

Brændt og destrueret

Sekundære offerlag i vikingetidsgrave

In inhumation graves from the Viking Age we often encounter a dark layer containing charcoal, burned bones and destroyed objects covering the buried individual. From other studies we know that the burned, and sometimes crushed, bones in this layer not only contains bones from different animals, but also from humans. This has led to several questions about the rituals concerning the burials from this period and what this secondary sacrificial layer may have represented. It seems that it is not only the deceased that has been in focus during the burial but also the ritual surrounding the filling of the grave and production of this layer. With the starting point in the graves from Svinninge, in West Zealand, this secondary and sacrificial layer in the graves will be discussed in this article in the hope of starting a discussion around the thoughts, traditions and rituals that make the foundation for this layer as the end-product, which is what we encounter in archaeology.