the particular location of this part of the Atlantic façade where the two great trends – continental and mediterranean – performing the neolithization of Europe, have met at the beginning of the 5th millennium before the Current Era.

Innate and expressed identities – This taken as a basis, technological approach assumes that all material implementation realized by men – beyond functional constraints and specificities – bears a part of innate identity resulting from the manner in which the operational sequences, whether simple or complex, are set up. At the same time, all these implementations materialise a conceptual standard to which expressed identity values are often attributed. Concerning megalithism, one will rather speak of a construction site in the first case, of an architectural project in the second. Unless considering that in the past, the part of labour invested into this task was not always freely agreed upon by everyone, each actor has undoubtedly put a part of his identities into the construction of such monuments. On the construction site, some examples as those of Champs-Châlon C or of Péré C à Prissé-la-Charrière (France), primarily suggest segmented organization of the working teams. In parallel, both the commitment of specialists and the scope of the project suggest perfect coordination (which in the minds of archaeologists, probably even more so than in the ones of ethnologists, is often related to the notion of institutional social hierarchy).

Construction of identities - The assertion of the existence of thoroughly designed and pre-planned architectural projects, is not insignificant concerning what is frequently still perceived to be «primitive» architectures. This does not prejudice the manner in which they could be in addition involved in complex ceremonial aspects. Amongst the numerous conceptual standards whose entire diversity we only just start to perceive in the megalithism of Western France, a very elongated trapeze-shaped plan lined by two lateral quarries is valorised. According to a general proposal hardly new in itself, this standard is not without recalling the plan of the Danubian house. At Souc'h (Finistère) and at Prissé-la-Charrière (Deux-Sèvres), the realization of such architectural projects seems to close a cycle of successive incorporations, at least locally. In both cases, they hardly take place before the end of the 5th millennium before the Current Era. A little bit as if at the moment when the incorporation process was tentatively completed, the need to express and to claim the identity of a prestigious but overall distant ancestry would have been all the more felt.

Richard Bradley, Passage graves, statues and standing stones: megaliths and social identities in prehistoric Scotland and Ireland

This paper contrasts two ways of thinking about the passage graves of Scotland and Ireland and the relationships between them. The first considers their characteristic structure in terms of architectural style, chronology and distribution. It seems that these features are closely integrated with one another, and in the past this method has led to the idea that the people who built the monuments formed part of a single network. That approach has much in common with Childe’s conception of a culture. For many years it was employed in discussion of monuments on either side of the Irish Sea. Recent fieldwork has severed some of these links. The architectural connections were not as strong as they appeared in the past and were based on the ground plans of individual sites rather than the techniques by which they were built. Structures which had been compared directly with one another were erected at different times over a thousand years, and some of them share features with other buildings that are not megalithic tombs. Should the apparent connections between Scotland and Ireland be discounted?

An alternative approach is to consider the meanings that could have been attached to particular structural devices. The feature that connects many of these monuments is the use of standing stones, either as components of the kerb delimiting a cairn, or as a ring of freestanding orthostats enclosing the other elements. These stone settings are rarely discussed, but comparison with the evidence from other parts of Atlantic Europe suggests that they could have been regarded as
statues, even though they lack obvious anthropomorphic elements. The same idea is present in British and Irish folklore. It raises the possibility that there were conceptual links between these different styles of architecture and that they lasted over a considerable period of time, during which individual sites were modified and reused. Thus the factor that links these different monuments may have been the idea that rings of upright stones stood for living creatures. Whether they ‘represented’ particular figures in the past, ancestors or mythical beings we shall never know, but the use of these images on both sides of the Irish Sea could have fostered a shared identity among the people who used these monuments.

Martin Furholt, The Megaliths of Northern Europe: Packages of Form, Meanings and Identities?
Especially in the newer German research on megaliths Jan Assmann’s concept of Cultural Memories has repeatedly been applied to understand the social significance of these Monuments. Although the concept has been developed from the Near Eastern early state societies, it seems to be well applicable to illiterate societies like the Neolithic of northern central Europe/southern Scandinavia. It also goes well along with Trevor Watkins thesis of the significance of external symbolic storage as a marker of early sedentary cultural behaviour. Beside the economic, technical and social innovations separating Neolithic cultural behaviour from Pre-Neolithic societies, a new state of the manipulation of material objects and structures as media of symbolic communication could be identified for most Neolithic societies of the old world. Since the Neolithic, the proportion of intentional production and use of material symbols by far dominates over unintentional symbol production.

Taking these observations serious, the early Neolithic period in northern central Europe/southern Scandinavia, that is the time from 4100 to 3500 BC is more or less the continuation of Pre-Neolithic behavioural patterns. In this time Neolithic innovations are known and implemented, but not yet in a quantity that would affectively change the cultural behaviour towards what have been defined as Neolithic earlier.

It is probably not earlier than 3500 BC that a real “Neolithic Package” consisting of large-scale monumental buildings storing Cultural Memories, an extensive and genuine variability in material culture symbolism, especially pottery and flint tool production, representing Communicative Memories come along together with a clear rise of economic impacts and supra-regional contacts.

Whether or not these innovations should really be conceptualised as a “package” it may be argued that after 3500 BC the amount of changes in behavioural patterns would justify to postulate the creation of new, Neolithic, personal identities. The nature of collective identities in this period shows a high complexity, as the new, more intentional treatment of material culture allow a better identification of different layers of identity. These may have existed before, too, but they have not been expressed by an intentional use of material culture as a medium of symbolic storage.

Kerstin Schierhold, The Gallery Graves of Hesse and Westphalia: Expressions of Identity (ies)?
The concept of identity, in many aspects, has been intensively discussed for several years for its applicability in prehistoric archaeology. In this paper, I would like to try to take up some of them with reference to the late Neolithic gallery graves of Hesse and Westphalia. Some selected aspects are examined to enlighten distinct scales of identity: a structural analysis of building techniques, deposition of grave goods and burial rites together with their spatial distribution offers comparisons to coexistent neighbouring communities with collective burials. These comparisons finally may point out identity-forming features.
Constanze Rassmann, Identities overseas? The Long Barrows in Denmark and Britain
Neolithic scholars have debated the significance of similarities between British and south Scandinavian ceramic styles and burial methods for over 70 years. The close parallels in design and practice between these two geographically-distant areas have often been interpreted as the result of both direct and indirect contact and exchange. This paper engages with the central issue of this debate by looking at contact and identity by means of non-megalithic long barrows. Can these structures be understood as a medium through which interactions were negotiated? Could they have been the means of articulating a shared “overseas” identity? In this paper, the various and sundry criteria associated with non-megalithic long barrows (i.e. barrow construction, grave design, grave goods, ritual practices) are qualitatively and quantitatively analyzed. The object is not only to assess the levels of similarity betwixt and between these various criteria, but also to determine if those selfsame categories can be combined in such a way as to make a British/south Scandinavian collective identity a viable focus for academic pursuit.

Luise Lorenz, Shape and ornamentation of ceramics from early neolithic north-eastern Germany seen as references to identities and communication
Between 1964 and 1970 rich material from 106 megaliths in north eastern Germany was excavated and published. Today this material still is a good object of investigation for large-scale comparisons of ceramic styles in this area. Which consequences for identities and communication structures can be drawn from the shape and rich ornamentation of early neolithic ceramics?
Niklas Luhmann’s concept of the structural coupling of consciousness and communication helps to analyze both aspects. He affirms, that communication and consciousness are separated, autopoietic systems, that are coupled for example by language, writing or material culture. While the self-consciousness of prehistoric human beings seems to be hard to catch, communication structures can be reconstructed by analyzing the similarities of material culture. From these communication structures conclusions to the identities of early neolithic persons or groups can be drawn.
In this paper similarities in shape and ornamentation of ceramics are seen as symptoms for early neolithic communication. Using the example of north eastern Germany this paper will show ways to explain communication structures and draw conclusions to identities in this region based on an analysis of shape and ornamentation of ceramic artefacts from megalithic tombs and contemporaneous settlements.

MONEUMENTS AND LANDSCAPES

Knut Rassmann, Georg Schafferer, Social Identities and the Architecture of Megalithic graves in North-Eastern Germany
The research module “Areas of Tradition” is part of the project “Population Density, Communication Structures and Areas of Tradition in the Funnel Beaker Culture” of the Joint Research Programme 1400 “Early Monumentality and Social Differentiation”. This project encompasses the linking of proxy data and of research strategies between the micro- and mesoscale projects. In a further step it delivers a comprehensive synthesis of this data on the macro scale.
The starting point for our presentation is a case study in north-eastern Germany reconstructing socio-political territories in the Middle Neolithic. To evaluate the quality of our model and for a comprehensive understanding of the landscape, a diachronological reconstruction of socio-political territories from the medieval period to the Middle Neolithic was undertaken. A rich archaeological data set provided the basis for our analysis. Drawing on more than 13,000 sites of the Slavonic period and on written sources we were able to localize the settlement areas of
Slavonic tribes. For comparison with this pattern we reconstructed socio-political territories for the Roman Period, Iron Age, Bronze Age, Late Neolithic and Middle Neolithic.

The settlement areas of the Middle Neolithic were compared with the regional distribution of specific types of megalithic architecture. The key issue is whether these patterns reflect chronological, chorological or social phenomena in north-eastern Central Europe, and whether they can be recognised in the other regions as well.

On the one hand it is possible that the regional patterns of megalithic architecture reflect the recognition and usage of landscape in prehistoric times, on the other hand they could be a physical and symbolic manifestation of social and political groups. Based on an approach employing a GIS-linked database and the application of geostatistical analyses, it is now possible to combine the different kinds of relevant data. This enables us to detect the diverse patterns in the usage of the various architectural features in the landscape, the chronological depth of this phenomenon, and the social processes and structures behind it.

Anselm Drafehn, Friedrich Lüth, Sabrina Reichler, Megaliths in North-Eastern Germany

The projects „Early Monumentality and Social Differentiation in Western Mecklenburg” and “Megalith-Landscape in Southeast-Rugia” are, together with 16 further projects, part of the DFG Joint Research Programme/Research Cluster 1400 (SPP 1400). This analyses the emergence of Funnel Beaker monuments (megaliths, enclosures) with reference to key areas.

The research area covers western Mecklenburg. The first key area, which was surveyed in fieldwork, is located southeast of Schwerin. The starting point for the analysis is the early Neolithic flat cemetery of Ostorf-Tannenwerder, located on a small island in the southern part of Schwerin in the lake "Ostorfer See". A recent interdisciplinary project using scientific methods identified the society buried here as one of hunter-gatherer-fishers, an interpretation which is supported by a typological analysis of the finds from the site. The question of the relationship between this "traditional" society and the coexistent megalithic tombs and enclosures can only be answered by the application of geostatistics, for example through the reconstruction of land use or of the local exchange network.

The island Rügen (Rugia), the second key area, is located in the Baltic Sea off the coast of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and, with an area of 926 sqkm, is Germany’s largest island. Rügen is characterized by a heavily structured landscape and rich archaeological material. The southeast of the island reveals a particularly strong concentration of megalithic tombs.

Using historical maps it is possible to localize some 200 tombs which have since vanished. The fact that only 54 monuments are visible today emphatically highlights the disproportion of surviving to vanished megaliths. The project aims to reconstruct ritual landscapes and settlement patterns based on the application of spatial analysis, taking into account this disproportion.

Within these projects, the relationship between megalithic tombs, settlements and other find categories within a clearly defined area will be analysed. Areas of settlement and burial sites will be determined, and potential relationships evaluated employing a landscape-archaeological approach.

Daan Raemaekers, All quiet on the western front? Current affairs of Dutch TRB research

The lecture will explore the potential of research on social identity of Dutch TRB groups by first describing the dataset available for research. Key issues are the poor preservation of soil features leading to a near absence of settlement remains and long standing research focus on research of megalithic tombs. The Dutch has been to focus on the interior of the tombs leaving us with little information on (ritual) activities near the tombs. A second characteristic of Dutch TRB is the enormous amount of pottery in the tombs. On the one hand this has prohibited full-scale publications, but on the other hand it is a great starting point for analyses concerning the social groups that used the tombs using the concept of micro tradition. A recently developed third research characteristic is the incorporation of microscopic use wear analysis of various flint objects from both tombs and depots.
Michael Parker Pearson, Builders and burials at Stonehenge
The identity of the people who built Stonehenge has long been a mystery. Were they Mediterranean or Egyptian architects directing local barbarians? Were they local chieftains mobilizing the labour of their Wessex polities? Were they egalitarian tribesmen driven by religious fervour? Or were they ancient British astronomer-priests using their powers of astronomical prediction to inspire their workforce?

New research is demonstrating that the hundreds of people buried at Stonehenge were drawn from a restricted section of society. New evidence of labour organisation in constructing the large henge enclosures of the mid-third millennium BC is also casting light on the working relationships of the Stonehenge community. Finally, isotopic studies of both people and animals are providing indications of mobility and origins of the people of Stonehenge and their herds.

Research since 2003 has provided a context for Stonehenge in relation to its local landscape of stone circles, timber circles, henges and other monuments. It is now possible to understand the development of Stonehenge between 3000 and 2500 BC in terms of distinctly British trends in funerary practices, domestic architecture, geometrical design and timber monumentality.

Muiris O'Sullivan, Megalithic Tombs and Storied Landscapes in Neolithic Ireland
This paper is concerned with the social landscapes underlying the megalithic tradition of the Irish Neolithic. The importance of place is now well established as a significant factor in the distribution of megalithic tombs at a local level as well as the original source of material from which they were built. At one level those places could be seen as a backdrop to the megalithic tomb; at another they could be seen as the reason for its construction or an intrinsic element of the construction ritual; and above all they are places for which emerging diachronic narratives envisage the ultimate form and use of the megalithic tomb as the culmination of earlier ritual interactions. Here I am concerned with the Neolithic mythologies that might have given meaning to ancient landscapes. Although the specific mythical personalities and events that transmitted the meaning of places from generation to generation in deep prehistory are now lost to us, we can nevertheless hope to identify the stages on which such dramas were presented and the landscape props that might have been especially relevant. The paper draws on analogies from proto-prehistoric Ireland and examines a small number of Neolithic case studies in some detail.

Alison Sheridan, New insights into Scotland's megalithic (and non-megalithic) funerary monuments
The last decade has seen a significant advance in our understanding of Scottish Neolithic funerary monuments, thanks to a combination of new discoveries, programmes of radiocarbon dating, isotopic and osteological analysis of human remains and a re-evaluation of the monuments within the context of broader European developments. This contribution will summarise our current state of knowledge and explore the insights that it offers into Neolithic cosmology and society.

Niels H. Andersen, Causewayed enclosures and megalithic monuments as a medium for shaping Neolithic identities
In Denmark, it seems acceptance of a Neolithic way of life was hastened by period of two hundred years, between 3400 and 3200 cal BC, characterised by the building of megalithic tombs and causewayed enclosures plus the performance of many rituals in association with these. Almost at the same time we see the introduction of the ard. This must have required great efforts in clearing arable areas of trees and stones, conferring a greater value on the fields and also the potential for better production. In the first half of the 4th millennium BC only slight traces of a Neolithic lifestyle are evident in a world still dominated by Mesolithic ways, but with new types of ceramics (the funnel beaker), polished flint axes and the first monumental tombs – the un-chambered long barrows.

In the Sarup area on SW Funen, hundreds of people from a large area must have been involved in building the causewayed enclosures. Originally, these were only used for a single activity, with
large quantities of diverse materials being treated here in a special manner, often including burning and fragmentation. Most of the activities took place in front of the palisade – at Sarup I - and in the ditches. The ditches have perhaps something to do with the group identities. However, after a short while, perhaps after only one large gathering, the sites were abandoned and left to decay. The aim of these activities was perhaps not the result, the construction, but the fact that hundreds of people from many different groups worked together and built up a very strong network which provided the conditions for a calm acceptance of the Neolithic way of life. Every single group of, for example, ditches was united in the great overall layout of the enclosure.

Contemporary with the construction of the enclosures, many megalithic tombs were built. In the Sarup area, these megalithic tombs are often found in clusters. Where these have been investigated, a pattern emerges in the preserved clusters showing a development from simple monuments, a type of un-chambered long barrows, to more elaborate types of monuments, as dolmens and passage graves. Perhaps the same group came back once in each generation to build a new monument at the same spot?

Material arising from the original burial of a whole corpse has yet to be found in a megalithic monument. In this first period with the building of megalithic tombs and enclosures it seems that corpses were treated in a special way by fragmentation, burning and placement at different locations, such as in ditches, by the palisades, in pits and perhaps in megalithic monuments. At the same time, by the megalithic tombs and the enclosures, there was special treatment of other materials such as the ceramics. It was during this very period, between 3400 and 3200 cal BC, that there was very elaborate ornamentation of ceramic vessels. This ornamentation must have incorporated numerous codes relating to identity etc. It is of particular interest that the ceramics are found in the same state as the skeletal material, flint axes, grinding stones, querns and grain.

After a further two to three hundred years, by 3100 cal BC, everything had changed. Now there was a calmer period with no building of enclosures and megalithic structures, but with much reuse of these monuments. The ornamentation on the ceramics is less rich which means they perhaps did not have to communicate such a strong message with their designs. The many activities involving fragmentation of materials seem also to have ceased. Data from pollen analysis give the impression of a stable time in the landscape. Perhaps this was a period of greater harmony with nature. In the Sarup area, people now lived in one large settlement on the Sarup site itself. This settlement covered an area of 4ha, in contrast to the “ritualised” period when people lived in many small settlements.

The numerous building activities and rituals which took place in the period between 3500 and 3200 cal BC must have been the medium by which people at last managed to accept the Neolithic way of life; a way of life which continued, with minor changes, until the middle of the 19th century AD.

Karl-Göran Sjögren, Megaliths, Landscapes and Identities: the case of Falbygden, Sweden

Today, about 455 dolmens and passage graves are known in Sweden. These tombs were built in a short and intense period, c. 3300-3000 BC cal, in the cultural setting of the Funnel Beaker (TRB) culture.

The tombs occur in two distinct types of landscape. In Scania, Halland and Bohuslän, they are found close to the coast. Especially in Bohuslän they are very close to the Neolithic shoreline and have been built in a rocky archipelago, in a strongly marine environment.

The second and larger group of tombs is found in the inland area of Falbygden in Västergötland. Here, a remarkable concentration of at least 255 tombs coincides with one of the very few places in the region where bedrock consists of limestone and slate instead of Precambrian rocks.

Spatial patterns are discernible in Falbygden but not very clearly in Bohuslän. In Falbygden, the tombs are closely spaced, occur in clusters or groups of 5-15 tombs, and tend towards regular spacing within the groups. Also, the largest tombs tend to occur in the centre of the area, for instance in Karleby, where several of the largest tombs are found. In Bohuslän, tombs are much more widely scattered and usually occur in pairs or in small groups of 3-4 tombs.
In this contribution, I will discuss the spatial patterns in the Falbygden landscape at different spatial levels, and whether the spatial patterns are also discernible in other variables, such as tomb or pottery typology. I will also touch upon the relations between Falbygden and surrounding non-megalithic regions as visible in ongoing isotope studies.

**Bettina Schulz Paulsson, Islands in the sun: genesis, diffusion and the significance of megaliths within the insular societies of Corse, Sardinia and Malta**

On Sardinia, Corsica and Malta, two distinct trajectories of monumental proliferation appear to exist. On Sardinia and Corsica Megaliths develop with small dolmen within necropolises around 4300 BC. This evolution happened most probably independently from a contemporaneous but different development in North West France. On Malta on the contrary the earliest monuments are represented by ritual buildings or central places with no function as funeral sites. The last year’s radiocarbon dates are helping to untangle the nuances of the differences for the beginning of megaliths in these regions and with an interpretative Bayesian statistical framework it is possible to define these origins even more. The paper gives a description of different scenarios for the genesis and the developing of the different kind of megaliths and megalith societies on these three relatively isolated islands. It is as well a theoretical approach towards a socio-archaeological interpretation of the monumentalisation of landscapes from prehistoric societies as a part of their memory culture.

**Philippe Chambon/Aline Thomas, The first monumental cemeteries of Western Europe: the "Passy type" necropolis in the Paris Basin towards 4500 BC**

The Seine-Yonne basin around 4500 B.C. sees a flourishing of cemeteries including giant “enclosures” that would not be equalled thereafter by any other funerary manifestation in Europe. These constructions sometimes exceed 300 m in length but contain very few burials. Beyond the classic interpretation, correlating a high investment devoted to a few individuals with a hierarchical society, a structural analysis reveals the repetition of a basic module, associated with consistent attributes, which evoke hunting and more broadly, the wild world. An exercise of association and exclusion brings into play the morphology and arrangements of the monuments, the gender of the individuals and their attributes. A central figure is thus distinguished, accompanied by an enigmatic insignia, trivially called an “Eiffel Tower”. This figure is surrounded by other individuals interpreted as hunters. Few individuals may served as no more than passive figurants. In any case, these monumental cemeteries correspond to the earliest human groups for whom we can identify diverse and repetitive statuses.

**Sarah Diers, Megalithic Landscape Altmark: Human-environmental interactions as seen in current pollen diagrams**

How did the first farmers in the Western Altmark (Saxony-Anhalt, Germany), the funnel beaker societies, interact with and change their environment? Pollen records from fens and bogs of different size in small river valleys provide insight into the vegetation history of the region. The aim of the palynological investigations is to reconstruct the environmental history of a micro region throughout the funnel beaker period in comparison to its surrounding and other TRB settlement areas. Recent results deriving from a multidisciplinary project will be presented. Special emphasis is laid on the potentiality of visibility of megalithic tombs.

**Denis Demnick, Megalithic Landscape Altmark: Excavations of the megalithic-graves Lüdelsen 3 and 6 and new results and perspectives of Altmark-Tiefstich-Group**

The aim of the project is to reconstruct the funnel beaker environment and landscape in the Altmark micro-region. Two megalithic graves, Lüdelsen 3 and 6, were excavated during a three-month campaign from July until October in 2007 and 2009. For the first time in this region, this gives the opportunity to directly analyse and compare two architecturally and probably temporally distinct grave types using modern methods of analysis.
Since 1980 there has been no re-evaluation of the typology and chronology of the Altmark-Tiefstich-Group Pottery on the basis of more recent excavations in the Altmark. Can we still confirm the Phases Düsedau and Haldensleben today or is it necessary to extend the existing concepts of time and phasing? In conjunction with the excavations of Lüdelsen 3 and 6 the typology and chronology of the Altmark-Tiefstich-Group Pottery will be analyzed and discussed. Both aspects together may show us change or continuity in local and regional Identities in the time of the funnel beaker culture in the Altmark-Region.