

## PUBLIC SEMINAR

THE NATIONAL EUROPE CENTRE AT THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY IS PLEASED TO INVITE YOU TO:

# Literate Farmers: On the history of Iceland

## Professor Gunnar Karlsson

Professor of History, University of Iceland, Reykjavik

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**Wednesday 20 July, 12.30pm**

at the National Europe Centre  
The Australian National University, 1 Liversidge Street,  
Parking available in Balmain Lane, opposite University House  
(Light refreshments will be served after the seminar)

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The lecture will give a broad survey of the history of Iceland with emphasis on the Middle Ages and the writing of sagas, which are the only achievement of Icelanders on a global scale. It will discuss the theory that medieval Iceland fostered a distinctive culture based on the peculiar situation of being a Christian population, and thus knowing how to write books on parchment, without being submitted to royal power, because Iceland was too far to the west in the North Atlantic for the crown of Norway to subdue the country until the late 13th century.

**Gunnar Karlsson** is a professor of history at the University of Iceland, Reykjavik. He is born and brought up in Iceland and was educated in Icelandic language, literature and history at the University of Iceland. He taught Nordic history at University College, London, 1974-76 and has been employed at the University of Iceland since 1976. His main area of research and writing has been the history of Iceland, especially in the Middle Ages and the 19th century. He has also written a number of textbooks for schools and other general works on the history of Iceland, among them *Iceland's 1100 Years: the history of a marginal society*, 2000.

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