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# Iceland and the World: From the Discovery of America to U.S. Defence

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*Greinin fjallar um rannsóknir sem íslenskir sagnfræðingar hafa birt og varða sögu heimsins utan Evrópu. Þar er ekki um auðugan garð að gresja. Flestir íslenskir sagnfræðingar rannsaka sögu Íslands. Reyndar hafa þessar rannsóknir oft verið settar í evrópskt sambengi og margir hafa rannsakað tengsl Íslands við Evrópu. En í þessu verkefni er heimurinn skilgreindur sem allar heimsálfur nema Evrópa. Þarafleiðandi er mér ansi þröngur stakkur skorinn. Spurningin sem ég hef þurft að glíma við í þessari grein er hvað hafa íslenskir sagnfræðingar rannsakað í sögu annarra álfa utan Evrópu?*

*Tvær fyrstu greinarnar fjalla um Ameríku á miðöldum. Inga Huld Hákonardóttir hefur skrifað grein um hina víðförlu Guðríði Þorbjarnardóttur, sem talin er hafa fetað fyrsta "hvíta" barnið í Ameríku og Þórunn Valdimarsdóttir hefur komið með þá athyglisverðu kenningu hvort hugsanlegt sé að Björn Breiðfirðingakappi hafi verið skeggjafi höfðinginn Quetzalcoatl, sem varð að guði Mexíkana? Í splunkunýrri doktorsritgerð skrifaði Sverrir Jakobsson um heimsmynd Íslendinga á tímabilinu 1100-1400, þar sem heimsmyndin nær óumdeilanlega út fyrir Evrópu, til Afriku og Asíu. Samkvæmt þeirri heimsmynd var t.d. Vinland Leifs heppna staðsett í Afriku.*

*Ég stóðst ekki freistinguna að kynna fyrir erlendum lesendum Reisubók Jóns Indíafara enda fór hann víða um Austurlönd í byrjun 17. aldar og lýsir reynslu sinni á afar athyglisverðan hátt. Rannsóknir Þorsteins Helgasonar á Tyrkjaráninu eru kynntar og lesendum bent á að þar voru ekki "Tyrkir" á ferð, þótt áfangastaður hinna 400 íslensku fanga var Norður-Afrika.*

*Vesturfara og -ferðir hafa verið mikið rannsakaðar en ég fjalla eingöngu um fræðilegar rannsóknir þeirra Helga Skúla Kjartanssonar og Jónúsar H. Kristinssonar. Vesturfaraskránni er lýst og sagt frá greiningu Helga Skúla á t.d. fjölda Vesturfara, aldri þeirra og kyni. Einnig er minnst á skýringar hans á orsökum og afleiðingum landflóttans til Ameríku fyrir íslenskt samfélag.*

*Loks er kafla um samskipti Íslands við Bandaríkin á 20. öld. Þar hafa prófessorarnir Þór Whitehead og Valur Ingmundarson unnið ótulllega að margvíslegum rannsóknnum í tengslum við síðari heimsstyrjöldina, lýðveldisstofnunina, Keflavíkursamninginn og herstöðina, inngöngu Íslands í NATO og samskipti Íslands og Bandaríkjanna meðan á Kalda stríðinu stóð svo dæmi séu nefnd.*

*Að síðustu er bent á þá staðreynd að Valur Ingmundarson (sem er yngsti kennarinn við Sagnfræðiskor) og Ellen Gunnarsdóttir, sem skrifaði doktorsritgerð um heilagar konur í*

*Mexikó við Cambridge-háskóla, rituðu bæði doktorsritgerðir sem tengjast ekki á nokkurn hátt sögu Íslands. Er þetta merki um breyttar áherslur, einkum þegar haft er í huga að Sagnfræðiskor atlar frá og með haustinu 2006 að leggja meiri áherslu á heimssögu og draga úr kennslu í Evrópusögu?*

## INTRODUCTION: RESEARCH IN WORLD HISTORY

Being asked to write about the historiography of research in world history in Iceland, I feel very much like the author of a book on Iceland who famously entitled a chapter of the book “Snakes in Iceland”. This was a short chapter, indeed only one sentence: “There are no snakes in Iceland”. In the same manner I can write: “There is no research into world history in the Department of History of the University of Iceland”. The academic staff, almost without exception, focuses on Icelandic history and if research is placed in a wider perspective it will most likely be in a European context. Indeed, relations between Iceland and other European countries have been extensively studied by members of the department.

When discussing this lack of research into world – that is to say non-European – history, it must be understood that the University of Iceland was not founded until 1911. The three existing schools of Theology, Medicine, and Law were combined, each becoming a separate faculty and only one new faculty was added, the Faculty of Arts, which to begin with taught only philosophy and Icelandic studies (i.e. Icelandic literature, language and history).

There are now eleven faculties at the University of Iceland covering most academic subjects. It is a national university and the only research university in Iceland. The Department of History is the only one in Iceland. It is one of the seven departments of the Faculty of Humanities – formerly the Faculty of Arts – which now boasts 34 disciplines. In the History Department there are at present eleven tenured professors and one adjunct. It was not until 1965 that history, comprising both Icelandic and world history, became an independent discipline, severing all links with Icelandic literature and language (now in the Department of Icelandic Studies). The academic staff in 1965 understood their main function as preparing their students for a teaching career in secondary schools. In the 1960s and 70s students were permitted to write dissertations, at both the BA and MA levels, on aspects of World or European history, e.g. the Korean War or Peter the Great. This is no longer the case. Though many of our graduates choose to go into teaching on the secondary level, the current staff considers it imperative that the students have a good grounding in historical research. Thus the B.A. dissertation now stipulates the use of primary sources and the only ones readily available in Iceland are obviously Icelandic. Students are, however, encouraged to place the subjects of their dissertations in a European perspective or attempt a subject in comparative history. Considering the fact that we are a nation of only 300.000 people with 1100 years of history, there is no shortage of topics in Icelandic history inviting research.

Writing history has been a popular pastime in Iceland. It was commonly believed that no special training was necessary. Since the introduction of history as a specific academic discipline in 1965 this attitude has changed somewhat. In this paper only research undertaken by trained Icelandic historians will be discussed. Both the former Soviet Union to the east and Greenland<sup>1</sup> to the west will be considered European countries and thus research by Icelandic historians concerning these countries are outside the scope of this chapter. The research subjects are arranged chronologically.

## THE MIDDLE AGES: AMERICA

It is traditionally believed that Iceland's relations with the world began in the year 1000 when Leifur Eiríksson, or Leif the Lucky as he is popularly known, discovered, by accident, the North American continent, almost 500 years before Columbus<sup>2</sup>. He called it *Vinland* [Land of the Vines] as he and his crew purportedly found grapes growing there. Historians, however, have not shown much interest in this. The sources are the Icelandic sagas<sup>3</sup>, written in the 12th and 13th centuries, and the discovery of America has been the province of scholars of medieval Icelandic literature rather than historians. Where actually *Vinland* was situated has been a source of great debate, but archaeologists have proved irrefutably at least that there were Nordic settlers in L'Anse aux Meadows in Newfoundland in the 11th century<sup>4</sup>.

One of the women settlers aroused the interest of historian Inga Huld Hákonardóttir. She wrote an article on Guðríður Þorbjarnardóttir, wife of the explorer Þorfinnur Karlsefni who led the largest expedition to America in the wake of Leifur's discovery (1000-1005). In America Guðríður gave birth to Snorri, believed to be the first Caucasian baby born there. Later she returned with her husband and three-year old son to Iceland and eventually went on a pilgrimage to Rome, making her perhaps the most widely-travelled western woman in the Middle Ages<sup>5</sup>.

Þórunn Valdimarsdóttir, a well-known and prolific historian, studied history for a time in Mexico. She was struck by the similarities between the descriptions of an Icelander in the ancient saga literature and of the Aztec god Quetzalcoatl. She has written an interesting article on the possibility that the Icelander Björn Breiðvíkingur Ásbrandsson or Björn Breiðvíkingakappi [Björn the champion from Breiðafjörður], was in fact the bearded stranger from the east, namely the legendary god Quetzalcoatl<sup>6</sup>. She describes how Montezuma, king of the Aztecs, welcomed Hernando Cortés, in the belief that he was the incarnation of Quetzalcoatl. The attributes were a pale skin and a beard in a beardless continent.

According to the Icelandic saga *Eyrbyggja*<sup>7</sup>, written in the first half of the 13th century, Björn sailed off course to a great land in the south-west ocean where he became the leader of the people there, ca. 1030. Quetzalcoatl and Björn were apparently contemporaries. This is a tantalizing theory, which Þórunn rightly stresses needs further research and scholarly co-operation between Icelandic and Mexican historians.

## 1100-1400: THE WORLD-VIEW OF THE ICELANDERS

Sverrir Jakobsson is a young Icelandic historian who defended his doctoral thesis last year in 2005<sup>8</sup>. It is an analysis of the dominant world-view in Icelandic society during the medieval period 1100-1400, its general mentality and how the world-view relates to the question of the identity of the medieval Icelanders. This is a fascinating study. The Icelandic world-view was centred on the Roman-Catholic one, Asia being in the middle of their world. The Icelanders, however, appear to have had little understanding of the Great Schism, the emperor in Constantinople being described in the saga literature as the head of all Christendom.

Africa, Asia and Jerusalem are examples of places frequently mentioned in this thesis. The Icelanders found new locations for newly discovered lands, though always within the known framework of their world. These were widely off the mark: Greenland was located close to Bjarmaland (the area around the White Sea) and Vinland (the land discovered by Leifur Eiríksson in North America) was located in Africa.

For Icelandic chieftains a way to gain honour was to travel southwards, most commonly to Rome, although trips to Jerusalem were naturally enough more prestigious. Interestingly, Icelandic chieftains traced their ancestry back to Asia, primarily to Turkey. Ari the Learned (1068-1148), traditionally regarded as the first Icelandic historian<sup>9</sup>, for example traced his own family back to the king of Turks.

*Hauksbók*, written by Haukur Erlendsson (d. 1334) a secular official, is of especial interest as it contains both a survey of world geography and important narratives on world history. Haukur mentioned many foreign countries, but none beyond the recognized world history of the time. He also chose to trace his family back to Asia.

Snorri Sturluson (1178-1241), politician and historian and perhaps the most famous medieval Icelander, was Ari's successor. His *Heimskringla* [History of the Kings of Norway] begins with a description of the world in which the story of the Turkish origins of both the leading Icelandic and Norwegian leaders are emphasized.

## THE 16TH-17TH CENTURIES. A PRIMARY SOURCE: JÓN THE WORLD TRAVELLER

I cannot refrain from mentioning a primary source which perfectly fits the topic under discussion, namely Iceland and the world. An Icelander, Jón Ólafsson (1593-1679), set off from Iceland on an English ship as a seaman in 1615 – naturally enough he first went to Europe: to England, Denmark, the Faroes and Norway, and even to Spitzbergen and the White Sea. But then he went further to extremely exotic destinations: India, Ceylon, the Danish colony Tranquebar in India, Table Island, the Cape of Good Hope, to Africa and Madagascar, the Comoro Island and Coromandel Coast, Ascension Island and Saint Helena. He returned to Iceland in 1626 and was called Jón the India Traveller (*Jón Indíafari*). He began writing his autobiography in 1661, a superb

account of his travels and the lands he visited. Its value was recognised early and has been published at intervals in Iceland, most recently in 1992.<sup>10</sup> It was first translated into English by Dame Bertha S. Philpotts, Mistress of Girton College Cambridge, and a renowned scholar. The first volume was published for the Hakluyt Society in 1923, the second in 1932<sup>11</sup>. It is a fascinating read, full of adventure and the descriptions of an exotic world as experienced by an Icelander brought up in a turf cottage at the turn of the 17th century.

## 1627: THE 'TURKISH RAID'

In 1627 Barbary corsairs from Algiers and Salé (Morocco) descended on Iceland, taking around 400 prisoners, the population of Iceland being reasonably estimated to have been then about 60,000. This dramatic event is popularly known as *Tyrkjaránið* – the Turkish Raid – as the two cities were then part of the Ottoman Empire. Four ships attacked the eastern and southern coast as well as the Westmann Islands, off the south coast of Iceland. About thirty people were killed in addition to the 400 taken prisoner. Ten years later 27 made it back to Iceland. The pirates never came again, probably because the Icelanders were too poor to pay ransom for their loved ones. The fear of the 'Turks' (Janissary Turks, Moors of various kinds and European renegades who were the leaders of the assault), however, lived on well into the 19th century<sup>12</sup>.

In 1902 The Historical Association (*Sögufélag*) was founded in Reykjavík. Its aim was to publish primary sources in Icelandic history. One of its first projects was to gather all available contemporary documents dealing with the raid. This 500 page volume<sup>13</sup> included chronicles, annals, prayers against the Turks, letters and a travel account of one of the victims, the Reverend Ólafur Egilsson<sup>14</sup>, who was one of the few who made it back to Iceland.

Despite the relative abundance of primary sources, no one has yet written a serious study of this blood-curdling event. This is about to change. An associate professor at the Iceland University of Education, Þorsteinn Helgason, is working on a doctoral dissertation and has already published a couple of articles on the subject. He has surveyed the foreign sources, identified the origin and nationality of the corsairs themselves as well as placing this Barbary raid in its European and African/Asian perspective<sup>15</sup>.

## LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURIES: EMIGRATION TO AMERICA

The first Icelanders to immigrate to America were Icelandic Mormons who moved to Utah in 1855-1856. A few people, not more than forty at the most, emigrated from Northern Iceland to Brazil in 1861. But it was not until the early 1870s that mass emigration began. In 1875 *New Iceland* was established on the shores of Lake Winnipeg with its own government and constitution. This republic was short-lived, New Iceland joining the province of Manitoba in 1887. Winnipeg has remained the Western-Icelandic centre (frequently visited by Icelandic politicians) though many people of Icelandic

descent eventually migrated to the west, all the way to British Columbia<sup>16</sup>, while others settled in Minnesota, Nebraska and North Dakota. In general the Icelandic settlements tended to be both north and south of the US-Canadian border<sup>17</sup>.

Considerable research has been done on these so-called 'Western-Icelanders', though here only academic studies will be discussed. In 1976 Helgi Skúli Kjartansson, now professor at the Iceland University of Education, wrote a dissertation for his master's degree on the subject of the Icelandic emigration to North America. Besides being a general survey, his thesis was primarily a statistical study of data on Icelandic emigrants which had been compiled by the Institute of History of the University of Iceland in connection with a Nordic research project on transatlantic emigration.

Subsequently the late historian Jónius H. Kristinsson turned to this field of research<sup>18</sup>. Funded by the government, he undertook an immense task, listing all the Icelanders that had definitely emigrated to America. Only those emigrants were included where reliable documentary information was available. The total is 14,268 to be exact. It goes without saying that this is a valuable record of all known Icelandic emigrants to America and the book was published by the Institute of History in 1983. The major sources used were parish registers and passenger lists, but when these two sources were compared only 6000 emigrants proved to be listed in both sources. Obviously, other sources had to be used and contracts between the emigrants and the agents of the shipping lines regarding fares and emigrant lists compiled by the sheriffs of each district in Iceland proved particularly useful. It is estimated that thousands emigrated without documentary trace. Perhaps the total was somewhere around 15-20,000 from 1870-1914<sup>19</sup>. Kristinsson gave the following information on each emigrant: the year of emigration, the last place of residence in Iceland, occupation, age<sup>20</sup>, the port of embarkation, the name of the ship travelled on and finally the destination.

Recently in 2003 Professor Kjartansson decided to publish his master's thesis, in a thoroughly revised form with the statistics calculated anew<sup>21</sup>. His study analyses the reasons for the emigration, placing the emphasis on economic development and business cycles, on both sides of the Atlantic, as principal contributing factors. Nevertheless, he does not reject the traditional causes of land-hunger and the harsh climatic conditions in Iceland in the late 19th century. A subsidised passage and 200 acres of land was an attractive proposition for an impoverished Icelander. Kjartansson considers the initiative of the Canadian Allan line and its agent, supported by Canadian authorities, as being instrumental in initiating the mass emigration from Iceland and in establishing Canada as the preferred destination. His analysis of the data shows that there was a population loss of about 20%, most emigrants coming from Northern and Eastern Iceland. The average age was 20-34 years old, more than half were female, a high proportion were married couples with a correspondingly high number of children. Finally, he assesses the consequences of this mass exodus on Icelandic society.

The sudden termination of mass emigration in 1906 is a peculiarity of Iceland, standing as it does in contrast to Scandinavia and Britain. Kjartansson explains this by the

general optimism following the introduction of Home Rule from Denmark in 1904. Indeed, much was accomplished in the next decade: motor boats and steam trawlers were introduced into the Icelandic fisheries, rivers were bridged, a new bank was established with foreign capital and the University of Iceland was founded, to give a few examples.

Finally, it might be mentioned that case studies have been made; for example Bergsteinn Jónsson, professor emeritus of the University of Iceland, wrote an article on the Icelandic settlers in Wisconsin<sup>22</sup>.

## THE 20TH CENTURY: RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES

Before a discussion can begin of this thorny and controversial subject it is necessary to sketch in the historical background<sup>23</sup>. In 1918 Iceland, a dependency of Denmark since 1380, gained its sovereignty and entered into a personal union with Denmark. It proudly asserted its status as being one of 'perpetual neutrality'. In 1944, while Denmark was occupied by the Germans, Iceland proclaimed its independence as a republic, after ensuring the support of Britain and the United States. It is necessary to stress that Iceland has never had an army. During the Second World War Iceland was first occupied by the British in 1940. When British forces were needed elsewhere in Europe the Icelandic government, in June 1941, agreed to invite the Americans, at the instigation of the British, to take on Iceland's defence and eventually a military base was built at Keflavík. In this manner the United States first became an active participant in the Second World War. In 1949 Iceland became a founding member of NATO. These two issues: the U.S. military base at Keflavík and Iceland's membership of NATO have been the most hotly contested post-Second World War political issues in Iceland, particularly in the 1940s and 50s and again in the early 1970s.

Since the opening of the archives abroad and in Iceland two professors at the University of Iceland, Þór Whitehead and Valur Ingimundarson, have done a great deal of research into Icelandic-U.S. relations. Professor Whitehead completed his doctorate at Oxford University on the subject of Iceland in the Second World War in 1978 and subsequently became the first scholar to engage in research on Icelandic foreign policy during the Cold War period 1946-1956, publishing his first article in 1973<sup>24</sup>. The reasons for Iceland's abandonment of its policy of perpetual neutrality and the decision to become a founding member of NATO have been the major subjects of debate. Whitehead has always stressed the geopolitical and economic reasons for Iceland joining the Western bloc. His interpretation regarding the abandonment of Iceland's avowed policy of neutrality was that it was a reflection of the realities of the Cold War and the vital importance of Iceland's strategic geographic position in the North Atlantic.

In the 1990s Professor Whitehead returned to the subject outlining his argument in detail in his book *The Ally Who Came in from the Cold*<sup>25</sup>. There he discusses the U.S. request for bases during 1945-46, the Icelandic-U.S. defence agreement of 1951, the U.S. attempts at expanding its military facilities during 1952-54, the Icelandic parliament's demands for



U.S. withdrawal and the search for a compromise, ending with the final settlement, the status quo at Keflavík, which he regarded primarily as a result of the international crisis in 1956, with the Soviet intervention in Hungary. The leaders of the pro-Western parties in Iceland's coalition government were faced with three major factors: the problem of Iceland's security in the light of Soviet expansionist policy, a problem compounded by Iceland's strategic position; the necessity of maintaining foreign trade with the United States and Britain (which had become of extreme importance during the Second World War) to avert economic depression and "the need to expand markets for a vastly increased fish production thereby obtaining foreign capital to modernize Iceland's backward economy"<sup>26</sup>. He concluded that concern for national security was "the paramount determinant" of Icelandic foreign policy<sup>27</sup>. This is the so-called orthodox view.

The revisionists of course disagreed. Elfar Loftsson, a political scientist, argued that the abandonment of the policy of Icelandic neutrality was due to direct intervention by the United States into Icelandic affairs hand-in-hand with pro-Western Icelandic politicians more interested in economic interests than security issues<sup>28</sup>.

In 1995 Valur Ingimundarson wrote about the reasons for the 1956 decision of the left-wing government of the time to abandon its stated policy of repealing the U.S. – Icelandic Defence Agreement of 1951 and the withdrawal of U.S. soldiers. The major reason was U.S. economic assistance. He argued that the right-wing of the Social Democratic Party (one of the coalition) had decided to make a deal with the United States and that this decision was taken before the Soviet suppression of the Hungarian Revolution. He demonstrated clearly that the Eisenhower administration had offered much-needed economic aid on the condition that the U.S. military base remain<sup>29</sup>.

In 1996 Ingimundarson published a book on Cold War Icelandic-U.S. relations during 1945-60<sup>30</sup>. The book, with an orthodox bias, sought to demonstrate that economic considerations were always a factor in Icelandic foreign policy and in the calculations of Icelandic politicians. It also dismissed the idea that security was a secondary – or non-existent – factor when Iceland joined NATO and agreed to sign the Defence Agreement with the United States. Ingimundarson uses a theoretical approach, mainly applying the theories of Melvyn Leffler and Geir Lundestad.

Another controversy in Iceland has been the question whether nuclear weapons have ever been stationed at the U.S. military base in Keflavík. This has been examined by Ingimundarson in the above-mentioned book. No evidence has been found of nuclear weapons at the Keflavík base in Iceland in the 1950s but he presents new findings that the Americans planned to put up anti-aircraft missile systems with nuclear warheads, only deciding against it because their systems were needed elsewhere.

In yet another book published in 2001<sup>31</sup> Professor Ingimundarson focuses on Iceland's relationship with the United States and NATO. He discusses why the Icelandic republic's second left-wing coalition government of 1971-1974, which, as the first did, promised to revise or abrogate the U.S.-Icelandic defence treaty, failed to do so. He argues that the key factor was political differences over economic policies – the govern-

ment could not reach a consensus on how far it should go in slackening the military ties with the West. An interesting factor which influenced the outcome was the fishing dispute with Britain. In 1972 Iceland unilaterally extended its fishery limits from 12 to 50 miles. A 'Cod War' broke out and British frigates moved into Icelandic waters. This nearly destroyed Iceland's relationship with both NATO and the United States. The crisis was dispelled in 1973 with the result that the pro-Western proponents gained control. Ingimundurson again uses a theoretical approach, using the theories of Pierre Bourdieu and theories of nationalism with even some postmodernist aspects.

A right-wing coalition government was duly elected in August 1974 and since then the question of a U.S. military base on Icelandic soil has ceased to be a major issue in Icelandic politics. As Professor Ingimundurson writes: "Iceland is firmly anchored in the Western alliance"<sup>32</sup>.

## THE 20TH CENTURY: ICELAND AND THE UNITED NATIONS

Valdimar Unnar Valdimarsson (1958-1988) graduated from the University of Iceland with a master's degree and went on to the London School of Economics to write a doctoral thesis on Iceland's role in the United Nations from 1946-1980. He had published one article on this subject before his untimely death. This was a discussion of Iceland's position regarding China's membership to the United Nations<sup>33</sup>. His thesis was eventually edited and co-authored by Gunnar Á. Gunnarsson and Guðmundur R. Arnason and published in 1993<sup>34</sup>. It is a general survey of Iceland's policy and decision-making in the United Nations from the date when Iceland became a member in 1946 (as Iceland was not a belligerent it could not be a founding member) to 1980. As far as global politics go Valdimarsson discussed Iceland's foreign policy and position in the UN regarding not only China but South Africa and the Middle East.

From the above it will be seen that only two professors of the Department of History of the University of Iceland have ventured into what might be called world history – relations with the United States. At the same time they are of course writing important chapters in the history of Iceland.

Perhaps though an interesting development is taking place. Professor Valur Ingimundurson, the youngest member of the Department of History, received his doctorate from Columbia University. Its subject, on American political history, had nothing to do with Iceland, though, as will be quite clear to the reader, he has subsequently turned to researching Icelandic history in an international framework. Recently, in 1998, a young historian, Ellen Gunnarsdóttir, was granted her doctorate from Cambridge University. Her thesis was, indeed, very far removed from Icelandic history. It dealt with Mexican *beatas* in the Baroque period and has been published in the U.S.A.<sup>35</sup>. It is certainly non-European. It is perhaps a sign of the times that the Department of History of the University of Iceland will introduce for the next academic year (2006-2007) a new curriculum emphasizing global history at the expense of European history. This will hopefully lead to more interest in doing research into world history.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Greenland is a dependency of Denmark, albeit with Home Rule. I have always considered it as being part of Europe, though it is of course geographically closer to the North American continent. Icelandic historians, and historians of other nationalities, continue to study the mystery of the disappearance of the Nordic settlement in Greenland in the late Middle Ages. No consensus has yet been reached
- <sup>2</sup> And sensibly lost it again. This is a popular joke in Iceland.
- <sup>3</sup> *Erik the Red's Saga* (Eiríks saga rauða) and *The Saga of the Greenlanders* (Grænlendingasaga). They are both published in English in the first volume of *The Complete Sagas of Icelanders*, general editor V. Hreinsson, Reykjavík 1997.
- <sup>4</sup> See e.g. H. Ingstad, *Westward to Vinland*, London 1965. The most recent book on the Vinland debate is by P. Bergþórsson, a meteorologist, *Vinlandsgátan* [The Vinland Mystery], Reykjavík 1997.
- <sup>5</sup> I.H. Hákonardóttir, *Guðríður Þorbjarnardóttir. Frá New York til Rómar?* [Guðríður Þorbjarnardóttir. From New York to Rome], in A. Agnarsdóttir et al. (eds.), *Kvennaslóðir. Rit til heiðurs Sigríði Th. Erlendsdóttur*, Reykjavík 2001, pp. 60-74.
- <sup>6</sup> Þ. Valdimarsdóttir, *Var Björn Breiðvíkingakappi skeggjaði höfðinginn Quetzalcoatl sem kom úr austri?* [Was Björn Breiðfirðingakappi the bearded chieftain Quetzalcoatl who came from the east?], A. Agnarsdóttir et al. (eds.), *Kvennaslóðir. Rit til heiðurs Sigríði Th. Erlendsdóttur*, Reykjavík 2001, pp. 99-107.
- <sup>7</sup> Translated into English as *The Saga of the People of Eyri* in vol. V of *The Complete Sagas of Icelanders*.
- <sup>8</sup> S. Jakobsson, *Við og veröldin. Heimsmynd Íslendinga 1100-1400*, [Us and the World. The World-View of the Icelanders 1100-1400], Reykjavík 2005. This chapter is abstracted from the English summary, pp. 363-68.
- <sup>9</sup> See the *Book of Icelanders* [Íslendingabók], written between 1122 and 1133.
- <sup>10</sup> V. Óskarsson (ed.), *Reisubók Jóns Ólafssonar Indíafara*, Reykjavík 1992.
- <sup>11</sup> *The Life of the Icelander Jón Ólafsson Traveller to India...*, London 1923-1932, 2 vols. The second volume was edited by R. Temple and L.M. Anstey. Incidentally, there is a copy of the manuscript, unexamined as far as is known, in the British Library Add. MS. 11227, dating from the end of the 17th century. There are about 20 handwritten copies in Iceland – it was a popular book – and it has also been translated into German and Danish. In 1998 Inger Barnes edited and translated part of the book as *Memoirs of Jón Ólafsson Icelander and Traveller to India...*, published in Cambridge.
- <sup>12</sup> For example when Sir Joseph Banks led the first foreign scientific expedition to Iceland in 1772 his arrival caused great alarm until he managed to convince the people that the members of the party were Christians.
- <sup>13</sup> J. Þorkelsson (ed.), *Tyrkjaránið á Íslandi 1627*, Reykjavík 1906-1909.
- <sup>14</sup> Later published separately: S. Kristjánsson (ed.), *Reisubók Séra Ólafs Egilssonar*, Reykjavík 1969.
- <sup>15</sup> Þ. Helgason, *Hverjir voru Tyrkjaránsmenn?* [Who were the Turkish raiders?], "Saga", 33, 1995, pp. 110-134, with an English summary; Þ. Helgason, *Íslendingar keyptir heim í kjölfar Tyrkjaráns* [Icelanders ransomed after the Turkish raid], "Íslenska söguþingið", 28.-31. maí 1997, Reykjavík 1998, I, pp. 331-342; Þ. Helgason, *Historical narrative as collective therapy: the case of the Turkish raid in Iceland*, "Scandinavian Journal of History", 22, 1997, pp. 275 H.S. Kjartansson - S. Hreiðarsson, *Framtíð handan hafs. Vesturfarir frá Íslandi 1870-1914*, [A Future across the Ocean. Western Emigration from Iceland 1870-1914], Reykjavík 2003. There is a summary in English, pp. 157-162-289.
- <sup>16</sup> Kjartansson - Hreiðarsson, *Framtíð handan hafs* cit., pp. 157-162.
- <sup>17</sup> For example there is still an old people's home for people of Icelandic descent in Blaine, Washington.
- <sup>18</sup> *Vesturfararskrá 1870-1914*, Reykjavík 1983.
- <sup>19</sup> E. Laxness, *Íslandssaga a til ö*, Reykjavík 1995, I, p. 37.
- <sup>20</sup> The age of children was often unreliable as a lower age meant a lower fare.
- <sup>21</sup> He was helped by a graduate student, Steinþór Hreiðarsson, who became his co-author.

- <sup>22</sup> B. Jónsson, *Frá sauðfjárbúskap í Bárðardal til akuryrkju í Wisconsin. Þettir úr dagbókum Jóns Jónssonar frá Mjóadal*, [From sheep-farming in Bárðardal to agriculture in Wisconsin. Excerpts from the journals of Jón Jónsson from Mjóadalur], "Saga", 15, 1985, pp. 59-96.
- <sup>23</sup> V. Ingimundarson, *Post-Cold War Historiography in Iceland*, in T.B. Olesen (ed.), *The Cold War and the Nordic Countries. Historiography at a Crossroads*, Odense 2004. The author is much indebted to this useful historiographical article which includes a comprehensive list of Cold War writings by Icelanders.
- <sup>24</sup> Þ. Whitehead, *Stórveldin og lýðveldið 1941-1944* [The Big Powers and the Republic], "Skírnir", 1947; Þ. Whitehead, *Lýðveldi og herstöðvar 1941-1946* [The Republic and Military Bases 1941-1946], "Skírnir", 1950.
- <sup>25</sup> Published in Reykjavík in 1998. See also *Leiðin frá blutleysi 1945-1949*, [The Road from Neutrality 1945-1949], "Saga", 1991, pp. 63-121 with an English summary.
- <sup>26</sup> Whitehead, *The Ally Who Came in from the Cold* cit., p. 85.
- <sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 82.
- <sup>28</sup> E. Loftsson, *Ísland í NATO-partierna og försvarsfrågan*. Disseration at the University of Gothenburg; Id., *The Disguised Threat. Iceland during the Cold war*, "Scandinavian Journal of History, 10, 3, 1985.
- <sup>29</sup> V. Ingimundarson, *Ábrif bandaríks fjármagns á stefnubreytingu vinstri stjórnarinnar í varnarmálum árið 1956* [American Money and the Policy Change of the Left-Wing Government in Defence Affairs in 1956], "Saga", 33, 1995, pp. 9-53 with an English summary.
- <sup>30</sup> V. Ingimundarson, *Í eldlinu kalda stríðsins. Samskipti Íslands og Bandaríkjanna 1945-60*, Reykjavík 1996.
- <sup>31</sup> Id., *Uppgjör við umbeiminn. Samskipti Íslands, Bandaríkjanna og NATO 1960-1974* [A Time of Reckoning: Iceland's Relations with the United States and NATO, 1964-1974], Reykjavík 2001. See also the same author's *The Struggle for Western Integration. Iceland, the United States and NATO during the First Cold War*, Oslo 1999.
- <sup>32</sup> Ingimundarson, *Post-Cold War Historiography* cit., p. 90.
- <sup>33</sup> V.U. Valdimarsson, *Alþýðulýðveldið og Ísland. Ísland og aðild Kína að Sameinuðu þjóðunum*, "Ný saga", 1988, pp. 110-119 with an English summary.
- <sup>34</sup> *Ísland í eldlinu alþjóðamála. Stefnunótun og samvinna innan Sameinuðu þjóðanna 1946-1980*.
- <sup>35</sup> E. Gunnarsdóttir, *Mexican karismata. The baroque vocation of Francisca de los Ángeles, 1674-1744*, published by the University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln 2004. See also: E. Gunnarsdóttir, *Trúarheimur kvenna í barokk Mexíkó* [The Woman's World of Faith in Baroque Mexico], in A. Agnarsdóttir et al. (eds.), *Kvennaslóðir. Rit til heiðurs Sigríði Th. Erlendsdóttur*, Reykjavík 2001, pp. 152-161.

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