

LEG? PLAY?

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Leg?

Jeg står ved kanten af udgravningen. Den unge kvinde skraber med hurtige, præcise bevægelser millimeter efter millimeter ned i det mørke lag. Hun benytter en træspatel. En gang i mellem lader hun sin pegefinger forsigtigt beføle de steder, der frigøres af spatelen.

Jeg ved det ikke så præcist, men jeg tror kun jeg var borte et øjeblik. Jeg lod tankerne bringe mig tilbage til vores leg i sanddyngen ved gavlen af fødehjemmet. Den hvidkalkede mur. Det bløde, varme sand. Min far der hakkede ukrudt oppe mellem grøntsagerne.

Under det yderste løse, tørre, varme sand blev sandet vådt, og her var det muligt at udgrave små tunneler og veje til de små legetøjsbiler. Vi skulle være forsigtige. Sandet virkede ustabil. Pludselig kunne det hele styrte sammen, og vores biler var dækket af sand.

Måske var det slet ikke leg? Vi kunne være lige så koncentrerede og målrettede som den unge arkæolog, der nede i gravfeltet minutiøst arbejdede med sit projekt.

Arkæologien er jo videnskaben, der studerer fortidens kulturer på baggrund af udgravninger og fund. Den unge kvinde er arkæologi-studerende. Hun er nu tæt på bunden cirka tredive centimeter under det sted, hvor hun startede. Hun fortæller, at hun startede med udgravningen af denne grav for en og en halv uge siden! Det kræver tålmodighed at være arkæolog!

Området er først blevet ryddet for det allerøverste lag jord og vegetation. Det blev udført ved hjælp af en større gravemaskine.

Dernæst startede arbejdet med skovle. Mørke felter og store sten fortæller, hvor de enkelte grave er,

og nu starter arbejdet med små håndværktøj.

Først er det en murske, og nu er de lag nået, hvor det er det minutiøse arbejde med spatel og hånd-detektorer, der er nødvendige for, at de skrøbelige efterladenskaber i form af menneskeknogler, potter og smykker ikke lider skade ved udgravningen. Med korte mellemrum sprayer graveoverfladen med vand for at opnå den nødvendige konsistens i gravefeltet. Når en potte er fundet, frigøres en hel blok af jord omkring genstanden, og den bringes ind på specielle laboratorier til nærmere undersøgelse og rengøring.

Vi befinder os ved den store jernaldergravplads ved landsbyen Vaarst i Østhimmerland. Her i juni 2022 er der taget hul på en ny udgravning i de grave, der er vurderet til at stamme tilbage fra perioden cirka år 200-550 efter Kristi fødsel.

Play?

I am standing at the edge of the excavation. With fast, precise movements, the young woman scrapes millimetre after millimetre into the dark layer. She uses a wooden spatula. Occasionally, she lets her index finger gently feel the areas released by the spatula.

I am not sure, but I think I only was gone for a moment. I had sunk into myself. I let my thoughts bring me back to our play in the heap of sand at the house end of my childhood home. The whitewashed wall. The soft, warm sand. My dad, who weeds between the vegetables.

Under the extreme loose, dry, hot sand, the sand became wet, and down here it was possible to excavate small tunnels and roads for our small toy cars. We had to be careful. The sand seemed unstable. Suddenly, it could all come crashing down and our cars were covered in sand.

Maybe it was not a play at all? We could be as concentrated and determined as the young archaeologist who, down in the burial excavation, meticulously was working on her project.

The archaeology is the science that studies the cultures of the past based on excavations and finds. The young woman is an archaeology student. Now, she is near the bottom about thirty centimetres below the level, where she started. She says she started excavating this tomb one and a half week ago! It takes patience to be an archaeologist!

First, the very top layer of soil and vegetation has been cleared. It was carried out using a larger excavator.

Next, the work started using shovels. The dark areas and large stones tell where the individual graves are located, and now the work starts with small hand tools.

First, they are using a trowel, and now the layers have been reached, where it is the meticulous work with spatula and hand-detectors which is necessary so that the fragile remains like human bones, pots and jewelry do not suffer damage during the excavation. At short intervals, the digging surface is sprayed with water to obtain the necessary consistency in the digging field. When a pot is found, a whole block of soil is released around the object, and it is brought into special laboratories for closer examination and cleaning.

We are at the large Iron Age burial site at the village of Vaarst in East Himmerland. In June 2022, a new excavation has begun in the graves that have been estimated to date back to the period approximately year 200-550 after the birth of Christ.



Vaarst, Østhimmerland, juni 2022

The village, Vaarst, East Himmerland, June 2022



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KOLOFON

*Ugens foto: Leg?
Af Keld Jensen*

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COLOPHON

*Photo of the week: Play?
By Keld Jensen*

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