

## MASCULINE IMAGES AND CONSTRUCTION OF ICELANDIC NATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY: HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS

*Originating in the middle of the 19th century, Icelandic nationalism has undergone certain changes over the course of a century and a half, but dominant masculine images have always remained its integral part, and in this sense, the modern stage is no exception. Early 2000s were marked by an intense economic development and the subsequent financial expansion of Iceland, against which “business-Vikings” — bankers and entrepreneurs responsible for this success — gained particular popularity. After the economic crisis of 2008–2009 the image of a “business-Viking” lost its relevance for some time, while ideas about exclusivity of Icelanders, considered to be the heirs to the “Golden Age” of Althing democracy and independence, were spreading. These ideas were supplemented by the myth of “exceptional” anti-crisis management. Nevertheless, despite a severe recession, Iceland managed to maintain and even strengthen its international prestige, which now rests upon the idea that this country is the “cradle of democracy”. If earlier (2000s) the main national symbol was the “business-Viking”, and Iceland was imagined as a country of the best financiers, then after the crisis, the emphasis moved to the resistance to cataclysms and “natural” (inherited from the ancestors of the “Golden Age”) strength and vitality of the Icelanders. Or, in terms of J. K. Puar and K. Sloopmaeckers, there has been a transition from hetero- to homo-nationalism in the discourse.*

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**For citation:** Snedkov, G. A. 2023. Masculine Images and Construction of Icelandic Nation in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Historiographical Analysis. *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)*. 3: 262–269.

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