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Burials and Landscape in the Faroe Islands during the Viking Age

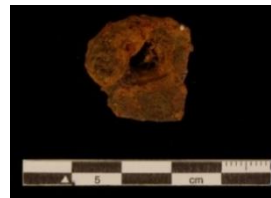
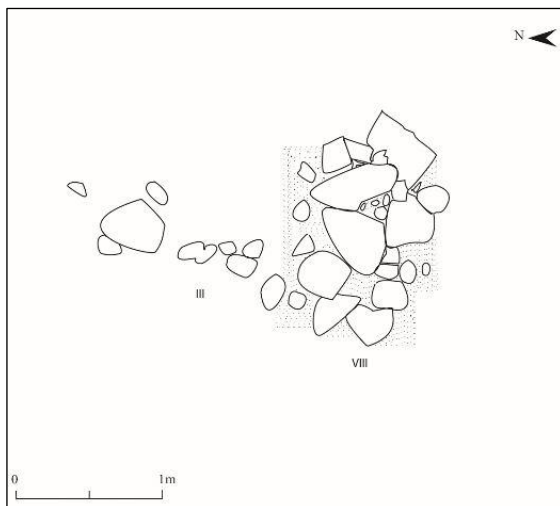
Ann Sølvia Selmarsdóttir Purkhús

Abstract

This research project aimed to provide a new understanding of the Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands, where they were located in the landscape relative to other Viking Age burials in the North Atlantic region, why those sites were chosen, and how we might be able to locate new burials. When I started this dissertation, only three Viking Age burial sites had been identified and two of them excavated in the Faroe Islands, neither of which had been fully published. This placed limits on our understanding of the world-views, beliefs and mortuary practices of the first inhabitants of the islands. Therefore, this project included a detailed analysis of the excavation archives of the excavated burials at Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð, and used a new, landscape-based approach to better understand the locations of the burials relative to natural and human-made features. Comparative landscape analyses were also conducted at selected case study sites in the neighbouring regions of Norway, the Northern Isles of Scotland, and Iceland, in order to consider the similarities and differences of the Faroese burials, and whether the world-views and beliefs of the Viking Age settlers in the Faroe Islands were distinct from their neighbours.

In an attempt to identify new Viking Age burial sites in the Faroe Islands, as these are not visible in the landscape today, I developed a new, multi-method approach that focussed on the northern islands of the archipelago, utilising archival sources, aerial imagery, local oral landscape histories, field survey, geophysical survey, and finally test excavations. Although no new burials were confirmed, a number of new ‘probable’ and ‘possible’ Viking Age burial sites were identified. Moreover, my analysis of the two excavated cemeteries, and the new landscape analyses conducted for this project, generated new interpretations. The key outcome of my research makes it clear that the first settlers brought with them pagan burial practices common to Norway and the North Atlantic region, which were adapted to the unique landscape of the Faroes – a landscape which is so rugged that it resulted in village-based settlement patterns, communal infields, and communal cemeteries. I argue that the dead were in fact visible from settlements, landing sites, and the routes between them, and may have played important roles greeting newcomers, standing guard over infields and settlements, and visually communicating family affiliations, land ownership, and identities.

Burials and Landscape in the Faroe Islands during the Viking Age



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Declaration

This thesis is solely the work of the candidate, and has not been submitted for any other degree. All quotations have been distinguished by quotation marks and the sources of information specifically acknowledged. The help received for the dissertation is detailed in the Acknowledgements.

Ann Sølvia Selmarsdóttir Purkhús

13th November 2020

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I hope that this research will inspire others to continue to do research in the Faroe Islands and the North Atlantic. There is still a lot to do!

Part 1

Chapter 1 Introduction: The Viking Age Expansion

At least by the middle of the ninth century AD Scandinavians had colonised the Faroe Islands (Arge 1989 p. 114). The islands they had reached consisted of an archipelago of 18 volcanic (non-eruptive) islands between Iceland and Norway, and they served as a steppingstone to other colonies in Iceland and, ultimately, Greenland and the east coast of Canada (Figure 1.1) (Ingstad, 1977). As they reached the Faroes in clinker-built ships (Graham-Campbell and Kidd, 1980 p. 25) they established themselves on the islands, building new homes (Dahl, 1951, 1965) and burying their loved ones in cemeteries (Figure 1.2) (Dahl and Rasmussen 1956; Arge and Hartmann, 1989). It is not clear how the Vikings navigated their open sea voyages in the North Atlantic, but from the Icelandic *Landnámabók* (Book of Settlements), dated to the twelfth century, there is a description of how to sail from Norway to Greenland using topographical features and the movements of birds and sea animals (Rögnvaldssyni, 1998). In their travels the Vikings also reached Lindisfarne Monastery in north-east England, which they raided in AD 793 according to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (Ingram, 2007). Consequently, following the conventions established by written sources, the Viking Age is often said to begin with the Viking raids in Europe during the late eighth century. In the Viking homelands in Scandinavia, however, many features of the Viking Age, including aspects of material culture, and the establishment of trading centres, emerged in the archaeological record at the very beginning of the eighth century (Myhre, 1998). Lately there have been debates regarding the traditional dating of the Viking Age, and whether it should be dated using archaeological material rather than solely historical sources of the raid on Lindisfarne (Myhre, 1998; Barrett et al., 2000). The Viking Age conventionally ends with events leading to the death of the English king, Harold Godwinson, at the battle of Hastings in AD 1066 (Thorpe, 1973; Eriksen, 2009 p. 9).

The mortuary practices of Viking Age Scandinavians were diverse, both in Scandinavia and in their settlements abroad. The range of burial practices in Norway, Denmark, Sweden, the British Isles, and Iceland were wide, including cremation, inhumation, under mounds in chambers or boats and flat burials. One of the biggest gaps in our knowledge about the Viking Age are the burial practices in the Faroe Islands. These form the focus of this dissertation.

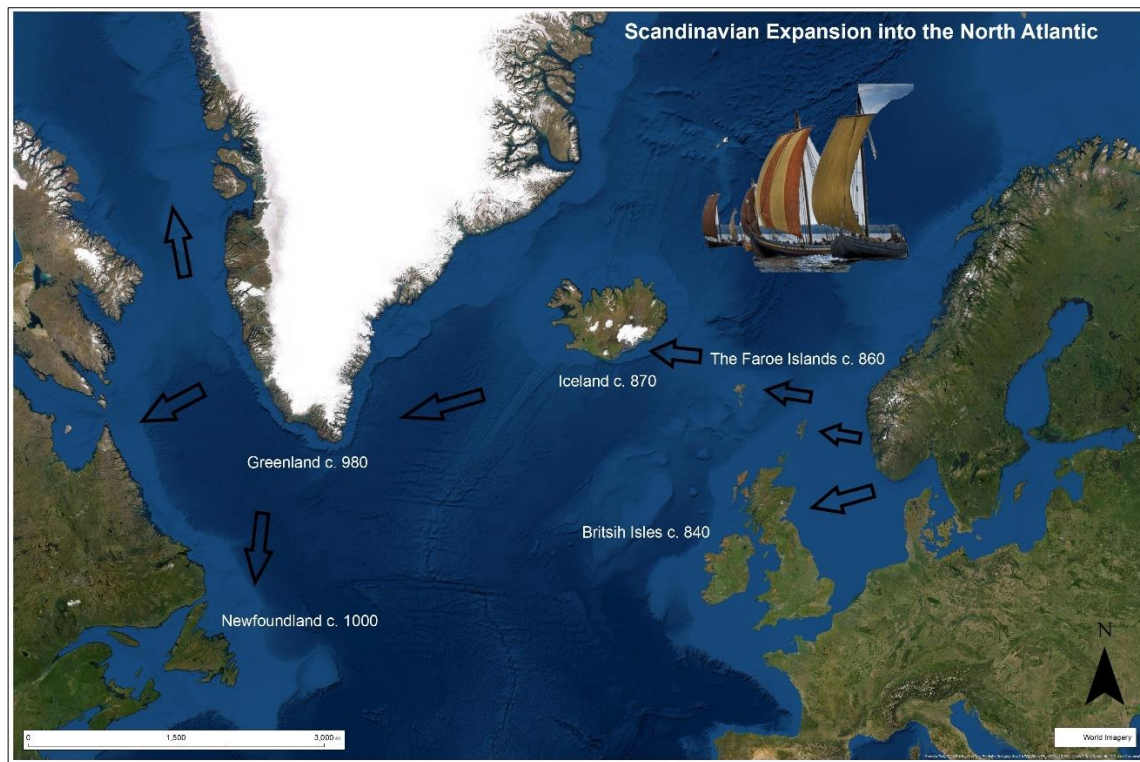


Figure 1.1 Scandinavian expansion into the North Atlantic. Photo of boat adapted from (Johansen, 2019).

1.1 Research Questions, Aims and Objectives

This research project aims to gain a better understanding of Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands. Since only three certain, possibly four, Viking Age burial sites have been verified in the Faroe Islands so far, in the villages of Tjørnuvík, Sandur, Hvalba and Skúvoy, the religious beliefs and mortuary practices of the first inhabitants in these islands remain poorly understood, (see Figure 1.2) (Dahl and Rasmussen, 1956; Arge and Hartmann, 1989, 1990; Arge and Michelsen, 2011). This lack of knowledge about the early burial heritage on the Faroe Islands leaves a huge gap in the understanding of both Viking Age burial practices and the interpretation of Viking Age society in the North Atlantic region. The main research question of the present study is therefore focused on the issue of where and how more Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands can be located. To answer this overarching research question, this dissertation explored the following questions: How is a Viking Age burial identified in the Faroese landscape? Are the Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands similar or different to those in Viking Age Norway, Iceland, the Shetland Islands and Orkney? Which methods and theories can be utilised and developed to get any closer to answering this question? Furthermore, does the location of the burials say anything about how the Vikings viewed their world?

To answer these questions, a novel interdisciplinary methodology had to be developed for locating Viking Age burials and to study their landscape settings. The interdisciplinary methodology used is outlined briefly below and is detailed in Chapter 3.

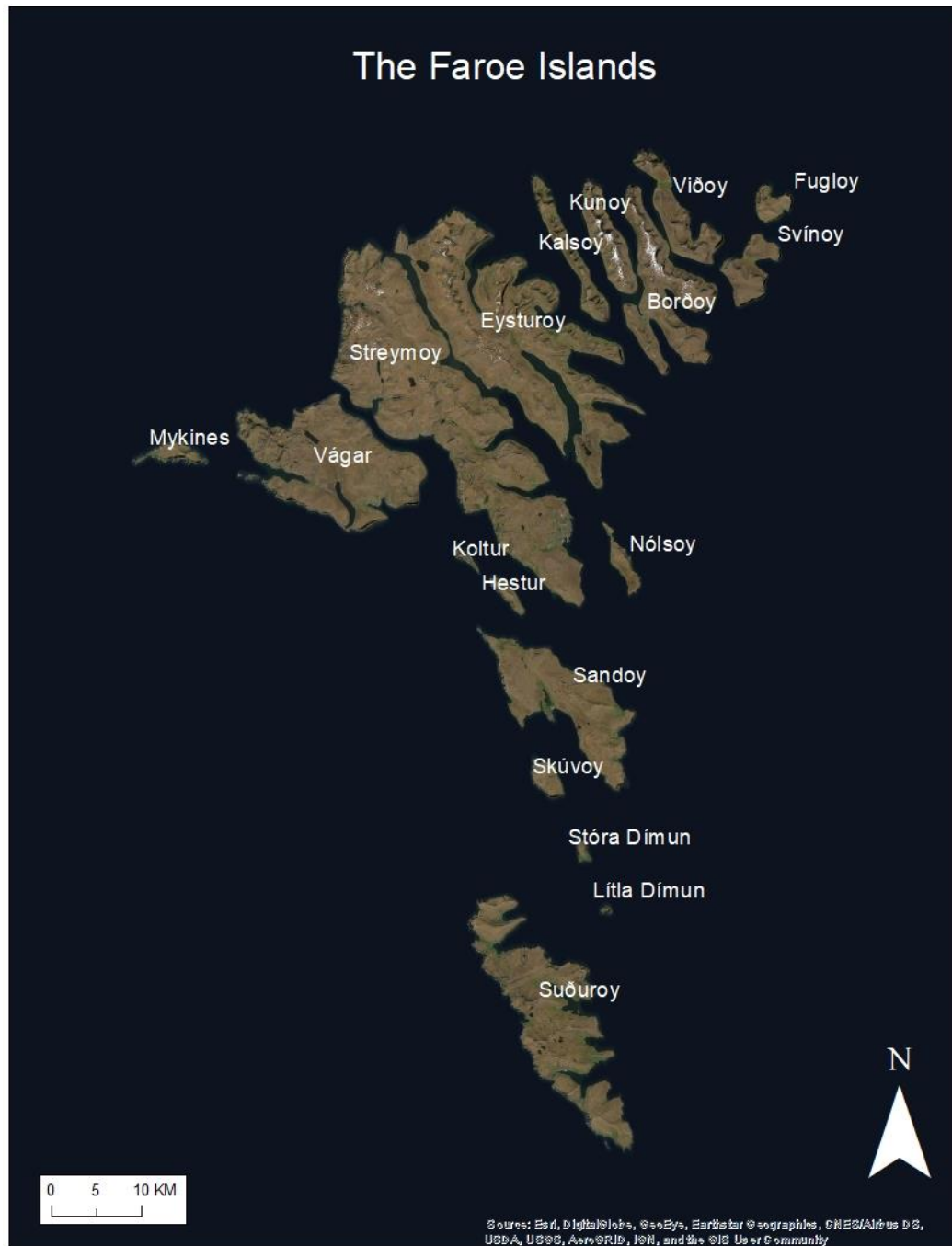


Figure 1.2 Map of the Faroe Islands.

1.2 Interdisciplinary Methodology

The methodology developed for this project was explicitly interdisciplinary, and progressed from desk-top research to field survey to detailed excavation. The research included a review of the relevant archives in the National Museums of Denmark and the Faroe Islands. The Faroese archives of Daniel Bruun (1856-1931), who conducted excavations in the Faroes, Iceland, and Greenland in the early twentieth century, are held in the National Museum in Denmark in Copenhagen (Bruun, 1907; Mortensen, 2002 pp. 42-43; Hansen, 2013). Unfortunately, these archives held no information about Viking Age burial sites in the Faroes. The archives held in the National Museum of the Faroe Islands, Tjóðsavnið, proved to be much more useful. The examination of the archives related to the excavated burial sites in the Faroes in the villages of Tjørnuvík and Sandur were crucial to this dissertation, and the results are presented in Chapter 4. The work on the archives in the Faroe Islands also involved a study of the survey data collected by Sverri Dahl, which was partly followed up later by Árni Thorssteinsson and Símun V. Arge. Sverri Dahl was the first professional Faroese archaeologist to work in the Faroes, the first head of the Faroese Archaeological Museum and Keeper of National Antiquities (Føroya Fornminnissavn, now part of Tjóðsavnið). He excavated the Viking Age settlement in the village of Kvívík and the burial site at Yviri í Trøð in the village of Tjørnuvík (Dahl, 1951, p. 65; Dahl and Rasmussen, 1956; Thorsteinsson, 1975 p. 3). Due to his knowledge and lifelong experience in archaeology in the Faroe Islands, his survey data had the potential to reveal other possible burial sites.

In addition to the archival studies at Tjóðsavnið, part of the place name archives at the university in the Faroe Islands, Fróðskaparsetur Føroya, were examined, specifically those concerning the northern islands. In addition, manuscripts about genealogy in the Faroe Islands by the late Símun Hansen, which are kept at the local museum Norðoya Fornminnissavn in the town of Klaksvík, were examined. Símun Hansen published six books on genealogy, which included oral accounts of social memories and stories about the landscape (Hansen, 1971, 1973, 1975, 1978a, 1978b, 1980, 1981). These oral accounts provided very important contextual information for the field survey work for this project, including perspectives on social meanings embedded in the landscape. Furthermore, he reconstructed the historical landscape by making maps based on aerial photographs taken by the Geodætisk Institut in the 1970s. These maps and accounts of landscape features were helpful in the preparation for the survey

work since these tools provided information about the historical landscape and could potentially support the location of burials.

At the beginning of this research the northern islands were considered to have the most potential for locating new burial sites by field survey, because two probable Viking Age burial sites had been identified in the northern islands (Zachariassen, 1956, pp. 2–4). Additionally, there were areas with structural remains which seemed not to be undisturbed by modern buildings. It was therefore decided to focus the field survey and research on the northern islands, which include Fugloy, Svínoy, Viðoy, Borðoy, Kunoy and Kallsoy. As part of the methodology for this dissertation, aerial photographs of the northern islands were also studied, including the photographs taken by the Geodætisk Institute and newer aerial photographs from the environment agency in the Faroes, Umhvørvisstovan, which are available online at www.kortal.fo (Umhvørvisstovan, 2009).

An additional aspect of the methodology for this project was the testing of the burial location model developed in Iceland. Adolf Friðriksson developed a novel model for the location of Viking Age burials in Iceland (Friðriksson, 2009, p. 9). His survey results showed that the locations of the Viking Age burials could be divided into three main groups based on their spatial relationships with and distances from settlements (Friðriksson, 2004, 2009). Since the locations of numerous Viking Age settlements are known in the Faroe Islands, there was potential to use Friðriksson's models to try to locate contemporary burials. It was hoped that learning more about the relationship between burials and settlements would open the possibility of understanding the relationship between the living and the dead in the landscape of the Faroe Islands.

Finally, as people living in the Faroe Islands today are still living in close contact with the land, are cultivating old infields, developing new infield plots from former outfields, and have a social memory of the place they are living in, it was decided to conduct interviews with farmers as part of the holistic strategy for locating possible Viking Age burials. This part of the research was targeted at people who lived in or used to live in the northern islands, to include their knowledge of possible burial places in the landscape. The interviews were conducted prior to, during, and/or after fieldwork, depending on when it was possible to arrange the meetings.

During these interviews, many subjects were touched upon, including possible place name evidence for burials. During the landscape survey, a few places were identified as possible

burial sites. These designations were based on the topography of the landscape and, following Adolf Friðriksson's (2013) model for Icelandic burials, the relative location of Viking Age settlements, settlement boundaries and old roads, as well as relevant place name evidence and the results of interviews with local people. Based on the results of the survey, a few places were selected for geophysical survey using a magnetic gradiometer. After the data from the geophysical survey had been mapped and interpreted, certain locations were chosen for test excavations.

An important aspect of this dissertation was a consideration of the social and cognitive aspects of Viking Age burial practices and landscape locations in the Faroe Islands by comparing them with contemporary burials in Norway, Iceland, the Shetland Islands and Orkney. Furthermore, variations in burial practices might reflect differences between the different societies established by the Vikings across the North Atlantic region, how they organised themselves, and how they perceived their landscapes. This important aspect of the landscape study foregrounded the importance of the landscape in the Faroe Islands to past societies and to the archaeological research of those societies.

Table 1.1 and Table 1.2 summarise how the methods used have contributed to the exploration of different research questions.

Table 1.1 Methods applied in the interdisciplinary research.

Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Archival research <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Previously excavated Viking Age burial sites in the Faroes Previous research on burials, Sverri Dahl Archives Research on the northern islands in the Faroes prior to the field survey Place name archival research Daniel Bruun Archive (Nat. Mus. DK) Previous excavated sites in Norway, Iceland, Shetland, and Orkney
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adolf Friðriksson location model
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aerial photographs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews

Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethnographic studies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comparative landscape analysis with other Viking burial sites
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field Survey
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Geophysical Survey
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Test Excavation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comparative analysis of burials in their landscape

Table 1.2 List of research questions and methods.

Research Questions	Methods
Where and how can we locate more Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Archival research <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Previously excavated Viking Age burial sites in the Faroes Previous research on burials, Sverri Dahl Archives Local archival research on the northern islands in the Faroes prior to field survey Place name archival research Daniel Bruun archive (Nat. Mus. DK) Testing of Adolf Friðriksson's burial location model Aerial photograph analysis Interviews Comparative analysis with other Viking Age burial sites in North Atlantic Region Field survey Geophysical survey Test excavation
How is a Viking Age burial identified in the Faroese landscape?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Archival research <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Previously excavated Viking Age burial sites in the Faroes Previous research on burials, Sverri Dahl Archives and Tjóðsavnið archives Place name archival research Interviews

Research Questions	Methods
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field survey • Landscape studies • Literature review
Are the Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands similar or different to those in Viking Age Norway, Iceland, Shetland, and Orkney?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archival research <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Previous excavated Viking Age burial sites in the Faroes 2. Previously excavated Viking Age burial sites in Norway, Iceland, Shetland, and Orkney • Comparative landscape analysis
Which methods and theories can we utilise and develop to get any closer in answering this question?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archival research <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Previously excavated Viking Age burial sites in the Faroes 2. Previous research on burials, Sverri Dahl Archives 3. Place name archival studies • Interviews • Landscape studies • Testing Adolf Friðriksson's burial location model • Comparative analysis with other Viking Age burial sites • Field survey • Geophysical survey • Test excavation
Does the location of the burials say anything about how the Vikings viewed their world?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archival research <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Previously excavated Viking Age burial sites in the Faroes 2. Previous research on burials, Sverri Dahl Archives 3. Place name archival studies • Interviews • Landscape studies

Research Questions	Methods
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Testing Adolf Friðriksson's burial location model, which related burial and settlement locations • Comparative analysis with other Viking Age burial sites • Field survey • Geophysical survey • Test excavation

1.3 The Landscape of the Faroe Islands

The locations of Viking Age settlements in the Faroes, and the burials associated with them, are intimately related to the geology and topography of the islands (Arge, 2016 p. 86). The islands are volcanic, and consist of a series of three basalt layers interspersed with volcanic ash and tuff (Rasmussen, 1984 pp. 117-126). Not all the basalt layers are present on all the islands, and the uppermost and youngest basalt layer, which is on the northern islands, is not on Suðuroy, Mykines, Gáshólmur, Tindhólmur, or Vágur (Rasmussen and Noe-Nygaard, 1969 p. 210). The present landscape has been formed by erosion of the basalt layers throughout the Pleistocene Ice Ages and the Quaternary Period (Noe-Nygaard and Rasmussen, 1959 p. 16). This produced separated islands, characteristic steep mountains, valleys, narrow fjords and sounds (Noe-Nygaard and Rasmussen, 1959 pp. 16-17). In the northern islands, where most of the field work was done, the landscape is characterised by particularly high, steep mountains, which reach a maximum of 880 metres. The ruggedness of the landscape is due to the fact that the basalt layers are relatively resistant to weathering, while the tuff layers are more fragile and more susceptible to weathering and erosion (Lützen, 1924 p. 6-7). In addition, on the coasts, the heavy surf has strong erosive power, particularly where the landscape is steepest, which results in sea stacks, sunken rocks, islets, skerries, landslides and talus slopes (Noe-Nygaard and Rasmussen, 1959 p. 18). Erosion by the sea, especially during storms, has had a profound effect on cultural heritage in the Faroe Islands, which are disappearing year-by-year (Arge, 2009 p. 4; Arge and Michelsen, 2011 p. 6). On the positive side, erosion is also one way that new archaeological sites are found (Hansen, 1971 p. 33; Church et al., 2005 p. 181; Arge, 2009; Arge and Michelsen, 2011). On the east coasts of the islands, sea-level rise has also resulted in submerged landscapes, most clearly observed in submerged peat bogs (Noe-Nygaard and Rasmussen, 1959 p. 18; Rasmussen, 1984 p. 132). In the archaeological context this is very

important, because this means that possible settlements and burials are already lost to the sea. For example, there is evidence for the submergence of a settlement at Undir Keisarafløtti in the village of Norðagøtu, on the island of Eysturoy, where the site is on the beach (Arge, 1986 p. 80). Through excavation of this site it was observed that the settlement was built on peaty soil, and, when excavated, it was submerged 0.60 metres under the sea level at high tide (Arge, 1986 p. 80).

In addition to having important impacts on Viking Age settlement patterns and erosion and site preservation right up until the present day, the geology of the Faroe Islands also has an impact on the quality of the soil. On the steep mountain sides the making of soil is dependent on the weathering of bedrock and, on steep-sided mountain slopes or cliffs made up of basaltic benches, soil development is limited (Adderley and Simpson, 2005 p. 714), and is highly susceptible to downslope erosion. In addition, soil is frequently transported to lower slopes and valley bottoms by overland flow during heavy rains, and is carried by streams to their lower reaches, where it is deposited on floodplains or in estuaries; as a result there is not much vegetation on the tops of the mountains (Lützen, 1924 p. 7). The soils that are preserved on hillsides, terraces, and valley bottoms are fertile, and are used for grazing sheep. Below the steep mountain sides, peat bogs and humus soils are common, sometimes mixed with gravel, sand and clay (Lützen, 1924 p. 8-10). These areas are often not very fertile, unless they have been cultivated and improved. Other types of soils in the lower altitudes are mineral soils and sandy soils, which can be fertile, and have been important for cultivation since settlement (Lützen, 1924 p. 11). Rutherford and Taylor (1981) classified five main types of soil in the Faroes as Regosols, Brunisols, Podisols, Gleysols and Organic Soils using the Canadian system of soil classification (Rutherford and Taylor, 1981, p. 231). The vegetation cover is grassland and woody shrubs. It is clear, therefore, that the geology of the Faroe Islands has had a strong effect on the vegetation, settlement pattern, the erosion of the landscape, and the quality of the soil. This geological landscape must be kept in mind when considering the Viking Age settlement patterns in the Faroe Islands.

1.3.1 Viking Age Settlements in the Faroe Islands

Viking Age settlements in the Faroe Islands are characterised by farms and villages situated close to the seashore, with core areas of settlement focused on good boat landing sites, and spreading along the coast and the fjords, close to fertile soils and natural resources such as

grassland and woody shrubs, comprising birch, heather, and juniper. Most of the archaeological investigations of the Viking Age and early Middle Ages in the Faroe Islands have concentrated on settlement sites (Dahl, 1951; Arge, 1986; Matras, 1995; Hansen, 2013). Two seminal studies of the process of prehistoric settlement in the Faroes were conducted by Arne Thorsteinsson (1978) and Símun V. Arge (1986). Thorsteinsson's (1978, 1981, 1990) work was interdisciplinary, based on archaeological excavations, place name studies and historical documents. He observed that some Viking Age settlements were associated with the location of the earliest church in the modern villages (Thorsteinsson, 1978 pp. 58-64, 1981 pp. 196-202). This implies that many villages in the Faroe Islands probably had continuous settlement from the Viking Age to the present day. This is seen most clearly in the village of Leirvík, for example, where the main farms are situated almost as they were hundreds of years ago (Arge, 1997 p. 51). In addition, based on documentary evidence, Thorsteinsson proposed that most villages in the Faroe Islands were settled before the year 1000 and had been divided into small plots of land at an early stage (Thorsteinsson, 1978, p. 65). The settlement structure since the Viking Age, he believed, was not isolated farms, but villages with several houses, each on a small plot of land (Thorsteinsson, 1978 p. 66). This was in contrast to the long-held idea that the first settlers established large farms, sometimes only one large settlement on one island (Matras, 1932). Furthermore, Thorsteinsson suggested that the farms established were small in size relative to their Scandinavian and Icelandic counterparts (Thorsteinsson, 1990, pp. 120–121, 1993 p. 4).

In his study of the development of Faroese settlement patterns, Thorsteinsson (1978 p. 63-65) listed ten villages with residential buildings in the modern infield area, which could be dated to the Viking Age, though archaeological evidence was lacking for ninth century occupation (Arge, 1991 p. 114). Dating these settlement sites remains a challenge because they have never been published in their entirety, and the current publications should be regarded as provisional reports rather than publications with final results (Arge, 1991 p. 109). Símun Arge, in his 1986 thesis, listed 16 buildings as possible or certain sites dated to the Viking Age, 13 of which are in the infield area of modern villages (Arge, 1986 Appendix 1). In the last few years, this picture has changed. Since 1986 four Viking Age settlements have been excavated. At Toftanes in the village of Leirvík a Viking Age settlement was excavated (Hansen, 2013) and at Undir Junarkisfløtti in the village of Sandur an early Viking Age settlement dated more precisely to AD 787-875 was excavated (Arge, 2001 p. 13). Additionally, in the village of Sandur on the site of Sondum, a Viking Age settlement was located and partly excavated, below which pre-

Viking activities were dated to two phases within the mid-4th to mid-6th and late 6th to late 8th centuries AD (Church et al., 2013 p. 231). Both the excavations at Undir Junkarisfløtti and Sondum have pushed back the date of the arrival of settlers to the early Viking Age, and, at Sondum, prior to the Viking Age. In addition to the excavations at Undir Junkarisfløtti and Sondum, a recent geophysical survey north of the church in the village of Sandur revealed the possible location of a Viking Age building (Tjóðsavnið, 2018 p. 16). Test excavations have been led on the site by the Head of Archaeology at Tjóðsavnið, Helgi Michelsen, and confirmed the presence of turf buildings and hearths, which are in the process of being radiocarbon-dated. In Table 1.3, the infield Viking Age settlements are listed, based on the information from Arne Thorsteinsson's and Símun V. Arge's publications and recent excavations of sites in infield areas of modern villages. Further descriptions of these sites can be found in Thorsteinsson (1978), Arge (1989), Matras (1995), in the Tjóðsavnið archives, and in the publication list in Table 1.3. In Figure 1.3 is a map of the settlement and burial sites.

Table 1.3 Viking Age settlement sites in the Faroe Islands.

Number	Village and Island	Arne Thorsteinsson (1978)	Símun V. Arge (1986 Appendix 1)	Recent excavations	Dating evidence	Publication
1	Hvalba, Suðuroy	Í Skálum (p.59) Viking Age	Í Skálum possible Viking Age		Building and artefact typology	Unpublished
2	Kvívík, Streymoy	Heiman Á or Niðri á Toft (p.59)	Heiman Á or Niðri á Toft Viking Age		Building and artefact typology	(Dahl, 1951)
3	Fuglafyrði, Eysturoy	Gjógvará (p.60)	Við Gjógvará late Viking Age		Building and artefact typology	(Dahl, 1958)
4	Vestmanna, Streymoy	Í Kálgarðinum (p.60)	Í Kálgarðinum possible Viking Age		Building and artefact typology	Unpublished
5	Klaksvík, Borðoy	Niðri á Toft (p.60) Úti í Grøv (not examined p. 60)	Niðri á Toft, not fully examined. House II and II medieval. (Arge, 1986, n. Appendix 1 p. 29, fig. 19)		Building and artefact typology	(Thorsteinsson, 1971)

Number	Village and Island	Arne Thorsteinsson (1978)	Símun V. Arge (1986 Appendix 1)	Recent excavations	Dating evidence	Publication
6	Sandur, Sandoy	Sandi, Við Kirkjugarð (s.59)	Við Kirkjugarð building remains. Viking Age	Undir Junkarisfløtti Viking Age (Arge, 2001) Á Sondum (Church, M.J., et al. 2013) North of the church (Tjóðsavnið, 2018 p. 16).	Yes Yes Yes Building and artefact typology. Possible Viking Age, waiting for results of C14 dating.	(Krogh, 1975) (Arge, 2001) (Church, 2013) (Tjóðsavnið, 2018 p. 16)
7	Sandavágur, Vágur	Yviri í Toftini (p.60) Eingjartoftum (p.60)	Yviri í Toftini Viking Age Eingjartoftum Middle Age		Building and artefact typology	(Diklev, 1976) (Dahl, 1961)
8	Seyrvági/Sørvágur, Vágur	Seyrvági (p.60)	Undir Skorum Viking Age		Building and artefact typology	(Dahl, 1965)
9	Syðrugøta, Eysturoy	Norðuri í Fornna (p.62) Vesturi í Horni (p.62)	Norðuri í Fornna. Viking Age Vesturi í Horni Viking Age		Yes. Vesturi í Forni C14 date	(Dahl, 1952) (Andreassen, 1981)
10	Søltuvík, Sandoy		Yvir í Húsi. Viking Age		Building and artefact typology	(Diklev, 1978)

Number	Village and Island	Arne Thorsteinsson (1978)	Símun V. Arge (1986 Appendix 1)	Recent excavations	Dating evidence	Publication
11	Kaldbak, Streymoy		Í Soylugarðsbø Viking Age		Yes	(Arge, 1980)
12	Eiði, Eysturoy		Í Durhúsi Viking Age		Building and artefact typology. Yes C14dated	(Andreassen, 1977, 1980)
13	Leivík, Eysturoy			Toftanes (Hansen, 2013)	Yes	(Hansen, 2013)
14	Norðagøta, Eysturoy	Undir Keisarafløtti		Excavated by Sverri Dahl in 1952.	C14 date of AD 670-860	(Arge, 2014 p. 10)
15	Haraldssund, Kunoy Suður á Búðum			Not excavated		(Matras, 1932; Dahl, 1968b; Hansen, 1978a)

From this short survey, considerably more Viking Age settlement sites have been located in the Faroe Islands than burial sites. In the archaeological descriptions of the Faroe Islands and in articles about settlements, Viking Age burials are often merely mentioned in a short survey of verified and possible burial sites, for example in Sverri Dahl's publications (1951 p. 70, 1959b p. 120-125), in Símun Arge's thesis (1986 p. 19), and in Símun Arge and Niels Hartman's (1989) publication on the Viking Age burials at Við Kirkjugarð. While not much is known about the early burial practises during the Viking Age in the Faroes, the excavations of the settlements provide information on how the first settlers managed to be sustainable.



Figure 1.3 Viking Age Burial Sites and Settlement Sites.

1.3.2 Sustainability during the Viking Age in the Faroe Islands

For the Viking Age settlement to be sustainable in the Faroe Islands, it was important for the settlers to exploit the resources available both on land and at sea, and this is clearly reflected

in settlement patterns. As most settlements were coastal, marine resources were generally easy to access. The bird cliffs were not always easy to reach safely, but both the birds and their eggs were an important resource, as were fish. At the Viking Age farms, animals were kept and were an important food source as well. This mixed subsistence economy has been most closely studied at the excavated site at Undir Junkarisfløtti in the village of Sandur. Zooarchaeological analysis of this midden and elsewhere have showed that the people who lived there during the Viking Age utilised seabirds and their eggs as a food source more than compared to other Viking Age settlers in Iceland and Greenland (Church, et al., 2005 p. 189; Lawson et al. 2005) – a resource that has remained vital in the Faroes up to the present day (Nørrevang, 1977 pp. 12-13). In addition, sheep, pig, cattle and fish bones were found during the excavation at Undir Junkarisfløtti (Arge et al., 2009 pp. 21-22). It was clearly important for settlements to be established in places with access to good agricultural land (for hay crops and grazing), fresh water, and coastal landing sites. Due to the needs of this mixed economic base, Viking Age settlements tended to be located close to streams and the seashore, as exemplified by Toftanes in Leirvík (Hansen, 2013) and Niðri á Toft in Kvívík (Dahl, 1951).

Important for the ongoing sustainability of settlement in the Faroes were also the home fields, where there was a combination of grazing, hay-meadows and parcels of cereal cultivation (Adderley and Simpson, 2005 p. 712). Archaeological and palynological data suggest that the early settlers sustained a successful barley crop (Adderley and Simpson, 2005, p. 713; Lawson et al., 2005, p. 680). As the Faroes did not have extensive woodland except heather and juniper (Hannon, et al. 2001 pp. 137-138), driftwood was probably a highly valued resource (Thorsteinsson, 1981 p. 665; Church et al., 2005 p. 194). Areas outside the farmsteads were also used for summer pastures, which is seen from the shieling activity in the Viking Age (Mahler, 2007). From around the eleventh to twelfth centuries the shieling system, which was part of a mixed economic base, was gradually replaced by a broad exploitation of outfield resources with more extensive sheep keeping (Mahler, 2007 p. 409).

Numerous studies of land-use and the impact of human and animal settlement on the Faroes environment have improved our understanding of Viking Age settlement. Studies show that blanket and shrubby heathlands developed prior to the first settlement, but that settlement probably accelerated the replacement of woodland shrub and herb-rich fields with acid heathland and blanket peat (Hannon and Bradshaw, 2000 pp. 412-413; Hannon et al., 2001, p. 129). Grass and heaths have dominated the vegetation cover of the Faroes since the Boreal

Period (9000-8000 BP) and pollen sequences remain dominated by grasses and sedges (Jóhansen, 1981 p. 134, 1985, p. 84). The subsistence practices of settlers and their animals, including burning to clear vegetation and the construction of drainage ditches to improve cultivated soils, changed vegetation cover over time, but this was slight compared to other areas of the North Atlantic (Lawson et al., 2005, p. 680; Mahler, 2007, p. 414).

These studies of Viking Age settlements and shielings, land use, and the impacts of humans and animals on the Faroe Islands, have vastly improved our understanding of settlement dynamics, ecology, and everyday life. However, the understanding of Viking Age religious beliefs and mortuary practices remains very poor, because there has yet to be dedicated research in this area. A specific landscape survey aimed at locating new burials had not been conducted in the Faroes before work began on this dissertation. The reasons for this are many, including the fact that most sites were chance finds, and were excavated in advance of construction work (e.g. the settlement Niðri á Toft in the village of Kvívík), road building, house building, the extension of churchyards (e.g. the burial site and settlement Við Kirkjugarð in the village of Sandur) or due to unexpected exposure by erosion (e.g. the settlement Niðri á Toft in the city of Klaksvík). Therefore, most archaeological excavations in the Faroe Islands were not conducted based on archaeological research questions (Arge, 1986 p. 37). That is starting to change. Recently, excavations in the village of Sandur were conducted as part of an interdisciplinary, international collaboration in the Heart of the Atlantic Project (Church et al., 2005; Arge, 2014 p. 8). This project targeted middens, however, rather than burials.

1.4 Viking Age Burials in the Faroe Islands

Archaeologists outside the Faroes have long wondered why there are so few Viking Age burial sites in the islands (Eldjárn, 1984 p. 3). Only two Viking Age burial sites have been excavated in the Faroes, one in the village of Tjørnuvík, on the northernmost coast of the island of Streymoy, at a site known as Yviri í Trøð (Dahl and Rasmussen, 1956, pp. 153–167), and one in the village of Sandur, on the southern coast of the island of Sandoy, at a site known as Við Kirkjugarð (see Table 1.4, Table 1.5, Figure 1.3) (Arge and Hartmann, 1990, p. 18). Both were cemeteries containing multiple burials, and both were found by chance. The burials at Yviri í Trøð were found by young boys, who stumbled upon them accidentally due to erosion (Dahl, 1983). The burial site Við Kirkjugarð was found in 1989 when the local council was planning to extend the burial ground associated with the current church (Arge and Hartmann, 1990, p. 6).

A third, unexcavated Viking Age burial site is located at Á Bønhúsfløtu in the village of Hvalba, on the most southern island in the Faroese archipelago, Suðuroy (see Table 1.4, Table 1.5) (Arge and Michelsen, 2011, p. 9). Tjóðsavnið received information about finds of human bones on an eroded slope, which had been accidentally discovered by a small boy (Arge and Michelsen, 2011, p. 9). The bones, which were part of a lower leg and shinbone, were examined and radiocarbon-dated to the year 1000 (Arge and Michelsen, 2011, p. 11).

In addition to the unexcavated burial site at Á Bønhúsfløtu in the village Hvalba, coffin remains from the village of Skúvoy at the site and churchyard of Ólansgarður, in the village of Skúvoy, on the island of Skúvoy, have recently been dated to the Viking Age (see Table 1.4, Table 1.5) (Arge and Purkhús, 2020, personal communication with Símun V. Arge February 2020). At about 1909-1910 the remains of an old cemetery were found, during the construction of a new cemetery in Ólansgarður (Tjóðsavnið, 1952f). According to local legend, the cemetery was used for people who died of the Black Death (Dahl, 1968a, p. 192). Remains of a wooden coffin, found during the construction work, was kept (Tjóðsavnið, 1952f). It is part of these coffin remains, which have now been dated. A stone with an engraved cross has always been visible at the site, and during the construction of the cemetery other stones with engraved crosses were found (Tjóðsavnið, 1952f; Dahl, 1968a, fig. 192). In addition to the cemetery, there is an area towards the west called Diktaraðrøðin, where human remains were discovered in 1962 as part of drain digging. This area has not been examined further (Tjóðsavnið, 1952f).

Table 1.4 Verified Viking Age Burial Sites in the Faroes Islands.

Burial Sites	Village	Island
Yviri í Trøð	Tjørnuvík	Eysturoy
Við Kirkjugarð	Sandur	Sandoy
Á Bønhúsfløtu	Hvalba	Suðuroy
Ólansgarður	Skúvoy	Skúvoy

Table 1.5 Overview of the dating of the burials.

Site name	Lab code	Sample material	Lab age BP	$\delta^{13}\text{C}$	Corrected C14 Age	Calibrated dates 1 and 2 sigma	Publication
Yviri í Trøð burial 1	C14 LabID	Bone human	1122±32	-19.6 (VPDB)	1054±32 (Reservoir corrected)	AD 991 and AD 974-1014	(Arneborg, et al., 2008, p. 19).

Site name	Lab code	Sample material	Lab age BP	$\delta^{13}\text{C}$	Corrected C14 Age	Calibrated dates 1 and 2 sigma	Publication
	AAR-6390						
Yviri í Trøð burial 2	C14 LabID AAR-6389	Bone human	1141±34	-18.8 (VPDB)	1036±34 (Reservoir corrected)	AD 999 and AD 981-1021	(Arneborg, et al., 2008, p. 19).
Á Bønhúsfløtu	C14 LabID AAR-13468	Bone human	1127±30	d13C (CG-CN) -19.6±0.1 d13C (dual-inlet) -19.4±0.05	1052±30 14C yr BP	897AD (13.0%) 925AD and 937AD (82,4%) 1025 AD	(Arge, 2009b; Arge and Michelsen, 2011).
Ólansgarður							Radiocarbon dated, not published, data embargoed (Arge pers. comm. 2020).
Við Kirkjugarð							Burial site not radiocarbon dated

With verified Viking Age burial sites in the Faroe Islands numbering only four, the number of burials in the Faroe Islands is considerably less than on the other North Atlantic islands such as Iceland, where some 316 pagan burials at around 160 burial sites have so far been recorded (Friðriksson, 2009) and Scotland, where around 138 burials in 87 sites have been found (Graham-Campbell and Batey, 1998; Owen and Dalland, 1999; Batey, 2016, p. 39). Due to the lack of research in this area, it is not known how representative the four known Viking Age burial sites are in terms of how or where the first settlers in the Faroe Islands buried their dead. This dissertation represents the first step towards filling this hiatus, by exploring a variety of archival, written, oral, place name, and archaeological evidence for possible burial sites, and

testing models of where burials might be found based on typical locations of Viking Age burials in the neighbouring countries of Norway, Scotland, and Iceland.

1.5 The Structure of the Thesis

This thesis consists of nine chapters. The thesis is divided into a Part 1, which includes the introduction, research context, and methodology chapters, 1-3, and a Part 2, which includes the results, discussion, and conclusion chapters, 4-9. The second chapter provides an archaeological framework for the thesis. It begins with a review of the available literature on burial practices in the Viking Age. It then summarises previous archaeological research on Viking Age burials in the North Atlantic region, and recent trends in theory and interpretation. It ends with an introduction to the written sources on Viking Age burials. This chapter also serves to highlight the gap in knowledge and limited approaches that have been applied to Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands to date, and the importance of the present work.

Chapter 3 presents a review of methods and models for locating Viking Age burials in the landscape that are important for this research project. This chapter provides a detailed overview of the methods applied in this dissertation to locate and study Viking Age burials. Particular attention is then focused on models developed to identify Viking Age burials in Iceland, the nearest neighbour to the Faroe Islands, and arguably the most appropriate comparison (Maher, 1999; Friðriksson, 2004, 2013).

Chapter 4 focuses on the two excavated Viking Age burial sites in the Faroe Islands, with the understanding that finding new burial sites has to go hand in hand with a deeper understanding of the known burial sites, including their form and their landscape contexts. This chapter is based on research in the excavation archives of Tjóðsavnið, since they have yet to be properly published. It begins with a synthesis of Sverri Dahl's excavation of the burials at Yviri í Trøð, in Tjørnuvík, and Símun V. Arge and Niels Hartmann's excavation of the burials found at Við Kirkjugarð, in Sandur. A detailed description is provided of the burials and their landscape contexts, together with maps, plans and photos.

Chapter 5 details the results of ethnographic, landscape folklore and place name studies on the possible locations of Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands. This interdisciplinary, interpretive research, which was developed to provide a basis for the archaeological survey work, also benefitted from Old Norse textual sources such as sagas. The main reason for

conducting this interdisciplinary research was to interrogate local knowledge and social memory of possible burial sites with a critical and open mind.

Chapter 6 presents the landscape analysis of known Viking Age burial locations, comparing the Faroe Islands with specific case study areas in Norway, Orkney, Shetland, and Iceland. The main focus of the analysis lies on the intervisibility and physical connectivity between burials and a variety of landscape features, such as coastal landing sites, routes, and settlements sites. The goal of this work was to develop a deeper understanding of how Viking Age settlers in the North Atlantic region, and in the Faroes in particular, may have perceived their landscapes and selected appropriate places for burial. This work helped to refine the selection of areas for field survey in the northern islands.

Chapter 7 presents the results of the field surveys, geophysical surveys and the test excavations undertaken during this PhD research. The beginning of this chapter deals with a field survey conducted on the northern islands of the Faroese archipelago. Based on the field survey, archival research, interviews, comparison with other Viking Age burials and to a certain extent on ethnographic sources (especially about settlements no longer visible in the landscape), certain areas were selected for geophysical survey. Based on the geophysical results, specific areas were selected for test excavations. Even though no new Viking Age burials were located in the time available, the potential to discover more burials remains very real, and the most likely places for finding new burial sites are described.

Chapter 8 discusses the implications of Chapters 4-7 in the context of a wider comparative analysis of the locations of burials in the landscape, the intervisibility of burials and settlements, and the physical connectivity of the burials and the landscapes of the North Atlantic Region. This chapter ends with a critique of the methodological and interpretative approaches of the study.

The last and final chapter, Chapter 9, draws together concluding remarks, highlighting the outcomes of this research project, and the original contributions this thesis has made to the understanding of Viking Age burials in the North Atlantic region, and in the Faroe Islands in particular, and the methodologies that can be used to locate them. The dissertation concludes with a reflection on the possibilities for further research and field studies in the Viking Age North Atlantic, with an emphasis on the Faroe Islands.

Chapter 2 Research on Viking Age Burials

This chapter sets the archaeological framework for the thesis. The chapter begins with a review of the literature on burial practices, followed by summaries of previous research on Viking Age burials in the North Atlantic region. In addition, there is an introduction to the medieval written sources considered relevant for the study of Viking Age burials. The present study is essential, considering that an assessment and discussion of Viking Age burials in the Faroes has not been part of a scholarly research until now. Consequently, this chapter emphasizes the gap in knowledge and limited approaches that have been applied to Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands to date. It includes different methods that can be used to research the location of Viking Age burials in the Faroes and highlights their landscape settings in comparison with other North Atlantic burials. Even though part of this research is interdisciplinary, it is important to highlight that this is an archaeological research project, with a foundation in the archaeological sources.

Burials contain valuable evidence and information about the past, not only about habits and customs, but also various aspects of social life in prehistoric societies (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 15). In this context human remains can provide important information about people's past lives (Parker Pearson, 1999, p. 3). Therefore, when there are few burial locations known, for example in the Faroe Islands, it leaves a gap in knowledge about people's past lives. It is often difficult to locate burials in the landscape, and archaeologists are only able to locate a small proportion of the total population living in a certain area (Parker Pearson, 1999, p. 5). In addition to this, part of the challenge of working with cemeteries in the archaeological record is that they formed part of the past people's world-views, mental landscapes, and life courses (Selling, 1991, p. 205). Therefore, when researching burials in past societies one needs to connect the gap between the contents of the burials and the mortuary performances and practices that are behind their creation (Price, 2010, p. 123). The locations of burials may not have been arbitrary; consideration may have been given to the monumental and memorial qualities of the topography and the cultural landscape, where the burial grounds have relationships to settlements and land use (Selling, 1991, pp. 205–206). Accordingly, the presence of a burial can provide archaeologists with essential data about both funerary practices and their social context (Parker Pearson, 1999, p. 5). These reflections on the relevance of studying burials in past societies provide a setting for the present research on Viking Age burials.

2.1 Viking Age Burials

The study of Viking Age burials through the archaeological record covers a broad range of research, both concerning the human remains and the burials themselves. In recent years research on Viking Age societies has emphasised that Vikings were not a homogenous or static group of people, but heterogeneous, varied, changeable and dynamic, and we should bear this in mind when we consider their funerary practices as well (Price, 2015, p. 2). Moreover, Viking Age research is not only conducted through archaeology, but also through the study of historical and literary sources, comparative religious studies, their visual culture and art, anthropology, and the natural, physical and biological sciences (Brink, and Price, 2008, p. xix; Price, 2012a). The study of Viking Age burials has been the focus of many scholars through time (e.g. Almgren, 1904; Shetelig, 1912; Nerman, 1917; Lindqvist, 1920; Price, 2002; Friðriksson, 2013; Eldjárn, 2016). Most recently Neil Price has integrated the archaeological record and literary sources with new interpretations on burial practices, mortuary behaviour and ritual performances (Price, 2008a, 2008b; Price, 2010, 2014).

Already in the 12th century Snorri Sturluson (1179-1241), the author of *Heimskringla* and the *Prose Edda*, had developed ideas about the practices of cremation and mound-building prior to the conversion to Christianity in Scandinavia (Sturluson, 1961 p. 1). Based on the sources he had to hand he divided the practice of cremation burials and mound burials into two periods (Sturluson, 1961, p. 1): first the cremation burial rite and later the mound burial rite, with a short overlap between them (Sturluson, 1961, p. 1). These ideas were discussed by early researchers seeking the burial sites of pre-Viking Age rulers mentioned in *Heimskringla* and attempting to date burial practices in late Iron Age Scandinavia (Nerman, 1917 p. 257; Lindqvist, 1920 p. 65). However, Sturluson's ideas were questioned early on based on the lack of evidence in the archaeological material (Gjessing, 1913; Friðriksson, 1994, pp. 74–75). Additionally, the historicity of the persons mentioned in the sagas have been questioned (Krag, 1991, pp. 7–8; Friðriksson, 1994, p. 75; Myhre, 2015, p. 116).

Another source-based approach often included in the discussion about burial practices concerns the laws made by Óðin in *Heimskringla*, that all men should be burned together with their belongings, because every man arrived to Valhalla with the belongings burned with them (Sturluson, 1961 p. 10). In addition, according to Sturluson, nobles should have a mound built in their memory and a memorial stone (*beytasteinur*) raised for them (Sturluson, 1961 p. 10). In the archaeological record of Scandinavia and the Scandinavian colonies, there is evidence

of mounds, cremation burials and memorial stones, but burials demonstrate a far more varied practice than was written in the textual sources (Ulriksen, 2011 p. 163).

2.1.1 Traditional Approaches to Viking Age Burial Practises in Scandinavia

In Scandinavia the Vikings practised both inhumation and cremation. The regional differences in cremation burials and inhumation burials in Scandinavia have been observed from the early 20th century, and are still a subject of discussion (Shetelig, 1912, p. 229; e.g. Price, 2010, p. 124). For example, it has long been observed that inhumation burials were more common in Denmark than cremation burials (Shetelig, 1912 pp. 229-230), but both inhumation and cremation burials were practised (Price, 2010, p. 124). There could be a rich variety of mortuary practices even within a single region. For example, in Denmark, at Ketting, there is a burial site under flat ground (Brøndsted, 1936 p. 128). At Jelling in Denmark, the burial site includes barrows (Brøndsted, 1936 p. 119) and at Lindholm Høje burial site in Denmark, there are mostly cremation burials and a few inhumation burials (Ramskou, 1976 p. 13). Many of the cremations at Lindholm Høje are marked with stone settings, including boat-shaped settings and triangular stone settings (Ramskou, 1976 p. 14). Early researchers argued that the majority of inhumation burials in Denmark that have few artefacts were influenced by Christian burial customs (Shetelig, 1925 p. 190; Shetelig and Falk, 1937 p. 277). Later research in Denmark has shown that it was common for men's burials during the 7th and 8th centuries to have very few weapons in them (Brøndsted, 1936 p. 227). However, during the 10th century the picture changed, and Viking Age burials became more richly furnished, with more variations in grave contents and styles (Thorvildsen, 1957 p. 106). The influence of Christianity is only definite from the 11th century onwards in Denmark, when artefacts are no longer found in the burials, and the cremation practice ends (Brøndsted, 1936 p. 227; Kleiminger, 1993, p. 146; Roesdahl, 1998, p. 158; cf. Kieffer-Olsen, 2002).

In Norway, the Vikings practised both cremation and inhumation, though in Sweden there were mostly cremations (Price, 2010, p. 124). In larger cemeteries, there are varied burial practices, as seen in the large cemeteries at Birka (Gräslund, 1981) and Fornsigstuna (Damell, 1991) in Sweden. In these burial sites, women, men and children are interred (Gräslund, 1981). The deceased could be interred in vessels, coffins, chamber graves, urns and mounds, either via cremation or inhumation (Gräslund, 1981). Large cemeteries with different burial practices are also found in Kaupang in Norway, where there were several cemeteries with inhumation

and cremation burials, chamber burials, coffin burials and flat burials (Stylegar, 2007 pp. 99-101). In addition to being interred in chambers or coffins, people were also buried in boats and large ships, as seen from the ship burials at Oseberg and Gokstad (Grieg, 1937, p. 75). Large ship burials have been located across Scandinavia, but more common in Viking Age Scandinavia were the boat burials, where an individual or several individuals were buried in a ship or small boat, with over 300 known to date (Kobyliński and Rabiega, 2015, p. 43). These examples demonstrate the varied ritual practices across Scandinavia. Also diverse were the settings of burials, which will be reviewed in the following section.

2.1.2 Viking Age Burial Locations in Scandinavia

The settings of burial sites have proved to be significant in research about Viking Age burials. They were often located around villages, in prominent locations that made them clearly visible from the villages (Fallgren, 2012, p. 73). Recent studies of small rural villages in Viking Age Scandinavia with visible remnants of infield, such as in south west Norway, Östergötland, and on Öland and Gotland, show that specific locations were selected for burials. In Öland in Sweden, for example, the settlements have a long continuity, and the cemeteries have also been used for extensive time periods (Fallgren, 2007, p. 118). The cemeteries were often located at the outer edge of the infield, where the common lands began (Fallgren, 2007, p. 118-119). In addition, the Öland burial fields appear to have been used to demarcate the boundaries of the settlements (Fallgren, 2007, p. 119). The cemeteries were located at different elevations in the terrain, and were also often placed near roads, or where a road leads into a settlement (Fallgren, 2007, p. 121). Similarly, the Kaupang burial site in Norway shows various physical connections to the settlement, the harbour and the road (Skre, 2007, p. 381). The burial sites at Bikjholberg, Søndre Kaupang, and Vikingholmen at Kaupang, are situated close to the settlement, (Skre, 2007, p. 381), while the burial site at Nordre Kaupang has clear associations with the routeway (Skre, 2007, p. 381).

Since the settlers of the Faroe Islands are thought to have originated from Norway, in some cases possibly via the Northern Isles of Scotland, Norwegian burials would seem to be a logical place to look for parallels for the types of burials and the landscape locations of burials in the Faroe Islands. In west Norway, the late Iron Age burials (Merovingian AD 550-800 and Viking Age AD 800-1050) are seldom found in large burial sites, but are situated close to or on the individual farms, sometimes on the homefields themselves, with only a few burials at each site

(Dommasnes, 1982, p. 71; Gjerland and Keller, 2010, p. 164). In west Norway it is rather rare for burials to be situated near routes or at farm boundaries (Gjerland and Keller, 2010, p. 161), as the Viking Age burials often are in Iceland (Gjerland and Keller, 2010, p. 161; Friðriksson, 2013). Furthermore, burials in west Norway often overlook water and are on the track between the boat-landing site and the farm core (Gjerland and Keller, 2010, p. 161).

Beyond observations of patterns and trends in burial types and locations, how have interpretations of Viking Age burials and associated rituals progressed? And how can these new perspectives aid in the understanding of Viking Age burials in the Faroes?

2.2 Present State of Knowledge about Burial Practices in Viking Age Scandinavia

This section is about recent research and the present state of knowledge about Viking Age Scandinavian burials. The exact number of Viking Age burials in Scandinavia is not known, but, in an informal survey based on a professional lifetime working with Viking Age burials and with colleagues in the same field, Neil Price has estimated that there are about half a million burials in Viking Age Scandinavia (Price, 2010). With this large body of material, a range of different studies have been conducted, with research questions focussing on religion, social structure, ethnicity, territorial organisation, military organisation and chronology (Rundkvist, 2007, p. 50), as well as burial practices and ritual performances.

2.2.1 Viking Age Burials and Performances

When a grave is in the landscape, it signifies that a burial has been staged sometime in the past (Nordeide, 2016, p. 168). At the burial site there can be evidence of a variety of burial practises, which can reflect differences in the burial performance (Nordeide, 2016, p. 168). The ritual variations do not necessarily have to reflect disparity and change in belief, but at some level they can express different cultures (Kyriakidis, 2007, p. 16; Nordeide, 2016, p. 168). From her research on the area of Romsdal in Norway, Sæbjørg W. Nordeide (2016, p. 171) found significant differences among burial customs. From her perspective, mortuary rituals helped in the process of socialising individuals to the group, with distinct burial practices being one way of demonstrating group identity (Nordeide, 2016, p. 171).

In his study of Viking Age religion and war, Neil Price drew on sources from both archaeology and literature, with a main focus on the archaeological sources (Price, 2002). Rather than placing the Viking Age beliefs and the practices in the context of 'religion', in the sense of the

world faiths today, he discussed the advantages of viewing the beliefs of Viking Age Scandinavians, and the practices related to their beliefs, as a 'belief system' (Price, 2002, p. 26). Even though practices related to Viking Age religion are not yet very well known (Price, 2002, p. 54), he pinpointed the available evidence of *Seiðr* magical rituals, their meaning, practice and the construction of gender and sexual identity, as seen in Viking Age burials. The evidence for sorcery came mainly from literature written in Iceland in the centuries following the Viking Age, such as the Poetic Edda, the Prose Edda, and the Icelandic Sagas (Price, 2008c, p. 244). In his study, Neil Price focused on female burials, because the primary figures in the performance of the magical rituals were often women (Price, 2002, p. 111). In the archaeological record, a female sorcerer was identified based on the artefacts found in the burial, such as staffs and narcotics (Price, 2002, p. 127). One example of a burial interpreted to belong to a female sorcerer was at Birka in Sweden, where the interred was buried with a staff (Price, 2002, p. 127).

In addition to study of sorcerers in Viking Age burials, Neil Price has focused on the settings of burials and the mortuary drama involved in the burial rites. His interpretation of the dramas played out at the grave sites addresses the variety seen in the burials (Price, 2010, p. 147). The dramas conducted during the burial rituals can take many different forms, are rarely the same, and the stories can also be interpreted differently from one location to another, or from one family to another (Price, 2010, p. 147). The possibility is that the memory of these stories, the events that have taken place at the funeral and the objects placed in the burials, were retold and repeated and linked together from one generation to another (Price, 2010, pp. 146-147). In an example of a drama unfolded in a cemetery in Kaupang, a boat burial with four people interred in it, was buried above another burial (Price, 2010, p. 127). In the bow of the boat a man and a woman with a small child bundled at her hip had been interred. In the stern was another woman interred in the burial, sitting and probably holding the steering oar of the boat, and next to her was an iron staff (Price, 2010, p. 128-129). According to Price's interpretation, the funeral not only consisted of rituals, but also represented the performance of stories (Price, 2010, p. 137). To support this idea, other sources were used, such as the burial account recorded by a Muslim soldier on the Volga river, and scenes from the Gotland picture stones (Price, 2010, pp. 131, 140). It is clear from these studies that there is much variation in the process of interment and burial performances in the Viking Age.

Further evidence of the variation in burial practises has been seen in the Baltic, where variation in funeral rites does not just occur between settlements, but also within communities (Callmer, 1992, pp. 100, 105, 1994, p. 13). In addition to the southern Baltic, recent detailed studies of burials in south-eastern Scandinavia show that death rituals are performed at specific, selected sites (Svanberg, 2003, p. 190). These cemeteries were usually placed on elevated and exposed locations (Svanberg, 2003, p. 190). Therefore, the burials could be seen and were visible, in favourable places for communication such as on small hills, beside roads and waterways (Svanberg, 2003, p. 190). The cemeteries were generally not tied to single farms or family groups, but were used and maintained by larger collectives of people (Svanberg, 2003, p. 148). In these studies, Fredrik Svanberg concluded that there was not a single homogenous “Viking Age” culture in Scandinavia, but rather several different cultural traditions concerning death and burial practices (Svanberg, 2003, p. 190).

Another interesting perspective on burial rites and ritual performances is the practice of re-using houses or barrows for burials (Thäte, 2007b, p. 281). The practice of re-using houses or monuments for burials was nothing new in Late Iron Age Scandinavia, but had been practised prior to the Viking Age (Thäte, 2007b, p. 281). In some regions of Scandinavia in the late Iron Age, such as Rogaland in southwest Norway, burials were sometimes located in abandoned settlement sites dating back to the Migration Period (Thäte, 2007a, 2007b). According to Eva Thäte (2007a, p. 191), there can be several reasons for the re-use of these abandoned houses for burials in the Viking Age. The person who buried t

he dead at the abandoned house could have used it as a symbol to demonstrate the end of the lineage of the former owner (Thäte, 2007a, p. 191). This burial custom could also be part of a legal statement, in which the house owner linked the family to the farms and burial places as an act of legitimization of land ownership (Thäte, 2007b, p. 118). In addition to the research on burials, ritual performances and ritual behaviour, new research methods have enabled Viking Age scholars to examine where people came from, for example with isotope analysis.

2.2.2 New Research on the Life Courses of Individuals based on Human Remains

Isotope analysis of a child inhumation burial from Birka (burial Bj 463) shows that the child spent most of its life outside Birka (Hedenstierna-Jonson, 2015, pp. 96–99). In addition, a previous burial (burial Bj 581), interpreted to be a male warrior burial based on the artefacts assembled, now shows with recent analysis that the individual in this burial was not a man, but

a woman, who died when she was at least 30 years old (Hedenstierna-Jonson, et al., 2017, pp. 3–5). In addition, the woman's genetic affinity showed more similarity with Northern Europe than Southern Europe and the Baltic (Hedenstierna-Jonson, et al., 2017, p. 5). In contrast, strontium isotope analysis conducted on the individuals from the burial site at the Viking Age fortress Trelleborg in Denmark shows that over half of the individuals sampled originated outside Scandinavia (Price, et al., 2011, p. 487).

These studies demonstrate how a combination of different methods can open new ways of understanding the life courses of individuals in the burials and can enhance the understanding of social life in the Viking Age (Hedenstierna-Jonson, et al., 2017, p. 6). This is relevant to this study on Viking Age burials in the Faroes, because it shows that people in the Viking Age travelled from one region to the other and that the people buried in the Faroes during the Viking Age could come from outside Scandinavia, not necessarily only from Norway or from Scotland.

2.3 Previous Research on Viking Age Burials in the North Atlantic Regions

This section is about previous research on Viking Age burials in northern Scotland, Ireland, and Iceland. From their Scandinavian homelands, the Vikings travelled to the North Atlantic in clinker-built ships (Graham-Campbell and Kidd, 1980, p. 25). From the archaeological material, there is clear evidence of Viking Age settlements and burials practices in Scotland, especially in the northern Scottish Islands (Hunter, et al., 1995; Buteux, 1997; Graham-Campbell, 1998; Fojut, 2006), in Iceland (Eldjárn, 1956; Einarsson, 1995; Friðriksson and Vésteinsson, 2003; Lucas and McGovern, 2007; Friðriksson, 2013), the Faroe Islands (Dahl, 1951; Arge and Hartmann, 1989; Mahler, 2007; Arge, 2014), Greenland (Arneborg, 2008; Madsen, 2014) and North America (Ingstad, 1969, 1977). Greenland and North America are not included in this study, because no Viking Age furnished burials are found in Greenland (Arneborg, 2008), nor in North America (Ingstad, 1969, 1977). Foregoing studies on Viking Age burials in the North Atlantic begins in Scotland with a focus on the islands Orkney and Shetland, which are geographically close neighbours to the Faroe Islands. In addition, these are all island communities and this connection between island communities and insular burials could have importance for the location of Viking Age burial sites on the Faroe Islands.

2.3.1 Viking Age Burials in Scotland

In the British Isles context, the early medieval period covers the timescale from c. 400 to 1100 AD (Williams, 2007, p. 1). Hence the Viking Age is part of the early medieval period in the British Isles. In the early medieval period in Scotland, the Scandinavian influences on Scotland and the islands was considerable (Barrett 2012, p. 411). In Scotland archaeologists often use the term ‘Norse’ to refer to associations with a Norwegian link, which covers the time period c. 800-1050, the Viking Age (Barrett, 2003, p. 74). Evidence shows that there was a large-scale Norse immigration, which is seen in settlement remains and burials (Hamilton, 1956; Kaland, 1993; Buteux, 1997; Graham-Campbell and Batey, 1998; Barrett, 2003, fig. 43; Harris, et al., 2017; Harrison and Griffiths, 2019), dietary changes (Barrett et al., 2001; Barrett and Richards, 2004), and onomastic/linguistic evidence (Fellows-Jensen, 2000; Gammeltoft, 2001; Crawford, 2006b, 2006a; Graham-Campbell, 2006). As a result, the Scandinavian arrival in Scotland is well attested.

It has been argued that the number of Viking Age burials in England, Scotland and Ireland does not seem to adequately reflect the longevity, intensity and the full extent of settlement (Owen, 1999, p. 172; Graham-Campbell, 2016). Results show that burials near the modern coast in Scotland and the Irish Sea region can be divided into two main groups, which are burials within 2 km of the seashore, and burials within 500m from the coast (Harrison, 2007, p. 175). Many burials have been discovered by accident during ploughing and construction work (Owen, 1999, p. 172). In addition, numerous burials excavated in the past have been badly recorded and destroyed by uninstructed diggers (Owen, 1999, p. 172; Shetelig, 1945, pp. 21-22).

2.3.2 Viking Age Burials in Orkney and Shetland

In Shetland and Orkney the burials are not located far from the sea, and they often have a view of water (Graham-Campbell and Batey, 1998, p. 115; Harrison, 2007, p. 175; Mcleod, 2015a, p. 7). An overview and descriptions of Viking Age burial locations in Orkney and Shetland are on *Canmore*, the National Record of the Historic Environment of Scotland (Canmore, 2015). In addition, the website *Viking Funeralscapes*, presents viewshed maps of many Viking Age burials (Mcleod, 2015b). From these sources, it is clear that the choice of the location for the burials varies, although landscape visibility appears to have been important in the selection of a burial ground (Graham-Campbell, 2016, p. 31). On the other hand, the physical relation between settlements and burials is not very well known in Shetland and Orkney (Graham-

Campbell and Batey, 1998, p. 145). Though several settlement sites have been excavated, the lower number of Viking Age burials sites is possibly because they have been eroded and lost. The normal burial practice seems to be inhumation, where the individuals were often placed in an extended or flexed position (Graham-Campbell and Batey, 1998, p. 145; Graham-Campbell, 2016, p. 31). Most of the burials seem to have been flat graves, with no remaining hints of mounds. There is also a marked tendency in Scandinavian Scotland to re-use existing prehistoric mounds as burial sites (Graham-Campbell and Batey, 1998, pp. 145–146).

An archaeological survey of settlements and burials was published in 1998 by James Graham-Campbell and Colleen Batey (1998). This study covers broad aspects of the Viking Age in Scotland and Scottish Islands, with case studies on Viking Age burials and interpretations (Graham-Campbell and Batey, 1998). The scope of the study was not to include a detailed account of the landscape setting, but to conduct a reassessment of former finds and to demonstrate the potential of Viking Age burials for understanding Viking Age Scotland during the ninth and tenth centuries (Graham-Campbell and Batey, 1998, p. 113). In addition to this study, a reassessment of the burials, the number of burials and their content was conducted on the Viking Age burial site at Pierowall in Orkney (Thorsteinsson, 1965, p. 24). However, the aim of this study was a reassessment of the burial site, and therefore did not include a landscape analysis of the burial site. In addition, a systematic archaeological survey in Shetland revealed possible burials located at Balta, Vinstrick, and Mula (Friel, et al., 2013, p. 105; Turner, et al., 2013, p. 91; Turner and Owen, 2013, p. 242).

Excavations were conducted on two Viking Age burial sites in Orkney at Scar in the island of Sanday (Owen and Dalland, 1999) and at Westness on the island of Rousay (Kaland, 1973, p. 77). In the publication of Scar in Orkney, the setting of the boat burial, the topography of the landscape, and possible settlement were discussed (Owen and Dalland, 1999, p. 3). A study recently conducted on mainland Orkney shows that the Norse settlers had various strategies to strengthen and validate their presence in the landscape, including physical interactions with structures, mounds and graves (Leonard, 2011, p. 64). Although these studies discussed the landscape in conjunction with Viking Age burial sites, it has been noted that a study focussed on Viking Age burials in their landscape settings is long overdue (Harrison, 2007, p. 174).

A common theme in previous studies of Viking Age burials in Scotland is that the burial location is often close to the seashore – a theme that will be revisited in Chapter 6, where I present my own landscape analysis of a number of burial sites in Orkney and Shetland.

2.3.3 Viking Age Burials in Ireland

In Ireland there are currently 107 known burials in 31 burial sites (Harrison and Floinn, 2014, p. 224). Although few burials have been associated with contemporaneous settlements (Harrison and Floinn, 2014, p. 292). The overwhelming majority of the burials are male burials, an interpretation based on the artefact assemblages in the furnished burials (Harrison and Floinn, 2014, p. 223). Most of the burials are located in Dublin (Harrison and Floinn, 2014, p. 224), a trend that had already been noted by Shetelig (1945, p. 20). The burial sites in Dublin are situated on or near the boundaries of the high medieval Liberty of Dublin (Harrison and Floinn, 2014, p. 293), meaning that the Viking Age settlement was effectively ringed by burial sites (Harrison and Floinn, 2014, p. 294).

2.3.4 New Research on Landscape and Viking Age Burials in the British Isles

Linked to the study of burial location in the landscape, is the research of their landscape settings, for example if they are near settlements and/or the seashore. Harrison's recent studies of furnished Viking Age burials in Scotland, England, Wales and Ireland shows the importance of the topographical locations of the burials and their physical relation to settlement (Harrison, 2007, p. 175; Harrison and Floinn, 2014, pp. 293–294). The study demonstrated that the majority of coastal burials in Scotland, Ireland and England were beside small bays, inlets or estuaries where the general views to and from burial sites were limited due to the near inlet and/or land adjoining it (Harrison, 2007, p. 176). Coastal burials, which have an open view, were rare and occurred only 10 percent of the time. These burials were often well furnished and among them are also boat burials (Harrison, 2007, p. 176). Most of the inland burials were located in river valleys, with a preference for a slightly elevated ground (Harrison, 2007, p. 176). Half of the furnished Scandinavian burials were located in either Christian or prehistoric monuments, a trend that we will return to and discuss in Chapter 8.

2.3.5 Viking Age Burials in Iceland

In Iceland the largest group of recorded monuments are burials (Pétursdóttir, 2007, p. 6). This is also a group of monuments which has received much attention in Iceland from folklore

(Pétursdóttir, 2007, p. 6) and sagas (Vigfússon, 1882, p. 47). In 19th century Iceland, it was generally accepted that non-Christians were buried in big mounds, on mountain tops or other high places (Friðriksson, 2009). Furthermore, finds of burials were often explained as battlefields (Friðriksson, 2009). During the first half of the 20th century, these ideas about the location of the burials gradually changed, partly because more burials were located due to the intensification of field cultivation and road construction (Friðriksson, 2009).

The most common burial practice in Viking Age Iceland was inhumation (Friðriksson, 2013, pp. 40–41). There are no large mounds built over the dead; rather the dead are buried about fifty centimetres deep in the ground (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 41). The dead were then covered by a small layer of earth and a pile of stones (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 41). Moreover, the individuals in the burials are often placed on their back or side, accompanied by some burial objects (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 41). These tools are knives, whetstones and sometimes fire stones, but jewels and weapons of war are rare (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 41). A possible cremation burial dated to AD 990 and possibly including two individuals has recently been excavated on a natural, anthropogenically altered hillock called Hulduhóll (Byock and Zori, 2012, pp. 2–13). However, this burial remains controversial, and is not universally accepted as a cremation by Icelandic archaeologists. This single example of a possible cremation, however, does not change the fact that Icelandic Viking Age burials are predominantly inhumations.

2.3.5.1 Kristján Eldjárn's Research on Burials in Iceland

Kristján Eldjárn's work on burials began in 1943 and his studies of Viking Age burials and grave goods remain central in Viking Age Iceland burial research today (Eldjárn, 1956, 2016; Friðriksson, 2013). The common characteristic of non-Christian burials in Iceland was that the deceased were buried with objects (Eldjárn, 2016, p. 41), and Eldjárn analysed the grave goods in relation to typology, content and style (Eldjárn, 1956). Kristján Eldjárn observed two main burial categories for the locations of the non-Christian burials in Iceland, which were burials close to the homefield and burials at some distance from the homefield of the farm (the "tún") (Eldjárn, 1958, pp. 30–31, 2016, pp. 264–267). Although Eldjárn's study on Viking Age burials in Iceland was pioneering, his work has been criticised for being mainly descriptive, in the form of a catalogue (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 40). Kristján Eldjárn's research has been built upon by recent studies, which placed an emphasis on the locations of Viking Age burials in the

landscape (Maher, 1999; Friðriksson, 2013). The following sections will discuss the results of these studies.

2.3.5.2 Adolf Friðriksson's Research on Burials in Iceland

Adolf Friðriksson's systematic research on burial topography began in 1998 (Friðriksson, 2004, p. 15). His research gives a detailed and nuanced picture of the non-Christian Viking Age burials (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 63). Through systematic research, observing trends, variables and the topographical and landscape setting of the Viking Age burials, information was gathered from all identified Viking Age burial sites (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 149). By knowing the distribution of burials within a given area in the landscape and their topography, important information was collected for further analysis and interpretation about the relationships between burials and settlements (Friðriksson, 2009). Based on this research, Adolf Friðriksson proposed a model for how the burials in Iceland were located (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 277). Furthermore, the new model enabled Adolf Friðriksson to refute some of the proposals by Kristján Eldjárn on the locations of pagan burials (Eldjárn, 1956, pp. 264–267, 2016, pp. 30–31). The model demonstrated that the burials in Iceland share a common framework, in terms of how their physical location was related to the farms (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 277). Within the general framework, the settings of the burials can vary, but are limited to specific locations within the property (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 277). In rare circumstances some burials could not be associated with the model (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 278). The reasons for this were that the farms could have been destroyed, not yet discovered, or that the dead had been buried outside the farm (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 278). In this model, 3 basic types are identified, A, B, and C (Figure 2.1):

- Type A represents burials located on or near the farm boundary wall
- Type B includes the burials located in the heart of the property (the homefield, or *tún*)
- Type C are the burials which are close to lines of communications, such as roads (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 278)

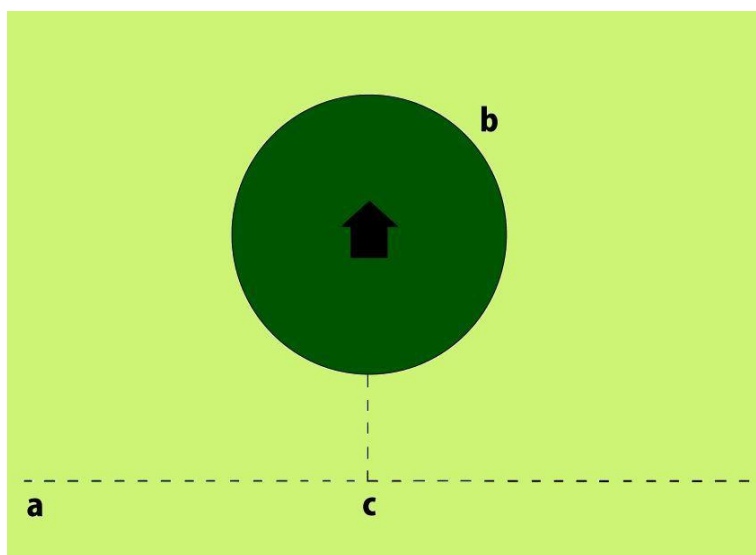


Figure 2.1 Adolf Friðriksson's Location Model. This model shows the main differences between 3 different types of burial location, Types A, B and C (source (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 278) fig. 1-42).

Imperative for the location model was also the distance between a burial site and the farm. The importance of the distance was already observed by Kristján Eldjárn, who noted that the average distance between the graves of a farm and the farm was often half a kilometre (Eldjárn, 1956). In re-examining all the burial sites and their distance to settlements, the average distance that was measured was 455m (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 256). According to this data, for 90% of the sites, this distance ranges from 100 to 1000m between a burial site and settlement (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 256). The distance alone does not reveal much about the significance of the location, but the distance, together with its variations, makes sense when it is placed into context with the aspects of farms, boundaries and tracks (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 260).

As part of his research on the location of Viking pagan burials Adolf Friðriksson tested the ability of the model to predict the locations of burial sites in eleven selected areas in Iceland (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 297). Out of the 11 selected areas, there were 8 locations with burials. Overall, the results therefore confirm the relevance of the location model (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 314). To sum up the results and the importance of the results with regards to the model: all coastal burials are near a landing site; seven burials out of nine are located close to the road; and six out of nine are located at property boundaries (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 314). Adolf Friðriksson's research on Viking Age burials in Iceland and the developed location model is

very relevant to this dissertation, because it provides ideas and possible interpretations of Viking Age burial locations in the Faroes.

The second important work to discuss regarding the location of burials and their physical relation to farms and landscape is the research conducted by Ruth Maher on Viking Age burials in Iceland.

2.3.5.3 Ruth Maher's Research on Burials in Iceland

Ruth Maher's approach to the study of pre-Christian burials in Iceland was to analyse the internal grave structures, artefact inclusions and the external surroundings to draw out the meanings, symbols and behaviours behind these (Maher, 1999, p. 4). Central for her analysis were the social relations between the burials in the landscape, the burials location in the landscape and the physical surroundings of the burials (Maher, 1999, p. 164). With this approach, the location, the placements and visibility of the burials became highly significant (Maher, 1999, p. 164). In the research, the views were categorized as vast, moderate or limited (Maher, 1999, p. 180). The results of the burial analysis showed that 15% had a vast view of their surroundings; 21.2% a moderate one; 67.3% a limited view (Maher, 1999, p. 181). From the viewshed calculation over half of the burials, 70.2% theoretically had a partial or full view of the sea (Maher, 1999, p. 181).

Regarding the discussion of the location of the burials, these were grouped into three categories. The first category were burials located outside the 1 km radius of the farm. The second category were burials positioned between 1 and 0.5 km from their associated farm mounds. The third category were burials which fell within a 0.5 km radius (Maher, 1999, p. 177). In her study, most of the burials were located within a 500 m radius from the farmhouse (Maher, 1999, p. 277). In relation to the location of the burials, there seems to have been a preference for having the burial located below the level of the associated farmhouse (Maher, 1999, p. 200).

The approach taken by Ruth Maher on the location of the burials resembled Adolf Friðriksson's work on Viking Age burials in Iceland, which began in 1998 (Friðriksson, 2004, 2009, 2013). In addition, Adolf Friðriksson dealt with the important aspect of burials which were not associated with farms, specifically those that were often located close to communication routes (Friðriksson, 2013). The results of the study of the distance between the burials and the

settlements conducted by Adolf Friðriksson and Ruth Maher correspond with Kristján Eldjárn's estimation of the average distance between a Viking Age burial site and a settlement.

The studies conducted by Adolf Friðriksson and Ruth Maher on the location of the burials, their average distance to the farms, and their physical landscape settings, are highly relevant to the study of Viking Age burials and location in the Faroe Islands, because these studies bring forward new ideas on the locations of burials and their variability in the landscape.

2.4 Viking Age Burials in the Faroe Islands

This section is about previous research and interpretations of Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands. The burial practice in the Faroe Islands during the Viking Age was inhumation, and a number of burials was furnished (Dahl and Rasmussen, 1956, pp. 153–167; Arge and Hartmann, 1989, 1990). No cremation burials have been located in the Faroes to date. These observations are based on two Viking Age burial sites which have been excavated in the Faroe Islands. The first archaeologically excavated burial site is one in the northernmost village of Tjørnuvík, at the site of Yviri í Trøð on the island of Streymoy (Dahl and Rasmussen, 1956, pp. 153–167). The second excavated burial site is on the southern coast of Sandoy, in the village of Sandur, at the site Við Kirkjugarð (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, 1990). A third Viking Age burial site is located at the site Á Bønhúsfløtu, in the village of Hvalba in the most southern island in the Faroe Islands, Suðuroy (Arge and Michelsen, 2011). The area of this burial site is set within visible building remains, which have recently been thoroughly recorded (Arge and Michelsen, 2011). The burial site was identified because human remains had eroded from the surface and these remains were dated to the year AD 1000 (Arge and Michelsen, 2011). This site has been linked to a possible early church sites in the Faroes (Arge and Michelsen, 2011; Hansen, 2011). When this research started only three Viking Age burial sites had been verified, but recently a fourth Viking Age burial site has been identified in Skúvoy (Arge, 2020 personal communication, February 2020). Therefore, with verified Viking Age burial sites in the Faroe Islands numbering only four, the number of burials in the Faroe Islands is considerably less than in the other North Atlantic islands such as in Iceland, where some 300 pagan burials at around 160 burial sites have so far been recorded (Friðriksson, 2009).

2.4.1 Burial Site Yviri í Trøð

The focus of this section is the first archaeologically excavated burial site Yviri í Trøð. Sverri Dahl, who excavated the burials, published only one article about the burial site, which was about burial number I (Dahl and Rasmussen, 1956, p. 160). The individual in the burial was buried with a ring-headed pin, and has been interpreted to come from the Scottish-Celtic area. This was the first burial with an artefact to be found during an archaeological excavation in the Faroes (Dahl and Rasmussen, 1956, pp. 162–166). The burial custom was understood to belong to a Norwegian traditions, while the burial itself more resembled Norse Viking Age burials in the neighbouring countries south of the Faroe Islands (Dahl and Rasmussen, 1956, p. 165). In the excavation twelve burials were excavated (Dahl and Rasmussen, 1956; Dahl, 1957, 1959). In relation to the excavation conducted by Sverri Dahl, Jóhannes Jóhanesen conducted a palaeobotanical study at Tjørnuvík after the burials had been excavated (Jóhanesen, 1971, p. 147). Relevant for this research is that Jóhanesen analysis showed that in the first settlement phase there were many small lakes, which are not in Tjørnuvík today (Jóhanesen, 1971, p. 147).

2.4.2 Burial Site Við Kirkjugarð

The second burial site to be excavated by professional archaeologists in the Faroes was the burial site Við Kirkjugarð on the island of Sandoy, in the village of Sandur. During the excavation, eleven Viking Age burials were found and seven of them excavated (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, p. 9). Two articles have been published about the burials, with key results about the layout of the burial site and the content in the burials (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, 1990). It was observed during the excavation that the burials continue underneath the old churchyard (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, p. 9). Previous archaeological examinations in the area showed settlement activity north of the burial site (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, p. 6) and industrial activity west of the church (Arge, et al., 2009, p. 29). In addition to these activities, the National Museum in the Faroe Islands, Tjóðsavnið, has also conducted test excavations of a possible Viking Age building north of the church (Summarmorgun, 2017; Løve, 2019).

The burial site Við Kirkjugarð seemed to be a well-organized burial site with burials in parallel rows, aligned east-west (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, p. 17). During the excavation it was clear that the burials had been disturbed by cultivation (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, pp. 16-17). Many of the individuals in the burials were buried with artefacts, which categorises the burials as furnished burials (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, pp. 16-17). Even if the overall picture showed

that the burials were very similar, they are individually quite different in terms of their layout and associated objects (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, p. 17). At the end of the excavation, Símun V. Arge and Niels Hartmann found it difficult to determine if the individuals buried followed a Christian burial practice, a non-Christian burial practice, or if the burials showed a gradual adoption from paganism to Christianity (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, p. 18). Therefore, the discussion of the burial site being a Christian or non-Christian burial site was left open for debate (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, p. 20). Another possibility could be that the individuals were both Christians and non-Christians. Since few pagan burials have been found in the Faroes during the Viking Age, it has been argued that the Faroe Islands were part of a Christian, or partly Christianised, Hiberno-Scandinavian world (Hansen, 2011, pp. 74–75). On the other hand, there are other possible reasons for the lack of pagan burials in the Faroe Islands compared to neighbouring regions of Norse settlement. For example, part of the Faroe Islands' cultural heritage has been lost due to cultivation and building construction which happened on the same place from one generation to the next (Zachariasen, 1956, p. 2; Arge, 2009a). It is also highly likely that some burials have been eroded away into the sea.

With only four archaeologically verified Viking Age burial sites in the Faroe Islands, there is a need to discuss the lack of burials, especially since there are several Viking Age settlements in the Faroes. In the next section, I will focus on the possibility of additional Viking Age burial sites in the Faroe Islands.

2.4.3 Probable and Possible Burial Sites

The lack of pagan burials in the Faroe Islands has been discussed in previous articles (Dahl, 1970, p. 63; Arge and Hartmann, 1989, p. 5; Hansen, 2011, p. 75). Although there is a lack of Viking Age burials in the Faroes, in Faroese folklore and place names there are place names that include the word element for a human-made 'mound', as well as folklore about natural mounds being linked with burials (Dahl, 1970, p. 63; Arge and Hartmann, 1989, p. 5). In the past, laymen have tried to excavate natural mounds, which were mentioned in folklore and place names as being possible burial places (Dahl, 1970a, p. 63). However, no burials were ever located during these excavations, and unfortunately the locations of all of the excavated natural mounds is not known (Dahl, 1970a, p. 63). According to Sverri Dahl there are only two mounds which are almost certainly burial mounds (Dahl, 1970a, p. 63). These are Havgrímsgrøv in the village of Hovi on the island Suðuroy, and Øttisheyggur in the district

Giljanes on the island Vágur (Dahl, 1970, pp. 63-64). Grave mounds and settlements are mentioned in the saga of the Faroe Islands, *Færeyinga Saga*, and many of the settlements mentioned in this saga have the characteristic of being difficult to access from the sea (Dahl, 1970a, p. 63). Sverri Dahl emphasised that, from archaeological investigations, the view given of settlements and burials mounds in *Færeyinga Saga* has been altered considerably (Dahl, 1970a, p. 63). In addition to the four verified Viking Age burials, previous research has found additional probable Viking Age burial sites (Table 2.1). On the island of Svínø, in the village of Svínø, men were levelling the ground for a hay storage facility and during their work they discovered a burial (Zachariasen, 1956, p. 2). The description fit very well with it being a Viking Age burial. On the island of Fugloy in the village Kirkja, burials were discovered in connection with the extension of a churchyard (Zachariasen, 1956, p. 2). The burials discovered in Kirkja had an east-west alignment, and in the burials, there were objects (Zachariasen, 1956, p. 2). Furthermore, there is the possibility of additional sites, categorized as possible sites, due to their lack of thorough descriptions (Table 2.1). Figure 2.2 is a map that shows the locations of burials mentioned above and in Table 2.1 is a total of nine burials.

Table 2.1 Verified, probable and possible burial sites in the Faroe Islands.

Burial Sites Faroe Islands			
Sites	Villages	Island	Burial Type
Yviri í Trøð, Tjørnuvík	Tjørnuvík	Eysturoy	Verified
Við Kirkjugarð	Sandur	Sandoy	Verified
Á Bønhúsfløtu	Hvalba	Suðuroy	Verified
Ólansgarður	Skúvoy	Skúvoy	Verified
Kirkjugarðurin	Kirkja	Kirkja	Probable
Frammi í Garði	Svínø	Svínø	Probable
Óttisheyggur	Giljanes	Giljanes	Possible
Havgrímsgrøv	Hov	Suðuroy	Possible
Á Vegginum	Kirkja	Fugloy	Possible



Figure 2.2 Location of verified, probable and possible burial locations in the Faroe Islands.

2.4.4 Current State of Viking Age Burial Research in the Faroe Islands

A review of these studies shows that there are four archaeologically verified Viking Age burial sites in the Faroe Islands. In addition to the known location of these burial sites, there are probable and possible burial sites, which have not yet been examined by archaeologists. The burial site at Yviri í Trøð í Tjørnuvík has not been fully described, analysed, or discussed. At the burial site Við Kirkjugarð at Sandur, two articles have been published about the burial site with descriptions of the main results from the excavation, the burials and layout of the cemetery

(Arge and Hartmann, 1989, 1990). In one of the articles, it was emphasised that the analysis of the excavation archive, the human remains, and artefacts was not yet finished (Arge and Hartmann, 1990, p. 31).

Since the material from the burial sites at Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð have not been analysed in depth, there is a gap in the knowledge about the burial practices and ritual performances in the Faroe Islands. Therefore, the aim of this research project is also to review the burial sites at Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð. This is the focus in Chapter 4. In addition to the review of the burial sites, part of this research project involved a landscape analysis of the burial sites Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð. The rationale behind a landscape analysis is further described in section 2.5 and detailed in Chapter 3.

2.5 Landscape Approaches

This section reviews landscape approaches relevant to this study. The landscape concept itself does not belong to a particular discipline in the academic world (Waage, 2010, p. 45). Landscape archaeology became established as a discipline in its own right in the mid-1970s, and from its inception archaeologists have approached landscape archaeology in different ways, as there is no single approach to studying the landscape (David and Thomas, 2010, pp. 27–28; Aldred, 2014, p. 13). For example, landscape archaeology can refer both to the study of places that are meaningful locations in which lives are lived (David and Thomas, 2010, p. 38) and basic units of lived experience (Casey, 2010, p. 44). A ‘lived landscape’ refers to a set of relationships between people and places, where a place is not just an entity, but also a relational concept, where people are drawn to the place in terms of what they expect to find or to happen there (Thomas, 2001, pp. 173–174).

In archaeology, landscape settings are very relevant when examining archaeological features, as the physical appearance of a landscape changes over time, taking on new shapes and forms (Lund and Benediktsson, 2010, p. 6). For example, there were no physical traces visible of the Viking Age burial sites at Yviri í Trøð or Við Kirkjugarð prior to the archaeological excavations. People live in and move through landscapes, and therefore the process of individual interaction in the landscape can be observed in the archaeological material (Anschuetz et al., 2001, p. 191). The study of burials, which do leave physical traces in the landscape, is one way for archaeologists to access the meaning of place in the past.

In a landscape approach it is possible to find different architectural morphologies of monuments, such as burial chambers, where the physical relationship of the burial chambers is clear and their location in the topography structural and repetitive (Tilley, 1994, p. 93). For example, in a study of the landscape context of Neolithic burial chambers in south-west Wales, Christopher Tilley discovered that the mortuary monuments were not the dominant focal points in the landscape. Instead, the rock outcrops were the focal point, because these were important as landmarks and orientation points, and the burials themselves referenced these natural features (Tilley, 1994, p. 99). By doing fieldwork in the landscape, moving through it and experiencing it first-hand, an archaeologist can therefore discover aspects of monuments in the landscape not known prior to the survey. This phenomenological approach to the study of archaeological landscapes was adopted for the present study.

The importance of the relationship between the archaeologist and the landscape has been studied by Oscar Aldred (2010, p. 59). His own landscape work focussed on the movement between cairns placed along routes in Iceland, and by moving through the landscape along these routes himself, he developed interpretations about the social and cognitive significance and meaning of movement through the landscapes in his study areas (Aldred, 2010, p. 43; Aldred, 2014, pp. 52–53). Even though his study was not about burials, his perspectives on relational movement and intervisibility of sites, monuments, and natural topographical features in a North Atlantic landscape influenced the approaches taken in this dissertation. While acknowledging that landscapes of the past are in the past, and the experiences of archaeologists moving through today's landscapes can only give an approximation of what it was like to move through those landscapes in the past, I felt that the potential value of phenomenological approaches warranted the use of field-based landscape analyses in the present work.

2.6 Historical and Literary Sources

This section is about the historical and literary sources on Viking Age burials relevant for this study of the burial location in the landscape and the ritual performances and physical remains, or markers, that may have been associated with mortuary practices in the Faroe Islands.

2.6.1 The Sagas

“Óðinn established in his land the laws that had previously been observed among the Æsir. He ordained that all dead people must be burned and that their possessions should be laid on

a pyre with them (...) and mounds were to be built as memorials to great men, and memorial stones were to be raised for all those who were of any account, and this custom lasted for a long time after that.”

Source: Snorri Sturluson’s early medieval text, *Ynglingasaga* 8 in *Heimskringla* (Sturluson, 2011, p. 11).

The passage above is taken from Snorri Sturluson’s early medieval text, *Ynglingasaga* 8 in *Heimskringla* (Sturluson, 2011, p. 11), which is the only detailed account of a Viking Age burial ritual by a Norse author (Price, 2008c, p. 257). Importantly, it mentions the practice of placing burials in or below mounds. In the corpus of Old Norse and medieval Icelandic literature that pertains (or purports to pertain) to the Viking Age, there are a number of other references to burials, funerary pyres, and burials in mounds. For example, in the Sagas of the Icelanders, such as *Laxdæla saga* and *Færeyinga Saga*, there are stories about high status people interred in mounds (Rasn, 1972, p. 3; Magnusson, M. and Pálsson, 1983, p. 101). The dating and the authorship of the sagas has been much discussed (Sveinsson, 1958, p. 1; Steinsland, 2005, p. 270; Kristjánsson, 2007, p. 203), and the consensus is that they cannot be used as direct evidence of Viking Age burial practices, or where burials were located in the landscape, because they were written in the thirteenth and fourteenth century, several hundred years after the Viking Age (Friðriksson, 1994). Even though the authors were writing in a Christian context, several hundred years after the events described, with a specific audience and agenda in mind, these sources remain of interest, because they do seem to describe pre-Christian, pagan burial practices (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 23). Therefore, although the descriptions in them may be distorted or exaggerated, it is useful to review the medieval Icelandic sources on burials, and to bear them in mind when trying to interpret the archaeological record.

In *Laxdæla saga* there are references to persons, who were buried in mounds (Magnusson and Pállson, 1986). For example, in *Laxdæla saga*, Unn the Deep-minded was buried in a mound, which had been prepared for her (Magnusson and Pállson, 1983, p. 57). Inside the mound she was interred in a ship and buried with precious objects (Magnusson and Pállson, 1983, p. 57). After she had been interred in the burial mound, the mound was sealed (Magnusson and Pállson, 1983, p. 57). Another woman in the same saga, Thorgerð, became ill, died and was interred in a burial mound (Magnusson and Pállson, 1983, p. 59). Another person in the

Laxdæla saga, Killer-Hrapp, who had the reputation of being a cruel man, wanted to be buried under the living-room door so he could keep an eye on the farm after he died (Magnusson and Pállson, 1983, p. 78). His wife obeyed his wishes, but he kept haunting people at the farm, so his body was then dug up and removed to a place far away from paths and pastures (Magnusson and Pállson, 1983, p. 78). Another mound was raised by Olaf over Thord Goddi, when he fell ill and died (Magnusson and Pállson, 1983, p. 100). The mound was located on the tongue of land at Lax River and is called Drafnarness where the mound was surrounded by a wall, which was known as *Haugsgard*, ‘mound wall’ (Magnusson and Pállson, 1983, p. 101). It is also written in *Laxdæla* saga that the sons of Hoskuld had a stately mound built for him, but he was not buried with many valuables (Magnusson and Pállson, 1983, p. 106). The sons planned to have a memorial feast for their father, which was the custom at that time, but it was autumn, so they waited until summer when more people could attend, and the goods were easier to obtain (Magnusson and Pállson, 1983, p. 106).

In the above mentioned burial descriptions from the sagas, there are very few details regarding the locations of burials, and therefore the stories can hardly be used as a guide to locate burials (Friðriksson, 1994, p. 75). In addition to the sagas, there are other sources for Viking Age burial practices and performances, which are contemporary to the Viking Age. These are sources from Ibn Faḍlān and Ibn Rustah, who on their journeys in northern Europe wrote accounts of Viking Age burials (Montgomery, 2000, p. 1; Watson, 2004, pp. 289–290)

2.6.2 Ibn Faḍlān and Ibn Rustah

They built something like a round hillock over the ship, which they had pulled out of the water, and placed in the middle of it a large piece of birch (khadank) on which they wrote the name of the man and the name of the King of the Rūs. Then they left.”

Source: Ibn Faḍlān’s account in his *Risala* report (Montgomery, 2000, p. 21).

During the Viking Age, Muslim scholars and ambassadors travelled to the northern hemisphere where they meet a people called the Rūs. The most famous of these, because of the preservation of their writings, were the geographer Ahmad Ibn Umar Ibn Rustah, known as Ibn Rustah (Watson, 2004), and the ambassador (or soldier) Ibn Faḍlān, who was sent by the Caliph al-Muqtadir in A.D. 921 to the King of the Bulghārs of the Volga (Montgomery, 2000, p. 1). Ibn Rustah was born in Isfahan and from his seven-volume encyclopaedia only the last volume has

survived (Watson, 2004, pp. 289–290). Ibn Faḍlān, on his journey to the Volga river, records several observations of social and ritual practices of the people he encountered, including the ten-day funeral of a Rūs chief (Montgomery, 2000, pp. 12–13). The account by Ibn Faḍlān recorded in his *risala*, or report/letter of communication, can be found in the Indian Amin Razi text from 1593 and from different fragmented sources. However, it is not clear from these Arabic sources whether the Rūs were Vikings or Slavs and perhaps this was also confusing for the Arabic writers (Montgomery, 2000, pp. 1–4). Ibn Faḍlān’s account was very detailed and he described many of the objects used in the ritual performances he witnessed. Due to the similarities between the objects and events he witnessed, and the burial record of Viking Age Scandinavia, including artefacts, ship cremation, burial chambers, and butchered animals, archaeologists have considered it likely that the people Ibn Faḍlān described were Vikings (Price, 2010, p. 133). Therefore, the account by Ibn Faḍlān provides a detailed narrative of an event that took place in and around a vessel for more than a week, a narrative that archaeology alone does not provide (Price, 2008a). It is important to be critical in using Ibn Faḍlān as a source on Viking Age ritual practices and performances (e.g. see the critiques of Karras, 1988), but it does not mean that the whole of this description is imprecise and incorrect (Price, 2008b, p. 258).

The second Arab scholar to be mentioned is Ibn Rustah. In Ibn Rustah’s account there is also a description of a burial, but it is not very detailed (Watson, 2004, p. 292). Ibn Rustah wrote that when an important man died among the Rūs they made him a grave like a large house (Watson, 2004, p. 292). Inside this burial, the Rūs gave the dead man clothing, food, drink, coins and an armband of gold (Watson, 2004, p. 292). Before closing the burial, they placed the woman that this man loved with him, alive, and she died in the burial with the dead man (Watson, 2004, p. 292).

These accounts of Scandinavian burial and religious activity were viewed through the eyes of people from different cultural backgrounds, who spoke different languages, and had their own agendas with regards to their relationships with Viking Age Scandinavians. Therefore, it is crucial not to accept these accounts uncritically, at face value. Nevertheless, they provide an intriguing addition to the available sources, and are a potential source of ideas that we can draw upon as we attempt to interpret the burial record of Viking Age Scandinavia and the North Atlantic region.

2.7 Archaeological Frameworks

The final section of this chapter is a short summary of the archaeological framework applied in this study and concluding remarks on the subjects touched upon in this chapter. Archaeologists have long been interested in the locations of burials (Parker Pearson, 1999, p. 11) and by developing models based on known burial locations and patterns, it is may be possible to locate more burials, as has been done in Iceland (Friðriksson, 2013). In addition, it is important to consider the physical relationships between burials, settlements, routes, and landscape features such as elevations, rock outcrops, rivers, streams, coastlines, and beaches that make ideal landing sites for boats (Friðriksson and Vésteinsson, 2011, p. 51). Many fruitful studies have been conducted that focussed on Viking Age burials within the landscape, especially in Iceland (Maher, 1999; Gjerland and Keller, 2010; Friðriksson, 2013), Scotland, England and Ireland (Leonard, 2011; Turner and Owen, 2013; Mcleod, 2015b) (Harrison, 2007), Norway (Gjerland and Keller, 2010), and Öland in Sweden (Fallgren, 2007).

Building on the interesting and valuable work that has been done on burials in these other parts of the Viking World, this dissertation attempts to contribute a landscape approach to the analysis and interpretation of Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands. As seen from the above discussion, the locations of burials were important for the Vikings. Not only could burials help to embed families and communities into the places they inhabited, both in their Scandinavian homeland and abroad, but, by being visible in the landscape, burials became integrated into the everyday life and mental maps of the people who lived near them. The varied burial practices, burial locations, and ritual performances associated with burials also provide insights into what was meaningful and significant to different communities. By searching for new burials, and comparing the Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands to contemporary burials in neighbouring regions, this dissertation aims to reveal aspects of the unique identity of the Faroe Islanders. The following chapter outlines the methodology employed to do this.

Chapter 3 Methods for Researching the Locations of Viking Age Burials in the Faroe Islands

Following the research questions put forward in Chapter 1 concerning where and how to locate more Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands, this chapter focuses on the methods for researching the location of Viking Age burials. In addition, this chapter provides a novel methodological framework with new ideas, approaches, and understandings for where and how to locate Viking Age burials in the Faroes, developed for this research project.

3.1 Introduction

In this research project, which has a focus on locating Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands and their physical relation to the landscape, methods are equally important as its methodology. Whereas methodology gives the researcher a chance to theorise the research goal, methods give the opportunity to contextualise the research process or the researched subject and material – it makes the research visible (L'Eplattenier, 2016, p. 173). Methods are how the research is conducted, how the primary material is located and used (L'Eplattenier, 2016, p. 173). In this research the primary material is the field surveys, the test excavations, physical observations in the landscape, unpublished archival material, and interviews. In addition to the primary data is the secondary data, which are published articles on excavated burial sites, online databases with archaeological information on burial sites, collections of human remains, ethnographic studies, as well as archival data with information on burials, including place names and folklore. In using place names, folklore and ethnography, the research on burials is interdisciplinary. Researching burials as an interdisciplinary approach has its strengths in the huge body of material, information, data, and methods that may be gathered in disciplines such as ethnography, folklore, and place name studies. However, the methodological approach of working interdisciplinarity in archaeology may appear at the outset to be fragmentary and fractured because it means applying different data, methods, and information from various sources. Hence, it is important to maintain a focus on the main research question: how to find and locate Viking Age burials from an archaeological frame of references. Part of working interdisciplinarity is to be methodologically considerate, conscious, reflective, and critical in deciding which information to extract from disciplines beyond archaeology and how to apply it in the research.

One of the starting points in researching Viking Age burials in the landscape was to recognise that in the Faroe Islands there were no visible Viking Age surface burial markers, no Viking Age mounds, and also no standing runestones or memorial stones such as those seen in the wide landscapes in Scandinavia, for instance the stone settings at Lindholm Høje in Denmark, the burials mounds in Birka and Tuna in Sweden and in Norway, or the famous Gokstad and Oseberg ship burials (Nicolaysen, 1882, p. 2; Ramskou, 1976; Nylén and Schönback, 1994; Ambrosiani and Clarke, 1995; Holck, 2006, p. 185). It may in fact reflect cultural and academic biases if one expects to find similar visible landscapes of the dead in the Faroes as in the other Scandinavian countries. The excavated Viking Age burial sites in the Faroes did not have any markers or indications of being Viking Age burial grounds, and there are no stories attached to the places regarding former mounds or stone markers. It appears to be a landscape of the invisible dead.

3.1.1 The Landscapes of the Invisible Dead

With only two Viking Age excavated burial sites in the Faroe Islands, Yviri í Trøð in the village of Tjørnuvík and Við Kirkjugarð in the village of Sandur, this leaves the Faroes in quite a remarkable and at the same time peculiar situation. Therefore, the point of departure for finding new Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands was the study of the three known burial sites, which were identified, when this research started, and their landscape locations in depth. The fourth verified burial site on the island Skúvoy, was not included in this detailed study, as it was only recently confirmed as a Viking Age burial site (Personal communication with Arge, 2020 February.). This study included a detailed review of the reports from the excavations at Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð in the archives at Tjóðsavnið, the National Museum of the Faroe Islands (here after Tjóðsavnið) (Dahl, 1956b; Hartmann, 1990c). Furthermore, archival research was carried out to follow up on previous reports and information of other possible human burials. In addition, a landscape study of the burial sites was conducted to contextualise the burials in the landscape and their relation to the physical landscape and cultural elements. This was the first steppingstone in getting closer in understanding the location of Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands. The second steppingstone was to study place names and landscape folklore drawn from ethnographic research, which encircled ideas and understandings of burials by people in the Faroe Islands. To understand and to get a full perspective of people's ideas and their concept of burials in the landscape, this survey targeted a wide timeframe from the Viking Age up to the present-day. Oral history research was conducted in the forms of

interviews and place name research, using maps and interviews. This second step led to the third steppingstone in this study, where the focus was on a comparative study of selected burial locations in Iceland, the Northern Isles of Scotland and Norway. A comparative approach helped to develop an understanding of the Norse mentalities concerning the physical relationship between death and landscape. The comparative approach also focused on the potential similarities and differences in the locations of Viking Age burials in selected areas compared with the Viking Age burial sites in the Faroes.

The fourth and final steppingstone to finding new evidence for Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands was through field survey, geophysical survey, and small test excavations. This chapter will detail each of these steps, starting with the first approach, the archival research on known burial sites in the Faroe Islands.

3.2 Archival Research on Known Burial Sites in the Faroe Islands

In archival research the employed practices include access to information, finding aids, reference material, archive locations and restrictions, evaluating the condition of the materials, existence of evidence or lack of same, and the triangulation of information (L'Eplattenier, 2016, p. 173). It is about all the factors that impact the systematic gathering of evidence and the interpretation of this evidence (L'Eplattenier, 2016, p. 173). In archaeology, there are standards for archiving. Archaeological archives comprise all records and materials acquired during an archaeological project (Perrin et.al., 2014). Included in many archaeological projects is the re-investigation of archives in curatorial care (Perrin et.al., 2014), which are often located in public or private institutions, such as museums and universities (for example Tjóðsavnið). In the archival profession, several changes have taken place in recent years, where archival concepts have been refined and rearticulated (Pearce-Moses, 2005, p. xiii). In archival research, questions are being raised regarding the means of archival research, the definition and use of the archives, the roles of the researchers and ethical thoughts with researching primary materials (Gaillet, 2016, p. 296). Furthermore, a large shift in the profession results from electronic records, which require the archivists to collaborate with different disciplines (Pearce-Moses, 2005, p. xiii). As I used the archives as part of my research, it is relevant for this project to include definitions of what constitutes an archival study and details of the archives themselves.

3.2.1 Archival Definitions

Archival studies can both be a formal curriculum for teaching and the knowledge which supports the practice of appraising, acquiring, authenticating, preserving and providing access to recorded material (Pearce-Moses, 2005, p. 28). Definitions of archives vary greatly, and this is reflected in the range of archives accessed for this research. Archives have been defined and, following these definitions, this study includes (Table 3.1) (Pearce-Moses, 2005, p. 29):

Table 3.1 Archival definitions (Pearce-Moses, 2005, p. 29)

Number	Definitions
1	Materials created or received by a person, family, or organisation, public or private, in the conduct of their affairs and preserved because of their enduring value
2	The division within an organisation responsible for maintaining the organisation's record of enduring value
3	An organisation that collects the records of individuals, families, or another organisation
4	The professional discipline of administering such collections and organisations
5	The building housing archival collections
6	A published collection of scholarly papers, especially as a periodical

Institutional archives, including the archives used in this study at Tjóðsavnið and the Department at the University in the Faroe Islands, Fróðsakaparsetur Føroya, deal with primary sources, sources which exist only in the archives and which are often not intended to be published (Connors, 2016, pp. 51–52). Therefore, it is important to be aware of the restrictions of working with this type of archive.

Primary sources in archives cover first-hand accounts of events, written down contemporaneously to the events or later recalled by an eyewitness, such as letters, diaries, government records, oral histories, photographs, maps and land records, blueprints, newspaper articles, artefacts and specimens (Pearce-Moses, 2005, p. 309). On the other hand, a secondary source is a work that is not based on direct observation or of evidence directly associated with the subject (Pearce-Moses, 2005, p. 355), such as commentaries, reviews and criticisms; these are sometimes archived with the primary sources. One important point to keep in mind here is that the definition of a primary or secondary source depends on how it is used (Pearce-Moses, 2005, p. 309). The definition of primary and secondary sources is important, because the primary sources can change to a secondary source, for example books published in the 18th century concerning legends, where the author had access to the primary source, but the reader

does not. The reader has therefore to trust the work done by the researcher. Today, archives are not just seen as storehouses for finding new knowledge, but primary sources for making knowledge (Gaillet, 2016, p. 298).

At the heart of archival research is the primary research, examining a wide range of materials and texts (Gaillet, 2016, p. 303). The material in the archives examined for this dissertation also includes collections of human remains (Table 3.8). Archaeologists, who work with such collections also deal with issues related to the collection and curation of the human remains (Stone, 2018, p. 1). Studies of anatomical collections can be viewed in different ways, and it is essential for research to include the ways in which the collections themselves tell a story (Stone, 2018, p. 2). For example, a study that focused on the making of an osteological collection by George S. Huntington between 1893 and 1921 included valuable information about how the collections were marked (Lans, 2018, pp. 11–26). Another study on burial vaults in Maryland, USA, demonstrated the value of integrating archaeological knowledge on the usage of burial vaults with the analysis of human remains and historical documentation (Owsley, 2018, p. 136). Bearing in mind this knowledge of the importance of archival study and different approaches to archival study, the focus will now be on the archives in the Faroe Islands and the Viking Age burials.

3.2.2 Archival Research and the Viking Age Burials in the Faroe Islands

For this study on Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands, archival research has been used as a source and method for detecting new information about possible Viking Age burials. As mentioned above, there are no visible markers in the landscape with which to identify possible burials. Therefore, a new method was developed to better understand the potential locations of burials in the Faroe Islands. This methodological approach included information in archival sources, especially previous excavations of the two known burial sites by Sverri Dahl, Símun V. Arge and Niels Hartmann, place names, folklore, and local stories. Using this new methodological approach, the possible locations of Viking Age burials were tested in certain selected areas in the Faroes (Table 3.8). The following sections provide an overview of the information accessed in the archives, including excavation archives, legends, places names and information from local informants.

3.2.2.1 Archives at Tjóðsavnið

All archives have their purpose: the collection, organisation and deployment in the archives is not neutral, and not without potential problems for later researchers (Walsham, 2016, p. 9; Wood, 2016, p. 230). The archives used in Tjóðsavnið are the original archives and unpublished reports by Sverri Dahl, Símun V. Arge and Niels Hartman (Dahl, 1956b; Hartmann, 1990c). Sverri Dahl was a pioneer in Faroese archaeology: he established professional archaeology in the country, and with it began collecting information from all over the islands. As the first state antiquarian in the Faroe Islands, Sverri Dahl established journal systems at least by 1952, when Føroya Fornminnasavn was founded. The journal system continued to be used until Sverri Dahl's death in 1987. For this study there are four journal groups which are of interest and which are detailed in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Journal group descriptions

Group	Journal Group Description
1	Sverra savnið Snr. 4911. Information from excavations, blueprints for papers, speeches, papers, newspapers, and conferences.
2	SD Bygdir (villages), 11-95. This record keeping was an overview of the villages. It was organised around the names of villages with the old village number (marknatsbygdir). For example, the record keeping began with the village of Sumba, with village number 11 and ended with the village of Hattarvík, with village number 95. Included in the folder are several subfolders with themes. These folders were to some extent updated by the archaeological assistant Leon Andreassen and former state antiquaries and archaeologist Arne Thorsteinsson and Símun V. Arge, adding more information over time to Sverri Dahl's original archive.
3	SD Evni (subject). This third record system was divided by subject and includes, for example, sections on settlements, objects, burials, and folklore.
4	Sverri Dahl útgrevstur frágreiðingar (excavation reports), diaries from the excavation at Yviri í Trøð, Snr. 3718; Snr. 3798; Snr. 3959.

Sverri Dahl also collected place names as part of the committee of *Fornrannsóknar og staðanavnannevnd Føroya Løgtings* (SFL) initiated by the Faroese Parliament (Fróðskaparsetur, 2020). This archive was part of the museum, but was moved to the University of the Faroe Islands' Linguistic Department, Føroyamálsdeildin (Fróðskaparsetur, 2020). In the archives at Tjóðsavnið, Sverri Dahl included various types of information, ranging from archaeological subjects such as burials, settlements, and artefacts to discussions of the preservation of buildings and special places in the landscape. During this research, the significant journal systems were *SD Bygdir/Villages*, *SD Evni* and *SD Útgrevstar*

Frágreiðingar. The journal systems were very detailed and often included personal information and letters, which cannot be published in this PhD research. The journal systems are intended to reference to each other, but it was not always possible to follow the reference thread from one journal system to another. This did not have negative implications for the study on Viking Age burials.

A summary of the archival sources and data types used in this dissertation is provided in Table 3.8. The results of the archival study of the Viking Age burials is presented in Chapter 4. In the next section, the focus is on the ethnographic, landscape folklore and place name methods used in this dissertation.

3.3 Ethnography, Landscape Folklore and Place Names

In this study on prehistoric groups of people, the focus is on the archaeological material as the main source. However, written accounts from the 1600s onwards provide valuable descriptions of people and how they lived, their cultural traditions, their beliefs, their folklore, some archaeological remains in the landscape, and the landscape itself. This section focuses on these non-archaeological sources, and how they were integrated into this dissertation, starting with ethnography in the Faroe Islands.

3.3.1 Ethnographic Methods

An ethnography is a description of a specific culture and its customs, beliefs, and behaviours, often based on participant observation of a group of people, and unstructured or semi-structured interviews (Sullivan, 2001, p. 507; Harris and Johnson, 2007, p. 5). It is a method of making personal observations, often supported by photographic and video records, and written descriptions of human interactions in social settings and activities (Harris and Johnson, 2007, p. 5). Often, ethnographic research also uses data from other disciplines such as geography, archaeology, history, and folklore. The modern form of fieldwork and ethnography was developed by Bronislaw Malinowski during his research at the Trobriand Islands (Malinowski, 1966). Prior to Malinowski, much ethnographic information was collected by amateurs and in Britain the academic world were for an innovation in the ethnographic method (Young, 1979, p. 7). The results of ethnographic research most often result in a narrative description (Genzuek, 2003, p. 1). When a research problem is established, the ethnographer enters fieldwork using the senses, with his or her own thoughts and feelings about what he/she encounters creating

subjective and potentially misleading data (Fetterman, 1989, p. 41). It is not possible to be “free” of one’s own cultural values, but one must be conscious of them (Kristiansen and Krogstrup, 1999, p. 133).

This study applied standard ethnographic methods of selecting and sampling contemporary informants and methods of interviewing to help locate Viking Age burials in the landscape, which will be described in more detail below. Although set out systematically, it should be kept in mind that a degree of flexibility and organic growth had to be allowed throughout the ethnographic research. A field plan which is reasonable and reflective cannot be switched onto “autopilot”, because it is important that the researcher is in control of the activities that he or she gets involved in (Kristiansen and Krogstrup, 1999, p. 132).

3.3.1.1 Selection and Sampling of Contemporary Informants

The selection and sampling of specific places and people for this project was in the first place determined by my research questions (Fetterman, 1989, p. 42; Kristiansen and Krogstrup, 1999, p. 133), which focused my study area on the northern islands of the Faroes archipelago. Coming from the Faroes myself, the process of selecting, sampling, and doing the interviews was also somewhat biased by my prior knowledge, understanding, and contacts. For example, from the beginning of this study I was aware of the potential difficulties in accessing some of the more remote locations in the northern islands of the Faroes archipelago, and this had an effect on my selection of a target population (Fetterman, 1989, p. 42). Like other ethnographers, I used a “big net approach”, where as many people as possible were included from the beginning, and then, as the study progressed, I narrowed this selection down to focus on specific parts of the landscape (a process described by Fetterman, 1989, pp. 42–43). In the process of getting access to the field, I felt that it was also important to be open-minded and considerate, because this sometimes provides unexpected information (Kristiansen and Krogstrup, 1999, p. 135).

As a person coming from the northern islands in the Faroes, I had certain advantages concerning the language and knowing whom to contact (such advantages are detailed in Kristiansen, S.; Krogstrup, 1999, p. 136). Before I decided which people to interview, I contacted knowledgeable people working in administration in the municipalities and asked them for advice about which people I should contact. In some places, I already knew relevant people to interview, so I made direct contact with them. I also contacted the local museum in Klaksvík, Norðoya Forminnissavn, and asked them if there were any specific people, they

would suggest I speak with. Furthermore, as people heard about my research, I was contacted by people around the islands in the Faroes reporting their knowledge of possible locations of Viking Age burials, including sites in Miðvágur in Vágur, and Hov in Suðuroy. This self-selecting group of informants expanded when I had the opportunity to be part of a national broadcast on Viking Age burials in the Faroes. Decisions about who to interview were based on whether the informants were in the northern islands, the credibility of their information, and accessibility of the areas they described. The subsequent interview process contributed to decisions about where to conduct survey work, as described below.

3.3.1.2 Interviews

For an ethnographer the interview is one of the most important data gathering techniques (Fetterman, 1989, p. 47). Interviews and conversations that enable knowledge exchange with local people should also be included more routinely in archaeological research, because it brings the archaeologist into direct contact with key stakeholders in the research, and gives local people an opportunity to make a direct contribution to the development of the research design (Milek, 2018, p. 37; Stutz, 2018, p. 54). There are both informal and formal interviews, with formal interviews being more structured, more directed at a narrow set of research goals, and often conducted with an interview guide and dictaphone (Kristiansen and Krogstrup, 1999, p. 155; Murchison, 2010, p. 113). The informal interview is different from a conversation, but the two can merge, where the interaction becomes a mixture of conversation and embedded interview questions (Fetterman, 1989, p. 49). In addition to the informal and formal interview techniques, I also conducted semi-structured interviews, which comprise a combination of closed and open-ended questions (Adams, 2015, p. 493). During these interviews, the questions were followed up by why or how questions (Adams, 2015, p. 493). James P. Spradley (1979, p. 58) highlights the importance of thinking of ethnographic interviews as friendly conversations in which the researcher slowly presents new elements and questions to help the informants to respond with the information being sought. By using the ethnographic interview method (Spradley, 1979), I was able to get real-world data, an in-depth understanding of local people, and had the possibility of making new discoveries.

During this research on locating new Viking Age burials, the interviews with local people were semi-structured in the sense that, prior to the interview, there were a few questions prepared, which were worked into friendly conversations. During the interviews, the focus was also on

using open-ended questions, phrasing questions clearly, and speaking using everyday language. For example, the following questions listed in Table 3.3 were worked into conversations. The questions were both of general character and questions, which were more topic-specific, targeting my specific research questions.

Table 3.3 Examples of questions asked during the interviews.

General questions	Topic-specific questions
“Do you take many walks in the field, in the landscape?”	“Do you have any knowledge of any possible Viking Age burials in this vicinity?”
“Where do you like to go?”	“Have you heard of, or found yourself, any bones of humans or animals while ploughing or walking in the fields?”
“When you walk in the field (or landscape), what is your experience?”	“Have you heard about any stories or legends related to the existence of old burial grounds?”
“Are there certain structures or elements in the field (landscape) which you find of interest?”	“Have you thought about whether there are any local place names which could be of relevance to burials, such as <i>kuml</i> (transl. mound), <i>leiði</i> (transl. burial place)?”

Between 2015 and 2018 I spoke with many knowledgeable people about the landscape of the Faroe Islands and the possible locations of Viking Age burials with a focus on the northern islands. In addition to the interviews that were semi-structured and planned, I also had *ad hoc* helpful discussions with local people, which took place in the landscape while I did my archaeological survey and fieldwork. In total, I interviewed 15 local people on the islands of Fugloy, Svínoy, Viðoy, Borðoy, Kunoy and Kallsoy (Figure 3.1).

I also planned walks in the landscape with local people from Hattarvík and Kirkja on Fugloy, with people from Hvannasund on Viðoy, from the villages Norðtoftum and Múla on Borðoy, and on Kallsoy in Mikladali and Trøllanesi. Most of the people I talked with and interviewed then had the opportunity to share their memories of the stories told in the landscape, some of which were also connected to place names. However, many of my informants were elderly people who were only able to show me on maps where I should walk to find something interesting. During this study, several of my informants sadly died, and I experienced first-hand how important it is to talk with people living in this area. As the remote islands in the

Faroes are getting more depopulated, there is great need to gather ethnographic information before it gets lost forever.

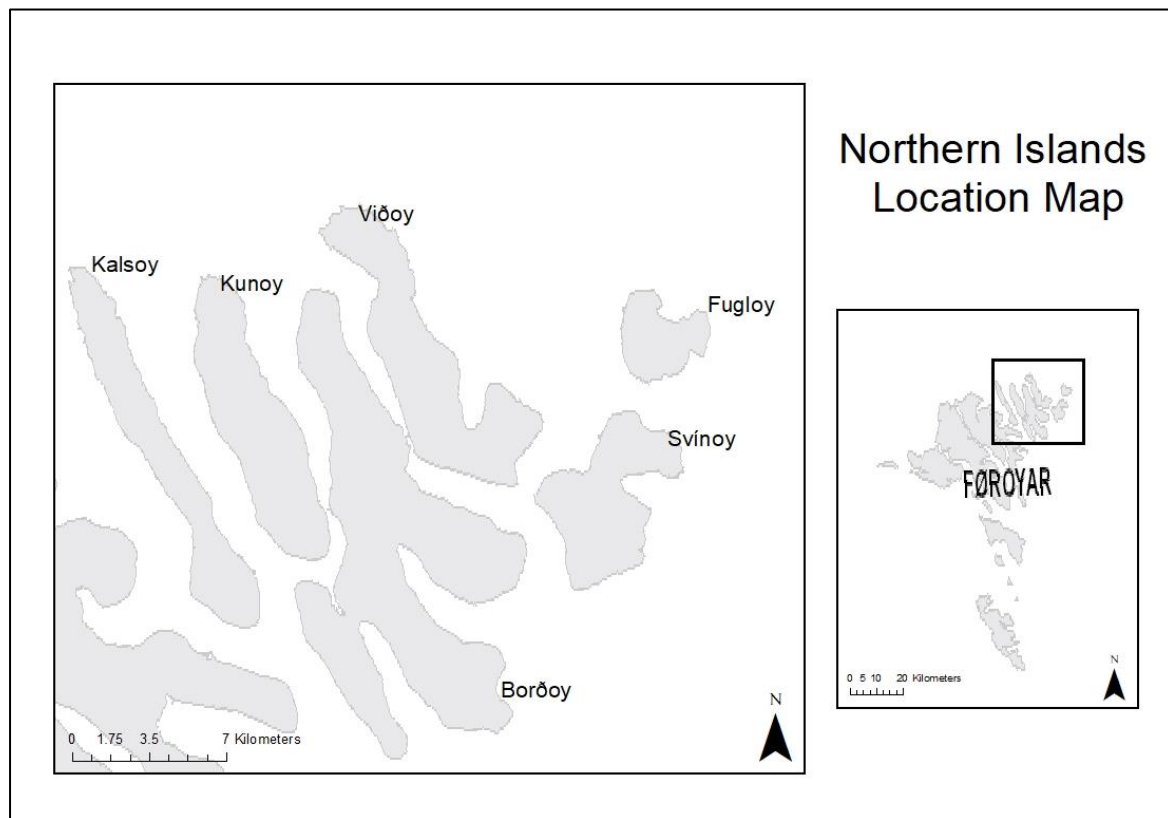


Figure 3.1 Location of the northern islands in the Faroes. Map source: Us.fo

As will be seen below, only a few of the people I talked with could provide any information on possible Viking Age burials. Nevertheless, all interviews were transcribed, and interview notes were written up and archived. The results of the interviews are in Chapter 5. An overview of data sources is provided in Table 3.8.

3.3.2 Landscape Folklore

The use of folklore in archaeological research has frequently been regarded as a peripheral and distrusted method (Paphitis, 2014, p. 4) and it often remains on the margins of the archaeological discipline (Glazier, 2007, p. 42). This may be due to a lack of understanding of folklore as a body of narrative material, of folklore studies as a discipline, and of how folklorists interpret their materials (Paphitis, 2014, p. 4). Even though the relationship between archaeology and folklore has recently been a turbulent one (Paphitis, 2014, p. 15), these two disciplines were clearly not separated during the 16th-19th centuries (Glazier, 2007, p. 43; Paphitis, 2014, p. 15). The use of folklore in archaeology diminished after the Second World

War, and there was an increasing distrust between folklorists and archaeologists (Paphitis, 2014, p. 25), although there continued to be publications that integrated the two (Fleure, 1948; Davidson, 1950). The scepticism came from both sides. In archaeology the distrust of folklore was due to the growing emphasis on scientific archaeological enquiry, while in folklore studies there was a reaction against the occasional use of material culture to support the continuation of ultranationalist and fascist regimes (Paphitis, 2014, p. 25). To guard against the risk of using what Paphitis (Paphitis, 2014, p. 25) described as “fakelore”, folklore should not be used in archaeological research to identify groups of people or cultures in the past (Glazier, 2007, p. 44) or as correct, reliable representations of past behaviours, beliefs or events (Gazin-Schwartz and Holtorf, 1999, pp. 4–5). In addition, archaeologists must accept that it is not possible to trace folklore back to prehistoric times, because folklore is dynamic: it changes and transforms, as societies do (Glazier, 2007, p. 44). In addition, meanings in folklore can be lost and new meanings embedded (Glazier, 2007, p. 44).

During the last two decades there has been a noteworthy increase in including folkloric material in archaeology (Paphitis, 2013, p. 1). Tina Paphitis, who has written a PhD on the topic “The Place of Folklore in Archaeological Landscapes” (2014) criticised archaeological researchers for having little understanding of folklore as a discipline, and its close connection to archaeology (Paphitis, 2013, p. 1). Furthermore, Darren Glazier (2007, p. 41) acknowledged that even though there has recently been an emphasis on multi-vocality in archaeology, the folklore discipline is inadequately understood in archaeological discourse. In knowing this history of archaeology and folklore, a fresh outlook on how to integrate the disciplines is needed.

3.3.2.1 Working with Folklore and Archaeology

In dealing with human activity and activity areas or sites, folklore comes from a meaningful engagement with sites (Paphitis, 2014, p. 15). Certain sites were not just sites of superstition, but also sites where people left offerings, such as the Stone of Odin on Mainland Orkney (Canmore ID 2128, 1946). Before the destruction of this stone, people left offerings such as bread, cheese, a rag or a stone, and a promise made at this site was particularly sacred (Canmore ID 2128, 1946). At this site there was a close link between the site and the people who passed it, reproducing the folklore not only based on beliefs and superstitions, but also on the concept of time (Paphitis, 2014, p. 15). Superstitions can also sometimes keep people away from sites

and protect the sites (McCafferty, 2018, p. 99). In Denmark, this was the case with the many man-made mounds, called *jættestue* in Danish. A *jætte* is a giant and it was believed in Denmark that these mounds were built by giants and were inhabited by trolls, pixies, and elves. Traditional folktales tell of a mound East of the town of Hjørring, Femhøj, where trolls used to live, before they moved to Russia (Tangherlini, 2013, p. 127). Another folktale is that money or gold were kept in mounds and protected by dragons, such as the mound Stovhøj in Ilbjærge (Tangherlini, 2013, p. 130). In addition to Danish folklore and mounds, Icelandic folklore contains stories about shieling maids being seduced or kidnapped by elves and fairies (Kupiec, 2016, p. 384). Similarly, in the Faroe Islands there are stories about elves living in natural mounds and in certain locations in the landscape (Sigvardsen, 2009, pp. 19, 30). These magical landscapes were inhabited by trolls, pixies, and elves, and therefore the landscape perspectives embodied different meanings for the people living in these areas, who believed in these vernacular beings. Though stories and folklore only exist by being recounted, they are remembered, recreated and reconstructed each time the tale is told (Glazier, 2007, p. 45). These stories are part of a long oral tradition and, as they become the subject of academic studies, they become sources that are written down and studied for meaning.

In a recent study by Pikne Kama (2017b), folklore and place names were interwoven together as place lore. Place lore, part of folklore, is a narrative connected with a certain place in the landscape (Kama, 2017a, p. 80). Place lore is also communicated and created today (Kama, 2017a, p. 81). Place lore has been used as a tool to identify archaeological sites, including burial sites in Karula Parish in Estonai (Kama, 2017b, p. 89). On dry land in the Karula Parish, 39 sites have been identified as burial places, where all burials except one burial site were identified based on folklore (Kama, 2017b, p. 99). Of these sites, 14 had place names or a toponym directly associated with a burial, such as 'burial-hill' (Kama, 2017b, p. 100). A further 6 sites had a place name which indirectly referred to a burial ground, for which the most common toponym was 'church' (Kama, 2017b, p. 100). As this study shows, folklore should be included among perspectives and sources in the study of burials. For this study, I also used ethnohistoric and folklore sources in the study of Viking Age burials and their location in the landscape.

3.3.2.2 Antiquarian Folklore Sources from the Faroe Islands

Faroese folk culture has not been much researched (Joensen, 1987, p. 9). The published material on folk culture and ethnology in the Faroes varies greatly in its context, quality and topics (Joensen, 1987, p. 227). One of the first books that can be used as an ethnohistoric and folklore source is *Færeyinga Saga* (1832) and a second book by Lucas Jacobsøn Debes in 1673, *Færoæ et Færoa reserata* (1673). In this book, Debes wrote about the Faroes and its inhabitants with some information on the first settlements. There is no information on possible non-Christian burials, but there are descriptions of people's beliefs and superstitions (Debes, 1673). In *Færeyinga Saga*, there are stories of people being buried in mounds according to the old custom, when the people living on the islands were still pagan (Rafn, 1832, p. 3 and p. 33). The saga begins with Grímr Kamban (Rafn, 1832, p. 1). In this saga Grímr Kamban is the first settler in the Faroes during the time of Harald hins hárfagra (Rafn, 1832, p. 1). The main persons in the saga are Sigmundr and Þrándr, and much of the saga concerns the power struggle between them (Rafn, 1832, p. 143 and p. 146). *Færeyinga Saga* was for the first time compiled by Carl Christian Rafn in 1832 (Rafn, 1832). Prior to the collection of *Færeyinga Saga*, in one saga the stories were in different sagas, for example in *Flateyjarbókar*, *Ólafs sögum* and *Ólafs sögu Tryggvasonar* (Frandsen, 2019, p. 29). Although, the sagas reflect pagan burial practises, they cannot be used as direct evidence of Viking Age burial location and burial practices for several reasons. For example, the authorship of the sagas has been much discussed and these sources are not contemporary with the Viking Age (Sveinsson, 1958, p. 1; Friðriksson, 1994, 2013, p. 23; Steinsland, 2005, p. 270; Kristjánsson, 2007, p. 203).

The number of folklore sources increased in the 18th century. In 1781 and 1782 the Faroese student Jens Christian Svabo travelled to the Faroes from Denmark and made a written account of his travels (Svabo, 1976). It was not published until 1924, because it was meant to be a report for the Danish authorities, but it was accessed and used by other writers, including Jørgen Landt and Niels Winther in 1875 (Joensen, 1987, p. 228). In this written account Svabo includes information on Faroese cultural remains in the landscape, including pre-Christian burials (Svabo, 1976). In his report there are short accounts of possible pre-Christian burial locations (Svabo, 1976, p. 123). The book published by Niels Winther in 1875, *Færøernes Oldtidshistorie*, described Faroese history towards the end of the 11th century (1875). The book includes descriptions of people who died in caves in the Faroes and how a king was buried in a bay at Fróðabø (Winther, 1875, pp. 30–31). The book has been criticised for not being critical

enough about the sources used (Joensen, 1987, p. 230). Even if this book is not a reliable historical source, it shows the importance of legends and place names in people's social memory of the landscape, and its association and links with burials in the landscape.

As part of this research, I read through these antiquarian sources to find information on Viking Age burials and possible locations of Viking Age burials. Culturally, the medieval sources framed the thinking that Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands could be under mounds and that people were buried according to the old custom (Rafn, 1832, p. 3 and p. 33). To a certain degree, this reasoning affected my methodology, because in the interviews I asked people about features in the landscape, which could be a burial, for example a mound or stone markings. If the sources had information on Viking Age burials or pre-Christian burials, the information was stored in a document and later added to a table. This table is part of the results in Chapter 5.

3.3.2.3 19th Century Collections of Legends and Folklore

The works by the philologists Jakob Jakobsen (1864-1918) and V.U. Hammershaimb (1819-1909) were milestones in the study of Faroese culture, legends and folklore (Hammershaimb, 1846, 1891; Jakobsen, 1898). In the Faroes there was not much collected prior to Hammershaimb's 1847 collection of legends, common sayings, popular beliefs and ballads (Hammershaimb, 1846). As part of this initial work, Hammershaimb was asked if he could do an anthology of Faroese-language literature and grammar (Hammershaimb, 1891, p. i). The result included poems, legends, and words, which are very helpful for gaining an insight into 19th-century Faroese people's social memories about their landscape. The principal work on legends and folktales was the collection by Jakob Jakobsen (Jakobsen 1898-1890), in which he had collected legends and fairy tales from the Faroe Islands (Jakobsen, 1898). Jakob Jakobsen was one of the leading figures in Faroese orthography, and he additionally researched and published on the dialect and place names of Shetland (Jakobsen, 1891, 1897). It is important to bear in mind that both Jakobsen's and Hammershaimb's work is based on oral accounts, and in many instances it is not possible to date oral histories and folklore, with the exception of a couple of legends (discussed below), though not back to prehistoric times. Nevertheless, they provide useful information about people's ideas of the landscape in the 19th century, people's reasoning, and their way of life (Jakobsen, 1898). This dissertation considered the legends as a

potentially useful source for the understanding of people's perceptions and ideas of the landscape, including burials in the landscape.

3.3.2.4 Legends

In the Faroes, legends are part of a long oral tradition together with ballads, heroic and shorter ballads, rhymes, fairy tales, proverbs, and riddles (Andreassen, 1986, p. 15). For this dissertation, the importance of the oral tradition of legends lies in stories about burials in the landscape, especially those associated with a place name. Furthermore, legends give a picture of how people link themselves to the landscape, and what is important to them. Legends cannot, of course, be used as direct historical sources, because the content is not reliable enough (Andreassen, 1986, p. 87). Nevertheless, stories described as legends purport to be accounts of actual events and real people, and they are always bound to a known place – and sometimes a known date (Andreassen, 1986, p. 15, 2014, p. 21). Many of the legends recorded by Jakobsen seem to originate in the 17th and 18th century (Jakobsen 1898-1901 p. vi). Just a handful of legends can be traced back to the pre-Reformation period. These sources, as well as another legend about a battle in the Faroes, *Bardagin í Mannafellsdali*, show that the legends can become mixed together (Jakobsen, 1898, p. xvi). In addition, the legends can date their origins back to the Viking Age, for example *Gulleheyggjar*, which traces its origins back to the Norwegian King Harald Fairhair (Jakobsen, 1898, p. vii). Therefore, one must treat these sources with care, even if legendary events appear to be linked to real place names. Nevertheless, legends do provide information about how people lived in the 1800s, and probably before, and specifically how they understood the landscape they were living in. Another source, which can shed light on the location of burials and previous settlements are the stories told in the villages, in Faroese called *bygdasøgur*. Today these stories are being published on a regular basis.

3.3.2.5 Village Folklore in the Faroe Islands

Literature based on stories from the villages began to be published in the 19th century, and their publication has increased steadily since the 1950s (Joensen, 1987, p. 9). This literature includes narratives about local people and their genealogies, events, deeds of valour, local legends, and other aspects of social memory, and often includes local place names (á Ryggi, 1965; Joensen, 1987, p. 231).

This dissertation made use of oral accounts of social memories and stories about the landscape in the northern Faroe Islands contained in the local historical genealogy work of Símun Hansen (Hansen, 1971, 1973, 1975, 1978b, 1980, 1981). In addition to analysing family relations, Símun Hansen provided important oral accounts of landscape features, some of which are now no longer visible in the landscape (Hansen, 1975, p. 14). Furthermore, Símun Hansen reconstructed the historical landscape associated with family histories by making maps based on aerial photographs taken by the Geodætisk Institut in 1970 (now archived in the local museum, *Norðoya Fornminnissavn*, in the village of Klaksvík, Faroe Islands). These maps are therefore very accurate and provide a lot of information on old settlement structures and patterns, old walking routes and place names (Hansen, 1971, plate vi). These maps and oral accounts of historic landscape features included possible locations of burials and were therefore a useful source for understanding ideas and meanings that local people associated with the landscape.

3.3.3 Place Names

A place name is a name that is associated with a topographical place at a point, line or area placed on a map (Schmidt, 1993, p. 21). The study of place names (toponymy) has a long history in Scandinavia (Brink, 2008, p. 57). Place names act not only as a guide to the landscape but are also of cultural significance: names have purposes, and when ancient place names are interpreted in the right manner, they tell us something about the place and the stories associated with it (Schmidt, 1993, p. 22; Kyritz, 2008, p. 1). In this sense, to name a place is a socially embedded act (Vuolteenaho and Berg, 2009, p. 9), enabling existing social orders to be reinforced, for example, or enabling people in marginal societal positions to express their place-bound identities (Vuolteenaho and Berg, 2009, p. 14). In addition, place names are a good source of information for socio-and cultural histories, but they only give a contextual hint, not a complete historical narrative, and they can be biased and difficult to use (Brink, 2008, p. 57).

Historical writings in which the toponyms are the link between the old writings and the observable landscape need to be used with caution (Fellows-Jensen, 1989, p. 77; Friðriksson, 1994, p. 15). Also, in many cases it is impossible to date place names, a problem that has been discussed for nearly two centuries, especially in settlement studies (Jørgensen, 1977, pp. 90–93; Friðriksson, 1994, p. 15; Brink, 2008, p. 58). The dating of place names can be fixed to a certain period (absolute) or the place names can be dated in relation to something else (relative),

depending on the context they are being used and dated in (Christensen and Sørensen, 1972, p. 165). This is because place names can change over time, and they can be moved from one place to another or be recent constructions of enthusiastic scholars or local people (Friðriksson, 1994, p. 15). For example, discoveries of a treasure can lead to new place names, such as Gold hoard Field in Surrey, and Money Howe in Yorkshire, England (Robinson, 2012, p. 134). This means that new place names can be created, and it is therefore not a straightforward task to incorporate place name research into archaeology: place names must be used very critically. Fortunately, there is a fairly solid chronology for Scandinavian settlement names, due to linguistic changes in the Norse language over time (Brink, 2008, p. 58).

3.3.3.1 Archaeology and Place Names

Methodologically it can be difficult to integrate archaeology and place names, and it is important to be aware of methodological opportunities and limits (Albris, 2017, p. 69). The core of the problem lies in the fact that the materials used in archaeological and toponymic studies have different formation processes. Archaeological material comes from human interactions with each other, animals, and the environment, and its preservation depends on material type, environmental conditions, and its vulnerability to disturbance by erosion or human actions. The survival of place names relies on them being orally transmitted and written down, and the survival or repeated transmission of manuscripts that contain them (Svensson, 2015a, p. 20, 2015b; Albris, 2017, p. 70). Both sources are therefore fragmentary, but fragmentary in different ways, so that the archaeological remains and the place names associated with the same place do not always both survive.

Nevertheless, while the nature of this fragmented material is acknowledged, it also holds great potential for complementary data, if the preservation conditions for both the archaeology and the place names are good (Svensson, 2015a; Albris, 2017, p. 71). Studies of place names and burials show how deep an impact some historical events had on people, and how these incidents shaped their perception of ancient monuments, as well as the past itself (Kyritz, 2008, p. 1). One example of the usage of place names and archaeological structures with burials are two archaeological sites in the Faroes. One site already mentioned is a Viking Age burial site in the village of Hvalba at the site *Á Bønhúsfløta* (Arge and Michelsen, 2011; Tjóðsavnið Fmnr. 20118, 2011), where the place name refers to the location of an early church site. The other site is in the village of Velbastaður at the church site *Niðri á Bakka*, where archaeologists from

Tjóðsavnið are currently excavating (Tjóðsavnið 3805, 1973; Michelsen, 2016, p. 6). The people who live in the village have called the site Kirkjubakki and Kirkjugarður, which translates as “A Church Slope” and “Churchyard” (Tjóðsavnið 3805, 1973; Michelsen, 2016, p. 6). It is not certain how far back these place names can be dated, but the place names refer to cemeteries, in where cemeteries have been archaeologically verified.

In the North Atlantic region in the 19th and early 20th century, it was common for antiquarians to try to use place names and local oral tradition to find Viking Age ‘heathen’ burials, especially in Iceland (Friðriksson, 1994, p. 75, 2013, p. 32). In Iceland, hundreds of sites are presumed to be pagan burial sites, based on finds of human bones, oral and written traditions such as the Icelandic sagas, and place names that contain particular elements, such as ‘mound’ (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 118). However, using modern survey methods, extensive investigations based strictly on the sagas, oral tradition and/or place names revealed very few pre-Christian burials, revealing instead more about how the landscape was perceived (Friðriksson, 2013, pp. 288–289). At the same time, any feature of a landscape can “make” a name, triggering a story or folktale, whether it is a simple rock, a small hill, a ruin, or a strange rectangular hole in the ground (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 288). Therefore, although it is always worthwhile investigating places with names that suggest the location of a Viking Age burial, standard archaeological methods of surveying and excavating must be used to verify the find.

3.3.3.2 Place Names in the Faroe Islands

In the Faroes, Christian Matras’ compilation of place names and their meaning on the northern islands was the first milestone in place name studies (1932). Several studies on place names, in combination with archaeological records, have been conducted in the Faroe Islands by both Símun V. Arge (2005) and Ditlev L. Mahler (2007). Based on the work of Matras (Matras, 1956, pp. 51–67), who showed that *ærgi* meant summer grazing pastures or shielings, Sverri Dahl (1970) and Ditlev Mahler (2007) integrated a study of place names featuring *ærgi* or *argi* into their studies of shielings. Furthermore, Símun V. Arge, together with Mike Church and Seth Brewington, incorporated place names into their research on evidence for pig husbandry in the Faroe Islands during the Viking Age and early medieval periods (Arge, et al, 2009, p. 19). Their research showed effectively that place names across the islands may be associated with pig farming or may indicate a comparable farming activity (Arge, et al, 2009, p. 24). Their research also demonstrated that place names associated with pig farming are not distributed

equally across the islands (Arge, et al, 2009, p. 25), but it does not necessarily follow that there was no pig farming in the areas without the pig element in place names, because the distribution might be due to the differential survival of place names.

The association of place names with possible Viking Age burials has previously been used in discussions of possible burials in the Faroes (Dahl, 1968, pp. 190–191; Arge and Hartmann, 1989), but there has not yet been a study of Viking Age burials in the Faroes that used place names as supporting evidence for locating new burials in the landscape.

3.3.3.3 Place Name Collections in the Faroe Islands

Since no certain Viking Age burials have been located in the northern islands in the Faroes, place names, legends and folklore, as a source of information about the social memory of the landscape (however fragmentary, dynamic, and biased), were used critically as one source of *direction* for investigating the possible locations of burials. The place names investigated were most often limited to those containing the Old Norse words for ‘burial’, or relating to an aspect of a possible burial, such as a ‘mound’ or ‘stone’. The words used in this research are in a table in Chapter 5. The place names were accessed through place name collections (Table 3.4).

Table 3.4 Overview of place name collections and their description.

	Place Name Sources	Description
1	Sverri Dahl Archive	Place names part of Sverri Dahl archives in the National Museum, Tjóðsavnið, the Faroe Islands. Main collection at the University in the Faroe Islands, Fróðskaparsetrið.
2	Archives at the University	Place name collections at the University in the Faroe Islands, at the Linguistics Department, Føroyamálsdeildin with the help and guide by Lena Reinert.
3	Place Name Database, Lena Reinert	Lena Reinert from the University in the Faroe Islands collects, adds, works, and supervises the place name databases. Through this database Lena Reinert conducted a few studies with relevance to burials.
4	www.kortal.fo	The place names on the online map of the Faroes, www.kortal.fo includes a layer of place names. These place names come from the collections at Føroyamálsdeildin and have been professionally examined and located.
5	Interviews	During the interviews conducted, one of the topics was on place names with regards to burials and burial locations.
6	Published books	Published books on place names, sometimes part of the book on the village stories. These place names are often a compilation of place names with maps and stories, but not including academic study or any survey of these place names.

	Place Name Sources	Description
7	Christian Matras' study on place names	Christian Matras' work on place names in the northern islands in the Faroes from 1932. <i>Stednavne paa de færøske Norduroyar</i> (Matras, 1932).

The targeted research areas will be the focus of the next sections, beginning with the methodology used for landscape studies.

3.4 Methodology for Landscape Studies and Comparative Study of the Viking Age Burials in the Faroe Islands and Neighbouring Countries

In this fourth section the topic is about the methodology applied for the landscape studies conducted on Viking Age burial locations in the Faroe Islands and the comparative study of burials and landscape in the Faroe Islands, Iceland, Shetland, Orkney and Norway. The focus of this comparative landscape study is on Viking Age burials and the intervisibility between the burials and the landscape and the burials and the settlements.

3.4.1 Landscape Survey

A survey is often the first stage of a long-term archaeological project, but it can also be used as a principal method for studying some aspects of the past and enables one to address some research questions that excavation alone never would answer (Banning, 2002, p. 1). The survey itself also depends on the scale of the landscape, how large or small areas are being covered, the accuracy of the landscape survey, which methods are being used, questions asked and both the theoretical and methodological outlook of the research. The survey methods can also be dependent on cultural heritage management (Richards, 2010, p. 551). Different methods in doing landscape surveys include the systematic planned field walking by setting out a trench or grid system by a team of surveyors (Cherry, 2005, p. 249) or strategies for sampling (overview see Richards, 2010, p. 555). During my survey work, ideas from phenomenology in archaeology, movement and visibility were explored. It was important prior to the survey to get a sense of how to apply phenomenology, movement and visibility during an archaeological survey: what phenomenology, movement and visibility constitutes, in the broadest sense, and the methodological implications for such an archaeological survey.

3.4.1.1 Phenomenological Approach in Archaeological Field Survey

The phenomenological approach in archaeological field survey has been explored by, among others, Christopher Tilley (Tilley, 1994, p. 12, 2010), Julian Thomas (Thomas, 1996, p. 2) and Richard Bradley (Bradley, 2000, 2002). It was Edmund Husserl (1859-1939) who initiated phenomenology as a movement and a new way of doing philosophy (Husserl, 2006, 2012; Moran, 2006, p. 1). With the publication of Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time* in 1927, phenomenology was understood as a combined contribution of both Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger (Moran, 2006, p. 3; Heidegger, 2010; Husserl, 2012). Martin Heidegger did not look for the conscious, objectifying experience of the observer, but the way that people experience and grasp the world by encountering objects as they exist and which are part of an everyday world (Barrett and Ko, 2009, pp. 281–282). As such, phenomenology deals with self-manifestation, where things show themselves in many ways, depending on the access there is to things (Moran, 2006, p. 229). In phenomenology the focus is on the study and description of a phenomena (Tilley, 2005, p. 201). It is important to describe the *phenomena* as it is – as it appears in the manner it appears and as it manifests itself to the consciousness of the experiencer (Moran, 2006, p. 4). Therefore, it is about the understanding between subject-object relations, which entails the individual (human subject) descriptions of things or objects he/she experiences in the world (Tilley, 2005, p. 201). In archaeology, both Christopher Tilley (Tilley, 1994, p. 12) and Julian Thomas (Thomas, 1996, p. 2) have been influenced by the work of Heidegger. For Julian Thomas, Martin Heidegger's philosophical ideas can be of critical importance for the archaeological project of understanding social life in the past (Thomas, 1996, p. 8). In his book on time, culture and identity, Thomas found that the ideas by Martin Heidegger were useful in analysing past societies (1996). In his phenomenological landscape survey methodology, Christopher Tilley was interested in Martin Heidegger's and Maurice Merleau-Ponty's ontological characteristics of the relationship between inhabited space and the social *Being in the world*, knowing their different phenomenological perspectives (Tilley, 1994, p. 13). The landscape has ontological significance, because it is altered, mediated, imbued with cultural meaning and symbolism and is not just an object of contemplation, depiction, representation and aestheticization (Tilley, 1994, p. 26). The landscape is seen/experienced as the physical and visual form of the earth as an environment, in a setting where locales occur and in a dialectical relation where meanings are created, reproduced and transformed (Tilley, 1994, p. 25). In this universe, the locales in the landscape can be natural features, such as inlets in a landscape, high points and manmade places such as monuments or

settlements (Tilley, 1994, p. 25). To embody the phenomenological ideas outlined above in an archaeological survey, it was important during my landscape survey to use these ideas in practice. In this understanding of phenomenology, the embodied individuals move in the landscape, where the individual is interpreting the landscape (Brück, 1998, p. 25). The placement, orientation and movement in the world structure the interpretation (Brück, 1998, p. 25). In this sense, the understanding of movement during a survey is relevant. An archaeologist who conducts studies and observations in the landscape is part of what he/she attempts to understand and describe (Tilley, 2010, p. 271). In this line of thinking the landscape phenomenologist is using his or her body as a tool, where the body experiences and he/she observes the landscape through the body (Tilley, 2010, p. 271). This approach has been criticised as subjective and it has been suggested that many archaeologists have used this new perspective uncritically (Brück, 1998, p. 24). Since phenomenological ideas are relevant for the survey and its methodology, the following section is about the critique of phenomenology in archaeology.

3.4.1.2 Critique of Phenomenology in Archaeology

After the book by Tilley was published (1994), it had much influence on landscape studies in archaeology. The phenomenological landscape archaeology approach in the introduction by Christopher Tilley has been labelled as both stimulation and persuasive, where Christopher Tilley urged people to view landscapes as 'mythpoesis' (Fleming, 1999, p. 119). In his critique of Christopher Tilley's work on the Welsh megaliths, Andrew Fleming suggested that the field data do not support the phenomenological approach of intentional relationships between the placing of welsh megalith tombs and natural features in the landscape, including siting factors (Fleming, 1999, p. 119). In addition, it has been pointed out that the idea of an individual using his or her body as a medium of engagement is in opposition to Martin Heidegger's idea of being in the world (Barrett and Ko, 2009, p. 280). It is Christopher Tilley's description of the subject as conscious and objectifying which is a break from Martin Heidegger's phenomenology (Barrett, C.J.; Ko, 2009, p. 281). It is not unusual in research to break from the original concept and shape it to one's own needs. This demonstrates that a researcher is available to work independently, forming new ideas. For example, Martin Heidegger made a shift in the understanding in phenomenology in not using Edmund Husserl's central concepts of 'noema, noesis and the transcendental ego' (Moran, 2006, pp. 226–227). On the other hand, Christopher Tilley's approach, that meaning comes when people engage with the material

conditions and that the body is the medium through which this engagement happens, broadly follows Martin Heidegger's and Maurice Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology (Barrett and Ko, 2009, p. 280).

Furthermore, the subjective approach in landscape phenomenology has been criticised as considering the landscape as static and self-contained, not in a constant and active process of being made (Aldred, 2014, pp. 26–27). Furthermore, there are critiques of using phenomenology in the landscape archaeology of shared experience (Brück, 1998, p. 27; Snead, et al., 2009, p. 14). The landscape studies by Vicki Cummings and Alasdair W. R. Whittle (2004) have also been criticised for their ideas, namely that in their encounters with megalithic tombs it is possible today for the sightseer to get a distant view of the source of the landscape, to understand what was available for past people and the reasons for choosing a specific location to build the tomb on (Barrett and Ko, 2009, p. 283). One may ask oneself whether it is possible to share the same experiences as the people who lived in a past landscape with the body. According to Joanna Brück, the human experience in the world is mediated by a set of contextual, contingent and cultural interpretative processes (1998, pp. 27–28). This effects phenomenology because the historicity of the body affects the natural being in the world, because people engage differently in the world and with different culturally constructed bodies (Brück, 1998, p. 28). It is therefore unlikely that Christopher Tilley or any other person doing phenomenology this way could or would experience the landscape as a past person experienced it (cf. Brück, 1998, p. 28). The experiences of individuals in the past, the movement and being in the landscape, would also be different if it was a pregnant woman, a disable person or a child moving in the landscape, where their perception and interpretation of the landscape would be different from an adult male (Brück, 1998, p. 28). According to John C. Barrett and Ilhong Ko, Martin Heidegger's phenomenology teaches that the subjects who define human agency are not defined through transcendental history but are diverse and are products of history itself (2009, p. 286). One could ask if it is possible through fieldwork observations to interpret and explain cultural variability to the actions of timeless human subjectivity shared over time (Barrett and Ko, 2009, p. 286). John C. Barrett and Ilhong Ko argue that a phenomenological approach to landscape can be seen as a human subject entering the world to find its place and to handle the material at hand, where technologies and architecture change over time and with it the possibilities of being in a particular world or time (2009, p. 290). It has also been argued that there is a crisis in landscape archaeology, because it is considered static, with the view that the landscape is a container or a medium (Aldred, 2014, p. 27). Furthermore, there is an issue

of binary oppositions, such as cultural landscape and natural landscapes, where the cultural landscape is seen as misusing nature, which then becomes passive and, in this sense, takes away the spaces in between, where the in between sites are not an active part of an interpretation (Aldred, 2014, p. 27).

From these advantages and disadvantages of applied phenomenology in archaeological landscape survey, it can be argued that the phenomenological landscape approach has its strengths and weaknesses. The phenomenological approach in landscape studies in archaeology has been tested and its methodology well grounded. During field survey, it is not a method which does require a lot of equipment, but also an open mind, pen, paper, and camera. The outline of the main points considered prior to, during and after the survey is outlined below in Section 3.5. Prior to my field studies I thought about, which aspects in a landscape study would be important in locating new burial sites. With the location of the burials sites in mind I approached my field survey with ideas on movement in the landscape and visibility between archaeological remains and features.

3.4.2 Movement and Visibility in the Landscape

In the context of movement and visibility it is relevant to consider and describe what might have been important to a Viking Age person, such as the ability to move between a settlement and a burial site, the visibility between the home and the burial ground and movement between the burial sites and landing sites and paths. With the descriptions and observations of the burial sites and their landscape setting the aim is to reach a better understanding of the material culture and its meaning and significance (Tilley, 2005, p. 201).

The complex networks of landscapes and movements are often difficult to map (Snead, et al., 2009, p. 2). These complex networks of trails, paths and roads often have no beginning and no end (Snead, et al., 2009, p. 2). In the sense of moving from one place to another, it involves the loss of place (Tilley, 1994, p. 27). The moving to places can also be socially prescribed, where there is a 'right' way to move around and approach places and monuments (Tilley, 1994, p. 28). In landscape archaeology, in the study of movement research on trails, paths and roads is highly relevant (Snead, et al., 2009, p. 18). Movement and walking can be seen as combinations of places and time-seasonal and social times (Tilley, 1994, p. 28). It has been argued that it is reasonable to assume that social spaces can be reconstructed archaeologically through a study of trail systems (Darling, 2009, p. 63). As a path or a track leave traces of activity and both can

be followed in the landscape (Tilley, 1994, p. 30). Tilley brought forward that the maintenance of a path is reliant on preceding networks of movement and paths are part of establishing and keeping social linkage and relations between individuals, groups and political units (1994, p. 30). In examining the relationship of social space to archaeological trails, J. Andrew Darling proposed that cognitive maps are encoded in song journeys in which routes of travel between places and mountains can be used as reference for planning journeys (2009, p. 82). Moving through a landscape can also be a process of engagement (Snead, 2009, p. 44), where the relationship between the places and trails are addressed (Snead, 2009, p. 44). James E. Snead has brought forward an approach called contextual experience, which is a landscape archaeology of cultural traditions – an ethnography of the past, in which interpreting trails must partake equally in the structures of culture and the structures of movement (2009, p. 44). In another approach on past movement and landscape, Oscar Aldred aims to offer an account on how to study past movement by re-thinking how landscape archaeology was practised (2014, p. 1). Oscar Aldred's work is relevant for this study, because it addresses movement and visibility factors in the North Atlantic in Iceland (Aldred, 2014). Movement was defined as human mobility, specifically walking, and the focus is not on different types of movement, but why movement occurred (the strategies) and the how and what questions of movement (the tactics), for example *What route* or *How to get to a place* (Aldred, 2014, pp. 3–4). One source of evidence were the sites themselves, since it was assumed that the people who built the site had a relationship with the location of the site (Aldred, 2014, p. 46). In the movement between sites, the details along the passages in between places, the movement manifested itself in the material that remained in the landscape (Aldred, 2014, p. 33). In addition to the movement between sites, the visibility between sites and landscape features were part of the methodological consideration prior to, during and after the field survey.

The landscape settings and layout are dependent on local topography (Fabeck and Ringtved, 2001, p. 145). The visual experience of the landscape is relevant and the cultural features with reference to space, limits, movement, central points and landmarks (such as orientation points) (Gansum, et al. 1997, p. 16; Fabeck and Ringtved, 2001, p. 145). Thereby, the visual landscape and the landscape itself is subjective, dependent on historical insight and what is included in the analysis of a landscape (Fabeck, and Ringtved, 2001, p. 145). In analysing a landscape, one can separate the archaeological, cultural and natural features, analyse them and in the end bring everything together to a conclusion (Stahlschmidt and Nellesmann, 2009, p. 6). The purpose of an analysis is to find and make visible what is important in the landscape (Stahlschmidt and

Nellemann, 2009, p. 6). During this analysis it is also relevant to consider what is not visible, and thereby not acknowledged and beyond our understanding of the landscape (Fabeck and Ringtved, 2001, p. 145). In understanding the landscape, its meaning and significance together with the visual surroundings during this research on the location of burials, the study was influenced by previous archaeological landscape analysis research by Gansum, Jerpåsen, Keller, Fabeck and Ringtved (Gansum, et al. 1997, p. 17; Fabeck and Ringtved, 2001, p. 146). In this regard, three main considerations were studied, outlined in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5 Three main survey considerations (Gansum, et al. 1997, p. 17; Fabeck and Ringtved, 2001, p. 146).

Number	Survey considerations
1	Identification – the separation of an object (in this study, the burial site) from the surroundings
2	The structure - the spatial relation of the object (in this study, the burial site) to other elements
3	Meaning of the content – the understanding of an object’s (in this study, the burial site) shaping or adjustment to the surroundings and the meaning we attach to the object

In addition to the landscape methods described above, visibility analysis has become a common tool to use in landscape archaeology (Fábrega-Álvarez and Parcero-Oubiña, 2019, p. 56). Studies in visibility analysis have been used both with and without GIS-based methods (Lake and Woodman, 2003, p. 689). Studies conducted on the visibility of tombs, barrows and cairns and the landscapes show the significance of used visibility to show building practices and local relationships (Tilley, 1994; Cummings, 2002; Arbour, 2015). Visibility analysis is also used to understand the constructed environment and local topography (Supernant, 2014, p. 497). In archaeology, this has been done using GIS applications and also other methods, such as landscape room analysis (Gansum, et al., 2014, p. 99; Supernant, 2014; Fábrega-Álvarez and Parcero-Oubiña, 2019). Studies conducted with landscape room analysis have been used to describe human perceptions of the surrounding landscape based on visual inputs, combined with cultural preconceptions (Heide, 2014, p. 99). In Norse settlements in Iceland, Greenland and Canada, Poul B. Heide noticed a feature important to all the farms, namely cairns (2014, p. 69). Poul B. Heide expressed the significance that cairns are only visually active and meaningful when observed from around the farmsteads (2014, p. 75). The studied showed that where the cairns were on the horizon it demonstrated that the land was under control and represented the materialisation of a relationship between man and land (Heide, 2014, pp. 76–77).

The landscape room study by Terje Gansum, Gro B. and Christian Keller inspired Poul B. Baltzer Heide's methodological considerations for his work on settlement and cairns in Greenland, Iceland and Canada mentioned above (Heide, 2014, p. 99). Their study (Gansum, et al., 1997) has also inspired my own methodological considerations in the study of Viking Age burials in the landscape. Terje Gansum, Gro B. Jerpåsen and Christian Keller developed their own model for how to conduct landscape room analysis and were influenced by architectural studies (Gansum, et al., 1997, p. 13). By transferring the meanings of an architectural room to a landscape room, the floor in the room was the flat landscape, the ceiling was the sky, and the walls were mountains, hills, ridges and barriers (Gansum, et al., 1997, p. 13; Heide, 2014, p. 67). During this study, it was assumed that the landscape had visual structures, cultural structures and lastly remains of previous archaeological structures (Gansum, et al., 1997, p. 10). The archaeological structure was divided into three main points, namely, *relation*, *context*, and *chronology*, outlined in Table 3.6.

Table 3.6 Main points of archaeological structures (Gansum, et al., 1997, pp. 20-22)

Number	Points
1	The relation: the relation between the structures and certain landscape features
2	The context: the context between the archaeological structures describes how these relate to each other
3	Chronology: the landscape changes over time and there can be different dating to the archaeological structures in each area

Relevant for the visual descriptions, the perceptions and the orientation in a landscape is the legibility of a structure: how easy or difficult it is to describe the structure (Gansum, et al., 1997, p. 24). Gansum, Jerpåsen and Keller found during their analysis that their landscape room analysis and location showed that there were relations between the burials' outer layout and their location in the landscape (1997, p. 46). The layout of the burials should be seen in the context of their location (Gansum, et al., 1997, p. 46). During their research, they also found that the burials were not randomly located in the landscape (Gansum, et al., 1997, p. 46).

Besides Gansum, Jerpåsen and Keller landscape room analysis, Oscar Aldred studied cairns and routes and examined the intervisibility between these (2014, p. 109). In his research on cairns and movement, Oscar Aldred used intervisibility, alongside spatial distance, to understand the function of cairns as markers which guided past movements (Aldred, 2014, p.

111). It was important for Oscar Aldred to identify the inter-visual connectivity links with the topography and to understand the role a site had on a route for human mobility (Aldred, 2014, p. 113). Cairns were not just important for past movement, but could also be connected with specific social expressions (Aldred, 2014, p. 113).

These ideas and the experiences of the above-mentioned researchers on movement in the landscape and the visibility between features in the landscape were used in my research to shape and formulate the outline and main points of the survey. The following section is about how I took onboard these ideas on phenomenology, movement, and visibility in landscape archaeology and how I was inspired by these ideas and how they affected my methodology. This research therefore builds on previous research and adds to the methodology for both locating and conducting comparative landscape analysis of Viking Age burial sites.

3.5 Field Survey

In this study the critical aspects of phenomenological landscape studies in archaeology, which have been discussed above, were a major consideration in deciding which methodology to follow during the survey work. It was acknowledged from the beginning of my landscape survey that it was not possible to explain cultural variability, or the actions of timeless human subjectivity shared over time, thought possibly to interpret in the fieldwork observations (Barrett and Ko, 2009, p. 286). The phenomenological understanding and approach put forward by Barrett and Ko was acknowledged - that a phenomenological approach to landscape can be seen as a human subject entering the world to find its place and handle the material at hand, where technologies and architecture change over time and with it the possibilities of being in a particular world or time also changes (2009, p. 290). At the same time, it was relevant to keep an open mind and ask questions of what would have been important for the Vikings arriving in the Faroe Islands, asking questions concerning the location of burial sites. Did the Vikings decide to lay their loved ones to rest close to home, on the boundary to the farm, or close to main road? Did the Vikings follow burial customs from their homelands or customs learned/encountered during their travels, or did they do something very different?

In answering these questions, specific methodologies were chosen, which have been outlined in Chapter 2 and in this Chapter 3. In using the phenomenological ideas in landscape archaeology, the framework of the survey was established where the landscape is seen as altered, imbued with cultural meaning and symbolism, but not as an object of representation

and anaesthetisation (Tilley, 1994, p. 26). A second objective of the field survey was to examine if the newly developed model for locating burials in Iceland (Friðriksson, 2013) and categories of location (Maher, 1999) could be partially applied in a Faroese context. This model was explained in Chapter 2.

As an archaeologist, I studied the embedded landscape with burial sites, settlements, and other structures, where the movements of my body became part of the researched landscape. The body (and the person), together with the senses, both mentally and physically experienced and observed the landscape (Tilley, 2010, p. 271). During the survey, I as a person interpreted the landscape with matters of placements, orientation and movement (cf. Brück, 1998, p. 25). During the landscape survey, I moved and engaged from one place to another, where I as an archaeologist conducted descriptions and interpretations of the landscape (cf. Snead, 2009, p. 44). In this process of movement, it was important to consider why movement occurred, for example, as how to get to a place (Aldred, 2014, pp. 3–4). In this study, the sites themselves were important, because it was assumed that people who built the site had a relation to the location and to the surrounding area (cf. Aldred, 2014, p. 46). In moving between locations, the visibility between the burial sites and settlements was important, as well as the visibility towards tracks, possible landing sites and the sea. During the survey, it was considered important to understand the location of the burial site in the landscape, the intervisibility with the settlements, the sea, harbours, routes and the topography, in order to understand human mobility (Tilley, 1994; Gansum, et al., 1997; Fabeck and Ringtved, 2001; Aldred, 2014, p. 113; Heide, 2014). In examining the aspects of phenomenology, movement, and visibility during the landscape survey, I used archaeologically known and verified Viking Age sites, place names, pen, paper, a camera, and a handheld GPS to register the locations.

Based on these methodological considerations, as well as previous research in landscape archaeology discussed above, I outlined nine focal points which were important for my descriptions during my landscape studies (Table 3.7). To follow these points consistently during the landscape survey, survey sheets were made (Appendix A1, section A1.1 and section A1.2). There were two survey sheets: one survey sheet for the landscape survey in the Faroe Islands (Appendix A1, survey sheet A1.1) and one survey sheet for the comparative study of burial sites in the North Atlantic (Appendix A1, survey sheet A1.2). The survey sheet A1.1 was developed for survey in 2012 (for research during the master) and supported by Helgi Michelsen at Tjóðsavnið. The survey sheet was revised for this survey as to follow the

methodology outlined above. There were other reasons as well to have survey sheets. Firstly, it was necessary to have consistency throughout the survey because the burial sites visited in Norway, Shetland and Orkney were only visited once and the landscape setting differs from one place to another. Secondly, a survey sheet reminded me of what to observe in the landscape. Thirdly, during the survey it helped to be systematic in observing both similarities and differences in the landscape and between sites.

Table 3.7 Focal points for survey descriptions.

Survey points	Descriptions
1	Prior to the survey: examining aerial photographs, reports, or information from newspapers and from local people, including the research on place names and folklore. Gaining as much knowledge of the sites as possible (Aldred, 2014). In addition, it was important during the survey of the northern islands in the Faroe Islands to include previous excavations reports and survey reports, possible information in the archives about finds of human bones, place names with relevance to possible burial sites and, as supporting evidence, conversations with people living in the area today. Certain areas were targeted for field survey.
2	Familiarising oneself with the landscape (Tilley, 2010, p. 274). This involved walking in the landscape, being in it to experience the landscape.
3	Location: Visiting known places of prehistoric significance (Tilley, 2010, p. 274). Recording the experiences. Taking photos and writing about the experiences. Following the survey sheet, though at the same time being open to the landscape and experiences the landscape. Here the descriptions of the location, beside the burial sites themselves, include geographical features, which are associated with the site such as cliff tops, tops of hills, rises of land, flat areas, a valley, watercourse, shoulder of land (Gansum, et al., 1997). While writing about this I also made a landscape sketch of the burial site and of the landscape on the survey sheet. Drawing a mental map if possible. Try, if possible to follow the infield and outfield border and the movement of old paths between some of the villages (Aldred, 2014). Taking photos and writing about the sites. Making descriptions of possible burial locations, using the information gathered and following the Icelandic model (Maher, 1999; Friðriksson, 2013).
4	Approaching significant places from different directions (Tilley, 2010, p. 274), in this context especially the burial locations. Doing this while writing down how the landscape changes around the burial sites when moving in and around the landscape.
5	If possible, following the path of movement through the landscape, describing how the movement changes and how places are perceived in relation to one another (Tilley, 2010, p. 274). Asking questions concerning how this movement occurred, why this particular movement occurred, by <i>what route</i> or <i>how to get to a place</i> (Aldred, 2010, pp. 3–4). Studying the possible routes of movement towards the burials, the relationship between the burials and known or likely settlement sites, other sites nearby, and the physical landscape around the burial grounds. Looking for any

Survey points	Descriptions
	signs of field boundaries. Access to burial (one or several). Keeping in mind variables such as go up or down slope.
6	Visibility to and from the burial (roads, trails, cairns). Visibility of burial site towards settlement site or modern settlement, the landing sites, the sea, the mountains, the field. Other features? (Gansum, et al., 1997) Are cairns visible? (Heide, 2014) Certain deviation or special character? Is there any disturbance? How is the intervisibility between burials and the settlements and the settlements and the sea?
7	Revisiting the same place during different seasons, at different times of the day (Tilley, 1994, 2010, p. 274). This was only possibly at some places in the Faroes, and therefore this stage does not follow a systematic approach in the survey.
8	Towards the end of the survey, after the initial descriptions, be in the area, listening to the sounds, the birds, the sea, and the wind. This is a very subjective experience, but one gets to experience the landscape as it is on the day of the visit. One must remember that it is only a visit and only a partial insight into the landscape can be gained. The landscape has changed since prehistoric times.
9	Based on these observations, continuing to write about the experiences and the interpretations. Not everything will come at once. It is a work-in-progress. Asking new questions, being open and at the same time critical. What is learned? Different and similar landscapes, many impulses, different sensory experiences, many historical layers in the landscape past and its agency. Different people moved in the landscape than today, different cultural experiences, physical conditions, mental conditions, age, male, female, child (Brück, 1998). New ideas?

In considering movement in the landscape, specific thoughts from the survey come to mind, such as the mindset of the observer, the paths walked and surveyed, the space between the monuments, the intervisibility between sites and everything in between. The journey itself now belongs to the one making it rather than to those who passed before (Snead, et al., 2009, p. 18). Although, it is not possible to share the experiences of a journey taken by people living in the past, walking in the footsteps of past generations can be a profound and engaging process (cf. Snead, et al., 2009, p. 19). The stages outlined above are the stages which make up the field walking of both known and unknown burial sites. In the following section, the methods for the geophysical survey and test excavations will be outlined.

3.6 Geophysics and Test Excavations in the Northern Islands in the Faroe Islands

A field survey works on the premise that the remains of past activity are still visible on the surface, made at different times (Bradley, 2003, p. 152). However, the normal physical

evidence of a Viking Age burial, which, in Scandinavia, includes mounds and stone settings, is not visible in the Faroese landscape and this is probable due to cultivation, road construction and landslip. This became clear after an initial field survey in 2015 in Fugloy, Svínoy, Viðoy, Borðoy, Kunoy and Kallsoy. During the field survey, several places were recognised as possible burial sites. These observations were based on the topography of the landscape, the relative location of Viking Age settlements, settlement boundaries, old roads, following Adolf Friðriksson's model (2013) and Ruth Ann Maher's (1999) categories for Icelandic burials, as well as relevant place name evidence and the results of conversations with local people. Since no burial remains were visible on the surface, more research was needed in the form of geophysical surveying, to decide which of these places would be best for test excavations during the summers of 2016 and 2017.

3.6.1 Geophysics

As mention above, several places were recognised as possible burial sites and certain sites were selected for geophysical surveying. Geophysics is a non-invasive survey method and archaeological geophysics has been defined as an examination of the earth's physical properties using non-invasive techniques revealing buried archaeological features, sites and landscapes (Gaffney and Gater, 2003, p. 12). The value of geophysics is its capability to sustain information about the subsurface over a large area in a reasonable timeframe and in a cost-effective manner (Burger, et al., 2006, p. 1). With geophysical methods there are limitations, such as resolutions and "noise" where there are some undesired signals affecting the results (Burger, et al., 2006, pp. 4–5). The method chosen for the survey in the Faroes was the magnetic method, because this method can be applied to both deep and shallow structures (Burger, et al., 2006, p. 429). Since I did not have prior training in geophysics, I was trained by Óskar Sveinbjarnarson, then a Research Assistant and Project Manager at University of Aberdeen, in how to do geophysics and he supervised the training with a magnetometer. In addition to the magnetometer, I was trained in using a resistance meter. Initially, my first supervisor Karen Milek and I thought that the resistance methods would be better because of the problem of the magnetic geology in the Faroes, but the practicalities of my remote work and access to equipment influenced the methods used. University of Aberdeen did not have a resistance meter, and I was not able to locate one to borrow. Therefore, we decided to use the magnetometer. This was only the second time a magnetometer had been used in the Faroes (in Chapter 7 the geophysical surveys conducted in the Faroe Islands are outlined in a table). Only

by testing the results from the magnetometer survey with archaeological test excavations was it possible to follow up on promising burial locations and to answer the proposed research questions.

3.6.2 Test Excavations

Based on the results from the geophysical survey, specific areas were selected on which to conduct test excavations, to follow up on promising Viking Age burial locations. Before beginning an excavation, one must be clear about what one wants to know or obtain, even though it can be refuted (Collins, 2004, p. 4). For this research project, the objective was to locate Viking Age burials, knowing from the outset that there was a possibility of not finding or locating any new Viking Age burials. In choosing to excavate, one also has to be aware of the fact that every excavation brings with it some destruction, and often total destruction, and as an archaeologist there is a high level of responsibility in conducting an excavation (Barker, 1989, p. 12). Therefore, the archaeologist has several responsibilities toward the site being excavated, namely, to record the site properly, as well as a responsibility towards the research project, the village, the people and so forth. Furthermore, excavation must be seen as the culmination of research on a site (Barker, 1989, p. 27). Each site excavated had its own unique history (Collins, 2004, p. 1). Therefore, the sites which were selected for excavation were seen as part of a bigger picture, in the context of their landscape and not as isolated phenomena (Barker, 1989, p. 28). The excavation method used for test excavations was the single context recording system (Diptych, et al., 1995).

Initial test excavation began during summer 2016 and continued during spring and summer 2017. The areas selected for test excavations were two on the island of Fugloy, in and close to the village of Kirkja, as well as small test excavations on the island of Borðoy at the village Depil – close to the old farmstead. The results of the geophysical survey and test excavation are provided in Chapter 7.

3.7 Concluding Remarks on the Integrated Approaches

This section is about the integrated approaches for researching and understanding the locations of burials in the Faroe Islands. In this study, an integrated approach is used, because by combining ideas from other studies into this research project new ideas and new mindsets are developed as to how to locate Viking Age burials in the Faroes, and how to learn about the

landscape relation and intervisibility between sites of known burial sites in the North Atlantic. In archaeology, it is not unusual to integrate different approaches into a research project. Studies already mentioned in this chapter are for example Christopher Tilley's integrated approach from philosophical phenomenology (1994) and Oscar Aldred's integrated approach of using different techniques in understanding the movement in the landscape (2014).

One of the survey objectivities, as explained in a previous section, was to test Adolf Friðriksson's model and Ruth Maher's categories of burials in the Faroe Islands (Maher, 1999; Friðriksson, 2009, 2013). The search for new Viking Age burials in the Faroes therefore included searching for burials in three main locations types, where they tend to be found on Icelandic sites. The advantages of using the research and results by Friðriksson (2013) and Maher (1999) is that these results and research are new and provide a different focus of the study of Viking Age burials in the landscape. The ideas developed during their research have been tested in Iceland. In addition, there is a substantial body of evidence on Viking Age burials and previous studies conducted on Viking Age burials, such as Kristjan Eldjárn's catalogue of Viking Age burials in Iceland (2016). In his research, Adolf Friðriksson, did not conduct a comparative landscape analysis of burials in Iceland and North Atlantic burials, because the task at hand was to study the Icelandic material and the large material of archaeological data from the burials (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 19). The definition of burials as pre-Christian or pagan affects the location of the burials and therefore the definition of the location model. In Iceland, the previous principle of defining a Viking Age burial was that pre-Christian burials or pagan burials are burials where human bones and grave goods are found in combination (Eldjárn, 1956, 2016). This classification is difficult to obtain, because there are examples of Viking Age burials in Iceland, where their outlook seems to be pre-Christian and/or have a Christian orientation but where they lack objects in them and/or have objects in them (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 126).

From the beginning of this research project and from the outset of formulating the research questions the disadvantages of integrated this approach have been considered. The disadvantages in integrated these ideas into the Faroese burial landscape is that the landscape is different from Iceland. There are not many Viking Age burials located in the Faroes and the body of material evidence is therefore not large compared to Iceland and the rest of Scandinavia. Often the exact location for the Viking Age settlements are not known in the villages, because most likely the Viking Age settlements are beneath the modern villages

and/or lost due to construction work or erosion. In addition, prior to this research project there was not much research conducted in Faroese archaeology on the Viking Age burials.

By integrating the approaches discussed above to produce a novel methodology for locating Viking Age burials, to study their location in the landscape, their intervisibility between sites and the landscape, I find that it is possible to locate more burials and better understand how they are identified in the landscape. Additionally, through this study to analyse and discuss the similarities and differences between the burial sites in the Faroes Islands and the wider North Atlantic to better understand the world-views of the Vikings and their choice of selecting certain places for burials.

Therefore, the knowledge of the burials themselves is very significant: who was buried where, how were they buried, and what were they buried with. These questions lead to Chapter 4, which details the results of the archival study of the Viking Age archaeologically excavated cemeteries in the Faroe Islands, Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð.

Table 3.8 Summary table of the archival sources and fieldwork accessed for this dissertation.

	Data Source	Data Type	Finished Gathering Data Yes/No	Location	Institution holding the Collection
1	Sverri Dahl – Tjørnuvík, útgrevstrar frágreiðingar/excavation reports Snr.: 3718, 3798, 3959	Archives. Handwritten Diaries and Reports. Human remains. Artefacts.	Yes	The Faroe Islands, Tórshavn	The National Museum in the Faroe Islands, Tjóðsavnið
2	Sverra Savnið. Snr. 4911	Information on excavations, blueprints, speeches, papers, newspapers, conferences etc.	Yes	The Faroe Islands, Tórshavn	The National Museum in the Faroe Islands, Tjóðsavnið
3	SD Bygdir 11-95	Archives – Handwritten. Notes.	Yes	The Faroe Islands, Tórshavn	The National Museum in the Faroe Islands, Tjóðsavnið

	Data Source	Data Type	Finished Gathering Data Yes/No	Location	Institution holding the Collection
4	SD Evni Cards and Notes	Archives – Handwritten and typed Notes.	Yes	The Faroe Islands, Tórshavn	The National Museum in the Faroe Islands, Tjóðsavnið
5	Símun V. Arge - Sandur	Archives – Reports.	No	The Faroe Islands, Tórshavn	The National Museum in the Faroe Islands, Tjóðsavnið
6	Símun V. Arge – Sandur	Archives – Artefacts.	Yes	The Faroe Islands, Tórshavn	The National Museum in the Faroe Islands, Tjóðsavnið
7	Símun V. Arge – Sandur	Archives – Human Remains.	Yes	Denmark, Copenhagen	The Anthropological Institute in Denmark, Copenhagen
8	Daniel Bruun	Archives - Handwritten. Notes and papers.	Yes	Denmark, Copenhagen	The National Museum in Denmark, Nationalmuseet
9	Letter Correspondence between the National Museums in the Faroe Islands and Denmark	Archives – Handwritten.	Yes	Denmark, Copenhagen	The National Museum in Denmark, Nationalmuseet
10	Norðoya Fornminnisavn Símun Hansen – Local Researcher	Archives – Handwritten. Notes.	Yes	The Faroe Islands, Klaksvík	Local Museum. Norðoya Fornminnisavn
11	Norðoya Fornminnisavn	Archives – Material remains.	Yes	The Faroe Islands, Klaksvík	Local Museum. Norðoya Fornminnisavn
12	Place Names	Archives – Handwritten and typed.	No	The Faroe Islands, Tórshavn	The University in the Faroe Islands, Fróðskaparsetur Føroya, Føroyamálsdeildin
13	Place Names	Database.	Yes	The Faroe Islands, Tórshavn	Lena Reinert The University in the Faroe Islands, Fróðskaparsetur

	Data Source	Data Type	Finished Gathering Data Yes/No	Location	Institution holding the Collection
					Føroya, Føroyamálsdeildin
14	Place Names	Published books and interviews.	Yes	The Faroe Islands	Public Libraries
15	Place Names and Stories	Interviews, conversations.	Yes	The Faroe Islands	
16	Local Knowledge on Burials	Interviews, conversations.	Yes	The Faroe Islands	
17	Fieldwork	Survey.	Yes	The Faroe Islands	
18	Fieldwork	Geophysics.	Yes	The Faroe Islands	
19	Fieldwork	Test Excavations.	Yes	The Faroe Islands	
20	Fieldwork	Landscape analysis of selected places.	Yes	The Faroe Islands	
21	Fieldwork	Landscape analysis of selected places.	Yes	Shetland	
22	Fieldwork	Landscape analysis of selected places.	Yes	Orkney	
23	Fieldwork	Landscape analysis of selected places.	Yes	Norway	
24	Fieldwork	Landscape analysis of selected places.	Yes	Iceland	

Part 2

Chapter 4 Results of the Archival Study of the Viking Age Burials in the Faroe Islands

This chapter focuses on the archival research of the excavated Viking Age burial sites in the Faroe Islands. In this chapter I have worked with the research question on where Viking Age burials are located in the Faroes, how a burial is identified in the landscape and developed my methodological approach in getting closer to answer the main research question on where and how can we locate more Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands. Additionally, I have studied if the location and the ritual performances practised at the burial sites gave any hints on how the Vikings in the Faroes viewed their world. This is the first time the sites have been pulled together in this fashion, where I have been able to work with unpublished archival material, handwritten diaries, artefacts and human remains. During this research I have also worked together with archaeologist Símun V. Arge from Tjóðsavnið, who supervised the excavation at the burial site Við Kirkjugarð.

The first site is in the northernmost village on the island of Streymoy, in the village of Tjørnuvík, at the burial site Yviri í Trøð. The second site is on the southern coast of the island of Sandoy, in the village of Sandur at the burial site Við Kirkjugarð. The burial sites Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð are marked on Figure 4.1. With the aim to have consistency in the study of the burial sites a framework for the selected material was organised.

4.1 Results from the Archival Study of known Burial Sites

In the layout of the methodology in the burial study, I made an outline which included the study of the burial sites, the descriptions of the burials and their content. I divided the outline into two main sections. The first section focused on the excavation and the second section on the burials. In these sections, I selected certain variables in the descriptions of the excavations and burials (Table 4.1, Table 4.2). It was not always possible to include information on all the variables and therefore I included the information from these variables in the research, when possible.

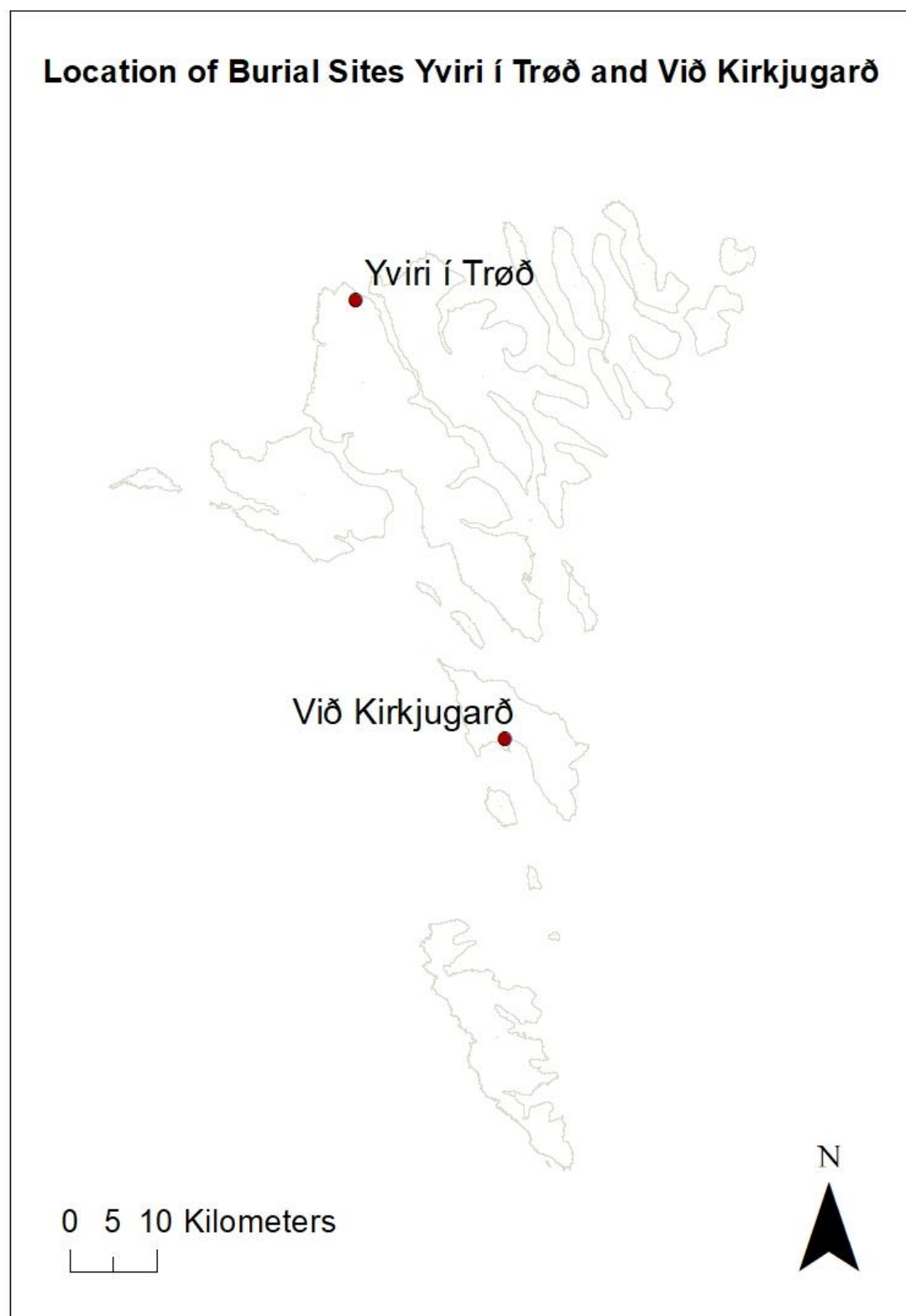


Figure 4.1 Geographical location of Viking Age burial sites Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð. Map Source: us.fo.

Table 4.1 Main points and variables.

Main Points	Variables
A: Location, the site	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Setting of the burials 2. Find circumstances 3. Previous work
B: Site surroundings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Descriptions of the surroundings
C: The site excavation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Excavated by 2. Aims 3. Methodology, what was the excavation technique? 4. Number of known burials 5. Distance between burials 6. Plan of the burial site

The second section includes detailed evidence and characteristics of the burials themselves and artefacts.

Table 4.2 Second section, main points and variables.

Main Points	Variables
A: Visible structural features	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shape and form of burial construction 2. Posthole 3. Burial markers 4. Boundaries 5. Size 6. Construction material 7. State of burial
B: Burial structures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Size 2. Shape or form of burial itself 3. Orientation
C: Type of burial container	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cist 2. Coffin 3. Wooden boards/chest 4. Boat
D: Skeletal remains	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inhumation or cremation 2. Single burial, double burial, multi-burial 3. Complete or fragmented bones 4. Bone preservation

Main Points	Variables
	5. Bones from humans and animals
E: Artefacts from burials	1. Type 2. Material 3. Quantity 4. Condition 5. Preservation

In the description and the analysis of the burials there were several layers of information to consider, for example structural features, burial structure, type of burial container, skeletal remains and artefacts from burials. I decided as part of the research process to include a catalogue of the burials, human remains, artefacts and photos taken as part of the re-examination of the burials. The catalogue with an appendix with photos of artefacts and human remains associated with each burial are in Appendices A2, A3, A4 with an overview in Table 4.3. Following this outline the study of the burial sites begins with the burial site in the village of Tjørnuvík at the site Yviri í Trøð.

Table 4.3 Overview of information in the appendices.

	Appendix A2	Appendix A3	Appendix A4	Appendix A5
Site	Yviri í Trøð	Við Kirkjugarð	Yviri í Trøð	Við Kirkjugarð
Content	Burials Yviri í Trøð	Burials Við Kirkjugarð	Excavation season	Excavation season

4.2 Yviri í Trøð

This section is about the excavation of the burial site Yviri í Trøð, beginning with the site location and find circumstances. In Figure 4.2 is an aerial photograph showing the village of Tjørnuvík and the Viking Age burial site Yviri í Trøð.

4.2.1 Location and Find Circumstances

Tjørnuvík is the northernmost village on the island Streymoy. Two young boys, Hans Esbern Heinesen and Guttorm Sørensen, discovered the burials in the village of Tjørnuvík at Yviri í Trøð in April 1955 when removing a stone from the surface of a sand dune outside the infield

area (Dahl, 1956a; Dahl and Rasmussen, 1956, p. 11). In Figure 4.3 is a photo of the village and the burial site seen from the landing site.

The site is close to the main road and prior to the rediscovery of these burials there had been road construction (Dahl, 1956a). Hans Esbern Heinesen told his father, Jacob Heinesen, about the find (Dahl and Rasmussen, J., 1956, p. 11). Jacob Heinesen looked at the bones and thought that these were human bones and built a stone wall up against the surface to protect the burial (Dahl and Rasmussen, J., 1956, p. 11). Afterwards, Jacob Heinesen showed the bones to the doctor Leif Dahl, who confirmed that the bones were human bones (Dahl and Rasmussen, 1956, p. 11). Jacob Heinesen then informed the National Museum of Antiquities Fornminnissavnið about the find, and soon after began the first professional archaeological excavation of a Viking Age burial site in the Faroe Islands, lead by Sverri Dahl (Dahl and Rasmussen, 1956, p. 11).

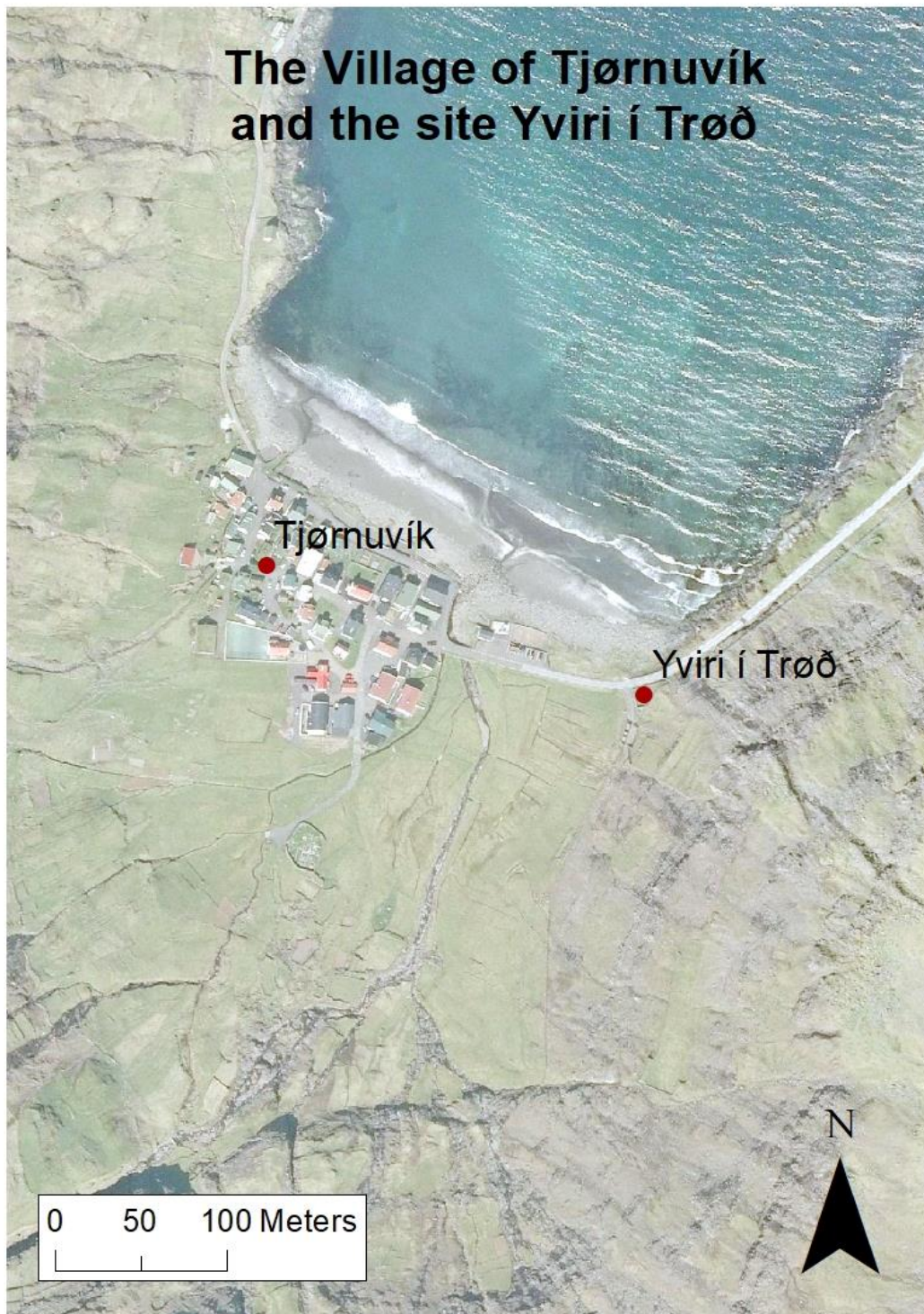


Figure 4.2 The village of Tjørnuvík and the Viking Age burial site Yviri í Trøð. Map source. us.fo



Figure 4.3 Tjørnuvík. X marks the cemetery Yviri í Trøð. April 2015.

4.2.2 The Burial Site Yviri í Trøð

The burials at the site Yviri í Trøð were located close to a small river, Rættaráin, just above the road (previously a path) leading south to the neighbouring village Haldórsvík and eight meters above the seashore (Figure. 4.4). Yviri í Trøð is a small area on the boundary to the present infield. The village of Tjørnuvík lies open towards the sea, northeast in a narrow inlet, surrounded by high mountains. The homefield area for cultivation and grazing is not extensive in Tjørnuvík and extends from the village towards the south to the border of the rockface, surrounding the village. The burials were set within this landscape, 7m east of the old infield dry stone wall and east of the village in a grass-covered ridge (Dahl, 1956a; Dahl and Rasmussen, 1956, p. 155).

Shifting sand and several landslides had covered the burials at Yviri í Trøð and therefore the overall preservation and condition of the twelve excavated burials was poor. With the burials covered with sand, and several landslides over hundreds of years, they were not visible in the landscape and as time went by people forgot about this burial site. Sverri Dahl, together with the geologist Jóannes Rasmussen from the Museum of Natural History, published one article about the burial site which focused on the first season and mainly on Burial I (Dahl and Rasmussen, 1956). During the excavation seasons 1957 and 1959 men from the village Tjørnuvík assisted Sverri Dahl during the excavations. During season 1957 he also had help from his wife Paula and an assistant Marjun Hansen.

There was a very informative radio interview with the excavation leader in 1983 about the site Yviri í Trøð. In the broadcast Sverri Dahl talked about the site, the burials and the circumstances of the excavations (Dahl, 1983). The sources I used in researching the burial site Yviri í Trøð were the published article by Sverri Dahl and Jóannes Rasmussen, the radio interview with Sverri Dahl in 1983 and the unpublished diaries and reports stored at Tjóðsavnið (Dahl, 1956a; Dahl and Rasmussen, 1956; Dahl, 1983). While I was reviewing the archival material on the burial site at Yviri í Trøð, finds associated with the burials were also re-registered and assessed for their future research potential. Due to a lack of conservation, they are highly corroded. There were three excavation seasons with the outcome of twelve excavated burials. See Table 4.4 and

Table 4.5 for an overview of the excavated burials.

Table 4.4 Overview of burials I-VI. The color-coded sections refer to excavation years.

Burial I	Burial II	Burial III	Burial III	Burial IV	Burial V	Burial VI
Tjørnuvík	Tjørnuvík	Tjørnuvík	Tjørnuvík	Tjørnuvík	Tjørnuvík	Tjørnuvík
Yviri í Trøð	Yviri í Trøð	Yviri í Trøð	Yviri í Trøð	Yviri í Trøð	Yviri í Trøð	Yviri í Trøð
Sverri Dahl	Sverri Dahl	Sverri Dahl	Sverri Dahl	Sverri Dahl	Sverri Dahl	Sverri Dahl
1956	1957	1957	1959	1957	1957	1957
22-26 Mai	17.7-18.8	17.7-18.8	27.5-8-8	17.7-18.8	17.7-18.8	17.7-18.8
3718	3798	3798	3959	3798	3798	3798

Table 4.5 Overview of burials VII-XII.

Burial VII	Burial VIII	Burial VIII	Burial IX	Burial X	Burial XI	Burial XII
Tjørnuvík	Tjørnuvík	Tjørnuvík	Tjørnuvík	Tjørnuvík	Tjørnuvík	Tjørnuvík
Yviri í Trøð	Yviri í Trøð	Yviri í Trøð	Yviri í Trøð	Yviri í Trøð	Yviri í Trøð	Yviri í Trøð
Sverri Dahl	Sverri Dahl	Sverri Dahl	Sverri Dahl	Sverri Dahl	Sverri Dahl	Sverri Dahl
1957	1957	1959	1959	1959	1959	1959
17.7-18.8	17.7-18.8	27.5-8.8	27.5-8.8	27.5-8.8	27.5-8.8	27.5-8.8
3798	3798	3959	3959	3959	3959	3959

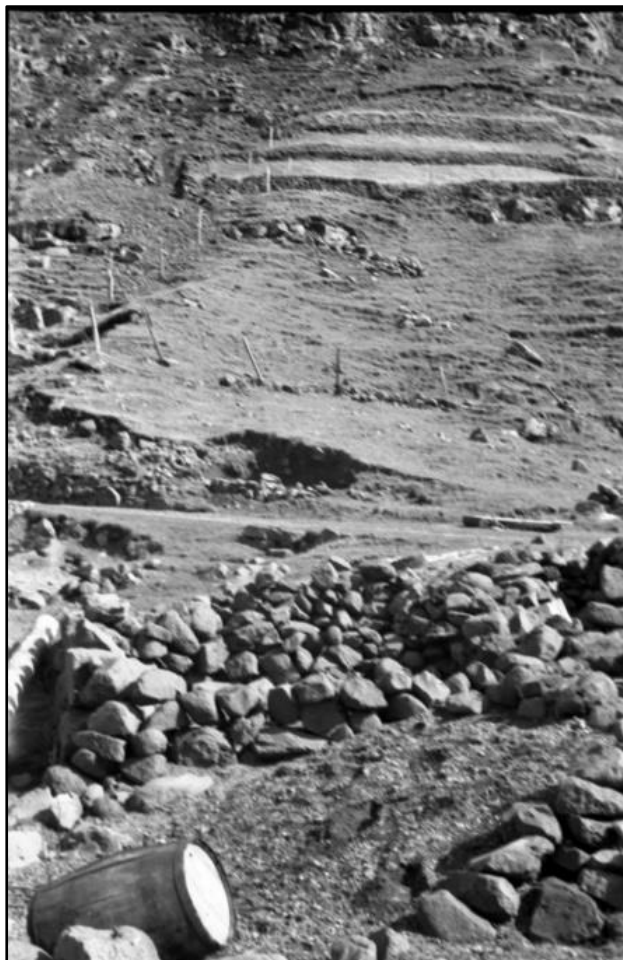


Figure. 4.4 View towards the site Yviri í Trøð. Sverri Dahl, 1956. Tjóðsavnið (R-1956-06-06).

4.2.3 Excavation Technique

At the beginning of the 1956 excavation season an x/y grid system was laid out with measurements in metres and excavated using search trenches. The size of the grid was 21x21m. The main reason for using the technique of trench digging was to clarify the function of the site (Dahl, 1983). Two main trenches were set diagonally at Y12.20 and Y9.0m. One main trench was set out as longitudinal at X9.50m (Dahl, 1956b). In Figure. 4.5 is the extension of the burial site and it is clear on this map that the burials are concentrated on the ridge towards east, on an area of 7x14m (Dahl, 1957b). The distance between the burials ranged from about 0.5cm to 1.0m and the longest distance between two burials was about 1.25m (between burials VI and X).

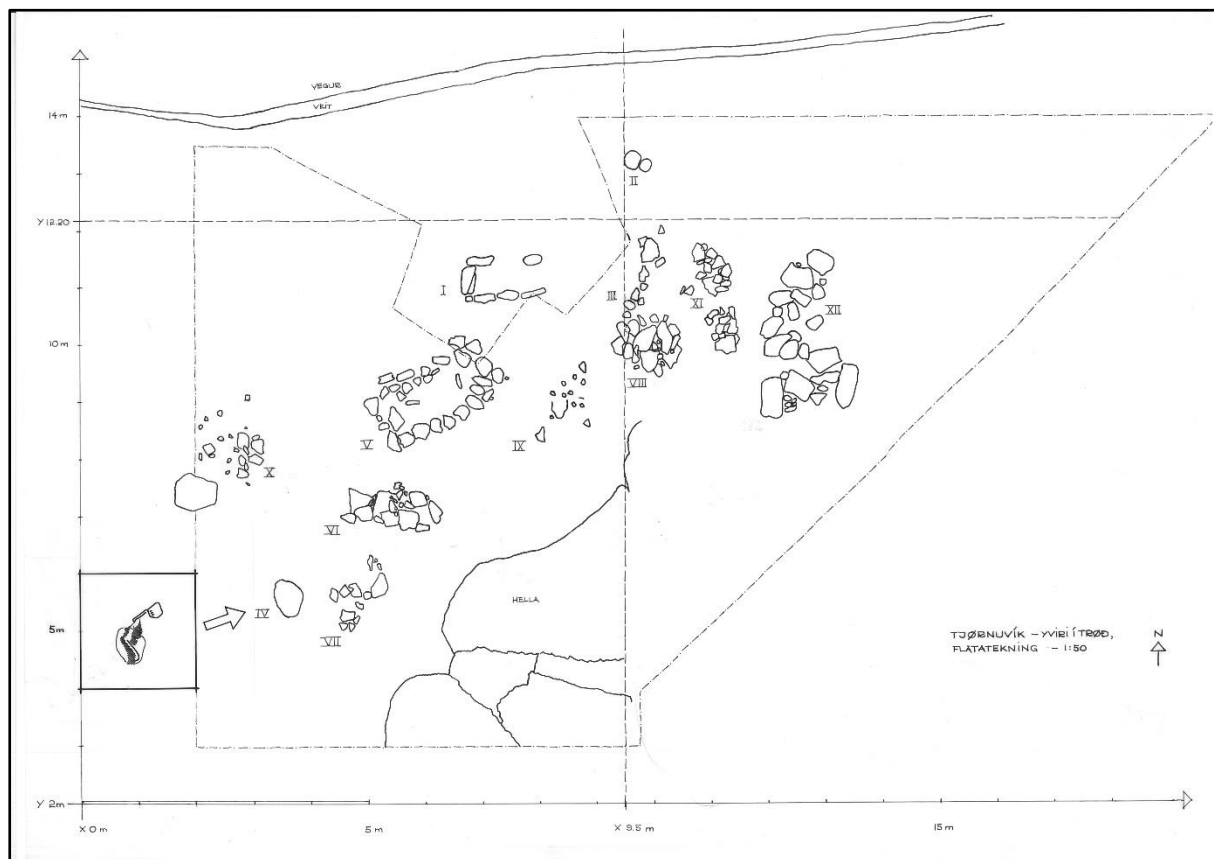


Figure. 4.5 Cemetery Tjörnuvík, Yviri í Trøð, Drawing Sverra Dahl. Digitised by Rúni H. Øster Source: Source Sverra Dahl Unpublished Report 1956-1959. Tjóðsavnið.

During the excavation seasons of 1956, 1957 and 1959, it was continued to dig in trenches (Dahl, 1956b). When a burial was observed in a trench, it was excavated from the surface. The landslides, stones and soil were excavated with shovels and the burials with a trowel. Each burial was marked with a Roman numeral from I to XII. I have decided to use the same

numbering system, to keep it consistent with the diaries, unpublished reports and artefacts. The artefacts are labelled with a find number, called “Fnr”. During this research, I have found that the labelling of finds was not always consistent during the excavation and therefore additional numbers were added during the review of the burials.

After the initial excavation, the surface of the burial was drawn and photographed, measured and removed (Dahl, 1957b, 1959c). During the 1956 and 1957 excavation seasons, there was no sign of a differentiation between the layers in the burial itself, but in the 1959 excavation season, the layers in the burials were part of descriptions (Dahl, 1959c). The layers in the trench were distinguished and an overall sequence of the layers was established (see Appendix A4).

4.2.4 Registration Technique

In the Faroes, each village has its own registration number. In the archaeological registration practice in the Faroe Islands, this system is applied to distinguish between the villages in the archaeological record. The village number for Tjørnuvík is 46 and for the site Yviri í Trøð the site number, called *Fmnr.* is 46003. Sort for *Fornminnanummar.* Each site has one or several site museum numbers called *Snr.*, short for *Savnsnummar.* Since there were three excavation seasons at the site Yviri í Trøð, this site has been given three unique site numbers. Today the practice is to have one *Snr.* number for all excavation seasons, not different site numbers for different seasons as was practised at Yviri í Trøð. The finds were labelled and packed with a find number called *Fnr.* In Table 4.6 is an overview of the excavation seasons, *Snr.* numbers and *Fnr.* numbers.

Table 4.6 Overview of excavations seasons, *Snr.* numbers and *Fnr.* numbers at Yviri í Trøð.

Excavation season	<i>Snr.</i> number	<i>Fnr.</i> number
1956	3718	001-032
1957	3798	001-032
1959	3759	001-028

Today the human remains, and artefacts are stored at the archives at Tjóðsavnið, and in the exhibition about the burial site Yviri í Trøð. Most of the human remains were fragmented and dissolved. The artefacts were often rusty and in poor condition. There was no sieving of the soil on site, but samples were taken of the sand and from the burials. All stones in the burials

were marked with a white colour and the soil for each burial was kept separate, so that these could be placed in the correct burial after finishing the excavation (Dahl, 1957b). Furthermore, during the excavation Sverri Dahl had observed that there were many remains from humans, including small bits of bones in the sand and therefore he thought it was better to restore it in the burials (Dahl, 1983). This point precisely made me consider the possibilities for additional burials at the site. This matter will be discussed further in section 4.4.

In the archives, there was not much information on the 1956 excavation season. Therefore, the main information from this excavation comes from Sverri Dahl and Jóannes Rasmussen's article from 1956. The outline of the excavation seasons and the detailed description of the main layers during the excavation of 1956, 1957 and 1959 are in Appendix A4. With the framework of the settings the following section is a review of the burials.

4.2.5 Review of Burials

The main framework of the objectivities applied in the descriptions and the review of the burials was outlined above, in Section 4.1. Detailed information about the artefacts and the human remains are in Appendix A2.

An overview of the burials is in Table 4.7, which are summarised from Pia Bennike's analysis of the burials (Bennike, 1978, sec. 7A). These results are from Pia Bennike's master thesis. Based on osteological analysis there were 4 adults, 2 children (new-born), 1 person over 15 years old or adult and 5 individuals who were undecided/uncertain (Bennike, 1978, sec. 7A). After the overview, the first burial review is of Burial I.

Table 4.7 Overview of burials. Based on Pia Bennike's Analysis of the burials (Bennike, 1978, sec. 7A).

Burial	Sex	Adult/child	Age
Burial I	Female	Young adult	(20-40 years old)
Burial II	?	Adult	Over 20 years old
Burial III	Child	New-born	?
Burial IV	?	Young adult	(20-40 years old)
Burial V	?	Child/adult	?
Burial VI	?	Young adult	(20-40 years old)

Burial	Sex	Adult/child	Age
Burial VII	Not sufficient human remains	?	?
Burial VIII	Child	New-born	?
Burial IX	Not sufficient human remains	?	?
Burial X	Not sufficient human remains	?	?
Burial XI	Not sufficient human remains	?	?
Burial XII	Uncertain	?	?

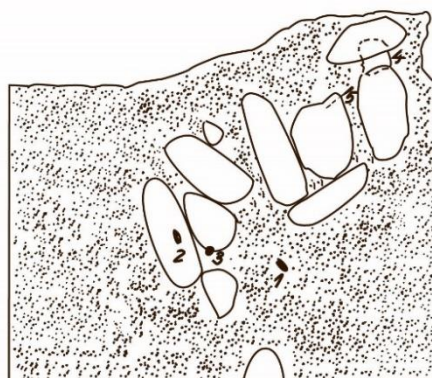
4.2.5.1 Burial I (see Appendix A2 Burial I)

The first excavated burial was burial I and it was excavated in 1956. As the landslide, which was layer A, was excavated the outer structure of the burial became visible with piles of flat measuring 0.45-0.55m in length and 0.20-0.25m in width. Towards the west, there were 2 water-rolled stones 0.55m in length and about 0.20m in width. The inner structure of the burial was interpreted to be a regular cist or stone coffin, with stones placed on edge (Dahl and Rasmussen, 1956, p. 158; Dahl, 1983). Inside the burial were flat stones and these stones could have been used as a lid to the stone coffin (Dahl, 1983).

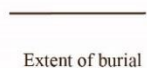
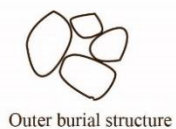
Most of the bones were lying beneath the fallen flat stones, a piece of knee was found outside the burial and underneath the water rolled stones there were bones from a foot (Figure 4.6) (Dahl and Rasmussen, 1956, p. 160). It was clear from the cut that the burial pit was dug deeper in the western end, where the head was placed, than in the west, where the feet were (Dahl and Rasmussen, 1956, p. 160). The length of the individual in the burial was 1.35m. The direction of the burial was east-north-east and west-south-west. The head was in the east-north-east, lying on the left side with the neck towards the sea and the face towards land, south. For Sverri Dahl this direction was based on ancient Norse cosmology, where the individual was assumed to be turning away from all the bad things in the world and looking towards the south, towards Ásheimi (Dahl, 1983).

The village of Tjørnuvík

Yviri í Trøð Burial I
Fmnr. 46003 Snr. 3718
Drawing: SD 1:25
Mai 1956



0 1m



1: Fragment of fibula
2 and 3: Remains of feet
4: Cranium
5: Ring-headed pin
Numbers on plan

Figure 4.6 Burial I, seen from above. Source: Sverri Dahl and Jóannes Rasmussen, *Víkingaaldargrøv í Tjørnuvík*, Fróðskaparrit 5. bólk 1956 Fig. 4 P. 159. Digitised Ann S.S. Purkhús.

The individual was probable placed on the left side (Dahl and Rasmussen, 1956, p. 161) with bent knees (Dahl, 1983). The water rolled stones by the feet had fallen inward on the feet, and because of this the burial had probably been longer in the past. The burial was about 1.5m in length and within 0.5m in width (Dahl and Rasmussen, 1956, p. 161). The burial was about 0.60-0.70m deep in the sand dune, into layer B. It was not possible for the excavator to estimate how thick the layer above the burial had been, because the flat stones had fallen inwards into the burial (Dahl and Rasmussen, 1956, p. 162). Based on this, Sverri Dahl concluded that there was probably no mound over the burial (Dahl and Rasmussen, 1956, p. 162). However, one must keep in mind that he did describe a small pile of stones, which were on top of the burial. Not far from the chin there was a ring headed pin made of bronze, round, 150mm in length together with a piece of cloth and a thread braided in the ring (Figure 4.7) (Dahl and Rasmussen, 1956, p. 162).



Figure 4.7 Photo of the ring headed pin of bronze, together with remains of cloth. Source: Tjóðsavnið,

In her catalogue of the burials, Pia Bennike mentioned that the bones were very fragile and the teeth very worn. She concluded, based on the human remains, that this individual was a young adult, who was most likely between 20 and 40 years old. Based on the size of the bones and their appearance, the individual was estimated to be female and around 150cm tall (Bennike, 1978, sec. 7A).

4.2.5.2 Burial II (see Appendix A2 Burial II)

In the radio interview from 1983 Sverri Dahl explained that Burial II was found in the trench beside the road and when the trench was cleaned there was an opening in a little hole (Figure 4.8). Above, there were roots from plants and below there were human remains (Dahl, 1957b, 1957a).



Figure 4.8 Burial II Human Remains. Photo Sverri Dahl, Tjóðsavnið (R-1957-7-17).

A few stones were on the top of the burial and the bones were in good condition because of the stones (Dahl, 1983). In the report it was mentioned that there were more bones behind this small hole (Dahl, 1957b, 1957a).

In her analysis of the human remains from Burial II, Pia Bennike concluded that this individual was an adult person over 20 years old. It was not possible to determine the gender. The height for a female would be 163cm and a male 166cm. This was based on the length of the humerus (long bone in the upper arm), which Bennike mentioned was not very specific (Bennike, 1978, sec. 4A). On the humerus, there was possibly a healed fracture (Bennike, 1978, sec. 3A).

4.2.5.3 Burial III (see Appendix A2 Burial III)

Burial III was located north of Burial VIII, and was covered by a few stones. Between Burial III and Burial VIII there were a few stones (Dahl, 1959c, 1959a). On the drawing these are labelled as two separate burials (Figure 4.9). The burial was constructed with a stone on top and with the human remains in the burial. The largest stone measured approximately 2.50 x 1.50m. The total measurement of the burial was about 2.60m in length and 1.0m in width.

During the 1959 excavation season large bones were found in Burials III and XI. The bones were interpreted to be animal bones, as these were too large to be human bones, but were rather bones from large animals (Figure 4.10) (Dahl, 1959c, 1959a). These were laid in a wooden box, which has since decomposed. In addition, below the stripes of stones between Burial VIII and Burial III there were bones underneath.

Pia Bennike analysed the human remains which were available to her from Burial III. Pia Bennike concluded that this individual was an infant, new-born (Bennike, 1978, sec. 4A), who was buried next to the other new-born in Burial VIII. With this information it is highly possible that the infant in the burial was buried together with an animal.

The village of Tjørnuvík

Yviri í Trøð
Fmnr. 46003
Plan 18
1:10

Burial III and VIII
Snr. 3959
Drawing: SD
08.06.1959

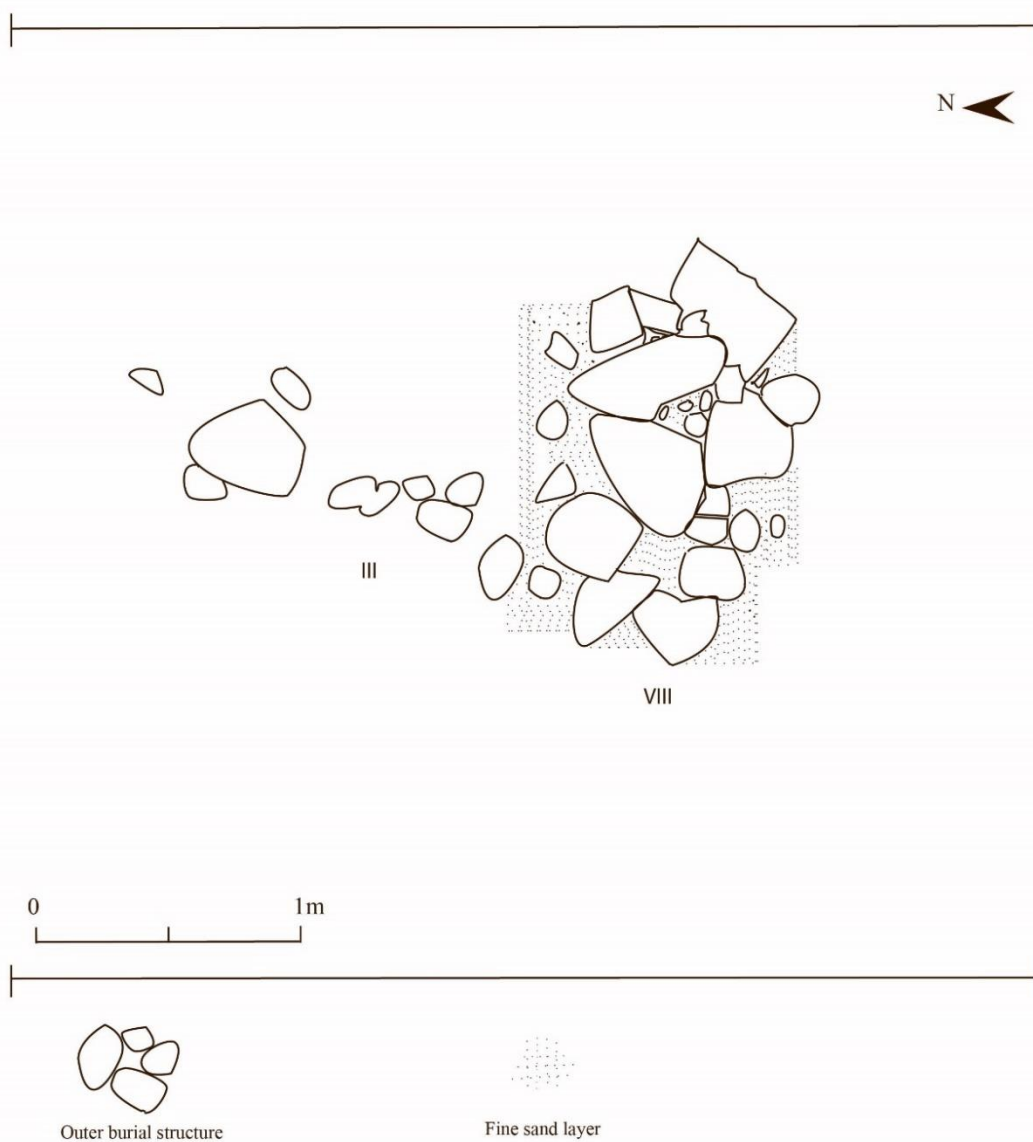


Figure 4.9 Burials III and VIII, Surface. Source: Sverri Dahl, Unpublished Report, 1957, Tjóðsavnið. Digitised Ann S.S. Purkhús.



Figure 4.10 Burial III, Animal or human Remains? 1959. Source: Sverri Dahl, Tjódösavnið (R-1959-7-33).

4.2.5.4 Burial IV (see Appendix A2 Burial IV)

There was no stone construction above burial IV, but a large stone or boulder, which marked the location of the burial. The size of the large boulder measured approximately 0.5 x 0.5m. This burial was located in the south western corner on the burial site. The individual in the burial was placed in the same manner as the individual in Burial I, on the left side with bent knees (Dahl, 1957a). The direction of the burial was east-north-east and south-west. There were no artefacts found in this burial (Dahl, 1957b, 1957a).

Unfortunately, Sverri Dahl could not take photographs of the bones from this burial during excavation, because they disintegrated rapidly (Figure 4.11). Instead, Sverri Dahl made a hasty drawing of the bones on the main drawing. These circumstances with Burial IV demonstrate the pressure Sverri Dahl was under during the excavation, as the bones were hastily disintegrating and there was no time for neither drawing nor taking photographs (Figure 4.12). Of human remains there were a few teeth left (Dahl, 1957b, 1957a).



Figure 4.11 Burial IV, a few human remains left. Source: Sverri Dahl, 1957, Tjóðsavnið (R-1957-VIII-13).

Based on the human remains at hand, Pia Bennike interpreted this individual to be a younger individual. Pia Bennike based her interpretation on the wisdom tooth, which had begun to appear, and the teeth were not very worn. It was not possible to sex the individual (Bennike, 1978, sec. 5A).

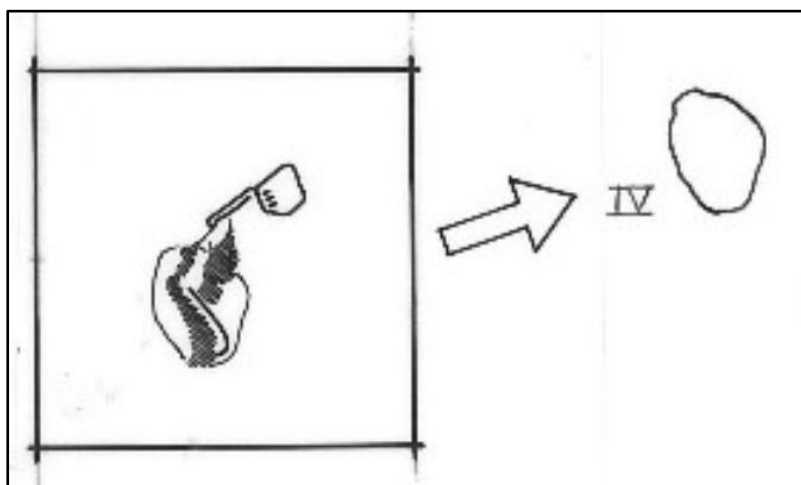


Figure 4.12 Burial IV. From main drawing. Source: Sverri Dahl, Unpublished Report, 1956-1959, Tjóðsavnið.

4.2.5.5 Burial V (see Appendix A2 Burial V)

Burial V was in the middle of the sand dune and was placed at the top of the sand dune at about 9-10 metres above sea level (Dahl, 1983). The length of the burial was about 2.5m in length and 1.4m in width (Figure 4.14). The excavated burial had a very well-constructed stone structure of water rolled stones and the stone structure resembled a boat in shape (Dahl, 1957b, 1957a). In the south end, a larger stone formed a stem, but in the north the stone to form a stem was missing. Sverri Dahl interpreted that this was on purpose (Figure 4.13) (Dahl, 1983).

When Sverri Dahl excavated this burial, it became clear that this burial had been disturbed in the past. In the south side of the burial all the stones were untouched, but in the north they had moved significantly. It was clear that they had either glided inwards into the burial or had ended up there because of human disturbance. In the north eastern end, there was a lower jaw with the chin turned towards the north east and the teeth in a south western direction. The skull was in the south western end. It later became clear that the head or skull was placed where the knees were, on the bottom of the burial (Figure 4.15). The condition of the human remains was poor, but it seemed that the person in the burial originally was laid on the side (Dahl, 1957b, 1957a).



Figure 4.13 Burial V, Surface, 1957. Photo: Sverri Dahl, Tjóðsavnið (R-1957-8-25).

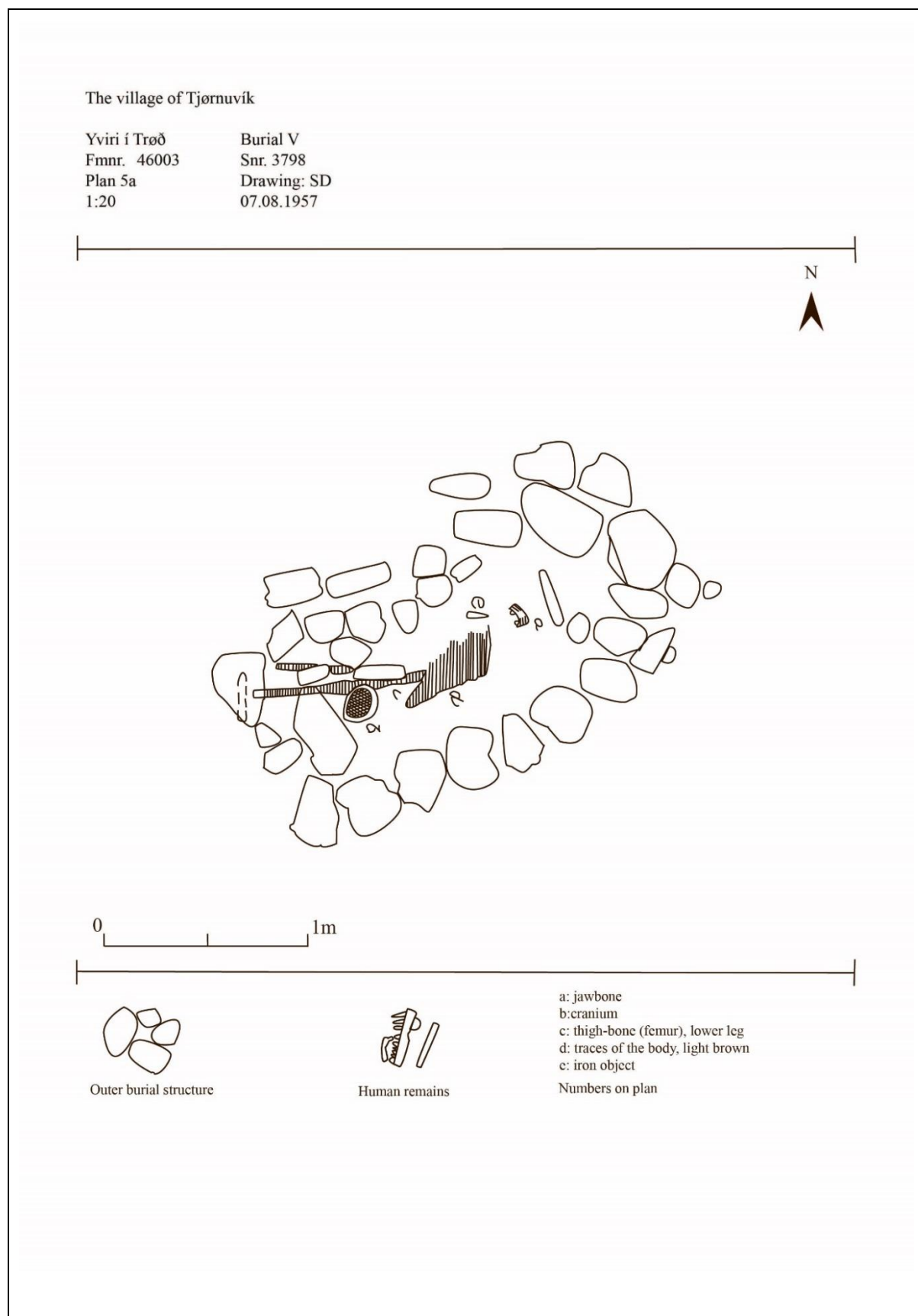


Figure 4.14 Surface, Burial V. Source: Sverri Dahl, Unpublished Report, 1957, Tjóðsavnið. Digitised Ann S. S. Purkhús.

The only artefact was a rusty object, which was placed close to the hip on the right side of the individual, in the northern part of the burial. When the object was cleaned it was clear it was a knife (Dahl, 1957b, 1957a) (this artefact is not in the archives). The individual in this burial was interpreted to be over 15 years old but was not sexed (Bennike, 1978, sec. 5A).



Figure 4.15 Burial V, the skull in the lower end of the burial at the knees. Photo: Sverri Dahl, Tjóðsavnið (R-1957-8-29).

4.2.5.6 Burial VI (see Appendix A2 Burial VI)

Burial VI was excavated during the 1957 excavation season. The burial was constructed with flat stones and covered with them as well (Dahl, 1957b, 1957a). The outer structure of the burial measured approximately 1.75m in length and 0.80m in width (Figure 4.16). The individual in the burial was measured to be 1.58m in length. In the burial most of the human bones were decomposed (Dahl, 1957b, 1957a).



Figure 4.16 Burial VI, Surface. Photo: Sverri Dahl, Tjóðsavnið (R-1957-8-30.)

The person in the burial was laid extended on the back, in an east west direction and the head turned a little bit towards south (Figure 4.17) (Dahl, 1957b, 1957a). In the report the bones were described as black, greyish and brown-yellow, but mostly just black inside. Some bones were white and a bit hard, but not hard enough that it was possible to sample them. Otherwise there were bits of bones and some teeth. Even so, this was one of the best kept burials, compared with Burial I. There were no artefacts located or found (Dahl, 1957b, 1957a).

Based on a photo and the human remains at hand, it was concluded that this individual was a younger adult person. The sex was not known (Bennike, 1978, sec. 5A).



Figure 4.17 Burial VI, the Human Remains. Photo: Sverri Dahl, Tjóðsavnið (R-1957-8-37).

4.2.5.7 Burial VII

Burial VII was located south of Burial VI and east of Burial IV. It was not possible to draw any conclusion on the size or position of the individual in the burial, because of the lack of human remains. On the drawing the stones above the burial seemed to be a bit scattered and, together with the missing knowledge of the human remains, it is difficult to give a measurement (Figure 4.18, Figure 4.19). If all the stones are included in the construction of this burial, the length of the burial was 2.0m and the width about 1.35m. The stones placed on the side of the burial had probably slid downwards, away from the main burial construction. The burial was constructed of stones on the surface and there were no remains to suggest any other building

material. There were no finds from Burial VII and there was not sufficient human remains to make any interpretation of the interred.



Figure 4.18 Stones above Burial VII. Photo: Sverri Dahl, Tjóðsavnið (R. 1957- VIII-16).

The village of Tjørnuvík

Yviri í Trøð
Fmnr. 46003
Plan 7
1:10

Burial VII
Snr. 3798
Drawing: SD
08.08.1957

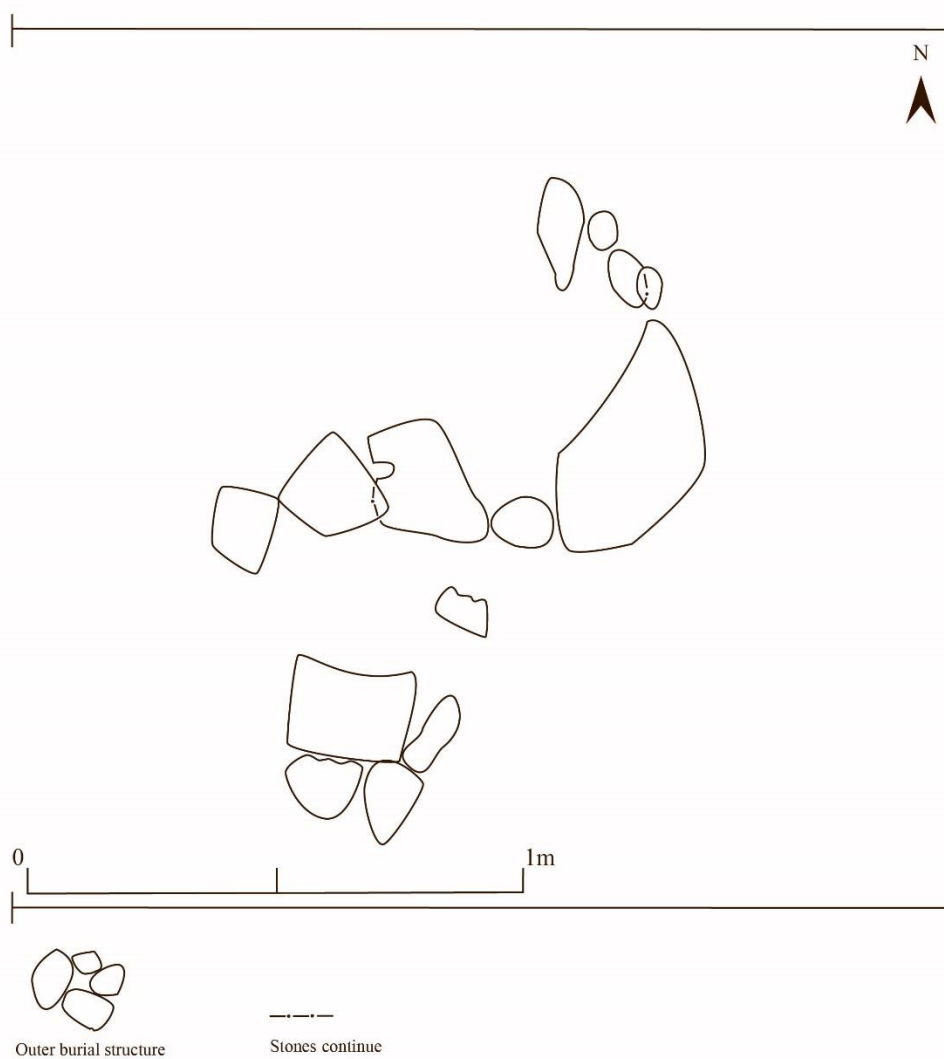


Figure 4.19 Burial VII, Surface. Source: Sverri Dahl, Unpublished Report, 1959, Tjóðsavnið. Digitised Ann S. S. Purkhús.

4.2.5.8 VIII (see Appendix A2 Burial VIII)

Burial VIII was constructed with stones and the outside measurements were in length 1.50m and in width 1.20m (Figure 4.20, Figure 4.21). The bones in the burial were fragile and decomposed (Dahl, 1957b, 1957a).

A piece of a rusty object was found in this burial, which was the first object found this season. In addition to this rusty object, an object which was strangely soft and round was found. Dahl interpreted the object to originate from the spoke on a spinning wheel (in Faroese a *tortil*). In this burial an iron buckle was found, with traces of fibre (Dahl, 1957b, 1957a). Beside these finds, Burial VIII was almost empty. The individual in this burial was interpreted to be a newborn (Bennike, 1978).



Figure 4.20 Burial VIII, 1959. Photo; Sverri Dahl, Tjóðsavnið (R-1959-4-13).

The village of Tjørnuvík

Yviri í Trøð
Fmnr. 46003
Plan 18
1:10

Burial III and VIII
Snr. 3959
Drawing: SD
08.06.1959

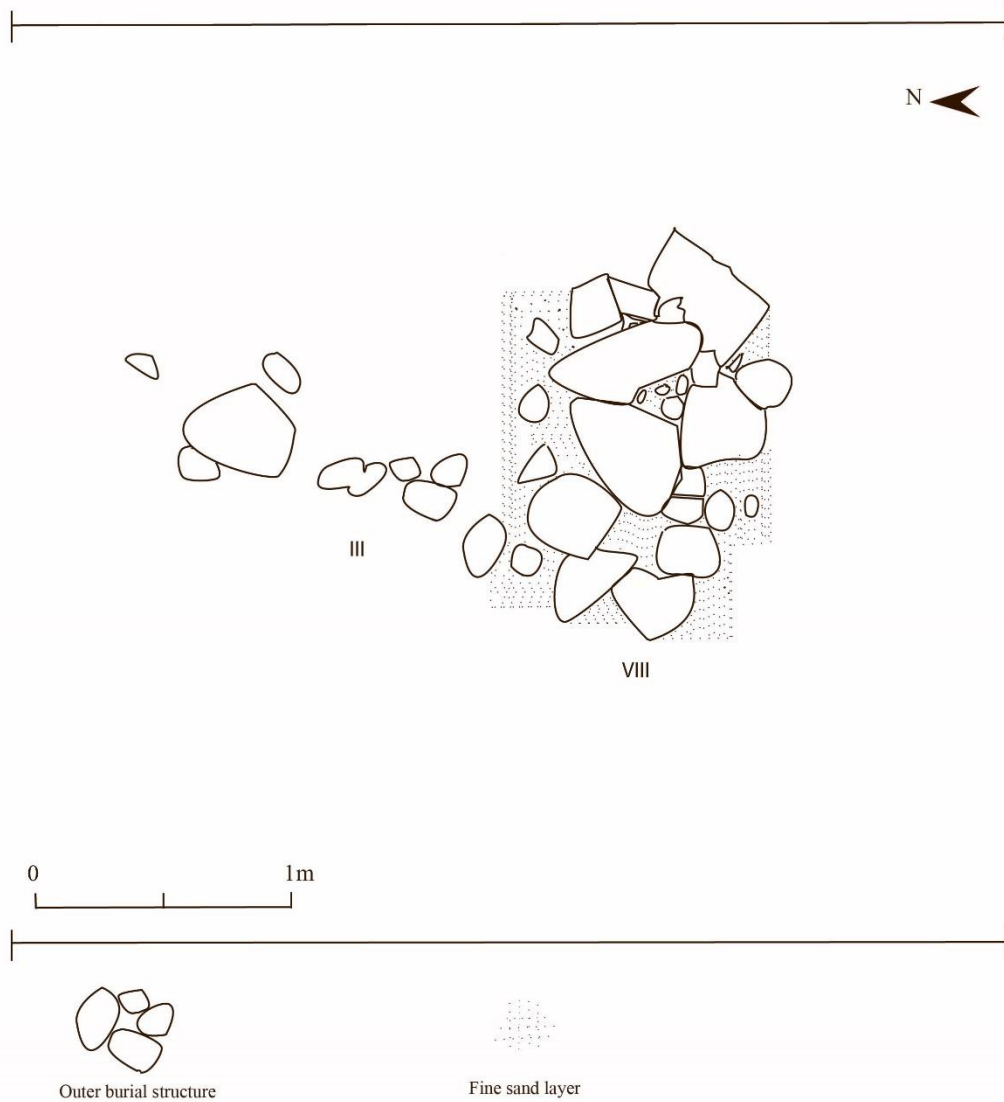


Figure 4.21 Burial VIII, together with Burial III, Surface 1:50. Source: Sverri Dahl, Unpublished Report, 1959. Digitised Ann S. S. Purkhús.

4.2.5.9 Burial IX (see Appendix A2 Burial IX)

Burial IX was marked on the surface by a few stones (Dahl, 1959c, 1959a). In the burial there were few bones, which most likely were toes. There were no decidedly human remains in order to make an interpretation of the human remains (Bennike, 1978, sec. 6A). In addition to the fragile and decomposed human remains charcoal was found (Dahl, 1959c, 1959a). As seen in the excavation photo in Figure 4.22, there was not much to find during the excavation of the burial.

On the drawing in Figure 4.23, there seems to be one main stone where the human remains were found in burial IX. Around this stone there are other stones scattered around. This resembles Burial IV in construction. The scattered stones have probably slid away from the main burial stones as the landslides came over the burials. The measurements with the large stone and the scattered stones are in length 2.5m and in width just about 2.0m.



Figure 4.22 Burial IX as it was excavated. Photo: Sverri Dahl, Tjóðsavnið (R-1959-5-35).

The village of Tjømuvík

Yviri í Trøð	Burial IX
Fmnr. 46003	Snr. 3959
Plan 21	Drawing: SD
1:10	25.07.1959

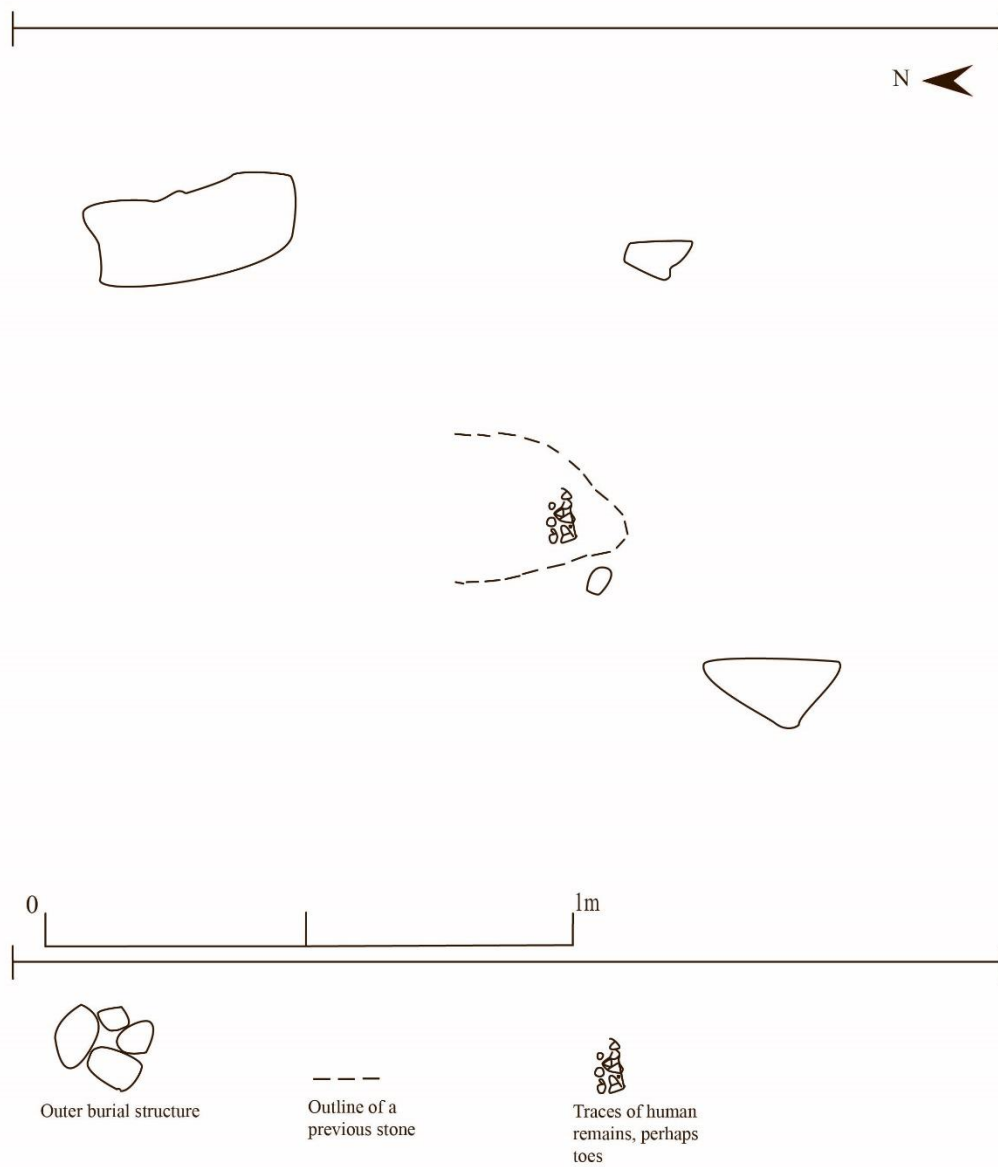


Figure 4.23 Burial IX, Surface 1:10. Source: Sverri Dahl, Unpublished Report, 1959. Digitised Ann S. S. Purkhús.

4.2.5.10 Burial X (see Appendix A2 Burial X)

The outline of Burial X was not very clear, as there were not many stone in the upper layer of the trench, which marked the burial (Figure 4.24).



Figure 4.24 Burial X, Located in the Trench. Photo: Sverri Dahl, Tjóðsavnið (R-1959-4-34).

Within the concentration of the stones the burial was 2.0m in length and about 1.0m in width, in the outer surface construction (Figure 4.25). The burial was covered with stones and dug into the sand layer B (Dahl, 1959c, 1959a). As the stones covering the burial are scattered in the northern and western part of the burial it is highly likely that the landslide has caused the stones to glide from its main burial construction (Figure 4.26). It is difficult to get clear measurement and overview of the burial due to the landslide and because it was excavated in a trench. In the burial there were bones, mostly decomposed (Dahl, 1959c, 1959a). There were no decidedly human remains in order to do an analysis (Bennike, 1978, sec. 6A). In addition to the human remains there was charcoal found in the burial (Dahl, 1959c, 1959a).

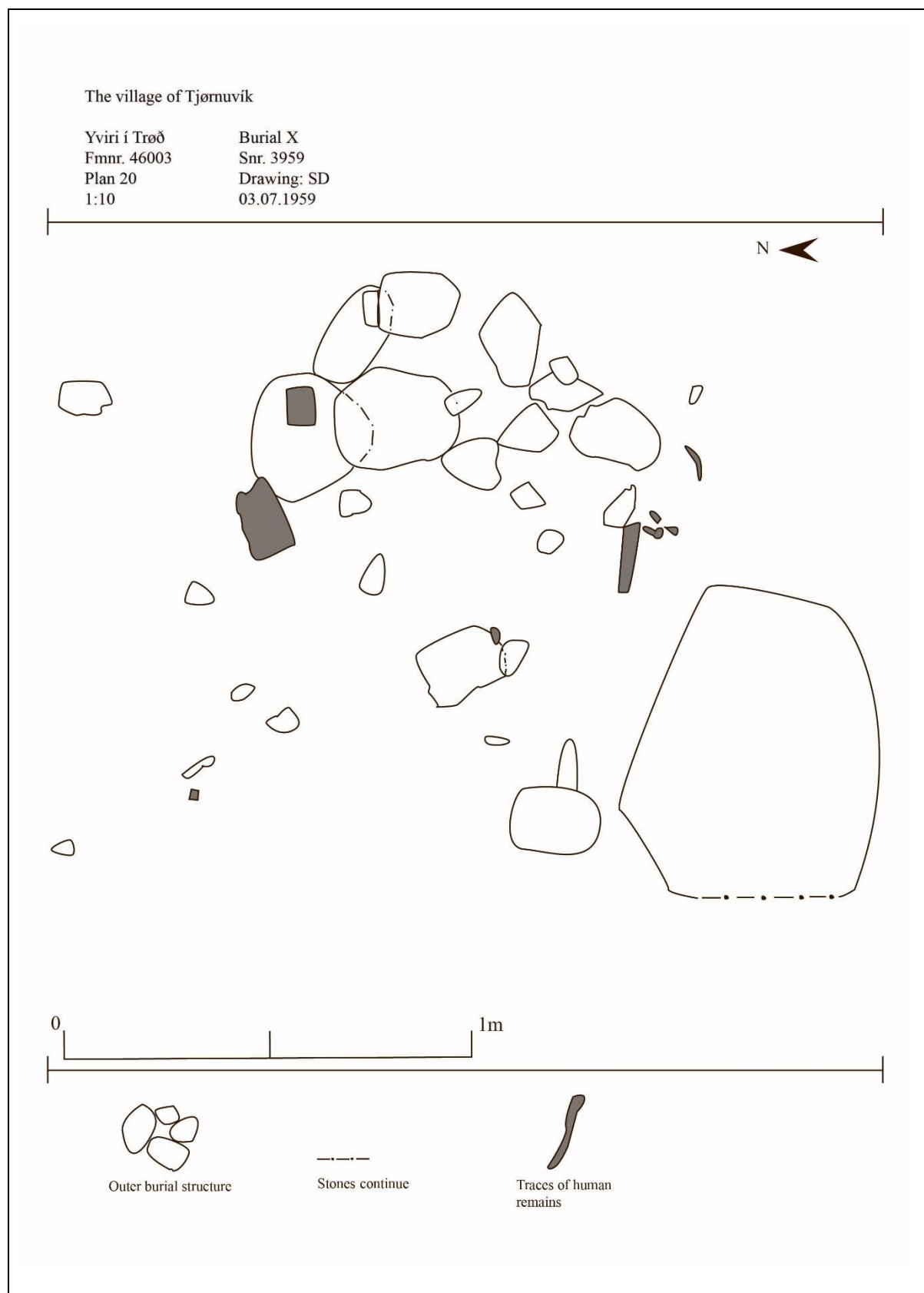


Figure 4.25 Burial X, Surface 1:10. Source: Sverri Dahl Unpublished Report, 1959. Digitised Ann S. S. Purkhús.



Figure 4.26 Burial X, Surface, 1959. Photo: Sverri Dahl, Tjóðsavnið (R-1959-7-30).

4.2.5.11 Burial XI (see Appendix A2 Burial XI)

Burial XI is one of the last excavated burials Yviri í Trøð. On the drawing in Figure 4.27 and on the photo in Figure 4.28, the burial is separated into two. In the initial interpretation of Burial XI, the two structures in the burial were seen as two separated burial. This interpretation changed during the excavation of the burials to one burial, Burial XI (Dahl, 1959c). Though it is not clear from the excavation report or diaries, why Sverri Dahl changed the interpretation.

The right part of the burial measured in length about 0.80m and in width 1.1m. The left part of the burial measured in length approximately 1.0m and in width 0.80m. Towards the right in the drawing there are two smaller stones. Both parts of the burial were well constructed of stones (Dahl, 1959c, 1959a). In the structure on the right hand side of the drawing, in the outer construction artefacts were found, a whetstone and charcoal (Dahl, 1959c).

The village of Tjørnuvík

Yviri í Trøð	Burial XI
Fmnr. 46003	Snr. 3959
Plan 19	Drawing: SD
1:10	19.06.1959

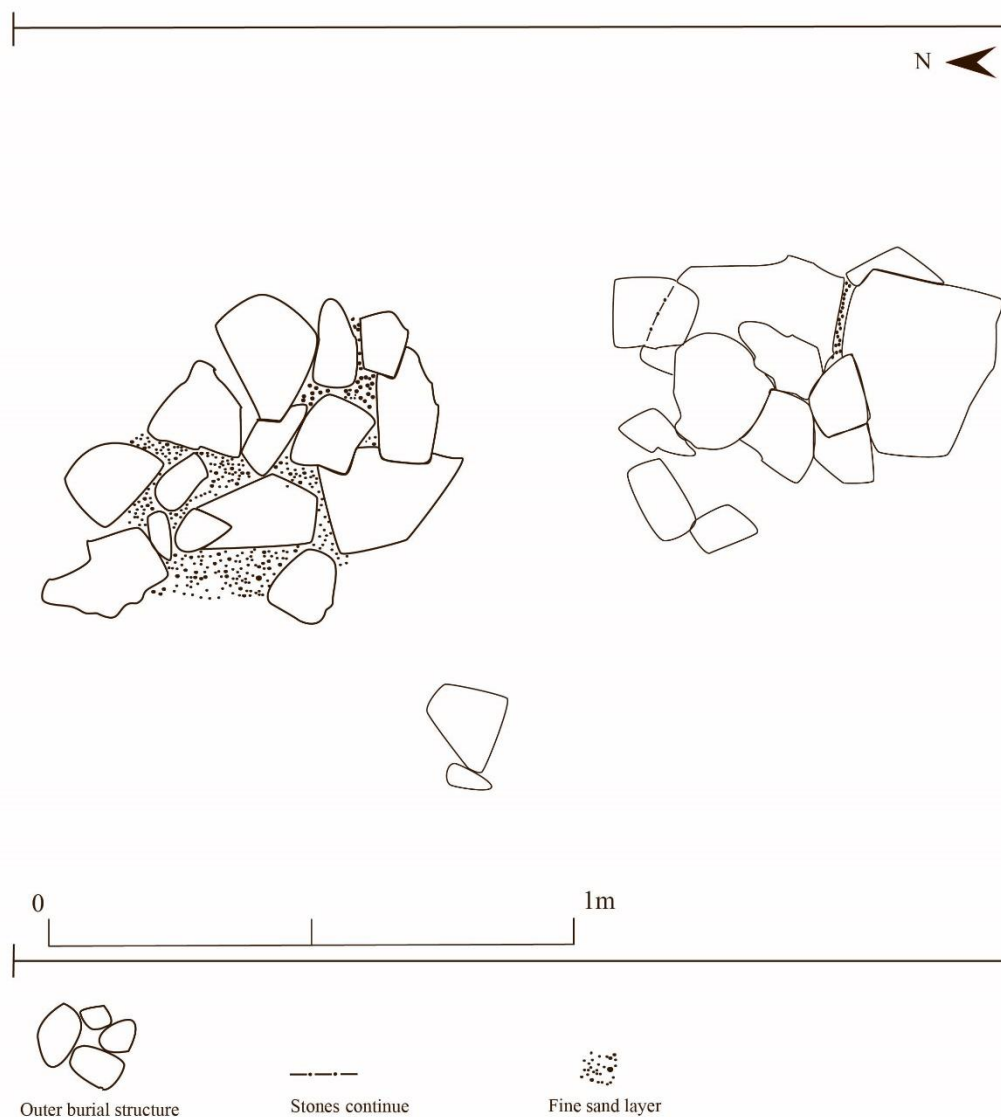


Figure 4.27 Burial XI, Surface, 1:50. Source: Sverri Dahl, Unpublished Report, 1959. Digitised Ann S. S. Purkhús.



Figure 4.28 Burial XI, Surface, 1959. Photo: Sverri Dahl, Tjóðsavnið (R-1959-4-12).

As Burial XI was excavated, light yellow and large bones were found in the upper layer, which were so large that these could be bones from large animals (Dahl, 1959c). These larger bones extended in the upper layer also south of the burial (Dahl, 1959c, 1959a). Today these bones are not in storage. In the same layer there were also smaller bones, thin and soft bones, which were interpreted to be possible human bones (Dahl, 1959c). As seen in the detailed drawing, Figure 4.29, the bones are scattered around and most of the larger bones are drawn south of Burial XI. South of the burial, smaller bones were observed, which could be human remains (Dahl, 1959c, 1959a). In the same trench as where the burial was found in Y9m, Sverri Dahl observed many large light-yellow bones, possibly animal bones and small bones, possibly human bones (Dahl, 1959c). In the layers there were also charcoal remains (Dahl, 1959c). When excavated through Burial XI, still thin, and soft bones were observed in the last layer of the burial. The bones were all decomposed and there was no definitive interpretation of the bones (Dahl, 1959c, 1959a). Due to the decomposed condition of the human remains, it was difficult to make an analysis of the bones and there were no decidedly human remains in order to make a proper analysis (Bennike, 1978, sec. 6A).



Figure 4.29 Burials XI and XII, Human Remains, 1:10. Source: Sverri Dahl, Unpublished Report, 1959.

4.2.5.12 Burial XII (see Appendix A2 Burial XII)

The last excavated burial was Burial XII. The burial was constructed of stones, and the burial was 3.0m in length and 1.75m in width (Figure 4.30, Figure 4.31) (Dahl, 1959c, 1959a). There is no separate detailed drawing of Burial XII, but there is a drawing together with Burial XI of the human remains as seen in Figure 4.29, and additional photos of the remains in Figure 4.32 and Figure 4.33.

Under the large pile of stones, the individual was interred into the sand, in where human bones were visible (Dahl, 1959c, 1959a). These were mentioned as “proper” bones, which probably had been part of the cranium (Dahl, 1959c). There were no teeth remains, but the vaulted coat of a head was very clear on the surface (Dahl, 1959c).



Figure 4.30 Burial XII, Surface, 1959. Photo: Sverra Dahl, Tjóðsavnið (R-1959-4-16).

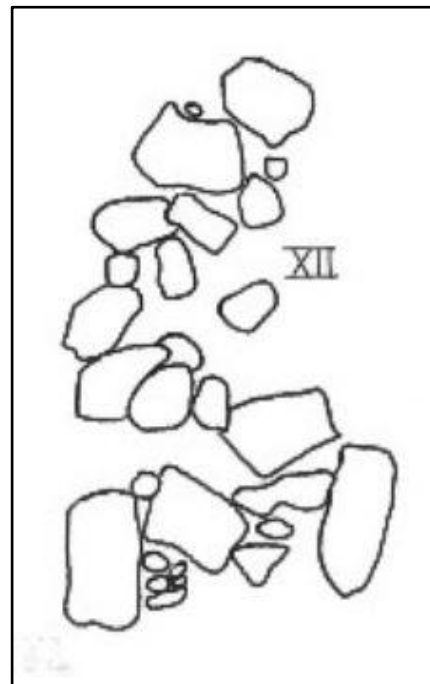


Figure 4.31 Burial XII from Main Drawing, 1:50. Source: Sverri Dahl, Unpublished Report, 1956-1959.

In the drawing of burial XII in Figure 4.29, the bones are concentrated in the area between 11y and 10y at about x12.50. If one compares the measurements of the drawing of the bones and the surface of the burial, the concentration of bones seemed to be in the left or lower part of the burial. Furthermore, on the drawing it appears to be two skulls. In addition, charcoal was found in the upper or right part of the burial.

As part of the processing the material a piece of burned bone was sent to forensic anthropologist, Head of Anthropological Institute of Copenhagen University Jørgen Balsev Jørgensen in 1959. Together with conservator Jeppe Møhl from the Zoologisk Museum in Denmark, it was concluded that the bone was from a sheep by the heel bone or calcaneus. Therefore, based on the observations made by Sverri Dahl and the analysis conducted of the burned sheep bone, it is possible that this burial had the remains of at least one person (perhaps two) and the cremated remains of a sheep. There were other finds from Burial XII: a rusty iron object and a belt of rust, which is not in storage (Dahl, 1959c).

In later analysis of the bone remains it was interpreted that the remains could be from human and/or animal remains (Bennike, 1978, sec. 6A).



Figure 4.32 Human Remains from Burial XII 1959. Photo: Sverri Dahl, Tjóðsavnið (R-1959-8-18).



Figure 4.33 Human Remains from Burial XII, 1959. Photo: Sverri Dahl, Tjóðsavnið (R-1959-8-19).

4.2.6 Preliminary Observations

During the process of examining the material, as well as the unpublished reports and diaries, the possibility emerged of additional burials. Therefore, based on unpublished site reports, diaries and radio interviews, these sources can shed light on additional burials and ritual activities performed at the site. This matter will be discussed in sections 4.4 and 4.5. In addition to the observation and discussions on possible burials, I will also discuss in Chapter 8 additional interpretations of ritual practices. A preliminary conclusion of the archival research and review is provided in 4.6, in conjunction with the burial site at Við Kirkjugarð.

As the review and description of the burial site Yviri í Trøð and the burials excavated has come to an end, the focus will now be on the Viking Age burials from the site Við Kirkjugarð in the village of Sandur on the island of Sandoy.

4.3 Við Kirkjugarð

This section is about the excavation of the Viking Age cemetery in the village of Sandur, with site name Við Kirkjugarð (Figure 4.34). The village number for Sandur is 27 and the area number for the excavations conducted at the site Við Kirkjugarð is Fmnr. 27015. The burial site Við Kirkjugarð is therefore part of a larger archaeological area with the excavations of an early church site, a settlement site and an industrial or activity site (Tjóðsavnið, 1952k). These

areas are differentiated with sites numbers, Snr. numbers. The Snr. number for the burial site at Við Kirkjugarð is 4422. The outline of this section follows the structure presented above in Section 4.1.



Figure 4.34 Aerial view of the village Sandur and the location of the Viking Age burials Við Kirkjugarð. Maps source: us.fo

4.3.1 Location and Find Circumstances

The site Við Kirkjugarð, together with the sites Undir Junkarisfløtti (Fmnr. 27020), at Á Sondum (Fmnr 27012) (Tjóðsavnið, 1952k) and the newly discovered building north of the

church, Norðanfyri Kirkjuna, is the area in the Faroes with the most abundant archaeological evidence from the Viking Age (Figure 4.35).

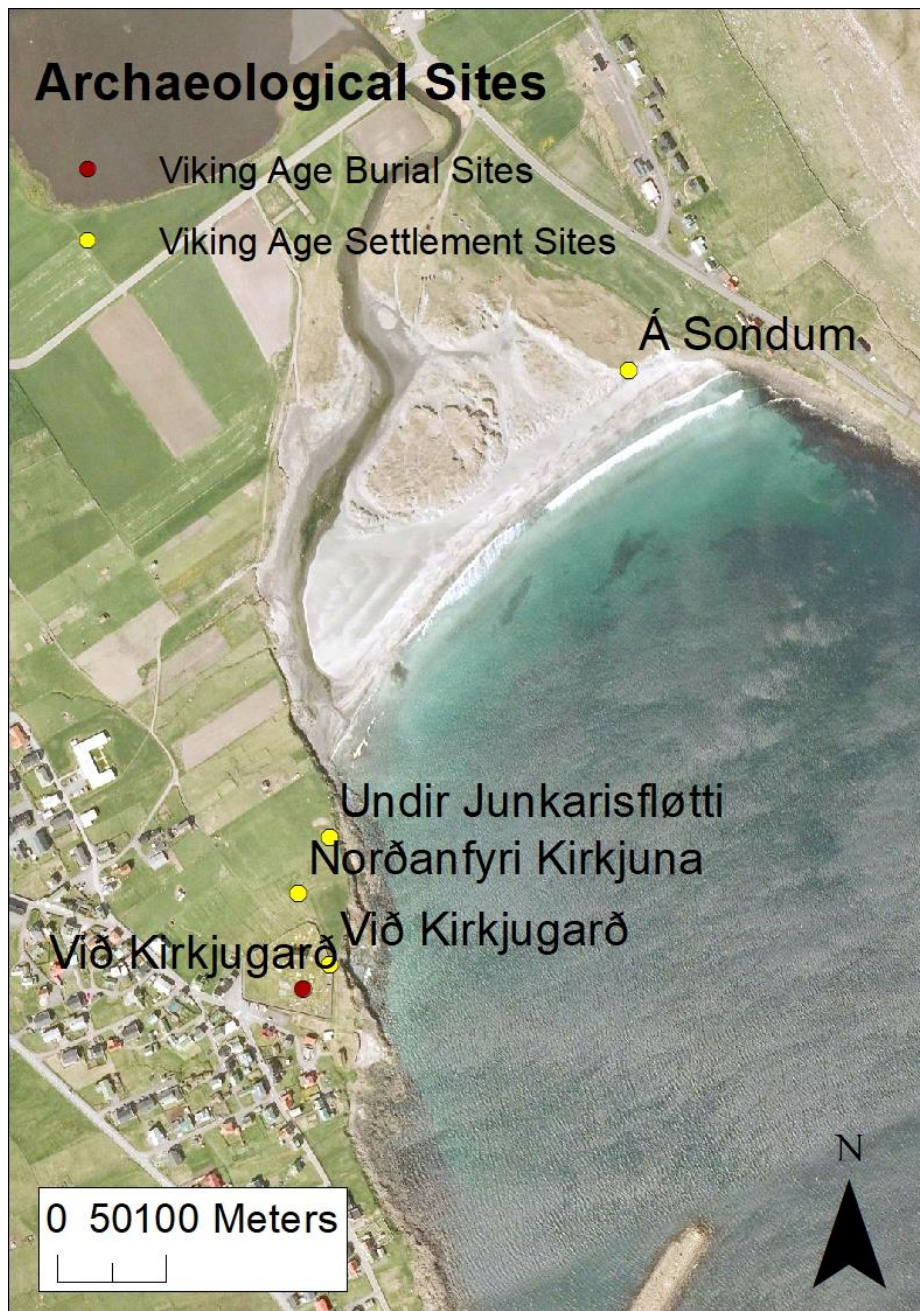


Figure 4.35 Aerial view of the burial site Við Kirkjugarð and settlement sites. Map source US.f0.

The indications of the importance of the site and the area at Við Kirkjugarð was significant already in 1863, when a coin hoard was found in a grass-grown stony mound. It was found when digging for a new burial in the south eastern part of the churchyard (Krogh, 1975). In

Færeyinga Saga the island Sandoy is mentioned as the place where the man Snæúlfur lived (Rafn, 1832, p. 21). In local folklore Snæúlfur lived in the village of Sandur at Á Heyggi more specially at Á Krossi, which is vaguely delimited to the southwest corner of the old church yard (Hammershaimb, 1891, p. XI; Hjalt, 1953, p. 138; Diklev, 1981b, n. ref. Sverri Dahl J.nr. 73/13-20). Additionally, in local tradition a convent was at Undir Halgabrekku, approximately, at the location where the church and churchyard are today (Hjalt, 1953, p. 56).

The natural landscape setting in the village of Sandur is quite different to the landscape in the village of Tjørnuvík. At Sandur, the bay is far-stretching, with sand dunes spreading along the coast. The hills and mountains in the vicinity of Sandur are lower and more settled in the landscape and not as steep as the mountains in Tjørnuvík. At Sandur, there are large lakes in close vicinity to the village. The name of the island, Sandoy, refers specifically to the island of sand with clear reference to the beach at the village of Sandur. The sandy soil in this landscape is good for agricultural activities. As part of the extension of the churchyard, test excavations were done south of the old churchyard (Figure 4.36).

During a test excavation in 1988, structures had been uncovered at Við Kirkjugarð which were interpreted to be part of a building (Hartmann, 1989b; Vilhjálmsen, 1989). During an excavation in 1989 at Við Kirkjugarð, it was clear that the structures were burials (Hartmann, 1989b). Niels Hartmann led the excavations of the Viking Age cemetery at Sandur at the site, Við Kirkjugarð, with Símun V. Arge as the leading supervisor from the National Museum in the Faroe Islands, Tjóðsavnið (Hartmann, 1989b, 1989a, 1990b, 1990a). Eleven burials were located, and seven burials were excavated. It is also evident from the excavations that the burials continue underneath the old churchyard (Hartmann, 1989b). As mentioned above, areas close to the burial site Við Kirkjugarð have been excavated showing settlement and industrial activities. To get an overview of the burial site and its relation to the activities at Við Kirkjugarð, a brief overview of these excavations is provided in Appendix A5. Additionally, interpretations in relation to these activities are brought forward in the appendix by former and present archaeologists working at Við Kirkjugarð.



Figure 4.36 Photo of the burial site Við Kirkjugarð. Niels Hartmann, Tjóðsavnið (1989-296-22).

In short, the archaeological excavations at Við Kirkjugarð have been characteristic by the need to extend the churchyard for new burials on the request of the local church authorities (Diklev, 1981b, 1981a; Hartmann, 1989b; Vilhjálmsón, 1989). The drainage system for the churchyard layout mapped out in a south-north direction have been used as trial trenches for the excavations conducted at Við Kirkjugarð (Appendix A5) (Diklev, 1981b; Hartmann, 1989b; Vilhjálmsón, 1989; Arge, et al., 2009). The excavations conducted at Við Kirkjugarð, Undir Junkarisflótti, Á Sondum show Viking Age settlement activities north of the church and possibly north of the dry stone wall and on the eastern side of the church (Krogh, 1975, p. 49; Arge et al., 2010; Church et al., 2013, p. 229; Summarmorgun, 2017; Nolsøe, 2018). Additionally at Á Sondum are pre Viking activities (Church et al., 2013). South of the church dry stone wall, there are industrial activities (Diklev, 1981b; Vilhjálmsón, 1989; Hartmann, 1990b; Arge et al., 2009). On the outskirts of these structures are the Viking Age burials (Figure 4.35) (Arge and Hartmann, 1989; Hartmann, 1989b).

The excavations also show that the settlements were short-lived, but the cemetery continued to be in use as seen with the need to extend the churchyard (Diklev, 1981b; Hartmann, 1989b; Vilhjálmsón, 1989). At one point it was decided to leave the coastal settlements as part of a move towards settlement further inland. It could be that people moved from this area along the

coast due to the shifting sand and erosion. Future archaeological research on this coastal strip on Sandur will hopefully shed more light on these issues and the dating of the different activities areas and the Viking Age burial site, in order to get a clear overview and time frame for the activities along the coast at Sandur. With the knowledge of settlements, as well as domestic and non-domestic activities, the attention will now be on the people who lived at Sandur and who were interred here during the Viking Age at Við Kirkjugarð – their final resting place.

4.3.2 The Burial Site Við Kirkjugarð

The burial site Við Kirkjugarð seems to have been well-organised, with the burials in almost parallel rows, not overlapping each other and aligned east-west with their head lying to the west (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, 1990). Even if this layout of a cemetery much resembled a Christian burial practice, many of the individuals interred in the burials were buried with objects (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, 1990). This might suggest that the burials came from an early Christian context, in which burial customs were in transition. Although the overall picture showed that the burials appeared to be similar, they were individually quite different in terms of layout and associated artefacts. The state of the skeletal material was not good; mostly only teeth enamel were left.

In Figure 4.37 is an overview of the excavated area at Við Kirkjugarð. Yellow marks the area with the Viking Age burials. The red circle marks the coin hoard found in 1863 and the eastern excavated gable of a building in the stony mound.



Figure 4.37 Overview of excavated burials in 1988 and 1989. Source: Símun Arge Tjóðsavnið.

4.3.3 1989 and 1990 Excavation Seasons

The excavation in 1989 started on the 10th of May, 1989, and ended on the 23rd of August, 1989 (Hartmann, 1989b). The 1989 excavation focused on the burials, while the 1990 excavation, attention was mostly on the area around the burials, where many structures were located (Hartmann, 1989b, 1990b). More information on the 1990 season is in Appendix A5. During this season, one burial was excavated. The excavation in 1990 lasted from 5th of May to 30th of August. Through the 1989 and 1990 excavations, it became more apparent that the landscape had changed character with the accumulation of the thick layers (Hartmann, 1990b, pp. 3–4). This landscape change was partially noticeable, especially where the landscape had been much flatter southbound (Hartmann, 1990b, p. 3).

4.3.4 Measurement and Excavation Technique

The measurement system was established as a right-angled coordinate system with values raising towards X and Y, East and North (Hartmann, 1989b). The same measurement technique used in 1989 was also used in the 1990 excavation, with minor adjustments to the measurement system (Hartmann, 1990b, p. 5). In the north-south direction, each area was assigned to a letter H, K, J or L, and in the east-west direction with a number 2,3,4,5 and 6. Each area was therefore pre-numbered before the excavation began (Hartmann, 1989b). The find number (Fnr. number) started with 600, in order to avoid double numbering from the previous 1988 excavation (Hartmann, 1989b).

The excavation started with the removing of the protective cover and surface excavation with shovels in order to get a clearer picture of the character of the layers (Hartmann, 1989b). Since the layers were deep, it was decided to dig a profile trench in the eastern part of the excavation (Hartmann, 1989b). During the excavation, the aim was to excavate one layer at the time, in the stratigraphically correct order (Hartmann, 1989b). Before the excavation started, there had been a focus on the structure K5A, because there were stones placed on the edge (Hartmann, 1989b). When the structure K5A was confirmed to be a burial, this changed how large an area was excavated and the focus of the excavation area. A major part of the excavation also focused on the extent of the burial site (Hartmann, 1989b). The burials in the medieval and modern churchyard set the physical limit on how far it was possible to continue with the excavation (Hartmann, 1989b). As mentioned above, seven out of eleven burials located were excavated. The focus will now be on the excavated burials.

4.3.5 Review of Burials

This section is about the results from the archival study conducted on the burial site Við Kirkjugarð. The sources used are the unpublished reports, the artefacts and the published articles by Símun V. Arge and Niels Hartmann (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, 1990; Hartmann, 1989b, 1989a, 1990b, 1990a; Arge, 2001). In addition, to the reports, the human remains, and artefacts were photographed, and their condition assessed as part of the review of the burials. The human remains are in storage at the Copenhagen University, Retsmedicinsk Institut, Anthropological Laboratory in Copenhagen. In Figure 4.38 is an overview of the eleven burials located at Við Kirkjugarð, coloured with yellow, where the rows are quite clear, burials marked with a red X are those which have been excavated. In Table 4.8 is an overview in which row the burials are part of.

Table 4.8 Overview of burials Við Kirkjugarð.

	First row (from south)	Second row	Third row	Fourth Row	Fifth row
Burial	J5A	K5A	J6G	J6E	J6F
Burial	K5D	K5B	J6C	J6B	

Burial			K5C		
Burial			K5E		

Pia Bennike from the Anthropological Laboratory at Copenhagen University was invited to take part of the excavations of the burial site and made the first assessment of the human remains in situ (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 5; Arge and Hartmann, 1990, p. 26). In Table 4.9 is an overview of Pia Bennike's analysis of the burials (Bennike, 1999). In the last column are Símun V. Arge and Niels Hartmann's interpretations of the gender of the interred human remains, based on the archaeological material (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, 1990; Hartmann, 1989b, 1990b). There were two adults, four young adults and one child (Bennike, 1999).

Table 4.9 Overview of Viking Age burials.

Burial	Sex	Adult/child	Age	Sex based on archaeological material
Burial J5A	?	Adult	30-50 years old	?
Burial J6B	Possibly male	Young adult	16-20 years old	Male
Burial J6C	?	Adult	30-40 years old	Female Possibly coffin birth
Burial K5A	?	Young adult	16-20 years old	Female
Burial K5B	?	Young adult	16-20 years old	Possibly female
Burial K5D	?	Young adult	16-20 years old	?

Burial J6G	?	Child	7-14 years old	Child
Burial K5C	Not excavated			
Burial K5E	Not excavated			
Burial J6E	Not excavated			
Burial J6F	Not excavated			

The review of the burials begins with Burial J5A and followed by a review the remaining six excavated burials. Combined with this review is further information, pictures and descriptions of the artefacts and human remain in Appendix A3.

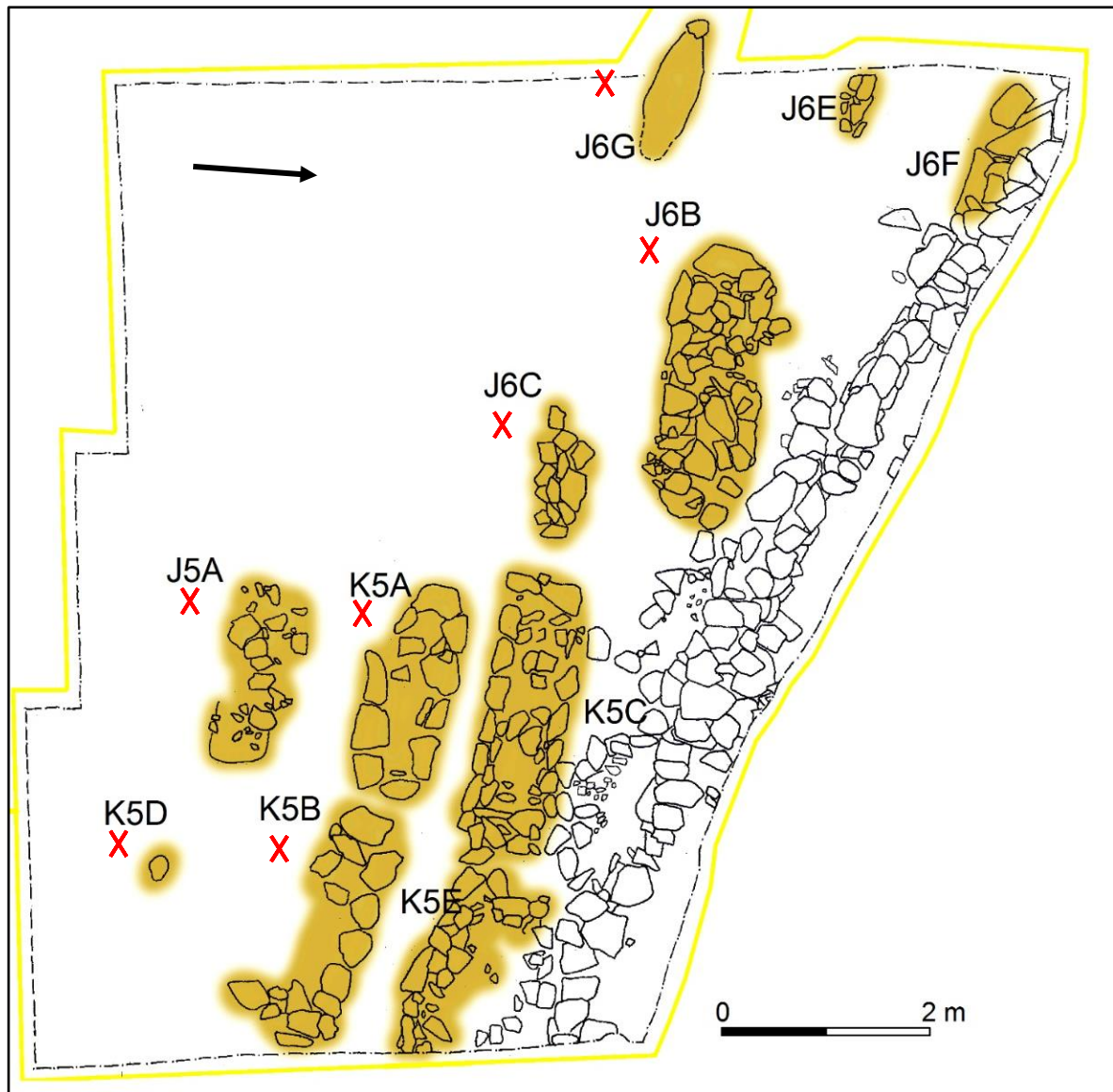


Figure 4.38 Overview of Viking Age burials at Við Kirkjugarð. Source: Símun V. Arge, Tjóðsavnið. Burials marked with a red X have been excavated (added by the author).

4.3.5.1 Burial J5A (see Appendix A3 Burial J5A)

Burial J5A was in the most southern row of the five burial rows, oriented in an east-west direction. The burials north of Burial J5A were burials K5A and K5C. In Figure 4.39 is a drawing of the burial.

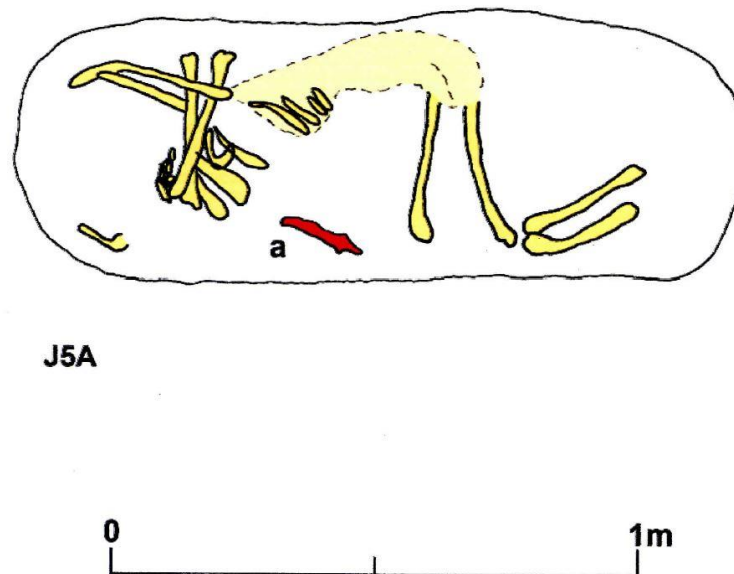


Figure 4.39 Plan of Burial J5A. The processed artefact is labelled as a knife. Source: Símun V. Arge, Tjóðsavnið.

The burial was irregular and partly disturbed (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, p. 10) and the layers in the burial were diffused (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 44). In addition, this burial was partly disturbed by earlier excavations especially on the south-western side (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 31). At different places around the burial edge there was a dark layer, which was interpreted as possible coffin remains (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 44). As the layer was not significant in its extension, the interpretation of this layer should be taken with consideration (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 44). The individual in the burial was most likely laid in a simple oval-shaped earth burial with a stone cover (Hartmann, 1989b, pp. 18 and 44). The stones above the burial were mostly

burnt and small, of hand to fist size (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, p. 10). The burial pit was just under 1.5m in length (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 9).

The individual in the burial lay on the right side in a hock position with the head in the west end (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 19). In Figure 4.40 in the dotted area opposite the abdomen area of the interred the excavator found possible artefacts, which include a possible wooden bowl and a comb. On top of the bowl lay an iron knife (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 33). When excavating this burial, seven other iron objects were found and in addition wooden charcoal. On the drawing below, x marks the findspot for the iron pieces.

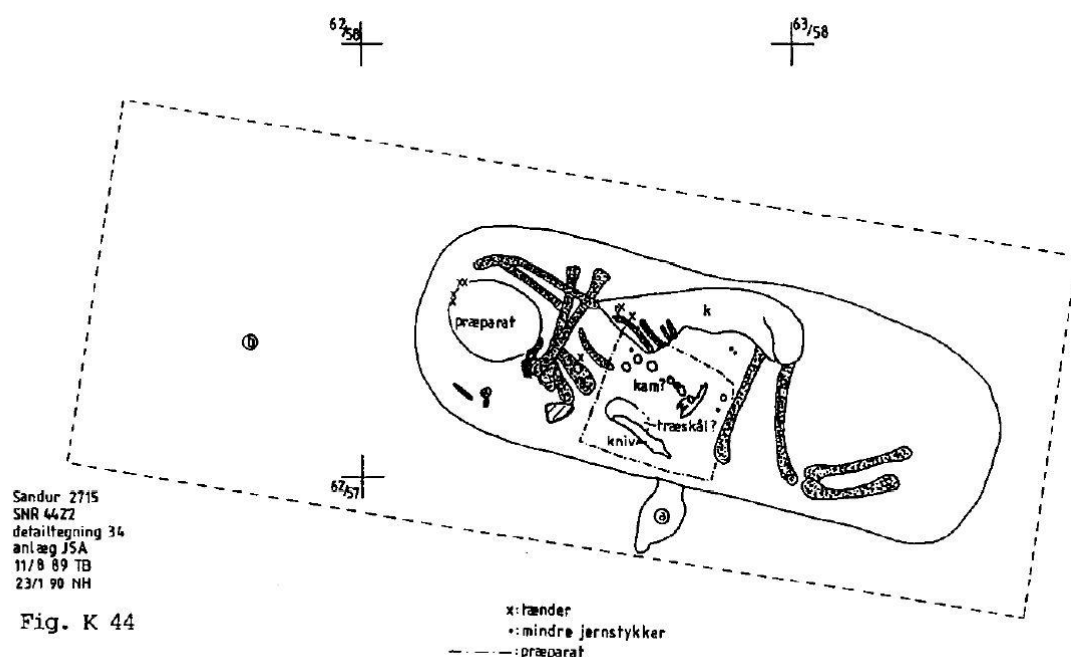


Figure 4.40 Burial J5A detail, drawing 34. Source: Niels Hartmann, Unpublished excavation report, 1989 Fig. K. 45.

According to Pia Bennike's analysis, the individual in the burial was estimated to be aged between 30 and 50 years old. The height of the individual was possibly 175cm, but it was difficult to estimate. It was not possible to determine the gender (Bennike, 1999).

4.3.5.2 Burial J6B (see Appendix A3 Burial J6B)

Burial J6B was excavated during the 1989 season. Burial J6B was in the fourth row of the five burial rows, oriented in an east-west direction. In a southern direction was burial J6C. This burial measured about 3x1m and was the largest of the burials excavated. The outer construction of this burial was carefully laid with stones. It was most likely that the burial was visible on the surface after the construction (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 17).

The burial was approximately rectangular or a little trapezoid with long sides, which pointed towards the east (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 45). The burial was constructed of both water rolled stones and cleft stones, with larger stones set as an outer frame and in the inside filled up and covered with smaller stones 10-40cm in diameter (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 45). The west end of the burial was marked with a large stone, 70cm in length. The east end of the burial was more diffused, but there were 3 larger stones (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 45). East of the burial was a stone, which seemed to mark the border with the next burial. This stone is marked with a red cross on Figure 4.41.

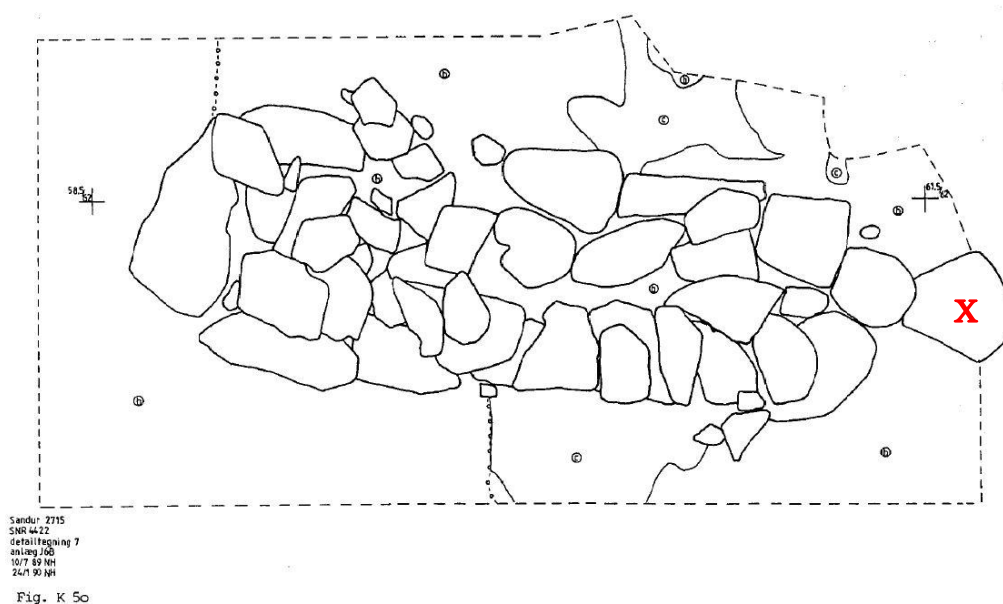


Figure 4.41 Burial J6B, Outer surface. Source: Niels Hartmann, Unpublished excavation report, 1989, detail drawing 7, Fig. K 50.

The individual was buried in an extended position on the back, with the head in the west-end (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 18). It was estimated that the person was a young man aged between 16 and 20 years old (Bennike, 1999). In Figure 4.42 is a drawing of the burial; the letters mark the artefacts located in the burial. The person was interred below the stone construction in where there were traces of wooden planks, which could be remains of a coffin (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 46). The traces were especially visible on the southern side, which was semi rectangular in shape, as seen in Figure 4.42.

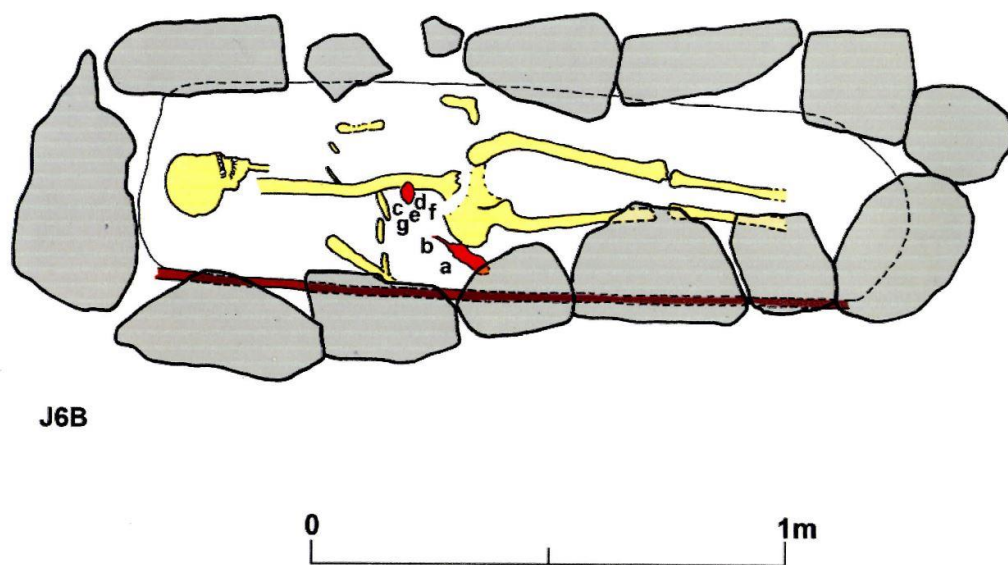


Figure 4.42 Plan of Burial J6B. Source: Símun V. Arge, Tjóðsavnið. The artefacts are labelled with a letter and the letters represent: A: Iron knife. B: Bronze ring. C: Seven weights in three pairs. D: Fragments of a purse. E: Strap end. F: Bronze fragment. G: Silver fragments.

In the burial the person was interred with several items, such as a knife, bronze ring, fragments of a purse, bronze fragment and silver fragments, which were probably hack silver (Figure 4.42). During excavation a possible belt was observed (Hartmann, 1989b). These items were concentrated around the abdomen area, in where remains of iron objects or possibly rivets in the size from a few millimetres to several cm in diameters, were found (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 18, p. 48). The iron objects were registered on a drawing (Figure 4.43). Most of these iron objects were dissolved and could not be taken up for preservation. Several of these iron objects were observed in the level above the human traces and a couple of them underneath the human traces (Hartmann, 1989b, pp. 36, 39). Since the iron objects and artefacts were concentrated around the abdomen area, and the area with iron objects was rectangular in its extension, it is

possible that the iron objects were part of a box and that a few of the artefacts had been enclosed in the box, for example the purse, bronze fragments, the weights and hack silver. The ring resembled much a ring headed pin and was possible used as a pin to fasten the clothes, and the possible leather belt was probably fasted around the waist in which the knife and knife shaft were attached to.

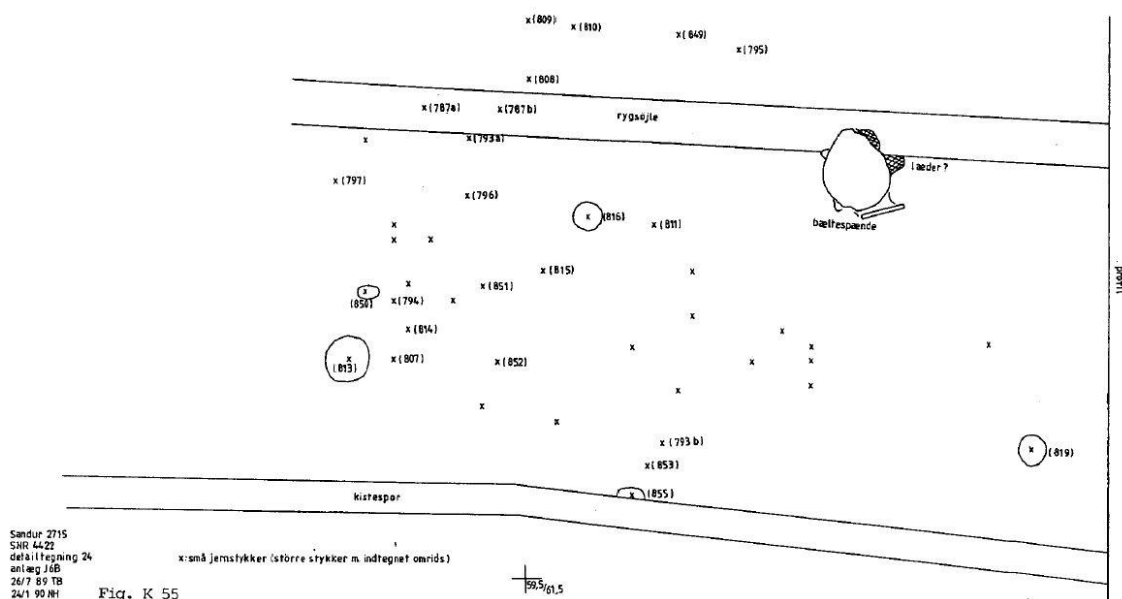


Figure 4.43 Iron objects from Burial J6B. Source: Niels Hartmann, Unpublished excavation report, Detail drawing 24 Fig. K 55

4.3.5.3 Burial J6C (see Appendix A3 burial J6C)

Burial J6C was excavated during the 1989 season. Burial J6C was in the third row of the 5 burial rows set in an east-west direction. Towards the north was Burial J6B. The outer construction of the burial was a stone setting, 1.9m in length and 0.56m in width (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, p. 11). The western half of the burial was lower than the eastern half of the burial. In the western end, there was an extra layer of stones and in the eastern end 3 stones, which were 5-10cm in size (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 36). The individual was located 30cm below the stone structure, who was laid in an extended position on the back with the head in the west end, in a simple earth burial (Figure 4.44) (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, p. 14; Hartmann, 1989b, p. 18). It was not possible to determine the gender (Bennike, 1999). Though it is feasible that the person in the burial was a woman, who had a coffin birth, because between the individual

thighbones some small bones lay (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 47). These bones could be the remains of a foetus (Figure 4.45).

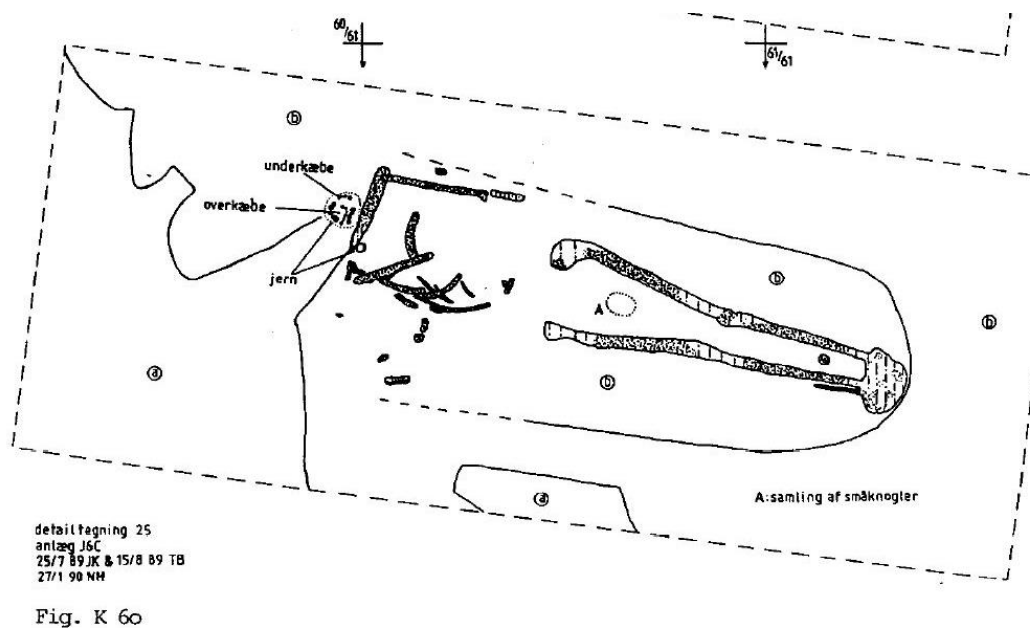


Figure 4.44 Burial J6C. Source: Niels Hartmann, Unpublished excavation report, 1989, detail drawing 25 Fig. K. 60.

Along the burial edge in the eastern part there was a darker colour, which could be remains from a coffin (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 48). Niels Hartmann pointed out that this could be a log coffin (in *Danish bulkiste*), but remained critical, because there were no traces of a coffin underneath the individual (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 48).

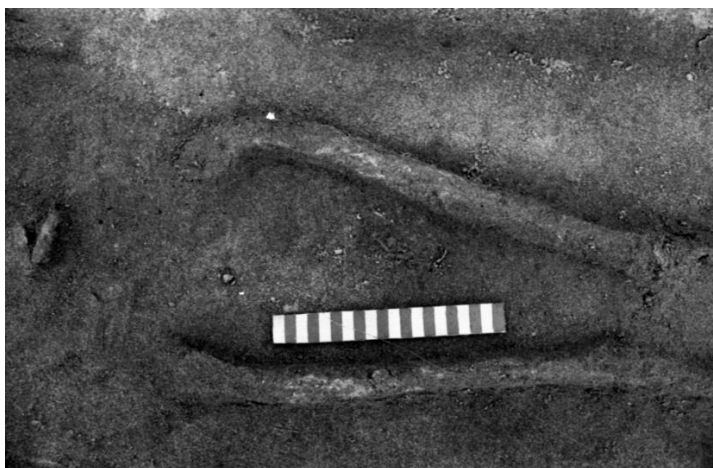


Figure 4.45 Small bones, coffin birth? Tjóðsavnið (1989-295-23).

These dark-coloured traces resembled very much the dark coloured traces in Burial J5A, in which there was no coffin (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 48). Three iron objects were found which are not in storage. The first iron object was found a few centimetres from the spine, the second on the right side of the rib and the third close to the teeth. From the fill in and around J6C there were burned bones and, by the right shoulder under the iron object, a few centimetres from the spine, there was charcoal. There were also animal remains found in layer b.

4.3.5.4 Burial K5A (see Appendix A3 burial K5A)

Burial K5A was excavated during the 1989 season and was the first excavated burial at the site Við Kirkjugarð. Burial K5A was in the second row; towards the north was Burial K5C and to the south Burial J5A. The outer construction of this burial was made of stones and was probably visible when built (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 17). The burial was constructed of alternating large stones, which were angular and round (possible water rolled) (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 48). The outer measurements of the burial were 2m in length and 0.90m in width. An older trench ran through the upper part of the burial's west end (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 49). The inner part of the burial was not filled with stones and the burial itself was formed as a stone-lined coffin rectangular in shape (Figure 4.46) (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 18).

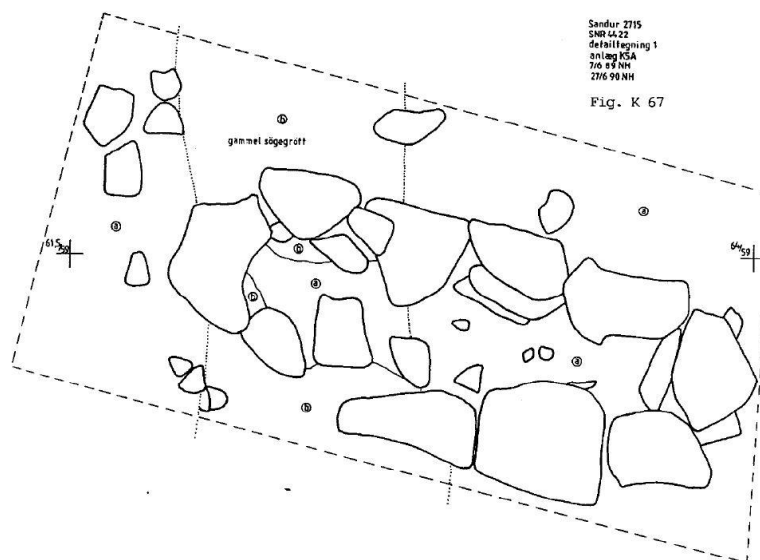


Figure 4.46 Burial K5A. Source: Niels Hartmann, Unpublished excavation report, 1989, Detail drawing 1 Fig. K 67.

In the long sides of the burial, several of the stones were placed on the edge and in both ends of the burial there was a larger stone placed on the edge (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 49). Between the stones in the construction, there was a large amount of peat ash lumps and in the burial itself, the transition from one coloured area to the next coloured area was rather diffuse. This colour variation could be due to decay of the individual and other organic components put into burial (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 38). In the burial fill, there were also significant peat ash spots, wood charcoals and burned bone (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 38). The bottom of the burial was a slightly uneven surface with rounded edges (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 50).

The individual in the burial was lying in an extended position on the back, with the head in the west end (Figure 4.47). It was not possible to determine the gender based on the skeletal remains (Bennike Sandur 2715 archives 1999). Though based on the artefacts in the burial it was argued that the person interred in the burial could be a female about 18 years old (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 18). The artefacts, which were found in the burial were, for example a clipped Arabic Cufic coin, an iron knife, pearls, and fragments of a bone comb. These are listed and marked in Figure 4.47.

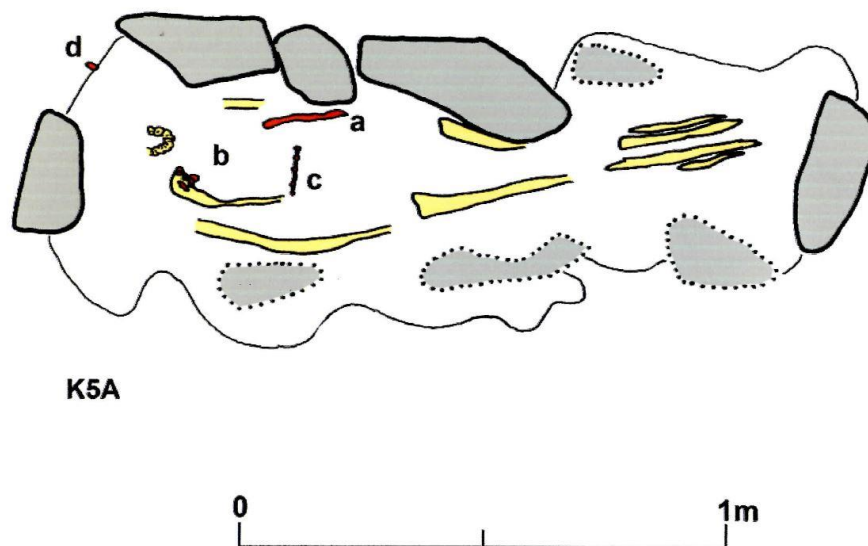


Figure 4.47 Plan of Burial K5A. The processed artefacts are labelled with a letter and the letters represent: A. Knife B. Pearls C. Bone comb fragments D. Silver coin. Source: Símun V. Arge, Tjóðsavnið.

The coin has been identified as a copy of an early Abbasid dirham, which was made by the Kazars or Volgar Bulgars in the late ninth century, Gert Rispling suggested c. AD 883/4 (Blackburn, 2005, p. 148). With the coin the burial can be suggestively dated to the mid-10th century (Graham-Campbell, 2005, p. 131).

4.3.5.5 Burial K5B (see Appendix A3 burial K5B)

Burial K5B was excavated during the 1989 season. Burial K5B was in the second row, oriented east-west. To the north was Burial K5E and towards the south Burial K5D. The outer construction of this burial was made of stone and was probably visible when built (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 17). Before the excavation of the burial, it was clear that the burial had been heavily disturbed in the southern side of the burial, with many stones missing (Figure 4.48) (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 50). The western end of the burial was more intact, and the end stone stood on its edge, wedge-shaped with the wedge tip placed down in the burial edge just above the bottom of the burial (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 51).

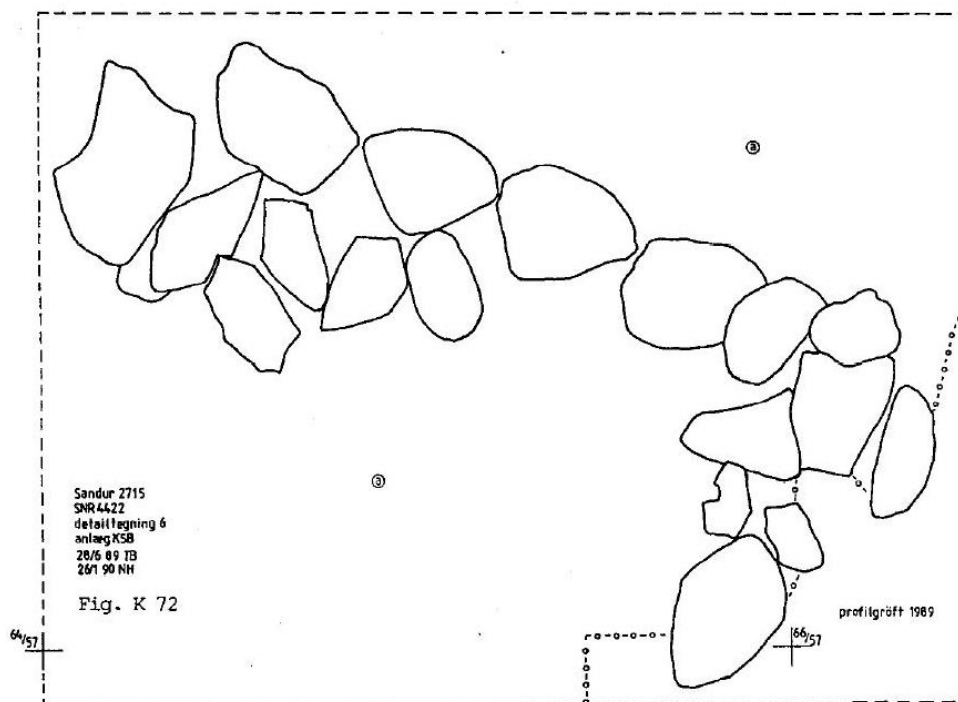


Figure 4.48 Burial K5B. Source: Niels Hartman, Unpublished excavation report, 1989, detail drawing 6 Fig. K 72

The outline of the burial seems to have been in its original shape rectangular. After removing the upper stones, there was a second layer of stones, which together with the missing stones formed a partly closed stone-lined coffin (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 52). The soil in this excavated area had inclusions of burned bones, charcoal, peat ashes, unburnt bones and 3 fragmented animal teeth, but nothing of this was sampled (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 51).

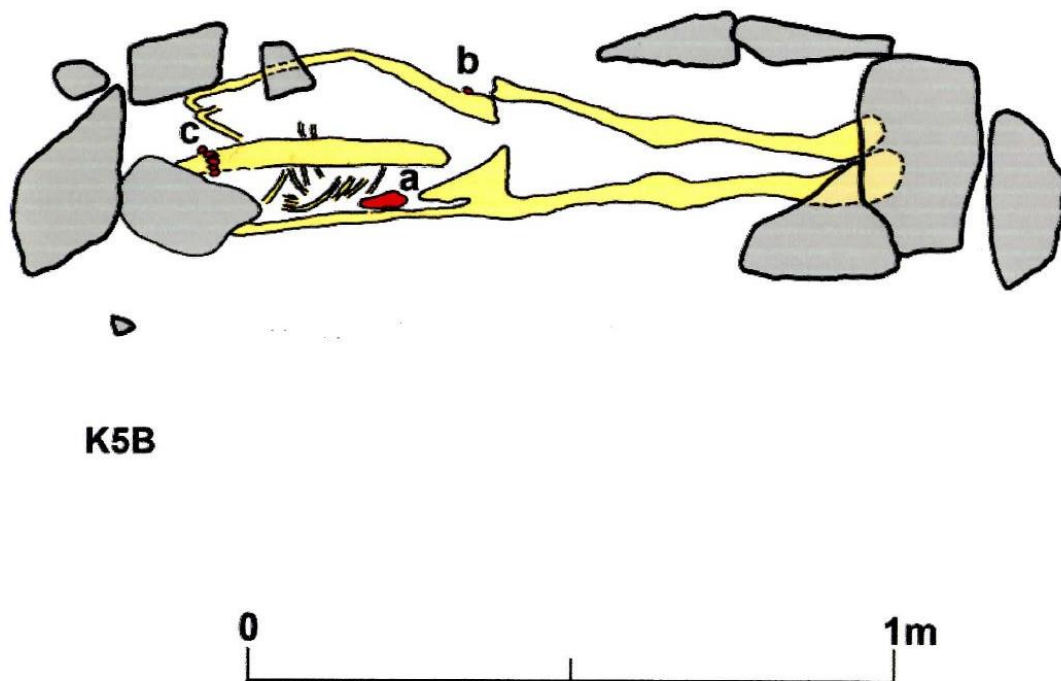


Figure 4.49 Plan of Burial K5B. The processed artefacts are labelled with a letter and the letters represent: A. Iron knife B. Silver finger ring C. Pearls. Source: Símun V. Arge, Tjóðsavnið.

Several damaged and dissolved iron objects were also found. In addition, animal bones were found close to the thighbone. The individual interred in the burial had a necklace as part of the burial assemblage, as well as a knife, a silver finger ring and other iron objects (Figure 4.49, Figure 4.51). In Figure 4.50, it is clear how the pearls are lined together below the deceased head.

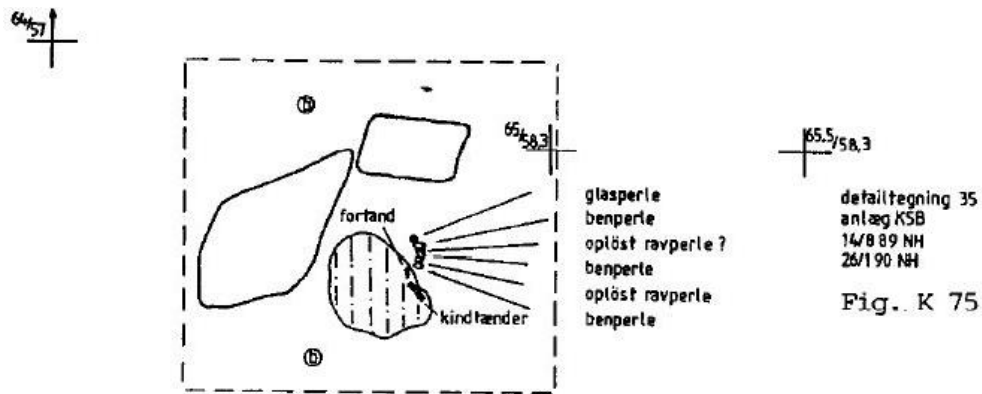


Figure 4.50 Burial K5B. A “perle” is a pearl. Source: Niels Hartmann, Unpublished excavation report, detail drawing 35, Fig. K 75.

Based on the artefact’s assemblage in the burial, Símun V. Arge and Niels Hartmann argued that the interred could be a female about 18 years old in age (Arge, S.V. and Hartmann, 1989, p. 15; Hartmann, 1989b, p. 18). Conferring the anthropological analysis, the individual in the burial was about 16-20 years old. The gender of the individual could not be concluded (Bennike, 1999).

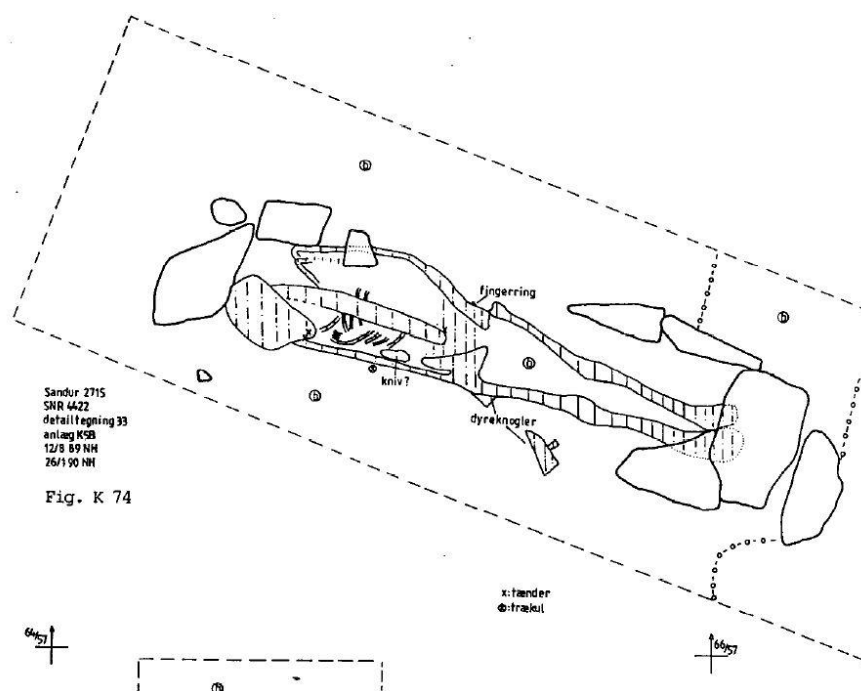


Figure 4.51 Burial K5B. Source: Niels Hartmann Unpublished excavation report Detail drawing 33, Fig. K. 74.

4.3.5.6 Burial K5D (see Appendix A3 2 burial K5D)

Burial K5D was excavated during the 1989 season (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 48). Burial K5D was in the outermost southern row, oriented east-west. The burials north of K5D were Burials K5B and K5E. A likely stone cover was destroyed by cultivation and therefore there was no stone cover above this burial (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 19). There were signs of cultivation in the eastern end of the burial (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 37).

Sandur 2715
SNR 4422
detailtegning 9
anlæg K5D
12/7 89 TB
23/1 90 NH

Fig. K 64

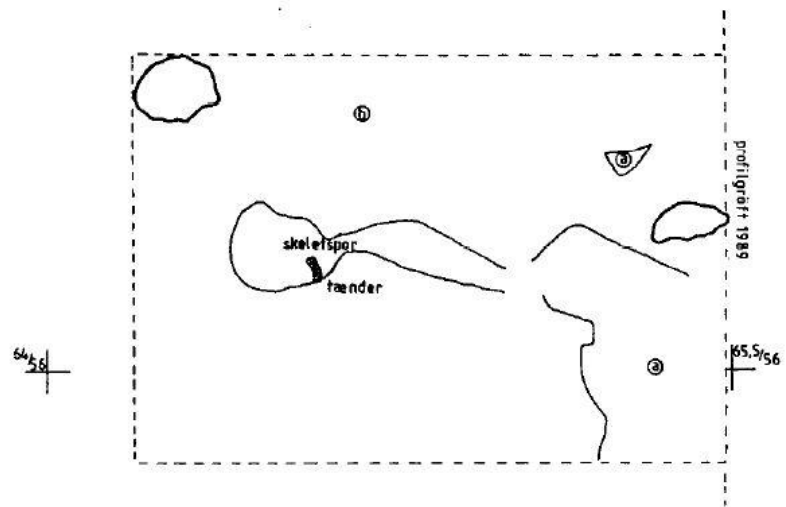


Figure 4.52 Burial K5D. Source: Niels Hartmann, Unpublished excavation report, 1989, detail drawing 9, Fig. K 64.

The individual in the burial was lying on the right side in a hock position, with the head in the west end in a simple earth burial (Hartmann, 1989b, pp. 18-19). There were no artefacts found in the burial and all the bones were very decayed (Figure 4.52). An iron object was found in the area of the burial, but it was difficult to determine if it was part of burial K5D. It was estimated that the interred was between 16 and 20 years old (Bennike, 1999).

4.3.5.7 Burial J6G (see Appendix A3 burial J6G)

Burial J6G was excavated during the 1990 season. Burial J6G was in the third row, oriented east-west. The burials north of Burial J6G were Burials J6E and J6F. This burial was found when the balk between areas H6 and J6 was levelled (Hartmann, 1990b, p. 7). The burial was 1.5m in length and 0.40m in width and was a trough-shaped pit burial (Figure 4.53, Figure 4.54) (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, p. 16).

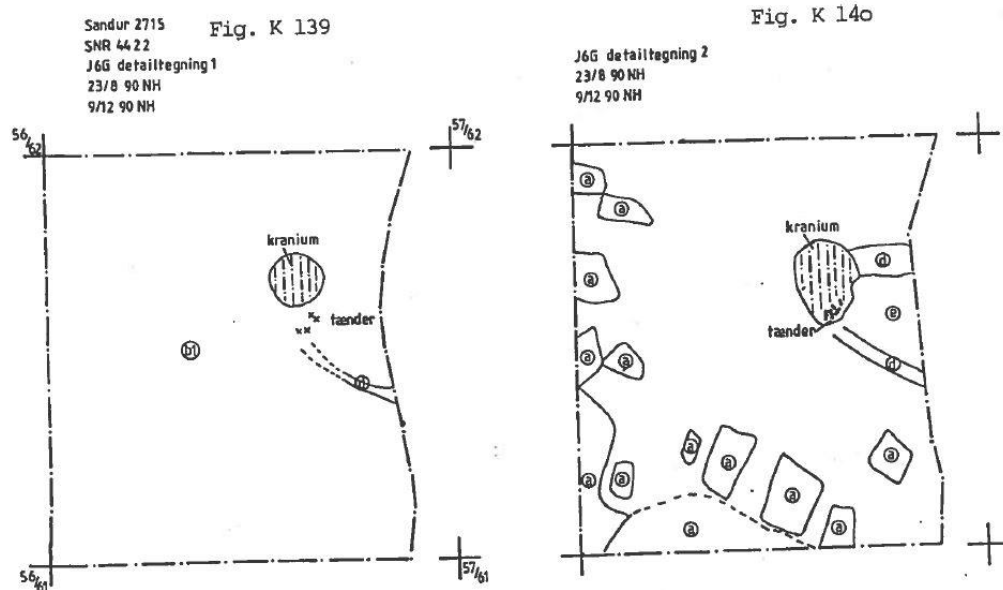


Figure 4.53 Burial J6G. Source: Niels Hartmann, Unpublished excavation report, 1989, Detail drawing 1 and 2, Fig. K 139 and K 140.

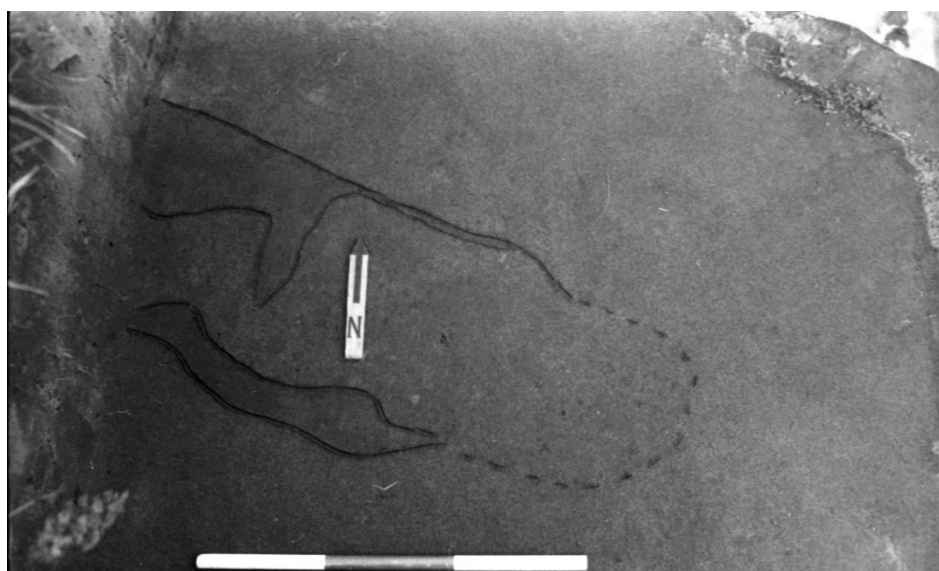


Figure 4.54 Burial J6G. Photo: Niels Hartmann, Tjóðsavnið (1990-122-03).

It was possible that the individual was interred on the left side (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, p. 16). There were very few human remains in the burial, because most of the human remains were decomposed (Hartmann, 1990b, p. 7). No artefacts recovered from this burial. The head was in the west end, which was decomposed, but there was a set of teeth (Hartmann, 1990b, p. 7). Based on the anthropological analysis the interred individual was a child between 7 and 14 years old (Bennike, 1999).

4.3.5.8 Burial K5C

Burial K5C was found in 1989 but was not excavated. Burial K5C was in the third row, close to the churchyard. South of Burial K5C were Burials K5A and J5A. The outer construction of this burial was carefully laid with stones, placed on the edge (Figure 4.55) (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 50). Since the burial was not excavated there is no information about it in Appendix A3.

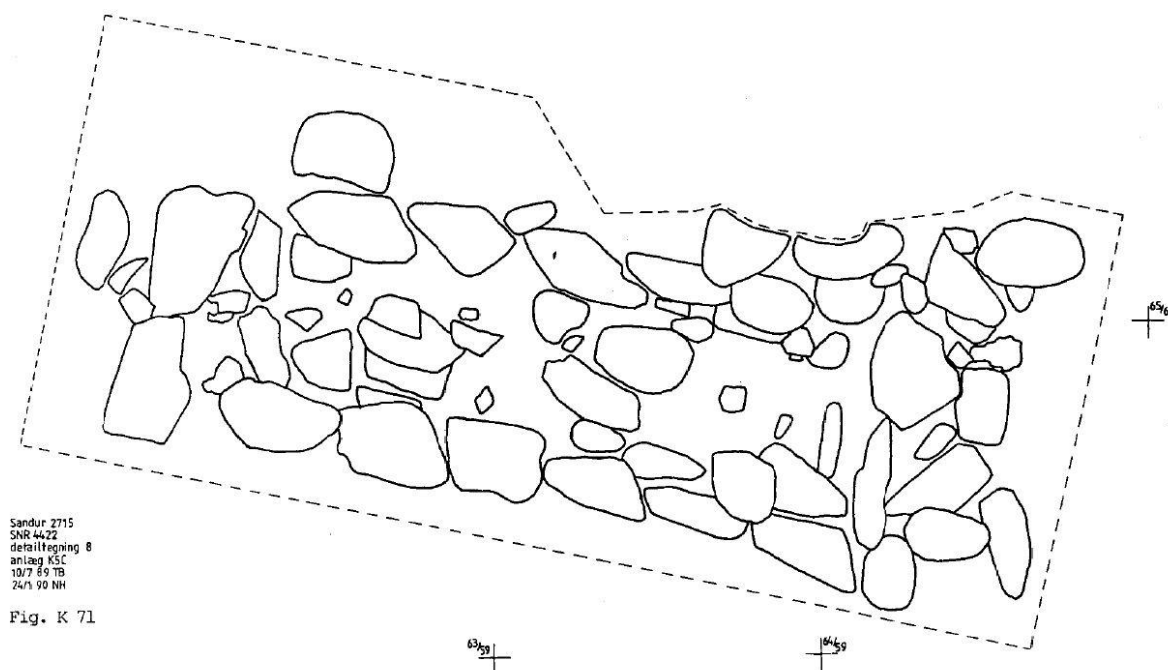


Figure 4.55 Burial K5C. Source: Niels Hartmann, Unpublished excavation report, 1989 detail drawing 8, Fig. K 71.

Most likely the burial was visible after its construction (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 17). Although this burial was not excavated, Niels Hartmann suggested some preliminary ideas on burial. As the burial points or tips slightly towards the west which it could be an indication that the

individual in this burial was interred in the burial with the head in the east end (Figure 4.56) (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 50). This would be in contrast with the ritual activity conducted at the other burials, where the interred was placed with the head in the west end of the burial. Although the burial is not excavated and therefore, the orientation of the interred is unclear.

This was the last of the burial review and following this final burial assessment is the discussion of ritual activities at Yviri í Trøð in section 4.4, followed by the discussion of ritual activities at Við Kirkjugarð in section 4.5.



Figure 4.56 Burial K5C, outer structure. Photo: Niels Hartmann, Tjóðsavnið (1989-139-27).

4.4 Yviri í Trøð Ritual Activities

In the process of the assessment of the burial sites of Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð there was evidence of additional burials and traces of ritual practices. This section is about the results of the additional ritual activities at Yviri í Trøð in the village of Tjørnuvík. The examination and review is based on the information given by Sverri Dahl in the excavation reports (Dahl, 1956b, 1957b, 1959c). The results are outlined below. An overview of ritual activities are in Table 4.10 and in the of the plan at the cemetery Yviri í Trøð in Figure 4.57.

Table 4.10 Evidence of additional ritual activities at Yviri í Trøð.

Season 1957	
A)	A skull measured in, which seemed to come from the ditch beside the road at X3 – 4 m about 6,20 + 8,48 m (Dahl, 1957a). No Find Number. On plan X1. See Figure 4.57.
B)	An additional possible burial was mentioned in the report and diary from 1957, when Sverri Dahl (short: SD) was cleaning the upper part of trench Y12,20 and excavating X3m towards the west (Dahl, 1957b, 1957a). Sverri Dahl did not follow up on this information in his report (Dahl, 1957b, 1957a). It is difficult to interpret the circumstances for this possible burial. If there was a burial, but without human remains it is possible that the burial was disturbed in antiquity. It is also possible that this burial was an empty burial, a cenotaph. On plan X2. See Figure 4.57.
Season 1959	
C)	When excavating the trenches SD observed bones in different heights in the trenches 9,5x-14x, 12y-5y (Dahl, 1959c). There was also charcoal in x12m.y9 (FNR 6b). On Plan X3. See Figure 4.57.
D)	Possible burials surfaced while excavating trench Y9m west of x9.5m in areas “in the excavation report described as <i>rútar</i> ” 8 and 9. In the shifting sand a large stone and lots of smaller stones, which he described as quite unusual to find in the shifting sand (Dahl, 1959c). The term “ <i>rútar</i> ” was no specified, but in the artefact overview it referred to as X8 and Y9. In the same area were rusty bits and a rusty piece of iron (FNR 1-4). It was not certain if these pieces were from the 1957 excavation (FNR 1) SD was not certain if this was a burial, but found bone remains and loose sand. (Dahl, 1959c). On plan X4. See Figure 4.57.

<p>E) Possible missing burials above the excavated burials. As SD excavated on top of the sand mound he observed that between the landslides and the brown sand layer there were areas with bone remains, which were decomposed and soft and visible as yellow dots (Dahl, 1959c). It was difficult for SD to interpret these bone remains and was not certain if they were part of burials or had been brought to the area from the other burials with the wind (Dahl, 1959c).</p>
<p>F) Possible destroyed burial: At 10x-7y at height 10.55 a very thin layer of bones were found at the bottom of a landslide with brown sand and small stones covering an area of about 50x50cm (Dahl, 1959c). In this area there are no burials registered.</p> <p>On plan X5. See Figure 4.57.</p>
<p>G) Ritual Activity: lots of charcoal was found east of X12-Y9m and south of burials XI and XII.</p> <p>On plan X6. See Figure 4.57.</p>
<p>H) Ritual Activity: Charcoal was also found in trench at X9 and at X9.5m-Y7.</p> <p>On plan X7. See Figure 4.57.</p>
<p>I) Ritual activity: Charcoal and whetstone found south of burial VIII.</p> <p>On plan X8. See Figure 4.57.</p>
<p>J) Burial III: Large animal bones were found, but these are not in storage (Dahl, 1959c). In the top layer there were thin bones and in the layer below decomposed bones (Dahl, 1959c).</p> <p>On plan X9. Figure 4.57.</p> <p>Burial VIII: In the top layer there were thin bones and in the layer below decomposed bones (Dahl, 1959c).</p> <p>On plan X10. See Figure 4.57.</p> <p>Burial IX: Charcoal found (Dahl, 1959c).</p> <p>On plan X11. See Figure 4.57.</p> <p>Burial X: Charcoal found (Dahl, 1959c).</p> <p>On plan X12. See Figure 4.57.</p> <p>Burial XI: In the top layer there were thin bones and in the layer below decomposed bones (Dahl, 1959c). Large animal bones were found, but these are not in storage (Dahl, 1959c). In burial XI there were both large light yellow bones, which were too large to be human bones and smaller bones, which probable were human remains (Dahl, 1959c). In addition, there was charcoal in the burial.</p> <p>On plan X13.</p>

See Figure 4.57.

Burial XII: In burial XII human remains observed and a burned piece of bone was found, which later analysis showed it was a bone from a sheep (Dahl, 1959c).

On plan X14.

See Figure 4.57.

K) Find numbers FNR. 7 and 8 remains of bones. Human or animal? Found charcoal as well. Exact location not mentioned in the report (Dahl, 1959c).

See Figure 4.57.

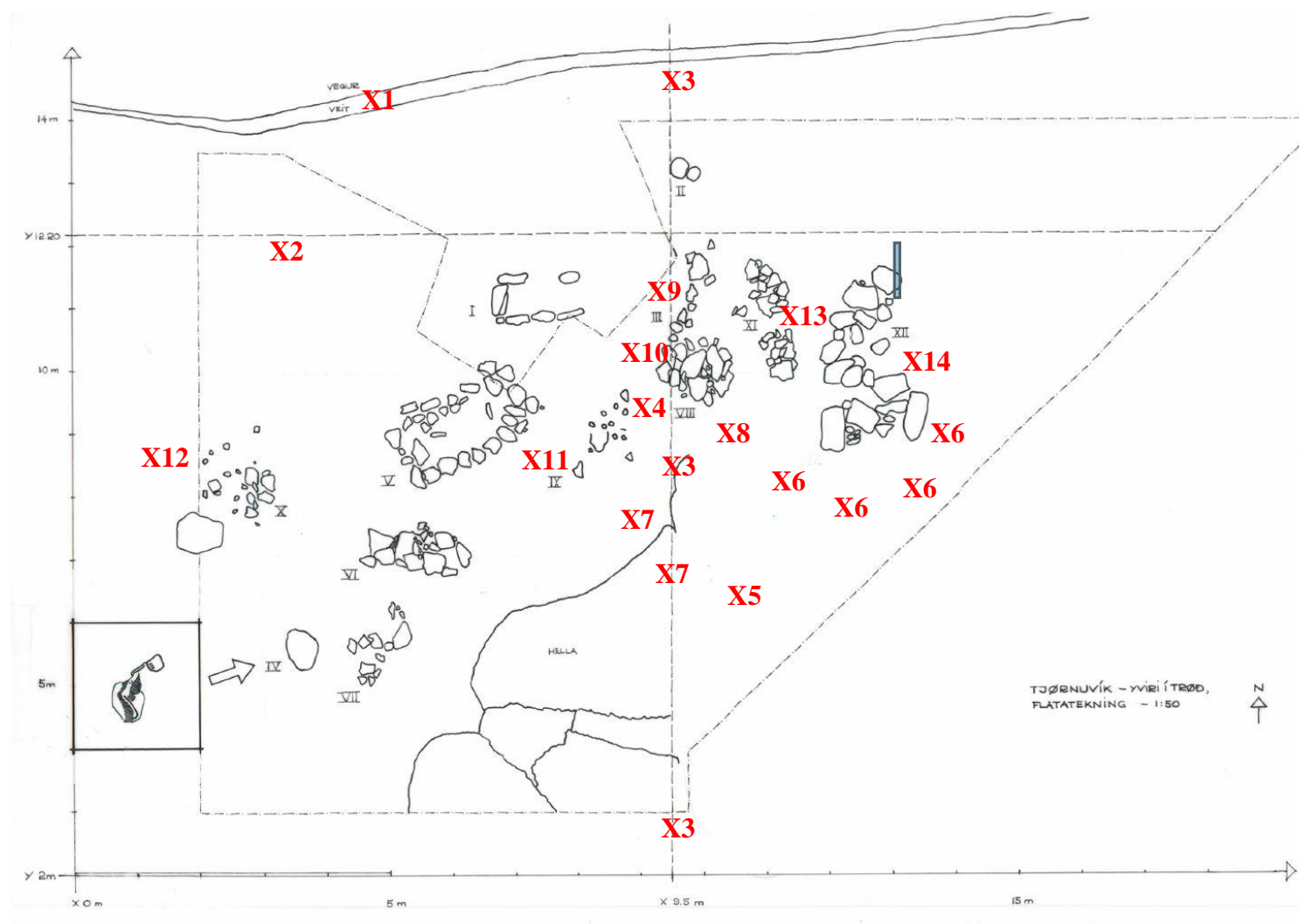


Figure 4.57 X mark additional ritual activities at Yviri í Trøð.

4.4.1 Additional Burials Yviri í Trøð

During the assessment it was evident that there were possibilities of additional burials above the layer with excavated Burials I to XII and in the same layer as the already excavated burials (Table 4.10, Figure 4.57). As Sverri Dahl excavated on top of the sand mound he observed that between the landslides and the brown sand layer there were areas with bone remains, which were decomposed, soft and visible as yellow dots (Table 4.10 E) (Dahl, 1959c). These areas with bone remains could be indicators of additional burials, which had not been registered during excavation. Sverri Dahl was digging in trenches and in using this excavation technique it was probably difficult for him to get a clear overview of the burial site. With this excavation technique it is difficult to observe burial in the surface. Additionally, the excavation team had probable no prior knowledge or experience in archaeological excavation, as Sverri Dahl was the only on site with archaeological experience and education.

In the review of the excavation season 1957 the results of the excavation show that there are the possible burials close to the ditch, marked as X1 in Figure 4.57 (Table 4.10 A) and in and close to trench Y 12.20, west of Burial I, marked as X2 in Figure 4.57 (Table 4.10 B). Additional burials are observed in the report from the 1959 summer excavation season marked as X3 in Figure 4.57 (Table 4.10 C), as X4 in Figure 4.57 (Table 4.10 D) and as X5 in Figure 4.57 (Table 4.10 F) (Dahl, 1959a). A possible destroyed burial was south of Burials VIII, XI and XII, which is on Figure 4.57 marked X5 (Table 4.10 F). There is nothing in the report, which indicates that the site was covered when not digging. The site probably was not covered off season it would have affected the condition and preservation of the remains. As the human remains were fragile and soft and turned to dust when the burials were opened (Dahl, 1959a).

In short it is very likely that there were burials between the last landfill and the brown sand layer. In this layer Sverri Dahl observed at several places and in different heights in the trenches in the sand mound decomposed bones. Eventual burials in this layer would have been destroyed by the ongoing landslides and the salt from the sea at Yviri í Trøð. Questions, which can be asked are: were the skeletal remains in this layer from human or animals or a combination of human/animal burials? Additionally, were these remains part of inhumation, cremated or both inhumation and cremated burials?

In addition to the possibility of several burials, it is feasible that the Burial XI was two burials and likewise Burial XII was two burials. In the overall drawing of the burial site, Burial XI is divided into two separate pile of stones (Figure 4.57). Burial XII is also divided in two sections on the overall plan of the burial site, where the southern section is turning east-west and the northern section in a more north-south direction (Figure 4.57). Since it was not possible for Sverri Dahl to interpret the bones and there was a mixture in the bones it was difficult to make an interpretation.

In both Burials XI and XII Sverri Dahl mentioned the presence of animals remains. In burial XI there were large animal bones and in burial XII analysis of a burned bone, showed it was a bone from a sheep (Table 4.10 J). Based on the descriptions of the larger non-human bones in the excavation report it is likely that in Burial XI the bone remains were above the human remains. It is also decidedly possible that there were animals buried above the human remains in burial III and VIII (Table 4.10 J). Therefore, I would suggest that at least in Burials XI and XII there were both buried human and animals.

4.4.2 A Platform for Ritual Activities?

With the addition of the evidence of several burials, there is strong support of a ritual platform at the burial site Yvirí í Trøð, observed from the large presence of charcoal remains mentioned in the excavation report. A platform for ritual activities and performances could have been concentrated on a location south of Burials VIII, XI, XI and XII, which in Figure 4.57 is marked as X6, X7 and X8 and in Table 4.10 with letters G, H, and I.

This is evident from the large concentrations of charcoal found in this area, where Sverri Dahl mentioned the possibility of the remains of a bonfire (Dahl, 1968a, p. 191). There were no signs of a structure and therefore the ritual activities were probable preformed in the open landscape on the burial site. With no signs of a structure it is also possible that in this area the bones were cremated and then laid on top of the burials. In a short description of the burials Sverri Dahl mentioned that there was burned sheep bones on the site together with charcoal pieces on the top layer on the sand dune (Dahl, 1968a, p. 191). As part of ritual activities animals were not only placed in the burials, but could also be used as part of the ceremonies (cf. Price, 2008, p. 148).

At the end of the Viking Age the cemetery at Yviri í Trøð was no longer in use. Built on the analysis of the cemetery there could be several reasons for the abandonment of Yviri í Trøð. The abandonment of the cemetery could be practical because there was not enough space to extent the cemetery towards the sea and path in the north, towards east and south of the infield/outfield border and towards west with the infield hayfield production. In addition, the continuing landslides could be a reason to re-locate the cemetery, landslides which Sverri Dahl recorded during his excavation of the burial site (Dahl, 1956b). In support of this argument are recent landslides. For example, in 1663 there was a large landslide, which destroyed most of the infield and in 1868 a second landslide covered all the infield in gravel and stones (Viderö, 1994, p. 6; Jacobsen, 1999, p. 182). The third main reason could be that the location of the cemetery was relocated to the village as people converted to Christianity. At the cemetery Við Kirkjugarð it was quite opposite, as the people who lived in the village of Sandur continued to use the cemetery from the Viking Age onwards.

4.5 Við Kirkjugarð Ritual Activities

This section is about the results of the additional ritual activities at Við Kirkjugarð in the village of Sandur. The examination and review are based on the information in the excavation reports, articles and photos (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, 1990; Hartmann, 1989b, 1989a, 1990b, 1990a). The results are outlined below. An overview of ritual activities is in the Table 4.11.

Table 4.11 Ritual Activities Við Kirkjugarð Seasons 1989 and 1990.

Season 1989
<p>Additional burials</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Additional burials probable destroyed during later cultivation (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 18). 2. Area J5, find number 674: human teeth in a semicircle and remains of animal teeth (Hartmann, 1989a, sec. Oldsagslister). 3. Area J6 animal remains, no certain human remains (Hartmann, 1989a, sec. Oldsagslister)
<p>Stone markers in the cemetery</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Possibly a stone marking of a burial underneath dyke J6D - associated to burial J6B (Hartmann, 1989b). 5. Stone marker between burials K5A and K5B.
<p>Burials Ritual Activities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Burial J5A: disturbed by an earlier excavation trench. Around the burial edge a dark layer, possible coffin remains (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 44). Stones above the burial mostly burnt and small (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, p. 10). Individual lay on the right side in a hock position with the head in the west end (Hartmann,

1989b, p. 19). Artefacts: a comb, a possible wooden bowl and iron knife (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 33). Iron fragments and wooden charcoal (Hartmann, 1989a).

7. Burial J6B the outer construction of this burial was carefully laid with stones. The burial was constructed of both water rolled stones and cleft stones (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 45). The west end of the burial was marked with a large stone, 70cm in length (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 45). Below the stone construction, the individual was buried in a coffin fully or partially made/constructed of wooden planks or a plank frame (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 18). On the south side of the burial and towards the north there were clear traces of wooden planks. The individual was not interred in the above stone cist, but 30cm below the stone frame in a rounded rectangular pit (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, p. 11). The individual was buried in an extended position on the back, with the head in the west-end (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 18). Iron objects concentrated around the abdomen area (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 47). The iron objects (possible nails) were probable part of a wooden box. A sample was taken and if the iron remains were part of a box it contained a purse and, in the purse, there were three sets of weights, hacked silver fragments, a decorated bronze fragment with an interlaced motif and other corroded bronze fragment. Other artefacts: a couple of the iron remains were underneath the human traces (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 36), a buckle with the possible remains of a leather strap, a knife and a knife sheath. The ring resembles a ring headed pin and it is possible that this ring was fastened to the clothes of the person in the burial. The possible leather belt was located around the waist and it is likely that the knife and knife shaft were attached onto the belt. Found in connection with the burial animal tooth in lower a and titan in layer b (table 4. 26).
8. Burial J6C burial disturbed possibly due to cultivation (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 36). The individual was located 30cm below the stone structure (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, p. 14). The individual was laid in an extended position on the back with the head in the west end, in a simple earth burial (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 18). Most likely there was a second individual in the burial, because between the individual thighbones some small bones lay. These bones could be the remains of a foetus, and it is therefore feasible that the individual in the burial was a woman, who had a coffin birth (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 47). It seemed likely that the individual was buried in a coffin, because there was a darker colour along the burial edge in the eastern part (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 48). Niels Hartmann pointed out that this could be a log coffin (Danish: *bulkiste*), but remained critical, because there were no traces of a coffin underneath the individual (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 48). Only three iron objects were found which are not in storage. The first iron object was found a few centimetres from the spine, the second on the right side of the rib and the third close to the teeth. From the fill in and around J6C there were burned bones and, by the right shoulder under the iron object, a few centimetres from the spine, there was charcoal. There were also animal remains found in layer b. With the few iron objects located and the burned bones in and around the fill of the burials, this could indicate that the burial was reopened after the person was interred. Or it is also possible that the burial was left open for a while, as part of the burial rituals. In addition, there was an animal tooth and a jaw fragment in layer b. A few cm from the spine was an iron object and larger charcoal by right shoulder. An iron object was on the rib, right side and burned bones from fill and around J6C.

Season 1989

9. Burial K5A outer was construction made of stones (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 17). It was constructed of alternating large stones, which were angular and round (water rolled?) (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 48). The inner part of the burial was not filled with stones and the burial itself was formed as a stone-lined coffin (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 18), rectangular in shape. Between the stones in the construction, there was a large amount of peat ash lumps (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 38). In the burial fill, there were also significant peat ash spots, wood charcoals and burned bone (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 38). Among the artefacts, there were pearls, which would have been a necklace of amber and glass pearls, a knife, probably remains of silver jewellery, which is not in storage, a comb and an Arabic Kufic coin. Animal teeth were found in the bottom of the burial.
10. Burial K5B outer construction of this burial was made of stone and was probably visible when built (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 17). Burial disturbed in the southern end (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 50). No cut visible (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 51). The soil in the excavated area outside the burial had inclusions of burned bones, charcoal, peat ashes, unburnt bones and 3 fragmented animal teeth, but nothing of this was sampled (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 51). The outline of the burial seems to have been in its original shape rectangular. After removing the upper stones, there was a second layer of stones, which together with the missing stones formed a partly closed stone-lined coffin (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 52). The individual in the burial was lying in an extended position on the back with the head in the west end. Several damaged and dissolved iron objects were also found. In addition, animal bones were found close to the thighbone. The individual interred in the burial had a necklace as part of the burial assemblage, as well as a knife, a silver finger ring and other iron objects.
11. Burial K5D a likely stone cover was probably destroyed by cultivation in this area (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 19). The individual in the burial was lying on the right side in a hock position, with the head in the west end in a simple earth burial (Hartmann, 1989b, pp. 18-19). There were no artefacts found in the burial and all the bones were very decomposed. An iron object was found in the area of the burial, but it was difficult to determine if it was part of burial K5D.

Season 1990

1. Area H6A remains of animal bones possible a sheep burial (Hartmann, 1990, p. 7;38)

Burial Ritual Activities

1. Burial J6G was excavated during the 1990 season. The burial was 1.5m in length and 0.40m in width and was a trough-shaped pit burial (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, p. 16). It was possible that the individual was interred on the left side (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, p. 16). There were no artefacts recovered from this burial.

4.5.1 Additional Burials Við Kirkjugarð

The burial site Við Kirkjugarð is only the second archaeologically excavated Viking Age burial site in the Faroes. During the excavation of the cemetery at Við Kirkjugarð it was not possible to fully understand the extent of the Viking Age cemetery, because the burials extended under the churchyard's drystone wall and the archaeological excavated dyke J6D (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 17). The possible dyke, J6D, was interpreted to be constructed after the interment of the individuals, but not long after (Hartmann, 1989b, sec. 19). In reviewing the cemetery at Við Kirkjugarð there was clear evidence of ritual activity in relation to the artefacts deposit in the burials: in addition, there is the possibility of further burials (see Table 4.11 on additional burials). This assessment is based on archaeological reports from the excavations in the seasons 1989 and 1990 (Hartmann, 1989b, 1989a, 1990b, 1990a).

The possibility of additional burials was recognized during the 1989 excavation in areas with scattered human remains (Table 4.11 numbers 1, 2 and 3) (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 17). In area J5 with find number 674 there were human teeth in a semicircle and remains of animal teeth (Hartmann, 1989a, sec. Oldsagslister). In area J6 animal remains were found, but no certain human remains (Hartmann, 1989a, sec. Oldsagslister). The possibility of additional burials had probable been destroyed during later cultivation (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 18). Niels Hartmann argued for the likelihood that the part of the excavated site Við Kirkjugarð could be a younger part of a larger cemetery (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 17). This phase of the cemetery then extended underneath the modern dry stone wall, the older dyke J6D and under the church cemetery.

4.5.2 Visibility of the Burials

Concerning the burials' visibility on the surface, it was difficult in the procession of the excavated material to draw a conclusion, because of the material accumulation to the site over time, here including the windblown sand (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 17). It was suggested that, with the carefully laid stone construction of burials J6B, K5A, K5B and K5C, it was highly likely that these burials had been visible on the surface after their construction (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 17).

In the structural layout of the burials, possible stone markers were between some of the burials. During the excavation of the burial J6B, it was observed that a stone was attached, but not part of the burial (Hartmann, 1989b). It could be a stone marker for another burial, which was

underneath the old dyke J6D. Furthermore, a stone between burials K5A and K5B could be a stone marker (Figure 4.58). However, these stones are at the same level as the burials themselves and could therefore have been symbolic stone markers (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 17). In addition, in the organisations of the cemetery there were certain stones, which probably were symbolic markers of the burial J6B and between burials K5A and K5B (Hartmann, 1989b; Table 4.11 numbers 4,5).

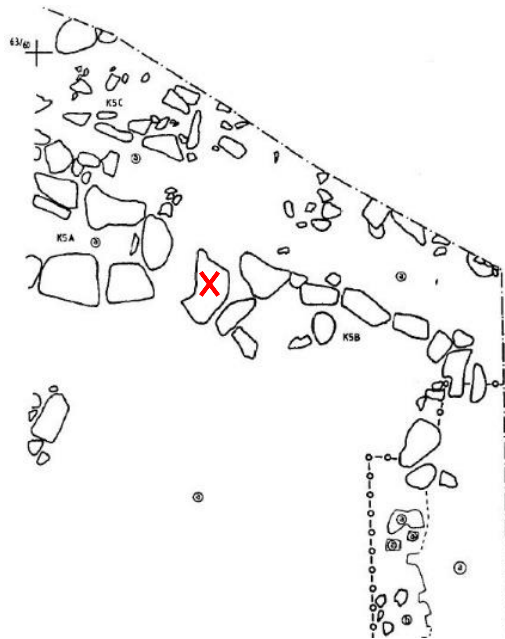


Figure 4.58 Stone marked with red X, possibly a symbolic mark between burials K5A and K5B. Unpublished excavation catalogue, 1989 fig. K29.

4.5.3 Ritual Performances Across the Site?

The artefacts in the burials and the position of the individual show a variety of burial practises and ritual performances. In Burial J5A the individual was laid on the right side in hock position with a comb and close to the abdomen area was a possible wooden bowl and iron knife (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 33). Burial J5A had possible coffin remains with a top layer of stones, which were mostly burnt and small (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, p. 10). In Burial J6B the individual was probable buried in a coffin and was laid in an extended position on the back (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 18). Above the abdomen area there were iron remains, which resembled iron nails and therefore could be interpreted as remains from a box (Table 4.11, numbers 6,7).

Ritual activity can also be observed in Burials J6C, K5A and K5B (Table 4.11, numbers 8,9,10). In Burial J6C an iron object was found on the rib on the right side and burned bones from fill and around J6C (Table 4.11). A few centimetres from the spine was charcoal. There were also animal remains found in layer b. In Burial K5A in the burial fill, there were also significant peat ash spots, wood charcoals and burned bone (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 38). Animal teeth were in bottom of the burial. Between the stones in the construction, there was a large amount of peat ash lumps (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 38). Around Burial K5B there probably was ritual activity because in the soil there was inclusions of burned bones, charcoal, peat ashes, unburnt bones and 3 fragmented animal teeth. Nothing of this was sampled (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 51). In Burial K5B animal bones were found close to the thighbone. With the few iron objects located and the burned bones in and around the fill of the burials, this could indicate that the burial was reopened after the person was interred. Or it is also possible that the burial was left open for a while, as part of the burial rituals. Another possibility is that the soil was a combination of previous activities on the cemetery and ritual activity at the site.

Another interesting feature at the burial site is the link between structure J6A and Burial J6E. Burial J6E was located directly beneath structure J6A and it is possible that these two structures were linked together (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 18). Burial J6E was not excavated and structure J6A, was oriented north-south with a row of stones on the top and with stones on the side (Hartmann, 1989a, fig. K14;K16). In the review of the find list there are no finds or artefacts associated with structure J6A (Hartmann, 1989a, 1990a). It is therefore difficult to interpret the function of J6A, but as it is located above a burial it could have been associated with ritual performances and activities at the site.

In addition to the added location of Viking Age burials and ritual activity it became evident during the excavation season in 1990 that there was stratigraphic evidence for cultivation activities at the cemetery (Hartmann, 1990b, p. 11). Moreover, the border at the cemetery's western and southern limit seemed to be partly determined by the open trench H7B. H7B could originally have been an open stream, which could have made a natural boundary for the cemetery extension towards the west (Hartmann, 1990b, p. 7). Besides the burials and the dyke, which were the focus during the 1989 excavation, remains of a pile of fire burned stones were found in area H5A. In area H6A, west of the cemetery, only animal bones were found (Hartmann, 1990b, p. 7; Table 4.11 season 1990). There are only a limited number of artefacts found west of the cemetery and the usage of the area therefore support an interpretation of an

area with industrial activities, perhaps a grain cultivation centre (Diklev, 1981a, p. 22; Hartmann, 1990b, p. 10; Arge, 2001, pp. 12–13; Arge et al., 2009).

4.6 Preliminary Conclusion of Archival Research and Review

This chapter focused on the archival research of the burial sites Yviri í Trøð in the village of Tjørnuvík and Við Kirkjugarð in the village of Sandur and reviewed these Viking Age sites. The excavated Viking Age burials at Við Kirkjugarð hold a prominent position in understanding the activities in this rich archaeological coastal area in the village of Sandur. In addition, the Viking Age burials at Yviri í Trøð hold an equally important projecting location in the understanding and comparison of Viking Age burials. It is not a straightforward or quick task to re-examine previous excavated sites. The persons, who excavated the sites have, during the archaeological excavation, made interpretations of the structures, the stones in the structure, the building material and, last but not least, have decided what to include and what not to include.

Both at Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð the burials, the content and the human remains were affected by the surroundings. At the site Yviri í Trøð, continuing landslides had affected the human remains and artefacts. In addition, there have probably been people disturbing the burials even in antiquity. At Við Kirkjugarð, the ongoing sand layers had worsened the condition of the human bones and artefacts and it seemed that cultivation had disturbed the outer surfaces of many of the burials. At both sites, the human remains were fragile and soft and therefore it was difficult to interpret gender and age of the interred. Few artefacts were found in Yviri í Trøð, but the reason for this could be the preservation conditions. In the diaries and reports, there are observations of rusty pieces, but they had all disintegrated. At Við Kirkjugarð the artefacts are in better condition, but in the reports, there is also mention of iron objects and pearls which had dissolved. Since the cemeteries are close to the sea the salt from the sea probable worsened the condition of the human and animal remains and the artefacts.

Though, compared with the site at Yviri í Trøð there are more artefacts in the burial site at Við Kirkjugarð and the burials are richer in silver artefacts, such as Burial J6B with silver fragments and silver threads around the knife handle and Burial K5A with a silver coin, see the review of burials in section 4.3.5. These artefacts, together with the weights, the large activity centre west of the burial site and the long house north of the church, could be indicators of a high status settlement site and that a few of the inhabitants in the coastal settlements in the village of

Sandur were in a higher social position (Arge, 2001, p. 11; Blackburn, 2005, p. 148; Graham-Campbell, 2005, p. 131). The location of the village Sandur in the middle of the North Atlantic, the good quality soil for agriculture, a possible grain cultivation centre, long houses by the inlet, access to wildlife and fresh water gave the inhabitants in Sandur good trading opportunities. Perhaps the communities in Sandur were part of a North Atlantic trading network, which is evident in the burials with artefacts, for example hack-silver, a coin and weights.

At the site Yviri í Trøð, Sverri Dahl decided to use trench digging as his prime excavation technique (Dahl, 1956b). The excavation technique of digging in trenches is often used to excavate a small number of discrete trenches and is often used to make a site definition (Collins, 2004, p. 28). It can also be an economical way to follow large structures such as roads, and or when sampling lineal features such as ditches (Collins, 2004, p. 28). Sverri Dahl began to dig in trenches in order to establish what the function of the site was (Dahl, 1983) but after he had established the site function, he continued to excavate in trenches (Unpublished excavation reports and diaries, 1957, 1959). Digging in trenches will usually give partial and probably misleading answers (Barker, 1986, p. 72). Even if Sverri Dahl was digging in trenches, there were several techniques he used which were good for the site. At the site surface, the landslides were removed by hand with spades and as soon as Sverri Dahl and his team were digging in the archaeological layers they were digging with trowels. No machines were used at the site. At the site, Sverri Dahl saw the importance of seeing the site in its natural setting, with the geology of this area (Dahl, 1983; Barker, 1989, p. 27). In understanding the geology of the area and the site geology, he had asked geologist Jóannes Rasmussen to assist him in the excavation (Dahl, 1983). The methods which Sverri Dahl used at Yviri í Trøð were quite different from the methods which Niels Hartmann used at Við Kirkjugarð.

At Við Kirkjugarð Niels Hartmann was excavating the site stratigraphically and divided the areas into grids. The burials there were named after the grid in which they were located and excavated (Hartmann, 1989b, 1990b). In previous years the area had been excavated using search trenches, planned accordingly to an already established drainage system. However, Niels Hartmann was in his excavation technique also using balks and this technique can hinder an overview of a completely archaeological site. As such, one of the burials was not located until the removal of a balk between two areas. At the beginning of the excavation in 1989, Niels Hartmann used a machine to remove the topsoil. Prior to the excavation, Niels Hartmann

set out a grid system, excavated the site stratigraphically and did sieving on site. The grid system was adjusted accordingly to earlier excavation seasons (Hartmann, 1989b). With these methods, Niels Hartmann and Símun V. Arge were able to get a clear overview of the burial site and the burials.

The two sites, Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð are different in terms of their layout, their usage, the outline of the burials and the artefacts found at each site. There are indeed interesting aspects of each burial, which raises new questions about the burials, the rituals, how the site functioned as a burial ground and their locations. In their similarities, the sites are both located close to the seashore and not far away from the settlement. This is a very important aspect in this research on locating possible new Viking Age burials. Both the sites represent the rare occurrence of Viking Age burials in the Faroes and so far, all the burials are inhumation burials. Another similarity is that there were artefacts in the burials. There are also areas at both Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð with remains of burned or unburned animal bones. This indicates ritual activity on the site before and/or after the individuals were interred. Furthermore, the burial site at Við Kirkjugarð continued to be used and is still in use today. Excavation at Við Kirkjugarð raises the possibility that before it was used as a cemetery it was cultivated. In addition, it is quite noticeable that the burials continue underneath the church dry stone wall and therefore the cemetery is extending further under the church cemetery. This raises the questions if the location of the excavated burials had been forgotten or were these burials intentionally not included inside the church dry stone wall. The excavation at Yviri í Trøð points in a very different direction, because at Yviri í Trøð there is no evidence of prior use of the area for cultivation and, after the Viking Age, the cemetery was no longer in use as a cemetery.

In this chapter the archival research has been used to directly address the research questions. I have developed and refined my methodological approach, in getting closer to answer the main research question on where and how we can locate more Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands. Moreover, though this research new knowledge is emerging on the ritual activities, which took place at the burial sites. Therefore, the question on how the Viking viewed their world has being directly accessed through this archival research.

With these preliminary conclusions and observations of archaeologically known and verified Viking Age burial sites at Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð the focus in the following Chapter

5 will be on possible additional burials found in the results of ethnographic, landscape folklore and place name studies.

Chapter 5 Results of Ethnographic, Landscape Folklore and Place Name Studies

This chapter is about the burial data retrieved from the study of ethnographic, landscape folklore and place name sources in the Faroe Islands, with a geographical focus on the northern islands in the Faroe Islands. This chapter addresses the research questions on where and how I can locate more Viking Age burial in the Faroe Islands, how a Viking Age burial is identified in the landscape and which methods I can develop in order to get any closer in answering this question. This large scale approach to locate Viking Age burials in the Faroes with ethnographic, landscape folklore and place names studies has not been tried beforehand. This chapter includes all references to burials in the northern islands with their relevance to Viking Age burials. An overview is in Table 5.3. I would like to mention that this list is not complete, because I am certain that there are more stories, legends, place names and accounts of burial locations than listed. For example, after the list was compiled and the chapter written, I learned about an additional legend concerning a burial site in Svínøi in the outfield. Part of this study of locating new Viking Age burials was formal and informal conversation and interviews with people living in the villages. In Appendix A8 is an overview of the informants.

There are 143 burial registrations for the Faroe Islands retrieved from a large variety of sources (Appendix A6). In addition, in Appendix A7 is information with complementary supporting landscape folklore and village history for the northern islands. For more information I would suggest looking at the references to each location. It is important to state that the overall aim of this chapter is to highlight relevant sources regarding possible Viking Age burials, especially in the northern islands. In addition, one of the objectives is to come closer to an understanding of people's social memory, knowledge, and the practical function of burials in the landscape. Even if archaeological remains are found in most of the villages, not all the villages have accounts, legends or stories of possible burial locations. In the preliminary study and survey of burial locations, all the villages were included, but for this section only villages with possible burial locations have been included. Figure 5.1 shows the possible burial locations.

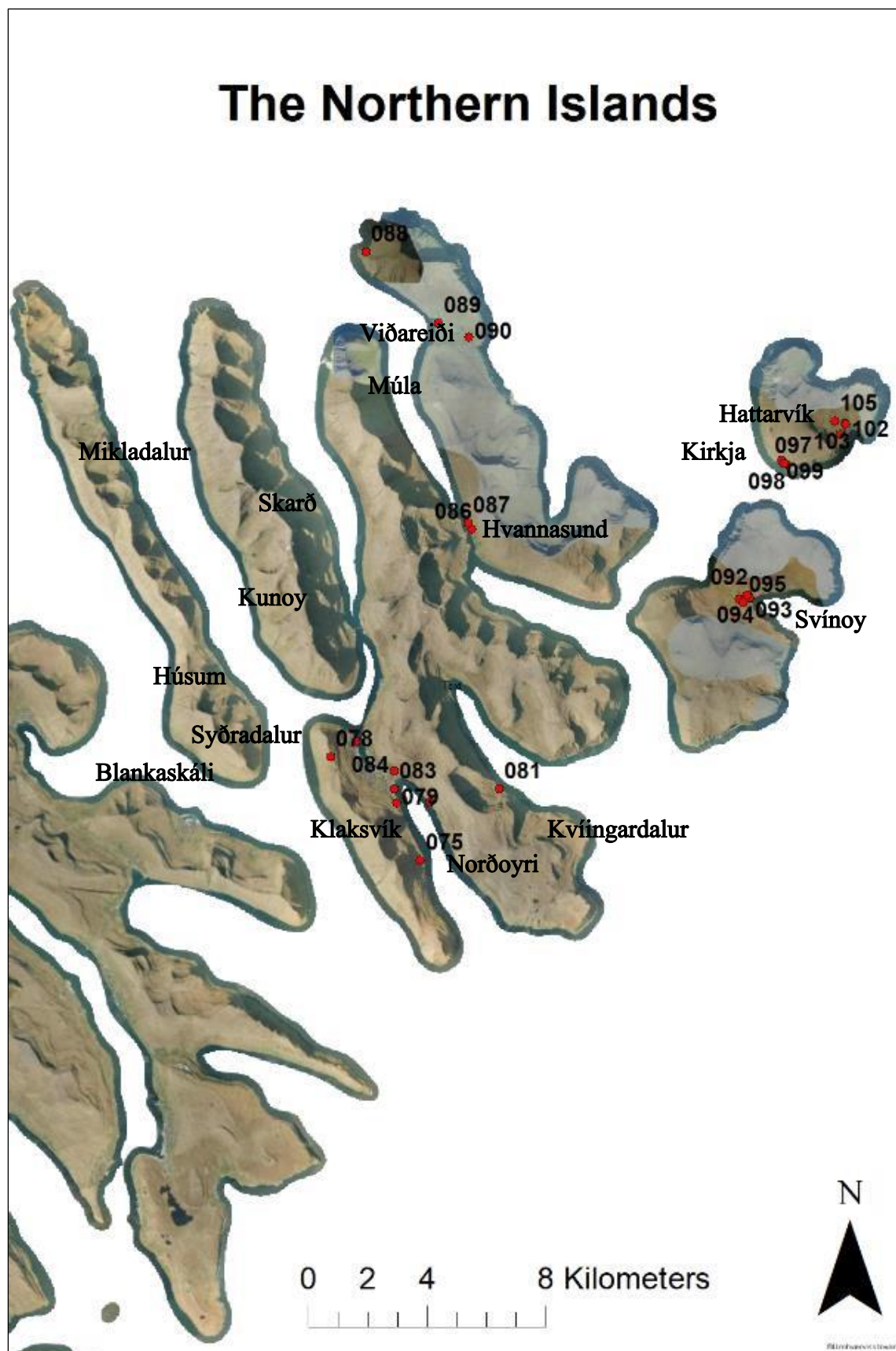


Figure 5.1 Map of the Northern Islands with IDs. Map US.fo

5.1 Study Areas in the Faroe Islands

In this data gathering, a table of certain, possible, and uncertain (with question mark) locations of burials was made to gain an overview of the burial data in the Faroes. There are sources used in this study which describe burials both in the infield and in the outfield. These sources cover a broad field of academic and non-academic published and un-published material. Part of these descriptions of burials are published in books by Niels Winter (Winther, 1875), J. Chr., Hammershaimb (Hammershaimb, 1847, 1891), Símun Hansen (Hansen, 1971), in newspaper sections (Zachariasen, 1956), as local legends (informants, Appendix A8) and accounts (Tjóðsavnið, 1952j). Regarding the place names, many of sources which have been used in this study are non-academic published books. This table is in addition to the abovementioned sources based on the research conducted in the archival studies (the collections of Sverri Dahl, Símun Arge, Christian Matras and place name archives at Føroyamálsdeildin). Included are also the 3 known Viking Age cemeteries in the Faroes. The burial data collected is outlined in Appendix A6.

5.1.1 Words Associated with Burials

It is not an unknown practice to associate words with burials. For example, in 1875 Niels Winther suggested that certain words were associated with a burial place (Winther, 1875, pp. 527–528). A simple form of a burial could be a constructed pile of stones and earth called a *køs* or *kas* in Faroese, related to the action of piling stones, *at kasa* (Winther, 1875, p. 528). A more complex structure was a burial in stone structure, referred to as *dys* (Winther, 1875, p. 528). Not all these words are used in Faroese place names, and in the northern islands the study of place names by the linguist Cristian Matras is often referred to (1932). The words *leiði*, *køs*, *kas*, *haugr*, *hegri*, or *dys* were not part of Christian Matras' place name catalogue in the northern islands (1932). Christian Matras mentioned the words *kumli/kumb/grevsturin/grøvn* for burials. In Table 5.1 is a list of words associated with the word “burial”, and if the meaning of the word relates to other features or settlements it is mentioned as well.

Table 5.1 Faroese Words Associated with Burials.

Faroese Words for Burials	Explanation of Word	Source	Is the Word Part or in Place Names?
<i>Leiði</i>	A <i>Leiði</i> refers to a burial.	(Winther, 1875, p. 527; Hammershaimb, 1891, p. 174)	Yes
<i>Jarða</i>	<i>Jarða</i> refers to the process of interring.	(Winther, 1875, p. 527; Jakobsen, 1891, p. 141; Svabo, 1976, p. 371)	Yes
<i>Køs or Kas</i>	<i>Køs</i> or <i>Kas</i> refers to a pile of stones.	(Winther, 1875, p. 528)	Not certain
<i>Heyggur</i>	<i>Heyggur</i> is a mound. It can be a natural mound, burial mound, and/or village mounds.	(Jakobsen, 1891, p. 116; Matras, 1932, pp. 145–156; Svabo, 1976, p. 327)	Yes, frequent are natural- and village mounds
<i>Kumli</i>	<i>Kumli</i> refers to a pile of stones and possible a burial.	(Matras, 1932, p. 189) (Svabo, 1976, p. 450) (Orðaseðlasavn Fróðskaparsetur, 1965)	Yes
<i>Dys</i>	<i>Dys</i> refers to a burial.	(Winther, 1875, p. 528)	Yes
<i>Kumb</i>	<i>Kumb</i> refers to a pile of stones and possible a burial.	(Matras, 1932, p. 189) (Orðaseðlasavn Fróðskaparsetur, 1965)	Yes
<i>Grøv</i>	<i>Grøv</i> refers to a natural ditch, a small peat bog and also a burial place.	(Matras, 1932, p. 131)	Yes
<i>Grevsturin</i>	<i>Grevsturin</i> refers to burial place.	(Matras, 1932, p. 128)	Yes

Other resources have also been used in searching for certain words and burials. In the online archive *Orðaseðlar*, established by the University in the Faroe Islands, there are notes on the meanings of words (Orðaseðlasavn Fróðskaparsetur, 1965). After the collecting of words associated with burials, Lena Reinert from the University in the Faroe Islands made a search for these words in her place name database (Reinert, 2018). The sources for these place names are place name registers such as that from V.U. Hammershaimb's archive c. 1850 (Hmb), Fornrannsóknar- og Staðarnavnanevd Føroya Løgtings (SFL) a public committee from the second world war. In addition, the Danish place names registration with Napoleon Djurhuus (INF Institut for navneforskning) and Dansk Stednavneudvalg (DSU). As well as the Faroese Linguistics Department, Føroya Málsdeildin, at the University in the Faroes (FMD). This specific search was conducted to find possible hints of burial accounts in the landscape through place names. To demonstrate the process of this research, a few examples are given in

Table 5.2.

Table 5.2 Place Names, Stories and Burials. Table by Lena Reinert. Some commentary added by the author.

Village	Registration	Name number	Place name	Comment
Klaksvík	SFL	40	<i>Gráisteinur</i>	According to the legend, a boy was once hanged by this stone. <i>Gráisteinur</i> are often said to be settled by mystical existences such as elves and one should not disturb them by moving or destroying the stone,
Depil	INF	33	<i>Køldugrøvn</i>	<i>Huldugrøvn</i> – the burial of an elf. Location not known.
Kirkja	INF	135	<i>Kumbirókagjógv</i>	A pile of stones or a burial. Here, on the mountain, steep terrain, no burial.
Kirkja	INF	142	<i>Kumbirøkur</i>	A pile of stones or a burial. Here, on the mountain, steep terrain, no burial.

These examples demonstrate the variety of place names, the different associations of words, and the stories and legends ascribed to certain place names in the landscape. This review of words and place names associated with burials leads on to the studies on the northern islands in the Faroe Islands, beginning with the study on the islands of Fugloy and Svínoy.

5.2 Study on the Islands of Fugloy and Svínoy

This section is about the study of folklore, place names and burials on the islands of Fugloy and Svínoy. Fugloy is the eastern most island in the Faroese archipelago and is quite remote from the mainland. Fugloy is the smallest of the northern islands, with a surface area of 11.18 km², with high mountains and few good landing places. In Fugloy there are two villages, Kirkja and Hattarvík.

The island of Svínoy is south of Fugloy. It has a surface area of 27.35 km² and has a wider and more open landscape. The coastline is also steep, but Svínoy has two good landing sites and these can be used depending on the weather. In Svínoy there is one village with the same name as the island, Svínoy.

In the following sections, the focus will be on the data gathered on burials in the landscape in the villages of Kirkja, Hattarvík and Svínø. Supplementary information is provided in Appendix A7.

5.2.1 The Village of Kirkja

The village of Kirkja is today situated on a hill (Figure 5.2). There are many streams in the village, which have provided fresh water for the inhabitants over the centuries. There are several structural remains which have been found during cultivation in the village of Kirkja. There are three possible burial locations which are relevant to this study on Viking Age burial locations.



Figure 5.2 The village of Kirkja on the island of Fugloy. September 2018.

5.2.1.1 097 Kirkja in Kirkjugarðinum Rógva

In the churchyard, previously unknown burials were discovered in 1900 during work to extend the churchyard and to clear the area for larger stones (Zachariasen, 1956, p. 4). The area in which the churchyard and the discovered burials were located is called Rógva and is today situated a few metres from the cliff (Figure 5.3). The place name Rógva or Róa indicates a feature in the landscape which points out and can slightly elevated in the area (Matras, 1932, p. 228). At Rógva there is a small area of infield which is situated between two cliffs (Matras,

1932, p. 228). The burials discovered in this churchyard had an east-west alignment, with the head in the west. The burials were constructed of stones set on edge, with stones as a lid (Zachariassen, 1956, p. 4). Left in the burials were human remains and a handful of artefacts (Zachariassen, 1956, p. 4; Hansen, 1971, p. 35). In two of the burial chambers there were objects, which resembled a spindle whorl, round and with a hole in the middle (Hansen, 1971, p. 35). In the soil other objects of stone were also found, but many of them were deposited back into the soil (Zachariassen, 1956, p. 4). The finds mentioned, which were not thrown back in, were a square stone with a square hole in one of the sides, a half stone spindle whorl and something which resembled a funnel made of reddish stone (Zachariassen, 1956, p. 4). It is not known today where these artefacts are kept.



Figure 5.3 The church and churchyard at Kirkja. May 2017.

There are no further descriptions of the burials. The find circumstances can in some regard be compared with the find circumstances at Við Kirkjugarð at the village Sandur. The burials at Kirkja were, as Við Kirkjugarð, located due to the extension of the churchyard. The burials at Kirkja also had an east-west alignment with human remains and artefacts. In addition to the finding of the burials in the churchyard, a building was discovered a few metres east of the church and the churchyard. This building with fireplaces was found in c. 1920 when men were building a boat house east of the church (Hansen, 1971, p. 32). This indicates that there has been a larger building close to the church and probably settlement activity close to the church.

Another possible cemetery in the village of Kirkja is located in the middle of the modern village, at Vegginum.

5.2.1.2 ID 098 Vegginum, Kirkja

The place at Vegginum is in centre of the village and has an open view towards the island Svínø, Borðø and Viðø in the south (Figure 5.4). It is raised slightly above the field below and is fairly flat. The higher elevation is probably due to years of cultural accumulation of layers.



Figure 5.4 View towards Vegginum and the islands of Svínø, Viðø and Borðø. May 2017.

Settlement remains and ruins have been found both east and west of Vegginum. Towards the east were the remains of building at Niðri Undir Mittúni and towards the west were building remains called Guddatøft (Hansen, 1971, p. 32). According to local knowledge in Kirkja, the area at Vegginum used to be a churchyard for victims of the Black Death (Appendix A8, Informants 4 and 5). There are no place names in the area which refer to a cemetery or churchyard. The place name Veggurinn signifies a wall of stone or grass peat (Matras, 1932, p. 307). It could refer to the building on either side of the area or an elevated platform towards the north. A human cranium has perhaps been found at Vegginum (Appendix A8 Informant 5), but the find circumstances are uncertain and the exact year is not known.

A third and the final possible burial location is at Norði á Rygginum, which is west of the village.

5.2.1.3 ID 099 Norði á Rygginum

At Norði á Rygginum there were structural remains about 30 metres north of the stream Bólsá, and above the path there was a large building with its entrance in the middle of the house (Figure 5.5). North of the large building was an outhouse (Zachariasen, 1956, p. 2). Below the road there was a ruin of a small building, stockyard and the platform for the midden (Zachariasen, 1956, p. 4). Short after 1900, men were cultivating this area as farmland and in c. 1936 a road was made, which went through the building remains (Zachariasen, 1956, p. 2). Left today is the stockyard and the platform for the midden (own observations and Informants 4, 17 and 20, Appendix A8). According to Informant 4, this area was according to local legend settled in the past by monks, who specified that these were not Irish monks. Furthermore, the informant mentioned the possibility of ancient burials in this area, but not with a specific location. The area east of the site is called Norð Millum Garðar. The word *Garðar* refers here to dried stone walls. Today most of these dried stones walls are under the surface.

With one certain and verified burial site in Kirkja in the churchyard, and two uncertain burial locations (Figure 5.6), the focus will now be on the neighbouring village of Hattarvík.



Figure 5.5 View towards Norði á Ryggjunum, Kirkja. May 2017.



Figure 5.6 Possible burial locations in Kirkja, with ID number. Map us.fo

5.2.2 The Village of Hattarvík

The village of Hattarvík is the eastern most village in the Faroe Islands. It is situated in a small inlet with raised mountains and hills. Its natural landscape settings are very different to those of the neighbouring village, Kirkja (Figure 5.7). In Figure 5.8 is an overview of the locations in a map of the village Hattarvík.



Figure 5.7 The village of Hattarvík. June 2015.

5.2.2.1 ID 100, Hattarvík

The first account is about a possible cemetery. The information on this possible burial ground comes from Informant 6 during a survey in 2016. Towards the end of the 19th century, or at the beginning of the 20th century, men were digging in an area close to a sheep pen and found human remains with their clothes on (Informant 6, Appendix A8). Unfortunately, nothing more is known. The exact location of this cemetery is not known, and it was not possible to ask about the original source, because the person had recently died. The location is close to a sheep pen and, according to the description, it could be either Úti á Rætt or above Traðtúni, across the sheep pen. There is no legend associated with either of the sheep pens, but according to one source (Informant 11, Appendix A8) there was *something* across the stream of the sheep pen, above Traðtúni. This second source had no more detailed information. The following burial account is based on folklore.

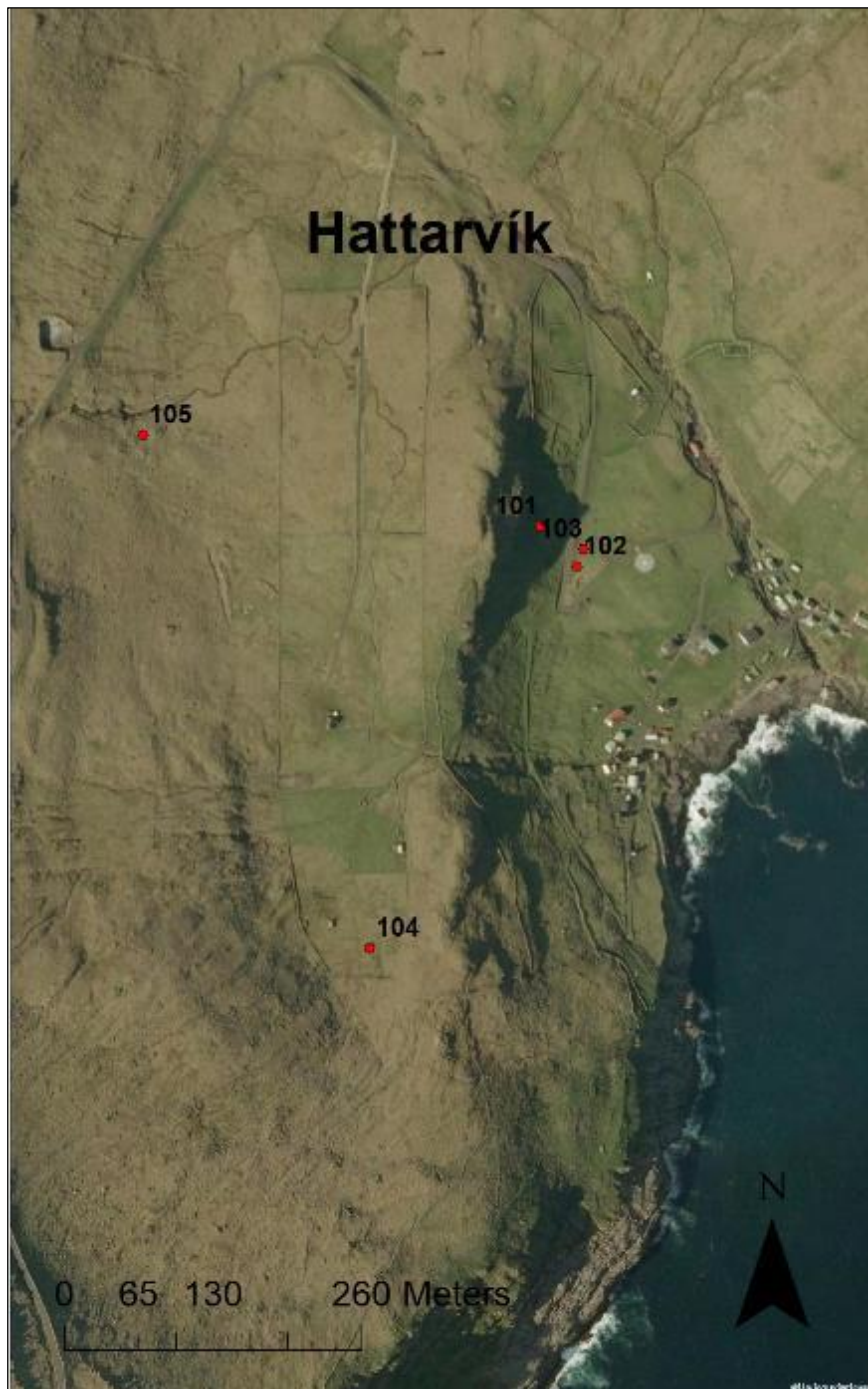


Figure 5.8 Possible burial locations in Hattarvík, with ID numbers. Map US.fo

5.2.2.2 ID 101, Leysingarteigar, Hattarvík

North of the village, above the road leading out of Hattarvík, Uppi í Líð, there is a piece of land defined by ditches (Figure 5.8). The place name word *Teigur* signifies a piece of land defined by ditches. According to local legend and Informant 5, this area was the burial ground for seven

siblings who had passed away. They had been conceived outside marriage and therefore the children were called *leysingabörn*, which means children born out of wedlock/illegitimate children. Hence the name of this place name, *Leysingar*. This area is an area for hay production, but people have not been digging in this area because it was not allowed due to superstition (Informant 11, Appendix A8). The next burial account also has its origin in folklore.

5.2.2.3 ID 102, Oddur, Hattarvík

Close to Leysingarteigar, but below the road, was a small mound, now cultivated away, called Oddur (Figure 5.8). According to local legend, Oddur was a boy who went climbing in a steep area on a Sunday, fell and died (Miðalberg, 1996, p. 55). Because Oddur had climbed on a Sunday he was not allowed to be buried in concentrated soil and was therefore buried close to where he had fallen, just north of the village, overlooking the village. The following burial account is not built on folklore, but on a place name.

5.2.2.4 ID 103, Gunnhildarheyggur, Hattarvík

Not far away from Oddur, also below the road and not far above the helicopter landing place, is a small mound called Gunnhildarheyggur and close to Gunnhildarheyggur are the place names Gunnhildarteigur and Steinurin í Gunnhildarheyggi (Figure 5.9). There is no legend attached to this place name, only the visible landscape feature of a low-lying mound, which today is much cultivated (Figure 5.9). Gunnhild is a personal female name and Gunnhild figures in the legend about the Norwegian Gunnar as the adoptive daughter of the witch Steinvør. In the legend, Gunnhild is killed by Gunnar, when she is transformed to a bird by her mother (Jakobsen, 1898, p. 162). The next burial account comes from the legend about Gunnar.



Figure 5.9 View towards Gunnhildarheyggur (1), Oddur (2) and Leysingateigar (3) (beside the road). Gullheyggur (4) towards the ridge on the left. June 2015.

5.2.2.5 ID 104, Gullheyggur, Hattarvík

Above the village in a western direction, south of the chapel ground and across the stream Húsá, is Gullheyggur. Gullheyggur was the area where Gunnar had chosen to settle. When Steinvør planned to avenge her adoptive daughter's death she laid a worm underneath Gunnar's house where his gold was hidden (Jakobsen, 1898, p. 163). Steinvør then takes the corpse of Tróndur to close the hole (Figure 5.8) (Jakobsen, 1898, p. 163).

5.2.2.6 ID 105, Døttheyggjar Hattarvík

The last story or account of a burial place in Hattarvík is at Døttheyggjar. Døttheyggjar is situated in the outfield on a hill, in a north western direction. According to the legend, this area is a possible burial place (Miðalberg, 1996, p. 55). The place name description of this area denotes that there are tree mounds on a row south of the stream (Miðalberg, 1996, p. 9). No burials have been found in this area during cultivation (Figure 5.10).



Figure 5.10 Døtttheyggjar (1,2,3 marked on the photo), Hattarvík. June 2016.

In Hattarvík, there are no certain Viking Age burial locations, apart from the unknown location of a possible burial ground close to a sheep pen, ID 100. There are oral accounts of the burial location, but these are not certain.

5.2.3 The village of Svínø

There is only one village on the island and it is situated in the inlet Svínøarvík, which is in the eastern part of the island (Figure 5.12). There are two main districts in the village, which are Heima á Bø and Úti á Bø. There is one church in the village and one account of a chapel site (Informant 8, Appendix A8) (Hansen, 1973, p. 17). There are three possible burial locations which are relevant to this study in Svínø and in Figure 5.11 is an overview of the locations in an aerial view of the landscape.



Figure 5.11 Possible burial locations in Svínøy, with ID numbers. Map US.fo

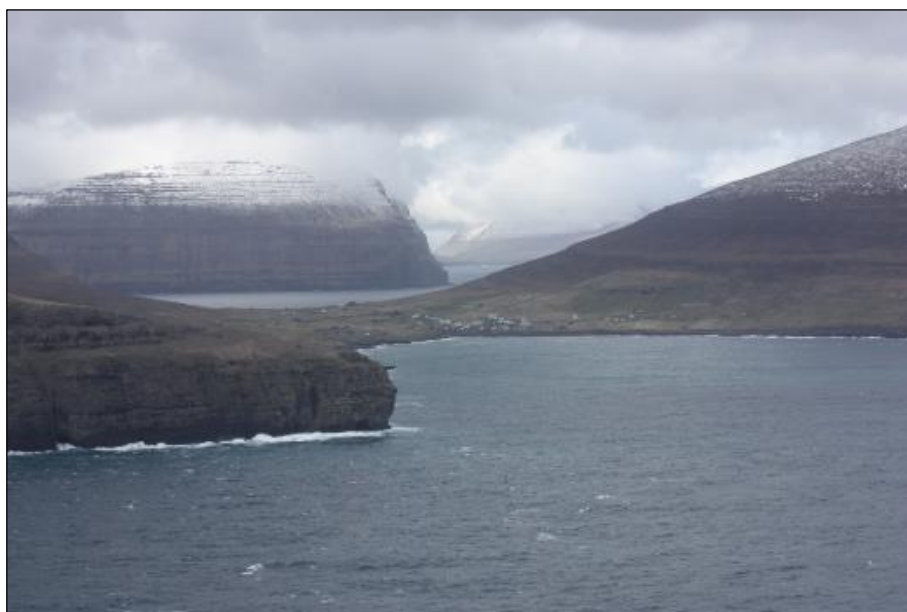


Figure 5.12 The village of Svínøi. Photo April 2012.

5.2.3.1 ID 091 and ID 092 Churchyard Svínøi

There are two accounts of the church cemetery which are of relevance for locating possible Viking Age burials. The first account, ID 091 relates to an incised stone. Under an older church, which stood close to the present church, men found a stone under the church floor incised with a cross and five parallel rows which make a cross (Sørensen, 1832, p. 118). The people in Svínøi, who knew there was a stone underneath the floor, thought it was the headstone which belonged to the Viking Age chief Svínøiar-Bjarna mentioned in *Færeyinga Saga* (Rafn, 1832; Hansen, 1973, p. 16). According to a local account, there should be two stones of a similar type (Tjóðsavnið, 1952d). The second stone has not yet been found.

The second account (ID 092) is from Informant 7 which explained that, while a burial was being prepared in the western part of the cemetery, an older burial was found with human remains (Informant 7, Appendix A8). The informant had informed Sverri Dahl about this discovery and with the description given to Sverri Dahl he said it could possibly be an older burial from the early medieval period (Informant 7, Appendix A8). Furthermore, in c. 1930 when the old part of the churchyard towards the west was being worked on, about 5-10 corroded coins were found (Tjóðsavnið, 1952d). During this work several coffins were discovered which were in fairly good condition, made of old planks from boats nailed together

with wooden nails (Tjóðsavnið, 1952d). One of the bodies seemed to be an unusually large person (Tjóðsavnið, 1952d). This information demonstrates that the cemetery at Svínøy has possible been in use from the Viking Age or early Middle Ages (Figure 5.13). Another account of a possible Viking Age burial was found in the middle of the village in 1898.



Figure 5.13 Church site, Svínøy. May 2018.

5.2.3.2 ID 093 and ID 094, Frammi í Garði Svínøy

In Svínøy, in 1898, while men were levelling the ground for a hay storage facility, they discovered a burial whose description suits very well with it being a Viking Age burial, listed here with ID 093 (Zachariasen, 1956, p. 2). The individual in the burial was buried with his head in the north and was buried underneath a boat with its keel turned over (Zachariasen, 1956, p. 2). According to a legend, this area used to be a burial ground (Tjóðsavnið, 1952d). Only a few metres away from this burial (ID 093) is the location of a possible chapel, which is listed here as ID 094 (Informant 8, Appendix A8). Today the road next to the storage facilities and above the chapel area is covered with asphalt and therefore it was not possible to conduct further research (Figure 5.14). A third burial ground in Svínøy is a more recent burial ground from a shipwreck in 1786 (see Appendix A7, Svínøy). The last burial account from Svínøy comes from a local legend.



Figure 5.14 The location of the Viking Age burial site is behind the red oil containers underneath the outhouse. The early Church site was in front of the oil containers. May 2018.

5.2.3.3 ID 096, Torvheyggur, Svínøi

According to a local legend, the mound Torvheyggur resembles a burial mound and could possibly be a burial mound (Informant 9, Appendix A8). In this area the inhabitants in Svínøi used to cut peat and the first half of the name of the mound *Torv* means peat. No human remains have been found in this mound during peat-cutting. This was the last burial account from Svínøi and the following section will be on possible burial locations on Viðøi and Borðøi.

5.3 Study on the Islands of Viðøi and Borðøi

This section is about the possible location of burials in Viðøi and Borðøi, based on landscape folklore, legends, place names and interviews with people. Viðøi is the most northern island in the Faroese archipelago and is 41.01 km² in surface area. It is characterised by high mountains and inlets. Today it is linked to the neighbouring island of Borðøi through a causeway. The villages of Viðareiði and Hvannasund are quite different in their settlement pattern, because of their settings in the landscape. The focus will first be on the village of Viðareiði (Figure 5.15). With an area of 94.90 km², Borðøi is the largest island of the 6 northern islands and has the largest city/settlement as well, Klaksvík. For this study on burial

locations the city of Klaksvík and the villages of Múla and Norðoyri are included. Today Múla is not permanently settled. The first study will focus on the island of Viðoy.



Figure 5.15 Possible burial locations in Viðareidí, with ID numbers. Map us.fo.

5.3.1 The Village of Viðareidí

The village of Viðareidí is situated with an open view towards east and west. Towards south and north are high mountains. In Viðareidí, there are two oral accounts and one place name

indicating possible burial locations, and here the focus will first be on the burial account about the battle at Ormadalur (Figure 5.15).

5.3.1.1 ID 088, Ormadalur, Viðareiði

In the outfield in Viðareiði at Ormadalur, also referred to as Úti í Dal, north on the mountain Villingardalsfjall, there is a legend about a battle between people from Viðareiði and Iceland (Matras, 1932). People from Iceland came ashore on Viðareiði and began to ravage the village and people escaped to the mountain (Weihe, 1938, p. 19). The Icelanders followed and when they came up the hill the villagers started to roll stones down the hill (Weihe, 1938, p. 19). It ended in a battle. The people who died were buried and the villagers were buried on the side of the river nearest to the home and the Icelanders buried on the other side of the river (Informant 3, Appendix A8). The second burial account comes from the infield close to the seashore at Flatabakki.

5.3.1.2 ID 089, Flatabakki, Viðareiði

Flatabakki, is according to a local legend, an area, which used to be a cemetery (Informant 3, Appendix A8). Flatabakki is a flat area, which slopes downwards towards the farm at Brekkumørk (Figure 5.16). This area is steep towards the seashore and the nearby gorge called Døttlisgjógv. The linguist Christian Matras was not certain of the interpretation of the place name Døttlisgjógv, but suggested that the original form could be Døglingsgjógv, with reference to a whale name (Matras, 1932, p. 94). Informant 3 suggested a different interpretation of the first part of the place name of Døttlisgjógv – *Døttlis* – to refer to death. The informant had compared the place name – *Døttlis* – with the first part of the place name Døttheyggjar – *Døtt* – in Hattarvík – with the legend of a burial ground (Miðalberg, 1996, p. 55). Informant 3 added that previous generations (his ancestors) were often not willing to talk about burials, cemeteries and death. With the legend of a cemetery close to the gorge, the informant suggested that the place name Døttlisgjógv could perhaps refer to a cemetery in Flatabakka.

The third and last burial account from Viðareiði is at Fransagrøvin.



Figure 5.16 Flatabakki, Viðareiði. May 2016.

5.3.1.3 ID 090, Fransagrøvin, Viðareiði

The last oral evidence of a burial in Viðareiði is the place name Fransagrøvin. This place name has also been referred to as Fransagravirnar (Informant 3, Appendix A8). Christian Matras mentioned the place name Fransheyggjurin and wrote that a French sailor should be buried at Fransaheyggjurin (Matras, 1932, p. 111). This area is today cultivated and there is no sign of a mound or a burial.

This was the last burial account from Viðareiði and the following section is about possible burial locations in the village of Hvannasund.

5.3.2 The Village of Hvannasund

Hvannasund lies on the northern part of the strait between Viðoy and Borðoy, and the settlement today is situated close to the seashore and a strait with a steep outfield. The second part of name of the village (-sund) denotes the natural description of its setting, which means a strait (Figure 5.18). There are two oral accounts with the possibility of two burial locations in Hvannasund. Both are in the outfield below the modern road to Viðareiði (Figure 5.17).



Figure 5.17 Possible burial locations in Hvannasund, with ID numbers. Map us.fo.



Figure 5.18 Hvannasund (right) and Norðdepil (left). June 2015.

5.3.2.1 ID 086 North of Byrging, Hvannasund

The first burial account is north of the causeway, below the modern road (Figure 5.19). In this area there is an oral account of the burial of a Norwegian seal hunter, who was buried there in c. 1800 (Informant 2, Appendix A8). The area has since been cultivated and a few years ago there was construction work in the area. No human remains have been found and today this area is part of the infield area in Hvannasund. The second burial account is situated north of the burial site of the Norwegian seal hunter.



Figure 5.19 North of Byrging. August 2015.

5.3.2.2 ID 087 Hvannasund, Norðafyri Byrgingina

The second location is in the outfield below the modern road to Viðareiði (Figure 5.20). It is close to the abovementioned burial (ID 986) but is situated further north. According to the legend, a Dutch ship arrived in Hvannasund in 18th century with sick men onboard. The men who had died were buried in the field (Informant 2, Appendix A8). The field is a flat area close to the seashore. In the past, one could see wooden boards on the edge on the slope (Informant 2, Appendix A8). Today all the remains seem to have eroded away, because there were no remains to observe on the edge of the slope or on the shore (own observations).



Figure 5.20 Location for a possible cemetery, North of Byrging. August 2015.

With this last burial account from Hvannasund, the focus will now be on burial locations on the island of Borðoy.

5.4 Borðoy

The island of Borðoy is the largest of the northern islands, with a surface area of 94.90 km². On the island there are two larger fjords or inlets, Árnafjørður and Borðoyavík. At Árnafjørður is the village of Árnafjørður and at Borðoyavík the city of Klaksvík. This island is characterised by its steep coastal area, valleys and inlets. There are today eight villages or settlements which are still settled. Cultural and structural remains have been found in most of the villages and in the outfield, such as the structural remains in Kvíngadali (Mahler, 1989) and í Hópinum (Brøgger, 1937, p. 182).

On the island of Borðoy there are only 3 villages which have accounts about burials. This study will begin with the most northern village on Borðoy, Múli, which has one possible burial location.

5.4.1 The Village of Múli

Today the village of Múli is not settled, but the village was mentioned in the law letter Hundabrævið from the Middle Ages (Figure 5.21) (Helgason, 1951). The sea shore at Múli is very steep and the landing place in Múli is therefore south of the village. In 1801, there were

only two houses in Múli and it is estimated that there have never been more than four houses in Múli (Hansen, 1975, p. 332).



Figure 5.21 The village of Múli, August 2015.

There is the possibility of a burial place in the outfield, but there are no stories, place names or legends attached to it (Informant 16, Appendix A8).

5.4.1.1 ID 085, Grøna Fløta, Múli

In the outfield is a green plain called Grøna Fløta, south of the stream. Grøna Fløta means a green plain and the colour green in the outfield is used as a description of a certain place, which is greener than other places in the outfield (Matras, 1932, p. 131). In this area, there is the possibility of a burial place (Informant 16, Appendix A8), but with no legends, stories or place names ascribed to it. There is, on the other hand, another story ascribed to the outfield, not far away from Grøna Fløta, about people with incurable sicknesses such as the Black death, who were forced to leave the village to live in the outfield. These people are said to have lived at Tobbabú (today a ruin) and food was placed for them on a stone nearby the ruin called Hýspisteinur (Informant 15, Appendix A8).

With one burial account from Múli the focus will now be on the city of Klaksvík.

5.4.2 The City of Klaksvík

Today the city of Klaksvík has grown to be a large settled area (Figure 5.22). In the past the settlement focused around four districts called: Vág, Uppsáir, Gerðar and Myrkjanoyri (Hansen, 1980, p. 1). There are a few oral accounts of locations with stories about burial and battles. The study of the location of the burials and the burial accounts will begin in the outfield area at Kvíngadaur.



Figure 5.22 The city of Klaksvík. August 2015.

5.4.2.1 ID 081 Kvíngardalur, Klaksvík

Kvíngadalur is a remote valley on the island of Borðoy (Figure 5.24). This valley is an open field towards the sea with slopes on each side and behind the field is a steep mountain. In the valley, which gets slowly steeper, are the settlement remains. Most of the remains are between two rivers (Tjóðsavnið, 1952a; Mahler, 1989; Mahler, 2007). Legend has it that Kvíngadalur was once settled by Irish people (Tjóðsavnið, 1952c). In addition, it was suggested that someone was buried in the oblong structure at Kvíngadali, which is seen on Figure 5.23. (Tjóðsavnið, 1952c). On higher elevation an additional structure was registered during survey, which could be large outhouse, as the lower end is open (Figure 5.23). A small test excavation was conducted by laymen in 1975, but no burials were found (Tjóðsavnið, 1952c).

The second account is also in the outfield, but closer to Klaksvík and with no known settlement remains.



Figure 5.23 Kvíingadalur, Borðoy. In the front the newly registered building (1) and in the back the oval structure (2). November 2015.

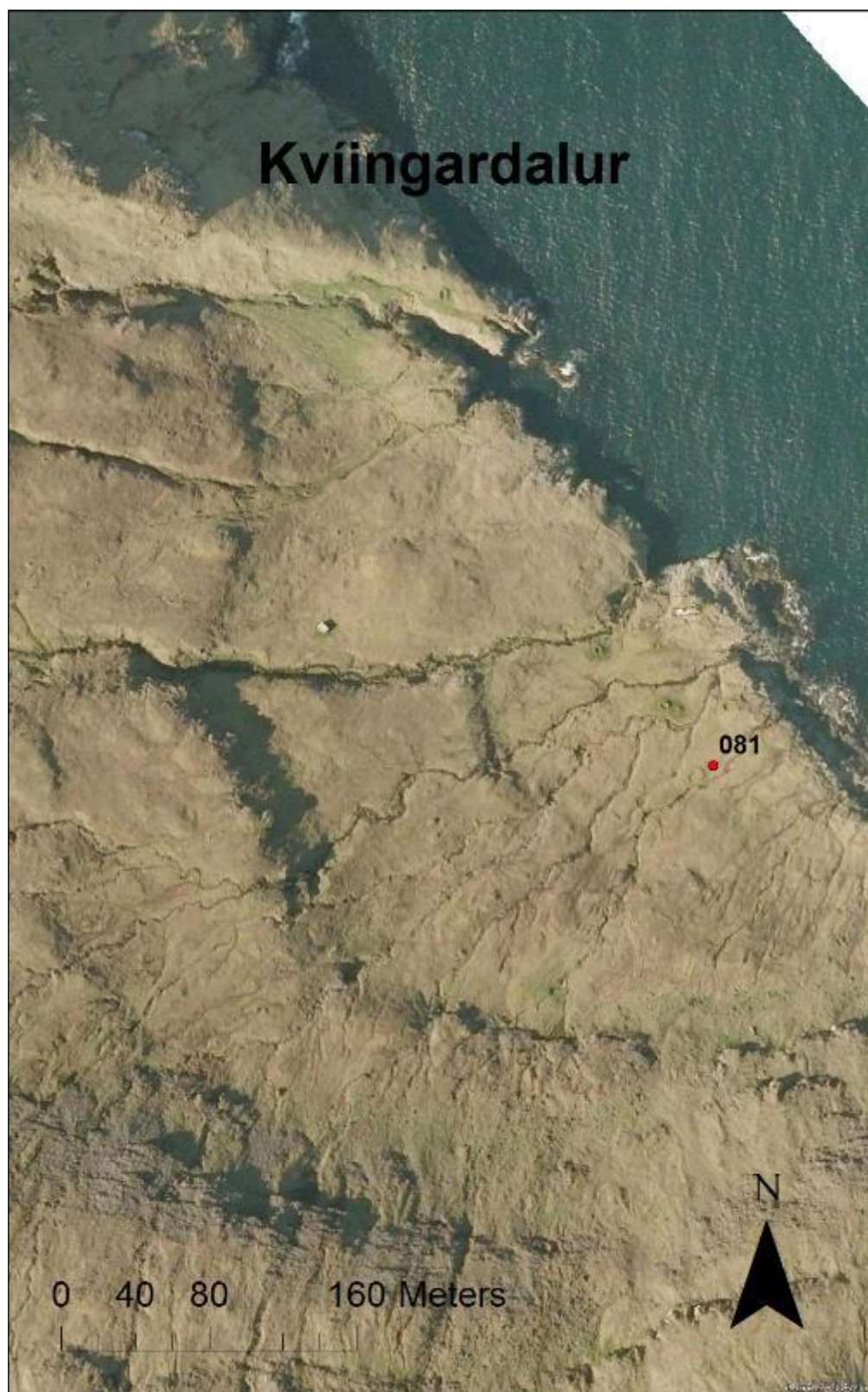


Figure 5.24 Possible burial locations in Kvíingardalur with ID number 081. Map US.fo.

5.4.2.2 ID 075 Stein Karl Hans, Klaksvík

According to a local legend, a young boy was buried under a stone in the outfield in Klaksvík at Uppsalahaga at Taravík (Figure 5.30). The stone was called “Stein Karl Hans” (Figure 5.25). The boy was found dead after taking care of sheep (Matras, 1920, pt. Klaksvík 04 FDM). Another legend is that this stone was named after the bailiff writer Karl Hans Høffner, who was found dead at this stone (Informants 18 and 19, Appendix A8). The next account has also its roots in local social memory.



Figure 5.25 Stein Karl Hans, Borðoyavík Uppsalahaga in Taravík. Photo: Norðoya Formninnissavn.

5.4.2.3 ID 079 við Sólstein, Klaksvík

South of the Viking Age settlement remains found at Niðri á Toft is a large boulder called Sólstein (Figure 5.26, Figure 5.30). This stone is situated at Úti í Trøð. According to local legend, people who were not allowed to be buried in consecrated soil were buried in close proximity to Sólstein (Tjóðsavnið, 1952c; Joenen, 1992, pt. 13). North of Sólstein are the remains of a building, not dated. Another legend in Klaksvík is about the burial site of a drowned man.



Figure 5.26 Sólsteinur, Klaksvík. April 2018.

5.4.2.4 ID 076 Yviri í Trøð, Uppsalahaga, Klaksvík

According to a local account a man was buried at Yviri í Trøð, because he fell in the sea while fishing on a Sunday (Figure 5.30) (Joenen, 1992) (Informant 18 and 19, Appendix A8). Since it was Sunday, the man was not allowed to be buried in consecrated soil (Joenen, 1992) (Informant 18 and 19, Appendix A8). Due to erosion a few years ago at Yviri í Trøð, the remains of a coffin became visible. Today the slope has eroded away, and nothing is visible (Informant 18 and 19, Appendix A8). In the following burial account, there are two legends about the place Uppi í Grevstrinum.

5.4.2.5 ID 078 Uppi í Grevstrinum, Klaksvík

In the outfield on a slope between Klakkur and Halgafelli, Uppi í Grevstrinum, there are two different legends about a burial ground (Figure 5.30) (Bruun, 1929, p. 106; Tjóðsavnið, 1952c; Joenen, 1992, p. 14). In the first legend pirates argued among themselves and killed each other. In the second legend there was a fight between Faroese people and Dutchmen or pirates. The area is on a slope and there are tussocks visible in the landscape. As with this legend and following legends, the information is often scarce and should not be considered complete. On the other hand, this legend and other legends bring forward ideas on how people in the past

related themselves to the landscape and how the social memory of a place can have several stories attached to it. The following burial account is centred on a local account and the archaeological remains.

5.4.2.6 ID 080 Úti á Sand á Stongum, Klaksvík

In the infield in Klaksvík at Úti á Sand at Stongum, there is an account of four coffins being found prior to 1930 (Figure 5.30) (Joenen, 1992, p. 12). These coffins had flat lids. Next to the burials two bronze spoons were found (Tjóðsavnið, 1952c). According to a local account, the coffins belonged to men from a ship who had died of illness (Joenen, 1992, pp. 12–13). One of the crew members was a captain and he was buried in his own coffin with a large padlock in the north eastern corner of the churchyard at Vági in Klaksvík (Joenen, 1992, p. 13). Today this area is settled. The next account is constructed around a legend with an interesting find.

5.4.2.7 ID 084 í Gerðinum or Gerðabø, Klaksvík

In the infield area at Gerðabø in Klaksvík there is, according to local legend, an old burial ground (Figure 5.30, Figure 5.27) (Joenen, 1992, p. 130). No burials have been found, but in the middle of the 1930s a man was cultivating in this area west of the settlement in Gerðabø and found a stone which was about 10x20x30cm, with incised strikes and letters of foreign origin (Informants 18 and 19, Appendix A8). The stone is lost today. Furthermore, no burials have been located and there are no visible features in the landscape of burials. The subsequent burial account has even less information to provide and the exact location is not known.



Figure 5.27 Gerðabøur, Klaksvík. April 2018.

5.4.2.8 ID 077 Stoyksoyri, Klaksvík

According to a local legend in Klaksvík, there was a battle between Faroese people and foreigners at Stoyksoyri (Weihe, 1938, p. 21; Tjóðsavnið, 1952c). No burial remains have been found in the area at Stoksoyri and the exact location of where the battle took place is not known. The next account is slightly different from many of the abovementioned legends because the following account is about the finding of a stray bone.

5.4.2.9 ID 083 Niðri á Toft, Borðoyavík, Klaksvík

In 1955 a young boy found a stray bone in Borðoyavík, which was given to Norðoyar Forninnissavn in June 2015 (Figure 5.28, Figure 5.29, Figure 5.30) (Forminnissavn, 2015). Since this bone has not been examined it is not known at this stage whether this bone is a human or an animal bone. The bone looks very worn and was probably in the ocean for a while until it was found (own observations). The bone was found close to the seashore and settlement site Niðri á Toft. There is much erosion at the inlet Borðoyavík and therefore the bone could be eroded from the edge of the land. With no burials found close to the settlements at Borðoyavík, it is not certain at all at this stage where the bone comes from. The last burial account was found in Sverri Dahls archives.



Figure 5.28 Borðoyavík, find of bone. June 2016.



Figure 5.29 Bone found close to Niðri á Toft, Klaksvík. May 2016.

5.4.2.10 ID 082 Uncertain Cemetery Location, Klaksvík

In the archives from Klaksvík, Sverri Dahl had written a note about an old cemetery based on a conversation from an informant (Tjóðsavnið, 1952c). The informant informed Sverri Dahl that there was perhaps an old cemetery in Klaksvík, but nobody knew anything about it. An elderly woman had told the informant that the information about this cemetery was developed around a story (Tjóðsavnið, 1952a, January 1946 on a letter from 22.nov.1945). The location of the cemetery was supposed to be in the bottom of Klaksvík, but there was no further

description. There was no knowledge about this place at the local museum in Klaksvík, Norðoya Fornminnissavn. Therefore, this alleged cemetery has not been located due to lack of information. With this final account on burials in Klaksvík, the neighbouring village of Norðoyri will now be in focus.

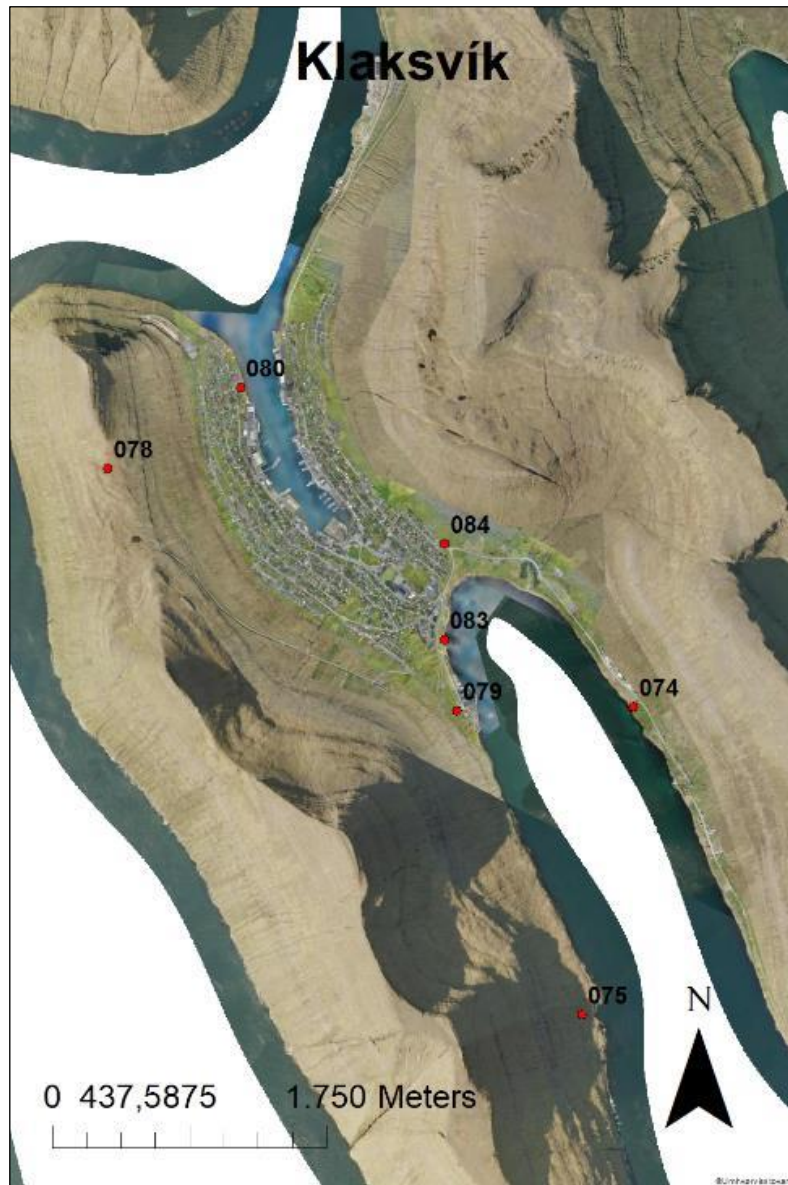


Figure 5.30 Possible burial locations in Klaksvík, with ID numbers. Map US.fo.

5.4.3 The Village of Norðoyri

The village of Norðoyri is on the eastern side on Borðoyavík and is situated on a tongue of land. The infield area is characterised by a flat terrain (Figure 5.31). In historic times there were about five houses (Hansen, 1980, p. 139). The focus will now be on one possible burial location at Norðoyri at Deyðabólsteinur.



Figure 5.31 The village of Norðoyri. September 2018.

5.4.3.1 ID 074 Deyðabólsteinur, Norðoyri

In the village of Norðoyri there is a local legend of a man being buried at Deyðabólsteinur, who drifted ashore (Matras, 1920, sec. 04 FDM; Tjóðsavnið, 1952i). This stone is situated close to the coastline (Figure 5.32). Furthermore, it is said that this place was haunted (Tjóðsavnið, 1952i). Nearby Deyðabólsteinur there are possible medieval settlements remains, which are within a location called Millum Garðar, which translated means, *Between the dried stone walls* (Brøgger, 1937, p. 187; Svabo, 1976).

The material presented above from the island of Borðoy provides burial accounts from a broad spectrum of stories, legends and place names about burials and settlements in the landscape. This study will now continue to the burial data from the two remaining islands, Kunoy and Kalsoy. The first material to be examined is from the island of Kunoy.



Figure 5.32 Possible burial location in Norðoyri, with ID number 074. Map US.fo.

5.5 Study on the Islands of Kunoy and Kallsoy

This section is about the islands of Kunoy and Kallsoy in which ethnographic data, folklore, legends and place names will be discussed in relation to burial locations in the landscape.

Kunoy is 35.46km² in size. Towards the east, Kunoy is separated from Borðoy by the strait Haraldssund and, to the west, the island is separated from the island of Kallsoy by the fjord Kalsoyarfjørður. There are two villages on the island, Kunoy and Haraldssund and the abandoned village Skarð (Figure 5.33).



Figure 5.33 Aerial photograph of Kunoy and villages Haraldssund, Kunoy and Skarð. Map source Us.fo.

The island of Kallsoy is a long and narrow island and is the most western of the northern islands. The island is 30.87km² and is very steep on the western side, with one abandoned village, Blankaskáli. On the eastern side there are four villages: Trøllanes, Mikladalur, Húsar and Syðradalur (Figure 5.34). These are all settled and there are possible burial accounts from the villages of Syðradalur, Húsar, Mikladalur and Blankaskáli.



Figure 5.34 The island Kallsoy and villages Trøllanes, Mikladalur, Húsar, Syðradalur and Blankaskáli. Map source Us.fo.

5.5.1 The Village of Skarð

The village of Skarð was depopulated on 26.01.1919 due to the foundered of the boat, Skarðbátur, in 1913 (Hansen, 1978a, p. 161; Kunoy, 2012, p. 54). Ruins of this settlement are still visible in the landscape today, which are clustered in two areas. The older part of the settlement is in the northern part of the infield, called Norðuri á Grundum, which was

abandoned in 1845 (Hansen, 1978a, pp. 142–143). After the desertion of this settlement due to natural causes, a new settlement was built south of the old infield fences, which continued to be settled until 1919 (Hansen, 1978a, p. 143). From the older settlement, Norðuri í Grundum, there is one burial account of a burial place.

5.5.1.1 ID 073 Skálin, Skarð

In the older part of the settlement at Norðuri í Grundum at Skálin is an account of a burial. According to local folklore a man has been buried at Skálin in a ship (Fróðskaparsetur, 1850, sec. Skarð), but there is no more information about the circumstances of a man being buried here in a ship. At Skálin is a ruin, which is overgrown with vegetation (Hansen, 1978, p. 142). The exact location of the burial is not known. The second burial account in Kunoy comes from the village of Kunoy.

5.5.2 The Village of Kunoy

The village of Kunoy is the only village on the western side of the island; the other settlements, Skarð and Haraldssund, are both on the eastern side of the island (Figure 5.35).



Figure 5.35 The village of Kunoy. August 2015.

There is one burial account in the village of Kunoy.

5.5.2.1 ID 072 Hálendingagravir, Kunoy

The burial account from the village of Kunoy is based on a legend. Above the village is a place called Hálendingagravir which, according to the legend, is a burial place of men from Holland (Dahl, 1968b, p. 309). The location of Hálendingagravir has not been confirmed, but the location should be close to Hálandsskor, where people sought refuge when pirates came to the village (Dahl, 1968b, p. 309). The first part of the place names Hálendingagravir and Hálandsskor, *Hálendinga-* and *Hálends-*, refers to people from Holland. As this was the last burial account from Kunoy, the focus will now be on the neighbouring island of Kallsoy.

5.5.3 The Village of Syðradalur, Kallsoy

The village of Syðradalur is the southernmost village on Kallsoy and was settled in the 19th century, specifically in 1812 due to avalanches in the village of Blankaskála (Hansen, 1966, p. 42). There is no knowledge of an earlier settlement in Syðradalur prior to 1812, but although there is no evidence, it is still possible that the village was settled earlier. One evidence of an earlier settlement could be the remains of a burial found in Syðradalur.

5.5.3.1.1 ID 066 Syðradalur

In the place name material collected by Christian Matras, there is an account of a burial. In the story, men were carrying soil from an area where they found a coffin with human remains (Matras, 1920, sec. 63). Unfortunately, in this source there is no further mention of a place name in the village and therefore it is not located. In an additional note in the same group, there is a description of an object found with an image of Christ. This object was found deep down in the soil north of the most northern house, as a man was building his house (Matras, 1920, sec. 63). The second burial account from Kallsoy comes from the village of Húsum.

5.5.4 The Village of Húsum, Kallsoy

The village of Húsum is situated close to the seashore. At Húsum there is one district, á Heyggi, but it is common to divide the village into two districts, Heimi í Garði or á Heyggi and Norð í Garði or á Brekku (Hansen, 1978b, p. 9). There are two possible burial locations in Húsum.

5.5.4.1 ID 067 Húsum

The first location of a possible burial is based on a legend, where an area is believed to be an old burial ground in the infield (Tjóðsavnið, 1952h). According to this legend, there are remains of an old burial ground and church on the northern side of the stream Gjógvará (Hansen, 1978b, p. 5). During cultivation in this area, people have found soapstone, but no human remains or remains of coffins (Tjóðsavnið, 1952h). The second burial account is one which Sverri Dahl received from one of his informants in the city of Klaksvík.

5.5.4.2 ID 068 Húsum

In the second burial account at Húsum, Sverri Dahl received information from one of his informants in Klaksvík about a possible cemetery or churchyard (Tjóðsavnið, 1952h). Prior to 1945, men had been working in the infield close to a stream, where they had found hair and single (individual) bones. In this area there were also many loose stones. There was no prior knowledge of this place being a burial ground (Tjóðsavnið, 1952h). It is possibly that this burial ground was mentioned in the place name material by Christian Matras (Matras, 1920, sec. 62), but it could also be a different burial ground located north of the stream Mataráin. Mataráin is further north than the stream Gjógvaráin. The cemetery mentioned in the place name material is said to be located at Í Toft (Matras, 1920, sec. 62). In the northern area of the stream Gjógvará, there are at least two place names with the *toft* element in. The place name *toft* mean *a ruin*. The first place name is Norð í Toft, which is north of the stream Mataráin, and the second place name is Niðri í Toft, where perhaps an old churchyard was located (Hansen, 1978a, fig. III). It has not been possible during this research to locate the exact location of the cemetery or churchyard, but it could be located at two different locations mentioned above. As this was the second and final burial account from the village of Húsum, the focus will now be on the village of Mikladalur.

5.5.5 The Village of Mikladalur

The village of Mikladalur is situated in a valley, close to the seashore with a landing site (Figure 5.36). In this village there are two accounts of burial places with both registrations found in legends.



Figure 5.36 The village of Mikladalur. August 2015.

5.5.5.1 ID 070 Mikladalur

In the first burial account, the story in the legend tells about a battle between people from Norway and the Faroes, because of a violent tax collection (Dahl, 1968c, p. 310). The exact location is not known and there is no more information about the battle. The other burial account was registered by Jens Christian Svabo in 1781/1782 (Svabo, 1976, p. 123).

5.5.5.2 ID 071 Mikladalur

The second burial account, mentioned by Jens Christian Svabo, is a legend about two burial mounds (Svabo, 1976, p. 123). There is not much information to retrieve from this registration, except that, according to a legend, there are two burial mounds at Mikladalur. Unfortunately, the exact location of these mounds is not known. With these legends in mind, the focus will now be on the orally transmitted burial account from one generation to the next at Blankaskála.

5.5.6 The Village of Blankaskáli, Kallsoy

In 1816, the village of Blankaskáli was abandoned due to an avalanche in 1808 (Hansen 1966 p. 40-43). Remains of the settlement are still visible in the landscape, but most houses were

moved to the village of Syðradalur (Hansen, 1966, p. 42). There are no stories about a churchyard in Blankaskála, but there is one story about a burial place, which is presented below.

5.5.6.1 ID 069 Blankaskáli

There is one possible burial location in Blankaskála. This registration is based on an oral account from Informant 12 (Informant 12, Appendix A8), whose family used to live at Blankaskála. The memories of this settlement and the stories attached to the village continued to be told from one generation to the next. According to the informant, a man was once buried in the middle part of the infield (Informant 12, Appendix A8).

This last burial registration for the northern islands leads to preliminary conclusions, observations and ideas about locations of burials retrieved from the study and registrations of ethnographic, landscape folklore and place names sources in the Faroe Islands.

5.6 Preliminary Conclusions

Each legend, story and place name has their own agenda and function. Legends and folklore are part of an oral culture, which changes over time. Therefore, the descriptions of burial locations and place name with reference to burial locations can change. This can make the information on possible burial location biased, because one expects or hopes to find indications of possible burial locations. In addition, the information from place names, folklore and ethnographic data is often supported by only one source, which leads to uncertainties and gaps of knowledge in the data. Even if there are limits and uncertainties about the location of burials, a place name can give valuable information about the location, especially if the location of the place name is known. If the location of the place name is known, the location still has a function, where it is significant and is actively used in the landscape. In this matter, the social memory of the landscape is not lost, but embedded in the landscape.

People's social memories about their landscape are also often seen in folk tales and their medieval equivalent, the Icelandic sagas. Unfortunately, during this study only a few of the people interviewed could provide any definitive information on Viking Age burials. Furthermore, the burial accounts retrieved from ethnographic, landscape folklore and place names sources often provided clues to burials in the landscape, but not definitive information on Viking Age burials. Nevertheless, this research and study is very important, even if

definitive information is not retrieved on exact burial locations, because a very important aspect of this project was to collect the knowledge people have about their long-term social memory of burials in their culture, villages and landscapes. Furthermore, this study is very important, because this is the first time a study on burials in the northern islands have been completed with sources from a broad range of information, retrieved from ethnographic, folklore and place names sources.

In Table 5.3 is a synthesis of the burial locations and possible burial sites, which is based on ethnographic sources, place names, folklore, interviews and field surveys on the northern islands. After the initial field survey in 2015, a few sites were selected for further geophysical analysis. Of the forty possible burial locations listed in Table 5.3, five possible burial locations were selected for further geophysical surveying. Unfortunately, there are a few sites which I had hoped to include in the geophysical survey and test excavations, but where it was not always possible. For example, it was not possible to include sites which were in modern churchyards (for example ID092, ID097), which were already excavated (or covered with asphalt or a building) (for example ID086, ID093, ID098) and where the location was not known (for example ID066, ID067, ID068, ID082, ID085, ID100), see Table 5.3.

This research and review of ethnographic, folklore and placename studies has addressed the research questions where and how I can locate more Viking Age burial in the Faroe Islands, how a Viking Age burial is identified in the landscape and which methods I can develop in order to get any closer in answering this question. With these preliminary conclusions, observations and ideas on retrieving burial data from ethnographic, folklore, interviews and place name sources and studies in locating burials in the landscape, the focus will now be on the results of the comparative study of the Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands and neighbouring countries in Chapter 6.

Table 5.3 Synthesis about burial locations and possible burial sites in the northern islands.

ID	Name	Visit	Location verified	Definition of site	1: Probable modern; 2: Possible medieval; 3: Possible Viking Age	Selected for further investigation
066	Syðradalur	Yes	No	Burial site	2;3	No

ID	Name	Visit	Location verified	Definition of site	1: Probable modern; 2: Possible medieval; 3: Possible Viking Age	Selected for further investigation
067	Húsum	Yes	No	Legend, burial site	2;3	No
068	Húsum	Yes	No	Burial site	2;3	No
069	Blankaskáli	No	No	Oral account	2	No
070	Míkladalur	Yes	No	Battle	2	No
071	Míkladalur	Yes	No	Legend, mounds, burial	2;3	No
072	Hálendingagravir, Kunoy	Yes	No	Legend, place name, burial	1;2	No
073	Skálin, Skarð	No	No	Legend, burial	3	No
074	Deyðabólssteinur, Norðoyri	Yes	Yes	Legend, burial	1;2	No
075	Stein Karl Hans, Klaksvík	No	Yes	Legend, place name, burial	1;2	No
076	Yviri í Trøð, Klaksvík	No	No	Legend	1;2	No
077	Stoksoyri, Klaksvík	Yes	No	Legend	2	No
078	Í Grevstrinum, Klaksvík	Yes	Yes	Legend, burial	2	No
079	Við Sólstein, Klaksvík	Yes	Yes	Legend, burial	2;3	No
080	Vágsstongum	Yes	Yes	Burial	1;2	No
081	Kvífingardalur, Klaksvík	Yes	Yes	Legend, burial	2;3	No
082	Klaksvík	Yes	No	Story, burial	2;3	No
083	Niðri á Toft, Klaksvík	Yes	Yes	Bone found	1;2;3	Yes
084	Í Gerðum, Klaksvík	Yes	Yes	Legend, burial	2;3	No
085	Grøna fløta, Múla	Yes	No	Legend, burial	2;3	No
086	North of Byrging, Hvannasund	Yes	Yes	Legend, burial	1;2	No

ID	Name	Visit	Location verified	Definition of site	1: Probable modern; 2: Possible medieval; 3: Possible Viking Age	Selected for further investigation
087	North of Byrging, Hvannasund	Yes	Yes	Legend, burial	2	No
088	Ormadalur, Viðareiði	Yes	Yes	Legend, burial	2	No
089	Flatabakki, Viðareiði	Yes	Yes	Legend, place name, burial	2;3	Yes
090	Fransagrøvin, Viðareiði	Yes	Yes	Place name, burial	2;	No
091	Church	Yes	Yes	Burial site?	2;3	No
092	Church yard, Svínø	Yes	Yes	Burial site	2;3	No
093	Frammi í Graði	Yes	Yes	Burial site	3	No
094	Bønhústoft, Svínø	Yes	Yes	Early church site	2;3	No
095	Skotagravirnar, Svínø (Appendix 5.2)	Yes	Yes	Skotaskipið	1	No
096	Torvarheyggjar, Svínø	Yes	Yes	Peat cutting, burial	1;2;3	No
097	Kirkja í Kirkjugarðinum, Rógva	Yes	Yes	Burial site	2;3	No
098	Á Vegginum	Yes	No	Legend, burial	2;3	Yes
099	Norði millum garða	Yes	No	Building remains; burial	2;3	Yes
100	Sheep pen? Hattarvík	Yes	No	Story	2;3	No
101	Leysingarteigar, Hattarvík	Yes	Yes	Legend, place name, burial	1;2	No
102	Oddur, Hattarvík	Yes	Yes	Story, place name, burial	1;2	No
103	Gunnhildarheyggur, Hattarvík	Yes	Yes	Place names	1;2	No
104	Gullheyggur, Hattarvík	Yes	Yes	Place name and legend	1;2	No
105	Døttheyggjar, Hattarvík	Yes	Yes	Legend, place name, burial	3	Yes

Chapter 6 Results of a Comparative Landscape Study of the Viking Age Burials in the Faroe Islands and Neighbouring Countries

This chapter presents a comparative landscape analysis of selected burial sites in the North Atlantic. In this chapter I am addressing the research questions of where and how we can locate more Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands and if the Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands are similar or different to those in Viking Age Norway, Iceland, and Scotland. In this context it is meaningful to consider why the number of Viking Age burials is slightly higher in Norway, Iceland, and the Scottish Islands, compared to the Faroe Islands (Table 6.1).

Table 6.1 Overview of burial sites in the wider North Atlantic.

Country	Number of Viking Age Burials	References
Norway	Approximately 8,000 furnished burials	(Stylegar, 2010, p. 71)
Scotland, including the Islands	Approximately 138 burials	(Graham-Campbell and Batey, 1998; Owen and Dalland, 1999; Batey, 2016; Graham-Campbell, 2016)
The Faroe Islands	24 burials at 4 sites (12 burials at Yviri í Trøð; 11 burials at Við Kirkjugarð; 1 burial at Á Bønhúsfløta, Hvalba; unknown burial number at Í Ólangarði, Skúvoy)	(Tjóðsavnið, 1952a; Dahl and Rasmussen, 1956, p. 160; Dahl, 1959; Arge, and Hartmann, 1989, p. 9)
Iceland	316 burials at 157 grave sites	(Eldjárn, 2016, p. 620)
Greenland	0 Viking Age Burials	

In answering this question, I will in the following section provide perspectives on the disparity of burial frequency in the different regions in the North Atlantic. This subject was briefly touched upon in Chapters 1 and 2, but in this section, it will be explicitly considered. Additionally, this section specifies the rationale behind the sample selection for each country and why particular cemeteries were selected for investigation. The first section is followed by a section on the reason behind the comparative approach, an outline of the survey sheets and sites selected for landscape analysis. This section is accompanied by sections on the landscape analysis of Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands, Norway, Shetland, Orkney and, at last, Iceland.

6.1 Regional Differences in Viking Age Burial Frequency

The disparity of burial frequency is evidently most apparent in the Faroe Islands, which contains very few (only 24 burials at 4 sites) compared with the number of burials in Iceland, Norway, Scotland, and the Scottish islands, as displayed in Table 6.1. The relatively low number of Viking burials in England, Scotland and Ireland – compared to Iceland, for example

– has also been the subject of discussion, because many scholars believe that the burial number does not accurately reflect the longevity, intensity and the full extent of Viking Age settlements (Owen, 1999, p. 172; Graham-Campbell, 2016). In Iceland, where at least 316 burials have been found at 157 grave sites, there are differences in geographical distribution caused by differences in exposure by soil erosion, road building, and construction projects, and there are also variations in burial practices, population density, grave goods, placement in relation to topography, and relationships with farms and boundaries (Vésteinsson, 2011, pp. 41, 46–48; Friðriksson, 2013, pp. 155–156, 194–195, 203, 243–244; Eldjárn, 2016, pp. 257–261). There are several points to bring forward in relation to the disparity of burial frequency in the North Atlantic region, and especially the low numbers of burials in some regions compared to Norway. First of all, in contrast to Norwegian burials, which are usually marked by a mound, and have therefore remained visible and recognised in the landscape for 1000 years, burial sites in the North Atlantic region are much less visible – often completely hidden. The vast majority of burial sites have been discovered by accident during agriculture, construction work, erosion or by other chance findings (Shetelig, 1945, pp. 21–22; Dahl and Rasmussen, 1956; Batey, 1993, p. 161; Owen and Dalland, 1999, p. 1; Friðriksson 2013 pp. 88, 291; Graham-Campbell, 2016). Secondly, burials found by chance have sometimes been badly recorded or destroyed by diggers, so end up not being properly documented and left off the map (Shetelig, 1945, pp. 21–22; Graham-Campbell and Batey, 1998, pp. 47–48; Owen, 1999, p. 172). Preservation in the wake of modern development has also undoubtedly led to the loss of some burials in the North Atlantic islands, because they were not visible on the surface and were therefore more vulnerable to new cultivation and building developments. Moreover, there is the concern of archaeological visibility of pagan burials. Since most often pagan burials are identified based on their artefact assemblages, pagan burials without artefact assemblages can be overlooked, an issue which has recently been raised in relation to pagan burials in Iceland (Pétursdóttir, 2009, p. 38; Vésteinsson, 2011, p. 48). The relatively high numbers of burials in Scotland, Iceland, and Norway compared to the Faroe Islands made it necessary to select a sample for comparative landscape analysis – it simply was not possible to visit all of them. How this sample was selected is explained in the following section, 6.1.1.

6.1.1 Sample Selection

Due to the large size and number of the study areas, the time frame of the project, and the landscape phenomenological method selected for landscape survey, it was evident from the

beginning of the project that I needed to select a small sample of a larger area for the comparative analysis of the landscape locations of Viking Age burials. Since, the Vikings sailed to the Faroe Islands from Scandinavia, most likely Norway, though the Northern Isles of Scotland and from Faroes onwards to Iceland, it was thought reasonable to consider comparisons for burial types and burial landscape location in these countries. These countries form a triangle around the Faroes and were the closest neighbours in a northern cultural framework that needed consideration. In the selection of specific sites for landscape analysis the main objective was to choose sites that were as comparable as possible to the variety of settings in the Faroe Islands, and so included coastal sites as well as more inland sites close to farms and boundaries. Additionally, having selected a survey-based phenomenological approach meant that I needed to consider the timeframe of the project and how many sites I would be able to visit. There are benefits and disadvantages with this method. For example, one advantage was that I could visit the sites in person and get a first-hand experience and knowledge of the sites and the landscape settings. On the other hand, one shortcoming was that in the timeframe I had, I could not visit more sites (see for example the overview of selected sites in Table 6.2). For example, in both Norway and Iceland there are many more burials than I selected, as shown in Table 6.1. Although this was duly considered, I still thought the novelty of the comparative method with a phenomenological approach was significant, and an important method to explore in the North Atlantic.

6.2 Comparative Analysis

From the beginning of this research, I have considered it important to include a comparative analysis of Viking Age burial sites in the North Atlantic. It is a common methodological approach to compare sites or objects to get a better understanding of the researched material (Smith and Peregrine, 2012, p. 4). In various studies burial sites have been compared as a way to examine the setting of the burials, burial rituals and their social importance (Gansum and Oestigaard, 2004; Eriksen, 2013; Friðriksson, 2013; Price, 2014; Klevnäs, 2016; Williams, 2016). In comparing sites, it is a matter of assessing the similarities between contexts and discerning if the information can be transferred from one context to the other (Hodder and Hutson, 2003, p. 194). Through this process, it is pertinent to consider and decide how the similarities and differences between contexts are relevant to each other (Hodder and Hutson, 2003, p. 194). Although the burial sites selected for the landscape survey are from the same time period, it is essential to consider the landscape context they are part of and embedded in

(Hodder and Hutson, 2003, p. 194). As the landscape in the North Atlantic differs significantly from one region to another, and this may have impacted burial placement, it was thought preferable to select a certain number of Viking Age burial sites in Norway, Iceland, Shetland and Orkney for a comparative analysis (Table 6.2).

Table 6.2 Overview of the burial sites selected for landscape analysis.

Countries	Sites
The Faroe Islands	Yviri í Trøð, Tjørnuvík Við Kirkjugarð, Sandur Á Bønhúsfløtu, Hvalba Kirkjugarðurin, Kirkja Frammi í Garði, Svínoy Óttisheyggur, Giljanes Havgrímsgrøv, Hov Á Veggnum, Kirkja
Norway	Klepp, Tu Burial Site Åkra, Karmøy Kongshaugen, Alvaldsnes, Karmøy Grønhaug, Bø, Karmøy
Shetland	Giant's Grave, Wick of Aith, Fetlar Sumburgh Airport St Ola's Church, White Ness Clibberswick, Unst Lunna Ness Burial Ground
Orkney	Broch of Gurness, Aikerness Westness, Rousay Pierowall Links, Westray The Scar Boat Burial, Quoy Banks, Sanday Styles of Brough, Sanday Bay of Skaill, Mainland
Iceland	Hemla, Vestur-Landeyjahreppur Dufþaksholt, Hvalhreppur Strand arhöfuð, Vestur-Landeyjahreppur Stóri-Moshvoll, Hvalhreppur Lækur í Flóa, Hraungsgærðishreppur

In the comparative approach taken during this study a standardised recording form was used for the landscape survey of selected burial sites. This approach was selected to ensure that the same observations were recorded at all the sites visited. The standardised recording form included specific categories with information of what to include in the landscape analysis, which is outlined in .

Table 6.3 and discussed in Chapter 3. With this approach, I had an opportunity after the survey to compare the locations of the burials, their landscape context, and possible burial practices. The notes from the survey are in Appendices A9, A10, A11, A12 and A13.

Table 6.3 Landscape Analysis Categories.

Categories	Information to include
1: Access to burial	Is the access to the burial site possible from land or sea or both?
2: Movement to and from the burial and location (including geographical features)	Possible paths of movement to and from the burial site such as roads, trails, and cairns. How are these situated in the landscape: close to hills, valley, sea, land, cliff top, top of hill, rise of land, flat or watercourse?
3: View from the burial site (including geographical features)	The view from the burial site has been categorised in terms of three options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Open/vast view from the burial site, mainly towards the settlement or the sea. A direct view towards the sea or settlement with no hindrance of the view, a sea stack, a shoulder of land, hills or cliffs. Open intervisibility between burial and settlement and/or between burial and the sea. 2) Partial view: where the view towards the sea and/or the settlement is partially obstructed by an inlet, bay, sea stacks, a shoulder of land, hills or cliffs. 3) No view: where the burial site is in a depression or behind a hill, hillock, and mound with no view towards neither sea nor settlement. The view can further be obstructed by mountains, cliffs, or a rise of land.
4: Signs of field boundaries	Rivers, shorelines and other topographical features, cairns, known farm borders such as walls or fences.
5: Location and orientation of burials	If possible, describe the orientation of the burials (the human remains) on site.
6: Certain deviations or special character	Is there a similarity with the location of this site compared with other Viking Age burial sites?
7: Other remains nearby	Settlement, sheep pen, shelter, old fences, dykes, other structures.
8: Signs of disturbance	Excavated or not, visible on the surface, disturbance by humans or animals, erosion, weather.
9: Other comments	While on site, ideas, thoughts etc.

At the end of each burial analysis, the key points are mentioned and after each geographical section, the key points are shown in a table. This table is important in the discussion of how the comparison aided in the refinement of the survey strategies in locating new Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands. In addition, it was significant in discussing the research questions in the context of similarities and differences between the burial sites selected for landscape

analysis. With this in mind the analysis will begin with the Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands.

6.3 Viking Age Burials in the Faroe Islands

Since there are only four verified Viking Age burial sites in the Faroe Islands, I decided to include a landscape analysis of ‘probable’ and ‘possible’ Viking Age burial sites as well

Figure 6.1 Location of verified, probable and possible burial locations in the Faroe Islands.
, Figure 6.4).

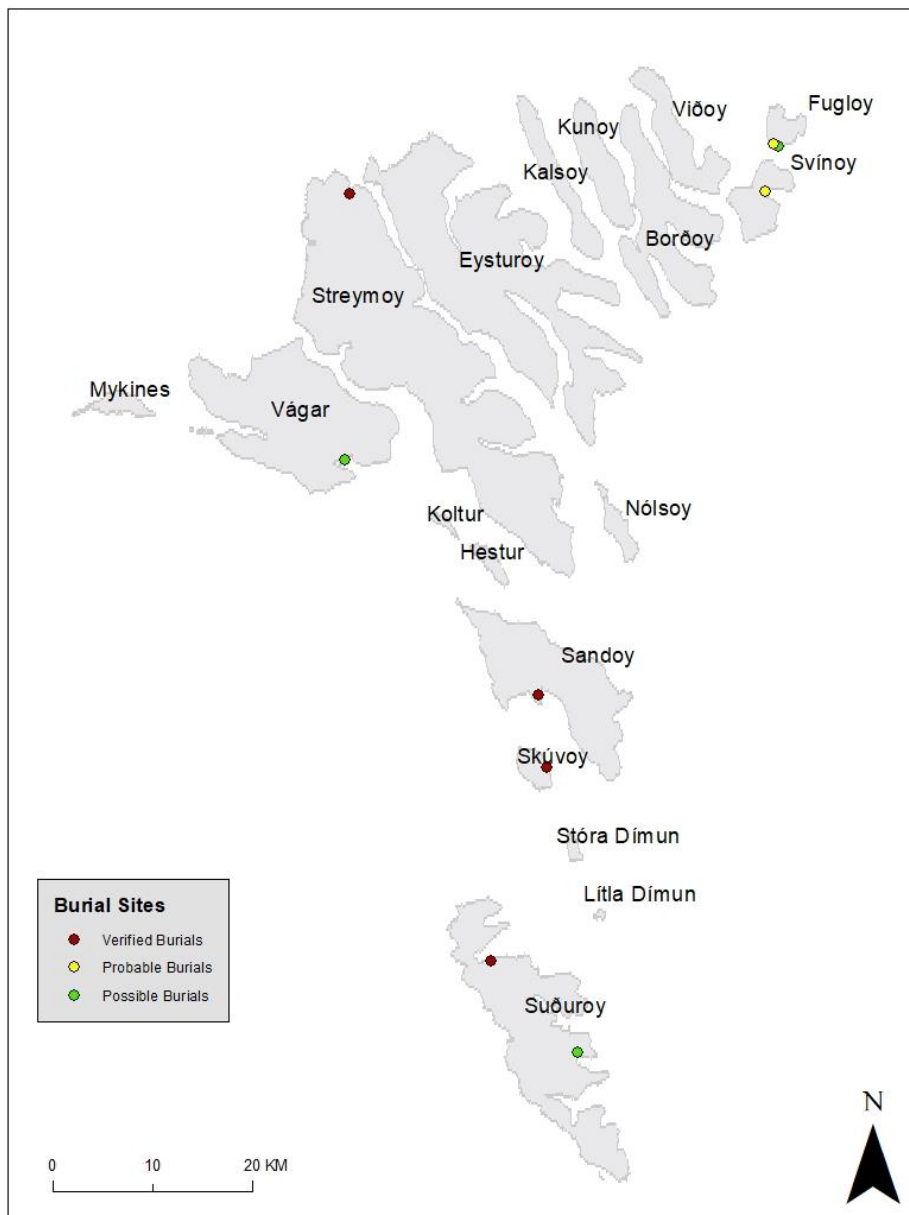


Figure 6.1 Location of verified, probable and possible burial locations in the Faroe Islands.

Table 6.4 Definite, probable and possible Viking Age Burial Sites in the Faroe Islands.

Verified	Probable	Possible
Yviri í Trøð, Tjørnuvík	Kirkjugarðurin, Kikrja	Óttisheggur, Giljanes
Við Kirkjugarð, Sandur	Frammi í Garði, Svinoy	Havgrímsgrøvn, Hov
Á Bønhúsfløtu, Hvalba		Á Veggnum, Kirkja

The reason was due to their potential to provide indications of where and how to locate Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands. ‘Probable’ burial sites are defined as those with clear find circumstances and clear descriptions of the burials and their contents. In comparison, ‘possible’ burials sites are not as clearly described and the find circumstances often vague.

6.3.1 Burial Site Yviri í Trøð, Tjørnuvík Tjóðsavnið/Museum ID Fmnr. 46003 (Appendix A9)

The Viking Age cemetery in Tjørnuvík, at the site of Yviri í Trøð, was reviewed in detail in Chapter 4. The village of Tjørnuvík is the northernmost village on the island of Streymoy (Figure 6.2). It lies close to the seashore in a narrow inlet, surrounded by high mountains (Figure 6.2, Figure 6.3, Figure 6.4, Figure 6.10). The burial site is situated 7m east of the old infield stone fence and east of the village on a grass-covered ridge, Yviri í Trøð (Figure 6.4, Figure 6.8) (Dahl, 1956; Dahl and Rasmussen, 1956, p. 155). Therefore, the burial site was set on a border between the infield hayfields and the outfield. After the excavation, the burial site was reconstructed with the marking of the burials (Figure 6.6, Figure 6.3, Figure 6.5). Access to the site is possible today from the path north of the site (Figure 6.5, Figure 6.6). This path leads both to the village Tjørnuvík and to the neighbouring village Haldórsvík. There is also easy access from the seashore (Figure 6.9). This makes the movement to and from the burial ground easy, as there is access to the site from the village of Tjørnuvík, the village of Haldórsvík and the sea. There is an open view and intervisibility from the burial site towards the seashore (north), the beach and modern landing site, west of the village (Figure 6.4, Figure 6.5). On the horizon there are two sea stacks called Risin and Kellingin. In addition, the eastern part of the island Eysturoy is visible (Figure 6.5). There is a good and open view towards the village, west of the site (Figure 6.8). There is no hill or shoulder of land to hinder the view towards the village. Towards the south, east and west, the view is limited by mountains and there is no view of other villages (Figure 6.2). The modern infield or home field area for cultivation and grazing is not extensive and extends from the village towards the south and to the border of the rock face, surrounding the village (Figure 6.10).



Figure 6.2 Topographic map of Tjørnuvík. Map source US.fo

On the western side of the burial site is a small river, Rættaráin. As the burials were placed on a sand dune and some of the burials marked with stones, it is clear that they were meant to be visible in the landscape (see Chapter 4). Towards the south there is a sheep pen (the age of which is not known) and below the path close to the seashore are stone structures. West of the burial site, Sverri Dahl excavated a structure in July 1959, which was initially interpreted as a boat house (Dahl, 1959a). Unfortunately, during this research, I have not been able to locate the report from this excavation and therefore the physical relation between the possible boathouse and burial site is not known. In a short description, Sverri Dahl mentioned that in

the structure he found glazed pottery of a younger date (Dahl, 1959a). The artefacts are at the archives in the museum and a few of them are included below (Figures 6.13-16).



Figure 6.3 View towards burial site from the path, today main road. July 2017.



Figure 6.4 The burial site and the village Tjørnuvík seen from the main road to Haldórsvík. July 2017.



Figure 6.5 Photo of the burial site Yviri í Trøð towards the sea. July 2017.



Figure 6.6 Reconstructions of the location of the burial site after excavation. July 2017.

In addition to the archaeological excavation at Yviri í Trøð, Jóhannes Jóhansen conducted a vegetational study a few meters south west of the burial site (Jóhansen, 1985, p. 41). His pollen results indicate that there was open shallow water to the west of the burial site, which probably gave the name to the village of Tjørnuvík, which means ‘Tarnbay’ (Jóhanesen, 1971, p. 148; Jóhansen, 1985, p. 42). This points towards the option that in the area west of the burial site, between the site and the village, there were small lakes (Jóhanesen, 1971, p. 148).



Figure 6.7 View from the burial site towards the village of Tjørnuvík. Photo May 2015.



Figure 6.8 View from the village of Tjørnuvík towards the burial site Yviri í Trøð. May 2015.



Figure 6.9 View from the seashore towards the burial site Yviri í Trøð. May 2015.



Figure 6.10 View from the landing area towards the village of Tjørnuvík (on the right) and the burial site Yviri í Trøð (to the left). May 2015.



Figure 6.11 View towards the infield and the streams from the burial site Yviri í Trøð. May 2015.



Figure 6.12 Structure west of burial site Yviri í Trøð. Photo: Sverri Dahl, Tjóðsavnið (R-1959-8-21).



Figure 6.13 Artefacts from the site of Toft Yviri í Trøð



Figure 6.14 Glazed pottery and an iron nail from Toft Yviri í Trøð.



Figure 6.15 Clay found in a pile of stones on the east side in Toft Yviri í Trøð.



Figure 6.16 Bone object found in a pile of stones on the east side in Toft Yviri í Trøð

The choices made by the first Viking Age inhabitants in placing this burial ground on the infield/outfield boundary on elevated land, marking the burials and displaying their visibility and location close to communication routes (both the sea and the path) and on the outskirts of a wetland area was highly relevant, because it shows which location as a burial ground was important for them. In addition to the significance of these key points, it is also very relevant that there is a short distance from the burial site to the village and the seashore, where there is an open view both towards the village and the seashore. This demonstrates at the same time that there is distance between the living and the dead with the borders and the wetland area, but also a closeness and a manifestation of power with the direct visibility between the village and the burial site. It also demonstrates a link between the burial site and communication routes both by land and sea, as well as the fact that, in the Viking Age, the burials were visible in the area since they were placed on elevated land and marked with stones.

6.3.2 Burial Site Við Kirkjugarð, Sandur. Tjóðsavnið/Museum ID Fmnr. 270015 (Appendix A9)

The second landscape analysis was conducted in the village of Sandur at the Viking Age burial site of Við Kirkjugarð (Figure 6.17, Figure 6.18).

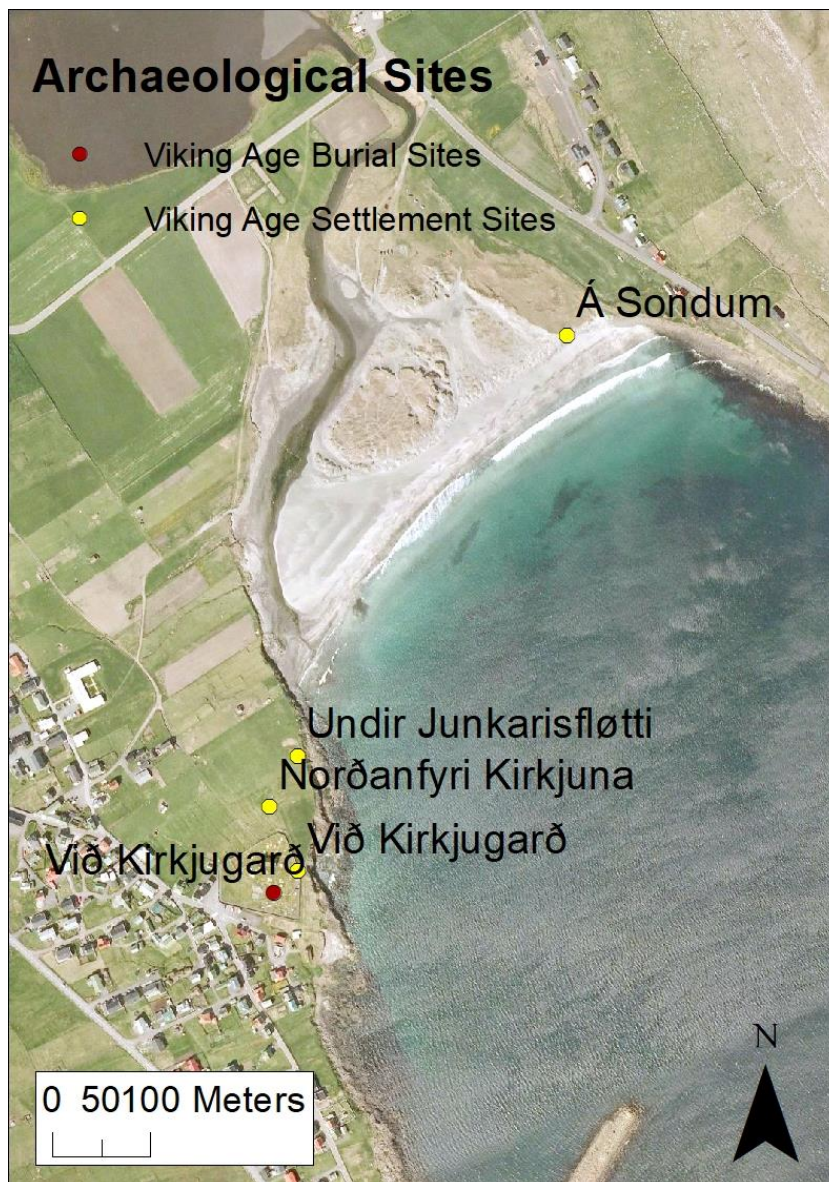


Figure 6.17 Overview of archaeological sites at Sandur.

The archaeological remains in the village of Sandur are set amidst in an open and exposed landscape. The natural landscape settings in the village of Sandur is quite different from the

landscape in the village of Tjørnuvík, because at Sandur the bay is far-stretching with sand dunes spreading along the coast (Figure 6.25). The hills and mountains in the vicinity of Sandur are low and not as steep as the hills in Tjørnuvík. There are also large lakes in close vicinity to the village. The name of the island, Sandoy, means ‘sand island’, with clear reference to the sandy beach at the village of Sandur.

The Viking Age burials are situated close to the modern coastline and were placed in a location affected by wind-blown sand (Figure 6.21). Because of the wind-blown sand, the burials were not visible in the landscape prior to the excavation. The distance from the burial site to the coastline is 59.1m. The village is on the south west side of the burial site. Following the shoreline in a northern direction, the beach is 343.2m from the burial site (Figure 6.25).

Below the burial site is a walking path which runs from the beach towards the modern landing site south east of the burial site (Hjalt, 1953, p. 61). This path provided easy access to the burials from the settlements, the beach and the boat houses. Therefore, the movement to and from the site was easy. At the modern landing site there used to be boathouses, as is evident on a 1900 map (Figure 6.22). Following the coastline north of the burial site, there are several buildings under the surface which are most likely contemporary with the burial site at Við Kirkjugarð. Approximately 6m from the churchyard’s dry stone wall is a possible Viking Age building, which is not fully excavated (Krogh, 1975, p. 46). Prior to the partial excavation of the building, a Viking Age coin hoard was discovered in 1863 (Krogh, 1975, p. 46). The coin hoard consisted of 98 coins dated to the late Viking Age, from the end of the 10th century. Further north is the parish church in the village of Sandur (Figure 6.19, Figure 6.20, Figure 6.24). During studies of the church in 1969-70, investigation results showed that there were five earlier church buildings, with the earliest dated to the 11th century. The church building from the 11th century was a wooden stave church of Norwegian type. Continuing further north along the coast, there are two sites close to each other. The first site is the recently discovered Viking Age hall. The second site is Undir Junkarisfløtti, with occupations dating to the 8th century (Church et al., 2005, p. 181). Around 1200AD, the settlement was abandoned, and people moved further inland. Proceeding from Undir Junkarisfløtti, walking across the beach, one finds Viking Age settlement remains at Á Sondum. Below the Viking Age settlement is the earliest archaeological evidence from the Faroe Islands, dated to 4th-6th century (Church et al., 2013, p. 228).

The burials are about 14m above sea level and therefore at a higher level than the beach. Towards the medieval and modern village, the elevation rises gradually. As the churchyard is situated on higher terrain than the beach and close to the modern seashore, there is an open view east towards the sea, the village of Skarvanes, the island of Skúvoy, the modern landing site to the east, the church to the north and Viking Age settlements and activity areas to the northwest, and towards the modern village to the west.

At the time of the burials' usage, the burials were marked with stones and were therefore visible in the landscape. In relation to this burial site, the sea and seashore act as natural boundaries for the extent of the burial site to the east. The churchyard's dry stone wall post-dates the Viking Age burials. During excavation, it was clear that the burial site extended underneath the dry stone wall and it was also evident that cultivation activities predated the burials. Below the dry stone wall was a dyke (in the excavation labelled J6D), which post-dates the burials (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 17). There is a ditch 1m from the dry stone wall at the north of the site, but it is not dated or excavated. The ditch is probably used to drain the cemetery. It is possible that the cemetery's southern and western border was determined by an open trench, which could have originally been a stream (in the excavation labelled as H7B) (Hartmann, 1990b, p. 7). South and southwest of the burials there was the course of an old stream, which is not dated (Diklev, 1981a, p. 19). Additionally, south and southwest of the burial site were areas with heaps of burned water-rounded stones, ash layers, slag-like material and a non-domestic structure with charcoal and large piles of fire cracked stones (Diklev, 1981, pp. 21–22; Arge, 2001, p. 12; Arge et al., 2016, p. 36). These structures point towards production activities, such as smithy activities and/or the production of food and drink. It could be, for instance, a grain cultivation centre (Hartmann, 1990b, p. 10). It is also likely that the activities south of the burials were related to the burial site itself as ritual activities. Since the features are not dated, the contemporaneity of these features and the burial site is not clear. In addition, the stratigraphic relationship is not clear between them either. Although there are no radiocarbon dates which would give a precise dating confirm the timeframe of these features, the question is how much it would help in understanding the stratigraphic relationship between the features and the burial site itself.

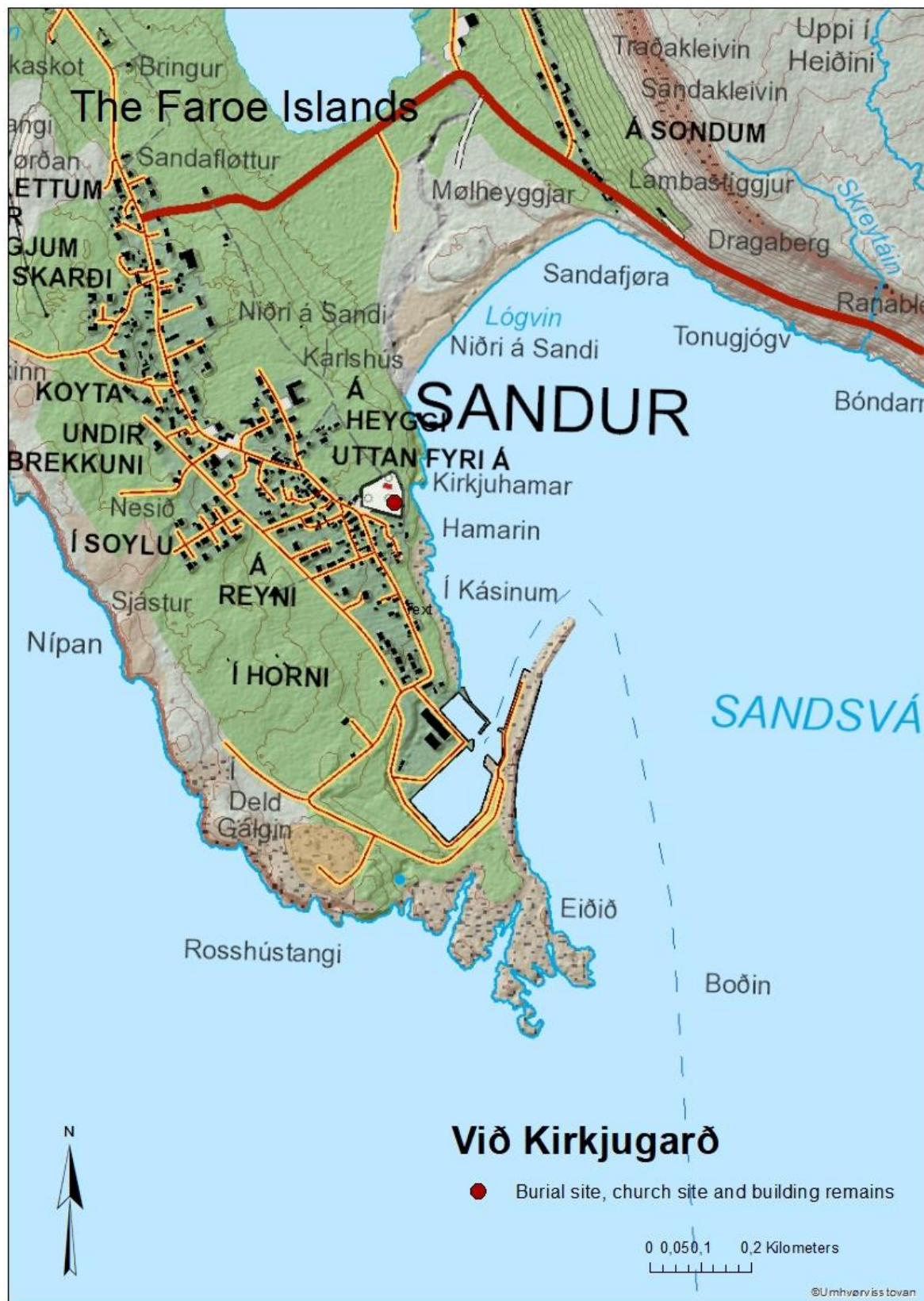


Figure 6.18 Topographic map of the village of Sandur and the burial site Við Kirkjugarð.



Figure 6.19 View from the burial site towards the church. July 2017.



Figure 6.20 View from the burial site towards the village. The burial site is flanked by a stone wall on the right and a modern cemetery on the left. July 2017.



Figure 6.21 View from the burial site towards the landing site. July 2017.



Figure 6.22 View from the burial site towards the landing site. July 2017.



Figure 6.23 Visibility from west of the church and burial site. April 2012



Figure 6.24 Visibility from north of the church and burial site. April 2012.



Figure 6.25 View from the beach towards the church and burial site. July 2017



Figure 6.26 View from Junkarisfløtti, close to the church, towards the small lake, Sandvatns. The village flanks both sides of the lake. July 2017.

It is significant that this burial site has been continually in use since the Viking Age and that it is only in recent years that there was a need to extend the churchyard. The extension of the churchyard led to the discovery of the Viking Age burials. Several Viking Age settlements have been found, where these people could have lived. The settlements are both close to the burials, with an intervisibility between the settlement sites and the burials. At the parish church in the village of Sandur, the earliest church phase dates to the Middle Ages. Since the earliest church phase is from the early Middle Ages, it is possible that the building excavated by Knud Kogh functioned both as a chapel and as a place of residence, but this is not certain at all. This burial site is also close to the seashore and there is easy access to the site, both from the Viking Age settlements and the beach towards the north. There is also easy access from the industrial area in the west and the landing site towards the east. The view is open towards the sea, the landing site, the industrial area and the buildings north of the burials.

6.3.3 Burial Site at Á Bønhúsfløtu, Hvalba, Nes, Tjóðsavnið/Museum Fmnr. 20118 (Appendix A9)

The third landscape analysis was conducted at the burial site at Á Bønhúsfløtu at Hvalba at Nes. The site encompasses a burial site, house remains, and stone wall remains (Figure 6.27). The site is located east of a promontory (in Faroese *nes*) and the district Nes is probably named after the promontory (Figure 6.33). 20m east of the burial site are the settlement remains

(Figure 6.29). Between the burial site and the settlement remains runs a channel, which separates the burial site from the settlement site (Figure 6.30).



Figure 6.27 Overview of the site Á Bønhúsfløtu at Hvalba, Nes.

Neither the burial site nor the settlement remains are excavated, but it is very likely that the burial site and the settlement were in contemporary use with one another. The remains on Á Bønhúsfløtu are set in a plain, close to the seashore towards the north (Figure 6.30, Figure 6.32). From the burial site, the terrain rises slowly towards the nearby modern houses, the cliffs and boulders in the south. There is easy movement to and from the burial site from the seashore and the settlement remains. When the landscape area at Á Bønhúsfløtu at Hvalba was surveyed by Tjóðsavnið, a possible churchyard and three building remains were registered (Arge and Michelsen, 2011, p. 12). Símun V. Arge and Helgi Michelsen interpreted this site as an early “chapel-site” with a farm, churchyard and church. It was at the edge of the fence enclosure, close to the seashore, where the human remains were discovered.



Figure 6.28 View of the burial site towards east. October 2015.



Figure 6.29 View from the burial site to the village of Hvalba in the west. October 2015.



Figure 6.30 View of the settlement remains. October 2015.



Figure 6.31 View towards the burial site and its enclosure. July 2017.



Figure 6.32 View from the enclosure towards the modern houses at Nes, Hvalba. July 2017.



Figure 6.33 The shoreline at Á Bønhúsfløtu, where there are clear signs of erosion. July 2017.



Figure 6.34 Map of the burial site Bønhúsfløta, the district of Nes and the village of Hvalba.

This fence structure, which is much eroded by wind and sea, has been interpreted as being part of an old churchyard (Figure 6.31) (Arge and Michelsen, 2011, p. 11). The burial site is being eroded by the wind and the sea. Therefore, it is not possible to estimate how far the burial site was from the sea during the Viking Age and whether there was direct access to the site from the sea, or whether there was land and buildings in between the burial site and the sea. The view from the burial site towards the ocean in the east and the inlet is open. The village Hvalba is towards the west and there is clear visibility towards the village (Figure 6.28, Figure 6.31). In addition, 90m east of the burial site is a river, Fleksá, which is visible from the burial site.

This burial site has a special character, being part of a possible early church site and nearby settlement remains, which are only 20m east of the burial site. With its closeness to the sea and with good walkable ground, it is easy to access the burial site and the settlement remains. There is also good visibility towards the village of Hvalba and towards the ocean.

This site was the last definite burial site. The focus will now be on two probable burials, beginning with the burial site at Kirkjugarðurin in the village of Kirkja on the island of Fugloy.

6.3.4 Probable Burial Site Kirkjugarðurin, Kirkja. Tjóðsavnið/Museum ID Fmnr. 94001 (Appendix A9)

The first probable burial site was located in the churchyard in the village of Kirkja (Figure 6.35, Figure 6.36, Figure 6.37). The area in which the burials were discovered is called Rógva and is only 6m from a steep cliff. The knowledge of the site comes from an article by Louis Zachariasen (Zachariasen, 1956) and the accounts written by Símun Hansen in his work on family histories (Hansen, 1971). It is most likely that the burial site at Kirkja is from the Viking Age, because artefacts were found in the burials (Hansen, 1971). Additionally, the grave cuts were lined with flat stones set on edge, with further stones placed on top as a kind of a lid. The burials in Kirkja were discovered in 1900 during work to extend the churchyard (Zachariasen, 1956, p. 4). These find circumstances are reminiscent of the find circumstances for the burials at Við Kirkjugarð in the village of Sandur, which were also located due to the extension of the old churchyard. The burials in Kirkjugarðurin, Kirkja had an east-west alignment, with the head in the west. There were three or four burials. In addition to human remains, the workmen who found the graves also found a handful of artefacts (Zachariasen, 1956, p. 4; Hansen, 1971, p. 35). The artefacts were not kept, and the description of the artefacts are based on the descriptions Símun Hansen and Louis Zachariasen received from their informants. In two of the burial chambers there were objects whose descriptions resembled spindle whorls: round, with holes in the middle (Hansen, 1971, p. 35). In the soil, other objects of stone were also found. Some of the objects were deposited back into soil by the workmen who found them (Zachariasen, 1956, p. 4). The artefacts which were not thrown back in included a square stone with a square hole in one of its sides, half of a stone spindle whorl, and something which resembled a funnel made of reddish stone (Zachariasen, 1956, p. 4). Overall, the descriptions suggest a Viking Age date for possible very early Christian burial practices or an intermediate phase from pre-Christian to Christian.



Figure 6.35 Map of the burial site Kirkjugarðurin and the village of Kirkja.

The landscape analysis of this site shows that there is a moderate view east towards the village of Kirkja (Figure 6.40). The view is moderate due to the location of the church. There is an open view towards the ocean (Figure 6.36). Towards the west is the island of Viðoy and the

village of Viðareiði, and towards the south there is an open view towards the inlet of Fugloyarfjørður and the islands of Viðoy, Borðoy and Svínø. The extension of the churchyard is limited towards the edge of the cliff, Rógva, and the stream Krossá towards the east. It is only recently that the churchyard has been extended towards the north. The church and churchyard are on the outskirts of the village, but it is easy to access the church from a path (today a modern road) leading from the village to the landing site Á Hellu (Figure 6.38, Figure 6.39, Figure 6.44, Figure 6.45). The village, the church and the churchyard are on a sloping hill close to the seashore, where the terrain is steep with cliff (Figure 6.42, Figure 6.43, Figure 6.44). The landing site is an old landing site, which was modified during and after the Second World War (Figure 6.45). South of the church are building remains and boat houses on either side of the stream (Figure 6.39, Figure 6.40). The location of the burials is quite significant because it has a similar location to the Viking Age burials at Við Kirkjugarð at Sandur. The key points are the location of the burial site close to a church and a settlement, and close to the seashore with open visibility towards the sea and the village.

It is highly likely that this probable burial site is a Viking Age burial sites. This assessment is argued from the descriptions of the burials, what was found and the location of the burial site. The location of the Viking Age burial site in Kirkja on the outskirts of the Christian cemetery is not unusual in comparison with the burial sites Við Kirkjugarð, Sandur and the burial site at Bøhúsfløtu at Hvalba, a possible early church site.



Figure 6.36 The village of Kirkja. The modern landing site on the righthand side of the photo. A second landing site is below the church. June 2015.



Figure 6.37 The location of the burial site behind the dry stone fence wall. Mai 2018.



Figure 6.38 The landing site Niðri á Hellu. October 2019.



Figure 6.39 Building remains south of the church. May 2018.



Figure 6.40 View towards the church and churchyard from the east. June 2015.



Figure 6.41 View towards the church from the west. June 2015.



Figure 6.42 View of the village from the outfield stone fence. June 2015.



Figure 6.43 View towards the modern churchyard. June 2015.



Figure 6.44 View from the boat houses towards north. October 2019.



Figure 6.45 The landing site on Hellu. October 2019.

6.3.5 Probable Burial Site Frammi í Garði, Svínøy, Tjóðsavnið/Museum Fmnr. 93001 (Appendix A9)

The second probable burial site was discovered in the village of Svínøy, at the house Frammi í Garði on the island of Svínøy, in the summer of 1898 when men were levelling the ground for a hay storage facility (Figure 6.46, Figure 6.47, Figure 6.54). The site is situated in a district called Heima á Bø, which is considered to be the oldest settlement area in the village (Hansen, 1973, p. 17). The site was recorded by Louis Zachariassen in an old publication in a newspaper (1956). Louis Zachariassen had collected information from his informants on the island of Svínøy and in the article he described how the burial was found. As the workmen were digging the timber and they lifted the timber, they saw it was a boat with its keel in the air. Underneath the boat they saw human remains, which quickly deteriorated when they came into contact with air. The burial was aligned north-south and it was thought that the person in the burial was a male. After the levelling of the ground, the hay storage facility was built (Zachariassen, 1956). There is no dating evidence to support the descriptions of the burial, but based on its association with a boat, and its north-south alignment, it is highly likely that this was a Viking Age burial. Moreover, as mentioned above, the burial site is in the middle of the oldest part of the village, where people have settled from one generation to the next (Hansen, 1973, p. 17).

On the ground above the burial, there was a large stone called Vætrasteinur. The stone was used as a building material for the new storage building in 1898. The size and shape of the

stone is not known. According to local folklore, this stone was inhabited by dwarfs (Zachariassen, 1956). Since this stone was above the burial, it is highly likely that this stone was originally a burial marker. At the time of the erection of the burial the site was most likely marked by this stone and hence visible for the people passing by.



Figure 6.46 The location of the burial site, the possible early church site and the landing site in the settlement district Heimi á Bø. Photo by Helgi Michelsen, Tjóðsavnið. Modified by author. June 2019.

On the island there are two landing sites and the known settlement today is mainly concentrated at the southern part of the island at the inlet Svínayarvík (Figure 6.50, Figure 6.53, Figure 6.55). The burial site is 86m from the inlet Svínayarvík. On the north side of the burial, there is a modern road which is likely to be above an old track, which leads to a junction and to a possible early church site, 15m east of the site (Figure 6.49, Figure 6.52). This information is based on local information and today there are no structural remains in this location to confirm the presence of building remains. East of the site runs the stream Giláin, and west of the site the stream Mataráin (Figure 6.51). The site is bounded in the south by the inlet and the landing site. It is difficult to estimate how the view was from and towards the burial site in the Viking Age, because the site is now in the middle of a built-up area.



Figure 6.47 Map of the burial site Frammi í Garði and the village of Svínø

This burial location is significant, because it is located between two streams, in close proximity to the old settlement district and only a few metres from a possibly early church site. In addition, it is close to the landing site and the visibility from the burial site towards the sea was

probably open, prior to the later added buildings. In addition, there is an open view towards the old settlement district. It is highly likely that this probable burial site is a Viking Age burial sites. This assessment is argued from the description of the burial, what was found and the location of the burial site.

The probable location of the burial sites Kirkjugarðurin and Frammi í Garði demonstrate that, in the process of making a location model to discover new Viking Age burials in the Faroes, there are several perspectives to consider. In addition to the two probable burial sites, there are three other possible burial sites, whose locations are rather more speculative.



Figure 6.48 View of the village from the east. May 2018.



Figure 6.49 View towards the burials site from the west. May 2018.



Figure 6.50 The landing site and inlet. May 2018.



Figure 6.51 View from the north, Giláin. May 2018



Figure 6.52 View towards the location of possible early chapel site. In the background the burial site Frammi í Garði. 2018.



Figure 6.53 View from the north towards the church. June 2015.



Figure 6.54 View towards the hay building, where the burial was found. May 2018.



Figure 6.55 View of Svínøy from the boat. August 2018.

6.3.6 Possible Burial site Óttisheyggur, Giljanes, Tjóðsavnið/Museum Fmnr. 28103 (Appendix A9)

At Giljanes, which is a promontory, between the villages of Sandavágur and Miðvágur was a small mound called Óttisheyggur (Figure 6.56). Around 1904 the mound was levelled because of cultivation (Tjóðsavnið, 1952g, n. 1954 and 1956; Dahl, 1968a, p. 191). Approximately 19-20m west of Óttisheyggur is a natural mound called Stóri Ótti (Figure 6.57, Figure 6.60). Locally, the levelled mound was called Lítli Ótti ('small Ótti') and the larger natural mound Stóri Ótti ('Large Ótti') (Tjóðsavnið, 1952g). According to local legend, a farmer called Ótti wanted to be buried here, because at this spot he could see to the farms he owned in Sandavágur and Miðvágur (Figure 6.60, Figure 6.61) (Svabo, 1976, p. 123).

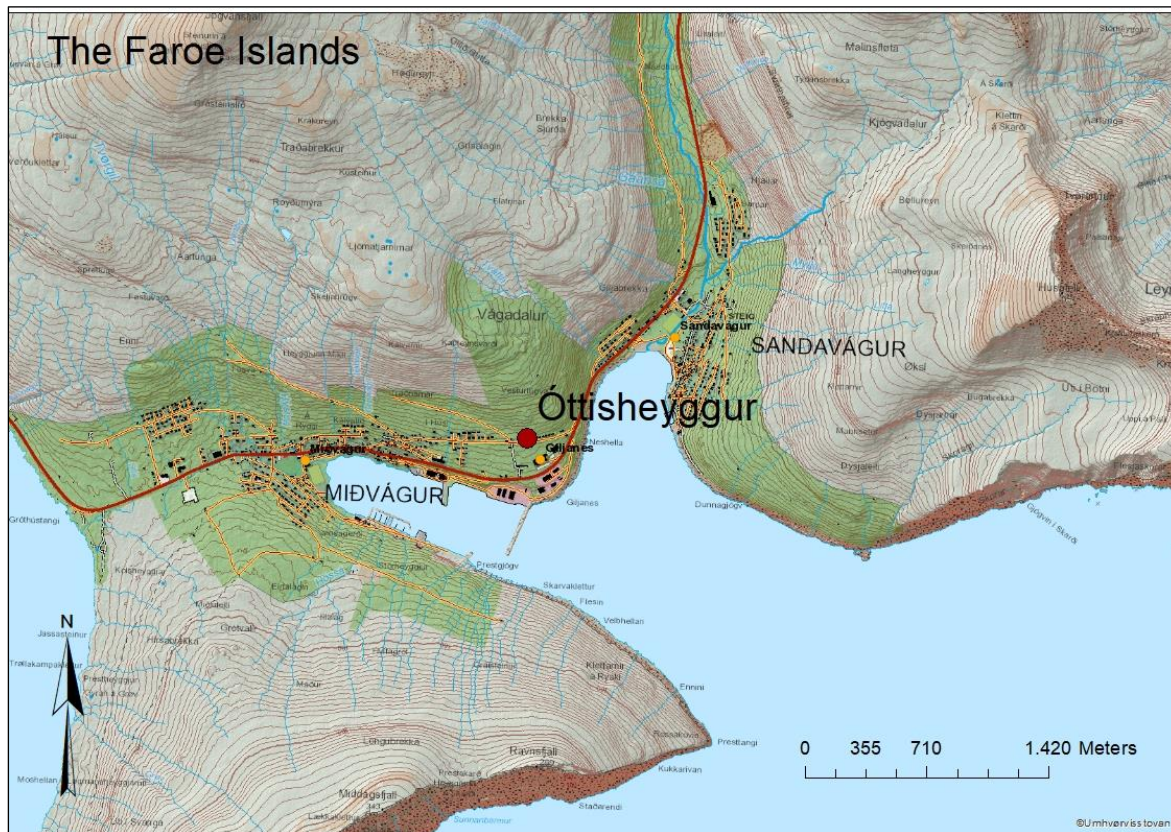


Figure 6.56 Map of the burial site Óttisheyggur and the villages of Miðvágur and Sandavágur.

Rendering old land division customs, Giljanes has always been part of Sandavágur (Petersen and Heinesen, 2010, p. 30). The boundary between Sandavágur and Miðvágur is today at Gilið, which runs from the field slope towards the seashore (Petersen and Heinesen, 2010, p. 27). The larger mound, Stóri Ótti, was situated 100m east of this boundary (Tjóðsavnið, 1952g, n. 1954 and 1956). Stóri Ótti is still seen in the landscape, while Óttisheyggur is no longer visible (Figure 6.58, Figure 6.59). The information on the shape, location and finds from Óttisheyggur used in this research is based on descriptions from the Bygdir archives, which Sverri Dahl established in 1952. The mound Óttisheyggur was 0.50-1.0m in height, rounded and grass-grown. As the owner of this area was cultivating the mound, he allegedly found human bones, chains and white balls large as eggs, as well as wood remains, which could be coffin remains. The finds are not described in more detail, and today these remains are lost (Tjóðsavnið, 1952g, n. 1954 and 1956).

The burial site is in an upland area, on the headland between the villages of Sandavágur and Miðvágur. The distance from the seashore to the burial site is about 370m. From the seashore the landscape rises steadily towards the possible burial site. At the burial site, the terrain is quite flat due to cultivation. From the site, the terrain gets steeper towards the hills. From the

site, there is an open view towards the sea and the island of Koltur (Figure 6.62). From Óttisheyggur, there is visibility to both the villages of Sandavágur and Miðvágur. The view towards the villages of Sandavágur and Miðvágur from Óttirheyggur is limited by the headland and by the fact that the terrain is levelled and flat. Therefore, the visibility towards the villages is better from the larger mound, Stóri Ótti, where one can view more of the villages. There are remains of recent settlements below the mound Stóri Ótti, named Hjá Nesa- Kristiáni and Hjá Magnus á Nesinum. On a lower level, below the path or modern road is a “Gálgasteinur” translated to ‘gallowstone’ (Petersen and Heinesen 2010 p. 37).



Figure 6.57 View towards Óttarheyggur to the left (cultivated and levelled) and Stóri Ótti on the right. April 2018.



Figure 6.58 View of the former location of the mound Óttisheyggur, just above the road. April 2018.



Figure 6.59 View towards Stóri Ótti from Óttarheyggur. April 2018.



Figure 6.60 View towards Sandavágur from Stóri Ótti. April 2018.



Figure 6.61 View towards Miðvágur from Stóri Ótti. April 2018.



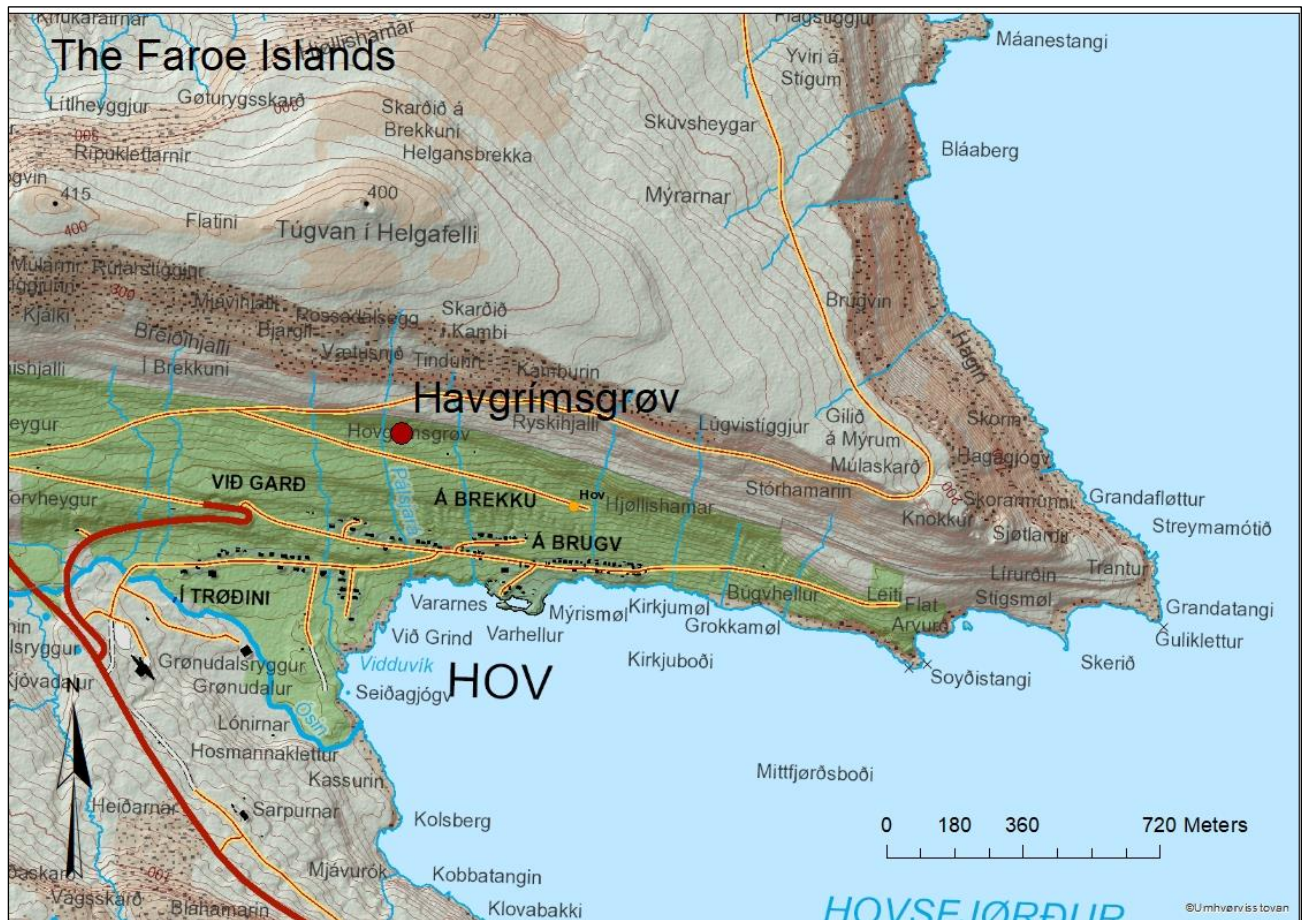
Figure 6.62 View from the burial site towards the sea and the islands of Koltur and Hestur in the middle. The southern part of Streymoy on the left and on the right part of Sandoy. April 2018.

The first part of the place name ‘**Gálgasteinur**’ refers to gallows. It is therefore possible that “Gálgasteinur” was used for execution. The possible burial found could therefore be from the Pre-Reformation or shortly after, as people who were executed were seldom buried in a churchyard. The location of this possible burial site is very relevant as it is close to a border between two villages and close to a communication route. In addition, there is an open view towards the ocean and neighbouring islands. The view is moderate towards the villages of Sandavágur and Miðvágur, but it is possible that the settlements were more visible in the Viking Age. With the knowledge of this possible burial site and the remains, could there be more burials in close conjunction to the road? Could there be burials placed in the natural mound Stóri Ótti?

6.3.7 Possible Burial Site Havgrímsgrøvn, Hov, Tjóðsavnið/Museum Fmnr. 15013 (Appendix A9)

The second possible burial site is Havgrímsgrøvn in the village of Hov, Undir Homrum on the southernmost island, Suðuroy (Figure 6.63). According to local folklore, this site is the burial place for Hafgrímr, one of the main characters in *Færeyinga Saga* (Rafn, 1832, p. 13; Berg, 1984, pp. 360–361). In *Færeyinga Saga*, Hafgrímur was chief over half of the island of Suðuroy, and lived in the farm Hofi (Rafn, 1832, p. 17). In 1834 or 1835 the mound Havgrímsgrøvn was excavated by farmer Ole Mortensen on the request of Governor Christian Pløyen (Dahl, 1968a, p. 190). The information from the excavation is from Governor Christian

Plöyen's letters published by Jákup Berg (1984, pp. 360–362). Since the primary material is not in storage at Tjóðsavnið now, it was not possible to access the primary material. There is not much information from the excavation and the burial itself but, according to the description, the outer layout of the burial was rectangular (Berg, 1984, n. ref. Chr. Plöyens letter 21. Mai 1833, p. 361). It is important to note here that Chr. Plöyen wrote that the villagers were reluctant to open the burial, because if the burial was opened an accident would occur (Berg, 1984, n. ref. Chr. Plöyens letter 21. Mai 1833). The burial was either opened in 1834 or 1835, because the short description of the excavation is dated to 26th July 1835 in Chr. Plöyen's letter. The burial measured 7.53m in length (12 *alen* – measurement system used was *alen* and 1 *alen* is 62.771cm) and 2.51m in width (4 *alen*). In addition to having a stone setting of loose stones carried to the burial from the seashore, there were a few rusty objects, fragments of bone and probably a whetstone. The soil in the burial was described as wet (Dahl, 1968a, pp. 190–191; Berg, 1984, n. ref. Chr. Plöyens letter 26. July 1835). The artefacts and bones found during this excavation were sent to the National Museum in Denmark and a short description and examination of the remains were carried out. The description of this examination is not dated. In this description, the small bone remains were described as cranium remains, and it was not specified whether these were human or animal remains (Berg, 1984, p. 362 ref. Frásøgn s-kort Tjóðsavnið). Since the circumstances for the bone remains are unclear, and the descriptions of the burial vague, this burial site is classified as a possible burial. Sverri Dahl interpreted this burial to be a Viking Age burial (Dahl, 1968a, n. 191). This site has been excavated and disturbed and it seems questionable whether further excavation would bring evidence of a burial. Based on description of this burial, it is possible it could be a Viking Age burial site. On the other hand, it is uncertain if this is a burial site, because there are few remains and the description is not thorough.



Havgrímsgrøv is in the cultivated infield area, 120m above sea level (Figure 6.70). At the burial site there are two heaps of stones (Figure 6.65). The burial is set on a flat area, below a rockface called undir Homrum (Figure 6.66). Its location therefore resembles a terrace. The land rises towards the hills in the north and slides downhill towards the village of Hov in the south. It is possible to walk from the village to the burial site (Figure 6.67, Figure 6.68). Towards east at Hamarin, above the rockface, is a cairn route between the villages of Hov and Øravík. Today there is a modern road between the villages. Towards the east and west are small streams. Below the burial is a very low-lying dry stone wall built in an east-west direction. East of the burial are the remains of a possible medieval settlement, called Undir Homrum. There is a good view from the burial site towards the settlement remains at Undir Homrum. The visibility from the burial site towards the village is limited, because of a rockface below the burial site. The view towards the ocean is open.

This burial location has similarities in its topographical setting with the former burial mound Óttisheyggur at Giljanesi, because it is situated up in the hills and not close to the seashore (Figure 6.69). It is also closely situated to the settlement of Undir Homrum.

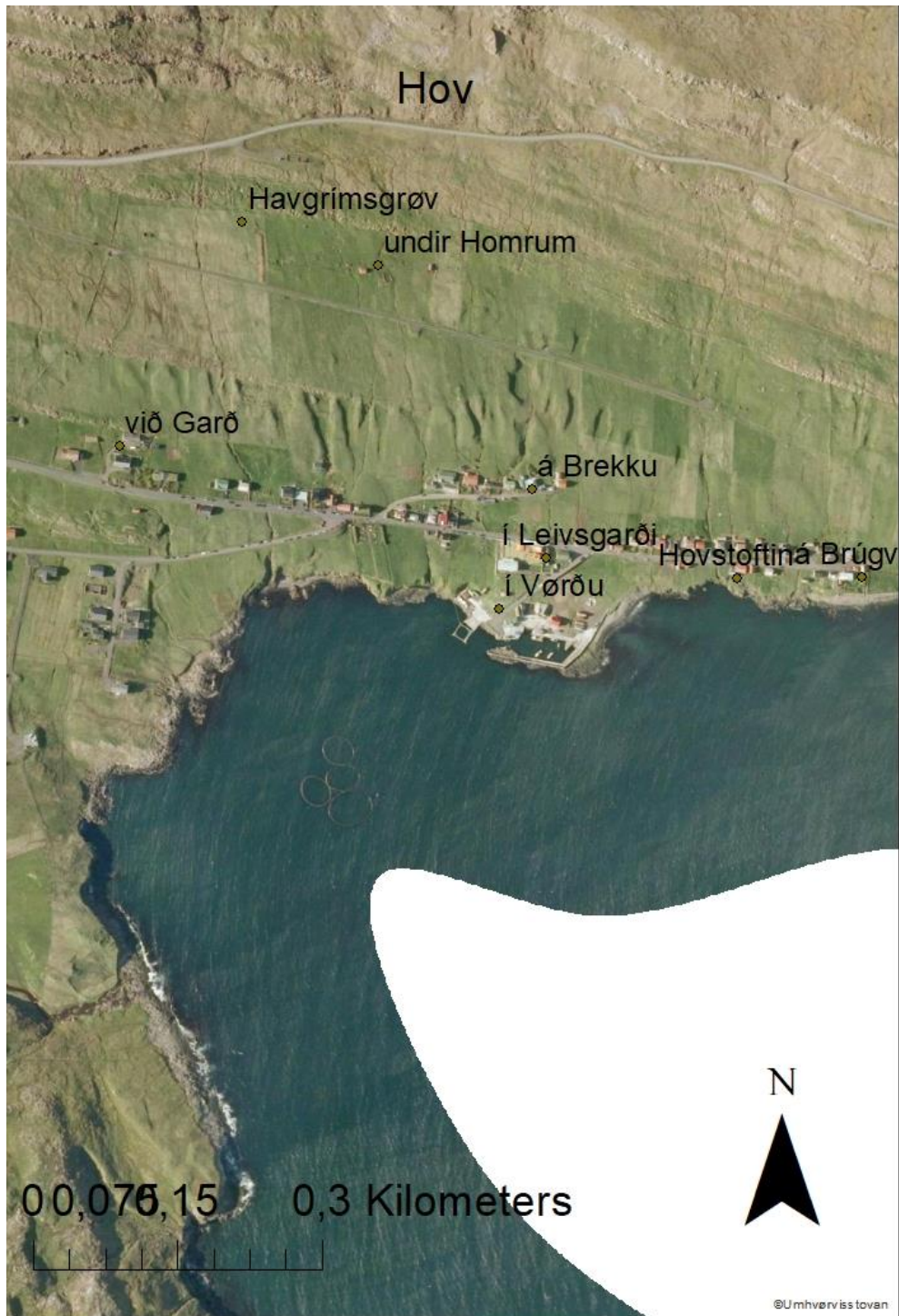


Figure 6.64 Aerial overview of Havgrímsgrøv and the village of Hov.



Figure 6.65 View of the possible burial site Havgrímsgrøv towards the southwest. October 2015.

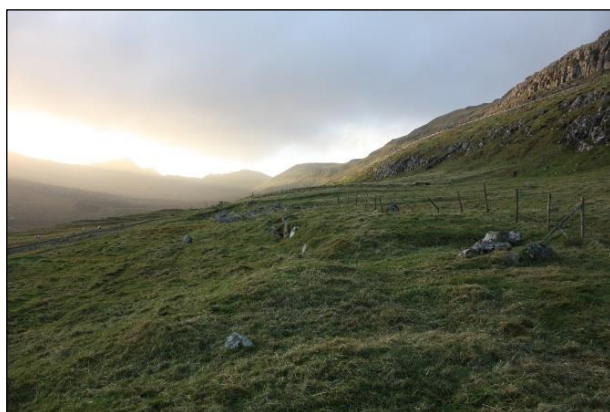


Figure 6.66 View towards the west from the burial site. October 2015.



Figure 6.67 View towards the village, facing south. October 2015.

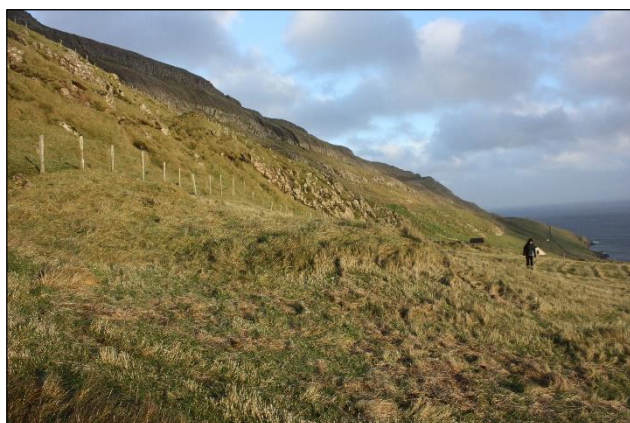


Figure 6.68 View from the burial site towards the east. October 2015.



Figure 6.69 View from the landing site at Hov towards the burial site further up the hill. October 2015



Figure 6.70 The village of Hov facing north. October 2015.

6.3.8 Possible Burial Site at Vegginum, Kirkja, Fugloy (Appendix A9)

The final possible burial site is at Vegginum, in the village of Kirkja on the northeastern island of Fugloy (Figure 6.71). According to local knowledge, in Kirkja the area at Vegginum used to be a churchyard for victims of the Black Death (Informants 4 and 5). This location is relevant for this dissertation, because it opens up the possibility for a location for an earlier burial. There are no place names in the area that refer to a cemetery or churchyard. A human cranium has possibly been found at Vegginum at least forty to fifty years ago, but the find circumstances are very unclear (Informant 5). The information about this possible burial site is centred on local knowledge from people with attachments to the island of Fugloy. In addition to the local knowledge of this site and the find of a human cranium, a stone with an incised cross was discovered 11m south of Vegginum on an elevated area (Figure 6.75).

At Vegginum is almost in the centre of the village (Figure 6.78). A road runs along the northern part of the site in an east-west direction. East of the burial site is the stream Gilið and towards the west the stream Krossáin. There are two main landing sites, which can be walked to from the seashore. Towards the north, the land rises and the land slopes downhill towards the south (Figure 6.77). There is an open view towards the ocean in the south and the islands of Svínoy and partly Borðoy and Viðoy (Figure 6.72, Figure 6.76). The view from the ocean when travelling by boat is very open towards the village of Kirkja and the burial site at Vegginum. Settlements remains and ruins have been found both east and west of Vegginum during cultivation and construction work. Towards the east were the remains of a building at Niðri undir Mittúni and towards the west were building remains called Guddatoft (Hansen, 1971, n. 32). There is also a structural feature of a man-made wall of stone next to the stream Brunnurin or Gilið, which seems to be part of an old fence or a building of unknown function. It is covered with vegetation. There is an open view towards the sea and, being close to the road and there is easy access to the location.

As there are no definite reports on burials and artefacts, except the incised stone with a cross and a possible human skull, it is difficult to say whether this site should be classified as a possible or probable burial site. In addition, this site is different from the other sites, because it is situated in the middle of the village. Based on the accounts of remains which have surfaced during the building of new houses and roads, this area could be a district with a cemetery with

the streams on each side acting as natural boundaries where this location was used as a shared burial ground for the farms east and west in the village (Figure 6.78).



Figure 6.71 Map of the burial site Á Vegginum and the village of Kirkja.



Figure 6.72 View of Vegginum seen from north. June 2015.



Figure 6.73 View from the east towards Vegginum. June 2015.



Figure 6.74 Finding spot of the incised cross at the light pole. June 2015.



Figure 6.75 Stone with incised cross. Stefan Stumman Hansen and John Sheehan 2006.



Figure 6.76 View from the site towards the church. March 2017.



Figure 6.77 View from the boat. August 2018.



Figure 6.78 Aerial view of the burial site at á Vegginum and archaeological remains.

6.3.9 Key Findings of Landscape Survey in the Faroe Islands

During this landscape survey, new ideas have emerged regarding the location of Viking Age burials in the Faroes. Moreover, the landscape analysis has shown the importance of the location of the burial sites and how much information there is on these sites. It is very interesting to observe that the burial sites are close to borders and close to communication routes. The distance to the seashore differs between the burial site, but all the burial sites have an open view towards the ocean. In addition, almost all the burial sites have an open view towards the village, except the burial sites Óttisheyggur and Havgrímsgrøvn. At Óttisheyggur, the view is limited by the headland towards the villages of Sandavágur and Miðagur. At Havgrímsgrøvn, the view is open towards the sea, but not towards the village, where the view is much limited by the rockface, which is on a lower elevation than the burial site. In Table 6.5 is an overview of the key findings of each burial site. After the table is the section with the landscape analysis of a few selected Viking Age burial sites on the western coast in Norway.

Table 6.5 Key findings from the burial sites in the Faroe Islands.

Sites, village	Distance from burial site to village/settlement	Distance from burial site to the sea shore	Burial site on/close to borders	Burial site on/close to communication routes	Burial site with several time periods	View to the ocean	View to the village	Continuity/re-use
Yviri í Trøð, Tjørnuvík	120m	37m	Yes	Yes	No	Open	Open	No
Við Kirkjugarð, Sandur	Við Kirkjugarð building: 12m Norðanfyri Kirkjustaðin á Sandi: 90m Undir Junkarisfløtti: 137m Á Sondum: 703m	54m	Yes	Yes	Yes	Open	Open	
Á Bønhúsfløttu, Hvalba	24m	11.5m	Yes	Not visible	Unknown	Open	Open	
Kirkjugarðurin, Kirkja	East of the stream Krossá building remains: 42m	6m Landings site: 94m	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Open	Open	
Frammi í Garði, Svínøi	Today under a hay storage. In an old settlement	77m	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Open	Open	

Sites, village	Distance from burial site to village/settlement	Distance from burial site to the sea shore	Burial site on/close to borders	Burial site on/close to communication routes	Burial site with several time periods	View to the ocean	View to the village	Continuity/re-use
	district Heimi á Bø. Possible early church site remains: 11m							
Óttirheyggur, Giljanes	Giljanes settlement unknown Miðvágur village, district Inni í Húsi: 755m Sandavágur, district Á Straplunum: 805m	421.2 m	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Open	Open to partial view	
Havgrímsgrø v, Hov	Undir Homrum 150m	385m	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Open	Partial	
Á Vegginum. Kirkja	Building remains to the west Guddatoft: 23m Building remains to the northeast Mittún: 16m	120m	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Open	Open	

6.4 Viking Age Norwegian burials

A few known Viking Age burial sites were selected for landscape analysis in Norway to compare them with burials in the Faroe Islands. As Norway has a more diversified landscape and there are many burial sites, it was difficult to choose which areas to target, but it was decided to focus on the western coast (Figure 6.79). Most of the burial sites are located on the island of Karmøy, which is an island with close connection to seafaring. With the link to seafaring on the island Karmøy, it was considered relevant to make a comparison with Karmøy, as it has similar nautical sceneries as the Faroe Islands. The first burial site is located on the western coast in Norway in the district Jæren, at the sites Grønhaug and Lower Mound.

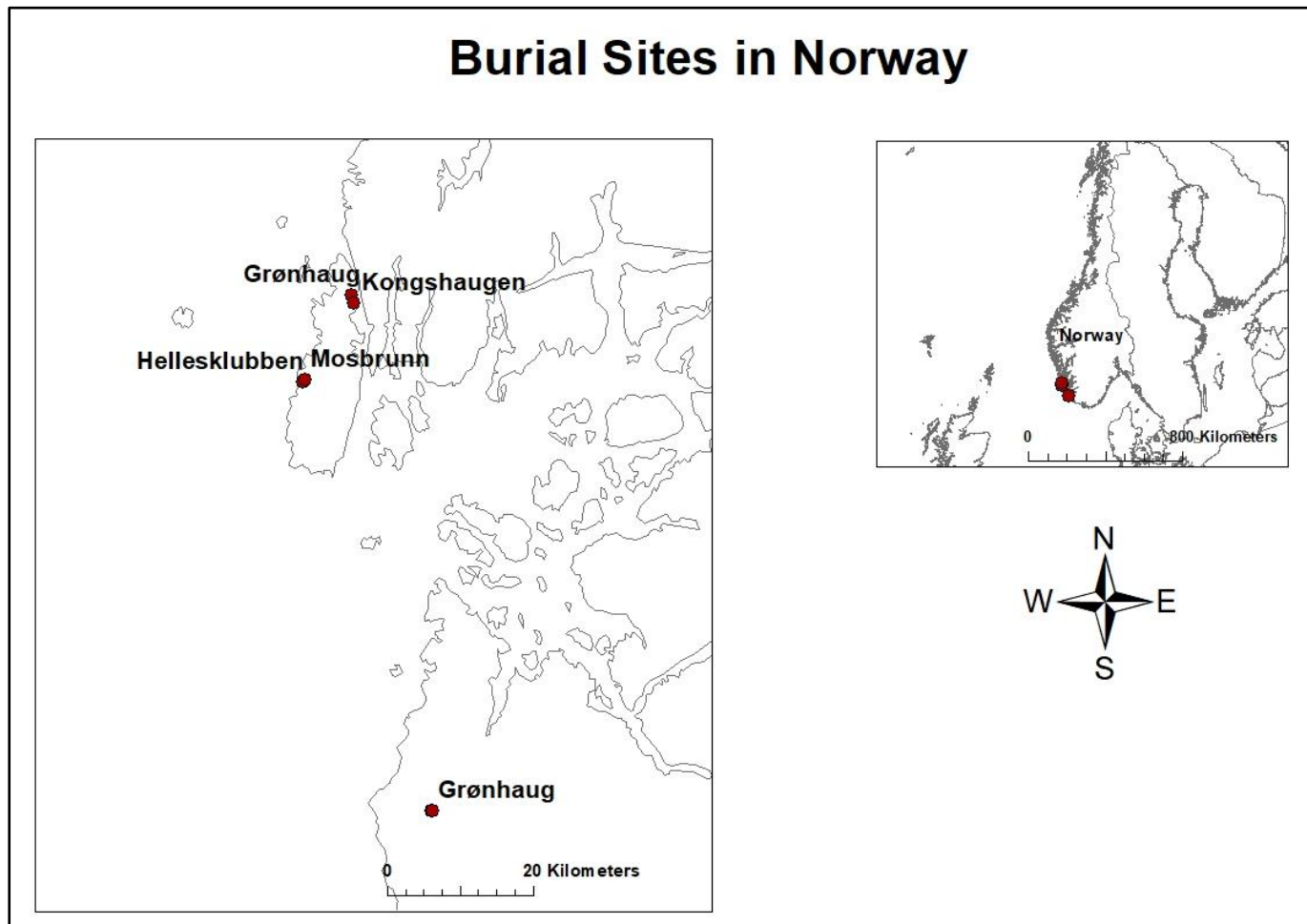


Figure 6.79 Overview of burial sites in Norway. Map source Geonorge.

6.4.1 Burial Sites Grønhaug and Lower Mound, at Klepp, Tu (Appendix A10)

The burial site at Klepp is in an inland cultivated area. At Klepp there are several burial mounds which have been used for an extensive period (Figure 6.82, Figure 6.83). The Viking Age burial mounds are situated close to the road with a large mound, Grønhaug (A. K. Museum, 1965a, n. KulturminneID 14628-1) and a lower round mound (A. K. Museum, 1965b, n. KulturminneID 54106). The burials have been dated based on artefact typologies. The excavation of Grønhaug was done in 1879 by Anders Lorrang (Helliesen, 1907, sec. 23). Grønhaug was 21m in diameter and 2.8m in height. Inside the burial mound was a chamber of flat stones, which was oriented N-S. The length was 2.2m and the height was 0.6m. There were several artefacts found in the burials, among others a piece of armour, part of a shield and iron nails spread in the chamber (Helliesen, 1907, sec. 23). The excavator also found human remains and above the burial chamber a horse was deposited on its left side with the legs turned towards

the south (Helliesen, 1907, sec. 23; Meling, 2014, p. 109). In the round mound, artefacts were also found, among others two oval brooches, an object for weaving and three spindle whorls (Meling, 2014, p. 108).

The Viking Age burial mounds are visible from the road and there is good access to the burials from the infield from the north, east and west. Movement towards the mound is more difficult from the south, because of the rise of land towards the mound Tinghaug, which is about 40m south-south-west from Grønhaug (Figure 6.91). The mound Tinghaug is steep on the southern side and the elevation acts as a natural boundary to access the Tinghaug from the south. On Tinghaug is the highest point in lower Jæren, 102m a.s.l. (Figure 6.87, Figure 6.89). With this high elevation, there is an open visibility of the Jæren and towards the North Sea. The name Tinghaug refers to an assembly site. The landscape surrounding the mounds is fairly flat, but it rises towards the mounds, which are situated in an elevated hilly landscape. Since the burials are elevated in the landscape, the view from the burial mounds is vast towards east, west and north. Towards east there is good visibility of the modern farms and settlements. In addition, there is good visibility towards the water. There are farm borders towards Særheim in the north and a border between Hauge and Tu towards the west. Towards the west are additional burial mounds, such as Krosshaug, from the period prior to the Viking Age in Norway, the Migration Period (Figure 6.85). In addition, to the burial site is an Iron Age ring village called Dysjane, (Figure 6.84, Figure 6.86). At the settlement are 16 houses, built around an oval yard and two burial mounds.

The key characteristic for the burial location of the Viking Age burials at the Klepp Tu burial site is that they are on the elevated ridge Anda-/Tur højden. Grønhaug, together with the mound Tinghaug, is over 102m a.s.l, with a view across the whole of the region of Jæren (Lillehammer, 2014, p. 15). There is a vast view from the burial mound Grønhaug and the assembly site Tinghaug. In addition, the burial site is located in agricultural land, not close to sea, but other prehistoric mounds and settlements such as Krosshaug and Dysjane (Figure 6.88, Figure 6.90).

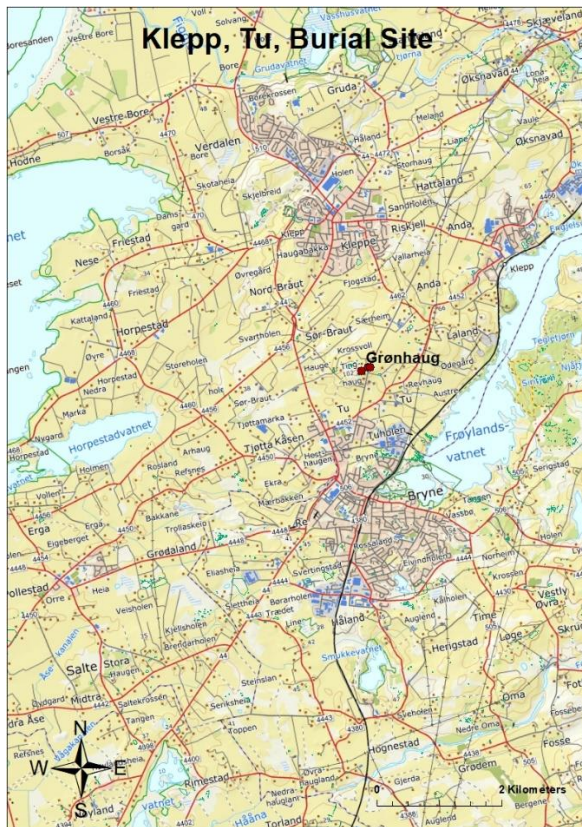


Figure 6.80 Klepp, Tu, Burial Site. Map source Geonorge.



Figure 6.81 Location of Klepp Tu burial site.



Figure 6.82 Grønhaug and Tinghaug. March 2017.



Figure 6.83 View from Grønhaug towards the round mound in the north. March 2017.



Figure 6.84 View towards the burial from Dysjane. March 2017.



Figure 6.85 The mound Krosshaug. March 2017.



Figure 6.86 View of the Iron Age settlement Dysjane. March 2017.



Figure 6.87 View from Storhaug towards the south. March 2017.



Figure 6.88 Elevation of Grønhaug. March 2017.

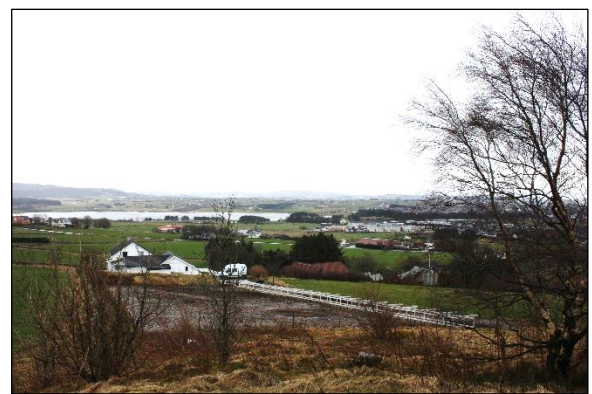


Figure 6.89 View towards the east at Grønhaug. March 2017.



Figure 6.90 View towards Dysjana in the west from Grønhaug. The view is limited by trees. March 2017.



Figure 6.91 View of Grønhaug and Storhaug seen from a northern direction. March 2017.

6.4.2 Burial Sites Hellesklubben and Mossbrun, Åkra, Karmøy (Appendix A10)

In the village of Åkra on the island of Karmøy, three mound burials dated to the Iron Age have been located (Figure 6.92). In 1857, a mound with bautasten was mentioned to be on a foreland on Hellesklubben (Nicolaysens, 1862-1866 p. 340). The 61190-1 burial mound Hellesklubben, which was situated close to the seashore, was dated to the Iron Age (Kulturminnesøk/Askeladden, n. KulturminneID 61190). The mound itself is no longer visible (A. Museum, 1965, nn. 61190–1). In the southwest corner was a raised stone, which probably was the mound's border (A. Museum, 1965, nn. 61190–1). There is easy access to the burial site with an open visibility in all directions, especially towards the sea in the west (Figure 6.94, Figure 6.95, Figure 6.97). Further inland, but in close proximity to the Hellesklubben, are two additional burial mounds in an area called Mossbrun (Figure 6.93). One of the mounds is dated to the Viking Age. Burial mound 53691-1 Mossbrunn was dated prior to the Viking Age, to the Migration Period (Museum, 1976, nn. 53691–1). The third burial mound, 24057-1 Mossbrun, was dated to the early Iron Age and Viking Age. The burial mound is today situated close to the modern road Vestrekarmøyeveg. The mound was a low sand mound built on a natural gravel mound (Årshefte, 1940, p. 10). The mound had a length of 16m and a width of about 12m. In 1938, half of the mound had been taken away and, in the mound, there were possible skeletal remains of a human and horse. In addition, several artefacts were found such as 3 gaming pieces of horn and several boat nails (Årshefte, 1940, p. 10). The boat nails were interpreted as the remains of a possible boat (Årshefte, 1940, p. 10). In 1995, the remaining mound was excavated (Museum, 1938, nn. 24057–1). It is easy to access this mound as well, but it is further away from the seashore than the burial mound Hellesklubben.

It is significant at Åkra that there are a few burial sites, with at least one Viking Age burial found close to the seashore, at Hellesklubben, and a second burial mound further inland, at Mossbrunn. At Mossbrunn there was a burial mound, which was used prior to the Viking Age. This demonstrates that there is a continuity of the usage of this area as a burial site. The view from the burial site at Hellesklubben and its locations close to the seashore show the significance of its proximity to travelling routes and its visibility in the landscape (Figure 6.96).



Figure 6.92 Burial Sites Hellesklubben and Mossbrunn. Map source Geonorge.



Figure 6.93 Aerial view of Åkra. Map source Esri.



Figure 6.94 View towards the seashore. Photo March 2017.



Figure 6.95 View towards the north from boat burial at the beach. Photo March 2017



Figure 6.96 View towards the village from the seashore. Photo March 2017.



Figure 6.97 The landscape around the burial. Photo March 2017.

6.4.3 Burial Site at Kongshaugen, Alvaldsnes, Karmøy (Appendix A10)

On the north-eastern part of the island of Karmøy is Alvaldsnes. Alvaldsnes has a long settlement- and burial history with archaeological remains from the Neolithic Age through to modern times (Museum, 1992, n. ID 115870). Alvaldsnes is, for example, known in *Heimskringla* through the king Harald Hårfagre, as one of his residences was possibly in Alvaldsnes and his burial mound conceivably at Karmsundet (Sturluson, 2013, pp. 105, 110). Multiple archaeological excavations have been conducted at Alvaldsnes in the periods 1992-1994, 2005-2006 and 2011-2012 (Museum, 1992, n. ID 115870). Through one of these excavations on Kongshaugen, Viking Age burials were uncovered (Figure 6.98).

About 150m southwest of the church Olavskirken is Kongshaugen. Kongshaugen is an elongated north-south oriented hill (Figure 6.100, Figure 6.101, Figure 6.103). During excavation of parts of the Kongshaugen in 2005 and 2006, three burials were discovered in the northern part of Kongshaugen (Hafsaas, 2005, p. 10). On the highest point of the mound there was a low burial mound with a diameter of 10m, which seemed to be intact (Hafsaas, 2005, p. 10). It was estimated that first mound burial was dated to between 200 and 400 AD. The second and third, a boat burial and a flat burial respectively, south of the mound, were dated to between 600 and 900 AD (Hafsaas, 2005, p. 11).

There is easy access to the burial site from the seashore (no more than 200m from the shore) and the path (today road) leading to Alvaldsnes. From the seashore the land rises and the landscape is undulating with low-lying hills (Figure 6.102, Figure 6.104). There is an open view towards the sea (today limited by the church) and across Karmsundet, towards the mounds at Grønhaug and at Reiheia (Figure 6.105).

The long continuity of burial sites and settlements is significant at Alvaldsnes and at Kongshaugen. There are several remains in close vicinity to the mound Kongshaugen, for example, the Iron Age mound Dåpshaug (Museum, 1992, n. ID 115870-39), a stone foundation which is a possible burial ground (Museum, 1992, n. ID 115870-12) and a cremation burial (Museum, 1992, n. ID 115870-13). The Viking Age burials located on Kongshaugen are part of the natural elevation of the area. The burials are also located close to the seashore and thus to a communication route. In consideration of the placement of the burial site, it is not unusual at Karmøy to find burial mounds located close to the seashore and in close proximity to each other (Figure 6.99). These are often not far away from the landing sites and close to modern roads.

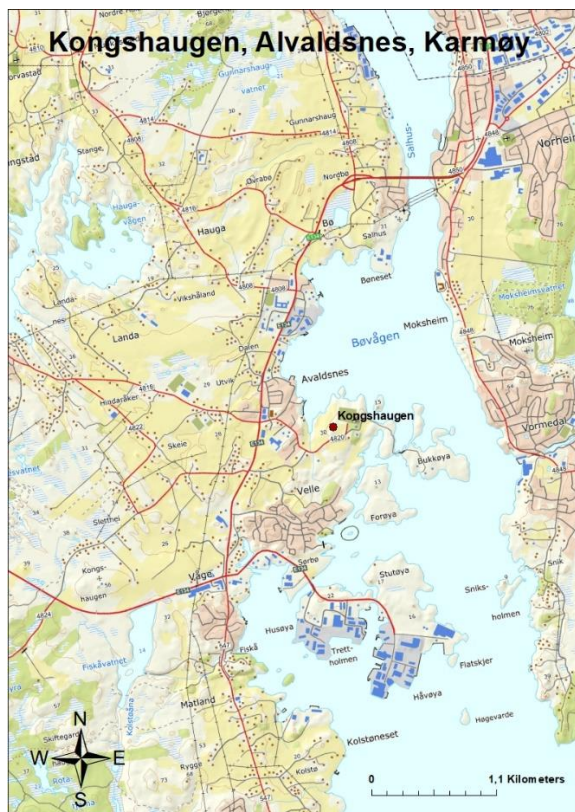


Figure 6.98 Kongshaugen, Alvaldsnes. Map source Geonorge.



Figure 6.99 Aerial view of the burial site Kongshaug with other archaeological sites.



Figure 6.100 View towards the church area and Kongshaugen on the right hand. March 2017.



Figure 6.101 View towards the burial site. March 2017.



Figure 6.102 View from the area at Kongshaugen towards Grønhaug (behind the ships). March 2017.



Figure 6.103 View from the burial site towards the church. March 2017.



Figure 6.104 View towards the burial site from the seashore. March 2017.



Figure 6.105 View from the Bronze Age mounds at Reheiå, Karmøy towards Alvaldsnes. March 2017.

6.4.4 Burial Site Grønhaug, Bø, Karmøy (Appendix A10)

Grønhaug is a Viking Age round mound on Karmøy on Blodheien in the village of Bø (Figure 6.106, Figure 6.108). Close to the mound are the Bronze Age burial mounds at Reiheia and Storhaug (Figure 6.107) (Museum, Arkeologisk and Bendixen, 1876, n. ID 4901-1; Shetelig, 1912, pp. 223–225; Opedal, 1998). Grønhaug was excavated in 1902 and in it was discovered a 15m-long boat (Shetelig, 1912, pp. 220, 222). The mound was about 30m in diameter and 4m in height, but most likely it had been higher in the past (Shetelig, 1912, p. 220; Opedal, 1998, p. 24). During the excavation it became clear that the mound had been disturbed at an earlier date (Shetelig, 1912, p. 220; Opedal, 1998, p. 25). Many of mounds on Karmøy had been

plundered after the excavation of the burial mound Flagghaug in the 1830s, but it was thought that the plundering of Grønhaug had happened long before the 1830s (Opedal, 1998, p. 27). Grønhaug is close to the seashore and therefore there is easy access to the mound from the seashore at Karmsundet. The small inlets are not visible from the mound, but the mound was probably visible from the sea. The inland areas at Grønhaug are fairly flat towards the north, south and west. Towards Karmsundet in the east, the seashore is more varied, shifting between rising land and small inlets. From the burial site there is an open view towards the important site at Alvaldsnes (Figure 6.110, Figure 6.111). There is also a moderate view across the Karmsundet towards Vormadal and Haugesund (Figure 6.109).

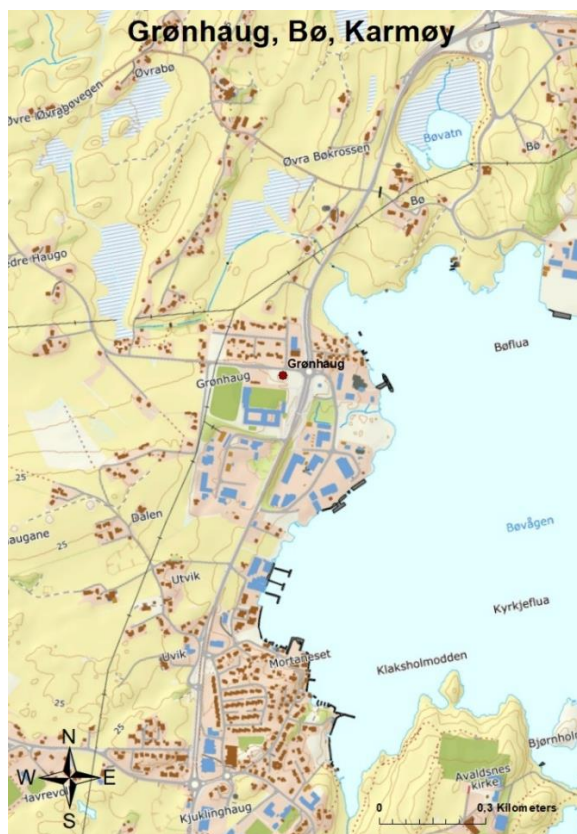


Figure 6.106 Topographic map of the burial site Grønhaug. Map source Geonorge.

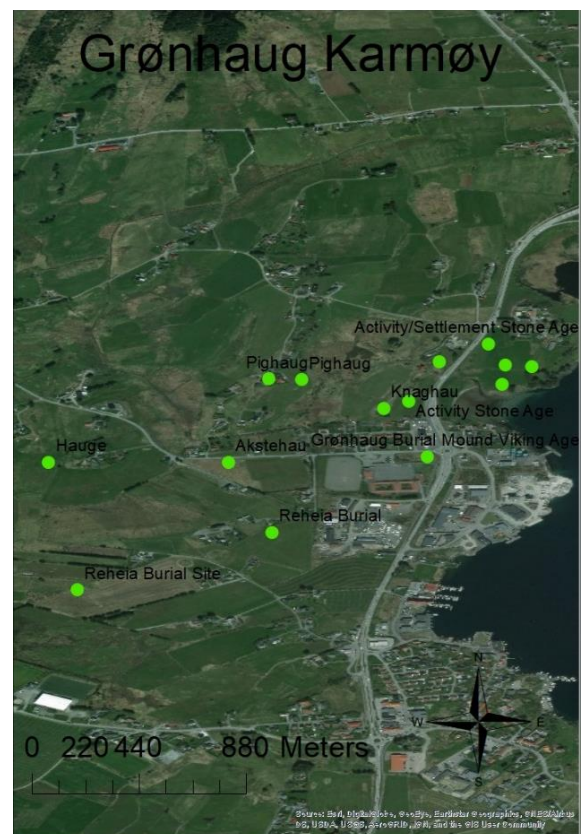


Figure 6.107 Aerial view of Grønhaug and neighbouring sites.



Figure 6.108 View of the mound Grønhaug. March 2017.



Figure 6.109 View from burial site Grønhaug towards Karmasund. March 2017.



Figure 6.110 View from Grønhaug towards Alvaldsnes. March 2017.



Figure 6.111 View towards Grønhaug from Alvaldsnes (behind the ships). March 2017.

The key points for Grønhaug are its short distance to the seashore and the access from Grønhaug to burial mounds at Reiheia and Storhaug. This shows that Grønhaug was part of a continuity in use of burial sites, with nearby communication and trading routes. In addition, the burial was disturbed in antiquity.

6.4.5 Key Findings of Landscape Survey in Norway

The landscape survey of the four selected sites in Norway show that the burial sites are located close to the seashore and in additionally further inland. In addition, it also confirms that there was a continuous use of burial sites, and that some of the burial sites had been disturbed in

antiquity. In Table 6.6 the key findings of each burial site are listed. With this summary, the focus is now on selected burial sites from Shetland and Orkney.

Table 6.6 Key findings from the burial sites in Norway.

Sites, village	Distance from burial site to village/settlement Viking Age	Distance from burial site to the seashore (approximately)	Burial site on/close to borders	Burial site on/close to communication routes	Burial site with several time periods	View to the ocean	View to the village	Continuity/Re-use
Klepp, Tu Burial Site	Not certain (Modern settlement 124m)	8km to seashore To Froylands vatn 1.5km To Orrevand 4.90km	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Open	Yes
Hellesklubben and Mosbrunn in Åkra	Not certain (Modern settlement 139m)	Hellesklubben 38mm Mossbrunn 352m.	Hellesklubben yes	Yes	Mossbrunn yes	Open	Open	Yes
Kongshaugen at Alvaldsnes	176m	162m	Yes	Yes	Yes	Open	Open	Yes
Grønhaug in Bø	Not certain (Modern settlement 48m)	271m	Yes	Yes	Yes, close to	Open	Open	Yes

6.5 Viking Age burials in the Northern Isles of Scotland: the Shetland Islands and Orkney

This section is about the landscape survey of 11 selected Viking burials in the Northern Isles of Scotland, Shetland and Orkney, where the location of a Viking Age burial is known and verified (Figure 6.112). One of the project's objectives is to examine how the Viking Age burials in the Northern Isles of Scotland are situated in the landscape compared to the burials in the Faroe Islands. The landscape analysis will begin in Shetland on the island of Fetlar.

Burial Sites in Shetland

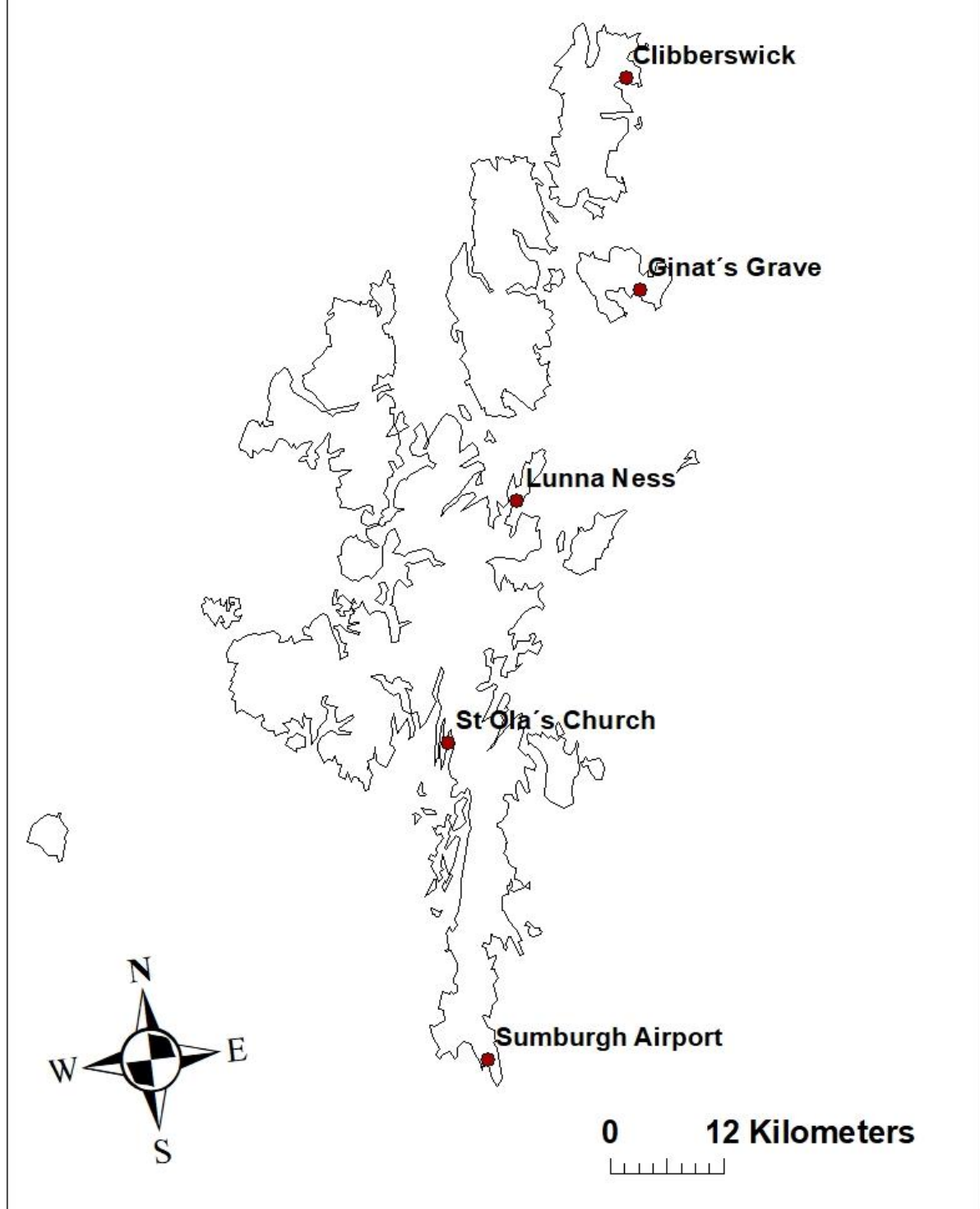


Figure 6.112 Overview of Viking Age burials in Shetland. Map source Geonorge.

6.5.1 Burial Site Giant's Grave, Wick of Aith, Fetlar, Shetland (Appendix A11)

On the island of Fetlar at Aith, a roughly boat-shaped stony mound was recorded in 1878 (Figure 6.113) (Batey, 2016, p. 39). The burial is situated close to an inlet and lies on the edge of the bank above the beach (Figure 6.115, Figure 6.116). It was aligned NE-SW and was approximately 10.7 x 5.50m. The mound had been disturbed in the past, but it is not clear when it was disturbed for the first time (Batey, 2016, p. 39). The mound was excavated in 2002 and during the excavation it became clear that the Viking Age burial had been disturbed in the past (Robinson, 2003, n. Time Team). With an oval brooch found during excavation, it was interpreted as a female burial. According to local tradition a giant was believed to be buried here, with his boat inverted over him and his money underneath his head (Canmore, 1878, n. Event ID 643461, Name Book 1878). The site was also associated with a sea-faring Viking, who died in the neighbourhood (Canmore, n. Event ID 643461).



Figure 6.113 The burial site Giant's Grave.

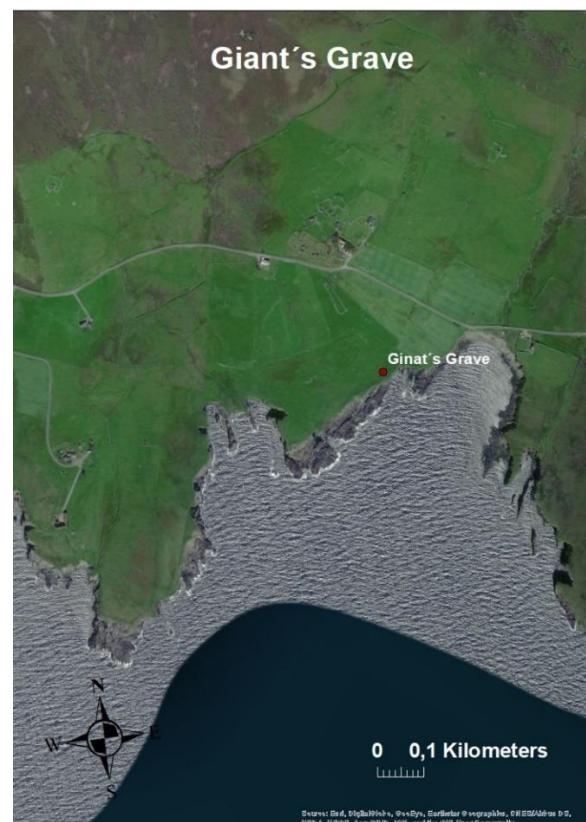


Figure 6.114 Aerial overview of the Giant's Grave and the coastal landscape.



Figure 6.115 View towards the burial site and the inlet. June 2016.



Figure 6.116 The burial site. June 2016.



Figure 6.117 The seashore below the burial. Photo June 2016.



Figure 6.118 View from the burial site towards the infield. Photo June 2016.



Figure 6.119 View towards the sea. June 2016.



Figure 6.120 View towards the sea from the inlet. Photo 2016.

The hills are low and there are no geographical features that hinder the movement to and from the burial site (Figure 6.115, Figure 6.116). The view is open towards the ocean and on the horizon other islands are visible (Figure 6.119, Figure 6.120). The view is limited towards the hills in the north and west and towards the east there are several hilltops (Figure 6.118). The location of the burial is visible from the inlet and when walking towards the burial from the east. The location of the burial is characterised by its short distance to the inlet and the seashore, (Figure 6.117). Additionally, it is on the sailing route towards the inlet and was probably visible when sailing towards the inlet or further along the coast (Figure 6.114). It is also relevant that two legends were attached to the place, which signals the social memory of the people living on Fetlar.

6.5.2 Burial Site Sumburgh Airport, Shetland, Canmore ID 552 (Appendix A11)

At Sumburgh Airport in Shetland a burial was found while bulldozing the site for Sumburgh Airport Control Tower during the Second World War (Figure 6.121, Figure 6.123) (Canmore ID 552; Henderson, 1940, n. ID 552). The artefacts from the burial are lost, but allegedly in the burial was an iron sword, a scabbard broken into three pieces, a small cooking pot and part of a human skull (Anderson., 1940, n. ID 552). It is interpreted as a possible male burial (Graham-Campbell and Batey, 1998, p. 64). The burial's location is set on elevated ground and the view towards the ocean in the directions of north, west and east is open (Figure 6.125, Figure 6.127). Towards the north, the view is partially limited by hills. There is full visibility towards West Voe and the ocean in the west and full visibility towards Gruntness Voe in the east.

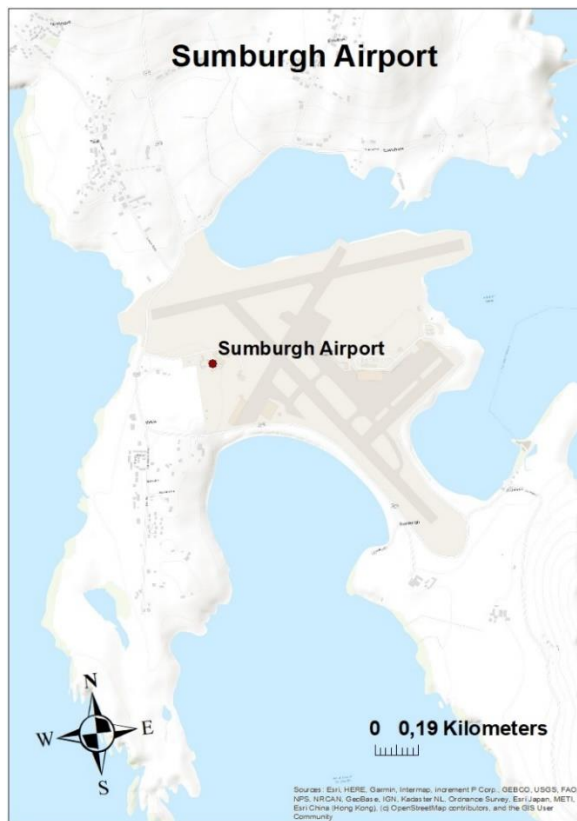


Figure 6.121 View of Sumburgh Viking Age burial site, Airport



Figure 6.122 Aerial view of the landscape at Sumburgh Airport burial site.

Further down the West Voe, an oval brooch was found while digging trenches during the Second World War at Wart Hill (Shetland Museum Accession Register ID 555, 1940, n. ID 555). It is possible that the oval brooch was from a female burial (Graham-Campbell and Batey, 1998, p. 64). The burial is on elevated ground in the landscape and the enclosing landscape is quite levelled (Figure 6.124, Figure 6.126). About 70m southeast from the burial site, a burial cist with multiple burials was found in 1978, Canmore ID 560 (Hedges et al., 1980; Walsh et al., 2011). Within 200m is Old Scatness, a Pictish settlement (Canmore/RCAHMS ID 190775, 1882, n. ID 190775). On the promontory close to the airport is the multiperiod site Jarshof, including Norse settlements (Canmore ID 513, 1897, n. Overview of Jarlshof ID 513; Hamilton, 1956).

The burial site is characterised by its location between inlets, with full visibility towards the inlets and the sea (Figure 6.122). Additionally, other remains have been located in close vicinity to the burial site.



Figure 6.123 Location of the burial site where the flight tower is. Photo June 2016.



Figure 6.124 View from the burial site. Photo June 2016.



Figure 6.125 View towards Jarshof, Sumburgh Head and the beach. Photo June 2016.



Figure 6.126 Landscape photo of the burial site with Pool of Virkie in the background. Photo June 2016.



Figure 6.127 View towards north, the village of Toab. Photo June 2016.

6.5.3 Burial Site St Ola's Church, White Ness, Shetland, Canmore ID 712 (Appendix A11)

White Ness is a tongue of land on the mainland, with Stomness Voe towards the north and Whiteness Voe towards the south (Figure 6.128).



Figure 6.128 Topographic overview of the Viking Age burial site at St Olaf's Church.



Figure 6.129 Aerial view of the landscape at the Viking Age burial site at St Olaf's Church.

At about the middle of this foreland is a churchyard belonging to St Ola's Church (Figure 6.130). Across the seashore towards east is the Mean Low Water Springs (Figure 6.132). At the churchyard in White Ness, an iron axe-head of the late 9th century Viking type was found with bones in a stone-lined grave in 1938 (RCAHMS, 1946, col. 1527). The exact location of the burial is not known. In addition to the Viking Age burial, inscribed stones have been found dated to the early medieval period (Canmore, n. ID 712). There is easy access to the burial from the small strip of land to the east and west and from the sea at Whiteness Voe towards south (Figure 6.131, Figure 6.133). Towards the west, the landscape is rising and there is a hill.

From the burial site, there is a moderate view towards the seashore. The visibility is good from all directions, except west.

The burial site is characterised by its open visibility towards the sea and the inlet. Additionally, the burial is located in a Christian cemetery, which shows that the site has been in use from at least the Viking Age (Figure 6.129).



Figure 6.130 White Ness, St Ola's Church. Photo June 2016.



Figure 6.131 View from the burial site towards the south. Photo June 2016.



Figure 6.132 View from the burial site towards the east. Photo June 2016.



Figure 6.133 View from the burial site towards the north. Photo June 2016.

6.5.4 Burial Site Clibberswick, Unst, Shetland, Canmore ID 157 (Appendix A11)

On the island of Unst in the village of Clibberswick, a Viking Age burial was found while digging up a farmyard in 1863 (Figure 6.134) (Canmore ID 157; RCAHMS, 1946, p. 25). This was a female burial and the finds consisted of two 9th century tortoise brooches, a bronze trefoil brooch, a silver armlet and two glass beads (Canmore ID 157; RCAHMS, 1946, p. 25). Close to the burial site are two small farms (Figure 6.136).



Figure 6.134 Topographic overview of the Viking Age burial site Clibberswick.

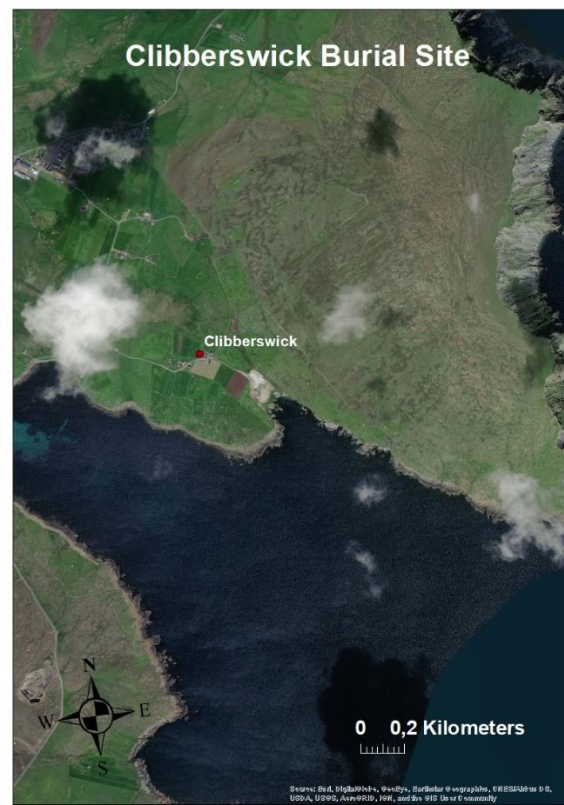


Figure 6.135 Aerial view of the landscape at the burial site Clibberswick.

On the map from OS 1843–1882 there are two houses. The house close to the burial site is Uphouse; the other Westerhouse is described as a township comprising of at least six roofed buildings (Figure 6.136) (Canmore/RCAHMS ID 285147, 2006, n. ID 285147). It is not certain how old these farms are. If these farms date back to the Viking Age, the burial could be located on a boundary between two farms. Close to the site is the steatite quarry at the wick at Clibberswick, used by the Vikings and the Norse. There is good access to the burial site from all directions (Figure 6.135). The visibility towards the north is restricted by hills (Figure 6.137)

and partly towards the east (Figure 6.139). The visibility towards the sea, the west and south is good (Figure 6.138).



Figure 6.136 Farm close to the burial site. Photo June 2016.



Figure 6.137 View from the burial site towards the north. Photo June 2016.



Figure 6.138 View from the burial site towards the west. Photo June 2016.



Figure 6.139 View from the burial site towards the northeast. Photo June 2016.

The site is characterised by its location between two farms. It is possible that the burial was located on a border between these two farms, but this is not certain, since there is no dating evidence. The location of the burial site close to the sea and to a steatite quarry is significant, as it shows that the burial was close to communication routes and networks.

6.5.5 Burial Site Lunna Ness, Burial Ground, Shetland, Canmore ID 1199 (Appendix A11)

In this area on Lunna Ness, which is a narrow neck of land between West Lunna Voe and East Lunna Voe, several sites have been classified, including a possible Viking Age burial site, a church (18th Century), churchyard, grave slabs and a war memorial (20th Century) (Figure 6.140) (Canmore/RCAHMS ID 1199, 1946, n. ID 1199). As part of an extension of the churchyard in 1999, an oval grassy mound was partially excavated which was similar in appearance to the several mounds west of the Kirk, considered to be a Viking Age burial. The excavated mound only consisted of clay, stones and lime plaster (Canmore Event ID 642516; Simpson, 2000, n. Event ID 642516). Possible Viking Age burial mounds lie to the SE of the monastery and a possible broch site (Turner, 2000).



Figure 6.140 Topographic view of the Viking Age Lunna Ness burial site.

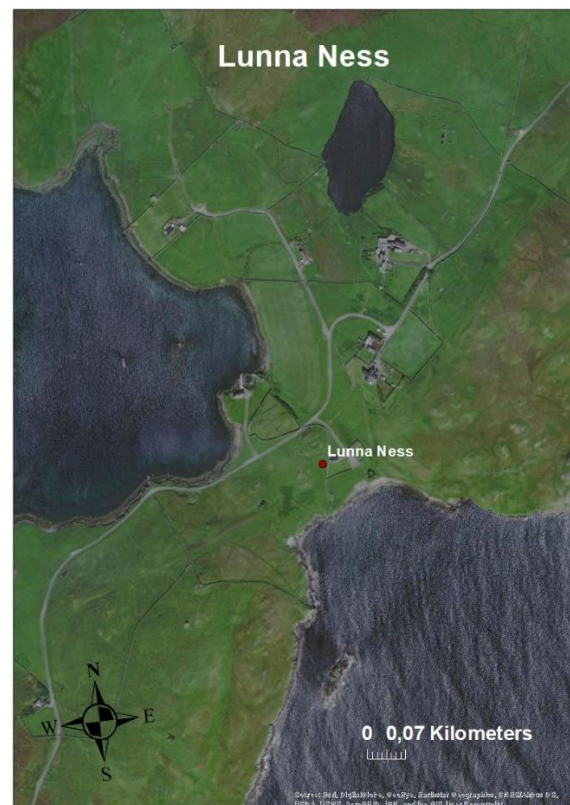


Figure 6.141 Landscape view of the Viking Age Lunna Ness burial site.

The site is on a low-lying isthmus, and the sea is both on the west and east of the burials. The burials are located in a down-sloping field area (Figure 6.142, Figure 6.143). Close to the burial site is the graveyard stone wall boundary. Access to the burial site is possible both from West

Lunna Voe and East Lunna Voe (Figure 6.141). The landscape is hilly, but it is possible to access the mounds from land as well. There is an open view from the burials towards East Lunna Voe and towards the hills in the north and south (Figure 6.144, Figure 6.145). Close to the site is also a monastery and a possible broch site. There is moderate visibility towards the East Lunna Voe and limited visibility towards the south, west and north, as the land is slightly rising.



Figure 6.142 Location of the burial site. June 2016



Figure 6.143 View from the burial site towards East Lunna Voe. June 2016.



Figure 6.144 View towards the south. June 2016.



Figure 6.145 View towards the north from the burial site. June 2016.

The site has a special character as it is located on an isthmus, close to the seashore and the inlets West Lunna Voe and East Lunna Voe. Additionally, there are other sites: a church from the 18th Century, a churchyard and a possible broch site. This demonstrates that this narrow neck of land has been in use continuously. Its location close to a broch site on an elevated field,

this probably enhanced the Viking Age burial's visibility and location in the landscape, and made it more visible for people travelling to Lunna Ness or those seeking shelter at the inlets during a storm.

6.5.6 Key Findings of Landscape Survey in Shetland

The landscape survey of the five selected sites in Shetland show that the burial sites are both close to the seashore and possible Viking Age settlements and a quarry. With the location close to the seashore and on elevated fields, it shows that it was important for the Vikings that the burial sites were visible and close to communication and sea-trading routes. In Table 6.7, the key findings of each burial site is listed.

With this summary, the focus is now on the six selected burial sites from Orkney (Figure 6.146). The landscape analysis begins with the Broch of Gurness.

Table 6.7 Key findings from the burial sites in Shetland.

Sites, village	Distance from burial site to village/settlement	Distance from burial site to the seashore	Burial site on/close to borders	Burial site on/close to communication routes	Burial site with several time periods	View to the ocean	View to the village	Continuity/re-use
Giant's Grave, Wick of Aith, Fetlar	To Wick of Aith house: 320m To Aith: 271m	To the inlet: 215m	Not visible	Yes	No	Open	Open	No
Sumburgh Airport	To Jarlshof: 1.43km To Old Scatness: 260m	West Voe of Sumburgh: 386m To Scord: 380 To: Gruntness Voe: 890m	Not visible	Yes	Yes	Open	Open	Yes
St Ola's Church, White Ness	Is in a settled area.	To Whiteness Voe: 151m To Stromness Voe: 386m	Not visible	Yes	?	Open	?	Yes

Sites, village	Distance from burial site to village/settlement	Distance from burial site to the seashore	Burial site on/close to borders	Burial site on/close to communication routes	Burial site with several time periods	View to the ocean	View to the village	Continuity/re-use
Clibberswick, Unst	Not certain	East Lunna Voe: 95m West Lunne Voe: 136m	Yes (Two farms)	Yes	?	Open	Open	No
Lunna Ness Burial Ground		m	Not certain	Yes	Yes	Open	?	Yes

Burial Sites in Orkney

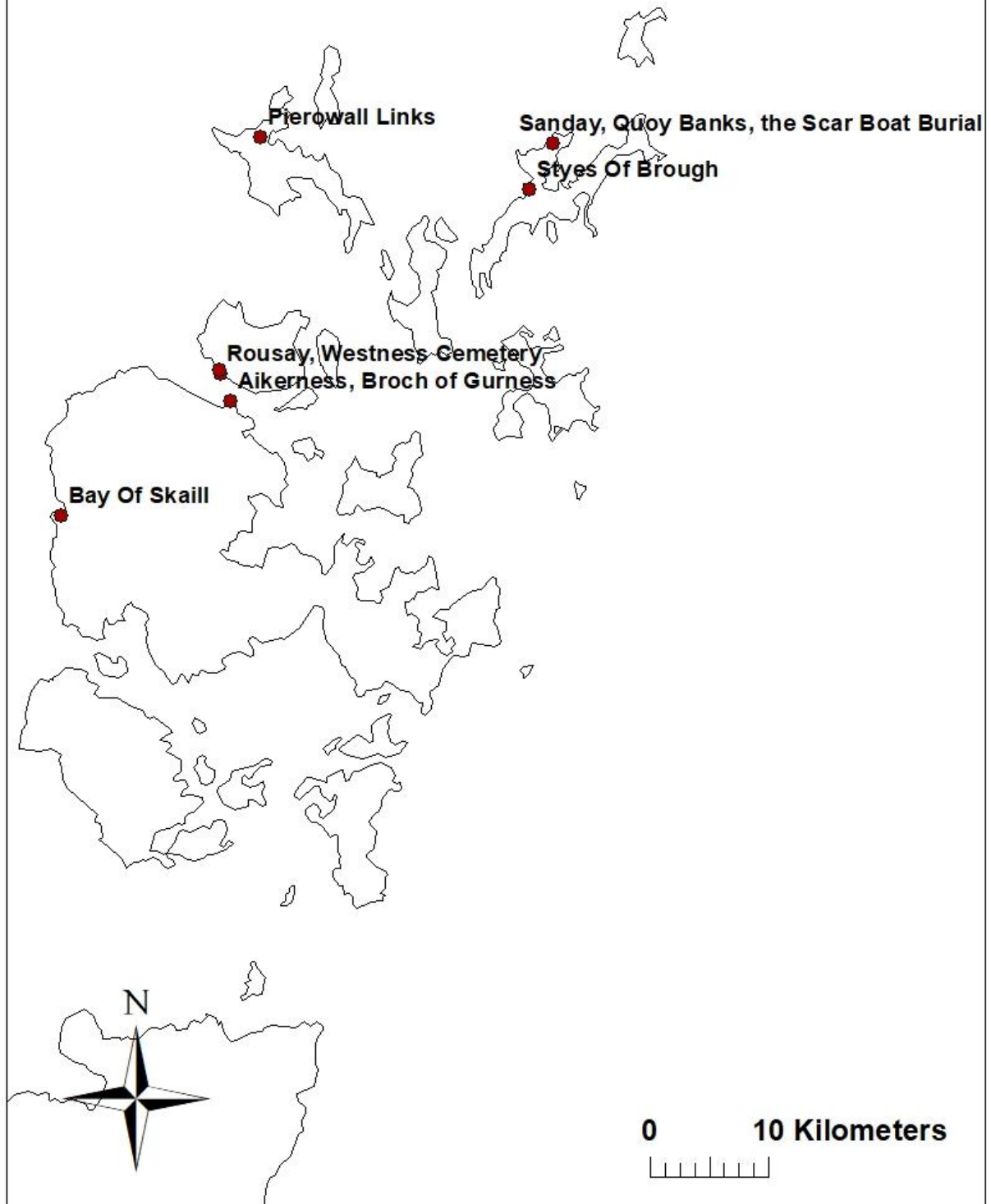


Figure 6.146 Overview of Viking Age burials in Orkney. Map source Geonorge

6.5.7 Burial Site Broch of Gurness, Aikerness, Orkney (Appendix A12)

At the Broch of Gurness in Orkney which stands on high land known as Aikerness, a Viking Age female burial was buried into the old rampart surrounding the broch and six possible Viking Age burials (Figure 6.147, Figure 6.149) (Canmore ID 2201) (Hedges, 1987, pp. 72–73). Based on the artefacts, the individual in the burial was interpreted to be a female burial, inserted in the northern wall of the external passage leading to the broch-period Gatehouse, in a stone cist with the head in the west end (Robertson, 1968, p. 290; Hedges, 1987, p. 73).

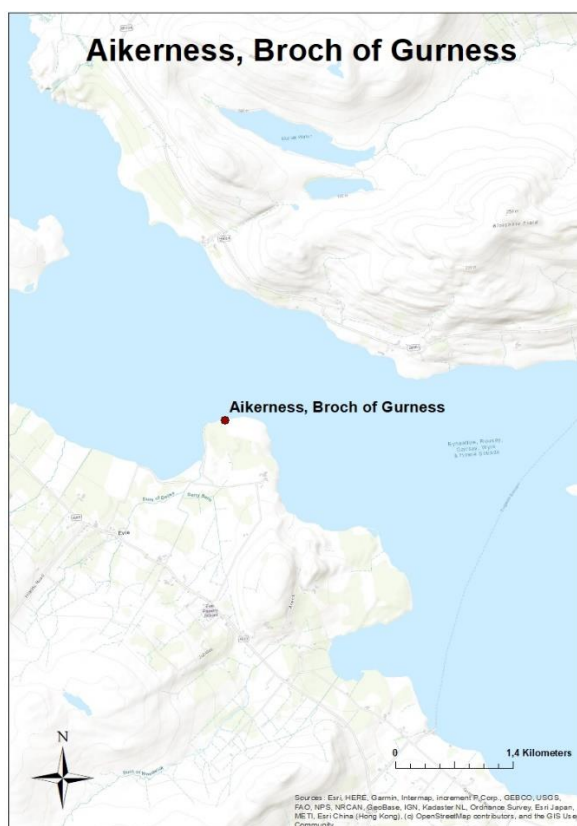


Figure 6.147 Topographic view of the Viking Age burial site at Aikerness, Broch of Gurness.

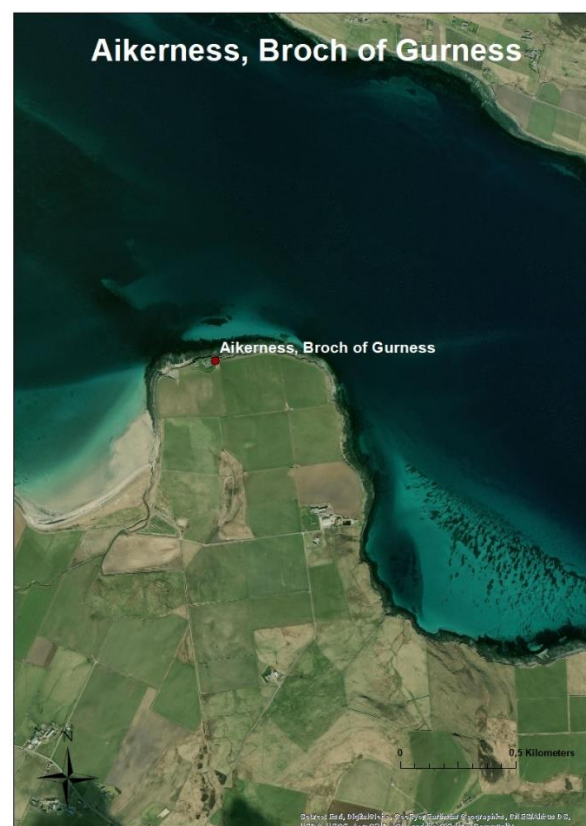


Figure 6.148 Aerial view of the Viking Age burial site Aikerness, Broch of Gurness.

The Broch of Gurness was built between 200BC and 100BC. There is good access to the broch site, both from land and sea (Figure 6.151). As the burial is in the old rampart of the broch, the movement to and from the burial would be restricted, though it is not certain how much the movement was restricted (Figure 6.152, Figure 6.154). From the Broch of Gurness there is a

moderate view towards the Eynhallow Sound, the uninhabited island of Eynhallow and the island of Rousay (Figure 6.150, Figure 6.153). Furthermore, there is a moderate view towards the Midhowe Broch and the Midhowe Cairn. There is good visibility of the broch; the question is how much of the broch would have blocked the visibility from the burial. Perhaps it would have limited the visibility from the burial site.

The site is characterised by its location in a broch and this location probably enhanced the significance of the location and the visibility of the burial site (Figure 6.148).



Figure 6.149 Broch of Gurness. June 2016.



Figure 6.150 The location of the Viking Age burial at Gurness with a view towards Rousay. June 2016.



Figure 6.151 The seashore at the Broch of Gurness. June 2016.



Figure 6.152 The Broch of Gurness. June 2016.



Figure 6.153 View towards Rousay from the Broch of Gurness. June 2016. Figure 6.154 The Broch and inner wall. June 2016.

6.5.8 Burial Site Westness, Rousay (Appendix A12)

On the island of Rousay at Westness, Viking Age burials were discovered on the western coast of the island (Figure 6.155) (Kaland, 1973). The burials were not visible on the surface, but when people from the farm at Westness buried a cow in 1963 they found a Viking female burial (Burial 1), which also had the remains of a child (Kaland, 1973, pp. 81, 94–95). The earliest burials were Pictish burials, marked with headstones and not disturbed by the Viking burials (Graham-Campbell and Batey, 1998, p. 136). West of the burial site was the Norse settlement (Kaland, 1973, pp. 83–91, 1993). In the cemetery, men, women and children were buried, which represented the whole community of Westness (Kaland, 1993, p. 317).

The burial site is on a promontory, which probably made it more visible during its usage and the location made the site easy to reach. With access, it benefits from being close to the ocean and close to the infield. There is good access to burial site from land and sea (Figure 6.157, Figure 6.160). With an open view towards the west was the settlement (Figure 6.159, Figure 6.156). Towards north, the land is rising and there is not an open view over the fields (Figure 6.158). Across the sea is the Broch of Gurness, with the Viking burial site. In addition to the settlement west of the burial site is a chambered cairn, a cellular building and roundhouses (Canmore/RCAHMS ID 2169, 1946, n. ID 2169). It is likely that the Vikings would have noticed the large Iron Age Midhowe Broch towards the west (Canmore ID 2286, 1932, n. ID 2286)

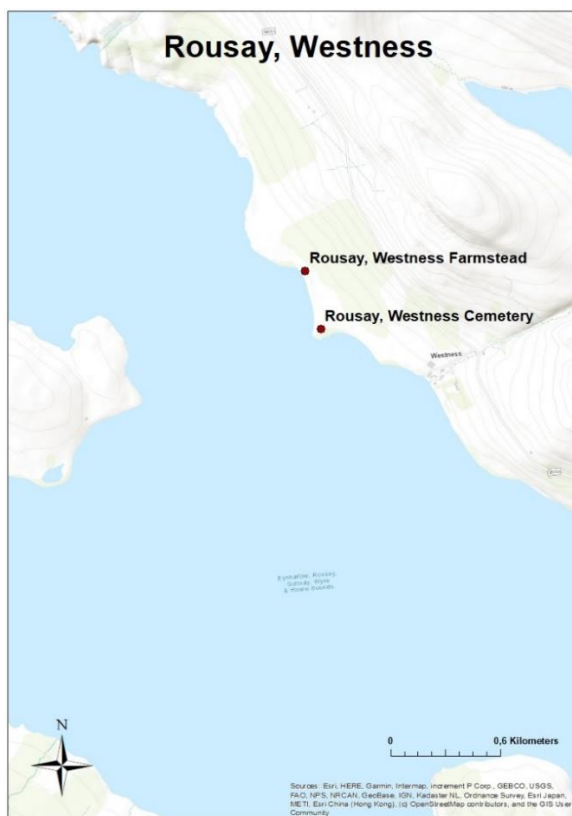


Figure 6.155 Topographic view of the Viking Age burial sites at Westness cemetery (Canmore ID 2167, 1962, n. ID 2167; Canmore ID 2197, 1963, n. ID 2197; Canmore ID 2204, 1963, n. ID 2204).



Figure 6.156 Aerial view of Rousay Westness burials and settlement sites from the Viking Age.



Figure 6.157 View of the burial site towards the seashore. June 2016.



Figure 6.158 View towards the north from the burial site. June 2016.



Figure 6.159 Location of the Norse hall. June 2016.



Figure 6.160 View of the seashore at the burial site, the island of Eynhallow and the mainland in the background. June 2016.

The site's special character is the continual use of the cemetery, first by Pictish settlers and then by Vikings, who did not re-use or disturb the Pictish burials. Additionally, it is significant that the Viking Age burial site and the Norse farm are situated close to each other, (Figure 6.156). The burial site and settlements sites are located close to the seashore and the people living in Westness were probably part of a sea-faring network.

6.5.9 Burial Site Pierowall Links, Westray (Appendix A12)

In the sand dunes at Pierowall Links in Westray, several Viking burials have been found (Figure 6.161). These have been located over the years after sand blowing (Anderson, 1872, pp. 552-53, 571, 573-74; Canmore ID 2768, 1946, n. ID 2768; RCAHMS 1 vol, 1946, p. 61; Thorsteinsson, 1965). In a re-examination of the burial site, 17 burials were distinguished with the possibility of other burials (Thorsteinsson 1965 pp. 164-171). Most of the burials were excavated by Willan Rendall from 1939-49 (Canmore ID 2768, 1946, n. ID 2768). The study conducted by Arne Thorsteinsson showed that the burial site covered a large area, with separated groups of burials. Most of the individuals were buried in flat graves, between the mounds and as secondary burials on mounds (Thorsteinsson, 1965, p. 163). The separated groups of burials were possibly used by certain families, but this is not yet proven (Graham-Campbell and Batey, 1998, p. 134).

The burial site is further inland, but still close to the seashore and the infield (Figure 6.162). With this location there is good access to and from the burial site from land and sea (Figure 6.164, Figure 6.165). There is an open view towards the bay of Pierowall and Sand of Gill in the east (Figure 6.163). There is also an open view towards land on the west side (Figure 6.166). Towards north is a hilltop. There is good visibility from and towards the burials at the Bay of Pierowall. Towards the north, the land is rising and towards the west it also a bit hilly.

The burial site at Pierowall Links is characterised by its location elevated on Pierowall Links and with easy access to the shore, both towards the north and west towards the village of Pierowall. It is also significant that there are groups of burials, which would probably enhance their visibility.

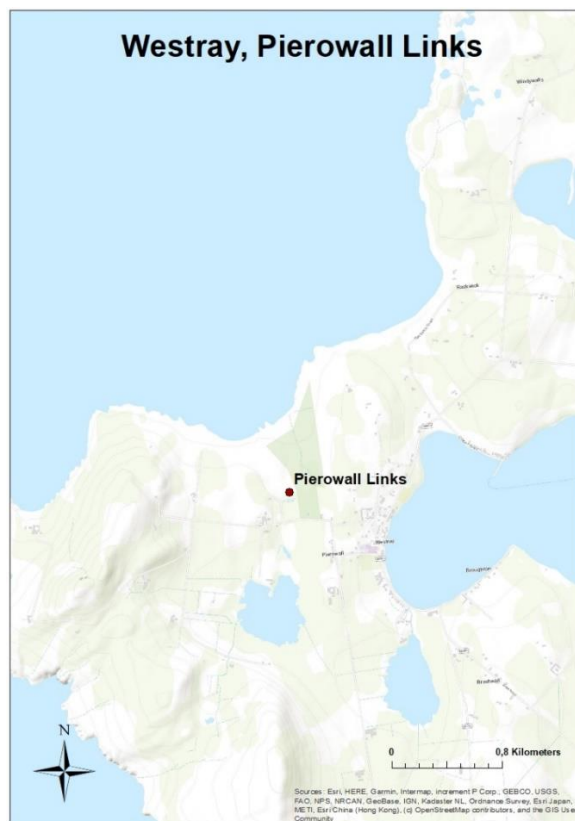


Figure 6.161 Westray, Pierowall Links Viking Age burial site.



Figure 6.162 Aerial view of Westray, Pierowall Links Viking Age burial site.



Figure 6.163 View towards Pierowall Links taken from the north. June 2016.



Figure 6.164 View towards the Bay of Pierowall from the sand dunes. June 2016.



Figure 6.165 View towards the Pierowall Links from the seashore. June 2016.



Figure 6.166 View towards the hilly/undulating landscape at Pierowall Links. View from nearby Rackwick Road. June 2016.

6.5.10 Burial Site the Scar Boat Burial, Quoy Banks, Sanday (Appendix A12)

After a storm at Quoy Banks on Sanday, the farmer John Deerness found bones sticking out of the eroding cliff surface (Figure 6.167). Six years later the site was recognised as a Viking Age burial site (Owen and Dalland, 1999, p. 1). As the site was close to the seashore and the cliff surface was heavily eroded, a rescue excavation began soon after the discovery. The burial site itself was a boat burial and the remains of three individuals were found: one elderly woman, an adult male and a child (Owen and Dalland, 1999, p. 28). The boat was 6.1m-long, placed in a pit aligned E-W. The eastern part of the boat was filled with stone, while the human remains were in the western end (Owen and Dalland, 1999, pp. 26–28).

No definitive Viking settlements have been found in the vicinity of the boat burial, but geophysical examination of the area around the burial site identified a settlement site of unknown date 200m south-west of the burial site (Owen and Dalland, 1999, p. 21).

It is easy to access the site in good weather from the sea (Figure 6.169, Figure 6.171). The land close to the burial site is fairly flat (Figure 6.170). The view from the burial site is open towards the Quoy Banks and the sea in the north. The land is rising towards the south, which limits the view from the burial site. As the land is fairly flat, there is good visibility to and from the burial site across the fields and towards the farm of Scar (Figure 6.172, Figure 6.168).

The site is characterised by its location in an open and exposed landscape, at a short distance from the seashore, which lead to its discovery as part of an ongoing coastal erosion. In addition, it is a significant burial with three individuals in different age groups. It is also very interesting that, prior to the discovery and excavation of the burial, it was described as an irregular grassy mound (Canmore/RCAHMS ID 3494, 1980, n. ID 3494). Therefore, the burial mound seemingly at one point had been visible in the landscape, on the small part of the coastal area called the Crook Beach, facing the North Atlantic.



Figure 6.167 Topographic view of the Scar Boat burial on Sanday (Canmore/RCAHMS ID 3494, 1980, n. ID 3494).

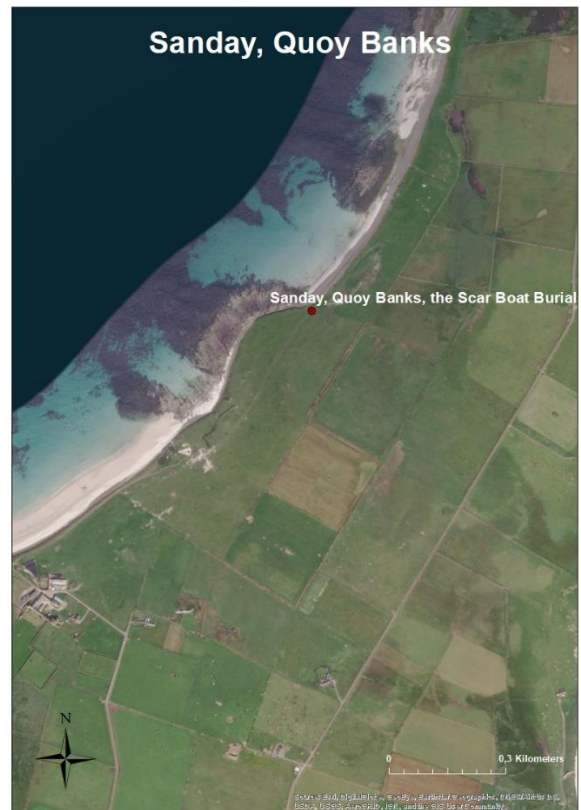


Figure 6.168 Aerial view of the Viking Age burial site at Sanday, Quoy Bank, the Scar Boat Burial.



Figure 6.169 The north coast of Burness, where the Scar boat burial was found. June 2016.



Figure 6.170 Inland view towards the east from the burial site. June 2016.



Figure 6.171 View towards the west from the seashore. June 2016. Figure 6.172 View towards the south to Scar. June 2016.

6.5.11 Burial Site Styes Of Brough, Sanday (Appendix A12)

At this burial site Styes Of Brough on the island Sanday, four mounds have previously been identified as Viking burials due to finds of Viking artefacts (Figure 6.173) (Canmore/RCAHMS ID 3523, 1980, n. ID 3523).

The mounds, which have been damaged in antiquity, vary in diameter from 15m to 30m and in height from 0.5m to over 2m (Owen and Dalland, 1999, p. 14). As part of Channels 4's Time Team series the mounds were examined by digging trenches in the mounds (Robinson, 1998). Three of the mounds were prehistoric, but mound number 2 was a disturbed boat-shaped stone setting, interpreted to be a Viking Age burial (Robinson, 1998; Owen and Dalland, 1999, p. 14). In addition, to the findings of this disturbed Viking burial, it was discovered that the Ness of Brough was most likely a tidal island when the Vikings arrived. Moreover, on the headland, a broch and several bronze age burial cairns would have been visible (Robinson, 1998). The Ness of Brough would then have functioned as a burial site and the settlement farm more inland, perhaps close to Westbrough farmstead (Robinson, 1998). Close to the farmstead at West-Brough, a Viking axe was found prior to 1911, which today is lost (Canmore ID 3518, 1940, n. ID 3518; Grieg, 1940).

There is semi-good access to the burial site from the inland and the sea today (Figure 6.177). There are small ponds towards the east, which can make it difficult to access the ness from the inland. Along the seashore are boulders, rock and shingle. The headland is horizontal and

therefore there is a good view towards the ocean, Point of the Styes and, towards the south, the Bay of Brough and the inland (Figure 6.175, Figure 6.176). Towards the west is the best view of the ocean (Figure 6.178). There is good visibility to and from the burial site, as the headland is open and levelled. Tracks lead from the inland towards the headland, and towards the east is a field boundary with its period unassigned (Canmore/RCAHMS ID 307161, 2010, n. ID 307161). On the neck of the headland there are smaller lakes, which could act as field boundaries.

The burial site is characterised by its location on a remote headland close to the seashore, which was most likely a tidal island in prehistory (Figure 6.174). If the headland used to be a tidal island during the Viking Age, the access would have been restricted during certain periods and created a boundary between the living and dead.



Figure 6.173 Topographic view of the burial site Styes Of Brough.



Figure 6.174 Aerial view of the burial site Styes Of Brough.



Figure 6.175 View towards Styes Of Brough from the east. June 2016.



Figure 6.176 View towards the south from Styes Of Brough. June 2016.



Figure 6.177 View towards the neck of Styes Of Brough towards the east. June 2016.



Figure 6.178 View towards the west from Styes Of Brough. June 2016.

6.5.12 Burial Site Bay Of Skail, Mainland (Appendix A12)

In 1888 a long cist was found close to the seashore at the south side of the Bay of Skail on the Mainland, which had the remains of a male skeleton. It was accompanied by a bone comb and comb case, a knife, a spearhead, and an iron arrowhead (Figure 6.179) (Canmore, n. ID 1665; Watt, 1888, pp. 283–284). The burial was typologically dated to the Viking Age (Graham-Campbell, 2019, n. discussion on dating pp. 302–303). The burial was inserted into a Prehistoric settlement mound, which is eroding into the sea (Watt, 1888, p. 183; Graham-Campbell and Batey, 1998, p. 59; Graham-Campbell, 2019, p. 303). In addition to the human remains and artefacts, animal remains were found, possibly a horse leg bone and bird and fish bones (Watt, 1888, p. 284).

North of the burial is the Prehistoric settlement Skara Brae (Figure 6.184). Recent excavations on the northern side of the Skail Bay has Viking-Late Norse phases building remains (Griffiths, 2019, p. 311; Hamilton et al., 2019, p. 111; Harrison and Griffiths, 2019, p. 53).

There is good access to the burial site from the seashore in the north and from inland areas towards the south, east and west (Figure 6.181, Figure 6.182). The landscape is fairly flat and there are sand dunes. East and west of the Bay of Skail is the sea-line characterised by rock and shingle. Behind the inland area in the west are cliffs, which hinder the access. The movement to and from the burial is easy, because the inland is fairly low-lying. There is a good view towards the ocean in the north, the bay of Skail and the sand dunes (Figure 6.183). Towards the south and east the view is partially limited by small hilltops. Towards the west there is an open view and one can see the edges of the steep hill are beginning. The visibility from the burial site to and from the east and south is partially blocked by the hilltops.

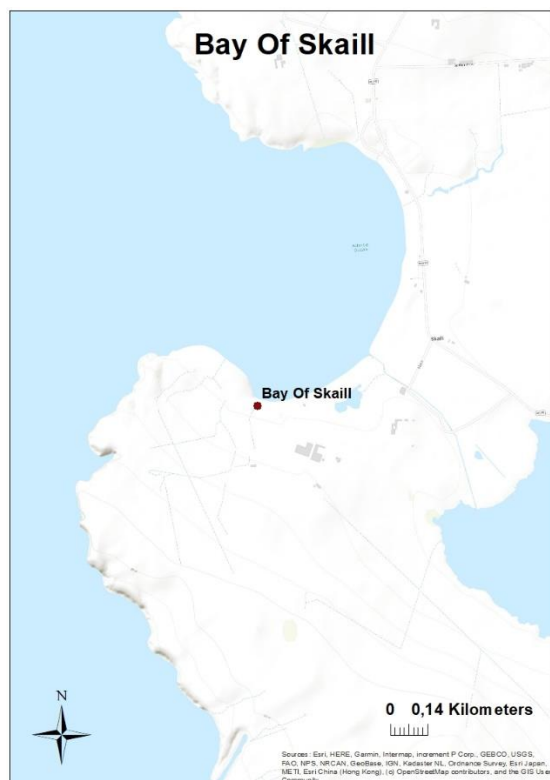


Figure 6.179 Topographic overview of the Viking Age burial site Bay Of Skail.



Figure 6.180 Aerial overview of Viking Age burial site Bay of Skail and Neolithic village Skara Brae.



Figure 6.181 View towards the north at the burial site. June 2016.



Figure 6.182 View towards the south at the burial site. June 2016.



Figure 6.183 View towards Skara Brae in the east from the burial site and the Norse settlement mounds in the vicinity. June 2016.



Figure 6.184 The Skara Brae settlement. June 2016.

This burial site is characterised by its location close to the seashore, inserted into a prehistoric settlement mound and at a short distance from the Neolithic settlement at Skara Brae (Figure 6.180). Additionally, with the newly established Viking-Late Norse phases on the northern side of the Bay of Skail, it is possible that the person who was buried here, lived in one of the settlements mounds.

6.5.13 Key Findings of Landscape Survey in Orkney

The landscape survey of the six selected sites in Orkney show that the burial sites are both close to the seashore, inlets, and Viking Age settlements. The survey also demonstrates that there is a practice of re-using previous settlements for burials. Their close proximity to the seashore, and location in inlets and in strategic settlement mounds show that it was important for the Vikings that the burials were visible in the landscape. Moreover, in placing burials in earlier settlements and burying the dead close to inlets and seashore show that the Vikings communicated their presences in the landscape through the burials. In Table 6.8, the key findings of each burial site are listed.

With this summary the focus is now on selected burial sites from Iceland.

Table 6.8 Key findings from the burial sites in Orkney.

Sites, village	Distance from burial site to village/settlement	Distance from burial site to the seashore	Burial site on/close to borders	Burial site on/close to communication routes	Burial site with several time periods	View to the ocean	View to the village	Continuity/re-use
Broch of Gurness, Aikerness	Uncertain	55m	Yes	Yes (sea route)	Yes	Open	Open	Yes
Westness, Rousay	375m	100m	Yes	Yes (sea route)	Yes	Open	Open	Yes
Pierowall Links, Westrey	Unknown Pierowall village: 521m	775m	Yes	Yes (sea route)	?	Open	Open	No
the Scar Boat Burial, Sanday	Unknown Sanday Scar farm: 1km	At/in the seashore	?	Yes (sea route)	No	Open	Open	No
Styes Of Brough, Sanday,	Closest farm 872m.	84m	Yes	Yes		Open	Open	No
Bay Of Skaill, Mainland	Viking/Norse settlement: 1km Skara Brae: 193m	67m	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Open	Open to view	Yes

6.6 Viking Age Icelandic burials

This section is about the landscape survey of five selected burials in Iceland, where the location of a Viking Age burial is known and verified (Figure 6.185). As Iceland has a very varied landscape and many Viking burial sites, it was decided to focus on a certain area in Iceland which demonstrated different types of burials. The burial landscape study will begin with the site Hemla at Vestur-Landeyjahreppur and Dufþaksholt at Hvolhreppur.

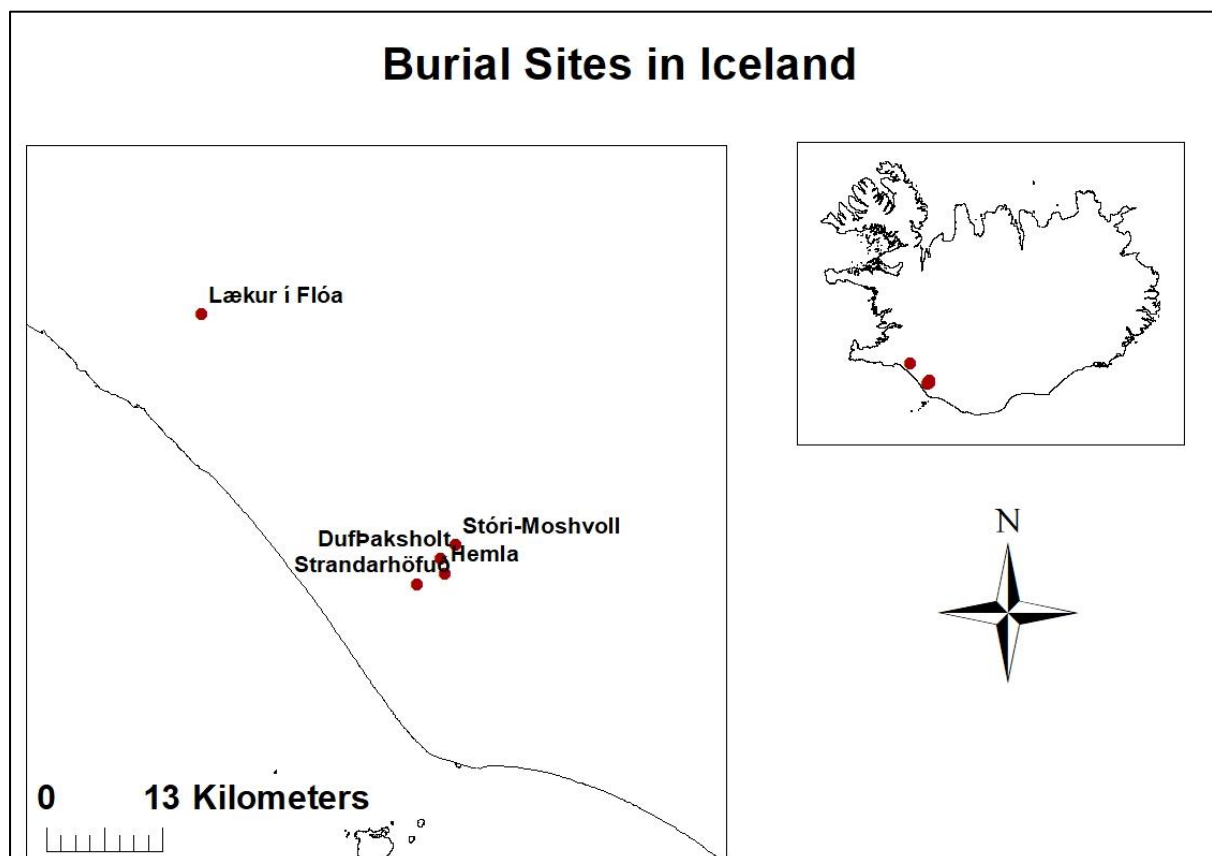


Figure 6.185 Overview of Viking Age burial sites in Iceland. Map source Landmælingar Íslands.

6.6.1 Burial Site Hemla, Vestur-Landeyjahreppur and Dufþaksholt, Hvolhreppur (Appendix A13)

The burial sites at Hemla and at Dufþaksholt are included in the same section because they are geographically close, approximately 1.9km from each other. At the burial site Hemla in Vestur-Landeyjahreppur (Catalogue number 5; Registration Iceland National Museum 12068 and 11327-42) two burials were found in 1932 and 1937 (Eldjárn, 2016, p. 49). The burial site was

185m NE of the homefield of Hemla in Vestur-landeyjum, on an eroded hillock known as Grýluhóll or Norðastihóll (Þórðarson, 1932, p. 55; Eldjárn, 2016, p. 49). The site is between the villages of Hemlu and Núps in Fljótshlíð (Figure 6.186) (Þórðarson, 1932, p. 55).



Figure 6.186 Topographic overview of Hemla. Map source Landmælingar Íslands



Figure 6.187 Aerial view of Hemla. Map source Landmælingar Íslands.

During the examination of the burial site in 1932, it became clear that the burial site consisted of a human burial with two horse skeletons situated close to the burial (Þórðarson, 1932, p. 56; Eldjárn, 2016, p. 49). Later, in 1937, an additional burial was discovered (Eldjárn, 2016, p. 583). The burial site is not visible from the farm as it is behind a natural mound (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 480). The primary environment for this burial site is wetlands, and the secondary environment birch (Figure 6.190) (Maher, 1999, p. 351). The view from the burial is moderate (Maher, 1999, p. 352). The distance from the farm to the burial site is 320m and the distance to the farm border is 150m (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 589).

The key point in the location of the burial is that it is near a border. In Adolf Friðriksson's table of types or patterns of burials, Hemla fits well with being a type A, fulfilling the criteria of being near a border (Friðriksson, 2013, pp. 278, 480). The burial site at Helma is, as with Efri-Rauðalækur, at an intersection in front of the farm, where the driveway to the house joins the main road (Figure 6.187) (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 221).

At the burial site Dufþaksholt at Hvolhreppur (Catalogue number 8) construction workers found human remains while constructing a road in 1949 (Figure 6.188) (Eldjárn, 2016, p. 51). The site was south of the old homefield of the farm Dufþaksholt and on the location of the burial there was a low mound (Eldjárn, 2016, p. 51).



Figure 6.188 Topographic view of Dufþaksholt. Map source Landmælingar Íslands.

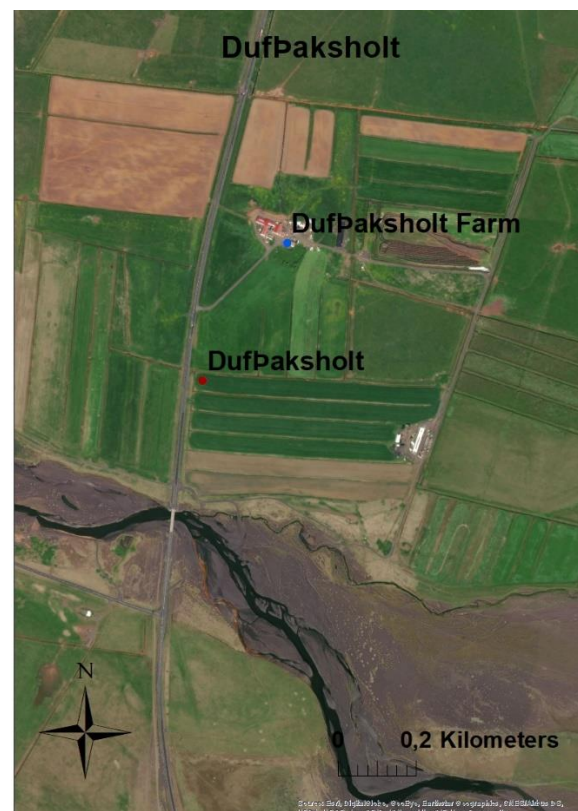


Figure 6.189 Aerial view of Dufþaksholt. Map source Landmælingar Íslands.

The burial is 400m from the farm site at Dufþaksholt and not far from the driveway which leads to the farm (Figure 6.189) (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 315). Furthermore, it is on the southern limit

of the cultivated area of the farm (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 446). The primary environment for this burial site is birch and its secondary environment water (Maher, 1999, p. 352). The primary natural feature is the riverbank (Maher, 1999, p. 351) but, as it is situated close to a road, it has also the road as a feature. The view from the burial site is moderate (Figure 6.191) (Maher, 1999, p. 355).

The burial is characterised by its close distance to the farm. It is possibly to classify this burial site as Type A but this is uncertain, as the distance to a border is not known. It does not fit all the criteria of being a Type A burial (Friðriksson, 2013, pp. 278, 584, 588). If Dufþaksholt is a type A burial, it pairs well with the Helma burial.



Figure 6.190 View of area around the burial site at Hemla. May 2015.



Figure 6.191 View towards the burial site at Dufþakshol. May 2015.

6.6.2 Burial Site Strandarhöfuð, Vestur-Landeyjahreppur (Appendix A13)

At this burial site at Strandarhöfuð, Vestur-Landeyjahreppur in Rangárvallasýslu (Catalogue number 6) a Viking Age burial was found in 1951 (Figure 6.192) (Eldjárn, 2016, p. 50). The burial was found halfway between two farms on a hillock called Markhóll on the slope Fljótsvegar, which are between the farms Strandarhöfuð and Strandarhjáleiga (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 549; Eldjárn, 2016, p. 50). The individual in the burial was aligned east-west and the head was in the west end (Eldjárn, 2016, p. 51).



Figure 6.192 Topographic view of Strandarhöfuð. Map source Landmælingar Íslands.



Figure 6.193 Aerial view of Strandarhöfuð. Map source Landmælingar Íslands.

The distance to the farms is 450m and the distance to the border is 20m (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 591). The burial is visible from the farms, which were in a slightly elevated area of the land (Figure 6.194, Figure 6.196) (Friðriksson, 2013, pp. 249, 591). The farms are also elevated in the otherwise very flat landscape, with the same altitude as the burial site (Figure 6.195) (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 249). East of the farms and burials runs the modern road, which roughly follows the old path in the area (Figure 6.193) (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 250). The burial site is set within wetlands as its primary environment and its secondary environment is birch (Maher, 1999, p. 351). As the surrounding landscape is open and flat, the view from the burial site is very open or vast (Maher, 1999, p. 355).

The key findings of the burial site are that it is close to a border and therefore fits well with being a Type A burial (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 278). In addition, the burials are visible from the farms in this open and levelled landscape (Maher, 1999, p. 355; Friðriksson, 2013, p. 249).



Figure 6.194 View towards the farm Strandarhöfuð. Photo 2015.



Figure 6.195 View towards the burial site between the farms. May 2015.



Figure 6.196 View towards the farm at Strönd. May 2015.

6.6.3 Burial Site Stóri-Moshvoll, Hvolhreppur (Appendix A13)

At Stóri-Moshvoll, Hvolhreppur (Catalogue number 7; Registration Iceland National Museum 6774-76), in 1913 a Viking Age burial with human remains in poor condition was discovered west of the small hillock Moshvolvshól when digging for a barn (Þórðarson, 1915, p. 87; Eldjárn, 2016, p. 51). In the burial, there were artefacts, specifically, an axe, and a knife (Eldjárn, 2016, p. 51). The previous year, remains of a horse were found (Þórðarson, 1915, p. 86; Eldjárn, 2016, p. 51).

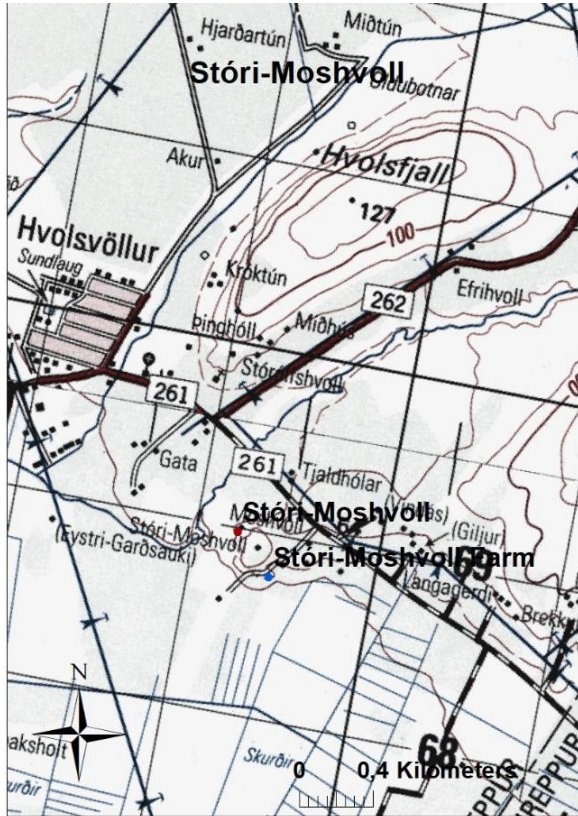


Figure 6.197 Topographic view of Stóri-Moshvoll. Map source Landmælingar Íslands.



Figure 6.198 Aerial view of Stóri-Moshvoll. Map source Landmælingar Íslands.

The burial site is 200m NE of the Moshvoll farm (Figure 6.197) (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 591). There is no direct visibility between the burial site and the farm, because the view is blocked by the hillock Moshvollhóll (Friðriksson, 2013, pp. 549, 591). The primary environment is the wetlands and secondary environment is birch (Maher, 1999, p. 355). As it was discovered west of a hillock in a flat area, the primary feature linked to the burial is flat (Maher, 1999, p. 351).

The characteristics of Stóri-Moshvell burial are the short distance to the farm and the hindered visibility between the burial and farm of a hillock (Figure 6.198). Stóri-Moshvoll fits well to be a type B, fulfilling the criteria of being close to a farmhouse and not close to a border (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 278).



Figure 6.199 View towards Stóri-Moshvoll, Hvolhreppur. May 2015

6.6.4 Burial Site Lækur í Flóa, Hraungserðishreppur (Appendix A13)

This burial site at Lækur í Flóa (Catalogue number 28) was discovered when the farmer extended the homefield area in 1969 (Eldjárn, 2016, p. 77). During the extension of the home field, an older settlement was also found (Eldjárn, 2016, p. 78). The older settlement was 200m south of the burial and the distance to the border from the burial site 60m (Friðriksson, 2013, pp. 512, 590). There was a direct visibility between the farm and the burial site (Figure 6.200, Figure 6.201, Figure 6.202) (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 590).



Figure 6.200 View of the settlement and burial at Lækur í Flóa, Hraungserðishreppur. May 2015.



Figure 6.201 View towards the burial site at Lækur í Flóa, Hraungserðishreppur. May 2015.

2m west of the burial, horse remains were found (Eldjárn, 2016, p. 78). During the excavation of the burials, it was clear that the burial had been disturbed (Eldjárn, 2016, p. 79). The burial was found close to a landscape feature called “hraundryli” in Icelandic, north of the old infield area, 60m west of the river and about 600m north of the modern farm (Eldjárn, 2016, p. 78). The burial is located in a flat area and there was no visible marker of the burial (Figure 6.203) (Eldjárn, 2016, pp. 78, 512). The burial is set within an area of wetlands and birch (Maher, 1999, p. 351).

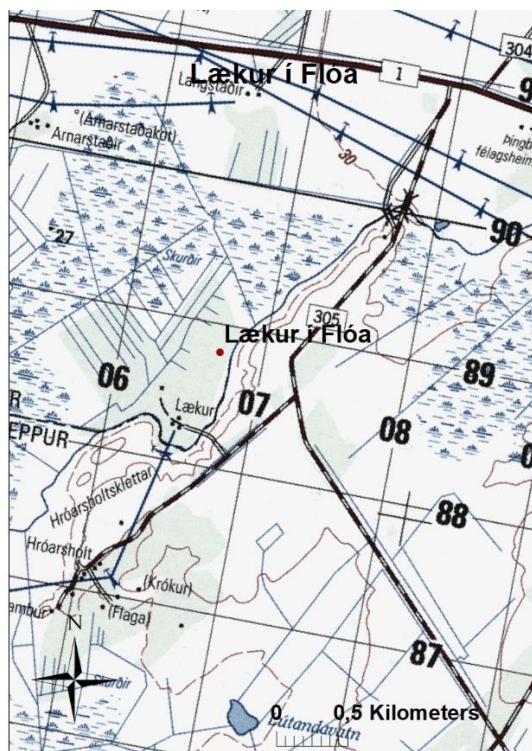


Figure 6.202 Topographic view of Lækur í Flóa. Map source Landmælingar Íslands.

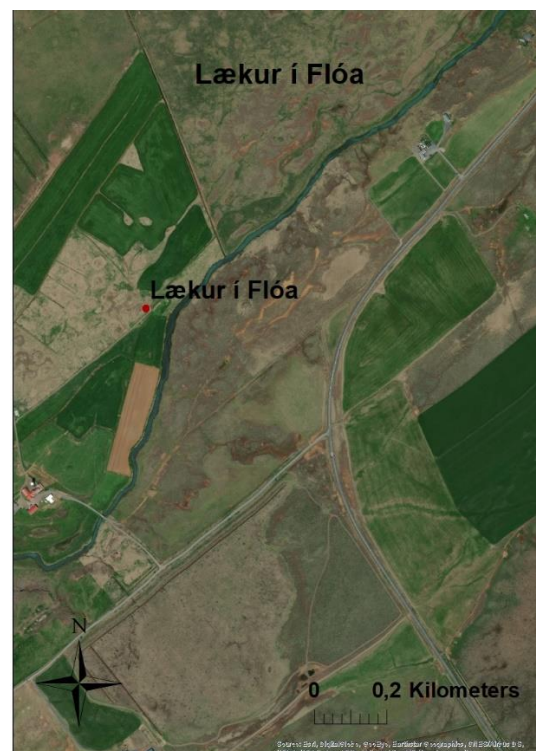


Figure 6.203 Aerial view of Lækur í Flóa. Map source Landmælingar Íslands.

This burial is distinctive in being in a levelled landscape with a short distance and direct visibility between the burial site and the farm. As the burial is close to a farm, it fits well with being in burial category B (Friðriksson, 2013, pp. 278, 590), although it could also fulfil the criteria of being in category A, as it is close to a border. Another significant observation is that the burial was disturbed in antiquity.

6.6.5 Key Findings of Landscape Survey in Iceland

The landscape survey of the five selected sites in Iceland show that the burial sites are both close to the borders and farms. The view between the burials and farm can be open and/or with a direct visibility between the burial and farm. In addition, there can also be no visibility between the burial and the farm. This study also indicates that Viking Age burials in Iceland have been disturbed in antiquity. The burial with a close proximity to borders shows that it was important for the Vikings to signal their presence in the landscape and perhaps also ownership. In Table 6.9, the key findings of each burial site are listed.

With this summary there follows a short section on initial observations of burial locations across the selected sites in the North Atlantic.

Table 6.9 Key findings from the burial sites in Iceland.

Sites, village	Distance from burial site to village/settlement	Distance from burial site to the seashore/river	Burial site on/close to borders	Burial site on/close to communication routes	Burial site with several time periods	View to the ocean	View to the village	Continuity /re-use
Hemla, Vestur-Landeyjahreppur	320m	210m (river/stream) 13.66m (to seashore)	Yes, 150m	Yes	No	No	No	No
Dufþaksholt, Hvolhreppur	418m	340m (to river) 14.23km (to seashore)	Maybe	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Strandarhöfuð, Vestur-Landeyjahreppur	450m	152m (to river) 10.49km (to seashore)	Yes 20m	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Stóri-Moshvoll, Hvolhreppur	200m	235m (to river) 16.87km (to seashore)	No	No	No	No	No	No
Lækur í Flóa, Hraungsgarðishreppur	200m	60m (to river) 13.80km (to seashore)	Yes, 60m	Yes	No	No	Yes	No

6.7 Concluding Remark

In this chapter I have addressed the research questions of where and how we can locate more Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands and if the Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands are similar or different to those in Viking Age Norway, Iceland and Scotland. In the Faroe Islands there has been a lack of investigation on Viking Age burials and therefore, in this research, it is the first time a detailed landscape study has been conducted on verified, probable and possible Viking Age burial sites and compared with North Atlantic burial sites.

From the landscape analysis of burial sites in the Faroe Islands, Norway, Shetland, Orkney and Iceland, one can observe both similarities and differences in the locations of the burial sites. In this perspective there are some interesting observations to bring forward (Table 6.10).

Table 6.10 Key points of the landscape survey.

	The Faroe Islands	Iceland	Shetland and Orkney	Norway
Open, limited or no intervisibility towards settlements	Open and limited	Open, limited, no visibility	Open, limited, no visibility	Open, limited, no visibility
Open, limited or no intervisibility towards the sea	Open	Open, limited, no visibility	Open	Open, limited, no visibility
Close to sea or water	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Close to settlements	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Close to boundaries	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Re-use of burial grounds	Yes	No obvious continuity	Yes	Yes
Visibility on surface	No	Both	Both	Both

One main difference for the Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands is the lack of burials and that the burials are not visible on the surface. Additionally, the Viking Age burials in the Faroes are located close to villages and not dispersed settlements, as for example in Iceland. The lack of burials in the Faroe Islands could be due to space issues and preservation of skeletal material. It is possible that there was not enough space for all to be buried on land and therefore some were buried at sea. As there are not many reports on the finding of human remains during cultivation it is also highly possible that the preservation condition has not been good for the human remains and therefore difficult to see or find during cultivation. Another, very likely possibility is that the burials are under the old villages and underneath the old churchyards, as

seen for example in the village of Svínoy in the churchyard and Frammi í Garði, in Kirkjugarðurin in the village of Kirkja and in the village of Sandur at Við Kirkjugarð.

During the landscape survey it became clear that across the North Atlantic the burial sites share many similarities. Several burial sites have an open visibility both towards the sea and the settlement. Additionally, they are close to streams and river, which could act as natural boundaries for the burials. These key points on the burial location and the observations of the burial sites in the landscape can help us to better understand the world views the Vikings had. For example, was it important to have the burial grounds in sight, to keep the ancestors close? Or was it important to keep the burial grounds at the boundaries, to mark one's own land ownership? These are all relevant observations and questions, which will be discussed further in Chapter 8.

Based on these initial landscape observations and analyses, the location of burials (verified, probable and possible in the Faroes), as well as the place names and ethnographic studies and location models, specific locations were targeted for further geophysical analysis and test excavations for locating unknown Viking Age burial sites in the Faroe Islands. This is the subject of following Chapter 7.

Chapter 7 Results of Field Survey, Geophysical Survey and Test Excavations

This chapter presents the results of the field survey, geophysical survey and test excavations conducted in the Faroe Islands, with a focus on the northern islands: Fugloy, Svínoy, Viðoy, Borðoy, Kunoy and Kalsoy (Figure 7.1). This chapter addresses the research questions on where and how to locate Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands and which methods are used to get closer in answering this question.

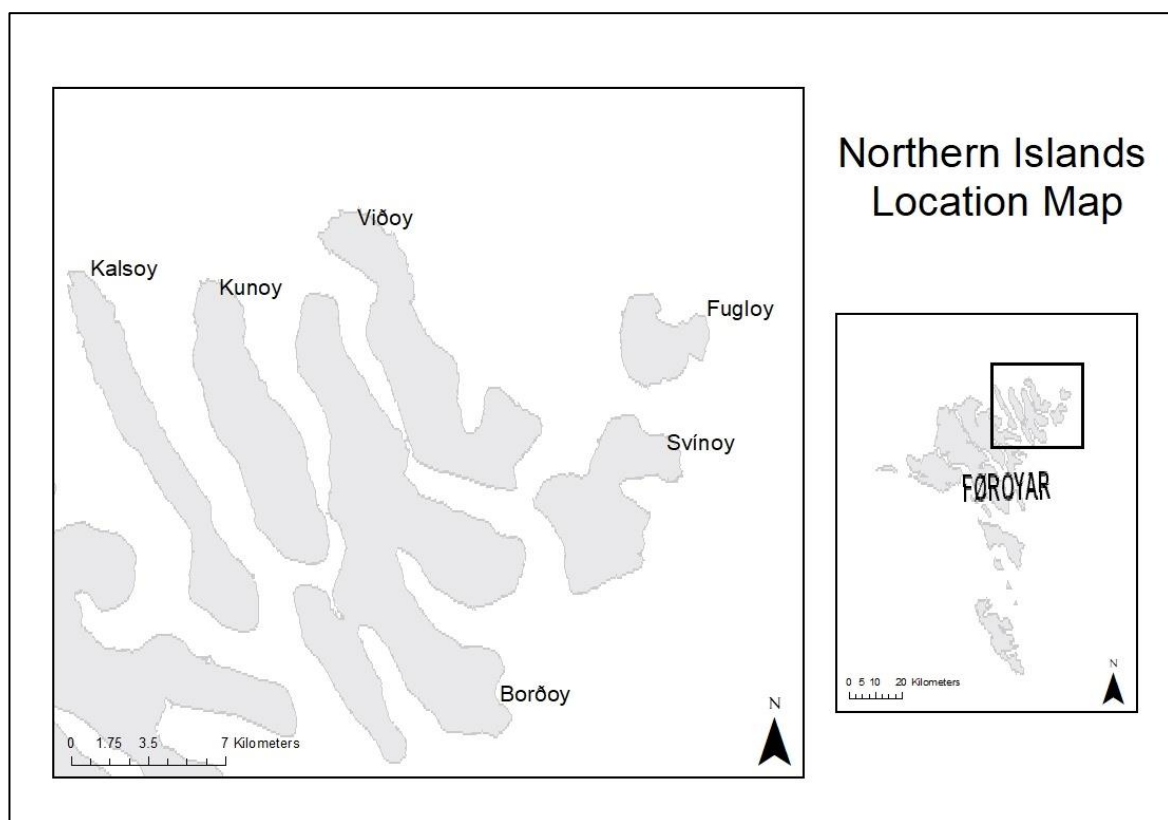


Figure 7.1 Location of the northern islands in the Faroe Islands. Map source: us.fo

This chapter is divided into four parts. The first section is about the field survey in the northern islands, the second section is about the geophysical survey, the third section is about test excavations, and the fourth part is a reflection on the fieldwork methodology and results, which leads to Chapter 8's wider discussion about the results of the conducted work.

7.1 Field Survey in the Northern Islands

Prior to the field survey, aerial photographs and other landscape photographs were examined for possible burial information, for example, signs of low mounds and stone structures. In addition, the archives in Tjóðsavnið were reviewed for useful past survey data to assist in the initial development and prioritisation of the present survey strategy. Relevant archives for the archaeological field survey included survey data collected by Sverri Dahl and partly followed up by Árni Thorssteinsson and Símun V. Arge. Sverri Dahl was meticulous in his work and had therefore different archival categories and folders. Many exciting and interesting results emerged from the archival work, which were presented in Chapter 5. Furthermore, an integrated part of this PhD project is outreach and during this work people called in or sent information about possible burial sites, based on local or family oral histories, landscape folklore, or their own observations of the landscape. These places, when the location was known, were included in the field survey. Unfortunately, there was no physical evidence on the ground for the existence of burials in those locations. Nevertheless, it was an important and worthwhile exercise to take the local stories and ideas about Viking Age burials into account when conducting the field survey.

The field survey included visits to and topographic studies of places of interest and a field survey in the infield and outfield of villages. Places were also surveyed which had been deserted in the late 1800s, as well as places with Viking Age settlement remains. The full list of sites visited is in Table 7.1. Most of the Viking Age settlements have not been excavated, but their building form resembles Viking Age longhouses. In Table 7.1 the places have been ordered with their specific site name, village and island. Each village is highlighted in a grey colour. Part of Table 7.1 are the methods used. If the sites have been mentioned in Chapter 5, these are listed under “Archive ID” with their ID number. The full list of these sites is in Appendix A6, with the sites in the northern islands discussed in Chapter 5. In the last column is information regarding whether the site was selected for further geophysical field survey.

The decision as to which areas to select for further geophysical analysis was based on several factors, for example topographic features in the landscape, possible Viking Age settlement, landscape borders, place names and legends, the landscape analysis of the North Atlantic burial sites in Chapter 6 and the location model developed in Iceland.

Table 7.1 Areas and places surveyed in the northern islands.

	Site Name	Village	Island	Methods	Archive ID.	Geophysics Analysis
A		Hattarvík, infield and outfield	Fugloy	Survey		
A1	Á Beiti	Hattarvík	Fugloy	Survey Location (short Loc.) model		Yes Between two farms
A2	Leysingarteigar	Hattarvík	Fugloy	Survey Legend Place name	101	No
A3	Oddur	Hattarvík	Fugloy	Survey Legend Place name	102	No
A4	Gunnhildarheyggur	Hattarvík	Fugloy	Survey Place name	103	No
A5	Uppi í Húsi	Hattarvík	Fugloy	Survey		No
A6	Niðri í Húsi	Hattarvík	Fugloy	Survey		No
A7	Gullheyggur	Hattarvík	Fugloy	Survey Legend Place name	104	No
A8	Uppi í Króki	Hattarvík	Fugloy	Survey Legend	134	No
A9	Døttheyggjar	Hattarvík	Fugloy	Survey Legend Place name	105	Yes Visible small mounds, legend and place names attached
B		Kirkja Infield and outfield	Fugloy			
B1	Norðari Kirkja	Kirkja	Fugloy	Survey		No
B2	Sunnari Kirkja	Kirkja	Fugloy	Survey		No
B3	Kirkja, Rógva-kirkjukrógv	Kirkja	Fugloy	Survey Archive	97	No
B4	Á Veggnum	Kirkja	Fugloy	Survey Legend	98	No
B5	Húsadeild	Kirkja	Fugloy	Survey Loc. model		Yes Close to a border, a stream and between settlements. Burial legend close to site.
B6	Norði Millum Garðar	Kirkja	Fugloy	Survey Legend	99	Yes Close to a settlement
B7	Skarðsvík	Kirkja/Hattarvík	Fugloy	Survey		No
B8	Vatnsdal	Kirkja	Fugloy	Survey		No
B9	Path	Kirkja/Hattarvík	Fugloy	Survey Loc. model		No
B10		Kirkja	Fugloy	Survey		Yes Close to a settlement
C		Svínoy infield/outfield	Svínoy	Survey		

	Site Name	Village	Island	Methods	Archive ID.	Geophysics Analysis
C 1	Heimi á Bø	Svínoy	Svínoy	Survey		No
C2	Úti á Bø	Svínoy	Svínoy	Survey		No
C3	Bjarnarsteinur	Svínoy	Svínoy	Survey Archive	91	No
C4	Kirkjugarðurin	Svínoy	Svínoy	Survey Informant 7	92	No
C5	Frammi í Garði	Svínoy	Svínoy	Survey Archive	93	No
C6	Bønhústoft	Svínoy	Svínoy	Survey Archive Informant 8	94	No
C7	Skotagravirnar	Svínoy	Svínoy	Survey Archive	95	No
C8	Torvarheyggur	Svínoy	Svínoy	Survey Local Legend	96	No
C9	Yviri á Dal	Svínoy	Svínoy	Survey		No
C10	Grønafløta	Svínoy	Svínoy	Survey Legend	141	No
C11	Yvir í Dal	Svínoy	Svínoy	Survey		No
C12	Yvir í Havn	Svínoy	Svínoy	Survey		No
D		Viðareiði infield/outfield	Viðoy			
D1	Við Garð/Fodlendi	Viðareiði	Viðoy	Survey		No
D2	Á Heygum	Viðareiði	Viðoy	Survey		No
D3	Í Ónagerði/Niðri á Bakka	Viðareiði	Viðoy	Survey		No
D4	Eiðsvík	Viðareiði	Viðoy	Survey		
D5	Flatabakki	Viðareiði	Viðoy	Survey Place name Legend Informant 3 Loc. model	89	Yes Close to as settlement. Legend of a burial ground attached.
D6	Framsagrøvin	Viðareiði	Viðoy	Survey Place name	90	
D7	Bønhústoft	Viðareiði	Viðoy	Survey Legend/informant 3	133	No
D8	Viðvík	Viðareiði	Viðoy	Survey		No
D9	Path	Viðareiði	Viðoy	Survey		No
E		Hvannasund Infield/Outfield	Viðoy			
E1	Sunnari Hvannasund	Hvannasund	Viðoy	Survey		No
E2	Norðari Hvannasund	Hvannasund	Viðoy	Survey		No
E3	Íslistoft	Hvannasund	Viðoy	Survey		No
E4	Norðan Byrging I	Hvannasund	Viðoy	Survey Legend	86	No
E5	Norðan Byrging II	Hvannasund	Viðoy	Survey Legend	87	No
F		Múli Infield/Outfield	Borðoy			
F1	Norðari Múla	Múli	Borðoy	Survey Loc. model		Yes Close to a settlement
F2	Sunnari Múla	Múli	Borðoy	Survey		Yes

	Site Name	Village	Island	Methods	Archive ID.	Geophysics Analysis
				Loc. model		Close to a settlement
F3	Bønhús	Múli	Borðoy	Survey Legend	140	No
F4	Path	Múli	Borðoy	Survey		No
G	Bygdin Fossá	Fossá Infield/Outfield	Borðoy			
G1	Bygdin Fossá	Fossá	Borðoy	Survey		No
H		Norðdepil Infield/Outfield	Borðoy			
H1	Bygdin Nordepil	Norðdepil	Borðoy	Survey		No
I		Depil Infield/Outfield	Borðoy			
I1	Bønhús	Depil	Borðoy	Survey Legend	142	Yes Close to a settlement and possibly early church site
I2	Depil Sunnan	Depil	Borðoy	Survey Loc. model		Yes Close to a settlement and border
I3	Depil Norðan	Depil	Borðoy	Survey		No
I4	Path	Depil	Borðoy	Survey		No
J		Norðtoftir Infield/Outfield	Borðoy			
J1	Bygdin Norðtoftir	Norðtoftir	Borðoy	Survey		No
J1	Landing Site	Norðtoftir	Borðoy	Survey		No
K		Árnafjørður Infield/Outfield	Borðoy			
K1	Bygdin	Árnafjørður	Borðoy	Survey		No
K2	Toftir	Árnafjørður	Borðoy	Survey		No
K3	Tingstaður	Árnafjørður	Borðoy	Survey		No
L		Skálatoftir Infield/Outfield	Borðoy			
L1	Bygdin Skálatoftir	Skálatoftir	Borðoy	Survey		No
L2	Path	Skálatoftir	Borðoy	Survey		No
M		Strond Infield/Outfield	Borðoy			
M1	Bygdin Strond	Strond	Borðoy	Survey		No
N		Ánirnar Infield/Outfield	Borðoy	Survey		No
N1	Bygdin Ánirnar	Ánirnar	Borðoy	Survey		No
O		Klaksvík Infield/Outfield	Borðoy			
O1	Myrknaoyri	Klaksvík	Borðoy	Survey		No
O2	Gerðar	Klaksvík	Borðoy	Survey		No
O3	Vág	Klaksvík	Borðoy	Survey		No
O4	Uppsalar	Klaksvík	Borðoy	Survey		No
O5	Sólsteinur	Klaksvík	Borðoy	Survey	079	No
O6	Taravík	Klaksvík	Borðoy	Survey		No
O7	Niðri á Toft	Klaksvík	Borðoy	Survey		No
O8	Borðoyavík	Klaksvík	Borðoy	Survey	083	Yes Close to a Viking Age settlement (not fully

	Site Name	Village	Island	Methods	Archive ID.	Geophysics Analysis
						excavated) and the find of a possible human bone
O9	Gerðabø	Klaksvík	Borðoy	Survey	084	No
O10	Grøv	Klaksvík	Borðoy	Survey		No
O11	Úti í Grøv	Klaksvík	Borðoy	Survey Archive Loc. model		Yes Close to a likely Viking Age settlement and to border and path
O12	Kvíngardalur	Klaksvík	Borðoy	Survey	081	No
O13	Uppi í Grevstrinum	Klaksvík	Borðoy	Survey Legend	078	No
P		Norðoyri Infield/Outfield	Borðoy			
P1	Bygdin Norðoyri	Norðoyri	Borðoy	Survey		No
P2	Bønhústoft	Norðoyri	Borðoy	Survey		No
P3	Íslistoftir	Norðoyri	Borðoy	Survey		No
Q		Haraldssund Infield/Outfield	Kunoy			
Q1	Bygdin Haraldssund	Haraldssund	Kunoy	Survey		No
Q2	Suður á Búðum	Haraldssund	Kunoy	Survey		No
Q3	Í Búðunum	Haraldssund	Kunoy	Survey Loc. model		Yes Close to a likely Viking Age settlement
R		Kunoy Infield/Outfield	Kunoy			
R1	Bygdin Kunoy	Kunoy	Kunoy	Survey		No
R2	Hellisdalur	Kunoy	Kunoy	Survey		No
S		Syðradalur Infield/Outfield	Kallsoy			
S1	Bygdin Syðradalur	Syðradalur	Kallsoy	Survey		No
S2	Støðin	Syðradalur	Kallsoy	Survey		No
T		Húsar	Kallsoy			
T1	Bygdin Húsar	Húsar	Kallsoy	Survey		No
U		Mikladalur Infield/Outfield	Kallsoy			
U1	Bygdin Mikladalur	Mikladalur	Kallsoy	Survey		No
U2	Skumpheiðarnar	Mikladalur	Kallsoy	Survey		No
V		Trøllanes Infield/Outfield	Kallsoy			
V1	Bygdin Trøllanes	Trøllanes	Kallsoy	Survey		No
V2	Horn	Trøllanes	Kallsoy	Survey		No

During the survey, thirteen places were recognised as standing out as possible burial sites (Table 7.2). These were identified based on the topography of the landscape, the relative location of verified and typologically dated Viking Age settlements, settlement boundary walls or natural features, old roads, as well as relevant archival evidence, the results of interviews

with local people, the conducted landscape analysis in the North Atlantic and burial trends proposed in Iceland.

Table 7.2 Sites selected for further examination.

	Site Name	Village	Islands
1	Á Beitið	Hattarvík	Fugloy
2	Døttisheggjar	Hattarvík	Fugloy
3	Á Toftum	Kirkja	Fugloy
4	Húsadeild	Kirkja	Fugloy
5	Norð Millum Garðar	Kirkja	Fugloy
6	Flatabakki	Viðareiði	Viðoy
7	Norðari Múla	Múli	Borðoy
8	Sunnari Múla	Múli	Borðoy
9	Norðari Depil	Depil	Borðoy
10	Sunnari Depil	Depil	Borðoy
11	Borðoyavík	Klaksvík	Borðoy
12	Úti í Grøv	Klaksvík	Borðoy
13	Í Búðunum	Haraldssund	Kunoy

The field survey was naturally divided according to the geographical borders of the islands in the north, starting with Fugloy, which is the most eastern island in the Faroe Islands. A landscape analysis of the selected sites is in Appendix A14.

7.1.1 Á Beiti and Døtttheyggjar, Hattarvík, Fugloy

On the island of Fugloy there are two villages, Hattarvík and Kirkja. These are different in the landscape layout, as the village of Hattarvík is located close to an inlet and the village of Kirkja on a downsloping hill. Fugloy was mentioned in the law letter *Hundabrævið*. This letter is part of the law manuscript *Kongsbókin* (1274-1441). This law letter was about the system of organising dog keeping in the Faroe Islands in the Middle Ages. It is estimated by scholars to have been written between 1350 and 1400 (Helgason, 1951, p. 112). In this letter, it was mentioned that in the two infield areas on Fugloy, two dogs were allowed (Helgason, 1951, p. 111). The villages are not specified, but the source is relevant as historical evidence, for the villages have origins going back at least to the medieval period. It is most likely that the settlements on this island have their origin in the Viking Age, as this is evident from structural remains in the villages, objects which have been found during cultivation and shieling remains

in the outfield, at Vatnsdalur and Skarðsvík (Matras, et al., 2003; Jacobsen, 2013). The results from the shieling at Argisbrekka and the lack of information from written sources on the shieling practices in the Faroe Islands can be used as indicators that the shieling activities ended in the early medieval period (Mahler, 2007, p. 412). Even if the shieling remains in Vatnsdalur and Skarðsvík, and the settlement remains found in the villages have not been archaeologically excavated and dated, it leads to the possibility of Viking Age burials on the island.

During the survey in the village of Hattarvík two places were chosen for further geophysical examination, which are at Á Beiti and Døtttheyggjar. As two sites were selected from the same village, there is first a short overview of the landscape in Hattarvík and then more detailed information from the landscape analysis in two separate sections.

The settlement of Hattarvík is divided into two main districts, Uppi í Húsi and Niðri í Húsi, each of which has three ancient farmhouses which have been occupied from one generation to the next (Figure 7.2) (Hansen 1971 p. 118; Zachariasen 1956 p. 2). In the beginning of the settlement in Hattarvík there probably were two main farms, called Uppi í Húsi and Niðri í Húsi, which refers to their elevation in the landscape. Uppi í Húsi is at a higher elevation, which translated means ‘The Upper House’ and the other district, Niðri í Húsi, translates as ‘The Lower House’. These two districts are naturally separated by the river Kellingará, which runs close to the district Uppi í Húsi. East of Niðri í Húsi runs another stream called Húsá. Through district leads the old walking path between the villages Hattarvík and Kirkja. Between the rivers, Kellingará and Húsá, is an area called Á Beiti, which is part of the old infield. On a lower level is a path, which binds the two districts together. The hayfields are not extensive in Hattarvík, as can be seen on Figure 7.2. The first site selected in Hattarvík was at Á Beiti.

7.1.1.1 Á Beiti, Hattarvík, Fugloy (Appendix A14)

As already mentioned, the site Á Beiti is between two districts, Uppi í Húsi and Niðri í Húsi. At a lower elevation there is a path, which connects the two districts. From this path one can also access the landing site. From the site the landscape slopes gradually towards the landing site. While the site Á Beiti is in the middle of the village and connects the districts, it is also a border zone between these two districts, a fact emphasised by one of its local names, Millum Húsa, which means ‘an area between the farms’. Following the Icelandic model, where burials are often on the border between two farms, it was reasoned that this area had the potential to

be a burial site (Friðriksson, 2013). Therefore, it was decided to include this area in a further geophysical examination to study if this area could be a burial ground. In Figure 7.3 and Figure 7.4 are photos of the possible burial site.

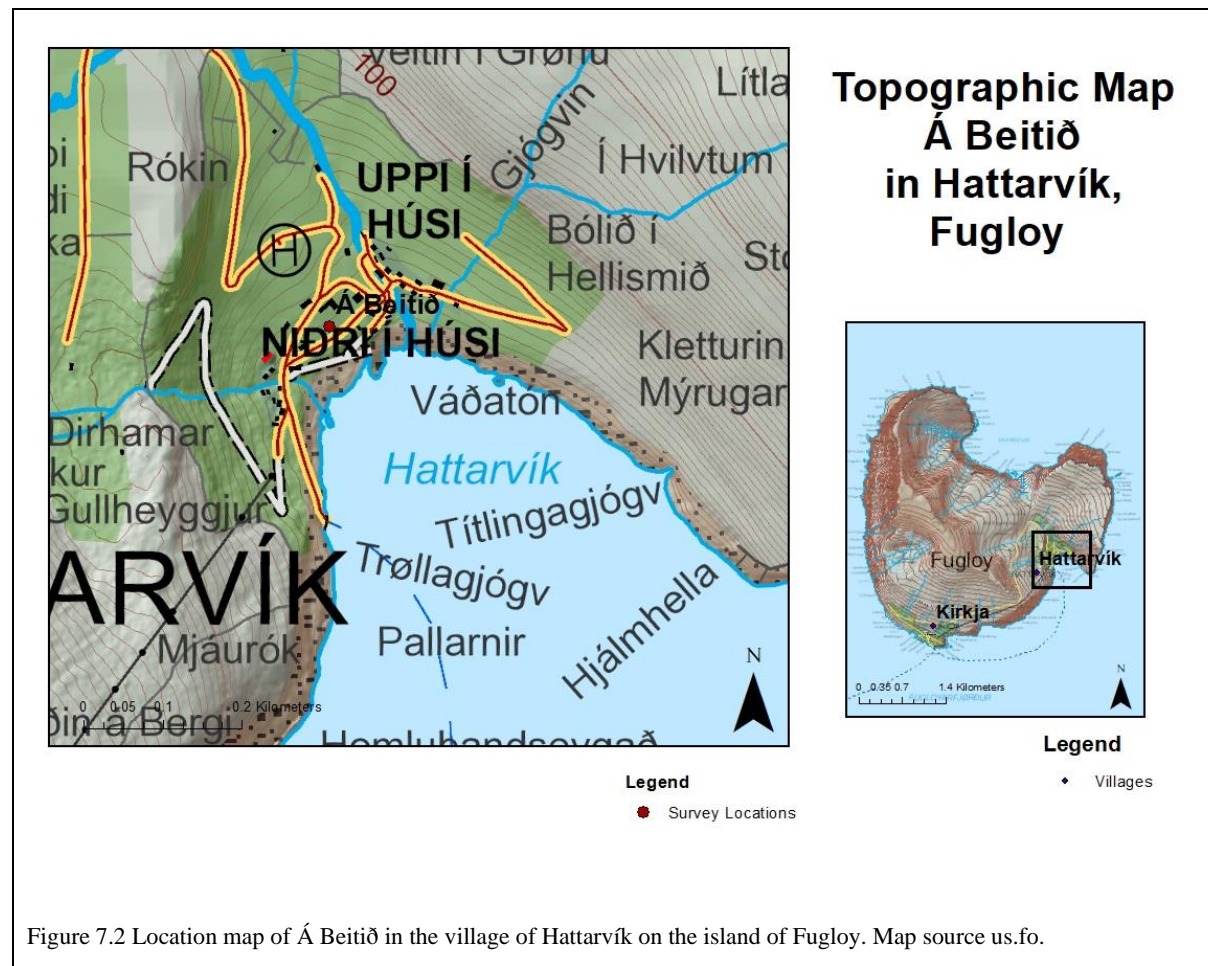




Figure 7.3 Photo of Á Beiti, marked with red. June 2015.

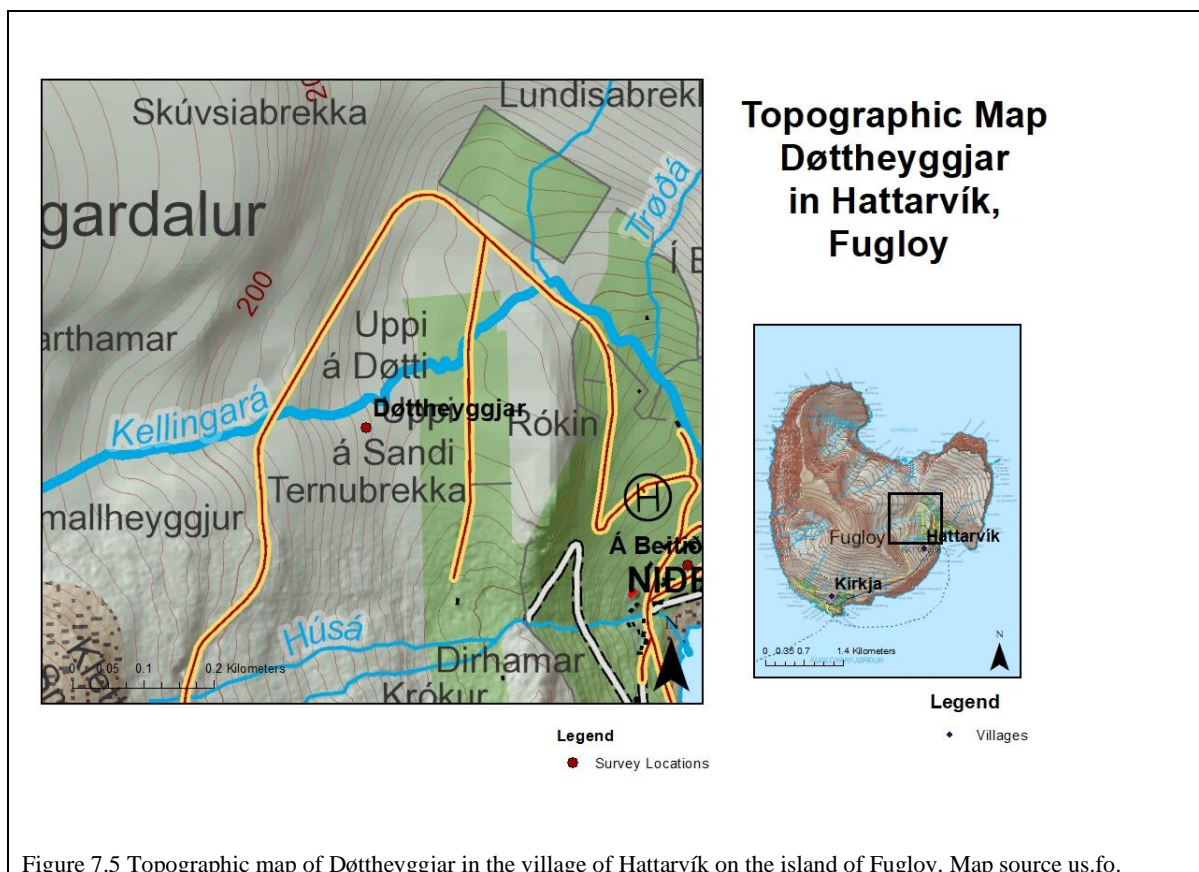


Figure 7.4 Á Beitið with the path at a lower elevation. August 2015.

7.1.1.2 Døttheyggjar, Hattarvík, Fugloy (Appendix A14)

The second location, Døttheyggjar, is in the outfield in a down-sloping hill with three small mounds in a row, south of the river Svartifossur (

Figure 7.5). This area is called Uppi á Sandi. Local folklore describes Døttheyggjar as a burial ground (Miðalberg, 1996, p. 55). The area looks to be affected by soil erosion, probably due to peat-cutting. In this area north and south of the mounds are several oval shaped stone structures, which have been used to store the peat after it was cut and dried. The peat storage structures resemble the Faroese rowboat (own observation). On a lower level towards the east is a peat storage with the name Huldukrógv. “Huldu” refers to elves, which in the Faroes are called *Huldufólk*. Connected to this area are folklore stories about mystical beings and elves, as it was not unusual to see or meet mystical being in this area (Miðalberg, 1996, p. 55). South of the mounds, in the area called Uppi í Króki, is the location of a possible early church site. The site has been disturbed when extending the homefield to hayfields by flattening the fields and drainage digging (Hansen, 1971, p. 109).



From the site there is no visibility towards the village and the farms, as there is a high ridge on a lower level (Figure 7.6). There is open visibility towards the sea in the south and in the east (Figure 7.7). Towards the east, the slope flattens out and rises again towards the hills and mountain Eystfelli in the east.



Figure 7.6 Døttheyggjar, view towards the north. August 2015.



Figure 7.7 View from Døttheyggjar towards the east. August 2015.

In its remote location it resembles the possible burial location Havgrímsgrøvn in the village of Hov on the island of Suðuroy, which was analysed in Chapter 6. From Havgrímsgrøvn and Døtttheyggjar there is no open visibility towards the village, but there is towards the sea.

7.1.2 Á Toftum, Húsadeild, Norð Millum Garðar, Kirkja, Fugloy

From the village of Kirkja, three sites were selected for further analysis. As mentioned above, the village is built on a down-sloping hill. The coast is very steep and is heavily affected by erosion (personal observation through archival research, conversations with people living in the village and field survey). Based on personal landscape observations, likely building remains recorded and conversations with people living in Kirkja, it is feasible that at an early stage in the history of the village of Kirkja there were three main farms clustered in three main areas in the village, marked as settlement remains on

Figure 7.8 (Tjóðsavnið, 1952j, n. Survey 2012; Zachariasen, 1956; Hansen, 1971). With the possibility of these farm areas and their border, it was reasoned that there could be three possible burial locations in the village, at Á Toftum, Húsadeild and Norð Millum Garðar (

Figure 7.8).

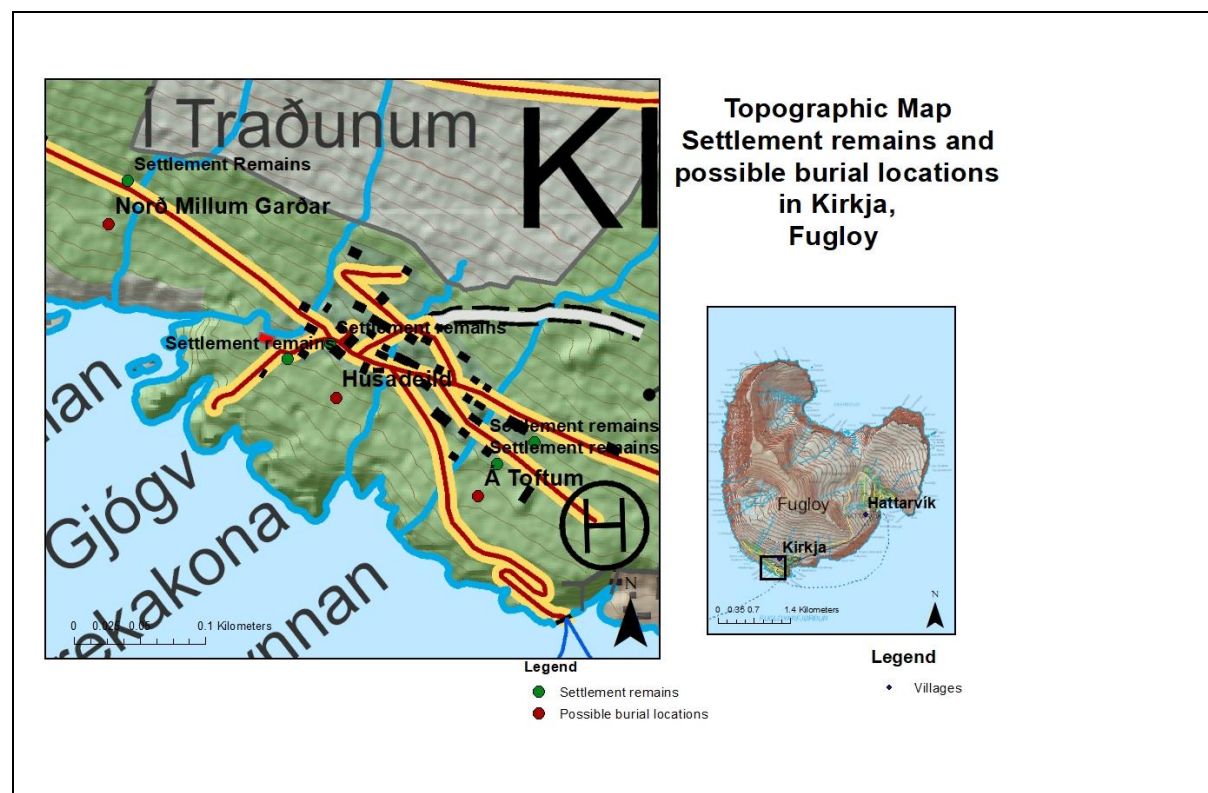
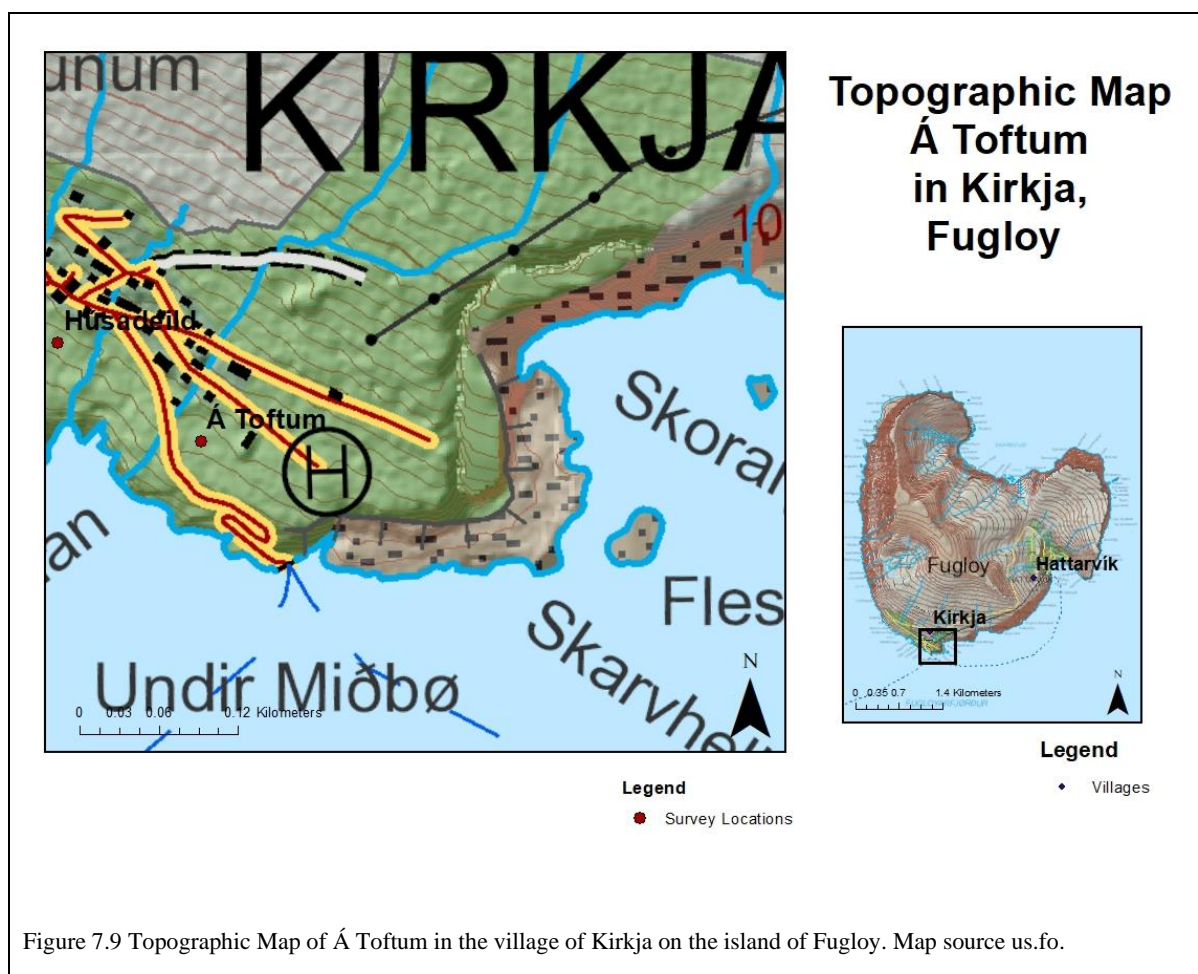


Figure 7.8 Topographic map of settlement remains and possible burial locations in the village of Kirkja on the island of Fugloy. Map source us.fo.

7.1.2.1 Á Toftum, Kirkja, Fugloy (Appendix A14)

The first possible burial site is in the eastern part of the village at an area called Á Toftum, translated ‘ruin’. This place name indicates a place with archaeological and cultural remains (Figure 7.9).



While ploughing and digging drainage ditches for a hayfield, the farmer found stone foundations (the year is not certain). As pointed out in Chapter 5, it is not unusual to find archaeological remains during cultivation, and in the village of Kirkja several structural remains have been found during ploughing and digging drainage ditches for the hayfield cultivation. These remains in Kirkja have been recorded by Símun Hansen (1971) and Louis Zachariassen (1956) by orally submitted accounts from people who observed the remains during ploughing, levelling the field for mechanical work, digging drainage ditches and construction work.

At a higher elevation at Á Toftum, a wall from a possible structure was registered in 2012 as the helicopter platform was under reconstruction (Tjóðsavnið Kirkja 00:95). The site was not excavated, but artefacts were found which can be dated typologically to the early medieval or

late Viking Age. Close to the remains found at Á Toftum is a path leading towards the landing site in Skoragjógv. West of Á Toftum runs a stream called Beitsá.



Figure 7.10 Á Toftum view towards the north. September 2016.



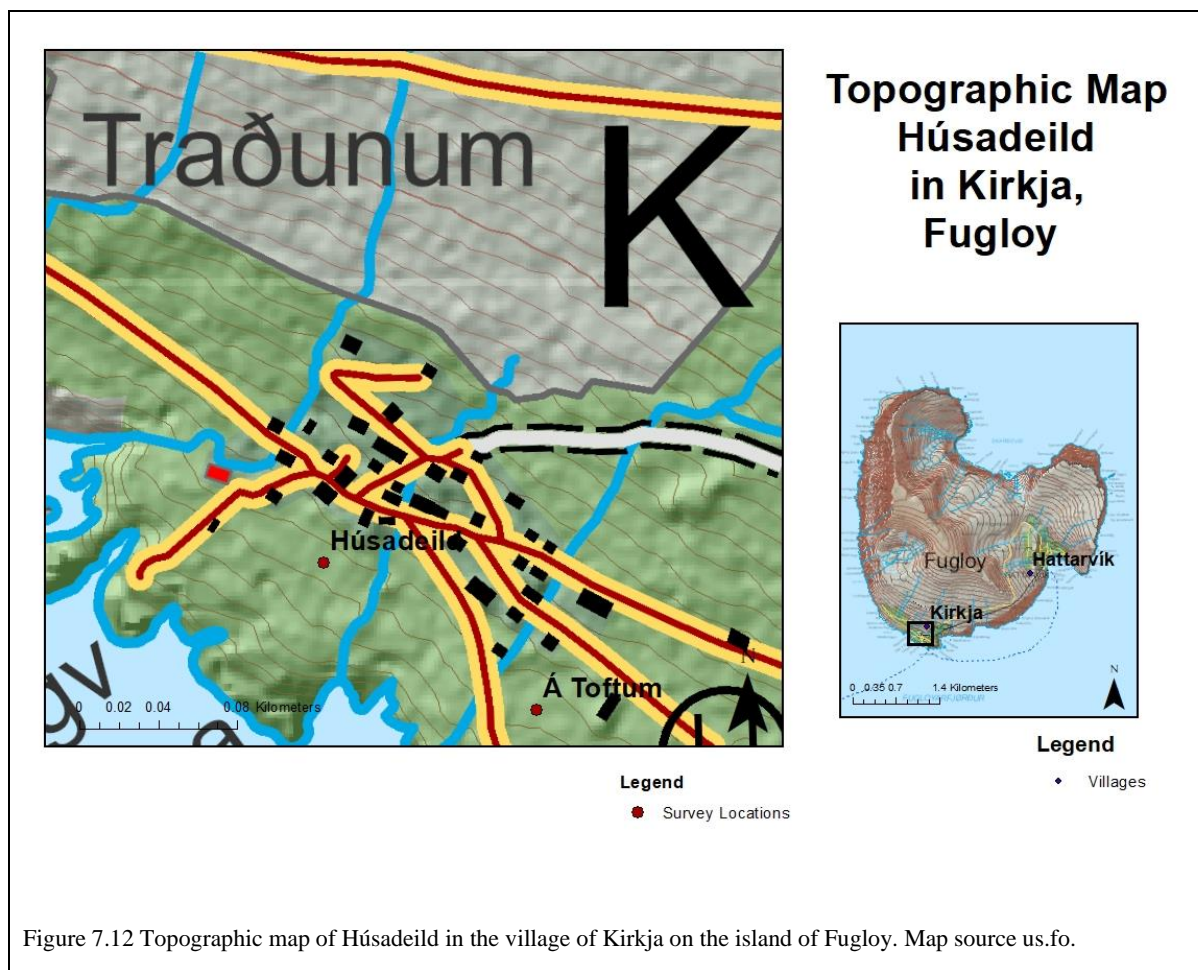
Figure 7.11 Á Toftum view towards the east. August 2015.

The view from the site is open towards the sea and island of Svínøy in the south. The visibility towards east and west is partly limited by a shoulder of land (Figure 7.11). Towards the north, the land is rising (Figure 7.10).

Centred on the reconnaissance of this area, with both formerly recorded structural remains and newly recorded remains, it was decided to target parts of this district to conduct geophysical examinations. It was difficult to estimate where a possible settlement boundary would be, because of the ongoing erosion of the coastline. As mentioned above, a path leading towards the landing side is close to the structural remains, and therefore it was decided that an area close to this path should be the focus of a geophysical survey.

7.1.2.2 Húsadeild, Kirkja, Fugloy (Appendix A14)

The site Húsadeild is downhill from the possible burial site Á Vegginum (Figure 7.12). A landscape survey was conducted for this possible cemetery site, described in Chapter 6, section 6.1.8. Since a landscape survey was conducted at this site, the survey description for the Húsadeild is succinct.



The site Á Vegginum is covered with asphalt and has been disturbed by construction and maintenance work. It was therefore decided to focus on the area of Húsadeild, instead of Á Vegginum. There are no indicators on the surface of possible burials, such as small mounds and cairns. The view from the Húsadeild is open towards the sea and the island of Svínø. The view towards the sea to the east and west is limited by a shoulder of land (Figure 7.14). There is good visibility towards the village towards the east, west, and north. Towards the north, the hill is rising (Figure 7.13). There is easy access to the site from the village and landing sites at Niðri á Hellu and Skoragjógv.



Figure 7.13 Húsadeild seen towards the north, marked with red. August 2018.



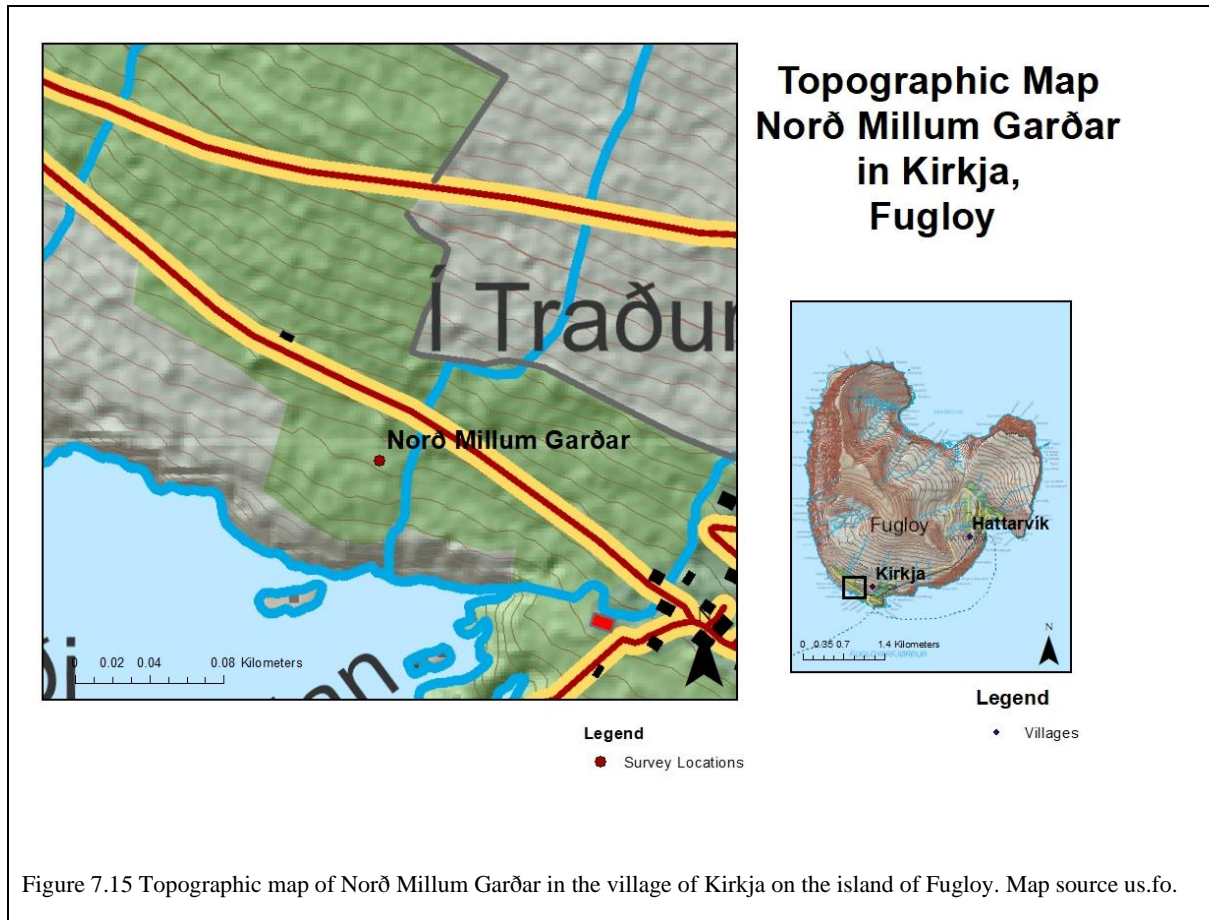
Figure 7.14 Húsadeild seen towards the west. August 2016.

It is possible that this area was used as a shared burial ground for the farms east and west in the village. These considerations are based on accounts of building remains, which have been found towards east and west, natural boundaries with streams and a path which runs at the site Á Vegginum, as already mentioned in Chapter 6, Section 6.1.8. This site is different from the other sites selected for further geophysical analysis in the village of Kirkja, because it is situated in the middle of the village. On the other hand, the location close to ruins and in the middle of the village resembles the burial location Frammi Í Garði, in the village of Svínø, discussed in Chapter 6, Section 6.1.5.

7.1.2.3 Norð Millum Garðar, Kirkja, Fugloy (Appendix A14)

The site Norð Millum Garðar was mentioned in Chapter 5 in connection with Norði Á Rygginum, in Section 5.2.1.3. Norð Millum Garðar translated means ‘North between the dried stone walls’ (Figure 7.15).

At Norði Á Rygginum there was evidence of a settlement, which due to road building and ploughing for hayfields was levelled prior to c.1936 (Zachariasen, 1956, p. 2). Left today is the stockyard and the platform for the midden. In local folklore, people were buried in this district and the districts Norð Millum Garðar and Norði Á Rygginum was settled. The location of possible burials is not specified and are not visible in the landscape.



From the site towards the south there is a full view towards the sea and the islands of Svínøy and Viðoy (Figure 7.16). The view towards the east and west is limited by the sloping counters in the landscape, as the landscape gets steeper towards the seashore (Figure 7.17). The view towards the north is limited by the rising hill. The view towards the village is open and there is easy access to the site from the village (Figure 7.17).

This is the third site selected for further examination in the village of Kirkja. It was decided to include this site, with the possibility to locate burials east of the settlement on the possible border of the farm towards the village. To locate the border, it was decided to include a small field east of the stream, Beitisá. It was hoped that a possible burial site would be located on the western side of the stream.



Figure 7.16 Stockyard and midden, view towards the south west. June 2015.



Figure 7.17 Norð Millum Garðar, view towards the east. June 2015.

7.1.3 Flatabakki, Viðareiði, Viðoy (Appendix A14)

The site Flatabakki is in the village of Viðareiði on the island of Viðoy (Figure 7.18). The site Flatabakkki was discussed in Chapter 5 in Section 5.3.1.2. and linked to local folklore. In local folklore, the site at Flatabakka used to be a cemetery (Informant 3, Appendix A8).

The landscape in Viðareiði is characterised by its isthmus, with two landing sites on each side of the isthmus. The settlement's location is therefore quite different in its layout and in its landscape features compared to the villages of Hattarvík and Kirkja. The villages in Kirkja and Hattarvík are on a small island with a steep coastline. The landscape in Viðareiði is more levelled. In this levelled landscape the settlements have until recently been scattered in the village, although the island has a steep coastline north and south of the village. The steep coastline is characteristic for the northern islands. In this open and levelled landscape, the hayfields are more extensive.

The site Flatabakki is in the western part of the village, close to the seashore (Figure 7.20). The site is on a levelled area, but slopes gradually towards the south (Figure 7.19). Towards the east is a depression, which is called the valley 'Dalurin'. It is not a deep and large valley, more like a small decline or recession in the landscape. Towards the west there is open visibility towards the sea. It is not possible to access the site from the west as there is a steep rockface on the edge of the site. Towards the north is the gorge Døtlisgjógv and the mountain Villingardalsfjall. The mountain limits the view towards the north.

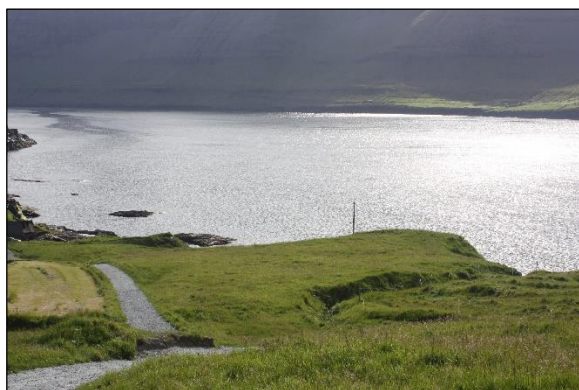
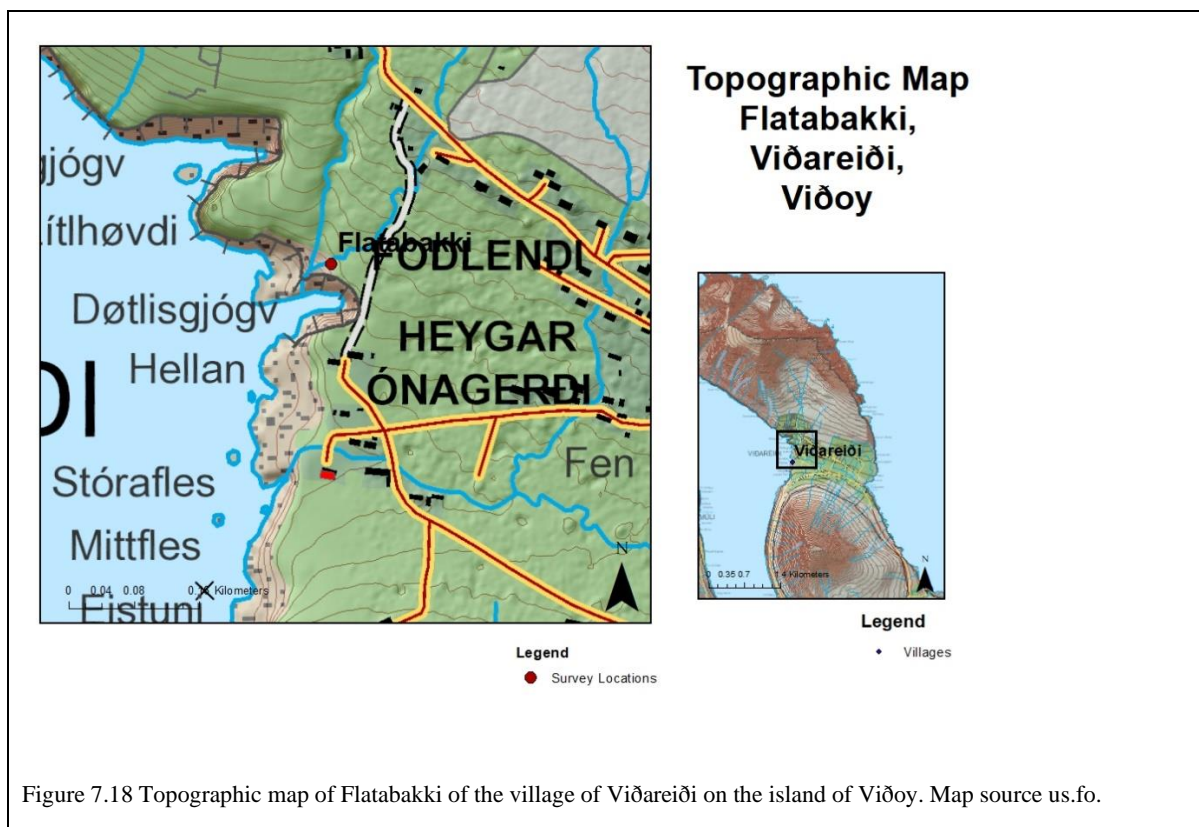


Figure 7.19 View towards Flatabakki southwest. August 2015.



Figure 7.20 View from Flatabakki southwards. In the background Brekkumørk farm, the church and Ónagerði. April 2018.

Towards the north is the district Fodlindi and Uppi við Garð. On the path to Fodlindi is a small tussock called Hvílingartúgva, which mean the resting tussock, which was used to rest on the path to the district Fodlindi. Towards the south, the view is limited by the mountain

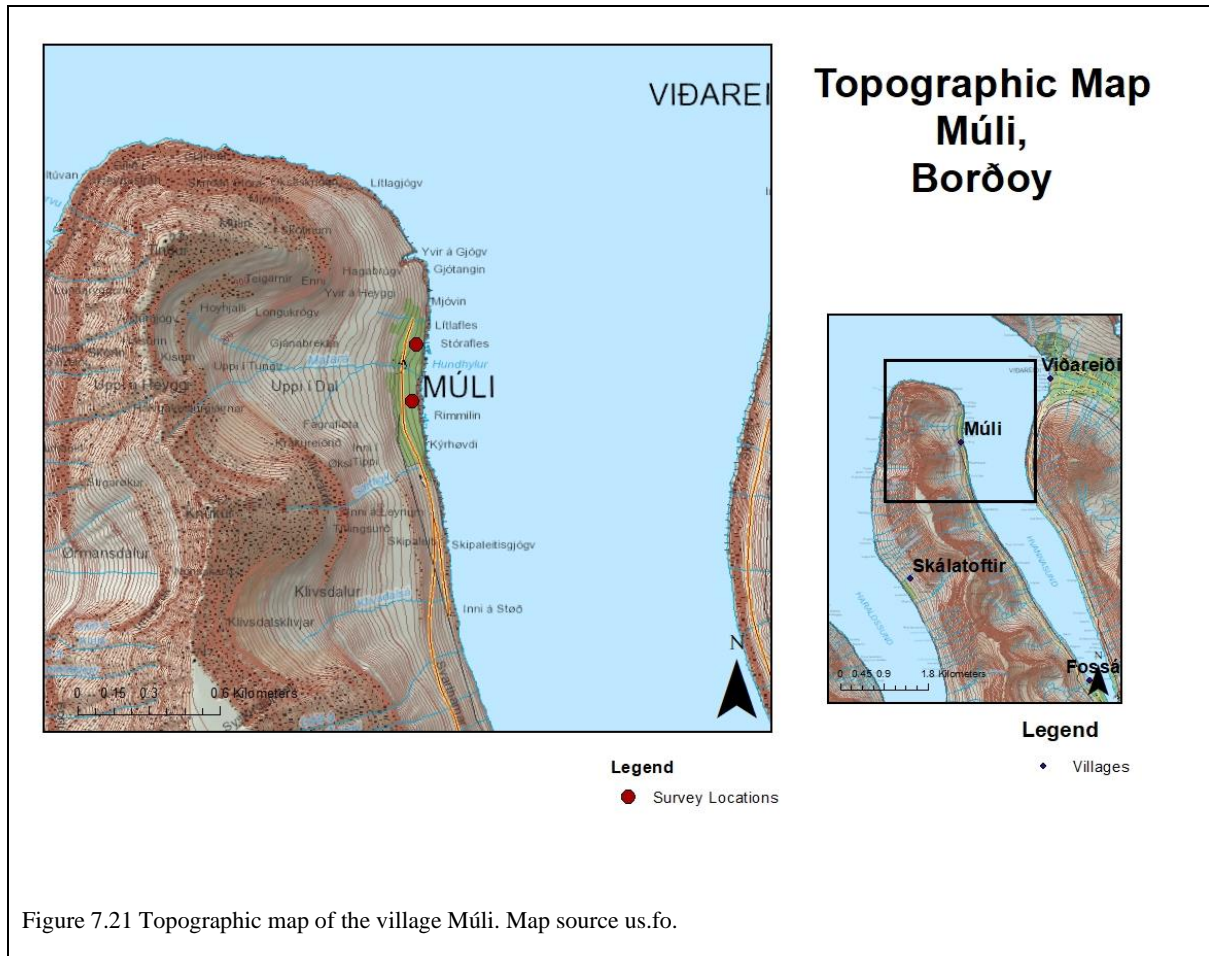
Malingsfjall. Towards the south is also the farm at Brekkumørk, the former farm Ónagerði and the church Viðareiðis Kirkja. At Brekkumørk, close to edge of the field building, building remains have been found. It is possible that this is part of the first settlements in Viðareiði. From the site there is a good view towards the farm at Brekkumørk. Towards north is the gorge Døtisgjógv and the stream Fodlinsáin, and further north is the river Bólsá. These could have acted as field boundaries. Towards the east is the path Bakkavegurin, which translates as “the Hill Path”.

The site is on the edge of the hayfield and the grazing area for sheep. It is situated between the districts Uppi Við Garð and Fodlindi and the district at Á Bakkanum Brekkumørk and Ónagerði. Since the site is between two districts and close to a communication route, it is possible that this site was a burial site in the past. It fulfils the criteria in the Icelandic model of being close to a border and close to a path/communication route. Additionally, it is possible that through the social memory of the people living in Viðareiði, the site location has been kept as a burial location.

7.1.4 Norðari Múla and Sunnari Múla, Múli, Borðoy (Appendix A14)

The village of Múli is situated remotely on the island of Borðoy (Figure 7.21). It was not possible to drive to Múli until 1988. The road probably came a little bit too late, as the village of Múli was abandoned in 1992 (Figure 7.22). Today there are no permanent residents, but house owners and farmers regularly tend to the sheep and houses in Múli. There are only a few houses in Múli and in 1801 there were probably only two houses in Múli situated northwards of the river Mataráin (Hansen, 1975, p. 332). Múli was mentioned in the historical law letter *Hundabrævið*, mentioned above in section 7.1.1 (Helgason, 1951, p. 111). It is therefore likely that Múli was settled by the end of the Viking Age.

There was no record of human bones or Viking Age artefacts having been found during construction or cultivation in Múli (Dahl Archive Green Folder Múla 00:87). From the landscape analysis, it was decided to focus on two areas in the village of Múli, as the areas close to the village are not disturbed by modern construction work or buildings. The first site is north of the village, in the infield, and the second site is south of the village.



The land below the village of Múli is very steep and therefore the landing place is south of the village, where the terrain is less steep. On either side of the stream Mataráin the old infield was divided into two equal parts. Former residents believe that the division of the homefield was kept until around 1900 (Hansen, 1975, n. plate XXIX). Separating the infield and the outfield is a dry stone wall. In the middle of the village are stone buildings and storehouses and the sheepfold is close to the seashore (Figure 7.23). A small landing site is south of the village at Inni á Støð (Hansen, 1975, n. plate XXVII). The old path is in the middle of the village and leads northwards to the north part of the village and on to the deserted village of Skálatofir. As mentioned in Chapter 5, a possible chapel or early church site was in the village, which used to be at “Gomlu Hús” (Informant 15). There is no known churchyard or cemetery in Múli. As long as people remember, the churchyard in Viðareiði has been used.



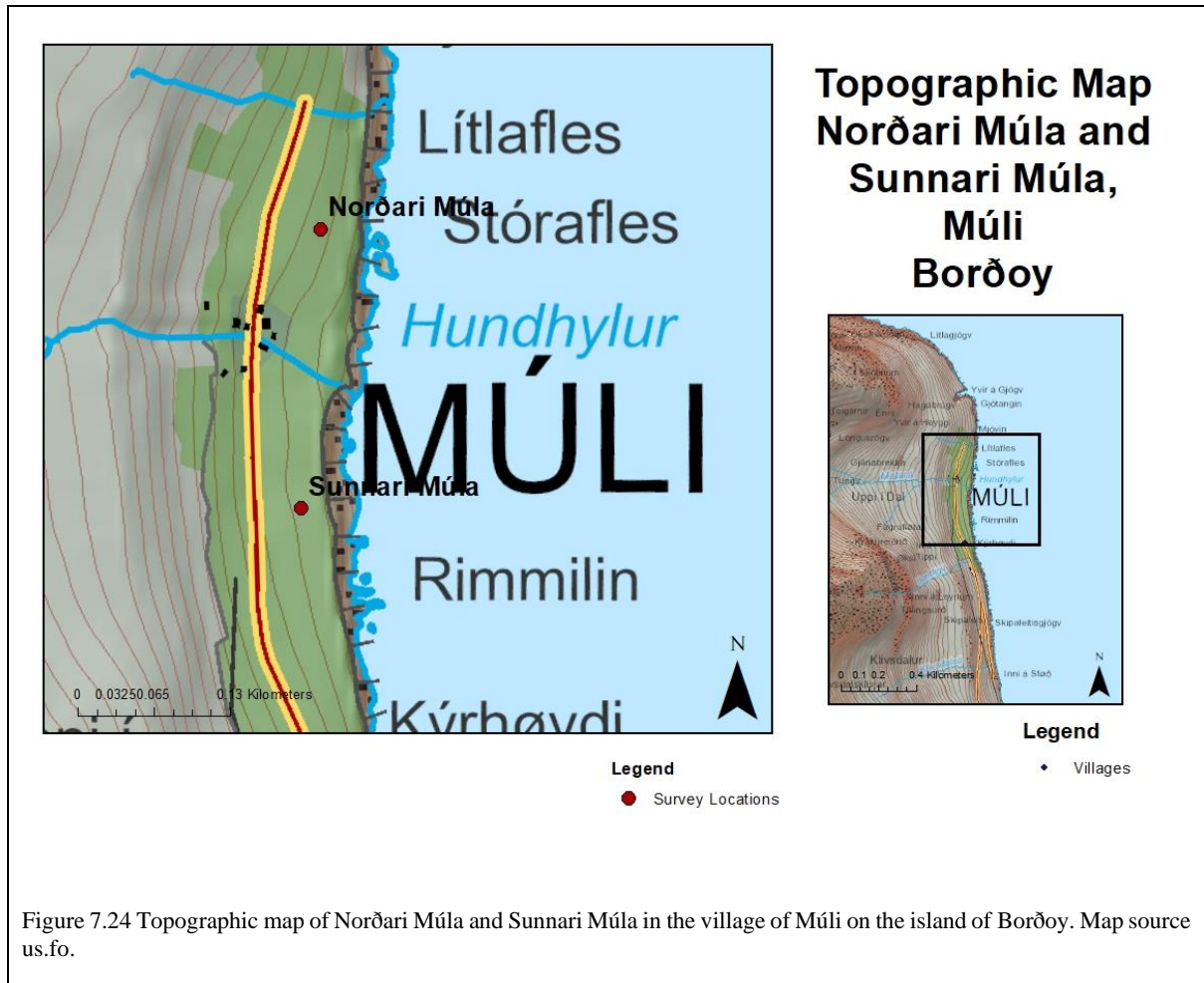
Figure 7.22 Múli, seen towards the west. August 2015.



Figure 7.23 Sheep pen, Múli. Seen towards the east. August 2015.

7.1.4.1 Norðari Múla, Múli, Borðoy (Appendix A14)

This site is north of the river Matará and the houses in the village Múli (Figure 7.24). It is part of an infield area for hay production. Access to the site is reached through the path from the village, which also leads to the village Skálatofthir. East of the site the field slopes downwards towards the edge of infield. At the edge of the infield, is a steep rockface. In the west, the fields rise towards the outfield. In the outfield is a valley called Uppi í Dal, which rises sharply in the direction of the mountain Tindur in the north and Uppi á Heyggi towards the south. These mountains limit the view from the site westwards. The view is open towards the sea in the east and the village of Viðareiði and the island of Viðoy. From the site there is an open view southwards to the village of Hvannasund (Figure 7.25). In a northwards direction, there is an open view towards the sea and the northern part of Viðoy.



The site has been disturbed by ploughing the field and digging drainage ditches for a hayfield. Since no modern construction work with large machinery has levelled the field, it was considered possible to locate a burial in this area. This site has the potential to be a possible burial site as it is close to a path, and close to the village and a possible early chapel or church site.

7.1.4.2 Sunnari Múla, Múli, Borðoy (Appendix A14)

The second site in Múli is southwards to the village of Depil and the river Mataráin (Figure 7.24). The landscape setting is reminiscent of the site north of Múli, as the view east, west, north and south is very similar. The view towards the west is limited by the mountain and towards the east there is a view towards the sea and the island of Viðoy and its villages Viðareiði and Hvannasund in a southward direction. Northwards the view is open towards the village of Viðareiði, a part of the island Viðoy and the sea (Figure 7.26). The access to the site

is easy by the path, which leads to the villages to the south, namely Fossá, Norðdepil and Depil. Fossá and Norðdepil were settled in 1866 and 1867 (Hansen, 1975, p. 278). Through the path the movement to and from the site is easy. The movement and access to and from the east is limited by the steep coastline. Close to the steep coastline, at the end of the infield, is a sheep pen which in local folklore was built by Andrass í Múla, in c. 1584 (Figure 7.23) (Hansen, 1975, n. plate XXVII). Westwards from the site is the outfield, whose boundary is made of a dry stone wall. The site itself has been disturbed by digging drainage ditches for a hayfield, which is a quite common disturbance observed during field surveys in the northern islands.



Figure 7.25 Northern part of Múli seen towards the southeast. August 2015.

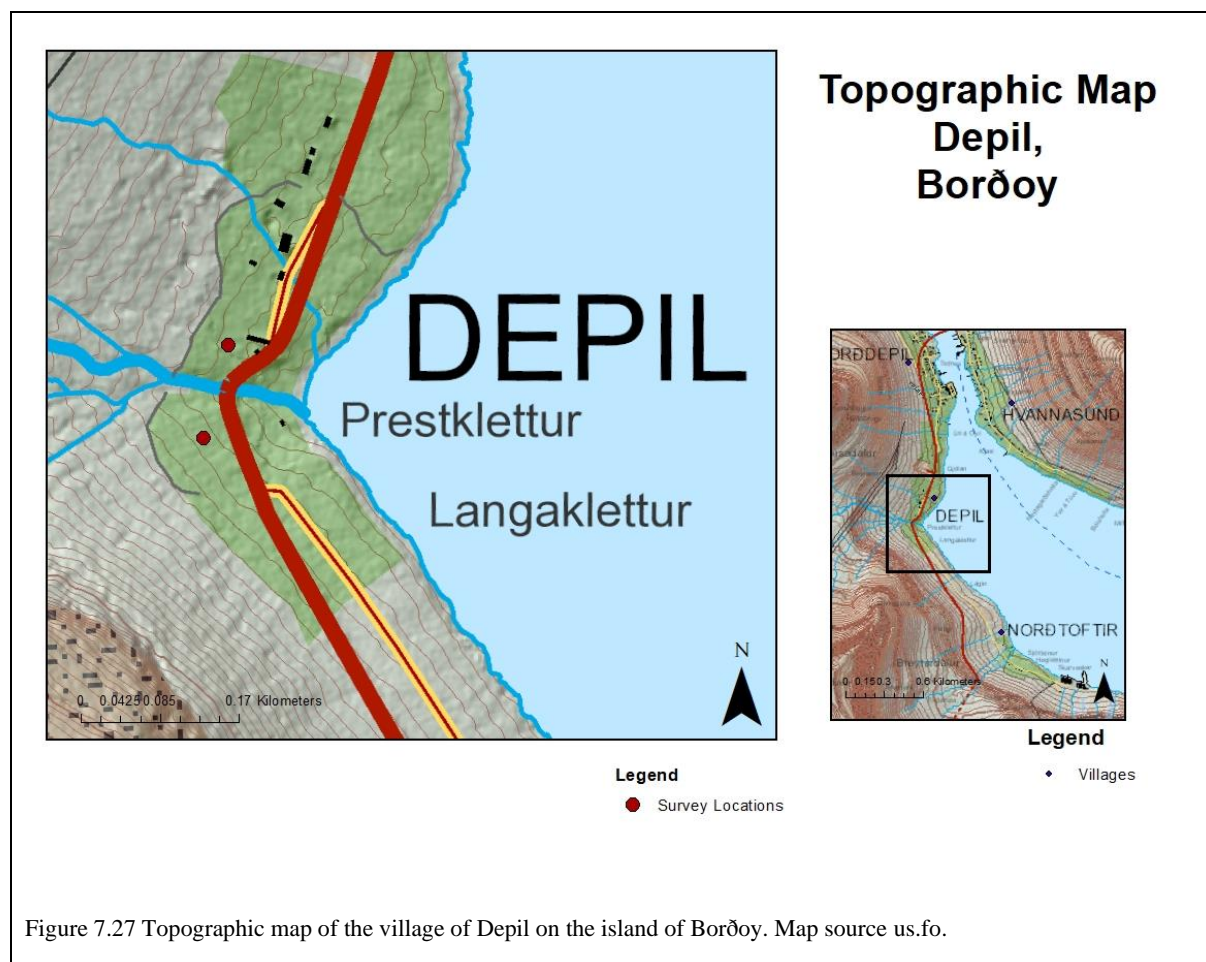


Figure 7.26 Southern part of Múlai seen towards the north. March 2016.

During the survey it was thought possible that a potential burial site could be located close to the path leading from the village. On the path between Múla and the villages to the south, Fossá and Norðdepil, there were no signs of possible burials in the landscape. The landscape is steep with many large boulders and stones. Therefore, it was considered during the field survey that a burial site could be located nearer to the village and close to the path leading to the village. The burial site would then be close to a communication road, which is seen in the village of Tjørnuvík at the burial site Yviri í Trøð and in burial trends in Iceland.

7.1.5 Norðari Depil and Sunnari Depil, Depil, Borðoy

Depil is a small village situated close to the seashore, with a small landing place (Figure 7.27). At the seashore there are remains of boathouses and a sheep pen (Figure 7.29). In the village there is a farmhouse, whose plot might date back to medieval times. The farmhouse is a scheduled monument today and was probably built in c. 1815 (Hansen, 1975, n. plate XX). In the infield area and close to the dry stone boundary wall between the infield and the outfield, there are several archaeological remains, including the possible remains of an early church site and remains of a possible leprosy house (Hansen, 1975, nn. XX–XXII). Close to the farmhouse runs the stream Depilsá and there are the foundation remains of water mills (hardly visible today).



It is not certain when Depil was settled, but the village was mentioned in a land register from 1584. The land register from 1584 is the oldest land register in the Faroe Islands. It is called

Jarðarbókin 1584, which is a registration of the Crown lands, not private landownership (Jarðarbókin, 1584; Thorsteinsson, 2012, p. 4). Jens Christian Svabo, a scholar in the field of linguistics and ethnography, mentioned Depil in a land survey in 1781 concerning how much land belonged to the village (Svabo, 1966, 1970, 1976, p. 380).

With the observations from the field survey, and the knowledge of structural remains in Depil and landscape layout, it was decided to include two areas in Depil for further study. In the two sections below, the results from the survey, including the view from the sites and their landscape location, is tied to the reasoning of the location of burials close to paths and farms, as mentioned in Chapter 6.



Figure 7.28 View towards Depil from the sea, seen towards the west. October 2019.

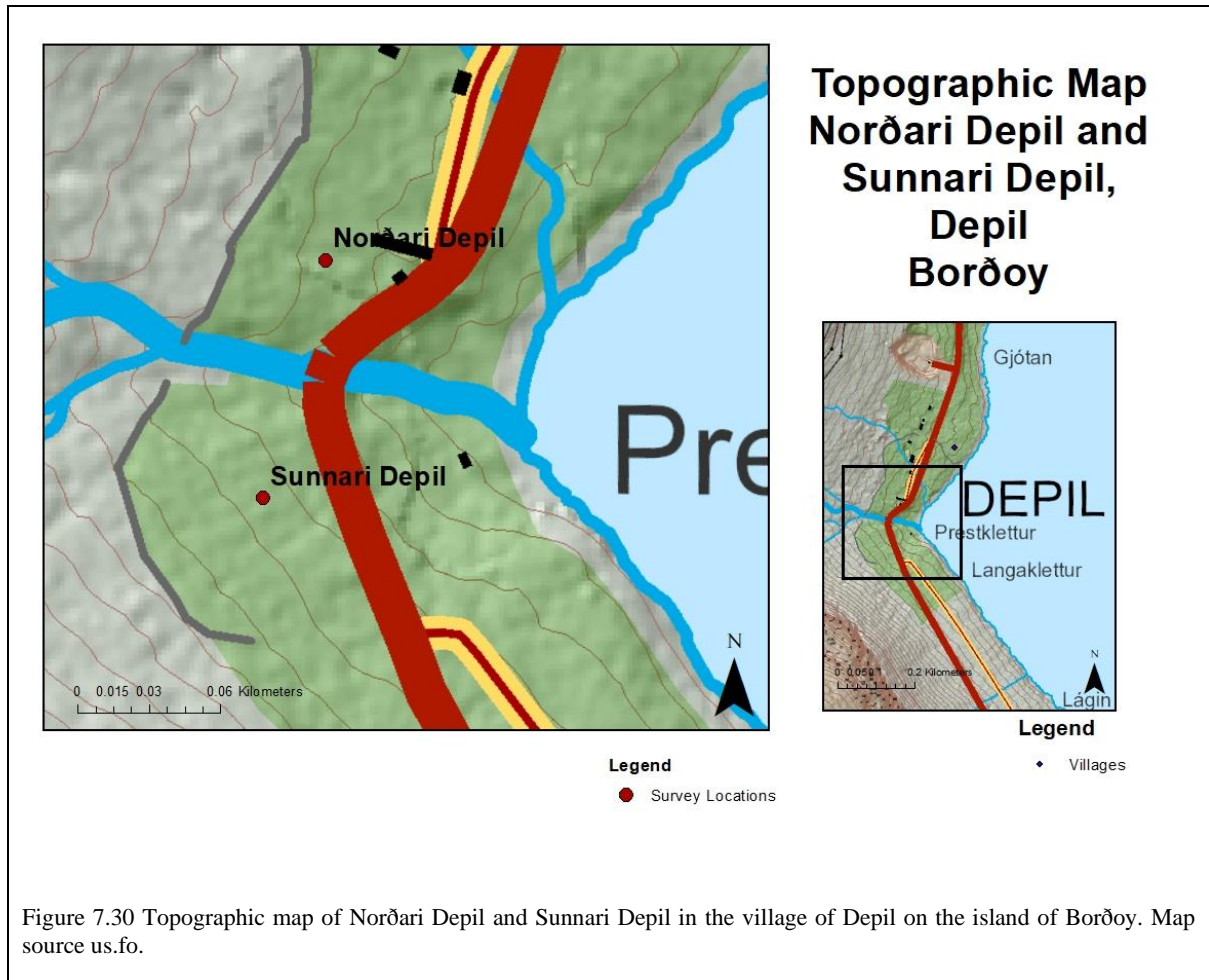


Figure 7.29 Photo of the inlet at Depil, seen in a northwesterly direction. May 2017.

The areas selected were south of the old farmhouse in the infield, and an outfield area south of the stream Depilsá.

7.1.5.1 Norðari Depil, Depil, Borðoy (Appendix A14)

The first site is situated south of the farmhouse and the river Mataráin (Figure 7.30). Between the farmhouse and the site, ruins have been observed in the past (Hansen, 1975, n. plate XXI).



During the landscape survey these were not visible. In the village south of the Mataráin there used to be enchanted stones which in local folklore were inhabited by elves. These are today lost due to modern construction and road building (Hansen, 1975, p. 280). The field slopes down eastwards to the seashore with a small inlet (Figure 7.31). At the inlet, there are two boathouses on the norther side of the river Depilá, and south of the river is a ruin of a sheepfold, of which the remains are almost all eroded away.



Figure 7.31 South of the farmhouse at Depil, view towards the north west. August 2015.



Figure 7.32 Photo of possible early chapel site, view towards the south. August 2015.

There is good access from the landing site towards the site and the farmhouse (Figure 7.29). The visibility eastwards from the site and the farmhouse to the seashore and the sea is open. From the site there is also a view towards the island of Svínøy. Towards the east is a path leading to the small village of Norðtoftir. The path is on a lower level.

Adjacent to the site is the location of a possible early church site, today built into the dry stone wall field boundary (Figure 7.32). South of the possible early church site, small stones were situated in a line. On the surface, these were not part of a structure and most likely these stones are leftover from building the outfield boundary. In the site itself, there is a low-levelled grass-grown mound with stones in it. On a higher-level, earthworks had been done to make a small terrace for the hayfields. Westwards, the valley increases/slopes up abruptly towards the rock ledges Snæhjalli and the even steeper Lokkarøkurnar and the mountain Lokki (height 754m). The steep outfield limits the access to the site from the west. Northwards is the path which leads to the recently settled village of Norðdepil, Fossá and the abovementioned village of Múla. The view is open towards the eastern part of the village of Hvannasund and partly the sea. The area is levelled and therefore the access and movement to and from the site northwards is easy. The view southwards is limited by the hills and the mountain Depilsknúkur.

With the knowledge of a small, low-levelled mound on the site itself, the possible early church site, the ruins north of the site and the location of the farmhouse it was thought possible that this site could be a location for potential burials.

7.1.5.2 Sunnari Depil, Depil, Borðoy (Appendix A14)

The second site is south of the river Depilsáin (Figure 7.30). It is easy to access the site from the east, from the path, the seashore and the inlet in Depil. The site is sloping downhill towards the inlet in the east (Figure 7.33). From the north, access is limited by the river Depilsáin. In the river there used to be mills, which today are lost; only part of their foundations is visible. They were used for grinding grain into flour. Today, a modern road, which is on a lower level than the site, makes it easy to access the site from the north. The visibility towards the east is open towards the sea and the western part of the island of Svínø. Northwards there is good visibility to the eastern part of the village of Hvannasund and partly the sea. The access to the site from the west and the south is limited by the outfield and the surrounding mountains. Westwards, the valley increases/slopes up abruptly towards the rock ledges Snæhjalli and the even steeper Lokkarøkurnar and the mountain Lokki (height 754m). The view southward is limited by the hills and mountain Depilsknúkur. These natural features limit the movement to and from the site. Therefore, the access, movement, and visibility to and from the site is best in a northwards and eastwards direction.



Figure 7.33 Sunnari Depil, south of the river Depilsáin, seen towards the west. August 2015.

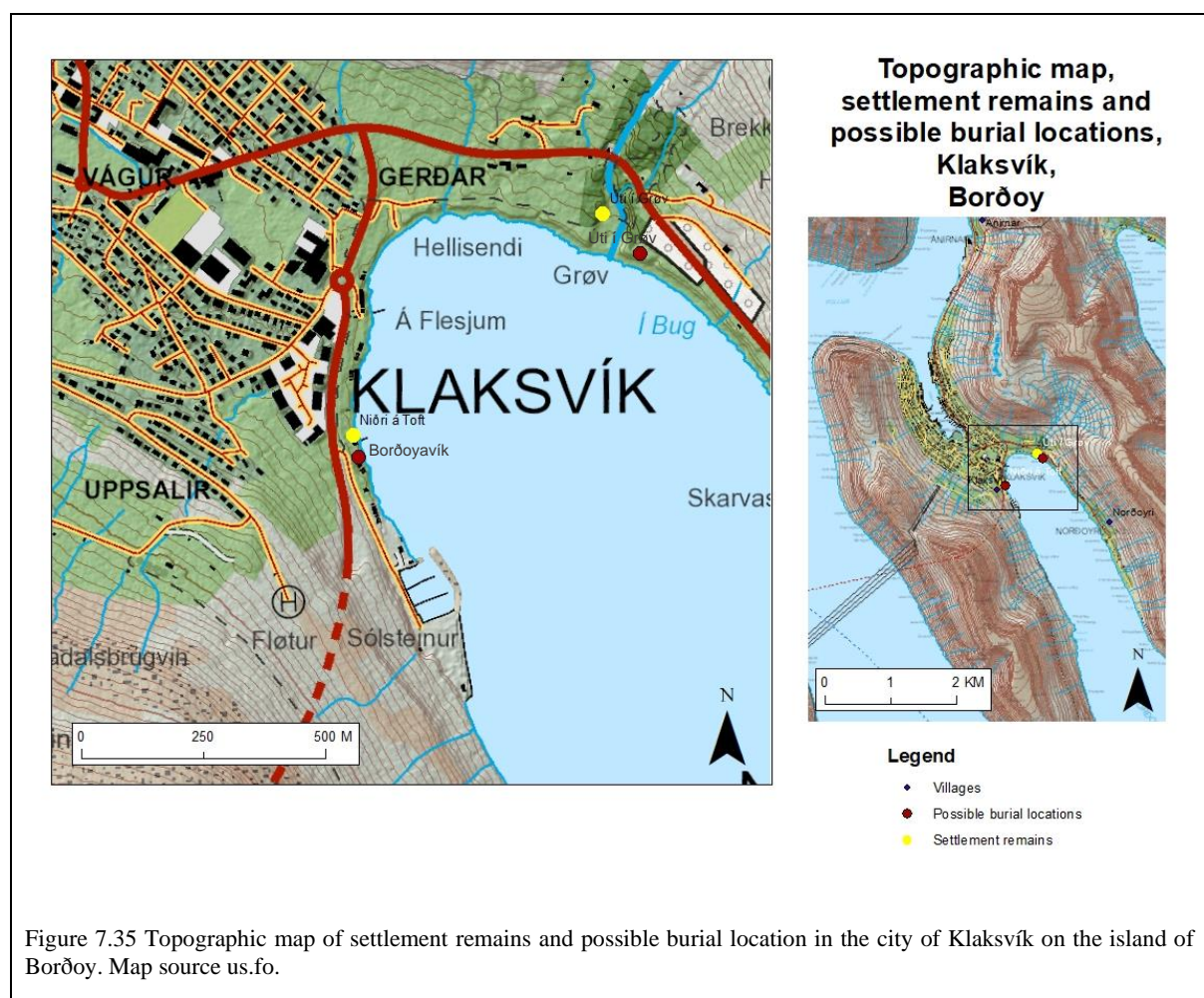


Figure 7.34 Remains of the sheep pen, seen towards the west. August 2015.

The main characteristics of this site are its location close to the river Depilsáin, a walking path, and the seashore with a very much eroded sheep pen (Figure 7.34). These landscape features are similar to the landscape setting of the burial site Yviri í Trøð, in the village of Tjørnuvík. Therefore, it was considered that this site could be a location for Viking Age burials.

7.1.6 Borðoyavík and Úti í Grøv, Klaksvík, Borðoy

The largest settlement in the northern islands today is the city of Klaksvík. Today the landscape around Klaksvík is highly populated, but in the past the settlement was dispersed, focused closed to the seashore. There are two natural landing sites in Klaksvík, which are the inlets at Borðoyavík on the eastern side, and at Vági on the western side. The settlements have probably been focused around these two inlets, but there is only clear archaeological evidence for Viking Age settlements at Borðoyavík at the site Niðri á Toft (Figure 7.35) (Dahl and Thorsteinsson, 1969).



Further Viking Age settlement remains are located at Úti í Grøv, on the northern arm of the inlet Borðoyavík, where a longhouse is situated close to the river, Gravará, with grass-covered walls with one large building and a smaller extension of the building (building inner measurements 11.75x4m, extension 4.5x2.75m) (Thorsteinsson, 1978, p. 60; Arge, 1986, n.

Appendix 1 p. 29 fig. 19). The long axis of the rectangular building is oriented in a north-south direction. The building remains have not been dated, but its building shape with curved walls can typologically be dated to a Viking Age longhouse (Arge, 1986, n. Appendix 1 p. 29 fig. 19).

As most of the area around the inlet at Vági today is settled, disturbed by modern construction work and levelled, it was estimated that it would be difficult to find evidence of possible burial sites in this part of the city. It is however important that, until 1866, the old churchyard in Klaksvík was located at Vági (Hansen, 1981, p. 193). Therefore, it is possible that this churchyard and the area adjacent to the churchyard, today used as a road network and covered with asphalt, holds the possibility to be the location of Viking Age burials. This scenario would be similar to the landscape burial setting at the site Við Kirkjugarð in the village of Sandur. During construction work and road buildings, there have been no reports of finds of human remains, coffins or artefacts. If there have been findings, these have not been reported to the National Museum. It was therefore decided to focus the research close to the Viking Age settlements at Niðri á Toft and Úti í Grøv (Figure 7.36, Figure 7.37). The first landscape analysis is close to the site at Niðri á Toft.



Figure 7.36 Landscape surroundings at the Viking Age settlement Niðri á Toft. Excavation encircled red. September 2018.



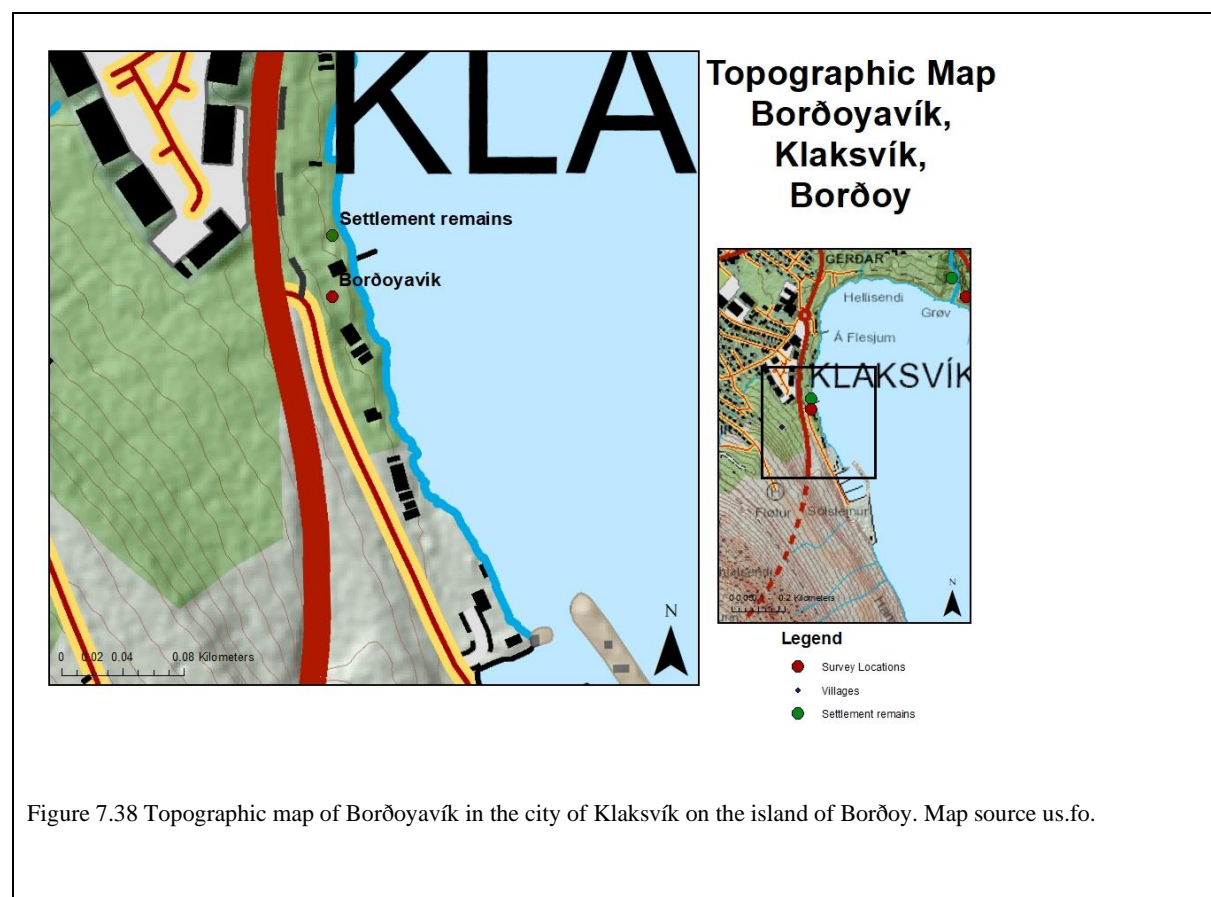
Figure 7.37 Landscape surroundings at the likely Viking Age settlement Úti í Grøv. Building marked with a red circle. September 2018.

7.1.6.1 Borðoyavík, Klaksvík, Borðoy (Appendix A14)

The site in Borðoyavík is located close to the inlet on a narrow strip of field, which slopes slowly downwards towards the inlet, eastwards (Figure 7.38). There is easy access to the site

from the inlet and movement to and from the site is easy from the east. The view is good towards the inlet and the sea. There is also a good view in the direction of Úti í Grøv (Figure 7.39). The movement from the west is also easy, from the district of Uppsálar to Borðoyarvík. On a further elevation towards the west, the hill rises towards the outfield. The road construction has probably filled part of the area west of the site with construction remains and there the hill rises abruptly. Northwards, there is easy access from the site to the settlement district at Gerðabø.

North of the possible burial site is the Viking Age settlement Niðri á Toft. The view is open to the infield and the path leading to the village Norðoyri. Southwards, the access is open through the seashore and to the outfield. The view is limited by the slowly rising hill, but movement to and from the site is effortless as it is not steep. Along the shore there are many modern boathouses (Figure 7.40).



Due to the construction work of the road and drainage the site has been disturbed by landfill and drainage ditches. In the 1950s a young boy found a possible human bone on the seashore, about 150m south of the settlement Niðri á Toft. The bone has not yet been properly analysed. There was no clear evidence of a burial on the surface, but since this site is close to a Viking Age settlement and the seashore, and also in an area where a possible human bone was found, it was thought that this could be a potential burial location.



Figure 7.39 View of the site seen towards/from the north east. August 2015.



Figure 7.40 The seashore at Borðoyavík, seen towards the north. August 2015.

7.1.6.2 Úti í Grøv, Klaksvík, Borðoy (Appendix A14)

The site Úti í Grøv is east of the town of Klaksvík. The district in which the site is located is called Úti í Grøv (Figure 7.41). Downhill and west of the site is the river Gravará.

Towards the west there is an open view to the city of Klaksvík and the likely Viking Age house (Figure 7.42). The likely Viking Age house is on the opposite side of the river Gravará (Figure 7.43). The river Gravará limits the access from the site to the house and it could act as a natural boundary between a possible Viking cemetery and a Viking Age house. On the downhill slope towards the west and north west from the site trees have been planted in the beginning of the 1980s. The trees limit the view today. Towards the north is a modern churchyard (Figure 7.42).

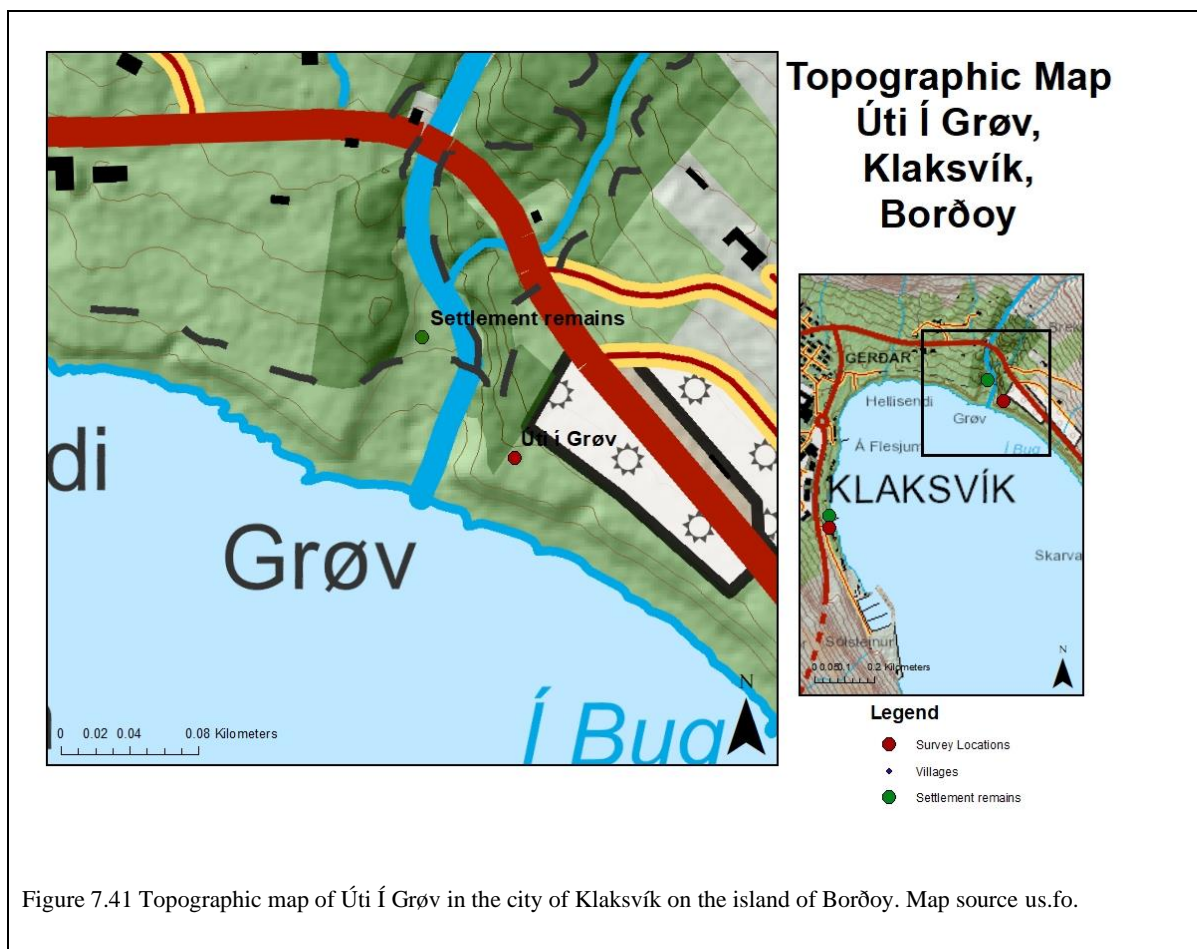


Figure 7.41 Topographic map of Úti í Grøv in the city of Klaksvík on the island of Borðoy. Map source us.fo.

The field descends southwards to the seashore and at the end of the infield ends in a steep slope. Therefore, movement to and from the south is not good. From the south there is a good view towards the sea, the site Niðri Á Toft and the seashore. At the seashore are three boathouses, the northernmost of which is built into an older boathouse. Close to the seashore are two outdoor swimming pools, built in 1905. Access and movement to and from the site eastwards is easy, as the field is levelled. On a lower level there used to be a path leading to the village of Norðoyrar. The path was not visible during the survey.

The location of the site close to a river and a path, but separated from the settlement by a river, is similar to the landscape setting of the burial site Yviri í Trøð in the village of Tjørnuvík. This site was therefore selected for further archaeological examination, as it was considered that the location close to a settlement, river and path could potentially be a Viking Age burial site.



Figure 7.42 View towards the site seen towards the west to Klaksvík. On the left is the modern cemetery. August 2015.



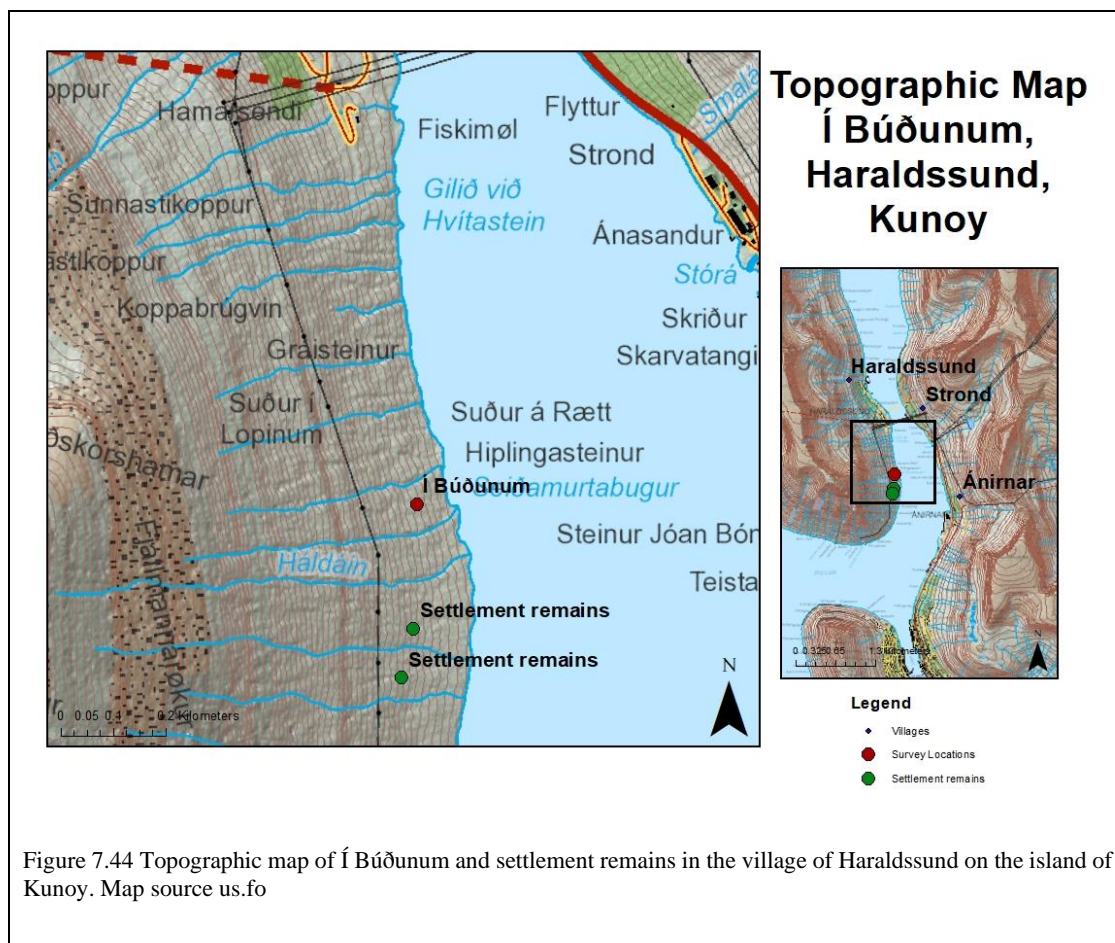
Figure 7.43 Settlement remains Úti Í Grøvn, seen towards the north. August 2015.

7.1.7 Í Búðunum, Haraldssund, Kunoy (Appendix A14)

South of Haraldssund on the island of Kunoy, there are clear settlement remains in an area called Suður á Búðum, close to the seashore (

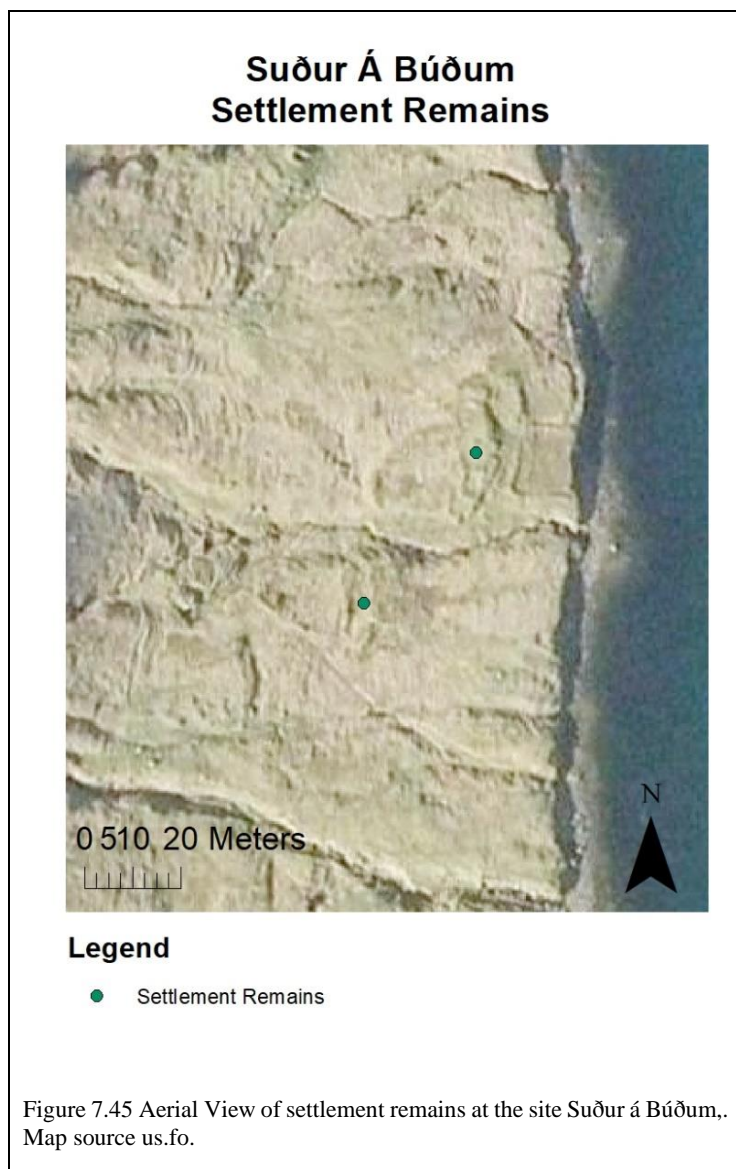
Figure 7.44) (Hansen 1978 p. 7; Dahl 1968 p. 309; Bruun 1929 p. 100). The building remains at Suður á Búðum, sometimes called Háledingabúðir or Háldatoftir, are, according to local legend, from a post-medieval settlement of Dutch whale hunters (Matras, 1932; Dahl, 1968b; Hansen, 1978a, p. 7).

There are two certain house ruins at Suður á Búðum with the remains of grass covered walls, (Figure 7.45) (Dahl, 1968b, p. 309; Hansen, 1978a, p. 7). The buildings are located on each side of a wide ditch, perhaps a dried-out river. On an aerial photograph a possible third structure was identified, west of the buildings, which is not clearly visible on the surface at ground level. The northern structure seems to have been modified over time and perhaps built together of more than one building. Its latest building phase was probable divided into five rooms (Dahl, 1968a, p. 309).



The shape of the buildings resembles typologically Viking Age and early medieval buildings with curved walls, but only archaeological excavation and research can give a clear answer to the date and function of these settlement remains (Figure 7.46, Figure 7.47).

It is possible to access the site from the north and west via boat, as the site is near the edge of the seashore. It is also easy to access and movement the site from the north, from the village and path to Haraldssund. The view towards the south is open towards the city of Klaksvík and the sea. The view is also open across the strait to the village of Ánirnar in a north-easterly direction and the village of Strond northwards. The view towards the west and the sea is also open, although the view towards the village of Haraldssund in the north is limited by the rising hill.



The seashore and the rising hill limit the movement in these directions. Towards the south, both access to the site and the view is limited by the rock ledges and the mountains Suður á Nakki and Galvsskorafjall. There was no visible border close to the settlement, such as a border for hayfield production or an infield/outfield border. In this area there are traces of drainage digging to maintain the outfield.

It was decided to target the area north of the settlement remains as a potential Viking Age burial site with the site name Í Búðunum. The main reason for this decision is that the path to the village of Haraldsund is in this direction and, as seen in Chapter 6, burials are often located close to communication routes, close to the seashore and close to borders.



Figure 7.46 The southern building seen towards north. August 2015.



Figure 7.47 The northern settlement seen towards north. August 2015.

7.1.8 Conclusion of Field Survey

During the initial field survey, it became clear that it would be more difficult to locate Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands than at first anticipated. In many Faroese villages the houses are built on top of old settlements or close to old settlements, and there has also been construction work for building new houses and outhouses, digging of drainage ditches, ploughing and flattening of fields to allow mechanised hay-harvesting. Furthermore, Viking Age burials may not be so easily recognised as in Iceland, where so-called ‘pagan’ burials are often marked by pits or depressions, rows of stones, or piles of stones. Likewise, in Scandinavia, the physical evidence of Viking Age burial sites regularly includes mounds and stone settings. These types of Viking Age burials are not evident in the landscape in the northern islands in the Faroes: Fugloy, Svínø, Viðø, Borðø, Kunø and Kallø. This could be due to a variety of reasons, including different burial customs, for example burial location, burial type, burial markers, or lack thereof, or disturbance by cultivation, road construction, or erosion. As most of the sites were disturbed by ploughing and digging drainage ditches for a hayfield, the traces or physical marks of a burial on the landscape, which could lead to a possible burial site, were not visible.

It is a striking fact that until quite recently the only church cemetery for the villages of Viðareiði, Hvannasund, Múla, Depil and Norðoftir was in Viðareiði. With only one cemetery the dead were transported to Viðareiði to be buried. There are no reports in the archive of findings of human remains during ploughing or digging drainage ditches in these villages.

There are pre-reformation stories about dead sailors being buried in certain areas, but no stories about the finding of human remains or burials (Appendix A6). It is thought-provoking that there are no reports or stories about the finding of human remains. There could be several reasons for this. It is possible that the Vikings buried their dead close to the seashore, which is constantly affected by erosion, as seen in the village of Hvalba at Bønhúsfløtu. These burials would probably be lost today due to erosion. It is also conceivable that people who found human remains prior to 1900, during ploughing, digging trenches or making embankments, did not report their findings to the local authorities or the human remains were poorly preserved in the soil and were therefore not recognised as human remains. An additional possibility is that the burials are underneath the church cemetery or the ancient farmhouses and yards.

Consequently, it was soon realised in the initial field survey that more research was needed in the form of geophysical surveying, which had the potential to detect burials no longer visible on the surface. This was done to decide which of the places examined in the field had the best potential for test excavations. The results of the geophysical surveys are described in the next section.

7.2 Geophysical Survey on the Northern Islands

This section is about the geophysical survey conducted on the northern islands with the Bartington Grad 601-2 magnetometer system. Until recently, archaeological geophysical surveys have rarely been conducted in the Faroe Islands, for example the National Museum of the Faroes, Tjóðsavnið, recently purchased a ground penetrating radar system to conduct their own geophysical surveys. The locations selected were based on the field survey outlined in Section 7.1. This is only the second time a magnetometer had been used in the Faroes successfully. The first survey by a fluxgate gradiometer was conducted in 1998 as part of testing the method in the Faroes on known archaeological locations, especially in relation to the island's basalt, which can cause "noise" in the data (Binns, 1998, p. 1). Therefore, this is a method in its infancy in the Faroe Islands. In recent years more geophysical surveys have been done on the island and in Table 7.3 is an overview of conducted surveys on the islands.

Table 7.3 Overview of geophysical surveys in the Faroe Islands. Table compiled by Helgi D. Michelsen, Símun V. Arge and Ann Sølvia Selmarsdóttir Purkhús, Tjóðsavnið.

Year	Survey
1998	Geophysical survey with a fluxgate gradiometer in the bay of Søltuvík on Sandoy and in the village of Leirvík on Streymoy. At both sites ancient remains were known with further potential

Year	Survey
	remains. Reference: Unpublished report: <i>Gradiometerundersøgelser ved Søltuvík (Sandey) og Leirvík (Streymey) på Færøylene</i> , 1999, by Richard Binns M.Sc. In collaboration with Tjóðsavnið.
2004	As part of the research project The Heart of the Atlantic Project in the village of Sandur a geophysical survey was conducted at the site Undir Junkarisfløtti. Reference: Report, 2010, S.V. Arge, R. Edvardsson and R. Friel, <i>The Heart of the Atlantic Project Excavations at Undir Junkarisfløtti and á Klettum: Field Seasons 2004-2006</i> . Earth resistance surveys undertaken at Undir Junkarisfløtti, Sandur, Sandoy in the Faroe Islands, May 2004. Pp. 50-55. In collaboration with Tjóðsavnið.
2006	GPR survey. Reference: <i>GSB Prospection Ltd. 2007. 3D GPR Investigations in Faroese Settings: Junkarisfløttur and Søltuvík</i> . Geophysical Survey Report 2006/57, GSB Prospection Ltd. In collaboration with Tjóðsavnið.
2009	GPR survey at the village of Sandur west of the parish church. Reference: Report, 2009, Munin Fríður P. Dalsgarð. <i>Kanning av undirlendi í samband við víðking av kirkjugarðinum á Sandi</i> . In collaboration with Tjóðsavnið.
2010	GPR survey. Reference: Report, 2010, Munin, Fríður P. Dalsgarð. <i>GPR kanning við Kollafjarðar kirkju</i> . In collaboration with Tjóðsavnið.
2011	GPR survey at the church site in the village of Sørvágur. Munin, Fríður P. Dalsgarð. Raw data. In collaboration with Tjóðsavnið.
2011	GPR survey conducted by Department of Archaeology, University of Cork. Reference: <i>Acta Archaeologica</i> vol 82, 2011, p. 63. Unpublished geophysical survey.
2014	GPR survey west of the abandoned church site, Niðri á Bakka, Velbastaður. Munin, Fríður P. Dalsgarð. Raw data. In collaboration with Tjóðsavnið.
2015	GPR survey on the island of Koltur at the site Heima í Húsi. Munin, Fríður P. Dalsgarð. In collaboration with Tjóðsavnið.
2016	GPR survey with a magnetometer. Reference: 2016, Ann Sølvia Selmarsdóttir Purkhús, <i>Geophysical Survey in Selected Places in the Northern Islands in the Faroe Islands</i> . Part of a PhD project. In collaboration with Tjóðsavnið.
2016	GPR survey to the north of the parish church in the village of Sandur - site name: Norðanvert kirkjuna á Sandi. Munin Fríður P. Dalsgarð. Data interpreted by Helgi D. Michelsen and Símun V. Arge. In collaboration with Tjóðsavnið.
2017	GPR survey to the north of the parish church in the village of Sandur - site name: Norðanvert kirkjuna á Sandi. Reference: Report, 2017, Munin, Fríður P. Dalsgarð, Símun V. Arge and Helgi D. Michelsen. <i>GPR norðanfyri kirkjuna in Sandur</i> . In collaboration with Tjóðsavnið.
2017	GPR survey við Prestá, Skáli. Munin, Fríður P. Dalsgarð. Reference: <i>GPR kanningar við Prestá, Skáli</i> . 23.07.2017. Unpublished report on geophysical survey.
2018	GPR survey to the north of the parish church in the village of Sandur - site name: Norðanvert kirkjuna á Sandi. Munin Fríður P. Dalsgarð. Data interpreted by Helgi D. Michelsen and Símun V. Arge. In collaboration with Tjóðsavnið.
2019	GPR survey to the north of the parish church in the village of Sandur - site name: Norðanvert kirkjuna á Sandi. Andreas Viberg, Guideline Geo, Sweden. In collaboration with Tjóðsavnið.
2019	GPR survey to the north of the parish church in the village of Sandur - site name: Norðanvert kirkjuna á Sandi. Tjóðsavnið.
2019	GPR survey west of the abandoned church site, Niðri á Bakka, Velbastaður. Tjóðsavnið.

7.2.1 Summary of Results

A detailed magnetometry survey was conducted over 13 selected sites which hold the possibility of being Viking Age burial sites (Table 7.2). After processing the data, it was clear that there was a lot of noise in the data, which appeared to capture many features of the bedrock, and at some sites it was difficult to locate any archaeological features. Therefore, the

geophysical survey was not conclusive and only by testing the results by archaeological excavations could the geophysical results be confirmed or not.

7.2.2 Complication during Survey

A geophysical survey with a fluxgate gradiometer requires to find a location in the field, which is quiet magnetically, a ‘Zero point’. In this location the device can be balanced, because in addition to the magnetic field in the earth, there can be high magnetic signals in the ground which can disturb the survey. Unfortunately, during the survey it was very difficult to find a ‘silent’ spot for calibrating the magnetometer. The magnetometer needs to be calibrated before each survey and, since this method has not been tried in the northern islands, this was one of the challenges. It was probably difficult to find a silent spot due to the magnetic geology and the thin soil cover. For example, on the island of Fugloy it took four days to find a ‘quiet’ spot to do the calibrations. After the first calibration it was easier to calibrate, but it was not unusual for it to take 1-2 days to find a quiet spot at each location, which was surveyed. However, it was decided to continue to use this method, since the equipment had been brought to the Faroes, funds were not available to rent a ground resistance meter, and since it was anticipated that the survey results would still be useful in locating Viking Age burials.

7.2.3 Processing the Data

Not all the sites which were selected for geophysical survey data were large areas, since the aim was to select areas with the most potential to hold Viking Age burials. Each grid was 20 x 20m. The processing of the data was performed using specialist software to filter and locate archaeological anomalies in the data, here burials. In the processing the following processes were used (Table 7.4):

Table 7.4 Processing the results.

Process	Detailed
Destripe	This process was used to: “ <i>equalise underlying differences between grids</i> ” (Consulting, 2016, p. 36).
Despike	This filter was: “ <i>used with the magnetometer data to remove spikes caused by small surface iron anomalies</i> ” (Consulting, 2016, p. 39).
Clipping	This process was used to: “ <i>remove extreme datapoint values</i> ” (Consulting, 2016, p. 35).
High pass filter	The High pass filter was used to “ <i>remove high or low frequency components in a survey</i> ” (Consulting, 2016, p. 48) .

7.2.4 Results

In the processing of the data interpretations were made between two possibilities of positive and negative results. The first is the positive data with probable archaeology in it and the second is negative data with possible archaeology in it. There were four sites with probable archaeology in it, although some of the sites had a weak anomaly. The remaining nine sites had no possible archaeological burials identified within the surveyed area. In Table 7.5 the sites and results are listed and in Figure 7.48 is a map of the selected locations.

The four sites with probable archaeology in them were selected for further archaeological test excavations. In the following subsections the results of each site are concisely outlined.

Table 7.5 Overview of sites and results.

	Site Name	Village	Islands	Results
1	Á Beitið	Hattarvík	Fugloy	Negative
2	Døttisheggjar	Hattarvík	Fugloy	Negative
3	Á Toftum	Kirkja	Fugloy	Negative
4	Húsadeild	Kirkja	Fugloy	Positive
5	Norð Millum Garðar	Kirkja	Fugloy	Positive
6	Flatabakki	Viðareiði	Viðoy	Negative
7	Norðari Múla	Múli	Borðoy	Negative
8	Sunnari Múla	Múli	Borðoy	Negative
9	Norðari Depil	Depil	Borðoy	Positive
10	Sunnari Depil	Depil	Borðoy	Positive
11	Borðoyavík	Klaksvík	Borðoy	Negative
12	Úti í Grøv	Klaksvík	Borðoy	Negative
13	Í Búðunum	Haraldssund	Kunoy	Negative

Surveyed Geophysical Locations

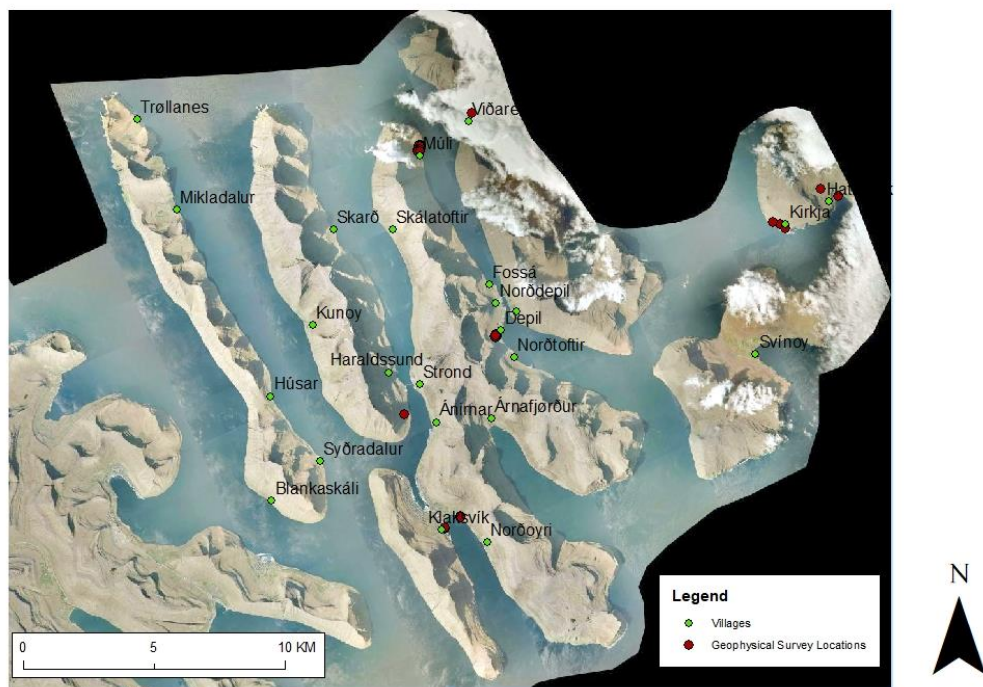


Figure 7.48 Overview of surveyed geophysical locations. Map source us.fo.

7.2.4.1 Á Beitið, Hattarvík, Fugloy

The site Á Beitið was selected for geophysical survey for its potential to hold Viking Age burials, as it is located between two districts in the village, Niðri í Húsi and Uppi í Húsi and is located close to a path. The area is not extensive and therefore only two grids were laid out (2 x 20 x 20). The survey results were negative. The survey results appeared blurred and irregular, and likely represent the underlying geology (Figure 7.49).

Á Beitið, Hattarvík, Fugloy, Survey

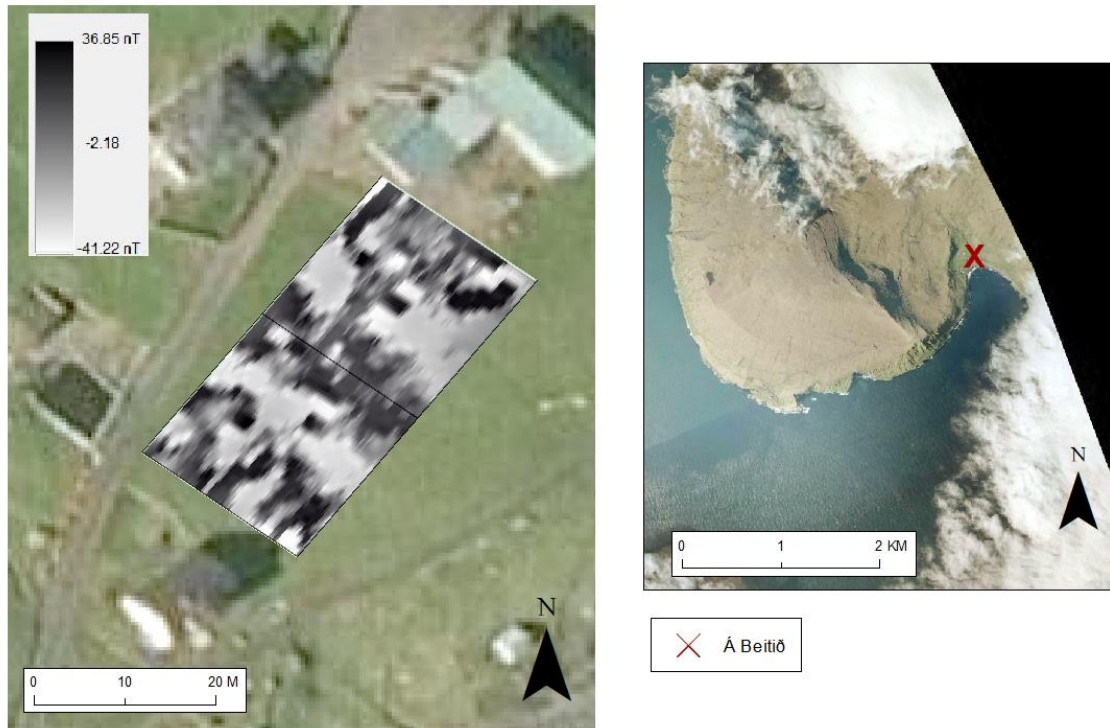


Figure 7.49 Á Beitið, Hattarvík, Fugloy, Survey. Map source us.fo.

7.2.4.2 Døtttheyggjar, Hattarvík, Fugloy

The site at Døtttheyggjar was also considered to be a location with Viking Age burials. The site is located in the outfield, with three low-lying mounds east of a stream. Four grids were laid out to cover the mounds in the sloping area. After the data was filtered the results were not conclusive, because of the noise in the data: most of the anomalies seem to be natural, geological features (Figure 7.50). With no data to guide the placement of evaluation trenches, it was decided not to conduct test excavations at this site.

Døttheyggjar, Hattarvík, Fugloy Survey

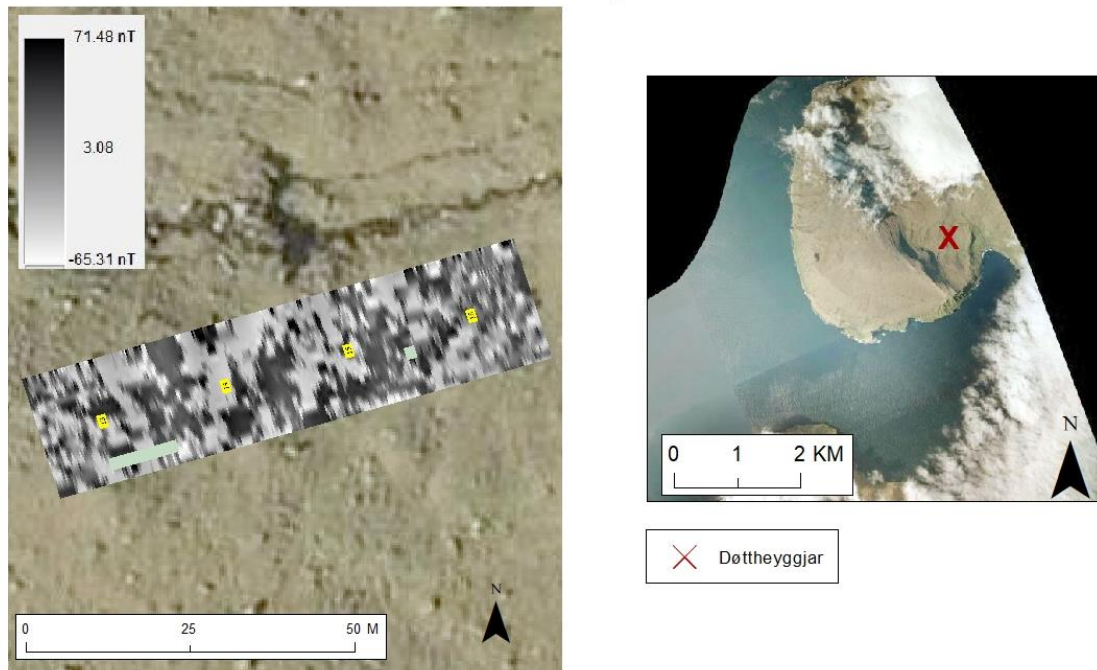


Figure 7.50 Døttheyggjar, Hattarvík, Fugloy, Survey

7.2.4.3 Á Toftum, Kirkja, Fugloy

The area at á Toftum is not extensive and it was decided to do the survey east of the building structures, and below the modern power station with two grids to locate possible burials. When the data was filtered, it was clear that there was a lot of noise in the results (Figure 7.51). It is possible that there are features in the northeast part of the survey area, but these are most likely geological. Based on the results of the survey, there was no evidence to guide the placement of evaluation trenches, so it was decided not to conduct test excavations at this site.

Á Toftum, Kirkja, Fugloy, Survey

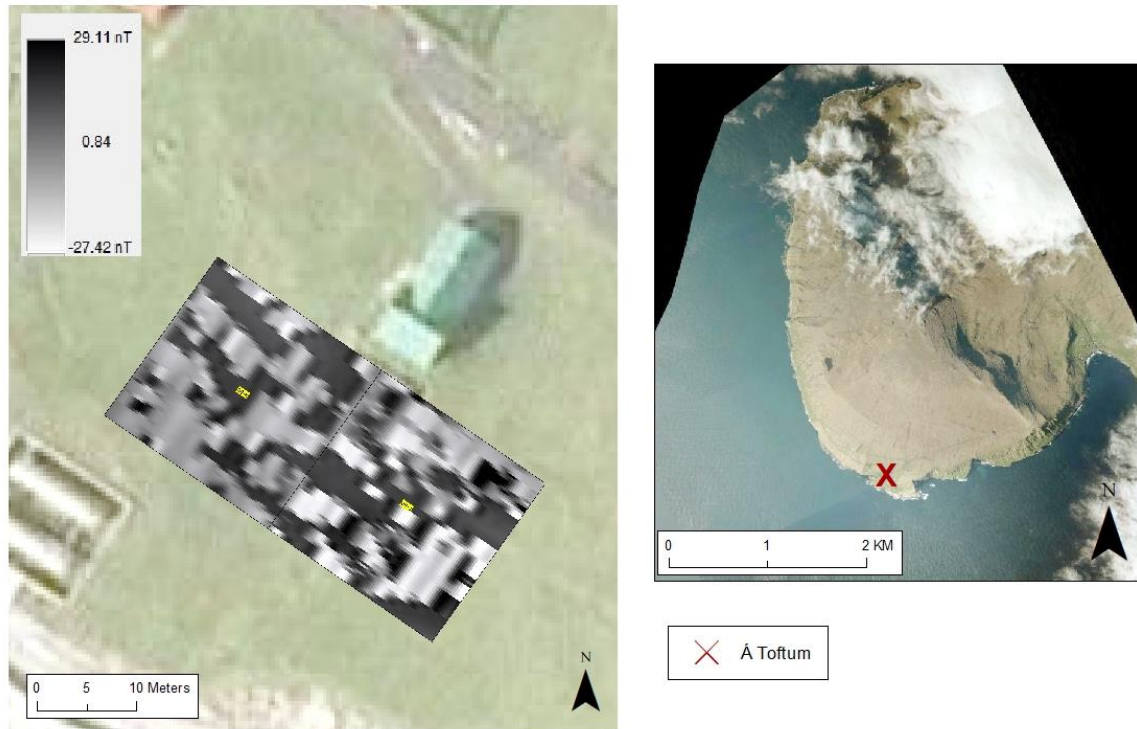


Figure 7.51 Á Toftum, Kirkja, Fugloy, Survey. Map source us.fo.

7.2.4.4 Húsadeild, Kirkja, Fugloy

At the site Húsadeild, 3 grids were laid out (Figure 7.52). The survey produced several interesting features. There were indications for a half-oval-shaped structure, possibly a wall, with several smaller features inside it that seemed to be well organised and regular, suggesting the possible location of a Christian burial ground. Furthermore, there were two features in the southern part of the survey, which were not organised inside a boundary wall and not regularly arranged. This could be indication of burials (Figure 7.53).

Húsadeild, Kirkja, Fugloy, Survey

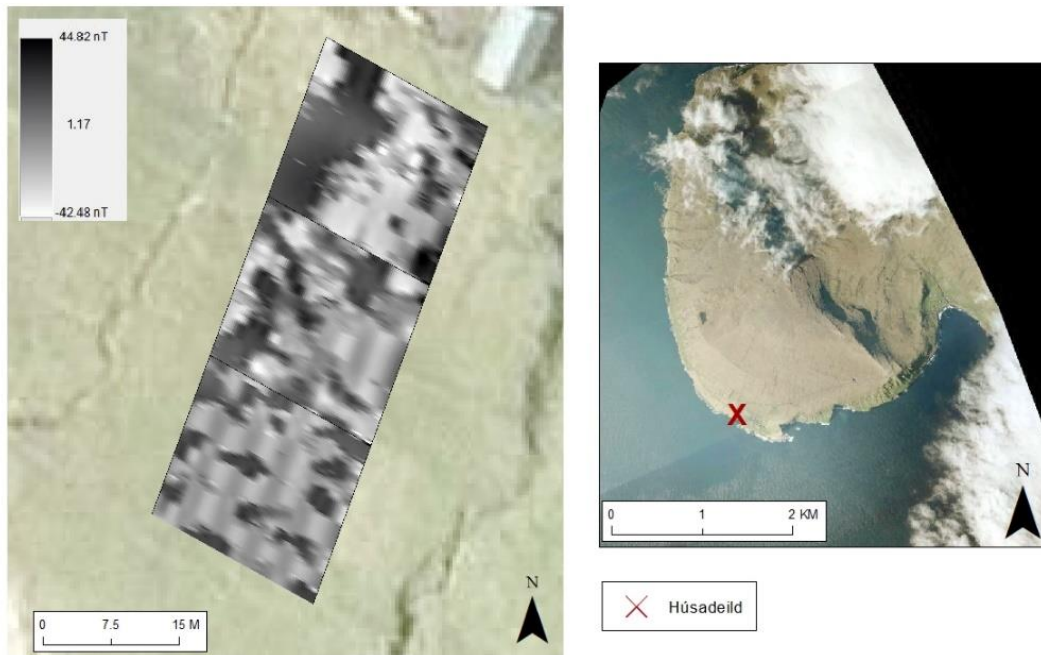


Figure 7.52 Húsadeild, Kirkja, Fugloy, Survey. Map source us.fo.

Húsadeild, Location of Possible Burials and a Wall

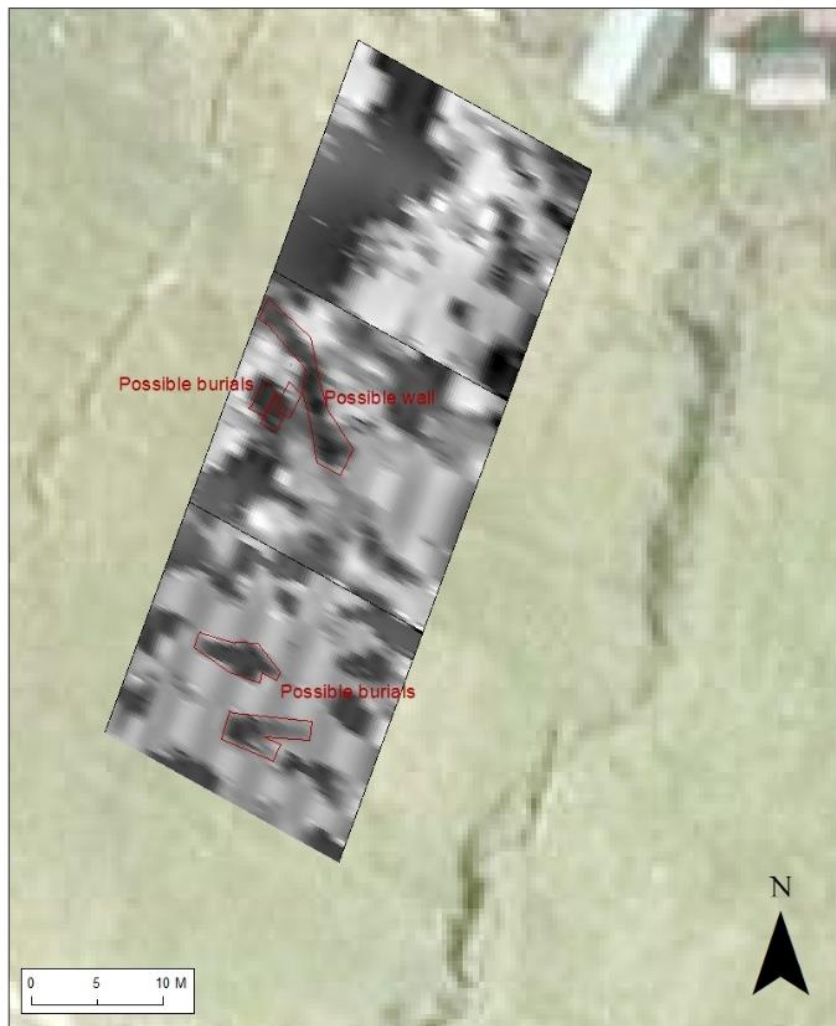
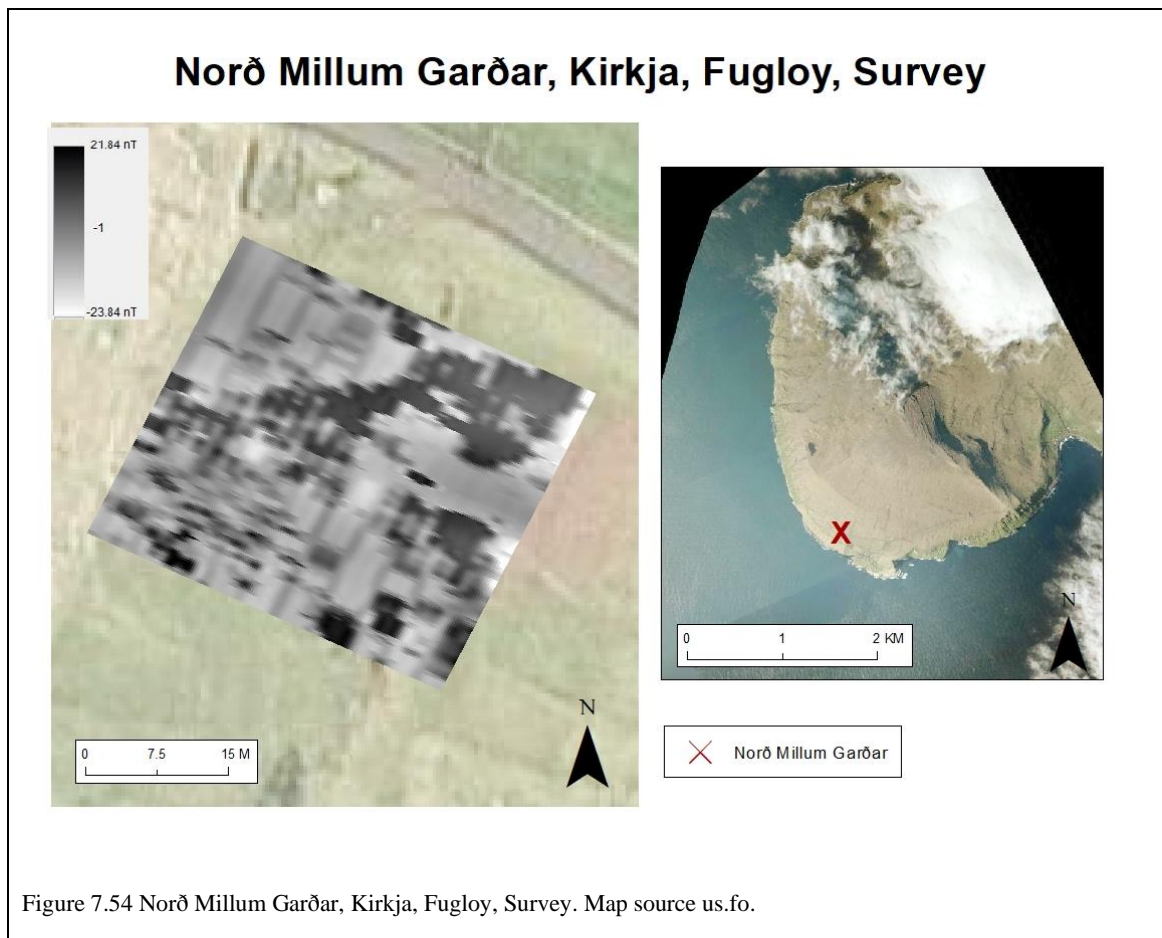


Figure 7.53 Húsadeild Location of Possible Burials marked red on aerial photograph. Map source us.fo.

7.2.4.5 Norð Millum Garðar, Kirkja, Fugloy

At Norð Millum Garðar there used to be remains of a ruin which according to historical descriptions, resembles a longhouse. It was decided to do geophysical survey below the remains and across the river which runs close to the remains (Figure 7.54). Since this area is not extensive, four grids were laid out for survey. The results showed that there are two or three possible structures, which in their outline resemble longhouses. In addition, there were features that could be possible burials (Figure 7.55). It was difficult to interpret the data from the survey,

because there was a lot of noise in the data, but it was decided for the test excavation to select part of this area. Each grid was 20 x 20m.



Norð Millum Garðar, Location of Possible Burials and Structures



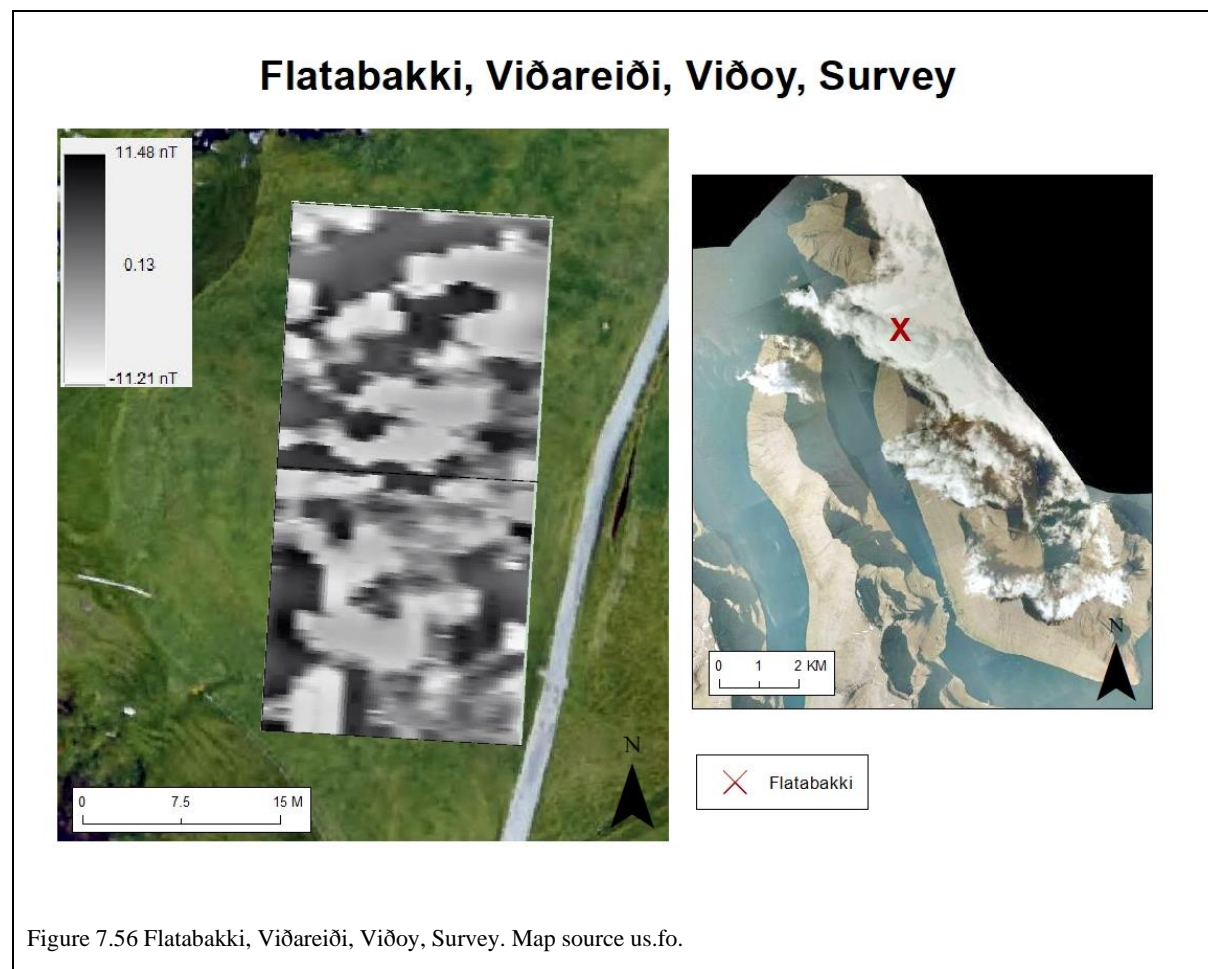
Figure 7.55 Norð Millum Garðar. Locations of possible burials and structures marked red on aerial photograph. Map source us.fo.

7.2.4.6 Flatabakki, Viðareiði, Viðoy

In the village of Viðareiði, the site Flatabakki was selected for geophysical surveying based on the known history of the site, which is the location of an old church and Christian cemetery (Figure 7.56). In addition, there is a farm close to this site called Brekkumørk and close to this site is a path, which connects the districts Uppi í Garð, Brekkumørk and á Bakkanum. Since

this area is not extensive, it was decided to survey two grids, for a total of 800m². The first grid is from the flat area and the second grid is from the slope downwards towards the farm at Brekkumørk.

As with the some of the previous survey results, there is much noise in the data and the outline of possible structures more resembles a structure of natural features, such as large boulders or bedrock near the surface. The second grid seems comparatively empty, possibly because of the deep soil cover here.

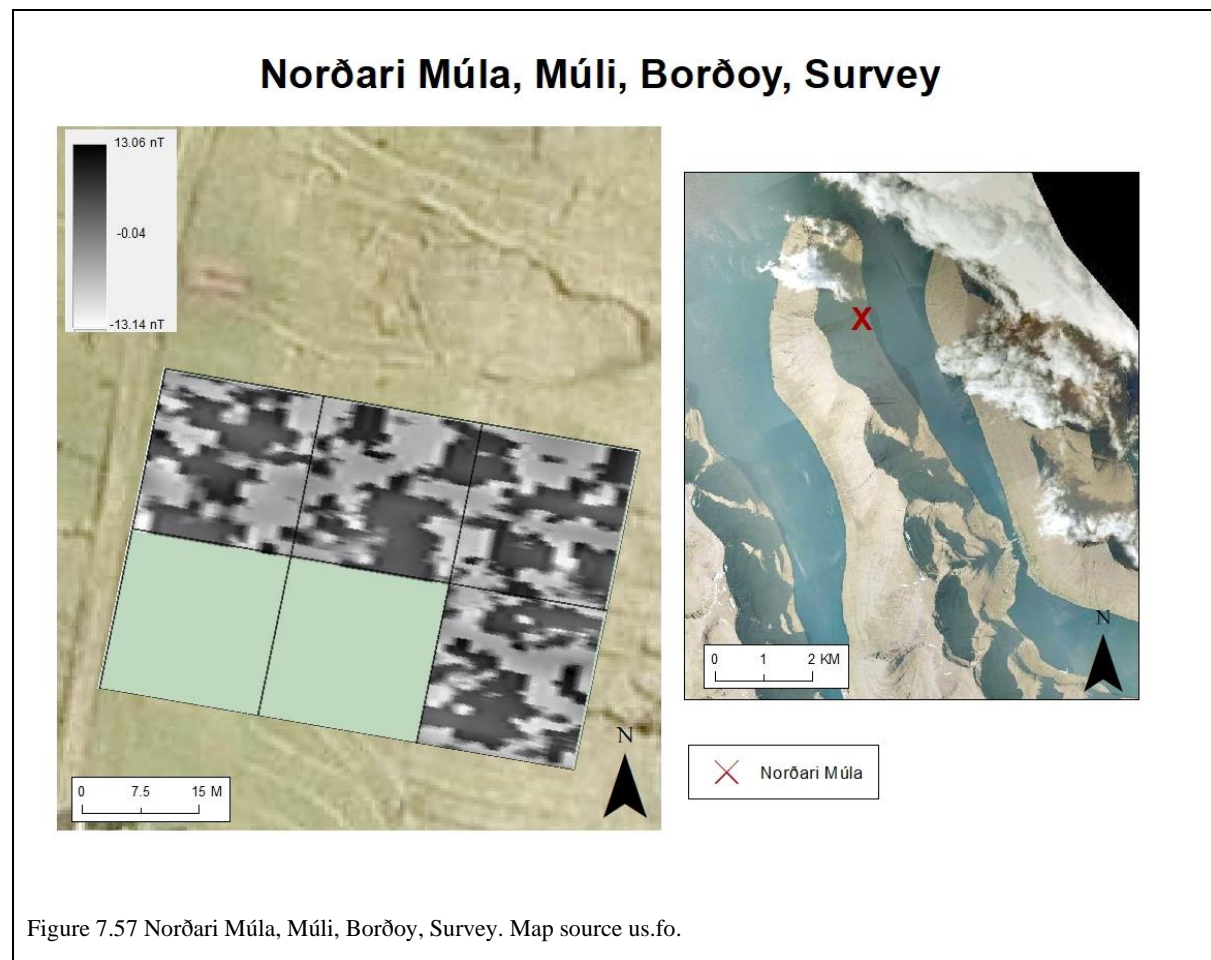


7.2.4.7 Norðari Múla, Múli, Borðoy

The first site in the abandoned village of Múli is north of the village, but is still in the present-day infield areas. In this area it was decided to conduct a geophysical survey in a smaller area

with four grids which avoided fences used for drying hay (Figure 7.57). There are several drains dug in the area, and it was not possible to avoid these in the survey.

The results from this survey show no signs of a burial.



7.2.4.8 Sunnari Múla, Múli, Borðoy

The abandoned village is not much disturbed by modern construction or farming. Based on the survey observations and the layout of the village in the field, it was decided to do a larger geophysical survey than at previous sites, to cover a large area in the search for possible burial sites (Figure 7.58). An area of 15 grids was laid out. After the survey, the results were filtered, but unfortunately there were no signs of any features in the field.

Sunnari Múla, Múli, Borðoy, Survey

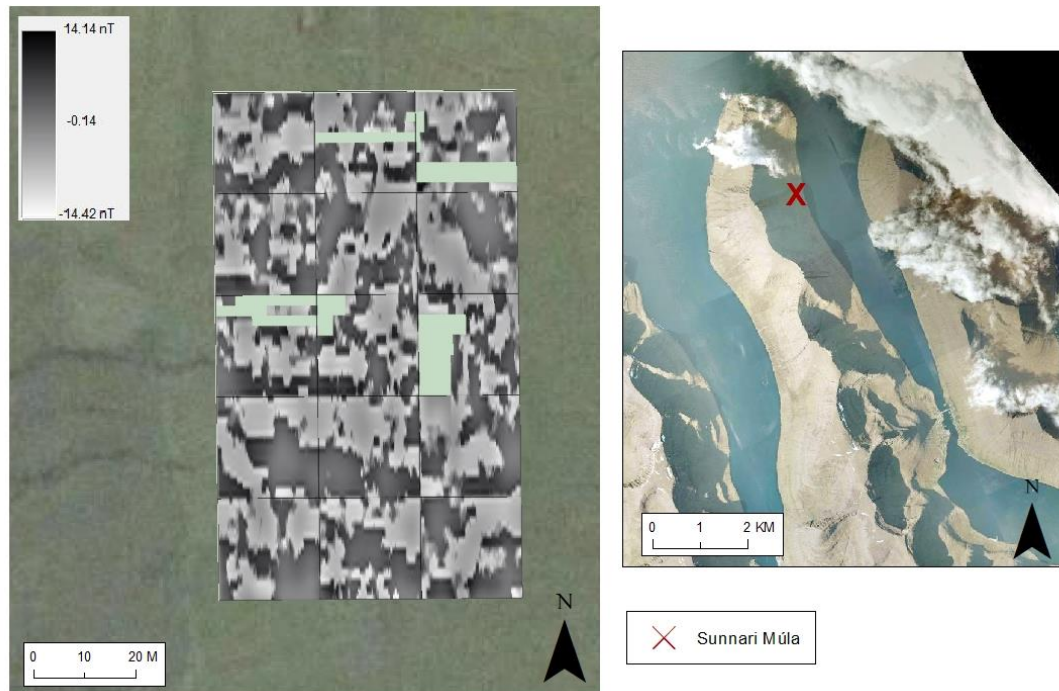


Figure 7.58 Sunnari Múla, Múli, Borðoy, Survey. Map source us.fo.

7.2.4.9 Norðari Depil, Depil, Borðoy

In the village of Depil two areas were selected for further geophysical survey. The first survey was close to the old farmhouse and structural remains along a stone wall, as well as the river Depilsáin (Figure 7.59). Since this area is not large, two grids were laid out. In the grid itself there was a cluster of stones. After the data had been processed there was the outline of a structure in the northern part of the surveyed area (Figure 7.60). This could possibly be the outline of a Viking Age burial site. In the second grid there were no structures.

Norðari Depil, Depil, Borðoy, Survey

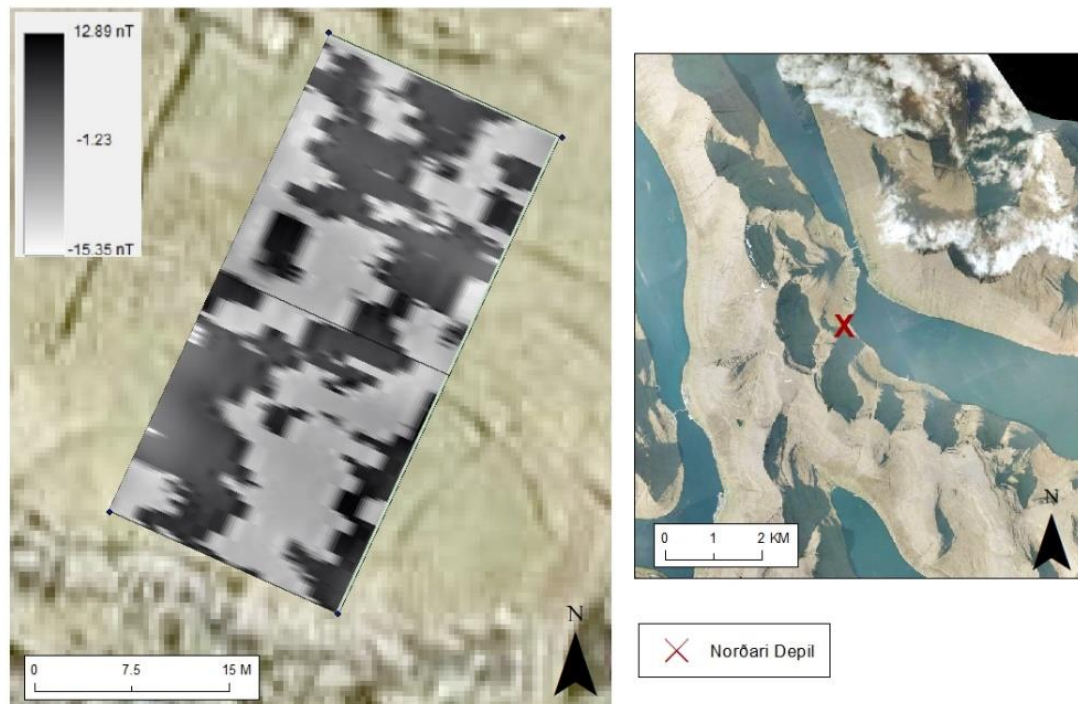


Figure 7.59 Norðari Depil, Depil, Borðoy. Map source us.fo.

Norðari Depil, Location of a Possible Burial

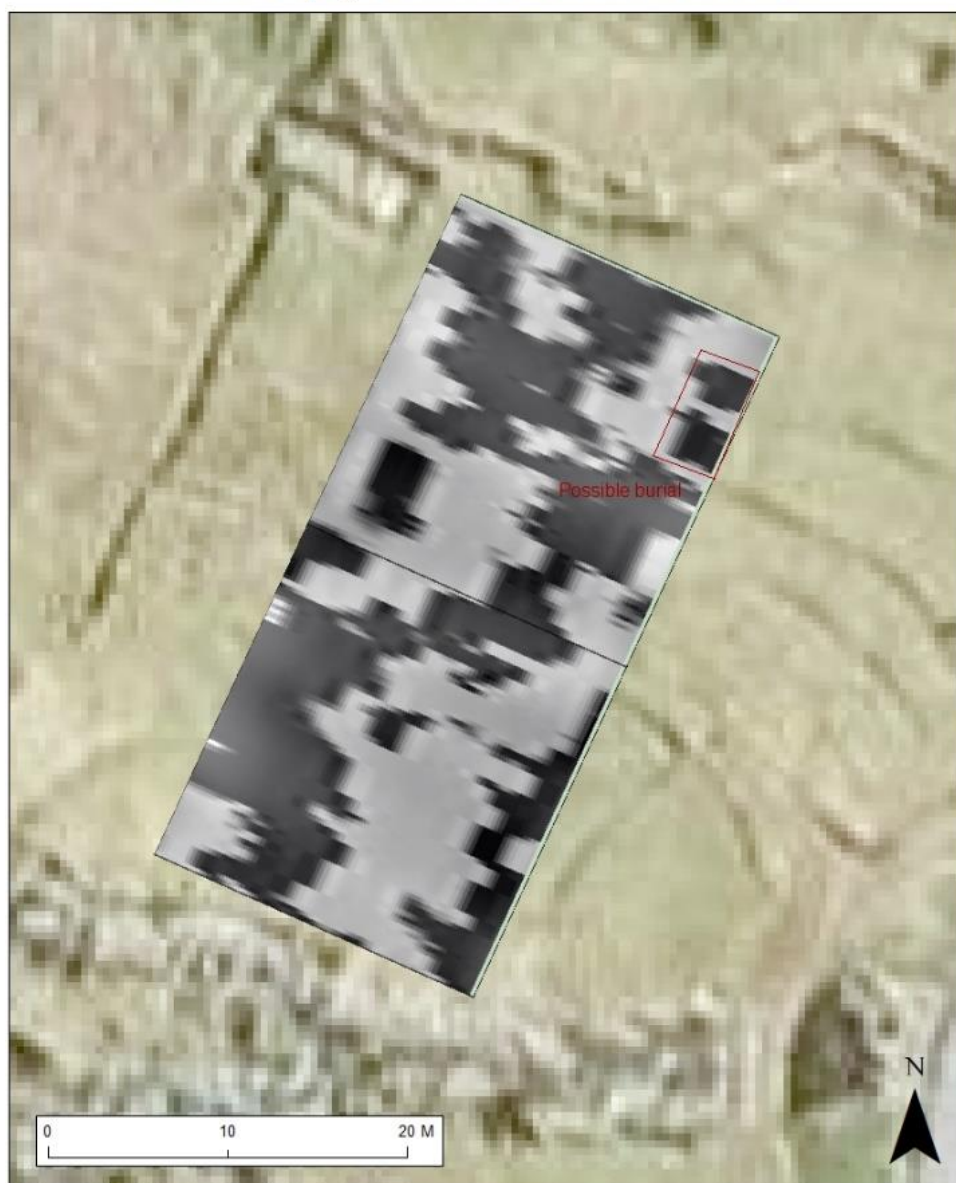
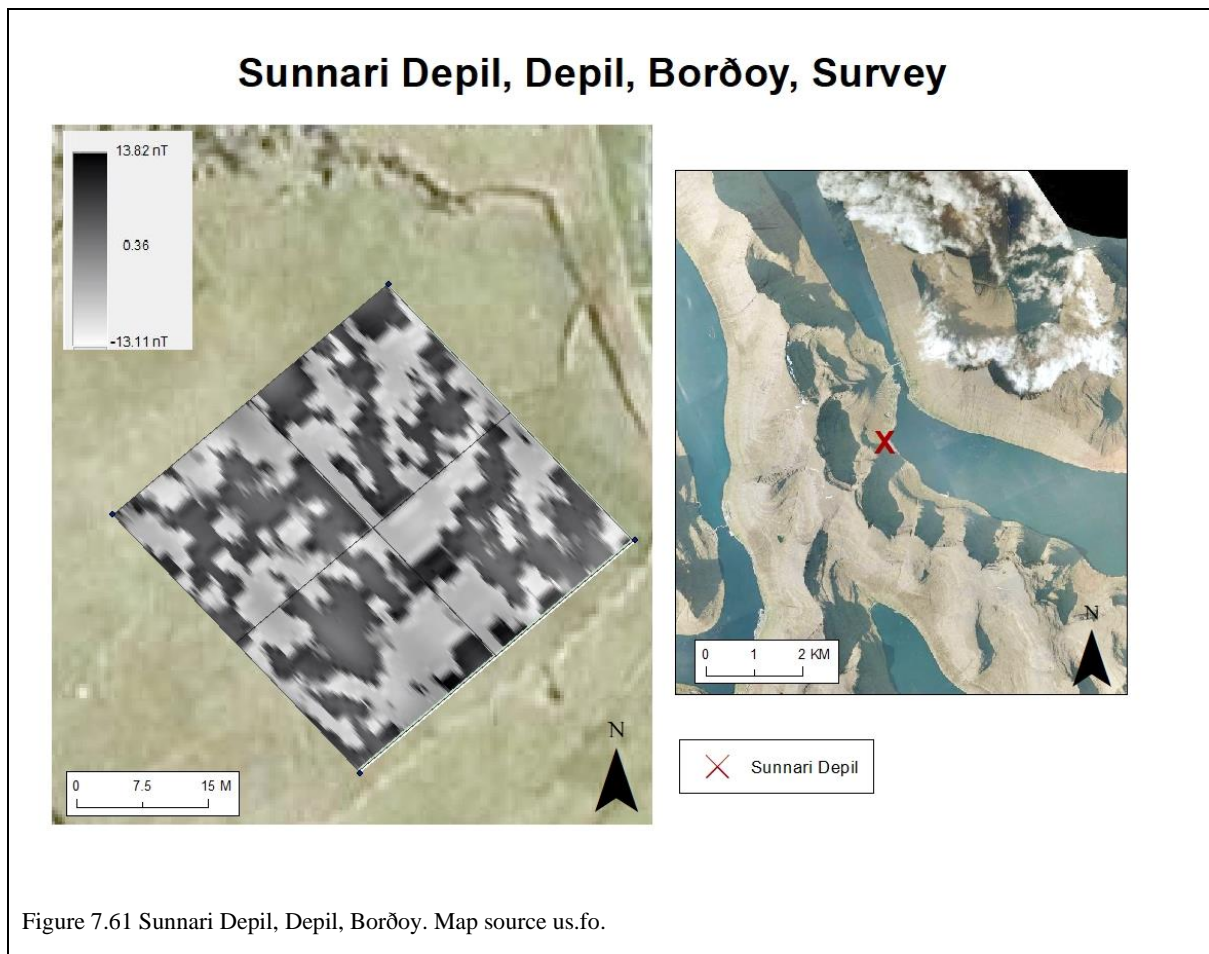


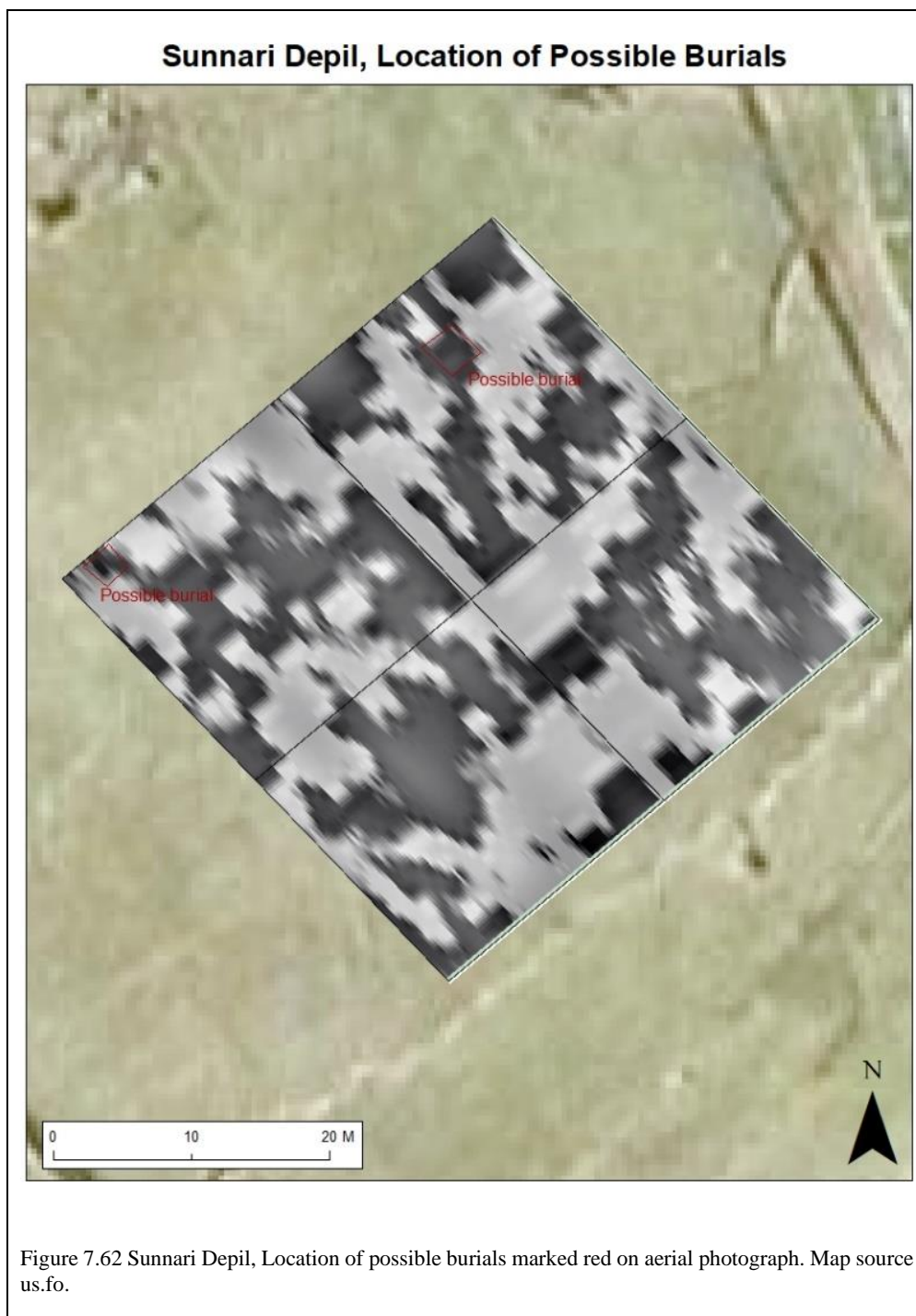
Figure 7.60 Norðari Depil, Location of a possible burial marked red on aerial photograph. Map source us.fo.

7.2.4.10 Sunnari Depil, Depil, Borðoy

The second site in Depil was on the southern side of the river Depilsá. It was decided to conduct a geophysical survey here based on the field survey of the area, the location of the farmhouse close to a river and the path leading to and from Múla. Four grids were laid out in an area,

which is today part of the village's infield (Figure 7.61). After filtering the data from the survey, the results showed the possibility of two features in the survey area (Figure 7.62).



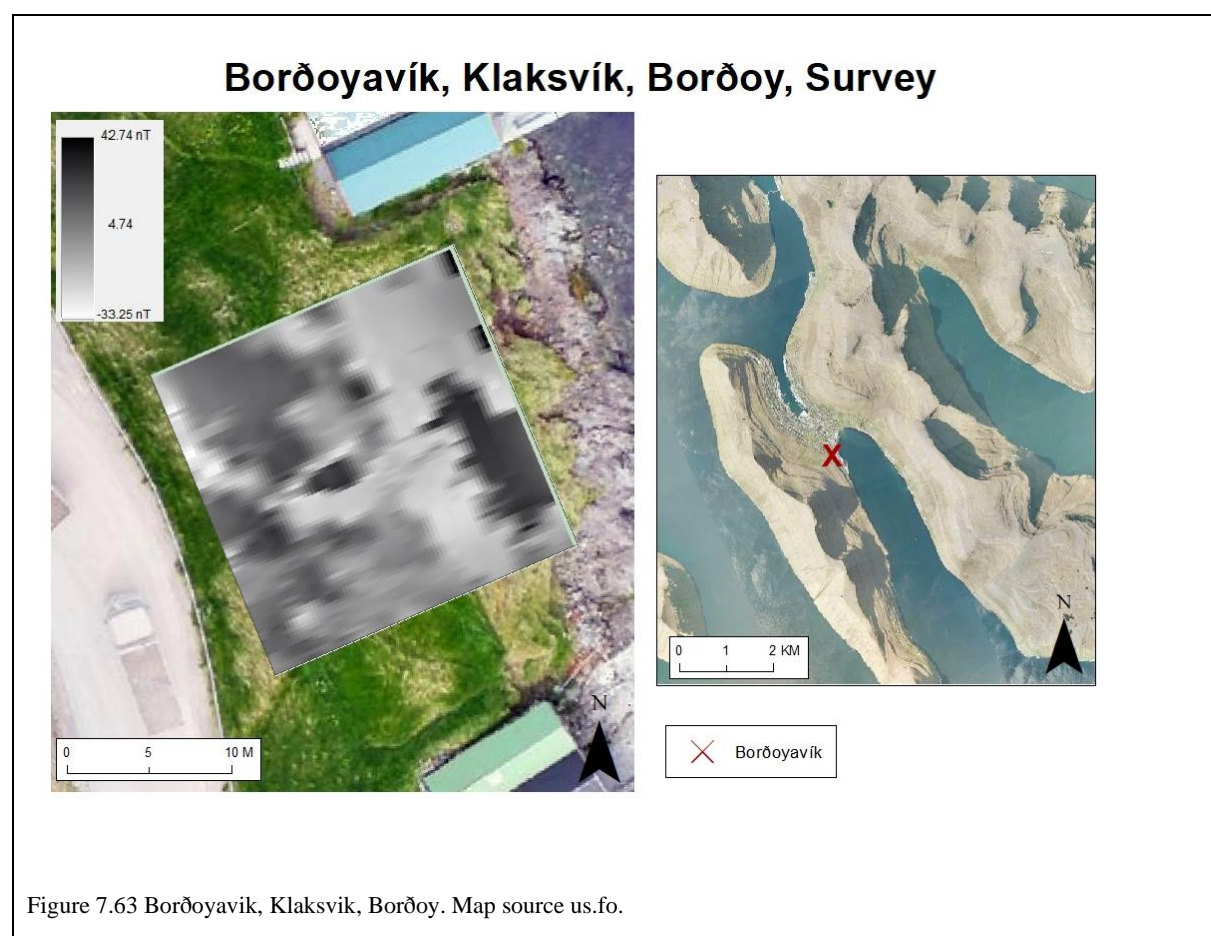


7.2.4.11 Borðoyavík, Klaksvík, Borðoy

Initially, it was considered to conduct the survey close to the find of the stray bone, found in the early 1950s and handed to the local museum in the city of Klaksvík, Norðoya Fornminnissavn. However, it was not possible to conduct a survey in this area due to erosion and the narrowness of the strip of land, which is on a lower level than the modern road. It was

therefore decided to do the survey 50m south of the Viking Age settlement and 50m south of the stray find of the bone.

The strip of land in this area is very narrow and there are several boat houses. Because of the narrowness of the terrain, as well as the limited space due to the main road with a modern fence to the west and the boathouses towards north and south, it was decided to lay out one grid for the survey (Figure 7.63). After the data was processed, the result showed that there was one large feature in the grid. This feature looks very much to be a natural feature and resembles the geophysical survey conducted at the site Beitið in the village of Hattarvík.



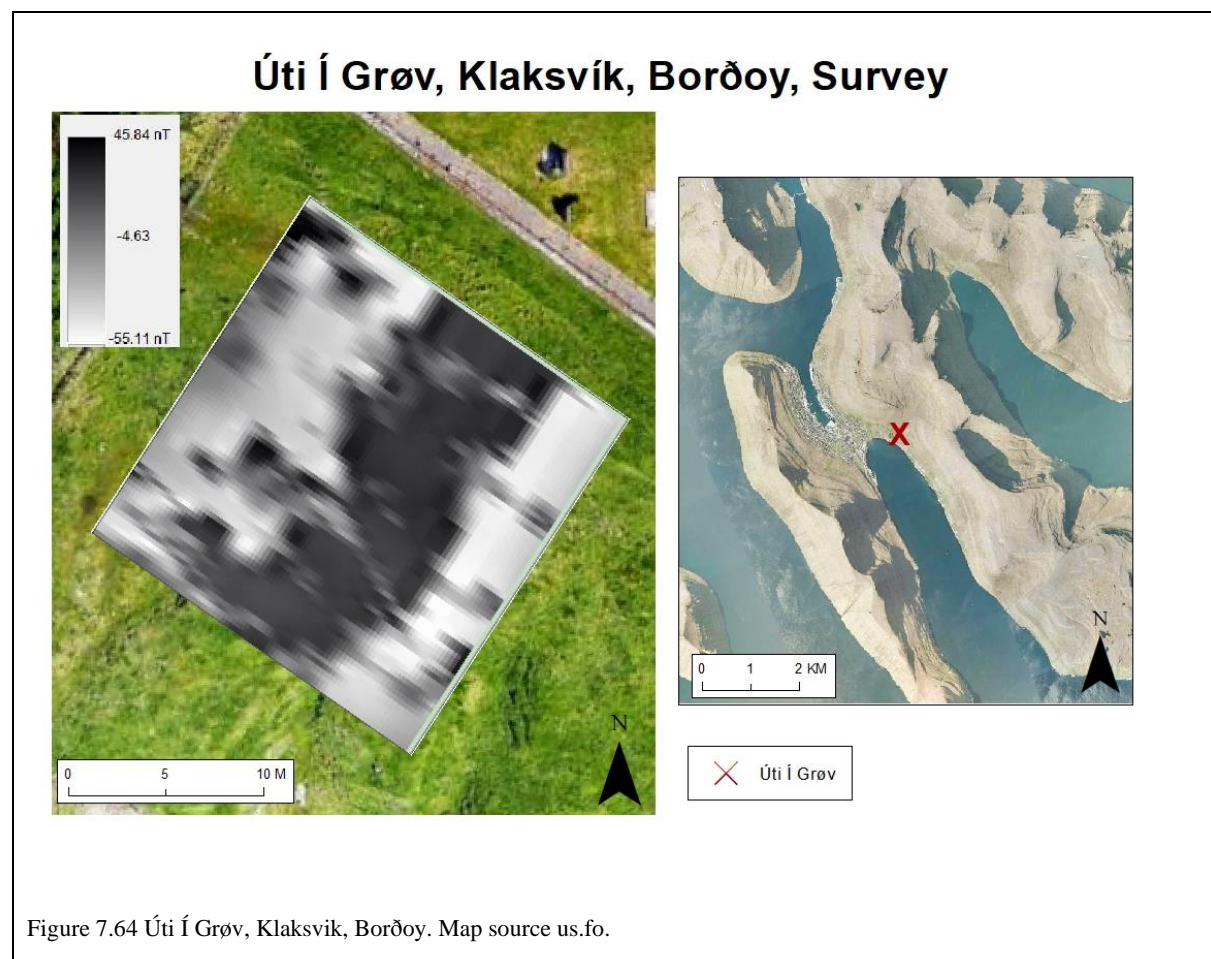
7.2.4.12 Úti Í Grøv, Klaksvík, Borðoy

The second location in Klaksvík was at Úti Í Grøv on the eastern side of the river Gravará and the probable Viking Age settlement. It was not possible to conduct a survey nearer to the river due to the modern plantation. Therefore, the survey was conducted south of the modern

cemetery. South of the cemetery in the site, there used to be a path from the city of Klaksvík leading east to the village of Norðoyrar. There were no signs on the surface of a path leading from Klaksvík to Norðoyrar.

It was considered that possible burials could be on the border of the settlement Úti Í Grøv, on the path leading to Oyrar. Towards the east, the strip of land narrows and therefore it was decided to set out one grid to locate possible burials (Figure 7.64).

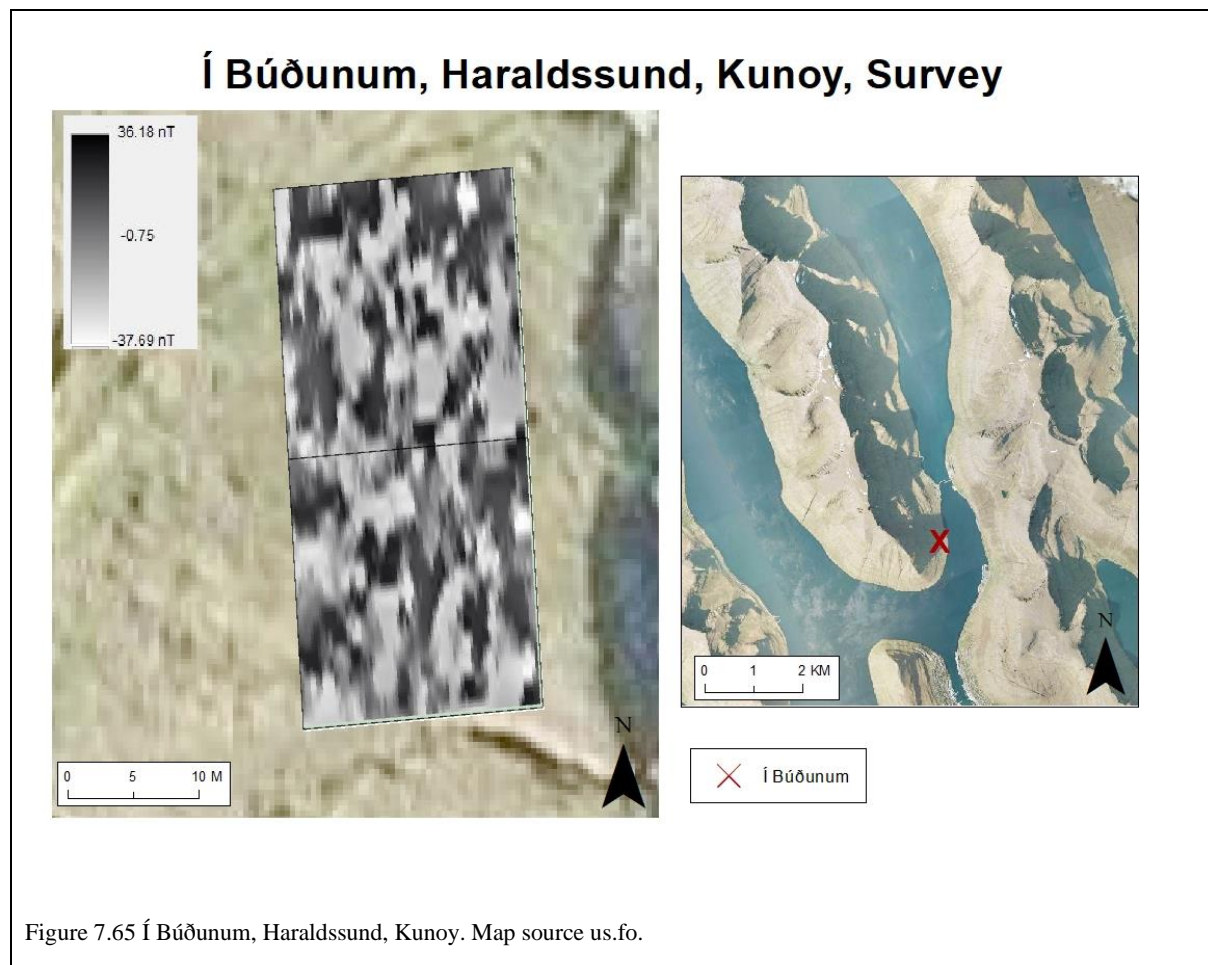
After the processing of the data there were clear indications of a large feature, which may be the road or path leading from Klaksvík to Oyrar. There are no signs of burials in the data results.



7.2.4.13 Í Búðunum, Haraldssund, Kunoy

The last site in this geophysical survey was on the island of Kunoy, south of the village of Haraldssund. The site is north of the settlement remains called Í Búðunum. Based on the location of the settlement remains and the topography of the landscape, two survey grids were surveyed north of the settlement remains (Figure 7.65).

In the results of the data was a lot of noise and there was no indication of any burials at the site.



7.2.5 Discussion of geophysical survey results

The geophysical survey revealed some interesting features, and the attempt to trial magnetometry in the northern islands was definitely worthwhile. However, the recognition of potential burials and other features was very hampered by the underlying geology. Therefore, it is not yet known which geophysical method is most suitable to the islands. In fact, the success

of different geophysical methods is highly dependent on the ground surface, bedrock, and soils on each island; they may need to be evaluated island by island. Therefore, this study represents an important and pioneering trial of the magnetometry method in the Faroe Islands.

The most promising, potential burial sites were those at Húsadeid and Norði Millum Garðar, in the villages of Kirkja on the island of Fugloy, and the sites Norðari Depil and Sunnari Depil in the village of Depil on the island of Borðoy. These were chosen for small-scale test excavations, the results of which will be concisely specified in the section below

7.3 Test Excavations

This section is about the small-scale test excavations conducted on selected sites on the islands of Fugloy and Borðoy. Prior to the test excavation, a geophysical survey had been conducted on selected sites with a magnetometer Bartington Grad 601-2 system. After processing the data, there were features in the sites which could be possible burial sites. The sites selected for test excavation were founded on the analysed results from the geophysical survey (Table 7.6, Figure 7.66). Since there was a lot of ‘noise’ in the geophysical results caused by the underlying geology, it was recognised prior to the test excavation that the underlaying could have affected the results. During the test excavation in the seasons of 2016 and 2017, this recognition became evident as there were no burials in the excavated test pits. The method and results from the small-scale test excavation are briefly described below. Detailed information is available in Appendix A15.

Table 7.6 List of test excavations 2016 and 2017.

Archaeological Site	Surveyed Site	Village/city	Island	Year
Húsadeild 1	Húsadeild	Kirkja	Fugloy	2016
Húsadeild 2	Húsadeild	Kirkja	Fugloy	2016
Mjølgerði 1	Norð Millum Garðar	Kirkja	Fugloy	2017
Mjølgerði 2	Norð Millum Garðar	Kirkja	Fugloy	2017
Mjølgerði 3	Norð Millum Garðar	Kirkja	Fugloy	2017
Depil 1	Sunnari Depil	Depil	Borðoy	2017
Depil 2	Sunnari Depil	Depil	Borðoy	2017
Depil 3	Norðari Depil	Depil	Borðoy	2017

Overview Test Excavations



Figure 7.66 Overview of test excavations in the northern islands. Map source us.fo.

7.3.1 Method

Permission to excavate these sites was received from both the National Museum in the Faroe Islands, Tjóðsavnið, and the landowners. The excavation method used for digging was the single context recording system (Diptych, Harriss and Dunwoodie, 1995; Connolly, 2009). After deturfing, each excavated layer or context was given a specific number and was described, photographed and drawn on a context sheet. If there were finds, these were labelled and bagged with their specific context number. The registration method followed the standard protocols of the National Museum in the Faroe Islands, Tjóðsavnið.

7.3.2 Húsadeild 1, Kirkja, Fugloy

The first test trench was at the site Húsadeild 1 on the surveyed site Húsadeild in the village of Kirkja on the island of Fugloy (Figure 7.67). Two trenches were opened at Húsadeild. The test excavation location was founded on the results from the geophysical survey, marked on the geophysical image (Figure 7.67). The first test trench was 1.30 x 1m. After deturfing it was evident with that the field had been levelled for hayfield production (Figure 7.68). The test excavation showed that the possible burial location marked out for test excavation on the geophysical image below was natural (Figure 7.69).

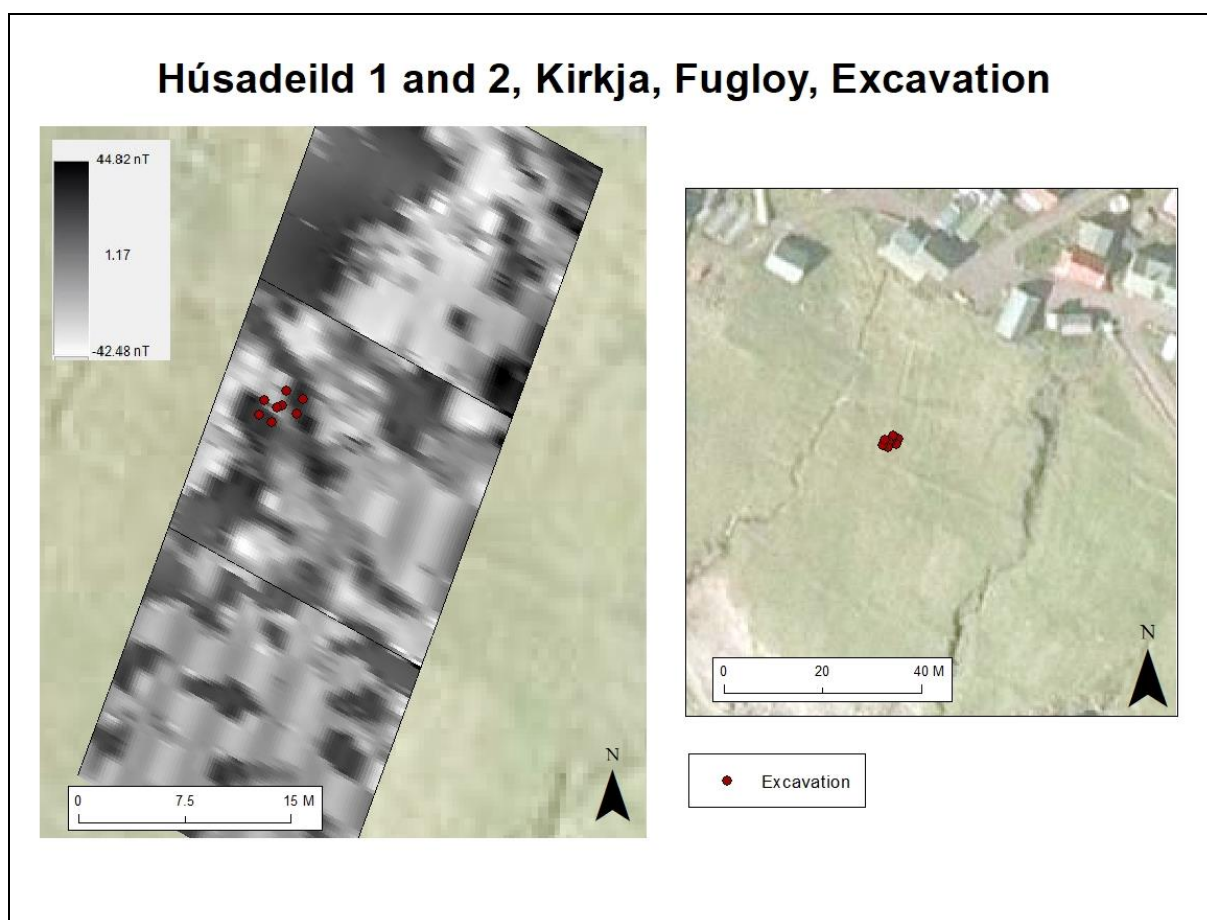


Figure 7.67 Húsadeild 1 and 2, Kirkja, Fugloy test excavations. Map source us.fo.



Figure 7.68 After deturfing the marks from levelling the field for cultivation was clear with spade marks. Seen towards north. August 2016.



Figure 7.69 Natural layer in the test excavations. Seen towards west. August 2016.

7.3.3 Húsadeild 2, Kirkja, Fugloy

The second test trench was at the site Húsadeild 2 and measured 1 x 1m. It was decided to focus on the second test trench south west of test trench Húsadeild I (Figure 7.67, Figure 7.72). The field slopes downhill towards the south and therefore the trench is deeper in the northern end (Figure 7.70). The test excavation showed that the possible burial location marked out for test excavation on the geophysical image below was natural (Figure 7.71). Since neither this test excavation nor the nearby one contained structures or burials, it was clear that the possible features seen in the geophysical survey results were caused by natural underlying geology.

To verify that this was the case, soil augering was conducted in the southern part of the geophysical survey area. The coring showed that the soil depth in this area varied between 30cm and 60cm, and there was no cultural material in the cores. It was therefore decided not to excavate further in the site Húsadeild.



Figure 7.70 Profile wall in Húsadeild 2. Seen towards the west. September 2016.



Figure 7.71 Final layer in test trench Húsadeild 2. Photo taken from the south towards the north. September 2016.



Figure 7.72 Overview of test excavations seen towards the south west. August 2016.

7.3.4 Mjølgerði 1, Kirkja, Fugloy

The second promising site was in the surveyed site Norði Millum Garðar in the village of Kirkja on the island of Fugloy. The northern part of this field is called Mjølgerði in Faroese and therefore the test trenches were labelled Mjølgerði 1, 2 and 3. Mjølgerði 1 is located on a levelled field, sloping downwards from the north towards the south. The area is used today for hayfield production and potato harvesting and during these activities whetstones and clay pipes have been found. The test excavation location was based on the results from the geophysical survey, marked on the geophysical image and extended further north (Figure 7.73).

Mjølgerði 1, 2 and 3, Kirkja, Fugloy, Excavation

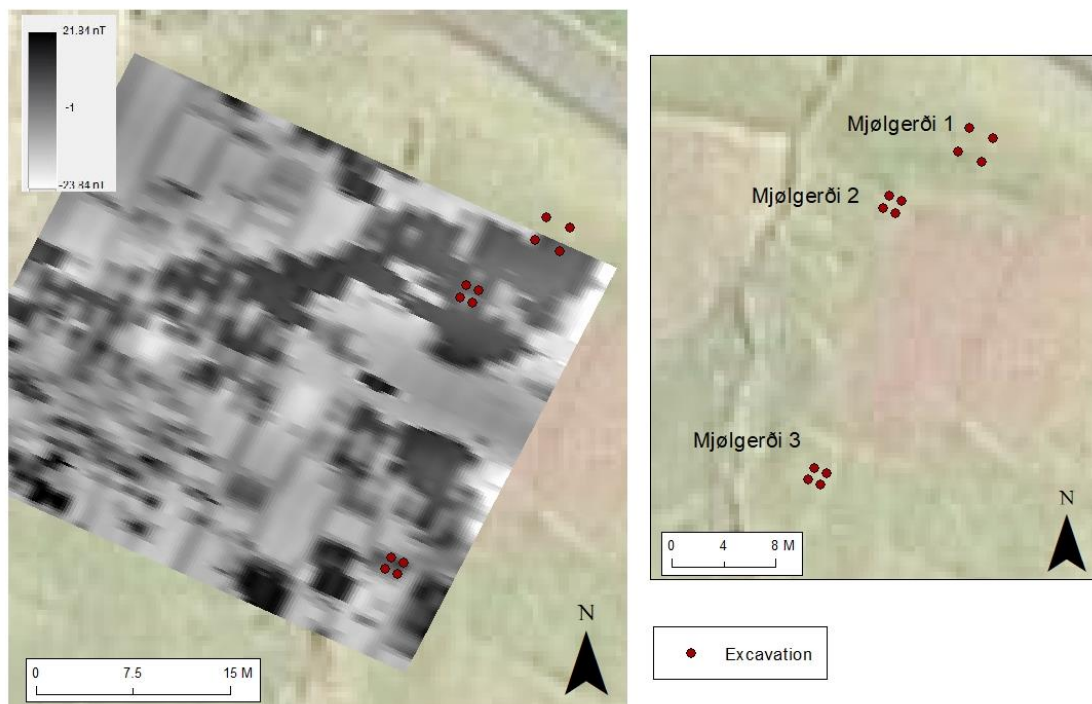


Figure 7.73 Mjølgerði 1, 2, and 3, Kirkja, Fugloy test excavations. Map source us.fo.



Figure 7.74 Collapsed stone wall at Mjølgerði 1, Kirkja, Fugloy. Seen towards the west. May 2017.

The excavation trench was 2 x 1m. During the excavation, several larger round stones began to emerge and during the excavation it was evident that the stones formed a stone wall, running east-west (Figure 7.74, Figure 7.75). The wall was disturbed, and had partly collapsed towards the south, possibly due to cultivation in the area. Although an interesting feature, especially if marking the boundary of a former settlement, the wall indicated that this was not a burial site, and the excavation was terminated.

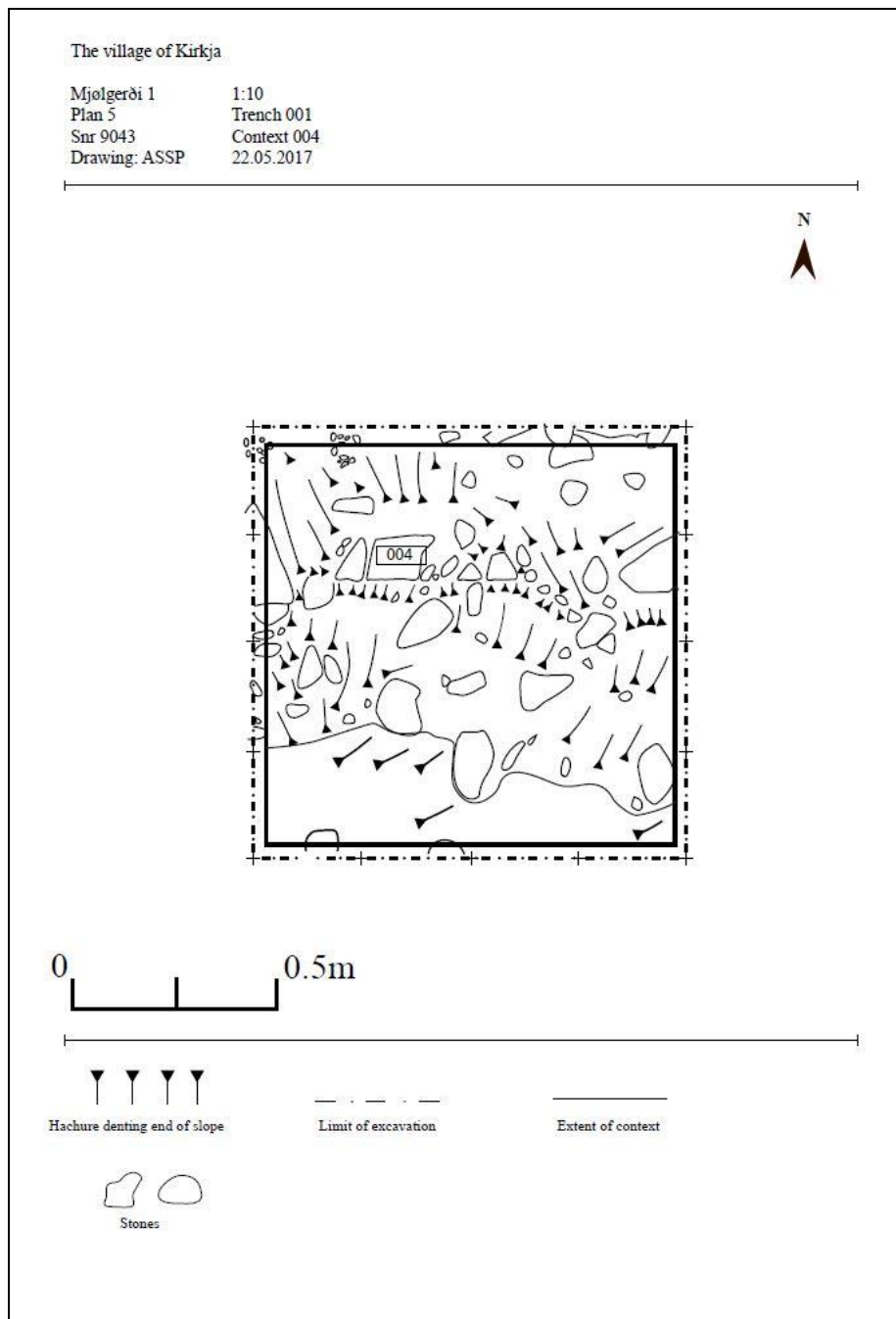


Figure 7.75 Plan of context 004, the collapsed dried stone wall. Digitised by Mari Haugesten.

7.3.5 Mjølgerði 2, Kirkja, Fugloy

The second test excavation at Norði Millum Garðar was carried out a few meters south of Mjølgerði 1. The field here slowly slopes downwards southwards. The test excavation location was based on the results from the geophysical survey, marked on the geophysical image (Figure 7.73). The test trench was 1 x 1m. During the excavation the test trench was filled with water, probably from the nearby stream west of the excavation. There was no structure in the burial, only randomly laid stones. The test excavation showed that the possible burial location marked out for test excavation on the geophysical image was natural (Figure 7.76).



Figure 7.76 Mjølgerði 2, Kirkja, Fugloy. Seen towards the north. Photo May 2017.

7.3.6 Mjølgerði 3, Kirkja, Fugloy

The third test excavation in Mjølgerði in Kirkja was also located based on the results of the geophysical survey, which showed a light anomaly which could be a burial (Figure 7.73). The field is in an area sloping down towards the south. The test trench was 1 x 1m. During the excavation a simple stone field drain was uncovered, with running water below it (Figure 7.77). There was a light anomaly in the geophysics results, but not extensive to be interpreted as a drainage field system. The excavation was therefore terminated, with no burial found (Figure 7.78).



Figure 7.77 Mjølgerði 3, lokarena. May 2017.

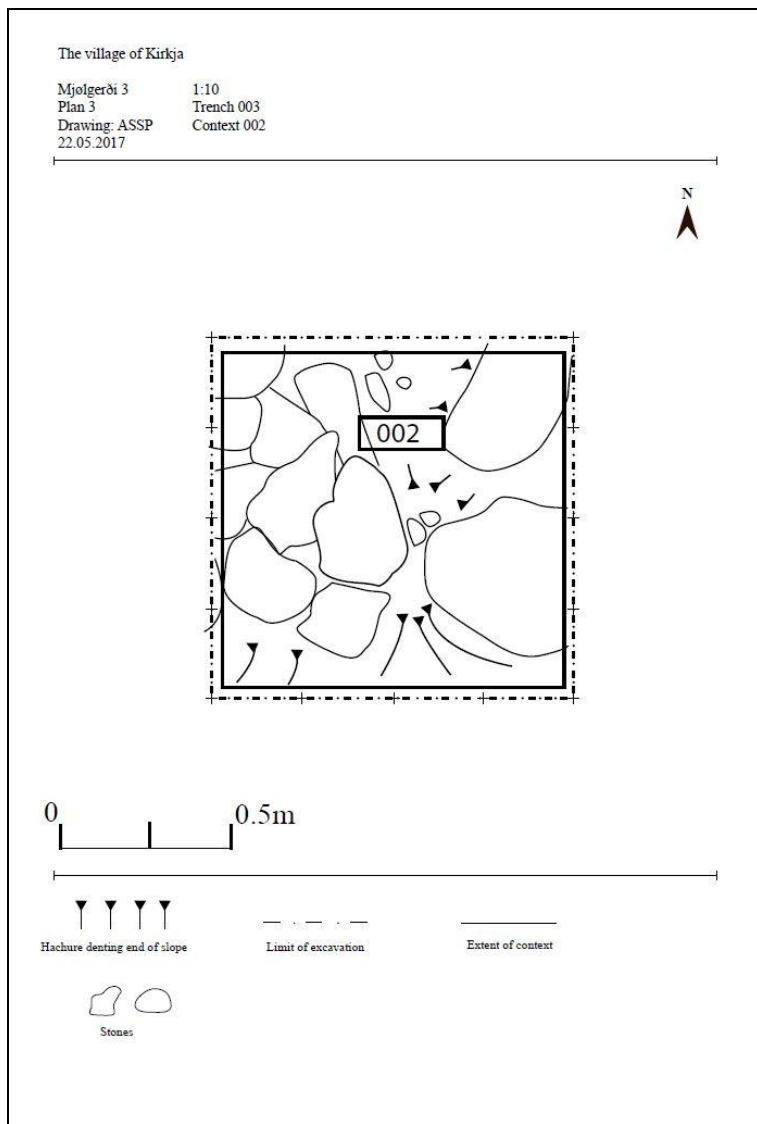


Figure 7.78 Plan of context 002. Digitised by Mari Haugesten.

7.3.7 Depil 1, Depil, Borđoy

On the surveyed site Sunnari Depil in the village of Depil two test trenches were selected for further test excavation. The first test trench was located on a hill sloping downwards the inlet in the east. The test trench was 1 x 1m. The site was selected based on the geophysical survey, which showed a clear anomaly for a possible burial (Figure 7.79). After deturfing, a large boulder became visible which soon filled the entire trench (Figure 7.80). The test excavation showed that the anomaly, which was interpreted to be a possible burial location on the geophysical result, was caused by a large boulder.

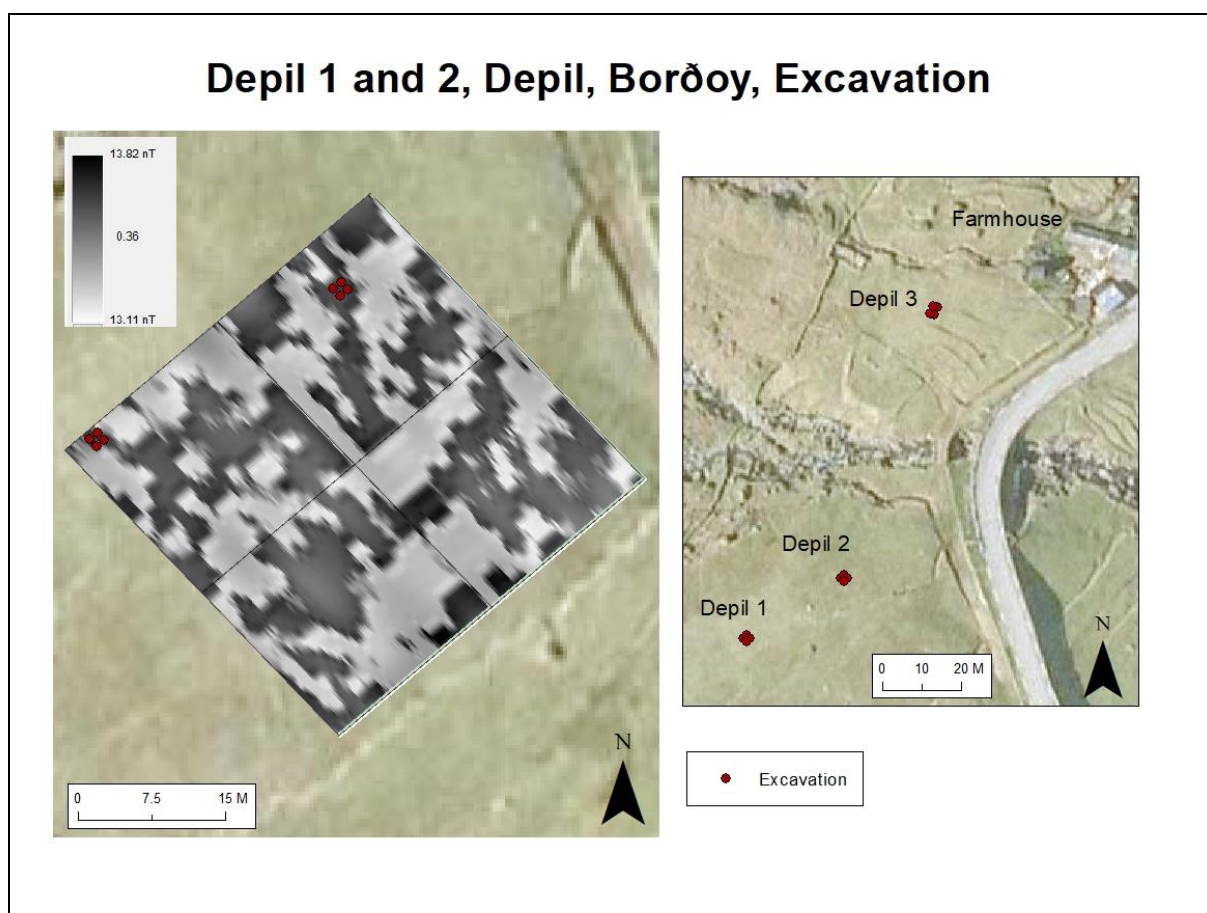


Figure 7.79 Depil 1 and 2, Depil, Borđoy, test excavations. Map source us.fo.



Figure 7.80 Depil 1, Depil, a large boulder. June 2017.

7.3.8 Depil 2, Depil, Borđoy

The second test excavation at Depil, Depil 2, was conducted on the southern side of the river Depilsáin, which sloped downhill towards the inlet in the east. The location was selected based on the results of the geophysical survey, which showed a clear anomaly for a possible burial location (Figure 7.79). The test trench was 1 x 1m. Soon after the deturfing, a large boulder surfaced. This boulder could not be moved, and the test pit excavation was terminated (Figure 7.81). Once again, the geophysical anomaly had clearly been created by the underlying geology and the near-surface boulder.



Figure 7.81 Depil 2, Depil, a large boulder. June 2017.

7.3.9 Depil 3, Depil, Borđoy

The last and final test excavation was conducted in the surveyed area Norðari Depil, which is on a hill sloping downwards towards the inlet to the east, with the farmhouse to the north and the river Depiláin to the south. The geophysical results appeared very promising, as there were possible structures in the field which could be location of a possible burial (Figure 7.82). Since the structure seemed to be large, a 2 x 1m test trench was opened. During the excavation it became clear that the possible burial location marked out for test excavation based on the geophysical image was natural soil and bedrock (Figure 7.83, Figure 7.84).

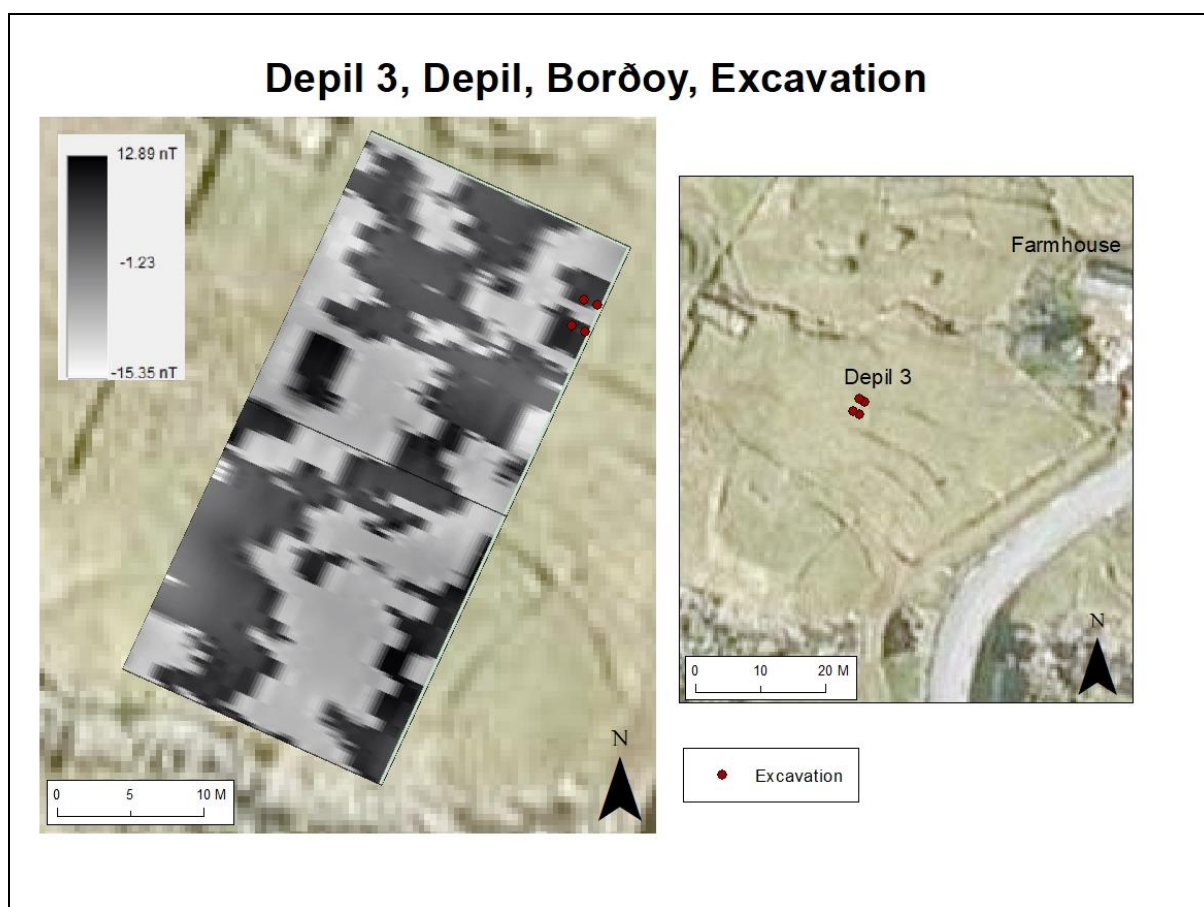


Figure 7.82 Depil 3, Depil, Borđoy, test excavation. Map source us.fo.



Figure 7.83 Depil 3, Depil, Seen towards the north. Natural bedrock. June 2017.



Figure 7.84 Depil 3, Depil, seen towards the south. June 2017.

7.4 Key Findings from Survey and Excavation Results

In this chapter I have addressed the research question on how and where to locate Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands and which methods we can use in getting closer of locating Viking Age burials in the Faroes. The results from the field survey brought forward several possibilities for Viking Age burial locations, based on the possibility for burial locations observed during the comparative research outlined in Chapter 6, the topography of the landscape, the relative location of Viking Age settlements, relevant archival evidence, the results of interviews with people in the villages and burial trends observed in Iceland (Maher, 1999; Friðriksson, 2013). The comparative study of burials in the North Atlantic and the study of verified, possible and probable burial locations in the Faroes became very important during this survey, as it was soon acknowledged that there were minor or no physical evidence on the ground for possible burial locations in the northern islands in the Faroe Islands. The traces of possible Viking Age burials have probably been lost due to disturbance, as most of the sites were disturbed by ploughing and digging drainage ditches for hayfields. Therefore, the traces or physical marks of a burial on the landscape, which could lead to a possible burial site, were

not visible. Consequently, possible burials are disturbed already. The lack of visible burials in the landscape could also be due to other reasons, for example different burial customs in the Faroes, burial locations, burial markers, or lack thereof.

During this research it is evident that there are several locations in the landscape, in where a Viking Age burial can be located. The most likely places for finding new burials are close to borders and communication routes, as seen at the known and verified Viking Age burial site at Yviri í Trøð. Likewise, potential places to find Viking Age burial sites are locations bordering on churchyards, as evidenced at the burial site Við Kirkjugarð close to a churchyard and the location of the burial site at Kirkjugarðurin in the village of Kirkja. The Viking Age burials could also extend under the churchyard, as observed during the excavation of the burials at Við Kirkjugarð. Additionally, the location of the burial site at Frammi í Garði in the island Svínø show that there are possibilities in locating new burials close to old farmsteads and below modern villages and gardens. Although the site Ólandsgarður in the island of Skúvoy, was not part of the landscape analysis due to its recent confirmation as a Viking Age burial site, the location of the site close to old settlement remains, additionally, prove that the Viking Age burial sites can be located close to farmsteads. According to local legend the cemetery at Ólandsgarður was used for people who died of the Black Death (Dahl, 1968, p. 192). The village in the island of Skúvoy is about 500 meters north of Ólandsgarður and in the village there are also ancient settlements (Tjóðsavnið, 1952b). Moreover, the find of the human bone on an eroding slope at the site Á Bønhúsfløtu in the village of Hvalba, which most likely is part of an early church site, indicate that the Viking Age burials can also be located at early church sites or adjoining early church sites. This research has therefore demonstrated that there are several possible locations for finding new Viking Age burials.

The decision regarding which areas to select for further geophysical analysis were based on several factors, for example topographic features in the landscape, possible Viking Age settlement, landscape borders, place names and legends, the landscape analysis of the North Atlantic burial sites in Chapter 6 and the location model developed in Iceland. Prior to the geophysical survey, a landscape analysis was conducted of the most promising sites selected for further examination, as this could help to identify possible burial locations in the landscape and refine the developed methodology for locating Viking Age burials in the landscape. The results from the geophysical survey uncovered some interesting features, but the identification

of potential burials was very impeded by the underlying geology. Based on the geophysical survey, the most promising sites were selected for further test excavations. At this stage it was not known how successful the selected sites for further test excavations would be.

The results from the test excavation show that the anomalies from the geophysical survey can be both cultural and natural. At the sites Mjølgerði 1 and Mjølgerði 2, there was clear evidence of cultural structures, with a collapsed stone wall and a simple drainage structure. The remaining test trenches only had natural bedrock and large boulders in them. This demonstrates that it is possible to use the magnetometer in the Faroe Islands, but it also shows that the magnetometer needs to be refined and developed according to the Faroese magnetic geological landscape.

With these new and interesting results from the field survey, geophysical survey, and the test excavations, the focus will be on the discussion of the results and the project as a whole in Chapter 8.

Chapter 8 Discussion

This dissertation has focussed on the questions of where and how more Viking Age burials can be located in the Faroe Islands, and whether an understanding of their physical locations in the landscape can help us understand more about how the Viking Age settlers of the Faroe Islands viewed their world. I sought to understand in greater depth than had previously been attempted the two excavated Viking Age cemeteries at Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð. In addition, by analysing their landscape contexts in detail, I aimed to better understand how burial sites could be identified in the Faroese landscape, and the potential significance of the precise location of burial sites in the landscape. I used a new, interdisciplinary methodology to attempt to identify additional burials and probable burials, and, by comparing all of the burials in the Faroe Islands with Viking Age burials in Norway, Iceland and the Northern Isles of Scotland, I explored the extent to which the settlers of the Faroe Islands arrived with preconceptions of how burials should be sited, and the extent to which the particularities of the Faroese landscape changed their views of how the dead should be emplaced. In this chapter, these research questions are directly addressed through a discussion of the results presented in Chapters 4-7.

The chapter is structurally divided into three main sections. Section 8.1 focuses on my reassessment and interpretation of the two excavated Viking Age burials sites Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð, including their composition and structure, their location in the landscape, their relationship to other landscape features and their former (Viking Age) visibility in the landscape. To understand the ritual context of the cemeteries as a whole, evidence for grave goods, animal parts, Viking Age or medieval disturbance is compared with Viking Age burials in the Northern Isles of Scotland, Iceland and northwest Norway.

The second section, 8.2, focuses on the question of where Viking Age burials are located, and why they are currently invisible in the Faroese landscape compared to burials in northwest Norway, the Northern Isles of Scotland and Iceland. Through a comparative discussion the wider trends in the Viking Age burial locations in the surrounding regions are brought to the fore, and I discuss the extent to which the Faroese adapted and modified these trends. Moreover, section, 8.2, considers how an understanding of burials in their landscape contexts can help us to refine our understanding of the beliefs of Viking Age people in the Faroe Islands, and how they perceived their world.

The last section, 8.3, focuses on the original interdisciplinary method which I developed as part of this research project, the first ever to dedicate itself to trying to locate and understand Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands. The discussion will be a frank evaluation, with the benefits of hindsight, about the effectiveness of the different methodological strands I pursued to gain information about possible new burial sites. This chapter concludes with an evaluation of the results and a critical assessment of the method and theory applied during this study.

8.1 Re-evaluation of the Known Burial Sites at Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð

In this first section, the discussion focusses on the re-evaluation of the cemeteries at Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð. In Chapter 4, the excavations conducted by Sverri Dahl at Yviri í Trøð, and Niels Hartman and Símun V. Arge at Við Kirkjugarð were presented in detail, including the excavations methods, descriptions of the burials and their content. With so few verified Viking Age burial locations, and the material from the burial sites at Yviri í Trøð and við Kirkjugarð not fully assessed, there had been a gap in our knowledge about the landscape of death: the burial practices and ritual performances on the Faroe Islands. With the re-analysis of these two burial sites, new ideas emerged on ritual activities and the meaning and significance of burial locations in the Faroe Islands, including whether these sites followed pagan or Christian religious practices.

8.1.1 Interpretations of the ritual activities at Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð

The burial sites at Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð provide physical evidence of transitional processes and rites, ritual activities and performances. Funerary rites and their length and meaning varies from one burial context to another. The whole process of a funeral begins with the loss of a person, although the preparations of a funeral can begin prior to the death of the person (Nordeide, 2015, p. 179). As a person dies and leaves the community, the social and economic roles of the individuals in the community or society are re-distributed (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 335). Therefore, the death of an individual is part of a life-crisis ritual (Turner, 1967, pp. 7–8). In their context, Viking Age funerals have social embedded meaning, being social affairs for social gatherings and possibly even some performances (Price, 2010, 2014).

A funeral is often considered to be a transitional phase, encompassing rites of passage from life to death (Gennep, 2010, p. 11). This transition can be thought of as a liminal period, in which the individual is in a state of betwixt and between (Turner, 1979, p. 224). In the Viking Age,

the grave could be left open and various funerary rites (and the liminal period of the deceased) would continue over a protracted period of time, as suggested by Gansum and Price (Gansum and Oestigaard, 1999, p. 83; Gansum and Risan, 1999; Gansum and Oestigaard, 2004, p. 69; Price, 2008, p. 267, 2014, p. 179). In this sense it is possible that the burial of a person is not a single act or event, but part of a large-scale social participation and complex performances, where a ritual takes time (Gansum and Oestigaard, 2004, p. 69; Price, 2014, p. 186). This is opposite to the idea that there is always a final rite of separation, when the grave is closed, and often marked in some way (Gennep, 2010, p. 164). From this point of view it could be argued that the disturbances of burials are part of the ritual processes (cf. Price, 2008b, p. 270, 2014, p. 186). The larger scale of breaking into burials has been observed at several burial mounds such as Osebergshaugen and Gokstadshaugen in Norway, where it is significant that the disturbance of the mounds and the burial chamber probably lasted several days and were possibly part of a staged public event and even conceivably part of the same operation (Gansum and Risan, 1999, p. 71; Price, 2008, pp. 269–270; Bill and Daly, 2012, pp. 813–815, 818; Gansum, 2018, p. 717). This gives a more varied and wide-ranging image of the ritual performances and mortuary behaviour taking place at the burial sites, prior to the interment of one or several persons and possible animals, while these were interred and in the period after the interment of the person/s and animals. This supports the work in interpreting and understanding the archaeological material from the burial sites at Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð.

At Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð the individuals were buried together in cemeteries, which shows that death was a social affair. The repeated use of the cemeteries signifies that the places were remembered, embedded in the landscape and part of an active and social community – it was part of a narrative (Tilley, 1994, p. 82). In a social event funeral rites may vary, and conceptions of the afterword, the person's sex, age and social position can change the funeral rites (Jonsson, 2007, p. 43; Gennep, 2010, p. 146; Friðriksson, 2013, p. 335; Dawn, 2008, p. 282).

The Viking Age funerary rites practised in the Faroe Islands can be seen through the material at both Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð, especially in the specific selection of the burial grounds and in the making and closing of the graves. At Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð there are no written sources or memorial stones to provide information as to why these places were

chosen as burial grounds. The location of the burials can be influenced by the deceased's social status, land ownership, eventual inheritance, gender relations, honor, territorial disputes, or any other social aspect that can be expressed, manipulated, imposed, modified or abandoned (Friðriksson, 2013, pp. 335–336; cf. boat burials Nordeide, 2015). The importance of the topographical locations of the cemeteries is discussed in greater depth in section 8.2, but here it is relevant to point out the possible significance of previous uses of a site in the choice of burial ground. The burial site of Við Kirkjugarð had been cultivated prior to its usage as a cemetery. To locate burials on arable land can be seen as a symbolic statement of status and an important attribute of burials, in which the community or leader had enough wealth to let arable land be used for a cemetery (Moen, 2019, p. 207). In this sense, the soil in the land used in the burials can be conceived as part of the ritual offering to the burials. Moreover, the act of breaking the soil, farming the land and using it to provide food for the community could potentially impart symbolic meaning and significance to the ground itself, giving it a new cultural context that was in turn significant in the burial rites (Gansum, 2004, pp. 233–235). It is also possible that the traces of cultivation were created by ritual ploughing, as argued by Dommasnes (1991, p. 57) for early Iron Age mounds in Scandinavia. Seen from this perspective, the burial ground at Við Kirkjugarð was either carefully selected or carefully prepared for the interment of the dead, and the landscape may itself have been seen as an agent, or active participant, in the burial rites.

The burial ground at Yviri í Trøð, in contrast, had no marks of previous usage for cultivation or fishing activities. The burials appear to have been set in a natural but liminal place, in a sand dune on the border between the infield and the outfield. From the records of the Sverri Dahl excavation, it is evident that the sand dune had been a prominent natural feature (Dahl, 1957a). The sand dune may have been selected as a burial ground because it was elevated and resembled a burial mound. In early medieval England, for example it was not unusual to use natural prominent features (Williams, 2006, p. 194). In addition, the location of the cemetery on a physical border – the edge of the agricultural land – may have signified the presence of a mental or symbolic border – a border between the living and the dead.

The layout and orientation of the burials within the cemeteries might also have been significant. At Við Kirkjugarð, for example, the orientation of all the burials was east-west, with the head in the west looking east. Additionally, they were placed in parallel rows. Although in the

Viking Age the individual in the burial could be placed in any direction, the parallel, well-organised layout of the burials, and their consistent orientation, could points towards an early Christian influence at Við Kirkjugarð. At certain places in Scandinavia, influences of Christian mortuary practice have also been observed in Viking Age burials, such as in Finnhæiði, in Sweden, where an east-west orientation was introduced in around AD 1000 (Svanberg, 2003, p. 160). At Yviri í Trøð, the burials were not as well organised as Við Kirkjugarð and the orientation of the burials mainly followed a north-south orientation. Burial VI, on the other hand, was oriented east-west. Further aspects of pagan and Christian religious practices are discussed in section 8.1.3.1.

Included in the burials at the cemeteries at Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð were objects and animal remains. Objects can be commemorative in different ways, and in burials can articulate social relationships and interactions between the living and the dead (Williams, et al., 2010, p. 3). At Yviri í Trøð most of the objects were of highly corroded iron and were difficult to identify. In burials III and XII iron roves were found, and in burial I a ring-headed pin, on which was engraved an image of three interlocked triangles called *valknútur* in Faroese (Figure 8.1, Figure 8.2).



Figure 8.1 Ring-headed pin from burial 1, Yviri í Trøð, Tjørnuvík.



Figure 8.2 Engraved image of interlocked triangles on ring-headed pin.



Figure 8.3 Picture Stone from Gotland, Viking Age. Photo Ola Myrin, SHMM. (SHMM; Kringla; Myrin, 2017).



Figure 8.4 Torshammare i kedja from Öland i Bredsättra. Photo:SHM (Kringla.nu; SHM, 1995).

The image of three interlocked triangles has been interpreted as referring to the death cult of Óðinn (Simek, 2007, p. 163). This interpretation relates to a story about the giant Hrungnir, who challenged Óðinn to a horse race and afterwards died in battle with Þórr (Simek, 2007, pp. 161–162). In *Skáldskaparmál* 14, Hrungir's heart is made of stone and is pointed in three corners (Simek, 2007, p. 163). One interpretation of the symbol is seen on the Gotlandic Picture Stone with interlocked triangles between the horse legs (Simek, 2007, p. 163; circled in fig. 8.3). This interpretation has been criticised as being overly speculative (Tietz, 2012, p. 140). Instead, it has been suggested that *valknútur* could refer to Þórr (Tietz, 2012, p. 140), since interlocked triangles (albeit somewhat different in style) were found on a Thor's hammer in a Viking Age cemetery in Bredsättra, Öland (Figure 8.4) (Tietz, 2012, p. 140). In addition, the symbol of three interlocked triangles is also seen on other artefacts from the Viking Age, such as on a buckle in the Viking Age Vårby hoard from Sweden (Schnell, 1946, pp. 10–11), on a ring-headed pin from Iceland (Eldjárn, 2016, p. 378) and on a wooden piece in the Faroes from the village of Fuglafjørður. It is not certain what the symbol means, but it was certainly known from numerous parts of the Viking world in pre-Christian contexts. At Yviri í Trøð there was

also evidence of animal remains in burials III, XI, XII and possibly in burial VIII. The animal parts and species are not specified in the report. A single burned sheep bone was found in burial XII, and unburnt ‘large mammal’ (cow or horse) bones were also observed by Sverri Dahl in burials XI and XII, but these bones were not kept in storage and the species is not known. Therefore, even though it is impossible to identify the corroded iron objects in the burials at Yviri í Trøð, and it is difficult to judge their meaning, the presence of the *valknútur* on the ring-headed pin, and the presence of animal remains, seems to suggest a pagan context. Additionally, at Við Kirkjugarð in burial J6C, a large charcoal fragment was found by the right shoulder. The funeral practices of burying a person with charcoal is also seen in the Late Anglo-Saxon Period in England (ninth century) and in medieval cemeteries in Scandinavia (eleventh century) (Jonsson, 2007; Holloway, 2009). It has been suggested that the charcoal was used in a variable manner. Charcoal could express social status, delimit the space of the grave, preserve the grave, and had the significance for cleansing and exorcising (Jonsson, 2007; Holloway, 2009). These ideas regarding ritual practices of charcoal could indicate that charcoal was used as part of a mortuary drama and most likely story-telling at the burial sites in the Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð.

At Við Kirkjugarð preservation was better and several artefacts were found in the burials. These demonstrate that when the individuals were interred, ritual activities took place. For example, in Burial J5A there were fragments of a bone comb with bronze rivets, a possible wooden bowl and an iron knife (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 33). In burial J6B a possible box was placed on the individual, which contained a purse with three sets of weights, hack silver fragments, a decorated bronze fragment with an interlaced motif, and another corroded bronze fragment. In addition to these artefacts were a buckle with the possible remains of a leather strap, a bronze ring, a knife, and a knife sheath (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 36). The ring resembles that from a ring-headed pin, and it is possible that this ring was fastened to the clothes of the individual. The possible leather belt was located around the waist and it is likely that the knife and knife shaft were attached to the belt. On the strap end was the ornamentation of an animal head (Figure 8.5).

Numerous animal remains were also found in association with the burials at Við Kirkjugarð. The animal species were unfortunately not identified, but in burial J6B, for example, an animal tooth was found, in burial J6C an animal tooth and jaw fragment were found, and animal teeth

were found at the bottom of burial K5A (Hartmann, 1989a, col. Oldsagslister). Additionally, in burial K5B several damaged and corroded iron objects were found and unidentified animal bones were found close to the thighbone.



Figure 8.5 The animal head on the strap end.
Photo Jógvan Fróði G. Hansen, 2018,
Tjóðsavnið.

The use of animals or animal parts in a burial show that they were not only significant in daily life, but also in death. During the excavation at Yviri í Trøð, Sverri Dahl observed several burnt pieces of bone, as well as ashes (Dahl, 1959a). If the burnt bones were from animals that had been intentionally sacrificed and cremated, is possible that many of the bones were crushed after cremation. Experiments in cremating lambs show that when bones are crushed after cremations, they are hard to identify and to recover during an excavation (Sigvallius, 1994, pp. 25–26). The study also showed that after a complete mammal body is cremated on a pyre, if the bones are not intentionally crushed afterwards, they tend to be fairly complete (Sigvallius, 1994, p. 27). Since no complete cremated animals were found at Yviri í Trøð, the burnt bones were probably produced elsewhere, most likely in the village. Additionally, if bones are buried with soot and charcoal, the bones will take on/become a greyish colour (Sigvallius, 1994, p.

32). Since the sheep bone in burial XII was not found together with soot and charcoal, it was probably handpicked from a cremation pyre or domestic hearth, and specially selected for the burial.

In Norse mythology, sheep do not seem to have the same importance as goats, horses, dogs, and pigs. On the other hand, the abundant presence of sheep bones in archaeological contexts indicates the sheep's social and cultural importance (Jennbert, 2002, p. 106, 2004b, pp. 161–162). In a study of cremated burials in North Spånga in Sweden, sheep bones have been found in all cemeteries, although the number of sheep decline in cremation burials from the Viking Age (Sigvallius, 1994, p. 72). It is not unusual to find animals bones in Viking Age burials in the wider North Atlantic and in Scandinavia. Part of the burial rituals were animals such as horse, sheep, goat, pig, dog, cat, bear, fish, poultry and birds of prey, which were used in multiple ways and variations (Shetelig, 1945, p. 33; Thorsteinsson, 1965, p. 167; Ramskou, 1976, p. 107; Gräslund, 1980, p. 40-45; Jennbert, 2002, pp. 110, 114; Richards et al., 2004, p. 30; Allmäe, 2011, p. 97; Eldjárn, 2016, p. 301; Sigvallius, 1994, p.61; Pétursdóttir, 2010, p. 184). In the account by Ibn Faḍlān, who witness a Viking (Rus) burial by the river Volga, there are descriptions of the sacrifices of animals (Montgomery, 2000, p. 16). In the Viking Age, animals were part of Nordic pre-Christian rituals and they feature in mythological and cosmological beliefs recorded in numerous sources (Jennbert, 2002, p. 105, 2004a, p. 195). Animals were also sacrificed outside of funerary contexts (e.g. at Hofstaðir, in Iceland; (Lucas and McGovern, 2007, p. 7), and were placed on, in and below the walls of houses (Carlisle, 2016, 2017, p. 258). Although there is no evidence for the sacrifice and interment of whole animals as part of the burial rites at Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð, as has been found in Scandinavia and Iceland, the usage of sheep and other animals' body parts in the burials should be viewed in this wider context of animal sacrifice and ritual use in a non-Christian world-view.

The variety of artefacts and animals used in Viking Age burials is also seen in the Viking Age burials in Iceland, the Northern Islands of Scotland and northwestern Norway. In the Faroese Viking Age excavated burials, there are no large weapons, shields, fittings for horses, or large brooches, all of which are rather common in burials in Iceland, Scotland and Scandinavia. In the archives, there are occasionally hints of unusual stray finds, such as coins and rings found during cultivation. Two such finds were discovered close to the village of Tvøroyri á Bø outside

the churchyard during cultivation. The circumstances related to the find are not well known, but allegedly a man once found an iron axe and sword. The find was not officially reported, and the exact location is not known; it could be on either side of the churchyard or above the churchyard (Tjóðsavnið, 1952e). Since the artefacts are now missing, it is not possible to typologically date the axe and the sword, but it is possible that these were part of a burial, the location of which is now lost.

In addition to the use of artefacts and animals in the ritual activities associated with the act of burying the dead, there is evidence of ritual activities near the burials. At Við Kirkjugarð, for example, a possible sheep burial was found close to the burials in structure H6A (Hartmann, 1990, p. 7, 38). Close to burial K5A between the stones in the construction, there was a large amount of peat ash (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 38). Additionally, there were peat ash spots, wood charcoal and unidentified burned bone in the fill of burial K5A, indicating that this material had been present on the ground surface and was redeposited in the grave fill when the grave was finally closed (Hartmann, 1989b, p. 38). At Yviri í Trøð, the deposition of charcoal took place at the burials at areas marked X6, X7 and X8 on fig 4.57. It is not clear from the stratification recorded in the excavation whether these ash and charcoal deposits were part of the funeral rites or whether they represent nearby activities before, during, or after the funeral.

The mortuary practices distinguished through the archaeological record at both Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð reinforce the view of Viking Age burials demonstrating individual character and not a standard burial practice (Price, 2012, p. 257). Evidence of ritual practices in the archaeological burial record are often more varied than those described in the written sources and in Norse mythology (Jennbert, 2002, p. 108). Part of the ritual performances and mortuary drama was the burial site and the landscape settings with its visibility. The selection of the burial site is most often a conscious choice, where archaeologically the landscape then becomes part of the source material to be studied (cf. Gansum and Risan, 1999, p. 60). At Yviri í Trøð, the ritual performances unfolded on a small ridge, on the border of the cultivated infield area, close to a stream, with a view towards the village, the seashore and landing site, enclosed by high mountains. In the village of Tjørnuvík, a medieval building has been excavated (Thorsteinsson, 1982, p. 155), although there are most likely Viking Age settlements below the modern settlement. At Við Kirkjugarð, the section of the burial ground was most likely on recently cultivated land, as suggested during the archaeological excavation (Hartmann, 1990b).

Additionally, the burial site was close to archaeologically verified Viking Age settlements and activity areas in a landscape with a view towards the sea, the Viking Age settlements and the low-lying hills and mountains (Arge and Hartmann, 1989; Arge, 2001; Arge et al., 2009; Arge et al., 2010; Løve, 2019). The setting of the funerary drama and the ritual performances took place in two very different landscape settings, but at both locations there was visibility towards the sea and the settlement.

As discussed in Chapter 4, there is evidence from Við Kirkjugarð and Yviri í Trøð that burials at both of these sites were marked with stones, for example the Yviri í Trøð burials I-XII, and the Við Kirkjugarð burials J6E, J6F, J6B, J6C, J5A, K5A, K5C, K5C, K5E and K5D. The main evidence for this was the layout of the burials, and the fact that they did not cut into each other. The large burial structures of burial J6B at Við Kirkjugarð and the burial structure in burial I at Yviri í Trøð indicate that these burials would have been visible a while after the persons were interred. There was no evidence at the site that the burials were marked with a carved piece of wood. As some of the burials were visible and marked in the cemeteries, the knowledge of their location was known, and their visibility in the landscape could have led to the disturbance of a burial at Yviri í Trøð.

8.1.2 Disturbance of burials

Another element of extended funerary behaviour is the practice of disturbance or re-opening burials, which is seen frequently in the archaeological record of Scandinavia and the North Atlantic region. At several archaeological sites in Norway, mounds have been disturbed in antiquity after their construction, for example Grønhaug at Karmøy, the Borre mounds, the Oseberg mound and the Gokstand mound (Shetelig, 1912; Brøgger, 1945; Myhre, 1994, p. 70). Additionally, the re-opening events were quite extensive, which implies that it would have taken several days to re-open then and therefore people would have noticed it (Brøgger, 1945, p. 15). In examining disturbed mounds, A. W. Brøgger concluded that people who disturbed the mounds not only sought the valuables, but also sought to use something from the burial, an object, which was important for the ancestor relations (Brøgger, 1945, p. 41). It has been noted since the early 20th century that Viking Age burial mounds were sometimes disturbed or re-opened in antiquity, and since some individuals in disturbed burials were dismembered, Brøgger and Shetelig suggested that the deceased would not be able to disturb the living (Brøgger, 1945, p. 43; Brøgger and Shetelig, 1950, pp. 93–94).

Another way of interpreting the phenomenon of disturbing or re-opening a burial is that the community was attempting to make changes to the embeddedness, agency and/or power of the burial location and the individual(s) in it. For example, removal of artefacts from a burial could demonstrate a shift in power relations, in a symbolic and public act, by re-opening the mound, destroying the burial and taking the artefacts (Myhre, 1994, p. 79). A re-opening of a burial mound might also have been used to transfer and legitimate power, but also symbolically to break the power the deceased had (Myhre, 1994, p. 80). It is likely that the reopening of burials was often conducted soon after the original interment (Price, 2008b, p. 269, 2014). In Iceland, 90 percent of all known burials have been disturbed at least once, but it is difficult to date the events (Friðriksson, 2013, pp. 135–136). In the burial context, different patterns have been observed, for example, damage to burials, damage or removal of all or part of the burial assemblage, changes to the disposition of the skeleton, and new inclusions in the burial (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 136). For example, the burials at Saltvík (Friðriksson and Gestsdóttir et al., 2005), Lítlu-Núpar (Friðriksson and Gestsdóttir et al., 2005b, p. 8) and Daðastaðaleiti (Friðriksson and McGovern et al., 2009, p. 11) were disturbed between the tenth and thirteenth centuries (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 137).

In the review of Burial V at Yviri í Trøð, it was evident that this burial had been disturbed in antiquity (Dahl, 1957b; Dahl, 1983). The northern end of the burial was deliberately disturbed and the head of the deceased placed between the knees (Dahl, 1957b). It is not known if the individual in burial V was beheaded prior to being buried, or if the placing of the head was part of rituals after the funeral. Burial V could also be defined as a ‘deviant burial’, one that is unusual in some way (even in a Viking Age context, in which each burial can be described as unique), relative to the ‘normal’ burial ritual in a certain period, region and cemetery. They may or may not include apotropaic rituals intended to avert evil or bad luck (cf. Aspöck, 2008, p. 17; Gardela, 2013a, p. 120). The removing of the head could help to ‘kill’ or incapacitate the dead person further, so preventing them from haunting the living as animated corpses. In this sense, the beheading could also be seen as a violent act of self-defence (Gardela, 2013b, pp. 130–131). In a study of decapitation in Viking Age Scandinavia, Gardela observed several instances where the head was placed in the leg area, for example at Ljungbacka, grave 1 from Lockarp and grave T from Bogøvej. Additionally, Gardela draws parallels between this burial custom and archaeological material from the Slavic areas (Gardela, 2013b, p. 130).

Burial disturbances and head placements that bear a resemblance to burial V at Yviri í Trøð can be found in Old Norse literature as well as the Viking Age archaeological record of Scandinavia. In *Laxdæla saga* and *Grettis saga Ásmundarsonar*, for example, the buried persons *Hrappur*, *Kár hinn gamli* and *Glámr* continue to cause trouble (Winther, 1977, pp. 45, 86; Magnusson and Pállson, 1983, p. 78). After *Kár hinn gamli* and *Glámr* are defeated by *Grettir*, he places their heads close to their rumps (likely between their thighs, but it is not specified in the text) (Winther, 1977, pp. 46, 93). *Hrappur* body is dug up at the farmhouse and buried far away from paths or pastures, where people travelled (Magnusson and Pállson, 1983, p. 78). Decapitated individuals are not often seen in Viking Age burials, but earlier research has shown that it occurred in Denmark and Sweden at places such as Tissø, Lejre and Stengade in Denmark (Skaarup, 1972, pp. 4–9; Bennike, P. and Christoffersen, 1981, pp. 11–12; Gardela, 2013a, p. 111, cf. 2013b). At Tissø, two individuals were decapitated, who had their heads placed between their legs (Bennike, P. and Christoffersen, 1981, p. 11), at Lejre and Stengade there were two double burials, where one of the interred was decapitated (Skaarup, 1972, pp. 6–8). The disturbance of burial V at Yviri í Trøð caused damage to the burial and therefore it is not known what, if anything, is missing from the burial, for example which artefacts were in the burial prior to disturbance and how many individuals were in the burial. In addition, it is not known when the burial was disturbed or whether it was disturbed multiple times.

The re-opening or disturbance of burial V at Yviri í Trøð can also potentially be linked to different religious practices. For example, it could have been an act of remembrance of the dead, to commemorate the dead, or to involve the dead in a new performance or community story-telling event. It is possible that when there was activity at the cemetery it, or those buried in it, were remembered, and the stories attached to the cemetery and its occupants may have been re-told. The re-opening could also at the same time reference other disturbed burials in the Scandinavian homeland or the North Atlantic region.

8.1.3 Re-use and Continuity

At Við Kirkjugarð and a few other probable cemeteries, for example in the village of Kirkja, the cemeteries continued as Christian cemeteries. The re-use of ancient burial sites and monuments is not an unknown practice in the Viking Age and early medieval period, and it has been interpreted as providing a link to the past and to a community's ancestors (Williams, 1997; Arnold, 2002, p. 132; Artelius, 2004, pp. 102–103; Pedersen, 2006; Thäte, 2007a). In

Denmark, for example, in the village of Hørning, an early wooden church from the late Viking Age/early medieval period was built on a levelled burial mound. When the mound was levelled, the chamber burial under the mound was not destroyed (Krogh and Voss, 1960, p. 11, 1961, p. 7,24). Additionally Viking Age burials have recently been excavated south and southwest of the church cemetery in the village of Haldum in Denmark (Jeppesen and Schwartz, 2007, pp. 123–124; Jeppesen, 2014). In Västergötland in Sweden, cemeteries from the Pre-Roman and early Roman Iron Age were re-used in the Viking Age (Artelius, 2004, p. 101). In addition, it was not unusual during the Viking Age in Southern Scandinavia for burial sites to be located in association with older, prehistoric burial sites, including Neolithic and Bronze Age mounds re-used for burials (Pedersen, 2006, p. 348). Early church sites have also been placed above pagan cult sites (Jennbert, 2002, p. 111; Magnell and Iregren, 2010, p. 223). At Jelling in Denmark, the two largest mounds are at Jelling church, where the northern mound is situated on the highest point in the landscape (Pedersen, 2006, p. 351).

Re-use of Viking Age burial grounds is also known in Norway, where early churches tend to have pre-Christian burials within a 100 m radius (Müller, 1991, p. 359; Sollund and Brendalsmo, 2013, p. 208). It has been suggested that the continuation to use a burial ground was to keep the ties to site, the ancestors and to community identity (Artelius and Kristensson, 2005, pp. 184–185). In Norway, two reasons for the close link between the early churches and pre-Christian burial sites have been argued for. One argument focusses on the power relations between the early churches and pre-Christian cult sites (Sollund and Brendalsmo, 2013, p. 209 ref. Helge Ljungberg 1938), and the second argument focusses on the continuity of cult practice in a particular location (Sollund and Brendalsmo, 2013, p. 209). In the early Christian period (c. AD 900-1000) there does not seem to have been a problem with placing Christian burials close to or in pagan burial grounds (Sollund and Brendalsmo, 2013, p. 210). At the Rogeberga burial ground in Sweden, the fence was not interpreted as separating Christians from pagans, but to demarcate the ‘sacred’, Christian part of the landscape (Artelius and Kristensson, 2005, p. 183).

When a pagan cemetery continued to be used for recognisable Christian burials, it seems that people who had converted to Christianity were not allowed to practise pagan rituals (*forn siðr*) at the burial site (Brendalsmo and Røthe, 1992, p. 96). A Christian burial is often differentiated by following specifically Christian rites, for example to bury individuals in consecrated ground

and having the deceased oriented with the head in the west end and placed on their back. Most often there are not many artefacts found in Christian burials, as from early on the Church opposed the use of amulets and magical devices (Jonsson, 2007, p. 64). Additionally, from the ninth century to the eleventh century, the fragmentation and destruction of bodies and objects in the burials disappear (Lund, 2013, p. 57). This would suggest that there is a shift in the perception of the body in burial practices and that the understanding of the body changed from the Viking Age to the medieval period (cf. Lund, 2013).

In this context, it was not only the understandings of the body that changed, but most likely the ritual practices as a whole. This could be one reason why there are no words for the religious activities the Vikings practised, as is understood today. Beliefs were described as *siðr*, which refers to customs, and is often interpreted as a 'belief system' (Steinsland, 1994, pp. 18–19, 2005, p. 267; Price, 2019, p. 3). The phrase 'Nordic Religion' is seldom used about the *forn siðr* and the question is whether the term 'belief system' encompasses the variety of Viking beliefs (Price, 2019, pp. 26–27). *Forn siðr* was forbidden in the early medieval laws, for example in the Norwegian *Gulatingslovi* and the Icelandic law *Grágás* (Finsen, 1852, pp. 22–23, 1870, pp. 21–22; Robberstad, 1952, pp. 42–47). One of the rituals practised in *forn siðr* was ancestor cult and/or communication with the dead in a cemetery, commonly referred to as *útiseti* in Faroese (Brendalsmo and Røthe, 1992, p. 10; Price, 2002, p. 93). *Útiseti* was a central form of communication with the dead (Robberstad, 1952, p. 47; Brendalsmo and Røthe, 1992). Considering the locations of early churches above or close to heathen cemeteries and farms, it is possible that we are seeing a concern for ancestors as a common feature in Christian and Viking beliefs. Continuing to use a pagan cemetery would have made it possible to continue *útiseti*, the communication with dead ancestors (Brendalsmo, 1994, pp. 108–110; Sollund and Brendalsmo, 2013, p. 213). The decision to locate Christian cemeteries on the pre-Christian cemetery at Við Kirkjugarð, on Sandur, could be interpreted in this way as well. The practice of Christian re-use of pre-Christian burial grounds is also found in Anglo-Saxon England (Williams, 1997, p. 25), where it has been argued that this was done in opposition to the Christian elite (Noort, 1993, p. 66). In times of insecurity, and when there was a changing belief system, it is possible that there was a need for visual expression of monuments in the landscape and some form of continuity from the past (Pedersen, 2006, p. 352).

At the newly settled Viking community at Sandur, the continued use of the Við Kirkjugarð cemetery during the pagan period, and subsequently into the Christian period, may have been related to the desire to claim common ancestors – a potentially important part of community identity, sense of place, and even land rights in and around the village. In addition, it has been suggested that the first churches were built as part of an already existing farm and thereby a link seems to have been between the early churches and the already established farms in the Faroes Islands (Krogh, 1983, p. 233). This is also known from Greenland and Scandinavia (Krogh, 1983; Brendalsmo, 1994, p. 105). In this context, Knud Krogh argued that in the discussion of the continuity from pagan to Christian cult sites in the Faroe Islands the clarification of the link between churches and farms could be crucial (Krogh, 1983, p. 244). Still, further research and excavation of early church sites and farms is needed to clarify the link between early churches and cult sites in the Faroes during the Viking Age (Krogh, 1983).

8.1.3.1 Pagan or Christian ritual practices

At Yviri í Trøð, Sverri Dahl interpreted the Viking Age burials according to the similarity of their burial customs to other Viking Age burials in Scandinavia and the North Atlantic region. For example, he thought that the orientation of the person in burial I was similar to the Norwegian custom, but that the burial itself, its stone structure, resembled Viking Age burials in the Scottish islands, south of the Faroes (Dahl and Rasmussen, 1956, p. 165). The individuals in the burials were buried in a sand dune (the highest point of which was 10m asl), and as most of the individuals had their heads oriented in a northern direction, Dahl interpreted this as part of a Norwegian burial custom, for example in burials IX, X, XI and XII (Dahl, 1983). Some of the individuals were placed on the left side with bent knees, and others were in an extended position (Dahl, 1956b, 1968a; Dahl, S. and Rasmussen, J., 1956; Dahl, 1983). During the excavation, some artefacts were recovered, such as a ring-headed pin and a small piece of unidentified corroded object from Burial I, a corroded knife in Burial V, and corroded objects and charcoal in burials IX, X, XI and XII (Dahl, 1956a; Dahl and Rasmussen, 1956; Dahl, 1983). Sverri Dahl interpreted burial VI differently. There were no artefacts in the burial, and the individual in the burial was extended on his/her back, with the head in the east end, setting it apart from the others. Therefore, Sverri Dahl suggested in a radio interview that this burial was different, because of the influences of Christianity (Dahl, 1983). Unfortunately, Sverri Dahl did not discuss this matter further in a publication. In a short survey on Viking Age burials in the Faroes, he pointed out that there is little evidence of burial mounds in the Faroes, as

written about in the *Færeyinga Saga*, even though there are a number of place names including the word for ‘mound’ in the Faroese landscape (Dahl, 1968a, p. 190). For example, there is Øttisheyggur, between the villages of Miðvágur and Sandavágur, Havgrímsgrøvn, in the village of Hov, and Tormanssgrøvn í Vági in the village of Vágur (Dahl, 1968a, p. 190). These are also mentioned by Símun V. Arge and Niels Hartman in their short overview of Viking Age burials in their article about the burial site Við Kirkjugarð (Arge and Hartmann, 1990, p. 18).

At Við Kirkjugarð, Símun V. Arge and Niels Hartmann found it difficult to determine if the individuals buried followed a Christian burial practice, a non-Christian burial practice, or if the burials showed a period of transition from heathendom to Christianity (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, p. 18). Therefore, the discussion of the burial site being a Christian or non-Christian burial site was left open for debate (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, p. 20). Since few pagan burials have been found in the Faroes during the Viking Age, Steffan Stumman Hansen has argued that the Faroe Islands were part of a Christian, or partly Christianised, Hiberno-Scandinavian world (Hansen, 2011, pp. 74–75).

Elsewhere in the Viking world, Viking Age burials are typically more spread out in the landscape, including both large and small burial sites with mounds, which can be close to farms in the infields, or at the border between the infield and the outfield. This contrasts with the early Christian burial sites, which are typically demarcated by fences or walls and are most often in the infield, not the outfield (Kieffer-Olsen, 2002, p. 28; Artelius, 2004, p. 105; Friðriksson and Vésteinsson, 2011, pp. 52–55). The interpretation of burials as pre-Christian or pagan affected the location model developed in Iceland by Friðriksson (2013). In Iceland, it has sometimes been difficult to use the classic definition of pagan burials, in which human bones and grave goods are found in combination (Eldjárn, 1956, 2016). This is because there are examples of Viking Age burials in Iceland that appear to be pre-Christian based on their orientation, but which lack objects in them, as well as examples that appear to have a typically Christian orientation (east-west), but with objects in them (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 126). The definition of pagan and Christian burials in the landscape is crucial in the Faroe Islands, because if pagan burial grounds continued to be used over centuries into the Christian period, it is highly likely that pagan Viking burials remain buried under, or may be found on the outskirts of cemeteries we would identify as Christian today. For example, the continuity of use of pagan sites in Christian times is seen in Frösön parish church in Sweden, where animal bones were

found under the floor of the chancel, including the fragment of a horse skull (Hildebrandt, 1989, pp. 153–166).

Towards the end of the Viking Age and into the early medieval period, as part of the Christianisation process in Scandinavia, kings who wanted to increase their power had a program or agenda of religious reformation (Steinsland, 1994, p. 17; Urbańczyk, 2014). In this sense, Christianisation in the north is closely linked to power politics (Steinsland, 1994, p. 18). Prior to formal, top-down Christianisation, the people living in Scandinavia had learned about Christianity in their travels and through missionaries who had been sent to the north (Pedersen, 1994, pp. 34–39; Steinsland, 1994, p. 17). Therefore, the form of Christianity that had reached Scandinavia had been culturally influenced by the Germanic cultures of Continental Europe and Britain (Sundqvist, 2011, p. 204). With the emergence of Christianity, the ritual activities that had probably been carried out at the cemeteries were phased out, and in the early medieval laws, such as the Norwegian *Gulatingsslovi* and the Icelandic *Grágás*, pagan rituals were forbidden (Finsen, 1852, pp. 22–23, 1870, pp. 21–22; Robberstad, 1952, pp. 42–47). Although pagan ritual activities associated with burials were phased out, it is possible that the early churches in Scandinavia were built on the main farms, at the same places where halls and cult houses had been located (cf. Sundqvist, 2011, on Sweden specifically). In this way, the community leader who resided at the main farm or settlement kept his/her power and agency in the community during the transition from paganism to Christianity. With the continuous use of a location, the leader continued to constitute the locations as central places and as arenas for power – in its both profane and religious aspects (Sundqvist, 2011, pp. 204–205).

In contrast with the situation in Scandinavia, not much is known about the process of Christianisation or the relationship between cult houses and farms in the Faroes, or the relationship between farms and early churches and Christian cemeteries (Krogh, 1983). In *Færeyinga Saga*, king Ólaf Tryggvasonar made Sigmundr chieftain of the Faroe Islands, and Sigmundr, on behalf of the Norwegian king, launched Christianity in the Faroes (Rafn, 1832, pp. 140–145). According to *Færeyinga Saga*, Sigmundr settled on the island of Skúvoy and built a church on his farm (Rafn, 1832, p. 158). Recently, the burial site Ólansgarður í Skúvoy has been dated to the Viking Age (Arge and Purkhús, personal communication, 2020). The burial site at Ólansgarður is significant, because it shows that this early medieval Christian cemetery was already in use during the Viking Age. In addition, the recent dating of the early

church site Niðri á Bakka, in the village of Velbastaður, is relevant in this context. The date published by Tjóðsavnið in June 2020 reveals a Viking Age date between AD 756 and 905, below the foundation stone of an early church building, which pre-dates the early church (Michelsen, 2020; Mirjansdóttir, 2020). As this excavation is not yet finished, this important excavation could bring more knowledge about the early link between farms and early church sites, and possibly the continuity of use of a site from the Viking to early medieval period.

The understanding of the locations of early church sites and their association with pagan cemeteries may emerge in the Faroe Islands as more research is conducted on early church sites. An article by Símun V. Arge and Helgi Michelsen on the state of the art of the early church sites in the Faroe Islands is still forthcoming, but Sverri Dahl compiled an overview of early church sites, which is included in Appendix 5.1. In addition, Stumman Hansen produced a catalogue of early Church sites based on information from the Sverri Dahl archives, place names and folklore (Hansen, 2011). In addition to the early church sites mentioned by Dahl and Stumman Hansen, the location of the probable Viking Age burial sites identified in the course of the present research project in the village of Kirkja and in the village of Svínø are relevant. The burial site in Kirkja was located in the extension of the Christian churchyard, and the burial site in Svínø at Frammi í Garði was located close to the settlement and close to a possible early church site. Moreover, there are several locations in the Faroes with the place name element *Bønhús*, which translates as ‘*an early church site*’. There is therefore potential to search for Viking Age burials at sites such as Niðri á Bakka at Velbastaður, at Bønhústoft in Leirvík, and Bønhústoft in Mykines. Prior to Christianisation, any of these sites could previously have functioned as pagan cemeteries or cult sites.

In summary, the state of knowledge before I conducted my research was that it was uncertain if the Viking Age burial site Við Kirkjugarð was pagan or Christian (Arge and Hartmann, 1989, p. 18), but that the process of Christianisation may have already started at Yviri í Trøð (Dahl, 1983). and that the Faroe Islands were part of a Christianised, or partly Christianised, Hiberno-Scandinavian world in the Viking Age (Hansen, 2011, pp. 74–75). The Christianisation process had already begun in the north. Missionaries had been sent to Scandinavia and Vikings living in Scandinavia and outside their homelands in the North Atlantic were aware of the new religion and perhaps they were influenced by it. It is striking that in the burials from the Viking Age in the Faroes there are no weapons or horse gear – in stark contrast to the other burial

assemblages in the North Atlantic region. The orientation and the position of the individuals in the burials, oriented mostly towards the north at Yviri í Trøð, but also in one case east-west, and at Við Kirkjugarð oriented east-west, and placed in different positions – on the side or on their back – shows that a variety of burial rituals were practised. Most, but not all, of the burials were marked on the surface with stones. Moreover, there are diverse ritual activities, performances, and possible beliefs evident in the burials, including the deposition of a variety of artefacts, charcoal and animal bones.

As a whole, the Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands show some similarities and some differences compared to contemporary burials in Scandinavia and the North Atlantic islands, with less variety of grave goods (notably no weapons or horse gear), but a varied orientation of individuals, and how they were placed in the burials. My in-depth exploration of the Viking Age cemeteries at Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð has led to the conclusion that the balance of the evidence points to them being pagan burials, following pagan ritual practices seen elsewhere in the Viking world. Bearing in mind the simple character of the grave goods at Yviri í Trøð, and the dominant east-west orientation at Við Kirkjugarð, it is not unlikely that some of the people settled in the Faroes were influenced by the new emerging religion, Christianity.

8.1.4 The Forgotten Landscape of the Dead

In Chapter 3, I argued that the Viking Age burial landscape in the Faroe Islands appeared to be a landscape of the invisible dead. This statement is based on the experience that during the field survey there were no traces of Viking Age burials in the landscape. Their apparently invisibility is evident in the find circumstances of the Viking Age burial sites in the Faroes. The site of Yviri í Trøð, in the village Tjørnuvík, was accidentally found by two young boys, and the burials at Við Kirkjugarð in the village of Sandur were only discovered because the local council planned to extend the churchyard (Dahl and Rasmussen, 1956; Arge and Hartmann, 1990). In addition, the human bones at Á Bønhúsfløtu in the village of Hvalba were found by a young boy on an eroding slope (Arge and Michelsen, 2011). Although the site is not yet excavated, the building remains at Á Bønhúsfløtu and the dating of the human remains indicate that around 1000 CE there was a settlement and burial site here (Arge and Michelsen, 2011). In the Faroes, very few Viking Age burials have been found. The possibility must therefore be considered that not everyone was given a grave in the Viking Age (Price, 2008b, p. 259), or at least not a terrestrial one. It is possible that they were buried at sea.

8.1.4.1 Visibility and communication

The burial sites Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð have similarities and differences in their Viking Age landscape settings (Table 8.1). At both cemeteries, there is visibility towards the sea, neighbouring islands, the infield, and settlements. In addition, the cemeteries are physically in close proximity to the sea, a stream, and landing sites. On the other hand, there are differences in the internal spatial relationship of the placement of the burial sites, and their physical relationship with the nearby settlement. The border between the settlement and burial site in the village of Tjørnuvík is much clearer and easier to define in the landscape than the border between the settlement and burial site in the village of Sandur.

Table 8.1 Similarities and differences between burial sites Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð.

	Yviri í Trøð, Tjørnuvík	Við Kirkjugarð, Sandur
Visibility	Visibility towards sea, infield and settlements	Visibility towards sea, infield and settlements
Near settlements/villages	No	Yes
Communication routes	Close to the sea, a stream, path, landing site	Close to the sea, a stream, path, landing sites
Location to borders	Yes	Yes
Re-use	No	Yes
Continuity or not	No	Yes

The burial site of Yviri í Trøð is on the boundary between the infield and the outfield, and a stream runs close to cemetery, while Við Kirkjugarð is closer to the settlement (the village) and industrial activities. The cemetery is not on an evident border between infield and outfield, but most likely on a previously cultivated infield. The borders of the Við Kirkjugarð cemetery are hard to establish due to the continuity of use of the cemetery towards the north, the previous use of the area for cultivation and the industrial activities towards the west. There is, however, a clear border towards the sea in the east, and the border at the cemetery's western and southern limits seems to be partly determined by the ditch H7B. H7B could originally have been a stream, which could have made for a natural boundary for the cemetery extension towards the west (Hartmann, 1990b, p. 7).

In this spatial mortuary landscape context, the narrative associated with the burial sites was important, as the Vikings lived in an oral society, in which visual expression, ceremony and rituals were means of communication. The memory of an event, a location, a burial, an object, or a person could be recalled, narrated and transferred orally with some type of visual expression, performance, or monument (Andrén, 1993, pp. 38–43; Svanberg, 2003, p. 190; Pedersen, 2006, p. 351; Price, 2010, p. 138,145; Williams, 2014, pp. 410–411). In the early stages of use of the burial sites, several of the burials were visible in the landscape with stone settings, but as time passed the burials were covered with landslides, drifting sand, and, in the case of Við Kirkjugarð, by later Christian burials, and over time the Viking Age burials were lost from social memory, without stories, place names or even folklore to retain them. If the memory of these two Viking Age cemeteries was not kept, it is relevant to ask if it would ever be possible to locate Viking Age burials with only the aid of sources from ethnographic, landscape folklore and place name studies.

Although the premise originally posed by this dissertation was that the Faroese Viking Age landscape was one of the invisible dead, my re-evaluation of the known burials and the results from the landscape analysis have given rise to a new proposal: that the burials were overtly pagan, and had indeed been visible, and played an important role in the landscape for a long period of time – probably centuries. The burial sites do not only relate to one single belief in afterlife (cf. Williams, 2010, p. 79). On the other hand, the differences between the burial sites and the variations between the burials at each burial site show a pagan practice with elements of ancestor cult, social memories, performances and cosmologies (cf. Andrén, 1993; Price, 2010, 2012; Williams, 2010; Klevnäs, 2016). Even though these were pagan burials, the people living in the villages were on the doorstep of a new belief: Christianity. With the emergence of new beliefs (and new gods), new understandings of the world were formed (Gunnell, 2009, p. 311).

In the review and discussion of the burial sites Við Kirkjugarð and Yviri í Trøð new ideas and perspectives have emerged, placing the sites in a wider North Atlantic and Scandinavian context. Moreover, the ritual practices examined during this study exemplify a variety of burial rituals, setting the stage for mortuary dramas and ritual performances which unfolded at the cemeteries, with everyone's story being slightly different (Gansum and Risan, 1999; Price,

2008, 2014). In this sense, these locations were a scene for a social and meaningful embedded act for the dead and the living. Following this argument, the location of the burial sites matters.

8.2 Location Matters

This section is about the location of burial sites in the Faroe Islands, and it addresses the question of why Viking Age burials are currently invisible in the Faroese landscape, especially compared to the Viking Age burial sites in northwest Norway, the Northern Isles of Scotland, and Iceland. Understanding the process of selecting burial locations, and emplacing the dead in the landscape with particular relations to topographical features, settlements, landing sites, and so on, is an essential aspect of the study of past societies (Williams, 1997, p. 3; Pearson, 1999, p. 124; Arnold, 2002, p. 129). Burial sites were meaningful, highly evocative and potentially powerful places, where past societies articulated their relationships with ancestors, the living and the land (Parker Pearson, 1999, p. 141). If the decisions made about where and how to place the dead were indeed different in the Faroe Islands than in contemporary Scandinavian settlements in Norway, Orkney, Shetland, and Iceland, this would be extremely interesting. Exploring the extent to which the Vikings in the Faroe Islands had similar or different mortuary practices to their neighbours has the potential to provide insights into a distinct society that emerged on the Faroe Islands – one that may have arrived with similar world-views and beliefs, but which then diverged for some reason. The discussion that follows aims to draw out the aspects of burial placement that are similar and different in the Faroe Islands, and to answer the pressing question of *why* differences might have emerged.

8.2.1 The Location of the Burial Sites

The physical relationships between landscape features, the spaces of the living, and the spaces of the dead, and the degrees to which these were similar and different to Viking Age burial sites elsewhere in the North Atlantic region, have been fundamental to this research project. Due to the great variety of topographic features and burial locations, it has been necessary to use a systematic methodology for assessing and recording these (see Chapters 3 and 6).

Table 8.2 summarises the key characteristics of the location of the burial sites, based on the results of this research.

Table 8.2 Location and characteristics of burial sites in the North Atlantic.

	The Faroe Islands	Iceland	Northern Scottish Islands	Norway
Intervisibility	Visibility towards sea, infield and settlements	Visibility towards sea, infield and settlements	Visibility towards sea, infield and settlements	Visibility towards sea, infield and settlements
Visibility on surface	No	Difficult to find	Often difficult to find	Yes
Proximity to communication routes	Close to the sea, streams, paths, landing sites and settlements	Close to the sea, rivers, paths, landing sites and settlements	Close to the sea, rivers, landing sites, settlements, paths	Close to the sea, rivers, landing sites, settlements, paths
Location boundaries	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Re-use from pre-Viking	No	No	Yes	Yes
Continuity or not after the Viking Age	Both	No	Both	Both

The demarcation of a burial site with a visible, above-ground marker makes it visible to people living close to the burial site, and to travellers. When a burial site is emplaced – or embedded – in a landscape, and is visible for extended periods of time, it profoundly alters the relationships between the living and the dead, and the living and their landscape. Therefore, the location of burial sites in relation to pre-existing landscape features – both natural and human-made – is meaningful and significant (Pearson, 1999, p. 131; Chamberlain and Pearson, 2001, p. 47; Arnold, 2002, p. 131; Svanberg, 2003, p. 190). As the following discussion explains, my study of the locations of Viking Age burial sites in the North Atlantic region clearly showed that their placement in the landscape was not arbitrary.

8.2.2 Farms, Communication Routes and Boundaries

The act of burial placement establishes and mediates several relations, including the burial's physical relation to landscape features, landscape entities, and socially and cognitively meaningful places, relationships between the living and dead, and potentially the relationships between the living, the dead and different agricultural territories (Pearson, 1999, p. 124, 132). In these mediations, there is a tension between physical proximity and physical separation through the creation of burial mounds, demarcated cemeteries (e.g. bounded by walls or fences) and the use of coffins, all of which serve to reinforce the boundaries between the living and the

dead (Arnold, 2002, p. 130). Transcending this tension between physical proximity and boundaries is the viewshed of the burial site, and the intervisibility between the burial ground, farms, boundary markers and landscape features.

As mentioned briefly above, there are differences in the placement of the burial sites at Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð, and their physical relationship with the settlement. The burial site Yviri í Trøð is on the border of the infield, while Við Kirkjugarð is closer to the settlements and industrial activities. Does this reflect differences in beliefs, in the need to mark boundaries, or in the needs of communities to be close to their ancestors? I will come back to this in a section below. It has been suggested, for example, that the placement of burial grounds near living communities may have allowed the living and the dead to protect each other in times of unrest (Parker Pearson, 1999, p. 129). It is possible that during the transition to Christian beliefs, there was a need for the groups living in Við Kirkjugarð in the village of Sandur and Á Bønhúsfløtu in the village of Hvalba to keep the dead closer to the living, not on the border of the settlement, in order to demonstrate their attachment to the past, their ancestors and possibly even their beliefs. This is seen at Við Kirkjugarð, where settlement remains have been found north of the burial site, north of the church at the site Undir Junkarifløtti and at the site Norðan fyri Kirkjustaðin á Sandi, dating to the Viking Age (Fmnr 27020; Arge, et al., 2016, p. 16; SNR 9053; Summarmorgun, 2017; Nolsøe, 2018). The location of burial sites close to settlements is also seen in the wider North Atlantic region.

The location of burial sites close to settlements is seen in the Northern Isles of Scotland, where it is common for Viking Age burials to be placed on or very near contemporary settlements. In the village of Clibberswick, Shetland, a Viking Age burial was located about 15m from the farm Uphouse and approximately 111m from the farm Westerhouse (Canmore ID 157; RCAHMS, 1946, p. 25). The importance of the link between the burials and farms are also seen at Aikerness, Broch of Gurness, and at Westness, on Rousay, both in Orkney. At the Broch of Gurness, six possible Viking Age burials were discovered, and one definitive Viking Age burial located close to a possible Viking settlement remains (Robertson, 1968, p. 290; Hedges, 1987, p. 73; Ritchie, 1996, pp. 121–122). The burial site at Westness, on Rousay, is on a promontory, and just a few metres west of the Viking burial site were Viking Age houses (Kaland, 1973, pp. 83–91, 1993). In Orkney, the Viking Age Skaill Bay burial is located close to the sea on the southern side of the beach, inserted into a prehistoric settlement mound

(Graham-Campbell, 2019, p. 303). North of the burial is the Neolithic settlement of Skara Brae, and recent excavations on the northern side of Skail Bay have revealed Viking Age/Late Norse buildings (Griffiths, 2019, p. 311; Hamilton et al., 2019, p. 111; Harrison and Griffiths, 2019, p. 53).

Likewise, in Norway, it was common for Viking Age burials to be placed on the farm. In the northern part of the island of Karmøy, off the southern west coast in Norway, three burial sites were selected for comparative landscape analysis: the previous mounds of Åkra, the mound of Grønhaug in Bø and Kongshaug in Alvaldsnes. In this district there are at least 36 known graves (Østmo and Bauer, 2018a, p. 227). As part of the Alvaldsnes Royal Manor Project, excavations have revealed both pre-Viking and Viking burials and settlement remains (Østmo and Bauer, 2018c). Most of the burial sites have an elevated location on the headland, such as the Viking Age burials on Kongshaug. On the northern part of Kongshaug, a cluster of three burials was found: one cairn probably from the first millennium AD, and one boat burial and a flat burial, estimated to date between 600 and 900 AD (Hafsaas, 2005, p. 11; Østmo and Bauer, 2018a, p. 244). The burials are therefore located in close vicinity to the farm and with an open view towards the sea and the sailing route. The possible hall building sits between two monumental mounds, Kjellerhaug and Flaughaug, dated to the phase SP I (c.2000-c.350 BC) (Østmo and Bauer, 2018b, p. 84). The Flaughaug burial mound is multi-phased, with a secondary burial from the 9th-10th century (Østmo and Bauer, 2018a, p. 230; Stylegar and Reiersen, 2018). The burial mounds seem to enclose the main central settlement area, the field to the west, and the harbour area, thereby marking different parts of the settlement at Alvaldsnes (Østmo and Bauer, 2018a, p. 245). Together with the mounds, the building overlooking the strait would have been visible outwards towards the sea route through the Karmsund strait (Østmo and Bauer, 2018c, p. 114). Close to the burials and settlements were also boathouses dated to the pre-Viking and Viking period (Østmo and Bauer, 2018c, p. 133). The Viking Age burials were closely associated with the settlements, in a prehistoric burial landscape, which may have given the Alvaldsnes district a strategic position for control of the Karmsund strait, and helped to impart the farm-holder's high status (Østmo and Bauer, 2018c, pp. 115, 133). Indeed, the poor preservation of the Viking hall and longhouse made it difficult to extract details about their wealth or social status, but due to their location and physical association with burial mounds, boat houses, pits, food-processing areas and storage areas, the excavators inferred that the owner had had substantial economic, social and military status (Østmo and Bauer, 2018c, p. 135). Often burial sites that

are physically connected to a farmstead are interpreted as expressions of ancestry and the right to ownership of land (Zachrisson, 1994; Skre, 1998, p. 206; Bukkemoen, 2014, p. 47). The use of Alvaldsnes as the location of an early church and churchyard is similar to the continued use into the Christian period of the burial site of Við Kirkjugarð in the village of Sandur. In the Faroes, the burial sites at both Við Kirkjugarð and Frammi í Garði are close to the settlements, as seen in Norway. In contrast, in Iceland it has been observed that the burials tend to be further from the farm complex than in Norway, about one third of the distance (Maher, 1999, p. 218; Gjerland and Keller, 2010, p. 163).

By knowing the possible distribution of burials within a given area in the landscape, one gains important knowledge about the relationships between burials, settlements, boundaries, and routeways (Friðriksson 2009:12). Research by Kristján Eldjárn (2016), Adolf Friðriksson (2013, p. 277), and Ruth Maher (1999, p. 70) has shown that pagan burial sites in Iceland were linked in different ways – and at different distances – to contemporary farms. Based on his research, which found that the locations of pagan burials were not random, Adolf Friðriksson developed a location model for pagan burials (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 364). Within the main framework of this model are the locations of burials in relation to the farm dwellings, with various types defined by their distance from houses and from other landscape features (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 277). Centred on fieldwork and examination of the location of Viking Age burials, a general framework of the burial location emerged with three basic types: A, B and C. Type A represented cemeteries located on or near to boundaries. By contrast, type B includes those located near the property. As for type C, it concerns cemeteries adjacent to the lines of communication (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 278). As part of the present study, I analysed the landscape context of a number of Icelandic burial sites, and found that they fit well within the typological framework established by Friðriksson (2013, p. 278). Strandarhöfuð and Hemla, in Vestur-Landeyjahreppur, matched Friðriksson's type A, since they were near property boundaries (Friðriksson 2013 p. 278). The burial site Dufþaksholt, at Hvolhreppur, was 400m from the farm site at Dufþaksholt and not far from the track that leads to the farm (Friðriksson 2013 p. 315). Furthermore, it is on the southern limit of the cultivated area of the farm (Friðriksson 2013 p. 446). Therefore, it is likely to be type A, close to a boundary, but at the same time it is close to a farmhouse (Friðriksson 2013 p. 584). Lækur í Flóa, Hraungsgarðishreppur, Stóri-Moshvoll, Hvaolhreppur match well with Friðriksson's type B, since they are close to a farmhouse and not a boundary (Friðriksson 2013 p. 278 and p. 590).

In addition, Ruth Maher's study in Iceland showed that male burials tended to be on elevated ground, which improved their prominence and visibility in the landscape, and female burials were often linked with waterways, such as rivers, which were frequently the boundaries between farms (Maher, 1999, p. 222).

The common choice to place Viking Age burials on boundaries between farms seems to have originated in Scandinavia. At Vestfold, in Norway, a study has shown that 24 percent of farms with historical boundaries have burial sites less than 50m from the farm boundaries (Ødegaard, 2010, p. 29). In her interpretation of this pattern, Ødegaard (2010, p. 31) suggested that the burials on boundaries were not arbitrary or accidental, but were intentionally located to be territorial markers and to express rights to the land. In Iceland, Friðriksson's analysis of the location also shows that a vast majority of the burials were placed on the limits of agricultural property (2013, pp. 199–200). In contrast, in Denmark, burial locations in Jutland show a substantial shift in the late pre-Roman Iron Age from being further away from villages to being closer to villages and hamlets, as Parker Pearson described them 'out there' (Parker Pearson, 1999, p. 129). In this context, the sharing of the same place in and around the settlement for both the living and the dead, could suggest that the living and the dead were protecting each other in a time of unrest between territorial groupings (Parker Pearson, 1999, p. 129). In Viking Age Denmark, Adamsen (2004, p. 23) observed that at certain locations, settlements and burials sites are separated by a watercourse or wetland area. The significance of this observation is that the burials are separated from the farms on the outside of a boundary (Adamsen, 2004, p. 26). This is also seen in the location of the burial site Yviri í Trøð, which is on the outside boundary of a stream. Although, this burial site is additionally on the boundary between the cultivated land and the outfield. This could reflect the need to mark boundaries to show the ownership of the land, between the settlement in the village of Tjørnuvík and the settlement in the neighbouring village of Haldórsvík.

The proximity of Viking Age burials to routes is another important trend. This is also seen in this study of Viking Age burials, where the verified burial site Yviri í Trøð is located no more than 4m from the road and the probable burial site on the island of Svínøy at Frammi í Garði is located 1m from a walking path in the village. In Iceland, no Viking Age roads have been dated, but from the early medieval laws, such as *Grágás*, it is known that when crossing land belonging to others, one had to follow tracks (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 207). According to

Friðriksson (2013, p. 226-227), burial sites that were close to paths in the landscape suggest that travel and movement were as important to the dead as to the living. It was very common in Viking Age Iceland to bury the dead beside roads and their location may symbolise the itinerant side of death, as part of their journey (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 233). Even though most paths, roads, and coastal landing sites in the Faroes have not been dated (and are, in fact very difficult to date), since these routes have been used from one generation to the next, most are likely to date to the first generation of the associated settlement. They are long-lasting traces of movement that have become embodied in the landscape (Tilley, 1994, p. 30).

However, in the Viking Age North Atlantic, the main ‘road’ was the sea, and the placement of burials at coastal landing sites in the Faroes, Iceland, Norway, Shetland and Orkney is an important aspect of the trend to place burials near routes. In the Northern Isles of Scotland, for example, the Viking Age burials at Giant’s Grave (RCAHMS, 1946, col. 1217), Scar Boat burial (Owen and Dalland, 1999), at the Broch of Gurness and at Westness, on Rousay, were all situated very close to the seashore. The burial site Lunna Ness is also situated west of the kirk and is between two inlets. These locations are easy to reach from the sea, and possible landing sites for boats, and were hence part of a communication network. In Norway, the Viking Age burials on Karmøy, Grønhaug in Bø, Konghaugen on Alvaldsnes, and the Åkra boat burial are also close to the seashore and travelling routes. In the Faroe Islands, the distance between the burial sites and the seashore is on average between 30 and 60m, except for the possible burial sites at Óttisheyggur and Havgrímsgrøv, which are on a higher elevation. This aspect is further discussed below.

The examples discussed show that the physical location of Viking Age burials is often associated with settlements, boundaries, terrestrial travel routes such as paths and trackways, and seafaring routes. Likewise, the physical link between burials, paths and elevation is significant for the Faroe Islands too. It is not unusual for Late Iron Age/Viking Age burials in Scandinavia to be located on an elevation (Thäte, 2007b, p. 132). In Norway, the burial mound of Grønhaug at Klepp Tu is situated on the ridge Anda-/Tuhøyden, and it is possible that there was a path on the southern part of the Anda-/Tuhøyden ridge (Lillehammer, 2014, p. 21). On the elevated ridge Anda-/Tuhøjden, Grønhaug together with the natural assembly mound, Tinghaug, is over 102m above sea level, with a view across the whole of the region of Jæren (Lillehammer, 2014, p. 15). The practice of locating burials on a ridge is also seen at a boat

grave cemetery at Skamby, in Sweden (Williams, et al., 2010, p. 15). A burial location on a ridge can help to make the funeral memorable and creates a prominent and visible place for the dead to inhabit (Williams, et al., 2010, p. 16). Moreover, the burial sites on the Tinghaug plateau, which was an assembly site and a central place in the landscape, marked an area that was highly significant for community identity, shared history, genealogies, rituals and decision-making, and by repeatedly coming to the plateau for important events such as burials and assemblies, this meaning was continually socially and spatially re-produced (Bukkemoen, 2014, pp. 44–47; Særheim, 2014, p. 52). In the Faroe Islands, only the possible Viking Age burial sites Óttisheyggur on Giljanes and Havgrímsgrøvn in the village of Hov are located on a higher elevation in the landscape. These possible burial sites have not been archaeologically excavated. The burial site in Havgrímsgrøvn in the village of Hov is located close to a possible medieval district (Tjóðsavnið 15002, 1952). Although this burial is defined as a possible burial site due to the lack of archaeological evidence of a burial and human remains, it can be argued with its elevation in the landscape that it was meant to be visible for people travelling to and from the village of Hov. The second burial site, Óttisheyggur in Giljanes, is likewise on elevated land, between the villages of Sandavágur and Miðvágur, on a promontory called Giljanes. According to local legend a farmer called Ótti owned the villages of Miðvágur and Sandavágur and he wanted to be buried at this location, so that he would have a good view of his properties (á Ryggi, 1965, p. 12; Petersen and Heinsesen, 2010, p. 30). Additionally, south of the burial site, there is a stone referred to as *Gálgasteinur*, which translated means “Gallows stone”. According to local folklore a gallows was located here (Ryggi, 1965, p. 104). Close to the gallows stone and the burial site is the boundary between the villages of Sandavágur and Miðvágur (Ryggi, 1965, p. 104). As this burial site was located on elevated land and on a boundary between two villages, it marked the area and made it visible for travellers. Additionally, the burial mound, together with the gallows stone, became an identity marker in the landscape, adding to the narrative of this landscape with the Viking farmer Ótti as one of its main figures.

In sum, the results of the comparative study conducted as part of the current research project showed that the close association of the Faroese burials with settlements, boundaries, paths, elevated topography and communication routes was also common in Viking Age burial sites in Scandinavia and the North Atlantic region. Communication, elevation and the physical link

between the burial sites and the landscape is also evident in the spatial and visible embeddedness of the burial sites.

8.2.3 Visibility

An important factor in the placement of a burial is its viewshed – the landscape visible *from* the burial, and the visibility *of* the burial from the landscape – which are linked to the visual embodiment of the memory of the person buried, and the memory of their death, the long-term commemoration of the dead, and the social memory of the funeral ritual or drama (Holtorf and Williams, 2006, p. 248,254; Price, 2008b, p. 267, 2010, p. 137). This project included analysis of the visibility between Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands and nearby settlements and landscape features, as well as a comparative analysis of this aspect of burial location in neighbouring regions of Viking settlement. As discussed above, in the Viking Age, cemeteries were often placed in locations that enhanced their visibility, such as on elevated ground, or next to a road, boundaries or settlements (Maher, 1999; Svanberg, 2003, p. 190; Pedersen, 2006, p. 351; Friðriksson, 2013). During this research, it was apparent that visibility towards the ocean or a river was often important at burial sites across the North Atlantic, including in Orkney (e.g. Broch of Gurness, Westness on Rousay, Pierowall Links on Westray, the Scar boat burial and Styles of Brough on Sanday, Bay of Skaill), in Shetland (e.g. Giant's Grave at Fetlar, Sumburgh Airport, St Ola's Church at White Ness, Lunna Ness), in Norway (e.g. Åkra Karmøy, Kongshaugen Alvaldnes, Grønhaug Bø), in Iceland (e.g. Hemla in Vestur-Landeyjahreppur, and Dufþaksholt and Efri-Rauðalækur, in Holtahreppur), and of course in the Faroe Islands (Yviri í Trøð, Við Kirkjugarð, Bønhúsfløtu, Kirkjugarðurin Kirkja, Frammi í Garði, Óttisheyggur, Havgrímsgrøv and Á Vegginum). Viewshed analysis conducted in Iceland by Ruth Maher showed that there was frequently a strong visual connection between the burials and the sea (Maher, 1999, p. 180). From her viewshed analysis, over half of the burials, 70.2%, had a partial or full view of the sea (Maher, 1999, pp. 180–181, 2013, p. 55), demonstrating that the view towards the sea was an important factor when communities made decisions about where to place their dead.

In the Faroe Islands the verified, probable and possible burial sites have an open view towards the sea. From another point of view, Viking Age farms tended to be on coasts or river valleys, for example at Niðri á Toft in the village of Kvívík, Við Gjógvaá in the village of Fuglafjørður

and at Toftanes in the village of Leirvík, where there was suitable land for the hay field required for winter fodder. Therefore, if burials were placed on or near farmsteads, this increased their chances of having views of the sea or river. However, in many cases, the microtopography of the landscape makes it clear that viewshed was intentionally selected.

Intervisibility of burials and farms was more variable. Maher's (1999, p. 228) landscape study of burials in Iceland demonstrated that a majority of Viking Age burial sites did not have a vast view of the landscape, but that the view of a homefield was important. In contrast, Adolf Friðriksson's (2013, p. 269) study of pagan burials in Iceland showed that burial sites were often at the same altitude as their associated farms, or even a bit lower. His studies showed that 51 out of 80 verified burial locations had no intervisibility at all between the burial site and the farm, even if they were in relatively close proximity (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 270). The view was interrupted in several ways, by natural features such as hills or high ground, or by the fact that the burials were located beyond a ridge or at the end of a slope (Friðriksson, 2013, pp. 270–271). Therefore, although his analysis of burial locations made clear that there was a close spatial relationship between the burial sites, communication routes, farm boundaries and settlements, in Iceland, at least, this close proximity did not always result in clear lines of sight (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 364).

In the Faroe Islands, at Yviri í Trøð, Við Kirkjugarð and Bønhúsfløta, the view towards the settlement was not hindered by any natural features. In Orkney, burial sites were also chosen to provide clear lines of sight to nearby settlements and other sites. For example, at Aikerness, Broch of Gurness, the burial location was close to the seashore and the settlement. From the burial site and the Broch of Gurness there was a good view towards the Eynhallow Sound, the uninhabited island of Eynhallow and the island of Rousay. Furthermore, there was a good view of Midhowe Broch and Midhowe Cairn. Across Eynhallow Sound was the Viking cemetery and settlement at Westness, on Rousay. The burial site at Westness was on a promontory, which would have made it highly visible to travellers. Also, since it was situated close to landing sites on the seashore, it had easy access to sea routes.

Comparative studies in Scandinavia have shown a similar emphasis on the viewshed of Viking Age burial sites. For example, burials marked by monumental stone ship settings in Denmark and Scania are often placed in prominent and visible locations in the landscape, close to

communication routes such as travelled paths, ridges and/or navigable watercourses (Vestergaard, 2007, p. 153). This was also observed on the island of Karmøy, Norway. The ship burial mound Grønhaug on the farm of Bø, dated to AD 790-95, had a clear line of sight across the Bøvågen to the settlement and burials at Alvaldsnes. Approximately 1.5km north of Grønhaug and approximately 160m from the sea is the ship burial mound Storhaug, dated to May-June AD 779 (Bonde and Stylegar, 2009, p. 153). Both mounds are close to the strait, and, based on Opedal's (1998, p. 40) estimates of their original size and height, they would have been visible on the sailing route on Karmsound, which passes by Alvaldsnes. These two large mounds, which must have been significant visual, cognitive and symbolic features in the Viking Age landscape and seascape, exemplify the importance of topographical position and intervisibility between burial sites, settlements and routes in the decision to locate burials in particular locations.

Although the verified Viking Age burial sites in the Faroe Islands were not large mound burials, such as in Norway, it is quite evident from the results that the location of the burial sites at Við Kirkjugarð and Á Bønhúsfløtu, close to settlements, the seashore and landing sites, and additionally the burial site Yviri í Trøð, on the boundary of the cultivated land, a road, the seashore and landing site, enhanced their visibility in the landscape. With this visual agency, the burial sites were symbolic features and a place for the needs of communities to be close to their ancestors. Moreover, they were probably part of people's negotiation of ownership of land.

8.2.3.1 Continuity and Re-use of Visible Landscape Features

The selection of human-made features already visible in the landscape – often prominently so – for the placement of Viking Age burials has frequently been observed in regions of the North Atlantic with pre-Viking settlement. This practice can be seen as a form of visual communication, in which the burial site is deliberately chosen to reference ancestors, meanings, beliefs or performances that had been associated with the place, whilst also taking advantage of the visibility and familiarity of the monuments being re-used. This has not yet been observed in the Faroe Islands, because, although pre-Viking settlements have been identified (Church et al., 2013), the remains of pre-Viking houses or burials have yet to be excavated in detail. However, in the Northern Isles of Scotland, the common Viking-Norse re-use of pre-existing settlements has been previously observed and discussed (Batey, 1987, p. 300, 2000; Thäte,

2007b, pp. 120–125; Carlisle, 2017, p. 224). Although the burial sites of the Picts tended to be avoided, Iron Age and Pictish settlement sites including brochs were sometimes re-used for Viking Age burials which could be linked to the legitimating ownership or rights to the land that had been appropriated from the native Picts (Thäte, 2007b, p. 129). In Orkney, for example, the re-use of a pre-Viking settlement is seen at the Broch of Gurness, where a probable female burial (based on the artefacts buried with it) was inserted into the northern wall of the external passage leading to the broch-period Gatehouse (Robertson, 1968, p. 290; Hedges, 1987, p. 73). At the Bay of Skail, the Viking Age burial was inserted into a prehistoric settlement mound (Watt, 1888, p. 183). At Buckquoy, the Viking Age farm was also re-used for burial (Thäte, 2007b, p. 129). The premeditated re-use of the existing settlements and landscape features for mortuary activity in Shetland and Orkney suggests that the settlers were intentionally linking themselves with the already established cultural landscape (Carlisle, 2017, pp. 253, 270). The region in Norway selected for comparative analysis showed some continuity in the use of pre-Viking burial sites. At Kongshaugen at Alvaldnes, the Viking Age burial was inserted into a burial mound dated to between 200 and 400 AD (Hafsaas, 2005, p. 11).

The comparative landscape analysis conducted for this research project demonstrates the rich meaning and significance associated with the locations of Viking Age burial sites. They are frequently characterised by physical proximity to, or intervisibility with, settlements, paths, communication routes, boundaries, the seashore and landing sites. Moreover, where there were pre-Viking settlements, Viking burials were sometimes inserted into pre-existing mounds and settlement remains. The burial record in Viking Age Scotland, Iceland and Norway, and how it has been interpreted, provides a basis for understanding the meaning and significance of the Viking Age burial locations in the Faroe Islands. This is the focus of the next section.

8.2.4 Viking Age Burial Locations in the Faroe Islands

This research has improved the understanding of the extent to which the unique landscape context of the Faroe Islands impacted mortuary practices, settlement patterns, environmental perceptions and the world-views and beliefs of those who settled there. From the comparative landscape analysis of Viking Age burials in Scandinavia and the neighbouring Scandinavian settlements in Scotland and Iceland, it is clear that contemporary Scandinavian burial practices were brought to the Faroe Islands, where they were modified and adapted. The agency of the settlers is seen in the locations they selected for settlement and burials. Of prime importance

for their settlements was that they were close to the seashore, to landing sites for their boats, to relatively flat land that could be used to cultivate hay crops (i.e. developed into an ‘infield’), and to streams providing fresh water. Moreover, the distinct aspects of the Faroese landscape with fjords, inlets and little land to cultivate, resulted in the majority of settlements being villages, rather than dispersed settlements, as they are throughout Norway, Scotland and Iceland. This village settlement pattern is really distinctive in the Faroe Islands and has great bearing on the burials and its location in the landscape. The early establishment of villages in the Faroes affects the location of probable Viking Age burial sites. In my understanding of the settlement record in the Faroe Islands, it seems most likely that the settlements grew into villages at an early stage of the settlement. This had an impact on the type of burials. Therefore, instead of finding isolated graves, or graves for small family groups as one would in dispersed settlements, for example in Iceland (Friðriksson and Vésteinsson, 2011), in the Faroes there is chance of finding community cemeteries instead of isolated graves, as also observed in Orkney at Pierowall cemetery on Westray (Graham-Campbell and Batey, 1998, p. 129).

The pattern of settling in villages in the Faroe Islands, which was common practice in Denmark, but rare in Norway, and completely absent in Scotland and Iceland, had a profound effect on Viking Age burials. In the North Atlantic this makes the Faroese settlement pattern distinct, especially in relation to the location of Viking Age burial sites. The two burial grounds excavated so far in the Faroe Islands were community cemeteries – possibly for everyone in the associated village – rather than single burials. These communities made a decision about where to locate their dead based on the ‘norms’, beliefs and ritual practices they brought with them from Norway and Scotland, but adapted these to the unique settlement pattern, topography and character of the Faroese landscape, and their unique needs as settlers, farmers and villagers in that landscape. For example, the results of this study show that for some settlers it was important to place the burial site – with visible markers – at the boundary between the village infield and the outfield, close to a path/route and a coastal landing site (e.g. Yviri í Trøð). For these villagers, the burial site would have been passed by on a daily basis by farmer-fishers as they walked to their outfields or to their boats. It would also have been visible from the sea, and would have contributed to the ‘greeting’ communicated to travellers arriving by sea or by land (cf. Opedal, 1998, p. 40; cf. Vestergaard, 2007, p. 153). It is possible that the highly visible burial ground at the boundary of the cultivated area provided a visual message that the land was settled, that the ancestors of the living community were embedded in it, and

that the land was legally and jointly held by the community (cf. Ødegaard, 2010, p. 31). The ancestors buried at the boundary may also have been symbolic wards or guards of the cultivated infield and settlement area, providing a protective presence against danger, invasion, disease and famine. A variation of this boundary location was the burial located between two settlements, as seen in the location of the possible burial at Óttisheyggur, on Giljanes. This burial site was on a route between the villages of Miðvágur and Sandavágur, with limited visibility towards Sandavágur, but with an open view towards Miðvágur and the sea. As Óttisheyggur was a burial site and located on a boundary between two villages, it is possible that its location symbolises the boundary between the dead and the living and the journey of the dead. This is an idea advocated by Friðriksson, where he proposes that the boundaries of the landscape can symbolise the boundary between the living and dead (2013, p. 333). He also proposes that the selection of a burial ground close to a road might represent the journey of the dead (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 333). In this sense, the idea of travel and movement is important for the dead and the living (Friðriksson, 2013, p. 227). More, the location of the burial site close to a border might be a territorial marker and a way to express rights to land (cf. Ødegaard, 2010, p. 31).

In some cases, it was more important for the early settlers to have the dead closer to, or embedded within, the villages themselves, as is evident at the burial site at Við Kirkjugarð at Sandur, and the probable burial site in the village of Svínøy. Part of my research question was to use my understanding of the burials to better understand the beliefs of Viking Age settlers of the Faroes and how they perceived their landscape and their dead. Having the dead near or amongst the living community in visible marked graves may have been related to the importance of, and veneration of, ancestors. It also says something about how the dead were perceived – not as the ‘other’, something to be feared and separated from the living – but an ever-present family, a continued part of everyday life, to be seen and perhaps communicated with on a daily basis. Often burial sites, which are physically connected to farmsteads are interpreted as manifestations of ancestry and the right to ownership of land (Zachrisson, 1994; Skre, 1998, p. 206; Bukkemoen, 2014, p. 47). For example, at Alvaldsnes the burial mounds seem to enclose the main central settlement area, the field to the west and the harbour area, thereby marking different part of the settlement at Alvaldsnes (Østmo and Bauer, 2018a, p. 245). The burial sites in the Faroes linked to farms could therefore express manifestation of ancestry and ownership of land. Moreover, the selection of burial sites close to the seashore

and with an open view towards the seashore could suggest that this intervisibility was important for their world-views. The sea routes, compared to roads and paths, might additionally represent the journey of the dead (cf. Friðriksson, 2013, p. 333). The significance of boat and ship burials is seen in the archaeological record and in the contemporary account by Ibn Faḍlān on his observations of the people called Rūsiyyah and a ship burial (Grieg, 1937, p. 37; Montgomery, 2000, p. 15; Roberts, 2011, p. 22; Kobylński and Rabiega, 2015; Harris et al., 2017).

The link between water and the afterlife is not unknown in Norse mythology, for example, in Eddic mythology the ship of the dead is called *Naglfar* (Simek, 2007, pp. 226, 282). In her research on Viking Age burials in Iceland, Maher stressed the importance of the visual connectivity of sea or water and burials, linking its meaning to cosmological connectivity, where the dead with the view over water or sea were guided to their afterlife (2013, pp. 214–215). With these observations of routes and seaways, linked to the world-views of the settlers, it is possible that the intervisibility between burial grounds and the sea were part of a narrative and that ritual performances unfolded at the burial grounds, thereby symbolising the journey of the dead.

The common aspect of all of the burials in the Faroe Islands is that their dead were buried with a clear sight line towards the sea, close to the seashore, travelling routes and landing sites. This indicated that the view towards the ocean was important for the people who settled in the Faroes. The intervisibility between the villages and the burials and the sea could emphasise the expression of ancestry and the ownership of land. Since few Viking Age burial sites have been found in the Faroe Islands, it is possible that people were buried at sea. Therefore, it is also feasible that the underlined intervisibility between the burial sites and the sea marks a symbolic expression and narrative for people buried at sea.

It is interesting that the importance of the sea in the locations of burials was not matched by the use of boats or ships in burials – although common in Norway, the Northern Isles of Scotland and Iceland, boat burials are so far almost absent from the Faroese burial record. For example, the probable burial on the island of Svínøi was covered with an overturned boat (Zachariassen, 1956). It is possible that in a landscape heavily dependent on boat transport, where the sea provided the main ‘road’ from one settlement to another, but where timber to

build and repair boats was totally absent, it was unthinkable to lose a boat by interring it in a burial. Instead, locating burials near or within clear view of a coastal landing appears to have been the priority.

Last but not least, this research shows that there was commonly a continuity of use of pagan burial sites in the Faroe Islands into the late Viking Age and medieval period, where they became incorporated into Christian graveyards. This was seen most obviously at Við Kirkjugarð in the village of Sandur, and the probable burial site at Kirkjugarð in the village of Kirkja. The perception that it was common for the earliest churches and cemeteries to be located on pagan cult places has been criticised (Olsen, 1966, p. 236). Olsen proposed that, the archaeological evidence does not support the idea that it was common to continue to use the pagan cult sites and burial grounds for Christian churches and cemeteries in Denmark (1966, p. 275). Although the continued use of pagan cemeteries was not a common practice, it was not unique to the Faroe Islands. Recent research has shown that early church sites have been placed above pagan cult locations in Scandinavia (cf. Krogh and Voss, 1961, p. 7,24; cf. Jennbert, 2002, p. 111; cf. Magnell and Iregren, 2010, p. 223). In Denmark in the village of Hørning, an early wooden church from the late Viking Age/early medieval period was built on a levelled burial mound. When the mound was levelled, the chamber burial inside the mound was not destroyed (Krogh and Voss, 1960, p. 11, 1961, p. 7,24). Additionally, Viking Age burials have been recently excavated south and southwest of the Haldum church cemetery in the village of Haldum in Denmark (Jeppesen and Schwartz, 2007, pp. 123–124; Jeppesen, 2014). At Jelling in Denmark, the two largest mounds are at Jelling church, where the northern mound is situated on the highest point in the landscape (Pedersen, 2006, p. 351). Re-use of Viking Age burials is also not an unknown burial practice in Norway, where early churches have pre-Christians burials within a 100m radius (Müller, 1991, p. 359; Sollund and Brendalsmo, 2013, p. 208). In Shetland, for example at St Olas's Churyard at Whiteness, there is evidence that the pagan Norse settlers used an existing cemetery, even though it was not common practice (Graham-Campbell and Batey, 1998, p. 144). This continuity of use, which did not seem to occur in neighbouring Iceland (cf. Friðriksson, and Vésteinsson, 2011), suggests that the Faroese did not consider the pagan graves to be profane, or requiring removal or destruction as Christianity rose to prominence. Additionally, it is feasible that in the beginning of Christianity consecrated cemeteries had not been established in remote parts of the north and in the North Atlantic and therefore people continued to use the pagan burial

grounds (cf. Artelius and Kristensson, 2005, p. 181). On the other hand, it is possible that the incorporation of pagan graves into Christian graveyards was considered to be a way of Christianising pagan ancestors, and retrospectively providing them with a Christian burial (cf. Müller, 1991, p. 369). However, we do not know for sure that they felt it necessary to provide a Christian burial place to the pagan dead. It is also possible that the embeddedness of the family and community burial place in the landscape, daily lives and world-view of the village residents was so deeply engrained, habitual and important that conversion to Christianity did not change their view of the most appropriate place to bury their dead. Regardless of religion, the community of the dead belonged together and was part of their identity (cf. Artelius and Kristensson, 2005, p. 184; cf. Sollund and Brendalsmo, 2013, p. 213).

In summary, the locations of Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands should be seen as having meaning and significance in relation to the beliefs, understanding of death, views of their ancestors and perspectives of the landscape of the people who made them. From these results, the following predictions can be made about where we are most likely to find more Viking Age burials. As yet undiscovered Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands are likely to be located on the border between the infield and the outfield of old villages, at the territorial boundaries between two settlements, or within the oldest parts of modern villages – quite likely underneath or adjacent to Christian cemeteries that go back to the early medieval period or the late Viking Age. They are likely to be located close to the seashore, coastal landing sites, rivers or streams, and old paths. Therefore, it is very important that during any road or seashore development, extensions to churchyards, or renovations of old (Viking Age and medieval) settlement districts, archaeological authorities from Tjóðsavnið are present to monitor any digging. In addition, it is recommended that any new research projects aiming to locate new Viking Age burials focus on the cemeteries of early church sites – either just outside the current cemeteries, or by systematic monitoring or archaeological excavation of burial plots or graves before they are needed, for example similar to the procedure used in the modern cemetery at Clonmacnoise, Ireland (King, 1990, 2003).

In an attempt to identify new Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands, this project developed and used a new methodological framework. The final part of this chapter is a frank evaluation of the methods used, the extent to which different avenues of enquiry were fruitful, and of

which methods have the best potential to contribute to future research on Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands.

8.3 Evaluation of the Research Methods used to Locate Viking Age Burials

This section contains an evaluation of the methodological framework developed as part of this research project. It addresses the effectiveness of the different methodological strands I pursued to gain information about possible new burials sites. The Viking Age burial record of the Faroe Islands remains scarce, incomplete and biased by chance discoveries. Although I was able to explore the two excavated Viking Age cemeteries and their landscape locations in greater depth than had been done before, and was able to identify a number of other probable and possible Viking Age burials from archival sources, despite my best efforts I was unable to locate new Viking Age burials in the field. There remain many more known settlements than burial sites, and, in villages with Viking Age settlements, such as Kvívík, Fuglafjørður and Klaksvík, there are at the moment no associated Viking Age burial sites. I believe, however, that this research project has made an important contribution to knowledge by revealing the importance of particular landscape locations for the known, probable and possible Viking Age burials. Moreover, this project opens up new avenues for research into the Faroese burial record and, by trialling a wide range of methods, I am now able to assess which methods have the greatest potential to provide more fruitful results going forward. After a discussion of the values and limitations of the various research approaches used for the current project, I will propose what I feel is the most effective approach as a way to take the research forward.

8.3.1 Evaluation of the Archival and Oral History Research

Archival research played an important role in this project, especially my in-depth study of the excavation archives pertaining to the cemeteries at Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð. This research revealed new details about funerary performances and rituals, the grave markers and the landscape locations of the burials (see Chapter 4). From these studies alone, new knowledge was generated about Viking Age burial sites, as well as about ritual practices and performances in the North Atlantic region.

However, archival research also played a significant role in my efforts to identify new pagan grave sites in the northern part of the Faroese archipelago: place name archives, the Sverri Dahl archives at Tjóðsavnið, previous ethnographic studies, and previous studies of folklore that

might be connected to social memories of burials in the landscape were all intensively searched. The results of these studies were presented in Chapter 5, with possible burial locations listed and detailed in Appendix 5.1, covering not only the northern islands, but also the southern islands in the Faroes. Much of the material in these archives had its origins in oral tradition, which was recorded long after the place names were coined, or after the events or stories (or burials) were purported to have happened. Moreover, as part of my original field survey, I conducted interviews with local villagers and had to sift through many folk tales, oral traditions and social memories of ancient places in the landscape in order to arrive at some that might possibly have a bearing on the locations of Viking Age burials.

These sources did not prove as fruitful as I had hoped for the identification of possible new burial sites. Using any data sourced from oral traditions is problematic, because it is often impossible to determine the reliability of the people who have transmitted the information. Oral accounts or traditions can live for hundreds of years, generation after generation (Andreassen, 1986, p. 15), but not necessarily in an unaltered form. People transmitting stories, folktales, or place names orally had their own agendas, selective memories and narrative or linguistic preferences, and of course they also catered to the needs and desires of their listeners (Andreassen, 1986, p. 22; Gunnell, 2012, p. 235). The landscapes described in such stories were composed of collective and individual memories. Different landscape features such as mounds, erected stones, or other archaeological traces, namely hills, rivers, paths and crossroads could be given different emphasis based on the beliefs of the story-tellers and the listeners (Gunnell, 2009, p. 308).

In the northern islands, where most of the field survey and interviews were conducted for the current research project, few locations were identified as possible Viking Age burials. Most often the stories and legends about burials in the landscape were of a post-medieval or an early modern date. For example, I was told about the burial of a seal hunter (ID 086, see Appendix A6), burials of people who were not allowed to be buried in consecrated soil (ID 074; 075; 076; 079; 090, see Appendix A6), and the burials of sailors who had become ill and died on board a ship (ID 080, coffins found; 087, see Appendix A6). In the place name archives, there were some indications of places with burials, but since it proved impossible to pinpoint the precise landscape locations of the places referred to, it was not possible to include them in a landscape survey of possible burials (ID 066, 068, see Appendix A6). Additionally, there were

a few places mentioned in local folklore and associated place names that pointed towards possible burial locations (ID 075, 101, 102, 103, see Appendix A6), but these are most likely of a much younger date.

In the context of archival research, the medieval sources helped to frame the traditional perception (which I attempted to test) that Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands ‘should’ at least sometimes be under mounds, and sometimes marked by stones. An example of this is the burial of Þorbjörn Götuskegg, who was mentioned in *Færeyinga Saga* as being buried in a mound (Rafn, 1832, p. 3). This preconception of how burials would appear on the surface affected my methodology, because mounds and stones were examples of features I was asking local people about, and which I myself was looking for in the landscape. The reference in *Færeyinga Saga* – and the implication that Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands involved mound-building – was, in fact, misleading, because there is so far no archaeological evidence to support the idea. If they did exist, it is possible that the mounds are no longer visible due to disturbance and flattening by cultivation, which seems to be the case, for example, for the ‘mound’ called Óttisheyggur, in Sandavágur (Tjóðsavnið, 1952g). It is also possible that, if they previously existed, any mounds built over burials were swallowed up by later settlements and graveyards. However, there is a very real possibility that in the rocky, shallow soils of the Faroe Islands, mounds were in fact never constructed, and the mound mentioned in *Færeyinga Saga* was made up – a relic or memory of a burial practice more common in Norway.

Even though my archival and interview research was very time-consuming (much more so than first anticipated), and did not result in the identification of new Viking Age burials, this strand of my research did allow me to make an interesting observation. It is evident that people living in the Faroe Islands do have social memories of burials in the landscape. They continue to pass down stories about burials in different settings and involving different practices compared to those used in Christian burials today, for example, where individuals were buried near a boulder, or in a ship, or in unusual or tragic circumstances. Therefore, although the stories and folktales set in the local landscape of villages - and remembered by villagers (especially the older generation) - do not provide historical or archaeological facts, they nevertheless pass on a social memory from one generation to the next. In such landscape stories and folk tales, there is much to learn about the communities who tell them (Gunnell, 2012, p. 261). Having gained so much experience in and knowledge about archival and oral history sources and the data they

can provide, I feel that I have matured as a researcher, and developed a deeper and more profound understanding of the rich heritage of the Faroe Islands.

8.3.2 Evaluation of Results of Field Survey, Geophysical Survey and Test Excavations

The methodology of the comparative landscape study, field survey, geophysical survey and test excavations was outlined in Chapters 2 and 3, and the results of these research approaches were presented in Chapters 6 and 7. This section focuses on the evaluation of the field methods used, and their potential for future research on burials in the Faroe Islands.

8.3.2.1 Field Survey

The chosen landscape analysis tools and attributes framed the survey and affected the results. The main approaches to field survey used in this study were phenomenological methods and related techniques for landscape analysis (Tilley, 1994; Gansum, T.; Jerpåsen, G.B.; Keller, 1997, p. 17; Fabeck and Ringtved, 2001, p. 146). During the survey, focus was placed on describing and interpreting the physical relationships between natural and human-made features in the landscape, their context and intervisibility (Gansum, et al., 1997, pp. 20-22). Additionally, the identification of burial sites in relation to landing places and routes was important in the analysis, and for interpretations of the embeddedness, meaning and context of the burial sites in their respective landscapes (Gansum et al. 1997, p. 17; Fabeck and Ringtved, 2001, p. 146).

One methodological challenge that arose during the comparative landscape studies in Norway, Iceland and the Northern Isles of Scotland, was that it was only possible to visit these places once. During these surveys, the weather was not always good, and at such times it was difficult to make proper observations and descriptions of the burial sites and their intervisibility with other important features in the landscape. Additionally, as the landscape changes from one season to the next, the different seasons can affect the access, movement and visibility, to and from the site. In reviewing the results, I therefore consider that it would be positive for understanding the location of a burial site to do phenomenological landscape analysis in different seasons.

Future studies could improve this aspect of the landscape analysis by including GIS-based viewshed analysis. Nevertheless, I found that there was great value in visiting these other

significant burial locations in the North Atlantic region, and comparing them with the burial sites in the Faroe Islands. Through these visits, I experienced first-hand how the burials were embedded in their landscapes, the viewsheds from the burial sites, and how the burial sites were physically and visually linked to other sites. The experiential, phenomenological landscape analysis approach, and the systematic recording of feature proximity and visibility using standardised recording forms, permitted close comparisons between a wide range of Viking Age burial sites in vastly different landscape settings. I feel that this was a highly effective methodology which broadened my understanding and interpretations of the Faroese burials.

Since the locations of numerous Viking Age settlements are known in the Faroe Islands, I thought it would be possible to integrate Adolf Friðriksson's and Ruth Maher's models of Viking Age burial locations in Iceland, and to test the applicability of these models in the Faroe Islands (Maher, 1999; Friðriksson, 2009, 2013). The search for new Viking Age burials in the Faroes therefore included searching for burials in three main types of location where they tend to be found on Icelandic sites: near farms, at the boundaries between farms (which is sometimes a river or stream), and adjacent to the lines of communication, for example on roads. Although this methodology did not lead to the identification of new burials, the locations of the verified Viking Age burials in the Faroes Islands did follow to some extent the models developed by Adolf Friðriksson and Ruth Maher in Iceland (Maher, 1999; Friðriksson, 2009, 2013). For example, the common practices of placing burials near settlements, infield/outfield boundaries, streams and paths, as seen in the Icelandic burial data, were visible at Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð, as well as the other probable and possible burial sites of Frammi í Garði on the island of Svínø, Óttisheyggur in the district of Giljanæs and Á Vegginum in the village of Kirkja. However, distinctive features of the Faroese landscape and settlement pattern also meant that the models for locating burials developed in Iceland were not completely applicable to the Faroese context. For example, it was not always possible to locate the Viking Age longhouse or hall associated with the burial site, such as in the villages of Kirkja and Svínø. In such cases, the Viking Age settlements are probably below the modern houses in villages that have expanded since the Viking Age. Moreover, the fact that many Faroese settlements have been villages (rather than dispersed farms) since the Viking Age (Thorsteinsson, 1978) means that 'boundaries between farms' which are clear in the Icelandic context, are not easily identified in the villages in the Faroe Islands during the Viking Age. From the survey in Kirkja,

and from ethnographic sources, it was also evident that a few dwelling sites had been destroyed by cultivation and erosion (Hansen, 1971).

In preparation for the field survey, the Sverri Dahl archives in Tjóðsavnið (*SD Bygdir* and *SD Evnir*) and the place name archive at the University in the Faroe Islands were examined for information on possible burial sites in the northern islands. Aerial and satellite imagery were also used to search for features that might be related to burials, and to pinpoint likely landscape locations for Viking Age burials based on the presence of landing sites, routes, boundaries, streams, and so on (Wynn, 1986, p. 245). As part of this study, every village in the northern islands was surveyed for possible Viking Age burials, in addition to more remote areas in the vicinity of villages, which contained either settlement (farm dwellings) or shieling remains. These methods were beneficial to my attempts to locate Viking Age burials, because I was able to tap into knowledge built up over time, and to test ideas other researchers had had about the Faroese landscape and the relationships between burial sites and settlements. Based on the field survey, certain sites were selected for geophysical survey.

8.3.2.2 Geophysical Survey and Excavation

The geophysical surveys conducted for this project were designed to further evaluate the locations identified in the field survey as having the potential to be Viking Age burials. As geophysical survey is non-destructive, efficient and time-saving, it was considered an important step to locate possible burial sites (Wynn, 1986, p. 245; Kvamme, 2003, p. 436). It was especially important to attempt geophysical survey because the field survey alone was not able to identify obvious places to target for test excavations (Wynn, 1986, p. 245). Moreover, the National Museum of the Faroe Islands, which provides permits for excavations, requires that geophysics be conducted prior to test excavations.

Since the field survey did not provide any clear candidates for new burial sites, decisions about where to conduct geophysical surveys were made based on comparative landscape analysis of known burial sites in the Faroe Islands, Iceland, Orkney, Shetland and Norway. Kirkja and Hattarvík on the island of Fugloy were targeted for geophysics, because there was a clear boundary between the districts which was also close to settlement areas. In Viðareiði, on the island of Borðoy, geophysical survey was conducted in an area where there was a possible burial site close to the village. Likewise, in Múla, Depli, Suðri á Búðum and Niðri á Toft in

Klaksvík, geophysical survey was conducted close to the villages, or close to known or possible Viking Age settlements, or between the infield and outfield boundaries of the settlements. Even though survey with a magnetic gradiometer was not successful in the northern islands, probably due to the magnetic underlying geology, surveys conducted with a magnetic gradiometer in other locations in the North Atlantic have been successful (Horsley and Dockrill, 2002; Graham, 2014).

As mentioned in Chapter 7, the magnetic gradiometer data were very ‘noisy’, and were dominated by the magnetic bedrock which made it difficult to interpret the data for identifying likely burial locations. Based on the magnetic anomalies that appeared to have the most promising size and shape, certain sites were selected for test excavations. In the small test excavations that were within the scope of this research project, no new burials were found, and the magnetic anomalies targeted were likely from boulders and other features. For a future study aimed at locating Viking Age burials in the Faroes, it would be worthwhile trying to use alternative geophysics methods, including ground-penetrating radar and electrical resistance, and to use wider excavation areas.

8.3.3 New Knowledge Generates New Approaches

This study represents the first time that a landscape approach has been used to study the burial record in the Faroe Islands. Although the methodology developed to give me the best chance of identifying new Viking Age burials in the northern islands of the Faroese archipelago was ultimately unsuccessful for the reasons discussed above, my archival studies and comparative landscape analyses have provided fresh insights into three definite, two probable and three possible Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands. Most importantly, it is now clear that the first settlers brought with them pagan burial practices common to Norway and the North Atlantic region, which were adapted to the unique landscape of the Faroes – a landscape which is so rugged that it resulted in village-based settlement patterns, communal infields and communal cemeteries wherever there was a good landing site and enough flat land to provide the hay fodder needed to keep livestock. The landscape and village-based societies shaped the world-views of these Scandinavian settlers, which in turn shaped the way that they embedded their dead – their ancestors – in the landscape, and made them visible and permanent fixtures that would have been seen and possibly communicated with on a daily basis. The description at the start of this dissertation of the Faroes as a landscape of the invisible dead has had to be revised

in light of this research. I thereby argue that the dead were in fact visible from settlements, landing sites and the routes between them, and may have played important roles greeting newcomers, standing guard over infields and settlements, and visually communicating family affiliations, land ownership and identities. When communities began to Christianise, they sometimes placed their churches and Christian cemeteries on or near the pagan cemeteries, and these gradually enveloped the Viking burials, rendering them ‘invisible’ until found accidentally. Future research seeking Viking Age burials should therefore target the edges of modern burial grounds, or even modern burial plots prior to their use.

Chapter 9 Conclusion

This chapter draws together final conclusions on the outcome of the research questions, its methods, results, and the discussion in the foregoing chapters. It highlights the innovative contributions this research has made to the understanding of Viking Age burial practices and their landscape contexts in the North Atlantic region, and in the Faroe Islands in particular. Towards the end of this chapter are reflections on the potential for further research on burials in the Viking North Atlantic, with a focus on the Faroe Islands.

9.1 Project Outcomes

This research project has explored Viking Age burials and their locations in the landscape of the Faroe Islands. The small number of verified Viking Age burial sites in the Faroe Islands, numbering four (only two sites burial sites excavated), left a significant gap in our understanding of Viking Age burials in the Faroes compared to the rest of the North Atlantic. This lack of knowledge prompted the main research question: how and where to locate Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands. To answer this required the development of a new, multi-method and multi-staged approach for locating additional Viking Age burial sites. The first stage was to understand the known and suspected burial sites in greater detail, to understand the physical interrelations between the burials, the adjacent landscape features, and settlements.

Part of this initial stage was the exploration of the archival sources held at the National Museum in the Faroe Islands for information about the known Viking Age burials, artefacts which could be associated with burials, and possible new finds of human remains. In addition, the Faroese archives of Daniel Bruun, held in the National Museum in Denmark, in Copenhagen, were scrutinised. As the landscape context and physical details of known burial sites at Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð were studied, additional information regarding world-views and ritual practices unfolded. The second platform for locating new Viking Age burials in the Faroes was interdisciplinary, and focused on the study of place names and landscape folklore, drawn from ethnographic research. In addition, new oral history research was conducted in the form of interviews, walks in the landscape with local informants, and semi-structured conversations. This approach helped to capture and understand the landscape settings and the social memories that people had of the locations of burials in the landscape; a knowledge orally transmitted from one generation to another.

The third stage in the development of a new multi-method approach was to take into consideration the trends found in the landscape locations of the Viking Age burials in Norway, Iceland and the wider North Atlantic region. This phase included an original, comparative landscape analysis of Viking Age burials in selected sites in Norway, Shetland, Orkney, and Iceland. By including this comparative approach, my research method placed new emphasis on the landscape settings of the Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands, and helped to narrow down the possible locations of Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands, and to refine the selection of sites for geophysical survey.

The final stage of the multi-method approach was to test the locations of sites targeted as possible Viking Age burials, selected through the previous stages and field survey in the landscape, with a geophysical survey using a magnetic gradiometer, followed by test excavations.

Although the methods used did not produce new confirmed Viking Age burials, a number of new probable and possible burial sites were identified, and new ideas were generated about how the early settlers perceived their landscape and their dead. Moreover, this research has set off new ideas about where it would be most fruitful to look for Viking Age burials in the future, and the most appropriate methods for doing so. Therefore, I feel that this project has succeeded in making an important contribution to the understanding of Viking Age burials, beliefs, and world-views in the Faroe Islands and the wider North Atlantic.

In the section that follows, I will summarise the key findings in greater detail.

9.1.1 The Burial Sites at Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð

From the beginning of this research project, the archival research of the two excavated Viking Age burial sites played an important role in the generation of new information about Viking Age burials and ritual practices in the Viking Age in the Faroe Islands. At the burial sites Við Kirkjugarð and Yviri í Trøð, the communities expressed some diversity in the decisions they made about burial location, the layout of the burials, and the accompanying artefact assemblages. The burial sites seemed to signal different needs in their relation to the communities who created them, and to the wider North Atlantic region.

At Yviri í Trøð, the burial location, the layout of the burials, and the artefacts were the result of social practices different to those at Við Kirkjugarð. The burial site was on the border between the infield and outfield, and was located close to a path between the villages of Tjørnuvík and Haldórsvík, just east of a river. In contrast, at the burial site Við Kirkjugarð, the burials were located nearer the settlement area to the north and the activity area devoted to industrial activities to the west.

At the site Yviri í Trøð, there were few artefacts in the burials, most of them badly corroded metal objects, but they show contact with the wider world. For example, the ring-headed pin from burial I points towards contact with Ireland. As mentioned in Chapter 4 and Chapter 8, the artefacts in the burials Við Kirkjugarð are better preserved than the artefacts from the burials at Yviri í Trøð. For example, the artefacts in burial J6B at Við Kirkjugarð included weights and hack silver. Contrasting social practices were not only seen through the artefact assemblages, but also how the individuals were buried.

At Við Kirkjugarð, the cemetery was systematically arranged in rows, most graves covered with a stone setting, and at least two burials are likely to have been in coffins. At Yviri í Trøð, the burials are not so consistently arranged and there were different constructions over the burials, including stone settings framing the burials and burials marked just with a few stones on the surface. Although some social practices differed between these two cemeteries both were located close to the seashore, landing sites, and routes, and intervisibility between the cemeteries, the associated settlements, and the sea was clearly important.

The different choices of the early settlers of Tjørnuvík and Sandur are interesting, and may be a product of the different landscapes of the settlements themselves. During this research it has now become evident that the first settlers brought with them pagan burial practices common to Norway and the North Atlantic region, which were adapted to the unique landscape of the Faroes. In this rugged landscape the settlements were focused on environments with good landing sites and enough land needed to keep livestock. Moreover, it was important to have communal infields, and communal cemeteries. The location in the villages chosen for the communal cemeteries had different characteristics and landscape features. These distinct selected locations provide new ideas on the world-views the Vikings had. For example, in the village of Tjørnuvík, with its settlement at the bottom of a small inlet enclosed by high

mountain, it was important for the settlers to have their dead on the outskirts of the village, with the burial ground on the boundary to the cultivated land and on the route between two villages. In their world-view the dead were thereby kept at a distance, but still the open intervisibility between the settlement and the burial ground distinguished that it was essential to have the dead in their sight. On the other hand, in the village of Sandur, which lies in an open hilly landscape, not enclosed by mountains, it was significant for the residents to have their dead near the settlements and with a intervisibility between the settlement and the burial ground. In their worldview it was therefore meaningful having the dead resident in the village and additionally to keep the dead in their eyesight. Likewise, in this study, I have found that the dead were in fact visible from settlements, landing sites, and the routes between them. The burial grounds visibility in the landscape, their location close to boundaries and settlements, in all likelihood, visually communicate land ownership, identities and ancestry.

9.1.1.1 Mortuary Rituals and Performances in the Faroe Islands

Through the study of the excavated burial sites, a new understanding was developed about the variety of mortuary ritual practices and performances during the Viking Age in the Faroe Islands. As in Iceland and the Northern Isles of Scotland, the Viking Age burials in the Faroes are so far all inhumation burials. However, a few of the individuals had artefacts in the burials, and their position in the burials show the individual character of the pagan burials in the Viking Age, the agency that the living exhibited when they were burying their dead. The artefacts in the burials were not silent, standardized, or random, but were deposited intentionally and selected with care. We must assume that they had embodied meaning, although it is not always possible to know what these meanings were. For example, the ring-headed pin found in Burial I at Yviri Trøð had engraved iconography with interlocked triangles, which indicates Viking pagan world-views.

It is also significant that both cemeteries also contained animal bones – both burnt and unburnt – which point to socio-religious activities, such as sacrifices and/or feasting, occurring before and/or after the individuals were interred. The performance of animal sacrifice at Yviri í Trøð, and the finding of animal remains in the burial fill at Við Kirkjugarð, demonstrate a clear dedication to paganism.

The Viking Age burials at Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð demonstrate a range of individual mortuary behaviours, as has been seen across Scandinavian Viking Age burial sites. Although the burials at Við Kirkjugarð are systematically arranged in rows, and most are oriented east-west, as seen in Christian burial practises, it is possible that the settlers were already being influenced by Christian practises, without having converted (or fully converted) to Christianity.

9.1.2 The not so Invisible Dead

One of the main objectives of this dissertation was to locate new Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands. Although no definite new burials were added to the corpus, through this research my archival research revealed two probable and three possible burial sites that can now be added to the number of Viking Age burial sites in the Faroe Islands. By incorporating these burial locations into a new landscape analysis of burial sites, it became clear that burials had not originally been invisible, as formerly thought.

The archival research presented in Chapter 4 showed that most of the burials were marked and visible in the cemeteries at Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð. Additionally, the probable burial on the island Svínøi was marked with a stone, and the possible burial at Giljanes was covered with a small mound. Visibility was not only linked to the layout or markings of the burials, but the visibility of the burial site from the settlements, the landing sites and the sea had an important role in the interrelations between the burials and the landscape, and between the living and the dead. The apparent invisibility of pagan burials was often a consequence of the continuity of the cemeteries into the Christian period, which caused the ancient burials to be covered by more recent ones. Therefore, future studies on seeking Viking Age burials should both focus on the edges of modern burial grounds and on modern burial plots preceding their use.

9.1.3 Archival, Ethnographic and Place Name Approaches

Part of the multi-method approach developed for this research was to integrate relevant information about possible burial locations and landscape perception from the fields of ethnography, folklore, oral histories (original interviews) and place names. Although this methodology may, at first sight, appear fragmentary, as it involved applying data and information from various sources, integrating these sources shed light on different aspects of burial location and on people's social memory about the burial landscape – though, as it turned

out, this memory did not stretch as far back as the Viking Age. The original archival research conducted for this dissertation revealed a number of new possible and probable Viking Age burials, which was a significant result, and provides a platform for future research. The data on possible new burial locations was gathered from different sources, listed in Appendix A6. Clearly, this table is a work in progress, as new information on possible burials is being added regularly. For example, as this dissertation was on the brink of submission, Símun Arge confirmed a Viking Age date from a burial discovered at Ólansgarður on the island Skúvoy. This dissertation was only ever going to be a step towards a more complete understanding of Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands, and it is exciting that new sites for future investigation continue to emerge. As the field survey focused on the northern islands, not all places listed in Appendix A6 were explored, and therefore there are more possible sites to investigate in the southern islands.

Working with these sources was a new experience for me, and I had to learn how to record and integrate intangible, organic data, with different formation processes compared to archaeological sites and material culture. Oral histories, in particular, can be subject to change as stories are communicated from one generation to the next. Even though my local informants were not able to point me towards new Viking Age burials, they did have social memories of unusual burial places – memories that are worth recording, and which may prove interesting for other research projects.

9.1.4 Impacts of Landscape on Burial Locations in the Faroe Islands

One of the conclusions of this project is that the very particular character of the Faroese landscape had a profound impact on settlement and burial patterns, and made them distinct from Iceland, Norway and Scotland in the Viking Age. The mountainous, rugged terrain and steep coastal cliffs that dominate much of the Faroese landscape focussed settlement on the restricted areas where good landing sites, flat land, and available fresh water made it possible to cultivate hay crops and keep livestock. Settlement therefore clustered in villages, rather than dispersed farms, as was the norm in Norway, Scotland, and Iceland. The burial sites, likewise, developed as community cemeteries rather than isolated burials. With suitable space for settlement being restricted, the villages have seen long, continuous use, a pattern that echoed by many cemeteries. Village life and the focus of their landscape around communal settlements may have imparted a strong sense of community, placed a value on shared ancestry, and given

rise to a perception of being rooted – physically, mentally and emotionally – to a particular piece of land. Such a world-view may have in turn influenced villagers’ decisions to, first, keep cemeteries close to settlements or clearly visible on routes travelled daily between the village and the sea, and, second, to maintain many pagan cemeteries as communal burial grounds into the Christian period. It was these decisions that caused Viking Age cemeteries such as Við Kirkjugarð to be subsumed by expanding Christian graveyards and growing villages. While some Viking Age cemeteries might be lost to erosion or disturbance, it is likely that many remain in their original locations – forgotten and for the moment invisible, but still embedded in the landscape, and incorporated into modern cemeteries and therefore the life courses of modern Faroese people.

9.1.5 Comparative Landscape Approaches

The comparative landscape analysis of selected North Atlantic burial sites and Faroese sites shed light not only on the distinctive character of the Faroese burials, but also the similarities shared with the other regions of Norse settlement. The conclusion of the comparative landscape study was that the topographic settings of the burials especially proximity to and/or intervisibility with settlements, communication routes, boundaries, and the sea-shore, were important in the choice of a location for a burial site. The similarities in burial locations across the North Atlantic highlight the beliefs and world-views that most Viking Age Scandinavians in the North Atlantic region likely shared, while the distinctive trends that emerged in each colony reflect the agency of the settlers and the local influences of unique landscapes. In the homeland of Norway, Viking Age burials were often located close to the seashore, near prehistoric burial sites and within view of settlements. In Shetland and Orkney, Viking Age burials were located close to the seashore, but there was also a tendency to re-use pre-Viking burial mounds and settlement sites, perhaps as a way of claiming a connection to, or appropriating, the native monuments in the landscape. In Iceland, burials could be near farmsteads (often just outside the homefield) or on the boundaries between farms, and being near or visible to routes through the landscape was clearly important. Since Iceland is much bigger than the Faroese or Scottish islands, and river valleys were just as important to Icelandic settlement patterns as coastal sites (and indeed inland sites have been more commonly excavated), proximity to the sea, or intervisibility with landing sites, does not emerge as an important pattern in Iceland.

In sum, the comparative landscape approach to Viking Age burials provided a new understanding of Norse mentalities, especially how they perceived the relationships between burials and landscapes. Viking Age burials were memorials in the landscape of the living, visible markers for the remembrance of the dead. Their specific locations in the landscape, and the performances and rituals enacted there, gave the places meaning and contributed to the distinct identities of the communities who created them.

9.1.6 Archaeological Fieldwork in the Faroe Islands

The original fieldwork for this project which had the objective of locating new Viking Age burials, focused on three main methods: field survey, geophysical survey, and test excavations. In the field survey ideas from landscape phenomenology were pursued for the first time in the Faroe Islands: to use the body as a survey tool, and to use multi-sensory observations of the landscape settings and landscape ‘logic’. I also had to think and reflect critically on how the landscape would have appeared when the Vikings arrived. While conducting this survey, I had to strip away the buildings and infrastructure associated with modern Faroese life, and consider where the first farms would have been located, and where they would bury their dead, taking into consideration that when Norse settlers arrived, they shaped a new living from in the landscape from scratch – not only their settlements and fields, but also their religious landscape. In doing so, their points of reference were most likely the cultural backgrounds from where they came, but also their individual personal experiences, and their perceptions of their new landscape. They had agency.

The survey went well and there were many locations that stood out as possible burial sites. In retrospect, it would be good to be able to visit the same site during different seasons. As a landscape changes from one season to another, the season can affect the visibility from the site, access, and movement to and from it. Therefore, it would be beneficial for understanding the location of a burial site to conduct phenomenological landscape analysis in different seasons. In processing the data from the survey, I would in a future study use viewshed analysis. This would help to understand the location of the burial sites from a broader landscape perspective, especially with elevation and visibility linked to other Viking Age burials, settlements, early church sites and Christian cemeteries, on other islands.

The geophysical survey conducted for this project faced a number of methodological challenges, and the outcomes of future geophysical surveys in the Faroe Islands could be improved with the use of complementary methods, such as ground penetrating radar and electrical resistance. Although it was difficult to find a ‘quiet’ spot for the settings of the Bartington survey tool, I would recommend to continue to use and develop the magnetometer for the requirements in the Faroe Islands, taking into consideration the magnetic hard geology and the shallow soils. This recommendation is based on the fact that there were not only natural features in the geophysical results, but also cultural features. As archaeological geophysics is in its infancy in the Faroes, it is important to continue experimenting with different methods, to combine them and refine them to make them suitable for use in the Faroese landscape. A refined and developed geophysical survey method for the Faroese landscape, would help to locate Viking Age burials in the future.

The final phase of the field work involved test excavations. Although no new burials were found during the test excavations, the selected locations, based on the results of the geophysical surveys, revealed cultural features, a wall and a simple drain in Mjølgerði 1 and Mjølgerði 3. Since it was difficult to see any conclusive evidence of burials in the geophysical results as there was much noise in the data, and the process of selecting locations for test excavations from a geophysical survey was new to me, I was meticulous in my selection of which areas and how many trenches to open. However, after the initial trenches were opened at the site Húsadeild 1 and Húsadeild 2, I soon realised that the soils in the field was very shallow and that the magnetic anomalies had been natural features. In subsequent trenches large test trenches were opened at Mjølgerði 1 and Depil 3, where Mjølgerði 1 resulted in the discovery of an archaeological feature. I learned from this experience, and feel that future research aimed at locating Viking Age burials should use a combination of geophysical methods (refined, as mentioned above) covering wider areas, coring, and larger excavation areas over suspected geophysical anomalies. This could improve the outcomes of future research projects focussed on Viking Age burials.

9.2 Reflections on the Results of this Research Project

As a result of this research project, the new questions asked, and the new methods employed, new knowledge on the location of Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands is starting to emerge. The research conducted demonstrates that we need to reconsider the locations of Viking Age

burials. There is a long continuity of settlements and burial places in the Faroe Islands, and this project has demonstrated that Viking Age burials could very well be below modern-day villages, below and on the outskirts of modern-day cemeteries, and also possibly disturbed. This helps to explain why so few Viking Age burial sites have been found so far.

The individuals in the burials, and the communities who buried them, had their own agendas, personal preferences, ideas, thoughts, and beliefs, which for us today are difficult to uncover fully, in all of their richness and diversity. As researchers, we see only a part of their lives, as revealed through a small sample of burials, artefacts, and settlements. In the studied archaeological material, I have reached the conclusion that it was meaningful and significant for the Vikings in the Faroes to settle close to the sea and landing sites, not far from fresh water, and to have their beloved dead buried close to the settlement or on outer boundaries of the settlement. It is clear that it was important that the burial sites were visible in the landscape, which is also the case in the wider North Atlantic. This demonstrates that while it was a necessity to seek new places to settle, it was at the same time essential to keep an open network with the rest of the world, especially with their neighbours in the North Atlantic, with whom they, to some extent, shared the same frames of references in relation to burial locations and ritual practices. Although the unique character of the Faroese landscape and village-based settlements gave them a distinct perspective on the importance of community and the long-term continuity and embeddedness of those communities – both living and dead – in this landscape, they were not isolated. The sea was a road that connected Faroes communities to each other and to the rest of the Viking World.

9.3 Prospects for Heritage Management and the Location of Viking Age Burials

This research study has important implications for heritage management within towns and villages and will also help to design a strategy for testing possible locations of Viking Age burial grounds in the future. For example, my conclusion is that land adjacent to Christian churches and cemeteries should be targeted, especially those known to have origins in the medieval period, and including private gardens with the permission of the landowners. In addition, archaeological watching briefs should be conducted whenever a new grave is excavated in a cemetery, and, owners of burial plots could be asked to give permission for excavations well in advance of the grave being needed.

Through this research, it has become clear that new pagan burials can be located when people do construction work in or close to old settlements and roads, when old churchyards are extended and, in the landscape, due to erosion. It is highly significant that there is good communication between the archaeological authorities, farmers and house owners in general, to ensure that human remains and artefacts are reported to the authorities. At Yviri í Trøð and Við Kirkjugarð, the human remains were in bad condition, and therefore an artefact, the presence of layered or worked stones, and wood could indicate the presence of a burial, even where there are few notable human remains. Identifying burials before they are destroyed can be effectively achieved with more open talks in the villages, local exhibitions planned together with local authorities, five to ten minute-long films on finds in a village, an information folder about the importance of archaeological finds for the community as a whole, and regular visits by archaeologists to the villages and cities for talks or question and answer sessions. It is important when doing public outreach to focus on the positive stories, where people have reported a find such as at Á Bønhúsfløta in the village of Hvalba, which lead to radiocarbon dating of the human remains, their identification as Viking Age remains, and an archaeological survey of the area. An additional strategy would be to develop community-based research projects together with the people living in the villages, and to do walks in the landscape (field survey) together to record possible archaeological remains. As this study has shown, I greatly benefitted from talking with people living in the villages and conducting interviews with them, to collect long-term social memories of unusual burials and features in the landscape. During this research, I talked with many knowledgeable people, but none of my informants could provide information about a possible Viking Age burial location in the northern islands. In the end one must be aware of what is evidence-based reality, and how to use the information in archaeological research. For a future study, it would be very interesting to use local participants and participant observation methods, in order to examine how farmers and local people interact with the landscape they are travelling and living in.

9.4 Proposals for Future Research

During this research project, it became clear that it is difficult to locate Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands because there are typically no physical remains of burial structures (mounds or stone markers) in the landscape, and because many burial grounds were in use for an long period of time extending into the Christian period. These issues lead towards new research questions, such as:

- How common was it to use the same cemeteries from the Viking Age to today?
- Were pagans and Christians always buried at the same locations during the late Viking Age?
- Is there a variation in the burial locations of males, and females, and children?
- How serious is the problem of burial disturbance due to erosion in the Faroese landscape, and how can we use eroding areas to find sites?
- Why are there no clear indications of Viking Age warrior burials, boat burials, or high-status burials in the Faroe Islands?

By the end of the Viking Age, and in the early medieval period, the whole of Scandinavia was in a period of political, social, cultural and religious change, which we can expect to have affected where people chose to bury their loved ones. Therefore, the trend observed in the Faroe Islands of continuity of burial location from the pagan to the Christian period is interesting. It would be useful if future studies could further examine the spatial relationships between pagan burial sites, early church sites, and settlements, in order to answer such research questions as:

- To what extent were early church sites a continuation of the pagan burial and ritual sites?
- If there was no continuation at a specific pagan burial location, how and what was the spatial relationship between the pagan burial sites and the early church sites and their cemeteries?
- And how were the early church sites related to the settlements? Were they part of a farm or village, or spatially separated from it?

In the Faroe Islands, the landscape was a new platform where the agents, the Vikings, consciously chose specific locations for settlements and burials. Through their agency, they shaped and changed the body of the landscape with burial locations, associated ritual performances, settlements, landing sites, shielings, ditches, boundary walls, cultivated fields, and so on, to encompass social, practical, and psychological requirements. The burials became embedded in the landscape in specially selected places near settlements, at the boundaries of settlements, and on routes, either near or clearly visible to and from the sea. Once in the landscape, burials became a new agent, having an active role in commemorating the dead, greeting visitors, and providing a visible, physical presence that must have routinely

communicated meanings to the living members of the community as they moved past and around them on a daily basis. It is impossible to know for sure what those means were, but we can speculate that they were likely to include messages related to creation of place, family ancestry, belonging, ownership, and protection.

As a result of this research project, the research questions asked, and the new methods employed, I feel that I have greatly improved the understanding of Viking Age burials in the Faroe Islands – not only their locations, but also their meanings and the world-views they embodied. The similarities and differences between the Viking Age burials in the Faroes compared to other areas of Norse settlement in the North Atlantic is now also better understood, giving rise to new ideas about the impact of the distinctive Faroese landscape and settlement pattern on the world-views of the settlers. However, the project has generated just as many new research questions as it has answered. I sincerely hope that I will be able to extend this research in a future study. I also hope that this study will inspire other students to do archaeological research in the Faroe Islands and the North Atlantic region.

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