

A rich weapon burial from the Late Roman Iron Age at Veldbæk, Denmark – comments on the distribution of power in southern Jutland

Bente G. Alexiou^{1,4}, Lars Grundvad² and Xenia Pauli Jensen³

¹ Museum of Southwest Jutland (Sydvestjyske Museer), Ribe, Denmark

² Sønderkov Museum, Brørup, Denmark

³ Moesgaard Museum. Archaeological Department, Højbjerg, Denmark

⁴ Corresponding author (ben10@sydvestjyskemuseer.dk)

ABSTRACT

During two campaigns in 1997 and 1999, archaeologists from Esbjerg Museum excavated a spectacular Late Roman Iron Age weapon burial at Veldbæk in Esbjerg, Denmark. In addition to full weaponry, the deceased was buried with magnificent grave goods such as gilded fittings for a military belt, gaming pieces, a gold finger ring, a silver animal fibula, a red carnelian intaglio, and a copper-alloy-clad wooden bucket. The assemblage dates the grave to the transition between periods C1b and C2 of the Late Roman Iron Age, which is to say ca. AD 250 or shortly thereafter. The grave is a crucial new piece in the puzzle to understand how power was distributed in southern Jutland during the Late Roman Iron Age.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received

11 October 2021;

Accepted

09 December 2022

KEYWORDS

Iron Age; Roman Age network; Weapon burial; Denmark

During the 1980s and 90s, a hypothesis concerning a warrior hierarchy in Jutland during the Late Roman Iron Age was constructed: the area around Vorbasse in southern central Jutland was the seat of power and the region was under martial rule by strategically placed local subordinates (Ethelberg 1990, 115-117; Ethelberg 1992, 114-118). The basis for the theory was a set of rich weapon burials all placed approximately equidistant from Vorbasse and characterized by a relatively uniform grave material including weapons and wooden buckets.

The question is whether this hierarchical, militaristic structure still works as an explanatory model for this period. The excavation of a Late Neolithic burial mound from the Single Grave Culture (2800-2400 BC) near Veldbæk in Esbjerg, southwestern Jutland, Denmark, revealed an exciting discovery of a spectacular weapon burial from the Late Roman Iron Age (AD 150/60-375). In terms of distance from the presumed centre of power at Vorbasse, it would fit well as an example of a local aristocrat in the hierarchy governing the periphery during this period.

This article presents this weapon burial from the Esbjerg area and places it into its proper local, regional, and societal contexts.

Find history

The Veldbæk burial mound was first mentioned during the systematic mapping of sites by members of the National Museum in 1891, when it was described as mostly gone. In 1917, it was reported as completely ploughed away.¹ On a map from 1796, the mound was registered as a linear mound, and it also appears in the Royal Topographical Map series from 1842-99 (Figure 1). Thus, the mound almost completely disappeared from the landscape between the period when the later maps were produced and 1917.

In 1997 and 1999, Esbjerg Museum excavated two thirds of the area the mound occupied.² The primary burial was a man's grave from the Single Grave Culture. It was recorded as being disturbed by several younger burials, among these an urn and





Figure 1. The location of the site. The Single Grave Culture burial mound that is the subject of this article is marked with red on the Royal Topographical map from 1842-99 (Graphic: Lars Grundvad).

an inhumation grave from the Iron Age (Søsted and Siemen 2003; Siemen 2009, 459-460).

This article focuses on the later, intrusive inhumation grave in the mound. While the Single Grave Culture material has already been presented in Palle Siemen's catalogue of Early and Late Neolithic graves from southwestern Jutland (2009, 459-460), the Iron Age grave has not been comprehensively published until now. Today, the Iron Age grave is still unique despite the fact that the area is well-researched and multiple excavations have revealed settlements from both the Early Roman Iron Age and the Early Germanic Iron Age.³

Topography

The landscape around Esbjerg sets the framework for the find. Burial mounds were built atop the Esbjerg moraine plateau, which stretches all the way north to Varde and east to where Varde/Holme Å meets with Sneum Å, which flows southwesterly around the plateau forming the boundary in that direction. The plateau was formed during the penultimate Saale glaciation and the subsoil consists of mixed sand and clay moraine deposits that form multiple inhabitable plateaus bordered by small streams and wetlands (Stoumann 2009, 17).

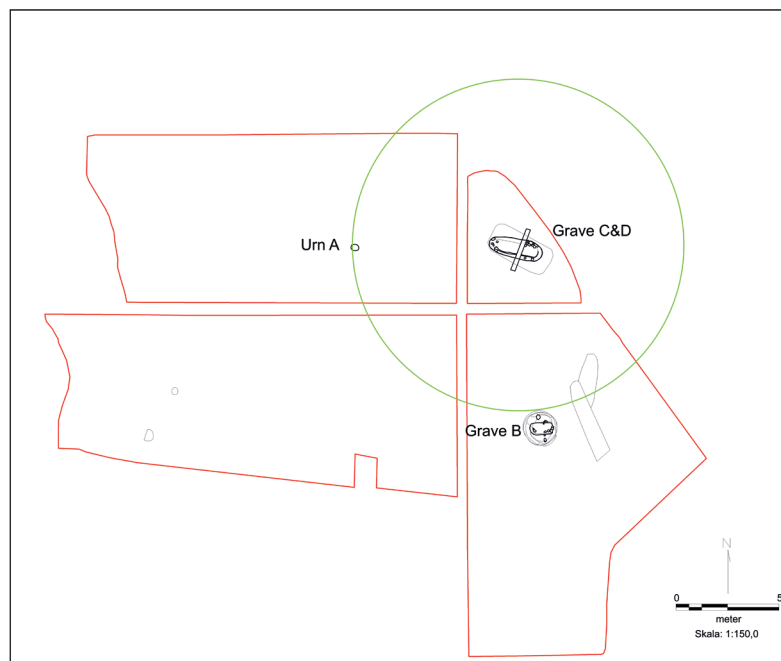
The burial mound was built on a large, flat area near the southern edge of the Esbjerg plateau. Maps show that the solitary mound lay south of a group consisting of at least five mounds, three of which contained grave goods from the Single Grave Culture. Before widespread drainage projects, the area was surrounded by extensive wetlands. Novrup Å runs from south to north and east around the plateau. The early topographic maps of Denmark show it as the northern boundary.

Excavation of the mound and surroundings

At the beginning of excavation in 1997, the remains of the mound were faintly visible as a vague, oval elevation, ca. 20-30 m long and 20 m wide, oriented NE-SW. Grave C (the weapon burial) and Grave D (the Single Grave burial) were found in the centre of the mound area, and it was initially assumed that there were two episodes of digging where one constituted a looting hole. Excavation was completed in the summer of 1999 revealing two additional graves (Figure 2).

The mound boundary was difficult to discern, so the circle on Figure 2 represents an estimate. In the excavation report it was estimated that the mound measured 16-18 m across based on Grave A's (an

Figure 2. Excavation plan. The presumed mound border is shown in green. An urn from the Early Iron Age (Grave A) is marked on the western edge of the mound. Only shattered pottery sherds and burned bones were left. A child's burial from the Single Grave Culture appears to the south (Grave B) and Grave C (the subject of this article) is shown in the centre. Grave D is the central Single Grave burial (Digitalization: Museum of Southwest Jutland).



urn from an earlier part of the Iron Age) placement at the edge (Søsted and Siemen 2003, 6).

The weapon burial and its contents

The grave was a ca. 330 x 150 cm, approximately E-W oriented, roughly rectangular pit, into which the deceased was placed in a log coffin (Figure 3). Artefacts in the form of pieces of an iron spear head along with many heavily degraded shield boss fragments quickly appeared (Søsted and Siemen 2003, 7).

At the very bottom of the grave, a stone pavement was found which could be best documented in

the eastern part of the grave. In the western end of the grave two pots were excavated and, immediately northwest of them, 16 glass, amber, and stone gaming pieces turned up. It is assumed that a wooden gaming board accompanied the pieces, but it has long since disintegrated. In the western end of the grave, in a deeper level, more gaming pieces were found, presumably having sunk down into the grave fill when the grave collapsed. A total of 30 gaming pieces were excavated. In addition to these pieces, many indistinguishable iron fragments were found in the eastern part of the grave.

At the bottom of the grave, traces of the coffin were registered in the form of a 2-6 cm wide strip of

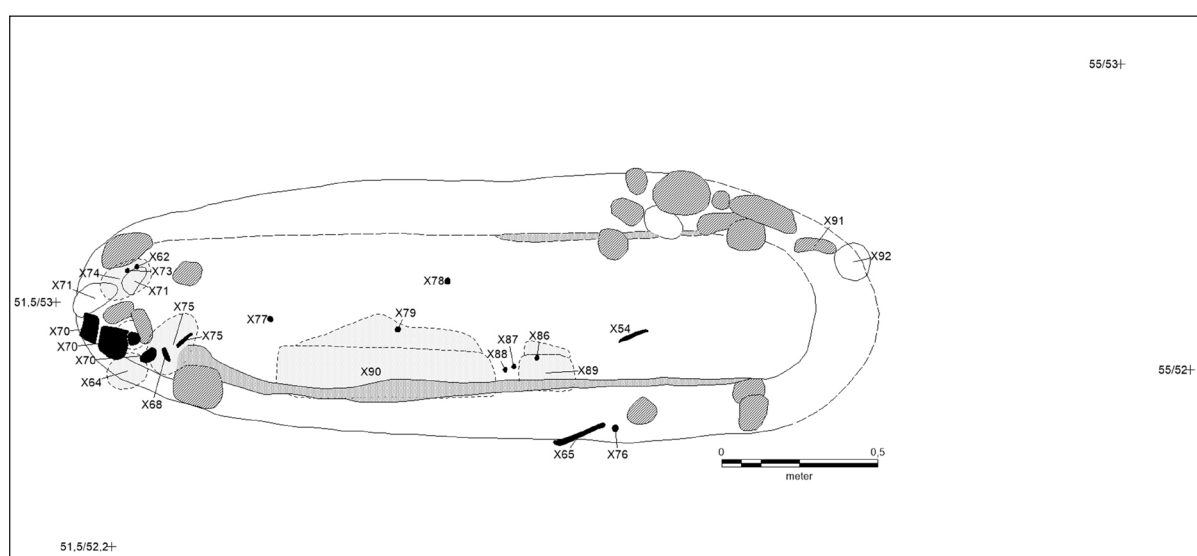


Figure 3. Excavation plan of Grave C. X-numbers mark the finds (Drawing: Palle Siemen).

decomposed wood. Traces from the wood revealed a coffin with parallel, straight sides and rounded ends to the east and west. Bowed sides rose from a flat bottom indicating a hollowed-out log coffin. Samples of the decomposed wood show that the coffin and lid were made of oak (Karg 2001, 1). No trace of the deceased was identified. Instead, numerous burial goods including: a sword, spear head, gold finger ring, animal fibula with a deer, and wooden bucket with copper-alloy fittings, were found during preparations to remove the bottom of the grave en bloc.

As no remains of the corpse were preserved, its orientation and whether the deceased was placed supine or on its side is uncertain. X-rays of the sword and belt fittings suggest that the grip lay to the east, as the fittings are described as being found north of the sword. Thus, the head of the deceased should also have lain to the east. Further indicators of the body's orientation are a fibula, which probably was on the deceased's shoulder, along with the gold ring's placement in the middle of the grave just north of the sword where the left hand should rest.

The assembled grave goods indicate a high-status burial. Based on the weaponry, the usual interpretation would be a male burial, but there are no skeletal remains to confirm this. The find groups will be treated separately as weapon-related items, imported goods, and elements that help to date the find.

Two pots

In the western and high end of the grave stood two fragmented pots, an s-curved mug (x70) (Figure 4) and a bowed, handled bowl (x71-72). The mug is 9.5 cm high, burnished, and decorated with two horizontal furrows under the neck along with etched wave ornamentation and hashmarks. It is of Ethelberg's type 1a3 with flared rim and partially vertical neck, dated to the period C2-C3 (Ethelberg 1990, 68, 73-74). The bowl with a vertical handle is burnished and decorated with three series of paired furrows. The vertical handle and relatively large size identify it as Ethelberg's type 4C1, dated to the period C1b-C2 (Ethelberg 1990, 84-85). Use-wear show that the pots had been used domestically before being deposited as grave goods. At Hjemsted burial ground, which is located approximately 50 km south of Veldbæk, for example, it was common to deposit one to three pots in the grave, placed both above and inside the coffin (Ethelberg 1990, 27, 43, Fig. 22).

Weaponry

Two shafted weapons were found in the grave: a spear head and a javelin head, both made of iron. The spear head (x17-22) was in several pieces, but it was observed to have been placed almost vertically, slightly canted to the southwest and with the socket towards the centre of the grave. It is 24 cm long and relatively well preserved (Figure 5). The point is leaf-shaped with a ridge running from the



Figure 4. The two pots (A: an s-curved mug. B: a bowed, handled bowl) were very probably placed on the lid of the coffin (Photo: Henrik Brinch Christiansen).

socket up along the blade, while the upper part of the blade is diamond-shaped in cross-section. Two different cross-sections within the blade itself can be seen on a series of spear heads from Vingsted and are also known from both Nydam and Ejsbøl bogs. Jørgen Ilkjær mentions them both as type 9 and during the review of his type 26 Svennum, which both belong to weapon group 7-9 dated from the close of period C1b to period C2, which is to say the second half of the 3rd century AD (Ilkjær 1990, 133-139; Engelhardt 1865, Table X:11-12; Ørsnes 1988, Table 129:11-12).

The javelin head lay in the southern end of the coffin. It is 27 cm long with two symmetrical barbs, and a partly preserved shaft (x54 and x75) (Figure 6). The type of wood has not yet been determined. Despite the heavily corroded socket, the ratio between socket and blade is clearly between 1/3 and 2/3. Together with a width of the blade at its middle of more than 12 mm, the javelin head can be identified as Ilkjær's type 6 Svennum (Ilkjær 1990, 165, 200, Tables 168-174). Thus, the javelin belongs to weapon group 7, dated to the transition between periods C1b and C2 in the mid-3rd century AD.

Additional finds from the southern part of the grave include wood, textile and iron remains related to a sheathed, double-edged sword with a relatively well-preserved handle and a silver disc or button (x89.03) (Figure 7). The preserved part of the sword is 52 cm long, of which 15 cm is the handle and pommel. Little can be said about the ca. 5 cm wide blade, as much of it is still concealed by the scabbard. During conservation, it was determined that the blade is pattern-welded, double-edged, and the handguard is perpendicular to it (Adomat 2001, 1). The tang is ca. 2.7 cm wide and the handle itself is ca. 9.3 cm long and up to 3.2 cm wide as preserved. The handle is wooden, but the type of wood has not been determined. It has not been possible to analyse the construction of the scabbard, but it seems to have a wooden core, which is well known from the period (Biborski and Ilkjær 2006). In addition, two layers of textile have been distinguished, one of indeterminate weave and the other of a broken 2/2 twill.⁴ Textile remains were found on the pommel, scabbard, and handle. Possibly it was swathed in



Figure 5. Spear head after conservation. Length: 24 cm (Photo: Silja A. Christensen).



Figure 6. Javelin head after conservation. Length: 27 cm (Photo: Silja A. Christensen).



Figure 7. The double-edged sword in wooden scabbard. The silver disc is placed where it is believed to have sat, if it functioned as a sword scabbard bead. Preserved length: 52 cm (Photo: Silja A. Christensen).

cloth when placed in the grave. The pommel was too damaged to recognize its form and type.

The silver disc (x89.03) measures 3.1 cm in diameter and is 2 mm thick. On the back some wood is preserved, and it may have been attached to the scabbard. Its function has not conclusively been determined. It could be a sword bead, or more properly a scabbard bead (Rau 2010, 380-384). Sword or scabbard beads made of glass and amber are widely known in Scandinavia from weapon sacrifices at Vimose, Thorsbjerg and Nydam, as well as from a range of grave finds from the Late Roman Iron Age (Werner 1956; Engelhardt 1869: Pl. 1; Pauli Jensen 2008, 142-143; Blankenfeldt 2015, 232-239; Rau 2010, 363-384). They could also be produced from precious metals in combination with, for example, rock crystal, such as seen at the Nydam bog (Rau 2010, 376, Table 48:1). However, the preserved wood on the backside of the silver disc from Veldbæk argues against an interpretation of a sword bead.

Additionally, remains of an iron shield boss (x21-22) were found, probably placed near the spear head. It is heavily fragmented, but it is possible to recognize the profile, which is a slightly indented neck that is separated from the top by a distinct bend. It most likely belongs to Ilkjær's type 6b or 6c with low necks and vaulted tops (Ilkjær 1990, 35; Ilkjær 2001, 299-306). Type 6 is linked to weapon groups 6 and 7, which date from period C1b to the start of C2, where they are widespread in South Scandinavia. In southern Jutland they occur in the graves from Næsbjerg and Vorbasse grave 11 (Ilkjær 2001, 306, cf. Table 1). Other fittings from the shield have not been identified, but it is not unusual that only parts of a shield were deposited in weapon burials from the Roman Iron Age (Henriksen 2009, 97 and references therein).

Knife

A knife with a partially preserved, wrapped handle was also excavated. It is not clear what was used for the wrapping, but it appears to have been fastened to the handle with a dark substance. The blade is relatively simple, but it is too deteriorated for the

form or type to be determined. The position of the knife in the grave is unknown.

Military belt

Two opulent belt fittings were found north of the sword (x89.01-02) (Figure 8). Both were made of several rectangular plates held together by respectively two and three hinges. They are finished on both sides with a decorative edge of eight connected, elongated silver triangles ending in a point with a hole and a rivet. The two central plates were each equipped with leaf gilded strips with a row of 11 beaded wire rosettes around silver rivets. On each strip, the 11 rosettes are flanked on each side by beaded wire.

The rivets fastened the gilding to an organic material which is not preserved. However, remains of both leather and textile were detected on the gilding, so it is possible that the item contained both. The fittings are fragmented but it is possible to determine that the width was ca. 10 cm. Similar, but not identical, ostentatious fittings are known from the Nydam bog. These are also constructed with hinges, though they are slightly younger than the grave at Veldbæk (Rau 2010, 252-253, Fig. 95-96). The rich weapon burial from Aasø just outside Glumsø on Zealand had, in addition to imported Roman pottery, remains of gilded fittings with hinges from a ca. 8 cm wide belt. This grave dates to the period C1b and is thus slightly older than the one at Veldbæk (Lund Hansen 1987, 416; Przybyła 2016). A grave roughly contemporary with Veldbæk (from the period C1b-C2) is known from Hammehög/Roegshög in Scania, Sweden, with a military belt featuring gilded fittings and hinges, as well as a double-edged sword, shield boss, gaming pieces and two dice (Stjernquist 1955, 168, Plate XL:3-7). The rich grave from Sætrang just north of Oslo, Norway, also contains a magnificent belt with gilded hinged fittings (Slomann 1959, 18-20, Plate III, V; reconstruction from Rau 2010, Fig. 100). It was excavated in 1834 from one of a series of large mounds. Highlights from the grave finds are gold finger rings (including a spiral ring of Beckmann type B30; Beckmann 1969, 42-43),



Figure 8. The two magnificent, hinged belt fittings that may have come from a military belt. The small one measures 8x10.5 cm and the big one 9.4x10.5 cm. After conservation (Photo: Silja A. Christensen).

imported Roman pottery, a wooden bucket with copper-alloy fittings, a double-edged sword with an hourglass-shaped handle, spear and javelin heads of Ilkjær's type 11, and an iron shield boss. The grave dates to period C3 and thus later than the Veldbæk grave (Slomann 1959; Lund Hansen 1987, 434; Ilkjær 1990, 306, cat.no. 735; Rau 2010, 258).

Marzena Przybyła has reviewed clothing accessories with sheet metal from South Scandinavia, including those from Veldbæk (2018, 470-473). She analysed the components of the decorative motifs and highlighted the similarities between the use of silver rivets at Veldbæk, sword decorations from finds at the weapon sacrifice at Illerup Ådal in eastern Jutland, and a rich grave from Thorslunde near Copenhagen (Carnap-Bornheim and Ilkjær 1996, Table 184; Engelhardt 1871; Przybyła 2018, 470). The long, gilded fitting with 11 rivets holds parallels in the weapon sacrifices from Ejsbølgaard-East – though with only 8 and 10 rivets – and at the Nydam bog, among other things in combination with arcade decoration (Nørgård Jørgensen and Andersen 2014,

Fig. 101; Rau 2010, Fig. 102-103, Table 12-14; Przybyła 2018, 473). These are both from southern Jutland and a bit younger than the grave at Veldbæk. The ring motif around the rivets can also be found in belt fittings from weapon sacrifices, but it is also seen on other objects, such as on fibulae and high-end weapon equipment both in southern Scandinavia and on the Continent (see for instance Przybyła 2018, 473-479, Fig. 15/40; Carnap-Bornheim and Ilkjær 1996, Abb. 264-269; Carnap-Bornheim 1997, Abb. 1; Przybyła 2005, Abb. 2; Becker 2001, 143). It is reasonable to presume a South Scandinavian craft tradition and more specifically, Przybyła suggests that the workshop may have been placed somewhere in Jutland (2018, 470).

In the Late Roman Iron Age, a group of ostentatious gilded belts and bandoliers appear in large weapon sacrifices like Nydam, Illerup Ådal, Vimose, Ejsbøl, and Thorsbjerg (Carnap-Bornheim and Ilkjær 1996, 444-449; Engelhardt 1869, Table 13; Nørgård Jørgensen and Andersen 2014, 141-144; Matešić 2015, 98-100) and in rich South Scandinavian and northern German

graves (Slomann 1959; Carnap-Bornheim 2003; Rau 2010). The striking military belts likely appeared under the influence of the Roman Empire, where they were the mark of a Roman soldier. However, the South Scandinavian belts had their own style (Hoss 2013; Pauli Jensen 2015, 273; Matešić 2015, 124-145). Thus, the Veldbæk example belongs to a distinct group of military belts with spectacular gilded fittings belonging to the highest warrior class with clear connections to finds from Jutland, Zealand, and the rest of South Scandinavia.

Glass, amber, and stone gaming pieces

Most of the gaming pieces were recovered from the western end of the grave and are believed to have lain on the lid of the coffin. The rest were found in the grave fill and the bottom of the coffin. They were made from glass, amber and stone (Figure 9). The majority was found with their flat side down and convex side up. 18 of the 30 pieces were glass, divided into the following colours: seven grey/black (x2, x7, x8, x9, x11, x15, and x73), four blue/turquoise (x4, x13, x16, and x63), four white (x5, x10, x66, and x68), and three light green (x65, x74.01, and x74.07). Eleven pieces were made of amber (x1, x3, x6, x12, x14, x62, x72/x74.6, and x74.02-x74.05) and one of stone (x69).

Glass gaming pieces are perceived as imports from the Roman provinces. There are numerous finds from the forts along the Roman limes, but also outside the frontier, in Barbaricum. Most common are the black and white examples (Krüger 1982, 156-158; Matschoss 2007), precisely as seen at Veldbæk. In central Barbaricum, Late Roman Iron Age gaming pieces and boards are closely linked to the Haßleben-Leuna horizon, which is characterized by especially rich graves with both Roman and Germanic status markers (Schulz 1933; Schultz 1953; Matschoss 2007). In current-day Denmark, coloured glass gaming pieces are known from period B2 onwards, however, the majority are from the Late Roman Iron Age C1-C2. They are primarily found on Zealand (Lund Hansen et al. 1995, 235, Fig. 8:15; Fonnesbech-Sandberg 2002, 212; Matschoss 2007, 477),



Figure 9. All the gaming pieces (including the carnelian gemstone in the centre) set on a reconstructed game board, as they might have appeared in the game Hnefatafl. (Layout after Michaelsen 1992, 60) (Photo: Henrik Brinch Christiansen).

although gaming pieces are also recorded from graves and settlement sites in the Southeastern part of Funen (Henriksen 2009, 156-160). Gaming pieces are rare in southwestern Jutland. Examples include Dankirke (three glass gaming pieces, two black and one multicolored;), Esbjerg (two amber gaming pieces and one of clay), the rich, Late Roman Iron Age grave from Brokær found in 1878 (bone/antler gaming pieces and a rectangular die), which is somewhat older than the Veldbæk grave, and those found among the burnt grave goods recently excavated from a rich urn burial at Sneum (Hansen 1990; Lund Hansen 1987, 439; Rasmussen 1995, 77-79; Møller 2016).

In contrast to glass gaming pieces, ceramic, amber, and bone examples are interpreted as local copies. Thus, the grave at Veldbæk contains both locally produced gaming pieces and imports from the Roman provinces.

A gemstone

At the bottom of the west end of the grave's central part, a small, 15 x 10 x 4 mm, red carnelian gemstone (x77) was found (Figure 10). Victoria, the winged Roman goddess of victory, is engraved on it, shown hovering over the globe with a laurel wreath in one hand and a palm branch held over her shoulder in the other. The goddess's long



Figure 10. Carnelian gemstone found in the western end of the grave. We suggest it was part of a boardgame. Size: 1.5x1x0.4 cm (Photo: Henrik Brinch Christiansen).

wings can be seen on her back, and she is draped in long, billowing robes. Carnelians and other semi-precious stones are uncommon in South Scandinavia but have been found as gemstones in finger rings of Beckmann's type 17b and 22a within group IV (Beckmann 1969, 34-36, 39; Andersson 1993, 63-64, 66-67). Beckmann dates type 17b to period C1-C2, while Andersson places rings with one set stone to period C2 and the especially rare rings with elliptical stones to period C3 (Beckmann 1969, 36; Andersson 1993, 64-65). Roman finger rings with mounted stones of type 22a are only known in South Scandinavia from Hågerup on Funen, dated to period C1b (Henriksen 2009, 328), though without a carnelian (Beckmann 1969, 39; Andersson 1993, 67). Rarely, carnelians have been found in other types of jewellery, such as in the gold fibula from the rich grave at Årslev on Funen, with eight gemstones individually set, of which three are carnelian and the rest garnets (Storgaard 1990, 32-35). However, none of the stones are engraved. One gemstone, much like that from Veldbæk and also dated to the 3rd century, was found in Ribe during excavation of the Viking-era marketplace (Wistoft 1978, 12). Additionally, finds of semi-precious stones including carnelians derive from the Gudme/Lundeborg complex in southeastern Funen (Thomsen et al. 1993, 84; Thrane 1993, Pl. 11).



Figure 11. Animal-shaped silver fibula in the form of a running, backward-looking deer. 4.5x3.4 cm (Photo: Henrik Brinch Christiansen).

The carnelian from Veldbæk was not set in a ring but found in the grave along with seven amber and glass gaming pieces. Therefore, it is suggested that it had functioned as "the king" in the boardgame (Duff and Duff 1935, 310-311; Krüger 1982, 161; Michaelsen 1992, 60).

Plate fibula

In the southeastern part of the grave, north of the sword, a silver plate fibula shaped as a running, backward-looking deer (x89.04) was found (Figure 11). The fibula is Almgren's type 229/Thomas's type F series 2 (Almgren 1897, 103; Thomas 1967, 60-66).

There are two or three similar, but not identical, examples known from southern Jutland: One is from Dankirke near Ribe, ca. 36 km south of Veldbæk. The Dankirke deer is made from copper-alloy and more graceful than the Veldbæk example. It looks back at a bird perched on its back. The fibula was not found in a closed context. Consequently, it could belong to the Late Roman Period, but the publications place it in the Germanic Iron Age (Thorvildsen 1972, Fig. 19; Hansen 1990, Fig. 1; Przybyła 2018, Fig. 10/90:4).

A second, more poorly preserved deer fibula was found in a woman's grave (grave 5) at Vorbasse, ca. 40 km northeast of Veldbæk. Here, it was found in combination with a gilded, four-armed swastika fibula with threaded beads as well as other fibulae, amber and glass beads, a wooden bucket with copper-alloy fittings, and more. The grave dates to period C2 (Hvass 1979, Fig. 8; Przybyła 2018, Fig. 10/90:1, cat. no. 184; Lund Hansen forthcoming). The final parallel comes from Billum, near Varde in central western Jutland. A very poorly preserved animal fibula was found in Grave 1, a rich burial of a woman. Additionally, the grave held a tutulus fibula, gold and silver pins, glass and amber beads, a wooden bucket with copper-alloy fittings, and a Roman glass goblet. The grave dates to the end of period C2 or beginning of period C3 (Frandsen and Westphal 1996; Przybyła 2018, Fig. 10/90:6).

Moreover, deer fibulae with forward-looking heads are known from the rest of Jutland and Zealand. Additionally, deer fibulae are known from southern Norway, and Gotland and Scania in Sweden (Przybyła 2018, Fig. 10/89-90). The most well-known comes from an inhumation grave at Skillinge, Scania, dated to the start of period C2. It shows a deer in profile with an impressive rack of antlers – a motif that is also known from the Continent (Stjernquist 1955, 132, Plate XXIX:11-12; Schach-Döriges 1997, Fig. 60a-c).

The fibulae mentioned above are cast, but the motif of the backward-looking deer is also known from embossed examples: Grave 24 at Engbjerg burial ground west of Copenhagen comprised a rectangular plate fibula with an animal, whose body and legs seem to depict a running deer looking forward. It is made of a thin silver plate hammered flat and covered with a thin layer of gold (Boye 2009, 313-316). The grave is interpreted as that of a young girl, richly endowed with necklaces of glass and amber beads, an antler comb, pottery, copper-alloy fibulae, and a spiral finger ring of Beckmann's type 30. The Engbjerg grave dates to the close of period C1b (Ethelberg 2009, 15; Boye 2009, 315). The well-known plate fibula of gilded silverplate from Tangendorf near Hamburg also depicts a running, backward-looking deer, but

here on a round disc. The find, which comes from a secondary burial in a Bronze Age mound, dates to the 3rd-4th century AD (Wegewitz 1941; Werner 1966).

Berta Stjernquist argues that the North European animal fibulae from the 3rd-4th centuries have their origin in the slightly older ones that are very common in the Roman provinces in the 2nd and beginning of the 3rd centuries AD (1955, 133). Animal fibulae in general are especially linked to the Germanic Elbe region (Almgren 1897, 103; Thomas 1967, map 8; Schach-Döriges 1997, 80). According to Marzena Przybyła, the cast, zoomorphic plate fibulae should be seen as a Scandinavian variant. She places the majority in period C2 but also mentions later examples (Przybyła 2018, 383, Fig. 10/89). Interestingly, most of the Scandinavian plate fibulae belong to female graves (Przybyła 2018, Fig. 10/92), but they apparently also occur in burials with weaponry, as at Veldbæk.

Gold spiral finger ring

North of the sword, two pieces of a finger ring were found (Figure 12). The fragments are from a gold spiral ring wound around itself twice with an outer diameter of 24 mm and a total weight of 12 g. This type of simple spiral finger ring belongs to Beckmann's type 30 (Beckmann 1969, 42-43, Table 15; Andersson 1993, 70-75). The type is frequently found in South Scandinavia, where it is



Figure 12. Spiral finger ring found in the middle of the bottom of the grave's southern end. The outer diameter of the ring measures 24 mm (Photo: Henrik Brinch Christiansen).

especially common in northern Jutland, Zealand, and Funen, but it is also known from the Continent and the Mediterranean region (Beckmann 1969, 43; Andersson 1993, 70). In the Esbjerg area, spiral golden finger rings from two graves in Næsbjerg were delivered to the National Museum at the start of the 20th century. The graves contained a relatively rich assemblage of jewellery, including a copper-alloy fibula of type A VII, 196, a silver fibula of type A VII, 205-6, and amber and glass beads (Mackeprang 1943, 101 nos. 110 and 112; Beckmann 1969, nos. 56 and 58; Andersson 1993, cat. nos. 660-661). Gold spiral finger rings are also known from a pair of stray finds in the Malt and Ribe districts (Andersson 1993, cat. nos. 645, 646 and 648), as well as one specimen found by a metal detectorist at Bramming Nygård in the Gørding district, all in the county of Ribe.⁵

According to Kent Andersson, this type is associated with high status contexts that also contain finds such as silver objects, imported Roman pottery, weapons, and in some instances wooden buckets with copper-alloy fittings (1993, 70). Almost all the gold finger rings of type B30 found in graves date to the Late Roman Iron Age (Andersson 1993, 72).

The bucket

A relatively well-preserved wooden bucket bound with copper-alloy straps (x92) stood in the north-eastern part of the grave (Figure 13). It is built of 13 yew staves with a width of 2.5-4.5 cm bound with four horizontal copper-alloy straps with a width of 3.0-3.5 cm (Søsted and Siemen 2003, 14). It holds a copper-alloy handle (form 1b after Becker 2008, Fig. 3) fastened to the bucket with two trapezoidal fittings (type IIIa after Becker 2008, Fig. 4) decorated with horizontal incised furrows. The top and bottom of the bucket are ca. 14 cm in diameter, and it is 17.5 cm high, thus it could hold about 2.7 litres of liquid when filled to the rim.

A similar, but not identical, bucket was found 11 km east of the Veldbæk burial in a grave at Sneumgård. It also had trapezoidal handle fittings of type IIIa but with a handle of form 1a (Becker



Figure 13. Copper-alloy clad wooden bucket found in the grave's northeast corner. Height: 17.5 cm (Photo: Henrik Brinch Christiansen).

2008, Fig. 3-4). It is slightly larger than the one from Veldbæk with a height and diameter of ca. 18 cm, meaning it could have held ca. 4.6 litres of liquid (Engelhardt 1873, 315; Becker 2008, cat. no. 54). Most of the ca. 65 wooden buckets with copper-alloy fittings found in present-day Denmark are from Zealand and Funen (Lund Hansen et al. 1995, 233-234) with just a few examples from Jutland, such as Sneumgård and Veldbæk (Becker 2008, maps 4 and 9; Lund Hansen 2009, 178). Moreover, buckets with trapezoidal copper-alloy fittings are especially linked to South Scandinavia, particularly Funen and Zealand. They are widespread in Barbaricum, although buckets with copper-alloy fittings are especially common in north-western Europe. All the Danish buckets are found in graves from the Late Roman Iron Age, and these graves are all exceptional with far more than the average amount of grave goods (Lund Hansen et al. 1995, 234; Becker 2008, 368).

In the above sections, we have reviewed the Veldbæk grave's form and furnishings. Based on the finds it is clear the grave belongs to the end of pe-

riod C1b or the start of period C2 (ca. AD 250 or shortly thereafter). We can discern that the grave is anchored in the local society both regarding the burial form and some of the grave goods, for example the pottery. On the other hand, it distinguishes itself from the majority of graves from this period with, for example, a full set of weapons, rich jewellery, and imported Roman goods.

In the following we will expand our horizon and place the Veldbæk grave in a wider context.

Veldbæk in local, regional, and social contexts

Due to the location, assemblage and date of the Veldbæk grave, it belongs in the southern group of weapon burials defined by Jytte Ringtved, which is to say the area south of Randers fjord/Agger Tange (1988, 98-110). Weapon burials and graves with furnishings similar to the Veldbæk grave from Ringtved's southern group in the Skast

Site	Date	Weaponry: Spear, Javelin, Shield boss, Sword	Jewellery	Gold Finger ring	Imports	Military belt	Bucket with copper-alloy fittings
Veldbæk grave C	C1b-C2	S, J, Sw, Sb	Silver fibula	B30	carnelian, gaming pieces	X	X
Jens Kusks Vej grave JV	C1b	S, J (type Svennum) arrow?	Silver fibula	B30			
Jens Kusks Vej/ Tjæreborg grave KK	C1b	S, J, Sw with chape, Sb				with glass mosaic	
Sneumgård sb.17	B2-C1b	S (type 25)	Swastika fibula, silver fibula, neck ring, amber and glass beads				X
Gammelby grave II	C1-C2	Sw					
Næsbjerg	C1b-C2	Sb (type 6)					
Næsbjerg, grave E	C1b	4 arrows	Copper-alloy fibula (M III,1/ Ethelberg 5b)				
Tornfeld (NM 19397-402)	C2-C3	Sb	Copper-alloy fibula				
Faurfeld (NM 19398)	C3-D	Sb					
Næsbjerg By	C1b		Copper-alloy fibula A VII,186, Silver fibula A VII, 205-06, amber and glass beads	B30			
Næsbjerg By grave AI	C1-C2		Amber- and glass beads	B30			
Sneum	B2	S (single-edged)		X	cauldron		

Table 1. Weapon burials and other rich graves from the Late Roman Iron Age from Skast district, Ribe County (Skast herred, Ribe amt).

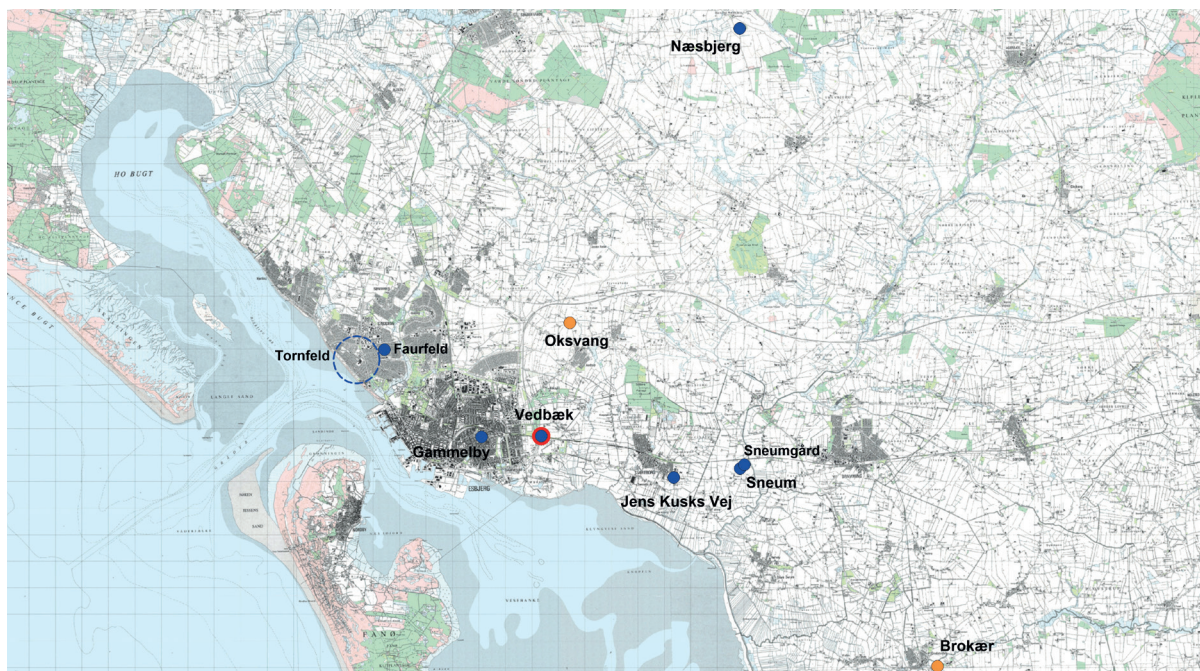


Figure 14. Important weapon graves from Roman Iron Age that are mentioned in the text and are within a radius of 17 km from Veldbæk. Included here are also Brokær and Oksvang (marked with orange) (Graphic: Lars Grundvad).

district (Danish: *herred*) are shown in Figure 14 and Table 1. It must be noted that the discoveries and excavations were made at different times, with varying methodology, and with a range of research focuses. With these reservations, a brief description of the finds follows.

Two weapon burials from Jens Kusks Vej in Tjæreborg (8 km east of Veldbæk) were part of a larger burial ground, where impressive finds dated to the Late Roman Iron Age were excavated, among others a snake head ring and a Hemmoor bucket. The two graves held respectively a younger and an older man. The older man in Grave KK was buried with exceptional equipment in the form of a shield, sword, shafted weapons, and balteus disc from a sword belt (Siemen 1987). The younger man in Grave JV was equipped with shield, spear and javelin as well as items only found in the richer circles such as a silver fibula, and one course of a gold finger ring (B30). The excavator interpreted the men as father and son (Siemen 1987; Siemen and Stoumann 1996, 143).

At Sneumgård (11 km east of the Veldbæk grave), a spear head of Ilkjær's type 25 was found and, additionally, seven pots and sherds from four

others, fragments of a gilded silver buckle, pieces of a gilded silver fibula, parts of a gold neck ring, amber and glass beads, and a wooden bucket much similar to the one from Veldbæk (Siemen and Stoumann 1996, 147). However, the finds cannot securely be assigned to a specific grave (Engelhardt 1873, 315; Mackeprang 1943, no. 114; Ilkjær 1990, cat. no. 647). Other noteworthy finds include a sword in a wooden scabbard from Gammelby Grave II at Storegade in eastern Esbjerg (Siemen and Stoumann 1996, 145-146), and a shield boss of Ilkjær's type 6 from Næsbjerg, and arrow heads suited for warfare in Næsbjerg grave E (Ringtved 1988, 172, 218; Ethelberg 1990, 116, Fig. 55; Ethelberg 1992, 116).

Two graves from the end of the Late Roman Iron Age that were not professionally excavated come from Tornfeld and Faurfeld, both containing shield bosses of Ilkjær's type 8. An additional two graves from Næsbjerg By that contained gold finger rings of type B30 can also be mentioned (Mackeprang 1943, 101 nos. 110 and 112; Beckmann 1969, nos. 56 and 58; Andersson 1993, cat. nos. 660 and 661). All in all, four gold rings of the same type were found within a quite limited area indicating

that the area holds some sort of special significance during this period.

The Sneum grave from the Early Roman Iron Age should also be mentioned in this context as it, among other, contains a single-edged sword, gold finger ring, and a cauldron of Roman origin. The grave indicates some degree of continuity in the Sneum area, as it is approx. 100 years older than the Sneumgård find mentioned above.

Thus, from a very small area within a radius of 17 km of Veldbæk, ten weapon burials from the Late Roman Iron Age have been registered. Moreover, it seems like the area was home to important people well before the Veldbæk grave was dug. The question is how to interpret this concentration.

The weapon burial tradition especially flourished at the close of the pre-Roman Iron Age and in the Early Roman Iron Age but wound down during the Late Roman Iron Age (Lindeneg Nielsen 1975; Martens 2002; Pauli Jensen 2015 with additional references). With this in mind, the Veldbæk grave and the many weapon burials in the vicinity are interesting, not least because only ca. 10% of the weapon burials (about 20) from the Late Roman Iron Age have full weaponry (including Veldbæk and Jens Kuskvej Grave KK, see Table 1). However, the shield fittings from all the graves in the Esbjerg area are of iron, which does not place them high in the military hierarchy identified in the weapon sacrifices. On the other hand, the exceptional military belt with gold-plating definitely belongs to the higher military echelons (Carnap-Bornheim and Ilkjær 1996, 483-485).

The Veldbæk grave's impressive weaponry reflects both close local connections and an affiliation with a widespread elite milieu that extends beyond southwestern Jutland. Especially, imported objects such as the gaming pieces and the carnelian gemstone from a Roman finger ring, but also the animal fibula and the bucket can be seen in a series of so-called princely graves in the Haßleben-Leuna horizon (Schulz 1933, 43-45, Taf. 1, 4-6, 18, 22; Schultz 1953, 35-67, Taf. II, XIII, XXVII; Becker 2001, 154, 159, 204-214 Storgaard 2003, 119-123). The affiliation to this elite environment is underlined in both equipment and in the motif of

the animal fibula which can be interpreted as another indication of common shared symbolic elite expressions (Rau 2012, 381-383).

Veldbæk: at the centre or on the periphery?

Several models of the structure of Late Roman Iron Age society generally and in southern Jutland specifically have been proposed. They are primarily based on grave finds and only rarely encompass other types of material. It is clear that a more in-depth study of organization and development would be achieved if, for example, the recent years' excavations of settlements in the area were included in the analyses. This is not possible in the framework of this article, so with that reservation we will focus on the graves and their evidence.

Per Ethelberg published a Late Roman Iron Age period C1b inhumation from Hjartbro in southern Jutland in 1992 (1992). The grave goods included full weaponry (spear, javelin, sword, and iron shield boss with decorative copper-alloy band), fragments of a prick spur ("stuhlsporn"), and a gold spiral finger ring (B30) (Ilkjær 1990, cat. no. 279; Ethelberg 1992). Using the grave at Hjartbro as a starting point, Ethelberg proposes a weapon burial horizon for southern Jutland. This represents the establishment of a warrior aristocracy surrounding a minor king or noble residing in Vorbasse, evidenced by the size of the settlement there and its central placement in relation to the southern group's weapon graves (Ethelberg 1990, 113-119; Ethelberg 1992, 114-118).

In contrast, Stig Jensen proposes the existence of small, independent, parallel power centres (1991, 85-86). This interpretation is echoed by Palle Siemen and Ingrid Stoumann (1996, 145-146), who propose that magnates or chieftains with weaponry were controlled by a chiefly lineage – perhaps from Sneumgård or Oksvang, where gold snake head rings and, in the case of the burial ground at Sneumgård, a Hemmoor bucket have been found. They argue that the relatively numerous Late Iron Age weapon burials from the Esbjerg area can be interpreted as a range of local military leaders that led to the establishment of a martial hierarchy of

a more permanent nature (Siemen and Stoumann 1996, 144-146). The distribution of rich graves in the Esbjerg region could indicate a series of smaller units within a hierarchy led by a magnate that controlled a host of common warriors from the periphery who were not buried with such pomp and wealth (Siemen and Stoumann 1996, 145-146). In this, they reject Ethelberg's theory on one hand, but use the same insignia (snake head rings) to identify a new centre on the other.

The problem is that if one recognizes the existence of one alliance with snake head rings as status and allegiance markers, it follows that there must have been other groups that were not a part of it. If two (or more) groups tried to distinguish themselves from each other, would they use the same marking to indicate their fellowship? Or would other alliances employ a different visual identity to distinguish themselves? One could, for example, de-emphasize copper-alloy or silver shield fittings in favour of impressive gilded military belts to show membership in another group. This allegiance could be reflected in the rich South Scandinavian graves with similar plated ornaments mentioned earlier, but also aided by the luxurious belts found in the large weapon sacrifices from the Late Roman Iron Age. Perhaps in the Esbjerg area we have yet another of the defeated groups whose equipment was sacrificed at Illerup, Ejsbøl, Nydam and Vimose? Or perhaps one of the victorious parties (Pauli Jensen 2017, 75-80)?

But how does this relate to the general Roman Iron Age power structure in the Esbjerg area? Even though the recently discovered Sneum cauldron grave mentioned above is around 100 years older than the Veldbæk grave, it supports the idea that for generations one or more rich, powerful families at Sneumgård were affiliated with the regional ruling lineage from Veldbæk, Tjæreborg, Gammelby and Næsbjerg. The question is whether the rich graves show a need for placing a new leader at the helm of a given area or whether one family or lineage controls an area for generations? Lars Jørgensen described how a family's status was transmitted through grave goods within a family group in burials on Bornholm from the end of the Late Roman Iron Age through the Early Germanic Iron Age (1988, 38-39). He suggests that only one representative of

each generation was buried with grave goods that indicate high status. Is it possible this is similar for the Esbjerg area? If so, the consequence would be that instead of discussing nobles, we should emphasize noble lineages, as most recently proposed by Rune Iversen (2011, 101). In the case of the Esbjerg area this would mean that continuity in the suite of grave goods could reflect the same family's hold on power over their realm – "family" understood in the broadest term possible.

The Veldbæk grave's combination of weapons, opulent belt, Roman imports, and locally produced luxury goods demonstrate a link to a martial hierarchy, a diplomatic understanding, and connections to powerful families in other areas of South Scandinavia and on the Continent. Both military and political power were (and still are) essential elements for the preservation and transfer of power. By visually signalling the ability and the will to use violence, as well as showing ties to important allies, the magnates of the Esbjerg area retained their power for centuries. Alliances and trade ties presumably shifted many times, but the area never lost its importance.

Final remarks

With the excavation and then rediscovery of the materials from the rich weapon burial with imported goods from Veldbæk, an important contribution was made to our understanding of the distribution of power in the Esbjerg area in the Late Roman Iron Age. The grave belongs to a group of especially rich burials in the Esbjerg region that constitute a well-documented power centre with close connection to continental centres of power of the Haßleben-Leuna-horizon. The southwestern Jutland group's extent and role is not yet fully defined, but a picture of a leading lineage based at Sneum emerges.

If we accept a noble lineage placed at Sneum, it is a clear break with Ethelberg's theories from 1992 that posit the population of the Esbjerg area being controlled by a family based in Vorbasse. Rather, Veldbæk, along with Sneum, show a noble lineage that has a different visual identity and demonstrates its military alliances by other

means than the Vorbasse dynasty. Therefore, the Iron Age power structure in the area that is today Denmark was more complex than proposed in the 1990s. It shows a picture of multiple small chiefdoms or areas of control that each manifested themselves visually by means of a distinct cultural identity. An identity that is best seen archaeologically in the grave material.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to a six week grant from the Museum of Southwest Jutland, it was possible to initiate the writing process, gather information about the grave and locate the grave finds. We are grateful to Per Ethelberg for dating the ceramic vessels. We sincerely thank Mogens Bo Henriksen, Ulla Lund Hansen, Morten Søvsø and Claus Feveile for valuable help and discussions. Henrik Brinch Christiansen created the reconstruction of the board game Hnefatafl in Photoshop. Furthermore, we thank Kenneth C. Ritchie for the translation.

Notes

- 1 Ribe county, Skast district, Esbjerg parish, sb.nr. 170 (190503-170); <https://www.kulturarv.dk/fundogfortidsminder/Lokalitet/75882/>
- 2 The excavation is registered as ESM 2249. Report by Kasper H. Søsted and Palle Siemen. Excavation in 1997 was by Kasper H. Søsted and Ulla Mejdahl while Palle Siemen excavated the site in 1999.
- 3 ESM 1917 (190503-30; <https://www.kulturarv.dk/fundogfortidsminder/Lokalitet/164425/>); Report written by Hemming Zaramella Hansen and Palle Siemen. ESM 1358 (190503-256; <https://www.kulturarv.dk/fundogfortidsminder/Lokalitet/117425/>); Dated to the Late Roman Iron Age/Early Germanic Iron Age. SJM 382 (190503-331; <https://www.kulturarv.dk/fundogfortidsminder/Lokalitet/214308/>); Dated to the Late Roman Iron Age/Early Germanic Iron Age. Report written by Sarah Qvistgaard and Claus Feveile. SJM 979 (190503-368; <https://www.kulturarv.dk/fundogfortidsminder/Lokalitet/241182/>); Dated to the Late Roman Iron Age/Early Germanic Iron Age and excavated under the leadership of Tobias Danborg Torfing.
- 4 The interpretation is by the authors based on Anette Adomat's drawing juxtaposed with a photo of 2/2 twill textile from Mannering 2017, 16.
- 5 SJM 949 x35, kindly shared by Claus Feveile; <http://sol.sydvestjyskemuseer.dk/?mode=detail&genstandsnr=200360395&side=2&antal=21&indexno=35&search=sjm%20949&sid=2c079756e61c634fb06a80c4b53354e6&tt=43>). FF 239820.

References

- Adomat, A., 2001. *Konserveringsrapport ESM 2249*. KRR Jour.nr: 99091. Esbjerg Museum.
- Almgren, O., 1897. *Studien über Nordeuropäische Fibelformen der ersten nachchristlichen Jahrhunderte*. Stockholm: Ivar Hæggström.
- Andersson, K., 1993. *Romartida guldsmide i Norden*. Occasional Papers in Archaeology 6. Uppsala: Societas Archaeologica Upsaliensis.
- Becker, A., 2008. Die Metallbeschlagenen germanischen Holzeimer der römischen Kaiserzeit. *Jahrbuch der Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseum Mainz* 53, 2006, 345-520.

- Becker, M., 2001. Das „Fürstengrab“ von Gommern. In: M. Sailer, A. Roeder, M. Becker and S. Fröhlich, eds. *Gold für die Ewigkeit: das germanische Fürstengrab von Gommern*. Halle (Saale). Landesamt für Archäologie Sachsen-Anhalt, 108-214.
- Beckmann, C., 1969. *Metallfingerringe der römischen Kaiserzeit im freien Germanien*. Saalburg Jahrbuch 26, 5-106.
- Biborski, M. and Ilkjær, J., 2006. *Illerup Ådal. Die Schwerter*. Jysk Arkæologisk Selskabs Skrifter nr. 25: 11-12. Højbjerg: Jysk Arkæologisk Selskab.
- Blankenfeldt, R., 2015. *Das Thorsberger Moor Bd. 2: Die persönlichen Ausrüstungen*. Schleswig: Verein zur Förderung des Archäologischen Landesmuseums e. V.
- Boye, L., 2009. Catalogue of the Burial Site. In: L. Boye and U. Lund Hansen, eds. *Wealth and Prestige. An Analysis of Rich Graves from Late Roman Iron Age on Eastern Zealand, Denmark*. Studier i Astro-nomi, Nyere Tid, Arkæologi vol. II. Kroppedal, 263-268.
- Carnap-Bornheim, C. von, 1997. *Neue Forschungen zu den beiden Zierscheiben aus dem Thorsberger Moorfund*. Germania 75, 69-99.
- Carnap-Bornheim, C. von, 2003. The ornamental belts from Ejsbøl Bog and Neudorf-Bornstein. In: L. Jørgensen, B. Storgaard and L.G. Thomsen, eds. *The Spoils of Victory. The North in the shadow of the Roman Empire*. Copenhagen: The National Museum, 240-245.
- Carnap-Bornheim, C. von and Ilkjær, J., 1996. *Illerup Ådal. Die Prachtausrüstungen*. Jysk Arkæologisk Selskabs Skrifter nr. 25: 5-8. Højbjerg: Jysk Arkæologisk Selskab.
- Duff, J.W. and Duff, A.M., 1935. *Minor Latin Poets*. Loeb Classical Library. London: Heinemann.
- Engelhardt, C., 1865. *Nydam Mosefund*. Sønderjyske Mosefund Bd. II. København.
- Engelhardt, C., 1869. *Vimose fundet*. Fynske Mosefund nr. II. København.
- Engelhardt, A., 1871. Romerske statuetter og andre kunstgjendstande fra den tidlige nordiske jernalder. *Aarbøger for Nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie* 1871, 432-454.
- Engelhardt, C., 1873. Valløby Fundet. *Aarbøger for Nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie* 1873, 285-320.
- Ethelberg, P., 1990. *Hjemsted 2 – tre gravpladser fra 3 og 4 årh. e. Kr.* Haderslev: Museumsrådet for Sønderjyllands amt.
- Ethelberg, P., 1992. Hjartbro – et våbengravsfund fra 3. årh. fra Sønderjylland. *Aarbøger for Nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie* 1991, s. 111-122.
- Ethelberg, P., 2009. Die Fibeln. In: L. Boye and U. Lund Hansen, eds. *Wealth and Prestige. An Analysis of Rich Graves from Late Roman Iron Age on Eastern Zealand, Denmark*. Studier i Astronomi, Nyere Tid, Arkæologi vol. II. Kroppedal, 15-36.

- Fonnesbech-Sandberg, E., 2002. Romerske spillebrikker og andet import i en sjællandsk fyrstegrav. In: J. Pind et al., red. *Drik – og du vil leve skønt. Festskrift til Ulla Lund Hansen på 60-årsdagen 18. August 2002*. PNM, Publications from the National Museum, Studies in Archaeology and History 7. København: Nationalmuseet, 211-215.
- Frandsen, L.B. and Westphal, J., 1996. De stenrige grave i Billum – jordfæstegrave fra ældre romersk jernalder. *Mark og Montre. Årbog for Ribe Amts Museer* 1996, 48-53.
- Hansen, H.J., 1990. Dankirke. Jernalderboplads og rigdomscenter. Oversigt over udgravningerne 1965-70. *Kuml* 1988-89, 201-247.
- Henriksen, M.B., 2009. *Brudager Mark – en romertidsgravplads nær Gudme på Sydøstfyn*. Fynske Jernaldergrave bd. 6: I-II. Fynske Studier bd. 22. Odense: Odense Bys Museer.
- Hoss, S., 2013. A theoretical approach to Roman military belts. *Journal of Roman Equipment Studies*, Papers presented on the XVIIth Roman Military Equipment Conference in Zagreb, May 2010, 317-326.
- Hvass, S., 1979. Jernalderlandsbyerne ved Vorbasse. *Nationalmuseets Arbejdsmark* 1979, 105-112.
- Ilkjær, J., 1990. *Illerup Ådal 1-2. Die Lanzen und Speere*. Jysk Arkæologisk Selskabs Skrifter 25:1-2. Højbjerg: Jysk Arkæologisk Selskab.
- Ilkjær, J., 2001. *Illerup Ådal. Die Schilde*. Jysk Arkæologisk Selskabs Skrifter nr 25: 9-10. Højbjerg: Jysk Arkæologisk Selskab.
- Iversen, R., 2011. Ellekilde – en gravplads fra yngre romersk jernalder med fyrstegrav og cirkusbægre. *Aarbøger for Nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie* 2009, 69-120.
- Jensen, S., 1991. Dankirke-Ribe. Fra handelsgård til handelsplads. In: P. Mortensen and B.M. Rasmussen, eds. *Fra Stamme til Stat i Danmark*. 2. Høvdingesamfund og Kongemagt. Højbjerg: Jysk Arkæologisk Selskab, 73-88.
- Jørgensen, L., 1988. Family Burial Practices and Inheritance Systems. The Development of an Iron Age Society from 500 BC to AD 1000 on Bornholm, Denmark. *Acta Archaeologica* 58, 1987, 17-53.
- Karg, S., 2001. *NNU-rapport for Novrup (J.nr. ESM 2249), j.nr. NNU A 8170*. København.
- Krüger, T., 1982. Das Brett- und Würfelspiel im freien Germanien. *Neue Ausgrabungen und Forschungen in Niedersachsen* 15, 135-324.
- Lindene Nielsen, J., 1975. Aspekter af det førromerske våbengravsmiljø i Jylland. *Hikuin* 2, 89-96.
- Lund Hansen, U., 1987. *Römischer Import im Norden. Warenaustausch zwischen dem Römischen Reich und dem freien Germanien während der Kaiserzeit unter besonderer Berücksichtigung Nordeuropas*. Nordiske Fortidsminder Ser. B Nr. 10. København: Det kongelige nordiske oldsagselskab.
- Lund Hansen, U., 2009. Holzeimer. In: L. Boye and U. Lund Hansen, eds. *Wealth and Prestige. An Analysis of Rich Graves from Late Roman Iron Age on Eastern Zealand, Denmark*. Studier i Astronomi, Nyere Tid, Arkæologi vol. II. Kroppedal, 177-183.

- Lund Hansen, U. et. al., 1995. *Himlingøje – Seeland – Europa. Ein Gräberfeld der jüngeren römischen Kaiserzeit auf Seeland, seine Bedeutung und internationalen Beziehungen*. Nordiske Fortidsminder, Serie B, bind 13. København: Det kongelige Nordiske Oldskriftselskab.
- Lund Hansen, U., forthcoming: *The grave fields of the Jutland Late Roman Iron Age village Vorbasse. Burial custom, society and social structure, textile production, contacts, and war*. Nordiske Fortidsminder. København: Det kongelige Nordiske Oldskriftselskab.
- Mackeprang, M.B., 1943. *Kulturbeziehungen im nordischen Raum des 3.-5. Jahrhunderts*. Hamburger Schr. Vorgesch. u. germ. Frühgesch. Leipzig.
- Mannering, U., 2017. 'Forhistorisk dragt'. In: U. Mannering, ed. *Arkæologisk tekstilforskning. Baggrund og ny viden*. København: Københavns Universitet, 4-43.
- Martens, J., 2002: The Introduction of the Weapon Burial Rite in Southern Scandinavia during the Late Pre-Roman Iron Age. In: C. von Carnap-Bornheim, J. Ilkjær, A. Kokowski and P. Łuczkiwicz, eds. *Bewaffnung der germanen und ihrer Nachbarn in den letzten Jahrhunderten vor Christi Geburt*. Akten der Internationalen Tagung in Nałęczów, 23. bis 25. September 1999. Lublin, 229-265.
- Matešić, S., 2015. *Das Thorsberger Moor Band 3: Die militärischen Ausrüstungen. Vergleichende Untersuchungen zur römischen und germanischen Bewaffnung*. Schleswig: Verein zur Förderung des Archäologischen Landesmuseums e.V.
- Matschoss, A., 2007. Kaiserzeitliche Beigaben von Brettspielobjekten im Barbaricum. *Ethnographisch-Archäologische Zeitschrift* 48, 465-498.
- Michaelsen, K.K., 1992. *Bræt og brik. Spil i jernalderen*. Højbjerg: Wormianum.
- Møller, N.A., 2016. *Udgravningsberetning fra SJM 455 Sneum Kirkevej*. Sydvestjyske Museer.
- Nørgård Jørgensen, A. and Andersen, H.C.H., 2014. *Ejsbøl Mose. Die Kriegsbeuteopfer im Moor von Ejsbøl aus dem späten 1. Jh.v.Chr. bis zum frühen 5.Jh.n.Chr.* Jysk Arkæologisk Selskabs Skrifter 80. Højbjerg: Jysk Arkæologisk Selskab.
- Pauli Jensen, X., 2008. *Våben fra Vimose – bearbejdning og tolkning af et gammelkendt fund*. Ph.d. dissertation from the University of Copenhagen, Saxo Institute. Vol.1-2. Copenhagen: University of Copenhagen.
- Pauli Jensen, X., 2015. Krig, kult og kontakter. Våbengrave og romersk militærimport i ældre jernalder. In: P. Foss and N.A. Møller, eds. *De dødes landskab – Grav og gravsik i ældre jernalder i Danmark*. Arkæologiske Skrifter 13. København, 269-281.
- Pauli Jensen, X., 2017. A World of Warcraft – Warrior identities in Roman Iron Age Scandinavia. In: S. González Sánchez and A. Guglielmi, eds. *'Romans' and 'barbarians' beyond the frontiers: Archaeology, Ideology and Identities in the North*. TRAC 2014. Oxford, s. 70-82.
- Przybyła, M.J., 2005. Ein Prachtgürtel aus dem Grab 1 von Wrocław-Zakrzów (Sakrau). Ein Rekonstruktionsversuch. *Archäologisches Korrespondenzblatt* 35, 105-122.

- Przybyła, M.J., 2016. Eine Insel der Pazifisten im Meer der Krieger? Anmerkungen zu einem Grabinventar von Aasø, Seeland. *Præhistorische Zeitschrift* 91/1, 149-201.
- Przybyła, M.J., 2018. *Pressblechverzeirte spätkaiserzeitliche Trachtbestandteile in Südkandinavien*. Nordiske Fortidsminder Serie B, bind 28. København: The Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries.
- Rasmussen, B.M., 1995. Brokær. Ein Reichtumszentrum der römischen Kaiserzeit in Südwestjütland. *Acta Archaeologica* vol. 66, 39-109.
- Rau, A., 2010. *Nydam Mose. Die personengebundenen Gegenstände. Grabungen 1989-1999*. Bd. 1-2. Jernalderen i Nordeuropa. Jysk Arkæologisk Selskabs Skrifter 72. Højbjerg: Jysk Arkæologisk Selskab.
- Rau, A., 2012. Das nördliche Barbaricum zur Zeit der Krise des 3. Jahrhundert n. Chr.: Einige kritische Anmerkungen zur Diskussion über provinzialrömisch-nordeuropäische Verbindungen. In: T. Fischer, ed. *Die Krise des 3. Jahrhunderts n. Chr. und das Gallische Sonderreich*. Akten des Interdisziplinären Kolloquiums Xanten 26. bis 28. Februar 2009. Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 343-430.
- Ringtved, J., 1988. Jyske gravfund fra yngre romertid og ældre germansk jernalder. Tendenser i samfundsudviklingen. *KUML* 1986, 95-232.
- Schach-Dörges, H., 1997. Zusammengesülte und vermengte Menschen. In: K. Fuchs et al., eds. *Die Alamannen*. Ausstellungskatalog Archäologischen Landesmuseum Baden-Württemberg. Stuttgart, 79-102.
- Schulz, W., 1933. *Das Fürstengrab und das Grabfeld von Hassleben*. Römisch-Germanische Forschungen 7. Berlin: W. de Gruyter.
- Schulz, W., 1953. *Leuna, Ein germanischer Bestattungsort der spätrömischen Kaiserzeit*. Deutsche Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, Schriften der Sektion für Vor- und Frühgeschichte 1. Berlin: Akademie Verlag.
- Siemen, P., 1987. *ESM 1566 Jens Kusks vej. Fundberetning*. Esbjerg Museum.
- Siemen, P., 2009. *Sen yngre stenalder i Sydvestjylland. Arkæologiske Rapporter fra Esbjerg Museum* 4.1. Sydvestjyske Museer.
- Siemen, P. and Stoumann, I., 1996. 'Grave og samfund'. In: I. Stoumann, ed. *Esbjergs Historie 1. Tiden inden 1850. Før byen kom*. Esbjerg: Esbjerg byråd, 103-158.
- Slomann, W., 1959. *Sætrangfunnet*. Norske Oldfunn IX. Oslo: Rolf Rannem.
- Stjernquist, B., 1955. *Simris, On Cultural Connections of Scania in the Roman Iron Age*. Acta Archaeologica Lundensia, Series in 4, N 2, Lund: Berlingska Boktryckeriet.
- Storgaard, B., 1990. Årslev-fundet – et fynsk gravfund fra slutningen af yngre romersk jernalder. *Aarbøger for Nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie* 1990, 23-58.

- Storgaard, B., 2003. 'Cosmopolitan aristocrats'. In: L. Jørgensen, B. Storgaard and L.G. Thomsen, eds. *The Spoils of Victory. The North in the shadow of the Roman Empire*. Copenhagen: The National Museum, 106-125.
- Stoumann, I., 2009. *Ryttergraven fra Grimstrup. Og andre vikingetidsgrave ved Esbjerg*. Arkæologiske Rapporter fra Esbjerg Museum 5. Esbjerg: Sydvestjyske Museer.
- Søsted, K.H. and P. Siemen, P., 2003. *ESM 2249 Novrup VI. Fundberetning*. Esbjerg Museum.
- Thomas, S., 1967. *Die germanischen Scheibenfibeln der römischen Kaiserzeit im freien Germanien*. Berliner Jahrbuch für Vor- und Frühgeschichte 7, 1-187.
- Thomsen, P.O., Blæsild, B., Hardt, N. and Michaelsen, K.K., 1993. *Lundeborg – en handelsplads fra jernalderen*. Svendborg: Svendborg & Omegns Museum.
- Thorvildsen, E., 1972. Dankirke. *Nationalmuseets Arbejdsmark* 1972, 47-60.
- Thrane, H., 1993. *Guld, Guder og Godtfolk. Et magtcentrum fra jernalderen ved Gudme og Lundeborg*. Odense.
- Wegewitz, W., 1941. Die Scheibenfibel von Tangendorf im Kr. Harburg. *Die Kunde* 4, 36-41.
- Werner, J., 1956. *Beiträge zur Archäologie des Attila-Reiches*. Abhandl. Bay. Akad. Wiss. Phil.-Histo. Kl. N. F. H. 38. München.
- Werner, J., 1966. *Das Aufkommen von Bild und Schrift in Nordeuropa*. Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften Philosophisch-Historische Klasse, Sitzungsberichte 4, 3-39.
- Wistoft, B.V., 1978. Viktoria fra Ribe. *Mark og Montre. Fra Sydvestjyske Museer* 1978, 12-15.
- Ørsnes, M., 1988. *Ejsbøl I. Våffenopferfunde des 4.-5. Jahrh. nach Chr.* Nordiske Fortidsminder Serie B, vol. 11. København: Nationalmuseet.