

Nordic Media Histories of Propaganda and Persuasion

Edited by Fredrik Norén
Emil Stjernholm · C. Claire Thomson

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“This rich and persuasive book argues that “the Nordic model” was forged not only through politics and economic policy, but also by media practices that sought to inform and persuade citizens at home and influence audiences abroad. Yet, as the book’s fascinating studies show, the Nordic region’s media histories cannot be understood in isolation. Moving beyond the typical focus on one country or one media form, this book explores transnational entanglements within and beyond the states of the Nordic region, as well as the entangled relations between film, radio, television, information policy, and cultural diplomacy programs. The result is a wide-ranging and methodologically innovative collection that offers fresh perspectives on the intersection between media, political power and global cultural relations in the twentieth century, in the Nordic region and beyond.”

—Benjamin G. Martin, Senior Lecturer and Associate Professor in the
Department of History of Science and Ideas, Uppsala University, Sweden

“This rich and accessible book makes a novel contribution to Media History by showing how propaganda and persuasion were key to constructing the Nordic Model. Using a theoretically inclusive and empirically situated approach, it examines a broad range of institutions and communications and illuminates the entanglement of things, ideas and actors across national borders during the Nordic welfare epoch. An essential read for scholars and students wanting to deepen their knowledge of propaganda in the welfare state.”

—Mats Hyvönen, Professor in Media and Communications, *Uppsala University, Sweden*

“Nordic Media Histories of Propaganda and Persuasion is a highly readable and original contribution to the voluminous literature on Nordic politics and culture. Illuminating case histories demonstrate how individuals and organizations cooperated to create what has become known as the Nordic model, not primarily through policy formation but through communication, propaganda and persuasion. The book eloquently demonstrates why, how, when, and by whom the Nordic model brand was curated.”

—Trine Syvertsen, Professor in Media and Communication,
University of Oslo, Norway

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PREFACE

The idea of this book emerged from the experiences gained from working with a Swedish-language volume that two of us (Fredrik Norén and Emil Stjernholm) edited—*Efterkrigstidens samhällskontakter*, published with Mediehistoriskt arkiv in 2019—about propaganda and information-related practices and debates during the post-war era in Sweden. Questions regarding differences and similarities, as well as collaborations between the Swedish case and other countries, simply became inevitable. In late 2019, Norén and Stjernholm teamed up with C. Claire Thomson and set out to address these questions by arranging a symposium focusing on transnational and comparative media research on propaganda and information in the Nordic countries between 1945 and 1990. This event took place on 12–14 August 2020 at the Old Bishop’s House in Lund. At the symposium, an interdisciplinary group of some 30 scholars met—in person and virtually—to present and discuss research on the topic. The keynote speakers during this symposium, Nicholas J. Cull (University of Southern California) and Benjamin G. Martin (Uppsala University), deserve a special mention in this context.

Based on the discussions in Lund, the theme of the present book was modified: the period was widened (from the 1930s to the 1980s), and the focus was narrowed to transnational rather than comparative perspectives. Some presenters at the symposium joined the book project and others got involved later. At two workshops during 2021, the authors met and discussed each other’s drafts. We are truly grateful for the authors’ engagement during the whole writing process and for the valuable feedback concerning the theme of the book and its individual parts. In particular,

we would like to thank the two external readers during our second workshop in London, Nicholas J. Cull and Peter Stadius (University of Helsinki), for their feedback and support, and for writing Afterwords to this volume.

Additionally, we would like to thank the foundations: Helge Ax:son Johnsons stiftelse, Karl Staaffs fond, Letterstedska stiftelsen, Magnus Bergvalls stiftelse, Riksbankens Jubileumsfond, Sven och Dagmar Saléns stiftelse, Åke Wibergs stiftelse and Erik Philip-Sörensens stiftelse for their generous contributions, which made it possible to arrange the symposium in August 2020 and the two follow-up workshops in 2021. We are also grateful to the Lund University Book Fund for covering the Open Access fee and thereby making the entire volume available to access and download via the Palgrave Macmillan website. Finally, we thank Mala Sanghera-Warren, Imogen Higgins and Emily Wood at Palgrave Macmillan for their interest in the project and their support and professional assistance in all of its phases.

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PART I

Introduction



Nordic Media Histories of Propaganda and Persuasion: An Introduction

Fredrik Norén, Emil Stjernholm, and C. Claire Thomson

Somethin' about Scandinavia (Bent H. Barfod) is the title of a short animated film made in Denmark in 1956 to explain economic and cultural cooperation in the Nordic region. Narrated from the perspective of a young boy, the film is ostensibly for children, but in its use of animation to render abstract political concepts through visual metaphor and a rich colour palette, it also functioned as a handy primer for audiences of all ages who wanted to understand how it could be that, as the voiceover concludes, “long ago, we were fighting against each other, but now, the Scandinavian countries are working together”. The film opens with five cartoon Vikings sporting the iconic helmets and *lur*-horns; working

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together, they are able to lift a giant rock, and to tear down walls between their respective fortresses to exchange goods. Later, a Danish man is pictured looking for factory work. Turned away in his home country, he is able to travel to Norway to find employment. He takes advantage of his new, mountainous surroundings to go skiing and breaks his leg. But no matter, explains the boy narrator: the man can use his national health insurance here too and can lie in his modern hospital bed, tended to by a Norwegian nurse, and “think about all these Scandinavian things”.¹

This is merely one example of how media were used in the mid-twentieth century to “enlighten”, “inform” and “persuade”—the nomenclature of communication activities was indeed vast and culturally specific—Nordic citizens of the benefits of political cooperation in their region. *Somethin’ about Scandinavia* also emphasizes the particularities of the individual nations; indeed, *Five Small Countries* was considered as an alternative title during the commissioning process.² Moreover, the production files show how fraught relations between the Nordic nations sometimes became during the decade that the Nordic Council (Nordiska rådet), established in 1952, was finding its feet. The labour mobility staged in the film was already a reality, but negotiations were ongoing about whether to develop a Nordic common market (a project which was eventually rendered irrelevant by the founding of the European Free Trade Association in 1960). These tensions did nothing to smooth the path of *Somethin’ about Scandinavia* as copies of the film travelled around the region. In Norway, the film was declared ineligible for the usual tax rebate for educational films.³ In Iceland, no cinemas were willing to screen it.⁴ And in Sweden, a row erupted between the Danish Embassy—which was screening the film for free in Stockholm—and the CEO of the dominant film company Svensk Filmindustri, Anders Dymling. His fury at the Danish diplomats undercutting the Swedish-dubbed version he had funded was visible in the force with which he typed a letter of protest to the distributor Statens Filmcentral about this “illegal competition”: the umlauts on the Swedish letters tore through the flimsy office paper.⁵ Even the English title of the film reveals an ambiguity which still obtains today in discourse about this region: what is referred to in the title and voiceover for the sake of the anglophone market as “Scandinavia” (technically only Denmark, Norway and Sweden) is in fact more correctly called Norden, or the Nordic region (encompassing Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Iceland, and their semi-autonomous territories and islands including Greenland, the Faroes, the Åland islands and Svalbard) (Fig. 1).

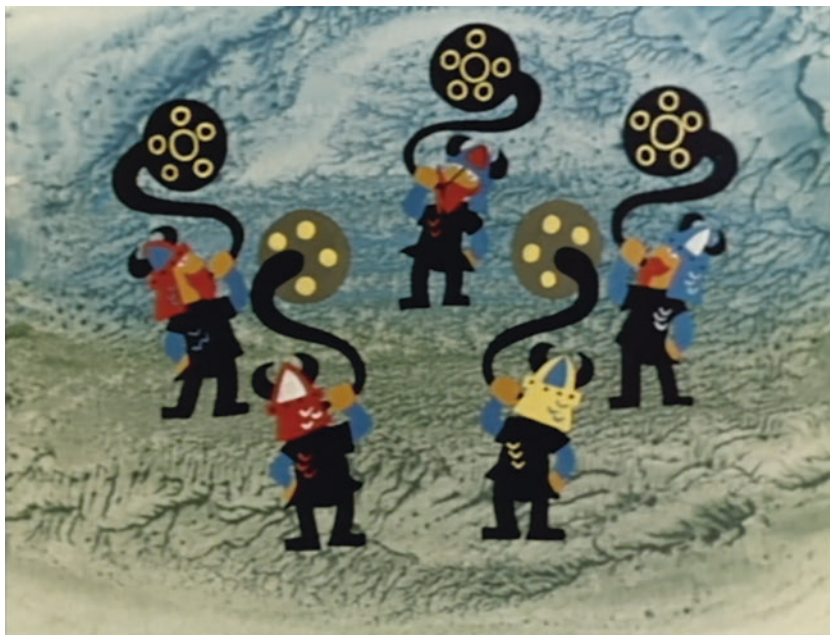


Fig. 1 Nordic Vikings with helmets and *lur*-horns in *Somethin' about Scandinavia*. Danish Film Institute. Framegrab

This single anecdote encompasses many things that travelled. The distribution ledgers record that *Somethin' about Scandinavia* had been seen by 280,337 cinema-goers by 1964 and remained available for hire until 1968 in 16 mm and 35 mm versions, which were loaned out 1500 times by Statens Filmcentral.⁶ Along with the film reels, the ideas, images and sounds instantiated in the film moved out into the world in less tangible and traceable ways. The paper trail left by the film's production testifies to innumerable movements of letters, documents, capital and the materials that constitute the medium-specificity of film—but also to the mobility of those people and organizations associated with the film. Together, all this demonstrates how ongoing negotiations of Nordic identities and politics, as well as the stances and positionings of individual countries and organizations, are shaped by, and indeed dependent on, the transnational movement of media, people and things.

Media connections—be they between actors, institutions and countries, or between technology, content and ideas—are always embedded in

their own specific historical conditions. To establish valuable knowledge about the past, and by extension enhance the understanding of our present time, we need to examine these media connections empirically. This leads us to what *Nordic Media Histories of Propaganda and Persuasion* aims to unpack. The book's guiding research question is as follows: how were propaganda and persuasion practices, as well as their associated ideas and the results they generated, shaped and reshaped by transnational entanglements within the Nordic region and beyond? The period in focus centres on what is often described as the classic Nordic welfare epoch, between roughly the 1930s and the 1980s.

Conceptually, the book operates on two levels. On the one hand, the book draws on Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell's inclusive definition of propaganda as "the deliberate, systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behavior to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist".⁷ Moreover, the book draws on their definition of the closely related term persuasion: as a complex, continuing and reciprocal process in which both parties are dependent on one another, a process that focuses both on influencing a given attitude or behaviour and on the co-creation of meaning.⁸ Just as important, on the other hand, is that the chapters work with an empirically situated approach to propaganda and persuasion. In practice, and drawing on the field of cultural historical media research,⁹ the different contributions highlight the communicative visions that the historical actors formulated, the concepts they used to describe these activities and the shifting practices associated with these visions and concepts. These two levels, the theoretical and the empirical, should work together to deepen our understanding of the past.

The Nordic welfare epoch, and its associated epithet the "Nordic Model", is known for the expansion of the state, influential social and educational reforms, and strong international and environmental engagement.¹⁰ Less recognized, however, is the mobilization of different media that were part of shaping these societal processes during this period.¹¹ Simply put: the so-called Nordic Model was built on propaganda and persuasion just as much as it was built on governance, social security and economic productivity. The expansion of the welfare state, with an increasing number of reforms, needed an inwardly directed media apparatus to generate informed citizens. Only then could the different social, educational and cultural programmes be implemented efficiently and effectively. At the same time, these national projects also became part of countries'

national branding and cultural diplomacy abroad. By further adopting a transnational media historical approach, this present volume offers a different perspective to much scholarly work in the same field, primarily in three interconnected respects.

First of all, the transnational emphasis of this volume focuses not only on the exchange and flow of media representations but also on how visions, technologies and practices travelled across countries and regions. What we mean by “transnational”, and specifically in the Nordic region, requires a few words of explanation. Pierre-Yves Saunier has remarked that although the concept of transnational history is relatively new, there is nothing novel about transnational historiography as a practice: the study of cross-currents between nations can be traced back at least to the work of orientalists in the 1880s. With Saunier, we regard transnational history as a conglomeration of approaches that focus on “relations and formations, circulations and connections, between, across and through” nations and other taken-for-granted social entities.¹² The emphasis on the mobility of people, things and ideas in such definitions goes some way to explaining the distinction between transnational history, comparative history and global (or international) history. While transnational history does not ignore the importance of national units, comparative history tends to privilege national iterations of phenomena and compare them, without looking for the empirical connections and exchanges that might contribute to explaining similarities and differences. Global history, meanwhile, examines dynamics and developments that obtain on the global scale.¹³ Clearly, watertight distinctions between these forms of “relational”¹⁴ historiography are hard to sustain. As a point of principle, however, we are interested in “entanglements” of practices, technologies, artefacts and institutions, drawing on scholarship in *histoire croisée* or “entangled history”. This approach seeks out points of entanglement or crossing in time and space, examining the actors and circumstances of such interactions, the threads of which sometimes shoot off in unexpected directions, often implicating the researchers themselves in their encounters with archives or artefacts.¹⁵ As discussed below, *histoire croisée* has been influential in Nordic media history in recent years.

Within these paradigms of transnational or entangled historiography, the Nordic countries, by dint of their close cultural, historical and linguistic ties, evince particular iterations of transnational dynamics. Co-existing with each nation-state’s discourse of distinctiveness is a tradition of cooperation at the regional level. Formalized by the establishment of the

Nordic Council in 1952, Nordic cooperation had long-standing grassroots support, as evinced by the formation of national Nordic Associations (Foreningerne Norden) from 1919 onwards¹⁶ and, further back, the mid-nineteenth century pan-Scandinavianist movement.¹⁷ Thus, transnational connections in the Nordic context are often facilitated (or indeed hampered) by extant institutions, networks, affinities or disputes operating on the regional scale. Elsewhere, the Nordic countries tend to be imagined as a nebulous mass erroneously called “Scandinavia”. As Harald Gustafsson notes, Nordic history can be viewed from different perspectives: Norden as part of a broader Western European tradition; Norden as a distinct region within this European constellation; Norden as nations with specific histories; and lastly, Norden as a number of nations with internal regional differences and sometimes regions that cross national boundaries.¹⁸

Previous scholarship investigating the dynamics of national and regional identities amongst the Nordic countries—and the image of the Nordic countries abroad—has often focused on myth-making and imagology. Studies of myths and images of the Nordics have generally noted that the strong traditions of progressive politics, democracy, equality and prosperity in the region have tended to foster myth-making within and outside the region. For example, Kazimierz Musiał¹⁹ has persuasively shown that these two aspects—a progressive tradition and myth-making—are interdependent. Recent scholarship has sought to unpack these myths and demonstrate their operations.²⁰ Several Nordic works deal explicitly with the representation (“imagology”), images and branding of the Nordic region, such as Musiał (1998), Harvard and Stadius (2014), Jenny Andersson and Mary Hilson’s special issue on “Images of Sweden and the Nordic Countries” in the *Scandinavian Journal of History*, and the recent volume *The Making and Circulation of Nordic Models, Ideas and Images*.²¹ Our book also touches upon these dynamics, but puts more emphasis on strategic and hands-on constructions and usage of such myths, images and discourses in the form of propaganda and persuasion, broadly conceived, by following the historical actors from state and non-governmental institutions.

The second perspective, which also distinguishes this book, relates to the fact that the media history of the Nordic countries has primarily been written from national perspectives. Ambitious and empirical studies cover various aspects of the history of different mass media (press, radio and television) in the Nordic countries, yet often limit the scope, as Harvard and Stadius point out, to “single media in a single country”.²² Within the

field of media history, there has been a vibrant theoretical and methodological debate on the issue of national and mono-medial perspectives.²³ Media historians Marie Cronqvist and Christopher Hilgert draw on this debate when examining the concept of *entangled media histories*, which the authors argue can be used to further underline the importance of transnational and transmedial perspectives when writing media history.²⁴ Rather than single-medium studies, Cronqvist and Hilgert note, attention should be drawn to entanglements and “flows of content across different media products, formats, genres, channels or outlets in national or transnational environments”²⁵ This principle underlies our own approach in this volume. A key distinction between our book and the bulk of works on Nordic media culture is thus that emphasis is placed on transnational entanglements, rather than national case studies or comparative studies.²⁶ This approach allows us, through a range of empirical case studies, to critically reveal a broad range of institutions and actors engaged in communicative activities with various labels—“propaganda”, “education”, “public information”, “public relations” and so on—and to productively map how these engagements and results were constructed outside the bounds of isolated nations at different times in history.

Thirdly, this book foregrounds empirical and media-centric case studies, rather than chapters driven by top-down and grand theory approaches. By committing to following the historical actors and tracing their media-related practices and discussions, the book highlights the importance of not taking contemporary ideas and concepts for granted, for example regarding which media were more important (e.g. traditional mass media), and what the meaning of “propaganda” once and for all refers to (e.g. lies and confusion). Top-down models, which might aim to explain media-related historical change and phenomena, could shed light on individuals’ and organizations’ structural use of media and their strategic intent. However, such models also risk underestimating historical and regional differences that might be crucial in order to make sense of the local or context-specific conceptualization of various communication activities and the practices that were mobilized to persuade different publics.²⁷ These aspects are discussed in more depth in the following sections outlining the book’s cultural historical media research perspective, as well as its empirically situated approach to the study of propaganda and persuasion.

Guided by these three parameters—the focus on entanglement of things, ideas and actors rather than media representations; cross-border connections rather than national comparisons; and archival-driven media

history research rather than top-down models—the aim of this book is to contribute to pushing the boundaries of Nordic media historical scholarship, arguing for a more integrative approach that combines the theoretical and the empirical.

WHY THE NORDICS?

In terms of geographical focus, the case studies in this book find their centre of gravity in the Nordic region—particularly Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland—and trace the movement of ideas, documents, images, sounds, people and material goods related to the production, dissemination and perception of activities that can be broadly conceived as propaganda and persuasion. This focus is based on the fact that this region has for a long time—again quoting Harvard and Stadius—“existed as an empirically observable phenomenon, in the form of a set of widespread images and stereotypes, as well as embodied in institutions for Nordic cooperation”.²⁸ This should, however, not be understood as a natural and unproblematic arena for collaboration and exchange between the different countries.

While the Nordic region is to some extent defined as such by its long history of political cooperation, for example formally instantiated in the twentieth century by the establishment of the Nordic Council, internally the region comprises a patchwork of small nations and territories, the latter enjoying a range of degrees of self-rule. The respective national imaginations of these neighbours are fuelled in no small part by differences, perceived and actual, between them.²⁹ The cultural and political work of defining these differences and similarities can often be discerned in the traces left by processes of collaboration and negotiation (Fig. 2).

We could think of the different degrees of Nordic collaborativeness as a centripetal dynamic versus a centrifugal dynamic. The centripetal dynamic highlights a tendency towards integration, which some of the contributions in this collected volume demonstrate, for example Ruth Hemstad’s chapter on the attempts to promote Nordic collaboration in the 1930s, and Fredrik Norén’s chapter on the exchange of ideas and practices related to public information between the Nordic countries in the 1970s. Other case studies in the book have a more centrifugal dynamic, following entanglements between the Nordics and the world beyond. This characteristic points to the fact that cooperation within the Nordic region did not exclude collaborations and exchange with the rest of the



Fig. 2 A map of Norden from *Somethin' about Scandinavia*. The scale of the map is distorted in favour of the Nordic countries. Danish Film Institute. Framegrab

world. In these processes, we also witness the tension between the idea of the Nordics as a homogenous entity and their ability to act and stage themselves as discrete nation-states. This becomes visible in Emil Eiby Seidenfaden's chapter about Danish journalists in the UK during World War II, and in Elisabet Björklund's chapter on the circulation of anti-abortion propaganda between Sweden and the US. In our view, it would be problematic not to integrate both these dynamics in a book that centres on Nordic media history and transnational entanglements.

To unpack the point of the two dynamics, the centripetal versus the centrifugal, it is pertinent to consider how these are shaped by the *smallness* of the Nordic nations. The trope of the small Scandinavian nation was already in evidence in the 1956 film discussed above, but it has also emerged as a key theme in understanding Nordic exceptionalism in recent scholarship. We build on this notion here for four reasons, each of which is suggestive of crucial political and cultural particularities of the Nordics, and each further impacting the understanding of transnational media histories of propaganda and persuasion in the region.

Firstly, it has been argued that smaller, more homogeneous populations facilitate the construction of “‘total’, consensual national images” that are partly informed by awareness of foreign perceptions of the nation, which can be leveraged by states to engineer shifts in collective self-perception at home and coherent nation-branding abroad.³⁰ This tendency could thus generate attempts by the Nordic countries to shape and reshape their self-images—or defend the nation from foreign counter-images—and convey such messages, within and beyond the region, which in turn can activate various media entanglements across borders. When such actors, institutions and ideas are mobilized across borders, it can in turn generate collaborations, negotiations and potential conflicts. An example of this is discussed in Melina Antonia Buns and Dominic Hinde’s chapter, about how the Nordic countries collaborated to promote a so-called Nordic environmental model, highlighting various frictions surrounding such an undertaking.

Secondly, while in the twentieth century the interests and strategies of the Nordic nations converged as small nations on the world stage, a deeper historical perspective reveals more complex power relations. Miroslav Hroch’s typology of nations differentiates between larger “ruling nations” and “small nations”; the road to national self-determination for the latter, he argues, entailed the people rising up against not just the ruling class but also whichever “great nation” was oppressing them.³¹ In the Nordic context, Denmark and Sweden have historically played the role of “great powers” or, put differently, colonial oppressors of Norway, Finland, Iceland, Greenland, the Faroes and other regional territories, as well as colonies further afield. Norway, Finland and Iceland gained independence in 1905, 1917 and 1944, respectively, and pitted their national narratives against those of Denmark and Sweden, which in turn were rival regional powers and players in great power politics from the Middle Ages to the Napoleonic era.³² In our book, some chapters hint at this power dynamic, for example Lars Diulin’s chapter on Nordic collaborations to produce films about foreign aid.

A third reason for taking the smallness of the Nordic states seriously is that small nations observably do not function simply as scaled-down large nations. As many of our case studies show, the dynamics of civil society and government, not to mention the circulation of people, material goods and media objects, function in particular ways in a small population. In the Nordic context, distinctive factors might be said to include a high degree of collective socio-political trust, mass participation in civil society and

grassroots organizations, the role of cooperative traditions or the state churches. This tendency is, for example, visible in Björn Lundberg and David Larsson Heidenblad's chapter on a travelling environmental campaign, revealing the closely intertwined cooperation between various societal sectors. A similar observation has been explored by scholars working on a variety of aspects of small-nation cultures, with the caveat that it is difficult to differentiate between local peculiarities and genuinely generic functions of scale. Elsewhere, for example, Mette Hjort and Duncan Petrie propose that a comparative approach to the study of small-nation cinemas can identify which aspects of film policy and circulation of films are effects of or responses to scalar conditions.³³ They cite the sociologists of education Mark Bray and Steve Packer, who also assert the value of unpacking which aspects of small-nation governance might indicate a distinctive socio-political "ecology".³⁴ Our own book asks similar questions, tracing the specificities and peculiarities of how the tools of propaganda and persuasion are commissioned, designed, circulated and received within and between a constellation of small nations. For example, C. Claire Thomson's chapter on the role of the Carlsberg and Tuborg brewing companies in funding science and the arts in Denmark, and their pursuit of nation-branding abroad, is suggestive of such small-nation dynamics.

A fourth and related point is concerned with language. Any study of Nordic transnational media history must wrestle with the implications of the patchwork of languages in the region, given that many types of media feature at least some verbal or written content. The countries of the region share the condition that their national languages are understood by very few people outside the territories in question. This impacts media entanglements that stretch beyond the Nordics, necessitating the use of world languages, especially English and German, in international communications, trade and diplomacy. Less obvious to outsiders are the linguistic tensions internal to the region. Danish, Norwegian and Swedish, at least in their written forms, are in theory mutually comprehensible, and the policy of the Nordic Council has long been to promote language cooperation as a driver of cultural affinity and mobility of citizens.³⁵ In practice, Scandinavians today tend to find it easier to converse in English as a *lingua franca*, and translation of popular fiction and subtitling of films between the languages are common. That Finnish is a Uralic language and Icelandic derives from Old Norse complicates the ecology of languages in the region and stymies smooth communication, as do the many dialects and indigenous languages, not to mention Norway's alternative national language,

Nynorsk.³⁶ The issue of language within the Nordic region is also touched upon in Mari Pajala's chapter, regarding the difficulties surrounding Nordvision and the attempts to stimulate Nordic television exchange. In short, every act of intra-Nordic communication in our case studies is predicated on complex language politics and accommodations, which shape, and are shaped by, uneven dynamics of political power and cultural capital.

The regional scope of this book is, then, rather easy to delineate, but throws up a range of complexities regarding intra-regional relations. The temporal scope of the book was harder to determine; the transnational history of media in the region, after all, could be said to stretch back in time to, for instance, the earliest known runic carvings of 150 AD.³⁷ Equally, the digital turn and the proliferation of new media in the twenty-first century, and its impact on governance and popular culture, are being amply mapped by Nordic scholars.³⁸ The focus of our book is the role of media in a particular and formative period in Nordic history: the emergence and consolidation of what became popularly known as the Nordic Model, in the period stretching from the inter-war years to the welfare state's decline, or at least transformation, in the 1970s and 1980s.

The Nordic Model is an imprecise and contested term, but in a broad-brush sense it refers to "the similarities in social and political development in the Nordic countries, including, among other things, the stability of parliamentary democracy; the preference for consensual solutions to social conflicts, especially in the labour market; and the universal, tax-funded welfare state".³⁹ Our point of departure is that the development of this model and the dissemination of ideas about it domestically and internationally were also shaped by transnational deployment of media that was sometimes strategic and targeted, sometimes improvised and messy, but often distinctive. As mentioned previously, cultural and media policies have of course been explicitly recognized by scholars as levers and vehicles in the development of the Nordic "middle way" since its first articulations between the World Wars. One example is the scholarly attention to the notion of the media welfare state, emphasizing, among other things, a public service ideal embedded in a corporatist-oriented political system, shaped by media regulations and media subsidies.⁴⁰ However, and as stated before, this has most often been done from a national or comparative perspective, and not from a transnational horizon highlighting the entanglement of media, technologies, ideas, institutions and actors within the Nordics and beyond. Further, drawing on the field of

cultural historical media research, this book brings media to the foreground of analytical attention—another feature which distinguishes this volume from related scholarship. In the following, the break with a tradition of both mono-medial and national Nordic media history is introduced in more detail.

BREAKING WITH MONO-MEDIAL MEDIA HISTORY

During the twentieth century, mass media such as radio, television, film and the daily press became both an integral part of ordinary people's lives and important tools to reshape modern society. Traditionally, scholars of media history have had a tendency to study these traditional mass media, and their institutions, as isolated from each other. This is also true from a Nordic media history perspective. In the last decades, a number of books exploring the film, television and journalism cultures of the region as regional phenomena have emerged, also relating to the topic of propaganda and persuasion, but these tend to have a mono-medial focus and to be organized into national case studies, as noted previously.⁴¹

Our volume draws on the field of cultural historical media research, an interdisciplinary branch of study which has gained momentum over the past decades. Solveig Jülich, Patrik Lundell and Pelle Snickars define it as “a multidisciplinary research field that studies relationships between media forms, media use, discourses and cultural contexts from a historical perspective”.⁴² Scholars within the cultural historical media research tradition go against the grain of mono-medial disciplinary boundaries and a media history privileging teleological narratives of progress. As Asa Briggs and Peter Burke argue in *A Social History of the Media*:

To think in terms of a media system means emphasizing the division of labour between the different means of communication available in a given space and at a given time, without forgetting that old and new media can and do coexist and that different media may compete with or echo one another as well as complement one another.⁴³

Moreover, a key aim within the field has been to broaden existing definitions of the media concept. For example, media historian Lisa Gitelman has argued that “media are unique and complicated historical subjects. Their histories must be social and cultural, not the stories of how one

technology leads to another, or of isolated geniuses working their magic on the world”.⁴⁴ Drawing on this principle, scholars working with a cultural historical perspective on media history tend to emphasize the social, cultural, economic and material conditions shaping communication, circumstances that have changed and transformed over time. In this vein, Pelle Snickars argues for the importance of empirical studies of the relations between media, and that media forms should be approached as “transnational, entangled and dependent on each other”.⁴⁵

Unavoidably, the scholar of propaganda and persuasion deals with a wide range of media forms, since the phenomenon is inconceivable without a process of mediation. The contributors to this book deal with a plethora of media used to propagate and persuade, often carefully orchestrated, such as radio, film, newspapers, posters, pamphlets, brochures, meetings, events, debate books, study circles, public hearings, competitions, textbooks, letters, telegrams, autobiographies, lectures, rumours, networks of informers, underground news, pirate radio, television, exhibitions, educational films, illustrated magazines, bulletin boards, architecture, photography, opinion polls, shop window displays and much more. Besides this broad concept of media, scholars working with a cultural historical media research perspective also pay attention to the cultural practice of mediated communication, which is integral to the media system approach. On the one hand, emphasis is placed on spatial and material dimensions such as the communication settings, the conceptions and ideas surrounding the choice of media in the efforts to persuade, the material conditions shaping the production and circulation of the media, as well as the use of the media in everyday life. On the other hand, focus is devoted to the social dimension, most notably the negotiations between historical agents and institutions, in their use of media. Going beyond a media history of “winners”, to borrow Thomas Elsaesser’s notion, this book attempts to also highlight media practices and media practitioners that are unfamiliar to a more conventional media history.⁴⁶ Using this as a starting point, a central aim of this volume is to identify previously neglected connections and transmedial relations between media, as well as alternate histories of propaganda and persuasion beyond canonical media texts. In the next section, our approach to the concept of propaganda and its rebranding during the twentieth century is delineated.

AN EMPIRICALLY SITUATED APPROACH TO STUDYING PROPAGANDA AND PERSUASION

In today's debates, "propaganda" seems almost exclusively associated with hatred, lies and disinformation. Often, the term is used to apportion blame, make issues illegitimate and erase them from the political agenda. However, the conception of what is perceived as persuasive communication activities, as well as what is considered ethical and unethical communication, has changed over time and differs between contexts within a specific period. Researchers have, for example, demonstrated that "propaganda" was used in a predominantly negative sense long before the twentieth century.⁴⁷ Meanwhile, others have shown that it was still possible to use the propaganda concept in a positive and neutral sense in some liberal democracies, including Sweden, in both the inter-war period and the post-war period.⁴⁸ Still, while practitioners of persuasive communication have occasionally given their work more legitimate labels—from "propaganda" to "public relations" to "strategic communication" and so forth—the actual practices may have been more stable.⁴⁹ Today's negatively preconceived notion of propaganda risks clouding historical developments of parallel and associated synonyms and practices—and how these too were connected and shaped in meetings between different national contexts. The reason why we have chosen to put "propaganda" in the book title, accompanied with the seemingly softer term "persuasion", should partly be understood as a somewhat provocative reminder of this historical development.

David Welch notes that although there exist various definitions of propaganda, some more useful than others, most scholars would agree that "propaganda is concerned with influencing opinion" and is often related to messages disseminated to a wider public, with an intended purpose, target and some kind of benefit for at least the sender.⁵⁰ Understood in this way, propaganda can be viewed as a "hammer that can be used to build a house or strike a victim".⁵¹ Hence, the aims and goals of propaganda can be more or less explicit, its tools and expressions more or less effective, and the ambition to reveal, conceal or distort facts more or less accentuated. Like Jowett and O'Donnell, we find such a pragmatic and open-ended conceptualization fruitful to apply in cultural historical media research.

This inclusive definition of propaganda and persuasion also allows researchers to work with an empirically situated approach and to follow the historical actors' communicative practices, and how they conceptualized these activities, with a direct or an indirect intention to influence their

publics. Furthermore, in this edited volume, the contributing authors highlight, on the one hand, the terminology and ideas that are articulated by the historical actors. On the other hand, they employ different theoretical concepts and perspectives—such as public diplomacy, region-building, circulation of knowledge—to unpack and analyse the communicative notions and practices that are revealed in the archival sources. Moreover, by adding a transnational perspective, the individual chapters shed light on how these communicative concepts and practices were shared, discussed, contested and shaped as they travelled across borders.

The book's empirically situated approach to the study of propaganda and persuasion is important from a historiographical point of view. Traditionally, the scholarly field of public relations history, which should be understood as a field intertwined with propaganda studies, is often written and understood from an Anglo-American perspective. Attempts to write general historiographies of public relations, for example, have thus had a tendency to emphasize the importance of the industry, especially in American contexts.⁵² From a European and Nordic perspective, however, the state and civic organizations should be regarded as of at least equal importance to corporations in the development of such external communication activities.⁵³

Established historiographical narratives of how different communication concepts and practices developed during the twentieth century should not be taken for granted, nor uncritically adopted from one context to another. While propaganda is often thought of as a phenomenon deployed in extreme circumstances, this book shows that in the Nordic context “propaganda” (alongside terms such as “oplysning”, “information” and “public relations”) was also conceived of as a mundane tool in the construction of the welfare states. In the post-war Nordic welfare states, for example, utopian visions were often coupled with attempts at persuasion, and media were used to demonstrate the importance of certain virtues and to steer the private life of individuals.⁵⁴

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK

We have consciously used the plural form of media histories in the book title. Consequently, this volume does not present *the* transnational media history of propaganda and persuasion in the Nordic region during the short twentieth century. Instead, the book presents different aspects of how such a history could be written. The different contributions have

been divided into three broad thematic sections: the first on cultural diplomacy and public information, the second on politics and security, and the third on internationalism and environmentalism. The structure of each section is based on a rough chronological progression.

The section “Cultural Diplomacy and Public Information” addresses a range of central questions, such as what was the role of different media in transforming the Nordic into an imagined community? To what extent did different national projects borrow from each other? How were best practices shared regarding how to provide citizens with information about topics such as welfare provision, national security and public health? How was gender equality translated and mediated into notions of decaying family life? In the first chapter, Ruth Hemstad applies a region-building approach to discuss attempts to promote Nordic cooperation in the 1930s and further highlight the historical development of this idea. Hemstad shows that different, predominantly social democratic, transmedial manifestations such as mass meetings, events and festivals were orchestrated and mediated in various ways to advocate for and circulate the message of Nordic cooperation. While Hemstad’s chapter has a centripetal characteristic, the second chapter takes on a centrifugal dynamic. In C. Claire Thomson’s chapter, analytical attention is directed towards the philanthropic diplomacy that the Danish brewing companies Carlsberg and Tuborg engaged in during the inter-war period as well as during the 1950s—especially through films—to promote Danish science and arts outside Denmark, in general, and in the UK, in particular. Moving on to Fredrik Norén’s contribution, he traces the Nordic and international contacts that the Swedish Board for Civic Information established through study visits, seminars and conferences during the 1970s. Using the concepts of epistemic community and circulation of knowledge, Norén shows how various actors from different societal sectors were drawn to each other to discuss and address issues of public information. In the section’s fourth contribution, Elisabet Björklund examines the circulation and reuse of American images of foetuses in Swedish anti-abortion campaigns from the 1970s and the 1980s. Björklund further analyses how terms such as truth, information and propaganda were used by different actors that engaged in discussions about these images.

The second thematic section of the book is “Politics and Security”. From the inter-war period to the Cold War era, the Nordic countries’ vulnerable geopolitical position has fostered encounters with other ideologies and systems. Chapters in this section of the book discuss Norden as a

geopolitical bloc where national and regional interests both overlap and conflict. Hence, how did the Nordic countries navigate outside threats? How did the involvement of Nordic actors in inter- and post-war international institutions such as the United Nations and NATO impact the use of communicative strategies in the Nordic countries? In what way did media from other parts of the world contribute to Nordic citizens' self-understanding? In the first chapter in this section, Emil Stjernholm examines the media production of the Office of War Information in Stockholm during World War II. Drawing on overlooked archival material from Swedish counter-espionage, Stjernholm maps the plethora of Office of War Information-supported media that were circulated in Sweden as well as in the neighbouring Nordic countries, highlighting Stockholm's status as a transnational, entangled propaganda hub. Emil Eiby Seidenfaden's chapter studies the work of Danish journalists in cosmopolitan London during World War II. In his analysis, Seidenfaden shows how Danish correspondents navigated between the interests of British intelligence agencies and different factions of the Danish Free movement, thus making a contribution to a neglected aspect of the history of journalism in Scandinavia. In the third chapter in this section, Øystein Pedersen Dahlen and Rolf Werenskjold explore the role of the organizations People and Defence and the Norwegian Atlantic Committee in the public debate on Norwegian defence and security policy in the 1950s. Particular emphasis is placed on the interactions between the Scandinavian security policy organizations, as well as the Norwegian organizations' collaboration with Norwegian news departments and journalists. In doing so, Pedersen Dahlen and Werenskjold argue that even though People and Defence and the Norwegian Atlantic Committee appeared as civil non-government organizations, they functioned as information agencies of sorts for their governments. Lastly, in his chapter, Jukka Kortti describes the Fulbright programme and the grants provided by private foundations to Nordic social scientists as an influential part of the systematic and extensive American soft power politics in the Cold War era. In his study, Kortti shows how visiting scholars, upon their return, contributed to the introduction of American-based scientific terminology in the Nordic press, while also influencing the post-war building of the Nordic welfare states.

From access to nature and its resources, to planned suburbs, to the world-leading industries that underpinned prosperity, the third section "Internationalism and Environmentalism" builds on the fact that concrete manifestations of the Nordic welfare states have been mediatized in

various compelling ways. How did landscapes, landmarks and machines function to articulate a mediated notion of, for instance, long-lasting social democratic-oriented projects to domestic and foreign publics in different media? How did different actors collaborate on public information campaigns related to cross-border issues like economic growth and environmental challenges? How did Nordic foreign aid organizations convey their work to domestic audiences, and how did this contribute to the image of the Nordic region as internationalist? These are some of the questions that relate to the third section. The first chapter, written by Mari Pajala, deals with Nordic television culture, however, from a production studies vantage point. In doing so, Pajala maps the establishment of an information infrastructure within the Nordvision network, highlighting the arduous task of developing Nordic transnational exchange. In the second chapter, Björn Lundberg and David Larsson Heidenblad focus on an early transnational media campaign aimed at bringing attention to environmental issues in the Nordic countries. In doing so, the authors trace how the campaigns mobilized civil society organizations and schools, as well as a broad range of media, all in an effort to transform information into awareness and political action. In their chapter, Melina Antonia Buns and Dominic Hinde critically discuss the image of the Nordic countries as green and modern, zooming in on the performativity of such a self-image at media events such as the international Nordic Council conference in 1975. In the mid-1960s, several Nordic foreign aid agencies, such as Swedish SIDA, Danish Danida and Norwegian Norad, had established information bureaus. Lars Diurlin's chapter explores the exchanges of ideas regarding information strategies that took place between these aid agencies, particularly focusing on their audiovisual strategies. While Laura Saarenmaa also tackles the issue of internationalism, she does so in the context of Nordic public service television. Focusing on the YLE Film Service, Saarenmaa scrutinizes the broadcasting of East Asian propaganda-oriented films in Finland during the 1970s and 1980s, showing how this was the result of a firm belief in geo-cultural diversity in film programming for television.

Taken together, it is our hope that the different chapters can shed light on an under-represented aspect of media history: an attempt to write transnational media histories of propaganda and persuasion in the Nordic region.

NOTES

1. *Noget om Norden* (Bent Barfod, Denmark, 1956). The English-language version of the film can be viewed at <https://filmcentralen.dk/museum/danmark-paa-film/film/somethin-about-scandinavia-told-danish-boy> (accessed 21 February 2022). A more extensive discussion of the film's production and distribution can be found in C. Claire Thomson, *Short Films from a Small Nation: Danish Informational Cinema 1935–1965* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018), 109–117.
2. Letter from I. Koch-Olsen (Dansk Kulturfilm) to F.W. Wendt (Foreningen Norden), 1 September 1955, “Noget om Norden 1956/7”, Statens Filmcentral Særsamling (hereafter SFS), Danish Film Institute (hereafter DFS), Danish National Archives (hereafter DNA).
3. Meeting minutes no. 2 1957, Ministerierne Filmudvalg, “Noget om Norden 1956/7”, SFS, DFS, DNA.
4. Letter from E. Knuth (Danish Embassy in Reykjavík) to the Danish Foreign Ministry, 31 August 1956, “Noget om Norden 1956/7”, SFS, DFS, DNA.
5. Letter from A. Dymling, Svensk Filmindustri, to Statens Filmcentral, 2 February 1957, “Noget om Norden 1956/7”, SFS, DFS, DNA. All foreign-language quotations in this volume have been translated by the author or authors.
6. Letter from I. Achton Schmidt, Statens Filmcentral, to Bent Barfod, 2 December 1968, “Noget om Norden 1956/7”, SFS, DFS, DNA.
7. Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell, *Propaganda and Persuasion*, 5th ed. (London: SAGE Publications, 2012), 7.
8. Jowett and O'Donnell, *Propaganda and Persuasion*, 32–33.
9. Solveig Jülich, Patrik Lundell and Pelle Snickars, eds., *Mediernas kulturhistoria* (Stockholm: Statens ljud- och bildarkiv, 2008).
10. Bo Stråth and Øystein Sørensen, eds., *The Cultural Construction of Norden* (Oslo: Scandinavian Univ. Press, 1997); Mary Hilson, *The Nordic Model: Scandinavia since 1945* (London: Reaktion, 2008); Jenny Andersson, “Nordic Nostalgia and Nordic Light: The Swedish Model as Utopia 1930–2007”, *Scandinavian Journal of History*, vol. 34, no. 3 (2009), 229–245.
11. For different examples see Mats Jönsson and Pelle Snickars, *Medier och politik: Om arbetarrörelsens mediestrategier under 1900-talet* (Lund: Mediehistoriskt arkiv, 2007); Eli Skogerbø, Øyvind Ihlen, Nete Nørgaard Kristensen and Lars Nord, *Power, Communication, and Politics in the Nordic Countries* (Gothenburg: Nordicom, 2021); Trine Syvertsen, Gunn Enli, Ole J. Mjos and Hallvard Moe, eds., *The Media Welfare State. Nordic Media in the Digital Era* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2014);

- Fredrik Norén and Emil Stjernholm, eds., *Efterkrigstidens samhällskontakter* (Lund: Mediehistoriskt arkiv, 2019).
12. Pierre-Yves Saunier, *Transnational History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 2.
 13. Saunier, *Transnational History*, 3–5.
 14. Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann, “Beyond Comparison: Histoire Croisée and the Challenge of Reflexivity”, *History and Theory*, vol. 45, no. 1 (2006), 31.
 15. Werner and Zimmermann, “Beyond Comparison”.
 16. Foreningerne Nordens Forbund, “The Confederation of the Nordic Associations”, <https://www.fnfnorden.org/in-english> (accessed 14 February 2022).
 17. For an account of the emergence of Scandinavianism as a concept, see Ruth Hemstad, “Scandinavianism: Mapping the Rise of a New Concept”, *Contributions to the History of Concepts*, vol. 13, no. 1 (2018), 1–21. See also Jonas Harvard and Magdalena Hillström, “Media Scandinavianism: Media Events and the Historical Legacy of Pan-Scandinavianism”, *Communicating the North: Media Structures and Images in the Making of the Nordic Region*, eds. Jonas Harvard and Peter Stadius, 3rd ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 75–98.
 18. Harald Gustafsson, *Nordens historia: En europeisk region under 1200 år* (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 2017), 13.
 19. Kazimierz Musiał, *Roots of the Scandinavian Model: Images of Progress in the Era of Modernisation* (Nomos Verlag, Musiał, 1998).
 20. Dominic Hinde, *A Utopia Like Any Other: Inside the Nordic Model* (Edinburgh: Luath Press, 2016); Ian Giles, Laura Chapot, Christian Cooijmans, Ryan Foster and Barbara Tesio, eds., *Beyond Borealism: New Perspectives on the North* (London: Norvik Press, 2016); Nima Sanandaji, *Debunking Utopia: Exposing the Myth of Nordic Socialism* (Washington: WND Books, 2016).
 21. Kazimierz Musiał, *Roots of the Scandinavian Model*; Jonas Harvard and Peter Stadius, eds., *Communicating the North: Media Structures and Images in the Making of the Nordic Region* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2013); Jenny Andersson and Mary Hilson, “Images of Sweden and the Nordic Countries”, *Scandinavian Journal of History*, vol. 34, no. 3 (2009); Haldor Byrkjeflot, Lars Mjøset, Mads Mordhorst and Klaus Petersen, eds., *The Making and Circulation of Nordic Models, Ideals and Images* (Abingdon; Routledge, 2022).
 22. Jonas Harvard and Peter Stadius, “A Communicative Perspective on the Formation of the North: Contexts, Channels and Concepts”, *Communicating the North: Media Structures and Images in the Making of the Nordic Region*, eds. Jonas Harvard and Peter Stadius, 3rd ed. (Burlington: Ashgate, 2013), 7.

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28. Harvard and Stadius, “A Communicative Perspective on the Formation of the North”, 3.
29. For a discussion on Nordic collaborations in the twentieth century, see Johan P. Olsen and Bjørn Otto Sverdrup, eds., *Europa i Norden: Europeisering av nordisk samarbeid* (Oslo: Tano Aschehoug, 1998).
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35. Nordic Cooperation, “Language”, <https://www.norden.org/en/language> (accessed 22 September 2021).
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38. See, for example, Yvonne Andersson, Ulf Dalquist and Jonas Ohlsson, *Youth and News in a Digital Media Environment: Nordic-Baltic Perspectives* (Gothenburg: Nordicom, 2018); Trine Syvertsen, Gunn Enli, Ole J. Mjøs and Hallvard Moe Syvertsen, *The Media Welfare State* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2014).
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PART II

Cultural Diplomacy and Public
Information



Promoting *Norden* and Nordic Cooperation in the 1930s: Social Democratic Visions and Transmedial Manifestations

Ruth Hemstad

The image of *Norden* as a unified entity of five flying swans—later to be the visual brand of official Nordic cooperation—was introduced as a poster, inspired by a poem, promoting the massive celebration of “Nordic Day” in 1936.¹ The transmedial and transnational literary and visual celebration of *Norden* that day was accompanied by a radio soundtrack of chiming church bells, singing schoolchildren, musical and cultural events, and political speeches, culminating with three kings and a president speaking together to an all-Nordic audience. National radio broadcasting and newspapers across the region covered the celebration, and the planning of it, heavily, contributing significantly to spreading the key message of the value of Nordic cooperation.

The five free Nordic swans, it will be argued in this chapter, flew particularly high during the mid-1930s, due to the joint efforts by social

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democratic political leaders and the transnational network of the voluntary non-political Norden Associations (Foreningen Norden), utilizing modern technologies and ideas of what was perceived as propaganda and agitation to reach broader segments of the population and to foster a sense of Norden as a cultural community. The 1930s thus represent a pivotal period for reinventing, redefining and consolidating Norden into a distinct political and cultural transnational region, characterized by increasing inter-Nordic cooperation and coordination. The comprehensive transnational cooperation within the labour movement gaining power across the region and their conscious use of communication strategies and technologies are important features of the time. The contemporary understanding and use of concepts such as “propaganda” and “agitation” is, it seems, in line with recent scholarly definitions of propaganda, as “the deliberate attempt to influence public opinion through the transmission of ideas and values for a specific purpose [...] Modern political propaganda is consciously designed to serve the interests, either directly or indirectly, of the propagandists and their political masters.”²

This chapter asks how modern mass media of the time, such as radio and film, were combined with older channels of communication, from public mass meetings and festivals to newspapers, posters and pamphlets, in what may be seen as an interwar breakthrough of Nordic ideas, culminating with the multimedial celebration of Nordic Day in 1936. It will be done by focusing on two interrelated transnational and transmedial events that contributed to putting Nordic cooperation high on the political and public agenda in the 1930s by disseminating the image of Norden as an entity with a distinct political content across the region and beyond. The events in question, both main examples of the “media Nordism” of the 1930s,³ are the public and broadcast meeting of the Scandinavian social democratic leaders in Copenhagen in late 1934 and the massive and spectacular celebration of the Nordic Day on 27 October 1936. Both cases illustrate the intensification of Nordic cooperation—at all levels of society—during the 1930s and the creative use, both from pan-Nordic oriented politicians and civil society actors, of a broad spectrum of available communication channels to promote this development.

The redefinition of Nordic cooperation in the 1930s is closely connected to increasing political conflicts and tensions in the surrounding world, with European crises of several kinds representing an external pressure that underlined the need for a united “Nordic front”.⁴ The manifestation of Nordic cohesion and cooperation which the celebration of Nordic Day represented took place—not by coincidence—at the same time as the

Social Democratic parties had gained power in the three Scandinavian countries and had a dominant influence in Finland and Iceland as well. This development meant that the message of Norden as a political entity, characterized by close Nordic cooperation and a widespread feeling of togetherness, could be intensively propagated, not mainly by civil society actors, as in previous decades,⁵ but also from above. In transforming Norden into a united community, the citizens of the different Nordic countries had to be informed, engaged and involved. Enhancing Nordic cooperation and solidarity—built on mutual knowledge and friendship—thus became a joint task for the Norden Associations and the social democratic leaders governing the Scandinavian countries from the mid-1930s. The Nordic labour movement consciously agitated the ideas of Nordic solidarity and Nordic democracy to strengthen their position,⁶ by utilizing available communication technologies to reach across the region and beyond. The Nordic “model” presented was one of democracy, freedom, peace orientation and transnational cooperation, both on an intergovernmental and a people-to-people level. During the 1930s, Nordic region-building was embraced by the governments in all the Nordic countries, actively facilitating inter-Nordic cooperation and connections, leading eventually to stronger institutional ties across the region, for example the establishment of the Nordic Council in 1952.

The belief in Norden and Nordic cooperation—and in communication and propagating these values to a broad audience—reached a peak in the mid-1930s. These renewed Nordic ideas of unity were, however, contested among nationally minded groups, especially in Norway and Finland, and they were met with counter-efforts through what may be termed anti-Scandinavian agitation, arguing against pan-Scandinavian endeavours. In Norway, “Nordic cooperation” was claimed to be too reminiscent of “Scandinavianism” and “Amalgamation”, ghosts of the nineteenth century still rousing strong emotions (see below).

The Nordic region-building project of the 1930s, and the reactions and resistance it met, must also be understood in the broader historical and transnational context of rival nation-building projects, on the one hand, and the pan-Scandinavian movement and ideas, on the other hand, dating back to the mid-nineteenth century. References to the pan-Scandinavian project were indeed frequently made, both by the labour movement and as part of the anti-Scandinavian counter-rhetoric. This tradition will therefore be presented in the following part of this chapter, before discussing the transnational and transmedial dimensions of the two public events.

REGION-BUILDING AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF NORDIC COOPERATION

Regions are historically contingent and, much in the same way as nations, imagined communities.⁷ Although Norden is often defined as a distinct historical region, Scandinavia and Norden can mean different things and may be called upon for different purposes, as Johan Strang reminds us.⁸ Iver Neumann underlines that the existence of regions is “preceded by the existence of region-builders, political actors who, as part of some political project, imagine a certain spatial and chronological identity for a region, and disseminate this imagined identity to others”.⁹ Regions are therefore “talked and written into existence”.¹⁰

This region-building approach may be fruitful when examined within a given political-ideological, social, cultural and technological context. The active region-builders and the actual political projects within the Nordic region have differed over time, from the pan-Scandinavian, national-liberal political and cultural project of the mid-nineteenth century, to the more practical and culturally oriented neo-Scandinavianism at the turn of the century, to the social democratic one of the 1930s—developing alongside a more conservative-oriented approach—and to the official region-building institutions developing after World War II. The potential for politicization of Norden as a concept and idea was demonstrated on several occasions during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. There are some interesting similarities between the project of the mid-nineteenth century and that of the mid-twentieth century, including the contested nature of certain key concepts and the complicated and controversial role of the German-Danish borderland. While old and new inter-Nordic visions and conflicts were interwoven parts of the renewed discourse on Norden and Nordic cooperation in the interwar period, the media channels available to capture public opinion were technically more advanced and varied and could reach most of the population simultaneously across the region. These possibilities were discussed and utilized in the Nordic region-building of the 1930s.

The talking—and organization—of the Nordic region into existence started from below—or rather from the middle, from intellectuals, students and other groups seeking togetherness across national boundaries. Scandinavian cooperation, as idea, concept and practice, was developed during the nineteenth century, closely connected to the pan-Scandinavian movement and what was termed “Scandinavianism”.¹¹ Newspapers,

journals, pamphlets and other printed material, as well as political toasting and speeches performed at different kinds of Nordic meetings, disseminated pan-national ideas within the region. Political ambitions for a Scandinavian union were promoted mainly by Danish national-liberal activists, seeking support in the ongoing conflict regarding the nationally divided Duchy of Schleswig in the German-Danish borderland, eventually leading to two wars. Schleswig was lost after the Second Schleswig War in 1864, and political Scandinavianism was thus in general perceived as dead and buried.¹² The Nordic region-building project, however, continued by other means, concentrating on cultural and pragmatic Scandinavian cooperation. Meetings, associations, institutions, publications, networks and practices with a pan-Scandinavian scope, with Nordic participants and with the aim of strengthening Scandinavian cooperation and a Scandinavian identity became gradually more widespread after 1864, disseminating ideas of Scandinavian unity.

During the period 1839–1905, as many as 100 different types of Nordic meeting series were regularly held in Scandinavian cities.¹³ This means that broader parts of the population—all kinds of professions, popular movements, organizations and institutions of different types—had some sort of regular Nordic exchange. The motivation behind this kind of transnational cooperation could differ, as could the degree of its ideologization and politicization. A revival in the interest of what was then termed “neo-Scandinavianism” was noticeable around 1900, with new pan-Scandinavian associations and a range of literary and practical collaborating initiatives, but this trend did not last for long.¹⁴ The dissolution of the Norwegian-Swedish union in 1905 had a devastating effect on most of these transnational contacts and turned the recent Indian summer into a cold Nordic winter, not least played out in Swedish conservative newspapers.¹⁵ In 1906, in a typical Swedish conservative reaction, the newspaper *Svenska Dagbladet* warned against Nordic collaboration and the term “Scandinavian cooperation” as such.¹⁶ Once again, “Scandinavianism” as a project was deemed dead and buried.

The World War I experience brought a return to Nordic cooperation, gradually also on a political and official level. While nineteenth-century “Scandinavianism” had strong political connotations, twentieth-century Nordic cooperation and “Nordism” were firmly based on mutual respect of national sovereignty. An early prominent example is the meeting of the three Scandinavian Kings, in Malmö in December 1914, an event—and a highly mediated event—of significant symbolic importance.¹⁷ Shortly after

the war, the Norden Associations were established in the three Scandinavian countries in 1919, Iceland in 1922 and Finland in 1924, as explicitly non-political organizations. Although having an explicit pan-Nordic ambition, these voluntary associations were nationally based, connected in a transnational network with annual joint meetings of representatives. They became central hubs within Nordic civil society in promoting Nordic cooperation in the interwar period.¹⁸ A main function was to disseminate knowledge on Nordic cultures and societies by utilizing a range of different channels of communication, through lectures, meetings, travel and publications, both among their members and aimed at a wider public, and to promote cooperation between the Nordic countries in general.¹⁹

“Nordic cooperation” was reintroduced as a political concept in the interwar period, reflecting a renewed belief in inter-Nordic engagement. In the Nordic encyclopaedia *Nordisk familjebok*, the Swedish conservative and Nordist activist Nils Herlitz, professor of constitutional law and member of the Norden Association in Sweden, defined “Nordic cooperation” in 1925 as the term “commonly used to summarize the current very strong movement for cohesion and cultural exchange between Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. Overall, Nordic cooperation in all parts (of society) in the four countries is met with sympathy and interest”.²⁰

While Nordic cooperation mainly took place within a civil society context in the nineteenth century, the interwar era included stronger political interaction in addition to and interacting with the civil society engagement. Old established Nordic meeting series were resumed, and new Nordic meetings and conferences were established during the 1920s. This tendency continued and expanded during the 1930s, with more than 160 different kinds of Nordic meetings held during the years 1930–1934.²¹ Some of the meetings were old established series of meetings, such as the natural scientists’ meetings, and the meetings among Nordic jurists, teachers, national economists, academics and professionals of numerous kinds. Reports from these kinds of meetings continued to merit considerable attention in Scandinavian newspapers.

New institutions and professions, not least within the increasing media and information industry, commonly sought cooperation at a Nordic level in the interwar period, causing new groups of practitioners to travel across the region. Among these were the Nordic annual meetings of programme directors at the national broadcasting companies, starting in 1935.²² Advertising companies, publishing houses and film distributors were also

establishing regular Nordic meetings in the 1930s. Nordic journalists continued their meeting series, dating back to the late nineteenth century. At a Nordic press conference in Finland in July 1939, against a backdrop of increasing international tension, Nordic cohesion was strongly underlined during the negotiations and around the dinner table, especially by the Danish and Finnish representatives, their countries constituting, as newspaper reports put it, the “outer boundaries of the territory that in everyday speech is now commonly termed Norden”.²³

The range of associational endeavours, organizations and institutions reflected and contributed to the imagining of Norden as a region. Alongside meetings with civil society actors, there was also a growing amount of intergovernmental and interparliamentary cooperation, for domestic and international purposes.²⁴ Nordic ministerial conferences were held frequently: Nordic Social Political Meetings since 1919,²⁵ while Nordic Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Meetings were held regularly from 1932. Joint delegations for Nordic economic cooperation (*Nabolandsnevnden*) resumed their activities in 1935. The Nordic Inter-Parliamentary Union, founded in 1907 as a semi-private forum, an “organized peace movement among Nordic parliamentarians” within the worldwide Inter-Parliamentary Union, organized annual meetings.²⁶ This activity, Knut Larsen claims, represents a remarkably long tradition of regional cooperation: “This tradition is longer and more intense than in any other region of the world.”²⁷

“The Nordic model of transnational cooperation”, Strang states, has been crucially important in creating the political and social arrangements commonly known as “the Nordic Model” or “the Nordic Welfare State”.²⁸ Characterized mainly by bottom-up, civil society-driven cooperation, with numerous ties across the region, it has also had significant political influence and contributed to the development of permanent intergovernmental cooperation after World War II.²⁹

The importance of this intra-Nordic dimension of civil society has varied profoundly during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and the significance has differed strongly between the Nordic countries. Periods of success in practical cooperation have often, as Götz, Haggren and Hilson underline, been times when “the perception of the unity of the region was particularly strong”.³⁰ It may be added that this perception, and the tendency towards more “intense Nordic cooperation”,³¹ often increased in times of external pressure felt as a common threat against the region, as was indeed the case in the 1930s and, furthermore, that this perception

was strengthened through communicative means. The strengthened perception of Nordic unity in the interwar period also prompted national, anti-Scandinavian reactions.

NORDIC CONFLICTS, OLD AND NEW: ANTI-SCANDINAVIANIST AGITATION

Several inter-Nordic, bilateral conflicts had marked the 1920s and early 1930s, such as the Swedish-Finnish conflict over the Åland Isles and the Danish-Norwegian Greenland conflict.³² By the mid-1930s, these obstacles to closer cooperation had more or less been resolved. The Nordic integration initiatives celebrated in speeches, at festivals, in newspapers and by the governments were still contested in certain quarters, especially among the newcomers as sovereign nation-states within the region: Norway and Finland. In Finland, some of the resistance was connected to the Åland question and the language question, which continued as a conflict during the 1930s. In Norway, anti-Scandinavian agitation was especially connected to the Greenland question in 1921–1931 and to Danish efforts to make the revised southern borders with Germany after the referendum in 1920, still not officially accepted by German authorities, into a shared Nordic issue.³³ Anti-Danish sentiments were explicitly expressed in Norwegian conservative-agrarian circles as a reaction to Danish Prime Minister Thorvald Stauning's speech to the Danish Parliament in 1933, followed up in subsequent years, when he declared that Denmark's southern border was the common boundary of Norden, indirectly anticipating support from the Nordic countries in the event of conflict with Germany.

Modern Nordic cooperation could still be associated with the political Scandinavianism of the nineteenth century. This concept lived on as a ghost—as it was put in both Norway and Denmark. Scandinavianism as a concept was continuously used during the 1920s and 1930s, connected to various forms of Nordic interaction, mostly positive in Danish newspapers, but in Norway more often in a negative context. Edvard Hagerup Bull, the first chairman of the Norden Association in Norway, stated in 1928 that political Scandinavianism has had even more influence in Norway after its death, as a ghost or a haunting experience.³⁴ Norwegian conservative newspapers, journals and magazines argued critically in the mid-1930s that Norden as a concept had become fashionable in recent years as a slogan utilized by leading politicians.³⁵ This position was formulated most

explicitly by Gustav Smedal, the main activist to front Norwegian historical claims on parts of Greenland, as the island was traditionally perceived as belonging to the historical Norwegian state, but remaining as part of Denmark since the separation of the Danish-Norwegian dual monarchy in 1814. In what may reasonably be termed Smedal's propaganda book, published in 1938, connecting the Greenland conflict and Scandinavianism, he simply proclaimed, as a warning, that "Scandinavianism and Nordic cooperation are one and the same thing".³⁶

SCANDINAVIAN SOCIAL DEMOCRACY, LABOUR SCANDINAVIANISM AND NORDIC COOPERATION

During the first part of the 1930s, the labour parties took over the governments in Denmark (1929), Sweden (1932) and Norway (1935), became a majority in the Finnish parliament (1936) and gained a strong position in Iceland. From the mid-1930s the Social Democratic parties thus dominated the Nordic political landscape. After elections in all the countries during 1936, concluding with the election in Norway in mid-October 1936, they were able to jointly celebrate their positions, not only within the nation-state framework but also as a hard-won common Nordic effort, internationally recognized. The social democratic stronghold in the Nordic region represented a rare transnational example of democratic, cooperating, peace-oriented states, in a world where anti-democratic tendencies were strengthening their position. The "Northern States [...] are the guardians of peace", Lord Cecil of Chelwood argued in his preface of the joint yearbook of the Norden Associations, *Nordens kalender* for 1937.³⁷

The social democratic political elite demonstrated strong confidence in the merits and future of Nordic cooperation in general, building on a long tradition of Nordic cooperation on their own. There had been close relations within the labour movement, both politically and not least organizationally, since the late nineteenth century, with collaborative networks and Scandinavian labour congresses dating back to 1886. The Nordic labour movement was closely interconnected from the start and developed Nordic cohesion and cooperation within their field. Whereas many Swedish conservative-oriented neo-Scandinavianists turned against the Norwegians, in particular, and Nordic cooperation, in general, after the Norwegian initiated dissolution of the union in 1905, the labour

movement in Sweden supported their Norwegian counterpart and the Norwegian cause and continued their contacts and collaboration.³⁸

From 1932, the cooperation was formalized and extended through the Nordic cooperation committee of the labour movement, SAMAK (Arbejderbevægelsens Nordiske Samarbejdskomite) between the Danish, Finnish, Icelandic and Swedish Social Democratic parties.³⁹ The SAMAK conferences coordinated Nordic policies towards international organizations and were a “significant meeting place and channel of communication between the social democratic prime ministers” from the mid-1930s.⁴⁰

The close social democratic collaboration also concerned the development of information strategies aimed at reaching the broad masses. In these efforts, terms such as “propaganda” and “agitation” were commonly used, building on contemporary experiences and practices—both in the Soviet Union and elsewhere. For example, from 1937, “Nordic agitation weeks” were jointly organized by the four Nordic labour youth organizations.⁴¹ There were also educational organizations for dissemination of knowledge, with the Worker’s knowledge association (Arbeidernes Oplysningsforbund) in Norway inspired by the same sort of organization in Sweden (Arbetarnes Bildningsförbund). The Swedish organization, led by Foreign Minister Richard Sandler, initiated the first Nordic conference among these organizations, held in Stockholm in 1935.⁴² The organizations exchanged lecturers and study material. In 1934, the Norwegian association published a *Curriculum in agitation and propaganda*, calling for more systematic and scientific propaganda activity by referring—in fact—to the success of the “fascistic agitation”.⁴³ The main points in this curriculum included reaching out to a broad audience by appealing to emotions, using symbols and through the use of agitation lectures, agitation meetings, the labour press, theatre, film, posters and printed matter.⁴⁴ In a handbook on *agitation and propaganda*, published by the same organization in 1938, “propaganda” is defined as “making known”, through dissemination of knowledge, “our opinions, thoughts and ideas, programme, slogans and symbols”, and “agitation” as “put in action”, meaning swaying people’s opinion by convincing them.⁴⁵ Propagation and agitation must, first and foremost, appeal to emotions, it is further underlined.⁴⁶ The general belief in the power of modern publication techniques in persuading the masses was strong.⁴⁷

NORDIC COHESION AND UNITY: PROPAGATING NORDIC COOPERATION IN 1934

The meeting of the three Scandinavian social democratic leaders in Copenhagen in December 1934 sparked the renewed propaganda and agitation of *Norden* and Nordic cooperation in the 1930s, and was a textbook example of appealing to emotions, using symbols and agitational lectures, distributed by radio, newspapers and pamphlets to reach a broad audience across the region and convince them of the value of Nordic cooperation. The meeting was organized by the Workers' reading society (Arbeidernes Læseselskab), founded in 1879 with the aim of disseminating knowledge to the working class. The Prime Ministers of Denmark and Sweden, Thorvald Stauning (a member of the reading society since 1900) and Per Albin Hansson, and the President of the Norwegian Parliament, later Prime Minister in Norway, Johan Nygaardsvold, were standing together to speak about Nordic cooperation to a numerous and enthusiastic public at the Sports Centre in Copenhagen, decorated for the occasion with Nordic flags. The event and the message of Nordic social democratic unity, based on Nordic self-government and freedom, were communicated to a wider audience than those present: the speeches were broadcast on national radio, printed and commented on in national newspapers across the region, and published and distributed as a separate pamphlet.⁴⁸

The meeting was followed by similar gatherings and speeches on Nordic cooperation and Nordic democracy—used as interrelated terms—over the following years and from late 1935 also involved the social democratic leader in Finland, Väinö Tanner (see below).⁴⁹ At these high-profile social democratic meetings several references were made to the pan-Scandinavian movement of the nineteenth century and to what was termed “Labour Scandinavianism” in particular.⁵⁰

In the preface to the published account, the publisher Johannes Lehmann presents the meeting, gathering thousands of participants, as a historical event, aligning it with the famous historical Scandinavian student meeting of 1845. In 1845, the Danish national-liberal leader, pan-Scandinavian activist Orla Lehmann, made the students from Denmark, Sweden and Norway swear to defend the pan-Scandinavian idea, with their own blood if necessary. Only a few of them felt obliged to participate in the two following Danish-German wars, 1848–1851 and 1864. The publisher Lehmann (probably not a relative) only referred briefly to this

historical meeting, focusing instead on the present speakers, three of the most prominent politicians in the Nordic region talking that evening on the important message of brotherly unity.⁵¹ Lehmann describes the meeting as an unforgettable event with an enthusiastic audience, receiving the speeches with a storm of applause.

The speeches of Hansson and Stauning strongly emphasized the importance of Nordic cooperation and the place of the labour movement within this broader project. Per Albin Hansson in particular focused on what he termed “labour Scandinavianism”, placing the labour movement as part of the broader, practically oriented pan-Scandinavian movement, contributing to a strong and coordinated Scandinavia. A Scandinavian social democracy, Hansson underlined, may play a leading role in the cooperation between the states and also in international politics. He emphasized that there were no visions of a Scandinavian political union, the aim had been and still was just a confident practical cooperation based on mutual trust, respecting each country’s independence.⁵² In his speech, Hansson presents a reinterpretation and re-evaluation of Scandinavianism through the labour movements and the Social Democratic parties in power, building a strong Scandinavia, based on solidarity, freedom and practical cooperation, aiming at securing democracy.

The concept of labour Scandinavianism was frequently used by labour politicians and authors in the 1930s.⁵³ It referred to a longer and more or less unbroken tradition of Nordic cooperation within the labour movement, with regularly organized labour congresses since 1886. When Scandinavian cooperation in general was heavily affected by the dissolution of the Norwegian-Swedish union in 1905, a main exception was the cooperation within the Scandinavian labour movement, which continued with cooperation and meetings after 1905 and pointed to “labour Scandinavianism” as the way forward, thus appropriating a concept strongly miscredited in Swedish national-conservative circles after 1905. When labour Scandinavianism was reintroduced in the 1930s, it contributed to a social democratic narrative of Nordic cooperation as a success story based on a longer historical tradition. The conceptual changes were commented on in Danish newspapers in connection with the meeting in Copenhagen. Social democratic newspapers argued that “Scandinavianism”, or “the new Scandinavianism”, had come to be a socialist and social democratic concept, based on the labour movement, while conservative newspapers opposed this kind of political class-based misuse of the concept.⁵⁴

In his speech, Stauning also underlined Nordic cooperation as based on the independence of each nation.⁵⁵ He referred to the old saying that war is inconceivable between the Nordic brothers, taken from Swedish-Norwegian King Oscar I's speech at the Scandinavian student meeting in Uppsala in 1856. The Nordic nations are "distinctive democratic nations", Stauning emphasized, with a strong tradition of freedom. As a final point, he declared that the meeting taking place was of considerable interest and that the participants would help to disseminate the spirit of the meeting across the Nordic region.⁵⁶ The message from the Norwegian social democratic leader Johan Nygaardsvold was, however, more cautious, reflecting the historically based opposition in Norway against what could be perceived as Danish or Swedish dominance. He referred to the threatening international situation, calling for Nordic and international cooperation, and the need of a united Nordic front against dictatorship and preparations of war. An organizational cooperation between the Labour parties in Norden was therefore necessary. On the concept of "Nordic cooperation" Nygaardsvold admitted, indirectly referring to the former union, that in Norway "this word has a bad connotation for many. It is feared that instead of cooperation, there will be amalgamation."⁵⁷ He believed, however, that the working class had nothing to fear but much to gain through strong organizational cooperation and unity.

The three speeches reflected different national experiences and attitudes towards Nordic cooperation as a political project. The common message of Nordic cooperation and togetherness based on social democratic unity was, however, strongly communicated across the region.

The aim of promoting Nordic cooperation by reaching broader segments of the population was shared by the Norden Associations. At the annual meeting of delegates, at Hindsø in Denmark in early 1934, the idea of a major joint effort involving mass media was put forward.⁵⁸ At the next meeting, in Oslo in 1935, it was decided that there should be a celebration of "Nordic Day" the next year in cooperation with the press, broadcasters and schools in the Nordic countries, to make the associations more visible, attract new members and promote Nordic cooperation. The initiative reflected the pro-Nordic sentiments in general at this time and the self-confidence among these associations. They were also able to build on older traditions and an increasing number of festival "Days" celebrating different topics. A "Nordic feast" in remembrance of the forefathers had been celebrated in the Nordic countries since the 1840s, based on a Norwegian initiative, and this feast was still celebrated in Sweden at the

beginning of the twentieth century. A more recent tradition was “Nordic weeks”: Stockholm had organized a Finnish week in 1925 and a Norwegian week in 1930. From 1935, a “Nordic Housewife Day” was organized in March.⁵⁹ In August 1935, the “Day of Nordic Democracy” was organized in Malmö by the Swedish Social Democratic Youth organization, as a follow-up to the Copenhagen meeting in 1934, with speeches by the four Nordic social democratic leaders, discussed in the newspapers and published as a pamphlet.⁶⁰ The leading conservative daily newspaper in Finland, *Uusi Suomi*, stated that the word democracy on this occasion was brutally misused “for the purpose of party propaganda” and that the “day of Nordic democracy was in fact the day of Nordic Social Democracy”.⁶¹

NORDIC DAY 1936: A DAY OF NORDIC PROPAGANDA

The combined efforts of civil society and state-based actors culminated in “Nordic Day” on 27 October 1936, simultaneously and synchronically celebrated—and broadcast through the national radio stations—in the five Nordic countries. Nordic Day in 1936 was intended to be a manifestation of Nordic solidarity and interdependence—aimed at the outside world as well as the Nordic population, “a united Norden in a Europe in disagreement”, as a Danish newspaper put it.⁶² Although initiated and coordinated by the primarily conservative-oriented Norden Associations, it partly became a day of Nordic social democracy—with social democratic ministers featuring prominently, and the idea of Nordic cooperation was powerfully popularized and demonstrated by the state of heads, all joining the celebration through a synchronized cross-national performance at the national broadcasters. It thus indeed became a pan-Nordic manifestation.

The aim of organizing a specific “Day” dedicated to all things Nordic was to increase interest in Nordic cooperation and an understanding of the “practical and idealistic” importance of this cooperation.⁶³ As a Norwegian newspaper stated, “it is difficult to name any branch of civic life that has not organized its own Nordic cooperation.”⁶⁴ To reach a broad spectrum of the population, including new generations, it was decided to involve media channels such as national radio broadcasters and the press, later also cinemas, and schools. In the massive news coverage of the planning and celebration of Nordic Day through most of 1936, the propaganda aspect was regularly commented on, and the day was described as “a joint Nordic day of propaganda through the press, school and broadcasting”, and as powerful propaganda for the idea of common Nordic understanding (*samförståndstanken*).⁶⁵

The time was, as indicated above, ripe for a Nordic festival. The Nordic newspapers covered the event carefully, through the planning process in 1935 and 1936, with news coverage on the day and reports the following week, confirming a general interest. Searching “Nordic Day” (*Nordens dag*) in Nordic newspaper databases illustrates a broad interest, naturally peaking in October. During 1936, there are 346 hits (247 in October) in Swedish newspapers, 328 hits (216 in October) in Swedish-language newspapers in Finland, 1041 mentions (704 in October) in Norwegian newspapers and 2273 mentions (1866 in October) in Danish newspapers.⁶⁶ The celebration of Nordic Day in 1936 was thus an outstanding and spectacular example of the propagation of Norden and Nordic cooperation in the 1930s, staged as a transnational and transmedial event involving almost all parts of society: the church, the schools, new and old media institutions, cultural and political life, civil society and state authorities, topped by three kings and a president.

It started early in the morning with chimes from four selected Nordic cathedrals, in Aalborg, Turku (Sw. Åbo), Trondheim (Nidaros) and Gothenburg, broadcast across the region. A short devotional followed from Norwegian Bishop Eivind Berggrav, speaking from Tromsø in Northern Norway, greeting Icelanders, Finns, Swedes, Danes and Norwegians, and underlining the Nordic region as a region of peace in the world. Nordic schoolchildren greeted each other in a special radio production by the Educational broadcasting service, as part of the Nordic educational marking of this specific day. In Denmark, all pupils were given a Nordic songbook, specially produced for the occasion. Newspapers like the Norwegian conservative daily *Aftenposten* published special editions packed with everything Nordic. A Nordic short film, *Norden in Pictures and national tunes*, a film potpourri consisting of scenes of Nordic landscapes accompanied by appropriate music,⁶⁷ was also produced for the occasion and shown at cinemas across the region. In Denmark, a sound film of the new Swan poem written to mark the festival, illustrated with Nordic images, was shown at cinemas. The day was filled with cultural activities, political speeches by visiting Nordic Foreign Ministers and many others,⁶⁸ and all sorts of public celebrations of Norden. The streets were decorated with Nordic flags and the specially produced Swan poster, displaying the Nordic countries as five swans flying high over the territory and the surrounding ocean (Fig. 1).

Nordic Day on 27 October 1936 culminated with a synchronized radio event in the evening, broadcast across the region and even beyond, to the Scandinavian diaspora in the United States.⁶⁹ The Nordic heads of state,

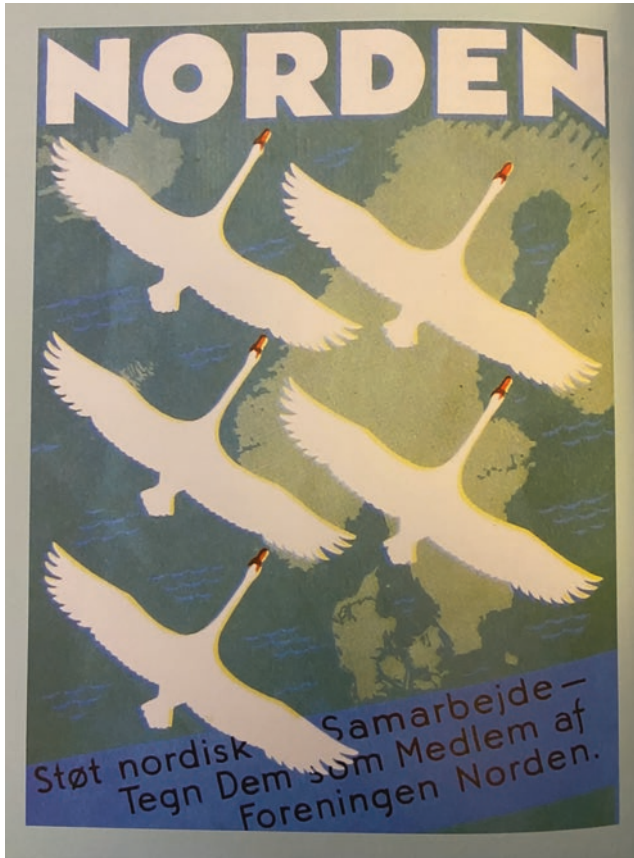


Fig. 1 The Danish-produced poster for Nordic Day, 27 October 1936, displayed five Nordic swans—allegorically presenting the free Nordic nations now in peace with each other—was inspired by a poem written for the occasion. In 1985 and 2004 it was redesigned, condensed to only one Swan, as the official logo for the Nordic Council and Nordic Council of Ministers. From Foreningen Norden (the Norden association), Norway

three Scandinavian kings and the Finnish president,⁷⁰ all gave their speeches, underlining the value of Nordic cooperation, less than five minutes each including national anthems, to an all-Nordic public, thereby constituting a transnational Nordic public sphere.⁷¹ The highly symbolic event was an auditory repetition of the 1914 royal meeting in

Malmö—which was also pointed out by the King of Denmark (and Iceland) Christian X in his speech—expanded with the president of Finland and reaching out throughout the region. It demonstrated the mutual understanding of the languages—the Finnish president delivered his speech first in Finnish and then in Swedish—and the degree of state support of the Nordic idea. The royal and presidential speeches were introduced and concluded by national anthems in a programme totalling 24 minutes.

The royal radio show was included in the cultural celebration that evening, demonstrating the transmedial dimension of the day. At the Royal Opera in Stockholm invited guests gathered for a Nordic cultural evening. For the first half-hour the audience listened, all standing, to the broadcast speeches, before Swedish King Gustav V left the royal office and the microphone to join the celebrations at the Royal Opera.⁷² President Svinhufvud's speech was broadcast directly from Helsinki's main exhibition hall (*Messuhalli*), and his and the broadcast royal speeches were a vital part of the cultural event there, open to everyone interested.⁷³ The Nordic radio evening continued with a Nordic cultural programme and a "radio ball" with Nordic dance music performed by the national orchestras in the capitals. The Swedish broadcasting company was in charge of the radio programme for the whole day, in what was a unique and technically advanced joint Nordic production.⁷⁴

In Denmark, one of the main events on this day was the unveiling of a monument at Dybbøl in commemoration of 1000 Nordic voluntary soldiers—from Norway, Sweden, Finland and Iceland—who fought for a common Nordic cause during the two Danish-German wars. In Norway, an initiative from the Norden Association to revise history textbooks in order to obtain a less nationalistic historiography of Nordic history had resulted in a Nordic commission, which presented its report too late to be a part of the Nordic Day celebrations, as originally planned, but nonetheless merited international acclamation and proved to have a longstanding effect.⁷⁵

Nordic Day in 1936 was an extraordinary event, criticized by some as being too over the top,⁷⁶ forcefully promoting Norden and Nordic cooperation to a domestic and an international audience, through a well-prepared and comprehensive joint effort by civil society and state actors, and by innovatively utilizing modern mass media.⁷⁷ The event also represented a peak. World War II demonstrated the predominance of national interests and the lack of binding Nordic cooperation at a political level in times of national and international crises.

CONCLUSION

The image of the five flying swans, introduced on the Nordic Day poster in 1936, is a main legacy of the spectacular interwar celebration, never fully paralleled later on, as the logo of the official main forums of Nordic cooperation today, the Nordic Council (1952) and the Nordic Council of Ministers (1971).⁷⁸ In 2019, they agreed on a common vision for the Nordic region as “the most sustainable and integrated region in the world” by 2030.⁷⁹ In a short animated video, launched on the official Nordic social media sites on another Nordic Day, 23 March 2021,⁸⁰ the main message states: “We are the Nordic Region. On our way to becoming the most sustainable and integrated region in the world. And that didn’t just happen by itself.”⁸¹ The 2030 vision echoes former dreams and imaginations, starting in the late 1830s among Scandinavian students and widely propagated in the mid-1930s by civil society actors and social democratic politicians. Today’s ongoing branding of Norden reflects a renewed reinvention, redefinition and rebranding of the region,⁸² and of the still ambiguous project of Nordic integration, from below and above. The Nordic institutions, and the dense web of Nordic cooperation and transnational relations characterizing the region,⁸³ did not, to be sure, “just happen by itself”, and the idea of Nordic unity is still in need of agitation on new and old media platforms. The transnational and transmedial propaganda of Norden and Nordic cooperation in the 1930s, culminating, as argued in this chapter, with Nordic Day in 1936, is a part of inter-Nordic media histories of propaganda and persuasion, and an important feature of the history of Nordic cooperation and region-building, characterized by grand visions, regular setbacks and, it seems, continuous new beginnings.

NOTES

1. The poem “Fem Svaner slog sig ned ved Nordens Kyst” (Five swans settled at the coast of Norden), concluding by describing the five free birds as a sign of light over the earth, was written by the Danish lyricist Hans Hartvig Seedorff Pedersen for the celebration of Nordic Day. It was printed in newspapers across the region, including the main Norwegian daily *Aftenposten* in its 24-page special edition published on the Nordic Day. The poem was recited as part of the cultural events that night and played the main role in a talking film shown at cinemas in Copenhagen, and the blue and white swan motif on the poster decorated 200,000 Nordic song-

- books given to every Danish schoolchild. “Svanemotivet”, *Fyens Stiftstidende*, 26 October 1936.
2. David Welch, “Propaganda, Definitions of”, *Propaganda and Mass Persuasion: A Historical Encyclopedia, 1500 to the Present*, eds. Nicholas J. Cull, David Culbert and David Welch (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC CLIO, 2003), 318.
 3. Cf. Jonas Harvard and Magdalena Hillström and the use of a related term: “Media Scandinavianism: Media Events and the Historical Legacy of Pan-Scandinavianism”, *Nordic Experience: Communicating the North: Media Structures and Images in the Making of the Nordic Region*, eds. Peter Stadius and Jonas Harvard, 3rd ed. (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2013).
 4. Benjamin G. Martin and Elisabeth Marie Piller, “Cultural Diplomacy and Europe’s Twenty Years’ Crisis, 1919–1939: Introduction”, *Contemporary European History*, vol. 30 (2021): 149–163.
 5. On the pan-Scandinavian movement and dissemination of ideas through different means in the mid- and late nineteenth century, see Ruth Hemstad, *Fra Indian summer til nordisk vinter: Skandinavisk samarbeid, skandinavisme og unionopplosningen* (Oslo: Akademisk publisering, 2008), Hemstad, “Scandinavianism, Nordic Co-operation, and Nordic Democracy”, *Rhetorics of Nordic Democracy*, eds. Jussi Kurunmäki and Johan Strang. *Studia Fennica Historica* vol. 17 (Helsinki: Finnish Literatur Society, 2010), 179–193.
 6. On the social democratic notion of Nordic democracy, see Jussi Kurunmäki. “‘Nordic Democracy’ in 1935. On the Finnish and Swedish Rhetoric of Democracy”, *Rhetorics of Nordic Democracy*, eds. Jussi Kurunmäki and Johan Strang, *Studia Fennica Historica* vol. 17 (Helsinki: Finnish Literatur Society, 2010), 37–82.
 7. Iver Neumann, “A region-building approach to Northern Europe”, *Review of International Studies*, vol. 20, no. 1 (1994): 53–74. Benedict Andersson has framed the concept of imagined communities in understanding nations and national identities (*Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. 2nd ed., London, Verso 1991), and it may arguably also be used in understanding region-building processes—in the Nordic region, initiatives within the fields of literature, history and museums have had region-building purposes.
 8. Johan Strang, “Introduction: The Nordic model of transnational cooperation”, *Nordic Cooperation: A European Region in Transition*, ed. Johan Strang (London: Routledge, 2016), 19.
 9. Neumann, “A region-building approach”, 58.
 10. Neumann, “A region-building approach”, 59. See also Xosé M. Núñez Seixas and Eric Storm, eds., *Regionalism and Modern Europe: Identity*

- Construction and Movements from 1890 to the Present Day* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018).
11. Ruth Hemstad “Scandinavianism: Mapping the Rise of a New Concept”, *Contributions to the History of Concepts*, vol. 13, no. 1 (2018): 1–21.
 12. The most recent re-evaluation of political Scandinavianism is Rasmus Glenthøj and Morten Nordhagen Ottosen, *Union eller undergang. Kampen om en forenet Skandinavien* (Copenhagen: Gads Forlag/Oslo: Scandinavian Academic Press, 2021).
 13. Hemstad, *Fra Indian summer*, 605–631.
 14. Hemstad *Fra Indian summer*.
 15. Hemstad, *Fra Indian summer*, 311–320, 363–368.
 16. Hemstad, *Fra Indian summer*, 363; *Svenska Dagbladet*, 16 October 1906.
 17. Peter Stadius, “Trekungamötet i Malmö 1914: Mot en ny nordisk retorik i skuggan av världskriget”, *Finsk Tidsskrift*, 4 (2014): 369–394.
 18. Michele Micheletti, “Föreningen Norden och nordiskt samarbete—i går, i dag och i morgon”, *Europa i Norden: Europeisering av nordisk samarbete*, eds. Johan P. Olsen and Bjørn Otto Sverdrup (Oslo: Tano Aschehoug, 1998), 318–343.
 19. Recent studies with a more systematic transnational perspective are Peter Stadius “Hundra år av nordism. Föreningarna Norden i går, i dag, i morgon”, *Meningen med föreningen: Föreningarna Norden 100 år*, ed. Henrik Wilén (Copenhagen: Föreningarna Nordens Förbund, 2019); Svein Olav Hansen, *Vennskap og kjennskap i 100 år: Foreningen Norden 1919–2019* (Oslo: Gyldendal, 2020); Micheletti, “Föreningen Norden”.
 20. *Nordisk Familjebok*, 2nd ed. vol. 37, suppl., 1925, 805–806.
 21. “Nordiska möten och sammanslutningar m.m.”, *Nordisk Tidsskrift för vetenskap, konst och industri*, vol. 11 (1935), 92–96, 173–76, 237–240, 319–320, 388–392, 465–472, 542–544, 629–632.
 22. “Nordisk samarbaid gjennom radio. Programchefenes møte i Stockholm”, *Arbeiderbladet*, 4 February 1935. On Nordic radio broadcasting cooperation, see Olav Midttun, “Samarbeid millom norderlandske kringkasterar”, *Nordens Kalender*, 1937, 77–86.
 23. “Nordisk samarbaid”, *Indlandsposten*, 25 July 1939.
 24. Cf. the active joint Nordic participation within the League of Nations in Geneva from 1919, Norbert Götz, “On the Origins of ‘Parliamentary Diplomacy’: Scandinavian ‘Bloc Politics’ and Delegation Policy in the League of Nations”, *Cooperation and Conflict*, vol. 40, no. 3 (2005): 263–279.
 25. Pauli Kettunen, Urban Lundberg, Mirja Österberg and Klaus Petersen, “The Nordic Model and the Rise and Fall of Nordic Cooperation”, *Nordic Cooperation: A European Region in Transition*, ed. Johan Strang (New York: Routledge, 2016), 69–91.

26. Knud Larsen, "Scandinavian Grass Roots: From Peace Movement to Nordic Council", *Scandinavian Journal of History*, vol. 9 (1984): 183–200.
27. Larsen, "Scandinavian Grass Roots", 200.
28. Strang, "Introduction", 3.
29. Norbert Götz, Heidi Haggrén and Mary Hilson, "Nordic Cooperation in the Voluntary Sector", *Nordic Cooperation: A European Region in Transition*, ed. Johan Strang (New York: Routledge, 2016), 57.
30. Götz et al., "Nordic Cooperation in the Voluntary Sector", 58.
31. Larsen, "Scandinavian Grass Roots", 200.
32. Leena Kaukiainen, "From Reluctancy to Activity: Finland's Way to the Nordic Family during 1920's and 1930's", *Scandinavian Journal of History*, vol. 9 (1984): 201–219.
33. Ida Blom, *Kampen om Eirik Raudes land: Pressgruppetittikk i grønlandsspørsmålet 1921–1931* (Oslo: Gyldendal Norsk Forlag, 1973).
34. Edvard Hagerup Bull, "Det nordiske samarbeide i de siste halvhundrede år. Et tilbakeblikk", *Nordisk tidsskrift för vetenskap, konst och industri*, 1928, 3. See also *Politiken*, 5 January 1934.
35. Arne Kobbe, "Stauning og skandinavismen: Tanken som får ny kraft med passende mellemrum", *ABC*, 2 May 1935.
36. Gustav Smedal, *Nordisk samarbeide og Danmarks sydgrense* (Oslo: Fabritius & Sønners forlag, 1938), 9.
37. "Innledning av Lord Cecil", *Nordens Kalender* (1937), 11. In his request to Lord Cecil, Christian Lous Lange, on behalf of the association, self-consciously underlines the importance of the association and its five national groups, which plays "an important part in the intellectual life of these countries". Letter from Chr. L. Lange to Lord Cecil, 6 February 1936, MSS, Add:51193, Cecil Papers, British Library.
38. Hemstad, *Fra Indian summer*.
39. The organization was originally founded in 1912 and resumed its activities in 1932. The Norwegian Labour Party participated as a guest in the first years until 1938, the Labour Union from 1936. Kersti Blidberg, *Splittråd gemenskap: Kontakter och samarbete inom nordisk socialdemokratisk arbetarrörelse 1931–1945* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1984).
40. Götz, Haggrén, Hilson, "Nordic Cooperation in the Voluntary Sector", 57. Bildberg, *Splittråd gemenskap*; See also Mirja Österberg, "'Norden' as a Transnational Space in the 1930s: Negotiated Consensus of 'Nordicness' in the Nordic Cooperation Committee of the Labour Movement", *Labour, Unions and Politics under the North Star: The Nordic Countries, 1700–2000*, eds. Mary Hilson, Silke Neunsinger and Iben Vyff (New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2017), 237–257.
41. "Vår ungdomsbevegelse i rivende vekst", *Arbeiderbladet*, 4 January 1937.

42. Norwegian participants were the later prominent social democratic leaders Haakon Lie and Einar Gerhardsen, “Nordisk samarbeid mellem Oplysningsforbundene”, *Arbeiderbladet*, 7 February 1935.
43. *Studieplan i agitasjon og propaganda*. Arbeidernes Oplysningsforbund (Oslo: Aasens Boktrykkeri, 1934), 3.
44. *Studieplan*, 11–12.
45. *Agitasjon og propaganda: Håndbok for tillitsmenn i de norske arbeiderorganisasjoner* (Oslo: Arbeidernes Oplysningsforbund, 1938), 7.
46. *Agitasjon og propaganda*.
47. See Axel Sømme, Sven Backlund and Arne Sørensen, *Den største høittaler og fem andre aktuelle problemer* (Oslo: Tiden norsk forlag, 1933), 109–134.
48. Johannes Lehmann, ed., *Nordisk Samabejde: Taler holdt i Idrætshuset d. 5. Decbr. 1934 af Per Albin Hansson, Johan Nygaardsvold, Th. Stauning* (Copenhagen: Povl Branner, 1934).
49. Per Albin Hansson, Johan Nygaardsvold, Th. Stauning, Väinö Tanner et al., *Nordisk Samarbejde: Taler* (Copenhagen: Fremad, 1937). See also Kurunmäki, “Nordic Democracy”.
50. Kaare Fostervoll, *Arbeiderskandinavismen i grunnleggningstida*. Skrifter fra Arbeidernes historiske forening (Oslo: Det norske arbeiderpartis forlag, 1935).
51. Lehmann, *Nordisk Samabejde*, 5.
52. “Statsminister Per Albin Hansson”, Lehmann, *Nordisk Samabejde*, 17.
53. Per Albin Hansson, “Arbetarskandinavismen”, *Nordens Kalender* (1937), 87–92; Fostervoll, *Arbeiderskandinavismen*.
54. “Den nye Skandinavisme”, *Social-Demokraten*, 7 December 1934; “Socialdemokratisk Skandinavisme”, *Aalborg Stiftstidende*, 6 December 1934; “Er Skandinavisme et socialistisk Begreb?”, *Lolland-Falsters Folketidende*, 6 December, 1934.
55. “Statsminister Stauning”, Lehmann, *Nordisk Samabejde*, 38.
56. “Statsminister Stauning”, 42.
57. “Stortingspræsident Johan Nygaardsvold”, Lehmann, *Nordisk Samabejde*, 29.
58. Hansen, *Vennskap og kjennskap*; “1919–1939: Hindsgavl, mødested for hele Norden”, *Nordiske: Magasinet om Norden*, vol. 4 (2019), 32.
59. “Husmødrenes Nordens-dag”, *Nationen* 11 March, 1935.
60. *Fyra tal om nordisk demokrati* (Stockholm: Frihets Förlag 1935).
61. *Uusi Suomi*, 29 August 1935, quoted after Kurunmäki, “Nordic Democracy”, 43.
62. “Et enigt Norden i et uenigt Europa”, *Jyllandsposten*, 27 October 1936.
63. “En ‘Nordens dag’ i slutten av oktober: Med propaganda for det nordiske samarbeide”, *Aftenposten*, 9 January 1936; “Nordens dag”, *Aftenbladet*, 8 January 1936.

64. “Et mål for samarbeidet”, *Norges Handels- og Sjøfartstidende*, 27 October 1936.
65. “Nordens delegertmøte samles idag på Holmenkollen”, *Norges Handels- og Sjøfartstidende*, 12 September 1935; “‘Nordens dag’ i slutet av oktober”, *Svenska Dagbladet*, 9 January 1936; “Danmark och nordiskt samarbete”, *Aftonbladet*, 9 October 1936, “Nordens statschefer tala till Nordens folk”, *Hufvudstadsbladet*, 10 October 1936.
66. Norwegian newspapers: www.nb.no, Swedish newspapers: <https://tidningar.kb.se/>, Danish newspapers: www2.statsbiblioteket.dk/mediestream/avis, Swedish-language newspapers in Finland: <https://digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi/search> (accessed 2 January 2022).
67. “Norden i bilder och nationella melodier, ett apropå till Nordens dag 1936”, “Nordens dag på film”, *Svenska Dabladet*, 24 October 1936.
68. The speeches by Swedish Foreign Minister Sandler in Norway and Norwegian Foreign Minister Koht in Gothenburg were published by the Norden Association in Norway and widely distributed, *Nordisk Samarbeide: Taler på Nordens dag av Halvdan Koht og Rickard Sandler* (Oslo: Norden, Norsk forening for nordisk samarbeide, 1937). The Finnish Foreign Minister visited Stockholm.
69. The radio production was transmitted to the United States by the National Broadcasting Corporation and Columbia Broadcasting Company. “Nordens dag hördes fint i USA”, *Aftonbladet*, 29 October 1936.
70. Norwegian King Haakon VII, Danish King Christian X, Swedish King Gustaf V and Finnish President Pehr Evind Svinhufvud.
71. The program is available online at the website of the National Library of Norway (for Norwegian IP-addresses): urn.nb.no/URN:NBN:no-nb_dra_1994-12032P. It concludes with a short remark towards the Nordic diaspora listeners in North America, that the speeches were part of a “mutual Friendship Day of the Northern peoples”.
72. “Nordens dag firas i dagarna tre”, *Svenska Dagbladet*, 22 October 1936.
73. “Nordens statschefer tala till Nordens folk. Internordisk radioutsändning på Nordens dag den 27 oktober”, *Hufvudstadsbladet*, 10 October 1936.
74. The Swedish company Radiotjänst reported that the production was one of the greatest they had ever done. *Aftonbladet*, 29 October 1936. On earlier cooperation, see Midttun, “Samarbeid millom norderlenske kringkasterar”, 77–86.
75. *Nordens läroböcker i historia: Ömsesidig granskning verkställd av Föreningarna Nordens facknämndar*. Föreningarna Nordens Historiska Publikationer vol. 1 (Helsinki: Föreningarna Norden, 1937). “Norden”, *Arbetet*, 27 October 1936. See also Henrik Åström Elmersjö, “Negotiating Norden: Nordic Historians Revising History Textbooks, 1920–1970”, *Making Nordic Historiography: Connections, Tensions and Methodology*,

- 1850–1970, eds. Pertti Haapala, Marja Jalava and Simon Larsson (New York: Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2017).
76. The excessive celebration, without any specific occasion, made people tired, Smedal argued in his 1938 publication, *Nordisk samarbeide*, 18.
 77. The event also promoted the Norden Associations as such; the Norwegian Norden Association tripled its membership to around 4000.
 78. The Swan symbol was used on the first common Nordic stamp in 1956, and redesigned and reduced to one Swan in 1985/2004 as the logo of the official Nordic cooperation. Nordic Day was celebrated in October in 1951, 1956, 1961, 1966 and 1971. From 1977, and particularly after the celebration of the 50-year anniversary of The Helsinki Treaty of 1962 (the “Nordic Constitution”) in 2012, Nordic Day has been celebrated on 23 March.
 79. www.norden.org (accessed 22 February 2022).
 80. The revived Nordic Day tradition commemorates The Helsinki Treaty, signed 23 March 1962, as a Treaty of Cooperation between Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.
 81. A longer version may be viewed on YouTube and on the website of the Nordic Council/Nordic Council of Ministers, <https://www.norden.org/en/declaration/our-vision-2030> (accessed 22 February 2022).
 82. Strang, “Introduction”, 3.
 83. H. Stenius & H. Haggren, “Det nordiska samarbetets vardagspraktiker: Vad vet vi om dessa förutom att de har varit/är viktige?”, *Finland i Norden, Finland 50 år i Nordiska rådet*, ed. Lars-Erik Häggman (Helsinki: Pohjola-Norden, 2005). Strang, *Nordic Cooperation*.

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“It All Comes from Beer”: Tuborg, Carlsberg, and the Role of Film in Danish Cultural Diplomacy

C. Claire Thomson

*Can beer inspire you to travel the world? Probably. It all comes
from beer*

—Carlsberg marketing campaign, 2020

One June evening in 1935, the salubrious central London boulevard of Park Lane was briefly witness to a 1600-strong horde emerging from Grosvenor House, all of them with beer glass in hand. According to a short report headlined “Films and Beer Glasses” in *The Times*, the large crowd had enjoyed a selection of films depicting “the attractions of Copenhagen in particular and Danish enterprises in general”. The film screenings were accompanied by a traditional Danish “cold table”, with “some tons” of food (and presumably beer) having been flown in “by airliner” from Copenhagen. Hosted by the Anglo-Danish Society, the

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F. Norén et al. (eds.), *Nordic Media Histories of Propaganda and
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event was the brainchild of Einar Dessau, an amateur filmmaker, radio pioneer, and heir to the Tuborg brewing dynasty.¹

This vignette in *The Times* ties together a number of threads that linked Denmark and Britain across the North Sea in the inter-war period. Firstly, strenuous efforts were ongoing at governmental level to strengthen trading links between the two countries; these efforts were buttressed by businesses and trade associations.² Secondly, economic relations were underpinned by bilateral cultural diplomacy, in the broadest sense. The Anglo-Danish Society, which hosted the film evening on Park Lane, is a good example of this activity. As the headline of the 1935 article in *The Times* suggests, this sort of cultural diplomacy was often underpinned by a combination of visual media and material culture (in this case, film and beer glasses). Trade deals and international understandings are facilitated by interpersonal interaction, the exchange of gifts, and, of course, refreshments—as Einar Dessau and his friends in the Anglo-Danish Society knew only too well.

While beer remains a social lubricant today, what is more historically specific is the kind of media event that Dessau organized on Park Lane in June 1935: a non-theatrical screening of a commissioned, promotional film, typically transported and screened in portable, small-gauge format. While it would be another decade before Danish documentary and informational film really blossomed, under pressure from the German occupation of the country during World War II,³ the inter-war years spawned a number of notable film commissions with the aim of promoting Danish culture and industry abroad. Curiously, beer often played a role in such efforts: not only in trade terms but also because the two major Danish beer brands (Tuborg and Carlsberg) were significant actors in philanthropy, science, nation-branding and filmmaking.

What this chapter aims to do, then, is to look through the bottom of the beer glass, so to speak, at a selection of films made with the involvement of Tuborg and Carlsberg to promote Denmark overseas before and after World War II. Here, I am inspired by Stephen Greenblatt's "Mobility Studies Manifesto", in which he insists that any understanding of how culture travels must "shed light on hidden as well as conspicuous movements" of objects, texts, people, images, and so on, and "identify and analyze the 'contact zones'" where cultural goods are exchanged.⁴

Examining such films has something to reveal about their role as "propaganda" for Danish culture and industry. Such films were often referred to as *propagandafilm* by commissioning bodies and other authorities, but

they sit at the intersection of a number of sub-genres of “useful cinema”,⁵ films which are defined by their intended purpose of educating, persuading or enlightening their audiences. How did such films get commissioned and distributed, and how did they represent Denmark to an implied foreign viewer? During World War II, international systems of exchange of informational films were established via diplomatic networks, national cultural institutes, and international organizations, and Denmark and the UK were quick to engage post-war in this kind of formal exchange.⁶ Particularly after the war, this international ecology was predicated on, as Kirsten Ostherr describes it “a mass, civic-minded audience willing to view regularly the thousands of instructional films that were produced in the post-war period”.⁷

A fascinating aspect of this system of film-based cultural diplomacy is the role of “diplomatic entrepreneurs”.⁸ In the context of informational film, I use this term to refer to business people, explorers or other luminaries who carried small-gauge informational films with them around the world. Such individuals feature in this chapter—Einar Dessau being an obvious example—but I also want to expand on this notion to consider the role of non-governmental organizations in the production of *propaganda* film. In the films discussed below, beer brewed by Carlsberg and Tuborg becomes a national cipher, entangling images and narratives of culture, industry, modernity, science, and philanthropy.

“NUESTRA MATERIAL DE PROPAGANDA”: MARKETING TUBORG

The film screened on Park Lane seems to have been the 31-minute *Copenhagen, Gay and Vivacious*, which Einar Dessau himself had directed in collaboration with the veteran Danish director A. W. Sandberg in 1934. Commissioned by the Tuborg-Carlsberg conglomerate,⁹ the film shows off Copenhagen through the eyes of an English couple, and was a black-and-white sound film produced by Palladium, one of Denmark’s major studios. Music was by Kai Normann Andersen, conducted by Erik Tuxen. All in all, this indicates a prestigious film that was an investment. Various international titles are listed under this film’s entry in the Danish Film Institute’s database,¹⁰ indicating that this film travelled, or at least was intended to travel, to a broad range of countries: *Copenhagen, la ciudad hermosa, viva y encantadora, Kopenhagen, die schöne und heitere Stadt,*

Copenhagen, la ville jolie, gaie et charmante, Kopenhagen, de vroolijke, lachend-moiïe Stadt.

This list of international titles reflects Dessau's work to expand the global reach of Tuborg: by the time he retired as a company director in 1963, he had expanded sales of the beer to 63 territories.¹¹ Dessau was a trained engineer and a life-long innovator in his use of radio and media, and in his marketing strategies. The collaboration on the London film screening with the Anglo-Danish Society exemplifies how such films often travelled—that is, under the auspices of ad hoc visits by diplomatic entrepreneurs, as well as more established consular and business channels—but it is also suggestive of Dessau's nose for cultural diplomacy and his international connections at high levels. The individual and collective social capital of the Anglo-Danish Society's members can be illustrated by the short account in *The Times*, each June through to the outbreak of World War II, of the Society's annual dinner at Claridge's Hotel. Invariably, these dinners featured British and Danish minor royalty, up to and including the Danish Crown Prince and Princess at the 1939 gathering. The courses were punctuated by toasts to the bilateral friendship of the two nations and speeches touting the steady improvement in trade relations.¹² As well as oiling the wheels of Anglo-Danish trade, the Society funded exchange programmes after World War II to give British children access to Danish tuberculosis sanatoria, and to facilitate mobility for students, a scholarship programme which continues to this day.¹³ The screening on Park Lane was therefore an example of how informational films were put to work amid a complex web of cultural diplomacy which combined trade relations with cultural, political, intellectual, and even philanthropic exchanges.

While the report in *The Times* did not specify the design of the beer glasses gifted to Dessau's guests in London, images of contemporary promotional glasses are to be found in surviving documentary and advertising footage from 1936, a year after the London trip. Poul Eibye, the same cinematographer who had worked on *Copenhagen, Gay and Vivacious*, shot 50 minutes' worth of footage for the Tuborg brewery (*Tuborg Film I-6*).¹⁴ These clips seem to showcase some of Dessau's marketing ideas and reflect his ambition to expand exports into new markets: illustrious guests visiting the brewery, some of them being treated to a guided tour by Dessau himself, or his father, company director Benny Dessau; clips showing trucks painted with "Bière Tuborg", and "Boy Beer Tuborg Pilsener" (for the francophone and anglophone markets); English-language labels being pasted onto bottles in a labelling machine; and four

bottles with different labels on a shelf, all in English. A giant bottle standing at the centre of a model village rotates on a turntable, and beer is poured from a bottle into a glass by an invisible hand. The Scandinavian market is not forgotten; a shot records the delivery of many cases to Swedish training ship *Fylgia*. Most strikingly, a sequence showcases marketing materials for the unfortunately named *Cerveza Boy, la legitima pilsener Tuborg*, showing a young Black servant boy and a drinking sailor. A poster featuring the boy and the sailor unfurls on screen, detailing “nuestro material de propaganda”, a branded range of merchandise which includes a brochure, playing cards, a dice shaker, and table skittles [Fig. 1]. These would seem to be film clips destined for trade fairs in the Spanish or Latin American market, along with the promotional items, and indeed the beer, that they showcase. In fact, Tuborg had had this and other export markets in its sights since its foundation in 1873, as evinced not least by the brewery’s harborside location north of Copenhagen, though high tariffs had made export to South America difficult.¹⁵



Fig. 1 Promotional footage for Tuborg displays a range of branded merchandise, or “material de propaganda”, destined for the Spanish-speaking market. From *Tuborg Film 1–6*, Poul Eibye, Denmark, 1936. Framegrab

These film fragments, tantalizingly decontextualized in their new digital instantiation, consolidate a few points for us: firstly, the use of the term “propaganda” as a synonym for what we would today call “marketing” (and, interestingly, its use in Spanish by a Danish company). At almost the same time, “propaganda” was also used in Danish in the mission statement of the dominant Danish body on the informational film scene: Dansk Kulturfilm was established in 1932 to coordinate the production of films for “education, enlightenment, and general propaganda”, indicating the flexibility of the term.¹⁶ Secondly, the involvement of the illustrious A. W. Sandberg as co-director of the tourist film, as well as renowned cinematographer Poul Eibye in both the prestige production and the more workaday publicity footage, has something to say about Tuborg’s marketing budget. But they also confirm that these two quite different domains of filmmaking were not discrete; indeed, there was considerable cross-over of personnel between documentary and commissioned films and feature filmmaking in Denmark.¹⁷ Concomitantly, taking these two points together, and as we shall also see in connection with the other films discussed below, it is often difficult for us today to tease out the distinctions between genres of the period, especially when the films are on the move—tourist film or educational film? Science film or travel film?

Thirdly, in their contingent, archival ordering, Eibye’s film fragments juxtapose disparate actors in the network of relations between beer and society. What emerges from the accidental montage is a tension between beer as a drink for the masses—visualized by the sheer volume of bottles and cases borne out onto the streets of Copenhagen by a never-ending parade of horse-drawn carts—and the kudos of the Tuborg brewery as a place where film stars and royalty (from Jean Hersholt to King Christian X) would flock to be guided around the premises by its directors. The footage thus reflects the global web of royals, philanthropists, tourists, businesspeople, and, of course, beer drinkers connected by the commercial, promotional, and philanthropic activities of Tuborg and other Danish breweries—and by the transnational movement of beer, and of films.

THE CARLSBERG MODEL: BEER, SCIENCE, AND PHILANTHROPY

Eibye’s surviving footage for Tuborg includes a sequence documenting a trade fair stall erected by Bryggeriforeningen, the Danish Brewers’ Association. Established in 1899, this organization still represents the

interests of almost all Danish brewers. Before Eibye’s camera, a rotating display listing the achievements of the country’s brewers includes a panel depicting two scientists (one male, one female) conducting experiments and claims proudly: “Danish research—supported by Danish breweries—has broken new ground for beer-brewing worldwide”.

In fact, the connections between Danish science and Danish beer were (and are) intricate and originate from the distinctive business model of the Carlsberg brewery. While Tuborg was more conventional in its status as “a corporation to create profits for shareholders”, Carlsberg was purportedly “more quality-conscious and independent of profit”.¹⁸ Carlsberg’s founder J. C. Jacobsen had been in the brewing business since around 1840, and a growing (and thirsty) urban population and the quality of his product had resulted in a healthy and expanding enterprise. Carlsberg began to export its wares to Great Britain in 1868 and to Asia in 1889; Ditlev Tamm contextualizes these export ventures within the national crisis for Denmark triggered by its defeat and loss of territory in the Dano-Prussian war of 1864, and the country’s efforts to rebuild, not least through industrialization.¹⁹ In this respect alone, Jacobsen was a leader, but his contribution to a re-imagining of the Danish nation went much further. In 1876, Jacobsen established Carlsbergfondet, the Carlsberg Foundation, and entrusted the Danish Academy of Sciences and Arts (Videnskabernes Selskab) to run it, with five university professors appointed as directors.²⁰ This was an expression of his faith in science to improve the brewing industry; he had less faith in his son, Carl Jacobsen, and left his entire fortune and company to the Foundation on his death in 1887.²¹ Nonetheless, Jacobsen *filis* built on his father’s principles with his arts-focused philanthropy under the rubric of Ny Carlsberg (New Carlsberg, established 1882), adopting the motto *Laboremus pro patria* (“let us work for the fatherland”). In 1906, these old and new Carlsberg businesses merged to form Carlsberg Breweries.²² What father and son had in common was a belief that “wealth and prestige brought responsibility, that from wealth flows an obligation to do something for the society in which they worked and whose growing thirst for beer gave them the economic possibility to do so”.²³

Indeed, science related to brewing was not the only field in which Carlsbergfondet sponsored research. Carlsberg’s expansion to the sponsorship of other scientific disciplines can be traced to the influence of Professor Johannes Schmidt and other members of the Foundation’s Board in the 1920s.²⁴ In turn, Carlsbergfondet’s support ensured that Denmark emerged as a global leader in certain fields, not least Schmidt’s

own specialism, marine biology.²⁵ Schmidt was not only an eminent scientist but also a pioneer in the use of film and radio to disseminate his work. Furthermore, he went to great lengths to flag his research achievements as Danish. Schmidt's ambitious expeditions to explore the world's oceans offer another example of how Danish beer became entangled with cultural diplomacy, film, and, in this case, science. In what follows, we look more closely at two films associated with the Carlsberg expedition: a film shot during the voyage by Schmidt the scientist, and a film that was carried around the world by Schmidt the diplomatic entrepreneur.

Images from the Carlsberg Fund's Global Oceanographic Expedition

As early as 1922, Schmidt had made a film of his early 1920s' Atlantic voyage, re-enacted in the narrow Øresund Strait that separates Denmark from Sweden and used it to illustrate his lectures on marine biology in London, Liverpool, and Paris.²⁶ The strategy of using moving images to mediate his research to the public (and to spread the reputation of Carlsberg as a sponsor of science) found expression again when, in 1928, Schmidt embarked on a hugely ambitious new expedition: to circumnavigate the globe, investigating water temperature, sediment, and marine life in the oceans. The vessel for this voyage, the *Dana*, had started life as a steam-trawler built for the British Navy during the Great War, and she anchored at Plymouth on the outward and return voyages, securing interest amongst the British public. A correspondent for *The Times* in 1930 commented that Schmidt's earlier discoveries about the life cycle of the Atlantic eel had "captured the imagination not only of marine biologists, but of all who as intelligent amateurs take an interest in the wonders of natural history in general and of marine life in particular". The same journalist explained that the Carlsberg Foundation's "generosity to science is a household word in Denmark".²⁷

Along with stocks of food and beer, and scientific equipment, Schmidt and his crew took with them a camera and rolls of film.²⁸ The resulting 20-minute film²⁹ is a fascinating hybrid: it is a travelogue, capturing soaring albatross above the ocean, Tahitian washerwomen, Chinese sailing boats, and a voyage through the Panama Canal. There are also extensive explanations of the scientific experiments undertaken during the expedition: sampling and experiments carried out by the crew are recorded on film; reconstructions demonstrating, for example, seawater and silt

samples are filmed in an aquarium; animated drawings clarify the detail; and frequent intertitles supplement the visual information. In this respect, the film is reminiscent of French marine biologist Jean Painlevé’s³⁰ contemporary nature films, though less magical and less ambitious in its use of magnification and other visual novelties. That said, Schmidt’s film has its whimsical moments: the crew frequently bring new pets on board, such as a small monkey, a sea turtle, and a pig.

Less charmingly, the film is of its time in its othering of a Japanese woman bartering with a sailor or the intertitle which jokes that this is a “black” day for the ship, because “negroes” are loading it up with coal. Altogether, the film is a rich case study in the production of scientific facts through movement and on screen: facts as they construct animal life, land- and seascapes, and people of other races and traditions, as profoundly “other”. But it also seems cleverly calculated to function effectively as a compelling and persuasive educational film, because it balances scientific information and explication, both visual and verbal, with the spectacular, the contemplative, and the cute.

The film produces space and facts in consort with each other. Its short length necessitates a radically truncated, or rather fragmented, account of the voyage; the film sends back “postcards” from a bewildering assortment of places. Without the opening animation of the ship’s route (Fig. 2), there would be no sense of spatial continuity or progress. The globe is a series of waters to be penetrated and sampled, with diverting land- and cityscapes inhabited by exotic creatures, people, and vehicles. While the space of the world is presented as discontinuous, however, the film also renders very viscerally how things move around the globe: food and coal need to be procured and loaded on board; animals seem incongruous on the deck, lifted out of their natural habitat; samples of seabed silt and water are isolated and transported around the globe; radio signals are received by the ship’s operator. Like Greenblatt, this is a film that takes mobility literally and shows—both deliberately and inadvertently—how culture moves, while itself being predicated on maritime mobility.

In its animated maps of the global route of the *Dana*, in its emphasis on mastery of global space, and in its painstaking demonstrations of water sampling techniques at depth, the film envisions how Carlsberg’s money and expertise enact a profound and very physical shift in the frontiers of knowledge: “the scientific frontier of the deep sea was pushed literally kilometres down into the ocean and wide across the Atlantic at first, then later the Pacific and Indian Oceans”.³¹



Fig. 2 An animated map previews the circuitous route of the expeditionary vessel *Dana* through the Pacific, the South China Sea, the Indian Ocean, the Mediterranean, and back to Denmark via Plymouth. From *Billeder fra Carlsberg-Fondets oceanografiske Expedition omkring Jorden 1928–1930* (Danmarks Fiskeri- og Havundersøgelser, Denmark, 1930). Framegrab

The Film About Denmark, and the Danmarksfilm Tradition

But not only was the expedition itself to be filmed: on board the ship would be copies of two promotional films about Denmark, and Schmidt would ensure that they were screened to local audiences in places agreed with the Foreign Office. The *Dana*, then, was carrying another kind of artefact designed to travel: the propaganda film. As Poulsen puts it, the expedition not only was to be “a showcase for Danish enterprise and ingenuity”, but would also provide the opportunity to “highlight and showcase aspects of Denmark” on a truly global scale. For example, in Sydney, Wellington and Bangkok a “substantial Danish contingent” was to be found, making “a willing audience for the Danish talks and films”, and in Durban City Hall in South Africa it attracted a crowd of 2500.³²

The films on board the *Dana* had both been made a few years earlier and bore the baldly literal titles typical of their time: one which focused on the Faroe islands, and another entitled *Danmarksfilmen* (*The Film about Denmark*, Poul Henningsen, 1926), an epic documentary at 150 minutes in length, displaying any and all thinkable aspects of Danish life: nature, architecture, folk culture, and industry.³³ It is not until the 85-minute

mark that around five minutes are devoted to an aerial view of the vast scale of the Carlsberg and Tuborg breweries, and a range of processes in the production of beer are demonstrated, showing a bustling, well-ordered factory setting full of gleaming, whirring equipment. While the length of *The Film About Denmark* seems excessive, and many of its sequences do seem interminable to today’s viewer, it was not untypical of its genre and time. A comparable undertaking was the Finnish six-part documentary *Finlandia* (Erkki Karu & Eero Leväluoma, 1922).³⁴

Another context for *The Film About Denmark* is the national genre it established, known today as *Danmarksfilm*: “Denmark Film(s)” in English. Ib Bondebjerg gives an overview of how the genre has evolved since its mid-1920s origins, retaining, and occasionally subverting, an established grammar of images and ideas about the nation.³⁵ Oddly enough, the image of the beer bottle has been a crucial part of that evolution. While in the 1926 film that travelled the globe with Schmidt’s expedition bottles feature in great numbers in an aerial shot of the bottling hall, the same object was instrumental in having the next *Danmarksfilm* censured by the press. This film, simply entitled *Danmark*, was commissioned by the Foreign Ministry, Tourist Board, and other organizations, and directed by the designer and cultural critic Poul Henningsen in 1935. As Bondebjerg explains, controversy was stirred by the film’s avant-garde editing, not least “when a shot of beer bottles on a production line is succeeded by images of a great number of foreign envoys getting out of a car to visit the Danish king”.³⁶ The Carlsberg Foundation, Ny Carlsberg, and the brewing industry itself were credible and respectable pillars of the social and economic life of the nation, and part of its visual repertoire. Royals, film stars, and other dignitaries were happy to be filmed for newsreels tasting pilsner in the brewery function room; princes sat down to eat on board the *Dana*; some documentary footage of esteemed guests and schoolchildren alike flocking past the stone elephants guarding the brewery entrance could even be conjectured to frame Carlsberg as a kind of proxy royal court.³⁷ But in the case of Henningsen’s 1935 *Danmark*, the Soviet montage-style collision of royalty with beer in an already controversial film triggered the plebeian associations of the national tittle—a tension echoed in the popular nickname for a bottle of Carlsberg: *Hof*, literally “court”. Later iterations of the *Danmarksfilm*³⁸ continue to feature beer brewing and drinking as crucial visual icons of Denmark and, concomitantly, as genre markers. For example, close-ups of bottles circling in a labelling machine under the watchful eye of workers feature in the

high-water mark of the genre, the Oscar-nominated short *A City Called Copenhagen* (Jørgen Roos, 1960).³⁹

The existence of a Danish-language printed programme for the 1926 *Danmarksfilm* makes it clear that the film had a double purpose, at least during the expedition. It could indeed function as propaganda for Denmark as a leading industrial hub or picturesque tourist destination. But it could also serve as a nostalgic litany of images of the homeland amongst the worldwide diaspora that the good ship *Dana* visited. The Danish-language printed programme begins by explaining the origins of the film as a Tourist Board project for foreigners, but ends with a declaration of patriotic affect: “Denmark,—our Fatherland, as it looked thousands of years ago,—as it looks today after suffering and joy,—sorrow and loss,—Denmark, as Danes will always love it!—”.⁴⁰ It is unclear whether a similar brochure was taken along on board the *Dana* for Danish-speaking ex-patriots, but the tone of the programme provides a sense of the nation-building effects that may have obtained alongside its original goal of cultural diplomacy. The journey of *The Film About Denmark* around the world, aboard Schmidt’s marine survey vessel, is a particularly intriguing example of diplomatic entrepreneurship, with film (and beer) in a key role.

IT ALL COMES FROM BEER

The Film About Denmark and its successors in the *Danmarksfilm* genre tend to situate the Carlsberg and Tuborg breweries as fixtures at the heart of Copenhagen, modern facilities from which beer flows outwards to the nation and the world. A later film commissioned by Carlsberg goes further, articulating how Carlsberg had shaped the cityscape and underpinned Danish scientific and artistic life. Destined for the anglophone market, this 1952 film goes so far as to declare in its title that *It All Comes from Beer*⁴¹—a motto still used by Carlsberg today in its online promotion.⁴²

The 15-minute film fastidiously explains for an anglophone audience how a range of aspects of mid-century Danish life did, indeed, “come from beer”—at least in the sense that the Carlsberg brewery’s profits were ploughed into the arts and sciences. The audiences at the film’s 1952 premiere in London⁴³ would have learnt about the equivalent of GBP 3.5 million given to science by Carlsbergfondet (the Carlsberg Foundation) to date, encompassing cancer research, Greenland expeditions, and funding for visiting researchers. The film also shows some of the 80,000 visitors from all over the world who, the narrator claims, visited the brewery every

year. Indeed, from other surviving footage of the brewery from the early 1930s onwards, it is clear that Carlsberg had enough kudos to attract illustrious visitors from movie stars to royalty for tours of the premises, as we witnessed earlier depicted in the Tuborg footage.

The film struggles to articulate the science funded by Carlsbergfondet on screen in compelling ways, choosing to solve the issue mainly via historical reconstruction. While other examples of surviving footage from the breweries demonstrate industrial and scientific processes in detail, drawing on the process film genre, *It All Comes from Beer* leaves the film format to do the heavy lifting in this respect: allegedly the first 35-mm colour film shot in Denmark,⁴⁴ the film was cutting-edge for its time and ostentatiously expensive. The (now-digitized) 15-minute version screened abroad was cut down from some three hours of footage of historical reconstruction and documentation of processes in the brewery shot over the previous five years. Similarly, the film does little to explore the impressive collections of sculpture donated by Ny Carlsberg to its dedicated museum, Glyptoteket, and dotted around the Copenhagen streetscape; even the world-famous Little Mermaid, commissioned by the founder’s son Carl Jacobsen in 1909, is given only a cursory panning shot. Still, *It All Comes from Beer* does establish that such was Carlsberg’s tentacular socio-cultural reach that a film documenting the company’s influence on Danish science and the Copenhagen streetscape inescapably also functioned as a handy introduction to Denmark, and even as an anglophone *Danmarksfilm*. A throwaway remark by a British journalist in 1957 is suggestive of Carlsberg’s renown in this respect: a visit to the Glyptotek, recounted as part of a travel feature, refers to “that engagingly philanthropic brewery organization, the Carlsberg Foundation”.⁴⁵

It All Comes from Beer was made at a moment of confidence for Carlsberg, as post-war beer consumption rocketed at home and abroad, and it held the lion’s share of the domestic market. However, the early- to mid-1950s was a watershed, when Tuborg reversed a slump in sales and national market share, overtaking Carlsberg in productivity and profitability, and eventually leading to a merger in 1969–1970.⁴⁶

CONCLUSION

The title of Carlsberg’s showpiece 1952 film continues to resonate across Carlsberg’s social media presence today. For example, the 170th anniversary celebrations of the brewery in 2017 spawned a number of short videos, one of which invites the viewer to *Fly with Drones and Discover the Art*

that Comes from Beer.⁴⁷ This 80-second promotional film employs, as the title suggests, a pair of futuristic drones to transport the viewer through the galleries of Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, the kinaesthetic sweep of the robots generating a compelling sense of the volumes and surfaces of the sculptures and marble columns as they unfold in space. Emerging from the roof of the museum and hovering over the Copenhagen skyline, the drones suggest the continued centrality of Carlsberg's architectural and cultural legacy to the city and nation.

For the brewing company, the phrase "It All Comes from Beer" is a resonant and succinct marketing mantra, explaining the impact of the distinctive business model that ploughs profits back into science and art. But if we take the mantra seriously, following the travels of Dessau, Schmidt and others, and the films and paraphernalia they took with them, we can observe that in the encounters where the glasses clink, the work of cultural diplomacy—and indeed cultural mobility—gets done.

Perhaps we could go further and think of beer itself as a medium. Its chemical and biological instantiation carries textural, olfactory, and gustatory information to the consumer; the glasses that contain it are often inscribed with the logos of the manufacturers; and as we have seen, its consumption as an element in film-centred cultural diplomacy is hard to distil from its representation on screen as scientific process, cultural ritual, and multisensory experience. As a product for export in its own right, beer carried (and still carries) with it a diverse and heavy cultural ballast, shaping the image of Denmark abroad. And a key image that emerged from the screens of the 1930–1950s was of a nation at the cutting-edge of science and industry—in large part due to the tentacular reach of the large brewing companies, Carlsberg and Tuborg, pioneers in promoting their own philanthropic and scientific achievements on film and integrating them into the composite image of the nation that was, and is, exported, in a very material sense.

NOTES

1. Anonymous, "Films and Beer Glasses", *The Times*, 21 June 1935.
2. For case studies illustrating the development of Denmark's trade relations with Great Britain in this period, see Mads Mordhorst, "ARLA: From a Decentralized Cooperation to an MNE", and Martin Jes Iversen and Andrew Arnold, "Carlsberg: Regulation of the Home Market and International Expansion", both in *Creating Nordic Capitalism: The*

- Business History of a Competitive Periphery*, eds. Susanna Fellman, Martin Jes Iversen, Hans Sjögren and Lars Thue (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).
3. Lars-Martin Sørensen, *Dansk film under Nazismen* (København: Lindhardt & Ringhof, 2014); C. Claire Thomson, *Short Films from a Small Nation: Danish Informational Cinema 1935–1965* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018), 56–63.
 4. Stephen Greenblatt, “A Mobility Studies Manifesto”, *Cultural Mobility: A Manifesto*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 250–3.
 5. Charles Acland and Haidee Wasson, eds., *Useful Cinema* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011).
 6. Thomson, *Short Films from a Small Nation*, 71–72.
 7. Kirsten Ostherr, “Health Films, Cold War, and the Production of Patriotic Audiences: *The Body Fights Bacteria* (1948)”, *Useful Cinema*, eds. Charles Acland and Haidee Wasson (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011), 103–122, 114.
 8. Kristine Kjærsgaard, “A Public Diplomacy Entrepreneur: Danish Ambassador Bodil Begtrup in Iceland, Switzerland and Portugal, 1949–1973”, *Histories of Public Diplomacy and Nation-Branding in the Nordic and Baltic Worlds: Representing the Periphery*, eds. Louis Clerc, Nikolas Glover and Paul Jordan (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 102–122.
 9. Tuborg had entered into a cooperation and profit-sharing agreement with its rival brewery Carlsberg in 1903. See Ditlev Tamm, *The Carlsberg Story: Founders, Foundations, and Fortunes* (Cham: Springer, 2020), 24.
 10. Danish Film Institute, “Copenhagen, Gay and Vivacious”, Filmdatabasen, <https://www.dfi.dk/en/viden-om-film/filmdatabasen/film/copenhagen-gay-and-vivacious> (accessed 30 July 2021). For additional information and stills, see Copenhagen, Gay and Vivacious: (https://www.criticalpast.com/video/65675036541_Copenhagen-Gay-and-Vivacious_Hans-Christian-Anderson-statue_Opera-House_markets (accessed 31 July 2021)). Unfortunately, the film is not available to view freely online at this time.
 11. Ib Gejl, “Einar Dessau”, *Dansk Biografisk Leksikon*, 2014, https://biografiskleksikon.lex.dk/Einar_Dessau (accessed 30 July 2021).
 12. Anonymous, “Danish Regard for Britain: Crown Prince’s Tribute”, *The Times*, 18 May 1939, 14.
 13. The Anglo-Danish Society, “History”, <https://www.anglo-danishsociety.org.uk/history> (accessed 11 October 2021).
 14. *Tuborg Film 1–6*, Poul Eibye, Denmark, 1936: <https://www.danmark-paafilm.dk/film/tuborg-film-1-6> (accessed 8 October 2021).
 15. Tamm, *The Carlsberg Story*, 26–7.
 16. Thomson, *Short Films from a Small Nation*, 8.

17. See Thomson, *Short Films from a Small Nation*.
18. Tamm, *The Carlsberg Story*, 24, 26. Tuborg established its own philanthropic foundation in 1931.
19. Tamm, *The Carlsberg Story*, 25.
20. Carlsbergfondet, “Carlsbergfondets historie”, <https://www.carlsbergfondet.dk/da/Om%20fondet/Carlsbergfondet/Carlsbergfondets%20historie> (accessed 4 April 2021).
21. Tamm, *The Carlsberg Story*, 52.
22. Carlsberg Group, “Who We Are: Our Rich Heritage”, <https://www.carlsberggroup.com/who-we-are/about-the-carlsberg-group/our-rich-heritage/> (accessed 23 February 2022).
23. Tamm, *The Carlsberg Story*, 52.
24. Bo Poulsen, *Global Marine Science and Carlsberg: The Golden Connections of Johannes Schmidt (1877–1933)* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 17.
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Nordic Public Information: An Epistemic Community of Experiences and Ideas in the 1970s

Fredrik Norén

The 1970s was a decade of information debates. Often, UNESCO's biannual General Conference in Nairobi 1976 is used as a symbol by scholars to exemplify these intense discussions. At that meeting, delegates from the global south advocated for redistributed flows of information and for enhanced national control over broadcasting and newspaper media—a new world order of information.¹ Other discussions have not received the same scholarly attention. In parallel with the UNESCO meeting, for example, another conference took place in Oslo in Norway. Here, delegates from the Nordic countries gathered to discuss other kinds of information flows, those between public agencies and citizens, so-called public information. Based on the archived minutes of the Oslo meeting, no such intense debates seemed to have occurred as the ones that took place in Nairobi, and the topic and circumstances were of course different. Still, the Nordic participants considered issues of public information urgent, connected to contemporary and future societal challenges and problems.² Moreover, they were

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regarded as issues with shared features and challenges that needed to be discussed in a transnational community. Focusing on a specific Swedish agency—the Board for Civic Information³ (Nämnden för samhällsinformation)—this chapter examines how Nordic and international actors exchanged experiences and ideas of public information during the 1970s.

There were several contextual similarities among the Nordic countries related to issues of public information in the 1960s and the 1970s. The heightened attention to how the state should communicate laws and recommendations to its citizens, for example, was fuelled by the increased complexity of an expanding public sector, demands for a strengthening of citizens' capacity to participate in societal processes, and a changing media landscape. These shared conditions make the Nordic region an interesting case to study how experiences and ideas of public information travelled and were discussed.

This chapter treats public information as an information policy-related problem and at the same time a cross-border problem shared by different countries. Three research questions are posed: Which kinds of experiences and ideas related to public information travelled across the Nordic countries, and in which forums were they discussed? What interests were represented when actors met from different countries? Can we discern an ambition to form a Nordic Model for public information? By analytically approaching this study from a transnational standpoint, it is possible to examine problems and opportunities connected to public information that were shared among stakeholders from different countries, and how these actors could have a potential influence on national policies.

This chapter uses the term “public information”.⁴ This term signals a broader notion than strictly dissemination of information about laws and regulations from state agencies to citizens, so-called governmental information. Public information, in turn, should here be understood as governmental information and other kinds of information that are thought of as important from a societal point of view and delivered by society-oriented organizations and industries, for instance trade unions and state-owned companies. Hence, such information could broadly relate to various aspects that citizens would need to navigate in society, such as workers' rights and consumer information.⁵ Theoretically, *epistemic community* and *circulation of knowledge* are used to unpack public information as a transnational issue in the Nordic region during the 1970s.

Empirically, the chapter foregrounds the Swedish Board for Civic Information, active between 1971 and 1981, and traces its contacts

outside the national context. The analysis reconstructs the Board's international contacts and exchanges through its archived correspondence series. Hence, the representation of countries is empirically defined. Consequently, this has generated an analysis that emphasizes Norwegian and Danish exchanges, some Finnish ones, no Islandic connections, and a few exchanges with countries outside the Nordic region. Due to the principle of public access to government files in Sweden, most meetings of this kind should have resulted in written, and later filed, correspondence between the Swedish and the foreign party. The archived accounts of these meetings—study visits, seminars, and workshops—are unfortunately often scarce in details, especially when it comes to thorough meeting minutes. Only some conferences have left a more detailed documentation. Still, the material provides a solid base to approach the chapter's research questions.

Research on public information tends to focus on contemporary and best practice-oriented issues.⁶ Scholarly works on its historical developments—especially relating to the 1970s—are scarcer, and those that exist tend to focus on specific countries. Within a Nordic context, and except for some scattered articles and book chapters, there are only a few notable contributions. Fredrik Norén's PhD thesis, for example, on the formation of governmental information in Sweden between 1965 and 1975, and Jesper Vestermark Køber's PhD thesis on the concept of local democracy in Denmark in the 1970s, which also touches upon public information policies.⁷ Hence, this chapter contributes to this research body by examining public information as a transnational and Nordic issue during the 1970s.

EPISTEMIC COMMUNITY AND CIRCULATION OF KNOWLEDGE

Scholars of information science tend to argue that the field of information policy is characterized by porous boundaries to other related policy fields such as education, security, and health. One reason for this is the ambiguous notion of information, which can allude to different things in various contexts. Consequently, information policy issues have the potential to attract stakeholders from different societal sectors, representing different interests.⁸ These conditions make it relevant to also understand the formation of public information policies in relation to the framework of *epistemic community*.

Epistemic community is a concept developed by political scientist Peter M. Haas to understand how the complexity and uncertainty of a policy issue, often shared between countries or regions, are addressed. Haas

defines such communities as “a network of professionals with recognized expertise and competence in a particular domain and an authoritative claim to policy-relevant knowledge within that domain or issue-area”.⁹ An epistemic community can consist of different governmental and non-governmental professional actors. Together, they embody a shared worldview deriving from a common set of normative and causal beliefs, as well as shared knowledge, notion of validity, and a joint policy mission for which the actors produce relevant knowledge.¹⁰ In particular, issues that comprise complexity and uncertainty—for example, the principles for and organizational forms of public information in the 1970s—tend to stimulate demands for knowledge exchanges. Steeped in interpretations, such knowledge is a social construct, generated from interacting actors. Ultimately, these communities have the potential to provide knowledge to, and impact, national policy makers.¹¹

This chapter will demonstrate how, as an ambiguous and complex issue, public information has the potential to generate an epistemic community of related professionals. And furthermore, that such a community is an arena where knowledge, decisions, and initiatives are steeped in discussions and negotiations at the intersection between various actors and interests. Here, *circulation of knowledge* constitutes a second perspective to understand the formation processes of public information in the Nordic region.¹² The perspective can be fruitful to employ when studying how this issue was configured, and reconfigured, by different layers of practically and theoretically oriented ideas and experiences from different societal spheres.¹³ Researchers who study processes of knowledge circulation tend to focus on how ideas, actors, and content, among other things, travelled and were exposed to different arenas and historically situated communities, which might influence these ideas, actors, and content in new directions. However, researchers can also put an emphasis on how such circulation, in turn, creates new forums for exchange and interactions. How letter correspondence, for example, leads to physical meetings, and in turn to deeper collaboration.¹⁴ In this chapter, the analysis focuses on various Nordic and international exchanges that the Swedish Board for Civic Information took part in during the 1970s. More specifically, it studies different kinds of ideas and experiences connected to public information that were circulated and shared in forums that resemble an epistemic community.

PUBLIC INFORMATION IN THE 1960s AND 1970s

States have always been keen on using information as a tool to govern. The forms and usages have changed through history depending on societal contexts and dominating communication systems.¹⁵ The breakthrough of democracy, for example, saw gradually increased demands for the use of information as a deliberative tool for citizens, partly to create a more equal relationship between the authorities and the people.¹⁶ This was also true for the 1960s and the 1970s. During this period, the Nordic region—as well as other western countries—saw renewed attention to challenges and problems connected to public information that needed to be addressed.

After World War II, information-related issues started to rise up the political agenda in several western countries. Media historian Brendan Maartens has, for example, described the British period after 1945 as follows: “just as ‘imperialism’ and ‘empire’ had been central to discussions of the British state in 1895–1914, ‘information’ became part and parcel of political discourse in the post-war era”.¹⁷ The notion of information became increasingly integrated in shifting academic disciplines as an important variable to understand and explain society and the human condition, as well as a means to solve societal problems.¹⁸ During the 1970s, information also became associated with internationally and politically sensitive discussions, later often symbolized by the UNESCO debate about the so-called new world information and communication order, mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. In fact, as argued by media and communication scholar Ulla Carlsson, “never—neither before nor since—have information flows been debated with such passion as in the 1970s”.¹⁹ To some extent, the attention to information flows also applies to different national contexts.

The expansion of the state in the post-war era, be it welfare states or not, caused a growing complexity of the societal structure, which in turn created increased demands for an informed citizenry.²⁰ As social reforms brought about new legislation, citizens needed to be informed if these reforms were to be efficiently implemented.²¹ Moreover, as the democratic bureaucracy grew, so did the body of governmental documents, which also raised the question of transparency. Hence, during the 1960s and 1970s, several countries directed their attention to information-associated legislation, often related to access to public documents.

Internationally, one of the more famous information laws during this period was the *Freedom of Information Act* in the United States in 1966,

which spread interest in and spurred debates on similar laws in other western countries, for instance in West Germany.²² In the Nordic region, similar legislation for public access to governmental files was implemented in Denmark in 1970, Finland in 1950, Norway in 1970, and Iceland in 1996 (although there were differences in the implementations). Sweden stands out as the first in the world to implement legislation on access to governmental documents, dating back to 1766.²³ However, during this time, the debates on information policies were not limited to accessing public information but also related to the right of citizens to be *actively provided* with information by state authorities.²⁴

The 1960s and especially the 1970s are often described as an active and expansive decade for public information in the Nordic region.²⁵ In fact, already in 1987, Danish governmental information investigator Lars Nordskov Nielsen described the era as the “classic paradigm” of public information policies.²⁶ The expansion of, and increased interest in, public information can be understood in the light of at least three broad and to some extent coinciding societal developments. Firstly, the expansion, centralization, and increased complexity of the welfare state created a need for more information to citizens, as well as a demand for a decentralized state to address the growing divide between the citizens and the political-bureaucratic apparatus. Secondly, the radicalization of society during the 1960s and 1970s made governments address growing citizen demands for increased influence in societal processes. Here, information was perceived as an important instrument for a deepened democracy. The evolving media landscape, which was then perceived to be in a time marked by significant changes, can be characterized as a third process in the formation of public information policies in the Nordic region and elsewhere, for example connected to various media-related legislation, changing patterns of media consumption, and the formation of media studies.²⁷

In the Nordic region, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden also had a similar development towards at least partly centralized public information policies, leading to a specific state agency mandated to support other authorities with their external information issues. Although the Danish National Advertising Bureau (Statens annonce- og reklamebureau) was established already in 1937, it was not until 1975—when the agency changed its name to the Danish Information Office (Statens informationskontor)—that its assignments expanded, partly to include co-production of TV spots containing public information from Danish state agencies.²⁸ In the late 1950s, a Norwegian debate on governmental advertisement in the press was

instrumental in forcing the Norwegian government in 1960 to appoint a committee of inquiry to scrutinize the state's external information activities towards the citizens.²⁹ As a result, and based on the committee's recommendation, the Norwegian Information Service (Statens informasjons-tjeneste) was established in 1965.³⁰ This new state agency was assigned with the task of acting as a consultant to ministers and other state authorities in information-related issues, and to some extent helping to plan and implement information campaigns.³¹ A couple of years later, in 1967, the Swedish government in turn appointed the Commission on Public Information, which came to similar conclusions as its Norwegian counterpart.³² This prompted the government in 1971 to establish the Swedish Board for Civic Information, assigned with the main task of coordinating state agencies' public information activities and providing them with consultative help.³³ From 1972, Sweden also aired TV spots from state agencies, a system that Denmark later adopted. However, the Swedish Board had less to do with this system, which instead was a collaboration between individual authorities and Swedish Radio, the national broadcasting company.³⁴

To conclude, the developments that preceded the different information agencies in the Nordic countries could, on a general level, be regarded as similar.³⁵ As could the critical opinions against the state authorities' communication strategies, which were built on comparable ideas such as criticism towards one-way information, manipulation, and outdated communication techniques.³⁶ Moreover, during the post-war era, the Nordic countries launched various information and media-oriented and cross-border projects, for example related to radio, television, satellite and telecommunication.³⁷ Such conditions are likely to have strengthened the will to reach out in order to learn and share experiences across the Nordic countries.

THE SWEDISH BOARD FOR CIVIC INFORMATION AND ITS TRANSNATIONAL FORUMS

In 1971, the Swedish government issued the newly established Board for Civic Information with instructions to guide the agency's work. These included surveying, investigating, and coordinating state agencies' external information activities, as well as supporting agencies with recommendations, consultation, and education related to this area.³⁸ Organizationally,

the agency was divided into a politically appointed steering board, and an office with employed officials responsible for implementing the government's instructions. Initially, the office had five full-time employees its director Bernt Björck—but would soon expand to nine officials,³⁹ and a couple of years before its disestablishment in 1981, the office had increased to 14 employees.⁴⁰

Up until 1975, the Board for Civic Information only had a few filed correspondence and exchanges with actors outside Sweden (see Fig. 1). Nevertheless, even these early activities—including official James Brade's participation in the Helsinki seminar "An afternoon on public information" (arranged by the European Association of Advertising Agencies and the Finnish Association of Advertising Agencies), and Björck's 1973 seminar visit to Bergen along with participants from Norwegian advertising agencies—give an indication of the Swedish Board's interest in the advertising industry.⁴¹ This interest was mutual, since advertising agencies seemed attentive to official public information activities. After the Bergen

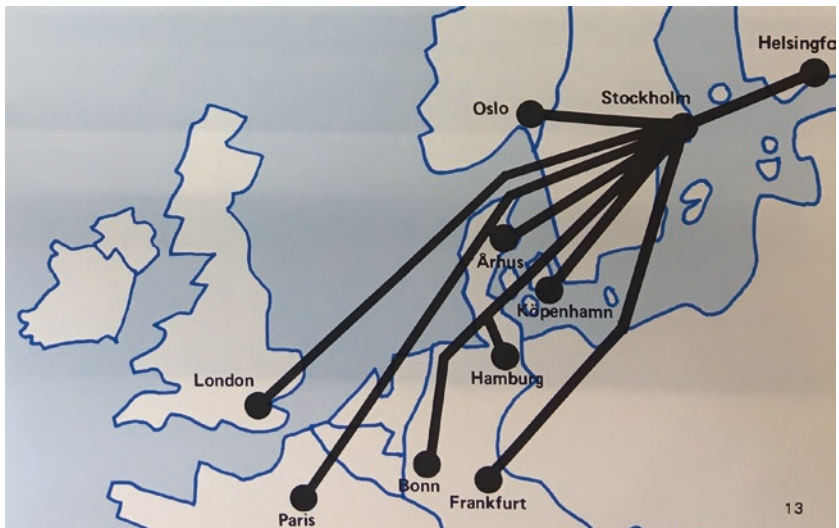


Fig. 1 The Board for Civic Information's international contacts between 1973 and 1975, as reported in the Board's annual report for the financial years 1973/1974 and 1974/1975. From National Archive of Sweden, Board for Civic Information, E1A:50

seminar in 1973, for instance, a representative from the well-known Swedish advertising firm *Ervaco* wrote to Björck and described the director's talk about the Board's work in terms of "respect and admiration".⁴²

Later, during the second half of the 1970s, the Board's Nordic and international contacts and exchanges intensified. Beyond correspondence by letter, these took place in three types of forums: study visits, seminars and workshops, and conferences, of which study visits were the most common forum. In retrospect, the agency viewed such contacts as important to "study the development in other countries and take part in experiences from others who have been in a similar or the same situation".⁴³ Furthermore, when representatives from Nordic countries met on different occasions and discussed public information-related issues, they often recognized a joint set of "problems and attitudes"—as a participant at the 1976 Oslo conference on public information expressed it—despite some differences in, for instance, organizational solutions.⁴⁴ These contact forums resemble Haas' description of how a transnational epistemic community is formed by actors from different countries to address the uncertainty and complexity of a specific issue. In such forums, participating actors' notions of challenges and solutions about a specific issue are circulated and interpreted.⁴⁵

Analysing the Board's archived correspondence series, it becomes clear that the different meetings between the Nordic countries centred around some recurring themes that represent the uncertainty and complexity of public information. On the one hand, information was perceived as a tool to solve problems in society and, on the other hand, as something that created societal problems, which in turn needed to be addressed with additional information policies—for example issues related to information divides. These themes can be summarized in five, to some extent overlapping, categories connected to (1) effects and evaluation of disseminated information; (2) information divides in society; (3) demand for more or better information; (4) techniques, methods, and best practices; and (5) organizational issues of public information.

The five categories above can be understood as pressing issues that different countries shared an interest in dealing with. Furthermore, and relating to the concept of epistemic community, these matters attracted professional representatives from Nordic countries to discuss their related experiences and challenges on the topic. These were not arenas for competing and negotiating actors, but rather forums to discuss and find practically oriented (epistemic) solutions to various perceived problems that

needed to be solved. In September 1976, as a typical example, a delegation from the Norwegian Information Service conducted a study visit to Stockholm, coordinated by the Board for Civic Information, to learn about how “Sweden has solved—or wants to solve—a number of questions related to public information”. These questions concerned, for instance, information practices at the municipality level, immigrant information, and contacts between Swedish broadcasting and public authorities. During the stay, the delegation visited representatives from, among others, the Swedish Educational Broadcasting Company (Utbildningsradion), the Swedish Immigration Agency (Statens invandrarverk), and Södertälje Municipality.⁴⁶ Similar study visits from Norway and Denmark were also conducted during the latter half of the 1970s, with representatives from the bureaucracy, advertising industry, academia, and journalism.⁴⁷

At the Nordic meetings, practically oriented discussions on public information dominated. This was, for example, the case when the Swedish Board visited other countries outside the Nordic region, such as the international “Public Service Advertising Conference” arranged by the International Advertising Association (IAA) in Brussels in 1979, which gathered some 350 participants from all over the world. The purpose of the conference was indeed practically oriented: “to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and information concerning the creation, development and implementation of public service advertising campaigns.”⁴⁸

Still, some exceptions regarding more theoretical and philosophical discussions are also notable in the archive material. One such example was at the “Research in Public Information” conference in Gothenburg in 1981, where a panel discussed the conceptualizations of society and the citizen in relation to public information.⁴⁹ This panel gathered academics from different disciplines—Göte Hanson from psychology, Jörgen Westerståhl from political science, Preben Sepstrup from market economics, to mention a few—as well as official representatives from Nordic municipalities and state agencies. Another example was the Nordic Media-Forsk conference in 1975 (today the NordMedia conference), which took place in Denmark. One of the conference’s working groups was dedicated to “public information and information divides”—chaired by Swedish media and communication scholar Kjell Nowak and Dan Lundberg—and gathered researchers and officials, for example James Brade from the Board for Civic Information, to discuss different theoretical communication models and how to prevent inequalities related to public information.⁵⁰

The overall focus on practically oriented discussions can partly be linked to the influence that social sciences had on media and information policies, as well as on the formation of media studies at that time—in Sweden as well as in other countries.⁵¹ Still, it should be mentioned that the so-called behavioural research ideal was continuously confronted by loudly critical left-wing opinion. Instead of focusing on how best to create information with desirable effects and feedback loops of various kind, the opposing voices often emphasized the need for mutual dialogue between bureaucracy and citizens, and to use information as a way to enhance citizen participation in society. These voices were, however, more heard in the public debate⁵² and rarely entered the arenas where the Board discussed public information outside Sweden. When critically oriented perspectives were discussed, it was often in contexts where researchers participated, as in the example from the two conferences above.

The examples above indicate that the Swedish Board for Civic Information was drawn to and became involved in forming an epistemic community of certain perspectives, ideas, and experiences related to public information. “Members of an epistemic community tend to pursue activities that closely reflect the community’s principled beliefs and tend to affiliate and identify themselves with groups that likewise reflect or seek to promote these beliefs”, as Peter M. Haas describes it.⁵³ This community, in turn, made it more difficult, and perhaps less attractive, for critically oriented actors, such as researchers, to participate in the discussions.

PUBLIC INFORMATION IN THE INTERSECTION BETWEEN DIFFERENT SECTORS AND INTERESTS

One would suspect that policies for public information were a concern for selected groups of bureaucrats and policy makers. However, tracing the paths of the historical actors, the archived correspondence material from the Swedish Board for Civic Information shows that different actors from academia, the advertising industry, bureaucracy, news media, and political parties initiated meetings and were represented at study visits, seminars, and conferences, at which experiences and ideas of public information were exchanged and discussed. In fact, it is fascinating how seemingly naturally stakeholders from different sectors during this era reached out, met, and interacted.

Study visits were a common exchange activity and had different initiators, such as advertising companies, state agencies, universities, and broadcasting institutions. In June 1975, for example, the advertising company *Ervaco* arranged a study visit in Sweden, coordinated by its branches in Oslo and Stockholm. For three days the delegates—including staff from the Norwegian Information Service—met and talked to information officers from Swedish state agencies, municipalities, and trade unions, as well as the principal of the Institute for Communication and Advertising Education, and took part in a concluding panel discussion led by Bernt Björck, the director of the Board for Civic Information.⁵⁴ Two years later, *Ervaco* re-visited Stockholm, where about 60 people met to discuss issues of public information (Fig. 2).⁵⁵

Another example includes a study visit to the Swedish Board by a group of students from the media programme at Volda University College in Norway. It took place in 1975, and like *Ervaco*'s study visits, this seems to have been appreciated by the student group, since it was followed up by a similar tour the next year. Based on the wishes of the Volda coordinator, the Board also arranged an activity programme that, among others, included meetings with representatives from the Stockholm School of Journalism, the Swedish Educational Broadcasting Company, *Liber* (a publisher of educational material), as well as information officials from state and municipality agencies.⁵⁶

Furthermore, the Board for Civic Information went on its own study visits, both to Nordic countries—such as various visits to the Norwegian Information Service—and outside the region.⁵⁷ Regarding the latter, the Board, together with representatives from other Swedish state agencies, went on an ambitious five-day visit to the UK in 1980 (Fig. 3). There, the 16 delegates met with representatives from the Central Office of Information's advertising division, the Department of Social Services, Greater London Council's public relations branch, an advertising agency (used in "government information campaigns"), the Post Office, and the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). At the BBC, the delegation discussed, among other things, issues related to "dissemination of public information material" over the radio. Some of the BBC's "TV spots" were also shown to the delegation, who also received a cassette with copies of these short films, which were later shown and discussed back home in Sweden.⁵⁸ Other countries outside the Nordic region that the Swedish Board visited during the period were France and West Germany.⁵⁹

NORDISK SEMINAR STUDIEREISE I OFFENTLIG INFORMASJONS- VIRKSOMHET STOCKHOLM 14.-16. SEPTEMBER 1977



Fig. 2 In 1977, the advertising company Ervaco's Norwegian branch organized a study visit to Stockholm. Forty people from Norway and twenty from Sweden, representing different interests and societal sectors, met during three days and discussed issues of public information. This is the front page of the study visit programme. From National Archive of Sweden, Board for Civic Information, EIA:66

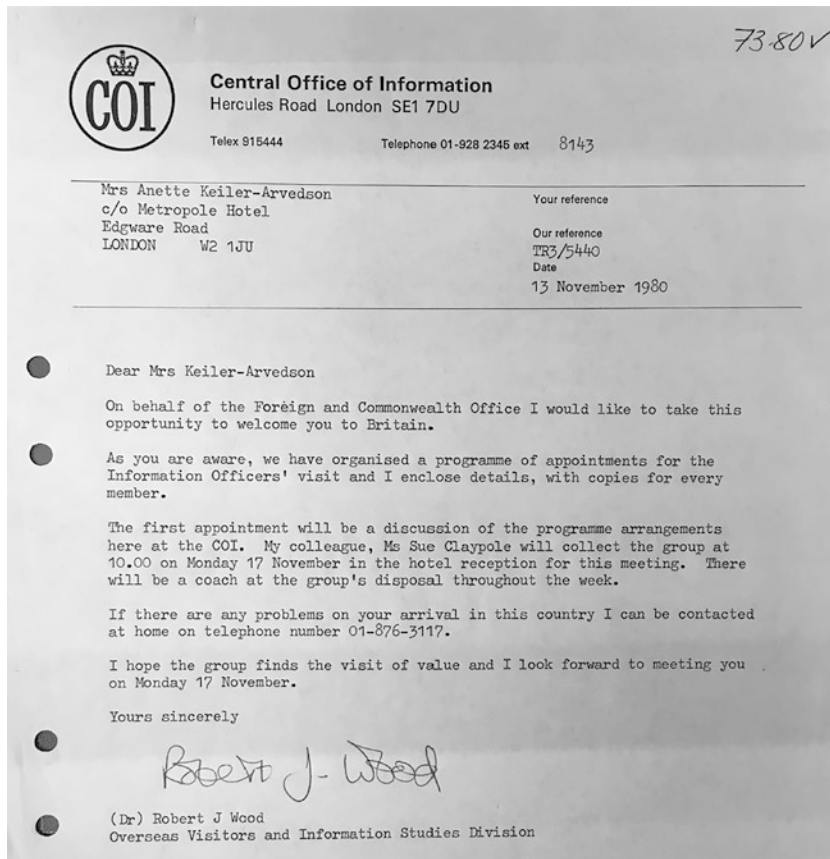


Fig. 3 A welcome letter to one of the participants from the Board for Civic Information who did a study visit in the UK, hosted by the Central Office of Information in November 1980. From National Archive of Sweden, Board for Civic Information, EIA:90

These intersecting meetings between different societal sectors show that various interests, perspectives, and agendas were made known to each other. Public information could hence be understood as a form of knowledge that evolved through circulation between actors from different countries, and related to commercial, academic, and administrative interests.⁶⁰

This observation is also aligned with Haas' view that these community meetings could be interpreted as "channels through which new ideas circulate from societies to governments as well as from country to country" and that these ideas were carried by actors who function as both "cognitive baggage handlers as well as gatekeepers governing the entry of new ideas into institutions".⁶¹

Besides advertising and broadcasting companies, the Swedish Board for Civic Information also had established connections with academic institutions in Sweden and abroad. Sverker Thorslund was one such key figure, an employed official at the Board with a licentiate degree from Stockholm School of Economics Institute for Research. Among other activities, he took part in the previously mentioned Nordic media and communication conference *Media-Forsk*, where he participated in the working group "The Local Communication System". Thorslund also gathered knowledge related to public information from different intuitions—UNESCO, UC Berkeley, the Australian Embassy, and so on—and was present when a delegation from the Government of Quebec's Department of Communication visited Stockholm in 1975.⁶²

Furthermore, the Board for Civic Information was involved in various activities in which researchers participated. Besides the previously mentioned conferences, other such meetings included different seminars on public information. One such seminar was held in Oslo, arranged by the Norwegian Information Service, at which Stein Bråten—then professor of sociology—talked about communication issues.⁶³ The presence of researchers in these meetings can partly be understood as a way of positioning themselves and pushing the perspectives they represented—such as behavioural science approaches or critical theory perspectives—in relation to the policy-oriented actors such as the staff at the Board for Civic Information.

The different meetings reveal a developed network, with a low boundary and little friction between bureaucracy, industry, and academia when it came to establishing contacts and performing knowledge exchange. As ideas and experiences about public information were exposed in the intersection between different interests and sectors, this circulation of knowledge resembles the formation processes of media studies, at least in Sweden, which occurred at similar crossings. It should be said, though, that it is difficult to discern specific and concrete effects of these meetings

on the participating organizations' work and activities related to public information. However, the fact that different representatives from the Nordic countries continued to meet, indicates a will to learn and adapt—and to promote one's own work and ideas.⁶⁴

A NORDIC MODEL FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION? TOWARDS SOME CONCLUDING REMARKS

Is it reasonable to argue that a Nordic Model for public information was consolidated, or at least considered possible, during the 1970s? Issues of public information attracted actors from different countries and societal sectors to seek contact and meet, partly due to shared notions of problems and solutions. As has been argued in this chapter, this resembles an epistemic community with a shared worldview and an agenda to address the complexity surrounding the issues of public information. At these transnational forums, ideas and practically oriented knowledge about public information were gladly exchanged. However, it is difficult to trace and measure how much of the collaborative potential between the Nordic countries was realized. This applies in particular to long-term policy change, which is something beyond the scope of this chapter.

Analysing the empirical material from a transnational approach, and applying perspectives of epistemic community and circulation of knowledge, one could, however, discern some concluding observations. And despite difficulties in tracing how knowledge and policies of public information were affected by the transnational exchanges in specific ways, it is possible to point to a few areas where at least Denmark, Norway and Sweden went in a similar direction. Comparable organizational infrastructure, for instance, with centralized state agencies for public information, was established (and re-organized in Denmark) in the 1960s and the 1970s.

The interest in public information-related issues was, of course, not unique for the Nordic countries during the 1970s, and the Swedish Board's transnational contacts also extended to other western countries. Public information policies, often emphasizing access to public documents and public information, were legislated and implemented in several countries during the 1960s and 1970s. In the Nordic region, another focus also existed: how authorities actively could and should disseminate

information to citizens. Here, as mentioned previously in this chapter, the problems and challenges of public information were often similar, for example related to practically oriented issues such as how to reach different groups of citizens with information, which media were more effective, and how to evaluate information campaigns.

Examples also exist of how the Nordic countries were inspired by each other. One example is the system of short TV spots financed and produced by state agencies. Such a concept was implemented in Sweden in 1972, with spots aired on public service television (which at that time held a TV monopoly, with only two existing channels). The Swedish model was based on a recommendation from the same government commission of inquiry, the Commission on Public Information, that proposed the establishment of the Board for Civic Information.⁶⁵ The idea of state-financed TV programmes was controversial since it could, as the critiques argued, jeopardize the role of an independent public service.⁶⁶ Nonetheless, in the late 1970s, the Swedish system was adopted by Denmark.⁶⁷

Differences in legislation were a natural barrier when it came to a joint Nordic Model for public information. Norwegian public service legislation, for instance, made it difficult to adopt a TV spot system like the one implemented in Denmark and Sweden. This and other obstacles were a topic discussed at the Nordic conference on public information in Oslo 1976, mentioned in the introduction to this chapter.⁶⁸ Still, at the various meetings where representatives from the Nordic countries met to discuss issues of public information, it is evident that participants showed a generally positive attitude towards collaborations within the Nordic region. Differences between the countries were recognized, but did not prevent a will to collaborate, for example related to “information approaches in the social sector, environmental protection, transport, opinion polls and testing of information materials”, as a participant pointed out at the 1976 conference in Oslo.⁶⁹ Three years later, another Nordic conference on public information was arranged in Copenhagen in order to deepen the contacts within the region. Once again it was concluded that they—at least Denmark, Norway and Sweden—shared the same problems and challenges related to issues of public information. Furthermore, it was agreed that “the form of exchange of experience between the Nordic countries must be established”, and that the different Nordic state agencies for public information should meet at

least once a year.⁷⁰ However, since the Swedish Board for Civic Information was dismantled in 1981, it is unlikely that the Nordic collaboration got as firm a structure as was intended.

To conclude, a move towards a joint model for Nordic public information in the 1970s seems less reasonable. However, this chapter reveals that issues of public information should not exclusively be understood as isolated concerns for each country. Yes, specific political issues that citizens needed to be informed about were often framed within national contexts, but ideas, experiences, and organizational structures of public information—broad aspects that in the end tend to affect policies—were not. These complex issues attracted people across borders to discuss, share knowledge, promote ideas, and learn from each other.

NOTES

1. *Courier*, no. 4 (1977); Ulla Carlsson, “The Rise and Fall of NWICO: From a Vision of International Regulation to a Reality of Multilevel Governance”, *Nordicom Review*, no. 2 (2002).
2. “Referat fra utvalgets 10. Møte mandag den 15. November 1976”, EIA:50, Nämnden för samhällsinformation (Board for Civic Information, BCI), Riksarkivet (National Archive of Sweden in Marieberg, NAS), hereafter BCI:NAS.
3. The English translation of the name is the agency’s own. See for example, “The National Board for Civic Information: Its Background, Organization and Duties”, EIA:20, BCI:NAS.
4. A direct translation would be “offentlig information” (in both Swedish and Danish, and in Norwegian “offentlig informasjon”). However, the Swedish term “samhällsinformation” (societal information) is a more historically adequate translation for the 1970s (“samfundsinformation” in Danish, and “samfundsinformasjon” in Norwegian). The nomenclature, however, was not stable, and different terms were used simultaneously. For example, the Board used “civic information” when it described itself in international contexts.
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 10. Mai’a K. Davis Cross, “Rethinking Epistemic Communities Twenty Years Later”, *Review of International Studies*, vol. 39, no. 1 (2013); Claire A. Dunlop, “Epistemic Communities”, *Routledge Handbook of Public Policy*, eds. Eduardo Araral Jr., Scott Fritzen, Michael Howlett, M. Ramesh and Xun Wu (London: Routledge, 2013).
 11. Haas, “Introduction”.
 12. Johan Östling, David Larsson Heidenblad, Erling Sandmo, Anna Nilsson Hammar and Kari H. Nordberg, “The History of Knowledge and the Circulation of Knowledge: An Introduction”, *Circulation of Knowledge Explorations in the History of Knowledge*, eds. Johan Östling, David Larsson Heidenblad, Erling Sandmo, Anna Nilsson Hammar and Kari H. Nordberg (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2018).
 13. Cf. Peter Burke, *What is History of Knowledge?* (Cambridge: Polity, 2015), 89–91.
 14. Östling et al., “The History of Knowledge and the Circulation of Knowledge”.
 15. For example, Robert Darnton, “An Early Information Society: News and the Media in Eighteenth-Century Paris”, *The American Historical Review*, vol. 105, no. 1 (2000); Burke, *What is History of Knowledge?*, 100–102.
 16. Edward Higgs, *The Information State in England: The Central Collection of Information on Citizens Since 1500* (London: Palgrave, 2004): 149–157; Mordecai Lee, “An Overview of Public Reporting”, *Government Public Relations: A Reader*, ed. Mordecai Lee (Boca Raton: CRC Press, 2008), 144–148.

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26. Lars Nordskov Nielsen, *Betænkning om offentlig information* (Copenhagen: Administrationsdepartementet, 1987), 24.
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28. Betænkning 1967:469 *Statens informationsvirksomhed*; Betænkning 1977:787 *Udvidet statslig information om love m. v.* The co-production of TV spots was based on a similar model that was implemented in Sweden in 1972.

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33. Norén, “Deliberation or Manipulation?”.
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45. Haas, “Introduction”, 17.
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54. “Nordisk seminar: Studiereise i offentlig informasjonsvikomhet”, E1A:36, BCI:NAS.
55. Letters, programme, E1A:66, NSI:NA.
56. “Förteckning över informationssekreterare Trygve Tamburstuens studiebesök i Stockholm den 14 och 15 maj 1975”, E1A:34, BCI:NAS; Letter, 9 May 1976, E1A:46, BCI:NAS.
57. For example, “Förhandsinformation—studieresa till Norge”, 10 April 1980, E1A:89, BCI:NAS.
58. Letters and programme, E1A:90, BCI:NAS. This was not the first visit to COI. In 1975, Göran Mandéus from the Board went to the UK to study how information was coordinated between different authorities, state agencies’ collaborations with advertising agencies, and how television and film have been used in public information, Letters, E1A:35, BCI:NAS.
59. NSI’s annual report, E1A:36, BCI:NAS.
60. Östling et al., “The History of Knowledge and the Circulation of Knowledge”.
61. Haas, “Introduction”, 27.
62. Letters, E1A:38, 43, BCI:NAS.
63. Letters, E1A:46, BCI:NAS.
64. Hyvönen et al., “The Formation of Swedish Media Studies, 1960–1980”.
65. SOU 1969:48.
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Contested Pictures of Persuasion: American Images of Foetuses in Swedish Antiabortion Campaigns of the 1970s and 1980s

Elisabet Björklund

That images of human foetuses are often used in antiabortion campaigns is a well-known phenomenon. If beautiful images of the unborn or ultrasound scans are used to create reverence for “life” or evoke emotional responses of affection in the viewer, gruesome images of dead and bloody aborted foetuses are used to create shock and disgust towards the thought of an abortion. The roots of these strategies are often located to the 1960s and 1970s and are strongly associated with the American pro-life movement, which formed in the years around *Roe v. Wade* in 1973.¹ This was a period when abortion laws were liberalized in many countries in the western world, while photographs of human foetuses were circulating transnationally and started to be exchanged between newly formed antiabortion groups. For example, Swedish photographer Lennart Nilsson’s images of human foetuses gained international fame when they were published in the American magazine *Life* and the pregnancy advice book *A Child Is Born* in 1965, and they were subsequently used in American antiabortion

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campaigns in the 1970s and 1980s.² However, it is less well known that other types of images of foetuses travelled from the US to Sweden during the same period and were used in the campaigns of Swedish antiabortion groups.

This chapter explores the circulation, use and public discussion of images of human foetuses travelling from the US to Sweden in the period before and after the introduction of abortion on demand in Sweden in 1975. The purpose of this chapter is twofold: First, it aims to highlight the transnational and transmedial character of the material used by the Swedish antiabortion groups in this era. As such, this chapter aims to contribute to existing research on Swedish abortion history and the visual culture of the human foetus during the late twentieth century.

Second, this chapter analyses how concepts such as “truth”, “information” and “propaganda” were used in discussions about the images. Visualizations of human foetuses are a pertinent example to use in exploring understandings of these concepts, as they have often been discussed using exactly these terms. On the one hand, images of the unborn are, in various ways, treated as a source of information about gestation. For example, ultrasound imaging provides doctors and midwives with knowledge about foetuses, and pictures of foetuses are often used as a pedagogical tool in sex education. This use of images as a source of knowledge is also mirrored in the rhetoric of antiabortion groups, in which images are often understood to disclose a hidden “truth” that citizens have the right to know.³ On the other hand, massive feminist criticism has been levelled against images of human foetuses for representing the unborn in deceptive ways that reinforce threats to reproductive rights. Here, the “truth” of the images has been one issue. It has, for example, been pointed out by many that even though Nilsson’s images claimed to represent “life before birth”, most of them did not depict living foetuses, but dead ones photographed after abortions.⁴

My analysis builds on a variety of media material distributed by a number of Swedish antiabortion groups in the period from the mid-1960s to the mid-1980s, including films, brochures, journals and books, together with material from Swedish television and the press in which these campaigns were discussed. A more comprehensive study could have encompassed a longer period, thereby also including the well-known Swedish antiabortion group *Ja till livet* (Yes to Life), which was established in 1991.⁵ However, as the aim is to explore the visual strategies of the new antiabortion groups that formed around the time of the introduction of

abortion on demand, I have decided to focus on a more concentrated time period. The material has been generated from searches in various Swedish library catalogues and databases. This chapter is further inspired by approaches within fields such as New Film History and cultural historical media research, which emphasize aspects of production, distribution and reception, and relationships and interactions between different media in specific historical contexts.⁶

VISUALIZED FOETUSES IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

The late twentieth century is often understood as a crucial turning point in the history of the visual culture of reproduction. In the late 1980s and 1990s, feminist scholars started to use the term “the public foetus” to describe what they understood as a new and problematic visibility of the foetus that had developed in the western world over the past decades. In these discussions, the spread of Lennart Nilsson’s famous photographs since the mid-1960s and the increasing use of ultrasound technology in maternity care since the 1970s were used as prime examples of how foetal imagery was spreading in a way that threatened to undermine women’s newly gained reproductive freedoms.⁷ Many pointed out that Nilsson’s images depicted the foetus as free-floating and separate from the maternal body, a representational practice which contributed to constructing it as an autonomous individual that should be granted personhood and citizenship.⁸

One can, however, ask in what ways this really was a new visual culture. The history of visualizing the unborn is rich and multifaceted, and pregnant and foetal bodies had been represented and displayed publicly in various ways long before the 1960s. Examples include wet specimen collections in museum exhibitions, illustrations in medical atlases and pregnancy advice literature, and sculptures and animated films intended for sex education.⁹ At the same time, scholars have pointed out that there was also a change in how the foetus was depicted in the mid-twentieth century. Lynn Morgan argues that although photographs of foetuses had existed earlier than the 1960s, what was new in this era was that the foetuses in the pictures were claimed to be alive. In the widely circulated photo book *The First 9 Months of Life* by Geraldine Lux Flanagan, published in 1962, many photographs of aborted, dying foetuses were included, but throughout referred to as living “babies”. As mentioned, the same is true for Nilsson’s images, which were not presented as picturing abortions, but rather used

to symbolize developing life. Hence, these pictures were important factors in a development that made foetuses into “icons of life”.¹⁰ Others have analysed the aesthetic means by which this was accomplished, for example how foetuses were humanized, made to look beautiful and how the pictures were created to evoke a sense of wonder in the spectator. As such, Nilsson’s images were similar to other emblematic pictures of the period, such as the “blue planet”.¹¹

The foetus as a symbol of “life” thus gained a strong foothold in the 1960s and onwards, and images like these have since been widely disseminated in sex education and pregnancy advice, as well as being used in campaigns against abortion. At the same time, scholars have discussed how another type of photographs of foetuses was also spreading during this period. Two central actors in this development were the Catholic physician John C. Willke and his wife Barbara Willke from Cincinnati. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, they toured the country to speak against abortion and became key figures behind the visual strategies developed by the US pro-life movement. Lennart Nilsson’s images were seen as very valuable by the Willkes, but they soon started to use another type of image in their campaigns as well—pictures of aborted foetuses that clearly represented them as dead or dying, for example, by showing bloody, disfigured bodies, or foetuses placed in buckets or trash bins.¹² Richard L. Hughes demonstrated that this was a strategy inspired by the anti-Vietnam war movement. While the pro-life movement later became allied with the political Right, it initially had many ties and similarities to other social movements of the 1960s and 1970s, not least the antiwar movement. Many people who had been engaged in the antiwar movement later became leaders of the antiabortion movement, and they used similar tactics of protest and modes of persuasion. In the early 1970s, the Willkes started to collect graphic images of aborted foetuses with the potential of arousing similar feelings of outrage and sadness in their viewers as the shocking photographs of dead children from the My Lai massacre had done. The Willkes used the images in their campaigns and a number of them were published in their widely circulated book *Handbook on Abortion* from 1971.¹³ In the decades following the 1960s and 1970s, two very contrasting types of images of foetuses were thus proliferating—wondrous images of humanized and beautiful foetuses signifying “life” and shocking images of mutilated and bloody foetuses signifying “death”.¹⁴

FOETAL IMAGES IN SWEDISH ANTIABORTION CAMPAIGNS BEFORE 1975

In Sweden, legal abortion had been introduced in 1938, but the law only allowed abortion in very specific cases, and it was in practice very difficult for women to get access to abortion. In the 1960s, however, views on abortion changed drastically. In the early 1960s, when major debates started on many issues related to sexuality, liberal and Social Democratic youth and student organizations began questioning the existing abortion law, which resulted in a heated debate, mainly between so-called cultural radicals and Christians. This led to the commissioning of a public inquiry into the matter in 1965 and eventually the introduction of abortion on demand in 1975.¹⁵ The Swedish development also pushed reform in the other Nordic countries, and liberalized abortion laws were eventually introduced in all the other Nordic countries during the 1970s.¹⁶

While the use of foetal images in antiabortion campaigns is mainly associated with the period from the 1970s and onwards, Swedish examples can actually be found already in the 1950s and 1960s. In 1952, a small scandal erupted in the city of Uppsala, when an uncensored medical film of a late abortion shot at Lund University Hospital was shown by physician Axel Ingelman-Sundberg at a public debate meeting to an audience of around 250 people.¹⁷ Abortion-critical physicians were also the driving force behind the production of Lennart Nilsson's famous photographs during this era. In Sweden, Nilsson's pictures have been largely associated with progressive sex education rather than arguments against abortion. However, Solveig Jülich has demonstrated that the reason Nilsson could get access to obstetrical clinics and take the pictures was that he collaborated with physicians who saw a value in the photographs as a means to raise public opinion against abortion. His early pictures of embryos and foetuses were also first published as part of abortion-critical articles written by medical doctors in the magazines *Se* (See) and *Idun-Veckojournalen* (Idun Weekly Journal) in the 1950s and early 1960s. When *A Child is Born* was launched in 1965, however, public opinion on abortion was changing and the pictures were hence re-framed into the context of pregnancy advice, as it would not have been commercially viable to be associated with an antiabortion agenda.¹⁸

Attitudes towards abortion on demand thus shifted quickly and radically in the 1960s, but the wave towards increasing liberalization also led to reactions among those concerned about the development. For instance,

the political party Christian Democratic Coalition (Kristen Demokratisk Samling, today the Christian Democrats) was founded in 1964 and remained opposed to abortion on demand until the late 1990s.¹⁹ Groups focused specifically on the abortion issue also formed, and displaying foetal bodies in discussions about abortion became a practice which gained a great deal of media attention. This was illustrated in 1969, when a controversial programme about the abortion issue was aired on Swedish television. Here, a number of different abortion methods were explicitly shown to the viewers, including a scene in which an aborted foetus of 17–18 weeks was displayed in close-up. Even though the programme did not explicitly argue against abortion, the choice to show graphic imagery of this kind was met with much criticism in the press.²⁰ But it also seems to have sparked new engagement in the issue. In the Christian newspaper *Dagen*, the programme was praised: “Trying scenes from operations illustrated eloquently how the Swedish industry of death operates”, as its front page declared next to a picture of the small hands of a 12-week foetus, reproduced from Flanagan’s *The First 9 Months of Life* (which had been published in Swedish in 1963).²¹ In 1971, when the public inquiry into the abortion issue had been published, *Dagen*’s editor Olof Djurfeldt took the initiative to start a working group called Rätt till liv (Right to life) and published a book of the same name, which was described as an alternative to the public inquiry.²² The name was chosen as a response to the inquiry’s title *Rätten till abort* (The right to abortion), but was probably also inspired by the use of this expression in the American antiabortion movement, for example in the name of the National Right to Life Committee, established in 1967.²³

In 1974, the year that the Swedish Parliament would vote on the abortion issue, other opponents of abortion also decided to use the strategy of showing foetuses as a method of persuasion. One of them was Irma Wright, a gynaecologist from Gothenburg. In 1974, she was invited to a debate on abortion on the popular TV programme *Kvällsöppet* and brought an aborted foetus of 12 weeks with her in her handbag. When showing the foetus to the host before the show, however, she had to promise not to display it in the programme. Even though she did not show the foetus, the newspaper *Aftonbladet* reported on the incident in large letters on its front page.²⁴ In a written statement, Wright later claimed that her aim had not been to shock the viewers. “Is it really more shocking to carry a foetus around than to kill it?” she asked rhetorically.²⁵

Wright also wrote a debate article about the matter in *Läkartidningen*, an established journal for medical doctors, and in a magazine called *Operation Sverige* (Operation Sweden).²⁶ The latter was published by an organization that was also called Operation Sverige, which had been started in 1968 and that was strongly opposed to the Social Democratic government of Olof Palme. Many among the members and contributors to the magazine had backgrounds in different Christian groups and connections with right-wing extremist or Nazi movements in Sweden.²⁷ The issue in which Wright's article was published was focused on abortion. On the cover, the headline stated that "The Palme government allows around 30,000 living human foetuses to be murdered each year!", next to a picture of a pile of aborted foetuses in a black plastic bag, originating from the Willkes' material (see Fig. 1).²⁸

These visual strategies of antiabortion activists in the early 1970s were noted at the highest political level. In the Parliamentary debate preceding the vote on the new abortion law in 1974, one of the Social Democratic members mentioned the front page of *Operation Sverige* and also said that foetal images had been sent anonymously to Members of Parliament in efforts to protest the proposal.²⁹

SWEDISH RIGHT TO LIFE GROUPS AND THE "YES TO LIFE" CAMPAIGN

The Swedish abortion debate of the 1980s has been characterized as lukewarm compared to the more intense debates that would follow in the 1990s.³⁰ In the early 1980s, the new abortion law had been in place for more than five years, and antiabortionists were thus in a marginalized position in opposition to the official standpoint. Nevertheless, there was also a sense that views on abortion were turning. In the fall of 1980, Prime Minister Thorbjörn Fälldin publicly said that he was personally opposed to abortion, except for cases of rape or when the health of the mother was endangered, a statement that triggered both concern and debate.³¹ The early 1980s were also a period when a number of new antiabortion groups were given attention in the media because of their use of graphic visual material.

The groups that appeared in the late 1970s and early 1980s were started on different initiatives, but they eventually formed a network around the issue. One of the groups that was most visible in the media was founded

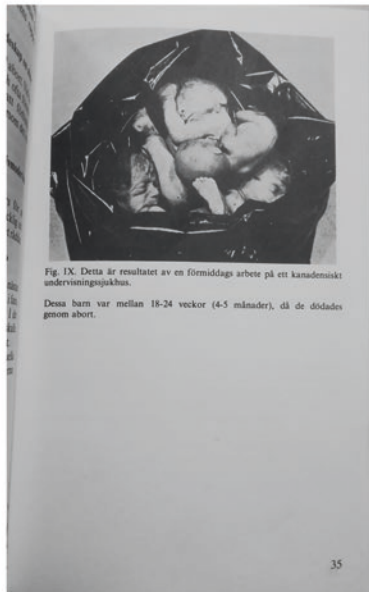


Fig. 1 The same picture of aborted fetuses published on the front page of *Operation Sverige* in 1974 (Fig. 1), in the brochure *Rätt till liv?* in 1980 (Fig. 2), and in the Swedish edition of *Handbook on Abortion* in 1980 (Fig. 3)

in 1979 in the small town of Borås and called themselves Rätt till liv just like the group started by Djurfeldt in 1971. Djurfeldt's group was, however, still active and was eventually turned into the nationwide organization Rikskommittén Rätt till liv.³² In 1980, they published a second book with one of Nilsson's images on the cover.³³ The same year, another publication in which Djurfeldt was involved would, however, receive much more attention—a thin brochure of eight pages titled *Rätt till liv?*, distributed by the Christian publishing houses Salt & Ljus in Järfälla and SAM-förlaget (owned by Svenska Alliansmissionen—a nonconformist congregation based in Jönköping). The brochure had a warning on its cover, saying that it contained “pictures that might be inappropriate to show to children and sensitive persons”. The text in the brochure argued against abortion from a clearly Christian point of view, but what made it controversial was that it included a translated supplement written by the Willkes with many of the pictures that had been published in *Handbook on Abortion*, most of them in colour. For example, the pictures displayed images of foetal body parts after abortions made with dilation and curettage and vacuum aspiration methods, and whole foetuses after late-term abortions made through hysterotomy and saline injection. It was stated that the brochure was part of the material in a campaign called “Ja till livet” (“Yes to life”), which was represented by a black-and-white symbol of two hands holding a foetus.³⁴

The brochure was met with strong, mainly negative, reactions. Established media and medical professionals generally described it as “horror propaganda” or a “horror campaign” and used negatively charged words to dissociate themselves from the method of showing pictures of aborted foetuses to abortion-seeking women.³⁵ In an editorial, *Expressen*, for instance, called it “a way of oppressing and humiliating human beings with sadistic pleasure—human beings who are already beaten”.³⁶ In contrast, representatives of the groups behind the brochure usually referred to it as “information” about reality and the “truth”, while also admitting that the images had a potential to shock. “The dreadful thing about these pictures is that they are true”, Djurfeldt wrote in a reply to *Expressen's* editorial.³⁷ And in *Göteborgs-Tidningen*, Gunnar Melkstam of Svenska Alliansmissionen argued that the images were necessary information comparable to that about, for example, the Vietnam war and the Holocaust.³⁸ The impression that the images could make was also understood quite differently. Many of those who criticized the brochure argued that it created feelings of guilt among women who had gone through an abortion

and risked terrifying those who were considering one.³⁹ Melkstam, in contrast, saw the pictures as a way to protect people from negative feelings: “The pictures are horrible, but the intention is not that anyone should be scared. [—] The brochure can protect people from having abortions. Its result can be that many people avoid feelings of anxiety. The brochure is preventive”, he said to *Expressen*.⁴⁰ Others argued that the feelings of guilt that the images could cause were necessary—“the feeling of guilt is the first step to liberation”, one advocate of the images said in a discussion on television.⁴¹ A similar line of argument was also expressed in the brochure itself, where it was stated that realizing and confessing one’s sins was necessary to receive God’s forgiveness,⁴² notions related to ideas about conversion and redemption prevalent in American right to life activism.⁴³

But it was not only American images of foetuses that were circulating in the media during this time. In November the same year, the newspaper *Göteborgs-Posten* published a Sunday supplement on the abortion issue, containing large images in colour of the foetus that Irma Wright had been stopped from showing in television in 1974.⁴⁴ Around the same time, it was also reported by several newspapers that a private counselling office for abortion-seeking women that had opened in Malmö, and which was supported by Rätt till liv, aimed to let women seeking abortion hold a doll of a foetus and look at Lennart Nilsson’s images of foetal development to dissuade them from going through with their abortions.⁴⁵

These different images and strategies were not only discussed in the media but also raised in a debate in the Swedish Parliament. Bonnie Bernström of the Liberal Party had written an interpellation about the matter asking the Minister of Health and Social Affairs if she would consider introducing ethical guidelines regarding abortion counselling and taking a stand against the “horror propaganda” used in campaigns against abortions. The Minister of Health, Elisabet Holm of the Conservative Party, answered by referring to the already existing guidelines and said that she agreed with Bernström that “horror propaganda in any form belongs neither in abortion counselling nor in the abortion debate”. She also stated that she had communicated her position to representatives of the Rätt till liv movement and that her impression was that they would discontinue this practice.⁴⁶

Nevertheless, in December 1980, *Expressen* reported on two new “horror books about abortion”.⁴⁷ The books referred to were *Handbook on Abortion*, which was now published in Swedish translation, and a booklet called *Argument i abortfrågan* (“Arguments in the abortion issue”),

produced by Rätt till liv in Borås. The latter contained some images of foetuses from *Handbook on Abortion*, but none of bloody foetuses or foetuses torn apart.⁴⁸ *Handbook on Abortion* was distributed by Salt & Ljus, SAM-förlaget and Proklama in Eskilstuna, as well as Rätt till liv, Borås. The book had been given a framework which put it in Swedish context. Without mentioning the book's many controversial images, Olof Djurfeldt argued in the foreword that even though it was written for an American audience, the abortion debate was international, and the book hence still made a valuable contribution to the Swedish discussion.⁴⁹ Throughout the book, footnotes informed the reader about the Swedish situation. One of the chapters in the book presented the American right to life movement, and at the end of the book this was supplemented with a list of Swedish right to life groups. There was also a list of other materials that were available to order, such as booklets, postcards, stickers, posters, films and slides.⁵⁰ In the article in *Expressen*, a member of Rätt till liv argued that the books were not propaganda, but that many saw a value in their disclosure of the "truth". On the other hand, Elisabet Holm, who was also interviewed, found the material harmful, and Bonnie Bernström said that she wanted to see legal action taken against it.⁵¹ Bernström's statement was criticized afterwards by several commentators, who argued that such ideas went against the freedom of the press.⁵² According to a later newspaper article, 5000 copies of *Handbook on Abortion* were published and it was sent to every Member of the Swedish Parliament.⁵³

The ideas about "truth" and "propaganda" communicated by the anti-abortion groups were also expressed in their own material. In 1981, Rätt till liv in Borås produced a short film for the campaign, also called *Ja till livet*, which is a clear example of this. The film tells the story of a teenage girl called Eva who becomes pregnant by mistake. After going through a vacuum aspiration abortion—which is explicitly shown in the film—she experiences doubts and is overwhelmed by guilt when one day looking at the images in Lennart Nilsson's *A Child Is Born*. After this, she starts to seek the "truth" about her abortion. Angered by the "evasive" descriptions she encounters in informational brochures by the National Board of Health and Welfare and others, she sees a doctor at the hospital where she works who agrees to tell her about foetal development and shows her a number of picture slides of foetuses at different stages of development. At the end of the film, she has come to the conclusion that the foetus she aborted was a "life". The film also connects abortion to genocide, as Eva's boyfriend watches a documentary about the Holocaust in one scene.

Produced by a minor film company called Cymbal Film, the film probably had limited distribution. It was given a 15-year age limit by the National Board of Film Censors and was harshly criticized in the press.⁵⁴ However, before the film's premiere, Rätt till liv also made a short feature about the film which was shown on the TV programme *Magasinet* (a programme on societal issues) in December 1980 as part of a longer discussion on abortion.⁵⁵ In this way, the organization got the opportunity to spread their opinions and parts of their material on national television.

It is reasonable to conclude that the discussion about foetal images in the early 1980s was polarized and unequal. While a small group of Christian antiabortion activists advocated the material, politicians, journalists and people interviewed in mainstream media generally took a clear stand against it. However, a dissenting voice in the debates was journalist Maria-Pia Boëthius. Boëthius supported the abortion law, but thought that it was paternalistic to argue that images of aborted foetuses should not be shown: "Should our dear 'Big Brother' know what twelve-week foetuses look like, while we easily frightened subjects should be spared?" she wrote. Later in the text, she continued by arguing that an image in itself could not be propaganda:

Is the image of a twelve-week foetus really horror propaganda? I don't think so. It is a picture of reality, that we have to look at with open eyes. We are in a bad situation when we start to take decisions based on corrected or withheld truths. It is something different when it can be connected to a horrible or moralizing or threatening or untruthful text. Then it can be horror propaganda. But the image in itself is not.⁵⁶

THE SILENT SCREAM IN SWEDEN

The discussion about foetal images in antiabortion campaigns seems to have diminished after 1981, but it resurfaced in 1985, when the US anti-abortion film *The Silent Scream* (Jack Duane Dabner, 1984) was imported into Sweden. This film, which is one of the most well-known US antiabortion films, features Dr. Bernard Nathanson, a former obstetrician and gynaecologist who had become an antiabortion activist. It shows a video screening of an abortion as filmed through an ultrasound scan and furthermore displays several graphic colour photographs of aborted foetuses. The film's name refers to the "silent scream" that Nathanson claimed the aborted foetus exclaimed during the procedure. Since its premiere, the

film has received severe criticism by medical experts, sex educators and feminists for being scientifically incorrect and misleading.⁵⁷ In Sweden, it gained attention in the media as clips from it were shown on the television programme *Magasinet* in March of 1985 as part of a feature about the US antiabortion movement. The programme also included a feature about Rätt till liv in Borås, in which some of their picture slides were shown. In the studio, there was a panel of discussants consisting of social welfare officer Ingrid Olsson, gynaecologist Karl Gösta Nygren of the National Board of Health and Welfare, Pentecostal pastor Peder Teglund from Rätt till liv in Borås and author Margareta Garpe, who was active in the influential feminist organization Grupp 8 (Group 8).

The discussion in the studio became intense. Teglund's main point was that the National Board of Health and Welfare was hiding the "truth" about abortions. He called their information "propaganda" and argued repeatedly through the programme that women needed to be informed about "the truth" in order to take a decision about abortion. When one of the hosts asked him about the relationship between his group and the American antiabortion movement, he replied that they had very little contact. He said that *The Silent Scream* was a good film, but that Rätt till liv had not yet decided whether to use it, and he also dissociated himself from the violent methods used by the American groups reported about in the programme. Nygren was the guest who expressed his disagreement with the antiabortion groups using the strongest words. He said that parts of Rätt till liv's "propaganda" were "extraordinarily [...] unethical and horrible" and criticized them for representing abortion in "an incorrect way, an exaggerated emotionally charged way". He called *The Silent Scream* "completely untrue", said that it made him "tremendously upset" and explained that he had tried to stop it from being shown on television. When Teglund brought up some facts about foetal development, Nygren argued that an abortion was not about the anatomical details of the foetus, but about "being forced to refrain from becoming a parent". Olsson argued that women were not as ignorant as the antiabortion groups described them, but that most knew very well what an abortion meant, and that films like *The Silent Scream* only led to increased feelings of guilt. Garpe, finally, criticized Rätt till liv for using words such as "human being" about the foetus, and the political aim of the antiabortion groups to change the existing law. Women were in most cases completely capable of making their own decisions, she argued, but she also said that she did not

believe in covering up the truth, as that strategy only led to campaigns like those by *Rätt till liv*.⁵⁸

Reactions to *The Silent Scream* were largely negative in the mainstream press, where words such as “[h]ysterical”, “fanatical” and “horror propaganda” appeared to describe it and the opposition against abortion in the US in general.⁵⁹ Even Alf Svensson, leader of the Christian Democratic Coalition, took a stand against the film.⁶⁰ It is not known to me whether *Rätt till liv* ultimately decided to show the film, but it was screened at meetings organized by the Christian organization Maranata, whose leader Arne Imsen claimed to have imported the film in the first place, and it remained in circulation among Swedish antiabortion groups well into the 1990s.⁶¹

CONCLUSION

The use of images of fetuses in Swedish antiabortion campaigns was not new in the period between the late 1960s and early 1980s, but the changing legal framework of abortion during this period meant that a number of new antiabortion groups formed and started to use a new type of material, in which images of aborted fetuses played a central role. These groups were small, and they did not represent everyone who was opposed to abortion or Christian, but their campaigns still attracted a lot of attention in mainstream media, which gave them a broad visibility and even caused discussions in the Swedish Parliament. The groups used a wide variety of media in their campaigns: books, brochures, postcards, stickers, picture slides and films. Material from the US was used in these campaigns in different ways: photos from different American sources were reproduced in Swedish publications, and American material was also translated and distributed in Swedish. The visual material was not exclusively American, however—Lennart Nilsson’s photographs were, for example, also used. Furthermore, the arguments used in the campaigns were similar to the ones used by American groups (e.g. the conversion narrative in *Ja till livet*, or the comparisons made between abortion, war and genocide), and they employed similar words and expressions in their rhetoric—most clearly through their use of the expression “right to life”. It is, however, difficult to ascertain to what extent the Swedish groups communicated with their American counterparts. Teglund said on television that they had very little contact, but this might have been a strategic statement as the

programme he participated in was reporting on the violence used by US antiabortion activists.

The way in which the foetal images in the material were discussed in the media speak of a number of issues related to notions about “propaganda” and “information”. One of the most obvious ones is that the concept of “propaganda” was used by both sides in the debate as a derogatory term about the material produced by the other side. Rätt till liv used the term to describe how the state covered up the “truth” about abortions by using “evasive” language and leaving out information. On the other side, commentators used the word about Rätt till liv’s material to describe how it presented the abortion issue in an overly emotional way, most clearly through their use of images perceived as shocking. Here, one can discern different views about what the “truth” about an abortion was, and how knowledge about this truth should be communicated. On one level, there were notions about an objective truth and medical facts. Rätt till liv understood the images to offer an indisputable “truth”, which their opponents did not disagree with *per se*. Discussions about, for example, how the images were arranged or what they really showed or left out were absent from the debates. Instead, opponents of the material argued that it was “untrue” mainly because it was slanted through incorrect and emotionally charged descriptions. On a different level, however, there were also arguments saying that the “truth” about an abortion was not found in the images. For instance, Nygren argued that an abortion was not about all the details regarding foetal development.

Another central discussion concerns the influence of the images. Recurring words used in the press reports about Rätt till liv’s material were “horror”, “guilt” and “harm”. These words suggest that a central view among those critical of the material was that it had a negative emotional influence on its viewers. Rätt till liv also understood the material to have a strong impact, but saw this as a desired effect in order to disclose the “truth” about abortion. Arguments were additionally raised about how the feelings of guilt that the images produced would lead to a kind of spiritual liberation or redemption. The implied audience for the material, who were understood to be influenced or enlightened in these ways, was clearly women, and the discourse around the images consequently suggests that many of those who were critical of them understood women to be a vulnerable group, while those who defended the use of the images saw women as an ignorant group in need of information. At the same time, Boëthius argued that it was a form of paternalism to protect women

from seeing images of aborted fetuses and that women needed to have full information before taking important decisions. Consequently, the discussion about this material was not only about fetuses, but perhaps more centrally about women, and about women's susceptibility to certain kinds of "propaganda" or "information" in relation to their new role as decision-makers about abortion.

NOTES

1. For histories of the pro-life movement, see, for example, Faye D. Ginsburg, *Contested Lives: The Abortion Debate in an American Community*, 2nd edition (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), Cynthia Gorney, *Articles of Faith: A Frontline History of the Abortion Wars* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998), and Mary Ziegler, *After Roe: The Lost History of the Abortion Debate* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015).
2. See, for example, Barbara Duden, *Disembodying Women: Perspectives on Pregnancy and the Unborn* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 50–55, Carole Stabile, "Shooting the Mother: Fetal Photography and the Politics of Disappearance", *The Visible Woman: Imaging Technologies, Gender, and Science*, eds. Paula A. Treichler, Lisa Cartwright and Constance Penley (New York: New York University Press, 1998), Richard L. Hughes, "Burning Birth Certificates and Atomic Tupperware Parties: Creating the Antiabortion Movement in the Shadow of the Vietnam War", *The Historian*, vol. 68, no. 3 (2006): 541–558, 553.
3. See Julie Palmer, "Seeing and Knowing: Ultrasound Images in the Contemporary Abortion Debate", *Feminist Theory*, vol. 10, no. 2 (2009): 173–189.
4. For example, Karen Newman, *Fetal Positions: Individualism, Science, Visuality* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 11–17.
5. Lena Lennerhed, "Abortdebattens paradoxer", *Sekelslut: Idéhistoriska perspektiv på 1980- och 1990-talen*, eds. Anders Burman and Lena Lennerhed (Stockholm: Atlas Akademi, 2011), 241.
6. See, for example, James Chapman, Marc Glancy and Sue Harper, eds., *The New Film History: Sources, Methods, Approaches* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), and the introduction to this volume.
7. Rosalind Pollack Petchesky, "Fetal Images: The Power of Visual Culture in the Politics of Reproduction", *Feminist Studies*, vol. 13, no. 2 (1987): 263–292; Duden, *Disembodying Women*, 50–55; Janelle S. Taylor, "The Public Fetus and the Family Car: From Abortion Politics to a Volvo Advertisement", *Public Culture*, vol. 4, no. 2 (1992): 67–80.

8. For example, Stabile, "Shooting the Mother"; Sarah Franklin, "Fetal Fascinations: New Dimensions to the Medical-Scientific Construction of Fetal Personhood", *Off-Centre: Feminism and Cultural Studies*, eds. Sarah Franklin, Celia Lury and Jackie Stacey (London: Harper Collins Academic, 1991), 190–205; Lauren Berlant, *The Queen of America Goes to Washington City: Essays on Sex and Citizenship* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 83–144.
9. For example, Nick Hopwood, *Haeckel's Embryos: Images, Evolution, and Fraud* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2015); Sara Dubow, *Ourselves, Unborn: A History of the Fetus in Modern America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Elisabet Björklund and Solveig Jülich, eds., *Rethinking the Public Fetus: Historical Perspectives on the Visual Culture of Pregnancy* (under review).
10. Lynn Morgan, *Icons of Life: A Cultural History of Human Embryos* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 193, 197–207. See also Emily K. Wilson, "Ex Utero: Live Human Fetal Research and the Films of Davenport Hooker", *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, vol. 88, no. 1 (2014): 132–160.
11. Sarah Franklin, Celia Lury and Jackie Stacey, *Global Nature, Global Culture* (London: Sage, 2000), 33–36; Nathan Stormer, "Looking in Wonder: Prenatal Sublimity and the Commonplace 'Life'", *Signs*, vol. 33, no. 3 (2008): 647–673.
12. Gorney, *Articles of Faith*, 99–106; Hughes, "Burning Birth Certificates", 552–554.
13. Hughes, "Burning Birth Certificates". See also Gorney, *Articles of Faith*, 102–106; Ginsburg, *Contested Lives*, 45.
14. For a discussion of this, see Morgan, *Icons of Life*, 228–232.
15. Lena Lennerhed, *Frihet att njuta: Sexualdebatten i Sverige på 1960-talet* (Stockholm: Norstedts, 1994), 141–152; Lena Lennerhed, "Sherri Finkbine's Choice: Abortion, Sex-Liberalism and Feminism in Sweden in the 1960s and 1970s", *Women's History Magazine*, vol. 73, no. autumn (2013): 13–18.
16. SOU 1983:31 *Familjeplanering och abort: Erfarenheter av ny lagstiftning*, 159–162.
17. Solveig Jülich, "Picturing Abortion Opposition in Sweden: Lennart Nilsson's Early Photographs of Embryos and Fetuses", *Social History of Medicine*, vol. 31, no. 2 (2017): 288–289.
18. Jülich, "Picturing Abortion Opposition", 290–301. For a detailed discussion of the many uses of Nilsson's images, see Solveig Jülich, "Lennart Nilsson's *A Child Is Born*: The Many Lives of a Best-Selling Pregnancy Advice Book", *Culture Unbound*, vol. 7 (2015): 627–648.
19. Lennerhed, "Abortdebattens paradoxer", 244.

20. I discuss this programme in “Visual Wonders and Shocks: Images of Human Fetuses in Television Programmes on Abortion and Fetal Research, 1969–1988”, *Medicine at the Borders of Life: Fetal Knowledge Production and the Emergence of Ethical Controversy in Sweden*, ed. Solveig Jilich (under review).
21. “TV-programmet om abortfrågan”, *Dagen*, 17 October 1969; Geraldine Lux Flanagan, *Livets första 9 månader* (Stockholm: Forum, 1963).
22. Olof Djurfeldt, *Rätt till liv—ett alternativ till abortkommitténs betänkande “Rätten till abort”* (SOU 1971: 58) (Gothenburg: Kyrkliga förbundets bokförlag, 1971). A second edition followed the year after, see Olof Djurfeldt, *Rätt till liv—ett alternativ i abortfrågan*, 2nd edition (Gothenburg: Kyrkliga förbundets bokförlag, 1972).
23. See Ginsburg, *Contested Lives*, or Ziegeler, *After Roe*.
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25. “Fråga till Socialstyrelsen om läkaren med fostret i väskan”, *Aftonbladet*, 3 April 1974.
26. Irma Wright, “Abortdebatten i TV”, *Läkartidningen*, vol. 71, no. 17 (1974): 1717; Irma Wright, “TV förbjöd visning av människofoster!”, *Operation Sverige*, no. 5–6 (1974): 4–5.
27. Karl N. Alvar Nilsson, *Överklass, nazism och högerextremism 1945–1995* (Stockholm: Carlssons, 1998), 209–233.
28. “Regeringen Palme tillåter att cirka 30,000 levande människofoster mördas per år!” *Operation Sverige*, no. 5–6 (1974): cover page. This picture was widely circulated in American antiabortion materials. See Gorney, *Articles of Faith*, 105–106. See also John C. and Barbara Willke, *Handbok om abort*, transl. Ingrid Pejrud (Järfälla: Salt & Ljus, 1980 [1971]), 35.
29. Riksdagens protokoll, no. 93, 29 May 1974, 101–102.
30. Lennerhed, “Abortdebattens paradoxer”, 241.
31. Lennerhed, “Abortdebattens paradoxer”, 238.
32. “Det började på 60-talet”, *Dagens Nyheter*, 11 August 1981. According to themselves, Rätt till liv in Borås was formed after the people involved had seen a number of photographs of different abortions. See Jonas Andersson and Rätt till liv, Borås, *Argument i abortfrågan* (Järfälla: Salt & Ljus, 1980), back cover.
33. Bo Setterlind et al., *Rätt till liv. Del 2* (Älvsjö: Skeab förlag, 1980).
34. Olof Djurfeldt et al., eds., *Rätt till liv?* (Järfälla: Salt & Ljus/Jönköping: SAM-förlaget, 1980).
35. For example, Peter Svensson, “Blodiga foster”, *Expressen*, 20 August 1980.
36. “En skymf”, *Expressen*, 23 August, 1980.
37. Olof Djurfeldt, “Det ohyggliga är att bilderna är sanna ...”, *Expressen*, 28 August 1980.

38. Gunnar Melkstam, "Hemska abortbilder för informationens skull!", *Göteborgs-Tidningen*, 28 August 1980.
39. For example, Svensson, "Blodiga foster"; Tommy Schönstedt, "—När jag ser bilderna vill jag bara gråta...", *Expressen*, 20 August 1980; M. William Olsson, "Söndertrasade foster", *Göteborgs-Posten*, 21 August 1980; Thomas Svedberg, "Läkare och kuratorer till attack mot frikyrkans skräckpropaganda: Fruktansvärt sätt att skapa skuld känslor!", *Göteborgs-Tidningen*, 21 August 1980.
40. Svensson, "Blodiga foster".
41. *Mellan himmel och jord*, TV1, 23 November 1980.
42. Djurfeldt et al., *Rätt till liv?*, back cover.
43. Ginsburg, *Contested Lives*, 104–107.
44. *G-P Nu*, Sunday supplement to *Göteborgs-Posten*, 9 November 1980.
45. "Försök i Malmö: undervisning kan ge färre aborter", *Dagens Nyheter*, 12 November 1989; Madeleine Lönnö, "En docka i fosterstorlek—så vill de stoppa aborter", *Expressen*, 13 November 1980; Margit Silberstein, "Abortsökande får 'dockor' i fosterstorlek", *Svenska Dagbladet*, 13 November 1980.
46. Riksdagens protokoll, no. 49, 15 December 1980, 101–112. Quote on p. 102.
47. Ann-Hjördis Larsson, "Nya skräckböcker mot abort", *Expressen*, 31 December 1980.
48. Andersson, *Argument i abortfrågan*.
49. Olof Djurfeldt, foreword to Willke and Willke, *Handbok om abort*.
50. Willke and Willke, *Handbok om abort*.
51. Larsson, "Nya skräckböcker".
52. For example, "Bonnie Bernström, förbudliberal", *Expressen*, 2 January 1981; "Rätten att tycka—och trycka", *Svenska Dagbladet*, 4 January, 1981.
53. Willy Silberstein, "Söta barn och blodiga bilder i abortmotsståndarnas kampanj", *Svenska Dagbladet*, 10 January 1983.
54. See, for example, Barbro Jöberger, "Blodiga filmscener mot fria aborter", *Dagens Nyheter*, 7 February 1981; Barbro Hedvall, "En film som vill skapa skuld", *Expressen*, 7 February 1981; "Ingen abort åt våldtagna", *Göteborgs-Posten*, 9 February 1981.
55. *Magasinet*, TV2, 9 December 1980.
56. Maria-Pia Boëthius, "Vem är lurad i abortfrågan?", *Aftonbladet*, 17 February 1981. See also Maria-Pia Boëthius, "Jag stöder inte alls skräckpropagandan mot abort", *Aftonbladet*, 24 February 1981.
57. See Petchesky, "Fetal Images". The film is available from the Internet Archive: <https://archive.org/details/SilentScreamAbortionOfPregnancy> (accessed 5 January 2022).
58. *Magasinet*, TV2, 14 March 1985.

59. Lars Bjelf, “Hysteriskt abortmotstånd i USA”, *Aftonbladet*, 14 March 1985; Bertil Mollberger, “Skräckpropaganda”, *Dagens Nyheter*, 15 March 1985.
60. Tommy Schönstedt, “Tittarstorm efter tv-film om aborter”, *Expressen*, 15 March 1985.
61. Magnus Persson, “Ni ljuger om aborter, Maranata!”, *Dagens Nyheter*, 26 March 1985; Advertisement for Maranata meetings, *Dagens Nyheter*, 15 June 1985; Arne Imsen, “Jag tog hit filmen”, *Dagens Nyheter*, 27 July 1986; Tomas Seidal, “Skakande ultraljudsfilmen om abort”, *Ja till livet-nytt*, no. 4–5 (1995), Mikael Oscarsson, “Det tysta skriket’ sågs av 1.5 miljoner—Mediaexplosion”, *Ja till livet-nytt*, no. 2 (1997).

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PART III

Politics and Security



A Rain of Propaganda: The Media Production of the Office of War Information in Stockholm, 1942–1945

Emil Stjernholm

During World War II, both Nazi Germany and the Allies invested heavily in propaganda in neutral Sweden. The battle for hearts and minds not only involved widespread dissemination of propaganda, but Stockholm became a veritable hotspot for espionage as well as intelligence gathering on enemies' propaganda efforts. As a member of the American Legation describes it in a letter back home: "Stockholm at present is probably the most international place in Europe, excepting of course England. Diplomatic representatives with their huge staffs ... journalists, business-men, refugees, and dubious types abound".¹ Throughout the war, the Allies also used Sweden as a key gateway to circulate propaganda in Denmark, Norway and Finland. This chapter studies the media production of the US Office of War Information in Stockholm, 1942–1945. While previous research has focused on the organization of OWI and the American strategies for war propaganda in Scandinavia, little emphasis has been placed on the actual production and circulation of American propaganda in Sweden during

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World War II.² Moreover, the OWI-supported media (e.g. books, magazines, films, radio and news stories) that were circulated in Sweden and the Nordic countries have not been studied in depth. This raises the following central research questions: How did OWI Stockholm produce and disseminate American propaganda in Sweden? What function did the Stockholm outpost have in the distribution of propaganda in the neighbouring Nordic countries?

The main source material comprises previously neglected archival material from the Civilian Security Service's (Allmänna Säkerhetstjänsten) counter-espionage, reports and hearings from the US Congress on the planning and implementation of US war propaganda, as well as preserved examples of American propaganda in Swedish mass media. Additionally, to further trace American propaganda efforts, the National Library of Sweden's digital search tool for digitized newspapers has also been utilized.

APPROACHING US PROPAGANDA

There has been extensive research on the American cultural influence in both Western Europe in general and Scandinavia.³ In a Swedish context, most previous research on aspects of American influence focuses on the Cold War era and the battle over influence between East and West.⁴ However, few contributions deal explicitly with US propaganda in Sweden, with Mikael Nilsson's comprehensive volume on the United States Information Service (later the United States Information Agency) constituting an exception.⁵ With regard to previous historical research on World War II propaganda, the greatest emphasis has been devoted to the study of Nazi German propaganda directed towards Sweden. In 1946, a government official report concluded that Sweden was "the subject of organized and highly active German propaganda".⁶ On the one hand, propaganda media such as the illustrated journal *Signal*, the radio network *Radio Königsberg* and the newsreel *Ufa-journalen* spread propaganda in neutral Sweden.⁷ On the other hand, different initiatives attempted to strengthen the institutional bonds, networks and entanglements between Germany and Sweden.⁸

By comparison, US propaganda in Sweden has received little attention. During the summer of 2021, the US Embassy in Sweden organized an exhibition on the Office of War Information's Stockholm outpost.⁹ Yet, in terms of previous research, only a few academic studies exist on the topic. One example is Ann-Kristin Wallengren's recent study on the

OWI-sponsored documentary *Swedes in America* (Irving Lerner, 1943), starring Ingrid Bergman, which provides insights about the US film propaganda in Sweden.¹⁰ Moreover, historian Harald Runblom has traced the development of the OWI branch in Stockholm, focusing particularly on mapping the Nordic countries' place in the overarching US propaganda strategy. Drawing on source material from OWI headquarters in Washington D.C., Runblom provides an overview of the expansive growth of the outpost, the American view on Sweden's neutrality and the aims expressed in the US propaganda directives. While Runblom places the American propaganda in a broader historical and political context, and thus provides a foundation for further studies on OWI Stockholm, this chapter includes few empirical examples of what the US propaganda looked like, how it was disseminated and at whom it was aimed. Notably, at the time of writing this chapter, Runblom did not have access to the archival material collected by the Civilian Security Service's counter-espionage due to a 70-year confidentiality clause on intelligence material, which was still in place until the mid-2000s when they were declassified.¹¹ As intelligence scholar Wilhelm Agrell argues, intelligence archives pose particular challenges for researchers, and the files accessible today tend to be fragments of a more complete archive. For example, with regard to the Civilian Security Service's archive, there was a systematic culling of the holdings in 1945–1946 after the organization was dismantled.¹² This chapter will not provide a comprehensive account of all aspects of OWI Stockholm's propaganda between 1942 and 1945. Rather, drawing on preserved primary sources such as transcribed phone conversations, supervised letter and telegram correspondence, invoices for propaganda items and newspaper clippings, the aim is to provide insight into the everyday work on American propaganda and to foster a more nuanced understanding of OWI's media production in Sweden.

In his studies on World War I propaganda, Harold Lasswell argued that propaganda had powerful effects on audiences.¹³ Drawing on Freudian psychology, Lasswell underlined the importance of shared symbols that evoke associations and trigger emotional reactions, symbols which in turn can be manipulated by those who take effort to change collective attitudes.¹⁴ In doing so, Lasswell contended that propaganda did not have to strive for immediate effect, but rather its influence was contingent on long-term conditioning and repetition. The US propaganda in Sweden operated along these lines, focusing not solely on the ongoing war but also putting much effort into media promoting American culture,

democracy and general way of life. This chapter concentrates on three types of American propaganda in Sweden (and the Nordics) hitherto under-researched: the support and dissemination of American news stories and lifestyle publications such as *Reader's Digest*, the private screenings of controversial US films such as *The Great Dictator* (Charlie Chaplin, 1940) and *The Moon Is Down* (Irving Pichel, 1943), and the major architecture exhibition *America Builds*. As Marie Cronqvist and Cristoph Hilgert argue, media history is permeated by cross-border and cross-media entanglements,¹⁵ something which is not least evident in propaganda history. Drawing on the concept of entangled media histories, Stockholm can be described as a propaganda hub where competing interests were brought to the fore. This theoretical perspective will thus inform my analysis of the material conditions of US propaganda.

NEWS FROM AMERICA

While the American Legation was smaller than its German counterpart, which at its peak employed 218 people,¹⁶ it grew significantly throughout the war. OWI Stockholm was established in Sweden during the summer of 1942 under the auspices of Karl Jensen, who arrived in Sweden in March the same year.¹⁷ During the war, the American Legation grew considerably, as one member of the legation noted in a phone conversation: "The Legation has expanded enormously since we got into the war, there now being a staff of 29 officers and over 130 employees".¹⁸ The OWI outpost, which was dedicated to the large-scale American propaganda and information campaign, reached a peak in 1944 when the payroll included 50 people, of which most were American and Swedish nationals.¹⁹

During World War II, the Swedish press was an important part of the propaganda battle for Swedish public opinion. Nazi Germany, for example, exercised great pressure on the Swedish press throughout the war. As Åke Thulstrup writes: "The publication of news reports or of comments unfavourable to Nazi Germany, if only in the form of a strongly expressed adherence to democratic ideals as opposed to the aims of National Socialism, was looked upon as a kind of sabotage against Sweden's gradual adaptation to Nazi-dominated Europe".²⁰ The German Legation in Stockholm demonstrated "remarkable activity" in its attempts to influence the Swedish press, supplying newspapers with news stories as well as photographs about their achievements on the battlefields.²¹ Moreover, an explicit aim in transferring the Nazi German diplomat Hans Thomsen

from the German Legation in Washington to Stockholm in 1943 was his knowledge about “the American press and propaganda” and his ability to counter it effectively in Sweden.²² Similarly, OWI Stockholm paid close attention to the German propaganda that circulated in Sweden: “The outpost uses Stockholm as a window to Europe. It collects information that comes from the belligerent parts of the continent ... The material poured in by the Germans to swing the Swedes is useful for us”.²³ Moreover, a key aim of American propaganda in Sweden was, as Runblom observes, to “counterbalance the German presentation of the United States”.²⁴ In doing so, OWI Stockholm paid great attention to the press landscape. In contrast to Nazi German propaganda, which was often aggressive,²⁵ the American propaganda was consciously toned down, taking heed of the notion that Swedes do not “appreciate guidance from the outside” and that they have a “dislike for sensationalism”.²⁶

Much of the OWI’s media production is centred on print material. Most of this work was done in-house, in the basement of Villa Åkerlund in Östermalm, which was purchased by the American Legation in 1942. As noted in a hearing before the House of Representatives in 1944, Jensen “manages what amounts to a publishing house with a large photo service, mimeograph machines and offset presses. The presses are in the basement where the swimming pool once was”.²⁷ A particularly central propaganda task for the OWI was therefore to support the circulation of American news stories. This was primarily done in three ways.

Firstly, through the publication of magazines produced by the American Legation in Stockholm. The journal *Comments from the American Press* was published from 1942–1944, appearing twice weekly, featuring primarily news from the war front. Together with the British Legation’s Swedish-language *Nyheter från Storbritannien*, which was in circulation long before the OWI outpost in Stockholm was established, these newspapers were considered important tools for influencing public opinion.²⁸ Moreover, the American Legation published a pamphlet called *News from the U.S.A.* from 1942–1943.²⁹ In 1944, *Comments from the American Press* was replaced with a less regular edition of the journal *Press Comments from USA*, with Jensen referencing the fact that “a great deal of material about America is now available to our readers through the regular news channels”, making the currently high publication frequency unnecessary.³⁰

Secondly, in particular during the first years of operation in 1942–1943, OWI placed much emphasis on the translation and editing of American news stories, which were often offered to the Swedish press free of charge.

The press relations were handled by the American Press Bureau, which operated out of the American Legation. In a letter back home, one translator noted how incredibly varied her assignments were:

I get all sorts of papers from the legation to translate and I read *Life*, *Time*, *Fortune*, *Atlantic Monthly*, *Harper's*, *The New World*, *Reader's Digest* etc. pretty regularly. I translate things about Robert Sherwood, the Mississippi-river, the Solomon Islands, General Eisenhower, Admiral Land, the new films, the new books, Hitler's oil-strategy, "Hitler—the phony lover", Mrs. Roosevelt: If you ask me, The art of Walt Disney, Mada Chiang Kai-shek and so on.³¹

While some of these topics are obviously political, such as the items about Eisenhower or Hitler's strategies, others concern popular culture or an American way of life in general. In the intelligence archive, there are many traces of news items being offered to Swedish magazines and newspapers throughout the war, including recipients such as the popular magazines *Veckojournalen*, *Husmodern* and *Allers*, the daily newspaper *Sydsvenska Dagbladet*, and the niche publication *Svensk flygtidning*, a magazine about aviation.³² Besides this, the OWI also provided Swedish newspapers with photographs from the war front sent using the radiophoto system.³³

A third press strategy was to support the publication of commercial American titles. For example, the OWI assisted the publication of a Swedish-language edition of the American lifestyle magazine *Reader's Digest*. In January 1942, Adèle Heilborn, the head of the Sweden-America Foundation (Sverige-Amerika Stiftelsen) from 1938 to 1966, wrote to an American colleague about the Swedish appetite for American culture:


Sweden is the kind of a propaganda tired country that would listen to cultural propaganda rather than war propaganda. Give us less pictures of the millionth cannon made by this and that factory, and more about science, culture etc ... The editors and journalists all over Sweden are longing for American magazines.³⁴

The publication of *Reader's Digest* under the Swedish name *Det Bästa* [The Best] in March 1943 was an instant success. This was highlighted during the OWI's yearly hearing before the House of Representatives, noting that "*Reader's Digest*, against the advice of its Swedish agent, printed 70,000 copies of its first issue. Those 70,000 were sold out in the

first 4 days”.³⁵ According to OWI Stockholm’s representative, the second issue had a print run of 140,000 copies and sold out just as fast. The same source concluded proudly: “with the aid and help of the Office of War Information, *Reader’s Digest* is now the magazine with the largest circulation in Sweden”.³⁶ The support for *Reader’s Digest* exemplifies what propaganda theorist Jacques Ellul describes as “integration propaganda”, a complex and subtle form of long-term persuasion primarily striving to influence cultural norms, rather than to agitate.³⁷

OWI Stockholm also produced print propaganda for a Danish audience. As Harald Runblom notes, the Danish-language publication *Nyt Over Atlanten* (News Across the Atlantic) was launched in 1943, with 10,000 copies printed for circulation in Denmark. Few traces remain of this activity, but one document shows that Karl Jensen, who was born in Denmark and became a naturalized American citizen, received feedback on a pilot publication from a Danish contact: “I have read the samples you gave me ... the size and printing of the magazine is good, and well used this propaganda can be of great value”.³⁸ While lamenting the “many examples of rather bad Danish”, the contact found *Nyt Over Atlanten* promising, adding that the Americans needed to keep the particularities and principles of propaganda in Denmark in mind. Seven central points of advice were outlined, such as “emphasize the romantic side of war, e.g. the actions of the saboteurs”, “let the Dane feel, that he too plays a part in the world” and “highlight the unreliability of the domestic newspapers”.³⁹ For Norway, the pamphlet *Amerika-Nytt* was printed in smaller numbers, around 3000 copies. As noted, much of the OWI’s printing was done in-house, but records gathered by the Civilian Security Service show that both *Nyt Over Atlanten* and *Amerika-Nytt* were printed regularly by Tryckeriaktiebolaget Federativ, a printing press operated by syndicalist trade union, the Central Organization of the Workers of Sweden (SAC). The production of propaganda for occupied Norway and Denmark was a sensitive issue, and the personal file on Karl Jensen notes that “the American Legation is highly anxious that word will get out that illegal propaganda aimed at Norway is being printed by the American Legation”.⁴⁰

Radio was another key medium for the dissemination of US news stories and war propaganda. During the war, there were various American radio broadcasts in Swedish (Fig. 1). However, much to the dismay of OWI Stockholm, correspondence suggested that most Swedes were not aware of the existence of such broadcasts despite the fact that these were advertised in major Swedish newspapers.⁴¹ Judging from the preserved



Gunnar Fagrell.

Hör AMERIKA i kväll

Nytt program!

Gunnar Fagrell, känd svensk korrespondent i Amerika, presenterar i kväll kl. 20.45 en ny serie intressanta radio-program på våglängd 41 m. (även på 31-m.-bandet).

Det blir aktuella intervjuer med svensk-amerikanerna i Massachusetts, som berätta om hur de lever och har det just nu och vad de tänker om det gamla hemlandet.

Tisdagen den 21 sept. på samma våglängd och tid blir det intervjuer med personalen vid den stora svensk-amerikanska tidningen "Svea". Det programmet måste Ni också höra — koppla på radion kl. 20.45!

Denna nya programserie sändes direkt från Amerika via England varje tisdag och lördag kväll kl. 20.45 på våglängd 41 och 31 meter.

OBS! Den vanliga nyhetsändningen på torsdagarna fortsätter på våglängd 41 och 31 meter kl. 20.45.

HÖR AMERIKA VARJE TISDAG - TORSDAG - LÖRDAG KL. 20.45

Fig. 1 Advertisement for American Swedish-language radio broadcasts in *Dagens Nyheter*, 18 September 1943

intelligence records, much emphasis at the Stockholm outpost was placed on radio propaganda. For example, records show that weekly measurement reports on the reception quality of American and British radio broadcasts were drafted in Sundsvall in the north of Sweden.⁴² Among the stations monitored were General Electric's shortwave broadcast to Europe

WGEO, the OWI-founded American Broadcasting Station in Europe (ABSIE) and the British BBC.⁴³ ABSIE was created in April 1944 with the ambition to support the Allied invasion of Europe, transmitting in several European languages until July 1945.⁴⁴ On the ground in Sundsvall, Swedish telegraphic operators reported on the reception, made technical suggestions on how to adjust and move the frequencies to avoid interference, and commented on the content of the programmes.⁴⁵ Some monitoring reports paid particular attention to the reception of radio broadcasts in Norwegian, Danish and Finnish, something which might imply that the signal strength in Sundsvall was seen as an indication of the reception quality also in other Nordic locations beyond American reach.⁴⁶ Similarly, another important task for the Swedish outpost was to monitor Nazi German transmissions, and an OWI representative aptly described Sweden as “an ideal place to listen”.⁴⁷

THE CIRCULATION OF FORBIDDEN FILMS

During World War II, all major combatants devoted significant funds towards the production and dissemination of film propaganda.⁴⁸ Famously, Hollywood filmmakers such as John Ford, John Huston and Frank Capra filmed on the frontlines of the war.⁴⁹ Similarly, OWI mobilized film propaganda, perhaps most notably through the influential propaganda series *Projections of America*, 26 short documentaries which centred on the American way of life.⁵⁰ The first completed film in the series was indeed the previously mentioned film *Swedes in America* on the contributions of Swedish immigrants in the US,⁵¹ which was screened in Sweden during the autumn of 1943 as a pre-film to *Casablanca* (Michael Curtiz, 1942).⁵²

During World War II, neutral Sweden has been described as a propaganda battleground.⁵³ Among other things, this was reflected in the pressure exerted towards the National Board of Film Censors (Statens biografbyrå) in questions surrounding film censorship. As Arne Svensson notes, there was close cooperation between the National Board of Film Censors, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Utrikesdepartementet) and the Government Board of Information (Statens informationsstyrelse) during the war.⁵⁴ Drawing on Swedish foreign policy, the film censors’ task was to assess whether imported films could harm Sweden’s relations with other nations, in which case the films should be banned or partially censored. As a consequence, the Film Censors paid attention to the propaganda content in foreign films. For example, the National Board of Film Censors

received many complaints from both American, British and Nazi German representatives about feature films with propagandistic tendencies, repeatedly urging the Swedish censors to stop the distribution of the adversaries' films.⁵⁵

The film screenings that took place in Sweden beyond the control of the National Board of Film Censors, however, have received little attention in previous scholarship. While all films that were distributed in Swedish cinemas passed the censorship bureau, private film screenings for members' clubs, film societies and other associations did not require such approval. Private screenings were commonplace throughout the war. For example, as I have discussed elsewhere, the German Legation and pro-Nazi associations such as Samfundet Manhem arranged private screenings of films that were never submitted to the film censors, such as the notoriously anti-semitic propaganda film *Der ewige Jude* (Fritz Hippler, 1940).⁵⁶ Similarly, the American Legation and the Office of War Information supported the circulation of forbidden American and British films.

The most famous "forbidden" film is probably Charlie Chaplin's *The Great Dictator* from 1940. Even before the war broke out, the German Film Chamber approached the Swedish Film Chamber, which was headed by Svensk Filmindustri's Olof Andersson, and made clear its view on Chaplin's film, labelling it a tendentious film.⁵⁷ Previous research shows that Andersson, who also served in the Nazi-controlled International Film Chamber, answered subserviently to the German diplomats, assuring them that Svensk Filmindustri would not distribute the film, adding that the strict film censorship laws would likely lead to a ban of the film.⁵⁸ Technically speaking, however, *The Great Dictator* was never forbidden in Sweden, as it was not submitted to the Censorship Board until September 1945 when it was subsequently approved.⁵⁹ Most likely, the film producer United Artists deemed it improbable that the film would pass the Swedish censorship bureau, and refrained from submission in an act of self-censorship. Yet, this did not prevent the film from gaining significant circulation in Sweden during the war.

Surveillance records show that the American Legation supported the circulation of *The Great Dictator* and that the film was high in demand. Inquiries came from both individuals and larger organizations—ranging from a professor in Uppsala wanting to arrange a screening for 20 of his closest colleagues to branches of large unions such as the Swedish Trade Union Confederation, the Railwaymen's Federation or Bofors Civil Servant Association asking to show the film to larger crowds of 1000 to

1200 people.⁶⁰ During the first years of the war, surveillance material suggests that commercial cinemas were commonly rented for private screenings, primarily during off-peak hours. However, in January 1943, the Swedish Association of Cinema Owners (Sveriges Biografägarförbund) decided that private screenings would no longer take place in their member cinemas.⁶¹ Larger screenings would often take place in auditoriums, such as the main lecture hall at the YMCA (KFUM) in Stockholm or cultural centres such as Folkets Hus, particularly after the cinema owners' decision (Fig. 2).⁶² During the autumn of 1943, two copies of *The Great Dictator* were in circulation: one in Stockholm and another distributed around the rest of the country.⁶³ In Stockholm, Allied and German officials monitored one another,⁶⁴ something which also holds true for the private film screenings. For example, the editor of the Swedish film journal *Filmbilden* wrote to the American Legation and reported that the German film company UFA's press division was in attendance during the American Legation's most recent screening of *The Great Dictator*.⁶⁵

Private film screenings occurred all the more frequently in 1943–1944. OWI supported the circulation of numerous other films besides *The Great Dictator*. One example is the John Steinbeck adaptation *The Moon Is Down* (Irving Pichel, 1943), which focuses on the occupation of a small town in

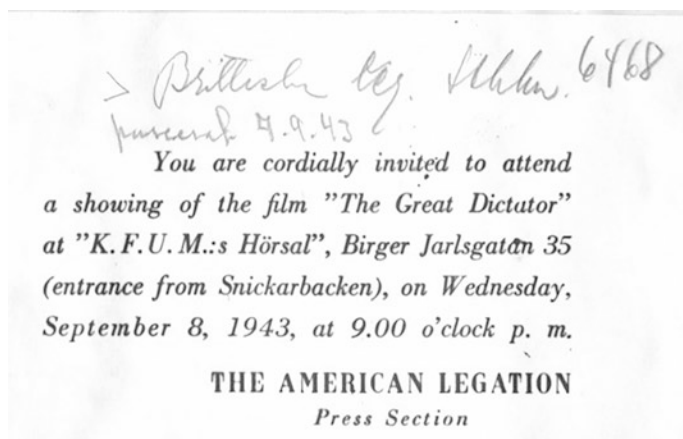


Fig. 2 Traces of the underground distribution of Charlie Chaplin's *The Great Dictator* (1940), F8EB:3, Allmänna säkerhetstjänstens arkiv, Swedish National Archives, Stockholm

Northern Europe. The Board of Film Censors banned the film in July 1943 with the justification that the similarities to the occupation of Norway are all too obvious.⁶⁶ Among other places, *The Moon Is Down* was screened at Moriska Paviljongen in Malmö for members of the Trade Union, much to the annoyance of three members of the National Socialist Workers' Party (Svensk Socialistisk Samling), who were recorded talking about the unfairness that their request to arrange a private screening had recently been denied by the local police office.⁶⁷ Other examples of banned films that OWI circulated include the British anti-Nazi thriller *Pimpernel Smith* (Leslie Howard, 1941) and the Nazi resistance drama *Underground* (Vincent Sherman, 1941).⁶⁸ Famously, one of the people who attended a private screening of *Pimpernel Smith* was the humanitarian Raoul Wallenberg.⁶⁹

Meanwhile, OWI Stockholm's film activities were not limited to popular Hollywood productions. A transcript of a wiretapped conversation between the representatives of the American Legation and the British Legation indicates that the Allies coordinated their film propaganda efforts in Sweden. The discussion focused on the dissemination of educational films for distribution in Swedish schools. James Knapp-Fisher, the Film Officer at the British Legation,⁷⁰ noted that he had provided a Swedish contact with seven short films from the British Ministry of Information and that the films would be screened in smaller villages, adding "this is precisely the type of propaganda that is so useful, but it cannot be too obvious".⁷¹ The member of the American Legation responded that he would provide the same Swedish contact with a film about life at American colleges. They also discussed the potential of distributing films on advances in medicine among Swedish doctors in order to showcase their countries' creativity and advancement in scientific matters. While the feature films distributed with the aid of the OWI Stockholm all belong to the anti-Nazi film genre and perpetuate strong political messages, the envisioned utility of educational films, promotional films about American colleges and science films was rather to provide a positive portrayal of America and Great Britain as civilized nations.

In the Civilian Security Service's archive, there are no traces of attempted film distribution from Stockholm to the neighbouring Nordic countries. However, a long article on the Stockholm outpost suggests that such activities took place, and that the OWI distributed prints of their *United Newsreel* into Denmark.⁷² Moreover, records show that the American Legation approved the lending of films for a screening in Stockholm

arranged by the husband of the famous Danish actress Marguerite Viby. The small audience of 16 people comprised Danish refugees as well as the Lord Mayor of Copenhagen.⁷³ Other examples of film screenings that the American Legation arranged for non-Swedish audiences include the sharing of five films in the US Department of War's documentary film series *Why We Fight* (Frank Capra & Anatole Litvak, 1942–1945) with the Legation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in Stockholm.⁷⁴ The connections between Allied representatives in the matter of film propaganda underline Stockholm's status as a propaganda and intelligence hub (for more on Stockholm and its role in the triangular stream of information between London and Copenhagen, see Emil Eiby Seidenfaden's chapter in this volume).

AMERICA BUILDS

The Office of War Information in Stockholm did not just focus on mass media. Another important tool for propaganda was the major architecture exhibition *America Builds* (*Amerika Bygger*), which opened at Nationalmuseum, the national gallery of Sweden, in June 1944. Within the diverse field of media archaeology and cultural-historical media research, scholars have foregrounded an expanded media concept, where museums, statues and exhibitions can be considered as media forms.⁷⁵ Meanwhile, mediation is a key function of museums, and curated exhibitions infer objects with meaning. Likewise, the exhibition *America Builds* built on and presented a range of media artefacts and served a distinct communicative purpose.

The Head of OWI Stockholm, Karl Jensen, started his career as a student of the architect Frank Lloyd Wright.⁷⁶ Jensen was a key figurehead in the organization of the exhibition. However, besides OWI, several organizations were involved in the planning and execution of the project: the Sweden-American Foundation (which was celebrating its 25th anniversary), the American-Scandinavian Foundation, the National Association of Swedish Architects (Sveriges Arkitekters Riksförbund) and the Museum of Modern Art in New York (MoMA). Henry Goddard Leach, head of the American-Scandinavian Foundation, involved MoMA in the project, and they took the lead in assembling the material that was shown during the exhibition.⁷⁷ An article in the American architecture magazine *Pencil Points*, which labelled the exhibition a “unique contribution to psychological warfare”, outlined the four main sections: pioneers of modern

architecture (such as Frank Lloyd Wright); outstanding buildings of the past ten years, U.S. housing in war and peace; and planning for the healthy growth of a large city.⁷⁸ The exhibit showcased a great amount of media—some 500 photographs, 100 photostats, pieces of fabric and material used during construction, posters and art work, architectural magazines, colour slides of American art, as well as documentary films for periodical screening at the Museum.⁷⁹ Some of the material had been utilized previously in domestic exhibitions, such as MoMA's *Art in Progress: Built in the USA* exhibition from June 1944.⁸⁰ In connection with the exhibition, several lectures were offered. Jensen presented on the topic of Frank Lloyd Wright and organic architecture, the Finnish modernist architect Alvar Aalto talked about city-planning and his impressions of contemporary American building, and the American author and poet Frederic Prokosch, who worked as a staff member at OWI Stockholm, presented new directions in American painting.⁸¹ By focusing on distinctly “modern” aspects of America, the exhibition presented an idealized version of society, a narrative and image that was further perpetuated in the Swedish media (Fig. 3).

The exhibition can be described as a typical mid-twentieth century media event, drawing on Espen Ytreberg's historical understanding of Dayan and Katz's concept.⁸² The opening ceremony was attended by Crown Prince Gustaf Adolf and Prince Eugen, brother of the Swedish King Gustaf V, lending credibility to the event. At the opening, the Head of Nationalmuseum Erik Wettergren underlined Swedish sentiment towards America: “America, a country closer to our hearts than many other countries at a closer distance, we welcome as a relative and a friend”.⁸³ *America Builds* gained attention in multiple media. In the press, author and art critic Gotthard Johansson, who introduced functionalism to a broader Swedish public, praised the exhibition: “the best architectural exhibition I have seen so far: lucid, fresh, captivating and varied”.⁸⁴ Moreover, the daily current affairs radio programme *Dagens Eko* (*The Daily Echo*) devoted time to *America Builds*.⁸⁵ Later, the exhibit moved to Gothenburg, where it was on display throughout September 1944 at Röhsska, the Museum of Design and Craft. After the war, *America Builds* became a travelling exhibition, appearing at the Finnish National Gallery Ateneum in Helsinki in 1945 and at Kunstindustrimuseet in Oslo in 1946. In the latter case, the opening ceremony, with Crown Prince Olav and Crown Princess Märtha in attendance, became a notable media event that was also captured in the newsreel *Filmavisen*.⁸⁶

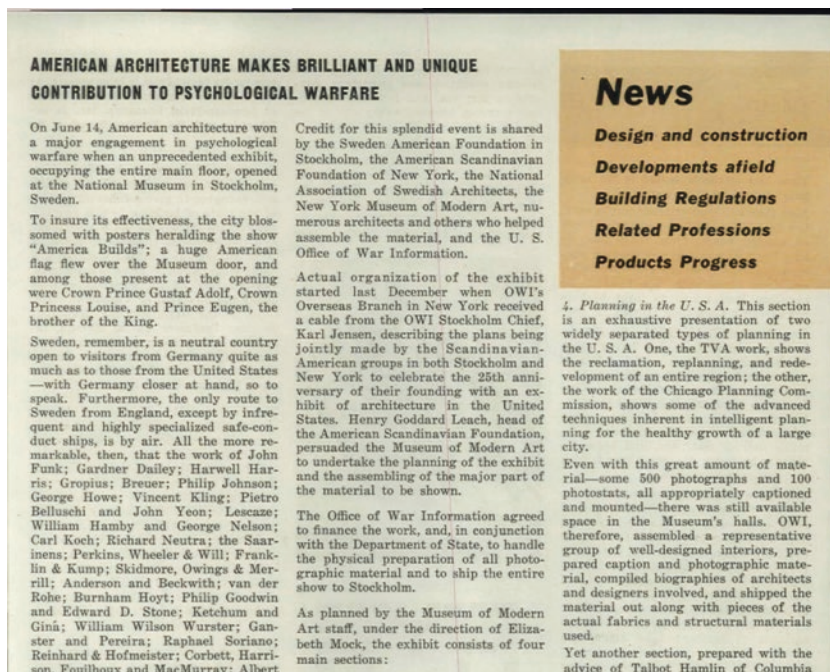


Fig. 3 A description of the America Builds exhibition as a contribution to psychological warfare in the architectural journal *Pencil Points*, vol. 25, no. 2 (1944)

CONCLUSIONS

Notably, the Office of War Information started operating in Sweden around the same time as Nazi Germany was beginning to experience a shift of initiative on the battlefield. As Klas Åmark notes, following 1942, Swedish public opinion grew more distanced and critical towards Nazi Germany.⁸⁷ In order for propaganda to be effective, Jacques Ellul observes, the audience needs to be receptive to it.⁸⁸ As the war turned against Germany, the Allies that were circulating propaganda in Sweden were thus speaking to an audience with a more favourable attitude than before.

This chapter examines the material conditions of US propaganda in Sweden and Stockholm's function as a gateway for propaganda aimed at the other Nordic countries. The study shows that the US press strategy in

Sweden differed from that of Nazi Germany, which Thulstrup has shown centred on threats and intimidation. With regard to the publication of newspapers, illustrated magazines and brochures, the American Legation was clearly identified as the commissioner of the material, offering a distinctly American view on the ongoing war effort. By contrast, the support of *Reader's Digest* and the planting of US-friendly news stories in Swedish newspapers were inconspicuous, a typical example of what theorists have labelled grey propaganda. Although Sweden was not central to the US radio broadcasting efforts, OWI's Stockholm outpost monitored the reception quality of US-sponsored Swedish, Norwegian, Danish and Finnish-language broadcasts in the north of Sweden, as well as Nazi German broadcasts. Another important media strategy, which Swedish officials paid close attention to, was the circulation of forbidden films. For example, even though Chaplin's *The Great Dictator* never passed the National Board of Film Censors, the film reached a considerable Swedish audience, something to which the amount of supervised correspondence about the film attests. Lastly, the exhibition *America Builds* in 1944 was a massive effort, and much work went into the difficult import of American photographs, books and films to Sweden. The fact is that the exhibition opened at the national gallery of Sweden had a symbolic bearing, and as a media event *America Builds* had a considerable impact in the public sphere.

Although previous research on World War II propaganda is exhaustive, surprisingly few studies focus on Allied media production and circulation in Sweden. A potential avenue for further research would be to approach Stockholm as a transnational, entangled propaganda hub. This chapter concentrates on US propaganda for a Swedish and a Nordic audience, but there are many questions remaining about the connections between the Allies on the ground in Stockholm when it comes to the making of propaganda, not only for the Nordics but also beyond. Furthermore, the topic of US propaganda in Sweden and the Nordics is of particular importance given the country's rapidly increasing influence in the Cold War era. For example, as Mikael Nilsson observes, the purposeful acts of persuasion aimed at Sweden continued and accelerated in the Cold War era under the auspices of United States Information Service, targeting among other things Swedish newspapers, labour unions and universities.⁸⁹ This raises questions about continuities and shifts between the wartime propaganda and the Cold War era public diplomacy.

NOTES

1. Letter from Dorothy Kjellstrand (American Legation) to Louis Quailles, 23 February 1943, F8EB:3, Allmänna säkerhetstjänstens arkiv (Civilian Security Service Archive, CSSA), Riksarkivet (National Archives of Sweden, NAS), hereafter CSSA:NAS.
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Mobilized for Propaganda: Danish Journalists in British Exile, 1940–1945

Emil Eiby Seidenfaden

Thank you for your last letter. I heard you on the BBC last night [...]. It was delightful. You have a strange voice. Hoarse, but filled with fire, which produces a brilliant effect. I have been told that your 5 minutes are listened to in all of Denmark where they crave this sort of thing that we over here may find obvious or redundant. (Jens Gielstrup to Sven Tillge-Rasmussen, exiled Danish journalists in Britain, 1941)¹

During World War II about 25 journalists were active members of the Danish exile community in Britain. Some were stranded when the war began as correspondents for Danish newspapers. Others escaped to Britain during the war. All faced a unique challenge: their government had struck a deal with the Germans which put the country under military occupation while maintaining the formal independence of its political life, an

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arrangement that Danish historians have called “a fiction of sovereignty”.² Therefore, no Danish exiled government existed, in London or elsewhere, to rally expatriates to the cause, as in the case of most other occupied countries. The status of Danish citizens in Britain seemed ambiguous, and before 1943, when the Danish “policy of negotiation” partially collapsed, they even attracted suspicion. The stranded journalists were forced to think about their allegiances and were faced with the question of how they ought to reconcile their professional identity with their position as exiles in a country at war.

The experience of these journalists constitutes an overlooked chapter in the Scandinavian history of journalism and helps us to grasp the war as a link in the evolution of professional journalism in Northern Europe during the first half of the twentieth century. Some of the Danes, and some of their British contacts, have published accounts and memoirs.³ However useful, they are coloured by their retrospective glance and focus, for good reasons, on their stakes in the resistance movement at home. A few biographies exist of spectacular exiled figures, such as the controversial Danish ambassador to the USA, Henrik Kauffman and the politician at the centre of the London community John Christmas Møller.⁴ Jeremy Bennet’s important study of the BBC Danish Service illuminates the difficult working conditions of the Danes in adhering to changing British governmental directives and the demands of the improvised wartime news bureau Dansk Pressetjeneste (DPT) in Stockholm.⁵

Drawing on the personal papers and publications of these exiled journalists, this chapter sketches their practices with a special focus on their engagement with what at the time was referred to as “propaganda”. It focuses on their activities and movements rather than the content of what they wrote or broadcasted. Methodologically, I consider it a piece of transnational history of journalism.⁶ Sune Bechmann Pedersen and Marie Cronqvist have discussed the phenomenon of foreign correspondents having to act simultaneously as reporters and agents of states.⁷ Indeed, the exiled Danes had to navigate *several* state allegiances—one to British governmental agencies who employed them and another to an idea of a Free Denmark, which was not a government but which existed to salvage the country’s reputation nonetheless. At the same time, these journalists adhered to a nascent professional ethos: Michael Schudson has shown how “objectivity” and a sense of stewardship of democratic ideals emerged gradually throughout the late interwar period and towards the end of World War II.⁸ The question of how much Scandinavian foreign affairs

journalists adhered to such ideals during wartime is complicated by historical variations in the development of media systems in Northern Europe and the Anglo-American world. However, journalism was undoubtedly emerging as a delimited professional field in Scandinavia at the time and was impacted by both French but predominantly Anglo-American traditions, considering journalism a commercial enterprise focused on news-gathering and involving early notions of objectivity.⁹ Our exiled journalists arguably navigated several legitimacies, one being an open-ended journalistic one which, rather than defining rigidly, we shall regard as simply a self-perception as journalists and trace by noting the connotations the exiled journalists attributed to it. This navigation will work as an analytical mainstay of the chapter, during which we shall also engage with the perception of propaganda by the journalists and what that activity entailed to them.

For reasons of clarity, the paper returns continuously to one journalist, Sten de Hemmer Gudme. Gudme has been chosen not with a biographical intention, but because his wartime trajectory offers insight into the main areas of activity of Danish exiled journalists: Initially struggling to find work, many joined the British in the BBC or in covert military propaganda between 1941 and 1943. After the fall of 1943, a combination of events in Denmark and a strained relationship with British leadership, the journalists shifted their efforts to public diplomacy. The emphasis was now on “selling” the Danish cause to the British public and also on the vital transfer of news and intelligence between Copenhagen, Stockholm and London, in which journalists were instrumental, the provision of reliable news being at the core of the journalistic tradecraft.

Before “zooming in” on Gudme, we examine the various institutions that Danes navigated in wartime Britain.

FOR BRITAIN AND FOR DENMARK

Shortly after the occupation of Denmark in April 1940, Danes in Britain founded the Danish Council, which formalized the free Danish movement, paralleling movements like the Free French. Pledging to stand “with Great Britain and Northern Ireland for Denmark’s liberation”, the Council aligned itself with the British war effort, but its attitude towards the Danish government’s policy of negotiation with Germany was ambiguous. This was due to disagreements not only among the Danes but among the British too, whose governmental institutions differed

internally in their policies towards Denmark. The British wanted to maintain control over information warfare aimed at Denmark, and strategists within both national groups feared that too heated criticism of the Danish government's policy risked alienating the Danish population from its exiled compatriots.¹⁰

Thus, the Foreign Office (FO) instructed the Danes that their association must not resemble a government in exile challenging the legitimate one in Denmark.¹¹ The association had an executive council (the Council) representing Danes who lived in the UK, (their numbers are undetermined, but there were "6000–7000 in England") and considered its most important function to be to "defend and explain" Denmark's special position to their British hosts.¹²

Together with the Danish Club in London and the Anglo-Danish Society of Britain, the Council became a social epicentre for Danes in Britain.¹³ Its members, however, differed over questions of how close it should be to the British government and over its policy towards the Danish envoy in London, Count Edouard Reventlow, who between 1940 and 1941 was considered by many as too prudent—or even cowardly—in his allegiance to official Danish policy.¹⁴ The conservative politician John Christmas Møller escaped to Britain in 1942 and became, after some compromise with the existing leadership, the leader of the Council.¹⁵ Invited by the British government, Møller brought dynamism to the Council but also gradually soured against his hosts.¹⁶ The journalists, meanwhile, worked consistently to promote the Danish Council to the British public, mainly through the Council's newspaper aimed at the exile community, *Frit Danmark*, but also other smaller outlets and books, pamphlets, exhibitions, talks and events. For reasons of space, however, the present chapter focuses on the activities the Danes engaged in *vis-à-vis* Scandinavia and particularly those under British direction (Fig. 1).

Most of the journalists worked for the BBC, from whose Danish Service they broadcast to occupied Denmark. The headquarters in the stately Bush House in central London became a pillar in the London of exiles where the Danes mingled with expatriate Europeans of many kinds, from journalists to politicians, diplomats, spies, civil servants, former officials of the League of Nations and so on.¹⁷ After the first improvised message to the Danish people on the evening of the occupation (by Sven Tillge-Rasmussen, London correspondent for the daily *Politiken*), the Danish Service transmitted news and talks daily throughout the war. Most of the journalist community worked for the BBC, although to quite different



Fig. 1 Danish exiled journalist Sten Gudme (left), UK Deputy Prime Minister Clement Attlee (middle) and exiled Danish politician John Christmas Møller (right) at a Danish exhibition in London, 1944. From the Photo Collections of the Royal Danish Library

degrees, some working as permanent newsreaders, some as commentators and some as monitors.¹⁸ The Danish Service's director, at the insistence of the British who wanted close supervision, was Robert Jørgensen, a British citizen with a Danish background who had a career in advertising and little journalistic experience.

Through the BBC, Danes would encounter the third and more mysterious platform that employed exiled journalists. British war propaganda operated through three ministries, namely the FO, the Ministry of Economic Warfare (which oversaw the infamous Special Operations Executive, SOE, tasked with paratropping trained exiles to facilitate sabotage), and the Ministry of Information. After the escalation of power struggles between these three ministries, a compromise was reached in late 1941 to create a single amalgamated clandestine organization tasked with

targeting occupied and enemy countries with propaganda. This body was called the Political Warfare Executive, (PWE).¹⁹ It supervised the BBC, together with the FO and its Political Intelligence Department (PID).²⁰

On the topic of propaganda, a brief historicization and discussion of this concept is worthwhile: Scholarship has argued that the concept of propaganda in Western countries was “theorized” as a problematic activity tied to the development of a mass society as far back as the late eighteenth century and did not, as is often assumed, emerge suddenly as part of Europe’s therapeutic dealing with the shock of “total war” in 1918. At the end of the interwar period propaganda, although regularly used interchangeably with “publicity”, was increasingly becoming reserved for describing a wartime measure. It could, in short, be legitimate under the right circumstances, but among people who had grown up during World War I, and arguably among journalists in particular, it would signify aggressive use of information to manipulate the masses. In this chapter, the word is used because the actors themselves (British intelligence agents and Danish exiled journalists alike) used it systematically to describe their own work, be it covert or overt. Its use by the author therefore does not reflect a value judgement, but rather a reflection of the discourse at the time, in line with the volume’s ambition to pursue an interrogation of the concept’s use and meaning over time.²¹

We observe at least three legitimacies open to the stranded Danish journalists: they could attempt to remain loyal towards the Danish representatives in Britain and only pursue work that was equally acceptable to these and to the British, such as working at the Danish Legation, or taking work outside journalism.²² Conversely, they could join British governmental war propaganda which would subjugate them to the British authorities. Finally, they could try to maintain a journalistic ethos of producing reliable news in times of war. Arguably, the complete maintenance of any or all of these three legitimacies proved next to impossible, and thus their wartime trajectory may be observed as an ongoing negotiation between them (Fig. 2).

“RICHARD STONE” THE PROPAGANDIST

One day during the summer of 1941, a man walked into Bush House which, aside from the BBC, hosted the newspaper of the Danish exile community, *Frit Danmark*. The newspaper’s editor, Emil Blytgen-Petersen had been confidentially told that Sten de Hemmer Gudme, a



Fig. 2 Picture taken during the “London blitz”, the first German air raids on London in September 1940. From New York Times Paris Bureau Collection/Wikimedia Commons

40-year-old journalist at the Danish daily *Politiken*, had fled Denmark via Sweden and was coming to Britain. Gudme had spent at least a month in the English countryside before he was allowed to go to London and show himself to the rest of the exile community.²³

Gudme had been invited by the British intelligence services via Ebbe Munck, a Danish journalist based in Stockholm, and a key facilitator-to-be of the Danish resistance movement, who worked together with the SOE representatives in the Swedish capital. The request for a talented Danish journalist to go to England came from Thomas Barman, a Norwegian-born agent of the PID.²⁴ Since his own days as *Times* correspondent in Scandinavia, Barman had counted Danish foreign affairs journalists among his friends. Gudme, who was unmarried and had no children, was willing to go. His friend and colleague at *Politiken* Erik Seidenfaden wrote enviously in a private note about a month after Gudme’s departure from Stockholm on a British military plane: “Gudme left for London on 20 May. War has broken out between Germany and Russia. Nobody can leave Denmark now. [Ebbe Munck] wrote today that various candidates were

proposed, but that he had decided on Sten because he was independent. Lucky man!”²⁵

After his escape, which brought German wrath upon his editor-in-chief in Copenhagen, who only just managed to keep his job, Gudme wrote in a farewell note to Seidenfaden and his wife Jytte: “not for a single moment have I regretted my decision, and I look forward to doing the job, whatever it may be”. Arguably, Gudme was thinking first and foremost of doing something that would help the British war effort and thereby legitimize his voyage.²⁶

On arrival he was installed in a village close to Woburn Abbey in Bedfordshire, north of London, which had become the headquarters of the PWE. Here, citizens of all occupied countries in Europe were tasked with counselling the British on strategy for each country, producing leaflets and making broadcasts from “black transmitters”, disguised as messages from partisans in the occupied country.²⁷ Gudme was ordered to take a false name and chose “Richard Stone”. He was united with fellow Danes Terkel M. Terkelsen and Jens Gielstrup (see the opening epigraph), who desperately needed news from Denmark. It was they, together with Sven Tillge-Rasmussen, who had asked Barman to procure a Dane for them with fresh news.²⁸ Gielstrup and Tillge-Rasmussen were former colleagues of Gudme’s at *Politiken*, while Terkelsen came from *Berlingske Tidende*.

Terkelsen was establishing himself as an arbiter between the interests of the British war effort and his own countrymen.²⁹ In January 1941 he had been asked to join the Enemy Propaganda Department, often referred to metonymously by its placement, “Electra House”, which was later to merge into the PWE.³⁰ Together with two Brits, Brinley Thomas (PWE) and Barman (PID), he would become responsible for directions to his Danish colleagues in the BBC.³¹ Gudme was appointed to lead the Danish Section at Woburn Abbey. Gielstrup, who had left a career as a promising novelist and poet in Denmark, and a Danish military officer, Eyvind Knauer were speakers at the Danish transmitter there, while Terkelsen and Tillge-Rasmussen were editors and consultants.³²

“Zooming out”, we observe that after Denmark’s occupation in April 1940, correspondents for Danish papers had lost their jobs and were catapulted into financial uncertainty. They still earned their money in journalistic work, albeit rather menial compared to their former glory as national correspondents. Terkelsen monitored Danish radio for the BBC, Tillge-Rasmussen and Emil Blytgen-Petersen both corresponded for newspapers

in neutral Sweden. Other Danes joined the ranks of what would become a journalist community in Britain, like the young communist and former expatriate salesman Leif Gundel, who talked his way into a job at the BBC.³³ The Danish Council had little insight into events in Denmark, and a general feeling of isolation permeated the Danish “colony”.³⁴

Then, in the spring of 1941, all this started to change as a number of the Danes were handpicked to serve British war propaganda. Several were already working at the BBC, but Gudme, Gielstrup, Tillge-Rasmussen and Terkelsen, together with Harry Agerbak who came later, joined the PWE in Bedfordshire and were singled out by Barman, in his memoirs, as “among the best of our colleagues”. Barman added that Gudme “ultimately played a leading part in the lay-out of all propaganda-leaflets, regardless of language, dropped by the RAF [(Royal Air Force)]”.³⁵

A letter from Gudme to his old friend Seidenfaden from May 1943 is telling as to the degree to which Gudme had settled into his role as propagandist two years after his arrival. Seidenfaden had remarked critically on the propaganda that was coming from England (it was unclear whether he meant BBC broadcasts or printed propaganda) and had called it “more German than English” in its style. Gudme responded quite passionately: “I cannot see the problem in certain kinds of propaganda using harsher methods”. And he added:

Dear God, did one ever hear of a more difficult country than Denmark in terms of propaganda! If one calls the Germans stupid bastards, they [the Danes] think one is an idiot, because they know that much better themselves, and the Germans are not even angry because they know it themselves too.³⁶

Gudme now legitimized his work as necessary for the war effort. He added, however, that he had passed on Seidenfaden’s remarks to Barman and to the FO. And in the longer run the criticism may have resonated with his own doubts. Gudme and Tillge-Rasmussen both stopped working at Woburn in September 1943, around the time when the Danish policy of collaboration collapsed after uprisings brought about by increased German pressure. Gudme went to devote his time to the Danish Council. He would replace Emil Blytgen-Petersen as editor of *Frit Danmark* when the latter went to Normandy to report from the Allied invasion in 1944.³⁷ Tillge-Rasmussen left to become an attaché at the Danish Legation, a role distinctly removed from war propaganda.³⁸

Primarily, it seems Gudme and Tillge-Rasmussen's exit from war propaganda reflected events in Denmark. With a more unified home front (the Freedom Council which coordinated the Danish resistance fight had been founded in September), they probably felt more needed elsewhere. Still, Gudme wrote later that he "broke with the British on political questions" suggesting that something more than a change in priorities was at stake.³⁹ A few weeks before, on 23 August, Tillge-Rasmussen's young assistant Jens Gielstrup, who had struggled to be allowed to fly for the RAF, was killed in one of his first operations as a Spitfire pilot, the training for which had taken him away from Woburn since the autumn of 1941. However, although Gielstrup's death shocked his colleagues, nothing suggests that it caused their exit.

Gudme has later been described as a man who only reluctantly spoke of his own work.⁴⁰ He seemed keen on keeping up the appearance of a smooth cooperation with the British authorities. A few months after he left Woburn, he travelled to Sweden on a mission which was, he wrote later, "initiated by the British". However, the minutes of the Information Committee of the Danish Council state that the mission was initiated from there, and that the Council had to "sell" it to the British.⁴¹ In fact, Gudme was able to go because of having successfully played two British institutions against each other. His employers in the PID and PWE were unwilling to let him go, but the SOE, a more activist organization pushing for more British action in Scandinavia, secured his permit. In the minutes of a joint meeting between the three organizations, a PID official notes the:

surprising decision of S.O.E Danish section to recommend to the Foreign Office that Mr. Sten Gudme (a former employee of the black side of PWE Danish work) should be granted an exit permit to go over to Stockholm to traffic with the Danish press service on behalf of the Free Danes. I have asked for an explanation of this strange affair.⁴²

Thus, the reasons for Gudme and Tillge-Rasmussen's change of heart seem connected to a combination of frustrated patriotism and a general fatigue with taking orders from the British. In an August 1942 memo signed by Gudme, Tillge-Rasmussen, Eyvind Knauer and Møller, the exiled politician, the signatories criticized the British policy of not encouraging active resistance, a reluctance the Danes believed risked undermining the work of agents in Denmark, and which could unfairly result in

“leaving Denmark worse off than other occupied countries” when the war ended.⁴³

The British largely ignored the memo and Terkelsen, significantly, did not sign it—he probably preferred to remain a loyal employee of the British, as has been noted too by Frank Esmann.⁴⁴ The memo seems to reflect a move away from legitimizing their presence in Britain through their devotion to the British war effort. By 1943, some of the Danes felt confident in trying to secure a more independent agency as journalists working under special circumstances.

A TRIANGULAR TRADE OF NEWS AND INTELLIGENCE

Arguably, some of the most important work performed by the London journalists was their channelling of news and intelligence between the capitals of Denmark, Sweden and Great Britain. This marks the latest phase of their activities, 1944–1945, when German defeats meant the Swedish government no longer seriously feared Reich repercussions for harbouring a Danish exile community, and the Danish government consisted of civil servants many of which were sympathetic to resistance efforts. A show of force was being prepared between resistance groups, the “old politicians” who had governed Denmark during the war and key figures of the exile communities like Kauffman and Møller.

The process of smuggling information, including news on resistance activities or intelligence from political circles, out via Sweden to Britain to either be broadcast back to Denmark by the BBC or Woburn or to benefit British intelligence, made for an elaborate role for journalists, whose capabilities as conveyors of reliable information became pertinent. After the war Gudme, together with Erling Bjøl and a Swedish journalist, contributed to a booklet by Stockholm Dane Gunnar Næsselund in which they wrote that:

The Danish Council and the individual journalists became tasked with establishing lines of communication with those back home. This depended necessarily on a close relationship with the British—and later the British-American—agencies that oversaw information from Denmark and that controlled the channels through which information had to pass. In the first few years very few in Denmark—you could count them on one hand—understood the significance of sending good political reports and news to England, and who were willing to run the personal risk it entailed.⁴⁵

Here it is seen how, in retrospect, journalists who had spent the war in Stockholm and London alike were keen to highlight their use of a journalistic skillset in the fight against the Nazis.

In Stockholm, activities intensified from August 1943 and a surge of refugees, including Jews escaping a German internment operation in October and resistance fighters with their covers blown or prominent anti-Nazis, came to Sweden. The relatively small exile community in Stockholm, headed by Ebbe Munck, became overworked, and the city became a hub of post-war planning and intelligence gathering.⁴⁶

When Gudme had left Stockholm back in May 1941, he had trodden a path that would be used regularly during the later war years. The first to repeat his journey was Møller, exactly a year later. Then followed journalists Ole Kiilerich and Holger Hørsholt-Hansen in February 1943, Harry Agerbak in November 1943, Erling Bjøl in February 1944 and Johannes G. Sørensen in December 1944. Ebbe Munck too visited London in mid-1944.⁴⁷

The route worked the other way as well. In August 1943, exiled journalists in Stockholm founded the news bureau Dansk Pressetjeneste (Danish Press Service, DPT). The DPT relied on informers in Denmark (notably the underground news bureau Information, which transformed, after the war, into a non-communist left-wing daily newspaper) and evolved into the paramount provider of Danish news to international media from the autumn of 1943. Its leadership was a triumvirate of Ebbe Munck, Gunnar Næsselund and Erik Seidenfaden, all journalists, and with a Swede playing the part of director to adhere to Swedish law.⁴⁸ The two exile communities now realized the importance of striking a deal that provided London with DPT news and intelligence for the BBC and for British governmental agencies, and simultaneously let Stockholm Danes have a say in its use. Reckless use of confidential news could compromise the safety of Danish officials helping the resistance and undermine the credibility of the DPT, which also serviced Swedish news media through the Tidningarnes Telegrambureau (TT).⁴⁹

Gudme was crucial in negotiating the details of these connections. As already referred to, on 24 November 1943, the Council's Information Committee deliberated about sending him to Sweden to negotiate "a direct news service from Stockholm to the [...] Committee".⁵⁰ Gudme left in December, and for two months he negotiated with the DPT and also interviewed Danish resistance fighters and prominent refugees in the Swedish capital. He sent intelligence reports to Møller in London, to the

PID and to Danish legations elsewhere.⁵¹ Upon returning, in February 1944, he briefed British government agencies on Scandinavian developments.⁵²

Despite the breakthrough, all was still not sorted. As discussed by Bennet, a crisis between the BBC and the DPT, which gives some insight into the conditions of the relationship, erupted in late June 1944. The Stockholm journalists accused the BBC Danes of making poor use of DPT telegrams, the content of which informers had risked their lives for. Consequently, they stopped all further news flows to London to exert maximum pressure on the British.⁵³ Erling Bjøl acted as a London informant for the DPT and, in letters to Stockholm, blamed Robert Jørgensen, the BBC's British-Danish director.⁵⁴ However, Bennet argues convincingly that the DPT's distrust in Jørgensen was largely unjustified, because the Stockholm Swedes were ignorant of the degree of British (PWE) control of the BBC. The British, after some resistance, agreed to reform their policy and allow more space for local Danish news. The Danes in Stockholm and London, although still having their work framed to a large degree by British demands, had won a victory by securing more freedom in the use of their news provision and thus a more clear-cut journalistic role for themselves.

Gudme's importance in bridging Stockholm and London worldviews is suggested by the fact that about a year after his return to England, Stockholm wanted him back. Gudme wanted to stay in London but acquiesced when Seidenfaden wrote to him: "I think it will be of great value both for London and for the Cause [sic] if there was a man here who knew how things stand on your side".⁵⁵ So, in December 1944, Gudme left Britain and settled in Stockholm for the rest of the war. At this point, his brother Peter Gudme, a leading force in *Information* in Denmark, had killed himself whilst in the custody of Gestapo in Copenhagen. Evidence of how this impacted the closed-off Sten Gudme is glimpsed in his papers—for example, in a report to Møller in January 1945 he referred to the Germans as "huns", a derogatory (and quite British) kind of slang he had not used before.⁵⁶ He also seems to have intensified his work. In late 1944, he became a member of the Liaison Committee between the Freedom Council, representing the Danish resistance movement, and the politicians (*Kontaktudvalget*).⁵⁷

Gudme was not the only contributor to this triangular movement of news and intelligence across the North Sea. Looking solely at journalists based in London, the late arrivals Ole Kiilerich and Erling Bjøl both acted

as liaison officers between Stockholm and London, and Terkelsen, as we have seen, supported the activities from the PID.⁵⁸ When Bjøl wanted to go to London in 1944, the British refused, saying he was of better use to them in Stockholm. Bjøl then secured a permit for England from his American employers at the United Press, a move which provoked the British to arrest him upon arrival and place him briefly in a screening camp. He later went over to the BBC, orchestrated by none other than Gudme, who wanted people there who had been in occupied Denmark. Danes were capable of manoeuvring between the interests of the Great Powers to increase their agency as wartime journalists.⁵⁹

CONCLUSION

This chapter has sketched the figures and practices of the exile community of Danish journalists in Britain from 1940 to 1945, with a special emphasis on their endeavours inside British-run war propaganda agencies and their struggle to gain independent agency within this framework. Throughout the war, the conditions that the British laid down for them and the realities of the Danish policy of negotiation very much shaped the ways the exiled journalist worked.

They never served a legitimate Danish government in exile and were therefore forced to constantly navigate three interdependent yet different legitimacies: one drawing on their nationality, one on their devotion to the British war effort and one on their own skillsets as journalists. First, a handpicked group assisted the PWE with targeting Denmark with covert or “black” propaganda, but over time, the ambiguous caution of British policy and the lack of influence given to the Danes on strategy drove the most experienced journalists to grow weary of British oversight. Helped by parallel developments in Scandinavia, including the partial collapse of the Danish government’s policy of collaboration with the German occupiers and the mounting confidence of exiled Danes in Sweden and of Swedish authorities in helping them, the London Danes were increasingly able to manipulate their British supervisors to give them more agency and thus were able to pursue a new role towards the end of the war (1944–1945) as facilitators of a transfer of news and political intelligence between London, Stockholm and Copenhagen.

NOTES

1. Letter from Jens Gielstrup to Sven Tillge-Rasmussen, nd, 1941, C17, Sven Tillge-Rasmussen Personal Papers, Danish National Archives (TR-DNA hereafter), Translated to English from Danish (D-E hereafter).
2. Claus Bundgård Christensen, Joachim Lund, Niels Wium Olesen and Jakob Sørensen, *Danmark besat: Krig og hverdag 1940–1945*, 5th. ed. (Copenhagen: Informations Forlag, 2020), 108.
3. Gunnar Næsselund-Hansen, Sten Gudme, Valter Hermanson and Erling Bjøl, *Danmarks Ansigt* (Copenhagen: Nyt Nordisk Forlag, 1946); Emil Blytgen-Petersen, *Frie danske i London, 1940–1945* (Copenhagen: Nyt Nordisk Forlag, 1977); Robert Jørgensen, *London kalder* (København: Det Danske Forlag, 1945); Terkel M. Terkelsen, *Særmelding fra London* (Copenhagen: Berlingske presse-bibliotek, 1971); Leif Gundel, *Her er London* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1945); Ole Kiilerich, *Ubetalelige Danmark: Journalisten og alle de andre* (Odense: Odense Universitetsforlag, 1985); Erling Bjøl, *Set I bakspejlet: Erindringer fra 30'erne, 40'erne og 50'erne* (Copenhagen: Politikens Forlag, 1993); Thomas Barman, *Diplomatic Correspondent* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1969); Robert Bruce Lockhart, *Comes the Reckoning* (London: Putnam, 1947).
4. *Uden mandat: En biografi om Henrik Kauffmann* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 2020); biographies of Danish journalists in Sweden see Gerhardt Eriksen, *Erik Seidenfaden: En biografi* (Copenhagen: Spektrum, 2000); Janni Andreassen, *At vise flaget: Ebbe Munck—krigskorrespondent, modstandsmand, hofchef* (Copenhagen: Høst & Søn, 2007); other works on exiled Danes include Martin Sundstrøm, *Man skal dø ung: Historien om forfatteren og spitfire-piloten Jens Gielstrups korte og intense liv* (Copenhagen: Informations Forlag, 2012); Mette Møller, *John Christmas Møller: Politik forud for alt* (Copenhagen: Møllers Kontor, 2019); Erik Thostrup Jacobsen, ed., *Gør jer pligt—gør jert værk. John Christmas Møllers dagbøger 1941–1945* (Copenhagen: Selskabet for Udgivelse af Kilder til Dansk Historie, 1995).
5. Jeremy Bennet, *British Broadcasting and the Danish Resistance Movement, 1940–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966). For a more recent but less detailed treatment of the BBC's relation to the Danish resistance see Michael Stenton, *Radio London and Resistance in Occupied Europe: British Political Warfare, 1939–1943*, (Oxford Scholarship Online, 2011), chapters 21–23.
6. Emanuele Loyer, “Exile”, Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History, eds. Akira Iriye and Pierre-Yves Saunier (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 368; Martin Conway and José Gotovitch, eds., *Europe in Exile: European Exile Communities in Britain, 1940–1945* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2001); Constance Bantman and Ana Cláudia Suriani da Silva, *The*

- Foreign Political Press in Nineteenth Century London: Politics from a Distance* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018); Michael Goebel, *Anti-Imperial Metropolis: Interwar Paris and the Seeds of Third World Nationalism* (Cambridge: CUP, 2015), Pavol Jakubec, “Together and Alone in Allied London: Czechoslovak, Norwegian and Polish Governments in Exile, 1940–1945”, *The International History Review*, vol. 42, no. 3 (2020), 465–484.
7. Sune Bechmann Pedersen and Marie Cronqvist, “Foreign Correspondents in the Cold War: The Politics and Practices of East German Television Journalists in the West”, *Media History*, vol. 26, no. 1 (2020), 76.
 8. Michael Schudson, *Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers* (New York: Basic Books, 1978).
 9. Daniel C. Hallin and Robert Giles, “Presses and Democracies”, *The Press*, eds. Geneva Overholser and Kathleen Hall Jamieson (New York: Oxford University Press, Institutions of American Democracy Series, 2005), 13.
 10. Hans Kirchhoff, *Augustoprøret 1943: Samarbejdspolitikkenes fald. Et studie i kollaboration og modstand I–III*, vol. 1 (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1979), 281.
 11. Sten Gudme, “De danske i England”, *De fem lange aar: Danmark under besættelsen 1940–1945 bd. III*, eds. Johannes Brøndsted and Knud Gedde (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1947), 1459.
 12. Gudme, “De danske”, 1460.
 13. The ADS, a philanthropic organization and forum for cultural exchange founded in 1924 to strengthen cultural and economic ties between the UK and Denmark. See Claire Thomson’s chapter in this volume.
 14. Gudme, ‘De danske’, 1457.
 15. Wilhelm Christmas-Møller, *Christmas: Christmas Møller og Det konservative Folkeparti vol II* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1993), 178.
 16. Terkelsen, *Særmelding*, 60.
 17. See also Jakubec, “Together and Alone”, 3.
 18. Terkelsen, *Særmelding*, 21. Prominent speakers also included Emil Blytgen-Petersen, Leif Gundel and Terkel Terkelsen, while British citizen Robert Jørgensen headed the section. Others were Paul and Ragna Palmér, Anker Svart, D. V. Aagaard, Flemming Barfoed, Sven Ebbesen and Poul Vejbye Johansen. Jørgen Edsberg, Jens Gielstrup and Sten Gudme contributed sporadically, while Holger Hørsholt-Hansen, Erling Bjøl and Johannes G. Sørensen took part during the last phase of the war, 1944–1945.
 19. David Garnett, *The Secret History of the PWE: The Political Warfare Executive, 1939–1945* (London: St Ermin’s Press, 2002). Bennet, *British Broadcasting*, 19. Lockhart, *Comes the Reckoning*, 153.
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- Culbert and David Welch, "Preface", *Propaganda and Mass Persuasion: A Historical Encyclopedia, 1500 to the Present*, eds. Nicholas J. Cull, David Culbert and David Welch (Oxford: ABC CLIO, 2003), xvii.
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 23. Gudme to Erik Seidenfaden, June 1941, Erik Seidenfaden personal papers, private access (ES-PA, hereafter).
 24. Sten de Hemmer Gudme, *Levnedbeskrivelse*, 1951, Records of the Chapter of the Royal Orders of Chivalry, 1; Barman, *Diplomatic Correspondent*, 8, 108; Bennet, *British Broadcasting*, 221–222. Erik Seidenfaden, note, 26. June 1941, ES-PA.
 25. Seidenfaden, note, 26. June 1941, ES-PA. D-E. Please note that Erik Seidenfaden (1910–1990) is the researcher's grandfather.
 26. Seidenfaden, "Sten Gudme", Dansk Biografisk Leksikon, https://biografiskleksikon.lex.dk/Sten_Gudme (accessed 4 February 2021); Sten Gudme to Erik and Jytte Seidenfaden, 16 May 1941, ES-PA.
 27. Bennet, *British Broadcasting*, 219; Lockhart, 53.
 28. Bennet, *British Broadcasting*, 222. Sundstrøm, *Man skal dø ung*, 160.
 29. Note from "4351" to "S", 7 December 1940, HS-2/27, SOE Records, British National Archives, 1.
 30. Terkelsen, *Sermelding*, 89; Barman, *Diplomatic Correspondent*, 101.
 31. Bennet, *British Broadcasting*, 229; Terkelsen, *Fra Paalidelig kilde*, 64.
 32. Gudme, *Levnedbeskrivelse*, 1.
 33. Leif Gundel, *Her er London*.
 34. Blytgen-Petersen, *Frie Danske*, 83.
 35. Barman, *Diplomatic Correspondent*, 108; Gudme, *Levnedbeskrivelse*, 1.
 36. Sten Gudme to Erik and Jytte Seidenfaden, 12 May 1943, ES-PA, 3–4. D-E.
 37. Gudme, *Levnedbeskrivelse*, 1.
 38. Møller's diary, 20 September 1943.
 39. Gudme, *Levnedbeskrivelse*, 1.
 40. S-J (unknown signature), "Sten Gudme er død" (obituary), *Dagens Nyheder/Nationaltidende*, 9 February 1961, 9.
 41. Gudme, *Levnedbeskrivelse*, 1; Minutes of the Meeting of the Information Committee of the Danish Council (ICMM hereafter), 24 November 1943, C74, Danish Council Papers, DNA, (DC-DNA hereafter), 1.
 42. Brinley Thomas to H. C. Bowen, "Report on Collaboration with S.O.E during the Period ending 24th of November 1943", 24 November 1944, FO898:240, DNA.

43. Gudme, Knauer, Møller, Tillge-Rasmussen, “Memorandum”, 9 August 1942, Sten Gudme Papers, C1, DNA (SG–DNA hereafter).
44. Jørgen Hæstrup, “Table Top—bidrag til den danske sabotages historie”, *Jyske Samlinger*, vol. 5 (1961), 396; Frank Esmann, *Da fornuften sejrede: Det britiske udenrigsministeriums politik over for Danmark under Anden Verdenskrig* (Copenhagen: Lindhardt & Ringhoff, 1972, e-book version, 2019), 101.
45. Næsselund et al., *Danmarks Ansigt*, 18–19, D-E.
46. For example, Andreassen, *At vise flaget*, 206–207.
47. Terkelsen, *Særmelding*, 120–124.
48. Erik Seidenfaden to “Mr. Wennstan”, 25 June 1973, ES-PA, 2; Næsselund et al., *Danmarks Ansigt*, 73, pp. 47; Andreassen, *At vise Flaget*.
49. For example, Næsselund et al., *Danmarks Ansigt*, 57.
50. ICMM, 24 November 1943, C74, DC-DNA, 1.
51. Gudme, *Levnedbeskrivelse*, 2.
52. Gudme, *Levnedbeskrivelse*.
53. Bennet, *British Broadcasting*, 184.
54. Bjøl to Seidenfaden, 27 August 1944, Seidenfaden Personal Papers, C1, DNA.
55. Seidenfaden to Gudme, 28 September 1944, C1, SG-DNA.
56. Gudme to Møller, 27 January 1945, C7, Emil Blytgen-Petersen private papers (BP-DNA hereafter); Unknown to Sten Gudme, 18 February 1945, C1, SG-DNA, 1.
57. For example, Terkelsen to Gudme, 29 September 1944, C7, BP-DNA, 1.
58. Kiilerich, *Ubetalelige*, 73–74.
59. Emil Eiby Seidenfaden, interview with Erling Bjøl, 16 March 2021.

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Norwegian Defence and Security Policy: The Struggle for Hearts and Minds in the 1950s

Øystein Pedersen Dahlen and Rolf Werenskjold

In the wake of World War II, attempts were made to establish a Nordic defence alliance between Norway, Sweden and Denmark, but negotiations broke down in January 1949. Barely two months later, Norway and Denmark joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), while Sweden proclaimed its traditional neutrality. In both Norway and Denmark, there was strong opposition to NATO membership, especially among the Communists and on the left wing of the major ruling Social Democratic parties. In Norway, opposition to NATO membership was close to 50 per cent in 1949, and it remained relatively constant throughout the 1950s.¹

This chapter deals with two Norwegian non-governmental organizations, the Norwegian People and Defence (Folk og Forsvar) and the

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Norwegian Atlantic Committee (Den norske Atlanterhavskomiteé). The overall research question is: what role did these organizations play in the public debate on Norwegian defence and security policy in the 1950s? To provide answers, we ask three sub-questions: first, how did the Norwegian government and the leadership of the Labour Party contribute to establishing and dominating these organizations? Second, how were the organizations used to influence public opinion? Third, how were journalists and the media used to establish a consensus on defence and security policy issues and support for Norwegian NATO membership? The establishment of the Norwegian organizations is analysed in the light of the corresponding organizations in Sweden and Denmark, the transnational interactions the Scandinavian organizations had with each other, and through the contacts Norwegian journalists established abroad.

In recent years, several studies have been written on propaganda and persuasion in Norway in the period after World War II. These studies have shown that Norway was deeply involved in Western transnational propaganda cooperation that aimed to secure support for Western cooperation at all levels—cultural, economic, political, and military.² While several professional historical studies have been conducted about the voluntary defence organizations in Sweden and Denmark,³ previous scholarship on the Norwegian organizations People and Defence and the Norwegian Atlantic Committee is limited to anniversary publications.⁴

SOURCES AND METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES

This study is based on many different sources, including documents from the archives of both People and Defence and the Norwegian Atlantic Committee, public reports, the Defence Commission of 1946,⁵ and coverage of the organizations in the Norwegian media in the 1950s. For People and Defence, there are also annual reports, board minutes, correspondence, internal notes, work plans, and official publications in the organization's headquarters, in the Norwegian Labour Movement's Archive and Library, and in the Norwegian National Archive. Not all the archives are organized or catalogued.⁶

Little archival material about the Norwegian Atlantic Committee has survived the many relocations the administration has undergone. There are only scattered remnants of annual reports, random documents, and no board minutes or documentation of the contacts the organization has had with others. However, some of the archive material from People and

Defence may shed light on the establishment of the Norwegian Atlantic Committee. The Atlantic Committee's official magazines and publication series are preserved in the Norwegian National Library.

PROPAGANDA AND THE STRUGGLE FOR PUBLIC OPINION AFTER WORLD WAR II

Psychological warfare can be characterized as either black, white, or grey propaganda, as suggested by Jowett and O'Donnell. In black propaganda, the sources are concealed or credited to a false authority and contain lies, fabrications, and/or deceptions. By contrast, white propaganda comes from an identifiable source, and the information tends to be accurate even if it is still intended to convince an audience of the superiority and justice of a particular regime or ideology. Grey propaganda is then something between white and black propaganda, where the source may (or may not) be correctly identified, and the accuracy of some of the information could be uncertain.⁷ The tense international situation after World War II increased the interest in using such propaganda and counterpropaganda on both sides of the Iron Curtain. The Cold War triggered the use of psychological warfare amounting to ideological war in peacetime as well as in times without direct military conflicts.⁸

At the beginning of the Cold War, the Soviet Union established and financed so-called front groups which emerged as civilian peace groups in many Western countries, including Scandinavia. In this sense, Soviet propaganda also took place through proxies, where the sender of the message remained hidden.⁹ Soviet propaganda was also transmitted directly via Radio Moscow, which was broadcast in local languages. As a result, the Norwegian authorities closely monitored Soviet radio broadcasts in Norwegian.¹⁰

From 1948, the Americans were committed to extensive cooperation with the British authorities to counter Soviet propaganda.¹¹ They understood that direct propaganda directed at the Scandinavian countries was counterproductive and therefore focused primarily on supporting locally produced material and local senders. Contacts and friendships with local journalists and partners were part of the strategy.¹²

After 1949, the counterpart to Soviet propaganda in Europe was primarily the Atlantic Pact's Information and Propaganda Organization—Information Service—with offices in Paris. Systematic and in-depth

analyses of the communist propaganda activities in separate Western countries were used to strengthen support for the national governments' countermeasures.¹³ It could include everything from the distribution of information and propaganda material to radio and press institutions, to the support of individuals in opinion-forming activities,¹⁴ as well as calls for the establishment of national associations in support of NATO.

In Norway, the influential party secretary of the ruling Norwegian Labour Party, Haakon Lie, played an important role in the earliest phase of the Cold War campaigns both nationally and internationally. Lie led the Norwegian Trade Union Movement's educational and propaganda-like activities (*Arbeidernes Opplysningsforbund*) throughout much of the 1930s.¹⁵ His already established broad international network was expanded during his stay in Britain and the United States during World War II. In the autumn of 1945, long before Great Britain, the United States, or the Norwegian authorities had formulated a propaganda strategy vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, Lie established an informal propaganda collaboration with both the British and American embassies in Oslo. It started with positive representations of the American and British Labour Movements' war effort, but the critical attitudes towards the Communists and the Soviet Union were gradually sharpened.

The Norwegian campaigns were used to undermine notions of the Soviet Union as an ideal state for the workers. Lie had a close collaboration with the British Labour Party, as well as the British and American Foreign Services. Lie played an active role in the campaign work of the European Cooperation Administration (ECA) and contributed to the fact that Norwegian trade union reports on the Soviet Union and the United States in 1948–1949 were spread as pamphlets internationally. For several years, Lie was an alternate member of the leadership of the CIA-funded Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF), and he cooperated closely with Willy Brandt and Arthur Koestler (Fig. 1).¹⁶ The contributions from both British and American sources were kept hidden when they were reused in Party publications.¹⁷

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PEOPLE AND DEFENCE IN NORWAY

People and Defence was established on 26 February 1951, following a proposal from the Defence Commission of 1946. Although Haakon Lie is not mentioned in the sources, the Labour Party was central in the establishment and management of the organization. In December 1950, Prime

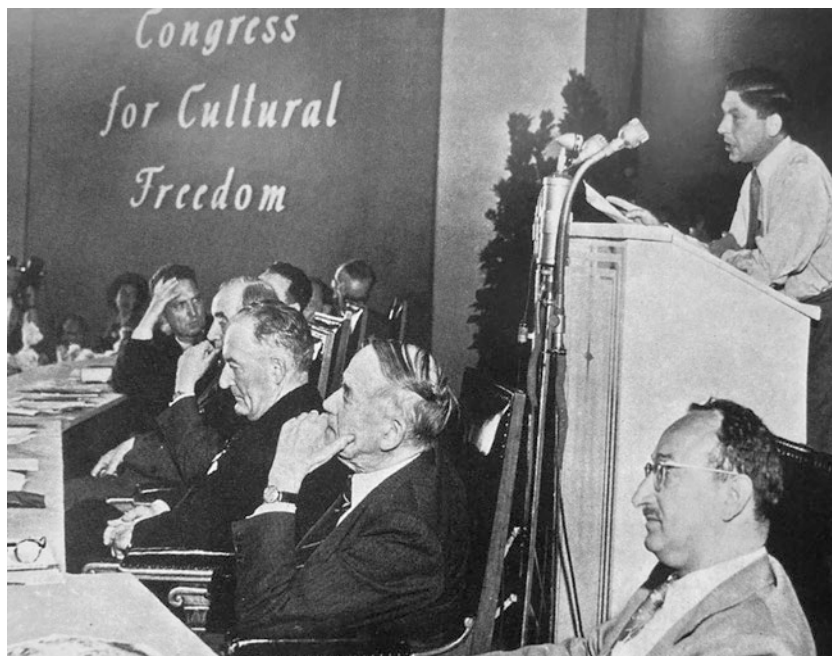


Fig. 1 Haakon Lie (looking at the speaker Arthur Koestler) at the Congress for Cultural Freedom June 1950 in Berlin. Lie was heading the Norwegian delegation, which included Trygve Bull, Willy Middelfart, and Per Monsen. Per Monsen wrote the speech that Haakon Lie gave at the opening of the conference. Lie was invited by Willy Brandt. Photo from *Süd Deutsche Zeitung* 1950

Minister Einar Gerhardsen (Labour Party) appointed a working committee led by the prominent Labour member Arthur Ruud as leader of the Norwegian Sports Confederation. The committee prepared the constitution of the new organization, with Gerhardsen participating in the last of the preparatory meetings.¹⁸

All the proposals from the working committee were adopted by the constituent meeting, where representatives from 65 different civic organizations met, dominated by workers' organizations. It was decided that People and Defence would be open to professional, economic, and cultural organizations and political youth organizations, which can be defined as civil society. Gerhardsen also gave one of the opening speeches at the

constituent meeting. Tor Skjøsberg was elected leader. He was the first leader of the Norwegian Resistance Movement (1941–1944) and was Minister of Shipping in Gerhardsen's first coalition government after the war. The deputy leader of the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (Landsorganisasjonen, LO), Pærlus Mentsen, was elected deputy leader of People and Defence. The new board otherwise consisted of representatives from the largest organizations. Arthur Ruud was elected to the board as a representative of the Norwegian Sports Confederation. Many of the board members belonged to the highest-ranking leaders of the Resistance Movement or had spent part of the war in Stockholm or London. The working committee wanted an alternate representative on the board from the Norwegian Press Association. The association only sent one observer and the meeting then decided to give the deputy seat to a representative of the press. No representative of the press was elected at the sub-constitution meeting or later.¹⁹ However, the proposal showed the importance that the initiators attached to the press.

Gunnar Sand was elected the first Secretary General (1951–1962). He had been the leader of the Labour Party's Youth Organization (AUF) working committee during the war (in Sweden), and the former editor of the very loyal Labour Party newspaper *Telemark Arbeideravis*. In 1951 he was secretary at the Labour Party's headquarters in Oslo. He had by then already been actively involved in the surveillance of Norwegian communists.²⁰

When, in their final report, the Norwegian Defence Commission of 1946 proposed establishing an association to promote better relations between the Defence Force and the public, they referred several times to equivalent Scandinavian organizations, the Swedish Central Committee of People and Defence (Centralförbundet Folk och Försvar, CFF) (1940), and the Danish People and Defence (Folk og Værn, FOV) (1941). Denmark's Folk og Værn was inspired by the Swedish organization when it was established by Danish officers and leading social democrats in 1941. Secretary General Gunnar Sand explained, in a speech to Norwegian officers in 1960, that it was Danish officers who invited the Labour movement to "create an understanding of each other's terms and views", just as the Swedish Social Democratic Youth Association also took the initiative for the corresponding Swedish organization.²¹

The leader of the Defence Commission, the Labour Party's deputy leader, Trygve Bratteli, had been present at a conference in Stockholm on 15–16 May 1939, which led to the establishment of the Swedish CFF. The

purpose of the meeting was to clear up misunderstandings between military officers and working-class youth. At the time, Bratteli described the conference in very positive terms to the Norwegian government's principal organ *Arbeiderbladet*.²² Other members of the Commission participated in joint meetings with representatives from the Swedish and the Danish organizations.²³ Furthermore, the future Secretary General of the Swedish People and Defence, Gunnar Sand, received detailed information about the organization of the CFF already in November 1950, and he was invited to Stockholm in January 1951.²⁴

Many Swedish objectives were adopted by the Norwegian Defence Commission. It claimed that "a planned defence policy was dependent on positive support from a majority of the people, or preferably from the whole populace". It also emphasized the effect of the mass media, claiming that the media, the large organizations, and the political parties had a decisive impact on people's opinions on defence issues. Radio lectures were identified as a particularly important channel for psychological defence preparedness so "that defence issues can receive a broad, factual and current treatment in the press, broadcasting and film". The commission proposed establishing a civil defence organization, with the major non-political civil society organizations as members, as they had already done in Sweden. In 1949, the recommendation from the Defence Commission was adopted unanimously by the Norwegian parliament, "except dissent from the Communists and a few minor dissents from a few other members."²⁵

However, no official initiative was taken before Prime Minister Gerhardsen raised the question in Parliament on 15 September 1950. He stated, with reference to the Defence Commission and the Swedish model, that an awareness campaign was not a task for the state authorities. It should be something "individuals from the various civic groups and political wings had to work on together". Gerhardsen believed that the press, schools, the church, and cultural and youth organizations should also join forces in such a campaign.²⁶ Gerhardsen's speech must be read in the context of the government's fight against communism and its threats to democracy. In 1951, all the political parties in parliament supported the establishment of the organization.

General Secretary Gunnar Sand soon recruited the journalist Per Monsen as editor of the new organization's mouthpiece magazine, *Kontakt-Bulletinen*. Monsen was one of Haakon Lie's closest allies in the fight against communism and an important supporter of his

brother-in-law, Foreign Minister Lange. Mønstad had been the Norwegian press attaché in Berlin until the autumn of 1949, when he returned to the government's mouthpiece, *Arbeiderbladet*.²⁷ From 1952, Mønstad became political editor of *Arbeiderbladet*, and he was chairman of the Norwegian Press Association from 1954 to 1958. Mønstad was considered by Prime Minister Gerhardsen to be quite hawkish towards the Soviet Union,²⁸ and he didn't want any discussion on decisions made about Norwegian foreign policy in *Arbeiderbladet's* columns.²⁹ Mønstad argued for the need for information, especially among young voters. He feared that many would vote for the Communists because of misinformation and communist agitation.³⁰ *Kontakt-Bulletinen* covered security issues in a broad sense, based on self-produced material, and content from the foreign press, the authorities, and cooperating organizations, but also from concealed sources. The magazine gave a strong defence of the Norwegian military strategy and NATO membership, including harsh criticism of Soviet politics, society, propaganda, intelligence, espionage, and its military strategy. The material from the magazine was used extensively by the Norwegian newspapers, either directly or as background information.³¹ The magazine disclosed very few of its sources.

The organization became a channel for information between the press, politicians, the civil service, and the armed forces. The organization cooperated closely with the Ministry of Defence, the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' press office, and the different branches of the armed forces. In addition, it helped the Norwegian government, as well as the NATO Information Service in Paris, to disseminate official information material to its members.³² The organization received some income from the membership fee, but the government subsidy was four to five times more than that of the member organizations.³³

The organization received support from an overwhelming proportion of the Labour press, the non-socialist press, and liberal papers. They had close contact with the Norsk rikskringkasting (Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation, NRK)—the public service broadcaster—even when they did not receive as much airtime as hoped for.³⁴ However, footage from the constituent meeting in 1951 was broadcast, and in December 1952 the state channel broadcast a nearly 40-minute debate programme about the organization with a large number of debate participants. NRK also followed up on topics that People and Defence promoted in the years that followed. Einar Gerhardsen's speech at the annual meeting in 1956 and that of Minister of Defence Nils Handal in 1957 were broadcast in full,

and excerpts from Handal's speech were broadcast in 1958 and 1959.³⁵ However, it was the Labour Party's own newspapers that gave the organization's activities the most attention.³⁶

Following a proposal from Per Monsen,³⁷ People and Defence awarded two press scholarships annually from 1952, following recommendations from the Norwegian Press Association, "for studies of NATO and Norway's participation in the NATO cooperation".³⁸ The press grants gave journalists at small newspapers with insufficient resources opportunities to familiarize themselves with various aspects of the NATO cooperation, but they also gave the defence issues a broader journalistic impact geographically. The grant receivers visited NATO's Northern Command at Kolsås outside Oslo, the military and civilian headquarters in Paris, and other NATO countries.³⁹ People and Defence spent large sums on press grants, but they also received a lot in return in the form of reports, lectures from the trips and a number of positive articles about the NATO cooperation, Norwegian defence policy and about People and Defence (Fig. 2).⁴⁰ The Norwegian Press Association withheld 10 per cent of the scholarship money until the reports from the journalists were submitted.⁴¹

Following another initiative from Monsen,⁴² People and Defence organized many conferences for journalists in collaboration with the Norwegian Press Association. The conferences were attended by journalists from various types of newspapers, apart from the communist ones.⁴³ The activities often resulted in press coverage about Norwegian defence policy, NATO, and People and Defence.⁴⁴ Several renowned journalists gave lectures to diverse audiences.⁴⁵ All this clearly shows how involved the press and journalists were in the activities of People and Defence.

Criticism of Norwegian defence and foreign policy came primarily from the political left in the Labour Party and from the communists, as well as from peace groups influenced by Soviet propaganda.⁴⁶ Per Monsen and the circle around People and Defence therefore closely followed the activities of both Norwegian communists and peace organizations.⁴⁷ Monsen also used his own newspaper *Arbeiderbladet* to criticize the Norwegian peace movement.⁴⁸

The trade unions also played a central role in the propaganda work, although there was strong opposition to NATO membership in some parts of the trade union movement, even outside the communist ranks in the Labour Party. In order to curb the debate about the membership of the individual unions, People and Defence decided in 1953 that only national unions should stand as paying members, as was also the case in



Fig. 2 Newspaper articles written by one of the recipients of People and Defence press scholarship, Kaare Bredesen, published by *Oppland Arbeiderblad* in November and December 1956. The press scholarship fellows had to sign for the funding through articles and reports in their local newspapers. The newspaper reports in the photo were about American forces in West Germany and West German NATO membership, both important issues in the Norwegian public debate on NATO in the mid-1950s

Sweden.⁴⁹ In addition to referring to freedom, the rule of law and democracy, the struggle against the rhetoric of the peace movements and the communists was a central concern in the work of the organization and the leadership of the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions.⁵⁰

An early close collaboration was established between the Scandinavian organizations, which was maintained throughout the 1950s. Annual meetings were arranged between the three secretariats, and joint Scandinavian conferences on defence issues were held. Experiences were shared on surveillance of communists, on military resisters, and on sabotage operations.⁵¹ The Swedish organization had already become part of the anti-communist campaign in Sweden in 1951. This included fighting the Soviet peace propaganda, which was considered a great concern by the

Defence leadership.⁵² The Norwegian organization wanted to learn from the Swedish, while the leader of the Danish organization believed that they could not agitate in the same way against communism. In contrast to the Swedish and Norwegian organizations, they were “an officially connected organization”⁵³ and not an association of civilian member organizations. There were also discussions on how to get the state radio broadcasters to be more positive about “defence problems”.⁵⁴

At the secretariat conference in 1952, the Norwegian delegation received information that the Swedish party leaders and the director of the Swedish public service broadcaster Sveriges Radio met weekly to discuss the previous week’s radio programme. In these meetings they made their remarks about programme items that they saw as unfortunate and discussed this with the radio manager.⁵⁵ At the following annual meeting of People and Defence, the organization decided to ask NRK to play an active role in positive information work about the armed forces.⁵⁶ The leader, Tor Skjønberg, met with Broadcasting Director Kaare Fostervoll to propose establishing a committee consisting of representatives of NRK, the individual branches of the armed forces and People and Defence to discuss how NRK could contribute more positive information about the armed forces. Fostervoll rejected the proposal and he stated that NRK as an institution could not be represented in such a committee, but NRK would always be willing to discuss different proposals to cover defence issues.⁵⁷ The NRK director had a background in the Labour Party and he was Minister of Church and Education in Einar Gerhardsen’s government from 1945 to 1948, but he was also one of the most prominent opponents within the Labour Party against Norwegian NATO membership before Norway joined in 1949.⁵⁸ His views on the NATO issue may explain his rejection of the invitation from People and Defence to establish a joint committee in 1953, but his view on NRK’s formal participation in defence organizations was soon to be challenged.

THE NORWEGIAN ATLANTIC COMMITTEE

The Norwegian Atlantic Committee was established on 15 June 1955. The purpose was to promote interest in and understanding of Norwegian and international Atlantic cooperation. The first board of the organization was strongly influenced by top-level politicians and journalists. It consisted of the President of the Norwegian Parliament (Stortingspresident) Nils Langhelle (Labour) as chairman, Party secretary of the Labour Party,

Haakon Lie, and foreign news editor Toralv Øksnevad of NRK. Otherwise, the board consisted of the editor of the conservative newspaper *Morgenbladet*, Birger Kildal, and Øyvind Skard (vice-chairman) as a representative of the Norwegian Employers' Association. The Chairman of the Atlantic Council was former Secretary General of the United Nations and former Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Trygve Lie (Labour). From the beginning, the board represented Norway's official foreign policy focus. Only two years after the Broadcasting Director had refused to participate in a committee that was to discuss the NRK's programme content, the foreign news editor joined the board of the Norwegian Atlantic Committee. Øksnevad had a completely different and positive view of NATO compared with Fostervoll. The decision about NRK's foreign news editor's board representation must have been pushed forward by the Labour government in consultation with Haakon Lie. It is natural to interpret this as an indication that the director of NRK had given in to political pressure.

Like People and Defence, the Norwegian Atlantic Committee had a board composed of representatives of different political interests, but the activity was more elite-oriented and to a greater extent aimed at those who were working on disseminating information to others: national newspapers, politicians, officials, researchers, and teachers in high schools.⁵⁹ The committee's aim was to conduct courses, meetings, and publication activities on Atlantic cooperation to promote political and ideological insights, plus cultural, economic, and social tasks within the Atlantic community—as formulated in Article 2 of the Atlantic Treaty.

The external context for the foundation of the organization was a US proposal to establish independent organizations in all NATO countries in order to secure political and public support for the activities and purposes of the defence alliance. The purpose was to counteract both direct and indirect Soviet propaganda. In Norway, the initiative came from the inner circle of Foreign Minister Halvard Lange after the international umbrella organization the Atlantic Treaty Association (ATA) was established in The Hague on 13–19 June 1954. The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent Tim Greve as a Norwegian observer to the founding meeting. Greve was Foreign Minister Lange's personal secretary and belonged to the inner core of the Norwegian foreign policy establishment. In the report from the constituent meeting of the ATA, Greve concluded that an Atlantic Committee should be established in Norway as well and he proposed that People and Defence should be part of the committee. The

board of People and Defence concluded that the organization did not want to participate in establishing such a committee or participate in the ATA, as they believed that the organization's "plans may go beyond the framework of the policy of the Norwegian government and parliament". The organization nevertheless wanted a non-binding collaboration with a possible Atlantic Committee.⁶⁰ Greve concluded that if Norway was to become a member, a separate organization would therefore have to be established.⁶¹

The Norwegian Atlantic Committee had similarities with the Danish Atlantic Treaty Association (*Atlantsammenslutningen*, DATA), which was established in December 1950.⁶² There were many prominent Social Democrats in both organizations with close links to the government apparatus and the Social Democratic Parties. Both emphasized the need to convince the population of the connection between membership of the Atlantic Treaty and the struggle for democracy and social development, in which social democrats led an ideological struggle against the communists in the workplace. DATA worked closely with the American embassy throughout the 1950s and 1960s. NATO exhibitions and information campaigns used many of the same concepts as the propaganda campaigns for the Marshall Plan.⁶³ It is possible that the Norwegian Atlantic Committee also had similar links, especially in view of the contacts that board member Haakon Lie had with both the British and American embassies in Oslo.⁶⁴

The financing of the new organization came primarily from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence, but other civilian organizations and the business community also contributed. The largest expenditure items were meetings and conferences and the publishing activities, for which American sources were likely contributors. According to its own statements, the committee emphasized the promotion of information, debates, and the exchange of opinions, in order to promote understanding of Norwegian obligations internationally and to increase the understanding of Western cooperation.⁶⁵

The first event held by the Norwegian Atlantic Committee was a large dinner for the new Commander-in-Chief of NATO in Oslo on 23 March 1956.⁶⁶ Representatives from the Norwegian government and other official authorities were present. On 15 May of the same year, the British Secretary General of NATO gave a lecture in Oslo under the auspices of the Atlantic Committee. Through the first two events, the Atlantic Committee demonstrated that the organization was focused on the

military, political, and economic aspects of Atlantic cooperation. The lectures supported the Norwegian government's foreign policy objectives in NATO cooperation, but the events also showed that the activities of the organization were aimed at the domestic political and economic elite of society.⁶⁷ The information activities were characterized by openness. The events were organized by a civilian organization, but there was little doubt about who the actors were and where the message came from.

In 1957, the Norwegian Atlantic Committee set up prizes for articles and books on Atlantic cooperation that had been published in magazines, the daily or weekly press during the year.⁶⁸ The press paid close attention to the competition, and all prizes were won by Norwegian foreign news journalists and foreign news correspondents.⁶⁹ The two best entries went on to an international competition, organized by the ATA. The organizer probably received a high number of articles published in the daily press across the country, thanks to the very generous prize fund. In addition, the Atlantic Committee promised prizes for dissertations, books, and brochures.⁷⁰

The objectives of both the Atlantic Committee and People and Defence's activities were based on total defence as a concept. School students and teachers were therefore important target groups. The Teachers' Union's high-profile leader, Kaare Norum, sat on the board of both organizations. He belonged to the inner circle of the Resistance Movement (Kretsen) during the war. In March 1959, the organizations collaborated to invite high school students to write essays about Atlantic cooperation. The top three students received free travel to and accommodation in Paris.⁷¹ The Atlantic Committee also organized contact conferences with teachers about schooling and NATO. Teachers heard about the cultural community between the Atlantic countries—and about the school's role in promoting such a community.⁷² Speakers were taken from the top management in the ministries. This shows the close contact between the school system, the organizations, and the authorities seeking to promote official Norwegian defence and security policy.

The Norwegian Atlantic Committee also collaborated with People and Defence on organizing NATO conferences, and in 1957 they set up a cooperation committee "to coordinate the information work on NATO". The committee also consisted of representatives from the press services of the Foreign Ministry and the armed forces.⁷³ They quickly arranged a roundtable conference with Foreign Minister Lange (Labour), Deputy

Chairman of the Foreign Affairs and Constitution Committee Arthur Sundt (Liberal), journalist Torolf Elster from *Arbeiderbladet* and Birger Kildal, who was both foreign correspondent for NRK and editor of the conservative newspaper *Morgenbladet*.⁷⁴

CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown how the Norwegian government and the leadership of the Labour Party used its own people to create and dominate a kind of propaganda apparatus during the early stages of the Cold War. It also shows how the government funded the organizations and collaborated with journalists and civil society organizations.

Previous studies have shown that propaganda cooperation with other Western countries was not only forced on Norway from outside, but the result of leading actors in the ruling Labour Party, who both invited and actively contributed to these efforts as early as 1945. And the non-socialist parties left it to the Labour Party to settle scores with the left wing and the communists. The strong man within the Labour Party, Haakon Lie, played a central role in the cooperation with British and American diplomats and the intelligence service. There is reason to believe that he and Einar Gerhardsen made the strategy and the choice of leadership in *People and Defence* together. Here, Per Monsen played a key role as editor of the magazine *Kontakt-Bulletinen* and as the person responsible for the information work of *People and Defence*. Monsen was a journalist and from 1952 political editor of the Labour Party's main organ *Arbeiderbladet*, at the same time as he worked actively to create contacts between Norwegian journalists and official representatives of Norwegian Defence and NATO.

The Norwegian Atlantic Committee was also established on the initiative of the Labour government. And it was dominated by the elite of the Labour Party, which included Haakon Lie as a board member. Like *People and Defence*, the Atlantic Committee directed its activities towards the training of schoolchildren and teachers, along with heavy investment in journalists and in publishing activities. While *People and Defence* gave their scholarships to journalists in small newspapers, the Atlantic Committee was more concerned with the foreign journalists in the major newspapers.

Both *People and Defence* and the Atlantic Committee had a close and intimate collaboration with the news departments in the press and the foreign news department of NRK radio, and the Norwegian Press

Association, as well as the Norwegian Defence press service, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and NATO's Information Service in Paris. At times, it can be difficult to see where one organization ended and the next started. The close relationship between the authorities and the press was thus a continuation of the Norwegian propaganda work abroad from the early twentieth century.⁷⁵ At the same time, the new organizations were strongly inspired by Swedish and Danish organizations.

While Sweden chose to remain outside NATO, the country still had a communication model that the Norwegian Social Democrats almost copied. Denmark had a slightly different model, in which civil society was not as clearly involved, in that their FOV did not rely on member organizations. Nevertheless, there was close informal cooperation between the three organizations, with regular joint meetings and confidential exchange of information on propaganda activities and the fight against communist espionage and sabotage. The three countries were often more similar than different. When the party press system in Norway was re-established after World War II, there was a change in the foreign policy area. After *Arbeiderbladet* raised the flag on the NATO issue, most Labour Party newspapers promoted foreign policy views in line with the party's decisions. All five party press organizations and their respective press agencies supported the Norwegian NATO membership, thus helping to establish the basic consensus in Norwegian foreign policy. The left-wing radical newspapers *Friheten* and *Orientering* were the exceptions.⁷⁶ Both the Danish and Swedish media systems in the 1950s were similar to the Norwegian system, and trust in the state was high in all these countries.⁷⁷ This was the very precondition for the propaganda work to succeed.

While the Scandinavian countries had failed to create a common Scandinavian defence union, the Norwegian, Swedish and Danish civilian defence organizations managed to create an informal and confidential Scandinavian collaboration on what could be described as propaganda related to defence issues and the fight against communist influence. This Scandinavian propaganda model was based on social democratic politicians' use of the media and civil society to gain support for defence policy and to counter Soviet propaganda and communist influence, also within the peace movements. Under the guise of being civil non-governmental organizations, People and Defence and the Norwegian Atlantic Committee both functioned as a kind of information agency for the government. They conducted both white and grey propaganda, whereby the sources of information were often concealed.

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Slow Media Under Cross Pressures: US Educational Diplomacy in the Nordic Countries During the Cold War

Jukka Kortti

The year 1952 has been seen as a turning point in Finnish post-war history: the Olympics were held in Helsinki, Finn Armi Kuusela won the first Miss Universe title and the last dispatched train of deliveries paying Finnish War reparations to the Soviet Union crossed the Russian border. The year 1952 was also important in terms of cultural exchange in Finland, since the country joined the American Fulbright programme, which had been established by US Senator J. William Fulbright in 1945. Finland could not join the programme in the late 1940s, because of the country's fragile geopolitical situation. Before joining the programme, it was to be ensured that the agreement would not jeopardize Finnish-Soviet relations. Sweden also joined the programme in 1952, Denmark signed up one year earlier, and Norway became a member as early as 1949.

This chapter examines the transatlantic educational exchange during the Cold War as the manifestation of American *public diplomacy*, more

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precisely *educational diplomacy*. It asks how American social sciences entered, through institutions and persons, the post-war Nordic countries. Secondly, this chapter investigates, as an example case, how one specific concept of American social sciences, namely “cross pressure”, was vernacularized¹ in the everyday public sphere according to Swedish, Norwegian and, in more detail, Finnish newspapers.

The Scandinavian social sciences were strongly shaped according to American models and theories after World War II. The empirical, positivist and highly modernist social sciences, especially sociology and political science, were part of the US ideological foreign policy during the Cold War. They were harnessed to an American national security drive to prevent countries from falling into communism. At the same time, social sciences were starting to be idealized in terms of “objectivity”, that is, using positivist, systematic, quantitative, statistic and computer-based methodologies. The wide-reaching and carefully planned educational policy particularly concerned so-called third-world countries, but it was also targeted at Western Europe—especially during the first two post-war decades.² In the Nordic countries, the American modernization ideology was adapted to the building and forming of a Scandinavian type of welfare state. At the same time, many of the Nordic social scientists became public intellectuals in their own countries. A major portion of them had visited US universities after World War II.

The concept of public diplomacy was born, in the modern meaning, during the 1960s to replace the term “propaganda”, which had accumulated so many negative connotations. Exchanges were seen as “mutual understanding”, opening up spaces for dialogue and interchange of alternatives, rather than the deliberate manipulation of information to achieve a desired result.³

But as the studies on propaganda show, the concept of public diplomacy is close to, if not a synonym for, the idea of “white propaganda”: the source of a message is known, the information is more or less accurate, but the message is presented in a manner that attempts to convince the audience only with the best ideas and political ideology.⁴ According to Marek Fields, who has studied Anglo-American propaganda and cultural diplomacy in Finland during the Cold War, the exchanges were at least indirectly doing an effective propaganda job, “leaving every USIS/Helsinki propaganda effort clearly behind”.⁵

The United States Information Agency (USIA)—known overseas as the USIS (United States Information Service)—was established in 1953,

and the Fulbright programme was assimilated into it. Although the programme remained in the State Department under the Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs, it was administered overseas by USIA personnel. Fulbright himself insisted on keeping the programme independent, because he did not want it to become tainted as a propaganda tool in a negative sense.⁶

Nevertheless, the Fulbright programme, as well as other exchange programmes, was the *slow media* of USIA-led Cold War propaganda from the early 1950s. By slow media, Lennie R. Johnson, who had studied “the philosophy and geography of US exchange programs”, means, besides exchange programmes, publishing and libraries, whereas the *fast media* section of USIA, for instance, consisted of film and broadcasting.⁷ In my view, examining the long-term effects of ideological cultural diplomacy, the idea of “slow media”⁸ is a precision concept. It brings out the fact that often ideas—being propagandist or more unintended—presented in culture and society will take time to be adapted and to become common in the public sphere.

Although the starting point is Finland, the focus of this chapter is on the wider Nordic adaptation of the Cold War American educational diplomacy. The chapter does not, however, investigate how conscious or subconscious the use of American ideas—considered to be adapted for cultural diplomatic or propagandist use—was among scholars, politicians and the media. This chapter also does not study other media, such as broadcasting (news, current affairs programmes etc.), but focuses on newspapers. In addition, the chapter concentrates on one side of “mutual understanding”, leaving out what Americans learnt from the post-war Nordic countries. After all, the programmes also provided grants for US scholars to go overseas.

PROMOTING WORLD PEACE IN THE SERVICE OF SOCIETY

Because of its Soviet relations, Finland was in an exceptional position as a target country for American cultural diplomacy in post-war Western Europe, although Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Iceland were special cases as well. The histories of the Nordic countries differ in the twentieth century, not least concerning their political situation in international relations after World War II.⁹ One good example of different histories between the Nordic countries is how they participated in the European Recovery Program (ERP), better known as the Marshall Plan. All the Scandinavian

countries had different paths in accepting the aid.¹⁰ The plan was predominantly aimed at the recovery of post-war Western European economies, but it also included (hard) sciences.¹¹ As studies have shown, the plan was not only about providing material resources to conduct research but also mediating American values for scientists in order to prevent them falling for the attractions of communism.¹²

In the Nordic countries, the central ideological question of the Marshall Plan concerned the social democratic views of labour-dominated post-war governments in economic planning. In terms of social sciences, this situation was particularly interesting in Norway since one of the most renowned American social scientists, sociologist Paul Lazarsfeld, spent six weeks at the University of Oslo in 1948, building Norwegian social sciences according to American post-war foreign policy. Funded not by the Marshall Plan but by the Rockefeller Foundation, Lazarsfeld's visit¹³ was strongly associated with the current highly ideological effort to remake Western Europe in the image of America. His strategy was to establish sociology as a policy-evaluating science in service of government, but the Norwegian philosophically oriented sociologists looked askance at the idea of social scientists being "service intellectuals" conducting "governmental science". The Norwegians wanted to act as bridge-builders, to ease the tension between progressive liberalism, democratic socialism and Soviet communism, rather than to enhance the modernist liberal economic progressive planning in policy making in the forms of "social engineering".¹⁴

Historically, intellectuals in the Nordic countries have often been used in the service of society. Accordingly, rather than remaining in the marginal avant-garde, they have been at the centre of society.¹⁵ Strong ties between the State and intellectuals have long historical roots, especially in Finland¹⁶, and this has been manifested in the social sciences. Already before World War II, Finnish social scientists were conducting "service research" and "governmental knowledge production" with reference to the German *Allgemeine Staatslehre* and *Verein für Sozialpolitik* schools. The central aim of social research was not only to solve the problems raised by industrialization, but also to benefit the goals of social policy. In this kind of research, there was not much room for academic autonomy and critical approaches. To a certain degree the same research policy continued, yet now with the new American influence, in the post-war period, when social sciences were given a profound role in creating the Finnish version of a Scandinavian welfare state.¹⁷

Although Finland did not join the Fulbright programme before 1952, the American scholarships started in 1949 with the introduction of the ASLA programme. The acronym stands for the Finnish words *Amerikan Suomen Lainan Apurahat*, Grants from America's Loan to Finland. The loan, however, related not to World War II, but to World War I. Finland dutifully paid the loan and interest during the 1930s—unlike many other countries that had borrowed from the US. The number of Finnish exchanges in America was proportionally higher than that of any other foreign nation in the early 1960s due to the Finnish special arrangements.¹⁸ The ASLA programme was later associated with the Fulbright programme, but it remained an independent exchange programme.

Sweden also joined the Fulbright programme in 1952. According to Mikael Nilsson's analyses, the Fulbright agreement was tied to military hardware trading (signing the Mutual Defences Assistance Agreement) between the US and Sweden. In other words, the Fulbright programme was a propagandist tool for binding Sweden closer to the US culturally as well.¹⁹ Norway had joined the Fulbright programme right away in 1949, and it was a strategic source for the recently established new national research council (*Norges almenntvitenskapelige forskingsråd*, NAVF), which supported basic research, including social sciences. Under the programme, American visiting professors in particular played a central role in forming Norwegian social sciences.²⁰

The basic idea behind the Fulbright programme was to fund educational, cultural and science exchange worldwide with the money the US government received from selling war surplus property to foreign nations. Senator Fulbright, the former president of the University of Arkansas, had himself studied abroad.²¹ The noble idea behind the programme was to promote world peace and understanding among peoples within the framework of internationalism, but recent research has shown that the programme was set out to display the values of Western democratic open society against the Soviet one as part of American cultural propaganda during the Cold War. It was designed not only to educate but also to indoctrinate.²²

During the Cold War, extra-university patronage had major interests with regard to science, including social sciences. Besides military, propaganda and intelligence agencies, private philanthropic institutions, namely the Carnegie Corporation, the Ford Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation, also had an impact on the American social sciences.²³ Furthermore, they directed their activities overseas from early on.

The whole philosophy of cultural and educational exchanges preceded the actual Cold War. The independent American foundations had provided scholarships for academics worldwide in the mid-war period. Scholarship programmes and their grants became part of the international nation-state competition for leadership already in the late nineteenth century. The rivalry between the great powers was not only about political, military, economic and imperial supremacy, but also included developments in the fields of education and research. The scholarships were at the centre of cultural diplomacy, through which nation-states reinforced “their prestige by exporting the products of their national cultures and by attracting as many producers of knowledge as possible”, as the editors of a compilation on the history of scholarships write. All in all, the decades immediate after World War II saw the explosive growth of student exchanges to the United States.²⁴

THE EXCHANGE PROGRAMMES AND THE NORDIC SOCIAL SCIENTISTS

The Rockefeller Foundation, which was established in 1913, started to support European social sciences after World War I, in order to reconstruct Europe after the war in the name of democracy and education. Nordic scholars also made use of the Rockefeller grants in the inter-war period. For instance, Heikki Waris, who later in 1946 became the first Professor of Social Policy at the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Helsinki, visited the University of Chicago, founded by John D. Rockefeller, on a Rockefeller scholarship in 1934–1935.²⁵ Perhaps the best-known Nordic social scientists, Gunnar and Alva Myrdal,²⁶ visited the US even earlier on a Rockefeller scholarship, in 1929–1930, absorbing the teachings of famous Chicago School.²⁷

After World War II, the Rockefeller Foundation directed its efforts towards promoting American interests in Europe, because of the growing threat of communism on the continent, particularly after the communist coup in Czechoslovakia in 1948. The Foundation believed that the best way to achieve results in this conflict “between communism and western democracy” was to promote good science, including social sciences.²⁸ Besides Lazarsfeld’s visit, Norwegian social scientists benefitted from the Rockefeller Foundation in various ways. In 1946, the Foundation assigned a grant for the social science-oriented philosopher Arne Næss, whose students visited leading research centres in the US from 1946 to 1951.²⁹

Since social sciences were either created or established in Europe after the war, American influence was strongest at European universities in the immediate post-war period.³⁰

Many of the Finnish social scientists had spent some time in US higher education by the early 1980s (44% in economics and economic history, 43% in political science, 39% in political history and 33% in sociology). This was manifested in the reference sources of doctoral dissertations in political science and sociology at Finnish universities from 1952 to 1978, when the American sources of reference dominated the fields. As the major figure of post-war Finnish social sciences, sociologist Erik Allardt has often emphasized that the American influence in social sciences was stronger in Finland than in any other country.³¹

This is difficult to prove, but the numbers of American references in Finnish social science literature are telling. For example, although the American scholarships had a significant impact on Swedish post-war academic life, including social sciences, European and above all Scandinavian textbooks still dominated the citations in Swedish publications.³² Nevertheless, the academic contacts were also of crucial importance in post-war Sweden. It is estimated that by 2002, over 4500 Swedes were enrolled in American higher education institutions. Sweden was fourth (after Germany, the UK and France) in terms of Western countries sending undergraduates to the US.³³

This slow media ranged from the exchanges to publications and donations to libraries. For instance, the ASLA-Fulbright fund covered 40% of all the acquisition costs for the libraries of the University of Helsinki in the early 1950s.³⁴ Moreover, the creation of American libraries in target countries was one form of American cultural diplomacy. For instance, Erik Allardt obtained most of the central literature for his master's thesis from the library of the US Embassy in Finland.³⁵

Erik Allardt visited the United States many times on a Rockefeller scholarship. The most important was his first visit to Harvard and especially Columbia University in 1953. In Columbia, Allardt's visit coincided with a visit by Norwegian political scientist Stein Rokkan, and they both adapted the ideas of political sociologist Seymour Martin Lipset while they were there. In his memoirs, Allardt writes about two decisive encounters during his stay at Columbia: the first was Lipset and the second was the punch card machine.³⁶ Rokkan has been considered the pioneer of using computer technology in Norwegian social sciences and overall "domestication" of American models for Norwegian social sciences.³⁷ Of the

Swedish academics, sociologist Torgny Segerstedt from Uppsala University had frequent contacts with American universities such as Stanford and Columbia. Segerstedt not only helped young Swedish sociologists with their American contacts at his “Uppsala School of Sociology”, but also mentored Allardt from early on.³⁸

The renowned sociologists were opinion leaders in the 1950s and 1960s. Sociology was a trendy field of science. In the Nordic countries, sociology was strongly entangled with the forming of a welfare state. The role of opinion leaders was also noticed by the Americans. Paul Lazarsfeld conducted an influential empirical study on voting behaviour, which was published as *The People's Choice* (1944). The study argued, among other things, that opinion leaders have a greater impact on audiences than simply hearing or reading the same information directly from a media outlet. Therefore, these “multipliers”, such as up-and-coming politicians, trade unionists, media professionals and academics, could function as channels of information in a targeted fashion through exchanges.³⁹

Indeed, the propagandist impact of the Fulbright programme was not limited to university circles. The Finnish ASLA grants, for instance, fall into four categories: leader grants, research grants, teacher grants and graduate student grants. That is why the programme included not just academics, but also civil servants, businessmen and politicians. Many future politicians and media company directors had graduated from the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Helsinki, which was established right after World War II.⁴⁰ Also in Sweden, a remarkable share of the business, media and political elite were Fulbright scholars, including two later Swedish Prime Ministers, Olof Palme and Ingvar Carlsson, and other political party leaders.⁴¹ Of the Danish politicians, Anker Jørgensen, Prime Minister in the 1970s (1972–1982), received a Fulbright scholarship as a trade unionist in the 1950s.⁴² Unlike academic scholarships, the research grants were not only applied for. Americans, such as diplomats, could also offer grants to officials and CEOs.⁴³

Moreover, writings, speeches and statements based on the USIA-generated material for the press in the target countries, along with the exchange scholars' own writings in their home country, consciously and unconsciously shaped the image of America and its superiority. Modernist sociological terminology entered the political language and newspapers. The sociologists were the first port of call when there was a need to explain the complicated, rapidly changing societal phenomena.⁴⁴ But how were these American ideas adopted in the Nordic public sphere?

CROSS PRESSURES IN A MODERN SOCIETY

I approach the query of how American sociological terminology was vernacularized in the Nordic public sphere through a limited case study, mapping the appearance of the term *cross pressure* in Finnish (*ristipaine*), Swedish (*korstryck*) and Norwegian (*krysspress*) newspapers during the Cold War.⁴⁵ While being a central concept of American post-war sociology (of politics), the uses of “cross pressure” also reveal the problems the Nordic (welfare) states faced in the rapid post-war modernization process.

“Cross pressure” refers to a social situation in which an individual encounters a conflict of incompatible motives when having to make a decision. Typically, in political life, this kind of situation arises in voting behaviour when a person must decide between two kinds of politics that a party represents, of which a person supports the first but is resistant to the second, for instance. The cross pressures are often divided into *attitudinal* and *affective* dimensions. The first dimension means the conflict between alternative beliefs or courses of action, in which a person must decide under conditions which bring into play attitudes that motivate different and opposing choices. The affective (affiliative) dimension refers to a conflict that may result from a person’s attachment to several groups which have preferences for different alternatives.⁴⁶ Although the idea of cross pressure had been introduced in the early twentieth century by German sociologist Georg Simmel in his ideas of intersecting social circles,⁴⁷ its theorizing and adaptation were very much a product of post-war American sociology.⁴⁸

The concept was part of American positivist and behaviourist social science and the ideology of American pluralism that relied on a “pure science”. Voting and election campaign studies were conducted as “policy research”, but the concept was widely applied to other fields of society as well, namely advertising and consumer behaviour.⁴⁹ Overall, the theory of cross pressure was to meet the requirements for analysing a modern society whose members live in processes of social change and are forced to accommodate new societal and cultural conditions. This was very much the situation in the post-war Nordic countries when the welfare state project faced its acceleration phase, with substantial societal reforms (social security, labour force participation, income transfer through taxation, gender equality etc.). Since Finland was a latecomer among the Nordic countries, the post-war decades, especially the 1960s and the 1970s, were the formative years of Finnish welfare state development.

“Cross pressure” (*ristipaine*) made its first appearance in the database of Finnish newspapers in 1956, then referring to elections. The article cited a speech given at the meeting of the Finnish Political Science Association by a political scientist. He discussed cross pressure concerning the so-called swing or floating voters, who are not very much interested in politics and are unsure about their voting decision. The political scientist also discussed the role of class in party loyalty in Finland, where language and ideological factors cause deviations.⁵⁰

Another article from 1959 discussed how economic growth might result in the backing of communists in Finnish political life.⁵¹ Erik Allardt had published his study *Social struktur och politisk aktivitet* (Social structure and political activism) in 1956 in which referring to the ideas of Lipset, he analysed Finnish “backwoods communism” (*ödemarkskommunism* in Swedish, *korpikommunismi* in Finnish), the radical communists in east and northern Finland. In the book, Allardt refers to the “cross pressure hypothesis” formulated by Lazarsfeld concerning the level of political passiveness. For instance, in isolated communities, where there is strong support for communists, the voting percentage is high.⁵² According to the American model, “small communities see the world through the same-coloured glasses”.⁵³ Allardt’s article titled “Is Finland a mass society?” was published in the *Uusi Suomi* newspaper in December 1963. It was a translation of his article in *Nya Argus*, the Swedish-speaking cultural periodical. In the article, Allardt uses the term cross pressure to reveal the situation of large social groups in society; how they are difficult to mobilize in mass movements because of multidimensional cross pressures and loyalties tied to their lives.⁵⁴

In the Norwegian database, the term first appeared in 1958 (see Fig. 1), but it became more widely used in the early 1970s. As in Finland, the term refers predominately to political life in Swedish newspapers in the 1960s and the 1970s, and it was social scientists who used the term.⁵⁵ The first articles that used “cross pressure” in Swedish newspapers concerned “Projekt Metropolitt” directed by Professor of Sociology Kaare Svalastoga at the University of Copenhagen.⁵⁶ The project studied baby boomer males in all Nordic capitals (except Reykjavik). “Cross pressure” was used in the article to depict the attitudes towards military issues among different groups of boys.⁵⁷

However, although “cross pressure” appeared often in the articles concerning the elections, they were only the fifth most common theme in

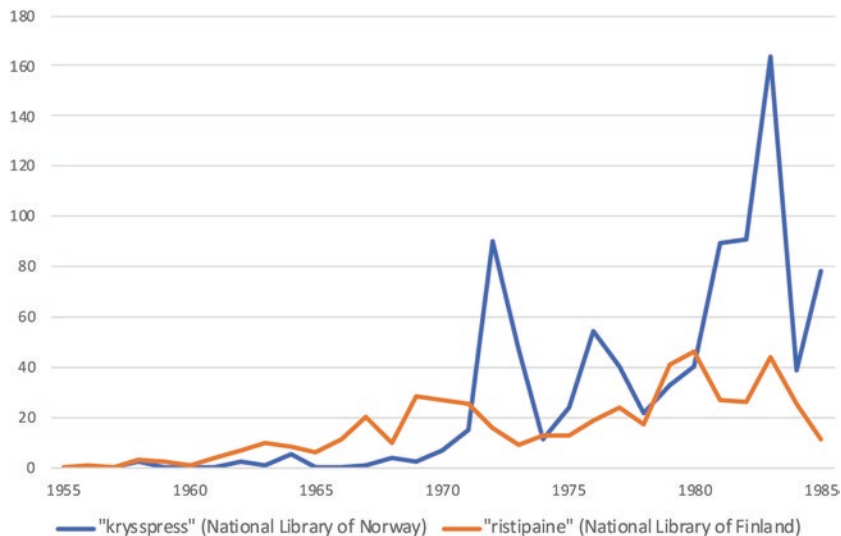


Fig. 1 Total occurrences of “cross pressure” in Finnish (*orange trendline*) and Norwegian (*blue trendline*) newspapers 1955–1985.⁵⁸ Source: National Library of Finland, National Library of Norway

Finnish newspapers according to my content analysis (see Table 1). Most commonly, the term was used under culture, domestic policy and economic policy issues. Culture accounting for over a third of all the articles is partly explained by fact that it includes TV and radio programmes; the content accounts of documentaries, teleplays and so on for the TV and radio section were taken from the broadcasters’ material, so the same texts were circulated in several newspapers. On the other hand, “cross pressure” was also a topic in many book reviews, both fiction and non-fiction, as well as in theatre play reviews. This speaks to its role in the modern way of life. For instance, in a review on a young adult fiction book, the writer emphasizes the cross pressures of young people between class, love and education.⁵⁹

Domestic policy issues that include the term are mostly about political parties and their pressures in the government. Finland and other Nordic countries are multiparty political systems, meaning that a government can consist of political parties that are ideologically rather distant from each other. This often leads to a situation where a politician or a party must

Table 1 Content analysis of “cross pressure” (ristipaine) in Finnish newspapers 1955–1985⁶⁰

<i>Theme</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
Culture	143	32
Domestic policy	91	21
Economic policies	64	14
Foreign affairs	36	8
Elections	33	7
Horoscope	14	3
Education policy	13	3
Media policy	8	2
Advertisements	8	2
History	7	2
Women’s issues	7	2
Church	6	1
Health service	5	1
Social policy	4	1
Science	3	1
Total	442	100%

decide, according to the idea of “attitudinal conflict”, should one support a case against their ideology and supporters or split away from the government. Changing society also makes demands of the old parties. For instance, the Finnish Centre Party, which had changed its name from the Agrarian Party a couple of years before, was discussed in 1969. The newspaper pondered the party’s position under different societal cross pressures as the Finnish countryside was emptying, and the economic structure was rapidly changing.⁶¹

In economic policies, “cross pressure” was often linked to the money markets, especially in the pages of *Uusi Suomi*, which was an official organ (until 1976) of the National Coalition Party (*Kansallinen Kokoomus, Samlingspartiet*), the leading Finnish right-wing party. For instance, in 1960, the paper wrote about how the growing state economy was producing a cross pressure between the private and public sectors of the Finnish national economy.⁶² The Bank of Finland was also seen as being under political cross pressures.⁶³ Finnish post-war modernization, including the welfare state project, did not really start before the 1960s. Thereafter, the changes were so rapid that Finnish economy and business life had to cope with many kinds of political struggles, not least those concerning the growing taxation.

One interesting example, found in both Finnish and Swedish papers, was use of the term in the articles about the position of women in society. In 1969 Elsi Hetemäki, who soon became a member of parliament

(1970–1991) for the National Coalition Party, wrote how a modern woman was living under multiple cross pressures:

You should be a good wife, a golden mother, an excellent professional at home and at work—increasingly in both areas. In addition, you should be a participative citizen and keep up with the times. And at same time, the modern woman should look neat and tidy, be sporty, cultural and in good health.⁶⁴

The same discussion continued in 1975, which the UN had declared International Women’s Year.⁶⁵ In 1979, *Svenska Dagbladet* published several articles, including Readers’ Letters, that discussed women’s position in society under the rubric *Kvinnor i korstryck* (Women in cross pressures). The newspaper also had a series of articles under the heading *Systrar i Norden* (Sisters in the Nordic countries). One of the articles stated that “despite strong Finnish women, Finland is a man’s society living in cross pressures”. According to the writer, Norwegian journalist, politician and feminist Birgit Wiig, the cross pressure originated from Finnish history: the Civil War, the close relationship with Nazi German during World War II and the influence of the Soviet Union have given conflicting models for Finnish women. Moreover, the attitude of the strong Finnish communist party towards women was conservative.⁶⁶ This is a good example of how different histories of the Nordic countries had an impact on such central issues of the Nordic welfare society.

CONCLUSION: CHASING THE HUMAN FACTOR THROUGH VERNACULARIZATION

Norwegian Steinar Bryn has illustrated how idealistic social democracy conflicts with “mythic America” in several ways. Whereas America means individualism, self-realization, profit-orientation, freedom and so on, social democracy values community orientation, social responsivity, people orientation and equality.⁶⁷ Despite this dualism, American ideas of modernity, with its emphasis on rationalism, reform and its orientation towards the future, was not that far from the Scandinavian welfare project. Transplanting America’s modern social science ideas to the Nordic societies just needed to be applied to the local ground that was fertile for American ideas during the post-war years.⁶⁸

Looking at how one central concept of American modernist social science was vernacularized in the Nordic public sphere illustrates this in

multiple ways. Whether it concerned politics, the economy or egalitarian societal issues, the cross pressures of modern society were very much the issues of the Nordic welfare states during their fast-moving reformative years. Although we often think that the “Nordic Model” was created in consensus, institutions, as well as individuals, had to make choices in cross-cutting cleavages in the fast-moving societies.

American scholarships were the central tool in mediating these ideas. The impact of American scholarships in the public sphere of target countries, however, is probably the most difficult subject to study—not only because the impact can often be noticed only years or decades after.⁶⁹

As we can see in the figures about the occurrence of the term “cross pressure” in the Finnish and Norwegian newspapers, the first peak is in the early 1970s (see Fig. 1). Moreover, when it was used in the 1960s, cross pressure referred mostly to its original use, that is voting behaviour and other dimensions of political life, and it was mostly used by scholars, “the opinion leaders” of the era.

However, the most numerous occurrences for the period under analysis come in the early 1980s. This indicates that social science terminology was vernacularized in everyday use on a delay, a couple of decades after its launch in the academic world. Whether we define them as cultural diplomacy, public diplomacy, PR, nation branding or propaganda, American scholarships represent various activities and circulation of mediated content that could be described as “slow media”.

Exchanges could also be seen as a form of strategic communication. Of the different forms of public diplomacy, the exchange programmes differ in that they directly involve the “human factor” in diffusing the interchange of people, ideas and opinions.⁷⁰ Although this human factor is difficult to study, one option is to investigate the vernacularization of American post-war ideas in the public sphere of the target countries. This chapter is only an example of the possibilities, hopefully a spur for further studies.

NOTES

1. Peter Mandler, “The Language of Social Science in Everyday Life”, *History of the Human Sciences*, vol. 32, no. 1 (2019), 66–82.
2. See, for example, Mark Sovey and Hamilton Cravens, eds., *Cold War Social Science: Knowledge Production, Liberal Democracy, and Human Nature* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Christopher Simpson, ed.,

- Universities and Empire: Money and Politics in the Social Sciences during the Cold War* (New York: The New Press, 1998); Michael E. Latham, *Modernization as Ideology: American Social Science and "Nation Building" in the Kennedy Era* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000).
3. Nicholas J. Cull, "Public Diplomacy Before Gullion: The Evolution of a Phrase", *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy*, eds. Nancy Snow and Nicholas J. Cull, 2nd ed. (New York and London: Routledge), 13; Giles Scott-Smith, "Exchange Programs and Public Diplomacy", *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy*, eds. Nancy Snow and Nicholas J. Cull, 2nd ed. (New York and London: Routledge), 38, 41.
 4. Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell, *Propaganda & Persuasion*, 6th ed. (London: Sage, 2015), 20.
 5. Marek Fields, *Reinforcing Finland's Attachment to the West: British and American Propaganda and Cultural Diplomacy in Finland, 1944–1962* (Helsinki: University of Helsinki, 2015), 200, 226.
 6. Cull, *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency*, 91, 195.
 7. Lonnie R. Johnson, "The Fulbright Program and the Philosophy and Geography of US Exchange Programs since World War II", *Global Exchanges: Scholarships and Transnational Circulations in the Modern World*, eds. Ludovic Tournès and Giles Scott-Smit (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2018), 174–175; Scott-Smith, "Exchange Programs and Public Diplomacy", 38, 41.
 8. "Slow media" also has another meaning, referring to the response movement against instant digital communication in terms of "sustainable media" in the early 2000s. See, for example, Jennifer Rauch, *Slow Media: Why Slow is Satisfying, Sustainable and Smart* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).
 9. A good English summation of the Nordic countries in international relations after World War II is Mary Hilson, *The Nordic Model: Scandinavia since 1945* (London: Reaktion Books, 2018), 116–147.
 10. See Helge Ø. Pharo, "Bridgebuilding and Reconstruction: Norway Faces the Marshall Plan", *Scandinavian Journal of History*, vol. 1, no. 1–4 (1976), 125–153; Mary Hilson, *The Nordic Model: Scandinavia since 1945* (London: Reaktion Books 2018), 63–65; Jussi M. Hanhimäki, *Scandinavia and the United States: An Insecure Friendship* (New York and London: Twayne Publishers, 1997); Leon Dalgas Jensen, "Denmark and the Marshall Plan, 1947–1948: The Decision to Participate", *Scandinavian Journal of History*, vol. 14, no. 1–2 (1989), 57–83; Kurt Samuelsson, "The Swedish Model and Western Europe 1945–1988", *Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 41, no. 2 (1988), 363–364; Alan S. Milward, *The Reconstruction of Western Europe 1945–1951* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1984), 96.

11. Between 1948 and 1955, 25,000 European engineers and managers visited the US, bringing American methods back with them to Europe (Tournès and Scott-Smith, “A World of Exchanges”, 10).
12. John Kriege, *American Hegemony and the Post-war Reconstruction of Science in Europe* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2006), 15–56.
13. Lazarsfeld was also one of the driving forces behind the “Americanization” of social sciences in his previous home country Austria after World War II (Günter Bischof, “Two Sides of the Coin: The Americanization of Austria and Austrian Anti-Americanism”, 147–181, *The Americanization of Europe: Culture, Diplomacy, and Anti-Americanism after 1945*, ed. Alexander Stephan (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007), 161.
14. Fredrik Thue, *In Quest of a Democratic Social Order: The Americanization of Norwegian Social Scholarship 1918–1970* (Oslo: University of Oslo, 2005), 252–297.
15. Ron Eyerman, “Intellectuals and the State: A Framework for Analysis, with Special Reference to the United States and Sweden”, in *Vanguard of Modernity: Society, Intellectuals, and the University*, eds. Niilo Kauppi and Pekka Sulkunen (Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä, 1992), 73.
16. See Jukka Kortti, “Intellectuals and the State: The Finnish University Intelligentsia and the German Idealist Tradition,” *Modern Intellectual History*, vol. 11, no. 3 (2014), 359–384.
17. Jukka Kortti, *Valtaan ja vastavirtaan. Valtiotieteellinen tiedekunta 75 vuotta* (Helsinki: SKS, 2020), 36, 124–129.
18. *ASLA Directory: ASLA-Grantees 1950–1963* (Helsinki: The ASLA Alumni Association, 1965).
19. Mikael Nilsson, *The Battle for Hearts and Minds in the High North: The USIA and American Cold War Propaganda in Sweden, 1952–1969* (New York: Brill, 2016), 206–214.
20. Thue, *In Quest of a Democratic Social Order*, 340–342, 353–354, 377
21. Nicholas J. Cull, *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency: American Propaganda and Public Diplomacy, 1945–1989* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 32.
22. For example, Sam Lebovic, “From War Junk to Educational Exchange: The World War II Origins of the Fulbright Program and the Foundations of American Cultural Globalism, 1945–1950”, *Diplomatic History*, vol. 37, no. 2 (2013), 280–312; Paul A. Kramer, “Is the World Our Campus? International Students and U.S. Global Power in the Long Twentieth Century” *Diplomatic History*, vol. 33, no. 5 (2009), 775–806, 796–798; Kriege, *American Hegemony and the Post-war Reconstruction of Science in Europe*, 160; Reinhold Wagnleitner, *Coca-Colonization and the Cold War: The Cultural Mission of the United States in Austria after the Second War* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 134–167.

23. Mark Solovey, “Cold War Social Science: Specter, Reality, or Useful Concept?”, eds. Mark Solovey and Hamilton Cravens (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 17.
24. Ludovic Tournès and Giles Scott-Smith, “A World of Exchanges: Conceptualizing the History of International Scholarship Programs (Nineteenth to Twenty-First Centuries)”, 1–29, *Global Exchanges: Scholarships and Transnational Circulations in the Modern World*, eds. Ludovic Tournès and Giles Scott-Smith (New York: Berghahn Books, 2018), 7; Kramer, “Is the World Our Campus?”, 792.
25. Waris was the pioneer of urban sociology in Finland. However, Waris was disappointed at his time in Chicago. He found the sociology at the University too theoretical and philosophical. Waris was interested in socialism, the cooperative movement and social insurance and they were not taught or supervised in Chicago. Waris visited many other universities in the USA and found answers to his interests at Columbia and Harvard Universities. Robert S. Lynd, Professor of Sociology at Columbia, served as a sort of role model for Waris. In Harvard, Waris met the Professor of Social History, A. M. Schlesinger. After long discussions with him, Waris was convinced to become dedicated to clearing the path for “realistic sociology” in Finland. (Repo 2011, 154–155)
26. Gunnar Myrdal was a Swedish economist and sociologist. He and his wife Alva Myrdal, a sociologist and diplomat, were very influential in shaping the Swedish welfare state in terms of social engineering. They are both Nobel laureates: Gunnar Myrdal received the Prize in 1974 and Alva Myrdal in 1982.
27. Nilsson, *The Battle for Hearts and Minds in the High North*, 219–220; Dag Blanck, “Television, Education, and the Vietnam War: Sweden and the United States during the Postwar Era”, *The Americanization of Europe: Culture, Diplomacy, and Anti-Americanism after 1945*, ed. Alexander Stephan (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007), 98–102.
28. Kriege, *American Hegemony and the Post-war Reconstruction of Science in Europe*, 116, 122.
29. Thue, *In Quest of a Democratic Social Order*, 159–160.
30. Erik Allardt, *The American Impact on Science and Higher Education in Finland* (Helsinki: Department of Sociology, University of Helsinki, 1984 Helsinki), 6
31. Erik Allardt and Krister Ståhlberg, “Social Sciences”, *Finnish American Academic and Professional Exchanges: Analyses and Reminiscences*, eds. William Copeland, Michael Haltzel, Kaarlo Hartiala, Eugene Holman, Allan Kuusisto, Hannu Rautkallio and Juha Vuorinen (Helsinki: Foundation for Research in Higher Education and Science Policy and United States Educational Foundation in Finland, 1983), 49–53; Allardt,

- The American Impact on Science and Higher Education in Finland*, 11; Kortti, *Valtaan ja vastavirtaan*, 121.
32. Nilsson, *The Battle for Hearts and Minds in the High North*, 212–220.
 33. Dag Blanck, “Traveling Scholars: Swedish Academic Travelers across the Atlantic in the twentieth Century”, *American Foundations and the European Welfare States*, eds. Klaus Petersen, John Stewart and Michael Kuur Sørensen (Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark, 2013); Blanck, “Television, Education, and the Vietnam War”, 101.
 34. Kortti, *Valtaan ja vastavirtaan*, 55.
 35. Erik Allardt, *Suunnistuksia ja kulttuurisokkeja* (Helsinki: Otava, 1995), 59.
 36. Allardt, *Suunnistuksia ja kulttuurisokkeja*, 79–82.
 37. Thue, *In Quest of a Democratic Social Order*, 388–389.
 38. Nilsson, *The Battle for Hearts and Minds in the High North*, 219–220; Allardt, *Suunnistuksia ja kulttuurisokkeja*, 67–69.
 39. Scott-Smith, “Exchange Programs and Public Diplomacy”, 43.
 40. *ASLA Directory: ASLA Grantees 1950–1963* (Helsinki: The ASLA Alumni Association, 1965), 32, 45, 83.
 41. Nilsson, *The Battle for Hearts and Minds in the High North*, 214–215.
 42. Nils Arne Sørensen and Klaus Petersen, “Ameri-Danes and Pro-American Anti-Americanism in Denmark after 1945”, *The Americanization of Europe: Culture, Diplomacy, and Anti-Americanism after 1945*, ed. Alexander Stephan (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007), 119.
 43. Sakari Kiuru, later Director-General of the Finnish Broadcasting Company, YLE (1980–1989), writes in his memoirs how the US ambassadors to Finland organized Kiuru’s visit after hearing that social democratic journalist and union officer Kiuru had not visited the US yet. Sakari Kiuru, *Lyhyin askelin. Puolipolitiiset muistelmani* (Helsinki: TSL, 2004) 107–109.
 44. Kortti, *Valtaan ja vastavirtaan*, 123–124.
 45. Note that my inquiry only includes searches for the translations of “cross pressure” in the Nordic languages. The concept may also have been used in its English version, but, according to the searchers in the databases, there is little evidence about that.
 46. Frank A. Pinner, “Cross Pressure”, <https://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences/applied-and-social-sciences-magazines/cross-pressure> (accessed 29 December 2021).
 47. Georg Simmel, *Conflict and The Web of Group Affiliation* (Glencoe: Free Press, 1955).
 48. See, for example, Paul F. Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson and Hazel Gaudet, eds., *The People’s Choice: How the Voter Makes Up His Mind in a Presidential Campaign*, 2nd ed. (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1960); Daniel Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East* (New York: Free Press, 1958); Seymour M. Lipset et al.

- “The Psychology of Voting: An Analysis of Political Behavior. Volume 2”, *Handbook of Social Psychology*, ed. Gardner Lindzey (Cambridge: Addison-Wesley, 1954); Talcott Parsons, “Voting and the Equilibrium of the American Political System”, *American Voting Behavior*, eds. Eugene Burdick and Arthur J. Brodbeck (Glencoe: Free Press, 1959).
49. Stuart Hall, “The Rediscovery of ‘Ideology’. Return of the Repressed in Media Studies”, *Culture, Society and the Media*, eds. Michael Gurevich, Tony Bennet, James Curran and Janet Woollacot (London: Methuen, 1982).
 50. “Äänestäjien siirtyminen puolueesta toiseen”, *Uusi Suomi*, 26 October 1956.
 51. *Etelä-Suomen Sanomat*, 15 October 1959.
 52. Erik Allardt, *Social Struktur och Politisk Aktivitet* (Helsinki: Söderströms, 1956), 12–17, 40–49.
 53. Lazarsfeld et al., *The People’s Choice*, 148–149.
 54. Erik Allardt, “Onko Suomi massayhteiskunta”, *Uusi Suomi*, 1 December 1963 .
 55. See, for example, Kurt Samulesson, “Förändrad politik”, *Svenska Dagbladet*, 20 October 1967; Kurt Samulesson, “Socialdemokratin och valet”, *Svenska Dagbladet*, 2 October 1968; Axel Waldemarson, “Holmberg, partiet och valet”, *Svenska Dagbladet*, 26 July 1970.
 56. Norwegian-born Svalastoga had visited the USA, including the University of Chicago, via an American-Scandinavian Foundation scholarship after World War II. He received his PhD from the University of Washington, Seattle in 1950. He was an “unceasing positivist”. (Peter Gundelach, “Kaare Svalastoga: The Unceasing Positivist”, *Acta Sociologica*, vol. 43, no. 4 (2000), 365–373.
 57. “En årgång pojkar i Nordens huvudstäder skall sociologundersökas under 20 år”, *Svenska Dagbladet*, 8 May 1964. The project was also introduced in other Swedish newspapers.
 58. The datasets used in this case study are by no means compatible nor even fully representative. Whereas Norwegians have digitalized all their newspapers for the National Library of Norway (*Nasjonallbiblioteket*), the Finnish database of the National Library of Finland (*Kansalliskirjasto*) is not complete. While it contains one of the major newspapers in Finland in the twentieth century, *Uusi Suomi* (1919–1991), the collection lacks the leading newspaper *Helsingin Sanomat* and major regional newspapers. Since the search of the Swedish database for “cross pressure” (*korstryck*) resulted in so few hits (from 0 to 7 per year until the late 1970s) or the results were biased (most of the hits are from the same advertisement circulated in different newspapers in the early 1980s), I decided not to include the figure from the search conducted in the newspaper database of the National

- Library of Sweden (<https://tidningar.kb.se/>). However, I used the database to read the Swedish newspapers (see footnote 60).
59. Sirkka Kurki-Suonio, “Tyttökirja pojillekin”, *Uusi Suomi*, 19 June 1966.
 60. The content analysis was conducted from the Newspaper Collection of the National Library of Finland. As mentioned, the database is not complete. The same kind of analysis was supposed to be applied to the Swedish and Norwegian collections, but the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020–2021 prevented my access to the collections. However, based on a search in the database of the National Library of Sweden, I was able to read the Swedish newspapers *Svenska Dagbladet* and *Dagens Nyheter* via microfilms at the National Library of Finland.
 61. Kalle Fröjd, “Vuodet vaihtuvat—puolueet murenevat vuosien kuluessa”, *Länsi-Savo*, 17 April 1969. Unlike in other Nordic countries, the Finnish Centre Party, nowadays officially the Centre Party of Finland (*Suomen Keskusta, Centern i Finland*) has remained a big party until the 2020s, being the biggest party in the 2015 parliamentary elections, hence still the Prime Minister’s party in the late 2010s.
 62. “Tilapäinen helpotus”, *Uusi Suomi*, 30 September 1960.
 63. “SAK ja korkopolitiikka”, *Etelä-Suomen Sanomat*, 9 March 1969.
 64. Elsi Hetemäki, “Nyky naisen kuva”, *Uusi Suomi*, 8 December 1969.
 65. Maija Dammert, Arja Käyhty, Kaija Korhonen and Petteri Väisänen, “Näin naisten vuonna”, *Etelä-Suomen Sanomat*, 11 May 1975.
 66. Ingrid Arhuslander, “De offrade yrkeslivet”, *Svenska Dagbladet*, 3 March 1979; “Kvinnan blir en buffert”, *Svenska Dagbladet*, 4 March 1979; Birgit Wiig, “Bort med myten om den starka finska kvinnan”, *Svenska Dagbladet*, 18 July 1979. Indeed, the position of women in the Finnish influential far left Leninist movement (the so-called Taistoists) has been seen as a reason why the Finnish feminist movement did not have the same kind of position as in other Nordic countries. Kortti, *Valtaan ja vastavirtaan*, 220.
 67. Steinar Bryn, “The Americanization of the Global Village: A Case Study of Norway”, *Networks of Americanization: Aspects of the American Influence in Sweden*, eds. Rolf Lundén and Erik Åsard (Uppsala: Uppsala University, 1992), 22, 33
 68. Blanck, “Television, Education, and the Vietnam War”, 107–108.
 69. Tournès and Scott-Smith, “A World of Exchanges”, 8–9.
 70. Scott-Smith, “Exchange Programs and Public Diplomacy”, 46.

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PART IV

Internationalism and Environmentalism



Creating Information Infrastructure for Transnational Co-operation in Television: Nordvision in the 1960s–1970s

Mari Pajala

What is the future of Nordvision, pondered a meeting of Nordic television professionals in 1969.¹ Public service broadcasting companies from four countries—Danmarks Radio (DR, Denmark), Norsk rikskringkasting (NRK, Norway), Sveriges Radio (SR, Sweden) and Yleisradio (YLE, Finland)—had begun the Nordvision co-operation in 1959 to organize television programme exchange and co-productions; Iceland’s Ríkisútvarpið (RÚV) joined in 1966. Nordvision enabled television companies to make efficient use of their resources by sharing programmes and production costs, which was particularly important in the early years of television when the companies had limited capacity for programme production. A decade after its birth, however, Nordvision was facing if not a crisis, at least a sense that it needed to clarify its purpose and reconsider its ways of operating. Television was no longer an emerging new medium but had grown into the major mass medium of the era. The need for Nordic programme exchange seemed less now that public service broadcasting companies had more

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resources for their own productions. SR and YLE had launched second television channels, which in Sweden in particular led to competition between channels.² Young programme makers with radical ideas had entered television. The world was changing too, and Nordvision had to consider how to respond to current events such as the Prague Spring.

As a response to these concerns, Nordvision set up a committee, informally called the Dyfverman committee, to formulate aims for the co-operation and to evaluate and redesign working practices within Nordvision. The committee produced a 29-page report which became the basis for developing Nordvision.³ In this chapter, the committee report and discussions around it serve as material for studying how institutions build transnational networks. In particular, I explore how Nordvision developed “information infrastructure”⁴ that would support transnational collaboration in television. By information infrastructure I here mean the infrastructure Nordvision used for internal communication. Following Alexander Badenoch and Andreas Fickers’ work on transnational European infrastructures, I understand infrastructures here as “composed as much of institutions, routines and discursive practices as of material artefacts”.⁵ A central infrastructural basis for Nordvision was the television network that enabled the transmission of programmes across borders and was used for Nordvision and Eurovision programme exchange. However, Nordvision work also required other kinds of infrastructure. Nordvision co-operation depended on a complex information infrastructure consisting of face-to-face meetings, letters, reports, statistics, telephone calls, telexes and videotapes. Through discussing Nordvision’s efforts to develop its internal communication, I consider how television contributed to the making of the “Nordic region as a mediated region”,⁶ not by analysing how Nordicness was represented on television screens but by focusing on the behind-the-scenes work of developing Nordic co-operation networks in television.⁷

Methodologically, my approach is inspired by recent work in media history that has shifted the focus from media content towards questions of technology and materiality.⁸ My aim is to contribute to historical studies of media production and distribution by discussing the practices and media technologies required in developing a transnational co-operation network such as Nordvision.⁹ The turn of the 1960s and 1970s offers useful material, as when Nordvision looked for a new direction, it had to reflect on and make visible its habitual working routines. My approach is inspired by Cait McKinney’s work on the “information activism” of late

twentieth-century US lesbian feminists. McKinney emphasizes the role of information in the formation of new publics and draws attention to the routine work with mundane media technologies that go into building alternative information infrastructure, such as newsletter networks. Defining “information as the object that moves through the application of specific media practices”, McKinney bases her methodology on “following information as it moves ... to see the infrastructures that quietly get it where it needs to get”.¹⁰ While my material is different from McKinney’s—Nordvision was not an activist network but a network of publicly funded broadcasting institutions—I find this approach useful also for studying Nordvision’s operations. A key problem for Nordvision was how to ensure efficient exchange of information that would support Nordic networking in television production and distribution. This chapter discusses the practices, media technologies and information genres¹¹ Nordvision relied upon, based on archival sources from the Nordvision files in the YLE archives.¹² The files include documents produced by all companies participating in Nordvision exchange, written in Scandinavian languages (Swedish, Danish, Norwegian). I read the Dyfverman committee report in relation to documents from the preceding and following years to trace how Nordvision members defined challenges relating to Nordic co-operation and attempted to solve them.

Given Nordvision’s long history and importance for public service television in the Nordic countries, there is surprisingly little previous research on it. An early exception is Ulf Jonas Björk’s article “Nordvision on Swedish Television: The Rise and Decline of a Regional Programme Exchange”. Björk focuses on Nordvision’s significance for Swedish television in the early 1960s, and as the title suggests, presents the history of Nordvision as a narrative of failure: while the leadership of Swedish television hoped that Nordvision would become an important source of programming and promote the understanding of Scandinavian languages, television viewers were critical of Danish language programmes in particular, the value of Nordvision exchange as a source of programmes soon diminished and Swedish television turned to American and British imports instead.¹³ This narrative is, however, misleading, as Nordvision remained active beyond the early years of television and is today an integral part of public service media production in the Nordic countries.¹⁴ Nordvision’s annual report describes 2020 as the “second-best year in the partnership’s history in terms of the number of Nordic co-productions”, with 2200 programme episodes co-produced.¹⁵ Nordvision’s Secretary General

Henrik Hartmann describes Nordvision as “one of the best and most successful examples of Nordic cooperation in the cultural sector” and “more vital, more comprehensive today than ever before”, citing rising numbers of programme exchange and the importance of Nordic co-production for financing programme projects.¹⁶ Nordvision has even been credited as one factor behind the recent international success of Scandinavian drama series: research on the European Commission’s support for television fiction between 2014 and 2020 found that Scandinavian countries were exceptionally successful in obtaining funding, which researchers saw as a result of the decades long institutionalization of co-production relationships within Nordvision.¹⁷ My aim in this article is not, however, to evaluate Nordvision in terms of success or failure, but to describe some of the work that has gone into building this network of Nordic television organizations.

“PRACTICAL *NORDISM*”

For Nordic public service television professionals in the late 1960s, it was clear that the motives for Nordvision collaboration were not only economic, but also “cultural-political”.¹⁸ Nordvision promoted a sense of cultural affinity between the Nordic countries, continuing work that had begun on the radio in the 1930s.¹⁹ The directors general of the public service broadcasting companies stated in 1969 that “programme collaboration between the Nordic radio organizations forms an important part of the cultural collaboration in the Nordics, and beyond the economic-practical aspects of collaboration must be considered to have independent cultural-political value”.²⁰ This statement guided the Dyfverman committee, but Nordvision members also had to figure out how to articulate Nordicness with their values and practices as television professionals.

The leadership of public service television was not motivated to develop Nordvision just because they valued Nordic community but also for strategic reasons. The inter-parliamentary Nordic Council (est. 1952) developed co-operation in the field of culture in the 1960s, for instance setting up a Nordic culture fund and prizes for Nordic literature and music. The Nordic Council was also interested in television, and in 1966 proposed launching a joint second television channel for the Nordic countries. The Nordvision meeting opposed the idea and argued that developing Nordvision co-operation was a better option.²¹ In his opening remarks for

a discussion about the future of Nordvision in 1969, SR's Nils Erik Baehrendtz raised the issue of the Nordic Council's interest in television, pointing out that thus far it had been possible to argue that broadcasting companies managed Nordic co-operation in a satisfactory manner. "It must be seen as important that radio companies maintain the initiative in this area through an active willingness to co-operate so that political and other initiatives from the outside are avoided as much as possible", Baehrendtz emphasized.²² The Dyfverman committee report avoided mentioning the Nordic Council, but it too raised the prospect of political pressure as a motivation for maintaining active co-operation, writing: "A significant decline in Nordic TV exchange would certainly bring to the fore more radical political initiatives".²³ Through active Nordic collaboration, television professionals sought to guard their autonomy and avoid more intrusive political interference.

Beyond these practical considerations, the leadership of Nordic public service television sought to define the value of Nordvision and Nordicness for their work. "One should not be Nordic just because that is the way things should be", as Baehrendtz reflected.²⁴ In defining the significance of Nordvision, the Dyfverman committee drew on contemporary ideas concerning electronic media's ability to foster connections across physical distance.²⁵ The committee report outlined a historical narrative of the development of Nordvision, starting from early idealism: "This was practical *Nordism*. Millions of people who had reacted with indifference to Nordic-minded [nordistiska] calls and done very little to train their ear for neighbouring countries' languages would, thanks to television's ability to illustrate and to combine benefit with pleasure, widen their horizons and be drawn into the Nordic community". Although these hopes had been complicated as audiences grew less enthusiastic about Nordic programmes, the committee maintained that the "driving force" behind Nordvision was the idea that television "can let Nordic countries talk to each other across borders". The committee emphasized that Nordvision programmes should not offer "neighbouring countries' voices ... as an echo of our own" but recommended a greater openness to programmes that would help viewers understand differences between the Nordic countries.²⁶ In this way, the committee sought to solve the problem of audience disaffection with Nordic programmes by giving a positive value to difference.

Apart from using television to encourage communication across national borders, Nordvision members were interested in producing good

television. In the 1969 discussion about the future of Nordvision, Baehrendtz commented that while Nordvision co-operation in entertainment and theatre in particular had produced many successes, lately programmes had also caused “public storms”. DR’s Lauritz Bindsløv emphasized that the public wants “good programmes regardless of whether they are Nordic or not” and “reacts strongly” if it is offered poor Nordic programmes. The challenge was to find a “middle ground between politicians’ wish for Nordic programme exchange and viewers’ wish to get good programmes”.²⁷ The discussion gave television audiences a central role in defining the value of television and positioned broadcasters as champions of viewers’ interests.

The challenge then was how to align Nordicness with quality. The Dyfverman committee agreed that audiences were right to demand quality, but argued that quality should not be seen in purely formal terms: one should not compare Nordic crime series, for instance, with “Anglo-Saxon” productions. “Quality is not just a question of form”, the committee emphasized, arguing that there was a “Nordic community of interest and hence a Nordic market”, which meant that programmes could be successful in the Nordic region even if they could not be sold elsewhere. Thus, the committee concluded that in choosing Nordvision programmes, instead of “quality” one should look for “qualities”, among them “Nordic characteristics” and the specific characteristics of individual Nordic countries.²⁸ In this way, the committee attempted to frame Nordicness as a quality in itself.

Nordvision discussions reflect a hopeful sense that Nordic co-operation would work well, if only the methods were right and the participants had enough information about each other’s activities. In the discussion about Nordvision’s future, Baehrendtz argued that “Nordvision co-operation is necessary also in the future as an instrument to produce more and better programmes”. He suggested that occasional failures were “not Nordvision’s fault” but caused by faulty methods. For instance, companies did not always have satisfactory information about interesting programmes produced in other Nordic countries.²⁹ In another meeting in 1969, NRK’s Otto Nes regretted the lack of Nordvision broadcasts on current topics, arguing that “we should keep each other better informed about our current plans and be more agile”.³⁰ The challenge for Nordvision was then to develop “new and more effective methods of collaboration” and sharing information.³¹

A COMPLICATED MACHINERY

At the end of the 1960s, there was a feeling that the habitual working practices of Nordvision, which derived from the late 1950s, needed to be updated. Writing about this period in his chronicle of Nordvision a decade later, YLE's Ville Zilliacus emphasized that Nordvision was not an "organization", but rather "a kind of machinery working according to a shared order, 'a way of working'".³² By calling Nordvision a kind of machinery, Zilliacus stressed Nordvision's difference from formally set up organizations such as the European Broadcasting Union (EBU). At the same time, the language of machinery also expressed a desire for efficiency and rationalization. According to Zilliacus, Nordvision needed to "rationalize [tehostaa] that complicated machinery with which programme offers had been dealt with in such an inadequate manner".³³ The basis of this machinery was Nordvision's regular schedule of meetings.

Nordvision could build on a "Nordic meeting apparatus" already established for the radio.³⁴ Upon this foundation, public service broadcasting companies developed a very active meeting culture, which by the late 1960s could seem excessive. Zilliacus notes that "in 1968, in addition to three Nordic director general meetings, three juridical and three technical meetings and two Nordic seminars, there were as many as 221 different conferences and meetings at different sectors and levels".³⁵ The main events for Nordvision were the three annual Nordvision meetings; the Dyfverman committee proposed a slightly lighter schedule of two Nordvision meetings and four planning meetings per year.³⁶ The Nordvision meetings had around 20 to 30 participants, mainly people in leadership positions regarding television programming. Companies took turns hosting Nordvision meetings, which were held at varying locations so that delegates got to know the country beyond the capital city. YLE's schedule for the 1965 meeting in Helsinki, for instance, included a day of screenings followed by two full days of meetings.³⁷ As television professionals attended these events several times a year, they would get to know their Nordic colleagues well.

Nordvision co-operation cut through all television programme production departments. As well as the main Nordvision meeting, there were group meetings for the programming areas entertainment, theatre, children and youth, culture, music, news, sports and film. Generally, the groups met once or twice a year (sports less regularly). The meetings were extensive: for instance, the children and youth group met twice a

year for four days and the culture group twice a year for three days.³⁸ At the meetings, delegates discussed plans for programme projects and attended screenings. The main Nordvision meeting discussed reports from the group meetings and approved or rejected their suggestions. All areas of programme production were thus in regular contact with corresponding departments in other Nordic countries. Yet, there was a sense that information should be shared more effectively to stimulate co-operation. To this end, Nordvision set out to improve its documents and communication.

DEVELOPING PAPER DOCUMENTS

Nordvision collaboration depended on a variety of written documents such as reports from meetings and seminars, statistical reports, memos outlining working routines and forms for co-production agreements. As literary scholar John Guillory argues, paper documents in information genres, such as form, memo and report, have been central modes of writing in modernity. Written documents have played an essential role in the management of the modern office or bureaucracy.³⁹ Nordvision documents were typed (in the case of statistics, drawn) on paper and copied for distribution. They were used to guide future work and eventually archived. Underlinings and comments in YLE's archived copies show that they were actively used and not just stored away. Developing the quality of these paper documents was a key concern as Nordvision sought to make its internal communication more effective. Here, two key types of documentation, reports from meetings and the weekly newsletter, are particularly illustrative.

The minutes of Nordvision meetings were traditionally comprehensive. In the 1960s they included, for instance, a detailed description about discussions concerning recent Nordvision programme exchange, with commentary about how individual programmes had been received by the public and the press in different countries as well as delegates' personal opinions about the programmes. The Dyfverman committee recommended that the extensive reports from Nordvision meetings be replaced by minutes limited to decisions and recommendations. The minutes should also be prepared during the meeting in question, so that they could be signed off before the delegates' departure.⁴⁰ The committee wanted to make the meeting reports more efficient by focusing on actions and ensuring their fast completion.

The quality of reports of group meetings remained an on-going concern for the main Nordvision meeting. In 1972, the Nordvision meeting stipulated that reports from group meetings should be concise, with a separate page for recommendations, and available within two weeks of the meeting.⁴¹ Still, the quality of the reports raised criticism. In 1973, for instance, the Nordvision meeting expressed satisfaction with the increased activity and “clear and informative reports” of the culture group, but complained that the entertainment group should give a fuller description of their meetings.⁴² The following year, the theatre group was asked to use “more concise phrasings”, and the news group was instructed to add a list of decisions and recommendations at the beginning of the meeting report.⁴³ As Guillory argues, informational writing can be seen as an “expression of control”.⁴⁴ Through instructions concerning meeting reports, the television leadership represented in Nordvision meetings sought control over the departmental heads represented in the group meetings. The instructions followed the stylistic norms of informational writing in modernity, which require concision and clarity, relying on the belief that brevity leads to clarity.⁴⁵ However, the desire for “fuller information” also expressed an anxiety that concise reports could lead to missing out important information and perhaps losing control.

The weekly newsletter was a new form of sharing information proposed by the Dyfverman committee. The committee felt that the current pace of planning hindered programme exchange particularly in departments such as culture, as many documentary programmes were tied to current events and suffered if programme exchange was delayed. The committee argued that “rich and timely information” about programme offerings on a weekly basis would activate the exchange of cultural programming and also improve the news departments’ opportunities to make use of current material.⁴⁶ As a schedule-based medium, broadcast television produced programmes for a specific moment in time.⁴⁷ Thus, Nordvision needed to figure out how to organize collaboration so that programmes could be exchanged in a timely manner.

The weekly newsletter was an attempt to solve this problem of timeliness. The newsletter was to include “definite offers” about four weeks before the programmes would be broadcast.⁴⁸ It had a set format, featuring information about programme offers for the week in question, Nordvision programmes broadcast the week before, Nordvision programmes about to be broadcast the following week, and new offers for the future. At the instigation of the Dyfverman committee, a Nordvision

secretariat (based at YLE for the first five-year period) was set up to coordinate co-operation, and the newly appointed Nordvision secretary was responsible for compiling the newsletter. The secretary emphasized that the letter could only fulfil its function if everyone followed the timeline conscientiously: information about offers had to be sent to the secretary via telex by Thursday noon. The secretary would then send copies of the letter via airmail to each company, where the local Eurovision office could distribute them on Monday morning.⁴⁹ Thus, the success of the newsletter depended on various media technologies such as the possibility to use telex and make paper copies and a fast and reliable postal service.

Not all departments were eager to adapt to the newsletter format, however. A Nordvision meeting in 1972 complained that the children and youth departments needed to finally add their offerings to the newsletter alongside everyone else.⁵⁰ The following year, the meeting again discussed the children and youth departments' "attitude" towards the newsletter and once more requested that the departments use it, appealing that this was the only way RÚV could be informed about programme offerings in time.⁵¹ The children and youth departments, in fact, collaborated very actively based on their shared "child-centred, democratic agenda" which envisioned children's television as a proponent of equality and emancipation.⁵² Indeed, the Dyfverman committee found that Nordvision collaboration within children and youth programming had been excellent.⁵³ It seems that the children and youth departments saw no need for a formalized newsletter, as they had already developed other ways of working together that suited them. Nordvision's attempts to rationalize its operations did not necessarily serve the needs of every programme department.

MEDIA FOR THE FAST EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

To achieve the efficient exchange of information necessary for television co-operation, Nordvision also worked with media other than paper documents. For instance, face-to-face meetings were complemented by telephone meetings. Nordvision had use of a four-way telephone connection, which enabled programme departments to hold teleconferences. The connection was not necessarily perfect, as illustrated by the Danish secretary's remark at the end of a telephone meeting: "It was very difficult to hear YLE."⁵⁴ Nevertheless, the telephone was useful for fast exchange of information. The news departments held daily telephone conferences to discuss which footage each broadcaster wanted to receive for their

evening news. Others, like the theatre departments, rarely conversed on the phone, only if there was an acute matter to discuss.⁵⁵ The telephone enabled the immediate communication necessary for the news exchange, whereas theatre departments, with their slower production schedule, had less use for the telephone.

Programme departments made use of the affordances of the telephone in different ways. The culture departments, which held a phone meeting every month, reflected that the meetings enabled the exchange of “fast information but at the same time participation is for practical reasons so limited that at times you do not have a chance to take a current project forward”. The children and youth departments, for their part, differentiated between the “official information” communicated through the Eurovision offices which handled programme traffic between the companies, and the exchange of “mutual information” characterized by “the lively telephone contact between the departments”.⁵⁶ The phone’s association with “mediated but intimate exchange”⁵⁷ shows in the children and youth departments’ way of differentiating between their lively telephone communication and “official information”.

At the end of the 1960s, an acute question for Nordvision was how to arrange opportunities to preview programmes in a timely manner. According to the Dyfverman committee’s historical narrative, Nordvision exchange consisted initially of live broadcasts, which meant that the “receiving countries opened their airtime to elements from neighbouring countries”. Any praise or criticism for Nordvision programmes was thus also directed at the sending country. With the possibility to tape programmes, the simultaneous transmission of programmes became less important and receiving broadcasters could increasingly choose which programmes they wanted to receive. This also meant that they had to take responsibility for any criticism Nordvision programmes received from the public. Moreover, whereas Nordvision exchange had offered a way of supplementing the limited domestic programme production in the early years of television, the situation was reversed by the end of the 1960s, when programme departments had “limited room in the television schedule and needed it for their own productions”.⁵⁸ Instead of scarcity of programmes, television producers now faced a scarcity of slots in the television schedule. For these reasons, the committee wanted to organize Nordvision co-operation in such a way that receiving broadcasters were able to select programmes that worked for them. Here, the ability to preview programmes was important.

Screenings were held at Nordvision meetings, and the theatre departments also arranged screenings in between meetings. In addition, programmes could be sent for previewing, but this did not function as well as could be hoped. In their comments to the Dyfverman committee, the entertainment group in particular complained that it took far too long to get programmes for previewing and stressed the need for a small tape format which would facilitate the circulation of viewing copies.⁵⁹ In its report, the committee noted that great difficulties in arranging opportunities for viewing programmes hindered smooth programme exchange. One possible solution was to preview programmes via the television network; this was the method used by the EBU for its screenings, but the use of the network was prohibitively expensive for Nordvision. Newly developed light videotape formats enabled the fast circulation of programmes, but the lack of shared standards had stood in the way. The committee was therefore pleased that the technical departments of the Nordic broadcasting companies had recently agreed to adopt the same videotape format, Ampex I-inch tape. The committee stressed that companies should not let “economic or other obstacles” stop them from acquiring the necessary technology, as the ease of circulating programmes would reduce the costs of screening Nordic programmes. Effective collaboration required technical standardization, but the unequal resources of the companies could slow this process—so far, DR planned to buy 15 Ampex players whereas YLE had budgeted only two.⁶⁰

TENSIONS BETWEEN BUREAUCRACY AND CREATIVE WORK

In developing Nordvision, one question was to what extent co-operation should be centrally coordinated. In a Nordvision meeting in Mariehamn in 1969, one participant argued that the goals of Nordvision needed to be discussed by programme makers in the spirit of workplace democracy, while some took the view that Nordvision co-operation should be directed from above, as producers did not value Nordic co-operation sufficiently.⁶¹ For their part, programme makers voiced concerns that Nordvision bureaucracy would hinder creative work. The same Mariehamn meeting heard a report from the culture group which criticized Nordvision’s attempt to come up with themed programming. The group “saw theme-based programmes as cumbersome”, complaining that the process of programme development “from proposal to acceptance by the NV [Nordvision] meeting” was “deathly for the inspiration of the producer”

and led to less topical programmes. The culture departments emphasized the importance of personal contacts, as illustrated by an SVT-TV2 employee whose job involved travelling, forming personal contacts and staying up to date with developments in other Nordic countries.⁶² For the culture departments, these kinds of personal contacts among television professionals were valuable, whereas the formal process of getting programme ideas accepted by Nordvision could stifle creative work.

The Dyfverman committee took the side of programme makers. It reflected that in meetings with programme groups it had encountered a fear of a “Nordvision superstructure and increased bureaucracy, which would work against the spontaneous participation you wish to see from producers and groups”. The committee’s conclusion that “Pan-Nordic directives have proved to be sensitive things” has been highlighted in the copy in the YLE archives.⁶³ The committee emphasized that Nordvision activities should primarily be initiated by programme departments, secondly by programme leadership and only in the last instance by Nordic organs. The committee recommended “avoiding formalizing intercourse more than absolutely necessary”.⁶⁴ Yet, the committee’s attempts to rationalize Nordvision’s operations could be in tension with creative television work. As we have seen, people working in programme production were not always eager to adapt to the working routines proposed by the Dyfverman committee.

Nordvision participants questioned what kind of information was actually useful for television production and programme exchange. Statistics were a key information genre for Nordvision. Produced first by DR’s Eurovision office and later by the Nordvision secretariat, statistics tracked the volume of Nordvision programme exchange and the proportion of each broadcaster’s participation. The Nordvision meeting followed the numbers closely, and a fall in the activity would be a cause for concern. The value of statistical information was also questioned, however. In an evaluation of departmental meeting practices in 1971, the theatre group reflected on the value of information for creating good television:

Meeting participants inform themselves in the broadest sense about each other’s problems in production, programme policy and other matters, which among other things leads to them being able to ... make better programmes about each other. The programme group sees this [activity], which naturally cannot be read from statistical figures, as perhaps the most important in further coupling the concept Nordic with the concept of quality.⁶⁵

The group called for the sharing of information not just about practicalities necessary for programme exchange and collaboration, but also about experiences and policies, arguing that this kind of information leads to better quality programmes. It emphasized that the benefits of sharing information are not visible in the statistics produced about Nordvision exchange. These views point to a tension between the formal way information about Nordvision collaboration was presented and programme makers' ideas about their work.

Concerns about the value of statistical information appeared even in formal Nordvision documents. The 1973 statistical report concluded with a section titled "General reflections" where the report's anonymous writer (perhaps Nils-Börje Storbom, who was the Nordvision secretary at the time) mused that the statistics do not really offer anything new: "We already know that NV exchange is growing in all NV countries". The author concluded with a set of open questions, such as: "why are NRK's and YLE's programmes the least popular in Norden?"; "why is music exchange declining despite music's international language?"; "why is the phrase force-feeding used in some NV contexts?" and "why are we afraid of Nordic public storms?" The author reflected that answers could be found in "programme politics, economy, technology or quality"—factors that statistics could not easily illustrate.⁶⁶ These reflections broke the impersonal tone expected from a statistical report to ask difficult questions about Nordvision co-operation.⁶⁷ The report's author suggested that statistical information about Nordvision exchange did not get you far in understanding the actual problems of Nordic co-operation. The burst of questions reflects a feeling that information was not enough.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed how institutions build Nordic networks by looking at how Nordvision developed its information infrastructure at the end of the 1960s and the early 1970s. Building a transnational network of television institutions required a complex information infrastructure consisting of face-to-face meetings, telexes, telephones, videotape and paper documents such as reports, statistics and newsletters. It also entailed engaging in debates about working practices, media technologies and what kind of information was useful for television work. A period of transition when Nordvision re-evaluated and refashioned its ways of working together brings to light challenges and ways of dealing with them. These

challenges rose in part from the *political* context, as public service broadcasting companies faced parliamentary pressure to show that they were capable of active Nordic co-operation. Nordvision had an ideological task to promote Nordic community, and one tension within Nordvision concerned how to articulate this task with participants' *professional* understanding of television, such as ideas concerning quality in television, the value of audience opinion, and the practices of creative work. The *medium-specific* qualities of television created their own challenges, as the pace of transnational co-operation could seem too slow to produce such topical programmes as were expected of television. *Institutionally*, tensions also arose between the wish to direct Nordic co-operation from above and programme departments' desire for autonomy. Moreover, *technological* changes required Nordvision to reconsider its working practices, as taped programmes replaced live transmissions as the most important form of programme exchange, requiring a faster exchange of information and new possibilities for previewing programmes. The story of how Nordvision developed its operations at the turn of the 1960s and 1970s sheds light on the "taken-for-granted practices of the analogue media era", which as Nick Hall and John Ellis note, is fast receding from memory.⁶⁸ These practices built the foundation for institutional Nordic co-operation in television, which remains active in the digital era.

NOTES

1. I would like to thank Susanna Paasonen, Laura Saarenmaa, Peter Stadius and the editors of this volume for comments and support.
2. "Nordvisionen i framtiden", appendix to: Sveriges Radio, "Nordvisionsmötet i Sundsvall den 24–26 februari 1969", Ref. 2360, The Oy Yleisradio Ab Archive, Central Archives for Finnish Business Records, henceforth YLE:ELKA.
3. "Rapport och förslag ifråga om Nordvisionsutbytes samarbetsformer februari 1970", Ref. 2360, YLE:ELKA. The committee members were Henrik Dyfverman (SR), Jan Frydenlund (NRK), Bendix Madsen (DR) and Lars-Peter Ringbom (YLE).
4. Cait McKinney, *Information Activism: A Queer History of Lesbian Media Technologies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2020), 7–8.
5. Alexander Badenoch and Andreas Fickers, "Europe Materializing? Toward a Transnational History of European Infrastructures", *Materializing Europe: Transnational Infrastructures and the Project of Europe*, eds. Alexander Badenoch and Andreas Fickers (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan 2010), 10.

6. Jonas Harvard and Peter Stadius, "A Communicative Perspective on the Formation of the North: Contexts, Channels and Concepts", *Communicating the North: Media Structures and Images in the Making of the Nordic Region*, eds. Jonas Harvard and Peter Stadius, 3rd ed. (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 1.
7. To clarify, when I call Nordvision a network, I mean that it was an organ within which Nordic broadcasting institutions maintained relationships and worked together, not a television network like CBS or NBC, for instance. Through Nordvision programme exchange, television companies could broadcast live or taped programmes from other Nordic countries on their national channels, largely free of charge to the receiving broadcaster.
8. For example, Nick Hall and John Ellis, eds., *Hands on Media History: A New Methodology in the Humanities and Social Sciences* (Oxon: Routledge, 2020); Andreas Fickers and Anne-Katrin Weber, "Towards an Archaeology of Television", *VIEW: Journal of European Television History and Culture*, vol. 4, no. 2 (2015), 1–6.
9. Cf. Badenoch and Fickers, "Europe Materializing?", 4.
10. McKinney, *Information Activism*, 9, 10.
11. John Guillory, "The Memo and Modernity", *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 31, no. 1 (2004), 108–132.
12. The collection is stored at the Central Archives for Finnish Business Records (ELKA).
13. Ulf Jonas Björk, "Nordvision on Swedish Television: The Rise and Decline of a Regional Programme exchange", *Scandinavian Studies*, vol. 70, no. 3 (1998), 325–336.
14. On the subject of the active Nordvision collaboration in children and youth television in the 1960s and 1970s, see Helle Strandgaard Jensen, "Scandinavian Children's Television in the 1970s: An Institutionalisation of '68'?", *Strenæ: Recherches sur les livres et objets culturels de l'enfance*, no. 13 (2018).
15. Nordvision, *Annual Report 2020–2021*, <https://2020eng.nordvision.org/> (accessed 28 January 2021).
16. Henrik Hartmann, "Nordvision: The Power of Sharing: The TV and Media Partnership", *Public Service Media from a Nordic Horizon: Politics, Markets, Programming and Users*, ed. Ulla Carlsson (Gothenburg: Nordicom, 2013), 107–108.
17. Cathrin Bengesser and Kim Toft Hansen, "Scandinavian Success as European Policy Dilemma: An Evaluation of Creative Europe's Funding for High-end Television Co-productions", paper presented at NordMedia Conference, 18–21 August 2021.
18. "Nordvisionen i framtiden".
19. See Hemstad in this volume.

20. "Ur protokollet från radiochefsmötet i Köpenhamn 7–8/11 1969", appendix I to "Rapport och förslag", 1970.
21. Danmarks Radio, "Nordvisionsmøde i Vedbæk 23–25 maj 1966", Ref. 2360, YLE:ELKA.
22. "Nordvisionen i framtiden".
23. "Rapport och förslag".
24. "Nordvisionen i framtiden".
25. For example, Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, 2nd edition (New York: Signet Books, 1964).
26. "Rapport och förslag".
27. "Nordvisionen i framtiden".
28. "Rapport och förslag".
29. "Nordvisionen i framtiden".
30. Sveriges Radio, "Nordvisionsmötet i Sundsvall den 24–26 februari 1969", Ref. 2360, YLE:ELKA.
31. "Nordvisionen i framtiden".
32. Ville Zilliacus, *Pohjoisvisio 20 vuotta* (Helsinki: YLE, 1979), 16. Zilliacus participated in establishing and developing Nordvision as YLE's director of television programming (1957–1969) and director of foreign service (1970–1979).
33. Zilliacus, *Pohjoisvisio 20 vuotta*, 16.
34. Zilliacus, *Pohjoisvisio 20 vuotta*, 3.
35. Zilliacus, *Pohjoisvisio 20 vuotta*, 15.
36. Zilliacus *Pohjoisvisio 20 vuotta*; "Rapport och förslag".
37. Yleisradio, "Dagordning", Ref. 2360, YLE:ELKA.
38. "Rapport och förslag".
39. Guillory, "The Memo and Modernity", 113–114. For document as a genre, see also Lisa Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014).
40. "Rapport och förslag".
41. Ríkisútvarpið, "Referat frá Nodvisionsmötet i Laugarvatn 15–16 juni 1972", Ref. 2360, YLE:ELKA.
42. NV-sekretariatet, "Referat från Nordvisionsmötet i Fredriksdal 29–30 november 1973", Ref. 2360, YLE:ELKA.
43. Yleisradio, "Referat från Nordvisionsmötet i Tammerfors den 5–6 juni 1974", Ref. 2360, YLE:ELKA.
44. Guillory, "The Memo and Modernity", 121.
45. Guillory, "The Memo and Modernity", 122–126.
46. "Rapport och förslag".
47. For example, Paddy Scannell, *Radio, Television and Modern Life* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996).
48. "Rapport och förslag".

49. N.-B. Storbom, "Nordvisionens veckobrev", 2 December 1970, Ref. 2360, YLE:ELKA.
50. "Referat från Nordvisionsmötet i Laugarvatn 15–16 juni 1972".
51. Sveriges Radio, "Nordvisionsmötet i Visby 14–15 juni 1973", Ref. 2360, YLE:ELKA.
52. Jensen, "Scandinavian Children's Television in the 1970s", 24.
53. "Rapport och förslag".
54. "Telefonmötet förud för Stockholms-mötet", Ref. 2360, YLE:ELKA.
55. "Programgruppernas arbetsformer", appendix 2 to "Rapport och förslag", 1970.
56. "Programgruppernas arbetsformer".
57. McKinney, *Information Activism*, 83.
58. "Rapport och förslag".
59. "Programgruppernas arbetsformer".
60. "Rapport och förslag".
61. Yleisradio, "Nordvisionsmötet i Mariehamn 6–8 oktober 1969", Ref. 2360, YLE:ELKA.
62. "Nordvisionsmötet i Mariehamn 6–8 oktober 1969".
63. "Rapport och förslag".
64. "Rapport och förslag".
65. "Referat från Nordvisionsmötet i Imatra 18–19 november 1971. Bilaga 2. Utvärdering av NV-mötesverksamheten", Ref. 2360, YLE:ELKA.
66. "NV-verksamheten sedd ur statistiska synvinklar", appendix 1 to: Yleisradio, "Referat från Nordvisionsmötet i Tammerfors den 5–6 Juni 1974", Ref. 2360, YLE:ELKA.
67. Cf. Guillory, "The Memo and Modernity", 114.
68. Nick Hall and John Ellis, "Introduction: What Is Hands on Media History?", *Hands on Media History: A New Methodology in the Humanities and Social Sciences*, eds. Nick Hall and John Ellis (Oxon: Routledge, 2020), 4.

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Mobilizing Scandinavian Children and Youth for the Environment: Launching a Transnational Campaign 1968–1971

Björn Lundberg and David Larsson Heidenblad

In April 1969, Swedish chemist and environmental advocate Hans Palmstierna travelled to Oslo with Seved Apelqvist, CEO of the cooperative insurance company Folksam, and Anders Ericsson, secretary of the company's Youth Council, to help launch a Norwegian edition of the Folksam environmental campaign *Front mot miljöförstöringen* (FMM, “Front against environmental degradation”). On April 17, Palmstierna appeared on primetime television in Norway, discussing environmental degradation with Prime Minister Per Borten and other guests.¹ Four days later Palmstierna, Apelqvist and Ericsson participated in an “information conference” in Oslo. The event was organized by the Norwegian cooperative insurance company Samvirke, with support from Landsorganisasjonen (Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions) and other labour union organizations. The Norwegian name of the campaign was presented as *Vern om naturmiljøet* (VNM, “Protect the Environment”) and

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Palmstierna's message to the audience was that humanity must not allow itself to be governed by short-term profits.²

In this chapter, we explore the early transnational effort to bring attention to environmental issues in the Nordic countries and the various media involved in the campaigns. The campaigns in Sweden (1968–1970) and Norway (1969–1971) coincided with “the environmental turn” in Scandinavia and were among the first resolute attempts to organize nationwide environmental campaigns based on popular support, but have been largely overlooked in the historiography of modern environmentalism.³ One of the reasons may be the fact that the campaigns did not originate in the green counterculture movement that has played a dominant role in the historiography of environmental action. As evident from the list of organizations involved in the planning and execution of these campaigns, they were organized and financially supported by corporations with strong ties to the labour movement and Nordic Social Democracy.⁴ This connection between nascent environmentalism and the architects and executors of the post-war Nordic welfare states undoubtedly set the campaigns apart from many other contemporary attempts to organize green grassroots movements. Here, elements of counterculture and political radicalism were all but non-existent.⁵ This in turn raises questions about the role of environmental issues in the history of the Nordic welfare states.

It is often said that environmental problems do not care about national borders, but previous research in the field of environmental history has emphasized that during the first half of the twentieth century, problems with pollutants and toxins in nature were perceived primarily as local problems with local solutions. One of the decisive changes during the so-called ecological turn around 1970 was the recognition of environmental problems as global threats. This shift in perspective also called for new transnational arrangements to address environmental degradation.⁶ As the Oslo conference suggests, the Swedish-Norwegian attempts to establish environmental campaigns provide examples of such transnational communicative activities and information exchange in the post-war Nordic region.⁷ In doing so, it built on existing practices of engaging children and youth in international issues across the borders of the Nordic countries. For several decades, transnational networks of cooperation in the region had been used to promote issues such as peace and humanitarianism.⁸ Now, environment degradation called for action.

As well as the geographic scale, the organizational temporalities underlying the planning, scope and outcome of these campaigns were also

important. The aspirations of these campaigns reached beyond short-lived media attention. From initial launch to finale, each campaign lasted two years and involved carefully crafted strategies for turning information into political impact. Moreover, by actively engaging with children and youth as symbolic ambassadors of future generations and stakeholders in environmental politics, the temporal orientation of the organizers was imagined in terms of generations rather than ephemeral impact.

These campaigns were also characterized by the multitude of media employed in collecting and distributing information as well as making information “active” in terms of inspiring political action. The importance of activating citizens in political or social affairs beyond mere attention-making has been discussed as principally important since antiquity and gained further relevance in twentieth-century democracies. Following Nick Couldry, Sonia Livingstone and Tim Markham, we will explore the relationship between media and civic engagement as a form of public connection that included attention and action on local, national and international scales of interaction.⁹ It is worth noting that we use the term “media” for a wide range of communicative tools used for transmission, storage and processing of information. Aside from print and broadcast media, we include communicative settings such as physical meetings, understood as “cultural techniques” of communication.¹⁰ The purpose is to explore the mediation and transnational entanglements of these early environmental campaigns, with special attention given to the various media involved and how these media “formatted” the content of the campaigns. What media and organizational strategies were used to create civic engagement with environmental issues, especially among children and youth? What role did attention and activation play in attempts to bring about political reform? How did the organizers address different geographic scales of environmental issues in local, national and transnational frameworks?

By addressing these issues, we will also contribute to the understanding of campaigns as a media format in 1960s’ Scandinavia. A year before the FMM campaign started, Sweden switched from driving on the left-hand side of the road to the right on 3 September 1967. As Fredrik Norén has shown in his evaluation of the massive information campaign that preceded the implementation, it involved the use of numerous media by a range of government agencies and no fewer than 250 NGOs.¹¹ One of these NGOs was Folksam’s Youth Council.

The traffic campaign and the FMM campaign both sought to convey information that would generate change. Since the relationship between *knowledge* of environmental degradation and environmental *action* was crucial to the campaign-makers, and still defines contemporary environmental discourse, we will discuss how these campaigns used various media for the purposes of attention, organization and activation of the public.

BRINGING ATTENTION TO ENVIRONMENTALISM

The FMM-VNM campaign originated in Sweden. In October 1967, Hans Palmstierna published the paperback book *Plundring, svält, förgiftning* (“Looting, Starvation, Poisoning”), which became one of the seminal contributions to Swedish public discourse on environmentalism.¹² Palmstierna was trained as a chemist, regularly appeared in the newspaper *Dagens Nyheter*, and was a committed Social Democrat. In his book, Palmstierna used his scientific expertise to show how man’s relationship with nature had transformed from mutual dependence to ruthless exploitation. The planet’s natural resources were quickly depleting while toxins and waste filled air, land and sea.¹³

Paperbacks were a new medium for public intellectual debate in 1960s’ Sweden.¹⁴ The success of Palmstierna’s book illustrates how environmental issues captured public attention in Sweden at this time and illustrates that the medium itself proved a successful starting point for transmedial circulation. In the following months, Palmstierna discussed his book on Swedish television, and his alarming propositions were brought up in the major newspapers.¹⁵ These media all contributed to the spread of information about environmental issues, capturing public attention in the fall of 1967.¹⁶ While Palmstierna was clearly content with this media impact and public connection, he was also concerned with what mere attention could not do. The book had increased awareness about environmental issues, but it did not provide an arena for social organization or political action. The relationship between information (or knowledge) and action—or rather lack of action—took centre stage in the 1967 environmental debate, and Palmstierna became personally involved in this issue. His next ambition was to organize a new popular environmental movement.¹⁷

Establishing a social movement would require a far greater effort than Palmstierna could muster on his own, but an opportunity presented itself through his contacts with the insurance company Folksam. After reading Palmstierna’s book, Anders Ericsson, secretary of the company’s Youth

Council, became committed to raising awareness of environmental issues in Sweden. In December 1967, Folksam's Youth Council began planning a nationwide campaign, which would involve Palmstierna personally, as he was given the task of preparing material that could be used to reach new audiences. The content of his book was now adapted for a younger audience by the use of other media and materials.

FROM ATTENTION TO ORGANIZATION

The aim of the Swedish FMM campaign was to "create broad and informed public opinion" which in turn would "influence public officials, corporations and industry to take action and make decisions without delay, eliminating further environmental degradation".¹⁸ Attention, fuelled by Palmstierna's book, can be understood as a prerequisite for what the campaign-makers regarded as the objective of the campaign: informed public opinion. But the campaign also demanded organization and circulation of knowledge in formats that could more easily ignite civic engagement. Therefore, the campaign was organized in two main phases. The first was carried out in 1968 and sought to involve children and youth by gathering information about local environmental problems. In the second phase, carried out in 1969, the newly found knowledge and commitment of young people would be used and harnessed in a series of public hearings. In other words, the two stages of the campaign aimed to transform the young generation from recipients of information to socially engaged environmental activists using a specific set of media-related strategies. These efforts to strengthen public connection using two-way communication tie in with contemporary debates on public information and civic participation. For example, a 1969 report by the Commission on Public Information, appointed by the Swedish government, stirred a debate on the capacity for citizens to interact with authorities, fuelling criticism of top-down, one-way-oriented public information.¹⁹

In the first phase, the organizers identified in-person meetings as a suitable technique for organizing the campaign nationwide. During these months, information meetings were held across the country, attended by local representatives from youth organizations and representatives of schools and municipalities. Anders Ericsson led this tour and reported that interest exceeded all previous campaigns by the Youth Council.²⁰

After months of planning and initiation, the next phase of the campaign was fully launched in the autumn of 1968. It included a special filmstrip

with the title *Plundring—förgiftning* [“Looting—Poisoning”], which primarily took aim at children and young teenagers. In the title, the three keywords in Palmstierna’s book title (looting, starvation, poisoning) were reduced to two. This reflected the fact that in this context, the focus was not on global population and nutrition issues (starvation), but instead on environmental issues with local scalability. To target youth in secondary education, workshops based on Palmstierna’s book were planned, and Palmstierna produced a specific study guide for this purpose.²¹

The campaign-makers also sought to encourage civic participation and interactivity by means of competition. In order to “achieve the greatest possible activity and the best possible results”, the campaign arranged a national contest, where the best entries would receive prizes totalling SEK 20,000 (equating to USD 20,000–30,000 in 2022, adjusted for inflation).²² The object of the contest was to produce a municipal “environmental inventory”. The instructions reveal that mediation was considered just as important as the information itself, since the contestants had to choose a suitable medium for their product: “The groups can make a poster, fact sheets, an essay or a filmstrip, a photo exhibition or whatever you have the resources for and an interest in”²³ Ultimately, the task was to translate knowledge into political action, and for this purpose the organizers were mindful of how knowledge was formatted, encouraging a multi-medial approach.²⁴ The target group of the nationwide competition was said to be youth organizations and secondary schools, but the material provided by the campaign was deemed suitable for younger children as well.²⁵ The package provided by Folksam included worksheets and instructions for study groups. In addition, participants could borrow the aforementioned filmstrip from their local Folksam office.²⁶

The list of prize winners testifies to broad interest and geographical impact.²⁷ Among the winners was a group of first-year students at Majorna secondary school (*gymnasium*) in Gothenburg, who had gathered data and produced an audio tape for use in public education: “We asked the company leaders about working conditions and environmental degradation, but at first they did not agree that the conditions were unsatisfactory. We pressed them harder and it turned out that almost everyone was aware of the problems”, said one student.²⁸ Another competition winner was a filmstrip about environmental degradation in Borlänge and Stora Tuna. A primary school in Örnköldsvik was praised for a “fact-packed and richly illustrated” environmental inventory.²⁹

The competition format testifies to the congenial structure of the campaign. The intention of the organizers was for the information compiled as part of the youth competition to also form the basis for the public hearings that were to be arranged during the following year. Thus, the organizers of the hearings would gain updated information that highlighted municipal problems, for which local politicians were accountable. Children and youth were thus activated in these campaigns, and their efforts were (at least in theory) to become practically useful in the link between information and action on environmental problems. In other words, children and youth were mobilized as *knowledge actors*, gathering and mediating information on local environmental problems and organizing them within a nationwide campaign.³⁰

FROM ORGANIZATION TO ACTION

On the evening of 19 February 1969, the first public hearing of the FMM campaign was held in Norrköping. With more than 800 people in the crowd, members of the youth organization of the trade unions' regional committee were put in charge of the public interrogation, in front of an all-male panel with representatives from local businesses and public administration.³¹ For three hours, they responded to questions about environmental degradation posed by the young interrogators and members of the audience.³²

The event marked the beginning of the second phase of the FMM campaign. During the first six months of 1969, twenty hearings of this kind were held across the country, with an average attendance of 500 people. In early January 1970, the campaign ended with a high-profile "environmental parliament" in Stockholm. By then, the impact had exceeded the expectations of the Folksam directors: 10,000 people had participated in hearings, and according to the company's periodical *Folksam*, "hundreds of thousands of young people" had studied the educational material of the campaign in schools and civic society organizations, or attended local campaign meetings. The publication reported:

Young people from schools, youth organizations and study circles, well prepared through book and field studies, have asked politicians, business leaders, authorities and experts about the environmental situation, especially in their own municipality, and how they intend to cope with our future.³³

After gaining attention through books, newspapers, and radio and television appearances, Palmstierna and Folksam had employed other media such as meetings and printed campaign material to involve children and youths in gathering information and producing knowledge about local environmental problems. Now, the time was ripe to transform these efforts into political action. The primary media technique employed for this purpose in the Folksam campaign was the public hearing, which illustrates that the media formats of the campaign relied heavily on a democratic repertoire that accentuated parliamentary reform rather than extra-parliamentary activism. This does not imply, however, that the use of hearings was well established within the democratic tradition of the Swedish social movements. Instead, the use of the English word “hearing” illustrates that this was considered a fairly new medium in Sweden and the organizers explicitly stated that they were inspired by US congressional hearings.³⁴ The major difference was that Folksam put young people in charge of interrogations. This reflected one of the ever-recurring ideas of environmental commitment: that children and young people, as members of the “next generation”, represent the future of the planet. One of the campaign’s information texts explained: “It is the youth who will take over the already severely devastated legacy. It is therefore also natural that young people are involved and form a front against environmental degradation”.³⁵

In early January 1970, a year designated as the European Year of Nature Conservation, the FMM campaign entered its final phase. On 2–4 January 1970, about 200 participants invited by Folksam’s Youth Council gathered for an “environmental parliament” in Stockholm. The participants included politicians, state and municipal officials and representatives of environmental organizations, representatives of youth organizations, and the winners of the 1968 competition. According to Folksam’s periodical, speeches by scientists and politicians were followed by a six-hour (!) hearing with a “quite heated” debate.³⁶

The environmental parliament marked the finale of a campaign that had begun two years earlier. In all stages of this campaign, Folksam and its Youth Council had targeted young people. Using custom-made educational material, the campaign had sought to educate the younger generation by bringing the facts from Palmstierna’s book to an audience that hopefully would turn words into deeds. The campaign did not merely aspire to enlighten public opinion. Instead, it was organized in two stages that would inspire action: from registering municipal environmental

hazards to raising demands for new legislation. Action, as envisioned by the organizers, did not centre on extra-parliamentary protests or civil disobedience. Rather, it aspired to be constrained, disciplined and firmly based on knowledge.³⁷ There was, among the leaders of the campaign, an optimistic view of how technology and political decision-making could solve the environmental problems that were generated by an industrial society.

CAMPAIGN EXPORT

By the time the Swedish edition of the FMM campaign ended in January 1970, the campaign had already spread beyond the borders of Sweden, with organizations in Norway and Denmark showing interest in the campaign format. In the following section, we will discuss the transnational scope of the campaign by analysing the Norwegian adaptation of the FMM campaign. During the spring of 1969, when Hans Palmstierna and Anders Ericsson were busy arranging public hearings in Sweden, they also made detours to Oslo and Copenhagen with the intent of establishing Norwegian and Danish editions of the campaign. The fact that they were accompanied by Folksam CEO Seved Apelqvist illustrates the importance given to the campaign and its transnational potential within Folksam. By then, Norwegian and Danish editions of Palmstierna's book had been published, making Palmstierna a public figure across Scandinavia.

As mentioned, the backers of the Norwegian VNM campaign included not only the insurance company Samvirke, but also LO, the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions. This arrangement offered financial and organizational strength as well as potential media impact through the various periodicals distributed by the unions.³⁸ However, when trade unions backed a campaign that took aim at industrial pollution, it also caused potential political controversy. In an interview published in the journal of the Norwegian Union of Iron and Metalworkers, campaign director Olav Carlsen was asked whether a campaign that placed Norwegian industry "in the line of fire" in fact posed an attack on the members' employers. Unsurprisingly, Carlsen denied this, stating instead that the campaign did not target companies but "laziness, inertia and habitual thinking, especially among responsible authorities".³⁹

In another interview, Olav Carlsen explained that the campaign was planned to involve young people, but also different sectors of society.⁴⁰ When compared to the Swedish FMM campaign, the Norwegian iteration

did not target children and youths exclusively.⁴¹ What is further worth noting is that the liberal newspaper *Dagbladet* had enthusiastically called for a Norwegian version of the Folksam campaign in mid-March 1969, that is before Palmstierna's Oslo visit, asking its readership to suggest organizations that could take the lead in Norway.⁴² This was not appreciated by Carlsen, who was already planning a Norwegian campaign with backing from labour movement and cooperative organizations. He told *Arbeiderbladet*: "Our campaign is far greater and will involve more organizations than the Swedish campaign".⁴³

Not everyone was content with the organization of the Norwegian campaign. On 1 April, the chairman and vice-chairman of Natur og Ungdom, the youth organization of the Norwegian Nature Conservation Association, called it "deeply regrettable" that the campaign would be dominated by the Social Democratic Party Arbeiderpartiet (although it should be noted that the party itself was not formally part of the campaign). Natur og Ungdom welcomed an environmental initiative but had apparently planned their own nationwide campaign for more than a month. They expressed interest in cooperation but stated: "The campaign should neither be un-political, nor party-political".⁴⁴

The VNM campaign formally began in September. Like the Swedish FMM campaign, it was organized in two stages. First, it offered educational opportunities for study circles, organized by the educational association of the Norwegian labour movement, AOF, discussing Palmstierna's book.⁴⁵ In the next stage of the campaign, these groups were to make practical use of newly acquired knowledge by actively identifying local environmental problems. These would, in turn, be addressed by nature conservation organizations. At the same time, those responsible for the campaign emphasized that the problems could not be seen as purely local. In the Norwegian context, the threat to the world's oceans was highlighted, including fears that life in the oceans was endangered.⁴⁶ Further, one of the campaign's district organizers stressed in an interview with *Fri fagbevegelse* that the global nature of pollution made trade unions especially apt to address environmental issues, since they had extensive international networks.⁴⁷

Within a month, Norwegian newspapers reported that several hundred meetings had been held around the country. "It is evident that broad opinion is already strongly concerned about these problems", Norwegian campaign manager Olav Carlsen told the newspaper *Moss Dagblad* in late October. Schools and adult education groups had begun working with the

problems locally. According to Carlsen, the organizers of the campaign even had difficulty finding enough qualified speakers to meet demand across the country. This, however, also revealed a shortcoming of in-person meetings as a medium for organizing the campaign, as the availability of knowledgeable actors limited potential outreach.⁴⁸ On the other hand, a multitude of media were employed in this phase of the campaign. The material provided to study groups included filmstrips and audio tapes, workbooks and material for interviews, and posters. Evidently, the campaign organizers sought to utilize different media to achieve active participation in ways that were similar to its Swedish forerunner.⁴⁹ Like its Swedish predecessor, the main purpose of the VNM campaign was stated to be the creation of well-informed public opinion, but also to direct this public opinion into action and put pressure on decision-makers in politics and industry.

In the autumn of 1969, Anders Ericsson from the Folksam Youth Council and Lennart Danielsson from the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency joined Olav Carlsen at a number of start-up meetings across Norway. Ericsson and Danielsson were quoted as saying:

There are probably no other countries that have initiated actions of the type we have had in Sweden. However, many people in many countries are concerned about the issues. [...] The special thing about the Swedish campaign is that we go out to the broad masses with scientific knowledge. In other countries, it is mainly scientists who work on the issues in isolation.⁵⁰

Knowledge was thus considered crucial for stirring public opinion and enabling political action. The purpose was to democratize knowledge, but obviously also to create leverage for policy-making.

In June 1970, those responsible for the campaign announced that 1800 working groups had been formed. At this time, the newspaper *Arbeiderbladet* also reported that a group of students at Lunde school (grades 7–9) had encountered problems when they wanted to document environmental impact at the company Union Bruk in Skien. The company management had apparently declined to answer the students' questions. Otherwise, most companies had welcomed the campaign, the Social Democratic newspaper reported.⁵¹

Like the Swedish FMM campaign, the Norwegian campaign ended with a conference, on 3 January 1971. Among the speakers were Edvard Hambro, president of the United Nations General Assembly. The 150 participants also included the winners of the campaign's prize competition

and representatives from participating organizations. According to information given to the newspaper *Arbeiderbladet*, 200,000 people had participated in the campaign “in one way or another”.⁵² Olav Carlsen said that he was particularly pleased that the campaign material had become part of the national school curriculum in Norway.⁵³

The Norwegian campaign also resonated abroad. Before the finalization of the campaign in 1971, Carlsen travelled to London with hopes of launching the campaign in the United Kingdom. However, after the Social Democratic Party won the Norwegian election that year, Carlsen would land a new job as state secretary in a new ministry of environmental protection.⁵⁴ Instead, the international connections of the trade unions became important for Norwegian attempts to inspire new environmental campaigns abroad. In 1971, the LO journal *Fri fagbevegelse* reported that trade unions in Austria, Singapore, Australia, Japan and the United States had begun addressing environmental issues in advance of the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the Environment, and that the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) had taken an interest in the Norwegian VNM campaign:

Without exaggeration, it can be said that the Norwegian trade unions have come further than other countries in this fight. The international trade union organizations have shown growing interest in what the LO campaign ‘Vern om Naturmiljøet’ has accomplished ICFTU has shown particular interest in the Norwegian model, and its environmental committee has already looked more closely at it.⁵⁵

When the United Nations arranged its first international conference on the environment in Stockholm the following year, Sweden and Norway could, in somewhat different ways, claim to be at the forefront of environmental action—at least among insurance companies and trade unions. This was in line with a self-image of Scandinavia as progressive and distinctly modern, and the solutions to environmental problems were consistently discussed in terms of scientific progress, investments and education.

CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

In this chapter, we set out to discuss the environmental turn in Scandinavia from the perspective of media history. We have analysed the wide array of media techniques employed in these campaigns to gain attention and

activate the public in terms of civic engagement. The formation and circulation of knowledge on environmental degradation were central elements in the execution of the campaign in a structure that ultimately sought to transform knowledge of these problems into political action. As shown in this chapter, the campaigns used different media for different purposes. Although there were certain overlaps, the organizational and activating efforts of the campaign relied heavily on in-person meetings, public hearings and parliamentary simulation, while the efforts to gain attention made use of mass media such as newspapers, books and radio.

The FMM campaign in Sweden shares certain characteristics with the information campaign that preceded the change to right-hand traffic in 1967. For example, both campaigns mobilized resources by involving a broad range of civil society organizations as well as schools.⁵⁶ While the traffic campaign made use of expertise from social and cognitive science to influence public opinion and maximize its impact, the environmental campaigns were not primarily directed at the attitudes or behaviours of citizens. Instead, attention and organization of public opinion were used as means to achieve political reform. In both cases, however, the temporal organization of these campaigns reveals the perseverance and careful planning of the campaigns, which lasted for a long period of time—approximately two years—and took into account how various media could transform information into awareness and action. By actively seeking to mobilize children and youth against environmental degradation, the temporal orientation of the campaigns took aim at the long-term perspective: to gain the support of “future generations” and prepare them for what would today perhaps be described as active “ecological citizenship”.⁵⁷

Whether or not these campaigns succeeded in their mission is open to debate, especially if we narrow our viewpoint to the organizations and companies involved. Palmstierna’s ambition to ignite a new popular movement modelled on earlier people’s movements in the Scandinavian tradition did not materialize, but the pathways to challenge industrial pollution on a municipal and national level arguably widened.

Finally, the environmental campaigns are testaments to the transnational exchanges and integration of the Nordic welfare states during these years. Both Hans Palmstierna and Olav Carlsen were members of the Social Democratic Party in Sweden and Norway respectively, and several others were public officials or leaders in the cooperative/labour movement. When the Swedish campaign was launched in 1968, the Social Democrats had been holding power for more than three decades and

gained more than 50 per cent of the public vote in the parliamentary elections that year.⁵⁸ Norway, on the other hand, was governed by a centre-right coalition. Instead, cooperation regarding these campaigns took place in civil society with support mobilized by companies and NGOs.

Earlier research has shown how environmental issues, owing to the transnational nature of pollution, became a crucial area for Nordic cooperation.⁵⁹ Formal networks among the organizations of the labour movement in Scandinavia facilitated international cooperation, including youth conferences, educational efforts and meetings of the Nordic cooperative insurance companies.⁶⁰ Again, the *scalability* of environmental issues between local, municipal problems and transnational or global challenges enabled activists to “think both globally and locally”, but also required environmentalists to use or develop organizational structures that facilitated international cooperation. The transnational networks of Nordic cooperation, as well as the vision and self-image of a distinct Swedish, Norwegian or Nordic Model, could readily be employed to promote the notion of a region at the forefront of environmental awareness, not least when measures to reduce pollution were framed in narratives of industrial progress and modernity.

NOTES

1. *Haugesunds avis*, 17 April 1969, 6.
2. *Glämdalen*, 22 April 1969, 1.
3. David Larsson Heidenblad, *Den gröna vändningen: En ny kunskaps historia om miljöfrågornas genombrott under efterkrigstiden* (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2021).
4. It should be noted that the Social Democratic Party in Norway (Arbeiderpartiet) was less dominant during these decades than its Swedish counterpart. From 1965 to 1971, Norway was governed by a centre-right coalition led by Per Borten of the Centre Party.
5. Andrew Jamison, Ron Eyerman and Jacqueline Cramer, *The Making of the New Environmental Consciousness: A Comparative Study of the Environmental Movements in Sweden, Denmark and the Netherlands* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1990); Andrew G. Kirk, *Counterculture Green: The Whole Earth Catalog and American Environmentalism* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2007); Frank S. Zelko, *Make it a Green Peace! The Rise of Countercultural Environmentalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); Hallvard Notaker, “Staging Discord: Nordic Corporatism in the European Conservation Year 1970”, *Contemporary European History*,

- vol. 29, no. 3 (2020), 309–24; Larsson Heidenblad, *Den gröna vändningen*; John McCormick, *The Global Environmental Movement: Reclaiming Paradise* (London: Belhaven Press, 1989).
6. Jan Thelander and Lars J. Lundgren, *Nedräkning pågår: Hur upptäcks miljöproblemet? Vad händer sen?* (Solna: Statens naturvårdsverk, 1989); Paul Warde, Libby Robin and Sverker Sörlin, *The Environment: A History of the Idea* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2018); Perrin Selcer, *The Postwar Origins of the Global Environment: How the United Nations built Spaceship Earth* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018).
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 8. See for example: Björn Lundberg, “Localized Internationalism: Camping across Borders in the Early Swedish Boy Scout Movement,” *Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth*, vol. 15, no. 1 (2022); Ingela Nilsson, *Nationalism i fredens tjänst: Svenska skolornas fredsförening, fredsföstran och historieundervisning 1919–1939* (Umeå: Umeå universitet, 2015), 167–173.
 9. Nick Couldry, Sonia M. Livingstone and Tim Markham, *Media Consumption and Public Engagement: Beyond the Presumption of Attention* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).
 10. Bernhard Siegert, “Cultural Techniques: Or the End of the Intellectual Postwar Era in German Media Theory”, *Theory, Culture & Society*, vol. 30, no. 6 (2013), 48–65.
 11. Fredrik Norén, “Dagen H: När samhällsinformation inte skildes från propaganda”, *Efterkrigstidens samhällskontakter*, eds. Emil Stjernholm and Fredrik Norén (Lund: Mediehistoria, Lunds universitet, 2019).
 12. David Larsson Heidenblad, “Mapping a New History of the Ecological Turn: The Circulation of Environmental Knowledge in Sweden 1967”, *Environment and History*, vol. 24, no. 2 (2018), 265–84.
 13. Hans Palmstierna, *Plundring, svält, förgiftning* (Stockholm: Rabén & Sjögren, 1967).
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15. Sven Fagerberg, “Från kunskap till handling”, *Dagens Nyheter*, 3 December 1967; Larsson Heidenblad, *Den gröna vändningen*, 35–36.
 16. Larsson Heidenblad, *Den gröna vändningen*, 118; Lennart J. Lundqvist, “Hans A K Palmstierna”, *Svenskt biografiskt lexikon*, <https://sok.rik-sarkivet.se/sbl/artikel/8022> (accessed 22 February 2022).
 17. Hans Palmstierna, “Insikt, kunskap, handling”, *Dagens Nyheter*, 29 December 1967.
 18. “Front mot miljöförstörelsen i ny ungdomsgiv”, *Folksam*, no. 1 (1968), 18.
 19. Fredrik Norén, “Deliberation or Manipulation? The Issue of Governmental Information in Sweden, 1969–1973”, *Information & Culture*, vol. 55, no. 2 (2020), 149–168.
 20. “Ungdomsorganisationer och skolor ‘heltända’ på miljövärdsfrågorna”, *Folksam*, no. 3 (1968), 39.
 21. “Plundring—förgiftning”, Arbetarrörelsens arkiv, Huddinge, Collection: 2336 Stillfilmer: vol. 4–36.
 22. “Ungdomsorganisationer och skolor ‘heltända’ på miljövärdsfrågorna”, *Folksam*, no. 3 (1968), 39; See also *Svenska Dagbladet*, 31 January 1968, 10. The sum in US dollars is calculated using the 1969 SEK-USD average exchange rate (5,175 USD), adjusted to 2021 value using US consumer price index data (<https://data.imf.org/>, accessed 22 February 2022), roughly 28,500 USD. In 1969, the Swedish krona was considerably stronger in relation to the US dollar than today. If we instead first convert the sum of SEK 20,000 to 2021 Swedish prices and then convert to US dollars, the sum is closer to 20,000 US Dollar.
 23. “Front mot miljöförstörelsen”, *Folksam*, no. 4 (1968), 53–54.
 24. Johan Östling, “Vad är kunskapshistoria?” *Historisk tidskrift*, vol. 135, no. 1 (2015), 112.
 25. *Unga Örnar*, no. 7 (1968), 4.
 26. *Unga Örnar*, no. 6 (1968), 3.
 27. “Miljökampanjens pristävling avgjord”, *Folksam*, no. 5 (1969), 45.
 28. “Undermålig miljövärd”, *GT*, March 31 (1969), 5.
 29. “Miljökampanjens pristävling avgjord” *Folksam*, no. 5 (1969), 45.
 30. The concept of children as knowledge actors is discussed by Simone Lässig, “The History of Knowledge and the Expansion of the Historical Research Agenda”, *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute*, vol. 59 (2016), 29–58; see also David Larsson Heidenblad and Johan Östling, “Efterord: Nordisk kunskapshistoria inför 2020-talet”, *Kulturstudier*, no. 2 (2019), 198–202.

31. *Folksam*, no. 2 (1969), 12–13.
32. *Folksam*, no. 2 (1969), 12–13.
33. *Folksam*, no. 4 (1969), 30.
34. “Front mot miljöförstöringen”, *Folksam*, no. 4 (1968), 55. Search results from the digitized newspaper archives of the National Library of Sweden (<https://tidningar.kb.se/>, accessed 22 February 2022) indicate that the English word hearing first appeared in news reports from United States politics, but in the 1960s it also began to denote similar interrogations in Sweden.
35. “Front mot miljöförstöringen”, *Folksam*, no. 4 (1968), 53.
36. Rolf Jüring, “Regeringen stoppar miljöfarliga produkter”, *Folksam*, no. 1 (1970), 20–23.
37. Jens Ljunggren has argued that patience and emotional control were central to the political strategy of the Social Democratic Party in the 1960s. Jens Ljunggren, *Den uppskjutna vreden: Socialdemokratisk känslopolitik från 1880- till 1980-talet* (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2015), 215–24.
38. The VNM Campaign was covered frequently in the LO publication *Fri fagbevegelse* as well as periodicals published by its member organizations: *Bygningsarbeideren* (Norsk bygningsindustriarbeiderforbund, 1969 no. 11/12); *Norsk kommuneforbunds fagblad*, vol. 40, no. 9 (1969); *Jern- og metallarbeideren: Organ for jern- og metallindustriens arbeidere*, vol. 73, no. 9 (1969); *Arbeidsmanden: Medlemsblad for Norsk arbeidsmandsforbund*, vol. 72, no. 10 (1969).
39. *Jern- og metallarbeideren*, vol. 74, no. 4 (1970), 11.
40. *Arbeiderbladet*, 29 March 1969, 9.
41. In *Oppland Arbeiderblad*, 25 April 1969, 10. VNM was described as a youth campaign.
42. *Dagbladet*, 15 March 1969, 8, 17.
43. *Arbeiderbladet*, 29 March 1969, 9.
44. *Dagbladet*, 1 April 1969, 13.
45. *Fri fagbevegelse* (Landsorganisasjonen i Norge), vol. 62, no. 9 (1969), 263
46. *Sarpsborg Arbeiderblad*, 10 October 1969, 7.
47. *Fri fagbevegelse*, vol. 64, no. 1 (1971), 12.
48. *Moss Dagblad*, 28 October 1969, 2.
49. *Fri fagbevegelse*, vol. 62, no. 9 (1969), 263.
50. *Sarpsborg Arbeiderblad*, 10 October 1969, 7. The article did not mention whether the quote came from Ericsson or Danielsson.
51. *Arbeiderbladet*, 19 June 1970, 3.
52. *Arbeiderbladet*, 31 December 1970, 14.
53. *Romerikes blad*, 27 November 1970, 5.
54. *Fri fagbevegelse*, vol. 65, no. 10 (1972), 2.
55. *Fri fagbevegelse*, vol. 64, no. 10 (1971), 4.

56. Norén, “Dagen H”.
57. Andrew Dobson, *Citizenship and the Environment* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).
58. Klaus Misgeld, Karl Molin and Klas Åmark, eds., *Creating Social Democracy: A Century of the Social Democratic Labor Party in Sweden* (University Park: Pennsylvania State Univ. Press, 1992), 452.
59. Jamison et al., The Making of the New Environmental Consciousness; Melina Antonia Buns, *Green Internationalists: Nordic Environmental Cooperation, 1967–1988* (Oslo: University of Oslo, 2020); Larsson Heidenblad, “Ett ekologiskt genombrott?”; Tuomas Räsänen, “Converging Environmental Knowledge: Re-evaluating the Birth of Modern Environmentalism in Finland”, *Environment and History*, vol. 18 (2012), 159–181; Asger Hougaard, “The Founding of the Danish Environmental Movement NOAH”, *Arcadia*, no. 18 (2019).
60. Mary Hilson, *The Nordic Model: Scandinavia since 1945* (London: Reaktion, 2008), 130–134; *Folksam*, no. 4 (1969), 31.

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Green States in a Dirty World: 1975 and the Performance of Nordic Green Modern

Melina Antonia Buns and Dominic Hinde

Following the 2015 United Nations (UN) agreement on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, the five Nordic prime ministers began to promote their own visions of sustainable progress based on “Nordic knowledge and experiences” in May 2017.¹ For the launch of this initiative, called *Nordic Solutions to Global Challenges*, the Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM) invited journalists and stakeholders on a boat trip, providing an exquisite tasting menu of Nordic cuisine with clear nods to home-grown sustainability and of Nordic sustainable lifestyle more broadly. The initiative was merely the latest example of joint Nordic attempts to present the region and its institutionalized framework for transnational collaboration as a

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problem-solving model, pushing international solutions and close cooperation as a leitmotif in the Nordic countries' broader characterization as successful, sustainable, and socially just manifestations of capitalist modernity.

Whilst the (self-)perception and image of the Scandinavian² countries as "harbingers of progress"³ was tied to the social democratic welfare states' concept of the so-called middle way between capitalism and socialism throughout both the Cold War and the twentieth century more generally,⁴ today this Nordic projection of modernity has expanded to encompass a range of other attributes, of which environmental and climate policies are a significant part.⁵ Events such as Sweden's hosting of the 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm and former Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland leading the World Commission on Environment and Development, which popularized the term sustainable development in 1987, have decisively contributed to political, societal, and academic perceptions of the Nordic countries as environmental pioneers.⁶

In more recent years, however, historians have increasingly challenged and unpacked such brands,⁷ while sociologists of modernity have long emphasized that the individual nation states are subject to the same broad trends as one another despite protestations of national difference.⁸ With regard to such attempts at nuancing the Nordic states as enthusiastic examples of modernity and progress, this chapter uses perspectives from the sociology of media and environmental and international history to critically unpack the role of environmental reform in the projection of Nordic values and ideals. It analyses how the reconfiguration of a social democratic Nordic model⁹ into a Nordic environmental model was performed to both domestic and international audiences. This allowed for the creation of an image of a green modernity, one that not only incorporated environmental protection into welfare but made environmental protection itself the catalyst for technological innovation, political progressiveness, and economic growth.

Such self-image was and still is propagated at international media events, most prominently conferences which provide an international stage for the performance of green leadership. As a decisive initial moment in this ongoing performance, we unpack the 1975 Nordic Council (NC) conference for international organizations in Europe, held at Frostavallen in Sweden. Strategically entitled *A Regional Approach—A World Wide Responsibility*, it is here used as a case to discuss the emergence of Nordic

green performance. We argue that it is to be seen as the progenitor of the Nordic Solutions to Global Challenges and similar campaigns in contemporary politics which have come to define Nordic cooperation on the world stage in the present, such as the Conference of the Parties (COP) meetings.

Of particular interest is how the Nordics used the conference to place brand their region, and how it was framed by press coverage. The 1975 conference is thus analysed as a form of instrumental value construction with clear diplomatic and political goals which sought to disseminate Nordic environmental ideas and solutions to global challenges, while at the same time legitimizing Nordic claims to leadership and progressiveness. Since the conference was organized by the NC and thus embedded in institutionalized Nordic cooperation, it provides a clear example of the communication of a unified Nordic environmental modernity to the world.¹⁰

Building on archival material and publications from the Nordic institutions, and media coverage,¹¹ the view of the Nordic states as engaged in transnational dialogue within a broader international context also helps to challenge some of the methodological nationalism which can dominate discussions of the Nordics.¹² Previous research has tended to ignore the fact that, following the identification of domestic and international environmental problems in the 1960s, the Nordic countries jointly set out to construct, as we argue, a transnational green Nordic modernity motivated by economic interests and social modernization as much as by traditional conservationist attitudes and pressing material concerns such as transboundary air pollution.¹³ The 1975 conference provided a framework within which the Nordic countries could construct a green regional identity by performing the core character of a Nordic green modernity, building on international cooperation and progressive solutions in terms of policies and technologies.

Shedding light on this key period of the 1970s is crucial to a contextualized understanding of the positioning of the Nordics in contemporary global environmental debates, and by extension their claims to leadership with seemingly progressive articulations of modernity both at home and abroad.¹⁴ The growth in Nordic environmental branding at regional and global level helped to conceal and diminish domestic frictions not only over environmental policy, but also over the inherent contradictions of environmental and welfare state policies still present in the 2020s. By way of context, we focus firstly on the construction of images and imaginaries

of Nordic modernity, before turning to the staging of the 1975 conference itself. We then look at how the events of the conference constituted an intentional performance of a green modernity, and in the final section consider its legacy in contemporary Nordic climate messaging.

IMAGES AND IMAGINARIES OF NORDIC MODERNITY

Despite different domestic industries and paces of economic development, historical research portrays the Scandinavian experience of modernity as a transnational and co-evolving process of broadly similar welfare states throughout the twentieth century.¹⁵ Following increasing societal and political attention to the disastrous environmental side-effects of economic growth since the late 1960s, pressure to respond to these environmental concerns, burgeoning globalization, and an energy crisis which threatened to paralyse the industrial engine of the welfare state provoked a crisis of legitimacy for Nordic modernity as a distinct project. This led to an ideological reformulation of welfare away from high growth rates and increasing consumption and towards environmental protection and immaterial values.¹⁶ Characterized by a more general disenchantment with the politics of high modernity, this shift would in 1996 be reframed by Swedish Prime Minister Göran Persson in terms of the green people's home (*det gröna folkhemmet*),¹⁷ ecological rather than political modernization as a leitmotif.

This view is of particular interest because it shows the flexibility of the modernization narrative whereby all politics, rather than merely social democratic politics, occur within a reflexive awareness of modernization as a teleology. According to the historian Kazimierz Musiał, the “image of progressive Scandinavia as a figure of discourse and a figure of thought”¹⁸ was attractive as a model by which “to demonstrate moral superiority in a world torn apart between economic, political and ideological extremes.”¹⁹ Building on this constructivist approach, historian Jenny Andersson has furthermore suggested that the Nordic model(s) function as a guiding template in global conversations on how a better world might be possible.²⁰ In this regard the spread of ecological modernization and green market capitalism throughout the world situates the Nordics as typifying this template, helping to engineer a set of norms about the forms ecological modernization might take.²¹

While scholars have started to critically question this reconciliation of sustainability and continued growth in practical politics,²² it is equally important to analyse the construction of this Nordic idea of green

progressiveness, its performance, and reproduction. Reproduction of green modernity must be seen within the context of extant discourses of the Nordic countries, especially Sweden, as emblematic of forward-looking post-war societies. From an international perspective, Sweden is often identified as a paradigmatic example of environmental modernity, with the political scientist Robyn Eckersley identifying it as an archetypal green state which has been able to integrate sustainability into the project of the high modern state.²³ As a consequence, discourses of modernization in Sweden have been hard to separate from notions of sustainability and movements towards an optimal state of modernity.²⁴ Indeed the performance of modernity has, as the geographer Allan Pred argued, always played a significant role in the projection of Nordic power around the world, interwoven with international expectations about the particular qualities of the Nordic countries.²⁵

Such performance of Nordicness and proactive branding of the Nordic states in an economically profitable and positive way takes place within the post-political “global market of ideas.”²⁶ In this open market, practices of nation branding “[involve] a two-way dialogue between national imaginings and foreign images of the nation,” between internal visions and external perceptions.²⁷ Yet where scholars tend to distinguish between branding as a strategic action of the late twentieth century on the one hand, and public and cultural diplomacy during the Cold War on the other, Nordic actors of the early 1970s used both terms synonymously.²⁸ This hints at an interconnection between sincere emotional ties and values, and the promotion and selling of governmental policies as part of a broadly embodied practice that cannot merely be dismissed as governmental propaganda. Instead, these discourses themselves not only were and are used as legitimizing processes for certain engagement at domestic and international levels, but also evolve in relation to cultural, diplomatic, and trade dynamics.²⁹

Similar to the shared experience of the welfare state societies, the Nordic experience of environmental awareness, in terms of early focus on nature protection and the later emergence of modern environmentalism from the 1960s, became integral to attempts to articulate a distinctive region.³⁰ Nordic experience(s) of environmental modernity can thus be characterized as a form of transnational practice which seeks both to manufacture consent about the legitimacy of the *Nordic way* at home and to project environmental leadership on the European and global stage.

International conferences and summits, too, create long tails in the places they occur. For instance, the 1972 Stockholm conference forms an international semiotic in its own right. As media events, such conferences not only allow for subtle propaganda and persuasion in the form of “place branding” the stage on which they are performed,³¹ but they also articulate, transfer, and display a region such as the Nordics as a “mediated concept.”³² Crucially, performance and mediation do not relate to human activity only, but equally to the performativity of socio-technological constructions of modern imaginaries.³³

Focusing on the performative dimension of diplomacy, Naoko Shimazu has argued that conferences can be seen as theatrical performances imbued with symbolic meaning which draw attention to a certain issue or area.³⁴ This theatrical lens on the 1975 conference as a staged international media event allows us to analyse the Nordic countries’ joint performance and dissemination of a green message, and the place branding of their region as a location where one “handle[s] the earth, which has fed us and fostered us, with reverence and care,” as Ragnhildur Helgadóttir, President of the NC, framed it in her closing speech to the attendees.³⁵

STAGING REGIONAL SOLUTIONS AND GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The 1975 conference at Frostavallen was by no means the first international event with a unified Nordic face. Expo ‘70, held in Osaka, Japan, had already seen the Nordic countries provide a joint pavilion dedicated to the *Protection of the Environment during Increased Industrialization*.³⁶ The 1975 conference, however, was different in several regards. Firstly, it was organized by the NC and thus built not only on institutionalized Nordic cooperation but also on shared Nordic ideals and ideas. Furthermore, the conference was explicitly recognized as a “PR event” and “enlightenment conference”³⁷ for international organizations, which had the aim of promoting Nordic policies and stressing the Nordic region’s value for the international community.³⁸

When the conference took place, the environment had already been part of institutionalized Nordic cooperation for several years. Parallel to the creation of domestic environmental institutions in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the interparliamentary NC had created a liaison committee on environmental issues, which in 1973 became a committee of senior

officials following the 1971 creation of the NCM.³⁹ This institutionalized cooperation provided the backbone of the Nordics' engagement within emerging environmental politics at international level—and has continued to shape Nordic environmental cooperation in the decades since.⁴⁰

While institutionalized Nordic cooperation primarily provided a forum for coordination of Nordic interests and engagements within international politics, the NC also functioned as an independent actor. Every two or three years it organized a conference for international organizations in Europe to disseminate information about the Nordic region, highlight Nordic cooperation, and press key policy areas which the Nordics at that point in time “consider[ed] [to be] of international importance.”⁴¹ As such, these conferences greatly contributed to the external image of the Nordic region. At the same time, the conferences allowed the Nordic countries to position their own institutional cooperation as on par with other international organizations such as the European Communities (EC). As a result, the participants of the 1975 Nordic conference on environmental pollution and policies included delegates from the European Court of Justice, the International Labour Organization, the World Health Organization, and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, as well as the EC itself and non-governmental organizations such as the World Wildlife Fund.⁴²

By the mid-1970s, environmental policies had not only been established and diversified, spanning from air and water pollution over environmental education to waste and noise, but also increasingly found their way into international treaties such as the 1974 Nordic Environmental Protection Convention (NEPC). Providing an extensive, legally binding framework for the prevention of transboundary pollution by introducing the principles of non-discrimination, equal rights of access, and information obligation, the four continental Nordic states created what they called a “globally unique” environmental convention.⁴³ A central motive was, however, to provide solutions to domestic acidification caused by European sulphur dioxide emissions beyond the borders of the Nordics.⁴⁴ Moreover, officials in the Nordic environmental ministries and agencies were cooperating closely on a Nordic Plan to Protect Conservation Areas and Biotopes, and the NC was discussing the role of the occupational environment with the Nordic trade unions, seeking improvement to both environmental conditions and general well-being.⁴⁵

In the eyes of the NC's Presidium, all these regional solutions deserved wider international attention as examples of international environmental

cooperation—an agenda where the regional approach recognized its global responsibility. On the one hand, it stressed the responsibility of single nations in the fight against environmental pollution, which due to its global character affected and affects different societies disproportionately. On the other hand, it displayed and positioned the Nordic countries as environmentally progressive, with policy solutions of relevance for the international community. By profiling such work as one of the most important issues within Nordic cooperation, the Nordics attempted to provide solutions to the complex task of international environmental governance. This had the added benefit of legitimizing the region as an international actor which the international community had to recognize and learn from.

FROSTAVALLEN AND THE PERFORMANCE OF GREEN NORDIC MODERNITY

These aspirations to present a superior green modernity of high living standards paired with environmental protection also built on the linkage of the desire to reduce environmental degradation with extant images of the Nordic region. By 1971 the Nordics had not only already established a certain exceptionalism or a “special position” in global politics, but their “Scandinavian lifestyle” had become what contemporaries called a globally highly valued “brand,”⁴⁶ defined by high standards of living, education, and social security, all synonymous with the social democratic welfare state and society.⁴⁷ Such an external acknowledgement fed back into Nordic self-perception as something distinct and special.⁴⁸ Nordic parliamentarians and ministers accordingly promoted a self-image that bestowed on the Nordics and their cooperative governance a great level of international importance and reputation. This was not just about nation states, but a model of regional excellence whose politics would have positive implications on the evolving international environmental frameworks that the fight against environmental pollution required.⁴⁹ This meant that there could exist a simplified externally communicated Nordic modernity, with the Nordic countries as environmental pioneers, alongside more complex and divergent modernities within the respective states whereby they could pursue different forms of politics and techno-industrial solutions internally.

At the conference, this environmental modernity was performed by means of time, place, and content, which connected experience with

political messages. Firstly, the timing of the conference was chosen very carefully. It was organized from 4 to 6 June, coinciding with the International Day of the Environment on 5 June that symbolically had been agreed at the Stockholm Conference a few years before.⁵⁰ In doing so, the NC intentionally positioned the 1975 conference as a continuation of the landmark Stockholm event. As such it not only included official dinners organized by the Swedish government and the NC respectively, but at least one press conference in which, among others, the Secretary General of the Benelux Consultative Interparliamentary Council, Marcel Hondequin, participated as an example of extra-Nordic dialogue.⁵¹

Secondly, the location of the conference in Skåne in southern Sweden was a deliberate choice, as it “illustrate[d] the issues that were discussed with practical examples.”⁵² This meant that delegates and reporters found themselves in the bucolic surroundings of Frostavallen which, with its beech woodlands, lakes, and flora, typified the landscapes singled out for protection in the new Nordic Plan to Protect Conservation Areas and Biotopes. When presenting this Nordic plan to the participants, then Norwegian Environment Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland repeated an articulation of modernity that did not measure welfare and high living standards in economic growth rates only, but by the “assets which nature and our living environment represent for human well-being, health and happiness.”⁵³ According to Brundtland, modernity no longer meant standards of living in material terms, but “quality of life” instead.⁵⁴ At the same time, the location typified the most severe environmental pollution in southern Scandinavia. Southern Sweden, as well as southern Norway, suffered from transboundary air pollution originating in Europe’s industrial areas, meaning that Frostavallen’s environs were also of political importance for the message of the NEPC, bringing home the transboundary impacts which some governments still challenged.⁵⁵

Finally, the site was close to technological solutions that promised to combine welfare and environmentalism and to realize a green modernity through endless energy production from nuclear fission. By 1975 Sweden was the only Nordic country with operating commercial nuclear power plants, local reactor Barsebäck I being the fourth operating reactor nationally. One and a half years after the energy crisis, nuclear power was seen as the energy source of the future, a seemingly limitless supply of power that also reduced dependency on oil imports. In addition, nuclear energy promised an end to the sulphur and nitrogen compounds and fly ash from oil and coal power stations that acidified Scandinavian lands and lakes.⁵⁶

On the final day of the conference, participants thus left nature behind for a peek behind the curtain of technological modernity.⁵⁷ The visit to Barsebäck's boiling water reactor that delegates were treated to was an illustration of practical problem-solving, that is to say not merely an aspiration but an embodied green modernity, which delegates could experience beyond the speeches and press packs. Closing off the nominally informational part of the conference with a trip to Barsebäck was therefore a tactical performance of modernity, which according to Helgadóttir proved that "the mind of man has succeeded in taking advantage of the atomic energy for human well-being."⁵⁸ That the same nuclear power station, located 20 km from the Danish capital on the Swedish side of the Øresund, had become an issue of conflict between Denmark and Sweden, however, remained an internal Nordic discussion.⁵⁹

The images absorbed and disseminated by participants and the Nordic press alike at Frostavallen portrayed Nordic environmental responsibility as an example to the international community and "environmental protection a trade article" to be exported to the world.⁶⁰ Such coverage also helped to reframe the realpolitik of the NEPC into a "model" for international environmental governance.⁶¹ Hondequin acknowledged that this "Nordic initiative [would] have an effect on the world,"⁶² and admitted that "everyone would like to have such a convention as the Nordics now have."⁶³ Michel Carpentier, then director of the European Environment and Consumer Protection Service, opined that "there [was] still a long way to go before a convention could be achieved [within the EC]" and that such a convention "would hardly be as comprehensive as the Nordic one."⁶⁴ Such external acknowledgements of the progressive Nordic region not only reinforced images of the Nordic countries as environmental pioneers and far-sighted strategists, but they also reinforced their own imaginings of a certain Nordic environmental exceptionalism, of a region that as one Danish newspaper wrote was "in many regards far ahead of others."⁶⁵

NORDIC GREEN MODERN AS STRATEGIC MESSAGING

Since the 1975 conference was staged, green imagery has become an intrinsic part of international political engagement generally, as well as of Nordic inward and outward legitimization. The dual message of regional solutions and global responsibility of 1975 continues to structure the contemporary messaging of Nordic green modernity at global events,

resulting from the dynamic interplay between domestic, regional, and international levels. The debates and negotiations surrounding climate change in particular, which have succeeded the environment more broadly as the centre of attention since the 1990s, provide a platform for a renewed instrumentalization of this joint Nordic green modernity.

At the COP24 meeting in Katowice in Poland in 2018, for instance, the information desk of the joint Nordic pavilion was dominated by a one-way road sign with the words *The Nordic Way*, whilst a cargo bike with the same slogan alongside physically embodied the green Nordic lifestyle. In the pavilion, posters communicated Nordic visions of a sustainable future; pictures showed natural landscapes in soft colours with wind turbines on the horizon as the engines of the green transition. Such Nordic visions and solutions aimed at encouraging visitors to both *Think Nordic!* and use the Swenglish neologism #talanordic.⁶⁶

This contemporary image of the Nordic region as a progressive, far-sighted strategist offering political and technological solutions to the world was equally prominent at COP25 in Madrid, where the Nordic pavilion used the tagline *Action to Inspire! Inspire to Act!* The slogan tied older messages of the 1970s Nordic environmental leadership that emphasized the inspiring value of Nordic cooperation to current youth climate activism, as personified by Greta Thunberg, whose anti-government activism had been co-opted into the Nordic global brand.⁶⁷ The Nordic countries can thus be said to recognize and create challenges on the global stage which then allow them to bring model solutions and roadmaps at international level, internalizing the concerns of climate activism into the acceptable processes of international governance.

The importance of these messaging strategies stretches far beyond the projection of sustainability, however. Sustaining modernity as a project and the continuation of liberal capitalism as its driver relies on the continued co-option of challenges to its hegemony. By viewing the Nordic performance of green modernity as an ongoing medial happening, taking place in physical and medial space, it helps us to better understand how the intrinsic conflicts of contemporary global politics, too, can be solved within the macro-narrative of modernist progress, and how its supposed ability to overcome regional differences in an international context is alive and well in times of political atomization and the decline of the dominant party model. The Nordic experience of environmental messaging is therefore instructive for our general understandings of modernity as narrative, requiring constant reinvention and re-assessment. At the Glasgow COP26

meeting in 2021, Nordic green modernity was once again on show, not just as a climate solution but as a laboratory of a shared global future.⁶⁸ Whilst the core messages of the 1970s remain, the contemporary appetite for positive visions has also seen the Nordics embrace green modernity as a technological export to turbocharge the green transition abroad and continued economic growth at home.

CONCLUSION

While contemporary Nordic engagement in promoting environmental and climate policies to the international community is legitimized by their long history of cooperation stretching back far further,⁶⁹ the leitmotif initially promoted at the 1975 Frostavallen conference was, we argue, foundational to their positioning today. Not only was it an international event organized through institutionalized Nordic cooperation with the aim of promoting Nordic solutions on environmental problems to the wider world, but a material embodiment of this Nordic articulation of modernity's imaginaries. As such it represents an active performance of Nordic policy solutions, staged in a surrounding that appeared to embody the reconciliation of environmental protection and nature conservation with seemingly endless energy sources for the future development of the welfare state, or a green modernity.

By using the Frostavallen conference as a case study for media events, we have analysed how the Nordic countries performed a Nordic environmental model for both domestic and international audiences, by means of place, time, and content. With this performance of a green modernity, the Nordics place branded their region as environmentally far-sighted, reinforcing an image of the Nordic region as distinct and exceptional but temporally so, rather than being an unrealistic dream. The 1975 conference provided a framework within which the Nordic countries could construct a shared regional identity, creating progressive solutions in terms of policies and technologies, which could then be modelled by others in the future. Ultimately, this performance had clear diplomatic and political goals in disseminating Nordic environmental ideas and solutions to global challenges but was equally based on the legitimization of Nordic claims to leadership and progressiveness.

This shows a duality in Nordic environmental messaging as both altruistic problem-solving and a means of exerting power and maintaining legitimacy in the face of domestic and international pressures, all whilst

apparently reconciling economic growth and environmental protection. Yet in contrast to a uniformly social democratic Nordic identity, this green messaging of modernity stemmed from the interplay between domestic, regional, and international levels, and was anchored firmly in Nordic cooperation and external conceptions of the Nordic region. As an identity equally shaped by national and international developments, expectations, and narratives, and serving political interests of varying character, a Nordic idea and performance of green modernity existed not instead of a Danish, Norwegian or Swedish one, but in addition to it.

Moreover, we can see how some of the broader narratives of ecological management and of the pristine Nordic states embodied at the Frostavallen conference bleed into other areas of domestic politics. Careful cooperation and management of the Nordic body politic feeds into other conceptions of the Nordic space and harks back to the dreamscapes of Nordic high modernism in which people, environments, and states were integrated into the same project. As such, Nordic Green Modern also offers a counter-narrative to decline and disintegration by offering a vision of a Nordic project shorn of its political complexity on the global stage.

NOTES

1. *Nordic Solutions to Global Challenges: An Initiative by the Nordic Prime Ministers* (Copenhagen: Nordic Council of Ministers, 2017).
2. We refer to Scandinavia when considering Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, and to the Nordic region when also considering Finland and Iceland.
3. Kazimierz Musiał, *Roots of the Scandinavian Model: Images of Progress in the Era of Modernisation* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 2000), 9.
4. The term “middle way” was coined by Marquis Childs in 1936; Marquis W. Childs, *Sweden: The Middle Way* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1936).
5. Truels Stende, *Omverdenens syn på de nordiske landene* (Copenhagen: Nordisk ministerråd, 2018).
6. For example, Peder Anker, *The Power of the Periphery: How Norway Became an Environmental Pioneer for the World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).
7. For example, Eirinn Larsen, Sigrun Marie Moss and Inger Skjelsbæk, eds., *Gender Equality and Nation Branding in the Nordic Region* (London: Routledge, 2021).

8. See, for example, Zygmunt Bauman's work on globalization, modernity and the nation state; Zygmunt Bauman, *Globalization: The Human Consequences* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), 55–76.
9. For a recent discussion of the Nordic models and their dissemination, see, for example, the contributions in Haldor Byrkjeflot, Lars Mjøset, Mads Mordhorst and Klaus Petersen, eds., *The Making and Circulation of Nordic Models, Ideas and Images* (London: Routledge, 2022).
10. The intergovernmental Nordic Council was established in 1952. Together with the 1971 Nordic Council of Ministers, it constitutes institutional Nordic cooperation.
11. Unfortunately, we could not trace the conference in English newspapers and magazines, which might be due either to the lack of reports or to the limitations of OCR and research in digitized material.
12. For methodological nationalism as a research critique, see Ulrich Beck, "The Cosmopolitan Condition: Why Methodological Nationalism Fails", *Theory, Culture & Society*, vol. 27, no. 7 (2007), 286–290.
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The Nordic Mobilization of Public Opinion on Foreign Aid in the UN's Second Development Decade

Lars Diurlin

In 1969 the United Nations decided that the coming decade would be launched as the Second Development Decade (DD2). The 1960s had seen an exceptional rise in foreign aid allocations in the global north, especially in the Nordic countries, but as the decade came to a close, so did the predominant belief that financial transfers and economic growth alone could cure underdevelopment and solve world poverty. DD2 signified a discursive shift regarding the understanding of development, as social equality and global interdependence became leading watchwords. DD2 also marked a significantly strengthened demand from the UN that all countries should employ modern media technologies to make an “unprecedented” coordinated effort to mobilize national public opinion in favour of development assistance, suggesting that governments “make every effort to convince their citizens [...] rather than following public opinion”.¹

This mobilization of the public was already taking shape in the Nordic countries. During the mid-1960s, the foreign aid agencies, especially

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Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA) in Sweden, Danish International Development Agency (Danida) in Denmark and Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) in Norway, had established domestic information bureaus whose budgets soared in concert with each nation's fast-growing foreign aid allocations.² As part of the DD2 agenda, the UN also pushed for increased transnational co-operation among the aid-giving countries to share know-how on public mobilization and coordinate governmental information strategies. As a response to such requests Jørgen Milwertz, head of Danida's information bureau, wrote the following, in March 1970, to Clinton A. Rehling, an information officer at the United Nations Development Programme:

I quite agree with you that there are a number of areas of productive co-operation between nationally and internationally employed information officers. In fact, it is an entirely new development that national agencies for international development are building up strong information services with fairly liberal budgets—in this country 1.9 million kroner for the fiscal year beginning 1 April and no doubt more for the next. There is no precedence for information budgets of this size in the history of the Kingdom!³

Three days later Milwertz wrote to Rehling again stating that he had initiated a meeting with the Director of Programmes at Danish National Television to discuss “the mobilization of public opinion for the second development decade”.⁴ They had agreed that something needed to be done “to overcome the disinterested attitude towards our topics” among the opinion-making Danish press corps. “Somehow we have managed to bore them”, Milwertz stated and continued to describe a plan to create new “imaginative” audio-visual programmes, in collaboration with Danish national television, featuring “successful social and economic development”, which he hoped would change general attitudes in favour of foreign aid, and, asked Milwertz, perhaps the UNDP could supply them with “a ‘catalogue’ of success-stories and [...] examples of successful development” around which they could build their programmes?

The exchange of information and collaborations on material production between Danida, Danish national television and the UN, as displayed in the correspondence above, stands as a telling example of how national and international development actors, along with domestic cultural producers, concerted their efforts to mobilize public opinion as the DD2 was launched. The coming decade would see new transnational collaborations

around issues of information and persuasion, often centring around the question of how to locate, produce and employ film as an information device.

Informed by the premise that the Nordic countries have historically shared a similar outlook on aid distribution, which resulted in several co-operations on foreign aid projects and the development of a certain “Nordic aid model”, this study aims to demonstrate that the Nordic countries also shared a common *domestic* challenge, where co-operation proved even more desirable: legitimizing the spiralling foreign aid enterprise in relation to public opinion.⁵ The study further shows that while the Nordic willingness to co-operate on development field projects declined around 1970, the inclination to share experiences on domestic information strategies only increased, especially as the UN announced the launch of DD2 and pushed for amplified transnational coordination regarding the mobilization of public opinion.

This chapter revolves around two main research questions: what exchanges of ideas regarding information strategies took place between the Nordic aid agencies during the launch of DD2 and how did the agencies’ information bureaus coordinate their efforts? As will be revealed, a central issue for the bureaus was the pressing need to generate audio-visual opinion-forming information. Considering the importance that the agencies applied to the film medium, the study will also investigate how opinion-forming audio-visual strategies were discussed as an essential part of the mobilization of public opinion. This strategic area was given special attention by the agencies and resulted in a Nordic film competition which was to commemorate the launch of DD2. The competition was mainly administered by Danida, but since the winning film *En sluten värld* (*An enclosed world*, Rolf Bolin, 1974) was a Swedish production, SIDA also became involved in the process. Norad and the Finnish Foreign Ministry were not as involved in the production.

Inspired by Sunniva Engh’s statement that the phenomenon of development aid can be “better grasped if viewed outside the national and regional frameworks, and placed within the partially overlapping ones”, this study aims to highlight a less discernible transnational component regarding development assistance (the more obvious one being the donor-recipient relationship).⁶ Relating to the discussion on centrifugal and centripetal dynamisms in Nordic collaboration in this volume’s introduction, foreign aid could be seen as cogently centrifugal, especially considering how aid has been discussed as a form of “nation branding”, making

aid-giving an essential part of “being Nordic” in the eyes of the world.⁷ Although foreign aid information was a domestic and thus centripetal matter, this study will show that the strategies *behind* the information were often conceived and transnationally circulated among the Nordic countries.

The study builds on archival material—mainly minutes and correspondence—drawn from the sections covering domestic information in the Danida subdivision of the Foreign Ministry archive. Similar sections on domestic information in the SIDA archive have also been systematically checked, but since the Danida archive is more comprehensive on both Nordic information co-operations and audio-visual strategies, SIDA’s archive has been of lesser importance.

TRANSNATIONAL MEDIA HISTORIES OF NORDIC FOREIGN AID INFORMATION POLICY

The study finds itself in an intersection where research on governmental information in the post-war welfare state converges with historical research on Nordic foreign aid policy. When merging these areas, the field of foreign aid information policy appears, allowing development agencies to be studied as a form of media producers. This study adds two further demarcations, focusing on the media history of Nordic foreign aid, as well as the transnational co-operation between Nordic aid agencies regarding the mobilization of public opinion.

Foreign aid information policy has been sparsely covered in the major historiographies of Swedish, Danish and Norwegian foreign aid.⁸ When compared, it can be deduced that as the Nordic aid agencies strengthened their information drives, they employed similar attitude-shaping strategies where most information funds would be channelled to NGOs, such as unions and popular movements, as well as to opinion-forming journalists and cultural workers, which came to function as proxy information creators. The public was then thought to perceive the information as more personalized and less bureaucratic.⁹ As this study will show, this information-by-proxy strategy was an integral part of the UN’s international DD2 mobilization, which came to influence Nordic governmental information strategies. As research in Swedish cultural policy history has shown, the strategy was also used in other policy areas during the 1970s, such as in the health and treatment sectors.¹⁰

In many studies covering the relation between Swedish foreign aid policy, public opinion and news media, it has been standard fare to adopt a narrow contemporary focus as well as overlooking SIDA's crucial role in constructing knowledge of and attitudes towards aid-receiving countries through the use of governmental information funds.¹¹ In his studies on the formation of public opinion on global solidarity and foreign aid, historian Tor Sellström adopts a historical perspective, but misses SIDA's, and thus the Swedish government's, fundamental role in this formation.¹² Other studies have pointed towards such issues and concluded that public demand was never a driver behind Nordic governmental aid choices.¹³ Although interest in global questions slowly grew during the 1960s, the majority remained uninterested. More to the point, the public's alleged lack of knowledge on global problems and engagement in global solidarity was considered a major obstacle when aid policies were to be legitimized. The implementation would depend on opinion-forming governmental actions.

The information strategies of Danida and SIDA should be discussed in the larger context of an intervening governmental approach adopted by welfare states after the Second World War, with the intention of influencing citizen behaviour using information as a controlling device, as has been studied in a Swedish context by Hanna Kjellgren and Fredrik Norén.¹⁴ Historical research on Danish governmental information policy is rare, but Jesper Vestermarck Køber's study on local democracy in Denmark states, as do Kjellgren and Norén, that the 1960s and 1970s were expansive decades for public information aimed at changing behavioural patterns.¹⁵ Previous research on the cultural history of media has highlighted that, in Sweden, such approaches unified several political areas. What was deemed dubious or too commercial demanded political action whether it concerned the "right" consumer products, citizen health, "quality" feature films or images of aid-receiving countries.¹⁶ Furthermore, this study is informed by Norén's argument that the state often operationalized media with its media-specificity in mind.¹⁷ The belief in (and use of) film as a sympathy-strengthening medium by foreign aid agencies should be seen in this context.

The media history of Swedish foreign aid information has recently received scholarly attention. Lars Diurlin has examined the information strategies of SIDA and concluded, much in line with both earlier and subsequent research on Nordic foreign aid history, that the agency used information, and particularly proxy creators, with the intention to sway public

opinion in favour of foreign aid, for example by funding films on development issues.¹⁸ Diurlin's argument, that SIDA-funded films thus can be situated in a problematic borderland between information and propaganda, has been criticized by Ingrid Ryberg in a study focusing on a selection of SIDA-funded documentaries made by women filmmakers.¹⁹ Ryberg finds it problematic to speak about SIDA-funded films in terms of propaganda or even as state-funded information. Instead, the material should be considered in a broader context of protest movements and transnational leftist documentary and "solidarity film" culture. Importantly, Ryberg's film cultural perspective can neither elucidate the fundamental prerequisites which made the documentaries in question possible nor clarify SIDA's objective to fund them, but rather adds insight into the artistic intentions of the filmmakers and how the films relate to transnational documentary movements. This study will show that audio-visual material funded by aid agencies was also part of a transnational group of intergovernmental organization (IGO)- or state-funded films on development, intended to strengthen public awareness of the need for global solidarity and aid. Contrary to Ryberg's definitive categorization and dismissal of the funder's objectives, we should consider Norén's argument that governmental information was rarely unmitigated, but a "mixed product" that could generate diverse expressions depending on the information actors the state decided to employ.²⁰ Still, it was an economic imperative for audio-visual foreign aid information, including the documentaries Ryberg discusses, that the funder saw an information value in the material and that this value corresponded with national information objectives of public persuasion regarding global solidarity and foreign aid. As this study will show, such objectives and strategies were influenced by the UN's global DD2 agenda for the mobilization of public opinion. Preferably, Diurlin's and Ryberg's perspectives can be combined to underline that welfare-state information policies have tended to benefit both cultural workers in need of funds and state agencies in need of creative opinion-making information.

THE 1 PER CENT TARGET AND THE NORDIC LIKE-MINDED FRONTRUNNERS

In 1961 the UN declared the 1960s the Development Decade. The Second World War had weakened the colonial powers and made way for a decolonialization process that gained momentum during the 1950s. In 1960 the global landscape was not only reshaping at a tremendous

speed—seeing 13 independent African states that year alone—but distances between countries that had had few historical connections were shrinking due to the UN’s diplomacy efforts.²¹ The idea of development through financial aid became an established policy field in western countries in the immediate post-war years: in the US, mainly as a Cold War strategy to contain the spread of communism, and in the UN as a way to maintain peace and reduce global inequalities.²² Impelled by the predominant paradigm of modernization—that all societies go through similar phases and that economic growth alone is key to development—aid was thought to automatically speed up the process.²³ As part of the 1960s’ Development Decade scheme, the UN therefore pushed rich states to increase aid levels, proposing a target of 1 per cent of GDP. Over the decade this target became a standard reference in western aid discourse—a kind of well-rounded “catchphrase” with transnationally competitive as well as domestically propagandistic qualities.²⁴

Heeding the call, a group of like-minded frontrunners emerged, mainly consisting of Nordic countries. Nevertheless, the Nordics had a long way to go. For example, in 1962 Swedish foreign aid stood at 0.12 per cent and in 1965 the Danish number hovered around 0.13, which was “distressingly low” according to the newly founded UN Development Aid Committee (DAC), which made a strategic case for publishing donor statistics.²⁵ As both nations set their dates for reaching the target—Sweden’s goal was 1974 and Denmark’s 1972—aid budgets had to be increased enormously every fiscal year.²⁶ Sweden eventually reached the target in 1977, Norway in 1982 and Denmark in 1992. These globally unique achievements, and the supposedly altruistic motivations behind them, have led observers to describe the frontrunners in terms of humanitarian or moral “great powers”, often downplaying self-interest and questions of trade, foreign policy and global security as motives for aid generosity.²⁷ Still, such more realistically grounded reasons have been emphasized in later research, often underscoring the vulnerable sandwiched position of the Nordic states between two Cold War blocs in the post-war decades, where it became apparent that small states, for which “hard-power” was not an option, could benefit from a rule-bound and mutually supportive international order.²⁸ The historical formation of Nordic foreign aid has thus been characterized by tensions between moral altruistic ideals and harsh political realities. Importantly, researchers concur that foreign aid became an unavoidable necessity. Joining the aid rush was deemed the only realistic way to gain a platform in a new post-colonial and globalized world.²⁹

NORDIC FOREIGN AID CO-OPERATION: FROM FIELD PROJECTS TO INFORMATION STRATEGIES

During the early 1960s the Nordics shared the conviction that as individual countries they were too small and inexperienced to engage in bilateral development co-operation. Still, the Nordic Council (est. 1952) recurrently stressed that foreign aid could grant the countries international standing as role models for newly formed states—an argument that echoed frequently as Nordic aid policy discourse evolved.³⁰ Consequently, the Nordic Council launched several collaborative field projects, the most elaborate being the Nordic Tanganyika Centre established in 1962, the same year as Sweden and Denmark signed the first official foreign aid bills of each country. The continued high-profile engagement in Tanzania during the 1960s has been described as a form of political marketing of the Nordic countries.³¹

An important motive behind Nordic co-operation was that results could become more visible, generating goodwill abroad and positive opinions at home. Just as the Nordics shared a similar outlook on aid distribution, they shared the issue of how to domestically justify soaring aid budgets, a concern aggravated by the long-term enterprise of development operations, the sheer distance between donor and recipient (which made it difficult to communicate accomplishments), and the aid's relative insufficiency on a global scale.³²

As it turned out, joint projects instead tended to obscure each country's own achievement.³³ Moreover, as the aid agencies gained experience, the need for field co-operation gradually vanished. Additionally, development aid increasingly became an integrated part of each country's foreign policy. This stymied joint ventures, since the Nordic Council was not allowed to engage in foreign policy.³⁴ Consequently, various national pre-conditions overrode the potential strength gained from transnational collaboration, especially regarding domestic opinion, since there needed to be a clearer link between taxpayers' money and the outcome of the national aid effort. Therefore, the domestic reasons that saw the Nordics tone down their field collaborations, also led to an increasing need for expanded exchange of know-how regarding information strategies. Nordic collaboration on foreign aid issues did not come to a halt around 1970, it simply changed areas of significance and stepped out of public view.

THE ESCALATION OF DOMESTIC INFORMATION AND TRANSNATIONAL EXCHANGE

At a 1970 DAC meeting for national development information officers, the main conclusion was the necessity to “convince ‘thinking’ people” in each country, since it was “they who influenced decisions and not the masses”.³⁵ This was in accordance with the Nordic strategies already taking shape, and since the governments based their forthcoming aid policies on the DD2 strategy—including public mobilization—they only needed to expand the scale.³⁶ Consequently, around 1970 SIDA held one of the largest spending budgets for domestic information of any Swedish authority, growing from SEK 183,000 to 22 million from 1965 to 1981.³⁷ Norad went from NOK 1 to 15 million between 1969 and 1982, and Danida doubled its information budget from 1969 to 1976, to over DKK 4 million.³⁸ Governmental evaluations and foreign aid research have concluded that the systematic efforts that resulted from these allocations were instrumental in creating public support for development assistance.³⁹

To meet the UN’s petition, the Nordic countries employed the above-mentioned information-by-proxy strategy, which could be understood as a certain “Nordic information model” corresponding to welfare-state corporatism in its use of interest groups. Nevertheless, around 1970 this set-up was not specific to the Nordics, but a recommended foreign aid information structure in the UN organizations, particularly championed by like-minded forerunners such as Canada and the Netherlands.⁴⁰ Still, at least SIDA’s information officers did not engage in this set-up as novices, since they could build on the opinion-forming corporatist tactics developed in the 1950s by its semi-independent precursor, The Central Committee for Technical Assistance (est. 1952). Interestingly, during the 1950s and early 1960s, the Central Committee also functioned as a role model for the simultaneous development of a Danish information strategy.⁴¹ Thus, the underlying ambition to let the idea of foreign aid seep into all levels of society and into public consciousness was not new at the start of DD2; what differed was the economic scope and the fixed 1 per cent target.⁴²

Another major difference was the amplified transnational coordination efforts regarding domestic information strategies that were initiated in 1969 by UN organizations such as the DAC and the Centre for Economic and Social Information (CESI), which, for the first time, gathered together information officers from the global north.⁴³ The CESI was established

with funds from Canada and the Netherlands as “a clearing house for the flow of ideas and information between development information officers” and became the UN body in charge of executing the DD2 public mobilization.⁴⁴

NORDIC INFORMATION COLLABORATIONS AND THE COMMON PURSUIT OF FILMS ON DEVELOPMENT

The interchange of foreign aid information strategies in the UN saw a simultaneous Nordic development. In 1969 the foreign aid information chiefs of SIDA, Danida, Norad and the Finish Foreign Ministry initiated quarterly meetings to discuss material production and coordinate international press trips, opinion polls, and image and article archives. An important catalyst was the Swedish Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, which arranged a Nordic symposium on governmental development information as a response to the implementation of the 1 per cent target.⁴⁵ Furthermore, the foundation and the information chiefs established a Scandinavian Development Society with the purpose of promoting “inter-Nordic exchange of foreign aid experiences” and facilitating the flow of information *to* and *between* the Nordics, and the dissemination of information *from* the Nordics.⁴⁶

The information chiefs soon acted as a Nordic collective, as the collaboration became parallel to other fields in which the Nordics co-operated with the UN and was regarded by the CESI as “an outstanding example of the kind of co-operation [...] envisaged in the strategy for [DD2]”.⁴⁷ An example of such concerted efforts is a mutual trip to New York in 1972, where the chiefs met with representatives from eight UN information divisions to discuss what the chiefs saw as the main problem regarding the DD2 mobilization: the need for films with attitude-shifting potential. Danida had recently concluded that around 100 films on development were produced globally each year, so it was a question of access and assessment, not of shortage.⁴⁸ Most meetings in New York revolved around this question, with the visitors pushing for internationally coordinated stock-taking and UN-supported audio-visual distribution networks.⁴⁹

Where books or exhibition material had to be reworked to cross language barriers, information films usually only needed a new narration track. Furthermore, the UN had advocated the employment of modern media technologies in the DD2 scheme. Coupled with the media-specific

costliness of film, these are likely reasons why the Nordic agencies saw it as imperative to locate existing material, but also a motivation to engage in possible Nordic co-productions. Another reason for the use of film was the awareness among the agencies that moving images had an unmatched potential to activate people into discussions and create an emotional experience of life in poor countries.⁵⁰ The latter effect had recently become particularly apparent when televised images of skeletal Biafran children entered western living rooms.⁵¹ Nevertheless, information spread by mass media was primarily apocalyptic, creating a “psychological resistance” among citizens towards the possibility to help, as contemporary research stated.⁵² On the other hand, mediating only facts was not enough. The 1 per cent target had to be situated in an explanatory and—as the board of SIDA phrased it in 1969—“interpreted” context, creating “imaginative programmes” as Milwertz had called for in 1970, preferably presenting “examples of successful development”.⁵³

Compared to its Nordic counterparts, Danida was at the forefront when it came to issues of audio-visual information. For example, in 1970 Danida decided on a tenfold increase in film allocations to DKK 441,978 (one-fifth of the information budget).⁵⁴ This can be compared to the SEK 100,000 assigned by SIDA for inhouse film production as late as 1974, a sum mainly used for re-dubbing.⁵⁵ Although discussions on global film inventory and assessment were frequent in the Swedish bureau, a developed film strategy was not launched until 1979—still only allocating SEK 325,000 annually.⁵⁶ The fact that Danida could boast such numbers can be explained by the existence of a highly developed state-funded structure for production and distribution of information films which was established back in the 1930s.⁵⁷ During the 1960s and 1970s the agency Statens Filmcentral (SFC) handled domestic distribution and production of information films and was therefore closely tied to Danida. In fact, all Danida films were checked by the SFC for a final decision on distribution.⁵⁸

To solve the question of global inventory and assessment of opinion-forming potentiality, Danida appointed a film committee in 1969 consisting of representatives from, among others, the SFC, the Ministry of Education and the NGO *Mellemføkkeligt Samvirke* (Danish Association for International Co-operation), which handled half of Danida’s information budget as part of the information-by-proxy strategy.⁵⁹ The committee watched six hours of film per month and oversaw re-dubbing and production. Additionally, experts from the educational field were frequently called in to evaluate “pedagogic” qualities.

The need for films on development was the principal issue when the chiefs initiated their trans-Nordic meetings. The first major collaboration was Milwertz' idea to organize a Nordic film competition and simultaneously acquire an information product that could explain "what we really mean when we talk about international development".⁶⁰ Among 67 proposals, Swedish filmmaker Rolf Bolin's *Akvariet* (*The Aquarium*), later retitled *En sluten värld*, was selected. The synopsis of *Akvariet* aptly connected to a DD2 discourse, criticizing growth-focused paradigms, and instead promoting social equality and redistribution of wealth as important development factors.⁶¹ Bolin furthermore made use of the "spaceship earth" analogy of global interdependence, popularized in DD2 literature and in the growing environmental movement, symbolized by the enclosed world of a small globe-shaped aquarium graphically intercut with a photograph of a vulnerable earth with nothing differentiating its surface, thus accentuating unequal development as a crisis involving all humanity (Fig. 1).⁶²



Fig. 1 The globe-shaped aquarium floating in space as the speaker of *En sluten värld* claims that "all living beings are dependent on each other". From National Library of Sweden. Copyright: Centralfilm

The collaboration would point to several aggravating circumstances that made Nordic co-productions of foreign aid films scarce, even though film was considered a crucial area for co-operation by all agencies. Etching out contract details regarding copyrights and transnational tax issues became particularly problematic, resulting in delays and capital being wired back and forth by mistake.⁶³ Moreover, the process would encompass five years of painstaking script revisions as the 12-minute film was to be finalized in “intimate and continuous contact” with the information bureaus.⁶⁴ In particular, the procedure was obstructed by the complex Danish audio-visual strategy with its numerous experts and gatekeepers, since they all emphasized different views on which development problems the film was to “talk about”. Areas would include the arms race, pollution, education, urbanization, communication problems, health, trade issues, economic growth, and the population explosion, as the experts simultaneously criticized the script for incorporating either too few areas or too many.⁶⁵ In 1973, as the film script was still under development, Danida’s new information chief, Richard Lydiker, listed as many as 15 “essential development areas”, including an assessment on how these areas were illuminated in the script “and the quality of that illumination”.⁶⁶ The level of detail in the Danish critique of the script and finished film is often striking. Bolin’s suggested superimposition of crying infants, which was to imply exploding birth rates, was, for example, criticized by Lydiker and the Danish experts for leaving out that the population explosion can also be seen as connected to lower death rates (Fig. 2).⁶⁷ Over the years the Danish experts furthermore deemed the film everything from too “chaotic”, “kaleidoscopic” and “lyrical” to too “smart”, “popular” and “weird”, calling for relentless revisions and reediting of both script and finished film.⁶⁸

In comparison, I have found no traces in the archive of SIDA’s information bureau that the film’s aesthetics, definition of development or opinion-forming impact was as thoroughly discussed. As no film committee or articulated audio-visual strategy yet existed, the script was accepted in 1972 (as in Finland and Norway), and subsequently used in the DD2 mobilization.⁶⁹ Ironically, as the idea had sprung from Danida, classroom test-screenings of the Swedish version, arranged by a Danish pedagogic expert in 1974, provided the nail in the coffin for a Danish release as the audience had considered it “propagandistic”.⁷⁰ The SFC therefore decided against distribution, even sticking to its verdict when a commercial company wanted to distribute the film in 1975, claiming that it “would do more damage than gain the opinion-forming efforts” if the film was shown.⁷¹



Fig. 2 The image of superimposed crying infants was included in the finished version of *En sluten värld* despite the Danish critique. From the National Library of Sweden. Copyright: Centralfilm

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This study has demonstrated that as the interest in common Nordic aid ventures declined around 1970, there was a simultaneous surge in collaborations regarding the domestic side of foreign aid policies, that of public image-building and attitude-shifting information. The Nordic co-operations shifted from openly embracing a collective Nordic power to mainly using the Nordic connections as a backstage think-tank to pursue mutual goals of public persuasion, specifically focusing on how to locate, produce and employ film as an information device.

The study has also pointed to the significant influence of the UN on the opinion-making efforts in the Nordic countries, following the implementation of the 1 per cent target and the launch of DD2, and moreover showed how the Nordic aid agencies communicated with several UN

branches on issues of public information. The simultaneously transnational and national aims of the Nordic information collaborations are interesting as they point to the previously discussed centripetal and centrifugal dynamics inherent in Nordic entanglements. In the earlier quoted correspondence between Milwertz and UNDP's information officer, Milwertz continued to point out the inherent dualism that characterized his swelling foreign aid information budget, as it was a domestic allocation used for international purposes:

[I]t is quite clear that the funds are meant for promoting international cooperation in the field of constructive social, economic and cultural development—in other words, to further international rather than national interests, or, if you wish, to show that national and international interests in the field of development are identical.⁷²

The dualism of these aims and fiscal allocations can be seen to correspond with the duality in the “Nordic” concept in relation to the national, which makes it “possible for the Nordic societies to be different and similar at the same time”, as pointed out by Pauli Kettunen and Klaus Petersen.⁷³ As much as the collaborations generated a shared face outward (e.g. towards UN organizations), the inward-pointing, domestic information needed to be nationally customized and drained of its “Nordicness”, as had been proved by the opinion-making non-value of field co-operations. The complications around the DD2 film competition further established that Nordic development collaborations were best held at the strategical level, as information material needed to be adjusted to national preconditions.

The DD2 film competition became a one-off audio-visual collaboration with an anti-climactic culmination in Denmark. This was partly due to the agencies' lack of experience in audio-visual co-production, but also a result of the over-developed Danish audio-visual strategy, where too many cooks often spoiled the broth. The film's fate was not unique. The SFC repeatedly blocked finished Danida films whenever experts considered them unsuitable as opinion-making vehicles.⁷⁴ It is understandable that such nationally grounded regimes were difficult to transfer into a Nordic collaborative effort. Furthermore, the production was not eased by the discursive shift which occurred as DD1 turned into DD2, where a mainly growth-focused definition of development was superseded by diverse, and therefore more imprecise, understandings of the concept, which

hampered consensus among the commissioning actors. Related to this, the aspiration to acquire a decisive 12-minute piece that could explain what the Nordic agencies *really* meant when they talked about international development displays an almost naïve credence in the possibilities of the cinematic medium, which indeed signals the importance the agencies put into film as an information device for the mobilization of public opinion.

NOTES

1. *Towards Accelerated Development: Proposals for the Second United Nations Development Decade* (New York: United Nations, 1970), 46. Cf. UN resolution 2567 (XXIV): “Mobilization of Public Opinion”, 13 December 1969.
2. The organizations will be referred to as “agencies”, although Danida was not a separate governmental body (as SIDA was), but part of the Foreign Ministry.
3. Letter from Jørgen Milwertz to Clinton A. Rehling, 20 March 1970, 104Q18, Udenrigsministeriet (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, hereafter MFA), Danske Rigsarkiv (Danish National Archives, hereafter DNA).
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 9. Simensen, *Norsk utviklingshjelps historie*, 259–260; Pedersen, "Det bilaterale program", 246–248; Lars Diurlin, "Att vidmakthålla och stärka allmänhetens intresse och stöd": SIDA:s attitydförändrande informationsstrategier", *Efterkrigstidens samhällskontakter*, eds. Fredrik Norén and Emil Stjernholm (Lund: Lunds universitet, Mediehistoria, 2019), 334.
 10. Lars Diurlin and Fredrik Norén, "Cultural Policy as a Governmental Proxy Tool for Improved Health: The Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare's Collaborations with Cultural Workers 1970–1975", *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 27, no. 5 (2021), 667–682.
 11. Cf. Ann-Marie Ekengren and Henrik Oscarsson, "Svenska folkets syn på bistånd i tider av oro", *Ekvilibrium: SOM-undersökningen 2015*, eds. Jonas Ohlsson, Henrik Oscarsson and Maria Solevid (Gothenburg: SOM-institutet, 2016); Maria Grafström and Karolina Windell, *Skandaler, opinioner och anseende: Biståndet i ett medialiserat samhälle* (Stockholm: EBA, 2019).
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27. Carl Marklund, *Neutrality and Solidarity in Nordic Humanitarian Action* (London: Overseas Development Institute, 2016), 22.
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43. Letter from A. Vincent to DAC Delegation Heads, 24 March 1970, 104Q18, MFA:DNA.
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54. Minutes, Danida information committee meetings, 11–16 November 1970; Danida board meeting, 16 May 1969, 104Q5, MFA:DNA.
55. "Arbetsprogram för materialgruppen 74/75", A8A:8/9.81, SIDA, Svenska Riksarkivet (National Archives of Sweden). It should be mentioned that SIDA also allocated smaller grants for external filmmakers from 1970, as well as co-funded several projects with Swedish National Television. Cf. *U-information: Fyraårsplan för SIDA's informationsverksamhet: 1971/72–74/75* (Stockholm: SIDA, 1971), 66, 155–159, 163.
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62. Gustaf Johansson, *När man skär i nuet faller framtiden ut: Den globala krisens bildvärld i Sverige under 1970-talet* (Uppsala: Uppsala University, 2018), 45–55. Cf. Berg et al., *En svindlande uppgift*, 258.
63. For example, Letter from Bo Kärre to Ole Dich, 21 June 1972, 104Q5, MFA:DNA.
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70. Letter from Albahn Hansen to Liss Hansen, 12 September 1974, 104Q26, SRIU:DNA.
71. Notes, Liss Hansen, 28 April 1977, 104Q26, SRIU:DNA.
72. Letter from Jørgen Milwertz to Clinton A. Rehling, 20 March 1970, 104Q18, MFA:DNA.
73. Kettunen and Petersen, "Images of the Nordic", 14.
74. Two examples of films that were stopped by the SFC are *Ujamaa* (Neesgaard, 1971) and *Det er jeres jord* (Bjerre, 1973). Letter from Richard Lydiker to Ole Neesgaard, 16 June 1972; Danida film committee notes, 6 December 1971, 104Q5, MFA:DNA.

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The Diversity Principle Taken to Its Extreme: East Asian Propaganda on Finnish Television

Laura Saarenmaa

On 16 September 1971, Finnish television showed a Chinese revolution ballet, *The Red Detachment of Women* (*Hong se niang zi jun*) (Jie Fu & Wenzhan Pan, 1970), one of the approved revolutionary model dramas of the Cultural Revolution in China (1966–1976). The film had had its world premiere just a couple of weeks earlier at the Venice film festival in August 1971.¹ The ballet tells the story of female Red Army troops fighting against a despotic property owner during the Chinese Civil War (1927–1937).

The Red Detachment of Women was based on one of the eight *model operas* (*Yangbanxi*) that captured the premise of the Cultural Revolution by modernizing the thematic and musical features of traditional Chinese operas. At the level of the narrative, this meant replacing noble characters with peasants and highlighting China's recent revolutionary struggles against foreign and class enemies.² The ballet film builds on the director Xie Jin's 1961 film with the same title. Part of the novelty effect of the ballet film came from the combination of military jackets, caps and rifles with classical ballet choreography and slender ballerinas. In most Western

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European countries, the openly propagandist ballet film was a largely unknown genre.³ In Finland, *The Red Detachment of Women* was televised as part of the late-night programming of the licence-fee funded public service broadcaster. A year later, it was followed by another Chinese ballet film, *The White Haired Girl* (*Bái Máo Nǚ*, directed by Hu Sang) in December 1972.⁴ This raises the question: how did the Chinese ballet films propagating Mao's Cultural Revolution end up on Finnish television in the early 1970s, and why?

In the early 1970s, news of the violent waves of Mao's Cultural Revolution was fresh in viewers' minds. Diplomatic relations between China and the Western world were strained, as were China's relations with the Soviet Union and its allies. Hence, showing Maoist propaganda on Finnish television cannot be explained by Soviet-friendly foreign policy. A more probable explanation comes from the exceptionally ambitious film policy of the Finnish Broadcasting Company (YLE) which, in the 1970s and 1980s, took the Nordic public service principle of geo-cultural diversity to its extreme.

This chapter explores the journey of Chinese ballet films onto Finnish television and outlines the programming policy context for these broadcasts. The study centres on the YLE Film Service (Filmipalvelu), an independent unit responsible for rental of foreign films and series. The Film Service unit operated independently from 1967 to 1987. In its heyday, the Film Service unit, initially called the Film Rental Department (Filmivuokraamo), was a working unit for 30 television professionals, responsible for a 40–50% share of the television programming.⁵ The core function of the YLE Film Service was to participate in international film festivals and screenings and to choose foreign films and programmes for broadcast. The annual screenings were arranged around Europe by the European Broadcasting Union, in West Germany by the Association of Public Broadcasting Corporations in the Federal Republic of Germany, and in Moscow by the Soviet Teleforum. In addition, there were annual film festivals such as the Venice, Cannes and London Film Festivals, and numerous national screenings based on bilateral contracts and communication. Through their choices of foreign films and series, the rental film professionals participated in shaping the national collective mindset and people's view of the world.

The share and significance of imported foreign films and programmes has gained relatively little attention in Nordic television history. This chapter concentrates on the rental film operations of the Finnish Broadcasting Company, YLE. However, there are many similarities between the YLE Film Service and the rental film units at other Nordic public service

television companies, and in this sense some of the findings of this study apply to other Nordic countries as well. This chapter primarily draws on archival material from the YLE company archive, including memos and papers on the resources and working practices of the Film Service unit, correspondence with the YLE management, and travel plans and reports from screenings and festivals. A limitation is that the archive primarily covers the years 1973–1984 and thus includes little information about the early years, 1967–1972, which are fundamental in tracing the journey of the aforementioned Chinese ballet films.⁶ In order to shed light on the early years of the YLE Film Service, then, this study additionally makes use of the digital archive of *Helsingin Sanomat* and interviews with YLE professionals.⁷

The model work ballet films have been discussed as part of Chinese film history and artistic traditions of opera and ballet dancing,⁸ but it is difficult to find information on their circulation in Europe. Previous research on Chinese cinema and its transnational circulation shows that international influences and exchange are of importance from the beginning of the twentieth century through to the 1940s—and then reappear in the 1980s—whereas the period 1949–1976 has been discussed in terms of retrenchment and isolation.⁹ Film historian Tina Mai Chen has complicated the periodization by exploring the circulation of Chinese films in the Soviet Union and Eastern European socialist countries until 1957, after which relations with China and the USSR froze. The screening of *The Red Detachment of Women* at the Venice Film Festival in 1971 marked the beginning of a new phase in the People's Republic of China's cultural diplomacy towards the west.¹⁰

In this study, the broadcasts of Chinese ballet films are used to nuance the understanding of Finland as the compliant neighbour of the Soviet Union, and the Soviet ambassadors' interference in YLE programming policy as the dominant narrative of 1970s Finnish television.¹¹ From the perspective of YLE foreign film policy, operated by the Film Service unit, the Chinese ballet films were unquestionably part of an ambitious education drive concerning world film cultures.

FILM EDUCATION THROUGH TELEVISION

Notwithstanding the distinctive characteristics of the different Nordic television companies, the Nordic countries share the BBC-driven public service television ideals of equality, high standards of news and current

affairs programming, and a strong focus on citizenship address and civil education.¹² A distinctive feature of Nordic public service television has been the substantially high number of internationally imported programmes and films.¹³ Television, like cinema before it, introduced Nordic film viewers to different languages and modes of expression. Since Nordic television audiences were already accustomed to following subtitles at the cinema, the same approach became a somewhat self-evident way of watching television. The acceptance of subtitles perhaps had an effect on the way that Nordic television developed its international and multilingual repertoire of programmes. However, there was also a determined programme policy that aimed at developing television as an arena for culturally diverse programming. These aims were enforced through the international news and programme exchange networks.

At YLE, internationalism was one of the founding programming policy principles of the 1960s. As stated by Kaarle Stewen (1934–2019), the head of the YLE Film Service from 1967 to 1975, “showing films from various points of the compass is part of the ongoing cultural emergence we are presently living through”.¹⁴ Internationalism characterized the decade more generally. YLE’s television department, at the time a dynamic organization for young television professionals, saw television as having an important ethical mission in increasing understanding between people, nation and races. “Our destiny is tied to what happens to other people or nations in other corners of the world. The task of television is to get people to realize this connection of destinies.”¹⁵ These declamations reflect the shared sense of solidarity in the 1960s, driven by international flows of New Leftist thinking.

The Nordic ideas of internationalism were rooted in the transnational waves of neo-Marxist left-wing radicalism, but gained broad support from all political directions. Internationalism was the mindset of the 1960s generation that distanced itself from the nationalism of the 1940s and 1950s and, in the peripheral Nordic context, acted internationally to break free from the region’s geographical remoteness. In the sphere of politics, internationalism took the form of engaging in the UN and joining in the transnational flows of anti-colonial criticisms, strongly provoked by student movements and civic organizations. A central medium of internationalism was television, which brought the distant places of the globe into people’s living rooms. Another important forum for internationalism was the film club movement, which gathered young generations in screenings that

introduced second- and third-world filmmaking as well as Hollywood classics.

The film club movement played an important role in YLE Film Service's film policy in terms of film education, which could be fostered through television. In Finland, ideas of film education through television were introduced in the mid-1950s by Helge Miettunen, a PhD in film aesthetics in 1949, a Member of Parliament for the Finnish People's Party from 1951 to 1958 and an YLE executive from 1957 and onwards. According to Miettunen, television could mediate film art for the masses. "The more the masses see films, the more they learn to appreciate it. This would uplift people's overall cultural competence."¹⁶ Miettunen presented his ideas in his book *Popular Audio-visual Education*, first published in 1954. Drawing on the international flows of mass culture critique and the post-war foreign political climate, art education was considered a vaccine against propaganda. "The great mission of people's free education is to educate audiences to recognize the difference between art and entertainment, recognize propaganda, and recognize the low value of shallow routine performances."¹⁷

Miettunen's theses did not receive unreserved support in the Finnish film industry or among film policy-makers. From the late 1950s onwards, their focus was rather on developing a sustainable level of finance and modern quality standards for national film production. Throughout the 1960s, the national film industry suffered a financial crisis and box office profits were declining. Television, which was becoming an ever more common leisure time activity, took much of the blame. The film industry and film critics insisted that the art of cinema belonged in film theatres and that the small television screen dismissed the essence of film art.¹⁸

Such reservations about television can be seen in Kaarle Stewen's careful formulations. In his book *This Is Television* (1968), Stewen admitted that television could not replace the cinema experience and that the screen size altered the art form. Nevertheless, television could have a lot to offer film culture. Firstly, television made it possible for new generations to become acquainted with classic works of film art. Secondly, television could show films from around the world that would not get any kind of theatrical distribution. This meant particularly films from socialist Eastern European and third-world countries. As formulated more precisely in a memo written by Kaarle Stewen in 1972, "television can complete the selection of films by showing films from many different countries, and mediate life abroad in less familiar living conditions and countries. In this

sense, showing foreign films on television is part of our mission as a public service.”¹⁹

Following these principles, Kaarle Stewen outlined television film policy that centred on film art education and geo-cultural diversity. Through programming that favoured second- and third-world filmmaking, Stewen aimed at balancing the influx of American material. During the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, the massive investments of the American film industry overshadowed smaller countries in the European markets. All notable American film companies had well-resourced representation in Europe, and the well-organized screenings and affordable prices spread material effectively around Europe.²⁰

The dominance of American content was a constant concern and matter of debate in the YLE TV Programme Council, which in the 1970s was scrupulous about following the foreign political spirit of friendliness towards the neighbouring Soviet Union.²¹ This meant a careful balancing of Anglo-American content with a sufficient share of Soviet and Eastern European productions. According to YLE Film Service statistics, the biggest countries for film rental between 1973 and 1984 were, in order, the US (557 films), the Soviet Union (212 films), the UK (139 films), France (129 films) and Sweden (98 films).²² Among the 212 Soviet films, there were several cinematic masterpieces as well as numerous more forgettable works. Among the self-evident representatives of film art were Sergei Eisenstein’s *Battleship Potemkin* (1925), which was shown for the first time on Finnish television in 1965, and again in 1978. YLE also broadcast Eisenstein’s films *Ivan the Terrible* (1944), *Aleksander Nevsky* (1938) and *October* (1927). Another canonical Soviet filmmaker whose work was well-represented on Finnish television was Andrei Tarkovsky, whose *Solaris* (1972) was shown for the first time in 1977 and again in 1979; *Mirror* (1975) was shown in September 1984, and *Andrei Rublev* (1966) in 1985. Soviet filmmakers were also familiar to Finnish film enthusiasts through Kosmos-film, a distribution company responsible for importing Soviet films to Finland. Originally established in the 1920s as a Finnish company, Kosmos-film was confiscated by the Soviet Union as part of the peace terms at the end of the Soviet-Finnish Continuation War in 1944 and run by Sovexportfilm from 1946 onwards. At the Helsinki Capitol film theatre, Kosmos screened films by Eisenstein, Heifitz, Donskoy, Raizman, Gerasimov, Pudovkin, Romm and Tsurai, and later Tarkovsky, the Mikhalkov brothers, and many other promising Soviet filmmakers.²³ Kosmos-film was the base that Sovexportfilm used to export films to the

Western European markets. Most of the Soviet films, for example the extremely desirable films by Andrei Tarkovsky, were distributed to Western European cinemas via Helsinki.²⁴

FROM HOLLYWOOD CLASSICS TO EUROPEAN ART HOUSE

The broadcasting of a substantial number of Soviet films highlights how YLE needed to balance the predominance of American films. Meanwhile, the broadcasting of American films also required careful curation. Alongside affordable contemporary films, YLE showcased Hollywood classics and films by the most notable directors of American film history. During the ten-year period 1975–1985 YLE Film Service broadcast films by D.W. Griffith, Otto Preminger, Orson Welles, Charlie Chaplin, Elia Kazan, George Cukor, Douglas Sirk, Howard Hawks, John Ford, John Huston, Alfred Hitchcock and Billy Wilder. More modernist American filmmaking was represented by films such as Don Siegel's *The Killers* (1964), Francis Ford Coppola's *You're a Big Boy* (1966), Robert Altman's *Brewster McCLOUD* (1970), John Cassavetes' *Husbands* (1970) and Sam Peckinpah's *The Getaway* (1972).

After the substantial representation of British films (139 films between 1973 and 1984), the second biggest Western European country for film imports to Finland was France. In the 1970s and 1980s, Finnish television viewers were spoiled with films by Resnais, Truffaut, Bresson, Godard, Melville, Chabrol and Malle. Similarly, plenty of space was given to representative works of modern Italian cinema: Rossellini, Visconti, de Sica, Fellini, Antonioni and Pasolini. Right after the bigger European film countries came neighbouring Sweden, and not surprisingly, all the notable films by Ingmar Bergman. In addition, YLE showed works by modern Swedish top-tier directors such as Alf Sjöberg, Gustav Molander, Jarl Kulle, Jan Troell and Bo Widerberg. Concerning the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic, YLE followed the official foreign policy by balancing between both Germanys. Nevertheless, the superior production capacity of the West German film industry is apparent in the statistics. Between 1973 and 1984, YLE broadcast 55 West German and 36 East German feature films.²⁵ This made a total of 91 films in the German language, including classics from early German film history such as *Tartuffe* (1925) by Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau, as well as representative works of new German cinema from Fassbinder, Schlöndorff, Herzog and Kluge.

The share of films from the socialist Eastern European countries broadcast on Finnish television was also remarkable: 50 films from Czechoslovakia, 47 from Hungary and 36 from Poland from 1973 to 1984. The strikingly balanced number of films from each East European country reflects the YLE Film Service's even-handed principle in covering the Eastern European film market. Newspaper reviews supported this ideal by underlining Eastern European films as part of the transnational cinema culture. For example, the film *Mrs Dery Where Are You?* (*Dèryné, Hol van?*, 1975) by Hungarian Guyla Maar was compared to *Opening Night* (1977) by American indie-filmmaker John Cassavetes.²⁶ Polish Krzysztof Zanussi, again, was introduced as the most interesting filmmaker in Poland, "alongside the more broadly known Andrej Wajda"; as one reviewer commented, "while waiting for Wajda's new work, Cannes award-winning *Man of Iron*, it is good to watch Zanussi's masterpiece *Camouflage*" (*Barwy ochronne*, 1977).²⁷

THE WORLDS OF WORLD CINEMA

Alongside covering Western and Eastern European countries even-handedly, the YLE Film Service was ambitious about world cinema, generally referring to national film industries in Africa, South America, Asia, the Middle and Far East, and Oceania.²⁸ In the 1970s and 1980s, the YLE Film Service put together broad film programmes from Japan and India. From Japan, YLE showed series of films by Yasujiro Ozu, Kenji Mizoguchi and Akira Kurosawa. From India, YLE showed series of films by Rajindar Singh Bedi, Shivendra Sindha, Mrinal Sen and Satyajit Ray. Moreover, the Cuban film *Memories of Underdevelopment* (1968) by Tomas Gutierrez Alea, and political underground films from Chile and Argentina, served TV viewers' engagement with the societal struggles in South America. Additionally, transnational identity struggles were represented in films by Iranian Shorab Shahid Salessi, in Mauritanian Sidney Sokhona's film *Nationality: Immigrant* (*Nationalité: Immigré*, 1975) and Turkish director Serif Gören's film *The Way* (*Yol*, 1982).

The world films were seen and selected one by one through participating in screenings and negotiating with the copyright owners.²⁹ The process might take months, consisting of travelling, negotiating contractual terms, preparing and signing contracts, and waiting for the material to arrive via international air cargo.³⁰ Foreign films were usually rental films—films were sent away after broadcasting, either to the production country

or directly to the next country. Notably, the further the films came from, the more likely it was that the same copy would travel through the neighbouring Nordic countries.³¹ Storage and courier services were hence key functions of the Film Service. Another was the technical operation of preparing the materials for broadcast by running the film projectors and making copies in a suitable format.³² One of the seldom mentioned, yet crucially necessary, set of skills related to translations and writing subtitles for broadcasts. This was a demanding task bearing in mind the range of languages that were represented in the film programming. This necessitated large networks of trained freelancers alongside permanent translation and subtitling staff.³³

NEW FILMS FROM CHINA

In the first phase, second- and third-world filmmaking was displayed by student associations and friendship societies aimed at advancing diplomatic relations between states. In the 1950s, Chinese films were showcased in Helsinki during the Chinese film week, organized by the Finnish-China friendship society. Finland, like Sweden, established diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China as early as 1950 and bilateral trade relations in 1953.³⁴ In the 1960s and 1970s, the Cultural Revolution silenced these relations.

Screening *The Red Detachment of Women* for an international film festival audience in Venice in 1971 marked a new foreign political phase for the People's Republic of China. Mao's regime strived to strengthen its international status and communication with the West. The famous landmark in this process was Richard Nixon's visit to Beijing in 1972. Notably, *The Red Detachment of Women* was performed for Nixon and his delegates as a stage production by the Beijing Opera.³⁵ In this sense, the ballet was a source of pride and used to attract international attention. However, it is not easy to find reliable data about the number of copies or their travels in Europe after the Venice festival premiere. While the film may have been screened in some other Western European countries, Finland was probably among the few where it was broadcast immediately on television.

Wherever the Chinese ballet films circulated, the distribution most certainly operated via Chinese embassies.³⁶ Countries like the People's Republic of China did not take part in international film distribution networks, but rather their cultural diplomacy was centrally administrated and the embassies took on a central role.³⁷ Meanwhile, communication with

foreign embassies was included in the duties of the YLE management. As head of the Film Service unit, Kaarle Stewen could have been contacted directly about the ballet films, or through YLE executives. In any case, scheduling *The Red Detachment* just a little more than a week after the Venice festival premiere indicates that a copy was perhaps already in Helsinki at the time of the festival.

Although I have not been able to find data on Chinese ballet films being televised elsewhere at the time, the copies might have travelled onwards to other Western European countries where the People's Republic of China had diplomatic representation. Finland happened to have both established diplomatic relations—and a particularly keen interest in showing films from countries like the People's Republic of China. This interest was strictly a matter of programming policy, here pointing to Kaarle Stewen's aspiration to show films from as many foreign countries as possible. For example, the *YLE Yearbook 1971–1972* proudly reported that the selection of feature films was again “as international as possible” and that there was “plenty of room for new or unreasonably invisible film countries”. “In 1972, YLE showed films from 27 different countries, including the People's Republic of China, India, Japan, Chile, Mexico, Romania, Spain, Denmark, Norway, Belgium and the Netherlands.”³⁸ In the same year, in a memo addressed to the YLE Programme Council, Stewen reminded them that the Finnish Broadcasting Company was internationally in a “leading position” when it came to the number of foreign films broadcast. The memo was a response to an ongoing debate on the number of Soviet films vis-à-vis American films on television. Hence, the diversity principle was used to move away from the overemphasis on the US-Soviet juxtaposition and clear the way for the autonomy of the YLE Film Service unit.

Newspaper critics shared the YLE Film Service's ideals of geo-cultural diversity and appreciated the broadcasting of international films from these starting points. In the Finnish national daily newspaper *Helsingin Sanomat*, *The Red Detachment of Women* was praised for taking a step away from conventional forms of classical ballet in order to seek “new expression to portray the proletarian heroes”.³⁹ The style of the anonymous review seems a bit fervent for liberal *Helsingin Sanomat*. It is possible that the film was not available for preview and that the text was based on press material and images provided by the embassy of the People's Republic of China.

China's foreign political regeneration intensified after the death of Mao in 1975. Trade relations with the Nordic countries were improved through state visits of the Vice Premier of the State Council Geng Biao in the spring of 1979. Biao was China's former ambassador to Sweden and hence was familiar with the Nordic countries.⁴⁰ A Chinese animation film *Monkey King: Havoc in Heaven* (Wan Laiming, 1963) shown on Finnish television in March 1979 was perhaps scheduled for Biao's upcoming visit.⁴¹ In 1980, *Monkey King* was also shown on Swedish television (SVT).⁴² In January 1984, Finland's Foreign Secretary Paavo Väyrynen visited China with the ambition of signing a culture exchange contract between Finland and the People's Republic of China.⁴³ It was perhaps the cultural exchange contract that enabled the YLE Film Service to gain access to the East Asian film markets in the following September 1984, when a tour to China and Japan was arranged.⁴⁴ From this tour, the YLE Film Service imported a selection of contemporary Chinese films for television. As *Helsingin Sanomat* noted in the foreign news section: "The wave of political liberation has entered Chinese film production. This will be witnessed by Finnish television viewers next year when the new films and documentaries from China will be broadcast."⁴⁵ In an interview with Nils Ljungdell, the head of the YLE Film Service after Kaarle Stewen, it was attested that the propagandist tone that used to characterize earlier films from the People's Republic of China had now been replaced with more humane themes, and that in China, it was now possible to reflect the nation's past critically. Read from a historic distance, it seems like the YLE Film Service film buyers were cast as cultural diplomatic ambassadors to testify to the opening of China—and Chinese markets. YLE began broadcasting the new films from China at the beginning of 1985. The critical response was polite and appreciative.⁴⁶ People's appetite for modern Chinese films was not necessarily great. In a newspaper caricature published in *Helsingin Sanomat*, a rental video shop owner cheers up while reading from the paper about the upcoming new TV films from the People's Republic of China and Hungary (Fig. 1).

ECONOMICALLY MOTIVATED NORTH KOREA

A programming policy that emphasized geo-cultural diversity might also explain the two films from the People's Republic of Korea (PRK) on Finnish television in the early 1980s. The first of them, *An Jung Gun Shoots Ito Hirobumi* (Kil-son Om, 1979), was a historical drama based on



Fig. 1 A rental video shop owner notes, “YLE has bought films for television from China and Hungary. Great!” *Helsingin Sanomat*, 5 October 1984. Copyright courtesy of the estate of Kari Suomalainen

the original manuscript by President Kim Il-Sung, the founder and life-time ruler of the People’s Republic of Korea.⁴⁷ The second Korean film, *Tale of Chung Hyang* (Yong-Gyu Yoon & Won Jun Yu, 1980),⁴⁸ was a romantic fairy tale similarly situated in a nationalistic historical setting. The first mentioned film, *An Jung Gun Shoots*, was introduced to a European audience at the Karlovy Vary Film Festival in Czechoslovakia in June–July 1980, again indicating that another copy was perhaps in Helsinki already at the time of the festival.⁴⁹ There is little evidence of *An Jung Gun Shoots* being screened or broadcast on television elsewhere in Western Europe. Rather, it seems that Eastern Europe was the primary area for North Korean culture diplomacy, and *Tale of Chung Hyang* had its TV premiere in Poland in March 1983 and a theatrical premiere in several Eastern European countries.⁵⁰

Another area of interest was the militarily neutral Nordic countries Finland and Sweden. Trade relations between Finland and the People’s Republic of Korea had been established in the early 1970s through deals

on paper-making machines.⁵¹ At the time, the Finnish-Korea friendship society (est. 1968) used cultural diplomacy to enhance the official relations. One of the contributions of the friendship society was a Korean film week, organized in Helsinki in October 1972. The opening film *A Flower Girl* (Ik-gyu Choe & Hak Pak, 1972), a nationalistic romance also based on an original manuscript by Kim Il-Sung, was, according to *Helsingin Sanomat*, screened to a full house of enthusiastic film-goers.⁵² Diplomatic relations between Finland and the People's Republic of Korea were established in the following year 1973, and the North Korean embassy was opened in Helsinki in 1978. The paper machine deals turned out to be unsuccessful because of North Korea's financial crisis and inability to pay.⁵³ Swedish companies such as Volvo and Atlas Copco also faced heavy losses in North Korea in the 1970s.⁵⁴

Notwithstanding the unfortunate paper machine deals, North Korea was diplomatically active in Northern Europe again in the early 1980s, desperately looking for means to improve the economic viability of the state. This was seen as being possible, again, through the militarily neutral northern countries of Finland, Sweden and Austria.⁵⁵ The screening of the North Korean films on Finnish television in 1980 and 1983 most likely resulted from the economically motivated cultural diplomacy practised through the North Korean embassy. A North Korean film shown on Swedish television in 1981 supports the theory of North Korea's tendentious cultural diplomacy towards Finland and Sweden. The film in question was *A Flower Girl*, a revolution romance based on an original manuscript by Kim Il-Sung. The film was shown on Swedish television (SVT) as part of a summer Saturday evening series, introducing films from rare film countries.⁵⁶ According to Swedish film historian Per Vesterlund, some Swedish reviewers objected to the showing of a film that openly praised the North Korean dictatorship. Others were more tolerant, admitting that the film was openly propagandist, but worth watching anyway because of its exceptional East Asian origin.⁵⁷

In Finland, the propagandist tone of the North Korean films attracted no attention. In the newspaper reviews, the films were described in aesthetic terms only. The ideological underpinnings of the North Korean films were not discussed, nor their televising questioned. Perhaps the rental film practices were not transparent enough for public scrutiny. Or perhaps focusing on aesthetics was a way of maintaining professional integrity during the dichotomous political order of the Cold War.

CONCLUSION

In April 1983, a couple of months before *Tale of Chung Hyang* was shown on Finnish television, the ambassador of the People's Republic of Korea had been expelled from Finland because of an attempt to bribe the Speaker of the Finnish Parliament. North Korean diplomats had also been expelled in the mid-1970s because of alcohol, tobacco and drug trafficking.⁵⁸ The misbehaviour of the Korean diplomats did not make a mark on the consistent programming policy of the YLE Film Service. Nor did these political incidents affect planned programming, which continued to embrace a wide range of films from around the world, including films from politically dubious autocracies such as the People's Republic of China and the People's Republic of Korea. As a consequence of various foreign and trade policy interests, such films occasionally became available for television.

In the early 1980s, the autonomy of the Film Service became more and more of a problem for the YLE management. The YLE channel managers felt that they were not informed well enough about upcoming films and did not feel included in the decision-making. The discussions eventually led to the winding down of the YLE Film Service as an independent unit. The closure took place in 1987 as part of a broader re-organization of YLE's functions. The autonomy of the YLE Film Service unit certainly made it difficult for outsiders to evaluate the rental film policy. Nonetheless, it could be argued that in the 1970s and 1980s Cold War climate, the ambitious rental film programming of the YLE Film Service was possible precisely because of the autonomy of the unit. The decision-making was centralized among a small group of people who shared the programming policy principles and worked consistently to uphold them through the decades. Consequently, this occasionally led to the broadcasting of some politically biased, propagandist foreign films such as the aforementioned Chinese and North Korean examples. Meanwhile, the critical response was tolerant towards the political propaganda in evidence among the broad selection of foreign films from around the world. The public interest in Chinese and North Korean films was modest, and the films did not attract public attention beyond scant newspaper reviews. Nevertheless, it is evident that during the Film Service years, Finnish television viewers had the opportunity to enjoy a film programme that would impress any university film studies department today.

NOTES

1. Venice Film Festival 1971 took place from 25 August to 6 September 1971. <https://artsandculture.google.com/entity/1971-venice-international-film-festival/m0wsvsyy?hl=en> (accessed 22 February 2022).
2. Rosemary Roberts, “Performing Gender in Maoist Ballet: Mutual Subversions of Genre and Ideology in *The Red Detachment of Women*”, *Intersections: Gender and Sexuality in Asia and the Pacific*, vol. 16, no. 3 (2008).
3. *The Red Detachment of Women* was a cover story of *Cahiers du Cinema* March–April 1972 issue. The piece, “La Révolution culturelle dans les studios en Chine”, written by Joris Ivens and Marceline Loridan confirms that the film was broadly known and discussed in Western Europe in the early 1970s. However, there are no references to theatrical distribution or screenings of the film in France or elsewhere in Europe in the article.
4. YLE TV1, 20 December 1972.
5. The share of domestic television production in the Finnish YLE in the mid-1970s was around 56–58%. The three countries that provided the largest share of imported programmes were the US and the UK at 40%, plus neighbouring Sweden at 14%. Feature films accounted for around 10% of the programming as a whole. Seija Nurmi and Raija Parkkonen, “Televisio-ohjelmiston rakenne ohjelmatyypeittäin ja alkuperäimittäin vuosina 1977–1979 sekä toimintavuonna 1979/80”, Oy Yleisradio Ab Sarja B 1/1982; Juha Kytömäki, “Televisio-ohjelmiston rakenne 1975 ohjelmatyypin ja alkuperämaan mukaan”. Yleisradio, PTS-tutkimuksia B 17/1976.
6. Kaarle Stewen’s archive at the National Archives of Finland (Hereafter KS:NAF) includes some papers about the early years but nothing about the communication with foreign embassies. Kaarle Stewen passed away soon after the interview in October 2019. The interview focused on the rental film operations more generally and did not touch on the specific question of the Chinese films.
7. Interview with Kaarle Stewen (1934–2019), 22 October 2019; phone interviews with Timoteus Tuovinen, 20 May 2021; Harri Lumme, 25 May 2021; Juhani Törnroos, 26 April 2021; Harry Isakson, 27 May 2021; Juha Kindberg, 31 May 2021.
8. Paul Pickowicz, *China on Film: A Century of Exploration, Confrontation, and Controversy* (Lanham: The Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, 2012); Chris Berry and Mary Farquhar, *China on Screen: Cinema and Nation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006); Christine Harris, “Re-Makes/Re-Models: The Red Detachment of Women between Stage and Screen”, *The Opera Quarterly*, vol. 26, no. 2–3 (2010), 316–342;

- Rosemary Roberts, “Performing Gender in Maoist Ballet: Mutual Subversions of Genre and Ideology in *The Red Detachment of Women*”, *Intersections: Gender and Sexuality in Asia and the Pacific*, vol. 16, no. 3 (2008).
9. Tina Mai Chen, “International Film Circuits and Global Imaginaries in the People’s Republic of China, 1949–57”, *Journal of Chinese Cinemas*, vol. 3, no. 2 (2009), 149.
 10. Tina Mai Chen, “Gendered Globality as a Cold War Framework: International Dimensions of Chinese Female Bodies in the 1960s”, *Positions: Asia Critique*, vol. 28, no. 3 (2020), 603–630.
 11. See, for example, Raimo Salokangas, “The Shadow of the Bear: Finnish Broadcasting, National Interest and Self-censorship during the Cold War”, *The Nordic Media and the Cold War*, eds. Henrik G. Bastiansen and Rolf Werenskjöld (Gothenburg: Nordicom, 2015), 67–100; Laura Saarenmaa, “Travelling with the President: State Visits, Television Diplomacy and the Promise of the Backstage”, *Remapping Cold War Media: Institutions, Infrastructures, Networks, Exchanges*, eds. Alice Lovejoy and Mari Pajala (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2022).
 12. On the educational aims of European public service, see Bernie Grummel, “The Educational Character of Public Service Broadcasting from Cultural Enrichment to Knowledge Society”, *European Journal of Communication*, vol. 24, no. 3 (2009), 267–285; Espen Ytreberg, “Ideal Types in Public Service Television: Paternalists and Bureaucrats, Charismatics and Avant-Gardists”, *Media Culture and Society*, vol. 24, no. 6 (2002), 759–774.
 13. On the Nordic Public Service, see, for example, Karina Horsti and Gunilla Hultén, “Directing Diversity: Managing Cultural Diversity Media Policies in Finnish and Swedish Public Service Broadcasting”, *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, vol. 14, no. 2 (2011), 209–227.
 14. Kaarle Stewen, *Tämä on televisio: Opas suomalaisen tv:n maailmaan* (Helsinki: Weilin + Göös, 1968), 139.
 15. Ville Zilliacus and Nils-Börje Stormbom, “Ohjelmatoiminnan tavoitteet”, *Tämä on televisio*, ed. Kaarle Stewen (Helsinki: Weilin + Göös, 1968), 86–87.
 16. Helge Miettunen, *Audio-visuaalinen kansansivistystyo* (Kuopio, 1954), 17–18.
 17. Miettunen, *Audio-visuaalinen*, 17.
 18. On the film political debates, see, for example, Essi Viitanen, *RefRACTing Space: Navigating the Suburban Milieu in Finnish Film 1960–1980* (University College London, 2015), <https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/1461231> (accessed 23 February 2022).
 19. Kaarle Stewen, “tv-ohjelmaneuvoston työryhmälle”, 11 December 1972, KS:NAF.
 20. Kaarle Stewen, interview, 22 October 2019. On US dominance of film imports in Sweden, see Ulf Jonas Björk, “‘Have Gun, Will Travel’: Swedish

- Television and American Westerns, 1959–1969,” *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, vol. 21, no. 3 (2001), 309–321; Tove Thorslund, “Do You Have a TV?": Negotiating Swedish Public Service through 1950s Programming, ‘Americanization’, and Domesticity (Stockholm: Stockholm University, 2018).
21. The Finnish Broadcasting Company (YLE) was regulated (from 1948) by an Administrative Council that consisted of Members of Parliament in proportion to their parliamentary strength. The Administrative Council nominated a Programme Council to examine and approve the programming plans and review the broadcast programmes in retrospect. The 1970s was a politically particularly intensive period for the Programme Council. The Programme Councils were disbanded in 1992.
 22. “The Division of the Foreign Feature Films by Countries 1973–1984”, YLE Film Service, 19 November 1984, YLE Film Service Archive (YFSA).
 23. Kaarle Stewen, “Elokuvahistorian unohdettu luku: Miten Suomesta tuli Neuvostoelokuvan näyteikkuna”, *Kanava*, vol. 3 (1999); Öhman, Mia, “Peili-elokuvan vastaanotto Suomessa: Andrei Tarkovski neuvostoelokuvan keulakuvana”, *Läbikuva*, vol. 32, no. 1 (2019), 27–45.
 24. Phone interview with Juha Kindberg, 31 May 2021.
 25. “The Division of the Foreign Feature Films by Countries 1973–1984”, YLE Film Service, 19 November 1984, YFSA.
 26. *Helsingin Sanomat*, 11 May 1979.
 27. *Helsingin Sanomat*, 14 August 1981.
 28. On the concept of world cinemas, see, for example, Natasa Durovicova and Kathleen Newman, eds., *World Cinemas, Transnational Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2010).
 29. Kaarle Stewen, interview, 22 October 2019.
 30. Kaarle Stewen, “tv-ohjelmaneuvoston työryhmälle”, 11 December 1972, KS:NAF.
 31. Phone interview with Harry Isakson, 27 May 2021.
 32. Phone interview with Juhani Törnroos, 25 June 2021.
 33. Phone interview with Juhani Törnroos, 25 June 2021.
 34. Laura Mäkkylä, “Punainen viiva kartalla? Suomen diplomaattisuhteiden synty ja kehitys Etelä-Korean kanssa vuosina 1953–1989”, The Department of History and Ethnology, University of Jyväskylä, 2014.
 35. For example, Harris, “Re-Makes/Re-Models”, 316.
 36. Harri Lumme worked at the YLE Film Service storage facility from 1975 onwards. Lumme recalls that some films were collected from the Chinese and North Korean embassies. It is possible that this had happened even before his time in office. Phone interview with Harri Lumme, 25 May 2021.
 37. Phone interview with Juha Kindberg, 31 May 2021.
 38. *YLE Yearbook 1971–1972*, 117.

39. *Helsingin Sanomat*, 16 September 1971.
40. Arto Mansala, *Asemapaikkana Peking* (Helsinki: Siltala, 2020).
41. According to *Helsingin Sanomat*, head of the Film Service Nils Ljungdell visited China for film screenings for the first time back in 1978. *Monkey King* was perhaps booked during that trip. Juhani Lompola, “Kiinalaisia laatufilmejä televisioon”, *Helsingin Sanomat*, 25 September 1984, 20.
42. “Apkungen”, *Dagens Nyheter*, 3 January 1980.
43. Foreign Secretary Väyrynen’s visit was followed by Prime Minister Kalevi Sorsa’s visit in 1986 and President Mauno Kovisto’s visit in 1988. <https://finlandabroad.fi/web/chn/kahdenvaliset-suhteet> (accessed 22 February 2022).
44. The Beijing-Tokyo tour by the head of Film Service Nils Ljungdell on 9–27 September 1984 included visits to China Film in Beijing, the Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK) and Nippon TV in Japan. “The international screenings and buying trips in autumn season 1984”, YFSA.
45. Juhani Lompola, “Kiinalaisia laatufilmejä televisioon”, *Helsingin Sanomat*, 25 September 1984, 20.
46. In *Helsingin Sanomat*, a dance film *Along the Silk Road* (*Si lu hua yu*, 1982) (TV1, 1 January 1985) was characterized as “interesting”, and the episodic film *Memories from Beijing* (*Chen na tiu shi*, 1982) (TV1, 25 January 1985) was suggested to “fascinate friends of the exotic”. The youth film *The Candidate* (*Hou bu dui Yuan* 1983) (TV1, 3 July 1985) was seen to highlight the joint responsibility of home and school “rather formally”, but cinematically the film was “beautiful and fresh in comparison to many scruffy western films”. A historical biography about *Qiu Jin*, an eighteenth-century feminist revolutionary (*Qiu Jin*, 1984) (TV1, 3 May 1986) was also considered “interesting”.
47. YLE TV1, 31 July 1980.
48. YLE TV1, 22 May 1983.
49. The screening of *An Jung Gun Shoots* at the Karlovy Vary Film Festival is mentioned in Johannes Schönherr, *North Korean Cinema: A History* (London: McFarland, 2012), 50–51.
50. IMDB, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2199671/releaseinfo?ref_=ttfc_ql_2 (accessed 22 February 2022).
51. Mäkkylä, “Punainen viiva kartalla?”, 57.
52. “Vuorossa korealaisen elokuvan viikko”, *Helsingin Sanomat*, 27 October 1972, 12.
53. Mäkkylä, “Punainen viiva kartalla”, 57.
54. Mäkkylä, “Punainen viiva kartalla”, 60.
55. Mäkkylä “Punainen viiva kartalla”, 55.
56. In Finland, *A Flower Girl* had been shown on television already in 1975 (TV1, 31 January 1975).

57. Per Vesterlund, “Det televiserade cinemateket: Några nedslag i svensk TV:s visningar av biografilm”, *Mediala hierarkier*, ed. Per Vesterlund (Gävle: Högskolan i Gävle, 2007a), 1–32.
58. “Riita IPU:n kokouspaikasta johti lähettilään karkoitukseen”, *Helsingin Sanomat*, 15 April 1983, 16.

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PART V

Afterwords



Afterword 1

Nicholas J. Cull

There is a joke at the beginning of the British comedy film *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* (Terry Gilliam & Terry Jones, 1975) in which the faux Swedish subtitles—inserted as a nod to the serious depictions of Medieval Scandinavia seen in films like *The Seventh Seal* (*Det sjunde inseglet*, Ingmar Bergman, 1957)—go haywire and begin including random comments suggesting that audiences might consider a holiday in Sweden. The joke is apt. Sweden and the other Nordic countries worked hard during the post-war period both to ensure the international visibility of their culture and to promote themselves as tourist destinations. Their efforts were instrumental in building the present image of that part of the world. The Norwegian political scientist Iver Neumann observed that regions are written and spoken into existence. We could add broadcast and performance to this list.¹ This anthology illuminates how that process operated in the twentieth century for the Nordic Region and the role of political communication in the building of images both internally and for audiences outside. It gives a compelling account of the past with multiple jumping off points for further productive research both within the region and in parallel cases elsewhere.

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Beyond their value for an understanding of internal Nordic identity politics and self-image, these essays tell a wider story and deserve to be read beyond their region and by scholars whose geographical areas of focus lie elsewhere. These essays explore not merely a regional success story but universal issues of communication history including issues of gender (Björklund), generation (Lundberg and Heidenblad) and identity. Global moments are opened from a fresh perspective including World War II (Seidenfaden and Stjernholm), the Cold War (Kortti, Dahlen and Werenskjold) and the political upheavals of the 1960s and 1970s. The chapters gathered here also present cases of key tools of communication in operation, including film (Thomson and Diurlin), radio (Hemstad), television (Saarenmaa, Pajala), photography (Björklund), government information (Norén) and exchange programmes (Kortti). In the course of this anthology global and local merge. One of the key narratives threading through a number of these essays (especially the later ones in the chronology) is the way in which the Nordic region comes to express itself through a distinctive and characteristic take on global concerns. Key regional expressions of global issues include environmental activism (Lundberg and Heidenblad, Buns and Hinde) and attention to human rights. The emergence of a global sensibility within the Nordic region has immense significance for other places, given the significant role it played in multiple global issues of the later twentieth century, including opposing both nuclear weapons and apartheid in South Africa.

This book is published at a unique moment for issues of reputation. It comes at the end of a period of success. Research on the comparative strength of national brands conducted in 2021 by Simon Anholt and the IPSOS organization found a noticeable bunching of Nordic countries at the top of the index, with Sweden placed highest, sitting in ninth position globally. No other region elicits this uniformity of admiration. The Soft Power of the Nordic model was such that during the post-Cold War period the three Baltic republics—Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia—all sought to align themselves with the region even as they worked to distance themselves from each other. The Nordic Council was open to such a relationship and worked formally with the Baltic states from 1992. Since 2000 the partnership has been known as the NB8 (Nordic-Baltic Eight).² But success has a price. Like a lightning conductor, the prominence of the Nordic reputation has drawn criticism from certain quarters. Kremlin-sponsored media such as the Sputnik website have singled out the Nordic region for particular criticism, building a counter-narrative to Scandinavian

virtue based on claims of endemic corruption and the abuse of children and animals. The libel is corrosive. The efforts of well-meaning Nordic NGOs to facilitate the adoption of Russian children become, with this malicious reframing, a depraved bid to accumulate more victims or an attempt to offset the population decline in a withering region, illustrated with a photograph of a creepy clown bending over a child.³

Of course, the Nordics are not alone in experiencing this attack. I have argued elsewhere that the coincidence of renewed great power confrontation and an era of easily accessible new media has raised the relevance of national reputation to such an extent that we should treat it as an explicit component of security. Reputational security is an issue which is plainly of concern in the Nordic countries.⁴ The government of Sweden has recently reorganized its psychological defence: investing in mechanisms to push back against malign disruption of media and the democratic process, thereby reviving the kind of work described by Øystein Pedersen Dahlen and Rolf Werenskjold in their account of Norway in the 1950s. This threat and its countermeasures underline that the image of the Nordics—individually and collectively—remains a work in progress.

One of the clearest impressions created by the book is the absence of inevitability in the emergence of the Nordic identity and the multiple currents in play around issues of identity. External threats emerge at several points as drivers of identity, both physical and cultural. It is apparent that at its earliest phase for some Nordics the other against which they had to define themselves was their immediate Nordic neighbour. The threat of Nazi Germany and Communist Russia certainly assisted in the recognition of regional commonalities and drove emphasis on internal commonalities. Ruth Hemstad's essay on the 1930s catches celebration of Nordic identity at exactly this point where the shadow of truly unlike states encourages the recognition of regional similarity. The tensions over the issues of Åland and Greenland show that real limits on regional feeling remained for many years. Moreover, it is striking how the wartime experience itself emphasized local experience even as its aftermath drove regional convergence. Emil Eiby Seidenfaden's account of the Danish politician Sten de Hemmer Gudme's wartime career broadcasting from Britain and Emil Stjernholm's case study of US wartime propaganda in Sweden reveals the way in which political discourse could explicitly be an international co-production. Despite the shared experiences, it remains apparent that there are multiple ways to perform the regional identity and express it locally. It is notable how, with the exception of the Nordic Council, the list of regional

signifiers is incomplete. Not all are NATO members, not all use the Euro, not all have joined the European Union.

These essays do an excellent job of unpacking cases of political communication. We see the formal outreach of the state and the role of non-governmental groups like Norden. There are cases of non-state actors taking up slack in a manner of governments elsewhere. C. Claire Thomson memorably compares Tuborg's image operation to a royal court. It is especially interesting to see the role of physical events like conferences, demonstrations and personal encounters managed through exchanges enduring in the era of electronic media. Jukka Kortti speaks of what practitioners termed "slow media", and the power of such experiences is implicit in Björn Lundberg and David Larsson Heidenblad's account of the youth movement around environmental issues in the 1960s and 1970s.

The final point to make is an important caveat to any discussion of international image. This book shows that the strong image of the Nordic region and its component nations is the product of effort and inventive communication; that strong image and effective work have been based on a foundation of positive reality. Simon Anholt, who has consistently reported the strength of the Nordic reputation in the global imagination, has more recently also sought an objective measurement, to log the key contributions of countries around the world to the global commons as revealed in UN data, and to adjust that according to gross domestic product to create an index of which countries do most good in the world. The resulting Good Country Index has—in multiple versions—emphasized the good reality of Nordic contributions to the global good. As of 2021 all four Nordics are in the top ten, with Sweden and Denmark taking first and second place.⁵ The best way to ensure continued international admiration for the region is to maintain this level of relevance to global concerns. Even in a world of fake news and rampant misinformation, doing the right thing matters. As already noted, a good reputation is an invaluable asset. Positive media and speedy rebuttals can help, but the essential foundation must be in fact. Reality will always be the best propaganda.

NOTES

1. Iver Neumann, "A Region-Building Approach to Northern Europe", *Review of International Studies*, vol. 20, no. 1 (1994), 53–74, 59.
2. For a summary created by the Estonian Foreign Ministry, see <https://vm.ee/en/nordic-baltic-cooperation-nb8> (Accessed 23 February 2022).

3. For “Scandinavians Take Kids from Russian Families to Reverse Population Decline”, a story from 2014, see <https://sputniknews.com/20141226/1016291788.html> (Accessed 23 February 2022).
4. For an extended discussion of Reputational Security, see Nicholas J. Cull, “From Soft Power to Reputational Security: Rethinking Public Diplomacy and Cultural Diplomacy for a Dangerous Age”, *The Routledge Handbook of Diplomacy and Statecraft*, ed. B. J. C. McKercher, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2022), pp. 409–19.
5. <https://index.goodcountry.org/> (Accessed 23 February 2022).

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Afterword 2

Peter Stadius

This book explores the ways in which Nordic countries have promoted their position in the international community through public diplomacy and other forms of communicative and collaborative efforts. The present volume brings forward a variety of cases where the acts of propaganda and persuasion have been performed in practice. The methodological focus is on the institutional and organizational frameworks of such activity and the actor agency that rises from the vast empirical material. This is a collection of hands-on case studies of Nordic media connections and propaganda practices. It reveals the multitude of ways in which transnational interaction has paved the way for an understanding of a specific Nordic region with clear features that give it a distinctive profile internationally.

The formative years and age of plenitude of what is commonly referred to as the Nordic Model, roughly from the 1930s to the early 1980s, is viewed here in a light that is different from the canonical narrative. Besides the policy achievements as such, the Nordic Model came to being on the international scene through deliberate propaganda or ongoing mediation. This was crucial in the process of creating the Nordic brand, that is, the

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image of a group of countries where progressive social democratic welfare policies laid the base for seemingly prosperous and harmonious societies. The Nordic Region came to be seen as a model in a Cold War context. The mixed economy, high level of education and comprehensive social security stood out in its totality in contrast to both the capitalist and communist models.

This book argues that not only did internal governance make way for this policy, but the communication of this Nordic Model also influenced its internal development and construction. Put more simply, the propaganda and mediation not only shaped the Nordic brand, but it actually also shaped self-perception and, concomitantly, policy-making. The acquired image became an asset in many ways, and especially in international politics the Nordics were able to punch above their weight in a world of tensions. One cannot overestimate the importance of this acquisition of international soft power prestige giving the Nordic countries room to manoeuvre, which also reflected on the Nordic societies in fostering a sense of security and geopolitical agency across social strata. The acknowledgement of these dynamics gives the study of various propaganda and soft power-related actions and channels a meaning that reaches beyond the scope of communicating a Nordic message to the outside world.

One major point made in this volume is that the Nordic region is more often seen as a coherent bigger unit, not as just five separate countries. This is especially the case with the perception of the Nordic countries as stable welfare states with a high standard of living and generally providing good life conditions for their citizens. However, as is clearly shown in this volume, this concordance was not always an uncomplicated reality when examining practical cooperation with empirical evidence at hand. The internal Nordic cooperation in media and propaganda was not always smooth, and what might have appeared as a united and uniform model region viewed from afar was not always a reality within. In the introduction to the book, one such case of media connections is depicted, providing a deep look into the processes of negotiation and discord that surrounded the management of the promotional film *Somethin' about Scandinavia*, produced in Denmark 1956 and aimed at a coordinated Nordic propaganda effort.

This empirically verified example of Nordic cooperation, with its common aim and practical internal discord, is in many ways illustrative of official Nordic cooperation as it developed during the Cold War. Actually, it is a reflection of the dynamics of tension and concord that have marked

Nordic cooperative efforts since the mid-nineteenth century. In all fields of political and cultural cooperation, the dynamics of national interests on the one hand and a historically deeply rooted drive to explore pan-Nordic ways of cooperation on the other hand have been simultaneously present. The actor-focused approach here allows the unpacking of these realities, and contributes to a much-needed understanding of the dynamics of Nordic cooperation beyond the often naively pictured rosy images expressed in celebratory speeches by politicians and other insiders of official Nordic cooperation. This last remark is not to be taken as a critique of Nordic cooperation as such, but rather as affirmative support for the need for research-based knowledge on the history and nature of Nordic cooperation.

The transnational perspective at hand is a fruitful approach in order to unpack the realities of entangled media histories, still often left in the shadows of national narratives. Many of the given examples show how difficult media cooperation has been even between the Nordic countries, often lauded for their deep mutual trust and high degree of cultural affinity. National media are difficult to root in transnational cooperative forms for the greater public.

The concept of propaganda is deliberately used in this volume, and it calls for reflection. Originating from the Catholic counter-reformation of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the notion eventually came to have a mainly negative connotation. During World War I, propaganda became a dominating feature in the media and an important part of that war's cultural and image landscape. The war propaganda was later seen as one of the factors when attempting to understand how that dystopian disaster had happened. Still, the word propaganda was not unanimously seen in a negative light. In the Soviet Union propaganda was a neutral, if not even positive, term hinting at the need to fight the great ideological battle through extensive propaganda campaigns aimed at the great public. Agitation and propaganda, AGITPROP, was a lauded part of the system. Empowerment and persuasion, the latter a component in classic rhetoric, became tools for both domestic and outreach use.

The Nordic concept of *folkbildning* (Fin. *kansansivistys*) is in some sense related to propaganda, and has mostly been seen in a neutral and positive light. The word derives from the German *Bildung*, which has no exact equivalent in the English language, but the meaning is somewhere between education and personal self-development. The prefix *folk-* alludes to its popular and collective dimension, and the notion suggests a clear

educator-educated process. *Folkbildning* is usually seen as a cornerstone of Nordic democracy, and as a theory and method for educating the people to become responsible citizens. The Folk High Schools (Swe. *folkhögskolor*) were originally aimed at the young adults in rural areas, and the study circles, both crucial institutions for cementing a Nordic type of welfare state, are vital components in these processes.

Another central term connected closely to the formative years of the Nordic welfare state is that of “social engineering”. As is the case with “propaganda”, “social engineering” has also been a neutral and celebrated concept symbolizing the active and reforming nature of the early welfare state construction. The social engineers were proud reformers, basing their reform policies on science. From the 1990s onwards, the re-evaluation of the early social engineering policies has contaminated the concept to such a degree that it is no longer used in its original sense. The broader and more neutral concept “agency” has replaced it, and as part of a moral turn in historical research, social engineering has mainly been connected to forced sterilization and the racially motivated discriminatory practices connected to it.

Rightly or wrongly, this example shows the sensitivity connected to conceptual shifts. The editors’ fearless application of propaganda as a concept in this volume indicates a critical stance on the study of the Nordic region and its cooperative culture and practices. Indirectly, the editors ask in the introduction what a Nordic Model of propaganda and persuasion might look like. The totality of the case studies gives an insight into a transnational reality in forging a Nordic cooperative media history, a narrative almost absent in previous English-language presentations for an international audience. The external propaganda practices exposed, often rooted in public diplomacy, are typical examples of so-called white propaganda. It is obvious that the receiver shall know who the transmitter is; that is actually one important part of the process. The fact that the Nordic countries usually have no doubts about engaging in white propaganda is in itself a proof of a strong consciousness and belief in actually providing a model for the rest of the world. There has for a long time been, and apparently also will be in the future, a market and demand for the Nordic region.

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