

# Newsletter of the Society of Historians of Scandinavia

Vol. 2, December 2009

Published annually, the Newsletter of the Society of Historians of Scandinavia aims to help the far-flung members of SHS stay connected with one another and to facilitate the conduct of SHS business. Submissions for the December 2010 volume should be sent to the SHS President by December 1, 2010.

## **Society Business: Thinking ahead to 2010-11**

### SHS-Sponsored Panels

Every year SHS sponsors one or two panels at the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study (SASS). In 2009 we aimed to sponsor panels regarding both Scandinavian and Scandinavian-American history. Look for them on the program as “Medieval and Early Modern Scandinavia” (currently designated D-3) and “Scandinavian Immigration II” (currently designated F-3).

For SASS 2011, we need to begin earlier to plan SHS-sponsored panels. Expect your president, Jennifer Eastman Attebery, and members of the SHS Executive Committee to be in touch with you during SASS 2010 to discuss how we can best showcase the work being done in Scandinavian and Scandinavian-American history.

### Elections

We will have three positions vacant after the Society’s 2011 Executive Committee meeting: Vice-President

(succeeding automatically to President after two years), Secretary-Treasurer (currently occupied by Terje Leiren), and one Executive Committee position (currently occupied by Dean Bennett). It is not too early to be thinking about who should fill these important positions. Nominations may be made by any Executive Committee member. Society members interested in serving, please contact a member of the committee (see page 3).

Bear in mind that, with the exception of the Vice-President, those currently serving in positions may be nominated to succeed themselves.

Nominations will be due to Jennifer Eastman Attebery by 15 December 2010: [attejenn@isu.edu](mailto:attejenn@isu.edu).

Elections will then be held via e-mail. Our constitution gives voters sixty days to submit ballots.

### Membership Dues!

If you know or think that you are behind on your dues, please contact our Secretary-Treasurer Terje Leiren: [leiren@u.washington.edu](mailto:leiren@u.washington.edu). Membership is \$15 annually.

## News from the Membership

### New Book by Oddvar Høidal

Høidal's book regarding Trotsky's exile in Norway was published in Oslo on November 12, 2009, an event which took him to Norway last fall to publicize the book. Høidal describes the book as follows:

“In addition to dealing with Leon Trotsky's life during the 18 months, June 1935 - December 1936, of his Norwegian exile, the study also covers earlier attempts by Norwegian socialists to gain asylum for Trotsky; his relationship with the Norwegian labor movement both prior to and after his arrival in Norway; his effort to create a new socialist international (the Fourth International) while in Norway; the treatment that Trotsky received from Johan Nygaardsvold's Labor government that resulted in internment; disagreement among political parties, as well as leading political and cultural personalities, concerning the government's policy toward Trotsky; and repercussions resulting from his stay that had an impact after his expulsion to Mexico, including the effort to establish a trotskyite section in Norway. In addition, the book can serve as a case study of how the government in a democratic society reacted when the actions of an individual posed a threat to its continued existence, the position of the governing party, and the country's positive relationship with a great power. To what extent was the government's treatment of Trotsky in violation of basic democratic rights? Could the Nygaardsvold administration have handled the difficult position it was in differently?”

For SHS members interested in obtaining the book, here is the publication information:

Oddvar Høidal, *Trotsky i Norge: Et sår som aldri gror*. Oslo: Spartacus forlag, 2009. Pp. 416. Nkr. 399,00.

### Wicker Receives Prestigious ACLS Fellowship

Nancy L. Wicker received an ACLS Fellowship for fall 2009 to pursue the project, “Goldsmiths, Patrons, and Women: Typology, Chronology, and the Social Life of Early Medieval Scandinavian Jewelry.”

According to the ACLU Fellowship Program website, Wicker's project examined, “pendant gold jewelry called bracteates,” which “have been found primarily in Scandinavia and dated to the Migration Period (fifth and sixth centuries A.D.).”

Wicker's project “examines the role of minor arts during this period; investigates migration and the dispersal of Scandinavian bracteates throughout Europe; sheds light on jewelry as markers of prestige, ethnicity, and gender in Scandinavian culture, considering the individuals who made, purchased, gave, and wore these artworks; and illuminates workshop practice of this anonymous art through microscopic examination of tool traces and establishment of an absolute chronology based on find combinations.” The project contributes to our knowledge of bracteates by focusing on social function rather than just form.

SHS members can look forward to hearing about the results of Wicker's project at future SASS meetings.

#### Byock Produces New Translation

Jesse Byock's translation of Grettir's Saga was published by Oxford University Press in 2009. Described by the publisher as "a sweeping epic of the Viking Age . . . [that] follows the life of the outlaw Grettir the Strong as he battles against sorcery, bad luck, and the vengefulness of his enemies," the saga is valuable for more than its literary merits. It also yields information about medieval law, folk belief, and folk history. This new Oxford edition includes a wealth of scholarly apparatus to augment the text, including a scholarly introduction, maps, genealogies, a time line, illustrations, glossary, notes, and bibliography.

For SHS members interested in obtaining the book, here is the publication information:

Jesse Byock, trans. *Grettir's Saga*. Oxford, U.K.: Oxford University Press, 2009.

#### Nordtorp-Madson Translates Book

Michelle Nordtorp-Madson is the translator of Lilli Fransen, Anna Norgard, and Else Ostergard's book *Medieval Garments Reconstructed: Norse Clothing Patterns*, to be published by Aarhus University Press in early 2010. Nordtorp-Madson was also an invited lecturer at the American Swedish Institute in 2009, speaking on "Magic, Murder and Mayhem: The Völsunga Saga."

#### Attebery Will Deliver Honor Lecture

Jennifer Eastman Attebery has been selected by Utah State University's Folklore Program to give the Fife Honor Lecture in March. The Fife Lecture is an annual honorary lecture given by a senior folklorist each spring. Named in honor of Austin and Alta Fife, the lecture has been held every year since 1981 and recipients are chosen on the basis of achievements in the field. Past Lecturers have included Wayland D. Hand, Bess Lomax Hawes, Alan Dundes, David Hufford, Peggy Seeger, and Henry Glassie. Attebery's Fife Lecture, "Personal Letters as Voices from the Past," will expand upon the conclusions in her book *Up in the Rocky Mountains*. Attebery has also been invited to present her research on immigrant letters later this spring at a symposium, "The Migration Letter: Archiving Postal Era Intimacy," to be held in Minneapolis on May 17-18, sponsored by the University of Minnesota's Immigration History Research Center and the Institute for Global Studies as part of their joint Global REM (Race, Ethnicity, Migration) Program.

#### **Society of Historians of Scandinavia**

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