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Organizational Scandinavianism Abroad.  
Literature, Sociability, and Pan-Scandinavian Associational  
Life in German-Speaking Europe 1842–1912

On Christmas Eve 1869, Scandinavians living in Vienna and other parts of the Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy gathered to celebrate a traditional ›Nordic‹ Christmas. Being among fellow citizens in a friendly, homely atmosphere must have been an effective remedy for homesickness. An enthusiastic toast, from the »remote Scandinavia« to the »great Scandinavia« in the North, raised by the 30 Norwegians, Swedes, and Danes attending the event, was documented in Danish and Swedish newspapers a few weeks later.<sup>1</sup>

Similar social gatherings, organized by local pan-Scandinavian associations, took place all over Europe and beyond during the second half of the nineteenth century, fostering a sense of common Scandinavian identity based on mutual culture and kindred languages among Scandinavians abroad. In German-speaking Europe alone, at least 20 pan-Scandinavian associations were established in 17 different cities during the period 1842–1905. At the heart of most of these associations, alongside social events, was the Scandinavian library – a collection of literature, journals, and newspapers available to Scandinavian readers living far from home.

The memorable Christmas party in Vienna, which featured an engraved medallion specially produced for participants, resulted in the formal founding of the Scandinavian association in Vienna. On 2 January 1870, 54 local Scandinavians, some of whom had lived in the city for many years, established *Den skandinaviske Forening i Wien* [The Scandinavian Association in Vienna].<sup>2</sup> The statutes of the association mandated the organization of frequent social gatherings to provide heartfelt and lively exchange among Scandinavians in Vienna, the formation of a choral society, the acquisition of Scandinavian newspapers, and financial

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1 »[...] att från denna aflägsna del af Skandinavien sända tanken upp till det stora Skandinavien« (»Skandinaviskt sällskap i Wien«. *Post- och Inrikes Tidningar*, 15 January 1870), referring a correspondence from Vienna to *Berlingske Tidende*. (All translations are mine.)

2 Ibid.

support for needy Scandinavians.<sup>3</sup> The meeting hall was in the Musikverein, where members and Scandinavian visitors could socialize and access publications from home – in 1888, the library contained around 500 volumes and subscriptions for six newspapers from Denmark, Sweden, and Norway.<sup>4</sup> Membership was open to »every Scandinavian« with no further explanation required. Among the general rules was the prohibition of political or religious discussions.<sup>5</sup>

These kinds of rules and practices were quite representative of the many pan-Scandinavian associations abroad at the time.<sup>6</sup> Although forming a choral society was rarely included in the basic statutes, sociability and entertainment were important constitutive aspects of associational life among Scandinavians abroad – as were print media and literature from the home countries. In addition to serving social, cultural, and literary purposes, the pan-Scandinavian associations abroad often functioned as safety nets through simultaneously organized sickness funds and mutual aid associations. These associations constituted an important infrastructural network for Scandinavians staying abroad.

To what degree was this phenomenon, which may be termed organizational Scandinavianism abroad, connected to the pan-Scandinavian movement at home? How did this transnational greeting, from the ›remote Scandinavia‹ to the common ›great Scandinavia‹ in the North, reflect ideas of a common Scandinavian identity, culture, and literature that existed as categories overlapping national and nation-based ones? How wide-ranging and longlasting was this associational activity, which was later forgotten and largely disappeared into oblivion? This chapter reflects upon these questions by exploring the place of Scandinavian literature and transnational sociability in some of these pan-Scandinavian associations abroad. More specifically, it will look into cultural associations established by and for Scandinavians in German-speaking cities, such as Hamburg (1842), Zurich (1845/1880), Berlin (1856), Vienna (1870), and Munich (1874). The study is mainly based on an ongoing inventory of written and printed materials produced by these and similar associations,

3 *Love for den skandinaviske Forening i Wien* [...], [undated], § 1.

4 »Skandinaverne i Wien«. *Dagbladet*, 20 September 1888.

5 *Love for den skandinaviske Forening i Wien* [...], [undated], § 21.

6 I use the term pan-Scandinavian to emphasize the transnational and pan-national character and to distinguish these associations from their contemporary Norwegian, Danish, and Swedish associations abroad.

such as statutes and by-laws, in some cases published annual accounts and catalogues, and printed or handwritten songs, as well as other manuscripts.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, Scandinavian newspapers regularly reported on pan-Scandinavian associations abroad.

### Organizational Scandinavianism Abroad

Pan-Scandinavian associations abroad – usually cultural-social societies offering membership for ›every Scandinavian‹ in a particular city – are mainly a nineteenth-century phenomenon, unfolding from the mid-1840s and declining after 1905. There were a couple of forerunners in the last part of the eighteenth century, both within and beyond the Scandinavian region, such as *Det Skandinaviske Literaturselskab* [The Scandinavian Literary Society] in Copenhagen and Nordic/Scandinavian societies in London and Philadelphia.<sup>8</sup> These pan-national and transnational associations, usually identifying themselves as ›Scandinavian‹, mirrored the associational spirit of the mid-nineteenth century<sup>9</sup> as well as the spirit of Scandinavianism that emerged in the Scandinavian region during the late 1830s.<sup>10</sup>

During the second half of the nineteenth century, there was a thriving pan-Scandinavian associational life beyond Scandinavian borders, established by and for Scandinavians living abroad. This self-organization took place within what may arguably be termed a Scandinavian diaspora, broadly understood as characterized by dispersion across state borders, homeland orientation and, although at an early, first-generation stage, boundary-maintenance.<sup>11</sup> Following sociologist Roger Brubaker's research, I will examine the associational activities initiated within these groups as diasporic projects, stances, and practices.<sup>12</sup>

These Scandinavian ›communities‹ in Europe, America, and other parts of the world could include new and established immigrants, but also, more frequent in a European context, short-term visitors such as

7 This kind of material is usually archived in ephemeral collections at national libraries.

8 *Det Skandinaviske Literaturselskab* was formed in Copenhagen in 1796. On these early initiatives, see also HEMSTAD: 2021.

9 HOFFMAN: 2006, 5.

10 HEMSTAD: 2019.

11 On the definition of the widely used term diaspora, see BRUBAKER: 2005, 5.

12 *Ibid.*, 12–13.

artists, artisans, travelling journeymen, merchants, travellers, tourists, and adventure seekers. Not only did millions of Scandinavian immigrants settle in North America during the nineteenth century,<sup>13</sup> Scandinavians were generally known for their eagerness to travel, as postulated in 1895 by a Norwegian newspaper report on the many pan-Scandinavian associations abroad.<sup>14</sup> Within Europe, Scandinavian travellers were sometimes termed ›migratory birds‹ (›Trækfugle‹), arriving regularly in southern territories every winter.<sup>15</sup> The size of the associations in terms of numbers of members therefore fluctuated according to these kinds of travelling patterns, both during the year and from one year to the next.

In addition to the many pan-Scandinavian associations on the European continent, numerous such associations were established, primarily beginning in the late nineteenth century, in North America, as well as several in Australia and South America, and a couple in Africa, usually in urban areas. The first transatlantic one was the Scandinavian Association founded in New York in 1844.

In one of the few scholarly articles on the topic of pan-Scandinavian associations abroad, the historian John R. Jenswold, focussing on an urban American context, terms this phenomenon ›organizational pan-Scandinavianism‹.<sup>16</sup> Norwegian immigrants gathered with Swedes and Danes in several American cities, presenting a unified cultural front by establishing pan-Scandinavian societies of different types during the 1850s–1880s.

A pan-Scandinavian dynamic, rising with the establishment of urban settlements in the middle of the nineteenth century and falling by the end of the century, was the means of organization for Norwegians in their first encounter with American urban life.<sup>17</sup>

In a later article, the Norwegian historian Olav Tysdal underlines the role of Scandinavianism in promoting social cohesion and as ›a useful tool to

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<sup>13</sup> Out of three million Scandinavians emigrating between 1825 and 1930, 1.2 million came from Sweden, 850,000 from Norway, and 300,000 from Denmark. More than 95 percent of these moved to North America including Canada (KULDKEPP: 2020).

<sup>14</sup> ›Den skandinaviske Koloni i Berlin‹, *Morgenbladet*, 25 January 1895.

<sup>15</sup> ›Fra Italien. III‹, *Morgenbladet*, 4 December 1877.

<sup>16</sup> JENSWOLD: 1985, 160. Some articles and books have been published on specific associations, primarily as part of anniversary celebrations. A recent account on the Scandinavian Association in Rome is ATMER: 2010.

<sup>17</sup> JENSWOLD: 1985, 160.

ameliorate the lives of immigrants«, through numerous associational initiatives – including choral societies – covering a wide range of immigrant interests in cities like Minneapolis.<sup>18</sup> During the 1890s, and especially around 1905, tensions between Norwegian and Swedish immigrants increased, reflecting the political conflicts within their homelands' union. Especially after the dissolution of the union in 1905, Scandinavian sentiments abroad were replaced by national identity as the cohesive force.<sup>19</sup>

Jenswold considers this experience as a »brief American fulfillment of an untested European idea, pan-Scandinavianism«. <sup>20</sup> However, the pan-Scandinavian idea of reconciliation among Scandinavians had already been tested in a European context, even if Scandinavianism as a political project was commonly deemed a failure after 1846. An organizational Scandinavianism, similar to the one examined in an urban American context, was very much alive in urban Europe during the same period.

This is essentially a history of rise and fall, demonstrating that organizational Scandinavianism abroad was closely intertwined with political-cultural developments in the home countries. Some associations did survive national tensions, and new ones were established later on, in Europe, America, and other parts of the world. One interesting exception to the Scandinavian diaspora's tendency to divide itself into national groups after 1905 was the Scandinavian community in Durban, which continued a pan-Scandinavian orientation well into the twentieth century. Based on an analysis of the monthly magazine *Fram*, published by and for the community from 1914–1954, the geographer Erlend Eidsvik describes an enduring cultural and practical Scandinavianism – during a period when the phenomenon had diminished in other parts of the world.<sup>21</sup>

German-speaking Europe was well represented among these kinds of associations. In the 1840s, the first initiative appeared in Hamburg; there are also traces of associational life in cities like Hannover, Zurich, Leipzig, and Munich in this early period.<sup>22</sup> Berlin followed in 1856, then Vienna, then Frankfurt am Main in 1878. In the 1880s, new associations were

18 TYSDAL: 2007, 172–174.

19 Ibid., 173; JENSWOLD: 1985, 162–165.

20 Ibid., 167.

21 EIDSVIK: 2013.

22 Associations are known from newspaper reports and/or correspondence with the Scandinavian associations in Copenhagen and Uppsala during the 1840s.

founded in Königsberg, Basel, and Geneva, and around 1900, similar associations were established in St. Gallen, Bremen, Darmstadt, Karlsruhe, Luzern, and Dresden. All in all, at least 20 pan-Scandinavian associations were founded in around 17 different cities in the German-speaking region between 1842 and around 1905. Similar associations were established in several cities in France, Great Britain, and Italy as well. The most famous of them all, and one of the few that ›survived‹ the national conflicts of 1905, was the Scandinavian Association in Rome for artists and scientists, *Circolo Scandinavico per Artisti e Scienziati a Roma*, formally established in 1860 when the city's older Danish and Swedish book collections were merged to form a Scandinavian library.<sup>23</sup>

So far, I have found traces of around 35 pan-Scandinavian associations established in more than 25 European cities during the period 1842–1905. Some associations were also established at the beginning of the twentieth century and during the interwar period. In some cities, such as Berlin and Paris, there was even more than one pan-Scandinavian association, each directed at a different segment of the diaspora population. More often, however, different associations followed one another. A slightly different phenomenon consisted of pan-Scandinavian associations active in foreign countries as branches of international organizations, such as the *Young Men's Christian Association* (YMCA).<sup>24</sup>

In several cities, pan-Scandinavian *and* national associations – Swedish, Danish, and Norwegian – existed side by side. There are also a couple of examples of Swedish-Norwegian associations.<sup>25</sup> The pan-Scandinavian associations remained in contact with local diplomatic representatives from Denmark and, until 1905, the United Kingdoms of Sweden and Norway. In some cities, such as Hamburg and Munich, members primarily represented the (upper) middle class, whereas several of the associations, as in Zurich, were organized around travelling journeymen – artisans or craftsmen working abroad as part of their training.<sup>26</sup> When

23 HEMSTAD: 2010a.

24 The YMCA was founded in London 1844. During the late nineteenth century, KFUM (*Kristelig Forening for Unge Menn*) established common Scandinavian branches in several European cities.

25 *Svensk-Norska Föreningen i London*, established 1868. A Swedish-Norwegian mutual aid association was founded in Berlin in 1884.

26 The Scandinavian expression was ›(landevejens) farende svend‹, in German: ›(Frei-)reisende Gesellen‹.

women participated, at least until around 1900, it was primarily as invited guests at specific social and cultural events.

What developed into a pan-Scandinavian network of associations across Europe included transnational contact and exchange of different kinds between several of these associations. During the last part of the century, there was a system of sister associations as corresponding members. The associations exchanged printed materials, such as statutes and by-laws, and offered reductions in entry fees and access to support for members from sister associations as well.

Some publications were directed explicitly to this Scandinavian diaspora ›community‹ – like the popular songbook *Sangbog for Den færende Svend og de skandinaviske Foreninger i Udlandet* [Songbook for Journey-men and Scandinavian Associations Abroad], first published by the Scandinavian Association in Zurich in 1904, with a second edition in 1906.<sup>27</sup> The songbook encompassed familiar songs from home as well as songs written by Scandinavians abroad, both in Scandinavian and German, for use at the meetings and as a valuable ›memory‹. The songbook was connected to the broader pan-Scandinavian relief fund *Central-Understøttelseskasse for Skandinaver i Udlandet (C.U.K.)* [Central Support Fund for Scandinavians Abroad], established in 1901. This was an early example of a Scandinavian umbrella organization aimed at supporting Scandinavian travelling journeymen all over Europe. Branches were later established in Scandinavian cities by alumni members, and the group was known by its nickname ›Nav'erne‹ – from Scandinaviens. Thus, during the last part of the nineteenth century, Zurich became a central node in the network of pan-Scandinavian associations primarily directed towards travelling journeymen, who had to spend one to three years abroad as part of their education and training. Although the average number of members was modest (around 50), more than 3,500 Scandinavians visited the association in Zurich between 1880 and 1905.<sup>28</sup>

In Hamburg, a journal targeted at this group was published in 1879: *Fra nær og fjern. Organ för skandinaviske selskaber i utlandet* [From Near and Far. Journal for Scandinavian Associations Abroad].<sup>29</sup> Though short-

27 *Sangbog for Den færende Svend* [...]: 1904 [1906].

28 *Skandinavisk Forening Zürich* [...], [1905].

29 A short notice on this journal initiative, presented as a sample issue, is published in *Aftonbladet*, 22 September 1879. It is unclear how many issues were actually published.

lived, the initiative was in line with the Hamburg association's ambition to facilitate connections between pan-Scandinavian associations abroad. The 1869 statutes explicitly mention that the management should »develop and maintain connections with the other non-political pan-Scandinavian associations abroad« and include them in their network as »corresponding members«. <sup>30</sup>

### Pan-Scandinavian Associations at Home and Abroad: Early Beginnings and the Role of Literature

Pan-Scandinavian associations were established not only outside but also within the Scandinavian region. <sup>31</sup> These kinds of associations at home, with explicit pan-Scandinavian ambitions, were founded in three different waves: during the 1840s and '60s, and around 1900.

The first pan-Scandinavian associations in the region in the nineteenth century were established in Copenhagen and Uppsala in 1843, inspired by the success of the Scandinavian student meeting in Uppsala that year. <sup>32</sup> The enthusiasm among the students sparked a broader pan-Scandinavian movement and the neologism ›Skandinavisme‹ [Scandinavianism] came into fashion. <sup>33</sup>

The pan-Scandinavian movement developed as a complementary, but also potentially competing nation-building project, building on the vision of ›Scandinavia‹ as a united community based on common history and culture, independent of the current nation-state system. The movement started in national-liberal circles in Denmark, strongly influenced by the growing German-Danish conflict over the Duchies Schleswig and Holstein. It spread to Sweden, stimulated by the fear of Russian aggression and dreams of reunification with Finland, lost in 1809. <sup>34</sup> To a lesser degree, these ideas were commonly approved in Norway, which had regained its autonomy in 1814.

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<sup>30</sup> »[...] fremkalde og vedligeholde Forbindelse med de øvrige ikke-politiske skandinaviske Foreninger i Udlandet« (*Love for det skandinaviske Selskab i Hamburg* [...], 1870, 10 (§ 26)).

<sup>31</sup> HEMSTAD: 2008.

<sup>32</sup> *Beretning om Studentertoget* [...], 1844.

<sup>33</sup> HEMSTAD: 2018; HEMSTAD, MØLLER and THORKILDSEN: 2018.

<sup>34</sup> KULDKEPP: 2019.



Political organizations were forbidden in absolutist Denmark until 1849 and rare in Sweden and Norway at this time. Literary societies were, then, the only available associational means for pan-Scandinavian activists to attain the long-term, political goal of Scandinavian unification. Hence, language and literature were perceived as central means in promoting pan-Scandinavian ideas and sympathies across Scandinavian countries.

While the purpose of these associations was officially limited to the field of literature, this was understood in a very broad sense. Initially, the exchange of literature between societies in Denmark and Sweden – and a book committee established as part of the Norwegian Student Association – served to build up Scandinavian libraries in each country.<sup>35</sup> Soon this activity was broadened to include the dissemination of Scandinavian literature beyond Scandinavian borders, as a response to requests from Scandinavians abroad beginning to organize.

Founded on 15 December 1842, the Scandinavian Association in Hamburg was the first general example of pan-Scandinavian self-organization in the nineteenth century. The initiative to bring together Scandinavians living in the Hanseatic free city, close to the conflict-ridden Danish-German borderland, was undertaken by Danish tradesmen already established there. The association began with around 100 members, the number later varying between 250 and 300 in the 1870s and '80s. Following and paralleling this example and reflecting pan-Scandinavian sentiments, several Scandinavian associations were established across Europe and the world, eventually becoming a global phenomenon around 1900.

»Scandinavian associations« – both those within and outside the Nordic region – merited an encyclopedic entry as early as 1848. In the Swedish encyclopaedia, *Svenskt konversationslexikon*, »Skandinaviskt sällskap« is included as a separate entry. The definition emphasizes the pan-national ideas underlying this kind of association and the perceived role of literature as part of a common nation-building process:

*Scandinavian societies* is the name of the associations, which in recent years have been established *within as well as outside Scandinavia*, in order to contribute to the development of the common Swedish, Norwegian, and Danish nationality. The purpose of these associations is to stimulate the feeling of one nationality, not Swedish, Norwegian, or Danish, but Scandinavian. Their main

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35 HEMSTAD: 2021.

principle is that these three Nordic states consist of one and the same people, and therefore the closest union between them should be promoted.<sup>36</sup>

The national unity exists; it goes on, independent of different sovereigns and even political systems. What is demanded is a sincere spiritual connection based upon the ›commonality of literature‹ (›litteraturens gemensamhet‹), and hence the activities within the associations are primarily literary, like the exchange of books. Added in this entry is that Scandinavian associations in foreign countries also function as social and supportive associations for Scandinavians living far from home.

The fundamentally unclear line between culture/literature and politics, demonstrated in this entry, may also be observed during the foundation of the Scandinavian Association in Hamburg. The discussion on the naming of this cultural and literary association elucidates the ambiguities connected to these associations at the time – also when established abroad. The Danish and Swedish authorities were hesitant about the establishment of pan-Scandinavian associations, both within and beyond their borders, fearing that Russian diplomats would suspect these groups of covert political activities on behalf of Scandinavian unification.<sup>37</sup>

Scandinavian newspapers refereed discussions about the name, reporting that Swedish(-Norwegian) and Danish diplomatic representatives in Hamburg were informed about the new association in Hamburg that had called itself ›The Scandinavian Association‹ (*Det skandinaviske Selskab*). This was not a problem for the Swedish diplomat; the Danish envoy, however, protested, fearing that calling the association ›Scandinavian‹ implied political connotations and tendencies that could provoke reactions from the Russian court – even if the purpose of the association was purely social and cultural in nature. Consequently, the association chose to change the name to the more neutral ›Nordic‹ and underlined its literary focus by naming itself the ›Nordic Reading Society‹ (*Nordisk Læse-*

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36 »*Skandinaviskt sällskap* kallas de föreningar, som de senare åren blifvit ingångna så väl inom som utom Skandinavien, för att verka i och för den för Sverige, Norrige och Danmark gemensamma nationalitetens utbildande. Dessa sällskapers ändamål är just att utveckla känslan af en nationalitet, icke Svensk, Norsk, Dansk, utan Skandinavisk. Deras grundsats är att dessa trenne nordiska stater utgöras af samma folk, och att derföre den närmaste förening emellan dem bör befordras.« (*Svenskt konversationslexikon*, 1848, 547–548).

37 BECKER-CHRISTENSEN: 2016.

*forening*) following a discussion at the general meeting.<sup>38</sup> However, a few months later, in April 1843, the next general meeting voted to reintroduce the original name, *Det skandinaviske Selskab*.<sup>39</sup> This name endured for the remainder of the nineteenth century; only after 1905 did a renewed conflict regarding the name arise when the Swedish members left the association.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the Scandinavian Association in Hamburg continued to function as a reading society, but it was also a well-organized social club, known for its events, parties, and choral society – and from 1867, it included a separately organized mutual aid fund.

The literary dimension was prevalent in most of these associations, with the Scandinavian library among its main purposes and attractions. Most of the pan-Scandinavian associations abroad had access to a meeting hall of some kind – either their own clubhouse or hired premises, and when this was not possible, an arrangement with a local restaurant or tavern where members could meet on a regular basis to socialize and read newspapers from home. On the premises of the association, at the reading table or in a separate reading room, books, journals, and newspapers were displayed and available for members and visitors to peruse.

The Norwegian author Camilla Collett participated at the 1873 founding meeting of the Scandinavian Association in Munich, formed by 16 Scandinavians, many of them artists. In her speech for the occasion, she underlined the significance of a common home abroad

[...] a regular meeting place where one can find a pleasant homey atmosphere, and where, in addition to social amusements, one also has access to reading, especially of books and newspapers from home, to avoid the feeling of being detached from the distant home, instead continuously remaining in contact with it.<sup>40</sup>

38 *Aalborg Stiftstidende og Adresse-Avis*, 27 January 1843.

39 *Love for det skandinaviske Selskab i Hamburg* [...], 1870.

40 »[...] et fast Samhugssted hvor man kan finde lidt hjemlig Hygge, og hvor man foruden den lettere selskabelige Adspredelse, tillige har Adgang til Læsning, særlig da af Hjemmets Bøger og Blade, saaledes at man ikke følte sig ganske løsrevet fra dette fjerne Hjem, men stadig sat i Rapport til det«. »Et interessant manuskript. Brudstykke af en Tale af Camilla Collett holdt i et Møde til dannelsen af den Skandinaviske Forening i München i 1873. (Efter Forfatterindens Manuskript ved C.C.)« (*Norges Kvinder*, 17 November 1931).

In developing their libraries, the associations abroad collaborated with organizations, publishers, and bookstores in their home countries. In periods with pan-Scandinavian associations within the Scandinavian region, especially during the late 1840s and early '50s, associations abroad were provided with books, journals, and newspapers collected and distributed by the ›mother‹ associations in Copenhagen and Uppsala.

The networking correspondence between the associations reveals the perceived role of literature in this transnational nation-building project.<sup>41</sup> Correspondence in the archives in Copenhagen and Uppsala reveals the exchange of books and periodicals between the Scandinavian associations there and similar ones in Rome, Bordeaux, Paris, Hamburg, Zurich, London, and New York in the 1840s and '50s.<sup>42</sup> Letters from associations abroad were regularly read aloud during the meetings. Accounts of meetings, including reports from abroad, were subsequently published in Scandinavian newspapers. The letters contained information about associational initiatives and activities in a particular city, often followed by a request of Scandinavian literature and journals for citizens abroad. Scandinavian newspapers continued to report on pan-Scandinavian associations abroad.

The exchange of books and ideas is also clearly illustrated in the correspondence between the Scandinavian Association founded in Zurich in 1845 and the one in Uppsala. In an 1847 letter from Uppsala to Zurich, the rise of Scandinavian associations is seen in the context of growing sympathies among people of neighboring cultures, replacing the hostility of earlier times.<sup>43</sup> Danes, Norwegians, and Swedes abroad had previously engaged with one another as foreigners without common interests. The letter highlights how this suddenly changed. The enthusiastic response to »Scandinavian brothers!« (»Skandinaviska bröder!«) from the association in Zurich, which begins by exclaiming that »unity is strength!« (»Enighed gör stærk!«), explicitly acknowledges the pan-Scandinavian movement

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41 See also HEMSTAD: 2021.

42 Fr. Barfods papirer, Ny Kgl. Samling 1819, 2°, II b, Royal Library, Copenhagen.

43 »De Skandinaviska Sällskaperna äro en frukt af de sympatier, som vår tid framkallat mellan beslägtade folk.« Letter from the Scandinavian Association in Uppsala to the Scandinavian Association in Zurich, 18 April 1847 [transcript]. (Bref till Skandinaviska Sällskapet åren 1843–1849 (U 1751 d), Uppsala University Library).

back home as a source of inspiration.<sup>44</sup> Reconciliation among Scandinavians has also taken place in foreign countries, inspired by the notion of ›brotherhood‹ within the Scandinavian region:

The son of Scandinavia no longer wanders like a stranger, as soon as he leaves the borders of his mother tongue, he finds friends, he finds brothers, who welcome him in foreign countries in his own language.<sup>45</sup>

In 1845, the newly-founded, 20-member Scandinavian Association in Zurich announced its establishment in a letter to the Copenhagen Association. The letter was read aloud at the associational meeting in Copenhagen, with the newly established association abroad revealingly presented as »The Zurich branch« (»Filiale i Zürich«).<sup>46</sup>

The Scandinavian associations in Copenhagen and Uppsala were dissolved in the 1850s.<sup>47</sup> Similar associations with pan-Scandinavian profiles and visions were founded in 1864 – in Norway as well – and again around 1900, but they did not put the same effort into disseminating literature abroad.<sup>48</sup> Other kinds of contacts took precedence for the associations abroad. Newspapers from home, central for pan-Scandinavian associations abroad, could be donated by editors or publishers, or subscriptions gifted by wealthy members or groups of members. Publishers or members, including ›corresponding members‹, who continued to support their association as alumni members after their return home, also donated books and established links to local newspaper publishers, securing the subscription and distribution of newspapers.

### Clauses on Literature

The central role of Scandinavian literature is reflected in the statutes of pan-Scandinavian associations abroad. The basic statutes of associations in Hamburg, Berlin, Zurich, Vienna, and Munich clearly illustrate this

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44 Letter from the Scandinavian Association in Uppsala to the Scandinavian Association in Zurich, without date. (Ibid.)

45 »Ei vandrer Skandinaviens Søn meer som en Fremdling, saasart han forlader Grændserne af sit Mødrene Sprog, han finder Venner, han finder Brødre, som i hans Tungemaal byder ham velkommen paa fremmed Grund«. (Ibid.)

46 »Köpenhamn«, *Studentbladet*, 20–21, 28 March 1845. The Uppsala newspaper referred to the Danish pro-Scandinavian newspaper *Fædrelandet*.

47 On the contact and exchange of books, see HEMSTAD: 2021.

48 Idem: 2008.

point. The acquisition of literature and newspapers is usually incorporated in the first clause, which states the purposes of the association.

*Love for det skandinaviske Selskab i Hamburg og dets Hjælpefond* [Statutes of the Scandinavian Association in Hamburg and its Relief Fund], dated 1869, are probably the oldest existing statutes of the Hamburg association. The association's main purposes are stated in the first, rather long clause, which underlines its social and literary mandates in addition to offering mutual support.<sup>49</sup>

The purpose of the association is to *promote social exchange* between Norwegians, Swedes, Finns, Danes, and Schleswigians living here, *to make Scandinavian literature available to them, to provide visitors with the convenience and usefulness of being introduced to a circle of fellow citizens, to guide members and newly arrived Scandinavians*, as far as it is desired and the administration manages, and to *support the needy* from Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, in accordance with the bylaws of the relief fund.<sup>50</sup>

This was the third revision of the original 1843 statute. It is difficult to tell if the sentence about Scandinavian literature was there from the beginning or is a later amendment. The Schleswigians (Danes living south of the German-Danish border after the 1864 war) were in all likelihood added in the 1869 version, as was the last section on support of the needy, since the relief fund was established in 1867.

A similar sentence, which includes Scandinavian literature and newspapers in the first main clause, is found in the revised statutes of 1873 of the Scandinavian Association in Berlin. *Den skandinaviske Forening i Berlin*, founded in 1856 by the manufacturer Carl Ramström with around 50 members, published its first statutes in 1858 in both Swedish and Danish. The association's stated purpose was to connect Danes, Norwegians, and Swedes living in Berlin for mutual entertainment and support, as well

49 *Love for det skandinaviske Selskab i Hamburg* [...]: 1870. The original statutes were adopted at the general meeting on 2 April 1843, and then revised several times, in 1849, 1862, 1869, 1875, 1882, and 1891.

50 »Selskabets Formaal ere at fremme det selskabelige Samkvem imellem her boende Normænd, Svenske, Finlændere, Danske og Slesvigere, gjøre skandinavisk Literatur tilgjængelig for dem, yde Tilreisende Behageligheden og Nyttens af at indføres i en Kreds af Landsmænd, vejlede Medlemmer og nyankomne Skandinaver, saavidt det ønskes og Bestyrelsen formaar, og understøtte Trængende fra Norge, Sverige og Danmark, overensstemmende med Lovene for Hjælpefondet.« (Ibid., § 1). The highlighted passages were printed in bold but have been converted into italics for this chapter.

as continuous connections to the home countries.<sup>51</sup> Interestingly, the 1873 statutes include the library and journals in its main purpose. This amendment probably reflects higher ambitions regarding the library and defines the library and Scandinavian print media as the means, alongside sociability, to promote Scandinavian cohesion:

§ 1. The purpose of the association is, by regular social gatherings, library, and periodicals [newspapers and journals], to form a tie between Scandinavians living here, as well as to support fellow citizens in need through the relief fund founded for that purpose.<sup>52</sup>

By 1875, the number of members in Berlin had risen to nearly 160, in addition to corresponding members in Scandinavian cities and pan-Scandinavian associations in Paris, Vienna, Newcastle-on-Tyne, and Hamburg.<sup>53</sup> Among the associational attractions there was also a choral society.

In Vienna, as we have seen, the acquisition of Scandinavian newspapers was also included in the first clause of the Scandinavian Association established there in 1870:

The purpose of the association, by frequent social gatherings, is to provide a heartfelt and lively exchange between Scandinavians in Vienna. It is furthermore the purpose of the association: a. to form a singing society, as soon as the necessary leadership and forces allow for it, b. [to facilitate] the acquisition of Scandinavian newspapers, c. to support needy Scandinavians.<sup>54</sup>

The subscription of newspapers and the improvement of the library were also included in the first clause of the statutes of *Skandinavisk Forening i München* [Scandinavian Association in Munich], established in 1874. In a Swedish version dated 1892, the purpose is defined as social and literary,

51 »Den skandinaviske Forening i Berlin har til Formaal at danne et Forbindelsesmiddel imellem herværende Danske, Norske og Svenske, til gjensidig Underholdning, til gjensidig Understøttelse og til stadig Sammenknytning med Hjemlandene.« (*Love for den Skandinaviske Forening, Berlin* [...], [1858], § 1).

52 »Foreningens formål er, ved regelmæssige selskabelige sammenkomster, bibliothek og blad-literatur at danne et binde-middel mellem her sig opholdende Skandinaver, samt at understøtte trængende landsmænd af en dertil dannet hjælpe-kasse.« (*Love for den Skandinaviske Forening i Berlin* [...], 1874, § 1. Also published in a Swedish version.).

53 *Den skandinaviske Forening i Berlin* [...], 1875.

54 »Foreningen har til Formaal, ved hyppige selskabelige Sammenkomster at tilveiebringe et inderligt og livligt Samkvem mellem Skandinaver i Wien. Det er tillige Foreningens Formaal: a. At danne en Sangforening, saasart den fornødne Ledelse og Kræfter dertil findes. b. Anskaffelsen af skandinaviske Blade. c. Efter Evne at understøtte trængende Skandinaver.« (*Love for den skandinaviske Forening i Wien*: [undated], § 1).

and, as we have seen above, these aspects are seen as interconnected – newspapers and the library provide the means to improve sociability and cohesion among Scandinavians:

To promote the social interaction between every Scandinavian. For this purpose, a daily newspaper is held from each of the Scandinavian kingdoms, and social amusements are organized for members, while the library is continuously improved.<sup>55</sup>

By centering sociability and literature, pan-Scandinavian associations abroad arguably contributed to facilitating and fostering Scandinavian sentiments among the numerous Scandinavians travelling to Europe, as well as among immigrants in America or in other countries. As a Scandinavian home abroad, the availability of newspapers, journals, and books from each of the three Scandinavian countries was vital. The numerous discussions around the reading tables must have been stimulating and truly transnational, constituting tiny Scandinavian public spheres abroad as minor nodes in an expanding Scandinavian book market – maybe even a brief fulfillment of the pan-Scandinavian idea. As the statutes indicate, the availability and reading of Scandinavian publications were seen as a means to promote Scandinavian cohesion. At least for a brief period during the last half of the nineteenth century, pan-Scandinavian associations abroad may have had some success in furthering this goal.

### Books and Newspapers for Members

Everyday tasks at the Scandinavian libraries abroad were carried out by an elected librarian. The librarian was usually a member of the board, and the rules for lending books and other regulations pertaining to the book collections were included in the statutes. One such task was to keep record of the books and periodicals and update the catalogue. The size of these Scandinavian libraries abroad differed noticeably, from two to three hundred volumes to several thousand in the most comprehensive of them: the Scandinavian book collection at the Rome association, proba-

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55 »Att befrämja det sällskapliga umgänget mellan hvarje skandinav. För detta ändamål hålles ett dagblad från hvart og ett af de skandinaviska rikena, och afhållas sällskapliga förnöjelser för medlemmarne, hvarjämte biblioteket oafbrutet förbättras.« (*Stadgar för Skandinaviska Föreningen i München*, 1892, § 1).



bly the only association that received annual financial support from the Scandinavian governments.<sup>56</sup>

Among the wealthiest of the pan-Scandinavian associations abroad, the Scandinavian Association in Hamburg, by the late 1870s, offered its approximately 300 members and occasional visitors no less than 45 newspapers and journals in the reading room: 30 Danish (including several local newspapers), five Norwegian, six Swedish, and four German. Furthermore, there were 1,425 volumes, including 813 books in Danish and Norwegian, 272 in Swedish, 269 in German, 43 in other languages, and 28 handbooks.<sup>57</sup> Some years later, in 1883, the library contained 2,000 volumes with 55 newspapers and journals available at the reading table.<sup>58</sup>

In 1877, seemingly without any reference to or knowledge of the conflict regarding the original name, the Scandinavian Association in Hamburg founded a reading circle among its members called *Nordisk Læseselskab* [Nordic Reading Society]. The purpose was to make new Nordic literature – and possibly German literature – available to members. In 1878, eleven journals (eight Scandinavian, three German) and 50 books purchased by the reading society were added to the Scandinavian Library.

The Scandinavian library in Zurich consisted of 700 volumes by 1905. An account from that year states the importance of this collection:

They are of great benefit to the members; especially during the winter they are used extensively and provide a pleasant shortening of the long winter evening. Furthermore, the association keeps several Scandinavian daily and weekly papers, so that the members can keep up to date at all times about what is going on in their home countries.<sup>59</sup>

The library of the Scandinavian Association in Vienna consisted of around 500 volumes. Most of these books were Norwegian, according to a newspaper report.<sup>60</sup> The reason for this rather rare example – usually most books in these foreign collections were Danish and Swedish – was

56 HEMSTAD: 2010a.

57 *Beretning for Aaret* [...], 1875; *Beretning for Tiden* [...], 1876.

58 »Det skandinaviske Selskab i Hamburg«, *Dagbladet*, 22 July 1884. The report was based on the account for 1883.

59 »De er Medlemmerne til stor Nytte, navnlig om Vinteren benyttes de i rigeste Omfang og er en behagelig Forkortelse af de lange Vinteraftener. Desuden holder Foreningen flere skandinaviske Dag- og Ugeblade, saa at Medlemmerne til enhver Tid kan holde sig a-jour med, hvad der foregaar i Hjemlandene.« (Ibid.).

60 »Skandinaverne i Wien«, *Dagbladet*, 20 September 1888.

that the Norwegian publishing houses Cammermeyer and P.T. Malling had donated these books as gifts to the association. Some Danish and Swedish publicists donated books as well. Additionally, the association in Vienna could offer its members and visitors six different newspapers from Norway, Denmark, and Sweden.<sup>61</sup>

In 1890, the Munich Association, of around 40 members, held 325 volumes, of which 140 had been donated from the city's earlier *Kunstnerforening* [Artists' Association].<sup>62</sup>

One of the few surviving library catalogues is that of the Scandinavian library in Berlin, printed in 1877.<sup>63</sup> Together with sporadically published annual accounts, it gives an impression of collection and acquisition practices. Among the 394 volumes listed, 171 were Danish, 161 Swedish, 47 German, and only 15 Norwegian – nine of them Kristoffer Janson publications donated by the bookseller and publisher Edvard B. Giertsen in Bergen.<sup>64</sup> Other recent gifts listed in the accounts were from the publisher Gustaf Laurin in Stockholm and the bookseller A.P. Brydolf in Örebro, both honorary members. Furthermore, eleven newspapers and journals were available to members: three Danish, four Swedish, and four Norwegian. Three were donated by the editor or publisher,<sup>65</sup> two were gifts from members,<sup>66</sup> and the rest were paid for by the association.<sup>67</sup> The account of the budget in 1875 shows that out of 578 marks, 149 were allocated for newspapers. Expenses for celebrations – but also for paper, writing material, and bookbinding – amounted to 356 marks.<sup>68</sup> The budget thus reflected the association's main purposes – sociability and literature.

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61 The newspapers were: *Verdens Gang*, *Dagens Nyheter*, *Politiken*, (Danske) *Nationaltidende*, *Punsch* and *Socialdemokraten*. The association only had to pay the postage costs of these papers. (Ibid.).

62 *Skandinaviske Forening i München* [...], [1890].

63 *Catalog over Skandinaviske Foreningens Bogsamling*, 1877.

64 Ibid.

65 *Dagstelegrafen*, *Fäderneslandet* and *Dagens Nyheter*.

66 *Fädrelandet* and *Morgenbladet*.

67 *Illustreret Tidende*, *Aftonbladet*, *Sydsvenska Dagbladet* *Snellposten*, *Aftenbladet*, *Bergensposten* and *Ny Illustreret Tidende*.

68 *Den skandinaviske Forening i Berlin* [...], 1875; *Skandinaviska Föreningens, i Berlin, årsberättelse* [...], 1876.

### The Rise and Fall of Scandinavian Unification Abroad

As we have seen, the pan-Scandinavian associations abroad provided a sense of home in foreign countries – a minor, ›remote Scandinavia‹. In general, the associations used ›Scandinavian‹ as a conventional term denoting newspapers and literature from Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. These countries were usually referred to as the home countries – in the plural – but sometimes there is mention of only one homeland – (the great) Scandinavia. The membership was usually open for »every Scandinavian« (»enhver Skandinav«), seen as fellow citizens. However, in mid-nineteenth-century Scandinavian countries, these terms were not self-evident. In a Norwegian context, they could even be contested as signs of Swedish or Danish expansionist endeavours.<sup>69</sup> Used by pan-Scandinavian activists within the Scandinavian region, they certainly had an ideological dimension – ›Scandinavians‹ were those supporting the idea of Scandinavian unity – one way or another. From the perspective of distant Scandinavian diaspora communities, the similarities between Scandinavians were more apparent and obvious, and reasons for collaboration were manifold. The idea and practice of actually establishing common Scandinavian associations abroad reflected the pan-Scandinavian movement and its ideas, and are thus part of a broader current that emerged in the mid-nineteenth century but waned around the turn of the century.

Although political discussions were forbidden in these associations, pan-Scandinavian statements were not unusual. Innumerable toasts, songs, and speeches that took place during social gatherings are testimony of Scandinavian sentiments and sympathies. Sometimes these kinds of expressions also found their way into printed accounts. In 1890, the Scandinavian Association in Munich published a report on its activities in order to raise awareness about the usefulness of such associations during an era of increasing travel. Pan-Scandinavian ambition and the belief in »one nationality« – as seen in the 1848 Scandinavian associations encyclopedia entry – is explicitly stated:

The activity in our association continuously animates the feeling among the members, that we, Norwegians, Swedes, and Danes, constitute one nationality, and that this word really becomes truth: »the brethren of the North«.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>69</sup> HEMSTAD: 2018.

<sup>70</sup> »Virksomheden i vor Forening gaar stadig hen til at levendegjøre den Følelse hos Medlemmerne, at vi, Nordmænd, Svenske og Danske, udgjøre én Nationalitet, og at

In 1905, at a time of growing national tensions, the Scandinavian Association in Zurich expressed a similar sentiment that recalled the old pan-Scandinavian motto »unity is strength« – the same motto, as we have seen, used in the mid-1840s in the correspondence between Zurich and the mother association in Uppsala. Underlining the role of the association, both in the present and future, as a home for travelling Scandinavians, the statement read: »Let us always keep together and stand by each other, remembering that the well-known phrase also applies to Scandinavians abroad: Unity is strength!«<sup>71</sup>

The publishing of annual reports, news, travel letters, reports from Christmas parties, and notices on pan-Scandinavian associations abroad in Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish newspapers reveals an enduring interest for these diaspora associations in the Scandinavian public sphere at home. At the end of the nineteenth century, headlines like »Scandinavian associations abroad« and »Scandinavians abroad« were established terms in newspapers, journals, and magazines in all three countries, reporting news from pan-Scandinavian associational life abroad. Thus, a Scandinavian public sphere arguably stretched across the Scandinavian countries and to an even broader pan-Scandinavian ›community‹ beyond.

This public interest literally culminated with the dissolution of the Swedish-Norwegian union in 1905. In the Swedish conservative press, pan-Scandinavian associations abroad were strongly criticized and condemned as the last vestige or stronghold of the no longer desired idea of ›Scandinavianism‹. These accusations participated in, and mirrored, national conflicts on the Scandinavian Peninsula. The renewed enthusiasm in Scandinavian cooperation termed ›neo-Scandinavianism‹ (›Nyskandinavisme‹) from 1899 quickly iced over, like a cold Nordic winter, both within and beyond Scandinavian borders.<sup>72</sup>

Thus, the prominent rise of pan-Scandinavian associations abroad was followed by a sharp decline due to the dissolution of the Swedish-Norwegian union. Pan-Scandinavian projects, stances, and practices abroad were rejected in favour of national diasporic ones. Most of the

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dette Ord virkelig bliver Sandhet: ›Broderfolkene i Nord‹.« (*Skandinaviske Forening i München* [...], [1890]).

71 »[...] lad os altid holde sammen og staa hverandre bi, erindrende, at ogsaa for Skandinaver i Udlandet gælder den kendte Sætning: *Enighed gør stærk!*« (*Skandinavisk Forening Zürich* [...], 1905).

72 HEMSTAD: 2008.

established pan-Scandinavian associations, both within and beyond Scandinavian countries, were dissolved after 1905. The national disagreement on the Scandinavian Peninsula leading up to the dissolution of the union in 1905, and the ›Nordic winter‹ that followed, also played out among Scandinavians abroad. They were no longer primarily Scandinavians – but Swedes, Danes, and Norwegians. National associations superseded the pan-Scandinavian ones in 1905 and the years that followed.

This crisis hit the Scandinavian Association in Berlin, dissolved in 1906 by Swedish initiative. The oldest pan-Scandinavian association, in Hamburg, found itself in the middle of a national storm in 1905. At its general meeting in early 1906, Swedish members argued that ›Scandinavianism is dead – *completely and irrecoverably dead*!‹,<sup>73</sup> that the association must therefore be dissolved and the assets owned by the association – including the mutual aid fund – be shared among the three national groups.<sup>74</sup> A majority of Danes and Norwegians rejected this claim and continued – unfairly in the eyes of the Swedes – under the same name until 1912, when the remaining Norwegians finally left the association, so that it became a purely Danish one.<sup>75</sup>

In conclusion, an organizational Scandinavianism abroad was widespread during the second half of the nineteenth century through the formation of numerous pan-Scandinavian associations in Europe as well as around the world. Although centered on sociability and literature, most of these associations were dissolved due to the political-national tensions at home leading up to the dissolution of the Swedish-Norwegian union in 1905. In spite of this abrupt closure, some of these networks, friendships, contacts, and experiences may have constituted a foundation for Nordic cooperation and rapprochement, based on pragmatism rather than sentiments, at home and abroad, well into the twentieth century and after. The place of sociability and literature in this broader picture has yet to be fully explored.

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73 »Skandinavismen är död – *fullkomligt och ohjälpligt död!*« (»Dansk-norsk tvångsskandinavism«, *Norrköpings Tidningar*, 9 March 1906).

74 Ibid.

75 HENNINGSEN: 1942.

### Epilogue: Books from Bergen with Love

From the early twentieth century, national umbrella organizations in each of the Scandinavian countries coordinated the network of what had become national associations abroad – sending national literature and lecturers. Most of the old established pan-Scandinavian associations abroad had been dissolved, with the association in Rome as the most important exception. However, closer examination reveals that it is a myth, disseminated in Rome – and in the Scandinavian press at home – that the association in Rome was the only one to survive the 1905 storm.

The Scandinavian sentiments highly praised in the context of many of these associations were seemingly halted. Nevertheless – as was the case after ›Scandinavianism‹ was declared dead and buried in 1864 – these ideas managed to live on. Among the groups still advocating Scandinavian cooperation and even ›Scandinavianism‹ after 1905 was the labour movement at home – and the associations for travelling journeymen abroad.<sup>76</sup> The pan-Scandinavian umbrella organization, C.U.K., which had branches in the Scandinavian countries as well as in European cities such as Zurich, continued their activities. They provide an interesting epilogue to this history of the rise and fall of pan-Scandinavian associations abroad and the integrated role of literature.

The newly formed local Bergen branch of C.U.K. initiated a public collection of ›Scandinavian literature‹ in 1922, to be distributed to the pan-Scandinavian associations abroad, especially in southern Europe. This initiative illustrates that dissemination of Scandinavian literature continued to a certain extent in the interwar period. Although the arguments used were seemingly anachronistic, they underline a main point discussed earlier in this chapter.

The initiative originally came from the main board of C.U.K., as stated in the public appeal published in a newspaper in Bergen on Norway's western coast. The local branch asked for bound or unbound books, especially from the last 20 years, which the associations abroad did not possess. The immediate background of this collection of Scandinavian literature for citizens abroad was wartime deprivation. Members, mainly workers, had been hit hard, and the associations, especially in Germany, could not afford to extend and take care of the library.

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<sup>76</sup> HEMSTAD: 2010b, 179–193.

The associations within C.U.K. strived to maintain familial feelings among Scandinavians abroad – a project deeply rooted, as we have seen, in the pan-Scandinavian nineteenth-century project. The purposes stated in the appeal echo the literary pan-Scandinavian ambitions that had to give way to more national diasporic identities and ideas. Besides supporting members' pecuniary needs, during travels and in case of unemployment or sickness, the aim of the pan-Scandinavian associations was no less than to »maintain Scandinavianism in foreign countries through Scandinavian literature and subscriptions to Scandinavian newspapers«. <sup>77</sup>

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