

Aspects of Johan Ernst Gunnerus' life and work

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Editor's preface

This issue of Transactions marks the 250th anniversary of the scientific journal. Brenna and Supphellen tell in their article the story of the founding of Scientific Society in 1760. The Society did celebrate its 250th anniversary in the spring 2010. The following year after 1760 the young society presented the first issue of *Transactions* named *Det Trondhiemske Selskabs Skrifter*, in Danish. The present 250th anniversary issue of Transactions commemorates the journal as the oldest Norwegian scientific publication still in existence.

Up to his death in 1773, Johan Ernst Gunnerus played an important role in the first issues of Transactions: As the *vice-precēs* of the Society he was the editor, but did also as well write the majority of the published articles himself.

It is therefore suitable to mark the anniversary with a special issue which focuses on Gunnerus and his contributions to the history of science. The articles present a wide field of his scientific explorations. Supphellen and Brenna describe the historical context to his work - in Trondheim and as part of the Enlightenment. Collett presents a detailed story of the role Gunnerus played as a reformer of the university and Hagland's article "Johan Ernst Gunnerus- Studies of the Norwegian language" calls attention to a less known part of the bishop's scientific interests. Jakobsen presents some of the theological texts and investigates how his theological agenda was related to the contributions to the other sciences. The last article by Bakken, Fremstad and Aagaard focus on some of Gunnerus' lasting contributions to natural history and show some of its contemporary significance.

The Royal Norwegian Society of Sciences and Letters will thank the authors for their contribution.

Trondheim, October 2011

Rolv Nøtvik Jakobsen

Assisting editor this number

Kristian Overskaug

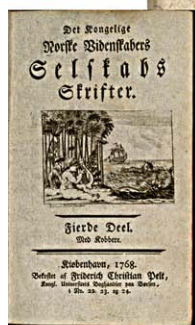
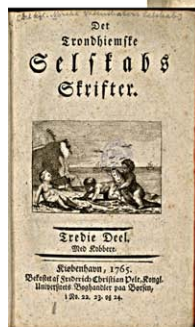
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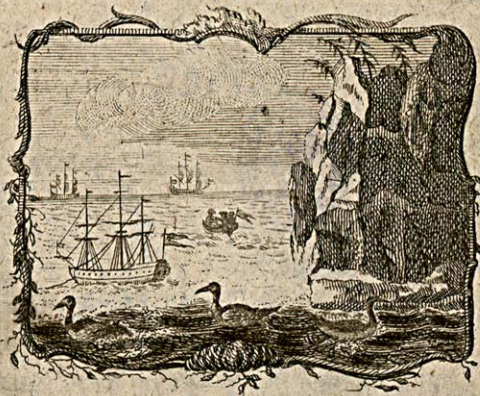
Bishop Johan Ernst Gunnerus 1718-1773, painting in Katedralskolen, Festsalen. University Library, NTNU Trondheim. Photo: Karl-Erik Refsnæs.

Content

Preface	iii
Content	v
Brita Brenna and Steinar Supphellen:	
Science, sociability, and the tools of Enlightenment – Johan Ernst Gunnerus and the Trondheim milieu	1
John Peter Collett:	
Johan Ernst Gunnerus as a University Reformer of the Enlightenment	23
Jan Ragnar Hagland:	
Johan Ernst Gunnerus – studies of the Norwegian language	63
Rolv Nøtvik Jakobsen:	
Johan Ernst Gunnerus – a conservative theologian and an enlightened scientist (?)	75
Torkild Bakken, Eli Fremstad and Kaare Aagaard:	
Bishop Gunnerus as naturalist: His impact on biodiversity research today ..	109



Det
Nordhiemske
Selskabs
Skrifter.



Første Deel.
Med Kobber.

Kjøbenhavn, 1761.
Bekostet af Frid. Christ. Pelt, Boghandler
paa Børsen, i No. 22, 23, og 24.

The title page of Skrifter (Writings) part 1 (1761), with part 3 (1765), 4 (1768) and 5 (1774).