

KARBONÖT, KALSÍT, SILFURBERG & NICOL-PRISMU

CARBONATES, CALCITE, ICELAND SPAR AND NICOL-PRISMS



TIL ER SJALDREGÐ TEGUND GOSBERGI, KARRONATT, SEM ER AD MEIRA EN HÁLPU LEVTI ÚR KARBONÖTUM. ÓL DÖNNÖ LENGAI ELDJALLIÐ Í TANSANÍU ERU PADNA SEM HEIJUR GOSID SÍKU HRAUNA Í SÓGULEGUM TÍMA. VINSTRI: GOS 1966 OG ÓGÚI 2011 Í OL DÖNNÖ LENGAI ELDJALLIÐ, SÍKU VARD GOS PARNA 2007/08.

HEGRE: KARRONATT-MYNDUNIN ER Í FAJLJÓLUNARNA Í ÓL DÖNNÖ LENGAI ELDJALLIÐ. KARRONATT ER Í MAGMATIC FORM OF A CALCIATE-RICH ROCK, CALLED CARBONATITE (5-50% CARBONATES).

ÖL DÖNNÖ LENGAI VOLCANO IN TANZANIA IS THE ONLY ONE KNOWN TO HAVE ERUPTED CARBONATITE IN HISTORICAL TIME.

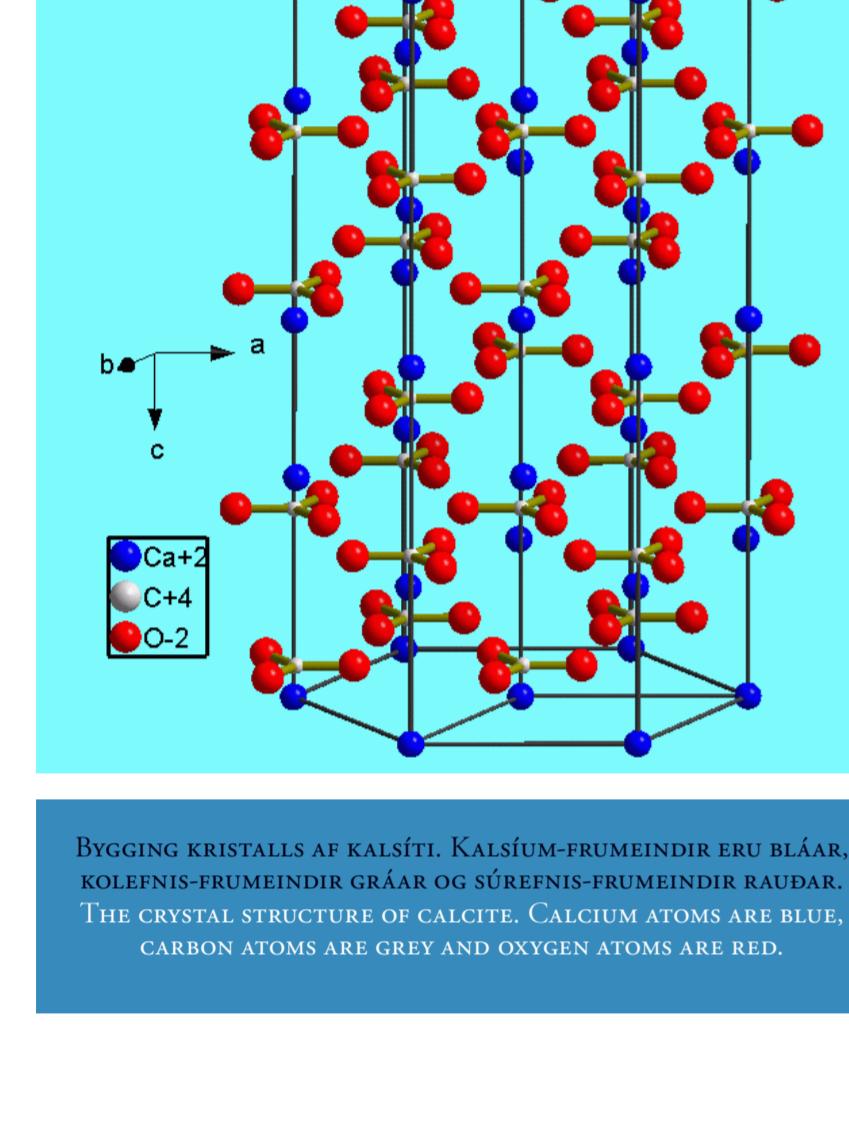
LEFT: ERUPTION IN 1966 AND CRATER IN 2011 IN ÖL DÖNNÖ LENGAI VOLCANO. THE LAST ERUPTION WAS IN 2007/2008.

RIGHT: THE CARBONATITE OUTCROP IS SITUATED AT THE KAISESTHÜL MOUNTAIN IN GERMANY. VOLCANIC VENTS WHICH WERE ACTIVE 19-16 MILLION YEARS AGO ARE EXPOSED TODAY, DUE TO RAPID EROSION.

MÍNU / PHOTOS: WILHELMUS & MARTIN GESSER 2006

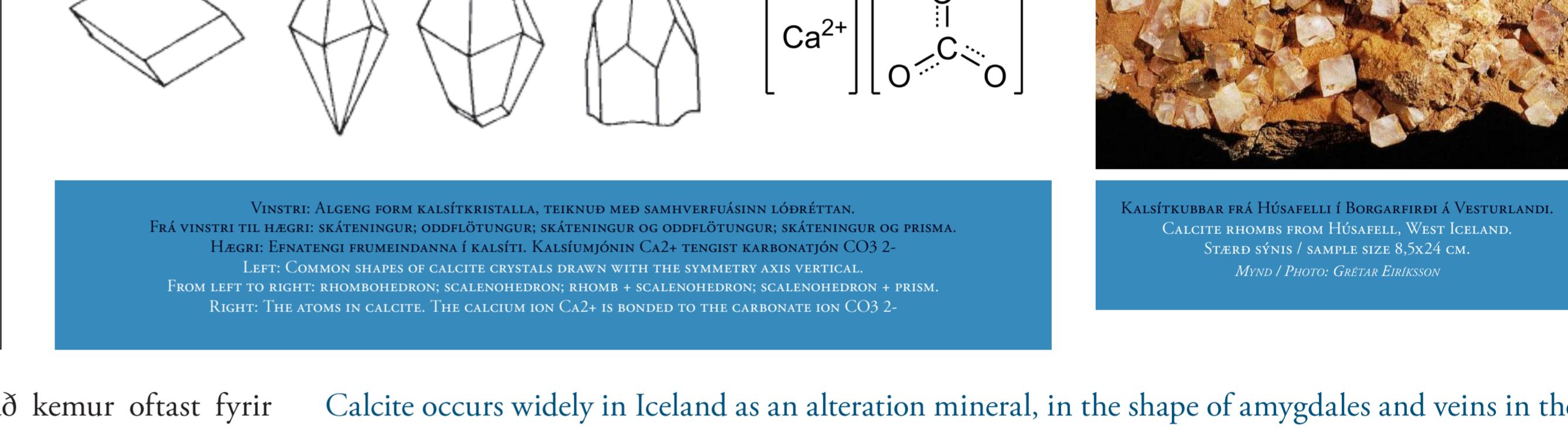
KARBONÖT

Karbónöt eru steindir þar sem einn eða fléiri málmar tengjast kolsýru-jóninni CO_3 . Þekktar eru um 60 karbonatsteindir, flestar þó mjög sjaldgæfar. Um 4% jarðkorpunnar eru úr karbonötum, aðallega kalsíumsamböndum. Karbonatsteindir eru mjög mikilvægar fyrir lífríki hafssins og hafa óbeint áhrif á magn gróðurhúsalofttegunda í andrúmsloftinu. Skeljar margra lífvera eru gerðar úr kalsítum og aragonítum, svo og kóralar. Þessar lífverur binda koldíoxíð til hafinu, sem þar með getur dreigி allar koldíoxíð um andrúmsloftinu. Helstu karbonatsteindir sem finnast hér á landi eru sölumeildis kalsít og aragonít. Bárðar eru kalsíumkarbonötur en kristallagerðir er ólík. Heilir fjallgarðar eru erlendis eru úr karbonötum, einkum svokölluðum kalksteini örðnum til úr sjávarseti. Slík setlögg finnast ekki á Íslandi. Við ummyndun breytist kalksteinnin í marmara, sem hefur verið notaður í byggingarbraði óldum saman. Kalsít er langalgengasta karbonatsteindin, en önnur dæmi um þær eru siderit (járnkarbonat) og dólómít (kalsíum-magnesíumkarbonat).

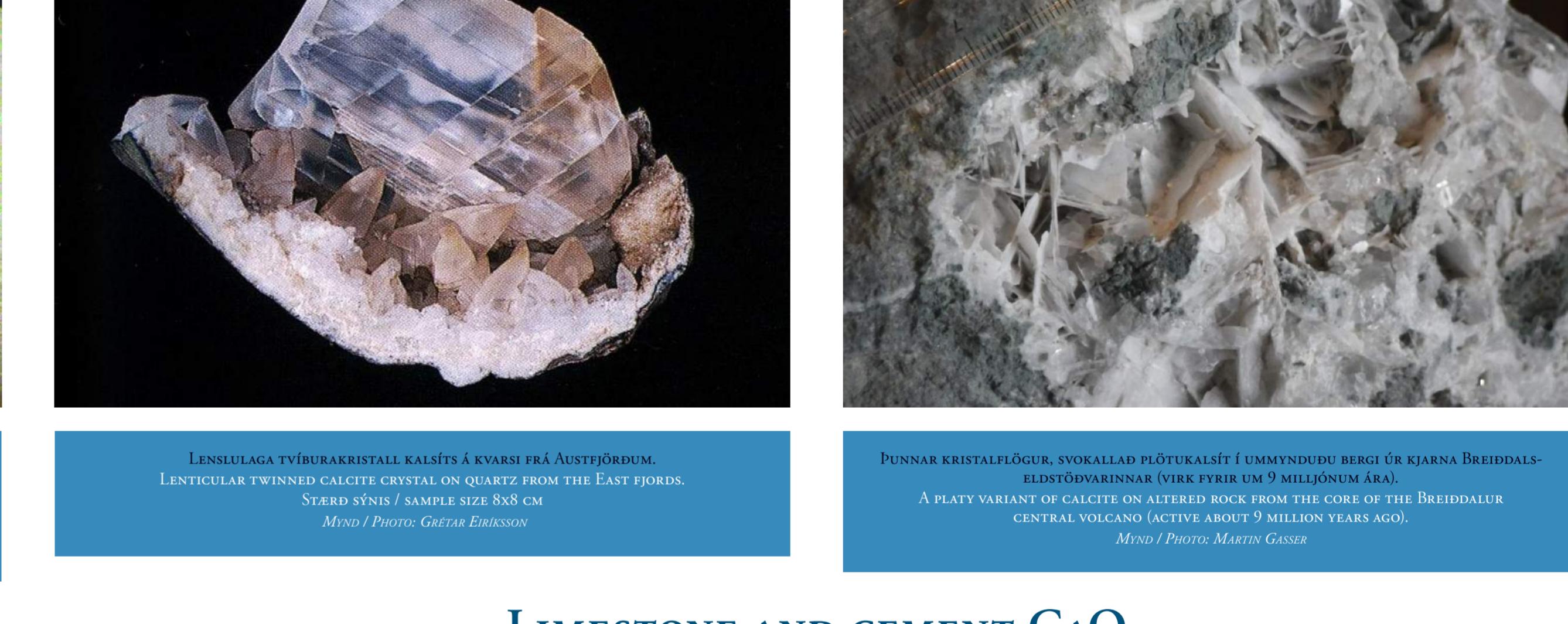


KALSÍT (KALKSPAT) - CALCITE CaCO_3
KRISTALGERÐ / CRYSTAL FORM: TRÍGÓNAL
HARKA / HARDNESS: 3
EÐLISPYNGD / SPECIFIC GRAVITY: 2,7

Carbonates are minerals in which one or more metals form compounds with the carbonic acid radical CO_3 . About 60 carbonate minerals are known, most of them very rare. About 4% of the Earth's crust consist of carbonates, predominantly calcium compounds. Carbonate minerals are highly important to the ecosystem of the oceans, and they have an indirect effect upon the quantity of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Shells of many organisms consist of calcite and aragonite, as do corals. These organisms therefore take carbon dioxide from the sea, which can then absorb more carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. The principal carbonates found in Icelandic rock formations are also calcite and aragonite. Both are calcium carbonates, but they differ in their crystal structure. Entire mountain chains abroad are built out of mineralized carbonate sediments, called limestone (not found in Iceland). Metamorphic processes convert limestone to marble, a rock used in building industries for centuries. Calcite is by far the most common carbonate mineral; other examples include siderite and dolomite.

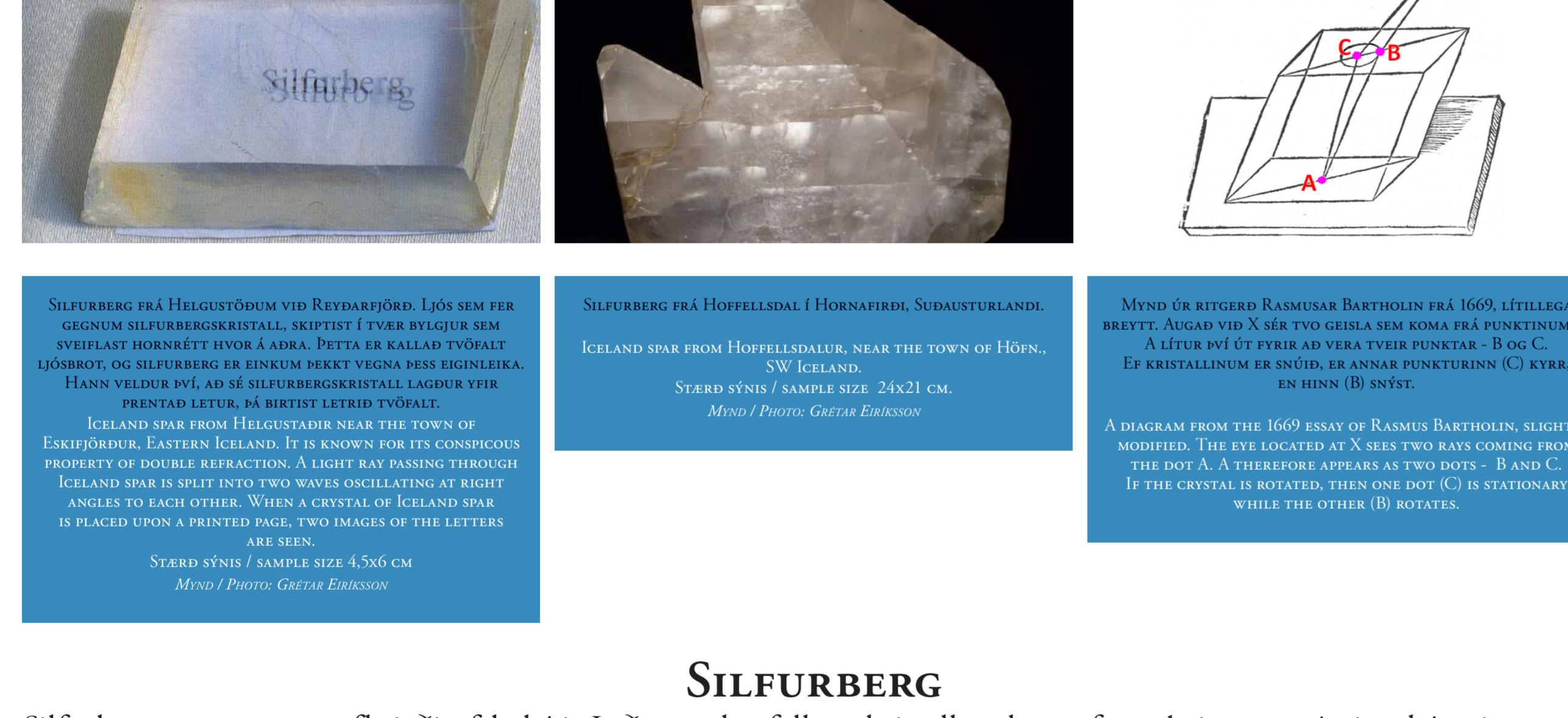


Calcite occurs widely in Iceland as an alteration mineral, in the shape of amygdales and veins in the host rock. It is most often found in the vicinity of eroded central volcanoes. The largest documented single crystal of calcite in the Helgustaðir quarry site in Reyðarfjörður, East Iceland was described as being about 6 x 3 m in size. Calcite is a common constituent of sedimentary rocks, especially limestone which is formed from the shells of marine organisms. Such limestone formations make up approximately 10% of sedimentary rocks in continental regions, but they do not occur in Iceland.

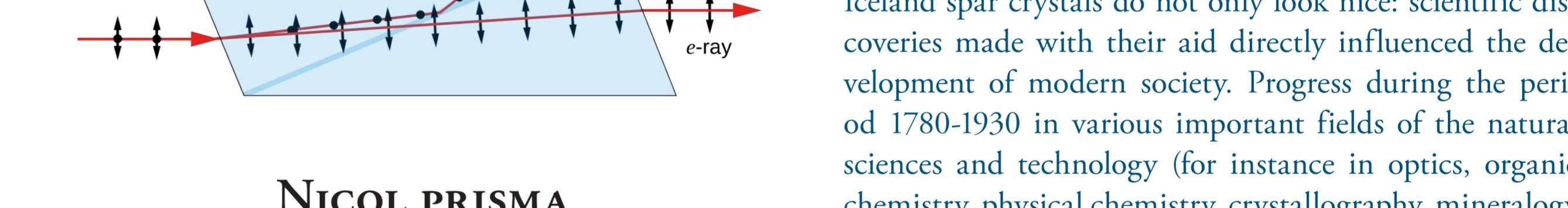


KALK OG SEMENT CaO

Kalsíumoxið (CaO , brennt kalk) er uppiðstöðuefnid í steinlímum og sementum. Það fæst með því að hita upp kalsít í ofni svo að koldíoxíð rjúki burt. Við byggingu fyrstu húsa úr steini á Íslandi var notast við innflutt kalk, en Egill Egilsen kaupmaður í Reykjavík gerði á áttunda áratug nítjánudal aldar tilraunir til að nýta kalsít úr æðum sem fundist hösfðu í Esju nálægi Möglísk. Þetta hráefni var flutt þaðan í kalkbrennluflóum við Arnarhóll, og íslenska steinlímindi var fyrst auglýst til sölu 1876. Reksturinn stóð ekki undir sér, og lagðist niður eftir því.



Calcium oxide (CaO , quicklime) is the principal component in the mortar and cements of the building industry. It is obtained by heating limestone to several hundred degrees. In the first stone buildings in Iceland, imported quicklime was used. In the 1870s a Reykjavík merchant attempted to replace this material by mining calcite from veins in the nearby Esja mountain. A lime kiln was constructed in the downtown area, but its product did not turn out to be competitive. The enterprise was abandoned after three years.



Silfurberg er vatnstaðrt afbrigði af kalsít. Það myndar fallega kristalla, algeng form þeirra eru ýmist skáteningar eða skalenóðar (með þófryndum oddflösum). Kristallar sem finnast eru afjanum mattar að utan og oft þaktrar geislasteinum. Silfurberg má kljúfa í skáteningar með 105° og 75° hornum milli hlíðanna, og fletirnir hafa glergljáa. Þegar hefur er gegnum tara kristalla, sjást tverr myndir vegna tvöfaldar jósbrotsins. Vísindamennirnir Erasmus Bartholinus í Danmörku og Christiaan Huygens í Hollandi birtu merkar athuganir á þessum og örðum eiginleikum silfurbergs frá Helgördum í Reyðarfjörði á seinni hluta 17. alda. Það átti síðan þátt í framförum á ymsum svíðum náttúruvísiða frá um 1780, einkum vegna hlutverks síns í tækjum til rannsókná á og með ljósi.

ICELAND SPAR

Iceland spar is a highly transparent variant of calcite. It forms crystals whose shapes are commonly either rhombohedral or scalenocephal (with triangular facets). When found, the crystals have matt surfaces, often overgrown with zeolites. Iceland spar can be easily split into rhombohoids with a vitreous lustre, having angles of 105° and 75° between the sides. When one looks through a clear crystal, two images are seen due to its double refraction. The scientists Erasmus Bartholinus in Denmark and Christiaan Huygens in Holland published important observations on this and other properties of Iceland spar from Helgustaðir in Reyðarfjörður, East Iceland, in the late 17th century. Iceland spar contributed significantly to progress in various fields of the natural sciences from around 1780 onwards, in particular through their use in essential components of certain optical instruments.

Nicol prisms do not only look nice: scientific discoveries made with their aid directly influenced the development of modern society. Progress during the period 1780-1930 in various important fields of the natural sciences and technology (for instance in optics, organic chemistry, physical chemistry, crystallography, mineralogy and petrology) would have been delayed by decades if Iceland spar had not been available at that time. As the sole supplier of first-class spar crystals for scientific purposes, Helgustaðir may therefore be considered the most valuable location in Iceland in an international context.

Nicol prisms represent the prime application of Iceland spar. Thousands of these prisms were produced in the 19th century, following their invention by W. Nicol in 1829. They are still in production, although so-called Polaroid sheets have since 1940 replaced them in many applications. A Nicol prism is made from two wedges of spar which are joined together by a thin coat of glue. In the diagram, a wave of ordinary light coming from the left is split into two polarized rays on entering the first wedge. The ray passing through the glue has a known direction of oscillation, which can be rotated arbitrarily. The other ray is reflected from the glue, and is generally not made use of. In addition to converting unpolarized light into polarized light, a Nicol prism can be used for finding the direction of oscillation in a polarized beam, and for attenuating its intensity. The most common types of optical instruments which contained Nicol prisms as key components were: polarimeters (including saccharimeters), petrographic microscopes, photometers (including spectrophotometers), various colorimeter devices, and optical pyrometers for measuring high temperatures. Other functions of Iceland spar included its use as a standard in the spectroscopy of X-rays, due to its perfect structure.

It would take up too much space to explain all the discoveries in which Iceland spar played a direct or indirect role. Some of these had wide-ranging consequences, including achievements by world-famous scientists of the 19th and 20th centuries such as A. Fresnel, M. Faraday, J.C. Maxwell and A. Einstein.

LEÓ KRISTJÁNSSON

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