

*A fleet of silver, come to torment us”: Sea-ice variations off the coasts of Iceland
from the Settlement to the Present*

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Short Abstract: Using primarily documentary historical evidence, this presentation will consider variations in sea-ice incidence off the coasts of Iceland from when the country was first settled (ca. AD 871) to the present day. There will be a particular emphasis on periods of little ice (e.g., ca. 1640 to 1680 and the present day) and periods of much ice (including the early 1600s, the late 1600s, the 1750s and the 1880s). The mainly negative societal impacts caused by the presence of the ice will also be considered. This part of the presentation will consider sea ice as "the country's ancient enemy", as evoked in the poem *Hafísinn* or "Sea Ice" which describes the ice as beautiful, but deadly, as suggested in the line from the poem quoted in the presentation title.