Midden Excavation at Möðruvellir, and Prospection in Hörgárdalur

Interim Field Report

Gásir Hinterlands Project 2008

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Summary

In June and August 2008 international teams cooperated in carrying out a program of survey, coring, and small scale test excavation on selected sites in the Eyjafjord region in Northern Iceland. This was the first season of a planned multi-season collaborative investigation of the hinterlands surrounding the medieval seasonal trading center at Gásir (Roberts 2004; Roberts et al, 2002-2006; Harrison et al 2006 – 2008; Harrison 2006-2008). Prior work at Gásir indicated that this trading center was provisioned from a wide economic catchment area and that investigations needed to be extended to include the surrounding landscape. The Gásir Hinterlands Project (GHP) is aimed at improving our understanding of the interactions of local farming strategies affected by changing climate and ongoing human impact with medieval overseas trade and long distance exchange centered on Gásir. GHP also focuses on the long term human ecodynamics in this historically important part of Iceland, contributing to the reconstruction of a detailed historical ecology of Eyjafjord from first settlement down to modern times. Part of the 2008 field project involved a 3rd season of excavation of midden deposits associated with the major monastic center at Möðruvellir. The second part of the project consisted of coring and selective test trenching of 9 sites in the surrounding valleys, building upon a comprehensive site survey database (ÍSLEIF) already established by FSI. While some sites tested proved to have little or no surviving household midden deposits (Neskot, Skriða:NLÖ1, Klausturhús, Möðruvallasel), others proved to have rich deposits quite possibly datable to the medieval and early modern periods through tephra and associated artifacts (especially Skuggi, and also Myrkárdalur). Some of the cored midden areas, i.e. Bakki, Skriða:NLÖ2, show great potential, if some logistical hurdles can be overcome. There appears to be great potential for further excavations at both Myrkárdalur and Skuggi, and additional coring work on other sites can usefully continue in the wider area.
Participating Staff

Project director: Howell M. Roberts (FSÍ)

Excavation supervisors: Howell M. Roberts (FSÍ) and Ramona Harrison (CUNY)

Senior advisors: T. H. McGovern (CUNY), Orri Vésteinsson (FSÍ)

Excavation crew: Frank Feeley (CUNY), Veronique Forbes (ULaval), Sigrún Inga Garðarsdóttir (FSÍ), Marjorie Gorsline (CUNY), Ramona Harrison (CUNY), Aaron Kendall (CUNY), Thomas H. McGovern (CUNY), Þóra Pétursdóttir (FSÍ), Howell M. Roberts (FSÍ), Konrad Śmiałowski (CUNY).

Geoarchaeology: Ian Simpson and Val DeFeu (U Stirling)

Survey: Christian Koch Madsen (U Arhus)

For the first three weeks, had help from local students who were indispensible for moving and sieving large quantities of soil: Guðlaug Jana Sigurðardóttir, Sigmar Ari Valdimarsson, Smári Ingvarsson, and Jón Karl Ingvarsson.

Introduction:

The first season of the Gásir Hinterlands Project (GHP) was carried out in cooperation between the Archaeological Institute Iceland (FSÍ) and the Northern Science and Education Center of City University of New York (CUNY) with specialist help in geoarchaeological sampling and analysis by a team from the University of Stirling. GHP took place in Eyjafjörður, in the NE part of Iceland in two sessions in June and August of 2008. The excavation part of the season lasted a total of 4 weeks in June and included an 11 (plus 3 local students) person field crew during the first three weeks; a team of two returned for one week in August to complete the survey work.

One goal for the summer of 2008 was to continue excavations at the deep midden deposit on the edge of the substantial farm mound at Móðruvellir, begun in 2006. Móðruvellir, formerly an Augustine monastery and for centuries a high status farm was undoubtedly connected with the Gásir trading site and at all periods maintained a central role in the economy and politics of Eyjafjord. At Móðruvellir, trench 1 (TR1), excavated since 2006, had reached depths of over 2 meters and allowed the recovery of a substantial archaeofauna dating mainly to post-medieval times. The TR1 unit needed to be carried deeper to attempt to reach medieval deposits and expanded...
horizontally to investigate relationships with nearby structures. The TR1 unit was successfully carried below early modern layers and substantial additional samples of bone and artifacts were recovered, but the unit encountered a dramatic change in soil acidity (dropping from a general local pH around 6 to a highly acidic 3.5) resulting from a massive concentration of peat ash in the lower layers. While this acidic depositional environment effectively preserved some pieces of cloth, little or no bone survived. The horizontal expansion of TR1 succeeded in recovering additional early modern artifacts and well preserved animal bone, but rapidly encountered substantial structural remains probably associated with the 18th-19th c farm. The TR1 area thus proved a good source of evidence for post-medieval occupation at Möðruvellir, but this locality probably is not well suited for further excavation aimed at reaching earlier deposits.

The second goal for this year’s Gásir Hinterlands project was to locate and test other known and surveyed sites in the Eyjafjörður region; especially in Hórgárdal and Öxnadal, two valleys located immediately to the W-SW of Möðruvellir and Gásir. More than 5000 sites have been located and surveyed in the Eyjafjörður region (Hreiðarsdóttir, 2008 in press; Hreiðarsdóttir, 2001; Hreiðarsdóttir & Vésteinsson., 1999; Vésteinsson & S.G., 1998) but little excavation has taken place in the area to date. Our objective for 2008 was to carry out second – phase investigations involving systematic coring (using a tube-type Oakfield soil corer) to locate probable midden deposits followed where warranted by small scale test trenching to test conditions of preservation and document possible tephra. This interim report provides a preliminary overview of the results of this regional second-phase survey investigation.
Figure 1 – Map of Iceland, highlighting the central sites Gásir and Möðruvellir in the Eyjafjörður region. (Source of detailed regional map: Roberts, 2004; labels added by R.H.).

The map below highlights the Gásir hinterland sites that were investigated in 2008 and are located in Hörgárdalur and Öxnadalur.

Figure 2 – Hörgárdalur and Öxnadalur sites investigated in 2008 (map created by Richard Streeter for Dugmore et al, 2008).
June 16 – July 4, 2008 Part 1 of the project, carried out by the whole team.

Mððruvellir

Figure 3 – Mððruvellir, NE direction. The modern church on the right, the midden mound is the light green area to the left of the buildings, marked by arrow. The Mððruvellir midden trench was extended vertically in 2008, but its size had to be reduced from 2mx8m to at first 2mx5m and then to 2mx3m due to the depth of the trench. Stepping in the site by leaving higher areas for access and a sturdy horizontal surface for ladder were strategies employed to keep the site safe.

Figure 4 – Portion of northern profile of MÖÖ TR1.
The Goal of the 2008 excavation was to find faunal materials useful for C14 dating of the midden layers and to attempt to reach medieval layers contemporary to the Gásir archaeofauna from the 14th Century AD. While TR1 was extended, another part of the team was busy opening up another trench TR2, situated parallel to TR1, and 6 m East of it, measuring of 2m by 4m. This area was cored and the augur profiles indicated presence of bone material as well as turf debris and peat ash, in other words an eastern continuation of the vast midden mound. Unfortunately, a trench dug for a power line for the metrological research station at Môðruvellir was encountered and TR. 2 had to be moved 1 m north from its previous location. That trench, TR2b revealed extensive early modern structural remains and excavation was stopped to avoid damaging these extensive and well preserved structural layers. Although the excavation of structural remains from Môðruvellir is very desirable, it would require far more money and time and people to do an open-area excavation (at least 5m by 5m) to reveal the entire structure and fully excavate it.

At the end of the three-week excavation of TR1 at Môðruvellir, the trench was deemed too deep to continue safely, although natural, undisturbed soil had not been reached yet. While the preservation of bone was excellent during the 2006 and 2007 seasons, the faunal remains from the 2008 season, especially from the lower deposits, were very poorly preserved and often turned into ‘bone butter’, which is completely unusable for faunal analysis. Despite this deterioration of the archaeofauna, due to high acidity of the peat ash and other deposits containing the bones, another type of potentially datable materials was recovered: very well preserved textiles which may give a clue on the age of the deposits containing them. These textile remains are now under specialist analysis. Environmental data other than bones were recovered and bulk samples taken from about 50 deposits. They will be floated and then analyzed at the University of
Durham. Veronique Forbes kindly took entomological samples to be processed at the University of Laval.

Figure 6 – Last day of excavation at Möðruvellir. The rest of the team is working on closing up the Myrkárdalur test trench.
Figure 7 - Möðruvellir Trench 1, North facing Section
**Midden Assessment, June 16 through June 20**

During the first week of the project, T.H. McGovern, R. Harrison, and Þ. Pétursdóttir investigated various sites by systematic coring of potential middens associated with structural remains from sites serving different purposes such as shieling sites, animal shelters, and farm sites of various social statuses.

*NB: The various sites are labeled: Site name, project code – (survey code). Coordinates, Elevation (according to Google Earth)*

**Myrkárdalur, MYÖ – (EY205_006)**

*Coordinates: 65°37.845’N, 18°34.906’W, Elevation 218m asl.*

The Myrkárdalur farm is situated in a highland area at the end of a valley named after the river Myrká. The farm ruin is clearly visible despite the overgrowth of grass: several rooms are connected through a central corridor, reminiscent of medieval houses from Greenland (T.H. McGovern, pers. communication). A landslide in the 14th Century destroyed part of the farm and the occupants were forced to move further west, where several more recent ruins are located.

![Figure 8 – Myrkárdalur ruin, survey plan (Hreiðarsd. 2008).](image)

Two likely midden mounds were located within 5m from each other, to the S of the older farm ruin (*coordinates: MYO04 65°37.840’N, 18° 34.901’W*). They are both visible due to rather rich vegetation growth, and the eastern one was indicated on the survey map.

![Figure 9 – Coring at the midden mounds.](image)
Both mounds were cored and the western one, believed to be the older one, was test trenched. The upper deposits of the trench contained some bone material, but there were fewer faunal remains in the lower layers which contained mostly structural debris (i.e. turf collapse) and some peat ash deposits. Some green jasper was found there. The artifacts recovered from the test trench are still under analysis and may help date the deposits. Artifacts were mostly made from either metal or stone, but occasional glass and pottery were recovered, as well as one piece of wood. No tephra was recorded.

Figure 10 – Trenching and planning the MYÖ midden.

Depending on the faunal and artefactual analysis, this trench may be extended in 2009. The eastern midden mound may be excavated in 2009 as the coring profiles indicated stratified midden deposits, containing burnt and unburnt bone, charcoal, and peat ash.

Möðruvallasil MSØ – (EY200_006)


This site was used as shieling site for sheep in medieval and early modern times and is associated with the church farm at Möðruvellir in several documents. The ruin is located about a 45 minute walk from the nearest jeep trail, and it would be logistically difficult to establish an excavation there.

Ari (the farmer who owns the land on which the shieling is located) reports that while summer grazing was good, the weather in this steep sided glacial valley was often very bad, with high winds and deep snow in the winter. This may be a factor in the long term land use pattern, as it appears that the substantial MSØ ruin (easily the size of a small medieval farm) remained only a seasonally occupied summer herding station.
There is a very easily visible raised feature next to the structural ruins that could be a midden mound \((\text{coordinates MS}65^\circ39.230'N, 18^\circ37.853'W)\), but upon coring it was found that it was neither rich in ash, nor bone nor charcoal, but that it may have been the result of repeated deposits of sheep dung. A core into the inside of the sel suggested there may have been a floor layer, but if this was indeed a floor deposit, it was not as thick or as compacted as in a normal dwelling house.

Fig. 12 – Coring at MSÖ with a young helper.

MSÖ is thus a very interesting evidence of seasonal herding and upland land use, but probably not a viable target for midden excavation.

Fig. 13 – Möðruvallæsel ruin, direction S.
Klausturhúsi KLÖ, (EY215 022)


KLÖ is a very clearly visible and substantial rectilinear ruin, ca 35-38 m long, near the modern road through Hörgárdalur, situated mid-way up the valley, built on a gravel ridge.

![Figure 14 - Klausturhúsi animal shelter, survey plan (Hreiðarsd. 2008).](image)

There was no clear surface indication of a midden mound, so coring transects were carried out around the structure and downslope where disposal of food and other refuse would be most likely.

Coring revealed that the prehistoric tephras (H3) were quite close to the surface, at a depth of ca 25 and 45 cm. Core number 7, just at the SE wall of the structure contained some turf that possibly included olive colored tephra. Two tephra samples were taken from this site, both tephras were found in a core at 12.40 m east (line running along the Northern wall; coordinates: KLO01 65°39.561’N, 18°29.693’W).

![Figure 15 – Coring at KLÖ. This structure is elongated E-W, view to East.](image)
The first tephra sample may have been a layer within a turf that had been cut into deposits containing 1422 or 1477 AD tephra (purple-black), encountered in the core profile at a depth between 20-34 cm. From the same core, at 37 cm below surface, an olive/black tephra was encountered and also sampled. Further investigation of the site by Dr. Simpson and the geoarchaeology team will clarify these relationships and help establish the chronology of this substantial old structure. The coring was successful in establishing that there was a floor inside the structure, but the only potential midden material were deposits that may represent repeated deposition of dung or stable cleaning materials but which lacked substantial bone or ash deposits. The results from the Klausturhús midden investigation are similar to the ones from Möðruvallasel, suggesting that both of these sites were probably managed largely as sel/shielings rather than as small farms that would have been likely to generate the full range of domestic refuse.

**August 17-22, 2008 Part 2 of the project**

The second round of midden investigations was conducted by Ramona Harrison (CUNY) and Þóra Pétursdóttir (FSÍ).

**Skriða**

The property that belongs to the modern farm at Skriða, located within ca. 20 km of Möðruvellir in Hörgárdal *(Coordinates: 65°43.103'N. 18°21.878W, 54m asl)* may have previously been the site of at least two medieval farmsteads whose traces are no longer present. The survey data indicated potential midden mounds associated with these old farms that are now predominantly known from written sources (Jónsson, 1905). Since the actual names of the old farmsteads are not entirely clear, they are both called Skriða for this survey, but were given the site Code of NLÖ, as the oldest farm on this site was supposed to be called Neðri Langahlíð. The midden associated with what is maybe the more recent farm is discussed first and labeled as Skriða, NLÖ1. The second farm may have indeed been the Neðri Langahlíð farm that was destroyed by a landslide (skriða in Icelandic) in 1390, covering the part of Rafn Bótólffson’s farm, killing him as well as his entire family (Brynjúlfur Jónsson, 1906).
As a result, the entire slope of the infield, situated to the NW of the modern Skirða farm house is more or less a gravel field covered with grass.

**Skriða, NLÖ 1 (EY-192:023)**

Coordinates: 65°43.103’N, 18°21.878W, 51m asl.

![Figure 16 – Coring at Skriða, NLÖ 1. The modern house visible on the right. Direction W.](image)

The farm is located just North of a road. Cores were put in just SW of the modern house (65°43.101’N, 18°21.876’W). There was occasional charcoal and a few tiny flecks of white burnt bone in a core put in at 10 m SW of the modern structure, as well as generally traces of peat in the coring profiles, but no convincing profiles indicating a midden. Another core put in at about 3 m NE of the last standing tree in the line indicates that there is potential midden material between 24 – 33 cm below the surface, right above a turf containing sequences of prehistoric tephras (at a depth of 33-40cm below surface). Coring has revealed evident traces of midden materials, but because the area was leveled in 1980, there no longer exists a well stratified midden associated with Skriða, NLÖ1.
Skriða, NLÖ 2 (EY-192:004)

Coordinates: 65°43.079’N, 18°22.047’W; 54m asl

To find this potential farm midden, a 30 m line was put up in the Skriða infield at a location ca 30 – 40 m NW of the modern structure, the line running N-S. The landslide(s) that covered this farm area left behind a ground that is very hard to core, and the only area where the Oakfield corer did not hit rock right away was just slightly North of the southern end of the line put in (S end: 65°43.073’N, 18°22.027’W),

Figure 17– Coring at Skriða, NLÖ2, the modern farm building is right behind the trees, to the E.

Two cores that contained distinctive midden deposits including black burnt bone were put in at the 2m mark; one directly at the line and one 1 m West of it. The core profiles showed clearly stratified deposits alternating in their contents of wood and/or peat ash, bone, and turf debris. Midden materials were encountered up to 72 cm below the surface, when a rock prevented the corer from going any deeper. The only potential tephra encountered here that may not be prehistoric was a black (1400s or 1766 AD?), found at ca. 20 to 40 cm below surface in one core. At the southern end of the line, most cores contained domestic midden materials and were prevented from reaching any deeper because of a rock. This midden seems to contain promising faunal materials, but trenching it will most likely require heavy machinery, i.e. JCB to gain access to the archaeology.
Bakki, BKÖ (EY-219:013)

Coordinates: 65°36.894´N, 18°30.378´W, 176m asl

Bakki used to be a wealthy church farm during the Middle Ages and is a working modern farm today, but the church is in use only on rare occasions. The investigated midden is associated with the old Bakki farm and is located in the SW corner of the new addition to the churchyard. A driveway belonging to the modern farm house offers easy access to the site.

Figure 18 – Bakki church in Öxnadalur. NE Direction.

Cores were put in to that SW corner of the churchyard (65°36.894´N, 18°30.378´W). The deepest core went to 150 cm below surface and contained very loosely compacted midden materials which were well stratified and showed bands of peat ash deposits, followed by turf debris, layers with charcoal and burnt bone (black and white).

At 14-16 cm below surface, right under windblown natural soil, a piece of a turf chunk that may have contained creamy white, potentially prehistoric tephra was found. This potential tephra should be further investigated as it can provide important references regarding time of deposition of associated layers. Several cores showed calcined bone fragments, frequent chunks of charcoal, peat ash deposits, turf debris, etc. The Bakki midden seems to be well stratified, containing peat ash, a considerable amount of charcoal as well as burnt and unburnt bone. The only logistical problem may be the fact that the midden is located in the churchyard.
The Jaðar ruin is located on Möðruvellir land, on top of a promontory to the SE of the modern church. Several coring lines were placed in association with the structural ruins that were visible despite the high grass growth. Þúfa (overgrown hummocks created by repeated freezing and thawing actions) cover the raised area that holds the ruins as well as the modern cemetery.

Coring at the line set up at the northern Structure (the large one on the survey plan) revealed some traces of charcoal and rather greasy deposits, possibly indicating a floor. Cores also contained some very patchy prehistoric tephra layers that could have been disturbed by digging into the prehistoric substrata. No conclusive structural or midden deposits were found. Many of the cores contained natural soil and some in situ prehistoric tephras.

Another coring line was set up along a north to south line at a small mound that looked very lush (Jaðar-HLN 65°46.166’ N, 18°14.814’ W). Various cores contained very loose deposits and many seemed to go through voids, which may be due to root growth.

Figure 21 - Survey plan of the Jaðar ruins (Vésteinsson, 2001:32)
action and/or þúfa-related cryoturbation? Except for the occasional charcoal bits, no cultural deposits were encountered. Root growth in most cores reached down to almost half a meter below surface. At 3.50 m and at 5 m south of the N end of the line black tephra was encountered at 52 and 72 cm depth from surface, respectively. In both cases, the tephra was right on top of prehistoric deposits and may thus be prehistoric as well.

The most promising area for midden deposits seemed to be at the Eastern center of the promontory, indicated by very green vegetation. The first core on that spot (JADESC 65°46.167’ N, 18°14.770’ W) went to a depth of 70 cm below the surface and hit a rock. A black tephra layer (1400s or 1766? AD) was found at 23-24cm below the surface. The core further contained a stratigraphic sequence of wood ash followed by peat and next by a layer of very clean soil at 37-38 cm down. Between 38 and 65 cm below surface, there was another series of peat ash, wood ash, lots of charcoal deposited on top of each other. The last five centimeters before the core hit the rock contained a rather large lump (2cm) of charcoal.

Several other core profiles contained a black or grey tephra band under the topsoil between ca. 10 and 15 cm below the surface. This tephra layer needs further investigation as it can provide valuable dating information. Followed by the tephra layer are cultural deposits: rather uncompact ed layers containing charcoal, peat and wood ash. The most promising soil core (Core 4) was taken at 4m E of the NE boundary of the new cemetery (JADSS 65°46.155’N, 18°14.767’W) and it is suggested that a test trench be put in here or/and at JADESC N65°46.167’ W18°14.770’.

NB: The old Akrar farm ruin, believed to lie close nearby (EY-068:020 65°46.157’N 18°14.441’W (Vésteinsson,2004:31)), still remains to be investigated for midden remains and this should be attempted in 2009.
Despite extensive coring at the possibly 4 Nesko ruins, no midden material was found at that site. The whole area seems to be naturally raised by gravel deposits, and there are gravel hills right to the north of the ruins. The soil was extremely dry, even after a couple of nights of rain. Many prehistoric tephra layers were encountered, following topsoil and clean soil (windblown) layers that contained no charcoal or any other indicators for human activity. Many cores contained deposits that consisted of very coarse sand and even gravel which were interpreted as natural depositions as the whole area consists of gravel hills:

The western most of the three structures found in a cluster on the eastern part of the site (NES02 E 65°46.685’N, 18°13.560’W) presents a good example: Underneath topsoil and another 20 cm of natural sandy silt deposit, a black tephra (1400s or 1766 AD?) was encountered at 35 cm below surface. Next, there was very uniform, homogenous sandy silt for another 10 cm down, followed by a prehistoric tephra (H3?) at 45 – 46 cm below surface. This was followed by another 15 cm of silty sand deposits, and a second prehistoric tephra at 60 cm below surface. The ph levels at all structures were between 6.8 - 7, but beyond some faint traces of turf collapse in the
most southern structure, no midden materials were found. No further activities at this site are suggested.

Figure 24 – Neskot. Móðruvellir is indicated by black circle, SW direction. Left arrow points to road (Nr. 1) toward Akureyri, right arrow points to road (Nr. 82) toward Dalvík.

Skuggi, SKÖ (EY-215:009)


The site is uphill from a bridge called Skuggabrú which crosses the Hörgá. Only the last part of the way which is uphill cannot be accessed by a vehicle. It is a rather steep ascent but a horse trodden way (the pasture also is in use for horse grazing) facilitates the ca. 10 min hike. Klausturhús, the animal shelter discussed earlier, lies about half a kilometer to the NW of this site. Skuggi is a medieval farm ruin said to have been inhabited before 1400 and has presumably been abandoned for a long time. The Skuggi farm midden was found at the exact location indicated by the survey map.

Figure 25 - Skuggi survey plan. C indicates the midden mound, coring and testing confirmed the location (Hreiðarsd. 2008).
A 16 m n-s line was put up to investigate the extent of the midden mound. The transect ran north from the NW corner of ruin C (SKU01N 65°39.752’ N, 18°28.813’ W). Cores between 12 and 14 m North of structure B were the most promising. These cores contained stratified midden deposits including relatively large pieces (2cm plus) of well preserved bone and the midden deposits continued to a depth of ca 80 – 120 cm below the surface.

Figure 26 – Skuggi ruin, SE direction, midden at the left.

The cores very consistently produced a grey/blue-black tephra layer that was right under the natural and seemed to seal all the cultural deposits. A test trench, 1 m by 2 m, was put in between the 12 and 14 m mark. The excavation revealed a layer of bluish grey tephra (possibly H 1300 AD), which sealed the entire midden deposit, thus indicating that these deposits had accumulated prior to deposition of this tephra layer. Various discrete midden layers could be planned and excavated and a good amount of well preserved and unburnt animal bones from domesticates, but also some fish and bird elements, could be collected. Other environmental samples were taken as well, and the tephra was sampled twice, to be analyzed by tephra specialist Magnús Á. Sigurgeirsson. Except for one iron object, and one potential slag fragment, all artifacts collected so far were from stone, i.e. jasper.

The goal is to return to Skuggi in summer of 2009 and to collect a larger sample.
Figure 26 – Skuggi Midden (SKÖ), South Section. Blue-grey tephra line (arrows) sealing all deposits.

Summary:

The summer of 2008 saw a very productive series of midden investigations that were conducted in collaboration between FSÍ and CUNY. The most promising sites were Skuggi and Myrkárdalur, both in Hörgárdalur, with Skuggi being the best indication for a well preserved and datable midden, as it contained a tephra layer that can be analyzed and used as dating device. While the midden investigations at Skriða-NLÖ 1, Nesko, Klausturhús, and Möðruvallasel did not produce proof for well stratified middens, there is significant potential for the middens at Bakki, Skriða-NLÖ2, and also Jœår. Although the 2008 Möðruvellir midden excavations were not completely successful in terms of collecting substantial faunal remains, there may still be useful dating material in form of the well preserved textiles and also the environmental samples. This is not to say that a few recovered bones are completely unusable for C14 analysis. Analysis of all the samples taken from the three sites will result in a set of data that can improve our understanding of the past in the Eyjafjörður region. As mentioned above, there are many sites from this area that have survey data readily available and that may provide excellent candidates for further midden investigations.
Further Collaboration Potentials:

On June 28, 2008, a meeting was held between Dr. Bjarni E. Guðleifsson and Dr. Þóroddur Sveinsson from the Icelandic Agricultural University (which runs the research station and experimental facilities based at Möðruvellir), and members of FSÍ, CUNY, U Stirling, U Edinburgh, and U Buffalo teams. A very successful exchange of information and ideas took place in the upper floor of the leikhús, a former gymnasium that now functions as cultural facility. Bjarni and Þóroddur were very interested in continued archaeological work on the Möðruvellir grounds as it was believed that the oldest farm in the area, Akrar (at least 1000 ya), has been situated on somewhere on its premises. Participants agreed that there was an excellent potential for productive collaboration to connect modern agricultural science to the archaeological and paleo-environmental investigations going on in the district, and plans were made for more formal proposals for expanded work and funding applications.

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Roberts, Howell M.

Roberts, H. M. et al.
Ramona Harrison Gásir Hinterlands Project–2008 Interim Field report

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Roberts, H. M. & Pálsdóttir, L.B. et al.  

Vésteinsson, Orri  

Vésteinsson, Orri & S. G.  
### APPENDICES

**Appendix I – Excavation Data-sets**

#### 2008 Möðruvellir Öskuhóll (MÖÖ) data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context number</th>
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<th>Date/Time dd.mm.yy.</th>
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<td>126 TR1 D</td>
<td>Brown mixed with black and pin, midden deposit of peat ash, structural turf and burned dung - very mixed</td>
<td>Brown mixed with black and pin, midden deposit of peat ash, structural turf and burned dung - very mixed</td>
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**Table 1 - MÖÖ08 Context Register for TR1**

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<td>500</td>
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<td>501</td>
<td>TR 2 D</td>
<td>Cut for unit [501]</td>
<td>Yellow brown soil under [500]</td>
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<td>502</td>
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<td>Yellow brown soil mixed with some ash</td>
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**Table 2 - MÖÖ08 Context Register for TR2**
MÖÖ 08 Context Register Trench 2B

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<td>Patch of turfy soil</td>
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Table 3 - MÖÖ08 Context Register for TR2b

MÖÖ 08 Samples register

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08-128 | TR1 | 130 | 1 small bag Wood | 04.07.08 P.  
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Table 4- MÖÖ08 Sample Register for all trenches

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### Table 5 - MöÖ08 Bone Register for all trenches

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<td>11</td>
<td>505</td>
<td>TR2</td>
<td>Metal</td>
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<td>Corroded</td>
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<td>Cleaning</td>
<td>TR2</td>
<td>Ceramic</td>
<td>Shard</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>TR2B</td>
<td>Ceramic</td>
<td>Clay pipe</td>
<td>Cleaning deposit, broken, just a piece of 2 cm long stem</td>
<td>18.06.08</td>
<td>VF</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>TR2B</td>
<td>Ceramic</td>
<td>Shards, cleaning deposit</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>TR2B</td>
<td>Glass</td>
<td>Bottle shards</td>
<td>Green bottle glass, and possible lamp</td>
<td>18.06.08</td>
<td>VF</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>600</td>
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<td>Metal (iron)</td>
<td>Nails</td>
<td>Corroded a little bit</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>600</td>
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<td>Iron</td>
<td>Bucket handle</td>
<td>Corroded a little bit</td>
<td>18.06.08</td>
<td>VF</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>603</td>
<td>TR2B</td>
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<td>19.06.08</td>
<td>VF</td>
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<td>19</td>
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<td>TR2B</td>
<td>Lead</td>
<td>Button</td>
<td>2 buttons, corroded</td>
<td>19.06.08</td>
<td>VF</td>
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<td>Pipe stem</td>
<td>19.06.08</td>
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<td>22</td>
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<td>Diverse fragments</td>
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<td>VF</td>
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<td>Knife handle</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>603</td>
<td>TR2B</td>
<td>Iron</td>
<td>Nails and other</td>
<td>Corroded</td>
<td>19.06.08</td>
<td>VF</td>
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<td>Shards</td>
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<td>26</td>
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<td>Glass</td>
<td>Shards</td>
<td>19.06.08 VF</td>
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<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>TR2B</td>
<td>Lead and other</td>
<td>Buttons</td>
<td>19.06.08 VF</td>
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<td>28</td>
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<td>Iron</td>
<td>Nails</td>
<td>19.06.08 VF</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>TR2B</td>
<td>Clay</td>
<td>Pipe stem Frags</td>
<td>19.06.08 VF</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>TR2B</td>
<td>Glass &amp; ceramic</td>
<td>Shards</td>
<td>19.06.08 VF</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>TR2B</td>
<td>Fe</td>
<td>Stud? 1 iron stud and 1 indet bit of iron</td>
<td>20.06.08 AK</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>32</td>
<td>TR2</td>
<td>Fe</td>
<td>1 clothes pin spring and 3 indet</td>
<td>17.06.08 AK</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>33</td>
<td>TR2</td>
<td>Pottery</td>
<td>Shards of pottery and glass</td>
<td>17.06.08 AK</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>34</td>
<td>TR2B</td>
<td>Glass</td>
<td>3 shards of glass</td>
<td>20.06.08 AK</td>
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<td>35</td>
<td>TR2B</td>
<td>Copper alloy</td>
<td>Broken sheet of copper alloy with perforation, pendant?</td>
<td>20.06.08 AK</td>
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<td>36</td>
<td>TR2B</td>
<td>Fe</td>
<td>? Corroded bit of Fe, pointed at one end</td>
<td>20.06.08 AK</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>37</td>
<td>TR2B</td>
<td>Clay</td>
<td>Pipe stem 2 bits</td>
<td>20.06.08 AK</td>
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<td>TR2B</td>
<td>Fe</td>
<td>Scissors</td>
<td>20.06.08 AK</td>
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Table 7: MÖÖ08 Artifacts Register for TR2 and TR2b

2008 Skuggi Öskuhóll (SKÖ) data:

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<th>Context Number</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description/Information</th>
<th>Date/Time dd.mm.yy.</th>
<th>ID</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>001</td>
<td>TR1</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Topsoil</td>
<td>21.8.2008 RH/PP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>002</td>
<td>TR1</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Grey-blue tephra - right under topsoil</td>
<td>21.8.2008 RH/PP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>003</td>
<td>TR1</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Bone &amp; charcoal rich midden dump under 002</td>
<td>21.8.2008 RH/PP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>004</td>
<td>TR1</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Orange/black midden dump under 003</td>
<td>22.8.2008 RH/PP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>005</td>
<td>TR1</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Brown/pink deposit w. Little charcoal</td>
<td>22.8.2008 RH/PP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>006</td>
<td>TR1</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Mixed deposit, turf/debris and silt</td>
<td>22.8.2008 RH/PP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>007</td>
<td>TR1</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Dump , charcoal % bone rich</td>
<td>22.8.2008 RH/PP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table 8: MÖÖ08 Context Register for TR1

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Bag. No.</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Vol</th>
<th>No. Of Bags / Buckets</th>
<th>Sample for</th>
<th>Description/Information</th>
<th>Date/Time dd.mm.y.</th>
<th>ID</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>TR1</td>
<td>002</td>
<td>1 sm bag</td>
<td>Tephra analysis</td>
<td>Blue/grey tephra</td>
<td>21.8.2008</td>
<td>RH</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>TR1</td>
<td>003</td>
<td>4 l</td>
<td>1 lg bag</td>
<td>Flotation</td>
<td>21.8.2008</td>
<td>RH</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>TR1</td>
<td>004</td>
<td>4 l</td>
<td>1 lg bag</td>
<td>Flotation</td>
<td>22.8.2008</td>
<td>RH</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>TR1</td>
<td>004</td>
<td>1 med bag</td>
<td>Charcoal analysis</td>
<td></td>
<td>22.8.2008</td>
<td>RH</td>
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</tr>
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### Table 9 - MÖÖ08 Sample Register for all trenches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bag No</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Weight in gr.</th>
<th>Quant of Bags</th>
<th>Description Information</th>
<th>Date/dd.mm.yy</th>
<th>ID</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 TR1 005</td>
<td>4l</td>
<td>1 lg bag</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Flotation</td>
<td>22.8.2008</td>
<td>RH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 TR1 007</td>
<td>4l</td>
<td>1 lg bag</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Flotation</td>
<td>22.8.2008</td>
<td>RH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 TR1 002</td>
<td>1 sm bag</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tephra analysis - same as sample no. 1, but from section Blue/grey tephra</td>
<td>25.8.2008</td>
<td>RH</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Table 10 - MÖÖ08 Bone Register for all trenches

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Bag No</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Weight in gr.</th>
<th>Quant of Bags</th>
<th>Description Information</th>
<th>Date/dd.mm.yy</th>
<th>ID</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 TR1 003</td>
<td>553</td>
<td>Various species, incl. Bird</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mostly sheep bone</td>
<td>22.8.2008</td>
<td>RH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 TR1 004</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>1 Mostly sheep bone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mostly sheep bone</td>
<td>22.8.2008</td>
<td>RH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 TR1 007</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mostly sheep bone</td>
<td>22.8.2008</td>
<td>RH</td>
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### Table 11- MÖÖ08 Artifacts Register for TR1

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<th>Finds No.</th>
<th>Material Type</th>
<th>Object Type</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Date/dd.mm.yy</th>
<th>ID</th>
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<tr>
<td>1 003 Iron Nail? Nail frag</td>
<td>21.8.2008</td>
<td>ÞP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 003 Stone/quartz Manuport? 2 small, very rounded pebbles</td>
<td>22.8.2008</td>
<td>RH</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 004 Jasper 1 flake of green jasper</td>
<td>22.8.2008</td>
<td>ÞP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4 005 Jasper 1 flake of green jasper</td>
<td>22.8.2008</td>
<td>ÞP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 007 Metal 1 very heavy fragment - lump of alloy?</td>
<td>22.8.2008</td>
<td>ÞP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 007 Stone/quartz 2 quartz pebbles</td>
<td>22.8.2008</td>
<td>ÞP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 007 Metal Small fragment of slag maybe</td>
<td>25.8.2008</td>
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### 2008 Myrkárdalur Öskuhóll (MYØ) data:

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<th>Group</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100 TR1 D</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dark layer mixed w. Charcoal</td>
<td>30.6.2008</td>
<td>AK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101 TR1 D</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Turf feature</td>
<td>30.6.2008</td>
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<td>102 TR1 D</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dark brown w. Stones and charcoal</td>
<td>1.7.2008</td>
<td>AK</td>
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<td>103 TR1 D</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Lighter brown w. Turf - down slope of wall</td>
<td>1.7.2008</td>
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### Table 12 - MÖÖ08 Context Register for TR1

<table>
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<th>Site</th>
<th>Sample number</th>
<th>Area</th>
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<th>Subsample</th>
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<tr>
<td>MYÖ08 08-02</td>
<td>Trench 1</td>
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<td>1.7.2008</td>
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<td>MYÖ08 08-03</td>
<td>Trench 1</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>1.7.2008</td>
<td>RCF</td>
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<tr>
<td>MYÖ08 08-06</td>
<td>Trench 1</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>2.7.2008</td>
<td>RCF</td>
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<td>Trench 1</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>3.7.2008</td>
<td>RCF</td>
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<td>MYÖ08 08-09</td>
<td>Trench 1</td>
<td>113</td>
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<td>Trench 1</td>
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### Table 13 - MÖÖ08 Sample Register for all trenches

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<th>Description Information</th>
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<td>100</td>
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<td>One drilled bone</td>
<td>30.6.2008</td>
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<td>One drilled bone</td>
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### Table 14 - MÖÖ08 Bone Register for all trenches
### MYÖ08 Artifact Register

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<th>Context No.</th>
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*Table 15 - MÖÖ08 Artifacts Register for TR1*
Appendix II – Harris Matrices

1. Möðruvellir

Möðruvellir 2006-2008 TR1 Harris Matrix

Phase One

Phase Two
Phase Three

063 073

074 075 077 079

080 081 084

082 085 083

086

087 088

089 090 091

092 094

093 095 096

097 099 098

100

101 102 103
Table 1 – Möðruvellir 2006-08 Trench 1 Harris Matrix

not excavated
Table 2 – Möðruvellir 2006-08 Trench 2 Harris Matrix

Table 3 – Möðruvellir 2006-08 Trench 2b Harris Matrix
Table 4 – Skuggi 2008 Harris Matrix

Table 5 – Myrkárdalur 2008 Harris Matrix
Appendix III – Gásir Hinterlands Project 2008 - CORING LOG

RH: This Coring Log presents raw coring data.

RH: Elevations are taken from Google Earth.

Ramona Harrison
Gasir Hinterlands Project 2008 Coring Log

A large part of the 2008 project was a prospection of potential medieval (1200-1400 AD preferred) midden materials associated with nine outlying sites at one point in time either belonging to the monastery at Möðruvellir or in other cases potentially involved in the social/cultural. economic. and political concerning medieval Hörgárdalur. Öxnadalur. and Eyjafjörður as a whole. Midden materials are required because they are likely to contain archaeofaunas and other environmental and artefactual remains that can offer comparative information to the archaeological and environmental data collected from the 14th Century AD deposits from the Gásir trading site that is located along the SW coast of Eyjafjörður.

The first series of cores was actually put into the Möðruvellir Midden. Since Trench 1 was becoming ever deeper. another trench with hopefully equally well preserved faunal materials that could be associated with medieval strata would be preferential.

June 17.6.08

Coring at MÖÖ 07 extension:

Core 1: at about 60 cm down from grass line:
0-65 cm rich mottled midden deposit; charcoal. peat ash. fire cracked rock. very soft. not compacted.
65-90 cm fire cracked rock. wood charcoal. burnt bone fragments
90-115 cm still uncompacted. wood ash. peat ash
to deep for corer

Core 2: at 5m East of the Eastern edge of 07 trench:
0-8 cm turf mat and topsoil
8-26 cm peat ash. burnt bone. charcoal
26-42 cm peat ash. charcoal. Andisol (silty soil typical in Iceland)
at 42 cm hit a rock

Core 3: at 5.50 m east of 07 trench edge:
0-5 cm turf mat and topsoil
6-24 cm ash charcoal. anthropogenic deposit. lots of soil mixed in
45-66 cm very ‘orange’ peat combusted. peat ash
66-75 cm peat ash. burnt bone. uncompacted
75-90cm flecks of bone. fish bone. peat. uncompacted
79-108 cm ‘stratigraphy’ wood and peat ash. charcoal. bone frags. uncompacted
Core 4: at 10 m east of 07 trench edge:
0-10 cm turf mat and topsoil
10-30 cm charcoal flecks. burnt bone. wood ash. charcoal
30-60 cm stratigraphy. midden. burnt turf. peat. woodash. charcoal. uncompacted
60-70 cm turf block
70-76 cm midden material
76-100 cm very uncompacted bands of ash. mottled. wood charcoal. bone flecks. burnt bone
100-116 cm charcoal bits. wood ash. peat ash. displaced turf. rich peat. bone pieces
116-140 cm mottled peat ash. very damp. still thawing

24.6.08
return to MÖÖ for coring. in search of better location to put in another trench.
Core 1
7m North of TR2b NW corner
0-15 turf mat and topsoil
15 – 20 then light pink layer w. burnt bits of bone
20-25 woodash
25-47 various deposits of woodash and peat ash
47-55 layers of wood ash. bits of charcoal
55-62 pear ash. slag. very varied
62-67 peat ash
67-75 wood ash. peat ash
75-87 peat ash layer
87-92 more `clean soil

Core 2
a 2.50 m from TR1
cr. 0-20 more midden material. peat ash
20-26 slag. mixed. cultural
26-29 peat ash middens
29-39 sudsy layer
39-45 mixed brown deep
45-47 woodash. bit of peat ash
47-52 orange midden
52-57 black sudsy layer
57667 pink orange mix
rock

Core 3
at ca 15 m N of TR1 NE corner
0-10 turf mat and topsoil
10-16 woodash.
16-22 peat. woodash
22ö50 woodash. charcoal
50-55 turf pink orange
55-60 black brown pinkish orange w. one unburnt bone
rock underneath

core 4
at ca 10 m N of NW corner of TR1
0-5 Turf mat and topsoil
5-12 peat ash. woodash
12-27 peat ash. charcoal. wood ash
void
63-72 mixed dark soil
72-77 peat ash
77-95 charcoal. some peat ash. wood ash.
rock under
Core 5
S of trench on SW corner of Mound
0-30 topsoil. some anthrop. soil. white burnt bone. bit of charcoal
rock

Core 6
20 m from SW edge of TR1
0-2 turf mat and topsoil
2-6 woodash. grey.
6-16 peat ash. charred
16-22 peat. orange
22-25. pale grey woodash
25-56 mixed pink peat ash
56-110 w. charcoal
110-115 woodash
115-130 soil w. charcoal. anthropogenic
corer not long enough to continue deeper

Core 7
c.a. 10m s of TR2
0-15 turf mat and topsoil
15-40 anthropogenic soil. woodash. charcoal
40-67 turfy. stripes. bit of bone
67-75soil anthropogenic
75-92 turfy layer
92-107 turf block w,. topsoil and banded grey-green tephra on bottom
107-110 peat ash and soil
110-120 stripy. more or less turf wall
120 – 140 topsoil w. turf under tephra. repeatedly
rock

Core 8
c.a. 10 m N of T2Bs NE corner
0-40 topsoil
rock

Conclusion/Suggestion after several cores placed at seemingly suitable locations:
another series of very systematic cores should be put into the Midden Mound; this will require several days of systematic midden coring if a write-up and analysis of the coring data is to be done in the field. at least one fieldwork day should be allocated for analyzing the coring data from the farm mound

Coring log for second-phase midden investigations

18.6.08
Myrkárdalur, MYÖ – (EY205 006)

Coordinates: 65°37.845’N. 18°34.906’W. 218m asl.

Eastern midden mound. indicated on the survey plan
put line in 10 m from N-S
at 0 m N65°37.845. W18°34.892
at about 5 to 6 m = right on top of mound
at 10 m N65°37.840. W18°34.887
First set of cores: line on a N-S Direction

Core 1: at 5m - top of mount.
0-6 cm turf mat and topsoil
6-20 cm turf ash. grey. turfy bits specks of charcoal
20-40 cm midden material. no compactions. wood ash charcoal. bone flecks?
rock

Core 2: at 5.30 m
0-8 turf mat and topsoil
8-12 wood ash. mixed materials
12-17 turf remains
17-20 wood ash. mixed material. charcoal. et cetera
20-30 finely. mixed. charred wood. flecks of bone
30-45 some peat ash. turf ash. burnt bone flecks
Rock

Core 3: at 6 m
0-8cm turf mat and topsoil
8-20 cm specks of charcoal. wood ash. turf ash. rather than peat ash
20-36 grey brown mixed midden. charcoal bits. wood ash
36-38 peat ash
rock

Core 4: at 7 m
0-8 turf mat and topsoil
8-23 wood ash. charcoal. piece of burnt bone. unburnt bone. uncompacted
rock
Core 5: at 9 m
0-8 turf mat and topsoil
8-11 mixed cultural stuff
rock

Core 6: at 11 m
0-8 turf mat and topsoil
8-10 sterile (windblown?)
rock

Core 7: at 4.5 m
0-10 cm turf mat and topsoil
10-16 midden material. wood ash. turf ash. charcoal
16-40 fire cracked rock. wood ash. turf ash charcoal
rock

Core 8: at 3 m
rock at 10 cm

Core 9: at 2 m
rock at 10 cm

Core 10: at 3.20
rock at 10 cm

... this is a midden

ergo: mound really is a midden

Line 2 – EW
runs from 5m E of mound (probably the more recent one. according to Tom) to 13 m
West of it
Western coordinates: MYO04: N65o37.840. W18 o 34.901 midden coordinates used
for report
NB: there is a second mound to the west of the mound indicated on the survey
drawing

GPS elevation: ca 286 m above sea level (Tom’s). Google Earth: 218

Core 1: at 1.20 south of 13 m East
0-8 turf mat and topsoil
8-22 cultural deposit
22-30 cultural deposit
30-40 peat ash. fire damaged rock. bit of bone. “midden material”
rock

Core 2: at 2.60m south of 13 m East
0-8 turf mat and topsoil
8-15 cm cultural deposit: soil (andisol) mixed with charcoal and turfy bits
15-36 ash and cultural mix. bits of charcoal
36-60 burnt bone. turf ash. charcoal. bits of peat ash. turf
60-84 segments of various cultural events. potential very fine like of black tephra at about 79 cm down
84-86 grey-brown deposit. mottled w. light brown deposit
86-106 dark brown banded deposit. anthropogenic soil
106-110 greasy deposit
110-124 brown deposit. maybe anthropogenic. some charcoal

= 2 different middens. the western one is earlier

Core 3 at 3.40m S of 13 m E.
0-4 turf mat and topsoil
4-14 very little cultural mostly natural. not a bit of charcoal

Core 4 at 4m south of 13 m E
0-6 turf mat and topsoil
6-18 bit of cultural layer. few flecks of charcoal
18-25 still cultural
25-27 greasy deposit. some cultural bits. charcoal ca. 7mm by 5 mm

Core 5 at 4.30 m S of 13 m E
0-8 turf mat and topsoil
8-14 peat
14-16 pebbly layer. very fine. almost sand
16-18 lighter cultural deposit. soft uncompacted
18-33 some cultural activity one pies of white burnt bone one large *6.5 cm by 0.2 cm) charcoal. more charcoal
33-34 organic peat ash
34-50 finely mixed peat ash and soil. charcoal. some woodash. very discrete/ fine deposits. organic/greasy material burnt bone. bit of birch bark

Core 6 at 5m S from 13 m E
0-7 turf mat and topsoil
7-18 cultural. wood ash. some charcoal
18-29 pieces of charcoal. peat ash. bark
29-35 charcoal. peat ash
35-40 some wood ash. some flecks of charcoal
this one has cultural material. some displaced white tephra.

Core 7 at 7 m S from 13 m E
0-8 turf mat and topsoil
8-18 patchy. charcoal. some repeat of tephra. black and very fine
18-22 not very midden like. piece of black burnt bone
22-36 some cultural material (?). not certain.
36-39 grease layer, piece of charcoal, turfy, seemingly a fine black line right underneath
39-50 sterile

Core 8 at 7.50 m
0-11 very rooty turf mat and topsoil
11-14 sterile
rock

Core 9 at 1.50 m
0-6 – turf mat and topsoil
6-13 gradually becomes more mixed wood ash, charcoal on bottom
rock

Core 9 at 2.50 m
rock

Core 10 at 2 m
0-6 turf mat and topsoil
6-14 andisol.
14-19 still andisol, but with more wood ash

3rd line at the more recent farm building, just south of modern structure running N to S

Core 1 at 1m S
0-13 turf mat and topsoil
13-21 Rooty and thick turf
21-36 more turf and natural
36-42 natural

Core 2 4.30 m S
08 turf mat and topsoil
8-10 natural
Rock

Core 3 from North, on the slope
0-12 turf mat and topsoil
12-20 natural
20-28 H2

Core 4 ca 10 m W of modern structure
0-10 turf mat and topsoil
10-13
13-14 black tephra band
14-20 natural
Core 5 ca 5 m N of northern edge of the structure north of the modern structure (concrete building. at least 1920s)
0-8 turf mat and topsoil
8-25 natural
Gravel under

Möðruvallasel MSÖ – (EY200 006)
Möðruvallasel – the shieling associated with Möðruvellir
Midden very easily visible.
Farmer Ari: often very bad weather in winter
Ari tells us that Ottir Einarsson (?). Hólar bishop born at the sel because his mother was not married and asked to be brought to the sel to have the child

PH about 6-6.5
Line 1 = E-W line
MSÖ1 West end
N 65°39.230. W 18°37.853 used as potential midden coordinates for report
MSÖ2 is 8m east of MSÖ1
N 65°39.234. W 18°37.847

Core 1
At 3 m. in Center of the Hóll
0-8 turf cover
8-15 soil
15-18 turf
18-33 peat. very organic
33-38 turf w. maybe tephra in it
38 – 40 mixed material w. pot. decomposed bone
rock underneath

Core 2
at 2.50m
0-8 turf cover
8-19 turf deposit. some flecks of black. maybe charcoal
19-24 mixed material. peat
24-26 turf block. black tephra
26-34 turf. looks like yellow (H) tephra on last 2cm = not midden material
34-40 natural (?). very thin line of black tephra?
49 – 42 natural
rock underneath

Core 3
80 cm N of 5m on line
0-8 turf cover
8-30 natural
rock underneath
This little mound is not rich in Ash or bone or charcoal, but may be result of repeated sheep dung deposition... Also, structure A is a serious stone building which maybe a statement because the sel is associated w. the monastery.

Core 4
ca 7m S of Structure 4
0-8 turf mat and topsoil
8-30 natural
30-40 tephra. Hekla. yellow

Core 5
ca 5 m E of Structure A
0-8 turf mat and topsoil
8-30 natural. some charcoal. root growth – vegetation at Landnám
30-40 H Sequence
40-45 natural

Core 6
ca 2 m S of building North of A
0-10 cm turf mat and topsoil and many roots
10-22 natural
22-32 ‘anthropogenic’ soil – could be sheep dung
32 – 35 prehistoric tephra
35-42 natural

Core 7
in middle of structure N of A
0-6 turf mat and topsoil. black layer on bottom that looks like tephra
6-8 red/black turf
8-12 floor layer? very greasy
12-40 natural
40-50 natural but bits of tephra

Core 8
Core 8 in W. part of building
0-8 turf mat and topsoil8-9 turfy/greasy deposit
9-15 cultural. buttery. still roots
15-20 natural
rock underneath

Core 9
between St. A and North Structure
0-8 turf mat and topsoil
8-15 cultural roots/vegetation
15-18 natural
18-23 cultural
23-17 natural
27-34 tephra bands. prehistoric
NB: rich soil = component of usual middens

Core 10
In building of structure North of Str. A.
0-8 turf mat and topsoil
8-9 greasy. organic dep.
9-17 cultural? floor layer from sel. not as thick or compacted as in a house occupied year long?

Core 11
Just SW of Structure A.
0-8 turf mat and topsoil
8-45 thick rich soil – thick accumulation
45-60 natural
60-63 prehistoric tephra

Klausturhús KLÖ, (EY215_022)
Coordinates: 65°39.552’N, 18°29.702’W, 280m. (versus 122 from gecko... Garmin)
nice ruin. very long (ca 35-38m)
unusual looking structure. close to Staðartunga, belonged to Möðruvellir
built on a gravel ridge

Core 1
on the West Edge of structure. just South
0-8 turf mat and topsoil
8-12 natural
12-14 turf – red
14-20 mostly natural. some roots in it
20-34 bit of turf. not much cultural. gravely
34-40 some cultural
rock underneath

Core 2
at 6m E.
0-12 turf mat and topsoil
12-14 peat/cultural mix
14-17 turf stripes
17-21 more natural looking soil
21-30 darker deposit
30-35 prehist. tephra

Core 3
N of Structure
downhill slope
0-8 cm turf mat and topsoil
8-16 natural w. roots
16-24 various layers of prehist tephra: banded and in situ

Core 4
ca 5 m W of 3
0-8 turf mat and topsoil
8-30 soil. rather rich and greasy. lots of roots. vegetation. prehist?

Core 5
ca 5m w of core 4
0-10 turf mat and topsoil
10-12 faint traces of midden: woodash. potential bone butter. charcoal
12-24 ‘cultural´ soil. anthropogenic. dung?
24-30 more of same
30-47 prehistoric tephra

Core 6
1 m E of Core 5
0-10 turf mat and topsoil
10-22 cultural soil: ’sheep dung´ deposit. maybe the midden. at an animal shelter
  band of tephra. thin and black line
22-24 richer greasier soil
24-42 natural
42-59 prehistory. turf bands

Core 7
just at SE Wall
0-5 turf mat and topsoil
5-10 soil w. roots
10-12 peat turf red
12-29 anthropogenic traces in soil – 1 piece of charcoal
29-37turf w. upcast olive tephra
37-46 mixed deposit. some soil and turf ... ‘anthropogenic´
  rock under

Core 8
2m E. of core 7

0-11 turf mat and topsoil
11-12 red turf
12-30 anthropogenic soil bit of charcoal
30-36 natural soil

Line
KLÖ 01 W 65°39.561’N. 18°29.693’W to
KLÖ 02 65°39.548’N. 18°29.720’W at 30m East

Core 1 at 1.20
0-6 turf mat and topsoil
6-15 cult. soil? maybe flecks of charcoal
Rock under

Core 2
at 2m
0-5 turf mat and topsoil
5-10 anthropogenic soil. bit of charcoal. some turf
rock

Core 3
at 4.50
0-9 turf mat and topsoil
9-18 greasy. rich soil. turf mixed in
natural under

Core 4
At 5.50
0-8 turf mat and topsoil
8-18 very rich soil. with a bit of turf in it. many roots
18-19 natural gravel

Core 5
at 8m
0-7 turf mat and topsoil
7-23 greasy soil. lots of roots
rock under

Core 6
at 9.50
0-11 root mat
11-12 turf red-peat ash – from bog?
12-25 rich soil. not much in it
25-29 turfy. greasy. organic. maybe sheep dung and thus midden material
29-44 natural.
44-65 tephra. prehistory

Core 7
at 11m
0-9 turf mat and topsoil
9-23 cultural material. soil w. little charcoal
23-45 rich soil. dung enriched?
45-47 prehistoric?

Core 8 at 12. 40m
0-6 turf mat and topsoil
6-18 rich soil
w roots
18-20 turf layer/peat
20-34 purple black tephra (1422?) . another sequence of 1477? – sample in a large bag
37 olive/black tephra (Sample)
37-47 natural and then Hekla – prehistoric

Core 9
at 13 m. 1 m North of line
0-8 turf mat and topsoil
8-17 natural/sterile
17-19 turf. red
17-42 somewhat anthropogenic soil
42 – 53 column of very nice bands of different colored tephra? (took picture)

Core 10
2 m N of 13 at line
0-4 turf mat and topsoil
4-23 rooty soil. very clean
prehistoric under

Core 11
0-5 root mat
5-13 prehistoric tephra and natural

ph 6.25-6.50

Core 12
Inside W. part of Structure
0-10 turf mat and topsoil
10-18 natural soil
18-20 peaty/turphy
20-22 natural
22-30 turf w. bands of tephra
30-32 compact. laminated deposit. peat ash. charcoal. various tephra patches (?) took picture
32-40 soil – anthropogenic.
40-41 Landnám tephra (?)
41-59 turf block w. bands of tephra patches
59-60 natural. left flag here for Ian Simpson
60-62 more of the same
62-64 turf
64-65 landnám? in Turf
65-66 natural
66 black tephra in situ then prehistoric natural

Core 13
0-5 turf mat and topsoil
5-15 turf block
15-21 natural
21-23 natural. anthropogenic
23-26 turf maybe floor deposit
26-40 greasy deposit. cultural. but coarse at the same time
40-45 Anthropogenic
45-46 different stripes of lamination. maybe a floor?
46-65 Natural/prehistoric tephra

Core 14
Inside eastern part of structure
0-6 turf mat and topsoil
6-42 anthropogenic soil. not very greasy. root growth
42-48 natural/prehistory tephra

At ruin (another beitarhús?)
ca 100 m W of KLÖ

Core 1
0-10 turf mat and topsoil
10-18 turf block/debris
18-33 prehistory
rock underneath

Core 2 in Part of Structure
0-9 turf mat and topsoil
9-12 soil w. piece of glass?
12-15 somewhat cultural then natural soil
rock under

18.8.08

Jaðar, JRÖ (EY-068:022)

Coordinates: 65°46.179', N 18°14.791' W, 18m asl.

Jaðar – at Northern Structure

first line from W to E.
from ca center of structure

Core 1 at 0 m E. = probably still in structure
0-12cm roots/topsoil
12-16cm dark brown organic. dep. w. charcoal
16-22cm various deposits. layer of fine gravel
22-27cm turf/peat? from very pale material. possibly upcast tephra (yellow) – but could also be very fine sand
27-36 mixed deposit. pieces of charcoal. red flecks. maybe peat?
then rock

Core 2 at 0.5 m east
0-12 topsoil
12-20 anthropogenic soil. pieces of charcoal up to 0.3 cm
20-25 mixed w. gravel
then rock

Core 3 at 90 cm
0-12 topsoil
12-14 rather clean soil
14-17 layer – loose soil and charcoal. very dense amount
17-20 clean soil w. some charcoal. anthropogenic. rather large pieces – 1 cm
20-30 natural. fine brown silt

Core 4 at 5 m
0-10 topsoil
10-16 nat. w. iron pan
16-20 very compacted, greasy black brown deposit. patchy prehistoric tephras ...
disturbed (postholes?)
20-30 soil w. will some charcoal. organic accumulation in it. but only few charcoal
30-40 various prehist. tephras. very light grey/yellow and then natural

Core 7 at 7m very empty core
0-7 topsoil w. roots
7-16 mixed ´organic´ brown (looks very fertile)
16-20 very red/brown soft. rather clean. very silty. natural looking
20-42 natural

Core 8 at 9m
0-12 topsoil
12-25 natural
Core 9 at 10.30m
0-11 topsoil
11-20 natural. fine. rather rich looking silt

Core 10 at 12m
0-15 topsoil and then natural
rock

Core 11 at 13.50 m
0-10 natural soil
rock

Core 12 at 16.50 m
0-5 topsoil
5-13 natural w. gravel

Line 2 at a very green looking ´hóll´ according to Orri´s description
GPS point taken at center
JAD-HL N 65°46.166´
Line N to S and: JADHLN to JADHLS is 11 m long

Core 1 at 0 m
0-8 topsoil
8-10 mixed soil. topsoil roots. natural
10-20 natural
20-44 natural. roots still there
rock

Core 2 at 2.50
0-5 cm topsoil w. roots
5-25 natural w. worms in there
25-46 natural. cream colored tephra on bottom
heavy accumulation of soil? roots go far down
46-48 cream colored tephra. loose deposit
48-65 prehist.

Core 3 at 3.50
0-5 topsoil
5-53 hollow in between
53 – black tephra band (prehistoric?)
53-63 very loose. prehistoric deposit. yellow-brown line. deposit. could be an H- tephra
63-65 deposit prehist.

Core 4 at 5 m
0-54 cm – again a hollow such as Core 3. at this depth. the corer only had 20 cm of deposit in it. hollow too large for animal burrow
65-67 very greasy. wet deposit. w. charcoal flecks in it. potential floor layer
67-72 looks like slightly disturbed prehist. layers
72-74 black tephra?
74-80 natural. sterile. prehistory

this is where the E-W line will be

Core 5 at 6.50 m
0-10 topsoil
10.... hollow
56-58 very organic dark dep. charcoal – some
58-61 various bands of tephra. landnám?
61-67 prehist. nat. silt
68-69 black/yellow sequence
69-80 clean. prehist. silt. brown

Hollow spaces ... Þúfur?

Core 6 at 8m
0-10 topsoil
10-18 natural
18-20 bits of charcoal. but very clean
20-30 natural. organic looking
30-40 soil w. tephra.
40-50 very orange looking. deposit may be from water. or iron...
50-56 prehist. silt

Line 2 E-W line at 5m S of JADHLN point

Core 1
at 1m east
0-10 topsoil
10-48 rather clean soil. occasional charcoal (windblown?). but not cultural.
cryoturbation?
48 tephra line. prehist
48-55 greasy. w. charcoal
55-80 natural. clean. tiny flecks of occasional charcoal. prehistoric

JADESC N65°46.167’ W18°14.770’
cores placed where most likely to find a midden in the area
Core 1
The deposits seem more midden like than others at the E. center of the mount. i.e.
more fertile seeming vegetation
0-23 natural
23-24 black tephra layer – could be medieval (1400s?)
24-37 wood ash. peat. banded and repeated – turf
37-38 soil – non-anthrop.
38-65 rather uncompeacted. various deposits of peat ash. woodash... lots of charcoal
65-70 i big lump ca 2 cm of charcoal
rock

Core 2 ca 1m E of 1
0-8 topsoil
8-10 clean soil
10- band of black greasy tephra (1717 or 15th Century?)
11-15 some peat ash. woodash. grey small gravel
15-18 very organic soil
18-23 orange. peat
23-40 peat ash
40-43 orange = peat? flecks on soil. occasional slag? (probably more likely pebbles
from bedrock... some charcoal
rock

Core 3 ca 8m S of Core 2 65°46.158’N. 18°14.768’ “JADE”
0-10 topsoil
10-20 mixed organic soil. compact. if midden material. then animal dung
27-28 brown/clayey line. rather organic
Ramona Harrison Gásir Hinterlands Project–2008 Interim Field report

28-31 mixed deposit. rather just silt. w. some organic
31 tephra line
32-35 mixed or upcast prehistoric tephra
35-41 natural
rock
Core 4 ca 4m S of Core 3
4m E of NE boundary of new cemetery = JADSS 65°46.155’N. 18°14.767’W
0-10 topsoil
10-15 rather natural. slightly organic – fertilized soil?
16-21 grey-pink greasy compact layer. very light color
21-54 less compacted. mixed. orange. brown. bit peaty
54 coarse grey olive tephra (part of landnám?)
55-67 less compacted. mixed. orange. brown. bit peaty
67-77 very mixed deposit. no charcoal. some flecks in it - maybe bone butter. some peat (very promising mixed deposit)
rock

Ergo: if return. should do more coring or small test trench here an at JADESC N65°46.167’ W18°14.770’

18.8.08

Nesko, NKÖ (EY-068:018)
very dry soil – has not rained in weeks

NESK1 – first. most NE of 4 possible ruins
S-N line
ph in ‘structure’: 6.8-7

NESK1N 0m at N. end. 15 at Send (should be same a MARK 05)
Core at 0.5m
0-9 top soil
9-59 clean soil w. one small pebble
59 – light tephra – prehistoric Hekla?
natural
65.5 orange band
natural
68 light tephra (crème/white)
natural
74 natural in-between all of these are prehistoric
74-75 natural
75 light-colored tephra line
75 – 87 natural

Core 2 at 2m South
0-7 topsoil
7-42 clean. natural. brown deposit
rock
core 3 at 4m S.
0-10 topsoil
10-28 natural
18-42 prehistoric tephra and sterile sequences

Core 4 at 6m = very deep deposit
0-8 topsoil
8-22 natural. non-cultural
22-64 natural. orangey material. one very small quartz pebble and occasional small regular pebbles ... probably the gravel that builds many of the mounds around

Core 5 at 7m
0-12 topsoil
12-68 natural
68-69 flecks of maybe light colored tephra
68-74 and more orange stripes
prehist deposits?

Core 6 at 8.40 – the first half meter is not compacted at all...
0-10 topsoil w. roots
10-28 clean soil
28-29 deposit of sandy silt
29-58 coarse soil. fine gravel. bit sandy
58-100 same material. becomes slightly more compacted bedrock

Core 7 at 10 m. very dry. although rain at night;
0-8 topsoil
8- olive grey tephra
11-15 sandy silt
15-34 coarse soil
34 – white yellow sandy tephra bad H3?
34-57 less coarse sandy silt. some charcoal (windblown?)
57 – red/orange line
58-60 gravelly silt (fine gravel)
60-80 gravel. sandy silt deposit

the tephra line is very thin; lot of coarse sandy silt filling in ‘structure’ lot of accumulation of silt. sandy. stormy era?

Core 8 at 14m
0-8 topsoil
8-44 gravelly sandy silt
44-46 very grey sand
46-47 light band of tephra?
47-54 sandy silt. slightly more red hue than above

Core 9 at 5m east of 10 m
0-8 topsoil
8-62 coarse gravely sand. natural

Core 10 at ca 15 m east of 15m line
0-8 topsoil
8-35 natural

Core 11 at 6m W of 10m
0-8 topsoil
8-40 natural coarse gravely sandy silt
46-113 natural – prehistoric?
no cultural remains
seemingly no tephras – maybe very deep deposit of natural material?

Core at the most left structure cluster of three in the east.
NES02E
65º46.685’N
18º13.560’ W used for report

0-8 topsoil
8-35 very clean sandy silt
35 black tephra
35-45 very clean sandy silt
45-46 some disturbed yellow/white prehist? tephra
47-60 non-cultural silty sandy deposit
60 white/creamy tephra (prehist)
60-63 silty sand

no indication of a midden found in association w. mound no. 1

raised feature ‘Mound 2’: just west of the most eastern structure.
core at NES02 C – i.e. the center of this raised feature visible in the landscape
65º46.689’N. 18º13.575’
0-14 topsoil
14-18 rather sandy gravely silt
18-22 turf collapse? mixed w. silty sand
22-33 reddish turf t/c? mixed w. silt
33 reddish line
34-57 silty sand w. some turf
57 red band-iron pan?
57-59 orange, green gray bands. some turf
9-62 mores silty sand
62 black line – very fine (tephra?)
62-68 silty sand
68 black tephra lines. ca 4cm thick
68-75 less mixed sandy
75 a line. maybe tephra
75-105 light brown colored silt
106 yellow/white/black band – prehistoric tephra
106 -108 prehistoric – natural

very organic looking soil – no charcoal – ‘dung’ enriched soil?
ph – 6.7 – 7

NES 02W
65°46.685’N. 18°13.576’W
Core 1
0-12 topsoil
12-41 natural
41-61 natural cream white tephra on bottom

Core 2 at about 5m N of NES 02C
0-8 topsoil
8-23 natural
23-33 natural. silty. windblown
33 cream/white very fine tephra line (H3?)
33-47 natural. prehist.
47-64 natural prehistoric

about 4m accuracy...
NES 03 E 65°46.685’N. 18°13.592’E
Core at str. south of NES 02 in E part
0-12
12-23 natural /windblown
23 – 24 sand lense
24-26 turphy – more compact
26-28 brown. organic but no charcoal
28-36 gravelly silt
36-46 mixed silt and bit organic
46-64 very fine silt
gravel/bedrock

no midden was found here. nothing even remotely organic beyond some dubious turf collapse...

19.8.08
Skuggi, SKÖZ (EY-215:009)


SKUGGI – considered old site. mentioned in the 14th Century
at ca 16.5 m; ph = 6.5-7
site is up hill at an elevation of ca 166m asl (according to my gecko, 360m
as according to Google Earth!
SKU01N- this is 18 m North (going downhill...) from NW corner of structure B.

SKU01N N65°39.752’. 18°28.813’W coordinates for midden location used for NSF report.
Core 1 at 17m N
0-10 topsoil
10-24 natural soil
24-25 lighter colored deposit
25-35 sandy silt mixed w. charcoal and some potential bone butter
35-37 lump of turf?
37-45 unburnt bone. loose. rather mixed. very little charcoal. woodash
45-54 becomes rather yellow. mixed probably turfy /Hekla. charcoal
54-55 grey black/purplish tephra – landnám
rock

Core 2 at 16m
0-15 topsoil
15-21 more mixed. but nothing cultural visible
21-31 charcoal. very occasional
31-36 white-burnt bone
36-44 organic. at east charcoal. woodash. mixed in
44-45 white burnt bone. and charcoal... rather accumulation of small bits of bone.
burnt and unburnt
rock

Core 3 at 15 m
0-15 topsoil
15-28 occasional bone and charcoal in rather clean deposit
28-34 lighter color. bits of more frequent charcoal
34 – 40 very frequent charcoal. some peat. some woodash
rock

Core 4 at 14m
0-12 topsoil
12-17 natural
17-18 maybe grey to black tephra (1717) = this was actually a grey blue tephra and
may very well be from the 1300 one
18-27 rather clean
27 – 33 darker deposit. traces of woodash. unburnt bone. one nice. 1.5 cm. dense
fragment. well preserved. charcoal
33=44 cleaner deposit
44 - 48 midden- like peat ash. charcoal. even bit of woodash
48-62 more of same. a bit cleaner than above and below
62-67 midden w. peat ash. charcoal. woodash
67-71 very well preserved bone fragment from mtm long bone. ca 2cm
71-78 very nice banded turf sequence w. Landnám and prehistoric (picture)
78-81 more organic deposit w. charcoal
rock

ph ca 6.8 -7

Core 5 at 13 m = almost at the center of the hóll
0-15 topsoil
15-23 windblown.
23-32 charcoal. woodash. cultural soil
32- 40 peat. charcoal
40-48 cleaner soil
48-53 peat
53 -55 woodash
55-72 bit of peat. some charcoal woodash. peat ash on bottom. whit burnt bone frag.
72-75 pink and charcoal
75 woodash layer (? could this be a tephra?)
75-77 more orange peat
77-79 turf collapse?
79 -82 peat ash mix
82-97 darker .v very mixed w. charcoal. peat ash. calcine bone. some wood
97-98 pink and woodash
98-99 woodash
99-101 turf debris w peat ash
101-103 pink woodash. peat ash
103-118 big chunks of woodash
118-124 turf w. tephra sequences. olive band (Landnám?). with prehist material in it
olive on top then yellow. then yellow black
124-129 very dark and compact still bit of charcoal
rock (bedrock)

Core 6 at 11.50 m
0-19 topsoil
19 tephra – black grey
23-27 midden material. peat ash. charcoal. calcine bone
27-32 more organic. may be decomp. wood
32-41 rather clean. occ. charcoal
41-48 darker. charcoal peat ash
48-54 peat ash. domestic. midden. charcoal
54-63 cleaner deposit
63-74 turf sequence w. olive color
74-76 peat ash. plus prehist
76-78 midden mat. and turf debris. peat ash
78-82 dark. clean. material – natural
rock

Core 7 at 10 m
0-21 topsoil
21- black – grey tephra
21-29 rather clean. maybe wood
29-32 some mixed ash. wood and peat
32-33 darker material and charcoal
33-37 occasional charcoal. but rather clean
37-46 turf collapse mixed w silt
rock
Suggestion in Aug. 2008: if a test trench should be placed between 12 and 14 m North

Skriða, NLÖ 1 (EY-192:023)
Coordinates: 65°43.103’N, 18°21.878W, 51m asl.

right to SW of new House; SK302A 65°43.101’N, 18°21.876’W (51-54m asl) used for potential midden coordinates in report
Core 1 = 10 m SW of mod house. about 2m W of trees
0-16 topsoil
16-51 very clean. occasional fleck of charcoal rock

Core 2 1 m SSW of Core1
0-8 topsoil
8-40 clean soil very loose. maybe recently disturbed?
40 black/grey tephra (1766?)
40-47 soil. occasional charcoal specks. tiny white burnt bone
47-54 bit cleaner
54-58 more mixed. traces of peat? traces of woodash. charcoal rock

Core 3 ca 3 m E of Core 2
0-11 topsoil
11 - 16 very loose sandy silt. orange. red band (peat?) w. occasional charcoal rock/root

Core 4
3m NE of last standing tree in the line between two tree trunks
0-24 topsoil
24-33 peaty. ashy (bit). bit midden-like
33-40 turf containing sequence of prehistoric tephras
40-52 in situ sequences of H3 and H4
ph 6.8 -7

Core 5 ca 1 m N of core 4
0-8 topsoil
8-18 clean. contains bit of peat rock

Skriða, NLÖ 2 (EY-192:004)
Coordinates: 65°43.079’N, 18°22.047’W, 54m asl
SKR 02
to W of farm w. N to S line. spanning 30m
SKR 02 N: 65°43.086’N, 18°22.054’W
SKR 02 S 65°43.073’N, 18°22.027’W coordinates used to indicate potential midden

could not get corer in at 16 or 15 m mark
the whole ground is covered by gravel and rocks

Core 1

0-8 topsoil
8-16 some flecks of calcine bone maybe a plow zone?
16-20 midden. peat ash
20-26 turfy deposit
26-30 midden. peat ash
30-35 brown deposit. mixed w. flecks of peat
35-54 peat ash mixed w. prehistoric tephras (from a turf block?): black and yellow/cream. bits of wood
54-56 no peat ash. brown deposit. not very cultural. no charcoal. windblown? dung?
56-61 orange. pink. red. peat ash. mixed w. black (prehistoric?) tephra
61-71 less peat ash. more bone
71-72 peat ash

Core 2

at 2m E of 2m from S line (where core 1 is)
0-8 topsoil
8-15 very little cultural mat. rather clean
15-17 mixed deposit
17 black tephra
17-21 peat / burnt dung?
21-26 very clean. bits of charcoal. very little rock

Core 3

at 1m E of Core 1
0-8 topsoil
8-12 bit of mixed black material. some chunks of charcoal. brown. not ‘orange’. black burnt bone
12-16 wood ash

Core 4

at 1m W of Core 1
0-7 topsoil and fertilizer
7-25 mixed soil w. peat ash. possibly peat ash. bit of black burnt bone, occasional charcoal
25-29 brown. clean material (windblown)
29-31 darker. cleaner.
31 possibly black tephra
31-36 mixed deposit w. some peat ash

Core 5

at 1.50 m W of Core 1
0-10 topsoil
10-20 slightly mixed soil
20-29 brown/yellow turf? w. prehist. tephra bands
29-31 beginning of prehist sequence?
31-46 various prehist. deposits w. various bands of tephra
Core 6 at 1m S of line origin
too much gravel

Core 7 at 27 m
0-10 topsoil
10-28 natural rock

this is a very problematic site because the landslide caused gravel covering of the whole slope

Suggestion if return and continuation of midden investigation:
Core 1 was 9 m W and 6.5 m S of the white fence post that is North of the blue fence post; would have to put in a trench to East. West. and North of that point

20.8.08
BAKKI
SW in church yard
65°36.894´N. 18°30.378´W coordinates (taken in SW corner of Churchyard) used for NSF report

‘Inside the new part of the churchyard’...
Core 1 – 1 m SW of a grave marked with the names Sigrún and Kári
very loose context
0-8 topsoil
8-14 clean soil. maybe fertilizer in it. (bit of white)
14-16 orange/white turf?
16-20 mixed deposit. charcoal. one fleck of burnt bone
20-29 mixed deposit. peat ash
29-30 cleaner
30-32 piece of striped turf
32-49 very mixed
49-50 very pink/orange. peat ash patch
50-91 still mixed soil w. fleck of peat ash. one speck of white burnt bone
91-150 very loose soil w. midden. all the way down
rock

Core 2 at 50 cm W and 1 m N of Core 1
0-15 topsoil
15-17 woodash
17-23 bit mixed soil. occ. charcoal
23-28 more turfy deposit
28-34 soil mixed w. peat ash and charcoal
34-38 cleaner. no anthrop. dep.
38-40 orange. pink w. charcoal
rock
Core 3 at 1.5 m E of Core 1
0-11 topsoil
11-22 rather clean soil, gravely
22-28 orange/pink peat white flecks of bone
28-50 midden material, peat, charcoal, loose, no bone
rock

Core 4 at 1 m S of Core 1
0-14 topsoil
14-19 mixed soil w. white burnt bone, mtm long bone, ca 3 cm
19-35 bits and pieces of tiny calcine burnt and crushed bone
35-39 woodash w. white burnt bone
39-58 more organic layer w. bits of wood and peat ash
59 big chunks of charcoal
59-68 turf w. tephra sequences
66 grey-black tephra, maybe landnám underneath: greenish and purplish
68 -71 looks natural, but with specks of black tephra and lot of charcoal
71-85 soil mixed w. lots of charcoal, peat flecks, some white burnt bone on bottom
75-100 very loose, a void
100 -104 soil bit mixed w. peat but rather clean
rock

Result: Bakki is a rather promising midden, if it was easy enough to get a permit to
dig in the churchyard...
If a test trench, then from Core 1 to Core 4: N-S
and ca. 50 cm W and 1.5 m E = 1mx2m
ca 3m south of last tree

SKÓ test trench
at 12 to 14 m from S: 1x2 m trench
took tephra sample of grey black t. under topsoil (upon talking with Andy C and Andy
D and Orri. this tephra. that is more grey blue than grey black. could be the 1300 AD
(Hekla)

Datum Point: highest part of Rock to SW of TR1
coordinates: accuracy 6m
elevation. 169m asl. according to GPs. but 360m according to Google Earth.
N65º39.745'
W18º28.804’ SKODAT
21.8.08.
I.H. 0.95

22.8.08
I.H. 0.99