



***SCANDINAVIAN-
CANADIAN
STUDIES***

***ÉTUDES
SCANDINAVES
AU CANADA***

**Volume 9
1996**

Editor / Rédacteur
Wolfgang P. Ahrens, York University

Editor/Rédacteur

Wolfgang P. Ahrens, York University

Associate Editor (Book Reviews) / Rédactrice adjointe (comptes rendus)

Gurli Aagard Woods, Carleton University

Editorial Board/Comité de rédaction

Anne Brydon, Anthropology, University of Western Ontario

Errol Durbach, Theatre, University of British Columbia

Christopher English, History, Memorial University of Newfoundland

Brian McIlroy, Film, University of British Columbia

Börje Vähämäki, Finnish, University of Toronto

J. Donald Wilson, Education, University of British Columbia

Kirsten Wolf, Icelandic, University of Manitoba

Rochelle Wright, Germanic Languages, University of Illinois

Scandinavian-Canadian Studies is the official publication of the Association for the Advancement of Scandinavian Studies in Canada. Subscriptions to the journal are available through membership in the Association, or may be purchased separately. (See inside back cover for membership information.) Manuscripts of articles should be sent to the editor: Wolfgang P. Ahrens, Department of Languages, Literatures & Linguistics, York University, North York, Ontario M3J 1P3; (416) 736-5016; e-mail: wahrens@yorku.ca. Papers may be written in English or French and must be double-spaced throughout, including notes and bibliography. The length of articles should normally not exceed 25 pages. Books for review, as well as manuscripts of the reviews themselves, should be sent to the Associate Editor (Book Reviews): Gurli A. Woods, School of Comparative Literary Studies, Carleton University, 1125 Colonel By Drive, Ottawa, Ontario K1S 5B6; e-mail: gwoods@ccs.carleton.ca.

Études scandinaves au Canada est l'organe officiel de l'Association pour l'avancement des études scandinaves au Canada. Les membres de l'Association reçoivent un abonnement à la Revue, mais il est également possible de s'abonner sans devenir membre. (Les renseignements sur l'adhésion se trouvent au dos de la couverture.) Les manuscrits des articles doivent être envoyés au rédacteur: Wolfgang P. Ahrens, Department of Languages, Literatures & Linguistics, York University, North York, Ontario, M3J 1P3; (416) 736-5016; courrier électronique: wahrens@yorku.ca. Les contributions peuvent être en français ou en anglais, et doivent être à double interligne, y compris les notes et les références. Les articles ne doivent pas normalement dépasser 25 pages. Les livres pour comptes rendus de même que les comptes rendus doivent être adressés à la Rédactrice adjointe (comptes rendus): Gurli A. Woods, School of Comparative Literary Studies, Carleton University, 1125 Colonel By Drive, Ottawa, Ontario, K1S 5B6; courrier électronique: gwoods@ccs.carleton.ca.

Scandinavian-Canadian Studies gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada towards publication costs.

Études scandinaves au Canada tient à remercier la contribution apportée par le Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada aux frais de publication.

Printed in Canada / Publié au Canada

ISSN 0823-1796

© Association for the Advancement of Scandinavian Studies in Canada /
L'Association pour l'avancement des études scandinaves au Canada

Scandinavian-Canadian Studies

Études scandinaves au Canada

Volume 9 1996

Editor / Rédacteur
Wolfgang P. Ahrens

Associate Editor (Book Reviews) / Rédactrice adjointe (comptes rendus)
Gurli Aagard Woods

A A S S C — A A E S C

Association for the Advancement of Scandinavian Studies in Canada
L'Association pour l'avancement des études scandinaves au Canada

The editor and editorial board of
Scandinavian-Canadian Studies / Études scandinaves au Canada
take no responsibility for the opinions or data presented by contributors to this
volume.

Le rédacteur en chef et le comité de rédaction de
Scandinavian-Canadian Studies / Études scandinaves au Canada
n'assument aucune responsabilité pour les opinions ou les données présentées
par les contributeurs à ce volume.

CONTENTS / SOMMAIRE

| | |
|---|----|
| Kai R. Pedersen | |
| <i>Laying the Foundations of Labour's Postwar Hegemony</i> | |
| <i>Norwegian Wartime Planning, 1940-45</i> | 1 |
| Ingunn Norderval | |
| <i>The Provincial Mayor in Norway:</i> | |
| <i>Role Development and Role Perception.</i> | 17 |
| William Sayers | |
| <i>Unique Nicknames in Landnámabók and the Sagas</i> | |
| <i>of the Icelanders: The Case of Þorleifr kimbi Þorbrandsson</i> ... | 49 |
| Kirsten Shepherd-Barr | |
| <i>"Le grand metteur en scène":</i> | |
| <i>Herman Bang in Paris, 1893-94</i> | 73 |
| Seija Paddon | |
| <i>New Historicism and the Prose of Joy Kogawa's Obasan</i> | |
| <i>and Leena Lander's Cast a Long Shadow.</i> | 91 |

Reviews / Comptes Rendus

| | |
|---|-----|
| Sigbjørn Hølmebakk. <i>The Carriage Stone</i> (Chester Springs, Penn.) | |
| —reviewed by Christopher Hale | 105 |
| Kirsten A. Seaver. <i>The Frozen Echo. Greenland and the Exploration of</i> | |
| <i>North America ca A.D. 1000-1500</i> (Stanford, California) | |
| —reviewed by Wolfgang P. Ahrens | 107 |
| Åke Daun.. <i>Swedish Mentality.</i> Translated by Jan Teeland | |
| (University Park, 1996)—reviewed by J. Donald Wilson | 111 |
| Olavi Koivukangas. <i>From the Midnight Sun to the Long White Cloud:</i> | |
| <i>Finns in New Zealand</i> (Turku, 1996)—reviewed by Mika Roinila | 113 |

Scandinavian-Canadian Studies
Études scandinaves au Canada
Volume 9
1996

Laying the Foundations of Labour's Postwar Hegemony: Norwegian Wartime Planning, 1940–45*

Kai R. Pedersen
Rochester, New York

RÉSUMÉ: *S'est en se lançant, pendant la deuxième guerre mondiale, dans un vaste effort de planification générale, que le parti travailliste norvégien put échaffauder le succès politique qu'il connut après 1945. Moins réceptifs que leur rivaux bourgeois à l'exhortation du conseil des ministres à renoncer à planifier selon des démarches partisans, le parti travailliste et les dirigeants syndicaux mirent sur pied un programme de réforme ambitieux et cohérent qui cadrerait avec le climat politique de la fin de guerre. Les projets politico-économiques des planificateurs sociaux-démocrates différaient suivant la division qui s'était installée entre tenants du corporatisme et du technocratisme mais ils ne se retrouvaient pas moins pour faire bloc en faveur d'un programme promettant croissance économique, plein emploi et redistribution des revenus. Plus soucieux de reprise économique que de réforme, les planificateurs non-socialistes n'ont jamais présenté un programme qui puisse inspirer confiance et rivaliser avec celui des travaillistes. Préconisant un modèle libéral de marché qui était loin de faire l'unanimité, les représentants de la bourgeoisie mettaient aussi l'accent sur le rétablissement économique plutôt que sur les réformes sociales et signèrent ainsi leur propre défaite politique.*

ABSTRACT: *This article argues that the Norwegian Labour party's extensive planning efforts during the war was critical to its political fortunes after 1945. Less willing than their bourgeois rivals to accept the war cabinet's ban on partisan planning, Labour party and union leaders designed an ambitious and coherent reform program that suited the nation's political mood at war's end. Although social democratic planners were divided among supporters of corporatist and technocratic visions for the postwar political economy, they all united behind a broad reform platform that promised economic growth, full*

employment, and income redistribution. Concerned with economic recovery rather than reform, nonsocialist planners never fashioned a credible alternative to Labour's program. The bourgeois leaders' liberal market model did not enjoy widespread appeal, and their advocacy of economic restoration over social reform was a recipe for political defeat.

Historians have commonly attributed the enduring hegemony of Norway's social democrats to the reformist program they adopted in the 1930s (Bull 1982: 78–79, 111; idem 1979: 131–32; Pryser 1988: 10–11). During that decade the Labour party scrapped its revolutionary dogmas and traded in its commitment to nationalization for a program that combined economic planning and Keynesianism. Politically, the new course paid off handsomely, catapulting the Labour party to power in 1935. As an economic strategy to get the country out of the depression, however, its effects were modest (Dahl 1973: chapter 3; Sejersted 1973; Nordvik 1977: 289–317; idem 1979: 223–37; Hodne 1983: chapter 7; Pryser 1988: 21–28). Perhaps voters in 1940 would have renewed Labour's governing mandate had the elections not been suspended as a result of the war and occupation.

When Norwegians went to the polls after the liberation in October 1945, they gave the Labour party a parliamentary majority for the first time, increasing its representation in the Storting from 70 to 76 (out of a total of 150). Although the social democrats actually registered a slight loss in the popular vote, from 42.5% in 1936 to 41% in 1945, this decline was, as Helle (1983: 17) argues, more apparent than real.¹ In view of the large gains made by the Norwegian Communist party, whose popularity had risen by over 10% since the prewar period, Labour's electoral stability is quite remarkable. By contrast, in most other countries, the communists' success came at the expense of the socialist or social democratic parties. The electoral strength Norway's social democrats displayed in 1945 cannot be explained primarily as the result of its prewar record. Nor was it simply an inevitable byproduct of the general repudiation of the Right that took place in much of Western Europe during the war; unlike their counterparts in most other occupied countries, Norway's nonsocialists were not significantly compromised by collaborating with the Nazi regime—in fact, they played a disproportionately large role in the resistance movement. More than anything, this article

suggests, it was the social democrats' shrewd and clairvoyant wartime planning that brought political success in 1945 (and later).

The Labour party's postwar political dominance was hardly a foregone conclusion in 1940. Indeed, without its comprehensive planning efforts, it is quite possible that Norwegian social democracy might have been outflanked by its Communist and bourgeois rivals, as prominent Labour leaders feared at the beginning of the war. Anyway, the social democrats assumed firm control of both official and unofficial Norwegian preparations for the peace. While they dominated wartime planning, Labour party and union leaders² could not agree with Labour economists on the postwar organization of Norway's political economy. But the divergent views of postwar economic planning proved a political asset rather than a liability in 1945. Furthermore, the various "factions" all united behind a series of economic policy prescriptions that would serve postwar Labour governments well.

Norway's social democrats encountered several setbacks at the beginning of the war. The German invasion discredited Labour's pacifism and bankrupted its neutrality policy (Riste 1973; Udgaard 1973: 24-25). The Nazi political crackdown dispersed the social democratic leadership and destroyed its organization. Furthermore, the Labour cabinet, exiled to London in June 1940, remained locked in a power struggle with the predominantly nonsocialist resistance movement in Norway, which blamed the government for the debacle of April 1940. The persistent demands for the resignation of the Nygaardsvold cabinet once the war was over and for its replacement by a resistance-led coalition suggested to Labour veterans that resistance leaders harboured postwar political ambitions. And, as the largest political party before 1940, Labour was likely to be more affected than its rivals by the growing popular disillusionment with traditional politics during wartime. Clearly, social democracy's continued reign after the war was anything but assured in the early 1940s.

No one understood Labour's predicament better than the party veterans who demanded that the Nygaardsvold cabinet launch a major planning campaign to regain the political initiative. However, the war cabinet's weak ties to occupied Norway and its uncertain political future after liberation led it to take a cautious line in planning for the postwar period. Prime Minister Johan Nygaardsvold instructed public officials to confine their planning to the immediate postwar phase and exhorted them to put ideological commitments and partisan political objectives

aside (Hartmann 1955: 102–103, 265, 268).³ That appeal fell largely on deaf ears, particularly among Labour party and union leaders.

After pressure by union officials,⁴ the cabinet agreed in September 1942 to set up a separate Department of Supplies and Reconstruction to oversee planning for the transition from war to peace. That department, as Konrad Nordahl, the head of the union office in London, remarked, was staffed with social democratic experts, so “what is being done certainly will take place in accordance with our viewpoints.”⁵ Hence, the policies of the Department of Supplies, like the government-sponsored advisory boards on postwar administrative reorganization, monetary reform, economic regulation, and labour policy reflected social democratic views (Debes 1980: chapters 21, 25; Luihn 1986: 187–91). Although the legislation which government planners drafted was provisional, subject to subsequent parliamentary approval, and intended only for the transitional period after the liberation, the postwar cabinets generally pursued the course these planners had charted. Their proposals for monetary reform, economic controls, and employment policy guided not only Norwegian reconversion but also its reconstruction strategy (Pedersen 1988: 28–32).

Nygaardsvold’s professions of nonpartisanship notwithstanding, the government-in-exile’s wartime planning thus bore a distinct social democratic imprint. Nonsocialists were simply unable to match the expertise and influence which the labour movement marshalled through its access to the cabinet and the public administration.⁶ These planning efforts facilitated a smooth economic reconversion in Norway after 1940, which benefited Norwegian Labour politically.

Labour movement representatives, however, were not content with such contingency preparations, and openly defied the request to abstain from long-term partisan planning. The principal leaders, Lars Evensen and Martin Tranmæl in Stockholm, Konrad Nordahl in London, and Haakon Lie in the United States, took advantage of the independence from the government which employment with the union federation provided to spearhead the development of a radical, partisan program for reconstruction.⁷

Labour economists served as a bridge between the cabinet and the movement in wartime planning. They included Erik Brofoss and Knut Getz Wold in the Departments of Supplies and Finance, respectively; Ole Colbjørnsen, a financial counsellor at the Norwegian embassy in Washington; and Trygve Haavelmo and Arne Skaug, both of whom

worked for the Norwegian Trade and Shipping Mission in New York.⁸ Labour economists charted their own separate reconstruction strategy which was both less nationalist and less radical than the movement's platform.⁹

Norway's bourgeois leaders felt more bound by the call for a war-time suspension of partisan activities than did social democrats. With the exception of Lars Christensen, the Norwegian consul in New York, and *Studieselskapet for norsk industri* (the Study Group for Norwegian Industry) in occupied Norway, nonsocialists produced no general plans for the postwar economy.¹⁰

— Labour's two visions of the postwar national economic order —

If wartime planners all agreed that rapid economic recovery required extraordinary measures, there was no consensus on which policies and what forms of economic organization should prevail in postwar Norway. These discussions produced three major alternative conceptions of economic planning. Labour movement leaders championed a corporatist model, Labour economists a technocratic model, and nonsocialists a liberal free market model. All models envisaged planning as a joint venture between the state and economic interest groups and defined economic growth as one of their principal goals. But their differences are more striking than their similarities. The social democratic conceptions of planning shared many features but had little in common with the liberal model. But even Labour economists and Labour party leaders were not of one mind regarding the management of the postwar economy.

The movement's planning scheme was both more elaborate and more ambitious than the model which Labour economists adumbrated. Full employment and economic growth were the overriding, irreducible planks in the social democratic program. But, unlike Labour economists, party planners placed just as much emphasis on the redistribution of economic wealth and power. To attain these goals, they called for a sweeping overhaul of Norway's prewar economy and polity. Indeed, as one report put it, the labour movement strove for "a new social and economic system." Liberal democracy and private capitalism would no longer do.¹¹

All social democrats agreed that only a controlled and planned economy could provide high economic growth and full employment. The successful Anglo-American experiments with state controls and

planning during the war suggested to Norwegian Labour leaders that "free competition and unplanned production can no longer be defended."¹² Instead, they wanted to employ the "almost completely centralized" economic system, which had sprung up during the occupation, for purposes of economic recovery. In this system, "Investments, prices, wages, profits, interests, [and] rents, ... [were] controlled."¹³ Whereas Labour economists on the whole regarded direct controls as temporary expedients, necessary during the reconstruction period, Labour party veterans conceived state controls as fundamental to a planned economy under any circumstances.¹⁴

The two groups also disagreed on the proper scope of state intervention in the economy. Both social democratic schemes for the postwar political economy presupposed a new and enlarged role for the state. Labour economists, however, did not consider increased state power the panacea that most labour movement leaders did.¹⁵ And the champions of technocratic planning generally soft-pedalled union leaders' demands for working-class participation in economic decision making. Corporatist planners insisted that management's unilateral control of industry was a thing of the past; instead, they called for "codetermination," which meant that "labour shall have the same right to decide over the means of production as capital."¹⁶ The eventual goal, as the wartime manifesto *Fremtidens Norge* (Norway of the Future) stated, was "an organization of the economy which puts the leadership and authority completely in the hands of the working people" (LO and Norsk Sjømannsforbund 1944: 34). Workers would take part in economic decision making through the corporatist bodies these wartime planners wanted to create.

At the apex of the corporatist pyramid, movement leaders envisioned a permanent central planning body with far-reaching executive powers.¹⁷ *Statens råd for næringslivet* (the State Council for the Economy) "must become the Norwegian people's general staff in the economic sphere." While the council as well as *Statens plankontor* (the State Planning Office) and *Næringsrådet* (the Economic Council) would be subordinate to the government and parliament, they would frame the nation's economic plans and coordinate the sectoral associations in which all economic life was to be organized.¹⁸ The proposal aimed to correct the shortcomings these social democrats saw in Norway's pre-war politico-economic system.¹⁹ It envisioned fundamental political reform by permitting far greater delegation of power from parliament to

government than in the past. The cabinet would confer broad policy-making authority on these semiautonomous planning agencies which would represent both the nation's political preferences and its economic organization. The other two components of the corporatist pyramid were designed to expand labour's influence in the workplace.

Corporatist planners regarded the tripartite *bransjeråd* (industry branch councils), the second pillar in the corporatist pyramid, as a vital link in the planning machinery, connecting *Statens råd for næringslivet* and *produksjonsutvalgene* (production committees). *Bransjerådene* would design and implement sectoral plans and supervise the overall restructuring of Norwegian industry.²⁰ *Produksjonsutvalgene*, the third link in the corporatist chain, were the cornerstone in the radical Labour blueprint for the development of economic democracy. They were also intended to play a critical role in raising productivity.²¹ The responsibility for engineering industrial renovation thus fell not on the "invisible hand," but on the corporatist bodies which party and union leaders hoped to control.

Labour economists' conception of planning presupposed less sweeping economic reorganization. They wanted to anchor the planning machinery within a slightly modified public administration (Bergh 1978b: 1-17). While technocratic planners, too, were committed to the creation of a new economic order after the war, the premium they placed on rapid economic recovery and political consensus limited their reform program. The proponents of corporatist planning, in contrast, aimed for a far-reaching transformation of the politico-economic order. Determined to effect a fundamental shift in the balance of economic power, they advocated reforms that would radically alter Norwegian capitalism.

On most economic *policy* issues, however, party and union leaders deferred to Labour economists. Both groups were committed to high investments, countercyclical budget policies, and a steeply progressive tax code. As a means to restore financial stability, they favoured rigorous price controls rather than a drastic monetary purge. Labour planners also called for broad social reforms partly in order to rally the work force behind the reconstruction effort.

The internal disagreements within social democracy did not, however, harm Labour politically. In fact, the corporatists' radical socio-economic aspirations gave the program political appeal, while the technocrats' well-crafted national and international economic strategies (Pedersen 1988: 52-63, chapter 2) added credibility. The importance

which both groups attached to such goals as economic growth, full employment, and income equalization made it possible for Norwegian Labour to present a relatively coherent program in 1945. In sum, it was a platform that addressed Norway's economic problems and that suited its political mood at war's end. The same cannot be said of the alternative which Norwegian bourgeois planners had charted during the war.

— Nonsocialists and the postwar national economic order —

Nonsocialist planning was centered in the leadership of *Norges Bank* (the Bank of Norway), *Studieselskapet for norsk industri*, and in Norwegian business circles abroad. If these groups did not reject economic controls and central planning outright, they endorsed a very limited form of state interventionism and favoured planning under the auspices of private industry. Those who urged the state to create planning boards wanted these staffed by industry representatives rather than government bureaucrats or union officials. In short, their platform was industry self-regulation, not a state controlled and planned economy. While there was disagreement over whether a return to the prewar economic order was feasible, most proposals sought to minimize the changes in economic organization and policy-making after the war.

Lars Christensen's *An Outline for Norwegian Post-War Reconstruction* directed its arguments against those who championed the retention of wartime controls in the postwar era. Such controls were effective only if they were all-embracing and completely centralized—that is, they worked only in totalitarian societies. Christensen argued that “the freer the economy can be left to function within certain prescribed limits, the sounder, cheaper, quicker and more lasting the ... recovery” (Christensen 1942: 107–08).

The *Outline's* warnings against state interventionism and government controls notwithstanding, the book was not a laissez-faire manifesto. Christensen acknowledged that the market economy, as it had existed before the war, was incapable of leading Norway along the path of swift economic rehabilitation. Consequently, he recommended certain institutional innovations, apparently inspired by the New Deal, such as the creation of a Reconstruction Finance Corporation and an Emergency Supply Corporation. The consul thus joined the wartime chorus demanding planning for an orderly economic transition from war to peace; and he urged the government to form an Agency for Post War Planning which would direct and coordinate those preparations. However, these

new organizations were not intended to police or supplant existing market institutions but to strengthen them. The proposed planning agencies would be disbanded once Norway's reconstruction was completed (Christensen 1942: chapters 3-4).

Studieselskapet for norsk industri, which leading industrialists in occupied Norway founded in May 1944, elaborated a program that sought to prevent a postwar recurrence of the investment and unemployment problems that had plagued Norwegians during the 1920s and 1930s. If industrialists could meet postliberation exigencies by coordinating their investment policies, they might escape government regulations and would not have to fear nationalization. But their suggestions for business planning and industry self-government, as the Study Group's leading student has concluded, "never became anything but ideas confined to a small circle of prominent industrialists" (Sevje 1977: 70; Sejersted 1984: 11-12).

In contrast to Christensen and *Studieselskapet*, the bourgeois leaders in the national bank conceived no general plan for the reorganization of the postwar national economy. Some liberal tracts such as Arnold Ræstad's *Europe and the Atlantic World* and William Keilhau's "Economic and Political Postwar Planning" were impenetrable political-philosophical essays concerned primarily with the international foundations of postwar cooperation.²² Although *Europe and the Atlantic World* acknowledged the wartime yearning for economic planning, it argued that fears of an intrusive state bureaucracy, which such planning presupposed, were likely to temper the demands for a planned postwar economy. Consequently, many countries "may prefer to suffer such shocks to their social stability as will be inherent in their retaining an individualistic economy" (Ræstad 1958: 80-81). With the partial exception of Christensen's *Outline* these works were unhelpful to Norwegian nonsocialists in search of a program to counter the social democratic agenda.

Not surprisingly, the nonsocialists' economic policy recommendations also differed from social democratic prescriptions. With economic revival rather than reform as the overriding aim, bourgeois spokesmen opposed high taxes, which stifled individual initiative, and public works, which were unproductive. Instead, the postwar government should seek the quickest possible restoration of free enterprise, economic competition, and balanced budgets. In theory they might have endorsed the popular demands for full employment, higher living standards, and social security that had sprung out of the interwar crises and the occupation,

but their support was, at best, qualified and half-hearted (Christensen 1942: 5, 76, 121; Ræstad 1958: 80, 86–87). Inadvertently, they lent credence to socialdemocratic assertions that only central economic planning could fulfill those reform objectives.

Christensen and other nonsocialists championed a sweeping monetary reform to contain the inflationary threat that had resulted from Nazi financial policy. Such a reform was a precondition, in this view, for the reintroduction of currency convertibility, the gold standard, and normal price relationships—in sum, it was a central prerequisite for the revival of a free-market economy (Christensen 1942: 57–72, 87–89, 100).

Bourgeois leaders, less concerned than social democrats with preventing unemployment and deflation, regarded radical monetary reform and deregulation as the most feasible means to accomplish speedy recovery. Broad socio-economic reforms would, in their opinion, only impede the realization of that objective.

— Labour's triumph in 1945 —

Social democrats triumphed in the wartime policy-making and planning debates in part because they were able to muster superior administrative resources and because they often enjoyed cabinet support. But the single most important reason for Labour's success in determining the postwar agenda was that it alone had fashioned a broad reform program with wide appeal to an electorate radicalized by war and occupation.

Norwegian Labour economists and party planners espoused different concepts of economic planning, but they shared the conviction that Norway should have a controlled and planned economy during the reconstruction period. To friends and foes alike, their differences seemed insignificant. In 1945, therefore, social democracy appeared as a united movement which championed economic planning as the key instrument for effecting broad economic and social reforms.

Nonsocialist spokesmen appropriated Labour's earlier calls for resuming the course which the country had pursued prior to 1940. While some bourgeois planners acknowledged that a successful economic revival hinged on the use of limited controls and planning, others opposed such extraordinary methods and disparaged any infringement on private enterprise. Unable to revise ideological postulates to fit the exigencies of a profoundly transformed socio-economic order, bourgeois leaders

could only reassert the merits, as they perceived them, of the prewar model—the familiar “return-to-normalcy” thesis.

Labour’s postwar hegemony was apparent already during the summer of 1945—before the elections in October gave it an absolute parliamentary majority. With the partial exception of the Communists (Helle 1983: 62–64), the political parties adopted in the name of national unity *Fellesprogrammet* (the Common Program) as the basis for Norway’s reconstruction (Eriksen and Lundestad 1972: 28–36). That program resembled the social democratic agenda even though it diluted or omitted Labour’s most radical demands. The program thus endorsed the party leaders’ vision of economic planning but deprived the corporatist pyramid of the authority necessary to make it an effective instrument of policy-making. Nonetheless, the social democrats got much of what they had bargained for, including endorsement of planning, controls, and full employment. Nonsocialists, having lost the planning debate and policy-making struggle during the war, found themselves on the defensive from 1945 on. They had never succeeded in fashioning a credible alternative to Labour’s blueprint for a controlled and planned postwar economy, and were no more able to set the political agenda after 1945 than they had been during the war. Nonsocialists’ self-avowed role of containing social democratic radicalism gradually lost much of its *raison d’être* as the challenge from the Left diminished. The Norwegian Communist party, victimized by both its own sectarianism, Cold War hysteria, and governmental repression, faded into political obscurity.

NOTES

* This paper draws primarily upon the wartime records of the Norwegian Federation of Trade Unions (LO) and the private papers of prominent Labour leaders, held at the Labour Movement’s Archives in Oslo. An earlier version of this paper was presented to the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study on 23 April 1993 at the University of Texas at Austin. The author would like to thank the following for assistance in the writing of this article: Steve Cloyd and Mac Knox, as well as an especially helpful anonymous reviewer for *Scandinavian-Canadian Studies*.

1. Labour's showing in 1936 was artificially high since the Communists did not field an independent slate of candidates that year (except in Bergen) because of unity negotiations with the social democrats.

2. This article distinguishes between Labour *party* and *union* officials (collectively labeled "labour movement" officials), Labour *cabinet* officials, and Labour *economists* in order to emphasize the differences between the three groups over wartime planning.

3. For the cabinet's views on the proper scope of wartime planning, see enclosure to letter from the Minister of Finance to LO, 15 December 1941, LO, London office, box 7c, folder: 14; "Referat av møte holdt i Utenriksdepartementets møtesal," Kingston House, 24 March 1943, LO, London office, box 6b, folder: 21.

4. The union office in London had in the summer of 1942 called on the government to create a "reconstruction office" in order to preempt the alleged efforts of private business leaders to usurp the exiled administration's planning responsibilities. See letter from Nordahl to Nygaardsvold, 13 July 1942, reproduced in "Beretning og regnskap for Arbeidernes Faglige Lands-organisasjon i Norge i tiden november 1941–31. desember 1942," LO, London office, box 2a, folder: 22.

5. Nordahl, "Beretning og regnskap for Arbeidernes Faglige Landsorganisasjon i Norge, London-sekretariatet i tiden 1. januar 1943–31. desember 1943," LO, London office, box 2a, folder: 16. The Minister of Supplies, Anders Frihagen, was a prominent Labour authority on banking and finance, who headed the Commerce Department from 1939 to 1942 and was president of Industribanken from 1935 to 1951.

6. Of course, many of the civil servants in the exiled administration were not socialists. This was particularly true for *Norges Bank*, where bourgeois economists predominated. For a discussion of the role of Norwegian economists in London, see Wold (1953), pp. 58–72.

7. These leaders considered the war cabinet "too apolitical," as Haakon Lie put it. See enclosure No. 2 to Report No. 33 from Oslo to London, 24 April 1943, LO, London office, box 7d, folder: 15; Haugen (1983), p. 67, *passim*; Dahl (1972), 2: 285–307; Nygaardsvold to Nordahl, 8 April 1943, LO, London office, box 7d, folder: 16. For the cabinet's views on the proper scope of wartime planning, Hartmann (1955), pp. 102–03, 265, 268; enclosure to letter from Hartmann to LO, 15 December 1941, LO, London office, box 7c, folder: 14; "Referat av møte holdt i Utenriksdepartementets møtesal," Kingston House, 24 March 1943, LO, London office, box 6b, folder: 21.

8. Except for Getz Wold, a member of *Venstre* (the Radical Party), they were the Labour party's principal economic experts both during and after the war. Getz Wold's views on economic policy were indistinguishable from the Labor economists proper.

9. Partly in order to minimize ideological controversy, they went to great lengths to stress the continuity between prewar economic policy and their ideas for the postwar order. See Colbjørnsen, "Foreløpige merknader til spørsmålet om Gjenreisningen i Norge m.v.," 11 March 1942, Colbjørnsen Papers, box 1.

10. See the national bank's explanation for this in its letter to the Department of Finance, 2 October 1943, reproduced in "Beretning fra Norges Bank om virksomheten i det frie Norge og i London i tiden 22. april 1940–13. juli 1945," *Stortingsforhandlinger*, 1945–46, V: 43–44.

11. LO, Report No. 49, received London 11 August 1943, Skaug Papers, box 22.

12. LO and Norsk Sjømannsforbund (1944), pp. 23–24. See also Haakon Lie to Anders Frihagen, 8 June 1943, Frihagen Papers, box 7; and Konrad Nordahl to Martin Tranmæl, 25 May 1943, LO, London office, box 9a, folder: 1.

13. Knut Getz Wold, "Norway's Problems of Economic and Social Reconstruction"; idem, "P.M. angående de finansielle og pengepolitiske spørsmål som dekningen av Wehrmachtsskontoen i Norges Bank i Oslo reiser"; idem, "Lønns- og prisnivået i Norge under og etter frigjøringen, 30 November 1943"; Trygve Haavelmo, "Wehrmachtsskontoen og pengepolitikken i Norge etter krigen, 21 August 1943," all in Skaug Papers, box 21.

14. LO, London office, "Retningslinjer for nyreisning arbeidslivet i Norge etter krigen," June 1942, LO, London offi box 9a, folder: 1. See also Bergh (1978a), p. 92.

15. Colbjørnsen, "Foreløpige merknader."

16. LO, Stockholm office, "Fagorganisasjonen og etterkrigsproblemene."

17. In contrast to the war planners' corporatist blueprint, postwar legislation established *Det økonomiske samordningsråd* (Economic Coordination Council) as a temporary and consultative organ. For postwar developments and debates, see Bergh (1983), pp. 84–125.

18. LO, Stockholm office, "De politiske problemer"; LO and Norsk Sjømannsforbund (1944), pp. 36–38; Stenersen (1977), pp. 74–78; Tangen (1978), esp. pp. 17–18.

19. For an incisive critique of the political system's failure to deal with the interwar economic crises, see LO, Stockholm office, "De politiske problemer i Norge etter krigen," March 1943, LO, Stockholm office, box 1941–45, folder: sosiale trygder.

20. LO, London office, "Retningslinjer for nyreisning"; LO, "Fagorganisasjonen og etterkrigsproblemene"; LO and Norsk Sjømannsforbund (1944), pp. 36–38; Bergh (1973), pp. 26–27, passim; Stenersen (1977), p. 77.

21. LO, Stockholm office, "Fagorganisasjonen og etterkrigsproblemene"; idem, "Gjenoppbyggingen av fagorganisasjonen i Norge," approved by the secretariat on 5 March 1943, in LO, Stockholm office, box 1, folder: 14; Stenersen (1972), especially pp. 16–17, passim; idem (1977), p. 72.

22. Both authors, above all Ræstad, the "spiritual father" of Norway's Atlantic policy, forcefully championed regional security collaboration of the North Atlantic powers. See Ræstad (1958); Keilhau, "Economic and Political Post-War Planning," 8 March 1943, Skaug Papers, box 22; idem (1944).

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Bergh, Trond. 1973. "Opprettelsen og utviklingen av bransjeråd." Unpublished thesis, University of Oslo.
- _____. 1978a. "Ideal and Reality in Norwegian Macroeconomic Planning, 1945–1965." *Scandinavian Journal of History* 3: 75–104.
- _____. 1978b. "Norsk makroøkonomisk planlegging på 1940- og 1950-tallet." *Sosial-økonomen* 2: 1–17.
- _____. 1983. "Medbestemmelse eller opposisjon? Noen hovedtrekk ved den norske debatten siden 1945 om demokrati i arbeidslivet." *Deltakerdemokratiet. Teori og praksis*. Ed. by Trond Bergh. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget. 84–125.
- Bull, Edvard. 1979. *Klassekamp og fellellskap 1920–1945*. Oslo: Cappelen.
- _____. 1982. *Norgeshistorien etter 1945*. Oslo: Cappelen.
- Christensen, Lars. 1942. *An Outline for Norwegian Post-War Reconstruction*. New York.
- Dahl, Hans Frederik. 1972. "Okkupasjon og integrasjon." *Historisk Tidsskrift* 2: 284–307.
- _____. 1973. *Norge mellom krigene*. Oslo: Pax.
- Debes, Jan. 1980. *Sentraladministrasjonens historie, V, 1940–1945*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Eriksen, Knut E. and Geir Lundestad, eds. 1972. *Kilder til moderne historie, II, Norsk innnerikspolitikk*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Hartmann, Paul. 1955. *Bak Fronten*. Oslo: Aschehoug.
- Haugen, Viðar. 1983. *Det norske Arbeiderparti 1940–1945*. Oslo: Tiden.
- Helle, Per. 1983. *Norges Kommunistiske parti 1945–1949*. Bergen: Universitetsforlaget.
- Hodne, Fritz. 1983. *The Norwegian Economy 1920–1980*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Keilhau, William. 1944. *Norway in World History*. London: Macdonald & Co., Ltd.
- LO and Norsk Sjømannsforbund. 1944. *Fremtidens Norge. Et bidrag til diskusjonen om retningslinjene for gjenoppbyggingen*. Stockholm.
- Luihn, Hans. 1986. *Arbeid og samfunn*. Oslo: NKS-Forlaget.
- Nordvik, Helge. 1977. "Krisepolitikken og den teoretiske nyorientering av den økonomiske politikken in Norge i 193 årene." *Historisk tidsskrift* 3: 289–317.
- _____. 1979. "Finanspolitikken og den offentlige sektors rolle i norsk økonomi i mellomkrigstiden." *Historisk tidsskrift* 3: 223–37.
- Pedersen, Kai R. 1988. "The United States and Norwegian Reconstruction, 1945–1953." Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Rochester.

- Pryser, Tore. 1988. *Arbeiderbevegelsens historie, IV, Klassen og nasjonen (1935–1946)*. Oslo: Tiden.
- Ræstad, Arnold. 1958. *Europe and the Atlantic World*. Oslo: Vitenskapsakademiet.
- Riste, Olav. 1973. "London-regjeringa": *Norge i krigsalliansen 1940–1945*. Oslo: Det norske samlaget.
- Sejersted, Francis. 1973. *Historisk introduksjon til Økonomien*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- _____. 1984. *Høyres historie. Opposisjon og posisjon, 1945–1981*. Oslo: Cappelen.
- Sevje, Svein. 1977. "En uheldig hund i keglespill. Studieselskapet for norsk industri." Unpublished thesis, University of Oslo.
- Stenersen, Øivind. 1972. "Om opprettelsen og utviklingen av produksjonsutvalg i norsk industri." Unpublished thesis, University of Oslo.
- _____. 1977. "Samarbeidslinjen blir til." *Tidsskrift for arbeiderbevegelsens historie* 2: 69–83.
- Tangen, Ole Herman. 1978. "Det økonomiske samordningsråd." Unpublished thesis, University of Oslo.
- Udgaard, Nils Morten. 1973. *Great Power Politics and Norwegian Foreign Policy, 1940–1948*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Wold, Knut Getz. 1953. "Statsøkonomisk Forening i London." *Statsøkonomisk tidsskrift*: 58–72.



The Provincial Mayor in Norway: Role Development and Role Perception

Ingunn Norderval
Molde College, Norway

RÉSUMÉ: *Même s'il existe beaucoup de documentation concernant les institutions politiques différentes du niveau de la province norvégienne, les chercheurs ne se sont pas intéressés au préfet, le maire de la province, appelé le "fylkesordfører". Il existe très peu de documents publiés, concernant le rôle du préfet dans le système politique norvégien.*

Cet article présente une recherche brève et historique du développement de la province norvégienne comme institution administrative et politique. L'élément essentiel de l'article s'agit de la poste du préfet, en concentrant sur la période qui suivait les grandes réformes démocratiques des années des 1970. Les sources les plus importantes de l'information sont des interviews étendus, faits avec tous ceux qui avaient été élus préfet dans la province de Møre et Romsdal depuis 1975, avec tous—à l'exception d'un—des vice-préfets, et aussi avec plusieurs fonctionnaires publiques dans la province. D'en plus, trois des cinq femmes élues préfets dans les autres provinces norvégiennes ont raconté leurs expériences. Finalement, l'information statistiques nationale, et des notations des résultats des élections provinciales entre 1975 et 1995 ont été utilisés.

ABSTRACT: *While there exists a considerable amount of literature on the various institutions of the regional level of Norwegian government, the province, political scientists have shown no interest in the provincial mayor, the "fylkesordfører." Virtually no published materials are to be found on the mayor's role in the system. This paper first presents a brief historical review of the development of the Norwegian province as an administrative and political institution. The main body of the paper concentrates on the mayor's office, with particular attention to the period after the major democratic reforms of the 1970s. The main source of information consists of in-depth interviews conducted with all those elected as mayor in the province of Møre and Romsdal since 1975, and with all but one of the vice-mayors ("fylkesvaraordfører"),*

and several top bureaucrats in the province. As well, three of the five women elected as mayors in other provinces have told of their experiences. In addition, national statistical data and election records from the provincial elections between 1975 and 1995 have been utilized.

Introduction

The Norwegian province, the "fylkeskommune," is celebrating its 325th anniversary in 1996: It was in 1671 that a royal decree divided the country into 12 provinces, then called "amt." The number has since grown to 18 "regular" provinces. The capital city of Oslo constitutes a separate province, bringing the total to 19.

For almost 200 years, the provincial administration was merely an extension of the centralized state, with no element of popular representation. However, in 1837 legislation was passed requiring every province to have a governing council composed of all the mayors from the municipalities. The state's top administrative official in each province, the "amtsmann" would be the leader of the council, with responsibility for preparing the agenda for its meetings.

During the 20th century, pressures for democratic reform resulted in significant changes in provincial governmental structures. Legislation passed in 1963 provided that the provincial assemblies would be elected by and from the municipal assemblies, the size of the delegation depending on the size of the municipality. In other words, no longer would the provincial assembly consist only of mayors. Further, although the top state administrative official, now called "fylkesmann" (governor), would still be in charge of preparing the agenda for the meetings, the provincial assembly would elect one of its own members as "fylkesordfører" (provincial mayor) for the entire four year term.

The most far-reaching reform was adopted in 1975, when legislation was passed providing for direct, popular elections to the provincial assemblies. The law also provided that the provincial assemblies would elect from their own midst an executive council, the "fylkesutvalg," reflecting party strength in the assembly, and one member of the executive council as provincial mayor, "fylkesordfører." A provincial director, "fylkesrådmann," would head the administrative bureaucracy, and aid the mayor in the discharge of his duties. The state's top man in the

province, the "fylkesmann," would from now on confine his activity to administration of purely state affairs, and have no political responsibility. (It should be noted that since 1986, Oslo has had a parliamentary type city government, where the executive council is not composed according to the principles of proportional representation, but is based on majority vote in the assembly. Unlike the other provincial mayors, the mayor of Oslo is largely a ceremonial figurehead, whose duties for the most part consist of representation at official functions, as well as of presiding at the meetings of the assembly and preparing its agenda.)

Democratization, decentralization and effectivization were the main ideas behind the 1975 reform. Through direct, popular elections and buildup of their own bureaucracies, the provinces would become more democratic and powerful elements of the political system. Some effects of the reform were immediately noticeable: While earlier provincial assemblies, even after the 1963 reform, had been dominated by the local political elites, i.e., the mayors, other groups now made their entry, giving the assemblies a far more representative character. Women, who before the 1975 reform constituted less than two percent of the provincial assembly membership, increased their representation to over 20 percent in the very first election. At the same time, political activity on the provincial level increased, with more frequent meetings of the assemblies, the executive council and the main committees. The office of provincial mayor immediately became a full-time, paid position in almost all the provinces.

During the two decades that have passed since the 1975 reform, social scientists have spent considerable effort scrutinizing the "new province." Recruitment processes, the relationship between the province and the state, provincial planning and budgeting processes, the role of the executive council and of the provincial standing committees, conflict patterns and coordinating attempts—all these are just some of the topics subjected to analysis (See Fevolden 1980; Hovik 1986). Curiously, however, literally no research exists on the development of the provincial mayor's role. One review article published at the time of the 10th anniversary of the "new province," "Forskning om fylkeskommunen" [Research on the province] does not include a single reference to literature on the provincial mayor, indeed, the term hardly occurs in the entire article (Hovik 1986: 13).

It was against this background that I decided to undertake an analysis of how the position of provincial mayor has been defined and de-

veloped in the course of the 20 years that have passed since the 1975 reform. In this case, the study has had to rely on information from the officeholders themselves. As a provincial politician and member of my province's executive council for many years, I know personally all those who have been elected provincial mayors of Møre and Romsdal during this period, and have been able to conduct in-depth interviews with all four of them. Of the four mayors who served between the 1963 reform and the more extensive reform of 1975, only two are alive today. I have had lengthy conversations with both of these men. As well, I have interviewed all but one of those who have served as vice-mayors from 1975 to the present, and those administrative officials who gave initial guidance to the mayors and introduced them to their work.

Very few women have so far been elected as provincial mayors in Norway, only six in the entire country. Of these six, I have been able to interview four about their perceptions of the office and its development.

In addition to interviews with some 20 politicians, top administrators and other provincial employees, I have utilized available national statistical data and election records from the provincial elections between 1975 and 1995.

Who is the provincial mayor?

The basic distinguishing features of the Norwegian provincial mayor are rapidly listed: He is a middle-aged man of the middle class, and most likely a public employee. Teachers have been rather overrepresented in the ranks of the mayors, whereas workers and private businessmen have been curiously absent. Politically, the mayor today tends to be a veteran of several sessions in the provincial assembly, and has generally served as leader of one of the major committees.

With reference to party affiliation, mayors today most likely belong either to the Labour Party or the Centre Party, but considering the entire period from 1975 to 1995, the Conservative Party has been the "runner up" to the Labour Party in terms of the number of positions controlled. There are today eight mayors belonging to the Labour Party, just as many to the Centre Party, while the Conservatives only hold two mayoral chairs and the Christian People's Party one. As shown in Table I, over the last two decades, Labour has held 43 of the 114 positions, the Conservatives 38, and the Centre Party 21, while the Christian People's Party can only boast 12.

| Table I | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| Party Affiliation of Mayors | | | | | | | |
| <u>Election Year</u> | <u>1975</u> | <u>1979</u> | <u>1983</u> | <u>1987</u> | <u>1991</u> | <u>1995</u> | <u>Total</u> |
| <i>Labour</i> | 7 | 3 | 8 | 6 | 11 | 8 | 43 |
| <i>Conservatives</i> | 5 | 10 | 8 | 11 | 2 | 2 | 38 |
| <i>Christian People's Party</i> | 5 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 12 |
| <i>Centre</i> | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 8 | 21 |
| Total | 19 | 19 | 19 | 19 | 19 | 19 | 144 |

It was during the so-called "right-wing wave" of the 1980s that the Conservative Party succeeded in electing most of its mayors: 29 of the 38 Conservative mayors were elected in the three elections from 1979 to 1987. In 1991, however, the ranks of Conservative mayors were decimated from eleven to two, and again, in the last election, in 1995, the Conservatives only succeeded in winning two of the top positions—in the capital city of Oslo and in the solidly Conservative province of Vestfold, which has had a Conservative mayor for the entire period, from 1975 to 1995.

The Centre Party, which has had its strength in the farming regions of western Norway, particularly in Sogn and Fjordane, and Nord Trøndelag, was the big winner in the last two elections. In 1991, the party won all five of its new mayoral positions from the Conservative Party.

It is also interesting to note the pattern of party domination in the various provinces. Some provinces have been solidly dominated by one party—in the "red provinces," Hedmark, Oppland and Finnmark, for instance, the Labour Party has held the mayor's office in all the electoral periods since 1975. No other party can equal that feat. However, the Conservatives have held on to one province, Vestfold, for the entire period, and the Centre Party has won five out of six elections in Nord Trøndelag. If we define a province as party dominated when the same party captures the top post in at least four of the six elections, seven of the 19 provinces can be characterized as dominated by Labour, and four

as dominated by the Conservatives. The Centre Party is dominant in two provinces, while the Christian People's Party only dominates one province, Vest Agder, in the southwestern "bible belt."

Only three of the established parties, namely the Liberal Party, the right wing Progress Party and the left oriented Socialist Left Party, have never succeeded in capturing the coveted position of provincial mayor.

The strong position of the Labour Party in Norwegian politics is further reflected in the fact that the party can point to the control of the largest group of vice-mayor positions as well: 38 of the 114 vice-mayors during this period have belonged to the Labour Party. In the three "red" provinces, both the mayor and vice-mayor have been from Labour the entire period, with the exception of one term in one province. From 1991 to 1995, Labour had a ruling alliance with the Socialist Left Party in Hedmark, and a vice-mayor was appointed from the latter party.

On the non-socialist side, none of the parties can aspire to anything approaching this record. Norway's fractured party system dictates marriages of convenience, and very few of these have proved to be monogamous affairs over an extended period. After an election, efforts to establish a ruling coalition require shrewd negotiations: What will you demand to support our candidate for mayor?

In the non-socialist camp, the Christian People's Party appears to be the most popular alliance partner, with 28 of the 72 non-socialist vice-mayors belonging to that party. This party has been a favorite partner particularly in Vestfold, Aust Agder and the western provinces of Rogaland, and Sogn and Fjordane. For the most part, the Christian People's Party has found happiness in Conservative arms: 19 of the 28 vice-mayors from the ranks of the Christian People's Party served under Conservative mayors. However, the most recent election seems to indicate that the party now is willing to accept suitors from other ranks as well. After the 1995 election, the Christian People's Party entered partnerships with Labour in Nord Trøndelag and Akershus.

John Adams, the first American vice-president, once observed that his office was "the most insignificant ... that ever invention of man contrived or his imagination conceived" (Morrison and Commager, Vol. I, p. 329). Certainly, the Norwegian provincial vice-mayor's position is even more modest. Its only significance lies in its potential: The occupant will become mayor if the incumbent dies in office. Other than this, it is definitely no stepping stone to the higher office. Only nine of the

provincial mayors have been nominated and elected after having first served in the lower office.

The reason for this is not just that there normally is no "on the job training" that renders the holder fit for promotion, but rather the fact that the vice-mayors very much are the "junior partners." They come from the smaller political parties, and have been wooed simply because the bigger party needs support to capture the main office. The smaller parties do not, however, have enough political weight to claim the main prize. "Always a bridesmaid, never a bride" aptly summarizes their position.

So, what patterns appear to emerge in the alliance building after an election? Which parties tend to enter into partnership with each other in the constituting processes every fourth year? What are the most likely coalitions in the fragmented Norwegian political system?

According to Arend Lijphart (1984), there are basically two theoretical approaches to explain coalition building, namely, the "ideological" and the "pragmatic" approach. According to the former, coalitions are generally formed with "close friends"—it is very unlikely that parties representing radically different political views will find each other. The latter approach stipulates that pragmatic concern for composing the smallest possible majority in the popular assembly, will guide parties in their search for coalition partners.

Coalition patterns in the Norwegian provincial assemblies during the period considered here appear to confirm the tendency by parties to seek partners with a certain ideological affinity. Thus, the Conservative Party and the Christian People's Party have been faithful partners in many provinces, as have the Labour Party and the Socialist Left Party elsewhere. Recent years have also produced an ideological reorientation within the Centre Party which has facilitated closer ties with both Labour and the Socialist Left Party.

However, as already indicated, the last elections also have produced some more pragmatic partnerships. In Møre and Romsdal this was aptly illustrated both after the 1991 and the 1995 elections. With nine parties represented in the 57-member assembly, and no clear majority bloc, the situation was very difficult when the representatives met to elect the executive council, the mayor and members of the main committees. In 1991, it first appeared that a coalition headed by the Conservatives would be able to appoint the mayor. However, after last-

minute maneuvers by the Labour Party, which shamelessly "sold" itself to a disgruntled dissident from the smallest party group, the one extra vote was secured which gave the position of provincial mayor to Labour. The left-centre coalition included the two social democratic parties, the Liberal Party and the Centre Party plus the deserter, who was paid with important committee memberships as well as a seat on the executive council for his betrayal of his own group.

Four years later, the situation was equally dramatic. The Labour Party had improved its representation, but was still dependent on support from others to retain the mayor's chair. One of the alliance partners from the previous period, the Centre Party, now claimed the top spot for its man, and was not willing to continue the collaboration unless Labour's mayor stepped down to the position of vice-mayor. Not unexpectedly, she was very unwilling to do so, and in party group discussions, the mayor was very forthright in her proposal that one should seek cooperation with the Conservative Party and the Christian People's Party. That would constitute the smallest possible majority, and since only three parties were involved, one would therefore not have to divide the spoils between as many partners in comparison to the alternative—an invitation to the more "natural" allies on the left and in the centre to form the new executive council.

As it turned out, a centre-right bloc was formed, which received the necessary support by allying itself with the most radical members of the provincial assembly, the Socialist Left Party. Again, the bait was political positions: A coveted seat on the executive council, and the chairmanship of the one committee most desired by the party leader.

The "political game" surrounding these negotiations has few formalized rules. Under Norway's proportional representation – party list system, the voters do not cast their votes for the individual candidate, but for the entire party list. The total number of votes received by each party determines how many of its candidates are elected. The person heading the party list is normally the candidate for mayor. Generally, the provincial party leader and the candidate heading the list constitute the negotiating committee which meets with similar teams from the other parties after an election to divide the spoils. Needless to say, the clear-sightedness of the contestants is not infrequently clouded by their personal ambition, and in some parties there now is a growing feeling that the negotiation team must be selected with more attention to diplomatic skills than has so far been the case.

The provincial mayor: Role development

Prior to the 1963 reforms, the role of provincial mayor was of virtually no consequence. The mayor was not elected for the entire four-year period, but only for the duration of a session of the provincial assembly, which normally met for about one week once a year. His function was merely that of presiding over the meeting, and he had no right to initiate issues for the agenda. The governor, the "fylkesmann," prepared the agenda and made his recommendations to the various committees. In the assembly itself there was little debate, and a strong pressure for consensus. Most issues were for all practical purposes decided in the committees, whose normally unanimous recommendations were followed up by the assembly. "There is no point in being querulous when you belong to the minority. There'll be other trains," was a comment frequently heard, according to one old politician who has served both under the "old" and the "new" system.

When the reform of 1963 provided for election of a mayor for the entire four-year period, it naturally opened the possibility for strengthening the role of the mayor. However, such a change, in order to come about, also required an office-holder intent on effecting a change. The development of an institution is as much a function of the precedents created by the policies and personality of the office-holders, as by the formal rules devised by the lawmakers. The formal institutional arrangements function as a framework around the political process, but the individual actors and the way they play their roles provide the content and substance. This is, of course, even more the case when new roles and structures are being created.

As actors in a system we normally encounter an established culture that defines the roles we are to occupy. There are clear expectations regarding role behaviour and attitudes. When new positions are established, however, there exists in a sense a vacuum: Roles and the relations between role occupants need to be defined. How this is done, and how the role is shaped through the interactions between the main actors of the system, will have significant consequences for its legitimacy. When, in addition, groups which earlier were unrepresented enter the leadership structures, as was the case with women's entry into top political positions in Norway a couple of decades ago, this, too, must be assumed to affect the way the system functions and develops.

It is, in short, essential to look at the actors in such new structures, their attitudes to their roles and role differentiations. In the following, we shall examine how the role of mayor in one Norwegian province, namely Møre and Romsdal, has been developed over the past generation by the significant actors of the system.

As it turned out, the first provincial mayor elected in Møre and Romsdal after the 1963 reform was a politician of the "old school"—full of deference to the fylkesmann, the governor, and not at all interested in transforming the office into a modern political tool for representative democracy. However, in 1967 the assembly elected Labour's John Strømsheim, who must be credited with starting the development of the modern mayor's role. Strømsheim was a seasoned veteran of municipal politics in the province's largest city, and had a very conscious view regarding the role he would fashion. He determinedly set out to change the image of the provincial mayor from that of merely presiding officer to one of more political significance. While the governor had up to now been the only one to address the provincial assembly at each session's opening ceremony, Strømsheim initiated the practice of the mayor's address—a speech of equal significance to that of the governor's. Looking back on this period, Strømsheim says: "I wanted the mayor to be a political counterweight to the state bureaucracy." Strømsheim also insisted that in dealings with the state authorities it was he, not the governor, who was to lead the meetings and present the province's case. As a popularly elected representative, he maintained that his role was superior to that of the state appointed governor.

At a time when party politics were deliberately toned down by provincial politicians, Strømsheim was also a very astute party politician. His election was a result of his very skillful political maneuverings, and came as a shock to many, since Labour was vastly outnumbered in the assembly. However, Strømsheim negotiated a mutually satisfactory deal with the small Liberal Party which was offered the vice-mayoral position in return for its support of Labour. Strømsheim recalls that many of his party colleagues were both surprised and shocked at his audacity, and advised him to be content with a more humble position, lest everything be lost. But Strømsheim was adamant that as the biggest party, Labour ought to go for the top job, and he was willing to gamble on the Liberals' fear that without Labour they would get no spoils at all. "But of course," he admits as he recalls the turmoil of those days, "nobody really thought we would succeed."

Strømsheim was not able to repeat the "coup" after the following election, and Trygve Silnes, the Centre Party politician who took over the reins in 1972, had no ambition to continue his predecessor's work and develop the office in a more political direction. He was content to practice the placid "president of the assembly" role, say as little as possible, and just be a fair director of the debate. Silnes died, however, after just a couple of years in office, and was succeeded by the vice-mayor, Johan Skipnes, whose view of the office was akin to that of Strømsheim. Skipnes had been a cabinet minister in the national government of Lars Korvald prior to taking over as mayor, and had a clear understanding of what ought to be the role division between the political leadership and the administration. However, he admits that the confining limitations of the old system rendered the possibilities for expanding the office rather insignificant. "The mayor led the executive council and the meetings in the assembly, but of course, he lacked the platform which the mayor received after direct elections were introduced," says Skipnes.

As mayor Skipnes was, however, fortunate in having a governor (fylkesmann) by his side who shared his convictions regarding the pre-eminence of the popularly elected official. Kåre Ellingsgård started his work as governor on January 1, 1973, and served until January 1, 1976, when the reform of 1975 took effect and the "new" province came into being. Then he became the province's top administrator, "fylkesrådmann." He was sure, he said later, that the province and its leadership would be the real centre of decision making, and preferred to be there rather than in the governor's position, which he believed would from now on be a more ceremonial office, stripped of real political power. During Ellingsgård's two years as governor, however, he tried to persuade the mayor to play a more active political role, at first without much success. "I consciously attempted to make him stand up as the foremost popularly elected politician in the province," Ellingsgård recalls about his dealings with Mayor Silnes of the Centre Party. But it proved impossible. Silnes was a very modest man, and the traditional respect for the governor's office was too deeply ingrained for him to even consider "trespassing" on its perceived prerogatives. "I tried to push him ahead in connection with royal visits and things like that, but it was quite in vain," says Ellingsgård.

When Silnes died, and the vice-mayor, Johan Skipnes, took over, Ellingsgård's attempts to give the office more political content met with greater understanding. Although personally also a very modest man,

Skipnes had more political experience and a clear view of the role a provincial mayor ought to play. Together, the two men began to fashion the foundation for the "new" mayor's office.

The "new" province is born

In September, 1975, the first direct elections for the provincial assemblies were held. The representatives then elected from their own midst an executive council and one of the councillors as mayor, to begin serving on January 1, 1976. The institutional framework was now in place, and the role holders could begin giving content to the institutions through their role interpretations, interactions and the precedents established. Clearly, in the early stages of this process the personalities and attitudes of the role incumbents are very important factors in the political development. A central role was extremely open, how would it be developed by the main actors?

Let us first present the two main actors: The director and the mayor.

When Kåre Ellingsgård, the man who had been governor of Møre and Romsdal since 1973, applied for and was appointed to the office of director, by virtue of his broad administrative background and the enormous prestige tied to the office he had just vacated, he could have easily overshadowed the provincial mayor. However, Ellingsgård also had long experience as a local politician and, as already indicated, firm convictions regarding the respective roles of elected officials and appointed administrators. When "the new order" took effect, Ellingsgård continued with even greater zeal the work he had begun as governor to prod the provincial mayor towards a more assertive political role.

The new mayor, Kjell Furnes, was only 39 years old, and the youngest man ever elected to the office in Møre and Romsdal. His political experience was relatively minor—he had been mayor of the smallest municipality in the province for a few years. He also had a solid dose of the deep respect entertained by the mayors for the governor's office, a respect which carried over to the person who had just left the office to become top administrator of the province, Kåre Ellingsgård. "I had quite a job training him," reminisces Ellingsgård, about those first days of the new order. "He also was personally quite modest, and didn't claim right away the position I felt the provincial mayor should possess."

Part of the "making of the mayor" was to render him visible to the media. Out of old habit, the media addressed their requests for information to the ex-governor. Ellingsgård recalls: "When the newspapers called me, I always directed them to the mayor, and said that these types of questions had to be answered by the politicians. I always answered that the administration would present the case and our recommendations to the popularly elected organs when the matter had been properly prepared." By and by, says Ellingsgård, the pressure from the media stopped as they came to regard him as more and more "impossible." "My standard reply was: 'I'll comment on the administration's advice in the provincial assembly when it meets.'"

The same applied to meetings with central authorities, according to Ellingsgård: "Earlier, it had been *my* job to argue the provincial case in meetings with the departments. Now, however, I told Furnes that he had to be in charge." Kjell Furnes confirms this account: "I received exceptional support and understanding from Ellingsgård. He had very strong and quite clear views regarding the role of the popularly elected officials, and he supported me in every possible way. He gave very good signals about how to build up a democratic system."

So, gradually the new pattern emerged: Prior to meetings with the press, state authorities or others, the administrative director oriented the mayor thoroughly about the issues. In turn, the mayor presented the provincial case. At the outset this undoubtedly often meant that the issues were not presented as cogently as they would have been had the administrative director been in charge who knew the cases through and through.

The relationship and division of work between the mayor and the director were not the only issues of concern during the infancy of the "new" province. Equally significant, if not more so, was the relationship between the province and the municipalities, and the definition of their respective prerogatives and the boundaries between them. Kjell Furnes recalls these challenges: "The provincial mayor was perceived as totally insignificant. It was the governor who had a strong position in the province. He was the alpha and omega, he had status and respect. He was the one who had to approve of relations with the municipalities. I tried to emphasize that a new political entity had been created. But it was not easy. Many local politicians were afraid of the 'supermunicipal ghost,' and felt that they had to see to it that the province didn't get too much power."

Particularly the three cities in the province were extremely watchful, according to Furnes. Prior to the provincial assembly meetings, the delegates from the cities would meet, together with their respective mayors and top administrators, in order to plan strategy and protect themselves against anticipated "onslaughts" from the province. Many of the provincial responsibilities were of a nature that required coordination of municipal undertakings, such as in the areas of health, schooling and communications. In this way, the province was easily suspected of attempts at steering and making "minors" out of the municipalities. "It was very strenuous during the earliest period," admits Furnes, who recalls that he travelled extensively, giving lectures about the new role of the province and the provincial mayor.

The smaller municipalities, on the other hand, appeared to be less concerned about the province representing a threat. "It seemed that they felt they could get support and help from the province," says Furnes.

The mayor's role in relation to central authorities was a third area which gradually took shape during Furnes's first term in office. At the beginning, the trips to Oslo were rather infrequent. However, as time passed, the mayor's role increasingly developed as that of a travelling ambassador and lobbyist for the province.

"The contact with Oslo grew stronger as time went by," remembers Furnes. "I established very good cooperation with the ten representatives from the province in parliament, 'Mørebenken'. This was something new and very useful. We built connections, got in touch with those who served in the various parliamentary committees. By and by I found my way about the departments, got acquainted with cabinet ministers and assistant ministers, and in the end I suppose I spent around 20 percent of my working time on travel to and meetings in Oslo."

One significant reason for increased travelling activity during these years, was the accelerating development of the Norwegian oil industry. Furnes was concerned to get the province "on the map"; he developed strategy plans, visited all the oil companies and tried to get the business community interested in offshore activity. "It was regular lobbying," he admits.

The major area of responsibility for the provinces is the health sector, which absorbs about 60 percent of most provincial budgets. In this area, too, Furnes succeeded in establishing firmly the mayor's role. Through his work, the ground was prepared for the building of two

modern hospitals in the province—an impressive multimillion dollar investment.

By the end of Furnes's term as mayor, the office had acquired both contours and content. The mayor was definitely the political spokesman of the province, and through precedents, patterns of interaction between the mayor and the administration had been fairly firmly established.

The mayor's duties

The law is almost silent in regard to the provincial mayor's responsibilities. It merely stipulates that the mayor chairs the meetings of the provincial assembly and the executive council, and is the legal representative of the province with responsibility for signing on its behalf unless this authority has been delegated to others (Paragraph 9, *Law on Municipalities and Provinces*). Definition and development of the duties of the mayor have therefore been the product of practice and precedents over the years.

The Norwegian provinces have two important functions today. They are delivering services to their citizens, particularly in the areas of health, schooling and communications, and they are regional political development organs. The latter function will most certainly become gradually more important with regional development across provincial boundaries and most likely also across national boundaries. In 1994 the mayor of Møre and Romsdal stressed this trend:

"In all of Europe we see a development where the regions play a more and more important role in society. The regional organs become engines for the development of both society and business. They become door-openers for business, they develop infrastructures as necessary conditions for growth, they develop regional cultural activities, and they make connections with regions in other countries" (Bjørlo 1994: 9–10).

In the course of this development, the legally defined duties of the mayor, so few and seemingly innocuous, have become quite overshadowed by the growing need for effective lobbying on behalf of the province: the meetings with state authorities, whether in Oslo or "at home" require an increasing amount of time. The estimates of the time spent on such meetings vary. Some mayors indicate 10 percent, others as much as 50 percent. Municipal authorities also frequently request the provincial mayor's presence as moral support and leader of the delegation in their meetings with state authorities. Engagement in

regional international undertakings is playing a larger role in some provinces. The mayor of Hedmark, for instance, reports increasing involvement in cooperative projects between her province and the Baltic states.

To get an impression of the mayor's duties, we might review the calendar of the mayor of Møre and Romsdal, Ole Øverland, which describes a typical week's agenda:

Monday: Meeting with the executive council. Following the meeting, the mayor and the councillors visited one of the area's industrial plants to be oriented about its problems. The mayor then took the afternoon plane to Oslo for a meeting with the Department of Finance concerning the proposals for cuts in budget allocations to the provinces. Home after midnight, having taken the last plane from Oslo and having picked up his car at the airport for a forty minute drive.

Tuesday: Up at dawn to drive to the southern part of the province (a four hour drive) for meetings with local politicians regarding the launching of a costly new joint state-province-municipal undertaking. Return home at midnight.

(He had now, in the course of two days, been "on the job" for as many hours as a normal working week for others.)

Wednesday: Strategy development meeting with one of the electric power companies in which the province is a major shareholder.

Thursday: Most of the day taken up with meetings with the political leadership of two neighbouring provinces regarding development of a regional health plan and the financing of hospital services. Later in the afternoon, meeting with a group representing three municipalities which are cooperating to develop tourism in the province and desire greater provincial engagement and funding to launch a vigorous tourism effort.

Friday: Meeting with Statoil, the Norwegian state oil company, together with the top leadership in three western provinces, to discuss strategy plans for development of the area's oil industry. In the evening, the mayor officially opens the opera season in Kristiansund.

Says Øverland, looking back at the week's work: "I feel privileged. It is fun. But the workload is enormous." The list of events also illustrates how there is a great deal of "automatic" production of work for the mayor. Cases, questions and issues pour in every day, much of it from the administrative offices. Private individuals request the mayor's

help: A political refugee desperately wants his family out of a camp in the Balkans—will the mayor plead his case before the Department of Justice? Students have grievances they want to present. Support groups for the handicapped need assistance. Single issues may easily fill the day, reducing the mayor's role to one of reacting to problems defined by others, rather than shaping events by taking the lead in initiating policy processes himself. All the mayors interviewed in connection with this project, express frustration at being captives of a system that produces much "busy work" and leaves little time for taking charge of the steering process, rather than being guided here and there by random events.

Political debate in Norway has in recent years centred much around the role of the politician versus the role of the bureaucrat. The politician, so goes the argument, should concentrate on the definition of goals, coordination of interests and solution of conflicts. He should concern himself with the development of visionary policies and strategies for their execution, not with the detailed questions requiring technical expertise. The ideal politician, according to one political scientist, would be a cross between the crusader and the horse trader. He would have the ability to inspire others with his ideals and visions, but at the same time be able and willing to compromise his views in order to reach political decisions acceptable to the majority in a pluralistic system (See Larsen and Offerdal 1990: 76–77).

An active and visionary mayor may put his stamp on the administration by turning his attention to some issues instead of others, and guiding the executive council in new directions. He will want to influence the decision making process, shaping the definition of alternative solutions to political problems, and influencing various factions towards acceptance of compromise solutions. How do the provincial mayors evaluate themselves as actors in the political system, and how are they evaluated by others?

James D. Barber classifies politicians in four major categories in his book *The Lawmakers* (1965), namely, the Spectator, the Reluctant, the Advertiser and the Lawmaker. The Spectator has "happened" into the political game, has little to contribute, and remains but for a brief period. The Reluctant is typically an elderly "pillar of society," who reluctantly has agreed to lend his name and services to the party. The Advertiser is out to advance his own career, while the Legislator, finally, is the "ideal" politician, who has entered politics to serve the causes he believes in.

In a similar vein, the Norwegian political scientist Oddbjørn Bukve distinguishes between several ideal political types, which he labels respectively the goal formulator, the integrator, the party politician and the sector politician. The goal formulator is the visionary who initiates new policies and who has clear strategies for attaining them. The integrator is concerned with getting people to cooperate across party lines and other divisions, while the party politician above all is concerned to advance his party's program and its goals. Finally, the sector politician is the typical "hyphen-politician," bent on advancing the interests of a particular sector, and specializing on school politics, health politics, financial politics and so on, instead of seeking to attain overarching goals (Bukve, 1995).

All the politicians interviewed were asked in which of these categories they would place themselves. Virtually all responded that features of all the categories go into their make-up, but the pragmatic integrator role appeared to be the dominant one. "I really get stumped by a question like that," admitted one mayor, and continued: "As a party politician I am of course concerned about making the party more visible. But as provincial mayor, you become bent on solving issues."

This mayor pointed to a danger inherent in politicizing an issue by making it a party cause: "As mayor, I can see that certain types of issues will arise. Should I then take the matter up with my party and let the party make a political move on the matter? Or should I plant these thoughts in a joint forum such as the executive council, and invite a joint solution? To politicize the matter, may be to assure its death. If you start a matter as a party political issue, it invites objections, and a good cause may be stopped for that reason."

His conclusion, then, was that "I am less occupied with the party role than with the mayor's role. As mayor, I wish to draw all along in the same direction regardless of their party identity. I think it is important to get people to pull as a team in a positive direction."

The administrators supported the politicians' assessments of themselves as predominantly integrators. One bureaucrat who had served with several mayors put it this way: "Visions? No, there was little of that, I think. The visions were encountered in the provincial assembly. Then, maybe, the mayor would grab hold of them and advance them further."

The initiatives, the new ideas, according to this official, most often originated with the organizations or the provincial assembly. Another administrator shares this evaluation: "No, none of them were visionaries," he says about the mayors he has worked with. "They were rather characterized by the attitude that one is to master a political tool, be a leader for the political organs, execute representative duties and all that sort of thing. But visions? No, I have not registered that they possess any clear vision of ideal goals."

Many commentators on the Norwegian political system have pointed to an inclination for compromise and consensus as one of its dominant characteristics. Harry Eckstein (1966), for instance, observes that in spite of deep cleavages and divisions, "overarching sentiments of solidarity" are present that make for cohesion and stability. Indeed, the very segmented nature of Norwegian politics may be what makes consensus a necessary virtue. A fragmented party system, reflecting and reinforcing strong cultural and geographic divisions, renders the demand for the integrator's role paramount.

Both bureaucrats and politicians emphasize that the Norwegian institutional system contributes to strengthen the integrator role. In the relations between the provinces and state authorities, the provinces that stand united and can boast consensus, are in a stronger position to press their demands. As one administrator put it: "It is almost utopian to think that the mayor should be able to conduct any party politics in our fragmented system. Party politics has to be toned down—a mayor is mayor for the whole province and all parties."

And the mayors themselves tend to support this assessment, even while emphasizing that their party values constitute the solid foundation of their political interest. As one mayor put it: "At the same time as I was concerned to forge as great a consensus as possible, I wanted it to show that it was a mayor from the Labour Party who was at the wheel."

Or in the words of a mayor from the Christian People's Party: "I always tried to unite opposites, both with regards to districts and politics. I tried to be pragmatic. The problem was that the old geographic divisions tended to emerge and make things difficult."

At the same time as the mayors stress their pragmatism and the importance of their role as integrators, there is also a certain wistfulness apparent regarding the elusiveness of the visionary, initiator role. "One

must try to contribute with initiative and visions, but there isn't enough time to be visionary," sighed one provincial mayor.

Interestingly, the women, more than the men, appear willing to admit aspiring to the role of visionary initiator, although they, too, confess that the integrator role is predominant. Grethe W. Bjørlo, a former mayor of Møre and Romsdal, put it this way: "It is very difficult to place yourself in some box. I wanted to be a unifying politician in a unified province, to show that Møre and Romsdal is one province. It was a turbulent period, with much strife and division. But the role of initiator, with visions, has also been important to me. In health policies there were big changes ahead. I had my ideas and visions as to how this ought to happen."

All the other women interviewed also claimed a streak of the visionary in them, at the same time as they emphasized the multifaceted role of the mayor. Evy-Ann Midttun of Finnmark had this to say: "I am a mixture of them all. I am a party person, and I don't want to distance myself from the party, so I take my party duties very seriously. I am an integrator, I like to get people to go along. And I think I have some of the visionary in me."

In conclusion, we may say that an active and visionary provincial mayor may establish his imprint on politics by guiding people's attention to certain issues, getting them on the agenda, and engaging himself in the formulation of various alternatives for solution of the problems thus defined. However, it is the rare mayor who really plays this visionary role. So far, the provincial mayor appears to be reacting to the initiatives formulated by others, rather than being the active initiator himself.

Working patterns

As "owners" of a new institution, the provincial mayors over the past 20 years have had a unique chance to develop the institutional patterns of the office. In the following, I shall look briefly at some of the patterns that appear to be emerging in the relationship between the mayor and the vice-mayor, between the mayor and the top administrative officials, and at what mechanisms are employed to secure good cooperation with the politicians of other parties.

The vice-mayor

As already stated, the role of the vice-mayor is, for the most part, considered unrewarding and insignificant. As one mayor reportedly said

about the relationship between him and his second-in-command: "I go to the events where they serve hot food and liquor—he takes the rest."

All of the vice-mayors interviewed expressed misgivings about their experiences. Einar Holm, who served a four-year period after the 1987 election is adamant in his criticism: "I felt it to be a very frustrating role, where you had to jump in on short notice if the mayor was absent, and without having had in any way participated in the discussion and decision making process. There was no information or very little information. It was extremely wearying, and I would not have continued like that for another four-year term. As a participant in a political leader team you must know what the tasks are and what you are supposed to represent. I just felt as an ordinary member of the executive council. And it was no fun at all to be informed late one evening that I had to meet in the department the next morning, without having had a chance to prepare myself and get acquainted with the issues."

The mayor of Hedmark, Siri Austeng, who is one of the very few mayors to have served as vice-mayor, echoes Holm's complaints regarding how the position earlier functioned in her province. The vice-mayor was used only in emergency situations, and the office was in no way a preparation for the mayor's job. Together with some disgruntled women municipal vice-mayors, Siri Austeng launched a "Women's vice-mayor society," which she says, had three criteria for membership: you must be a woman; you mustn't know what the job was all about; and you must not have received the manual for mayors.

"We met once in a while," says Austeng, "it was really quite a lighthearted and happy society, but there was a certain seriousness underneath it all, too."

When Siri Austeng became mayor, she decided to take steps to develop the office of vice-mayor in a constructive way. (This may be easier to achieve in Hedmark than in most provinces, since the Labour Party controls both offices). "Politics should be fun," says Siri Austeng. "I am concerned that this job, too, shall be fun." Consequently, she is careful to involve the vice-mayor in all the mayor's plans and activities, and every Monday morning she meets with him prior to the regular weekly meetings with the political leaders of the standing committees. Austeng sees this arrangement as a great strength both for herself and the province. "Politically we trust each other, and he has reduced my work load greatly."

The mayor of Finnmark, also a woman from a province so strongly dominated by the Labour Party that the party controls both positions, similarly reports that the vice-mayor is a more important political partner than what is normally the case. As in Hedmark, the office of vice-mayor is a full-time, paid political position, and there is a clear division of labour between the mayor and the vice-mayor. He is the leader of the Committee on Administration, and has special responsibility for questions relating to education, research and development of business competence. "He is my closest adviser on questions relating to education and culture," says the mayor, who adds that the vice-mayor in her province also assumes a heavy burden of representative duties.

In summary, one may conclude that if the office of vice-mayor is to be developed as a significant one, structural changes are necessary. The position must be made a better paying one—nobody can be expected to assume political duties that encroach on one's ordinary work responsibility, without adequate compensation. As politics more and more become a full-time affair, remuneration must correspond to the responsibility.

The administrative director

Concern about the proper division of labour between members of the popularly elected fora and the administrators has been a prominent feature of the political debate in Norway as elsewhere during the past decades. Many are worried that politicians are losing their sense of their special responsibility, which is to define goals and find compromise solutions to problems that have no ready technical solution: that they are instead becoming "hyphen-politicians": experts in a narrow area—"school-politicians," "health-politicians," and so on. But as Larsen and Offerdal ask: Why do we need a second bunch of experts? The administration possesses the expertise—the task of the politicians is to define goals, aggregate interests, soften conflicts and forge compromises (Larsen and Offerdal 1990: 76).

In practice this ideal division of labour may be harder to achieve than the theory indicates. The "input" received by the politicians and which constitutes the basis for their deliberations and decisions, by and large originates from three sources, namely, the media, interest groups and parties, and the administrative branch. Probably, the most important role is played by the administration, through its daily contact with the problem-areas, and the great expertise at its disposal. The administra-

tion, for all its loyalty to the politicians and to political decisions made, is in a very favorable position to influence the political agenda, to pose the questions, and to frame the problems and the recommendation to their solutions.

The "rearing of the mayor" which takes place every time there is a "changing of the guard" includes lessons in the rules of the game—what is your preserve and what is mine. Thus, after the 1991 election, the administrative director invited a social science professor to give a seminar for the new mayor and the executive council about the respective roles of administrators and politicians, and the imperative demand for "no trespassing."

The degree to which the mayors avail themselves of the aid and advice of their administration, naturally differs from person to person. Seasoned politicians may operate very much on their own when meeting with central authorities, for instance, while others nearly always prefer to have a representative from the administration along "who knows the case." The mayor of Finnmark, Evy-Ann Midttun, put it this way: "Purely political matters I handle myself. But if I feel that I don't know the case well enough, I take the administrative director or someone else along."

Personal differences also manifest themselves in the extent to which the mayors make use of administration services when it comes to the writing of speeches, and answering questions and interpellations in the assembly. One mayor claimed that he wrote virtually all his speeches and addresses in answer to interpellations himself, and this was in fact confirmed by people in the administration. Others rely completely on the administration, while yet others will get a draft which they then improve on and "make their own."

Obviously, this is an area very much coloured by politics, and one may ask whether it would not be desirable for the mayor to have a personal political secretary, charged with the responsibility for handling speech writing and responses to interpellations. Such an arrangement appears to be rare, however. Of the mayors interviewed, only Siri Austeng in Hedmark, had a political secretary. She feels that this office is essential to the proper functioning of the mayor's political work: "Politically, we are on the same wavelength. I feel I can trust him totally to represent my views and what I stand for."

All the administrators as well as the politicians, stressed the importance of "separateness," of clear divisions between administrative and political work. The fact that there are no institutionalized, regular meetings between the director and the mayor must be seen as a consequence of this determination to abstain from mutual interfering until the cases are ready to be put forward by the administration. However, the close proximity of the working quarters, the daily contact and the "open door" policy practiced everywhere, all tend to produce an atmosphere characterized by unity and agreement. "The mayor gets caught up in the administrative environment and way of thinking," said one administrator, who admitted that the director and the mayor were hard to tell apart in many cases.

Another administrator, confronted with the fact that the administration's viewpoint prevails in a high proportion of cases, protested that this was so "because we listen, we sense what the political sentiment is, and what is acceptable to the provincial assembly. We anticipate political reactions, and are therefore able to formulate recommendations which will be met with favor." For his own part, he insisted, he had always been conscious of the fact that the mayor must be absolutely independent of the administration, to the extent that the mayor did not even see the administration's recommendations before the other politicians did.

This "cozy" relationship between politicians and administrators may of course serve to cover up the very real problem represented by an asymmetrical power situation: The administration commands the strongest hand. It has the expertise, the factual knowledge, the time to gain insight and mastery of the issues. Sometimes, political feelings of inferiority may result in strongly negative attitudes to the administration. One mayor alluded to this when commenting on the situation at the time she took office: "I was appalled that the politicians had worked up—I must call it almost a hatred of the administration. I do not share this lack of confidence in the administration that you encounter in some circles—the fear that the administration will govern you. I am not governed by anyone, and I am very confident in my own political competence. I regard the administration as a necessary and useful service apparatus for the politicians."

Dealings with group leaders and opposition

In a fractured political system such as Norway's, where one party seldom has a majority behind it, it is of paramount importance to achieve cross-partisan cooperation in order to attain decisions that appear legitimate. The combined effect of the institutional system, with all major parties represented in the executive council, and the traditional preference for consensus, tends to ensure mutual consulting and deliberation. Provincial relations with the state work in the same direction. "It is important that we present a unified front if we are going to get support for this in the department," is an admonition frequently heard in the executive council as well as in the provincial assembly.

There is, however, little in the way of institutionalized arrangements to ensure optimal cooperation between the mayor and the leaders of the other party groups. The regular meetings of the executive council provide frequent contact, and in this rather informal organ, there occurs, undoubtedly, much "thinking aloud" around the table, which eventually results in a sense of the "view of the council" and the forging out of mutually acceptable solutions. As these meetings normally are open to the press and the public, however, there are also significant constraints present. Not infrequently, the mayor may ask the group leaders to meet with him during a break, so that closer consultations may take place than those permitted by the open forum.

The need to present a "united front" in dealings with the central authorities, has led to many mayors including the "leader of the opposition" at scheduled meetings with state officials. The "leader of the opposition," though no formal position, is normally the leader of the largest party not represented in the "ruling coalition." Thus, when the Conservative Party held the mayor position in Møre and Romsdal during the 1980s, the Labour Party's group leader regularly accompanied the mayor on his trips to Oslo. Interestingly, the practice was not followed up to the same extent by the Labour Party mayor when she took office in 1992. Her own explanation of this was in terms of access to the government: The Conservative mayor needed someone from the Labour Party to "smooth the path" for him in government headquarters, whereas she, as a member of the "ruling party" had no such need. The present mayor, a Centre Party man, has, however, resumed the practice of including the opposition leader (in this case the ex-mayor) on many of his political trips to the capital.

Only one of the nine mayors interviewed appears to have made a deliberate effort at building up a regular institutionalized vehicle for cross-party cooperation. The mayor of Hedmark, Siri Austeng, meets every Monday morning with the leaders of the five major committees of the legislative assembly. It must be noted, however, that this is possible because of structural features in the Hedmark system: This province has to a greater degree than most, instituted a system of full-time pay for the top politicians.

Women mayors—does it make a difference?

As already mentioned, the provincial assemblies prior to the 1975 reform were by and large patriarchal, indeed geriatric societies. They seldom had more than one or two women in their midst. Most often, the women were totally absent. Here too, the new order brought about a change: a virtual female “invasion” occurred immediately, and on a national basis the provincial assemblies counted approximately 25 percent women representatives after the 1975 election.

Since then, women’s representation has increased steadily, and is today around 40 percent. In Møre and Romsdal the figures closely reflect the national trends.

Slowly, some women were also admitted to leadership status. By 1980, three provinces entrusted the vice-mayor position to women, and then, in 1983, the province of Buskerud made history by electing the first female provincial mayor, Labour’s Åse Klundelien. The same year, six women were elected as vice-mayors, four from the Labour Party and two from the Christian People’s Party.

During the next election period, no woman served as mayor, but the number of female vice-mayors increased to seven. Then, in 1991, the big “break-through” occurred: Three provinces elected female mayors, namely, Møre and Romsdal, Oslo, and Buskerud. At the same time, eleven provinces elected female vice-mayors, and in Oslo both the mayor and the vice-mayor were women—Labour’s Ann-Marit Sæbønes and the Socialist Left Party’s Karin Pahle.

The last election, in the fall of 1995, also saw three women elected as mayor, as well as ten as vice-mayors. The province of Buskerud followed Oslo’s example of four years earlier and elected women both as mayor and vice-mayor. In Oslo, however, the two women had to vacate the top leadership.

Table II

Women Mayors and Vice-Mayors

| Election Year | 1983 | 1987 | 1991 | 1995 | Total | |
|---------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----|
| | <u>M/VM</u> | <u>M/VM</u> | <u>M/VM</u> | <u>M/VM</u> | <u>M/VM</u> | |
| <i>Labour</i> | 1/4 | 0/5 | 2/4 | 2/3 | 5/16 | 21 |
| <i>Conservatives</i> | | 0/1 | 1/3 | 1/3 | 2/7 | 9 |
| <i>Christian People's Party</i> | 0/2 | | 0/1 | 0/3 | 0/6 | 6 |
| <i>Centre</i> | | 0/1 | 0/1 | 0/1 | 0/3 | 3 |
| <i>Socialist Left</i> | | | 0/2 | | 0/2 | 2 |
| Total | 1/6 | 0/7 | 3/11 | 3/10 | 7/36 | 41 |

In summary, then, six women have held the mayor's position. One of the six has served two periods, which means that of the 114 mayoral posts elected over the last 20 years, women have held seven.

So, does it make any difference whether women serve in high office or not? Clearly, in regard to policy output, it has been adequately demonstrated that women's political presence indeed makes a difference (See, for instance, Skjeie 1992). But do women also possess, as some assert, a different leadership style—a style that reflects women's supposed preferences for less hierarchical organizations, as opposed to men's traditional, controlling leadership styles?

There are few empirical studies which highlight the issue. While the Norwegian political scientist Hege Skjeie, as already mentioned, has shown that women's presence in politics certainly makes a difference for policy output, her study of cabinet ministers in Norway does not appear to support the notion of a special female leadership style. Nina Cecilie Raaum also emphasizes that empirically, it is very unclear whether men and women possess different political leadership styles (Raaum 1995).

According to Raaum, the main problem with the studies asserting such differences is that they draw conclusions about women's behaviour in formal organizations from observations about women's roles and be-

haviour in the private sphere. The researchers thus create individuals without institutional ties, says Raaum, insofar as they fail to consider that formal organizations both "shall and must regulate organizational behavior" (Raaum 1991: 180).

In the course of my conversations with both politicians and administrators, I asked them all their opinion regarding possible differences between men's and women's leadership styles. Interestingly, there appeared a clear gender distinction: All but one of the men expressed the conviction that there are no sex differences—whatever differences exist must be attributed to individual style and preference; they are personality differences, not sex differences. On the other hand, all of the women felt that there definitely are differences between male and female leadership styles. Here is how one woman expressed herself on the matter:

"Of course there is a difference. There has to be. We bring with us to the leadership positions all the experiences from our other roles. I feel that women are not so caught up in prestige in connection with the job as mayor. And people notice that women seem first and foremost to react to a human being. So, things go smoother for women, there is more teamwork, more communication and dialogue. Women appear to solve conflicts in a different manner than men do."

Oslo's Ann-Marit Sæbønes put it this way: "I think women's leadership style is more democratic. It is not so important for us to have our way all the time. With men, I often have the impression that the conclusions come first, and that the debate in a way is irrelevant. Women are also more concerned than men with the informal relationships, with how people feel. They seem to look more after the needs of others."

Only one of the men supported the women in their perception. "I don't know how to explain it," he said, "but, yes, I have seen that women have a different style of leadership. It is my experience that they work in a different way, which may be more useful and better for society. It is the fashion in which they approach the problems. It is different."

All this does not, of course, add up to more than reporting the beliefs of some men and women regarding gender differences. Whether their opinions reflect verifiable facts, can only be determined after careful empirical studies of the leadership styles of both men and women.

Conclusion

The democratic reforms of two decades ago inspired high hopes for a revitalization of the Norwegian provincial government. Democratization, decentralization and effectivization would, the reformers hoped, bring about a surge of interest in the regional government, and lead to increased participation in its affairs. Today, many feel that these hopes have not been met, and a chorus of criticism is currently heard, which in its most extreme form demands the total elimination of the province as a political entity. Its functions may just as well be divided between the state and the municipalities, the critics assert.

There can be little doubt that provincial politics have failed to inspire the interest, the knowledge and the participation hoped for two decades ago. Voter turnout in provincial elections, although high by international standards, is consistently less than in the national elections, and municipal affairs excite people far more than provincial matters. Two of the political parties, the Conservative and the Progress Party, have adopted dissolution of the province as one of the items of their party's agenda for the upcoming elections.

There is no immediate prospect that the crusaders will be victorious. However, unless their challenge is met with serious self-appraisal, neither will the province be able to develop as a vital political entity. In this necessary vitalization process, the provincial mayor has a crucial role to play, for it is the mayor, more than anyone else that represents the province to the "grassroots," the ordinary men and women of the country.

Grethe W. Bjørlo, ex-mayor of Møre and Romsdal was very much aware of this dimension from the moment she took office. She recalled that the retiring mayor said to her, as he handed over the mayor's necklace and gavel: "Giving the province a human face will be your great task." Reflecting on this, she continued: "The province is not just some administrative office in Molde. To give it human appearance was congenial to me—I did not want to be locked up in an office. I love people. So I made a visit to all the municipalities in the province, where people could take the time they wanted presenting their problems. I tried to make them see that the province is not a brake and a hindrance, but different from that—an asset."

The mayor of the northernmost province, Finnmark, Evy-Ann Midttun, shares these convictions: "I have decided to visit all the

provincial institutions—50 altogether. First the small ones, then the larger will follow later. The mayor must be active, cooperate with the municipalities, give information, meet people. It is expected that the mayor is down at the pier in Vadsø, meeting with and talking with the fishermen.”

Current criticism against provincial politics and administration must be, and is indeed, taken seriously by the politicians. Very few suffer any historical homesickness and longing for the “good old days” when the provincial assemblies consisted of the mayors—mostly men—of all the municipalities. However, one must be open to the possibility of improving the system so that cooperation between the province and the municipalities is facilitated. To that end, including the municipal mayors in the provincial assembly may be one suggestion worth considering.

A far more conscious use of the media to “market” the province among the voters and making them aware of the functions performed by provincial institutions is at any rate necessary. In this work, the role of the mayor will be central. It is, after all, the mayor who represents the “province’s human face.”

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Barber, James D. 1965. *The Lawmakers*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Bjørlo, Grethe Westergaard. 1994. “Fylkeskommunene møter framtida.” Molde: Unpublished lecture.
- Bukve, Oddbjørn. 1995. “Konsensusdemokrati, majoritetsstyre og managementmodellar—erfaringar frå norske kommunar,” in T. Hansen and A. Offerdal. eds. *Borgere, tjenesteytere og beslutningstakere*. Oslo: TANO.
- Eckstein, Harry. 1966. *Division and Cohesion in Democracy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Fevolden, Trond. 1982. “Politikere på fylkesplan. En presentasjon av organisering, politikkertyper, vurderinger og budsjettbehandling.” Oslo: Institutt for statsvitenskap.
- Grønmo, Odd, Arvid Berglind and Lars Vaage. n.d.: “Fylkesordførernes oppgaver, ansvar og status.” Oslo: Norske Kommuners Sentralforbund.
- Hansen, Tore and Audun Offerdal. 1995. *Borgere, tjenesteytere og beslutningstakere*. Oslo: TANO.
- Hovik, Sissel. 1986. “Forskning om fylkeskommunen—ein litteraturgjennomgang.” Oslo: NIBR-rapport 1986: 13.

- Larsen, Helge O. and Audun Offerdal. 1990. *Demokrati uten deltakere?* Oslo: Kommuneforlaget.
- Lijphart, Arend. 1984. *Democracies*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
- Morrison, Samuel and Henry Steele Commager. 1950. *The Growth of the American Republic*. 4th Edition. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Raaum, Nina Cecilie, ed. 1995. *Kjønn og politikk*. Oslo: TANO.
- Skjeie, Helge. 1992. *Den politiske betydningen av kjønn: En studie av norsk topp-politikk*. Oslo: Institutt for samfunnsforskning. Rapport nr. 11.



Unique Nicknames in *Landnámabók* and the Sagas of the Icelanders: The Case of Þorleifr *kimbi* Þorbrandsson

William Sayers
Silver Spring, Maryland

RÉSUMÉ: *Le sobriquet de Þorleifr kimbi Þorbrandsson, connu de Landnámabók, illustre le problème de noms supplémentaires mais uniques en vieux norrois/islandais. Ces noms donnent l'impression d'originer dans le lexique quotidien mais portent une charge jugementale et une coloration affective qui sont difficiles à évaluer tout en suggérant des potentialités péjoratives. Lorsqu'un tel nom, de toute apparence historique, est activé dans un narration pleinement développée, dans le cas actuel Eyrbyggja saga, de nouveaux contextes, peut-être fictifs, peuvent diriger le public de la saga vers une interprétation modifiée du sobriquet ou une valeur sémantique nouvelle. L'étude s'adresse aux origines et significances possibles du nom kimbi. A la fois, la carrière de son porteur, Þorleifr Þorbrandsson, figure de deuxième ordre dans le monde des sagas, est examinée contre l'arrière-plan de ses relations parfois contentieuses avec son frère nourricier, le bien connu Snorri le goði.*

ABSTRACT: *The nickname of Þorleifr kimbi Þorbrandsson, known from Landnámabók, is instructive in addressing the problems of unique bynames in Old Norse/Icelandic, which often appear drawn from the everyday vocabulary but carry a difficult to quantify, potentially pejorative, judgmental charge and affective colouring. When such an ostensibly historical name is activated in fully developed narrative, in this instance Eyrbyggja saga, new and possibly fictional contexts may steer the saga public towards a modified interpretation or new semantic value for the byname. Possible origins and meanings for kimbi are reviewed and the trajectory of its bearer, Þorleifr Þorbrandsson, a saga character of the second order, is examined against the background of his sometime adversarial relations with his better known foster-brother, Snorri goði.*

Nicknames (or bynames) are a prominent feature of early Norse prose literature—*Landnámabók*, the family and kings' sagas—and may reasonably be assumed to reflect actual onomastic practice and to have been sensed as distinct from names given at birth.¹ The prominence is twofold. Not only do relatively large numbers of persons in the settlement history and saga narratives bear bynames (adjectival qualifiers or appositive nouns), which must have been in more frequent daily use than patronymics to distinguish individuals with like names, but the names recur throughout the relevant narrative, so that the nickname functions as identifier of physical person and often of personality for the saga public no less than for the name-bearers' contemporaries. Another kind of prominence is the consequence of the often graphic and, we might judge, lightly deprecatory character of the names. While *auðigr*, *fróðr*, *hvass*, *kappi*, *rammr*, *sterkr*, and *spakr* ("rich, learned, astute, the champion, mighty, strong" and "wise") are at the positive end of an assumed spectrum, and *gamal*, *hvítr*, *langhals*, *mjór*, *rauðr*, and *svartr* ("old, white, long-necked, slender, ruddy" and "swarthy") might be thought at the centre, more numerous appear to be the nicknames based on a negatively assessed physical exceptionality, the product of genetic inheritance or the vicissitudes of life in the early medieval North. Thus we meet in *Landnámabók* characters such as Auðun *stoti* ("the Stutterer"), Arn móðr *enn skjálgi* ("the Squint-Eyed"), Geirmundr *heljarskinn* ("Hell-" i. e., "Dark-Skinned"), Óláfr *jafnkoll* ("Level-Pate"), Ólófr *tvennumbrúni* ("Two-Brows"), and also Ketill *enn einhendi* ("the One-Handed") Auðunarson, Hávarðr *enn halti* ("the Lame"), Þórólfr *bægifótr* ("Twist-" or "Awkward-Foot"), Qnundr *tréfótr* ("Wood-Leg") Ófeigsson and other maimed or crippled land takers (see the discussion of disfigurement in Bragg 1995). In many cases nicknames may have originated in the "middle ground," that is, not given by members of the family or household, or by those in other regions of Iceland, but by residents in the same district. This would account for the non-sympathetic, lightly critical tone of many.

Despite the common occurrence of nicknames, our texts offer very little in the way of etiology—we rarely see the events or circumstances that prompted the award of a second identity. But, as *Eyrbyggja saga* and corresponding passages of *Landnámabók* will be at the focal point of this study, it will be useful to consider one such infrequent glimpse into naming practices, especially since the greater part of the saga could be called a detailed illustration of and commentary on the byname and

on the conventional physical and moral portrait which here, in a slight variation on family saga practice, comes after the character has been seen and judged in a first character-revealing episode.² Opening with a brief recapitulation of the events of *Gísla saga*, *Eyrbyggja saga* states:

Þorgrímur drap Vésteinn Vésteinsson at haustboði í Haukadale. En annat haust eptir, þá er Þorgrímur var hálfþrítógr, sem faðir hans, þá drap Gísli, mágr hans, hann at haustboði á Sæbóli. Nökkurum nóttum síðar fæddi Þórdís, kona hans, barn, ok var sá sveinn kallaðr Þorgrímur eptir feðr sínum. Litlu síðar giptisk Þórdís Berki inum digra, bróður Þorgríms, ok rézk til bús með honum til Helgafells. Þá fór Þorgrímur, sonr hennar, í Álftafjörð ok var þar at fóstri með Þorbrandi; hann var heldr ósvífr í æskunni, ok var hann af því Snerrir kallaðr ok eptir þat Snorri (*Eyrbyggja saga* 1935, Ch. 12).

[Thorgrim killed Vestein Vesteinsson at an autumn feast at Haukadale, and the following autumn when he was twenty-five years old, the very age his father had been when he was drowned, Thorgrim's brother-in-law Gisli killed him at an autumn feast at Sæbol. A few days later Thorgrim's widow Thordis gave birth to a boy, called Thorgrim after his father. A little later Thordis married her brother-in-law Bork the Stout and went to live with him at Helgafell, but her son Thorgrim was sent to Alftafjord to be fostered by Thorbrand. Thorgrim was a very difficult child, so they called him Snerrir, and afterwards Snorri.]³

The physical and moral portrait follows Snorri's trip to Norway with his foster brother Þorleifr *kimbi* Þorbrandsson and his astute and wily recovery of his patrimony from his step-father Þorkr *enn digri* ("the Stout").⁴ After comment on his appearance, the saga continues:

[H]ann var hógværr hversdagliga; fann lítt á honum, hvárt honum þótti vel eða illa; hann var vitr maðr ok forspár um marga hluti, langrækr ok heiptúðigr, heilráðr vinum sínum, en óvinir hans þóttusk heldr kulða af kenna ráðum hans. (Ch. 15)

[He was usually even-tempered, and it was hard to tell whether he was pleased or not. He was a very shrewd man with unusual foresight, a long memory and a taste for vengeance. To his friends he gave good counsel but his enemies learned to fear the advice he gave.]

Unlike many fatherless or ill-fathered young men in the sagas, Snorri overcomes the handicap of a paternally unstructured early childhood and also successfully controls and interiorizes his emotions. He sets goals and, usually impervious to honour-related exterior coercion, pursues them purposefully and by all means available, so that the descriptor *snerrir/snorri* that was assigned to his temperament in childhood becomes the trademark of his political persona and social agency as adult.

Later Snorri will complement his personal resources through a marriage alliance with the daughter of a man characterized and renamed as follows:

Þorgrímur Kjallaksson bjó í Bjarnarhöfn ... ok áttu þau Þorhildr þrjá sonu. ... Annarr var Arngrímur; hann var mikill maðr ok sterkr, nefmikill, stórbeinóttir í andliti, rauðbleikr á hár ok vikóttir snimma, skolbrúnn, eygðr mjök ok vel; hann var ofstopamaðr mikill ok fullr ójafnaðr, ok fyrir því van hann Styrr kallaðr. (Ch. 12)

[Thorgrim Kjallaksson was living at Bjorn's Haven. He had three sons by his wife Thorhild. ... The second, Arngrim, was a tall strong man, big-boned and ginger-haired, with a prominent nose. He had gone bald at the temples while still young, his eyebrows met but his eyes were large and fine. He was a very arrogant man and unjust, which got him the name Styrr.]

Thus, while he has features that attracted somewhat derogatory nicknames to some men, it is on the basis of his social and political interaction with others that he is characterized as "battlesome" and later in the saga even *Styrr* will be amplified to *Víga-Styrr* "Killer-Styrr." It is generally the case in the family saga that, once past the ancestral chapters dealing with initial settlement, nicknames are restricted to secondary characters—unless, as with Snorri and Styrr, the bynames completely supersede the given names.⁵

To return to more formal considerations, nicknames could refer to appearance, character, origins, skills or avocation, etc., e.g., *Vémundur enn mjóvi* ("the Slender") Kjallaksson, *Bersi godlauss* ("the Godless") Bálkason, *Aldís enn barreyska* ("from Barra") Konálsdóttir, *Án bogsveigir* ("Bow-bender"), or might originate in specific events that are not always recorded, or both. Ironic antithesis could also come into play, as when a burly man is called "the Feeble" (Þorbjörn *skrjúpr*, *Laxdæla saga*). For nicknames to stick and become commonly used, the referents (facial features, qualities of personality) would also have to have been prominent or well known, although their linguistic realization could take the form of "occasional compounds," that is, the pairing of two familiar ideas in a novel, often witty, combination, e. g., Björn *sviðinnhorni* ("Burnt-Horn"), Bolverkr *blindingatrjóna* ("Blind-Snout"), Þorgeirr *smjörkengr* ("Butter-Crook"? "Butter-Bight"?), Ávaldr *qngt í brjósti* ("Tight-in-the-Chest").⁶ In Iceland, nicknames might go farther afield than simple references to origins or immediate prior residence in the Hebrides or various parts of Norway—*Sæmundr enn suðreyski* ("the Hebridean"), Svartkell *enn katneski* ("from Caithness"), Álfr *enn egzki*

(from Agð, modern Agder)—and be based on foreign words or names, e. g., Óláfr *feilan* (OIr. *fáelán* “little wolf,” also a proper name), Helgi *bjólán* (OIr. *Beollán* or *beóil* “grease, fat, meat-juice”).⁷

Bynames were often context-dependent; for example, knowledge of Björn Ásbrandsson’s local origins as well as his exploits abroad was required to appreciate the appropriateness of his identifier *Breiðvíkingakappi* (“the Breiðvík Champion”). But many of the most colorful names from *Landnámabók*, while not opaque, say nothing about the contingent circumstances or more durable conditions that prompted them: Álof *elliðaskjöldr* (“Ship-Shield”); Ófeigsdóttir, Auðun *rotinn* (“Rotten”); Þórólfsson, Þorsteinn *vífill* (“Weevil”), Boðmóðr *ór búlkarúmi* (“from the Hold”), Þorsteinn *kleggi* (“Horsefly” or “Cock of Hay”?), Þóróddr *hjálmi* (“Helmet” or “Hay Rick”?). On occasion this uncertainty is evidenced in the tradition itself, and in varying manuscripts we find Þórarinn Há-Snorrason called both *rosti* (“Brawl”) and *tosti* (“Frog?”), Þorbjörn Kjallaksson, both *skorðuðr* (“Notched, Scored”? for *skorungr* “prominent, brave”?) and *skorfuðr* (“Magnificent”).

In many cultures names are a prime example that knowledge is power, and knowledge of names, even in the sense of “domesticating” the foreign or aberrant by renaming it, was a means, if not always to domination, to at least a degree of neutralization. While names might have been intended as emblematic and hence constant in meaning, some were subject to reinterpretation even if their moment of ascription were not all that far distant in time, if knowledge of the circumstances of origin was lost. Not only could names be reinterpreted, but, in the passage from genealogy and family and local tradition to more consciously shaped story and eventually text, narrative detail appropriate to the new meaning could be created and adduced in lieu of the original context—narrative content then being aligned with onomastic label. This might occur over the span of years from the settlement and immediate post-settlement years of Iceland up to the period of saga-writing. And, in the ongoing interplay between lexicon and literature, the new signification assigned to a nickname in a traditional narrative could then determine the semantic future of a rare or unique byname if it were to enter (or re-enter) the mainstream vocabulary of the linguistic community—or such, at least, is the hypothesis that will be tested in this study which focuses on Snorri’s companion on his trip to Norway, Þorleifr *kimbi* Þorbrandsson.

Although there is some inconsistency in the treatment of early land-taking in the Snæfellsnes and Breiðafjörðr areas in the various recension of *Landnámabók* and in *Eyrbyggja saga*, the settlement history and family saga are in essential agreement as concerns Þorleifr. The single entry from the former gives us a capsulized version of his role in the more amply told events of the saga, and provides a distilled context in which to approach his byname *kimbi*.

Synir Þorbrands í Álptafirði váru þeir Þorleifr kimbi ok Þoroddr, Snorri, Þorfinnr, Illugi, Þormóðr. Þeir deildu við Arnkel um arf leysingja sinna ok váru at vígi hans með Snorra goða á Ørlygsstöðum. Eptir þat fór Þorleifr kimbi útan; þá laust Arnbjörn son Ásbrands ór Breiðavík hann með grautarþvöru; Kimbi brá á gaman. Þóðr blígr brá honum því á Þórsnesþingi, þá er hann bað Helgu, systur hans; þá lét Kimbi ljósta Blíg með sandtorfu. Af því gerðusk deilur þeira Eyrbyggja ok Þorbrandssona ok Snorra goða; þeir þorðusk í Álptafirði ok á Vigrafirði (*Landnámabók* 1968, S 86, H 74).

[The sons of Thorbrand of Alftafjord were Thorleif Kimbi, Thorodd, Snorri, Thorfinn, Illugi, and Thormod. They quarrelled with Arnkel over the inheritance left by his freedmen and along with Snorri the Priest they were fighting him when he was killed at Orlygsstead. Thorleif Kimbi went abroad, and later he was struck with a ladle by Arnbjorn, son of Asbrand of Breiduvik [sic]. Kimbi didn't take it seriously, but Thord Blig poked fun at him for it at the Thorsness Assembly, when Kimbi asked for the hand of Thord's sister Helga. It was because of Kimbi that Thord got hit by a piece of sandy turf on this occasion, and this sparked off the quarrels between the men of Eyr on one hand, and the Thorbrandssons and Snorri the Priest on the other. They fought battles at Alftafjord and on Vigrafjord; *Landnámabók* 1972, par. 86.]

Pending the discussion below, we may note the fatal interplay of sport (the background to the turf-throwing incident), malice, satiric comment, and honour; the juxtaposition of Þorleifr *kimbi* and *gaman* "sport, play" (in the sense "make light of"); and the use of *Kimbi* alone on occasion in the narrative. Elliptical as well as succinct, *Landnámabók* does not spell out that Þorleifr's voyage abroad was as outlaw and in consequence of the legal judgment and settlement following the killing of Arnkell.

Despite the work's concern for etiology, the modern editor of *Landnámabók* defers to the editors of *Eyrbyggja saga* in the matter of comment on Þorleifr's nickname *kimbi*. We turn to notes accompanying Þorleifr's entry into the saga narrative for a brief review of proposed explanations (*Eyrbyggja saga* 1935: 20n3). The editors begin by stating that no certainty is to be had in the matter of the unique byname. In his nineteenth-century dictionary (*Lexicon Islandico-Latino-Danicum*

Biornonis Haldorsonii 1814), Björn Halldórsson interpreted the term as meaning "mockers," glossed in Mod. Icel. with *háðfugl* by the editors of *Eyrbyggja saga*. They go on to suggest an association with *kimbill* "satchel, small bag." Marstrander (1915: 56) suggested a possible Irish origin in the names *Cimbe*, *Cimbil*. Cleasby, Vigfússon and Craigie (*A Dictionary of Old Icelandic* 1957), citing *Eyrbyggja* but not *Landnámabók*, also saw *kimbill* as the likely source for the nickname and saw a related meaning in *kumbl* "cairn" in the sense of something piled up. In this vein Jan de Vries noted Mod. Icel. *kimbi* "bundle; hay sheaf" and went on to identify cognates in early Germanic languages (including Shetland Norn, perhaps the historically most telling example) and modern Scandinavian dialects (see de Vries 1961). These are related to the verb *kimbla* "to bind, truss up" and denote a "stave," one of a number of shaped wooden pieces bound together as a pail or tub.⁸ Tacitly recognizing the resistance of the nonce word to definitive identification, de Vries also called attention to Alexander Jóhannesson's interpretation of *kimbi* as "mockers" and an etymology in the word that generated Mod. Icel. *kíma* (var. sp. *kýma*) "admonish, scold, criticize; mock, ridicule," a derivation which rejoins Björn Halldórsson's reading.⁹ The most recent treatment of this complex of words is in Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon 1989, which finds the past history (especially vocalic) of *kíma* murky, mentions Þorleifr in connection with *kimbi* as "satchel, bundle", and raises doubts concerning the putative homonym with the meaning "mockers." I return to these reservations below.

Since Þorleifr's nickname displays no variation in extant manuscripts but at the same time no unambiguous tie to other words chosen for record in early Icelandic literature (a lexical screening process that may have excluded many familiar words, although the derogatory vocabulary is a robust one),¹⁰ we may pursue Marstrander's suggestion and again look afield to cultural communities other than Norway that contributed both personnel and more modest onomastic and other lexical input to settlement-era Iceland. Ireland, the Gaelic-speaking Hebrides, and mainland Scotland are reasonably thought to have supplied between 15 and 25% of the original settlers and these would include Norse, the offspring of Norse-Celtic unions, free and unfree Celts, with doubtless considerable numbers of the latter among the unnamed and usually unnumbered members of land-taker households. I return below to Marstrander's proposed personal names *Cimbe*, *Cimbil*, which are plausible phonologically but present difficulties in para-linguistic

terms. But Old Irish does have a legal term that meets phonetic criteria and could be “inserted” in Þorleifr’s biography at the point of his banishment from Iceland as an outlaw, following the death of Arnkell.

Old Irish *cimbid* (-d = a voiced fricative, ON-Icel. *ð*) was an unransomed criminal or captive. He was without legal capacity because of a serious offence for which compensation had not been paid and could be held by the offended party as a prisoner. Irish law provided for the possibility of a *cimbid* being ransomed by other than his kin, and a legal tract suggests such redeemed fighting men were suitable as royal bodyguards, since the king would thenceforth be their primary object of loyalty and, indeed, sole legal bulwark. More tentatively, Kelly, on whose *Guide to Early Irish Law* the above is based,¹¹ continues: “In non-legal sources the word *cimbid* is used of a person who faces death on behalf of a group or tribe” (1988: 98). This might be in single combat and the term appears especially appropriate when the odds against survival were high. Thus, while the biblical image is being stretched somewhat, the *cimbid* might be called the “scapegoat.” Although the fit with the Icelandic outlaw is not exact in the narrow legal sense, there are ample grounds for comparison in the specific circumstances of Þorleifr Þorbrandsson.

With this I now turn to *Eyrbyggja saga* not only to investigate how the story might explain the nickname—the objective of the lexicographer and onomastics scholar—but also to explore how the byname, stated on Þorleifr’s entry into the saga, may, like the more conventional portraits, have functioned proleptically to alert the saga public to likely future action on the part of its bearer and even to thematic and ideological concerns that the work will go on to treat. But our initial vantage point must be the action of the saga, since certainty is lacking as to the exact meaning of the name. To work for a moment exclusively in terms of saga logic, the Þorbrandssons, despite a respectable lineage from Tungu-Odd (*Landnámabók* 1968, Table VI) are “losers” in *Eyrbyggja saga* and no prominent descendants are cited in this saga or in *Landnámabók*. Although they enjoy the support of their chieftain and foster-brother Snorri, who seldom quits a situation at personal disadvantage, both their political and jural undertakings are stymied, and their actions under arms are no more successful, whether at the level of the individual or as an armed troop. In their faction are no men of the stature of Arnkell Þórólfsson or Björn Ásbrandsson *Breiðvíkingakappi*.

Þorleifr is listed first among the Þorbrandssons, as eldest, and in *Eyrbyggja saga* too his byname is already in place. No conventional portrait is offered. On the other hand, a mocking opponent whom he will meet at a much later date in the saga, the Þórðr blígr Þorlaksson noted in the *Landnámabók* entry, is given a brief description—*ákafamaðr mikill ok qrorðr* [a very vehement and outspoken man] (Ch. 12, my trans.). With the authorial description of temperament, the byname *blígr* is best seen as referring to physical appearance and seems to have meant “staring” (a cataract in one eye could be considered). Nothing precludes there being two like personalities in a single saga chapter or in a single interpersonal antagonism, although it would not be conventional.¹² Nor can we, still without answers to basic questions concerning *kimbi*, conclude that Þorleifr is being intentionally juxtaposed to Þórðr at this early point in order to prepare for future action. As there is no other Þorleifr in the immediate “narrative vicinity,” his nickname does not appear intended to distinguish him from namesakes and we must assume another function.

Information on Þorleifr’s character is soon made available in the account of Snorri’s return from a trip to Norway made at age 14. He had been accompanied by Þorleifr and his brother Þóróddr. Perhaps part of the plan to make Snorri’s success abroad appear modest but also borne out by later events as a telling detail on personality, Þorleifr is described as decked out in foreign-bought finery:

[Þ]á skauzk þar mjök í tvau horn um búnað þeira Snorra ok Þorleifs kimba. Þorleifr keypti þann hest, er hann fekk beztan; hann hafði ok steindan sǫðul all-glæsiligan, hann hafði búit sverð ok gullrekit spjót, myrkblán skjöld ok mjök gyldan, vönduð ǫll klæði; hann hafði þar ok til vart mjök ǫllum sínum fararefnum. (Ch. 13)

[people saw a world of difference between the outfit of Snorri and that of Thorleif Kimbi. Thorleif had bought the best horse he could get, along with an elaborate, painted saddle. He carried an ornamented sword, a gold-inlaid spear, and a dark-blue, heavily gilded shield. All his clothes were of the finest quality, and it was on this outfit that he’d spent most of his travelling money.]

This description is worth quoting in full since at this point the rhetorical style of the saga is consciously attuned to the character it is describing—fulsome and all exteriors. In lieu of a standard concise description, this must function as Þorleifr’s moral portrait.

Þorleifr does not reappear in the saga until considerably later, when Snorri’s aid is sought by the Þorbrandssons in their effort to re-

cover the estate of deceased freemen farmers who had formerly been the family's slaves. After a first such dispute, Snorri was initially reluctant to become involved because Arnkell would be his opponent; his would-be clients were openly critical of him. Then the second former slave is killed. Snorri seems to overstate the case in order to provoke Þorleifr by saying that Arnkell will always carry the day in any dispute with the Þorbrandssons. But while less powerful in political and material terms than Snorri, Þorleifr will not be bested verbally, even as he rises to Snorri's bait and retorts critically:

"Satt segir þú þat, Snorri; má þat ok kalla várkunn, at þú réttir eigi vörn hlut við Arnkel, því at þú heldr engu máli til fulls við hann, því er þit eigizk við með ykkir at skipta." (Ch. 32)

[“That’s true enough, Snorri, you’ve every excuse for not wanting to defend our rights against Arnkel. In every quarrel with him you’ve been the loser, no matter what the issue.”]

Later, at a feast hosted by Snorri, Þorleifr takes the potentially dangerous step of intervening in a *mannjafnaðr*—a verbal contest over candidates for the title of best man in the district—in favour not of Snorri or Styrr, but of Snorri's rival Arnkell. The statement and ensuing dialogue are heavy with innuendo. Þorleifr calls Arnkell the best man, since he has let no killing in his household go unavenged, while Snorri's man Haukr lies dead but uncompensated. Þorleifr introduces this judgment by saying that Snorri and Styrr should count as only one man, since they were related (“tied”) by marriage (*ek kalla, at þar sé sem einn maðr, er þeir eru Snorri goði ok Styrr, fyrir tengða sakar*; Ch. 37). Pointing up the fact that Snorri is Styrr's son-in-law in this fashion suggests the charges of sodomy that figure fairly frequently in defamatory social comment in medieval Iceland. Snorri does not reply at the time and the other guests, while aghast at Þorleifr's boldness, think that no more than the truth has been said. As the guests leave, a time when gift-giving was customary, Snorri gives Þorleifr a fine long-handled axe but then curiously continues: “*mun hon eigi taka til hofuðs Arnkatli, þá er hann býr um hey sitt á Örlygsstöðum, ef þú reiðir heiman til ór Álptafirði*” [“Should it be that you ride home to Alptafjord and take aim at Arnkel while he's stacking his hay at Örlygsstaðir, it might not be long enough to reach as far as his head”]. Örlygsstaðir is the disputed farm property. Snorri is not making a reference to Þorleifr's physical height but to his stature in matters of honour and the unspoken word here is *lítilmannligr*, “small-mannish, deficient in masculinity”—a slur in

keeping with Þorleifr's earlier comment about Snorri and Styrr. Provoked, Þorleifr says that when Snorri is ready to avenge Haukr, he, Þorleifr, will not be slow to swing at Arnkell.

Arnkell is eventually attacked and mounts a heroic defence from a haystack surrounded by a frozen turf wall. Þorleifr is the bold one who tries to mount the wall, and while he is forced back, Arnkell's blow at him breaks the sledge runner that has proved so effective a makeshift weapon in his defence. After suffering several wounds, Arnkell is killed but the saga does not identify who struck the fatal last blow. The resulting court case is ill-handled by the women who were Arnkell's heirs, leading to a change in Icelandic law. Only Þorleifr is condemned as responsible for Arnkell's death, an outcome narratively prepared by his leap onto the turf wall, and is sentenced to three years' outlawry. Thus, one might conclude that he serves as the family scapegoat in the affair and goes into exile.

On making land after the voyage to Norway, Þorleifr is charged with the collective cooking duties that rotated among the crew members but is delayed when he finds the cooking pot already in use by another Icelander, Arnbjörn Ásbrandsson (Björn's brother) who is not sharing food with the crew. Þorleifr reacts to the Norwegians' jibes that he is slow like all Icelanders and throws down the pot with Arnbjörn's food, stalks off and is then burned on the neck when Arnbjörn taps him with the hot pot-stirrer. Þorleifr gives a relatively measured reply, worth quoting in full when we recall the proposed meaning of "mock" for his nickname:

"Eigi skulu Nóreghsmenn at því hlæja, með því at vit erum hér komnir tveir samlendir, at þeir þurfi at draga okkr í sundr sem hunda, en minnask skal þessa, þá er vit erum á Íslandi." (Ch. 39)¹³

["Since we're the only Icelanders here, it wouldn't be right to give the Norwegians a chance to make fun of us, and drag us apart like a pair of fighting dogs. But I'll remember this next time we meet back in Iceland."]

Perhaps more telling is the authorial aside that the saga offers when Þorleifr returns after two years in Norway to Álfafjörðr: *ok lét vel yfir sér, sem vanði hans var til* [pleased with himself as was his wont].¹⁴ This comment, coming at midpoint in the block of chapters during which Þorleifr is active (Chs. 32–48), radiates forward and backward in the saga and functions as a proxy for the conventional introductory portrait as did his silent cameo appearance on his return from Norway with

Snorri. The outstanding question is to what degree it also resonates with the nickname *kimbi*.

As recounted in *Landnámabók* Þorleifr, once back at Álptafjörðr, asked for the hand of Helga Þorlaksdóttir, sister of Þórðr *blígr*, in marriage. Þórðr reappears in the saga in a style in keeping with his earlier portrait when he pointedly asks of Björn Ásbrandsson, his sister-in-law Þuríðr's lover, about the resemblance of her son, the young Kjartan. Þórðr turns down Þorleifr's suit, saying that the marks on Þorleifr's neck from the porridge incident would heal before he would see his sister so married. Again Þorleifr's response is moderate while still causing the disagreement to escalate in typical saga feud fashion. He says that he is not sure revenge can be taken on Arnbjörn but meantime he is not averse to seeing Þórðr receive some blows of his own. Þorleifr orchestrates this petty revenge when he causes Þórðr to be hit by a piece of flying turf as he passes by a rough game at the Assembly. A minor armed fracas ensues but is patched over with Snorri's help.

Þorleifr and his brothers, against Snorri's advice, attempt an attack on Arnbjörn, and one is tempted to draw the conclusion that Þórðr's insult, more than the prospect of marriage with Helga, is the driving force. As previously, Þorleifr is not above faulting his foster-brother Snorri for "timidity" in refusing to join or condone them. The foray is not a success, and, worse, Arnbjörn and his redoubtable brother Björn Ásbrandsson are now firmly allied with Þórðr *blígr* and the other Þorlakssons. Snorri is drawn into plotting against the rival faction, but his wily advice is not effective in a slave's assassination attempt against any one of Arnbjörn, Björn or Þórðr. The slave is disarmed, captured and killed, but even such a death under aggressive circumstances requires reparation, and Þórðr offers to deliver it to Þorbrandr and his sons to rob Þorleifr of the chance to mock his courage ("*ok skal Þorleifr kimbi eigi at því eiga at spotta, at ek þora eigi at færa þrælsgjöld*") ["Thorleif Kimbi's not going to have an excuse to poke fun at me and say I'd never dare to bring the slave-payment myself"], Ch. 43). This is the sole instance of mockery being directly associated with Þorleifr by another. There has been ample illustration of his scorn for Snorri under certain circumstances but the wit and irony of mockery have not been prominent.

Two celebrated battles with appreciable forces now result from the squaring off of the two factions, at Álptafjörðr and on the ice of Vigrafjörðr. Prior to the former Þorleifr reacts, in conventional saga fashion,

to an old woman's jibe when she observes how fine-looking his enemy Steinþórr Þorlaksson was, when he rode up. He rushes out with his brothers after him. After some first skirmishing, Þorleifr again shows that he can push these same buttons, and calls attention to the fact that the man who wounded Snorri's son is one to whom Snorri had earlier promised immunity. In the second encounter, Þorleifr again exhibits his bravery, and is described as always in the fore. He mocks his opponent Steinþórr for carrying the same poor sword as in their earlier meeting. But when Þorleifr later tries to dispatch Þórðr blígr who has slipped to the ice after a spear thrust, Steinþórr races up and strikes at Þorleifr, severing his leg below the knee, which belies the comment on the sword. All Þorleifr's earlier verbal confrontations are thus realized physically as well, but not to his advantage. After the battle Snorri and his men arrive to assist the Þorbrandssons and, true to form, the injured Þorleifr urges Snorri to mount a pursuit. Three sons of Þorbrandr have suffered wounds in the battle. Although Snorri is successful in saving their lives, *Þorleifr kimbi gekk alla stund síðan við tréfót* [Thorleif Kimbi walked with a wooden leg for the rest of his life] (Ch. 45). In the ensuing settlement Þorleifr is again charged as having been the instigator to the fighting, but receives compensation for his lost leg. This time the settlement holds, although Þorleifr *kimbi* leaves the saga and Iceland to emigrate to Greenland. His nickname is memorialized in the toponym *Kimbavágr*, a bay between two glaciers where he settled and lived to old age. Þorleifr entered the saga a vain and confident young man returning to Iceland with fancy continental clothes; he leaves defeated, with a wooden leg but nickname intact.

The above rather full excerpting from *Eyrbyggja saga* concerning Þorleifr *kimbi* illustrates how a character from the second rank contributes to the feuds that embroil such better known saga characters as Snorri, Arnkell and Björn *Breiðvíkingakappi*. Here, as in many other sagas, feuding begins in and is often furthered by trivialities among lesser men, to which the honour code obliges both farmer and chieftain to respond. Þorleifr's characterization is of a single piece and portrays, with no particular sympathy, a man neither good nor bad, ostentatious, bold, touchy in matters of honour, and as ready of tongue as many other saga figures. Neither his character nor his causes nor his actions compel our admiration or support, but an understanding of them is crucial to an understanding of Snorri's role as chieftain and of much of the saga. Although Þorleifr's relationship to his chieftain is affected by their

childhood tie, which may be thought to attenuate somewhat the verbal expression of his dissatisfaction, it illustrates how clients could try to coerce their district leaders into action in their support, with questions about their manhood, courage and slowness to vengeance more common than wheedling.

The saga author's sureness of characterization and the Þorbrandssons' lack of luck can be confirmed by a brief consideration of Þorleifr's brother Þóroddr who also accompanied Snorri on the initial trip to Norway, returning better dressed than Snorri but more modestly than his brother. As in the case of Þorleifr, he is not accorded a capsule portrait by the author, and has no identifying byname. It is he who exhibits community responsibility and fulfils the family obligation to assist their erstwhile competitor Arnkell in disposing of the corpse of his father Þórólfr *bægifótr* ("Twist-foot") who had been plaguing the district as a *draugr* or revenant. While a participant in all the family squabbles, he is never an instigator, nor does he cause their escalation through verbal abuse. After the settlement with the Þorlakssons he marries and starts farming, and it is he who intervenes again in the matter of the marauding Þórólfr when the *draugr* resumed haunting after the death of his son. But Þóroddr fails to heed the advice of a crone who tried to discourage him from keeping a suspect pet—a bull calf born of an injured cow that had uncharacteristically been spared and then serviced by a supernatural animal from the sea after having licked the ashes from the incineration of Þórólfr's malevolent corpse. The bull Glæsir will eventually gore Þóroddr to death. He loses his life rather than a leg, even after a career more civic-minded than his brother's—further proof, if any were needed, that life in the sagas is governed by a complex causality shot through with contingency and injustice.¹⁵

Our task has been to examine Þorleifr's emblematic nickname *kimbi* and address two questions, bearing in mind that they may be only one: that of the etymology and original meaning of the term from the tenth century, and that of the meaning ascribed to the traditional name by the thirteenth-century saga author, in a sense prescribed and illustrated for his public in the deployment of consonant event and detail in the narrative. There is also the matter of chronology, of whether the "historical" Þorleifr received his byname in childhood, like Snorri, or later as a young adult, like Styrr. As noted, the saga author has assigned the name from Þorleifr's first appearance in the saga and it is maintained through to the end, even given iconic status in the name of a landmark

in distant Greenland. Of the options earlier reviewed in this article for the name's signification, those of a foreign origin find least corroboration in the surrounding saga narrative. An Irish proper name as Marstrander has suggested finds no support and faces the formal difficulty of resulting in an unconventional apposition of two proper names,¹⁶ with no adjunct evidence that *Cimbe* or *Cimbi* was moving toward incorporation in the lexical mainstream. OIr. *cimbid* "unransomed captive" has the requisite phonetic contours for easy adaption into early Icelandic as *kimbi* and has the added attraction that events in Þorleifr's life as jural scapegoat and outlaw relate to the same semantic field. But Þorleifr is credited with no time *vestr um haf* "west across the North Sea," either in his youth or during his exile, which he would appear to have spent in Norway, nor is there any other evidence for the Irish legal term penetrating Old Norse-Icelandic. The institution of outlawry was sufficiently familiar not to require foreign lexical adjuncts.¹⁷ Of native Germanic roots, that underlying the words *kimbill* "satchel" and *kimbla* "truss up" could imaginatively be viewed in a metaphorical light as suited to a vain person concerned with clothing and appearance, but just as easily associated with a person bearing a grudge and bound in rancour. On the other hand, it cannot be excluded that the nickname did indeed mean "bundle, satchel" and had its origin in some event or circumstance that is lost to us.

Björn Halldórsson's interpretation "mockers" must be taken seriously, both for its assumed base in popular speech of an era closer in time to the saga's composition and for its agreement with instances of Þorleifr's behaviour in the saga. But Þorleifr has no sharper a tongue than Snorri and the ludic dimension, malice and scurrility that one finds in such clear-cut saga mockers as Sigmundur Lambason in *Njáls saga*, Tjorvi Hróarson in *Landnámabók*, Tannr Bjarnarson in *Sturlunga saga*, Broddi Bjarnarson in *Ölkofra þáttr*, or even the sorcerer Oddr Kottluson in *Eyrbyggja* are lacking. If *kimbi* is to be associated with Mod. Icel. *kíma* it would appear to fit best at the low intensity end of the semantic scale and one might on this basis suggest "the Censorious" as Þorleifr's byname.¹⁸ The sense of self-importance that is conveyed in the description of his clothing and the telling phrasing *ok lét vel yfir sér, sem vanði hans var til* [pleased with himself as was his wont] accord well with Þorleifr's complaints and moderated incitation of Snorri, his menacing retort to Armbjörn and none too witty expression of ill-will toward Þórðr

blígr to round out the portrait of a vain, critical, somewhat impetuous man.¹⁹

Nonetheless, other characters in the saga, Oddr Kǫtluson and Þórðr *blígr* Þorlaksson in separate strands of the story, are those explicitly identified as the verbally scornful, and, as noted, saga conventions seldom oppose two characters of like temperament. The less than perfect fit between Þorleifr *kimbi* and “mocker” then compels me to return to the narrative evidence a further time. Although I have called the portrait of Þorleifr internally consistent I would single out one incident in which his behaviour is somewhat at odds with that which precedes and follows and, indeed, with the succinct *Landnámabók* entry. This is the encounter with Arnbjörn at the camp-site on the islet off the Norwegian coast. While Þorleifr’s usual impetuosity is evident in his throwing down the pot with Arnbjörn’s porridge when annoyed by his countryman’s unwillingness to surrender it and by the Norwegians’ jibes about Icelandic slowness, he uncharacteristically does not rise to the insult and injury that the light blow with the hot porridge-stirrer (*þvara*) represents. Instead, his statement of reluctance to take action seems overmotivated—in terms of family saga style—and he invokes the need for ethnic unity in the presence of the foreigners. This, the use of direct speech, and the threat to repair the situation back in Iceland appear to me an unconvincing amassing of narrative detail and a pitch to the saga public’s national sentiment that were intended to get the narrator past a sticky point in his story. It will be noted that Þorleifr does not act on his threat once back in Iceland until the insult by Þórðr *blígr* and the rejected marriage suit. *Landnámabók* alludes to the incident in Norway, but says of Þorleifr’s reaction to the burn on his neck only *Kimbi brá á gaman* [Kimbi made light of it]. A case could be made for this as intended to be a telling revelation of personality (nonchalance, little concern for honour) and thus to create a discrepancy between the briefer incident from the settlement history and the longer saga account, but the textual evidence is spare. Yet it is worth noting that it is at this point that the *Landnámabók* account drops the full name in favour of the byname alone, as if suggesting that it were the more operative in the incident. This occurs a second time in the reference to Þórðr *blígr* being hit with the sandy turf. At a minimum I would suggest that the saga version, with its invocation of Icelandic identity and cohesion, evident in both the Norwegians’ criticism and Þorleifr’s appeal for deferment, shows the author at some pains to reconcile the main lines of his

inherited story with his conception of the character of Þorleifr, while keeping the latter within a normative honour-driven pattern of behaviour.²⁰

This invites speculation that the key to the nickname may lie in this incident. In the later rejection of Þorleifr's marriage suit by Þórðr blígr, known for his sarcasm, reference is made to the burn scars, now two years old, on Þorleifr's neck, here called *grautardílar* "porridge marks."²¹ While preparing food could not have been a demeaning task for men at sea or at war, the reference is clearly intended to be deprecatory and suggestive of women's work, since more neutral terminology was available. One of the earlier proposed roots for *kimbi* was *kuml/kumbl* in the sense of "cairn," that is, stones amassed as one might otherwise gather and tie grain or staves of wood (the verb *kimbla*). But as a cairn was often commemorative, *kuml* also meant a distinguishing "mark" or "sign." In *Kormáks saga*, Steingerðr divorces Bersi after he suffers a wound to the buttocks when a sword glances off his shield, a wound that she, perhaps in search of a pretext, qualifies as dishonouring. This prompts her to give him three nicknames, matched to stages in his career, the last of which is the scurrilous *Raza-Bersi* "Arse-Bersi." Then the saga, through indirect discourse but with a choice of words intended to reflect the speaker's usage, states that Steingerðr *eigi vilja eiga Bersa þorkumlaðan* (*Kormáks saga* 1939, Ch. 13). This is conventionally read as Steingerðr not being willing to remain married to Bersi as a cripple and she could be referring to a more slowly healing knee wound suffered at the same time, but the basic notion of *þorkumlaðr* is bearing a lasting scar or mark (*þr* as intensive, here durative, prefix + *kuml/kumbl*).²² The term has added weight in these circumstances in that the mark has been made by another man in a dispute and is a *klámhogg* "dishonouring blow." I then propose that we read *kimbi* as "little mark," and see it, in early versions of the story, as a slur promoted by Þorleifr's enemies back in Iceland, that is, only in adult life. Whether because the original meaning was lost or Þorleifr's memory was being spared in the later written tradition—a kind of editorial management of family and local history that is apparent in other instances of written treatment of scurrilous defamation—the name is given Þorleifr on his introduction in the saga (but is not used then, it should be noted, by other characters) and the character is contoured in the surrounding story to encourage an alternative interpretation of the nickname as that of a scornful man. The suppression of the conventional moral portrait near

the start of the saga may have been an additional narrative tactic to this end.²³ In the absence of such an authorial statement, which is generally phrased also to pass as community judgment on the figure, the nickname functions as a kind of shorthand to subsume and recall essentials of personality and behaviour, the background against which actions in the narrative present are to be seen. Thus bynames can be seen as another narrative device to assist saga authors in the deployment of secondary characters, even if the name in question were historically authentic and, in a sense, prescribed in the story.

To summarize and conclude concerning Þorleifr and his unique nickname, no certainty has been reached in the matter of the etymology of the byname *kimbi*, although *kumbl* "mark" offers an attractive key to the somewhat problematic textual evidence. The nickname appears to have its source in popular tradition associated with the Þorbrandssons, possibly in a socially significant event such as the incident with Arnþjórn Ásbrandsson, and was retained both in *Landnámabók* with little in the way of explanatory context and by the author of *Eyrbyggja saga*, who made it the summary judgment on this character of the second rank. The caution that etymology should not be privileged in the search for meaning in specific historical circumstances has again proved apposite. The somewhat paradoxical situation of a singular name with a firm place in tradition dictated certain compositional strategies in the saga, which in turn steered interpretation of the byname as "mockery" or "censorious." It prompted the interjection into the etymological debate of new lexemes (e.g., *kíma*) and shaped subsequent lexicographical entries. The author has realized a credibly shaded portrait of a vain, impetuous but brave man, active in his family interests in both verbal and physical duelling, someone who does not particularly engage our sympathy but who does illustrate the situation of free farmers anxious to maximize their land-holding on the resource-scarce island. In competition with others in like situations, he turns to his chieftain who is also his foster-brother, Snorri *goði*.

Our perhaps improved understanding of the coercion to which clients subjected their district leaders does not exonerate Snorri in the matters of the death of Arnkell or the assassination attempt against members of the Þorlaksson-Ásbrandsson faction but rather reveals the moral cost at which effective chieftainship was exercised in early Iceland. In this goal-oriented, ruthless and above all self-controlled politician we also see the gradual redefinition of a childhood nickname.

In *Eyrbyggja saga* Þorgrímr Þorgrímsson—Snorri—attends first to his own inheritance and family situation, then is drawn into the legal squabbles of his clients over land, eventually into feud and pitched battles. Turning these encounters to personal advantage wherever possible in that he cements political alliance even when the loser in the legal or armed struggle, he ends in the saga a convert to the new religion and a successful expeller of revenants against whom he ironically invokes the law of trespass. Þorleifr Þorbrandsson's nickname *kimbi*, whether it has its origin in character and social censure, or in incident and social interaction, is tied to normative codes of behaviour and the centrality of personal honour in the early North. But Snorri *goði* makes other men's honour his political instrument rather than letting them direct him through coercive appeals that call his own honour into question. Each of the family sagas and *þættir* in which Snorri appears assumes a slightly different stance toward this central figure of the late tenth and early eleventh centuries, as dictated by saga thematics, the narrative matter at hand, and possibly audience and patron sympathies. Here, we may recall the saga author's measured assessment of Snorri.²⁴ The result is a figure not so much psychologically complex as elusive in evaluative terms, since the sagas encourage comprehension more than judgment, and the latter on their own largely unstated terms. Þorleifr *kimbi* Þorbrandsson is a lesser man, but in this character realization, some of this same ambiguity and elusiveness is also found, in no small part crystallized in his byname.

NOTES

1. The phenomenon of bynames can become a very marked feature of the narrative, as exemplified by *Landnámabók* 1968, S 111: *Kjallakr hét maðr, son Bjarnar ens sterka, bróður Gjaflaugar, er átti Björn austræni; hann fór til Íslands ok nam land frá Dögurðará til Klofninga ok bjó á Kjallaksstöðum. Hans son var Helgi hrogn ok Þorgrímr þengull undir Felli, Eilífr þrúði, Ásbjörn vǫðvi á Orrastoðum, Björn hvalmági í Túngarði, Þorsteinn þynning, Gizurr glaði í Skoravík, Þorbjörn skrofuðr á Ketilsstöðum, Æsa í Svíney, móðir Eyjólfss ok Tin-Forna* [There was a man called Kjallakr, the son of Björn the Strong, the brother of Gjaflaug, whom Björn the Easterner got in marriage; he travelled to Iceland and took the land from Dögurðará to Klofningar and lived at Kjallaksstaðir. His sons were Helgi Roe and Þorgrímr Sea-weed Stem below Fell, Eilífr the Magnificent, Ásbjörn Muscle at Orrastaðir, Björn Whale-gut in Túngarðr, Þorsteinn the Thin, Gizurr the Cheery on Skoravík, Þorbjörn the Magnificent at Ketilsstaðir, Æsa on Svíney, the mother of Eyjólf and Tin-Forna;

my trans.]. For a general consideration of the Old Norse/Icelandic byname material, see Whaley 1993.

2. On saga portraiture and likely classical and post-classical models, see Lönnroth 1965.

3. *Eyrbyggja Saga* 1989; *Snerrir/Snorri* is interpreted as "contentious, troublesome."

4. The byname *kimbi* is discussed in detail in the following. On the question of inheritance and patrimony, so important in this saga, see Byock 1989; on tensions across the generations, see Schach 1977 and Bragg forthcoming.

5. A formal distinction is doubtless to be made here between a byname added to a given name and a complete replacement. In the former case we seem to have a commentary on the person, while in the second the identifying, rather than describing, function seems dominant. Examples cited here and below are a random sampling from *Landnámabók* 1968.

6. Another compounding principle was to prefix an element to a proper name. These, too, might reveal place of residence, past history, or another characteristic, e. g., *Berðlu-*, *Blund-*, *Brodd-*, *Hqðā-*, *Holmgöngu-*, *Hunda-*, *Kampa-*, *Sleitu-*, *Víga-*.

7. The name is interpreted as "living-healthy"; see Pokorny 1921.

8. In particular the parts of the staves that projected past the bottom seem to have been meant, so that the image may have its origin in *kambr* "comb" (a word ultimately based in the idea of "teeth") rather than in the notion of "bundle" (*Kambr* occurs as a placename, and *Kambi* as a personal name). No term like ON-Icel. *glæsimaðr* "dandy" is explicit in the description of Þorleifr on his return from Norway, although there is more than a hint of such a judgment (note the adjective *allglæsiliðr* used of the saddle), so that one might pursue the idea that *kimbi* is derived from *kambr* with a meaning comparable to Eng. *coxcomb*, but I have found no supporting evidence for such metaphor for a vain, overdressed person. *Kambr* was however used of the crest of a rooster (*hanakambr*), e. g., Gullinkambi in *Völuspá*.

9. Alexander Jóhannesson 1951–56. Other lexicographers who have entries for words possibly related to *kimbi* but do not adduce other evidence than that reviewed above are Baetke 1965–68, Fritzner 1883–1972, Heggstad, Hødnebo and Simensen 1990, Holthausen 1948. Swedish cognates are usefully discussed in Hellquist 1980, s.v.v. *kim*, *kimme*.

10. For a brief discussion of the problems of humble words and late attestations, see Liberman 1991: 222f.

11. See too examples in *Dictionary of the Irish Language* 1913–76, s.v. The cultural patterns evident in other instances of slave-holding and colonization stimulate speculation that unfree Celtic women might have been assigned household tasks that included the function of nursemaid, so that pet names drawn from Irish might have been given to infants of Norse stock, but we have no examples. In general, the family sagas give very little evidence of hypocoristic or abbreviated names.

12. An even more negative picture is given of the sorcerer Oddr Kǫtluson earlier in the saga: *mikill maðr ok knár, hávaðamaðr mikill ok máluqr, slysinn ok rógsamr* [a big robust man, loud-mouthed, a born trouble-maker and given to gossip and slander] (Ch. 15).

13. The ideologically charged motif of Icelanders abroad suppressing their contention of favour of temporary ethnic solidarity is also represented in *Gunnlaugs saga ormstungu* and *Bjarnar saga Hítðlakappa*.

14. *Eyrbyggja Saga* 1989 offers "as pleased with himself as ever."

15. There is no lack of subtlety in the Icelandic family sagas but it is often difficult to fix the point at which a line is to be drawn in the matter of authorial manipulation of detail for effects of cohesion, the esthetic satisfaction of perceived parallels and balances, contrasts, etc. Þorleifr is the first of the Þorbrandssons to be introduced and is credited with a brightly painted saddle (*steindan sǫdul allglæsiligan*); he leaves the saga with a wooden leg. Then his brother Þóroddr spares an injured cow and must have put a wooden splint on the broken leg; from the cow a calf Glæsir will be born, the cause of Þoroddr's death and the last mention of a Þorbrandsson in the saga.

16. Placenames, however, do figure as prefixes to given names, e.g., Sífú-Hallr Þorsteinsson.

17. With the events that follow in the train of Þórgunna, the immigrant from the Hebrides, *Eyrbyggja saga* is one of the richest in terms of deployment of Celtic-related narrative matter.

18. Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon, whose chief concern was naturally not the elucidation of *Eyrbyggja saga*, shares these reservations about *kimbi* "mock" and writes: "Einangrað vafaorð (e.t.v. skýringartilgáta B.H. [Bjarnar Halldórssonar] á viðurnefinu kimbi"; 1989: 460f., s.v. *kimbi*. General practice among translators has been to leave nicknames in the original (*Eyrbyggja saga* 1920, *Eyrbyggja saga* 1959, *Eyrbyggja saga* 1989), although Boyer 1987 accepts the "mock" identification, giving "Thorleifr le Gouaillieur."

19. A comparable figure is Jökull Ingimundarson in *Vatnsdæla saga*.

20. One of necessity thinks of Þorsteins þátr stangarhǫggs, and the blame that attached to a milder man for his slowness to seek vengeance for an ambiguous injury. Compare, too, the slash on Gunnarr's cheek by Otkell in *Njáls saga* and Njáll's insistence that Gunnarr make the incident publicly known so that his version of events would be "on the record." Injury to the head and face seems to have been particularly related to notions of honour (but no less those to the buttocks; see the discussion *infra* of Bersi in *Kormáks saga*).

21. Having "deconstructed" the saga account at this point, it would be satisfying to reveal that the nickname derives from *kimbi* "stave" as a nautical term replacing *þvara* "pot stick," part of the everyday language of life ashore that was banned at sea, but we have no *comparata* to legitimate such speculation.

22. In *örkumlaðr* there may be both interference from the verb *kumla*, *kumbla* “bruise, wound” (“piling up of blows”) and overtones from *orr* “scar.”

23. Or the portrait may simply have been lacking in oral traditions associated with Þorleifr. One additional, rather suspect detail, is the inclusion of the placename *Kimavágr* in Greenland, mention of which might be seen as a further attempt to neutralize any markedly negative connotations of the byname. Cf. the incongruous ascription of the founding of the English city of Scarborough (*Skarðaborg*) to Kormákr's brother Þorgils *skarði*, with a harelip or cleft in the chin as the possible referent (*Kormáks saga* 1939, Ch. 27).

24. Snorri has not been our main concern in this article, but in view of the ambivalent treatment it may be of interest to recall the moral portrait in *Eyrbyggja saga* (Ch. 15) and complete it with the physical particulars: *Snorri var meðalmaðr á hæð ok heldr grannligr, friðr sýnum, réttleitr ok ljóslitaðr, bleikhárr ok rauðskeggjaðr; hann var hógværr hversdaliga; fann lít á honum, hvárt honum þótti vel eða illa; hann var vitr maðr ok forspár um marga hluti, langrækr ok heiptúðigr, heilráðr vinum sínum, en óvinir hans þóttusk heldr kulða af kenna ráðum hans* [Snorri was of medium height and rather slight build, a handsome, regular-featured man with a fair complexion, flaxen hair, and a reddish beard. He was usually even-tempered, and it was hard to tell whether he was pleased or not. He was a very shrewd man of unusual foresight, a long memory and a taste for vengeance. To his friends he gave good counsel but his enemies learned to fear the advice he gave]. As Lönnroth convincingly illustrates, the saga authors likely had classical and post-classical models for such compressed portraiture, and among these Dares Phrygius's *De excidio Troiae historia* is of interest in the light of the relatively early Icelandic adaptation of this material in *Trójumanna saga*. Although the larger narrative tradition about Snorri would have supplied the main lines for the depiction of personality, it seems plausible that his portrait was also modelled on the precedent of Dares' portrait of another crafty leader, Ulysses: *Ulixem firmum dolosum ore hilari statura media eloquentem sapientem* (*Daretis Phrygii de excidio Troiae historia* 1873, Ch. 13); [Ulysses was tough, crafty, cheerful, of medium height, eloquent, and wise] (*Daretis Phrygii de excidio Troiae historia* 1966). *Trójumanna saga*, while it may be considered an intermediary for the set pieces of the family sagas, should not be seen as the immediate source for the portrait of Snorri; the recension cited by Lönnroth (1965: 111) offers: *Ulixes hinn spaki var sterkr maðr, meðalmaðr vexti, fláraðr, hýrligr í yfirbragði, forvitri ok málsnjallr*. Snorri's physical portrait includes mention of his medium height and it will be recalled that in the matter of the gift axe he questioned whether Þorleifr had sufficient “reach” to attack Arnkell. But for both men the “mediocre” is also an assessment of ethical stature.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Alexander Jóhannesson. 1951–56. *Isländisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*. Bern: A. Francke.
- Baetke, Walter. 1965–68. *Wörterbuch der altnordischen Prosaliteratur*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag.
- Björn Halldórsson. 1814. *Lexicon Islandico-Latino-Danicum Biornonis Haldorsonii*. Ed. by Rasmus Kristian Rask. Copenhagen: J. H. Schubothum.
- Bragg, Lois. 1995. "Disfigurement, Disability and Dis-integration in *Sturlunga saga*." *alvissmál* 4: 15–32.
- _____. Forthcoming. "Generational Tensions in *Sturlunga saga*."
- Byock, Jesse L. 1989. "Inheritance and Ambition in *Eyrbyggja saga*." In *Sagas of the Icelanders: A Book of Essays*. Ed. by John Tucker. New York: Garland. 185–205.
- Daretis Phrygii de excidio Troiae historia*. 1873. Ed. by Ferdinand Otto Meister. Leipzig: B. G. Teubner.
- _____. 1966. *The Trojan War: The Chronicles of Dictys of Crete and Dares the Phrygian*. Trans. by R. M. Frazer, Jr. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- A Dictionary of Old Icelandic*. 1957. Ed. by Richard Cleasby and Gudbrand Vigfusson. 2nd. ed. Suppl. by William Craigie. Oxford: Clarendon.
- Dictionary of the Irish Language*. 1913–76. Gen. ed. E. G. Quin. Dublin: Royal Irish Academy.
- Eyrbyggja saga*. 1920. *Eyrbyggja saga: Die Geschichte vom Goden Snorri*. Trans. by Felix Niedner. Jena: E. Diederichs.
- _____. 1935. Ed. by Einar Ól. Sveinsson and Matthías Þórðarson. Íslenzk fornrit 4. Reykjavík: Hið íslenska fornritafélag.
- _____. 1959. *Eyrbyggja Saga*. Trans. by Paul Schach and Lee M. Hollander. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- _____. 1987. *Saga de Snorri le godi*. In *Sagas islandaises*. Trans. by Régis Boyer. Paris: Gallimard.
- _____. 1989. *Eyrbyggja Saga*. Trans. by Hermann Pálsson and Paul Edwards. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Fritzner, Johan. 1883–1972. *Ordbog over det gamle norske Sprog*. Vols. I–III. Kristiania: Feilberg & Landmark, 1883–1896. Repr. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1954. Vol. IV. Suppl. and corr. by Finn Hødnebo. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1972.
- Heggsted, Leiv, Finn Hødnebo and Erik Simensen. 1990. *Norroen ordbok*. 4th ed. Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget.
- Hellquist, Elof. 1980. *Svensk etymologisk ordbok*. 2 Vols. Lund: Liber Läromedel.

- Holthausen, Ferdinand. 19498. *Vergleichendes und etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altwestnordischen*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Kelly, Fergus. 1988. *A Guide to Early Irish Law*. Early Irish Law Series 1. Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies.
- Kormáks saga*. 1939. In *Vatnsdæla saga*. Ed. by Einar Ól. Sveinsson. Íslenzk fornrit 8. Reykjavík: Hið íslenska fornritafélag.
- Landnámabók*. 1968. Ed. by Jakob Benediktsson. Íslenzk fornrit 1. Reykjavík: Hið íslenska fornritafélag.
- _____. 1972. *The Book of Settlements: Landnámabók*. Trans. by Hermann Pálsson and Paul Edwards. University of Manitoba Icelandic Series 1. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press.
- Lieberman, Anatoly. 1991. "Icelandic Etymology." [Rev. of Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon, 1989.] *Scandinavian Studies* 63: 221–29.
- Lönnroth, Lars. 1965. "Det litterära porträttet: latinsk historiografi och isländsk sagaskrivning—en komparativ studie." *Acta Philologica Scandinavica*. 27: 68–117.
- Marstrand, Carl J. S. 1915. *Bidrag til det norske sprogs historie i Irland*. Christiania: Jacob Dybwad.
- Pokorny, Julius. 1921. "Nachlass Kuno Meyer: Zur keltischen Wortkunde, No. 250, Altir. *Beollán* n. pr. m." *Zeitschrift für Celtische Philologie* 13: 193.
- Schach, Paul. 1977. "Some Observations on the Generation-Gap Theme in the Icelandic Sagas." In *The Epic in Medieval Society: Aesthetic and Moral Values*. Ed. by Harald Scholler. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer. 361–81.
- de Vries, Jan. 1961. *Altnordisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*. 2nd. ed. Leiden: Brill.
- Whaley, Diana. 1993. "Nicknames and Narratives in the Sagas." *Arkiv för nordisk filologi* 108: 122–46.



“Le grand metteur en scène”: Herman Bang in Paris, 1893–94

Kirsten Shepherd-Barr
North Carolina State University, Raleigh

ABSTRACT: *The Danish novelist, journalist, actor and director Herman Bang worked as a director in Paris during the period in the early 1890s when Ibsen and other Scandinavian dramatists were first being premièred in France. Bang's own directing skills and approaches were formulated during this period, as he went from an apprenticeship with the symbolist theatre of Lugné-Poë to the more realistic style of mainstream theatre. We aim here to explore some of the techniques and methods Bang employed in the range of theatre companies with which he worked and, most importantly, to emphasise his role in the emergence of the modern director. Using Bang's promptbook for a production of Rosmersholm, replete with his own detailed notes on acting and character and sketches for the mise en scène, we can begin to reconstruct and explore the choices he made as a director and to understand more clearly why his approach to theatre clashed with Lugné-Poë's.*

RÉSUMÉ: *Auteur, journaliste, comédien et metteur en scène, le danois Herman Bang a travaillé à Paris en tant que metteur en scène au début des années 1890 quand Ibsen et d'autres dramaturges scandinaves ont fait leurs débuts en France. Bang a formulé ses propres outils et méthodes pour la mise en scène pendant cette période, passant de l'apprentissage du théâtre symboliste de Lugné-Poë au style plus réaliste du théâtre populaire. Notre but ici est donc d'explorer quelques-unes des techniques et méthodes employées par Bang pour les différentes troupes théâtrales avec lesquelles il a travaillé, et surtout, de souligner son rôle dans l'émergence du metteur en scène moderne. En nous appuyant sur le cahier de travail de Bang pour une représentation de Rosmersholm, plein de ses propres notes sur les personnages, les techniques, et des plans pour la mise en scène, nous pouvons commencer à reconstruire et à explorer les choix qu'il a faits en tant que metteur en scène et d'aboutir à une meilleure compréhension des raisons pour lesquelles son théâtre est entré en conflit avec celui de Lugné-Poë.*

Theatre history reconstructs the nature of past theatrical events, often relying heavily on available archival material pertaining to initial productions. This endeavour to recreate theatrical performance bears increasing relevance to the broader contexts of dramatic representation, charting the theatre's role in the interaction of artistic movements and the cross-cultural exchange of ideas and influences. Theatre has often been excluded from the histories of artistic movements because of the supposedly ephemeral nature of performance. Yet the forces that unite to create theatre are often harnessed to a particular aesthetic agenda, as are those of the visual arts and literature; and, as theatre requires the harmonic convergence of so many discrete elements (text, actors, director, set and lighting designers, musicians, and so forth), it poses especially rich possibilities for tracking the array of ideas and cross-cultural interactions that fuel aesthetic movements. This paper focuses on one example of theatre as cultural and aesthetic interface, exploring the role of Herman Bang, the Danish director, writer, actor and journalist who lived in Paris for a year in the early 1890s and who became, in that brief space, deeply involved in presenting Ibsen's plays to French audiences.

Although Bang has rightly been called "one of Ibsen's most influential pioneers in France" (Meyer 1971, II: 298), his contributions went virtually unacknowledged at the time. Lugné-Poë, the French director with whom he worked most closely, was slow to acknowledge his help, and Bang's role in the diffusion of Ibsen's influence in France has thus only recently begun to be reassessed.¹ Lugné-Poë maintained decades later that Bang surpassed Reinhardt, Porel, Antoine, and Stanislavski as a director, and wrote warmly of him: "Il est vrai que le grand metteur en scène Herman Bang, qu'Ibsen devait envoyer deux ans plus tard à Paris, n'était point encore passé par là et que ce fut lui, lui seul, que créa les premiers ensembles selon la volonté de l'auteur" (Lugné-Poë 1936: 23). In his brief tenure with various theatre companies in Paris, from his arrival in February 1893 to his return to Denmark in June 1894, Bang exerted a profound influence on the way in which Ibsen's plays were presented and received. It is worth looking at the directorial methods he used, as they raise interesting questions about dramatic interpretation and staging in relation to the text, illuminating our understanding of the importance of this issue for contemporary theatre artists. In addition, Bang's work in Paris provides us with insight into the emergence of the modern director. In the following discussion I will focus on his interpre-

tation of one Ibsen play in particular, *Rosmersholm*, for which we have Bang's detailed directorial notes.

Although he had little first-hand directing experience, Bang had briefly been an actor and had trained enough to know that he was inclined to realistic theatre. He also explored and embraced new techniques, however, like those of the emerging naturalistic drama, pioneered in Scandinavia by William Bloch in Copenhagen, August Lindberg in Sweden, and Bjørn Bjørnson in Norway. Bloch especially was "Scandinavia's foremost exponent of stage naturalism in the age of Ibsen" (Marker and Marker in Durbach 1980: 60–61). He was open to theatrical progress so long as it focused on the actor and the interpretation of character. Lugné-Poë hints at some of the directorial techniques Bang introduced at the Théâtre de l'Œuvre:

Expulsé de Berlin où Bang et Hoffory avaient voulu arranger un festival Ibsen, il y a une vingtaine d'années, Bang s'adressa de Meiningen au maître, qui ne le connaissait que de nom, et obtint de lui une chaude recommandation auprès du duc, ami d'Ibsen. Quelques semaines après, Bang fut expulsé de Meiningen. En route pour Vienne il s'arrêta à Munich afin d'y rencontrer Ibsen.

(Lugné-Poë 1936: 89)

This comment underscores some of the factors that helped shape Bang's career: his affiliation with the pioneering naturalistic theatre in Germany, his acquaintance with Ibsen, and his nomadic, rootless lifestyle. It was Bang's homosexuality that led to his repeated "expulsions" from these German cities, where he was constantly keeping a step ahead of the police. Eventually, his travels led him to Paris (Amsinck 1972: 6). He brought with him valuable experience of contemporary theatre, including the ideas of the Duke of Meiningen and Professor Streben's work with the Sulkowsky Theatre in Vienna.² "Bang havde her set, hvor mange flere og bedre muligheder et lille teater havde for at udvikle og fremhjælpe hver enkelt skuespillers særlige talent" ["Bang had seen here how much greater the possibilities were in a little theatre to develop and further each individual actor's special talent"] (Amsinck 1972: 8). This focus on working to develop each actor's range and abilities—using the play as a tool for the actor, rather than the play (and the actor) as the vehicle for an aesthetic agenda—would ultimately put him at odds with the proponents of French symbolist theatre.

As a writer, Bang produced numerous journalistic pieces, novels and stories that clearly signalled his interest in contemporary ideas about art and literature, and in Paris he quickly became absorbed into literary

circles, for example frequenting Mallarmé's Tuesday soirées.³ His connection with theatre companies interested in producing new Scandinavian drama came about through Ibsen, who had heard Bang lecture on Maupassant and *Hedda Gabler* in 1891 in Christiania (Oslo), and was reportedly impressed by Bang's analysis of Hedda's character.³ Through a mutual acquaintance, his French translator Count Moritz Prozor, Ibsen asked Bang "to advise Lugné-Poë on the way his plays ought to be done" (Meyer 1971, III: 232). He recommended that Bang serve as a kind of production assistant in the Théâtre de l'Œuvre's upcoming productions of *Rosmersholm* and *The Master Builder*. Ever attentive to his growing reputation abroad, Ibsen was concerned that a Scandinavian presence should guide these productions and ensure their authenticity, in order to achieve the breakthrough he had already enjoyed in Germany and was on the verge of gaining in England through the ceaseless efforts of such champions as William Archer, Bernard Shaw, and Elizabeth Robins. In fact, Bang would be the "ambassador" of several Scandinavian dramatists in France (including himself), directing nine of the eleven French premières of Nordic plays produced in Paris in 1893–94.⁵

André Antoine at the Théâtre Libre had set the precedent for hiring a Scandinavian "mediator" to help ensure that no cultural *faux pas* would be committed in his 1890 production of *Ghosts*, a landmark in early modernist theatre history. Clearly Bang was likewise meant to provide the necessary Scandinavian touch for the Théâtre de l'Œuvre, making sure that costumes, mannerisms, voices, gestures, and facial expressions seemed *à la manière nordique*. But he did much more than this; while fulfilling his official function, he also assumed the role of unofficial director and dramaturge, and proved such a valuable presence that his position was retained after his departure in 1894 and filled by the naturalistically-inclined Bjørn Bjørnson (Amsinck 1972: 34). This clearly demonstrates a recognition on Lugné-Poë's part that the direction taken by Bang had become a vital element in the success of the productions, and was also the mode preferred by the majority of the actors.

Bang understood that Ibsen's concern was not so much about achieving an "authentic" Scandinavian flavour in the productions, but having a fellow Scandinavian writer and (most important) man of the theatre on hand who would keep these premières from being mere fodder for the current French vogue for foreign literature, or the whim of some fashionable but fleeting aesthetic agenda. Ibsen's instinct proved

right; much of Bang's tenure with the Théâtre de l'Œuvre throughout 1893–94 was spent in frustration over the style encouraged by Lugné-Poë. While he did not mind so much the unpaid work (most of the company went unpaid), Bang chafed under what he considered an extreme symbolist interpretation of Ibsen, and struggled constantly to rein in some of Lugné-Poë's deliberately anti-naturalistic methods: 1) hieratic, monotone, plainchant line delivery; 2) slow, fluid, dream-like movements and gestures; 3) abstract scenery painted by avant-garde contemporary artists like Edvard Munch, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, and the Nabis group; and 4) the use of a thin gauze scrim placed between audience and actors (the actors acting behind it).⁶ He felt that while such techniques could be appropriate for Maeterlinck's dramas—which he admired—and even for a later Ibsen play like *The Master Builder*, they would be ill-suited to such stoutly realistic dramas as *A Doll's House* and *An Enemy of the People*.

Far from abandoning his work with Lugné-Poë, however, Bang stayed and endeavoured to subvert these methods through intensive individual and group coaching of actors, a realistic directorial style, and constant efforts to explain Ibsen's plays in their original context, thus managing to curb some of the extremism. Arguably, his modifications of the radical style of the Théâtre de l'Œuvre helped to save plays like *Rosmersholm* from an obscure and misguided experimental staging, and gained for them an audience they might not otherwise have attracted. Ultimately, however, he realized this company would always privilege aesthetic, formal considerations over text and characterization. When he left to take up his work as a director in Copenhagen, most notably with Folketeatret from 1897–99, he took with him the techniques he had developed and honed during his Parisian directing experience. His contribution to the concept of the modern director was thus based on a set of cross-cultural interactions and experiments that are characteristic of literary and artistic modernism.

A brief chronology of Ibsen productions in France will help us to contextualize Bang's contributions as a director. Surveying the many Ibsen premières in France, one quickly gains an impression of the diverse groups that produced his works and, more importantly, of the wave of interest in "les étrangères" (primarily Scandinavian and Russian writers) that fuelled these first productions. I will describe only the premières that occurred shortly before and during Bang's own residence in Paris, and will focus primarily on Bang's role in the productions of

several important Paris premières: *A Doll's House*, *Rosmersholm*, *The Master Builder*, and *An Enemy of the People*. Of these, all but the first were done at Lugné-Poë's theatre and were therefore self-consciously promoted as symbolist productions. The fact that he was associated with such different theatrical styles provides us with an important means of analysing the versatile approach Bang used in directing Ibsen in Paris, and I hope to show how his dissatisfaction with Lugné-Poë's interpretation of Ibsen helped to affirm and underscore the style he himself espoused and which stemmed largely from his experiences as a director in Scandinavia and Germany before coming to Paris.

As was the case in England, where Ibsen's breakthrough was occurring simultaneously, many of Ibsen's premières in France took place in experimental, "fringe" theatres, often relying on subscriptions (this was especially crucial in England where many such productions were officially banned from West End theatres). Eleven months after the première of *Ghosts* at Antoine's Théâtre Libre in May 1890, the next play of Ibsen's to be performed in Paris was *The Wild Duck*, on 28 April 1891, again at the Théâtre Libre with Antoine playing Ekdal. These productions were firmly rooted in Antoine's aggressively naturalistic style. Actors used a conversational (rather than declamatory) tone of voice, often dropping to a whisper; they occasionally turned their backs to the audience; the audience watched the play in darkness, and in true naturalistic fashion the stage scenery was meant to *be* rather than merely suggest the play's setting. On 17 December 1891 came the first attempt to stage Ibsen commercially in France: a matinée of *Hedda Gabler* at the Vaudeville. The production was directed by the young Albert Carré and starred Marthe Brandes, a Langtry-esque, fashionable comedienne who openly professed to understand neither her part nor the play itself, and played Hedda as the stereotypical "sophisticated, elegantly attired femme fatale from the pages of Dumas or Flaubert" (Marker and Marker 1989: 163). Lugné-Poë later recalled how the audience laughed at this "crushing failure" which moved Francisque Sarcey to proclaim in *Le Temps*: "Ibsen is now dead in France" (Meyer 1971, III: 197).

A private salon performance of *A Doll's House* in 1892 seems to confirm that, at least in terms of mainstream theatre, this was true, and that Ibsen's plays would be confined to elite, avant-garde circles. Indeed, on 16 December 1892, *The Lady from the Sea* was humbly presented at Les Escholiers (where Lugné-Poë worked before starting his own venture, the Théâtre de l'Œuvre). Proust was among the fellow stu-

dents Lugné-Poë lectured about Ibsen. Lugné-Poë played Dr. Wangel in what was probably a very bad production—Bang at least was appalled. Already Lugné-Poë seems to have begun to implement his idiosyncratic acting style—little movement, flat vocal tone—later claiming to be influenced by the Germans. But this production “marked the beginning of an important partnership. Lugné-Poë was to do more for Ibsen than any other Frenchman, before or since; and within eighteen months at the age of twenty-four,” he was to take on the part of Solness and become the first actor to succeed in that role (Meyer 1971, III: 219).

The year 1893 was for Ibsen in France what 1891 had been for him in England: a pivotal moment in his introduction to a wider European audience. In the autumn, Lugné-Poë along with the artist Edouard Vuillard and the art critic Camille Mauclair founded the Théâtre de l'Œuvre, opening on 6 October with *Rosmersholm*. This production marked Herman Bang's first alliance with Lugné-Poë. As Frantisek Deak has shown, *Rosmersholm* firmly launched the Théâtre de l'Œuvre as the leader of the symbolist theatre movement, and more importantly made symbolist theatre an avant-garde enterprise (Deak 1984: 29–36; Deak 1993: *passim*). Next they put on *An Enemy of the People* (10 November 1893), a “hopelessly unruly premiere” that instantly associated the play, the Théâtre de l'Œuvre, and Ibsen with anarchism. It opened on a day of “fierce anarchical demonstrations” in the Paris streets, and was enthusiastically supported by radical young artists and thinkers who queued up in droves clamouring to be extras in the crowd scenes; the dress rehearsal eventually turned into a riot which Bang only succeeded in containing by assigning each extra a specific and distinct character (Marker and Marker 1989: 131). This was a technique borrowed from the Meininger company in the 1870s, and Bang's crowd direction was singled out and commended by critics; but the performance generally got tepid reviews, partly because it was preceded by an incendiary lecture about the play by the well-known anarchist Laurent Tailhade. William Archer described this bit of propaganda as an obvious excuse to attack all leading French politicians and writers, including the influential conservative theatre critic Sarcey (Meyer 1971, III: 232–33). The anarchist overtones persisted; in April 1894, on the night before *Solness le Constructeur* premièred, the Foyot restaurant bombing took place in which (ironically) Tailhade, who happened to be dining there, lost an eye. It was later revealed that none other than Félix Fénéon, an anarchist writer and critic and “the midwife of symbolism,” who also greatly admired Ibsen, had perpetrated this act.⁷ The Théâtre de

l'Œuvre, now firmly regarded as anarchist-symbolist in its agenda, was typical of French artistic endeavours—politics and aesthetics were never far apart, particularly in so visible and immediate a form as theatre. This link only alienated the apolitical Bang even further from its aims.

In France, *A Doll's House* never sparked the kind of heated public debate about marriage and women that it did on its 1889 première in London; that uneasy mixture of admiration and hostility failed to materialize, partly because the play came after a succession of other Ibsen plays in France which laid an entirely different groundwork for his reception, and partly because of the unusual set of circumstances surrounding the first French productions of the play in the early 1890s. The first performance of *A Doll's House* in France had catered to the literati of Paris at a private salon. *La Maison de Poupée* received its first commercial production at the Vaudeville on 20 April 1894, with the popular actress Gabrielle Réjane as Nora.⁸ Finally—fifteen years after the play was written, and five years after its sensational English première—*A Doll's House* was publicly performed in France. Bang was the artistic director for the production, which was not quite as conventionally done as one might suppose. The manager, Paul Porel, was Réjane's husband and had been director of the Odéon until 1892; he was also the "only well-known director to fight for new tendencies" (Jasper 1947: 80). As previous French directors had done, Porel hired Bang to direct the acting and to ensure that the production would have Scandinavian authenticity—further evidence of the French eagerness during this period for cross-cultural exchange and the successful transplantation of foreign works. Bang leapt at the chance to work with Réjane on giving the text a realistic interpretation, and she recalled later how meticulously and exhaustively he coached her. Her Nora was the *vraie révoltée*, vivacious, erotic, immodest, yet at the same time showing a "sustained sense of fear," of great nervous energy, building to "wild confusion" and finally "inert numbness."⁹

While the production found favour with audiences, the critical reaction was overwhelmingly negative; "even the foolishness which Archer compiled from the British press in his 'Mausoleum of Ibsen' (1894) pales by comparison with such Gallic *hauteur*."¹⁰ Many of these critics subscribed to an avant-garde aesthetic that favoured symbolism and other new artistic ideas, and for whom this seemingly conventional play had no formal novelty. Thus, compared to other Ibsen plays (*Ghosts*, *An Enemy of the People*, *The Master Builder*, and *Peer Gynt*),

A Doll's House hardly had a sensational effect in Paris, ultimately contributing little to the avant-garde or even to the cause of women's rights.¹¹

Although he left Paris in June 1894, Bang's association with the Théâtre de l'Œuvre was not yet finished. When Lugné-Poë took *Rosmersholm* and *The Master Builder* to Christiania, arriving on 3 October 1894 with his ten very young co-actors, Bang again played a key role as mediator. He arranged for Ibsen to see both performances, and then introduced the two men. Ibsen (speaking in German) told Lugné-Poë that French actors were the best suited for his parts, because they played with passion. Although he apparently loved the performance of *The Master Builder*, and pulled the necessary strings to get Lugné-Poë a King Oscar medal as a reward, he did have some reservations about the stylized interpretations of his plays, especially *Rosmersholm*. The character of Brendel, for example, was portrayed as a mysterious symbol of "l'invincible attirance de l'homme vers l'idéal, il est l'Idéal".¹² Lugné-Poë consciously aimed for this interpretation by an innovative lighting technique which Ibsen disliked, complaining to Bang about the way Brendel on his last entrance was brilliantly spotlighted "électriquement," and saying he did not want such "mystérieuses bêtises" in his pieces (Lugné-Poë 1936: 81). This effect was no doubt heightened by the fact that Lugné-Poë also turned down the house lights for this production, a gesture Antoine had made earlier but which was sufficiently novel to draw comment in the press (Reque 1930: 91).

Bang's Parisian experience had challenged him to work within a range of theatrical modes, from Lugné-Poë's heavy symbolism to the more realistic acting of Réjane. Bang's success at both styles of staging demonstrates both his versatility and the resilience of Ibsen's texts. Bang ideally occupied a kind of middle ground in his approach to Ibsen, between the overly realistic and conventional and the extremely experimental and obscure. That Ibsen himself preferred an approach like Bang's is evident from his many letters to actors, directors, and other interpreters, warning against any extreme approach, whether old-fashioned or radically new. Bang recorded a conversation between himself and Lugné-Poë in which their fundamentally opposed ideas about staging Ibsen are thrown into sharp relief. The French director idealistically aims for the expression of the spiritual, mystical realms of the soul; Bang eschews such abstract and hazy notions in favour of a practical, actor-oriented directorial approach (Deak 1993: 216). "Det blev Bangs

opgave at overbevise de franske skuespillere og Lùgné-Poe om, at de nordiske dramers personer var levende mennesker, og at det symbolske kun skulle anes bag ord og handling, mens kampen for ideerne skulle lyse frem af skuespillernes menneskelige kampe" ["It became Bang's project to convince the French actors and Lùgné-Poë that the characters of Scandinavian drama were living people, and that the symbolic should only be felt behind words and action, while the struggle for ideas should shine forth from the actors' human struggle"] (Amsinck 1972: 15). This was partly the basis for his dislike of attaching the labels "symbolist" and "anarchist" to Ibsen's plays; "hans store opgave var at 'frelse' det nordiske drama og sin personinstruktion fra tidens stærkt tendentiøse interpretationer" ["his great project was to 'rescue' the Scandinavian drama and his own direction of acting from the period's strongly tendentious interpretations"] (Amsinck 1972: 18).

The question was not whether theatre could be a place for experimentation and new ideas, but to what extent radical staging techniques could be applied to Ibsen's dramas, or to contemporary Scandinavian drama in general. As he wrote in an article on Nordic dramas in Paris for *Nyt Tidsskrift* in May 1894, Bang was wary of any doctrinaire use of theatre in the name of theatrical reform:

De Mænd, der vil reformere Teatret deler Skæbne med de andre—med Malerne, Billedhuggerne, med Musikerne, med Digterne, hele den unge Græshoppesværn af Symbolister, Modernister, Nyromantikere, Impressionister og Mystikere. De tror, mens de feberagtig søger det nye og frelsende, at finde Kunstens Fornyelse i en Formel og i en voldsomt praktiseret Teori.

[Those men who would reform the theatre share the fate of the others—painters, sculptors, musicians, poets, the whole young grasshopper-swarm of symbolists, modernists, neo-Romantics, impressionists, and mysticists. They believe, as they feverishly seek the new and redeeming, that they will find the renewal of art in a formal and violently applied theory.] (Amsinck 1972: 14)

This statement reveals Bang's mission in Paris to be wider than simply rescuing Nordic plays from such theoretical violence. Like Ibsen, his main interest is in championing the essential clarity of theatre through characterization, in preserving theatre against what they both saw as the distorting effects of artistic vogues and tendencies.

As Hanne Amsinck has observed, Bang habitually noted down the practical requirements (props and other staging elements) of his productions, and she regrets the apparent loss of such valuable evidence from his work in Paris: "havde vi bare haft Herman Bangs instruktions-eksemplarer, havde vi været godt hjulpet" ["if we only had Herman

Bang's promptbooks we would be greatly helped"] (Amsinck 1972: 45). However, Bang's directorial approach is clearly demonstrated by the notes on stage directions and text in his promptbook for *Rosmersholm* which is in the Royal Library, Copenhagen.¹³ This document probably came to Bang through William Bloch, who directed the first Danish production of the play (in 1887); it is likely that Bang sent for it in desperation on realizing the full extent of the symbolist interpretation of Ibsen at the Théâtre de l'Œuvre. Although this copy is not in the Fonds Rondel with other promptbooks from the Théâtre de l'Œuvre, it is possibly the "Norwegian text in hand" to which Frantisek Deak refers (Deak 1993: 189). The likelihood that this was Bang's vision of how *Rosmersholm* should be staged in Paris is further substantiated by the fact that several months later, when directing the Théâtre de l'Œuvre's production of *Un Ennemi du Peuple*, he also used a Bloch promptbook (from an earlier production at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen) (Deak 1993: 200). The promptbook for *Rosmersholm* reveals the ideas behind Bang's staging of Ibsen and hints at the methods he probably used in Paris. It also points up more clearly why his approach would have clashed with Lugné-Poë's while harmonizing with the English productions; Bang followed the latter's emphasis on the female character's predicaments and her centrality to the drama, thus engaging contemporary debate and discourse on women's rights and further promoting the concept of the Scandinavian *révoltée*.

Bang's notes indicate he saw the play as Rebekka's tragedy, with her as the central figure.¹⁴ His marginal notes in the script, as well as his alteration of many of Ibsen's stage directions for Rebekka, show how carefully he thought out her role. For example, in the scene in which Rebekka reveals that she has just been listening at the keyhole to Rosmer and Kroll, Bang notes at the bottom of the page, under Ibsen's stage directions: "Here is the great high point of the play" (96). Bang concentrates almost exclusively on the character of Rebekka, altering or deleting certain of Ibsen's stage directions regarding her, as in the following examples: "flytter sig lidt nærmere" ["moves a little closer"] is deleted (11); "afbryder ham [Kroll] alvorligt" ["interrupts him with seriousness"] is deleted (13); "Rebekka rejser sig" ["Rebekka rises"] (14) and "Rebekka sætter sig i en lænestol" ["Rebekka sits down in an armchair"] (17) are deleted, as is "går hen til rektoren" ["goes over to the Rector"] (20).

These comments show Bang deliberately reconfiguring the blocking for Rebekka, focusing on her physicality and the use of her body in ways that often seem to contradict Ibsen's directions. Clearly, he wants more physicality than Ibsen has indicated. In order to show his conception of the positions of the characters on stage, Bang draws spare, simple diagrams in the margins, all variations on one basic sketch which occurs throughout his notes. He sometimes adds to or elaborates on Ibsen's stage directions, as when he interjects the note "Rebekka slipper stolen" ["Rebekka releases the chair"] on the line, "Ja—glade" ["Yes—happiness"] (104) and when he deletes the direction for her to show anxiety ("gå omkring, knuger og vrider hænderne" ["walks about, rubs and wrings her hands"], 142). These minor alterations cumulatively render Rebekka more physical, as if to highlight the repressed, vulnerable, tormented side of her character, and avoid the stereotype of the helpless, hand-wringing female. They also show Bang's instinct for dramatic effect, seeking new ways for the actor to portray strong emotion realistically rather than melodramatically, something Ibsen would develop to a fine art in his directions for *Hedda Gabler* a few years later.¹⁵ Bang in fact anticipates this move away from melodramatic female gestures to distinctive and idiosyncratic mannerisms often revealing wordless protest and repressed emotion.

One of Bang's most interesting and innovative comments occurs when he indicates that Kroll should stand "med Ryg til Publikum" ["with back to audience"] on the line "Vi vil dog prøve, om vi ikke kan få gjort dig uskadelig" ["we will nevertheless try to see if we can't render you harmless"] (82). Antoine used this novel bit of blocking in his productions at the Théâtre Libre, in *Ghosts*, for example, drawing vehement protests from conservative critics like Sarcey. It was clearly a favorite of Bang's. Other instances of this particular direction can be found again on the line "fra den tid, da du kom til os" ["from the time you first came to us"]—Bang notes, "Rosmer sidder med Ryg mod Publikum, Rebekka staar" ["Rosmer sits with back to audience, Rebekka stands"] (101)—and on Rosmer's line, "Kom ikke ind på dette her! Ikke nærmere, Rebekka!" ["Don't get into this any further! No closer, Rebekka!"]; Bang notes, "Med Ryg til Publikum" (194). The use of this deliberately "fourth wall"-oriented movement indicates the refreshing unconventionality in Bang's directorial approach, reflecting as well the influence of German and French naturalism on Scandinavian theatre.

Bang also pays particular attention to tempo and dynamics. It should be noted that in the texts Ibsen only rarely designates tempo instructions like slow or fast. Bang writes "hast" or "hastigt" ["in a hurry"] in at least nine places in the text, often beside chunks of dialogue rather than individual lines, and at emotional high-points in the play. For example, in the first lengthy conversation between Rosmer and Kroll (50-51), "hast" appears twice in the margins—first beside Rosmer's great revelation about his break with Kroll's party, then next to Rosmer's line "Det har du selv tvunget mig til, Kroll" ["you yourself have forced me to it, Kroll"].¹⁶ The instruction peppers the margins of the final pages of text, in the climactic scene between Rebekka and Rosmer culminating in their suicide. Bang also indicates "sagte" or "langsomt" ["softly," "slowly"] next to certain lines, and pointedly notes "pludseligt" ["suddenly"] on Rebekka's line "Hvorledes vil du da kunne leve livet?" ["How will you be able to live life?"] (184). In addition to such tonal or rhythmic indications, Bang occasionally shows where he thinks a pause should occur, and what the dynamics of certain key lines should be. For example, he writes at the bottom of a key page of dialogue in which Rosmer and Rebekka discuss their relationship (107): "De taler halvhøjt i den stærkeste intim [?] Spænding" ["they speak semi-audibly in the most intimate intensity"]. Later in the final scene between Rosmer and Rebekka, Bang makes another revealing note about dynamics—Rosmer "næsten skriger" ["almost screams"] his line "Har du mod og vilje—til dette, Rebekka?" ["Do you have the courage and will—for this, Rebekka?"]. Bang pictures the final exit dramatically but simply, with Rosmer and Rebekka walking out dead centre (upstage—so again with backs to the audience, absorbed in each other), followed by the door closing—a subtle yet powerful intertextual nod to the ending of *A Doll's House*.

In terms of extensive cuts, revisions, or alterations that affect the original meaning, Bang rarely tampers with the actual text.¹⁷ However, there are occasional deletions in the longer passages of any one character, as in most of Rosmer's speech about the "spiritual marriage" he and Rebekka have formed (129). It is interesting and revealing that Bang deemed this passage either irrelevant, troublesome, or for some other reason in need of excision; the idea of the "spiritual marriage" became one of the most famous and lasting of the Ibsenist concepts and figured in debates about the New Woman in Europe, as the writings of such women as Lou Andreas-Salomé attest. Most likely his motive was to keep the audience's attention on Rebekka and her complex psychologi-

cal impulses, as he had throughout the play, rather than diverting it to abstract ideas.

In this and other ways, Bang's approach to Ibsen resembles that of his contemporaries in England, a connection which has not been previously made. William Archer, Elizabeth Robins, Janet Achurch and Charles Charrington, the Independent Theatre (and Herbert Beerbohm Tree, one of the few mainstream directors who would undertake to produce Ibsen in the West End) all staged Ibsen's plays in realistic fashion, either because overt experimentation would risk critical and audience favour or because of the trickle-down effect of censorship on British theatre, censorship having effectively encouraged and enforced a rigid set of standards for production that were hard to sway. Prevailing conditions had also persuaded audiences that plays of the realistic mode (including drawing-room, society comedies and cup-and-saucer melodramas) were the natural idiom of the modern theatre. The distinction here is that in England, Ibsen was played deliberately for his iconoclastic potential to disrupt and overthrow contemporary British drama using West End conventions, relying on content rather than form for radicalism since there was little receptivity to the kind of formal theatrical experimentation Lugné-Poë employed. But it is just as powerfully Bang's ideas about foregrounding the female characters' physicality and emotional tension that link him with the first English productions of Ibsen in a profoundly important way. These productions conformed on the surface to realistic, acceptable theatrical conventions, yet shared a deeply radical basis in their emphasis on dilemmas of the female characters.

Bang's work with various French theatre groups sharpened his instincts as a director, and deepened his conviction of the responsibility to work closely with the actors, from stars like Réjane to the crowds who served as extras in *Un Ennemi du Peuple*. It also perhaps contributed to his belief in the director's total involvement and immersion in the theatre. His mission was clear: the modern director must not merely arrange the staging, he must learn the whole range of his craft in order to become "det centrale led i skabelsen af en forestilling" ["the central link in the creation of a production"] (Amsinck 1972: 45). In his writings Bang emphasizes above all his passion for the theatre, for "den Kunst ... som vi nu og da behager os i at paastaa er i Dekadence, men som dog af alle har bevaret den største Magt over vore Sind" ["that art which we sometimes like to declare is decaying, but which of all arts has maintained the greatest power over our souls"] (Bang 1892: dedication).

Although he is no theoretician or dramaturgical philosopher, Bang says, he hopes that the reader of his book will feel "et Pust af den Kærlighed til Scenens Kunst, som har fulgt mig hele mit Liv" ["a whiff of that love for the art of the theatre which has followed me all my life"] (Bang 1892: dedication). It is ironic that Bang's international reputation as a director will probably rest primarily on his brief and not entirely happy liaison with the French avant-garde theatre. His concern for the preservation of theatre may have provided the strongest basis of all for his approach to directing the Scandinavian plays that were, however fleetingly, so popular in France.

NOTES

1. As early as 1889 Prozor, Ibsen's authorized French translator, mentions Hermann [sic] Bang—"un jeune romancier danois de plus grand talent"—in the preface to his first published volume of Ibsen translations (Prozor 1889: 14–15). For accounts of Ibsen's breakthrough in France, see Amsinck (1972), Lugné-Poë (1931, 1936), Nyholm (1959: 7–78), and Reque (1930). Some of Bang's own recollections of his Parisian stint are in Bang (1910); he also recorded his impressions as correspondent to *Dagbladet* and other Scandinavian newspapers. On related aspects of Bang's career see Greene-Gantzberg (1992, 1986). Bigeon (1984: 207–51) included a chapter on Bang, along with chapters on Brandes, Ibsen, and Strindberg.

2. Bang (1892) devotes a chapter to each of these in his book *Teatret*.

3. For a contemporary French account of Bang in Parisian literary circles, see le Rouge (1993). Indeed, Mallarmé's praise of Ibsen in the Danish newspaper *Politiken* in 1898 may owe something to his connection with Bang.

4. Bang's description of Ibsen's reaction is recounted in Lugné-Poë (1936: 92ff).

5. A synopsis of these productions is given in Amsinck (1972: 32). As his work with the Théâtre de l'Œuvre was unpaid, the 37-year-old Dane supported himself as a journalist, serving as Paris correspondent for various Danish and Norwegian newspapers; he would sometimes write four or five articles a day (42).

6. For fuller descriptions of these techniques see Deak (1993) and Jasper (1947).

7. See Halperin (1988: 57). Le Rouge (1993: 225–31) gives a contemporary account of the Foyot restaurant bombing. Fénéon was interested in Ibsen in terms of both anarchism and symbolism, and had volunteered as an extra for the turbulent première of *Un Ennemi du Peuple*.

8. This performance was "only for subscribers of the Vaudeville," according to the program for the performance. See *Maison de Poupée* (1894), Fonds Rondel Re.19.211, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Paris.

9. Marker and Marker (1989: 60–61). With her hand-wringing, wild-eyed hysteria, this Nora sounds much like the melodramatic and overwrought Nora/Flora of *Breaking a Butterfly*, the English travesty of *A Doll's House* for which Henry Arthur Jones and Henry Herman were responsible a decade earlier.

10. Marker and Marker (1989: 62). Reactions to the French performance can be found in Noël and Stoullig (1894).

11. An anecdote printed in *Le Figaro* points up the cultural gulf between the play and its French audience. In the foyer after the performance, the public's reaction was captured "par une bonne dame qui mettait son manteau en disant à son mari: 'Vois-tu, chez nous on se serait engueulé d'abord, et on se serait réconcilié après'" (Reque 1930: 45).

12. Alfred Vallette, review of *Rosmersholm*, unspecified paper (November 1893), Fonds Rondel. Vallette was founder (in January 1890) of the *Mercure de France*, the main journal of the symbolist movement, and was a champion of Maeterlinck (Jasper 1947: 37). He exhorted his countrymen: "we need a theatre"; Paul Fort took this up and started the symbolist theatre with his Théâtre d'Art, focusing on Maeterlinck (Nyholm 1959: 32–33).

13. *Herman Bang's instruktøreksemplar af Rosmersholm* (København, 1886), med indstregninger og regiebemærkninger [*Herman Bang's director's copy of Rosmersholm ... with underlinings and notes on the mise en scène*]. Cited by page numbers in parentheses throughout text. The marginal comments are in two strikingly different hands: the majority (indicating stage directions, tempo and dynamics of speech, and other comments) in a tiny, close, neatly-lettered black-ink hand; some in a larger, more sprawling, pencilled hand, used mostly for textual underlining. These underlinings were perhaps made by Bloch, or by an actor; they could mean either that the given line corresponds to a given movement/stage direction, or that the line is important and should be emphasised accordingly by the actor. Checked against samples of Bang's handwriting, it is clearly the fine, black-ink hand that is his.

14. As Deak also points out (1993: 189).

15. Note for example the stage direction Ibsen gives Hedda when she is first left alone on stage in Act I: "Hedda [går] om på gulvet, hæver armene, knytter hænderne som i raseri. Slår så forhængene fra glasdøren, blir stående der og ser ud" ["Hedda paces the floor, raises her arms, clenches her fists as in rage. Thrusts the curtains aside from the glass door, remains standing looking out"] (Ibsen 1922: 315).

16. "Hastigt" occurs on the following pages of the *Rosmersholm* promptbook:

On Rebekka's lines "Nej, aldrig. Og ikke doktor West heller. Aldrig med et ord" ["No, never. And not Dr. West either. Never with one word"] and "Det er umuligt. Det er bare noget, De vil bilde mig ind. Aldrig i verden er det sandt" ["It is impossible. It's just something you want me to believe. Never in the world is it true"] (142).

Next to Rosmer's line "Hvorledes forklarer du, hvad der er sked med dig?" ["How do you explain what has happened with you?"] and Rebekka's reply: "Det er rosmer-slægtens livssyn" ["It is the Rosmerian outlook on life"] (179).

From Rosmer's line "Er det ikke underligt...?" ["Isn't it strange?"] to Rebekka's "Har det? Og endda så—? Alligevel?—" ["Has it? And even so—? Anyway?—"] (181).

"Hastigt muligt" ["As fast as possible"] next to the exchange between Rosmer and Rebekka: "Ja, det er jo det, som vilde være det store... . Å Rebekka—hvor kan jeg tro fuldt ud på dig?" ["Yes, of course *that* would be the great... . Oh Rebekka—how can I believe fully in you?"] (183).

On Rosmer's "Ja, du,—det er dette spørgsmål, som jeg aldrig..." ["Yes—that's a question that I never..."] (196).

Next to the exchange from "Men jeg vil ikke se dit nederlag, Rebekka!" ["But I don't want to see your destruction, Rebekka!"] to "Aldrig har du sind til at gå Beates vej" ["You'll never have the mind to go Beata's way"] (198).

"Hastigt, Haand i Haand" ["Quickly, hand in hand"] next to the exchange from "Mand og hustru bør følges ad..." to "For nu tør jeg det" ["Husband and wife ought to go together"... "For now I dare to do it"] (201).

17. Some of the pencilled corrections have to do with the language, specifically "fordanskning" (literally, "making Danish") of common Norwegian idioms. Thus "sidder igen" (3) becomes "bliver tilbage" ["remains behind"], "liker bedst" (5) becomes "holder mest af" ["likes the best"], and "nok så" (9) becomes "ganske" ["rather," or "pretty much"]. Such minor changes were fairly standard in stagings of Ibsen in Denmark, and the "fordanskning" of the Norwegian is an idiomatic, not a semantic change.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Amsinck, Hanne. 1972. *Sceneinstruktøren Herman Bang og det franske symbolistiske teater*. Copenhagen: Gads Forlag.
- Annals du théâtre et de la musique*. 1894. Ed. Noël et Stoullig. Paris.
- Bang, Herman. 1892. *Teatret*. Kjøbenhavn: Schubothes Boghandel.
- _____. 1910. *Masker og Mennesker*. Kjøbenhavn: Gyldendal.
- Bigeon, Maurice. 1894. *Les Révoltés Scandinaves*. Paris: Grasilier.
- Deak, Frantisek. 1984. "Ibsen's *Rosmersholm* at the Théâtre de l'Œuvre." *Drama Review* XXVIII (Spring), 1: 29–36.
- _____. 1993. *Symbolist Theater: The Formation of an Avant-Garde*. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Durbach, Errol, ed. 1980. *Ibsen and the Theatre*. London: Macmillan.

- Greene-Gantzberg, Vivian. 1992. *Herman Bang og det Fræmmede*. Copenhagen: Gyldendal.
- _____. 1986. "Herman Bang als Theaterkritiker in Deutschland." *Skandinavistik*, 7–20.
- Halperin, Joan U. 1988. *Félix Fénéon: Aesthete and Anarchist in Fin-de-Siècle Paris*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Herman Bang's instruktøreksemplar af Rosmersholm* (København, 1886), med indstregninger og regiebemærkninger [*Herman Bang's director's copy of Rosmersholm ... with underlinings and notes on the mise en scène*]. Ny kongelig samling 1204, 8°, Royal Library, Copenhagen.
- Ibsen, Henrik. 1922. *Samlede Digterverker*. Vol. 5. Oslo: Gyldendalske Bokhandel.
- Jasper, Gertrude R. 1947. *Adventure in the Theatre: Lugné-Poe and the Théâtre de l'Œuvre to 1899*. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press.
- le Rouge, Gustave. 1928; repr. 1993. *Verlainiens et Décadents*. Paris: Editions Seheur.
- Lugné-Poe, Aurélien. 1931. *La Parade*, II. Paris.
- _____. 1936. *Ibsen*. Paris: Editions Rieder.
- Marker, Frederick and Lise-Lone. 1980. "Ibsen and the Scandinavian Theatre." *Ibsen and the Theatre*, ed. Errol Durbach. London: Macmillan.
- _____. 1989. *Ibsen's Lively Art: A Performance Study of the Major Plays*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Meyer, Michael. 1971. *Ibsen: A Biography*. Vols. II and III. London: Rupert Hart-Davis.
- Nyholm, Kela. 1959. "Henrik Ibsen paa den franske scene." *Ibsenårbok 1957–59*. Skien: Oluf Rasmussens Boktrykkeri.
- Prozor, Moritz, trans. 1889. *Les Revenants. La Maison de Poupée*. Paris: Albert Savine.
- Recque, A. Dikka. 1930. *Trois Auteurs Dramatiques Scandinaves: Ibsen, Björnson, Strindberg devant la Critique française 1889–1901*. Paris: Honoré Champion.



New Historicism and the Prose of Joy Kogawa's *Obasan* and Leena Lander's *Cast a Long Shadow*

Seija Paddon
University of Helsinki

RÉSUMÉ: Selon l'expression de Stephen Greenblatt, il y a en général très peu de véritables inventions dans la culture; dans la pratique, l'écriture se sert de matériel transmis, hérité, modifié, transformé et reproduit sous une forme ou une autre. *Obasan*, de Joy Kogawa et *Cast a Long Shadow* [Jette une grande ombre], de Leena Lander peuvent être considérés comme des ouvrages prétendant revenir en arrière dans le temps. Plus spécifiquement, dans ces romans le matériel hérité et reproduit, ce que nous pouvons appeler les inter-textes des romans, représente une gamme qui va d'emprunts épistolaires jusqu'à des rapports gouvernementaux et une quantité surprenante de textes théologiques des XV^e, XVI^e et XVII^e siècles. Par conséquent, nous voyons la dissolution de mythes auparavant totalisants, et nous entrons dans un domaine romanesque de discours en conflit. En outre, la renarration fictionnalisée que font Kogawa et Lander de segments particuliers de l'histoire rapportée peut être vue en termes reconstructionnistes comme exprimant une narration jusqu'ici étouffée; il s'agit donc de retourner les histoires au domaine des conflits sociaux dont ils sont le produit.

ABSTRACT: Stephen Greenblatt has arrived at the dictum that as a rule, there is very little pure invention in culture; in practice writing employs material that is transmitted, inherited, modified, altered, and reproduced in one form or another. Joy Kogawa's *Obasan* and Leena Lander's *Cast a Long Shadow* can be viewed as works that claim to return to history. In these novels, specifically, the inherited and reproduced material, what we can term the novels' intertexts, run the gamut from epistolary borrowings to governmental memoranda and an astonishing number of fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth century theological texts. As a result, we see the dissolution of once totalizing myths and enter a novelistic terrain of conflicting discourses. Moreover, both Kogawa's and Lander's fictionalized retelling of particular segments of recorded history can

be seen in reconstructionist terms to give voice to hitherto silenced narration, hence returning the 'histories' to the field of the social conflicts that originally produced them.

Moral: there exist obsessive ideas, they are never personal; books talk among themselves, and any true detection should prove that we are the guilty party.

(Umberto Eco. *Reflections on The Name of The Rose*)

I have chosen New Historicism as a mode of analytic approach for my reading of Joy Kogawa's *Obasan* and Leena Lander's *Cast a Long Shadow* because the conflicting debates over the definitions and textual politics of New Historicism offer an interesting context within which to consider contemporary literary writing. More specifically, I should say, it is a context that not only allows us to see contemporary literature's relation to history, but also the ways in which such literature manipulates historical texts. Brook Thomas in his book—appropriately titled—*New Historicism* tells us that at its most general, the term “historicism” can refer to any sort of historical method (4),¹ or it can refer to historiography, especially the German historiography of the 19th century, which carried the name *Historismus*. Within contemporary use, and while New Historicism has general and specific meanings, it refers to “our relationship to the past and the way it is possible for us to understand it” (Thomas 4). It means, among other things, the establishment of new connections between literature, literary writing and history. Importantly, we are compelled to think about history as intertextuality that is inevitably interventionist since it assists us in remaking the past, or our perception of the past. The contention is, of course, that history is not some reified phenomenon, but rather it is always mediated by human kind through discursive activity.

Since the impreciseness of “New Historicism” means that it doesn't have a representative approach to literature, I have appropriated one of Thomas's critical approaches in my study of Kogawa's and Lander's novels as works that claim to “return to history,” rather than being explicitly concerned with the rewriting of it. The novels' fictionalized retelling of particular segments of recorded historical “facts” can be seen in reconstructionist terms to give voice to hitherto silenced narration, hence they return to the field of social conflict which originally produced them. While arguments in this paper derive their support from

varied theoretical sources, I would like to mention Foucault's 1963 text, *Madness & Civilization* as the backbone of my study.

While both novels present a new mode of analysis of relatively familiar historical events, or chains of events, they represent disparate historical periods. Kogawa's novel, first published in 1981, deals with the Canadian Government's policy and practice of internment and dispersal of Japanese-Canadians during the Second World War, hence the novel deals with a relatively recent history. However, in her writing, Kogawa defamiliarizes the notion of language as mimetic or reflective of reality, thus making the reader reassess what passes for historical "truth."

For Joy Kogawa, a poet and a third generation Japanese-Canadian, whose novel *Obasan* won both the First Novel Award and the Canadian Authors' Association Book of the Year Award, the experience of writing this partly autobiographical, partly fictional novel, was an act of regenerative exorcism. Through the eyes of the child/narrator, Naomi, the novel tells the story of Naomi's and her family's lives of hardship, tragedy, and pain during the turbulent years of the Second World War. On the surface level, the novel narrates the fragmentation and destruction of one Japanese-Canadian family among uncountable others. Before its dispersal and enforced relocation from Vancouver, the family consists of Naomi, her brother, Stephen, her parents, aunts and uncles, and two sets of grandparents. On a deeper level, the novel tells of Naomi's silent search for her mother from whom she is separated at the age of five, her unspoken feelings of guilt and the blame she assumes for the loss. It is only at the novel's close that she is told the truth; her mother, who had travelled to Japan before Pearl Harbour for what was to be a visit with her sick grandmother, was in Nagasaki the fateful day the atom bomb was dropped on the city. For Stephen, whose musical talent is discovered early and encouraged, first by his mother and father and subsequently by caring teachers during his otherwise difficult school years, music becomes a way out from the indignity of being seen as an enemy alien. As his talents are recognized and awarded, he distances himself from his family background and Japanese roots; he becomes an internationally known artist who no longer has anything in common with the members of his family who are still alive.

Leena Lander's Finnish language novel *Lankeaa pitkä varjo*, or *Cast a Long Shadow* in English translation, in turn, is based on the more distant history of the 17th century witch trials in Åland. In the novel,

fictive realities are constructed in layers. Nils Pilsander, the Circuit Court Judge of Åland "appears" to the author/narrator as a man obsessed by a need to unburden his conscience, to retell the chain of events that led to seven women being condemned to die as witches. Hence, he becomes the novel's shadow-narrator. While the reader learns about the lives of these women, multiple historical realities meet and challenge each other. The original and actual court records Lander researched tell of the judge's passionate pursuit to eradicate evil and of the many judicial errors he made in the process. The reader meets the women in their everyday circumstances as Lander embellishes details and narrates the terror which the sudden disruptions and imprisonments cause in their lives. The court records tell of tortured women, deceitful or despairing husbands, and forcibly abandoned babies. In Lander's telling, the narrated "histories" also become a study of the workings of the judge's mind and of the prevailing beliefs and thoughts of the times. The judge has offered to be the subject of the novel, and he dominates the narration, but he also becomes the author's nightmare. The author, in seeking answers from Jung's theories, is compelled to ask whether her opponent is the judge of the distant, disturbing past, or her own shadow self. Thus the novel evokes what is sometimes termed "metaphysical shudder" in its pursuit of an answer to philosophical as well as Jungian questions of guilt.²

Lander, the several times award winning author of eight novels, plays for theatre and radio, essays, and criticism, succeeds in her narration of 17th century life in its inexplicability, fragmentation, and subtextual richness. In her prose, the readers find themselves in a world and time in which they would not choose to live, and yet, they are powerless to adopt an attitude of detached contemplation, hence they are challenged by the problem: whose authority are they to accept, the narrator's or their own based on the officially sanctioned authority of traditional accounts of history. In both Kogawa's and Lander's novels, then, the actual, "official" truth of the times is both questioned and challenged by the voice of humanity to which only contemporary history will give credibility.

The specifically inherited, referred to, and reproduced materials in these novels run the gamut from epistolary borrowings to governmental memoranda, to an astonishing number of fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth century theological texts, as well as official court records. This "reproduced" and/or referred-to textual material functions as "evidence"

of narrative authenticity in the fictive retelling of the stories. The idea of "evidence," or the textual traces left by the past, constitute the actual, rather than virtual reality (Wilkinson 80) in Kogawa's and Lander's novels. But the traces also become part of a paradox. If we keep in mind that the main thrust of New Historicism is its distrust of received knowledge, or distrust of grand narrative systems that once made sense—whether political or religious—both novels, nevertheless, incorporate and use the traces as "authentic" support for the worlds they create. When we read Naomi's, the protagonist's, diary account in *Obasan*: "The Commission put out a notice—everyone has to be ready for 24-hour notice. No more extensions... We're trying to get into a farm, or a house around Salmon Arm or Chase, or some other decent town in the Interior" (103), and so on, the reader knows that Kogawa refers to an "actual" notice, the record of which can be verified.

This deliberate strategy of "factual" embedding in contemporary use, however, has taken on an ironic twist. Naomi finds among old newspaper clippings and her aunt Emily's diary entries the journalistic excerpt dated June 21, 1944: "It seems highly disturbing that without debate, and with agreement by all parties, the House of Commons adopted a clause in the new bill dealing with elections which will disenfranchise men and women of Canadian birth. This is bill 135 ... No other democratic country has such legislation" (41). Aside from the contrast democratic legalities offer to the chaos of World War II, when seen retrospectively, today's reader knows all too well that the question about the democratic rights of the Japanese-Canadians veils the actual and uglier truth, racism, the truth that is silenced. Yet, racism in *Obasan* functions not unlike madness in Shakespeare and Cervantes, it is beyond appeal. In Foucault's terms, "nothing ever restores it either to truth or to reason" (31). As Naomi's aunt Emily finds out, it is useless to reason that German-Canadians are not subject to the same indignities and economic losses Japanese-Canadians are. The Germans are not visible enough objects of common prejudice. A telegram sent to Mackenzie King by concerned missionaries reads in part: "Repatriation and dispersal policies [are] the cruellest cut of all. Expensive, inhuman, and absolutely unnecessary. Not even a semblance of democracy or common sense in this latest racial persecution" (184).

The clash between the veiled, actual reasons not articulated by the official rhetoric, and the toneless governmental discourse of form letters sent to Japanese-Canadians euphemistically "asking" them to hand over

the titles to their properties (36) before the people are moved inland from British Columbia, create endemic tensions in the novel. In Kogawa's narration the gaps and inconsistencies in the logic of what is happening to Naomi and her extended family and their friends result in severe undermining, if not near destruction of the individuals' sense of identity. Kogawa writes in parenthesis an unarticulated admonishment that rings in Naomi's memory: "Keep your eyes down. When you are in the city, do not look into anyone's face. That way they may not see you. That way you offend less" (183). Abjection, then, the inevitable consequence of happenings that are not only beyond appeal, but outside logically constructed arguments, takes on unusual modes of expression. Robin Potter in studying abjection as a phenomenon in the novel, and what it results from, writes about the characters' "consistent and continuous preoccupation with cleanliness and hygiene, excrement, death and decay" as being reflective of a cultural group having a sense of itself as the source of corruptive and corruptible behaviour (Potter 118).

The Government of Canada, and its various judicial arms, function much the same way the Hôpital Général functions in Foucault's text, "not as a medical establishment, but rather a semijudicial structure, an administrative entity, which along with the already constituted powers, and outside of the courts, decides, judges, and executes ... It is quasi-absolute sovereignty, jurisdiction without appeal, a writ of execution against which nothing can prevail" (Foucault 40). Jurisdiction without appeal has, of course, nothing to do with any legal concept, but it works as an order of repression. Aunt Emily despairs: "They took away the land, the stores, the businesses, the boats, the houses—everything. Broke up our families, told us who we could see, where we could live, what we could do, censored our letters, exiled us for no crime" (Kogawa 36).

The anxiety the repression causes is further emphasized by the "facelessness" of its source. The written documents, the governmental reports, recommendations, policy documents, and so on, which Naomi in her sense of hopelessness refers to as "crimes of history" (41), are virtually authorless texts. They have been composed, edited, revised, and translated by uncountable numbers of people. Hence there is no author whom an individual could question, no one to whom one could address an appeal. Not surprisingly, then, Naomi concludes: "But you can't fight the whole country" (42). Only Stephen, who has a book of riddles and who, unlike Naomi, understands what they mean, finds a way out of an

incomprehensible situation. How often had he come home from school, his glasses broken, tear stains on his face, taunted by other boys: "All the Jap kids are going to be sent away; they're bad and you're a Jap." Yet his father told him he is not a Jap, he is a Canadian. "It is a riddle," Stephen tells Naomi. "We are both the enemy and not the enemy" (70).

The confinement of, and/or the driving away of segments of population who are without resources, or without what is seen as proper social moorings, has, of course, a long history and can be traced at least as far back as mid-sixteenth century Europe (Foucault 47). Whether the purpose was, as in England and France, for societies to rid themselves of the unemployed, the poor scholars and beggars, together with the mad (in fact, at times they were seen as one homogeneous lot of undesirables), or in Canada during the unfolding of war hysteria to rid the country's coastal area—seen as vulnerable to enemy attack—of a visible racial minority and disperse the people inland where they could be used as cheap labour in the production of food, in any of these cases morality and justice permitted themselves to be the administrative expression of arbitrary power. In Foucault's terms, the phenomenon becomes part of the history of unreason (Foucault 64).

The practice of instilling fear by references to loss of life or various forms of personally degrading punishments such as incarceration and public disgrace, with the accompanying losses of status, home, and family, has its place in the world of religion as well as politics, although within religion the fear often works on a metaphoric level. Frequently, the threats have to do with the spiritual world and life after death, rather than the observable and mundane. Nevertheless, religion is an important site of ideological power and not unlike other modes of power, it has an unceasing need to re-establish its authority. The widespread violence against women carried out under the guise of eliminating evil and Satanic and demonic practices, violence that swept through Europe between the 1560s and 1760s, had its counterpart in Southern Finland in the seventeenth century witch trials conducted in Åland, the subject matter of Leena Lander's novel. Whether or not we see a correlation between the European witch craze and the traumatic social changes of the 17th century Europe, that is: wars, overpopulation, impoverishment, and famine (Nenonen 33), and argue that the intensive and large-scale outbreaks of the persecution of women as witches happened in times of disasters, according to Foucault's reasoning, we are witnessing the anxiety of those in power and their need to legitimize their authority by

casting out specific "others." We can see, then, that by using dichotomies already in place, dichotomies that establish the deviance of certain groups, in times of crisis those in authority are able to use these groups to bolster their own positions. The difference between Catholic beliefs and those of the Protestant Reformation aside, those in authority within the patriarchal church structures were impotent to alleviate people's suffering.³ Thus the women who were imagined to possess demonic powers were seen as the causes for the world's suffering and disasters, and therefore they could not be allowed to live. Or to quote the judge in *Cast a Long Shadow* and his historical musings in the interest of justifying local persecutions in Åland: "Jews everywhere soon gave the Inquisition enough to do, and the number of witches continued to increase. That is how, at the onset of our century, learned men could state that the situation had gotten out of control; clearly it was still the Jews who had brought about the Black Death, but the religious wars could already be seen as disasters conjured up by witches" (37). Significantly, the reader is made aware how Lander's novel becomes an exploration of the power of legal and religious discourses as they work to sustain social order in Åland.

The discursual slippage, that is, the gap in logic between the provable and the unprovable, occurs when we are asked to make the giant leap of faith from the victimization of women, specifically, as witches, to their demonization, and the demonization of women's sexual practice, whether actual or the fabrication of the minds of European monks, among others. When Kjellinus, a man of the cloth in Lander's novel explains: "There wasn't an essential difference between whether the witch's agreement with the Devil was imagined, or real. Even in the former case a witch had to be in agreement with the Devil, because she believed her imaginings to be real. Satan gives birth to imaginings" (59), the slippage or gap in logic finds its explanation in the realm of the hallucinatory and the unprovable. Foucault explains: "Madness is the purest, most total form of *qui pro quo*; it takes the false for the true (the imagined for the real) ... [b]ut it is also the most rigorously necessary form of *qui pro quo* in the dramatic economy, for it needs no external element to reach a true resolution. It has merely to carry its illusion to the point of truth" (Foucault 33-34).

What counter-Reformation had already uncovered in Europe, that is, the widely practiced combination of Christian and pagan beliefs, which had gone on for more than a thousand years, especially among

the uneducated populace, finds its equivalence in Lander's novel. The deep roots of peasant life are in a culture that rejects the enforced religious conformity of the educated, and offers, instead, inventive and idiosyncratic interpretations of Christian doctrine (Wilkinson 85). Lander's novel carries examples of popular misinterpretations of church dogma, as well as beliefs stemming from oral culture that the official lack of religious tolerance summarily labels as instances of demonic practice. Even harmless, superstitious practices among farmers' wives by which they hoped to produce more butter or cure their children's fevers, are considered intimate acts of fraternization with the devil.

It is noteworthy that Kastelholm castle as the place where the accused women are confined conjures up dominant images of sadism. The cells are cramped, dirty, pitch-dark with an earth floor. The walls have cracks in them that let the bitterly cold winter winds further chill the unheated cells. The women rarely have an opportunity to wash themselves and then only in ice-cold water. In the darkness of their cells, they are interrogated and threatened with physical punishments unless they confess to having a personal (and often sexual) relationship with the devil. Foucault points out how Marquis de Sade's entire oeuvre carries images of the fortress, the cell, the cellar, the stronghold of confinement, as the natural habitat of sadistic behaviour (Foucault 210). In keeping with the dominance of the sadistic, the courtroom practice of using thumbscrews becomes the means by which confessions are extracted from the accused women. Maria N., one of the accused, withstands the pain for a long time. In the end, with her fingers crushed, she admits having healed a sick boy with sorcery. In the narrator's words: "She told of having dropped silver in water and having read spells afterwards" (29).

Maria N.'s confession is an example of how the popular pagan beliefs are confronted by the elite and Christian ones. In her narration about the women who were beheaded and burnt at the stake as witches, Lander constructs a fictional world of sadism and dark fear to mirror the historical one. Significantly, the norms of both are fantastic. As a stroke of pure authorial genius, Lander gives her novel a narrative frame that embodies the rules of the fantastic world where reality and illusion merge, a world where the border between life and death is transgressed as a matter of course. As the novel is the fictive reconstruction of events leading to seven women being condemned to die, the shadow-narrator, Judge Nils Pilsander from the centuries' dim past, functions in what Brian McHale terms a "historical dark area" (89). The judge tells his

story, or "history," to the novel's actual, but expressly self-reflexive narrator. Or to quote Foucault, we are at the narrative stage where the Judge's error begins to unravel the web. "Accusing himself, he speaks the truth in spite of himself" (Foucault 33). Thus Lander camouflages the seam between historical reality and fiction. As an example of what McHale terms as "postmodernist interventionist historical fiction," history and fiction exchange places, history becomes fictional and fiction "true" history, the real world having lost its place somewhere along the way, or rather, the reader is left with the question: "real" in comparison with what (McHale 96)?

While Kogawa demystifies and unravels the orthodox version of the past, she has to adhere to the limits set by historical distancing, or rather its lack. Not enough time has passed since the actual events, therefore authorial freedom and reader acceptability dictate that the events and characters in her novel adhere to a narrative logic that does not contradict the "official" historical record of those events. Lander's writing, on the other hand, has the freedom to integrate apocryphal history in the form of quotations from numerous Latin texts on the deviance of witches and their demonic practices; creative anachronism not only in shaping the lives of her characters and the relationships between them (one might wonder, for instance, whether the relationship between the Judge and his field-hand could, in reality, have been as egalitarian as the novel portrays it), but in giving the Judge a life and a role within the framework of contemporary history; historical fantasy, again in the form of the Judge as a shadow narrator who appears to the author "in person," thus forcing her also to examine the very idea of authorship, as well as recorded "facts." Stylistically her writing feasts on such diverse elements as Voltairean chapter headings, and the nineteenth century use of initials as substitutes for proper surnames, a device used in an effort to enhance the illusion of reality. It is as if the author felt it necessary to delete the names for reasons of tact or legal responsibility.

While both novels are terrains of conflicting discourses that deal with the problems of power and its attendant techniques of discrimination and exclusion, in reading *Obasan* and *Cast a Long Shadow* through the Foucaultian grid, one becomes aware of a coextensive and optimistic counter-discourse, something we might call an alternative consciousness. An argument emerges, pointing out to us that since all relations are contingent, each is also therefore vulnerable. While in Foucault's terms, the thought that power could be transcended is truly a Utopian thought,

at the same time the victory of the forces of containment cannot ever be seen as lasting ones. Or in Foucault's own words, power does not constitute "a fatality at the heart of societies, such that it cannot be undermined" (Leinwand 478). In the end, the reader of *Obasan* witnesses the closing of the discursive circle. The "fictitious" treatment of a very grievous and unjust past has become the catalyst for the factual, albeit belated government acknowledgment of past wrongs. Thus the "misappropriated," or unjustly exercised power is clearly undermined by the impact Kogawa's novel had and continues to have on Canadian political consciousness.

In Lander's writing, the last court proceedings see life emerge as the winner as Margaret M., the last of the accused, after a couple of uncertain and hesitating steps walks to the courtroom door and into what constitutes the ambiguous freedom still prevalent today, freedom that doesn't often acknowledge past wrongs, but merely finds contextual explanations and justifications for them. While against all odds life has triumphed, and "the fatality at the heart of society has been undermined," Lander also lets the reader understand that guilt for past wrongs "is not yet wiped away, but a day will come when it has shrunk and is as small and light as a feather," something to be blown into the wind so that it will be no more (269). Hence, in the subject matter of Lander's novel, there is no "closing of the discursive circle," but rather, it is *time* that ultimately blots out the past injustices, time in its progression into silence (Foucault 281).

My *Ansatzpunkt*, or point of departure, in this paper has been an attempt to cross cultural boundaries in the world of literary writing and its unmasking of the inadequacies of historically constructed truths. The logic of unmasking, in turn, inevitably reveals the truths that are, and have been obscured. But the crossing of cultural boundaries also contributes to a realignment of one's thinking and perspective on history. In the end, however diverse the historical situations that form the subject matter of the literary retellings, and the myriad of pluralism's competing voices aside, critical interests will uncover in the literature what we might in the simplest terms recognize as a vision of a shared humanity.

NOTES

1. In addition to scholars and works mentioned in the text, the following is a list of a few works among many—too numerous to be included here—dealing with New Historicism: Fischer, David Hackett. *Historians' Fallacies* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970); Jamieson, Fredric. *Postmodernism or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991); LaCapra, Dominick. *History & Criticism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985); Tompkins, Jane. *Sensational Designs: The Cultural Work of American Fiction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985); Veeder, Aram H. Ed. *The New Historicism* (New York: Routledge, 1989); White, Hayden. *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973).

2. For Lander's references in the novel to Jung's study of the personal unconscious and the shadow, see, for example, "Aion: Phenomenology of the Self" in *The Portable Jung*. Edited by Joseph Campbell (New York: Penguin Books, 1984), pages 139–162.

3. In Lander's novel, Parson Kjellinus often consults St. Augustine's *De Civitate Dei*, Heinrich Kramer's and Jacobus Sprenger's *Malleus Maleficarum* and other expressly Catholic theological texts in support of his ruthless drive to eliminate witches from Åland in the hope of avoiding famine and pestilence.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Campbell, Joseph. Ed. 1984. *The Portable Jung*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Eco, Umberto. 1983. *Reflections on The Name Of The Rose*. Translated by William Weaver. London: Secker & Warburg.
- Fischer, David Hackett. 1970. *Historians' Fallacies*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Foucault, Michel. 1973. *Madness & Civilization*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Greenblatt, Stephen. 1988. *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Jamieson, Fredric. 1991. *Postmodernism or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Kogawa, Joy. 1983. *Obasan*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Kramer, Heinrich and Jacobus Sprenger. *Malleus Maleficarum*. Translated from Latin by Montague Summers. 1968. London: Folio Society.
- LaCapra, Dominick. 1985. *History & Criticism*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Lander, Leena. 1986. *Lankeaa pitkä varjo*. Helsinki: Kirjayhtymä.
- _____. 1995. *Cast a Long Shadow*. Translated by Seija Paddon. Toronto: The Second Story Press.

- Leinwand, Theodore B. 1996. "Negotiation and New Historicism." *PMLA* 105, 3: 477-490.
- McHale, Brian. 1989. *Postmodernist Fiction*. New York: Routledge.
- Nenonen, Marko. 1992. *Noituus, taikuus ja noitavainot*. [Witchcraft, magic and the persecution of witches.] Helsinki: Societas Historica Finlandiae.
- Potter, Robin. 1990. "Moral—In Whose Sense? Joy Kogawa's *Obasan* and Julia Kristeva's *Powers of Horror*." *Studies in Canadian Literature* 15, 1: 117-139.
- Thomas, Brook. 1991. *The New Historicism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Tompkins, Jane. 1985. *Sensational Designs: The Cultural Work of American Fiction*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Veesser, Aram H. Ed. 1989. *The New Historicism*. New York: Routledge.
- White, Hayden. 1973. *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Wilkinson, James. 1996. "A Choice of Fictions: Historians, Memory and Evidence." *PMLA* 111, 1: 80-92.



REVIEWS / COMPTES RENDUS

Sigbjørn Hølmebakk. *The Carriage Stone*. Translated by Frances Vardamis. Chester Springs, Pennsylvania: Dufour Editions, Inc., 1996. 192 pages.

Reviewed by CHRISTOPHER HALE
University of Alberta

Sigbjørn Hølmebakk (1922–81), born in Flekkefjord in southern Norway, was the son of a minister. As well as being a novelist, he was very interested in film, and he was active in leftist politics. His novel *The Carriage Stone* was originally published in 1975 under the Norwegian title *Karjolsteinen*. It received the Norwegian Literary Critic's prize the year after it appeared, was later made into a film, and was a popular choice in the Norwegian Book Club.

The novel deals with the way in which the two major characters face fundamental questions of life. One of the most important of these questions is: if death is the end of everything, what is then the use of attempting to achieve anything, what is the meaning of life? The first person to whom the reader is introduced is a writer and a Communist political activist, Olav Klungland, who is in the process of writing a new novel which he is having difficulty in finishing because he doubts his abilities. On a visit to a dying party comrade in a cancer hospital, he meets a retired pastor, Eilif Grøtteland. Grøtteland, who is visiting his sick wife in the same hospital, asks Klungland for a copy of one of his books. Later the two meet in Grøtteland's hotel room, and the pastor tells Klungland his life story, about his relationship to his brother and to his wife and his losing his faith. All this has such an effect on Klungland that he begins to doubt even more his own worth and goals in life.

While we are led to believe in the beginning of the book that Klungland is the principal character, almost two-thirds of the narrative is Grøtteland's relation of his story, and Klungland's life is relegated to the background. Only in the final chapters does Klungland reappear and take on the leading role. Although the two men are from opposite poles of so-

ciety, they both are concerned with the same problem, and both come to similar conclusions as to how to deal with them.

The novel is well-written, absorbing, and it deals with fundamental human concerns. It will no doubt appeal to a broad reading public. It introduces to the English-speaking world an important author who is as yet little known outside of Scandinavia. Because of this a more extensive overview should have been included of Sigurd Hølmebakk and his works than the short biographical note at the beginning of the book.

All in all, Frances Vardamis's translation reads smoothly and well. Rather than translating the text literally, she has frequently rewritten passages or paraphrased them. Usually this has created a better flow in English than a closer rendition might have done. For example, on page 76 the translation reads:

After the church service, Didrik went down and spoke with the minister. The mayor and Jens Christian were there as well. The teacher, too, insisted on joining the conversation, and the others had to silence him; he responded sharply but then he left them and began to fuss with the hymnals over by the cupboard. It reminded me of how he behaved at his desk in the classroom when he was angry.

A literal version of the original might, however, sound as follows:

After the service, Didrik went down to speak with the minister. The mayor and Jens Christian were also there. The teacher joined in the conversation, and his shrill voice cut through so the others had to quiet him down; whenever he had said something, he left them and began to fuss with the hymnals over in the cupboard; it was like seeing him at his desk in school when he was angry.

In Vardamis's translation, the essential meaning has been preserved. Also, to improve the flow, an occasional sentence is either added or deleted without any damaging effect.

Vardamis takes other types of liberties with the text, thus making a more readable English version. In the original, Hølmebakk's dialogues, especially those between Grøtteland and Klungland, are often lengthy, and the reader can at times be somewhat bewildered as to who is speaking at a particular moment. To prevent such confusion Vardamis frequently substitutes the speaker's name for the pronoun "he" in these conversations. Another example is the division into paragraphs. Vardamis frequently breaks up some of Hølmebakk's longer paragraphs, especially those in which there are lines spoken by more than one person. Occasionally as well, the position of two sentences is reversed.

It does happen now and then that the translation of passages is not entirely successful. Once in a while, individual words may be rendered

with poor English equivalents, as when on page 61, the Norwegian *smørbrød* ("open-faced sandwich") becomes "butter-bread," or completely mistranslated, such as when on page 28, "She was at her job from eight-thirty to four-thirty" becomes "eight-thirty to three-thirty." Phrases, and sentences too, may not be entirely correctly translated. For example, on page 32, Vardamis interprets the original, "He looked directly at him," as "The man stared into space." These and other examples of mistranslations which could be mentioned, do not seriously affect the meaning of the text.

There are, however, some rather serious mistranslations. Sometimes a word is misunderstood totally. For instance, on page 68 the Norwegian word *sømmen* ("the sewing") is given as "summer" (Norw. *sommeren*), and on page 146 *matrester* ("leftovers") is translated as "mattresses" (Norw. *madrasser*). In other places, the English word does not express the correct nuance the author is trying to convey when he chooses the Norwegian word. This can be seen, for example, on page 166 in the sentence, "Klungland, not trusting himself to discuss the matter, answered quickly," where the original says, "couldn't bring himself to discuss" (Norw. *orke*).

I do not feel, though, that these criticisms are important enough not to recommend this edition to most readers. However, if a literary scholar is planning to write a critical paper on the novel, I would suggest that one at least have the Norwegian original close by to be able to compare it with this translation.

Kirsten A. Seaver. *The Frozen Echo. Greenland and the Exploration of North America ca A. D. 1000-1500.* Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1996. xvi + 407 pages.

Reviewed by WOLFGANG P. AHRENS
York University, Toronto

This is a marvellous overview of Norse Greenland with a re-examination of older literature and a presentation of works on the topic which have appeared in recent years in both English and Scandinavian languages. The study looks at historical records, church records and descriptions of archeological finds. Thus we find particular attention paid to genealogical family relationships between Greenlandic and Icelandic families in the 14th and 15th centuries, as well as the activities of bishops appointed to Gardar in Greenland—bishops who were both resident and more often than not non-resident in the later years of the colony. We learn of prized

Greenland items for trade: falcons, stock fish, train oil, walrus ivory and narwhal horns, as well as about the activities in the North Atlantic of English merchants in the 15th century, particularly those of Bristol, and the trade entertained by the Portuguese from the Azores. This is a well researched book to which the excellent and exhaustive bibliography of over 250 items attests.

The chapter headings give a good indication of the detailed contents of the book: 1) Greenland and Vinland: 1) North Atlantic Exploration Five Hundred Years Before the Cabot Voyages; 2) Social and Economic Conditions in Norse Greenland Before 1350; 3) Church and Trade in Norse Greenland Before 1350; 4) Ivar Bárðarson's Greenland; 5) The Western Settlement Comes to an End; 6) Rumors of Trouble in the Eastern Settlement; 7) England and the Norwegian Colonies, 1400–1450; 8) Sailing out of the Middle Ages, 1450–1500; 9) Greenland, 1450–1500; 10) The Age of Discovery.

The central intriguing question about Norse Greenland is, of course, why this colony, which at its height in the 13th century had some 4,000–6,000 inhabitants, came to an end in the late 15th or early 16th century. Several theories exist and Seaver examines each of these.

A major theory is that the Black Death decimated the population. This plague struck Norway in 1349, but Iceland not until 1402–4. It is unlikely that it ever reached Greenland, “for the bubonic, rather than the pneumonic, form of the Plague to take of hold of Greenland, a ship would have had to bring both infective rats and sailors still well enough to manage the ship, and the rats would have needed a favorable climate for the survival and reproduction of the flea vectors, which require heat and humidity to breed and flourish. The rat species in question at that time would have been the black rat (*Rattus rattus*), also known as the ship rat, for the brown rat (*Rattus norvegicus*) did not invade Europe from Asia until some three centuries later. The brown rat is adept at exploiting natural habitats away from human dwellings, but the black (or ship) rat is not. The cold and rather arid Greenland climate did not encourage cozy flea-and-rat colonies outside, and no rat bones have been found inside the Norse houses there so far (only the bones of house mice)” (88–89). Other diseases, however, were present and could have had an influence in reducing the population. There were small pox epidemics in Iceland in 1380–81 (316) and 1431–32 (185) which could have spread to Greenland, and it can be assumed that the population also suffered from such parasitic and epidemic diseases as trichinosis (58), pneumonia, in-

fluenza and typhus (59). However, "what the archeologists have *not* found is evidence that a devastating epidemic put an end to either colony [the Norse Eastern and Western Greenland settlements]" (59).

Other theories trace the extinction of the Norse population to the hardship resulting from the worsening of climate in the fifteenth century, or to a possible conflict with the Thule people who were expanding southward in Greenland. But, there is no evidence—archeological or other—that the Norse starved to death because of the changing climate, "nor do they seem to have died en masse from other causes, such as pestilence or Eskimo aggression" (138).

Seaver postulates that the Norse lasted much longer in Greenland than is generally assumed. She goes to great length to explain the political situation in the North Atlantic in the 15th century. At that time, conflicts between English traders and the Danish-Norwegian crown led to a prohibition of trade with Atlantic Norwegian colonies, and there is evidence that only rarely did trading licences get issued. However, there is circumstantial evidence that trade continued without formal customs declarations and that traders, especially the British, had journeyed to Greenland (251). Also, archeological evidence of garments from the graves in the Herjolfsnes grave yard in the Eastern settlement shows that European traders visited there in the later half of the 15th century. There is a man's overgown (Figure 29, page 231) and a so-called Burgundian cap (Figure 28, page 230), in fashion around 1480–90. When the new wave of voyages of discoveries to North America started in the early 16th century, contact had ceased between Iceland and Greenland, although apparently Greenland–England contact still existed. Yet, Greenland lay far out of the way of the normal, more southerly, routes that ships now took to North America.

So, what happened to the Greenland Norse? "By the end of the fifteenth century, after ten or twenty years with no English ships calling, and with direct contact with Iceland an even more distant memory, many of the colonists may have felt deprived and isolated enough to welcome the chance of another change, brought by post-Columbian explorers and adventurers. Drawn by reports of new lands and opportunities far west in the ocean, these new travelers had much in common with Erik the Red and his little band of colonists. It is perfectly possible that even after five centuries, the Greenland Norse were as capable of adventure, and as thirsty for a fresh start, as their ancestors had been when they set sail for the great unknown" (253). Seaver notes that the Bristolman Richard

Warde and the Azorean explorer João Fernandes (both of whom had been involved in enterprises of North American exploration) disappeared from Bristol records around 1500. Bristol merchants were familiar with Norse Greenland; in addition, it was difficult in the early 16th century to recruit any sailors for voyages to North America (often convicts were assigned as sailors in those days), let alone find settlers for unknown areas. Further, Seaver notes "the eerie Greenland scene of careful burials and deserted tidy homesteads, so eloquently described by Joel Berglund ["The Decline of the Norse Settlements in Greenland." *Arctic Anthropology* 23 (1986): 109-135] strongly suggests voluntary desertion of the Eastern Settlement" (311). So, Seaver concludes that the Greenlanders "who had so clearly taken active part in the North Atlantic economic community throughout the fifteenth century, had remained opportunists to the end and joined the early-sixteenth-century European surge toward North America" (311). Whether this was part of a lost expedition of Warde and Fernandes can never be ascertained. The conjectured emigrants to the mainland of North America were presumably lost on their voyage, or else succumbed shortly thereafter when they encountered hardships in their settlement and did not receive support from the European mainland. One need only remember that early 16th century settlements much further south, and presumably with more favourable climatic conditions also failed (e.g., the Roanoke Island colony in present North Carolina between 1584 and 1589). People leaving for a venture of new colonization are normally the young and healthy. This probably also occurred with the Greenland Norse. Those left behind were then the old and infirm; with the vigorous group of the settlers "lost", undoubtedly those left behind would soon have perished, with the colony ceasing to exist. This is a neat and plausible theory and perhaps one day, some archeological evidence may surface that would support it and convince remaining doubters.

Reading this fascinating study, one gets a clear picture of the age and one feels that little else can be said about Norse Greenland. It is a "must" read for all those interested in medieval Scandinavia, and in Iceland and Greenland in particular.

Åke Daun. *Swedish Mentality*. Translated by Jan Teeland. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996. 236 pages.

Reviewed by J. DONALD WILSON
University of British Columbia

Studies of national character are out of fashion these days. Their zenith was reached in the 1950s and 1960s. Typical of this genre were studies done by Seymour Martin Lipset such as *The First New Nation* (New York, 1963) in which he compared the national character of the United States and Canada. Mildred A. Schwartz produced similar research on Canada itself in a book entitled *Public Opinion and Canadian Identity* (Berkeley, 1967). But in the seventies scholars became skeptical of the entire exercise of demonstrating national character. It seemed presumptuous to imagine one could identify and distinguish the national characteristics of Canadians and Americans, as opposed to those of other industrialized nations. Many of these characteristics, it was argued, distinguished not Canada, the United States, or Sweden for that matter but all industrialized countries: rationality, efficiency, competitiveness, punctuality. Anyway, the phrase itself, "national character," seemed by the sixties to contain racist overtones. Moreover, it was difficult to speak of national characteristics when, in reality, Canadians all have multiple social identities: national, regional, community, and many private identities based on ethnicity, class, and gender. But such concerns have not stopped Swedish ethnologist Åke Daun from writing a book called *Svensk Mentalitet* in 1989, available now in English as *Swedish Mentality*.

I have enjoyed visiting Sweden many times over the years since 1958, and have made a number of friends there. It has only been during the last couple of times that I have come to realize another reason why I like Sweden so much; namely, it is like going back in time to the way we used to be in Canada in the 1950s: mostly white faces in the street, extreme politeness and civility, and an aversion to loud and aggressive behaviour. A comfort zone of nostalgia envelopes me, and I feel at ease (*jag trivs i Sverige*). In reading this book, I came to realize once again why I like Sweden and Swedes (also Finland and Finns for that matter). Their national stereotypes—humility, tolerance, justice, and conformity—represent the way I remember Canada and Canadians to be as I grew up in Southern Ontario in the forties and fifties before the extensive American social and cultural influences took hold in the 1960s featuring pride, conceit, boasting, and garrulousness and before large-scale immigration from Asia, Africa, and South America.

Daun's study reiterates a good many of the national characteristics I have noted regarding Sweden. In fact, perhaps this type of national character study is more valid for Sweden because of its population's relative (until recently) ethnic homogeneity. One wonders, though, whether it can be considered valid for much longer. Most of Daun's data is based on innumerable polls and interviews, many of which, significantly, were done in the 1970s and 1980s when Sweden was less diverse than it is today.

Using the methods of psychology, social psychology, and cultural anthropology, and in particular the findings of survey research, Daun is able to tell us a lot about Swedish society. The high divorce rate is attributed to the need "to be able to be one's own person" (69) and as a consequence of conflict avoidance. The latter is said to be extremely important for Swedes both at work and in social life. Stress on sameness and conformity is highly prized in Sweden. In all the Scandinavian countries "the ideas of equality defined as sameness and of individualism defined as independence seem to be reinforced" (105). Foreigners, even well educated ones, just don't fit into the sameness and are often critical of it. This sort of critique sometimes results in Swedes being accused of lack of imagination and dullness (*tråkighet*).

Swedes (and Finns) place a great deal of emphasis on the spoken word; thus they have little patience with "small talk" (*kallprata*) and find it difficult to engage in it. Many, for example, find the ubiquitous North American greeting "How are you today?" off-putting because of its meaninglessness. People who are garrulous and constantly chattering are found particularly offensive. It follows that noisy, loud, and unruly people are not appreciated. Swedes, accordingly, apply negative stereotypes to Americans, Germans, and Southern Europeans. Swedish children are taught early on to restrain their emotions, especially in public. In turn, foreigners commonly accuse Swedes of lack of feelings and inordinate shyness.

Daun devotes an entire chapter to "rationality" because Sweden is a nation "whose culture is permeated by rationalism" (137). Rationality is said to be at the root of the origins and the operation of the Swedish model of the welfare state. The heavy reliance on family planning, for which Swedes are famous, is another example of an underlying rationalist streak. Swedish parents, for instance, do not "have" children, they "get" or "acquire" them (*skaffa barn*), indicating a particular way of thinking about children. Then the child's self-development is prized, rather than the child being expected to fit into the family structure, as among Jews

and South Asians. In a related way, Swedes applaud public policies favouring the enlightenment of the people: sex education, consumer education, and adult education which is conducted through a vast array of institutions scattered throughout the country.

For Swedes, Trudeau's famous dictum "reason over passion" is a watchword of life. Even "pleasure is a very serious matter in Sweden," to quote a Danish journalist (141). Strict liquor laws, a legacy of the country's puritan Lutheran background, reinforces this point. In any case, "having fun" is a serious matter that is often subject to planning and preparation and rarely spontaneous. (The same is true of Finland.) Moreover, it is best to enjoy things in moderation; nothing in excess. A corollary, Daun concludes, is "being happy does not primarily mean to be gay or joyful" (169), a statement incomprehensible to the average North American bombarded daily by TV ads suggesting exactly the opposite. As Daun goes on to note, Swedish seriousness leads to belittling "southerners" (Southern Europeans and Middle Easterners) "which in turn provides grounds for discriminating against immigrants" (151). The other side of the rationalist coin is the proud attachment to "modernity," as exemplified by statements like the following: "we no longer believe in superstitions; we don't go to church; we're not ruled by irrational ideas" (154).

Despite my disclaimers at the outset about studies of this sort, I must admit that this is an impressive book, wide ranging and solid in its social science research base. As Sweden becomes more multiethnic and multicultural, surely Daun's findings will be in need of revision. The author admits as much by stating: "Currently (1989) we see a greater fragmentation, with rather competitive ideologies and lifestyles" (212). But in my opinion he provides a very sound picture of the national characteristics of "traditional" Sweden which I suspect is fast disappearing, just as Canada is changing before our very eyes.

Olavi Koivukangas. *From the Midnight Sun to the Long White Cloud: Finns in New Zealand.* Turku: Institute of Migration. Migration Studies C11, 1996. 397 pages.

Reviewed by MIKA ROINILA
University of Saskatchewan

After years of exhaustive research involving interviews and examining official statistics, Koivukangas has produced a very detailed account of the Finns in New Zealand. This book follows an earlier work by the same

author on Finnish immigration: *Sea, Gold and Sugarcane: the Finns in Australia, 1851-1947* (1986). The present book, which is richly illustrated with photographs and drawings, examines Finnish immigration and settlement in New Zealand from the earliest times to the present, and evaluates the Finnish contribution to the development of this country.

The book consists of sixteen chapters. Chapter 1, entitled "Introduction," deals with the physical geography of New Zealand, and the scope of the study. Chapter 2 traces the arrival of the Finns in New Zealand as far back as 1769, when Captain James Cook landed in New Zealand on board of the *Endeavour*, accompanied by the Finn Herman Spöring. Spöring was given much credit for collecting plant samples and for making illustrations and taking notes on wildlife encountered in the Pacific. He impressed Cook to such an extent that Cook named an island off the New Zealand coast after him. Sporing [sic] Island, now Pourewa Island, is located on the eastern coast of the North Island, near Tolaga Bay. Koivukangas mentions (28) that he visited the island in 1988 and that some of the old time residents in the area still did know the island by the old name. The next two chapters continue the early history by discussing Finnish sailors, whalers and gold diggers, as well as the small scale farmers that settled in small colonies in the 18th and 19th centuries. Chapters 5-9 deal with family histories of residents on both the North and the South Islands, as well as on two smaller islands nearby—Stewart and Chatham Islands. The total number of Finnish immigrants to New Zealand was not large—a mere 1,500-2,000. Koivukangas has seemingly attempted to deal with almost all of these, and he examines a large number of families in detail. Many interesting life stories emerge from these family histories which indeed make "good reading." For example, the author devotes an entire chapter (Chapter 9, 156-169) to the story of the Finnish sailing ship *Pamir* that was seized during the Second World War and held by the New Zealand government from 1941-1949. Many of this ship's crew remained in New Zealand and the lives of these sailors are well documented. Chapters 10 to 14 outline Finnish involvement in the development of the New Zealand forestry industry; as well, these chapters delineate Finnish cultural and religious affiliations, and the retention both of Finnish cultural values and of the Finnish language, and finally, there is a discussion of the trends of assimilation. The role of women in more recent immigration is dealt with in a separate chapter (Chapter 14, 231-244). From these discussions, it is made clear that the Finnish settlers can be divided into three general groups: 1) the earliest settlers—sailors, whalers, etc., who assimilated completely to New Zealand soci-

ety; 2) first generation immigrants who arrived in the 1950s and 60s, founded clubs and organized activities that kept many Old World traditions alive and provided support for Finnish speakers; many of these organizations and their activities have faded away and the descendants of these immigrants for the most part no longer maintain neither the Finnish language nor their Finnish heritage; 3) Finnish immigrants since the 1970s; these are better educated, more established in the New Zealand economy; as there are fewer and fewer immigrants arriving each year, the need for social support and cultural activities is less than in the past, a further reason for Finnish clubs to cease, e.g., the Tokoroa Finnish club in 1977, and the Kawerau Finnish club in 1984.

A general overview chapter (245–261) and a conclusion (262–265) are followed by two large appendices, listing Finnish New Zealand immigrants from before and after 1949. The many immigrant records needed for these appendices were retrieved from New Zealand Naturalization Records, the Register of Aliens (1917), and Death Records. Koivukangas gathered information on over 1,000 Finnish families. To a researcher and immigrant historian, these appendices constitute the most important feature of this work, and this material will be invaluable for further research on family histories, both in Finland and New Zealand. Over twenty-five years of meticulous and painstaking data collecting has paid off, as we now have the most comprehensive account possible of Finnish New Zealand immigrants and their descendants.

Some flaws in the book include inconsistent cartography and errors in the details in the theoretical overview on the patterns of migration at the end of the book. Koivukangas (262) does not include “restricted migration” among the typologies formulated by W. Petersen. Rather, “forced” and “impelled” migrations are listed separately, even though they imply the same typology according to Petersen (1958). Although properly cited in the bibliography as Everett S. Lee, *A Theory of Migration* (1969), in the text this author is referred to as Robert E. Lee (262). (Had the author been reading about the American Civil War?) Other less serious problems are a small number of spelling errors (e.g., 27–28; 32) and mistakes in the footnotes in Chapter 10 (Footnote 19 is given twice, p. 177 and p. 178, and the numbering sequence is incorrect from this point forward to the end of the chapter. . Also, the title of the book with its reference to the long white cloud, seems enigmatic to a non-New Zealander and the author might have been wise to note the meaning of this expression in the book’s introduction. (The Maori name for New Zealand is *Aotearoa*, “land of the long white cloud.”)

Apart from these criticisms, the work deserves praise for its pioneering contribution to Finnish immigration research. In part also, the book caters to the interests of the New Zealand Finns who are interested in family history and genealogy, and are eager to find their roots in Finland. In sum, the book is highly recommended to individuals interested in demography, settlement and family history, ethnic minorities, overseas migrations, and the Finnish influence in the South Pacific.

REFERENCES

- Koivukangas, Olavi. 1986. *Sea, Gold and Sugarcane: The Finns in Australia 1851–1947*. Turku: Institute of Migration. Migration Studies C8.
- Lee, Everett S. 1969. "A Theory of migration." In J. A. Jackson, ed. *Migration*. Cambridge. 282–297.
- Petersen, William. 1958. "A general typology of migration," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 23: 256–265.



AASSC / AAESC

Association for the Advancement of Scandinavian Studies in Canada
L'Association pour l'avancement des études scandinaves au Canada

(1995-1997)

President/Président

Christopher English, History, Memorial University of Newfoundland

Past President/Président sortant

Harry Lane, Drama, University of Guelph

Vice President/Vice-président

John Tucker, English, University of Victoria

Treasurer/Trésorière

Birgitta Linderöth Wallace, Canadian Heritage, Historic Properties, Halifax

Secretary/Secrétaire

Daisy Neijman, Icelandic, University of Manitoba

Members at large/Membres adjoints

Fred Thompson, Architecture, University of Waterloo

Hans Möller, Library, McGill University

Editor/Rédacteur (Journal/Revue) (1995-99)

Wolfgang Ahrens, Languages, Literatures & Linguistics, York University

Editor/Rédacteur (Newsbulletin / Bulletin)

Will van den Hoonard, Sociology, University of New Brunswick

The main aims of the Association are to encourage studies on and promote research in Canada in all aspects of life in the Scandinavian societies, to provide a multi-disciplinary forum for the presentation and discussion of papers on all matters relevant to Scandinavian studies, and to stimulate awareness of and interest in Scandinavian studies in Canada. Membership fees are \$30 a year for regular members and \$15 for student and retired members. Institutional memberships are \$40. Fees should be sent to the Treasurer of the Association: Birgitta Linderöth Wallace, Canadian Heritage, Historic Properties, Upper Water Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3J 1S9.

Les objectifs principaux de l'Association consistent à promouvoir les études et les recherches canadiennes sur tous les aspects de la vie dans les sociétés scandinaves, à fournir un forum multi-disciplinaire pour la présentation et la discussion d'articles portant sur toutes les questions essentielles aux études scandinaves, et à susciter un intérêt pour les études au Canada. La cotisation annuelle est de 30\$ pour les membres ordinaires, de 15\$ pour les étudiants et les retraités, et de 40\$ pour les institutions. Les cotisations doivent être envoyées au trésorière de l'Association: Birgitta Linderöth Wallace, Canadian Heritage, Historic Properties, Upper Water Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3J 1S9.

CONTENTS / SOMMAIRE

Kai R. Pedersen

- Laying the Foundations of Labour's Postwar Hegemony
Norwegian Wartime Planning, 1940–45* 1

Ingunn Norderval

- The Provincial Mayor in Norway:
Role Development and Role Perception* 17

William Sayers

- Unique Nicknames in Landnámabók and the Sagas of
the Icelanders: The Case of Þorleifr kimbi Þorbrandsson*..... 49

Kirsten Shepherd-Barr

- "Le grand metteur en scène":
Hermann Bang in Paris, 1893–94* 73

Seija Paddon

- New Historicism and the Prose of Joy Kogawa's Obasan
and Leena Lander's Cast a Long Shadow* 91

Reviews / Comptes Rendus

- Sigbjørn Hølmebakk. *The Carriage Stone*
(Chester Springs, Penn.)—reviewed by *Christopher Hale* .. 105
- Kirsten A. Seaver. *The Frozen Echo*.
*Greenland and the Exploration of North America
ca A.D. 1000–1500* (Stanford, California)
—reviewed by *Wolfgang P. Ahrens* 107
- Åke Daun. *Swedish Mentality*. Translated by Jan Teeland
(University Park, 1996)—reviewed by *J. Donald Wilson* ... 111
- Olavi Koivukangas. *From the Midnight Sun
to the Long White Cloud: Finns in New Zealand*
(Turku, 1996)—reviewed by *Mika Roinila* 113