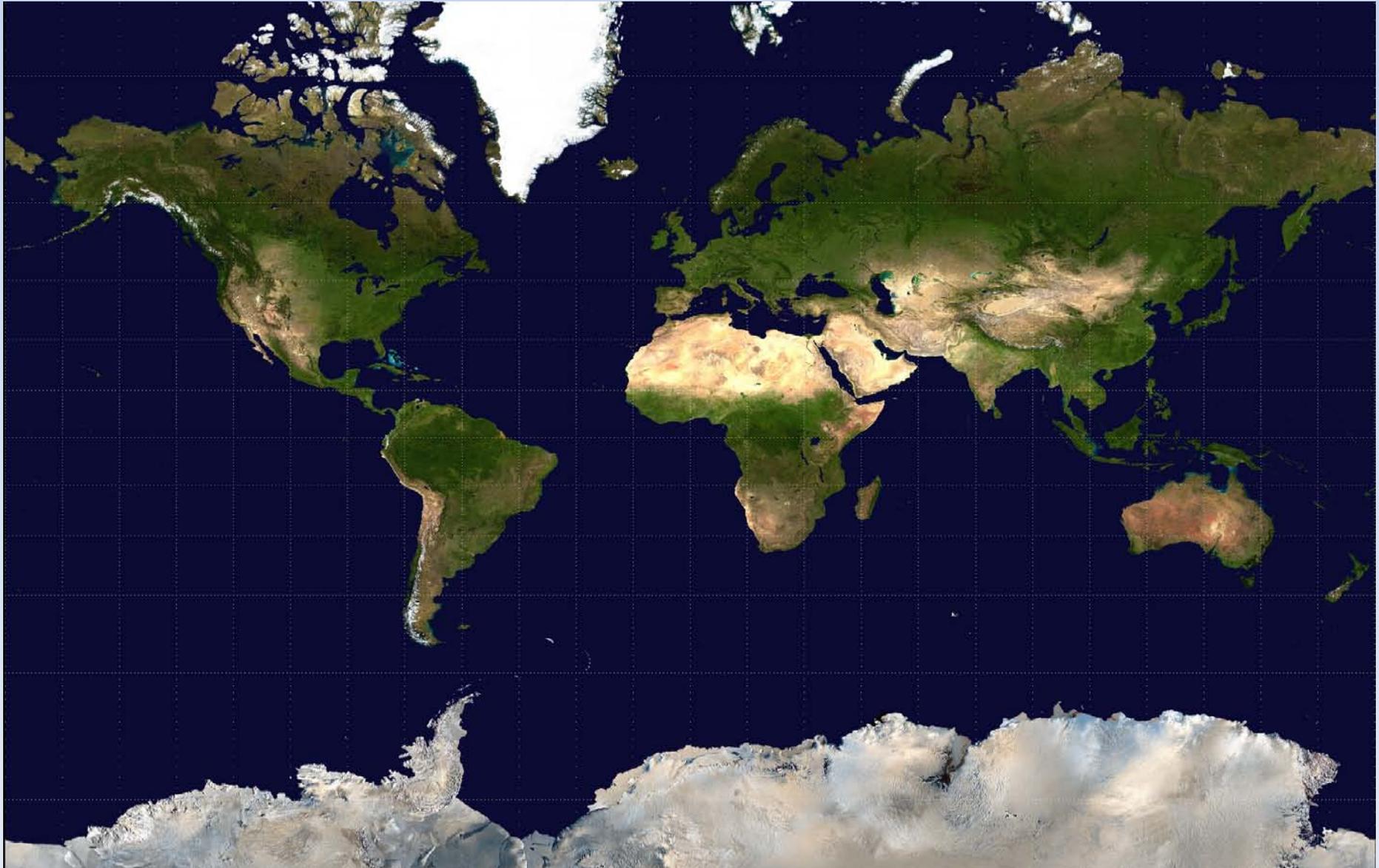


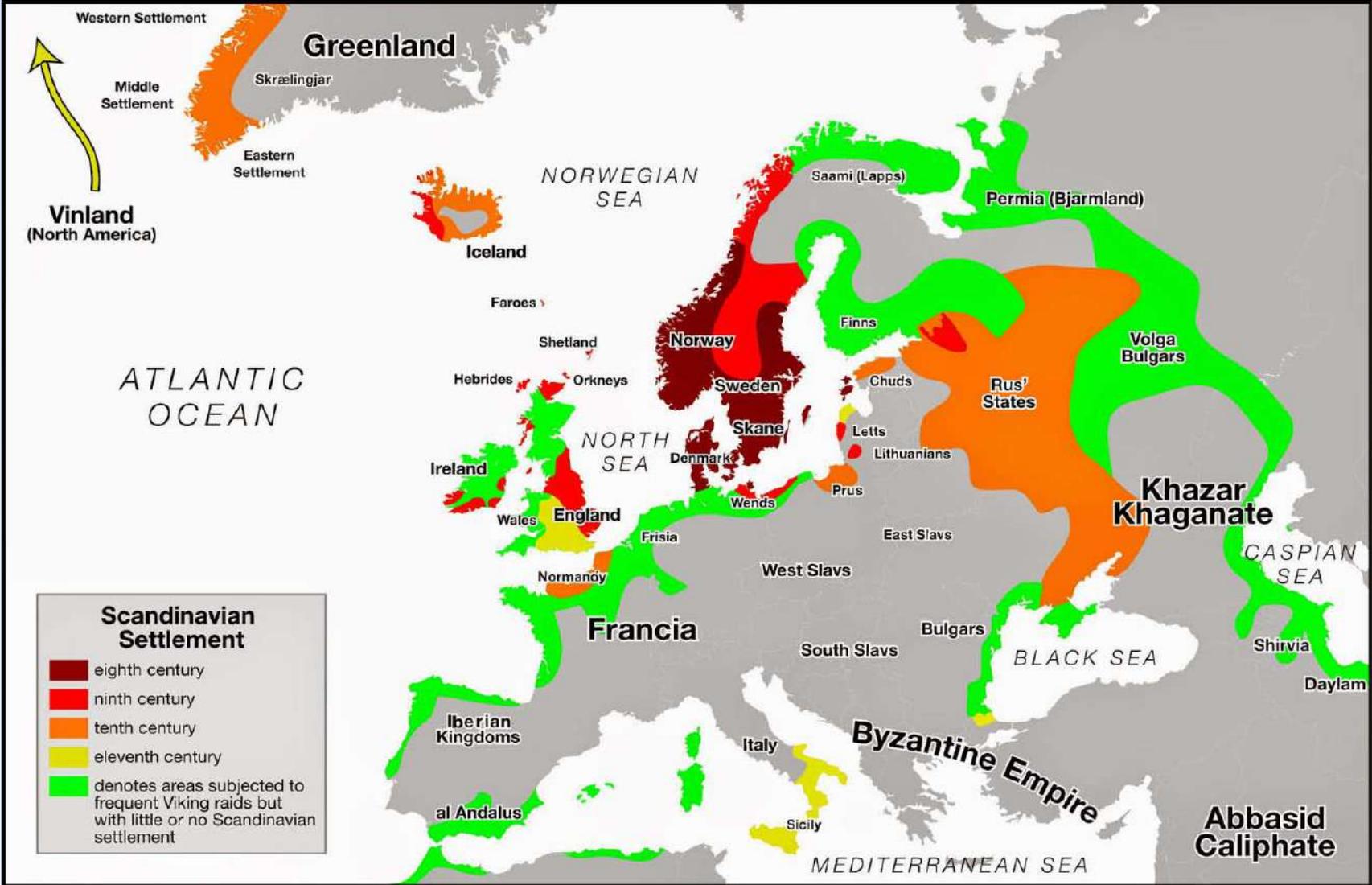
Expedition Greenland

Learning Sustainability
from the Vikings

Where is Greenland?

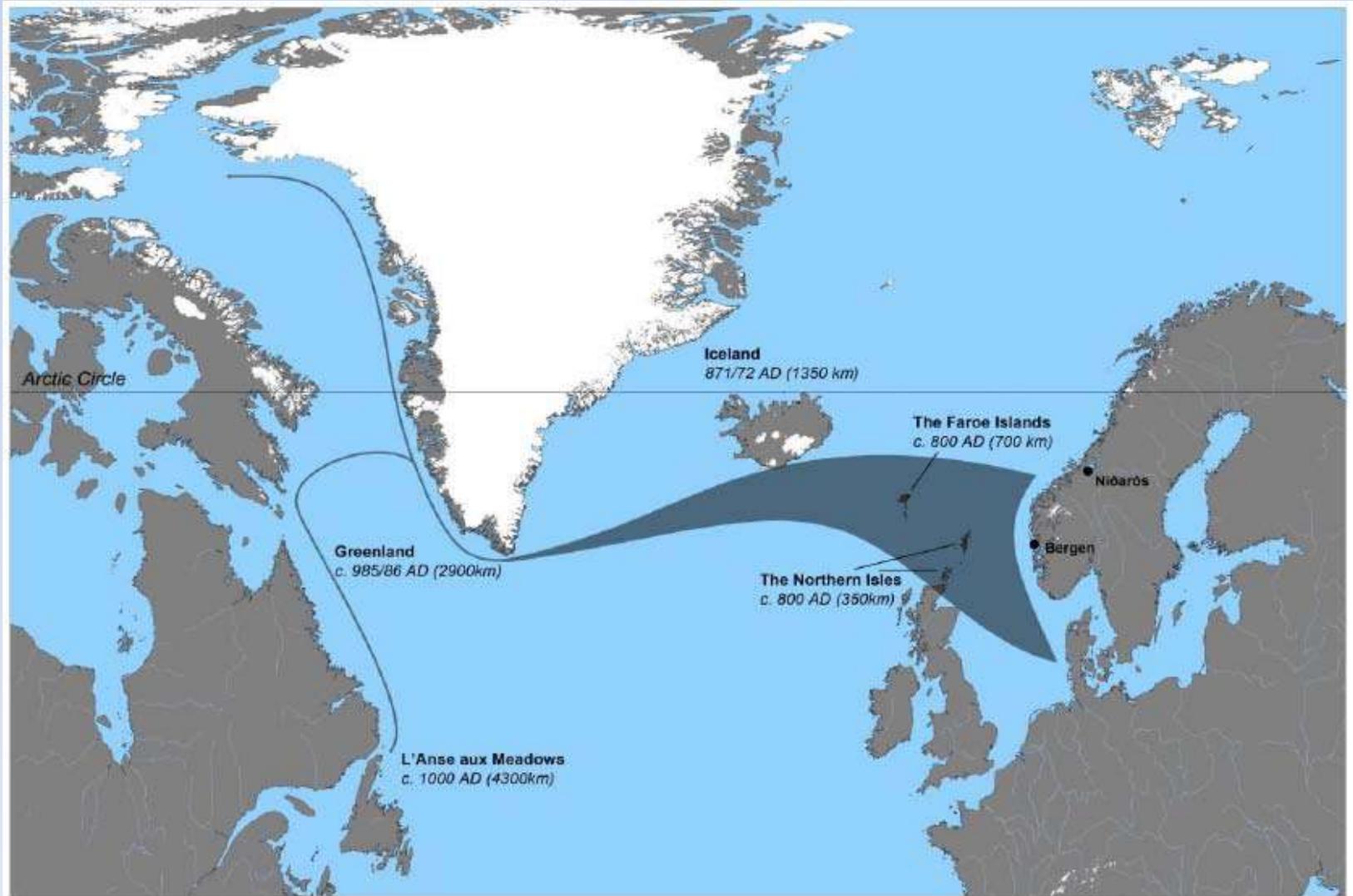


Where was Greenland in the time of the Norse?

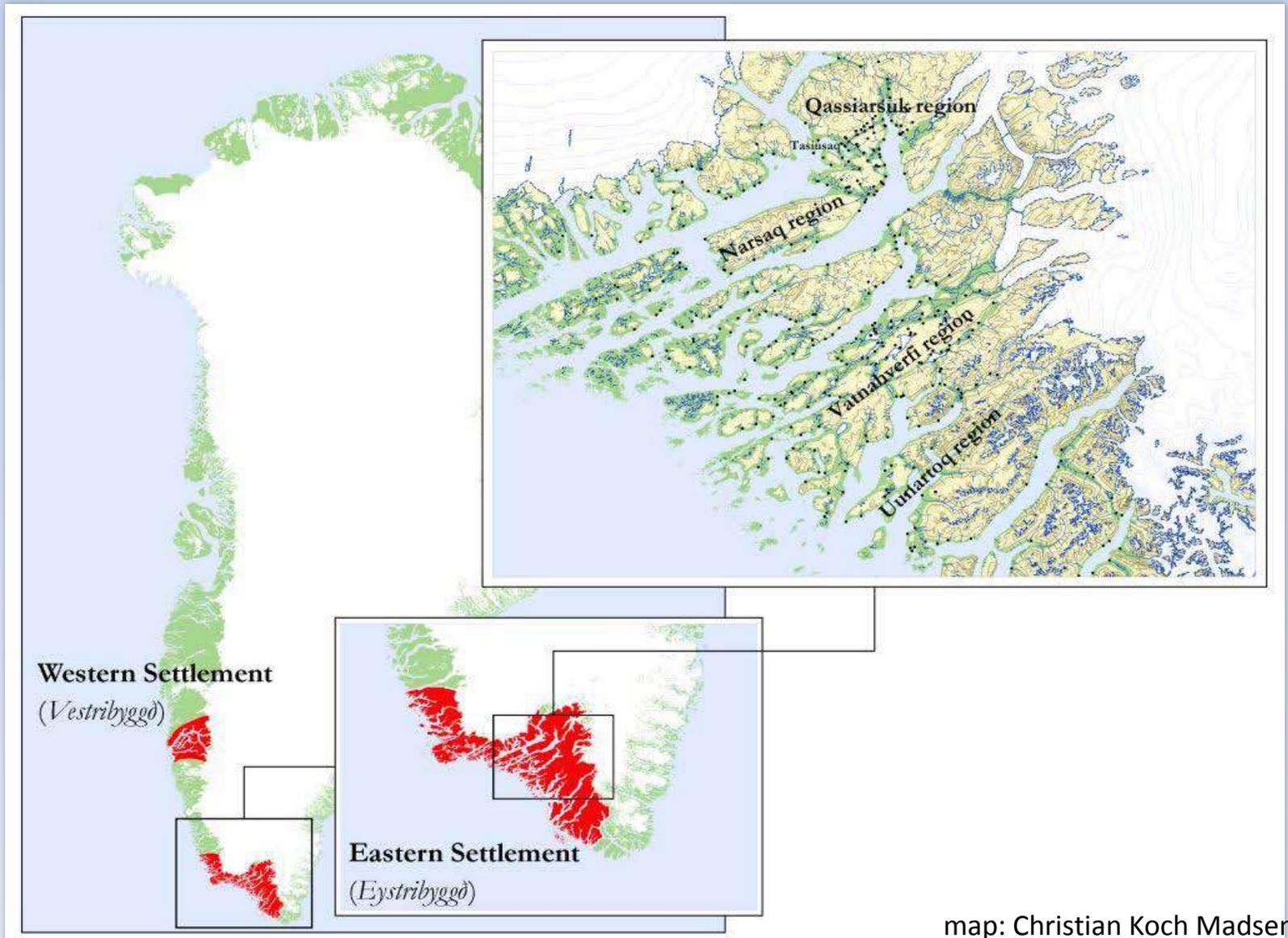


Karte: Max Naylor, Public Domain

Ways to Greenland



Where have been the Norse settlements?



The Saga of Eric the Red

- Eric left the North of Iceland, cleared land in the valley of falcons and settled down there.
- Eric's slaves caused a landslide on Valthjof's land. Eyolf the Dirty, a relative of Valthjof, killed the slaves not far from the Waterhorn. That is why Eric killed Eyolf and a man named Raven the fighter. He was persecuted by Eyolf's relatives, and they banished him from the valley of falcons.
- Eric now took land around Brokey and Oxney. After another dispute, a court declared him outlawed [free to kill], but his friend hid him in Dimun Bay.
- Eric told his friends that he was planning to search for the land that the seafarer Gunnbjorn had sighted many years before when he was driven off from his route to the West of Iceland.

Interpretation of the saga

- A landlord named Thorvald and his son Eric moved to Iceland around 960 AD. They found no better land to settle than a gloomy shore in the extreme north-west.
- Eric did not like this inferior status. He married a girl from a more southern region, established a farm in the prosperous valley of falcons and began to work his way up.
- But the landlords from the neighborhood did not accept any upstart. They managed to ban Eric from the valley of falcons.
- Another banishment brought out the true character of this man: he did not turn to piracy. Instead, he decided to spend the years of exile with exploring new countries and new opportunities.

Criteria to select a place of settlement

If you are looking for a suitable location for your farm, make sure that the following criteria are as well met as possible:

- **Access to drinking water**: Rivers and lakes have drinking water quality; The water of the ocean is too salty and can not be drunk.
- **Quality of the grassland**: This depends mainly on the amount of rain (it is important that there are no drought periods caused by cold wind), the temperature and the soil quality.
- **Transport by sea**: Transport was mainly organised with boats over the fjords and the sea. When traders came from Norway, they reached the settlements from the south, but the hunting grounds for walruses and polar bears lay in the north.
- **Protection against bad weather**: fog, storms and drift ice are negative weather effects on the coast, while cold and droughts are typical for higher altitudes.

Norse Settlement Landscapes in Greenland – *Vegetation in Fjords and Fell*



Highland



Lowland

← **Inner fjord**
Sub-continental, subarctic

Middle Fjord

Coast
Oceanic, low-arctic →



