

Introduction

Vinland on the brain: remembering the Norse

Tim William Machan

In 1875 the Victorian scholar-adventurer Richard Burton, reflecting on a century of English engagement with Iceland and its natural wonders, observed that the ‘travellers of the early century saw scenes of thrilling horror, of majestic grandeur, and of heavenly beauty, where our more critical, perhaps more cultivated, taste finds very humble features’. For in their enthusiasm, early visitors like Ebenezer Henderson, George Mackenzie, and Henry Holland had created a dilemma for those who followed: to embrace their predecessors’ calculated zeal and possibly reproduce its extravagances, or to effect a more measured response and hazard the criticism and even rejection of their own peers. ‘They had “Iceland on the Brain”’, Burton continues, ‘and they were wise in their generation: honours and popularity await the man who ever praises, the thorough partisan who never blames’.¹

Iceland on the Brain – an evocative phrase that describes an experience transformative if also ominous. It calls to mind an external force that, whether desired or not, imposes itself on an individual’s character and thought processes. And, in fact, it is not an inapt way to describe what Britons and other European visitors experienced in Iceland in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Buoyed by the first wave of romantic musings like Bishop Percy’s *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry* and Thomas Gray’s ‘The Descent of Odin’, early travellers witnessed a spectacular but menacing landscape of volcanoes and glaciers, vistas unlike any to be found in Great Britain. William Morris, an Iceland enthusiast writing at nearly the same time as Burton, nonetheless described the island as ‘an awful place: set aside the hope that the unseen sea gives you here, and the strange threatening change of the blue spiky mountains beyond the firch, and the rest seems emptiness and nothing else; a piece of turf under your feet, and the sky overhead, that’s all’.² With intense if conflicting sentiments like these, it is

hardly surprising that some travellers praised the aching beauty of Iceland's waterfalls and geysers, even as others came to regard the constantly unstable volcano Hekla as the Hell-mouth and the Snæfellsnes Glacier as an entrance to the centre of the earth.

This is a book about a related strain of brain fever, one whose earliest cases can be diagnosed about two centuries ago. Its symptoms have included poems, novels, travel books, translations, inscriptions, artefacts, archaeological digs, legislation, films, comic books, video games, statues, restaurants, music camps, racism, and even a theme park. Having gripped Canada, the United States, and South America, the fever now has spread across the globe. To paraphrase Burton, it might be called Vinland on the brain.

Vinland, of course, is the area that Norse sagas and other medieval Nordic records designate as the Western Hemispheric place where Norse travellers from Iceland and Greenland made land, encountered hostile indigenous peoples, and established brief settlements. Certainly in North America and probably lying more northerly than southerly, the precise location of Vinland, despite decades of research and the strong convictions of many researchers, may never be known, if only because, in accordance with Norse geography, Vinland never had a precise location. Thingvellir, the site of the annual Icelandic parliament and social gathering, very much was and is a specific place. But Vinland as well as Markland and Helluland, respectively the forested and rocky areas also mentioned in medieval sources, would have been relational terms rather than locations with exact geographic coordinates. Vinland, then, was neither Markland nor Helluland, and it was the last and furthest south of the North American places first visited by the Norse. It must also have been far enough south for grapes to have grown there, since the first element in the Norse form of the name seems incontrovertibly to have been *vin* (wine) and not *vin* (meadow), as some critics have argued.³ That quality would probably rule out Newfoundland and any place north of it, but doing so still leaves a lot of land to the south, in present-day Canada, the United States, and, in theory, Central and South America. Outside these generalities, the Norse sources offer only tantalising details that do little to narrow down the geographic possibilities.

As vague as the specifics of Vinland might have been, however, there is no doubt that Icelanders and Greenlanders did at least step onto the North American continent sometime around the year 1000. The longhouses at L'Anse aux Meadows in northern Newfoundland, discovered and excavated by Helge Ingstad and

Anne Stine Ingstad in the 1960s, offer unarguable proof of this. Not only their architectural style but also their layout and positioning are characteristically Norse and, concomitantly, would be uncharacteristic for the culture of either the Thule Inuit or the Dorset, the first peoples who lived throughout the region and who would have been the first North Americans to encounter Norse visitors. The presence of smelted iron and several artefacts could have come only from the Norse, and a spindle whorl could have come only from a Norse woman. Occupied for at most ten to twenty years, the eight buildings, which might have accommodated as many as fifty men and women at any one time, by themselves provide evidence neither for why they were erected where they were nor for why they were abandoned, although the site seems by design to have been more of a place to stage shipping than a genuine farm or settlement. The only other possible (if still unlikely) Norse sites in North America are on Baffin Island and at Point Rosee on the southern end of Newfoundland.⁴ Outside of L'Anse aux Meadows, genuine Norse artefacts – shards, smelted iron, fragments of tools, carved bones, figurines, boat nails, chain mail, and so forth – have been found across Greenland and Arctic Canada, as well as in Maine. Such finds might be the remnants of an actual on-site Norse presence, but they also could imply the existence of trade networks by which goods moved from Iceland and Greenland into North America or even contact between indigenous peoples and the Norse in Norse Greenlandic settlements.⁵

None of this evidence, in any case, suggests a sustained Norse presence in the Americas after the beginning of the eleventh century or, perhaps, ever. Nonetheless, memories of Vinland persisted in Iceland and the Nordic regions for several centuries. In the 1060s Adam of Bremen relays that, while he was at the Danish court of King Svein Estridsson, the king told him of an island named Vinland on which wine grapes and other crops grew abundantly.⁶ The Icelandic Annals of 1121 notes that Greenland's Bishop Eirik Gnuþsson went to Vinland, although whether he went expecting to find a colony or no one at all depends on how one translates the Old Norse verb *leita*.⁷ But if this source is to be believed, he at least did go there. Another twelfth-century geographical treatise mentions Helluland and Markland as well as Vinland, and in the same period the Icelandic historian Ari Thorgilsson says that his uncle Thorkel Gellisson had told him of Vinland and that Thorkel had got his own information from one of Greenland's original settlers.⁸ Another well-known Norse reference to North America occurs in

a later entry in the Icelandic Annals, this one from 1347, which records the arrival of a small craft carrying seventeen men ‘who had been on a voyage to Markland and later had been driven by gales to this land’.⁹

Of course, the most familiar and detailed accounts of the Norse in North America – so detailed, in fact, that they have often been accepted as factual, serving as roadmaps for Norse activity – are *The Saga of the Greenlanders* (*Grænlandinga saga*) and *Eirik the Red’s Saga* (*Eiríks saga rauða*), both from the thirteenth century. Blending credible historical detail (like skin-boats, or canoes) with phenomena that recall contemporary accounts of the wonders of the East (like unipeds), the sagas in particular would seem to verify a Norse presence. But, again, they do not indicate the exact location of these landings, much less the possibility that Norse settlers, besides those ultimately associated with Leif Eiriksson, might have journeyed elsewhere in the area. And the Vinland sagas are not dispassionate historical records but crafted pieces of prose in the tradition of the *Sagas of Icelanders* (*Íslendingasögur*), with all of their events and characters shaped by the works’ narrative designs.

All of these later accounts were written down well after the events they describe, and just what their terseness meant is not easy to say. Perhaps by the late Middle Ages Vinland had become just a dim memory, or perhaps trips there were so common as to merit no elaboration. Then again, it might be that any such trips were marginal and essentially inconsequential in the late medieval North Atlantic experience. In the centuries after the settlement period, indeed, as well as in the later saga accounts of this period, Icelandic writings emphasised larger, culture-defining matters like the *landnám* (settlement) itself, family and district history, and the conversion to Christianity, especially as these matters helped define Icelandic–Norwegian relations.¹⁰ From this perspective, Vinland would have been irrelevant.

After the Middle Ages, Nordic references to Vinland and even Greenland become still more erratic and even cryptic. In the early fifteenth century, the Dane Claudius Clausson Swart described Greenland as an island that is connected by a land-bridge to Karelia, across which, as he claims himself to have seen, ‘infidels’ daily attack in huge armies. He may have imagined Vinland to be attached to this land-bridge as well, though he does not mention the place by name.¹¹ A papal letter from the century’s close expresses concern that no outsiders had been to Greenland in eighty years, during which time, according to the rumours

that reached the Pope, many Greenlanders had abandoned their faith.¹² In the seventeenth century, at Iceland's bishopric Skálholt, according to Finnur Magnússon, Bishop Gísli Oddsson saw an anonymous Latin manuscript that referred to North America. This manuscript stated that in 1342 the Greenlanders willingly abandoned their faith and converted themselves to the people of America ('ad Americæ populos se converterunt'),¹³ and it was for this reason that Christians now stayed away from Greenland. North of both Iceland and Greenland, the document claimed, lay a region named *Jötnaland* (giant land) or *Tröllbotnaland* (troll-bay land). Magnússon goes on to reference several trips to Greenland or attacks perpetrated on the Norse Greenlanders by *skrælingjar* (skrælings or 'weaklings', the Norse word used in reference to Native Americans and Inuit alike).¹⁴ But even if these references are historically accurate and not fabrications, they, like Swart's description and the papal letter, reveal nothing about the status of Vinland, other than that seventeenth-century Icelanders believed that Greenland at least was well inhabited in the fourteenth century, and that nineteenth-century Icelanders and Danes, in turn, believed them.

Perhaps the most intriguing post-medieval Nordic reference to Vinland comes from the 1520 testimonial of a parish priest in Fet, Norway, who claimed that an abandoned farm named Birkefloten belonged to the vicarage. Rather inscrutable is the role played in this affair by one Olaf Byrien, who testified that he was born and married in Vinland, and that he had dwelt there for some time. Apparently, Byrien's nativity and upbringing somehow disqualified him from any claim to the Norwegian farm.¹⁵ It should go without saying that he had certainly never set foot in Vinland, and so the truly remarkable thing to me (again) is the dispassionate way in which all this is announced, as if claims of a Vinland origin were commonplace for sixteenth-century Norwegians. That, or Byrien's assertions are so outrageous – the medieval equivalent of alien abduction – that they require no comment. Indeed, while post-medieval references to Greenland persist into the early modern period, Vinland generally drops from notice. When the Dane Hans Egede visited Greenland in 1721, he did so with the conviction that he would find descendants of the original settlers, but he never seems to have contemplated a further trip to Vinland, which, in fact, he does not mention in his subsequent narrative of his visit.¹⁶

From the North American perspective, references to the Norse presence are still rarer, even non-existent, for the simple reason

that most tenth- and eleventh-century indigenous cultures lacked writing of any kind. Memories could be passed on only by oral tradition, then, and nearly five centuries passed between the L'Anse aux Meadows settlement and the regular presence in the region of English explorers and merchants. Another century would pass before the establishment of Jamestown in Virginia, the first permanent North American Anglophone settlement. Still, some memories may have persisted. In 1858 Hinrich Rink, a Danish scientist, visited Greenland to study its glaciers and geology. From Danish missionaries there, he learned of Inuit folklore that possibly referred to contacts with the Norse. At what time these contacts took place, whether in the tenth or fifteenth century, is impossible to say, though they do indicate a sometimes adversarial relationship. In one tale, an Inuk's killing of two Norse Greenlanders leads to something like a blood feud that concludes with the death of a certain Ungortok, possibly an Inuit approximation of the Norse name Ingvar.¹⁷

Beginning in the nineteenth century and catalysed by several contributing factors, these thin contacts and records gave rise to the Vinland fever illustrated throughout this volume. In some outbreaks, the thirteenth-century *The Saga of the People of Eyri* (*Eyrbyggja saga*) has proved particularly influential. At one point the saga tells of how Gudleif Gunnlaugsson, in the days of St Olaf (so before 1030), sailed west around Ireland and was blown farther west by a gale. Arriving at an unknown land, the crew encounters men who speak 'Irish' – hundreds of them, in fact; they bind the crew and take them to a court that decides to kill some and enslave the rest. A great man arrives and asks for Gudleif, whom he addresses in Icelandic, enquiring about where in Iceland Gudleif and his crew came from and revealing that he and Gudleif know several people in common. After taking the counsel of his people, the man tells Gudleif that he and his crew can return home but refuses to divulge his own name, lest any of his family should come looking for him.¹⁸

This is a strange story, no less so for occurring at the end of a saga populated by other oddities, including pagans, ghosts, and various kinds of revenants. Stranger still may be the notion that Gudleif and his crew landed in Mexico, a line of reasoning that leads to several alleged Central and South American Viking finds. Some critics have argued, for example, that the Aztec god Quetzalcoatl, a figure part bird or serpent and part human, originated as a representation of a Norseman; that the Aztecs themselves may have descended

from the Norse; that the murals in the Temple of the Warriors in Chichen Itza (in the Yucatan), produced between about AD 600 and 900, depict Western Europeans; and that various alleged colonial encounters with blonde, blue-eyed indigenous peoples were in fact with descendants of the Norse who came from Iceland and Greenland to the Americas.

The Eyrbyggjan rationale, as it might be called, was put to its greatest use by the Paraguayan engineer Vicente Pistilli (1933–2013) and the French archaeologist Jacques de Mahieu (1915–90), whose works have been crucial to the persistence of patently absurd arguments about Norse–South American contact and, in effect, the location of Vinland there. In a 1978 book Pistilli advanced the case for the Norse settlement of Paraguay. The village of Torín, he argued, had been named for Thor, while the word ‘Paraguay’ itself (from the Guaraní *pará* for ‘sea’) means ‘warriors of the sea’, a ‘name typical of the Vikings’.¹⁹ Pistilli further claims to identify runic inscriptions, a Viking ‘temple’, and the ruins of ‘Vikinga-Guaraní en la Cuenca del Plata’ (a Viking village in the Basin of the River Plate) that have (he says) characteristics of Trelleborg, the tenth-century ring fortress on the Danish island of Zealand that was built during the reign of Harald Bluetooth.²⁰ According to Pistilli, after Leif Eiriksson came upon North America, he sailed south, and led by one Ullman, or ‘el hombre de Ull’, passed by Pánuco on the east coast of Mexico, near Tampico; a map on the book’s cover illustrates part of the journey. Norse people were still in Paraguay at the beginning of the fourteenth century and, with the Guaranís as allies, constructed the city of Tava Guasú, leaving indelible physical and social traces of their presence. Later, conquistadors encountered their descendants in a tribe of white indigenes, whose own descendants are the Guayki (or Aché), peaceful hunter-gatherers of eastern Paraguay with pale skin and ‘European features’.²¹

Drawing heavily on Pistilli’s work, but also extending his own previous efforts, de Mahieu claims to have found other signs of a Norse presence in Paraguay: ruined Norse structures; a distinctively South American futhark; a fortress at Cerro Corá with a mural 300 metres by 10 metres and containing runes and images of Odin, Sleipnir, and a dragon; and a hollowed hill that the indigenous people call ‘the fortress of the white king Ipir’. De Mahieu argues that a Norse presence in Central and South America began well before Leif’s voyages, with the landing in Mexico of Jarl Ullman of Schleswig in 967, whom the Aztecs transformed into

the god Quetzalcoatl. Unhappy that his army had begun to mix and intermarry with the indigenous people, Ullman led them south to Venezuela and Colombia. It was a descendant of Ullman's force, Naymlap, who brought the group to Peru, giving rise there to an Incan empire led by a Norse elite. From only about 5,000 original colonisers, de Mahieu calculated, a population of about 80,000 had arisen by the end of the thirteenth century.

According to this improbable expansion of Pistilli's impossible genealogy, the indigenous Guayakís are descendants of a group of Vikings who may have been refugees from the Tiahuanacu Empire; if true, this would mean the Norse were in Bolivia as well. He argues that after 1290 a Norse population remained for a long time in the jungle, some even carving runes as late as the fifteenth century. But as with Ullman's group in Mexico, the Norse people experienced degeneration ('degeneración') through mixing with indigenous peoples. Their descendants (which in fact, according to de Mahieu, 'is the meaning of the word Inca in Norse'), their traditions, and their language may have survived even longer but certainly were gone by the time Pizarro and the conquistadors arrived in 1524. 'The Spaniards completed the picture', he concludes, 'by marrying the girls of the white aristocracy and by reducing their brothers to slavery'. All in all, 'The civilizing epic of the men of the north had lasted five hundred years'.²²

It is, of course, easy and appropriate to ridicule arguments like these, based as they are on an apparently wilful misreading of historical sources, no understanding of recorded Norse history, and improbabilities like Paraguay, a landlocked country, meaning 'warriors of the sea'. And I have not even mentioned the mummified remains of an Incan dog, which, it turns out, has been judged to have been born in Bundsö, Denmark.²³ But I recount these arguments here not simply to ridicule them but to introduce some of the darker aspects of Vinland fever, and those are the political implications that it has carried from its earliest days. Pistilli's book, for example, begins with an introduction by General Marcial Samaniego, who assisted Alfredo Stroessner in a 1954 coup d'état in Paraguay that led to thirty-five years of effectively military rule, characterised by, among other things, the fostering of Nazi war criminals and the brutal harassment of indigenous peoples – among them the Aché, with their pale skin and European features – that has left them still severely impoverished and socially constrained today.²⁴ A war criminal himself, de Mahieu served in the Waffen SS and fled to Argentina in 1946 on the first plane

there from Europe after the Second World War. A Peronist until his death, de Mahieu was a self-proclaimed scientist who directed the Institute of Anthropology in Buenos Aires and participated in pagan summer solstice gatherings of former Nazis. He was also an avowed anti-Semite – which gives some historical depth to his concerns about the degeneration of the Norse population in South America – and while he wrote in French, his books were translated into German by one of Joseph Goebbels's assistants, Wilfred von Oven, who himself had fled to Argentina.²⁵

While arguments like these may have no traction among scholars, they certainly have made their way to the mainstream public. The Norwegian Thor Heyerdahl, who sailed his reed-boat *Kon-Tiki* from Peru across the Pacific Ocean to prove that South Americans had settled Polynesia, advocated a similar diffusionist theory of migration that put northern whites as the progenitors of global cultural achievements. His raft was named for Viracocha, a presumptively pre-Incan figure who was white, bearded, and taller than the indigenous people and who had come from the north and east. By Heyerdahl's thesis, the pre-Incan people who left South America for Polynesia were themselves bearded and white, and although Heyerdahl never seems to have explicitly said they were Norse, he did claim that their white, bearded descendants had been found in Polynesia by the earliest European explorers and that the Incans had told the conquistadors about the legend.²⁶ The *Kon-Tiki* now resides in a purpose-built museum in Oslo, which makes no mention of Heyerdahl's overtly racist inclinations. If all of this biography is as chilling as the arguments are absurd, it may be more chilling and more absurd to realise that there are people today who take Pistilli, de Mahieu, and Heyerdahl quite seriously.²⁷

And if this South American narrative casts something of a pall over the exuberant North American influences of Vinland fever that I am about to sketch, I mean it to do so. As I noted at the outset, these influences began innocently enough, in the northern literary connections Percy drew in his 1770 *Northern Antiquities* or in the stylised late eighteenth-century Norse imitations like Percy's *Five Runic Pieces* and Gray's 'The Descent of Odin'.²⁸ Expanding on several centuries of musings about a shared English–Scandinavian ethnic identity and written during the emergence of the United Kingdom, Percy's and Gray's efforts inspired a veritable explosion of nineteenth-century interest in the medieval Norse world, imaginatively expressed in saga translations by George Webbe Dasent and others, historical novels like William Morris's *Thorstein of the*

Mere, and assorted paintings and carvings. The phrase ‘Vikings and Victorians’, to borrow the title of Andrew Wawn’s excellent book on these phenomena, sums up a mindset that was equal parts whimsy and historical social engineering.²⁹

A peculiarly North American version of Vinland fever began to spread with the 1837 publication of the Dane Carl Christian Rafn’s *Antiquitates Americanae*, which claimed to identify Viking artefacts across the eastern seaboard of the United States (an area he had in fact never visited) and introduced the Vinland sagas and other Vinland materials, in Latin translations, to the modern world. Generally credited with inspiring North America’s own traditions of Norse-themed poems, novels, and translations – including the first North American English translation of the Vinland sagas in 1841³⁰ – *Antiquitates Americanae* can also be thought to have led, eventually, to films, comic books, and video games. And as in Britain, both whimsy and social engineering have animated North American responses to the medieval Norse past. Whimsy alone might well account for the alleged discovery of Viking age axes, swords, runic carvings, skeletons, coins, mooring holes, and even a stone tower in Newport – discoveries, I hasten to add, that have been made not simply along the Atlantic shore but as far inland as Iowa, Minnesota, and Oklahoma.³¹ Or perhaps the discoveries owe to whimsy coupled with ethnic identification among the millions of Scandinavians who emigrated to North America beginning in the late nineteenth century. Between 1870 and 1914 alone, fifteen to twenty thousand Icelanders, amounting to a quarter of the island’s population, left their homeland for Canada or the United States.³² It would seem not only understandable but well-meaning and even reasonable for such immigrants to desire to find material evidence of some ancestral connection between their homelands and their own new world. The fraternal organisations that spread in the aftermath of Scandinavian emigration, organisations like the Sons of Norway, reflect just such a desire.

Yet this same desire also has led to less benign social engineering, even anxiety, in North America, where Vinland and the Vinland sagas always have figured more significantly, in both popular culture and academic criticism, than in Britain, Scandinavia, Australia, and elsewhere.³³ And the obvious reason is the fact that, whatever Vinland’s precise location, it clearly was in North America and it is perhaps the only legitimate physical link between the Americas and medieval Europe. As in several of the South American narratives I described earlier, then, Norse findings can be traced, at least

in theory, to a named place and named individuals, giving them all the greater frisson of verisimilitude. More importantly, a late nineteenth-century discovery in North America meant discovery in a country, in the case of the United States, that was barely a century old or, in the case of Canada, in a very recent confederation still politically subject to Great Britain. If Vinland finds connected North America to Europe, they could equally serve contemporary nation-building sentiments, giving a distinctively political edge to the concept of Vikings and Victorians as it has taken shape in North America.³⁴

The Kensington Runestone, one of the most famous of the bogus Norse artefacts, can be looked at in this light. Allegedly discovered in west-central Minnesota in 1898 by a Swedish immigrant farmer named Olof Ohman, the stone's carving claims to tell the story of eight Gotlanders and twenty-two Norwegians who, having travelled far to the west of Vinland ('fro vinland of vest'), returned one day from fishing only to find the ten men they had left behind were red with blood and dead ('röde af blod og ded') – killed, presumably, by some group of Native Americans.³⁵ Remaining behind with the ships at the sea – said to be a fourteen-day journey away – is another group of ten men, whom the survivors evidently hastened to join, though only after pausing, rather implausibly I think, to carve the stone. Dated 1362, the stone is absurd in every imaginable linguistic, historical, petrological, geographical, and sociological sense. And not surprisingly, it was immediately dismissed as a fraud – even, perhaps, a practical joke. Ohman allegedly said, in fact, that his intention was to do something that would 'bother the brains of the learned'.³⁶ Bother them he did, when the stone caught the attention of Hjalmar Holand, a Norwegian immigrant and amateur historian who devoted his life to studying Norwegian-American settlements in general and to advancing the cause of the Kensington Runestone in particular. Indefatigable and impervious to common sense or any scholarly conventions or corrections, Holand relentlessly championed the idea that the Norse had been to Minnesota as an extension of Paul Knutson's alleged 1354 visit to Greenland (on behalf of Sweden's King Magnus) in order to ascertain the state of the Greenlanders' faith. Holand's 1940 book, *Westward from Vinland: An Account of Norse Discoveries and Explorations in America 982–1362*, identified mooring stones along a path of movement across Hudson Bay to western Minnesota and discussed objects found by locals that substantiated this preposterous narrative. But though preposterous,

the narrative was convincing enough for the runestone to be exhibited from 1948 to 1949 at the Smithsonian Institution and at the 1965 New York World's Fair.

From one perspective, all this is as charming as that mummified Incan dog. Holand clearly touched a nerve in a great many people and not only those of Scandinavian descent. In fact, in the 1960s, according to one estimate, over 60 per cent of people in Minnesota believed that the Norse had been the first Europeans to arrive there.³⁷ The runestone narrative as Holand fabricated it has inspired Elizabeth Coatsworth's 1950 novel, *Door to the North: A Saga of Fourteenth Century America*; Laura Goodman Salverson's 1954 novel, *Immortal Rock: The Saga of the Kensington Stone*; Margaret Leuthner's 1962 comic book, *Mystery of the Runestone*; and a significant part of the identity of Alexandria, Minnesota. Today, indeed, the town has a Runestone Park as well as a Runestone Museum whose exhibits include, according to the website, 'the world famous Kensington Runestone'.³⁸ There is a Viking Plaza mall, a Catholic church named 'Our Lady of the Runestone', and an enormous statue of Big Ole, a horned-helmeted Viking. A bit up the road, in Fergus Falls, the Viking Café serves a 'Vik Vuffin' sandwich.

A lot of this enthusiasm, I suspect, is tongue-in-cheek. But as with that Incan dog, it also has an unsettling quality, which is not simply the extent of human gullibility. People have wanted to believe not only that Norsemen had come to Minnesota but that they had been slaughtered there by Native Americans. In this regard, the date of the alleged attack may not be coincidental. The year 1362, several critics have pointed out, was 500 years before the war between the United States and the Dakota plains tribes, which entailed many killings on both sides, including an 1862 massacre at Norwegian-Swedish settlements at Norway Lake and West Lake, approximately 55 miles southeast of Kensington.³⁹ Culminating that December in a mass hanging of prisoners in Mankato, Minnesota (a further 110 miles southeast), the war epitomised lingering white resentment and, whatever the forger's intentions, would have offered a context for receiving the stone as both a reminder of Native American savagery and a monument to martyred Scandinavian forebears. By connecting the Kensington stone to Knutson's alleged trip, further, Holand provided a Christian motivation for the story. The commemorated Norsemen were not brigands and pirates from the days of Egil Skallagrimsson – or, for that matter, mercenaries in pursuit of gold, as Columbus and

his followers sometimes were understood to be. The stone commemorates instead religious men on a religious expedition who were slaughtered by pagans. Because the alleged expedition took place before the Reformation, and despite the fact that its biggest champions were primarily Protestant Scandinavians, the stone could even affirm an early, specifically Catholic presence in North America.⁴⁰

As a forgery that effectively erased differences between an actual Viking, a fourteenth-century Norseman, and a nineteenth-century Scandinavian immigrant, the stone has given rise to all manner of cultural discourses about history and identity. Indeed, everything about the story has become mythologised: Ohman, his finding of the stone, Holand's efforts to advance its authenticity, the events the stone allegedly narrates, the relevance of these events to nineteenth-century Scandinavian settlements, the implications the stone has (or can have) for ethnicity and cultural identity today, and the open public controversy, in some quarters, still surrounding all of the above. To a large extent, responses to the stone promote distinctions based on observers' levels of education and aesthetic sensibilities, as well as on their sentiments about binaries like urban/rural, regional/national, and white/non-white. And like all myths, these have given rise to still more myths, including the 1948 discovery of a second stone that talks about four maidens encamped in 1368 and also a nearby 'Viking Altar Rock', where Catholic mass was allegedly held. In Harris Burkhalter's words,

While runestone supporters drew the stone into their stories of an ancient heritage on the North American continent and, in particular, the Midwest, Scandinavian opponents viewed it as detrimental to the public image of their ethnic group. Like the runestone supporters, those who denied the authenticity of the Kensington Runestone drew on their Norwegian-American identities to justify their actions.⁴¹

As a historical object created to affirm cultural truths, the stone has thus helped define the ethnic identity not just of Minnesota but of the United States.

Which brings me back to Leif Eiriksson, who by the time of the Kensington Runestone's discovery had become something of a cult figure in North America.⁴² And here again, a mixture of whimsy and anxiety runs through the discussions of Vinland and its American relevance. In all seriousness, Albert Welles's 1879 *The Pedigree and History of the Washington Family* argues that

George Washington is a direct descendant of Thorfinn Thordarson Karlsefni, whom the sagas identify as the leader of a trip to colonise Vinland. And not just of him but of the Danish king Harald Bluetooth, Hrolf Ox-Thorisson the Walker (the Norse founder of Normandy), and, ultimately Odin. Says Welles, ‘The remarkable resemblance of character between Odin and his descendant Washington, separated by a period of eighteen centuries, is so great as to excite the profound and devout astonishment of the genealogical student – one the Founder of the most eminent race of Kings and Conquerors, and the other of the grand Republic of America.’⁴³ Having Odin in one’s family tree would of course be gratifying, but in the late nineteenth century having Thorfinn Karlsefni there may have been more significant. Indeed, despite his genealogical focus, Welles dwells on Leif’s voyage, explaining that the skeleton discovered in 1831 in Fall River, Massachusetts and commemorated in Longfellow’s ‘The Skeleton in Armor’ was that of Leif’s brother Thorvald, and that Snorri Thorfinnsson, whom the sagas present as the first European born in North America, was in fact born ‘in the present State of Massachusetts, in the year 1008’.⁴⁴

Leif assumed increasing significance in the rise of a kind of edgy cottage industry, professional as well as amateur and devoted to the discovery of Norse influences and evidence of Vinland. And so Rasmus B. Anderson, a professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, published an influential book with a title that was direct and to the point: *America Not Discovered by Columbus*. Bringing together materials on Viking history and relying on saga accounts, Anderson presents Columbus as a fraud who consulted Norse materials in the Vatican and there discovered records dating to an encounter with Gudrid, the wife of Thorfinn Karlsefni and mother of Snorri Thorfinnsson, who at the close of *The Saga of the Greenlanders* is said to go on a pilgrimage south. ‘Rome paid much attention to geographical discoveries’, Anderson argues, ‘and took pains to collect all new charts and reports that were brought there. Every new discovery was an aggrandisement of the papal dominion, a new field for the preaching of the Gospel. The Romans might have heard of Vinland before, but she brought personal evidence.’⁴⁵

For his part, Eben Horsford, who made his money perfecting and marketing baking powder, argued that Leif’s booths were far from Newfoundland. By this argument, Leif had first landed on Cape Cod and then sailed up the Charles River ‘to the south

end of Symonds's hill near the Cambridge City Hospital. Here was the site of Leif's houses'.⁴⁶ And there, Horsford claimed, the ruined structures were still evident. As in South America, reports of white, blonde-haired, blue-eyed indigenes point to the Norse presence in this same region, while the very word *America*, according to Horsford, derives from the Norse name *Eirik*: 'The natives of Vinland could not easily utter "Eirikr" or "Ærerkr" (Norse forms) without prefixing an *m*, – out of which, to the listener, arose "Em-erika" = America.'⁴⁷

What made a connection to Leif and Vinland so desirable in the nineteenth-century United States was less whimsy than anxiety, however. Specifically, within the context of increased European immigration from eastern and southern Europe and the impending quincentenary of Columbus's arrival in the Caribbean, apprehension over what might be called the country's cultural and racial identity roiled issues that otherwise might simply have been absurd. If Columbus had been the first European arrival, then the United States could be stamped as Catholic and, by the racial stereotypes of the day, Mediterranean; if Leif was the first, then it was Protestant and Germanic. In either case, it was white, and hence the interest of Horsford and others in blonde, blue-eyed indigenes.

Perhaps the most vocal proponents of the pro-Leif view were John and Marie Shipley, who between them published several books arguing for the presence and significance of Leif and a Vinland colony. Champions of the Gudrid-goes-to-Rome theory, the Shipleys consistently foregrounded the racial and social implications of an early Norse colony. 'The vital question', the Shipleys say at one point, 'is not so much who discovered America, as which part of Europe, the North or the South, gave the impetus to American civilization.'⁴⁸ They insist that Columbus's motivation 'was simply and solely papal aggrandisement, the gaining of a vast new territory for proselyting [sic] purposes; in other words, the establishing of the future empire of the Pope on the western continent'.⁴⁹ Elsewhere, Marie Shipley asserts 'that the wise-heads in the Eternal City were aware, almost as soon as the Icelanders themselves, that some of the adventurous sons of that race had pushed their explorations clear to remote lands across the ocean and founded colonies there'. It was Roman Catholic deceit, perfidy, and immorality that advanced the cause of Columbus, and to grant the 'Italian adventurer' the status of first European in North America is to condone the '[f]ear, envy, hatred, [and] a deep-seated animosity' directed at the Norse in order to erase their memory as 'the

only obstacle to the sacerdotal plan of universal sovereignty, of the subjection of all mankind to the rule of the Cross'.⁵⁰ Together the Shipleys demanded not simply the establishment of a national Leif Erikson Day but a Washington exhibit that recognised the real history of the Americas: 'The ancient Republic of Iceland and our modern one would thus be placed side by side, the republic of the year 1000 and that of the year 1889, the United States honouring Iceland for the discovery of this land!'⁵¹ They even sent a plea to the United States Congress requesting money to go to Rome in order to look for suppressed archival evidence of the Norse North American presence:

The Church having full knowledge of the existence of the western continent, discovered by men of a race that the Church had no intention of glorifying, and Columbus being an obedient tool of that Church, the means were at command for effecting a re-discovery of that continent, and for obtaining for the Church and its minions all the glory of a vast original achievement!⁵²

North Americans were not the only ones to embrace such extreme views of Leif and Vinland; the Dane Juul Dieserud advances much the same position as support for his argument that Scandinavians should have proprietary status in the United States.⁵³ But given what was at stake in North America, Vinland fever certainly burned hottest there. In his 1844 translation of *Heimskringla*, indeed, the Orcadian Samuel Laing, who was very much a Scandinavian-phile in his own right, summarily dismissed Rafn and the Newport Tower: 'those sly rogues of Americans dearly love a quiet hoax'.⁵⁴ A similar North American/British split appears in responses to the now infamous Yale Vinland Map, which purported to be a pre-Columbian depiction of Norse North America. Looking at the evidence today, one has a hard time understanding why anyone ever believed in the map's legitimacy, and in fact scholars from the British Library and other British academics were withering in their scepticism of everything about the map: its provenance, representation of the world, depiction of Vinland, the wording of its legend, and even its ink. In the face of all this, Yale and the individuals associated with a facsimile reproduction of the map fiercely maintained their support, even as late as the book's 1996 re-issue, although now the map seems to have no academic credibility at all.⁵⁵ By no means did the Yale map ever overtly channel the kinds of social and political anxieties that animated Holand, the Shipleys, or others afflicted with Vinland on the brain. At the same

time, for anyone who knows the fever's history, those anxieties retain a ghostly presence; it was on 11 October 1965, two days after Leif Erikson Day and one day before Columbus Day, that Yale University Press announced the map's existence and launched its edition thereof, making the front page of the *New York Times*.⁵⁶ And while the Yale map has never been a medium for anti-Italian sentiment, it has not only divided critics by nationality but also been a platform for American assertions of self-identification.

Many more examples of Vinland on the brain could be cited – a whole book's worth, in fact. What I have tried to do here is give a sense of the variety of the fever's symptoms as well as underscore the importance of the question I directly asked about the Vinland map. Given what is known about Norse behaviour in general and specific activity in Iceland and Greenland, why did – or does – nearly everything I have discussed retain any legitimacy as plausible historical accounts? One might go so far as to say that the intensity of belief even seems to vary in inverse proportion to the reasons for it. The stronger the belief, then, the less likely it is that it is connected to material reality. It is almost as if Vinland has become a kind of free-floating yet powerful signifier. Sometimes, as in the case of that Incan dog, it has been attached to the whimsical. Sometimes, as in the Kensington Runestone or the Shipleys' ramblings, the attachment is whimsical but with strong social and political implications. And sometimes, as in de Mahieu's work as well as the so-called Vinland flag recently adopted by white supremacist groups, Vinland on the brain has been downright toxic.⁵⁷ All this suggests that the condition may not so much have infected individuals as been actively sought out and embraced by them. Why they have chosen it and the significance they see in journeys from Iceland to the Americas, therefore, reveal much more about them than about Vinland.

Notes

- 1 Richard Burton, *Ultima Thule, or, A Summer in Iceland*, 2 vols (London: William P. Nimmo, 1875), pp. ix–x.
- 2 William Morris, *Icelandic Journals* (Fontwell: Centaur Press, 1969), p. 108.
- 3 Perhaps most prominently, Helge Ingstad advocated the *vin* (meadow) sense, which better fitted the L'Anse aux Meadows site. See Helge Ingstad, 'Viking ruins prove Vikings found the New World', *National Geographic*, 126 (1964), 708–34.

- 4 Heather Pringle, 'Evidence of Viking outpost found in Canada', *National Geographic* (19 October 2012), <https://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2012/10/121019-viking-outpost-second-new-canada-science-sutherland/>, last accessed 13 December 2018; and Mark Strauss, 'Discovery could rewrite history of Vikings in New World', *National Geographic* (26 March 2016), <https://news.nationalgeographic.com/2016/03/160331-viking-discovery-north-america-canada-archaeology/>, last accessed 13 December 2018.
- 5 Robert McGhee, 'Norsemen and Eskimos in Arctic Canada', in Eleanor Guralnick (ed.), *Vikings in the West* (Chicago: Archaeological Institute of America, 1982), pp. 38–52; and William W. Fitzhugh and Elisabeth I. Ward (eds), *Vikings: The North Atlantic Saga* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2000).
- 6 'He spoke also of yet another island of the many found in that ocean. It is called Vinland because vines producing excellent wine grow wild there. That unsown crops also abound on that island we have ascertained not from fabulous reports but from the trustworthy relation of the Danes': Adam of Bremen, *History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen*, trans. Francis J. Tschan (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 219.
- 7 'Íslenzkir annálar', in Guðbrandur Vigfússon (ed.), *Sturlunga Saga*, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1878), vol. 2, pp. 348–91 (356). Old Norse original: 'Eiríkr b[ísku]p af Grænlandi fór at leita Vinlandz.' Other copies of the Annals have a similar entry for the same year.
- 8 F. Donald Logan, *The Vikings in History*, 3rd edn (London: Routledge, 2005), pp. 70–1.
- 9 Quoted in G. J. Marcus, *The Conquest of the North Atlantic* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1980), p. 78.
- 10 Ann-Marie Long, *Iceland's Relationship with Norway, c. 870–c. 1100: Memory, History and Identity* (Leiden: Brill, 2017).
- 11 Axel Anton Bjørnbo and Carl S. Petersen, *Fyenboen Claudius Clausson Swart (Claudius Clavus), Norden ældste Kartograf: En Monografi* (Copenhagen: Bianco Lunos, 1904), cols 178–9.
- 12 Robert Ferguson, *The Vikings: A History* (New York: Viking, 2009), p. 289.
- 13 Because of the conclusion the manuscript draws, 'converterunt' would seem to be used not simply in the classical sense of 'gone over to' but in the medieval sense of 'morally changed'.
- 14 Finnur Magnússon and Carl Christian Rafn, *Grönlands Historiske Mindesmærker*, 3 vols (Copenhagen: Möller, 1838–45), vol. 3, pp. 459–64.
- 15 *Diplomatarium Norvegicum*, vol. 18 (Christiania [Oslo]: P. T. Mallings/Riksarkivet, 1847), pp. 213–14. I am grateful to Richard Cole for this reference, as well for the ones to Claudius Clavus and Gísli Oddsson.

- 16 Hans Egede, *Det gamle Grønlands nye perlustration* (Copenhagen: Groth, 1741).
- 17 Ferguson, *The Vikings*, pp. 290–1.
- 18 *The Saga of the People of Eyri*, trans. Judy Quinn, in Viðar Hreinsson, Robert Cook, Terry Gunnell, Keneva Kunz, and Bernard Scudder (eds), *The Complete Sagas of Icelanders, Including 49 Tales*, 5 vols (Reykjavík: Leifur Eiríksson Publishing, 1997), vol. 5, pp. 131–218 (215–17).
- 19 Vicente Pistilli, *Vikingos en el Paraguay* (Asunción: R. Rolón, 1978), p. 19.
- 20 Pistilli, *Vikingos en el Paraguay*, p. 27.
- 21 Pistilli, *Vikingos en el Paraguay*, p. 22.
- 22 Jacques de Mahieu, *El Rey Vikingo del Paraguay* (Buenos Aires: Hachette, 1979), p. 177. For a brief summary of de Mahieu’s ideas, see Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *Black Sun: Aryan Cults, Esoteric Nazism, and the Politics of Identity* (New York: New York University Press, 2003), p. 184.
- 23 Geoffrey Brooks, ‘The Danish Viking presence in South America, 1000–c.1250’, *The Society for Nautical Research* (30 November 2015), <https://snr.org.uk/snr-forum/topic/the-danish-viking-presence-in-south-america-1000-c-1250/>, last accessed 13 December 2018.
- 24 Luke Holland, ‘Whispers from the forest: the excluded past of the Aché Indians of Paraguay’, in P. Stone and R. MacKenzie (eds), *The Excluded Past: Archeology in Education* (London: Routledge, 1990), pp. 134–51.
- 25 Uki Goñi, *The Real Odessa: How Peron Brought The Nazi War Criminals to Argentina*, rev. edn (London: Granta, 2002), p. 110.
- 26 Axel Andersson, *A Hero for the Atomic Age: Thor Heyerdahl and the ‘Kon-Tiki’ Expedition* (Oxford: Lang, 2010); and Scott Magelssen, ‘White-skinned gods: Thor Heyerdahl, the Kon-Tiki Museum, and the racial theory of Polynesian origins’, *TDR: The Drama Review*, 60 (2016), 25–49. Heyerdahl supports his diffusionist ideas with many of the fraudulent finds discussed here in Thor Heyerdahl and Per Lillieström, *Ingen Grenser* (Oslo: J. M. Stenersens Forlag, 1999).
- 27 See, for example, Clyde Winters, ‘Pre-Columbian murals and Norse sagas suggest Vikings met the Aztecs, and the outcome was not pretty’, *Ancient Origins: Reconstructing the Origins of Humanity’s Past* (27 November 2016), www.ancient-origins.net/history/pre-columbian-murals-and-norse-sagas-suggest-vikings-met-aztecs-and-outcome-was-not-pretty-021084, last accessed 13 December 2018; Robert Peron, ‘Viking and the Aztecs in MEXICO?’ (27 November 2016), <https://rperon1017blog.wordpress.com/>, last accessed 13 December 2018; Þórunn Valdimarsdóttir, ‘Vikings in Mexico 998 AD?’, https://thorvald.is/?page_id=392, last accessed 13 December 2018; Trueman, ‘Vikings in Paraguay – the Amambay / Guaira runes and more’,

- Abovetopsecret* (28 October 2012), www.abovetopsecret.com/forum/thread894216/pg1, last accessed 13 December 2018.
- 28 Thomas Percy, *Northern Antiquities, or, a description of the manners, customs, religion and laws of the ancient Danes, and other northern nations; including those of our own Saxon ancestors. With A Translation of the Edda, or System of Runic Mythology, and Other Pieces, From the Ancient Islandic Tongue. In two volumes. Translated from Mons. Mallet's Introduction a L'Histoire de Dannemarc, &c. With Additional Notes By the English Translator, and Goranson's Latin Version of the Edda* (London: T. Carnan and Co., 1770); and Thomas Gray, 'The Descent of Odin', in J. Crofts (ed.), *Gray: Poetry and Prose, with Essays by Johnson, Goldsmith and Others* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1926).
 - 29 Andrew Wawn, *The Vikings and the Victorians: Inventing the Old North in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2000). Also see Andrew Wawn (ed.), *Northern Antiquity: The Post-Medieval Reception of Edda and Saga* (Enfield Lock: Hislarik Press, 1994); Margaret Clunies Ross, *The Norse Muse in Britain, 1750–1820* (Trieste: Parnaso, 1998); Heather O'Donoghue, *English Poetry and Old Norse Myth: A History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); and Jón Karl Helgason, *Echoes of Valhalla: The Afterlife of the Eddas and Sagas*, trans. Jane Victoria Appleton (London: Reaktion Books, 2017).
 - 30 North Ludlow Beamish, *The Discovery of North America by the Northmen, in the Tenth Century, with Notices of the Early Settlements of the Irish in the Western Hemisphere* (London: T. and W. Boone, 1841).
 - 31 Birgitta Linderoth Wallace, 'Viking hoaxes', in Guralnick (ed.), *Vikings in the West*, pp. 53–76; and Wallace, 'The Vikings in North America: myth and reality', in Ross Samson (ed.), *Social Approaches to Viking Studies* (Glasgow: Glasgow University Press, 1991), pp. 207–19. See also Kevin J. Harty's chapter 3 in this volume.
 - 32 Ryan Eyford, *White Settler Reserve: New Iceland and the Colonization of the Canadian West* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2016), p. 7.
 - 33 One notable exception is the work of the Norwegian historian Gustav Storm (1845–1903), which focuses on the exact location of Vinland. See, for instance, Gustav Storm, 'Studier over Vinlandsreiserne, Vinlands Geografi og Ethnografi', *Aarbøger for Nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie*, 2: 2 (1887), 293–372.
 - 34 For general overviews of the relations between United States cultural identity and Viking finds, see Erik Ingvar Thurin, *The American Discovery of the Norse: An Episode in Nineteenth-Century American Literature* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1999); Geraldine Barnes, *Viking America: The First Millennium* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2001); and Annette Kolodny, *In Search of First Contact: The Vikings of Vinland, the Peoples of the Dawnland, and the*

- Anglo-American Anxiety of Discovery* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2012).
- 35 The runic inscription and a translation can be found in Guralnick (ed.), *Vikings in the West*, fig. 17. A transcription occurs in Erik Wahlgren, *The Kensington Stone: A Mystery Solved* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1958), p. 109. Wahlgren's devastating exposé ought to have ended all discussion of the Kensington stone.
- 36 Quoted in Harris Burkhalter, 'Bothering the brains of the learned: Norwegian-American ethnic identity and perceptions of the Kensington Runestone in American popular culture', in Terje Mikael Hasle Joranger and Harry T. Cleven (eds), *Norwegian-American Essays 2014: Migrant Journeys: The Norwegian-American Experience in a Multicultural Context* (Northfield: Norwegian-American Historical Association, 2014), pp. 145–72 (147). Wahlgren (*The Kensington Stone*, pp. 154–73) argues in detail that the stone was intended to be a hoax and, as such, was meant to be exposed.
- 37 David M. Krueger, *Myths of the Rune Stone: Viking Martyrs and the Birthplace of America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015), p. 5.
- 38 'Runestone Museum', *Explore Alexandria Minnesota*, https://explorealx.com/dt_places/runestone-museum/, last accessed 13 December 2018.
- 39 Odd S. Lovoll, *Norwegians on the Prairie: Ethnicity and the Development of the Country Town* (St Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2006), p. 22. Also see Krueger, *Myths of the Rune Stone*, pp. 41–51.
- 40 Krueger, *Myths of the Rune Stone*, pp. 93–117.
- 41 Burkhalter, 'Bothering the brains of the learned', p. 158.
- 42 Odd S. Lovoll, *The Promise of America: A History of the Norwegian-American People* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), p. 180.
- 43 Albert Welles, *The Pedigree and History of the Washington Family: Derived from Odin, the Founder of Scandinavia, B.C. 79, Involving a Period of Eighteen Centuries, and Including Fifty-five Generations, down to General George Washington, First President of the United States* (New York: Society Library, 1879), p. iv.
- 44 Welles, *The Pedigree and History of the Washington Family*, p. xxv.
- 45 Rasmus B. Anderson, *America Not Discovered by Columbus: A Historical Sketch of the Discovery of America by the Norsemen in the Tenth Century* (Chicago: S. C. Griggs and Company, 1874), pp. 66–7. See also Bergur Þorgeirsson's chapter 7 in this volume.
- 46 Eben Norton Horsford, *The Landfall of Leif Erikson A. D. 1000 and the Site of the Houses in Vinland* (Boston: Damrell and Upham, 1892), p. 91.
- 47 Horsford, *The Landfall of Leif Erikson*, p. 109. In an earlier study, Horsford describes the pronunciation as 'one of the features of speech

due to imperfect vocal development, remarked among American aboriginal races, and especially among the indigenous tribes of the region of Norumbega (Vineland)': Eben Norton Horsford, *Sketch of the Norse Discovery of America, at the Festival of the Scandinavian Societies Assembled May 18, 1891, in Boston, on the Occasion of Presenting a Testimonial to Eben Norton Horsford, in Recognition of the Finding of the Landfall of Leif Erikson, the Site of his Vineland Home and of the Ancient Norse City of Norumbega, in Massachusetts, in the 43rd Degree* (Boston: n.p., 1891), p. 29. Norumbega, which Horsford derives from 'Norway', was a mythical settlement that shows up on early maps of New England.

- 48 John B. Shipley and Marie A. Shipley, *The English Rediscovery and Colonization of America* (London: Elliott Stock, 1891), p. vi.
- 49 Shipley and Shipley, *The English Rediscovery*, p. 45.
- 50 Marie A. Shipley, *The Icelandic Discoverers of America, or, Honor to Whom Honor is Due* (New York: John B. Alden, 1890), pp. 70, 67.
- 51 Shipley and Shipley, *The English Rediscovery*, p. 48.
- 52 Shipley and Shipley, *The English Rediscovery*, p. 40. Marie Shipley seems to have been the driving force behind the idea; see her *The Norse Colonization in America in the Light of the Vatican Finds* (Lucerne: H. Keller, 1889).
- 53 Juul Dieserud, *Sagaens Leif Erikson: En Karakteristik af Amerikas Første Opdager paa Grundlag af Sagaens Geretning om Ham* (Chicago: John Anderson, 1893).
- 54 Snorri Sturluson, *The Heimskringla, or, Chronicle of the Kings of Norway*, trans. Samuel Laing, 3 vols (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1844), vol. 1, p. 183.
- 55 R. A. Skelton, Thomas E. Marston, and George D. Painter, *The Vinland Map and the Tartar Relation*, 2nd edn (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996).
- 56 Kirsten A. Seaver, *Maps, Myths, and Men: The Story of the Vinland Map* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2004), p. 149; '1440 map depicts the New World', *New York Times* (11 October 1965), p. 1.
- 57 See Verena Höfig's chapter 5 in this volume.