



Viðar Hreinsson Mag. Art – Short bio and CV

Viðar Hreinsson grew up on a farm in Northern Iceland but studied Icelandic and literary theory in Iceland and Copenhagen. He is an independent literary scholar at the Reykjavík Academy and has taught and lectured on various aspects of Icelandic literary and cultural history at universities in both in Iceland and abroad, in Canada, USA and Scandinavia. He is the General Editor of the acclaimed *The Complete Sagas of Icelanders* I-V (1997), and he is the author of a two-volume biography of Icelandic Canadian poet Stephan G. Stephansson published in Iceland 2002 and 2003. The first volume was nominated for the Icelandic Literary Prize, and the biography as a whole received an the 2003 Award for Excellence in Scholarly Writing. A rewritten

English version of this biography, *Wakeful Nights*, was published in Canada in 2012. He has written a number of scholarly articles on medieval sagas, 17th century literature, manuscript culture and Icelandic emigrant literature. More recently Viðar has been an environmental activist, written two biographies, served as the director of the Reykjavík Academy, and pursued research in Icelandic literary culture and critical cultural theory. At present he is working on a ecocritical research project that will result in a monograph that will at the same time analyse and depict the 17th century conception of nature, and the life of Jón Guðmundsson the Learned (1574-1658), a self-educated scholar, historian, poet, sorcerer and artist.

Affiliation:

Independent researcher at The Reykjavík Academy - Hringbraut 121, 101 Reykjavík, Iceland
Phone (+354) 844 8645 (cell) e-mail: vidar@akademia.is

Education:

Mag.-art. in literary studies, University of Copenhagen 1989
BA in Icelandic and literary studies, University of Iceland 1980.

Language skills:

Fluent in Icelandic, Danish and English. Read Norwegian, Swedish and German.

Occupation:

April 2010 - Independent researcher, conducting research projects on literary culture, writing a biography, and chief consultant for a new translation of the Sagas of Icelanders into Danish, Norwegian and Swedish since 2007.

September 1, 2005-March 31, 2010: Executive director of the Reykjavík Academy,

1994-2005: Independent scholar and part-time university teacher in Iceland and Denmark

1994-1997: General editor of *The Complete Sagas of Icelanders* I-V.

September 1992 - August 1994: Assistant Professor in Icelandic, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Kanada.

1989-1992: Independent scholar, teacher in two secondary schools and part-time teacher at the University of Iceland.

Service and Administrative Activities:

2007- Chairman of the project “Svartárvot, menning – náttúra” (Svartárvot, Culture – Nature).

2010-2012: Chairman of the board of the Reykjavík Academy.

2007-2010: Served on three working-groups for The Icelandic Science and Technology Policy Council and The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture.

1998-2001: On the board of the Reykjavík Academy.

Research interests and projects:

Icelandic cultural and literary history, most recently in ecocritical context: Medieval Saga literature,

16-17th century literature, Icelandic-North-American emigrant/immigrant literatures, rural studies, post-Gutenberg manuscript culture.

Projects in progress:

A lengthy essay on Icelandic post-Gutenberg manuscript culture and the self-educated scholar and farmer Gísli Konráðsson in the context of post-humanism and ecocriticism (a part of the project *Reading and Writing From Below: Toward a New Social History of Literacy in the Nordic Sphere During the Long Nineteenth Century*, funded by the Joint Committee for Nordic Research Councils for the Humanities and the Social Sciences, see <http://blogs.helsinki.fi/nord-corp/>).

A research project that will result in a monograph which will at the same time analyse and depict the 17th century conception of nature, and the life of Jón Guðmundsson the Learned, a self-educated scholar, historian, poet, sorcerer and artist.

Development of the project the project “Svartárvot, menning – náttúra” (Svartárvot, Culture – Nature): a cooperative project by the farmers of Svartárvot, a sheep-farm in northern Iceland, and members of the Reykjavik Academy. The objective is to establish an academic institute for research, teaching and travelling in one of the most remote inhabited places in Iceland, not only to address the most important academic challenges of the 21st century, but also actively to participate in revitalizing a farming community.

Participant in a COST action: *Investigating Cultural Sustainability*:

<http://www.culturalsustainability.eu/>

Participant in the research project: *Inscribing Environmental Memory in the Icelandic Sagas*:

<http://www.nabohome.org/iem/>

Grants:

Icelandic Science Fund 1988, 1992, 1997, 1998, 1999.

Various grants for the biography of Stephan G. Stephansson

Grant from Hagþenkir for the biography of Bjarni Þorsteinsson

Various grants for the monography on Jón Guðmundsson the Learned and the 17th century conception of nature.

Awards:

Silver in the 2013 Independent Publisher Regional Book Awards for “Canada –West. Best Regional Non-Fiction” for *Wakeful Nights. Stephan G. Stephansson: Icelandic-Canadian Poet*.

Jón Sigurðsson’s Donation 1997, 2002, 2004, 2006 and 2012.

The annual prize of the Icelandic Academic Authors’ Association for the best scholarly work 2003 (A two volume biography of Stephan G. Stephansson).

The Authors’ Library Fund 1998.

Books:

Comic Sagas and Tales from Iceland. Edited with an Introduction and Notes by Viðar Hreinsson. 2013, Penguin Classics, London.

Wakeful Nights. Stephan G. Stephansson: Icelandic-Canadian Poet. 2012 Calgary, Benson Ranch Inc.

Bjarni Þorsteinsson. Eldhugi við ysta haf. 2011 (Bjarni Þorsteinsson. An Idealist in the far North. A biography) Reykjavík: Veröld.

Gæfuleit. Ævisaga Þorsteins M. Jónssonar. 2005 (The Quest for Luck. The Biography of Þorsteinn M. Jónsson) Akureyri: Hólar.

Landneminn mikli – ævisaga Stephans G. Stephanssonar Fyrra bindi 2002 (The Great Settler. The biography of Stephan G. Stephansson, vol. 1). Reykjavík: Bjartur.

Andvökuskáld – ævisaga Stephans G. Stephanssonar Síðara bindi 2003. (The Poet of Wakeful Nights The biography of Stephan G. Stephansson, vol.2) Reykjavík: Bjartur.

The Complete Sagas of Icelanders I-V 1997. (General editor, other members of the editorial committee: Robert Cook, Terry Gunnell, Keneva Kunz and Bernard Scudder) Reykjavík: Bókaútgáfan Leifur Eiríksson.

Most recent essays, and essays in English:

“Cultural Amnesia – and Sustainable Development.” Submitted to the peer reviewed journals *Κυλμυρα/Culture* (hard copy) or *Investigating Culture* (online). 2013.

“Afturhvarf og opinberun Þórbergs” in „að skilja undraljós“ *Greinar um Þórberg Þórðarson, verk hans og hugðarefni*. Editors: Bergljót Soffía Kristjánsdóttir and Hjalti Snær Ægisson. Bókmennta- og listfræðistofnun Háskóla Íslands and Háskólaútgáfan Reykjavík 2010: 35-60. (Refereed)

“The Resurrection and Crucifixion of the Sheep” © *The Provincialists*. Ed. Eivind Reierstad. Torshavn 2008: 74-82.

“Tryggvi sigurvegari? – Íslenskar verkalýðsbókmenntir” *Samfélagsleg áhrif verkalýðshreyfingarinnar á 20. öld – Framtíðarsýn á 21. öldinni*. Editors Sumarliði R. Ísleifsson og Þórunn Sigurðardóttir. Reykjavík 2007.

“Sögur af vondu fólki. Um sagnagerð Jónasar frá Hrafnagili”. *Sú þrá að þekkja og nema. Greinar um og eftir séra Jónas Jónasson frá Hrafnagili*. Ed. Rósa Þorsteinsdóttir. Reykjavík 2007: 66-73.

Biographical entries in *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, Vol 293, Bruccoli Clark Layman, Detroit etc. 2004: Guttormur J. Guttormsson (pp. 108-115), Jakobína Johnson (pp. 166-170), Káinn (pp. 234-240) and Stephan G. Stephansson (pp. 328-343).

“Folly in Tailcoat or Multiculturalism” www.kistan.is (2002)

[HTTP://WWW.KISTAN.IS/DEFAULT.ASP?SID_ID=28001&TRE_ROD=004&TID=2&FRE_ID=39447&MEIRA=1](http://www.kistan.is/default.asp?sid_id=28001&tre_rod=004&tId=2&fre_id=39447&meira=1)

“The Poet in the Pigpen: Stephan G. Stephansson” *Rustica Nova. The New Countryside and Transformations in Operating Environment*. Editors Kalle Pihlainen og Erik Tirkkonen. Turku 2002: 179-194.

“Unheard Thunder: Stephan G Stephansson” *Rediscovering Canadian Difference* Editor Guðrún Guðsteinsdóttir. The Nordic Association for Canadian Studies Text Series 17. Reykjavík 2001.

“Husbrag eller herredsbrag. Overvejelser omkring litterær selvbevidsthed i islændingesagaerne.” *Artikler. Udgivet i anledning af Preben Meulengracht Sørensen's 60 års fødselsdag 1. marts 2000*. Norrønt forum, Århus 2000: 47-63.

“The Barnyard Poet. Stephan G. Stephansson (1853-1927)” *Nordic Experiences: Exploration of Scandinavian Cultures*. (ritstjóri Berit I Brown) Westport, Greenwood Publishing Group 1997: 97-113.

“Metaphors of Care and Growth: The Poetic Language of Stephan G. Stephansson.” *Canadian Ethnic Studies / Études ethniques au Canada* XXIX, 3 (1997): 51-63.

“Icelandic Canadian Literature” *The New Icelanders. A North American Community* (ritstjórar David Arnason og Vincent Arnason) Winnipeg, Turnstone Press 1994: 87-90.

“Western Icelandic Literature, 1870-1900” *Scandinavian-Canadian Studies* 5 (1993): 1-14.

“The Power of the Word: Some Reflections on “The Icelandic Academy”” *The Icelandic Canadian* Winter 1992: 90-104.

Dozens of university and conference lectures on Icelandic literary and cultural history in North America, Iceland, Scandinavia, the Baltic countries, Macedonia.

Reviews, radio-programs, interviews and debate essays in various Icelandic media on literature, culture, environmental issues and the Icelandic breed of cows.