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The Nabberör dogs - social significance of dogs in South Scandinavian Late Iron Age

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The Nabberör dogs - social significance of dogs in South Scandinavian Late Iron Age

HIGHLIGHTS IN ARTICLE: OLA MAGNELL, ELISABETH IREGREN, KRISTINA JENNBERT

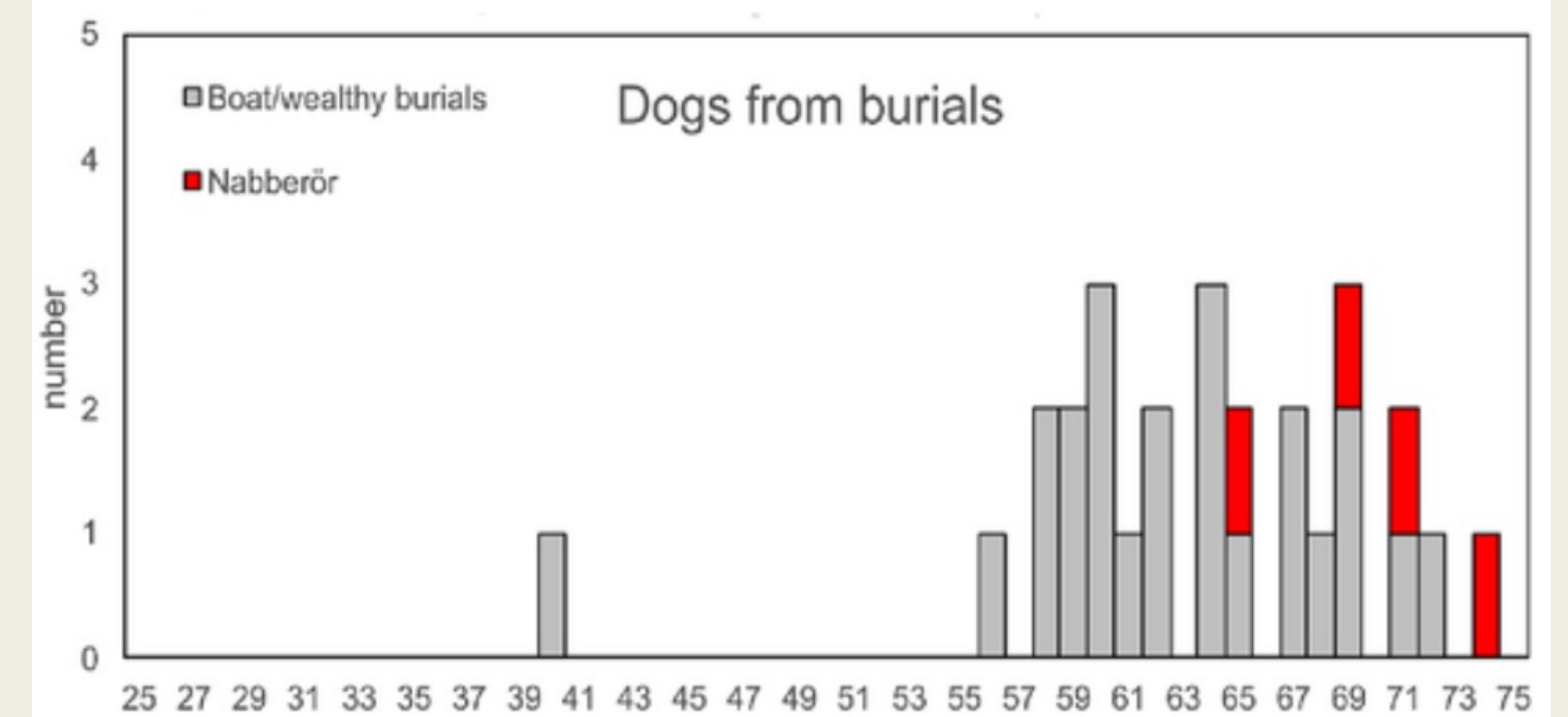
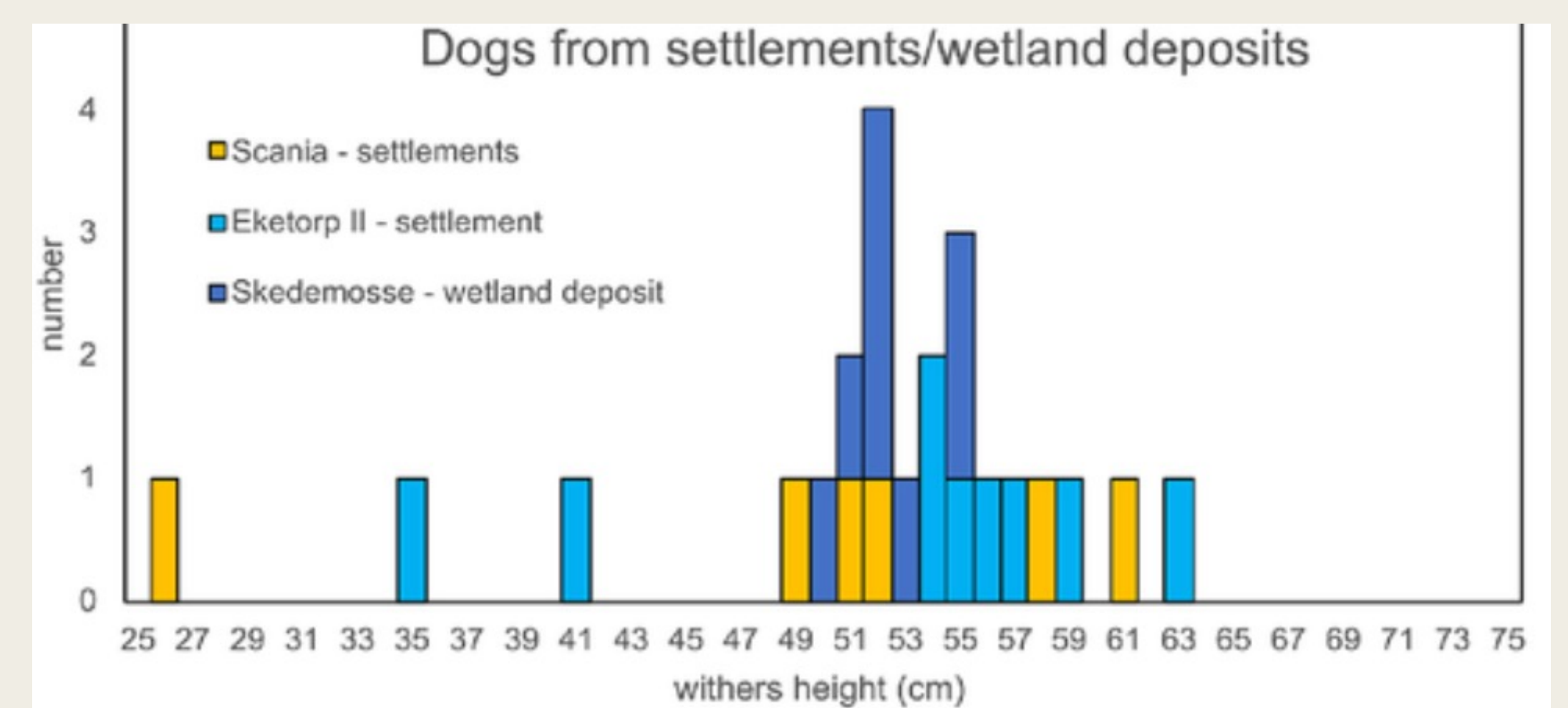
BREEDING, FEEDING AND MOBILITY AMONG DOGS IN THE ELITE IN THE MEROVINGIAN PERIOD - ANALYSIS OF DOGS IN THE BOAT GRAVE NABBERÖR, ÖLAND, SWEDEN

JOURNAL OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SCIENCE: REPORTS, PUBLISHED JUNE 2024, [HTTPS://DOI.ORG/10.1016/J.JASREP.2024.104558](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jasrep.2024.104558)

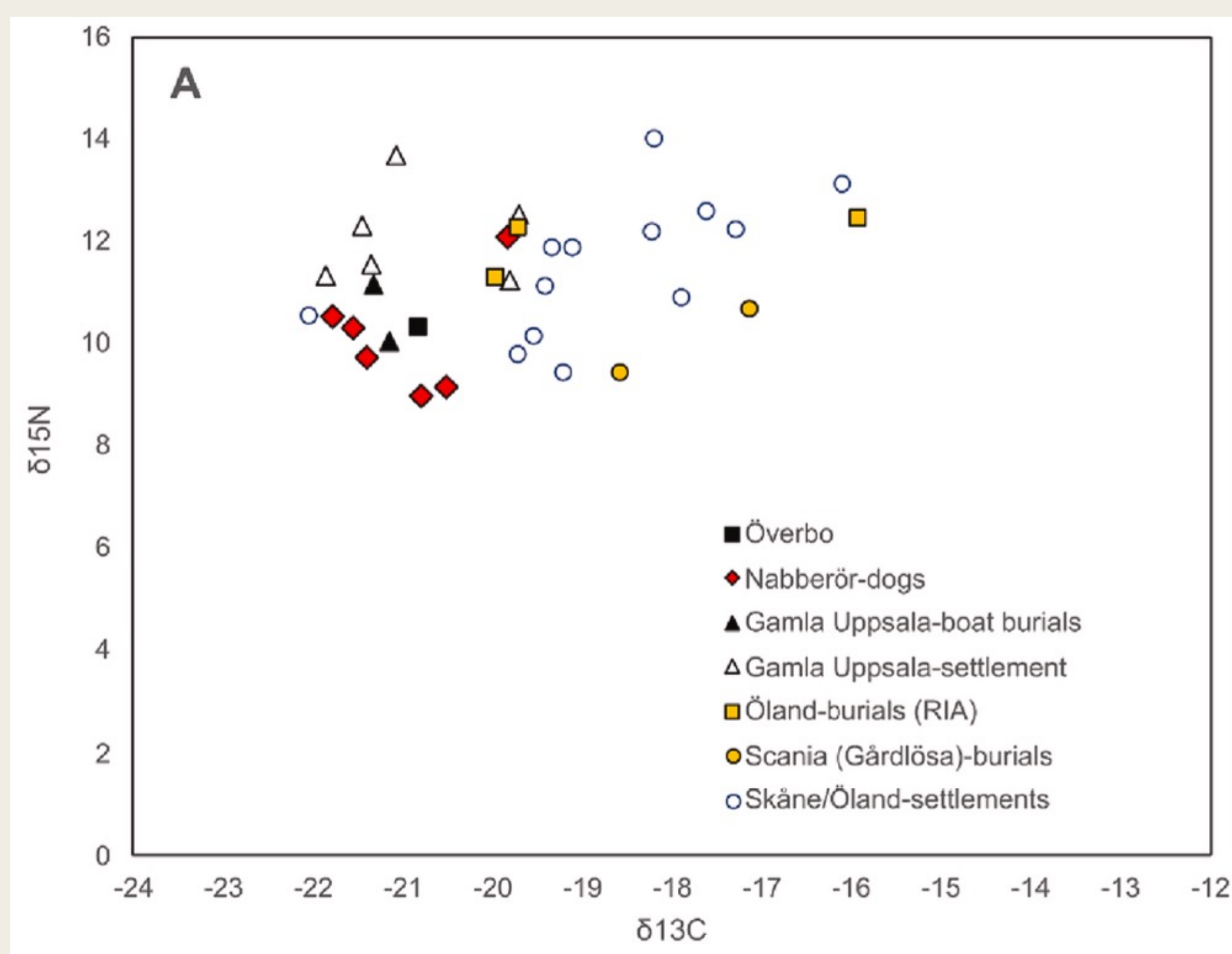
- During the Late Iron Age, a large variety of dogs and the earliest evidence of dog leashes appear in Scandinavia. This study is based on an analysis of the dogs in the Nabberör boat grave on the island of Öland in relation to dogs from other burials and settlements.
- Breeding and care of the dogs have been analysed through the integrated life stories of individual dogs, based on age, sex and health status, together with morphology and leash finds.
- The feeding of these dogs has been studied by examining stable isotopes ($\delta^{13}\text{C}$ and $\delta^{15}\text{N}$) and their mobility through the strontium ($^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}$) isotopes.
- The large dogs in Nabberör were kept and cared for in different ways than other common farm dogs. The dogs indicate social significance and links between elite families in South Scandinavia.

Results

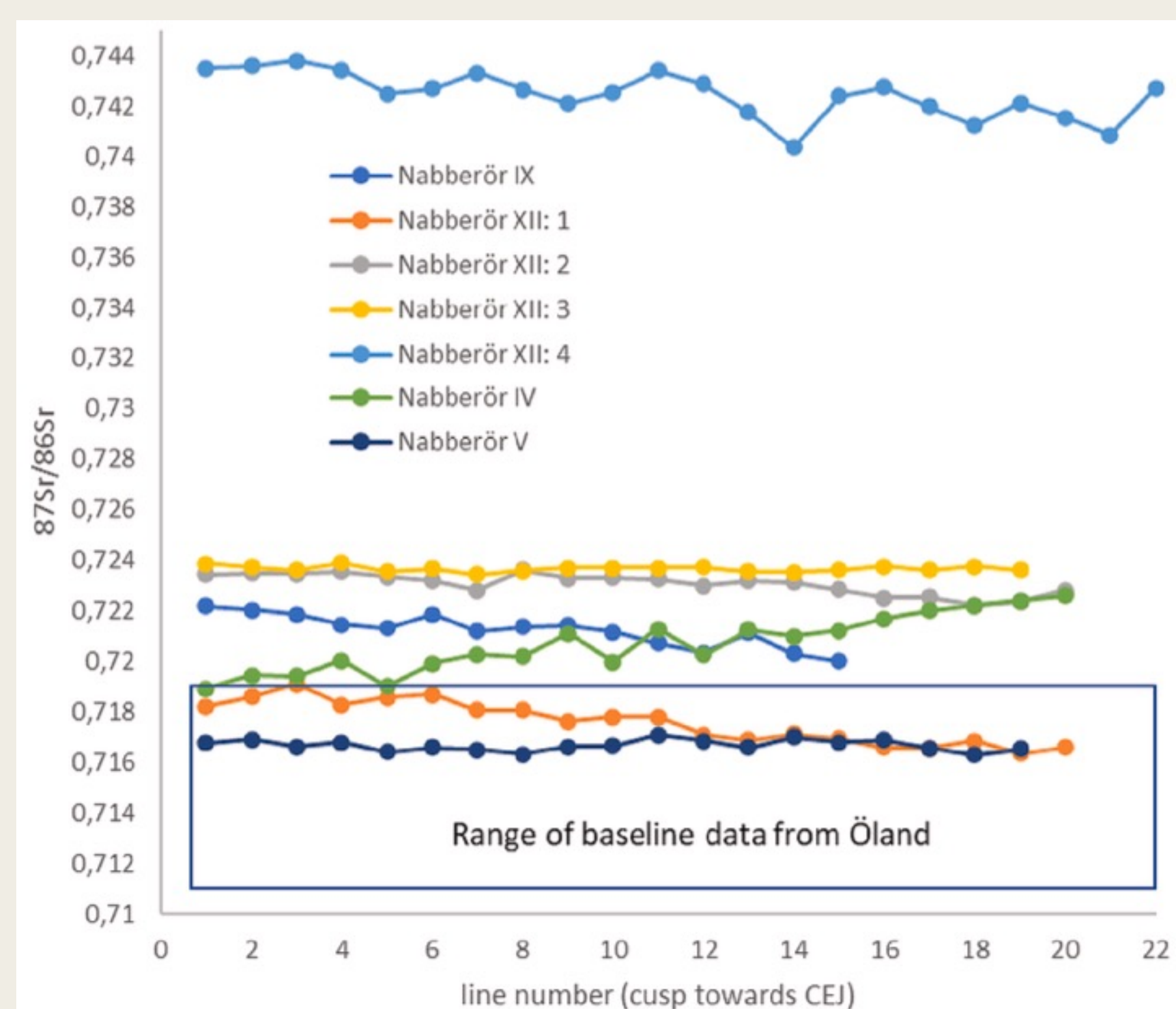
- Osteometry reveals unusually large size of five dogs from the Nabberör burial. The Nabberör dog type represents the largest dogs in Late Iron Age Sweden. They had an impressive height at withers, robust mandibles and with spacing between the premolars.
- They were not sighthounds, but large, normally built dogs. In contrast to other boat graves, for example in Vendel and Valsgärde, the dogs from Nabberör are remarkably uniform in size and appearance.
- Two young dogs in Nabberör were juveniles aged 8–12 months and the other dogs were also rather young between 1–2 and 2–4 years.
- Stable isotopes show here together with dogs from other elite burials from the Swedish mainland (Överbo and Gamla Uppsala) a diet with a relatively large proportion of meat compared with ordinary dogs from settlements.
- The strontium analysis indicates that the dogs came from at least three areas with different bedrock. One dog may have been bred on Öland, but two others were born in different areas of mainland Sweden.
- The dogs had elaborate leashes which only are found in elite burials. The leashes imply that these dogs in the Late Iron Age had special tasks and meanings for the owners as control of breeding but also as a kind of adornment exposing wealth and social prestige.



Calculated withers height (cm) of dogs from Nabberör, other wealthy burials, settlements, and depositions in wetlands.



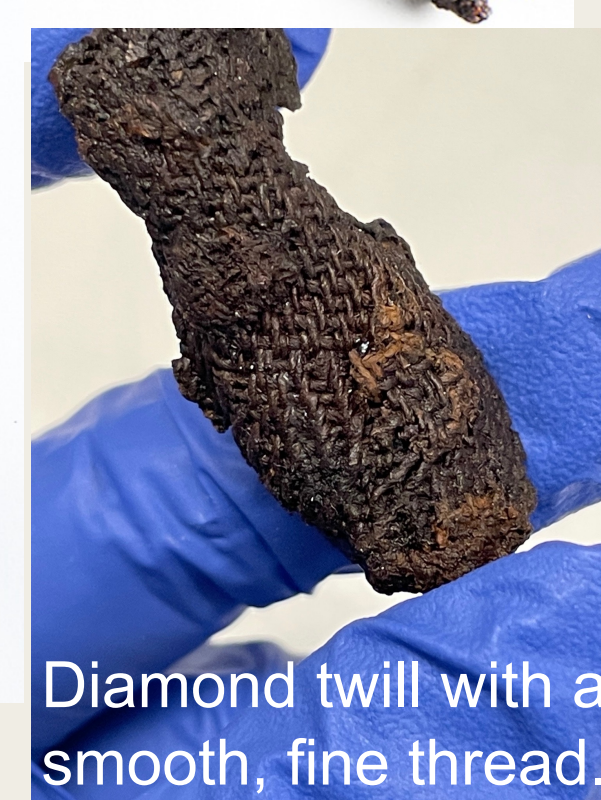
Stable isotopes ($\delta^{13}\text{C}$ and $\delta^{15}\text{N}$) of dogs from Nabberör, other elite burials burials from the Roman Iron Age (RIA) and Late Iron Age (LIA) settlements on Öland and in Scania.



Strontium isotope ($^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}$) values of dog teeth from Nabberör based on laser-ablation (LA-MC-ICP-MS).



Bayeux tapestry online



Diamond twill with a smooth, fine thread.



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