First Annual Conference for the History of Science in Norway
Vidar Enebakk, Forum for University History, University of Oslo

Conference Objectives

The aim of the conference is to establish a national network for historians of science in Norway. At present no such organisation exists. Nevertheless, in recent years there has been a remarkable effort by strong and committed research groups at all the main universities towards developing the history of science as a discipline. By bringing together these local initiatives the national conference at Baroniet Rosendal 20-22 May 2008 will encourage closer national collaboration, increased scientific publication and broader participation in international organisations. It is our ambition that this conference will be the first in a series of national annual conferences for the history of science.

The purpose of the new network shall be to promote cooperation in the field of the history of science understood in the broadest sense. In particular, the network shall aim at:

1. Providing an internationally orientated network for research in the history of science.
2. Promoting national cooperation between local initiatives and institutions.
3. Promoting the preservation of and access to scientific heritage through museums etc.
4. Promoting, collaborating, assisting, and advising on the teaching of the history of science.
5. Advancing the education of the public in historical, cultural, and social aspects of science.

The broader impact of the conference is the consolidation of history of science as a discipline in Norway. The intellectual merits will consist of reciprocal comments and criticism, thus challenging on the level of a national scientific community the individual and more local sets of standards and practices. The five sessions at the conference will be organized around topics where we already have strong international reputation and resources, such as the history of polar science, the history of scientific institutions (societies, museums, universities), the history of mathematics, and the history of medicine and life sciences. Further, it is an important goal of the conference to facilitate closer collaboration with international contacts and colleagues, thus each session will include one specially invited international historian of science who will discuss the presented cases in relation to recent international debates.
International orientation

Various research groups in Norway have already established strong relations to eminent historians of science at leading universities. For instance the group in Tromsø has a close collaboration with Professor Robert Fox in Oxford, and together they have recently submitted a research application. Similarly, Forum for University History has submitted an application to the Research Council together with Professor Giuliano Pancaldi in Bologna and Professor Simon Schaffer in Cambridge. In addition to these colleagues we also intend to invite Professor Moritz Epple in Frankfurt and Dr. Lisbet Rausig, Senior Research Fellow at Imperial College in London – both renowned historians of science who also fortunately speak Scandinavian languages. Their role in the five respective sessions will be to comment the various papers by Norwegian colleagues and relate them to recent international theoretical and methodological debates within history of science.

Also in a broader institutional sense Norwegian history of science today is in a fortunate situation. The discipline is already established internationally at most of the leading universities. There is a huge institutional infrastructure with publication channels and conferences for history of science that we can simply ‘hook-up-with’ and ‘tap-into’ through organisations such as the History of Science Society (HSS), the British Society for the History of Science (BSHS), the European Society for the History of Science (ESHS), and finally the Division for the History of Science and Technology, which formally is a part of the International Union for the History and Philosophy of Science (IUHPS).

It is worth emphasizing that although most of these organisations defining the discipline were established between 1928 and 1948, the ESHS was founded just recently in Paris in October 2003. This must be seen in relation to the direct recommendations issued by the European Union in 1998 in order to foster intellectual cooperation in the history of science in Europe. Even more important, the program for “Science and Society” under the European Commission organised a workshop with more than 40 scholars in Brussels in June 2006 explicitly emphasizing the role and relevance of the history of science as documented in the report by Dominique Pestre on *Historical perspective of science and politics*.\(^1\)

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For instance in Denmark these developments has resulted in a renewal of the already existing Danish Society for the History of Science (DSHS). Also in Sweden there is a huge interest in the history of science, and we especially welcome the appointment of Professor Otto Sibum in the Rausing chair in History of Science at Uppsala University. It is our intention to use this opportunity to launch a similar national network in Norway in line with these recent European efforts.

Due to our international orientation, the explicit ambition to publish internationally, and five specially invited guests from abroad it is obvious that the official language at the conference will be English (those unable or uncomfortable with this arrangement will of course be able to present papers in Norwegian). We also suggest that presenters write the papers with a long-term goal to publish internationally, not only for oral presentation at the national conference.

We further emphasize the value of presenting papers at international conferences, and we encourage our participants to submit papers and participate in the following upcoming international events:

- “The Sixth Joint Meeting for the British Society for the History of Science (BSHS), the Canadian Society for the History and Philosophy of Science (CSHPS), and the History of Science Society (HSS)”, 4.-6. July 2008, Keble College, Oxford, United Kingdom.\(^2\)

**National collaboration**

Despite the lack of national organisation and coordination there is currently a great variety of local activities in the history of science: For instance in Tromsø, Einar-Arne Drivenes and Harald Dag Jolle has edited a three-volume history of Norwegian polar history with particular emphasis on the role of the sciences, and Terje Brundland recently submitted his PhD on

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\(^2\) [www.bshs.org.uk/bshs/conferences/other_bshs_meetings/three_societies_meeting/three_societies_2008_call_for_papers/index.html](www.bshs.org.uk/bshs/conferences/other_bshs_meetings/three_societies_meeting/three_societies_2008_call_for_papers/index.html)

\(^3\) [www.oeaw.ac.at/kgnmm/ESHS3rdCongress/](www.oeaw.ac.at/kgnmm/ESHS3rdCongress/)

\(^4\) [www.conferences.hu/ichs09/invitation.htm](www.conferences.hu/ichs09/invitation.htm)
scientific instruments at the University of Oxford. In Trondheim, Steinar Supphellen and Anne Kristine Børresen at NTNU has organized the Forum for the History of Knowledge (Kunnskapshistorie). Also in Trondheim, there is an ongoing project on the history of the Royal Norwegian Society of Science and Letters (Det Kongelige Norske Videnskabers Selskab) to be finished by the 250th anniversary in 2010. In Bergen, a two-volume history of that University was written for the 50th anniversary in 1996, and this project has launched a renewed interest in the history of science in Bergen. In Kristiansand, a group on the history of mathematics has been organized by Professor Reinard Siegmund-Schultze at the University of Agder. Similarly in Oslo, the Faculty of Medicine recently appointed Christoph Gradmann as professor in the history of medicine. At the TIK-center in Oslo, both Brita Brenna and Kristin Asdal explores the interface between science and technology studies (STS) and history of science.

Finally, a large research group is organized by Professor John Peter Collett at the Forum for University History, producing a six-volume history of the University of Oslo for the 200th anniversary in 2011. This group further includes Professor Robert Marc Friedman, who currently holds the only Norwegian chair in the history of science, Peder Anker who has a PhD in history of science from Harvard, and Vidar Enebakk who recently was a Visiting Scholar at the Department for the History and Philosophy of Science in Cambridge.

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8 Reinhard Siegmund-Schultze and Henrik Kragh Sørensen (eds.), Perspectives on Scandinavian Science in the Early Twentieth Century, Novus Forlag, Oslo 2006.
10 Kristin Asdal, Brita Brenna and Ingunn Moser (eds.), Technoscience. The Politics of Intervention. Unipub Forlag, Oslo 2007. See also: www.tik.uio.no
11 John Peter Collett, Historien om Universitetet i Oslo, Universitetsforlaget, Oslo 1996. For more information: www.hf.uio.no/forskningsprosjekter/ffluent/index.html
Also acknowledging the many important contributions by individuals like Arild Stubhaug, Geir Hestmark, Nils Roll-Hansen and others, it is nevertheless the case that the more institutional initiatives above lack the support and structure of a professional scientific community. Such a broader institutionalisation is required to ensure better quality control and consolidation of the discipline in terms of teaching, research and dissemination. Also, a national network is necessary to mediate between local and international arenas both in terms of more international scientific publication and participation at workshops, seminars and conferences. In short: To increase international activity, we need to strengthen the national network.

Dissemination of contributions

An important goal of this conference is to facilitate better international scientific publication. Rather than organize a more local collection of the contribution at the conference, we encourage all participants individually to submit their papers to acknowledge publication channels with peer review. The idea of the conference is to provide our participants with the opportunity to first present their papers nationally, then at the various international conferences in 2008-9 mentioned above, before submitting them for international publication.

An important part of the dissemination and further contribution to enhancement of scientific activities in the history of science consists in mediating between this new national initiative and more local forms of organisation. In this respect the setting up of a network and a webpage will be of great value, thus enabling better communication among the various groups and increased exchange of ideas and information concerning Norwegian history of science.

Organizing committee and Advisory board

The conference will by organized by Forum for University History at the University of Oslo. Vidar Enebakk is chief organizer and the organizing committee at Forum consists of Peder Anker, John Peter Collett and Robert Marc Friedman. In addition the Advisory Board will consist of five representatives from the five respective universities: Einar-Arne Drivenes (Tromsø), Steinar Supphellen (NTNU), Reinhard Siegmund-Schultze (Agder) and Christoph Gradmann (Oslo) – we have not yet been able to find a representative from Bergen.

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Dates, meeting location and transport

The conference will be held at Baroniet Rosendal on May 20-22, 2008. This manor originally erected in 1665 located at Kvinnherad by the Hardangerfjorden will serve as a perfect location for a national conference. Forum for University History has a long tradition for hosting conferences here as the building belongs to the University of Oslo through Den Weis-Rosenkroneske Stiftelse established in 1928. Baroniet Rosendal can provide us with modern conference- and ICT-facilities in a seminar room for 40 persons where the sessions will be held. Regarding accommodation Baroniet Rosendal can arrange for a total of 24 individual rooms in ‘Avlsgården’ and ‘Fruehuset’ respectively. However, we have access to additional rooms at Rosendal Gjestgiveri in Kvinnherad. (www.baroniet.no/no/index.php)

We will travel from Bergen to Rosendal by boat, so the participants will have to arrange for flights or other transportation to Bergen individually. “Hardangerfjordsekspressen” departs from Bergen on Tuesday 20. May at 16:30 and we’ll arrive at Rosendal by 18:25 – in time for dinner and a formal opening of the conference. We leave by boat on Thursday 22. May at 14:15 and arrive in Bergen at 16:10. The trip is 290 NOK each way. (www.rodne.no)
Program
The conference will be organized around five main sessions in addition to the formal opening. The session will be chaired by members of the advisory committee, and each session will have one specially invited international guest lecturer. A total of four papers can be presented in each session, and we suggest the papers should be only 20 minutes long so we can leave plenty of room for discussion. We expect around 25 participants including chairpersons and invited guests.

**Tuesday 22. May**
16:30  Departure from Bergen
18:25  Arrival at Kvinnherad, walk to Baroniet Rosendal, checking-in.
19:00  Chair: Peder Anker
       John Peter Collett: “Formal Opening of the Conference”
       Vidar Enebakk: “A Short History of the History of Science in Norway”
20:00  Dinner

**Wednesday 23. May**
09:00  **Session 1: Enlightenment Science and Scientific Societies**
       Chair: Steinar Supphellen (NTNU). Guest: Lisbet Raising (London)
11:00  Lunch
       Guided tour around Baroniet Rosendal
13:00  **Session 2: History of Medicine and Life Sciences**
       Chair: Christoph Gradmann (Oslo). Guest: Giuliano Pancaldi (Bologna)
15:00  Coffee break
15:30  **Session 3: Polar Science**
       Chair: Einar-Arne Drivenes (Tromsø). Guest: Robert Fox (Oxford)
19:00  Dinner Party: “Slottsaften”

**Thursday 24. May**
09:00  **Session 4: History of Mathematics and Natural Sciences**
       Chair: Reinhard Siegmund-Schultze (Agder). Guest: Moritz Epple (Frankfurt)
11:00  Lunch
12:00  **Session 5: Instruments, Collections and Museums**
       Chair: Astrid Forland (Bergen). Guest: Simon Schaffer (Cambridge)
14:15  Departure from Rosendal by boat.
16:10  Arrival in Bergen.
Budget

The application to the Norwegian Research Council is for 125,000 NOK.
The conference fee is 1000 NOK (20 persons, excluding our five international guests).
The institutions involved will provide 25,000 NOK in self financing.
The self financing also includes travel and accommodation. However, the participants
themselves will have to arrange for the trip to Bergen (stipulated 1000 NOK) and the boat to
Rosendal (2 x 290 NOK). Also the rooms must be paid by the participants (2 x 750 NOK).
All relevant expenses have been confirmed by Baroniet Rosendal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Norwegian Research Council</td>
<td>125,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conference fees (20 x 1000,-)</td>
<td>20,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self financing, travel and accommodation</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL INCOME</strong></td>
<td><strong>231,600</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Planning and preparation (1 month)*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flights to Bergen (20 x 1000 NOK)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boat to Rosendal (20 x 2 x 290 NOK)</td>
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<td>Rooms at Rosendal (20 x 2 x 750 NOK)</td>
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<td>Invited international guests (x 5)</td>
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<td>Conference facilities, fruit, coffee etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conference material, invitation, program etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two lunches at Avlsgården</td>
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<td>Guided tour at Baronoet Rosendal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dinner at Avlsgården Wednesday 28/5</td>
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<td>Dinnerparty/Slottsaften, Thursday 29/5</td>
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<td>Unforseen expenses</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL EXPENCES</strong></td>
<td><strong>231,600</strong></td>
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* NFR-standard for post doctoral research fellows: 722,000 NOK/12 = 60167 NOK