

International Workshop

## Building the North with Words

Geographies of scientific knowledge in European philologies 1850–1950

Organized by Joachim Grage (Freiburg), Thomas Mohnike (Strasbourg), Michael Rießler (Freiburg)

At USIAS, the University of Strasbourg Institut of Advanced Studies, in cooperation with FRIAS, the Freiburg Institut of Advanced Studies.

Location :

MISHA (Maison Interuniversitaire des Sciences de l'Homme–Alsace), salle de la table ronde,  
5, allée du Général Rouvillois, 67000 Strasbourg

Thursday, June 5<sup>th</sup> 2014

- 14h00 Introduction (Grage, Mohnike, Rießler)
- 14h30 Dan Ringgaard (Aarhus):  
*Mapping Place Theory*
- 15h15 Paula Henriksson (Uppsala):  
*Imagining the North while Travelling to the South: Geographical Structures of Thought in the Travel Writings of P.D.A. Atterbom*
- 16h30 Coffee break
- 17h00 Julia Zernack (Frankfurt):  
*Building the North with Poetry – "The Edda" in European Romanticism*
- 17h45 Lis Møller (Aarhus):  
*Hauch's German Lectures on Nordic Mythology*
- 20h00 Dinner for speakers

Friday, June 6<sup>th</sup> 2014

- 09h30 Joachim Grage (Freiburg):  
*Henrik Ibsen and the Birth of Modern Scandinavian Literature as an Academic Topic in Europe*
- 10h15 Coffee break
- 10h45 Annette Lassen (Copenhagen):  
*A Nordic Defence: Old Norse Philology in Copenhagen in the Middle of the 19th Century*
- 11h30 Thomas Mohnike (Strasbourg):  
*Narrating the Germanic. Strasbourgian Philologists Caught in Geographical Imaginations*
- 12h15 Lunch
- 14h15 Merja Torvinen (Caen):  
*The Romanticized North – Construing the Image of the Saami in the 19th Century French Travel Literature*
- 15h00 Michael Rießler (Freiburg):  
*Saami Studies at European Universities since 1850*
- 15h45 Coffee break
- 16h15 Final discussion

**Joachim Grage (Freiburg)**

Henrik Ibsen and the Birth of Modern Scandinavian Literature as an Academic Topic in Europe

When Nordic philology emerged as an academic discipline in the nineteenth century, contemporary Scandinavian literature was only of interest as far as it dealt with northern antiquity like Oehlenschläger's poems or Tegner's Frithiofs saga. The modern breakthrough in nordic philology was a consequence of Scandinavian literature's breakthrough in Europe: It was Henrik Ibsen who became the first main object of research in modern Scandinavian literature. In my talk I want to explore how Ibsen was used as a topic at European universities between 1890 and 1920 in an unfolding and differentiating landscape of philological research.

**Paula Henriksson (Uppsala)**

Imagining the North while Travelling to the South: Geographical Structures of Thought in Swedish Romantic Travel Writing

In the works of the Swedish romanticist, poet and literary historian P.D.A. Atterbom (1790–1855) one can trace a geographically structured model of thought, governing his understanding not only of historical time and space, but also of the aesthetical challenges of his time. My aim is to illuminate this model by returning to the travel writings resulting from his journey to Italy in 1817–19.

**Annette Lassen (Copenhagen)**

A Nordic Defence: Old Norse Philology in Copenhagen in the Middle of the 19th Century

Around the middle of the 19th century, the first professor of Nordic languages at the University of Copenhagen, Niels Matthias Petersen, published four volumes of Icelandic family sagas in Danish translations. The language of the translations included many new words and idioms, otherwise completely unknown in Danish, and which he had found primarily in Old Norse. This was a conscious act on Petersen's behalf. Petersen intended to strengthen the Danish language against the threat from the South, particularly from

German language and culture. In the last volume he included a lengthy discussion on his ideas behind the language of his translations. In my paper, I will discuss the language policy of N.M. Petersen, as it is expressed in Petersen's translations and commentaries, i.e. how N.M. Petersen intended to build the North with new words.

**Thomas Mohnike** (Strasbourg)

Narrating the Germanic. Strasbourgian Philologists Caught in Geographical Imaginations

The imaginative geographies produced and reproduced by philologists working with Nordic sources in Strasbourg were not innocent. Even if methods and sources of French and German philologists were basically the same, the results changed depending on the political and historical contexts, i.e. on Strasbourg being politically French or German. My talk will try to systemize the relationship between the changing places of Strasbourg and the geographical knowledge narrated by philological research.

**Lis Møller** (Aarhus)

Hauch's German Lectures on Nordic Mythology

In the summer of 1846 the Danish poet Carsten Hauch gave a series of public lectures in Kiel on Nordic mythology. The lectures were subsequently published: *Die nordische Mythenlehre nach einer Reihe von Vorlesungen* (Leipzig 1847). Hauch had in 1846 taken up the post as professor of Danish at the university of Kiel, a position he held until 1848 when the deterioration of German-Danish relations forced him to leave the country. My paper will consider Hauch's lectures as an instance of the use of Nordic mythology as a means to further transnational understanding. The explicit (if somewhat naïve) intention of the series of lectures was to counteract the growing nationalism in Germany and Denmark by calling attention to a shared cultural heritage.

**Michael Rießler** (Freiburg)

Saami Studies at European Universities since 1850

Saami Studies is the relatively new name of a scientific discipline investigating Sápmi and the Saami people. Saami Studies were earlier known as Lappology, which traditional focus was on Saami anthropology, history, linguistics, literature and related fields. Today, research in Saami Studies is often carried out with an interdisciplinary approach. Since Saamic cultures and societies are highly diverse and the relevant geographic area stretches across several countries, Saami Studies are now also usually defined as a field of area studies.

My paper deals with the history of research in Saami Studies, which are considered to have begun 1673 with the work *Lapponia* by Johannes Scheffer from Strasbourg. My paper deals specifically with the contributions by researchers from outside the Nordic countries and focusses on the start of "Modern Saami Studies" from around the middle of the nineteenth century on. Important subject areas during this period were comparative anthropology and linguistics.

### **Dan Ringgaard (Aarhus)**

#### Mapping Place Theory

In my paper I shall try to present contemporary positions within place theory between phenomenology, sociology and cartography. I will especially point to a turn from a "reading for the plot" to a "reading for the atmosphere" and the methodological as well as philosophical implications of this turn.

### **Merja Torvinen (Caen)**

#### The Romanticized North – Construing the Image of the Saami in the 19th Century French Travel Literature

In my presentation, I'll examine the way the Saaminess is construed in French literature through three early travel descriptions from Finnish Lapland, dating from the 17th to the 19th century.

**Julia Zernack** (Frankfurt)

Building the North with Poetry - "The Edda" in European Romanticism

In several European literatures national romanticism developed the particular concept of 'nordic' Romanticism: poetry of a certain 'northern' character in modern national languages (French, German, Danish, Swedish, English, Polish, Russian). One of the main sources of inspiration for this concept was represented by Old Norse Poetry, though in the shape Paul-Henri Mallet had given to it in the middle of the 18th century in a French translation. The present paper will discuss the way in which Mallet's cosmopolitan construction of a 'celtic' Edda contributed to the emergence of various 'nordic revivals' in literature during the process of nation-building in the 19th century. Though these revivals typically lay claim to national distinctiveness they will be regarded as a common European phenomenon open to comparative research.