Scandinavism

Overlapping and competing identities in the Nordic world: 1770 - 1919

van Gerven, T.W.J.

INTRODUCTION

On a cold but sunny April morning in 2016 – barely four months into working on this dissertation – I took a walk around the Citadel of Copenhagen. I was looking for the monument for the Nordic volunteers who had died while fighting Denmark's cause during the wars over Schleswig and Holstein in 1848–1851 and 1864. According to the information board I had studied with due care upon entering the terrain, the monument was supposed to be located on the westernmost point of the fortress's outworks, but now I had trouble finding it. My questionable sense of direction was no doubt a major part of the problem, while a failing internet connection and a bad night's sleep in a noisy hostel did not contribute to the success of my mission either. When I finally found what I was looking for, I was, besides relieved that my frustrating wanderings were over, rather underwhelmed, not to say disappointed. The monument – having the shape of a burial chamber guarded by Mother Denmark holding the Danish flag – was in a woeful state. The granite stone was dirty from rain and vegetal deposits, while Mordor-like bushes eerily crept up from behind the tomb. Most unsettlingly, natural erosion had rendered the names of the fallen completely unreadable (Ill. 0.1).

It is tempting to read the sorry condition of the monument, such as I encountered it that day, as indicative for the obscure place Scandinavism occupies in the public consciousness in the Scandinavian countries today.[1] After all, the 'Memorial for Nordic volunteers and fallen' (Mindesmærke for frivillige og faldne), as is the official name, can very well be seen as one of very few public monuments that evokes the memory of the Scandinavist movement. Both at the time of the Schleswig Wars and on the occasion of the memorial's inauguration in 1920, the dedication and deeds of the Norwegian and Swedish (as well as Finnish) volunteers – whose number reached the hundreds – had been enveloped in an atmosphere of pan-Scandinavian brotherhood and solidarity.[2] The gradual disappearance of their chiselled-out names suggests that their sacrifice has now been largely forgotten.

The contregarde harbouring the memorial is situated only a short walk away from Churchill Park. This park to the south of the Citadel is rather heavy with monuments, most of which transmit a more well-defined national message, commemorating among others the Danish military victims of the two World Wars as well as the Spanish Civil War. These monuments are considerably more accessible and visible to the public than the granite tomb for the Nordic volunteers, which takes some effort to visit, even if you were to walk straight at it (which I thus sadly did not). This discrepancy in visibility, I would

argue, is symptomatic for the hegemonic position the national perspective has in our understanding of the past. This is a general point, but especially holds true for the way Scandinavism until relatively recently has been treated by historians. Indeed, as a subject of scholarly inquiry Scandinavism could for a long time be counted among the many victims of methodological nationalism, meaning that it did not show on the radar of historians whose investigative lens was that of the nation-state, for long "the basic unit of historiography."[3] Alternatively, and due to the tendency to see the nation-states as we know them today as the inevitable end result of history's progress, Scandinavism has often been portrayed, implicitly or explicitly, as the loser in the race for geopolitical consolidation and the warm embrace of the people's political and cultural allegiance.

Ill. 0.1 - The Memorial for Nordic volunteers and fallen such as I encountered it that April morning. Personal photo.

Yet, on the other hand: the memorial is there, it is visible. In fact, when walking through Churchill Park, the city stroller will encounter two other instances of a cultivated Scandinavian identity, in the shape of two female creatures from Norse mythology: close to the sidewalk a furious Valkyrie riding an equally furious stallion, and a little further ahead, towards the waterfront, the goddess Gefion and her four gigantic oxen atop the capital's largest fountain. As shall be argued in more detail in Chapter 15, these two sculptures anchor Copenhagen, and in extension Denmark, firmly in Scandinavian identity, if only through their reference to Scandinavia's oldest literary heritage. Their presence, their existence is meaningful with regard to our understanding of the historical significance of Scandinavism. Albeit not in the form of an established nation-state, Scandinavism did leave a mark on history, as much as it left a mark on Copenhagen's public spaces. To a much larger degree than it has hitherto been accredited for, Scandinavism has helped determine the shape and direction of the separate nation-building processes in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, while it was simultaneously instrumental in articulating an overarching pan-national, Scandinavian identity that tied these three countries closer together.

It is the aim of this dissertation to brush the dirt off the memory of Scandinavism and bring this double impact of the movement in plain sight. It intends to do so by examining not only the aforementioned sculptures but a broad selection of cultural products and practices that invoke an image of the past. This extensive corpus includes history books, plays, pieces of poetry, paintings, public commemorations, as well as such unobtrusive objects as street name signs. All this cultural engagement with the past was instrumental in the imagining of collective identities in nineteenth-century Scandinavia and it was above all in these historicist activities that a dynamic interplay between Danish, Norwegian, Swedish, and Scandinavian identity formation unfolded.

Before I in this opening chapter turn to matters of source selection, theory, methodology, and historiography, the historical movement we call Scandinavism first deserves a proper introduction. What, in broad terms, are we talking about when we talk about Scandinavism?

A VERY SHORT HISTORY OF SCANDINAVISM

There was a time when Scandinavism did enjoy widespread interest. That is, at least after the fall of 1843, when the word was first used in a Danish newspaper.[4] Politically and ideologically, Scandinavism was the brainchild of liberal and nationalist circles in Denmark. Their Scandinavian sympathies supported pleas

for constitutional reform and their ambitions to replace the incumbent absolute monarchy with a more open and democratic society. Such liberal ideals found a willing audience predominantly among students and intellectuals in the other Scandinavian countries. It was accordingly in the academic milieu that Scandinavism came to maturation as an actual movement.

A few months earlier, in the late spring of 1843, the university town of Uppsala, East-Sweden, had been the location of what is generally regarded as the first pan-Scandinavian student manifestation. A little over 200 students from Copenhagen and Lund had travelled all this way to immerse themselves in a days-long programme of festivities, excursions, dinners, and speeches.[5] The students from Christiania had formally decided to join, but failed to acquire sufficient financing for the journey. Perhaps they found some solace in the newspapers, which reported extensively on the Uppsala event.[6] The many speeches that were held at the occasion knew one refrain that was repeated time and again and that now also speckled the columns of the Norwegian papers: the three nations Denmark, Norway, and Sweden were bound to each other through their shared historical roots, their common cultural legacy, the great similarity between the three languages, and by a shared Nordic spirit or *Volksgeist*.[7] In fact, according to a widely used metaphor, Danes, Norwegians, and Swedes were brothers, siblings, a family united by blood and common beliefs. Another often employed metaphor likened the course of Scandinavian history to the growth of a tree. Sprouting from a single root, the tree had at some point developed into three separate branches, which were professed, however, to bend together again at the top, as in a famous poem by the pioneering Scandinavist Frederik Barfod (1811–96):

> Split in three the Nordic trunk
>
> Yet the root a single one,
>
> And the crown's foliage will
>
> At last enfold every branch![8]

The idea of a shared past thus contained, and legitimized, visions for a shared future. How that future should look like remained a matter of contestation. Some cherished high-flying dreams of a united kingdom or a federal state, or at the very least a defence union; others contented with seemingly less ambitious goals such as a customs union, a monetary union, a common postal service and/or harmonization of the educational systems.[9] Truth of the matter is that the student meetings – of which there were organized seven between 1843 and 1875 – functioned as hotbeds for the development of practical cooperation be-

tween the Scandinavian countries in the form of networks, societies, conference series, journals, and other initiatives, some of which survived until this day. Of course, Scandinavism also had a life outside the academic world, where likeminded ideas were independently activated to stimulate pan-Scandinavian rapprochement.

During the events of 1843, the political emphasis was on outside threats, which in the eyes of the Scandinavists constituted a necessity for inward cooperation and solidarity. Many a speaker in Uppsala directed verbal venom towards the mighty empire to the east, which was seen as the authoritarian antonym to the liberal Scandinavian states. These anti-Russians sentiments were, from the Swedish side, explicitly connected to credulous dreams of reclaiming Finland, which had been lost to Russia in 1809.[10] But the issue that would accompany Scandinavism throughout its life of political agency was concentrated around Denmark's contested southern border. The burgeoning national sentiments in the duchies Schleswig and Holstein, which demanded independence to join the German Confederation, was portrayed by the Danish Scandinavists as a threat not only to the Danish-speaking population of Schleswig, but also to the territorial integrity of Scandinavia at large.[11] They accordingly presented the 'Schleswig Question' as a common Scandinavian cause. When the tensions led to war, a number of Norwegians and Swedes – several of them students who had become inspired during the student meeting of 1845 in Copenhagen – enlisted with the Danish army to live up to their Scandinavian pedigree. Outside the participation of these volunteers, however, the Schleswig question never developed into the unifying issue such as the Danish Scandinavists had envisioned it. As a consequence, Denmark stood alone when the conflict again led to war in 1864. This time, the Danish army did not stand a chance against the combined Prussian and Austrian forces. Schleswig in its entirety as well as Holstein and Lauenburg were lost, while all the talk of pan-Scandinavian solidarity of the previous decades had not materialized into actual military support from the brother nations. Because of this, '1864' was seen, both at the time and by later commentators, as Scandinavism's Waterloo. The project had failed.

HISTORIOGRAPHY
BLIND SPOTS AND REVALUATIONS

This is, in very broad outline, the story of Scandinavism such as it has traditionally been told in encyclopaedia-entries and national histories. Much of the older literature on Scandinavism has perpetuated this incomplete understanding of the movement. The foundational text within the field, written as early as 1900, takes up a somewhat ambiguous position in this respect. On the one hand, Julius Clausen's *Skandinavismen historisk fremstillet* (Scandinavism in historical perspective) offers a broad insight into the movement from the late 1700s all the way up to his own day, in that way circumventing the problematic legacy of '1864' and its effect on the historical appreciation for Scandinavism and its long-term impact. On the other hand, however, Clausen still maintained that Scandinavism only acquired its "typical and distinct shape […] once historicist and political visions were attached to it."[12] Clausen thus understood Scandinavism primarily as a political movement. The same holds true for the next three main works published on the subject. These monographs by Åke Holmberg (published in 1946), John Sanness (1959), and Henrik Becker-Christensen (1981) otherwise differ strongly from Clausen in their limited temporal and geographical approach, as they focus on the decades marked by the Schleswig question and cover the subject from a specific Swedish, Norwegian, and Danish perspective respectively.[13]

By 1994, Kristian Hvidt characterized the study of Scandinavism as a "neglected field of research."[14] He identified the one-sided preoccupation with politics, the use of the narrow timeframe of the 1830s to 1860s, as well as the general tendency among historians to concentrate on national history rather than transnational entanglements as the main reasons behind this deficit. These shortcomings accordingly did little justice to the 'multifacetedness' (*det mangestrengede*) that Hvidt saw as the main line in the development of Scandinavism and Nordic cooperation. The highly complex character of Scandinavism at the same time posed a major challenge for the historian, Hvidt contended, as he or she not only would have to work across national borders, but also delve into a variety of historiographical fields, ranging from social history to cultural history and literary history.[15]

In the new millennium, scholars dared to pick up the gauntlet and started to take an interest in the 'blind spot' that Hvidt had identified in the history of Scandinavism in the years between 1864 and the end of the First World War. In 2008, Ruth Hemstad published an elaborate study on the reflourishing of Scandinavian cooperation in the decade around 1900, constituting what she termed

an "Indian Summer" for Scandinavism. This Neo-Scandinavism was however abruptly interrupted by the dissolution of the union between Norway and Sweden in 1905, which led to embitterment especially from the Swedish side and tainted any talk of Scandinavian rapprochement. Consequently, it is this year that according to Hemstad marks the ultimate demise of Scandinavism as a possible political alternative to nationalism, and not 1864. With this detailed study – which includes an equally extensive inventory of a great number of pan-Scandinavian initiatives employed between 1839 and 1905 – Hemstad has convincingly shown that Scandinavism had a prolonged ideological life after 1864 and a significant impact on Scandinavian cooperation, which, although going through a slump directly after 1905, was seriously picked up again after the end of World War I.[16]

Another blind spot in Scandinavism research has been addressed by Kari Haarder Ekman in her dissertation on cultural Scandinavism from 2010. Whereas Hemstad had labelled the 1870s and 1880s a period of 'hibernation' for Scandinavism,[17] Haarder Ekman argues that the so-called Modern Breakthrough (*Det moderne Gjennembrud*), a movement which emerged precisely in this period, was yet another instance of Scandinavism. What is more, Haarder Ekman propounds that by the time the influential Danish critic Georg Brandes (1842–1927) coined this term to describe the new naturalistic brand of Scandinavian literature – which, with such exponents as Henrik Ibsen (1828–1906), Herman Bang (1857–1912), and August Strindberg (1849–1912), rose to world prominence – the physical and mental infrastructure was already in place that had transformed Scandinavia into a shared literary space. In fact, Brandes himself thought of Scandinavian literature as an unambiguous cultural unit. In Haarder Ekman's words, "Scandinavism was an important part of the societal context during the nineteenth century, with a great influence on literature."[18]

The work of Hemstad and Haarder Ekman has done much to revaluate Scandinavism's historical importance by shifting the investigative search light from politics to culture. Following their publications, the scholarly interest in Scandinavism has increased considerably over the last decade, no doubt greatly stimulated as well by the general trend towards transnational topics at humanities faculties worldwide. In 2014 and 2018 respectively, two comprehensive anthologies appeared on Scandinavism that have further contributed to showcasing and exploring the multificatedness of the phenomenon.[19] The diverse articles in these anthologies bear testimony to the far-reaching influence Scandinavism has had within a great variety of fields, including – besides politics – art, literature, media, science, church life, women's rights, and popular culture.[20] At the same time, the articles combined cover a long time period, ranging from the end of the eighteenth century to the early twentieth, thus

highlighting once more that Scandinavism, complex and many-sided as it is, had roots that go back to long before its days of political activity and had a lasting significance until long after the Schleswig debacle of 1864.

As a consequence, many blind spots in our knowledge of Scandinavism have in recent years been filled in. Yet, one road that so far has been left untraveled, despite the fact that some scholars have cautiously explored the first meters, concerns the relation between Scandinavism on the one hand and the three national movements on the other. In nationalism studies, it has for long been established that nationalisms do not emerge and operate in a vacuum, but develop in constant interaction with competing and complementary identity projects.[21] Until relatively recently, the relation between Scandinavism and Danish/Norwegian/Swedish nationalism was, owing to the political frame, understood as one of competition. Implicit in the 'failed project' thesis is the assumption that Scandinavism's ultimate goal was the establishment of the Scandinavian nation state.[22] Yet, as Magdalena Hillström and Hanne Sanders have rightly asserted, it is misleading to project our current ideas about nationalism – which presume a tight connection between nation and state – on nineteenth-century reality: not every national project necessarily aspired state formation. A nineteenth-century citizen of Denmark, for instance, could unproblematically identify as both Danish and Scandinavian, while perceiving both as a 'national' identity.[23]

Therefore, the one-sided focus on politics captured in the analogy of a competition between two incompatible projects fails to properly describe the dynamics between Scandinavism and the various nationally-specific cultural nationalisms in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. The relation was not exclusively – what is more, not even primarily – a competitive one; Scandinavism and nationalism were in many ways compatible, and could even mutually reinforce each other. Øystein Sørensen has for instance postulated that the diffusion of Scandinavist rhetoric significantly subdued anti-Danish and anti-Swedish sentiments in Norwegian nationalism; no small feat when considering that in much of Europe self-images were constructed in direct hostile contrast to the closest neighbours.[24] Ulf Zander has in the same vein singled out the mitigating effect of Scandinavism, which helped to create a friendly and constructive atmosphere between the Scandinavian countries, provided it offered no serious ideological challenge to the nation-state.[25] On a more fundamental level, Scandinavism as a cultural mobilizer had a profound impact on the direction and substance the independent nation-building processes were to take, as the editors of the 2018 anthology have pointed out.[26]

However, this intimate entanglement between Scandinavism and nation-

alism, between the cultivation of an overarching Scandinavian identity and the development of the separate national identities, has never been studied in a systematic and theorized way. Outside the above statements, Scandinavism has predominantly been studied as something that existed largely separate from, additional to, or even against the nation, or as a common platform between the nations, yet seldom as a movement that worked *with* the nation. This dissertation's main aim is to fill this gap, or blind spot, to remain true to the terminology coined back in the day by Kristian Hvidt. The following two questions will be guiding in the exploration of this issue:

1. How did Scandinavism contribute to the formulation of a transnational Scandinavian identity, transcending and supplanting the nation-building projects in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden?

2. How did Scandinavian identity formation interact with the various nationally-specific manifestations of cultural nationalism?

A logical first step in investigating the entanglement between the Scandinavian and the national is the specification of the entangled parts. How do I understand 'Scandinavism' and which definition of the notoriously evasive concept 'nationalism' underlies the main argument of this dissertation?

KEY CONCEPTS
SCANDINAVISM AND NATIONALISM

From the previous pages it might have become clear that I approach Scandinavism as a primarily cultural movement.[27] This does not mean that I will leave the political aspects completely out of the equation; it only indicates that the focus will be on the cultural activism that was carried out to articulate a Scandinavian identity. Ever since Julius Clausen's grounding study, it has been customary for researchers to make this distinction between political Scandinavism on the one hand and cultural Scandinavism on the other (or 'literary' Scandinavism, which has often been applied as a synonym).[28] Although Kim Simonsen has a valid point when he states that this distinction is largely artificial – in the context of nationalism the cultural is always political, while nationalist politicians without exception act upon culturally-conceived self-perceptions – I nevertheless profess to uphold this artificiality in this dissertation, for two reasons.[29] Firstly, disentangling culture from politics avoids, as mentioned previously, the trap of understanding Scandinavism as a conventional form of nationalism that seeks political autonomy and political autonomy only. Secondly,

and arguably more importantly, zooming in on culture makes it possible to capture Scandinavism and its durable impact over a long period of time, spanning the entire 'Long Nineteenth Century', from 1770 to 1919.

At the same time, a study period of a century and a half necessitates a broad definition that identifies those fundamental traits that have remained stable across historical developments and across interpretative differences among historical actors, and thus secures that we are talking about basically the same animal from start to finish.[30] Accordingly, the definition of Scandinavism used in this dissertation rests on two poles: 1) the idea or notion that the Scandinavian nations share a common Scandinavian identity that suffuses their individual national identities, and 2) the cultural activism inspired by this idea. Such a broad understanding of the phenomenon holds the further advantage of allowing a discussion of 'Scandinavism before Scandinavism' – that is the study of the cultivation of Scandinavian identity from before 1843, when the word first appeared in written sources. The label 'Scandinavism' applied to these early decades should then be understood as a heuristic term to describe this cultural engagement with Scandinavia as a collective identity.

Admittedly, my one-size-fits-all conceptualization seemingly goes against the grain of Ruth Hemstad's fair warning that scholars have often employed the term Scandinavism anachronistically and imprecisely, without paying due attention to the serious disagreements on its exact meaning that existed among actors at the time.[31] Yet, as I have hopefully made clear by this point, I am being anachronistic, and perhaps imprecise, with good reason: I perceive Scandinavism as a general cultural preoccupation with Scandinavian identity that was of at least comparable interest to an antiquarian working on Norse mythology in 1770 as to a sculptor chiselling out Thor's hammer in 1919. This does not mean that I see Scandinavism as a stable phenomenon immune to the twists and turns of historical change. Throughout the dissertation I will keep a sharp eye on the political, cultural, social, poetical, aesthetical, and technological developments that effected the fabric and direction of the movement as well as the shape and substance of the various cultivation products and practices that will be analysed across the pages.

In order to make a proper exploration of the relation between nationalism and Scandinavism possible, it makes sense to duplicate my conception of Scandinavism and apply it one-on-one to its parent-concept 'cultural nationalism', thus understanding the national movements in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden as the creative and scholarly engagement with national identity.[32] With this focus on culture, on the human acts that contribute to the articulation of collective identities, I tie into a 'metacultural turn' within nationalism studies

that occurred slightly earlier in this field than in the study of Scandinavism and that can be traced back to the first few years of the third millennium.[33] In the work of among others Joep Leerssen and Anne-Marie Thiesse nationalism is seen as the result not of culture 'as such' but of metacultural conscious-ness-raising, a product of people's intellectual and creative interaction with the world around them; cultural rhetoric and endeavour have accordingly become the object of critical analysis in their own right.[34] This is set in contrast to earli-er studies of nationalism, which approached the subject primarily from a socio-logical and/or politological perspective and saw the cultural preoccupations of nineteenth-century nationalists as secondary or auxiliary to the political agen-da.[35] Yet, as Miroslav Hroch has demonstrated, it were the cultural interests of small circles of intellectuals that first made the idea of the nation crystallize into the focal point of collective identification and the rallying point for subse-quent social and political activism.[36] By the same token, this activism not always resulted in state formation – Scandinavism being an excellent but far from the only example – which is not to say that the cultural activities were without val-ue or effect. It would be a mistake to judge historical processes solely by what they lead to, to fall into the trap of teleology and project today's map of Europe one-on-one on nineteenth-century reality as the inevitable end result of the continent-spanning nation-building process. Indeed, it is more interesting to ask the question why Scandinavism 'failed' and Denmark, Norway, and Sweden 'succeeded', and how these contrasting outcomes affected each other.

In both my conception of Scandinavism and nationalism, then, there is a *nation* whose distinctive identity is invented and cultivated through an intense cultural activity. For what is important to keep in mind is that nations are not a fact of nature; they are constructed, and this construction happens to an im-portant extent through the writing of novels and schoolbooks, through the teaching of language, the erection of monuments and public art, the organiza-tion of memorial events, the painting of scenes from the historical past, the naming of streets after historical figures, the composing of national music – in short, that what Leerssen has called 'the national cultivation of culture'.[37] All this cultural production contributes to the articulation and perpetuation of na-tional self-images that provide individuals with the sense that they belong to the imagined community, to use Benedict Anderson's famous term, that is their nation.[38] After all, a nation constitutes of such a large aggregate of people that it is impossible for one person to know all the other members of his communi-ty by face or even by name; therefore, a nation is by definition a subjective community, which relies on notions of a shared culture and shared historical memories.[39]

This basic fact then – that nations are defined, not only by material reali-

ties and political developments, but also by subjective cultural self-identification and self-silhouetting – means that national identities are fluid and subjected to change.[40] The fluidity of national identity also implies, to highlight the point once more, that one person can identify as a member of more than one nation at the same time, at least for as long as there is no conflict in political allegiance.[41] In its cultural guise, Scandinavia offered a 'national' identity that was essentially compatible with the politically cordoned-off Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish national identities.[42] The overlap that accordingly exists between national and Scandinavian identity affected the cultivation of culture on a very fundamental level, in the sense that the cultivation of national culture always implied the cultivation of Scandinavian culture and vice versa. Concurrently this does not mean that this intimate linkage was never contested; yet, cultural producers, in one way or another, knowingly or unknowingly, always had to negotiate a position within the wider Scandinavian context, whether they liked it or not.

This distinctive dynamism between the national and the Scandinavian, continuously oscillating between compatibility and contestation, had a profound impact on the nation-building processes in the Scandinavian countries: this is the central hypothesis that this dissertation aims to corroborate.

THEORY AND METHODOLOGY I
HISTORICISM AND MEMORY SITES

Now that we have established what Scandinavism is and how the Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish national movements should typologically be understood, the next step is to identify the intersections between these separate strains: where do the lines of the national and the Scandinavian cross? Of course this is essentially a rhetorical question; these linkages are so many that we might even ask ourselves: where do they *not* cross? As the growing body of literature on Scandinavism has shown, Scandinavian cooperation was employed in an ever-expanding number of fields and in a great variety of forms; contact and cultural exchange happened via countless formal and informal channels of communication. Yet, there is one connection that underlies all others; one that provided the ideological ammunition for those who ventured to intensify mutual rapprochement; one, finally, that we encountered already a few pages back in Barfod's tree metaphor: the belief that the Scandinavian nations had common *roots* and a shared *history*. This belief in turn fuelled the idea, to quote a report of the 1843 student meeting, that "the peoples of the North had a shared

nationality [and that] therefore their future development should go hand-in-hand and bring them closer and closer together."[43]

Because of the centrality in Scandinavist self-perceptions of this myth of intertwined historical destinies, the thematic focus of this study will be on *historicism*, understood here, first and foremost, as the creative engagement with the national past through literature, academic investigation, visual representation, and public propagation. All this cultural productivity was rooted in the philosophical current carrying the same name that emerged at the start of the nineteenth century and that sought to understand the present from the perspective of its historical development. Reacting against the radical modernity imposed by the Napoleonic occupation, German intellectuals such as Friedrich Carl von Savigny (1779–1861) and Jacob Grimm (1785–1863) elevated tradition and rootedness in the past as the cornerstone of a specific *national* identity. For it is in the context of the German reactionary response to the dramatic and rapid developments that swept the continent after the French and Industrial revolutions that we can situate the genesis of methodological nationalism, as from this moment forward nations came to be seen as the primary (though not exclusive) drivers of the historical process.[44] Human history, in nineteenth-century historiography, was the history of the organic growth of nations. Consequently, the cultivation of the past – in historical novels, in history painting, in architecture, in public ceremony and so on – was as a general rule employed in service of the national cause: it sought to reconnect the nation with its roots, with its most notable ancestors and heroic deeds, and in so doing underline the enduring relevance of the nation in the present.[45]

As everywhere in Europe, historicism would in Scandinavia form part and parcel of the national projects throughout the nineteenth century. And it was in these historicist endeavours that cultivation practices could – and would – become entangled. The belief in a common Scandinavian mainspring meant that nationalists in all three countries associated the roots of their respective nations with the same cultural artefacts – foremost among them the Eddas and sagas – while dealing with the great events of the later parts of history often necessitated a widening of the geographical horizon to encompass the historiography of the neighbours.

Historicism understood as the cultivation of the past in the service of collective identity formation has over the past decades been fruitfully studied from the perspective of *cultural memory*, which in the definition of Jan Assmann comes close to my conceptualization of historicism: "[the] body of reusable texts, images, and rituals […] whose 'cultivation' serves to stabilize and convey the society's self-image."[46] Cultural memory thus emphasizes the *how* of

remembering, as Astrid Erll has phrased it, by drawing attention to the symbolic, mediated, and performative acts that help create stories about the past as the focus of collective identification.[47] If we were to conceptually differentiate between historicism and cultural memory, we could say that whereas historicism refers to a general cultural preoccupation with the past that emerged in tandem with Romantic nationalism, the concept of cultural memory, such as I use it here, places emphasis on cultural remembrance as a dynamic process that, although gravitating towards a limited number of relatively stable points of reference, continuously reinvests these *memory sites* with new meaning.[48]

Memory sites, or *lieux de mémoire*, constitute one of the more influential concepts to have come out of the interdisciplinary field of cultural memory studies. Pierre Nora, the coiner of the term, defined memory site as "any significant entity, whether material or non-material in nature, which by dint of human will or the work of time has become a symbolic element of the memorial heritage of any community."[49] The concept thus not only refers to literal 'sites' in the geographical sense, but also to symbols, objects, artefacts, rituals, buildings, works of art and monuments, as well as historical persons and events. According to Nora, collective remembrance tends to crystallize towards a limited set of memory sites, which provide "a maximum amount of meaning in a minimum number of signs" and form common frameworks for a group's historical self-identification.[50]

Recent studies have amended Nora's original conception of memory sites in two important ways. Firstly, the attention for memory sites as relatively stable entities has been replenished with a focus on the dynamic process in which they function. Although canonical sites of memory indeed form the common currency in the economy of cultural remembrance, their meaning is not fixed but in constant flux as groups and individuals continuously recalibrate their relationship to the past in the light of changing circumstances. Remembering should thus be seen as a performative act, rather than as a preservative one, which also means that memory sites only stay alive for as long as people are willing to actively engage in this act and use them as the currency in their memory culture.[51] The dynamic approach has gone hand in hand with a growing interest for the relation between media and memory. After all, it is only through inscription in media that a certain memory site can become collective and create a sense of common identity across space and time, while its continued potency largely depends on its ongoing cultivation in different media – that is, on their repeated *remediation*.[52] On a more fundamental level, then, media are instrumental in constructing images of the past and in shaping the very memory itself; in Erll's words, "mediality represents [...] the very condition for the emergence of cultural memory. [...] The medium is the memory."[53]

Secondly, the inherent mediality of cultural memory pinpoints the capability of memory sites to travel across existing cultural and geopolitical boundaries, thus having a transnational dimension that has remained under-exposed in Nora's France-focused *Les lieux de mémoire* (1984–92) and its many spin-off projects outside France. Although the nineteenth and twentieth centuries witnessed a massive effort to nationalize memory cultures, cultural remembrance, to quote Chiara De Cesari and Ann Rigney, "involves the continual production, remediation, and sharing of stories about a past that changes in relation to the new possibilities for interpreting it within shifting social frames operating at different scales and across different territories."[54] Cultural remembrance, in other words, has the capacity to reconfigure the borders between imagined communities, as memory sites are subjected to the ideological needs and acts of remembering of the individuals and groups appropriating them.

This, then, is how historicism in nineteenth-century Scandinavia will be studied here: starting from these recent insights from cultural memory studies, a selection of memory sites are the basic foci of investigation; they will be traced across time in their cultivation in different media and their fluctuating integration in national and transnational contexts. This diachronic, media-based and transnational approach will make it possible to identify certain trends in the historicist articulation of national and pan-national identities. It simultaneously allows for the examination of the role played by aesthetical discussions and genre conventions in the shaping of memory and identity.

The dynamic, transnational memory sites in focus are in majority persons and events from Scandinavian history. The selection of sites can be classified into two categories, which can perhaps best be described as 'those that – seemingly – unite' and 'those that – seemingly – divide.'

The first category refers to the most ancient roots of the Scandinavian nations: Norse mythology. Although not constituting a historical memory in the literal sense of the word – after all, Odin, Thor, Freya are mythical, not historical – these myths were seen from the organicist perspective of Romanticism as the purest expression of the collective soul and the very foundation of the national imagination.[55] Following this Romanticist dogma, the Scandinavists believed that the Scandinavian peoples shared a common Nordic spirit or *Volksgeist*. It is no coincidence that the rhetoric during the first Scandinavian student meetings bristled with references to the Norse gods and Viking lore, that the banquet hall in Copenhagen at the manifestation of 1845 was decorated with banners depicting Odin and the others, that the students in 1843 at the ancient mounts in Old Uppsala engaged in the invented tradition of drinking mead from drinking horns, or that they referred to themselves as 'peaceful Vi-

kings', who were on a mission of friendship, not plunder. However, such was the prestige of Norse mythology that the ownership of its sources repeatedly became a bone of contention and gave cause to particularistic Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish appropriations. As much as the famed medieval literary heritage buttressed visions of Scandinavian cultural unity, I will argue in Chapters 2, 3 and 11 that the national cultivation of the myths could also have centrifugal implications in which the own national identity was carved out in opposition to the bigger Scandinavian picture.[56]

The second category concerns the Early Modern Period, which on a superficial glance appears to be the direct negative of Norse Antiquity: an age of discord foremost, coming nowhere close to unity. From the ill-fated days of the Kalmar Union (1397–1523) – when the three nations were de facto united in a single state structure, but hardly harmoniously so – up to the final settlement of the Great Nordic War in 1720, the Danish and Swedish powerhouses had been in a close to incessant state of war, with armed conflicts erupting again in 1788–89 and the Napoleonic era. According to Kristian Hvidt this less than pleasant sight from the rear-view mirror placed historians planning to write a history of Scandinavia in a dilemma as it showed "that in the realm of politics centrifugal forces had through the ages been stronger than unifying ones."[57] Uffe Østergård maintains that historians resolved this conundrum by wilfully distorting historical reality: "In the pan-Scandinavian perspective all instances of historical discordance between the Nordic states as well as attempts at imperial dominance were eliminated."[58]

I only partially agree with Østergård's observation. On the one hand, nineteenth-century historians – and with them authors, poets, painters, and other cultural producers –indeed often downplayed the role of historical conflict – so far I agree with Østergård – but they did, on the other hand, not altogether eliminate or ignore these uneasy episodes from the past either. Instead, I will argue that they engaged in an act of cultural translation by applying a narrative template developed by Walter Scott (1771–1832), in one way or another, to Scandinavian historical events.[59] In his immensely popular Waverley novels such as in *Ivanhoe* (1819), Scott pitted different ethnic groups against each other (Highlanders vs. Lowlanders, Scottish vs. English, Normans vs. Saxons) whose divisions were ultimately resolved in the usually happy end, as such opening the way for the imagination of collective identities within a multinational framework. As Ann Rigney writes, "[r]ecalling a disquieting memory while simultaneously tempering its affective power was typical for Scott" and his novels can be perceived as "attempts to resolve the bitterness by acknowledging the conflictual experiences of both parties so that bygones may be bygones."[60] Remembering and forgetting are thus intimately interlinked.[61] By liter-

ally ascribing bad experiences to the past – by being *able* to forget them and bury the symbolic hatchet – the door could be opened to a more progressive future. In other words, historical novels and historicist art are not necessarily an outlet for nostalgia (although they can be), they are also very much about the here and now, while they simultaneously offer visions for the future; this dissertation will provide plenty of evidence that this certainly holds true for the cultivation of Scandinavian history, especially within the context of Scandinavism. Serving as a 'model of remembrance', to borrow Rigney's term, Scott-style conflict-reconciliation narratives formed powerful vehicles for conveying a message of Scandinavian unity, something that I will address most elaborately in Chapters 6 and 13 on historical fiction, but it also, in a slightly different form, applies to the visual arts and to performative culture (Chapters 7, 8 and 14).[62] Such stories offered what Benedict Anderson has termed 'the reassurance of fratricide': the potentially divisive impact of the historical memories of the many wars could be soothed and even rationalized away through the reassurance that they took place *between* brothers, thus *within* the Scandinavian nation, which eradicated a clear-cut division between winners and losers.[63]

On closer inspection, then, the 'Age of Severance' (*söndringens tid*) – the name the Swedish poet Esaias Tegnér (1782–1846) gave to the centuries dominated by inter-Scandinavian hostilities – offered ample ammunition for Scandinavian identity making. Although individual episodes and heroic figures from this era provided rewarding subjects for national self-celebration and even triumphalism at the expense of the Scandinavian other, I will argue that the Scott-model formed the dominant approach to dealing with this conflict-filled past. Conversely, Norse Antiquity, as we have seen, was never the unchallenged beacon of Scandinavian unity the central Scandinavist doctrine would have liked it to be. Cultivations of Norse myths and Viking exploits accordingly oscillated between national appropriation on the one hand and the elevation of Scandinavian communality on the other.

Figure 0.1 schematizes the various forms the cultivation of the past could take pertaining to the two main categories of memory sites described above. Notwithstanding the colours chosen for its design, this simple matrix comes with the standard disclaimer that reality is seldom, if ever, black-and-white. To illustrate the point: a novel on Norwegians bravely defying Swedish invaders can contain passages of blatant patriotic triumphalism alongside instances of grandiloquent Scandinavist rhetoric, while the discourse surrounding the cultivation of Norse mythology often condensed towards the assertion that Viking lore is 'both national and pan-national.' With that being said, the four base modalities of cultivating identified here will serve a heuristic purpose in calibrating a memory site's role in the articulation of collective self-definitions.

	Nation	Scandinavia
Norse Antiquity	Appropriation	Communality
Age of Severance	Self-Celebration	Reconciliation

Figure 0.1 – The Four Base Modalities of Cultivating Scandinavian Memory Sites.

To be sure, this primary focus on Viking heritage and Early Modernity means that a significant chunk of the Middle Ages is largely missing in my analysis: roughly the period from the end of the Viking Age (ca. 1050) until the foundation of the Kalmar Union in 1397 (the periodical division of Scandinavian history will be elaborated upon in more detail in Chapter 6).[64] Although medievalism was, as in most European countries, a strong force in Scandinavian culture throughout the century, the High Middle Ages featured less prominently in Scandinavist propaganda than Norse Antiquity, the Viking Era, and Early Modernity, possibly because this was, for Scandinavia, the age of Catholicism and national histories were in general written antithetically to the Catholic Church.[65] When browsing through the cultural production that take its subject from this period (and that not infrequently feature bishops in a suspect role), one notices furthermore that the focus is often on civil war, internal power struggles, and respective 'Golden Ages', while transnational encounters appear to be less frequently thematised.[66] Nevertheless, there still is a wealth of material also in this part of the corpus that can shed light on the dynamic interplay between national and transnational memory-making. However, because the High Middle Ages, in the artistic imagination, literally took up a middle position between the 'contested communality' of the preceding centuries and the 'reconcilable division' of what came after it – the period is characterized by a continuous fluctuation between war, conflict, alliance, dynastic unification and intermarriage – a proper analysis of their mnemonic cultivation demands a more complex approach that would stretch the output capacity of this dissertation. Undoubtedly, the motifs that I am sadly forced to discard now offer interesting material for future research.

THEORY AND METHODOLOGY II
THE HISTOIRE CROISÉE OF SCANDINAVISM

Employing a transnational perspective on cultural memory requires a heightened analytical awareness of the spatial frames in which cultural remembrance takes place. A very central question at every step of the way concerns the exact collective identity that is being cultivated through a certain act of remembrance like a novel, statue, or commemoration: is it the national, the Scandinavian, or perhaps both? In other words: in which spatial frame should this particular mediated representation of the past be situated?

It is important to note that such frames do not exist *a priori* to cultural memory. Maurice Halbwachs, one of the pioneers in the study of collective memory, was of the belief that they were and saw what he termed *cadres sociaux* (social frames) such as the family, class, religious group, or indeed the nation, as productive of cultural memory.[67] The shift towards the dynamic understanding of cultural remembrance has problematized also this premise. Instead, it has now been acknowledged that communities are as much shaped and reconfigured by acts of remembrance as that they generate their own specific memory culture.[68] This point is especially meaningful for our current purpose as it helps us understand the agency of cultural memory in the production of an imagined community such as Scandinavia that lacked institutional infrastructure and was no self-evident social frame before people started engaging in fabricating mnemonic practices.

The fluidity of the boundaries of imagined communities also directs the attention towards the interaction between different spatial frameworks. To be sure, scholarly interest in transnational historical developments at first left the framework of the nation largely intact, as per the brand of comparative history grounded in the works of Marc Bloch and the Annales School.[69] In the late 1980s, the French historians Michael Werner and Michel Espagne launched the concept of *cultural transfer* (or *Transfergeschichte*) in reaction to what they saw as the continued primacy of the nation as the primary unit of investigation in the comparative approach.[70] The focus in the history of transfers is on the circulation of cultural products across different spatial spheres, highlighting these processes rather than the spatial units. Yet, Werner later conceded that the begin and end point of the studied processes were still quite often national communities.[71] Thus confronting the persistent problem of methodological nationalism that according to him continued to stymie *Transfergeschichte*, Werner together with Bénédicte Zimmermann developed an approach they called *histoire croisée* to bring to light the important role the entanglement between

different geographical levels or units has played in historical processes. Parallel to the recent trends in cultural memory studies, Werner and Zimmermann do not see frames as pregiven; ideally, the historian induces the relevant spatial frames from their object of study, based on the categories applied by the historical actors.[72] Of course, the spatial frames central to the current study *are* factually predetermined as they are in themselves objects of study, but a proper investigation of the interaction between the national and the supranational level as well as between the three nations demands an analytical flexibility that continuously addresses the specific perspective of the historical persons involved. What is more, although the frames of the nation and that of Scandinavia take central stage, other relevant spatial scales, such as that of the city, the region, or the continent at times have a role to play as well and should be addressed accordingly.

Concepts from the toolkit of *histoire croisée* are useful in bringing theoretical focus to the study of the interplay between cultural Scandinavism and the nation-building processes in the individual countries. In their focus on entanglements and its effects, Werner and Zimmermann place emphasis on *mutual perception* as a catalyst for human action. This certainly applies to the cultural dynamics in Scandinavia. As we shall see at several points in this thesis, cultural activism in Scandinavian country X often served as a point of departure for cultivational practices in Scandinavian country Y. Similarly, the processes of national and Scandinavian identity formation were intimately interlinked owing to the continuous interaction between various cultural producers. On a more discursive level, mutual perception has for long been acknowledged as a dynamic central to the articulation of national self-images, which are after all dependent on how the own group is perceived to be different from others.[73] In this sense, Scandinavism provides a peculiar case as it calibrates the mutual perception among Danes, Norwegians, and Swedes as hinged between notions of 'otherness' (distinctive national features) and 'sameness' (common Scandinavian traits). This also pertains to the image of Scandinavia from the national perspective, as Scandinavia can alternately be seen as either internal or external to the national self-image depending on the eye of the beholder and the given political and social circumstances.

As Werner and Zimmermann write, the nature and result of mutual perception are defined by the power relations between the different parts, which they describe in terms of *symmetry* (the parties involved in the entanglement stand on an equal footing) and *asymmetry* (there is a disparity in power or influence between the separate parties). Identifying asymmetries can contribute greatly to understanding the workings of entanglements in historical processes and the mutual interconnection between different polities.[74] Concerning Scan-

dinavism and the mutual perception between different spatial frameworks, three levels of symmetry–asymmetry dynamics can be determined. To begin with, Norway for the larger part of the study period found itself in a politically asymmetrical position to the other two countries. Although the country between 1814 and 1905 enjoyed a high level of sovereignty in the personal union with Sweden, it was not altogether independent, as it had to except the Swedish king as head of state and could not pursue its own foreign policies. Before the Swedish century, moreover, Norway had been part of the Danish realm for over four centuries (1380–1814), which had left a cultural legacy that would make itself feel throughout the nineteenth century. At the same time, however, complete symmetry between the three nations was by most Scandinavists seen as a *sine qua non* for the Scandinavian project to succeed, meaning that Scandinavian unity could only be achieved after full self-realisation of its constitutive parts, entailing full political independence and a strongly developed national self-consciousness.

Secondly, there is an alternately symmetrical and asymmetrical relation between nationalism on the one hand and Scandinavism on the other. Ruth Hemstad contends that whereas political Scandinavism was often seen as threat to national sovereignty (thus as a symmetrical competing national movement), as a cultural programme it was treated as compatible and non-threatening (thus as asymmetrical in terms of power relations).[75] Yet, as this study of the cultivation of memory sites will show, asymmetry was at times also experienced within the cultural sphere. In accordance with the above observations on Norway, some Norwegian commentators contested the cultivation of 'their' memories by Danish or Swedish artists, deeming such practices unjustified acts of appropriation. In a slightly different case, the craze for Norwegian literature that pervaded Swedish society in the closing decades of the nineteenth-century ultimately spawned a counter-movement that sought to emancipate Swedish authors from this 'Norwegiomania'.[76]

Thirdly, the awareness of being a European periphery played into both political Scandinavism (forming a more powerful block against potential Russian or Prussian aggression) and cultural Scandinavism, as expressed through the repeated wish of turning Scandinavia into a common cultural sphere that could boast a stronger and more attractive profile towards the rest of Europe and indeed the world. Kari Haarder Ekman has argued that the creation of Scandinavia as a literary space fortified the position of the otherwise marginal individual languages within what Pascale Casanova has termed the 'World Republic of Letters': world literature as a 'world' in its own right, relatively independent from political and linguistic borders.[77] Within this world system power is unequally distributed, with 'large' languages like English and French, not-

withstanding the quality of the work of individual authors using these languages, having a larger global share than peripheral ones.[78] Following Haarder Ekman's conclusions, Scandinavism's cultural activism should partly be seen as an attempt to enlarge Scandinavia's cultural capital on the world stage.

THEORY AND METHODOLOGY III
SOURCES AND DATABASES

To recapitulate: the main aim of this dissertation is to understand the entanglement between Scandinavism and the various nationally-specific cultural nationalisms in Scandinavia in relation to the articulation of different collective identities. It intends to do so by tracing and analysing a number of memory sites in their movement across a variety of media. This means that the primary sources lying under the historian's magnifying glass are indeed these various mediated appearances of the memory sites in question, which include a breath-taking wealth of cultural practices and activities: novels, poems, songs, paintings, schoolbooks, history writing, critical writing, monuments, commemorations, sculptures, clubs and societies, music, street names, and more. The advantage of such a broad cultural approach lies in the synthesis it brings to the hitherto fragmented body of case studies that address Scandinavism's impact in individual cultural fields or in the work of individual authors and artists.[79] Furthermore, as I have highlighted before, casting the net wide is necessary to capture the complexities of cultural remembrance, which of course does not contain itself to a single cultural pursuit, but attains much of its dynamics from its intermediality and repeated remediation of particular memory sites.

On the other hand, however, working with such a large and multifarious corpus poses a number of challenges related to matters of source selection and the structuring of the overall argument. What is required, then, is some form of systematisation in order to categorize the myriad of cultural endeavours involved in the raising of national consciousness and gain insight in how these pursuits relate to each other. To this end, Joep Leerssen has in his studies on Romantic nationalism in Europe developed a model that distinguishes between four fields of culture and three degrees of cultivation.[80] Figure 0.2 presents the resulting matrix, which offers a necessary measure of heuristic structure to the study of cultural nationalism. In the following, I will very briefly describe the different cells in this matrix; more elaborate reflections follow primarily in Part II of the dissertation.

The first cultural field the model identifies is that of language, in the Romantic worldview seen as the very source code of the national character. Activism in this field include the writing of dictionaries and grammars, deliberations on orthography, and language education. Textual culture is the second field and concentrates on literature, both fictional and non-fictional, both historical and freshly produced, as an object of study, inspiration, commentary, reflection, propagation, and celebration. Visual or material culture likewise involves the preservation of ancient national treasures as well as the production of new monuments, art works, architecture, and design in service of the nation's self-image. Finally, non-material culture refers to cultural practices such as music, dance, sports, manners and customs, and other instances of folklore, including oral literature.

As regards the various stages of cultivation, the model distinguishes between three phases that succeed each other in degree of intensity. The first stage is concerned with the preservation and inventorying of cultural heritage in order to salvage and safeguard the nation's historical legacy; this includes for instance the edition of old manuscripts and the conservation of ancient remains. The next level revolves around fresh cultural productivity inspired by the nation's culture and history and involves varying endeavours such as historical fiction, history painting, national-history writing, sculpturing, the composing of music, and the opening of museums. The final stage concerns propagation or public proclamation: the use of culture to communicate the national identity to society via among other things language and history education, the dedication of public spaces after historical figures, and the organization of festivals and commemorations of various kinds.

At the bottom the matrix additionally includes two categories that transcend the division in fields and pursuits, and describe the organizational structures in which these endeavours are carried out. The first – the social ambience – refers to bottom-up initiatives instigated by private parties such as clubs, societies, newspapers, journals, conferences and networks; the second – institutional infrastructure – contains the institutions initiated by the authorities, including museums, libraries, and universities.

To be sure, the matrix does not pretend to describe or capture cultural nationalism in its deepest essence. Its main purpose is, as noted earlier, heuristic: the model provides a tool with which to situate a certain cultural endeavour within the broader context of cultural-nationalist activism. This is accordingly also how it will be used here: as a means to bring structure to an otherwise amorphous and unattainable assemblage of study objects.

	INVENTORY (SALVAGE, RETRIEVAL)	INSPIRATION (FRESH CULTURAL PRODUCTION)	INSTRUMENTIALIZATION (PUBLIC PROPAGATION, PROCLAMATION)
LANGUAGE	dictionaries grammars	orthography standardization / dialet debates language purism	language activism language planning language education
TEXTUAL CULTURE	editions of older - literary texts - historical documents - legal sources	[a] translations / adapations: Bible, world classics [b] national / historical drama, novel, poetry [c] national history-writing [d] literary history, literary / cultural criticism	history education historical pageants commemorations literary events / festival / awards
MATERIAL CULTURE	archeography monumental remains symbolically invested sites	monument protection policy, restorations, design, decorative arts historicist painting, museums	monuments, dedication of public spaces official use of historicist archiecture / decorative arts / design
IMMATERIAL (PERFORMA-TIVE) CULTURE	editions of oral literature provebs, superstitions, pastimes manners and customs, folklore folk dance, folk music	literary evocations of rustic-ity traditional sports/pastimes, tourism national music composed	revived or invented traditions events / festivals / awards (folklore, sports, music)
SOCIABILITY	[a] associations, city acdaemies, reading societies [b] periodical, publishing ventures		
INSTITUTIONAL INFRASTRUC-TURE	[a] state academics, universities, chairs [b] libraries, archives [c] museums, government agencies		

Figure 0.2 - The Cultivation of Culture Matrix. Source: Encyclopedia of Romantic Nationalism in Europe.

Admittedly, some cultural fields will in the course of the analysis receive more attention than others, while the emphasis will be on cultural production and proclamation, and less so on the inventory stage of cultivation. Although language activism, orthography, history and language education, commemorations, festivals, dedication of public places, sociability, tourism, music, and sports will all pass the review, historical fiction and the visual arts hold a central place – forming a guiding line through all four parts of the thesis – for a number of reasons.

As regards historical fiction, Aleida Assmann has highlighted the special mnemonic power of narrativity to stabilize cultural memory by moulding the past in a structured, recognizable, and indeed memorable form that, in addition, is easier to reproduce or adapt in new versions.[81] Elsewhere Ann Rigney has underlined the specific qualities of fictional literature in this respect, as a gripping novel or play can frame a certain memory in a more engaging and aesthetically pleasing way that resonates with potentially larger audiences.[82] Prioritizing aesthetics and drama above historic authenticity – as many works of historical fiction do – may paradoxically contribute to making a certain memory site more memorable, while thoroughly recasting its shape and substance – the way in which the past is remembered – in the process. What Susan Brantly

has concluded concerning the infamous Swedish king Carl XII – that the historical person has become increasingly eclipsed by his many fictional alter egos – undoubtedly holds true for many another historical figure as well.[83] Literary works thus provide points of stability in the mnemonic process, but as has been remarked earlier, they are also mobile and part of a dynamics in which they can travel across cultural borders and form part of alternative transnational identity programmes as much as they can be adapted to other media, give rise to new versions, or influence writers and artists working on the same historical material.[84]

Similar observations can be made concerning the capacity of paintings and sculptures to make the past imaginable, or indeed visual. Some paintings have become (or were once) the iconic visual marker of a certain historical character or event, while their inclusion in the collection of (mostly) national museums provides them with a canonical status, often literally offering a gallery of the nation's collective heroes and achievements. Recursivity and procreativity also play a role. Think for example of the reproductions of paintings used in history textbooks, or consider the case of Molin's Fountain in Stockholm (Chapter 15) of which the much-anticipated unveiling in 1873 was preceded by the publication of a booklet containing photographs of the original plaster cast as well as by a highly successful theatre tour that offered *tableaux vivants* of the fountain's sculpture groups.[85] Besides once again accentuating the inter- and multimediality of memory sites, Molin's Fountain proves that monuments, rock-solid they though may seem, are not restricted to their direct physical environment and have a mobile character of their own.

Because of these qualities – their monumentality, mobility, recursivity, and procreativity – literature and visual art are well-suited for a *longue durée* analysis of national and pan-national remembrance concentrating on a limited set of memory sites that are traced in their move from book to book, from book to sculpture, between the national and the Scandinavian framework, and so on. In order to say something meaningful about these long-term developments I combine a distant reading approach with a selection of close-reading case studies.[86] Regarding the distant reading side of the story, I have collected two separate databases – one on literature and one on the visual arts – containing 684 and 915 works respectively for the entire study period of 1770–1919. Primary function of the databases is to identify diachronic trends regarding the historical periods that are most popular as a subject of cultivation and establish differences between the three nations in this regard. The close-reading cases are carried out to assess how historical fiction and art function as media of memory and contribute to the articulation of collective identities.

The databases can be consulted via the website I have built as appendix to this dissertation: www.scandinavism.com.[87] The website also features a reflection on the criteria used for the selection of works, which can likewise be found in Chapter 6 for literature and Chapter 7 for the visual arts.

STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION

This dissertation is divided into four parts, followed by a synthesizing conclusion. Each of the four parts is preceded by its own short introduction, which hopefully will be of useful guidance to the reader. For the sake of oversight I will nevertheless briefly shed light on the overall framework in the current section. The structure is partly chronological and partly thematic.

Part I is titled *Imagining Scandinavia* and traces the intellectual roots of Scandinavism. It accordingly goes back to the final decades of the eighteenth century, when a number of philosophical and cultural developments paved the way for the so-called Nordic Renaissance: a renewed interest in Old-Norse poetry and mythology, in Scandinavia as well as elsewhere. Centrepiece of Chapter 1 is the prize-essay question that was organized in Copenhagen in 1800 and asked whether Norse mythology could function as a valuable source of inspiration for the modern poet. Chapters 2 and 3 basically centre on the same ongoing debate, albeit in relation to the visual arts. These learned disputes reveal that Old-Norse culture emerged as the foundation for a shared Scandinavian identity, setting it apart from a European South rooted in classicism as well as from a German culture that was argued to have no stake in this now prestigious legacy; concurrently, the many essays and pamphlets spent on the procreative usability of Norse mythology – cautiously, indirectly – gave expression to first inter-Scandinavian discord regarding the exact ownership of this same grand medieval literary heritage.

Part II – *Cultivating Scandinavism* – deals with Scandinavism during its heyday of cultural and political resonance, roughly the period between 1830 and 1870. The cultivation of culture matrix provides the framework for the chapters in this part of the dissertation, which successively trace how a Scandinavian identity was cultivated through the creation of a Scandinavian public sphere (Chapter 4), through language activism (Chapter 5), through history education and historicism in literature (Chapter 6), through historicism in the visual arts (Chapter 7), and, finally, through commemorative practices (Chapter 8). Taken together these chapters demonstrate how this plethora of cultural and academic endeavours contributed to turning Scandinavia into a cultural sphere (Chapter 9) that not only normalized pan-Scandinavian cooperation in

the cultural field, but also provided artists with a common cultural repertoire and the comforting sense that they formed part of a larger pan-national community, which could boast a stronger, more prestigious reputation towards the outside world.

Part III can be perceived as the flipside of Part II, as it examines how the notion of a shared Scandinavian identity *negatively* stimulated the nation-building process in Norway, which from the outset had been the country most sceptical of Scandinavism. *Challenging Scandinavia*, this part argues, formed an important driver behind the Norwegian search for an idiosyncratic historical identity. Chapter 10 discusses how Norwegian historians and authors tried to carve out a national narrative in contrast to competing Scandinavian readings and ventured to reclaim historical memories that were believed to have been lost to Denmark. The most controversial issue in this context concerned the ownership of Old-Norse literature, which now that Norwegians started to take an interest erupted into a scholarly debate that lasted for several decades. This controversy forms the subject of Chapter 11. Chapter 12 addresses another conflict over a memory site, being the eighteenth-century naval hero Peter Wessel Tordenskjold, who was claimed by both Denmark and Norway as a national hero, while he simultaneously came to be appropriated in a Scandinavist frame.

In Part IV on *Ambient Scandinavism* the focus shifts to the period between 1870 and 1919. With both Scandinavism and Romantic historicism having passed their zenith at this point in time, these final chapters trace the lingering impact that Scandinavism as a cultural affect would nevertheless continue to exert. Chapter 13 shows that the narrative strategies authors employed during the golden age of Scandinavism to align stories about historical inter-Scandinavian conflict with Scandinavism's reconciliatory message were retained by succeeding generations of writers. In this form, as the subtle, almost unobtrusive background in a gripping melodramatic or literary tale, we might argue that Scandinavism had reverted back to an inert state that comes close to Michael Billig's notion of "banal nationalism."[88] This 'ambient Scandinavism', as this dissertation proposes to call this stage, also became part of the public sphere through the naming of streets after Norse gods and historic figures (the subject of Chapter 14) and through the installation of public artworks with a mythological theme (Chapter 15).

The conclusion, finally, will tie many of the lines running through the dissertation together by showcasing how national identities in nineteenth century Scandinavia took shape through a continuous and dynamic interaction between the Danish, Norwegian, Swedish, and Scandinavian national movements.