



SCANDINAVIAN- CANADIAN STUDIES

ÉTUDES SCANDINAVES AU CANADA

EDWARD W. LAINE
editor/éditeur

AASSC

ASSOCIATION
FOR THE ADVANCEMENT
OF SCANDINAVIAN STUDIES
IN CANADA

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DES ÉTUDES SCANDINAVES
AU CANADA

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"SEPTENTRIONALIVM REGIONVM DESCRIP."—AN EARLY CARTOGRAPHIC VIEW OF THE SCANDINAVIAN-CANADIAN CONNECTION—FROM ABRAHAM ORTELIUS, *THEATRUM ORBIS TERRARUM* (ca. 1591-1592).

Courtesy of the National Map Collection, Public Archives of Canada.

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CANADIAN
STUDIES**

**ÉTUDES
SCANDINAVES
AU CANADA**

A SELECTION	UN CHOIX
FROM THE PAPERS	DES COMMUNICATIONS
PRESENTED	PRÉSENTÉES
AT THE FIRST	À LA PREMIÈRE
ANNUAL MEETING	RÉUNION ANNUELLE
HELD AT	TENUE À
OTTAWA	OTTAWA
1982	1982

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Ottawa, 1983

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Editor's Introduction

The present volume of *Scandinavian-Canadian Studies/Études Scandinaves au Canada* owes its very publication, form and content to the founding meeting of the Association for the Advancement of Scandinavian Studies in Canada (AASSC), which was held on 1-4 June 1982 in conjunction with the annual convention of the Learned Societies at the University of Ottawa. At that first meeting of the AASSC, the membership agreed to support the publication of a selection of the papers which had been presented to them at the various sessions. Their express wish, however, was not to underwrite such a publication merely for the purpose of commemorating the new association's founding, but rather as a prospectus and exemplar of its aims and objectives which, in the words of the AASSC's first President, Dr. Christopher S. Hale,

are to promote and encourage Scandinavian studies in all fields, to disseminate this information wherever and whenever possible, and to keep each other informed of events and programs occurring in our individual parts of the country and the work in the various areas of Nordic studies that we are carrying out. Though we are a Canadian-based organization, we should certainly encourage not only cooperation with other Scandinavian-oriented organizations in other parts of the world, but also we should encourage memberships from outside of Canada as well. Furthermore, it is absolutely imperative that the multidisciplinary nature of the AASSC be stressed as this is vital to our continued existence as a viable association.

Whether or not this inaugural volume of *Scandinavian-Canadian Studies/Études Scandinaves au Canada* quite succeeds in meeting the intended goals of its sponsors in every respect or in encapsulating within its covers only that which represents the absolute "state of the art" in Scandinavian scholarship, it does present a positive beginning in the promotion and advancement of Scandinavian studies in this country. For example, here is included the work of Canadian scholars from Newfoundland to British Columbia and various points in-between. Also included are representative essays from the Scandinavian-Canadian community-at-large and, as well, from the academic community in Scandinavia. No less significant is the fact that these contributions have been drawn from so many different fields and disciplines, for example, from literature, history, geography, political science, philology, folklore studies, sociology, etc. Indeed, when viewed as a whole, these essays constitute a remarkable vignette of the vitality and diversity of the work that is now being produced here and abroad under the rubric of "Scandinavian studies."

However, given their vastly differing subject matter and scholarly perspective, the individual essays in this volume are primarily interrelated by their shared interest in the Scandinavian experience. Therefore, in order to accentuate those common linkages inherent to them, these essays have been arranged in a "topical-chronological" order (as determined by their contents) within the following sections: "The Scandinavian Presence in Canada"; Scandinavia and the Wider World"; and "Detective Novels as Social Criti-

cism and Other Variations on Scandinavian Themes." By this means, we can better perceive that the essays within each of the three sections do possess a kind of general thematic integrity of their own, but one whose disparate elements are also mirrored and echoed in the various studies of the other two. In that sense, the peripatetic reader will find various thematic lines relating to the historic continuum of the Scandinavian experience which, however fragmentary and incompletely drawn, can be interconnected.

To illustrate some of this, note how each of the essays listed under "The Scandinavian Presence in Canada" is tied to the general theme of "accommodation and adaptation." In Jalava's essay, for example, the discussion centres upon the Canadian government's accommodation and adaptation of its immigration policies to the task of attracting immigrants from Scandinavia during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Dahlie's essay, on the other hand, chooses to show how the Norwegian immigrants in British Columbia made use of their own newspaper press in the process of accommodating and adapting themselves to their new homeland. In Hale's study of Axel Sandemose, a Danish-Norwegian novelist and one-time sojourner in the Canadian west, we are shown that Sandemose equated the success of an individual immigrant's accommodation and adaptation to the rigours of this country with the question of his own personal "luck." Finally, in Martin's comparative analysis of the retention rates of old Finnish folk technology in Finland and Canada, we are given some indication of the extent to which the process of accommodation and adaptation has succeeded in affecting the material culture of the present-day Finnish-Canadian community.

The essays in the second section — "Scandinavia and the Wider World" — are concerned with Scandinavia's relations with the rest of the world from the dawn of recorded history to the present age. For example, in tracing the origins and spread of the tradition of popular literacy in Scandinavia to the early accessibility and receptivity of the local inhabitants to various external cultural influences, Roe's essay dispels the notion that the proto-Scandinavians lived beyond the pale of the ancient Graeco-Roman world despite their relegation to the remote fringes of northern Europe. McCreesh's study of the family sagas supports the view that the early Scandinavians were quite receptive to foreign influences, at least in terms of their easy acceptance of Christianity in the sagas. Likewise, Sayers' tracing of the Bóand-Nechtan myth bespeaks of a network of cultural cross-currents in ancient times that extended from the British Isles through Scandinavia and across the face of Europe as far as the Indian sub-continent. As McGinnis notes, the intrepid Viking warrior-traders of Scandinavia even were to act as one of the integral links in the lines of communication with the east (as they were to do with the south and the west, penetrating as far as the Mediterranean region and the North American continent respectively). Echoes of that Viking tradition are evoked in Chan's report on the activities of Scandinavian arms traders in China as late as the early twentieth century. However, as Matson's essay on the recently held Strindberg festival in Stockholm suggests, Scandinavia's principal contribution to the contemporary world scene is accomplished by means of such peaceful pursuits as the promotion of its literary and theatrical heritage (after the style of one pioneering Scandinavian, Alfred Bernhard Nobel, who sought to become a benefactor of man-

kind by plowing the immense fortune that he had earned from the traffic in war-munitions into a prize fund for those world figures who excelled in the fields of peace, literature and the sciences). In that sense, the Scandinavians have travelled a full circle, for they are now repaying with interest the debt that they have owed to others for those early borrowings abroad which permitted them to become such literate and refined peoples.

The last section, "Detective Novels as Social Criticism And Other Variations on Scandinavian Themes," includes those essays which concern themselves with Scandinavia proper. Riegel and Ohlin, in their complementary studies on the Scandinavian detective novel, show how the genre has been transformed from a mere "entertainment" into a vehicle for denouncing the excesses of "bourgeois" society. As we can also surmise from Leland's essay, at the core of Ibsen's genius and universal appeal was his determination to make of Scandinavian theatre a stage upon which to play out the eternal conflicts that arise between the dictates of society and the aspirations of the individual. Perhaps this tension between the needs of the commonweal and those of the individual is endemic to Scandinavian societies, for theirs is a history of free-spirited and independent-minded peoples who have subjected their cherished sense of individualism to the constraints of such social order as was necessary to enable them to survive and prosper in their relatively inhospitable northern lands — whose geography, in part, has been so aptly described by Nowak. In Norderval's essay, we are shown some of the political mechanisms and processes that have evolved in Scandinavia and which are now used to preserve the democratic balance between the needs of the individual and society. Whether or not Scandinavia has succeeded in creating the best of all compromises in that regard, Elgaard's essay parenthetically asserts that certain strong-minded individuals still refuse to be compromised by their Scandinavian environment and society.

On this cryptic note, the reader is enjoined to undertake his own exploration of the various facets of Scandinavian studies as presented in this distinguished collection of essays. So, all that remains is for this editor to thank the following: the manuscript assessors and Editorial Board members of the AASSC, whose initial advice and comments proved most helpful; Dr. George Bolotenko, who graciously provided the much-needed reinforcement of a second pair of eyes in the proof-reading and editing of the galleys; Lars Lindgren, who freely assumed the major burden in developing the artwork, design and layout for this first volume of *Scandinavian-Canadian Studies/Études Scandinaves au Canada*; and Natalie Singer of the University of Ottawa's Reprographic Services, who patiently nursed the publication through the different stages of printing and production. Without the able assistance of the above, this editor — if not the publication — would have succumbed to "Gutenberg's apoplexy" or some other form of terminal printing disorder.

Edward W. Laine

Hvad
danske
Landmænd
kunne
udrette
CANADA.



FREE
TO ALL
WESTERN
CANADIAN
FARM
LANDS

Hvor

... og ...

Hvorledes.

... Med meget mere. ...

Paalidelige Oplysninger

... for ...

Vordende Settlere.

Distrikt Hoved Kontor og
Gen. Distrikt Bittan,
Johannesdal,
Cinema, Skanebe.

KANADA

Tillfällenas
Land

UTGIVEN PÅ BEMYNDIGANDE AF
INRIKESMINISTERN
OTTAWA, KANADA
1910

THE SCANDINAVIAN PRESENCE IN CANADA

The Scandinavians as a Source of Settlers for the Dominion of Canada: The First Generation, 1867-1897

Mauri A. Jalava

Immigration from Scandinavia in the nineteenth century provided the nucleus for the Scandinavian population in Canada which, at present, totals close to 450,000 residents.¹ The potential of Scandinavia as a source for valuable settlers was quickly realized by Canadian immigration agents, government officials and businessmen who rushed to gain their share of emigrants in competition with other host countries such as Australia, Brazil and the United States.² The railway companies with their landholding subsidiaries, steamship lines and financiers, formed influential lobbies in pressing the government to grant those concessions necessary for maximizing their share in the business opportunities which were created by the opening emigration market. Industrial interests, particularly those associated with mining, lumbering, and the extensive railway, bridge, and canal construction in this country, all made demands on the labour force which the immigrants provided.³

In the selection of who should come, the decision makers were influenced by the prevalent doctrines of "social Darwinism." Accordingly the "Nordics" were viewed as second only to the Anglo-Saxons in the hierarchy of "races" as suitable settlers for Canada. Moreover, since many of the destitute immigrants who were shipped to Canada from Great Britain under various charitable schemes proved not to possess the necessary qualities for the rigours of pioneering, the alternative solution was to look for more settlers among the kindred races in Germany and Scandinavia. The Scandinavians were all lumped together as part of a mythological Teutonic super-race which was thought to be "active, proud, ambitious, useful, energetic, [and] civilized. . . ."⁴ Sir Charles Tupper, then High Commissioner for Canada in London, claimed that

. . . the Scandinavian becomes at once an ideal immigrant who is not surpassed by any other nation, not even by the pick of the emigrants from the United Kingdom.⁵

John Dyke, the Canadian Immigration Agent in Liverpool, similarly maintained that, ". . . in giving an impetus to immigration, one emigrant from the Scandinavian Kingdoms. . . is equal to seven Englishmen."⁶ He also reported that Sir John A. Macdonald was "specially interested in the fine bodies of Scandinavians he had seen on route to the United States."⁷

Despite this great interest in Scandinavia as a source of settlers, the numbers of immigrants to Canada remained disappointingly small compared to that of those going to the United States. Thus, at the turn of the century they totalled 33,544 and 1,380,413 respectively.⁸ Canadian research-

ers have given but scant attention to this small group, perhaps because they have been hampered by the unfamiliar languages and by the lack of accessible archival material related to the Scandinavian immigrants.⁹ Research on Scandinavian immigration history has suffered also from certain other limitations, most notably from the general tendency to view the effects of the immigration phenomenon in the narrowest of nationalistic terms whereas this process, in reality, results from an immixture of many international elements.¹⁰ At times, the researchers' view is also blurred by the seemingly similar appearance of Scandinavians amongst themselves or among Anglo-Saxons. This impression is evident in Howard Palmer's statement that in Canada we "need to analyze individual groups, including the relatively large and mostly unstudied and somewhat *invisible* [my emphasis] ones such as . . . the Scandinavians."¹¹ This "invisibility" turned out to be an important asset for the Scandinavians in the Canadian immigration process. It is, in fact, the contention of the author that the accepted image of Scandinavians in Canada as an easily assimilable group of immigrants was a powerful factor in the formulation of Canadian immigration policies and priorities. Accordingly, the following essay delineates the general historical framework which both allowed and assisted the first generation of Scandinavians to settle in the Dominion of Canada.

Certain aspects of this structure had already begun to emerge through trial and error in the immigration policies of the Province of Canada. It was during the last two decades of the pre-Confederation era that the Canadian ports experienced the first flood of Scandinavian immigration. A Norwegian ship chandler, Hans Hagens, stated in his testimony to a Select Committee on Emigration in 1860, that the repeal of the *Navigation Act* in 1849 enabled the Norwegian ships to bring emigrants to Quebec City, adding that they could now obtain "a return freight here in timber for English Ports."¹² The increase in human cargo to North America forced the passing of the *Imperial Passengers Act of 1855* which added considerably to the security and comfort of the passenger. By 1865, at least 48,060 Norwegians had passed through Canadian ports, although only a fraction remained in Canada as the main body headed towards the United States.¹³ Efforts were made, however, to secure a larger portion of the Norwegian emigration to provide settlers for Canada.

In 1857 the British American Land Company commenced an immigrant settlement project in the Township of Bury, and appointed a Norwegian agent at Quebec who, with assistance from the Chief Emigrant Agent, A.C. Buchanan, was able to persuade some fifty Norwegian families to form a nucleus for the colony.¹⁴ A year earlier five thousand pamphlets had been sent to Norway. Those were followed by a stream of other pamphlets and reprints for almost a decade thereafter.¹⁵ Buchanan's office was staffed with interpreters in the German and Norwegian languages.¹⁶ Also the Grand Trunk Railway employed, during the travel season, a Norwegian and a German interpreter.¹⁷ On the recommendation of the Select Committee on Emigration, Helge Haugan, a Norwegian, was appointed as resident agent to Christiania where he opened an Emigration Office.¹⁸ During the same period an ambitious settlement project had been started in Gaspé under the leadership of a Norwegian entrepreneur, Christopher O. Closter. He also

was sent to Norway to interest prospective emigrants to go to Gaspé where one was supposed to be able to combine deep-sea fishing with agriculture.¹⁹ The Norwegian settlement in the Eastern Township was to be seen, according to the Committee, as the "nuclei of future strength [and] ought to be multiplied and encouraged from Gaspé to Lake Huron."²⁰ This pre-Confederation experience in organizing immigration had given Canadian immigration officials reason to believe that they had a foothold in Scandinavia.

The establishment of the Dominion of Canada with the passage of the *British North America Act* in 1867 started a new period in Canadian immigration history. Under Section 95 of the Act, matters of agriculture and immigration were concurrently subject to federal and provincial legislation although, in case of conflicting legislation, the section made it clear that provincial law could have effect only if it did not contradict any Act of the Parliament of Canada. Federal control of immigration continued under the Department of Agriculture and it was legislated in the *Immigration Act of 1869*. The new legislation provided, among other measures, for the establishment of immigration agents in various countries at the discretion of the Minister.²¹ The first Dominion Agency of Immigration in London was established by an Order-in-Council in 1868 in which Sir John Rose, a former Minister of Finance in the first Macdonald Cabinet, was instructed to act on behalf of the Canadian government in numerous matters including the promotion of emigration.²² Under his supervision the agency was directed by William Dixon who had proved himself a vigorous campaigner for immigrants for the Province of Canada in 1866 by seeking contacts "with passenger agents and others interested in the emigration business."²³

The creation of the Province of Manitoba in 1870 gave a strong boost to the search for more settlers. Consequently, the first Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba, William McDougall, was appointed Special Commissioner in Europe for the Canadian government. During the period of his appointment (from 15 January 1873 to 13 April 1874), McDougall carried out a great deal of rather grandiose planning for a network of immigration agents as was well summarized in his report to his successor, Edward Jenkins.²⁴ In that report, he also described his system of reduced passenger rates for the emigrants which was to be supervised by his agents. He also related that he had already recruited such agents:

I appointed the agent of the Allan Steamship Company at *Copenhagen, Gottenburg and Christiania* and *Hamburg* to act as agent for Canada in forwarding emigrants and in the circulation of information by advertisements as to advantages offered by Canada, terms of passage, &c.²⁵

McDougall's scheme, including the idea of assisted passage, found general acceptance, although interruptions in its implementation did occur.²⁶ His partiality to the Allan Steamship Line, however, became a contentious issue.²⁷ John Dyke, on many occasions, charged that McDougall's work was unsatisfactory and unsuccessful. In his opinion, McDougall "had no knowledge of the languages used there, and moreover, not the slightest practical acquaintance with the business"; besides, he had aroused much jealousy among the numerous agents of the other steamship lines.²⁸ Later, in 1883, when John Oddell, the representative of the Inman Line, was made a special

agent for Sweden, Dyke was able to get the Minister of Agriculture to keep the appointment secret, arguing that, "I fear it will create terrible jealousy on the part of the other steamship agents, should it become known."²⁹

Moreover, the agents of the Allan Steamship Line in Scandinavia were seen, then and later, as "working directly with the Northern Pacific Railroad Company and for the States of Minnesota and Dakota."³⁰ In the spring of 1871 the American business tycoon, Jay Cooke, and the Montreal-based financier and shipping magnate, Sir Hugh Allan, concluded a secret agreement which, however, became public knowledge during the great Pacific Scandal that forced the resignation of the Canadian government. Cooke's financial empire, in which the Northern Pacific was only a part, aimed to take over the development of the Canadian Pacific as well. The enterprise would be accomplished, according to Cooke, by the total "annexation of British North America north of Dakota" to the United States.³¹ In his scheme, the annexation of Canada could be effected from the United States "without any violations of treaties but 'as a result of the quiet emigration over the border of trustworthy men and their families'."³² As the plan unfolded, Sir Hugh Allan was to bribe most of the key politicians in Canada. Cooke himself engaged an experienced immigrant promoter of Swedish origin, then the Secretary of State in Minnesota, Colonel Hans Mattson, to go to Sweden to stimulate more Scandinavians to occupy the millions of acres of land south of the Canadian border, the *Aufmarschland*, for the quiet emigration over to Canada.³³

Colonel Mattson travelled to Sweden in June 1871 where he set up his office in Kristianstad. During that period his growing interest in Finns as prospective immigrants led him to visit Turku, Helsinki, and Kronstadt (near St. Petersburg).³⁴ With him he had propaganda material in the Finnish language intended for distribution by the Finnish agents of the Allan Line.³⁵ In 1873, when the American economic crisis led to the collapse of Jay Cooke's empire and the Pacific Scandal erupted into the open in the Canadian press, Mattson was still able to salvage and enhance his personal position by obtaining an appointment for a year as "an agent of the Dominion in the Scandinavian Kingdoms."³⁶ In the circumstances leading to Mattson's appointment one can thus detect the early interplay of various business and political forces that became so evident in the later formation of cartels to control the emigration traffic. Of the various attempts to control this traffic, the most notable was the *North Atlantic Steamship Conference* of 1887 which ultimately led to the establishment of the *British-Continental Steerage Pool* in 1898. The aim of this cartel was to divide the passengers and to fix the prices in order that the participants could eliminate all real competition.³⁷

In 1873, however, the success of the Allan Steamship Line in monopolizing part of the Scandinavian emigration traffic was diminished by the effect that the American financial crisis had in lessening its flow.³⁸ Colonel Mattson remained hopeful of better results because of the upsurge in Icelandic emigration. In that year, an Icelandic settlement had already been established in Ontario. As the location proved to be unsuitable, those settlers were relocated to the District of Keewatin, north of Winnipeg.³⁹ There *New Iceland* showed such promise that by 1875 the Canadian government decided to appoint William C. Krieger as special agent to Iceland.⁴⁰ Krieger

was under the direct control of Edward Jenkins who had been appointed as Agent General and Chief Emigration Agent for Europe.⁴¹ Jenkins favoured a tight control over all agents, perhaps too tight, for, by an Order-in-Council on 17 December 1875, his position was redefined in a manner that he considered to be demeaning and, therefore, unacceptable.⁴² He was then followed, in succession, by F.J. Dore and William Annand.⁴³ The prospects for Scandinavian emigration from the continent were deemed by Dore to be extremely poor, although they continued to be excellent in the case of Iceland.⁴⁴ John Dyke, at Liverpool, also waxed enthusiastic about the outlook for Icelandic emigration. After a personal encounter with a group of Icelanders, he asserted that they

were one of the finest lots of emigrants which have ever left Europe; just the people for a new country, very simple in their habits and requirements, and remarkably abstemious.⁴⁵

The Allan Steamship Line had, with Dore's blessing, acquired an extraordinary position in the transportation of emigrants from Iceland to Canada, by arranging agents to buy the surplus stock — mainly sheep — of the emigrants who were thus made to feel secure in their financial arrangements.⁴⁶

As the general flow of emigrants had been diminishing, the worried Canadian provinces agreed at the federal-provincial conference of November 1874 to accept federal leadership in the control of all sub-agents in Europe.⁴⁷ This scheme was abandoned in 1880 when Sir Alexander T. Galt was appointed the first Canadian High Commissioner in London.⁴⁸ Galt had received the approval of the federal government for his plan to create within his office a special Emigration Branch under the direction of his secretary, Joseph Colmer.⁴⁹ Dissatisfied provinces, in consequence, hastened to reopen their old offices or to establish new ones in Europe.⁵⁰ Most active in the field was the Province of Manitoba which prepared pamphlets in all of the Scandinavian languages for distribution in Northern Europe.⁵¹ The activity of Manitoba's over-zealous agents in Iceland in the 1890s became the subject of severe criticism by the Danish government. John Dyke reported that Denmark planned to restrict or even stop emigration from Iceland to the Canadian North West.⁵²

John Dyke had acted as an immigrant agent for the Province of Ontario in Europe since 1869. He was appointed the federal Immigration Agent for Liverpool in 1876, and for the next twenty-two years he travelled extensively in Scandinavia seeking contacts. He preferred making a direct approach to prospective emigrants with suitable propaganda material.⁵³ He maintained that

I have purchased books containing the names and addresses of nearly every farmer in Sweden for although the emigration agents are under the control of the police authorities the post is still free. . . .⁵⁴

A compilation of John Dyke's figures from his reports show that, in the period of 1883-1894, 390,000 pamphlets or leaflets were sent by the government to Norway (some of them went to Denmark), 330,000 to Sweden, and 56,000 to Finland.⁵⁵ These figures do not include the material prepared for distribution in the Scandinavian countries by the Canadian Pacific Railways, the steamship lines or the provinces.

Concurrently, the competition for Scandinavian emigrants with the agents from the United States continued relentlessly.⁵⁶ The Canadian gov-

ernment decided to seek Scandinavian emigrants not only from the Nordic countries but also from among those who had already left for the United States. In 1876, a Mr. A. Halvorsen was engaged in Chicago as a Canadian agent to distribute propaganda among the local Scandinavians.⁵⁷ The Americans could reciprocate in a more massive manner: thus the agent of the Northern Pacific Railroad in Liverpool was able to send to Scandinavia on one day in 1878 "no less than eleven car loads of printed matter."⁵⁸ As a result of this fierce contest for emigrants, Dyke noted with some bitterness that, in Scandinavia,

so great is the prejudice against Canada, so systematically has the country been plied with antagonistic matter, that acting upon the advice of the most successful agents I omitted [in a newspaper article] to mention "Canada" at all.⁵⁹

The best advertising was conceived to be the testimonies of happy settlers living in the companionship of their countrymen. But the Scandinavian agrarian settlements did not prove to be very successful. Even *New Iceland*, the largest of the Scandinavian colonies, failed to keep its settlers in the Gimli district, for many of them became urbanized labourers in Winnipeg. The slow expansion of *New Denmark*, a Danish Colony in the Province of New Brunswick, was hampered still more by the exorbitant prices charged for the surrounding lands by the owner, the New Brunswick Railway Company.⁶⁰ The unsuccessful Norwegian colonization experiment in Gaspé in the 1860s had caused much adverse publicity in Scandinavia. Despite the ambitious plans for a *New Scandinavia* settlement in Manitoba, this colony could gather but only seventy-seven families by 1891.⁶¹ The *New Stockholm* and *New Finland* colonies which were established in the Province of Saskatchewan respectively by Swedish and Finnish settlers, remained equally limited in size.⁶² The *New Norway* settlement in Alberta was opened only in 1894 and, along with numerous smaller settlements, did not fare any better than the earlier colonies. Regardless of these modest successes, the advertising booklets were full of favourable descriptions which sought to fix the impression that the agrarian settlements were thriving concerns. As evidence, they cited success stories of assorted Scandinavian social organizations and individual immigrants, and, as well, included maps to show the wide distribution of Scandinavian colonies in Canada to prove the suitability of this country as a land of settlement for the sturdy sons of Scandinavia.⁶³

This somewhat "utopian" advertising did not attract many Scandinavians. The men could find ready employment in the mining or lumber industries. Other work was also available to them in more urbanized areas. As well, Scandinavian women found employment easily with Canadian families because of their good reputation as domestics. Sir Charles Tupper noted that

the Scandinavian servant girls are clean, honest, industrious and intelligent. They are generally well domesticated and capable women, and accustomed to low wages and a simple quiet life.⁶⁴

Nevertheless, there were a few Scandinavians who were not wanted in Canada, for example, certain emigrants from northern Sweden. J.G. Colmer noted that, "they are mostly sawmill hands and labourers, not farmers, and are generally of a very rough element."⁶⁵ This estimate reflected the reports

received about one Nic Erickson who, as Colmer stated, has occupied the position of agitator among the working men in the Sundsvall district, and in addition has been connected with one of the co-operative stores which has been established.⁶⁶

Thus emigrants with newfangled social ideas were not wanted by Canadian emigration agents who, all along, had emphasized physical strength and docility as the strongest selling points for Scandinavians in the Canadian emigration market.

Some tentative conclusions about Canadian immigration policies regarding Scandinavia at the end of the nineteenth century can now be formed. The selection and invitation of the first-generation Scandinavians as settlers in the Dominion of Canada were coloured by ideas of social Darwinism and Anglo-Saxonism. On this basis, an idealized image of the Scandinavian emerged and it was applied to almost all emigrants from the Nordic countries; that is, they were deemed to have the perfect virtues of the ideal settler. It was with this picture in mind that Canadian officialdom and business interests extended their initial organizational reach into Scandinavia. This image also influenced the direction and force that the current of immigration took once it left its Scandinavian source. While Scandinavian scholarship has made many inroads in studies regarding the North American emigration phenomenon, the author now suggests that this research should be augmented and extended in Canada to include a closer look at the selective immigration policies which were developed in the Dominion of Canada during the first three decades of its existence.

Notes

¹ A compilation of the Danish, Finnish, Icelandic, Norwegian and Swedish totals is given as 444,005, in Table 4.19, "Population by ethnic groups, 1951, 1961 and 1971" in *Canada Year Book 1980-81* by Statistics Canada (Ottawa: Supply and Services Canada, 1981).

² A joint Scandinavian-Australian research project into Scandinavian immigration to Australia and New Zealand has been started; see: Olavi Koivukangas and Ismo Söderling, "Scandinavian Immigration to Australia and New Zealand. An International Symposium at the Institute of Migration," *Sirtolaisuus-Migration*, Vol. 9, 1982, No. 1, pp. 19-25. Note also the remark made by Paul W. Gates in his article, "Official Encouragement to Immigration by the Provinces of Canada," *Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. XV, March 1934 [pp. 24-38], p. 37, that, the Canadian agents frequently found themselves unable to compete with agents of the Australian colonies who could even pay the passage of immigrants to this continent. Canada could not be sure that, if she did pay the passages of immigrants, they would stay in Canadian territory.

³ The relationship between business and immigration was well understood by the contemporary leaders, as is shown in the remark of Sir Charles Tupper (Canada, *Sessional Papers*, 1891, No. 6E, pp. 5-6) that immigration was "as much a matter of business as any other industry that can be mentioned."

⁴ Editorial, "The Approaches to Manitoba," *The Ottawa Times*, 19 May 1870. For an interesting review of the *mystique* of Anglo-Saxonism in North America, see: Chapter IX, "Racism and Imperialism" in Richard Hofstadter's *Social Darwinism in American Thought* (Revised Edition; Boston: Beacon Press, 1955), pp. 170-200. Donald Avery also claims that "Canadians regarded them [the Scandinavians] as close cultural relatives," in his study, *'Dangerous Foreigners' — European Immigrant Workers and Labour Radicalism in Canada 1896-1932* (Toronto: McClelland and Steward Limited, 1979), p. 14. The feeling of the Teutonic brotherhood was sometimes extended even to Finns, as attested by the following excerpt from John Greenleaf Whittier's poem, *The Conquest of Finland*,

Sit down, old men, together,
Old Wives, in quiet spin;
Henceforth, the Anglo-Saxon
Is the brother of the Finn!

(As quoted by Ernest J. Moyné, "John Greenleaf Whittier and Finland," *Scandinavian Studies*, Vol. 44, Winter 1972, No. 1 [pp. 52-62], pp. 54-56; the poem was first published in the *National Era*, 11 December 1856.)

⁵ Letter by Sir Charles Tupper to the Hon. President of the Privy Council, dated at London, 28 September 1892, Public Archives Canada (hereafter, PAC), Immigration Branch (hereafter, IB), RG 76, Vol. 13, Part I, Microfilm Reel C-4669.

⁶ "John Dyke report on trip to Norway and Sweden in 1883," 1883, PAC, IB, RG 76, Vol. 106, File 18012.

⁷ John Dyke, "Report on Continental Emigration," 27 March 1895, PAC, IB, RG 76, Vol. 13, File 77, Part II, p. 9, Microfilm Reel C-4669.

⁸ M.C. Urquhart (ed.), *Historical Statistics of Canada* (Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada Ltd., 1965), p. 18 [a compilation of the 2,502 Finns and 31,042 Scandinavians listed in the *Census of Canada, 1901* and a compilation from the *Twelfth Census of United States for the year 1900* [129,680 Finns and 1,250,733 Scandinavians] as reported by Robert E. Park, *The Immigrant Press and Its Control*, No 7 in *Americanization Studies — the Acculturation of Immigrant Groups in American Society under the Editorship of William S. Bernard* (Montclair, New Jersey: Patterson Smith, 1971), p. 317.

⁹ Dr. Edward W. Laine, the Scandinavian specialist in the National Ethnic Archives section of the Public Archives Canada, discusses the limitations in the implementation of the Northern Europe archival programme in his paper, "Towards Knowing Ourselves Better: The National Ethnic Archives Programme, The LI-RA-MA ('Russian') Collection and Canadian History," presented to the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Association of Slavists, Halifax, 31 May 1981.

¹⁰ Examples of these efforts are found in the work of the Commission on Immigration Research (in Swedish: Expertgruppen för invandringsforskning [EIFO]) which was established by the Swedish Government in 1975; Siirtolaisuusinstituutti-Migration-institutet (Migration Institute) in Turku, Finland (established in 1974); the Finnish Emigration History Research Center (Siirtolaisuushistorian tutkimuskeskus) of the University of Turku (established in 1963). The largest group is the Uppsala Group in Sweden which started its work from the middle of 1960s. Most enlightening is Eva Halmberg, "The Swedish commission on immigration research (Eifo)", *Siirtolaisuus-Migration*, 1978, Vol. 5, No. 1, pp. 24-27. An authoritative review of the research work

in the Nordic countries is given by Ingrid Semmingsen in her article, "Nordic Research into Emigration," *Scandinavian Journal of History*, Vol 3, No. 2, 1978, pp. 107-129. The Canadian indebtedness to Scandinavian scholarship is acknowledged by Jørgen Dahlie in "Review Essay: New Directions in Scandinavian Immigration Historiography," *The Lakehead University Review*, The Finnish Experience, Vol. IX, No. 1, Spring 1976, pp. 55-67.

¹¹ Howard Palmer, "Canadian Immigration and Ethnic History in the 1970s and 1980s," *International Migration Review*, Vol. 15, 1981, No. 3 [pp. 471-501], p. 487. One should note that Canadians, even in their statistical surveys, lump all Scandinavians under one heading. A recent study in Canadian multiculturalism based its findings on a survey of non-official language groups in which the Scandinavians, as a whole, formed one of the ethnic and cultural groups in Canada. See Canada, Minister Responsible for Multiculturalism, *Non-Official Languages: A Study in Canadian Multiculturalism* (Ottawa: Supply and Services Canada, 1976), in particular, pp. 266-267.

¹² Province of Canada, *Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Canada* [hereafter, PC/JLAPC/1860], 3rd session of the 6th Provincial Parliament of Canada, Session 1860, p. 53.

¹³ A Jorgensen, *The Emigration from Europe During the Present Century, its Causes and Effects* (Quebec: 1865) [available at PAC Library, Microfiche No. 1-3281], p. 6. Jorgensen's statistical information does not seem to differ markedly from that given by Theodore C. Blegen in his article, "An Early Norwegian Settlement in Canada," *The Canadian Historical Association, Report of the Annual Meeting at Montreal, May 23, 1930 With Historical Papers* (Ottawa: Department of Public Archives [1930?]), [pp. 83-88], p. 83.

¹⁴ The testimony of Richard William Heneker, in PC/JLAPC/1860, pp. 36-37.

¹⁵ The new pamphlet was titled: *Canada: A Brief Outline of Her Geographical Position, Productions, Climate, Capabilities, Educational and Municipal Institutions*.

¹⁶ PC/JLAPC/1860, pp. 23, 25-26.

¹⁷ The testimony of Charles M. Symons, Agent at Point Levi for the Grand Trunk Railway Company, in PC/JLAPC/1860, pp. 48-49.

¹⁸ Report of the Minister of Agriculture of Canada, 10 April 1861, in Province of Canada, *Sessional Papers* (No. 23), Vol. 4, Fourth Session of the Sixth Parliament of the Province of Canada, Session 1861.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*; Closter is also spelled as Kloster.

²⁰ In addition to the well-known Gaspé settlement and the above-mentioned settlement in the Township of Bury, there was another one in the area of Cherbourg, established in 1854; see: Blegen, "An Early Norwegian Settlement in Canada," p. 84.

²¹ Canada was thus following the policy set by the Select Committee of Emigration in 1860 for the Province of Canada.

²² H. Gordon Skilling, *Canadian Representation Abroad: From Agency to Embassy* (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1945), pp. 2-3 and 86.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

²⁴ "W. McDougall report of arrangements in Scandinavia to E. Jenkins, Agent General, 1874," PAC, IB, RG 76, File 18023, Department of Agriculture, General Correspondence (Secret Series), No. 124, London, 1874.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 4-6.

²⁶ Letter by J.G. Colmer, Secretary to the High Commissioner of Canada, Sir Charles

Tupper, dated at London, March 1893, PAC, IB, RG 76, Vol. 13, File 77, Part I, p. 8, Microfilm Reel C-4669.

²⁷ Dyke, "Report on Continental Emigration," 27 March 1895, p. 2; and report by John Dyke to the Right Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald, titled "Scandinavian Emigration," dated at Liverpool, 13 September 1881, p. 12; both are found in PAC, IB, RG 76, Vol. 13, File 77, Part I, Microfilm Reel C-4669.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 80-81.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 32; letter by John Dyke to Mr. Pope, the Minister of Agriculture, dated 30 August 1882; Lars Ljungmark discusses this aspect in the chapter "The Dominion of Canada — A Newcomer on the Swedish Emigration Market," in his study, *For Sale — Minnesota: Organized Promotion of Scandinavian Immigration 1866-1873*, Studia Historica Gothoburgensia, XIII, edited by Erik Lönnroth (Stockholm: Akademiförlaget, 1971), pp. 192-201. See also James B. Hedges, "The Colonization Work of the Northern Pacific Railroad," in *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, Vol. XIII, No. 3, December 1926, pp. 311-342.

³¹ Pierre Berton, *The National Dream — The Last Spike* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1974), pp. 45-46.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 48.

³³ Hans Mattson, *Reminiscences: The Story of an Emigrant* (Saint Paul, Minnesota: D.D. Merrill Company, 1892), p. 117.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 127; There existed a strong migration of Finns to St. Petersburg where, in 1869-1881, they formed 2.6% of the population, and in total numbers they constituted the third largest urban grouping of Finns after Turku (Åbo) and Helsinki (Helsingfors). See Max Engman, "Migration from Finland to Russia during the Nineteenth Century," *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 1978, Vol. 3, No. 2 [pp. 155-177], p. 165.

³⁵ Ljungmark, pp. 174-175.

³⁶ Letter by John Lowe to H. Mattson in Christianstad, Sweden, dated at Ottawa, 30 October 1873, PAC, Department of Agriculture, General Letterbooks: 1852-1894, Agriculture RG 17, A I 2, Vol. 1507, Letterbook 1873, p. 261.

³⁷ Kristian Hvidt, "Emigration Agents," *Scandinavian Journal of History*, Vol 3, 1978, No. 2 [pp. 179-203], pp. 200-201.

³⁸ See "Annual Report of Mr. H. Mattson, Special Immigration Agent in Scandinavia," 18 December 1874; Canada, *Sessional Papers* 1875, Vol. 8, No. 8, Sessional Paper No. 40, pp. 134-137.

³⁹ "Frá Íslendigum i Muskoka, Ontario," *Framfari*, Vol. 1, No. 6, 14 January 1878, p. 26.

⁴⁰ W.J. Lindal, *The Icelanders in Canada*, Canada Ethnica II (Ottawa: National Publishers Ltd., and Viking Printers, 1967), p. 127.

⁴¹ Skilling, p. 8.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

⁴⁴ "Report of the London Agent, Mr. F.J. Dore," Canada, *Sessional Papers* 1877, Vol. 8, No. 38 (Report of the European agents), pp. 124, 126.

⁴⁵ "Report of Liverpool Agent, John Dyke, Liverpool, 31 December 1876," Canada, *Sessional Papers* 1877, Vol. 8, No. 38 (Report of the European agents), pp. 134-135.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ Skilling, p. 13.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁵¹ Letter by J.G. Colmer to the High Commissioner, Sir Charles Tupper, dated at London, March 1893, PAC, IB, RG 76, Vol. 13, File 77, Part I, p. 37, Microfilm Reel C-4669.

⁵² Letter by John Dyke to the High Commissioner, Sir Charles Tupper, dated at Liverpool, 12 April 1893, p. 2, PAC, IB, RG 76, Vol. 13, File 77, Part I, Microfilm Reel C-4669. McDougall had recommended, in 1874, the withdrawal of "Provincial and itinerant agents," in "W. McDougall report. . . .," pp. 15-16.

⁵³ For Dyke's contacts, see "John Dyke report on trip to Norway. . . ."; in a letter (included in the same report, Part II), dated 1 December 1882 from John Dyke to Lowe, he stated:

With regard to Finnish emigration, the whole of printed matter must be sent as letters, that is, under cover otherwise it would be stopped by the Russian authorities.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁵⁵ Dyke, "Report on Continental Emigration," pp. 186-87.

⁵⁶ The same can be said about the agents of the many passenger lines. In some cases the advertising was not beyond making some rather racist remarks. One circular from a Scandinavian steamship line, *De förenade Thingvalla- och Skandia-Linerna*, promoted the fact that it was the only direct line to North America from Gothenburg, claiming the added advantage that its passengers need not come in contact with the "dirty Jews, Polacks, Bohemians, Hungarians and Irelanders" [translated by the author from Swedish]. For this, see the John Davis Barnett Collection, n.d., PAC, MG 30, B86, Vol. 189.

⁵⁷ Skilling, p. 3.

⁵⁸ Dyke, "Report on trip to Norway. . . .," pp. 7-8.

⁵⁹ Dyke, "Report on Continental Emigration," letter dated 1 December 1882, p. 58.

⁶⁰ Norman MacDonald, *Canada: Immigration and Colonization, 1841-1903* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1966), p. 115; according to a minister of the local church, the colony had only 83 families by 1893. See N.M. Hansen, "Kolonien 'Ny Danmark,'" *Danebrog* [Ottawa], 26 May 1893, p. 1, cols. 2-3.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 206.

⁶² W.J. Lindal, *The Contribution Made by the Scandinavian Ethnic Groups to the Cultural Enrichment of Canada*, draft for the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism — Research Studies, Winnipeg, Manitoba [1966?], pp. 11-14, available at PAC Library, FC 145 B5A3R4, Div. 8-B, No. 4; in 1891, the *New Finland* colony had only fifteen families. For this, see letter by Alfred Åkerlindh in the "Scandinavian Immigration Report 1895-1902," PAC, IB, RG 76, Vol. 13, File 77, Part II; Varpu Lindström-Best has also pointed out that,

despite the encouragement and help from the Canadian Government and the C.P.R. the Finns did not turn out to be eager agricultural settlers. Many lacked the initial financing necessary even with the prospect

of free land. Others were unwilling to make the longterm investment of time necessary to turn the bush into a self-supporting farm.

For this, see her "The Impact of Canadian Immigration Policy on Finnish Immigration, 1890-1978," *Siirtolaisuus-Migration*, Vol. 8, 1981, No. 2 [pp. 5-15], p. 7.

⁶³ For example, see *Assiniboia, Alberta, Saskatchewan & Athabasca; det Store Nordvestliga Amerika* (Liverpool: 1892), PAC, IB, RG 76, Vol. 13, File 77, Part I. It has been pointed out by Gulbrand Loken, *From Fjord to Frontier: A History of the Norwegians in Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1980), p.41, that, at least in case of Norwegians, the "policies pursued by Canada. . .drove most. . .to establish settlements in the United States."

⁶⁴ Letter by Sir Charles Tupper to the Hon. President of the Privy Council, dated at London, 28 September 1892.

⁶⁵ Letter by J.G. Colmer to Sir Charles Tupper, dated at London, March 1893, p. 29, PAC, IB, RG 76, Vol. 13, File 77, Part I, Microfilm Reel C-4669.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 39. Also Timo Orta has noted that the lumber and sawmill industry [in Finland]

created a quite new and rootless labor force for whom employment, especially during economic slumps, was highly precarious, and which thus constituted a very likely potential emigration population.

Orta adds that,

because of the considerably greater mobility and turnover of its labor force, it was in the sawmills where the labor problems of a modern mass industry emerged in Scandinavia.

For this, see Timo Orta, "Finnish Demographic and Social Backgrounds," in *The Finnish Experience in the Western Great Lakes Region: New Perspectives*, edited by Michael G. Karni, Matti E. Kaups, Douglas J. Ollila, Jr. (Turku: Institute for Migration, 1975), pp. 21-35. Edward W. Laine has also shown that this latent political radicalism among some Scandinavians was revealed at the beginning of the twentieth century, a phenomenon that proved to be exceptional among "Canada's ethnic minorities which have generally been characterized as being politically passive," in his penetrating article, "Finnish Canadian Radicalism and Canadian Politics: The First Forty Years, 1900-1940" [pp. 94-112], *Ethnicity, Power & Politics in Canada*, edited by Jørgen Dahlie and Tissa Fernando (Toronto: Methuen, 1981), p. 94.

The Ethnic Press as a Cultural Resource: *Canada Skandinaven* and the Norwegian-Swedish Community in B.C., 1910-1930

Jørgen Dahlie

Fifty-odd years ago, the Scandinavian ethnic press was still a vigorous institution for Danes, Norwegians, and Swedes in British Columbia. While apparently destined to fade rather quickly by the time of World War II, it seemed to have served its readers well, granting that this judgement still awaits a fully informed assessment and qualification by historians. Nevertheless, for such immigrants as Nels Nelson of Revelstoke, there was little hesitation in citing the advantages for Scandinavians to have a newspaper for their own particular needs. In February 1932, he made known his views to *Vancouver Posten's* editor:

As a reader of your valuable paper for a number of years, I wish to thank the Norwegian business men in Vancouver for their enterprise and loyalty to their transplanted brothers from across the sea, for publishing such an interesting newspaper as "*Vancouver Posten*."

Most of us left our fathers, mothers, friends and everything dear to us and immigrated to Canada and the United States. We landed here friendless, strangers to the natives, unable to speak the language. . . . We are willing to work, to study and to learn. We want to become good Canadians. We want to obey the laws of the country, so that we can be a credit to our native land. That is why such papers as "*Vancouver Posten*" are so valuable to us. They will take the lead and we shall follow. Their responsibility is great. . . .¹

Similar sentiments appeared in other letters, and some writers pointed out that it was only through reading *Canada Skandinaven* that they could keep alive the heritage and knowledge of the Old Country. Others welcomed the opportunity to tell of the literary, economic, or athletic exploits of Scandinavians in Canada to counter the prevailing stereotype of immigrants addicted to *drikke og slaas* (drunkenness and violence).² Obviously it is difficult to sustain the claim that Nelson and other correspondents spoke for the 13,000 Norwegians or 16,000 Swedes then scattered throughout the Province.³ But it may be conjectured that most of these immigrants viewed *Vancouver Posten* as much more than just another newspaper: its pages represented a vital resource — cultural, social, and educational — that the Scandinavian immigrants drew upon from time to time as they began a new life in British Columbia. A selective look at *Canada Skandinaven* (and its successors, including *Vancouver Posten*) will illuminate one facet of the Province's ethnic history that has so far received little attention, and lend support to

the thesis that the ethnic press was a unique resource for those whom it addressed.

When *Canada Skandinaven* began publication in July 1911, there were only 763 Danes, 3,732 Norwegians, and 7,118 Swedes in the Province with a four to one male-female ratio, a characteristic not significantly altered until the late 1920s.⁴ Furthermore, it was a widely dispersed population, a circumstance hardly favourable to Scandinavian-language editors and publishers. By 1921 when the Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish groups had increased to 2,191, 6,570, and 9,666 respectively, the settlement pattern disclosed that Norwegians, as a case in point, were most numerous in the far-flung electoral constituencies of Skeena, Cariboo, and Comox-Alberni.⁵ Nevertheless, Scandinavians seemed determined to found their own publications despite the formidable odds: the short-lived Cape Scott colony of Danes and the Sointula settlement of Finns on Malcolm Island are classic examples where it was deemed imperative to found newspapers in spite of bleak prospects for their success.⁶ Elsewhere in Canada, notably on the prairies, Norwegians and Swedes had had a history of more favourable results, with *Norrøna*, *Svenska Canada-Tidningen*, and *Canada Posten* as established newspapers in Winnipeg.⁷ And a chronicler of the early Norwegian settlement in southern Saskatchewan claimed that "many a prairie boy and girl learned to read Norwegian. . . from old copies" of newspapers which saw double duty as wall coverings in some of the early houses built by the settlers.⁸

The early years of *Canada Skandinaven* reflected a preoccupation with the local and more mundane activities of Scandinavians, replete with letters from readers who expressed general satisfaction with this new forum as a medium of exchange for their views and experiences. By the 1920s there was a more pronounced emphasis on the unique features of the Old Country heritage and the special value of the cultural baggage that the immigrants had brought with them.⁹ As the collective confidence of the ethnic community grew, the press took a firmer position on controversial issues: however, throughout the whole period there were consistent references to the achievements of individual Scandinavians which were designed to underscore the general notion that these people were a distinct asset to the Province.

"Like a living thread," wrote Einar Finsand in January 1912, "the newspaper binds us together, so that we can feel ourselves as part of a large family, well informed about each other's activities instead of standing apart, each in his own little corner."¹⁰ Finsand's metaphor is an apt one: in the widely separated communities of B.C., it was difficult for transient Scandinavians to maintain any kind of contact with their countrymen. On the same theme, C.A. Stenerson, noting that there was little sense of cooperation and community among Norsemen, called upon all those "who have not yet forgotten their Fatherland nor their mother tongue" to work together through the agency of *Canada Skandinaven*, asking in particular for support for the newly-established fraternal lodges in New Westminster and Vancouver.¹¹ He was seconded by another writer who warned against the tendency among Norwegians to criticize rather than support the new paper in its effort to reach out to all Scandinavians.¹²

Among the themes which emerged in the formative years of *Canada Skandinaven* (which was amalgamated with the Swedish-language *Canada-Tribunen* in 1913) was that of education. The newspaper deemed it especially important to note the schooling of the more prominent Scandinavians as well as to publicize which avenues were open for those who wished to succeed. It was, for example, a matter of grave concern to the editor that the 1912 list of normal school graduates contained so few Scandinavian names. "We have looked through the entire list of 150 and could find, as far as can be determined, only five names which could possibly be Scandinavian, namely Agnes R. Borland, Bessie Thompson, Fanny A. Thompson, Lillian Johnson, and Sigrid M. Johnson." Moreover, the writer admitted that he could only be sure of the last two and concluded that "this demonstrates that we Scandinavians are not as far ahead here in British Columbia as we ought to be. . . ." ¹³ He maintained this was not the case in the United States and urged greater efforts in the future. Periodically, the newspaper publicized such institutions as Pacific Lutheran Academy in Tacoma and Bethania College in Everett where Scandinavians were sure to be welcomed. ¹⁴ Immigrants who had recorded notable achievements because of their education — for example, Thorleif Larsen, Rhodes scholar and subsequently a university lecturer, or Ivar Fougner, pioneer teacher and Indian agent in Bella Coola — received extensive commentary in the Scandinavian press. ¹⁵ Individuals such as Ludvig Hansen, who had recently taken his examination as machinist, could stand as a model for his countrymen: "That is just what we Scandinavians ought to do, we should go as far as we can in our own discipline or trade. Scandinavians should aim for the best positions and they can get them if they prepare for them." ¹⁶

On the same theme, editors were always careful to note the educational background of those immigrants who had become fairly well established in British Columbia. In a special issue marking the centenary of Norway's constitution, biographies of several immigrants were featured with prominent mention of their schooling. Hallgrim Kilde, who was responsible for the illustrations in the April 1914 issue of *Canada Skandinaven*, had worked in logging and with a lumber company since his arrival in 1911. He had a rather remarkable background: Hamar Middleschool, 1897, Jønsberg Agricultural and Technical College, 1899, later the top graduate from Aas Agricultural Institute, 1906, and finally a graduate of the Royal Norwegian Art Academy in Oslo prior to emigration. C.T. Apenes, working in 1914 as an engineer in Comox on railroad construction, was a graduate civil engineer from the Kristiania (Oslo) Technical School in 1896, and studied railway and bridge building at the Dresden Technical School three years later. John Dybhavn, who was to form a business partnership with the Swedish-born Olof Hanson (later M.P. for Skeena), studied at a seminary and the Bergen Military School in the 1890s, perfected his English in Seattle and enrolled in correspondence courses in insurance and real estate while doing contract work for the Grand Trunk Pacific. ¹⁷ In those instances when no note was made of educational background, attention was directed to the specific work and travel experiences that had prepared an immigrant for subsequent success in the Province. ¹⁸

There were, of course, numerous other items of interest and concern to

Scandinavians in the early years of the ethnic press. It would be inaccurate to suggest that the editors hewed consistently to a few themes since there is also a sense in which the newspaper mirrored the inchoate, fragmented nature of an immigrant community searching for place and stability. Along with the predictable appeals to support ethnic churches, fraternal associations, and Scandinavian enterprises, one finds revealing glimpses of an individual immigrant's experiences which often spoke of perceived contrasts between the Old World and the New.¹⁹ Such statements were usually to be found in letters from logging, mining, and construction workers who occasionally took pen in hand to comment on matters of immediate interest to themselves. For example, Anton Woldheim, who found himself on strike in the spring of 1912, had harsh words to describe camp conditions in Spuzzum at that time: "This is not an unreasonable strike. I have never in my life seen such unsanitary, dirty bunkhouses as I have here. It looks as though it is hard to find a healthy work place in Canada. One can get sick just by looking at the crowded bunkhouses, we're packed in here like herding in a can."²⁰ Another Swedish immigrant in Sparling echoed his complaints, noting that "conditions here are deplorable with no washing facilities and no privacy."²¹ A worker from Camp 104 on the Grand Trunk had scathing remarks to make about the labour practices there which lured Scandinavians (and others) with the promise of "fare free" wages of three dollars per day: "A man can come in for one cent a mile but if he wants to leave it will cost four cents. The fact is if a man wants to go to Edmonton with a \$50.00 stake, he will have to work like a horse for six months — and, that's the brighter side, the worst is so bad I would be accused of lying if I repeat it."²²

But even as they experienced disillusionment, these individuals would find in the ethnic press a kind of social and cultural connection with other Scandinavians that helped to put their experiences in perspective. So one finds the Grand Trunk labourer quoting Henrik Ibsen — *se det fik fanden fordi han var dum og ikke beregnet sit publikum* (free-translation: there's the devil to pay if you don't take into account your audience); a North Bend worker has words of praise for *Canada Skandinaven's* feature story on the noted explorer, Roald Amundsen; while a miner in Phoenix describes in detail reminiscent of the description of Old Country competitions, his account of a ski tournament in which all the participants were Scandinavians.²³ Others who suggested that local municipal politics compared unfavourably with practices in Norway or Sweden²⁴ or who thought that Scandinavian settlements such as Quatsino and Holdberg could have been better served by road builders with Old Country qualifications,²⁵ were not so much complaining as they were speaking to knowledgeable countrymen who understood the real meaning of their remarks. In a similar vein, the strident tone adopted by one G.G. in an article entitled "Where Should the Scandinavian Stand in this Country's Politics" suggests that his was a subject for internal consumption: "Which party here. . . will do most for the Scandinavians? The old, aristocratic, reactionary, conservative party which cries: 'Canada for the British [*sic*] born' and which seeks to exclude from any domain those who do not have a British-sounding name?. . . We will never make any progress this way, even if we get to the position of being 'subjects'."²⁶

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Certainly as the Scandinavians became more assured of their place in provincial society, they and the editors of the ethnic press took a more confident stand on many matters, including the question of citizenship and host-society relationships in general. By the end of World War I, the press had survived economic difficulties and changes in editorial staff, even as it had performed a vital function defending its readers from the occasional anti-foreign sentiment.²⁷ Perhaps indicative of the new maturity was the swift and uncompromising response of the *Norseman* (successor to *Canada Skandinavien*) to allegations that Scandinavians in Bella Coola were of pro-German sentiment. The 21 March 1919 issue reprinted an apology from a federal officer, Charles Tucker, which said in part: "All these men are either Canadian born or naturalized British subjects of many years' standing. A large number of their sons and relatives have volunteered and gone overseas, some of them never to return. Their liberality in connection with Victoria Loan subscriptions and Red Cross collections has been an example to the whole of Canada. I regret exceedingly having made the statements. . . . This apology is given and intended to be published in order to right the wrong that has been done to them."²⁸

Editor Nils Westby, who figured prominently in the post-World War I phase of the ethnic press, was later to remind his readers that Tucker's about-face had not removed all hostility to the foreign-born: "When we changed the *Norseman* into the English Language," wrote Westby, "one of our greatest reasons for doing so was to help the Scandinavians in getting the recognition and prestige, which they are entitled to. . . . Some even say, that the Scandinavians living in Canada are at no disadvantage whatever. . . . In this we do not quite agree. We admit that a Scandinavian perhaps has equal chances with most other foreigners and that the prejudice is very much less against us than toward most other nationalities, but even then we are not satisfied."²⁹

A year earlier, in the spring of 1919, Westby had remarked that the worst was over with respect to successful operation of the *Norseman*. He noted that the management of the press was in the hands of competent and experienced personnel. For example, James Leider, who was responsible for the Swedish-language material, had held similar positions with the *Winnipeg Skandinavien*, *Canada Posten*, and the Port Angeles (Washington) *Daily Herald*, in addition to his experience in Sweden and Boston. Other members of the Scandinavian Press, Limited, included Swedish-born linotypist Emil Stedt, and two Norwegian-born directors, Edvin Johnsen and George Lund, all with various newspaper and business backgrounds. Westby himself, after initial schooling in Sandeford, Norway, had attended the Bruce Peebles School and Harts Academy in Leith, Scotland, to apprentice as an engineer prior to immigration to Canada.³⁰ With such an experienced team of individuals, Westby had good reasons to sound optimistic about the success of the Scandinavian Press in the decade to come. Under his leadership during the 1920s, there was to be an added emphasis on the Old-Country values, significantly more discussion of the literary and educational tradition of Swedes and Norwegians, and appropriate recognition of important milestones achieved in Canada.

As the immigrant community became more familiar with the majority

culture and its own place within the host society, the ethnic press tended to reflect the increased confidence of the minority. Typically, one finds a passionate defence of one's group and a self-confident tenor to a number of individual statements. For example, Swedes and Norwegians in the 1920s spoke out vigorously for their own definitions of loyalty which would not necessarily suggest a diminution of *their* heritage. In an address entitled "Patriotism," Reinhold Ahleen argued that it was important to implant the Swedish heritage in the second generation and he defined as a real patriot one "...who is proud of his heritage, his language, his culture, and his country's history. . . ." ³¹ In a related account, Torvald Bøe objected strongly to the practice of the English-language press which invariably defined the "Old Country" as being England or the United Kingdom:

I am sitting here with an issue of "The Vancouver Daily Province" in front of me. I have subscribed to this paper for many years in order to try to learn the language. And my eyes have fallen several times on the expression: "Old Country" and the reference under it to London and to England. That arouses a certain bitterness in me as I begin to philosophize about it. And I ask myself: are the English people so dominant in this country? Are the rest of us just so much sand in the garden? . . . That points to a grave discourtesy against other nationalities who are peopling and building Canada. . . . When a paper such as "The Vancouver Daily Province," which must be seen as an organ common to the whole variety of people here, ignores my nationality. . . then I must protest. ³²

Bøe concludes that anyone who no longer has pride in his own country of origin will be in fact of little worth to the new society he is helping to build. He claims to have raised an extremely vital issue, one that shows up "... not only in the work place but also infiltrates the government offices as well as society generally." ³³ Many Scandinavians were concerned to discover a classification of the population which would place "Britishers" in one camp and "foreigners" in another. ³⁴ One immigrant noted that, as he looked about in one of the schools in Vancouver, over twenty nations were represented there. Most of these people, he said, had come in response to Canada's need for the right kind of immigrant, particularly those who could work in the agricultural and forest industries. It would not do for Canada, in view of her need, to discriminate against these "foreigners," many of whom, in his opinion, "... came from the agricultural schools and the folk high schools. . . with better education than those who attended schools here. . . . It was dissatisfaction [with conditions] that had driven members of the Nordic race to the position of first rank among those whom we have learned to call a civilized people." ³⁵

While statements that involved racial superiority were relatively infrequent in the Scandinavian press, there is little question that Swedes and Norwegians were eager to remind each other of what their heritage and culture had accomplished. Calls to immigrants to reflect on their past took many forms: celebration of literary figures, commemorative observances, and exhortations to advance the spread of Scandinavian ideals were among the initiatives presented in the ethnic press. The Swedes, for example, were

treated to a detailed account of a three-day celebration in Sweden of the 450th anniversary of the founding of Uppsala University. The richly ceremonial aspects of this important anniversary were highlighted with appropriate references to royalty, the *Rektor Magnificus*, the student choir, and the history of the institution over many years.³⁶ Earlier in the year, in June 1927, Svenska Förbundet (The Swedish Association) had held its first annual meeting in Canada, an occasion which stimulated Swedes to recall, in the words of one writer, that "Sweden is a cultural [nation] of first rank."³⁷ He cited such names as Linne, Tegner, Selma Lagerlöf, Strindberg, Nobel, and Nordensköld, which he claimed to be world renowned and attested to the richness and strength of Swedish culture.

The same issue of *Canada Skandinavien* featured a call to Swedes to define and defend *Svenskheten* (Swedishness) as a repository of ideals and values to enhance their lives in Canadian society.³⁸ This emphasis on the need for schooling was also related to the rich heritage that Scandinavians were fortunate enough to share: "no matter how well you have been educated in your elementary schools (*barndomsskola*) if you wish to progress in this country, the first condition is that you must learn to understand the language, people, and the state of things here."³⁹ Such advice was consistent with the overall picture that editors and contributors to the Scandinavian press tried to draw respecting their own countrymen.

When, for example, the noted Norwegian novelist Olav Duun turned fifty years of age, the account of his career carefully noted that he continued to teach school many years after his first success as a novelist.⁴⁰ In another issue marking the death of the renaissance scholar and author, Hans Kinck, Scandinavians were reminded that "... he was reputed to be the most learned writer. . . " in Norway.⁴¹ And the suggestion was implicit that Scandinavians here need not forego their identification with a heritage of books and learning, particularly when works of an Ibsen, Bojer, Hamsun, Lagerlöf, Undset, or Jacobsen were available in local libraries.⁴² Nor was the scattered community of Scandinavians elsewhere in the Province overlooked: *Canada Skandinavien* featured lectures by Thorleif Larsen on the genius of Ibsen and Hamsun, to name but two of the writers to whom most Scandinavians could relate.⁴³ An interesting footnote to one of Larsen's lectures suggests that "the great Scandinavian race is fortunate, that he [Larsen] is one of them. Although brought up in this country, having won the Rhodes Scholarship for excellence in study, he has also lived in Europe and completed his great learning in the leading academies of the Old World."⁴⁴

Enough has been said to indicate that the Scandinavian ethnic press touched upon a great number of matters that Swedes and Norwegians were likely to find of much interest, if not of direct bearing on their day-to-day lives in a newly established society. It would be incorrect to leave the impression that the foreign language forum was indispensable to their well-being. Nevertheless, in a variety of ways — in addition to those already documented — the ethnic press became an almost necessary resource. When Karl Vike travelled and reported on Scandinavian settlements along the Pacific Coast, on Vancouver Island, through the Fraser Valley, and in numerous logging and sawmill communities, he was not seeking new subscribers;

his reports carried news of Danes, Swedes, or Norwegians, born in Fyen, Hälsingland, or Kongsberg, with biographical sketches which filled in details of emigration, background, family life, and present occupation.⁴⁵ In this way Finsand's metaphor of the "living thread" dimension of the ethnic press became an actuality. And, in time, as *Canada Skandinaven* recounted the history of the first three decades of the Lutheran Church in Vancouver, it was a sign to the community that it had, in fact, taken root.⁴⁶ Similarly, as immigrants read the headline "Scandinavians Triumph at Revelstoke"⁴⁷ or followed the only available accounts of great sporting events in Drammen, Falun, or Holmenkollen,⁴⁸ they felt less keenly the distance between Old World and New. K. Holst-Grimsgaard, who replied to one of Karl Vike's visits on behalf of *Canada Skandinaven*, probably summed up the views of his countrymen as well as anyone:

I have been out here since New Year's, 1925. I knew there were many Scandinavians in Vancouver and Westminster [sic] and the area: I know they had their churches, associations, meetings, etc., but I never knew what transpired among them, . . . until I recently started to have "Canada Skandinaven" sent to me. And I believe that is how it is with most of the Scandinavians around here. . . . "Canada Skandinaven" is just that organ we need here to further cooperation and to strengthen the sense of community among the Scandinavian people in this region.

It is well we are, and should be, good Canadians since we have decided to break a new path out here — but, let us not be too quick to relinquish that Scandinavian element we have brought with us. There are cultural values, spiritual values, yes, even material values in that inheritance that we or our forefathers brought from the homeland.⁴⁹

It was those values, in Holst-Grimsgaard's view, which constituted the critical resource for the Scandinavians in early twentieth-century British Columbia.

Notes

¹ *Vancouver Posten*, 26 February 1932. *Vancouver Posten* succeeded *Canada Skandinaven* which was first published under that name in 1911. During the next eight years it twice subsumed *Canada-Tribunen*, a Swedish-language newspaper edited by James Leider (1918-1919), but there is no record of its editorship in the 1912-1913 period. For most of the years 1911-1919, *Canada Skandinaven* alternated between Norwegian and Swedish editions every other week and regularly carried separate news items from Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Finland. In 1918, Nils Westby took over control of *Canada Skandinaven*, absorbed *Canada-Tribunen* in 1919, changed the title of *Canada Skandinaven* to *Norseman* (27 January 1919 — 12 October 1923) and published it in English for a two-year period. See *Union List of Canadian Newspapers Held by Canadian Libraries* (Ottawa: National Library of Canada, 1977).

² *Canada Skandinaven*, 6 March 1912; 22 January 1913.

³ See *Seventh Census of Canada 1931*, Vol. II: *Population by Areas*, Table 31, p. 297.

⁴ *Fifth Census of Canada, 1911*, Vol. II: *Religions, Origins, Birthplace, Citizenship, Literacy & Infirmities by Provinces, Districts and Sub-districts*, Table xvii, pp. 440-441.

⁵ *Sixth Census of Canada, 1921*, Vol. I: *Population*, Table 26, pp. 380-381. Actual numbers were: Skeena — 1142; Cariboo — 750; Comox-Alberni — 697; New Westminster, by comparison, had 795.

⁶ See *Grundlovfesten i Peace Arch Parken*, 1967 (Vancouver: The Danish Central Committee) and *Sessional Papers* (1897), 778-780 for details of Danish colony; J. Donald Wilson, "A Synoptic View of the *Aika*, Canada's First Finnish-Language Newspaper," *Amphora*, 39 (March 1980), 9-14, discusses the Finnish effort.

⁷ No complete history of the Danish, Norwegian, or Swedish language press has yet been written. An example of what can be done has recently appeared in Arja Pilli's *The Finnish-Language Press in Canada, 1901-1939: A Study in the History of Ethnic Journalism* (Turku, Finland: Institute of Migration, 1982). Researchers interested in other Scandinavian newspapers should first consult the *Checklist of Canadian Ethnic Serials* (Ottawa: National Library of Canada, 1981) which provides invaluable information on names, places, dates, frequency of publication, format and languages used, as well as the availability and location of microfilm runs of current or discontinued publications. Among some of the more significant Norwegian language papers that might be noted are *Dominion Skandinav* (1927) and *Norge Canada* (1934-1940?), both published in Winnipeg; *Norsk Nytt* (1942-1955?) in Vancouver; and *Norden* (1918-1922), in Outlook, Saskatchewan. Swedish language papers of similar importance include *Canada Posten* (1904-1952), *Svenska Canada Tidningen* (1907-1932) and *Canada Tidningen* (1933-1970), all published in Winnipeg, and *Svenska Pressen* (1929-1930), *Nya Svenska Pressen* (1975-), *Svenska Vancouver Posten* (1910-unknown), from Vancouver.

See also my "From Ringsaker to Instow: A Norwegian Radical's Saskatchewan Odyssey," in Martin Kovacs, ed., *Ethnic Canadians: Culture and Education* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, 1977), 93-106, and "No Fixed Boundaries: Scandinavian Responses to Schooling in Western Canada," in Danielle Juteau Lee, ed., *Emerging Ethnic Boundaries* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1979), 117-129, for additional references to Scandinavian-language sources, including *Norrøna* and *Svenska Canada Tidningen*.

⁸ Peder H. Nelson, "Hadelendinger i Canada: De Første norske nybyggere i Saskatchewan," in *Nordmanns-Forbundet Månedshäfte* (reprinted in *Western Viking*, 9 March 1973), p. 10.

⁹ See the "Introduction" to *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 2, (1978), (Special Issue — Ethnic Radicals) by Jørgen Dahlie and J. Donald Wilson for commentary on the intellectual and cultural baggage that immigrants might bring in their passage to a new country. See especially n. 4, p. 7, on qualitative emigration.

¹⁰ *Canada Skandinav*, 17 January 1912.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 28 February 1912.

¹² *Ibid.*, 31 July 1912.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 20 June 1912.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 11 September 1912. Advertisements appeared regularly in the first few years noting the cost, duration of courses, what one could expect to learn (business, preparation for a "First Class Certificate," college preparatory courses). See *ibid.*, 29 November 1911.

¹⁵ See *Diary of Ivar Fougner* (Public Archives of British Columbia) for details, but see

Canada Skandinaven, 10 April 1912, 20 May 1921, and 16 February 1923 for information on Larsen. See also *Vancouver Posten*, 19 September 1930, for a brief account of Fougner's career as Indian Agent.

¹⁶ *Canada Skandinaven*, 10 April 1912.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 15 April 1914. Dybhavn was noted for his commitment to building rapport and strengthening bonds among Scandinavians. See *ibid.*, 3 April 1913, for an account of his travels to help organize Scandinavians.

¹⁸ *Canada Skandinaven*, 15 April 1914.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 13 March 1912.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 17 April 1912; cf. *Stump Ranch Chronicles and other Narratives*, ed. Rolf Knight (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1977), for similar experiences by a Norwegian and German immigrant.

²¹ *Canada-Tribunen*, 16 April 1913.

²² *Canada Skandinaven*, 11 September 1913.

²³ *Ibid.*, 12 February 1913, and 6 March 1912. Sam Wormington has collected a large number of English-language accounts of the early Scandinavian-dominated ski tournaments in his *The Ski Race* (Sandpoint, Idaho: Selkirk Press Inc., 1980). See p. 85 for note on Mellrud.

²⁴ *Canada Skandinaven*, 12 February 1913.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 13 December 1911.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 14 May 1913.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 16 and 31 October, and 29 March 1916. These issues of the newspaper were representative of the editor's concern to demonstrate the loyalty of Scandinavians through giving accounts of men who had volunteered for service. There was an emphasis on those who had gained commissions and otherwise distinguished themselves as loyal subjects. One finds a marked contrast in these accounts and some which appeared after the war when the frustration of certain Scandinavians led to outbursts against those who were now blaming the "foreigners" for Canada's problems: "Why then all this propaganda against all foreigners in the daily press?" *Norsemen*, 18 June 1919. See also *ibid.* for a reprint of Thorolv Klaveness' article from *Nordmandsforbundet* which defends the immigrant's contribution to North American society.

²⁸ *Norseman*, 21 March 1919. See *Vancouver Posten*, 2 May 1930, for the bitter response of a Scandinavian immigrant who complained that ". . . the hiring halls have orders to give jobs first and foremost to the English and Scotch [sic] and that means nothing left for the Scandinavians. . . the rest of us feel like intruders."

²⁹ *Norseman*, 20 May 1921.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 21 May 1919.

³¹ *Canada Skandinaven*, 27 November 1925.

³² *Ibid.*, 9 March 1928; Klaveness, *op.cit.*

³³ *Canada Skandinaven*, 9 March 1928.

³⁴ *Vancouver Posten*, 2 January 1931.

³⁵ *Canada Skandinaven*, 8 January and 1 October 1926.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 14 October 1927.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 24 June and 1 April 1927. The 2 April 1976 issue features the annual meeting of the Norsemen's Association.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, and 9 July 1926.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 1 October 1926. See also *Vancouver Posten*, 7 November 1930.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 17 December 1926.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 26 October 1926.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 3 December 1926. Among the titles listed were Bojer's *Den Siste Viking* (The Last Viking), Hamsun's *Sult* (Hunger), Ibsen's *Et dukkehjem* (A Doll's House) and *Vildanden* (The Wild Duck), Undset's *Kristin Lavransdatter*, and J.P. Jacobsen's *Niels Lyhne*.

⁴³ *Norseman*, 7 July 1921, 20 May 1921. Larsen's series on Ibsen ran for fourteen weeks. See *ibid.*, 17 February 1922.

⁴⁴ *Norseman*, 20 May 1921.

⁴⁵ See, for example, *Canada Skandinaven*, various issues from February through May, 1926, but especially 2 and 23 April, 14 and 21 May.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 27 October 1926.

⁴⁷ *Norseman*, 17 February 1922.

⁴⁸ *Canada Skandinaven*, 2 April 1926; but see also *ibid.*, 13 April 1916, for detailed earlier account of the results of the famed Holmen Kollen ski meet.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 2 April 1926.

Aksel Sandemose and *Ross Dane*: A Scandinavian's Perception of Western Canada

Christopher S. Hale

Aksel Sandemose (1899-1965) is considered to be one of Scandinavia's foremost writers. His novels have awakened a great deal of discussion for their psychological insights into human nature, and they are required reading both in secondary schools in Scandinavia and at most universities where Scandinavian languages and literatures are taught. As well as appearing in Norwegian, Danish, Swedish, Icelandic and Finnish, a number of his novels have been translated into English, French, German, Polish and Czech, and thus he is known to a reading public outside of the Nordic countries. Though Canada figures centrally in several of his novels, these particular ones have not been rendered into English for the most part, and thus he is, unfortunately, not well known here.

Born in Nykøping, Denmark, of a working-class Danish father and Norwegian mother, and having established himself as a promising young writer in his native country, he gave up his Danish citizenship in 1930 and became a Norwegian. From then on, he wrote exclusively in Norwegian and, thus, achieved his chief fame as a Norwegian author.

Before he changed citizenship, he made two trips to Canada. The first of these was as a seaman on a schooner to Newfoundland, at that time still a British colony. On his arrival there in October 1916, he jumped ship. After working as a lumberjack for a short while in the wilderness, he left Newfoundland in January 1917, eventually to return to Denmark. In 1927, he again made a journey to Canada, this time ostensibly as a correspondent for the Copenhagen newspaper *Berlingske Tidende*. Arriving in Winnipeg at the beginning of the harvest season, he travelled here and there throughout the prairie provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, spending a lot of his time in Danish immigrant colonies. While on the prairies he observed farm-life in the Alida region of Saskatchewan and visited Danes in several small towns in the Drumheller and Holden areas of Alberta. During this second Canadian stay, he was constantly entertaining the possibility of immigration, picking Canada, as he himself writes, because that country was his choice as the best land of the future.¹ However, shortly before Christmas while in Calgary, he finally gave up his ideas of moving to Canada and so left the West. After a month's stay in the East, he returned to Denmark in February 1928.

The experiences he had during his sojourns in Alberta and Saskatchewan influenced his writings to a great extent as he tried to probe the make-up of people who left their native land to settle in a new and unfamiliar country. In fact three of his novels, sometimes regarded as a trilogy — *Ross*

Dane (1928), his last Danish novel; *En sjømann går i land* (1931), his first Norwegian one; and *September* (1939)— are set almost exclusively in Alberta.

The central character in *Ross Dane*, for whom the book is named, is based on a Saskatchewan farmer whom Sandemose knew, but the locale of the story has been transferred to Alberta. The novel describes the adventures of the Danish immigrant Ross as a young man and how he establishes himself as the leader and patriarch of the Albertan-Danish community in which he lives. *En sjømann går i land* is concerned with another Danish immigrant, Espen Arnakke, the author's alter ego, who flees to Alberta after having committed a murder in Newfoundland. The book deals with Espen's struggle to overcome his guilt feelings and adapt himself to the often harsh life of the settler in a new country. *September*, the central plot of which has to do with a love triangle, looks at a later stage of the immigrant community and attempts to determine to what extent both first-generation settlers and their descendants have remained Europeans or become Canadians.

In this paper, I should like to give an idea of the kind of picture of the Canadian prairies and its people that Sandemose presents in his novel *Ross Dane*. Then I will discuss to a certain extent what, in Sandemose's opinion, is the type of person best suited to life on the western prairies, again as reflected in this novel.

Ross Dane is divided into two parts. In the first part we meet Ross, a Dane who immigrated to South Dakota with his parents as a boy. The time is the 1890s. Ross is riding the rails north into Saskatchewan searching for some runaway horses. On the way he meets a Metis, Charles Villeneuve, who accompanies him and, after finding the horses, they decide to travel west to look over the country. In Moose Jaw they pick up a couple of newly-arrived Danes, a farmer named Pedersen with his two sons and his two daughters and a declared free-thinker and basically good-for-nothing, Jensen, for whom Ross soon acquires a decided dislike. Pedersen is heading for Alberta and, when it comes out that Charles has a homestead near Beaver Coulee in that very province, the whole group decides to go there. Finally they arrive in Beaver Coulee after a long journey. These people make up the core of the new settlement. As time goes on Theodor, Pedersen's oldest son, comes down with tuberculosis. So, to cure him, Ross suggests that Theodor be placed in an open shed so that he can have fresh air, and here Theodor stays for four years, day and night, until he is finally well. After the first winter, the scoundrel Jensen leaves Beaver Coulee, basically for good. The community does grow with an influx of eastern Europeans, Galicians, most of whom do not get along with the Danes. Furthermore, Ross marries an Albertan girl of Danish-Norwegian descent who bears him triplet boys.

Part two takes place several years later. The colony itself has become a mixture of nationalities, but the Scandinavians are in the majority. Already Ross has a leading influence in the district. However, a split in the settlement has occurred with Pedersen and Fyodor Murazezsky, one of the Galician settlers, on the one side, and Ross and Ivan, another Galician, on the other. Ross and Ivan form a grain co-op to save the colony from financial disaster. Theodor, now recovered, breaks with his father and brother Frederik and moves out to an isolated coulee to live. After a few years of

loneliness and psychological problems, he ends up shooting himself. His death prompts Ross to wish to build a church for the Scandinavians and, after some urging on his part, he finally convinces Pedersen to go along with the scheme. Once more the community is reunited.

Some of Sandemose's physical descriptions of the prairies are very convincing. He makes the reader feel, for example, the vastness and emptiness of the landscape in passages such as the following:

The train moved at a snail's pace, rumbling gloomily through the deserted countryside. The prairie lay brilliantly green with multicoloured patches of flowers. Dwarf trees stood around the waterholes with hawks circling over them. Rasmus gradually got the feeling that the great open land was just waiting for something. (p. 9)²

A sense of the tension and fear on the part of all nature as a prairie fire approaches is illustrated in these lines:

A mountain of darkness grew in the west extinguishing the stars; coyotes went past, standing for a moment with forelegs on the ground and tongues flaring out between dagger-like teeth; rabbits were running in all directions both toward the fire and away from it; the weasel rushed past like a writhing serpent, and the gophers ran into the water to get it over with at once. The skunk plodded off, crying with every part of its body, and the badger splashed next to the bank snarling; it didn't want to go any further; it sat down on its tail in the mud and bared its teeth toward what was coming. All the prairie animals went past, silent and panting, a horde struck by madness, the wolf side-by-side with the rabbit, owls and hawks in the middle of flocks of peaceful birds. (p. 34)

The mood of Beaver Coulee itself in winter is pictured like this:

Now again the coulee shifted form and colour from hour to hour, the light shifted and the drifts went wandering. Beaver Coulee was forever unchangeable, but never the same. It whispered everything that a mortal human being has dreamed and seen, it was Denmark, it was Mount Everest, it was the moon's dead craters. But first and last eternally: Beaver Coulee. (p. 85)

These and other descriptions reveal a person who would seem to have close, first-hand knowledge and familiarity with the prairie; yet Sandemose was only there approximately three and a half months before he wrote *Ross Dane*, and he had never experienced spring or midsummer on the prairies. It is interesting to note that Sandemose at one point does confide to his diary that, after just two months in western Canada, he feels that twenty years had passed since his leaving Esbjerg.³

Sandemose also seems to be quite familiar with the people themselves on the prairie and the primitive conditions in which they live. For example the feelings of loneliness, if not out-and-out hopelessness and fear, felt by many of his characters, especially the immigrants, come frequently to the surface in the book. Especially striking are the portraits of the farm-wife who has been virtually drained by hard work, drudgery and loneliness.

The woman came out with several small children clinging to her skirt. With shifty eyes she looked toward the stranger, and Ross saw how she was afraid he would speak a language she didn't understand. It was pitiful to see her standing there in the drizzling rain, and the sight burned itself into Ross — this wife of a bankrupt Danish farmer deposited onto the desolate prairie in a miserable shanty which storm and rain went through. Her eyes showed that she had cried her fill. (p. 137)

Another time, Ross has shot some marauding wolves on behalf of one of the farmers. He brings them to the farmer's wife who tells him to take them into the barn. "But a little later Ross saw her staring out into the prairie. There was a hunted look in her eyes." Then Ross meets the farmer himself who explains

... when we came here. . . she was longing to get back to Bergen. There was water there. Here, there's just prairie. And all the strange things that we can gather in from out there. . . .'

Ross asked, 'Is she afraid of the prairie?'

His eyes lit up. 'Yes, that's just it. *She's afraid of the prairie.* We men don't understand that sort of thing, I guess. But however much we talk, that's what she is. . . afraid of the prairie. . . .' (p. 148, Sandemose's italics)

Also loneliness and fear especially affect Theodor as he lies in his shed during the winter.

With wild eyes Theodor looked out between the slats. A memory had lodged in his mind, several nights ago an animal was making noises out there which he had never heard before. The sound had made all other living things become silent. It had been everything in one, the night itself with all its devilry. If only it would never come again. When it became silent a painful sinking hand had come into his heart, a longing for Denmark after a rainy day, when because of the weather one was shut in far out in the country. This land shook him, this nightly, insatiable cacaphony of wolf howls to the sky, where the white fire of the northern lights gave answer. The winter was hopelessly long, spring would certainly never come again; the land could never break out of its strait-jacket of ice and snow. (pp. 96-7)

Another thing that strikes Sandemose especially is the racism displayed on the part of the Scandinavian settlers. This also plays an important role in the book as has already been indicated. At the time of the Scandinavian immigration to Western Canada, many southern and eastern Europeans were immigrating there as well. Bohemians, Poles, and other Slavic peoples — but most especially Ukrainians — were all lumped together by the Scandinavians under the term "Galicians." The word "Galician" is used also in *Ross Dane* to mean the same thing. While Sandemose himself in the narration shows little direct evidence of prejudice on his part, his characters do show some to a greater or lesser extent. It is usually made a point of fact that these Galicians are dark-haired and swarthy, worship God in a strange way, have swarms of children, and speak English, if in fact they do at all, very poorly.⁴ The main villain among them is Fyodor Murazezsky who, upon arriving in Beaver Coulee with his enormous family, gets into an altercation with Ross over a question of the ownership of a certain cabin. This causes bad blood between the two from the beginning and a rift which never heals. The only Galician who does seem to have any redeeming qualities is Ivan who soon allies himself with Ross in the grain co-op and remains his friend throughout the rest of the book. Of course there can be prejudice on both sides as well, and when Ivan, for example, learns that Ross' Danish assistant Hans is making advances toward his daughter, the following happens.

Ivan discovered that Hans was making himself out to please and enlightened his daughter about two things, namely that Hans belonged to the, with few exceptions, inferior Nordic race, and was married besides.

The first he impressed on her with philosophy, the last with a thrashing. (p. 196)

Other people who become objects of contempt, especially on the part of Ross, are free-thinkers and those whom he calls horn-blowing religious types, primarily Swedes. The former are miserable good-for-nothings who don't have any beliefs, and the latter think that anyone can get into heaven regardless, says Ross. The free-thinkers are represented primarily by Jensen, the scoundrel, who hangs on to the community and who, in spite of having quite a bit of money, constantly tries to sponge off others.

Less realistic, perhaps, is the picture Sandemose gives of the native population. Basically the main person in this category is Charles Villeneuve, the Metis. He is in a constant state of inner conflict with himself on whether he is an Indian or a white man. Basic instincts in him tell him that he is an Indian, and he often goes out hunting like one and sometimes dresses like one. Yet Charles believes that the man of the future is the white man, and he wishes to cast his lot with him. In spite of this, he marries an Indian woman, and his children end up being dominated by their more animalistic instincts, something that Sandemose seems to have thought typical of the North American native. Charles is, though, highly respected by Ross Dane, and Ross learns a great deal about survival on the prairies from Charles. This mutual respect between Scandinavian and Indian is something Sandemose may have frequently witnessed during his travels.

Now I should like to look at what qualities Sandemose thought the ideal immigrant to the Canadian west should have and how this is reflected in *Ross Dane*. According to his newspaper articles that appeared in the 1920s, Sandemose felt that the successful farmer-immigrant carries on the traditions of the Viking Age since the Nordic race is the same today as it was then.⁵ Yet it is quite obvious from *Ross Dane* and the other novels in the Alberta trilogy that not every Scandinavian can succeed in coping with leaving his home country and settling in a harsh new environment. Here the tubercular Theodor immediately comes to mind.

One cannot talk about Sandemose's views on the qualities of the successful immigrant, though, without bringing in the concepts *lykkemann* and *niding* which Sandemose has often discussed in his own works. These two words go back to Old Norse *lukkumaðr* and *niðingr*, and Sandemose has used them in the same sense as they are used in the Icelandic sagas. A *lukkumaðr* is one who is born with good luck or fortune and is destined to do well in whatever he undertakes in life. On the contrary a *niðingr* is one who has no good luck or fortune at all and is destined always to be a failure. Thus, when looking at Sandemose's successful and unsuccessful immigrant, one must often take into account to what extent he may be a *lukkumaðr* or a *niðingr*.

Obviously, by this definition Ross Dane is a *lukkumaðr* and he is certainly the one in the book who succeeds best of all. Any time there is a challenge or a job to be done he is there, instinctively knowing what to do. It is his advice to drive the wagon and animals into a slough in order to save as much as possible as a prairie fire approaches on the trek west. This saves the caravan. Upon arriving in Beaver Coulee he borrows two wild oxen from Charles, tames them with his bare hands and gets his land broken up for planting. When his wife Eva gives birth to triplets and no doctor or mid-wife can be found to assist, Ross takes on the job himself and afterward appears

at the cabin door covered with blood. As time goes on he becomes virtually a monarch over the community and is referred to as King Dane by most of the settlers. People usually heed his advice and, if they do this, things usually turn out right for them. Ross' crowning achievement, both physically and symbolically, is the church he builds at the end of the book, from the steeple of which both the Danish flag and the Union Jack fly. To top it all off, Ross' name is Rasmus Dansker in the first half of the book. In the second half he has become Canadianized and is called Ross Dane. In the same category certainly is Eva, Ross' wife. She is almost idealized as being the perfect prairie wife, someone almost goddess-like at times, and it is probably no coincidence that she bears the name of the first woman on earth. Always supporting Ross in his endeavours and faithfully standing by him, she cuts an imposing complementary figure to her husband. Truly, this couple is the archetype of the successful immigrant family.

On the other hand the *niðingr* could be said to be represented primarily by two characters. Jensen, the free-thinking scoundrel, has already been mentioned. The one, however, who most fits the definition of *niðingr* is Theodor. He seems doomed from the start. He is already showing early symptoms of tuberculosis when Ross meets him in Moose Jaw. His fear and hallucinations really begin as he lies alone out in the shed. Though through this treatment he is cured of his disease, he is still sick in his soul. After a row with his father and brother, he moves out to North Coulee where his fear of the prairie and his hallucinations increase, eventually forcing him to shoot himself after realizing deep down that he is not suited to this harsh life.

Other characters are perhaps less easy to categorize. Pedersen and his son Frederik are frequently portrayed as having somewhat of a rascal nature, and they are often pitted against Ross Dane himself. Yet they survive the experience and stay on in the prairie community eventually to become reconciled with their neighbours, so to speak. Pedersen's two daughters also adapt and survive, but they turn to the Indian way of life, running off with Charles' sons. Regarding the others, especially the non-Scandinavians, it seems as though the question of coping or not coping with prairie life does not really concern Sandemose.

Like Ross remembering his homeland — albeit dimly, Aksel Sandemose, as evidenced by his diary from the Canadian trip, did as well, though with him it became a virtual longing. As already noted, his pining for his homeland was too much for him to resist, and he gave up his ideas of settling in western Canada. Also, as he indicates in his later works, he most likely felt himself a *niðingr*; and since it seemed to take a *lukkumaðr* to flourish in Canada, he had to leave if he was going to survive.

Sandemose felt the farm work was back-breaking and almost too hard, and his essays tell of farmers who felt that many of the new immigrants were worthless workers. On the other hand, he saw things here about Danes which he disliked, and this contributed to his feeling of wishing to immigrate somewhere, if not to Canada. He describes in articles how he dislikes his countrymen's racial hatred and also the envy that Danes felt toward successful members of their own ethnic group. By 1930, he had made his

decision to leave Denmark once and for all and to settle in the country of his mother's birth, Norway.

Ross Dane is not Sandemose's best work but, when it came out in 1928, it was very well received. Asmund Lien considers *Ross Dane* to be Sandemose's "best conventional novel," comparing it to Ole Røvaag's *I de dage* and to Johan Bojer's *Vor egen stamme* which Sandemose may have read;⁷ and Ole Storm, in his epilogue to a recent Danish edition, has called it his "break-through novel."⁸ The narrative, however, appears uneven in places. This is noticeable, for example, when Sandemose discusses Theodor's hallucinations, where at times he almost seems to get bogged down in elaborations on the young man's mental condition. Sandemose's imagery, while often very striking and well thought out, occasionally misses the mark. An example of this may be found at the beginning of Chapter Seven where an unfortunate attempt is made to compare the sun to a newspaper editor:

Editor Sol walked thoughtfully over the floor in his office contriving new sensations for the world press; he shone tentatively on Rasmus Dansker, who quite rightly began thinking about a girl in Youngstown but stayed where he was. Then the sun made Beaver Coulee yellow for a day and went on to the next column. (p. 60)

As indicated in the discussion above, some of the characters are too romantically drawn. This is perhaps especially true of the women in the book; and of these, Eva stands out most of all. The reader never really gets to know her, and she is often viewed as an ideal woman. This fits in well with what Storm has noted about Sandemose's early novels. In these, his female portraits are characterized by "a shyness with regard to the sex and a lack of psychological understanding."⁹ This is in direct contrast to the depths to which many of Sandemose's characters are probed in his later works.

Several years after *Ross Dane* appeared, Sandemose felt that his novel was a sort of moral and artistic capitulation to readers' tastes and the monetary interests of the publishers to whom he had had to sell himself to provide for his family.¹⁰

In spite of all this, it makes entertaining reading and gives us insight into the make-up of the immigrant to Canada as perceived by a Scandinavian visitor. Also a number of the aspects of the book, for example the psychological study of the *lukkumaður* and *niðingr*, presage his first Norwegian novels about Espen Arnakke — Sandemose's alter ego. The character Ross Dane plays a minor role in his next book, *En sjømann går i land*, and Espen, in this same novel, of course settles in Beaver Coulee where the story continues.

Notes

¹ *Berlingske Tidende*, 8 October 1927.

² The quotations from *Ross Dane* have been translated by the author of this paper. Page numbers refer to the Danish edition in Schönberg's "lommeelefant" series, Aksel Sandemose, *Ross Dane* (København: Det Schönbergske Forlage, 1976).

³ See Carl-Eric Norberg, *Sandemose. En biografi* (København, 1967), p. 111.

⁴ See Asmund Lien, "Sandemose's America," *Americana Norvegica*, Vol. III, (Oslo, Bergen, Tromsø: Universitetsforlaget, 1971), pp. 332-3, for a further discussion of Sandemose's "Galicians."

⁵ See Lien, p. 332.

⁶ See Johannes Væth, "Lykkemand og niding?" *Samtiden* (Oslo, 1963), pp. 612-16, and Nordberg, in the chapter "Lykkemand og nidding," pp. 81-97.

⁷ Lien, p. 334.

⁸ Aksel Sandemose, *Nybyggere i Alberta (Ross Dane)* (København: Lademann, n.d.), p. 241.

⁹ Storm, p. 259.

¹⁰ See Norberg, p. 115.

Folk Technology Retention: Finnish Folk Tools and Procedures in Mid-Canada and Central Finland

J. David Martin

Problem, Hypothesis, and Prediction:

The simplest explanation for technological retention, discontinuation, and replacement is the practical one: people use the technology that produces the most/best results for the effort and cost required to accomplish a given task. There exists a bias in favour of the familiar (see e.g. Zajonc, 1968) — including such familiar practices and tools as characterize “old-country” technology — but if a new technology is clearly more efficient, it will be adopted in preference.

Applied to migration, this “practicality theory” would usually predict technological discontinuation or replacement. Most migrants move to destinations that are sufficiently different from their old homelands so that their familiar technologies are not as well adapted as others which have been developed in and for the new one.

It is often claimed (e.g. Isajiw, 1978; Maunula, 1983; cf. Ishino and Donoghue, 1959; Sharp, 1952) that migrants from one cultural setting to another (as most international migrants are) retain expressive culture longer than technology. Research on cultural retention is thus much more often focused on “expressive” rather than “material” or “technical” culture (Maunula, 1983, Royal Commission, 1969, as cited; Spady and Thompson, 1977; M. Martin, 1980; Polkki, 1976). Work behavior research usually deals with the employee in a setting determined by the destination culture (Bradwin, 1972; Kouhi, 1976; Polkki, 1976; M. Martin, 1979). It seems to be assumed that old-country technology is dropped as fast as its destination culture’s equivalents can be adopted (Isajiw, 1978).

This may often occur, for migration frequently deposits one in a setting in which old-country technologies are unsuited or, in many other cases, it may bring the migrant to a culture whose technology is more efficient. However, a bad fit between old-country technology and the destination’s circumstances is hardly universal; furthermore, the hospitability of the old-country social environment for folk technology also changes over time, and typically, in the recent past, the change has been for the worse. Retention in the home country is itself imperfect. The ideal test of folk-technology retention would compare it with retention of expressive culture as a fraction of the same kind of retention in the old country.

Old-country retention will almost certainly be the higher, because of both site factors and social inertia. Hardly ever is the destination site more hospitable than the old for the use of technology which, after all, was devel-

oped under old-site conditions. Some folk technology will be retained in modernized form in the old country, but the migrants will not make up a "market" for the manufactured elements of this modernized folk technology (for instance, folk forest husbandry in Finland uses a tool called the *vesuri*, which is manufactured there but which, in Canada, must be handmade). And the destination site may contain alternatives to folk technology which are analogously unavailable in the old country. Still, in a new-world site, it is quite possible that a minority ethnic group will carry folk technology whose fit to the site is excellent (and nearly as good as the fit of that folk technology to the old country).

For example, the Finns migrating to the Boreal Forest regions of Canada possessed a culture more suited to that geography and climate than did either the dominant Anglos or the "subdominant" French. Though mid-Canada is fifteen degrees south of central Finland (the region from which most of the Finnish immigrants came), its climate is not warmer but slightly colder. Winters are comparably long and summers comparably short. The forests contain species ecologically analogous to Finnish species from the same genera: *Picea*, *Pinus*, *Betula*, *Populus* in particular. There is a bit more diversity in Canada owing to the geography of the past glaciations (see e.g. Padmore, 1979).

To put it most simply, mid-Canada "looks like home" to a Finn — and the home technology can be readily transplanted. Thus, if technology is usually abandoned for practical reasons, and those practical reasons usually exist at the conclusion of an international migration, the Finnish Canadian is an exception. Finnish Canadians in northwest Ontario and similar ecological regions should retain technology, relative to its retention by comparable persons remaining in Finland, approximately as well as they retain expressive culture. Pending a measure of expressive-culture retention (hopefully forthcoming in Maunula, 1983), it will be predicted that retention rates in Canada will be at least half as great as those in Finland if other factors are equal.

Significant "other factors" are age, sex, rural work experience, and rural versus urban residence. These are the independent variables which furnish alternatives to, and which operate in addition to, the "old-country/new-country" (hereafter, SITE) variable. If they prove comparably important, the finding of a SITE effect is qualified, and the question whether folk technology is transplantable would be answered "at least somewhat" — how much depending on the details of the findings of this study and others which should then follow it.

Rural work experience has "obvious" importance in that Finnish immigrants brought a basically rural culture to Canada (Kouhi, 1976: 22; Morrison, 1976: 46; cf. also Kronborg, Nilsson, and Svaletuen, 1977); most of the folk technology that could be retained or dropped was rural in use and value. The arrival of replacement technologies is likely to have been about simultaneous in Canada and Finland, at least since the Second World War. (For that matter, horse-logging persisted in northwest Ontario for some years after the war.) However, modern Finland has a higher proportion of its population in rural work, and particularly in family farming, than Canada.

Rural residence is arguably likely to affect interest in, and thus, retention of folk technologies. However, some rural residents today work in thoroughly industrial jobs, including many forest industry jobs, and are not necessarily exposed either to folk culture or to opportunities to apply it.

Rural technologies were often sex-typed for use, which plainly should affect retention rates. And older people, having grown up earlier in the modernization process, can be expected to retain "old technology" better than their juniors. AGE as a variable should be differently interpreted depending on whether it does or does not "disappear" in partial correlation. If it acts largely "through" rural work experience (RWORK) or its correlation with SITE, these variables would seem to have causal priority. AGE effects that do not "partial out" might well reflect a gradual loss of folk technology; older people hold it better because of the less-industrialized work process and cultural values of their early years.

Research Procedures:

After several focused but minimally structured interviews with informants from the Lakehead Finnish community, a list of eleven tools and ten tasks was drawn up. These formed the pre-test stimulus. Thirty-nine persons of Finnish descent, residing in northern Ontario (usually in or near Thunder Bay), and thirty-two residents of central and west-central Finland¹ were each asked if they recognized (had used, still used) each tool and how they performed each task. Those recognizing the name of a tool were further asked to describe or sketch the tool, and to state what uses it had and what experience they had had in using it. The responses provided my raw data.

The sample was organized as a loose quota sample, strictness being sacrificed to availability and "informed judgement" of the suitability and diligence of potential respondents. Some effort was made to get generational

Table 1: Recognition of tools
(Percentages)

		(0)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Mean	S.D.
a)	Wooden well-pump	22	33*	43	2	0	1.2	.8
b)	<i>Vesuri</i> (brush hook)	19	12.5	19*	17	32	2.3	1.5
c)	<i>Pulkka</i> (Lapp's sled)	32	26*	21	8	13	1.4	1.4
d)	Wooden hay-rake	14	25	28*	22	11	1.9	1.2
e)	"Cold-hole"	25	22	31*	4	18	1.7	1.4
f)	Home-made skis	4	45	31*	7	13	1.8	1.1
g)	Kitchen wood-box	7	15	18	17*	43	2.8	1.3
h)	<i>Sauna</i> door handle	6	8	15	3	68*	3.2	1.3
i)	Angle-leg bench	19	15	33*	1	31	2.1	1.5
j)	Snath (scythe handle)	11	22	35*	15	17	2.	1.2
k)	Old-fashioned dining-table	17	12	32*	3	36	2.3	1.5
Summary score for tool use:							20.6	8.8

* = Modal Category

series — parent-child or grandparent-parent-child series — rather than the maximum number of different families. However, in lacking something comparable to Thompson's census of his time of reference (1975: 7) and in being without data on ethnicity suitable for setting representative quotas, a set of rather arbitrary sample quotas were set as follows: 50 to 67% male; approximately one-fourth in each of the age categories 13-29, 30-44, 45-60, and over 60; and for the Canadian sample, approximately 40% in each of the "first" and "second" Canadian-born generations, and 20% Finnish-born. Rural experience was coded as a variable but was not given quotas.

The interview schedule was organized as a checklist: for each of the tools listed in Table 1, all respondents were asked to indicate if they recognized and could describe the tool, if they had used it, if they still used it, and if they could make it themselves; for each of the tasks listed in Table 2, respondents were asked to indicate if they knew how to do the task, if they had ever done it (not just helped another), if they still did it from time to time. Respondents who had stopped using a tool or doing a task were asked whether they were using a non-folk alternative or simply not doing that kind of thing. Coding was as follows: 0 = Non-recognition or unable to make; 1 = Recognizes but has not used/made personally; 2 = Has used in the past but has dropped for a more modern technology, or has made in the past but no longer does; 3 = Has used in the past but no longer has occasion to, or makes currently; 4 = Uses currently (not a code for MAKES).

The proportion of the sample recognizing, using or doing, and replacing each technology were tabulated.² In addition, those respondents who

Table 2: Recognition and experience of tasks
(Percentages)

	(0)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Mean	S.D.
a) Make rag-rugs	14	49*	21	7	10	1.5	1.1
b) Make <i>kalja</i>	20	26	17*	5	32	2.0	1.6
c) Salt fish	21	31*	14	1	33	2.0	1.6
d) Take a <i>sauna</i> #	0	4	3	0	93*	3.8	.7
f) Split a large round	14	8	8	19*	50	2.8	1.5
g) Preserve mushrooms	40	25*	3	4	28	1.5	1.7
h) Store potatoes, etc.	7	12	10	11	60*	3.4	1.4
i) Set hay to dry	14	24	14*	26	22	2.2	1.4
j) Roof a house without commercial roofing (cf. Williams: 128-131)	42	33*	19	2	4	.9	1.0
k) Plow snow without an hydraulic blade	42	18*	18	6	11	1.2	1.4
Summary "tasks" score						21.3	9.3

* = Modal Category

This variable was included to allow for extreme loss of culture among Finnish Canadians; there was no extreme loss. Of those not using the *sauna* currently, nearly all gave health reasons.

had the appropriate knowledge and interest were invited to add technologies to the writer's collection for future consideration, and possibly for inclusion in later interview series. Some risk of exaggeration is unavoidable with such self-report data, but objective recall testing, while possible in theory, would not have been feasible with this technology subject matter and these widely scattered respondents.

Three summary scores were computed from the item answers: TOOLS is the sum of a respondent's answer scores for all the tool-use items; TASK is the sum of a respondent's answer scores for all the task items; and MAKES is the sum of a respondent's answer scores for all the tool-making items. These summary scores represent sums of ordinal answers (all in the same format) to a set of items. While not mathematically proper, they are analogous to the respected Likert scaling technique, and the analysis of ordinal data as if interval, while unwise if one attempts to describe the mathematical form of relationships, seems legitimate if one seeks only to detect them (Acock and Martin, 1974). These "undermeasured" data are fit for detecting relationships between variables, but not for describing them: one may report Pearsonian correlations and their significance levels with very modest risk of error, but parametric coefficients should not be reported or interpreted.

Results:

Data analysis employed the SCSS computer tabulation procedures "Regression," "Univariate" and "Crosstabs," but the number of tables produced is far too large to include them all here. Table 1 indicates the recognition rates for the "tools" and Tables 2 and 3 do the same for the "task" and "tool making" variables. Exaggeration, which probably occurred, would likely attenuate the variable relationships it affected at all.

Of the bivariate tables produced, over half were "statistically significant" — that is, contained a statistically significant relationship between the variables. The probability of this number of "significant" relationships in a

Table 3: Tool making

	Percent able to make	Mean	S.D.
a) Wooden well-pump	11	0.11	.32
b) <i>Vesuri</i> (brush hook)	11	.14	.42
c) <i>Pulkka</i> (Lapp's sled)	14	.18	.45
d) Wooden hay-rake	29	.32	.53
e) "Cold-hole"	39	.47	.65
f) Home-made skis	17	.25	.60
g) Kitchen wood-box	49	.65	.75
h) <i>Sauna</i> door handle	54	.86	.88
i) Angle-leg bench	30	.38	.64
j) Snath (scythe handle)	18	.22	.51
k) Old-fashioned dining-table	21	.29	.62
Summary score for tool making		14.5	6.37

data-set lacking true relationships is $< .001$ (Martin 1970). In an effort to summarize and organize the survey material, summary scores and regression analysis were employed as follows.

The summary scores TOOLS, MAKES, and TASKS were dependent variables in the retention-rate comparisons. The independent variables were SITE (Finland or Canada), AGE, SEX, rural work experience (RWORK), and rurality of lifestyle (RUPART). They are all causally prior to the dependent variables, having existence before data collection. Except for RWORK and RUPART, they are conceptually independent of one another. RWORK is to a considerable degree causally prior to RUPART (and these two will not be used as "control variables" against one another). Table 4 constitutes the raw-correlation matrix, with values in the upper triangle and significance levels in the lower.

The three dependent variable summary scores were intercorrelated, as they should be if they are aspects of the same concept. Of the independent variables, AGE and RWORK were significantly correlated with all dependent variables. SITE was significantly correlated with TOOLS and TASKS; SEX with MAKES, and RUPART with TOOLS. However, AGE in particular cannot be interpreted without looking at partial correlations and, in general, this is a good idea. It seems clearest to proceed by dependent rather than by independent variable.

TOOLS was significantly correlated to (and causally downstream from) SITE, AGE, RWORK and RUPART in that order. Partial correlations were run, "controlling" the relationship with each independent variable by partialling out the effects of the others. The SITE effect was virtually unchanged; the AGE effect decreased considerably, the RWORK effect decreased minimally, and the lifestyle effect increased minimally. SEX just failed to reach statistical significance, with males having a bit greater retention of tool use. (However, more tools were male- than female-typed, and "retention" may not be what is involved in the case of SEX.)

The SITE, RWORK, and RUPART effects "hold up" under partialling, indicating they are nearly independent. The AGE effect decreases substan-

Table 4: Raw correlation matrix
Independent Variables and Dependent Summary Scores

	TOOLS	TASK	MAKES	AGE	SEX	RWORK	RUPART	SITE
TOOLS	—	.52	.53	.47	.18	.31	.22	.55
TASKS	.001	—	.5	.44	.05	.45	.14	.35
MAKES	.001	.0~	—	.22	.50	.23	.15	.02
AGE	.001	.001	.05	—	.05	.41	.03	.28
SEX	(NS)	(NS)	.001	(NS)	—	.11	.02	.00
RWORK	.01	.05	.001	.001	(NS)	—	.52	.07
RUPART	.05	(NS)	(NS)	(NS)	(NS)	.001	—	.03
SITE	.001	.01	(NS)	.01	(NS)	(NS)	(NS)	—

(NS) means "Not Significant ($p > .05$)"

tially, and the lower figure ($r = .29$; $rsq = .09$) is the more appropriate, since we are interested in the effect of AGE as an indicator of ties to the past and not as it may reflect SITE or RWORK. SITE is clearly the strongest influence on TOOLS retention.

Influences on TOOLS summary variable:

Independent Variable	Zero-order Correlation	Partial Correlation
SITE	.55***	.53***
AGE	.47***	.29**
SEX	.18	.20
RWORK	.31**	.28**
RUPART	.22*	.26*

TASK was significantly correlated to (and causally downstream from) RWORK, AGE, and SITE in that order. When partial correlations were run, as described above, the SITE effect was slightly increased; the AGE effect decreased considerably (to where it fell short of statistical significance), and the RWORK effect decreased slightly. AGE, RUPART, and SEX failed to reach statistical significance, with males having slightly more retention, and the other effects falling in the predicted direction.

Influences on TASKS summary variable:

Independent Variable	Zero-order Correlation	Partial Correlation
SITE	.35**	.37***
AGE	.44***	.17
SEX	.05	.14
RWORK	.45***	.42***
RUPART	.14	.15

Here RWORK is the stronger influence, whereas SITE was the stronger influence on TOOLS. The AGE effect falls so low under partialling that it, like SEX and RUPART, can be treated as a very minor influence. The insignificant RUPART effect may merit discussion later.

The summary variable MAKES was significantly correlated to (and causally downstream from) SEX, RWORK, and AGE in that order. After partialling out the effects of the others, the SEX effect was virtually unchanged; the AGE effect decreased moderately, the RWORK effect decreased considerably, and only SEX remained a significant independent variable:

SEX is the only variable whose effect persists under partialling. RWORK may still merit discussion, but its effect is weak ($rsq = .05$). AGE falls just below "statistical significance" and is probably a minor influence — but so minor that, rather than discontinuation, it could reflect the fact that many young men may simply have yet to learn tool making.

Influences on MAKES summary variable:

Independent Variable	Zero-order Correlation	Partial Correlation
SITE	.02	.10
AGE	.22*	.20
SEX	.50***	.50***
RWORK	.23*	.15
RUPART	.15	.16

Discussion:

Considering all three "summary dependent variables," RWORK and SITE are comparable and most important among the independent variables, while AGE is significant in tool use and SEX affects tool making. (Men are the tool makers. This is a cultural fact rather than differential retention.)

The Canadian retention rates are respectable, and do not indicate that folk technology has been quickly dropped. The strong effect of RWORK on TASKS is another indication that, while Finnish Canadians retain less of their folk technology than those remaining in Finland, SITE is just another independent variable (and not, as the literature would imply, *the* independent variable).

RWORK, SITE, and SEX are not to be ignored if their effects disappear under partialling. At this point it is difficult to assign causal priority; and if SITE does influence RWORK, or co-vary slightly with SEX, this does not decrease the interest of the latter variables. AGE, however, "means" something different, depending on the effect of partialling. An AGE effect that persists would seem to reflect differences in the time when old people were socialized, as compared with the recent time when young people were; while one that is largely removed by partialling would seem to "act" only through the intermediation of experience or spuriously through association with SITE. (AGE and SEX are virtually uncorrelated.)

RWORK influences all three summary variables significantly. In the case of MAKES, this effect is apparently shared with AGE, and partialling leaves AGE's effect stronger. (AGE is, of course, associated with experience.) SITE influences TOOLS and TASKS, but not MAKES. (One reason for this may be that some tools can be bought in Finland while they must be made in Canada, so that the higher Finnish rate of use need not engender a higher rate of tool making.) Likewise, the strong relationship between TOOLS and SITE may result more from availability than from willingness to use folk tools. The tools listed in the interview schedule are, in several cases, made commercially in Finland but not in Canada: *pulkka*, *vesuri*, bench, table, at least. This cannot but affect their use. Two conclusions are encouraged; first, availability of folk technological equipment may be a major factor in its discontinuation, perhaps more major than any desire to get on the industrial bandwagon. Second, the TASKS variable, rather than TOOLS, may best reflect the relative disposition of Finnish Canadians and Finns to retain folk technology.

SITE may also affect the operation and extent of rurality, both in terms of work experience and in terms of present lifestyle. Finnish rurality is typically expressed in small-holds and villages; mid-Canadian rurality, in pulp-wood camps, mines, tourist operations, and other appendages of the metropolitan system. Metropolitan dominance appears much weaker in Finland than in northern Ontario; for this reason, and not for reasons of climate or geography, rural experience since the Second World War and current "rurality" of lifestyle cannot have as strong a folk character in Canada.

AGE influences the use of TOOLS and the variable MAKES, but is not as strong a variable as SITE or RWORK. RUPART has a modest effect on TOOLS. SEX influences only tool making, apparently in response to long-standing custom.

Finally, while results are still preliminary, there is evidence forthcoming that expressive-culture retention in Canada is at a comparable level with technological retention (Maunula, in preparation). While the direct comparison of percentages is impossible, since there is no "true index" of what "is" either folk technology or expressive folk culture, the possibility exists that in this hospitable site, folk technology has been retained as well as, or better than, expressive culture.

Without anticipating Maunula's results, one can make some impressionistic local observations. May Day (*Vappu*) celebrations are modest and not comparable to those in Finland. Fewer households still bring in a hired Santa Claus while the children are awake, as is the custom in Finland. Mid-summer trees are to be seen but are not terribly common; national costumes are rarer. In sum, the relative retention of technology and expressive culture by migrants is apparently a highly conditional matter, and the direction of the difference is not necessarily always in "favour" of expressive culture.

Notes

¹ From these areas — and from the western coast — came most of the migrants to mid-Canada. An attempt was made to balance urban and rural residents.

² The "rate of retention" is, in practice, the proportion of a list of earlier cultural items known, used (etc.) by a person, or the proportion of a sample knowing (using, making, performing) a tool (task). Rates of retention were double-calculated, once for recognition and once for use.

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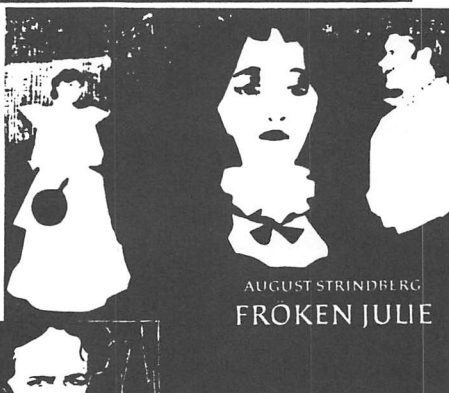
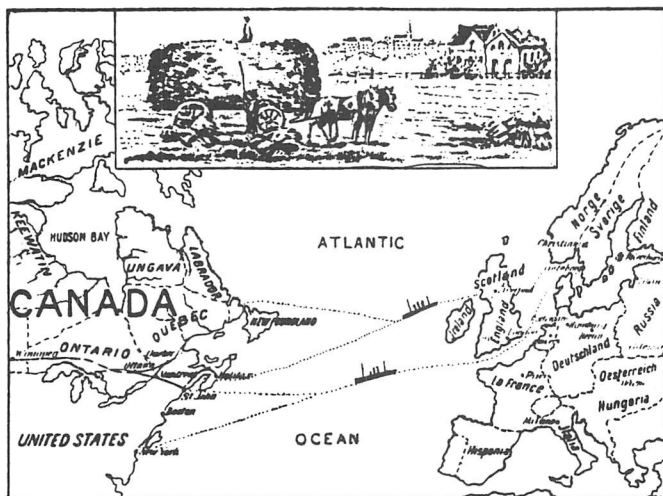
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SCANDINAVIAN-CANADIAN STUDIES



SCANDINAVIA AND THE WIDER WORLD

The Origins and Spread of Literacy in Early Scandinavia

H. Roe

The beginnings of literacy¹ in Scandinavia are still in many ways obscure and problematic, and the history of literacy in Scandinavia is in some ways unusual. Iceland, for example, was settled by the same people who, from the end of the eighth century on, destroyed countless centres of culture in the British Isles and on the Continent. Yet by the twelfth century the descendants of these renowned barbarians had established a small society, numbering somewhere between 45,000 and 75,000,² which was quite literate. This society also produced one of the great vernacular literatures in the history of the West, as well as an extensive body of learned writings in both Norse and Latin. Today the people of Iceland, currently numbering somewhat over 200,000, are generally considered to be the most literate people on earth, at any rate as far as the number of bookstores available is concerned, or the number of books written, published, translated, sold and read.³ Moreover the Icelanders had already achieved total literacy in the eighteenth century, well before the other peoples of Europe.

Paper, printing and Protestantism undoubtedly helped bring about universal literacy in Iceland. Poverty and the ruggedness of the landscape also may have been factors. Scotland, for example, has consistently been more literate but less prosperous than England, and the mountainous and rural province of Vorarlberg, bordering Switzerland, was the most literate district in all of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.⁴ Another factor would be the high status which women traditionally have enjoyed in Iceland. The children of literate mothers invariably learn to read, whether schools are available or not. The most important factors, however, are the existence of a large body of native literature extending back, with few linguistic changes, for almost a thousand years, and a centuries-old tradition of widespread literacy.

Some Icelandic manuscripts survive from the twelfth century, roughly two dozen in all. Most of the surviving manuscripts come from the thirteenth and later centuries. The script is Caroline miniscule with a number of insular features. Opinions vary on the extent of literacy among the laity during the early period, and on the dependence of the native manuscript tradition on church institutions. Scholars such as Einar Ólafur Sveinsson⁵ and Siguðor Nordal⁶ have maintained that literacy was already widespread during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and that the leading families were involved in the production of vernacular manuscripts. Roughly 700 vellum manuscripts survive from the medieval period, almost all of them in Norse.⁷ Many others were undoubtedly lost as a result of wear, dampness, fire and neglect. Of the many manuscripts collected by Árni Magnússon at the beginning of the eighteenth century, some were lost at sea on the way to Denmark. Of those which made it to Copenhagen, roughly two-thirds were destroyed in the Great Fire which began on 20 October 1728. Pre-Reformation records⁸ indicate that monastic collections probably had three Latin manuscripts for every one in Norse, but almost all of the Latin manuscripts

were burnt or otherwise wilfully destroyed at the onset of the Lutheran period.

Lars Lönnroth,⁹ on the other hand, has argued against the notion that literacy was widespread among the laity during this period, maintaining that the literate Icelanders were those who had been educated at church schools, and that all of the manuscripts, even those done for private families, were produced at monastic scriptoria. It is no doubt true that, given the expense of parchment and the skill required to utilize fully the space provided, most, if not all, of the manuscripts are the work of a small number of professional scribes. Most of these scribes, though not necessarily all, would have been associated with church institutions. Nonetheless it is clear that knowledge of writing in Iceland at this time was not restricted to professional scribes. The runic alphabet had been in use in Scandinavia for at least a thousand years, and there is considerable evidence that many of the Icelanders of the time were acquainted with this writing system. Some must have known both the runic and the Latin alphabet.

A recent study by Ian Dale¹⁰ has introduced the term 'digraphia' to describe the not uncommon situation in which a single language can be written in two different scripts. Other examples of 'digraphia' are Hieroglyphic and Cuneiform Hittite, or Arabic written in Hebrew characters by the Jews of medieval Spain. The term 'digraphia' is modelled on the term 'diglossia', introduced by Charles Ferguson¹¹ to describe the use of a higher and lower variety of the same language, such as by a speaker of German in Switzerland who may make use of Standard German or Schwyztütsch, depending on the situation. Many linguists would now consider Ferguson's term 'diglossia' inadequate for describing the multiplicity of dialects or styles which may be adopted by any speaker of any language.

However, this same multiplicity of styles is also a characteristic of writing systems, not only with respect to the variety of the system used — that is, print, script, capitals, italics, and so on — but also with regard to the materials employed. In most, if not all, literate societies there is a correlation between the text and the style of writing and the materials used. Bronze plaques and engraved stones do not generally compete with neon signs and scribbled notes. A proper wedding invitation must be printed, preferably engraved, in black on white card, following a traditional formula, and using one of a small set of type fonts. The bride, on the other hand, must send out her thank-you notes on plain paper, using a fountain pen rather than a ballpoint, and avoiding mechanical formulae. The importance, public nature, or record value of a text commonly determines the expense and permanence of the materials used as well as the style of lettering.

Unfortunately, the inconsiderate peoples of earlier times did not always have a proper concern for permanence, or they simply were not aware that their writing materials did not have a very long shelf-life. Little has changed. Upon entering a present-day bookstore filled with new and expensive paperback and hard-cover books, one might assume that, barring flood, fire or nuclear attack, some of these records of our contemporary civilization might inform scholars or literati of later centuries. However, given the sulphur content of the paper on which most of these books are printed, few will have any physical existence fifty years from now.

Among the fragile materials used by the ancients were papyrus, clay,

wax, wooden tablets, and the leaves and bark of trees. Despite all odds some of these flimsy substances have accidentally survived the centuries and have been uncovered by the careful techniques of modern archaeology. It is certain that papyrus was extensively used as a writing material in early Greece, probably from the seventh century B.C. onwards.¹² Yet, due to the dampness of the climate, only one charred, and therefore preserved, fragment has been found in Greece itself.¹³ The only other surviving papyri north of the Mediterranean are at Herculaneum where, thanks to a beneficent eruption of nearby Mount Vesuvius in A.D. 79, a number of Epicurean and other texts have been preserved.¹⁴

Hittite texts are extant on such materials as lead seals, clay tablets and blocks of basalt. We know, through many references in the texts to "scribes of wood," that wooden tablets were also used extensively.¹⁵ Yet not a one has been found to date.

The inscriptions in Linear A and Linear B, discovered in this century at Knossos on Crete, and at Mycenae and Pylos on the mainland of Greece, were not intended as permanent records, and in the normal course of events would not have survived.¹⁶ The fragile clay tablets which bear these inscriptions are preserved only because the buildings which housed them were destroyed, intentionally or not, by fire, thus baking the tablets to a sufficient degree of hardness to make possible their survival. The fact that the Linear B inscriptions are largely concerned with mercantile records should not lead us to believe that we are here dealing with a case of "restricted literacy," the product of a specially trained and highly unionized class of accountants. Tablets containing communications of a private nature would probably not have been placed in large fortified public buildings, and would not therefore have had the good fortune to be put to the torch by invading barbarian hordes.

For centuries the Frisians have been saddled with the reproach "*Frisia non cantat*," since their earliest manuscripts are concerned only with the law, and not with lyrics. Here again we are probably not dealing with restricted literacy, as some have suggested, but with the restricted survival of those texts which the Frisians considered deserving of permanent materials.

Another set of texts which had no business surviving was discovered at excavations in Novgorod in 1970.¹⁷ The language is Slavic of the eleventh and later centuries, written in a previously unknown Roman script. The writing material is birchbark, which is usually only slightly more permanent than birthday cake, yet it is probably the material originally denoted by the Latin *liber*.

The excavations at the Hanseatic Dock in Bergen, carried out in the early 1960s, have yielded hundreds of runic inscriptions of a decidedly popular character, dating from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.¹⁸ These inscriptions, ranging from invocations to obscenities and from libels to personal and business letters, are obviously the work of the merchants and citizenry of Bergen, apparently a fairly literate lot. Most of these inscriptions are on wooden sticks, much like paint-stirrers, called '*rúnakeflar*' in Norse. Given their fragility and obvious suitability for kindling, their survival into the twentieth century is clearly an accident. Aside from the Bergen inscriptions, other rune-sticks, some from as early as the ninth century, have been found in the other old trading towns of Scandinavia and the Bal-

tic.¹⁹ It is likely that current and future excavations will provide us with more of these rune-sticks, but the vast majority, being biologically degradable, have by now rejoined the greater eco-system.

The runic alphabet itself is of uncertain age and provenance.²⁰ The system was already in use in Scandinavia by the second or possibly first century A.D. The earliest surviving inscription is on a spearhead found in a grave in Oppland, Norway. The grave has been dated by archaeological criteria to the second half of the second century A.D.²¹ In its earliest form the runic alphabet had twenty-four angular characters well suited, and probably originally intended, for carving in wood. The word 'rune' itself comes ultimately from a common Germanic word, perhaps borrowed from Celtic, meaning 'mystery'. There is some evidence, albeit of a later date, that the names of the runes were formed according to the acrophonic principle, that is, the t-rune was named after **tiwas*, the god called Týr in Norse. It is often maintained that the runes were used for magical purposes, but the evidence, some of it medieval, is not compelling. Language itself was used for magical purposes, but it is not clear that the runes were originally used to increase the effect. In any event, early in the third century A.D., following the Roman custom, runes were placed on weapons and other objects to provide evidence of ownership.²² From this time onward runes entered the public domain.

The source of the runic system is generally considered to be the Greek alphabet, whether directly or indirectly. The most common explanation is that a Germanic tribe, in contact with people using a North Italic alphabet, copied and adapted this alphabet sometime during the first century A.D., or perhaps somewhat earlier. The North Italic alphabets are derived from the Etruscan which, in turn, is derived from the Greek. Another common theory, based partly on the fact that some of the earliest inscriptions are found in Norway, Denmark and Sweden, suggests that a Scandinavian familiar with the Mediterranean world devised this system single-handedly, using a variety of the Latin alphabet as his model. Again the date would be somewhere around the first century A.D. Another quite old theory, recently revived by Aage Kabell,²³ maintains that it is likelier, on the basis of internal evidence, that the runic alphabet was borrowed directly from the Greek alphabet sometime during the sixth century B.C. Finally, a theory proposed by Louis Heller²⁴ suggests, also on internal evidence, that the runes may go back to the pre-Germanic period, that is, well into the second millennium B.C. I have listed these theories in what seems to me to be the order of probability. If we then adopt the dates suggested by the first two theories, the North Italic and the Latin, the use of runes would have begun in Scandinavia in the second or, more likely, first century A.D. Given the archaeological evidence, the second century A.D. is the latest possible date.

It is likely that the runes carved on stones, with or without accompanying decorations, were the work of a small, specialized group. Rock carving for religious and other purposes is an old practice in Scandinavia, and certainly pre-dates the use of runes.²⁵ It is nonetheless clear that the early runic stones were modelled on inscriptions written on wooden sticks, and equally clear that the runes themselves were originally designed for carving in wood. Runic inscriptions may also have been used for charms, curses, or other magical purposes. Efficacious composition would thus require the par-

ticipation of someone with specialized or arcane knowledge. One should not, however, conclude from this that few people could read the inscriptions, or that few of those who could read runes were able to write them themselves on more tractable materials. Few people throughout history have been able to read Chinese characters or Sanskrit written in devanagari; but the runic alphabet, just as the early Greek alphabet, is a popular script, concise and efficient, and, in comparison with syllabic or ideographic systems, very easy to learn. Furthermore, such statistics as exist for literacy in alphabetic systems indicate that the ability to read almost always involves the ability to write, however badly.

Some consideration must also be given to the nature of early Scandinavian society. It is important to remember that contacts between Scandinavia and the outside world did not begin with the raid on Lindisfarne in 793. There were trade connections with Mycenaean Greece in the second millennium B.C. Throughout the Roman period and thereafter there were extensive trade relations between Scandinavia and the Continent. In addition to amber, furs and slaves, exports from Scandinavia included finished consumer goods. There is also considerable, and constantly increasing, archaeological evidence that Scandinavia achieved technological parity with the Continent at a very early date in such areas as metal-working, textiles, ship-building, fortifications and weaponry.²⁶ In addition, common impediments to the spread of literacy seem to have been lacking. Extreme social distinctions, such as those present in feudalism, did not exist in early Scandinavian society. There is little evidence of a separate learned or priestly class, one which might restrict access to literacy. Finally, there is considerable evidence that women had much higher status in Scandinavia than in the rest of western Europe.

It has been established that a simple alphabetic system was in use in Scandinavia by the second century A.D. The primary writing materials were pieces of wood and a knife. Both were universally available at this time, and the wood was free. Wooden sticks may not be suitable for very long texts, but they are reasonably permanent in a damp climate, much more so than the birchbark, clay tablets and papyrus referred to above. Nevertheless, it is unreasonable to expect that they will have survived for a thousand years or more. Therefore, it may never be possible to provide physical evidence for widespread literacy in early Scandinavia. However, as the archaeological evidence continues to come in, it seems more and more likely that the literacy of which Icelanders are so justly proud is not a recent response of the human spirit to excessively dreary winters, but the vestige of an ancient tradition of literacy which Iceland held in common with the rest of early Scandinavian society.

Notes

¹ Literacy here refers to the use of an alphabetic system for a variety of purposes, i.e., the characters represent sounds, not symbols. For other definitions of literacy and general discussion, see J. Goody and I. Watt, "The Consequences of Literacy," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 5 (1962-63): 304-26, 332-45.

- ² See the articles on "Population" in *Kulturhistorisk Leksikon for nordisk middelalder* (Copenhagen 1956-78), Vol. XIII, p. 390ff. by Jón Steffensen.
- ³ For current statistics, see Richard Tomasson, *Iceland: The First New Society* (Minneapolis, 1980).
- ⁴ For a discussion of European literacy, see C.M. Cipolla, *Literacy and Development in the West* (Harmondsworth, 1969).
- ⁵ "Lestrarkunnátta Íslendinga í fornöld," *Skrínir* 118 (1944): 173-97.
- ⁶ *Tid och kalvskinn, Scripta Islandica* 5 (Uppsala, 1954).
- ⁷ See H. Hermannsson, *Icelandic Manuscripts, Islandica* XIX (Ithaca, 1929).
- ⁸ See E. Olmer, *Boksamlingar på Island, Göteborgs Högskolas årsskrift*, 1902.
- ⁹ *Tesen om de två Kulturerna, Scripta Islandica* 15 (Uppsala, 1965).
- ¹⁰ "Digraphia," *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 26 (1980): 5-13.
- ¹¹ "Diglossia," *Word* 15 (1959): 325-40.
- ¹² See L.H. Jeffery, *The Local Scripts of Archaic Greece* (Oxford, 1961), p. 56f.
- ¹³ See S.G. Kapsomenos, "Der Papyrus von Dervéni, ein Kommentar zur orphischen Theogonie," *Gnomon* 35 (1963): 222-3.
- ¹⁴ For the texts, see *Herculaneum volumnum quae supersunt*, I, 1793-1855; II, 1862-76; III, 1914, ed. D. Bassi (Naples, 1914). For a general survey, see Joseph Jay Deiss, *Herculaneum* (New York, 1966), pp. 47-57.
- ¹⁵ See O.R. Gurney, *The Hittites* (Harmondsworth, 1952), p. 20.
- ¹⁶ See Michael Ventris and John Chadwick, *Documents in Mycenaean Greek* (Cambridge, 1959), esp. p. xxix.
- ¹⁷ See Klaus-Detlev Grothausen, "Die altrussische Birkenrindenschrifttum," pp. 212-240, in *Frühe Schriftzeugnisse der Menschheit* (Göttingen, 1969).
- ¹⁸ See Aslak Liestøl, "Runner fra Bryggen," *Viking* 27 (1964): 5-53.
- ¹⁹ See Aslak Liestøl, "Runic Voices from Towns of Ancient Norway," *Scandinavica* 13 (1974): 19-33; "The Literate Viking," in *Proceedings of the Sixth Viking Congress*, ed. Peter Foote and Dag Strömbäck, (Uppsala, 1971), pp. 69-78.
- ²⁰ For a general discussion, see Lucien Musset, *Introduction à la Runologie* (Paris, 1965), esp. p. 19ff.
- ²¹ See Wolfgang Krause and Herbert Jankuhn, *Die Runeninschriften im älteren Futhark* (Göttingen, 1966), pp. 75-7.
- ²² See Joachim Werner, *Das Aufkommen von Bild und Schrift in Nordeuropa, Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse, Jahrgang 1966, Heft 4*, p. 29ff.
- ²³ "Periculum Runicum," *Norsk Tidsskrift for Sprogvidenskap* 21 (1967): 94-126.
- ²⁴ "Runic Writing: Germanic or Indo-European," *Papers in Language and Linguistics* 8 (1972): 89-92.
- ²⁵ For early rock carvings, see Peter Gelling and Hilda Ellis Davidson, *The Chariot of the Sun* (London, 1969).
- ²⁶ See, for example, the papers in *Iron and Man in Prehistoric Sweden*, ed. Helen Clarke, (Stockholm, 1979).

Ghosts and Pagans in the Family Sagas

Bernadine McCreesh

At first glance, the coming of Christianity to Iceland in A.D. 1000 seems to be presented in the Family Sagas as a matter of little significance. The moral attitude of the characters does not change after the Conversion; the sagas themselves are not obviously influenced by religious writings; no overt attention is paid to the coming of Christianity; paganism apparently is not condemned.

However, if some of the motifs in the Family Sagas are examined in greater detail, subtle differences between Christian and pagan times appear. As Paul Schach has pointed out:

[There were] three ways in which saga writers stressed the superiority of Christians over pagans: through the qualified praise of pagan heroes, through the attribution of superiority of heroes to the fact that they were Christian rather than pagan, or through the declaration that the individual, although pagan, was the equal in morality and conduct of the very best Christians.¹

Subtle differences are also observable in the realm of the supernatural. Ghosts in the Family Sagas are of two kinds — pagan and Christian. The pagan ghosts, whom I shall refer to as *draugar*, appear in those parts of sagas in which the action takes place before the official acceptance of Christianity by the Alþing of A.D. 1000. The *draugar* are animated corpses, often larger and uglier in death than they were in life. They are so substantial that men can engage in combat with them, and so insubstantial that they can vanish into the earth. The way in which they are normally prevented from walking about is by having their bodies reduced to ashes; once the corpse is destroyed, so is the ghost. Christian ghosts, on the other hand, are simply the bodies of people who have not yet received proper burial; once laid in consecrated ground with hymns sung over them, they stay put. This is consistent with Christian tradition, which maintained that it was the souls of the damned who walked the earth. Non-believers would be damned, and it was they who gave Christian Icelanders trouble after their interment.

Both Nora Chadwick and Hilda Ellis Davidson relate the *draugar* to the howe-dwellers of folklore:²

In these tales the corpse within the grave is always represented with vampire-like propensities, superhuman strength and a fierce desire to destroy any living creature which ventures to enter the mound. In the *Íslendinga Sögur* this idea is further developed, and in the case of particularly strong and troublesome personalities the body will no longer consent to confine its energies inside the grave-mound, but takes the of-

fensive and leaves it to cause trouble farther afield. This has resulted in a number of magnificent tales of haunting by a series of *draugar* who are as individual after death as they have been in life. It is evident here that we are dealing with no stereotyped literary motif, but that what in itself is a somewhat crude and unattractive conception of the dead has fired the imagination of the saga-tellers, and been worked upon by their superb narrative power and skill in depicting character to create a group of unforgettable 'ghosts'.³

Not all pagans become *draugar* after death, but those that do seem to do so for one of two reasons. The first is that they had been murderously inclined — or at least an unneighbourly nuisance — while they were alive. But difficult though these men had been to deal with alive, they are twice as difficult to deal with dead. As the author of *Harðar Saga ok Holmverja* so neatly puts it:

*Sóti var mikit tröll í lifinu, en hálfu meira, síðan hann var dauður.*⁴

Another man of the same ilk is Hrappr in the *Laxdæla Saga*:

En svá illr sem hann var viðreignar, þá er hann lifði, þá jók nú miklu við, er hann var dauður, því at hann gekk mjök aptr. Svá segja menn, at hann deyddi flest hjón sín í aptrgöngunni. (V, 39)⁵

Þórófr bægifótr, the father of Arnkell góði in the *Eyrbyggja Saga*, was of a similar disposition: in his youth he had won his farm by overcoming an old man in a *hólmgang* and in his old age he became really cantankerous, eventually dying in his high-seat the night after a quarrel with his son (IV, 92). Klaufi in the *Svarfdæla Saga* is another troublesome revenant; he had killed four men by the time he was eighteen, and his corpse also refused to lie quiet in its burial mound.⁶ These revenants all behave in a similar fashion: they destroy animals, kill or terrify the housewife and the servants, and, when their corpses are finally dug up again, the bodies are found to be undecomposed (*ófúinn*). It is only after the body has been reduced to ashes that the haunting finally stops. These ghosts seemed to walk because they were such unpleasant and overbearing characters in life that in death they could not bear to leave their relatives and neighbours in peace.

The other reason why some ghosts walk is that they have connections with the world of magic. For example, Gyða, a witch in the *Flóamanna Saga*, cannot be kept in her coffin after death and has to be burned:

*Fara nú síðan, ok sem þeir hafa farit um hrið, tekr at braka mjök í kistunni, ok því næst bresta af hankarnir, ok kemst Gyða ór kistunni. Þá fara þeir til báðir ok tóku hana, ok þurfti þó alls við, ok váru þeir báðir sterkir menn. Éat taka þeir til bragða, at þeir flytja hana til báls, er Auðunn hafði búið.*⁷

Þormóðr, a shape-shifter in *Hávarðar Saga Ísfríðings*, also refuses to lie quiet after death. Like Þórófr bægifótr, Hrappr and Klaufi, he is surly and anti-social:

Þormóðr var lítt við alþýðu skap manna; hann var þá hniginn nokkut á inn efrà aldr. (VI, 292-93)

His corpse is sunk in the depths, not burned, perhaps because he is a shape-shifter, and his ghost returns to trouble sailors:

Bjó þá um sem honum líkaði ok lagðisk út á sjóinn með hann langt frá landi ok sökðði niðr í djúp. Þykkir þar jafnan óhreint síðan, ef menn sigla í nándir. (VI, 301)

Hallbjörn of the malicious and vengeful Kotkell clan of witches in the *Laxdæla Saga* also haunts the area where he was killed:

Hallbjörn sliksisteinsauga rak upp ór brimi litlu síðar en honum var drekkt. Þar heitir Knarrarnes, sem hann var kasaðr, ok gekk hann aptr mjök. (V, 109)

On the other hand, Svánnr in *Njáls Saga*, a magician *óðall ok viðreignar* and apparently an excellent candidate for ghosthood, does not walk after death. However, his body was reported to have vanished into the mountain of Kaldbakshorn, and the author stresses that his cadaver was never found:

Þat vissu allir, at hann fannsk hvárki lífs né dauðr. (XII, 46)

Once again, a ghost cannot exist without its body.

Shape-shifters, witches and wizards belong to the pagan world of magic. There are certain indications in the Family Sagas that *draugar*, too, were felt to have pagan connotations. Ghosts are often described in terms of heathen otherworld creatures: Sóti was a *tröll*; Þórólfr bægifótr was *inn trollsligsti at sjá*. In *Flóamanna Saga*, the ghost is actually said to be Þórr. In this saga, hauntings of a type similar to those in the other sagas are carried out not by a ghost but by Þórr, who is angry that Þorgils has adopted Christianity. The god appears to Þorgils in dreams, threatening to kill his animals, and then actually does kill two of them:

Aðra nátt eftir dó uxi gamall fyrir Þorgilsi. Þá sat hann sjálf hjá nautum um náttina eftir. En um morgininn, er hann kom heim, var hann víða blár. Hafa menn þat fyrir satt, at þeir Þórr muni þá fundizt hafa. Eftir þat tók af fallit.⁸

This scene seems to be partly symbolic, putting into concrete form the fears and doubts Þorgils had about how the old gods would treat him after he renounced his religion, with the buffeting he receives from Þórr standing for his mental struggle. However, the fact that one saga-author can actually equate a ghost-figure with one of the ancient gods suggests that in people's minds there was felt to be some connection between *draugar* and paganism.⁹

This premise is further supported by the fact that, in sagas and parts of sagas set in post-Conversion times, the *draugr* gives way to more innocuous but less colourful revenants. These new ghosts are of two types: the vision, seen by only one or two people, and the "undead" — or, more correctly — "unburied" dead, a creature somewhat similar to the *draugr*, larger than life, visible to many, but of a kindly disposition. The Christian *draugr*-type is different in several ways from its pagan counterpart: it walks before burial, not after; is not particularly horrifying to look at; and rises mainly for charitable motives. For instance, Þórgunna in the *Eyrbyggja Saga* wishes to provide food and warmth for those carrying her corpse to its final resting-place after

an unfriendly farmer has refused them hospitality (IV, 144). Þorsteinn Eiríksson in *Eiríks Saga Rauða* also returns from the dead for charitable reasons: he wants, firstly, to tell his widow what her future will be; secondly, to urge her to give her money to the Church or to the poor; thirdly, to tell her what should be done to stop the hauntings. (IV, 215-16).

The only Christian ghosts that walk are those that have not yet been buried according to the laws of the Church. In *Eiríks Saga Rauða*, this feature is given most prominence: not only are we told in great detail what has been done with the corpses until then, but we are also told how they should have been treated. It is the fact that bodies have not been given proper Christian burial that makes them rise from their graves:

Er þat engi háttr, sem hér hefir verit á Grænlandi, síðan kristni kom hér, at setja menn niðr í óvígða mold við litla yfirsngva. (IV, 216)

This is also the reason why the corpses in the *Eyrbyggja Saga* do not stay put: although there was a church at Fróðá where they died, there was no priest in it, and so they could not be buried with the proper rites. After death they behaved in similar fashion to pagan *draugar*. The shepherd, for instance, bars the entrance to the house:

Vildi Þórir inn ganga, en saudamaðr vildi þat víst eigi; þá vildi Þórir undan leita, en saudamaðr sótti eptir ok fekk tekit hann ok kastaði honum heim at durunum; honum varð illt við þetta, ok komsk þó til rúms síns ok var víða orðinn kolblár. Af þessu tók hann sótt ok andaðisk. (IV, 146)

It was only after a priest had been sent to Fróðá that the hauntings stopped:

Bar prestur þá vígt vatn ok helga dóma um öll hús. Eptir um daginn syngr prestur tíðir allar ok messu hátíðliga, ok eptir þat tókusk af allar aptrgöngur at Fróðá ok reimleikar. (IV, 152)

In the *Eyrbyggja Saga*, too, a contrast is made between pagans and Christians who die in similar circumstances. When Þorsteinn Þorskabitr is lost at sea, his shepherd sees the mountain of Helgafell open up and Þorsteinn and his companions welcomed inside to warm fires and a joyful feast; the pagan dead are presumably happy with their lot, for they do not return to trouble the living. On the other hand, when the bodies of Þóróddr and his companions are lost at sea, the Christian ghosts do not seem to be at rest, for they return to the feasts and fires of their former dwelling-place. These ghosts are so substantial that the householders are banished from their own fireside. At this point the story goes from the sublime to the ridiculous as those who have been buried at the farm join those who have been drowned and both sets of ghosts sit around together either dripping with water or shaking the earth from their clothes. It is difficult to believe that the author of the *Eyrbyggja Saga* took the idea of ghosts and hauntings altogether seriously.

Despite this contrast, the author of the *Eyrbyggja Saga* does try to create a link between pagan and Christian ghosts. For example, Þórgunna's body, unlike Þórólfr bægifótr's, is not burned on a pyre, but her bedclothes, which

seem in some mysterious way to be linked to the deaths and hauntings at Fróðá, are destroyed by fire. In the *Laxadæla Saga*, too, an attempt is made to establish some sort of continuity between pagan and Christian ghosts. As Guðrún is passing through the lych-gate on her way to church, she sees something that the author calls a *draugr*:

Þá sá hon draug standa fyrir sér. Hann laut yfir hana ok mælti: "Mikil tíðendi, Guðrún," sagði hann. Guðrún svarar: "Þegi þú yfir þeim þá, armi." (V, 222)

This ghost appears on the day Guðrún's husband had been drowned, just before she sees such a realistic vision of him and his comrades that she expects to find them in the house on her return from church. The exact significance of the creature in the lych-gate is not clear, but the *draugar* of the pagan world seem to be giving way to the visions of Christian times.

An example of the vision occurs in the *Fóstbræðra Saga*, when Þorgeirr Hávarsson and the men who die with him appear to two brothers who had formerly been comrades-in-arms of theirs:

Þá geta þeir at líta, hvar menn gengu utan eptir vellinum. Þeir þóttusk kenna mennina ok sýndisk þar vera Þorgeirr Hávarsson ok þar níu menn, er þar fellu á skipinu með Þorgeiri; váru allir alblöðgir ok gengu inn eptir vellinum ok ór garðinum, ok er þeir kómu at á þeiri, er fellr fyrir innan bæinn, þá hurfu þeir. (VI, 217-18)

In *Eiríks Saga Rauða*, Sigríðr, who is about to die, but not Guðríðr, who is standing next to her, has a similar vision of those who have died or will die (IV, 215).

Gunnar, in his burial mound in *Njáls Saga*, seems to represent yet another transitional stage between the *draugr* and the vision. The body does not leave the howe but can be heard talking inside it. When Skarheðinn and Hogni investigate, they seem to be able to see into the mound:

Tunglskin var hjart, en stundum dró fyrir. Þeim sýndisk haugrinn opinn, ok hafði Gunnarr snúizk í hauginum ok sá í móti tunglinu; þeir þóttusk fjögur ljós sjá brenna í hauginum, ok þar hvergi skugga á. Þeir sá, at Gunnarr var kátligr ok með gleðimóti miklu. (XII, 193)

Was it a trick of light? Was it a vision? Or did the mound open?

With the exception of the shepherd in the *Eyrbyggja Saga*, the only murderous pagan-type *draugar* to be found in Christian parts of sagas are the unconverted. In the *Flóamanna Saga*, for instance, Jósteinn and his men continue with their pagan practices and become ghosts after death:

Síðan eru þeir kasaðir í mölinni. . . . Váru nú allmiklar aftrögungur ok sóttu mest Þorgils. . . í þenna hluta skálans gengu þau mest aftr, er þau höfðu átt. Þorgils lét brenna þau öll á báli, ok varð þaðan af ekki mein at aftrögungum.¹⁰

Glámr, one of the most memorable ghosts in the Family Sagas, is another obdurate heathen who turns into a *draugr*. Like Hrappr and Þórólfr bægifótr, he is unsociable:

. . . mikill ok sterkr ok ekki mjök við alþýðuskap. (VII, 109)

Like Þorhallr veiðimaðr and Jósteinn, he is still a pagan:

Kirkja var á Þórhallsstöðum; ekki vildi Glámr til hennar koma; hann var ósöngvinn ok trúlauss. (VII, 110-11)

Once he has been killed by the monster in the fells, all attempts to bring Glámr to church or the priest to him fail: not even oxen can drag his body along once the ground stops sloping downwards, and his corpse cannot be found when a priest is brought to it, although it can be found straight away when there is no priest in the party. Like a typical *draugr*, Glámr refuses to lie quiet. The following Christmas Eve the new shepherd is found dead in Glámr's cairn with his neck broken and every bone in his body crushed. However, this time people have no trouble giving the shepherd proper Christian burial:

Síðan færðu þeir hann till kirkju, ok varð engum manni mein at Þorgauti síðan. (VII, 114-15)

The contrast between the behaviour of Þorgautr after his death and that of Glámr is obvious. Good Christians, properly buried, lie quiet, whereas heathen spirits can still roam the earth and harm the living. The people of Iceland (or the author of *Grettis Saga*) actually look on Glámr as something un-Christian, for they call him an *óhreina anda* (VII, 122). This term had been used in the sagas of Óláfr Tryggvason to describe such creatures as the trolls of Naumudalr, fiendish and pagan spirits that Óláfr had had to banish from Norway.¹¹ The implication is that Glámr is not only a ghost but also a vestige of heathendom.

A variation of the theme of the troublesome pagan and the *draugr* occurs in *Njáls Saga*. Valgarðr inn grái is a typical pagan, *grályndr ok óvinsæll* (XII, 70). He opposes Christianity when it first comes to Iceland (261), remains a heathen after everybody else has been converted (274), and destroys all the religious objects that his son has. In a saga set in pre-Christian times one would expect a man like Valgarðr to walk after his death. Valgarðr does not, however, walk in the literal sense of the word. What he does is plant in his son's mind the seeds of a plot which eventually leads to the death of Njáll and his sons. Would Morðr have hatched such a scheme without his father's suggestion? Valgarðr killed Njáll and his family as effectively as he would have done had he risen from the grave and physically attacked each one of them. What the author of *Njála* seems to have done is to have rationalized the motif of the murderous *draugr*, to have shown how a man, although dead, can bring about the demise of others without leaving his grave.

In *Eiríks Saga Rauða*, Garðarr the overseer — the man who, according to Þorsteinn Eiríksson, was responsible for the hauntings on Greenland — seems also to have been a pagan, for his body, unlike those of the others who died on Greenland, is not to be buried but burned on a pyre in the traditional way of disposing of a disruptive pagan *draugr*:

Vil ek mik láta flytja til kirkju ok aðra þá menn, sem hér hafa andazk, en Garðar vil ek brenna láta á báli sem skjótast, því at hann veldr öllum aprtröngum þeim, sem hér hafa verit í vetr. (IV, 216)

Since Þorsteinn has already emphasized that Christian corpses should be placed in consecrated ground with hymns sung over them, he cannot consider Garðarr a Christian if his body is to be treated this way.

Þórhallr veiðimaðr, in the same saga, seems to be a Christian in name only, for in times of adversity he calls on Þórr for food (IV, 224). What is particularly interesting about him is that he is described in similar terms to the man who becomes a *draugr*:

Hann var mikill maðr ok sterkr ok svartr ok þursligr, hiljóðlyndr ok illorðr, þat er hann mælti, ok eggjaði jafnan Eirík ins verra. Hann var illa kristinn. (IV, 222)

There is no mention, however, of his rising from the dead; on the contrary, he comes to an ignominious end, dying as a slave in Ireland (IV, 226). Similar terms are also used to describe Þróðir, the apostate deacon in *Njála* (XII, 446), and even Garðarr is called *ekki vinsæll*. Even if the obdurate heathen or apostate does not walk after death, he is still credited in life with some of the typical features of the pagan ghost.

What we have here is an example of a literary motif being altered to fit different social conditions. As the religion of Iceland changed, so too did the saga-authors' representation of the supernatural world. Once the country had been converted to Christianity, anti-social, overbearing men no longer walked after death, wreaking havoc on men and beasts. Those who did walk were either Christians who had not yet been properly buried or pagans who refused to accept the new religion. As time went on, ghosts were replaced by visions, and the characteristics of the men who would once have become *draugar* were transferred to the obdurate heathen or the apostate. In this way the saga-authors are subtly pointing to a moral: those who have heard the Word of God and rejected it are worse than the worst of pagans.

Notes

¹ "Anti-pagan Sentiment in the Sagas of Icelanders," *Griplá*, ed. Jónas Kristjánsson (Reykjavík: Stofnun Árna Magnússonar, 1975), p. 131.

² N.K. Chadwick, "Norse Ghosts," *Folklore* 57 (1946): 50-65; 106-127. Hilda R. Ellis, *The Road to Hel* (New York: Greenwood, 1968), pp. 87-98; 162-64.

³ *Op. cit.*, pp. 92-93.

⁴ *Íslendingasögur*, ed. Guðni Jónsson, 13 Vols. (Reykjavík: Íslendingasagnaútgáfan, 1953), 12: 233.

⁵ Unless otherwise mentioned, all Icelandic quotations will be taken from the *Íslensk Fornrit* editions (Reykjavík: hið íslenska fornritafélag, 1933-). References are to volume (Roman numerals) and page (Arabic numbers).

⁶ *Íslendingasögur*, 8: 214.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 12: 21.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 12: 36.

⁹ In the old laws of Norway *haugar*, like heathen sacrifices and shrines, are taboo. In both the Older Gulaping Law and in King Sverrir's Christian Law we read: "*Blot er oss kviðiat at vér scolom eigi blota heidit guð, ne hauga, ne horga*" — *Norges Gamle Love indtil 1387*, ed. R. Keyser and P.A. Munch (Christiania: Chr. Grøndahl, 1846), I: 18 and 430.

¹⁰ *Íslendingasögur*, 12: 40-41.

¹¹ *Óláfs Saga Tryggvasonar en Mesta*, ed. Ólafur Halldórsson, 2 vols. (Copenhagen: Einar Munksgaard, 1958), II: 142.

The Irish Bóand-Nechtan Myth in the Light of Scandinavian Evidence

William Sayers

Volume Three of George Dumézil's work, *Mythe et épopée*, opens with a study entitled "La saison des rivières," in which he establishes correspondences between mythological figures in the early Vedic/Avestan, Irish and Roman traditions.¹ This article will consider whether a fourth — Scandinavian — panel can be added to this triptych. The underlying mythogem has three principal elements: a source of power residing in a body of water and attended by a guardian spirit, the unauthorized approach to the water by an outsider, and the punishment of the intruder by the upsurging water which becomes part of the world-river.

In the *Rig Veda* (10.30), we meet the figure Apām Nápāt; in the Iranian *Avesta* (*Yāst* 19), he is Apām Napāt. The name is conventionally interpreted as 'descendant of the waters'. Apām Napāt, who paradoxically has affinities with the fire-god Agni, hides the K'arənah, a numinous power translated by Dumézil as "*la gloire lumineuse*," in a lake from which the evil Frañrasyan tries to retrieve it. As a non-Aryan Turanian, he is unqualified to perform this act, and the water overflows as the power repeatedly retreats before him. Finally it disappears into the earth, carrying with it the K'arənah, which thus passes into rivers that issue from and return to the primordial sea. Dumézil finds the Irish equivalent of this episode in the *dindschenchas* story of Bóand, from whom the river Boyne takes its name.² The Irish counterpart of Apām Napāt is Nechtan, the guardian of a well whose waters burst the eyes of those not empowered to approach it or those who come bearing a lie. Nechtan's wife, Bóand, is seduced by the Dagda, the Good God, and, after a pregnancy during which the sun stands still, gives birth to a son. To efface the signs of that birth, Bóand defiantly circles the well three times to the left. The water rises up to mutilate her, and then pursues her to the sea. The river Boyne is the result: its waters continue under the sea and under land to form all the great rivers of the world, and then return to their source in the well. Dumézil seeks to confirm this correspondence of Indo-Iranian and Irish myth with a third example. Extending the onomastic link of Apām Napāt and Nechtan to include the Roman god Neptūnus,³ he finds equivalent fragments of myth recast as part of the legendary history of the war between the Romans and the Etruscans. Because of temporary deficiencies in Roman ritual practice, the mountain-enclosed Alban Lake overflows and rushes to the sea.

Patrick Ford has considered an aspect of the Indo-Iranian and Irish correspondence in "The Well of Nechtan and 'La Gloire Lumineuse'."⁴ Ford convincingly demonstrates that the "potent essence, preserved in a body of water, accessible only to a chosen few and endowing those elect with extraordinary powers" is, in the Irish tradition, the "notion of inspired poetry

and its associated wisdom" (67), *imbis forosnai*, best known from the story of Finn and his adventure with the well, the hazelnuts and the salmon of knowledge.⁵ The well is also called Connla's Well and the Well of Segais. The eastern counterpart of this strand of the mythic skein is less developed, although the Indian version of the episode, as preserved in the words of the ritual, makes it clear that the K'arənah bestows eloquence on its servants (Dumézil, 29, n.3). In the Roman historical accounts, the power to achieve victory over the Etruscans can be viewed as the equivalent.

In considering the Germanic evidence for possible correspondences to Dumézil's reconstructed myth, particular attention will be devoted to his contention that these three names — Apām Nápāt, Nechtan and Neptūnus — can jointly be traced to an Indo-European kinship term **nep(o)t-* 'nephew, descendant'. Dumézil establishes that *nápāt* as 'descendant' is frequently used in binary epithets put in apposition to Indo-Iranian theonyms. Apām Nápāt itself is unique in being the complete name, unreferred to any other. The reverse difficulty exists with the Irish name, for of whom or of what is Nechtan the descendant? Articles by Jord Pinault and Christian Guyonvarc'h developed Dumézil's initially somewhat hesitant etymological explanation.⁶ With some remaining reserve, Dumézil took up their proposed amendment of his initial **Neptano* to **Nept-ono-s*.⁷ The root is employed in the various Celtic languages under the following guises: O.Ir. *niae*, *nia* 'nephew', *necht* 'niece'; Ml.W. *nei*; Mod.W. *nai* 'nephew', *nith* 'niece'. The suffix *-onos* is found in these early names: Bratronos, Maponos, Matrona, the latter two appearing as Mabon and Modron in the Welsh *Mabinogion*. Since these are the Brother, Son and Mother *par excellence*, so Nechtan would be the Nephew. But Dumézil does not speculate as to whose nephew Nechtan might be. Were the hypothesis accepted, the nephew of the Dagda might be a good guess, but more later of the Dagda and the *Mabinogion*. Here it will suffice to recall the figure of Teyrnion, the foster-father of Gwri/Pryderi in *Pwyll*, whose name is traced to **Tigernonos*, 'the great lord'. This shows that the suffix was not restricted to kinship terms.⁸ Among recent commentators, Wolfgang Meid has also linked Nechtan with Neptūnus, but he traces the names via **neptus* to the I.E. root **nebh-* (cf. Lat. *nebula*).⁹

In Irish material other than the Bóand story, Nechtan is given a specific pedigree and is variously called Nechtan mac Labrada ('son of speech', followed in one case by the epithet *lesbhrec* 'profit of falsehood') and mac Námat ('son of mockery' or 'enmity').¹⁰ Despite these curious patronymics, there is no suggestion of an uncle/nephew relationship. Nechtan(n) was also a not uncommon personal name in early medieval Ireland and Scotland,¹¹ and was viewed at the time as derived from a different root than *necht* ('niece'). According to the explanation offered in *Cóir Anmann* (*The Fitness of Names*) and *Sanas Cormaic* (*Cormac's Glossary*), *necht* is to be viewed as the past participle of the verb *nigid* 'washes, purifies', with the derived meaning of 'pure, brilliant'.¹² At first glance, this appears to provide a more likely basis for a personal name than a kinship term whose masculine form had fallen into disuse and whose feminine form was similarly threatened.

We must recall that Bóand came to the well of Nechtan to efface the traces of her adultery. The well can be seen to have had a cleansing, puri-

fying function as a prelude to the transfer of its gift. Commentators have mentioned the three cupbearers of Nechtan — Flesc, Lam and Luam — but none has called attention to their names. In choosing 'rod, wand' from among the various meanings for the first and reading Lam as *lám*, we get the functional crescendo of 'wand', 'hand', 'steersman', ideas that are certainly more easily associated with some rite of purity or purification than with a master whose name derived from a kinship term.¹³ The three names can also be matched against the three deformations in the water's punishment of Bóand — the loss of a thigh, a hand and an eye. The resulting pairs may be considered an attenuated reflection of the three Indo-European social functions established by Dumézil.¹⁴ Irish *nigid* 'washes, purifies' is traced to the I.E. root **neig^w-/*neig-*.¹⁵ Vendryes gives the following related Celtic terms: Britannic *nithio* 'nettoyer, purifier', later 'vanner, cribler' (cf. the ability of Nechtan's well to distinguish among those approaching), and Gaulish *enneint*.¹⁶ Before examining the role of this I.E. root beyond the Celtic world, we must consider, in addition to Nechtan, another Celtic aquatic spirit unmentioned by Dumézil: *ech uisce*, the water-horse.

Down to modern times the water-horse has continued as a vital element in the popular beliefs of Celtic Britain. The earliest examples, for natural reasons of textual transmission, are Irish and are associated with fresh water. The most celebrated water-horses, although their origins are seldom recalled in the epic tales, are the Liath Macha (Grey of Macha) and Dub Sainglend (Black of Sainglend) of Cú Chulainn. In one version, the hero met them by the lochs whose names they bear and, by wrestling with them in the water, overcame them.¹⁷ Descriptions of their course emphasize not only their speed and power, but also their ardent nature. We are clearly dealing with embodiments of elemental natural forces.¹⁸ Another tradition has only Liath Macha as a true water-horse, the equivalent of the semi-divine Cú Chulainn, while its companion was a earthly horse, the equivalent of the hero's human foster-brother, Connal Cernach.¹⁹ On Cú Chulainn's death, the horses return to their respective lochs. In the hagiographical tradition, St. Féchin was served by a water-horse that was gentler than ordinary horses, but this miraculous harnessing of nature's wild force must be seen as due to the saint.²⁰ As a final example, the *Triads* include a reference to a water-horse whose monstrous offspring, resulting from a union with a priest's daughter, was one of three wonders of Glenn Dallan.²¹ The water-horse itself receives no comment, which suggests that it was an accepted popular belief.

Modern Celtic names for water-horse include the Welsh *ceffyl dwr*; the Scottish *aughiskey*, *cabyll-ushtey*, *kelpie* and *tangie* (the latter two based on terms for seaweed and thus referring to salt-water creatures); and the Manx *glastyn* (< O.Ir. *glais* 'stream').²² The traditional lore associated with water-horses differs slightly from one region to another. They are generally treacherous and violent, carrying unsuspecting riders off into lakes or the sea, or devouring cattle, but on occasion can be tamed for brief periods of domestic use. They can be driven off by correct rituals involving Christian signs, iron, or a body of water opposite in nature (salt:fresh) to that of their origin. Frequently, it was believed that the water-horse could take the form of a handsome, seductive young man.

Northward in the Orkneys and Shetlands, where Celtic culture merges with Norse, we find water-horses and demons under the names of *shoopiltie* (< O.N. *sjó* + *píltr* 'sea lad'), *noggle* (vars. *nuggle*, *nygel*) and *nuckelavee*.²³ Here, too, the water-horse's character ranges from the mischievous to the maleficent, and shape-shifting occurs. The water-horse is also found in the other Norse-settled islands: in upland Man as *nikyr*, in the Faeroes as *nikur*, and in medieval Iceland as *nykr*. The term is, in fact, basic to the Germanic vocabulary.

It is found as *nicor* in *Beowulf* and the *Blickling Homilies*, wherein it seems to be a generic term for sea-monsters.²⁴ The *nicor-hus* of *Beowulf* (1411) compares with the kenning for Iceland as *naefrland nykra borgar* 'nickers' fortress birchbark land' in *Nóregs konungatal*.²⁵ The later English term is *nicer*, also used as an equivalent of siren. It survives in a number of English toponyms: *Nikerpole*, *Nikeresaker*, *Nickurlands* and *Knucker Hole*.²⁶ *Nix*, *nixie* and *nisse*, as terms for water-elves, appear related, and possibly even to Old Nick as a hypocoristic term for the Devil. Cognate terms in other Germanic languages are: O.H.G. *nichus*, gl. 'crocodillus'; M.H.G. *niches*, *nickes*; M.Du., M.L.G. *nicker*, *necker*; Du. *nikker*; Germ. *Nix*, *Nixe*, and possibly the early Germanic name *Neccho*, *Nicklemann* and the river *Neckar*; Da. *nøk*; Mod. Icel. *nykur*; Nor. *nykk*; Sw. *näck*; and the loans, Fi. *näkki*, Est. *näkk*, *näks*. The common Germanic root behind this series of names is **nikwiz-* or **nikus-* and the Indo-European root is that already considered for *Nechtan* in the Irish context: **neig^w*- 'washes, purifies'.²⁷ Given the fact that the root has survived as a verb in none of the Germanic languages, the persistence of this uniform name for a water-spirit suggests a deeply-seated traditional belief and an original mythological position of importance.²⁸ It may also suggest a relatively early loss of the word's original semantic content — 'washing, purifying'. The connotations of the continental Germanic terms are aquatic monster and water-demon, while in the Nordic tradition, as we shall see, the emphasis lies elsewhere.

Finnur Jónsson suggested that the motif of the water-horse may have been brought to Iceland by settlers with Gaelic connections.²⁹ Although there are no surviving medieval Norse references to the *nykr* as adopting a horse's shape, a dapple-gray stallion from the sea (cf. *Liath Macha*) figures in the *Landnámabok* and this animal, like its Celtic analogues, allows itself to be put in human service for one day of extraordinary work.³⁰ While the general Scandinavian diffusion³¹ of the water-horse plus the pan-Germanic spread of the nicker motif argue for more than a simple, single-occasion transfer during the settlement of Iceland, there is interesting circumstantial evidence for a loan from the Celtic world. Mod. Icel. alternatives to *nykur* are *nennir* (an assimilated form of *neknir*), and *kumbur*, also meaning 'block of wood'. It is tempting to think that, in *kumbur*, two terms may have coalesced; the one, *kubbr* 'chopping, cutting', and the other traceable to O.Ir. *camm* 'crooked, twisted, treacherous', which is also found in the name of the first Norse settler of the Faeroes, Grím Kamban. The allusion would have been not to a physical infirmity but to the shape-shifting, trickster qualities of the water-spirit. This is also the sense in the medieval Icelandic rhetorical term *nykrat*, referring to incongruous changes in the component images of an extended kenning.³²

The juxtaposition of two related marine motifs in the Faeroese tradition has some bearing on the possibility of a loan from Celtic tradition. While the Scandinavian *nyk/nøk/näck* almost exclusively resides in fresh water, the Faeroese *nikur* — like its counterparts in Iceland, the Shetlands, Orkneys and the Western Isles — lives in the sea. The attractive little horse that tries to lure riders up on its back but on occasion can be harnessed for work, and the handsome youth who courts girls, are in full accord with the traditions further south. Independently, there is the Faeroese tradition of the *mar-mennil* 'sea homunculus', the same term as found in the medieval Norse *Hálfs saga*. This dwarf merman (cf. *shoopiltie*) shares none of the characteristics of the *nikur*, save his marine origin.³³ Juxtaposed, the two figures underline the nicker's ability to maintain his central identity. Finally, the geographical distribution of the water-horse in Scandinavia also suggests an entry, if there was one, from the south and west. On balance, it would appear that the protean element is fundamental to the Nordic nicker, and that this shape-shifting ability may have attracted the water-horse motif.

At this point, we may parenthetically note the Greek sea-god Nereus, whose name has been linked with the I.E. root *sná-* 'flow'.³⁴ Generally benevolent, he appears to belong to the race of Titans that preceded the Olympian gods. It has been suggested that Nereus was originally the presiding spirit of fresh water with little in the way of an organized cult. According to this view, he acquired his marine association as Greeks became better able to master the sea.³⁵ Largely overshadowed by Poseidon (who, it should be noted in passing, gave the gift of horses to man), Nereus had shape-shifting and prophecy among his skills, and was the father of the musical, siren-like Nereids. Many of these points will recur in the Scandinavian — especially Swedish — context, which will now be examined in detail.

The *näck* has been called "one of the most central figures in Swedish popular belief."³⁶ This status is due in part to its use in a literary motif in the nineteenth century, which led to a reinforcement on the level of folklore. The *näck* has been characterized as a male water-spirit, often malevolent in disposition and taking a variety of forms, quasi-human and animal, especially equine. It was frequently seen as a guardian spirit, protecting the stream or lake against pollution or improper fishing, and was armed with a trident (cf. Poseidon and the lightning bolt of Apām Nápāt, RV 2.35, st. 9). Variant names are *bäckamannen*, *havsmannen*, *åmannen*, *strömkarlen*, *ström-gubben*, *forsgubben*, *forskarlen*, *kvarngubben*, *ågubben*, *rågubben*, *Ström-Jan*, *strömtussen*, *nissen*; in its equine guise, *vattenhästen* (cf. *ech uisce*), *dammhästen*, *åhästen*, *strömhästen*, *sjöhästen* and, perhaps the best known from southern Sweden, *bäckhästen* 'stream horse'. Many of the earlier-named elements are also found in compounds with *näcke-* and *-näcken*. The general currency of *näck* and its many local alternatives attest on the one hand to the lexical isolation of the word, but on the other to the persistence of the general belief it expressed, even long after the original meaning of washing and purifying may have been lost. In expressions such as *ta mig näcken* and *det var näcken* (literally "may the Nick take me", "that was the Nick", but equivalent to "I'll be damned"), *näck* replaces *fan* 'devil'.

Earlier studies have amply documented the figure of the Swedish *näck*

and we need consider only those aspects which might link this water-spirit with Indo-Iranian and Irish analogues. In addition to its temperamental disposition, seductively friendly to man (and woman) on some occasions and unfriendly on others, the *näck* is perhaps best known for its ability as a musician, in earlier tradition as a harper and later as a fiddler. The sound of running water may lie at the root of this metaphorical extension. On condition (sacrifice or exchange), the *näck* is prepared to teach others its art, although incorrect ritual procedure may leave the neophyte with only partial mastery.³⁷ But woe to them who dance to the *näck's* own melody when it or one of its protégés plays at country dances, for the dancers will dance themselves to exhaustion or death. The music is also capable of telekinesis. Here, briefly put, we have in the gift of musical ability the counterpart of the poetic gift of the Irish well,³⁸ of the sign of sovereignty hidden in the Indo-Iranian lake, and an equivalent punishment for misuse. For the Irish and Nordic names we have a single etymological source. The mythogem may appear incomplete in that the flooding (world-) river motif is not developed. The rush and swirl of the dance to death (which also has a suggestion of the 'heat in water' motif) can, however, be seen as a symbolic equivalent.

A variant on the *näck's* transfer of musical ability can be seen in the motif of the water-horse serving human masters, and in the *näck* as *kvarn-gubbe* 'old man of the mill', where the primal force of water works to man's economic advantage (cf. the K'arənah assuring prosperity through cattle, as well as the gifts of the priesthood and defensive force, Dumézil's Indo-European trifunctionalism). In more attenuated form, this finds expression in the belief in the *näck* as resident under bridges.

In considering the Nordic evidence, it may be argued that Mimir's well, as described in the *Völuspá* and other works, offers a better parallel with the Irish wells of Nechtan and Segais. Admittedly, the correspondence on this single feature is good but, on the whole, it is less complete than in the case of the *näck*, even without considering etymology. It could also be contended that the evidence of modern folklore has no place in comparative Indo-European mythology. Yet Dumézil himself is prepared to take a single nineteenth century memorate as evidence that the myth of Njörðr lived on in coastal Norway.³⁹ The *näck* is not found in a panoply of early Scandinavian deities, but the example of pre-Olympian Nereus suggests that the modern *näck* is the descendant of some central figure of the Vanir type.⁴⁰ This is not to suggest a fully developed mythological framework in which this water-spirit would have figured, nor a hieratically organized cult. More likely, there may have been a general belief in a *numen*, a resident spirit in each watercourse and lake, whose manifold presence found expression in the primal, protean force of water — nourishing, cleansing, and destroying.⁴¹

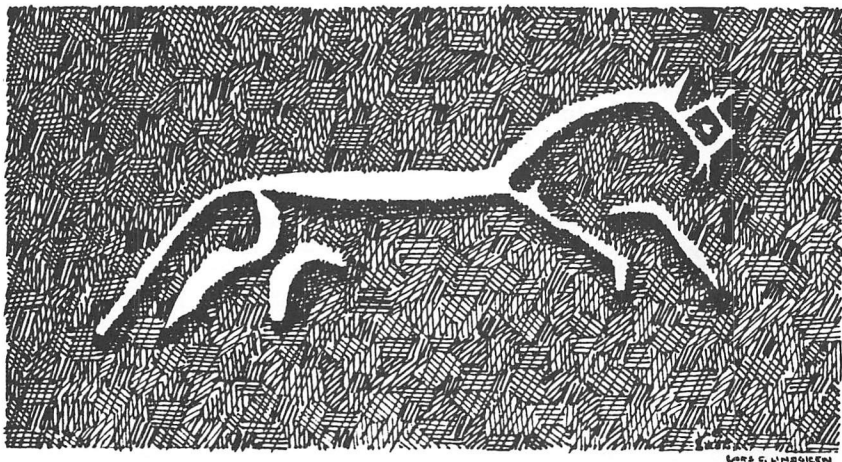
After this summary view of the diversified Scandinavian water-spirit — seducer, musician, teacher and, in quasi-human and equine form, demon — we must return to earlier matters to determine whether the Bóand/Nechtán story has any affinities with that of the water-horse. First we may note that Bóand had sons other than Oenghus, by other partners. In *Táin Bó Froích*,⁴² we learn almost parenthetically that she was also mother to the triplets Goltraide 'plaintively', Gentraide 'laughingly', and Súantraide 'sleepily',

three musical modes to assist women and cattle in birthing but, because of the emotional impact of music, fatal to many in a male audience. Their father was Uaithne (Harmony), the Dagda's harper. Alternatively, the Dagda, himself a harper, may be suspected as the true father of the triplets in an earlier version. As well as offering points of comparison with the Swedish *näck*, this complements other references to the musicality of the water from the Well of Segais, analogous to that of Nechtan.⁴³ It also shows Bóand in a transfunctional mother role.

As noted earlier, Bóand's other son by the Dagda was Oenghus, also called Mac ind Óg 'the young son'. He was associated with healing springs, music and horses (cf. the Greek spring Hippocrene). The Irish Mac ind Óg finds a counterpart in the early British and Gaulish cult figure of Maponos 'the great son', with whom he shares many associations. The names may, in fact, have a common source: Mac ind Óg < *Maccon Oc < Mak^wk^wonos > Maponos. The mother/son pair, Matrona and Maponos, make a shadowy appearance in the Welsh *Mabinogion* as Modron and Mabon, although it has been argued that the entire corpus deals with collective material pertaining to the god Maponos.⁴⁴ A more developed parallel is found there in the figures of Rhiannon (< *Rigantonā 'the great queen'), Teyrnnon Twrf Liant 'the great lord of the tempestuous flood', and Manawydan, son of Llŷr, the sea god. Behind the existing account in *Pwyll* — Rhiannon's punishment as a beast of burden for the loss of her son, and horse-owning Teyrnnon's fostering of the horse-loving infant Gwryi/Pryderi — we may recreate the mythic union of a marine fertility god and an equine goddess. Here Rhiannon recalls the Gaulish deity Epona (cf. *W. ebol* 'colt'), surnamed *regina* by the Romans, who gave her a cult day of celebration on 18 December, one day after that of the marine deity Cansus, identified with Poseidon Hippios. In *Manawydan fab Llŷr*, the pair is again joined with Manawydan as the marine deity.⁴⁵ We can then, for present purposes only, establish the following simple hierogamous paradigm in the Welsh and Irish traditions: Welsh Teyrnnon (aquatic) + Rhiannon (equine) → Gwri/Pryderi (horse-loving) → Maponos (music, springs, horses), and Irish Dagda (equine; see *infra*) + Bóand (aquatic) → Oenghus (music, spring, horses). It should be emphasized that the story of Bóand as a hypostasis of the great goddess is not necessarily the most important nexus in the Irish tradition of this set of associations.

Since the interdependence of the Irish kings and the sovereignty of Ireland is well attested, we will recall only the fertilizing role of the former and the occasional equine manifestation of the latter. Many legendary Irish kings bore names based on the root *ech-* 'horse': Eochu, Eochaid (cf. Welsh traditions concerning the name Mark < *march* 'horse'). One of them, a thirsty king of the Fir Bolg, had the water of all the rivers and streams of Ireland hidden from him by the druids and cupbearers of the Túatha Dé Danann and was killed by this ruse. The Dagda was also known as Eochaid Ollathair 'great father', and lay with Bóand at the house of her brother, Elcmaire 'of the horses'.⁴⁶ In this context, consider the following: references to other Eochuids, father and consorts of the Matrona figure Medb (< Proto-Celtic **Ekwo-medua* 'horse mead');⁴⁷ her lover, Fergus son of Ro-ech

'big horse'; Cú Chulainn, son of Lug the sea god, and his horses (*supra*); and Macha, daughter of Sainreth mac Imbrain 'nature of the sea', who gives birth to twins after being forced by the Ulster king to race against horses. Here we see yet again the complex and complicated interweaving of roles and hierogamous motifs in the early Celtic saga material and, behind it, the original polymorphic and transfunctional deities in an elastic mythic narrative.



A final example will illustrate this interdependence of equine and aquatic motifs and will relieve the Nechtan/Bóand episode of some of the isolation to which a study like Dumézil's subjects it. In a legendary account⁴⁸ of the death of Eochaid son of Mairid, an early King of Munster, Mairid's wife was Eibhliu, daughter of Guaire from the district of Mac ind Óg. She courted her step-son Eochaid who, with his brother, agreed to elope with her. When the brothers later separate, the one, Ríbh, goes into the territory of the fairy-chief Midir (also a figure in the Bóand story), while Eochaid goes into that of Mac ind Óg. The horses of Ríbh's party are killed by Midir, who provides them instead with a single pack-animal. Later, it sinks down to rest with them; rising, its urine mixes with the humans'. A spring bursts forth, drowning all and creating Loch Ree. Eochaid, in his turn, is met by a tall stranger, in reality Mac ind Óg, who has killed his horses and threatens his and his party's lives. When they protest, he gives them a pack-horse, warning them that their lives will be in jeopardy if they unload the horse *en route*, let it make water or stray, or send it back without its bridle. When they reach a hitherto unspecified destination in Ulster, they unload the horse in a single, collective movement, while avoiding looking back the way it came. Again horse's urine flows with men's. A well is formed; Eochaid puts a cover on it and has it watched over by a woman. He then builds a house above it. One day when the cover is left up, an underground loch erupts through the well and Eochaid with many of his children are drowned. Loch nEchach (Loch Neagh) is the result. Among the survivors is his daughter

Liban, who lives for some three hundred years in human form in the underground sea, with the well serving as a passageway to that Otherworld. Then she becomes a mermaid in the sea, until she is baptized at a later age and travels briefly on land in a water-filled glass vessel on a cart drawn by deer before returning to her underwater roaming.

Whether it is punishment for eloping with the father/king's wife or the territorial intrusion into the lands of Midir and Mac ind Óg that leads to the slaughter of the two troops' horses and their replacement by the initially subservient but ultimately fatal, well-producing pack-horses, the equine-aquatic association is again abundantly clear as are the points of correspondence with the *ech uisce* motif. The reason for the injunction against mixing human and equine urine, most certainly mythological in its origins, is not apparent from the narrative context.⁴⁹ It does, however, suggest a review of Bóand and her punishment. One recension of the story has the well punish those who approach it bearing falsehoods; in another, the well rises against Bóand because of her pride in her beauty. While the texts are not explicit, an analysis from a moral perspective might suggest that Bóand is punished for the sin of adultery. But the sexual unions of supernatural beings are not to be seen in human, social terms. At a deeper level, and one perhaps obscured in the surviving recensions of the story, Bóand's crime may have been the intent to defile the well by washing in its water directly after childbirth. With this notion, we return to the previously discussed etymological base of *necht*: 'washed, purified', hence 'pure'.

To conclude the review of the Irish material with a consideration of the name Bóand, it may originally have branched off from that of her sister Bé Find, whose name has been explained as being composed of the elements *bo* 'cow' and *find* 'white' (O.Ir. **bō úinda*), with the possible meaning of 'cow-white (goddess)'.⁵⁰ Cow and horse are certainly not interchangeable, but both have associations with birth and fertility. They may be seen as adjacent in functional ranking on a Dumézilian scale of (sacrificial) animals. In summary, we have no direct tie between the water-horse and the story of Nechtan and Bóand, but both clearly belong to the same world of associations.

With the functional and etymological correspondence between Irish Nechtan and Scandinavian *näck* now established, we may examine the most recently developed panel in Dumézil's triptych, the Roman god Neptūnus and the marvellous flooding of the Alban Lake. This consideration will, however, be brief, since the case Dumézil makes is generally convincing, although somewhat circuitous. The crux is his association of the flooding lake with the deity, nowhere explicit in the pseudo-historical accounts. Given the detail with which the argument is developed over forty-six pages, it is curious that Dumézil should favor a recasting of a name related to **neptonos* on the model of Lat. *tribūnus* and reject in a single line an etymology for Neptūnus with a clear aquatic association. "*L'ombrien nepitu qu'on a rattaché parfois à cette racine *neptus, est plutôt 'ad nihilum redigito'*" (41, n. 1). This Umbrian evidence would be given a fairer trial if it were clearly admitted that the term occurs in a ritual context on the Iguvinian tablets in a description of the lustrations of the citizens of the city. The imperative form *nepitu*

has been glossed as 'inundato' or 'flood with water'.⁵¹ The accompanying terms also suggest a purification by natural means, for example, snow. Umbrian *nep- would be a regular development of an I.E. *neik^w-, certainly close enough to *neig^w- to warrant serious consideration.

Could Neptūnus have originally been an Umbrian deity, or better, *numen*? Could he have come from inland like Nereus and been absorbed into the Latin sphere, when its essentially familial and agrarian mythological beliefs were elaborated and systematized on the Greek model? Dumézil concedes that the cult of Neptūnus is one of the least documented and that the original association was with moisture, and somewhat later with bridges (cf. *näck*), rather than with the sea.⁵² The question is raised; it must be debated in another forum.

Finally, a few, very brief observations about the figure of Apām Nápāt. These points have gone without comment in Dumézil's study, but may take on added importance in the light of the new evidence above. In the Vedic hymn devoted to Apām Nápāt there are two references to his or the waters' purity (3, 8), two references to his association with horses (1, 6), one to Apām Nápāt symbolized as a bull (13), and a further reference to shape-shifting (13) as he takes on the identity of Agni, the fire god. Agni, on one occasion, also assumes the shape of a horse. In the Avestan material, the horse motif is also present (Dumézil, 25), although the Zoroastrian religion generally rejected the importance placed on the warrior's horse by the Vedic tradition.⁵³ As in Greek tradition, the Vedic hymns trace the birth of the horse, like the sun, to the sea (RV 1.163).

Dumézil's general concluding observations on the role and function of the aquatic deities may be recalled: "*Sans être de la mythologie naturaliste, l'ensemble de représentations ainsi reconnu concerne l'eau, élément important de la nature et objet d'utilisations multiples (notamment boisson, agriculture) et de spéculations (telles que le feu dans l'eau, l'eau explosive)*" (87). The evidence reviewed here suggests that the concept of water as a purifying, at times destructive, agent should be added to complete the picture. We have seen that Scandinavian folkloric evidence for the *näck* meshes well with Indian ritual, Iranian myth, Irish place-name lore and Roman legendary history. As the etymon of the theonym, Dumézil's *nepotonos 'descendant' offers a plausible explanation of Apām Nápāt, but aids little in better understanding Nechtan or Neptūnus.⁵⁴ On the other hand, the figure of a primordial Washer and Cleanser, his name based on the I.E. root *neig^w-, does provide greater illumination.

Notes

¹ *Mythe et épopée*, III, "La saison des rivières" (Paris, 1973), pp. 21-89. This study is an expansion of his article "Le puits de Nechtan," *Celtica* 6 (1963): 50-61.

² The basic texts are the prose (Rennes) *Dindschenchas*, ed. and trans. Wh. Stokes, *Revue Celtique* 15 (1894): 315; *The Metrical Dindschenchas*, III, ed. and trans. Edward Gwynn, Todd Lecture Series, 10 (Dublin, 1913), pp. 26-39; and "Cináed úa Hartacáin's Poem on Brugh na Boinne," ed. L. Gwynn, *Ériu* 7 (1914): 210-38.

³ T.F. O'Rahilly was among the first to suggest a connection between Nechtan and Neptūnus in *Early Irish History and Mythology* (Dublin, 1946), pp. 311f, 322f.

⁴ In *Myth in Indo-European Antiquity*, ed. Gerald J. Larson (Berkeley, 1974), pp. 67-74.

⁵ "The Boyhood Deeds of Finn," ed. Kuno Meyer, *Revue Celtique* 5 (1881-82): 195-204; trans. in *Ériu* 1 (1904): 180-90; see also R. Thurneysen, *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 17 (1927): 268. A corollary of the extraction of a gift from the well is the extensive Celtic practice of depositing votive offerings in springs and wells.

⁶ Jord Pinault, "Brittonika VI:14. Nechtan (*Neptono)," *Ogam* 16 (1964): 221-23, and Christian Guyonvarc'h, "Annexes étymologiques du commentaire. 1. Nechtan (*Neptono) ou le 'fils de la soeur'," *Celticum* 15 (1966): 377-82, the latter article complementing Françoise Le Roux, "La courtise d'Étain: Commentaire du texte," pp. 328-75, in the same volume.

⁷ The case he makes is summarized as follows: "**Nept-o-no-, Nechtan, peut être dans le même rapport avec *nep(o)t-: non pas un équivalent mais une forme avertissant que, justement, il n'y a pas lieu de spécifier, transformant 'le neveu' ou 'le descendant' en un être hors série ou typique, qui ne peut pas être confondu avec d'autres. Peut-être d'ailleurs, Nechtan a-t-il cessé très tôt d'être le *nep(o)t- des eaux; d'après son mythe, il ne vit plus, comme Apām Napat 'en' elles; il reste seulement, comme Apām Napat, mais de l'extérieur, leur maître. Son non traditionnel, que l'évolution de la langue séparerait de celui du 'neveu' et livrait sans défense à la réinterprétation par necht (*nik-to- 'brillant'), pouvait dès lors être aussi coupé des eaux sans dommage*" (p. 38).

⁸ On the use of the suffix *-no-*, T.L. Markey writes: "The addition of the suffix denotes transposition of the term's underlying meaning to a social domain, that is, the 'incarnation' of the qualities of a deity as a distinctly social manifestation," in "Indo-European Theophoric Personal Names and Social Structure," *Journal of Indo-European Studies* 9 (1981): 227-243, here 230.

⁹ *Die Romanze von Fróech und Findabair. Táin Bó Fróich*, ed. Wolfgang Meid (Innsbruck, 1970), p. 73, note to 1. 3.

¹⁰ For Nechtan mac Labrad lesbhrec, see *Silva Gadelica*, ed. Standish O'Grady, 2 Vols. (London, 1892), 1: 520. Nechtan also figures in a number of other tales, e.g. *Tochmarc Treblainne*, again in a subservient capacity. See R. Thurneysen, *Die irische Helden- und Königsage* (Halle, 1921), pp. 300f, 602n. Dumézil (68f) has called attention to a Nechtan, companion of Bran, who, on the return to Ireland from their voyage, steps ashore (returns to reality) too abruptly and is killed by a 'wave of clear water' *toinn*

usci glain; Immram Brain, ed. A.G. van Hamel (Dublin, 1941), p. 19. While Dumézil stresses the parallel with the punishment of Bóand, the reference to the water's clarity is important for the present argument.

¹¹ E.g., Nechta Scéne and his sons in *Táin Bó Cúailnge, Recension I*, ed. Cecile O'Rahilly (Dublin, 1976), 11. 721ff, and *Táin Bó Cúailnge from the Book of Leinster*, ed. Cecile O'Rahilly (Dublin, 1967), 11. 1082ff; perceived as a feminine name Necht in *Dun mac Nechtain Scéne* in Wh. Stokes, "The Prose Tales in the Rennes Dindsenchas," *Revue Celtique* 16 (1895): 83. It is worthy of note that it is against Nechta Scéne's three sons that Cú Chulainn fights his initiatory combats. Their names are Fóill 'sly'; Fannal traditionally 'swallow', but perhaps it better refers to *fannaid/fannagaid* 'weakens'; and Túachell 'cunning'. They may be viewed as ethical obstacles to the initiate's realization of the heroic ideal. In the context of these names, cf. the earlier mentioned patronyms of Nechtan. As concerns the historical use of the name in Britain, note Kenneth H. Jackson, *The Gododdin* (Edinburgh, 1969), p. 48, and more recently, Seán Ó Coileáin, "Some Problems of Story and History," *Ériu* 32 (1981): 115-36, here 117ff.

¹² *Sanas Cormaic*, ed. Kuno Meyer, *Anecdota from Irish Manuscripts*, Vol. 4 (Halle, 1912), p. 22, No. 247. *Cóir Anmann*, ed. Wh. Stokes, *Irische Texte*, Vol. 3 (Leipzig, 1897), p. 368, n. to par. 188. The reference in the latter is to the legendary king Nuadha Necht. The first element occurs in the name of the mythological king Naudha Airgedlámh 'silver arm' or 'hand'. The Welsh equivalent is Llud Llaw Ereint, with Llud an alliterative derivation from an earlier Nud. The names are associated with the aquatic deity, Nodons/Nodens, whose temple and healing baths have been discovered at Lydney Park in Gloucestershire. The name "Nuadha Necht" then makes a double allusion to water. The river Boyne is also characterized in the source documents as *slán* 'stainless' and *báin-gile* 'white, bright', *Metrical Dindshenchas*, pp. 26, 34; cf. the transfunctional Iranian goddess Anāhitā, 'the moist, the strong, the pure' (*Yašt* 5).

¹³ Regarding cupbearers in Irish literature, see Ford, *op. cit.*, 69, n. 3. Note, too, the expression *flesc láma* as land recovered by one's own labours or possibly measured by hand or with a rod, hence 'patrimony, domain'.

¹⁴ "And sexual crimes (third function) are punished in the same manner in which sacrifices are made to the divinities of fertility: by drowning" from Donald J. Ward, "The Threefold Death: An Indo-European Trifunctional Sacrifice?" in *Myth and Law among the Indo-Europeans*, ed. Jaan Puhvel (Berkeley, 1970), pp. 123-42, here p. 127.

¹⁵ J. Vendryes, *Lexique étymologique de l'irlandais ancien* (Dublin, 1961), s.v. *nig-*.

¹⁶ J. Vendryes, "Sur la racine de l'irlandais *nigim* 'je lave'," *Revue Celtique* 47 (1930): 442-44. The theory of a pair of roots, **neig^w-/*neig-*, was advanced by J. Loth who glossed the former as 'laver' and the latter as 'vanner', in "Notes étymologiques et lexicographiques," *Revue Celtique* 40 (1923): 342-76. Vendryes traces O.Ir. *nigim* to the second form.

¹⁷ From an interpolation in *Fled Bricrend, The Feast of Bricriu*, ed. and trans. George Henderson, Irish Texts Society, 2 (London, 1899), p. 38. Discussed by R. Thurneysen in *Die irische Helden- und Königsage*, pp. 462f.

¹⁸ E.g., *Tochmarc Emere*, in *Compert Con Culaind*, ed. A.G. van Hamel, Mediaeval and Modern Irish Series, 3 (Dublin, 1956), p. 24.

¹⁹ Discussed in Patrick K. Ford, *The Mabinogi and Other Medieval Welsh Tales* (Berkeley, 1977), pp. 7ff; see note 45, *infra*.

²⁰ Wh. Stokes, "Life of St. Féchin of Fore," *Revue Celtique* 12 (1891): 347. See a similar instance in Stewart Macalister, "The Life of St. Finan," *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 2 (1899): 555.

²¹ *The Triads of Ireland*, ed. Kuno Meyer, Todd Lecture Series, 13 (Dublin, 1906), p. 31, No. 236. For other references, see Tom Peete Cross, *Motif-Index of Early Irish Literature* (Bloomington, 1952), B.181.3: "Magic horses from water world."

²² Cf. Sc.Gael. *glaistig* 'she devil in form of a goat' or 'beautiful female fairy seen washing by stream', Edward Dwelly, *The Illustrated Gaelic-English Dictionary* (Glasgow, 1973), s. v.

²³ For vignettes of the Irish and Scottish water-horses, see Katherine Briggs, *A Dictionary of Fairies* (London, 1976). Water-bulls, to name but one other type of magical animal, are also frequent motifs in folktales and have similarly ancient origins.

²⁴ *Beowulf*, ed. F. Klaeber, 3rd ed. (Boston 1950), vv. 422, 575, 845, 1427; *The Blickling Homilies of the Tenth Century*, ed. R. Morris, Early English Text Society (London, 1874), pp. 209, 211. *Nicor* is used to describe the hippopotamus in the Old English translation of "Alexander's Letter to Aristotle," in *Three Old English Prose Texts*, ed. S. Rypins, EETS (London, 1924 [repr. 1971]), p. 599.

²⁵ The reference to birchbark in *Nóregs Kungatal*, st. 75, is to the coat of ice covering Iceland. See Dag Strömbäck, *Kulturhistorisk lexikon för nordisk medeltid*, Vol. 12 (Malmö, 1967), s.v. *näcken*.

²⁶ See Martin Puhvel, *Beowulf and the Celtic Tradition* (Waterloo, 1979), p. 65. He provides a quick survey of Celtic water-monsters in pp. 61-72.

²⁷ Derivatives of **neig*^w- in other languages should be noted. Vendryes (*op. cit.*) adduces a Latin *pollingo* 'je fais la toilette (d'un mort)' < **por-lingo* < **por-ningo*. Other terms are Gr. *nízo* 'wash', Sans. *nēṇēkti* 'he washes'.

²⁸ Dumézil concluded (p. 34) that Scandinavian mythology had no fully-articulated equivalent to the *Apām Nápāt*/Nechtan/Neptūnus myths, although he noted the parallel of the world-river issuing from the cauldron of the serpent *Niðhöggr*, and the separate tradition of Mimir's well of knowledge.

²⁹ Finnur Jónsson, *Norsk-islandske kultur- og sprogforhold i det 9. og 10. aarhundrede* (Copenhagen, 1921); discussed in Jean Young, "Some Icelandic Traditions Showing Traces of Irish Influence," *Etudes celtiques* 2 (1937): 119. For a good general introduction to the Nordic nicker, see Strömbäck, n. 25 *supra*.

³⁰ *Landnámabok*, ed. Finnur Jónsson (Copenhagen, 1925), p. 57. In the Norse translation of the legendary history of Theodoric, the hero, at the end of his career, is tempted by a deer that runs by. He mounts an unknown black horse, which races swiftly away. He is unable to check it and plunges with it to his death in a lake. It is unsure whether this is part of the water-horse tradition and whether it stems from original north German material or from its Nordic compilers. *Þidriks saga af Bern*, ed. Henrik Bertelsen, 2 Vols. (Copenhagen, 1908-11), 2: 392ff.

³¹ A mixed bag of older and more recent references is found in H.F. Feilberg's *Bidrag til en Ordbog over jyske Almuesmål*, 4 Vols: (Copenhagen, 1886-1914), s.vv. *havmand*, *hest*, *nøkke*.

³² *Nykrat* is accompanied by the synonym *finngálknat*, glossed by Jan de Vries as 'zauberwesen, kentaur', *Altnordisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, 2nd ed. (Leiden, 1962), who suggests that the second element, *galkn* 'fabeltier', may be of Celtic origin. It is tempting to think that the complete compound might relate to Irish *finngall* 'fair foreigner (Norwegian)', and might refer to a figure of Irish rhetoric taken by Norse-Irish settlers to Iceland. *Galkn*, however, occurs in other compounds (*hreingalken*, *hranngalken*); Irish *gal* 'ardour; vapour', with its hint of shape-shifting, is a possible source. *Islands grammatiske Litteratur i Middelalderen: Den tredje og fjerde grammatiske Afhandling*, ed. B. M. Olsen (Copenhagen, 1884), 13: 6.

³³ "Nikur" and "Marmennil" in U.V. Hammershaimb's *Faerøsk anthologi*, 2 Vols. (Copenhagen, 1891), 1: 334-36. *Hálfs saga og Hálfsrekka*, ed. A. Leroy Andrews (Halle, 1909), p. 82.

³⁴ Herbert Hunger, *Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie* (Vienna, 1969), and Hjalmar Frisk, *Griechisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* (Heidelberg, 1970), s.v. Ne-reus.

³⁵ A. Lesky, *Thalatta. Der Weg der Griechen zum Meer* (Vienna, 1947), p. 107. Since this paper was presented, I have noted C. Scott Littleton's "Poseidon as a reflex of the Indo-European 'source of waters' god," in *The Journal of Indo-European Studies* 1 (1973): 423-40. The evidence, associated with the origin of the river Lerna, is fully congruent with the thrust of Dumézil's and Ford's studies.

³⁶ Maja Bergstrand, "Näcken som musikaliskt väsen," *Folkminnen och Folktankar* 23 (1936): 14-31, here p. 14. For a more general study, see Tobias Norlind, "Studier i svensk folklore: Näcken och havsfrun," *Lunds universitets årsskrift* N.F. Avd. 1, Vol. 7, No. 5 (1911), pp. 94-148.

³⁷ Sacrifices of cats, lambs or quarters of meat in exchange for musical ability may be seen as echoes of original, more general fertility sacrifices to the water-spirit. The means of ridding oneself of the nicker are strikingly similar in areas as distant as Sweden and the Orkneys: call him by name, show an iron object, display or name a Christian sign (or cut it on his back); see Briggs, *supra*, and Norlind. The later Swedish idea of the *näck* longing for salvation may point to a realization of the figure's origins in pagan antiquity, or stem from the medieval theological concept of the spirit as a fallen, music-playing angel.

³⁸ Or, to paraphrase Ford, *op. cit.*, p. 74, "a potent illuminating wisdom, found in the water, guarded by [the *näck*], whose possession endowed the privileged few with extraordinary powers."

³⁹ *Du mythe au roman*, Appendice VI, "Njörðr, Nerthus et le folklore scandinave des genies de la mer," (Paris, 1970), pp. 185-96, here p. 188.

It seems incomprehensible that Dumézil should have overlooked the *näck* in his detailed consideration of the Scandinavian sea-spirits and their present-day descendants. Nor is there any hint of a *rapprochement* to be made between the essentially peaceful and prosperous Njörðr, his terrestrial counterpart with aquatic overtones, Nerthus (in Tacitus' Latin), and Greek Nereus. For the etymology of Njörðr, Jan de Vries offers a primitive Norse **nertu*, cognate with O.Ir. *nert* 'power', Sans. *nár* 'man' as the preferred explanation, but also lists others which recall the **snā-* root of Ne-reus, e.g., Lith. *neriù* 'immerse, plunge'. *Altnordisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, s.v. Njörðr.

⁴⁰ Of Germanic water-spirits, de Vries writes: "*Solche übernatürliche Wesen sind persönliche Ausdrucksformen für die an Pflanze, Fels oder Wasser haftende Macht . . . , die zu beunruhigen oder gar zu ärgern der Mensch sich hüten soll. . . . Falls sie der Religion zuzurechnen sind, gehören sie zu einer sehr primitiven Schicht, der noch vor der Ausbildung der heidnisch-germanischen Religion liegen würde.*" *Altgermanische Religionsgeschichte*, Vol. 1 (Berlin, 1956), pp. 261f. Joseph Campbell writes in *The Masks of God: Occidental Mythology* (New York, 1964), p. 21: "In the older mother myths and rites the lighter and darker aspects of the mixed thing that is life had been honored equally and together, whereas in the later, male-oriented, patriarchal myths, all that was good and noble was attributed to the new, heroic master gods, leaving to the native nature powers the character only of darkness — to which, also, a negative moral judgement was now added."

⁴¹ Here we have dealt principally with fresh water and its attendant spirits. The

seductive, potentially treacherous aspects of the sea have often found expression in female figures: mermaids, Nereids, sirens, *havsfruar*, etc.

⁴² Meid, *op. cit.*, p. 57, par. 10; note p. 141f.

⁴³ Note the sweet music of the stream issuing from the Irish well of knowledge, *Echtra Cormaic i Tír Tairngiri* (*Cormac's Adventure in the Land of Promise*), ed. Wh. Stokes, *Irische Texte*, Ser. 3, Vol.1 (Leipzig, 1891), p. 195.

⁴⁴ Eric P. Hamp, "Mabinogi," *Transactions of the Honorable Society of Cymmrodorion* (1974-75): 243-49, who also proposed the etymology for Mac ind Óg.

⁴⁵ This résumé draws on the fuller discussion by Patrick Ford of the "Mare and the Lad" motif in the introduction to his *The Mabinogi and Other Mediæval Welsh Tales*, pp. 4-12.

⁴⁶ *Metrical Dindshenchas*, p. 27; úa Hartacáin, p. 220, st. 12. It has been suggested that Elcmaire and Nechtan were originally one and the same: Heinrich Wagner, "Eine irische-alt nordische έρεος γάμος- Episode," *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur* 77 (1955): 348-57.

⁴⁷ From I.E. **médhu* 'mead', thus an 'equine ritual involving drunkenness', proposed by Jaan Puhvel in "Aspects of Equine Functionality," in *Myth and Law among the Indo-Europeans*, pp. 159-70, here p. 167. Puhvel concludes: "In brief, the basic Indo-European equine myth involves the mating of a kingship-class representative with the hippomorphic transfunctional goddess, and the creation of twin offspring belonging to the third level estate" (172).

⁴⁸ For this fuller version, see "Aided Echach mheic Mhaireda," in *Silva Gadelica*, 1: 233-37; 2: 265-69.

⁴⁹ This event is glossed over in O'Grady's prudish translation, where he renders "*asbert friu cen scor indeich ocus ar ná léictis airisem dó ar ná sioblaid a fual ar ná bad fochonn báis dóib*" (I: 234) as "he enjoined them moreover not to unload the horse [on the way], nor [at any time] to let him make a halt, lest where he stood there happened that which should be to them an occasion of their death" (2: 266). An explanation of the myth(s) associated with Eochaid, Loch Neagh, and the Nerthus-like figure, Liban, will be attempted in a future article.

⁵⁰ Meid, *op. cit.* p. 73, note to 1. 3, and Anders Ahlqvist, "Old Irish *bé, ben* 'woman'," *Ériu* 31 (1980): 156-63. A near equivalent explanation is offered in the Irish texts, i.e., that the name Bóand comes from those of the two rivers Bo and Find which flow together to form the Boyne; Rennes, *Dindschenchas*, p. 315; *Metrical Dindshenchas*, pp. 32, 34.

⁵¹ Iguvian tablets VIb, 60 and VIIa, 49, as reproduced in Carl Darling Buck, *A Grammar of Oscan and Umbrian* (Boston, 1928); see also pars. 212 and 310. Buck links *neptitu* with Neptūnus and elsewhere (par. 87) notes the frequent syncope of short vowels in median syllables in Umbrian. Neptūnus need not have been formed on the analogy of *tribūnus*, as Dumézil suggests, for there were theonymic models, e.g. Matūnus Tūtūnus. The temporal development of fresh-water spirits into salt-water deities has a narrative parallel within the myth itself, in the spring or lake flooding and flowing to the sea.

⁵² The divergent paths that an evolving Indo-European mythogem can take, are well illustrated in the antonymic relationship of the moisture-bringing Neptūnus and the Orcadian *nuckelavee* — a skinless, hydrocephalic sea monster mounted on, or centaur-like, part of an equally monstrous horse — bringing droughts, blighted crops, poor weather, but never appearing when it rained; see George Douglas, *Scottish Fairy and Folktales* (London, 1893), pp. 160ff.

⁵³ Stig Wikander, "Nakula et Sahadeva," *Orientalia Suecana* 6: 66-96 (1957), discussed by Donald J. Ward, "The Separate Function of Indo-European Divine Twins," in *Myth and Law among the Indo-Europeans*, pp. 193-202, here p. 195. James L. Sauvé writes: "...the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* (1.1.3.9... which tells of Agni's flight into the waters) astonishingly enunciates the heteromorphic and congruent characters of Agni, the horse, and the *aśvattha* tree combined." This tree is seen as representative of the world-tree; in "The Divine Victim: Aspects of Human Sacrifice in Viking Scandinavia and Vedic India," in *Myth and Law among the Indo-Europeans*, pp. 173-191, here p. 187.

⁵⁴ One may speculate that *Apām Nápāt* was originally an epithet used in apposition to a name — possibly on the **neig^w*- root — which was later dropped. 'Purifier, Descendant of Waters'?

The Vikings in the East: *Yngvars saga víðförla*

Deborah McGinnis

In the year 1041, just shortly before the end of the Viking Age, a young Swede named Yngvar Eymundarson died "somewhere in the east in Serkland." His passing, and that of his men, has been commemorated on twenty-five to thirty rune stones in Sweden and his exploits have been recounted in an Icelandic saga entitled, appropriately, *Yngvars saga víðförla*. The saga contains many folklore motifs such as giants, dragons, and magic, but it also gives information about some trading practices and trade routes in Russia at that time.* The episodes describing Yngvar's voyage down one of the largest rivers in the country echo descriptive passages in the *Rus Primary Chronicle* and in the Byzantine manuscript called *De Administrando Imperio*, and these similarities make it possible to conjecture which route Yngvar took in search of a kingdom of his own.

Yngvars saga víðförla, a late Icelandic saga of the fourteenth century,¹ recounts the background and the exploits of Yngvar Eymundarson. Yngvar belonged to the Swedish royal family, but his grandfather and father had been in constant conflict with the king. Yngvar succeeds for a while in reuniting the family, but his own ambition and pride eventually shatter the peace. He arrogantly demands his uncle Ólaf's crown and, when he is refused, Yngvar determines to set out and found a kingdom of his own in the east. To do this, he gathers a fleet of thirty ships and sails to Novgorod where his cousin, Ingigerð, and her husband, Yaroslav the Wise, rule. Here he spends his time learning foreign languages and the geography of Russia. He becomes intrigued by tales of three great rivers in that country and he decides to explore the largest of them. His fleet sets sail and, during their voyage, Yngvar and his men meet dragons, cyclopes, elephants, and many heathen peoples. He gains great wealth, fame, and the love of a queen named Silkisif. She offers herself and her kingdom to him, but Yngvar temporarily rejects her. He intends to continue his exploration and then to return to Silkisif; unfortunately, Yngvar dies of a mysterious illness before he can make his way back to her.

Yngvar's reception in Russia is friendly not simply because of his relationship to Ingigerð, but also because of his nationality. Yngvar's Swedish forebears had made contact with the Slavic peoples of Russia in the ninth century. The *Rus Primary Chronicle*, covering the period from 852 to the second decade of the twelfth century, describes the Norsemen's incursions into the country. Under the year 859, the compiler of the *Chronicle* mentions that:

The Varangians from beyond the sea imposed tribute upon the Chuds, the Slavs, the Merians, the Ves', and the Krivichians.²

* Editor's note: Although 'Rus' and 'Russia' are used interchangeably here, it is understood that, in the context of the era with which this article deals, the lands of the Eastern Slavs were known as 'Rus'.

He also records that between the years 860 and 862 these foreigners were driven out and then were begged to return:

The tributaries of the Varangians drove them back beyond the sea and, refusing them further tribute, set out to govern themselves. There was no law among them, but tribe rose against tribe. Discord thus ensued among them, and they began to war one against another. They said to themselves, "Let us seek a prince who may rule over us according to the law." They accordingly went overseas to the Varangian Russes. . . .³

In the above passages the author calls the foreigners "Varangians" and "Rus," terms that have caused contention among modern historians. The Normanists, primarily from Western countries, contend that the Varangians were Scandinavian traders who passed through Russia establishing trading centres and that the Rus were Scandinavians who settled in Russia and were eventually assimilated into the native Slavic population. They also proposed that the Scandinavians made up the Russian aristocracy at that time. Eastern scholars hold the anti-Normanist position which maintains that the Varangians and Rus were Slavic tribes and not Scandinavian at all, and they reject the *Chronicle's* account.⁴

Although the passages dealing with the calling-in of the Varangians are of questionable accuracy, they do suggest the importance of the role played by the Norsemen in the development of Russia. The Scandinavian presence in this country cannot be denied, and its influence was felt at least until the death of Yaroslav the Wise in 1054. The Russians' acceptance of the Scandinavians, particularly the Swedes, gave men like Yngvar the freedom to explore their vast country.

For the Vikings, Russia was a stepping-stone to the profitable trading centres in the east and their activities in both Arabian and Byzantine territories have been confirmed through archaeological discoveries and manuscripts.⁵ There are, indeed, two treaties, one signed between 911 and 912 and the other in 945, between the Rus and the Byzantine Empire. The names of the Rus delegation are Scandinavian and this supports the hypothesis that they were the aristocracy in Russia at that time.

The records of the Muslims and the Greeks show that, around the time that Yngvar is said to have been searching for a kingdom of his own, the Vikings were active around the Caspian, the Black Sea, and Transcaucasia between the Kur and Araxes rivers. Yngvar could have gone down either the Volga to Baghdad or the Dnieper to Byzantium. It is possible to conjecture which route he took by examining the saga itself and other sources, primarily Constantine Porphyrogenitus' *De Administrando Imperio*.

The sagaman writes that Yngvar's interest in the Russian river system was aroused during his stay with Yaroslav in Novgorod:

Yngvar was there for three winters. . . .He heard talk that three rivers flowed from the east through Garðaríki and that the largest was in the middle. Then Yngvar went far and wide throughout the Eastern Empire and enquired if any man knew whence the river flowed. . . .Then Yngvar prepared for his journey from Garðaríki: he intended to explore and search the length of this river.⁶

Although they do not all flow east as is written in the saga, there are three rivers that originate in the area of Novgorod. They are the Dvina, the Dnieper, and the Volga. Of these rivers, the Dnieper is in the middle and, as

a trade route, it surpassed even the Volga. The Rus *Primary Chronicle* describes the rivers in this way:

The Dnieper itself rises in the upland forest, and flows southward. The Dvina has its source in this same forest, but flows northward and empties into the Varangian sea. The Volga rises in this same forest. . . .⁷

A complete catalogue of the dangers to be encountered along the Dnieper is included in Chapter Nine of Constantine's manuscript. Chapter Nine of this text is not consistent with the rest because it does not concentrate on diplomacy and imperial intrigue; instead, it recounts in detail a Rus trading expedition to Byzantium. Dimitri Obolensky suggests that the chapter "is probably source material which was collected for the use of the Byzantine foreign ministry and lay in the ministry's files."⁸

Constantine begins his account by describing the arrival of the traders in Kiev and their refitting of vessels, called "monoxylas," for the journey. The trading convoys could only travel during the late spring and summer because at that time the flood level of the river made the rapids partially navigable. There are nine cataracts on the Dnieper river, but Constantine names only seven, having combined two of the minor rapids. Each of these cataracts or, as Constantine calls them, barrages, has a Slavic and a Scandinavian name describing the force of the river. The first is called *Essoupi* which means in both languages "do not sleep." Here the river is narrow and studded with boulders:

The barrage itself is as narrow as the width of the Polo-ground; in the middle of it are rooted high rocks, which stand out like islands. Against these, then, comes water and wells up and dashes down over the other side, with a mighty and terrific din.⁹

The current rises in the rapids from 40-50 metres a minute to between 200-300 metres a minute.¹⁰

The Russians do not venture to pass between. . . [the high rocks] but put in to the bank hard by, disembarking the men onto dry land, leaving the rest of the goods on board the 'monoxyla'; then they strip and, feeling with their feet to avoid striking a rock, [there is a break in the text]. This they do, some at the prow, some amidships, while others again, in the stern, punt with poles; and with all this careful procedure they pass this first barrage. . . .¹¹

The method used by the traders to pass this obstacle is repeated for the next two cataracts as well.



The most dangerous rapid is the fourth one. Constantine calls it the "pelican barrage" because he translated the name to mean "the place where the pelicans nest." Vilhelm Thomsen disagrees with Constantine's transla-

tion and interprets the name to mean "ever-rushing."¹² The current in this stretch of water is so strong that the rapid is never navigable; therefore, the method of circumnavigating this obstruction involves more than poling the boats:

At this barrage all put into land prow foremost and those who are deputed to keep watch with them get out. . . [while] the remainder, taking up the goods which they have on board the 'monoxyla', conduct the slaves in their chains last by land, six miles, until they are through the barrage. Then, partly dragging their 'monoxyla', partly portaging them on their shoulders, they convey them to the far side of the barrage; and then, putting them on the river and loading up their baggage they embark themselves, and again sail off in them.¹³

Two passages in *Yngvars saga* are very similar to this account. Instead of Constantine's seven barrages, the saga writer has only two. Using his artistic licence, probably to avoid repetition, he has combined characteristics of the different obstacles mentioned in the Greek source. In the first section, Yngvar and his men arrive at a large waterfall which prevents them from proceeding and forces them to portage:

Yngvar travelled along the river until he came to a great waterfall and narrow chasms. The crags were so high that they had to haul their ships up by means of ropes. Afterwards they hauled them back to the river

As the Rus in Constantine's entry use ropes to move their ships, so do Yngvar and his men.

The second obstacle encountered by the expedition is also a waterfall, but this time even ropes will not help them:

When they had travelled for a while they came to a huge waterfall. Such a great turbulence arose from it that they had to put ashore. . . [where] the crags were so high there that they were unable to haul the ships up by the ropes. They set their ships forth along the cliffs, there where it drifted from the river and the current. There was a little gap in the cliffs so they went ashore there.

In the first passage, the waterfall resembles the welling up and dashing down of the water in Constantine's first barrage, and the severity of the turbulence in the second segment is close to that found in Constantine's fourth rapid. The Scandinavians are forced to dig a channel in order to divert water from the river to carry them around the second waterfall. Such a canal was not unknown to Constantine, although he attributed its construction to the "ancients." The seaway lay between the Maeotic Lake, the Sea of Azov and the Nekropyla, a gulf near the Dnieper river.¹⁴

Once the fourth barrage is passed, there are three more minor rapids to negotiate before the traders come to the Isle of St. Gregory. From the seventh barrage to the island, the convoy is in constant danger from attacks by the Pechenegs. The island of St. Aitherios is the next stop before the ships face the open sea. Yngvar is given a parallel report of barrages and hostile natives by King Jólfr:

. . . there is a large whirlpool there called Gapi. Between the sea and the river is that ness called Siggeus. The river flows briefly before it falls from a precipice in the red sea¹⁵. . . [and] out on the river you have travelled along lie robbers on large ships, and they have disguised all the ships with reeds so that people will think them islands. . . .

Here are all the details found in Constantine: whirlpools, islands, hostile natives and the open sea. Yngvar does not cross the Black Sea to Constantinople, though. His final destination can be conjectured from the description of Queen Silkisif's capital, Citiópólis.

The colouring of Queen Silkisif's city, in the saga, is very distinctive. The structures of the town are "built from stones of white marble." There was a famous fortified city on the Don river called Sarkel, which means "the white house." It was an outpost for the Jewish Khazars and was built for them at their request by a Byzantine engineer in the 800s. According to Constantine, the Greek builder "made some ovens and baked bricks in them and with these he carried out the building of the city, making mortar out of tiny shells from the river."¹⁶ The shells gave the city its white appearance. Archaeologists have also found that the builders used some "marble columns of Byzantine origin, dating from the sixth century, and probably salvaged from some Byzantine ruin."¹⁷

The remains of Sarkel were discovered by Soviet archaeologists between the years 1934-1936. The excavation was accelerated between 1949-1951 because of the building of the Tsimlyanskaya storage lake which eventually submerged the ruins. The city itself was surrounded by outer walls ten metres high with towers at the corners. The geometric precision of the town's lay-out can be attributed to the Greek engineer. In the ruins, archaeologists found evidence of both a garrison and a civilian population. There were good-sized granaries unearthed, and locally-crafted artifacts such as pottery and bone-carvings were discovered along with imports from Iran, Central Asia, Caucasasia, the Crimea, and the Byzantine Empire.¹⁸ The picture of Sarkel reconstructed by archaeological means harmonizes with Silkisif's "excellent city" and the sagaman's tributes to its beauty.

Although Yngvar's voyage does not sequentially match Constantine's outline of the Dnieper trade route, there are enough similarities to suggest that this is the path Yngvar took. The rearrangement of the events was probably made consciously by the writer to allow the romance between Yngvar and Silkisif to develop. If this artistic licence had not been exercised, Yngvar would have been dead or dying before he even met Queen Silkisif. He would have had no time to win her heart or convert her to Christianity.

The homeward voyage of Yngvar's companions, Ketil and Valdimar, also seem to indicate that they travelled in the area of the Dnieper river and the Black Sea. When the river they are travelling divides, the two men go different ways:

When they had travelled for a while the path divided, and they separated because no one wanted to follow the other. Ketil chose the direction straight ahead and arrived in Garðar; Valdimar arrived with one ship in Miklagarð.

It is most unlikely that Valdimar would arrive in Miklagarð, or Byzantium, if they had been travelling down the Volga.

The historicity of *Yngvars saga víðfjörla* is supported by the rune stones in Sweden. Most of the Yngvar-stones are concentrated around Lake Mälaren in Uppland, with others scattered in Södermanland, Östergötland and Västmanland. The placement of the stones gives the impression of a rough circle,¹⁹ and their localization indicates that Yngvar probably launched his ex-

pedition from this vicinity. The style of the carving also sets these stones apart, as a group, from other monuments: "The Ingvar-stones in Southern Uppland portray a distinctly closed group with a singular ornamentation and style."²⁰ The stones are, for the most part, unornamented and the carver has been identified as the rune-master Askil.

The Yngvar-stones, whether dedicated to his brother or to his men, share a common feature: the men "died in the east" or "died in Serkland" with Yngvar. The Stora Lundby stone in Södermanland says:

Spjute and Halvdan they raised this stone in memory of Skarde, their
brother.
went east from here
with Ingvar.
In Serkland lies
the son of Öjvind.²¹

The finest memorial to Yngvar's quest is found on the Gripsholm stone, raised by Tola for her son, Harald, probably Yngvar's half-brother:

They fared like men
far after gold
and in the east
gave the eagle food
they died southward
in Serkland.²²

The Svinnegarn stone and the Steninge stone in Uppland commemorate two captains who joined forces with Yngvar. The information that they had their own ships reinforces the theory that Yngvar recruited from the Uppland area. The Varpsund stone gives an understated testament to the courage and ability of these adventurers "[who] skillfully could steer a ship."²³

The identity of *Serkland* towards which Yngvar's fleet steered is uncertain. Literally the word means "land of the Saracens," and this has been interpreted as Baghdad. Because of this reading of the rune stones, previous scholars have assumed that Yngvar travelled down the Volga river to this city. The Saracens, however, controlled a much larger area than just the Caliphate of Baghdad. As Sven B.F. Jansson states, "it is impossible to give any fixed boundaries to the Serkland, 'the Saracen's land', of the rune stones."²⁴ If it is possible that, by Serkland, the Norsemen meant the land of the Muslims, just as Garðaríki can mean the whole of Russia as well as a particular town or district, then Yngvar would have passed through Saracen territory while travelling down the Dnieper and on to Transcaucasia as easily as he would have going down the Volga to the Caspian and overland to Baghdad.

The runic monuments in Sweden prove the historical existence of Yngvar. He was much more than the creation of a storyteller's imagination designed to relieve the tedium of a long winter. The inscriptions and the saga indicate that the expedition ended in disaster somewhere in the east and that Yngvar died in the year 1041. The sagaman has taken liberties with his source material to add interest, but his information appears to be basically correct. The similarities between the saga and the Greek and Russian works cited seem to indicate that either the writer was familiar with these works or that the details of Yngvar's voyage had been preserved, possibly

through oral transmission, until the sagaman committed them to paper. Because of these similarities, it is now no longer possible to assume that Yngvar's quest took him down the Volga.

Notes

¹ Dietrich Hofmann, in his essay "Die *Yngvars saga víðförla* und Oddr munkr inn fróði," has examined descriptive passages, certain phrases, and etymological details in the saga and has, thereby, identified the author as the monk named Odd who also wrote *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar*. Hofmann feels that the currently accepted dating of *Yngvars saga* is inaccurate and that it was actually written before the year 1200. He maintains that Odd wrote the original saga in Latin, which would account for the seemingly Latinate passages in the work, and that the Icelandic translation followed shortly. If Dr. Hofmann is correct, this would considerably lessen the time gap between the historical events and the writings of the saga.

² S.H. Cross, trans., *The Russian Primary Chronicle* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Mediaeval Academy of America, 1953), p. 59.

³ Cross, p. 59.

⁴ The arguments for both sides of the debate can be found in N.K. Chadwick, *The Beginnings of Russian History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1946); Cross, *The Russian Primary Chronicle*; Eric Oxenstierna, *The Norsemen*, trans. C. Hutter (London: Studio Vista, 1966); H. Paszkiewicz, *The Origin of Russia* (London: n.p., 1954); N.V. Riasanovsky, *A History of Russia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963); Vilhelm Thomsen, *The Relations between Ancient Russia and Scandinavia and the Origin of the Russian State* (1887; rpt. New York: Burt Franklin, 1964); *Varangian Problems: Report on the First International Symposium on the Theme "The Eastern Connections of the Nordic People in the Viking Period and Early Middle Ages,"* Moesgaard-University of Aarhus, 7-11th October 1968 (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1970).

⁵ For a list of some major Arabic sources, see an unpublished lecture by Richard Perkins of University College, London, given at the University of Saskatchewan in 1977. It includes Ibn-Dihy, *An Amusing Book from the Poetical Works of the Magrib*; Ibn-Khalkum, *The Book of Examples*; al-Idrisi, *The Book of Roger*; al-Masudi, *The Golden Meadows*; Miskawaih, *The Experiences of Nations*; and al-Kazquini, *Geography*. Another bibliography of these manuscripts is found in H. Birkeland, *Nordens historie i middelalderen efter arabiske kilder* (Oslo: n.p., 1954).

⁶ All quotations from *Yngvars saga víðförla* are taken from my own translation based on Emil Olson's 1912 edition of the saga. My translation was done as a Master's thesis for the Department of English, University of Saskatchewan, in 1981.

⁷ Cross, p. 53.

⁸ Dimitri Obolensky, "The Byzantine Sources on the Scandinavians in Eastern Europe," *Scando-Slavica*, supplementum 1 (1970): 155.

⁹ Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De Administrando Imperio*, trans. R.J.H. Jenkins, ed. Cy Morvacisk, 2nd ed. (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies Trustees for Harvard University, 1967), p. 59.

¹⁰ Obolensky, pp. 39-40.

¹¹ Constantine, p. 59.

¹² Thomsen, p. 56.

- ¹³ Constantine, pp. 59-60.
- ¹⁴ Cross, p. 187.
- ¹⁵ The name Red Sea here is mythical and does not refer to the Red Sea as we know it.
- ¹⁶ Constantine, p. 185.
- ¹⁷ Arthur Koestler, *The Thirteenth Tribe: the Khazar Empire and its Heritage* (New York: Random House, 1976), p. 85.
- ¹⁸ A. Mongait, *Archaeology in the U.S.S.R.* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1959), pp. 340-341.
- ¹⁹ E. Wessén, "Historiska runinskrifter," *Vitterhets historie och antikvitets akademiens handlingar*, filologisk-filosofiska serien 6 (1969): 31.
- ²⁰ Wessén, p. 31.
- ²¹ Sven B.F. Jansson, *The Runes of Sweden*, trans. Peter G. Foote (Stockholm: P.A. Norstedt and Söners Forlag, 1962), p. 41.
- ²² Jansson, p. 41.
- ²³ Jansson, p. 44.
- ²⁴ Jansson, p. 40.

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Scandinavian Arms Traders in Warlord China

Anthony B. Chan

In the course of modern Chinese history,¹ the activities of Scandinavian countries have been decidedly overshadowed by those of Britain, France, the United States, Japan, and Germany. Yet, in the context of international law, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark enjoyed the same rights and privileges as the major powers after China's defeat in the Opium War (1839-1842). The Treaty of Nanjing* of 1842 not only opened a series of treaty ports, but also set forth three clauses that would serve to undermine China's independence and sovereignty. These were: the right to establish foreign-governed settlements and residential concessions in China; the most-favoured-nation clause which gave any nation having agreements with China the same rights secured by other countries already having treaties with China; and extraterritoriality, which placed foreign nationals in China under their own laws.² By a treaty signed on 20 March 1847 between the Qing government and Carl Frederick Liljevalch, the commissioner to China and special envoy of the king of the united Kingdoms of Sweden and Norway, both Sweden and Norway could formally participate in the exploitation of China. Later, on 13 July 1863, the Danish plenipotentiary, Colonel Waldemar von Raasloff, signed a similar treaty with the Chinese giving Danish citizens the same privileges as their Swedish and Norwegian counterparts and other Westerners.³ Even with these rights and privileges, Scandinavian influence in the overall development of China was minimal. However, for some warlords during the 1920s, Scandinavian armaments traders were just as important as those from the major imperialist countries. Since domestic arsenals were unable to meet the demands of these Chinese militarists, imports of war *matériel* were crucial to the maintenance of their armies and weapon systems. This paper, therefore, will focus exclusively on the hitherto unknown role of Norway and Denmark in the arms trade in China during the 1920s.

While the issue of armaments transactions contravened the Arms Embargo Agreement of 5 May 1919 (see section on *Arms Control in Warlord China* below), thanks to the diligent work of the British and American intelligence networks in China, documentary evidence relating to dealers, warlord purchasers, products and prices are readily available. The key sources are Great Britain's Foreign Office files — that is, China General Correspondence, FO 371, 1912-1928, and Peking Legation Papers, FO 228, 1912-1928 — and the United States of America's Records of the Department of State Relating to the Internal Affairs of China, 1910-1919, SD files.

* The transcription of Chinese used in this paper is *pinyin*, which was adopted in the People's Republic of China in 1958, and is gradually coming into favour among Western scholars.

The Warlord Era

Historians of modern China have traditionally referred to the warlord era as the period from the death of Yuan Shikai in June 1916 to the triumph of Jiang Jieshi's Northern Expedition of 1928.** It was a time of internecine warfare, economic disruption, and social distress, all of which led to the further entrenchment of imperialism in China. The establishment of the Republic of China in 1912, which had held so much promise for the future of the Chinese people, was now destroyed by the military machines of the warlords and their provincial satraps.

War was the scourge of the warlord era in Chinese history, bringing great suffering to the people. All of the warlords and their armies participated in this Chinese tragedy — taxing, extorting, murdering, and raping. Briefly stated, a warlord was:

... a man who was lord of a particular area by virtue of his capacity to wage war. A warlord exercised effective governmental control over a fairly well-defined region by means of a military organization that obeyed no higher authority than himself.⁴

Thus, the chief factor affecting the power of a warlord was the availability of a strong military force that he could utilize to control a specific geographical area. This meant that his capacity to wage war was a pre-condition to his survival. Therefore, in his desire to achieve adequate military power, the acquisition or production of war materials became one of his primary concerns. It was a question of who could sell, at what price, within which delivery dates, and under what conditions. A steady flow of arms and ammunition was the life-blood of a warlord's military organization.

For the warlord, his sources in the provision of armaments changed drastically after the end of World War I. Formerly, Japan had been the only source during the War but, after 1918, warlords could buy from international suppliers. Since there was a surplus of war *matériel* left from the end of the War in the victorious Western nations, no country could establish a monopoly in the China armaments market. The most revealing aspect of the Western armaments trade in warlord China was that it was broadly based. Because the most significant attribute of a warlord was his capacity to wage war on the battlefield as the first step towards securing political power, the question of how to strengthen his military capability was always present. Fully cognizant of the warlord's needs, the Western armaments traders, committed only to the profit ledger, sold whatever the China armaments market could take. The warlords were eager to buy, and traders from all parts of the Western world, with their order books in hand, were eager to sell. From the factories in France, Britain, Italy, Norway, and Czechoslo-

** The Northern Expedition, led by Jiang Jieshi and supported by several reformist warlords like Yan Xishan of Shanxi and Feng Yuxiang of the Guominjun faction, ostensibly united China under the Guomindang (Jiang's Nationalist Party). It ushered in a new era by establishing Jiang, through recognition by Western and Japanese governments, as the official leader of China. It also marked the beginning of the Nanjing era, a period when the capital of China moved from Beijing to Nanjing. However, warlords still controlled such strategic provinces as Yunnan, Sichuan, and Fengtian. For more on the Northern Expedition, see Donald A. Jordan, *The Northern Expedition: China's National Revolution of 1926-1928* (Honolulu, 1976).

vakia, Western agents converged on the camps of the warlords. And, if the Western traders were slow to negotiate on Chinese soil, such warlords as Zhang Zuolin sent their emissaries to Western cities.

The lines of communication between the warlord buyer and the Western seller were well oiled by their respective views of military and economic necessity. These two primary interests made for mutually satisfying commercial transactions. Thus, for a percentage of the profits, such Western middlemen as Ludwig Bing in Harbin, the Boixo Brothers of Shenyang, A.L. Gran in Shenyang, the Peking Syndicate of London, Jardine and Matheson of Xianggang (Hong Kong), Pestalozza in Beijing, Alexandre Varenne in Indo-China, Butterfield and Swire of Xianggang, and F. Siebert in Qingdao were willing to intervene and, thereby, minimize the complications inherent to trans-continental shipments of arms. Western shipping lines were also eager to bolster their profits by carrying cargoes of war munitions to warlord China. To guarantee their investments, Western traders often obtained insurance from Lloyds (Underwriters) of London, England, and from Eagle Star and British Dominion Insurance Company.⁵ The fact that these companies were willing to insure war materials consigned to warlord China, and at acceptable premiums, meant that the risks involved were few.

Arms Control in Warlord China

All of the war materials exported to warlord China from a majority of the Western countries with interests in China and Japan were in direct contravention of the Arms Embargo Agreement of 5 May 1919. Submitted to Chen Lu of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Agreement took note of the "present state of division between North and South in China" and the "continued possibility of importing military arms and ammunition into the country from abroad." Agreeing "to restrain their subjects and citizens from exporting to or importing into China arms and munitions of war and material destined exclusively for their manufacture," Britain, Spain, Portugal, the United States, tsarist Russia,^{***} Brazil, France and Japan formed the first attempt at arms control in the Republic of China. The embargo would be lifted only when a government was established in China "whose authority is recognized throughout the whole country."⁶ For the British who had initiated the embargo, they agreed to conclude armaments transactions with the Chinese warlords at Beijing only when "a fairly stable government" was able to take power.⁷ For other countries like the Netherlands, Denmark, Belgium, and Italy, their Beijing representatives were also in "full accord" with the Agreement. But they could not completely endorse the embargo until their responsible ministries for foreign affairs officially concurred.⁸ Norway remained outside the agreement and, therefore, was able to sell armaments to the Chinese without regard to any international sanctions.

The Scandinavian Traders

While some Western governmental agencies or their nationals concentrated much of their efforts on a specific warlord, the general norm of the

^{***} Although the Russian Revolution of 1917 ousted the tsarist government from power, a legation acting in the name of Imperial Russia still operated in Beijing until 1922.

Western trader-warlord relationship was multilateral. With the exception of Norway and Denmark which dealt almost exclusively with Zhang Zuolin and his Fengtian clique,**** most of the Western countries or their nationals made arms deals with several warlords as long as they were willing to pay.

The armaments transactions made by Zhang Zuolin were followed closely by Western observers and officials because, of all the warlords, Zhang, with his political and economic base in the Northeast, was the most powerful. He, therefore, could embark on a grand scale of arms acquisition.

In Fengtian province, which was Zhang Zuolin's chief economic base, the control of the Shanhaiguan-to-Shenyang section of the Beijing-Shenyang railway after 1922 yielded an annual income of five million dollars. By May 1922, salt and customs revenues were no longer remitted to Beijing. Nine million dollars from the salt gabelle and 700,000 taels from customs entered Zhang's treasury every year thereafter. Yet, such regular sources as the land tax were able to meet civil and military expenditures for the first fiscal year after 1922. The fact that there was a surplus of \$8,548,737 from a revenue of \$26,787,958 demonstrated the economic genius of Zhang's minister, Wang Yongjiang, and the health of the Fengtian economy even after Zhang was defeated in 1922 by his rivals in Beijing.⁹ With a prosperous economic base, Zhang not only bought arms and armaments, but also engaged in chemical experiments and hired Western munitions experts, advisers and mercenaries.

Norway and Denmark did not adhere to the Arms Embargo Agreement of 1919. Because of this, they supported their nationals in dealings with the Chinese warlords. While some contracts provided for direct sales of armaments and ammunition, the Norwegians and Danes mainly sold lathes, hydraulic presses, machinery for making explosives, steel for rifle barrels, uniforms, bayonets, helmets and shoulder straps, as well as rifles, pistols and machine guns. Advisers from Norway, Denmark, and Sweden were also found in many warlord camps, factories, and arsenals.

Of the Scandinavian traders, Norway was the largest exporter of war materials to warlord China with Zhang Zuolin as the principal buyer. The main munitions factories in Norway were located at Raufoss and Kongsberg and were owned and operated by the Norwegian government. At the end of World War I, the viability of these factories was a cause of much concern to government officials in Oslo. Since both factories were operating at a great loss, the government made a concerted effort to obtain contracts from countries in need of war materials.¹⁰ Warlord China was considered a lucrative market because of its unstable military conditions. While such private firms as Norsk Sprængstof Industrials began exporting explosives to China as early as 1925,¹¹ much of Norway's involvement in the armaments trade in

**** The Fengtian clique or faction was a group of militarists controlling specific areas in Fengtian, Jilin, and Heilongjiang provinces. They owed allegiance to Zhang Zuolin alone. Warlord groupings during the 1920s were commonly referred to as cliques based on personal loyalty. In fact, the Chinese term for warlord was *junfa* (military family or clique). For more on the evolution of warlord cliques, see Andrew J. Nathan, *Peking Politics, 1918-1923: Factionalism and the Failure of Constitutionalism* (Berkeley, 1976).

warlord China occurred from 1927 to 1928 during the height of the Northern Expedition.

In 1927, the Shenyang branch of the Norwegian firm of A.L. Gran (14 Majia miao hutong, Beijing) obtained a contract from Zhang Zuolin to equip his chemical factory with machinery and other "chemical" equipment. Built by a German contractor named Witte, the factory was designed to manufacture T.N.T. It was fully equipped by September 1927. The chief supervisor of the installation of the machines was A.L. Gran himself, who was assisted by a Swedish technical engineer named Carl Brakenhielm, a member of the foreign staff of advisers in Zhang Zuolin's Shenyang arsenal. In the financial arrangements, Jardine and Matheson acted as the agent for The Chartered Bank in Shenyang in processing the contractual documents.¹² Two years before, Gran had been involved in a consignment of armaments and other tools of war from the SS *Vav*, owned by the firm of Haldfan Ditlev-Simonsen and Company. The cargo, which consisted of 129,000 kilos of rifles, 16,000 kilos of Browning pistols, 39,000 kilos of field guns, 2,990 kilos of Nitedal black powder, and 207,000 kilos of T.N.T., was destined for Zhang Zuolin.¹³

One of the largest Norwegian contracts in terms of volume sold to the Fengtian army was the 14,189 cases of war material shipped from Eugene-near-Brobsh on the SS *Sakudal*. Arriving in Yingkou on 19 November 1927, the 1,176 tons of materials consisted of 12,987 cases of rifle cartridges, eight cases of detonators, 545 cases of T.N.T., 309 cases of smokeless powder, seventeen cases of black powder, 282 shells, and twenty-four cases of "game boosters" (large ammunition). The customs release for these goods was authorized by Zhang Zuolin's son, Zhang Xueliang.¹⁴ In the previous month, the Fengtian army also received 400 tons of high explosives through Qinhuangdao from the Norwegian steamer SS *Rollon*.¹⁵

Of the Norwegian shipments closely monitored by British intelligence from the port of departure in Europe to Zhang Zuolin and his allies in warlord China, the cargo of war materials consisting of 3,608 cases on the SS *Bestik* was the most revealing not only of British efficiency, but also of the multilateral dimension of the Western armaments trade. The consignment was first assembled in Oslo with materials from Germany, Czechoslovakia, and the Netherlands, arriving from Hamburg on the SS *Bonn* and from Antwerp on the SS *Nord*. The German cargo of pistols from the Mauserfabrik at Oberndorf was valued at £3,750.¹⁶ With additional war materials from the government factory at Raufoss, SS *Bestik* left Oslo in May 1928 with all goods insured by Lloyds (Underwriters) of London.¹⁷ The agent in China for the fourteen cases of airplane parts and accessories, sixty cases of ammunition, and eight cases of "sport-pistols" destined for Zhang Zuolin was G.G. Amundsen of Oslo, whose representative in Yingkou supervised delivery. The remaining 3,626 cases shipped by Amundsen and George Frank of Hamburg for the American-China Export and Import Company were delivered to Zhang Zongchang in Qingdao.¹⁸

Another "split" cargo intended for the *Anguojun* forces¹⁹ arrived in Qingdao on 19 March 1928. Recipients of these war materials unloaded off the Norwegian vessel SS *Aker* were Sun Chuanfang, Zhang Zongchang, and the Third and Fourth Armies of the Fengtian forces led by Zhang Xueliang and Yang Yuting. Of the 2,482 cases, Zhang Xueliang and Yang Yuting received 81 cases, consisting of 992 cavalry rifles, 400 pistols, and 1,500,000

rounds of rifle ammunition. The total value of the entire shipment amounted to \$1,000,000.²⁰ In July 1927, the SS *Aker* also docked at Qingdao with 2,107 cases of war materials specifically for Zhang Zongchang.

Official Norwegian involvement in the armaments trade to warlord China not only included the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, but also touched the Prime Minister's office. The Ministry was in direct contact with Gorrissen, the owner of SS *Aker*, throughout the various transactions with the *Anguojun* forces. Since it believed that the trade could only benefit Norwegian exporters and the mercantile marine, the Ministry stated that it was not in a position to interfere.²¹ Furthermore, Prime Minister Mowinckel admitted to F.O. Lindley, the British Minister in Oslo, that the government arms factories had indeed delivered war munitions to the *Anguojun* forces. But, with Zhang Zuolin's death in June 1928, the Norwegian government did review the question of further arms exports to China because of British protests. However, Mowinckel stated that, while outstanding contracts would still be filled, new contracts affecting the factories at Raufoss and Kongsberg would be prohibited.²²

Like the Norwegian, the Danish attitude to the China arms market only concerned the monetary gains that could be made from the military instability of warlord China. The most significant transaction involved the Danish firm of Nielsen and Winther of Copenhagen and Zhang Zuolin in 1921. Designed to equip Zhang's arsenal in Shenyang, the Nielsen and Winther contract called for the export of lathes, hydraulic presses, and other machinery which were specifically intended to assist in the manufacture of field guns and ammunition as well as small airplane bombs. The projected production figures were twenty guns and 10,000 rounds of ammunition per day.²³

This shipment, which arrived in Yingkou in November 1922, was a turning point in the Fengtian clique's attempt to achieve an element of self-sufficiency. While one report mentioned that the Danish cargo "had never been installed and the little which was unpacked already showed signs of deterioration from neglect,"²⁴ this description depicted the Shenyang arsenal in its very early stage of reconstruction in 1923. When the machinery was finally installed in 1924, Zhang was able to rely on this arsenal for a daily production of 300,000-400,000 rifle cartridges and a yearly output of 200 artillery pieces and 300,000 shells.²⁵

The Nielsen and Winther cargo, valued at about \$3,900,000 for 300 sets of machinery, was shipped to Zhang Zuolin on the Danish vessel SS *Malaya*. While most of the machinery was purchased from German factories by Nielsen and Winther, the contract was strictly Danish in negotiation and implementation.²⁶ According to the Danish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, British and American firms were competing with Nielsen and Winther for the Fengtian contract. When these firms realized that they were unable to convince Zhang Zuolin that their bids were less expensive, their respective governments issued a strong protest over the Danish transaction.²⁷ The Danish Ministry, however, stated that their protest was unjustified since British and American companies had already been supplying machinery of an identical nature to the arsenals in Shenyang, Taiyuan, and Guangzhou from 1920 to 1921 without interference from their respective governments.²⁸ The official Danish reply to the British government included the fact that

... no prohibition [exists] in Denmark against exportation of these articles and such materials may be shipped freely without the knowledge of the Danish government.²⁹

In a statement to the Americans, the Danish Ministry for Foreign Affairs pointed out that these

... machines were. . . not made for the sole purpose of manufacturing or repairing war materials. These machines are, therefore, not embraced by the prohibition against exportation. . . For this reason, the Danish government is of the opinion that there is no ground for its intervening in this particular case.³⁰

In addition to the arsenal machinery, Nielsen and Winther also supplied the advisers. Except for the Swede, Carl Brakenhielm, the rest of the advisers were Danish. Among these Danes were: S. Schroeder, in charge of rifle production; Christiansen, an expert in manufacturing large ammunition; and Larson, a specialist in the manufacture of cartridge casings.³¹

Arsenal equipment was not the only item that Zhang Zuolin purchased from Denmark. In June 1923, the Shenyang Consul reported that a \$250,000 order of uniforms and other war materials was concluded between the Fengtian faction and a Danish firm.³² In November 1926, Nielsen and Winther supplied about thirty tons of bullet strips to the Fengtian forces with additional contracts calling for the importation of explosives.³³

While Zhang Zuolin was the most influential of the warlords during the 1920s, Zhang Zongchang was, perhaps, the most bizarre. Tales depicting his debauchery, illiteracy, and worship of Confucius enlivened his grim and brutal rule of Shandong. As a military commander, Zhang proved his competence to Zhang Zuolin by his systematic suppression in late May 1922 of a rebellion led by Gao Shibin who was attempting to avenge the ouster from Jilin in 1919 of his superior and uncle, Meng Enyuan, by challenging Zhang Zuolin's authority in the Three Eastern Provinces.³⁴ In 1924, Zhang Zongchang's ability as a military commander again proved superior against Wu Peifu's Ninth Division, commanded by Dong Zhengguo, at Lengkou, a strategic pass along the Great Wall. This encounter, which became the decisive military impetus influencing Feng Yuxiang's mutiny against Wu Peifu in October 1924, pushed Wu's key Zhili forces out of Lengkou and Shanhaiguan. Wu later escaped to Shanghai on a warship docked at Tanggu.³⁵

Zhang Zongchang's demonstration of loyalty to Zhang Zuolin on the battlefield propelled him to the Military Governor's office in Shandong in April 1925. Zhang Zuolin even subsidized Zhang Zongchang in the beginning of his tenure with a monthly payment of 400,000 yuan.³⁶ With the increase in tax revenues, Zhang was able to exploit the resources in Shandong. From 1925 to 1928, eighty-nine percent of the provincial budget — or fifty million of a fifty-six million dollar budget — was allocated to increasing the military capability of Zhang Zongchang's armed forces.³⁷

During Zhang Zongchang's second term in Shandong, the Guomindang launched its military campaign to liberate China from the warlords on 1 July 1926 by asserting in its Mobilization Order for the Northern Expedition that:

To protect the welfare of the people, we must overthrow all warlords and wipe out reactionary powers so that we may implement the Three People's Principles and complete the National Revolution.³⁸

To counteract the Guomindang military thrust, the *Anguojun* Army, led by

Zhang Zuolin with Zhang Zongchang and Sun Chuanfang as the two active deputy commanders, was formed on 24 November 1926. While the Fengtian forces would provide some of the war materials for the Shangdong army, Zhang Zongchang looked to the Western traders to increase his military strength, especially during the height of the Northern Expedition.

Although Zhang Zongchang's major transactions were with the Czechs and the Germans, he also dealt with the Norwegians. Large cargoes on the Norwegian ships *SS Aker*, *SS Skule*, and the *SS Bestik* arrived in Qingdao from August 1927 to August 1928. The *SS Aker* carried two consignments. The first, which left Oslo on 6 July 1927, was negotiated and supervised by W.J. Leigh, Zhang Zongchang's Eurasian (Chinese and English) armaments adviser. It contained 2,107 cases of war materials. Nine airplanes with parts constructed by the Udet Manufacturing Company of Germany formed the bulk of the largest items in the shipment. There were also 20,800 leather straps, 11,370 bayonets, 8,875 new rifles, 2,500 old rifles, 9,000 muzzle covers, 250 pieces of machinery parts, six hunting rifles with 1,200 cartridges for each, twelve air rifles, sporting pistols with safety ammunition, and ten cases of detonators.³⁹

Before the arrival of the second *SS Aker* cargo, a shipment of 7,000 rifles, ten machine guns, and 2,100,000 rounds of ammunition for distribution among Zhang Zongchang and his *Anguojun* colleagues landed in Qingdao in January 1928. The importers of this cargo were the International Trading Company, Associate Transport Company, and Heintzel and Company, all of Qingdao. Shipment was made on the *SS Skule*.⁴⁰

The second *SS Aker* cargo arrived in Qingdao on 10 March 1928 with 2,482 cases of war materials. This was a consignment to be split among the *Anguojun* units, with 2,140 cases destined for Zhang Zongchang. One hundred and thirty cases contained Mauser model 88 type "79" rifles and 1,941 cases consisted of Mauser model 98 type "79" rifle ammunition. The remaining cases included bayonets, straps, machine guns, machine gun shields, machine gun ammunition, pistols, air rifles, and steel helmets.⁴¹

Another Norwegian cargo, which was to be divided between Yingkou with eighty-two cases and Qingdao with 3,526 cases of war munitions, docked in Qingdao in late August 1928 on the *SS Bestik*. Zhang Zongchang's share of the shipment, which was consigned to the American-Chinese Export and Import Company of Tianjin, consisted of 500 rifles, 5,000 bayonets, 5,000 shoulder straps, 534 boxes of rifle cartridges, and forty Mauser and Browning pistols with 43,000 rounds of ammunition. A bill of 39,405 gold dollars was drawn by Schroeder of Liege against the shipping documents. Collection of the bill was in the hands of Banque Belge pour l'Etranger in Tianjin.⁴²

Conclusion

Since the issue of military capability was crucial to all warlords, the importance of extending the China arms market to include all bidders was necessary if a warlord wished to avoid dependence on one foreign country. Although the Scandinavian traders dealt almost exclusively with Zhang Zuolin and his Fengtian clique, these warlords did not simply buy from Scandinavian nationals. The Scandinavian sellers were part of the Western arma-

ments trade from which warlords bought war materials. Yet, by reaching out to Western arms dealers for small arms, machinery for arsenals, and even leather straps and helmets as well as airplanes, armoured cars and equipment for chemical factories, Zhang Zuolin and his Fengtian clique, like all other warlords, became dependent on the Western armaments traders for their military survival. While the warlords tried to establish a domestic military foundation by strengthening their arsenals and factories, the process of construction still necessitated their reliance on foreign machinery, equipment, and advisers. Thus, the nature of military modernization in warlord China was essentially a wholesale imitation of the Western military experience and technology in a Chinese context.

Notes

¹ The periodization of modern Chinese history follows the generally accepted view of Western scholars; i.e., from the Opium War beginning in 1839 to the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949.

² For a discussion of the effects of these clauses, see J.K. Fairbank, "The Mechanics of Imperialism in China," *Amerasia*, Vol. I (1937), pp. 295-300; "Tributary Trade and China's Relations with the West," *Far Eastern Quarterly*, Vol. I (1942), pp. 129-149; "Chinese Diplomacy and the Treaty of Nanking, 1842," *Journal of Modern History*, Vol. XII (1940), pp. 1-30.

³ For a further discussion of the Scandinavian treaties with China, see H.B. Morse, *The International Relations of the Chinese Empire* (Taipei, 1964), Vol. I, pp. 332-333, and Vol. II, pp. 117-118.

⁴ J.E. Sheridan, *Chinese Warlord: The Career of Feng Yu-hsiang* (Stanford, 1966), p. 1.

⁵ The Eagle Star and British Dominion Insurance Company insured a consignment of pistols and ammunition exported from Hamburg to warlord China. The recipient was not stated. Great Britain, Public Record Office, Foreign Office Files, China General Correspondence, Foreign Office (hereafter FO) 371/19238, 18 June 1924.

⁶ J. Jordan to Wai-chao Pu (*Waijiao bu*), "The Arms Embargo Agreement," 5 May 1919, Annex I in A.E. Eastes, "Memorandum Respecting Arms Embargo in China," FO 371/5297, 9 December 1920.

⁷ W.R. Louis, *British Strategy in the Far East, 1919-1939* (Oxford, 1971), p. 122.

⁸ Jordan, "The Arms Embargo Agreement."

⁹ G. McCormack, *Chang Tso-lin in Northeast China, 1911-1928* (Stanford, 1977), pp. 90-92.

¹⁰ F.O. Lindley to A. Chamberlain, Great Britain, Public Record Office, Peking Legation Papers, Foreign Office (hereafter FO) 228/3764, Oslo, 11 July 1924.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, FO 228/3112, Oslo, 12 August 1925.

¹² B.G. Tours to M. Lampson, FO 228/3763; FO 371/13180, Shenyang, 9 May 1928.

¹³ R. Hall (Acting Consul) to His Majesty's Minister (hereafter HMM), FO 228/3111, Yingkou, 30 May 1925.

¹⁴ A.E. Eastes to HMM, FO 228/3766, Yingkou, 22 November 1927.

¹⁵ Lindley to Chamberlain, FO 228/3764, Oslo, 24 July 1928.

¹⁶ New Scotland Yard to Foreign Office, FO 397/13180, London, 19 May 1928.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*; Lindley to Lord Cushendun, FO 371/13181, Oslo, 2 August 1928.

- ¹⁸ Eastes to Lampson, FO 228/3764, Yingkou, 6 August 1928.
- ¹⁹ The *Anguojun* (Pacification of the Country) forces were established among Zhang Zuolin's warlord allies, particularly Wu Peifu and Yan Xishan, to fight the on-coming Guomindang army of Jiang Jieshi. It totalled 1,481,500 troops, of which the majority were infantry. H.G.W. Woodhead, *The China Yearbook*, 1928 (Nendelin, 1969), p. 1282.
- ²⁰ Stewart to Lampson, FO 228/3763, Beijing, 15 March 1928.
- ²¹ Lindley to Chamberlain, FO 228/3766, Oslo, 14 March 1928.
- ²² *Ibid.*, FO 228/3766, Oslo, 2 August 1928.
- ²³ Harold Scarenius to Earl Granville, FO 371/8015, Copenhagen, 22 May 1922.
- ²⁴ Cited in McCormack, *Chang Tso-lin in Northeast China*, p. 107. The source of this citation was not given. By quoting this without further information, McCormack, who has written the best book on Zhang Zuolin, gives the impression that the Danish machinery was never installed.
- ²⁵ Ding Wenjiang, *Minguo junshi jinju [Recent Military in the Republic of China]* (Shanghai, 1926), Vol. I, p. 106; Woodhead, *The China Year Book*, 1928, p. 1281.
- ²⁶ C.M.T. Cold to Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 30 November 1923, enclosed in no. 2 in J.D. Prince to Secretary of State, United States, Records of the Department of State Relating to the Internal Affairs of China, (hereafter SD) 893.113/615, Copenhagen, 4 December 1923; F. Wilkinson to R. Clive, FO 371/9196, Shenyang, 6 November 1922.
- ²⁷ Foreign Office Memorandum, FO 228/3105, 16 May 1922.
- ²⁸ Copy of communication from the Danish Ministry for Foreign Affairs to HMM, 22 May 1922, enclosed in R.C. Parr to Curzon, FO 228/3105, Copenhagen 24 May 1922.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*
- ³⁰ Cold to Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 30 November 1923.
- ³¹ Macleay to Ramsey MacDonald, FO 228/3108, Beijing, 15 March 1924.
- ³² Wilkinson to Macleay, FO 371/9198, Shenyang, 4 June 1923.
- ³³ H.H. King to C. O'Malley (Charge d'Affaires), FO 371/12424, Qingdao, 29 November 1926.
- ³⁴ Tao Juyin, *Beiyang junfa tongzhi shichi shihua [An Informal History of the Rule of the Northern Warlords]*, Vol. VI (Beijing, 1957), pp. 111-112; *North China Herald*, 3 June 1922, and 17 June 1922.
- ³⁵ Chou Tsun-shih, "The Profile of a Warlord," in Dun J. Li, ed., *The Road to Communism: China Since 1912* (New York, 1969), p. 15.
- ³⁶ McCormack, *Chang Tso-lin in Northeast China*, p. 153.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 155.
- ³⁸ "Mobilization Order for the Northern Expedition," 1 July 1926, cited in Donald A. Jordan, *The Northern Expedition: China's National Revolution of 1926-1928* (Honolulu, 1976), p. 64.
- ³⁹ H. King to Lampson, FO 228/3763, Qingdao, 31 August 1927.
- ⁴⁰ Tillney to HMM, FO 228/3763, Tokyo, 22 January 1928; *China Year Book*, 1928, p. 19281.
- ⁴¹ Stewart to Lampson, FO 228/3763, 15 March 1928.
- ⁴² Eastes to Lampson, FO 228/3764, Yingkou, 6 August 1924.

The Theatre's Approach to Strindberg: Four Productions in the Strindberg Festival, Stockholm, May, 1981 — *Brott och brott; Fadern; Fadren, en opera; Il padre*

M. N. Matson

How does the theatre approach Strindberg—the subjective writer of drama, the most objective of the arts? Four productions, out of some twenty-five in the 1981 Stockholm Strindberg Festival, showed a range of styles with one thing in common — a director's controlling vision, realized in the first place by the scene designer.¹ *Brott och brott/Crimes and Crimes* at Dramaten was the showpiece of the festival, and therefore it may be taken — indeed, was taken — as characteristic of the establishment theatre's approach to Strindberg. The three productions of *The Father* were produced independently of each other by very different organizations: a Swedish municipal company; a visiting Italian troupe; and a company of young artists, from France and America as well as Sweden, formed to produce *The Father* as an opera. Apart from the inspiration of the play itself, the common factor in these productions was the pre-eminence of director and designer, a pre-eminence apparent, therefore, both in and out of the Swedish establishment theatre.

Directed by Per Verner-Carlsson and designed by Lennart Mörk and Agneta Pauli, *Crimes and Crimes* at Dramaten brought together the extensive acting and scenic resources of a major European state theatre, achieving spectacle and production values seldom seen in North America save in the musical theatre. The participants in the symposium held in conjunction with the festival attended the production *en masse*.²

What the audience saw at first was a stage open all the way to the rear wall of the theatre and to the sides as well, where scenery and set props were stored. Centre stage was a white semicircular ramp, complemented downstage by a semicircular gravel path curving toward the audience. Beyond the ramp were three piles of white drops attached by slack lines to the loft above.

The circular path and ramp, the programme informed us, had a mandala form, signifying the universe in which the diverse fates of the four major characters were joined and paralleled like the sides of a square within the circle.³ More obviously, the circle defined a central acting area, behind which the life of a large city would reflect and affect the fates of the principals, and it came to symbolize the circularity of the story.

The production began with a scenic prelude. Strong piano chords

sounded as the white drops were slowly raised. Upon them were projected shifting images of Paris at the turn of the century. As the music changed to the cool complaint of a jazz cornet, the stage was gradually populated by the characters of the play, the inhabitants of the city, each doing a characteristic turn: workers gathering, a veiled woman whirling, detectives lurking about ominously. Stellan Skarsgård, who was to play the painter Adolphe, paced back and forth as an actor warmed up his voice, singing strange scales, dissonant and yet in keeping with the "bluesy" jazz.

Thus, as the drops rose, a city of the imagination was erected before our eyes; and, as the actors gathered, that city was populated. The projected images were like the costumes, realistic in period detail, but their supersize and the ghostly, shifting luminosity of projection made them surrealistic in effect. The prosaic materiality of photographic detail was heightened by projection, as if alchemically, to the poetic spirituality of shadows on moving cloth and, in front of those cloths, real actors embodied imaginary souls in order to enact their histories. Reality became dream, and dream — reality.⁴

The scenic prelude came to an end when a large reproduction of Delacroix's *Jacob Wrestling with the Angel* was slid across the front of the stage from right to left, and a cross with *O crux, ave spes unica* on it rose mysteriously from centre stage, pivoting on its base up toward the audience.⁵ The first scene in the Montparnasse cemetery began.

At the end of the play, in a scenic coda that complemented the prelude and rounded out Strindberg's story, the cross rose again—the Delacroix painting was slid across the stage once more; but this time, when centre stage was again visible, Maurice, the successful writer and failed father, stood where the cross had been, his arms outstretched, ambiguously Christ-like and lover-like, at once suffering and offering an embrace to Jeanne, the discarded mother of his dead child, the child he had wished had never been born. Jeanne, downstage, had been praying at the cross and now faced Maurice upstage. They continued to look at each other as they circled to either side, Jeanne to the left, Maurice to the right, keeping his arms outstretched, as if offering Jeanne love again. She, however, maintained her distance and finally backed off to one side, and he almost simultaneously, for he was a figure of renunciation as well as of hope, backed off to the other. The sadly passionate cornet sounded again; the circle completed, the play ended.

Per Verner-Carlsson expanded the text of *Crimes and Crimes* not only with a prelude and a coda, but with interludes when the scene changed. For instance, in the text (and the production) Maurice's new mistress Henriette is harassed by the police as a prostitute, and she indignantly tells them she is of good family (III.ii: *Auberge des Adrets*).⁶ In another scene she reveals her secret: she once performed an abortion that killed the woman as well as her fetus (IV.i: *Luxembourg Gardens*); that's why she is afraid of the five of diamonds, which symbolizes the place of execution, with its five stones for the guillotine (II.i: *Auberge des Adrets*). In the production, while the scene changed to III.ii, an interlude was added; the veiled woman who had earlier whirled about in the background, Henriette's double, appeared at the top of the semicircular ramp, and, flinging open her robe, exposed her chest be-

fore she lay down on her back, her head hanging over the edge of the ramp, facing the audience. An empty picture frame was held in front of her upside-down head, as if confining it, while a sword was brought down behind the frame, indicating her execution. This morbidly sexual exhibition was a nightmarish projection of the guilty fear that drives Henriette "to live in a continuous whirl of recklessness"⁷ veiled by the assumption of respectability.

Besides expanding the play at the beginning, the end and between scenes, Per Verner-Carlsson amplified the text *during* a scene by literally projecting images of the inner state of characters on to the white cloth behind them. Maurice describes the restaurant in the Bois de Boulogne as a Garden of Eden, and himself and Henriette as the first — and therefore only — human beings, and it is here he falls by wishing his daughter out of existence (II.ii: Bois de Boulogne). Behind and partially enclosing the amorous pair was a kind of tent, a huge parachute on its side that had been pulled out of the urban background. Upon this partial cyclorama at first were projected beautiful leaves; but then, after the fateful death wish, similar images almost imperceptibly took their place and one realized with a shock that the beautiful leaf-like objects one was looking at were now flies. This scenic projection of attractive sin, of love that leads to death, of the woeful spiritual state that calls evil good⁸ was successful because of the subtlety of the imaged transition from good to evil.

It may be objected that the director and his designers overloaded a slender dramatic proverb, a realistic tragicomedy of bohemian life, with symbolic spectacle and overwhelmed the actors with stage effects. But the vast environment of the city and its varied life within which the tiny but megalomaniacal principals played their story — or their story played them — was the appropriate macrocosmic amplifier of microcosmic incident. We witnessed a Strindbergian world of repetition and correspondence, a tragicomedy both petty and consequential.

The Father was performed in three quite different versions during the festival: as a relatively naturalistic document at the Stadsteater; as a ritualistic opera at the Music Academy; and, mainly in Italian, as a feminist reconstruction at the Klarateater. Each version testified to the director's design, and to the designer's direction.

Whereas Per Verner-Carlsson had introduced mythological allusions (the mandala and *Jacob Wrestling*) into *Crimes and Crimes* at Dramaten, Jan Håkanson took them out of *Fadern* at Stadsteatern. And he replaced the anecdotes the Captain tells against women with quotations from Strindberg's own anti-feminist polemic. The declared object of the deletion of myth and substitution of polemic was to play down the tragic universality of the sexual conflict and emphasize *Fadern* as "a calculated intervention in contemporary sexual politics," and thus "re-establish the historical and political context of the drama," making it, "into the bargain, more accessible to an audience of 1981."⁹

Whether this documentary approach made the play more generally accessible, I don't know. Making the Captain quote from Paul Lafargue's article on matriarchy in *La Nouvelle Revue* of 15 March 1887, seemed to me to

date and distance him. It didn't help to know Strindberg had uttered the same quotation.¹⁰ It made the Captain seem a mere creature of his time, quaint and rather pathetic, and this despite the impressive military bearing with which Keve Hjelm played him.¹¹

Gunilla Palmstierna-Weiss's set gave a mysterious quality to the otherwise documentary naturalism of the production. It was a darkly lit, panelled room in which *all* potential openings were concealed by the panelling, which at the same time suggested a padded cell. Behind these walls the sounds of domestic life could be heard — from which direction would a woman next appear? — while the Captain sat at his desk planning his campaign. He seemed both inside and outside a besieged citadel, his campaign both offensive and defensive. He was frustrated at every turn; at one point he even tried to go through a panel which he mistook for a door. Near the end of the first act his wife surprised him by appearing at a hitherto unused opening upstage. It was through this opening that the Captain threw the lamp at the end of the second act. In the third act, with the panels left open to the window behind, the room was seen for the first time by the cold light of day, the wall scorched where the breach had been made.

It was from this point, the morning after the Captain's blow-up, that *Fadren, en opera*, William Runnström's setting of the third act of *The Father*, began. It was Strindberg's play as *Endgame*. The set by Roj Friberg was a grey, dusty, pock-marked ruin in a desolate landscape — a house blown up, its walls rubble, its furniture, occupants, and visitors equally scorched and tattered. This was the world after the explosion, after the Captain had hurled the lighted lamp at his wife. We saw the world created by the father's rage, but at the same time the world as he had suspected it to be, its corruption revealed, a world only he could not live in. He had retired upstairs, sitting on his throne on the mountain top.

The director, Jean-Claude Arnault, saw the play not as period polemics, but as the ganging up of the many against the one who sees and says too much, the seer who accepts death for his own good.¹² Whereas in *Crimes and Crimes* the protagonist assumed a cruciform posture partly in hope of regaining love, in *Fadren* the Captain was hung on a cross by the sleeves of his strait-jacket after he died. In the play, the crucifixion was metaphysically witty; in the opera it looked romantically presumptuous at first, but it began a ceremonial sequence of gradually accumulating power, the "Requiem Mass"¹³ that ended the opera. One by one the musicians, wearing capes, appeared from behind the scene and formed a line of mourners up to the cross. The silent, oddly-shaped instruments they carried, were like ceremonial objects, part of the strange ritual. A few musicians remained behind to maintain the musical thread, accompanying the murmuring of prayers by the characters on stage. Then a breath-taking moment: the daughter started down the railway tracks to the left, making the slow, steamy puffs of a locomotive starting, and moving her arms like pistons. But when she came to the place where part of the track had been removed to make her father's cross, she stopped and turned to her mother standing on the platform, held out her arms to her and said, "Mama." She had stalled, unable to move into adult life, and turned back to her mother. The final "Amen" was a long sus-

tained note, the only one played by the musicians on stage; the light gradually intensified to blinding brightness and then faded quickly as did the music, and the opera, the exorcism of the hero, was over. The music and ritual of the production gave it an expressive and monumental universality Strindberg might have approved of.¹⁴

Mina Mezzadri's production of *Il padre* from the Teatro di Porta Romana in Milan was a series of variations on *The Father*, not a mere translation of the text either into Italian or onto the stage. What Strindberg's text provided, was a kind of scenario for the production. It began with the men standing on top of what seemed to be a wall, and the women going about their maternal rounds at the bottom, pushing around a playpen, for instance. The men wore brown leather, the women white cotton dresses like night or nursery gowns. The men never looked at the women, even when talking to them; they were literally beneath notice, playing, cuddling, and giggling in their nursery below while the men conducted the serious business of the world above. The one time the Captain did look at his daughter was when he had dressed her as a little soldier and she stood rigidly at attention.

The real nature of the daughter was revealed in a scene introduced into the middle of the play, proceeding from the event (also invented) of her first menstruation. Her shock was balanced by her mother's delight, and the servant girl explained with appropriate gestures the routine of womanhood: putting on a sanitary napkin, taking pleasure in intercourse and enduring the pain of childbirth, giving a child the breast — all this while speaking Swedish! In a newspaper interview the director explained that Swedish was used because the father couldn't understand it — but since the Swedes could, perhaps they were being complimented on their relatively frank feminism.¹⁵

As the play went on, the patriarchal structure, the apparent wall that the men stood on, swung open into a series of steps on an axis, and as the Captain went mad, he descended into what now became a matriarchal matrix, into the spaces between the narrow swinging platform. Clutching a white sheet around his nakedness, he crawled through the spaces, finally to be reborn in the playpen, the women crooning and nursing him to who knows what new life.¹⁶

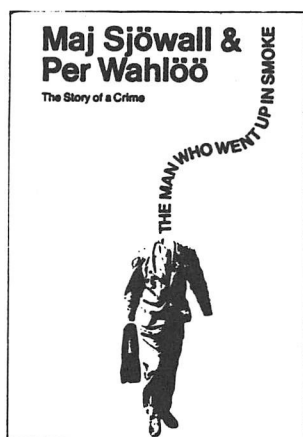
Enrico Job's set showed how a patriarchal world of right-angled rigidity devolved into a matriarchal world of spherical flux. Mina Mezzadri extended into action the Doctor's remark that we don't know what life the Captain may awake to; he was given another chance, awakening once again to a life nourished by women, but this time after the collapse of patriarchal authority. It was a scenically fascinating production which raised the question whether the emphasis on women as maternal wasn't itself a patriarchal attitude, one, however, of which Strindberg again might well have approved.¹⁷

Keve Hjelm, the Stadsteater's Captain, claimed at the symposium that Strindberg had never been played properly. Hjelm attacked the "literary," director-centred theatre exemplified by Per Verner-Carlsson's production of *Crimes and Crimes*. In such a theatre the actor was reduced to acting out the director's predetermined vision and, in *Crimes and Crimes* particularly,

competing with scenery that imaged soul-states which the actors themselves should have suggested in their interplay.¹⁸

There is no doubt that *Crimes and Crimes* was controlled by the director's very elaborate plan, and that this complex theatrical idea was in good part realized by the scenery, particularly by Lennart Mörk's projections. Solveig Ternström, who played Henriette, makes it clear in her published rehearsal diary that the actors had to find themselves in the master plan and that she for one was practically overwhelmed by the challenge of acting up to the scenery. But she also tells how things spontaneously emerged from the actor's interplay, such as the hysterical laughter that opened up her character's desperate emptiness to the stunned audience.¹⁹ As the play was conceived by the director, the actors were certainly not the whole show, but they played the central part in a beautifully realized psycho-mythic spectacle.

What Keve Hjelm advocated was an actors' theatre, and he praised the work of the Milanese actors, who let themselves go physically and vocally — posturing, climbing through or swinging on the set of *Il padre*, and using the extreme ranges of their voices. But the actors' freedom was after all conditioned by the jungle-gym environment in which, like children, they played. Similar conditions controlled much of the actors' behaviour in *Il pellicano*, also directed by Mezzadri and designed by Job. As in *Crimes and Crimes* and the other productions of *The Father*, in *Il padre* the director's conception, given material form by the stage designer, established obvious and often quite peculiar limits within which the actors had to operate. Perhaps the theatre for Strindberg, the communal realization of egocentric genius, has so far been created only as the realization of another coercive vision, the director's.



by Delia Bartolucci, the Captain by Virginio Gazzolo, Bertha by Carla Chiarelli, the servant girl by Alessandra Musoni.

¹⁶ Cf. the Doctor's reply when the Pastor asks in the last scene of *Fadren* whether the Captain is dead: "Nej, han kan ännu vakna till liv, men till vilket uppvaknande veta vi ej" (*August Strindbergs Dramer*, ed. Carl Reinhold Smedmark [Stockholm: Bonniers, 1964], III, 274).

¹⁷ One striking instance of Strindberg's personal wish to see women as mothers occurs in Harriet Bosse's report of his proposal of marriage: "Would you like to have a little child with me, Miss Bosse?" (*Letters of Strindberg to Harriet Bosse*, tr. Arvid Paulson [New York: Thomas Nelson, 1959], p.26).

¹⁸ Hjelm's remarks appeared as a full-page article in *Expressen* ("Teaterns mord på August Strindberg/The Theatre's Murder of August Strindberg"), 23 May 1981. The panel discussion, including Hjelm's remarks, has since been printed in *Strindberg on Stage: Report from the Symposium in Stockholm*, ed. Donald K. Weaver (Stockholm: Swedish Centre of the ITI in collaboration with the Strindberg Society, 1983), pp. 64-83.

¹⁹ Ternström (see n. 4 above), pp. 1, 15, 19.

⁶ Act and scene numbering (Roman numerals, upper and lower case respectively) as in *Crimes and Crimes*, tr. Arvid Paulson, in *Seven Plays by August Strindberg* (New York: Bantam Books, 1960). In the Swedish text I have used (see n. 7 below), the scenes are not numbered.

⁷ Paulson's translation. The Swedish is "att leva i sus och dus" (*Strindbergs Skrifter* [Stockholm: Bonniers, 1951], XII, 230).

⁸ Cf. the Abbé's words when he learns from Jeanne that Maurice has kept her waiting two hours at the cemetery (I.i): "Ve, ve dem, som kalla ont gott och gott ont" (*Strindbergs Skrifter*, XII, 207).

⁹ Lars Bjurman [Dramaturg] and Jan Håkanson, *A Note on the Adaptation of "The Father"*, supplied (in English) by Stadsteatern with the programme for the production, where the same explanation is given. The *Note* also gives a complete translation of Act II, scene iv (Captain and Doctor) as revised. The programme itself gives excerpts from some of the sources of the revision: Preface to Part II of *Giftas* (1885; tr. Mary Sandbach, *Getting Married* [London: Victor Gollancz, 1972]); *Sista ordet i kvinnofrågan/The Last Word on the Woman Question*, 1887; "Maktfrågan eller mannens intresse/The Question of Power or the Man's Interest," *Politiken*, 7 March 1887; Letter to Edvard Brandes, 22 Jan. 1887.

Bjurman and Håkanson think the original anecdotes "no longer convincingly" illustrate woman's moral inferiority (as if the adapters were obliged to make a better case against women than Strindberg had!). However, as Harry Carlson of the City University of New York pointed out at the symposium, whatever Strindberg's intention, the anecdotes may well have the useful effect of illustrating not women's frailty, but the Captain's narrow-minded insecurity.

¹⁰ In the Postscript to the Preface of *Giftas*, Part II:

"The patriarchal family is consequently a comparatively recent form of society, and its rise was marked by as many crimes as we may perhaps expect in the future, should society attempt to revert to matriarchy" (tr. Sandbach [see n. 9 above]).

Strindberg had gone on, as the Captain in the adaptation did, to warn that the attempt to return to matriarchy was already under way.

¹¹ Laura was played by Lena Granhagen, the Doctor by Peder Falk, the Pastor by Stig Torstensson.

¹² See interview with Arnault in *Expressen*, 6 May 1981. The opera was produced by Fadrensällskapet; the orchestra, directed by Per Lyng, consisted of members of Regionmusikern in Stockholm. Laura was sung by Elizabeth Weman, the Captain by Tord Wallström. The daughter Bertha, a non-singing role, was played by Anette Zylberszac.

¹³ So termed in English by the Swedish-American composer in the programme. Runnström's Prokofiev-like music was of course a major factor in the production, but the heroic concept that shaped it seems nevertheless to have been Arnault's.

¹⁴ Cf. Strindberg's advice in 1908 to stage *The Father* with draperies "so that 'the play will be lifted out of its heavy everyday atmosphere and become tragedy in the grand style'" (quoted by Frederick J. Marker and Lise-Lone Marker, *The Scandinavian Theatre: A Short History* [Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1975], p. 184).

¹⁵ See Ulla-Brit Edberg, "Strindberg på italienska," *Svenska Dagbladet*, 17 May 1981: "Det svenska språket är givetvis till för att avskärma Fadren från förståelse av den kvinnliga världen./The Swedish language serves naturally to shut the father out from understanding the world of women." Mezzadri is also reported as saying emphatically she is not a feminist ("Jag är inte feminist, understryker Mina Mezzadri"). Laura was played



Notes

¹ Besides the productions discussed in this paper, the festival performances of *Påsk, Leka med elden, Moderskärlek, Kamraterna, Holländaren, Lycko-Pers resa, Porträtt av en Konstnär som ung man, Vi ses i Berlin* by Dramaten; *Stora landsvägen, Lycko-Pers resa, Fröken Julie* by Riksteatern; *Ett litet drömspel* by Stadsteatern; *Ett drömspel* by Teater 9; *Fräulein Julie* by the Bayerischen Staatsschauspiel; *Il pellicano* by Teatro di Porta Romana (Milan); *El viaje de Pedro Afortunado* by Teatro Latin-americano-Sandino; *Dödsdansen* by Svenska Teatern (Helsingfors); *Los acreedores* by Compania de los cuatro (Venezuela); *Kannibaler* at Strindbergmuseet; *Dialog med Strindberg* at Strindbergssalen; *Fröken Julie* (balett) at Operan.

² The symposium "Strindberg på scenen/Strindberg on Stage" was held at Filmhuset, 18-22 May 1981. The participants attended the May 18th performance of *Crimes and Crimes*; it had opened on 5 January 1980.

³ Maurice was played by Jan Malmjö, Jeanne by Gerthi Kulle, Adolphe by Stellan Skarsgård, Henriette by Solveig Ternström.

⁴ Ingela Lind comments in the programme on "glidningarna mellan teaterdröm och verklighet/the glidings between theatre-dream and reality" in this production of *Crimes and Crimes* (Stockholm: Dramaten, 1980; p.12); and in her published rehearsal diary *Brott och brott: Dagboksanteckningar från repetitionstiden okt 79-jan 80*, Solveig Ternström tells of the director's intention to achieve "ett glidande mellan dröm och verklighet" (Stockholm: Dramaten, 1980; p.15).

⁵ Strindberg describes visiting the church at Place Saint-Sulpice to contemplate Delacroix's painting in "Inferno III," the second part of *Légendes* (wr. 1897; pr. Paris: Mercure de France, 1967); English translation as "Jacob Wrestles" by Evert Sprinchorn, in *Inferno, Alone, and other Writings* (Garden City: Anchor Books, 1968). The Latin inscription appears not only in Strindberg's setting (Montparnasse cemetery), but also on the cross at Strindberg's grave in Stockholm.

DETECTIVE NOVELS AS SOCIAL CRITICISM
AND OTHER VARIATIONS
ON SCANDINAVIAN THEMES

Society and Crime in the Novels of Hans Scherfig

Dieter K.H. Riegel

Hans Scherfig, widely read in Denmark and translated into more than twenty languages, is virtually unknown in the English-speaking world.¹ Born in Copenhagen in 1905, he began his career as a painter and achieved some success with his first novel, *Den døde mand* (1937). Two more novels followed, *Den forsvundne fuldmaegtig* (1938) and *Det forsmætte forår* (1940), before the Second World War interrupted his literary career. Scherfig's next novel, *Idealister*, was originally banned prior to publication in wartime Denmark. It first appeared in Sweden in 1944, and only after the war (1945) in his own country. He published three more novels: *Skorpionen* (1953), *Frydenholm* (1962), and *Den fortabte abe* (1964).² His other contributions include numerous articles and essays as well as travel books.

Although some of his most important works had been written before the war, his rise in popularity began only in the sixties. His satirical talent is now generally acknowledged by the literary establishment, although grudgingly in some quarters.

Coming from a middle-class home, he got interested in socialism and communism while still at university, and he became a convert during the depression in 1929-1930 while staying in New York where he was in contact with the John Reed Club and Michael Gold, the editor of the *New Masses*.³ Ever since that time, Scherfig has been a strong and loyal supporter of the Danish Communist Party although not without personal sacrifice, for he had been arrested in 1941 in connection with the unconstitutional internment of the Danish communists at the demand of the German authorities. Whereas his lack of success in the forties and fifties was obviously due to the climate of anti-communism of the times, his belated popularity has surprised many observers.

Scherfig's novels owe their success to a skilful combination of realism, social satire and the use of certain elements of popular literature. Critics have noted in particular the pattern in detective fiction and the related theme of crime as its prominent features. It is the purpose of this paper to analyse the crime pattern and determine its relationship to the central themes of Scherfig's novels.

There is evidence that Scherfig had already been interested in detective stories as a boy. In *Det forsmætte forår*, for instance, we hear that a group of schoolboys read the adventures of *Nat Pinkerton*, *Dr. Nikola*, and *Rocambole*.⁴ In *Den Forsvundne Fuldmaegtig*, when the police search Mogensen's room, several issues of *Rocambole* are found and, as well, a detective novel by Jean Tulipe.⁵ Jean Tulipe had already appeared in person in Scherfig's first novel, *Den døde mand*, where he was described as sitting in a café all day observing the most dreadful murder dramas and writing them down at night.⁶ As it happens, Jean Tulipe is one of the pseudonyms under which Scherfig had published several dozen short stories in the weekly journal *Ude og Hjemme*.

These had appeared between 1933 and 1936, well before his first novel. The only instructions for these short stories were that they should be 'mystical' and not contain the word 'butter', since the journal was owned by a margarine factory.⁷ Apparently Scherfig used a German detective novel entitled *Der Mann, der zweimal leben wollte* as one of his models, a book which had greatly impressed him as a boy.⁸ Since Scherfig was familiar with popular adventure and crime stories and, furthermore, was able to produce such literature with ease himself, one can reasonably assume that the crime pattern was more than just a convenient trick of the trade to give his novels a more popular appearance.

The significance of popular literature is clearly revealed in a scene from *Det forsømte forår*, already referred to earlier, in which the narrator discusses the private reading material of a group of schoolboys. In this novel, Scherfig makes the point that the school as an institution attempts to shape students' minds in such a way that they willingly accept their roles in capitalist bourgeois society as oppressors and as the oppressed. This goal is achieved by emphasizing order and discipline as well as by promoting a competitive spirit and discouraging solidarity and spontaneity. The officially-sanctioned literature is misused by the school as a tool to prevent students from developing into normal human beings. The popular literature of adventure and crime, often with heroes clearly at odds with the police, serves as an escape from the oppressive climate of the school. But, more importantly, it stimulates the imagination by opening up a new sphere of freedom in which heroes act with vigour and without restraints. The reading of such literature, often in secret and without parental knowledge, is connected with pleasure, quite unlike the study of literature in school, and introduces an utopian element, a vision of a joyful life in freedom. By implication popular literature, regardless of its ideological content, can have a liberating effect, and it is certainly with this potential of popular literature in mind that Scherfig must have borrowed the detective pattern from crime literature.

It is important to note that Scherfig does not use the term '*kriminalroman*' in the title of any of his novels; the publisher does, and this only in one case, on the cover of the paperback edition of *Den fortæbte abe*.⁹ Consequently, readers might be surprised to find that they are reading a crime novel. How the crime pattern is realized in each of the novels will be briefly described by concentrating on the key elements of such patterns: crime, victim, criminal, detective.

In *Den døde mand*, a narrator by the name of Scherfig gives us the biography of the eccentric painter Hakon Brand. The theme of murder is introduced relatively late when Brand admits, or rather pretends — as the reader will find out later — to have killed a rival of his, the journalist Vollbeck. To his consternation the body of Vollbeck keeps returning and has to be disposed of repeatedly by Brand. The mystery is finally resolved in a comedy of errors when Brand finds a real body in his bed, immediately causing him to die of shock and, meanwhile, the presumed victim re-emerges alive and well. Scherfig has obviously parodied the genre of the detective novel: there is no crime, no victim — for the body is that of a stranger who happens to die in Brand's bed — and, consequently, no criminal. Only the detective function is represented — by the narrator who unravels the mystery.

In *Den forsvundne fulmaegtig*, a mystery is introduced right at the beginning. Two men disappear, but only one body is found. A thorough police investigation terminates with the erroneous identification of the body as Amsted, a missing civil servant. In the middle of the book, the narrative's perspective shifts away from the investigation to the life and fate of a mysterious stranger who claims to have returned from America after a long absence and takes up lodgings at a small seaside resort. He arouses suspicion among his neighbours; however, the reader soon realizes that the stranger must be the missing Amsted, who is eventually arrested and sent to prison for alleged insurance fraud. As it turns out, his former classmate, Mogenssen, was not murdered at all but had committed suicide. When released, Amsted feels unable to continue life in freedom and seriously contemplates committing a real murder in order to be returned to an orderly life in prison. In the end, his wish comes true: he claims to have killed his classmate. Again there is no murder and, consequently, no criminal or victim. Even when the police function is relatively important, the police are still unable to detect the truth.

Det forsømte forår is the first novel in which a real murder occurs. *Lektor Blomme's* death by poisoning remains unsolved until, at a class reunion twenty five years after graduation, Judge Ellerstrøm confesses to having murdered his former Latin teacher. However, none of his classmates pays any attention to his admission of guilt. The role of the police is negligible, and the criminal remains unpunished.

Similarly *Idealister* begins with a murder scene, in which a wealthy manufacturer and landowner, Skjern-Svendsen, is killed in his bed in the middle of the night by an unidentified person. We are introduced to several suspects, but the reader's expectations are disappointed when, quite in the style of the classical detective story, Skjern-Svendsen's gardener makes a confession in a surprise ending. All elements of the crime pattern are utilized, but the police are given only a minimal role.

Skorpionen, the first postwar novel, gives an account of the infamous "Edderkop" affair. The unsuspecting and harmless *lektor*, Karelius, is arrested one morning and accused of a double murder. The police, engaged in a cover-up operation, need a suspect and therefore keep Karelius imprisoned although no evidence links him to the murders. After a year in prison, he is sent back home, but the murder cases remain unsolved. A substantial part of the novel deals with the illegal practices of members of the business community who enrich themselves by black marketeering, smuggling and other irregularities in collusion with the police and with the knowledge of the Minister of Justice. The crime is never solved; on the contrary, the police are themselves corrupt and victimize innocent citizens.

In *Frydenholm*, a panoramic view of Denmark under German occupation, Scherfig is mainly concerned with a collective crime committed by the Danish authorities in collaboration with the German occupation forces against the Danish communists; that is, their illegal arrest and internment and subsequent deportation to a German concentration camp where many of them lose their lives. The whole state apparatus has become corrupt and the police, having abandoned their traditional role as protectors of the innocent, cannot be used to represent the detective function in the novel because

they are themselves involved in criminal activities. Instead, Scherfig concentrates on the other elements of the crime pattern: the victims, the criminals and the crime.

Finally, in *Den fortættede abe*, Scherfig returns to a more light-hearted approach. In search of a valuable stolen monkey which is a leading painter of "infra-human" art, Jonas, a private detective, pursues Sylvestre Mourant, another painter and world champion in the art of the macabre. He manages to unmask Mourant as being, in reality, quite a normal man with a wife and children and, thereby, ends the painter's career. As was the case in Scherfig's first novel, there is no crime, no criminal, no victim; but there is a detective who goes through all the motions of the classical crime hunter.

This brief survey of Scherfig's novels shows not only that his plots are conceived with the crime pattern as their basis, but also that he creates original variations on that pattern. Each of his novels has a unique, individual structure with an unpredictable use of the crime pattern. In response to a question about his planned novel, *Døden i Fredensborg*, Scherfig mentioned that it contained a political and "kriminalistisk" intrigue and a few murders.¹⁰ All this, as well as the fact that Scherfig's novels have a transparent and consistent thematic structure as Andersen and Emerek have shown so convincingly, points rather to a more organic connection between form and ideological content.¹¹

Such a link becomes apparent when Scherfig's view of society is taken into account. In his theoretical and journalistic writings, he emphasizes again and again that bourgeois society is a class society in which the ruling class dominates and exploits the rest of the population. This society is based on the principle of competition, a Darwinistic struggle for survival, where the strongest win. The laws governing "liberal" society are the same as those which can be observed in nature where aggression is the norm. Capitalist society is basically a criminal society.¹²

Historically speaking, bourgeois society is in a stage of decay and disintegration and will, one day, be transformed into a socialist and, eventually, a communist society. In a text entitled *AR 2061*, originally published in 1961, Scherfig gives us his view of this future society.¹³ Since everybody will be provided for according to his needs, there will be no theft or any other crime, no police and no prisons. What used to be called "crime" will then be considered a disease. But the frequency of mental illness will be much lower when fear and pressure have disappeared. An article from the same year, "Tanker om Fremtiden," outlines the stages of human development.¹⁴ Mankind has already crossed the threshold that separates him from the animal world which is governed by a brutal struggle for survival. Man is peaceful and good, but his humanity is violated by the capitalist system which artificially imposes on him the law of the jungle. It is exactly that interim stage which Scherfig describes in his novels. By implication, crime in bourgeois society is the result of one of two factors: an aggression of the stronger against the weaker in the context of the class struggle, or an act of frustration of the oppressed against the oppressor.

We will now return to his novels to illustrate that point briefly. Since man is good by nature, the school has to impose on its students a regime and a set of values that will make them fit and willing to participate in the

process of exploitation against their natural inclinations. *Lektor Blomme*, in *Det forsømte forår*, is the most hated representative of such an institutionalized school system. His murder is an act of frustration and of unconscious revolt against this system of oppression on the part of a student, *Ellerstøm*, who affirms his humanity by this act. Consequently *Ellerstøm* does not feel guilty, for he does not consider *Blomme* a human being but a representative of an inhuman system. Nor does the reader feel any sympathy for the victim. While the unfolding of the plot of the novel leads the reader to appreciate the motives of the murderer, *Scherfig*, at the same time, indicates that murder as an act of self-defence is not a constructive tool of change. *Ellerstøm*, after all, will join the ranks of the oppressors by becoming a judge. The more tragic aspects of the theme of the murderer as a victim of capitalist society are developed in *Idealister*: where the gardener, *Holm*, becomes mentally deranged as a result of various pressures and kills his employer; the murder victim — the influential businessman, *Skjern-Svendsen*, who represents the capitalist class — does not receive any sympathy from the author.

In all his novels, *Scherfig* show us people who have deviated from their natural goodness in varying degrees in response to the demands and pressures of capitalist society. Some are completely alienated from their own selves and participate more or less unscrupulously in the process of exploitation; for instance, the various police officers in *Skorpionen*. Others make futile attempts to re-assert their humanity, which may or may not lead to criminal acts. Therefore, *Scherfig's* novels almost naturally develop into crime novels. The extent to which the pattern of the detective novel is utilized, depends upon the degree of frustration and violence with which the oppressed react. In *Den forsvundne fuldmaegtig*, for instance, *Amsted* simply tries to remove himself from society, but he is already so deformed that he can no longer live in freedom and must pretend to have committed a murder in order to regain entry into that part of society which will still accept him — the prison.

It is not surprising that, in the context of *Scherfig's* view of society and crime, the detective function can only play a minor role. *Scherfig* did not step into the tradition of the Great Detective which is so prominent and popular in the genre, and with good reason. The detective's mandate, to bring the criminal to justice, cannot be executed satisfactorily since capitalist society is ultimately responsible for crime. In *Frydenholm*, the powerful alliance of all societal forces against the communists makes it virtually impossible for the victims to find justice, a situation which makes the detective function redundant. But even in those novels where the police go about their business properly, they fail to uncover the truth. In *Den forsvundne fuldmaegtig*, *Amsted* manages to deceive the police and the justice system; in *Det forsømte forår*, the murder remains unsolved; and, in *Idealister*, the murderer gives himself up voluntarily. In *Skorpionen*, the police actively prevent the truth about a double murder from being revealed. *Jonas*, one of the policemen who is implicated in various crimes and dismissed from office in this novel, plays the role of private detective in *Den fortabte ake* and, therefore, cannot be taken seriously by the reader.

This investigation has shown that *Scherfig* uses the crime pattern as an

organizing principle in all his novels. In doing so, he is able to accommodate the expectations of readers of popular literature. As was pointed out earlier, Scherfig's view of popular literature is not entirely negative, since the heroes in the books he was familiar with as an adolescent had freed themselves of the restraints of bourgeois society, thereby allowing the readers to enjoy in their own imagination a temporary escape from the often unpleasant realities of daily life.

Although an organizing principle, the crime pattern is used imaginatively and does not appear to be a restraint on the author's creativity as is so often the case in the traditional crime novel. Furthermore the pattern, as it organically emerges from the plot, is the formal equivalent of one of the dominant themes of Scherfig's novels, namely that of the inherently criminal character of capitalist society. It is therefore not unreasonable to assume that Scherfig's view of the nature of bourgeois society led him to adopt the crime pattern as the structural backbone of his novels.

Notes

¹ The only novel available in an English translation is *The Idealists* (*Idealister*), tr. Naomi Walford (London: Elek, 1949).

² All references to Scherfig's novels are based on the paperback editions by Gyldendal (Gyldendals Tranebøger) with the exception of *Skorpionen* (Vinten: Stjernebøgerne).

³ Carsten Clante, *Normale mennesker: Hans Scherfig og hans romaner* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1975), pp. 56-59. Vilhelm Joost, *Scherfig* (Aalborg: Stig Vendelkaers Forlag, 1974), pp. 24-25.

⁴ *Det forsømte forår*, p. 102. On Dr. Nikola and Rocambole, see Tage La Cour and Harald Mogensen, *The Murder Book: An Illustrated History of the Detective Story* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1971), p. 59 and p. 41 respectively. On Nat Pinkerton, see Georg Seesslen, *Mord im Kino: Geschichte und Mythologie des Detektiv-Films* (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1981) pp. 87-88.

⁵ *Det forsømte forår*, p. 46.

⁶ *Det forsømte forår*, p. 99.

⁷ Clante, *Normale mennesker*, p. 70.

⁸ Clante, *Normale mennesker*, p. 92.

⁹ Gyldendals Tranebøger, 1972.

¹⁰ Jørgen Moestrup, *Hans Scherfig* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1977), p. 92.

¹¹ Jens Kr. Andersen and Leif Emerek, *Hans Scherfigs forfatterskab: En analyse* (Copenhagen: Vinten, 1973), pp. 11-25.

¹² Hans Scherfig, "Kapitalismens filosofi," in *Den fattige mands bil: udvalgte essays* (Copenhagen: Vinten, 1971), pp. 50-52; "Den kriminelle stat," in *Årbog 1973: Kommentarer* (Copenhagen: Tiden), pp. 79-81.

¹³ In *Butleren og andre historier* (Copenhagen: Vinten, 1973), pp. 19-35.

¹⁴ In *Marxisme, rationalisme, humanisme* (Copenhagen: Vinten, 1975), pp. 34-41.

The Ideology of the Martin Beck Novels

Peter Ohlin

The Swedish detective novel has not had a strong international reception. Even the more successful among them seem somewhat anemic in comparison with those of the international masters of the field. It is all the more pertinent, therefore, to pay attention to the extraordinary international success of the ten Martin Beck novels by Maj Sjöwall and Per Wahlöö. The breakthrough was almost immediate with the publication of *Roseanna* in 1965, culminating with the reception of the Edgar Award for the best mystery novel from the Mystery Writers of America in 1970. In the next five years, they published four more books; all were written with equal competence, verve, and drive, and they became widely available on the international market.

A few reasons may be advanced for their remarkable success. First is the gallery of characters. All the individual policemen are carefully delineated with a few very recognizable traits, sometimes bordering on a parodic schematization: Melander's computer-like memory and habit of always disappearing to the bathroom; Kollberg's sensualism, intuition, and radicalism; Beck's intuitions and ulcers; Månsson's mentholated toothpick; and so on. Even the stupid or malevolent characters (Malm, Bulldozer Olsson, Kristiansson and Kvastmo) are so sharply etched that it becomes amusing to recognize them whenever they appear again.¹ Secondly, the novels are written in a strikingly distinctive documentary style. What this means is that the prose style, as well as the rhetorical organization of the text, tends to be documentary, objective, flat, and omniscient. Bodies tend to be described with clinical detachment.² Even though Martin Beck may be the hero, and the narrative most frequently follows his experience, we are also permitted to observe bank-robbers in action, to record the bewilderment of a criminal who has been outwitted, and other similar overviews. Sometimes this can lead to paradoxes, ironies, and pointed flash-forwards ("Many years later, when the investigation had reached a dead end, there would be people who blamed him . . .").³ All of these devices are motivated by a kind of documentary devotion to facts, but orchestrated by a rhetoric which permits taking into account the many curious ironies created by the juxtaposition of specific facts.

A third reason for the relative popularity of these novels may be the modern urban milieu they present. They take us, in other words, through a set of contemporary settings in which contemporary events will have an impact on the plot itself, and not just provide part of the environment. The most basic example of this is *The Locked Room*, which is a deliberate variant on the classic crime mystery premise of a dead body in a locked room and no murder weapon anywhere. But a comparison with, say, Dorothy Sayers'

Busman's Honeymoon reveals all the differences. In *The Locked Room*, the social facts as they impinge on the lives of the criminals, on the detective-hero and his colleagues and friends, are of paramount importance.⁴ In other words, the novels present us not just with updated versions of classical detective novel formats, but also with a set of contemporary social dilemmas related to modern urban technological societies. All of these dilemmas cannot only be instantly recognized, but also be seen as relevant.

A further reason for their success may be their blistering critique of the modern welfare society (Sweden as the "middle way"). In *The Man on the Balcony* (1967), the specific role of the police in society is related to the problems of youngsters and drugs, the increasing power of gangsters, the absurd increase in technological devices in police work, the currency of alcoholism and the prevalence of socio-psychological expert commentary on anything and everything. In the later novels, everything from alcohol legislation and prison reform to hospital care and airport design comes in for fairly specific criticism. It may be suggested that a country which has earned its reputation as the "middle way" becomes somewhat more interesting in the public mind when it appears as a very tainted paradise indeed.

These perhaps superficial characteristics of the novels must be seen within the context of the fact that, on the whole, the ideology of the detective novel has always been profoundly conservative. After all, the major function of the detective, or the police force, is to restore order where the criminal has disrupted it. In the process, the detective frequently encounters greed, venality and viciousness behind the genteel exteriors of the very rich; and the police force has to cope with bureaucratic stupidity and the self-serving compromises of the politicians. But, instead of promising the possibility of some kind of social action, such critical observations tend to remain individual perceptions. Egocentric detectives like Poirot, Holmes, Wimsey, and Wolfe end up affirming a morality that is based on individual perceptions and actions, which is the hallmark of a bourgeois ideology. Even writers with more or less open "left-wing" sympathies, like Dashiell Hammett, no matter how forceful their critiques of some aspects of social behavior, offer little by way of an alternative except in the style and endurance of their individual heroes.

In this context, the crime novels of Sjöwall and Wahlöö at first seem unusual in their attempt to present a critique of Swedish society from a non-bourgeois ideological point of view. Their vision of Sweden not as a socialist welfare state that has failed but rather as a capitalist exploitative society that has succeeded all too well is, at least superficially, quite striking. Their most basic expression is what might be called the betrayal of the average citizen by the society itself, or rather, by the social democratic regime. This critique reaches its culmination in the last of the novels (*The Terrorists*):

Here in Sweden our pretend-socialist regime has for many decades proclaimed a kind of neutrality, which is totally false. All the time, since long before the cold war, our foreign policy has been shaped by people with a very negative approach to socialism and a positive view of Western capitalism Since our social democratic government basically only represents its own and the private capitalist interests, but has succeeded in fooling the people into believing that it represents a sort of so-

cialism, it has as long as it has been in existence fought against the really true socialism The Swedish version of social democracy has for decades fooled the masses with false propaganda. In fact, it represents totally capitalist interests and a small clique of bosses who can be expected to keep the majority of the workers under control. This is a crime against the people, actually against every individual living in the country.⁵

While this critique is attributed to a character described as radical in the novel, it is nevertheless typical of the kind of view that emerges from the novels as a series. In comic form, this betrayal, and its commitment to the consumer society, appear like this in an early novel:

The consumer society and its harassed citizens had other things to think of. Although it was over a month to Christmas, the advertising orgy had begun and the buying hysteria spread as swiftly and ruthlessly as the Black Death along the festooned shopping malls. The epidemic swept all before it and there was no escape. It ate its way into houses and apartments, poisoning and breaking down everything and everyone in its path. Children were already howling from exhaustion and fathers of families were plunged into debt until their next vacation. The gigantic legalized confidence trick claimed victims everywhere. The hospitals had a boom in cardiac infarctions, nervous breakdowns and burst stomach ulcers.⁶

This description is by no means unusual; and when the same sentiment is voiced in the last novel of the series, it is almost parodic:

Since the time when Martin Beck and his generation were children Christmas had developed from a fine traditional family holiday into something that could not be called anything but an economic con game or commercial madness.⁷

It even affects Gunvald Larsson, that inveterate snob who has abandoned his upper-class background to become first a sailor and then a policeman:

When the Muzac tried to torture the customers into some further impulse buying by spewing forth, for the fifth time, the same idiotic translation of "Rudolph the Rednosed Reindeer" Gunvald Larsson became so distracted that he bought the wrong kind of cheese, Swedish Camembert instead of Danish Brie, and on top of everything else, the wrong kind of tea, Earl Grey's Gunpowder instead of Twining's Lapsang Sou-chong, before he managed to fight his way through the line at the check-out counter, and left the store tired, sore, and irritated.⁸

Western capitalism, indeed.

But the theme of economic exploitation is not just a comic element. In a number of the novels, the economic system is the premise that underlies the crime. For example, in *The Laughing Policeman*, what looks like a sex crime turns out to be motivated purely by the imperatives of bourgeois economic respectability. In *Murder at the Savoy*, the death of the corporate executive is not the result of a financial struggle or petty jealousies, but the almost accidental act of vengeance wreaked by one of the small victims of corporate economics who has been suddenly rendered homeless and jobless by a stroke of the corporate pen (in a society where the welfare state does not know how to deal with such indignities). In *The Cop Killer*, the sex murderer, once again, turns out to be not a sex murderer at all: he is simply afraid that the disclosure of his little love affair will ruin his financial arrangement with his wife. In *The Terrorists*, Rebecka Lind's refusal to accommodate the pre-

vailing socio-economic system is so massive (and so innocent) that practically nobody understands her, either before or after the crime. However, in all these novels, the socio-economic motive is, in fact, almost never mentioned; the fact that the economic system crushes some individuals remains the individual perception of some sensitive individuals like Beck, Kollberg, and a few others.

The second major element of this critique is the increasing bureaucratization and politicization of the police force. The conflict between the working policeman and the politics of the police commissioner is, of course, a standard element in most so-called procedural detective novels. What makes the Martin Beck novels different is that here it is not simply the conditions in one city which are criticized: here a national police force is shown to be so politicized, centralized and isolated from society at large that it becomes a kind of paramilitary force. For example, by insisting that political demonstrations must be contained at all costs by riot squads (rather than by cops on the beat or traffic cops), the statistical incidences of assaults on policemen become so inflated that they present an overwhelming argument for more manpower and more budget; and thus power is preserved:

The new police headquarters building was to be an important symbol of this new power. It was to facilitate a planned central directorate of a totalitarian type, and it was also to be a fortress against the prying eyes and ears of persons having no business there — which meant, in this case, the entire Swedish nation. In this context one line of thought was important: Swedes had gotten into the habit of laughing at the police. Soon no one would laugh any more. Or so it was hoped.⁹

The novels attempt to document with some care the ways in which the bureaucratization and politicization of the force has affected the procedure and methods of the individual policeman. The encouragement of the use of physical force is one such example. This is not just the problem of whether policemen should in fact always be armed, a debate which is brought up by Kollberg in nearly every novel. More important, however, is the increase of technological force of a more or less military nature. The escalation of force proceeds from the service gun to sharpshooters, attack dogs, helicopters and commando forces. The more massive the force, the more ludicrous the results, as demonstrated in *The Abominable Man*, in which one man on the roof of a building kills a couple of policemen, wounds several more, destroys several police vehicles, downs one helicopter and kills one of the specialists on airborne attack fighting. "Then came the impotent substitute for revenge. Hundreds of different weapons belched out bullets towards the building on Dalagatan. Few of them with any target and none of them with any effect. The police opened fire, futilely, but presumably to regain their courage. Shots were fired from hopeless angles and impossible ranges."¹⁰ Similar scenes are repeated in *The Locked Room* and *The Cop Killer*.

This increase in the availability and use of technological force must be seen in relation to the examples of incompetence and brutality. The most frequently visible symbols of incompetence are, of course, Kristiansson and Kvant and, later, Kvastmo. The gradual revelation of what actually happened when Rebecka Lind tried to borrow some money, demonstrates a frightening combination of incompetence, stupidity, and brutality. The stress on technology and weaponry, the increased reliance on technicians

and specialists, the lack of psychological training, and the isolation of the force from society are said, again and again, virtually to guarantee the decline of police competence. The novel that deals most explicitly with this theme is *The Abominable Man*, in which both the victim and the murderer are policemen, and in which all motives and all procedures to capture the guilty man are based on a familiarity with the development of the police force in the Martin Beck universe.

Ultimately, this goes so far that individual policemen are forced to question their relationship to the criminal and begin to see him more as victim than as perpetrator. In novel after novel, the criminal can be seen as a victim either of circumstances and provocation, compulsion, blackmail, or other larger economic motives.¹¹ (In *The Cop Killer*, there are at least three people who appear to be victimized by the forces of economics, the hysteria of communications media, or sheer miscarriage of justice, as an ironic counterpoint to the real crime.) What this amounts to is a direct criticism of a society that more and more often chooses simply to label such people as criminals rather than deal with the underlying causes of criminal acts. As the series progresses, these causes are identified more and more precisely, and are all found to be connected with the exploitative devices of a pseudo-socialist society. Consequently, individual policemen like Beck, Larsson, Kollberg, Rönn and others find themselves acting more and more to protect the criminal rather than to destroy him.¹²

This critique of Swedish society may or may not be valid, but it is certainly pointed enough and suggestive. The real problem, of course, is what kind of positive values are presented to counterbalance this negative critique. The question that must be asked is whether, in the light of such critical elements, the novels embody any positive possibilities for their characters (or by implication, for us) and, if so, what these are. But since this critique of social phenomena is Marxist (or pseudo-Marxist), exposing Swedish society as hopelessly committed to a form of Western capitalism, the only positive elements in the life of the protagonist and his friends are totally divorced from social action and societal reform. In fact, what is being held up to us is the faint but unrealistic possibility of a kind of utopian pastoral commune, which has very little to say about the specific social problems that have been criticized previously.

Perhaps the major element in this profoundly conservative utopian vision is sexuality or, more simply, the relationships between men and women. Throughout the series, Martin Beck is working his way out of a joyless marriage into a final meaningful relationship with an independent and loving woman. She is that best of all things: independent, experienced, divorced, mother, property-owner, intelligent, good cook, sensualist. No wonder Martin Beck falls in love with her. Her name, Rhea, signifies the goddess of growth of all natural things; she is Cybele, the Magna Mater, daughter of Uranus and Gaea (heaven and earth), mother of Zeus, Hera, Poseidon, and so on. And, in the novels, she runs her apartment house not like a traditional capitalist landlord would, but like an earthmother, the natural mother of a large commune. In short, she is the nostalgic intimation of the possibility of a liberated woman, combining independence of mind with a social conscience and a sensual appetite. The problem, of course, is that

this dream vision is an inadequate response to the view of sexuality presented in the previous novels.

In most of the novels, women are presented quite explicitly as victims of their biological needs.¹³ Sexuality is depicted as a kind of dangerous trap, and the detachment of Martin Beck is partly due to the fact that he lives in a marriage that is no longer sexually functional. As well, the early novels include long and explicit descriptions of women's bodies in absurdly objective and clinical detail, and certainly in a way that no male body is described in the whole corpus.¹⁴ In other words, the series seems to imply that the unbridled sexuality of women is very dangerous and will lead to crime, and that a woman is better off when she can set herself up as a mother and take care of a family (like Gun Kollberg, or Rhea). While this summary may be slightly unfair, it does include the basic characteristics of the vision of sexuality and its role in the novels. If the social critique of the novels is attempting to find more liberated relationships between men and women, this view of the female role hardly supports it.

A second element of the vision of these novels is the objection to rationalism and logic. In fact, novel after novel stresses the qualities of humanness, the ability to listen, the importance of intuition. Without making too much of it, one may nevertheless hazard that the stress on such qualities supports a reform on a human rather than an ideological level.

Thirdly, there is a deliberate contrast between city and country, particularly in the later novels. Granted, the novels seem to say that Stockholm is a cesspool. Its police force is absurdly incompetent and overtaxed by social imperatives and to join it in this day and age is an act of defiance or madness (*The Locked Room*). On the other hand, one meets all kinds of "nice cops" in the country: Ahlberg in Motala, Månsson in Malmö, Allright (or Nöjd) in Anderslöv, and so on. While this theme may be understated, it nevertheless becomes another element in the general vision of a possible life in which women are earthmothers, people understand each other without speaking, and the technological demands of urban life have disappeared.

In short, for all the pointed social critique of very specific conditions portrayed in these novels, their vision is a profoundly conservative one. In addition, the rhetorical complexities created by the style are problematic. For example, in *The Terrorists*, one of the terrorists escapes surreptitiously to Denmark and Copenhagen airport. One of the Swedish crime investigators, going home to the south of Sweden, has to land at the same airport. This is what the novel says: "They had never met before and would never meet again. Consequently, neither of them noticed anything." In being allowed to know something which the characters themselves do not and cannot know, the reader becomes involved in the overall design of the narrator and his narrative. It is exactly at that level that the flat, documentary style of the descriptive prose becomes so effective, forcing the reader to give his assent to the overall factuality of the novel. If there are things to know, from now on it seems reasonable to assume that the reader will know them since he now shares the omniscience of the narrator. The complicity of the reader in the situation obviously undercuts the ideological critique and reinforces instead his perception that, bad as things are, this is simply the way that they are.

This dilemma quite possibly may be an accurate reflection of social reali-

ties in Sweden in the 1970s: I refer to the tension between the social-democratic bureaucratic hierarchy on the one hand (and its commitments to the party programme) and, on the other hand, to the increasing demands for participatory power, human control of the working environment, and so on. But, in the long run, what one will remember the novels for may be their account of Martin Beck's gradual and tentative struggle toward a human liberation, a struggle marked by the realization that the social and political realities of his existence are in stark conflict with his most profound human needs. But that is not a specifically Swedish condition — it is a universal one.

Notes

¹ In this respect, their stereotypes are as meticulously crafted as the figures that appear on well-made TV shows like *Barney Miller* or *Hill Street Blues*.

² All the more lurid because of the subject matter. This is our first encounter with Roseanna McGraw: "She was naked and wore no jewellery. The skin was lighter across the breasts and the abdomen as if she had been sunbathing in a bikini. She was wide-hipped and had strong thighs and the hair between her legs was black and wet and thick. The breasts were small and soft with large dark nipples. From her waist to the hipbone there was a whitish red scratch. Apart from that the skin was soft with no scars or blemishes. She had small hands and feet and the nails were not painted. The face was swollen and it was difficult to tell what she had really looked like. The eyebrows were dark and pronounced and the mouth seemed wide. The hair was black and of medium length and was plastered to her skull. A wisp of hair lay across the neck." *Roseanna* (Stockholm: Pan/Norstedts, 1967), p. 7 (my translation). This description is rather mild compared to that of the victim in *The Abominable Man*: "The dead man lay partly on his side between the bed and the window. The throat had been cut with such force that the head had been thrown back at an angle of almost ninety degrees and lay with its left cheek against the floor. The tongue had forced its way out through the gaping incision and the victim's broken false teeth stuck out between the mutilated lips." *The Abominable Man* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), p. 28. The description goes on for at least another half-page. There is a kind of false neutrality in such prose which, as one of its functions, engages the reader in a kind of rhetorical complicity with the text: i.e., the reader comes to feel that this is simply the way things are and can then sit back and watch Beck, Rönn and others react to the scene in more or less horror.

³ *Roseanna*, p. 7.

⁴ The solution of the problem demands not just the ingenuity to solve a puzzle, but also an intimate familiarity with the practical details of such phenomena as police incompetence, the inadequacy or inhumanity of social welfare agencies, the prevalence of petty graft on the dockyards, and so on. The ultimate paradox is that neither Beck's superiors nor the courts are able to accept his solution to the problem, this being another demonstration of how far they are removed from the social reality they inhabit.

⁵ *Terroristerna* (Stockholm: Norstedts, 1975), pp. 218-219 (my translation).

⁶ *The Laughing Policeman* (New York: Bantam, 1971), p. 103.

⁷ *Terroristerna*, p. 407.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 386.

⁹ *The Locked Room* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1973), pp. 142-143.

¹⁰ *The Abominable Man*, p. 195.

¹¹ In fact, this theme appears in the very first novel in which the only way to catch Roseanna's murderer is to set a trap by provocation. The ethics of this entrapment still haunt Beck in *The Cop Killer*, nine years later. But the symbol of the trap is crucial and Beck's personal situation is explicitly related to it from the beginning.

¹² "Someone was responsible for all this. Not Nyman, because he had never understood what responsibility for human beings actually meant, or even that such an idea existed. Not Malm of course, for whom Eriksson was quite simply a dangerous madman on a roof, with no other connection to the police than that it was their job, one way or another, to put him out of action.

"And Martin Beck felt something growing stronger and stronger in his mind. A sense of guilt, a guilt he might actively have to come to terms with." *The Abominable Man*, p. 189.

¹³ In *Roseanna*, the victim dies because her unconventional and liberated approach to sex drives a psychopathic male across the brink of what he can tolerate; the suggestion that she has thus brought her death upon herself is implicit. In *The Man Who Went Up in Smoke* (New York: Bantam, 1970), pp. 71-72, the portrait of Ari Boeck is symptomatic: "She lowered the dress a little and looked at him over the hem with glazed brown eyes, which neither reacted nor comprehended. She had got her left arm free from the dress. She stretched it out, gripped hold of his right hand and slowly drew it down between her legs. Her sex was swollen and open. Vaginal secretion ran down his fingers.

"Feel it," she said, with a sort of helplessness, far beyond good or evil."

In *The Man on the Balcony*, the liberated ways of Lisbeth Hedvig Maria Karlstöm in dealing with her biological needs are explicitly described as dangerous (she is even directly compared to Roseanna). In *The Laughing Policeman*, the ultimate motive for the crime may be economic, but the situation is established by the "over-sexed" behavior of Teresa.

¹⁴ Cf. the description of Roseanna cited earlier; or the description of Ari Boeck referred to above, or a number of similar descriptions of Asa Torell and Gun Kollberg.

Daniel Haakonsen's View of Ibsen, with Special Reference to His Last Book

Charles Leland

Daniel Haakonsen is Professor of Norwegian Literature at the University of Oslo. Now a vigorous sixty-five year old, he has devoted a lifetime to the study of Ibsen. His first book, *Henrik Ibsens Realisme*, appeared in 1957. Ten years later, in 1967, his book on *Peer Gynt* helped to commemorate the centenary of the publication of Norway's favourite work of literature. Meanwhile a steady stream of articles and lectures have appeared. To complete his credits, it should be noted that he was editor-in-chief of *Ibsenårboken* (*The Ibsen Year-Book*) for many years and a moving spirit behind four International Ibsen Seminars — the first held in Oslo in 1965, then in Cambridge (1970), Bergen (1975), and Skien (1978). Now, *finis coronat opus*. Last autumn, Aschehoug in Oslo brought out surely the most profound and beautiful book on Ibsen ever published — *Henrik Ibsen: Mennesket og Kunstneren* — the author of which was Daniel Haakonsen.

To say that his text unfolds Ibsen's life and art in chronological order would be a pale statement of the truth. Each biographical and literary event is so imaginatively grasped and vividly projected that Ibsen's private and artistic life, seen as one unified whole, becomes both absorbing in itself and a vital part of the whole "speaking picture," which is the book. The text not only speaks through itself but through pictures, roughly 450 of them! Some are associated with Ibsen and his characters: from the island of Ischia (where he began *Peer Gynt*) to Gjenden Edge in the Jotunheim (where *Peer* "rode" the buck); from St. Peter's Basilica in Rome (where, as he wrote to Bjørnson, he conceived the idea for the dramatic form of *Brand*) to strange figures emerging from marble by Michelangelo and Rodin (figures with which Haakonsen associates the later work of Arnold Rubek). We also have a picture of the Albergo la Luna in Amalfi, once a Franciscan monastery, where Ibsen wrote *A Doll's House*; we are invited to imagine the master walking in the cloister garden as he pondered his play!

But perhaps the most valuable pictures for students are those of recent productions from some twenty-five countries. To give the reader an idea of various production values, several pictures of a single scene will often be given: we have Chinese, Norwegian, Danish, Swedish, Viennese, Ukrainian, English and American *Noras* — all dancing the tarantella! There are six pictures of the "stocking scene" in *A Doll's House* — from the National Theatre in Oslo, the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen, the Criterion Theatre in London, the Norwegian Theatre in Oslo, the Comédie Caumartin in Paris, and the Akademietheater in Vienna. But perhaps even more striking are the five pictures of facing pages from the moving farewell between Nora and Rank — pictures from China, Malmö, Stockholm, Paris, and Copenhagen — each of which gives its own subtle version and vision of compassion and

sympathy for the pair, united, yet separated forever, by the flame which Nora holds up to light Dr. Rank's cigar.

Three pictures of the luncheon scene in *The Wild Duck* show how differently roles can be interpreted. One, from the 1979 production at the Studio Theatre in Edmonton, shows Relling as domineering and teasing and Molvik as a wild man, imagining himself to be the centre of the conversation. In the same scene from Polish television in 1976, Relling appears as defiant and angry and Molvik as withdrawn into his own world. The 1975 Stockholm *Wild Duck* shows a skeptical, almost resigned Relling and an apathetic, deadened Molvik. Different as these productions are, each of the pictures of the scene communicates, in its own way, the tension between Dr. Relling and Gregers Werle. (Haakonsen notes all this, and much more, in his marginal commentaries on the pictures.)

Some especially fine shots, including the one on the dust jacket of a very blonde and beautiful Hilda Wangel waving her white shawl in jubilation at the end of the play, are from a 1968 production of *The Master Builder* at the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis. But perhaps the most moving photographs are of Osvald, played by Nicholas Pennell, and Mrs. Alving, played by Margaret Tyzack, at the end of the 1977 production of *Ghosts* at Stratford, Ontario. The sorrowful mother and the dying son almost become a modern version of Michelangelo's *Pieta*, an idea perhaps borrowed from Peter Stein's Marxist *Peer Gynt* at the Schaubühne am Halleschen Ufer, Berlin, 1971. In Stein's version, Peer — who, as the onion scene reveals, never could find his true self — dies in his mother's lap as a victim to nineteenth-century bourgeois individualism while the scenic world around him collapses; presumably he is born again in the holy spirit of collectivism. Haakonsen's volume enables us to see all this except, of course, the "born-again" communist, Peer Gynt!

Given the fact that the volume was published in Norway and written by a scholar who has never visited these shores, the Canadian content of the volume is worth noting — eleven pictures from Stratford, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Edmonton, and Hart House in Toronto. I am to blame for them — pictures of, for example, Kate Reid, Frances Hyland, and Douglas Campbell playing in *John Gabriel Borkman* at Niagara-on-the-Lake. There is even one of Ray Conlogue, drama critic of the *Toronto Globe and Mail*, as Rosmer in a student production at Hart House ten years ago.

The pictures, together with commentary and appropriate citations from plays and letters which accompany them, are deftly coordinated with the text. Obviously an important aspect of Haakonsen's critical theory is simply that the plays are meant to be seen. Nevertheless, the text of the volume is far more important than the pictures and could well exist without them. I regretted time and time again, as I showed the pictures to zealous members of my Ibsen Seminar this year, that only one of them could read the text, which is, indeed, the latest word of a great scholar who has meditated on Ibsen, written about him, and taught him during a long academic career. Professor Haakonsen wrote me last October: "In the course of the past year I have been more pressed than ever before in my life. First, there was the primary text of the Ibsen book. I had planned to write it in a relatively superficial way (*på en forholdsvis lettvis måte*), to lay out a kind of overall picture (*et*

slags gjennomsnittsbilde) of Ibsen scholarship: ideas which most could agree with. But when I actually began to write, I felt compelled to present my own ideas, and thus the task of giving a coherent approach to Ibsen's life and work was thrust upon me. It was exciting — but exhausting!"¹

In the resulting text, the heart of the mystery of each play is plucked out and revealed, often casting new light on the dramatic action itself and on its relationship to the important leitmotifs that Haakonsen discerns in Ibsen's total work: freedom and responsibility; art and life; the individual and society; the life of the world and the life of the spirit; objective and subjective interpretations of law and morality; "Who is God?" — "Who am I?" — "What is the goal of history?" (as the titles of chapters on *Brand*, *Peer Gynt*, and *Emperor and Galilean* have it).

Some of the "new light" that Haakonsen casts on the plays comes from his creative study of Ibsen's sources. In *Henrik Ibsen: Menneket og Kunstneren*, he looks especially at the source of *Ghosts* and *Hedda Gabler*. In a lecture published in the latest *Ibsenårbok* (1981-82), "*Vildanden* og fire russiske romaner," he looks at *The Wild Duck* in the light of novels by Goncharov and Turgenev. In both his book and recently published lecture, Haakonsen advances a theory in three parts as follows: (1) While Ibsen was working on a play, he studied works dealing with the same cultural conflict that he hoped to deal with in his play, for example, the relationship between parents and children (*Ghosts*) or between bourgeois domesticity and aristocratic aestheticism (*Hedda Gabler*). (2) He availed himself of speeches, situations, motifs, and ideas from the works he was inspired by. (3) He always, at a significant point, turned the ideas and values of these works upside down, thus bringing in completely new perspectives on the conflict he had projected and the motifs he had "borrowed." (In articulating this theory, I have generally used Haakonsen's own words in a letter to me.)

What kind of critic is Daniel Haakonsen? First, what he obviously is *not*: he is not a structuralist, a post-structuralist, or even de-constructuralist, although I know from listening to his lectures in Oslo that he understands these critical approaches far better than I. If one believes that the signifier can never in fact indicate or represent the signified, that (in the words of Paul de Man) "sign and meaning can never coincide," or that "meaning does not mean," one is not likely to be enthusiastic about Haakonsen's work.² He also knows "the great code" as well as Northrop Frye and sees the archetypal and mythical patterns in the plays. There is the journey underground in *Peer Gynt* and *John Gabriel Borkman*; the heavenly ascent in *Brand*, *The Master Builder*, *John Gabriel Borkman* and *When We Dead Awaken*; the scapegoat exemplified by Hedvig and Little Eyolf; and the *femme fatale* everywhere from Furia to Irene. However, Haakonsen is not a disciple of Frye either. Nor is he a "new critic," although no critic of Ibsen is more aware of the meanings and interactions of words and the ambiguities, tension, irony, and paradox within the verbal-visual dramatic universe of each play.³

In the end, I think, it can be said that Daniel Haakonsen is a mimetic critic and a "true humanist" (to borrow a phrase from Jacques Maritain). He is mimetic in the sense that he sees the plays as related analogously to the real world where real men and women think, discern vocations, make

choices, act, suffer, and die. If "the novel is a perpetual quest for reality," as Lionel Trilling wrote,⁴ so Haakonsen sees the plays of Ibsen as a perpetual quest for reality too. Ibsen's concern is man in himself, asking Peer Gynt's questions: "Who am I?" and "What does it mean to be oneself?" But Ibsen's humanism, as Haakonsen sees it, goes beyond this. His view of Ibsen is explained by Helen Gardner's dictum that "a critic's attitude to works of art must depend ultimately on his conception of the nature of man."⁵ This is why I call Haakonsen a "true humanist" and link his view of Ibsen with the theistic "*humanisme integral*" or "true humanism" of Jacques Maritain. Here the ultimate concerns are not man in himself alone, but man in his relationships to others, and to the Other who is God or some other transcendent ideal.

The typical Ibsen hero or heroine asks questions about his responsibilities to others, for example, in *The Lady from the Sea* and *Little Eyolf*; his responsibilities to the commonwealth in *Pillars of Society*, *Enemy of the People*, and *John Gabriel Borkman*; or his responsibilities to some utopian ideal or to God. He asks Brand's questions: "Who is God?"; "How can I best imitate him and lead others to Him?" All these become an integral part of being oneself — "*humanisme integral*" indeed! Haakonsen shows that, for Ibsen, to be truly human means to aspire to a utopian ideal and, at the same time, to assume responsibility for one's actions and choices in the world.

Indeed, the supreme worth of the individual, paradoxically, can be achieved only within a living, responsible and, at the same time, ideal relationship, for example: as when Peer Gynt finds the true centre of his being in Solveig, a Solveig who is somehow conflated with the giving of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost; or, as when Nora, in *A Doll's House*, looked for "the most wonderful thing" ("*det vidunderligste*") so "that our common life could become a marriage" ("*at samliv mellom oss kunne bli et ekteskap*"). Obviously this "*ekteskap*" is something more than mere "*samliv*", something more than the mere living together of man and woman. This insight into the deeper dimensions of Ibsen's drama is articulated in Haakonsen's first book, then repeated in an important article in *Ibsenårboken* 1968-69 — his "Ethical Implications in Ibsen's Drama" — and repeated again with utmost emphasis and clarity in his latest book.

Thus Haakonsen sees Ibsen steadily and sees him whole, and the most extraordinary feature of the text of his last book is the seamless way in which the mass of scholarly and critical detail is integrated and directed toward this vision. Allow me to exemplify this with two quotations: one relatively long, one short.

The first is from a chapter entitled "*Kvinner, Kunstnere, og Utopier*" ("Women, Artists, and Utopias"), and — if you will — please forgive my clumsy translation which, at times, may seem to verge on mere paraphrase:

The ideas of Ibsen's heroes can fairly be described as utopian. "The wonderful thing" ("*det vidunderlige*"), as Nora conceives it, does not correspond to the relationship between Helmer and herself, nor, probably, to the relationship between husband and wife anywhere in the world. Where will we find a marriage which daily is as ordinary as every other marriage but in the hour of trial shows itself to be a marriage in which each spouse is ready to offer life and honour for the other?

But a utopia always has two sides. It breaks with one position and points the way to another. From one point of view it is, nevertheless, workable, since it points out a new direction and a new hope.

The truly living characters ("*de levende*") in Ibsen's plays have before their eyes a goal which points beyond the established society. The goal is to unite the individual and community ("*individ og fellelesskap*"), to unite nature and culture — the powers of life with the demands of the spirit ("*livets krefter med åndens krav*"). This goal is formulated in various slogans or devices — eye-catching labels which are often better known than the works from which they come. The essential thing about them is that they formulate a utopia, realized in a relationship between two persons and pointing to a synthesis of nature and spirit or of the real and the ideal.

In some instances both the ideal and the expanding life ("*livutfoldelsen*") it points to are expressed in the device itself. Thus we have "freedom with responsibility" ("*frihet under ansvar*") in *The Lady from the Sea* or "free, happy, noble men" ("*frie, glade adelsmenn*") in *Rosmersholm*, "noble" here standing for a spiritual or moral quality, not for nobility of birth. In other instances we do not see the union of the ideal and the real expanding life it points to before we have placed the devices in their contexts. They acquire their full meaning within the context of the plays. This is the case, for example, with "the wonderful thing" ("*det vidunderlige*") in *A Doll's House*, "the joy of life" ("*livsglede*") in *Ghosts*, "vine leaves in the hair" ("*vinløv i håret*") in *Hedda Gabler*. The same may be said of "castles with firm foundations beneath" ("*luftslott med grunnmur under*") in *The Master Builder*, "a true community among men" ("*forbundsliv mellom menneskene*") in *John Gabriel Borkman*, and, in its way, "day of resurrection" ("*oppstandelsens dag*") in *When We Dead Awaken*. All are powerful, creative words, looking towards transfigured worlds, shining and innocent utopias ("*blåøyde utopier*") of various sorts. But the words and the worlds they figure forth are also dangerous, because they hint at a happiness and an inner revolt which point beyond the traditional modes of life in a bourgeois society.⁶

This over-arching idea, as it is directed specifically to the life of man, is stated in another way when Haakonsen is dealing with Ibsen's final, great quartet of plays:

The four last plays clarify the tension between art, which moves in one direction, and life, which moves in another. But in the end both must be reconciled — by means of human responsibility, which must pass over from manuscript to life; by means of the tower, which must be scaled by the master builder; by means of the ore in the hearts of men, which Borkman must also set free; by means of the statue, which must be brought to perfection through the life of both the sculptor and his model.⁷

This is related to a vision of Ibsen's characters, who are, as Haakonsen has said, often motivated by inner norms in response to individual vocations but who, at the same time, must accept responsibility to society, a society regulated by external norms and values.

I have barely indicated the scope and hardly plumbed the depths of Daniel Haakonsen's reading of Ibsen. Fortunately, the book can speak for itself and should be allowed to do so. Perhaps some day it will even be translated into English and thus become available to the many Ibsen enthusiasts of the English-speaking world.

Notes

¹ "I løpet av det siste året har jeg vært presset som aldri før i mitt liv. Først var det hovedteksten til Ibsen-boken. Jeg hadde planlagt å skrive den på en forholdsvis lettvis måte: legge frem et slags gjennomsnittsbilde av forskningen om Ibsen: indée som de fleste kunne være enig i. Men da jeg begynte å skrive, var det simpelthen nødt til å legge frem mine egne meninger, og slik kom jeg til å stå over for den oppgaven å gi et sammenhengende syn på Ibsens liv og verk. Det var spennende, men — exhausting."

² For the idea and some of the phrasing of this sentence, I am indebted to an unpublished essay by my colleague W.J. Keith, "Novelist or Essayist? Hugh MacLennan and *The Watch that Ends the Night*," pp. 10-11.

³ Haakonsen himself acknowledges a profound debt to the "new critics." In a recent letter to me, he has this to say:

Generelt, svært generelt, kan jeg si at min lærer i metodikk var en professor i romanske språk — Peter Rokseth — som foregrev New Criticism og som druknet i strømningene fra New Criticism (det vil si: han ble identifisert med dem). Men *han* hadde inkorporert indéverdenen, dikternes "filosof" i sin lære. Jeg tror han arbeidet ut fra et begrep som ikke fins på de nordiske språk: spirituality — den indre enhet i (helgenens og) dikternes verk, tanke, følelse, moral — bare studerbart i deres verk. Og først og fremst i de mest levende deler av deres verk. Det er da en enhet som kritikeren kan søke i dikternes verk — enten på tematikkens område eller moralens eller f. eks. konfliktenes (Apollon-Dionysos i min siste bok) eller billedverdenens, osv. — Ut fra dette synspunktet har dikterens liv eller hans lesning bare interesse hvis det sees i forbindelse med det skapende sentrum (the spirituality) hos dikteren.

⁴ Lionel Trilling, "Manners, Morals, and the Novel," *The Liberal Imagination* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1957), p. 205.

⁵ *The Business of Criticism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 21.

⁶ Daniel Haakonsen, *Henrik Ibsen: Mennesket og Kunstneren* (Oslo: Aschehøng, 1981), p. 166.

⁷ Haakonsen, p. 270.

A Contribution to the Understanding of the Biogeography of a Sub-Arctic Lake: The Case of Mývatn, Iceland

W. S. W. Nowak

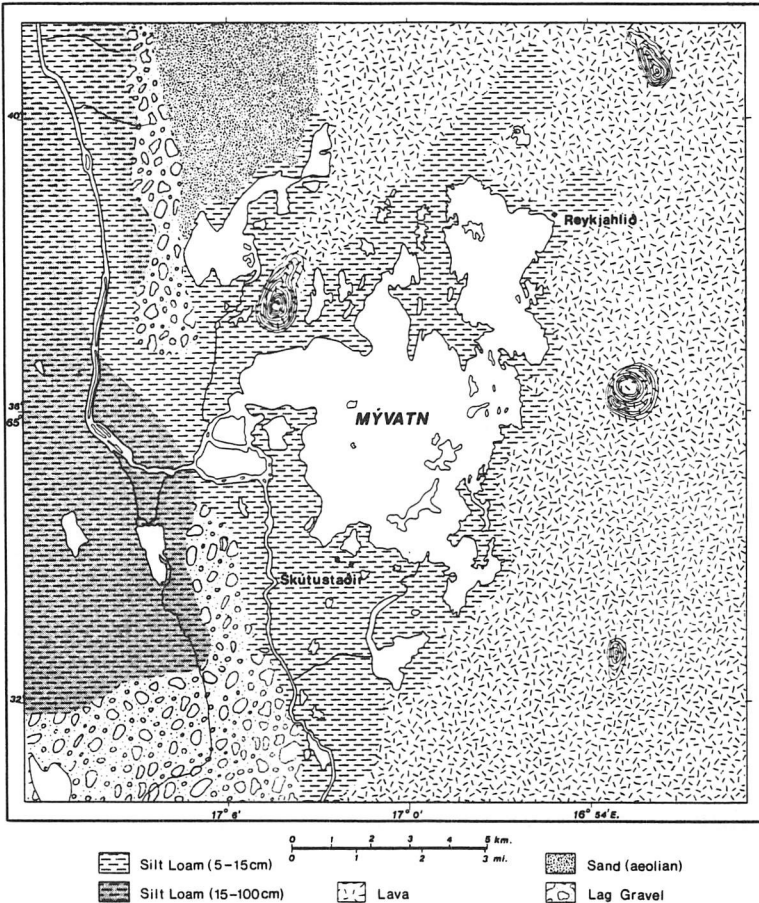
Lake Mývatn is situated in north-eastern Iceland, E.S.E. of the town of Akureyri and S.S.E. of Húsavík. Near the Lake are landscapes so desolate that they have been compared to the lunar surface (Ogrizek, D., 1952). Indeed, Neil Armstrong and some other astronauts trained here prior to their historic moon landings (Magnusson, S.A., 1973, p. 60). The Lake itself is shallow, and is situated in a volcanically active part of the country. Its regional setting has been well defined by Hayman who considers that the Mývatn district is dominated by the Lake and extends west to the Barðar-ðalur Valley, south to a line parallel with Lundabrekka, east to Námafjall and south to a line parallel with Hlíðarfjall (Hayman, C.F., and Others, 1966). It lies just north of a region known as the Central Depression, which has volcanic forms in tremendous variety for such a small area (Clarke, G., 1970).



In this zone are located several large volcanoes, for example, Krafla, Hverfjall, Leirknukur and Viti, which has a crater of 1000 ft. in diameter

(Gjerset, K., 1924). Many of the Mývatn volcanoes are of recent origin, and their variety within the Central Depression has long been commented upon by geologists, to whom the area is a centre of rare interest, for nowhere else are such features duplicated in comparable numbers and peculiar formation (Stefansson, V., 1939, p. 232). Out of the lava surface contiguous upon Mývatn itself rises Hverfjall, which has the longest ash cone in Europe (O'Dell, A.C., 1957). Ash volcanoes frequently produce funnel-like craters and their silhouettes are indicative of recent volcanism. These cones form rapidly during single eruptive phases and may or may not be associated with lava emissions at their base. Hverfjall is a good example of this phenomenon. Ash cones can also be distributed irregularly or else close together in the areal-eruption fields that are well represented around Mývatn

SOILS NEAR LAKE MYVATN



near Skútustaðir (Darby, H.C., 1942, p. 14). The Lake itself is believed to have been formed by an igneous explosion and the consequent damming of water in pre-historic times.

Two kinds of lava occur to the south of Mývatn: *apalhraun* and *helluhraun*. The first is formed of viscous lava, is full of contortions, has a generally rough surface and is equivalent to the Hawaiian *aa* or blocky lava. Sand-filled hollows often form banks against the blocks, though bare rocks may typify the younger *apalhrauns*. By contrast, the *helluhraun* frequently makes an undulating landscape, and even creates hills, but it usually maintains a smooth outline. The latter is equivalent to the Hawaiian *pahoehoe*, or corded lava. Generally speaking, such a landscape is fairly flat by Icelandic standards, and presents sand-filled hollows with protruding ropy mounds (Clarke, G., 1970).

The southern part of the Lake rests on a lava flow emitted some two thousand years ago by the crater row called Threngrslaborgir (Thórarinnson, S., 1968). This feature has formed unusually shaped rock-pillars in the Lake itself, and also the picturesque *Dimmuborgir* or 'Dark Castles'. This is an area of fantastic lava pinnacles formed by the collapse into tunnels of the surface of a flat lava dome more than 1000 m across and about 30 m high (Darby, H.C., 1942, p. 22). This district has been aptly described as "... congealed pandemonium, with signs of volcanic convulsion everywhere" (Stefansson, V., 1939, p. 230). Remnants of lava tunnels form the many 'doors' and 'rock-churches' of this zone, and some of the features here resemble solitary volcanic 'castles', pillars and arches.

Further to the east, one finds hot springs and mud volcanoes. The gul-lies behind these have been stained with sulphur and other deposits which are so characteristic of the district called Námafjall, a sub-glacial moburg ridge. The mud pots and fumeroles here are sometimes associated with haematite and gypsum, as well as with the ever-present sulphur. To the north lies Hrafninnulsryggur, which is well known because of the local presence of obsidian (Walker, G.P.L., 1959). The mud volcanoes to the north-east of Mývatn have been studied in some detail by Danish and Icelandic scholars (Thorkelsson, Th., 1910). At present, the local farmers are claiming that these volcanoes are in the process of shrinking, but this theory is considered academically dubious.

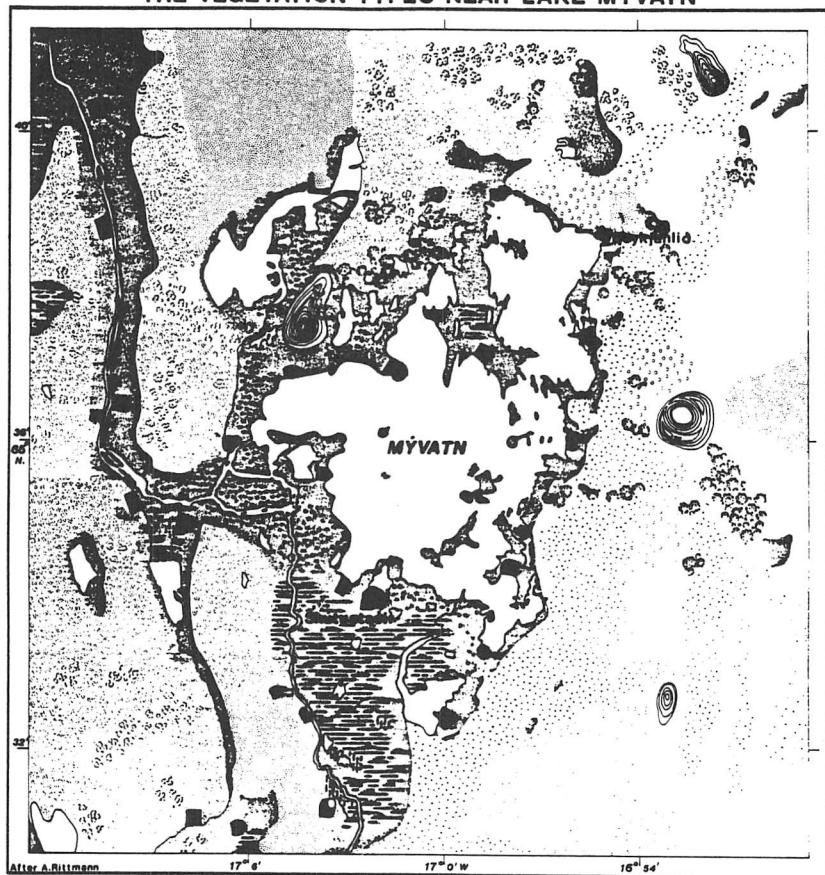
In the last few years, a geo-thermal power station has been constructed at Krafla and has commenced tapping sub-surface steam. The project has not been a success, however. Expensive Japanese turbines capable of an output of 60 mgW were placed in position but the steam did not come in predictable volumes, so that the station operates at approximately one-tenth of its anticipated capacity. This is being explained by the recent volcanic activity in this zone, which was still continuing into mid-1981 (Jónsson, S. 1982). In previous centuries there has also been some sulphur mining in this district.

Other geo-features are also worthy of mention. Palagonite, a brown, glassy mineral produced by sub-glacial eruptions, forms breccia and creates some of the highest plateaux and table-mountains of sub-glacial origin which are so characteristic of central Iceland, and which appear so impressive to tourists. Near Lake Mývatn there is a whole series of such formations,

including the well-known Búrfell (Nawrath, A., 1959). Other mountains, composed of basalt, are situated to the west of the Lake. Some large areas of lava desert also occur to the east of Mývatn that are often devoid of surface water. The Ódáðahraun reaches as far as the volcano Askja, and is also a series of rugged and flat deserts interspersed with Pleistocene till and some fluvio-glacial deposits (Clarke, G., 1970).

The landscape to the north of the Lake, and towards Húsavík, is differ-

THE VEGETATION TYPES NEAR LAKE MÝVATN



■ Cultivated land
(Farm)
■ Bog
■ Meadow
■ Pasture

■ Wood & coppice
■ Heather
■ Lichen & moss

■ Sand
■ Stratified lava
■ Block lava
○ Volcano

0 1 2 3 4 5 km.
0 1 2 3 mi.

ent. Shield-volcanoes can be encountered here, and these consist completely of lava extruded from the central vents which often produce low shield-shaped domes with gentle slopes of from 2° — 8° . Some of these are quite small, for example, Stora Viti, some 25 kms north of Mývatn (Darby, H.C., 1942, p. 16). The river Jökulsá frequently forms bogs, which are covered with heather, scrubby dwarf-willows and birches. In the nineteenth century, the farmers benefitted greatly from the vegetational assets of this feature and frequently collected Iceland-moss here, which is apparently edible (Shepherd, C.W., 1867, p. 143).

The vegetation near the Lake is also characterized by considerable variety and is usually a reflection and a result of the existing pedological and micro-climatic phenomena. Much of the desert and lava to the south and east of Mývatn is devoid of plant growth. Elsewhere, the flora is shrubby, and contains stands of dwarf birches amongst the lava features. In such zones, the soil may have a high humus content (Clarke, G., 1970). The northern rim of the Central Plateau is mainly wild and barren for, even in the most favoured areas, vegetation grows for only three months of the year (O'Dell, A.C., 1957). Marrum grass was deliberately planted in a desert zone five miles to the east of Mývatn, because it is a dune-fixer. Its introduction constituted an experiment in grassland initiation for reclamation purposes (Groves, R.W., 1966).

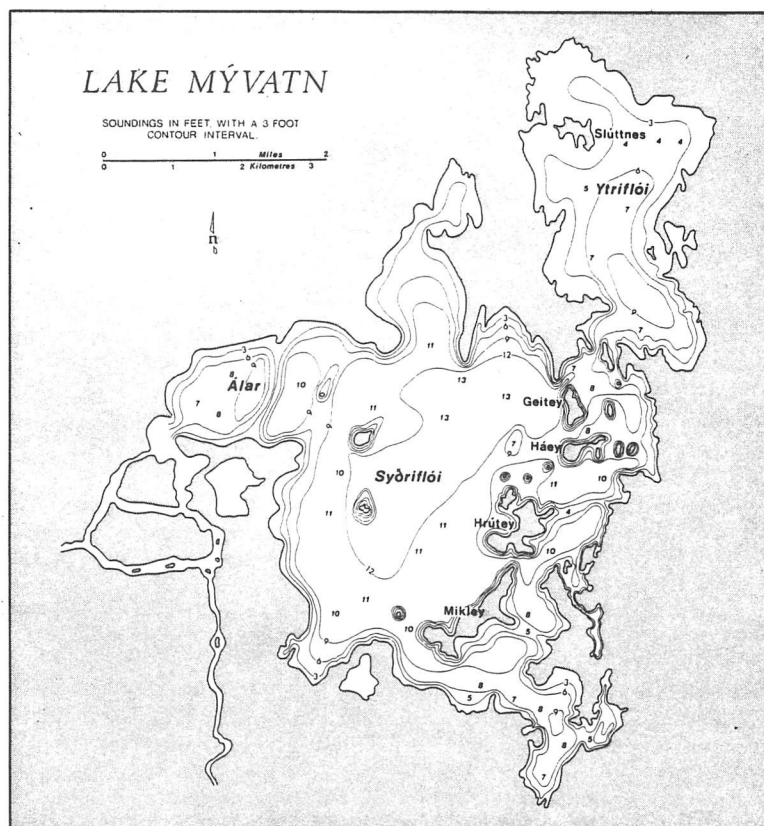
Near the Lake one can also encounter patches overgrown with a wild oat called melgrass, which was often eaten in times of famine in the past. One author has stated that in bygone centuries the land near Mývatn was inhabited by outlaws who lived on angelica root and horsemeat; the animals presumably lived on the wild cereal too (Simpson, C., 1967). It is also strange to record that, in the midst of such desolation, one can sometimes find a few isolated hamlets endowed with excellent land; and these, according to Clarke, contain some of the most prosperous farms in Iceland despite their high altitude of 277 m and northerly latitude (Clarke, G., 1970). They are usually located on the margins of the Mývatn zone and are not typical of it, but rather, form outliers of other natural regions.

When the ice retreated, sub-glacial volcanic processes continued as sub-aerial activity, and this has left its mark on the local soils (Jóhannesson, B., 1960). Since much of the lava near the Lake is of the *apalhraun* type, many of the pedological series are sandy or dusty in texture. Much of Iceland also has soils derived from the decomposition of basic igneous rocks of "remarkably uniform chemical composition" (O'Dell, A.D., 1957), so that pedological variety is not as great as would otherwise be the case. The Mývatn area series are characterized by a high content of iron oxide and iron phosphate, but suffer from a lack of calcium carbonate, since lime can be separated only with difficulty from siliceous compounds.

The climate of the area is also interesting. Rainfall is not abundant near the Lake. Indeed, the Ódáðahraun between Vatnajökull and Mývatn has the lowest figures recorded in the country (Clarke, G., 1970). The Central Depression has only 400 mm p.a., but the climate is still considered mild by Icelandic standards. Storms are quite frequent and tend to be severe throughout the year, and much of the rain comes in heavy downpours.

These are followed by drying winds which cause much damage to the soils due to their erosional power.

To the north the climate is much drier. Indeed, the precipitation on Grimsey Island, off the north coast of Iceland, is recorded as 371 mm, which is the same as in Denver, Colorado (Clarke, A.H., 1943, p. 7). This type of climate implies that the area near Mývatn is not as favoured with respect to hydro-power potential as the regions of southern and western Iceland. Nonetheless, it is still an energy-rich zone. Electricity can be generated from natural steam derived from this zone, and some of it has now been fed into the national grid (Anonymous, 1969) and is much used by the diatomite enterprise on the Lake, which was the first major consumer of industrially applied geo-thermal power in Iceland (Various Authors, 1971). The Lake is also a major vacational attraction, even though it is situated in a sparsely settled area remote from the main population centres. The unique character of the Lake and the interest this generates have both caused it to entertain a considerable proportion of the total number of visitors coming to the country (Sterry, D.R., 1970).



The Geographical Character of the Lake Itself

Mývatn is a large, shallow and flat-floored lake, some 38 sq. kms in area, and situated at a distance of 55 kms from the town of Akureyri. The depth rarely exceeds four metres. It is the third largest lake in Iceland (Óla, A., and Others, 1956), and occupies a depression in the region of recent lava fields. In the eighteenth century a lava flow reached its northern shore. It is found on a plateau 300 m in elevation (Hayman, C.F., and Others, 1966), while Leathart claims that the water level is 1000 ft. above m.s.l. (Leathart, P.S., 1967). The outline is very irregular and there are many small islands.

In the Icelandic language, the word 'Mývatn' means 'midge lake' (Simpson, C., 1967), and this is remarkable, since, generally speaking, Icelandic fauna is characterized by a paucity of such insects. Clearly, Mývatn must be an exception in this respect, because Simpson also claims that "... the tourist is hampered by clouds of midges." Darby records that *simulium vittatum*, a small fly, can be seen to swarm over the lake, and that such swarms resemble in appearance a cloud of steam rising 8–10 m above the ground, so that it is difficult not to swallow several while breathing. Their bite does not pierce the skin but rasps it to produce sores (Darby, H.C., 1942, p. 132). The author of this paper did not see any such phenomenon during his field-work in the area, but that is an insufficient basis for doubting Simpson's and Darby's words on this matter, particularly since the Lake's very name suggests that such insects are indeed a prominent feature and a source of discomfort for the inhabitants there.

Hayman records that the climate on the lake-edge is drier than in the surrounding regions due to the shelter of those mountains which encircle the water area. Also, weather changes result in fluctuations amounting to 40 cms in the water level. In the neighbourhood of Vógar, a small area of the Lake never freezes in winter owing to the presence of hot springs (Darby, H.C., 1942, p. 64).

While its source is the Kraká River, the Lake is drained by the Laxar-ðalur together with a subterranean and sub-surface drainage system in its north-eastern section. The Laxá River is fast-flowing and its valley is U-shaped, showing much evidence of glacial erosion, together with such youthful features as waterfalls, rapids and potholes. The river flows north, and empties into the sea near Húsavík (Hayman, C.F. and Others, 1966).

A part of the Lake is called Kalfarströnd and, in this zone, the shores twist into tiny bays and display huge rock-pillars 3–5 m high. In pre-historic times, the Lake was larger and continuous with Sandvatn in the north-west (Darby, H.C., 1942, p. 64). Indeed, Icelanders always point out that the environs of the Lake offer a greater variety of geographically interesting phenomena than exist in any other part of the country. This is because of the presence of hot springs, sulphur pits, mighty rivers, waterfalls, unusual lava formations, etc. (Anonymous, 1966).

The origins of the Lake have been studied incompletely, but much material has already been compiled which can throw light on this topic. There is a consensus of opinion amongst the geologists that, in or around 3800 B.C., a lava flow of the *helluhraun* type, originating from a point 25 kms S.E.

of the region at Ketildyngja, was responsible for the formation of the Lake. In the process of motion, it dammed the river Laxá by its present exit and thus caused it to assume lacustrine configurations (Hayman, C.F. and Others, 1966). The direction of the initial lava movement still can be perceived clearly, and it has been pre-determined by the orientation of pre-flow topography.

Acid rock eruptions (Silica % of 70 +) are rare in the Mývatn area, but they produce interesting stones of varied colours and with obsidian spherulites. Near the Lake is the rhyolite and obsidian hill called Hlíðarfjall (Darby, H.C., 1942, p. 18). North of Hlíðarfjall, the flow is a mile in width. It would seem, however, that the presence of this ridge deflected the lava and gave its motion an eastwards orientation, so that it continued to advance towards Reykjahlíð.

This basic pattern was subsequently modified by chronologically later eruptions and their ensuing flows. For instance, one such source of secondary lava was the zone of fissures known as Threngslaborgir. The latest of these infusions took place in 1724, and volcanic activity lasted for some five years, having originated in the north-eastern part of the region. During this period, the surface topography was drastically altered in many localities, and the centre of destruction was at Reykjahlíð. In this parish, all the features of human occupation were destroyed, with the exception of one small church (Simpson, C., 1967).

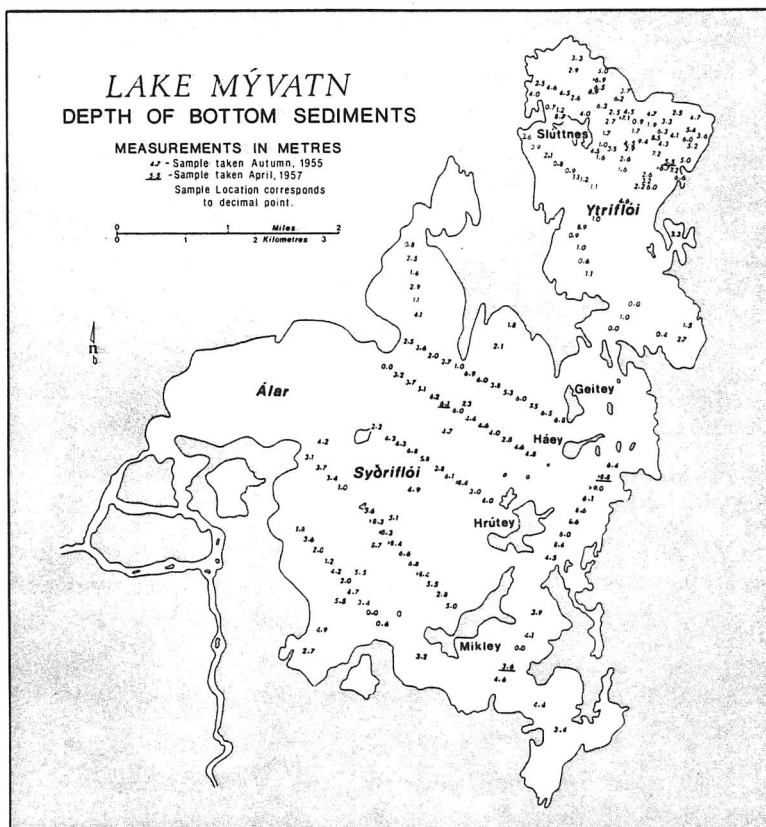
The original lava flow, from Ketildyngja, is known locally as the 'older Laxarhraun'. The material from the Threngslaborgir is called the 'younger Laxarhraun', and has been dated at 2500 B.C. The various flows differ from one another not merely in age and configuration, but also in composition and chemical structure, for instance, in their clay content (Clarke, G., 1970). Many other centres of volcanic activity also have been associated with the fissure systems, for example, the zone of substantial outbursts at Mývatnsveit (O'Dell, A.C., 1957). Fissure volcano activity is well illustrated along the line of the Threngslaborgir. These are called *gjár* in Icelandic and are numerous in the north-eastern part of the district, where a series of faults trending N.-15°E. breaks up the surface into strips. Some later faults trend N.-W. The solfataras and hot springs on Dalfjall and Námafjall lie along northerly-trending fractures (Darby, H.C., 1942, p. 24).

Some of these are still volcanically active. The Hverfjall cone is one of them. This is a typical Icelandic type of volcano, with a crater of about a half-mile across and walls of lava and ash; some local scientists believe that it had been formed by a single explosion, but no substantive evidence to verify this has yet been published. The floors of this crater are divided by a ridge in the middle, and the slopes are very steep.

To the south of this volcano, at Dimmuborgir, lava pillars some 2000 years old are present, while further afield one can encounter pseudo-craters. Dimmuborgir itself is an area of fantastic lava pinnacles formed by the collapse into tunnels of the surface of a flat lava dome more than 1000 m across and about 30 m high (Darby, H.C., 1942, p. 22-23). Many of the small islands in the Lake are also small volcanoes, as can clearly be perceived by looking at them from Vindbelgjarfjall. Some of them — for example, Skútustaðir — have been greatly eroded by waves, revealing their inner vol-

canic structures. The central plug of fused rock within a cone on western Hrótey Island is particularly interesting (Darby, H.C., 1942, p. 22).

Besides its diatomite-bearing potential, and its complex geology, Lake Mývatn is of interest to scientists for a variety of other reasons. One authority has already pointed out that the vegetation of islands is always more meagre and less diversified than that of continents, and Iceland is no exception (Bjarnason, H., 1968). However, the flora and fauna of Lake Mývatn is particularly lush by Icelandic standards. According to Leathart, some of the richest vegetation is found around its shores (Leathart, P.S., 1967).



Because the Lake is shallow and highly entropic, it supports a considerable biomass of diatoms, most of which are benthic, though planktonic species are also found (Ólafsson, J., 1971). Algae tolerate the harsh volcanic environment of Iceland very well, so that it is not surprising that they are abundant here. Indeed, they are known to have been one of the earliest

forms of life to colonize fiery Surtsey Island (Fridriksson, S., 1968). Included in these generalizations concerning algae are also the species of diatoms from which diatomite is ultimately derived. Their survival is doubtlessly facilitated by the extremely low temperatures of the Lake, even in summer. As Simpson points out, the waters of Icelandic lakes are so cold that row-boats are discouraged from going far offshore since, if one were to capsize, the rowers would be in great danger of death by hypothermia (Simpson, C., 1967).

The hydrography and chemistry of Lake Mývatn is imperfectly understood, though much useful work on this subject has been done by Jón Ólafsson of the Marine Institute at Reykjavík. Much research on the pedology of the Lake is also continuing, but the results are, as yet, inconclusive. It would appear that the clay content of lacustrine soils derived from *helluhraun* lava is higher than in those resulting from the *apalhraun*; this type of soil retains fossil diatoms and helps to account for the areal abundance of diatomaceous earth (Clarke, G., 1970).

The fauna of the Lake is no less interesting. According to one writer, Lakes Mývatn and Thingvallavatn are the best bodies of water in Iceland for trout fishing (Somme, A., 1960). These fish, as well as salmon, are caught inshore and supplied to local hotels, but the organization of the fishery is quite complex because the farmers regard Mývatn as a communal lake (Simpson, C., 1967). Other kinds of wildlife also abound here. For instance, Mývatn is an area of maximum overlap between two types of bird fauna (Huxley, J., 1950). Some 10,000 duck eggs are also reported in the literature as being collected from the lake-shore every year (Simpson, C., 1967). There is no waterfowl hunting or sport-fishing allowed, not even by foreigners, but the tourist industry is well developed in the vicinity of the Lake. Besides studying various natural phenomena, the guest can do some close-shore boating and hot-spring bathing. Volcano-climbing is also popular, and the tops offer attractive views. Birch and rowan trees, rare elsewhere in Iceland, have been successfully planted in this area, and this also increases the tourist attraction of the lake-side (Leathart, P.S., 1967). Indeed, any Icelander will say that no visit to his country by a foreigner is complete without a journey to this unusual lacustrine zone.

The Biogeography of the Diatomaceous Earth Resource: A Postscript

Diatomite is a product derived from fossil diatoms, or rather from their skeletal structures. Diatoms are single-celled algae, known also as colonial algae (Hayman, C.F., and Others, 1966). They are found deposited in the sediments at the bottom of Lake Mývatn and other lakes, and the raw material has been described as "cell-laden mud." One writer records that he saw "heaps of what looked like red coke, but was diatomaceous earth or Kísilguhr," an important substance in the filtering industry (Simpson, C., 1967). While most of the commodity being mined at present derives from fossil diatoms, there is a theory which postulates that these deposits can slowly be replenished by present-day biota in the Lake, and this will permit a greater tonnage to be obtained (Jónsson, B.B., 1968).

The largest single source of diatomite in the world is the Lompoc Mine in California (Various Authors, 1973), but the layers at the bottom of Lake Mývatn are the most extensive in Europe (Sømme, A., 1960). The particles are extremely minute, and one scientist has described them as being 1/10,000th of a sand-grain in dimension (Hayman, C.F., and Others, 1966). Despite their tiny overall size, they have great relative strength, and can further be sub-categorized according to criteria of micro-dimensions and durability. The type of diatomite currently being exploited appears to be restricted to volcanic zones, but there is no inherent reason why this should be so, for technology makes it possible to use sources derived elsewhere, as for instance, in the highly diatomiferous lakes of Labrador or the European Alps (Halpfass, W., 1925; Buresch, R., 1925).

Very little has been published on the diatom flora of Lake Mývatn, from which diatomite is derived, and some of the existing data is contradictory. Even the authorities in this field cannot agree on some important issues. For instance, the researcher who is familiar with the contributions of Ostenfeld, Ólafsson and Hallgrímsson, may find it hard to decide if most of the forms are benthic or planktonic. Thus, Ólafsson believes that the Lake supports a large mass of diatoms, most of which are benthic, though planktonic forms are also found (Ólafsson, J., 1971). Hallgrímsson, on the other hand, thinks that the diatoms of the Lake are mostly planktonic, and that the benthic species have been poorly studied (Hallgrímsson, H., 1971). According to the 1970-1971 investigations, the most common diatoms of Lake Mývatn are: *Synedra ulna*, *Fragilaria* (mostly *capucina* and *construens*), *Diatoma* species, *Melosira* species and *Tabellaria* (*genestrata* and *flocculosa*). Thus, Hallgrímsson feels that the bulk of the diatomite is derived from plants of the above species (Hallgrímsson, H., 1971). Ólafsson also believes that the samples worked by Ostenfeld are not representative.

Diatomite has a multi-utilization advantage over competing substances, and the range of applications for which it can be employed is constantly growing apace with research on the use of the material. The literature contains three statements on the topic, and the author of this paper has verified them as being correct. One writer records that diatomite is used for polishing, toothpaste and insulation (Simpson, C., 1967). Another lists the following uses for diatomite: to bind phosphorus to the end of matchsticks; as a non-coking additive in chemical fertilizers; as a filler in plastic materials, explosives, and building agents; as a filter-aid in wine-making; and in antibiotics (Hayman, C.F., and Others, 1966). Finally, the annual report of the John's-Manville Corporation notes these applications for the utilization of the material: for filtering liquids, clarifying liquids and functional filtering of paints; in plastics, agricultural chemicals and polishes; for sludge-removal from municipal water treatment systems, removal of solids from tertiary sewage, specialty paper, absorbents, and as a free agent in various manufactured and consumer products (Various Authors, 1972). Diatomite filter-aids have a distinct advantage over conventional paper filters (Booth, D., 1967), while the fact that the mineral is non-metallic also opens up many research possibilities for its use. At present, pilot plant studies are continuing in the U.S.A., the purpose of which is to improve the manufacture and utilization

of synthetic silicates made from diatomite (Various Authors, 1973). These may initiate a whole new industry for Iceland and give the Lake Mývatn district extra importance amongst the multinationally important industrial regions of the world.

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The Norwegian Prime Minister

Ingunn Norderval

Introduction

In contrast to the abundance of published works on the chief executives of other political systems,¹ surprisingly little has been written about the recruitment and role of the Norwegian prime minister. Apart from juridical works with their emphasis on the constitutional and legal rules surrounding the office, memoirs of earlier prime ministers and biographies, no published accounts exist dealing with the dynamics of the selection process and the prime minister's role in the political system.² It is my purpose here to analyze this process with the major emphasis on the period since World War II.

Recruitment literature has generally focused on two major sets of variables: the impact of the political institutions on the system that is being considered, and the characteristics of the recruits themselves, such as their personality, socio-economic background, occupational status and their political socialization. According to one oft-cited definition, recruitment is "a process by which individuals possessing certain personality traits and occupying specified social positions in their community are screened by political institutions for elective office."³ Two Norwegian social scientists, Stein Ugelvik Larsen and Audun Offerdal, also suggest that the study of recruitment should focus on the question of *who* are the people selected, *how* just these people are selected, and *what* are the consequences that flow from the fact of their selection.⁴

This preoccupation with political recruitment is, of course, rooted in the fact that it is necessary to screen out and select decision makers since direct democracy is an impossibility in a modern political system. However, the question may be raised: what is the relevance of Norway to other countries in this context? Is the study of the recruitment process in such a small system of any significance at all to our understanding of recruitment processes elsewhere? Harry Eckstein provides a very apt and concise rationale for studying those smaller political systems such as Norway's.⁵

I shall begin by examining the formal and informal requirements surrounding the recruitment of individuals to the office of Prime Minister of Norway, and the characteristics of those people who have held that office. I should note that the sources for this study consist of published materials such as earlier prime ministers' accounts of their years in office, newspaper articles, the state calendar, and the very useful books, *Stortinget*, which are published after every national election and contain biographical data on members of the Storting and the cabinet. In addition, significant information and insight is provided from interviews with three post-war prime ministers and several cabinet members, which were conducted under my guidance by two of my students, Liv Hegle Sjøflot and Johannes Sjøflot, who also did a great deal of work on the tables.

Selecting the prime minister

In a parliamentary system there are generally three demands that must be met by a politician who aspires to be prime minister:

- 1) election to parliament,
- 2) attainment of the position of party leader,
- 3) support of a majority in parliament.⁶

In Norway, however, only the last one is an absolute requirement.

With regard to parliamentary membership, although most prime ministers and cabinet ministers are picked from among the elected members of the Storting, there is no legal requirement that this be done. Indeed, under the Norwegian constitution, members of the cabinet may not hold their seats in the Storting as long as they serve as ministers. Instead, when serving as ministers, they resign their seats in the Storting. Those seats are then filled by the deputy members who have been elected simultaneously with the regular membership.⁷

However, since the introduction of the parliamentary system in 1884, only one Norwegian prime minister has attained office without any previous experience in the Storting, namely, Einar Gerhardsen. He formed his first government — a coalition government — in the summer of 1945.⁸ But that situation was hardly typical, for the "normal" political process had been interrupted by the war years.

Table I: Political experience of post-war prime ministers when first appointed

	Party, type of government	Years as		
		Member of Municipal Council	Member of Storting	Member of Cabinet
Einar Gerhardsen	Labor — majority govt.	13	0	0
Oscar Torp	Labor — majority	7	3	12
John Lyng	Conservative — coalition, minority	14	13	0
Per Borten	Centre — coalition majority	9	15	0
Trygve Bratteli	Labor — majority	0	11	10
Lars Korvald	Christian People's Party — coalition minority	0	11	0
Odvar Nordli	Labor — minority	12	14	1½
Gro Harlem Brundtland	Labor — minority	0	1	5
Kåre Willoch	Conservative — minority	7	19	5

As Table I shows, all but three of the post-war prime ministers have had more than ten years' experience in the Storting prior to their appointments as leaders of the government. The present prime minister, Kåre Willoch, can clearly point to the longest legislative career. First elected in 1957, he has served nineteen years in all in the Storting until 1981. That career was interrupted only by the five years he served as member of the non-socialist coalition governments (four weeks in 1963, and from 1965 to 1970).⁹

Generally, it may be said that experience in the Storting is one of the

qualifications required of a candidate for the prime minister's position. Thus, when Willoch's predecessor, Gro Harlem Brundtland, left Odvar Nordli's cabinet in a 1979 reshuffle to take her seat in the Storting, many considered it as part of her "grooming" for the prime ministership. She had been chosen for a cabinet position in 1974 without any elective experience and, although subsequently elected to the Storting, she had never served there before that time.¹⁰

Table II: Norwegian prime ministers who have served as party chairmen prior to or during tenure

	*Prior to becoming prime minister	**While serving as prime minister
Stang, F.		
Selmer		
Schweigård		
Sverdrup	x	x
Stang, E.	(x)	
Steen	x	x
Hagerup		
Blehr		
Michelsen		
Løvland		
Knudsen		(x)
Konow a)		
Bratlie	x	x
Halvorsen	x	x
Berge a)		
Mowinckel		
Lykke	(x)	
Hornsrud	(x)	
Kolstad		
Hundseid	x	x
Nygaardsvold		
Gerhardsen	x	x
Torp	(x)	
Lyng		
Borten	x	(x)
Bratteli	x	x
Korvald	x	x
Nordli		
Brundtland		(x)
Willoch	(x)	

* Those in brackets had been party chairmen, but were not serving at the time of appointment.

** Those in brackets served as chairmen for only part of the period as prime minister.

a) No information is available on Berge and Konow.

Nor does the prime minister need be the leader of his or her party. In fact, as Table II shows, it was not until the post-war period that the practice

of uniting party leadership and premiership in the same hands became common. Of the nineteen men who served as prime minister from 1884 until World War II, only eight were party leaders prior to becoming prime minister and six were party chairmen during their terms in office. With Gerhardsen, however, the practice of giving one person responsibility for both posts became the rule in the Labor Party. Gerhardsen held both offices simultaneously during most of the period from 1945 to 1965. In 1951, however, he insisted on passing the prime minister's mantle to Oscar Torp. Torp remained head of the government until 1955, when Gerhardsen again took over.¹¹

Gerhardsen's reason for his decision to step down as prime minister was direct and simple: "I am tired."¹² But, in his letter of 10 November 1951 to Labor's central executive, in which he requested to be relieved of the office of prime minister, he also touched on the principle of uniting the offices of party leader and prime minister: "The combination party chairman-prime minister may deserve examination. In principle there is, perhaps, no objection, but in practice, the arrangement has certain weaknesses."¹³

A major weakness was, of course, the inability of one man to do full justice to both offices. But, in his memoirs, Gerhardsen again insists on the superior merits of uniting the two posts in the same hands, although he grants that a good case can be made for the opposite view. Nonetheless, he feels that the major advantage for their union is that this facilitates close contact between the government and the party leadership, thus contributing to a sense of security in both the cabinet and the party.¹⁴

Of the Labor Party's five post-war prime ministers, only Nordli had never been party chairman. This deviation from the usual practice resulted from deliberate attempts to stem party factionalism. In 1975, Trygve Bratteli resigned his position as party chairman while still serving as prime minister. The party's national convention elected a new chairman, Reiulf Steen, with the understanding that he would not succeed Bratteli as prime minister. The party leadership then agreed that the prime minister's office should be given to Nordli. By this compromise, divisive party quarreling over these positions was prevented.¹⁵

In 1981, Brundtland took over the prime minister's post from Nordli. Many feared a nasty struggle, since it was known that the new prime minister favored a return to the Gerhardsen pattern. The party's national convention, which met in April 1981, had to choose between her and Steen.

Brundtland never declared herself a candidate for the party's leadership. "I'll accept whatever job the party chooses to give me," was her cryptic reply to newsmen who pressed her for an answer on the issue. Delegates to the convention were, nonetheless, under considerable pressure to desert Steen for Brundtland, and the polls indicated grassroots support for her as leader. A party fight over the matter in an election year undoubtedly would have proved very damaging. Thus, Steen's announcement after the convention got under way that he would no longer be a candidate was met with relief. Any hard feeling against Brundtland as an "iron lady" melted away during her acceptance speech to the convention when, overcome with emotion, she broke down in tears.¹⁶

In the non-socialist parties, the union of the two offices is the exception

rather than the rule. The present prime minister, Willoch, is not chairman of his party, although he has been so in the past. The Centre Party's Per Borten gave up the party chairmanship after becoming prime minister. John Lyng, a Conservative and head of the short-lived coalition government in 1963, was never party chairman. This leaves Lars Korvald of the Christian People's Party as the only post-war non-socialist prime minister who has followed the Gerhardsen practice of keeping the reins of both party and government in his hands.¹⁷ The most likely reason for the difference in the usual practices of the Labor Party and the non-socialist parties is found in the fact that the non-socialist governments always have been coalition governments until the autumn of 1981.

Thus, the last of the three points mentioned at the outset, namely, support by a majority in parliament, is the only absolute requirement that must be met by a candidate for the office of prime minister in Norway. The king is advised by the retiring prime minister as to who should be able to command such a majority. As in the case of other constitutional monarchies, the provision for the appointment of the prime minister by the king today is a mere formality although, on two occasions, King Haakon apparently took a fairly active part in the negotiations preceding the formation of a government.

The first occurred in 1928, when he is said to have exercised some personal influence during the crisis which led to the establishment of the first Labor government under Christopher Hornsrud. In 1945 as well, the king, on his own initiative, consulted a Supreme Court justice, Paal Berg, about whom to approach regarding the appointment of a new prime minister and government. Gerhardsen also relates that, after it had been decided that he would form a government, the king expressed his concern about geographical balance in the composition of the cabinet. He also recommended that women be represented and suggested that a few individuals from the war-time cabinet-in-exile ought to be included.¹⁸ Normally, however, there is no scope for a monarch to exert his influence.

How Does a Candidate Emerge?

The call from the king inviting a politician to form a new government may climax a long and arduous process of bargaining between party factions or, in the case of coalition governments, different parties. At other times, the selection of the new prime minister may be a foregone conclusion—a "crown prince" may have emerged or been anointed.

Formally, it is the party organization and the parliamentary party which select the candidate for prime minister. The organizational structure of all Norwegian parties is essentially the same: a central executive committee is at the top, and is responsible to a larger national council that meets less frequently. The party's national conference, which either meets annually or bi-annually, is normally not involved in leadership selection.

In the Labor Party, the central executive committee has considerable influence in the selection of the candidate for prime minister. Its decision is then presented to the national council for its approval, and finally to the party's members in the Storting. (Only once has this party's national conference been involved in the selection process: in 1975, Nordli was picked by

the national conference to succeed the retiring Bratteli.) The process is by and large the same in the bourgeois parties, but the parliamentary groups of these parties have a somewhat stronger influence than is the case in the Labor Party.

However, in many cases, the formal decision-making organs find themselves confronting a *fait accompli*. This makes their function one of mere rubber-stamping. A parliamentary party leader who is also the party chairman is difficult to overlook. There also may be a "crown prince" waiting in the wings as happened in the summer of 1981, when the Conservative Party nominated Willoch as its contender for the prime ministership. Then again, a successor may be handpicked by the sitting prime minister as occurred in 1951, when Gerhardsen simply announced that Torp would succeed him. So great was Gerhardsen's prestige that no opposition developed. Torp was routinely confirmed by the leading organs of the Labor Party as the party's candidate for prime minister. According to Haakon Lie, none could have prevented this "*coup d'état*."¹⁹

In those cases when no particular person has appeared as the "logical choice," or when a strong leader has not appointed a successor, the formal party organs often play a decisive role. This was clearly true of Brundtland's selection in February of 1981. During the bargaining sessions in the central executive committee, another candidate, Rolf Hansen, was originally favoured by the Labor Youth Organization (AUF) and by the Trade Union Federation (LO). Brundtland, who as deputy leader of the party was a member of the central executive, has revealed that the decision to make her prime minister was made two days prior to the formal decision by the party's national council. A secret meeting was arranged at the home of a former prime minister, Bratteli, where members of the party hierarchy and the chairman of the LO gathered. A half-hour discussion resulted in Brundtland's selection. Changes in the cabinet were also discussed and it was agreed to keep these to a minimum.²⁰

When there is no heir apparent or in times of perceived crisis, the resulting uncertainty may lead to bargaining, which provides room for influence from the grassroots of the party. This was very much the case when Brundtland became prime minister in 1981. The Labor Party struggled against its image as a rudderless ship adrift with a crew of old men on board. Declining support in the polls promised disastrous results in the forthcoming Storting elections. Obviously, both a bright new face and a generational change were needed. The message "we want Gro," which came from an increasingly active and growing grassroots movement, was heeded by the party's top leadership.²¹

The selection process within the non-socialist parties is by and large similar to that of the Labor Party. At the same time, it has been a more complicated and more interesting process because a non-socialist government in the post-war period has always meant a coalition government until 1981. Agreement between the parties on a "self-evident" candidate has been the exception rather than the rule. Also, if the formation of a coalition has been the result of a government crisis (as in 1963 and 1971) rather than of a general election, the uncertainty surrounding the future prime minister has

been great and, consequently, the scope for bargaining and informal influences has increased.

Lyng, the first non-socialist prime minister in Norway since 1935, has produced an extremely interesting account of these behind-the-scenes manoeuvres in 1963 and of the gradual emergence of consensus as to who the next prime minister ought to be. The background for the lack-of-confidence vote in the Labor government in the summer of 1963 was the King's Bay scandal, which involved mismanagement of the state-owned mines at Spitzbergen. Lyng reports that, in June 1973, he had a lengthy conversation about the situation with the parliamentary leader of the Christian People's Party, Kjell Bondevik. The parliamentary leaders of the two other non-socialist parties had both left town on summer vacation. According to Lyng, neither he nor Bondevik had a clear overview of the King's Bay issue. However, both perceived that a crisis might be at hand and believed that they ought to consider how a non-socialist government should be formed. It was, says Lyng, "the first time I had a really detailed and open conversation with any of the other parliamentary group leaders about the pattern of a possible bourgeois government formation."²²

The two men discovered that they held few differences of opinion and were agreed that the best solution to the government crisis would be a coalition government of the non-socialist parties. They also agreed that it was essential to arrange a meeting as soon as possible with the other parliamentary party leaders. They fixed 2 July as the date of the meeting, for all the members of the Storting were to be in Oslo to celebrate King Olav's birthday.

This meeting was held in due course, and the decision was made to form a coalition government when the Labor government fell. Lyng's notes, made right after these conversations, provide interesting glimpses into the dynamics of the informal recruitment process:

We agreed that during the necessary negotiations, nobody was to pose ultimatums on any point. We further agreed that the composition of the government by and large must reflect the parties' representation in the Storting, however, with the reservation that those parties which were given one of the key positions (such as prime minister and foreign minister) would have to be content with a suitable reduction in number.

I pointed out that I assumed the Conservative Party as the largest group would make a certain claim on the prime minister's job, but that this claim must not be considered an ultimatum. . . .

In order to get a certain overview of how the distribution of persons would look, we then started a discussion of what persons might be suitable from the various parties. The conversation was made difficult insofar as we did not know at this time who would be assuming the position of prime minister. . . .²³

A few days later, Lyng wrote a letter to the chairman of the Conservative Party, Sjur Lindebrække, in which he reported on his conversations with the other parliamentary party leaders. He added:

In regard to the question of the further formal approach, we all agreed that it would lead to chaos if the question of the placement of every single department and every single candidate has to be submitted to all the central executive committees, Storting groups, etc. We agreed that each of us ought to get the freest possible mandate to arrange the various pieces of the puzzle.²⁴

Lyng's notes are also interesting because we find here the blueprint for subsequent coalition-formation processes, that is, the granting of a broad mandate for negotiations to delegations representing the prospective coalition partners. The exact size of these delegations have varied. In 1981, they consisted of four representatives from each of the three cooperating non-socialist parties: the Conservative Party, the Centre Party, and the Christian People's Party. As it turned out, the talks broke down and the Conservative Party formed a new minority government alone.²⁵

The work of such a delegation falls into two stages: first, agreement is attained on the candidate for prime minister, and then agreement is reached on the distribution of the various departmental portfolios among the parties and the individuals who are to fill these posts. During the second stage of the delegation's work, the candidate for prime minister assumes the role of leader in composing a future government. However, it is clearly impossible to separate the two stages completely, for much importance is attached to the prime minister's office. Those parties that give up their aspirations for the top post require assurances that other "plums" will be available and demand firm promises as to which ones they are to be. Especially in 1965, there was a good deal of bargaining about other offices before the party leaders finally agreed that either the Liberal Party or the Centre Party was to get the prime ministership. It was finally the parliamentary group of the Conservative Party that decided the issue when it threw its support to the Centre Party's candidate, Borten, rather than to the Liberals' Bent Røyseland — a decision, incidentally, which many Conservatives have since confessed that they regretted.²⁶

The individual parties of a prospective coalition government usually have little doubt as to their favoured choice for the prime minister's post. Typically, it is the party chairman or the leader of the parliamentary group. But a party's anticipation of the reaction of its coalition partners to a particular person as candidate for the prime ministerial chair may dictate that its own first choice be passed over in favour of one who can muster more support from the other parties. Thus, in 1971, the Liberal Party knew that its leader, Helge Seip, was unacceptable to other members of the coalition and, therefore, the party leadership supported Halvard Eika, a relative unknown, as its candidate for the prime ministership.²⁷

Even when a party knows that it has little or no chance to win the post of prime minister, it will go through the exercise of nominating a candidate. The most recent election illustrates this. Willoch of the Conservative Party had for many years been regarded as the "natural" prime minister in a bourgeois coalition government by his fellow party members. However, both the Christian People's Party and the Centre Party, prospective partners in a coalition cabinet headed by the Conservative Party, put forth their own candidates as leaders of the government.²⁸

The People Who Have Served

Since the appointment of the first Norwegian prime minister in 1873, Norway has had 30 prime ministers. What characteristics do they share in terms of background and career patterns? Do different recruitment patterns characterize the various parties or periods?

Sex, age, occupation and education:

To begin with the obvious: it is an almost exclusively male group we are considering. When Brundtland succeeded Nordli in February of 1981, she was Norway's first female prime minister (and, for that matter, the first woman to become prime minister in Scandinavia and continental Europe as well).²⁹

Not quite forty-two years old when she took office, Brundtland was also the youngest prime minister in Norwegian history. The previous record holder, Georg Hagerup, was forty-two when he began serving.²⁹ Like other political systems, Norway's tends to reserve the prime minister's office for those who are well into middle age; it is not a position one can normally aspire to hold until his or her fifties. Of the nine post-war prime ministers, only three were in their forties when they began serving; the average age on first appointment has been fifty-three.

Looking at the whole period from 1873 till today, one can observe a slight trend towards more youthful prime ministers. From 1873 till 1905, half of the men were over sixty when they began serving. In contrast, since 1905 most have tended to be between fifty and sixty.³⁰

Table III: Norwegian prime ministers by occupation and occupational category

	1873- 1905	1905- 1935	1935- 1965	1965-	Total
Lawyers/high state officials	6	2	1		9
Educators					8
Professors	1				
School principals	1	2		1	
Teachers		3			
Private businessmen					5
Shipping-men		3			
Merchants		2			
Workers			3	1	4
Functionaries					4
Economists				1	
Public accountants				1	
Municipal agronomists				1	
Public health officials				1	
Total	8	12	4	6	30

In regard to occupational and educational characteristics, some interesting patterns appear. It is possible to discern several distinct periods:

- 1) 1873 — 1905, the period of state officials,
- 2) 1905 — 1935, the period of businessmen and teachers,
- 3) 1935 — 1965, the period of workers,
- 4) 1965 — 1983, the period of functionaries.

The first of these periods, from 1873 to 1905, was characterized by the predominance of jurists; all but one of the eight prime ministers during those years had law degrees and were high state officials.

The second period belongs to the businessmen and teachers. Between 1905 and 1935, ten of twelve prime ministers were found in one or the other of these two occupations. Among the businessmen were several shippingmen. During this period the Norwegian economy was in rapid growth, the country was emerging as an industrial nation, and its fleet was becoming one of the largest in the world. It is tempting to speculate that this expanding capitalism reflected itself in the recruitment to leading political offices as well. This period was also one of democratization. Educational opportunities for the masses improved, and teachers' colleges especially recruited ambitious young men from the lower strata. Teachers frequently were perceived as the "natural" leaders in their communities, and were launched into political careers as the sway of state officials in party politics diminished.

The third period, from the depression of the thirties through the war years and the post-war period up to 1965, belongs to the workers. The ascendancy of the Labor Party in Norwegian politics represented opportunities for political influence from groups which had hitherto not found their way into the political decision-making process. People with meagre formal credentials and resources would compensate for those shortcomings through labor union activity and party work to reach positions of power. Johan Nygaardsvold, Gerhardsen and Torp fall into this category. With the exception of Lyng's brief government in 1963, all the prime ministers during this period were workers who, through dint of hard work in the unions and the Labor Party, had compensated for their lack of the credentials normally required in recruits for high office — a good education and prestigious occupation.

The fourth and final period is that of the functionaries, and we may appropriately date that back to the bourgeois election victory in 1965 and the establishment of the coalition government under the Centre Party's Borten, a municipal agronomist. The other prime ministers during this period include a school administrator, a certified public accountant, a worker turned party functionary, and a physician employed by the public health office. The last one, Willoch, is an economist and fits nicely into the pattern; before his political career began, he worked as an executive secretary and consultant for the Norwegian Shipping Association and the Industrial Association respectively.

During this last period, the Norwegian welfare state has been cemented and the educational system has mushroomed to meet the needs of an increasingly technological and bureaucratic society. The supply of well-educated people and the complexity of the problems facing decision makers have combined to raise the educational levels of the political recruits. It seems safe to say that the era of the "self-taught man" in Norwegian politics belongs to the past. The number of politicians who rise to the top in spite of their limited educational and professional qualifications will be getting smaller and smaller.

As far as educational background is concerned, there is a marked con-

trast between the period since World War II and the earlier years. From 1873 until Norwegian independence in 1905, the prime ministers were university educated, and all but one of them had been lawyers. Between 1903 and 1935 the picture is more varied, with relatively few university graduates. As Table IV shows, seven of the twelve had only elementary school, high school, teachers' college or a practical education. During the same period, three of the five with university education were trained as lawyers.

Table IV: Education of Norwegian prime ministers

		1873- 1905	1905- 1935	1935- 1982	Total
High	University degree	8	3	3	14
	Agricultural college		2	2	4
Medium	<i>Examen artium</i>		2	1	3
	Teachers' college		2		2
Low	Post-elementary school practical courses		2	1	3
	Elementary school only		1	3	4
Total		8	12	10	30

During the period from 1935 to the present, the representation of university graduates among the prime ministers has been further reduced; prior to Brundtland, only one had a university degree, namely the Conservative Party's Lyng, who was a lawyer. This development is of course related to the ascendancy of the Labor Party and its dominance in Norwegian politics. None of Labor's prime ministers before Brundtland had received a university education, and four of them had no formal education at all beyond elementary school. In being union activists and party functionaries, these men were hardly "workers" when entering politics, but their background was definitely that of the working-class poor.

Clearly, Brundtland's appointment represents a break with this tradition, an occupational and educational as well as a generational change. The Labor Party is still an unusually open party, where people with few formal credentials have been able to make up for this through hard labor in the party vineyard, and where a working-class background is indeed considered an asset. However, the same tendency is noticeable here as in other European labor parties; the educational and occupational status of the party leaders and elected representatives is increasing and relatively fewer workers are now serving in high office than a generation ago. This development has caused concern within the party, and the previous party chairman, Steen, commented in an interview just a few days after Brundtland's appointment: "I would look at it with concern if the Labor Party's determining organs become dominated by academicians. We need them too, but there must be balance in our representation to the popularly elected assemblies. The Labor Party must continue to be a labor party."³¹ The same concern was expressed at the national convention that in April 1981 elected Brundtland as the new party leader and Einar Førde, another academician, who was

then Minister of Education and Church Affairs, as deputy leader. But others have voiced strong objections to any tendencies that regard people with education and professional-experience as somehow less "qualified" for office than those with a bona fide working-class background.³²

Political experience:

It has been customary in Norwegian politics for recruits to higher posts to have done yeoman service at the lower levels. Normally, extensive schooling in the party organization and in local politics precedes entry into the national arena, and there has been relatively little of the North American practice of "drafting" or nominating people without party experience to high political office.³³ As Table I shows, all but three of the nine post-war prime ministers served several years as local politicians before entering national politics.

Recent years have, however, produced several exceptions to the rule that political office is a reward for long and faithful party service. Thus, Lyng recounts in his memoirs how he attempted to recruit the well-known engineer Olav Selvaag as a member of his cabinet. Says Lyng: "True enough, none of us knew for sure where he belonged politically, but we felt confident that he was not a socialist."³⁴

It is also known that Lindebrække, long-time chairman of the Conservative Party, was courted by both the Liberals and the Conservatives when he was first nominated to the Storting.³⁵ Today, Professor F. Frank Gundersen, a Storting representative for the Progressive Party, is still not a party member.

All these "draftees" from outside the ranks of party activists who have been offered and have won high political office, have been prominent in other areas. They have been educated and well-known people who could add lustre to the party ticket and perhaps garner a few votes from outside the ranks of the regular party supporters. Brundtland was one of these types when she first entered national politics. A political unknown, she was invited by Bratteli in 1974 to serve as his Minister of the Environment. Although a party member, she had not been politically active since her student days, but had been immersed in her work for the public health service and a research project which she hoped would result in a Ph.D. in medicine. During the five years that she served as Minister of the Environment, she displayed energy and decisiveness, and her popularity put her in the forefront of the candidates for prime minister when Nordli's retirement became due.

To talk of her "comet-like" rise, as has sometimes been done, is nonetheless an exaggeration. As we see from Table I, not all Norwegian prime ministers during the post-World War II period have had extensive government experience prior to their appointment to that post. Indeed, four of the nine had not served in any cabinet at all, and of the five who had served, one had only eighteen months' experience in cabinet. With her five years as minister, Brundtland in fact ranks close to the top among the post-war prime ministers in terms of cabinet experience.

It also is worth noting that Brundtland's political career was rooted in a thorough grounding in politics during her childhood. Her mother, Inga,

worked for the Storting, and her father, Gudmund, was a cabinet member under Gerhardsen. Their daughter's political interest was awakened through friendship from an early age with people like Gerhardsen, Martin Tranmæl and Olav Larsen, the editor of *Arbeiderbladet*. She became a member of the Labor Party's children's organization, *Framfylkingen*, and, as a medical student at the University of Oslo, she belonged to the students' socialist club. When a conflict erupted in 1959 between the party leadership and the club over the issue of student visits to East Germany, she loyally followed the party line. Her reward came years later.³⁶

The contrast between Brundtland and the first of the post-war Labor prime ministers, Gerhardsen, is evident and itself an illustration of the changing nature of the party. Gerhardsen, too, grew up in a political atmosphere. His parents were socialists, and his father was a labor union leader. In his memoirs, Gerhardsen recalls falling asleep as a child while listening to the union members' political talk in the kitchen. Gerhardsen himself became engaged in both union and party work as a young teenager, and through the Labor Party's adult education courses he received his only education after elementary school. The party became his home, his work, his recreation. His friends were party friends. Politics was their consuming passion.

This was a pattern Gerhardsen shared in large measure with Torp and Bratteli, who succeeded him as prime minister. Both came from very poor working-class families in eastern Norway, and were socialized into class consciousness both through their home environment and their union activities which they entered upon at a very young age. As a thirteen year old boy in 1906, Torp was an active supporter of one of the first successful industrial strikes in Norway — at the lumber factory in Hafslund. He also took great pride in the fact that his grandfather, a tenant farmer, had been a member of the very first genuine working-class movement in Norway, Marcus Thrane's "Workers' Societies."³⁷ But this pattern belongs to the past. Workers are no longer the backbone of the Labor Party — the middle class employees in the service-sector of the post-industrial society constitute its new clientele and leaders. It is Brundtland, not Gerhardsen, who represents today's Labor Party.

With the exception of Korvald, all of the non-socialist post-war prime ministers have had extensive political experience at the local level prior to attaining national office. The most interesting background in many ways is that of Lyng who, in his youth, belonged to the radical group *Mot Dag* (Towards Day), an organization affiliated with the Labor Party having a particular appeal for intellectuals and academics. This was, according to Lyng himself, a logical result of his childhood experience. His father, although not politically active, was acutely interested in politics, and had amassed a great amount of radical literature which the younger Lyng had pored over as a high school student. When Lyng was elected to local office, however, it was as a member of the Liberal Left Party in Trondheim. This party dwindled into insignificance during the 1930s, and was not reconstituted after the war, when most of its members naturally drifted into the Conservative Party. By this time, Lyng, as an active resistance worker during the war, had been associated with the coalition government in London where he, along with other Conservatives, planned the first post-war national elections. He was elected to the Storting in 1945.

Table V: Norwegian prime ministers after World War II—
Demographic, educational and occupational characteristics

Name	Year of birth	Age at time of appointment	Birthplace
Einar Gerhardsen	1897	48	Asker, Akershus
Oscar Torp	1893	58	Skjeberg, Østfold
John Lyng	1905	58	Trondheim, Sør-Trøndelag
Per Borten	1913	52	Flå, Sør- Trøndelag
Trygve Bratteli	1910	61	Nøtterøy, Vestfold
Lars Korvald	1916	56	Nedre Eiker, Buskerud
Odvar Nordli	1927	49	Stange, Hedmark
Gro Harlem Brundtland	1939	41	Oslo
Kåre Willoch	1928	53	Oslo

In contrast to Lyng, Willoch's childhood home was solidly conservative. The war years contributed to his awareness of and interest in politics and, when he started his economic studies at the University of Oslo, he became a prominent member of the Conservative Students' Association. Through his work there he was eventually made a member of the executive committee of the Conservative Party in Oslo, and was elected to the city council in 1951. He was then only twenty-three years old. Elected as a deputy member to the Storting in 1953, he became the youngest representative to serve since 1814 after being called on to sit in place of the regular representative. He has been a central figure in the party ever since, having become a regular member of the Storting in 1957, a Conservative cabinet member of the coalition cabinets in the 1960s and party chairman from 1970 to 1974.

As Table I shows, Borten, a farmer's son, also had extensive experience in local politics and the Storting when he became prime minister. The fourth of the non-socialist premiers, Korvald, rose to national attention through his work in Christian organizations and the Christian People's Party, and was elected to the Storting in 1961 without previous local experience. Korvald came from a strongly fundamentalist rural background. His father, a farmer in eastern Norway, was a member of the parish council and chairman of the pietistic "Inner Mission," and his mother, too, was a devout Christian with a strongly developed social conscience. This, as well as his father's membership in the municipal council, may have nurtured latent political interests in him.³⁸

Education	Occupation
Elementary school	Worker, political secretary
Elementary school, practical course	Smith, electrician
Law	Lawyer
Agricultural college	Farmer, agronomist
Elementary school	Worker, politician
Agricultural college	School-principal
Business school	Accountant
Medical school	Physician
University	Economist, politician

Table VI: Prime ministers' provincial origin

Province	1873-1982
Oslo/Akershus	7
Vestfold	4
Sør-Trøndelag	4
Østfold	3
Bergen/Hordaland	3
Hedmark	2
Aust-Agder	2
Buskerud	2
Vest-Agder	1
Oppland	1
Rogaland	1
Nordland	0
Troms	0
Finnmark	0
Nord-Trøndelag	0
Møre og Romsdal	0
Sogn og Fjordane	0
Telemark	0
Total	30

Geographical Representation:

In a country such as Norway where geographical divisions and the centre-periphery conflict have dominated political life, it is of some interest to see which areas of the country have supplied most of the prime ministers. As Table VI shows, it is Oslo and the surrounding area that have predominated. Over two-thirds of the prime ministers have come from this part of the country. Northern Norway has not provided a single prime minister, and there are four other counties, besides the three northern ones, which have been unrepresented. During the period from 1873 to 1905, all the prime ministers were from the eastern part of the country. Between 1905 and 1940, geographical representation was more balanced, with Western Norway providing four, and southern Norway three of the prime ministers. The post-war period, however, has restored the predominance of the Oslo area, for seven of the nine heads of government have come from this part of the country. The predominance of eastern Norway is again underscored when we consider the number of years the premiership has been held by people from the various geographical areas. For sixty-eight of the one hundred and nine years since 1873, the prime minister's chair has been occupied by someone from eastern Norway.

Table VII: Regional origin of prime ministers

Region	1873-1905	1905-1935	1935-1982	Total
Eastern Norway	8	4	7	19
Western Norway	0	4	0	4
Trøndelag	0	1	3	4
Southern Norway	0	3	0	3
Northern Norway	0	0	0	0
Total	8	12	10	30

Conclusion

In summary, then, we may say that the typical Norwegian prime minister is a man in his fifties with a relatively long political career behind him, including several years in the Storting and many years of active party work, although not necessarily as party leader. With the exception of the period from 1935 to 1965, prime ministers have usually been men with superior educational and occupational attainments. Geographically, the office has been dominated by people from southern Norway, particularly the area around Oslo and Trondheim. As a rule, both socialist and non-socialist prime ministers have served lengthy apprenticeships but, with regard to cabinet experience, the socialists have accumulated, on the whole, more practice. The explanation for this fact must be sought in the long domination of Norwegian politics by the Labor Party, which in effect denied bourgeois opposition politicians the chance to serve apprenticeships in the cabinet.

Notes

¹ The literature on the American presidency is particularly large. One might mention works such as Edward S. Corwin, *The President: Office and Powers* (4th ed., 1957), Sidney Hyman, *The American President* (1954), and Clinton Rossiter, *The American Presidency* (1956), as well as Harold Laski's *The American Presidency* (1940), and, more recently, James Barber's interesting work, *The Presidential Character* (1972). For a study of the Canadian chief executive, see R.M. Punnett, *The Prime Minister in Canadian Government and Politics* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1977). Humphrey Berkeley analyzes the prime minister and his role in the British system in *The Power of the Prime Minister* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1968).

² The standard works on the Norwegian constitutional system and government are Johs. Andenæs, *Statsforfatningen i Norge* (4th ed.; Oslo: Tanum-Norli, 1979); Kristian Bloch, *Kongens Råd* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1963); and Frede Castberg, *Norges Statsforfatning* (3rd ed.; Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1964). Of the earlier prime ministers, Einar Gerhardsen and John Lyng have written memoirs that throw interesting light on the prime minister's role in the political system. See Einar Gerhardsen, *Fellesskap i krig og fred 1940-45* (Oslo: Tiden Norsk Forlag, 1977); *idem.*, *Samarbeid og strid 1945-55* (Oslo: Tiden Norsk Forlag, 1971); *idem.*, *I medgang og motgang 1955-65* (Oslo: Tiden Norsk Forlag, 1972); and John Lyng, *Vaktskifte 1953-1965*, (Oslo: J.W. Cappelens Forlag, 1973).

³ Herbert Jacob, "Initial Recruitment of Elected Officials in the U.S. — A Model," *Journal of Politics*, 24 (November 1962), p. 708.

⁴ See S. Ugelvik Larsen and A. Offerdal, *De få vi valgte* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1979), Chapter 2.

⁵ Harry Eckstein, *Division and Cohesion in Democracy. A Study of Norway* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1966), pp. 3-6.

⁶ See Punnett, *op.cit.* p. 30.

⁷ The Norwegian election system is explained in Henry Valen and Daniel Katz, *Political Parties in Norway* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1967), Chapter 2.

⁸ Liv Hegle Sjøflot and Johannes Sjøflot, "Statsministeren norsk politikk" (Unpublished term paper, Møre and Romsdal Regional College, 1980), p. 55. This and other translations from Norwegian are by this author.

⁹ *Hvem er hvem*, 1979, p. 684.

¹⁰ See *Arbeiderbladet*, 3 February 1981, pp. 6-9, and 31 January, p. 7.

¹¹ Per Øyvind Heradstveit, *Einar Gerhardsen og hans menn*, (Oslo: J.W. Cappelens Forlag, 1981), pp. 140-145.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 140.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 141.

¹⁴ Gerhardsen, *I medgang og motgang*, p. 66.

¹⁵ Sjøflot and Sjøflot, *op.cit.*, p. 54.

¹⁶ See *Arbeiderbladet*, 6 April 1981, special national conference edition, no pagination.

¹⁷ Sjøflot and Sjøflot, *op.cit.*, p. 39.

¹⁸ See Gerhardsen, *Fellesskap i krig og fred*, pp. 175-189.

¹⁹ Haakon Lie, . . . *slik jeg ser det* (Oslo: Tiden Norsk Forlag, 1975), p. 56.

²⁰ See *Arbeiderbladet*, 2 February 1981, p. 7, and 7 February, p. 19.

²¹ See *Arbeiderbladet*, 3 February 1981, p. 7.

²² Lyng, *Vaktskifte*, p. 151.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 156-157.

²⁵ *Aftenposten*, 17 September 1981, p. 45, and 19 September 1981, p. 3.

²⁶ See interview with Conservative party chairman, Jo Benkow, in *Sunnmørsposten*, 4 March 1980.

²⁷ Sjøflot and Sjøflot, *op.cit.*, p. 55 and p. 59.

²⁸ See *Arbeiderbladet*, 8 July 1981, and *Dagbladet*, 8 August 1981.

²⁹ Many of the press notices regarding Gro Harlem Brundtland's appointment have mentioned that she was the fifth woman prime minister in the world, with Sri Lanka's Sirimavo Bandaranaike, India's Indira Gandhi, Israel's Golda Meir and England's Margaret Thatcher preceding her. Actually, the list includes at least three more women. In 1974, President Bokassa of the Central African Republic appointed Elizabeth Domitien as prime minister and, in 1979, Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo became prime minister in Portugal. Elizabeth Domitien served until 1976, when she was dismissed by Bokassa after opposing his move to become emperor. Pintasilgo, an engineer, Catholic, socialist and feminist, was actively opposed by the centre and right-wing parties in her country, and lost the election only 100 days after her appointment to office. Finally, Mary Eugenia Charles became prime minister of the little island republic of Dominica in 1980. See Torild Skard's reports in *Arbeiderbladet*, 11 and 13 February 1981.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Aftenposten*, 14 February 1981, p. 3.

³² *Arbeiderbladet*, 6 April 1981, unpaginated national conference edition.

³³ See Valen and Katz, *op.cit.*, Chapter 3, particularly pp. 57-64.

³⁴ Lyng, *Vaktskifte*, p. 175.

³⁵ See Ingunn Nordeval Means, *Kvinner i norsk politikk* (Oslo: J.W. Cappelens Forlag, 1973), pp. 67-71.

³⁶ *Dagbladet*, 7 February 1981, p. 17.

³⁷ Einar Gerhardsen, *Unge år*, (Oslo: Den norske Bokklubben, 1976), pp. 16-74. See also Egil Helle, *Oscar Torp — arbeidergutt og statsmann* (Oslo: Gyldendal, 1982), pp. 9-37.

³⁸ See John Lyng, *Brytningsår* (Oslo: J.W. Cappelens Forlag, 1972), Chapters 1 and 3; Carl Johan Berg, *Kåre Willoch* (Oslo: Fabritius Forlagshus, 1978), pp. 15-59; and Lars Korvald, *Politikk og kall* (Oslo: Rocon, a.s., 1982), pp. 16-50.

No Time for Timelessness?

A brief look at the trio:

Tove Ditlevsen (1918-76)

Frank Jæger (1926-77)

Ole Sarvig (1921-81)

who all died by their own hand.

Elin Elgaard

It was in 1958 that Klaus Rifbjerg (known as the Danish "John Updike") took over the editorship of the well-reputed literary magazine, *Vindrosen*, with the dare-devil cry: "And NOW for a good splash in the onion-dripping!" An era came to an end: *Heretica* — the organ for art viewed as *musisk* — had yielded after fourteen years. Whereas its stance had once been against rationalism and materialism and for the continuity of traditional standards, under Rifbjerg's control it definitely became linked with the youth and student troubles of the 1960s. As the two editors who followed him were to bear out in their manifesto of 1969:

Art is a schooling of the unlike sensations, sense and sensitivity, both [being] the prerequisite for renewal. Art is unreal reality and can never compensate for truth. But when it stands as a claim on, a thorn in the side of, existing reality, we must needs say: "*Avanti*, imagination!"

Indeed, the 1970s was a time of politicization and confrontation in art above all else. Art, however, seemed to be on hard times. In the next decade, this was felt: ephemeral literary magazines of political bent lost subscriptions or went under; minority literature lost a relatively easy forum as more stringent demands for quality set in. In women's and workers' literature, the wheat has by now been sorted from the chaff: names like Suzanne Brøgger, a superb essayist, will stay, but the imitations from hangers-on are plainly *de trop*. Introductions to the present-day worker's milieu — at the assembly line, in the rural outback — have been needed and are justified as long as they add to the literary spectrum. We may, just about *now*, have come full circle — and to what?

The isolated figure bent over a desk — jotting down, ticking away — has always been there, even if only barely during the recent decades of politico-sociological writing. That he has now re-emerged as a publisher's concern is purely coincidental with the prevailing wave, an ecological alert that embraces every living and breathing thing around us. Our interest is in a writer looking back on his/her childhood, *that* little part of our world. It is easier, and somehow right and proper once again, to peer narrowly with (and into) an individual. Knowingly or not, the Danes are back with their small personal voice, always the true one in art — and always the one left behind by the charging, dogmatic bandwagon.

Voices like Tove Ditlevsen's, unschooled because her working-class home did not believe in education for girls; like Frank Jæger's painting,

whether in poetry or prose, of portraits, always portraits, be they of parson, postman or literary celebrity; like Sarvig's when, in recognizing the distance between himself and technology, he winds on the path that he sees the duty of all of us to follow back to the self that is Man as Myth. Back, back to individual roots, to nature — you name it, we (the world, all of a sudden) like it! Oh yes, of course it will be abused, like all other suddenly perceived truths. However, it is here rather than in chanted Marxist theory that Denmark's chances lie for cutting any ice internationally — in books that capture their time and see what will last in it, what has the germ of the new *with* an inlay of the everlasting. Such will survive.

There was a time when what was said and written by Danes carried weight; one need go back no further than 1944 for a firmly held literary view: "The edifying process after the war and its disillusionment will be on poetry's head; it and it alone may delve through the ruins of illusion toward the perennial." Thus heralded by the notable writer Martin A. Hansen, *Heretica* came into being; and by comparison the trivial flag-waving of the 1960s has faded into an apologia for itself.

* * * *

Significantly, the trio I am here concerned with appeared — each for the first time in print, each within a short time of the others — in *Heretica's* poetry pages. As this magazine which gave them a forum was later to be accused of "extreme aestheticism," so was each in turn pinned with a label to writhe under. Ditlevsen wrote in "too maudlin a fashion of her own unhappiness, too scathingly of those who tired of her"; Jæger was an increasing absurdity, an ostrich-in-the-bush "green poet" (the landscapist connotation of "green" gradually yielding to nastier overtones of "greenhorn"); Sarvig seemed to have encircled himself with a maze of convoluted sentences. With their emergence in the 1940s and 1950s, they had been greeted with enthusiasm: Ditlevsen, for her home-truths about growing up poor and confined as a girl within a girl's strict domain, and so being inevitably exploited; Jæger, for his immediate landscaping and his irresistible peopling of the countryside with fauns and imps; Sarvig, for his visionary, yet succinct and "masculine" lines. In less than a quarter-century, something was to go sour — but why? And how?

Perhaps it may seem specious to argue why the regionalists couldn't make use of a Jæger, the feminists similarly of a Ditlevsen, or as might the outraged anti-Marxists of a Sarvig? But no, it was too clearly to be read between the lines that these writers refused to be categorized and to do away with all things past in one fell swoop. The past counted too much in terms of its styles and rigour. The whole idea of severance, of chopping things to fit conveniently would have been a betrayal of art to them. It is true that Jæger never travelled much, for which reason he always repudiated Death as The Last Journey: "All this incessant buzzing, even to the Hereafter!" But he did translate a great deal from English and German, using that work for a steady widening of his own linguistic/stylistic horizons. Tove Ditlevsen, accused of exploiting her men as they had her by laying them bare to the public eye, declared wryly that she had transformed them. This firmly-rooted

Copenhagener had travelled *minds* for literary purposes, and rendered a poet's universe rather than a literal truth which, no doubt, could have wreaked havoc amongst those portrayed! Sarvig, seeking a fabulous world as Jæger before him, travelled widely and stayed abroad for long periods, but he always returned eager to add to the Danish tradition the first disturbing whiffs of what he had heard, seen, and caught. His Danish translations are the most recent as well as the most brilliant we have of Shakespeare's major plays.

Increasingly, however, the idea of staying put in Denmark or true to her, meant turning a deaf ear or blind eye to certain clamorous pressures. Frank Jæger began expressing direct fears about modernism, characterizing its gloom and doom attitude as "sheer cultivation of eschatology in the manner of journalese," that is, supposedly creating for the masses but without caring a bit about them. Sarvig similarly declared that the new concept of "group-action" in virtually everything espoused "a contradiction in terms, certain to lead to entropy." "Preserve," he went on, "the place that man can always return to: his inmost self, the world of his longing."

That was just what Ditlevesen practised, for it was there — even in her most intimate poetry, transcending the mawkish, leaving the message of Truth rather than personal spleen — as an edifice to outlast whatever person or persons who had caused the outpouring in the first place. So would it remain to praise the lover unalterably, regardless of any subsequent caddish behaviour! She would not have set much store in academe's battles with society; to her, education was an enviable gift not to be frittered away in "demos." "You work, you live," she believed and, therefore, would have sympathized with the plight of today's unemployed on that score. Prolific as she was, the intervals between each book were utter hell — causing fits of depression, attempts at taking her own life, and prolonged stays in mental hospitals which were, according to her,

the only place I was ever really happy. Old age, to me, would mean finally coming to terms with, and unabashedly flaunting, my own strangeness; to be old and wise is a stage I could never hope to reach.

Well, she made sure of that!

Frank Jæger fought a similar battle against depression. The identification of Eros (his Muse) with his real-life love proved increasingly difficult. He, who in youth with tongue-in-cheek named himself "the old man," became imbued with real decay. Whereas Ditlevsen took to drugs, he sought drink. And Sarvig? Living the paradox of seeing, on the one hand, life itself as a journey that unites all mankind and, on the other, man as the obscurest, most unknowable of all creation perhaps proved too frightening a prospect once he had lost his wife in his later years.

They came; they saw; they went so closely one after the other. The seeing was what did it for them. Insofar as one has any right to approach their riddle, the seeing ultimately filled them with absolute dread. That was their self-inflicted task, which perhaps also rebounded on them all the more incalculably *because* they found themselves in a largely unresponsive climate.

What did they see? The world teetering on the verge: to Jæger, so it was in art; to Sarvig, so it was in Europe then being swept by no less a conflagration than when Nis Petersen wrote his poem, *Burning Europe*, about World

War I; to Ditlevsen, so it was in man's cruelty to man, for she did not limit herself to sexual battles. She was undone by them. So was Jæger when his relentless tackling of the self for artistic expansion came to be called by newer critics as "a lack of verve." The same happened to Sarvig when he took to shack-living in exile out of failure to comply with Danish taxation laws and Danish publishers who, for their part, failed to recognize demanding writing when they saw it (several books of his were translated abroad, himself collaborating on the translations, before they ever saw the light back home). There was an end to it: Ditlevsen, you might say, imploded whereas Jæger burst his bonds and Sarvig evaporated, as it were, in a bluish flame of purity. It was of their own choosing, surely, regardless of whatever they had "seen." Wasn't it?

Indeed, they did prefer isolation; but that was only for the purpose of handing on the "text" to others. And this text, says Sarvig,

... is for the individual to take, rather than the merely received opinion of each congregation member (as was the case pre-dating Gutenberg and the art of bookprinting) — or dogma of any kind. Rather than dedicating it [the text] to a certain point in time and *its* dogma (realism; symbolism; the desperation of the 1920s; the powerless humanism of the 1930s; the darkened war horizon of the 1940s), use it as a point of departure — for the fact is that life at all times has a religious perspective dwarfing all the rest.

This perspective, for Sarvig, was *not* church-related, but simply the deep-founded hope that "man is more than his milieu, that higher things guard him, that long roads and unknown destinations still await."

Jæger's text was concretized in landscape; and he gave to us the secular joys of nature's cyclic rhythms for which, along with his avocation of "the little life" (the importance of the microcosm), he came to be scorned for *irrealis*, a kind of hyper-unreality ten years before the renewed interest among publishers in just that! In this, how close he is to Ditlevsen, who called her first poetry collection *Little World*? Her very naivety ensured an unbounded curiosity about life and an absence of sentimentousness that is characteristic of the truly unselfish writer. In her work is the compassion that is so conspicuously lacking in modern writing until "now" (perhaps due to the war between "us" and "them" waged throughout the 1960s that made of so much fiction mere treatise). She would have said to this, as she did once: "It must be nicer by far to fear something concrete than be the prey to this thingless fear forever there within." She went on to express the burden of the artist's soul and its amorphous knowledge in the simple words: "I should've gone bonkers, had not the good Lord given me the ability to write artistically." This more than touches upon Sarvig's averral, in one of his last interviews, that intellect was the thing to blame for our alien, inhumane world. The designs of industry — "shaped" society — are accomplished by staring right *through* a pane with a constricted view; the majority of people are pacified by being allowed to stare *at* it (or vaguely through it, if at all); whereas the artist's burden is focusing *on* it, that is, making the surface speak as a dewy window may be written on, or as a canvas may grow upon the eye in the studying. It is an act of will to see the pane itself, as it were, allowing the mind's eye a look for safekeeping on its retina!

Safe for sharing out, that is; but first there is the wrestling with words

(Jæger), the living of them (Ditlevsen), the travelling of them (Sarvig: in lots of little paper-bits that must be linked, patiently and slowly, to a chain-belt round your capacious self). There is the head-on meeting with loneliness and death again and again, and one must face both unafraid.

There is no doubt that their kind of isolation breeds a peculiar kind of arrogance. Thus, for a brief while when co-editing *Heritica* in the 1950s, Frank Jæger was wont to return works by well-established writers, scribbling a "pull yourself together, man, stop sending us shit like that" in the margin. That he sent back the young poet Rifbjerg's submissions with the comment "Trash!" was therefore no indication of wariness or envy of changing taste and novel victories — however tempting that assumption! He just couldn't brook writing for sheer effect, nor second-rate effort. Art was pain, a heave from the entrails — and not for those entrails' own sake either.

Consider the programmatic poem from his first collection (*Virtuous Poems*, 1948; initially published in the literary magazine, *Wild Wheat*, 1947):

We who chose the rain grow fingers long, evasive,
And immense exuberant hair.
We have fields' green growth
Cast down into our lungs
As we take the air.

.....

We who chose the land
Pocket bits of earth eternal
Tote it round on elfin shoes.
Our teeth go crunching kernels,
Bid you welcome to a handful
Mayhap two.

We that choose life
Shall one day go right athwart the road,
Tangling with autumnal shrubs.
We've had rain, night, land press
Hard against our heartbeat
As we walked.

This is power *in* subjection to the word and to inspiration as it happened, as was borne out by Sarvig over twenty years later (in his essay, "Object Power"):

I think literature — when considering the best authors, the most widely read among them — has or has had considerable power because it mirrors the essence of the times, thus making it possible for many to meet and share their common experience through language. But however strong my belief in the magnitude of this power, I do not think it calculated or deliberate, nor that it exemplifies any power on the part of the author, but solely the word. [This — as opposed to power uncontrolled — merely places people as functionaries of its use in various key positions: social, cultural, economic, etc.]

In the light of this sampling of life, in the name of the word whilst travelling on — always on, Tove Ditlevsen's sad poem, *Ancestress* becomes pertinent (and note the ending which, nonetheless, heightens the gruesomeness of life to a kind of passionate affirmation of it). It is from her posthumous collection, *To a Little Girl* (1978).

Ancestress

The unremitting
consequences of
converging slime
in doorways gateways
parks car-backs —
love romance
heartbreak tears
fleeing steps
strange men's
determined backs —

The insipid smell of
neglected babies
growing children love-children
remembered children
wanted or mixed-up
children themselves breeding
sons and daughters-in-law
grandchildren
new beginnings
continuations
slimy tears
abortions
the survivors
pathetically brave
in cold waiting-rooms —
their loving hearts
lacking all insight.

(Those old and lonely
grasped the simplification
themselves once for all
having started the chain —
now piously feeding
the stray cats
roaming always
close to
the poor)

So, even in this — what Sarvig would term "the linear life" — we pick up as we go.

* * * *

Settlement
withdrawal
intense absorption —
all else pushed aside
except one:

The unviable
never continuing
great-grandchild
whose enormous head
ever bumps the door
of the dreams within
the round room.
Gently I lift
up the small sexless
one that smiles when
you stroke its left cheek.

With this great-grandchild
in my arms
this memoryless
end of my outer
life's incalculable
accident
I walk away
into night
stroking
its left cheek
producing
an uncertain smile
that was worth
all my while.

In the circular life — life as it should be lived, with a *will* as Sarvig himself admits, since it means dropping the habit of throwing scummy poison in our wake — is another child. Frank Jæger has described it in the poem *To a Sensitive Female Friend* (from *Virtuous Poems*, 1948):

In my inmost thoughts sits
joy, a child with white
teeth.

As I run in the dark toward
a strong "good day" to your hands.

Intact in the womb of love is this child who, in Tove Ditlevsen's salvaging hands, was carried away maimed, but still. So Love, if wrecked, mocked or betrayed, does yet exemplify best of all that "circular life" in its consummate moment of timelessness:

Christ, [says Sarvig of the Higher Being within us, which is unrelated to any church or orthodox religion as such] is also the impulse that makes two people meet in erotic love, thereby giving one another the quietude of affirmation. For this, I believe, may very well be one of the last mysteries left to us, in severance from the old world.

Says Tove Ditlevsen in her collection, *Little World*, 1942:

Take then my heart into your hands,
but take it tenderly, be kind,
it is so red, that heart — and yours.

It beats so quietly, so muted,
for it has suffered and it has loved,
now it's at peace, that heart — and yours.

"Oh, to be an apple," says Jæger, "bursting with riches and rest. . . ."
That is experience in the round.

* * * *

With an ever-encroaching contrast between the poet's universe and lived-through pain, one poetic voice confesses

If it weren't for your knees —
your cheekbones — asking —
breasts, too, never mind their smallness —
well, who else might
ask indeed?

Between them and me, this is.

You mean, then: Us?

But I ignore all questions,
answering never.

Spiting

my dexterity, up it flares:

the lie, a flame. Against

my chance-open eyes

that if stupid yet must see:

My idols faked.

My idols true.

Of which the truest comes as rain

aslant my panes.

(from Jæger's poetic cycle, *The Homecoming*, 1969)

Another voice joins in:

It's raining tonight, a deluge

of atomized dreams.

Now you're with another, sharing

my heart's inner realms.

You will hide yourselves from the world —
most sequestered the spot.

Believing yourselves alone,

though, with two shadows, you're not.

It's raining wasted dreams —
 an unmendable loss:
 two shadows may never now meet,
 their calling of names never cross.

(from Ditlevsen's *Rain*, posthumous collection)

And another chimes, to boost their faith in continuity, despite severance:

My love:
 its reality
 even in this daylit room
 where I may no longer touch.
 (from Sarving's *My Love*, 1952)

* * * *

But voices can switch like parts in a play. Jæger's Muse dies, and his universe seems to lunge with the laugh of an ill wind. He queries:

Gentle, strange girl,
 why did you stay away?
 Over and over I hear
 your muted voice.

You, who are not here.
 You, who keep so still.
 Know, I'll think of you.
 And was that, indeed, your will?

Ditlevsen's faith in humanity dies; the rug is pulled from under her.

She answers:

We that ever flee
 may recognize each other
 in the scurrying of hands,
 the fearful glance.

We see the heart's crime
 like a shadow on the brow —
 react to other people's words
 as they were pinpricks, every one.

* * * *

Yes, those shadows draw near:

Please understand: I'm not the one you think:
 mouthing ever, "Ah, behold the beauteous, length'ning shadows!"

I am the poet Cinna. And with dread
 I watch familiar shadows growing, head by head.

Though this poem alludes to Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar* and the double role of the poet-politician Cinnæ who is made a popular scapegoat responsible for Cæsar's death, Jæger clearly intended this as his own message to the modernist coterie. It was his way of refuting the sticky label of "green poet" with which they kept dismissing him, willing him to be *passé*.

Shadows, Ditlevsen knew, are there from childhood, waiting. So, she says, in *To a Child, Evening* (posthumous collection):

You'll dream of Rapuntzel and Snowwhite,
 of forest roots and wild berries,
 till you forget the shadow by your side:
 the child that everyone thinks is you.

Whereas the poet never forgets the childhood *dimension*, the rightful scale. Says Sarvig:

Behind there in the dark are nothing but trees, their naked branches
 forming a gigantic enclave — for yourself to wander at the foot of, a peculiar
 vertical ant with a woolly cap and a newly lit pipe —.

As Jæger would at once agree:

Trees may bend in their pride.
 Trees may stand, stripped
 to the naked bark,
 yet afford lee to strangers.
 Shadows play. And sun.
 In their hair, the stars:
 Artist of might eternal is he
 who created a tree.

(*The Homecoming*)

Shadows, then, as gigantically cast by trees, are not that which cause the fear, nor is it caused by the personal decrepitude with death at its end. "I do not regret the passing of years," Ditlevsen said in her last interview. "They mean there won't be such a weary long way to go yet. The reality of life I push away: it's so uncouth, isn't it?"

You may look at it self-ironically, like this:

— Hens.

And earwigs.

A certain remoteness:

The gauntlet
 a twigs' arcade of
 twittering gossip —

(*The Homecoming*)

But that doesn't diminish the sting of this particular reality: personal failure, or *attributed* personal/artistic failure as decreed by the whims of the times. Sarvig says sternly, but also forlornly:

It has always been my conviction, growing stronger over the years, that what you might call "soul's reality" — the experience of the very message of the age — is best, nay even only, come by in the individual's response to the surrounding world, to the monuments of the past and, first and last, to the particular fates of the people immediately round him or her. But this very relationship is for art and literature to describe and vivify; which has been done and, I hope, will be done continually, albeit the living literature must needs fight, not only present-day despair and dissolution, but also more practical things — let's call them the ethical-practical conditions in this welfare state of ours — inside which their work has no *organic* part to play [My emphasis].

Here he has firmly vouched for everything Tove Ditlevsen has written out of her entirely different background. Indeed, in that same essay, Sarvig goes on to declare that "a great proportion" of these artists belong to "the proletariat" (which she undoubtedly did), and calls those lucky that "succeed in fleeing to some sequestered spot, where under primitive conditions, they may devote themselves to their writing." This describes equally well

what both he and Jæger did, the former in his shack-like exile in Spain and elsewhere in Southern Europe, and the latter in his dilapidated farmhouse on Langeland, a small island that, if it's "south" at all, is just south-west of Sealand!

No ivory towers here — and it pained all three to have such thrust upon their landscapes by a haphazard literary climate.

* * * *

There were enough who bent over backwards to be sucked in and, thus, to become part of the prevailing literary "organism." Now, when coterie-writing has lost or is losing its grip, writers who did hold their own (though, one suspects, with minor compromises that rankle) have begun to speak frankly. One example is the novelist Knud Holst who has said of the government's hold on the arts in reference to Axel Sandemose, a previous generation's Jæger/Sarvig figure:

He was one of those non-recruited artists who try to hang onto a difficult, very personally evolved way of writing. . . . Such a writer comes in handy to society only when his successes in the acceptable circles have put their indubitable stamp on him, rendering him once more worthy of interest. Which would still mean his knuckling under to specific demands on the lines of: "I say, next time it won't be all that gloomy, will it?" Or: "About time a social novel of yours saw the light, don't you think?" Or again: "When *are* you going to come all out in the open, making common cause with This or That? — Don't you think it's your bounden duty to write that epic, analytical study of society? Or who d'you imagine you're writing for? Yourself?" (From an article in *Weekendavisen*, supplement to the Copenhagen newspaper, *Berlingske Hus*, 1981.)

In other words, back to the days of the draughty garret when writing is permissible as an eccentricity, or when it strikes a lucky vein of topicality. Otherwise, it needs be parasitic and not a far step from the chanted "art for the people," which is edited by the state (as occurs behind the Iron Curtain). If the state is your patron, it is the state you must flatter and to which you must dedicate your work — if only in invisible ink. It is an irksome master and an outright punishment to the individual who obeys only the "must" of his conscience.

Holst daubs a wry picture of luxury-restaurant guzzlers at state expense on the one hand, and on the other, a sneaking in the back door for a darning needle on credit which is sold by the very people that one is supposed to be writing *for*. At least, Holst reasons, the seller is true to himself, dedicating himself exclusively to his notions department rather than trying to combine art with life.

Well, how *do* you separate them? Tove Ditlevsen couldn't and realized it from the start, Jæger lost that capacity, and even Sarvig wafted away in a flutter of meticulous little notes and jottings. Holst answers, you can't. Which makes it exceedingly lonely. Not outright tragic, though? Well, he shrugs, yes: *tragic* — even, ultimately to the sellers of darning needles. If they get the art they deserve — hmmm!

As Jæger writes:

The glare of white is at the end:
The road is empty to walk.
The forest is empty of beasts,
this is the empty, bleak day
after the fairy tale.

(*Cinna & Other Poems*, 1959)

And Ditlevsen continues:

Nothing left of me — the mystic tones
of earlier days, created in him, by him;
nothing but the off-key, raucous strains,
the would-be dazzling songs of sirens.

Where am I, then? Where is now my home?

(*Fragments*, posthumous collection, 1978)

Ah, but — concludes Sarvig —

All that happens was dreamt once — the way night makes all that's close
up disappear, the remoter dreamier substance draws ever nearer. . . .
[Nor should panic then ensue, for] our beginning is a place — our con-
sciousness brings with it gratitude of a kind — our youth, our art an un-
witting prophecy. . . . [So] touch me, and let us go — a space!

(*Yesterday — and Soon*, 1976)

Biographical Notes

Tove Ditlevsen

Born 1918, in Copenhagen, daughter of a stoker. Left school in 1932 for an office job. Debut in 1939 in the literary magazine *Wild Wheat*, with the poem *To My Dead Child*. Received several prizes and literary awards, including one for children's fiction (1959).

First collection of poetry, *Girl's Mind*, appeared in 1939. Wrote thereafter some eight collections, plus the fragment, *To a Little Girl*, published posthumously. In addition, she wrote four short-story collections, five novels, her memoirs in three volumes, and half a dozen books of essays. Died in 1976.

Frank Jæger

Born 1926, in Frederiksberg (a wealthy residential area of Copenhagen), the son of a "confidential" clerk. Became a student in 1945, and took up work as librarian in 1950. After that he was fully occupied as a writer. In 1952-53, he was co-editor of *Heretica*. Received seven prizes and awards, one of which was the booksellers' Golden Laurels (1959).

First collection, *Virtuous Poems*, appeared in 1948. Wrote in all sixteen books of poetry, two novels, half a dozen story collections, about that many books of essays, a few radio plays and a book of memoirs ("of the young Jæger"). Died in 1977.

Ole Sarvig

Born 1921, in Copenhagen, the son of a master painter. Visited England in 1938, and graduated in 1940 with *studentereksamen* — that is, like Jæger, was formally qualified to take up university studies. Chose instead to co-edit *Weilbach's Encyclopaedia* (1944-45) before devoting himself fully to writing.

First collection, *Green Poems*, appeared in 1943. Published in all eleven collections of poetry, five novels, eight books of essays, several plays, a book on Edvard Munch's graphic works (1948), and a collection of hymns. He spent the years 1954-1962 in Spain. Of his six prizes and awards, most notable was the Grand Prize of the Danish Academy (1967). Died in 1981.

References

Any selection from such a sea of material must necessarily be arbitrary. However, I chose to make Ditlevsen and Jæger a duologue of poets with Sarvig the essayist concurring alongside. This was intended to give a mix of genres rather than suggest that each was predominantly one or the other — poet or prose-writer. Indeed, I might have switched them around completely: Ditlevsen wrote several essay-collections, redolent with dry wit; Jæger was a fine and prolific essayist and short-story writer. Both Sarvig and Ditlevsen are as worthy of mention (and translation) as novelists as well as poets. I have also tried to confine myself, overall, to what I myself have translated of them rather than risk infringing on other translators' efforts already out or in the making.

Unless otherwise stated, I have quoted throughout from Sarvig's collection of essays which spans more than thirty years, *Yesterday — and Soon* [*Igå — om lidt*] (Gyldendal, 1976).

Very little exists in English at the moment:

A poetry collection by Ole Sarvig, *The Late Day*, has been issued by Curbstone Press (Connecticut), 1976.

Collections of poetry by Tove Ditlevsen are being prepared for publication this year by the same publisher.

I myself have translated one poem by Frank Jæger, *Ode To Firewood*, for the *Scandinavian Review* in New York; and a Ditlevsen story called *Fear* for *Prism International* (Vancouver).

SCANDINAVIAN-CANADIAN STUDIES

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