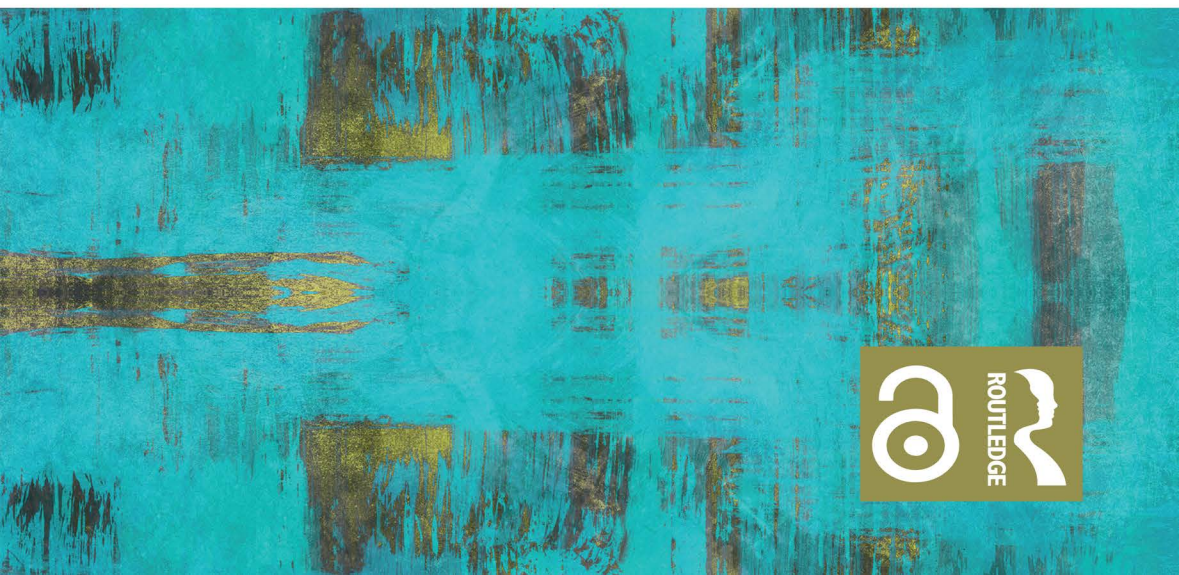
Nordic Studies in a Global Context

NORDIC TRANSATLANTIC CROSSINGS

EMIGRATION, INTERACTION AND DEMOCRACY 1825–1945

Edited by
Ruth Hemstad and Terje Rasmussen



Nordic Transatlantic Crossings

Adopting a broad and transnational Nordic approach, this book highlights the interconnected, transatlantic and reciprocal processes of migration and democracy with Nordic crossings.

It illuminates the connections, challenges and broader democratic context of transatlantic crossings of various kinds and explores the intertwined practices and experiences of Nordic mass migration and American democracy. By examining episodes, reflections and trends related to inter-Atlantic encounters that challenged established norms and policies, the book brings fresh insights into the significance of transatlantic connections at certain moments in time and helps describe the development of a transatlantic public sphere and a transcultural space.

This book is of key interest to scholars and students of Nordic and Scandinavian studies, American-Scandinavian studies, North American history, political theory, history of political ideas, migration studies and, more broadly, history, political science, political sociology and literature.

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1 Introduction

Emigration, interaction and democracy in a Scandinavian-American perspective

Ruth Hemstad and Terje Rasmussen

Introduction

Two hundred years ago, the first Norwegians emigrated to the United States of America in search of religious freedom. The following century, they were joined by a substantial part of the population from Norway, Sweden and the other Nordic countries, drawn to the "land of freedom" for a variety of reasons. America and American democracy soon became an ambiguous point of reference, an object of "love and hate", continuing until today. Since the beginning of mass migration, Nordic transatlantic crossings and interaction, increasingly including short- and long-term travellers, were closely connected to democratic developments – and shortcomings – both at home and across the sea. The multidimensional transatlantic experiences, networks and encounters have influenced the Nordic countries in several interrelated and often underexplored ways.

Norway and Sweden were the two countries, next to Ireland, with the highest rate of inhabitants departing their countries. Danes, Finns and Icelanders also left the Nordic area for the new American world. Between 1825 and 1930, around 2.5 million Scandinavians emigrated to North America, while a considerable number, maybe as much as a fifth, chose to migrate home again.[1] The Nordic countries hence offer unique possibilities for comparison of similarities and differences of experiences and for exploring transnational transfer and entanglements, both within and beyond the region. So far, however, the main bulk of research on emigration has been tied to the framework of the individual Nordic nation-states, and Scandinavian-American relations have mostly been studied as Norwegian-American, Swedish-American and Danish-American relations, respectively. Scandinavians have, to a lesser degree, been studied as a cohesive immigrant group, and the broader Scandinavian context of emigration experiences has often been lacking in a historiographic tradition still influenced by its origin among the immigrant groups themselves. It thus remains a challenge to transgress "the nation-state model and instead explore migration issues pertaining to the Nordic countries at large".[2] Moreover, research on national developments in the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Nordic region has only, to a limited degree, incorporated migration and other global movement trends and their significant impact on the societies at home. By widening the perspective and employing a transnational Nordic approach, this volume seeks to

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highlight the interconnected – transnational and transatlantic – processes of migration, mobility and democracy and the development of what has been termed a transatlantic public sphere and a transcultural space.[3]

By examining episodes and trends related to transatlantic encounters that in various ways challenged established norms and policies, the purpose of this volume is to bring fresh insight into the significance of transatlantic connections of a wide variety of kinds over more than a century, from the early 1800s to World War II. Our focus rests on dynamics in American communities and in Nordic civic life, emphasizing the significance that transatlantic relations and emigration had on developments at both ends.[4] From the Nordic side, American society was met not only with admiration but also with ambivalence and condemnation. Contrasting impulses were negotiated and domesticated for the Nordic mentalities that they indeed took part in shaping. To be sure, America was a conglomerate of social constructions, of moral and immoral practices, ideas and individuals. "America" was a term that functioned much like basic concepts such as "democracy" and "freedom". It resembled an image or a symbol: Everyone attributed something to it, and in that way, "America" enabled communication on politics, culture, farming, religion and so on. Exactly what people meant by it proved very, and probably increasingly, different things.

Experiencing American democracy

The first "great experiment in democracy" – the United States – fuelled the unprecedented social experiment of European mass migration, made possible by the recently achieved freedom of movement and thus freedom to emigrate on the one hand, and the travel and communication revolution on the other hand.[5] More than 50 million Europeans emigrated, with 35 million to North America, and perhaps as many as 7 million of them returned.[6] This massive transatlantic experience shaped both the old and the new worlds. America became a place for democratic learning and critique – experienced and felt "from below" over sustained periods of time. While practising democracy in the new world, immigrants remained in touch with their country of origin through a "virtual community" of millions of letters, thousands of periodicals and books, and other kinds of information exchange.[7] Global networks of migrants and expatriates, many living transnational lives going back and forth frequently, sustained cultural, linguistic and economic links across vast distances.[8] As Christiane Harzig emphasizes in underlining the importance of transcultural spaces: "Germany, Europe, and North America were interconnected in more ways than has been assumed in traditional emigration and immigration literature". These interconnections "involved every aspect of the social fabric – the political, economic, cultural, and, of course, the personal/individual threat – and affected those who stayed at home as much as those who went abroad".[9]

In the Nordic region, the influence of American society and ideas was already substantial in 1814, when the citizens of Norway received their constitution. The "founding fathers" who wrote the Constitution were well acquainted with several of the state constitutions in America, and statements from some of them were

copied almost verbatim.[10] The rapidly increasing emigration, particularly from the 1860s, caused intense discussions, not least in Norway and Sweden, although it also served to produce relationships of an everyday and more lasting nature.[11] Gradually, emigrants came to be seen not primarily as lost resources, but as valuable contacts abroad, forging transatlantic, transnational and trans-local communities. The Scandinavian countries, at least Norway and Sweden, may thus be described (as has been done for Italy and Germany) as "Emigrant nations", embracing populations across nation-state borders in an expanded nation.[12] While particularly Italian authorities consciously sought to bind their citizens abroad more closely to their homeland, the Nordic countries demonstrated limited official engagement, relying on civil society initiatives.[13]

Migration was the baseline for transoceanic networks of influence that have since grown and dramatically shifted. How did nineteenth-century Scandinavians make sense of the different physical and spiritual landscape they migrated to? How did they experience their new life, and how did they remain in contact with their homelands and relatives through transatlantic networks that were established in and influenced both worlds? The myriad of Scandinavian transatlantic crossings and connections, linkages and ruptures, and the broader democratic context they were intrinsically part of are topics to be further explored in this volume. A cross-cutting theme is thus the development and importance of transatlantic ties and Scandinavian networks created by emigration and expatriation, primarily on individual, local and associational levels. How did migrants and travellers from the Nordic region reflect upon their lives and experiences in North America, particularly as they pertain to a conception of "democracy", broadly understood? In different ways, each chapter engages with how these expressions circulated among Scandinavian-Americans and others and across the Atlantic to relatives and communities back home in transatlantic public spheres and virtual communities, spanning more than a century.

Nordic transatlantic experiences, we argue in this volume, make an excellent case from which to evaluate the larger historical phenomenon of transatlantic mass migration. By addressing the wider implications of transatlantic mobility of people, including central historical actors, civic organizations and political ideas, the book explores the interconnected practices and experiences of Nordic migration and American democracy.

By transatlantic connections, we here refer to various forms of mutual influences in the wake of migration, remigration and travel. Migration of people also implies migration of culture in a wide sense. Immigrants and travellers brought with them their Nordic ways of observations and returned with impressions and documentation that inspired and yet also discouraged. The social interaction of people brought with it a congruent interaction and negotiation of ideas, theories and conventions about democracy and freedom, leading to modified conceptions and narratives of integration and identity, both over there and back home.

Concepts directed towards the future, like progress and democracy, connected Europe and America. More than anything, America represented change and new possibilities, and conversely, the Nordic nations represented a standstill for the

immigrants. American society represented visions of the future as well as images of horror, with an ambiguous position in Nordic political discourse from the 1850s onwards. American ideas and society more than indicated to the Nordic nations how (not) to navigate towards the future.

Migration and its material and immaterial effects opened new possibilities while closing others. The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were under the heavy influence of not only migration but also (pan-)nationalism, colonization, imperialism and war. During this period, the Nordic countries developed strong national and eventually democratic identities. Old ways and established royal authorities were challenged. Transatlantic connections enabled a progressive outlook that provided a reference for social and cultural change. Although this is not a novel conclusion, our contribution is in part to substantiate and in part to moderate this statement, building on a rich and varied corpus of empirical material from both sides of the ocean. Changes in the Nordic countries, we would furthermore like to argue, were often initiated by groups and classes in the Nordic countries themselves or at least negotiated in a multi-vocal sense, rather than being unsubtly dominated by American "soft power". This picture was arguably altered later with the US-initiated "Americanization" of Europe in the postwar years, a period that, however, falls beyond the scope of this volume.

The cases explored in this book span religious, economic, political, feminist and cultural areas on institutional as well as individual levels that put conceptions of justice, freedom, rights and autonomy on the public agenda. In examining and discussing connections of social meaning, the contributions study newspapers, fiction, judiciary documentation, personal narratives about the situation for social and ethnic groups, monuments and written memories, organizational accounts and more that embody ideas, dreams, political discourses and narratives. By remaining close to the voices of agents and the actual exchange of their experiences, our aim is to demonstrate the nature and variety of transnational and transatlantic ties and social interaction. The cases address unexpected redefinitions of concepts and themes such as national identity, belonging, citizen, race, white(ness), Black, American, Indigenous and colonialism. The crux of the topics dealt with boils down to transnational, meaningful social interaction, short and long term, with repercussions beyond itself and for its aftertime, some of which had lasting implications on both sides.

Of particular interest are notions of how American social practices were – in a wide sense – seen as democratic and in opposition to the "old" authorities in the Nordic region, a view that again was variably disturbed by observations of slavery and violence. A pertinent issue, only lately explored in Nordic-American historiography, is also how whiteness, racial questions and Scandinavian exchanges with other ethnicities and Indigenous peoples played into the immigrant experience as they were expressed both in the United States and the Nordic countries.[14]

By presenting in-depth cases of historical interaction, we aim to highlight transnationalism and its unintended and hitherto unrecognized effects, particularly in the Nordic countries, in their specific historical contexts. This is not a straightforward task. Clearly, America served as a mirror, as the "other" for Europe with the

Atlantic as a border, which enhanced comparing and debating about what would be fair and just for the Nordic futures. The relationship is, moreover, obviously of an asymmetrical kind, between what during this period became the most powerful nation in the world and the small Nordic states in a – comparatively speaking – stable corner of Europe.

In studying constructions of various discourses in a shifting, uneven and dynamic set of connections, sensitivity to contingencies is necessary – things could have developed differently. Some discourses, ideas and practices tended to dominate as a result of political and cultural struggles in both places, but particularly in the expanding and divided US. Of particular importance remains, however, the multitude of individual and organizational contacts and networks invigorating close and enduring exchange on different levels of the societies across the old and new worlds.

International and transnational relations

The transnational turn has been an important inspiration for much scholarship, including on European and Nordic-American relations. From the 1990s, what was called transnational history appeared and presented a novel perspective on international circulations of people, norms, ideas, institutions and technologies. We perceive transnational history, with Struck et al., as an "umbrella perspective that encompasses a number of well-established tools and perspectives such as historical comparison, (cultural) transfers, connections, circulations, entangled or shared history as well as a modern form of international history" and as a "perspective of study" rather than a clear-cut method.[15] Transnational history is a method to escape methodological nationalism that takes the nation-state as the primary scale of analysis and instead goes beyond single national frameworks to explain recent historical developments.[16] Even if migration and diaspora studies are transnational *per se*, and transnational history, as Akira argues, "really began in the nineteenth century, propelled by technological innovations as well as by supranational consciousness", an explicit transnational approach insists on stressing the importance of interactions and interconnections across national borders.[17]

Through the transnational history approach, a broader and literally larger scene was stretched out not only to include networks that went beyond the nation and the Nordic or European region but also to include the Americas and other regions of the world. A main contribution in this transatlantic field is Daniel T. Rodgers' seminal book from 1998, *Atlantic Crossing: Social Politics in a Progressive Age*, where he describes Euro-American "webs" and "networks" of influence.[18] His volume is instrumental in demonstrating the analytic power of transnational and transatlantic history. Before Rodgers, in 1986, James T. Kloppenberg had published *Uncertain Victory*. Both works considered transatlantic interchange and mutual influence of ideas in the Western world in the progressive era (1870–1920).

The growing awareness of the vital role of international and transnational relations in the formation of modern states has resulted in several insightful publications recently. Among volumes exploring Euro-American relations since the late

eighteenth century, we may mention *The American Experiment and the Idea of Democracy in British Culture, 1776–1914*, published in 2016, and "Transatlanticism: Identities and Exchanges" from 2009, both edited by Ella Dzelzainis and Ruth Livesay.[19] Their work followed the transatlantic track developed by Rodgers and later Paul Giles in several works during the last decades, among them *Transatlantic Insurrections*, published in 2001, and Ian Tyrrell's *Transnational Nation: United States History in Global Perspective*, published in 2007. The novel anthology *The Atlantic Enlightenment*, edited by Susan Manning and Francis D. Cogliano in 2008, demonstrates the impact of transatlantic relations on European enlightenment.

A number of publications have presented the conceptual history of democracy in Europe, but only addressing Euro-American relations in the nineteenth century in passing.[20] In Nordic historiography on transatlantic connections, transnational perspectives are employed in recent publications that examine the transfer of ideas and impulses in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[21] Common Scandinavian perspectives in research on Scandinavian immigrant experiences are, however, still sparsely developed, as addressed in 2011 in the anthology *Nordic Migration*, although recent important contributions illustrate the fruitfulness of combining Scandinavian sources and approaches. Major works to be mentioned are Jørn Brøndal and Dag Blanck's "The Concept of Being Scandinavian-American", from 2002; Brøndal's monograph published in 2004, *Ethnic Leadership and Midwestern Politics: Scandinavian-Americans and the Progressive Movement in Wisconsin, 1890–1914*; Anders Bo Rasmussen's 2022 monograph C*ivil War Settlers: Scandinavians, Citizenship, and American Empire*; and Erika Jackson's monograph from 2019, *Scandinavians in Chicago: The Origins of White Privilege in Modern America*. Other central works are published by Philip J. Anderson, Dag Blanck, H. Arnold Barton and others.[22] We should also like to mention the topical volume edited by our colleague at the University of Oslo, Hilde Sandvik, *Demokratiet i Amerika – Skrekkeksempel eller ideal?* from 2025 (Democracy in America – a frightening example or an ideal?) on Norwegian conceptions of the United States since Norwegian emigration began in 1825.

This volume builds and expands on this transnational and transatlantic approach by bringing together an interdisciplinary Nordic – and transatlantic – team of scholars, studying experiences of the migrants in the new world, as well as lasting implications of the long-term exchanges, encounters and entanglements in the old one. Although Finland and Iceland are to a large extent included in the chapters' discussions on transatlantic encounters, we have had to concentrate our studies for the most part on the three Scandinavian countries, due to practical and scholarly reasons. See, in particular, Bohlin's and Hemstad's chapters for discussions on Finnish and Icelandic perspectives.

Outline of the chapters

The contributions in this volume fall into three subject areas, although they are all concerned with Nordic-American relationships in various ways. The first set of chapters addresses how Scandinavian self-images were elaborated and refined with

representations of American culture and society as a reference. The second group of chapters turns to America as a stage for Nordic attempts at reconstituting an idea of Nordic culture and politics there, while the final three chapters focus on cases that demonstrate how modern American ideas and institutions influenced Scandinavian modernization from the beginning of the twentieth century.

In Part I, which we call Entanglements, the chapters address Nordic countries and their elaboration of a national self-understanding through the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries with impressions of American society as a mirror, most commonly associated with immigration.

Henrik Olav Mathiesen starts off by discussing the initial Nordic and particularly Norwegian emigration by religious dissidents, including Quakers and Haugeans, from the 1820s and 1830s, as encouraged by utopian and religious communities and movements, both at home and abroad. Early transatlantic correspondence and the Haugean oppositional mindset played a major role in this development.

Steinar A. Sæther focuses on two of the most widely read and distributed texts on California (in a broad understanding of the term) in 1850s' Scandinavia: botanist N.J. Johansson's travelogue and the California "cyclorama", a novel pre-cinematic "media" developed and toured by the Lehmann brothers. Both innovative and imaginative accounts of the distant place of opportunities no doubt stimulated Scandinavian conceptions of faraway California. Each in its way portrayed Californian life in romantic as well as brutal colours, illustrating the duality and ambivalence of Californian images in Scandinavia at the time (and probably since).

Anna Bohlin investigates the views on America by three Nordic pioneers of the women's movement: the Swedish author Fredrika Bremer, the feminist and first Finnish MP Alexandra Gripenberg, and the Norwegian writer and translator Sofie Magelssen-Groth. Bremer travelled around America and Cuba for two years in the mid-1800s, while Gripenberg and Magelssen-Groth visited America three decades later. Their books on their travels became widely read. Bohlin addresses Bremer's ambivalence towards what she observed on her extensive travels and contrasts it with the assessments of American democracy by Gripenberg and Magelssen-Groth.

Values and norms are topics for Terje Rasmussen's chapter as well. He examines the "indirect" influence of Gustave de Beaumont and Alexis de Tocqueville's publications about American society on policy processes and debates in Norway. The chapter addresses three critical moments of Tocquevillian (and Beaumontian) reception in Norway: The first concerns the work conducted by the Penitentiary Commission [Straffeanstaltkommisjonen] around 1840; the second deals with the debate on introducing a jury institution in Norwegian courts in 1852; and the final addresses the emerging debate on democracy that followed Tocqueville's death in 1859.

Jana Sverdljuk explores how Norwegian immigrant authors from the early phase of the emigrant period, 1839 to 1925, narrate interaction between Norwegian settlers and Indigenous peoples as part of a broader discursive process of immigrant identity construction. By using language-technological tools in analysing depictions of Indigenous peoples, the chapter explores predication strategies, that is how subjects are defined, described, evaluated or characterized, and identifies typical

patterns in the material. Examples range from the generalization or conflation of Indigenous groups to dehumanization and demonization, as well as to harmonizing and romanticizing.

Tina Langholm Larsen and Anders Bo Rasmussen's chapter concerns symbolic remigration as a means of rehabilitating and taking ownership of ideas. They address the very successful return of the remains of labour leader Lois Pio from Chicago to Denmark in 1920, orchestrated by his daughter and the Social Democratic Party. Pio's reburial signified a commemoration in a new Danish and social democratic context. Langholm Larsen and Anders Bo Rasmussen compare this memorial transformation with the similar story of the Norwegian labour leader Marcus Thrane, whose remains were brought back from Wisconsin to Oslo for a cemetery commemoration of honour after World War II.

The chapters on Encounters in Part II then turn to the wider reproduction and negotiation of the idea of the Scandinavian in American society.

Jørn Brøndal examines the representation of political views and ideologies in a Danish-American newspaper from the late 1800s and early 1900s – *Den Danske Pioneer* of Omaha, Nebraska. It was by far the largest Danish-language paper in the United States. Brøndal particularly explores how the paper and its influential editor, Sophus Neble, handled and mediated conflictual political developments and preferences between the old and the new worlds. A particular case in point was the major labour conflict in Denmark, the "Great Lockout" in 1899, where Neble mobilized the paper and the Danish-American readership in support of the locked-out labourers at home.

Ruth Hemstad discusses the public use of medieval historical narratives as political arguments in a transnational and transatlantic public sphere. Hemstad examines how America's Norse heritage – the historical narrative of Leiv Eiriksson as the first *white* discoverer of America in the year 1000 – was reinterpreted, disseminated and culturally recreated in manifold ways by Norwegian Americans and the broader Scandinavian immigrant community, mainly from the 1870s to the 1930s. The Viking legacy served as a usable past and a form of boreal medievalism, positioning the Scandinavian-Americans (particularly the Norwegians) in the hierarchical ethnoracial landscape of emerging importance in contemporary North America.

Terje M.H. Joranger compares views on whiteness, race and the Indigenous population in regional Norwegian-American newspapers in the Midwest and local newspapers in northern Norway. This chapter focuses on land as a contact zone between Indigenous populations and Norwegian settlers in Norway and in the United States, respectively, in light of federal legislation, such as the implementation of the Dawes Act of 1887, and the consequences of the passing of the land act favouring white settlements in the Lake Traverse Reservation in North and South Dakota between 1890 and 1910. The legal arrangement paradoxically enabled Indigenous populations and new Scandinavian settler communities to live together in close proximity.

Daron W. Olson addresses the Scandinavian-American relationships during the interwar and war periods, focusing on how Norwegians and Norwegian Americans

developed a discourse that stressed the intrinsically democratic character of Norway and its citizens and among the immigrants in America. In celebrations and manifestations for a liberated Norway, speakers and writers emphasized that Norway and the United States shared a basic outlook on democratic life. Norway came to be an "exemplar nation" for democracy and freedom.

The two chapters in the final Part III on Enactments examine America as a resonance and resource for Scandinavian modernization from the late nineteenth century onwards.

During America's progressive era, new ideas expanded from the Old World to the New World. In Terje Rasmussen's second contribution, the reception and influence of the economic and moral ideas of Henry George in Scandinavia, and Norway in particular, are analysed. In conjunction with similar traditional ideas and modern economic theory from Great Britain, Georgeism played a significant role in a critical phase of Norway's debates about how to protect its vast hydroelectric resources at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Victoria C. Austveg and Eirinn Larsen address the Americanization of women's political consciousness in Scandinavia with emphasis on the rise of the culture and concept of the "professional woman" in the interwar period. In the late 1920s, the American organization National Federation of Business and Professional Women (NFBPW) extended its activities to Scandinavia. This chapter explores how it was received and transformed, particularly in Norway and Sweden.

This volume results from the interdisciplinary UiO:Democracy project Experiencing American Democracy: Nordic Encounters in Transnational Perspective (ExAm) at the University of Oslo. Experiences of American democracy, incessantly mediated through social and mainstream media channels at the time of writing, continue to stir national debates and reactions and shape Nordic reflections and orientations in a changing and unstable world. The current intense debates in Europe and the United States related to issues of democracy and its crisis are of a very different kind from those discussed in this volume. And yet, there is much to learn from seeing how things once were, how conflicts were handled and how things could have been today, and putting the ongoing Scandinavian-American relationship of "love-and-hate" into a longer historical perspective. No doubt, modern representations of "democracy" have drawn heavily on American and Tocquevillian notions. The multidimensionality of the American continent concerning phenomena like ethnicity and race, and its paradoxical notion of freedom, probably made it – and still makes it – an ambiguous source of political and moral arguments in Europe. America was – and continues to be – a mirror or a resonance board, and time and again also a warning example, for navigating the Nordic neighbouring countries into the future, and the history of our interconnections is a complex and multilayered one, spanning more than 200 years.

Notes

1 Wyman, "No Longer Freedom's Land," 80.
2 Ax and Østrem, eds., *Nordic Migration*, 11.

3 Mathiesen, *The Epistolary Practices*; Penny, *German History Unbound*, 140; Harzig, "Gender, Transatlantic Space."
4 A central exception to the limited research on this topic is Skard, *USA i norsk historie*, 1976. See, however, Houe and Rossel, *Images of America in Scandinavia*, 1998.
5 Choate, *Emigrant Nation*, 228–229.
6 Choate, *Emigrant Nation*, 63.
7 Choate, *Emigrant Nation*, 232.
8 Penny, *German History Unbound*, 97–98.
9 Harzig, "Gender, Transatlantic Space," 147–149; 152, quoted from Penny, *German History Unbound*, 134.
10 Frydenlund et al., eds., *Grunnlovsfedre*; Transatlantiske forbindelser.
11 Hemstad, "Et større Norge"; Hemstad, "Emigrant Colonialism"; Hvidt and Barton, "Scandinavian Discord."
12 Green and Weil, *Citizenship and Those Who Leave*; Choate, *Emigrant Nation*; Riall, "Offshore Nation"; Penny, *German History Unbound*.
13 Choate, *Emigrant Nation*; Hemstad, "Emigrant Colonialism."
14 See however Brøndal, "The Fairest"; Olson, *Vikings across the Atlantic*; Hansen, *Encounter on the Great Plains*; Sverdljuk et al., eds., *Nordic Whiteness*, Jackson, *Scandinavians in Chicago*. See also the bibliography on Norwegian migrants and Native Americans (primarily in research literature) at the National Library of Norway: https://lokalhistoriewiki.no/wiki/Bibliografi:Norske_migranter_og_amerikansk_urbefolkning and the general bibliography *Literature on Norwegian-American Subjects*, nb.no/bibliografi/noram/search.
15 Struck et al., "Introduction," 573–574.
16 Struck et al., "Introduction;" Akira, "The Transnational Turn," 376.
17 Struck et al., "Introduction," 579; Akira, "The Transnational Turn," 376.
18 Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings*.
19 Dzelzainis and Livesay, "Transatlanticism: Identities and Exchanges."
20 Kurunmäki, Nevers and te Velde, *Democracy in Modern Europe*. See however Nolte, *Transatlantic Democracy in the Twentieth Century*.
21 Olson, *Vikings across the Atlantic*; Ax and Ostrem, *Nordic Migration*; Frydenlund et al., eds., *Transatlantiske forbindelser: Norsk-amerikanske relasjoner gjennom 200 år*; Svendsen, "Tomt land – ny nasjon"; Hemstad and Stadius, *Nordic Experiences in Pannationalisms*; Sverdljuk et al., *Nordic Whiteness*.
22 Anderson et al., *Scandinavians in Old and New*; Anderson and Blanck, *Norwegians and Swedes*.

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Part I

Entanglements

American society as a mirror

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2 Emigration as political and religious opposition

The case of initial migration from Norway to America, 1817–1837

Henrik Olav Mathiesen

Introduction

By the early nineteenth century, few states in Europe were democratic in any modern sense. The overthrow of the old regimes had given, especially to the middle classes and the social elite, a significant degree of influence in political decision-making. The "people", for whom the middle classes had led the fight against absolute monarchy, were largely left outside the world of effective political participation. Constitutions that enfranchised parts of the populace still demanded certain criteria for participation. These criteria usually involved property or, as in the newly formed republic in North America, the correct skin colour and cultural conformity – neither African Americans nor tribal nations were included. Even as suffrage was, comparatively speaking, radically extended in the American republic, women and many men were nonetheless excluded. Attempts by commoners to influence their own situation took the shape of ritualized demonstrations, or even insurrections swiftly suppressed, as in the case of the 1794 "Whiskey Rebellion".[1] Even as the beginnings of an organized party-political system were emerging, enfranchised and other citizens alike experimented with alternative ways of participation. Historians like Daniel Peart have shown just how much early American democracy was an "era of experimentation", in which people, inexperienced in decision-making processes, sought political influence in a variety of ways.[2]

In European countries, which drew inspiration from the American example, revolutionary constitutions nonetheless restricted participation and, in several cases, preserved ancient laws and practices as well as the position of the traditional elites. In 1814, prominent members of the Norwegian upper and middle classes organized a revolt against the international treaty delivering the kingdom of Norway from the King of Denmark to the King of Sweden. The Norwegian revolt and the ensuing military campaign failed, as expected, against the might of the Swedish military machine led by Charles John, a former general under Napoleon and now Sweden's chosen crown prince. The eventual peace settlement nonetheless preserved, with minor alterations, the constitution that was drafted in May 1814 and used to declare independence. This constitution allowed propertied men of a certain age to vote for people who would, in turn, decide who should represent electoral districts in the national assembly, *Stortinget*. Predictably, the electoral system, along

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with longstanding hierarchical social norms, simply entrenched the governing classes – officials in a variety of clerical and bureaucratic positions who had helped the Danish crown to govern the country, although it also admitted wealthy town dwellers and prominent estate owners. Old criminal laws, meanwhile, were carried over into the new political system, only to be adjusted and reformed in the 1840s.[3]

This situation ensured that troublemakers like Hans Nielsen Hauge, who had been imprisoned in 1804, were tried and convicted according to the laws of the absolute monarchy when he, at last, received his final verdict in late 1814. These laws stated that commoners, like Hauge, were forbidden to gather crowds and to preach without the express prior consent of the local priest. These laws also forbade the existence of Christian "sects" other than the official Lutheran state church. The latter was undoubtedly why a number of Quakers – Norwegians who had converted while imprisoned in England during the Napoleonic Wars – emigrated to America in 1825. But among those who left in 1825 were also Haugeans. Unlike the Quakers, who refused military service and state church rituals, the Haugeans were by no means engaged in criminal activities. Conversely, they were encouraged by the admittedly broken, but now released, Hans Nielsen Hauge to remain faithful to the state church and abide by the law. Why, then, did Haugeans also leave?[4] This chapter argues that, in the absence of political participation, opposition-minded members of the public found ways to express dissent through religion. For many decades into the nineteenth century, religion was the primary means of organization. It served as a way to channel opposition against the governing classes and to attempt to influence and establish forms of individual, local and even society-wide forms of autonomy. The failure to do so led people to emigrate. Although scholars have struggled to associate emigration with political opposition, the chapter argues that religiously motivated, yet nonetheless distinctly political opposition provided the first impetus for emigration to America, both during the first "false" start of 1825 and when an emigration chain reaction first commenced in 1836, through which hundreds of thousands would seek their fortune across the Atlantic.

Popular attempts of establishing religious and political autonomy

In a country where clerical equalled state authority, where freedom of assembly was non-existent and unknown in principle, where local officials were only held accountable by the king in a foreign land, where military service was strongly enforced, where moral discipline was ensured by corporal punishment and where production and trade were strictly regulated to secure the "privileges", as the exclusive deals with the crown were known, of the merchant class, what were commoners to do if they found their own situation intolerable? During the absolute monarchy, apart from "supplicating" the king to adjudicate on local grievances and to reprimand corrupt officials, grassroots insurrection provided the main, and as a rule, an unsuccessful channel of political communication.

The genius of Hans Nielsen Hauge, a farmer's son outside Fredrikstad in south-eastern Norway, who came of age during the later stages of absolute monarchy in Norway, was to employ the pietistic language of government officials – the

clergy – against themselves. Since the eighteenth century, Danish kings had strongly desired to instil proper, Lutheran Christianity in the hearts and minds of Norwegians, even to the point of establishing a common school, mandatory for all, with Christianity as the sole subject of instruction. The people were no longer to be Christians in an outward manner only; they were to properly internalize Christian doctrines and to be moved emotionally and intellectually by Christian teaching.[5] The "pietism" of the absolute monarchy had sown the seeds of its own opposition, however, as it prepared the ground for an individual, radically egalitarian assessment of proper "Christian" conduct. As ever, the radical message of Christianity, to defy worldly authorities and to rely on faith and Scripture alone – ironically enough, the foundational doctrine of Lutheran Christianity as well – could be used against those in power who tried to enforce not just religious feeling but also a strict moral code along with deference to those in charge and the very system of exclusion and, at least at times, oppression they employed to secure their own status.[6]

Grounding his social project in his interpretation of Scripture and its gospel, along with personal revelations, Hauge organized commoners along radical and, inevitably, provocative lines. To help his fellows support themselves financially, Hauge co-operated with others to ensure that his supporters were given licenses to produce and trade goods and, not least, to make paper for printing his religious tracts.[7] As Berge Furre has observed, Hauge "wrested religion from the king's hand and directed this dangerous weapon against the pillars upholding the order of the absolute monarchy".[8] Hauge found support for his theology in the medieval German mystics, just like Martin Luther himself had done when he opposed the legitimacy and extent of the Church's secular power.[9]

In Denmark-Norway, the Lutheran church had been established as a state church and was, by Hauge's time, being run and staffed by hirelings of the absolute monarchy. The official response to Hauge's challenge, therefore, was swift. For a number of years, Hauge was continually imprisoned on charges of vagrancy and illegal preaching until, in 1804, the government found it opportune to charge him with the implications of his preaching, which were – it was claimed – to spread heresy and, in print, insult the clergy as a class. But most of all, it was said, Hauge's activities worked to incite popular contempt for the governing classes.[10] He was put in custody for years on end, awaiting trial just as the Napoleonic Wars were raging on the continent.

At the same time as Hauge was imprisoned, another self-styled pietist preacher, further south, in Württemberg, Germany, fled the country after being released from prison. Johan Georg Rapp was not alone. Several thousand of his followers joined him, establishing a utopian community, "Harmony", in Pennsylvania. In 1817, just as Hauge had been released from prison in Norway and was attempting to re-establish his role as leader of his movement, some 500 Rappites shipwrecked outside Bergen on the way to join their prophet in America. They were cared for by local Haugeans in the city. The now Swedish monarch, however, wanted these religious dissidents gone. Charles John personally bankrolled the upkeep of the emigrants, and eventually, in 1818, the Norwegian government would assist the Rappites over the Atlantic.[11]

Rumours of the crown personally supporting a party of destitute emigrants soon spread across the country, and there are several recorded instances of commoners believing that the state would fund the journey of everyone, and not just the Rappites, who would like a way out of the country.[12] By that time, malcontent was running strong as the government, in order to establish a Norwegian national bank, demanded deposits of gold and silver from the populace. After rumours of state-sponsored emigration were quashed, the government had to quash what looked like the beginnings of a large-scale revolt. If the peasants were not to be helped in emigrating, they could at least march on the capital. They were only prevented from reaching the capital by the intervention of the army.[13]

Although emigration had not yet become strongly associated with religious opposition, the contact between the German emigrants and the Haugeans continued. They kept up a correspondence, some of which is preserved, and we even have evidence of Hauge himself, at his home outside the capital of Christiania, receiving and reacting to a letter sent from America in 1819.[14] All the same, historians have never been able to causally link the Haugian transatlantic connection with the first instance of emigration from Norway, in 1825.[15]

In 1825, it appeared to have been the Norwegian Quakers outside Stavanger, further south of Bergen, who took the initiative, even though, it must be said, they were joined by local Haugeans as well.[16] We do not know why the Norwegian Quakers decided to emigrate or why they did so at this time. They had lived in the country since the end of the Napoleonic Wars, facing continual persecution – though interspersed with instances of local, pragmatic tolerance – for their refusal to participate in Lutheran Church rituals and to serve in the army. The Quakers were a distinct Christian sect unlike the Haugeans, who remained Lutheran, yet both communities had a habit of styling themselves and addressing each other as "friends". They both were opposed to secular-religious authorities, or at least the monopoly these authorities claimed and enforced on theological interpretation and evangelization. They both were socially egalitarian, with an impulse to organize self-sustaining alternative communities. Local bonds of affinity and mutual understanding may have been stronger than what was separating them. What likely brought these groups even further together was the common official attitude towards them as a potential or actual threat to social order.

The 1825 emigration is often discussed as the beginning of the Norwegian migration to America. This is true only in hindsight. The emigration would very nearly have ended with the emigrants of 1825. Their colony in upstate New York did not attract many newcomers. Indeed, for the next ten years, only a handful of people seem to have followed in their wake. The emigration in 1825 represented an oppositional religious community attempting to escape state persecution and, possibly, to attempt to create their own alternative society in the United States. A more forceful example of the same phenomenon would be the emigration of the "Erik Janssenites", followers of the Swedish lay preacher and prophet, who attempted to escape persecution and who established a utopian community in Illinois in 1846.[17] By then, however, a Scandinavian bridgehead had already been established in Illinois, through the relocation of the Norwegian emigrants from New York to the

interior in 1835.[18] Without that relocation, it is more than possible that Norwegian emigration would only have picked up speed after the Swedish, which began around the same time as Erik Janssen and his followers left for America.

The blasphemous politics of Hans Barlien

In Norway in the 1820s and early 1830s, meanwhile, religious opposition fused with demands for local self-government. A prominent, if mostly theoretical, example is the failure of the farmer genius Hans Barlien to reform politics on a local level. Barlien had for years been attempting to contribute to society by designing safety vests and unsinkable boats and improving the water facilities of the city of Trondheim. He was self-educated but travelled all the way to Copenhagen to extend his knowledge. He realized, he later claimed, that if he were to make himself heard by the official classes, he would have had to attend the university where the official classes had been educated. In 1815 and 1816, Barlien attended, as a propertied farmer, the first ordinary national assembly.[19] He had evidently studied well, for in parliament in 1817, he argued that the "people" should be understood as the basis of political power and, consequently, that members of the official classes, as merely servants of the state, should not be allowed to participate in politics.[20] This was to turn the political realities of the day on their head, of course, and probably made him enough of a liability to ensure that he would never be elected to the assembly again. But not for lack of trying. He attempted to stand for election every time but found himself continually charged with a variety of legal accusations, the favoured tool among official classes for playing troublesome elements off the political board. To meet in the national assembly, a representative could not have current charges placed against him, whatever their basis. This did not stop Barlien, who was sent to Stockholm in the 1820s to present local grievances to the king on behalf of his parish in Overhalla, Trøndelag. The complaint: corrupt and parasitical actions taken by the local official classes. The case was dismissed.[21]

When Barlien, on account of a range of local issues needing to be solved, attempted to organize a local committee to function as some sort of municipality, he caused uproar. Ten years before local self-government was enacted, establishing just such municipal structures, Barlien faced a range of accusations. He had committed blasphemy, it was claimed, as well as having gathered a crowd, illegal under the 1765 regulation. If illegal assembly was a serious crime, suggesting intentions of revolt, blasphemy was, like in the case of Hauge, a way of policing public expressions and protecting the reputation of the clergy. According to the accusers, Barlien had allegedly claimed that "the saviour was the prostitute son of a Jewish soldier" and that God was "too old to believe in". Barlien defended himself, claiming that the official who had accused him of uttering these phrases had simply concocted such fantasies "within his own, narrow mind". When the Supreme Court eventually acquitted Barlien of all charges, all the cast votes for Barlien to attend the national assembly had twice been invalidated.[22]

The constitution stipulated not only laws against blasphemy proper but also a form of blasphemy, or "irreverence", against the powers that be as well as the

state constitution itself. In other words, it was possible to be charged for political blasphemy.[23] Barlien was not afraid, and in 1836, he published his commentary on the Norwegian Constitution. Here, he repeated his argument that the official classes should be prevented from being elected to the national assembly, but he also provided a religiously formulated political philosophy for local self-governance.

Just like the apostle Paul had distinguished between the word and the letter of the law (2 Cor 3:6), Barlien distinguished between the "word" of the constitution and its "spirit" and nonetheless required both to be in place and to harmonize.[24] Elected representatives should "guard against consenting to any provision which in any way conflicts or does not harmonise with our Constitution's word, spirit, and principles".[25] Any laws, provisions, verdicts or precedents that did not adhere to these three, Barlien warned, should be abolished. The Constitution, in short, should be explained according to "reason, natural law, Jesus's morality, Matt 7:12".[26] The principles of the Constitution, Barlien argued, were both Christian and in accordance with natural rights, a "cosmopolitan spirit" from which also Christianity derives its spirit: "The Constitution, the law of nature, and true justice are singular (synonymous) terms, and really the same", he demanded.[27]

But this was only half of it. Barlien also argued that the true basis of power lay not just with the people but also with the people at a local level. Each locality should have the power to create laws, he reasoned, and it should be the national assembly's role to affirm them.[28] The state should, in short, derive its power and legitimacy from municipalities, and not the other way round. Barlien also demanded that this commentary should be made compulsory reading in all schools before he promptly emigrated to America, whose system of a federal republic, and with the possibility of creating new local, self-governing communities out west, must have appealed strongly to him. From America, Barlien argued for what he called a "government derived from nature".[29]

Apparently, Barlien had attempted to secure guarantees from the United States, first through the ambassador in Denmark and then through Congress in Washington, for a territory in the Midwest set aside for Norwegian colonization. What could not, evidently, be created in Norway could, with the financial support of Barlien, be established in the New World.[30] While Barlien's colonization scheme came to little, in an unfortunately chosen spot in south-eastern Iowa, he had wanted to free his fellow citizens politically – and perhaps also religiously, for these were, in Barlien's view, intimately connected. He had argued, after all, that it should be up to local municipalities to appoint and dismiss government officials – including, naturally, the clergy – and not just by court verdict, as was presently the case.

Barlien had been at the forefront of what would become the first regular emigration. But he had heard about Norwegians who had recently gone before him to the North American interior. At first, he based himself in St Louis in order to, as he wrote, "discover where the Norwegians were residing".[31] Barlien had emigrated in 1837, just as another emigrant party left from Bergen. That party would establish the second Norwegian colony in Illinois, at Beaver Creek. For his part, Barlien must only have heard about the settlement at Fox River, that is the transplanted Norwegian colony from upstate New York. The 1825 colonists had begun

relocating in 1835, and in the process, they had sent letters back to Norway with a fellow colonist, Knud Andersen Slogvig, who ended up causing the first real wave of emigration from Norway in 1836.

The religious origins of the 1836 emigration

In the spring of 1835, Knud Andersen Slogvig departed from the colony in New York. As was common when people set out on a journey, he brought letters – people did not tend to put too much trust in the postal services, which were also prohibitively expensive. The letters Slogvig brought were written by members of the Norwegian colony. Prominent among them were the letters written by Gjert Gregoriussen Hovland, who had emigrated with his wife and children in 1831. Hovland's letters are preserved in various versions, and they are associated with three distinct dates: 22 April, 23 April and 28 April 1835.[32] It therefore appears as if Hovland wrote at least three letters right on the eve of Slogvig's departure, as we know that Slogvig had been given a formal leave of absence from the Quaker community on 24 April.[33] Other letter writers included Henrik Christophersen Hervig, later known as Henry Harwick, and a woman who wrote back to her niece. The Hervig letter is preserved, but the woman's letter is only known through a recollection by someone who had read it and who was consequently inspired to emigrate.[34] These letters, and probably still more, were brought by Slogvig to the Stavanger region on Norway's western shores in 1835.

The following year, 1836, saw Slogvig at the forefront of an emigrant party, divided into at least two ships, which headed for the newly established Norwegian colony in the interior, at Fox River in Illinois.[35] Contemporary newspaper reports and the testimony, then and later, suggest that letters from Norwegian colonists had been a primary reason for these emigrants' decision to leave. Also important was undoubtedly the opportunity to speak with an emigrant in the flesh.

The exact role of the 1835 letters and their courier in causing the 1836 emigration has been a matter that historians have, for the most part, been content to ignore. Hovland's letters have been either referred to as a good example of such letters or, at most, discussed as some of the more important letters arriving in Norway in those early years.[36] It is as if the exact events of 1835 and 1836 have been deemed too irretrievable and impossible to reconstruct in detail so that the most which can be said is that letters, and potentially Hovland's letters in particular, helped cause the emigration. But if so, how and why? In pointing to the general effect of these letters, scholars have had a tendency to side, if perhaps unconsciously, with the official interpretation at the time. Rosy images of a land of Canaan, portrayed in glowing terms, had set fire to the imagination of simple, uncritical peasants. Contemporary officials described the early emigration as a "fever", an irrational, impulsive and irresponsible reaction to evergreen stories of the grass being greener on the other side. Scholars have also been confused as to the nature of Hovland's letters, even to the point of confusing them with each other. Two of the most important early scholars of the emigration from Norway, Theodore C. Blegen and Ingrid Semmingsen, simply noted how Hovland had written three "almost identical" letters but did not stop to ask why.[37]

There are some issues to consider. The letters, and not just Hovland's, all seem to have contained essentially the same information. The New York colonists all told a story about the recent discovery of available, cheap land in the interior and that the New York colonists were on their way to relocate. It appears, in other words, to have been a concerted, propagandistic effort. All the same, the letter writers did not write propaganda in a modern sense. The letters were all crafted to be personally relevant to the recipients. When Hovland customized his message to Baar Hansen, a man on northern Karmøy whom Hovland had evidently written to from America at least twice before, he described the opportunities for maritime work along the canals and inland lakes.[38] To his brother-in-law, Hovland was extremely careful and reticent in his attempt to persuade him and his family to join them in America.[39] To friends in Kopervik, meanwhile, he was quite insistent.[40] But Hovland was most insistent with regard to his own kin living where he himself had grown up, in Askvoll in Sunnfjord. Hovland asked Baar Hansen to travel up to Askvoll to enquire whether Hovland's cousins would like to come to America: He would pay for their journey and their settlement in the interior. Indeed, all the known letter writers of 1835 were attempting to persuade people who knew and who probably already trusted the letter writers.

Hovland seems to have been the most politically and religiously outspoken writer. "Anyone has the freedom to travel about in the country, wherever he likes, without any passport or testimony", Hovland wrote, with an evident critique of the Norwegian system of internal migration, whereby parishioners were mandated to apply for a passport to travel outside of their own parish. Hovland's letters were full of similar comparisons, criticising the lack of economic liberties in Norway and the oppressive system maintaining the privileges of the upper classes. "When assemblies are held to elect a leader [*forstander*] for the benefit of the country", Hovland wrote, attempting and struggling to describe a functioning democracy, "[T]he common man's vote is just as legitimate and authoritative as the great and the powerful". In America, Hovland argued,

> [N]o unnecessary burdens are mandated, whether in the form of taxes or other expenses, in order to uphold persons who are not needed and who intend to sustain themselves by the toil of others. Everyone has to work for his own upkeep, commoners and educated alike.

It is in this context that Hovland also addressed his widest audience:

> I would not be mistaken if I wished that everyone belonging to my class in Norway would come here, especially those who suffer the most deprivation and who has little to provide for themselves and their kin and who have to suffer under the yoke of others.[41]

In one of the manuscript copies of Hovland's letters, the letter writer also comes across as deeply religious.

> When the race is run and the staff is laid down, would we then be worthy of hearing the joyous voice: come, my Father's blessed ones and inherit your

> kingdom and the justice, for whom you have been prepared! Wherever we may roam in the temporal realm, let us seek him who is the true light and life and to follow his voice, which resonates in our breasts, wherever we go or stay! Live well in God, that I wish for you! Your friend![42]

Such language is a far cry from other preserved emigrant letters. Habitual religion did not normally produce such prose. But the letters that Haugeans wrote to each other did. Indeed, from a modern perspective, the preserved Haugean letters contain little of actual substance. They are, for the most part, exhortative and demonstrative, modelling the religious sincerity of the writer and the persons addressed.[43]

It is not known whether Hovland was ever considered or indeed considered himself to be a "Haugean", but there are numerous factors to consider in establishing his social context. He was, first of all, attracted to the colony of religiously dissident Norwegian Quakers and Haugeans in upstate New York. At a time when the emigration was little more than a trickle of people with personal connections to the 1825 emigrants, Hovland uprooted his family and settled among them. Religious revival came late to Hovland's home place in Kopervik, but around the time Hovland left, the prominent Haugean leader, John Haugvaldstad, in Stavanger had sent emissaries to Kopervik who had started to build up a community of "friends".[44] It might be entirely innocuous that Hovland, in his two letters to Karmøy and Kopervik, greeted "friends" and styled himself as their "friend", but there may also have been some kind of symbolic communication involved, seeing how both Quakers and Haugeans lovingly and habitually used "friends" as a designator for members of their in-group. Apparently, Hovland had also been in conflict with the local priest, as a later letter gives evidence of. A letter written by Hovland in 1838 was printed and introduced by a newspaper, which explained that it omitted a section of the letter due to some harsh words directed at a local priest who had attempted to dissuade Hovland from emigrating.[45]

Whether or not Hovland saw himself as a Haugean or, indeed, a Quaker, is not important in and of itself. His class critique does place him in an oppositional role, and in this, he was not unique among early emigrants. But it may well have been Hovland's uniquely religious language that helped his letters to spread beyond those Hovland had known and addressed personally. We do not know if Hovland intended for his letters to be disseminated widely, but so they were. And it appears they were disseminated not entirely at random. The first emigrants of Voss, who had left in 1836, recalled that they had been induced to emigrate through being exposed to one of Hovland's letters. The letter had been carried to Voss by a "reader priest" (*Læserprest*), in other words, a Haugian lay preacher, according to the Norwegian-American journalist who wrote down these emigrants' recollections in the 1860s.[46] Voss was not far from Kinsarvik, where Hovland's brother-in-law lived, but the letter, which was later found in Voss, was not Hovland's letter to his brother-in-law but to his friends in Kopervik. Moreover, the local priest in Kinsarvik reported that he had also been shown a copy of the letter to Baar Hansen at northern Karmøy.[47] All three of Hovland's letters thus circulated in the Inner Hardanger region by 1836, and one of them had actually been disseminated by a travelling Haugean preacher.

There is more. A copy of the letter to Baar Hansen was later discovered in a notebook in Tinn, east across the mountains from the Hardanger fjord. The date of the copy was 1837, and it was found in a notebook belonging to one of the prominent Haugeans of the area, the schoolteacher Kittil Gregersen Sæbrekke.[48] The first party of emigrants to leave from Eastern Norway was a party of emigrants from Tinn in 1837.[49] It is not known how and why they made their decision to emigrate. If they had been exposed to one of Hovland's letters, or alternatively someone reiterating the message from the New York colonists, they appeared to be ready to trust its contents completely.

Unfortunately, no further evidence can be presented for why the 1836 emigrants decided to trust the 1835 letters. Conversely, we are hard put to explain why these emigrants decided to trust such letters at all, written as they had been by persons they did not know personally and addressed to persons equally unknown to them. Why did they make the leap of faith into the unknown, as emigration was in that year? How is this to be accounted for, unless those who circulated these letters in some way helped to vouch for their contents, the writers or the original recipients? The letters' circulation through the existing Haugean epistolary networks would explain everything.

The intimate connections between religious and political control

The official reaction against circulating emigrant letters and the emigration was slow at first but was adamant in its devaluation of emigrant letters and their trustworthiness. In the spring of 1837, the bishop of Bergen, Jacob Neumann, decided to inoculate his flock against the recent outbreak of emigration fever. He published and disseminated a "pastoral letter", a "word of warning to the farmers in the diocese of Bergen who desire to emigrate". His letter, which was printed and disseminated through clerical and secular official channels to the districts where emigration had occurred, was a theologically reasoned argument to make Norwegians reconsider their intention to follow others across the Atlantic.[50] Neumann was a staunch defender of Enlightenment Christianity and highly opposed the Haugean movement. He would later argue against the proposed laws establishing religious freedom, both in the sense of allowing free church movements and lay preaching without prior official consent.[51]

But in all of this, he was behind the times. In the 1840s, the laws were passed, allowing Haugeans to convene and preach without prior permission by the local priest, and also allowing other Christian "sects", like the Quakers, to formally exist outside the official Lutheran state church. Neumann had also been too late in preventing a large-scale emigration. Emigrants would leave in the hundreds in 1837 and every year thereafter. Some of them would write letters back, the effect of which, according to one newspaper editor's complaint, was to chip away at the "mindset that once bound the priest to his congregation, with the same bond that binds the father to his children".[52] The emigrant letter that had occasioned this editorial complaint included an attack on Bishop Neumann and his pastoral letter, charging him with speaking about matters of which he had no knowledge or experience.

More important, however, is the newspaper's comment about how the official classes perceived the effect of emigrant letters. Such letters "circulate from place to place like message sticks", the newspaper observed, reflecting the wording of similar, contemporary complaints from a variety of officials. Since the Middle Ages, message sticks had been a common method of quickly assembling the people, either for the army or for political purposes. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the official classes' primary association would have been the first steps taken in the process of organizing political revolt. The use of message sticks had, for just this reason, been expressly forbidden during the absolute monarchy. The disorder and disrespect of governing authorities which such message sticks – and now emigrant letters – portended, ensured that clerical and secular officials continued to find common cause as a ruling class well into the nineteenth century.[53] According to the mandated and mandatory school books of the day, proper Christians should obey any authority, secular and clerical, placed above them, just as their own parents. Some Christians, however, found inspiration in the pietism, ironically pushed by the state since the mid-eighteenth century, which demanded an attitude of inner repentance and which inspired demands of outward egalitarianism in believers. The emigrants, like the Haugeans and Quakers, challenged the potential for social and political control which the church, and indeed the church-state and state-church, had held for centuries.

The intimate connection between political and religious opposition, in the absence of alternative political participation for commoners, survived into the 1850s, at least. When the working classes were first organized in 1849 to demand essential political and social rights, it was not in and of itself an irreligious movement, even though the organizer, Marcus Thrane, was somewhat of a freethinker.[54] The way in which the governing forces first attempted to crush the movement, however, is indicative of how political and religious control still worked together in a state which had only, so far, extended the franchise to propertied citizens. The unpropertied masses were led by a man who could be charged with blasphemy – which he ultimately was. His specific crime, as a journalist, was to have reported on a gathering of priests, inviting them to debate a case where a farmer had dressed up as a priest to perform the eucharist for a dying old vagrant who had stayed in his barn. In the lack of wine, the farmer had substituted the blood of Christ with sour beer. Thrane challenged the clergy: In what way, exactly, would an actual priest have been essential in this performance, and what would happen to that poor man's soul?[55] Interpreted as ridicule and contempt for the clergy as a class, Thrane's challenge was charged with the crime of blasphemy, evidently considered as the most expedient way to stop the workers' movement from gaining momentum.

Thrane was acquitted only by the Supreme Court, which could, in the end, not find any reason to fault Thrane's description of an event that had actually taken place. But the Supreme Court would, in a later case, uphold the accusation that Thrane and others had voted for and thus attempted to instigate revolution, even though no such evidence was to be found.[56] The potential for disorder had to be nipped in the bud, just as how the clergy and other officials had first attempted rhetorically with the emigration. As emigration was in and of itself not illegal,

it had not been possible to employ the sword, just the pen. The Thranites, and thus the first political movement in Norway comprising the unenfranchised part of the populace, however, were brutally crushed, and their leaders were incarcerated. Consequently, the only solution left, as many Thranites also concluded, including Thrane himself, was to emigrate to America.

Conclusion

As the nineteenth century progressed, the ever-larger scale of emigration lost its oppositional thrust. Emigration to America evolved from being perceived as a threat to established hierarchies and social order to becoming what Nils Olav Østrem has called an "emigrant culture".[57] Next to Ireland, Norwegian and Swedish societies experienced the highest proportional rates of emigration in all of Europe. Emigration to America would become a regular feature of those societies for many decades to come. It could no longer, then, be explained away as the inspired actions of simpletons and a naïve peasantry. As rates of actual insanity manifested themselves to a disproportionate degree among Norwegian emigrants in America in the early twentieth century, Norwegian authorities became concerned that by allowing psychologically ill individuals to emigrate, they were taking less care of their own populace than what even Americans expected of them.[58] A sense of public responsibility for people's wellbeing had begun to emerge, and indeed so had the welfare state. By the time emigration ebbed off in the interwar years, the Labour Party was in power and would remain so for the entire postwar period. After World War II, Norway's most prominent bishop, Eivind Berggrav, could rave against the welfare state as the manifestation of just another totalitarian state.[59] Just like Bishop Neumann's warning against emigration in 1837, Berggrav's warning against the welfare state would be paid little heed: The people had voted. In Neumann's case, it was the people excluded from the franchise who had voted, and they had done so with their feet. They were inspired to do so by their opposition to both religious and political authority alike. For, as many Norwegian commoners in the early nineteenth century would have experienced, to speak of one was to speak of the other.

Notes

1 See, for example Pasley, Robertson and Waldstreicher, *Beyond the Founders*; Bouton, *Taming Democracy*.
2 Peart, *Era of Experimentation*.
3 For transatlantic connections, see, for example Frydenlund, Hamre and Avelin, *Grunnlovsfedre*. For the aftermath of the 1814 constitution, see Storsveen, Frydenlund and Pedersen, *Smak av frihet*.
4 See, for example Golf, *Oppbrudd og utvandring*, 55–59, for a discussion of the relationship between Haugeans and Quakers in connection with the 1825 emigration.
5 Thuen, *Den norske skolen*, 18–25.
6 For the repressive aspects of the absolute monarchy, see Rian, *Sensuren i Danmark-Norge*.
7 See, for example Grytten, "Haugianere som næringslivsaktører"; Haukland, "Hauge."
8 Furre, "Hans Nielsen Hauge," 83.
9 Gilje, "Mystikk, 'svermeri' og religiøs toleranse," 57–58, 54.

10 Supphellen, *Konventikkelplakatens historie*, 83.
11 Semmingsen, "De tyske emigranter"; Semmingsen, "Shipload of German Emigrants."
12 Semmingsen, "Shipload of German Emigrants," 187–190.
13 Johansson, "Bondetogene."
14 Semmingsen, "De tyske emigranter," 138n32; Hauge, letter to friends in Bergen, 13 September 1819, in Kvamen, *Brev frå Hans Nielsen Hauge*, 272–274.
15 Semmingsen, "Haugeans, Rappites."
16 Haanes, "Haugianere i Amerika," 213–215.
17 Barton, *Folk Divided*, 15–16.
18 On the fate of the New York colony, see Canuteson, "Kendall Settlement Survived."
19 A recent biography of Hans Barlien is Selliaas and Storøy, *Hans Barlien*.
20 Selliaas and Storøy, *Hans Barlien*, 183; Barlien, "Norriges Grundlov," 232–238.
21 Selliaas and Storøy, *Hans Barlien*, 216–217.
22 Aavatsmark, *Hans Barlien*, 109–121, 191–195.
23 Mestad and Michalsen, *Grunnloven*, 1078–1081.
24 Barlien, *Bemærkninger*, iv.
25 Barlien, *Bemærkninger*, iv.
26 Barlien, *Bemærkninger*, iv.
27 Barlien, *Bæmerkninger*, 12, 24.
28 Bjerkås, "En ensom radikaler," 335–336.
29 Quoted in Selliaas and Storøy, *Hans Barlien*, 277.
30 Selliaas and Storøy, *Hans Barlien*, 275–277.
31 Hans Barlien, letter to Jens Rynning, dated 23 April 1839, St. Fransville, Missouri, de Moyen River, North America, printed in *Morgenbladet*, 10 October 1839.
32 For an extensive discussion of the letters and the surviving material, including the provenance of each version, see Mathiesen, "Epistolary Practices," ch. 3.
33 Rosdail, *Sloopers*, 68.
34 Hervig's letter was printed in the newspaper *Den Constitutionelle*, 21 June 1837. The story of the woman's letter to her niece in Norway is found in Langeland, *Nordmændene i Amerika*, 33.
35 Cadbury, "Four Immigrant Shiploads"; Semmingsen, *Veien mot vest*, 40–42.
36 The tendency of viewing Hovland's letters as "typical" or indicative of the early letters which helped cause the emigration seems to have originated with Blegen, "Typical 'America Letter'."
37 Semmingsen, *Veien mot vest*, 480n4; cf. Blegen, *Norwegian Migration*, 66.
38 The letter, dated 28 April 1835, was published in the newspaper *Den Norske Rigstidende*, 25 May 1837.
39 The letter, dated 22 April 1835, was attached to a report to the government from the local priest in Kinsarvik. See N. Herzberg, Ullensvang, 6 July 1837, to the county ("Amt") of Southern Bergenhus, among papers collected for the preparations of the Royal Proposition of 1843 concerning "the emigration to foreign parts of the world," to be found in a box marked "Emigrasjon (Finansdept. D)," now located in the archives of the Ministry of Local Government at the National Archives of Norway: Kommunaldepartementet, Arbeidsavdelingen, diverse sakarkiv, sakarkiv – emigrasjon, RA/S-1436/F/Fa/L0001.
40 The letter, dated 23 April 1835, survives in three versions: a manuscript copy found at Voss and a printed version published in the newspaper *Christianssandsposten*, 23 February 1843. The third version, published in *Den Constitutionelle*, 1 June 1837, omitted this detail. The manuscript copy of the letter is in the archives of Voss Folk Museum, archival box no. 12, marked "Amerikabrev," folder no. 1, marked "Efter Knut a Rene Amerikabrev."
41 23 April 1835. Similar statements are found in all versions of all letters.
42 This is found in the letter to Hovland's brother-in-law, dated 22 April 1835.
43 The letters are digitally available from the National Archives of Norway; see AV/RA-EA-6834: "Samlinger til kildeutgivelse, Haugianerbrev."

44 Østrem, *Karmøys historie*, 230; Langhelle, "Nytt syn," 239–244.
45 The letter was dated 6 July 1838, and was published in the newspaper *Den Bergenske Merkur*, 30 November 1838.
46 Clausen, *Chronicler of Immigrant Life*, 94 and 95. The original article was printed in *Billed-Magazin*, 6 November 1869. This was confirmed by the discovery of the report made by the local priest at the time; see Rene, *Historie om Udvandringen fra Voss*, 99–100. Although the priest does not mention Hovland by name, he seemed to describe the contents unique to the letter Hovland sent to Baar Hansen (28 April 1835).
47 See note 39.
48 For the discovery and text, see *Rjukan dagblad*, 19 June 1937. On Gregersen, see Einung, *Tinn Soga*, 494.
49 Svalestuen, *Tinns emigrasjonshistorie*, 44–53.
50 Neumann, *Varselsord*. An original copy is held at the National Library of Norway. An English translation is Malmin, "Word of Admonition." For Neumann's distribution, see the County Office of Stavanger ("Amtmannen i Stavanger"), incoming correspondence ("Journal"), 1835–1839, entry 1303, 8 June 1837; see also outgoing correspondence ("Copie-bog"), entries 1214, 1215 and 1216, 8 June 1837. Stavanger Regional State Archives. For incoming correspondence, see SAST/A-101928/99/00/00BB/00BBb/L0013, journal avd. va, nr. 9. For outgoing correspondence, see SAST/A-101928/99/00/00B/00Ba/L0044, kopibok avd. v, nr. 14. Neumann also distributed the pamphlet to the press in the capital; see *Morgenbladet*, 13 June 1837; *Tiden*, 15 June 1837; *Den Norske Rigstidende*, 15 June 1837.
51 Molland, *Norges kirkehistorie*, 171, 179.
52 *Den Bergenske Merkur*, 1 February 1839.
53 Sandvik, "Riots and Participation."
54 For portrayals of Thrane and his movement, see Bjørklund, *Marcus Thrane*; Ringvej, *Marcus Thrane*.
55 "Bonde for Præst og surt Øll for Viin (til at overveies af Exegeterne)," *Arbeider-Foreningernes Blad*, 4 May 1850.
56 A summary and an evaluation of the legality of the proceedings is in Mestad and Michalsen, *Grunnloven*, 1072–1073.
57 Østrem, "Emigrant Culture," 229.
58 Ødegård, "Emigration and Insanity."
59 Tønnessen, "Velferdsstaten," 202–204.

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3 Forging America in Scandinavia

Andersson's travelogue and the Lehmanns' cyclorama of Gold Rush California

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Introduction

California has had a disproportionate importance for Scandinavians' perception of America. Most Scandinavian transatlantic migrants ended up in the Midwest. Yet, the most popular of popular culture's artifacts have reproduced a view of the US that was clearly more wild west than Midwest. This chapter presents two of the most influential of the earliest Scandinavian "texts" on California, both produced in the early 1850s, both catering to surprisingly wide Scandinavian audiences and both aiming to be more entertaining, of higher quality and more lucrative than the ordinary travelogues and migrant letters.

Migrants and miners who flocked to California after 1848 did not agree on how to describe the land and its people. It took several years before credible and authoritative narratives of the California Gold Rush would be available in Scandinavia. Here we explore two of the most read and widely distributed texts (in a wide understanding of the term) about California in the 1850s and Scandinavia: botanist Nils Johan Andersson's travelogue and the California cyclorama developed, managed and toured by the Lehmann brothers.

The discovery of vast amounts of gold along the American River near Sacramento in 1848 and the subsequent influx of thousands of gold-fever-struck miners inspired romantics and pessimists alike. Carl Christian Nahl's famous painting "Sunday Morning in the Mines" (1872) illustrates the ambivalent attitude of the time (see Figure 3.1). The Californian gold country could be both paradise and hell. Literally on one side, Nahl pictured men in companionship resting from diligent and hard manual labour for the betterment of themselves and their communities, reading the Bible, writing letters back home and cleaning their clothes when not working in the beautiful landscapes of the Sierra; whereas on the other side of the painting, northern California was a modern Sodom and Gomorrah of violence, vice, gambling, drinking, fistfights and smoking.

Texts, rumours and images that reached Scandinavian audiences in the 1850s were similarly ambivalent. In some, the democratizing effect of gold was

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Figure 3.1 Charles Christian Nahl (American, born in Germany, 1818–1878), *Sunday Morning in the Mines*, 1872. Oil on canvas, 72 × 108 in.

Source: Crocker Art Museum, E. B. Crocker Collection, 1872.381

emphasized. Swedish *Aftonbladet* was among the first newspapers in Scandinavia to report on massive gold discoveries in California:

> Eldorado discovered: From California it is reported that gold has been discovered in countless amounts in some forks of the Sacramento River. . . . The daily earnings vary between sixteen and several hundred *riksdalers*, which is why all other activities have been abandoned. Soldiers, sailors, craftsmen, officials, even the governor have rushed to this Eldorado.[1]

Correspondenten from Skien in Norway brought nearly identical news 13 days later and added, "[E]veryone works for themselves, the greatest Republicanism prevails here in practice – no masters, no servants – all are free and equal".[2] Gold could evidently cause social and political revolutions.

Simultaneously, disorder, lawlessness and violence predominated in other notices. *Stockholms Aftonpost* reported on 17 March 1849 that "California is said to be awful; murder and manslaughter are everyday occurrences (in six weeks, 20 people out of 15,000 have been injured), there are no laws, only Lynch justice is in operation". Almost identical news followed in *Stavanger Amtstidende* four days later:

> From America it is reported that the gold fever seems to be decreasing. From California, there were letters that described the situation as gruesome.

> Murders and robberies were part of daily life. Within six weeks, 20 out of 15,000 people were missing; there is no authority or law anymore; Lynch law has taken its place, and since the government cannot provide protection, people will not pay taxes to maintain order.

A week later, the same newspaper reported that "The situation in California is still described as terrible".[3]

In 1848 and 1849, then, Scandinavian newspapers ambivalently informed their readers that northern California was at the same time a democratic paradise and a dystopian state of chaos and lawlessness. Facing such divergent descriptions, it is not surprising that readers thirsted for credible firsthand accounts, preferably written by fellow and trustworthy compatriots.

As more and more Scandinavians found their way to California, letters eventually found their way into the nascent Scandinavian press. Typically, the letters mentioned the names and fates of fellow countrymen, described the hazardous journey to California, gave details on the extreme price levels in San Francisco, documented the hardships and sometimes the technology involved in gold mining and provided general advice to potential migrants, especially the degrees of danger and risk involved and whether – in the end – it would be worth the effort. They contained information on individual compatriots, bordering on gossip. Readers seemed to favour narratives that included updated and reliable facts on prices, wages, probabilities of finding gold, considerations on the best routes and skills needed to succeed in California.

It is easy to picture readers as potential migrants at home, calculating the costs and benefits of moving to California. All this is reflected in the letters printed in Scandinavian newspapers at the time. They were both private and public at the same time. We suspect that many were written for both the authors' closest relatives and friends back home, as well as for a broader public. Presumably, the best writers would write both more intimate texts reserved for the family and more public ones that the relatives could sell to the papers. If so, what is available to us is, first and foremost, the public part of the letters.[4]

The texts by botanist Andersson and the Lehmann brothers on California share some of these traits. But their emphasis is not so much on the very utilitarian motives, which are critical for potential migrants. They were more ambitious. They sought to entertain and educate, and they aspired for greater literary and artistic qualities. They may also have hoped to earn some money from their cultural production. In fact, potential economic gain may have been the key motive behind both the travelogue letters and the cyclorama.

Botanist Nils Johan Andersson's letters on California

The series of letters written by the Swedish biologist Nils Johan Andersson in the summer and fall of 1852 on board the frigate *Eugenie* somewhere in the Pacific was initially printed as a serial in six instalments between 16 March and 7 April 1853 in *Aftonbladet*.[5] The serial was shortly thereafter published in the three-part,

two-volume book *En werldsomsegling skildrad i bref*, along with the other letters written by fil.mag. Anderson, during his global circumnavigation.[6] The book was swiftly translated into Danish/Norwegian and German, and a few years later also into Dutch.[7] Even before the book was translated and published, several of Andersson's letters were translated and published in Norwegian newspapers.[8]

A prime reason for public interest in Andersson's texts stemmed from his more thorough and nuanced understanding of the Scandinavians' predicament in California than the more amateurish letters that hitherto had prevailed. *Filosofie magister* Andersson was originally a botanist and a participant in the Swedish scientific expedition aboard the frigate Eugenie, which sailed around the world between 1851 and 1853. When Eugenie arrived in San Francisco in July 1852, Andersson had already written very readable letters on Madeira, Brazil, Valparaíso, Guayaquil, the Galápagos, Panama and Hawaii, all of which had been published in *Aftonbladet* and commented on in other newspapers.

Many readers eagerly awaited his next letter, which had been advertised to deal with the gold country of California. But the California letter was delayed. *Aftonbladet* ran a notice on 15 October 1852 about Mr. Andersson and a short letter received from him dated 9 August from San Francisco, where he explained that he had just visited the gold mining areas in California and that several Swedish gold miners had asked him to send greetings back home: Mr and Mrs Arnberg with their son, Olsson, Holmgren, and Rohde from Gothenburg, Carl and Johan Ahlberg from Helsingborg, and the names of a dozen others followed. Family and friends were encouraged to write to them at the address "Baltimore company, near Colona (sic), California, United States". A more comprehensive text was promised. The same notice was reproduced in various Swedish newspapers in the last weeks of October 1852.

In early March 1853, *Aftonbladet* printed a short notice informing readers that several letters from Andersson had arrived, but – regrettably – that the eagerly awaited text on California sent from Sydney in October had gone missing. Shortly thereafter, however, the letters were published without any further explanation of how they suddenly appeared.

When they finally did arrive, Andersson's letters provided a sympathetic insight into the position of Scandinavian miners in California, seen through the eyes of an initially very sceptical academic. To begin with, Andersson had very little regard for the city of San Francisco:

> the gaming houses . . . proliferate in atrocious numbers on all streets . . . the rattle of dice or the clinking of gold and silver coins . . . the movement and congestion everywhere, the glare, the bustle, and the noise . . . the seething chaos, the tumultuous bustle, the restless spirit of speculation, the never-resting greed for gain, which the visitor meets at every step in thousands of forms

At first, San Francisco was a horror example of a city for Andersson. He described, with Old Testament fervour, a breathless humbug of a place that had sprung up in

record time. It contained a confusion of "physiognomies" and a cacophony of languages and cultures. He lamented that the only thing people had in common was a boundless pursuit of gold and money.

After a few days, Andersson was evidently loosening up. Maybe California did not appear so deafeningly chaotic to him? Maybe the encounter with the young Swedes near Coloma changed his perspective. In the fifth instalment of the serialized letters from California, we finally get to meet the Swedish miners – or more accurately, the Swedish bakers. Svensson from Ystad, Billberg from Helsingborg and Magnusson from Kongsbacka, had now taken a break from gold mining and returned to their pre-migratory occupation. They ran a highly profitable bakery in the gold mining village of Coloma, a few miles north of Hangtown. Andersson, who thus far in his letters had moralized about naive young men who got carried away by the thirst for adventure and empty promises of easy money, was forced to see their situation from a different angle. The passage comes as quite a surprise to the reader, although in the meantime, Andersson had softened somewhat since his first diatribes against San Francisco. His description of Sacramento was not as condemnatory. Still, this is a new tone in his letters. Elongated descriptions of human encounters had not been part of Andersson's repertoire. The description of his encounter with the young Swedish bakers is more intimate and personal than anything he had published previously.

> It was highly characteristic to hear them make comparisons between their current and former positions. At home, poor apprentice craftsmen with wages hardly sufficient for the basic necessities, tyrannized by their master and with no other prospect than a lowly, if not despised, social position, burdened by worries about sustenance and a multitude of almost equally burdensome, in their opinion useless, taxes – and here, free and independent, no one daring to overlook them, no master idling while the fruits of their sweat and toil enriched him, no impertinent young gentlemen, no boasting uniforms, in short: no privileges.[9]

Andersson's sudden display of empathy marks a clear break in his California text. The change may reflect his preference for rural landscapes – after all, he was a botanist. It could also be a result of different parts being written at different times. The California text was written over a very long period, and he may have rethought his California impressions after having visited Hawaii and China before arriving in Sydney, from where the letter was posted. Whatever the cause of his change of attitude, Andersson now expressed an understanding for the social appeal that California society had on young Swedish craftsmen and manual workers. Even without gold, life in California could appear free and highly democratic, in the sense that younger working-class men did not have to endure harassment or disrespect from social superiors. Similar descriptions by other Scandinavian migrants are well-known from other parts of America. In that sense, California was not exceptional. Other places in America could also be described as democratic paradises. But Andersson's description is an important reminder that emigration, including

that to California during the Gold Rush, had important dimensions beyond the economic.

Andersson also included a somewhat peculiar paragraph at the end of the California chapter on law and order:

> Before I leave the mines, I want to say a few words about the state of law there . . . . There doesn't seem to be any law in the old juridical sense, that is, written ordinances . . . . Justice without law is preferred over law without justice. That is the whole difference. It goes like this. Gold miners rarely work alone . . . . In general, they are members of a company, often consisting of up to 80 people. If a dispute arises, a theft is committed, or a crime of any kind occurs, it sometimes happens that the victim takes it upon themselves to punish the guilty party, and if their case is clear and just, nobody thinks badly of them . . . . However, such acts of vigilante justice are becoming rare. Generally, within the company, a jury is formed, which acquits or condemns, and in the latter case, the execution follows immediately after the verdict, consisting either of cutting off the eyebrows and hair, expulsion from the company, or whipping or hanging. The judgments of the jury are always respected, and there is no concept of appeals or fines. The justice system is therefore strict and determined; everyone is interested in maintaining it – everyone is equal before this justice . . . . That is why there is now the greatest security at the mines. Doors are locked only with a stick or a piece of rope, and thefts are rare. If something is lost, a notice is posted on the nearest tree, and often, within a short time, the lost item is returned. Gold miners used to always carry pistols. Now, these weapons are only seen in gambling houses, and nobody thinks anymore about the need to protect life and property with their help.

The popular courts cannot have been as effective in guaranteeing security as Andersson claimed. He spent too little time in California to form an opinion about how safe the country had become. We do not know what the Swedish bakers had told him about lynch law. A few pages earlier, he recommended *Sixteen Months at the Gold Diggings*, a book by Daniel Woods published in 1851.[10] Most likely, Andersson's description of the state of law in the mining district is a crude rewriting of a few pages from Woods' book. The positive description is the same, and so is the emphasis on justice without law:

> Without law, except the law of honor; without restraint, except that imposed by the fear of summary punishment, which was sure to follow the only crimes cognizable under the new code – those of stealing and of murder – we were comparatively safe.

The only significant difference is that Woods believed that the mining areas had become less safe when the hitherto oral mining codes were put into writing, an important detail that Andersson failed to mention. Consequently, the mining areas

appeared rosier in the description of the Swedish academic than in that of the American gold miner. We do not know whether Andersson had discussed this topic with his Swedish hosts. He wrote, in any case, as an outsider, and there was no detailed account indicating that he had spoken with people who participated in vigilante justice or lynchings.

Andersson succeeded. His text was recognized as an authoritative view on California in Scandinavia, as indicated by the many translations and editions in newspapers and books. Andersson's authority was based on several classic rhetorical components.

His *ethos* stemmed partly from his academic credentials. Not only was he a *filosofie magister* from Uppsala University, and a lecturer in botany at the same university from 1846, he also was a member of the exclusive group of scientists elected to be part of the royally financed global circumnavigation on board the frigate *Eugenie* in 1852 and 1853. When his letters were published in Scandinavian newspapers, his titles and credentials were always underlined.

Several contemporaries commented on his efficient style of writing and how he vividly described the places that he visited with a nuanced and learnt style. Although today's readers will notice many biases and prejudices in his texts, compared to most Scandinavian travelogues at the time – and certainly compared to what hitherto had been published on California – Andersson's reached another level of precision. Admittedly, he did not completely avoid either the romanticization of the free and democratic America or the moralistic scolding of young emigrants; he at least included both these perspectives in a text that seemed sympathetic, balanced and well-informed. Although he was a scholar and, as such, part of a small, socially privileged group in nineteenth-century Sweden, he was the son of a farmer, and in the class-conscious Swedish intellectual milieus at the time, this must have predisposed him for the sympathy he displayed towards the Coloma bakers. Presumably, he was the kind of writer who could appeal emotionally to a wide, popular, but nevertheless educated public at the time. So, unlike many other California writers, Andersson sought *logos* more than *pathos*. It was his careful, moderate, nuanced and informative and seemingly objective style of writing that gave him such an authoritative position among the authors of California texts in the 1850s' Scandinavia.

However, Andersson's letters did not go unchallenged. There seems to have been a veritable competition to have the most credible and convincing descriptions of the Californian Eldorado in Scandinavian newspapers in the early 1850s. *Malmö Tidning*, in particular, was critical. On 15 March 1853, the day before the first part of Andersson's letter from California was published in *Aftonbladet, Malmö Tidning* published an explicit criticism of Andersson's texts:

> As proof of the negligence with which our world travelers, who spend most of their time at sea, often have to expedite their visits to land, it should be mentioned that our traveling naturalist Andersson, upon the frigate's landing at San Francisco, took a morning trip by diligence to the southern mines, looked around the area and nature, dug up a bottle of California soil, and

returned in the evening. This was all he saw of California outside of San Francisco.

Readers should be warned: Do not attach much importance to what the botanist Andersson wrote about social and political conditions in California! He may have been well-educated and a gifted writer, but after all, he had only been in California for a week.

The Lehmann brothers and their California cyclorama

The explicit criticism of Andersson was a way for the local Swedish newspaper *Malmö Tidning* to launch its serial about the gold country: "Nya Californien", a comprehensive introduction to the area's geography, geology, flora, fauna and social conditions, based on conversations with the recently returned – and very Scandinavian – Lehmann brothers. The text, based on the interview with the Lehmann brothers who had just returned from California, consisted of five parts and occupied a significant portion of all the Malmö newspaper's five editions between 12 March and 26 March 1853. It was probably not a coincidence that the Malmö paper published its series of interviews with the Lehmann brothers almost on the same dates as *Aftonbladet*'s publications of Andersson's letter.

In these texts, a more positive perspective on California was offered. In contrast to Andersson, the Lehmann brothers described San Francisco as a large, modern, densely populated and fast-growing city. They emphasized its civility. Among other things, they make a point of San Francisco being a proper city with 200,000 inhabitants, "[T]here are theatres, hospitals, pharmacies, the California Mint, lithographic establishments and, like other cities, printing houses and newspapers", as well as many churches.

Panoramania and hyperrealism

Fortunately, Scandinavians would no longer need to risk their lives on nine-month journeys on the high seas to experience California. Simultaneously with the publication of the Lehmanns' impressions of California, the brothers had started the construction of their mammoth visual representation of California that would be displayed in numerous Scandinavian cities in the 1850s and 1860s. It was a gigantic cyclorama or moving panorama. One of the topoi of this media genre was that it was so realistic that the spectators would find it hard to distinguish reality from illusion. It was frequently alleged that drunken sailors and even animals were fooled.[11]

For the Lehmann brothers, the interview published in Malmö was the first of many marketing stints to build public interest in their California cyclorama, first displayed in Copenhagen's recently opened *Tivoli* in the summer (July and August) of 1853.

Before we turn to the history behind the Lehmanns' cyclorama, some general remarks about this mediatic genre are in order. In producing the California cyclorama, the Lehmanns were both developing a peculiar family tradition and bringing

to Scandinavia a whole new technology of visual representations for big audiences. What the Lehmanns called "cycloramas" were in Britain and the Americas usually referred to as "moving panoramas", and it was a craze that began in the late 1840s, a trend termed *panoramania* by Albert Smith in the *Illustrated London News* in 1850.[12] The moving panoramas, or cycloramas, were colossal paintings, often several metres high and several hundred metres long. The canvas was rolled from one axis to another, usually displayed on a theatre scene in front of a seated audience, accompanied by a narrator or actors, music and scenic lighting.[13]

Some media and art historians have been fascinated by the whole range of "ramas" developed and displayed during the nineteenth century, beginning with the first panorama paintings of the late eighteenth century through the cosmo-, dio-, cyclo- and kinetoramas and culminating in the moving pictures or cinematography of the late nineteenth century. From a strictly technological point of view, the moving panoramas can both be regarded as one of the last stages of development before the birth of cinema *and* as a technologically simple visual invention, yet impressively colossal in size and weight. Although Friedrich Kittler himself does not seem to have been particularly engaged in the discussion on the moving panoramas/cycloramas, he has been widely influential in proposing a technological and post-humanist understanding of media history in general, and he has been particularly interested in optical media such as the diorama, the daguerreotype, photography and film as precursors of current digital media.[14] Self-named *media archaeologist* Erkki Huhtamo, on the other hand, in his wonderful *tour* of the moving panoramas, is sceptical of reducing media history to "machinic logic" and is keen to treat the moving panoramas as "a complex and contradictory token of its time", where human desires and needs are paramount.[15] In a similar vein, art historian Sylvi Cook Evjenth, in discussing virtual spectacles in the city of Bergen in the nineteenth century, suggested that the cosmoramas, panoramas and cycloramas were not very advanced technologically speaking.[16] She contended that they could have been developed in the fifteenth century, but that there was no need or purpose for them before the urbanization of the first industrial revolution had created sufficiently large working and middle classes willing and able to pay for spectacles. She also argues that there is an obvious link between the development of the large-scale pano-, cosmo- and cycloramas and the bourgeois hyper-realistic tastes of the mid-nineteenth century. The ideal was for the spectacle to be so realistic and lifelike that the spectator would feel as if she or he were experiencing the reality of the journey. American scholars have been eager to posit a connection between the sheer size of the new medium and the grandeur of the American landscape, which was often the motive of some of the best-known moving panoramas.[17]

What the Lehmann brothers advertised in Scandinavia as a cyclorama in the 1850s was identical to the moving panoramas public craze in many American cities from the late 1840s onwards, much ridiculed by Mark Twain, although it has been argued that his style of writing can be understood as a textual version of the moving panorama.[18] Indeed, there are many parallels between the travelogue and the moving panorama: realism, chronological movement through time and space

and scenic descriptions, just to name a few. And having a journey as the title and principal topic of the panorama was also typical.

Turning to the particular story of the Lehmanns' California cyclorama, it is remarkable not only for the way it illustrates some of these general observations regarding moving panoramas, but it also adds another transnational component to it. For our purposes, the most important aspect of the spectacle is how successful it was in forging a particular view of California and America by touring the major cities of Scandinavia for many years, attracting large crowds for several days in every city. In this way, the Lehmanns reached a mass audience before the term was invented. To understand how this came about, we need to look into the family history of the Lehmann brothers.

The very Scandinavian Lehmann family

From what we know so far of the Scandinavian Lehmanns in California, it is not clear whether they had the intention of producing a cyclorama before they went to California or if this was an idea they conceived there. It is possible, although perhaps not probable, that this was the plan all along. Their upbringing and family background point in that direction.

The three Lehmann brothers, Johan Christian (b. 1818), Carl Peter Jr (b. 1822) and Emil Andreas Teodor (b. 1825), were all born in Bergen (Norway) as sons of portrait painter Carl Peter Lehmann Sr and singer Nancy Johanne Sophie née Perschy.[19] Both parents were born in Denmark and came to Bergen in the early 1800s as children of ambulant artists.

Carl Peter Lehmann Sr (b. Copenhagen 1794) most probably came to Bergen in 1816 or 1817 as a line and ballet dancer and decorator for his stepfather's ambulant theatre. In Bergen, he met Nancy (or Ana) Johanna Sophie (b. Copenhagen, 3 December 1795), the daughter of Johan Perschy, who came to Bergen from Denmark in 1807 to serve as "stadsmusikant" (city musician).[20] In 1817, Carl Peter Sr and Nancy were married in Aalborg, Denmark, but soon returned to Bergen.[21]

As a sideline to his theatre work, 15-year-old Carl Peter Sr had started to paint miniature portraits. In Bergen, he was primarily known as a portrait painter and, eventually, as the master decorator of the largest theatre in town. He taught drawing at a local academy and painting privately. In 1825, there were ads in the local newspaper for a cosmorama that included several landscape paintings by Lehmann on display in Perschy's residence in the town centre.[22] This is one of the earliest known public displays of cosmoramas in Norway.[23] Some of Lehmann Sr's larger paintings on landscape and historical/mythological motifs were exhibited and won prizes in Sweden and Norway in the 1820s but were severely criticized by the internationally renowned romantic painter J.C. Dahl. According to several short biographic notes on Lehmann, this criticism was so severe and painful that Lehmann Sr decided to leave Norway and resettle in Sweden.[24] However, this oft-repeated rumour may be based on a misunderstanding.[25]

From 1827 to 1842, Carl Peter Lehmann Sr seems to have renewed his artistic and ambulatory way of life, often in company with one or more of his sons,

although his registered address for most of the time was in Sigtuna, a small town between Stockholm and Uppsala. In 1827, he moved from Bergen to Sweden with at least one of his sons and his wife.[26] In 1829, Carl Lehmann advertised in Stockholm that he was selling several studies for Norwegian landscape paintings and that customers were welcome to his atelier on "Spetsens backe, house number 7, Gräflingens quarter, inside the property (garden) and up the second stairs".[27] In the following years, adverts for his portrait painting jobs appear in newspapers across southern Sweden: Uppsala in 1829, Westerås in 1831, Gothenburg in 1832 and Nyköping and Kalmar in 1833. Presumably, Lehmann was touring Sweden as a portrait painter, perhaps together with his oldest son or perhaps with his entire family. The family was registered as residents of Sigtuna. The next household in the register is that of one of his in-laws, the musician Johan Pershcy, with his wife, a daughter and a son born in Bergen in 1810 and 1813, respectively, and listed as having arrived in Sigtuna from Bergen in 1829.[28]

For the years 1834 through 1839, the whole family is listed as residents of Sigtuna: Carl Petter, portrait painter; Nancy Johanna Perschy, his wife; and their sons Johan Christian (b. 1818), Carl Petter (b. 1823), Emil (b. 1826) and Nicolaus (b. Malmö 1836). Nancy's parents and sister still lived in the house next door.[29] According to one of the short encyclopaedic entries, he toured Finland and Russia between 1836 and 1840.[30] Between 1840 and 1845, the family still resided in Sigtuna. Johan emigrated to Russia in 1840, and Carl moved to Stockholm in 1841. Nancy's father, the Catholic musician Johan Perschy, nearing his 80th birthday and by now a widower, still lived next door with his daughter and maid.[31] In the household list for the years 1846 through 1850, the Lehmanns were still registered as living in the western quarter of Sigtuna.[32] Both Carl Jr and Emil were registered as having moved to Stockholm in 1850. In the list for 1850 through 1855, there is a note saying that portrait painter Carl Lehmann moved to Stockholm in 1854 with Nicolaus Lehmann, his youngest son.[33]

While being registered residents of Sigtuna, various members of the family embarked on an extended trip in Norway, settling in Bergen again in 1842–1843 and visiting several other cities in Norway in the early 1840s, mostly to paint miniature and some larger portraits for whoever was willing to pay. Carl was recognized at the time as an extremely productive "konterfejer", and in his own register, which is not complete, he listed more than 4,000 portraits in addition to his larger landscapes and altarpieces. He was also an experimentalist and among the first in Scandinavia to publicly display daguerreotypes and cosmoramas.[34]

The Lehmann brothers in California

The three oldest of Lehmann's sons travelled on the ill-famed *Amerika Paket* to California with Captain Hugo Lous, owned by gentlemen Lücke, Möller and Sohlberg in Christiania and complained bitterly about that experience in their interviews afterwards. The journey took nearly nine months from Christiania (Norway), via London and the Falklands/Malvinas, to San Francisco, where they landed on 8 September 1851.[35]

Unfortunately, little is known about what the brothers did in California between September 1851 and 1 January 1852. One anonymous Swedish writer, whose letter was dated 29 March 1852 and published in Swedish *Snällposten* on 8 November, mentioned having travelled to the gold mines on New Year's Eve with the three brothers. He mentions them twice, once in connection with all the fancy Swedes he met in California ("här har jag treffat grefwar, baronar konsuler, köpmen, sjökaptener") and once in connection with how lucky one had to be to do well in mining.[36] This same letter was paraphrased in the Danish newspaper *Flyveposten* on 17 November 1852, and here the brothers were referred to as Danish. Here also, it was emphasized that by now gold was so scarce that only capitalists could hope to make a profit, but that they (presumably including the Lehmann brothers) had been lucky to get employment by digging ditches that had earned them US$30 in 12 days.[37] Two men, most likely two of the brothers, appear in the 1852 Sacramento census on 27 July: Chas H. Leaman and M. Leaman from Norway, 25 and 28 years old, are listed as painters in Sacramento.[38]

In Sacramento, the Lehmann brothers may have been inspired by the moving panorama of Paul Emmert, who displayed a several-hundred-feet-long moving panorama of the gold mining districts to the astonishment and joy of the audience, if we are to believe the Sacramento Daily Union, 27 April 1852:

> The Pacific theater was filled last evening with a very intelligent and fashionable audience, among whom were several ladies, the Governor and many members of the Legislature. We have forborne hitherto to recommend our readers even to attend this exhibition, presuming it scarcely possible that a panoramic painting of this magnitude could be executed in this country to compare with those of the Eastern cities. But we have been most agreeably disappointed –: the various mining views particularly are given with an accuracy that is truly wonderful. The highest compliment that could be paid the artist was the manner in which the miners present recognized and acknowledged old mining scenes, calling forth exclamations to the infinite entertainment of the audience. As the village of Mokelumne Hill, with its whitened tents, and life-like scenes passed before the audience, we heard cries of "hallo, whew! there's Charley Bell's tent"! "I see that church when they were building it". "By Jove there's the old tree we camped under, &c". The artist has certainly displayed a degree of skill commensurate with his laudable effort to exhibit California as it is.[39]

The newspaper ads suggest that Emmert's panorama was shown in Sacramento during the final days of April. In early May, the same or at least a similar panorama of the California gold mines was shown in the Theatre of Varieties in San Francisco's Commercial Street.[40] Paul Emmert's name was explicitly mentioned in the advertisement on 6 May, and the show was still running every night as of 20 May 1852, according to the Alta. On 28 June, the Sacramento Daily Union announced that the panorama was going to be shown in Coloma on 4 July as part of the National Independence anniversary.[41] In other words, the Lehmanns would

have had opportunities to see Emmert's moving panorama, and given their interest in painting and commercial opportunities, it would be odd if they did not.[42]

Another anonymous Swedish letter writer, whose letter was published in *Aftonbladet* on 4 December 1852 but was written in July the same year, relates having met the three Lehmann brothers, "portrait painters from Sigtuna some time ago in Sacramento". According to this last letter, the Lehmanns were fed up with California, had not been successful in mining and were planning to go to New York as soon as they had enough money to buy tickets.[43] Presumably, they are the J. Lehman, E. Lehman and C. Lehman listed among the passengers on the steamer Winfield Scott, along with more than 600 others bound for Panama on 1 September 1852.[44]

The Cyclorama on tour in Scandinavia

By January 1853, they were back in Scandinavia. The newspaper *Malmö Allehånda* reported that the Lehmann brothers were in town (without specifying how many of them were present), that they had just returned from California and other American places and that they were accepting commissions for portrait paintings: 20 rigsdaler for large ones and 10 for the small. The editors further informed that the Lehmann brothers were working on a grand artwork, a panorama of California that would be shown at the theatre in the city once it was finished. Their father, the ageing portrait painter, was also in town and taking commissions.[45]

From the summer of 1853, the California cyclorama was on display, and the brothers toured across Scandinavia, starting at the *Tivoli* in Copenhagen in early July. According to a short piece in *Flyveposten*:

> Two brothers, the gentlemen Portrait painters Lehmann from Norway will next week display a Cyclorama, built by themselves, several hundred yards long, which depicts the journey from Christiania to California, and the mainly the interior of California where the Gold mines are located, and other curiosities from those areas. For one and half year, the gentlemen have travelled in this now so curious land and they have just recently returned. They will themselves explain the paintings and in the end who how the washing of gold is done.[46]

Almost identical texts were published in other Danish newspapers the following days.[47]

Beginning in July, there are almost daily advertisements in Danish *Dagbladet* for the California cyclorama. The ad explained that at a quarter past eight at night, in Tivoli, the painters Lehmann will display a cyclorama several hundred feet long, and that the start of the show would commence with the firing of shots of cannon fire. The Lehmanns also had other shows at the Tivoli theatre: a one-act pantomime called "Joco – den brasilianske abe" and a comic Negro national dance called Luseilong or Old Jey danced by gentlemen Molino and Colegate.[48] In the beginning of August, the shows were ending. On 2 August, Dagbladet reported that this was the last week the show would run, and on 6 August, the *Københavns privilegerede*

Adresse-Contoirs Efterettninger said that tonight's show would be the last on the Tivoli stage. We do not know if this was planned all along, and we do not have any information about attendance or the number of sold tickets for the show.

At least one local Norwegian newspaper claimed that the shows had been successful. In August 1853, the *Christiansands Stiftsavis and Adresse-Contors Efterettninger* reported that the Lehmann brothers,

> who left this city in 1850 . . . with the Barkship 'Amerika Paket', have now returned to Europe after staying for a long time at the gold mines, where they have made good deals. . . . They are currently staying in Copenhagen, where they have exhibited a Cyclorama depicting gold mining, gold panning, and the life of gold miners. This Cyclorama has enjoyed extraordinary applause and is considered a masterpiece in Copenhagen.[49]

The brothers tried their luck in Norway. Already on 31 August, the local newspaper from the town then known as Fredrikshald (now Halden), close to the southernmost point of the Swedish-Norwegian border, repeated much of what had already been written in the Danish papers but added more interesting details about its content:

> the brothers Johan, Carl and Emil Lehmann, artistic painters and sons of portrait painter Lehmann in Bergen, who left Christiania in 1850 for California on board the *Amerika Paket*, have now returned to Norway and are presently in this city, where they intend to exhibit a Cyclorama painted by them which depicts gold digging, gold washing and the life of the gold miner etc. The painting which is 350 feet long, is rolled onto two big cylinders so that one sees an opening or part of the painting which is 9 feet tall and 15 feet long. The painting contains several descriptions of life among the miners, and the most curious of the regions of California and its most important cities. All this is of the most interesting kind, especially since the spectator is guaranteed that the presentation is accurate given the fact that the gentlemen Lehmanns themselves have been in California, participated in the gold mining, and subsequently drawn everything in situ. Additionally, some of the tools used for gold mining are shown, and the whole exhibit is accompanied by a short lecture which apparently for the majority of the audience includes many valuable pieces of information.[50]

The Lehmanns continued to tour with the Cyclorama in Norway throughout the fall of 1853, although it is difficult to establish a clear itinerary. From Fredrikshald, they appear to have continued to the city of Skien, where the local newspaper *Correspondenten* published a short advertisement: "The Lehmann brothers will display their progressively moving large painting, 350 feet long, of California and its curiosities". Prices for adults and children were noted, printed brochures would be distributed and shows were planned for Thursday, Friday, Sunday and Monday. On the same page in the newspaper, a short notice informed readers that brothers

Emil, Carl and Johan Lehmann had arrived from Fredrikstad and were staying with Mr Limie.[51]

A few months later, a newspaper in Trondheim reported that the famous gigantic cyclorama depicting scenes from California, measuring 350 feet long and stored on two large rolls, had been exhibited in several cities by the Lehmann brothers and had now arrived in Trondheim.[52] After Trondheim in October 1853, we find ads for the cyclorama in Kristiansand (southern Norway) from 21 June to 1 July 1854 and in Christiania (present-day Oslo) in October and November 1854.[53]

By December 1855, the Lehmann brothers were touring in Sweden. A newspaper in Karlskrona, in a brief note, informed its readers that it was the last night to see the wonderful Cyclorama showcasing the California gold mines. Just a few days later, the Swedish *Snällposten* reported that the brothers had presented their cyclorama for the first time in Kristianstad on 14 December to great acclaim. Two weeks later, the brothers showcased the cyclorama at the theatre in Helsingborg. On the basis of exhibition times and places, they were travelling from their home in Sigtuna in Sweden towards Denmark in the late fall of 1855, bringing the cyclorama with them and doing some shows on the way.[54]

In February of 1856, they had reached Fredriksborg (outside of Copenhagen). In Fleischer's inn in Fredriksborg, the brothers had shown the cyclorama ("deres store og smuke rundmaleri") to a numerous public, and the audience had been acquainted with the miners' adventurous life. Two more shows would be held in Fredriksborg. Similarly positive were the reviews from Roskilde a couple of weeks later and subsequently from Slagelse on the western coast of Zealand, before the brothers took the show to Odense on Funen in April 1856.[55]

By late June and July 1856, the brothers were back in Christiania (Oslo). Although the cyclorama was not explicitly mentioned, the ads suggested that they were attempting a big show in a separate tent which they called *Valhalla*, raised right in front of the well-known Klingenberg theatre. The show included a "scenic performance of the adventurous life of the gold miners and the journey to California" combined with a concert by the musical company of the family Beyerböck.[56]

Unlike the many parodies of the moving panoramas in the United States as detailed by Erkki Huhtamo, I have only found positive reviews of Lehmann's cyclorama from the early 1850s. It was a show that catered to a wide popular audience, as evidenced by both the places where it was shown and how it was advertised. Unfortunately, we have no sources so far that can give us a clearer understanding of the brothers' own motivations and thoughts regarding this moving spectacle. On the basis of their family history as ambulant artists, the history of moving panoramas elsewhere and their interviews in Malmö in January 1853, it seems that their intention was to provide realistic information and perspectives on California to popular Scandinavian audiences and to earn some money from this. Probably, the show was modified as they toured. But the information we have on the precise content of the shows is nevertheless limited.

It is possible that the brothers sold the cyclorama to the Danish Goldkette family, who were of Jewish origin and known in the mid-nineteenth century for

staging circuses around Denmark.[57] An ad from an Aalborg newspaper in Jutland in September 1856 reads:

> Mr Goldkette shows . . . here a panorama and a mechanical display of the gold mining in California, that deserves attention . . . one sees in the foreground the different groups of miners and others that dwell there, the different expressions of activity, lust and passions that accompany it. In the background which presents the area's romantics, a caravan pulls migrants across the stage. The work has been executed in London, with accuracy in the details and a fortunate whole. An inner mechanic moves the figures and contribute to the show's clarity and liveliness.[58]

From then on, searches for "California AND panorama" in the Danish newspapers mostly contain references to Goldkette and his mechanical painting. These ads ran from 1856 to 1860 and are from many different cities across Denmark. Presumably, they were part of a presentation that Goldkette ran along with his circus.

Whether or not the cyclorama was owned or borrowed by Goldkette, it seems less uncertain that the Norwegian J. Halvorsen, based in Christiania (Oslo), toured with the cyclorama in 1869 in Drammen, Skien, Larvik and Bergen.[59] In Bergen in September, the ad explicitly states that this panoramic movable painting was produced by the Lehmann brothers, and this will be the first time it is shown in Bergen. However, Halvorsen seems to have struggled. The work may have deteriorated, the public's taste may have changed, or gold mining in California may have become less relevant. The few reviews are scathing and recommend that people stay away. Halvorsen advertises that the tickets to the show double as lottery tickets and that money prizes are drawn every night. According to one anonymous shop owner in Larvik, this is all a scam, and the city authorities are advised to lock him up and stop the show.[60] This is in December 1869 and is the last explicit reference to Lehmann's cyclorama we have found.

Despite its sad ending, the cyclorama had a much wider impact on public perceptions of America in the 1850s than most other cultural artefacts available at the time. By touring the largest cities of Denmark, Sweden and Norway for several years on their own, and later through other managers, the Lehmanns reached thousands of spectators. All the known reviews from the 1850s were positive and underlined the strong emotional impact the spectacle had on the audience. The overall presentation of California in botanist Andersson's letters and in the cyclorama served to forge a particular view of California (and by extension of America) that laid the foundations for future generations of Scandinavians' perception, a *topos* of individualism, materialism and lawlessness.

Notes

1 *Aftonblade*t 16 October 1848.
2 *Correspondenten* 29 October 1848.
3 *Stockholms Aftonpost* 17 March 1849, *Stavanger Amtstidende* 21 and 28 March 1849.

4 For wider historiography on letters and particularly migrants' letters, see, for instance, Alvstad, "The Transatlantic Voyage"; Gerber, *Authors of Their Lives*; Earle, "Letters and Love in Colonial Spanish America."
5 The Swedish newspaper *Aftonblade*t was established in 1830 by the liberal nobleman Lars Johan Hierta and quickly became the most important of the independent newspapers not financed by the king. It was one of the most read Swedish newspapers. In the early 1850s, Hierta chose to step down as editor-in-chief and was followed by historian and orientalist Carl Fredrik Bergsted, just like Andersson, a fil.mag. educated in Uppsala. In the 1850s, conservative and royalist critics regularly referred to the papers as "Magistrarnas aftonblad," the "the masters' evening mail," while it continued to be Sweden´s most read newspaper. Nils Johan Anderssons letters from California were printed in the newspaper as follows: part I published 16 March 1853 in *Aftonbladet*, no. 62. (https://data.kb.se/dark-29103/manifest), part II published 21 March 1853 in *Aftonbladet*, no. 65 (https://data.kb.se/dark-29093/manifest), part III published 22 March 1853 (https://data.kb.se/dark-29097/manifest), part IV on 24 March 1853 (https://data.kb.se/dark-29104/manifest), part V on 30 March 1853 (https://data.kb.se/dark-29101/manifest) and somewhat confusing part X on 7 April 1853 (https://data.kb.se/dark-29147/manifest).
6 Andersson, *En Werldsomsegling Del 1*; Andersson, *En werldsomsegling del 2*; Andersson, *En Werldsomsegling Del 3*. The editors of the book, Aron Samson and E. W. Wallin, established the Nordiska bokhandeln in Stockholm precisely in the 1850s, a bookshop that was to become the largest in the city.
7 Andersson, *En Verdensomseiling*; Andersson, *Eine Weltumseglung*; Andersson, *Eene reis om de wereld*.
8 *Christiania-Posten* on 22 February 1853 provides a summary of the text recently published in the Swedish *Aftonblade*t, based on the letter written by Andersson and dated 30 October in Sydney. *Stavanger Adresseavis & Amtstidende,* 31 December 1853, brings a lengthy excerpt from Andersson's book, the Norwegian edition, on Canton and China. *Christiania-Posten* on 12 September 1853 published excerpts from the book, the part on Australia.
9 *Aftonbladet* 30 March 1853.
10 Woods, *Sixteen Months at the Gold Diggings*.
11 Huhtamo, *Illusions in Motion*, 249.
12 Huhtamo, *Illusions in Motion*, 189.
13 Dahl, "Mark Twain and the Moving Panoramas"; Miller, "The Panorama, the Cinema and the Emergence of the Spectacular"; Van Suylen et al., "From Wallpaper to Moving Panorama."
14 Kittler, *Optical Media*.
15 Huhtamo, *Illusions in Motion*, 16–18.
16 Cook Evjenth, "Populær Billedunderholdning."
17 Huhtamo, *Illusions in Motion*, 172–191.
18 Dahl, "Mark Twain and the Moving Panoramas."
19 Church records for births and baptisms of the Lehmann brothers in Bergen are found in Statsarkivet (Bergen), Korskirken kyrkjebøker no. 13, 1815–1822 and no. 14, 1822–1840. Scanned and digitized versions are available from digitalarkivet.no. Johan Christian was born on 13 August 1818. His parents then lived in "rode 20" and had married in Aalborg (Denmark) on 2 October 1817. Carl Peter was born on 11 November 1822, and Emil Andreas Theodor was baptized in November 1825.
20 Baptism record of Ana Johanna Sophie from Danmark Kirkebøger, 1484–1941, database with images, *FamilySearch* (https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QS7-L94Q-P9B5?cc=2078555&wc=M5VF-GPV%3A357517801%2C357517802%2C357714801%2C357732501: 22 May 2014), København > Sokkelund > Garnisons > 7 (1772–1797) Fødte > image 268 of 286; Rigsarkivet, København (The Danish National Archives), Copenhagen. Selvik, "'Musikelskerinder' og kvinnelige musikere i Bergen ca. 1750–1830," 13.

21 Marriage recorded in parish records from Vor Frue, Aalborg 1815–1822, p. 133 (http://ao.salldata.dk/vis1.php?bsid=356591&side=4&height=1039).
22 See, for instance, *Bergens Adressecontoirs Efterretninger,* 19 February 1825, and the comment by Cook Evjenth, "Populær Billedunderholdning."
23 In the Scandinavian digitized newspapers, the oldest ads for cosmoramas seem to be Hannover-based landscape painter F. Otto's ads in *Morgenbladet* (Oslo) in 1824.
24 von Malmborg, "Carl Peter Lehmann"; Nannestad, "Carl Peter Lehmann."
25 Lexow, "En kunstbegivenhet i 1820-årenes Bergen."
26 Morgenbladet, 26 July 1827.
27 *Dagligt Allehånda*, 3 August 1829.
28 Sigtuna, S:t Olofs och S:t Pers kyrkoarkiv, Husförhörslängder, SE/SSA/1557/A I/7a (1830–1834), bildid: C0048570_00064, sida 53a.
29 Sigtuna, S:t Olofs och S:t Pers kyrkoarkiv, Husförhörslängder, SE/SSA/1557/A I/8a (1835–1839), bildid: C0048572_00080, sida 70.
30 von Malmborg, "Carl Peter Lehmann."
31 Sigtuna, S:t Olofs och S:t Pers kyrkoarkiv, Husförhörslängder, SE/SSA/1557/A I/9a (1840–1845), bildid: C0048574_00080, sida 69.
32 Sigtuna, S:t Olofs och S:t Pers kyrkoarkiv, Husförhörslängder, SE/SSA/1557/A I/10 (1846–1850), bildid: C0048576_00252, sida 241.
33 Sigtuna, S:t Olofs och S:t Pers kyrkoarkiv, Husförhörslängder, SE/SSA/1557/A I/11 (1851–1855), bildid: C0048577_00036, sida 26.
34 Lexow, "En kunstbegivenhet i 1820-årenes Bergen"; Cook Evjenth, "Populær Billedunderholdning"; Nannestad, "Carl Peter Lehmann"; von Malmborg, "Carl Peter Lehmann." See also Carl Peter Lehmann in https://nkl.snl.no/Carl_Peter_Lehmann.
35 *Malmö tidning*, 26 March 1853 and Lous, *Erindringer fra orlogs-og koffardi-livet i 1850-og 60-aarene*.
36 *Snällposten*, 8 November 1852.
37 *Flyveposten*, 17 November 1852. Notice that 24 Swedish skilling is said to be equal to 24 Danish skilling. Almost identical notice in *Aalborgske Stifstidende* og *Adresseavis* 22. November 1852. 30 dollars is here translated as 57 RBD.
38 1852 California census, "Sacramento, California, United States opptegnelser," bilder, *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:939N-13SL-P3?view=index: 14. feb. 2025), bilde 332 av 886; California. Legislature.
39 *Sacramento Daily Union*, 27 April 1852.
40 *Alta California*, 3 May 1852, 6 May and 20 May.
41 *Sacramento Daily Union*, 4 July 1852.
42 For some more information on the Swiss Paul Emmert and the commercial success of his moving panorama, see McDermott, "Gold Rush Movies."
43 *Aftonbladet*, 4 December 1852.
44 *Daily Alta California*, 1 September 1852.
45 *Malmö Allehånda*, 15 January 1853.
46 *Flyveposten*, 24 June 1853.
47 *Aarhus Stiftstidende*, 27 June 1853; *Aalborg Stiftstidende og Adressseavis*, 28 June and *Thisted Kongelig allernaadigst priviligerede Amtsavis og Avertissementstidende*, 30 June.
48 *Dagbladet* (København), 8 July 1853, and 11, 13, 15, 16, 18, 20 and 22 July 1853. The same ad was also printed in *Københavns privilegerede Adresse-Contoirs Efterettninger*, 11, 13 and 15 July 1853.
49 *Christiansands Stiftsavis and Adresse-Contors Efterettninger*, 13 August 1853.
50 *Fredrikshald Budstikke*, 31 August 1853, as quoted in *Christiania-Posten*, 9 September 1853.
51 *Correspondenten* (Skien), 8 September 1853.
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53 *Kristiansands Stiftsavis*, 21 June through 1 July 1854, *Christiania-Posten*, October and November 1854.
54 *Carlscronas Wekoblad*, 8 December 1855, *Snällposte*n 17 December 1855, *Öresunds-posten*, 28 December 1855.
55 *Frederiksborg Amts Tidende og Adresseavis* (Hillerød), 7 February 1856; *Roeskilde Avis og Avertissementstidende*, 21 February 1856; *Sorø Amts-Tidende* (Slagelse), 8 March and 13 March 1856; *Svendborg Amtistidende*, 3 April 1856; *Fyens Stiftstidende* (Odense), 14 April 1856.
56 *Christiania Intelligentssedler*, 2 July 1856.
57 Falk, "Slægten Goldkette – en jødisk cirkusfamilie."
58 *Aalborg Stiftstidende og Adresse-Avis*, 6 September 1856.
59 *Drammens Blad*, 12 February 1869; *Bergens Adressecontoirs Efterretninger*, 4 September 1869.
60 *Jarlsberg og Larviks Amtstidende*, tirsdag 7 desember 1869.

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4 The women's movement

Bremer, Magelssen-Groth and Gripenberg in America

Anna Bohlin

Introduction

"The differences in our conditions and the American are considerable, and the work for women's cause has therefore taken on very different characters, there and with us".[1] So argues the Finnish Baroness Alexandra Gripenberg (1857–1913) in an 1889 article in the Norwegian women's rights journal *Nylænde* (Newly arrived). The article, "Kvindesagen i Amerika" (The woman's cause in America), was one of several publications following Gripenberg's attendance at the first International Women's Rights Convention in Washington during the previous year. According to Gripenberg, the great ideas "running through the centuries are international", whereas national circumstances, such as national characteristics, decide the course of their progress.[2] The American woman – like the entire nation – is "wide awake, quick thinking, and active"; she is self-reliant and rushes into decisions. Gripenberg warns that this is not the way forward in the Nordic countries, since the Nordic woman is passive and has "locked up feelings, fostered by impressions of the landscape".[3] Still, the conclusion Gripenberg draws is that there is much for Nordic women to learn from the American women's movement, especially when it comes to perseverance. And they did: From the inception of the American organized women's movement in the mid-nineteenth century, Nordic feminists[4] crossed the Atlantic and brought back ideas on organization and democracy.

The Nordic countries were represented by three delegates at the International Women's Rights Convention in 1888. The Finnish Women's Association (founded in 1884) was represented by Gripenberg and the Finnish journalist and activist Alli Trygg (1852–1926).[5] Norway was represented by the writer and translator Sofie Magelssen-Groth (1859–1947) and had two newly established organizations: the Norwegian Association for Women's Rights (founded in 1884) and the Norwegian Women's Suffrage Association (founded in 1885). From 1887, the former association had produced *Nylænde*, the first Norwegian women's rights journal, and thus published not only Magelssen-Groth's report from the Washington convention, covering in total 21 pages of two issues (nos. 10 and 12, 1888), but also a lecture held at the convention by the Indian delegate, Pandita Ramabai Sarasvati (no. 21, 1888).

Only five other European nations were represented at the convention, apart from Norway and Finland: England, Scotland, Ireland, France and Germany.

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Denmark was supposed to be represented by Mrs Professor Frederiksen, who lived in Chicago, but she could not attend due to illness. Her paper was published in the journal *Woman's Tribune*, as was an article on the situation of women in Italy.[6] Unfortunately, Gripenberg also fell ill on the third day of the convention, and her two contributions were therefore published in *Woman's Tribune* as well.[7] As Magelssen-Groth pointed out in her report for *Nylænde*, the Swedish women's organization, Fredrika Bremer-förbundet (The Fredrika Bremer Association, founded in 1884) did not send a delegate.[8] However, the author after whom this organization was named, Fredrika Bremer (1801–1865), had previously visited America to draw inspiration for her work for women's rights. Bremer's two-year travels in America and Cuba from 1849 to 1851 occurred only one year after the very first national women's rights convention in Seneca Falls in 1848.

The aim of this chapter is to revisit the inceptions of the Nordic women's movements in America to unearth their forgotten roots. I will investigate three common themes in the accounts by Bremer, Magelssen-Groth and Gripenberg of women's emancipation in America. Although published 35 years apart, Bremer's travelogue *The Homes of the New World: Impressions of America* (2 vols., 1853) on the one hand, and on the other Magelssen-Groth's report for *Nylænde* and Gripenberg's travelogue *A Half Year in the New World* (1889, Engl. trans. 1954), share striking similarities. The idea of an organized women's movement was so new to the nineteenth century that it had to be conceived of in terms of other political movements to become plausible at all. Secondly, all three authors admired and learnt from the organizational and communicative skills developed by the American women's movement. Thirdly, the women's movement's connection to religious devotion was highlighted by all of them. Interestingly, the exemplary political movements, communication technology, and religious landscape were all, at least in part, examples of the different circumstances pointed out in the quotation by Gripenberg above. Yet they are featured as inherent to the self-representation of the women's movement that they carried back home, and they all adhere to a specific temporality.

Gripenberg was a leading figure in the national Finnish Women's Association. The first International Women's Convention in Washington founded the permanent organization, the International Council of Women (ICW), of which Gripenberg would become a prominent member.[9] In 1888, she travelled in America for six months, as the title of her subsequent travelogue suggests; in *A Half Year in the New World,* she devoted the second chapter to a thorough account of the convention. In 1907, Gripenberg would become a member of the Finnish parliament in the first election with women's suffrage. However, she had initially become a feminist after reading John Stuart Mill's *The Subjection of Women* (1869) and Bremer's 1856 emancipation novel *Hertha*.[10] *Hertha*, in turn, was deeply influenced by Bremer's travels in America.[11] Bremer would be celebrated as the great forerunner of the women's movement in Sweden.[12] Her novels had been a great success in Britain and America from the 1840s, thanks to her translator, Mary Howitt, a British, radical Quaker with a high reputation, especially among radical Unitarians.[13] Howitt launched Bremer as "the Miss Austen of Sweden", and in 1843, 12 different editions of Bremer's work were published in the United States alone,

while the 1853 travelogue caused a new boom.[14] Bremer received many invitations from America and already had an extended network when she arrived in 1849. Her journey was covered by the American press, and hundreds of people came to see her, including Lucretia Mott, a Quaker and abolitionist, who, together with Elizabeth Cady Stanton, had initiated the Seneca Falls women's rights convention the previous year. In her study *Golden Cables of Sympathy: The Transatlantic Sources of Nineteenth-Century Feminism*, Margaret H. McFadden calls Bremer one of the "mothers of the matrix". She also notes that "the number of international connections made by Nordic women was disproportionate to their population".[15]

Women's access to education in America was of special interest to all European visitors who advocated women's rights, as was American women's liberty to practise a wide range of professions, such as medical doctors and preachers, and in some denominations, even ordained priests. Bremer was invited to stay at the house of one of the first female medical doctors in America, Harriot Hunt (1805–1875), who convinced Bremer of the importance of women practising as medical doctors.[16] In Bremer's view, American professional women were certain to change the future, and she deemed American women's educational opportunities and female teachers to be America's most important contribution to the future of mankind – a view that her subsequent emancipation novel, *Hertha,* testified to.[17]

In her report of the convention more than three decades later, Magelssen-Groth emphasized the rapid acceleration of women's educational opportunities of late. In fact, at approximately the same time as the publication of that article, she took the entrance examination to Columbia University, although the birth of her daughter later that year put a stop to her academic studies. Still, she had already studied at the university in Geneva when she moved to New York in 1887, where she stayed and continued to contribute to *Nylænde*.[18] In Magelssen-Groth's report of the women's rights convention in Washington in 1888, though, Norway was still home.

Exemplary political movements

The historiography of the women's movement was a crucial aspect of the arguments for women's liberty right from the start. The Washington meeting commemorated the first American national Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls 40 years earlier in 1848. It was a crucial moment in what Nancy Hewitt has called "the legend of the Seneca Falls Woman's Rights Convention".[19] Gripenberg and Magelssen-Groth both emphasized the ridicule and hate to which the pioneers were exposed in contrast to the interest and enthusiasm which the convention received in 1888. The presence of the pioneers at the convention, especially Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony and Lucy Stone, was used as a powerful rhetorical image to strengthen the idea of a natural development from hardship to glorious victory, a narrative well-known from Christian hagiographies. The older women's bodies were portrayed as living evidence of how the painful memories of the initial struggles had been transformed into an almost transcendental beauty and serenity. Thus, the memory work carried out at the convention suggested that progress was measured by the effect of public opinion on individual lives and indicated a straight

road to political, societal and moral success. The ageing bodies incorporated a temporal narrative of the women's movement. Above all, it encouraged the Nordic people who read about first-generation women's rights activists: Enduring the spitefulness of your fellow humans can be morally elevating. Sainthood was close by.

Whereas the pioneers were revered as moral examples, the movement obviously also needed exemplary political movements to gain political weight. As the quotation from Gripenberg in the introduction suggests, national characteristics were an integral part of the arguments for women's rights. The nineteenth-century discourse on liberty opened the possibility for equating women's liberty with national liberty. Hence, Gripenberg's article on the women's cause in America and Magelssen-Groth's report from the women's rights convention both start with references to the American Revolution. Indeed, the origin of the debate on women's emancipation is usually dated to the French Revolution – both today and in the first histories of the Scandinavian women's movements, including Gripenberg's three volumes on the topic, published in 1893–1903.[20] Nevertheless, the conflation of nationalist and feminist discourse was a fundamental trope, for example in the Nordic emancipation novels of the 1850s, when women's emancipation first became a topic for public debate in the Nordic countries.[21] In Magelssen-Groth's account of the Seneca Falls Convention, national liberty is the explicit model:

> The proudest document for an American is the Declaration of Independence for his country, the very deed in which his forefathers proclaimed their freedom from English dominion. When the American women in 1848 proclaimed their freedom from men's dominion, they used the Declaration of Independence as a model, made complaints and demands to the men of their country equally fearlessly as the American men had earlier made to their English oppressors.[22]

Women's political rights followed from the same logic as national political rights. This line of argument was by no means restricted to America – for example, in the Nordic countries, similar arguments to connect women's liberty to the struggle for national liberty in the late nineteenth century were promoted by feminists in the national independence movements in, for instance, Finland (a Grand Duchy within the Russian Empire 1809–1917) and Iceland (independence from Denmark in 1944).[23] The great rhetorical advantage of pointing out this aspect of the American women's movement, though, was that American national independence had already been achieved. Thus, the women's movement adopted a history of another political movement, based on the same arguments of democracy and freedom, which allowed the transfer of the course of history to a different political cause.

However, the most important exemplary political movement at the International Convention in 1888 was the abolitionist movement. In this case, a common organizational history connected the emancipation of slaves and of women, as the Seneca Falls Convention was dominated by radical Quakers, rooted in the abolitionist movement.[24] Clearly, this is an obvious example of societal circumstances that differ from the Nordic countries, and yet Magelssen-Groth and Gripenberg

both recount quite extensively the narrative of the origins of the women's movement in the abolitionist movement. In her study, *The Early Feminists*, historian Kathryn Gleadle has investigated the connection to the anti-slavery movement in Britain and shows how the concept of slavery was redefined to apply to women. "The comparison of women's position with that of the slave was a common idiom among early feminists", she notes.[25] The same is true of the Swedish debate on women's emancipation from 1850s onwards.[26] Nevertheless, relating the women's movement to slavery in an American context obviously literalized the metaphoric use of the term.

Gripenberg dates the organized women's movement back to the day when seven female American delegates were denied access to the World Anti-Slavery Convention in London in 1840 because of their gender.[27] Accordingly, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and her friends decided that a dedicated organization for women's rights was needed. Gripenberg summarizes the organizational and ideological importance of the abolitionist movement for women's emancipation:

> All of these old people had worked together to free the slaves – they had served that ideal which in America paved the way and prepared minds for another even greater ideal. This new ideal no longer affected a single class or race but all mankind.[28]

The abolitionist movement, according to Gripenberg, was a preparation of minds. Furthermore, her formulation implies a temporality that is clearly spelled out in her article:

> As little as the present realizes that women's liberation is a natural consequence of the higher development of mankind, just as little did America realize that the demand for the abolition of slavery was only a consequence of republican principles.[29]

Emancipation is a natural law.

Magelssen-Groth focuses her version of the abolitionist connection on the testimony of the former slave Frederick Douglass, a leading figure in the abolitionist movement, who had written several famous autobiographies and who had been the only black person to speak at the Seneca Falls Convention. Magelssen-Groth quotes from his address at the "Pioneer's day" of the Washington convention. Fifty years ago, Douglass had been in chains,

> sold like an animal, and noble women bought my freedom and gave me the opportunity to develop my abilities. And when I, ten years later, stood among women who claimed the same rights for themselves and their sex, as I myself craved, how could I not make their cause my own?[30]

The same rights define the goal, prompting Magelssen-Groth to include abolitionism in the account of the women's movement. Still, Magelssen-Groth and

Gripenberg both struggled to balance abolitionism as an exemplary movement with their own racism. Magelssen-Groth goes on to reassure her reader that even though Douglass is Black, very little about him reminds her of that fact, whereas for Gripenberg, the most powerful argument for women's suffrage in America is the right to vote for ignorant immigrants and black men.[31]

In 1888, the abolition of slavery was a history to be remembered and a victory that foretold the future of the women's movement. In Bremer's pre-Civil War account of American society, the fate of the abolitionist movement was still uncertain. Bremer did not mention Seneca Falls in *The Homes of the New World*, which is curious since she met with Frederick Douglass and Lucretia Mott, who had perhaps been the most important person in organizing the Seneca Falls Convention.[32] Bremer stated that the conventions started in Ohio – presumably, she referred to the meeting in Salem in 1850. Obviously, she wrote her travelogue before "the legend of the Seneca Falls Convention" had been established.

However, Bremer did acknowledge the co-organization of the abolitionist and the women's movements in her definition of "emancipated ladies" – a concept that still required explanation. At the house of the medical doctor Harriot Hunt, she met with "several of the 'emancipated ladies', as they are called; such, for instance, as deliver public lectures, speak in public at anti-slavery meetings, etc."[33] It is no coincidence that Bremer stressed women's public performances; a woman speaking publicly was something extraordinary for a European in the 1850s and was still unusual in the 1880s. Bremer, Magelssen-Groth and Gripenberg all devoted considerable space to analysing women's performances: rhetoric, appearance, dress and looks. After listening to Lucretia Mott speaking about "peace, slavery, and the rights of woman" at a Quaker meeting, Bremer was "glad to have heard a female speaker, perfect in her way".[34] Furthermore, "emancipated ladies" suggests an escape from the confines of the household. Apart from this one instance, the concept "emancipation" in Bremer's travelogue is reserved for the emancipation of slaves.

Slavery became one of the main issues that Bremer wanted to investigate and form an opinion on during her travels in America and Cuba. In North America, many of her friends were active in the abolitionist movement. She visited black people's homes and a black minister of an Episcopal church together with Lucretia Mott in Philadelphia and attended anti-slavery meetings, for instance, in Boston, where she listened to Lucy Stone giving a speech to an escaped, female former slave.[35] Nevertheless, she also made a point to talk to slave owners and slaves in Louisiana, Georgia and Carolina. The entire travelogue ends with her conclusion on that matter, a conclusion that satisfied neither the abolitionists nor the slave owners.[36] Bremer impressed on the reader that slavery was a fundamental contradiction in American society that would lead to its doom should it not be corrected and that emancipation from slavery should be granted in steps to ensure an education to freedom.[37] Perhaps more surprisingly from a modern standpoint, she perceived a crucial problem in black people's "want of national spirit" and leaders – Frederick Douglass being the only candidate so far – and argued that "a good emancipation" could only be realized through Christian, black communities.[38] Access to education was also certainly the most pressing issue for women's liberty in

Bremer's view, but her travels in America had a different outcome regarding her ideas on the emancipation of women. Before going to America, she had pleaded for women's civil citizenship, and although she did not say so in public, she also supported women's political citizenship. Her experiences of American democracy and the women's movement's arguments radicalized her views and encouraged her to be more outspoken.[39] For Bremer, the women's movement should show the way for the abolitionist movement rather than the other way around.

Organization, communication and modern technology

Bremer never did attend a women's rights convention herself, although she very much wanted to. On her way back to Europe, she read reports from the convention in Worcester in 1850.[40] The first mention of the conventions, though, is in connection with "the movement of associations" that fascinated her. "This people associate as easily as they breathe", Bremer contends.[41] The following description relates democracy to modern technology and deserves to be quoted in full:

> Whenever any subject or question of interest arises in society which demands public sympathy or co-operation a "Convention" is immediately called to take it into consideration, and immediately, from all ends of the city or the state, or from every state in the Union, all who feel an interest in the subject or question fly upon the wings of steam to the appointed place of meeting and the appointed hour. The hotels and boarding-houses of the city are rapidly filled; they come together in the great hall of assembly, they shake hands, they become acquainted with one another, they make speeches, they vote, they carry their resolutions. And forth upon the wings of a thousand daily papers flies that which the meeting or the Convention has resolved.[42]

Time itself moves faster; this is the speed of modernity, reflected in the breathtaking pace of the sentences. Even more important is the general call to participate. Bremer is stressing "public sympathy" and "co-operation"; the subject – "they" – are the people, a feeling, acting, moving body, open to all. The very circulation of ideas and people depends on technology, such as the super-modern railway and the press; American technology, in this instance, is a precondition of democracy. Moreover, modern technology is portrayed as a transcendental means of communication: Technology endows political opinions with wings to fly.

Bremer herself was a member of philanthropic societies for women in the 1840s, but the organizational skills that she admired in the American associations no doubt inspired her to take women's associations to the next level. She became a driving force in a national network of women's organizations for childcare in response to the 1853 cholera pandemic.[43] In the following year, she called for a worldwide organization of women, of Christian women, that is, in reaction to the nineteenth-century Crimean War. "Invitation to a Peace Alliance" was published in *The Times* (28 August 1854) and subsequently by several other papers.[44] At the time, the article was ridiculed by the editor of *The Times* and forgotten but republished

and celebrated in the 1910s and 1920s, when the women's movement had become international and peace was indeed regarded as a feminist concern.[45] Even though the invitation to a peace alliance had perhaps no effect when it was published, it did have a long-term effect on the historiography of the women's movement.

At the 1888 Washington convention, Gripenberg and Magelssen-Groth were both very impressed with the efficiency of the public communication: Speeches were sent to major newspapers in advance to be printed the same day, and reporters made shorthand notes of the proceedings that were published in *Woman's Tribune*, which had set up a provisional editing office in the same building. Since Gripenberg could not be present due to illness for a major part of the convention, she in fact relied on *Woman's Tribune* for her report. It is true that *Nylænde* (where Magelssen-Groth's report was published) was started in 1887, thereby demonstrating that women's rights journals were already being established in the Nordic countries. Indeed, the first was the Swedish *Tidskrift för hemmet* (Journal for the Home) in 1859. Nevertheless, the admiration suggests that American communication technology gave food for thought. When Gripenberg returned home, her publication initiatives increased. Apart from her report on the Washington convention in her travelogue, she translated several of the speeches into Swedish and Finnish, and in 1889 she launched the first women's rights magazine in Finland: *Koti ja Yhteiskunta* (Home and Society).[46]

More importantly, the very organization of an international convention, and even more so the foundation of the permanent International Council of Women, would have a profound effect on the Nordic women's movements – both in terms of organization and in terms of individual persons' networks and identifications as feminists. If Gripenberg, in the quote from her article on women's rights in America cited at the beginning of this chapter, emphasized the differences between nations, her subsequent activities in and friendships within the International Council of Women led her to develop an international feminist identity.[47] However, at the time, there was no self-evident course of action for a women's rights organization.

Gripenberg's presentation in 1888 of an international women's organization bears witness to the novelty of the idea: "A permanent woman's organization which would bind together and give unity to *all kinds* of women's associations had been proposed".[48] Women in America, as in the Nordic countries, were already organized in philanthropic associations of different kinds, and there was no consensus on claiming suffrage.[49] That issue would soon split the women's movement, nationally and internationally. Hence, Gripenberg did not single out women's struggle for political rights as the core issue, but the cooperation between different societal initiatives; the main thing was women's contributions to civil society. The International Council of Women should encompass "*all kinds* of women's associations". Some ideological divergences on how to imagine the future are discernible in minor differences between Magelssen-Groth's and Gripenberg's accounts. Magelssen-Groth reports on initiatives for women's workers unions and on an address from Kropotkin, subsequently a leading anarchist, who pleaded with the American women to choose "the right side" in the social war to come.[50] Those issues were omitted by the conservative Gripenberg. Instead, she focuses on the moral benefit from

comparing with other nations, quoting the committee for the programme of the International Council of Women: An international association "would help women to avoid the danger of admiring their own work too much. . ., they would see what women in other lands have accomplished and would always find some new field to be learned".[51] The purpose of the international women's rights organization at its inception was more a question of enhancing women's societal importance rather than achieving particular political goals.

Religious foundations

The religious freedom in America presented an entirely different religious landscape from the Nordic countries. Despite the many different denominations, the devout Christian framing of the International Women's Rights Convention was conspicuous, a fact that both Magelssen-Groth and Gripenberg commented on from slightly different viewpoints. The deeply religious Lutheran Gripenberg was enthusiastic about prayers and hymns on every occasion and content that several religious topics were addressed. That was in keeping with the historiography of the women's movement: The Seneca Falls Convention had been held in a Methodist church and organized by radical Quakers. In Washington in 1888, the conference was inaugurated with a sermon by the Methodist minister Anna Howard Shaw (1847–1919), the first woman to be ordained in the Methodist Church in the United States in 1880, who later became the first woman ever to preach in a Swedish church during the Congress of the International Women Suffrage Alliance (IWSA) in Stockholm in June 1911.[52] Religion was still an important part of women's emancipation in the 1880s, but it was not unchallenged.

Magelssen-Groth has a decidedly ironic tone when she identifies a crucial difference between Nordic countries, dominated by Lutheran state churches, and the United States:

> When you are used to think of Paul as a protector of established institutions – slavery and the oppression of women – you do find it strange to hear practically all women priests thank God for having sent Paul, the revolutionary, the great reformer, who first acknowledged his own blindness and then endeavoured to tear other people from blindness and prejudice.[53]

In Norway, Magelssen-Groth points out, Paul is "supposed to be very much against women's emancipation".[54] Biblical exegetics depends on societal conditions; the State Church will use religion to protect the *status quo*, whereas the Bible in America may be used for radical politics, such as to promote female priests. Magelssen-Groth distinguishes between different denominations' readiness to ordain women; the first, Antoinette Brown Blackwell (1825–1921), was ordained by the Congregational Church in 1853. In Norway, on the other hand, even "fairly liberal-minded people", Magelssen-Groth writes, "are astonished and horrified the first time they hear about female priests".[55] The interpretation of the Bible had indeed been a crucial concern for women's rights activists on both sides of the

Atlantic, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton subsequently initiated the highly controversial *The Woman's Bible* (1895, 1898), a two-volume commentary on the Bible.[56]

For Bremer, being part of the initial stage of the women's movement, the conventions had an even broader mission, and the fact that it happened in America was of utmost significance. The Conventions for the Rights of Women, she writes,

> furnish and afford a striking scene in the great drama which is now being performed; for all that lives fettered in Europe is brought forward in America, acquires form, builds a church, combines in union, takes a name, speaks out.[57]

The fettered life in Europe taking form and acquiring a voice in America obviously refers to democracy but more generally to Bremer's understanding of progress as God's plan for humankind. Modern technology and organizations held a profound meaning, connected to a Christian notion of evolution that involved the emigration to America in God's plans for humankind.

When Bremer visited America, she travelled to the future – literally. The progress of human culture was thought to move from East to West: The ideas that had germinated and bloomed in Asia and Europe would come to seed and be harvested in America.[58] According to the Christian notion of evolution, America had a providential purpose. Regrettably, Bremer had an expansionist conception of the United States with an ensuing devastating view of the Indians.[59] Like many of her contemporaries, she believed that all nationalities would melt together in the New World to create a higher humankind, closer to God. People went to America to build the New Jerusalem, and Bremer went to the frontier, expecting Paradise; she was disappointed not to find perfect freedom.[60] That did not stop her from believing that she visited a moral, religious and political future, promised by God. In keeping with that Christian temporality, Bremer thought that the women's rights conventions might "hasten on the approaching day" – but only if managed properly: Bremer was not pleased with the tone of accusation.[61] With the important exception of the Quakers, she found the American woman wanting in "consciousness of her own vocation, of her responsibility as a *Christian citizen*".[62] Bremer's own Lutheran understanding of Christianity was ultimately the standard by which she measured how women's emancipation contributed to the future.

Concluding remarks

Bremer and Gripenberg marked the inception of different generations of the women's movements in the Nordic countries. Their perceptions of women's rights in America were circulated to a large audience back home and helped to achieve real change for Nordic democracies. The Nordic women's movements received radicalizing impulses and ideas on how to modernize modes of communication and organization. Bremer was convinced of the importance of women practising many different professions, and for the next generation, the women's rights convention of 1888 provided the opportunity for Magelssen-Groth and Gripenberg to engage

in a top-modern international organization. Although separated by 35 years, their understanding of women's emancipation largely coincided.

In 1853, Bremer imagined women's emancipation as part of a Christian notion of evolution; the goal was to become citizens in God's Kingdom on earth – a reminder that the political struggle for women's rights was conceived of in terms of a utopian, Christian idea of progress. The women's movement and the utopian idea of a New Jerusalem in America are usually treated as separate movements in modern research, but in the nineteenth century, they were part of the same logic. Thirty-five years later, the Christian framing was challenged, as Magelssen-Groth's ironic comments on the State Church exegetics suggest. The same temporality still governed the idea of the women's movement, though. The historiography of the American national organized women's movement, celebrating 40 years, was appropriated by the newborn Nordic women's rights organizations, thereby endowing them with a history. Progress was essential to the self-representation of the women's movement, and the American pioneers' ageing bodies embodied and naturalized that temporal narrative. The temporality of the women's movement in the late 1880s texts of Magelssen-Groth and Gripenberg was strengthened by exemplary, successful political movements: American national independence and abolitionism. In America, Bremer, Magelssen-Groth and Gripenberg had to acknowledge the co-organization of the American women's movement and the abolitionist movement and to confront the literal meaning of the metaphor of slavery.

Notes

1 "Ulighederne mellem vore og de amerikanske forholde er store og paatrykker kvindesagsarbeidet der og hos os et vidt forskjelligt præg." Gripenberg, "Kvindesagen i Amerika," 155, my trans.
2 "De store spørsmaal og idéer, som gaar igjennem aarhundrederne er internationale. Deres udvikling derimod blir mer eller mindre national efter de forskjellige folks karakter." Gripenberg, "Kvindesagen i Amerika," 155.
3 The original reads: "lysvaagen, snarraadig og virksom"; "indestængte følelser, fostret af naturindtryk." Gripenberg, "Kvindesagen i Amerika," 155.
4 The concept "feminist" was not established until the early twentieth century, and I use it here in an analytic sense for a person who advocates women's rights.
5 Annola and Markkola, "Baroness Alexandra Gripenberg," 192; McFadden, *Golden Cables*, 176–180.
6 Magelssen-Groth, "Indberetning," 146. The Icelandic women's rights organization was not established until 1894. Kristmundsdóttir, *Doing and Becoming*, 32.
7 Gripenberg, *Ett halfår i Nya Verlden*, 21.
8 Magelssen-Groth, "Indberetning," 147.
9 Kinnunen, "The National and International in Making a Feminist"; McFadden, *Golden Cables*, 171–186.
10 Kinnunen, "The National and International in Making a Feminist," 655. See also Manns, "Så skriver vi historia."
11 Burman, *Bremer*, 281, 369–370.
12 Manns, "Så skriver vi historia."
13 Gleadle, *The Early Feminists*, 43, 60, 95, 103, 181.
14 Arping, " 'The Miss Austen of Sweden'," 103–105.
15 McFadden, *Golden Cables*, 4, 149–161.

16 Bremer, *Hemmen i den Nya Verlden*, 1:165.
17 Bremer, *Hemmen i den Nya Verlden*, 1:224.
18 Magelssen, *Familien Magelssen*, 206.
19 Hewitt, "Re-Rooting American Women's Activism," 19.
20 On the early historiography of the Swedish women's movement, including Alexandra Gripenberg's *Reformarbetet till förbättrande af kvinnans ställning*, 3 vols., (1893–1903), see Manns, "Så skriver vi historia," 9.
21 See, for example Bohlin, "Literature and the Construction of Scandinavian Peoples."
22 "Det stolteste dokument, en amerikaner kan pege paa, er hans lands DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, det aktstykke i hvilket hans forfædre sagde sig fri fra Englands herredømme. Da de amerikanske kvinder i 1848 sagde sig fri fra mændenes overherredom, brugte de uafhengighedserklæringen som mønster, fremførte klager og stillede krav ligesaa frygtløst ligeoverfor sit lands mænd, som amerikanske mænd i sin tid havde gjort det ligeoverfor engelske undertrykkere." Magelssen-Groth, "Indberedning," 145, my trans.
23 On Finland, see Kinnunen, "Alexandra Gripenberg and Lost Faith." On Iceland, see Krismundsdóttir, *Doing and Becoming*, 35, 65–66.
24 Hewitt, "Re-Rooting American Women's Activism."
25 Gleadle, *The Early Feminists*, 62–70, quotation on p. 63.
26 Manns, *Upp systrar, väpnen er!*, 180.
27 Gripenberg, "Kvindesagen i Amerika," 149.
28 Gripenberg, *A Half Year in the New World*, 16. "Alla dessa gamla hade troget arbetat för slafvarnas frigörelse, – denna idé, som i Amerika plöjde fältet och beredde sinnena för en annan ännu större, en idé, som icke berörde en klass eller en race, utan hela menskligheten." Gripenberg, *Ett halfår i Nya Verlden*, 21.
29 "Ligesaalidt som nutiden indser, at kvindefrigjørelsen er en naturlig følge af menneskeslegtens høiere udvikling, ligesaalidt forstod Amerika, at abolitionisternes fordring paa slaveriets ophævelse kun var en konsekvens af de republikanske principer." Gripenberg, "Kvindesagen i Amerika," 149.
30 The original reads: "solgt som et dyr, og ædle kvinder kjøbte mig fri og gav mig anledning til at udvikle mine evner. Og da jeg saa ti aar efter stod midt iblandt kvinder, der fordrede samme rettigheder for sig og sit kjøn, som jeg selv tragtede efter, skulde jeg saa ikke gjøre deres sag til min?" Maglessen, "Indberedning," 155.
31 Magelssen-Groth, "Indberedning," 155; Gripenberg, *Ett halfår i Nya Verlden*, 12.
32 On Mott, see Hewitt, "Re-Rooting American Women's Activism," 20.
33 Bremer, *The Homes of the New World*, 1:144. The original reads: "åtskilliga 'emancipperade' fruntimmer, sådana nämligen som hålla offentliga föreläsningar, tala publikt vid antislavery-möten o.s.v." Bremer, *Hemmen i den Nya Verlden*, 1:167. Lofsvold discusses Bremer's interactions with American female authors and women in general. Lofsvold, *Fredrika Bremer and the Writing of America*, 25–105.
34 Bremer, *The Homes of the New World*, 1:427.
35 Bremer, *Hemmen i den Nya Verlden*, 1:226–231.
36 Several researchers have commented on Bremer's opinions on slavery in relation to the American debate; see esp. Lofsvold, *Fredrika Bremer and the Writing of America*, 177–242; Wendelius, *Fredrika Bremers amerikabild*, 71–98.
37 Bremer, *Hemmen i den Nya Verlden*, 3:520–521.
38 Bremer, *The Homes of the New World*, 2:156–157, 654. Lofsvold remarks that even though Bremer had read and appreciated Douglass' autobiography, it appears to have been "irrelevant to Fredrika Bremer's discussion of slavery and her proposals for emancipation." Lofsvold, *Fredrika Bremer and the Writing of America*, 188.
39 Burman, *Bremer*, 218–220, 281, 368–370.
40 Johanson, "Anmärkningar," 4:647.
41 Bremer, *The Homes of the New World*, 2:152. On associations, see also Wendelius, *Fredrika Bremers amerikabild*, 28–30; Runeby, *Den nya världen och den gamla*.
42 Bremer, *The Homes of the New World*, 2:153.
43 Burman, *Bremer*, 357, 361.

44 Burman, *Bremer*, 362–363.
45 "Invitation to a Peace Alliance" and the editor's comment are both printed in full in Johanson, "Anmärkningar," 3:561–569. On the importance for the women's movement in the 1910s and 1920s, see McFadden, *Golden Cables of Sympathy*, 157; Bohlin, *Röstens anatomi*, 52.
46 Salenius, "The 'Emancipated Ladies' of America," 127; Annola and Markkola, "Baroness Alexandra Gripenberg," 193.
47 Kinnunen, "The National and International in Making a Feminist" and "Alexandra Gripenberg and Lost Faith in National Belonging"; Annola and Markkola, "Baroness Alexandra Gripenberg."
48 Gripenberg, *A Half Year in the New World*, 24, italics in the original edition in Swedish, but not in the translation into English. "En stående internationel qvinnoförening, innes-lutande i sig och förenande i organiserad enhet *alla* qvinnoföreningar *af alla slag*, hade blifvit föreslagen." Gripenberg, *Ett halfår i Nya Verlden*, 30.
49 See, for example Seip, "Sosialt arbeid – et kvinnerom"; Krismundsdóttir, *Doing and Becoming*, 26–33.
50 Magelssen-Groth, "Indberedning," 179–180, 186.
51 Gripenberg, *A Half Year in the New World*, 24. The original reads: "bättre kunna undgå faran att för mycket beundra sitt eget arbete, emedan de skulle kunna jemföra det med hvad som blifvit uträttadt af deras systrar i andra länder och alltid finna något område, hvari de skulle hafva något att lära." Gripenberg, *Ett halfår i Nya Verlden*, 30–31.
52 Stenberg, "A Star in a Constellation," 27.
53 "Naar man er vant til at tænke sig Paulus som beskytter af bestaaende institutioner – slaveri og kvindeunderdanighed – faldt det underligt at høre saagodtsom alle kvindepræsterne takke Gud, fordi han havde sendt Paulus, revolutionsmanden, den store reformator, der først erkjendte sin egen blindhet og siden stræbte at rive andre mennesker ud af blindhed og fordom." Magelssen-Groth, "Indberedning," 151.
54 The original reads: "hjemme i Norge ialfald, antages [Paulus] at have havt meget imod kvindeemancipationen." Magelssen-Groth, "Indberedning," 151.
55 "Selv noksaa fordomsfri mennesker . . . forbauses og forskrækkes, første gang de hører tale om kvindelige præster." Magelssen-Groth, "Indberedning," 151.
56 On *The Woman's Bible*, see, for example de Groot, "Contextualizing *The Woman's Bible*." On the Protestant domination of the ICW, see Rupp, "Constructing Internationalism," 142; Rupp, *Worlds of Women*, 55–60. On exegetics in the Swedish nineteenth-century women's movement, see Hammar, "From Fredrika Bremer to Ellen Key."
57 Bremer, *The Homes of the New World*, 2:155.
58 Bremer, *Hemmen i den Nya Verlden*, 3:519. "Ja, det synes mig, att de väsentligaste af de riktningar inom menniskoanden, i godt som i ondt, hvilka under historiens åldrar uppspirat och blommat i Asien och Europa, skola i Amerika sätta frö och bli färdiga till skörd." See also Wendelius, *Fredrika Bremers amerikabild*, 127–130.
59 Bohlin, "Fredrika Bremer's Concept of the Nation."
60 Bremer, *Hemmen i den Nya Verlden*, 2:182, 425, 442; 3:268. On the idea of the New Jerusalem in America in general and Bremer's view in particular, see Zorgati and Bohlin, eds., *Tracing the Jerusalem Code*.
61 Bremer, *The Homes of the New World*, 2:616. The original reads: "påskynda den kommande dagen." Bremer, *Hemmen i den Nya Verlden*, 3:478.
62 The original reads: "utan medvetande om sin egen kallelse, sitt ansvar såsom *kristlig medborgarinna*." Bremer, *Hemmen i den Nya Verlden*, 2:446; Bremer, *The Homes of the New World*, 2:141. The English translation has been amended to convey the literal meaning.

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5 Norwegian and Scandinavian responses to Tocqueville and Beamont's America

Terje Rasmussen

Introduction

Gustave de Beaumont and Alexis de Tocqueville had a number of political reasons for getting away from the French July monarchy, and they planted an idea with the right authorities for an excursion to investigate the American penal and prison system. In May 1831, the two young friends arrived in Rhode Island. They travelled by horse, cart and boat west towards the Great Lakes, then south to New Orleans and finally back up to New York. They visited a number of large cities and smaller towns, as well as Canada. They sailed back to France from New York in February 1832, after a nine-month voyage.[1] The time was well spent: They conducted a number of interviews, collected documentation and made visits to several institutions.

In the following years, the two young companions published three major texts as products of their trip: *Du système pénitentiaire aux États-Unis et de son application en France* by Beaumont and Tocqueville (1833), *De la démocratie en Amérique* by Tocqueville (1835/1840) and the novel *Marie: ou l'Esclavage aux États-Unis, tableau de moeurs américaines* (1840) by Beaumont.[2]

In the following, the topic is the reception of the first two of these three texts in Norway, at three political "moments" around the years 1840, 1852 and 1859. The idea behind this chapter is simply that through Beaumont's and Tocqueville's systematic observations of America, Norway (as in France and other European countries) gained unique analytical knowledge about the new continent, with "democracy" as a key reference.

The most famous of the texts is, of course, Tocqueville's *De la démocratie en Amérique*. The book was published in two volumes in 1835 and 1840. Tocqueville's work was a milestone in many ways. It must be said to be the first major empirical study in what became political sociology. The first volume describes American conditions concretely with a mixture of ambivalence and recognition. The second volume dealt more closely with the field of ideas and politics. Tocqueville and Beaumont had been preparing this work together since 1830, but the two ended up writing separate books. When they returned to France in November 1831, Beaumont embarked on the study of penal systems, and later *Marie*, while Tocqueville wrote on *De la démocratie* for periods from 1832 to 1840.[3]

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A few words should be added about the reception of *De la démocratie* in Scandinavia. The first volume was published in French and English in 1835, and a separate American edition was published in 1838. In Sweden, there had been an interest in America's penal reforms and experiments with cell prisons for a few decades, which Beaumont and Tocqueville's book nurtured.[4] An incomplete Swedish translation, *Om folkväldet i Amerika*, was published in 1839 and 1846. The first volume was much discussed by Swedish conservative and liberal writers and speakers.[5] One of them was perhaps the foremost intellectual in Sweden in the 1800s, the liberal politician and historian Erik Gustaf Geijer, who believed that this was one of the best books he had read and would read.[6] It has been claimed that the book contributed to Geijer's turn to more liberal values during this period and that Tocqueville's description of the bicameral system in America contributed to the system's victory in the Swedish Riksdag in 1840.[7] Another Swede with influence who read Tocqueville was J.A. Gripenstedt, who became Minister of Finance and leader of the nobility in the Riksdag from 1840 and of its second chamber from 1867.[8] Gripenstedt's copy of Democracy in America was full of underlining and annotations.[9] The dramatist and author August Strindberg referred to the book in his essays. The Swedish political sociologist, Richard Swedberg, believes that interest in Tocqueville's book declined in the early 1900s.

In Danish, a longer excerpt of the book was published in 1844 in a collection on recent history under the auspices of the Free Press Society. The association was founded in 1835 by liberals who wanted to counteract censorship, and it published the journal *Gjengangeren*. Selections of the work were translated by the lawyer and liberal politician Hother Hage (1816–1873). Hage was particularly interested in the jury system and travelled to several countries in Europe to study the use of and attitudes towards the jury. According to the Danish Biographical Encyclopaedia, Tocqueville is said to have been an ideal for him.

No review was printed in Norway of Tocqueville's *De la démocratie*. In fact, an incomplete Norwegian edition was published as late as 1969, introduced by the historian Kåre Tønnesson. Nevertheless, politicians and others referred to the original French version throughout the 1800s. In July 1837, *Morgenbladet* published a series of articles on slavery in America, listing figures from *De la démocratie* on the number of slaves in various states. On 12 July 1837, Tocqueville's famous comparison of the neighbouring states of Kentucky and Ohio, the first with slavery, the other completely without slaves, is referred to. The point of both Tocqueville and *Morgenbladet* is that Ohio surpasses Kentucky not only morally but also economically because the entire people work together and look ahead. This was probably the first public Norwegian mention of Tocqueville's book.

The reception of *De la démocratie* shows that the ambivalence of the book made it a rhetorical springboard for both conservatives and liberals, as Mill observed in England. Mill stated in 1832 that the book marked "the beginning of a new era in the scientific study of politics". In England, Tocqueville also gained some influence during the debate on the Second Reform Act passed in 1867. In Norway, Ludvig Kristensen Daa, the historian and member of parliament, was a prolific figure in the political mainstream who noted the book's ambivalence: "In his book

on American democracy, he both proves a deep knowledge of the nature of the republic and monarchies, and also shows that he despises both". The positive thing about Tocqueville was his impartiality and doubt. "His contempt is as great for the king as it is for the people".[10] From the 1850s onwards, references and quotations to Tocqueville were regularly made by both liberals and conservatives.[11] Liberals like John Stuart Mill, in particular, referred to Tocqueville's view of democracy as irreversible. Among them, the liberal member of the Noewegan parliament Gudbrand A. Berg stated:

> Already the French writer Tocqueville said that the nations of Europe are so imbued with democratic ideas that the final victory of the popular cause can be confirmed as a given fact, and that it is therefore much wiser to devote one's energies to organizing and directing the popular efforts than to indulge in fruitless attempts to suppress them.[12]

The prison commission

The first Norwegian impact came after Beaumont and Tocqueville's report on prisons and punishment in 1833, *Du système pénitentiaire*. Beaumont's and Tocqueville's prison reports dealt with democracy in Tocqueville's sense. For Tocqueville, the question of institutional legitimacy became very central in *De la démocratie*, and in the prison report, a central question was: How to turn criminals into good citizens? And how could the prisons achieve a certain degree of legitimacy, even among the prisoners themselves? Furthermore, the report addressed the paradox between growing crime and growing democracy.[13] Most importantly, the question of the choice of penal system was no longer simply about punishment but about how the prisoners could regain their dignity as citizens.[14] On the trip, Beaumont and Tocqueville conducted interviews with jurors, prison directors, inmates, politicians, judges and others. According to the prison report, they visited at least 14 prison facilities, where they interviewed prisoners, guards and administration, the most important of which were probably Sing Sing (NY), Auburn Penitentiary (NY) and Eastern State Penitentiary, Philadelphia (PA).[15] They also collected large quantities of documents and books that they had sent to France and made notes and wrote letters every night.

A recurring comparative perspective in the report highlighted similarities and differences between America, France and Europe. Much of the material dealt with the prison system, but they had already planned a larger, broader work on America and also collected material for that purpose. Originally, *Du système pénitentiaire* was almost 500 pages long with all the appendices. Its first edition appeared in 1832. Later, a second edition was published in 1856 in two volumes with a lengthy introduction and several appendices, including one on pauperism and the school system in the United States. The report was immediately translated into English for the American market, but in an incomplete and, in the authors' opinion, biased edition.[16] A complete version was not available in English until 2018.

The report directly contributed to the growing debate in several European nations about penal reform. Interest in prison reforms and punishment had been on

the rise since the turn of the century. Philanthropic ideas were in opposition but became more central. In both France and Norway, *Du système pénitentiaire* became material for public reports around 1840.[17] In 1840, several important documents were published in Norway about prisons and punishment, which were influenced by Tocqueville and Beaumont's observations in America. In 1837, the government appointed the Prison Commission to study "The improved organisation of the Prisons" ("Straffeanstalternes bedre Indretning").[18] The undisputed professional authority on the commission was Dr Frederik Holst (1791–1871), a professor of medicine and pioneer in the field of social medicine. He was the first to receive his doctorate in Norway (in 1817), and he represented a modern view of punishment.[19] Previously, Holst had made two long trips to the continent and Great Britain to study prison systems. His involvement in the investigations of prison and punishment brought the prisoners' mental strains into the picture more strongly. Emphasis was also placed on the prisoner's condition after his imprisonment.

From Holst's publications, we can see that he was a strong supporter of one of two American prison systems considered by Beaumont and Tocqueville, the so-called Philadelphia model. In 1839, the *Skilling-Magazin* (with the subtitle "To the Dissemination of Useful Knowledge") printed a lecture that Holst had given in Gothenburg, "On the Newer Prison Reforms", in which he distinguished between the Auburn system and the newer Philadelphia system with reference to Tocqueville's and Beaumont's report (see below). Holst was probably the leading interpreter of the assessments put forward by Tocqueville and Beaumont; in Holst's and the commission's interpretation, the Philadelphia system was preferable.[20] Holst followed up with an article the following year on "De sanitaire conditions in prisons after the newer systems", emphasizing the Philadelphia model.[21]

The Prison Commission made a large and unanimous recommendation in 1841. Its report has been called Norway's most important contribution to penitentiary science.[22] The recommendation was broad and thorough, and of great importance was the extensive collection of foreign reports that had been translated and published by the commission as an appendix. The commission seemed to assume that the models in question were no longer to be found in Britain as in the 1820s. The pioneering country was, above all, America, where English systems had been modernized.

The Commission had translated into Danish-Norwegian and published the report by "the two young Parisian lawyers", Beaumont and Tocqueville, excluding its statistical appendices. The Commission points out that the report was praised in many countries and had received awards in France. The Norwegian version was 134 pages long and was entitled "On the Penance System in the United States and its Application in France".[23]

Beaumont's and Tocqueville's report of 1835 entered the Norwegian prison debate precisely when important choices were to be made between prison models: between the so-called Auburn model (work in silence during the day and isolation in the cell at night) and the Philadelphia model (almost total individual solitary confinement in the cell).[24] Beaumont and Tocqueville showed how American states had tried out both models and discussed their pros and cons. As historian Espen Schaanning points out, one can also read the report as a defence of the Auburn

system.[25] My own reading, admittedly after almost 200 years, indicates that the report is ambivalent and critical of the application of both systems in France. Beaumont and Tocqueville point out that the Philadelphia system may be preferable in theory but would be far too costly to be introduced in France.[26] The Auburn system was based on a more realistic structure: "This system we would therefore require to apply to our prisons, if there were only a question of choosing between these two systems".[27] The Auburn system's emphasis on work was believed to prepare the prisoner for a life of freedom. However, the system was considered less humane because breaches of the silence during work were punished corporally.

The Prison Commission argued, quoting Tocqueville and Beaumont, that there is nothing better for morality than a system that leaves the criminal to the trials of loneliness, leading him to reflection and remorse.[28] Repentance and penance in solitude were the basis of the Philadelphia system. The inquiry believed that "it is a matter of restoring a soul that has been defiled by crime, its original purity".[29] The goal was to give the criminal back his self-esteem and inner peace. This, of course, was associated with great difficulties, but it is still crucial to let God in so that not only the criminal is physically liberated in the end but also that his soul is forgiven.[30]

The Norwegian Commission's recommendation was in favour of the Philadelphia system and based its conclusion in part on Beaumont and Tocqueville. It was argued later that the two went to America as convinced supporters of the Auburn system but returned home as ardent defenders of the Philadelphia system.[31] This is uncertain, but in any case, it is not unreasonable to conclude that Tocqueville's and Beaumont's observations of the two prison systems in America via Holst's and the Commission's interpretation contributed to the Philadelphia system being preferred by the Commission, if reserved for shorter sentences.

Crown Prince Oscar: "a highly meritorious work"

Beaumont and Tocqueville's report also came to the Commission's table via two other key interpreters. The commission also had a Swedish report from 1840 translated, which was informative and had many factual arguments for prison reform. More remarkable than the content itself was the author and translator of the report. The author was anonymous (an "unnamed high author"), but known: Crown Prince Oscar of Sweden and Norway, the future King Oscar I. As a student under one of Sweden's great liberals in the first half of the 1800s, Johan Gabriel Richert (1784–1864) had liberal views in the prison debate.[32] As both the Commission and the press in Sweden pointed out, considering the author's future position, it was clear that his assessments would have considerable influence.[33]

With his French background, Oscar was updated on the debate in France and was in favour of reform. In his report, he frequently refers to Beaumont's and Tocqueville's report.[34] Oscar immediately makes it clear that questions of crime and punishment intervene directly in the life of the state, and one has come to the realization that this is not only about inflicting suffering but also about finding and, as far as possible, removing the causes of criminal acts. A problem with the current

system was that it humiliated and degraded the prisoner so that he became a "pari" and was unable to adapt to society.[35] Beaumont and Tocqueville's report is drawn into the assessment of the Philadelphia and Auburn systems here as well. Oscar considers the French report "a highly meritorious work" and quotes it frequently.[36] For instance, he refers to the conversations that Beaumont and Tocqueville had with prisoners in the Philadelphia prison who lived in total silence without any interaction with others and who were mentally affected.[37] Oscar points out that the isolation could create more dangerous prisoners.[38]

In his comparison and assessment of what system could be suitable in Sweden, the Crown Prince concludes that the Philadelphia system is the best but adds a number of detailed recommendations that soften the system.[39] It should only be applied to those with lesser punishment due to the mental injuries.[40] The proponents of the Beaumont model had made it clear that man's mental state depended on contact with fellow humans. However, social interaction in prisons meant "contagion" of criminal behaviour, while loneliness meant communication with God. The latter was preferable.

Henrik Wergeland: Philanthropism

The translator of Oscar's report into Norwegian contributed footnotes on Norwegian conditions and statistics. Importantly, he contributed an afterword, "Remarks". The translator was the national poet and rebel Henrik Wergeland. When Oscar's document was incorporated into the commission's work, Wergeland's "Remarks" were omitted, perhaps because Wergeland did not spare the sarcasm about the cold foolishness of the "Juristery" regarding the prisoners' situation and their indifference to questions of mercy and the reconstruction of human character. Wergeland had first-hand knowledge of the degrading effects of the penitentiary: As a newly appointed National Archivist with an office at Akershus Fortress, he was able to observe the miserable conditions for the nearly 500 prisoners at Akershus Penal Institution, the so-called slavery.

Through his translation work, Wergeland had become well acquainted with Beaumont and Tocqueville's experiences in America as well as their assessments of punishment and imprisonment. Wergeland has his clear views (on reconciliation institutions) that go in a religious-philanthropic direction. He opens with words of mercy and compassion by Shakespeare (Portia) and continues with his first question: How does society receive the prisoner who is left alone outside the walls? How will they become usable members of society?[41] The Norwegians' response was lukewarm: Norway's valleys are secluded not only by the mountain walls but also by customs and prejudices.[42] The prisoners are plunged straight into society from "the height of the gallows of dishonour and find no arms to occupy themselves".[43] Wergeland refers to philanthropic ideas about reconciliation and grace. "When righteousness had satisfied itself with its activity, mercy should begin, as in heaven".[44] He insisted that reconciliation institutions were needed to facilitate the transition to society. Step by step, "the criminals should again become useful members of society and acceptable to it".[45]

Wergeland makes his assessment of the two American prison models mentioned, and he considers the Auburnian system as simply too cruel. Using "the stick" against all talk during work was untenable. Wergeland considers the Philadelphian system to be somewhat better for shorter sentences. A reform is needed, Wergeland writes: "These are times that will be renowned and glorious without revolutions or wars". One is accused of "philatropism" by the enemies of reform, the jurist, which "has penetrated its heartless dominion into all state relations in the constitutional states".[46] But the warmth of philanthropy will one day permeate all public relations, he insisted.[47]

In this way, social physician Holst and the others on the commission received input directly not only from Beaumont and Tocqueville but also from Crown Prince Oscar and Henrik Wergeland. As mentioned, the Auburn system was considered too physically brutal, and the commission concluded in 1841 that the Philadelphia system was preferable. This is how they interpreted Beaumont and Tocqueville, although their conclusion is, as I read the report, highly ambivalent. The commission nevertheless found that the Auburn system was not useless, but that both prison systems could be used on different groups of prisoners. The so-called Penitential Prison Act was passed by the Storting in 1848, and the Penitential Prison in Kristiania opened in 1851.

Jury as a political institution

The second political moment with Norwegian implications of Beaumont's and Tocqueville's trip to America concerns the question of a lay jury in the courts. It was a central debate, especially in the period 1847–1852, although it appeared in the Storting throughout most of the 1800s. The Storting wanted documentation from abroad, including from America. The civil servant Ole Munch Ræder was asked by the Storting to travel to America to study the use of and attitudes towards the people's jury.[48] He left Christiania in October 1846 and spent three months on the continent and then almost half a year in London to make contacts and gain a basis against which the American legal system could be considered.[49] In May, he boarded a ship bound for New York. After a tour of over a year and a half across several states (and Canada), he arrived in Norway on New Year's Day, 1849.[50]

In the years after his trip to America, Munch Ræder, as a deputy in the Ministry of Justice, wrote the report that the Storting had requested (see below). It became a work in three volumes.[51] Much had to be reviewed, he wrote, because the jury is "not only a judicial, but also a political and social institution".[52]

In parts of the work, he discusses the jury system as a political principle. In his earlier work *Den Norske Statsforfatnings Historie og Væ*sen (1841), Munch Ræder gives his opinion on democracy and the jury system before he embarked on the journey. Despite his background as one of the faithful servants of the civil service, he makes a name for himself here with a distinctly positive concept of democracy. "The principle of democracy is not only the most natural, but also the safest".[53] On the jury system, Munch Ræder was sceptical: "To declare [jurors] to be the representatives of popular sovereignty and to give them political authority is to give the

opinion of a small community the opportunity to deliberately overthrow the will of the whole people". Yes, "the most imperfect tool of public opinion" is allowed to take precedence over the elected body that has passed the laws.

After the journey and reading of *De la démocratie en Amerique,* Munch Ræder's scepticism was turned into firm belief in the jury institution. A people's jury was a natural extension of "the people's self-government". It is society itself that, in its "sobriety, self-esteem and sense of justice must find the means for its survival".[54] In England and America, we have seen the "calming character" of the jury and its support for the order of civil society. It is in accordance with the spirit of the English nation, and in his opinion, the Norwegian one was not much different. He points out how important it is that the jury must function in interaction with a free public opinion. On the journey, he had observed how the press permeates all powers and acts as a mutual link between the "masses" and their leaders. With a free press, a jury would be a voice in public opinion. A jury could give direction and moderation to the reason and moral power that vibrates in the people, particularly when they experience injustice.

The parliamentary elections can neither ennoble nor lecture the people, Munch Ræder stated, while the vocation of the jury institution is "rich in nourishment for both spirit and heart".[55] Through the jury member's reflection, society assumes a higher tone, he writes, and this will be very important in a free country like Norway, "where the centre of gravity of political power lies with the less enlightened bourgeois classes, where, therefore, every progress they make is a further assurance of the safety and welfare of the whole". Munch Ræder believed that the jury arrangements were educational for the many who were about to take part in the management and care. The country's future rests in the hands of democracy, he concluded.[56] There is no point in shielding the legislative power from progress.

In the second volume of his report, Munch Ræder commented on Tocqueville. His view of the jury was that it was an important institution that contributed to the development of society through its influence on the character and upbringing of the people.[57] He quoted Tocqueville approvingly:

> The jury system, as understood in America, seems to me to be no less a direct extreme consequence of the sovereignty of the people than universal suffrage. These institutions are two instruments of equal influence, which contribute to the supremacy of the majority.[58]

However, Munch Ræder suspected that Tocqueville had misinterpreted American legislators: The guiding principle has always been that jurors are not only of the people and have the right to vote but also that they must be particularly competent. For example, the requirements for voting rights and for participation in the jury were different in a large state such as New York and other states. And when Tocqueville also considers universal male suffrage to be an expression of sovereignty, he ignores the fact that in many states, the right to vote is restricted at the same time as popular sovereignty is recognized.[59] Nevertheless, Munch Ræder assured that he had great confidence in Tocqueville's assessments of American conditions. It is

clear that Munch Ræder, like Tocqueville, regarded the jury institution as a political and democratic body, a view he acquired during his journey to America. Reading Tocqueville's book again during his time in America and after he returned home, he wrote, had only strengthened the good impression he got when he read it for the first time a few years earlier.[60]

Munch Ræder was probably not in favour of making the question of a people's jury too politicised, although his impression was that citizens wanted the judiciary closer to the people: "Those who have followed the public discourse at the Storting and in the press fairly closely can hardly deny that there is a growing longing to bring a more popular element into the administration of justice".[61] But unfortunately, the jury institution was drawn into the political game on the European continent "[B]etween revolution and conservatism, they have all grasped it as something whose character was disorganizing and divisive".[62] The consequence was that it became a kind of thermometer, "from which one could measure at any time what passions, whether of overthrow or reaction, were at the beets of the state, as well as what degree of heat they had". A new Criminal Procedure Act from 1857, with a jury, was not sanctioned by the King. It was not until 1887 that a law on the jury was sanctioned by the king.

Democracy as *a fait accompli*

A third moment in the Norwegian reception of Beaumont and Tocqueville's writings arrived in 1859. A lengthy article was printed in *Norsk Maanedskrift*, a magazine founded by the national historian P.A. Munch. In contrast to the two previous moments, this article did not fall into a concrete political process in Norway but was actualized by Tocqueville's death. It seemed appropriate to summarize Tocqueville's political significance and his famous works. Many years had passed since the publication of *De la démocratie*. America was changing rapidly, and now it was apparently facing civil war.

The two young authors of the article would later make a name for themselves: Ludvig M.B. Aubert became professor of law and minister of government in 1884; Jacob Neumann Mohn became one of Norway's first statisticians and a forerunner of sociology. He became head of the Statistical Office in 1871, renamed Statistics Norway five years later, where he collaborated with the famous statistician Anders Nicolai Kjær. Whereas Aubert became a moderate Christian conservative, Mohn probably adhered to more liberal values.

An enormous admiration for Tocqueville's work runs through the 1859 article, and the two authors consider him an outstanding guide for both politics and research.[63] Aubert and Mohn applaud Tocqueville's view of democracy as a wind over Europe that could not be halted. They emphasize his words in a famous speech in January 1848: "I think we sleep on a volcano. Don't you notice that there is a revolution in the air . . . ? If the bourgeoisie loses power, it is because they have not earned it"! They are far more critical of the conservative historian and statesman François Guizot, who did not listen to the reason he himself constantly praised. Equally critical are the two Norwegian students of the radicals and socialists who

have not understood what a destructive and explosive force revolution can be. They regard Tocqueville and themselves as champions of a tendency towards democracy that must not tip over into its opposite. Democracy was only possible with enlightenment and restraint.[64] What this may mean in the case of Norway the readers never get to know here, only that ambivalence and resignation are moods that fit what is to come.[65]

At this early stage, the two authors acknowledge that Tocqueville has "created a new branch of political science in which is likely to remain unsurpassed for a long time. His method deserves no less admiration than the results to which it has brought him".[66] First, they are thrilled by the dispassionate sobriety he displays.[67] No doubt, Tocqueville considers democracy to be good, they point out, but more important is that he presents democracy as a given historical premise that is "fixed and unchangeable, a fait accompli". Secondly, he has no less than "studied democracy itself through the lenses of American experience, rather than simply studied America's democracy".[68] He has sought and found "what is the essence of democracy and its necessary consequences, its inherent shortcomings and real merits".[69] Thirdly, a strength is that he compares the new and the old world.[70]

The Frenchman wanted to investigate, Aubert and Mohn write, how the wave of democracy and greater social equality, which would overwhelm all of humanity, manifested itself in concrete American institutions and social conditions – before it hit the old world.[71] Until now, the problem was that eyewitnesses had been characterized by personal and one-sided prejudices. Therefore, most people were not familiar with the state of American society. But Tocqueville "visited the country with the calm of the philosopher and a sincere eagerness to see and judge rightly and justly". And he has seen like few others: . . . democratic institutions and their influence on all moral and intellectual conditions of life, in its finest ramifications.[72] Aubert and Mohn underline that democracy is a beacon for Tocqueville, a given historical prerequisite "that is fixed and unchangeable, *un fait accompli*".[73]

Yet in a stable society, the authors write, democracy will not be possible in the foreseeable future: "The French would need a long time, perhaps permanent repression and great resignation, before they would be fit for democracy. Until enlightenment becomes commonplace and the customs purified, democracy is impossible".[74] The "beneficial democracy" is thus pushed forward by the two authors in Christiania into an abstract future.

It is evident to all who can see, the two authors wrote in 1859, that the weight of social life shifts from the few to the many, classes assimilate and become equal, property is divided, and "spiritual formation" is spread widely. The working classes are more recognized, while the aristocrats are weakened "by their lazy habits and softness". The middle class has become the core of the people.[75] All of this marks the inexhaustible movement that Tocqueville calls "democracy". The two authors in Norway consider it a quite broad use of the term, and they would have preferred to reserve it for reforms of formal political bodies. And yet Aubert and Mohn follow Tocqueville in that the challenge was to build democratic institutions that unleash the people's abilities and guarantee against the abuse of the people's power.[76]

Conclusion

To the formidable Tocqueville literature on *De la démocratie,* this chapter has added insight on how his and his travelling companion Beaumont's novel ideas and proposals were addressed in Scandinavia and particularly Norway from the 1840s. I have argued that the report and book discussed here clarify the influence of American society in Scandinavia, which grew from the 1830s, when letters from America (often published in local newspapers) as well as re-immigration increased. Somewhat surprisingly, we may conclude that the lesser-known prison report by Beaumont and Tocqueville was probably more influential in Norwegian society than Tocqueville's *De la démocratie*.

Generally, one can see American influence in Norway as an extension of Sweden's role. For a few decades after 1814, Sweden served as a political mirror for Norway, as it sought its own political and constitutional self-recognition. Sweden was not only Norway's "brother people" but also *a negation*, with its nobility and national assembly of the estates. Growing emigration and the accompanying interaction contributed to America's rising position as a reference. For the working and poor population in Scandinavia, America was a continent of opportunity, but with anomalies as well. For the Norwegian bourgeoisie who worried about the labour force leaving the country, America was a country with political arrangements that did not "fit" Norway. The 1830s were probably a crucial period when the concept of democracy became American. When Tocqueville and Beaumont arrived in New York in 1830, the self-description of "democracy" was in frequent use, and the export of the term had begun. It continued with Tocqueville himself. Together with Beaumont, he showed that America was a democracy with its blessings and serious flaws, both from the point of view of the formal representative government and in terms of a popular and decentralized political culture. In Europe and Norway at the time, however, "democracy" remained an ingredient in mixed variants for decades.

Notes

1 Schleifer, *The Chicago Companion*, 15.
2 Eng. edition: *Marie; or, Slavery in the United States: A Novel of Jacksonian America*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1958.
3 Schleifer, *The Chicago Companion*, 6.
4 Borell, *De Svenske Liberalerna*, 64.
5 Borell, *De Svenske Liberalerna*, 61.
6 Sweberg, "Tillbaka Till Tocqueville?," 221.
7 Swedberg, "Tillbaka Till Tocqueville?," n.3, ref. Rexius 1915.
8 Swedberg, "Tillbaka Till Tocqueville?," 231, 221, n.4.
9 Swedberg, "Tillbaka Till Tocqueville?," 232.
10 Kristensen Daae L., *Granskeren*, 16 December 1841, no. 49.
11 For example, Norwegian liberals like Gudbrand Berg and conservatives like Bernhard Getz.
12 Berg, Storthinget i 1851, 28.
13 Ferkaluk, "Translator's Introduction," xxiii.
14 Ferkaluk, "Translator's Introduction," xxiii.
15 Ferkaluk, "Translator's Introduction," xv.

16 Ferkaluk, "Translator's Introduction," xix.
17 Ferkaluk, "Translator's Introduction," xvii.
18 The commission members were Lieutenant General Ferdinand Carl Maria Wedel-Jarlsberg, Professor of Medicine Frederik Holst, Expedition Secretary Erik Røring Møinichen, Major at Akershus Fortress Christian Glad, and City Conductor in Christiania Christian H. Grosch.
19 Larsen, "Frederik Holst og fengslene"; Schaanning, *Menneskelaboratoriet*.
20 Holst, Frederik, "Om de nyere Fængselsreformer," *Skillings-Magazin*, 1839.
21 Holst Fr, *Skilling-Magazin* nr 48, 1840, 378 – This was a selection of a longer article in *Norsk Magazin for Lægevidenskaben* 1840, Vol. 1, Issue 2, 97–126.
22 Schaaning, *Menneskelaboratoriet*, 95.
23 Transl. by R. M. Colban.
24 Schaanning, *Menneskelaboratoriet*, 97.
25 Schaanning, *Menneskelaboratoriet*, 100.
26 See Schaanning, *Menneskelaboratoriet*, 496, n.496.
27 Beaumont and Tocqueville, "Om Bodsystemet," 112.
28 Straffeanstaltkommisjonen, 3rd section, ch. 3, p. 460.
29 Straffeanstaltkommisjonen, 460.
30 Straffeanstaltkommisjonen, 461.
31 Aubert and Mohn, "Alexis de Tocqueville," 498–499.
32 Borell, *De Svenske Liberalerna*, 88.
33 Wergeland, *Bemærkninger*, 139, which also quotes *Dagbladet Allehanda* 9de Sept. 1840.
34 Oscar, "Om Straf og Straffeanstalter"; Borell, *De Svenske Liberalerna*, 91.
35 Oscar, "Om Straf og Straffeanstalter," 16.
36 Oscar, "Om Straf og Straffeanstalter," 31.
37 Oscar, "Om Straf og Straffeanstalter," 32.
38 Oscar, "Om Straf og Straffeanstalter," 53.
39 Oscar, "Om Straf og Straffeanstalter," 93.
40 Oscar, "Om Straf og Straffeanstalter," 123.
41 Wergeland, "Bemærkninger," 142.
42 Wergeland, "Bemærkninger," 140.
43 Wergeland, "Bemærkninger," 142.
44 Wergeland, "Bemærkninger," 141.
45 Wergeland, "Bemærkninger," 142.
46 Wergeland, "Bemærkninger," 153.
47 Wergeland, "Bemærkninger," 153.
48 Emil Aubert was a lawyer and became a magistrate, then county governor, mayor of Trondheim, and member of parliament.
49 Munch Ræder gives an account of his journey and his investigations in the first volume of *The Jury Institution in Great Britain, Canada and the United States of America* and in *Den norske Rigstidende*, 18 September 1850.
50 Like a Norwegian Beaumont or Tocqueville, he travelled the New World but covered more states and for more than twice as long. He observed court proceedings and interviewed judges and jurors in a number of cities, such as Madison, St. Louis, Cincinnati and Pittsburgh, Washington, New York and Boston. He also visited Canada. In October 1848, the journey came to an end. Ræder, Ole Munch. "Letters from America," *Den norske Rigstidende*, 18 September 1850.
51 The Jury Institution of Great Britain, Canada and the United States of America.
52 Ræder, *The Jury Institution*, Vol. I, inl.; chap. X.
53 Ræder, *The Jury Institution*, 33.
54 Ræder, *The Jury Institution* II, 684. The magazine *Almuevennen* also later stated that Ole Munch Ræder "was, as is well known, an ardent opponent of the jury, but who came back as an admirer and defender of it." Folkevennen, no. 15 1863, 119.
55 Ræder, *The Jury Institution* II, 769.

56 Ræder, *The Jury Institution* II, 770.
57 Ræder, *The Jury Institution*, 397. Tocqueville writes: "The institution of the jury can be aristocratic or democratic, depending on from where you take its members. But it will always be republican, because it leaves the real decisions to the people, or to a section of the people, and not to the authorities," *Demokratiet i Amerika*, 53.
58 Tocqueville in Munch Ræder, vol. II, 397.
59 Ræder, *The Jury Institution* II, 402.
60 Ræder, *The Jury Institution*, 403.
61 Ræder, *The Jury Institution* II, 773–774.
62 Ræder, *The Jury Institution* II, 772.
63 Aubert and Mohn, "Alexis de Tocqueville," 518.
64 Aubert and Mohn, "Alexis de Tocqueville," 512.
65 Aubert and Mohn, "Alexis de Tocqueville," 517.
66 Aubert and Mohn, "Alexis de Tocqueville," 522.
67 Aubert and Mohn, "Alexis de Tocqueville," 523.
68 Aubert and Mohn, "Alexis de Tocqueville," 524.
69 Aubert and Mohn, "Alexis de Tocqueville," 524.
70 See Aubert and Mohn, "Alexis de Tocqueville," 524.
71 Aubert and Mohn, "Alexis de Tocqueville," 501.
72 Aubert and Mohn, "Alexis de Tocqueville," 522.
73 Aubert and Mohn, "Alexis de Tocqueville," 523.
74 Aubert and Mohn, "Alexis de Tocqueville," 512.
75 Aubert and Mohn, "Alexis de Tocqueville," 525.
76 Aubert and Mohn, "Alexis de Tocqueville," 528.

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6 Representations of Indigenous peoples and the construction of Norwegian identity in America*

A corpus-based study

Jana Sverdljuk

Introduction: Constructing Norwegianness in a settler-colonial context

America has long been associated with the ideals of freedom, opportunity and democracy – an image that deeply resonated with many European immigrants. Yet these ideals were being constructed on a foundation of systematic Indigenous dispossession, racial violence and legal exclusions. Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, US policies such as the Indian Removal Act, the Dawes Act and the reservation system coincided with evolving frameworks of racial citizenship, which increasingly defined access to rights and belonging through whiteness (see also Chapter 10 in this volume).[1] This racial logic also shaped the experience of European immigrants. When Norwegians arrived in the United States, they entered a society where race and ethnicity were central organizing categories. Although not initially seen as fully "white" by Anglo-American standards, Norwegians – alongside other Northern and Western European immigrants – were gradually incorporated into the privileges of whiteness, a process described by David Roediger as *becoming white*.[2] As Betty Bergland has demonstrated, this often involved consenting to the dispossession of Native peoples.[3]

At the same time, immigrants actively worked to preserve their cultural distinctiveness. Through the institutions, publications and networks of Vesterheimen – the transnational "Western Home" of the Norwegian diaspora, what prominent literature scholar Orm Øverland has described as a "nation within a nation"[4] – they engaged in a rich literary and intellectual culture that emphasized ethnic pride, cultural memory and the construction of a cohesive sense of Norwegianness.[5] This dual identity – both white and ethnically distinct – meant that Norwegianness was not simply inherited but actively negotiated within the frameworks of American society. Immigrant identity formation in the United States was a complex and dynamic process, shaped by the intersections of racial, ethnic, gendered and political discourses.[6] Gunlög Fur's research on Scandinavian settlers living near Native American reservations further complicates homogenizing views of "settler whiteness". Fur argues that racial and social positions among settlers were diverse and that their interactions with Native peoples cannot be reduced to a simple narrative of dominance.[7]

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Karen V. Hansen extends this perspective into the twentieth century in her study of Norwegian Americans and Dakota people near Spirit Lake. She shows that the racialization of Native Americans by broader American society – including Norwegian settlers – did not preclude moments of mutual recognition. Through daily coexistence, Norwegians and Dakotans developed "a certain familiarity with each other" grounded in ancestral narratives, land-based memory and everyday interdependence. Although they lived mostly apart, each community came to understand its own distinct identity by comparing it with the other, culturally different group.[8] Together, these studies show that Norwegian-American identity was flexible, situated and shaped not only in relation to the dominant white majority but also through encounters – both real and imagined – with Native Americans.

Against this background, the chapter, while using a corpus of Norwegian-American non-fiction and literary texts written between 1839 and 1925, analyses how Native Americans were described, contrasted and evaluated to establish symbolic boundaries around Norwegian identity. How is the idea of Norwegianness constructed as a position within intersecting discourses of race, nationalism, settler colonialism and cultural belonging?

Assembling a corpus

The corpus was constructed by selecting digitized texts from the Norwegian-American bibliography compiled at the National Library of Norway,[9] covering the period 1839–1925, and extracting those books containing the terms "indianer" ("Indian"), "indianere" ("Indians") and "indianerne" ("the Indians") with the help of Python code. This resulted in 190 titles authored by more than 120 writers. In contrast, the entire digitized book collection within the Norwegian-American bibliography from the same period included 1,478 titles when the corpus was created in Autumn 2024.[10] The disparity (1,478 contra 190 titles) suggests that issues concerning Native populations were at the margins of Norwegian-American authors' concerns. As for the authors, the works belong to prominent immigrant cultural figures – writers, educators, religious leaders, historians and political activists. Referring to Norwegian-American literature (and the same can also be said about history and other non-fiction books), Orm Øverland points out that, although written in the Norwegian language, it was marginalized in the United States and less widely read in Norway. The readership primarily consisted of immigrants who were deeply invested in Norwegian culture. Apart from immigrant authors, the corpus includes some books by non-immigrant Norwegian authors published in the United States for use within the Norwegian immigrant community. This reflects the logic of compiling the Norwegian-American bibliography, which has served as the foundation for compiling the present corpus.[11]

Genres

Based on an overview of the metadata, which is a systematic study of the authors and titles in the corpus,[12] it is possible to conclude that the material includes a diverse array of genres. This suggests that representations of Native Americans and

the construction of Norwegian identity were shaped by genre-specific conventions. Among the works, there are *popular history books* by Olav Larsen Kirkeberg, Peter Andreas Munch and David Monrad Schøyen, to name only the authors discussed later in this analysis. These works contain, among others, stories of early European and Norse encounters with Indigenous peoples, highlighting, for example, Leif Erikson's voyages to North America, and framing Indigenous peoples as symbolic figures representing a Nordic presence in the New World. In addition, *pioneer stories* stand out, like those authored by Martin Ulvestad, Hjalmar Rued Holand and Knud Langeland. These narratives emphasize the role of immigrants as pioneers who arrived to settle, cultivate and civilize the wilderness – a land depicted as inhabited "only by wild Indians".[13] *Literary works*, such as novels and narratives by Drude Krog Janson, Kristofer Janson and Eilert Storm (to name only those who will be quoted), portray adaptation-related and psychological complexities of immigrant life and contain romanticized depictions of Native Americans. Moreover, there are books for children, popular literature, religious writings and legal works.

Strategies of the representation of Indigenous people

To work effectively with the large dataset, the research was conducted using applications from the Digital Humanities Laboratory at the National Library of Norway.[14] Through the integration of distant reading, understood here as the systematic review of concordances,[15] with the close reading of selected examples, the method enables interpretive movement between parts and wholes, in line with the hermeneutic circle. I started by conducting an analysis of concordances, that is text snippets from the corpus that entailed the base word ("Indians"), 872 extracts altogether. Afterwards, it was necessary to engage with a selection of books to conduct a more nuanced analysis of the representation of Native Americans and Norwegian identity construction. In total, around 40 books were reviewed, some of which are cited in this chapter. This approach has allowed the study of discursive strategies of representation of Native Americans, analysing characteristic linguistic expressions occurring in the extracts and linking them to broader discourses, themes, ideologies and cultural assumptions present in the texts. Martin Reisigl and Ruth Wodak define representation strategies as a more or less accurate and intentional plan of discursive practices adopted to achieve a certain aim.[16] They identify, among others, referential nomination and predication strategies, that is how subjects are defined, described, evaluated or characterized, viewing these strategies as linguistic tools in the process of including/excluding groups. This kind of language analysis reveals patterns of racism, marginalization and exclusion, often normalized and taken for granted by the authors.

The material (presented in the concordances) is rich and shows a wide range of such strategies. I have read the concordances following key principles from corpus linguistics[17] and have identified the most prevalent predication strategies, as described in this chapter. For clarity, the examples are connected to the main genres outlined earlier. As will be shown, the most frequent patterns include (1) generalization or conflation of Indigenous groups, (2) dehumanization and demonization

and (3) harmonizing and romanticizing strategies. The following analysis is organized into three main sections, corresponding to the genres of history writing, immigration accounts and literary works:

- Conflation strategy and the stories of early colonization
- Pioneer narratives and settling in the wilderness
- Literary discourses on the noble savage

Conflation strategy and the stories of early colonization

As the analysis of concordances shows, one typical trend of the representation of Native Americans is grouping them with other Indigenous peoples – such as "Eskimos" (Inuit). For example, the names of various groups are often used interchangeably, without concern for ethnographic accuracy.

1. "there were wild people, a mixed race of Indians and Eskimos" (O. L. Kirkeberg, *Læsebog for børn*, 1910).[18]
2. "in the more northern Vinland there was a race that, according to the description, was probably Eskimos" (D. M. Schøyen, Amerikas *Forenede Staters Historie*, 1874).
3. "the Eskimos were displaced by the contentious and cunning Indians, who often even embarrassed the English" (P. A. Munch, *Underholdende Tildragelser af Norges Historie korteligen fortalte*, 1889).

Religious morality in Olav (Ole) Larsen Kirkeberg's Læsebog for børn

Accounts like this were to be found in various kinds of literature. One such example is *Læsebog for børn*, a textbook for children's religious education published in Minneapolis in 1910. Olav (Ole) Larsen Kirkeberg (born 1849 in Sør-Aurdal, died 1925 in the United States) was a Norwegian-American pastor and folk high school educator.[19] The author describes a European shipwreck in an icy, remote, unidentified place where the survivors encounter a group of "mixed Inuit and Indigenous people" (as quoted in the concordance 1), who initially frighten them. However, the latter, instead of harming the sailors, sings a song in which the name Jesus can be recognized. Realizing that their captors are Christians, the sailors rejoice, believing that they have been saved by their shared faith. The story serves as a religious cautionary tale for children, emphasizing that even sceptics recognize the power of God in moments of true peril. It conveys a racialized view of Indigenous peoples, linking their perceived savagery to their mixed racial heritage. Referring to a "mixed race" of Indians and Eskimos added drama and symbolic complexity to the story, reflecting a broader colonial tendency to conflate distinct Indigenous groups, often based on superficial observations or ideological assumptions. To sum up, the content of this text, including its depictions of Native Americans, reflects colonial themes and an effort to align Norwegian identity (as a project of educating immigrant children) with wider American colonial ideologies, such as the idea of

progress through European settlement, the notion of civilization versus savagery and the duty of colonizers to "civilize" Indigenous peoples.

D.M. Schøyen's Amerikas Forenede Staters Historie*: Norse discovery and racial hierarchies*

The same tendency to mix various Indigenous groups – and to construct a Norwegian identity that aligned both with American racialized notions of citizenship and broader European colonial imaginaries – can also be found in narratives recounting the Vikings' early travels to America, as exemplified in concordance 3, from D. M. Schøyen's *Amerikas Forenede Staters Historie*. Schøyen, a Norwegian lawyer and journalist, emigrated to the United States in 1867 and settled in Chicago, where he became a leading contributor to the influential Norwegian-American newspaper *Skandinaven*. Schøyen's book can be classified as a work of popular history, written by an immigrant author for a Scandinavian immigrant readership. The author follows the sagas' references to the *Skrælings*, the Indigenous people encountered by the Vikings in Vinland, translating the term *Skrælings* as "Eskimos". He points out that the ancient Norsemen "encountered, in the southern regions they visited, wild and warlike peoples" – presumably referring to Native Americans – while "in the more northern Vinland", as Schøyen writes (concordance 2), the Vikings "found a race that, according to descriptions, was likely Eskimos". Schøyen adds, "Such peoples are now found only far to the north".[20]

By linking Vinland's *Skrælings* to Inuit, Schøyen (like other authors such as P.A. Munch, who will be mentioned later) anchored Norse presence in a recognizable cultural geography. Inuit populations had for a long time been familiar to Scandinavians through missionary activities in the Arctic. As the primary ideological goal was to claim that Vikings had discovered America (see also Chapter 9 in this volume), that reference to the Inuit made the claim appear more plausible. Thus, the primary role of Indigenous peoples in this discourse is to serve as reference points in larger narratives celebrating the greatness of the Norse as the first discoverers of America. The thesis that the Norse were the first Europeans on the American continent aligned with the broader project of constructing a morally upright, historically rooted vision of Norwegianness – one in which Norwegian and other Scandinavian immigrants were not seen as newcomers but as heirs to a long-standing presence on the continent. For Schøyen, this approach to American history served to elevate these immigrants within the racial hierarchy of the time and to bolster their collective self-image.

Nationalism and colonial imagination in P.A. Munch's Underholdende Tildragelser af Norges Historie

Peter Andreas Munch, a Norwegian historian known for his work on medieval history and for his translations of Norse sagas, published the book *Underholdende Tildragelser af Norges Historie* in Christiania in 1847. Later, in 1889, it was published in Chicago. It is written in a popular genre. Like Schøyen, Munch writes about "Vinland", with the aim of strengthening the cultural mythology of nineteenth-century

Norway. Moreover, Munch also believed that Inuit groups were displaced and pushed further northward by supposedly "superior" and "warlike" incoming Native Americans, as illustrated in the concordance 3. This is another manifestation of the typical conflation strategy of nineteenth-century ethnographic thinking, when some groups were believed to be more primitive than others. The publication of the book in Chicago also speaks to the book's relevance for Norwegian-American readers, who were equally concerned with preserving and projecting a positive image of Norwegian national identity. Munch was recognized for this role by Rasmus B. Anderson, who, at the beginning of his book *Amerika ikke opdaget af Columbus* (1878), credited Munch with helping to "educate the mass of the Norwegian people" about "the fact that their forefathers discovered and visited the American continent long before Columbus".[21] Also, *Amerika ikke opdaget af Columbus* (1878) (see also Chapter 8) was advertised at the end of Schøyen's book. This kind of Norwegian patriotic history-writing tradition, in which both Norwegian-American and Norwegian authors participated, may be viewed as a transatlantic intellectual project of constructing a *Greater Norway* identity.[22] The term, used by immigration scholar Daron W. Olson, refers to the transnational sense of belonging shared by Norwegians in Norway and in the diaspora, which intersected with Norway's nation-building efforts – particularly during the period from 1860 to 1925.

The presented sense of Norwegianness was tightly knit to the ideas of race and whiteness and colonial mentalities spread in the United States (and in Norway) in the nineteenth century. Thus, Munch engages in historical speculation, imagining that had Norse voyages to Vinland continued, Norwegians might now occupy the same dominant position in American society as the English. He writes:

> If the voyages to Vinland and the connection with Greenland had only been maintained beyond 1500, then perhaps the Nordic colony in those regions could have become permanent, and Nordic settlers, with the Nordic language and nationality, might have played the same role in America as the English and their descendants do today.[23]

This statement reveals the ideological stakes of this tradition of history writing, which positioned Norwegians near the upper echelons of the American racial order. However, Munch did not present Norwegians as violent colonizers like the British. Instead, he implied that they were the rightful, peaceful civilizers who failed to claim the continent only because, as he argued, the settlers in Vinland "did not yet have gunpowder weapons, and their higher level of civilization was not in itself sufficient to protect them against the natives".[24] This suggests a sort of missed destiny, reinforcing a moral claim to belonging – that Norwegians deserved a place in American history and even greatness, had they arrived at the right historical moment.

Pioneer narratives and settling in the wilderness

A close reading of concordances shows that dehumanization emerges as another most common representation strategy, appearing across a wide range of excerpts

by different authors, and is typical for the accounts of settling down. In the pioneer narratives, Native Americans are described as a part of nature, "wild" and categorized as primitive, creating an impression that immigrants were settling the "empty" spaces of the wilderness:

4. "The Indians are not regarded as owners of any land solely by virtue of their residence there". (D. M. Schøyen, *Lovbog for Hvermand*, 1878).
5. "The whole region was a wilderness back then. There were only Indians and wild animals to be seen". (M. Ulvestad, *Nordmændene i Amerika*, 1907).

The figure of the uncivilized Other was essential in constructing the self-image of Norwegians as representatives of an advanced group, who made significant contributions to the development of the land. This representation aligned with the settler-colonial trope of *terra nullius*, the notion that land not actively cultivated or "civilized" by its inhabitants could be considered legally unclaimed and open to settlement.

David Monrad Schøyen's* Lovbog for Hvermand: *Colonial complicity

This mindset is particularly evident in the legal writings of the Norwegian-American author David Monrad Schøyen, who aimed to educate fellow immigrants about US law and civic life, as this quote shows (corresponding to concordance 4):

> By public land is meant the large tracts of land over which the United States claims ultimate ownership, and which have not yet become the object of private property rights. Native Americans are not considered owners of any land solely by virtue of their residence there; their property rights and the extent of those rights depend on the agreements made with the U.S. government (i.e., Congress and the President). Prior to 1861, these were concluded as treaties and, once ratified by the Senate, were absolutely binding on both parties. Since then, the rule has been that Native affairs are subject to the general legislative authority of Congress, meaning that the government may alter agreements at its discretion, provided this does not violate the inviolability of contract law. These matters concern us here only in regard to the question of how land transitions from being under Indian title to becoming general public land.[25]

Schøyen's framing and lack of critique about Native American dispossession suggest complicity or at least alignment with US settler logic, as the author internalizes racialized legal norms, where immigrants could see themselves as law-abiding and morally upright participants in the American expansion project. In this regard, particularly relevant are Betty Bergland's conclusions, which reveal how Norwegian immigrants gradually consented to an unjust racial system by practicing what she calls "epistemological ignorance" and consenting to an unjust racial contract.[26]

Martin Ulvestad's Nordmændene i Amerika*: Everyday encounters at the frontier*

The sense of Norwegian moral and material superiority as landowners – developed in legal discourses such as Schøyen's – is echoed in everyday frontier anecdotes. Here is an example from *Nordmændene i Amerika* by Martin Ulvestad, published by the History Book Company's Publishing House in Minneapolis in 1907, which illustrates how he – and, by extension, many Norwegian settlers – viewed Native Americans through the lens of land entitlement and settler legitimacy. Ulvestad, a printer, amateur historian and author who emigrated from Norway in 1888, chronicled the early settlements in states such as Minnesota, Iowa and the Dakotas, as well as in California, Oregon and Washington. The writer admires pioneers' bravery and hard work, particularly in clearing land "where only Indians lived before" (as expressed in the concordance 5). He describes enduring long journeys to mill their wheat – efforts that symbolize the expansion of settlement. Ulvestad positions Native Americans as peripheral figures, passive and impoverished, as for instance in the passage where he recounts a story from Ole I. Oas, one of the first settlers of New Hope, Portage County. In the passage, a newly arrived woman (in 1865) experiences an unsettling encounter when a Native American man appears at her cabin, asking for food.

> she took off running toward us, occasionally turning back to swing the hoe at the Indian, who followed behind. By the time she reached us, she was drenched in sweat – but the Indian only laughed. He was simply hungry and wanted something to eat; that was all. Later, our wives often fed Indians, and we always maintained a good relationship with them.[27]

The resolution of the episode suggests a shift from initial fear to coexistence, albeit within a dynamic where Indigenous people rely on settler charity rather than being sovereign peoples with their own agency. The recurring portrayal of Native Americans as *hungry* in such narratives is not incidental. It reflects the material consequences of US dispossession policies, and especially the systematic destruction of Indigenous subsistence practices, such as hunting and agriculture. But in Ulvestad's telling, hunger is not presented as the result of structural violence; instead, it serves to convey the settlers' sense of moral authority.

Demonization and accounts of the Sioux War of 1862

Demonization can be identified as another typical strategy, which involves depictions of Native Americans as "warlike" and dangerous. The authors often invent frightening rituals or emphasize the fear Native Americans instilled among settlers, as illustrated in these concordances:

6. "We never felt safe from wild animals and Indians. Every little branch that was moved by the wind" (M. Ulvestad, *Nordmændene i Amerika*, 1907).

7. "where they came, the farmers joined the caravan, for everyone was afraid of the wild Indians" (Holand, Hjalmar, *De norske Settlementers Historie*, 1908).
8. "America's wild Indians supposedly used to capture the white men, it was claimed, and slaughter them during feasts" (Holand, Hjalmar, *De norske Settlementers Historie*, 1908).

The strategy was particularly prominent in various accounts of conflicts such as the Sioux War of 1862, which directly affected many Norwegians. Ignited by years of broken treaties, forced displacement and unfulfilled promises from the US government, the war had devastating consequences for Indigenous communities. There are plenty of authors, including the above-cited Martin Ulvestad (concordance 6) and Hjalmar Rued Holand (concordances 7 and 8), who write about this conflict.

Hjalmar Rued Holand: Heroism of Guri Rosseland

Thus, Hjalmar Rued Holand's book *De norske Settlementers Historie* is a dramatic and emotionally charged narrative about (the later) famous Guri Rosseland (1813–1881), who survives an attack by Native Americans and demonstrates extraordinary courage and determination during the Dakota War of 1862. Her story is represented as one of resilience, maternal care and heroism in the face of extreme hardship. After a Native American attack on her settlement, which left many dead and homes burnt, Guri, along with her children, bravely navigated the dangerous landscape to rescue survivors, even though she had lost members of her family. Despite the constant threat of attack, she cared for the wounded, nursing and transporting them across the prairie to safety in Forest City. This is how the author describes Guri's heroism:

> Even though the area was full of murderous Indians, Guri was not discouraged. Without complaining, she resolutely went to work and took her time to bathe and dress the wounded men with motherly care, fetched water, cooked food, and then carried them out, laying them in the wagon bed, which she had done her best to make as comfortable as possible with fresh moss and bedding.[28]

This portrayal, centred on the survival of the settlers, often overlooks the complexity of settler-Indigenous relations and the profound injustices that shaped these conflicts. In this context, Ørm Øverland poses a critical question: Is it possible to retell the story of these encounters in a way that grants dignity and humanity to both sides – challenging the ideological structures embedded in the heroic narrative of savagery and conquest?[29]

The intersection of nationalist and colonial discourses

Holand's book opens with a verse dedicated to Norway, emphasizing that immigrants carried with them not only their heritage but also a sense of duty to honour

their homeland through their achievements in America. The imagery of Norway as the "glorious ancient land" and the settlers as its devoted sons strengthens the idea that their presence in America was not simply a matter of individual migration but part of a broader historical destiny:

> Hail to you, Mother, Queen of the North, in your proud splendor!
> Here, in the western wilderness, we will weave a wreath for you.
> Just as the Gulf Stream warmly embraces you with its mighty arms,
> So our hearts cling lovingly to your warmth.
> Now Norway, the glorious ancient land of tales, which our ancestors helped build, this verse
> About her sons' triumph and victory over the wilderness of the West is dedicated in devotion.[30]

In the verse, one can trace an intersection of nationalist and colonial discourses in the construction of immigrant ethnic identity: The author expresses his devotion to Norway while framing the settlers' triumph over the American wilderness as a patriotic offering to the homeland. The book's preface further amplifies these themes, invoking a quasi-biblical narrative of migration that mirrors the logic of Manifest Destiny. The author frames Norwegian emigration within a grand, almost sacred historical tradition of righteous settlement:

> The first dark tales, with which the history of most countries begins, tell of great migrations. They report that, long ago in the distant past, great crowds of people pressed into unknown and wild territories, cleared forests, tilled the fields, and founded new kingdoms. The Bible tells much about such migrations. It recounts how Abraham, the father of the faithful, led a large following from his ancient surroundings in Ur to establish a new home in distant Canaan, far to the west; his quarrels with Lot, their respective families; Israel's long, exhausting wanderings through vast deserts, and their many battles with the Canaanites, whom we may rightly call the Indians of that time and land, forced to give way to new settlers.[31]

This passage offers an explicit religious and historical justification for settler expansion. The author likens Norwegians to the biblical Israelites, depicting their journey as not only a migration but also a divinely guided conquest. The analogy between the Canaanites and Native Americans positions Indigenous peoples as the *inevitable obstacle* to a higher civilizational order.

Literary discourses on the noble savage

In literary texts, Native Americans are often portrayed as living in close contact with immigrants, particularly in frontier settings (concordance 9). Authors frequently draw on the Noble Savage trope to emphasize Indigenous purity, simplicity and closeness to nature. This romanticized portrayal is sometimes accompanied

by expressions of empathy and admiration (concordance 10), which in some cases open the way for deeper insights into the injustices suffered by Indigenous peoples and for criticism of American government policies towards them (concordance 11). The following concordances illustrate how such representations function within narratives of coexistence, empathy and evolving moral awareness.

9. " 'She is Norwegian, but has lived among Indians for the most part', replied the police officer". (K. Janson, *Vildrose*, 1887).
10. " 'I was thinking about the poor Indians', she said, 'they really have endured a hard fate'" (D. K. Janson, *En Saloonkeepers Datter*, 1894).
11. "In total, 425 captured Indians were brought before the court. Of these, 321 were found guilty, and when the court concluded" (E. Storm, *Alene i Urskogen*, 1899).

These examples reflect what can be described as harmonizing and romanticizing strategies of representation. Native Americans are not portrayed as hostile antagonists but rather as emotionally resonant figures – as suffering victims, benevolent neighbors or morally dignified outsiders. By emphasizing peaceful coexistence, shared human emotions and cultural proximity, these texts construct a vision of frontier life in which Norwegian immigrants and Native Americans are imagined as capable of mutual understanding. At the same time, the use of romantic tropes often obscures the power asymmetries and settler-colonial structures underlying these encounters.

Kristofer Janson's Vildrose: Norwegian identity between privilege and marginality

Kristofer Janson's novel *Vildrose* offers a rare literary engagement with Native Americans from a Norwegian-American perspective. Published in Minneapolis, Chicago and Copenhagen as part of *Nordmænd i Amerika*, the novel reached both immigrant and Scandinavian audiences. Janson, a Unitarian minister and advocate of democracy and abolition, brings a liberal ethos to the text, though his portrayal remains shaped by the Noble Savage trope. Indigenous characters are romanticized as sincere, childlike and close to nature, reflecting the conventions of nineteenth-century frontier fiction.

At the centre of the story is Gunnhild, a Norwegian girl raised within an Indigenous community and given the name Vildrose (Wild Rose). Through her, Janson explores the tensions of cultural belonging and identity across racial and national boundaries. While the narrative at times exoticizes Native life, it also emphasizes emotional depth, moral clarity and cross-cultural connection. Vildrose shares the traits of the Indigenous characters' purity, humility and connection to the land, suggesting a symbolic affinity between Norwegians and Native Americans.

Janson's portrayal of coexistence gestures towards harmonizing strategy: Norwegian settlers are depicted not merely as white and privileged, but also as poor, hard-working and spiritually in tune with nature. This framing allows these

immigrants to appear morally distinct from Anglo-American colonizers – closer in spirit to Native peoples, yet still occupying the civilizing role. At times, the narrative slips into racialized tropes: Flinkhjort, Vildrose's Indigenous friend, becomes a tragic antagonist who leads an attack on the Norwegian settlement. Yet even here, violence is portrayed as a response to structural injustice.

Janson frames the Dakota War of 1862 as a shared tragedy, caused by broken treaties and US betrayal, in which both Native and immigrant communities suffer. Vildrose's final sacrifice – giving her life to protect the settlers – cements her role as a tragic mediator between the two worlds. While the novel sentimentalizes Indigenous suffering, it also critiques American policy and asserts a more complex vision of Norwegian-American identity – rooted in both settler aspirations and immigrant marginality. In this way, *Vildrose* stands out as an ambivalent but ethically engaged contribution to the literature of Norwegian America.

Drude Krog Janson: Native Americans as symbols of authenticity

Similarly, Drude Krog Janson – Kristofer Janson's wife and a notable author in her own right – conveys her support for Native Americans in a brief yet significant episode of her renowned novel *En Saloonkeepers Datter*, published in Minneapolis and Chicago. The writer uses the figure of the Native American as a symbol of spiritual purity and resistance against the constraints of bourgeois American life. Through the character of Astrid, a Norwegian immigrant and daughter of a saloonkeeper, Janson critiques the materialism and moral rigidity of the American middle class. Astrid's admiration for Indigenous people is tied to her search for authenticity, freedom and a deeper ethical sensibility. In this way, the Indigenous Other becomes a mirror for Astrid's own rebellion – a vehicle through which the author explores alternative values rooted in nature, sincerity and individual freedom, distinct from both American conventions and the traditions of her native background.

Thus, the Indigenous Other not only becomes a symbol of Scandinavians' early presence in America and participation in the colonization of the continent but also serves as a means for the author to reflect on what we might call the intersectional nature of this immigrant group's identity: Racially privileged over some groups yet still compelled to struggle for economic and cultural survival. Janson, through her protagonist, critiques prevailing racial attitudes and the negative stereotyping of Native Americans as "thieves and criminals", expressing sympathy for their suffering under colonial rule. The narrator reflects:

> Where is he (the Indian) now? Gone are they all – the white man has driven them away from their paradise. The white man's god is a mighty god, a terrible god. The Indian flees trembling before his face, further and further away.[32]

This discourse underscores Drude Krog Janson's empathy for Indigenous peoples and her challenge to dominant constructions of "whiteness". Importantly, both she and Kristofer Janson construct identity not by elevating Norwegians above other groups but by appealing to alternative elements of cultural belonging – rooted in

ethical reflection, spiritual depth and historical awareness. They saw the cultivation of cultural identity and consciousness of one's roots as a pathway to moral clarity and even political awareness of universal humanity and rights. Rather than promoting superiority, their work advocates for the preservation of difference and uniqueness as a foundation for solidarity and critique.

Eilert Storm: Criticism of settler-colonial injustices in Alene i Urskogen

A motif of genuine friendship with Native Americans appears in Eilert Storm's *Alene i Urskogen* (1899). Written as a personal diary recounting Storm's journey to his claim near Mineby Ely in northern Minnesota in 1892, the novel is divided into two parts: an initial prose introduction detailing various Native American tribes, followed by a narrative of Storm's experiences as a homesteader. While Storm's ethnographic classifications reflect common stereotypes about Indigenous peoples, he also critiques the encroachment of civilization, portraying it as destructive to Native cultures. However, most valuable are the author's reflections on the racial limitations of American ideals of freedom and justice.

Storm's critique extends to the commonplace figure of the settler, exposing their complicity in the American government's unjust treatment of Native Americans. A key example is the character Arthur Smith, a Norwegian immigrant who strongly believes in universal human rights that are possible to enjoy in the United States – yet only applies these values to white settlers. Seeking to escape social judgement in Norway, Smith becomes a fervent believer in the American Dream, but his commitment to justice excludes Native Americans. This contradiction is made clear when he justifies the extrajudicial killing of a Native man, dehumanizing him as a "sly beast from the reservation". Smith advocates for Lynch law, a form of extrajudicial punishment common on the American frontier that was often used to enforce racial hierarchies, with Native Americans subjected to executions without legal trial (see also Chapter 3 in this volume). Eilert Storm challenges the moral superiority of whiteness by advocating for the universal application of human rights, condemning settler-colonial practices and highlighting the legal limitations of American democracy. Storm's work can also be read as a critique of immigrants who assimilate into American whiteness, abandoning ethical values.

However, Storm takes this critique further by deeply engaging with Native traditions and seeks to document and preserve Native cultural heritage. As the narrative progresses, the narrator finds himself alone in the forest, where he meets and forms a close friendship with a Chippewa Chief, Manitouwoc. The latter recounts Native American stories and legends that reflect their deep connection to nature. Storm's admiration for Manitouwoc's wisdom and his people's cultural heritage reflects a romanticized fascination with Indigenous cultures.

Conclusion

The Native American Other was not merely a background figure in these narratives – it was an integral element in the symbolic construction of Norwegian

immigrant identity. Representations of Indigenous peoples served multiple functions: They evoked the mythic presence of Norse ancestors in America, affirmed the role of Scandinavians as early pioneers on the frontier, and reinforced a sense of cultural authenticity rooted in simplicity, closeness to nature and moral integrity. By juxtaposing themselves with Native Americans – either through contrast or through selective identification – Norwegian immigrants could position themselves as both ancient and modern, both civilizers and humble workers, and both insiders and outsiders. In this way, the figure of the Native Other became essential to how the writers narrated their place in American history and society.

Through the invocation of the Indigenous Other, immigrant authors were able to articulate an ethnic identity that was both exceptional and adaptable – superior to "savage" Native Americans yet also aligned with them in terms of shared marginality and closeness to the land. This dual positioning created a liminal, "in-between" identity, as theorized by Roediger and Lovoll: one that was racially privileged but economically vulnerable; ethnically distinct but desirous of inclusion within the American polity.

At the same time, immigrant literature reveals an ambivalent and sometimes critical stance towards American society. While the authors often embraced American values of hard work and progress, they also used depictions of Indigenous encounters to stage a critique of materialism, racial injustice and moral decay. America was not only the land of opportunity – but it was also a space of democratic learning. In some texts, the frontier becomes a moral testing ground where ideas of justice, equality and freedom are re-examined in light of both Native American suffering and immigrant hardship. Underlying many of these narratives is a self-understanding of Norwegians as ideal immigrants: liberal, just and deeply committed to the principles of democracy – qualities that, in their view, distinguished them from other immigrant groups and aligned them with the best aspects of American political culture.

In this sense, the discourse of Norwegian immigrant identity did more than simply celebrate whiteness or reproduce colonial narratives. It also carved out a space for democratic reflection, imagining an America where marginalized voices – immigrants, Indigenous peoples and the rural poor – could challenge dominant norms and reshape the nation's ideals from below. The complex portrayal of Native Americans thus serves not only as a foil for immigrant self-fashioning but also as a vehicle for a broader interrogation of what it means to belong, to be civilized and to participate in democracy. At the same time, statistical marginality of Native American topics (only 190 out of 1,478 books mention "Indians") suggests that Norwegian-American authors could implicitly align themselves with the dominant racial order that sought to erase Indigenous presence. This omission enabled the seamless construction of Norwegian-American identity as compatible with US nationhood, while sidestepping the moral and political complications of Indigenous dispossession.

Notes

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1 Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism."
2 Roediger, "Working Toward."
3 Bergland, "Norwegian Migration."
4 Øverland, *The Western Home*, 9.
5 Olson, *Vikings*; Lovoll, *Norwegian Newspapers*; Joranger, "Ideal."
6 Sverdljuk, *Nordic Whiteness*.
7 Fur, "Indians."
8 Hansen, *Encounter*.
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7 Transatlantic Burials

The "resurrection" of Louis Pio, Poul Geleff and Marcus Thrane

Tina Langholm Larsen and Anders Bo Rasmussen

Introduction

On a sunny Sunday in July of 1921, thousands of Danish labour movement members and sympathizers gathered at Copenhagen's Vestre Kirkegaard to witness a carefully orchestrated unveiling ceremony. After years of ambivalence, the Social Democratic Party, led by Prime Minister Thorvald Stauning, had decided to embrace and commemorate its deceased founder, Louis Pio, by placing his ashes – recently disinterred from a Chicago graveyard – in a granite monument.

Close to half a century earlier, Pio and his close collaborator Poul Geleff unexpectedly fled Denmark due to government persecution. Among labour organizers, their disappearance created such anger that they were viewed as traitors to the cause they had promised to lay down their lives for. For decades, a broad-based "traitor" narrative dominated the labour movement, but leading up to the Social Democratic Party's 50th anniversary in 1921, Louis Pio's daughter, Sylvia, constructed a redemption story that was eventually adopted by the party power brokers.

Thus, on 17 July 1921, Thorvald Stauning unveiled a monument to the party's founder along with a eulogy that attempted to reshape Pio's legacy in broader Danish society.[1] Stauning emphasized the "awe and gratitude" that he and the Danish working class felt towards the party's founder.[2] To Stauning, Pio and, by extension, Geleff were righteous fighters for a more just society; victims of government repression whose painful fight for "society's lower classes" and a broader definition of democracy had now earned them belated acknowledgement and remembrance.[3] As Stauning unveiled the monument in front of an estimated crowd of 5,000 people, the Social Democratic leader established a memorial site that was the product of movement in time and between places.[4] Stauning's 1921 portrayal of Pio and Geleff's suffering and contemporary resurrection served as a reminder of the way that the rich and powerful had resisted seemingly legitimate demands "from below", but it was also clear that the labour leader's newly constructed recollection was carefully crafted for the occasion and – partially through the efforts of Sylvia Pio – had already been years in the making.

This chapter explores how the 50th anniversary of the Social Democratic Party helped reshape the memory of the party's founders. Thus, we examine two intertwined spheres of interest: The first is represented by Pio's daughter, Sylvia, who

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sought to "resurrect" her father as the heroic man of the people through an act of monumentalization. The second revolves around the Social Democratic Party and its efforts to position itself as a democratic political party for and by the Danish people by retelling the party's history. As such, both positions dealt with intentional attempts to (re)model the interrelationship between the past and memory to construct a new narrative – a narrative that has dominated Danish labour history until this day.

As scholars of memory studies remind us, memory is an ever-evolving social construction that reflects contemporary interests. Shaping collective memory, as well as writing history, is an act imbued with power, mirroring certain preferences, goals and beliefs; an act with the power to decide what is remembered and what is forgotten.[5] Community formation is closely tied to memory through the inherently selective nature of collective memory whereby a group of people are bound together in their common endeavours based on a shared past that serves the group's interests. Through this process, collective memory can be deliberately distorted and reshaped through different strategies, for example selective omission, fabrication or exaggeration.[6]

Place and (collective) memory are deeply entangled, scholars suggest. While historian Pierre Nora considers locative fixity, exactly because of the stability and continuity of place, the natural environment of memory, cultural memory scholar Julia Creet argues that memory is fundamentally migratory. Still, both Nora and Creet emphasize memory's ability to construct a sense of historical continuity and agree that identity formation is an integral aspect of memory and particularly the formation of minority identities among social actors seeking to memorialize a history threatened to be suppressed or eradicated by a privileged majority. Yet Nora's conception of *lieux de mémoire* (sites of memory), referring to the memorial consciousness embodied in concrete places where "illusions of eternity" are created, differs substantially from Creet's argument that it is movement and displacement rather than stability that lead to the production of memory attached to locations.[7] "Between times, places, generations, and media, from individuals to communities and vice versa, movement is what produces memory – and our anxieties about pinning it to place", Creet argues.[8] Thus, according to Creet, it is not the attachment of memory to place that provides continuity, but memory itself.

Pio and Geleff as traitors

When Louis Pio and Poul Geleff disappeared from Denmark on 23 March 1877, they left few physical traces of their labour activism behind. Only the people closest to Pio and Geleff knew about their emigration plans, and when they left Copenhagen together with their respective partners and two infant children, they also left stunned labour movement allies in their wake. According to a British correspondent in Denmark, it was "painful to watch the groups of Socialists" who subsequently gathered in front of the labour newspaper's office "talking and gesticulating with an expression of mixed surprise, pain, and hatred in their faces".[9]

In the Danish press, the labour leaders were described as "thieves" who absconded in the middle of the night and abandoned their loyal followers along with

the cause they had promised to lay down their lives for.[10] In addition, a former ally in the labour movement, who felt betrayed by Pio, sent letters of warning to the United States directed at Scandinavian-language newspapers in Chicago and even the German-born Secretary of the Interior, Carl Schurz.[11]

The narrative of treacherous and fraudulent behaviour was strengthened by Geleff himself. Soon after Pio and Geleff arrived in New York, they got into a heated fight over money (they had both been bribed by the Danish authorities to leave, but Pio had covertly received a larger sum). Angered, Geleff vowed never to associate with Pio again and published a self-loathing pamphlet called *Den Rene, Skære Sandhed om Louis Pio og Mig Selv* [*The Plain and Simple Truth About Louis Pio and Myself*] in September 1877, where he admitted to taking a bribe and described his former ally as a deceptive "scoundrel".[12] The accusations stuck. For decades, Pio and Geleff were remembered as traitors to the labour movement's cause in Denmark.[13]

Scandinavian labour cooperation in the United States and transatlantic exchange

Immediately after arriving in the United States, Louis Pio immersed himself in labour-related issues. The failure of an ill-conceived socialist settlement on the Kansas prairie in the spring of 1877 only convinced Pio that the labour movement should fight for tangible day-to-day progress instead of detached revolutionary theories or utopian ideas.[14] Thus, Pio tried to appeal to Scandinavian workers in Chicago over the summer of 1877, hoping to create a third-party alternative to the Democrats and Republicans, and in 1878 also launched a Scandinavian-language labour publication called *Den Nye Tid* [*The New Era*], which enabled him to (re) connect with Norwegian-born labour leader Marcus Thrane.[15] For years, Pio and Thrane had followed each other from a distance, with Pio reading Thrane's publication *Dagslyset* [*The Daylight*] and Thrane in turn keeping an eye on labour developments in Scandinavia.[16]

In Chicago, Thrane likewise contributed to *Den Nye Tid*, but his editorial collaboration with Pio proved short-lived as the former Danish labour leader soon left the newspaper's everyday operation to Norwegian-born socialists such as Peder Pedersen and Olaf Ray.[17] *Den Nye Tid*'s successive editors continued to publish Thrane's texts along with those of Astaa Hansteen and other Scandinavian-American labour activists, while Pio pursued additional labour-related projects.[18] In the mid-1880s, Pio increasingly devoted himself to the Knights of Labor and became part of the organization's local Scandinavian leadership. Still, Pio in 1883 claimed to be pulling editorial strings at *Den Nye Tid*, but his approach to labour organizing, advocating non-violence and negotiation, was seemingly less militant than that supported by *Den Nye Tid*'s Norwegian-born editors, who maintained close ties to radicals associated with *Chicagoer Arbeiter-Zeitung*.[19]

The question of Marcus Thrane's radicalism, whether real or imagined, also became a theme in 1883, when he visited his home country of Norway for the first time since emigrating with his four daughters in 1863.[20] In Christiania (present-day

Oslo), Thrane's activities were closely followed by the authorities and the local newspapers. When the Norwegian labour movement in April refused to rent a lecture hall to Thrane, the rejection was, at least partially, described in the Norwegian press as tied to his perceived radicalism.[21] Dejected, Thrane – who found a different venue to give his lecture on America's bright and darker sides for a relatively small audience – made sure to note in his diary the names of all seven labour leaders who voted against his use of their facilities.[22] Additionally, Thrane's visit to the "Old World" likely strengthened his sense that "the common people", for whom he believed he had "sacrificed everything", continued to shun him.[23]

Still, despite their disappointments, Scandinavian-American labour leaders like Thrane maintained an ambiguous interest in their respective home countries. Poul Geleff also returned home in 1883 and seemingly used his time in Denmark to re-establish connections with emigration agents and – probably due to his controversial labour organizing past – published a handbook for prospective emigrants under a pseudonym.[24] In his book, Geleff lauded the social mobility, rule of law and "immense wealth" in the United States and thereby attempted to tap into a broader transnational curiosity about the American democratic experiment that was on full display in the 1880s.[25]

The labour leaders' interest in transatlantic developments was reciprocated by the general public, and the number of Scandinavian immigrants in the United States more than doubled between 1880 and 1890 (from 440,262 in 1880 to 930,091 in 1890).[26] In Chicago, Louis Pio welcomed Danish reporters into his home for lengthy conversations in 1883, and journalistic interest in Geleff's American life was on display as well.[27] According to one journalist, Pio revealed that he now worked to establish Scandinavian chapters of the Knights of Labor with the aim of organizing "a couple of thousand members".[28] For his part, Thrane moved from Chicago to Wisconsin in 1884 but continued his contributions to *Den Nye Tid* and also his interest in labour issues. As Thrane wrote to Olaf Ray in 1884, after having received *The Cooperative Commonwealth* written by the influential Danish-American socialist Laurence Gronlund, he was grateful for the book but wished that his Norwegian countryman would have accompanied it with both "appropriate and inappropriate reflections" about contemporary events, mutual acquaintances and *Den Nye Tid*.[29] Years later, Thrane continued to express sympathy with radical labour allies in Chicago, not least "his friend August Spies", who was hanged on 11 November 1887 for his part in the alleged conspiracy on Haymarket Square, and every year thereafter "Thrane flew the black flag of anarchism to commemorate the injustice he felt had been perpetrated".[30]

The death of Pio and Thrane

Despite Pio's active involvement in the American labour movement, not least the Knights of Labor, and Thrane's continued writings and demonstrations, both labour leaders' American efforts were eventually forgotten. When Louis Pio passed away in Chicago in 1894, he was buried by a small handful of friends and family at Forest Home Cemetery across from Waldheim Cemetery, which held the more

militant Haymarket "martyrs".[31] The obituaries were respectful and often quietly laudatory, but the public perception of Pio as one who had betrayed the Danish workers remained.[32] Thrane, who passed away in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, in 1890, was similarly buried privately in a local cemetery. This, however, was the product of his own will, because as a "last request", Thrane had left behind a note stating his wish to be buried in a plain, cheap coffin without any funeral service or religious ceremony, and only outspoken freethinkers were allowed to witness the interment.[33] On 1 June, a month after his burial, an estimated crowd of 500 people gathered in Aurora Turner Hall, a central labour location on Chicago's northwest side, and paid their final respects to the Norwegian-born labour leader.[34] According to the *Chicago Tribune*, Thrane's name was to Scandinavians "what Garibaldi's is to the Italians", but it was also clear to the journalists that "others" regarded Thrane as an "archtraitor to his King".[35] Thus, the theme of Old World treachery, tension with the labour movement "left behind" and a long-winded road to rehabilitation as a heroic figure would continue to echo in both Danish and Norwegian transnational labour history.

Attempts of rehabilitation

In 1901, Louis Pio's widow, Augusta, attempted to rehabilitate her late husband's reputation by convincing the renowned Danish literary critic Georg Brandes to write a sympathetic piece about his activities in Denmark, and former labour movement allies also attempted to nuance his legacy.[36] Still, the negative portrayal of Louis Pio lingered in the broader public.

More than a decade later, Augusta Pio visited Denmark to speak about the labour movement's early years but found herself interrupted by at least one audience member who challenged her positive portrayal of Pio.[37] Sylvia – Louis and Augusta Pio's daughter – witnessed the incident in 1913 and later explained how watching her mother's struggles with the public perception of Pio's "treason" incited her to bring honour to her late father – and by extension to her mortified mother.[38]

> Despite the fact that she [Augusta] remained angry and bitter over his departure in 1876 [sic], more so over the years as her mind grew dark and heavy, – she loved my father, from first to last, and only him. – She gave a speech to defend him, and her voice failed, you could see how she fought to hold back her tears. I felt such pity for her . . . . I sat there, crying, myself. I heard a woman sitting behind me saying: "Yes, but Pio ran away with the money" . . . . But that evening I decided that my father should be honored by the party, so <u>that</u> is also a deed of my mother.[39]

Sylvia had, in 1913, divorced the extravagant Count Eggert Knuth, who had originally convinced her to migrate to Denmark. While living with Knuth as part of the Danish social elite, Sylvia had to conceal her socialist sympathies. However, during the couple's tumultuous divorce, she utilized her reclaimed political freedom to engage with Social Democratic politicians who helped her reach an advantageous

divorce settlement, which included custody of her two children and substantial economic support.[40] The divorce, then, marked the beginning of Sylvia's interaction with the party's leadership, in which new actors with newfound political power had risen to the top since her father's departure.

It was not until 1918, however, when the party leadership appointed the renowned socialist editor Emil Wiinblad and Alsing Andersen to write the party's history as part of its 50th anniversary celebrations, that Sylvia finally found an opportunity to realize her ambition.[41] Sylvia was seemingly aware of history writing's powerful potential to shape collective memory, and in order to pursue her own family interests, she became a close friend of Wiinblad, who continuously consulted her about his editorial work.[42]

The first version of the party's history from 1904, called *Socialdemokratiets Aarhundrede* [*The Century of Social Democracy*], confirmed the traitor narrative Augusta and Sylvia had been confronted with in 1913.[43] The aim of the revised second version was to instrumentalize history as a means to demonstrate the magnitude, coherence and increasing political power of the Social Democratic Party to the Danish public or, in the words of the party leadership, to "outwardly manifest the Social Democratic Party as the real party of the country".[44] Reframing the labour movement's history thus became a common goal of Sylvia and the party despite their diverging motivations. This party-building ambition was part of a broader democratic nation-building in the 1920s, whereby the Social Democratic Party sought to ensure the working class' governmental representation.

Bringing back Geleff, the only survivor of the party's founders, was an important piece of this puzzle, and Wiinblad therefore went abroad in 1918 to locate him.[45] Yet no one had been in contact with him for decades, leading his former acquaintances to believe that he had passed away. Without any leads, Wiinblad's search stagnated, and he returned to Denmark empty-handed. Then suddenly in 1920, a disheartened Geleff contacted the Danish Consul Baerresen in Colorado, asking for help after months of hospitalization in Kansas.[46] In his letter, Geleff, now 78 years old and living an impoverished life as a commercial traveller, asked for economic support to remigrate to Denmark.[47] Baerresen reached out to Emil Opffer, the editor of the newspaper *Nordlyset*, who then contacted Social Democratic politicians to inform them about Geleff's existence and homesickness. Emphasizing that Geleff was the only survivor of the party's original founders, Opffer recommended that the party, as "a feather in its cap", sponsor the remigration of their old "Hero" instead of letting him die as an American "Outlaw".[48]

As a close associate of the party's leadership, Sylvia gained access to the letters from Opffer, and in early May 1920, she offered to aid the party in bringing back Geleff. Although Geleff's pamphlet from 1877 had been hurtful, she offered to host him until October if only the party would sponsor his remigration – after October, she would pay him 125 kroner monthly to ensure his decent living in Denmark. In return, Sylvia requested that the party recognize and approve of the reburial of her father's ashes.[49] The party responded to Sylvia by unanimously approving both bringing home Geleff and acknowledging the reburial of her father.[50] Sylvia then contacted Geleff, who gladly accepted her offer.[51]

After 43 years of exile, Geleff journeyed back to Denmark in July 1920, where he was welcomed upon arrival by both new and old party members. Sylvia opened her luxurious home to him, and the party invited him to partake in the democratic conversation that the Danish government had excluded him from half a century earlier.[52] Hosting Geleff was seemingly a small price for Sylvia to pay in return for the party's support for her father's resurrection. Sylvia and Augusta wanted the Danes to remember Pio as they did: as an idealist and selfless man, unjustly cast away by Danish society.[53]

When the public celebration of the Social Democratic Party's 50th anniversary began in July 1921, Sylvia's extensive lobbying proved successful. On 17 July, the day of Pio's reburial at Vestre Kirkegård, thousands of people listened to Stauning's framing of Pio as a righteous fighter who deserved to be acknowledged and remembered.[54] As if the intermediate years of dishonour had never existed, Stauning created a historical continuity that drew a direct line from Pio's founding of the party in 1871 to its national success in 1921.[55] Pio and Geleff's American exile was deliberately forgotten in Stauning's memory-making at Pio's new burial site.

A week later, on 24 July, which was the day of public celebration, the newly monumentalized remembrance of Pio was supported by a full front-page article in the party's official organ, *Social-Demokraten*. In conclusion, it was stated that

> [I]t is the duty of the Social Democratic Party to preserve in grateful memory the heroism, the selfless sacrifice for a great idea, with which our pioneers broke the first breach in the wall of indolence and called upon Denmark's proletarians to think, act, and respect themselves.[56]

But perhaps most importantly, the exact same version of the party's history was presented in the newly published *Det danske Socialdemokratis Historie fra 1871 til 1921 [The History of the Danish Social Democratic Party from 1871 to 1921*], in which Wiinblad had left out the unflattering parts of Pio's flight from Denmark and his subsequent life in the United States.[57]

This leaves the questions of *why* Wiinblad and the party leadership accepted Sylvia's persuasive efforts to rehabilitate her father and *why* they collaboratively succeeded in doing so. First, for both Sylvia and the Social Democratic Party, the question of identity was placed at the centre of their ambition to revise history and reconstruct the dominant collective memory. As actors fighting to position themselves up against powerful conceptions of who they were, they rejected the identities ascribed to them. While Sylvia wanted to defend her father and the family name, the Social Democratic Party aimed to claim a central position in Danish politics. In other words, they sought to establish new identities for themselves. They employed the literal and symbolic revision of history as a tool to achieve their respective goals, and collectively they succeeded in creating a sense of historical continuity from 1871 to 1921 that found monumental manifestations in the anniversary publication of the party's history and in the monument dedicated to Pio. With strong connections to the labour community, safeguarding the social interaction through interpretation and involvement that monuments demand to remain

active, the party had, with these physical manifestations, ensured the optimal circumstances for the new collective memory's survival.

Second, the successful rehabilitation of Pio depended on several factors that connected the new collective memory to movement and dislocation, as Julia Creet suggests. Movement in time was also a movement between generations, which played a decisive role for the close relationship and cooperative memorial efforts between Sylvia Pio and the party leadership. With her (in)famous surname and outspoken sympathy for the socialist ideology, Sylvia was an appealing figure to the party, inside and out, and she could hardly be blamed for her father's actions decades earlier. Her appeal flattered Stauning, who represented a new generation of socialist politicians without personal recollection of the founders, to such a degree that he and Sylvia developed an intimate relationship in this period.[58]

Movement between places was another factor crucial to the rehabilitation. Pio and Geleff's transatlantic dislocation from Danish society, which created a temporal and geographical distance from their misdeeds in the 1870s, allowed the public to lay aside the pain and strife of the past. As the party later sought to create historical continuity between 1871 and 1921, this dislocation, however, infringed on the continuity, and the founders' American exile was therefore deliberately omitted in the reconstructed narrative.

The ingenuity with which Sylvia launched her mission in Denmark is noteworthy, but it was not exceptional. Sylvia was raised in the United States and visited the South on several occasions in the late 1890s and early 1900s, where comparable narrative reconstructions took place.[59] In late 1893, Louis Pio was a key figure in the establishment of White City in Florida, where exclusion of "Chinese, Negroes and other colored people" was taken for granted.[60] During this time, when laws in support of racial segregation were passed across the former Confederate States, Pio and his family seem to have openly supported unequal treatment of nonwhites based on a sense of European civilizational superiority.[61] In this post-Civil War milieu, daughters of Confederate veterans, opposed to ideas of racial equality, were working to reshape Civil War memory at both the regional and national levels.[62] Seeking to vindicate their defeated and disgraced fathers, who in the aftermath of the war were perceived as traitors to the nation, organizations such as the United Daughters of the Confederacy gathered young women, having little if any personal war memories, to launch commemorative initiatives honouring their fathers. Among the Daughters' initiatives were the construction of monuments and the reburial of their fathers in national cemeteries established to commemorate fallen patriots.[63] It is not possible to document whether Sylvia found transatlantic inspiration from these women who were seeking to "resurrect" their fathers. However, their bare existence demonstrates that rehabilitation through monumentalization and reinterment were well-known tools used to control commemorative practices at the time when Sylvia decided to rehabilitate her father through such initiatives.

Helped by movement in time, between places, generations and genders, a new memorial consciousness about Pio and Geleff was produced in 1921. Despite this remodelling attesting to the selective and malleable nature of collective memory, the remodelled recollection of the party founders has proved solid since then. Geleff's

death in 1928 in Anacapri, Italy, where he moved to because of health issues, testifies to this.[64] As a last gesture, the Social Democratic Party raised a monument on the island, honouring him for his ground-breaking work, thus repeating, and thereby reinforcing, the collective memory of his heroism.[65] When Sylvia died a few years later, her grave, including a headstone with the inscription "Thank you from the women of the Social Democratic Party", was placed next to her father's grave in Vestre Kirkegård as a symbol of her loyalty to both her family and the party.

The 150th anniversary of the Social Democratic Party in 2021, however, suggests that the main branch of the Danish workers' movement now struggles to reconcile the different narratives of its founders. In an anniversary publication, the prominent Danish social democratic politician Dan Jørgensen asked whether Louis Pio should be remembered as a hero of the people or as a traitor and concluded that the former outweighed the latter.[66] Recent scholarly research into the Social Democratic Party's early years and its transnational connections to the United States has attempted to nuance this conclusion by emphasizing the limits to the labour leaders' belief in international solidarity based on deep-seated ideas about racial hierarchies but has also acknowledged the importance of the labour struggle that Pio, at the risk of his own life, continued to wage in North America.[67]

Thrane's reburial and resurrection

In 1949, the Norwegian government, led by Einar Gerhardsen, who, like Thorvald Stauning in Denmark, came to be known as a central figure in the labour movement of the twentieth century, a so-called landsfader, facilitated the reburial of Marcus Thrane in Norway.

This rehabilitation, however, was the product of a long process that started decades earlier. As early as 1883, Venstre's Andreas Hølaas had challenged the prevailing portrayal of Thrane by presenting him as a wrongfully judged martyr to the labour cause. This rehabilitative portrayal was confirmed in 1903 by O.A. Øverland, also from Venstre, and the labour politician Halvdan Koht, along with historian Jakob Friis, in 1917 expanded the positive narrative by shining a new light on Thrane's life and work.[68] Thrane's rehabilitation culminated on 27 April 1949, with the reburial of his disinterred remains in an honorary burial site at Vår Frelsers cemetery in Oslo as part of the Norwegian Labour Party's 100th anniversary.[69] Without the acceptance from Thrane's family, the Norwegian government decided to redeem the sins of Norwegian society, and at the reburial ceremony that conflicted with Thrane's last will, Halvdan Koht proclaimed, "We acquit Marcus Thrane"![70] Labour Party politician Lars Moen added that Thrane had never been forgotten but lived on in the memory of his fight for justice and progress, and with this reburial, Norwegian society manifested its future obligation to the legacy of Thrane.[71]

Conclusion

Since the Social Democratic Party's Prime Minister Thorvald Stauning ceremoniously unveiled Louis Pio's monument at Copenhagen's Vestre Kirkegård in

July 1921, the leaders of the labour movement have been portrayed as heroic men who fought for democratic inclusion of the oppressed classes of Danish society and therefore deserved fond remembrance and general acknowledgement. This chapter has investigated how the recollection of the party's founders, which diverged substantially from the perception of Louis Pio and Paul Geleff as dishonest traitors prevailing until then, was carefully crafted for the occasion.

The 1921 commemoration of the party's founders, connecting the past to the present, was the product of Sylvia Pio's personal interest and the party's public interests that, in combination, rewrote the party's foundational history, which led to a resurrection of Pio and, by extension, also Geleff. The labour leaders' lives and achievements abroad were deliberately omitted in this remodelled historical narrative that gave rise to a new collective memorial consciousness that has proved solid to such a degree that it has dominated the historiography on the Danish labour movement until this day.

The surprisingly similar reburial of Marcus Thrane in Oslo in 1949 suggests that the posthumous transatlantic crossing and monumentalization of formerly exiled labour leaders have played an important role in the Scandinavian labour parties' (successful) attempts to establish and consolidate themselves as the leading democratic parties of "the people".

Notes

1 Thorvald Stauning, "Socialdemokratisk Forbund," *København*, 13 Juli 1921. Louis Pio, 1941–1894. Box 4. Arbejderbevægelsens Bibliotek og Arkiv.
2 "Louis Pios Mindesteen paa Vestre Kirkegaard [Louis Pio's Monument at Vestre Kirkegaard]," *Nationaltidende*, 18 July 1921; "Louis Pios Mindesten afsløres paa Vestre Kirkegaard [Louis Pio's Memorial Revealed on Vestre Kirkegaard]," *Social-Demokraten*, 18 July 1921.
3 "Louis Pios Mindesten afsløres." See also Rasmussen, *Pio – flugten til Amerika*, 304–307.
4 Stauning, *Socialdemokratisk Forbund*, 13 Juli 1921. Also Creet, "Introduction."
5 Nora, "Between Memory and History," 8. See also Wertsch and Roediger III, "Collective memory," 320–321.
6 Isurin, *Reenacting the Enemy*, 9–14, 20–24.
7 Nora, "Between Memory and History," 7, 12.
8 Creet, "Introduction," 9.
9 "Disapperance of the Danish Socialist Leaders," *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 28 March 1877.
10 "De Socialistiske Førere [The Socialist Leaders]," *Dagbladet*, 26 March 1877. See also, "Centralbestyrelsen Har Vedtaget at Sende Bladet 'Hejmdal' I Chicago Følgende Skrivelse [the Board Has Resolved to Send the Newspaper 'Hejmdal' in Chicago the Following Letter]," *Social-Demokraten*, 7 December 1877.
11 "Pionistisk Kæltringeliv [Pionistic Scoundrel Life]," *Flyvebladet*, 1 April 1877.
12 Geleff, *Den Rene, Skære Sandhed om Louis Pio og Mig Selv*.
13 "Arbejderbevægelsen og Louis Pio [The Labor Movement and Louis Pio]," *Den Danske Pioneer*, 23 October 1901.
14 A. W. Hansen, "Louis Pios Forsøg Paa at Oprette En Socialistisk Stat I Kansas [Louis Pio's Attempt to Establish a Socialist State in Kansas]," *Dannevirke*, 14 February 1906; Pio, *Til de skandinaviske Arbejdere i Amerika*.
15 Pio, *Til de skandinaviske Arbejdere i Amerika*; Hansen, "Louis Pios Forsøg," *Dannevirke*, 14 February 1906.

16 "Fra Chicago [from Chicago]," *Socialisten*, 28 October 1871; Thrane, "Socialismens Fremgang [The Progress of Socialism]," *Dagslyset*, March 1877.
17 Contemporary newspaper reports point to both personal and ideological differences between Pio and the board behind *Den Nye Tid*. See "Fra Chikago [From Chicago]," *Horsens Folkeblad*, 8 June 1878; Ellroy, "Fra Amerika [From America]," *Fædrelandsvennen*, 21 August 1878.
18 "Misfosteret finder en stor Fornøielse [The Monstrosity Finds Great Pleasure]," *Den Nye Tid*, 14 August 1880; "Abonnenter [Subscribers]," *Den Nye Tid*, 9 June 1883; C. E. L, "Norsk-Danske Bladmænd Og Trykkerier I Chicago I 70–80-Aarene [Norwegian-Danish Newspapermen and Printing Shops in Chicago in the 70s and 80s]," *Ugebladet*, 22 June 1922. Also Lovoll, *Norwegian Newspapers in America*, 88–89. We are grateful to Hilde Sandvik and Ruth Hemstad for their help in locating the few remaining issues of *Den Nye Tid* in Kristianssand's state archive in Norway (See the archive's website in English: https://www.arkivverket.no/en). See for example Hansteen, Aasta, "Nutidens Tænkere [Contemporary Thinkers]," *Den Nye Tid*, 9 June 1883.
19 L, "Norsk-Danske Bladmænd." See also Walther Bauch, "Danskere I Amerika [Danes in America]," *Louis Pio*, 1941–1894. Box 4. Arbejderbevægelsens Bibliotek og Arkiv, "The Reds: Extraordinary Turn-Out at the Exposition Building," *Chicago Tribune*, 23 March 1879; "Stor Pic-Nic! [Grand Picnic!]," *Den Nye Tid*, 9 June 1883; Thrane, Marcus, Eau Claire, Wis. 14 Nov 1884. Bx. 1041. Hr. Olaf Olsen! Brevsamling nr. 231. Brev til og fra Marcus Møller Thrane (1817–90) og hans krets. Thrane, Marcus til [Ray], Olaf Olsen. Nasjonalbiblioteket, Oslo; Ray, Olaf Olsen, "Arbeiderbevægelsen I Amerika Og Dommen over Socialisterne [The Labor Movement in America and the Socialists' Sentencing]," *Tiden*, 13 November 1886.
20 Leiren, "Lost Utopia?," 470.
21 Friis, *Marcus Thrane*, 102. See also "Fra Hovedstaden [from the Capital]." *Fædrelandsvennen*, 7 May 1883.
22 Thrane, Marc. 29. [April] Forelæsning I Tekniken over Americas Lys-Og Skyggesider [Lecture in Tekniken on America's Bright and Shadowy Sides]. Ms.4° 1781 "From Chicago to Norway 1882–1883. Nasjonalbiblioteket. Also Bjørklund, *Marcus Thrane*, 326–327.
23 Thrane, 29. [April] Forelæsning i Tekniken; Thrane, Marcus. Autobiographical Reminiscenses by Marcus Thrane. Ms.4° 1708 Selvbiografi i oversettelse fra 1917 ved Thranes datter Vasilia Thrane Struck. Nasjonalbiblioteket. Also Schmidt, *80 Louis Pio Breve og en bibliografi*, 52.
24 "Til Amerika med Dominion Linien [To America with the Dominion Line]," *Aarhus Amtstidende*, 6 April 1883.
25 Brede, *Haandbog for Udvandrere til Amerika*, 26, 54.
26 Jeppesen, *Danske i USA 1850–2000*, 196–198.
27 Th. Graae, "Danske I Amerika. Louis Pio [Danes in America. Louis Pio]," *Nutiden, Billeder og Text*, 26 September 1886, 519–521; Th. Graae, "Danske I Amerika. Poul Geleff," *Nutiden, Billeder og Text*, 15 April 1888.
28 Bauch, *Danskere I Amerika*.
29 Thrane, *Eau Claire, Wis*, 14 November 1884.
30 Leiren, "Lost Utopia?," 477.
31 B., C. "Pios Død [Pio's Death]," *Randers Arbejderblad*, 24 July 1894.
32 "Louis Pio Død! [Louis Pio Deceased!]," *Social-Demokraten*, 10 July 1894. See also Graae, "Danske i Amerika. Louis Pio." For collaboration with Thrane, see Westergaard, "Marcus Thrane in America."
33 Hirsch, *Thrane's Last Requests*.
34 "Norway's Great Agitator," *Daily Inter Ocean*, 2 June 1890.
35 "In Honor of a Patriot," *Chicago Tribune*, 2 June 1890.
36 Pio, Augusta. Chicago, 24 October 1901. Georg Brandes arkivet. Box 111. Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Copenhagen. Also "Arbejderbevægelsen og Louis Pio."

37 Pio, Sylvia. Hotel Lützclau [1924]. Dansk pressemuseum og arkiv. Håndskriftsamlingen. NSA2-A04996. Acc. 1989/174. Box 50. Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Copenhagen.
38 In public, Sylvia claimed that she had wanted to reframe the recollection of her father to Danish workers since his death in 1894; see Poulsen, "Louis Pios Datter, Fru Sylvia Poulsen, fortæller." In private, however, Sylvia pointed out the 1913 speech as the most important turning point; see Pio, Hotel Lützclau.
39 Pio, Hotel Lützclau.
40 Hvidt, *Sylvia Pio*, 86–87.
41 Forretningsudvalget, 12 March 1918. Mødereferat. Socialdemokratiet Arkiv. A. Partiledelse. Forretningsudvalget. Referater fra Forretningsudvalgsmøder, 1918–1927. Arbejderbevægelsens Bibliotek og Arkiv.
42 Hvidt, *Sylvia Pio*, 89.
43 Jensen, *Socialdemokratiets Aarhundrede*.
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46 Geleff, Poul, To Emil Opffer, 6 April 1920. Geleff, Poul. Box 1. Archive no. 33. Arbejderbevægelsens Bibliotek og Arkiv.
47 Data extracted from Census Year: 1920; Census Place: *McPherson, McPherson, Kansas*; Roll: T625_539; Page: 6A; Enumeration District: 80.
48 Opffer, Emil, To A. C. Meyer, 10 April 1920. Geleff, Poul. Box 1. Archive no. 33. Arbejderbevægelsens Bibliotek og Arkiv.
49 Pio, Sylvia, To Wiinblad, 5 May 1920. Sylvia Pio. Box 1. Arbejderbevægelsens Bibliotek og Arkiv.
50 Forretningsudvalget, 7 May 1920. Mødereferat. Socialdemokratiet Arkiv. A. Partiledelse. Forretningsudvalget. Referater fra Forretningsudvalgsmøder, 1918–1927.
51 Pio, Sylvia, To Geleff, Juli 1920. Sylvia Pio. Box 1. Arbejderbevægelsens Bibliotek og Arkiv.
52 "45 years' exile brings triumph to Danes' chief," *Chicago Tribune*, 14 July 1920; "Da Povl Geleff kom hjem, [Povl Geleff came home]," *Den Danske Pioneer*, 19 August 1920. Also "Hvorledes man fandt Geleff [How Geleff Was Located]," *Vestjyllands Social-Demokrat – Esbjerg*, 13 June 1921.
53 Poulsen, "Louis Pios Datter, Fru Sylvia Poulsen, fortæller"; "Et besøg hos Louis Pios Enke," *Politiken*, 13 July 1921.
54 "Louis Pios Mindesten Afsløres Paa Vestre Kirkegaard [Louis Pio's Memorial Revealed on Vestre Kirkegaard]," *Dagbladet (København)*, 18 July 1921. See also Rasmussen, *Pio – flugten til Amerika*, 304–307.
55 Geleff had by then been hospitalized and was not able to make it to the anniversary party; see Bjerring, J.J., To Sylvia, 17 July 1921. Sylvia Pio. Box 1. Arbejderbevægelsens Bibliotek og Arkiv.
56 "Da Arbejderne for Første gang hørte deres egen Røst [When the Workers Heard Their Own Voice for the First Time]," 23 July 1921.
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59 Pio, Louis Mrs. "Fra Florida [from Florida]," *Den Danske Pioneer*, 13 September 1894; "The Golf Season Opened Friday," *The St. Augustine Evening Record*, 24 January 1902.
60 Quoted in Miller, "Louis Pio and Danish Settlements in America," 284.
61 Quoted in Schmidt, *80 Louis Pio Breve og en bibliografi*, 82; Pio, Augusta, Louis Pios Liv Og Død I Amerika [Louis Pio's Life and Death in America]. 1922. Louis Pio, 1841–1894. Box 4. Arbejderbevægelsens Bibliotek og Arkiv.
62 Janney, *Remembering the Civil War*, 234.
63 Janney, *Remembering the Civil War*, 262–263.

64 "Poul Geleff rejste i Gaar til Capri [Poul Geleff Traveled to Capri yesterday]," 1927. Geleff, Poul. Box 1. Archive no. 33. Arbejderbevægelsens Bibliotek og Arkiv; "Povl Geleff død," *Demokraten (Aarhus)*, 17 May 1928.
65 Harry Rasmussen, "Her Sluttede Dansk Pioners Bevægede Liv [Here Ended the Danish Pioneer's Eventful Life]," 1977. Geleff, Poul. Box 1. Archive no. 33. Arbejderbevægelsens Bibliotek og Arkiv.
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Part II

Encounters

Negotiating Scandinavia in America

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8 Mediating and activating politics across the Atlantic via the press

The case of *Den Danske Pioneer* of Omaha, Nebraska and the 1899 "Great Lockout" in Denmark

Jørn Brøndal

Introduction

A main function of the Scandinavian ethnic press in the United States during the "classical" era of migration in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was to mediate between the Old World and the New – to keep the readership apprised of developments taking place back home while also acquainting them with life in the United States. Sometimes, this happened on a non-political basis. In other cases, however, a conscious effort was made by the editorship to push the readers to actually support a specific political cause, creating political ripples crisscrossing the Atlantic Ocean. When that happened, attempts might even be made to directly link political currents in the Old World with others in the New – as if the two constituted a natural, transatlantic whole.

Both the most influential Norwegian-American newspaper and Danish-American newspapers became involved in such efforts. The story of how the Norwegian-American *Skandinaven* of Chicago – around 1900, the leading Scandinavian-American paper in the United States – steered such a course under the editorship of Nicolai A. Grevstad has already been told. Grevstad, himself a former editor in Kristiania (Oslo) of *Dagbladet*, attempted to forge what appeared to be a seamless link between the nationalist liberal Left Party (Venstre) and the Republican progressive movement of Robert M. La Follette and a cohort of Scandinavian-American politicians in Wisconsin.[1] An equally compelling tale is that of the considerably more left-leaning *Den Danske Pioneer* – by far the most prominent Danish-American newspaper around the turn of the century – which in 1899 became directly involved in a major labour conflict in Denmark, the "Great Lockout".

Den Danske Pioneer of Omaha, Nebraska

By the turn of the twentieth century, this eight-page weekly had reached an avowed circulation of 25,000, making it larger than all the other Danish-American newspapers combined, if significantly smaller than *Skandinaven*, with a reported circulation of its biweekly edition of nearly 44,500.[2]

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The *Pioneer* was founded in 1872 by Mark Hansen (1830–1908), a Danish migrant from the city of Kolding and a veteran of the Dano-German Three-Year War (1848–1850), as well as the American Civil War. He believed that Omaha – this hub for migrants moving west – would be an ideal spot for a Danish-language paper.[3] The *Pioneer* received a decisive boost when Sophus Martinus Frederik Neble (1858–1931), a 24-year-old Danish immigrant and former typographer with *Stubbekøbing Avis* on the island of Falster, turned up in Omaha in September 1883, having left Denmark that April. When he purchased the paper from Hansen and took over its editorship four years later, it entered its golden age. As a Norwegian-American commentator noted, Neble "has built up the 'Pioneer' to becoming one of the largest, most widely distributed, and most influential Scandinavian newspapers in the country", well-known among Danish and actually also many Norwegian immigrants.[4]

The *Pioneer* was an entirely different creature from *Skandinaven*. Thus, its tone towards Lutheranism verged on hostility. This was the case especially during the years that Hansen – who had flirted with Mormonism in his youth – controlled the paper. Marion Tuttle Marzolf, the historian of the Danish-American press, suggests, however, that relations were mended somewhat when Neble became editor.[5] But only to some extent. In 1894, just as Danish Lutherans in the United States were splitting into two independent sects, the relatively liberal-minded Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church, subscribing to the theology of the Danish church father N.F.S. Grundtvig (1783–1872) – and led in the United States by his son Frederik Lange Grundtvig (1854–1903) – and the gloomier and more pietistic United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church, inspired by the Danish Inner Mission movement led by Vilhelm Beck (1829–1901), the *Pioneer* fired off an editorial missive. In it, the paper satirized over "how the doughty pastors over here fight and quarrel and are in an extremely terrible mood" and parodied "the cheerful Grundtvigians with His Holiness Pastor [Frederik Lange] Grundtvig at the helm" and the Inner Mission "Pietists" and "fire-and-brimstone preachers". Suggesting that "the loving Danes" back in Denmark need not bother to send another pastor to America and ought instead to let Danish Americans tend to their own business in religious matters, the editor concluded that the "sensible people, however, just view all this as humbug and trickery".[6] Henrik Cavling, a celebrated Danish journalist known for his wit, suggested in 1897 that "the infidels and anti-clerics" had found "a strong home in the *Pioneer*".[7]

While the *Pioneer* spared no time poking fun at Danish-American Lutheranism, its attitude to the secular mutual-aid association the Danish Brotherhood (Dansk Brodersamfund) was different. To be sure, during the early days, when Mark Hansen controlled the paper, the *Pioneer's* relationship with the Brotherhood was hostile. In 1881, Hansen had co-founded The Danish Brothers in Arms (De Danske Vaabenbrødre) as an association for Danish war veterans who had fought the Germans in the Three Years' War and the War of 1864. At its convention in Omaha the following year, however, a group rebelled against Hansen's leadership and decided to open up membership to all Danish-American men and change the name of the association to The Danish Brotherhood in America (Det Danske Brodersamfund i

Amerika). Hansen and his allies left the meeting in disgust, slamming the door and taking the association's war chest with them.[8] Under Neble's editorship, however, the relationship between the *Pioneer* and the Danish Brotherhood improved to the point of friendship, with the *Pioneer* printing reports from lodge meetings and national conventions.[9] As a reader in Huron, South Dakota, noted in 1898, "We read so much about the Danish Brotherhood in the *Pioneer*" that this person now felt like launching a lodge in here.[10] With the Danish Brotherhood, especially before 1900, having a fraught relationship with Danish Lutheranism – in 1887, pastor Frederik Lange Grundtvig likened the association to "the devil himself" due to its secretiveness and ritualism – the *Pioneer* under Neble had no difficulty choosing sides in that conflict.[11] In a feud with Pastor A. Kirkegård of Fremont, Nebraska, in the mid-1890s, an editorial in the *Pioneer* noted, "Things are going to H . . . for Pastor Kirkegaard in Fremont. The other day, the Danes there established a lodge of the Danish Brotherhood".[12] Frederik Lange Grundtvig, for his part, compared the *Pioneer* with the Copenhagen-based papers *Social-Demokraten* and *Politiken* and noted that they were "as notorious for their handling of the truth" as the *Pioneer*.[13]

While *Skandinaven* and most other Scandinavian-language papers with a clear political profile supported the Republican Party, *Den Danske Pioneer* leaned Democratic. In 1900, according to *N.W. Ayer & Son's American Newspaper Annual and Directory*, out of 61 Scandinavian-language newspapers in the United States, 38 labelled themselves "Republican" or "Independent Republican", 19 "Independent" – which usually indicated that they featured no partisan editorials – two "Democratic" or "Independent Democratic", one "Socialist Labor", and one "Prohibition". Whereas *Skandinaven* figured in the Republican column, the *Pioneer* was listed as "Independent Democrat".[14]

The *Pioneer* definitely came with an independent streak, a point Neble emphasized when in 1922 he asserted that despite its democratic leanings, the paper's "principles" had never been for sale. That made sense. After the violent Haymarket riot in Chicago on 4 May 1886 – when an unknown person threw a bomb that killed several police officers, and four anarchists subsequently were executed – the *Pioneer* expressed sympathy for the anarchists and described their execution in painful detail, whereas the bulk of the Dano-Norwegian press condemned the labour radicals.[15]

By the 1890s, the *Pioneer* was trumpeting its own quite radical version of western populism. In 1894, one editorial defended Kansas populism against attacks that it was hurting farmers economically and claimed instead that a drought – and maybe also prohibitionism – should be blamed.[16] Another editorial criticized the Republican candidate from Nebraska's second congressional district, David H. Mercer, as a "tool in the pay of the capitalists" and the former Democratic governor James E. Boyd as a politician who had "sold himself to the railroad companies". Therefore, the *Pioneer* recommended that voters support D. Clem Deaver for Congress, a candidate of the People's Party.[17] In yet another editorial, the *Pioneer* ranted against "the rotten power" that over the past 30 years had been in the ascendant and now dominated "all matters in the country". Indeed, "It is a disgrace to the American people that year after year, they have allowed themselves to be forged ever more firmly into the chains of capitalism, until they are now barely able to break free".[18]

In 1896, the *Pioneer* joined the People's Party in supporting William Jennings Bryan, likewise of Nebraska, as the Democratic candidate for the presidency. Likening his nomination at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago that summer to "a clap of thunder" striking "the capitalists of Wall Street and the East", the *Pioneer* quoted Bryan's acceptance speech at length, including his memorable declaration that "you shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold".[19] In its final issue before the election, the paper claimed that it had never been this involved in presidential politics before, but this time "the rights of common folks" were being "threatened with destruction by the united capitalists of the nation".[20] Even after Bryan's defeat to William McKinley, the *Pioneer* kept up its drumbeat for Bryan, who for years remained a formidable force within his party.[21] The *Pioneer* likewise maintained its populist tone. In 1901, it criticized the Standard Oil Company: "Both the producer and the consumer are its helpless slaves". Two years later, it attacked the company for its opposition to pending antitrust legislation, and in 1908, it ironized over how Standard Oil had just avoided paying a big fine, something that common citizens would never get away with.[22]

If the *Pioneer* leaned to the populist left in US politics, it was equally radical when it dealt with the political situation in Denmark. Unfortunately, despite its considerable circulation, we do not have a complete run of the paper, a major culprit being a fire that, some time prior to 1922, swept through the *Pioneer's* headquarters in Omaha and consumed almost all papers published before 1894.[23] Still, it is clear that from 1884, when a coup by the nationalist-militarist Right party (Højre) established a semi-dictatorship in Denmark lasting until 1901, the *Pioneer* became so critical of the royal family and the Danish government that it was banned in Denmark from 23 September 1886 until 12 April 1898.[24] In an open letter to the *Pioneer's* subscribers in Denmark, Neble wrote, "Down with Estrup! . . . Long live freedom in Old Denmark! . . . Fight if you are worthy".[25] In 1894, the paper suggested that "in another country, one would have beheaded such a law-breaker" as Estrup.[26]

During the ban, Neble actually attempted to fool the Danish authorities by continually manipulating the nameplate of the issues headed for Denmark. According to Marzolf, among the names the paper used were *Den Danske Amerikaner* (*The Danish American*), *Dansk Ugeblad* (*The Danish Weekly*) and *Friheden* (*Freedom*).[27] After the ban was lifted, not only did the paper become available once again to Danish subscribers – with the *Pioneer* urging Danish Americans to donate subscriptions to their friends and relatives in the old country. By 1908, it could be purchased in the Telegram Hall of the large Danish liberal newspaper *Politiken*, just off the City Hall Square in Copenhagen.[28]

For years, the *Pioneer* lent its columns to Danish radicals. One such person was Mogens Abraham Sommer (1829–1901), an eccentric schoolteacher and uncompromising lay preacher who, besides being arrested by the Danish police on numerous occasions, and also flirting briefly with socialism, agitated for Danish migration to the United States and personally traversed the Atlantic on numerous occasions.[29] According to Neble, Sommer, who oftentimes wrote op-eds in the *Pioneer* under the pseudonym of "Principal Petersen" ("Fuldmægtig Petersen"),

was a talented writer whose pieces attacking King Christian 9 led directly to the Danish ban.[30]

The *Pioneer* likewise gave voice to Povl Geleff (1842–1928) a pioneer within the Danish Social Democratic Party who, together with its founder Louis Pio (1841–1894), was arrested following a major clash between labourers and the police at Nørrefælled in Copenhagen on 5 May 1872. Having served long prison sentences, both men – who had long been planning to create a socialist colony in Ellis County, Kansas – were bribed by the Danish police in 1877 to leave Denmark earlier than expected, causing chaos within the Social Democratic Party. In the United States, the two men quickly broke with each other over matters having to do with the respective sizes of their bribes so that only Pio participated in the short-lived and ill-fated Kansas experiment, while Geleff headed directly to Chicago.[31] By the mid-1890s, Geleff appears to have reneged on his socialist principles, instead feuding endlessly in the *Pioneer* with the Chicago socialist John Glambeck, the soon-to-be editor of the Dano-Norwegian socialist paper *Arbejderen* (*The Laborer*).[32] By the mid-1890s, Geleff was describing his early cooperation with Pio as somewhat idealistic and naïve, as a rough-and-tumble partnership between two idealistic "hotheads" ("Brushoveder") whom many Danes in those early days viewed as worse than "arsonists and burglars, adulterers and debauchees, brothelkeepers and pawnbrokers, and other bloodsuckers". Now, on the other hand, "pastors and rural deans, professors and doctors and, I would almost add, the devil and his great-grandmother" posed as socialists. Obviously, this was no longer the Geleff who, during his Atlantic crossing with Pio in 1877, had talked about himself purchasing the *Pioneer*, undoubtedly with a view to turning it into a socialist organ, while Pio could take over the smaller *Heimdal* of Chicago.[33] By the mid-1890s, however, Geleff saw himself as a pioneer of another cause, western irrigation, more specifically in the Arkansas Valley, Colorado, where he had settled.[34] Some readers writing letters to the *Pioneer*, including Glambeck, ironized so much over how Geleff the socialist had turned into Geleff the land agent that Geleff himself in March 1896 sarcastically described himself as "a land agent by the grace of God".[35]

The *Pioneer* likewise appears to have afforded room for articles by Louis Pio, who, however, also dabbled with editing his own little assortment of radical papers.[36] Unfortunately, few issues of the *Pioneer* have survived prior to Pio's death in June 1894. That year, however, one reader complained about a piece, in fact, written by Pio in the paper.[37] Also, several issues of the paper carried ads under his name promoting land sales for "The White City" near Fort Pierce in Florida.[38] After his death, the *Pioneer* certainly took Pio's side after his break with the Social Democratic Party leadership following his abrupt departure from Denmark and persistent rumours that he had stolen money from the party.[39] In July 1895, an editorial castigated the party leadership in Copenhagen for purposefully ignoring Pio at a recent Constitution Day (5 June) event, even though the foot soldiers of the party still saw him not only as "the creator of the Danish labor party but as its brilliant, electrifying force in a grand movement, a personality so large that the party has never seen anything like it since", but also definitely as "a genius without a balancing pole".[40]

Neble's friendly attitude towards organized labour had a personal side to it. Like so many other Danish-American leaders, he was acquainted with the famed "round table" in "Wilken's Cellar" (Wilkens Kælder) on LaSalle Street in Chicago, where prominent Danish men assembled and enjoyed wine in a convivial and decidedly anti-clerical atmosphere. For years, the table was presided over by Danish Vice Consul Peter Emil Dreier (1832–1892) and, upon his death, by the wealthy biochemist and beer fermentation expert Max Henius (1859–1935).[41] The group sometimes included Louis Pio and – perhaps only on *other* occasions – Povl Geleff, with each of them – are we to believe Neble – occasionally chatting with Henry L. Hertz, son of the police inspector in Copenhagen responsible for their arrest and subsequent departure from Denmark.[42]

During a business trip to Chicago in early 1890, Neble himself found a seat at the Danes' round table. As he recalled many years later, Alfred William "Sorte" Hansen (1854–1909) – known for his shock of black ("sorte") hair – invited him to join him for lunch in Wilken's Cellar. Among the guests was Louis Pio.[43] Hansen himself was a close friend of Pio, for whom he had worked as secretary not only in Denmark but also during the failed colonial experiment in Kansas.[44] Later, however, Hansen appears to have soured on socialism, now arguing that "it is good enough in theory but impossible in practice".[45] According to Neble, Hansen was not only "one of the most well-informed and singular Danes in America" but also "one of the friends who until his death was very close to me".[46] That may be an understatement. When Neble's first wife, Kirsten (née Larsen) died, in 1900, Neble soon married the 18-years-younger Olivia Hansen, the daughter of "Sorte" Hansen. Shortly thereafter, Neble and "Sorte" Hansen started a tradition of convening in Omaha every 4th of July.[47]

The Great Lockout of 1899

Den Danske Pioneer's US-inspired brand of western populism and Danish-inspired pro-labour attitudes came together in one coordinated political push in 1899, when a major labour conflict broke out in Denmark. That spring, organized carpenters in the Jutland peninsula struck, angry that collective bargaining with their employers apparently was resulting in lower wages for them than for their colleagues in the islands of Funen and Zealand. Just as the conflict seemed on the verge of being resolved, the employers, organized in the Danish Employer and Master Association, decided to force a showdown over who controlled the rules of the labour market. The Great Lockout began on 2 May and lasted for 107 days, ending in the September Settlement, a major agreement laying down the rules for collective bargaining between labour and management for the next 61 years.[48]

The conflict in Denmark received massive coverage in the *Pioneer*. As early as 20 April, the *Pioneer* reported that skilled carpenters were ready to strike and that rumour had it that if they did so, the employers' association would "respond with a lockout in other crafts".[49] On 8 June, the paper announced that "the bomb has finally exploded" and that the lockout had begun. From now on, the conflict was covered each week as the top story in the paper's "Denmark" section.[50] On 15 June, the first of a slew

of editorials supporting labour's side in the conflict appeared. Neble heaped praise on the labourers for their "admirable behavior" – a sentiment incidentally shared by the Norwegian-born US Senator Knute Nelson, who visited Copenhagen during the Great Lockout.[51] Lauding Danish organized labour for its recent enormous progress and for no longer putting up with being treated like "slaves" as during the Middle Ages, Neble laid the blame for the conflict squarely at the feet of "the big aristocratic employers" who wanted to be "masters in the workplace". Even though claims were made that organized labour had a war chest of 1.5 million kroner at its disposal, this would hardly suffice in a struggle with 35,000 labourers out of work and 100,000 mouths to be fed, a conflict in which "their opponents have the capital".[52]

On 29 June, the *Pioneer* went one step further: In an editorial, Neble appealed directly to Danish Americans to support their Danish compatriots and to do so economically. This was "a fight between capital and labor", a fight of huge international consequence, because if the employers could beat the unions in as well-organized a country as Denmark, they could beat them anywhere. Thus, Denmark, in Neble's view, was becoming a testing ground for the whole industrialized world. What was needed, therefore, was money. He made his appeal personal. He himself offered to collect the money and publish the names of everyone contributing to the cause. He announced that he was setting an example himself by donating 100 Danish kroner to the locked-out labourers. Over the next two months, the first editorial on page four of the paper would invariably be headlined, "Help Them!"[53]

Two features characterized Neble's appeal in this and later editorials in the *Pioneer*. First, his plea was ethnic. It was aimed exactly at the Danish-American population group in the United States. As he noted, "In almost every Danish settlement, you will find several Danish associations, Danish churches, and so on". He called special attention to two mutual-aid associations, The United Danish Societies of America (De Sammensluttede Danske Foreninger af Amerika) – a loosely organized group of clubs with strong local presences in cities as widespread as Oakland and Alameda, California, and Racine and Kenosha, Wisconsin – and the more tightly knit and fast-growing Danish Brotherhood. In 1899, that group boasted 126 lodges spread across the United States, with Lodge No. 1 based in Omaha and No. 126 in Los Angeles. Just three years later, the Brotherhood had 145 lodges with 8,347 members, and by 1907, it had 255 lodges with 17,173 members.[54]

Second, Neble's appeal was class-based. Not only did he portray the struggle as one between "capital" and "labor". He also appealed directly to the Danish migrants' socio-economic roots. As he wrote, "Through class *[Stand*] and birth, we can only side with one party: the workers". He further asked, "Are not the vast majority of us sons and daughters of the class that is today being forced into surrender by hunger? Are we to quietly watch this happen?" Even the many Danes who have done well for themselves in the United States should remember their backgrounds: "Danes in America, whether we are workers or employers today, let us not forget that it is the class we originated with that is fighting its desperate battle, and that we once were of it ourselves".[55]

The economic support quickly started pouring in, with a lot of the early assistance originating in Omaha: The Danish Association gave US$25, and Lodge No. 1

of the Danish Brotherhood gave US$10. Notably, the Thyra Danebod lodge of the Danish Sisterhood in America (Det Danske Søstersamfund i Amerika) – a female offshoot of the Danish Brotherhood that by 1908 boasted 106 lodges with 5,190 members – donated US$14.[56] From now on through 12 October, the paper would list each individual and every association contributing to the cause, the lists soon taking up three to four densely typed columns in the paper.

By far the majority of donors were listed simply as individuals, with one or more persons having taken charge of a collection. For instance, in Rockville, Nebraska, S. Andersen raised US$21.75, with 14 named persons donating US$1 each, 15 others 50 cents, and one person 25 cents.[57] Still, the associations also played a prominent role. By far the most important was the Danish Brotherhood. During those weeks, 46 of its 126 lodges contributed to the cause 65 times in all. The lodges stretched from metropolises like Minneapolis and Chicago to Danish-American hubs like Racine, Wisconsin, and Dannebrog, Nebraska.[58] Other associations chipped in. In Kimballton, Iowa – another predominantly Danish-American area – the Hamlet Lodge of the Knights of Pythias fraternal order contributed US$10.[59] In White City, Florida – the settlement that Louis Pio had worked to establish – the Danish Settlers' Club raised US$5.[60]

Judging by names and titles, the majority of the donors were men, undoubtedly reflecting patterns of economic dominance in ethnic families, notwithstanding that lots of the practical work of many ethnic associations – and churches – was done by women. Now and again, the contributions of women were acknowledged. When Lodge No. 47 of the Danish Brotherhood in Ironwood, Michigan, gave US$43.75 to the locked-out labourers, Mrs A. Bertha Pedersen took charge of collecting the funds.[61] Also, when money was raised in Lewiston, Michigan, not only was Mrs Christine Ness in charge; among the contributors were Mrs C.B. Johnson, Miss Karen Andersen, Miss R. Jensen, Mrs S. Petersen and Mrs P.B. Johnsen, besides a couple of men.[62] Contributions by the Danish Sisterhood were noted on five occasions in *Den Danske Pioneer*. In Marinette, Wisconsin, a local women's association named "Victoria" – apparently not part of the Danish Sisterhood – donated US$30.[63]

Sometimes, money was collected during Danish Brotherhood picnics, with Lodges No. 10 of Council Bluffs, Iowa, No. 52 of Lemont, Illinois, and No. 71 of Penn Yan, New York, each engaging in such activities. Among the more curious donations were US$2.50 in proceeds from a box of cigars donated by a benefactor in Brooklyn, New York, and a stool gifted by N.O. Nielsen of Omaha that brought in US$6.20. "Professor" H.C. Petersen of Nelson, Minnesota, who advertised in the *Pioneer* for his "famous electric belt" – one of the medical shams of the day – avowed that for every belt sold, "we will give 25 cents to our brothers in Denmark who at the moment are fighting a serious and fair battle against the capitalists".[64] Neble reported that the professor did indeed contribute US$2.50 on one occasion and another US$2.75 on another.[65]

In his editorials, Neble also urged labourers to contact US-based unions, just like he printed an English-language appeal in his paper and helped distribute a likewise English-language pamphlet received from Copenhagen, asking for support

also from Norwegian- and Swedish-American papers.[66] Some Danish-American labourers did, in fact, raise money through union-related activities. The Brotherhood of Painters and Decorators' Local No. 108 in Racine, Wisconsin – a hub of Danish industrial labourers – contributed US$20; Local No. 109 in Omaha gave US$5; and Local No. 194 in Chicago – according to Neble, the "Scandinavian" Local – donated fully US$100.[67] Other contributions came in from the Bakers' Union Local No. 11 in New Haven, Connecticut, and the Woodworkers' Union Local No. 82 in Marshfield, Wisconsin.[68]

Industrial labourers also contributed to raising funds through their workplace. In Racine, the Malleable and Wrought Iron Company's Blacksmith Shop collected US$13 on one occasion and another US$15.50 on another, whereas the Horlicks Food Company of the same city wired US$30 to Neble and sent another US$40 to Copenhagen directly. The "Danish laborers" of the Holyoke Linden Paper Company in Holyoke, Massachusetts, contributed US$4.35 on seven separate occasions.[69]

As already indicated, some groups aided the locked-out labourers independently of Neble. The *Pioneer* reported that the "Scandinavian" local of the Carpenters Union of Chicago contributed US$100 to the cause, whereas the "Scandinavian" Painters' Union of the same city gave a whopping US$700.[70] The minuscule Socialist Labor Party (S.L.P.) likewise contributed. In Chicago, the party arranged a ball in Woer's Hall and raised US$100 for the Danish workers; another branch of the party in Akron, Ohio, contributed US$2.50 directly to Neble's campaign.[71] In early September, Neble acknowledged that other groups were helping the locked-out Danish labourers and estimated that, whereas the *Pioneer* thus far had contributed 31,400 kroner, total contributions from the United States amounted to some 60,000 kroner.[72]

By the end of the conflict, the *Pioneer* had contributed 34,500 Danish kroner, or, in Marzolf's estimate, slightly more than US$9,000.[73] Out of total foreign contributions adding up to almost 680,000 kroner for the Danish labourers – with the bulk of the money flowing from Germany and England – the *Pioneer's* assistance may seem small. But taking price movements into account, the 34,500 kroner in 1899 corresponds to about 2.5 million kroner today – or US$370,000 – a very impressive amount for one Danish-American newspaper.[74]

Notably, the Danish-American churches played only a minuscule role during the Great Lockout. To be sure, in Poughkeepsie, New York, a Danish Lutheran congregation donated US$50 to the cause, and in the Kendallville schoolhouse in Michigan, following a service by Pastor Ole Amble, one person collected US$10.30. Also, when Lodge No. 71 of the Danish Brotherhood in Penn Yan, New York, at one point raised US$23.25, US$3.50 of that amount was collected at a meeting convened by one Pastor Jacobsen.[75] A few other Lutheran ministers chipped in individually, including Pastor J. Chr. Petersen of Dannebrog, Nebraska, who gave US$1 to the US$30.25 raised by the local lodge of the Danish Brotherhood; three other pastors – A. Bekker of Grayling, Michigan, G. Grill of Upland, Nebraska and K. Østergaard of Bernardino, California – each gave 50 cents to the cause.[76] And that was about it.

Indeed, the two main Danish-American Lutheran newspapers showed no support for the locked-out labourers. The Inner Mission *Danskeren* recommended that

Danish Americans *not* take sides in a conflict characterized by missteps on both sides – and soon received an earful from the *Pioneer*.[77] The Grundtvigian *Dannevirke* criticized "the venomous hatred that the socialist papers have dripped into the minds of the working class" and argued that it was "unfair to blame the employers for the current conflict. It is deeply rooted in the trade union system, as it has developed here in our country".[78]

Thus, the case of the Great Lockout illustrates how *secular* ethnic groups under the overall leadership of the *Pioneer* were able to mount an impressive transnational campaign for organized Danish labour, even as the two main Danish Lutheran denominations abstained from helping. As it was becoming clear, Danish-American identity could also be formed powerfully by groups outside the churches.

For the most part, the Danish-American supporters appear not to have been socialists, and former socialists like Povl Geleff and "Sorte" Hansen were notable for their silence. If they played any active role in the attempts to mobilize Danish Americans at all, it was not reported in the *Pioneer*. We should add that Neble was not a socialist himself, even if his earliest journalistic piece apparently was published in *Social-Demokraten* of Copenhagen.[79] Years later, he claimed that his Danish political background was that of a "young social liberal man" ("ung radikal Venstremand"), that is a man in sympathy with the ideas that in 1905 would lead to the formation of the Danish Social Liberal Party (Radikale Venstre), a party that the Danish paper *Politiken* also aligned with.[80] By that time, he had experienced another clash with the leadership of the Social Democratic Party, this time over their treatment of Povl Geleff, who, according to Neble, had been given a third-class steamboat ticket by the party when invited to return to Denmark in 1920. Neble's charge, in turn, prompted the party leadership to dub Neble's paper "strongly anti-socialistic", with *Politiken* then intervening on the side of Neble, suggesting that he came "close to being a Social Democrat".[81]

Originally, however, following Neble's support for the locked-out workers, the Social Democratic Party understandably showed gratitude towards Neble. When he visited Denmark in 1905, a celebration in his honour was organized in Labour's Meeting House in Rømersgade in Copenhagen. According to *Politiken*, "virtually every well-known Social Democratic name in Copenhagen was on hand", and the room was adorned not only with trade-union banners but also with a decoration featuring the Danish and American flags leaning towards each other over a globe bedecked with a laurel wreath. In a speech by Martin Olsen – who during the Great Lockout had handled organized labour's relations with other countries and was now the trade union boss – Neble was praised as the man who "even though he isn't a Social Democrat always has been a friend of labor". Neble, on his part, urged Danish labourers to travel to the United States to learn new and more efficient skills there. He was impressed by the general progress of Danish labour; "but it surprises me that you still are so far from the eight-hour workday which now has been introduced everywhere in America with the help of the government".[82] The implication seemed to be that US principles of scientific management – Taylorism – might bring the eight-hour workday to Denmark: hardly a standard socialist idea.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Neble's ethnic newspaper, *Den Danske Pioneer,* did much more than simply mediate politics between the Old World and the New. Instead, his paper succeeded in activating an impressive part of its readership during the Great Lockout of 1899 by combining Western-style populism with an anti-authoritarian Danish brand of social liberalism. Thus, Neble and his paper helped forge a sense of Danish-American identity that merged Old World class-based loyalties with an activism rooted not directly in socialism but in a secular network of organizations and associations that, in combination – at least in this one case – turned out to be more formidable than organized Danish-American Lutheranism. With good reason, Neble saw his campaign of 1899 as an exercise in reaching across the Atlantic:

> This way of building bridges between us Danes in America and the wronged compatriots in our homeland is the right one, and we Danes here in America will henceforth be seen in a better and more proper light by our compatriots in Denmark than we have ever been before. We have shown that we have not forgotten Denmark, but at the same time, we have demonstrated that our best and noblest feelings are with those who are oppressed and wronged".[83]

Notes

1 Brøndal, *Ethnic Leadership*, 92–98, 231–235.
2 *Ayer's Newspaper Directory*, 1411–1413; Brøndal, *Ethnic Leadership*, 83–84, 266–267.
3 *Danske Pioneer*, 14 December 1922; Marzolf, *Danish-Language Press*, 54; *Bien*, 6 March 1908.
4 *Danske Pioneer*, 14 December 1922; Wist, "Pressen efter Borgerkrigen," 175; Marzolf, *Danish-Language Press*, 57.
5 Marzolf, *Danish-Language Press*, 74.
6 *Danske Pioneer*, 8 February 1894.
7 Cavling, *Fra Amerika*, 1:315.
8 Paulsen, "Det Danske Brodersamfund," 214–215; *Danske Pioneer*, 14 December 1922.
9 *Danske Pioneer*, 1 August, 3, 31 October, 14 November 1895; 9, 16 January 1896; 21 September 1899.
10 *Danske Pioneer*, 24 February 1898.
11 Grundtvig, *Jesu Kristi Kirke og de afgudsdyrkende Foreninger*, 4. After the turn of the century, to be sure, the Danish-American churches improved their relations with the secular associations; cf. Petersen, *Drømmen om Amerika*, 238; Brøndal, *Danske Amerikanere*, 53.
12 *Danske Pioneer*, 31 October 1895. Also *Danske Pioneer*, 24 January, 14, 28 February 1895; 2 January, 7 May 1896.
13 *Dannevirke*, 22 May 1889.
14 *Ayer's Newspaper Directory*, 1411–1413; Brøndal, *Ethnic Leadership*, 267.
15 *Danske Pioneer*, 11 November 1887; Brøndal, *Ethnic Leadership*, 91; Andersen, *Rough Road to Glory*, 45–56. According to Anderson, *Skandinaven* originally "maintained a guarded silence" before calling the executions "a significant event in the nation's history." Andersen, *Rough Road to Glory*, 48.
16 *Danske Pioneer*, 11 October 1894.
17 *Danske Pioneer*, 11 October 1894; *Omaha Daily Bee*, 24 February 1914.
18 *Danske Pioneer*, 11 October 1894.

19 *Danske Pioneer*, 6 July 1896.
20 *Danske Pioneer*, 29 October 1896.
21 *Danske Pioneer*, 1, 8 June 1899; 17 September 1908; 1 July 1915; Marzolf, *Danish-Language Press*, 74–75.
22 *Danske Pioneer*, 2 May 1901, 12 February 1903, 30 July 1908.
23 *Danske Pioneer*, 14 December 1922.
24 Marzolf, *Danish-Language Press*, 60–61, 71. Apparently, the ban was lifted temporarily prior to 24 August 1892, when the Copenhagen-based newspaper *Politiken* reported that the *Pioneer* had been banned in Denmark *again;* cf. *Politiken*, 24 August 1892.
25 Marzolf, *Danish-Language Press*, 71. The open letter was also mentioned in the Grundtvigian Danish-American paper *Dannevirke* on 8 December 1886. The paper criticized the letter for its "thoroughly ugly language" and its call for "murder of the ministry."
26 *Danske Pioneer*, 5 April 1894.
27 Marzolf, *Danish-Language Press*, 60.
28 *Danske Pioneer*, 18 May 1899; *Politiken*, 3 February and 11 May 1908.
29 Larsen, *Urovækkeren Mogens Abraham Sommer*, 144, 167; Hvidt, *Danske veje vestpå*, 183–184; Sønnichsen, *Rejsen til Amerika*, 1:127–131; Brøndal, *Danske Amerikanere*, 15–17.
30 *Danske Pioneer*, 28 February 1901; 14 December 1922; 11 January 1923; Marzolf, *Danish-Language Press*, 66.
31 Rasmussen, *Pio*, 87–109; *Dannevirke*, 14 February 1906.
32 Glambeck was editor of *Arbejderen* from September 1896 to October 1898 and then again from August 1899 to March 1900; cf. Marzolf, *Danish-Language Press*, 103; Danielsen, "The Early Danish Immigrant Socialist Press," 70. For the Geleff-Glambeck feud, see *Danske Pioneer*, 19, 26 July, 8, 29 November, 27 December 1894; 10, 24 January, 7 March 1895.
33 Salmonsen, *Brogede Minder*, 63–67, 71; Wist, "Pressen efter Borgerkrigen," 82.
34 *Danske Pioneer*, 21 February 1895.
35 *Danske Pioneer*, 26 July 1894; 19 March, 18 June 1896; 22 April 1897.
36 Brøndal, *Danske Amerikanere*, 19; Rasmussen, *Pio*, 132–137.
37 *Danske Pioneer*, 23 August 1894.
38 *Danske Pioneer*, 8, 15 February, 8, 15, 22 March 1894. On "The White City," see Rasmussen, *Pio*, 255–278.
39 Rasmussen, *Pio*, 91–94.
40 *Danske Pioneer*, 25 July 1895; 18 June 1896.
41 Hvidt, *Danske Veje*, 321; Petersen, *Drømmen om Amerika*, 161; Simonsen, *Kampen om danskheden*, 98–99; Rasmussen, *Pio*, 127–137.
42 *Danske Pioneer*, 11 January 1923; Rasmussen, *Pio*, 7, 41, 127.
43 *Danske Pioneer*, 11 January 1923. Neble reported that he returned to Wilken's Cellar that same evening!
44 Rasmussen, *Pio*, 97–99.
45 *Danske Pioneer*, 19 August 1909.
46 *Danske Pioneer*, 11 January 1923. According to Neble, Hansen and Pio fell out with each other shortly after the failed Kansas adventure but soon mended their relations, *Danske Pioneer*, 19 August 1909.
47 *Dannevirke*, 18 August 1909; Kamp and Alsted, "Sophus F. Neble."
48 Christensen, *Septemberforliget*, 1–6.
49 *Danske Pioneer*, 20 April 1899.
50 *Danske Pioneer*, 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 June, 6, 13, 20, 27 July, 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 August, 7, 14, 21, 28 September, 5 October 1899.
51 Gieske and Keillor, *Knute Nelson*, 243.
52 *Danske Pioneer*, 15 June 1899.
53 *Danske Pioneer*, 29 June, 6, 13, 20, 27 July, 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 August 1899.
54 Plow, "Den Danske Forening 'Dania' af California," 238; *Folkets Avis*, 24 May 1900; *Skandinaven*, 25 May 1892. For a complete list of all the Danish Brotherhood lodges

in 1899, see *Danske Pioneer*, 21 September 1899. On the Brotherhood's membership figures in 1902 and 1907, see Paulsen, "Det Danske Brodersamfund," 219.
55 *Danske Pioneer*, 29 June 1899.
56 *Danske Pioneer*, 6 July 1899; Hoffenblad, "Det Danske Søstersamfund," 230.
57 *Danske Pioneer*, 31 August 1899.
58 These numbers are based on my reading of the lists of contributors in *Danske Pioneer*, 6, 13, 20, 27 July, 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 August, 7, 14, 21, 28 September, 5, 12 October 1899.
59 *Danske Pioneer*, 17 August 1899.
60 *Danske Pioneer*, 14 September 1899.
61 *Danske Pioneer*, 14 September 1899.
62 *Danske Pioneer*, 21 September 1899.
63 *Danske Pioneer*, 6 July, 3, 10, 31 August, 14, 21 September 1899.
64 *Danske Pioneer*, 3 August 1899. In the same issue, another and larger ad boomed Dr. Sanden's "world-famous" electric belt, the *original* belt that other producers were simply imitating, a belt that was "good news for everyone suffering" from almost any ailment.
65 *Danske Pioneer*, 7, 28 September 1899.
66 *Danske Pioneer*, 6, 27 July 1899.
67 *Danske Pioneer*, 20, 27 July 1899. Nokkentved, "Danes, Denmark and Racine;" Brøndal, *Danske Amerikanere*, 32, 34, 38.
68 *Danske Pioneer*, 24 August, 14 September 1899.
69 *Danske Pioneer*, 20 July, 3, 10, 24, 31 August, 7, 14, 21 September 1899.
70 *Danske Pioneer*, 3 August 1899. The Carpenters' Union local in Omaha, on the other hand, contributed 20 dollars to Neble's collection, cf. *Danske Pioneer*, 10 August 1899.
71 *Danske Pioneer*, 13 July, 10 August 1899.
72 *Danske Pioneer*, 7 September 1899.
73 *Danske Pioneer*, 21 September 1899; Marzolf, *Danish-Language Press*, 77; Christensen, *Septemberforliget*, 40–41.
74 My calculation is based on Christensen's estimate that 680,000 kroner in 1899 corresponded to 50 million kroner today. Christensen, *Septemberforliget*, 41.
75 *Danske Pioneer*, 20 July, 10, 24 August 1899.
76 *Danske Pioneer*, 3, 31 August, 21 September 1899.
77 *Danskeren*, 12, 26 July 1899; *Danske Pioneer*, 20 July 1899.
78 *Dannevirke*, 26 July 1899.
79 *Danske Pioneer*, 21 October 1926.
80 *Danske Pioneer*, 11 January 1923; Marzolf, *Danish-Language Press*, 67.
81 *Danske Pioneer*, 21 October 1926.
82 *Politiken*, 16 December 1905; Bertolt, "Martin Olsen."
83 *Danske Pioneer*, 10 August 1899.

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9 Historical narratives as political arguments

Leif Erikson as usable past in transatlantic perspective

Ruth Hemstad

Introduction

The essence of American democracy, past and present, it is claimed, is the eternal arguing over democracy.[1] The international arguing and rhetoric over *American* democracy, the oldest constitutional democracy in the world, also has an enduring character. This is not least the case in the Scandinavian countries, where encounters with American democracy have been an integrated part of the emigration experiences throughout most of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[2] Scandinavian scholars and immigrants also *contributed* to this American rhetoric of democracy by introducing and enhancing a powerful historical narrative connected to the question: Who did discover America? In this discussion, starting in the late 1830s and gaining momentum from the 1870s onwards, the Norse heritage of America was, in fact, narrated as a vital source of American democratic development. A linkage was hence created connecting Norway as the cradle of "popular freedom", Leif Erikson[3] as the first *white* discoverer of America and the modern "Vikings" and American democracy of the nineteenth century. The narrative was repeatedly advocated by Rasmus B. Anderson and others (see below): "The civilized history of America begins with the Norsemen. . . . The first white man to plant his feet on the American continent was Leif Erikson in the year 1000".[4] The whiteness of the Norse explorers is continuously underlined and illustrates the importance of integrating ethnoracial perspectives in the studies of immigration experiences, as the Scandinavian Norse heritage has "sometimes been used to bolster racial supremacy claims".[5] (See also Chapters 6 and 10 in this volume.) This, it may be added, is still the case.

Historical narratives are often integrated parts of political discourses, as arguments legitimating claims and negotiating positions. The imaginary of the Vikings and Leif Erikson as the first discoverers of America served as a *usable past*[6]: The retrospective reconstruction of the Viking legacy could promote contemporary and future cultural and political arguments and purposes and form the basis for "the present and future greatness".[7] The use of history is "in no way a neutral act, but will always be marked by a consideration of certain interests and a certain purpose".[8] The historical narrative created and promoted by central agents within the Scandinavian-American diaspora thus functioned as a political argument, utilized

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to gain influence, privileges and legitimacy and to strengthen the position of Scandinavian immigrant communities in the American ethnoracial cultural and political hierarchy.[9] It also emphasized the connections – past, present and future – across the Atlantic. The scholarly and popular Vinland account, Mulligan argues, was a "persuasive and strategically retold narrative", establishing not only a past but also a future that "helped Scandinavian immigrants assimilate as Americans"[10] and reifying their "birthright as Americans".[11]

The nineteenth- and early twentieth-century writings on, and performances and commemorations of, the Viking exploration of America may, moreover, be seen as a transatlantic *boreal medievalism*.[12] Medievalism is generally defined as the reception, recreation and remediation of medieval culture, from artistic expressions to political discourse and scholarly writings. Boreal medievalism narrows the concept – geographically to the North, temporally to the Viking and medieval ages and ethnically to the Norse and white figure of the Viking. The Viking diaspora, not least in North America, is also included in this post-medieval imaginary.[13] "Through boreal medievalism", Stahl emphasizes, "[W]e can perceive the Viking Age as a discourse, the product of a cultural construct and of symbolic stakes".[14] By focusing on this specific boreal dimension of medievalism, moreover, the references to the perceived Old Norse political virtues, representing a non-feudal, egalitarian and republican societal ideal, along with the adventurous, exploring, pioneering – and indeed racial – character of the Vikings, may more easily be foregrounded.

This chapter examines the public and political use and circulation of Old Norse historical narratives, mainly among Norwegian and Scandinavian immigrant communities in the United States, and how it evolved within a broader transatlantic public sphere.[15] What became an activistic Leif Erikson cult was based on scholarly and popular historical accounts from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, materialized through the erection of monuments from 1887, continued with public performances at the World Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893 and culminated with the longstanding and eventually successful Leif Erikson Day movement, achieving the much-wanted recognition through the annual official celebration of Leif Erikson Day on 9 October, nationally celebrated, although on a singular basis, in 1935. From 1964, this day has been officially proclaimed by the president on an annual basis. The chapter discusses aspects of these interconnected activities, building on existing scholarship as well as historical publications of different kinds and informed by transnational, conceptual and whiteness approaches.

Transnational and transatlantic perspectives

The creation and deployment of an Old Norse memory culture and historical narratives in America was an entangled process involving actors and organizations on both sides of the Atlantic, with transatlantic intermediaries playing a central role. It was initiated from within the Scandinavian diasporic communities, although based on intercultural transfer and exchange. The production and dissemination of historical writings and creation of transatlantic sites, monuments, performances

of events (including a reconstructed Viking voyage), and the commemorations of anniversaries and celebrations of "days" promoted transatlantic crossings and transfers of various kinds, making the narrative of a common past even more useable. These encounters illustrate the necessity of including what Harzig terms the *transatlantic and transcultural space*: "a space filled with the manifold relationships that weave the fabric of the transatlantic world".[16] Through the travel and transfers, however, the ideas, narratives and images were transformed, as Mauch notes, as "[n]othing crossed the Atlantic without adaption and change".[17] Although migration and diaspora studies are fields that are transnational *per se*, a transnational approach seeks to analyse movements of ideas, persons or institutions, processes across state and national borders, and cross-border cultural or intellectual transfers in order to escape methodological nationalism.[18]

A transnational approach to the study of the historical use of Leif Erikson also makes inter-Scandinavian cooperation and conflicts related to this legacy more visible. Ideas, concepts and images could travel back and forth not only across the Atlantic but also between the Scandinavian communities on both sides. Scandinavian historiography on emigration in general, including memory studies, is, however, still often nationally orientated, focusing mainly on one of the Nordic countries and its diaspora population, in spite of the shared experiences of mass emigration and the manifold entanglements and encounters among Scandinavians in America.[19] The historical narrative of the Viking exploration of Vinland is, as Øverland emphasizes, a core aspect of the Norwegian-American homemaking and foundation mythology.[20] This powerful identity narrative was not limited to the Norwegians, however, as it was well represented among Swedes, Icelanders and Danish groups as well. The Norwegians were, however, the ones most eagerly cultivating the image and imaginary of Leif Erikson and, at times, appropriated both Leif Erikson and the Viking Age as such.[21] The Norwegian engagement is significant with regard to the funding and erection of Norse monuments, the performances at the World's Columbian Exposition and the campaign for the celebration of Leif Erikson Day.

The discovery of the Vinland narrative

The Leif Erikson mythology was not reserved for immigrant communities, as it also aligned well with a white, Anglo-Saxon Protestant, anti-Catholic New England elite narrative, promoted since the mid-nineteenth century. The upsurge of American scholarly and popular medievalism, perceiving race as "the driving force of history" and the Teutonic, or Nordic, race as superior, may be seen, as Mancini and Fleming argue, in the context of a traditional elite group striving to bolster and uphold their authority in the country in the face of mass immigration and industrialization.[22]

The relative success of using the Viking narrative for political purposes in a Norwegian and Scandinavian immigrant context from the 1870s onwards is thus based on the existing New England elite interest in Old Norse culture, dating back to the 1830s. The Danish Old Norse scholar and linguist Carl Christian Rafn (1795–1864), a central actor in the Royal Society of Northern Antiquities in Copenhagen, played

a key role in making the Norse voyages to America known to an American audience through the publication of *Antiquitates Americanae* in 1837.[23] This large and grandiose volume was the first modern edition of the Vinland sagas (the *Saga of the Greenlanders* and the *Saga of Erik the Red*), containing accounts of the voyages to and settlement in "Vinland" around the year 1000. Rafn provided the accounts in Old Norse-Icelandic, Danish and Latin and included a summary in English as well as a commentary on a range of alleged historical sites and Viking relics, suggesting that the Vinland area corresponded to New England.[24] The Vinland sagas were soon translated, reworked and circulated to an English-reading audience in the following years. Barnes argues in her seminal book *Viking America* that the edition "attracted the attention of serious scholars", was widely and favourably reviewed and made "an immediate impact", not least upon the New England intellectual and artistic environment.[25] Among the prominent American authors and scholars with whom Rafn stayed in contact was Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, who remained an important supporter of the Leif Erikson movement.

From the late 1860s and 1870s, ethnic leaders, such as the Norwegian-American professor Rasmus B. Anderson (1846–1936) and the Swedish-American Johan Alfred Enander (1842–1910), author and editor of the Swedish-American newspaper *Hemlandet* in Chicago, utilized and further developed the Vinland narrative. They could build on Rafn's account in developing the grand Scandinavian narrative of Leif Erikson and the Vikings as the true discoverers of America and in creating a linkage between Old Norse liberty-loving societies, the modern Vikings – the Scandinavian immigrants – and American democracy. The Viking exploration of the continent thus became the first Scandinavian contribution to North American society. Anderson, Barnes states, appropriated the saga translations "entirely to entrepreneurial ends",[26] and "indefatigably reminded his fellow Americans" – and, it must be added, not least Norwegian and other Scandinavian-Americans – of the Old Norse discovery of America.[27] The campaign, eventually including a range of means, required, Olson argues, an "aggressive ethnic leadership and group consensus" that characterized the Norwegian (and Scandinavian-American) communities.[28]

The main, although controversial, figure here is Anderson. He was born in Wisconsin, son of a pioneer – his father was among the "sloopers" arriving in 1825 from Stavanger – and the first professor of Scandinavian languages in the United States, at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. He was later known as the "Grand Old Man" and the "Father of the Leif Erikson movement", but also, by the more critically, as "a born crusader . . . fearless, pugnacious, and zealous", "irregularly great" and a "valiant fighter".[29] Anderson collaborated closely with his friend, the famous Norwegian violinist Ole Bull, since the late 1860s, and also with Longfellow and others, in promoting the Viking narrative through the erection of a statue of Leif Erikson in Boston (see below). In 1874, Anderson published a political pamphlet of 100 pages, a pugnacious book provocatively titled *America Not Discovered by Columbus*. It had a "heavy and fairly immediate impact"[30] and was to be published in eight editions and translated into Norwegian in 1878,[31] as well as into German and Russian. Since the late 1860s – and continuing throughout

his lifetime – Anderson toured Norwegian America with his lecture on the Norse discovery of America.

In 1874, Enander, probably inspired by Anderson's narrative,[32] published on the Viking discovery as an important part of his *Förenta Staternas historia* (History of the United States). Enander – as well as Anderson – placed, as Blanck argues, Scandinavians "in a superior position vis-á-vis the growing number of Italian immigrants"[33] in what became a competition on the American discovery narrative. In the Swedish-American narrative, Leif Erikson and the Vikings were mainly presented as Northmen (*nordmän*), not Norwegians (*norrmän*): "During the Viking Age in the North, the name Northmen was a common term for Norwegians and Icelanders, Swedes and Danes, roughly equivalent to the newer term Scandinavians", Enander underlines in 1874.[34] Many Americans, as confirmed by later scholars, "made no strict distinctions between Sweden, Norway, and Denmark", and "the Vikings were often seen as 'Scandinavians'; the terms 'Norse' and 'the North' were often used as well".[35] The tendency towards Scandinavian rivalry over the Viking heritage was sharpened by both the American conflation of the respective Scandinavian nationalities into one group and the evolving national conflicts between Swedes and Norwegians in the homelands towards the end of the nineteenth century, culminating in the dissolution of the common union in 1905. There are many examples of Scandinavian cooperation in America, however, both before and after 1905, through pan-Scandinavian associations and in political contexts, and also in connection with Norse commemorations.[36]

Old Norse democracy?

The historical narrative and rhetoric of the Norse discovery of America and the claimed democratic connections became widely disseminated. An illustrative example is a letter to Anderson, reprinted in his book *The First Chapter of Norwegian Immigration*, published in 1896. The letter was presented as an autobiographic sketch, written at the request of Anderson by John Evenson Molee, one of the first farmers in the Muskego settlement. Molee starts by underlining what he terms his "northern, democratic, independent viking instincts" (as, in fact, a reason for not using uppercase letters).[37] He returns to this phrase in the concluding part: Being "a northern democratic viking", he explains, motivates his strong support of the Monroe Doctrine. Molee's presentation of the Viking legacy in America reveals his rather close reading of Anderson's 1874 publication: "Without the influence of the Scandinavians, there would have been no *Magna Carta* in England, and probably no '*Declaration of Independence*' in America".[38] This remarkable statement closely mirrors Anderson's narrative.

Anderson strove to establish a firm link between the culture and society of the Norsemen and that of American democracy. Contrary to Molee, however, Anderson does not – as far as I have seen – use the term "democracy" or "democratic" in his descriptions of Old Norse society, neither in his main publication on the matter, the 1874 pamphlet, nor in his published speech the following year. Scholars have tended to write *democracy* into Anderson's history writing, as presenting

Norwegians as the first to introduce into the English-speaking world "the values of (love for) democracy",[39] describing ancient Norse society as one with "fully developed and broadly based democratic institutions" and arguing that "American democracy was of Norwegian origin".[40] Anderson used other concepts and terms that may be seen, however, as vernacular translations or equivalents as part of the semantic field surrounding the concept of democracy, which otherwise was commonplace in the American context at the time.[41] For conceptual clarifications, though, it is of interest to look into Anderson's terminology in what became a high-profiled piece of propaganda.

He sets out by presenting his subject as of "equal interest to Americans and Norsemen".[42] Norsemen, he explains, mirroring the racial language of the day, are descendants of a "branch of the Teutonic race", which emigrated from Asia and eventually settled in Norway. Foregrounding Norway, he mainly speaks of "Norsemen", whom he characterises as "a bold and independent people. They were a free people. Their rulers were elected by the people in convention assembled, and all public matters of importance were decided in the assemblies, or open parliaments of the people".[43] Emigrants from Norway, he explains, discovered Iceland and established a republic there in 874. The ancient literature and traditions of Iceland – which Anderson knew well as a scholar and translator – "excel anything of their kind in Europe during the middle ages".[44] Anderson presents the Vinland sagas describing the discovery of America by Leif Erikson and additional medieval sources to document beyond doubt the brave voyages of the Norsemen.

An important part of the argument, making the connection between the Old and the New Worlds and between old and new political values even stronger, is the Norsemen's conquering expeditions in Europe. Through Norse heroes such as the Viking chief Ganger Rolf (Rollo), who took possession of Normandy in 912, and his great-grandson, William the Conqueror, who conquered England in 1066, and later, from there on by the Pilgrims on the Mayflower in 1620 to North America, Anderson constructs a proud narrative of the Vikings as bearers of freedom, liberty and justice. The Norse Vikings are thus framed as the ideological founders of vital aspects of American society, freedom and self-governance, which "were claimed to be Viking traits".[45] Anderson, therefore, could conclude:

> Yes, the Norsemen were truly a great people! Their spirit found its way into the Magna Carta of England and into the Declaration of Independence in America. The spirit of the Vikings still survives in the bosoms of Englishmen, Americans and Norsemen, extending their commerce, taking bold positions against tyranny, and producing wonderful internal improvements in these countries.[46]

In Anderson's published speech, delivered at the 50th anniversary of Norwegian emigration to America in 1875, the Norse spirit of freedom – transplanted to Normandy and England – and from there to America – was emphasized in similar, immodest ways. A key expression here is popular freedom (*folkefrihet*), which may be

seen as close to "democracy", an expression also used by the Norwegian national historian Rudolf Keyser,[47] one of the inspirations for Anderson: "Let us not forget that Norway's great advantage is that it is the great, rich source of almost all the popular freedom that exists among men".[48]

In his publications, Anderson "attempted to win a place for New World Norwegians by rewriting the very foundation myths of the American nation".[49] His 1874 English-language publication was not least directed at a New England readership, and, although controversial, his book was "well within the boundaries of the discovery discourse" as practiced by the Anglo-Saxon cultural and social elite, including their conceptions of the "democratic inheritance of the Teutonic race", as Mancini argues.[50] Anderson's narrative accommodated and enhanced an increasing interest in the Viking discovery, which, during the last part of the century, "became intertwined with lines of historical inquiry that linked race and politics in an attempt to explain American democracy as an outgrowth of a distant Anglo-Saxon, Teutonic, or Nordic past".[51]

The writings of Anderson, Enander and other Scandinavian (and American) authors who followed suit were the basis of the Norse historical narrative and the homemaking mythology. To make the Vinland imaginaries forceful, persuasive and meaningful for Scandinavian-Americans and Americans more generally, it had to be retold and culturally recreated; it demanded conscious cultural work. This was done in manifold ways. The main means utilized in this strategic process were, first, the erection of monuments; second, the Norwegian representation at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, through a Viking voyage and what was meant to be "the great memorial picture"; and third, the annual celebration of Leif Erikson Day on 9 October. Rasmus B. Anderson intensely contributed to the first and third of these endeavours; the editor and captain Magnus Andersen, and, more hesitantly and less successfully, the painter Christian Krohg, to the second one (see below).

The theatre of Vinland – transatlantic Norse monuments

The very first monument to commemorate Leif Erikson as the discoverer of America was erected in Boston in 1887 and was, Barnes argues, "perhaps the most significant act in what was to become the nineteenth-century 'theatre' of Vinland".[52] Monuments, Hjorthén underlines, are made to embody "an argument", a material rendering of a "specific past that occupy a public space, with the intention to tell a singular story about that specific past for posterity".[53] The Norse monument movement had two main objectives, or stories to tell. Most importantly, Viking monuments embodied, represented and manifested the official and public recognition of Leif Erikson as the first discoverer of America. Second, the monuments displayed transatlantic relations, embodying a narrative of common origins and belongings. Monuments like these were created by most diaspora immigrant groups in the United States as expressions of transcultural and transatlantic spaces, nourishing national and ethnic identities and community belonging. In her introduction to the

volume *National Matters*, arguing for the necessity of expanding studies of national identities and nationalism, Zubrzycki emphasizes that

> Individuals experience historical narratives and national myths through their visual depictions and material embodiments, as well as in the built environment like architecture, monuments, and the landscape. This renders otherwise distant and abstract discourses close and concrete to them.[54]

Transatlantic monuments have, Hjorthén argues, "for cultural, social, commercial, and very often for political purposes – been intended to create communities that stretch across the Atlantic, based on representations of shared pasts, presents, and futures".[55] The study of monuments and other material expressions thus brings interesting perspectives to the broader discussion of historical narratives and the use of history as a political argument in a transnational and transatlantic context.

Anderson and Bull – functioning as a central transatlantic intermediary – collaborated closely since 1873 in collecting funds for a statue of the Norse hero through concerts and lectures. Bull was seen as quite an idol by many Americans and was well-known in New York and Boston. He was a friend of Longfellow and other prominent scholars of the time. He gave a series of concerts in both the United States and Norway, including one in Bergen with Edvard Grieg and Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson in 1873, as part of the campaign. Anderson often travelled with him, lecturing on the sagas and the Vinland voyages. The Massachusetts committee for the erection of the monument, organized by Bull, consisted of several distinguished members, including Longfellow, the author James Russell Lowell and Professor Eben Norton Horsford, a major, although eccentric player in promoting the Viking heritage of the area. The sculptor Anne Whitney was commissioned with the task. The Scandinavian-American community in the region was proudly participating in the unveiling of the monument in 1887.[56]

A replica of the monument in Boston was placed in Milwaukee later in 1887. The Danish editor, the socialist leader Louis Pio, was among Scandinavians engaged in this activity through his journal *Samfundet*, initiating a Scandinavian fundraising for a gift to Horsford for his role in funding the monuments. Pio presented the cause as a common Scandinavian one. It is only through these kinds of engagements from influential men, Pio argues in the journal, that "we Scandinavians may hope eventually to get the name of Leif Erikson to be recognized by the American nation".[57] The third monument was erected in Chicago in 1901, a bronze statue created by Sigvald Asbjørnsen, which, it was argued in 1936, was "much more representative of the Viking type than the one in Boston", perceived by some as more feminine.[58]

The Leif Erikson movement, focusing on both monuments and the celebration of a specific day for commemoration, was less active for a period until after World War I, but from the 1920s, the level of activities increased considerably.[59] In some cities, monuments of Erikson and Columbus, both as "discoverers of America", co-existed as parallel and competing historical narratives. Columbus monuments soon spread nationwide and across (Southern) Europe, with eventually more than

150 on each continent,[60] while Erikson gathered a more modest number – between 20 and 30 – mainly in the United States, Canada, Iceland, Greenland, Norway and Scotland.[61]

In 1920, a monument of Thorfinn Karlsefni, the brother of Leif Erikson and the first to establish a colony on the new continent, was unveiled in Philadelphia.[62] From 1931, the Minnesota Leif Erikson Monument Association worked for a monument to be erected on the State Capitol grounds of St. Paul, which was unveiled in 1949. A similar initiative in Seattle in 1956 resulted in another monument unveiled in 1963. Monuments also crossed the Atlantic in both directions, as gifts and replicas. The monument of Leif Erikson, situated in front of the Hallgrímskirkja in Reykjavik, was presented as an official gift from the United States to Iceland as part of the millennial celebration of the Icelandic Althing in 1930, while a replica of this statue was erected in Newport News, Virginia, in 1938. One of the later examples is a replica of the Seattle monument, given to Trondheim in 1997, organized by the Leif Erikson International Foundation in Seattle, Washington. The inscription declares – reflecting the position of the presenters more than the receivers – that Leif Erikson is "an important symbol of ethnic pride for Americans of Nordic heritage".[63] In Trondheim, as nothing crosses the Atlantic "without adaption and change",[64] it is also known as the Emigrants' Monument.

America discovers Leif Erikson: The gem and the failure at the World's fair

The Atlantic Sea crossing, from Bergen, Norway, to Chicago in 1893, was a modern Viking voyage of a spectacular kind, making the World's Columbian Exposition, designed to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Columbus' discovery of America, a site also for proclaiming America's Norse origin. The Viking – a replica of the Gokstad ship, excavated in 1880 – soon became, as the *New York Times* reported, the "gem of the Exposition".[65] To many, this "graceful ship" was "like a spectre, a phantom craft" that came out of "the mist of the centuries from a gray and hoary past to demonstrate the truth of Leiv Eiriksson's discovery of America", as it was later described.[66] While the replicas of the three Spanish caravels had to be towed, the Viking ship's triumphant voyage by a crew of 12 men "represented at once history and romance, shipbuilding skill, courage and daring seamanship".[67]

Magnus Andersen, captain of the ship and editor of the maritime newspaper *Norsk Sjøfartstidende* (Norwegian Maritime Newspaper) since his return from New York to Norway in 1890, had announced his plans in Pio's Scandinavian magazine in Chicago, *Samfundet*, in 1889,[68] when he still worked as a leader of the Temperance Seaman's Home in New York. Andersen hoped for official funding in Norway and additional support from Scandinavians in America but ended up with limited or no support from either. A heated discussion in Norway on the correct historical size and construction of ships used during the original Viking explorations cooled down the official interest in the adventure.[69]

Not being part of the official Norwegian representation did not diminish the public and official attention, however, as evidenced by the considerable interest

shown by American newspapers. On the basis of a selection of different newspapers, Andersen suggested that as many as 30,000 newspaper articles and notices were published in American papers concerning the Viking ship during its visit to Chicago,[70] making it the best advertising for Norway at a time when there were few arenas for the promotion of Norwegian national interests abroad.[71] The Chicago exposition was the most significant American cultural event of the late nineteenth century and attracted 27 million international visitors.[72]

Among the memorable ceremonies in the "White City", the enormous exhibition area with almost only white buildings, placed in Jackson Park on the shores of Lake Michigan, was the official welcome of the modern Vikings by the Chicago mayor, Harrison. He underlined the historical bonds between Norway and the United States and the liberty-loving nature of the Norsemen.

> Your people are famed for their sturdy love of liberty, which has always existed and does exist in the land of the Norsemen, for it is the proud boast of all the Scandinavians that no Norseman was ever a slave unless he was conquered by some foreign foe.[73]

In his response, Andersen emphasized the racial connections, in line with Anderson's historical narratives and the contemporary ethnoracial hierarchies in America: "I am proud that it is the Viking blood in the old Anglo-Saxon race that has made it what it is".[74] In a similar vein as Harrison, the Fair president, Potter Palmer, in his official welcome speech, assured his audience that "Every school boy knows the peculiar characteristics of Norway and the Vikings" and that the "Norsemen had the glory of giving the jurisprudence to America".[75] Andersen responded, reiterating the phrase of the "Viking blood in the old Anglo-Saxon race".[76]

The Atlantic voyage of the Viking seized an, as we have seen, "already-primed American imagination" and did much to put Norway and Leif Erikson on the map of America.[77] It changed, Mulligan argues, "the ways Americans conceived of their past – North America could now also be spoken of as Norse America".[78] The emerging Leif Erikson movement, encouraged by the manifold scholarly and cultural work, got, as was described in retrospect in 1936, a "tremendous impetus" from the spectacular event in Chicago.[79]

The great memorial picture

Considerably less, and primarily negative, attention was, however, given to what was meant to be the "great memorial picture" as part of the Art Exhibition in Chicago.[80] The original plan had probably been to provide a monument to commemorate Leif Erikson in Chicago in time for the exhibition. The Leif Erikson Memorial Association in the city realized, however, that this would take too long and settled instead for a historical painting of Leif Erikson as the discoverer of America. A competition was announced in Norway, which caused problems from the start, as a group of Norwegian painters claimed that the jury ought to consist of artists. The famous realism painter Christian Krohg won the competition with his life-size (313 x 470 cm) painting *Leif Erikson Discovering America*.

Although monumental in size, receiving much attention as such, the painting turned out to be a huge disappointment among the Norwegian Americans, calling it a poor piece of work (*Makverk*).[81] They expected to see a heroic memorial picture in a classical, grand style, demonstrating once and for all that Leif Erikson was the real discoverer of America. Instead, they got more of a realistic, not particularly heroic depiction of a Norwegian fisherman or marine pilot, barely recognizable as the great Norse hero.[82]

After the Exposition, the painting was thus returned to Norway. It seems not to be of particular interest for the gradually expanding Leif Erikson movement, although it is occasionally used as an illustration in published material.[83] More usable, and corresponding to popular taste, was another painting, by the romantic painter Hans Dahl, who, it seems, was not deemed worthy of participating in the competition, or he possibly withdraw his painting from it.[84] His painting was, however, the one chosen when the Norwegian-American newspaper *Nordisk Tidende* celebrated that Leif Erikson Day was officially proclaimed, first on a state level, in Wisconsin on 9 October 1929, then on a national level in 1935, with the special issue *Leiv Eiriksson Review* displaying Hans Dahl's "Famous painting" on the front page.[85] The negative reception of Krohg's painting in 1893 was explained in 1936 in this way: "At that time conservative people shook their heads over it as very 'modern'".[86] A renewed American opportunity for the painting, which in the meantime had become something of a national symbol in Norway, came in 1936, based on a Norwegian initiative. This year, a copy of Krohg's painting, executed by his son Per Krohg, was presented to Congress, to be placed in the National Statuary Hall in the Capitol, by Alf Bjercke, representing Norwegian Friends of America.

The memory culture originated among Norwegian Americans, where it served as a usable past in their efforts to become American while remaining Nordic.[87] Krohg's painting was not able to capture the Norwegian-American or the general American imagination, and it never reached the same level of interest among Norwegian Americans as among Norwegians in Norway. The Norwegian interest in the Vinland voyages in general and Leif Erikson in particular notably started in the 1890s, connected to the World's Fair in Chicago.[88]

The divergent reception history of Christian Krohg's painting is elucidating, confirming Mauch's statement that nothing crosses the Atlantic without being changed. The painting soon found its way into the main textbooks in history and as a framed poster reproduction in the classrooms.[89] Bjørgo argues that "very few – if any – historical portraits in Norwegian art history have had such an immediate and lasting effect on identity formation".[90] Before the close of the century, Leif Erikson had become a main symbol in Norway, not only of the golden age in Norwegian history but also of Norwegian emigration to America, one of its greatest joint experiences of the long nineteenth century.[91]

While the painting was celebrated, Magnus Andersen was met with silence upon his return to Norway in 1894. Thirty years later, in 1923, he was honoured by the Norse Federation (Nordmands-Forbundet) in Kristiania (now Oslo) for his achievements in Chicago, causing, it was said, the "American discovery of Norway".[92] In Norway, the Viking voyage has received limited scholarly or public attention until recently.[93] The same goes for the historical painting, which, however,

somewhat unexpectedly, reappeared as a contested issue in public debate in early 2023, demonstrating the national-political mobilizing potential of historical arguments. The reason was a comment by the director of the Department of Collections at the National Museum in Oslo at that time, Stina Högkvist, suggesting that the painting was "colonialistic" as a reason for its storage in the magazine rather than on display as a permanent part of the new exhibition. The Swedish background of the director did nothing to cool the heated reactions, amounting to a veritable shitstorm in social and other media channels. Högkvist probably felt compelled to excuse the chosen terminology, particularly that it was presented without the necessary context.[94] The Norwegian-American context is indeed a necessary background for understanding Krohg's painting. The intended use of it, as part of the Leif Erikson campaign, might well be seen within a general colonial and certainly an ethnoracial framework – even if it did not live up to these expectations. The later reception of the painting in Norway as a valued national image, included in textbooks for generations, makes it historically relevant, although not perceived as one of Krohg's most important works.[95]

Alongside solid monuments, realistic or romantic paintings and spectacular voyages, the transatlantic commemoration of the Norse explorer took on many and multimedial forms, from performances such as street parades, popular feasts and even pantomimes and an opera to compositions, films, medals, stamps, posters and other visual and commercial material, alongside written accounts, journals, prose and fiction, as well as through place-naming practices of parks, squares, drives and a range of associations founded across and beyond Norwegian and Scandinavian America. In his study of Icelandic-American commemoration and their self-styled Viking identity, Halink maintains that the many public references to Leif Erikson or Vinland can be "seen as a 'silent proclamation' of the community's historical rootedness".[96] The Scandinavian-American memory culture and its manifold expressions may likewise be seen as a transnational and immigrant version of banal or ambient nationalism.[97]

The Leif Erikson Day movement

The annual official commemoration of Leif Erikson Day on 9 October, at both the state and federal levels, was a main goal within the expanding Leif Erikson movement, particularly from the 1920s and 1930s. A public celebration would represent an official recognition of the Norse hero as the first white and European discoverer of America and link the distant Scandinavian past with the American present and everyday life. Celebrations had been going on occasionally in certain Norwegian and Scandinavian immigrant communities since the early 1890s as festivals and street parades, encouraged by the historical writings and speeches of Rasmus B. Anderson and others. Anderson had originally suggested a "Grape Festival" in September-October, the time of ripe grapes, alluding to the name Vinland (literary "Wineland"), given to the new continent by the Vikings. A fixed date of 9 October – the date of the arrival of the "sloopers", the first Norwegian emigrants in 1825 – was first agreed upon in 1927, inspired by the centennial celebrations in 1925.[98] The great centennial

celebration in Minneapolis, honoured by the presence of President Coolidge (see also Chapter 11 in this volume), sparked more systematic cultural and political work to promote the Leif Erikson Day cause. Two years earlier, in 1923, the first large Leif Erikson Day was held in Manhattan, initiated by the New York Chapter of the Associates of the American Scandinavian Foundation, founded in 1910. The plan was to make the movement "thoroughly American and to present to the country a united Scandinavian front", including Swedes and Danes in the campaign.[99] Many, primarily Norwegian, societies took up the idea of a celebration of a Leif Erikson Day and incorporated this in their bylaws.

The first important milestone was in 1929, when Wisconsin was the first US state to adopt a law establishing an annual Leif Erikson Day on 9 October, declaring that one half hour "may be devoted in the schools to instructions and appropriate exercises" to commemorate the Norse explorer.[100] This was a main step in making Americans rewrite their history, strongly encouraging the public school, "the prototypical agent of assimilation and Americanization",[101] to teach American children about their Norse ancestors. Several associations were involved in the campaign, such as the Sons of Norway lodges and the Scandinavian American Fraternity, but not least the new nationwide association founded in the same year in Madison, Wisconsin, the Leif Erikson Memorial Association of America. Rasmus B. Anderson, still active, now in his eighties and celebrated as the "father of the movement", became "President emeritus" of the association along with the President, C.A. Hoen. In the following years, similar laws were enacted in the states of Minnesota (1931) and South Dakota (1933), as well as in other states in the United States and Canada later.[102]

The interest in Norway for this celebration was far more modest, including on the part of the main association for Norwegians abroad, the Norse Federation (Nordmands-Forbundet), formed in 1907.[103] In the first issue of the journal *Nordmands-Forbundet*, published in late 1907, there were frequent references to the Viking Age and the Norwegian people as fond of travelling, but there was no mention at all of Leif Erikson and the discovery of America that would otherwise have been relevant.[104] There was gradually more interest in Old Norse history in the journal in the 1920s, and from 1926, the Norse Federation took up the celebration in Norway of Leif Erikson Day, making it an example of what Olsson has termed matching transatlantic and transnational celebrations, happening at the same time both in Norway and among Norwegians in North America.[105] It was commemorated, slightly adapted to the Norwegian context, as "Emigrant Day" (*Utflytterfolkets dag*), from around 1928 to the 1970s, with a reduced interest after the 1950s.[106]

In the American context, the movement and the historical narrative of the first white discoverer of America were gaining influence beyond the Scandinavian immigrant communities, potentially contributing to positioning the Scandinavians within the ethnoracial hierarchy. The terminology of whiteness connected to the Norse narrative was explicit during the 1920s and 1930s, as is evident in the Leif Erikson celebrations. The gradually stricter immigration regulations of the 1920s, however, limited the possibility for Scandinavian migration, as it did not, as Brøndal notes, place the Scandinavians on a par with "old stock" Anglo-Saxon Americans.[107]

In 1929, at the banquet following the signing of the bill in Wisconsin, C.A. Hoen delivered a speech inspired by the racial ideas of the time. The children should now be taught the story of Leif Erikson, Hoen declared: "the first white man who set foot on the mainland of America, of Thorfinn Karlsefni, the first to establish a colony on the American mainland, of the boy, Snorri, first white child born in that colony".[108]

The year 1935 represented the second major milestone, when Congress authorized President Franklin D. Roosevelt to proclaim a national Leif Erikson Day on 9 October, although on a singular basis. At the celebration in Minneapolis, the longstanding Minister of Norway to the United States, Wilhelm Morgenstierne, confidently delivered his address, paying tribute to the memory of the "first Norse immigrant . . . the first of all white immigrants to America". He continued:

> from being a misty tradition, the name of Leiv Eiriksson stands out today as a great living reality in the saga of the world – the old and the new. It is today universally accepted as an historic fact, that a Norseman was the first white man to set his foot on American soil.[109]

Nordisk Tidende celebrated the official recognition with a special issue, *Leiv Eiriksson Review*, where Hans Dahl's heroic painting of Leif Erikson figured prominently. In a comprehensive overview of the Leif Erikson movement, H. Sundby-Hansen starts by declaring that the movement, dating back to Anderson's monument initiative in the 1870s, had "reached proportions greater than ever before in its history".[110] The success of the movement is explained through its broad popular base, as it was

> sponsored in the popular manner by many individuals of Norwegian birth or extraction and by Norwegian-American organizations of various kinds, social and fraternal societies, churches and welfare associations, clubs, civic and political groups, central bodies or leagues of local societies in the larger cities, extending across the country from coast to coast.

Sundby-Hansen could conclude that "The American Leiv Eiriksson Day movement is well under way", believing that "still greater achievements" lay ahead. The Grand Old Man, Rasmus B. Anderson, lived to experience the first national celebration. He died next spring, on 2 March 1936. His message also found its way to Canada, where Knute Haddeland, in a *Leif Erikson Memorial Issue,* argued that "Leif Erikson is gradually, as the debris of legendary mist is being more and more cleared away and the true story of his life becoming better known, emerging as one of medieval history's truly great men".[111]

Leif Erikson was a "truly great", white man, arguably representing a "democratic" Norse society. In the 1935 *Leiv Eiriksson Review*, and hardly coincidentally, the long article on the history of Leif Erikson Day is followed by a short extract of Olaf Morgan Norlie's 1925 volume, *History of the Norwegian People in America*, a book in line with Anderson's filiopietistic and nativist writing. Under the headline

"Physical Characteristics", the explicitly racial description of the Norwegians is quoted, without further comments: "Physically, the Norwegians are the most typical of the Teutons . . . . Scandinavians, and with them Norwegians, are found to be the fairest among the so-called white races".[112]

Conclusion

The Norwegian and Scandinavian-American historical narrative focused, as has been shown, on the Viking legacy as a kind of boreal medievalism, dating the Scandinavian origin in America to Leif Erikson and the Norse discovery of the new continent. The narrative served as a usable past, assisting the Norwegians – and Icelanders, Swedes and Danes – in becoming Americans while remaining Nordic, and could serve as a political argument in the ethnoracial American social and political landscape. The Norwegian-American narrative aligned with that of the New England elite, linking race and politics, the imagined Teutonic or Nordic past and the present American democracy, although Rasmus B. Anderson, it seems, preferred the concept of "popular freedom" to that of "democracy" in describing Viking society.

Through a range of means, spanning from history writing to monuments and the celebration of Leif Erikson Day, America's Norse heritage was promoted both within a transatlantic Norwegian and Scandinavian community and an American white Protestant context. Almost 100 years after the first initiatives and Vinland lectures by Anderson, the Congress of the United States approved, in 1964, by a joint resolution, to authorize the President to proclaim 9 October in each year as Leif Erikson Day. Lyndon B. Johnson directed government officials to display the flag on all government buildings on that day, and he invited the people "to honor on that day the memory of Leif Erikson by holding appropriate exercises and ceremonies in schools and churches, or other suitable places".[113]

The Scandinavian Norse diasporic narrative, thus officially recognized in the United States, was transferred back to the homelands through the tight networks of transatlantic connections, particularly from the 1890s. Although in Norway it could tie into national narratives of a "golden age" before centuries of unification with the neighbouring countries, the Norwegian-American narrative was not to the same degree shared by the population back home. The Norse legacy of Leif Erikson as the discoverer of America is still a part of a transatlantic and transnational repertoire that can be mobilized for contemporary purposes – cultural, commercial, political, racial, identity political, and perhaps even democratic.[114]

Notes

1 Wilentz, "History and Democracy," 37, 101.
2 Sandvik, *Demokratiet i Amerika*.
3 The spelling of this name varies in different contexts. The official Norwegian spelling, Leiv Eiriksson, is also used in some Norwegian-American historical contexts, although I will use the more common English version, Leif Erikson, in this chapter, if not otherwise spelled in the quoted sources.

4 Anderson, *The Centennial*, 47.
5 O'Donoghue, "Old Norse," 249. See also Olson, *Vikings across*; Jana Sverdljuk et al., *Nordic Whiteness*.
6 Godson, "Self-Determination."
7 Øverland, *Immigrant Minds*, 143.
8 Nielsen, "Uses of History."
9 See Olson, *Vikings across*, Blanck, "The Transnational Viking," Halink, "The Good Sense," 160–178.
10 Mulligan, "Migration," 101.
11 Andersson og Magelsen, "Performing a Viking History," 177.
12 Stahl, "Boreal Medievalism."
13 Stahl, "Boreal Medievalism," 3.
14 Stahl, "Boreal Medievalism," 10.
15 Mathiesen, "The Epistolary Practices."
16 Harzig, "Gender, Transatlantic Space," 14.
17 Mauch, "Oceans Apart?," 12.
18 Struck, "Introduction," 575.
19 There are several important exceptions to this rule published recently, however, such as Brøndal, "The Fairest"; Rasmussen, C*ivil War Settlers*; Sverdljuk et al., *Nordic Whiteness*; Jackson, *Scandinavians in Chicago*; Norman and Runblom, *Transatlantic Connections*. See also Ax, *Nordic Migration*, 11.
20 Øverland, *Immigrant Minds*, 143.
21 Lovoll, "Leiv Eriksson som symbol," 124.
22 Mancini, "Discovering," 873–877; Fleming, "Picturesque History," 1078.
23 Rafn, *Antiquitates Americanae*. Rafn's network of American scholars and writers are currently studied by Kim Simonsen as part of the research project Reclaiming the Northern Past (Reykjavik Academy).
24 Rafn, *Antiquitates Americanae*; Barnes, *Viking America*, 37; Forssling, *Nordicism*, 46.
25 Barnes, *Viking America*, 46–48; 117; 121, Blanck, "The Transnational," 6.
26 Barnes, *Viking America*, 55.
27 Skard, *The United States*, 77.
28 Olson, *Vikings across*, 111.
29 Knaplund, "Rasmus B. Anderson," 23; 24; 43.
30 Mulligan, "Migration," 114, see also Olson, *Vikings across*.
31 Anderson, *Amerika*.
32 Øverland, *Immigrant Minds*, 124.
33 Blanck, "The Transnational," 11.
34 Enander, *Förenta Staternas*, 51.
35 Blanck, "The Transnational," 5.
36 On Scandinavian associations abroad, see Hemstad (2023).
37 Anderson, *The First Chapter*, 301.
38 Anderson, *The First Chapter*, 319–320.
39 Olson, *Vikings across*, xix, 45 ff.
40 Øverland, *Immigrant Minds*, 146, 150, 169.
41 On the use of the term Democracy in Europe and America, see the project Re-imagining Democracy, https://re-imaginingdemocracy.com/ and Innes and Philp, *Re-imagining Democracy*.
42 Anderson, *America Not Discovered*, 36.
43 Anderson, *America Not Discovered*, 49.
44 Anderson, *America Not Discovered*, 56.
45 Blanck, "The Transnational," [13].
46 Anderson, *America Not Discovered*, 63.
47 Keyser, *Udsigt*.
48 Anderson, *Tale ved Femti-Aarsfesten*, 24.

49 Mancini, "Discovering," 864.
50 Mancini, "Discovering," 881.
51 Mancini, "Discovering," 873, see also Fleming, "Picturesque History," 1077–1078.
52 Barnes, *Viking America*, 56.
53 Hjorthén, "Transatlantic Monuments," 106, 97. See also Guttormsen, "Valuing immigrant."
54 Zubrzycki, "Introduction," 5.
55 Hjorthén, "Transatlantic Monuments," 103.
56 On the Boston monument, see Guttormsen, "Valuing immigrant."
57 "Circulære til alle skandinaviske Foreninger," *Samfundet*, 1889, 883.
58 Sundby-Hansen, "Popular Nationwide."
59 See Olson, *Vikings across*; Sundby-Hansen, "Popular Nationwide."
60 Hjorthén, "Transatlantic Monuments," 96.
61 This number includes statues and replicas, tablets and plaques. For an overview, see Guttormsen, "Valuing Immigrant," 83–84, https://leiferiksson.vanderkrogt.net/ and https://www.leiferikson.org/Timeline.htm. Guttormsen is currently working on a volume on the history of Norse monuments in America (and beyond).
62 The statue was toppled into the nearby river by protesters in 2018 as a reaction to white nationalists's usage of the site on Leif Erikson Day, "Philly's Thorfinn Karlsefni Statue Toppled Into Schuylkill River," *NBC10 Philadelphia*, 2 October 2018, https://www.nbcphiladelphia.com/news/local/thorfinn-karlsefni-statue-schuylkill-river/191603/ (accessed 1 March 2025).
63 https://www.leiferikson.org/Trondheim.htm.
64 Mauch, Oceans Apart?," 12.
65 Jackson, *Scandinavians*, 51.
66 Sundby-Hansen, "Popular Nationwide," 12.
67 Sundby-Hansen, "Popular Nationwide," 12.
68 Harry Randall, "Korrespondanser. Hr. Redaktør!," *Samfundet*, 1989, 1003–1005.
69 See Brenna, "Verden som ting," 406–414.
70 Andersen, *Vikingefærden*, 434, see also Archer, "Vikingferden i 1893."
71 Norway at this time had no formal foreign policy of its own due to the union with Sweden.
72 Jackson, *Scandinavians*, 59.
73 "Viking Ship Arrives," "Mayor Harrison's Welcome," *The Daily Inter Ocean*, 12 July 1893; the newspaper clippings are found in the scrapbook "Viking ship" [1893], at the National Library of Norway; see also Andersen, *Vikingefærden*, 427–430.
74 "Response by Captain Andersen," *The Daily Inter Ocean*, 12 July 1893; *The Chicago Tribune*, 13 July 1893, "Viking Ship."
75 "Viking Is in Port," "President Palmer's Welcome," *The Chicago Tribune*, 13 July 1893, "Viking Ship."
76 "Viking Is in Port," "Capt. Andersen's Response," *The Chicago Tribune*, 13 July 1893, "Viking Ship."
77 Mulligan, "Migration," 101.
78 Mulligan, "Migration," 101.
79 Sundby-Hansen, "Popular Nationwide," 2.
80 "Chr. Krohgs Leif Erikson og Amerikanerne," *Morgenbladet*, 29 October 1893.
81 "Chr. Krohgs 'Leif Erikson'," A*ftenposten*, 17 October 1893, quoted from the Norwegian-American newspaper *Norden*.
82 Brenna, "Ting som fortelling," 421, see also Hemstad, "Leiv Eiriksson."
83 As in the "Program for Dedication of Leiv Eiriksson Square," Brooklyn, N.Y. 1925. 552 Leif Erikson Papers, NAHA Archives.
84 Ljøgodt, *Historien fremstilt*, *165*.
85 H. Sundby-Hansen, "Leiv Eiriksson Conquering America," *Nordisk Tidende*, 26 September 1929; *Leiv Eiriksson Review*.
86 "Scandinavians in America," *The American-Scandinavian Review* (Summer 1936): 172.

87 Guttormsen, "Valuing Immigrant."
88 Bjørgo, "Leiv Eiriksson," 109.
89 Bjørgo, "Leiv Eiriksson"; Hemstad, "Leiv Eiriksson."
90 Bjørgo, "Leiv Eiriksson," 110.
91 Skard, *The United States*, 77.
92 *Nordmands-Forbundet*, 1923, 16, 148.
93 See however Archer, "Vikingferden i 1893."
94 Stina Högkvist, "Derfor sa jeg 'kolonialistisk'," *Aftenposten* 13 March 2023, https://www.aftenposten.no/meninger/kronikk/i/ve9324/derfor-sa-jeg-kolonialistisk (accessed 5 November 2024).
95 The Norwegian art historian Øystein Sjåstad is working on a monograph on Krohg and this painting, see also his forthcoming "A Cultural Biography of Christian Krohg's *Leiv Eiriksson's Discovering/Arrival in America* (1893)," in *(Post)Colonial Norway: Interdisciplinary Studies on Norway's Entanglement with Colonialism and its Aftermath*, edited by Christa Wirth and Monica Grini (Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 2026).
96 Halink, "The Good Sense," 169.
97 Billig, *Banal Nationalism*. On ambient nationalism/Scandinavianism, see van Gerven, *Scandinavism*.
98 Sundby-Hansen, "Popular Nationwide." The following presentation is based on this article.
99 Sundby-Hansen, "Popular Nationwide."
100 See also Anderson, *Leif Erikson Day*.
101 Mancini, "Discovering," 883.
102 In Illinois in 1937, Washington 1941, Colorado 1943 and in the province of Saskatchewan, Canada in 1946.
103 See also Hemstad, "Emigrant Colonialism."
104 "Et forbund av alle Nordmænd," *Nordmands-Forbundet* 1 (October 1907): 1–5.
105 Olson, *Vikings across*, 160.
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10 Nation-building, land and contact zones in South Dakota and Finnmark County, Norway, 1890–1910

Terje M.H. Joranger

Introduction

While Indigenous populations in various locales have regarded land as a communal resource based on sustainability, authorities in agrarian western societies have historically valued land as a source of status, wealth and investment. As part of nation-building strategies around the turn of the last century, authorities in the United States and Norway initiated land legislation with the purpose of settling public lands for preferred ethnic groups and for civilizing Indigenous populations. In this process of nation-building, authorities favoured white settler populations by selling public lands. At the same time, the same authorities would marginalize Indigenous populations who inhabited the very same lands that the latter regarded as their homeland.

This chapter forms part of a research project in progress, which aims at portraying the relations between Indigenous populations and Norwegian settler populations in two case studies. It focuses primarily on land as a contact zone between the two groups in light of federal legislation and constructed ethnoracial hierarchies. It includes the Sámi population in Finnmark County, Norway and Native Americans in the Sisseton and Wahpeton or Lake Traverse Reservation in Sisseton, Roberts County, in the Great Plains region in present-day South Dakota. The study areas include interactions between Norwegian immigrant settlers on two continents in defined locales or contact zones. Several scholars in the United States have noted the construction of ethnoracial hierarchies in multicultural societies where the dominant ethnic group, including an elite, defined the position of the various groups on the matter of their racial credentials. The Indigenous populations in Norway and the United States had an inferior position in the constructed hierarchy because their culture and ethnic credentials did not match the expectations of the elite.

Norway and the United States followed two varied paths towards the Indigenous populations within their borders during their respective society-building periods in the nineteenth century. While Norway embraced a strategy of forced assimilation called Norwegianization, the US federal government employed a racialized strategy of dispossession and removal of their Indigenous populations to reservations. Both in Norway and in the United States, the strategies were aimed at securing the central authorities' control over their respective countries. A Truth

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and Reconciliation Commission was appointed by the Norwegian parliament in 2018 in order to investigate centuries of repressive state policies towards the Indigenous Sami and Kven/Norwegian Finns minority in Norway.[1] As part of the nation-building process in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the central authorities in the United States and Norway established a policy of selection in terms of which population groups were preferred as developers in the nation- or empire-building process and which groups should not be part of the process.

Legislation and settlement in Norway

The last decades of the eighteenth and most of the nineteenth century represented a period of expansion and settler colonization in western societies. The central authorities enacted legislation in order to control the territory and to ensure the inclusion of wanted population groups. For example, several treaties between 1751 and 1826 settled the border in northern Norway between Norway, Sweden, Russia and the Grand Duchy of Finland. Following the war between Sweden and Russia in 1809, Sweden lost Finland to the Russian empire. As a consequence, the regions near the Finnish border opened up for expansion and land-taking. As a result, Finns in the region immigrated to Norway. The East Sámi population in this area were engaged in reindeer herding in the border region. The rich resources in fishing and land cultivation resulted in an influx of Finns from the mid-nineteenth century, and they gradually outnumbered the Norwegian population. As part of a nation-building strategy, the Norwegian central authorities started to develop the region through road construction and a policy of settlement. The increase of Kven immigrants in Finnmark County and the northern part of Troms County in the 1870s alarmed the Norwegian government. They regarded the large influx of Kvens as a danger to national security in the region, and, as a consequence, the authorities started the building of roads and the establishment of new farmsteads as a measure to halt the Kven influence in the border districts, especially in Pasvik in the Varanger region.[2] Moreover, the authorities developed an increasing Norwegianization process that aimed at securing control of Norwegian ethnic, cultural and religious authority within the Norwegian border. Legislation was a significant tool for the central government in this process, including the Land Sales Act of 1863 and 1902 and the Citizenship Acts of 21 April 1888. The Land Sales Act of 1902 became tied to racial credentials. According to §1 c) in the act, which included the survey and sale of public lands, it could "only apply to Norwegian citizens . . . who can speak, read and write the Norwegian language and practice it on a daily basis". In practice, the law thus marginalized large groups in the region, including members of the Sámi population and Kvens (Norwegian Finns) who did not master the language. Later studies have shown that the language clause in the Land Sales Act of 1902 did not materialize and that Norwegian citizens, regardless of language use in daily life, could purchase public land. Yet, the regulations resulted in a mark of inferiority on Norwegians who did not speak Norwegian on a daily basis.[3]

The Sámi population in Norway was gradually marginalized during the nineteenth century. During the Dano-Norwegian union, which was dissolved in 1814,

attitudes towards the Sámi population were relatively positive. The personal royal union between Norway and Sweden in 1814 also gave Norway an independence in domestic affairs. The development of a nationalistic ideology influenced the nation- and state-building of the young Norwegian nation-state. According to historian Steinar Pedersen, this ideology included a forced assimilation of Indigenous and minority groups and "gradually defined the Sámi population as an inferior group without culture and civilization, and without rights of ownership to land and resources in the northern part of the country". Moreover, the majority population employed the state as a tool to advance their interests in order to unify the people, state, culture and legislation into the nation-state. The Sámi population had a limited position in this development. The *Lappekodisillen*, a codicil that was introduced by the Dano-Norwegian authorities in 1751, gave recognition to the Sámi as a separate but stateless group in the Nordic countries. As a consequence of the nationalist ideology that dominated the nation- and state-building process from the mid-nineteenth century, Norwegian authorities dismantled the codicil.[4] The nationalistic ideology resulted in an intent to assimilate the Indigenous and the minorities in Norway. The assimilation took on forces of Norwegianization of the groups' culture and language, which especially applied to Finnmark County and the northern portion of neighbouring Troms County.[5] Norwegian national historians Rudolf Keyser and Peter Andreas Munch had a great impact on the direction of nation-building, among others, in their practical erasure of Sámi history and culture in Norway. Their "immigrant theory" stated that Germanic Norse tribes had immigrated to present-day Norway from the East and the North (see also Chapter 6 in this volume). These tribes, who were the ancestors of the Norwegian people, owned land and established a state based on legal principles. The Sámi population, on the other hand, were nomadic and did not own their own land. The independent Norwegian farmers were thus hailed as the true people.[6]

Legislation and settlement in the United States

The establishment of the young republic of the United States in the 1780s shared some similar characteristics with the domestic independence of Norway in the development of a nation- and state-building process. This included, among others, the opening of new regions for settlement based on exploration and new legislation. The Ordinance of 1785 and the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 were two significant pieces of legislation for the settlement of agricultural regions in the United States. According to the provisions of the Ordinance of 1785, surveyors would divide all government-owned land into townships of six miles square. The creation of townships by federal law was carried out for the purpose of making available identifiable and saleable tracts of land to individuals. The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 prepared the basis for westward expansion through various stages and also framed the legal and political boundaries for future generations. The Louisiana Purchase of 1803 is significant in this context. It covered a vast region stretching from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains to the West and included a territory that the federal government of the United States purchased from the State of France.

Later, the US government expanded their land base westward through the war with Mexico between 1846 and 1850.[7] The ordinance created the body of land called the Northwest Territory, with the provision that it eventually be carved into new territories, and it also established the stages through which each territory was to become a state and how it was to be governed. Finally, a section of the Ordinance contained a bill of rights that, among others, guaranteed the people of the Northwest Territory freedom of worship and certain privileges.[8]

Land acts in the United States were a strategy to people, cultivate and civilize the American continent in the nineteenth century. The first Naturalization Bill, 1790, stated that only free whites of good character with two years' residence in the United States could become naturalized citizens.[9] According to Matthew Frye Jacobson, the naturalization law of 1790 created a dual terrain for the "fit" and the "unfit" for self-government.[10] The American historiography of expansion thus "*justifies* American expansion by a combined logic of race, righteousness, and civilization".[11] By way of legislation, non-preferred groups were kept outside the nation-building process of the Anglo-American elite during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Land policy also was an instrument that the US authorities employed in their removal of unwanted groups. During the first decades of the nineteenth century, the US authorities launched a process of removal towards the Indigenous populations as a definite policy and a measure to populate their lands with white settlers.[12]

The development of a nation-building ideology favoured settler populations from Christian European countries where landownership and legal rights were established institutions and laid the foundation for mass immigration from Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. A prerequisite of the settling of the public lands was the purchase of millions of acres of land from Native Americans by the federal government of the United States. Through treaties and dispossession, federal authorities dispossessed and displaced the American Indians and assigned them to reservations.

The American lawmakers belonged to an Anglo-American elite who regarded themselves as the founders of the American republic and American democracy. As white immigrants, they were entitled to own property as opposed to being property in the capacity of being slaves.[13] They were in position to organize various ethnic groups in a constructed ethnoracial hierarchy where the elite was on top of this hierarchy and placed other groups in various positions relative to one another according to a set of characteristics that proved favourable to the elite. Many European immigrants, including Norwegians and other Scandinavians, entered the United States from homogeneous societies in their homeland. As immigrants in the United States, they were ascribed as privileged immigrants and ranked on the top portion of the constructed ethnoracial hierarchy and became white over time (see also Chapter 5 in this volume). The creation of racial hierarchies developed in Europe following colonization and encounters between colonists and the population in the conquered territories. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, scholars developed the idea that the culture of the European elite was superior to non-European cultures. It was also more prone to represent civilization and reason

than other cultures. In the first part of the nineteenth century, studies of race were institutionalized in France and England within the fields of ethnology and anthropology. In these studies, scholars created racial hierarchies in which the various races were placed according to certain characteristics. These ideas soon spread to the United States, where scholars developed racial studies, stating that racial differences must have consequences for the organization of society.[14] Similar hierarchies based on social Darwinism and other theories also existed in the Scandinavian countries. In Norway, the positioning of various racial hierarchies was not only prevalent with regard to the Indigenous population, the Sámi, but also applied to Kvens (Norwegian Finns) and Forest Finns.[15]

Land as contact zones: The Lake Traverse reservation

As white settlement proceeded on these lands westward within the boundaries of the United States from the mid-nineteenth century, they exerted pressure on Indigenous nations and their way of life and culture on lands that they regarded as their homelands. From 1832 until 1871, American Indian nations were considered to be domestic, dependent tribes. This meant that negotiated treaties between tribes and the United States had to be approved by the US Congress. For example, according to the Treaties of Traverse des Sioux and Mendota in Minnesota Territory in 1851 between the federal government and four bands of the Dakota, the latter ceded approximately 24 million acres in present-day Minnesota, South Dakota and Iowa. They left a strip of reservation land along the banks of the Minnesota River. Besides, funds were set aside for the construction of schools and other services, while the rest was to be placed in an account managed by the federal government. From that account, the bands were to receive an annual interest payment in both cash and goods.[16] The Sisseton and Wahpeton spoke the Siouan language and were part of *Oceti Sakowin*, the "People of the Seven Council Fires". In the treaty of 1805 and all subsequent treaties, the Dakota are referred to as the "Sioux", a label that was drawn from the Ojibwe nation (previously referred to as Chippewa). They alluded to the Seven Council Fires as the Little Adder Snakes, which was translated into the French language and shortened to "Sioux".[17] According to oral tradition, the Dakota originated near the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi rivers.[18]

Two bands of Dakota, Sissetons and Wahpetons, were involved in the signing of several treaties about land cessions with the federal government between 1805 and 1851. Since the seventeenth century, fur traders had established trading posts and Catholic missionaries had established churches on Indian territories, thus altering the ways of life of the Dakota population.[19] Treaties where various tribes bequeathed their land to the federal government of the United States for a certain amount of money altered Indigenous cultures even more.[20] The advance of settlers following the opening of new territories brought additional pressure upon then-existing Indigenous land. As the US government kept more than 80 percent of the money promised through the treaties, with only the interest on the amount paid to the Dakota, the latter were starving. By 1862, stripped of their land, left without the food and money promised to them and pressured by an increasing number of

immigrant settlers, members of the Dakota went to war with the US government, leading to the US-Dakota War. The war created traumatic relations between the Dakota and settler populations, and relations between settlers and the Indians would enter a phase of hostility and suspicion for many years to come.[21]

Five years following the US-Dakota War in 1862, two subdivisions of the Dakota Indians, the Sisseton and the Wahpeton, made their home in the newly formed Lake Traverse Indian Reservation in Dakota Territory. The two bands did not lift arms against the US federal army during the US-Dakota War.[22] An 1891 Act of Congress ratified an 1889 agreement between the Indians and the federal government, in which each Indian on the reservation was allotted 160 acres of land. The remaining unallotted land was sold to the United States, which opened it to settlers. A consequence of the 1891 Act was that Indians and non-Indians alike were to occupy the territory within the boundaries of the reservation as created by the 1867 treaty. Indian lands were scattered in a random pattern throughout the territory.[23] The passing of another act resulted in the creation of a multicultural environment in the reservation, enabling white settlers to settle within the boundaries of the reservation. The General Allotment Act, or Dawes Act, of 1887 stated that surplus land in reservations – land that had been divided and sold as individual lots to tribal members – could be sold to white homesteaders. Reformers of legislation pertaining to the Indigenous populations by now stated that Indians were ready for citizenship and that they should be exposed to a capitalist society. In other words, the act was a measure to civilize Native Americans by adhering to American culture. According to historian Gary Clayton Anderson, the act was partly initiated by social Darwinists who were inspired by the notion of survival of the fittest and who accepted that those who didn't succeed should perish. The law paved the way for land ownership, which symbolized the backbone of American democracy. Furthermore, Anderson states that the act in essence "was seen as the solution to the Indians' penchant to live communally". Lawmakers assumed that when American Indians acquired individual ownership of land and the citizenship rights attached to land ownership, this would make them civilized and good Americans.[24]

In terms of American law, the Dawes Act emphasized severalty, namely the treatment of Native Americans as individuals rather than as members of tribes.[25] Negotiations were initiated in Washington, and a commission was appointed in 1889, as mentioned by the observer in the *Sioux Valley News* in 1892. The commission reached an agreement with the Sisseton and Wahpeton tribe regarding the opening up of the settlement and for the Indians to sell surplus land. As a consequence of land-taking by white settlers, Indigenous populations and settlers from different Euro-American origins came to live in close proximity to one another.

The triangular-shaped Lake Traverse Indian Reservation covered portions of the Great Plains region in northeastern South Dakota and extended into North Dakota.[26] French astronomer and cartographer Joseph N. Nicollet was one of the explorers who laid the foundations for settlement in the region. In two expeditions in 1838 and 1839 sponsored by the United States government, Nicollet made observations in the triangle of land which is situated between the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. Among others, he conducted a study of the Coteau des Prairies, a plateau that is

situated 700 to 800 feet above the prairies in present-day eastern South Dakota and which runs through the region where the Lake Traverse Indian Reservation later was created.[27] During his mapping of the Coteau des Prairies, Nicollet observed that the region was not settled by white settlers. Nicollet developed good relations with the Dakota tribes, including the Sisseton and Wahpeton, who were living in the region of study. Yet Nicollet echoed the sentiments of the American authorities in mapping the land for the purpose of surveying and selling the land to white settlers. According to Nicollet biographer Martha Coleman Bray,

> [the region] presented an opportunity to civilization – an opportunity to develop the use of the land through knowledge of its character . . . . The government must know more about the land in its great variety before it was sold off in small lots.[28]

All told, 574,000 acres of Sisseton and Wahpeton lands were open to settlement. The agreement stated that land was reallotted, giving each man or woman 160 acres, and each child under 21 was to get 40 acres. Those who had already received allotments would get an additional acreage in order to make the total holdings equivalent to 160 acres. On the opening of the reservation, thousands of potential settlers were standing along the reservation line, which was guarded so that the land-seekers would not cross the line ahead of time.[29]

One of the results of the Dawes Act was the rapid loss of land allotments to white purchasers after 1892. New acts reduced the land held by tribal members; the federal government in 1902 followed up the Dawes Act by passing the Appropriations Act that allowed allotted lands that had been inherited to be sold. As a result of changes in the land laws, white settlers became owners of about 20,000 acres of reservation land that formerly belonged to American Indians by 1910. The Sisseton and Wahpeton people continued to sell or lease their land within the limits of the reservation. During the 1920s, for example, falling wheat prices resulted in the loss of more land. According to Anderson, the end result of the allotment policy was a loss of two-thirds of land that belonged to the Sisseton and Wahpeton people in 1887. By 1969, tribal members were owners of only 105,000 acres out of the original 340,000 acres that had been allotted, whereas 850 acres was communal land owned by the tribe.[30]

The Great Plains region has received limited attention from Norwegian-American scholars. The culture area of the region comprises a vast grassland stretching between and from the provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta in Canada to Texas in the United States to the south. Prior to white settlement, the region was populated by several culture groups that encompassed six distinct Indigenous language families.[31] Also, relatively few scholars have undertaken studies on inter-ethnic relations between Scandinavian and Indigenous populations in the United States, with some exceptions.[32] Karen V. Hansen's eminent study *Encounter on the Great Plains* on Scandinavian settlements in the Spirit Lake Dakota Reservation in North Dakota between 1890 and 1930 forms an exception. In her study, she relates to the entangled relationships that developed between the Dakota Indians in the

reservation and the Scandinavian population after a large portion of the acreage had been sold to the settlers. In her study, she brings forward two dominant processes in American history, namely the continuing immigration of people to the United States and "the protracted dispossession of indigenous peoples who inhabited the continent".[33] The following part of this chapter focuses primarily on land as a contact zone between the two groups in light of federal legislation and constructed ethnoracial hierarchies.

Many Scandinavian immigrants took advantage of the Dawes Act, and many were to settle on land that originally was held by Sisseton and Wahpeton tribal members. The interactions between Norwegian and other European settlers and members of the band of Sisseton and Wahpeton were tied to the use of the land. In settler societies where land-taking is an essential part of society building, it is relevant to connect these interactions to literary scholar Mary Louise Pratt's concept of *contact zones*. Her concept defines "social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power".[34] The asymmetrical relations are relevant between Indigenous and settler populations in the areas of study in Finnmark, Norway, and South Dakota, the United States.

Newspapers as time witnesses

How did observers in local and regional newspapers in the two locales display inter-ethnic relations between settlers and the Indigenous population? In this study, we have included two newspapers in Finnmark County, Norway, and two newspapers in Roberts County, South Dakota. The newspapers from Norway are *Finnmarksposten* and the *Finnmarken*. *Finnmarksposten* was established in Hammerfest in 1866 as a weekly. The newspaper had conservative leanings and at the latest in 1918 became the main organ for the Norwegian Conservative Party, *Høyre*, in Western Finnmark. In 1992, the newspaper merged with the newspaper *Finnmark Dagblad*, which still holds the editorial responsibility for *Finnmarksposten*.[35] *Finnmarken* was established in Vardø in 1899 and originally represented the perspectives of the Norwegian Liberal Party, *Venstre*, to "advocate points of view about a democratic development in public and municipal life" and to promote regional interests. *Finnmarken* soon developed as a socialist newspaper and in 1906 declared to advocate the views of the labour movement. Until 1924, the editors of the newspapers were hired from the radical politicians of Vardø, some of whom had ties to revolutionaries in Russia.[36]

The *Sisseton Weekly Standard*, a weekly English-language newspaper, began publication in 1892 in Roberts County, South Dakota. The *Standard* supposedly was the first newspaper established in Sisseton and was published originally by Gilbert O. Kively. In 1894, Kively sold the *Standard* to Casper Kennedy, who operated the newspaper for the next ten years. On 23 December 1904, Kennedy in turn sold the *Standard* to Charles C. Knappen, who was responsible for the newspaper's publication until his death in 1911. He turned the newspaper into an eight-page, six-column weekly. It originally had no political affiliation but later

evolved into a Republican paper. In 1929, Albert Adams purchased the Standard and merged it with his paper, the *Sisseton Courier*.[37] The *Sisseton Posten*, a four-page Norwegian-language publication, was established in Effington, approximately 15 miles northeast of Sisseton, also in Roberts County, in 1902 by Eivind Trockstad, an immigrant from Drammen. After settling in Roberts County, he realized that many settlers preferred seeing the news in their native language. He named the paper after the local Sisseton Wahpeton Native American tribe living on what is now known as the Lake Traverse Reservation in Roberts County. His brother Axel became editor in 1909, when the newspaper moved to Sisseton. Each issue included a column which was titled "Effington og Omegn" (Effington and Region), which brought reports on family and other visitors stopping by local citizens' homes, travel experiences, crime reports and opinions. The newspaper also brought happenings in the nearby states of Minnesota, North Dakota, Iowa and Wisconsin, which helped local Norwegians stay in touch with other Norwegian or Scandinavian settlers in the region. In addition, the weekly column "Norge", or "Norway", kept the Norwegian subscribers in touch with their homeland news. The *Sisseton Posten* continued publication for several more years before being discontinued.[38]

Several annual issues of each of the newspapers have been studied in detail in order to locate observances in the newspapers on interactions between the Norwegian and the Indigenous populations in Finnmark and in the Lake Traverse reservation. Both the *Finnmarken* and the *Finnmarksposten* had limited news coverage about the Sámi population.[39] The *Finnmarksposten* had conservative leanings and had a focus on economic life in the region, including fisheries and trade in its issues. The *Finnmarken* developed into a socialist paper and presented articles on the labour movement, women's rights, prohibition and other topics. One of the few findings in *Finnmarksposten* included a criticism of representative Saba from East Finnmark, a member of the Storting, regarding the migration pattern of reindeer.[40] An issue of the *Finnmarken* in 1906 contained a letter from Anders Larsen, the editor of *Sagai Muittalæge*, the first Sámi newspaper. Larsen had reacted to earlier reports in the newspaper that included misconceptions about "Finns" (Sámi). His criticism in the newspaper was a defence for Indigenous culture, which was influenced by assimilation. The response of the editor was harsh and related that the Sámi was "weak hunting and fishing tribe [that] has found a real good sanctuary in Norway".[41]

The newspapers in Roberts County, South Dakota, had limited news coverage about interactions. The Norwegian language newspaper *Sisseton Posten* had a strong emphasis on being a bridge builder between Norwegians in the Sisseton region, in the Midwest, and, to a lesser extent, in Canada. News columns from Norway indicated that the readership of the newspaper enjoyed learning news about their homeland. The English language newspaper *Sisseton Weekly Standard*, which had eight to ten pages as opposed to the *Sisseton Posten* with four pages, had longer news articles about cultural events and world news and also placed a greater emphasis on the various immigrant groups in the Sisseton area. In the issues studied, Native Americans were mostly referred to certain cases tied to economy, crime and

activities within the group. For example, there are reports about annual payments from the federal government and the sale of Indian inherited land within the limits of the Sisseton Agency.[42] Some reports also have racialized descriptions of Native Americans, and there are references to several court cases where Native Americans were sentenced for crimes – mostly to other Native Americans. Other reports mentioned the organization of activities among the Native Americans in the Sisseton region. One issue of the *Sisseton Posten* had a mention of an Indian "Fair" that was going to be held in the Indian Agency in October 1909. It was to include the sale of products and animals and that exclusively Native Americans were recipients of prizes.[43] Another issue reported that Native Americans made preparations for their annual Christmas gathering with a Christmas tree in Big Cooley Church.[44] The only direct reference to interactions between Norwegians and Native Americans in the Sisseton area is mentioned in a notice in the *Sisseton Posten* about Ida Joyce Monson, a woman who was born to Norwegian immigrants in Elbow Lake, Minnesota. She was married to Indian minister John Savage, who was secretary for Indian Chief Kohler. Ida Joyce had earlier taught in the Sisseton school but had moved to Cleveland, Ohio, where she had acquired recognition for being the first "official mother" for unhappy young women. She used her experience from her time with young girls in the Sisseton reservation and the Black Hills by stating that she had a call to take care of and to guide young, poor, unhappy girls.[45]

Due to the limited, and partly lacking, existence of documentation from newspapers, it is difficult to state a conclusion about the existence of interactions between Norwegians – in Norway and the United States – and Indigenous populations. In general, the newspapers in Norway and in the United States give the impression that Norwegians and Sámi in Finnmark and Norwegian immigrants and Dakota were living in separate worlds, although they were living in the same region. For example, the newspapers in Roberts County stated that Norwegians in the Lake Traverse reservation interacted with other Norwegians not only in the region but also in other portions of the United States and in Canada. On the one hand, there is no mention of organized interactions between the groups. This said, the news reports do not bear any mention of hatred and opposition between them. Yet, a mentality tied to civilization and progress was expressed by various white observers in the newspaper issues. In the Sisseton Weekly Standard, a witness described the modernization of the Sisseton mission:

> Located in a fertile country, with its vast fields and herds of cattle, once the home of the buffalo and the savage, are the institutions that have perhaps done more than any other agency toward the uplifting of a mighty race of people . . . . The buildings of the mission stand in the midst of a large worked farm. And here, the children of the savage have, for several decades, been taught the ways of civilization and to become useful citizens of the land over which their fathers roamed in its primitive environment.[46]

The findings partly corroborate Karen V. Hansen's study on Scandinavian settlers in the Lake Traverse reservation in North Dakota. Through oral interviews and

research from archives, she could identify the entangled relationships between Dakota and Norwegians. Both groups made claims to the land by constructing homes, and neither group "followed the road to assimilation planned by government officials and reformers". Instead, they created their life within their own premises.[47]

This chapter calls for more transnational studies, including the use of written and oral primary source material. Norwegian-American studies on these interactions have primarily described the attitude among Norwegians towards the Dakota, in which the latter have largely been erased from the narrative. By including narratives from both Dakota, Sámi and Norwegians, we could get a better understanding of their interactions. Both written and oral source material may add valuable information to supplement and contextualize newspaper columns regarding interactions between Indigenous and settler populations. The existence of local narratives may fill out historical data that does not exist in other sources. Oral-based knowledge systems are predominant among Indigenous cultures. In this respect, oral source information from informants in the localities studied forms a relevant supplement to the written first- and secondary-source material in this study. For example, oral interviews with tribal members in localities with mixed Native American and Norwegian presence, in addition to written primary source material, would supplement existing sources. Interviews with members of the Sisseton and Wahpeton Oyate (group) shed light on their relationships with Norwegians. References to the ethnic "Other" did exist. For example, one Dakota informant mentioned that the Dakota referred to German and Northern European immigrants as *iyasica* (Ee-Yah-She-Cha), meaning "to speak unpleasantly". On the other hand, Dakota referred to British and Southern Europeans as *yasicu* (Ee-Yah-She-Chu), meaning "greedy".[48] There were tensions between the Dakota and Norwegians as well as with Polish and German settlers in the reservation. According to the informant, many elders talked about the fact that the tensions lay between the Dakota and the federal army from the East Coast. The actual population from Europe did not have anything to do with these tensions, and people in the area did not commit any violence against the Dakota.[49] Several of the Dakota informants had Norwegian ancestors.[50] For example, Lars A. Stavig, an immigrant from Romsdal, Norway, refers to several encounters with American Indians in his letters and memories.[51]

Additional interviews with members of the Sisseton and Wahpeton Oyate add to the entangled relationships that existed between members of the group and Norwegian immigrants. This applies to the narrative about John Cloud, or Johnny, as he was called, who was part Dakota and grew up on the reservation speaking only the Dakota language and German.[52] The boy later rented a parcel of land in the county, and he learnt English. Johnny also learnt to speak Norwegian as his fourth language and mingled with the Norwegian farmers and interacted with them in his pursuits to become a farmer. According to observers, the Indian boy became a skilled farmer and community leader.[53] The story is corroborated in an interview with one of his descendants. She mentioned that John Cloud became one of the most successful farmers in South Dakota, as he asked Norwegian farmers how to farm. In addition, he added his Dakota knowledge to planting crops according to moon phases and taught this knowledge to his Norwegian neighbours. One of his

best friends was Norwegian and named Iver. When John married, he named his eldest son John Cloud, Jr, but he named another son Iver after his Norwegian friend.[54]

Other types of source material may also shed light on interactions between Native Americans and Norwegian immigrants and their respective descendants. In 1949, Alice Fiksdal published a poetry book, *Nature Sings at Pickerel Lake*. Her poems reflect her respect towards Native Americans and nature in the region around Pickerel Lake in the western part of the Lake Traverse Reservation. According to Tamara St John, archivist at the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate, Alice Fiksdal and her family developed a close friendship with Native Americans in the region for generations. Later in life, Alice referred to her grandmother's arrival in South Dakota and to the fact that she would not have survived if it had not been for her Native American friends.[55]

Conclusion

Norwegian settlers and the Indigenous populations in Finnmark County and in South Dakota interacted within contact zones in which the parties had asymmetrical power relations to the central authorities in the historical context of nation-building. Parts of these uneven power relations may be tied to the differing attitudes towards the land; whereas Norwegian settlers regarded land as a source of wealth and of income, the Dakota regarded land as a communal resource based on sustainability. The aspirations to land ownership placed the Norwegians in a favourable position as a national group in Norway. In addition, their Nordic background gave them a favourable status in the ethnoracial hierarchy in the United States. The position of the Indigenous population within the nation-building projects in Norway and the United States was more difficult to define. In Norway, the authorities set on a strategy of forced assimilation towards the Sámi population, whereas the federal government in the United States displaced and marginalized the Native American populations as part of their nation-building strategy. Interviews and archival sources in this study indicate limited interactions between Indigenous populations and Norwegian settler populations in the two contact zones in Finnmark and in South Dakota. Newspapers in the regions of study and other source material provide limited material on the interactions between the groups studied. However, the material proves the existence of parallel worlds and a distance between the Indigenous populations and Norwegians in the time period. Yet the groups developed strategies of cooperation and a mutual distant respect towards each other.

Notes

1 Sannhets-og forsoningskommisjonens rapport.
2 Niemi, "Fornorskningspolitikken," 138.
3 Evjen and Ryymin, "Fornorskningspolitikk," 199–200, 216.
4 Pedersen, "Inn i den norske nasjonalstaten," 137, 154–155.
5 Evjen and Ryymin, "Fornorskningspolitikk," 168–169.
6 Pedersen, "Inn i den norske nasjonalstaten," 132–133.
7 Billington, *Westward Expansion*, 243–245.

8 Johnson, *Order Upon the Land*, 27–28; Curti, *The Making of an American Community*, 261.
9 US Capital Visitor Center Artifact Explorer, Naturalization Bill, 4 March 1790. H. R. 40, Naturalization Bill, 4 March 1790, https://www.visitthecapitol.gov/artifact/h-r-naturalization-bill-march-4-1790.
10 Jacobson, Whiteness, 27–28, 155–161, 213–222.
11 Legislation including the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the Immigration Act of 1924 were measures to keep out unwanted population streams based on suspected negative credentials. Jacobson, *Whiteness*, 21, 39, 218.
12 Billington, *Westward Expansion*, 297.
13 Jacobson, *Whiteness*, 20–21, 40, 73.
14 Kyllingstad, *Rase*, 56, 64–68.
15 Sannhets og forsoningskommisjonen, 217.
16 Minnesota Historical Society: Traverse des Sioux, https://www.mnhs.org/traversedessioux/learn.
17 EagleWoman, "Re-Establishing the Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate's Reservation Boundaries," 240, footnote 3.
18 Westerman and White, *Mni Sota Makoce*, 20.
19 Black Thunder et al., *Ehanna Woyakapi*, 1–6; Westerman and White, *Mni Sota Makoce*, 163–195.
20 Black Thunder et al., *Ehanna Woyakapi*, 9, 13–16, 21–26.
21 Joranger, "Migration, Regionalism and the Ethnic Other," 47–48.
22 EagleWoman, "Re-Establishing the Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate's Reservation Boundaries," 239–266; National Congress of American Indians: The Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate of the Lake Traverse Reservation in North and South Dakota, https://archive.ncai.org/tribal-vawa/get-started/the-sissetonwahpeton-oyate-of-the-lake-traverse-reservation-in-north-and-south-dakota; Sisseton Wahpeton Sioux Tribe, https://sdtribalrelations.sd.gov/tribes/Sisseton-Wahpeton-Oyate.aspx.
23 DeCoteau v. Dist. County Court for Tenth Judicial Dist., Supreme Court of the United States 16 December 1974, Argued; 3 March 1975, Decided No. 73-1148.
24 Anderson, *Gabriel Renville*, 155.
25 National Archives Milestone Documents, *Dawes Act* (1887), https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/dawes-act.
26 The reservation comprises five counties in present-day South Dakota and two counties in North Dakota.
27 Bray, *Joseph Nicollet and His Map*, 186; Bray, Edmund C. and Martha Coleman Bray, "Introduction," 1.
28 Bray, *Joseph Nicollet and His Map*, citations 188–189.
29 Black Thunder, *Ehanna Woyakapi*, 69–71.
30 Anderson, *Gabriel Renville*, 156.
31 Indigenous peoples of the Great Plains, Britannica, https://www.britannica.com/topic/Indigenous-peoples-of-the-Great-Plains [last updated 16 January 2025].
32 Bergland, "Norwegian Immigrants and Indianerne," 319–350; Fur, "Indians and Immigrants," 55–76.
33 Hansen, *Encounter on the Great Plains*, 2.
34 Pratt, "Arts of the Contact Zone."
35 "Finnmarksposten" in *Store norske leksikon*, https://snl.no/Finnmarksposten (accessed 13 April 2025).
36 "Finnmarken" in Store norske leksikon, https://snl.no/Finnmarken_-_avis (accessed 13 April 2025).
37 Chronicling America, "About The Sisseton Weekly Standard. (Sisseton, Roberts County, S.D.) 1892–1929," Library of Congress, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn99062049 (accessed 13 April 2025).

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40 *Finnmarksposten*, 10 October 1906.
41 *Finnmarken*, 16 May 1906.
42 For news about the sale of inherited land, see, for example *Sisseton Weekly Herald*, 14 May 1909 and *Sisseton Posten*, 5 May 1910; for court cases, see *Sisseton Weekly Herald* 8 September 1905 and *Sisseton Posten*, 12 December 1909.
43 *Sisseton Posten*, 8 September 1910.
44 *Sisseton Posten*, 22 December 1910.
45 *Sisseton Posten*, 26 January 1906.
46 *Sisseton Weekly Standard*, 14 May 1909.
47 Hansen, *Encounter on the Great Plains*, 235–243.
48 Intervjew with Akisa Red Soldier.
49 Interview with Akisa Red Soldier.
50 Interview with Akisa Red Soldier.
51 Memories of Lars A. Stavig (undated, publisher unknown), 26; Rasmussen, "The Stavig Letters," 19, 21, 47.
52 Interview with Raine Cloud.
53 Hunhoff, "A Farmer's Story"; interview with Raine Cloud.
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11 Norwegian and American voices in the United States, 1933–1945

A shared affinity for democracy

Daron W. Olson

Introduction: A crisis of democracy

Following the tumultuous years of the Great War, the leaders of the victorious nations who met at the Versailles Peace Conference in 1919 attempted to shape a new Europe founded on the principles of liberal democracy. European leaders believed that they could ensure peace and prevent the return of war by creating small, democratic buffer nations that would encircle Germany. In Germany, the combination of war reparations, hyperinflation and the Great Depression by the late 1920s made the nation vulnerable to the allure of a dictatorial strongman. Across Europe in general, the horrors of the Great War had caused a loss in the belief in the inevitable progress of Western Civilization. Democratic parliaments struggled to solve these crises, and as a result, many Europeans lost faith in democracy and turned to authoritarian political movements for answers as both fascist and communist dictatorships arose. By the mid-1930s, several democracies had fallen, and in the surviving democracies, there was a common discussion about the crisis of democracy. Within the United States during the 1930s, voices from both Norway and the United States contended that Norway was a steadfast democratic ally of the United States and that its democratic model of government offered an alternative to autocratic forms of government then sweeping Europe. During the war as Nazi Germany occupied Norway, these voices argued that Norway's democratic way of life symbolized what the Allies were fighting for and that Norway's love of democracy allowed it to resist the forces that would Nazify the Nordic nation. Moreover, Norway's leaders looked to the Norwegian-American community of the United States as a key asset in promoting this message to Americans.

Adolf Hitler and his National Socialist German Workers Party (NSDAP) came to power in Germany in 1933. Soon, his regime gobbled up smaller states around Germany, and small democratic nations like Norway became concerned. The Nordic nations of Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland participated in discussions about a neutral Nordic security alliance during the 1930s, but nothing came of it. In the United States, despite the predilection for isolationism, key American figures sounded out the growing threat that dictatorial nations posed to democratic nations. Before World War II and during the war, Norwegian visitors to the United States added their voices to sound the alarm that democracy faced and to emphasize how the United States and Norway remained true defenders of democratic ideals.

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Democracy in peril

In the decade of the 1930s, the United States faced threats to its democratic system. Perhaps the most notorious came in 1934 when retired Marine General Smedley D. Butler testified before Congress that a group of Wall Street bankers had approached him to organize a coup against Franklin D. Roosevelt. The seriousness of this "Business Plot" remains unresolved, but Butler stressed that he was interested "in maintaining a democracy".[1] Father Charles Coughlin used his National Union for Social Justice to criticize Roosevelt's New Deal. In a radio broadcast from 20 November 1938, Coughlin defended the Kristallnacht pogrom in Germany (attacks on Jewish merchants), observing that Nazism had evolved to act as a defence mechanism against the incursions of "Communism" and adding that Communist leaders were mostly "atheistic Jews".[2] Another threat came from Huey "Kingfish" Long, who during his term as governor of Louisiana became a dictator. In 1934, he abolished local government and took personal control of all educational, police and fire job appointments throughout the state. In 1934, he achieved absolute control of the state militia, judiciary and elections, denying citizens any legal redress. Although he embraced share-the-wealth programmes, his dismissal of democracy meant he posed a threat as evidenced by his election as a US Senator, which was cut short when he was assassinated in 1935.[3] On the evening of 20 February 1939, the *German-American Bund* held a pro-fascist rally at Madison Square Garden in New York. Behind the speaker's platform was a huge banner of George W. Washington, which was flanked by American and Nazi flags. Attended by 20,000 people, the organizers depicted that fascism was American, even claiming that the nation's first president was "America's first fascist".[4] Charles Lindbergh, the aviator hero who had flown solo across the Atlantic in 1927, became a promoter of American isolationism and was noted for having sympathy for Nazi Germany. He stated that "Jewish interests" were trying to manipulate America into joining the war against its national interests and that America should only join a European war if it was to protect "the white races" from foreign invasion from "some Asiatic intruder".[5]

Viewing the situation in Europe with growing alarm, key American voices expressed the idea that democracy was also in peril in the United States. Many viewed economic hardship among the people as a threat to democracy. Writing in 1937, William B. Rubin, a Milwaukee attorney, observed,

> If democracy as we conceive it, has suffered, and it has suffered, it is because of certain men, in their greed and desire for tangible accumulations far beyond legitimate needs and common good, have forgotten the idealism of democracy and created a social inequality through an inequality of distribution which finally culminated in the greatest depression this nation has ever suffered.[6]

Others warned that the dictatorships had democracy in their sights as a prime target. In 1938, Harold L. Ickes, Secretary of the Interior, stated, "The principle of democracy is under attack throughout the world and is faced with the greatest fight

in its history to continue existence". He added that the world was "beset by two fanatical foes, which have the will to conquer at all costs. Democracy cannot live side by side in the same country with either fascism or communism".[7] The existential threat that fascism and communism held for democracy was a common theme in the United States in the 1930s. The political commentator, Walter Lippmann, noted how democratic systems could be exploited by authoritarian ideologies to undermine democracy. In October of 1938, he wrote, "For not until the rise of communism and then of fascism had anyone imagined that civil liberties and the democratic ballot could and would be used to destroy civil liberties and the democratic ballot".[8]

Since the 1920s, Lippmann had strongly criticized Italian fascism, fearing its suppression of democracy and liberty. Consequently, during the 1930s his writings focused on finding the right balance between democracy and freedom. As dictatorships grew in strength, he worried that the gravest danger would be a new war for the survival of liberal democracies. Upon the outbreak of World War II, Lippmann saw that it was America's destiny to defend the United States and the West from "the evil which is devastating the world".[9] Lippmann maintained that the survival of the Scandinavian democracies was crucial to this strategy since there were so few democracies in Europe at this time. He viewed the Soviet Union's invasion of Finland in late 1939 as a threat to all the Scandinavian democracies and urged the United States to do everything in its power and in the interest of mankind to ensure that "these free, honest, and innocent northern peoples should survive". For Lippmann, the preservation of the Scandinavian democracies, including Norway, was essential to saving democracy in the West.[10]

Creating closer democratic ties between the United States and Norway, 1933–1940

With democratic nations under siege, it was natural for them to seek ties among themselves as a form of protection, and the Scandinavian nations were no exception. In November 1939, the Associated Press published an article describing the democratic character of the Scandinavian monarchs. Denmark's King Christian X displayed little formality and was an exemplar of the nation's "all wool and yard-wide democracy". The article depicted Sweden's King Gustaf as carrying the idea of democracy 100 percent, and King Haakon of Norway was known for having coffee with his subjects. All three kings "enjoyed a glass of beer and a chat with their subjects". It mentioned that while many people trembled for the future of democracy, it "can still be found in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden".[11] Despite the great differences in power status between the United States and Norway, voices both American and Norwegian emphasized the shared affinities the two nations had for democracy. During the years from 1933 to 1940, Norwegians and Americans developed different themes that spoke to the strong, shared democratic ties between Norway and the United States. For many years, Norway had attempted to link its fortunes with that of the United States, which was viewed as a young, progressive and emerging power. The large Norwegian-American population within

the United States provided a natural point of entry for this effort, and prominent Norwegians would often speak to Norwegian-American audiences as part of this concentrated effort.

One of the themes was the idea of longstanding ties between Norway and the United States. On 9 October 1935, President Franklin D. Roosevelt of the United States issued a formal proclamation declaring the day Leif Erikson Day in honour of the Old Norse explorer who had walked on the soil of the New World around the year 1000 (see also Chapter 9 in this volume). At the local Leif Erikson Day commemoration in Minneapolis on the same day, Minnesota governor Floyd B. Olson, of mixed Norwegian and Swedish descent, extolled the Norse explorer when he commented that other nations would be better if they adopted the same spirit of peace as Norway and the United States exercised between them. "The example set by Norwegians in maintaining peace and good will is an inspiration to all people. And the exploits and courage of Leif Ericsson form an inspiration to seek new forms of economic and social relationship".[12]

Speaking at the same Minneapolis commemoration, Norway's envoy to the United States, Wilhelm Morgenstierne, maintained that Leif Erikson was a symbol of a thousand-year relationship between the United States and Norway. Speaking forcefully and with conviction, he emphasized the need for Norway and the United States to stand side by side in the coming struggle.

> Here are two great nations of the world joining hands across the sea, realizing that not only do they have the same colors in their flags but also the same ideals in their hearts . . . . The very meaning, the foundation of democracy – the right and the duty of any nation to shape the destinies of that nation – is being challenged, right and left. In this crisis, in this confusion of ideas and of aims, Norway and the United States stand side by side, grimly determined to uphold freedom of conscience, freedom of speech, and freedom of action within the law, to uphold the only sound and only just, the only safe form of government for an enlightened people; majority rule, democracy.[13]

Morgenstierne's forceful call placed Norway and the United States as partners in an epic struggle to determine the future of humanity – a prediction that would prove highly accurate.

Another theme from this time was the idea that Norway was a model democracy and a stable democracy. During his 1938 tour of the United States, Carl J. Hambro, President of Norway's Storting, or parliament, spoke to Americans about the situation in Europe and how Norway represented a democratic ally in the struggle against the growing threat of fascism. His words built upon those of Marquis Childs, who in 1936 had authored *Sweden: The Middle Way*, which viewed the Swedish model of social democracy as a compromise between the extremes of American capitalism and Soviet communism.[14] At a talk given in Minneapolis in July 1938, Hambro remarked that Norway's system of [true] proportional representation "since 1920 has given the government a stability necessary to unified action".[15] There was some merit to Hambro's words, for while he was a member of Norway's Conservative

Party, the government was led by Norway's Labour Party. And yet, Hambro could speak on behalf of Norway's merits despite political differences.

American voices, especially Norwegian-American ones, also spoke to Norway as a model democracy and thus a natural ally of the United States. In 1938, O.A. Stolen, a Madison, Wisconsin, attorney, spoke to this theme as a keynote speaker at the 17 May celebration. "[Norway] is the cradle of liberty" doing for its people, maintaining that they live well. "Their socialism is not the theoretical socialism of Karl Marx, but that practical socialism . . . . They have no surplus; there is no monopoly. The purpose of the government is to make the people happy".[16] Stolen's comments spoke to American sensibilities when he downplayed the Marxist socialist ideas of the labour government, instead using practical socialism. Knowledgeable listeners and readers would have known that Norway's Labour Party had been quite radical just a decade earlier under Martin Tranmæl. Stolen's comments likely resonated, as they hinted at affinities with President Roosevelt's New Deal ideas.

Even conservative Norwegian Americans utilized this approach to sell Norway as a model democracy. In 1939, Senator Alexander Wiley, a Norwegian-American and Republican senator from Wisconsin, endorsed both the Viking heritage and the pragmatic social ideas of Norway. He proclaimed that Norway is now retaining [the Viking blood] to build up "the finest laboratory of democracy in the world. It was Norway that led the way in the new day under new world wide conditions to an understanding of the greater functions of the state". He emphasized the duty of the state to assist in the economic development of the country, to build the initiative and morale of its people and to provide an opportunity for its citizens to earn a decent living.

> Norway is demonstrating that the ideal state is that one which creates self-respecting citizens – citizens who learn to help themselves, depend upon themselves, and who look upon government as a servant, not the master, in the great enterprise of life.

It should be noted that while the reporter for *The Daily Tribune* from Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin, took Wiley's comments at face value, another paper, *The Capitol Times* of Madison, Wisconsin, called him out for his hypocrisy, as he was an unrepentant critic of Roosevelt's New Deal and, by analogy, of Norway's Labour government.[17]

In fairness to Wiley, though, he uttered those words while in the presence of Norway's royal couple, Crown Prince Olav and Crown Princess Märtha, during their 1939 visit to the United States. Noting the success of the 1938 visit of the Swedish royal family to the United States, Norway decided to do its own version to promote closer ties between it and the United States.[18] During the 1938 tour, Sweden's Crown Prince, Gustaf Adolf, told audiences of his pride in Swedish Americans but most of all Sweden's pride in its democracy.[19] For more than two months, the royal couple crisscrossed the United States as Crown Prince Olav spoke before large, receptive crowds in areas of large Norwegian-American settlements. The Crown Prince used his platform to speak highly of the Norwegian immigrants and

their important contributions to America as well as the pride that Norway felt for their emigrated kinfolk.

Democratic ties between the two nations were a constant theme of the tour. Speaking before an enthusiastic audience at Decorah, Iowa, in May 1939, the Crown Prince extolled the shared love of democracy of Norway and the United States.

> We have not only the same colors in our flags but also the same ideals in our hearts. We in Norway are happy to know that our countrymen have been able to make contributions to the upbuilding and progress of this great country. I believe it is chiefly for two reasons. In the first place we – you of America and we of Norway – fundamentally have so much in common. We share your love of liberty, of government of and by and for the people, of free democratic institutions. Keep open the windows to the country whence your fathers came. Do it for this reason – that in this way you will be the strongest and most vital link between two freedom-loving nations which have so much in common and nothing that separates them except the ocean.[20]

The Crown Prince reiterated this theme again when he spoke before a large throng at Madison, Wisconsin, in June 1939.

> We are filled, also, with a deep sense of the friendliness and generosity, of the American people, and the strong kinship in more than one way between your people and mine. We feel more keenly than ever our community of outlook on most fundamental matters. Both our peoples believe deeply in free democratic institutions, in social justice and brotherliness, and in peace between men and nations.[21]

With the ominous harbinger of war hanging over Europe, the Crown Prince's comments struck a nerve with an American audience that was proud of its democracy and peaceful intentions, particularly its determination to stay out of the European war. Yet, it should be noted that the Crown Prince had delivered his speech wearing a white dress military uniform and saluting the American flag during the playing of the American national anthem. Symbolically, he represented Norway as a military ally to the United States.[22]

The words of the Crown Prince also sought to smooth over significant differences between the democratic systems of Norway and the United States. Norway was a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary system, whereas the United States was a democratic republic that had fought its revolutionary war to escape the clutches of European monarchy. Furthermore, the United States was an economic power with the capacity to become a military power, while Norway was a small nation on the periphery of Europe. The key to selling Norway as a similar democratic brother among nations was the image of Norwegian Americans as loyal Americans and upholders of core American democratic values.[23]

Despite these differences, US President Franklin D. Roosevelt viewed Norway in positive terms. During their trip to the United States, the royal couple had

opportunities to meet with the president, and it was Roosevelt who suggested that in the case that Norway was invaded, the United States would gladly receive Crown Princess Märtha and the couple's children as exiles.[24] Although Norway hoped that it could remain neutral in any forthcoming conflict, there was concern that Nazi Germany would likely have its sights set on invading and occupying Norway. The Norwegian government and King Haakon VII hoped the threat of the British Royal Navy would be enough to discourage such an event. Diplomatically, Norway needed to pursue a course of neutrality in which it favoured neither Germany nor Britain.[25]

World War II arrives in Norway

Norway declared its neutrality in September 1939, the same month that Germany invaded Poland. Believing an attack on Norway was not possible, the Norwegian government did not order a general mobilization. The government also secretly requested the British government to defend Norway from an attack by Germany, which the British confirmed to Foreign Minister Halvdan Koht. Hitler did not originally envision an invasion of Norway, but that changed in February 1940 when the British navy attacked the *Altmark*, a German merchant ship that had taken refuge in a Norwegian fjord. Norway's failure to act convinced Hitler that the Nordic country would not defend its neutrality, and he ordered the German military to prepare for an invasion and occupation of Norway. Hitler wanted to avoid a repeat of the British blockade as in the first war, and the occupation of Norway would prevent this situation.[26] The Germans invaded on 9 April 1940 and advanced on all fronts. In the evening in the town of Elverum, the Norwegian government and King Haakon decided to continue the war for the duration. Norway's ministers, representing the government and King Haakon and Crown Prince Olav, found refuge in Britain. Norway held out for 62 days until surrendering to German forces in June.

Norway's lacklustre performance during the German invasion invited negative comments. The harshest criticism came from Leland Stowe, who, in the 19 May 1940, issue of *Life* magazine, contended that the Norwegians had hardly put up a fight. Moreover, he claimed, Norwegian traitors had allowed disguised German ships (loaded with armed soldiers) to slip into Norway's major ports undetected, thus becoming the spearhead of the invasion.[27]

In the early years of the war, Norway's reputation suffered, and by association, that of Norwegian Americans. Stowe broadened his analysis from Norway to include Sweden and Finland in a series called "The Twilight of Scandinavia", which appeared in American newspapers. He remarked that Norway had not really resisted the Germans, calling out Norwegians as collaborators and traitors. The Norwegians were "a flabby people".[28] Stowe likewise took aim at Sweden, chastising them for their unwillingness to fight for democracy. He stated that if Sweden and Norway had come to Finland's aid against the Soviet Union in 1939, then Britain and France would have also sent forces, which would have made it difficult for Germany to invade either Norway or Sweden. But Scandinavian inaction and lack of fortitude, Stowe maintained, now left both countries vulnerable, and the Viking tradition was dead, for they had grown soft living in luxury. In Norway and

Sweden, Stowe saw a warning sign for the United States that it would soon face a similar decision on whether or not to fight for its freedom. He also added that only Finland – so much different than Norway and Sweden – had distinguished itself by its willingness to fight for its freedom.[29]

Norwegian Americans also received criticism. In 1943, Walter Netterblad, a Wisconsin high school teacher and director of the local Red Cross, quoted Major Gunnar Johnson of the Norwegian Medical Corps, who stated:

> The Norwegians of Norway are very much disappointed in the Norwegians of the Midwest. They gave them little or no help when they needed it – financially or otherwise. They had an opportunity to join the Norwegian air forces in Canada, but only about five volunteered. It was a blow to Norway to think that their countrymen in America let them down so badly when they needed help so much. The Norwegian-Americans are too self-satisfied.[30]

A more prominent Norwegian homeland critic was Major Ole Reistad, the commander of Camp Little Norway in Toronto, Canada, where Norway was training its pilots. In an article that appeared in *Collier's Magazine* on 22 November 1941, Reistad stated that while Norwegian Americans offered support to Norway, they contributed very little. He struck a raw nerve when he said, "But you cannot count yourself a son [of Norway] when you experience seeing Norway in a struggle to the death and being beaten to a pulp, and you nonetheless do nothing about it".[31]

Norwegian officials were not willing to let these comments go unchallenged. Responding to Stowe's twilight comments in 1941, Wilhelm Morgenstierne, Norway's envoy to the United States, assailed the journalist when he stated that Norway was a civilized and peaceful country that spent taxpayer money on schools and hospitals rather than on guns and tanks. He also noted that thousands of young Norwegians risked their lives to leave Oslo so they could join Norwegian fighting forces in the valleys and countryside of Norway.

> And today – as almost daily stories in American newspapers show – the Norwegians are carrying on an heroic, determined, silent fight against the enemy – a fight which terrorism, prisons and concentration camps cannot break. 'Is this a sign of a 'flabby people'?[32]

Promoting Norway's war effort in the United States was a top priority for the Nygaardsvold government. In a memo dated 18 November 1941, to cabinet member Birger Ljungberg, Prime Minister Nygaardsvold authorized him to travel to the United States to secure both military and material support from the United States, including having Norway's legation organize with American citizens to create the institutions to bring about these results. The memo also mentioned the need to create close ties with the Roosevelt administration, including having the Crown Prince travel to the United States.[33] Norwegian leaders and public speakers in the United States promulgated the ideas of democratic connections between Norway and the United States as part of this wartime strategy.

A shared affinity for democracy: World War II

On 22 June 1941, Nazi Germany invaded the Soviet Union, which was known as Operation Barbarossa. According to Nazi ideology, it would be the ultimate racial struggle between the civilized peoples of Europe, especially the Germans and their racial kin, and the *untermenschen* and barbaric peoples of the Soviet Union. According to the Nazi scheme, Norway was an important ally since it was viewed as a racially pure nation comprised of pure Nordic stock. Josef Terboven, who served as the Nazi Commissar for Norway, stated that Norway had the choice of cooperating as part of the greater Germanic confederacy, often called "The Greater Germany", or losing its independence. He added that Norway should "march shoulder to shoulder with the German people of the same race and therefore to recognize and handle Germany's enemies as its own".[34]

As pointed out by historian Ole Kristian Grimnes, Norway was in a unique position in World War II, being the only German-occupied country where an indigenous national socialist party (*Nasjonal Samling, NS*) attained state power and attempted to promote a revolution. The leader of the revolution was Terboven, though Norwegian NS leader Vidkun Quisling was appointed Minister of State on 1 February 1942. This resulted in a compromise situation in which Quisling wanted to become the *Fører* (leader) of Norway, yet he still had to answer to German stipulations. The Nazification programme of Norway proceeded on two fronts: one ideological, converting Norwegians to national socialism, and the other to create a new political order. The Ministry of the Interior would attempt to implement the revolution in central and local governments, the Ministry of Culture and Popular Entertainment would attempt to implement national socialist culture and media, and the Ministry of Labour Service and Sport would attempt to impose a labour service modelled on that in Germany. Other key ministries that would undertake the revolution include the Ministry of Justice (legal systems) and the Police Ministry (law enforcement). The eradication of Norway's Jewish population was also part of the revolution, and although Terboven and his staff made the decisions, it was Norwegians working under Quisling who carried out the measures.[35]

Quisling's attempts to impose his revolution met resistance almost immediately. The new regime passed a law requiring all young people aged 10–18 to serve in the NS Youth Service, and another law created a new professional organization for Norway's teachers, who were expected to teach national socialist principles to Norway's youth. Norway's teachers refused to cooperate and sent a signed letter outlining their disagreements in late February. Resistance to the youth service came from Norway's parents, who protested the organization. They were soon joined by Norway's bishops who signalled their disapproval. The NS government responded with a mass arrest of teachers, which included interrogation and punishment in forced labour camps. On 24 February, Norway's bishops resigned their positions as state employees and indicated their desire to create a Lutheran church no longer affiliated with the government because the teachings of the church did not reconcile with national socialist ideas. Additional resistance soon came from college students, their professors, athletes and labour organizations across Norway.

The Nazi regime responded with mass arrests, deportations to concentration camps on the continent and even executions. The Norwegian Home Front also organized and took on the task of engaging in sabotage and intelligence activities against the regime. As Grimnes observes, this resistance was from a population who had no chance of recapturing the state; therefore, their strategy was to demonstrate how little progress the new NS state was making in connecting with the people.[36]

Critics of the Nazis liked to point out that homeland Norwegians did not espouse this assigned role. As historian Francis Sejersted has noted, Norwegians viewed the war as between democracy and dictatorship, seeing themselves as fighters in a heroic struggle.[37] They argued that Norway was a failed Nazi experiment. For instance, the famed author, Sigrid Undset, spent the war in the United States, where she often spoke and wrote to American audiences. In 1941, she made the following observation: Hitler believed that democracies did not like to fight, and he was right. But he had not counted on the fact that democracies would fight to preserve their own lives in democracies. On Norwegians, she noted, "We do not care for power and money as much as for personal freedom and human dignity, for the integrity of our homes and the right to mind our own affairs".[38]

Official Norway also sought to promote a similar theme. Tor Myklebost, who worked for the Royal Norwegian Information Service in the United States, expanded on the theme of Norway as a failed Nazi experiment. Published in 1943, his book titled *They Came as Friends* noted how Norway had taken in many displaced German youths after World War I. Yet in exchange for this kindness, these Germans, who had learnt to speak and write Norwegian, served as the fifth-column spearhead of the German invasion and conquest of Norway in 1940. Myklebost used the book to also demonstrate how Norwegians had rejected the Nazi path. "To Hitler, Norway was the great experimental field for the transplantation of National Socialist ideas in foreign soil. And he gambled everything on the success of the experiment. He had reckoned without democracy that Norway would succumb.

> He did not realize that what he took to be signs of weakness were in reality signs of strength. He did not understand that the victories that he apparently had won at the start in reality constituted the prerequisites for his defeat. He believed that democracy was nothing but a system and that merely by obliterating the institutions created by democracy he would stand as victor over the system. He did not understand that fundamentally democracy is a way of living that will only die when the last democrat lies six feet under the sod.[39]

The concept that Norway's democracy was a staunch weapon against fascism continued to be repeated by Norwegian officials in the United States. In a 1942 radio broadcast for the show *The Spirit of the Vikings*, Hans Olav, press attaché for the Royal Norwegian Information Service in the United States, remarked that "[t]he men and women and children, yes even the children of Norway, have proven that the weapons of democracy are more enduring than the bombs, and torpedoes, and rifles, and concentration camps of Norway". Although overwhelmed militarily by Nazi forces, he stressed that "The Norwegians fell back as it were on the only lines

of defense that they had ever had: the trenches of democracy hewn into the bedrock of their history and tradition and outlook on life". He concluded by expounding, "[T]heir uncompromising and democratic resistance had, ideologically speaking, eaten into the Nazi structure like termites and left it shaking".[40]

An American who shared similar ideas was the author, John Steinbeck. In his novel *The Moon is Down*, Steinbeck created a fictional town in Norway to highlight how staunchly the Norwegians were resisting the attempts to Nazify Norwegian society. On 17 May 1944, the author used the occasion of Norway's Constitution Day to praise Norway's spirit and resistance to the Nazis when he expressed

> This should be a symbol day for all peoples, that they might take heart from the proposition proven by the Norwegians that the human spirit is stronger than any plans or treachery and weapons that may be brought against it. The world's debt to Norway is very great.[41]

Together, these Norwegian and American voices proclaimed Norway's defiance against the Nazis. Norway was a nation proud of its democratic traditions, which provided a bulwark against the seductive racial temptations offered by Nazi Germany. Norway's strength, these voices argued, came from a position of deep moral strength, and Norwegian soil made poor ground for the transplantation of Nazi ideas and practices. This line of reasoning dovetailed with the position of the Roosevelt administration; President Roosevelt declared that America would be "the great arsenal of democracy" through its material support for nations fighting tyranny.[42] Once the United States entered the war, the Roosevelt administration continued to depict the struggle as one between democracy and freedom on one side versus dictatorship and oppression on the other side, though it must be admitted that the Soviet Union made the formulation less than ideal. This position, however, was well-suited to Norway's war aims and its projection to the American public during the war.

President Roosevelt likewise placed great value on presenting Norway in a favourable light to the American public. The president had wanted Norway's royal family to do a public speaking tour of the United States in early 1941, though in a letter to FDR, King Haakon thought it a bad idea for homeland Norwegians since it might depict the royals as having a good old time in the United States. In a later letter, Roosevelt reassured the king that Crown Prince Olav's March visit to the United States had been well received, and he again urged having the royal couple (Olav and Princess Märtha) embark on a tour of the Scandinavian-American northwest, noting that the Crown Princess "clearly represents a combination of Norway and Sweden and Denmark, which symbolizes the independence of all three countries".[43] Thus, non-Norwegian-American voices spoke on behalf of Norway as a strategy in which the United States was fighting a noble cause for the restoration of democracy.

The narrative centred on the moral high ground of Norway also manifested itself in the argument that Norway's struggle against Nazi Germany represented a struggle of civilization versus barbarism. In the bleak days of 1941, Wilhelm Morgenstierne offered hope in this vein when he contended that all justice and democracy have been banished from his country; that people are "arrested, convicted

and tortured" without any semblance of a trial; and that the supreme courts have resigned in a body to protest against German control.

> The people are fighting with their spirit undiminished. They are temporarily at the mercy of a barbarous armed invader, but with their determination and their love of liberty and justice, they are confident that they will drive out the oppressor.[44]

Two years later, on the May 17th Day celebration, Norwegian Americans were more optimistic about the eventual defeat of Nazi Germany and the restoration of an independent Norway. Expressing this sentiment, Minneapolis mayor Marvin L. Kline acknowledged Norway's struggle against Nazi tyranny:

> The stand of this noble land [Norway] against tyranny is a symbol, a symbol of the fact that no matter how basely tyranny is practiced, not how savagely it grinds down those it would enslave, the spark of freedom and liberty will never be extinguished. There will always stout souls to carry it forward, souls to whom death is nothing compared with the right to speak and think in accordance with the dictates of conscience.[45]

Prior to the outbreak of the war, proponents of Norway had pointed to the nation as a model democracy. Not surprisingly, during the war, voices speaking for Norway lauded it as an exemplary democracy, a nation whose strong democratic traditions warranted the Allied effort to liberate and restore Norway to independence. When Norwegian Americans celebrated May 17th during the war, the event often triggered proclamations of Norway as a stellar example of democracy, a nation where its citizens celebrated their national day despite the threat of Nazi reprisals. In 1941, the *Nashua Messenger* of Montana editorialized about Norway's democratic status by offering,

> By its celebration [May 17th] while still under the heel of a modern oppressor it has demonstrated that the unconquerable spirit of the Norwegians is not dead. The flame of freedom may be hidden but even the despicable secret police of the Nazis could not extinguish that flame of Norway.

The paper concluded that the imprisonment of resisting Norwegians would not "obliterate the love of freedom in Norway. Still others will be there to take their place when the proper time arrives".[46]

Others used the occasion to explain how Norway had a long-tenured love of democracy and that this spirit made Norwegians strongly resistant to attempts to deny them their freedoms. Speaking at the 1943 May 17th celebration in Minneapolis, local judge Thomas Gallagher proclaimed,

> One hundred twenty-nine years have elapsed since Norway proclaimed its independence and today we find Norway and its people again bidding defiance to a ruthless dictator who seeks vainly to crush the spirit of freedom which has characterized the Norwegian people through the centuries.[47]

This idea was picked up by other Americans. A 1943 editorial in the Swedish-American paper *Omaha Posten* identified the tenacity of Norway's democracy:

> During these three years Norway has given the world a clear demonstration of the strength of democracy, of its ability to absorb blows and in fact to generate new strength under the punishment until it is able to stand up and return blow for blow. That is what the Norwegians are doing today, both on the home front and from abroad.[48]

This comment reflects the reality that Norway's reputation in the United States must be viewed in the context of a larger transnational context of Scandinavian democracy. In an editorial from the previous year, *Omaha Posten* praised Sweden's democracy, noting that in a recent election there, every Nazi candidate had been defeated. The editorial also praised Sweden for upholding its democratic ideals despite being surrounded by dictatorial states, making it a source of pride for Scandinavian Americans. The paper emphasized that while Sweden was neutral diplomatically, "it will not be neutral when it comes to matters of democracy", a fact that should reassure the Allies in the war effort.[49] These efforts must be viewed in the context of a neutral Sweden that, at least for the first part of the war, acceded to Germany's demands, including allowing German troops to transport through Sweden on their way to the Eastern Front.[50] The American war columnist, Raymond Clapper, observed that while the Danes had received relatively good treatment from the occupying Germans, the Nordic people had not bought into Nazism and remained committed to their values, including democracy. He acknowledged that the Nazis had a dismal failure in their effort to win over the Danes. Increased sabotage also pointed to growing Danish discontent within the new world order.[51]

For some Americans, Norway was an exemplary democracy that served as inspiration for the United States in wartime. Florence Jaffray Harriman, the American ambassador to Norway, published her book *Mission to the North* in 1941, detailing her experiences there. Ms Harriman reflected on how Norway was developing "ever fresh concepts of democracy, as if these children of the Vikings had remembered much that Americans of the frontier have to their loss forgotten". She added that before the war, the Norwegians

> were way ahead of us all in the democratic ways of life, in a measure we owe to them to carry on their experiments here and to trust them to develop powers of resistance until the elements of democracy are untied and prevail.[52]

In an editorial commenting on the 1943 May 17th celebration, the *Globe-Gazette* of Mason City, Iowa, remarked,

> And so on her independence day Norway was hailed by the free world as an example of the hidden strength of democracy and well may we pray that our own national spirit, if put to the same test, can match that of little Norway, with a population equal to our Tennessee and an area three times as great as that single state.[53]

Norwegian Americans took pride in the shared affinity for democracy that Norway and the United States shared, including their similar constitutions. Many even related how the American Constitution had served as a blueprint for Norway's constitution. Early in the war, the *Wisconsin State Journal* observed, "And that constitution [Norway's constitution], translated into English, is hardly distinguishable from the American one. The Norwegians boldly lifted all the United States' ideas of free speech, free press, proportional representation".[54] This exaggeration, while born of a spirit of enthusiasm, was hardly true, for Norway's democracy featured parliamentary democracy and a king, often referred to as a constitutional monarchy, while that of the United States was that of a democratic republic. Its value spoke more to propaganda than reality. The paper echoed similar sentiments three years later when its editor, William T. Evjue, a prominent Norwegian American, commented, "In the last 125 years, Norway has progressed as a modern nation. Men of Eidsvold in 1814 drew heavily on the United States constitution adopted a generation earlier".[55]

Both Norwegian and American voices denoted their admiration for the shared personifications of the spirit of democracy found in both Norway and the United States. Reflecting on the 70th birthday of Norway's King Haakon VII in 1942, the *Record-Searchlight* newspaper of Redding, California stated, "Brave little Norway's democracy and love of freedom are real and intense, and they are nowhere better exemplified than in her king, Haakon VII, who celebrated his 70th birthday yesterday (August 3)".[56] Thus, Americans saw in Norway's king a leader who was a staunch defender of democracy. In a similar vein, Norway's envoy (and eventual ambassador) Wilhelm Morgenstierne heaped praise upon a former American president in 1941 when he exalted

> To us sons and daughters of Norway the hope of the future is associated with the man of old who said: "To do justice, to love mercy, to walk humbly with thy God". It is associated with the spirit of your great kind man of Illinois, who personifies to the ages the virtues of humility, true democracy, the dignity of man, neighborly good will and brotherly love. The spirit of Abraham Lincoln to us, is the always recurrent wave of the future.[57]

One finds a similar comparison made at Norway's Day on 25 July 1943, in Minneapolis. During the war, many prominent Norwegian-American communities had established a Norway Day to celebrate the home country. Since these celebrations often featured picnics in large parks, they tended to be held during the warmer summer months. Speaking to a large crowd, Georg J.M. Walen, a Norwegian-American pastor, declared that Norway's historical leaders for freedom, such as the author Henrik Wergeland and the politicians, Christian Mikkelsen, Johan Sverdrup and Martin Tranmæl, were made from the same mould as Abraham Lincoln.[58] In making these comparisons, Norwegian and Norwegian-American leaders aimed for a convergence of ideological heroes. As noted by Sára Bigazzi et al. in their study on representations of heroes, narratives relating historical events to current ones "embody values and belief-systems, and represent the shared identity of the collective". Heroic narratives, moreover, create "cognitive perspective for potentialities and

stimulates action out of the ordinary".[59] Through heroic narratives, a free Norway of the future was possible.

Norway's leadership valued highly the efforts of Norwegian Americans in promoting Norway's cause during the war in the United States. Britain's ambassador to Norway, Laurence Collier, stated that a primary purpose of Prime Minister Nygaardsvold's trip to the United States in 1942 had been to "stimulate the Norwego-American [sic] community in the states". He had hoped to influence them to reject isolationism. Collier's Norwegian contact, M. Berg of Norway's Foreign Office, had likewise informed him that the Norwegian Americans of the US Middle West were more pro-Russian than had been expected owing to their "natural radical outlook".[60] At an April, 1941 talk given in Minneapolis, Morgenstierne articulated how Norway was fighting the war on three fronts: 1) on the home front in Norway; 2) on the military front, particularly Norway's merchant fleet contribution; and 3) on a "third front" where thousands of Norwegians outside their homeland are pressing Norway's cause.[61] Reidar Solum, Norway's consul in Minneapolis, noted the success of the third front when speaking at the 1945 Syttende mai celebration held at Central Lutheran Church in Minneapolis; he extended the ultimate compliment to the Norwegian-American community of the Twin Cities when he described Norway's victory by saying, "It is as much your victory as Norway's".[62] This third tactic was part of the Norwegian government's "Greater Norway" strategy that aimed to harness support for Norway among the emigrated Norwegians, especially those living in the United States.[63]

Through their collective efforts during World War II, Norwegian and American voices argued forcefully that Norway and the United States were fraternal nations in the worldwide struggle to promote and defend democracy and freedom. It can be argued, however, whether these shared Norwegian and American voices made a significant impact upon the American landscape in a larger sense. One might ask what the ultimate impact of these efforts achieved. And yet these voices proved highly effective for American President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who announced his support of these ideals in his famous "Look to Norway" speech of September 1942. At an event when the United States gifted a submarine chaser named *King Haakon VII* to Norway, the president used his speech to argue that Norway was precisely the reason the United States had entered the war to defeat the tyranny of fascism.

> If there is anyone who has any delusion that this war could have been avoided, let him look to Norway. And if there is anyone who doubts of the democratic will to win, again I say, let him look to Norway.
>
> He will find in Norway, once conquered and unconquerable, the answer to his questioning. At home, the Norwegians have silently resisted the invaders' will with grim endurance. Abroad, Norwegian ships and Norwegian men have rallied to the cause of the United Nations. And their assistance to that cause has been all out of proportion to their small numbers.[64]

To Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Norway was an exemplary democracy for the world, a beacon of democracy, and the reason why the United States was fighting the war on behalf of all democracies.

Conclusion

Despite the hopes of its leaders, Norway was not liberated until after the war, with the small exception of Finnmark, Norway's northernmost region. Nonetheless, Norway had emerged from the war as a victor, including its standing in the eyes of the citizens of the United States, particularly Norwegian Americans. This successful propaganda campaign within the United States owed much to the ability of the Norwegian government to sway American opinion, but the role played by the Norwegian-American community proved immensely important to the cause. Aided by this community, Norway had "punched above its weight" in terms of its national reputation during the war.[65] This campaign contributed to Norway's closer ties to both Britain and the United States after the war.[66] Swedish-American relations, meanwhile, suffered as Sweden maintained its policy of neutrality.

From 1933 until 1945, the democracies of the world engaged forces in which the future direction of the world was up for grabs. The German invasion of Norway in April 1940 raised the stakes for the small Scandinavian nation, which would require the aid of three world powers to ultimately liberate it. Winning over the reluctant will of the United States, a nation with isolationist motives, proved to be a tough challenge. Fortunately, for those wishing to see Norway liberated, their voices, both from Norway and America, presented Norway as a faithful and steadfast ally in the struggle against fascism. Homeland Norwegians and Norwegian Americans sustained Norway's image both before the war and throughout it, offering the idea that Norway and the United States shared an affinity for democracy. This approach showcased Norway's democracy as 1) a staunch weapon against Nazism; 2) a struggle between civilization and barbarism; 3) a model democracy; 4) having shared personifications of the democratic spirit; and 5) the reason the United States and Norway were brothers in arms in the struggle against Nazi tyranny. At a Norway festival held at Carnegie Hall in New York on 29 May 1945, Harold Hagen, a congressman from Minnesota and the featured speaker, called Norway "the arsenal of the spirit of freedom, liberty, and democracy".[67] In effect, Norwegian, Norwegian-American and American voices had made Norway the exalted ideal of democracy in the world.

Notes

1 Iber, "The Marine."
2 "Charles Coughlin," *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*.
3 "Huey Long," *Britannica*.
4 Kramer, "When Nazis Took Manhattan."
5 Churchwell, "Ten Minute Talks."
6 "Communism and Dictatorships Attacked by Attorney Rubin," *The Sheboygan Press* (Sheboygan, Wisconsin), 23 August 1937.
7 "Uphold Democracy, Ickes Radios to British Empire," *Daily News* (New York, NY), 23 February 1938.
8 Walter Lippmann, "Need for Defense of Democracy is Stressed," *Des Moines Register* (Iowa), 14 October 1938.
9 Regalzi, "Democracy and Its Discontents." See also Lippmann, "A Declaration of Faith and Hope."

10 Walter Lippmann, "Defense of Finland: Lippmann Says We Should Act Promptly," *The Decatur Daily News* (Illinois), 6 December 1939.
11 "King Is Friend in Scandinavia," *The Spokesman Review* (Spokane, WA), 26 November 1939.
12 "Friendship of 2 Nations Cited by Norse Envoy," *The Minneapolis Star*, 10 October 1935. The term Norse originally meant those living in the Nordic areas during the Viking Age and thus could refer to someone from Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Iceland or someone from those areas living abroad. In the United States at this time, Norwegian Americans had appropriated the term Norse as an equivalent for Norwegian, the most outstanding example being the 1925 Norse-American Centennial, which was a celebration of Norwegian immigration to the United States.
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14 Childs, *Sweden: The Middle Way*.
15 "Hambro Gives Key to Norse Unified Action," *The Minneapolis Journal* 23 July 1938.
16 "Norsemen Tell Again in Song and Story of a Free Country," *Wisconsin State Journal* (Madison, Wisconsin), 18 May 1938.
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22 Sorensen, "10,000 Cheer Talk by Prince at Capitol."
23 Olson, *Vikings*, 179–188.
24 Olson, *Vikings*, 189.
25 Yilek, *History of Norway*, 193–196.
26 Yilek, *History of Norway*, 199. Mann, *British Policy and Strategy*, 2.
27 Leland Stowe, "How a Few Thousand Nazis Seized Norway," *Life*, 6 May 1940, 90–103.
28 Leland Stowe, "Vital Lesson for U.S. in 'Viking Twilight'," *The Evening Star* (Washington, D.C), 26 February 1941.
29 Leland Stowe, "Sweden Called Victim of Neutrality and Norway a Martyr to Pacifism," *Buffalo Evening News*, 5 March 1941.
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31 *Collier's Magazine* as quoted in Karsten Roedder, *Av en utvandreavis' saga* 2, 66.
32 Wilhelm Morgenstierne, "Norwegian Flabbiness Denied," *Buffalo Evening News* (New York), 12 March 1941.
33 Johan Nygaardsvold, Prime Minister, Memo to Statsråd Birger Ljungberg, 18 November 1941, London, England. Nygaardsvold Johan-kopi. Da 0003, A5(1). Norwegian Labor Party Archives, Oslo, Norway.
34 Stratigakos, *Hitler's Northern Utopia*, 14–19; Edward A. Shanke, "Germanic State Confederacy Is Still in Question," *The La Cross Tribune* (La Cross, Wisconsin), 26 October 1941.
35 Grimnes, *Norge under andre verdenskrig*, 303–354. Recent scholarship by Norway's Marte Michelet has focused criticism on how Norway's Resistance movement failed to act on behalf of Norway's Jews. See Marte Michelet, *Hva Visste Hjemmefronten? Holocaust in Norge*.
36 Grimnes, 304, 366–420.

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64 *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. II, 1942, 377–378.
65 US President Barack Obama made this remark at a press conference on 10 December 2009. It was also apropos during World War II. "Remarks by President Obama and Prime Minister Stoltenberg of Norway during Joint Press Availability," https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/realitycheck/the-press-office/remarks-president-obama-and-prime-minister-stoltenberg-norway-during-joint-press-av (accessed 15 February 2025).
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12 Norwegian Georgeism, 1890–1915

Terje Rasmussen

Introduction

In the decades around 1900, what came to be known as Georgeism was transmuted from America into a set of more operational economic principles that could be implemented by social-liberal parties in Europe. The chapter addresses this pivotal phase in the "Scandinaviation" and politicization of an American idea or ideology that had considerable influence in the economic handling of natural resources. The key concept in what follows is ground rent or land rent (grunnrente, grunnverdi): the value created by nature itself or in combination with modernization (urbanization, industrialization). Today, land rent as a foundation for taxation remains a hotly discussed political and economic principle. It has been applied by the Norwegian state in the administration of the oil drilling and the profitable fish industry in western fjords (the "salmon tax"). It continues to be discussed regarding the land-based and the Skagerrak Sea wind power industry.[1] I do not argue that this is not due to Georgeist influence on Norwegian and Scandinavian political history alone. Rather, it was its transformation and domestication that enabled it to co-produce, with other traditions in economics and law, an alternative view on natural resources.

Henry George and the international movement that he inspired argued that the use and exploitation of land in a wide sense, as all material resources, was a privilege. Land could not be seen as either a human-made product or a type of commodity. At the outset, land could not belong to anyone in particular but to the commons. To claim ownership of the air humans breathe or the water humans drink was blasphemy. Those who wanted to make use of God's nature at the expense of others had to compensate the social community. Moreover, they had to compensate for the *increased* value on nature enhanced by social and urban development. What was called the "sleeping" acquisition of "wealth" was unacceptable morally and economically.

A few words should be said about the man who inspired the term "Georgeism". Henry George (1839–1897) was a reporter, writer and self-taught political economist from Philadelphia who led a reform movement during America's progressive era. He worked for several newspapers in California, where he voiced harsh criticism of speculators and contractors who accumulated wealth at the public's

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expense. On the basis of his popular books, George built a moral-political movement with ramifications across the continent and soon in Europe and Australia. He ran for election as mayor of New York City and was the United Labor Party's nominee in 1886. George viewed privately held land rent as unduly robbed from society and argued for a tax on land rent, particularly its incremental increase over time. He believed that the monopolization of land value by property owners was economically and morally wrong and would only deepen social cleavages and conflicts. George was a liberalist who did not wish to abolish property rights but argued that the rapidly increasing land rent due to modernization should be returned to the state through taxation. One factor likely hindering the uptake of George's ideas was his and his followers' assertion that the land rent tax should be the sole tax, known in the United States as "the single tax movement".

Georgeism enters Norway

Three of Henry George's books were soon translated into Norwegian in 1886 and 1887: His main works were Progress and Poverty (1879), Social Problems (1883) and Protection or Free Trade (1886). His first and most popular work, Progress and Poverty, is considered the most read economic work of the nineteenth century, more than the works of Malthus, Marx and Mill.[2] It was well received in the Norwegian press, particularly in the liberal *Dagbladet*. The journal *Nyt Tidsskrift* presented George's economic theory in an extended review, and its author Holger Sinding later issued a biography of George after having corresponded with him. The magazine *Ny Illustreret Tidende* presented Henry George with a large portrait of the man on the first page, followed by his life story that left the impression of a modest and morally strong man with a novel and brilliant idea.[3] An article in the central journal *Samtiden,* however, dismissed George's ideas as speculative and a product of pseudo-science. The recently founded scientific journal *Statsøkonomisk tidsskrift* only reprinted some international critical comments on the book. George's reasoning was embedded in a social and moral worldview that did not align with the norms of science at the time. Nor did his world view on social justice fit well with contemporary economic and juridic thought. In the journal and its association Statsøkonomisk Forening, two of the nation's most prolific professors of law, T.H. Aschehoug and Bredo Morgenstierne, dismissed George's ideas as bordering on socialism, despite their liberalist elements (free trade, no taxes on investments).[4]

While the Georgeist idea received tremendous popularity in the United States and Europe, including Scandinavia, it was deemed too radical and different for most players in the established party-political landscape. The Norwegian professor of economic history, Wilhelm Keilhau, argued in 1912 that Georgeism as an ideology had never been as influential in Norway as it was on the continent.[5] In the Norwegian parliament, Stortinget, from the 1880s onwards, Georgeism was undoubtedly hampered by its radical insistence on land rent tax as the only tax and was thus perceived as extreme liberalism. The rising socialist movement in Europe considered it to be largely naive liberalism. The Norwegian Labour Party (Arbeiderpartiet), founded in 1887, showed little interest in Georgeist ideas as socialism

focused on contradictions between labour and capital, with no independent role for the value of natural resources. Conversely, conservatives soon labelled the state's right to expropriate land rent a socialist position. Henry George argued from Roman Law and Christian morality, rather than analysing structural exploitation of the working classes. In the Georgeist scheme, there were no social classes, no main contradiction between labour and capital, and no anti-capitalism. It simply argued that natural resources that were subject to exclusive privileges had to be compensated according to their increasing social value.

Despite resistance, Georgeism gained adherents in Norway as well, including among politically influential figures. Georgeism was central on several political fronts in Norway if viewed not as a rigid quasi-religious ideology but as a pragmatic approach to address social injustice. I will address political areas and issues where Georgeist ideas were drawn upon in the formation of Norwegian policies in this critical period. The chapter highlights two figures in the developing and cultivating of Georgeism in Norway: the leading parliamentary liberal Viggo Ullmann and the prolific party chairman and reformer Johan Castberg.

George's main work, Progress and Poverty, was translated by the well-known social-liberal and Grundtvigian parliamentary representative Viggo Ullmann. In the preface, Ullman, referred to George's statement that he wanted to combine the ideas of Adam Smith and David Ricardo with Proudhon and Lasalle by building on the true and honourable aspects of socialism to compensate for its weak aspects.[6] He concludes by quoting Henrik Wergeland, the national poet: "Gone is the ugly lurking feud between wealth and labour"[7] Viggo Ullmann was a prominent political figure of his time. As so many in Europe at the time, he was engaged in the "social question". Ullmann was a local newspaper editor and a Grundtvigian, and he met at Stortinget for 15 years for the Liberal party (Venstre) and served as party chairman for three years. He was president of Stortinget for several years, and in 1893–1894, he was among the most prolific parliamentarians in Norway. In 1887, Ullmann founded the journal *Vor Tid*, dedicated to "social questions and Christianity", where most articles related to Georgeist issues.[8] Ullmann's articles prioritized moral justification over economic reasoning.[9] His pathos encircled around solidarity and the Christian calling of love of one's fellow humans. In 1889, Ullmann played an instrumental role at the founding meeting of the Scandinavian Association for Social Reform in Odense, Denmark. Although Georgeist ideas gained more traction in Denmark than in Norway and Sweden, Ullmann's journal represented the association in Scandinavia. Despite energetic efforts from Ullmann and others, interest in Georgeist ideas waned, and *Vor Tid* ceased publication in 1891. Ullmann visited the United States in 1893 for the World Exhibition in Chicago (see also Chapter 9 in this volume), where he met Henry George personally, no doubt leaving a lasting impression.[10]

Debates in Norway referred to Denmark and England as nations successfully implementing land rent policies.[11] In England, local legislation included taxation on unearned increment in the London County Council Act of 1895, and similar local reforms on "land values taxation" followed. Local improvement areas were to contribute according to the increase of value from the city development. In 1904,

Stortinget decided that property was to be taxed according to market value rather than revenue, which was a decisive step towards what Adam Smith had advocated more than a century earlier and John Stuart Mill in 1871 as one of the founders of the British Land Reform Association.[12] The moderate utilitarian John Stuart Mill turned against private property as the sole legitimate principle to handle common affairs. He came under a certain influence of people like St Simon and Comte and made the point that the concept of "private property" could not apply to what is not a product of labour but of nature.[13] Heated debates took place in the liberal *Daily Chronicle* and *Daily News*. The English League for the Taxation of Land Values and the Land Nationalisation Society arranged public meetings on the issue.[14]

In Denmark, new acts were passed from 1907 that connected the construction of harbours and railroads to the taxation of neighbouring properties.[15] One may safely conclude, Kristiania's mayor Hagbart Berner stated, that "there is a general cultural wave that lifts the question of value increase taxation to be one of the most important questions of our time".[16] He argued repeatedly for a tax on the value increase of urban property.[17] In the leading intellectual journal *Samtiden*, the Danish Georgeist Erik Givskov presented the debates in Ireland, Britain and New Zealand, demonstrating how the land rent tax was seen to remedy poverty and social injustice.[18] Alongside some German Länder, Denmark was early to implement land rent taxation principles, influenced by Henry George and his followers in the Danish Association for Land Rent (Grundskyld). In 1908, the "railroad rent" (jernbane-skyld) was introduced in some local areas after the British betterment principle. The tax revenue was introduced to expand public infrastructure.[19]

In Sweden, the journal *Retsstaten* was published by Johan Hansson, and in 1917, it was published from Copenhagen. The Swedish debate seemed to be rather critical of Georgian ideas, particularly by leading figures in the Nationalökonomiska Föreningen.[20] Professor Gustav Cassel investigated the question on behalf of the government and was sceptical of what he called the confiscation of land rent.[21]

The Georgeist association and *Retfærd*

The Georgeist way of approaching the problem was that forests, ore from silver and copper mines, and waterfalls belonged to the commons and that their value needed to remain public.

In a situation of state and municipal deficits in combination with dramatic increases and concentrations of wealth, this principle seemed urgent.

In 1906, a more stable phase of Norwegian Georgeism began with the foundation of a Norwegian Georgeist association and the journal *Retfær*d (Justice), subtitled "Journal for the Norwegian Henry George movement". The journal *Retfærd* followed in the footsteps of the journals *Ret* in Denmark, *Land Values* in England and *Bodenreform* in Germany. The Georgeist association announced its aim to work for a peaceful solution of the social question through the economic liberation of the Henry George way: "Initialisation of land rent taxation".[22] This was taken directly from the Danish association's principles. In *Retfærd'*s translations of one

of his speeches, the Norwegian Georgeists were reminded of Georges' spiritual inspiration:

> To us it is enough to know that God is alive, and that it is not His will, all this injustice in the world. We must struggle for the Kingdom of justice here on earth. Today, it is us given to see that the Kingdom shall come![23]

The association soon recognized that the increase in the tax on land rent was a promising approach, since the dramatic rise in future land value would amount to the dominant part of the land rent.[24] Norway was in the midst of its second industrial revolution, exemplified by the Eyde and Birkeland's invention of artificial fertilizer. The value of places and towns near new industries was set to skyrocket. If value increases were returned to society, the land question could be addressed by granting loans and credit to the landless. From 1909, the association was clear on that, unlike George's American organization, it did not pursue a one-tax policy but advocated a tax on land rent as one of many tax forms.[25] It also emphasized the *future increase* in value of land (natural resources) as the tax object as a step towards a long-term aim to introduce land rent tax as such. This also indicated the organization's intent to influence ongoing debates and policy planning. However, Viggo Ullmann, the translator of George and a leading liberal member of parliament, was frustrated by what he saw as the dilution of the significance of Henry George himself, and he felt himself marginalized. To Ullmann, land rent was not just a principle of taxation but also a moral (and Christian) worldview, much like in the Danish association and its journal *Ret*. In 1908, Ullmann left the association because of the more pragmatic profile of the Norwegian association, and he died in 1910.[26] The number of subscribers on *Retfærd* in 1909 was 300, and the association never became as successful as the Danish association.[27]

If distancing themselves somewhat from the Danish model, the Norwegian adherents of Henry George still identified as Georgeists, and the association presented itself as the "Henry George movement in Norway". Georgeism was seen not just simply as some macroeconomic ideas but also as an alternative to both socialism and status quo liberalism. In an unsigned article in the September 1909 issue, socialism and Georgeism were said to have the same goal for society: to end all forms of poverty and injustice. However, the root of the problem, Georgeists argued, was not the capitalist's ownership of the means of production but the unwarranted exploitation of *nature*. The problem is not profit from capital investment but the exclusivity of what really belonged to the commons:

> [The capitalist] has made himself into the master of the earth with all its wealth and value that no human being has produced and therefore no human being has the right to make himself master over it in a way that hurts and humiliates other people.[28]

Georgeism differentiated between labour, capital and *land* as a third productive and unrivalled source of progress and wealth: "The contradiction is not between

labour and capital . . .but between labour and capital on the one hand and the monopolization of land on the other". The article concluded that socialism and Georgeism were quite different "systems". Unlike socialism, Georgeism would solve the problems in a *natural* way. The "naturalness" referred to George's assertion that taxing land rent was basically a question of returning to a previous and more harmonious state, where natural resources and the benefits of their cultivation were shared by all.

In 1912, the association renamed itself the Association for Land Rent Taxation (Laget for grunnverdibeskatning). The association showed less interest in utopian ideals and focused more on influencing actual parliamentary politics. The Georgeist association was dominated by social liberals. Among its members was Mathilde Eriksen, who was active in the largest organization for women, Norske Kvinders Nationalraad. Eriksen gave a talk on the theory of George at its convention in 1907.[29] Its chair was the leading advocate for women's voting rights, Gina Krog, who addressed Georgeism in the Journal for women's cause, *Nylænde*.[30] Another active female member of the association was Viggo Ullmann's sister, Ragna Nielsen, an acknowledged feminist. Others were politically active in the Liberal Party and the Labour Democrats. Many were involved in other widespread causes such as the Landsmål movement, which worked for the Norwegian written language based on dialects (Nynorsk), and the temperance movement. Some were bearers of public office, local politicians and newspaper editors, many of whom were associated with the Liberal Party.

In the association's monthly journal, *Retfærd*, editor Trygve Kramer translated articles by Henry George on how to build support for the land rent idea in European countries. In April 1908, Henry George published an article in *Retfærd* and in other countries on "What you can do for our cause – a guide to agitation".[31] The article outlined how to effectively argue in meetings and the papers and how to build associations and write pamphlets. He emphasized that the task was not to preach a new idea but to remind people of the once-natural and original principle that the earth itself belongs to everyone. Viewing land as equal to tools and machines was possible only because people had not reflected on its absurdity. Therefore, the idealist George assured that debate itself would undermine the unjust system.[32]

In *Retfærd,* Kramer argued that land rent tax was not really a tax but a fee on the exclusive right to use common land – waterfalls, the sea or forests.[33] The exception would be natural monopolies like railroads, the telegraph and the postal service, which the state must manage. Standing in the midst of the great struggle to protect basic national resources, the journal reminded its readers of George's demand: "We must re-make the earth into our common property"! In 1909, the editor of *Retfærd*, Trygve Kramer, published the book *Land rent taxation* (Grundverdibeskatningen).[34] Kramer justified his work by pointing out the growing popularity of the Labour party; alternative ideas needed to be developed to preserve private initiative. The transition from a peasant society to an industrial one also demanded action to prevent a widening gap between landowners and the landless. The journal *Retfærd* continued to report on debates in the British Parliament regarding tax reforms in cities and farmland, which seemed to offer ideas for the future – though Norwegian politics lagged behind.

The number of members in the Henry George Association was only 163 in 1909, one year after the first issue of *Retfærd*. No new local branches were established.[35] The journal had to practise self-financed publication to survive. (Authors had to pay 5 øre per line to have their article printed.) Its influence did not derive from its number of members but from the political capital of those who were.

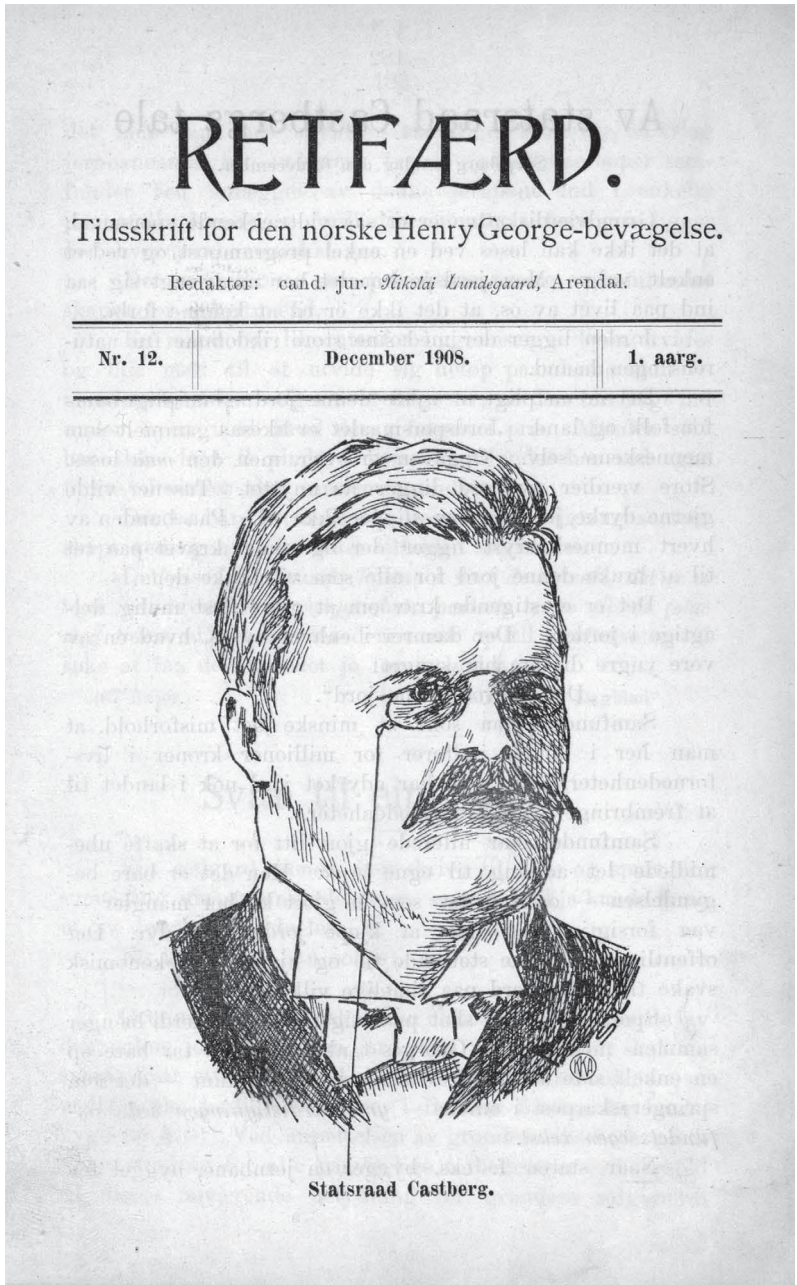
The labour democrats and Georgeism

Among the central pioneers, Viggo Ullman and the writer Arne Garborg stand out. However, a far more central political figure in the two decades surrounding the turn of the century was the social-liberal lawyer Johan Castberg. As a leading member of the George Association, Castberg also wielded considerable influence as the party chairman of the Labour Democrats and as minister of justice in several liberal coalition governments. He was a close ally to Prime Minister Gunnar Knudsen of the Liberal Party and spearheaded several social and industrial reforms during the early twentieth century.

From the 1880s onwards, Johan Castberg, in line with European social-liberal trends (and the American "progressive era"), adopted a perspective on "non-socialist socialism". He quoted the first leader of the Third French Republic, Leon Gambetta: "Practical socialism consists of a series of social questions that when resolved, is socialism".[36] For Castberg, the only path to a just society was through an endless series of social reforms: "In this, all true democrats agree".[37] Taxation in a social and just manner was among his top priorities from the outset. Individual egoism, he believed, had to be replaced with "a general spirit (almenaand), a sense of common interests and duties and a common aim to unite everyone".[38] His ideas shared much with British idealism, so-called French solidarism and German social democratic thought. In the leading journal *Samtiden*, Castberg was labelled "the Norwegian Lasalle" (see Figure 12.1).[39]

Johan Castberg addressed the issue of collective responsibility for the individual, asserting that the state was merely a manifestation of solidarity. The primary antagonist in his talks was the Manchester school of economics and laissez-faire liberalism, and nationally, the Conservative Party (Høire).[40] His non-Marxist collectivism was closely aligned with French social democrats like Jean Jaurès and social liberals such as Léon Bourgeois – or British Fabianism.

Castberg argued for the necessity of long-term thinking in addressing the complexities of the social question. In the discussions between Ullmann and Castberg in 1890, two distinct approaches to Georgeism emerged. Whereas Ullmann followed Denmark in viewing Georgeism as a comprehensive ideological system, Castberg saw it more as an economic theory from which specific insights could be adapted to the Norwegian context.[41] This divergence and, in part, controversy evolved over the following years. Castberg argued that land principally belonged to society, but he acknowledged that peasants were entitled to their own farming land. The principle of land rent tax could not be universally applied due to the prevalence of small and heavily indebted farms. Instead, he proposed a tax on uncultivated land. A radical proposal he supported was the expropriation of uncultivated usable



RETFÆRD.

Tidsskrift for den norske Henry George-bevægelse.

Redaktør: cand. jur. *Nikolai Lundegaard,* Arendal.

Nr. 12. | December 1908. | 1. aarg.

Statsraad Castberg.

Figure 12.1 The journal *Retfærd*, published by the Henry George Association in Norway
Source: National Library of Norway

land.[42] However, the focus remained on how to provide reasonable loans, rather than adopting forceful measures. The pragmatism of the worker association in the 1890s was very much influenced by Johan Castberg. The argument was, in a Georgeist sense, that land belonged to all, and they extended this point to argue for the welfare of crofters and land workers.

Following the dissolution of the union between Norway and Sweden in 1905, Georgeist ideas gained greater legitimacy. International capital began to focus on Norway's abundant and inexpensive natural resources: forestry, mining and, most importantly, hydroelectric power for the new bourgeoning, power-demanding industry. The financial speculation surrounding these resources, along with the dramatic rent increase as an effect of social and industrial development, echoed the very issues that had sparked Henry George in the 1860s to reflect on the problem of unearned rent.

In 1900, the United Workers' Associations, under Castberg's leadership, transformed into a political party, declaring the land question its top priority.[43] The party formally adopted the name Labour Democrats (Arbeiderdemokratene) in 1911. From the outset, the party placed the land and social questions at the forefront of its agenda. A key priority in their programme was the taxation of uncultivated, productive land to facilitate land redistribution.[44] They also advocated for a tax on what they termed "unearned future value increments", arising from general social progress, and called for the introduction of land rent taxation. In the 1909 programme, the governing Liberal Party proposed an inquiry into land rent taxation. Castberg frequently appeared in the widely read liberal press, particularly in the supportive Kristiania daily *Dagbladet*. Ahead of that year's parliamentary election, Georgeist ideas were hotly debated.

At the 1907 national party convention, Castberg argued in favour of a tax on future land rent as a first step. In a resolution, the party endorsed the implementation of a tax law that would return land rent to society, particularly in relation to waterfalls, mining, urban land and land near train stations.[45] The George association welcomed the resolution as a significant step forward. At the 1909 party convention, however, a change of strategy occurred. Castberg advocated for an incremental approach to land rent taxation, starting with taxes on rent value increases due to public infrastructure and installations.[46] He continued to grapple with the challenge of introducing land rent tax in an older society where land had already been distributed according to established legal norms and where small farms were burdened with heavy mortgages, making further taxation unrealistic.

From 1906 to 1909, the concept of land rent taxation gained traction in party platforms, albeit in modified forms.[47] The Liberal Party programme proposed further investigation into the possibility of state or municipal taxation on the increase in land rent caused by public investments.[48] *Retfærd* noted that while the breakthrough for Henry George's ideas was partial, it marked an important step forward. Conservatives framed the Labour Democrat position as dangerously socialist. In the annual throne speech debate of February 1909, conservative leader and former

Prime Minister Frederik Stang criticized the Liberal Party for attempting to curtail the right to private property. A key conservative strategy during this period was to portray Castberg as a socialist, aiming to divide the coalition government of which he was a member. Stang warned that land rent taxation would dominate the election campaign, which it did. The 1909 election was a significant setback for the two liberal parties.

Waterfalls: Concessions acts and the principle of reversion

The period 1906–1920 marked the first phase of hydropower development in Norway, a period that was highly decisive in both economic and political terms. Most importantly, it signalled the emergence of the interventionist and nationalist state. Several factors came together during this second industrial revolution: a general economic upturn, rising incomes for municipalities, electrochemical and electrometallurgical innovations led by industrial entrepreneurs, and, of course, Norway's unique topography. The country had some of the highest waterfalls in Europe, combined with mountain lakes that could serve as reservoirs. However, national capital was scarce, and foreign speculators showed interest.[49] In 1906, the Kristiania daily *Verdens Gang* initiated a political debate over national control of water resources. The paper suggested a "conspiracy" of foreign capitalists seeking to buy up all available Norwegian hydropower for speculative purposes. Among the speculators mentioned were the Swedish Wallenberg brothers, well-known for their financial strength. Johan Castberg quickly raised the issue in Parliament, asking what the government would do about this situation. Less than a month later, Parliament passed a set of laws known as the "Panic Laws". In 1888, restrictions on foreign ownership had been introduced, though not effectively enforced.[50] These new laws required foreign interests to obtain state permission (a concession) for the use of hydropower resources, with the concession period set at 60 to 80 years. In the spring of 1906, following the Panic Laws, another law was introduced confirming the concession obligation, stating that the owner's headquarters had to be in Norway. The important principle of reversion was introduced, specifying a 75-year limit without compensation.[51]

The government noted that a strong international hydropower movement had developed in Europe since the 1890s, as the importance and value of waterfalls rapidly grew. It was seen as essential to protect this resource as part of the common good.[52] Calculations suggested that Norway's total hydropower potential amounted to six million horsepower, with its value expected to increase dramatically year by year as new industries were established.[53]

The Swiss organization Frei Land, which led this movement, was heavily inspired by the philosophy of Henry George. In a referendum held on 25 October 1908, a clear majority of Swiss voters approved a law stating that the energy from waterfalls belonged to the federation, with cantons receiving all taxes and fees related to their industrial use.[54] This idea resonated in Norway, particularly with the country's recent status as an independent nation and within the framework of its dominant social-liberal ideology.

Another set of laws was passed in 1909 on the initiative of Minister of Justice Johan Castberg that concession was obligatory for all larger waterfalls, mines and large industries, and reversion was obligatory for all between 60 and 80 years. Following these "Castbergian" concession laws, concession fees had to be paid as well. Prime Minister Gunnar Knudsen as well was positive about the principle of reversion as a source for fiscal income.[55] Already in the 1890s, he had suggested state acquisition of waterfalls to secure energy for later electrification. In 1900, 24 towns in Norway had been electrified.[56]

The 1909 laws represented a more radical form of state intervention than had been proposed by the previous government under Prime Minister Chr. Michelsen. Pressure from the radical wing of the Liberal Party, as well as from the Labour Democrats, resulted in the inclusion of Norwegian capital in the concession rules, alongside foreign capital. However, the debate continued as industrialization spurred strong interest in Norway's natural resources, whose value was now rising rapidly.

Georgeism became a central ideological influence on the concession laws. Georgeists advocated for both land rent taxation and reversion as a means of addressing these issues. However, the pioneering Norwegian Georgeist, Viggo Ullmann, argued that a tax on the production of hydropower (measured in horsepower) amounted to a tax on capital, which he felt contradicted the core principles of Georgeism. The debate was picked up by the *Dagbladet* daily, where its editor, Volkmar, expressed sympathy for Georgism in its more moderate form. Ullmann was criticized in *Dagbladet* for failing to recognize that this was an opportunity for Georgeism to prove its relevance. Ullmann's ideological position was discussed in the journal *Retford*, but his views remained a minority opinion among Georgeists in Parliament. The majority accepted the state's active role in protecting the nation's resources, arguing that the conditions attached to a concession represented an adaptation of Georgism.

In the Norwegian context, the "purist" Georgian position appeared too liberalist to be adopted in a society where the state was seen as "the strong arm of society", as Castberg put it in his concession debate in 1909.[57] Castberg was widely praised for his work in Parliament on the new concession laws. Although the laws did not affect existing production, they prevented monopolization, speculation and foreign ownership. Norway's approach followed that of some German states and Switzerland, where the state would take control of property rights for hydropower production above a certain size. Castberg ensured that this principle applied to both foreign and Norwegian capital.

The "panic acts" and the concession laws of 1906–1907 were noted as major victories for the Henry George cause: "A great battle is won, and we expected no less, given that Johan Castberg, a member of the Henry George Association, was part of the government".[58] Only the state and municipal authorities could initiate new hydropower projects, and all private interests had to obtain a concession for a period of 40 to 80 years. This prioritized electricity for the population over the needs of industry. The most contentious issue was the principle of reversion: When the concession period expired, all resources, including infrastructure,

would revert to the state without compensation, meaning that the total ground rent would be returned to society. The Georgeist Association was also satisfied with the 1906–1907 concession laws because they imposed annual state taxes based on the horsepower generated by hydropower and the tonnes of ore produced by mining. As the editor of *Retfærd* stated, this was "nothing more than an imperfect land rent tax", and the Georgeists hoped to improve the public understanding of the principle. "No Georgeist in Norway has suggested the introduction of a full land rent tax all at once".[59]

In the central journal *Samtiden*, economic historian Wilhelm Keilhau argued in 1912 that the bold concession policies were a unifying force between national and social politics, made possible by the state's dominant economic position.[60] Keilhau, who had defended his doctoral thesis on David Ricardo's theory of land rent, believed that these steps were driven by a fear of the consequences of foreign capital inflows and the lack of sufficient national capital to exploit Norway's natural resources. He viewed the state's right to reversion as a "golden compromise" that secured public goods without violating constitutionally protected private property rights. Keilhau noted the democratic character of George's doctrines: "It is the great justice demand of democracy that individuals' undeserved losses are shared by all, just as their undeserved gains should benefit all". In particular, this fact applied to profits generated by societal development and investment in infrastructure – core ideas in the democratic principle of equality, which Keilhau pointed out was on the agenda of all democratic nations.

After ten more years of debate, another two essential concession acts were passed by Stortinget in 1917, concerning Norwegian and foreign ownership of industry and waterfalls. The principle of escheat was specified to a maximum of 60 years and recognized by the High Court as constitutional. The world war did not weaken the demand for Norwegian resources, and the capital was accessible due to increasing shipping rates. The challenge now was to make the concession laws even stricter for foreign capital, to build a Norwegian industry without draining the farming sector of labour power. The concession law of increased taxes had shortened the period before reversion. Johan Castberg argued that waterfall resources should be considered national property. A radicalized compromise law was passed.[61] The Labour Party and the Labour Democrats together ensured that obligations to the worker's housing conditions were covered by the law, confirming the reversion to the state.[62]

Conclusion

We have seen how American ideas were met with both enthusiasm and ambivalence and how they were used to address issues specific to Norwegian and European contexts. Georgeism represented an alternative way to organize property, moving beyond traditional liberalism and socialism. The ideas were adapted for Norwegian conditions through a process of negotiation and domestication. The only future for Georgeist ideas was to move beyond Henry George himself and transform his concepts into liberal and social-democratic reforms. In Denmark,

Georgeism continued in its original strong version and eventually turned itself into a political party, Retspartiet.[63]

Ironically perhaps, the popularity of Henry George's ideas in Europe marked a *return* to Europe, as his theories were largely based on British thought (A. Smith, D. Ricardo and J. S. Mill), which in turn had been influenced by Roman law. Yet, from the turn of the century until World War I, Henry George's way of framing social, moral and economic problems remained influential in debates across Europe. The issue of land value became central to various forms of activity during this period of urbanization and industrialization. Norway's strong historical nationalism provided motivation for this intellectual movement. Contributions from figures like David Ricardo and John Stuart Mill were referenced in academic circles, but Henry George's compelling vision spread the concept of land rent by integrating economic issues with moral and religious values.

As noted in the introduction, the Georgian association in Norway probably appropriated the reforms in the hydroelectric sector as confirming the reasonability of their own policies. The land rent idea certainly had more than one offspring, and it was not a passing idea. It still represents a vital, if controversial, position in Norwegian politics. When oil was discovered in the North Sea, the situation echoed the early twentieth century: immense natural resources, international companies seeking exclusive rights, and limited national capital and expertise to fully exploit these resources. Drawing on past experiences, a regime of concessions, investment taxes and petroleum rent taxes was established in the 1970s. Unfortunately, this historical success in energy management has not guided Norway's energy policy over the past three decades. Instead, it has been sidelined in favour of systems that either ignore or only marginally account for natural resource rents – such as those generated by wind and solar power – as an important source of taxation.

Notes

1 Another example: At the G22 summit in Rio de Janeiro 2024, the Norwegian minister of finance advocated a global tax on commercial exploitation of the "ground rent" of personal data, by tech-giants like Meta and Alphabet. *Klassekampen*, 24 July 2024.
2 Blaug, "Henry George."
3 *Ny Illustreret Tidende*, 24 March.
4 See Aschehoug, *Socialökonomik*, 167.
5 Keilhau, "Vort nationale demokrati," 119.
6 Ullmann, "Oversætterens forord" (Translator's preface).
7 In Norwegian: "Endt er den fæle, lurende fejde, imellom rigdommen og arbejde."
8 Vikse, "Jord – skatt – Rettferd," 41.
9 Ullmann, *Vor Tid*, vol. 1.
10 Vikse, "Jord – skatt – Rettferd," 45.
11 Vikse, "Jord – skatt – Rettferd," 89.
12 *Retfærd*, 1908, "Vor sag." See J.S. Mill: *Principle of Political Economy*, book II, Chap. II, paragraph 6, and programme art IX.
13 J.S. Mill, *Principles of Political Economy* 4, II, I § 3, 5, 6.
14 *Retfærd*, no. 3 mars 1909.
15 Berner, "Bolignød," 47.
16 Berner, "Bolignød," 48.

17 Berner, "Bolignød," 357.
18 Givskov, "Irland og Home Rule."
19 Thomle, "Verdistigningsskatten," 25. The Danish organization Retsforbundet was established by the Henry George Association and other groups in 1919. It turned into a political party in 1923 and entered the parliament in 1926. After World War II, it increased its group in the parliament, and in 1957–60 it was a member of a coalition government. In the 1970s it was the only non-socialist party that campaigned against Danish EU membership. In addition to land rent tax, it advocated separation of church and state, more referendums, and broad coalition governments after the principle of "samstyre". Several journals merged into *Det frie Blad*. See Bjørner, "Retsforbundets første tiår".
20 Thomle, "Verdistigningsskatten," 26.
21 *Retfærd*, March 1909.
22 Vikse, "Jord – skatt – Rettferd," 103.
23 *Retfærd*, November 1909, 180.
24 *Retfærd*, September 1909, 135.
25 Vikse "Jord – skatt – Rettferd," 116.
26 Vikse, "Jord – skatt – Rettferd," 101.
27 In 1927, *Retfærd* ended its publishing after two decades.
28 *Retfærd*, September 1909, 142.
29 Eriksen, "Det sociale Spørsmaal."
30 Krog, "Henry George."
31 George, *Retfærd*, 1908, 51.
32 George, *Retfærd*, 1908, 51.
33 Kramer, "Retfærd," *Vor sag*. 1908, 41, 53.
34 Kramer, *Grundverdibeskatningen*.
35 *Retfærd*, September 1909, 130.
36 Castberg, "Vor beskatning. Et stykke praktisk socialisme," *Vor tid*, No. 2. april 1887, 41.
37 Castberg, "Vor beskatning," 43.
38 Castberg, "Vor beskatning," 51.
39 *Samtiden*, 1913, 443–450 ("Spectator").
40 Thorud, "Det radikale folkepartis fremvekst," 88.
41 Vikse, "Jord – skatt – Rettferd," 66.
42 Vikse, "Jord – skatt – Rettferd," 73.
43 Vikse, "Jord – skatt – Rettferd," 78.
44 Vikse, "Jord – skatt – Rettferd," 86.
45 Vikse, "Jord – skatt – Rettferd," 173.
46 Vikse, "Jord – skatt – Rettferd," 177.
47 *Retfærd*, May 1909.
48 The Liberal Party. (Venstre) Programme 1909, post 11b.
49 It should be noted that the Nordic countries were exceptional in Europe in that the waterfalls were privately owned. Most of Europe remained under the influence of Roman law that defined stable waterfalls as belonging to the commons. The introduction of reverting the waterfalls to the state (escheat) would in the long term bring Norwegian policy more in line with most other European nations.
50 Sanders, "Democracy and Resource nationalism," 2023, 3.
51 NOU 2004:26, 48.
52 NOU 2004:26, 49.
53 *Retfærd*, September 1909, 134.
54 *Bodenreform*, 5 December 1908/*Retfærd* nr. 1 January 1909.
55 NOU 2004:26, 48.
56 NOU 2004:26, 30.
57 Castberg. Stortinget, 19 July 1909, see Castberg, Virksommeord.no.
58 *Retfærd* nov. 1909, no. 168 and no. 2, 28.
59 Andr. Hansson in *Retfærd*, January 1909.

60 Keilhau, "Vort nationale demokrati," 107–122.
61 Sanders, "Democracy and resource nationalism," 12.
62 Parliament, St. forh. 1917, 1053.
63 Lange, *Henry George*.

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13 The interwar professional women's movement in Scandinavia

"Like fresh wind from across the Atlantic"

Victoria C. Austveg and Eirinn Larsen

Introduction

Scandinavian historians have long focused on topics like equal pay, women's work rights and fair career opportunities, all of which form the liberal component of the so-called Nordic gender equality model. However, there is a noticeable gap in the literature regarding the transnational influences that enabled Scandinavian middle-class women to organize and identify as professionals with their own economic opportunities and rights. This chapter aims to address this gap by examining the transatlantic ties and connections that shaped the professional women's movement in Scandinavia prior to World War II. The starting point was the goodwill trips to Europe organized by the American National Federation of Business and Professional Women (NFBPW) in the late 1920s and early 1930s. These trips aimed to rally support for an international federation of working middle-class women. As a result of these transatlantic efforts, new organizations for professional women emerged across Scandinavia.

The Norwegian National Federation of Self-Employed Women, founded in 1931, was the first visible response to the American Business and Professional Women's (BPW) movement in Scandinavia. With its soon-to-be 3,000 members, it outnumbered and reinvigorated the liberal feminist camp after years of dormancy. In Sweden, the organization was first established through a single club before a national federation, the Swedish Federation of Professional Women's Clubs, was formed in 1935. Their development mirrored that of Norway while also engaging women within the social-democratic camp. In Denmark, none of this happened, and when a national federation for professional women was set up after World War II, it seemed less forceful. Why this was the case is an important question to answer, but only secondary in this chapter. What seems evident, however, even at this stage in our research, is that the woman the American BPW movement connected with in Denmark, Stella Kornerup, was not able to mobilize working middle-class women in the way Nanna With did for Norway and Alva Myrdal did for Sweden.

The transatlantic connections were still important for the organizing efforts of professional women in all three countries. It provided a new generation of liberal feminists across Scandinavia with ideas of how to organize themselves to identify and act upon their situation as working women. This was especially important for

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Scandinavian women as the male-breadwinner model strengthened its footing in interwar politics. As the economic crisis hit, unemployment rose, and the social democratic parties gained electoral support across the region.

We start this chapter out by discussing the American business and professional women's movement. The grandiose idea of its leader, lawyer Lena Madesin Phillips, to create a worldwide association of business and professional women led in 1930 to the International Federation of Business and Professional Women (IFBPW). By using what historian Megan Threlkeld describes as a rhetoric of citizenship, Phillips established an international scene for herself and members of the American business and professional women's clubs.[1] Representing more than 100,000 members by 1930, these American women belonged to the liberal camp of feminism. Still, they were socio-economically diverse and encompassed both self-employed women and women working in private and public administration, in media and the liberal professions, and in the remaining part of the chapter, we discuss the different responses to the American initiative in Norway and Sweden. We conclude by questioning whether the rise of the professional women's movement in Scandinavia could be seen as a sign of the Americanization of working middle-class women's political consciousness.

The American beginning

During the interwar period, economic gender equality in the United States, as in the rest of the world, was virtually non-existent. For instance, in the 1920s, American women in paid labour only earned 57 percent of what men did.[2] Societal norms, reinforced by deliberate policies, confined women – particularly married ones – to unpaid domestic labour. While approximately half of unmarried women worked for wages, this figure plummeted to just 9 percent for married ones.[3] Employment patterns also reflected American class and race dynamics, with working-class women, and particularly women of colour, being more inclined to engage in paid labour.[4] This situation arose from economic necessity, typically with the family unit relying on her income. In contrast, working middle-class white women were increasingly characterized by professional ambition that went beyond just making ends meet.[5] It was this segment of wage-earning women that the NFBPW sought to engage.

Lena Madesin Phillips, the founder of the NFBPW, fits well into the image of the new woman of the interwar period: the flapper with short hair and a skirt just below the knee. Born in 1881 in Kentucky, she grew up with opportunities to enter educational institutions previously closed for women and gained the right to participate in national elections at 41.[6] Kentucky had been crucial as a gateway to the South for feminist and women's rights activists. Still, it was racially diverse and lagged somehow in the enfranchisement of women compared to other and more northern states.

Phillips' ability to rise and become one of the great American feminists of the twentieth century had much to do with her own merits. She was the second woman to graduate from law school at the State University of Kentucky, and she pursued a successful career as a self-employed lawyer with the right to present in court in

several states.[7] Phillips remained unmarried throughout her life but had a female life partner, Marjory Lacey-Baker, or "Maggie", as Phillips called her.[8] She became close friends with the Roosevelts and the Swedish Myrdals and visited the Scandinavian countries several times during her lifetime, becoming a key international figure.[9] Most significantly, Phillips established a women's organization, which in time sparked an international movement and a new identity for white-collar workers and self-employed women. The precondition for being able to do so was her involvement in the American National Federation of Business and Professional Women.

Phillips was 36 when she received a request from the YMCA to unite all business and professional women in the nation during World War I.[10] According to Lisa Sergio's bibliography on Phillips, she articulated an inclusive configuration. To the main board, she argued it would "include a Unitarian, a Jewess, a Quaker and a Christian Scientist and that we are trying to secure an equally prominent Catholic woman to join us".[11] The federation was to be politically neutral to party politics and attract a diverse membership from different congregations, indicating her vision for an inclusive organization across the United States. Yet it was exclusively white for decades.

At the NFBPW's founding meeting in 1919, 212 delegates and around 400 white women settled on an organizational model that came to serve as a standard for women's organizations in Scandinavia and beyond – not to mention laid the groundwork for its international federation, the IFBPW. The organization adopted a federative structure modelled after the American governance system, building up local clubs across the United States and thereby facilitating rapid membership growth. This framework empowered local women's communities, granting them autonomy, establishing leadership roles and allowing them to prioritize issues important to their members locally. At the same time, the national board had a broader perspective, which was notable in NFBPW's main purpose to promote the interests of business and professional women and further

> to secure combined action by them; to gather and distribute information relative to vocational opportunity; to stimulate local and State organizations and cooperation among business and professional women of the States of the United States.[12]

Though inclusive in many terms, the NFBPW upheld segregation by excluding coloured women from its membership, implying that "women" meant "white women" and that the term "professional" referred to activities open to white people only. This practice, as noted by historian Maurine Beasley, was not unusual for women's organizations established by white women during this period, as whiteness was a significant aspect of the American women's movement after 1920.[13] This was also true for the NFBPW. Sergio confirms this, noting that Phillips had limited interaction with women of colour beyond those she had known in her childhood, who served as domestics in her home.[14] It was first in the 1930s that Phillips began to interact with influential black female leaders such as Mary McLeod Bethune,

the founder of the National Council of Negro Women. However, it was not until 1948 that Phillips voiced concerns about the racial policies maintained by the organization.[15] Regrettably, this had a minor practical impact, as she no longer held leadership positions in the NFBPW. The organization she had established remained a coalition primarily representing white women from two distinct socioeconomic segments far into the 1950s: the self-made and often self-taught businesswoman and the college-educated professional white woman.[16]

Goodwill across the Atlantic

In response to the escalating political assaults and restrictions on working women during the interwar period, the NFBPW prioritized securing access to every education and profession in its first decades. As noted by Geline MacDonald Bowman and Earlene White, authors of the NFBPW history, the organization's core mission remained clear from the start. At its first convention, it advocated for women's inclusion in all civil service exams and called for better data on US women in government employment.[17] The national focus soon expanded as well when the International Labour Organization (ILO) pushed for more global restrictions on working women. Phillips broadened the BPW movement's vision to include women worldwide.

In the summer of 1928, NFBPW embarked on its first goodwill tour to Europe, establishing a foundation for expansion and development into an international movement just two years later. The tours were intended to foster positive transatlantic relationships and promote the organization, with a total of 64 American business and professional women participating at a considerable expense of US$795 each. This figure corresponds to over US$14,700 in the currency of 2024, meaning it was not affordable for just anyone. The subsequent year, they visited the Nordic countries: Norway, Sweden, Finland and Denmark.[18]

In early August 1929, about 30 American women came to Oslo to meet prominent Norwegian business and professional women. Among others were activists and leaders of several women's organizations, predominately consisting of non-socialist women such as Betzy Kjelsberg, Agnes Martens and Manny Altern. Furthermore, the Americans met Norwegian female lawyers, doctors and journalists, to mention some. Among them was journalist, publisher and author Nanna With, who would become the key figure in the formation of the Norwegian BPW Federation. Already in 1919, she had crossed the Atlantic and explored the American people, culture and, foremost, its Norwegian immigrants.[19] Nanna With possessed the necessary connections and resources that Phillips and her women sought, creating the basis for lifelong friendships divided by the ocean. Organized by Altern and With, the first of many American visits consisted of lectures on Norwegian women's roles in various professions, tours of a chocolate factory and accommodations at the premier hotel in the capital, Grand Hotel. After two and a half days, the American visitors took the train from Oslo to Stockholm.[20]

The Swedish visit unfolded similarly, and as it had been in Norway, the American presence in Stockholm was deemed successful by the NFBPW itself and the Swedish media. The Americans first met with Edith Lindblom, the leader of the

Female Clerk Society (Kvinnliga kontoristföreningen).[21] While Lindblom was their first point of contact in Sweden and organized the visit, the Swedish organization was later established by two other women, Célie Brunius and Alva Myrdal. Brunius was like Norwegian Nanna With, a journalist, editor and, of course, a women's activist. On the other hand, Myrdal would emerge as one of Sweden's most notable figures of the century due to her writings, diplomatic efforts and active participation in the Social Democratic Party – and as the wife of Gunnar Myrdal. Eventually, she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her work towards disarmament and her advocacy for nuclear-free and weapon-free zones.[22] Nevertheless, in the late 1920s and early 1930s, Alva Myrdal primarily worked as an author, following her husband to live and work in the United States and Geneva while raising their children.[23] She wrote both independently and with her husband, the socialist politician Gunnar, primarily focusing on feminist family policies, making them pioneers. This focus would significantly influence the Swedish BPW organization – much like Alva Myrdal's involvement with the BPW movement would shape socialist politics in Sweden.

However successful the NFBPW visits in Norway and Sweden were deemed, it became clear that additional time was needed to create national federations across Scandinavia that could affiliate with the upcoming international BPW movement. The journey to Denmark yielded less success, leading to a complete lack of the BPW movement over the following seven years. Consequently, contrary to Phillips' initial plan, the IFBPW was formed a year later without the involvement of Norway, Sweden or Denmark. To join IFBPW as a national federation, one needed to have at least three local clubs and a national board. If a country had less than three local clubs – as later became the case for Sweden – a local club could still be under the umbrella of IFBPW, but it would not have a national federation at home.

Scandinavian responses

In 1930, just weeks before the IFBPW founding meeting in Geneva, Phillips and her team embarked on another goodwill mission to Scandinavia, trying once again to get them ready to join the federation from its beginning. Though this did not become the case – it would take an additional year for them to join – Phillips left the north with the following thoughts on Scandinavian women:

> From Norway we naturally moved on to Sweden . . . . The Scandinavian women were among the first to have suffrage and both Norway and Sweden had achieved much, more seemingly professional than in business life, however. It seems to me that here was a cleavage between business and professional women which we did not have in our country, perhaps because these nations had had a more clearly defined class system than we had ever knew in America.[24]

Phillips' insights regarding class structures in Scandinavia compared to the United States are significant in several aspects. Class did indeed vary notably between

different Scandinavian countries and the United States. This was especially true if one only had white people in mind, given the complicated and intersectional matter of race and class in the United States. Nevertheless, white Americans had a flatter class structure than Scandinavia, especially considering the historical and cultural aspects of class in the Nordic countries. Nonetheless, her remarks on there being fewer businesswomen in Scandinavia were only partially true – it would be the already organized businesswomen of Drammen and Oslo who made a Norwegian BPW federation possible.

In 1931, when the IFBPW was under a year old, Phillips kept facilitating for a Scandinavian inclusion. Norwegian Nanna With was invited to America, where she was set to lecture at BPW clubs nationwide for three months. On her return voyage to Norway, her suitcase was packed with BPW materials, including statuettes and regulations.[25] By the time of her return, things had also been progressing at home. Phillips had sent the Canadian attorney Dorothy Heneker, who, for four days in both Norway and Sweden, was to travel to places where it was likely to establish local clubs and hold lectures to boost the organization.[26] This gave results.

On 14 April 1931, a meeting with 70 influential business and professional Swedish women and one Canadian was held at Hotel Carlton in Stockholm. Miss Heneker of Montreal, as she was called, "made a very nice and inspiring speech outlining the purpose of the federation, and the majority of those present became very keen on starting the club proposed".[27] A committee was formed to draft a proposal for the constitution and bylaws. Three weeks later, in early May, the first Swedish BPW club was founded. Its official name was "Affärs- och Yrkeskvinnors Klubb", a direct translation of the American title. Baroness Märta Armfelt was elected the first chairwoman, and prominent women such as Célie Brunius, Alva Myrdal, Greta Cembraeus, Sigrid Beckman, Ingrid Sandberg and Era Wallmark-Nilén took on leader positions from the start.[28] They were a combination of highly educated and self-made women, and all but one were married and mothers. The club began with around 40 members. These members included more traditional businesswomen, with shops and firms selling goods and services to people. In addition, there were solicitors, insurance inspectors, bank tellers, journalists, sculptors, sand painters and medical gymnasts.[29] Nevertheless, Sweden had only this single club in the first four years of the 1930s, missing the opportunity to create a national federation like Norway did within a month.

When the Norwegian founding meeting took place on 13 June 1931, professional women in Norway sought to make a greater impact than their eastern neighbours did. They established two local clubs and incorporated already existing organizations of businesswomen: Drammen Women's Trade Association (Drammen Kvinnelige Handelsstandsforening), while the Oslo Women's Trade Association (Oslo Kvinnelige Handelsstandsforening) joined soon after.[30] Through this initiative, they made a comprehensive national board. Nanna With assumed leadership from the beginning, a crucial factor in the rapid growth of the BPW in Norway. She was the one who had connections in both the liberal women's movement and among Norwegian businesswomen. Other prominent figures were journalist Caro Olden, parliamentarian politician and medical doctor Signe Swensson, and

her colleague Dr Cathrine Hambro. In addition to being women activists and professionals, these Norwegian women had another thing in common: They stayed unmarried, some promotively single, and some in same-sex relationships. This was also, as we know, the case of Lena Madesin Phillips.[31]

The original naming of the Norwegian federation was to be Self-employed Women's National Federation, and the member base mostly belonged to the petite bourgeoisie and surpassed the divide between labour and capital, uniting the two.[32] The federation was organized in a strikingly similar way to the American BPW, which was required from the international federation, IFBPW.[33] Its national board was comprised of committees for administration, organization, public relations, and education and career guidance. This indicates that the Norwegian federation was effectively established from the outset, ready to promote the formation of various clubs throughout the country. However, the IFBPW umbrella provided more than guidelines on organizational matters. Its primary focus was advocating for women's employment rights, which helped mobilize working middle-class women across countries.[34]

Norwegian and Swedish BPW branches actively championed equal professional rights for women, particularly through their members' magazines. These were mirrored in the NFBPW's journal *Independent Woman*: "the first magazine in the United States to be published for women in business and the professions and the most widely quoted of any woman's organization magazine".[35] In Norway and Sweden, the journals typically included political news, lectures, articles, summaries of meetings and information about upcoming events and gatherings. Most importantly, it gave the members information about key issues.

Stockholm BPW, for instance, used the journal to cover international voices and messages. Particularly interesting was one of Eleanor Roosevelt's articles called "The Married Women in Business", which was translated and paraphrased in the Swedish member magazine in 1933.[36] Roosevelt reasoned that both female and male European ancestors worked regardless of gender when they immigrated to the United States. Additionally, she contended that the right for women to work was a fundamental aspect of personal *freedom* and *existence*. This liberal way of understanding women's rights, embedded in core American values, was distributed and spread to all Swedish members who had affiliations to both sides of the political aisle.

Different dynamics: party politics, class and gender

The most significant difference between the Norwegian and Swedish BPW movements became the party-political affiliation of their members. This difference resulted partly from how each country's socialist party had addressed the issue of class struggle during the interwar period. The Norwegian Labour Party was significantly more revolutionary than its Swedish counterpart. In 1919, Norwegian Martin Tranmæl led the party into the Comintern, believing that revolution and dictatorship were inevitable.[37] In contrast, two years earlier, the Swedish sister party, led by Hjalmar Branting, had entered a coalition government with liberal parties

and openly distanced itself from the Bolshevik's communist vision for the world.[38] The Norwegian Labour Party left the Comintern in 1927; nevertheless, its revolutionary actions led to a deeper divide between the two political sides, including their women.

Women in the Norwegian labour movement prioritized class struggle, viewing their challenges as workers as outweighing those related to their gender. From 1930, women involved with the Norwegian Labour Party barred members from joining right-affiliated groups, a policy the leaders in the socialist women's organizations enacted themselves. According to historian Elisabeth Lønnå, the "political right" encompassed any organization not led by their own party, with certain female trade unions excluded from the rule.[39] This negative response towards other female organizations also reflected resistance against any liberal influences towards the labour movement, which women's economic emancipation indeed was.[40] Consequently, most politically active Norwegian socialist women supported restrictions on female employment as the solution to the economic crisis of the interwar period, arguing that this secured an income for every family, with men as the primary earners.[41] This reinforced traditional gender roles, starkly contrasting the BPW's recognition of women as individuals entitled to economic freedom.

The Norwegian middle-class women within the liberal camp of feminism rather claimed that gender equality had to be upheld in all aspects of law and politics.[42] To the Norwegian liberal middle-class working women, the BPW movement was "Like fresh wind from across the Atlantic", as Nanna With described it.[43] To them, IFBPW represented more than just an organization; it offered professional women an identity that inherently countered socialist attacks on those pursuing economic independence and equal opportunities in the workforce.

In Sweden, however, the debate between women of different classes unfolded differently. As in Norway, Swedish women were usually divided into organizations based on class and party politics, with disagreements and main issues thereafter; still, it was not as rigid. The male breadwinner model was never the politics of consensus in the Swedish Labor Party, allowing female party members to oppose the attacks on working women without betraying the party line. This meant that although the cultural gender norms were equally strong in Sweden as in Norway, it was not socialist party politics that reduced women's rights in the workforce. As Renée Frangeur has noted, socialists – men and women – openly discussed the matter in the Swedish parliament throughout the interwar years, as did the liberal parties.[44] Furthermore, women's suffrage in Sweden persisted until 1919, necessitating alliances across political lines. This, with a less radical Labor Party and a coalition government of socialist and liberal parties, provided opportunities for women's collaboration in the time before World War II.[45]

These were the different Scandinavian class and gender dynamics that met the American BPW in 1930. Though the organization was without political affiliation, this had minimal practical impact on the Norwegian BPW. As we already have seen, the Swedish BPW had members from both sides of the political aisle, paving the way for a united progressive movement nationally and internationally. This, for instance, allowed social democrats who also were middle-class women, such as

Alva Myrdal and Karin Kock, to become the faces of the Swedish BPW despite the IFBPW having a liberal nature at its core. In turn, this prompted Swedish socialist women to advocate for both gender liberation and improved working-class conditions, whereas these issues remained distinct in Norway. This affected the focus of the Norwegian and Swedish BPWs, as well as the policies of their respective labour movements in the following decades.

Getting names, members and priorities right

In Norway, the BPW movement openly opposed the Labor Party's views on women in the workforce from a liberal angle. It was welcomed by feminist-minded middle-class women. At the same time, the federal structure facilitated the swift growth of local clubs and, consequently, members. By 1933, the Norwegian BPW branch had expanded to nine local clubs and 1,560 members.[46] In contrast, Sweden had only one BPW club, the Stockholm club, with 448 members that same year.[47] The organizational model of the Norwegian BPWs interested Swedish women from the beginning, and the two sister organizations shared everything from the member journals to strategies on how to expand the movement most effectively.[48] As learnt from its American mother, the NFBPW, propaganda or what we would call marketing today, was crucial to distributing the BPW agenda.[49] In this context, the naming of the organizations played a vital role; what was the best translation of "business and professional women" in Scandinavia?

In 1932, the Norwegian local BPW club of Oslo and the only Swedish club, BPW Stockholm, rebranded themselves as "Professional Women". The argument was that this title and identity was more modern, easier to pronounce, and, to a larger extent, coined what they were: women with a profession.[50] Their rebranding was clearly strategic, as each club leveraged the other's name change in their discussions to persuade their members.[51] The soon-to-become Oslo BPW leader, journalist Caro Olden, was the mastermind behind this. She had agitated for changing the title of the National Norwegian BPW, which went by the name of Self-Employed Women, to something more modern.[52] To Olden's great frustration, this would take another six years, partly due to the counterpart arguing that professional, or *yrke*, "had something rather sharp and unpleasant about it, which easily invited ridicule".[53] This negative association likely stemmed from the term's oppositional nature against the male breadwinner model. However, the term "professional women" was part of the Norwegian language in record time, and local BPW clubs across the country rapidly followed in the footsteps of Olden.[54]

The political identity of professional women was continually evolving during the 1930s, and another key debate was whether housewives should be permitted BPW membership or not. The organization did aim for broad inclusion. However, its core mission was to advocate for women's right to paid work over the traditional housewife role. Some still argued for including housewives as members, stressing that some of them had been forced out of employment by the very laws BPW opposed. The Stockholm BPW club capped housewife membership at 20 percent in 1932, while the Norwegian debate lasted throughout the decade.[55] The standing

fear was that once housewives were admitted, their needs would overshadow those of professional women and undermine BPW's purpose.[56] Nanna With even sought support for her view from the IFBPW, which replied that "I believe Miss Heneker agrees with you that they [Housewives] should not be accepted as members".[57] Despite repeated discussions at national BPW congresses, no consensus was reached. Nevertheless, by 1934, nine of 12 Norwegian clubs excluded non-earning women, reinforcing the BPW's identity and focus on women's right to work.[58]

During the 1930s, the most significant issue for the IFBPW was women's right to work.[59] In 1934, all its 22 member countries were asked to submit information on the economic status of women in their country, which both the Norwegian Federation and Swedish Club did. This revealed that, although both limited women's participation in the workforce and their wages relative to men, they did so in distinct ways due to differences in gender politics and labour market structures. In Norway, the priority of the BPW was to oppose the continued attempts to restrict women in the workforce. For example, in 1936, the Norwegian Labour Party made another attempt to include specific protections for working women within the legal framework, denying women the right to work overtime and at night – like the restrictions upheld for Swedish women since 1919. The Norwegian BPW rigidly opposed this through agitation by their BPW liberal parliamentarian, Dr Signe Swensson, and addressing the Norwegian parliament, arguing that "Any special protection for women is unnecessary and will only harm the free competition of working women".[60]

Moreover, the Norwegian BPW generally and constantly challenged policies and gender norms through dissemination in media, which they claimed had "been quite easy as the Oslo Club has as members at least one female journalist from each of the big papers".[61] This approach to political advocacy originated from the American NFBPW and could also be observed on the other side of the border. In 1934, an additional three local Swedish BPW clubs were established. Following a request for and receipt of Norwegian laws for inspiration, circumstances finally came into place for Sweden to establish a national federation as well.

Same, but different

In 1935, the Swedish Federation for Professional Women was ultimately founded. At this point, Norway had 22 local clubs and about 3,000 members, while the United States had over 1,200 local clubs. This was in stark contrast to four clubs and about 800 members in Sweden. Myrdal, who was becoming a Swedish celebrity, went in as the national leader from the beginning. This not only paved the way for swift growth but also continued to steer the organization towards a liberal-socialist agitation for women's rights.

Already in 1933, members of the Swedish BPW could read about the new female motto: "The married woman's right to work – the self-supporting woman's right to marriage".[62] This dual demand, with a special focus on the right to marry – and not just the right to work – separated the Norwegian and Swedish BPW branches. In 1934, Alva and Gunnar Myrdal released the renowned book *Crisis in the Population*

Question, proposing solutions to the declining birth rate in Sweden.[63] They claimed that a significant aspect of the issue was related to the considerable challenges working women encountered when entering into marriage and motherhood, which were substantial enough to deter many women from pursuing them.[64] They suggested socialist solutions to facilitate the opportunity for women to become mothers while continuing to work. Though the book initially did not have a liberal feminist goal, it advocated for women's economic liberation through collective measures, something the Norwegian Labour Women of the interwar period never managed due to their isolation and strong opposition against anything liberal.

The advocacy for establishing public daycare centres in Sweden was particularly noteworthy because this became a significant political issue within the framework of the so-called Swedish gender equality model. It does not hold the same relevance in the Norwegian context, as the number of Norwegian daycares was incomparable to the Swedish until the early 2000s.[65] Naturally, Myrdal did promote this way of advocating for women's freedom and the right to work within the Swedish BPW. Concurrently, it is also evident that the socialist women in BPW played a role in integrating ideas and policies on women's autonomy into the Swedish political framework and labour movement. In general, family politics played a much more significant role in the Swedish BPW than the Norwegian – also in terms of advocating for bodily autonomy. Abortion was one of the Swedish BPW's most prioritized issues; this was not the case in Norway.

Nevertheless, more significant than the differences of the two national BPW branches were their shared values and aspirations for the women's movement, which was embedded in economic equality. Throughout the decade, both federations worked carefully on issues that would truly spark in the years after 1945: women's right to citizenship, equal pay for work of equal value, and the right to individual taxation. This common interest in gender economic equality enabled consistent collaboration and new relations within Scandinavia, attributed to the American-founded IFBPW and its rapid growth. Within only nine years of its beginning, in 1939, the IFBPW had grown to 100,000 members across 25 countries. Among these were Norway, with 24 local clubs and around 3,000 members, and the Swedish Federation, with 17 clubs and a total of 2,500 members. This gave its members multiple scenes and levels from which to operate.

The Norwegian and Swedish federations had grown close ties through inter-regional goodwill tours in Scandinavia, personal communication through letters, lectures and meetings, the BPW Nordic summer camps from 1935, and a Nordic committee for women's organizations. Also included here was the Finnish Club, along with a small Danish club created in 1936 that remained largely unnoticed until after World War II.

The Scandic leaders would also meet sporadically at the ILO conference, where IFBPW and its member states consequently kept a close eye, ready to send international petitions at every attempt to reduce women's economic rights, demanding "That the right to earn is one of the essential rights of human personality".[66] In just a few years after World War II, the ILO would undergo a significant transformation and establish itself as a leader in equal pay initiatives during the early 1950s. The

IFBPW would, on the other hand, once again take on a vital behind-the-scenes role in advocating for economic equality regardless of gender.

Conclusion

There has been limited research on the transatlantic ties and connections of what is frequently referred to as the Nordic model of gender equality. The becoming of this model has more often been located within the region and not between Scandinavians and the outside world.

However, the concern for professional and economic gender equality among American feminists increased in the late 1920s and early 1930s, spreading to Europe and Scandinavia and shaping the emerging identity of working middle-class women. This was a period when the fight for suffrage was partly replaced by a peace movement on the one hand and efforts to improve conditions for self-employed and salaried women on the other.

This chapter has demonstrated the close ties and connections between American and Scandinavian feminists during the interwar period through the lens of the BPW movement. The American NFBPW played a key role by organizing goodwill trips that helped establish BPW clubs in Norway and Sweden and revitalize liberal feminism, especially in Norway. In Denmark, the transatlantic connection had less immediate impact. Hence, the interwar professional women's movement in Scandinavia was no simple sign of the Americanization of working middle-class women's political consciousness. The leading Nordic figures of the movement were very differently connected both to the established political landscape and the labour market and in terms of their gender status.

Norwegian Nanna With, affiliated with the Liberal Party, led the women's trade society in Oslo during the visit of American BPW to Scandinavia in the late 1920s.

Figure 13.1 the frequency of "yrkeskvinne" in Norwegian newspapers from 1930 to 2013

Source: The N-gram analysis was carried out through the National Library of Norway. For details and raw data, see https://www.nb.no/ngram/#1_1_2_yrkeskvinne_1_1_3_1810%2C2013_2_2_2_12_2

Like many BPW women in Norway, she remained unmarried while working in journalism and publishing. In contrast, Swedish Alva Myrdal was married, a devoted social democrat and an advocate for married women's rights to childcare. Her close ties to the Roosevelts made her a significant voice in the international BPW movement and Swedish social democracy. In Norway, BPW women opposed the Labour Party's male breadwinner model as the response to the economic crisis. This indicates that the American-born professional women's movement hit Scandinavia very differently. It helped transform the liberal feminist camp in Norway, arguing for economic gender equality; in Sweden, it helped a new platform for social democratic family policies to develop.

However, the impact of the transatlantic feminist activist was indisputable. An N-gram investigation of Norwegian newspapers shows that there was no use of the Anglo-American term "professional women" until the goodwill trips organized by Phillips to Scandinavia in 1929 and 1930. The Norwegian term for professional women, *yrkeskvinne*, in Swedish *yrkeskvinnor,* appeared in the public debate simultaneously with the founding of the professional women's clubs in Scandinavia (see Figure 13.1).

Notes

1 Threlkeld, "Twenty Years of Worlds of Women," 4.
2 Kessler-Harris, *Out to Work*, 230.
3 Hill, *Women in Gainful Occupations*, 242–243.
4 Hill, *Women in Gainful Occupations*, 234–236.
5 Kessler-Harris, *Out to Work*, 226.
6 Sergio, *A Measure Filled*, 9.
7 Sergio, *A Measure Filled*, 20–26.
8 Rupp, *Worlds of Women*, 63–64.
9 "Nordisk samarbeid." Letter from Lena Madesin Phillips to Signe Swensson, dated 8 September 1941. National Archives of Norway, AV/RA-PA-0711/E/L0008.
10 Bowman and White, *A History of the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs*, 12.
11 Sergio, *A Measure Filled*, 42.
12 Byrne, *The Age Factor as It Relates to Women in Business and the Professions*, 11.
13 Beasley, "After Suffrage," 194.
14 Sergio, *A Measure Filled*, 223–224.
15 Sergio, *A Measure Filled*, 224.
16 Levine, *Degrees of Equality*, 107.
17 Bowman and White, *A History of the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs*, 21–22.
18 Good-Will Tour of Business and Professional Women; Partial International Program Northern and Southern Section, Summer 1929 (flyer). Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Call No: 71-102-72-76 / Carton 3: folder number 61.
19 With, *Noe å leve for*, 10.
20 Good-Will Tour of Business and Professional Women; Partial International Program Northern and Southern Section, Summer 1929 (flyer). Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Call No: 71-102-72-76 / Carton 3: folder number 61.
21 "Papper angående Klubbens bildande: 1929–1931." Letter from Lena Madesin Phillips to Edith Lindblom, dated 18 January 1930. The National Archives of Sweden, SE/RA/730387/F1/1.

22 Hirdman, *Det tänkande hjärtat*, 384.
23 Hirdman, *Det tänkande hjärtat*, 153.
24 Unfinished history of International federation of business and professional women. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Call No: 71-102-72-76 / Carton 9: folder 249.
25 With, *Noe å leve for*, 130.
26 "Papper angående Klubbens bildande: 1929–1931." Letter from Harriet Taylor to Lindblom, dated 6 August 1930. The National Archives of Sweden, SE/RA/730387/F1/1.
27 "Papper angående Klubbens bildande: 1929–1931." Report by Era Nilon, July 1931. The National Archives of Sweden, SE/RA/730387/F1/1.
28 "Papper angående Klubbens bildande: 1929–1931." Report by Era Nilon, July 1931. The National Archives of Sweden, SE/RA/730387/F1/1.
29 "YKR, Handlingar rörande internationalle federationen 1932–1935." List of members, 27 May 1932. The National Archives of Sweden, SE/RA/730386/E3/2.
30 With, *Noe å leve for*, 131.
31 Larsen and Austveg, "Norske yrkeskvinner etter amerikansk modell," 247.
32 Larsen, "Standsorganisering i klassesamfunnet," 14.
33 With, *Noe å leve for*, 131.
34 "Internasjonale rådsmøter 1933–1946." The National Archives of Norway, AV/RA-PA-0711/E/L0007.
35 Rawalt, *A History of the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, 1944–1960*, 14–15.
36 "Y.K:s Klubbnytt November 1933," no. 12, p. 127. The National Archives of Sweden, SE/RA/730387/Ö1/1.
37 Sejersted, *Sosialdemokratiets tidsalder*, 181.
38 Sejersted, *Sosialdemokratiets tidsalder*, 179.
39 Lønnå, *Stolthet og kvinnekamp*, 123.
40 See Slagstad, "Feminismen som normativ teori," 499–512.
41 Lønnå, "LO, DNA Og Striden Om Gifte Kvinner i Arbeidslivet," 159.
42 Hagemann, "Særbeskyttelsen av kvinner?," 93.
43 Unfinished history of International federation of business and professional women. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Call No: 71-102-72-76 / Carton 9: folder 249.
44 Frangeur, *Yrkeskvinna eller makens tjänarinna*, 75–77.
45 Frangeur, "Social Democrats and the Women Question in Sweden," 427.
46 "Årsberetninger 1932–1939." Annual report May 1933. The National Archives of Norway, AV/RA-PA-0711/A/L0002.
47 "Y.K:s Klubbnytt Maj 1933," no. 9, p. 99. The National Archives of Sweden, SE/RA/730387/Ö1/1.
48 "Korrespondens Norge, 1932–1943." Letter from Stockholm BPW to Nanna With, dated 24 May 1933. The National Archives of Sweden, SE/RA/730386/E3/1.
49 "Internasjonale rådsmøter 1933–1946." The National Archives of Norway, AV/RA-PA-0711/E/L0007.
50 "Landsmøte Bergen 1936." The National Archives of Norway, AV/RA-PA-0711/A/L0002.
51 *Kvindelig Handelsstands Blad*, nr. 6/1932, 87.
52 *Kvindelig Handelsstands Blad*, nr. 6/1932, 87.
53 "De selverhvervende kvinners landsmøte i pinsen," *Trøndelagen*, 5 May 1934.
54 "Årsmøtet Tønsberg 1938." The National Archives of Norway, AV/RA-PA-0711/A/L0002.
55 "Affärs-och yrkeskvinnors klubb Stockholm September 1932," no. 1, p. 3. The National Archives of Sweden, SE/RA/730387/Ö1/1.
56 "Husmødrene under diskusjon," *Adresseavisen*, 22 May 1934, 4.
57 "Korrespondanse." The National Archives of Norway, AV/RA/PA-0711/EL/L0001/0001.

58 "Husmødrene under diskusjon," *Adresseavisen*, 22 May 1934, 4.
59 "Internasjonale rådsmøter 1933–1946." The National Archives of Norway, AV/RA-PA-0711/E/L0007.
60 Dokumenter inngitt Stortinget, tilegg til dokument nr. 1, 1936: 1.; ST 1936, 246–250.
61 "Årsberetninger 1932–1939." The National Archives of Norway, AV/RA-PA-0711/A/L0002.
62 "Y.K:s Klubbnytt Oktober 1933," no. 11, p. 127. The National Archives of Sweden, SE/RA/730387/Ö1/1.
63 In later years, it has been highly criticized for its agitation towards forced sterilization.
64 Myrdal and Myrdal, *Kris I Befolkningsfrågan*, 315.
65 Danielsen, "Det lange 70-tallet," 161.
66 Petition on the right to earn for the woman, married or unmarried June 1935. The National Archives of Sweden, SE/RA/730386/E1/1.

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