

DOLMENS IN O CONDADO-A PARADANTA

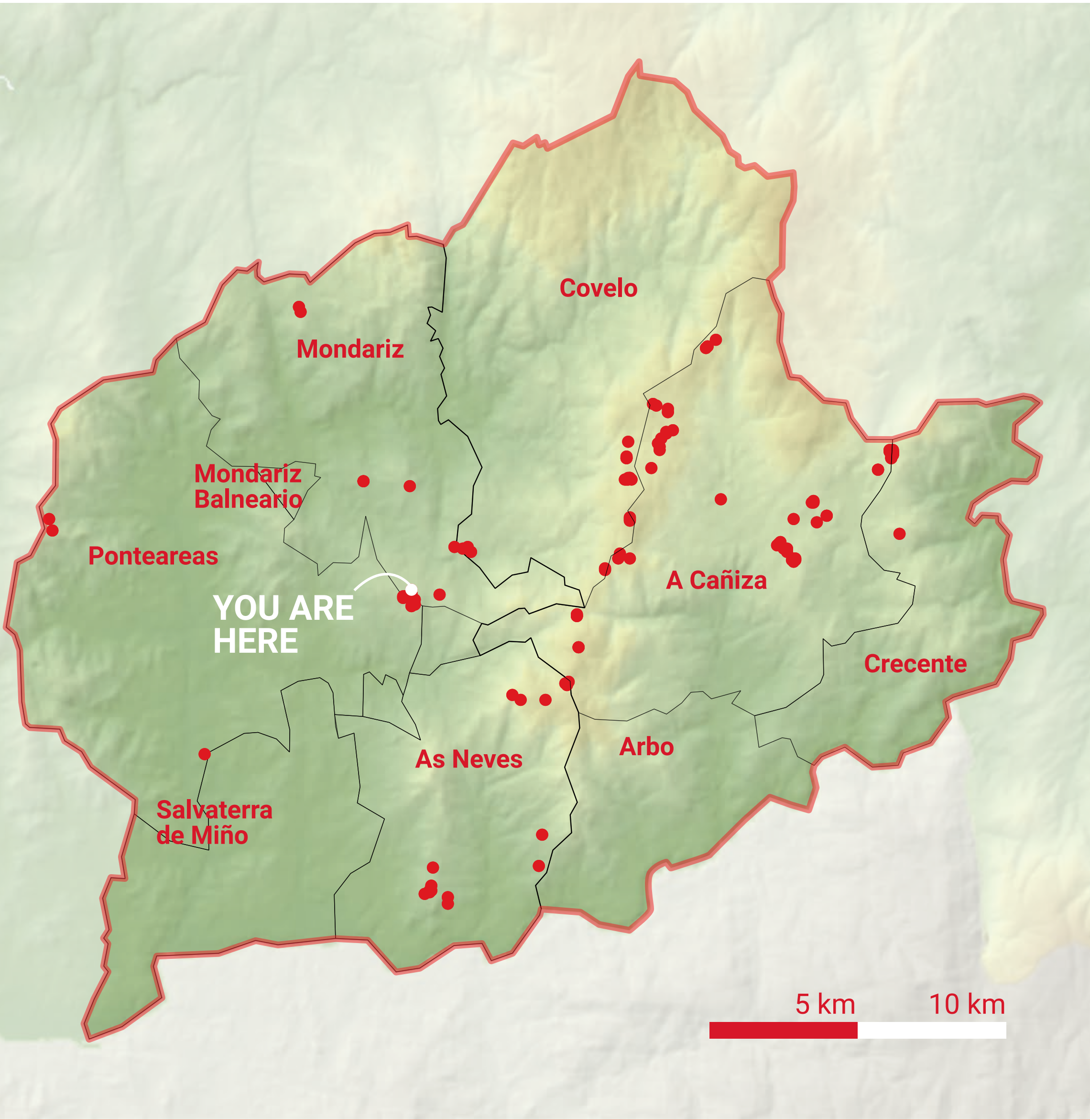
The Neolithic era was an evolved culture with a social division associated with work and ideology. During this period, humans began to subdue nature: they domesticated animals, cultivated the land and built mámoas or burial mounds, the first monumental funerary constructions in Europe.

The barrows

The people who built the barrows sought to humanise the landscape with clearly visible monuments. They would have been organised into tribes, clans or groups of varying sizes, always proportional to the size of the funerary monuments. The construction of a mámoa reveals a strong social organisation.

Barrows in the area

To date, there are some 160 "mámoas" catalogued in O Condado-A Paradanta, with references to some that were destroyed in the last century and place names that indicate the existence of many more. They are located mainly on the plateaus of A Caniza and Covelo and in the highlands bordering the Tea valley. No mámoas have been excavated, so it is not known what period they belong to or whether they were reused. So far, no cists, menhirs or stone circles have been documented in our region, but there is evidence of the existence of settlements or villages in the vicinity of the burial mounds.



The settlements

The settlements were built with perishable materials. The clans lived in huts made of wood, straw and mud, typical of a prehistoric nomadic or itinerant culture; the use of these materials explains why, today, there are hardly any remains of the dwellings. The settlements of this sedentary society would have been located near burial sites, in search of areas for cultivation and sources of water.



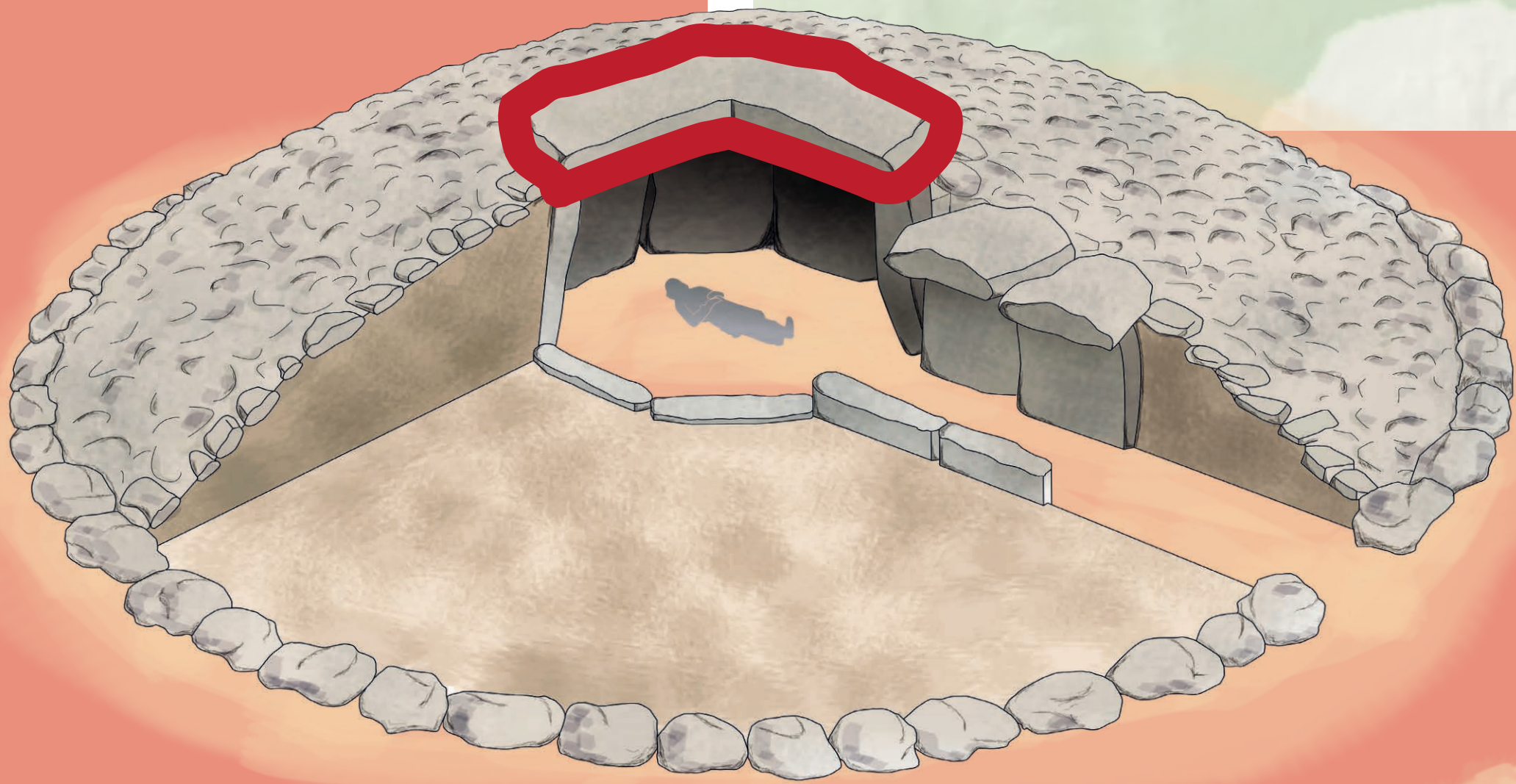
The grave goods

The corpses were accompanied by rich grave goods, consisting of objects that the deceased would need in the afterlife: pottery (cups, pots, etc.), jewellery (necklaces, bracelets, etc.), tools (polished axes, adzes, gouges, sickles, etc.) and weapons (stone daggers, bows and arrows).



Ideology and religion

During the Neolithic period, a religion based on death developed and remained deeply rooted for more than two thousand years. The society that built the barrows is believed to have had a highly developed belief system that led them to pay special attention to the afterlife.



1

Using hammers and wooden wedges, Neolithic inhabitants used nearby quarries to extract granite blocks. The use of fire and water helped to fracture the stone.



2

The dolmen was covered with earth to form a hemispherical cap, which was protected by a large stone slab, transported using a system of logs and ropes.



3

The penultimate step was to open the stone corridor that led to the chamber.



4

On occasions, the barrows was covered with a layer of stones to make it more visible in the landscape and give it a monumental

