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Reviewed Article:

Varus and the Lost Legions in Sagnlandet Lejre - A Re-enactment Success?

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In July 2009 a battle took place in Sagnlandet Lejre, in the heart of Zealand in Denmark. The battle was a dramatized re-enactment of the historical battle of Teutoburg forest in Niedersachsen in the year 9 AD - also known as the Varus Battle. Why should such a re-enactment event take place in Denmark - over 100 kilometres from the presumed site of the historic battle? And why was this event different from the hundreds of other re-enacted battles that take place all over Europe every summer? And the most important question - was

the event a success and by what criteria should the success of a re-enactment event be measured? In this article a number of dilemmas, which are invariably linked with attempting to re-enact specific historic events for a modern audiences, are discussed and the event "Varus and the Lost Legions" as it took place in 2009, forms the centre point.

> All in all the story of this 2000 year old war was understood. Humour was used as a means of communication and yet many visitors expressed that they had been struck by the harshness of the Romans and the brutality and quantity of the massacre.

Aside from the daily work with research, education and presentation of the past Sagnlandet Lejre work with two-year themes, the aim of which are to generate new knowledge and know-how for all employees in the centre and thus expand our experience and the experiences we offer to our visitors. The theme for 2009 and 2010 was "War and Conflict" - a side of the past, which cannot be over looked and has indeed shaped the world as we know it. However it is a theme the centre had only given sporadic attention until 2009. A brainstorm meeting was held among the many creative and imaginative employees of the centre and a crazy idea was born. 2009 was the 2000 year jubilee for the battle of Teutoburg Forest in year 9, a cataclysmic event which is practically unknown in Denmark, in spite of its world altering consequences. The crazy idea became a challenge - to re-enact the battle of Teutoburg forest in Sagnlandet Lejre!

The Beginning

An Ambitious Concept

As project manager, researcher and, as it turn out, scriptwriter the task fell to me to shape the event. Having experienced and assisted at a number of similar events like the Moesgaard Viking Market and the battle of Trelleborg, I had some experiences in the field and with experiences comes a drive to do as well as others, if not even better. As an archaeologist working in the field of re-enactment, it is always necessary to have as high a standard of authenticity as possible. Furthermore it is vital for me to ensure that the audiences of such an event to not only have dazzling or impressive experiences of the past, but actually to acquire concrete knowledge of history and its effect on our lives today. Creating a re-enactment event in a location like Sagnlandet, which is famous for its high standards of authenticity, only adds to the need of portraying the past as realistically as possible. However, as I am sure many of my colleagues in the field of re-enactment will agree, it is also vital to create events which are colourful, exciting and thrilling if we are to succeed in attracting an audience. Size matters and conveying the feeling of being part of the events and face to face with the past are effective means of achieving this end. Universally thrilling themes like war, battle and drama are in effect means to make dry historical facts become more edible to a modern audience. In a sense this is indeed the core to re-enactment - making history LIVE and alive. Can a colourful re-enacted event be combined with high standards of authenticity? Well, the attempt was

made with the following concept of "Varus and The Lost Legions".

The aims of the event

- The event should be a new kind of re-enactment in Sagnlandet, where a concrete and relatively well documented historic event is presented. The sources are written classical sources from antiquity concerning the event or the people involved in the event, combined with archaeological evidence from the 1st century and finds from the supposed battlefield at Kalkriese in Niedersachsen. Hence the idea is to let there be a direct link between the source material and the experience of the audience, creating an all-encompassing experiences of the events in year 9, which changed the history of the world.
- Instead of leaving the historical concept and the plot of the re-enactment event to the re-enactment groups invited to perform the event, Sagnlandet would undertake the serious task of research for this event, write a scenario and attempt to control the proceedings of the event in as authentic a way as possible. As we are dealing with an historic event it is our task to ensure a realistic interpretation of life and society in the 1st century, the German warriors, roman soldiers and civilians as well as the accuracy of the battle itself.
- Also it is the aim of this event to create as full an experience of walking into the year 9 as possible, by showing as many sides to the life on both sides of the conflict as possible - camp life, building of fortifications, battle and training techniques, diplomacy and rebellion, household chores, trading and food sales, the religious part of warfare, infantry and cavalry, fashion and equipment specific to either Romans or Germans, civilian life versus military life, guerrilla warfare verses organized military systems etc.

The Pedagogical aim of the event

- more than just creating a popular event with our audience, a new and hopefully more authentic type of re-enactment event in Sagnlandet, there were also another set of ambitions behind the event. These ambitions were linked with wanting to take up an unpleasant and yet to many people very exciting theme - war and conflict. The purpose of doing this was:

- To debate war in words, action and consequences - why does it happen in history and now.
- To use the attraction of the excitement of battle to create reflection on the more serious sides to war.
- To use the abstract nature of a 2000 year old event to "cushion the blow" of debating so horrible a theme. That a massacre happened 2000 years ago is easier to handle then a war in our own times.

Due to a successful fundraising campaign, the financial support from the Region Zealand, the municipality of Lejre and a hand full of local sponsorships the vast research work began. The

task at hand was to clarify what the historic events of the battle actually were and where the "good story" was - meaning how a dramatic - audience appealing - but realistic plot could be constructed from the historic data.

The elements of the Event and the presentation method

In order to fully describe the work method that was involved in this event, it is important to state what communicative techniques were used and how the event was structured.

1. STEPPING INTO THE LIFE AND TIMES of Roman soldiers and Barbarian warriors through...
   - An experience for all senses - seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, tasting, trying out the past.
   - Direct dialog between 2000 year old individuals and the audience (meaning that the role playing characters can communicate both in character and "step out of the part" and talk about the past as living exhibits. The method used is characteristic to Sagnlandet Lejre and has been part of our concept for more than 30 years).
2. THE DRAMA OF THE BATTLE - told through scenes derived from the history, played out by the main authentic characters involved in the battle. The complex and interwoven relations of the characters create...
   - An exotic (thrilling) and yet familiar world.
   - A Classic epic tale - with "point of no return", "final stands" and all the elements of a dramatic story.
   - An exciting Drama - between stereotypical dramatic characters - the young lovers, the old patriarch, the ambitious women, the instigator of trouble, the hero, the villain, the betrayer et cetera.
3. THE HISTORY BEHIND THE EVENT - told through the show itself, and through back ground information told in three media...
   - The Narrator - As the final battle is played out the goings on are commented on by a skilled storyteller, giving the background story of the event and leading the audience through the plot.
   - A short account of the original battle written in the program and on Sagnlandets website.
   - The longer and more complex ethnical, geographical, political and historical story behind the battle is told through a small exhibition at the entrance to the playing area - what happened before and what were the consequences of the battle and what was the story of the individual main characters and what does history tell us about them.

...But before we go on it is perhaps prudent to give a short account of the actual historical data of the original historic Varus battle

What was historic Varus battle and why was it so important?

One of the most important battles in History was fought in year 9 A.D. Approximately 20,000 Roman legionaries and auxiliaries lead by the Roman general Publius Quintilius Varus were defeated by a force of barbarian tribe warriors, lead by the Germanic chief and roman vassal Arminius, after a week long series of ambushes, near the Teutoburg Forest in the north western part of what is known as Germany today. The defeat was so catastrophic that the Roman Empire was in a shock. From that time on, the Romans gave up conquering the rest of Europe, and the Rhine formed the border between the Roman world and the warrior tribes in Northern Europe. The Varus battle, as it has since been called, divided Europe into two cultures which have echoed in world history. One is the Romanized part, such as France, Italy and Spain, which is characterized by the Roman way of living. The other is a more Germanic-oriented part consisting of among others Germany, Denmark and Poland. These parts never became part of the Roman Empire and developed in contrast to Romanized Europe. Epochal wars followed in the wake of the Romans' defeat. Napoleon and Hitler both tried to conquer the other half of Europe. Thereby, the Varus battle and the events that followed in its wake formed an important part of shaping the Europe of today. (This paragraph was featured in the program and a much elaborated version was shown in the exhibition of the historical back ground)

The written sources

The sources to the Varus battle are questionable, but in comparison to other 2000 year old events the sources are numerous and on the whole believable. Four Roman sources describe the battle specifically and the battle is furthermore referred to in Roman poetry due to the epic character of the defeat. The four writers are Vellius Patercullus, Florus, Cornelius Tacitus and Cassius Dio. Generally the sources contain many varying accounts to the same events, but are in agreement on the identity of the main characters and the result of the final battle - the annihilation of legions 17, 18 and 19 of the Imperial Roman Army. Furthermore the writers agree on 1) That the leader of the upraising Arminius was a trusted vassal of General Varus , 2) Varus was warned of the coming ambush by the Germanic chief Segestes, 3) Varus' rule in the provinces was unpopular, if not hated and 4) Varus was reckless in ignoring the warning of the coming rebellion.

The use of the sources is problematic. Only Roman accounts exist, the accounts are highly moralizing, none of the writers were eyewitnesses to the events and all writers follow each other and could therefore well have written their accounts on the basis of their predecessors'. Cassius Dio has the most detailed account of the proceedings of the battle, but writes almost 200 years after the event.

The event as it was

Four re-enactment groups, the challenges of the modern audience and a lot of compromise

Four re-enactment groups were ultimately involved in the event. The Germanic or barbarian

warriors - Arminius army consisted of Prindsens Hverving - a unique Iron Age group portraying Iron Age weapons use, combat, equestrian battle and daily life. Prindsens Hverving have more than 40 years of experience with full contact battle and show fighting and have been a permanent part of the program in Sagnlandet for many years. The Roman Legionaries under General Varus consisted of the newly formed and first Danish Roman re-enactment group Legion VI Vitrix Cohors II Cimbria - the group focus on accurate portrayal of the Roman Legionaries and military camps, Roman battle formations and marching orders and the civilian life of traders, craftsmen, women and children that followed Roman Legions in the field. Until Varus and the Lost Legions Legion VI had done very little man to man fighting. The third group was formed by a few especially invited trades people to simulate Germanic traders that would also have followed the legions on campaign. The function of these to was partly to create a more populated and full scenery but also to, create an opportunity for the audiences to trade with the re-enactors and to taste both Germanic foods and Roman delicacies. The last group consisted of Sagnlandets own staff and volunteers in period costume. This group assisted in making hands-on activities for the children like warrior practice, archery et cetera.

In order to create cooperation between these different groups a vast number of compromises were made- both in relation to authenticity and the quantities of soldiers and equipment which was initially envisioned. Another great concern was to make the rather complex ethnical, political, geographical and historical story of the Varus battle known to a Danish Audience, to many of whom Roman and Iron Age history in general is very vague if not completely mixed up with the more popular idea of the Vikings. Numerous compromises were made on this account too - too many in fact to be listed here. But a few examples should be mentioned. As one group was fully battle trained and the other had no fighting experience what so ever, the actual fight scenes of the event were somewhat limited and formation battles were largely given up in preference to one on one battles. Sagnlandets Iron Age Village was also given a part in the storyline of the plot providing the civilian the setting for the Germanic environment that Varus ruled over. Mixing together the geography of both a reconstructed Danish village and a purely hypothetical local Iron Age community in the Kalkriese area 2000 years ago, can be said to be something of a generalization, but created a very recognizable atmosphere enhancing frame for the audience. Another exception from historic fact was that it clearly became evident was that the Germanic Warriors had to be referred to as Barbarians (The ancient Roman term for all no Romans) because the term Germanic has a negative ring to many Danes. The Germanic tribes of the 1st century may have included warriors from today's Denmark, but this is a fact which is again unknown to Danish audience at large. So in order not to confuse the narrative of the event with post world war 2 issues, the compromise was made to call the Germans barbarians - hence the barbarian camp.

The setting of the event

The four groups form a show area comprising a Roman camp and a Barbarian camp next door to each other as a vassal or auxiliary camp would have been to the legionaries, the Iron Age village of Lethra and the arena, a natural amphitheatre. The area was separated from the rest of the centre by a gate, thus creating a gateway between modern facilities like toilets, café etc. and the playing area. In short the situation in the playing area at the outset of the event can be described as follows.

- In the Iron Age Village Lethra the farmers are under Roman rule and submit to paying taxes to Rome.
- Two groups of soldiers are situated in the valley outside, the Roman Legionary fortress and the barbarian warrior camp.
- The two camps are allies…so far.
- The Roman camp is governed by General Varus and his wife the noble Claudia Pulchra.
- The barbarian camp led by the Germanic Cheruscian chief Arminius and his Girlfriend Tusnelda.
- Between the two camps Segestes roams, a turn coat character who is Germanic but loyal to the Romans … at first.

The historic characters and their importance to the plot

The following paragraphs were featured in the program all of the audience received upon arrival. It attempted to link the dramatic characters of the event as closely to the historic account of them as possible and I can only encourage the readers of this article to seek out the sources themselves, as the historic persons involved in the battle and its aftermath make for an exciting read. However it is true that the motivation of the characters is mostly down to our own interpretation and with regards to the two female characters little is really known about them then other than their fates after the battle -that they should have played a part in the actual events of the battle is an interpretation of ours to create a more fully dramatic plot and a less unisexual experience for the audience.

- **Main characters in ”Varus and the lost legions”**
  Based on historic events and authentic people
- **Procurator and General Varus**
  Powerful General Publius Quintilius Varus’ career is characterised by politics and the military. He used to be consul in Rome and procurator in North Africa. Now, he wants to oppress the barbarians by Roman law, however, he also rather leans towards tough punishments. In Varus’ eyes, barbarian habits are primitive, and he thinks that barbarians should be grateful that he is introducing Roman law and order.
- **Cheruscian chief and allied Roman knight Arminius**
  Young Arminius is chief of the barbarian tribe Cheruscians but was brought up by

Romans. His rank - Equites - is the third highest rank within the Roman Empire. He is, however, in a dilemma between his own people and the Romans. Arminius is a young charismatic leader. Within a short while, the tribe heads will gather around him and demand a rebellion against the Romans.

- Procuratoress Claudia Pulchra of the Imperial Family
  Claudia Pulchra or 'beautiful little Claudia' is a lady of important dimensions. Being the daughter of the Emperor Augustus' niece she is only three steps away from the highest power in the Roman Empire. She is married to General Varus and has chosen to follow her husband to the barbarians' land. She has one mission – helping these primitive people to a civilised (Roman) life.
- Cheruscian chief Segestes
  Not unlike Arminius, Segestes is chief of the barbarian Cheruscian tribe. However, there is no doubt in his mind about where his loyalty ought to be. Segestes has become a rich man under the reign of the Romans., Segestes intends to stay good friends with the Romans at any price, even though quite a few barbarians mockingly call him "Toga-wearer" and "Roman-lover".
- Cheruscian princess Tusnelda
  Tusnelda is the daughter of Segestes but does not share her father's love for the Romans. She is proud of her people and respected by her tribe. Tusnelda hates the Romans for their atrocities and will do all in her power to regain the barbarians' freedom. She is in love with Arminius and has great plans for his future.

The programme

Tuesday 7 – Saturday 11 July at 10-17

- Experience today's dramatic scenes from Varus and the lost legions.
- Enjoy camp life among the colourful Romans and ardent barbarians.
- Meet women, children, slaves and craftsmen in the warrior camps.
- Make a deal with a travelling shopkeeper.
- Learn more of the history behind the Varus battle through the small exhibition.

Food as it was 2000 years ago

- Buy iron-age grill food, cold ancient beer and apple juice in the Barbar's tavern.
- Get a taste of Roman delicacies in the Tavern – samples from 11.30 – 12.30 and 13.30 – 14.30.

Activities in the Warrior tent – 10.00 – 14.00

- Try holding a copy of one of the 2000-year-old swords, javelins, shields, etc.
- Be equipped as a genuine Roman legionary or a barbarian warrior.

Arms show and warrior training – 10.15 – 10.45 and 12.00 13.00

- Listen to amazing stories about the warriors' weapons.
- Learn how to fight as a fearsome iron age warrior.
- Learn how to attack in shield formation.
- Train your battle cry so that your enemy will tremble with fear.

"Varus and the lost legions" performed in three exciting scenes
11.00 – 11.30 – The barbarians attack the Roman camp - Near the Roman camp A group of lightly armed barbarian warriors from the Bructerii tribe have had enough of the Roman legionaries. The warriors attack the Romans' fortified camp. The Romans pay them back and by their expert battle technique they show that it is unwise to be up against Rome elite soldiers – the legionaries.

13.30 – 14.00 – Romans exercise their power and an ambush is prepared - In Lethra A Roman platoon, lead by General Varus, is marching to the village Lethra to collect taxes from local peasants. Not all of them are able to pay and therefore become heavily punished by the Romans. The barbarians decide to object to the Romans' tough rule, and Arminius must decide where his loyalties lie. A rebellion atmosphere spreads, and the chiefs of the five tribes, Cheruscians, Chauci, Bructerii, Suebi and Marsi leave the village with plans of war on their minds…

15.00 – 16.00 – Battle – Varus and the lost legions! - In the arena The Romans set out from the camp and march northwards where a tribe threatens with uprising. Arminius takes Varus and his escort of legionaries, auxiliaries, women and children through the strange land. Suddenly, the Roman column is attacked by an unknown enemy, and the battle for the future of Europe has begun! See 100 players perform a dramatisation of one of the most important battles in world history with ardent horses and riders, expert archers, light infantry, heavily armed legionaries and magnificent battle scenes.

Success or not?

Three measures for success

In this article a number of ambitions and aims with creating and carrying out an event such as Varus and the Lost Legions have been mentioned and a full account of the work leading up to the event has been described. Also an account has been given of how the event actually turned out. All this has been done in order to better discuss what measures of success we use in modern re-enactment in museums or historic open air centres' such as Sagnlandet Lejre. After all success can be many things and can be caused and prevented by many factors. And as blaming both good and bad results on the weather just isn't enough to develop museum presentation I will try to list three measures for success I find relevant in connection with the

presented re-enactment event.

A Business Success?

The question all historical and archaeological centres and museums have to ask themselves today. However, I have always found that this is a very important question to ask and most of all to analyze why. Not many years ago visitor numbers were irrelevant in many Danish museums as indeed in many other countries. Nowadays it has become important point to be popular with our audience. And with good reason I might add. To produces historical event of little public interest is not only financially unsound I think it is an unsound practice for history as such. Why should all the rest of the world adhere to political, social, global, local, personal developments and not History? History and the presentation of history are obliged to keep up with the world and relate to modern peoples wishes and interests. Therefore low visitor numbers require a thorough reflection on why.

Was there a great public interest in Varus and the Lost Legions? - No, not compared with events like Hastings 1066, Museum und Park Kalkriese´s annual re-enactment of the Varus' battle or even the comparatively small Moesgaard Viking Market. All these events attract thousands of spectators. We did not aim for thousands, but only to double our daily visitors and this did not happen. In relation to the same week the year before we had an increase in visitors of approximately 15%, which was far from, what we had hoped, but certainly better than no increase at all. Many arguments can be stated as to the cause of this - too little PR is a classic cause, but many museums find, as we do, that traditional means of marketing fail in the fragmented media of today. Also, a large increase in competition with many museums competing for the visitors, plays a role. A local flyer and poster campaign was carried out for the event and a good coverage in television, newspapers and Radio was achieved.

An Archaeological/Historical Success?

Creating a re-enactment event without historical or archaeological compromise is impossible. But attempting to stay within a reasonably chronological frame should be the aim and on this point many details were authentic and accurate in a 1st century frame. The four sources to the battle itself and the additional sources to the history and times were followed and this part of the work was, as far as possible, faithful to the sources without however being able to make the allowances for the potentially dubious nature of the original sources or indeed the many centuries of interpretation these sources have been exposed to. That we were able to set the plot into a historical perspective via the historical texts in the program and the exhibition was to me a step towards historical-archaeological pride and acknowledges that there is a scientific debate behind all historical and archaeological presentation and re-enactment. This also made the many necessary compromises far more bearable. With regards to the equipment, especially the personal equipment of the Iron Age Warriors and Roman camps tents, the costumes and lay out created a generally authentic frame. However,

especially the question of ethnic and geographical complexity was hard to portray accurately. For example the ethically complex character of Arminius - A Germanic tribesman raised as a Roman and an officer in the Roman Army, should historically have been dressed in full Equites cavalry equipment, but we found it impossible for the audience to understand that a person dressed as a Roman was in fact an ethnically ambiguous character. Another example in dress was that the character of Claudia Pulchra was dressed in a fine silk costume, but in fact a Roman lady of the Imperial family would never have been seen among the barbarians and even if allowances are made for this, she would never have walked around showing her jewellery with her Palla (shawl) open - authentically she should have been completely covered and transported in a carriage or such like. We chose to dress Arminius in Iron Age Warrior costume, with a few Roman accessories to make it apparent that he was a barbarian and we chose to let Claudia walk around with a servant and soldiers for her protection, so that the audience could actually see all her splendour.

This compromise was worth the sacrifice - from comments and questions asked by the audience it was quite clear that the conflict, who was who and who had which status or authenticity was clear to the audience and this was after all more important than complete archaeological accuracy in dress. So was it a historical and archaeological success? All in all I think more details were accurate than inaccurate, more situations and equipment were authentic than inauthentic and the experience of putting a large effort into insuring direct link between historical and archaeological sources and re-enacted event was definitely worth while and I believe a far better result was achieved than if we had allowed all the re-enactors to design the plot themselves.

A Presentation (Narrative and Pedagogical) Success?

In this last paragraph I think it is important to mention the feedback we had, not on how many visitors we had or whether they were given accurate historic details, but rather how they saw the experience, did they learn anything from being part of the event and did they indeed feel part of the event and thrilled by the show. If the answer to this question had also been a no and if the presentation or indeed concept of the event did not impress the audience, I would have been disappointed. But fortunately this was not the case.

All the visitors entering the centre at 10 in the morning were also there for the final battle at 3 in the afternoon. Our visitors' comments are exclusively positive throughout the week of Varus and the Lost Legions - not one negative comment was stated and especially the battle itself received much praise. I personally overheard many children during the week rooting for the barbarians and talking against the Romans (The bad guys) among themselves, meaning that even small children had understood the plot. An 8 year old girl working in the barbarian food tent said, as I think an occupied barbarian probably would have said in the 1st century "The Romans are welcome to buy food from us - but it costs double for them!"

All in all the story of this 2000 year old war was understood. Humour was used as a means of communication and yet many visitors expressed that they had been struck by the harshness of the Romans and the brutality and quantity of the massacre, if however our version of the battle included reviving the dead as part of the show so as to make it a family friendly experience. There was a very good dynamic atmosphere between the two camps and the village. The Romans and Barbarians interacted well and the tolerated presence of the Romans was apparent to the audience who were included in the interaction between the groups. The re-enactors were generally good at addressing the audience and upholding the dialog between visitors and re-enactors. On many occasions since the event was held in 2009 visitors, re-enactors, volunteers have asked when we will .be doing something like "Varus and the Lost Legions" again, either because the witnessed the event or because they had missed it and had heard of it. And we do indeed hope to host a similar event in future, but only time will tell. In conclusion we are pleased with the product which was Varus and the Lost Legions. We made an interesting and thrilling show, filled a whole day with atmosphere for the whole family, gave the Danish audience an in depth encounter with the Romans and were able to communicate the importance of a 2000 year old conflict. Having visitors and re-enactors remember the atmosphere of an event from more than a year ago is, in my view, a success and an incitement to continue working with re-enactment - in spite of all compromises.

A last comment - I recently had another piece of feed back. A very active live role player in her early twenties had experienced the event and gave me a piece of very interesting feedback. She had thought the event interesting, but "Boring" with far too little interaction between the re-enactors. This is food for thought - If the future generations of the potential audience to museums think a re-enacted historical event with 100 re-enactors is boring, we have our work cut out for us as museums working with re-enactment. I choose to see this as an exciting challenge!

Copyright photos from event: Sagnlandet Lejre (Ole Malling), Prindsens Hverving (Carsten Madsen)and Legion VI Victrix Cohors II Cimbria.

Link(s)

Film clipping from the event deel 1
Film clipping from the event deel 2
Film clipping 3 from the event
Re-enactment group: Legion VI Victrix Cohors II Cimbria
Re-enactment groups: Prindsens Hverving
Re-enactment groups: Volunteers and staff

Keywords event
war
living history
army

Country Denmark

What is Sagnlandet Lejre?

Sagnlandet Lejre was formerly known under the title Lejre Research Centre. The name was changed to Sagnlandet Lejre I 2009 as it was evident that the old name had lost its being and had indeed never comprised the full scope of the centres work. Sagnlandet Lejre, with the scientific title - Centre for Historical-Archaeological Research and Communication - has three main purposes - experimental research, education and public presentation of the past. In addition to this the centre has over 40 years of continual experience with ancient crafts, reconstruction and re-enactment of the past in Stone Age, Bronze Age, Iron Age, Viking Age and Historic Times. The centre's location in a spectacular 43 hectare natural heritage landscape also adds to the centres activities in terms of presentation of mans interaction with nature through the ages. The centre's work today is most accurately described as a symbiosis between re-enactment in reconstructed pre-historic and historic environments and on-going experimental archaeological research. As all of these activities are hard to combine in one accurate and reasonably short title the source of the name was instead found in world famous lore and legends linked with Lejre, namely the legends of Beowulf, King Skjold and the first kings of Denmark. The village of Old Lejre - 100 meters from the centre - still holds the Danish record of the longest Iron Age and Viking Age long house with 60 and 80 meters in length. This site is believed to have been the court of the legendary Lejre Kings. To sum up the word Sagn means Legend in Danish - hence Sagnlandet Lejre- the land of legends Lejre. A title, we think, opens up a world of possibilities for the future.

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FIG 1. THE ROMAN TAX COLLECTION PARTY - CENTURION MARCUS CAELIUS FOLLOWED BY MR. AND MRS. VARUS AND BEHIND THEM IN RED ARMINIUS.

FIG 2. VARUS GIVING THE TROOPS A PEP TALK. THE SCRUTINIZING EYE WILL SEE MORE THIRD CENTURY EQUIPMENT THEN FIRST.

FIG 3. THE DRUNK SEGESTES TRYING TO WEAR A TOGA, BUT FAILING MISERABLY, FLANKED BY VARUS AND MARCUS CAELIUS.

FIG 4. THE FORMATION BATTLE - LOOKS VIOLENT ON STILL IMAGES, CONSIDERING THAT NO ACTUAL FIGHTING WAS DONE FOR SECURITY REASONS.

FIG 5. THE YOUNG HERO ARMENIUS - HERE TRYING TO CONVINCE BOTH ROMANS AND BARBARIANS THAT COOPERATION IS THE WAY.

FIG 6. SEGESTES AND ARMINIUS TRYING TO DISCOURAGE A BUDDING CONFLICT BETWEEN A BARBARIAN TRIBES MAN.