Pathological Animal Bones from Iceland

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**Introduction**
No systematic research has been done on pathologies in Icelandic archaeofaunas. However, pathological examples have been used as evidence for environmental and cultural changes. McGovern (2009) used cases of "broken mouth" in caprines as a proxy for soil degradation in the Mývatnssveit area in North-Iceland (McGovern, 2009). A cattle skull with signs of infection after horn removal from the Skálholt bishopric in South-Iceland, with has been interpreted as an indication of Lamarckian breeding in the 17th century (Hambrecht, 2007).

Here some examples of pathologies encountered in two Icelandic archaeofaunas, from Althingisreitur and Skriðuklaustur are presented.

**Althingisreitur**
A multi-period site dating from the late 9th to the 19th century in downtown Reykjavík. The site was an activity area in the IV phase (871-1226 AD) it was used for iron working with furnaces and smithies but later as a fish processing site and midden (Garðarsdóttir, 2010). The archaeofauna includes the traditional domesticates like sheep/goat, cattle, horse and dog and cat. Large quantities of cod and puffin bones as well as seal, walrus and cetacean bones show a heavy reliance on marine resources at the site (Pálsdóttir, 2010, 2013).

**Skriðuklaustur**
A late medieval monastery in East-Iceland (1495-1554 AD), excavated between 2002 and 2011 (Steinunn Kristjánsdóttir, 2012). The archaeofauna included sheep/goat, cattle, horse and dog bones from wild animals such as cod, shark, seals, cetacea, swans, eagle and arctic fox (Hamilton-Dyer, 2010; Pálsdóttir, In preparation).

**References**

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