

American Studies in Norway 1965—67

A natural distinction can still be made between those European nations where American Studies remain experimental, or even slightly suspicious, and those where such studies are now fully accepted and form a normal part of the curriculum in schools and universities. Since the late 1950s, Norway belongs to the latter group. For that reason, no sensational news may be expected from a report on developments within the three years' period under consideration. Notwithstanding, some progress has taken place since the Oslo meeting in 1964, and it should be put on record. In many fields such as Political Science, Psychology, and other Social Studies, the intellectual and scholarly exchange has reached such a degree of intensity that it is hopeless even to outline it. I will here limit myself to American Studies specifically.

The *secondary school system* in Norway is at present in a period of change and turmoil, and extensive experiments are being carried out. It is quite probable that these reforms will eventually lead to some changes even within that study of the United States and its civilization that is now carefully worked into the curriculum. But any serious reduction of requirements I do not envisage. The teaching staff of *lektors* now seems to feel tolerably well prepared for its task in the field. By a cooperation

of the American Institute, the American Embassy and the Association of Secondary School Teachers annual Summer Schools for secondary school teachers were organized regularly since 1950. But in recent years these courses were not well attended. The strong need felt in the 1940s and 50s apparently is not there any more, and the courses have now been discontinued.

On the *university* level, the most conspicuous progress in the period is actually due to the American Council of Learned Societies.

By a three years' grant the Council recently made it possible to establish at the University of *Bergen* an Associate Professorship (*dosentur*) of American Literature. It is implicitly understood that after the expiration of the grant period the position will be transferred to the ordinary government budget. The chair will probably be filled as of August 1, 1969, and several qualified scholars may be expected to apply.

In addition, the University of *Bergen* recently appointed a young scholar, *Helge Normann Nilsen*, to a five years' Assistant Professorship (*universitetsstipendium*) of American Literature. Since the full Professor of English Literature at *Bergen*, *Georg Roppen*, is also a scholar in the American field, and since there is in addition a Fulbright Visiting Professor every year, teaching of American Litera-

ture at the University is now well taken care of. The position of History is not quite as favorable.

At the new University of *Trondheim* an American lektor in the English Department is largely teaching language. Teaching of American Literature and Institutions is taken care of by Fulbrighters; obligatory requirements correspond to those at Oslo, perhaps with somewhat stronger emphasis on Institutions. The holder of the Associate Professorship of English Literature (I. Raknem) is also a scholar in the American field. A full professorship of English Literature has been announced and will probably be filled as of January 1, 1969, — I hope, by somebody able to teach both literatures in the language.

The Norwegian Government has just invited the Parliament to establish a new university at *Tromsø*, in the extreme North. Among the first chairs to be announced is also one of English. When this new English Department gets under way, American material will surely play the same part as it does in the other Norwegian universities, and some teaching will have to be provided accordingly.

At the University of Oslo, there is a professorship of American History (held by Dr. Ingrid Semmingsen), donated by the ACLS in 1963. When the grant expired in 1968, the Government made the chair a part of the ordinary budget. The ACLS has provided a matching grant of 1000 dollars for the purchase of books in American History.

In 1966 Magne Helvig was appointed Associate Professor (*dosent*) of Geography in Oslo. He holds an American Ph. D., and in 1963¹⁶⁴ held the ACLS fellowship for studies in the USA.

In 1967 the ACLS granted a one year fellowship to an Associate Professor in the Music Department for the study of American Music.

In the English Department at Oslo, requirements in American Institutions will be tightened as of 1968, and there is now regular teaching of the subject with obligatory attendance on the elementary level. The Ministry in 1967 established a new lectureship of American Literature in the English Department, and the ACLS donated another lectureship for a three year period, on the condition that it become a part of the ordinary budget at the expiration of the grant. The positions will be filled as of August 1, 1968, by Per Seyersted and Dorothy B. Skårdal (half positions) and Brita Seyersted. At the same time the Ministry established a Scholarly Assistantship in American Literature, and a position of Office Assistant, both to be filled in 1968. In 1966 Orm Øverland was appointed to a five years' Assistant Professorship (*universitetsstipendium*) of American Literature. In 1967 a new lectureship in the Department of General and Comparative Literature was filled by one of the Instructors of American Literature, Jan W. Dietrichson. The National Research Council granted one to three years' fellowships in American Literature and History to four young scholars, to

be attached to the American Institute.

The English Department is applying for a dosenur of American Literature and lectureships in American Institutions, and Language. While the Department waits for these new positions there has been a Fulbright Visiting Professor of American Literature in Oslo every year since 1958. A number of doctoral theses are close to completion, some at Oslo, some at Yale, which has come to play a considerable part as a point of contact in the USA.

There is an important development in the field of resources for research. The American Institute since 1965 has been subscribing to the microfilm series *American Periodicals before 1850*, purchased with the support of the American Council of Learned Societies, and in 1967 also entered subscription for the microfilm series *American Culture*. This magnificent undertaking is going to reproduce 6000 American books down to 1876 within all fields of civilization; the titles

are selected by a committee appointed by the Am. Stud. Ass in America. The purchase was made possible by an additional ACLS grant of 5000 dollars to be matched by a similar amount from the donated funds of the American Institute. There is a printed catalog of the collection, and the material will be made available for inter-library loan all over Scandinavia.

In 1966 the American Institute in cooperation with the University of Pennsylvania Press brought out the first volume of a series *Americana Norvegica. Norwegian Contributions to American Studies* (340 pp.). The volumes, to appear at irregular intervals, will contain smaller articles — 10 to 100 pp. — particularly written by the younger generation of scholars. Editors of the first volume were Professor H. H. Wasser (N. Y.) and myself. The second volume will appear in the summer of 1968 with myself as Editor and with an editorial committee representing the three universities of Bergen, Oslo and Trondheim. Sigmund Skard

Swedish Books, recently published in the field of American Culture

Geography and travel

Kalm, Pehr, Resejournal över resan till norra Amerika (A travel journal on the journey to North America), utgiven av Matti Kerkkonen. 382 pp. Ill. 1966. (Skrifter utg av Svenska litteratursällskapet i Finland, Helsingfors, 419).

History, immigration, emigration, and minorities in America

Englund, Erik, Siouxerna — ett krigarfolk på prarierna (The Sioux — a warfaring people on the prairies). (Av) Erik »Uncas Englund. Ill. av Hans Soderberg. 182 pp. Stockholm, Natur och kultur, 1967.

Olsson, Nils W., Swedish Passenger Arrivals in New York 1820—1850. Acta Bibliothecae Regiae Stockholmensis, VI, Stockholm, 1967.

En *smålandssocken* emigrerar. En bok om emigrationen till Amerika från Långasjö socken i Kronobergs län. (A Smolandish parish emigrates. A book on the emigration to America from the parish of Långasjö situated in the county of Kronoberg) Red.-kommitté: John Johansson... (utg av) Långasjö emigrantcirkel. 928 pp. Ill. Långasjö, 1967.

American foreign policy and foreign relations

Myrdal, Gunnar, USA och Vietnamkriget (The USA and the war in Vietnam). 13 pp. Ill. Stockholm, Vietnampress (box 681, Stockholm), 1967.

Linguistic studies, dictionaries, etc

Allwood, Martin S, Engelska vokaler och idiom med viktigare amerikanska varianter (English vocables and idioms with some important American variations). I samarbete med Elsie Postlethwaite. Monica Nilsson och G K Laycock. Fonetisk skrift av Boel Rönn. 3 uppl. 168 pp. Ill. Stockholm. Liber (Seelig), 1967.

Literature and culture: General

American Portraits. An anthology of modern American writing. Selected by Wendy Hall and S A Bergmann. 79 pp. Stockholm. Sv. Bokforl., 1966.
An *Anglo-American* song book. Engelska, irländska, skotska och ameri-

kanska sånger saml. och bearb. av Gertrude Björklund. 14 överb. uppl. 103 pp. Stockholm, 1966.

Björkestén, Ingmar, Scenbild USA. En amerikansk teaterhistoria (A short history of American Theatre). 157 pp. Ill. Stockholm, Sveriges radio, 1967.

Interesting things. British-American anthology. Ed. by Ö. Rudal and A. Englund Stockholm, 1966.

A *light* dozen. British and American stories. Ed. by Bertil Eriksson. 2 ed. 113 pp. Stockholm, 1967.

More interesting things. British-American anthology. Ed. by Ö. Rudal and A. Englund. 103 pp. Ill. Stockholm, 1967.

Literature and culture: Individual writers

Lindberg-Seyersted, Brita. The voice of the poet. Aspects of style in the poetry of Emily Dickinson. (Studia anglistica Ups., 6). Uppsala, 1968.

Literature and culture : Art, architecture, film, music

Reutersvärd, Oscar, Baertling. Creator of open form. 51 pp. Ill. New York: Rose Fried Gallery. Stockholm 1966.

Sociology, social anthropology, social institutions

Black power — svart makt. Den svarta nationalismen i USA. (Black power — the black nationalism in the USA). En antologi red. av Björn Kumm. 136 pp. Stockholm, 1967.