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Abstract

(*Alvastra Pile Dwelling: The 1976–1980 Excavations. The Western Trench.*) The western trench is one of four main trenches from the 1976–1980 excavations of the Alvastra pile dwelling in Östergötland. In the 12 m² trench two horizontal log floors were exposed, separated by a row of closely spaced piles.

A chorological analysis of stumps and branches of *Salix*, identified to species and age, which were scattered over the burnt floor surfaces, supports the previously published dendrochronology, and three phases of events are distinguished when the floors are matched against each other.

Through analysis of 28 not hitherto presented radiocarbon datings of human bones, together with the 19 previously published datings of plant material, the site of the pile dwelling can be assumed to have had a much longer period of use – almost the whole of the MN A – than previously assumed.

The find material differs noticeably from that in the eastern part of the pile dwelling in that it contains a large proportion of burnt flint, plenty of Funnel Beaker-influenced pottery, hardly any classical Pitted Ware pottery, and a great deal of human bone – mostly burnt.

Among the human bones there were at least three distinct patterns, which are interpreted as expressions of secondary burial being practised throughout the period of use. The burial ceremonies appear to have been most intensive in the latter part of the MN A.

The relation of the pile dwelling to the nearby megalithic grave is tested by considering two different suggested interpretations.

Keywords

Broby, Alvastra Pile Dwelling, Sweden, wetland, building structures, *Salix* stumps and branches, stratigraphy, dendrochronology, artefacts, ecofacts, Funnel Beaker culture, Pitted Ware culture, early Middle Neolithic, sacrifices, burial practices, megaliths.

Utgivare

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Omslagsbild fram: Påraden i Västra schaktet under framgrävning. Foto: Hans Browall.

Omslagsbild bak: Författaren. Foto: Andrea Browall.

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