VESTERHEIM IN RED, WHITE AND BLUE: THE HYPHENATED NORWEGIAN-AMERICAN AND REGIONAL IDENTITY IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST, 1890-1950

By

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
Department of History

MAY 2018

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This dissertation has been many years in the making. It all began in 2004 at Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Washington. Chandra Manning, Gina Hames, Carlton Benson, and Beth Kraig instilled in me a desire to pursue history as a profession. I completed a second major in history during the course of one academic year, and I do not believe I could have done it that quickly without the encouragement of Chuck Nelson and David Gerry at the Office of International Student Services. Important during my time at PLU was also the support of Helen Rogers, a close friend and an experienced history major.

While my interest in Norwegian Americans' relationship with Norway and Norwegian culture began during my time at PLU, it was during my years pursuing a Master's degree at Montana State University in Bozeman that this project began to take shape. I remain indebted to Robert Campbell, Billy Smith, and Brett Walker, in particular, for the guidance and wisdom received, but the lessons learned from Timothy LeCain, Michelle Maskiell, Mary Murphy, Michael Reidy and Robert Rydell are not forgotten. Jim Meyer, we never worked in the same history field, but the conversations we had off campus still inspire me.

In my years at Washington State University, one name stands out. Without the tireless guidance, timely encouragement, and friendly nudging, from Laurie Mercier, this dissertation would never have been finished. Jeff Sanders and Bob Bauman, my coursework with you helped provide direction for this dissertation. Luz Maria Gordillo, you challenged me to think more critically about gender. In addition to the members of my committee, many more deserve my gratitude. Ken Anderson, Linda Campbell, Annette Bradstreet, Ginny Taylor and Jamie Hankins are only some of the university staff to whom I remain indebted.

In my archival research, I have received invaluable help from many archivists. Conversations with archival staff and chance encounters sometimes led my work in fruitful new directions. Gary Lundell of the University of Washington Libraries Special Collections and Scott Daniels of the Oregon Historical Society deserve special mention. Kerstin Ringdahl of the Pacific Lutheran University Archives & Special Collections, and Brad Richardson of the Clark County Historical Museum, also offered valuable help. Amy Boxrud, Gary De Krey, and Jeff Sauve, I still remember fondly the three weeks I spent with the Norwegian-American Historical Association at St. Olaf College. Odd Lovoll, befriending you made my Northfield stay in the summer of 2015 particularly memorable. You made my stay both fruitful and enjoyable.

One of the chapters of this dissertation is entirely the result of a chance encounter. In January 2015, I spent a weekend cross-country skiing near Oregon's Mt. Bachelor. I had stopped for a break near a lunch-spot ski cabin when Tim Gibbons overheard my Norwegian accent. In the conversation that ensued, I learned about the Scandinavian immigrant history of Pacific Northwest skiing, and about Gibbons' and Tor Hanson's work as co-curators on the then upcoming Deschutes Historical Museum ski exhibit "Winter Comes." Gibbons also put me in touch with Dave Moffett, John Lundin, and Kirby Gilbert of the Washington Ski and Snowboard Museum who provided ideas for the development of my chapter on Norwegian ski culture in Oregon and Washington.

Finally, the many student peers who have crossed my path on two campuses of Washington State University were invaluable in my own maturation as a graduate student and in the development of this dissertation project. I owe my thanks to many, but Andrea Hetley has remained a particularly steady friend throughout the entirety of my WSU program. Aaron

Whelchel, I never knew you while you were a graduate student, but you have been an indispensable resource as a colleague and also a good friend. May the force be with you, and live long and prosper! Last but not least, Angelique Harding, your constant support and unwavering belief in me, the ways you challenged me to think, and our talks on a treadmill or yoga mat, kept me on track toward the finish line.

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Abstract

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May 2018

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Norwegian-American migrants to the Pacific Northwest built a cohesive ethnic community there from the 1890s that persisted through World War II. They were drawn to the Pacific Northwest by its geographic resemblance to Norway, and its extraction industries, such as logging and fishing, that were familiar to them. The place in terms of its geography, soil conditions, climate, and resources, fed into local Norwegian-American constructions of the Pacific Northwest as a transplanted, new Norway. This ethnic environmentalism reflected the ways that constructed memories of Norwegian geography and the Norwegian past helped define the group's ethnicity, but it also represented one aspect of the case they made for belonging in America, and the Pacific Northwest. The geography and resources of the Pacific Northwest figured into Pacific Northwest identity construction for the region's population across ethnic lines. Hence, for Norwegian migrants, the Pacific Northwest as place could be used to assert both one's Norwegianness as well as one's Americanness as an Oregonian or Washingtonian. Additionally, winter recreation, winter sports, and the promotion of strenuous exercise in the great outdoors represented a

Norwegian cultural transplant that helped shape regional identity and regional symbols. Simultaneously, Pacific Northwest Norwegians' constructions of race figured into the evolving Norwegian-American identity. As Protestant Nordics they benefited from white privilege. They understood themselves as Norwegians of unquestionable American citizenship, and asserted their capacity for self-government in response to the racialized and gendered construction of American citizenship. When their loyalty occasionally came into question, it simply presented an opportunity to trumpet their perceived racial superiority. Ethnicity consistently came to expression through celebration. Every year, from 1890 to 1950 (and in fact up to the present day), local Pacific Northwest Norwegians descended upon Seattle's Seventeenth of May celebration in commemoration of Norway's Constitution Day. While the celebration's format varied from year to year, ebbed and flowed with nationalist waves from Norway and the United States along with internal forces of disunity within the ethnicity itself, it proved a remarkably persistent vehicle in which the community showcased its unity, coherence and strength to both the younger generations and other Americans.

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Dedication

For Angelique

PROLOGUE

On May 23, 2015, I found myself among scores of excited parents, siblings, aunts and uncles, grandparents, and an unusual amount of press, as I attended Pacific Lutheran University's commencement ceremony in Tacoma, Washington. King Harald V of Norway had accepted the invitation to give the commencement speech, and to receive an honorary doctorate. To applause, the king invoked the pioneer spirit of the roughly 800,000 Norwegian men and women who emigrated from Norway to America, between 1825 and 1925, who could call on that pioneer spirit to embrace challenges of the present day. He hailed Pacific Lutheran University as the "fulfillment of a dream," brought to the Pacific Northwest in the late 1800s by Norwegian immigrants, who came with little, built farmhouses with less, then a church, and finally a school. Pacific Lutheran University, the king said, represents "a testament to the hard work and core values of these first Norwegian immigrants."[1]

Likewise, in a speech given in Seattle the day before, the king also emphasized the legacy of the same first-generation immigrant Norwegian pioneers when he spoke about the Norwegian immigrant influence on Seattle's fishing industry. He highlighted the close ties between Norway and Washington State, and the Norwegian heritage shared by more than 450,000 Washington residents, a heritage he said comes to expression every year as a parade through the streets of the borough of Ballard.[2] He noted that many of these were members of approximately sixty Norwegian-American organizations and read the *Norwegian-American Weekly*, published

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[1] Pacific Lutheran University, news feature. https://www.plu.edu/marcom/news/2015/05/23/3522/ (Accessed: Nov. 5, 2016).

[2] This number represents over 6 percent of the total population of Washington State, as of July 1, 2016. United States Census Bureau. https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/WA/PST045216 (Accessed: Nov. 17, 2017).

without interruption since 1889.[3] Invoking the German occupation of Norway during World War II, and his own status at the time as a refugee under President Roosevelt's personal protection, the king spoke of the shared national values of freedom, democracy and human rights; of cultural similarities and bonds that ease business interaction between Norway and the United States; and finally of his own ease in understanding why many Norwegian immigrants chose Seattle as their home. "With the backdrop of hills and mountains and the closeness to the ocean, it looks very much like parts of Norway."[4]

This connection between the mountains and fjords of Norway, and the natural features and even weather of the Pacific Northwest is a common theme when visitors from Norway visit Puget Sound. I made similar observations myself when I first arrived in the United States from Norway to study business administration and later history at Pacific Lutheran University. During my years in Tacoma, Pacific Lutheran University welcomed Norwegian visitors ranging from musicians and academics to political figures, and speakers repeated odes to the "Norwegianness" of the Pacific Northwest's natural beauty as if it were some kind of rehearsed mantra or obligatory courtesy.

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[3] Founded as *Washington Posten*, this Seattle newspaper was the primary Norwegian language publication in the Pacific Northwest. This weekly newspaper reached the most subscribers, in the greater geographic area, and stayed steadily in publication for the longest period of time. *Washington Posten* became *Western Viking* in 1961, and continued publication under that name until it transitioned to the *Norwegian-American Weekly* in 2006. In May 2016, the publication moved to Shoreline, Washington, and changed its name to the *Norwegian American*, a biweekly newspaper that can claim it is the only surviving Norwegian newspaper in the United States, continuously published since 1889. See Norwegian American. http://www.norwegianamerican.com/ (Accessed: Nov. 21, 2017).

[4] Norway.org. http://www.norway.org/News_and_events/Embassy/Its-Official-HM-King-Harald-Coming-to-the-US-in-May-2015/Speeches/Gala-Dinner-Speech-Seattle-May-22-King-Harald-V/#.WAgCRtwt2Dc (Accessed: Nov. 5, 2016).

This admiration of place began with the first Norwegian immigrants who arrived on the Atlantic Coast in the slooper *Restaurationen* in 1825. They were Quakers and Haugians, members of minority Christian movements in Norway attracted by American religious liberties.[5] That year many Americans were heading west to seize Indian lands, and by the mid-1830s most of the Sloopers had joined this westward migration stream. The first among them settled the Fox River Valley to Chicago's southwest, which became an important destination for chain migration sparked by the letters the first settlers sent back home.[6] From 1836, group migration from Norway (no longer just Quakers and Haugians) became an annual occurrence, and the "America fever" in the Norwegian countryside did not abate for almost a century.

Norwegian Fox River Valley settlers quickly turned their attention farther west, initially within Wisconsin Territory. Wisconsin became the center of Norway's *Vesterheim* (western home) in the 1840s, and held that position until the Civil War. Norwegian settlers in Michigan, from the late 1840s and onward, found employment in lumber, mining, and operating vessels on the Great Lakes. The earliest Norwegian settlements held a strong regional composition, in that people settled next to neighbors who had previously been their neighbors back home in Norway. As they continued westward to Iowa and Minnesota, migrants from various parts of Norway intermingled more. After the Civil War, Minnesota became the undisputed new center of Vesterheim. Taking advantage of the 1862 Homestead Act, which seized Indian lands for

[5] The Norwegian Lutheran state church held a religious monopoly in Norway, and Quakers and Haugians were subject to various degrees of persecution by its clergy.
[6] Odd S. Lovoll, *The Promise Fulfilled: A Portrait of Norwegian Americans Today* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 7-8.

European and Euro-American settlement, Norwegians reached the northernmost part of Dakota Territory by the late 1870s.[7]

In the predominantly rural Norwegian-American Upper Midwest settlements from Wisconsin to North Dakota, the Norwegian language and culture dominated beyond the turn of the century. In rural communities, interaction, and especially intermarriage, with other ethnicities was uncommon. Interactions with Native Americans in Wisconsin and Minnesota were fraught with as much apprehension, racism, and conflict as that of any other Euro-American settlers, including homesteaders killed during the U.S./Dakota War of 1862/63.[8] In North Dakota, land-grabbing Norwegian Americans took advantage of the "opening up" of lands to white settlers in 1904. They homesteaded on the Dakota/Spirit Lake Indian reservation, thereby both dispossessing Indians of their lands and becoming their neighbors.[9] Farther west, land-hungry Norwegian settlers continued to take advantage of the "opening up" of Indian reservations as well, but by the time Norwegian first and second generation migrants flowed into the states of Washington and Oregon most were attracted by the logging, fishing, and shipping industries, as well as urban life in or near the immigration centers of Seattle, Tacoma, and Portland.[10]

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[7] Lovoll, *Promise Fulfilled*, 11-13.

[8] Betty Ann Bergland, "Dispossession, Possession and Whiteness: Indigenous Peoples and Norwegian Immigrants in the Upper Midwest," Conference Paper, Nordic Whiteness Conference, National Library, Oslo, Norway, November, 2015.

[9] Karen V. Hansen, *Encounter on the Great Plains: Scandinavian Settlers and the Dispossession of Dakota Indians, 1890-1930* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 1-28 (Introduction); and Karen V. Hansen, "Land Taking at Spirit Lake: The Competing and Converging Logics of Norwegian and Dakota Women, 1900-1930, in Betty A. Bergland, Lori Ann Lahlum, eds., *Norwegian American Women: Migration, Communities, and Identities* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Press, 2011), 211-45.

[10] *Washington Posten* carried numerous ads for lots in the 1890s, as well as other notices about land-grab opportunities. A first-page note on February 12, 1891, for example, proclaimed that the Puyallup Indians were unwilling to sell lands, and that the Umatilla Indians acted threatening.

The language of pioneering was closely connected to "whiteness" and white claims to "original" settlement. Scandinavian migrants, with Norwegians among them, had trickled into western Washington already before the Civil War, but it was only after the completion of the northern route of the transcontinental railroad in 1883 that first and second generation Norwegian Americans came to the western shores of Oregon and Washington in more substantial numbers. Early histories of Norwegian immigration to the Pacific Northwest highlighted Scandinavian participation in the first wave of exploration and settlement by "white men."[11] Hans Bergman, for example, in his *History of Scandinavians in Tacoma and Pierce County* (1926), sought to establish a deep Scandinavian claim to the Pacific Northwest when he spotlighted the Swede Nicholas Delin (or Dahlin, which would be the Swedish spelling), and gave him the honor of the title "first white settler" on the future site of the city of Tacoma. Delin and his associates built and operated a sawmill at Commencement Bay in 1852, near the spot that later became the intersection of Dock Street and Puyallup Avenue. The claimed fact that Nicholas Lawson, the conductor on the first Northern Pacific train that arrived at its terminus in Tacoma in 1883, also was a Swede, led Bergman to argue that this "tends to show that the Scandinavians always have been a pioneering people."[12]

A similar note on June 2, 1892, announced the possibility that Indian lands were going to open up for sale near Tacoma.

[11] The term "Scandinavian" refers to people and cultural influence from Scandinavia. Scandinavia is composed of the three countries Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, which means that Norwegians, Swedes and Danes can be referenced also as Scandinavians. Finland and Iceland are, together with the three Scandinavian countries, Nordic countries. While the latter two countries are not technically Scandinavian, both scholars and producers of primary sources have often included Finland and Iceland in their idea of Scandinavia.

[12] Hans Bergman, *History of Scandinavians in Tacoma and Pierce County* (Tacoma: Hans Bergman, 1926), Foreword, 9-11.

"Pioneering" was also explicitly connected to the unique, and familiar, Pacific Northwest environment. Norwegian migrants were drawn to the Pacific Northwest by the promise of a milder climate free of extremes, a landscape that resembled Norway, and industries that mirrored traditional Norwegian industries. When John Toskey arrived in Moscow, Idaho, he exclaimed that he had "now come to Norway."[13] Similarly, Nels Bruseth, an early migrant to the Puget Sound area in western Washington, recalled in a 1936 newspaper reminiscence the similarity between the Puget Sound and the fjord and island geography of Norway as a major factor in the decision to go there, in addition to the promise of more abundant living.[14] Likewise, O. B. Iverson, a Snohomish County pioneer "thought of Norway," when he first laid eyes on the "jagged summits of the Olympics," which suddenly appeared "clear and cold, sticking out of the dark, green bank of firs on the foothills." Compared to Norway, this "scene was different but just as beautiful."[15] The railroad companies, immigration agencies, local communities, and individual settlers boosted the Pacific Northwest as a destination to targeted ethnicities in their own native languages. From the 1890s, pamphlets, newspapers, handbooks and private letters sent to the Midwest or Norway abounded with descriptions of the rewards to be had for those willing and able to work hard in Northwest farming, mining, fishing, or lumbering.

Norwegian-American migrants to the Pacific Northwest between 1890 and 1950 contended with the demands of assimilation, growing Norwegian nationalism connected to Norway's efforts to establish itself as an independent nation, and the invention of a localized, Pacific Northwest-specific, Norwegian-American ethnic identity. All this in the context of

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[13] Elliott Robert Barkan, *From All Points: America's Immigrant West, 1870s – 1952* (Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2007), 69.
[14] Jorgen Dahlie, *A Social History of Scandinavian Immigration, Washington State, 1895-1910* (Thesis, Washington State University, 1967), 23.
[15] Dahlie, *A Social History of Scandinavian Immigration*, 25.

growing American nativism, the Great Depression, a dried up first-generation immigrant stream by the 1930s, and two World Wars. During the two decades between 1890 and 1910, Pacific Northwest Norwegians founded churches, schools, and ethnic organizations not only modeled on the Norwegian-American institutions that already existed in the Upper Midwest, but also as direct branches and offshoots from those preexisting organizations.[16] During this period Pacific Northwest Norwegians maintained substantial transnational contact with Norway, as well as intra-regional contact with the Upper Midwest. Hence, in many ways, Norwegian-American identities in the Pacific Northwest mirrored those in the Upper Midwest.[17] Constructions of local identities, however, such as what it meant to be a Pacific Northwesterner, connected with processes of localized hyphenated immigrant identity production. Subsequently, in the Pacific Northwest, the local coastal landscape, coupled with the "idea" of the region, figured into Pacific Northwest Norwegian identity invention.

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[16] The term "Pacific Northwest Norwegians" is used throughout this dissertation to identify Norwegian Americans of any generation living in the Pacific Northwest. For the purposes of this dissertation, this usually means the states of Oregon and Washington, though of course those two states are only part of the Pacific Northwest. Institutions established during this 20-year timespan included ethnic fraternities such as the Sons and Daughters of Norway, with local lodges in every community, sports clubs, singing societies, churches in every community, and some institutions of higher learning – Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Washington, foremost among them.

[17] Daron Olson has outlined specific temporal phases to the Norwegian-American ethnicity that he contends is representative for Norwegian communities in the United States as a whole. Olson argues that Norwegian-American identity developed roughly between 1865 and 1925. He views the Civil War as a watershed event. Sufficient numbers of immigrants had arrived prior to the war for an identity to begin to form (the Proto-Norwegian-American stage). Participation in the Civil War affirmed Norwegian-American identity through the "blood sacrifice," the willingness to lay down one's life for one's love of one's adopted country. Concurrently as American identities developed, immigrants also held an awareness of (and shared) Norwegian national romanticism – a celebration of the "authentically Norwegian" peasant culture within Norway – a cultural movement that preceded the demand for independence. Norwegian immigrants, Olson maintains, came to view their group as a unique, special hybrid nation in America. See Daron W. Olson, *Vikings Across the Atlantic: Emigration and the Building of a Greater Norway, 1860-1945* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 27, 31.

Simultaneous constructions of ethnic and American identities among Pacific Northwest Norwegians depended on both ethnic environmentalism and an often unarticulated, racialized whiteness. I define ethnic environmentalism as the appropriation of the physical landscape – its natural geography and resources – in one's perceived ethnic claim to a specific place, or in the invention of one's ethnic identity. The geographic features of the states of Oregon and Washington – the mountains, forests, rivers and fjord landscape – along with the abundant "Norwegian" resources to be harvested from the land and waters, in particular logging, agriculture, and fishing – became central to the Norwegian-American claim to the Pacific Northwest. Concurrently, Pacific Northwest Norwegians made an elaborate case for their belonging based on racial characteristics and their suitability for citizenship as "the best Americans" – not just the most desirable, most assimiliable immigrant group, but the best Americans period.[18] Norwegian Americans did not generally express a sense of whiteness in terms of identity.[19] Neither did Pacific Northwest Norwegians. But the Norwegian-American constructed claim to a place in American society – in the Pacific Northwest as elsewhere – rested on an explicit if somewhat unarticulated racial identity construction.

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[18] Olson, *Vikings Across the Atlantic*, 26, 32, 42, 101-103. Olson argues that Norwegian-American community leaders interpreted Anglo Americans' racial ideology as an "*idealized standard* against which all Americans, including Anglo-Americans, should be measured." Against this idealized racial standard (based on racial characteristics, one's history, and one's "ownership" of American values and institutions), at least some ethnic leaders viewed the Norwegian American, and not the Anglo American, as *the* "best American."

[19] Orm Øverland, "Becoming White in 1881: An Immigrant Acquires an American Identity," *Journal of American Ethnic History* (Summer 2004): 132-41. While Øverland can point to a single specific case of a Norwegian-American immigrant whose identity transitioned from "us and them" when comparing Norwegians to Americans in Iowa, to "us and them" differentiating Native Americans as a racial other from white men (including himself) in New Mexico, Øverland nevertheless maintains that Norwegian Americans in a large collection of America letters (letters from immigrants to friends and family back home) identified members of the dominant culture as "Americans," "English," or "Yankees" rather than whites.

The main historiographies that this work intersects with concern the links between place and the construction of local and regional identities in the ethnoracially diverse American West, and the relationship between (persisting) ethnicity and integration (assimilation). While the works of environmental historians on place and regional identity have had a tendency to deemphasize immigrants' hyphenated identities, the works of historians of ethnicity and (im)migration have conversely tended to deemphasize the role of local and regional identities in the lives of specific immigrant communities.

Environmental historians have long been preoccupied with the interrelationship between the physical place and the formation of regional identities. William Cronon, Katherine Morrissey and John Findlay explored the notion of region or place, and people's interaction with that place – or the environment in which they live – and on the production of regional identity in the American West.[20] On this subject, there is a natural (no pun intended) confluence between the work of environmental historians and historians of the American West, and their long-running debate on the American West understood as a process or a place. "New western" historians, such as Patricia Nelson Limerick, have in the last few decades sought to highlight the complexity or "messiness" of the region, complicate the traditional story of progress, and to tell more inclusive and critical stories by emphasizing the racial and ethnic diversity of the American West.[21]

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[20] William Cronon, "Kennecott Journey: The Paths Out of Town," in *Under an Open Sky: Rethinking America's Western Past* (New York: Norton & Co., 1992), 28-51. Katherine G. Morrissey, *Mental Territories: Mapping the Inland Empire* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997). John M. Findley, "A Fishy Proposition: Regional Identity in the Pacific Northwest," in *Many Wests: Place, Culture, & Regional Identity*, ed. by David M. Wrobel and Michael C. Steiner (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997), 37-70.

[21] See for example Patty Limerick, "Examining 'The Heart of the West,' " *Public Historian* 31:4 (Fall 2009): 90-96; and Patricia Nelson Limerick, "Turnerians All: The Dream of a Helpful History in an Intelligible World," *American Historical Review* 100:3 (Jun. 1995): 697-716; along

Scholars of the Asian-American immigration experience have long emphasized Asian immigrants in the context of the American West, but as Elliott Barkan has asserted, European immigrants, or ethnicities, have somewhat been invisible among the forest of Euro-American migrants in the histories of the American West.[22] For example, in his treatment on *Racial Fault Lines* (1994) in California, Tomas Almaguer contrasted the racialization of Native Americans, Mexicans, Chinese, and Japanese against a singular Euro-American group, which he argued unified (despite the ethnic differences among them) against the non-white racial other.[23] In recent years, Barkan's *From All Points* (2007) and Karen Hansen's *Encounter on the Great Plains* (2013) are examples of studies that have probed the experiences of specific European immigrant groups in their American West settings.

Historians of ethnicity and (im)migration have since the 1960s and 1970s focused on the persistence and reinvention of ethnic traditions and customs in the face of acculturation and assimilation. These scholars rejected the traditional historiographical canon on assimilation, which, through much of the twentieth century, had been the ruling paradigm through which scholars interpreted the immigration experience.[24] That is, they abandoned the process of

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with her book: Patricia Nelson Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: Norton, 1987).

[22] See for example Ronald Takaki, *Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1989). Elliott Robert Barkan, *From All Points: America's Immigrant West, 1870s-1952* (Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2007), xii. Barkan quotes Frederick Luebke on European immigrants as the "forgotten People of the American West," an "undifferentiated English-speaking majority." Barkan defines the diversity of the West as including Mexicans, Chinese, Japanese, and diverse Euro-American white migrants.

[23] Tomas Almaguer, *Racial Fault Lines: The Historical Origins of White Supremacy in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

[24] Oscar Handlin, *The Uprooted: The Epic Story of the Great Migrations that Made the American People* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1951) is an oft-cited example of the traditional one-way assimilation narrative. Examples of works that engaged with theory on cultural

assimilation understood as the inevitable one-way acculturation and shedding of ethnic distinction in the melting pot that reshaped immigrants into American citizens. Scholars now emphasized ethnic cultural persistence and cultural pluralism, or multiculturalism.

In the 1980s, however, Richard Alba brought new life to the concepts of assimilation and Americanization with his "new assimilation theory." Focusing on Italian Americans in particular, he argued that the Italian immigrant communities' ethnicity had reached its twilight phase. He argued that World War II represented a turning point where largely second-generation Italian Americans demonstrated their willingness to make the ultimate sacrifice for their adopted country as government propaganda also minimized ethnic differences to highlight unity in the war effort. Decades later, with dwindling numbers of living pre-World War II immigrants due to immigration restrictions from the 1920s through the 1960s, the third and fourth generations held little connection with their ancestors' homeland, and the immigrant generation itself.[25] In the same vein, in 1995, Elliott Barkan proposed a model of ethnicity as he called it, a six-stage (two-way) assimilation model from contact to assimilation.[26]

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pluralism: Milton Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life: The Role of Race, Religion and National Origins* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), while Gordon outlined theories of assimilation in much of the book, the third part explored cultural pluralism; Marie Haug, "Social and Cultural Pluralism as a Concept in Social System Analysis," *American Journal of Sociology* 73:3 (Nov. 1967): 294-304; Gary Nash, *Red, White, and Black: The Peoples of Early America* (Eaglewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1974; Edward Murguia, *Assimilation, Colonialism, and the Mexican American People* (Austin: Center for Mexican American Studies, 1975); and Antonia Pantoia, Wilhelmina Perry, and Barbara Blourock, "Towards the Development of Theory: Cultural Pluralism Redefined," *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare* 4:1 (1976): Article 11.

[25] Peter Kivisto, "The Origins of 'New Assimilation Theory,' " *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40:9 (2017): 1418-29.

[26] Elliott R. Barkan, "Race, Religion, and Nationality in American Society: A Model of Ethnicity: From Contact to Assimilation," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 14:2 (Winter 1995): 38-75.

While some subsequent works have argued a two-way assimilation process (which refers to a negotiation between the dominant culture and individual ethnic groups where both or all groups' cultures are adapted by the incorporation of elements from the other), most studies continue to emphasize cultural pluralism and ethnic cultural survival rather than "new assimilation."[27] Also, in response to critics, Barkan and others have more recently begun to substitute the term "assimilation" with "integration" or "incorporation."[28] Most ethnic and immigration historians continue to stress resistance against integration, and the collective struggles of under-privileged groups in building communities, establishing institutions, and

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[27] Robert Hueston, for example, examined the assimilation of German immigrants into a preexisting Pennsylvania Dutch Germanic ethnicity in the second half of the nineteenth century. He posited that immigrants moved through all six stages of Barkan's model in the lifetime of the first generation. The political scientist Francisco Pedraza similarly argued that Latino "convergence" with Anglo Americans does indeed occur, but that a "two-way street" – the Latinos and the "receiving society" – determine the ways acculturation happens, and what effects it has on individual immigrants' attitudes. See Robert F. Hueston, "The Assimilation of German Immigrants into a Pennsylvania German Township, 1840-1900," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 133:1 (Jan. 2009): 59-87; and Francisco I. Pedraza, "The Two-Way Street of Acculturation, Discrimination, and Latino Immigration Restrictionism," *Political Research Quarterly* 67:4 (Dec. 2014): 889-904. Interestingly, both Barkan and Pedraza understand "two-way" to mean the willingness to acculturate on the part of the immigrant, and acceptance of the immigrant on the part of the "core" culture or Anglos. They do not imagine a two-way (or multi-way) cultural negotiation of give and take in which both (or all) cultures are transformed by the process (also the core or dominant culture). Richard Alba has also continued his studies on assimilation: Richard Alba and Victor Nee, *Remaking the American Mainstream: Assimilation and Contemporary Immigration* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003).

[28] Barkan's model was published with attached criticism. Rudolph Vecoli (p. 76-81) confessed an aversion to the abstraction and schemes of neatness made out of messy reality in models. His main criticism, however, was that despite Barkan's insistence to the contrary, the model was a blast from the past in its "straight-line theory" basically portraying immigrants as "shedding cultures and identities in the process of absorption into the core culture and society." One is left with the impression, Vecoli added, that "assimilation is normal, expected," one-directional, and almost inevitable. Works on integration/incorporation include: Elliott R. Barkan, "Immigration, Incorporation, Assimilation, and the Limits of Transnationalism: Introduction," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 25:2/3 (Winter/Spring 2006): 7-32, and Elliott R. Barkan, Hasia Diner, and Alan M. Kraut, eds., *From Arrival to Incorporation: Migrants to the U.S. in a Global Era* (New York: New York University Press, 2008).

facing off against discrimination. Since Norwegian Americans by most measures proved a privileged immigrant group, historians of the Norwegian-American immigration experience have been hard-pressed to uncover examples of ethnic struggle against forms of discrimination, but recent works have emphasized ethnic persistence into the Cold War era and beyond.[29]

This dissertation attempts to operate in the crossroads between the two historiographies, and argues how Norwegian-American migrants to the Pacific Northwest built a cohesive ethnic community there from the 1890s that persisted through World War II. Chapter 1 argues that they were drawn to the Pacific Northwest by its geographic resemblance to Norway, and its extraction industries, such as logging and fishing, that were familiar to them. The place in terms of its geography, soil conditions, climate, and resources, fed into local Norwegian-American constructions of the Pacific Northwest as a transplanted, new Norway. This ethnic

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[29] Scholarship on Norwegian Americans carried a largely assimilationist interpretive framework through the 1980s. Some historians whose works in the last 25 years have emphasized ethnicity and cultural retention include April Schultz, Peter Thaler, Orm Øverland, Daron Olson, Odd Lovoll, Knut Oyangen, and Anna Peterson, among others. Schultz asserted processes of simultaneous accommodation and resistance, and the reinvention of Norwegian-American ethnicity in the face of 1920s nativism, achieved through celebration and pageants. Olson also argued accommodation in response to the nativist backlash, but nevertheless persisting ethnicity in part through transnationalism and a Greater Norway nationalist project. Lovoll and Oyangen have argued adjustment, adaptation, and integration, but also persisting ethnicity through ethnic food culture. See April Schultz, *Ethnicity on Parade: Inventing the Norwegian American Through Celebration* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1994); Peter Thaler, "Concepts of Ethnicity in Early Twentieth Century Norwegian America," *Scandinavian Studies* 69:1 (Winter 1997): 85-103; Orm Øverland, *Immigrant Minds, American Identities: Making the United States Home, 1870-1930* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000); Daron W. Olson, *Vikings Across the Atlantic: Emigration and the Building of a Greater Norway, 1860-1945* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013); Odd S. Lovoll, *Norwegians on the Prairie: Ethnicity and the Development of the Country Town* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2006); Knut Oyangen, "The Gastrodynamics of Displacement: Placemaking and Gustatory Identity in the Immigrants' Midwest," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 39:3 (Winter 2009): 323-48; and Anna Peterson, "Making Women's Suffrage Support and Ethnic Duty: Norwegian American Identity Constructions and the Women's Suffrage Movement, 1880-1925," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 30:4 (Summer 2011): 5-23.

environmentalism reflected the ways that constructed memories of Norwegian geography and the Norwegian past helped define the group's ethnicity, but it also represented one aspect of the case they made for belonging in America, and the Pacific Northwest. Simultaneously, as shown by environmental historians, the geography and resources of the Pacific Northwest figured into Pacific Northwest identity construction for the region's population across ethnic lines. Hence, for Norwegian migrants, the Pacific Northwest as place could be used to assert both one's Norwegianness (transplanted Norway) as well as one's Americanness as an Oregonian or Washingtonian.

Additionally, as discussed in chapter 4, Norwegian migrants brought with them an almost spiritual appreciation for the great outdoors, a philosophy that emphasized the health of mind and spirit through strenuous outdoor-activity. The "idræt" ideology, as it was called, represented a founding principle in a number of ski clubs created by Pacific Northwest Norwegians across the region in the 1920s and 1930s. During the course of the 1930s, in the midst of the Great Depression, winter recreation, winter sports, and the promotion of strenuous exercise in the great outdoors represented a Norwegian cultural transplant that helped shape regional identity and regional symbols. City, state and regional authorities, in Oregon and Washington, adopted an image shaped in part by Norwegian immigrants, in their plans to boost regional recreation and tourism.

Chapter 2 explores how Pacific Northwest Norwegians' constructions of race figured into the evolving Norwegian-American identity. As Protestant Nordics they benefited from white privilege. They understood themselves as Norwegians of unquestionable American citizenship, and asserted their capacity for self-government in response to the racialized and gendered construction of American citizenship. When their loyalty occasionally came into question, it

simply presented an opportunity to trumpet their perceived racial superiority. Simultaneously, as addressed in chapter 3, ethnicity consistently came to expression through celebration. Every year, from 1890 to 1950 (and in fact up to the present day), local Pacific Northwest Norwegians descended upon Seattle's Seventeenth of May celebration in commemoration of Norway's Constitution Day. While the celebration's format varied from year to year, ebbed and flowed with nationalist waves from Norway and the United States along with internal forces of disunity within the ethnicity itself, it proved a remarkably persistent vehicle in which the community showcased its unity, coherence and strength to both the younger generations and other Americans. Chapter 5 offers a case study of the lives of three first-generation cultural producers, the ways they adjusted and adapted, and the specific ways ethnicity persisted in their lives to 1950 and beyond. The purpose, here, is to explore different ways that Norwegian Americans in a specific region – the Pacific Northwest – constructed their hyphenated identities. They brought with them a cultural identity from Norway and the Upper Midwest, and a racial identity that crystallized in the American ethnic environment. Upon arrival, they asserted an ethnic environmentalism that appropriated the local natural landscape in the ethnic claim of belonging in the Pacific Northwest. As the Norwegian-American population grew, collective memories and collective narratives served to reinforce this claim.

CHAPTER 1: ALMOST NORWAY: NORWEGIAN MIGRANTS AND THE PROMISE OF A NEW SCANDINAVIA IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

"We live our lives between memory and hope: Memories and hope play vital roles in molding and enriching our lives. When pleasant memories and living hopes converge, life becomes beautiful and strong."[30]

- Reverend O. L. Haavik

"We wanted to go to a land where the scent of flowers and the singing of birds filled the air, where the sun is shining without burning, where the snow is falling without the thermometer being brought to zero, and where the rain is falling quietly and calmly without wind and without thunderstorms."[31]

- Dorthea Dahl

Introduction

It was a warm day in June 1883, when Marie Pauline Vognild beheld the coast of Norway for the first time in her life. She had been born in Vardø, one of the northernmost and easternmost townships of the Norwegian arctic frontier. Her parents had instilled in her the roots of a migratory life early in her childhood when they uprooted and left for a foreign country where

[30] O. L. Haavik, *My Memoirs* (undated and unpublished), 1, Collection no. 2245, Vertical File, in O. L. Haavik Papers, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.

[31] On moving to Moscow, ID from South Dakota in 1903, as quoted in Hilde Petra Brungot, "To Keep and Cultivate: Dorthea Dahl A Norwegian-American Voice in Idaho," *Latah Legacy* 30 (2001): 5, in Dorthea Dahl Papers, Accession no. 820, Folder 1, Norwegian-American Historical Association, Northfield, Minnesota.

they established a jewelry and watchmaker business. Marie had spent most of her childhood in Archangel, Russia. The eldest of three siblings, her trip to Norway had been filled with fun and adventure, but also responsibilities. Her family traveled south along the coast to visit relatives around Trondheim before crossing the Atlantic to America. From the deck of the cargo ship *Arkangelsk*, she had marveled at the size of the country. People had so often spoken of the beautiful but impoverished *little* Norway. Her journey around the northern coast and south to Trondheim made the country appear as anything but little. "Now we see church spires, and people and ships," her brother had called down to her from up above while she finished tying ribbons into her little sister's hair. Moments later Marie stood on the deck. As the ship approached the pier, all the pictures of Norway she had painted in her mind flashed by her eyes, "oh, so beautiful I thought it all was, much more beautiful than anything I had imagined." At the vendor's and farmer's market at Trondheim's central square – *Torvet* – she purchased dollhouse furniture beautifully decorated in *rosemaling* as a gift for her cousins already in America. "Poor you," the cozy old woman vendor had exclaimed, "so you are going over there! It won't be much time for you to play, I would think," she said with a sincere look.[32] Schooled by a governess in Russia, Marie Vognild spoke fluent Russian, and some German, French and English, but very little Norwegian.[33] By the time they set out for America, she had become conversational in Norwegian, and "it was as if the door to a whole new world had opened, I had already fallen in

[32] Marie V. Lund, "Minner Om Norge: Mitt Förste Glimt av Fredrelandet," *Washington Posten*, March 6, 1931, 1, 3. Marie Vognild Lund (1870-1943) met Gunnar Lund in Chicago where he taught immigrants English in night school. They married in Seattle in 1900, and he later found his career as publisher and editor of *Washington Posten* from 1905 until his death in 1940.
[33] Biographical Sketch in Marie Vognild Lund Papers, Collection no. 4077, Vertical File, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.

love with Norway, but now I had a burning desire to see the land where I wouldn't have time to play."[34]

The old woman in Trondheim was right, she later recalled, "playtime was short and one had to become an American as quickly as possible." Immediately, Marie held an association of America with hard work. Immigrants' letters home to Norway, as well as leaflets and handbooks, designed to inform the prospective migrant, warned that settling in America – and particularly in the West – demanded hard work. Albert Hansen Fjære wrote from Montana, but his message was representative when he warned that "no Norwegian boy on first arrival likes it here as much as in Norway, because it is difficult for a newcomer in America. But if you keep your spirits up, it will work out. There is good eating here, and good pay, but there is also [hard] work."[35]

Norwegian migrants came to the Pacific Northwest in search of opportunity in familiar industries in a familiar climate and natural environment. Reports of the close resemblance of the Pacific Northwest to Scandinavia, and an untapped cornucopia of wealth and resources, drew turn-of-the-century Norwegian immigrants directly from Norway, and even greater numbers of Norwegian-American migrants from the Upper Midwest, to the Pacific Northwest. As evidenced above in Marie Vognild Lund's 1931 weekly series "Memories of Norway," published in Seattle's Norwegian-language newspaper *Washington Posten*, the mental pictures of Norway, or the constructed memories of Norway, played an important role in Pacific Northwest Norwegians' everyday lives around the turn of the century.

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[34] Marie V. Lund, "Minner Om Norge: Mitt Förste Glimt av Fredrelandet," *Washington Posten*, March 6, 1931, 3.
[35] Albert J. Hansen (Fjære), Sweet Grass, MT, to Gerhard Kristiansen, May 1, 1903, in Orm Øverland, ed., *Fra Amerika til Norge VI: Norske Utvandrerbrev, 1895-1904* (Oslo: Solum Forlag, 2010), letter no. 231, 406-07.

Memories and re-imaginations of Norway and bygone life at home – viewed through a romanticized and gendered lens complete with attachments to family, community, and landscape – figured into constructions of Norwegian-American identity. In the Pacific Northwest, and particularly in the states of Oregon and Washington, the industries of logging, shipping, freshwater and saltwater fishing, all combined with the natural features of Oregon and Washington to create a narrative of a transplanted Scandinavia – or transplanted Norway – into which the transplanted Norwegian from the old country or the Upper Midwest of the United States found "himself" inserted into a "natural habitat" for which his Scandinavian "ruggedness" made him ideally suited.[36] Such masculine characterizations of Scandinavians, which mirror characterizations of pioneers or frontier mountain men in the American West, coupled with the industries themselves, suggest a demanded male physicality on the part of the immigrant. Additionally, the parallel to the rugged frontiersman invented a narrative that drew upon American imagery and cultural invention. Norwegian and Scandinavian immigrants *claimed* the Pacific Northwest as their own, in part through the demonstrated "Americanness" of the Scandinavian frontiersman, and in part through the production of a Norwegian-American identity that drew upon the landscape itself and the aforementioned "Norwegian" industries in the invention of a transplanted Norway.

The Pacific Northwest and Theories on Regional Identity Invention

[36] Scandinavia refers to the three countries Norway, Sweden and Denmark. Hence, ideas and imagery of transplanted homelands found in the sources refer to Scandinavia, Norway, and Sweden interchangeably. Norway and Sweden share much of the same geography, while Denmark's landscape is distinctly different while the people nevertheless share language and many other cultural parallels with other Scandinavians.

The role of the environment as an external force affecting human agency, the role of people in changing the land, and the role of the natural environment in constructions of people's regional identities are typical themes highlighted by scholars concerned with place as both an idea and a physical space.[37] Interest in constructions of place and region in the minds of Pacific Northwest residents flourished among environmental historians and cultural geographers in the 1990s. William Cronon, Katherine Morrissey and John Findlay described the continuous production of regional identity in the American West, and how people interacted with place or the environment in which they live. Cronon explored a ghost town in Alaska and introduced his readers to the forces of environmental change by examining the Indians and miners who had lived in the area during 27 years of copper mining from 1911 to 1938, the ways their environment (the natural world around them) affected their lives, and in turn the ways their lives affected and *changed* the environment in which they lived. Morrissey explored the mental framework in which regional identity production takes place in an examination of the Inland Empire – a locally constructed sense of self (or meaning) in community with others that comprise an inland region with Spokane at its center, a region that covers an area almost fully enclosed by mountains that stretches into Oregon, Montana and Canada. And Findlay emphasized regional identity production, centered on the western side of the Cascadian divide, though he tried to be all-inclusive in describing the Pacific Northwest as a whole.

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[37] William Cronon, "Kennecott Journey: The Paths Out of Town," in *Under an Open Sky: Rethinking America's Western Past* (New York: Norton & Co., 1992), 28-51. Katherine G. Morrissey, *Mental Territories: Mapping the Inland Empire* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997). John M. Findlay, "A Fishy Proposition: Regional Identity in the Pacific Northwest," in *Many Wests: Place, Culture, & Regional Identity*, ed. by David M. Wrobel and Michael C. Steiner (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997), 37-70.

As Cronon explains, the role of the natural environment differed greatly in Native American and miner constructions of identity. Cronon contrasted Indians' close relationship with and dependence on the environment with that of white copper miners who imported necessities rather than relying on the surrounding environment for survival. To the Indians, the natural environment represented the ability to survive, and to the miners, it represented merely a resource for extraction and a place for recreation and beauty. The white miners, mining administrators and their families, and the merchants and entertainers who came with them, brought a much bigger world around them, with their hearts in the job and not the land. They viewed the area a place of exploitation to discard rather than preserve.

Many immigrant settlers to the Pacific Northwest shared a similar perspective (make a buck and return home), but more commonly they desired to make a permanent home there. Findlay notes that over time migrants developed a sense of identity within a region that could be very different depending on where they lived, and that identity was often imposed on the region from outside by outsiders making sense of the region from the outside looking in. He argues that for many people the Pacific Northwest was a destination to which they intended to go, and that they carried with them a preconceived impression of the region derived from boosters' advertising campaigns that sold it as *the* place to live and work. A 1911 promotional flyer in Swedish from the Swedish Land & Colonization Company, for example, advertised land in Venersborg, Washington. This "Swedish colony" promised a "favorable location" not to be bested, soil "proven to be of the best quality," suitable for intensive farming, fruit orchards, or vegetable gardens. With an "ideal" climate, "abundant" water supply, low land prices with the best of terms, and existing infrastructure that would allow "easy" daily access to markets, the

home seeker would find everything he might desire in Venersborg.[38] When home seekers arrived, however, they found land not unlike Sweden or Norway in that it was hilly, rocky, and full of stumps, but it did not seem quite the paradise boosters' materials had promised.[39]

But if identity is a mental framework, as Morrissey contends, self-made or imposed from outside, then what can be said about the role of the environment in the creation of this regional identity? Findlay, and others, view region and place as constructs that describe relationships between the self, outside forces, perspectives, place and space. Morrissey and E. V. Walter understand place more as an idea – a blend of passions and moral judgments, geographic orientation and sensory perception – that arise as mental projections from collective experience, but belong specifically to a given place.[40] In Alaska, Cronon explored an environment that through its remote harshness and extraction utility had served a specific purpose to the immigrants that came. They came because of the resource the environment had to offer, and they came in spite of the area's remoteness. In Cronon's case then, the environment was perhaps to blame for the lack of regional identity construction among the white settlers.

To Norwegian emigrants, whether they gazed west from Norway, the East Coast, or the Upper Midwest, the Pacific Northwest seemed remote as well. The "lower 48" Pacific Northwest, however, had the resources that local communities attempted to sell both directly and

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[38] Swedish Land and Colonization Co., "Köp Land i den svenska kolonien Venersborg," 1911, flier, "Venersborg" file, "Clark County Townships," in Clark County Historical Society Research Library Collections.

[39] Bob Beck, "Promises, Promises: Venersborg Pioneers Got Rocks, Stumps," *Columbian*, Mar. 29, 1979, clipping, "Venersborg" file, "Clark County Townships," in Clark County Historical Society Research Library Collections.

[40] Robert David Sack, *Homo Geographicus* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1997), 27, 156-60; and E. V. Walter, *Placeways* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 21; as cited by William L. Lang, "Beavers, Firs, Salmon, and Falling Water: Pacific Northwest Regionalism and the Environment," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 104:2 (Summer 2003): 152-54.

metaphorically to demonstrate their importance. Home seekers' information pamphlets issued by railroad companies, for example, always highlighted the bounties to be had in fishing and forestry, along with the bounties that could be harvested from the earth. These types of materials attracted farmers, fishermen, loggers and miners who dreamed that they could also benefit from resource extraction. So in that sense, was the Pacific Northwest really that different from a remote inland region in Alaska? From the perspective of Norwegian emigrants, the Pacific Northwest did indeed seem remote. At least it did until the first pioneers established the beginnings of Norwegian enclaves and institutions from the 1870s and onward, and their letters to friends and family back home started a migration chain that boomed after the completion of the Northern Pacific transcontinental railroad in 1883 (and later the Great Northern railroad). The Kitsap Peninsula on which first-generation Norwegian immigrant Peter Røthe had settled by 1908 was indeed remote.[41] But a train undoubtedly carried him from Wisconsin to Seattle or the Puget Sound terminus of Tacoma, from which he could find Kitsap Peninsula just across the "fjord." The hardships endured by Tonette Peterson and her husband homesteading on the Olympic Peninsula in 1891, made even Tacoma seem distant.[42] But the railroad made the Pacific Northwest accessible as a region, and the natural environment as invoked in promotional pamphlets, newspaper features, and letters home to Norway or the Midwest, invited settlers to share in the cornucopias of bountiful plenty that Oregon and Washington had to offer.

Norwegians and Norwegian Americans outside the region who read letters, pamphlets, newspaper stories, and handbooks about the bounties to be had in this place that so resembled

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[41] Peter Røthe, Harper, WA, to Lars Trondsen Kinsarvik, Nov. 26, 1908, in Orm Øverland, ed., *Fra Amerika til Norge: Norske Utvandrerbrev VII: 1905-1914* (Oslo: Solum Forlag, 2011), letter no. 265, 424-26.

[42] "Mrs. Tonette Peterson," in Hans Bergman, *History of Scandinavians in Tacoma and Pierce County* (Tacoma: Hans Bergman, 1926), 170-71.

Norway, constructed an idea of the place before ever setting foot there. Preconceived or "imprinted" ideas of the Pacific Northwest helped shape regional identity for Findlay's migrants. Similarly, imprints derived at least in part from the booster materials that depicted the region as a place defined by natural beauty and abundance, helped shape Pacific Northwest Norwegian identity. When migrants such as Torger Peterson in Dakota Territory experienced his crop destroyed by grasshoppers the first year, and destroyed by hot winds the second year, pamphlets describing a milder climate free of extremes undoubtedly held an appeal. Letters from Norwegian friends and relatives already in the Pacific Northwest helped paint a picture of a promised land, a New Norway out West. When Peder Greseth of Spokane Falls, Washington, wrote to friends or relatives that he found things more to his liking in Washington than in Minnesota, the "Torger Petersons" of Minnesota or Norway paid attention. Out "here it more resembles Norway's nature," he wrote, "so that it often reminds me of Norway when I see and contemplate the beautiful nature out here. Yes, here there are big mountains with snow caps both in winter and summer."[43] Similar to the Kennecott miners in Alaska, Norwegian migrants were attracted by the economic opportunities promised by the region's resources, but they were also attracted by what they perceived as the region's natural beauty – a beauty that carried importance beyond its value as a resource for extraction.

While the Kennecott example suggests that people motivated by economic extraction are less inclined to appreciate nature for its beauty, and perhaps less likely to develop the kind of attachment to place that fuels identity production, other scholars have linked technology and the control of nature with regional identity. Richard White has asserted that humans and their

[43] Peder J. Greseth, Spokane Falls, WA, to Haftor Olsen Torset, Aug. 2, 1890, in Orm Øverland, ed., *Fra Amerika til Norge: Norske Utvandrerbrev V: 1885-1894* (Oslo: Solum Forlag, 2009), letter no. 198, 382-83.

technologies do not exist separate from nature. Humans and nature are inseparably integrated, and by extension from his argument, human technology is nature in simply a different form altered by labor. White attacked the perceived boundary between the natural and the artificial, describing the Columbia River as an "organic machine," in which the distinction between the wild and the natural and the industrial has blurred.[44] He claims that the dams on the Columbia River made another important regional resource that helped define the Pacific Northwest both as a region, and a place, of natural beauty and bountiful plenty.[45]

From the turn-of-the-century home seeker pamphlets to the local attractions advertising found in hotel lobbies in 2017, natural beauty and bountiful plenty have been common advertisement themes for the Pacific Northwest as a region. Among those themes, certain iconic symbols, such as the salmon, have come to represent the region. William Lang has posited that regional identity in the Pacific Northwest is part of the social ecology of the place, and grows out of and is nourished by the local environment.[46] Indigenous peoples viewed their world as an "enchanted environment," Lang explained, where they lived off the natural bounty of the land. European identities, he argued, derived from this enchanted image, but redefined in economic and exploitative terms. Local boosters transmitted symbols of the Pacific Northwest as cornucopias of natural abundance – agricultural abundance, logging abundance, salmon abundance, and so on – in promotional pamphlets designed to inform and recruit possible

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[44] Richard White, *Organic Machine: The Remaking of the Columbia River* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1995), 104.
[45] White, *Organic Machine*, 64. William L. Lang, "Beavers, Firs, Salmon, and Falling Water: Pacific Northwest Regionalism and the Environment," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 104:2 (Summer 2003): 159-60.
[46] Lang, "Beavers, Firs, Salmon, and Falling Water," 155.

settlers. There was not just one icon that helped define regional identity in the Pacific Northwest, Lang maintained, but there were several: "Beavers, firs, salmon, and falling water."[47]

Boosters' Advertising, Race, Region, and the Norwegian Migrant

Regional boosters and railroad companies targeted Euro Americans, and especially northern European immigrants, across ethnic lines with their pamphlets. Among the volumes of materials in English from the Great Northern Railway or the St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Manitoba Railway, some materials from the land commissioner in St. Paul, Minnesota could be obtained in any of the Scandinavian languages or German as early as the 1870s.[48] Materials from the land commissioner in St. Paul promoted Minnesota and the Dakotas in the 1870s and 1880s, but by the 1890s many Great Northern publications for home seekers had shifted to Oregon and Washington to attract users of its newly completed rail lines to the west coast. In 1890, Ernst Skarstedt synthesized and translated boosters' materials for Oregon and Washington into Swedish in a handbook for Scandinavian home seekers, "since it is impossible for them to get a clear, neutral impression from a newspaper correspondent or private letter," or promotional pamphlet. Skarstedt added that most published materials on the region were written in English, and that they almost exclusively focused on positives. Therefore, Skarstedt aimed to highlight

[47] Lang, "Beavers, Firs, Salmon, and Falling Water," 159-60.
[48] "Minnesota som den er," "Minnesota som den är," "Minnesota wie est ist," "Minnesota as it is," St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Manitoba Railway Company, ca. 1888, Collection no. 132.D.19.10, in Great Northern Railway Company Records, Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, Minnesota.

negatives as well as positives to satisfy a need because existing "texts fail to calm the skepticism of the Scandinavian reader."[49]

Skarstedt organized his handbook into three parts, the first a description of Oregon and Washington, its "land and people, nature, resources." The second part offered a history of Oregon and Washington, including cities and towns. And the last part offered a biographical section on Scandinavians already there. Skarstedt made a point that his book "does not solely focus on merchants and so-called higher classes of people. …Instead, it values and emphasizes the farmer and his toiling the earth." He included merchants, lawyers and doctors in the biographical section, "but also artisans, farmers, and others," because it "is the *working* class who lays the foundation for a country's welfare and builds the community."[50]

In fact, early promotional pamphlets discouraged people unaccustomed to hard physical labor from making the journey. "[Persons] accustomed to ordinary and mechanical labor, and who unite frugal habits with persevering industry, will run the least risk in emigrating; but individuals unwilling to work, or accustomed to live by their wits, are not wanted," an 1885 pamphlet on Oregon stated. "We can not, at present," the pamphlet continued, "encourage the immigration of more than a very few professional men – such a lawyers, doctors, surveyors and civil engineers – unless they have money beyond the expected earning of their profession, and are prepared to take their chances after arrival." The author also discouraged women from coming alone, or clerks unaccustomed to working with their hands from taking their chances. They needed able-bodied male laborers, mechanics and "real" farmers, more than anyone else, to

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[49] Ernst Skarstedt, *Oregon och Washington: Dessa staters historia, natur, resurser, folklif m.m. samt deras skandinaviska inbyggare: En handbok för dem, som önska kännadom om Nordvestkustens förhållanden* (Portland: Broström & Skarstedtsförlag / F. W. Baltes & Company, 1890), Foreword p. III-IV.
[50] Skarstedt, *Oregon och Washington*, IV.

build the community by hand, but they could also use a "good woman servant."[51] The masculine image of a rugged, strong pioneer frontiersman unafraid of getting his hands dirty permeated through nineteenth century regional advertising materials, in particular. Rugged, mountain man descriptions of frontier pioneers in the American West are of course well known, as is their symbolic meaning, understood by contemporaries in a Frederick Jackson Turner sense, as emblematic of true American spirit and manliness. This symbol of a desirable western settler is of course gendered, racialized, and class-based, but it also served as a model of desirability in an assimilative sense for foreign immigrants.

In his handbook, Skarstedt followed the pattern of the promotional pamphlets from the railroads, highlighting soil conditions, climate, and resources and industry, such as primarily forestry, fishing, and agriculture – which he knew interested land-hungry Scandinavians with experience from logging or fishing in Norway or Sweden. But he also painted a racialized and gendered picture of the "typical" settler and described the Native American and Chinese inhabitants as exotic fixtures in the same section where he also described mountains and lakes, and streams and valleys. The home seeker, travelling west by way of the Northern Pacific Railway, endured "a monotonous journey through snow-covered winterly lands" in the Upper Midwest, before leaving the mountain chains behind and finding "the land green and the air mild." The spectacle of "wonderfully smelling pinewood, tree-clad hills, and blue lakes" opened before the traveler's eyes.[52] The successful home seeker, Skarstedt mused, mirrored the

[51] "Oregon As It Is," 1885 (unknown publisher), promotional pamphlet, Mss 6000, Box 4, in Pacific Northwest Promotional Brochures Collection, Oregon Historical Society, Portland, Oregon.
[52] Skarstedt, *Oregon och Washington*, 1.

persistence and perseverance of the rugged American pioneer.[53] "A person with such spirit and enterprise will find ample opportunity to build a good future" in Oregon or Washington, as long as he did not expect "that riches will rain from heaven, or that the country will be running over with milk and honey."[54]

Most promotional pamphlets, addressing the farmer or aspiring agriculturalist, emphasized climate and soil conditions. Skarstedt promised "varied rich soil conditions, nature scenes, and natural wonder." As will be recalled, the 1911 Venersborg flier promised Scandinavian settlers that soil conditions "are proven to be the best possible" for "intensive farming" and growing fruit and vegetables, with an "ideal" climate, and an abundance of available water.[55] Promotional materials from railroad companies emphasized cornucopias of abundance promising bountiful harvests of grains or fruits. Farming often featured on the cover, as in a 1923 pamphlet entitled "The Land of Better Farms: The Pacific Northwest," which had a painting depicting a hillside farmer on the front page.[56] A 1915 pamphlet promised the "charm of a perfect climate, rich soils and peerless natural resources, while a 1906 pamphlet promised "bounteous crops of wheat, oats, barley, rye, hops, fruit and all other farm and garden products of the most favored regions of the temperate zone."[57] Similar to the Venersborg flier promises,

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[53] Skarstedt, *Oregon och Washington*, 60.
[54] Skarstedt, *Oregon och Washington*, 61.
[55] "Köp Land," Promotional Newsletter, Swedish Land & Colonization Co., 1911, "Venersborg" file, "Clark County Townships," in Clark County Historical Society Research Library Collections.
[56] "The Land of Better Farms: The Pacific Northwest." Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad, Northern Pacific Railway, Great Northern Railway, 1923, Mss 6000, Box 2, in Pacific Northwest Promotional Brochures manuscript collection, Oregon Historical Society.
[57] "The Pacific Northwest: A Description of the Natural Resources, Scenic Features and Commercial Advantages of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho," Chicago & North Western Railway, 1906 and 1915, Mss 6000, Box 2, in Pacific Northwest Promotional Brochures manuscript collection, Oregon Historical Society.

pamphlets painted a glossy picture of a neat landscape ripe for picking. Pamphlets did warn that milk and honey did not come without hard work, but suggested that patience and hard work produced desirable results. By the first decades of the 1900s, the pamphlets included photographs of prospering fields at harvest, statements from successful farmers, population data, and regional harvest output and market value data. Coupled with photographs of fresh-looking small town streets, large farm houses, and little girls in pretty white dresses picking apples in orderly-looking orchards, however, the wealth of materials created an unmistakable impression that a fairytale wonderland of abundance, a newly discovered well-kept secret, was there to solve all one's troubles.[58]

Skarstedt's treatment held a particular emphasis on natural features in western Oregon and Washington resembling Scandinavia. He contrasted the fertile fields and wildest forests of the west side of the Cascades with the barren deserts and monotonous prairies found east of the Rocky Mountains. He did also stress the differences between the east and west sides of the Cascadian divide, but devoted much space to chronicling the Scandinavian-like natural features of the Pacific Coast, and contrasting those to the flat and barren Dakotas and Upper Midwest. He naturally expected much of his readership to be familiar with the Upper Midwest, or to be deciding between the Upper Midwest and the Pacific Northwest as their destination. Advantages to the coastal Pacific Northwest, compared to areas east of the Rocky Mountains, lay in the effects of the climate on human health, he asserted, as well as in the absence of extremes in heat

[58] These observations are made on the basis of the accumulative contents of the Pacific Northwest Promotional Brochures Collection, Oregon Historical Society; and the Lewiston-Clarkston Improvement Company Records, 1888-1963, Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections, Washington State University.

or cold, sudden temperature changes, or storms.[59] Pamphlets boosted the agricultural promise of irrigated lands east of the Cascades, but they also dwelled on the "wonder country of majestic mountains, snowcapped peaks, great forests and [by the 1920s] superb scenic highways" with a "wonderful" climate.[60] Subsequently, both Skarstedt and the pamphlets stressed the landscape's agricultural potential as well as its natural beauty – its material value and its aesthetic value.

Appealing to Scandinavian sensibilities, both Skartstedt and the promotional pamphlets also emphasized forestry and fishing. Skarstedt devoted separate, detailed chapters to each fully aware that Scandinavian migrants found these industries of particular interest. "[G]rander, richer and more magnificent forests" are nowhere to be found, he asserted. He provided the number of sawmills in both states, and gave an impressive number on daily timber capacity.[61] The industry of prominence, however, according to Skarstedt, was fishing. Carried out in rivers and streams as well as in the ocean, he maintained that mostly Scandinavian and Italian fishermen harvested salmon, sturgeon, halibut, and eulachon smelt for salting, drying, smoking, as well as canning, and added that mostly Chinese worked in the canneries.[62] In contrast, much of the space in railroad pamphlets for the states of Oregon and Washington, as a whole, was devoted to farming and agricultural output, suggesting that Scandinavians were specifically targeted for industrial labor in fishing and timber. The same was true for materials boosting specific communities east of the Cascades. Richard White and William Lang have both emphasized how Pacific Northwest

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[59] Skarstedt, *Oregon och Washington*, 3-5, 10-14.
[60] "The Land of Better Farms: The Pacific Northwest." Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad, Northern Pacific Railway, Great Northern Railway, 1923, Mss 6000, Box 2, in Pacific Northwest Promotional Brochures manuscript collection, Oregon Historical Society.
[61] Skarstedt, *Oregon och Washington*, 19-27. The number for 1889 is given as 212 sawmills in Oregon and 181 in Washington. He claimed the capacity for both states combined to be 3 million feet of usable timber per day.
[62] Skarstedt, *Oregon och Washington*, 38-39.

boosters consciously constructed and marketed regional identity around local economic resources, and forestry and fishing was of course no exception.[63]

Pamphlets boosting coastal communities, or the pages devoted to the west side in materials discussing the states as a whole, also featured sections on forestry and fishing in their discussion of the resources of the area. A 1924 pamphlet, for example, promised "A New Capital of Lumbering," and the "Fish Center of the World."[64] Promotional pamphlets and books boosting local communities, typically published by local chambers of commerce or commercial clubs, emphasized fishing and forestry, if these industries held a local presence. Snohomish County, Washington, for example, advertised itself at the 1905 Lewis and Clark Exposition in Portland as a "land of opportunity" ready for the farmer, manufacturer, and capitalist in the "Best Climate on Earth," and with abundant resources and prominent industries in fishing and lumber.[65] Whether they read Skarstedt or English language materials (not to forget private letters and local ethnic newspapers such as *Washington Posten*), land-hungry Norwegian migrants might opt for eastern Washington, while laboring loggers, fishermen and urbanites headed for the coast.

Promotional pamphlets suggested what type of immigrants the railroad or local communities hoped to attract. Skarstedt highlighted the masculine, rugged character of the pioneer as a necessary trait.[66] In so doing, he opened up for the reader to draw parallels between

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[63] White, *Organic Machine*, 64. Lang, "Beavers, Firs, Salmon, and Falling Water," 155-60.
[64] "The Land of Opportunity Now: The Great Pacific Northwest," Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad, Northern Pacific Railway, Great Northern Railway, 1924, Mss 6000, Box 2, in Pacific Northwest Promotional Brochures manuscript collection, Oregon Historical Society.
[65] "Snohomish County Washington: The Richest on Puget Sound," Snohomish County Executive Committee for the Lewis and Clark fair, June 1905, Mss 6000, Box 22, in Pacific Northwest Promotional Brochures manuscript collection, Oregon Historical Society.
[66] Skarstedt, *Oregon och Washington*, 60.

practical necessity, the American pioneer ideal, and the rugged "outdoorsman" trait that Norwegians and Swedes believed characterized the Scandinavian race. In a sense, Skarstedt was making a case, as understood by his readers, that Norwegians and Swedes were especially suitable to inhabit the rugged terrains of the Pacific Northwest – both on account of their homeland experience living in a similarly rugged terrain, and their homeland experience in the key industries of the region. A 1923 pamphlet described the "settlers" in the Pacific Northwest as a "Happy Farm Folk," who came from the Midwest and the East. In other words, the pamphlet stressed an internal Euro-American migration stream from the East to the West, without acknowledging the presence of many foreign immigrants among them. "They were not afraid to work and they worked hard," the pamphlet continued, "but by laboring intelligently and with fewer handicaps [compared to life back East] they have earned the reward of better living."[67] In the context of the Immigration Restriction Laws of 1921 and 1924, the author stressed the Americanness of Washington and Oregon's builders. By insisting that the members of this happy farm folk had proved their merit as American pioneers, and that they had showcased the "intelligence" of a sturdy folk, the pamphlet expressed a gendered and racialized ideal as the typical native-born Euro-American settler.

Key to the author of a 1903 railroad pamphlet, and his intended audience, was what constituted the "best class" of East Coast and Midwest settlers to the region; what made "the highest standard" of foreign immigration, and the absence of "Orientals." The citizens of the Pacific Northwest consisted of "the best class of settlers from the oldest sections of the East and Middle West," the author asserted. The "foreign immigration received" was "of the highest

[67] "There is a Happy Land: The Pacific Northwest." Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad, Northern Pacific Railway, Great Northern Railway, 1923, Mss 6000, Box 2, in Pacific Northwest Promotional Brochures manuscript collection, Oregon Historical Society.

standard." And Oregon and Washington were "well protected by law from any large movement of Orientals."[68] The author noted that almost six times as many foreign-born settled permanently in Washington as in Oregon, and that a large percentage among them contributed toward the "agricultural development" of the "new region."[69] The tone and language used suggests that the author is anticipating the number of foreign-born to be perceived as negative, and hence is quick to assert the utility performed by these "permanent settlers" to the region. Of greatest concern, clearly, to both the author and the intended reader, is the presence of Chinese and Japanese, which the author is quick to dismiss as insignificant. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 reduced Chinese immigration numbers, and Portland, Tacoma and Seattle took violent action to evict the Chinese population, but Asian Americans continued to have a presence in those cities and for example in fishing and canning communities along the Columbia River and on the coast.[70]

What lay in the terms "best class" and "highest standard" was obviously racial. It did, however, reference traits and characteristics often understood as racial, but also understood to represent the class-distinguished "ruffians" within one's own ethnicity. The previously discussed 1885 pamphlet "Oregon as It Is" outlined specific skills based on social class and gender in response to the question of "who should come." A home seeker needed the means to support himself and his family for months, but he also needed to be accustomed to hard work.

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[68] Rinaldo M. Hall, "Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Their Resources," Oregon Railroad & Navigation Company, Southern Pacific Company (Oregon), 1903, Mss 6000, Box 2, in Pacific Northwest Promotional Brochures manuscript collection, Oregon Historical Society.

[69] The numbers provided are 1,342 for Oregon compared to 5,907 for Washington. The pamphlet does not specify race or ethnicity in connection to those numbers, but is referencing European migrants.

[70] A number of scholars have studied the presence of Asians in the Pacific Northwest in the context of Chinese Exclusion. See, for example, Chris Friday, *Organizing Asian American Labor: The Pacific Coast Canned-salmon Industry, 1870-1942* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994); and Andrew Gyory, *Closing the Gate: Race, Politics, and the Chinese Exclusion Act* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998).

"[Individuals] unwilling to work, or accustomed to live by their wits [such as casual and racialized laborers], are not wanted. Idlers will only go from bad to worse, and adventurers will not prosper," the pamphlet warned.[71] Hence, it suggested that working-class men, or men of means willing an able to conduct physical labor represented the desired "class" of people. In connection with the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exhibition in Seattle in 1909, Sherman County, Oregon, defined its population as a "law-abiding, moral, industrious, healthy class of people."[72] These were terms that carry racial connotations as nativists tended to characterize "desirable races" as all of those things. Jason Pierce has noted that boosters and opinion shapers relied on a narrow definition of whiteness to exclude racialized undesirables in their marketing.[73] This was true for authors of promotional pamphlets as well as individual residents. An 1891 letter to the editor of *Washington Posten* from Olander Wold of South Bend, Washington, for example, explained that the community leaders and general population referred to the majority of workingmen in the community as Scandinavians. In Wold's opinion, among the workingmen of South Bend, one could find "low subjects from our own nation [Norway]," as well as brawling, "misbehaved Russian Finns" understood by the community at large as "some kind of Scandinavians."[74] Based on racial prejudice, Wold expressed concern that Scandinavian association with Finns (whom he racialized as Russians) diminished the regard held by others for

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[71] "Oregon As It Is," 1885 (unknown publisher), promotional pamphlet, Mss 6000, Box 4, in Pacific Northwest Promotional Brochures Collection, Oregon Historical Society, Portland, Oregon.
[72] Oregon Commission of the Alaska-Yukon-Exhibition, "Oregon: A Booklet of the Resources of a Wonderful State," 1909, Mss 6000, Box 4, in Pacific Northwest Promotional Brochures manuscript collection, Oregon Historical Society.
[73] Jason E. Pierce, *Making the White Man's West: Whiteness and the Creation of the American West* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2016), xvi.
[74] "Brev til 'Washington-Posten,' " *Washington Posten*, May 7, 1891, 6 (the letter is signed Olander H. Wold, and is dated South Bend, Apr. 23, 1891).

Scandinavians in general, but he also defined "low subjects" among those he viewed as his own people as rootless working-class laborers who engaged in knife and bottle disagreements in saloons.

Ethnic groups that communities considered undesirable are ignored in the pamphlets. Instead, the pamphlets assumed and stressed people considered by the communities as representative of their "high standard of citizenship."[75] A 1904 railroad pamphlet, for example, gave the number for total foreign immigration to the United States in 1903, and the number for foreign migrants that permanently settled in Oregon at less than one quarter percent the total national number.[76] The author gave that information in the tone of citing an advantageous characteristic about the state, suggesting that the region offered more opportunities for white Euro-American migrants seeking a place devoid of "foreign" influence. Yet Scandinavians received favorable attention; of the 1,996 foreign-born Oregon immigrants, the largest number – 571 individuals or 29 percent – were Scandinavians.[77] While Japanese migrants were listed as one of the populations in this pamphlet, a survey index for the state of Oregon from around the same time, which gave population data on a county basis, ignored the Asian-American and Native-American population. The pamphlet gave the number of native-born (which might include unspecified Native Americans and African Americans) and the number and nationality of origin for the foreign-born. The foreign-born were given predominantly as western European

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[75] Oregon Commission of the Alaska-Yukon-Exhibition, "Oregon: A Booklet of the Resources of a Wonderful State," 1909, Mss 6000, Box 4, in Pacific Northwest Promotional Brochures manuscript collection, Oregon Historical Society.
[76] It gave national immigration at 857,046 individuals, and the number for Oregon at 1,996.
[77] Rinaldo M. Hall, "Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Their Resources: Mecca of the Homeseeker and Investor," Oregon Railroad & Navigation Company, Southern Pacific Company (Oregon), 1904, Mss 6000, Box 2, in Pacific Northwest Promotional Brochures manuscript collection, Oregon Historical Society.

(most commonly English, Irish, Scotch, German, and Scandinavian), and Canadian, with a few mentions of southern and eastern Europeans as well as Finns.[78]

A wealth of studies on race and migration exist that have documented how race featured into turn-of-the-century constructions of citizenship. These studies have highlighted how nativists and policy makers defined northern and western Europeans, such as Protestant Norwegians and other "Nordics," as desirable. Nativists envisioned the melting pot to make Americans out of Nordics (not non-Europeans and to some extent not even southern and Eastern Europeans), and framed the Immigration Restriction Laws from 1882 to the 1920s to keep racialized "undesirables" out.[79] It is not necessary to retread that well-established point here, but instead to emphasize how that context underscored for turn-of-the-century Norwegian migrants their status as "desirable." When the literature of the time problematized immigration in ways that did not include Scandinavians, and when boosters specifically targeted Scandinavians as desired settlers, Norwegians underwent the journey reasonably assured that they already had an established place in American society, and a place waiting for them in the Pacific Northwest. "For generations the West has been securing the best type of manhood and womanhood from the other side of the Rockies," a 1915 railroad pamphlet asserted. "Those who are thrifty, energetic and courageous have heard the call of the West and have pulled up their stakes and come West to

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[78] "Survey Index of the State of Oregon," Heald-Menely Co., Undated (but population data and style of pamphlet suggests early 1900s), Mss 6000, Box 4A, in Pacific Northwest Promotional Brochures manuscript collection, Oregon Historical Society.

[79] Examples of this literature include John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1955); Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998); Gary Gerstle, *American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), and Mae Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), just to name a few.

establish new homes." The author claimed that the "type of citizenship" found on the Pacific Coast was "very high," and that this high type of "manhood and womanhood" would produce the "highest type of American, not only physically but also from the standpoint of mentality."[80]

Promotional pamphlets generally avoided any mention of race or ethnicity (other than "Orientals" and European nationalities), but depended on an assumed, if often unexpressed, normalized settler whiteness. Jason Pierce has argued that the railroad executives who commissioned this kind of literature made distinctions between ethnic and racial groups, and especially between whites, African Americans and Native Americans, and that they actively sought to recruit and settle specific groups of European immigrants along their lines – and that by doing so the railroads shaped the ethnic landscape of the West.[81] Located not along a railroad, but instead next to a river envisioned as a major "highway," the ethnic makeup of turn-of-the-century Clarkston, Washington, makes an interesting example of the way boosters shaped this ethnic landscape. As a planned community funded by eastern capital that sprang up overnight, Clarkston is not representative of the typical immigrant's ethnic enclave, but it nevertheless serves as an example of the ways that boosters tailored their advertising to attract specific pre-selected groups of immigrants. Typically, boosters' pamphlets erased ethnic variation by addressing the reader as an assumed desirable settler, and by providing photographic references that showcased white farmers and laborers stripped of any kind of ethnic distinction. Photographs often showed landscapes, with people far away or out of focus in such a way that ethnic variation was indiscernible. If people appeared in the photographs close enough to the photographer to make out facial features, the subjects always looked generically Euro-American.

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[80] Southern Pacific Co., "Oregon for the Settler," 1915, Mss 6000, Box 5, in Pacific Northwest Promotional Brochures manuscript collection, Oregon Historical Society.
[81] Pierce, *Making the White Man's West*, 152, 173.

Publicity photographs commissioned by the Lewiston-Clarkston Improvement Company, in their effort to recruit settlers for Clarkston, depicted innocent looking, young girls in clean white dresses picking apples and grapes off well-kept trees. Other photographs showed electric lines, roads, automobiles and well-kept residential houses. The Lewiston-Clarkston Improvement Company offered cash prizes for best-kept place, fence, orchard, and lawn, as well as the neatest and most orderly home.[82] "You Should Build in Parkway," an advertisement brochure from the Parkway Development Company in Clarkston announced. "Parkway is designed for a quiet class residential district. In it you will find the setting for the home you have dreamed of."[83]

Boosters envisioned Clarkston as a picture-perfect community, at least implicitly understood as racially white. With a readership concerned about underdeveloped infrastructure and amenities in mind, the brochure continued in a pleasant sales tone to explain that in Parkway "there will be a fine atmosphere of style and distinctiveness. … Here will meet the eye, the beauty of well laid out and well planted streets. … Here you will find no bustling thoroughfare disturbing the quiet with its racket of speeding autos." If East Coast or Midwest readers remained unconvinced, the development company assured them that they "will never need worry about what the new purchaser of the lot next door to you is going to do. Protective restrictions assure you that his plan of development will fit in with yours and with that of the neighborhood." With that, the reader might also have felt assured that only the "right" class of individual could be found on neighboring lots. Parkway represented "the best place to build no matter who you are,"

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[82] Record of prizes awarded for season of 1910 by the Lewiston-Clarkston Improvement Company, in Lewiston-Clarkston Improvement Company Records, 1888-1963, Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections, Washington State University.

[83] "Parkway: Clarkston's New Model Residential Section," promotional pamphlet from Parkway Development Company, Clarkston, Washington, Undated, in Lewiston-Clarkston Improvement Company Records, 1888-1963, Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections, Washington State University.

the pamphlet continued.[84] Of course "no matter who you are" assumed Euro-American, and not black, Asian or Native American. Boosters envisioned the city of Clarkston as a clean, neat, orderly oasis of perfection, and marketed the community as an apple orchard paradise at least implicitly understood as overwhelmingly white. In the case of Clarkston, boosters depended on an unexpressed racialized landscape that translated into a county population increase from 1,580 in 1890, of whom 1,546 were counted in the U.S. census as white (97.8 percent), to 6,539 in 1920, of whom 6,528 were deemed white (99.8 percent) in the census.[85]

Jason Pierce has argued that this pattern of planned "white" communities was commonplace throughout the American West. Anglo Americans imagined the West, and created it, as a refuge for Anglo-Americans, and obscured the presence of non-whites with a narrative centered on the white man's West.[86] While Pierce describes specific examples of European ethnics, his work leaves the question, however, of how individual ethnicities, understood as white by themselves and their contemporaries, constructed their own narratives of belonging in the American West. Did they all whole-heartedly buy into the notion of the white man's West,

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[84] "Parkway: Clarkston's New Model Residential Section," promotional pamphlet from Parkway Development Company, Clarkston, Washington, Undated, in Lewiston-Clarkston Improvement Company Records, 1888-1963, Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections, Washington State University.

[85] U.S. Census, 1890, Table 15: Native and Foreign Born and White and Negro Population, 434. U.S. Census, 1920, Chapter XVI, General Statistics of Population, by Counties, 1369.

[86] Pierce, *Making the White Man's West*, ix. Pierce argues that the overwhelmingly white population in certain parts of the West, coupled with a narrative mythology of Manifest Destiny and the white man's West, obscured the actual presence of Indians, Hispanics and Asians. In this mythology, "lesser groups" played only the role of the fleeting villain predestined defeat at the hands of the "heroic frontiersman." This mythology envisioned a "racial refuge" for white men in the American West, free of "lesser groups," and in time boosters' recruitment, violence, and legislation combined in an attempt to shape this vision into reality. In the case of Clarkston, population data recorded by census takers suggest that Native Americans left, and that small numbers of African Americans and Asian Americans present decreased over time. They did not necessarily go far, however, as they may just have relocated across the river to Lewiston, Idaho.

and with that assimilate into a generic whiteness? Responding more or less to this question with respect to the assimilation of turn-of-the-century Norwegian settlers on the Dakota Indian reservation in North Dakota, Karen Hansen argues that they did not. Norwegians certainly racialized the Dakota Indians. They naturalized at high rates (which the Dakota could not before 1924); and they recognized and acted upon the importance of a political voice in the American system; but they "maintained their distinctiveness and unapologetically held on to their cultural two-ness." They did not disavow their heritage, Hansen asserts, nor surrender their ancestral identity.[87] In the case of Norwegian Americans in the Pacific Northwest, they constructed identities around both the physical landscape and racial superiority that asserted ethnicity. Pacific Northwest Norwegians' constructions of identity around a sense of racial superiority is the topic of the next chapter.

The Norwegian Migration Stream to the Pacific Northwest

Norwegian migrants had been coming to the Pacific Northwest for decades, but by 1895 they were coming to the region, and especially the state of Washington, in substantial numbers. In 1880, before the completion of the northern route of the transcontinental railroad, the Scandinavian population of the Pacific Northwest had numbered 4,651 individuals, a smaller population than that of the German, Irish, English, or Chinese.[88] The Scandinavian population experienced an explosive growth over the next 30 years. By 1890, they outnumbered all the other ethnic groups, with a population of 32,192, and the number of Scandinavians continued to

[87] Karen V. Hansen, *Encounter on the Great Plains: Scandinavian Settlers and the Dispossession of Dakota Indians, 1890-1930* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 209-10.
[88] Carlos A. Schwantes, *The Pacific Northwest* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 229. The German population numbered 7,982; the Irish 6,883; the English 6,143; and the Chinese 16,004.

balloon to 40,882 in 1900, and 98,933 in 1910.[89] In 1900, Washington's first-generation Norwegian immigrants numbered 9,891, or 8.8 percent of the total population of Washington's foreign-born.[90] By 1920, these numbers had increased to 30,305 and 11.4 percent.[91]

The number of Norwegian immigrants in Oregon was comparatively smaller, in a state where the proportion of immigrants was much smaller. In 1900, they made up 4.2 percent of the foreign-born in Oregon, with a number of 2,789 individuals.[92] In 1920, that number had increased, but more modestly, than in Washington. The 6,955 first-generation Norwegian immigrants recorded in Oregon in the 1920 census represented 6.5 percent of the total population of foreign-born in Oregon that year. In both states, the number of second-generation Norwegian Americans, that is, the number of individuals born in the United States from at least one Norwegian-born parent, had increased more significantly than that of first generation immigrants. In 1900, Washington's first-generation Norwegian immigrants represented 52.6 percent out of all first and second generation Pacific Northwest Norwegians, while the

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[89] Schwantes, *The Pacific Northwest*, 229. For comparison, The Germans numbered 29,813 in 1890; 33,145 in 1900; and 52,395 in 1910. According to Kristina Veirs, *Nordic Heritage Northwest* (Seattle: Writing Works, 1982), Scandinavians made up a quarter of Washington's foreign-born in 1900.

[90] U.S. Census Compendium, 1900, Table LXXXII, and Table 33 (Foreign born population distributed according to country of birth, by states and territories: 1900). The total number of foreign-born in Washington in 1900 were 111,864. This was a little over one-fifth (21.6%) of the total population of Washington (518,103). See Table I Population of the United States by States and Territories: 1900.

[91] U.S. Census Compendium, 1920, Chapter VI Country of Birth of the Foreign-Born Population, Table 6; and Chapter IX Country of Origin of the Foreign White Stock, Table 14.

[92] U.S. Census Compendium, 1900, Table LXXXII, and Table 33 (Foreign born population distributed according to country of birth, by states and territories: 1900). In Oregon, the total number of foreign-born in 1900 were 65,748 compared to a total population of 413,536, which means that 15.9% of the population were first-generation immigrants. See Table I Population of the United States by States and Territories: 1900.

corresponding number for Oregon was 50.1 percent.[93] This meant that already in 1900, first-generation immigrants barely outnumbered second-generation immigrants in both states. By 1920, the percentage of first-generation Norwegian immigrants out of all individuals with at least one Norwegian-born parent had decreased to 46.2 percent for Washington and 43.1 percent for Oregon.[94] In real numbers, Washington had had 9,891 first-generation, and 8,923 second-generation Norwegian immigrants in 1900, and these numbers had increased to 30,305 first-generation and 35,308 second-generation by 1920. In 20 years, first-generation immigrants more than tripled with an increase of 206.4 percent, while second-generation immigrants almost quadrupled with an increase of 295.7 percent. This meant that between 1900 and 1920, and especially after 1920, the second generation played a key role in identity construction. Unsurprisingly, children of immigrants outnumbered actual immigrants by 1920, but the number of first-generation Norwegian immigrants nevertheless remained high at 11.4 percent of all foreign-born immigrants in Washington.

The Norwegian migration stream to the states of Oregon and Washington included a large proportion of first-generation immigrants, but the journey to the Pacific Northwest – for both first and second-generation migrants – nevertheless more commonly began in the Upper Midwest than Norway. Scholars of the Norwegian-American immigration experience have noted that most of the migration of Norwegian ethnics into Washington and Oregon between 1890 and 1920 came from a second, domestic migration stream. This included the American-born children of immigrants who had settled elsewhere in the United States, as well as first-generation

[93] U.S. Census Compendium, 1900, Table LXXXIX. The total population of Norwegian immigrants, and second-generation Norwegian Americans with at least one parent born in Norway, numbered 18,814 for Washington, and 5,566 for Oregon.
[94] U.S. Census Compendium, 1920, Chapter VI Country of Birth of the Foreign-Born Population, Table 6; and Chapter IX Country of Origin of the Foreign White Stock, Table 14.

immigrants who had first settled in some other place as well. Sometimes the Upper Midwest served as a way station where immigrants spent anywhere from months to a year or two with relatives or former, home country neighbors in older immigrant communities, before continuing on to the Pacific Northwest. Other times, immigrants spent years building a life in the Midwest, before they made the decision to make the move west in search of better opportunities.[95] Jorgen Dahlie termed them "second-stage immigrants," migrants who first settled in the Midwest before the promises of the Pacific Northwest drew them westward.[96]

Judging from the surviving accounts, the most common Norwegian Pacific Northwest migrant was a male who had undergone a first-stage migration from Norway to the Upper Midwest, then had lived and worked for a few years east of the Rockies, before undertaking the second-stage journey to the Puget Sound to farm, fish, cut timber, or climb the social ladder in Seattle or Tacoma. Older men, who had lived in the United States for a decade or more, often migrated with their families. The accounts, of course, are not representative of a cross-section of the Norwegian-American migrant population. First, in terms of gender, men are overly represented.[97] Second, in terms of social class, urban working professionals are overly represented compared to farmers or workingmen. While the actual average immigrant left no account of his or her journey in an archive, and was unlikely to be featured in contemporary

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[95] See for example Elliott Robert Barkan, *From All Points: America's Immigrant West, 1870s-1952* (Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2007), 70-71; and Jorgen Dahlie, *A Social History of Scandinavian Immigration, Washington State, 1895-1910* (Thesis, Washington State University, 1967), 39.
[96] Dahlie, *A Social History of Scandinavian Immigration*, 39. Also Barkan, *From All Points*, 71.
[97] In 1900, men above 21 years of age represented roughly 59 percent of foreign-born Norwegians in Oregon and Washington. The remaining 41 percent represented women and children of both genders under the age of 21. Hence, men did greatly outnumber women at the turn of the century, but women are nevertheless underrepresented in the biographies. See U.S. Census Compendium, 1900, Table 71, "Foreign born males 21 years of age and over, distributed according to country of birth, by states and territories."

writings, such accounts nevertheless suggest that the two-stage migration in all likelihood was the common experience also for the "voiceless masses."

From the roughly 110 first and second generation Norwegian immigrants, and "prominent citizens" of the Pacific Northwest (western Washington almost exclusively), featured in the biographical sections of Skarstedt's *Oregon och Washington* (1890), Thomas Ostenson Stine's *Scandinavians on the Pacific* (1909), Hans Bergman's *History of Scandinavians in Tacoma and Pierce County* (1926), and Alma Guttersen and Regina Hilleboe Christensen's *Souvenir "Norse-American Women"* (1926), roughly 70 biographies explicitly stated that the subjects had lived in the Upper Midwest before relocating to Washington. Out of the last forty, six had lived elsewhere in the United States before coming to the Pacific Northwest; four in unspecified places, one in California, and one in New Mexico. No more than seven clearly stated that they had migrated directly from Norway to the Pacific Northwest, with the Pacific Northwest as their intended destination. The remaining biographies were unclear on whether the subjects had settled elsewhere before coming to the region.[98] Interestingly, the number of

[98] Skarstedt, *Oregon och Washington*, 242-306. Thos. Ostenson Stine, *Scandinavians on the Pacific* (Seattle: Denny-Corryell Company, 1909), 51-208. Hans Bergman, *History of Scandinavians in Tacoma and Pierce County* (Tacoma: Hans Bergman, 1926), 48-54, 91-194. Alma A. Guttersen and Regina Hilleboe Christensen, eds., *Souvenir "Norse-American Women," 1825-1925: A Symposium of Prose and Poetry, Newspaper Articles, and Biographies, Contributed by one hundred prominent women* (St. Paul: Lutheran Free Church Publishing Co., 1926), 309-78. Roughly 100 out of the 110 are men. Bergman sometimes discussed women as part of their husband's biography, and he listed a few as separate entries. Skarstedt offers 26 biographies of prominent Norwegians in the Pacific Northwest, about 20 of whom are explicitly stated to have come from the Midwest. Stine offers 45-50 biographies, from which about 30 depict migration from the Midwest. Only one – John Blaauw, the editor of *Tacoma Tidende* – is said to have migrated directly from Norway to Seattle. Out of Bergman's 34 biographies, 25 are said to have migrated from the Midwest, while between three and five appear to have come directly. From the six Pacific Northwest women found in Guttersen and Christensen's book, four had undergone second-stage migration from the Midwest. One of the other two had been born in

second-generation Norwegian Americans featured among the prominent citizens in the four books is unexpectedly low, given the high number of second-generation immigrants living among them.[99]

Ethnic Environmentalism: The Appropriation of the Landscape in Asserting Ethnic Identity

American-born migrants had never themselves seen the fabled Norwegian scenery against which migrants compared the Pacific Northwest. Even those born in the United States became aware of the landscape parallels between the Norway experienced and narrated by their parents, and the Pacific Northwest that they found. The novelist Dorthea Dahl was only two years old when her parents brought her from Norway to a South Dakota homestead by way of New York and Minnesota. When she was twenty-two years old, she continued westward to Moscow, Idaho with relatives and neighbors.[100] While born in Norway, it is doubtful that Dahl retained very many memories of her own from her time there. Nevertheless, the landscape of the Pacific Northwest, and how it impacted Norwegian Americans, figured as a theme in some of her writing. In her short story, "Bækkens Sang" (The Song of the Stream), for example, Dahl made the scenery central to the happiness of a young migrant couple from the Midwest, and the homely atmosphere of their Idaho/Washington homestead. "The mountains toward the East were so tall that one could often see the clouds resting below their peaks. The stream which ran across their

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Oregon, and left Oregon for the Midwest. Only one name, Christian Quevli, appears in both Skarstedt and Bergman's books.

[99] Only eighteen had been born in the United States. Two were born in Oregon, one in Idaho. The Upper Midwest states in which the other 15 were born were Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa.

[100] Hilde Petra Brungot, "To Keep and Cultivate: Dorthea Dahl A Norwegian-American Voice in Idaho," *Latah Legacy* 30 (2001): 1-7 (1-27), in the Dorthea Dahl Papers, Accession no. 820, Folder 1, Norwegian-American Historical Association, Northfield, Minnesota.

piece of land was singing a new melody for Signe, but Einar recognized it from his childhood [in Norway]."[101] The female protagonist, a second-generation Norwegian American, had never seen Norway, but her husband, a first-generation immigrant, had. The landscape did not carry familiarity to the heroine, but to her husband it resembled his childhood home. During the course of the story, the heroine learns to appreciate and associate this Norway-like scenery with home, just as much as her husband did, suggesting how immigrants and second-generation Norwegian Americans together fashioned an identity tied to past and present places.

Pacific Northwest Norwegians commonly made a connection between the mountains and fjords of Norway, and the natural features and even weather of the Pacific Northwest. This notion of place in the context of the Pacific Northwest as relatable and comparable to Norway – understood as a place and as an adequate substitute for that which they missed – represents a common theme in Pacific Northwest Norwegians' constructions of the region as both a place and an idea. Odd Lovoll has argued that a large percentage of Norwegian immigrant settlers on the Pacific Coast originally came from Northern Norway or the coastal districts of Western Norway, and that the similarities in topography, physical appearance and climate attracted them to the Pacific Northwest in the first place. Immigrants transferred a Norwegian coastal culture to the west coast of America, he claims, a place that not only had a landscape reminiscent of home, but that offered familiar livelihoods such as shipping, fishing and lumbering.[102] In "inventing" memories of Norway, and in transplanting landscape-based culture – which included ski culture and a health of body, mind and spirit ideology called *idræt* – Pacific Northwest Norwegians

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[101] Brungot, "To Keep and Cultivate," 23-24.
[102] Odd Lovoll, "Washington Posten: A Window on a Norwegian-American Urban Community," *Norwegian-American Studies* 31 (Jan. 1986): 163-186.

appropriated the local landscape in ethnic identity production.[103] The Pacific Northwest Norwegians themselves *were* transplanted Norway, in a sense, and viewed themselves as hardened by the cold weather, biting winds, rough seas, and rugged terrain of Norway – hardened in masculine ways that mirrored the tough ruggedness of the American frontiersman ideal. Their Norwegian experience, in their view, made them ideally suited to manage the rugged landscapes and industries of the Pacific Northwest. The ways that the local landscape of Oregon and Washington's mountainous and forested coastal west side seemed to affirm both a Norwegian ethnic identity – and a Norwegian "claim" to the Pacific Northwest – is an example of what I call ethnic environmentalism.

From the first Norwegian railroad passengers through Stevens Pass, to King Harald's visit to the area in 2015, Norwegian migrants and visitors alike have marveled at the "Norwegian" scenery on the west side of the Cascade mountains. In an attempt to connect with his clientele, a Seattle banker painted a romantic picture in an 1891 *Washington Posten* advertisement disguised as a letter to the editor.

> For the Norseman there is something alluringly attractive about our natural surroundings out here, which makes him immediately feel at home. As soon as he crosses the Cascade mountains and starts breathing

[103] By "invented" memories I mean that it is very subjective what an individual chooses to emphasize and view with romanticized, nostalgic goggles. When an ethnic group forms a narrative of a collective memory around an agreed-upon perception or experience of one's common past, those memories are constructed. This does not mean that they are untrue, per se, it just means that the selected memories emphasized serve a collective purpose cultivating the agreed-upon narrative. See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London/New York: Verso, 1983); and David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2001), for works on "remembering and forgetting," imagining, and constructing agreed-upon collective memories.

> the fresh, mild air from the ocean in the west, and he catches a glimpse of the grand Puget Sound, which like an arm with its long fingers point inland from the Pacific Ocean toward the snow-covered mountains, toward the green-clad hills, toward the grand and rich valleys, toward the beautiful cities on each side of the sound. Irresistibly, he let's his inner contentment come to expression in song: 'Here is the land that suits me the best, For here [this place] I have long longed.'[104]

Snow-covered mountains, the fjord-like appearance of the Puget Sound and other bays, and wild, vast forests made emblematic themes in migrants' commentaries. If they had stayed long enough, the mild climate compared to the Upper Midwest made another common theme. Gulic Hanson wrote his mother from Clackamas County, Oregon, in 1903, that this "place significantly resembles old Norway …. with its hills, valleys, and rivers." He found it "both a healthy, pretty, and good place to live," and praised the almost year-round summer, with hardly any snow.[105] Søren Nelson in Mason County, Washington, on the west side of the Puget Sound, found his chosen home ideal. Here he could watch the "sailable salt water and steamers passing by" from his bed, in a place with "an abundance of fish in the bay," and "much available timber in the forests."[106] Little had changed by the 1930s, when *Washington Posten* compared the ski area at Mount Hood in Oregon with famous ski areas in Norway. "This is Nordmarka and Hardangervidda combined. Pinetrees stand in small groves, or individually here and there; vast,

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[104] "En Skandiavisk Bank i Seattle," *Washington Posten*, Sep. 24, 1891, 1.
[105] Gulic Hanson, Stone, OR, to Ingebjørg Gulliksdatter Ørstein, Jun. 10, 1903, in Orm Øverland, ed., *Fra Amerika til Norge VI: Norske Utvandrerbrev, 1895-1904* Oslo: Solum Forlag, 2010), letter no. 237, 415-16.
[106] "Korrespondance," *Decorah-Posten*, Nov. 17, 1902, clipping, in Kenneth Björk Papers, Accession no. 1343, Box 20, Norwegian-American Historical Association, Northfield, Minnesota.

open meadows, hills and valleys with 10-20 feet of snow." Invoking Norwegian folk culture, the newspaper's correspondent posited that "there is something troll-like about these snow-covered expanses," mirroring the Norwegian snow-covered expanses that inspired the invention of trolls in the first place.[107]

Stories about the "Norwegian" wonderland out west found attentive ears in the Upper Midwest. O. H. Skotheim had lived in the Pacific Northwest, but had relocated to Minnesota when he in 1906 explained in *Washington Posten* that people generally longed for the "wonderland" of the Puget Sound. "A land that is free from blizzards, tornadoes, hail in the middle of summer, and booming thunder with murderous lightning," held appeal to people in the east when they heard stories about it, according to Skotheim, with its bountiful resources, "its constant bewitching power for the imaginative and industrious," and "its alluring beauty for the nature lover."[108] M. J. Lindahl had been born in Wisconsin from "sturdy Norwegian parents." He lived in Wisconsin, the Dakotas and Minnesota, before he settled in Woodburn, Oregon, and went into business as a jeweler, watchmaker, hardware and furniture dealer. "Since he came here, however, and enjoyed life in this equable climate, he says he wouldn't endure the rigorous and almost unbearable winters of those states if he were given the finest quarter section of land along the Red River of the North."[109]

Yet, most Norwegian Americans remained in the Upper Midwest. Census data shows that the Upper Midwest consistently had a Norwegian-American population about ten times as high

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[107] "John Elvrum Seirer Stort," *Washington Posten*, undated early 1930s clipping, in Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 1, 1920s-1936, Oregon Historical Society, Portland, Oregon.
[108] Lovoll, *Washington Posten* (quoted from *Washington Posten*, Aug. 17, 1906).
[109] Woodburn Independent, "Woodburn Oregon: A Thriving City in the Land of Promise," Souvenir booklet, *Woodburn Independent*, Oct. 1908, Mss 6000, Box 19, in Pacific Northwest Promotional Brochures manuscript collection, Oregon Historical Society.

as the Pacific Northwest (regardless of the total population size) from the turn of the century to World War II, and beyond. The reason that people stayed is that most had acclimated to the flat, oceanless landscape – and were okay with it. The Norwegian community there was mature and well established. The Midwest was the center of Norwegian-American institutions, including the Lutheran church. Families had children who remained. Most of the Norwegian institutions of higher learning were there. Farmers had agricultural lands, loggers had forests, fishermen had the Great Lakes, and urban professionals had Minneapolis and St. Paul. In short, there was much to be gained and enjoyed by Norwegian Americans in the Upper Midwest. This does not, however, negate the fact that those who undertook the second-stage migration (even though they were fewer than those who stayed) often cited the Norwegian-like mountains, oceans, fisheries, and the absence of Midwest scourges among their reasons for migration, perhaps both to justify their exodus and to attract others to join them.

Advertisements specifically targeted at Upper Midwest Norwegians boosted Pacific Northwest lands with an eye toward Scandinavian sensibilities – farmland and forestry. One such 1899 advertisement claimed that there was better land to be had in Washington and Oregon than in "opened" Indian reservations in the Midwest. It promised that much good land remained, both for purchase and homesteading. Those who decided to head west could still share an experience similar to that of the old pioneer settlers from fifty years earlier, while simultaneously enjoying the benefits of progress. "Our powerful railway system now stretches its arms and legs to almost every corner." In addition to land, the advertisement stressed opportunities in logging, the high price of timber, and the ease of bringing logs to market by means of rivers or the railroad. Uncle Sam still has use for "Europe's working people, the nation's backbone and life-blood," it concluded. There was "space and free land available for anyone who comes here with 'mot i

bryst og kraft i arm,' [courage in the chest and force in the arm]" – an often used Norwegian idiom idealizing the masculine working-class.[110] In an 1891 letter to the editor of *Washington Posten*, intended to promote South Bend to anyone interested in conditions there, Olander Wold highlighted the area as a paradise for sailors and fishermen. Norwegian seaworthy men had settled along "bays and fjords" everywhere they expected a port town to develop, and every vessel that passed by seemed to be captained by a "Viking son."[111]

Weathered, rugged landscapes and Viking imagery served a masculine image of the needs of the Pacific Northwest, and what the Pacific Northwest Norwegian had to offer. The aforementioned Seattle Banker praised the Nordic spirit and progress of the Scandinavian people who had settled around Puget Sound. One cannot live on "good climate and a beautiful nature" alone, not even in the Pacific Northwest, he asserted. "Work, entrepreneurship, perseverance" were required, "and these traits are the Norsemen's strong suit."[112] Another letter to the editor from S. A. Hartmann in Everett, Washington, dated 1892, compared the pristine lands of the Pacific Northwest to the youth of childhood. "The land here is still new, like in its childhood, wearing the spring's suit, but life is pulsing with a marvelous force, and here much energy and skill is exerted." Hartmann exerted a claim that fierce, laborious, and entrepreneurial Norwegians were building the country. In reference to the nineteenth century Norwegian romantic nationalist Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson's "Fædrelandssang" (Fatherland song), he asserted that [here] is not only 'Sædejord og Sommersol nok' (Enough fertile soil and summer-sun), but also enough men and

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[110] "Land for Nybyggere," *Decorah-Posten*, Sep. 12, 1899, clipping, in Kenneth Björk Papers, Accession no. 1343, Box 20, Norwegian-American Historical Association, Northfield, Minnesota.
[111] "Brev til Washington-Posten," *Washington Posten*, May 7, 1891, 6.
[112] "En Skandiavisk Bank i Seattle," *Washington Posten*, Sep. 24, 1891, 1.

love and skill to 'build the country.' "[113] At least in part, if one were to take Hartmann's word for it, Pacific Northwest Norwegians hard-earned skill from Norway's school of life was to thank for it.

The poet Thomas Ostenson Stine found the Pacific Northwest a poetic landscape that compared favorably with Scandinavia. "The fjords of Norway are sublime, and Puget Sound is equally so," he wrote.

> What can be more soul-stirring and soul-inspiring than a merry sheet of water rippling for hundreds of miles into a land of verdure, making sweet music day and night? What can be more angelic and soothing to the soul than the songs of the waves? Where can you find more poesy than in the pearl-set crests rolling like melted gold upon gilded pebbles?[114]

Many scores of men, "mostly Scandinavians," he asserted, resorted to the waves to earn their keep. "When you throw your eye upon Puget Sound, and behold the fleet of fish barges, rolling upon her briny breast, a reminiscence of the coast of Norway steals into your soul."[115] The landscape inspired much poetry. "Mountains looking seaward charm us, On the shore of Puget Sound," reads one of the verses in his "Greetings from Puget Sound."[116] The second stanza of

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[113] "Fra Everett," *Washington Posten*, Mar. 10, 1892, 3. Bjørnson, the author of the Norwegian national anthem, wrote this poem in the context of Norway's period of romantic nationalism, and its labor to become an independent nation. The poem says that Norway has enough fertile soil and summer-sun, if only there was enough love of country to take on the collective toll… Hartmann suggests that Pacific Northwest Norwegians coupled with other Americans have enough men, love and skill to make the collective heave.
[114] Thos. Ostenson Stine, *Scandinavians on the Pacific* (Seattle: Denny-Corryell Company, 1909), 24.
[115] Stine, *Scandinavians on the Pacific*, 26, 33.
[116] Stine, *Scandinavians on the Pacific*, VIII.

"My Washington," is particularly illustrative of the ways he connected the local landscape to Norway, and literally claimed this landscape as his own.

> I love thy peaks in twilight hue,
>
> In silver rays rear to my view,
>
> I love thy brooks, thy laughing fjord,
>
> Thy waving fields in grain of gold.
>
> My Washington, sweet gem of the sea,
>
> Land of the future, and home of the free.[117]

The landscape of the Pacific Northwest stirred Stine's memories of coastal Norway. He adopted Washington as his home, but viewed the Puget Sound through a nostalgic lens, and named it what it appeared to him and other Norwegians – a fjord.

For Pacific Northwest Norwegians, the landscapes of the region triggered memories of Norway, and constructed memories of Norway in turn helped shape the migrants' relationship with the region's nature. O. H. Haugann of Vancouver, Washington, for example, wrote a letter to the editor of *Washington Posten* in 1891 where he documented his trip from South Bend to Vancouver by way of Astoria and Portland. "It makes a powerful impression to see the waves of the great ocean roll toward the beach," he wrote. "These waves seemed to roll old memories in over me, and lead me back to the time that I was going to sail across the Atlantic Ocean. What burning longing I felt, after having been able to sail across that ocean and see the lands on the other side, to once again see old Norway's beaches!"[118] A poem by the Norwegian romantic nationalist Asmund Olavsson Vinje, translated and reimagined by Ole Lien for *Washington*

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[117] Stine, *Scandinavians on the Pacific*, 21.
[118] "Hr. Redaktør!," *Washington Posten*, Oct. 29, 1891, 6.

Posten, is another example of how romantic memories of Norway could interconnect with a romantic construction of the local natural landscape on the Pacific coast.

Now once again the rock-bound valleys greet me,

Which I in childhood days at home did see.

The [spoiling] [illegible] breeze from the mountains meet me.

And snow peaks glitter like a golden sea.

It is the voice of nature which invites me.

And makes me thoughtful, but from anger free.

The past in youthful recollections [beaming].

Returns again – with fond emotions streaming.

Yes, life with gentle rush is softly streaming,

As when in early spring I flowers did spy.

I'm dreaming now, as I before was dreaming,

When I did see these mountains vast and high.

Life's struggles disappeared in sight redeeming,

When sunset's golden greeting met my eye.

A place of rest I find when homeward going.

At night – the sinking [sun] [illegible] directions [making] [illegible].

All things I find the same but more ideal,

So that the light of day appears more bright;

And that which pained me once in sorrows real,

Does now turn life's dark shadows into light.

Alluring thoughts of sin – and joy unreal,

And now delivered from temptations might.

Old thoughts are reconciled in visions fleeting;

The heart, though older now, is quickly beating.

Each rock and hill with memories are teeming,

For, when a boy, I here did skip and play.

I fancied that these lofty mountains beaming,

With crowns of snow were giants in a fray.

From all around come recollections streaming,

While sun sinks down in snow and fiery spray.

And to the last repose, in shades abiding,

These visions shall my parting steps be guiding.[119]

This poem very much reflects Vinje's sentiment, but it is not a literal translation of his work. Lien altered it under "poetic license" perhaps to reflect his own sentiment as well. Lien, and *Washington Posten's* readers, easily read this poem as a reflection of what they would meet if they went home to Norway, to their childhood community. As such, it represents a constructed, collective memory of Norwegian childhood. However, a reader could also read it to represent the sentiment of first arrival into the Pacific Northwest. While not literally a return to one's birthplace, one's arrival in the Pacific Northwest could serve as a metaphorical return to one's childhood in the place one found to most resemble one's childhood reminiscences.

[119] "On Visiting the Home of Childhood," *Washington Posten*, Mar. 12, 1891, 1.

Peter Røthe kept searching for his Norwegian childhood home until eventually he found it in Washington.[120] He had left Seattle and *Washington Posten* in 1893, for Norway, but later returned to the United States. He then lived for a while in Wisconsin, where he experienced hardship. In 1908, however, he wrote his friend Lars Kinservik in Norway, from his new home in Kitsap County, Washington, and explained to his friend his reasons for moving from Wisconsin to Washington. It had been difficult, he maintained, to live in a country where;

> there is no ocean to see – no mountains – no frothing river, not even a brook to hear. *Here* we live by the ocean, and when the weather is clear we can faraway see snowcapped mountains all summer long. The ocean is without comparison nonetheless, and I never tire from observing it, with its seagulls, wild ducks, steamers, ships and boats, to see it calm like a mirror, or with wild waves – to hear the waves break against the shore: That is so wonderful.[121]

This description of the Pacific Northwest coastal landscape reflects Røthe's constructed memories of that which he has missed about Norway while living in Wisconsin. "The nature has become clearer to me over the years," he continued, "as I have become more estranged from other people." Røthe does not explain how and why he has come to feel estranged from others. Perhaps he has lived in remote, rural areas, or perhaps he has experienced a form of acclimation where he has gradually separated himself from the Norwegian community. In any event, a

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[120] Peter Røthe was editor of *Washington Posten* from 1891 to 1893. He returned to Norway that year. When he came back to the United States, he lived for a time in Wisconsin, before he eventually returned to Washington.

[121] Peter Røthe, Harper, Washington to Lars Trondsen Kinsarvik, Nov. 26, 1908, in Orm Øverland, ed., *Fra Amerika til Norge: Norske Utvandrerbrev: VII: 1905-1914* (Oslo: Solum Forlag, 2011), 424-26.

Norwegian landscape has become more important to him. "Here, the nature still rules," he explained, "as the land is wild and for the most part uncleared. Here are vast, dark forests [untouched by man] in abundance."[122] The climate suited him better in Washington than in Wisconsin, he continued, because he could not handle the cold winters. And he rejoiced in finally having found happiness on his own piece of land, his own "Varalid," so named after a meadow near his childhood home in Hardanger, Norway. He had always thought he would name his home, once he had one, after the meadow meaningful in a constructed memory sense to both Røthe and Kinservik. "Now I finally have my own house on my own land – and have come to Varalid – as extraordinary as that sounds."[123] He had finally come home, to his own piece of Norway and his own piece of childhood.

Conclusion

Norwegian Americans came to the Pacific Northwest with preconceived notions that they would find the landscape of a Norwegian wonderland. These preconceived impressions of the Pacific Northwest, and particularly the coastal lands of Oregon and Washington west of the Cascades, derived from a number of sources: First, the letters of migrants already there; second, local ethnic newspapers such as *Washington Posten*, which carried letters to the editor from settlers in various communities, features on the State of Washington, and land advertisements; third, advertisements placed by land colonization companies and railroad companies in ethnic

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[122] Peter Røthe, Harper, Washington to Lars Trondsen Kinsarvik, Nov. 26, 1908, in Orm Øverland, ed., *Fra Amerika til Norge: Norske Utvandrerbrev: VII: 1905-1914* (Oslo: Solum Forlag, 2011), 424-26.
[123] Peter Røthe, Harper, Washington to Lars Trondsen Kinsarvik, Nov. 26, 1908, in Orm Øverland, ed., *Fra Amerika til Norge: Norske Utvandrerbrev: VII: 1905-1914* (Oslo: Solum Forlag, 2011), 424-26.

newspapers in the Upper Midwest; fourth, booster materials in the shape of pamphlets issued directly from communities, land colonization companies, and railroad companies, and fifth, handbooks which included more detailed studies of conditions given potentially in the migrant's own language. All these sources depicted a perceived reality of the Pacific Northwest from the perspective of people already there, but they also created an impression of the region – a romantic and imagined wonderland (beyond the mere facts) – onto the minds of potential migrants. The literature reinforced the idea of the region, in ways that subsequent migrants carried with them when they set out to see the place for themselves.

When migrants passed through the Cascades and arrived in the Evergreen west side of Washington or Oregon, they overwhelmingly confirmed the parallels between Norway and the Pacific Northwest to be true. Booster materials helped create a collective expectation and a collective narrative of the Pacific Northwest as a new Norway, which was reinforced by individual experiences after arrival. The landscape triggered individual reminiscences, which in turn shaped individual relationships with the landscape of the Pacific Northwest, and further, fed into the constructed collective narrative. The industries of the coastal Pacific Northwest – logging, fishing, and shipping – conveniently fell into a transplanted or new Norway narrative as well as they mirrored Norwegian industries with which many migrants had experience.

Hence, Pacific Northwest Norwegians engaged in ethnic environmentalism – the appropriation of the local landscape in affirmation of ethnic identity – as they constructed identities around the landscape itself, the industries, and the imagined rugged character of Norwegians owing to the rugged environment of homeland Norway. Additionally, by embracing an understanding of self as shaped and hardened by the wild environment of Norway's coasts, Pacific Northwest Norwegians likely also were aware of how those idealized characteristics also

reflected the American ideal of a racialized and gendered pioneer settler. To Pacific Northwest Norwegians, then, the Pacific Northwest (as well as Norway) becomes both a place and an idea. The identity derived from an ethnic environmentalist construction reflects both the relationships between the self, outside forces, perspectives, place and space, which define Findlay's understanding of constructed regionalism. And the blend of passions and moral judgments, geographic orientation and sensory perception that Walter views as an idea that arises from mental projections connected to collective experience within the context of a given place.

Chapter 4 will revisit ethnic environmentalism with a case study of the impact on the Pacific Northwest made by the Norwegian ski sport in the 1920s and 1930s, along with the accompanying *idræt* philosophy. In chapter 2, however, we turn to examine constructions of race as part of Norwegian-American ethnic identity construction in the Pacific Northwest.

CHAPTER 2: "GOOD AMERICANS BORN OF A GOOD PEOPLE:" RACE, WHITENESS, AND NATIONALISM AMONG NORWEGIAN AMERICANS IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

"American citizen! American citizen! A warmth from within filled my whole being. Father and the two neighbors related amusing incidents from the federal court, when a kindly judge had evidently felt that he learned more from studying my father's honest, intelligent Norwegian face than he did from his halting English, and had led him by easy steps to the coveted goal of obtaining his final papers. An American citizen! An American citizen! I was like a child of royalty who suddenly realizes the significance of his royal heritage."[124]

- Dorthea Dahl

Introduction

It was a cloudy, cold morning in October 1896, when Marie Pauline Vognild beheld the coast of Norway for the second time in her life.[125] As a child, thirteen years earlier, she had marveled at the size of the country from the deck of the cargo ship *Arkangelsk*, as it had made its way west and south from Russia to Trondheim. She had spoken little Norwegian at the time. Now, she

[124] Dorthea Dahl, "Three Flags," *Latah Legacy* 30 (2001): 31, in the Dorthea Dahl Papers, Accession no. 820, Folder 1, Norwegian-American Historical Association, Northfield, Minnesota. Dorthea Dahl was only two years old when she and her family emigrated from Norway in 1883. She spent her childhood homesteading in South Dakota (during which time her father obtained his citizenship), but spent most of her life in Moscow, Idaho. Dahl's life is part of the subject of Chapter 5.

[125] Marie V. Lund, "Minner Om Norge: Ett Aar i Norge," *Washington Posten*, March 13, 1931, 1. Marie Vognild (1870-1943) met Gunnar Lund in Chicago where he taught immigrants English in night school. They married in Seattle in 1900, and he later found his career as publisher and editor of *Washington Posten* from 1905 until his death in 1940.

found herself on the deck of *S.S. Tingvalla*, a trans-Atlantic steamer, catching the first glimpse of land on the approach to Kristiania.[126] This time she spoke the language, and she experienced frustration with "Amerikanerinnen" (feminine form of "The American") as she called her, the wife of the American consul in Calcutta. A passenger on the ship, along with her family, the "Amerikanerinnen" had repeatedly let it be known what she thought of "the foreigners." She had explained with a condescending tone that she had enjoyed the service of several intelligent, Norwegian domestic servants, whom must previously have worked in "good" homes in Norway. "That was when my Norwegian blood started heating up, when someone doubted the Norwegian people's intelligence. Many of these girls, I answered, come from very good homes, perhaps even better than the houses in which they serve in America." On arrival in Kristiania, the consul's wife made a final remark that "made my blood boil." She expressed puzzlement that people did not look different than they did "at home" in America. "I asked her what she expected to see," well-knowing that by "at home" she meant the United States, and by "not different" she meant just "as white."[127] A first generation Norwegian immigrant to the United States (who had spent her childhood in Russia), Marie Pauline Vognild responded in astonishment and outrage. The whiteness of Norwegians was self-evident to her, and the suggestion otherwise had infuriated her.

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[126] *S.S. Tingvalla*, of the Danish Tingvalla Line, operated between New York and Kristiania in the 1880s and 1890s. Kristiania was the name of the Norwegian capital before it reverted back to the older Norwegian name Oslo in 1925. Passenger lists suggest the date must have been October 29, and that the ship arrived with flags flying on half-mast after the death of a sailor during the voyage. Norwayheritage.com. http://www.norwayheritage.com/p_ship.asp?sh=thing (Accessed: Feb. 20, 2017).

[127] Marie V. Lund, "Minner Om Norge: Ett Aar i Norge," *Washington Posten*, March 13, 1931, 1, 3.

That Vognild thought it important to record her outrage in her "Memories of Norway" newspaper column, reveals how many Norwegian immigrants viewed their ethnic identity and racial superiority. They understood themselves as Norwegians and as uncontestable American citizens – model citizens – as good and better than anyone else, even the "blueprint" English heritage American, and they saw themselves as "good Americans born of a good people." They viewed themselves as white when contrasted against Native Americans, Asian Americans, or African Americans, but they rarely attempted to "claim whiteness" as a response to native-born Americans' charges against them. When their Americanness occasionally came under attack, they mounted a "best American" defense to claim and defend their Americanness if not whiteness, and used such charges as an opportunity to trumpet their believed racial, national, and civic superiority.

Whiteness and the Construction of the Racial Self

Whiteness scholars argue that claiming whiteness, or becoming "white," represented a central element in European immigrants' identity production. The premise here, as argued by Noel Ignatiev in his case study on the Irish, or Matthew Frye Jacobson on southern and eastern Europeans more generally, is that certain white immigrant groups themselves were initially racialized as lesser whites of a "different color" compared to the Anglo-Saxon Protestant norm.[128] In time, they experienced a gradual whitening that opened doors and allowed them full participation in civic life, including citizenship, and a claim to an American identity conferred

[128] Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge, 1995); and Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998). "Whiteness of a different color," is of course Jacobson's phrase.

with the full privileges of whiteness.[129] This whitening had everything to do with how "Americans" perceived them, but scholars also argue that these initially marginalized immigrant groups actively pursued and eventually claimed whiteness.[130] David Gerber and others have questioned the claim of whiteness studies by arguing that European immigrants generally did not preoccupy themselves with efforts to become white. Gerber posits that immigrants encountered racial hierarchies on arrival, and that they were willing to profit from any conditions that offered opportunities to them, but that conclusive evidence that immigrants offered much thought to the "established order" of racial hierarchy is lacking.[131]

In spite of Marie Vognild's sensitivity above to the suggestion that Norwegians be viewed as foreign, different, and perhaps *differently* white than the native-born American (i.e. white Anglo-Saxon Protestant), Norwegian Americans did not appear concerned with an expressed need of "becoming white." One might argue that in the context of late nineteenth and early twentieth century scientific racism, and the eugenics-driven nativism that motivated immigration restriction from the Chinese Exclusion Act (1882) to the Johnson-Reed Act (1924), Norwegian immigrants understood that as members of the "Nordic" race they ranked on the highest level of the racial hierarchy along with Anglo Saxons. According to the prevalent

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[129] Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White*, 2-3. Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*, 13-14.
[130] Ignatiev discusses, for example, how the Irish purposely sought to disassociate themselves with free blacks in the mid 1800s to counter the perception that both ethnic groups intermingled, intermarried, and performed the same kinds of jobs. Jacobson, among other examples, discusses individuals' attempts to sue the government for the right to become citizens by arguing successful assimilation *and* attempting to claim whiteness (key to citizenship based on the Naturalization Act of 1790). Since the first Naturalization Act (1790), eligibility of citizenship had been limited to "free, white persons," with the only amendments pertaining to individuals of Spanish descent already present in Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona when these areas became part of the United States, freed slaves after the Civil War, and individuals of Asian origin born in the United States. From 1924 also Native Americans became considered citizens.
[131] David A. Gerber, "Immigration Historiography at the Crossroads," *Reviews in American History* 39:1 (March 2011): 83.

classification systems, only Northern and Western Europeans belonged to the Nordic race, while "Alpines" and "Mediterraneans" (Southern and Eastern Europeans) represented the undesirable poor, huddled masses whose immigration Johnson-Reed sought to limit.[132] Jason Pierce argues that in cases where the court system scrutinized an immigrant's fitness for citizenship, the courts deferred to a "man on the street" definition of whiteness, the understanding of the "average" American viewed as a peer by the judges in question (native-born white people). When the Irish in the nineteenth century, or the Italians at the turn of the century, found their whiteness contested, Pierce contends that these newcomers "struggled with being in-between" in a nation that separated its peoples as white or non-white, but that they quickly realized the benefits of whiteness conferred, and sought to claim it for themselves.[133] Membership in the white race rested on one's perspective, location, and time. He notes that at one point Benjamin Franklin considered only Saxons to be white, and that Swedes and Germans possessed a "swarthy Complexion."[134] Pierce clearly considers Franklin's definition of whiteness an exception, however, because he quoted Elliott Robert Barkan that to Scandinavians "the quest for whiteness was largely irrelevant…it was scarcely a hurdle to be surmounted."[135] The Northern Pacific Railway, for example, actively sought to attract Scandinavians as laborers and later as settlers for the "simple reason that [native-born] Americans considered them desirable, hardworking, and white."[136] Pierce argues that the railroads shaped the ethnic landscape of the West in this manner. They did so, not through overt discrimination, he maintains, but by sending agents to

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[132] Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*, 69.
[133] Jason E. Pierce, *Making the White Man's West: Whiteness and the Creation of the American West* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2016), xv-xvi.
[134] Pierce, *Making the White Man's West*, 12.
[135] Pierce, *Making the White Man's West*, 13.
[136] Pierce, *Making the White Man's West*, 160.

Scandinavia and other locations in Northern and Western Europe, and by identifying a desirable "Class of Emigration to settle," and by creating societies along their lines that were predominantly rural, Protestant, and white.[137]

Scholars have understood the white privilege that Norwegian immigrants enjoyed, along with the idea of race itself, as a social construct.[138] Critics of whiteness studies, such as David Gerber and Eric Arnesen, maintain that the whiteness construction sometimes appears to come from the historians rather than the subjects themselves. Arnesen argues that historians have defined whiteness too loosely, and that whiteness alone, without analysis of power structures, has proved an inadequate tool in historical analysis. He questions whether the historical subjects understood whiteness the way historians say they did – whether whiteness actually represented a meaningful identity to them.[139] For example, Arnesen questions whether the Irish ever needed to become white, and doubts Ignatiev's apparent assumption that if not for the power and lure of "whiteness," Irish immigrants might have rejected white supremacy and never adopted a hostile stance against African Americans. Certainly Irish immigrants experienced discrimination, and American elites viewed themselves superior to them, but Arnesen believes "becoming white" too simplistic an explanation. Whiteness was not, he maintains, some clearly understood ideology

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[137] Pierce, *Making the White Man's West*, 161, 173.

[138] There is of course no biological basis for race, but socially constructed races are nevertheless important for the power this conception has wielded in history (and still wields) as a social category. Whiteness is a socially constructed racial category with real consequences on society in terms of the ways it has privileged those passing for "white," and marginalized non-whites. See Stephen Cornell and Douglas Hartmann, *Ethnicity and Race: Making Identities in a Changing World* (Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press, 1998), 23-25.

[139] Eric Arnesen, "Whiteness and the Historians' Imagination," *International Labor and Working-Class History* 60 (Fall 2001): 5-6.

that opened doors and solved all problems for immigrants who adopted it.[140] Arnesen suggests that the better question would be "how immigrants became racialized."[141]

Native-born Americans, scientists, and anti-immigrant nativists racialized southern and eastern European immigrants around the turn of the century. Matthew Frye Jacobson argues that these racialized Europeans represented whites of a different color until a whitening process made all European Americans Caucasian in the twentieth century. This whitening, according to Jacobson, happened in part due to immigrants' agency and the act of claiming whiteness, and in part on account of the dominant culture crystallizing race more directly in black and white terms – literally as well as figuratively.[142] Disagreeing with the overall interpretive framework rather than the racialization of immigrants, Arnesen suggests a difference between the belief that distinct white races exist and an identity based on "whiteness."[143] Finally, he argues that the label "white" could mean different things in different contexts. When nativists charged that "Germans were driving 'white people' out of the labor market," Arnesen suggests that rather than the racialization of terms, "German" meant immigrant or foreigner in this context, and "white" meant native-born, English-speaking, or American.[144] Similar examples exist where the term "Norwegian" or "Scandinavian" is substituted for the "German" of this particular example. In the absence of clear evidence of the racialization of Scandinavian immigrants in the United States, it seems likely that Arnesen's interpretation is most applicable in this case. As will be seen later in this chapter, however, Norwegian immigrants took offense and responded angrily to those kinds of complaints about them. Norwegian Americans constructed their own racial identity based on

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[140] Arnesen, "Whiteness and the Historians' Imagination," 15.
[141] Arnesen, "Whiteness and the Historians' Imagination," 16-17.
[142] Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*, 201-202.
[143] Arnesen, "Whiteness and the Historians' Imagination," 17.
[144] Arnesen, "Whiteness and the Historians' Imagination," 17-19.

Norwegian homeland romantic nationalism, but also their sense of racial superiority as a "civilized race" well suited for American citizenship.

Norwegian Romantic Nationalism and the Construction of the "Racial" Self

Turn-of-the-century Norwegian Americans conceived of themselves as belonging to a race they often referred to as "Norrøna-ætten" or "Norrønafolket (Northern race or Northern folk). Projected onto the Norwegian consciousness in 1872, in the midst of a nationalist awakening, and growing emigration to the United States, Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson's poem "Norrønafolket, det vil fare, det vil føre kraft til andre" (The Northern Folk, it will traverse, it will bring empowerment to others), linked Viking Age Norse identity to nineteenth century Norwegian nation-building.[145] Since it celebrated the Norse vagabond spirit as the source of its greatness, and highlighted the dissemination of a Nordic gift onto the world, the idea also linked emigrated Norwegian Americans to Norway in ways emphasized by the Norwegian-American elite in the decades that followed. Simultaneously, it became a symbol, as perceived by immigrants, of the contributions they believed they had made unto American society.[146] Bjørnson (1832 – 1910)

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[145] Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, *Sigurd Jorsalfar* (Kristiania: Gyldendal Boghandel Nordisk Forlag, 1911), 44-45. Arthur C. Paulson, "Bjørnson and the Norwegian-Americans, 1855-75," *Norden: Tidsskrift for Det Norske Amerika: Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson Jubileumsnummer* 1-2 (May 1932): 23-25.

[146] "Norrønafolket, det vil fare" is performed at the end of the second act of Bjørnson's historical play *Sigurd Jorsalfar* (originally published in 1872). Sigurd Magnusson was a twelfth century Norwegian king who earned his name "Jorsalfar" after undertaking a crusade on Jerusalem in support of the Christian king there. In Bjørnson's play, a skald performs the poem, set to music composed by Edvard Grieg, to honor the king's decision to "sail south and take new land for the Norrøna folk … The Norrøna folk has not lived here for many generations; it has come from wide reaches, and it will move on … down south each man will receive in tenfold what they went after … The Norrøna folk will fare well, it builds the country from outside." The poem suggests that a restless traveler spirit is central to the identity of the Norse folk, and that by undertaking "defining" hero's journeys abroad (Viking raids, exploration), individuals have built

maintains a strong position to the present day as the "national poet" of Norway. He advocated Norwegian Independence and republicanism decades before Norway separated from Sweden, and his literature largely shaped Norwegian romantic nationalism from the 1850s to the 1870s.[147]

Norwegian Americans generally admired Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, and his literature helped shape how they remembered Norway. The year 1932, Bjørnson's one-hundredth birthday, witnessed numerous commemorations around the country. In Seattle, Pacific Northwest Norwegians and an "overwhelming American effort" hosted a Bjørnson-Grieg memorial concert already on April 8, in which a choir and orchestra presented several works. Marie Lund performed Bjørnson's poem *Bergliot*, while an individual with the Americanized name Ethel Steele – most likely a second-generation immigrant – had learned to perform *Solveig's Song* in "impeccable Norwegian."[148] On Bjørnson's actual birthday, December 8, "the Norwegians of the city" held a celebration on the University of Washington campus, in which Gunnar Lund, the editor of *Washington Posten*, offered the words of welcome.[149] Since the church (Norwegian Synod and the Hauge Synod of the Lutheran church, Methodist, and Mormon) held a strong position among rural Norwegian immigrants in particular, Bjørnson alienated many of them in 1875 when he broke with the Norwegian Lutheran state church and distanced himself from organized religion.

Norway in an "imagined community" sense. See Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, *Sigurd Jorsalfar* (Kristiania: Gyldendal Boghandel Nordisk Forlag, 1911), 43. The term "imagined community" borrowed from Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin of Nationalism* (London/New York: Verso, 1983).

[147] He wrote the lyrics for "Ja, vi elsker dette landet," the Norwegian national anthem, during this time period (the exact date is unknown).

[148] "I Björnson-Aaret," *Washington Posten*, Apr. 15, 1932, 4. "Mrs. Gunnar Lund," *Seattle Daily Times*, Apr. 7, 1932, 12.

[149] "Bjornson's Centenary Will Be Celebrated," *Seattle Daily Times*, Dec. 7, 1932, 19. "U. of W. Og Vi," *Washington Posten*, Dec. 16, 1932, 4.

Norwegian Americans nevertheless continued to appreciate his romantic nationalist literature despite his break with the church. By 1932, the St. Olaf College scholar Arthur Paulson believed that practically all of the older generation of Norwegian Americans had read Bjørnson's *Synnøve Solbakken* (1857), a peasant tale that painted a vivid and romantic picture of an idyllic Norwegian farmer's life.[150] To Norwegian Americans, Bjørnson was one of them. His father was a farmer before he became a pastor, and was perceived as an "ideal peasant" and ideal leader figure in Norwegian public life. His romantic peasant tales depicted an idealized Norway that mirrored the nostalgic lenses through which an immigrant recalled his or her childhood.[151] The "Norwegian landscape" that Pacific Northwest Norwegians found around Puget Sound, added to migrants' romanticized memories of their Norwegian peasant culture childhood, to create a regional Norwegian-American identity that shared Norwegian nationalist symbols.

Norwegian nationalism based on peasant culture held appeal not only to farmers but also to urban immigrants. The yeoman farmer represented a nineteenth century ideal in both Norway and the United States. Scholars have asserted that roughly 87 percent of all Norwegian immigrants to America arrived during the "pioneer era," between 1865 and 1930. The majority of these settled in the Upper Midwest, and most earned their living from agriculture throughout this period.[152] Nevertheless, by 1900, cities had attracted laborers and working professionals in notable numbers. Norwegian migrants had flowed into New York, Minneapolis, and Chicago for more than half a century, which by 1900 added a population of more than 11,000 in each of the

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[150] Arthur C. Paulson, "Bjørnson and the Norwegian-Americans, 1855-75," *Norden: Tidsskrift for Det Norske Amerika: Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson Jubilieumsnummer* 1-2 (May 1932): 25.
[151] Arthur C. Paulson, "Bjørnson and the Norwegian-Americans, 1855-75," *Norden: Tidsskrift for Det Norske Amerika: Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson Jubilieumsnummer* 1-2 (May 1932): 23-25.
[152] Daron W. Olson, *Vikings Across the Atlantic: Emigration and the Building of a Greater Norway, 1860-1945* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 12-17.

two first cities and over 22,000 in Chicago. With a Pacific Northwest migration stream that developed momentum in the late 1880s and 1890s, Seattle's Norwegian-born population had surpassed 1,600 by 1900. Tacoma had a population of more than 1,400 Norwegian immigrants, and Portland's first-generation Norwegian Americans numbered 850.[153] While Norwegian Americans in rural communities may have taken note of the centennial anniversary of Bjørnson's birth as well, commemorative events took place in cities with sizeable immigrant communities.

Norwegian-American community leaders drew on the yeoman ideal and romanticized peasant culture when they constructed narratives of race. Illustrating the fluidity of their racial constructs, they did not necessarily (in all respects) think of ethnic Norwegians as members of the same race. As part of a full-page feature on the Norwegian Constitution Day celebration in Seattle in 1899, the *Seattle Times* offered "a history of the Norse race," in which they explained that during the "early migrations of the Germanic race" two distinct peoples populated Norway. The first people built homes along the coast and the shores of the fjords, and the second people came later and settled on higher ground on the coast and in the inland forests. Described as possessing different temperaments and different physical traits, the first "hopeful and sanguine, fair, blue-eyed and tall of stature," and the second "defiant in nature, pessimists, … dark, lynx-eyed and small of stature," these "light and dark stripes of the two original peoples can be traced in the history of Norway from the earliest sagas to the present day."[154] In a similar vein, in a 1911 letter to his friend Lars Trondsen Kinsarvik back home in Norway, Peter Røthe, the former editor of *Washington Posten* who found his ideal Norwegian home on the shores of Puget Sound, expressed dismay with the industrialization and urbanization that Norway embraced at that

[153] U.S. Census, 1900. Table 35 Foreign born population, distributed according to country of birth, for cities having 25,000 inhabitants or more: 1900 (Norway).
[154] "Descendants of Vikings Celebrate," *Seattle Times*, May 18, 1899, 8.

time.[155] He explained that he thought of Norway as populated by two main races – "real" Norwegians and outsiders. He viewed ordinary folk, the farmer's class, as true Norwegians; and the elite ("*storfolk*" as he called them) as immigrants.[156] In this view, moneyed and educated people represented an immigrant class from Denmark, and he blamed this class for industrialization and urbanization.[157]

The outsider image of the ruling classes, and the supposed Norwegian authenticity of the peasant culture, explained Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson's popularity among Norwegian Americans. The freeholders and tenants from whom Norwegian Americans descended represented "pure Norwegian stock," at least as understood through the lens of nineteenth century Norwegian romantic nationalism, which upheld the small farmer as authentically Norwegian. In this view, nineteenth century educated Norwegian officials remained essentially Danish in culture, even if fiercely Norwegian in politics.[158] Members of the elite did sometimes come to the more provincial Norway from Denmark (and later Sweden), but more commonly Norwegians who stepped up to the ranks of the elite received their education and earned their status in

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[155] Peter Røthe's (1860-1926) pre-emigration name was Per Svendsen Røthe. He was editor of *Washington Posten* from 1890-1893 before he went back home to Norway. He later returned to the United States, and lived in Madison, Wisconsin for a while before establishing his home "Varalid" (named after a cherished memory from home) in Harper, WA across the Puget Sound from Seattle. Øverland gives his American name as Peter Rothe, but in *Washington Posten* he gave his name as Peter Røthe. See Orm Øverland, ed., *Fra Amerika til Norge: Norske Utvandrerbrev, 1905-1914*, Bind VII (Oslo: Solum Forlag, 1911), 185.

[156] Peter Røthe (Per Svensen Røthe), Harper, Washington, to Lars Trondsen Kinsarvik, Nov. 19, 1911, in Orm Øverland, ed., *Fra Amerika til Norge: Norske Utvandrerbrev, 1905-1914*, Bind VII (Oslo: Solum Forlag, 2011), 353-54.

[157] From 1380 to 1814, Norway made a provincial hinterland of a united kingdom with Denmark. This political union brought significant Danish cultural influence over Norway, with political figures, military officers, scholars, and priests, all receiving their education in Copenhagen. Danish became the official language used by government. Anyone who spoke and read Danish appeared well educated or highborn.

[158] Arthur C. Paulson, "Bjørnson and the Norwegian-Americans, 1855-75," *Norden: Tidsskrift for Det Norske Amerika: Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson Jubilieumsnummer* 1-2 (May 1932): 23.

Copenhagen. Norwegians used Danish as their official written language, and even up to the present day most Norwegians use a written language that is essentially a modified form of Danish.

As part of the mid-nineteenth century wave of Norwegian romantic nationalism, nation-building Norwegians gradually came to look toward the freeholding farmer, the sagas of the Viking past, fairy tales, folk songs and other folk literature, and the many spoken dialects, as cultural expressions of "true" Norwegianness. Unsurprisingly, in this context, Norwegians at home and abroad appropriated the symbolism of this cultural heritage as a nationalist and racial expression of authentic Norwegianism. Emigrated Norwegians sometimes came to appreciate the result of Norway's nationalist attempt to develop a Norwegian language. Peter Røthe, for example, expressed admiration for this "landsmaal," derived from an amalgam of "pure" Norwegian dialects.[159] His friend, Lars Trondsen Kinsarvik had sent him a copy of *Jonsok Draumen*, a "landsmaal" translation of William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. In his 1913 response, Røthe wrote that it was a "true delight" to read this version of Shakespeare. He thought that it had gained rather than lost in translation, and that it sounded "more poetic than [in] English." He expressed a growing respect for this new Norwegian language, and asserted that a successful rendition of Shakespeare proved that the "landsmaal" represented cultural

[159] "Landsmaal" was the name used from 1853 for an official Norwegian written language devised by Ivar Aasen (1813-96), based on western Norwegian "authentic" dialects. The effort to develop this language dovetailed with Norwegian romantic nationalism. It survives in the present day as "nynorsk," one of Norway's two official written languages. The other, "Rigsmaal," or "bokmål" as it is known today, remains the main written language of Norway. Spoken in and around Oslo, it nevertheless remains a Norwegianized version of Danish.

sophistication of the highest degree, thereby arguing that Norwegian folk culture was not inferior to Danish or English culture.[160]

In the context of Norwegian romantic nationalism, Norwegian Americans conceived of the Norrøna folk (or race) as a gendered expression of shared heritage, as glue holding a dispersed diaspora together. A nineteenth century construct, the idea still carried resonance into the 1940s. "When push comes to shove we are a hard and rugged race," University of Washington music professor August Werner, a first generation Norwegian immigrant, said from the podium during his Seventeenth of May speech in Seattle in 1940, suggesting that Norwegians everywhere would weather the crisis of the German occupation of Norway in World War II.[161] Of course, with the term "race," Werner invoked idealized masculine traits of the Norwegian character, understood as an ethnic group rather than in a racialized sense. Norwegian-American constructions of self as an ethnic group emphasized the masculine ruggedness, sturdiness and hardiness of one's character in the nineteenth century as well as in 1940. Other Americans also often repeated the same terms to describe Norwegian Americans. Gail Bederman and Kristin Hoganson connect gender, race, and nationalism in turn-of-the-century constructions of white, American manliness (later masculinity) in response to a perceived "crisis of manhood."[162] The language Norwegians used to describe themselves, and other Americans used to describe them,

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[160] Peter Røthe (Per Svendsen Røthe), Harper, Washington, to Lars Trondsen Kinsarvik, June 25, 1913, in Orm Øverland, ed., *Fra Amerika til Norge: Norske Utvandrerbrev, 1905-1914*, Bind VII (Oslo: Solum Forlag, 2011), 410-11.

[161] August Werner, "17de mai, 1940," typewritten speech manuscript, May 17, 1940, in August Werner Papers, Collection no. 2923, Box 1, Folder 21, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.

[162] Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995); and Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

mirrored the language crisis-torn white American men used in reconstrucing their own manliness in the 1890s. For example, in their coverage of Norway Day at the 1909 Alaskan Yukon Pacific Exposition in Seattle, the *Seattle Times* observed that the descendants of Norwegian Vikings, "proud of their history and … race" captured yet another "Saxon nation today and carried it off into captivity." The newspaper described Norwegians' masculine physical or racial characteristics, undoubtedly as perceived by the reporter, but also as narrated by Pacific Northwest Norwegians themselves: "Blue-eyed, fair-haired, tall and straight as were their illustrious ancestors." The reporter went on to describe how the "sons of Norway flocked in great numbers through the gates…attracting universal attention by their sturdy build and splendid physique." As the many "Norsemen" accompanied by their families enjoyed the fair grounds, they became "objects of much admiration and interest."[163] The reporter made no reference, however, to the class implication for Pacific Northwest Norwegians. They owed their sturdy build to many years of labor in forests, mills, and on the sea.

Norwegian-American women also described the Norwegian people in similarly masculine terms. In 1926, in connection with the centennial commemoration of the 1825 arrival of the Norwegian sloopers, Alma Guttersen of St. Paul and Regina Hilleboe Christensen of Portland, Oregon, published a commemorative *Souvenir "Norse-American Women," 1825-1925*, which collected submissions from "one hundred prominent women" around the country. In the preface, Alma Guttersen wrote of Norwegians that they represented "a people morally and physically clean and strong, humble, honest, industrious, thrifty, courageous, law-abiding and God-fearing, a people proving their worthiness to contribute to and become part of American

[163] "Vikings Take Fair By Storm," *Seattle Times*, Aug. 30, 1909, clipping in Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition Scrapbooks, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.

citizenship."[164] Ragna Tangjerd Grimsby similarly asserted that Norwegians made "some of the sturdiest, most upright and God-fearing people in the civilized world."[165] In addition to the masculine "pioneer settler" qualities named by both genders, women had a greater tendency than men to emphasize Norwegians' supposed morality and pious religion. Donna Gabaccia has argued that women's choices and roles within the family made them the emotional core within immigrant families and communities in their adaptation process and evolution of ethnic identity.[166] As such, it was not unusual that women served as a moral compass within both the family and the community.

These types of characterizations of the Norwegian immigrant persisted into the 1940s. During a 1940 Sigvald Qvale Norwegian heritage recitation contest in Poulsbo, Washington, Professor O. M. Norlie, a Lutheran minister, scholar and second-generation Norwegian American, spoke of Norwegians as a "beautiful" people.

> There is no other race on Earth with fairer hair or bluer eyes than this people. They share with the other Scandinavian peoples the honor of being the whitest of all peoples. They are tall, backboned, enduring and

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[164] Alma A. Guttersen, "Preface," in Alma A. Guttersen and Regina Hilleboe Christensen, eds., *Souvenir "Norse-American Women,' 1825-1925: A Symposium of Prose and Poetry, Newspaper Articles, and Biographies, Contributed by one hundred prominent women* (St. Paul/Minneapolis: Lutheran Free Church Publishing Co., 1926), 6. This book was published to commemorate the achievements of Norwegian-American women as part of the celebration of the centennial of Norwegian immigration to the United States in 1925. Guttersen edited this collection of writings from a number of women from across Norwegian America, along with Christensen, a resident of Portland, Oregon.

[165] Ragna Tangjerd Grimsby, "Norse in Our Schools," in Alma A. Guttersen and Regina Hilleboe Christensen, eds., *Souvenir "Norse-American Women,' 1825-1925: A Symposium of Prose and Poetry, Newspaper Articles, and Biographies, Contributed by one hundred prominent women* (St. Paul/Minneapolis: Lutheran Free Church Publishing Co., 1926), 81.

[166] Donna R. Gabaccia, *From the Other Side: Women, Gender, and Immigrant Life in the U.S., 1820-1990* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994).

> laborious. They are intelligent and studious, they are hard-working and frugal, they are upright and honest, they are conscionable and law-abiding.[167]

Norlie highlighted the same masculine traits that might describe the pioneer woodsman. More notably, however, he identified Scandinavians as the "whitest of all peoples," a racial construction based on whiteness where he implied that Norwegians belonged at the top of a racial hierarchy. The Norrøna folk, or the Norwegian-American ethnicity, supposedly offered everything anybody could desire of a person's character, and (as will be seen) as a community; the members of this community believed that their contribution to American society helped raise it toward its higher ideal and the fulfillment of its promise.

Norwegian Americans' worthiness of American citizenship, and their claimed status as a civilized people – their claim that they represented "good citizens born from a good people" – suggested an awareness and acceptance of the racial and masculine connotations that Kristin Hoganson and Gary Gerstle argue characterized both nativists and legislators' definition of worthy citizenship.[168] In that way, it represented a Norwegian-American argument of belonging when stated by Norwegian Americans, and a statement of acceptance when voiced by other Americans. Norwegian-American women, of course, used the same argument, including its masculine connotations, without sharing the premise that "good citizens" had to be male.[169] It also begs mention, however, that Gerstle and Hoganson, along with Matthew Frye Jacobson

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[167] "Arven," *Washington Posten*, May 17, 1940, 3.
[168] Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood*; and Gary Gerstle, *American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 14-80.
[169] Anna Peterson, "Making Women's Suffrage Support an Ethnic Duty: Norwegian American Identity Constructions and the Women's Suffrage Movement, 1880-1925, *Journal of American Ethnic History* 30:4 (Summer 2011): 5-23.

stress "whiteness," as defined by the immigration laws between 1790 and the mid-twentieth century, as a central component of the construction of a civilized, and worthy citizen. Subsequently, when Norwegian Americans trumpeted their perceived racial superiority in the vein of Professor Norlie above, they did so, at least in part, to claim American citizenship beyond any possible doubt. Race, in this sense, meant more than highlighting the stereotyped strengths and virtuous traits of ethnicity. It rested upon a racial construction of self as part of the Norwegian-American identity, based on racial hierarchy and an idea of whiteness.

Sigurd Jorsalfar's Crusade and the Nørrona Folk in Vesterheim

Gunnar Lund, the longtime editor and publisher of *Washington Posten*, often expressed his "tribal" bond to Norwegians in Norway or Norwegian Americans "back east" in the Upper Midwest, which exemplified Benedict Anderson's nationalist "imagined community" construction in action. In connection to the centennial celebration of the first lasting Norwegian settlement in the United States in Fox River, Illinois, in 1934, Lund regretted that the Norwegian language had "largely been lost over the last one hundred years" in Fox River, but praised the people there for "still feel[ing] like a Norwegian tribe." He continued:

> Those of us on the Pacific Coast are far from Fox River, but the people there are our close relatives, and their celebration brings our Norwegian journey here in Vesterheim to mind. We have fared here as people did at home in Norway, we weathered hard times but we have also simultaneously felt the joys of success. The endurance, faithfulness, and our ability to persist in our tasks, which is our tribe's trademark, our

people here has also shown it, and it has brought honor onto Norway.[170]

War bond advertisements printed in Lund's newspaper during World War I called upon not only the loyalty of the reader as an American citizen, but also as descendants "from the Norrøna folk."[171] August Werner invoked and celebrated the spirit of the Norrøna folk in his Norwegian Constitution Day speeches from the 1940s to the 1960s.[172] Werner claimed that Norwegians, in the spirit of the Norrøna folk, had conquered the North Sea, "and all the seven seas after that."[173] Pacific Northwest Norwegians, along with Norwegian Americans elsewhere, constructed a narrative of belonging to Norway as well as the United States. Daron Olson explores the idea of "Greater Norway," in which the Norwegian government, especially after the 1920s, sought to link expatriate Norwegians to the Norwegian nationalist project in an "imagined community" that bound the emigrated diaspora to the homeland.[174] To Norwegian Americans, then, the

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[170] "Vaar Egen Stamme," *Washington Posten*, June 15, 1934, 4. Gunnar Lund (1866-1940) had been born Gunerius Emanuel Abrahamson in Stavanger, Norway. When he arrived at Ellis Island at age 23, he took his mother's last name and "Norwegianized" his first name. Educated in law, he nevertheless went directly to Seattle where he laid railroad tracks, worked in lumber mills, and loaded lumber onto ships (even spent a year in charge of heating the Norwegian Lutheran Church in Portland). He spent some years in Chicago, teaching immigrants English and operating his own dairy business, before returning to Seattle and eventually made a career for himself as owner and editor of *Washington Posten* from 1905 to 1940. See Gunnar Lund Papers, Collection no. 4076, Vertical File, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.
[171] "Til De Norskfødte Borgere i Amerika," *Washington Posten*, Apr. 11, 1919, 4.
[172] Werner tells a celebratory and self-congratulatory anecdote about climbing onto a roof to set off fireworks. His friends call on him to sing something, and he begins "Norrønafolket, det vil fare" (the Norse people will traverse), before a fireworks explosion threw him off the roof. Bjørnson's poem/song from *Sigurd Jorsalfar*, as earlier mentioned, opens with "The Northern/Nordic people, it will traverse," or more literally, "The Norrøna folk, it will fare well."
[173] August Werner, "17th of May 1961," handwritten speech manuscript in English, May 17, 1961, in August Werner Papers, Collection no. 2923, Box 1, Folder 21, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.
[174] Daron W. Olson, *Vikings Across the Atlantic: Emigration and the Building of a Greater Norway, 1860-1945* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 159-60.

Norrøna folk represented a nationalist connection to the homeland, as well as a racial construct that asserted Norwegian Americans' suitability for American citizenship.

A close parallel existed between Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson's poem (song) about the restlessness of the Norrøna folk, and the gendered narrative Norwegian Americans presented about themselves to other Americans. Briefly summarized, *Norrønafolket, det vil fare* tells the following story. The poem asserts that the Norsemen have a restless soul. Their desire to head into the bigger world gains the world at large. In other words, Vikings and crusaders bring sword-tip progress as a gift unto the wider world. The crusaders' courage reflects well on them, the poem continues, and the honor they earn abroad inspires their people at home. When the Norsemen crusaders in the story returned home from Jerusalem, Norway "radiated" on account of their foreign achievements. Many trivial matters that had occupied people's consciousness before the crusade now seemed less important. The journey the crusaders had undertaken, in many ways a "hero's journey" as defined by Joseph Campbell, had created purpose, pride and a sense of identity for not only the crusaders but the Norse people in general.[175] As a consequence of the crusade, the woman and the mother could now set goals of manly aspiration for their sons. Hence, a foreign journey became a symbol of a rite of passage and a test of manhood. If two travelers met on a mountaintop, the poem suggested, they inevitably would talk about the crusade. In the honor and joy of the crusade, the two men would find brotherhood before going each their way. Likewise, an old man on a crutch would rise and look to God, and say, "the race increases the heritage, [I am] happy to fare." All enterprise needs "renewal," or the people's spirit will weather away, the poem asserts. Without the new foreign exploits of young men, older generations will not get rejuvenated. Honor must be kept young, and only through trial can it be

[175] Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1949).

achieved. Hence, the Norrøna giants once again traverse the ocean on dragon wings, raised above all doubt, toward greatness in the distance, the poem concludes.[176] Even though the Viking Age is over, dragon-adorned ships once again cross the ocean carrying new generations of young men to face their trials. This seemed true for medieval crusaders in the story, and it seemed true for those migrating across the Atlantic at the time when the poem was written.

With this poem, performed as a song in his play *Sigurd Jorsalfar* (1872), Bjørnson suggested that honor could only be won abroad through facing challenge. Boys, encouraged by their mothers, needed to leave home and go away to faraway lands. This venture turned boys into "men," and their good deeds reflected well on the fatherland and the Norrøna race. The last stanza, of course, seemed to speak directly to the Norwegian emigrants of the day. By emigrating for America, they took up a tradition with roots in the bygone glories of the Viking Age, and they set out to "become men" in their era's equivalent of Sigurd's *Jorsalfar* (journey to Jerusalem).[177]

Seattle Norwegians celebrated themselves as an ethnic group in the spirit of *Norrønafolket* at the Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition in 1909. A Viking ship made landfall

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[176] Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, *Sigurd Jorsalfar* (Kristiania: Gyldendal Boghandel Nordisk Forlag, 1911), 44-45.

[177] There are some interesting parallels between Bjørnson's *Norrønafolket* (1872) and Rudyard Kipling's *White Man's Burden* (1899). In Kipling's poem, white boys also earn their manhood by going into exile. Kipling's white men also bring their gift onto the world. Kipling's well-known poem suggests that "civilized" people have a moral obligation to go on a "civilizing mission" and share their civilization with the world, and essentially to conduct child rearing; to educate and raise the "uncivilized" through colonization. Norway never possessed colonies. Vikings settled Normandy and Iceland, set up small settlements on Greenland, and a brief and unsuccessful settlement on Newfoundland. There was never an organized state effort behind such ventures, however. Vikings raided empires rather than set out to build them. Under the influence of national romanticism, mid to late nineteenth century Norway underwent a similar growth in nationalism as that which drove nineteenth century European colonization, but instead of building empire through colonial possession, Norwegians built a greater Norway through emigration (spreading one's diaspora).

shortly before 1 o'clock in the afternoon. A band of Indians, the Norway Day queen, and her court greeted Captain Eric Thomle and his men, the captain playing the role of Leif Erikson. The St. Olaf College band, having made the trip from Northfield, Minnesota, then headed a procession to the Stadium, where the organizers formed a historical parade. The parade started at the Stadium around 1:30 in the afternoon and made its way around the grounds. The parade depicted nine historical periods that narrated how Norwegian Americans viewed themselves, but also how they wanted "Americans" to perceive them. First came the Visigoth invasion of Rome in the fifth century CE, which showed ancestors of the Vikings carrying off Roman soldiers into captivity. Then followed the early Vikings of the tenth century; Norse mythology, showcasing Valkyries carrying off fallen heroes from the battlefield to Valhalla; and the Viking conquest period of Europe, from Rollo to William the Conqueror. All this represented Viking prehistory featured to argue the Norse people's role in shaping early European history.[178]

The parade then moved into more recent history to showcase Norway establishing itself as a modern democracy, a nation among nations, and its romantic nationalism. After a section highlighting Norway's "highest splendor as a world power" in the Middle Ages; and a subsequent section devoted to folk hero admirals of the eighteenth century; the parade emphasized the 112 delegates of the 1814 Constitutional Assembly at Eidsvold, the founding fathers who framed Norway's modernity as a constitutional – and civilized – nation. The peasant wedding procession, in national costumes from the middle of the nineteenth century, that followed, articulated the romantic nationalist view of the authentically Norwegian on which the new nationalist project rested.

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[178] "When Ancient Norway Comes to the A-Y-P," clipping from Seattle newspaper, Aug. 29, 1909, and "Vikings Take Fair By Storm," *Seattle Times*, Aug. 30, 1909, clipping, in Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition Scrapbooks, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.

Last, but not least, came a contingent of "authentic" present-day Vikings from Alaska – gold miners. A float in the shape of a Viking ship made the focal point of this final historical section, carrying gold pans in lieu of shields, and picks and shovels instead of spears and axes.[179] In the late 1890s and early 1900s, Seattle had served as a way station for hopeful miners on their way to the Yukon and Alaska, Norwegians among them. While most miners struck little gold, those who did return with a fortune made a significant imprint on people's imagination. O. J. Ekre, for example, had arrived in Tacoma, Washington, from Minneapolis in 1890. He left for the Yukon in 1895, and after gold mining success returned to Tacoma in 1898 and established himself as an investor and businessman.[180] Joachim Olson-Houg made three separate trips to the gold fields from Tacoma, and eventually established a successful construction business in Tacoma, which turned him into a large-scale property owner and city councilman for Ruston.[181] While the gold miner and Viking represented romanticized masculine figures on Pacific Northwest Norwegians' consciousness, also women could insert themselves in this collective imagination in a "rugged, tough Norwegian" sense. Otelie Sofie Torsdatter, or Tilla Holte, for example, stressed her own resourcefulness in her narrative of her journey from Wisconsin via Seattle and Dawson to Fairbanks Creek and her husband's gold-mining claim. Travelling with her sister and her newborn child, she described purchasing her own vessel to sail in icy waters after traffic had stopped for winter, and a 200-mile perilous overland journey in late fall which

[179] "When Ancient Norway Comes to the A-Y-P," clipping from Seattle newspaper, Aug. 29, 1909, and "Vikings Take Fair By Storm," *Seattle Times*, Aug. 30, 1909, clipping, in Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition Scrapbooks, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.
[180] Bergman, *History of Scandinavians in Tacoma and Pierce County*, 115.
[181] Bergman, *History of Scandinavians in Tacoma and Pierce County*, 162-63.

made her daughter the "youngest white child over Eagle Summit."[182] With the combination of Viking imagery and Alaska gold mining, Pacific Northwest Norwegians sought to invoke the Viking Age and Norrøna spirit on behalf of present-day [1909] Norwegian Americans, and to assert themselves as the same people carved by Norway's history, rough geography, stormy seas, and harsh and cold winters.

In the vein of Bjørnson's poem, the narrative the parade presented highlighted ancestors overpowering the might of the Roman Empire in lieu of the Muslim challengers of Jerusalem, and it connected present-day Norwegian Americans to their Viking past. It also emphasized the sea-faring mastery of Norwegians so crucial to the manly purpose and nature of the Norrøna folk as depicted in the poem. Norway's parallel history to that of the United States as a constitutional democracy – Norway's civilized form of government – could be viewed as an argument that Norwegians would be outmatched by no one, and also as a statement of Norway's gift or contribution onto the world. Finally, the use of the romanticized freeholder "authentic" Norwegian as the chosen symbol of the time period most closely associated with Norwegian Americans' own departure from Norway, helped root the narrative in the romantic nationalism of the nineteenth century. The 1925 Norse-American Centennial (of Norwegian immigration) pageant in Minneapolis-St. Paul, which has been studied by April Schultz, articulated the same links between mythology, the Viking past, and the free-holding "authentic" Norwegian farmer,

[182] Marie Lund, "De Som Gaar i Kjøkkenet: Otelie Sofie Torsdatter," *Washington Posten*, serial column, Mar. 10, 1933, 1, 3 – May 12, 1933, 5. This is a biographical series entitled "Those who walk the kitchen," highlighting the exploits of ordinary Norwegian immigrant women "who have lived up to their task." While written by Lund as a biography, it is clear from the prose that the narrative is based on an in-person interview.

as the 1909 parade in Seattle.[183] On the same day that the Minnesota pageant took place, 10,000 people attended the "Norse-American Centennial of the Pacific Northwest" in Seattle. The Leif Erikson Lodge of the Sons of Norway staged a parade at this event as well, highlighting the millennium since the Norse explorer's "discovery" of America. The parade included a thousand participants who emphasized the Norwegian-American history of the sloopers, prairie pioneers, participation in the Civil War, and in fishing, mining and other occupations in the Pacific Northwest.[184]

In the context of immigrant hostility and nativism connected to World War I, and the subsequent Immigration Restriction Acts of the 1920s, Norwegian Americans at the 1925 events seemed primarily concerned with emphasizing the Norwegian-American Civil War blood sacrifice, along with the immigrants' general contribution to American society. In Seattle, Pacific Northwest Norwegians emphasized the longue durée since Leif Erikson's discovery of America, and participation in various Pacific Northwest industries. Simultaneously, in Minnesota, groups within the pageant represented art and literature, invention, industry, commerce, World War I soldiers, Red Cross nurses, and women war workers. Schultz has nevertheless maintained that the Minnesota parade narrative also restated ideas of Norwegian-American superiority in the coded language of pageantry.[185] All three parades suggested the gift of civilization brought onto the world by the immigrants. Norwegian racial identity, and sense of superiority, had not changed noticeably. But in the 1920s context, in both the Pacific Northwest and the Upper

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[183] "Norse-American Centennial," Ray-Bell Films, Inc., St. Paul, Minnesota, 1925. Norwegian-American Historical Association Archives, Northfield, Minnesota. April R. Schultz, *Ethnicity on Parade: Inventing the Norwegian American through Celebration* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1994). Daron Olson also describes the event in *Vikings Across the Atlantic*, 133-49.
[184] Olson, *Vikings Across the Atlantic*, 142-43.
[185] Schultz, *Ethnicity on Parade*, 7-9; Olson, *Vikings Across the Atlantic*, 148.

Midwest, Norwegian Americans shifted their emphasis toward immigrant contributions. As will be discussed later, the historian Daron Olson has argued that the organizers concocted a narrative for the centennial festival designed to convince native-born American leaders that Norwegians made *good Americans*. This narrative asserted that Norwegians held a long association with the New World, it underscored that they shared cultural values with Anglo-America, and finally it emphasized Norwegians' racial pedigree.[186]

"White Men" and Indians as a Racial "Other"

Pacific Northwest Norwegians defined themselves in national-ethnic terms as distinct from "others," including Americans. When they used the term "American" as an "other," it was not as a racialized "other." First-generation immigrants tended to contrast themselves against English-speaking Americans. Contrasting the dominant culture from the self is a typical first-generation phenomenon, where the Norwegian immigrant idea of "American" did not differ significantly from the Mexican immigrant idea of "Anglos."[187] In both cases, members of the dominant culture are seen as distinct from the members of one's own ethnicity or community. While immigrants clearly distinguished themselves from native-born Americans, they did not appear to lump second-generation members of their own community with the "Americans." They attempted to construct hyphenated identities that distinguished their own ethnicity from other Americans.

First-generation immigrants often contrasted native-born Americans from immigrants in labor settings. Peter Røthe, for example, compared Germans, Scandinavians, and Irishmen to

[186] Olson, *Vikings Across the Atlantic*, 134.
[187] David Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 1836-1986* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987).

"Americans" in an 1891 editorial in *Washington Posten*. In defense against nativist complaints, he asserted that the European immigrant groups had no more criminals, poverty, or mentally ill people among them than "Americans" did. He also defended immigrants' rights to organize labor protests, and sided with German and Irish "Anarchists," or Scandinavian "drunkards" against their employers. The foreign-born worker suffered poor conditions, he argued, compared to his "American brother."[188] Christian Løkke, a fisherman who spent much of his life in-between Tacoma and Alaska wrote of work "conducted in a very American manner," and of a friend's daughters serving "American families" as maids.[189] A *Washington Posten* reporter found it enjoyable that "so many Americans … one only had met in ski-cabin brotherhood a year or two ago" came out to watch a ski jumping competition on Mt. Rainier.[190] In such contexts, Pacific Northwest Norwegians clearly differentiated immigrants from native-born Americans, but it also seems likely that they made distinctions between any member of their own ethnicity and class and Americans as well. In other words, when Norwegian immigrants differentiated themselves from "Americans," they did not typically count their own second-generation friends, neighbors, colleagues, sons and daughters among those Americans.

Immigrants pursued acceptance and Americanization, but even though they viewed themselves worthy of citizenship they nevertheless continued to see themselves as distinct from Americans. Anna Regina Hilleboe Christensen's mother had learned the English language from her future in-laws, who "instructed her in the American ideas of home and housekeeping," her mastership of which, "made her a teacher and leader among the women who came directly from

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[188] Editorial Page, *Washington Posten*, Jun. 11, 1891, 4.
[189] Christian Løkke to Karl Andreas and Maren Pernille Løkke, Oct. 18, 1905 and Dec. 13, 1905, in Orm Øverland, ed., *Fra Amerika til Norge: Norske Utvandrerbrev, 1905-1914*, Bind VII (Oslo: Solum Forlag, 2011), 109, 112-13.
[190] "Skirendet Paa Mt. Rainier: Midsommerlöpet I Vesten," *Washington Posten*, July 8, 1921, 1.

their foreign homes."[191] Steven Eide, a Columbia River fisherman and second-generation immigrant, recalled that he had grown up speaking Norwegian at home. After he had started school his parents stopped speaking Norwegian in the house. Then "they'd talk American." There were many Swedes and Norwegians around Skamokawa, Washington, he mused, but there were "your Americans" too.[192] In all these cases, "American" meant the culture of English-speaking, white Americans with English-sounding names.

In its criticism of anti-immigration Americanism, *Washington Posten* occasionally contrasted the Anglo-Saxon race with other European races. In the context of defending immigrants' labor organizing, *Washington Posten* maintained that the "Anglo-Saxon race is as much given to revolutionary ideas as any other race." Many "revolutionists of American blood," the newspaper asserted, could be found in the Pacific Northwest, "but it is more convenient to blame foreigners for the spirit of revolt and unrest."[193]

Pacific Northwest Norwegians did not express a "pan-white" identity very often, but it did come to expression when they defined themselves as distinct against imagined "lesser" racialized "others." When they addressed their own whiteness, they did so in contrasting white Americans from Native Americans, Asian Americans or African Americans. When they wrote about people of color, they often did so with an anthropological detachment, relatively

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[191] Anna Regina Hilleboe Christensen, "Wife and Mother: Gjertrud Rumohr Haug Hilleboe, 1833-1909," in in Alma A. Guttersen and Regina Hilleboe Christensen, eds., *Souvenir "Norse-American Women,' 1825-1925: A Symposium of Prose and Poetry, Newspaper Articles, and Biographies, Contributed by one hundred prominent women* (St. Paul/Minneapolis: Lutheran Free Church Publishing Co., 1926), 31, 33.
[192] Steven C. Eide, Interview by David L. Myers, March 17, 1976. Washington State Oral History Program, Wahkiakum County, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.
[193] "Indvandringen i Fremmedsprogs-pressen," *Washington Posten*, June 24, 1921, 4. Gunnar Lund is quoting the *Literary Digest* of May 28, 1921, quoting *Washington Posten's* general position. He made no additional comment.

objectively in coverage of a newsworthy event, or sometimes to defend the humanity (if not the full equality) of the subject. But Pacific Northwest Norwegians also made stereotypical characterizations of Native Americans, Asians, and Blacks, reflecting the racism embedded in American society.

Norwegian migrants to the Pacific Northwest typically described Native Americans in exotic terms, or as an aspect of the local ecosystem, assessed almost with the interest of a naturalist studying the natural environment. This romanticized view of the Indian as "part of nature" was not uncommon in the late nineteenth century when anthropologists sought to document the "vanishing race," and literature celebrated the "noble savage." Such associations were strengthened by the turn-of-the-century perception that Native Americans were a thing of the past. Philip Deloria traces American colonists' connection between Indians and the "primordial landscape" at least as far back as the Boston Tea Party, but it probably dates to the very first encounters.[194] In his *Oregon och Washington*, an 1890 handbook in Swedish for Scandinavian immigrants to the Pacific Northwest, Ernst Skarstedt described Indians as part nature and part "noble savage." The first mention of ethnicity is found in the chapter on fish and fishing, where Skarstedt matter-of-factly points out that fishermen are mostly made up of Scandinavians and Italians, while cannery workers are mostly Chinese.[195] In the chapter on

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[194] Philip Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998). Indians as part of the primordial landscape suggest a perception that they were there before humans, prehistoric and primitive, they were part of the natural landscape. Deloria argues that Native Americans represented to the colonists a connection with something authentically American – a root Americanness. Hence colonists and the turn-of-the-century "back to nature" movement, for example, engaged in the old world tradition of wearing masks by disguising themselves as Indians with the intent to connect with this prehistoric (and masculine) Americanism.

[195] Ernst Skarstedt, *Oregon och Washington: Dessa staters historia, natur, resurser, folklif m.m. samt deras skandinaviska inbyggare: En handbok för dem, som önska kännadom om*

agriculture, however, while describing the harvest on the hop fields in the Puyallup Valley of Washington, racialization combine with noble savage thinking and an "idyllized" social racial mixing.

> At the hop fields in the Puyallup valley one can every year find 6,000 people employed during harvesting. Most of these [seasonally employed hop-pickers] are Siwasha Indians, who are generally considered both prettier, more laborious, and better behaved than even white laborers. Many white laborers are found as well, and among them not that few who just as much for the experience and enjoyment as for the income participates in the hop picking. Even rich people consider it summery recreational to spend a few weeks with the hop pickers, with whom they likely join in happy games after the end of the day's work with more excitement than with which they participate in the hop harvesting itself.[196]

Skarstedt does not specify who he views as "white," but in this context it seems likely that the term "white" encompassed all European immigrants and all Anglo Americans. Whether interested parties requested his book from the Upper Midwest or Scandinavia, Skarstedt expected the reader to identity with the white laborers. Nowhere in the book does he describe white laborers as someone clearly different from Scandinavian laborers. It is interesting, however, that whites, even moneyed whites, are depicted in negative terms. Skarstedt may have meant to convey that white immigrants generally found Pacific Northwest Indian women attractive in a

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Nordvestkustens förhållanden (Portland: Broström & Skarstedtsförlag / F. W. Baltes & Company, 1890), 39. Translated by this author from the original Swedish.

[196] Skarstedt, *Oregon och Washington*, 56. Translated by this author from the original Swedish.

colonizer and colonized sense; he may have meant to be humorous to entertain Scandinavian readers; or he may have inadvertently or intentionally characterized other white ethnics negatively in comparison to the Indians on account of his own perceived competition with other white immigrant groups.

Native Americans' role as a racial "other" is clear in other sections of Skartstedt's book. He painted a romantic picture of the Indian camps at the aforementioned hop harvest in the Puyallup Valley, but referred to Indian girls as "women from a barbaric background … by nature prone to fripperies," who sought through "screaming colors and tastelessness to obtain the viewer's attention and appreciation, but presumably not his *admiration*" [italics in original].[197] The Indians represented a racial "other," picturesque and interesting to look at, exotic and different, worthy of study, but not an equal. Many historians have described Europeans' racial "othering" of Native Americans or Africans particularly in the contact phase between the two groups. Stephen Greenblatt, for example, explored the efforts on both sides to make sense of the "other." He argued the centrality of mutual wonder and marvel, as well as misunderstanding, in the initial contact between Europeans and Native Americans in the brief moment of cultural encounter. He emphasized the European representation of the "other" to Europeans at home, which he described as representations on display.[198] A misunderstood, racialized culture on display is also an important topic of the literature on the depiction of the "other" through the medium of world's fairs.[199] The ways Norwegian migrants engaged in "othering" of the Native Americans they met, and particularly the ways they "displayed" Native American people and

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[197] Skarstedt, *Oregon och Washington*, 56. Translated by this author from the original Swedish.
[198] Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).
[199] See, for example, Robert W. Rydell, *All the World's a Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876 – 1916* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).

culture in writing intended to recruit Scandinavian migrants, reflected similar dynamics and racialized constructions as those described by Greenblatt, Robert Rydell, and others. Similar to other writers of his time period, who wrote about the noble savage, Skarstedt humanized the Indians, but he also took it for a foregone conclusion that the Indian way of life had to disappear for an inevitable – and good – progress of modern society, which in turn offered the opportunities that brought Scandinavian settlers to the Pacific Northwest.[200]

George Teien, a first-generation Norwegian immigrant who arrived in Seattle in 1906 by way of Brooklyn and the Upper Midwest, readily adopted the racial "othering" in which white Americans engaged. Before moving to the West Coast, Teien had built and ran a general store or trading post on the Chippewa Indian Reservation in the Upper Midwest for a period of three years. His tale seems embellished and sometimes improbable, but is quite revealing in his characterization of the Indians on the reservation. Teien seemed to respect and admire his Chippewa customers and friends in many ways, but he clearly viewed them as a distinct "other." "My first winter with these children of the forest was a pleasant one," he wrote. "When I tried to learn their language I was given every possible cooperation. They were like a big crowd of unspoiled children."[201] Colonizers' view of indigenous peoples as "children" has been thoroughly documented by historians of empire. Teien expressed a view not unlike that of Rudyard Kipling, in his poem "The White Man's Burden" (1899), where the white man embraces his civilizing mission of remolding peoples "half-devil" and half-child." Contemporary commentators sometimes viewed Kipling's poem as a satirical criticism of empire, but many

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[200] Skarstedt, *Oregon och Washington*, 57, 73. Translated by this author from the original Swedish.

[201] George C. Teien, "Teien Tales," undated, unpublished memoir, 18, in George Teien Papers, Scandinavian Archives, Box 27, Folder 10, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.

nonetheless held the view the poem expressed that justified white men's mission to bring forth civilization and progress.[202]

Teien's narrative clearly established an identity as a "white man" when contrasted against Indians. He described himself as the only white man in the area during the first two winters, and that in that capacity he played host to any white man who passed through the area. One winter, his friend Hans, who only spoke Norwegian, came to visit him, but since he "possessed a fiddle and was a fair player," he quickly became "a favorite" with both "the young Indians" and "the whites."[203] Indians, he wrote, could "imitate sounds made by birds or animals in general," and they had difficulty making the "white man's bread."[204] Not only did these experiences clearly mark Indians as a distinct, childish "other," perhaps more closely related to nature than other humans, but they also clearly distinguished Teien and other white men as "white" across ethnic lines when contrasted with the Native Americans. Teien's account highlights an immigrant living "alone" far outside an immigrant community, with Native Americans as his neighbors. His Norwegianness came to expression only in his interaction with Hans, and in a near-death experience caused by falling through the ice while engaged in the Norwegian activity of ice-skating on a frozen lake.[205] Teien's construction of identity otherwise reflected that he identified with white American men across ethnic lines, and that he "othered" his closest neighbors as distinctly different from himself.

In a narrative of her mother's migration experience, Anna Regina Hilleboe Christensen of Portland, Oregon, expressed racial superiority in contrasting her mother and "white people"

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[202] Gretchen Murphy, *Shadowing the White Man's Burden: U.S. Imperialism and the Problem of the Colorline* (New York: New York University Press, 2010), 1-2.
[203] Teien, "Teien Tales," 25.
[204] Teien, "Teien Tales," 27.
[205] Teien, "Teien Tales," 21-23.

against Indians, and she justified taking their lands. Gjertrud Hilleboe had emigrated from Norway by herself as a young girl to join her brother Peder in America. She joined Peder in Wisconsin, where they lived a pioneer existence in a small log hut. "They could well understand," Christensen wrote of her mother and uncle, "why the Indians enjoyed their nomadic existence and would not willingly relinquish their claims to the white people who now usurped their possessions and crowded them out of their happy hunting grounds."[206] While expressed as sympathy, the author, or the subject, showcased her sense of superiority by patronizing Indians and their culture. And she clearly justified the taking of Native lands:

> The streams, lakes and forests had been the hunting grounds of the Indians and they were loathe to part with them. They were, however, won by the kindness and fairness of the pioneers. Near this home they often camped, and mother was a favorite with the red people. Many a loaf of bread, piece of meat and other food found its way to their wigwams. She often also cared especially for the squaws and papooses. When they, in return for her consideration and kindness, offered her their food, she declined, not relishing their culinary art. Skunk meat and snake soup did not appeal to her.[207]

White people won the Indians over with "kindness and fairness," the reader is meant to believe, so that they voluntarily parted with their lands. Also, as suggested by this account, Christensen (as a surrogate for her mother) claimed that Indians had no idea how to gather and cook food, nor

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[206] Christensen, "Wife and Mother," in Guttersen & Christensen, eds., *Souvenir 'Norse-American Women,' 1825-1925*, 30.
[207] Christensen, "Wife and Mother," in Guttersen & Christensen, eds., *Souvenir 'Norse-American Women,' 1825-1925*, 32.

were they capable of caring for their young or their women. In short, one is supposed to believe, the Indians were dependent on Gjertrud's superiority, skill, and kindness in order to survive.

In the 1930s and beyond, Pacific Northwest Norwegians continued to trumpet Norwegian superiority in ways that racialized the "other." August Werner, for example, expressed a belief in Norwegian superiority in his construction of ethnic identity. Werner, who also came to Seattle after first having lived and worked elsewhere in the United States (Brooklyn), boasted superiority when he described his ethnicity. He referred to Norwegians as a "people inhabiting a rugged and bewitchingly beautiful country," which he in turn compared to the ruggedness of the Pacific Northwest. "Freedom of man and Freedom of spirit is in the very blood of our race," he wrote, and he maintained that an "abundant amount of energy and adventurous daring spirit [still existed] in our race" (i.e. the spirit of the Norrøna race).[208] The term "race" here reflects the broader definition used by his contemporaries. He conceived of Norwegians as an ethnic group, who had achieved a great degree of "civilization" on account of Norway's environment and Norwegians' cultural heritage.

Werner also depicted Scandinavian superiority, compared against the "other" of Native Americans, in a 1938 play. The Swedish Tercentenary Association of Seattle and Vicinity commissioned Werner to write a commemorative play for the Tercentenary Celebration the association hosted in Seattle in July 1938.[209] Swedish Americans celebrated the 300th anniversary of the landing of Swedish colonists in present-day Delaware, and the founding of New Sweden, in celebrations across the country. In Seattle, the celebration featured "A Play in

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[208] August Werner, Seventeenth of May speech manuscript, 1951, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 21, University of Washington Libraries Special Collections.
[209] Gunnar Strandin, Secretary, Swedish Tercentenary Association of Seattle and Vicinity to Werner, 9 December 1937, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 8, University of Washington Libraries Special Collections.

Three Scenes Depicting Different Episodes from the First Swedish Expedition to Delaware, 1637-1638."[210] The publicity poster and seal for the Seattle event featured a painting by Werner, on which a Swedish aristocrat is standing in front of his ship, gazing intently on the viewer. Next to him stands a Native American, gazing upon the Swede.[211] The tercentenary association had no trouble casting the Swedish parts, but the Indian parts proved more difficult. The organizers hoped to cast Indian dancers, but the final production in the evening of July 9 appeared to feature Scandinavian Americans in all roles.[212] The absence of Native Americans on the cast suggests that Indians remained exotic and "alien" in the view of Scandinavian Americans in the 1930s, and that the Scandinavian community in Seattle had little contact with Native Americans.

The play carries overly racist overtones. Indians appear only in the second scene (or act), which depicts the Swedish landing in Delaware. Indians arrive by canoe, come ashore, greet other Indians, and then gaze toward their left in anticipation. Then the Swedes make landfall, their leaders approach the Indians and make payment for the lands as promised. "The Indians of course show great delight in what they are given, but otherwise they are stolid [stoic]," Werner writes in his scene description. When the peace pipe is passed around, "[one] of the Swedish officers, Captain Jöransson, is reluctant to sit down with these men "who don't talk any

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[210] August Werner, "A Play in Three Scenes Depicting Different Episodes from the First Swedish Expedition to Delaware, 1637-1638," unpublished stage play, 24 March 1938, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 20, University of Washington Libraries Special Collections.

[211] "Tercentenary Celebration Seattle Washington July 9-10 1938," publicity photograph/poster, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 8, University of Washington Libraries Special Collections.

[212] Agge, Swedish Tercentenary Association of Seattle and Vicinity to Werner, 22 June 1938, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 8, University of Washington Libraries Special Collections. "Gus Backman in Leading Role," *Seattle Daily Times*, 8 July 1938, 3; "Chairman," *Seattle Daily Times*, 9 July 1938, 13; and "Pageant Marks Swedish Fete," *Seattle Daily Times*, 10 July 1938, 5; all discuss the play, but are remarkably silent about the Indian performers.

Swedish," and sit there and "grunt." In everything he says and does, Captain Jöransson shows contempt. Later, one Indian wants to trade something for Mrs. Britta Jöransson's handkerchief. He goes over to her and "grunts" something. "What are you grunting for? Can't you talk Swedish?," she calls out in response. The Indian pulls at her handkerchief. "Take those red hands off my kerchief or I'll slap you," she exclaims. Captain Jöransson witnesses the last part of the exchange, and rushes over. He chastises his wife. "Aren't there enough white men for you to flirt with? Do you have to take up with a redskin?"[213]

The Indians are painted as willing collaborators who freely traded lands and goods with the Swedes, and were happy and better off with the trade. Several times, Werner refers to Indian speech as "grunting," in the stage directions, suggesting a prevailing view of Indians as a racial "other." Captain Jöransson and his wife treat the Indians with contempt, while the play does not allow the Indians to show understanding, reaction, or to express their perspective. In sum, the play makes an odd celebratory pageant for an event commemorating a significant anniversary. The Indians are merely extras (literally and metaphorically), observing the events without providing the audience with an opportunity to understand their humanity or motivations. As such, these characters become an apt metaphor for the disdain with which Scandinavian Americans viewed them as late as on the eve of World War II.

White Ethnics and the Racial "Othering" of Chinese and African Americans

[213] August Werner, "A Play in Three Scenes Depicting Different Episodes from the First Swedish Expedition to Delaware, 1637-1638," unpublished stage play, 24 March 1938, Scene 2, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 20, University of Washington Libraries Special Collections.

Norwegian Americans' racism and "othering" directed toward Chinese Americans echoed that of other white Americans in the West. Unsurprisingly, Ernst Skarstedt's 1890 handbook contained numerous negative depictions of Chinese in the Pacific Northwest as a "lesser" people. He depicted the Chinese immigrant in a tone reminiscent of how he otherwise described wildlife, and he echoed the prevailing view among white Americans in the American West of the effeminate Chinese laundry man.[214] "These slanted eyed, yellow, adorned hair creatures can be found most places along the coast," he wrote.[215] Skarstedt repeated the contemporary anti-Chinese nativist argument, and claimed that the Chinese were unassimilable because they "never shed their homeland's habits."[216] The highly racialized language Skarstedt used in his book provides an example of a particular way in which Skarstedt and his Scandinavian readership, as anticipated by the author, embraced a unified whiteness across ethnic lines with other Euro-Americans in defining themselves as white when contrasted against the Chinese.

Washington Posten, as well, expressed clear racism directed against Chinese immigrants. In 1899, the newspaper provided an account of a Norwegian immigrant woman in the Upper Midwest who married a Chinese. As per the prevailing naturalization laws of the time period, this woman forfeited her American citizenship if she already had one. Marie Jordahl, age 25, of Des Moines, Iowa, married in Milwaukee. "That a Norwegian girl marries a Chinese does not happen every day," the newspaper reported.

> [He] has the good-sounding name Lum Hing. … The groom [35 years old] does not run a laundry, but operates a Chinese store in Barnesville

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[214] See for example Ronald T. Takaki, *Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1989).
[215] Skarstedt, *Oregon och Washington*, 74. Translated by this author from the original Swedish.
[216] Skarstedt, *Oregon och Washington*, 75-76. Translated by this author from the original Swedish.

> and is supposedly affluent. … Mrs. Lum Hing may think that she has made a good deal, but the odds are she will regret it. That a white woman marries a Negro or Indian can to an extent be understood, but a Chinese man – ich! But the woman is an unreasonable being.[217]

Racialized and gendered views are clearly at play here. First, the author addresses the assumed profession: The effeminate Chinese laundry man. Second, on the basis of the often understood variables of class and its intersection with race, which suggest that money whitens, that is, a person of financial means has an easier time passing as white (or winning acceptance among whites), it is clear that this author does not find a Chinese man acceptable in that respect. Third, a racial hierarchy is suggested where the author implies that marriages between white women and blacks or Native Americans could possibly be accepted. And finally, the author, clearly a male, can only explain Jordahl's choice of husband with woman's lack of rational thought.

The local mainstream press also stressed unified whiteness across ethnic lines at the expense of Asian immigrants. An account that appeared in the *Seattle Times* in 1905 contrasted immigrants of "Mongolian" descent with whites. The newspaper reported on having received three printed postcards announcing the formation of the Mongolian Exclusion Society. The newspaper asserted that the postcards, signed by American citizens with foreign names and handwriting "distinctive of Germany, Sweden and Norway," pleaded for national support in the society's fight against the yellow peril and their quest to eliminate "Mongolian" competition for white Americans' jobs. In response to the postcards, a reporter had attempted to track down the secretary of the society to learn "why the Mongolian Exclusion Society yearned so much to keep Orientals from coming to the land of the free." Eventually successful in finding a member of the

[217] "En Norsk Kvinne Gifter Seg Med En Kineser," *Washington Posten*, July 28, 1899, 5.

society, the reporter had asked him about the foreign names on the postcards and inquired as to "why the society did not broaden its scope and give Americans alone a chance to get rich by excluding all other nationalities from the shores of the land of the Star Spangled Banner." Paraphrased by the reporter, the representative of the new society had responded that "white men had a right to come in as long as they showed a desire to become good citizens, but that the members of the organization felt no overwhelming love for men of a brownish hue."[218]

While the tone of the 1905 article made it seem that the author did not share the Mongolian Exclusion Society's view, other articles made clear distinctions between "Orientals" and the "white immigrant from Europe." In the context of the nativist environment that produced exclusion laws aimed at Asians and southern and eastern Europeans by 1921 and 1924, a 1920 *Seattle Times* article highlighted the progress of Irish, German, and Norwegian immigrants, and called it a process that built "the great, rich, generous nation we have today." The author warned, however, that "Orientals" necessarily would seek the same kind of progress, and suggested that if the State of Washington became "Orientalized" the "original immigrant would be disenfranchised and could own no land," and the labor force of the state would "descend to the level of the immigrant from Japan, China, and India."[219] In the author's view, it appears that a unified group of Irish, German, and Norwegian immigrants could be counted among the "original" immigrants, whose dominion seemed threatened by "new" immigrants from Japan, China, or India. The "white immigrant from [northwestern] Europe" seemed to represent to this author a cross-ethnic whiteness – the "original immigrant" – that he contrasted against the ominous "other" of Asian immigration.

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[218] "Keep Japs Out is Their Slogan," *Seattle Sunday Times*, July 23, 1905, 12.
[219] "Orientalized Washington," *Seattle Times*, Oct. 17, 1920, 18.

The Norwegian ethnic press in Seattle, and immigrant accounts of migration and settlement in the Pacific Northwest, have remarkably little to say about African Americans.[220] Only when blacks represented direct economic competition to Norwegian Americans and other whites locally, did *Washington Posten* through its pro-labor orientation reveal its negative attitudes and hostility toward African Americans, who were often used as strike breakers. An early report in *Washington Posten* tells of an Oregon Improvement Company mining outfit in Franklin, Washington, that brought in 675 "negro miners" to take jobs from "white miners." The newspaper took on a labor perspective against this "foreign" intrusion. It painted a picture of a scene where self-restrained out-of-job white miners held moral superiority and kept calm against an outrage.[221] In a mass meeting in Ballard, the Norwegian enclave in Seattle, the attendees passed resolutions that condemned the conduct of the Oregon Improvement Company as "un-American and damaging to the state's best interests."[222] In his editorial section, Peter Røthe described both the black miners and the "white workers" as victims, wronged and tricked by the Oregon Improvement Company. Røthe shaped the story as labor standing its ground against an immoral employer, and could not imagine what "drove … Seattle-Negroes" to make the trip to Franklin "to help the company" by attempting "to convince their brethren" to stay.[223] As with Native Americans and Asians, the (competitive) presence of African Americans made Pacific Northwest Norwegians express a sense of unity with other Euro-Americans – other whites – when contrasting themselves against a racialized "other."

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[220] Orm Øverland notes that letter writers had little to say about Native Americans as well. Øverland, *Fra Amerika til Norge VI: Norske Utvandrerbrev, 1895-1904* (Oslo: Solum Forlag, 2010), 45-47.
[221] "675 Negre i Franklin, Wash.," *Washington Posten*, May 21, 1891, 5.
[222] "Washington," *Washington Posten*, May 28, 1891, 1.
[223] "Untitled editorial," *Washington Posten*, May 28, 1891, 4.

Washington Posten's Pro-Immigration Stance, 1890-1920

While *Washington Posten* in many ways trumpeted Norwegian superiority, its editorials from the 1890s to the 1920s nevertheless supported unlimited European immigration. Tacoma's Norwegian newspaper, *Tacoma Tidende* supported the 1921 immigration restriction bill, but *Washington Posten*, at the time, had a reputation as a newspaper that opposed "the type of Americanism which sees danger in every non-British immigrant," which it viewed as a "revival of the Know-nothing movement."[224] Despite expressing views by letter to his friend Lars Trondsen Kinsarvik that "the lowest, most unlearned peoples from Southeast Europe" made the majority of immigrants in 1913, Røthe expressed pro-immigration views in his editorials in *Washington Posten* in the early 1890s. Even in 1913, he seemed confident that on account of America's greatness, "a small minority of good brains," and the power of assimilation, America could absorb any immigrant, no matter how "low" and "unlearned" they might be. As a consequence of assimilation or Americanization, "races and racial characteristics change quickly here," he observed. Borrowing from the pseudoscience of scientific racism and eugenics, he explained that "Norwegian people's children have something un-Norwegian over them. Even the shape of the skull – the slowest of everything to change – has been shown through measurements to change ever so slightly already by the next generation."[225]

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[224] "Indvandringen i Fremmedsprogs-pressen," *Washington Posten*, June 24, 1921, 4. A feud between Peter Røthe and the editor of *Tacoma Tidende* developed already during the early 1890s. *Washington Posten* established itself as a pro-labor, pro-immigration forum, while the Tacoma newspaper took on a business professional's nativist perspective.

[225] Peter Røthe (Harper, WA) to Lars Trondsen Kinsarvik, Nov. 22, 1913, in Orm Øverland, ed., *Fra Amerika til Norge VII: Norske Utvandrerbrev, 1905-1914* (Oslo: Solum Forlag, 2011), letter no. 265, 424-26.

This view meant that Norwegian immigrants became "un-Norwegian" over time as they became American, and to Røthe this was true of other European immigrant groups as well. He consistently defended immigrants and immigration from his editorials. In 1891, he criticized Judge Robinson in Olympia, Washington, for denying U.S. citizenship to five Italians. The judge had supposedly asked the men whether they would be willing to enroll in the U.S. Army to fight a war against Italy, and had denied their citizenship when they did not prove willing to make that pledge. According to Røthe, such a question during the citizenship proceedings was highly unusual, and he sided with *The Telegraph* in suggesting that "the judge was partial against these Italians, and that it is not 'fair' to be stricter with them than other people." Røthe made a distinction between an acceptance to be drafted in the event of war, and to *volunteer* to fight against one's birth-country. Few immigrants could be naturalized citizens, he suspected, if they had to pledge a willingness to *volunteer* in a war against their birth-country. "He is not much of a man he who desires to go to war against his fatherland," he added, signifying obvious close ties with his own homeland, and sympathy with other European immigrants with similar ties.

With this argument, Røthe asserted that assimilation held its limits. He questioned the manliness of immigrants who held their birth-country in such low esteem that they would gladly wage war against it, and the Americanism of the judge that would require it. He doubted that the many German immigrants in Washington (naming them as an example) "would happily take up arms against the fatherland," but suspected that in the case of war they would "remember their duty as American citizens, and if it came to it, do their duty as such just as much as Judge Robinson." Røthe concluded that the five Italians "have been in this country longer than required by law for citizenship." They surely wished to become citizens. "The law guarantees them that

right."[226] In 1892, Judge Robinson denied citizenship to twenty-four Italians and Swedes on account of an inability to read English. Røthe agreed with the judge that good citizenship, "for men that is," required the ability to vote "intelligently." This required knowledge of English, and the ability to read the Constitution as far as Røthe was concerned as well. "But if this is to be demanded from those who want to *become* citizens," he added, "the same demands must be made of those who *are* citizens." He argued that a "native" who cannot read was no better equipped for the duties of citizenship than an "ignorant foreign-born," and suggested that "the same 'test' be used on Americans."[227] If one based the ability to be a good citizen with one's ability to read, Røthe maintained that Anglo Americans did not necessarily make better citizens than European immigrants.

Washington Posten's support of immigrants, and its opposition to immigration restriction, continued under the editorial hand of Gunnar Lund after 1905. In 1918, for example, Lund found it "unfortunate that [Word War I had] brought an amount of undeserved criticism for so-called hyphenated Americans. There has been no end to the accusations from some circles … of lacking patriotism or real American mentality."[228] Lund asserted that better grounds existed to make such accusations against native "Americans" rather than immigrants. He gave examples of such Americans' resistance to conscription, and of the bravery and patriotism of immigrants, and continued:

> It is an undeserved and unfounded charge this question of immigrants' lack of patriotism, and if it were not for our being forced into it by our own Small-Americans [Natives who think all immigrants are suspect], it

[226] "Nægtet borgerbrev," *Washington Posten*, Apr. 23, 1891, 4.
[227] "Negtet Borgerskab," *Washington Posten*, Nov. 24, 1892, 4.
[228] "Smaa Amerikanere," *Washington Posten*, Nov. 1, 1918, 4.

> would never have occurred to us to justify ourselves in this area. The hyphen in front of the American has only one meaning, to show the person's ancestral origin, and it does not signify a lesser degree of American temperament. Thankfully, an American temperament does not depend on one's birthplace, but on the spirit implanted in free men regardless of where they come from.[229]

Similarly, in 1919, Lund charged that "*Washington Posten* has repeatedly brought attention to the demonization of everything 'foreign' that currently happens here in our free America … it presents itself as a persecution of any and all who have come here from the other side of the ocean."[230] He went on to explain that knowledge of the true state of affairs helped but little when an immigrant faced native-born Americans who blamed immigrants "for all misery." The most radical among the spokesmen of the "Know-Nothingism of this day and age will not be content with anything less than stripping the immigrant's spirit away," he wrote.[231] The most nonnegotiable among nativists, he suggested, demanded assimilation to the extent that an immigrant needed to abandon all cultural heritage to please them.

<u>The Scandinavian Racial Self and Norwegian Superiority</u>

Pacific Northwest Norwegians believed they were superior to other immigrant Euro-Americans and native-born Anglo Americans. Olander Wold of South Bend, Washington, explained in an 1891 letter to the editor of *Washington Posten* that "the Americans" called the majority of workingmen in South Bend "Scandinavians." He expressed outrage that these Americans usually

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[229] "Smaa Amerikanere," *Washington Posten*, Nov. 1, 1918, 4.
[230] "Forkjetringsen Av De Fremmede," *Washington Posten*, May 2, 1919, 4.
[231] "Forkjetringsen Av De Fremmede," *Washington Posten*, May 2, 1919, 4.

lumped "a sorry collection of misbehaved Russian Finns" among the "Scandinavians." On account of his "national pride," Wold felt "both angry and violated." He appealed to his countrymen, *Washington Posten's* readers, to help "make the Americans understand that we are neither spiritually or bodily brothers with 'the low Russian Finns,'" and added that the Russian Finns' standing was "doubly low compared to 'the real Scandinavians.'"[232] Wold viewed himself as a Scandinavian, and he did not consider Finns to share the temperament, culture, or race as his own people. It offended him to be lumped together with Finns, and he expected other Pacific Northwest Norwegians to be offended by it as well. He seemed to value that Americans considered Norwegians to be workingmen, but sought to distance Scandinavians as a superior group compared to the Finns who would "use knives and bottles on each other."

Anglo Americans never expressed doubts of the worthiness of Norwegians for U.S. citizenship in ways that could be interpreted as charges that Norwegians were not white. Anglo Americans most commonly praised Norwegian Americans as good citizens, but occasionally the Americanness of Norwegian Americans did receive some scrutiny. Pacific Northwest Norwegians quickly responded to charges of inadequate assimilation, foreign attachment, lack of patriotism, or un-American behavior. Their intense reaction to any such charge suggested that the matter was a sensitive one, but the fierceness with which they defended their Americanness also suggested that they viewed such attacks as an opportunity to trumpet their own (racial) superiority. Native-born Pacific Northwest Norwegians, and the educated elite among the first generation immigrants, resolved questions of inadequate Norwegian-American assimilation by simultaneously both ignoring race and invoking race in a claim of Norwegian civic superiority; an almost innate *Norwegian* Americanness demonstrated through a proven (to them) superior

[232] "Brev til Washington-Posten," *Washington Posten*, May 7, 1891, 6.

capacity for self-government. They constructed a Pacific Northwest Norwegian identity that relied on a construction of superior capacity for self-government, which in turn could be interpreted as an unarticulated racialized whiteness, and convinced themselves (and tried to convince others) that they truly made better Americans than anybody else.

When a city councilman in Portland, Oregon, lumped Scandinavians with racialized others, and appeared to bring Scandinavian whiteness in doubt, the Norwegian community reacted with an outcry. During a city council debate on municipal roadwork in 1893, Councilman I. M. Davis remarked that if the city gave the contract to a rich corporation, this corporation "would employ Scandinavians, Negroes, and Chinese. It would be better to leave the matter as it was till spring, and let white men have the benefit of the work."[233] *Washington Posten's* editorial response revealed the Norwegian community in Seattle to be unexpectedly defensive about "whiteness:"[234]

> When we remember that the Chinese are generally despised and hated, so much that they are prevented entry into the United States, and that the Negroes, though freed, by the Americans never have been granted the same place as themselves, socially or politically, the first openly persecuted, the second quietly despised, both standing equally low with respect to general knowledge and intelligence, as Scandinavians stand high, when we remember this, we can understand the depth and breadth of the insult this snob in the Portland City Council uttered.[235]

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[233] "Untitled editorial," *Washington Posten*, Nov. 23, 1893, 4. "The Portland Slanderer," *Washington Posten*, Nov. 23, 1893, 1.
[234] Given as Chas. Overland. Røthe had left for Norway by this time.
[235] "Untitled editorial," *Washington Posten*, Nov. 23, 1893, 4.

The writer expressed outrage at the suggestion that Scandinavians be counted with blacks and Chinese, and unsurprisingly expressed in the manner of an obvious fact how he thought Scandinavians ranked racially in terms of "knowledge" and "intelligence" in comparison to the other two groups. While the councilman may have used the term "white" in the meaning of native-born American, and "Scandinavian" in the meaning of immigrant, as Eric Arnesen would interject, the editor's response left little doubt that he viewed the councilman's statement an insult to all Scandinavians, immigrant or native-born. He reacted strongly against the perceived lumping of Scandinavians together with Blacks and Chinese, people Pacific Northwest Norwegians also racialized, and suggested a racial hierarchy with Scandinavians on top. "We are well aware that among some native-born Americans," the editor charged, "a not insignificant amount of ignorance and prejudice exists against foreign-born fellow citizens."[236] In response, he sought to set the record straight, and trumpeted Scandinavian and Norwegian superiority.

The "Portland slanderer" received wide attention among Scandinavians in Seattle, who expressed outrage because it slandered all citizens or persons of Scandinavian birth. On the front page in the same issue, *Washington Posten* reported in English about the "Portland slanderer: A fanatic representative of Knownothingism," and continued "Scandinavians resent the insult with magnanimity." Every Scandinavian society in Seattle adopted resolutions in response, the newspaper reported, after they attended a general mass meeting in Seattle. The Norwegian Singing Society of Seattle resolved that they "resent any and especially the above named deprecatory utterances and desires to brand the originator as a prejudiced ignoramus unworthy of any public trust," since Councilman Davis' statement "reflects upon any citizen of Scandinavian birth or extraction and is unworthy of any gentleman." Likewise, the members of the Norwegian-

[236] "Untitled editorial," *Washington Posten*, Nov. 23, 1893, 4.

Danish Young People's Literary Society Fremad of Seattle, resolved to "protest against all and singularly the above uncalled for manifestation of knownothingism and express the hope that all intelligent citizens will assist in weeding our political garden for such rank and foul excrescence as Mr. Davis of Portland," because "the said malicious statement is an insult to every person of Scandinavian birth or extraction."[237] The fact that these resolutions were expressed in English, and that they made the front page of *Washington Posten*, signified that the framers, as well as the newspaper, wanted to reach an audience beyond the Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish speaking populations.

Other such charges came from the podium of Norwegian Constitution Day celebrations in Seattle. In 1901, Colonel Alden J. Blethen, the owner and editor of the *Seattle Times* from 1896 until his death in 1915, propositioned his audience to celebrate the Fourth of July instead of the Seventeenth of May, and thereby "[breaking] down the clannish barriers which divide the people into nationalities." They could rely on their children to do this, he mused, because "every child born in America … would owe allegiance only to the American flag."[238] In other words, Colonel Blethen renounced the event for which he spoke, and called on Pacific Northwest Norwegians to abandon it, assimilate, and become "true" Americans. Similarly, from the same podium, one year later, Judge R. B. Albertson reminded Pacific Northwest Norwegians that they had "new responsibilities as sons and daughters of the great American republic," responsibilities, the listener might assume, not compatible with a celebration of the Seventeenth of May.[239] In "preserving this tender regard for the land of your birth," he continued, "it should constantly be remembered that a higher duty rests upon you as [American] citizens." While admitting that the

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[237] "The Portland Slanderer," *Washington Posten*, Nov. 23, 1893, 1.
[238] "Their Day Closed Brilliantly, *Seattle Daily Times*, May 18, 1901, 8.
[239] "Norway's Day of Freedom," *Seattle Sunday Times*, 18 May 1902, 13.

commemoration of the "gilded pages of Scandinavian history" had its proper place, Judge Albertson maintained "your chiefest pride and glory should henceforth be to contemplate the matchless grandeur of that great government of the sovereign American people of which you are now a component part." In other words, Pacific Northwest Norwegians should with greater care demonstrate their appreciation and loyalty to the *American* rather than the *Norwegian*. "The magnificent resources of this country have been freely and fully thrown open to your thrift and enterprise," he added, "and in the race for worldly advantage, the humblest immigrant is given a chance to better his condition, which is nowhere else to be found. But above all and beyond all, you have been clothed with the priceless mantle of American citizenship."[240]

Judge Albertson responded to his own charge by also trumpeting Norse and Scandinavian racial "purity" and superiority, along with the "good citizen" defense. In the context of eugenics thinking, he praised the Norsemen as "a distinct and uncorrupted race." The history of Europe in general, he said, was the history of "blended" nationalities. The "purity of the Scandinavian race," however, has not suffered from the admixture of alien blood that elsewhere throughout Europe has almost obliterated the original stock." He cited the absence of lasting foreign invasion as the reason behind Scandinavian "racial purity," and suggested that the terrorizing Viking raids brought a "gift" upon Europe – "new life … breathed into a decadent civilization."[241] At the 1905 event, he added the "good citizen" defense. He maintained that the "American people have nothing to fear from the citizenship of the Scandinavian." Drawing upon a Norwegian-American "homemaking myth" that insisted American liberty and democracy descended from Viking Age Scandinavian institutions, Albertson claimed that the "love of

[240] "Norway's Day of Freedom," *Seattle Sunday Times*, 18 May 1902, 13.
[241] "Norway's Day of Freedom," *Seattle Sunday Times*, 18 May 1902, 13.

liberty was born in the soul of the Norseman."[242] Hence, Scandinavian immigrants came to American shores with "American values" already instilled. "I do not need to instruct the Scandinavian in the lesson of good citizenship," he continued, "for he has brought to this country a respect for law and a devotion to the right of the individual man." In conclusion, he stated another homemaking myth: "If any people on the face of the earth have a right to be welcomed to the shores of America, it is the descendants of the race that first discovered it."[243] With this, Judge Albertson had not only argued the purity of the Scandinavian race, he had also argued that Scandinavians made good American citizens, even if he cautioned Pacific Northwest Norwegians against celebrating one's Norwegianness to the extent that one might lose track of one's duties as American citizens.

Pacific Northwest Norwegians responded to any and all charges of inadequate assimilation or foreign attachment with a good citizen defense. In an article that appeared in *Washington Posten* in 1905, George Bech compared "the Norwegian constitution to that of the United States." Bech aimed to highlight the ways that "the two people have advanced, since they attained their liberty." He wrote the article as a defense of the celebration of the Norwegian Constitution in the American immigrant context, and referenced a celebration "a few years ago" that the "Norwegian citizens of Seattle and surrounding country certainly not yet [had] forgotten, …when one of the orators…found it proper to denounce the very celebration of which he was a

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[242] "Homemaking Myths" refers to narratives constructed by immigrant groups to claim belonging in the United States. See Orm Øverland, *Immigrant Minds, American Identities: Making the United States Home, 1870-1930* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000).
[243] "Independence of Norway," *Seattle Daily Times*, May 18, 1905, 8.

participant."[244] Bech listed a few similarities, and then moved on to list differences. "The Norwegian constitution of 17th of May 1814 gave to the people the freedom of speech and of the press and the right of conscience and to peaceably assemble. The constitution of the United States of the 17th September 1787 did not give any such liberty to this people." The author mentioned that the American constitution allowed slavery and gave the right to vote exclusively to the "white part of the population," while the Norwegian counterpart set no such stipulations. Bech praised Norway's Constitution for its democratic inclusiveness, and framed the American Constitution's democratization of only the *white* population as an undemocratic limitation. In short, Bech's main point was that the Norwegian constitution was more "*democratic*" and that it was "a more liberal document than that of the United States." The author credited the Norwegian constitution and political system with a century of peace, and the American constitution and political system with the Civil War and three presidential assassinations in the space of forty years.[245]

Bech showed deep understanding of both constitutions, and both political systems, and referred to himself and the readers – "we" – as Americans in ownership of the American constitution rather than as Norwegians in ownership of the Norwegian counterpart. Bech regularly published Norwegian-language articles in the same newspaper, so his decision to write this particular article in English seems to underscore the point that "we are American." Undoubtedly, however, he hoped to reach a broader audience as well. After all, his purpose was to explain and defend Norwegian-American commemoration of the Seventeenth of May, presumably both to Norwegian Americans advocating abandonment of Old World heritage and

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[244] "The 17th of May," *Washington Posten*, May 12, 1905, 5. The orator is almost certainly Col. Blethen, and the occasion the 1901 Seventeenth of May celebration previously discussed.
[245] "The 17th of May," *Washington Posten*, May 12, 1905, 5.

other Americans demanding the same. In any event, Bech ended the article with the question that opened it: Should the 17th of May be commemorated? His answer was of course a hearty yes! "May we learn of the Norwegians to respect the constitution, that we may advance, and to reform the same as we advance…as they have been advancing ever since that memorable day, when true, loyal, liberty-loving men met at Eidsvold and…took an oath, which they as well as their sons and their sons after them have kept and will keep as long as Mount Dovre stands!"[246] Bech went as far as arguing that Norway's idea of liberty as a democratic model was worthy of emulation in America – Norwegian Americans and other Americans, should all look up to Norway for a more pristine model of "civilized society" and able self-government than that of the United States. Jacobson argued that to be accepted as an American and a citizen meant to be "civilized," civic-minded, capable of self-government – and *white*. If Norway's democratic system was *more* "civilized," if Norwegians proved *more* capable of self-government than Americans, then perhaps Norwegians could be seen as even *more white*? Arnesen may be right that reading a superior whiteness argument into Bech represents an overreach on the part of the historian, but Bech surely viewed himself part of a superior race – a race which was superior in part because of its achieved level of civilization and proven capacity for self-government.

Pacific Northwest Norwegians expressed not only a belief that they made good citizens, but also a belief that they made better Americans than anybody else – including Anglo Americans. Recent studies on Norwegian-American identity production, primarily centered on the Upper Midwest, have made similar observations. For example, Daron Olson maintains that the Norwegian immigrant community aimed to convince other Americans that nineteenth century Norwegian immigrants were good Americans already before setting foot on American

[246] "The 17th of May," *Washington Posten*, May 12, 1905, 5.

soil. Olson calls this the creation of *hegemony myths*, and argues that between 1890 and 1917, Norwegian immigrant leaders first constructed a narrative that Norwegians represented the best immigrant group, and later that they made the best Americans.[247] This study has explored Norwegian Americans' racial awareness in the Pacific Northwest and their perceived superiority as part of the larger picture of regional identity production similar to Daron Olson's findings on the Upper Midwest.

In the Pacific Northwest the "best American" argument boasting Norwegian-American superiority seemed consistent from the 1890s beyond World War I, when immigration from Norway essentially ceased. In 1891, Peter Røthe, for example, cited evidence that Scandinavians (along with Germans and Irishmen) "were good citizens, and drunkenness was not more common among them than among Americans who, in fact, were often against prohibition."[248] Likewise, in his November 1913 letter to his friend Lars Trondsen Kinsarvik, Røthe distinguished between the "[d]elinquents, vagabonds, and fanatics" who made up (as Røthe saw it) the bulk of early immigration to the United States in the late 1700s, as well as the bulk of the "lowest, most unlearned peoples from Southeast Europe" who immigrated in 1913, *and* the "small minority of good brains and strong character" responsible for setting a "foundational tone" and keeping the United States on "an even keel for the most part."[249] Undoubtedly, Røthe counted Pacific Northwest Norwegians among the "good brains and strong character." In his 1918 charge against "Small-Americans," or "Petty-Americans," which he called politicians who instilled a "persecution of those not born in the United States," Gunnar Lund asserted that

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[247] Olson, *Vikings Across the Atlantic*, 26, 32, 42.
[248] "Indvandringen," *Washington Posten*, June 11, 1891, 4.
[249] Peter Røthe, Harper, Washington, to Lars Trondsen Kinsarvik, Nov. 22, 1913 in Orm Øverland, ed., *Fra Amerika til Norge: Norske Utvandrerbrev, 1905-1914*, Bind VII (Oslo: Solum Forlag, 2011), 424-25.

Governors Harding of Iowa and Stewart of Montana engaged in petty behavior when they questioned the loyalty of Dr. Lanstrum, a candidate for U.S. Senate, on account of his Swedish ancestry. Lund charged that Harding and Stewart lacked "the broader perspective, the ability to see the big picture, which is America's gift to its true children."[250] In other words, Lund suggested that the "true children" of America were found among the more progressively minded immigrants, and that the "Small-Americans" were anything but. In 1919, he raised Senator Knute Nelson, a Norwegian immigrant to the Upper Midwest and the first Scandinavian-born elected to the U.S. Senate, as a "prime example of a good American, whether native or immigrant."[251]

Lund also argued that Norwegian immigrants (along with other European immigrants) came to the United States with a better understanding of the country's founding principles than many native-born citizens, and that the ethnic press performed an important task in Americanizing immigrants. He responded to a charge made by Congressman Albert Johnson of Grays Harbor, Washington, in a speech given at the Young Men's Republican Club in Seattle, where the congressman had opined that to "root out the evil" of social revolution radicalism in the media, one needed to "suppress the foreign language press."[252] In his editorial, Lund agreed that "a thorough Americanization" of immigrants was needed, "but maybe most of all for our native-born Americans. The American spirit is not demonization or intolerance," he asserted, and explained that immigrants came with "the outlook of wide tolerance upon which the American institutions were built, and their respect for the individual as a human."[253] In this respect, he maintained, immigrants drawn to the United States already held a more thorough understanding

[250] "Smaa Amerikanere," *Washington Posten*, Nov. 1, 1918, 4.
[251] "Amerika Først," *Washington Posten*, May 2, 1919, 4.
[252] "Forkjetringsen Av De Fremmede," *Washington Posten*, May 2, 1919, 4.
[253] "Forkjetringsen Av De Fremmede," *Washington Posten*, May 2, 1919, 4.

of American founding principles than the nativists who opposed immigration. Subsequently, nativists needed a lecture in Americanization more so than immigrants. Nonetheless, he continued, "[w]e understand that a wide-reaching work is required to make us all good Americans," and asserted that the foreign-language press, such as *Washington Posten*, performed a crucial role in this task as a medium in a language immigrants understood. In *Washington Posten,* and other newspapers like it, "the immigrant receives an introduction to the new political and social conditions with which he is faced here. It is through these papers that he receives his first education in the obligations and rights of citizenship."[254] If Americanization was understood as education in the political and social conditions of the country, as well as the rights and obligations of citizenship, then *Washington Posten* was a means with which Norwegian immigrants *became* Americanized.

The 1925 centennial of Norwegian immigration to America also sparked boasts of Norwegian-American superiority in relation to the duties of citizenship. Alma Guttersen asked the question of why are Norwegians so readily assimilated in America, as part of her preface to the centennial celebration publication *Norse-American Women*. In response, she offered that out of "that wholesome, virile, home atmosphere [of early Norwegian pioneers] there grew, naturally, a right sense of the relative values in life which has enabled the descendants of those early pioneers to contribute much to the growth and well being of America." The answer to the question "may truly be, 'Because they have little to learn but the language; they bring with them the very ideals and principles and characteristics which make Americanism.'"[255] No on could

[254] "Forkjetringsen Av De Fremmede," *Washington Posten*, May 2, 1919, 4.
[255] Alma A. Guttersen, "Preface," in Alma A. Guttersen and Regina Hilleboe Christensen, eds., *Souvenir "Norse-American Women,' 1825-1925: A Symposium of Prose and Poetry, Newspaper*

claim, according to Guttersen, to make better, more authentic, Americans than the descendants of Norwegian pioneers. Dr. H. G. Stub of the Norwegian Lutheran Church, whose son Hans Andreas Stub was a Seattle pastor and Secretary of the Lutheran Church of America, opposed dropping "Norsk" or "Norwegian" from the church's name at the annual meeting in 1926. He cited President Coolidge's willingness at the 1925 centennial celebration to acknowledge the Norwegian immigrant contribution to America's development. Coolidge and the celebration had made an impact on Norwegian America, he argued:

> Our self-esteem had been strengthened, our love of Norwegian heritage gave us direction and purpose to provide America with the best we possessed. And now we are to surrender the fort, tell the world that we are ashamed of the Norwegian name, of being born of a good people? … We need to be [true to] ourselves and keep the name of our church that we hold so dear.[256]

The appeal had worked, because the proposal to change the name was defeated. Stub had reminded the members of the convention that the "Norwegian" was part of their identity, and part of the "best we possessed." Stub envisioned Norwegian Americans as good citizens because they had contributed to the making of America with the best they had to offer, but he also saw them as good citizens "born of a good people."

Conclusion

Articles, and Biographies, Contributed by one hundred prominent women (St. Paul/Minneapolis: Lutheran Free Church Publishing Co., 1926), 7.

[256] "Den Norsk Luth. Kirke I Amerika," *Washington Posten*, June 18, 1926, 1.

Pacific Northwest Norwegians undoubtedly and uncontestedly benefitted from white privilege between 1890 and 1945. They most commonly identified as Norwegians, but as Norwegians of unquestionable American citizenship. When they identified as American citizens they responded to a racialized and gendered construction of citizenship – the white male American norm. But they also identified as "white" when they contrasted themselves against a racialized other. They had little reason or motivation to challenge Anglo-American dominion beyond that of other white ethnics, but they nevertheless offered such a challenge through their "Norwegians make the best American" argument. When faced with charges of foreign attachment, they claimed Americanness, good citizenship, and Norwegian superiority in their defense.

Washington Posten also consistently defended immigrants in general against immigration restriction. And during the nativist heyday of World War I and the 1920s, the newspaper made "good American" arguments against nativism. *Washington Posten*, and many of the Pacific Northwest Norwegians the newspaper reached, viewed themselves as progressive and pro-labor – even if they had a little too high opinion of themselves – and had come to believe that they themselves were the *very ideal* to which everyone else should aspire to conform. All of this, whiteness, race, and nationalism, was part of a deliberate articulation of what made Norwegian immigrants both superior and ideal citizens. In the next chapter, the remarkable consistency in the nationalist narrative surrounding the celebration of the Seventeenth of May – the Norwegian Constitution Day – in Seattle between the 1890s and the 1940s will illustrate these themes.

CHAPTER 3: IMAGINING, REMEMBERING, AND NARRATING NORWAY: SEATTLE'S CELEBRATION OF THE NORWEGIAN CONSTITUTION DAY, 1890 – 1950

"Those of us who have witnessed the awakening of spring in Norway can never forget it. It is difficult to imagine a more beautiful sight than a broad hillside early a spring-day when all the birches are budding and bursting out. Everything the whole landscape is colored with the lightest of green, the evergreen in the background are dark brown, the sea around the mountains are blue with white snow on the [mountain] tops. The houses are painted red and over all flows a golden sunshine, and peace and quiet. That is a sight which has to be seen in order to understand, and once seen you'll never forget it. And the 17th of May belongs to the Springtide. It is the real May day – with promises for the future."[257]

- August Werner

Introduction

Sunday, May 17, 1891, was a perfect day. The weather was the most pleasant one could ever desire. "The snow-clad Olympics in the West, the Cascades in the East, and the sound sparkling in sunlight in between. The air was clear and comfortable, no pressing heat, no chilling wind." It was truly a perfect day, and on such a day, "it is bewitchingly beautiful out here in the new Norway," Peter Røthe declared in *Washington Posten's* review of the festivities of the day.[258] The chartered steamer *City of Seattle* had departed Tacoma with five hundred passengers that

[257] "Seventeenth of May Speech," 1951, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 25, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.
[258] "17de Mai-Festen," *Washington Posten*, May 21, 1891, 1.

morning. In Seattle, the vessel picked up another five hundred. People on the pier witnessed the spectacle of a steamer filled with cheerful Norwegians dressed in national costumes. The celebration organizers had adorned the ship with red, white and blue decorations to match the red, white and blue of the Norwegian flag. The *City of Seattle*, along with *Henry Bailey*, *Munroe*, *Mabel*, and *Wasco* brought Pacific Northwest Norwegians from around the Puget Sound to a picnic celebration of the Norwegian Constitution Day – the Seventeenth of May – in Mukilteo, Washington. The day represented the first united celebration of Norway's national holiday in the Pacific Northwest, and only the third official Seattle celebration to take place.[259] In his announcement of the plans for the day a few weeks earlier, Røthe, the editor of *Washington Posten* and the secretary of the event organizing committee, had posited that such an event in commemoration of the Seventeenth of May would of course be festive and enjoyable, but it would also "contribute significantly to unite the area's widely spread Norwegian people's interests."[260] In its report on a celebration that it called a "splendid success," the newspaper estimated that 3,000 people had made the trip to Mukilteo in all. "Never before," Røthe wrote, had "so many Norwegian men and women gathered any time or any place in the state of Washington." It made the first big meet for the "numerous Norwegians around the Puget Sound."[261] In their excitement about the response to the plans from around the sound, *Washington Posten* had ventured in its last issue before the big day that the event satisfied a great need. "As numerous as we are out here, we are strangers to each other. We should come

[259] "17de Mai-Festen," *Washington Posten*, May 21, 1891, 1.
[260] "Til den norske befolkning ved Puget Sound," *Washington Posten*, Apr. 9, 1891, 8.
[261] "17de Mai-Festen," *Washington Posten*, May 21, 1891, 1.

together, get to know each other, and converse on common memories, and on present-day and future common interests."[262]

Pacific Northwest Norwegians commemorated themselves, their memory and idea of Norway, and their place in the Pacific Northwest through the Seventeenth of May celebrations. Community leaders constructed a narrative that came to expression in speeches and the pageantry of the events themselves. Convinced that Pacific Northwest Norwegians represented a group divided across class, gender, political, and religious perspectives, event organizers sought to unify the group through ethnic celebration of the homeland. In their mind, their common love of country trumped the divisions among them, and the Seventeenth of May served as glue to bring people together in celebration of Norwegian nationalist symbols that trumpeted the superiority of Norway, Norwegian heritage, and the Norwegian ethnicity to the second generation and the American public at large. Despite divisions along class, religious and presumably gender lines over particularly the temperance question, the narrative they constructed, and the event itself, remained remarkably consistent from 1890 to the 1950s. The event served as a medium to reaffirm, celebrate, and showcase common ethnic ties, and it helped cement a Pacific Northwest Norwegian-American identity that signaled a healthy ethnic community, but that nevertheless emphasized Norwegian nationalism and superiority as a claim to American citizenship.

The Seventeenth of May commemorates the day in 1814 when a popularly elected National Assembly completed their work on the Norwegian Constitution. Norway's history has been closely linked with that of Sweden and Denmark since the Viking Age. After a four hundred year-long union with Denmark, the Treaty of Kiel toward the end of the Napoleonic

[262] "Seattle," *Washington Posten*, May 14, 1891, 8.

Wars transferred Norway to Sweden. The treaty outraged Norwegians, causing rising nationalism, articulated by the elite, and culminating in the constitution and the appointment of a Danish prince (who had served as governor of Norway since 1813) as king. Sweden, however, did not accept this Norwegian king, and enforced the union. In this context, the dual nationalistic symbols of the constitution and the newly established Norwegian flag (both of which Sweden allowed), became center-points in commemorations and celebrations on May 17. The first known private celebrations took place in the early 1820s, after which they became more public. From 1827 the capital held an official celebration of the "Constitution Day."[263]

Unlike the Cinco de Mayo and St. Patrick's Day celebrations, which are both largely inventions of Mexican Americans and Irish Americans respectively, Norwegian Americans imitated the practice from Norway.[264] Since Irish Americans turned St. Patrick's Day from a low-key religious festival to a spectacular celebration with drinking and parades, Gayle McPherson, with Malcolm Foley and Aaron McIntosh, maintain that St. Patrick's Day is more about claimed "Irish-ness" than Irish tradition or nationalism.[265] In the context of a successful Norwegian independence movement, which inspired Norwegians to "imagine community," Norwegian tradition and nationalism remained central in Seattle's annual commemoration of the Seventeenth of May from the 1890s to World War II. A survey of these festivities nevertheless reveals that American and local conditions quickly shaped the format and content of the celebration. The earliest commemorations focused on building a community and on fostering

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[263] Gabriella Elgenius, "Successful Nation-Building and Ceremonial Triumph: Constitution Day in Norway," in David McCrone and Gayle McPherson, eds., *National Days: Constructing and Mobilising National Identity* (Hampshire and New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009), 107-12.
[264] Odd Lovoll, *The Promise of America: A History of the Norwegian-American People* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 182.
[265] Gayle McPherson, Malcolm Foley and Aaron McIntosh, "Parading Conspicuous Identity: St. Patrick's Day, New York," in McCrone and McPherson, eds., *National Days*, 197-209.

unity among Norwegians recently settled in the area in urban and rural settings, and in a range of occupations, and as such served an important role in Norwegian-American identity production across class and gender in their newfound Pacific Northwest setting. As David Hayes-Bautista finds with the spread and popularity of Cinco de Mayo in the United States, the Seventeenth of May celebrations helped Pacific Northwest Norwegians fuse memories of Norway with a "legitimate claim" to the Pacific Northwest, and developed both the "Norwegian" and the "American" sides of the hyphenated identity.[266] Norwegian Independence from Sweden in 1905 provided a nationalist boost, as did the constitutional centennial in 1914, but the context of the Immigration Restriction Acts of the 1920s only served to cement the narrative on the democratic parallels between the Norwegian constitutional heritage and American institutions.

Troubled by what they perceived as ethnic disunity among Pacific Northwest Norwegians, Seattle Seventeenth of May event organizers, public speakers, and newspapermen often used the event as a rallying call for unity to support common objectives, such as raising funds for the Norwegian Singing Society to attend the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893, or efforts to build a Norwegian hospital in Seattle.[267] Ellen Litwicki contends that many American ethnicities used celebrations as a means to raise funds for ethnic causes, but in this case ethnic unity over division made a parallel cause.[268] From 1929, various organizations such as the Norwegian Hospital Association, the Norwegian Singing Society, and the Sons and Daughters of Norway joined forces to organize a single official Seattle event instead of each their separate

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[266] David Hayes-Bautista, *El Cinco de Mayo: An American Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 4.
[267] "17de Mai," *Washington Posten*, Mar. 16, 1893, 4. "17. Mai i Seattle," *Washington Posten*, May 5, 1922, 8.
[268] Ellen M. Litwicki, "'Our Hearts Burn with Ardent Love for Two Countries:' Ethnicity and Assimilation at Chicago Holiday Celebrations, 1876-1918," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 19:3 (Spring 2000): 13.

events. Home to a large Norwegian-American community, and a natural center for Pacific Northwest Norwegiandom similar to the role of Minneapolis for the Upper Midwest, Seattle's event modeled and mirrored other such events in Oregon and Washington. Through letters to the editor of *Washington Posten*, residents from other towns and cities chimed in on the debates surrounding Seattle's celebration, and reported on their own local commemorative events. Temperance, social class, the distinction between secular clubs and churches, and the competition between such clubs for dominance, were important reasons for several separate Seventeenth of May celebratory events within Seattle most years between 1891 and 1929. While unity advocates interpreted the separate events as evidence of divisions, Pacific Northwest Norwegians' overall success in establishing an ongoing Seattle tradition for Seventeenth of May commemoration that brought the community together in club houses, churches, and parks testifies to the importance of this particular National Day as both a symbol and a "factory" of "imagined" identity and a cohesive and vibrant ethnic community.

The Imagined Community of Vikings

As a National Day, the Seventeenth of May is conceived as a "commemorative device" situated in time and place for "reinforcing national identity," or for that matter imagining, inventing, or reinventing national identity and belonging. David McCrone, Gayle McPherson, and others, make this overall argument in the study *National Days: Constructing and Mobilising National Identity* (2009). They maintain that shared "rituals, symbols and collective memories form a key part in the formation of a nation's sense of self," and that national days serve this role for the participants while also communicating to the wider world the particular nation's values,

attitudes, and strengths.[269] McCrone and McPherson describe national days as a process of remembering and forgetting, that in the case of expatriate diasporas are marked by tendencies of romanticizing "home," and expressions of connection to a "lost" or "hidden" set of imagined traditions.[270]

National days, therefore, are important means of imagining and inventing the nation, but they are also useful means for expatriates in claiming continued membership in the imagined community of the nation. In the context of Norwegian Independence, Pacific Northwest Norwegians claimed this continued membership in the Norwegian national consciousness along with other Norwegian Americans. While Pacific Northwest Norwegians emphasized coastal Washington and Oregon as a "New Norway," and constructed memories of Norway around landscape and industry parallels – their ethnic environmentalism as I name it – Seattle's Seventeenth of May celebration nevertheless makes an example of a representative rather than unique Norwegian-American community Constitution Day commemoration.

The idea of the nation as an imagined community, and the role of remembering and forgetting in that process, are both central to Benedict Anderson in his seminal treatise on nationalism. Anderson defines the nation as "an imagined political community – … imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign."[271] An *imagined* community, Anderson explains, because each member cannot possibly meet every other member, and yet the idea of their association exists. The membership is *limited* with finite boundaries, often defined as a *sovereign* nation state. And finally, the nation is imagined as a *community* because of the imagined unity of its

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[269] David McCrone and Gayle McPherson, eds., *National Days: Constructing and Mobilising National Identity* (Hampshire and New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009), xiii, 1.
[270] McCrone and McPherson, eds. *National Days*, 6-8.
[271] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London/New York: Verso, 1991), 6.

membership regardless of the diversity that may exist within it.[272] A Norwegian immigrant in Seattle at the turn of the century surely knew many other Norwegians in Seattle, perhaps some elsewhere in the United States as well, and most certainly some at home in Norway. No matter the cohesiveness of the Norwegian community in Seattle, it was imagined in a broader sense to include all Norwegians in the Puget Sound area (and beyond), and it was imagined through transnational ties to encompass the Norwegianness of Norwegian Americans as well as Norwegians back home.

Anderson's process of "remembering" and "forgetting" is central to the construction of memories of Norway as well as the Norwegian past. In separate studies of Norwegian-American identity production in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Orm Øverland and Daron Olson identify the broad parameters of a creation story mythology for this immigrant group. Øverland calls it a homemaking mythology or homemaking argument, while Olson refers to origin myths or foundation myths.[273] Taken together, these myths (or this mythology) formed what Benedict Anderson calls "a narrative of 'identity.' "[274] Anderson asserts that groups of people conveniently and collectively "remember" and "forget" their national past based on "baby photograph" prompts in their everyday lives. The pageantry and speeches of Seventeenth of May celebrations, along with *Washington Posten*'s reports and editorials on the meaning of the event, similarly helped Pacific Northwest Norwegians "remember" specific narratives of their collective childhoods as well as that of the nation itself. Seattle's Seventeenth of May

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[272] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 6-7.
[273] Orm Øverland, *Immigrant Minds, American Identitites: Making the United States Home, 1870-1930* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 7-8. Daron W. Olson, *Vikings Across the Atlantic: Emigration and the Building of a Greater Norway, 1860-1945* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), Chapter 2.
[274] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 204.

celebrations thus represented not only the "baby photograph," but also an expression of interpretation connected to that piece of "documentary evidence" – and importantly – an expression of collectively formed (and forming) identities.

Øverland (along with Olson) argues that a Norwegian-American origin story based on the Viking discovery of North America, and the Viking origin of American democracy, took shape in the last several decades of the nineteenth century. Øverland notes that all immigrant groups have asserted their own homemaking mythology, central to which is the immigrant's claim to a place and belonging in the adopted society. When Norwegian Americans, who also claimed they were the most sacrificing American citizens and the "best Americans," insisted that Norwegians were the first to discover America, Øverland argues that they invented and asserted a "creation story" argument of belonging.[275] As such, Øverland contends, this mythology represented hyphenated invention rather than transplanted cultural heritage.[276] Øverland argues that a marked Norwegian-American identity ceased to be central to community members' American lives after 1925, and with it, homemaking arguments ceased to be relevant. The use of the Norwegian language was quickly diminishing among Norwegian Americans, he notes, not from nativist pressure but from acculturation within the group. The nativist pressures that gave rise to homemaking myths in the first place had ceased to be a concern.[277] The persistence and content of Seattle's Seventeenth of May celebrations after 1925, however, counters the degree of "erasure" of ethnicity Øverland suggests.

Pacific Northwest Norwegians constructed a remarkably consistent Seventeenth of May narrative that relied on Viking symbolism, and emphasized the Viking discovery of North

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[275] Øverland, *Immigrant Minds, American Identitites*, 146.
[276] Øverland, *Immigrant Minds, American Identitites*, 147-48.
[277] Øverland, *Immigrant Minds, American Identitites*, 172-73.

America and the Viking origin of American democracy. As the argument goes, Norse society fully developed democratic institutions during the Viking Age, and Viking raiders exported their ideas to Normandy and Great Britain. The Norse explorer Leif Erikson discovered America five hundred years before Columbus, and Norwegian Vikings established the first European colonies there. And finally, America's Founding Fathers held Norse ancestry and carried Norwegian ideas rooted in Norwegian principles.

The Viking foundation story proved a significant narrative pillar in Seattle Norwegians' claim to an American identity, but also one that offered transnational links to Norway. The second narrative pillar Seattle Norwegians erected was a claim to the Pacific Northwest's "Norwegian" coastal landscape and industries, which will be discussed in the next section. Seventeenth of May speakers and commentators invoked the Viking spirit on behalf of the Norwegian-American population, and emphasized the Viking origin of not only Norway and the Norwegian-American ethnicity, but also American democracy in their act of selectively remembering their "national" past. In 1899, for example, A. J. Thuland, the editor of *Washington* Posten, highlighted the role of Seventeenth of May as a "memorial" day on which Norwegian Americans "take a seat in Mother Norway's halls," remember the sagas and the heroes, and join with "the old Viking spirit in its campaign to awaken the people from their long slumber" of political union, and witness "dawn in Norway."[278] Thuland here demonstrated the community's awareness of the Norwegian independence movement, and asserted that this movement along with its support from sympathetic Norwegian Americans held inspiration from their common Viking past. Conrad M. Thuland, the speaker at the celebration that year connected the sagas to his Norwegian-American listeners by highlighting the Viking Rollo of Normandy's ancestry to

[278] "17de Mai," *Washington Posten*, May 12, 1899, 2.

William the Conqueror, and Leif Erikson's discovery of America.[279] The Viking Age had molded Norwegians as "one people" the same speaker asserted in 1908, but the overall foundation story claim of Norwegian immigrants' Americanness – a claimed common ancestry with Americans of English descent – suggested that the Viking Age perhaps had molded both Norwegians and future Americans as *one* people.[280]

Pacific Northwest Norwegians' Viking foundation narrative mirrored the one established in the Upper Midwest some decades earlier, but in the Pacific Northwest it persisted beyond World War II. April Schultz and Øverland note that this narrative persisted in the Upper Midwest until after the centennial commemoration of Norwegian immigration in 1925.[281] Ole Edvart Rölvaag, the author of *Giants in the Earth*, gave a Seventeenth of May speech in Iowa in 1926 in which he argued that Vikings developed popular democracy, and that this democratic idea disseminated from Viking forefathers to the American Founding Fathers.[282] Øverland asserts that this type of rhetoric quickly dissipated after the excitement connected to the 1925 centennial had passed. He argues that Norwegian Americans celebrated Seventeenth of May first and foremost as Americans, and maintains that while the homemaking myths came to full expression in the 1925 centennial, changes undergone by the members of the ethnicity made the Viking origin argument irrelevant by the end of the decade.[283] In the Pacific Northwest, however, a particularly active Leif Erikson League continued to argue the importance of the explorer. In relation to

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[279] "Storartet 17de Maifest i Seattle," *Washington Posten*, May 19, 1899, 1. A family relationship between A. J. Thuland, who emigrated from Vestfossen in Buskerud at age 13 in 1884, and the Seattle attorney Conrad M. Thuland, who often advertised his services in *Washington Posten*, is possible, even likely, but such a connection is inconclusive based on available evidence.
[280] "17de Maifesten," *Washington Posten*, May 22, 1908, 4.
[281] April R. Schultz, *Ethnicity on Parade: Inventing the Norwegian American Through Celebration* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1994), 10.
[282] Øverland, *Immigrant Minds, American Identitites*, 4.
[283] Øverland, *Immigrant Minds, American Identitites*, 172-73.

Seattle's World's Fair in 1962, this organization erected a statue to its namesake on the Shilshole Bay Marina in Ballard. The sculptor, August Werner, kept referencing the Viking origin theme in his many Seventeenth of May speeches between the 1940s and the 1960s. In his 1951 speech, for example, he claimed that the Declaration of Independence, the parliamentary system, the right to free assembly and trial by jury, and the "inalienable right and freedom of the individual," all had their "origin in the same old Norse Laws." In the same speech, he even claimed that George Washington's ancestry connected the United States' first president to Norway.[284] Schultz notes that human societies construct narratives about their history and their world that are "rooted in myths and stories that reinforce a particular view of that world."[285] The collective perception of history is central in the creation of ethnic celebrations, and Pacific Northwest Norwegians' selective remembering of a democratic Viking past, while conveniently forgetting the violence associated with the dissemination of this idea, makes a case in point.

Constructed Memories and Ethnic Environmentalism

From the podium of a celebration in 1899, Frank Oleson, the president of the organizing committee and the original founder of *Washington Posten*, invoked liberty as another key component of Norwegian-American ethnicity. National holidays based upon the "establishment of independence" were "sacred and important," he maintained, and as such the Seventeenth of May was inspirational to others. Norwegians were examples of "the very symbols of liberty in all places and in all ages," he argued. Liberty itself "springs full [grown] from [Norway's] rugged

[284] "Seventeenth of May Speech," 1951, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 25, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.
[285] Schultz, *Ethnicity on Parade*, 125.

and inaccessible mountains, and the boundless and everheaving sea," he added.[286] A 1924 speaker argued that the Norwegian character had been molded by a hard and rugged life on the Norwegian coast.[287] Oleson made the same connection between the natural landscape that molded Norwegians and their predisposition for democratic self-government 25 years earlier.

The natural landscape was central to the second narrative pillar Seattle Norwegians erected: A claim to the Pacific Northwest as the earliest pioneers and community builders in this "new Norway." They made essential contributions to the development of the region's fishing, shipping, and forestry industries, and they imagined special ethnic privilege to the region's "Norwegian" mountains, forests, rivers and lakes. Key to this imagined "New Norway," was the act of remembering and forgetting the mother country (and for that matter the region's indigenous inhabitants). Seventeenth of May speakers, newspaper reporters and poets made both subtle and explicit connections between the coastal landscapes of Norway and the Pacific Northwest. The Norwegian immigrant had been nurtured by the "free sweep of the seas that broadened his vision, and the majestic mountain heights that elevated his thoughts," Judge R. B. Albertson asserted from the podium in 1905.[288] They consistently expressed memories of the natural beauty of Norway, along with the rugged mountains and coasts, in their construction of a remembered Norway that carried meaning in the Pacific Northwest context. As Røthe asserted in his newspaper, Pacific Northwest Norwegians' thoughts went "far and wide across mountain and ocean to cherished fatherland" on the Seventeenth of May.[289] Shultz argues that "ethnic celebrations and public events are significant sites where meaning is reaffirmed and/or

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[286] "Storartet 17de Maifest i Seattle," *Washington Posten*, May 19, 1899, 1.
[287] "Syttende Mai i Seattle," *Washington Posten*, May 23, 1924, 1.
[288] "Independence of Norway," *Seattle Times*, May 18, 1905, 8.
[289] "17de Mai-Festen," *Washington Posten*, May 21, 1891, 1.

constructed."[290] The natural landscape of the Pacific Northwest took on special meaning for Norwegian immigrants when viewed through the prism of a constructed memory of Norway's comparable landscape. Seventeenth of May celebrations were such a "significant site" in Seattle where ethnic environmentalism – the appropriation of the local landscape in ethnic identity construction – came to expression.

Celebration speakers often invoked a connection between Norwegian-American identity, Norwegian heritage, and the Norwegian landscape. In his 1899 speech, Frank Oleson called the Norwegian immigrant a "child of the ocean and the mountains."[291] Likewise, Conrad Thuland used the rural, symbolic image of "shepherd's clothes" saturated with mountain air and mountain living, as well as the smell of seawater, to represent the healthy clean character of the Norwegian heritage in his speech that same year.[292] In 1905, Judge R. B. Albertson argued from the podium that Norwegians made good American citizens in part because they had been nurtured by the "free sweep of the seas that broadened [their] vision, and the majestic mountain heights that elevated [their] thoughts."[293] Another speaker, in 1911, invoked Norwegian scenery when he asserted that Norway remained rich and grand in the memory of "those who love the greatness God has put into Norwegian nature," which "makes mother so beautiful with hills and valleys, with the sun in her embrace, and the white hair of eternal snows on her scalp."[294] Forty years later, August Werner counted Pacific Northwest Norwegians among the members of the nation

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[290] Schultz, *Ethnicity on Parade*, 19.
[291] "Storartet 17de Maifest i Seattle," *Washington Posten*, May 19, 1899, 1.
[292] "Storartet 17de Maifest i Seattle," *Washington Posten*, May 19, 1899, 1.
[293] "Independence of Norway," *Seattle Times*, May 18, 1905, 8.
[294] "Frihedsdagen Feiret i Seattle," *Washington Posten*, May 19, 1911, 1.

"inhabiting a rugged and bewitchingly beautiful country."[295] Consistently, Seventeenth of May speakers affirmed the centrality of Norway's natural features to Norwegian – and Pacific Northwest Norwegian – identities. Along with the rugged and wild landscape, "fresh mountain air" and a "healthy clean heritage" had molded the Norwegian "folk," and in the Pacific Northwest, emigrated Norwegians continued to live up to that promise.

Celebration speakers expressed meaning associated with the natural landscape, but participants could also be invited to construct their own meaning through associations sparked by poetry and song. In 1891, for example, George Bech wrote a song for the occasion of the trip to Mukilteo, which highlighted the unforgettable Norwegian mountains that beckoned the Norwegian American's homeward bound thoughts, along with the rumbling river and waterfall, the rustling pine trees, and the waves breaking against the shore.[296]

Wherever fate puts a Norwegian ashore,
As wide-reaching as the earth is round,
Longing pulls him toward the beach of home.
But that is of course no surprise.
Who can forget Norway's mountains!
A Norwegian? No, he would sooner forget himself.
He does not forget the rumble of the river and the waterfall
With the rainbow's crown on his forehead;
It is as if he could hear the rustle of the Norwegian pine
And the waves breaking against the shore.

[295] Seventeenth of May Speech," 1951, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 25, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.
[296] "En Sang til at synge paa Turen til Muckilteo den 17de Mai 1891," *Washington Posten*, May 14, 1891, 1.

We see the cabin in which we lived as a child,

Us Norwegians, yes, we see it all.[297]

In Bech's song, memories of childhood combine with memories of Norway's natural landscape. Constructed memories of the innocence of childhood, the uncomplicated carefreeness of a child's existence are coupled with the almost spiritual appreciation of the mountains, forests, rivers and waterfalls of the home country. An immigrant's life before emigration, however, was anything but carefree. Hence, as Anderson terms it, an active process of remembering/forgetting underpins this constructed (or imagined) identity narrative.

An appreciation of the natural beauty of the Pacific Northwest usually came to expression when newspaper reporters painted a picture of the idyllic setting of the Seventeenth of May celebration in Seattle, or when speakers or poets expressed their love for the natural landscape. In their report of the festivities in 1891, for example, *Washington Posten* painted a picture of the snow-clad mountaintops east and west, with the Puget Sound sparkling in the sunshine like a fjord in between, and asserted that on such a "perfect day" it was "mesmerizingly beautiful out here in the new Norway."[298] The Norwegian-American National Anthem, written for *Washington Posten* by Harald With in 1914, emphasized the hard work of Norwegian immigrants using the axe to clear forests for the plow. A new time has come, he claimed, where the enterprise of Norwegian Americans can be heard from the smelter driven by the river flood from the melting glacial snow, the rumble of the waterfall, the "song of the river resounding like hammer-blows," and the boom of ore in the mountain halls.[299] Not unlike nature and industry

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[297] "En Sang til at Synge paa Turen til Muckilteo den 17de Mai 1891," *Washington Posten*, May 14, 1891, 1. Translated by this author.
[298] "17de Mai-Festen," *Washington Posten*, May 21, 1891, 1.
[299] "Norsk-Amerikansk Nationalsang," *Washington Posten*, May 15, 1914, 1.

combined in Richard White's *Organic Machine* (1995), the anthem uses images of nature commonly used in descriptions of Norway, transformed to convey the echoes of the enterprise of Norwegian Americans on the Pacific Coast.[300]

Reporters, event speakers and poets commonly described the "fjord" and the surrounding mountains in idyllic terms. At the 1903 joint celebration for Puget Sound communities in Poulsbo, the treasurer of Kitsap County highlighted the greatness of Washington State and "depicted in poetic phrases the scenic beauty of Poulsbo and the Puget Sound."[301] Likewise, for the centennial constitutional commemoration in 1914, *Washington Posten* described an idyllic scene in their report from the event:

> a beautiful and sunny day like only 'the Queen City' can muster. A wonderful spring day, with sun over city and country, with the Sound's spring waves glittering in the sun, and with the Olympic Mountains as snow-capped troll peaks far away. Never was the sky more blue, never was the sun more bright, never was the wind fairer than on this Mother Norway's solemn holiday.[302]

As in 1891, *Washington Posten* painted an idyllic picture in 1914 of a city bound to a natural scenery of snow-capped peaks, blue skies, and glittering waves connected to constructed memories of Norway by well-placed references to the fjord or bewitching troll mountains. The scenery of mountains that meet the sea describes the coastal Pacific Northwest well, but it also evokes images of narrow Norwegian fjords carved by glaciers where mountains literally do meet

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[300] Richard White, *Organic Machine: The Remaking of the Columbia River* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1995). White describes Columbia River transformed by water power industry as a hybrid of the natural and the "artificial," where nature plays into industry and vice versa.
[301] "Thousands Enjoy the Day," *Seattle Times*, May 18, 1903, 12.
[302] "Syttende Mai i Seattle," *Washington Posten*, May 22, 1914, 1.

the sea. The author's use of the term "fjord" in description of the Puget Sound voiced a common association between Norway and the Pacific Northwest. The word undoubtedly brought images of Norwegian fjords to mind for *Washington Posten's* readers. The association between trolls and mountains is deeply ingrained within Norwegian folk culture, and as such, a snow-capped "troll peak" visible from Puget Sound evokes constructed memories of the old country and a transplanted Norway as well.

Transnational Bonds, Norwegian Nationalism, and the Seventeenth of May

Not only did Seventeenth of May speakers construct memories of Norway that emphasized landscape and industry parallels between their old and new homes, they also emphasized transnational bonds. One of the speakers at Mukilteo in 1891 asserted that "common language and common memories bind us together" – Pacific Northwest Norwegians around the Puget Sound and home country Norwegians.[303] Celebration speakers consistently engaged in the invention and imagination of a transnational community of "Norwegiandom," but this transnationalism came to particular expression between 1905 and 1914, the years of Norwegian independence from Sweden and the constitutional centennial. In 1906, for example, one speaker spoke of Norwegians as a class of people risen from subjugation, and connected the inspired struggle of Norwegians in general to the thrift of Norwegian Americans. The pioneer immigrant to the Pacific Northwest, the speaker asserted, drew on his Norwegian nature in his pioneering success. The same speaker assessed the transnational bonds between Pacific Northwest Norwegians and Norway. Every "son and daughter with Norwegian hearts," he affirmed, shared the honor of Norway's achievement of independence. "Every greeting we send, every word of

[303] "17de Mai-Festen," *Washington Posten*, May 21, 1891, 1.

sympathy, every little helpful hand offered Mother Norway in critical moments, even from the distant Pacific Coast, have been mighty pulse beats, that were felt from ocean to ocean, from the North Cape [northernmost point of Norway] to Lindesnes" [southernmost point].[304] Norway's recent freedom struggle inspired Norwegian nationalism among Pacific Northwest Norwegians, and they imagined and claimed a share in this new Norwegian nation through their transnational bonds, their support of the independence movement, and their demonstration of "self" as "true" Norwegians in spirit through successfully molding a "new Norway" in the Pacific Northwest.

Speakers and commentators affirmed the Seventeenth of May as a meaningful celebratory day beyond Norway's borders through rhetorical manipulation for both Norwegian and American-born audiences. The many flags from the many ships and homes *around the Earth* reminded a 1907 speaker that "Norway is a sovereign country, that its children is a sovereign people with its proud history" and "distinguished character," to which he and his listeners belonged.[305] In a 1909 letter to the editor, a pastor known to offer oratory at the celebrations, imagined the Seventeenth of May as a "common fireplace" around which "Norway's children in a foreign country" gathered to "warm by the same fire" as Norwegians at home. "May the memorials we raise to our fathers both here and on Norwegian soil reflect what is in our hearts, and let us [Pacific Northwest Norwegians] be Norwegian and living monuments."[306] The image of the "common fireplace" figured as an imagined meeting place where homeland Norwegians and expatriate Norwegians met to warm themselves in the glow of their nationalist achievement, and build the new national community together.

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[304] "Tale af Herr Lewis Walby ved Sonner og Dotre af Norges 17de Maifest i Christensens Hall," *Washington Posten*, May 18, 1906, 1.
[305] "Pastor C. Aug. Petersens Tale ved Sønner af Norges Fest den 17de Mai 1907 i Seattle, Wash.," *Washington Posten*, May 24, 1907, 1.
[306] "17de Mai 1909," *Washington Posten*, May 14, 1909, 4.

The Seventeenth of May celebrations did not only help Pacific Northwest Norwegians imagine transnational identities, but they also erected bridges. In his 1909 speech, Frank Oleson credited the Seventeenth of May Sunday excursions to Mukilteo in 1891, Vashon in 1896, and Poulsbo in 1903, not only with creating more unity among Norwegians around the Puget Sound, but also with "tightening the bond between us and the old country, they were bridges across the ocean."[307] The celebrations marketed, and represented a statement of Pacific Northwest Norwegians' nationalist fervor that was hard to miss for visitors from Norway or the Upper Midwest. To a 1911 speaker, the Seventeenth of May celebrations showcased a "national self-respect" that impressed homeland Norwegians. National self-respect united Norwegians transnationally, he asserted. "There are two kinds of Norwegians I have always despised," he continued. The first type was the one that always talked about how much better things were in Europe. The speaker considered such persons to belong among Theodore Roosevelt's "undesirable citizens." The second kind – people who exaggerated and bragged about the state of affairs in America, but had nothing good to say about Norway – made undesirable Norwegian Americans.[308] The subtext, of course, was that people with true national self-respect – adequately transnational Norwegian Americans – did none of those things. Subsequently, good Norwegian Americans shared this self-respect with homeland Norwegians, but they also held a national self-respect in common with other Americans. This imagined "national self-respect" had everything to do with imagining communities and building hyphenated identities. This speaker saw no contradiction between maintaining dual identities and asserting loyalty to both Norway and the

[307] "Frihedsdagen," *Washington Posten*, May 21, 1909, 1.
[308] "Frihedsdagen Feiret i Seattle," *Washington Posten*, May 19, 1911, 1.

United States. To the contrary, he viewed the complete shedding of ethnic identity, or the refusal to adapt and adopt, as problematic.

Norwegian nationalism came consistently to expression in Seattle's Seventeenth of May celebrations. In Norway, prior to Independence, the Liberal Party (Venstre) and the Labor Party intentionally used the "clean" or "unmarked" Norwegian flag in their parades (a Norwegian flag free of the union symbol in the upper left corner), in a protest not just against Sweden but also against the ruling and the more union-friendly classes within Norway. The use of this flag in parades and commemorations was very controversial, and became a highly politicized issue.[309] In Seattle, the organizers of the 1899 festivities in Madison Park adorned the center pavilion with flags for the occasion. On the center flagpole flew an American flag, and from each of the four corners flew 'clean' Norwegian flags, free of the union device. Over the stage hung two American flags from each side, which met two Norwegian flags at the center. An additional Norwegian silk flag was draped from the ceiling beams.[310] All of these flags symbolized the union of the Norwegian and the American for the Pacific Northwest Norwegians present, but they also reflected a highly political and nationalistic decision to showcase support of Norwegian independence rather than Scandinavian unity. Since the organizer, the Norwegian Club, held a liberal view on the consumption of alcohol this event appealed broadly to members of the working class. As in Norway, members of the working class explicitly showed their support of independence through the use of "clean" flags.

Pacific Northwest Norwegians nevertheless showed broad consensus in support of Norwegian independence across class and gender lines. The Seventeenth of May Sunday

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[309] Elgenius, "Successful Nation-Building and Ceremonial Triumph," in McCrone and McPherson, eds, *National Days*, 107-12.
[310] "Storartet 17de Maifest i Seattle," *Washington Posten*, May 19, 1.

excursion picnic to Poulsbo in 1903, for example, filled ten full steamers with between 7,000 and 9,000 people. The crowds exceeded expectations. Seattle alone filled seven of the steamers.[311] When one takes into account that Seattle's Norwegian-born population had barely surpassed 1,600 in 1900, one gets a sense of the significance of that number.[312] Hardly anyone stayed at home. "Such a large gathering of Norwegian men, women, and children have likely never before gathered on the Pacific coast," the *Washington Posten* reporter speculated, "and probably not anywhere else in America either." From the many thousands present, "exceedingly few … were not Norwegian or Norwegian-American."[313] Red, white, and blue Norwegian flags, free of the union symbol, flew from the steamers and everywhere around when the several speakers spoke of Norway, Washington, and Poulsbo, and Norwegian singing societies of Seattle and Everett performed the songs of the homeland.[314] *Washington Posten* had believed that almost all Norwegians around the Puget Sound had showed up in Mukilteo that Sunday in 1891 as well.[315] The Mukilteo excursion, however, had included Danish and Swedish speakers, and the program had ended with hurrahs raised for Sweden and Denmark. Twelve years later, however, two years before Norwegian Independence, the program had no Scandinavian content and the largest crowd of Norwegians mustered on the Pacific Coast up to that point, counted few Swedes among them, according to the reporter.

The political tensions between Sweden and Norway could be witnessed among the Scandinavians in Seattle in the years before Norwegian Independence. In 1893, *Washington*

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[311] *Washington Posten* estimated at least 7,000, while *Seattle Times* gave the number as 9,000.
[312] U.S. Census, 1900. Table 35 Foreign born population, distributed according to country of birth, for cities having 25,000 inhabitants or more: 1900 (Norway).
[313] "17de Mai-Festen i Poulsbo," *Washington Posten*, May 22, 1903, 1.
[314] "17de Mai-Festen i Poulsbo," *Washington Posten*, May 22, 1903, 1. "Thousands Enjoy the Day," *Seattle Times*, May 18, 1903, 12.
[315] "17de Maifester i Seattle," *Washington Posten*, May 5, 1899, 6.

Posten waged a feud in its editorial pages with the editor of the Swedish-language *Vestra Posten*. They charged each other with belittling the national group of the other, and both the editor and readers of *Washington Posten* took offense when *Vestra Posten* questioned Norwegians' [racial] intelligence. Swedes and Norwegians in Seattle had previously interacted as "brethren people" with the "best understanding" in between them, *Washington Posten* asserted. The newspaper expressed a belief that Norwegians and Swedes in Seattle had "grasped the ridiculous in quarreling about intelligence, 'superiority,' etc." in distinguishing between Swedes and Norwegians. "We are possibly the most Norwegian-Norwegian Norwegians in Seattle, but it would never occur to us to attack the local Swedes" for the actions of the Swedish government. The "trouble maker" at *Vestra Posten*'s "rascal work," however, did according to the newspaper attack the Norwegians of Seattle in such a manner.[316] The topic that had motivated the feud was the question of Scandinavian unity or "Scandinavianism" versus Norwegian nationalism. Increased political tension between Norway and Sweden, accompanied by increased expression of Norwegian nationalism among Pacific Northwest Norwegians, made local Swedish Americans uncomfortable in the lead-up to Norwegian Independence. The peaceful separation between Norway and Sweden in 1905, however, undoubtedly made Swedish Americans less uncomfortable with displays of Norwegian nationalism.

Another way Norwegian nationalism came to expression in the years after Norwegian Independence was through the pageantry of the Seventeenth of May programs. Children had been central to Seventeenth of May celebrations in Norway since the last decades of the 1800s, but children got incorporated in the program in Seattle only from 1905 with the boost of

[316] "Untitled editorial" and "untitled letter to the editor," *Washington Posten*, May 11, 1893, 4.

Norwegian Independence.[317] That year, the program for the Sons of Norway event specified that the audience would sing the Norwegian national anthem while standing, while about 50 Norwegian children would be waving flags at them from the bleachers to the tunes of the music.[318] In the 1910 celebration, the program described the "Living Flag" – 70 small girls dressed in national colors forming the Norwegian flag as the "raisin in the sausage" or the 'dot over the i.' The organizers promised a "spectacle, that will get every spark of life to glimmer and flutter with excitement."[319] The young girls marched into the hall under a large Norwegian and American flag, while everybody in the auditorium sang the Norwegian National Anthem. Dressed in "red, white and blue dresses they assembled with great care and precision," into the Norwegian flag and sang national songs. Then the stage shifted, and the girls reassembled into the U.S. flag and sang the Star Spangled Banner. "This wonderful item on the program will never be forgotten," wrote *Washington Posten*, "and it is difficult to describe the feelings that stirred with those born in the old country, when the many American-born small girls sang the songs from home, while they waved Norwegian flags."[320] The transformation into the American flag highlighted how much Americans and Norwegians held in common, how 'moldable' Norwegian immigrants were, and the hyphenated identities of Pacific Norwest Norwegians.[321] But it was the display of American-born girls in the formation of the Norwegian flag that moved

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[317] The focus on children became a persisting theme over time in Seventeenth of May celebrations in Norway after Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, the writer of the National Anthem, first organized a boys' flag parade in the 1870s. By 1889, girls took part in such parades too. See Elgenius, "Successful Nation-Building and Ceremonial Triumph," in McCrone and McPherson, eds., *National Days*, 107-12.
[318] "Stor Norsk Folkefest," *Washington Posten*, Apr. 28, 1905, 8.
[319] "Sid Ikke Hjemme den 17de Mai," ad. *Washington Posten*, May 6, 1910, 8.
[320] "17 Mai i Seattle," *Washington Posten*, May 20, 1910, 1.
[321] The organizers of the 1925 centennial in Minnesota arranged a similar display. April Schultz maintains that it symbolized successful assimilation and Norwegians' innate possession of American ideals. See Schultz, *Ethnicity on Parade*, 51-52.

Washington Posten's reporter, and presumably other immigrants in the audience. As a spectacle that Norwegian Americans repeated nationally, the "living flag" made an "invented tradition" in the American immigration context.[322]

The classic "Bjørnsonian" children's parade – a romantic nationalist invention – became an element in Seattle Seventeenth of May celebrations in 1913 and 1914, and after 1931. In 1913, Sons of Norway in Ballard hosted Seattle's first Seventeenth of May parade. The event included American parade mainstays such as a queen and her court and floats. But it also included the emblematic Norwegian children's parade. "This specifically Norwegian way of celebrating the day of liberty, *Washington Posten* observed, "will … be the most appealing [going forward], and … it occurred with all the interest of news as it was the first time a children's parade took place at a 17th of May celebration" in Seattle.[323] The centennial celebration in 1914 included another children's parade, this time in downtown Seattle. The four hundred children, "an extraordinarily beautiful line of happy celebration-clad small [children]," each carrying a Norwegian flag, made the jewel of the parade as far as the *Washington Posten* was concerned.[324] Outdoor spectacles with children's parades did not take place in the context of World War I, and the Immigration Restriction Laws of the 1920s. But Pacific Northwest Norwegians nevertheless organized well-attended Seventeenth of May celebrations every year, and by 1931 the children's parade also returned.[325] As a site of identity invention, the Seventeenth of May parade in Seattle reflected constructions of hyphenated identities that

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[322] Kathleen Neils Conzen, "Ethnicity as Festive Culture: Nineteenth-Century German America on Parade," in *Invention of Ethnicity*, Werner Sollors, ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 50.
[323] "17de Mai i Seattle og Udenfor," *Washington Posten*, May 23, 1913, 1.
[324] "Syttende Mai i Seattle," *Washington Posten*, May 22, 1914, 1.
[325] "Syttende Maifesten i Seattle," *Washington Posten*, May 22, 1931, 1.

stressed ethnicity through commemoration.[326] The longevity of Seattle's celebration in and of itself is a testament to ethnic persistence among Pacific Norwest Norwegians, but the commemoration nevertheless has faced its challenges.

Challenges and Responses: Ethnic Division, Race and Americanization

In the last decade before Norway gained its independence from Sweden, contests over how to celebrate the Seventeenth of May became an important arena for Norwegian Americans' battles over temperance. In 1891, during the Sunday excursion to Mukilteo, the president of the organizing committee had received thundering applause and cheers when he promised an even bigger celebration next year. Afterwards, Røthe, the editor of *Washington Posten*, had returned to Seattle "proud to be a Norwegian," and "pleased to be living and working with the Scandinavians" of the Puget Sound.[327] A year later, however, two separate celebrations took place in Seattle. One hosted by the secular Norwegian Labor Union and the other hosted by the religious youth organization Fremad (Forward), the Temperance Society, the Good Templars, and various churches. The first event undoubtedly attracted a working class audience open to alcohol consumption, while the second event carried a temperate tone.

Washington Posten aligned itself with a labor and secular perspective, and it consistently advocated the non-temperate celebrations. The newspaper also argued for single official celebrations for the city as a whole, but maintained that the churches and other organizations needed to join the non-temperate celebration. Norwegians in a foreign country, the newspaper

[326] Litwicki, "'Our Hearts Burn with Ardent Love for Two Countries," 5.
[327] "17de Mai-Festen," *Washington Posten*, May 21, 1891, 1.

explained, depended on the camaraderie of Norwegian organizations.[328] *Washington Posten*'s clear support of the labor union event in 1892, and their suggestion that anyone absent from that event undermined Norwegian unity in Seattle, disappointed and offended some Seattle Norwegians. In a letter to the editor, one reader challenged *Washington Posten* and the Norwegian Labor Union's right to speak for all Norwegians around the Puget Sound, and suggested that the temperate event in fact had been the most successful and the most nationalistic.[329]

Seattle's mainstream press suggested that teetotaler views among Norwegian immigrants were well known in the city. The *Seattle Times*, however, noted that the community was divided on the temperance question, and that this was the major issue that set celebrations apart. In 1902, the *Times* observed that Seattle Norwegians had celebrated their Constitution Day in a "loyal" manner in four separate locations.[330] While *Washington Posten* treated the Norwegian Club's event in Madison Park as a single main event, the *Times* asserted that "only a small fraction" of Seattle's Norwegians "found gratification at Madison Park, where liquor is generally plentiful," because "there are thousands of Norwegian-Americans in this city who are strongly opposed to the indulgence of wine." The Norwegian Club, the *Times* explained, "clings to the opposite pole, believing like some of the old Vikings, that wine gives strength and courage."[331]

Washington Posten's editors along with Seventeenth of May speakers expressed regret at this perceived division within the community, and often called for unity on the Seventeenth of May in the spirit of that which the commemoration represented. The 1908 celebration speakers,

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[328] "Untitled editorial," *Washington Posten*, May 11, 1893, 4.
[329] "Sneversyn," *Washington Posten*, May 26, 1892, 1.
[330] "Norway's Day of Freedom," *Seattle Times*, May 18, 1902, 13.
[331] "Norway's Day of Freedom," *Seattle Times*, May 18, 1902, 13.

for example, emphasized that coming together was "the only way such a day of unity could and should be commemorated."[332] One of the speakers, Conrad Thuland, argued that through give and take it should be possible to meet each other halfway.[333] Gunnar Lund, the editor of *Washington Posten*, deemed it "unfortunate" that the celebration took place in three separate locations in Seattle in 1913. He believed it unreasonable that "individual flocks" separated themselves from their countrymen and thereby failed to learn the lessons offered by the commemorated Eidsvoll delegates, and expressed a wish that everybody would come together for the centennial celebration the following year.[334]

Such calls for unity in the spirit of Seventeenth of May seemed to consider multiple celebrations organized separately by different ethnic organizations – religious and secular – as "problematic" and a sign of division within the community. Pacific Northwest Norwegians certainly did disagree on temperance, and different political and religious perspectives existed among them. Unity advocates achieved some success. Lund got the unified 1914 celebration for which he advocated. Single, unified celebrations otherwise took place from time to time before and after 1905 owing to the efforts of unity advocates who valued cooperation across class and gender. The unity proponents lost some perspective, however, in equating success with single citywide commemorations, and in their frustration with the difficulty in getting a diverse population to agree and cooperate. In their focus on frustrated efforts, they failed to recognize multiple ethnic organizations and multiple competing Seventeenth of May commemorations as a sign of a vibrant and healthy ethnic community.

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[332] "17de Maifesten," *Washington Posten*, May 22, 1908, 4.
[333] "17de Maifesten," *Washington Posten*, May 22, 1908, 4.
[334] "I 1914," *Washington Posten*, May 23, 1913, 4.

Another challenge to Seventeenth of May commemorations, from outside and within the community, arose from assimilationist thinking and demands for Americanization. From the podium of a Seventeenth of May celebration in Seattle in 1901, the *Seattle Times* editor had renounced the very event for which he addressed. The Seventeenth of May commemorated a history from which the emigrant had departed, and the Fourth of July commemorated a history the immigrant ought adopt.[335] Both Norwegian Americans and other Americans expressed such sentiments from time to time. Celebration speakers and newspaper commentators framed their defense in terms of the aforementioned homemaking myths and the argument discussed in chapter 2 that Norwegians made good Americans – or better Americans – on account of their Viking and Seventeenth of May heritage. Kathleen Neils Conzen and Ellen Litwicki note that immigrant groups commonly used "good" and "better" American arguments to justify their ethnic celebrations.[336]

Seattle Norwegians constructed an elaborate narrative justifying the uniquely ethnic celebration of the Seventeenth of May from claims of un-Americanness by arguing their very Americanness as commemorations of freedom. In 1898, in the midst of the Spanish-American War, *Washington Posten* defended the commemoration of the Seventeenth of May even at the time of war. *Skandinaven*, a Norwegian-American weekly in Chicago, cautioned that Norwegians might be perceived by others as "bad American citizens" if they celebrated Norway instead of showcasing American patriotism. In response, *Washington Posten* argued that if celebrating the Seventeenth of May made Norwegian Americans bad American citizens, then that would be true next year and last year as well. "For most Norwegian-Americans,"

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[335] "Their Day Closed Brilliantly, *Seattle Daily Times*, May 18, 1901, 8.
[336] Litwicki, "'Our Hearts Burn with Ardent Love for Two Countries," 15. Conzen, "Ethnicity as Festive Culture," 57-58.

Washington Posten asserted, "the 17th of May is just a 'memory-celebration,' an anniversary, where we come together and enjoy ourselves and pay tribute to freedom's altar." It was especially at times of war, the newspaper maintained, that it was crucial to remember and commemorate days of freedom.[337] The foreign part of the Seventeenth of May celebration, then, was understood as an act of remembering one's past, and commemorating this past with others who shared it. The celebration of freedom, however, the key message of the Seventeenth of May, was relevant in an American context as well, or so they brilliantly co-opted. In narratives created as part of, and in defense of, commemoration of the Seventeenth of May, Pacific Northwest Norwegians appeared determined to pursue ethnic solidarity and to celebrate Norwegian constitutional independence despite American nationalism. Seattle Norwegians constructed a rhetoric of American and Norwegian institutional compatibilities, shared values and heritage, and mutual understanding and appreciation of liberty.

Rhetoric defending the Seventeenth of May commemoration also took on an air of ethnic pride justification, and an emphasis of the superiority of Pacific Northwest Norwegians' talents (also understood as race) and heritage compared to other groups. In his 1899 speech, Conrad Thuland opened with a reference to claims that Norwegian Americans were "clannish" and "unpatriotic" by celebrating the Seventeenth of May, and that this celebration suggested "that we are not good Americans." Thuland explained that such claims always made him think of the story of the young, simple Norwegian shepherd who rose to become an adviser to the Persian shah. In the Persian Empire as anywhere else in the world there were fine people who felt superior to everyone else, and they looked with contempt upon this shepherd who seemed so close to the shah. Envious of his position, they conspired against him. A rumor spread among his

[337] "17de Mai," *Washington Posten*, May 13, 1898, 2.

opponents that this First Minister (the shepherd) was planning some kind of plot against the shah, and that the one locked door in his home hid weapons and money to be used against the shah. When the shah heard the rumor he inspected the room, which turned out to be simply furnished with a shepherd's clothes, staff, and whistle adorning the walls. These were the First Minister's mementos from his boyhood, appealing to his purest and best feelings. To others it was just junk, but to him it was invaluable treasure. Thuland ventured that on the Seventeenth of May, Pacific Northwest Norwegians take the liberty to enjoy their shepherd's garbs, even though there were "those among American snobs and ignorants" who suggested that such enjoyment of the shepherd's garb made them poor American citizens.[338]

This story evoked the simple origins of the "true" Norwegian, and the "purest and best feelings" connected to Norway and the Seventeenth of May. Similar to the Askeladd (the hero) of Norwegian folk tales, this simple "Joe" outwits his jealous, selfish and greedy opponents and rise to prominence without losing touch with his humble origin. When days of reckoning arrive, the Askeladd fares well while his opponents learn humbling lessons. When the shepherd's clothes are viewed as an allegory for the celebration of the Seventeenth of May, critics of the commemoration become the envious opponents from other ethnicities (perhaps other immigrant groups). The First Minister, or Askeladd, represents the Pacific Northwest Norwegian who has achieved success in the United States, and the shepherd's garb symbolizes the heritage itself and the meaning of the Seventeenth of May, which remind Pacific Northwest Norwegians of their "purest" and "best" selves. It is somewhat ironic that the opponents are framed as "fine people" with an air of superiority around them because this shepherd's story evokes a sense of Norwegian superiority rooted deeply in Norwegian cultural identity. Inspired by folk tales and

[338] "Storartet 17de Maifest i Seattle," *Washington Posten*, May 19, 1899, 1.

romantic nationalism, Norwegians understood themselves as a simple "folk" – farmers – and they viewed aristocrats with contempt. When Thuland evoked the purity of the Askeladd shepherd, he claimed the superiority of Norwegians' talents on behalf of Pacific Northwest Norwegians, but he also claimed the superiority of the Norwegian folk, not unlike the German-American idea of the "volk" to which they claimed membership through ritual and celebration.[339]

A belief in Nordic racial superiority also came to expression in the pageantry of the parade. In the 1914 parade, for example, the Norwegian Turners dressed in their "attractive white gymnasts' costumes, and with the Stars and Stripes and two Norwegian flags" made a spectacle of idealized manhood. *Washington Posten* noted that no example of more "strapping boys" existed anywhere in Seattle, and suggested that young girls swooned wherever the turners went by.[340] The "strapping" turners symbolized ideal masculinity, but at a time when organizers of a massive fiftieth anniversary Battle of Gettysburg reenactment conveniently forgot the African American involvement in the Civil War, and the President of the United States praised a film that glorified the Ku Klux Clan, the spectacle of the Norwegian Turners made a "racial" and nationalistic ideal that no one missed. Coupled with the Norwegian Singers, who of course also participated in the parade, the Turners served as "major standard bearers of nationalist ideology" similar to the function Kathleen Neils Conzen has noted German Turners and Singers held for the German-American ethnicity.[341] The spectacle of the Norwegian Turners would have met Gunnar Lund's approval when he called on the people of Vesterheim to use the Seventeenth of

[339] Conzen, "Ethnicity as Festive Culture," 59.
[340] "Syttende Mai i Seattle," *Washington Posten*, May 22, 1914, 1.
[341] Conzen, "Ethnicity as Festive Culture," 61.

May to "muster labor in our forefathers' footprints. Let it be our task to carry the best attributes of the Norrøna people forward," and please the "scrutinizing eye" of critical Americans.[342]

Despite the occasional voices of criticism to which Pacific Northwest Norwegian orators responded, they had every reason to believe mainstream Americans heard, understood, accepted and even admired their Seventeenth of May message. In a 1901 article on this ethnic celebration in Seattle, for example, the *Seattle Times* called "particular attention" to the Seventeenth of May celebrations "because the Scandinavian people, whether segregated as nations or treated as a whole, are among the most thrifty, enterprising and progressive" Americans, whether "native or foreign."[343] This characterization of Scandinavians praised the widely trumpeted virtuous Norwegian character traits in its description of the context for the Seventeenth of May. The *Times* noted that there are more Germans in the U.S. than Scandinavians, and that Germans celebrated no such days. Scandinavian Americans, however, held "stronger motives" for commemorating "important days and great events in their native country," than did Germans, the newspaper maintained. It cited the "good reason" of a century-long independence struggle in Norway as the basis for that stronger motive. As an ethnic day of celebration that commemorated the very principles on which also the Fourth of July rests, the *Times* deemed it "most natural and fitting" that Norwegians celebrate the Seventeenth of May, also as American citizens.[344] Such statements in the mainstream press provided affirmation for Pacific Northwest Norwegians, and helped motivate continued arguments of Norwegian superiority. Conzen's work shows that German Americans held their own ethnic celebrations, including public parades, in the United States in the nineteenth century. In the context of World War I, German Americans held few, if

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[342] "17de Mai," *Washington Posten*, May 14, 1909, 4.
[343] "17th of May Celebrations," *Seattle Times*, May 15, 1901, 6.
[344] "17th of May Celebrations," *Seattle Times*, May 15, 1901, 6.

any, public ethnic celebrations. No specifically anti-German hostilities existed yet in 1901, however. Whether or not the reporter's assessment rings true after further study on the subject, the fact that Norwegian nationalism connected to the independence movement was getting into high-gear by 1901 might explain a greater visibility of the Seventeenth of May compared to other ethnic festivals.

Seventeenth of May speakers who represented mainstream America, and particularly mayors and governors who represented official Seattle and Washington, also offered validation of Pacific Northwest Norwegians' celebration narrative. This validation came in part from political leaders' accepted invitations and attendance, but also in the message they conveyed through their oratory. One such 1907 speaker, for example, validated the foundation narrative. He highlighted Norway's high place among civilized countries, and the contributions of Scandinavian Americans to the development of the United States. The most significant contributions, he asserted, lay with the Norwegian Vikings. "We speak about our Anglo-Saxon forefathers, but it is the … peoples from the North we owe our resolve and our freedom to think and speak, just like we are indebted to them for the first exploration of this country."[345] In 1908, the mayor gave a speech that offered tribute to Norway and Norwegians in the old country and America. The United States always offered a welcoming hand, he maintained, to the "laborious and patriotic citizen" Norwegians made.[346] In 1912, the mayor told the story of an Irishman who refrained from copying an Englishman's sense of humor, because without his Irishness he would be ashamed.[347] The subtext here, readily accepted by the crowd, was that Norwegians in Seattle could easily "copy" the American in all things, but it would be an unfortunate loss if they gave

[345] "17. Mai i Seattle," *Washington Posten*, May 24, 1907, 4.
[346] "17de Maifesten," *Washington Posten*, May 22, 1908, 4.
[347] "Norges Frihedsdag i Seattle," *Washington Posten*, May 24, 1912, 4.

up their Norwegianness. Another mayor described Norway as the "bulwark of freedom in Europe," and flattered and validated Pacific Northwest Norwegians as possessors of "true ideas and ideals of the spirit of freedom for which America stands. Of those who emigrate to these shores, none has better [claim to the land] than you."[348] In 1914, Governor Lister spoke to receptive ears when he referred to his audience as the "best of the citizenship of the state of Washington."[349] Such oratory from mainstream political leaders signified to the listeners that Norwegian heritage was "safe" and valuable, and that the celebration of this heritage on the Seventeenth of May represented an expression of their Americanness as well as their Norwegianness.

Conclusion

The 1930s and the Great Depression inaugurated the coming together of the Norwegian Hospital Association, the Norwegian Singing Society, the Sons and Daughters of Norway and other ethnic organizations in one common annual Seventeenth of May Festival for greater Seattle. The first joint event took place in 1929, and by 1930 *Washington Posten* claimed that 5,000 people attended and that no other nationality in the city could undertake a similar ethnic celebration of a comparable magnitude.[350] In 1931, a children's parade returned as part of the festivities.[351] All this signaled a "win" for secular organizations in the control and management of the Seventeenth of May celebration, but also the remarkable persistence (or "ethnic survival") of the Seventeenth of May in Seattle.

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[348] "Patriotic Talks Stir Norwegians," *Seattle Daily Times*, May 18, 1914, 7.
[349] "Patriotic Talks Stir Norwegians," *Seattle Daily Times*, May 18, 1914, 7.
[350] "Seattles Syttende Maifest," *Washington Posten*, May 23, 1930, 1.
[351] "Syttende Maifesten i Seattle," *Washington Posten*, May 22, 1931, 1.

On the Seventeenth of May, Pacific Northwest Norwegians' thoughts went "across land and ocean to the thousand homes far toward the north," Gunnar Lund wrote in his editorial in 1921. Dreamingly, they "see the country rise clean and beautiful from the ocean, lands and forests clothed in their brightest colors … wild and rugged to the eye."[352] Selectively remembering (and forgetting) Norway, Pacific Northwest Norwegians constructed memories of the Norwegian landscape and invented a connection to the coastal landscape of Oregon and Washington. This appropriation of the local landscape, this ethnic environmentalism, made an important pillar in orators' constructions of Seventeenth of May celebration narratives and Pacific Northwest Norwegians' constructions of identity. Foundation myths that claimed the Viking origin of American democracy, and the cultural and racial superiority of Norwegians, made another such pillar.

In the context of a Norwegian independence movement that succeeded in its efforts in 1905, Pacific Northwest Norwegians also imagined transnational community by asserting and nurturing their bonds with Norway. The Seventeenth of May celebration hence became an important nationalist vehicle to claim membership in an imagined "greater Norway" as Daron Olson has labeled it. But in its narrative of liberty and freedom, this ethnic celebration also became a vehicle to assert the close relation and compatibility between Norwegian and American ideals and democratic institutions.

While celebration orators and newspaper commentators often appeared to despair over perceived division within the ethnic community over divisive issues such as temperance, the remarkable persistence of the Seventeenth of May celebration as an annual ethnic festival from 1890 to World War II and beyond, nevertheless suggests the persistence of a vibrant and healthy

[352] "17de Mai," *Washington Posten*, May 13, 1921, 4.

ethnic community even in the context of Immigration Restriction Laws, second and third generation acclimation, and the world wars. In the next chapter, the persistence of Norwegian ethnicity will be explored through another cultural vehicle, namely the ski culture that Norwegian immigrants brought with them to the Pacific Northwest. Along with the spectacle of Seventeenth of May, skiing represented an important maintained Norwegian cultural tradition. While Seventeenth of May orators argued the Americanness of Norwegian democratic heritage, skiing and winter recreation played an important role in the development of Pacific Northwest identities across Euro-American ethnic lines.

CHAPTER 4: THE MULTORPOREAN BIRDMEN AND THE SLAT-RIDERS OF THE 1930S

"On skis

Pack your sack, get underway

Uphill toward the white mountain.

Leave 'old depression' behind

Be your happy self once again.

The dark city lies behind you

Happy you get as you climb high

When you see the white pines

All the burdened, painful lifted.

You once again have skis on your feet

Down the hill – oh, how it soars,

Young once more in Norway –

Long, difficult years forgotten.

Can you remember the old country?

Can you remember the splendor of the snow?

Can you remember old Norway

In its white winter dress?

Let go of the puzzles of life

Here you forget the world's battles,

Here is the grandeur of the fairy tale.

The pine tree sparkles tall and white.

In this the snow's white temple

I will offer a silent prayer:

Oh I wish I could bring the purity of the snow

Along to those below."[353]

- A skier, 1932

Introduction

"It is the springs. Nothing else but. You are obliged to have them. Where? In the legs, to be sure," Hjalmar Hvam told the sports reporter from the *Oregon Journal*. Fred McNeil thus learned the "sine qua non of ski jumping" in "solemn pronouncement from the lips of a tall, slim young Norwegian-American" while they hugged a stove in a drafty log cabin near the ski jump at Swim on Mount Hood. "We get the springs when we are really young in Norway," Hvam continued in quiet, measured words with musical intonation. "If you do not get them then, they will never

[353] "Paa ski," *Washington Posten*, Mar. 4, 1932, 6. Printed anonymously under the sports section "Sports-Spalten," in Norwegian. Translated by author.

come. When I was very small – before I started to school, even – I could jump a bit with skis. But not off a big take-off. No, no! That came later. But on my little skis I would go out with the others and we would run on the level snow and jump. Broad-jumping, you know. And in that way we got the spring that takes us off the big jumps now." Corey Gustafson, Arne Stene, and Olaf Langrud, who with Hvam counted among the handful of "best … ski-jumping experts in the Pacific Northwest" nodded in agreement. They "had come from the same school. They had got their 'springs' in Norge."[354]

In the 1930s, Portlanders flocked to Mount Hood, and Seattleites flocked to Mount Rainer and Snoqualmie Pass, "amid deep snows and bracing air," to play in the snow, to engage in "idræt," and to "see that contest of the Vikings," ski-jumping.[355] The Cascade Ski Club of Portland opened modestly with their first ski jump in the late 1920s, but within a few years thousands of people made the trip from Portland to the mountain to be spectators at ski jumping events, and to go skiing. The lobbying efforts of the Norwegian founding members of the ski club to have the road to the mountain cleared of snow in winter opened the mountain for winter use. It allowed the Cascade Ski Club, Mount Hood, Portland, and the Pacific Northwest to take part in the modernization of the ski sport that simultaneously took place in the East and Rocky Mountain West, along with Europe. Immigrants from Norway and Scandinavia brought a ski culture with them to the Pacific Northwest, along with the idræt mindset – a belief in the health of body, mind, and spirit through strenuous outdoor exercise. Skiing and the idræt idea spread across ethnic, social, and gender lines, and figured into state and city efforts to market Mount

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[354] "Where Winter Sportsmen Vie," *Oregon Journal*, Feb. 2, 1930, in Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 1, 1920s-1936, Oregon Historical Society, Portland, Oregon.
[355] "Where Winter Sportsmen Vie," *Oregon Journal*, Feb. 2, 1930, in Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 1, 1920s-1936, Oregon Historical Society, Portland, Oregon.

Hood and Oregon as a winter-wonderland, with Portland as its portal. With the establishment of the ski clubs, and through organizing the ski sport in the Pacific Northwest, Norwegian immigrants helped lay the foundation for the present-day year-round recreational access and use of the Cascade mountains, along with the present-day popularity of skiing. But in its Norwegian cultural origin, and in its cross-cultural appeal, it also contributed to the evolving Norwegian-American identity, and the local identities, of the first and second-generation immigrant skiers themselves.

Sports historians have traditionally framed their studies in terms of the transition from traditional play to more sophisticated, organized modern sports, and as diffusion from cultural hegemonies. As such, traditional sports narratives have emphasized a Eurocentric origin in hegemonic cultures, such as England, and a one-way diffusion or spread to other places and cultures. In his seminal study *From Ritual to Record*, Allen Guttmann argues that secularism, equality, specialization, rationalization, bureaucracy, quantification, and the keeping of records differentiated modern sports from traditional games and pastimes.[356] The modernization of sports, according to Guttmann, followed from the processes of industrialization and urbanization, and was rooted in the English invention of amateur sportsmanship. Central to modern sports was a governing authority that oversaw standardized rules and conditions, so that athletes' performances in one event could be compared to performances on other dates and in other locations.[357] Following from Guttman's argument on the centrality of Great Britain (and the West) in the modernization of sports, historians have also studied the diffusion of organized

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[356] Allen Guttmann, *From Ritual to Record: The Nature of Modern Sports* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), 15-56.
[357] John G. Reid and Robert Reid, "Diffusion and Discursive Stabilization: Sports Historiography and the Contrasting Fortunes of Cricket and Ice Hockey in Canada's Maritime Provinces, 1869-1914," *Journal of Sport History* 42:1 (Spring 2015): 89 (87-113).

sports from Great Britain and around the world – or from the West to the rest of the world. Most studies have focused on England as the starting point, and treated diffusion as one-directional, but historians have also begun to consider multidirectional diffusion, the importance of continental Europe in the origin of some sports, and particularly ways that "borrowers" reinvented sports. Maarten van Bottenburg and John and Robert Reid, for example, have suggested that the role of Great Britain in both sports diffusion and cultural diffusion need to be reassessed. "Borrowers" routinely modified and transformed sports, according to van Bottenburg, and "reverse diffusion" from politically or economically weaker countries to stronger countries did happen. John and Robert Reid, likewise, argue that while the sporting diffusion model retains its general validity at least within the British Empire, the process of diffusion was complex and variable.[358]

Skiing modernized as a sport in the early twentieth century when governing bodies, such as the U.S. National Ski Association (founded 1905) and the Norwegian Ski Association (founded 1908) began to regulate competition in the Nordic branches of ski jumping and cross-country skiing.[359] "Modern" Nordic skiing featured prominently at the First Winter Olympics in 1924. In the absence of bureaucracy, standardized quantification, and regulated recordkeeping, Guttmann would consider early community and ski club competition in the nineteenth century a transitional "traditional play" on a path toward modernization. If one considered nineteenth century Norway (or Scandinavia) a ski culture hegemony, skiing did not represent one-way

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[358] Reid and Reid, "Diffusion and Discursive Stabilization," 91. Maarten van Bottenburg, "Beyond Diffusion: Sport and Its Remaking in Cross-Cultural Contexts," *Journal of Sport History* 37:1 (Spring 2010): 41-53.

[359] E. John B. Allen, "Values and Sport: The Development of New England Skiing, 1870-1940," *Oral History Review* 13 (1985): 56-57. Allen argues that skiing modernized in New England (and by implication the United States as a whole) between 1870 and 1940.

diffusion. Scandinavian immigrants brought ski culture with them to New England and the Great Lakes, and introduced the Rocky Mountain West to "Norwegian snowshoes" indispensible for transportation between communities in winter.[360] Norwegian immigrants, such as the Hemmestvedt brothers whose exploits have been explored by Helen White, competed in ski jumping in the first tournaments and winter carnivals organized by local Rocky Mountain communities in the 1880s and 1890s, before some of them returned to Norway and continued competition there.[361] Hence, I would argue, skiing enjoyed local, national, and transnational contexts from its modern beginnings, with multi-directional, transnational exchanges between for example Norway and the United States.

Sports historians have also considered social history, looking at the intersections between gender, race, and social class, and the role sports played in the lives of immigrants and racial minorities in their quest to become accepted as full-fledged Americans. Historians have critically evaluated the conventional wisdom that sport served as a vehicle for upward social mobility.[362] Peter Levine, for example, found that before World War II, sports represented a middle ground to earlier generations of Jewish Americans both as actual experience and as a symbol. They actively embraced sports as a strategy to demonstrate their Americanness and earn acceptance as Americans.[363] José Alamillo emphasizes transnationalism and the role of sports in Los Angeles

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[360] Jack A. Benson, "Before Skiing Was Fun," *Western Historical Quarterly* 8:4 (Oct. 1977): 431.
[361] Helen M. White, "Ski-Sport Heroes from Norway: Norwegian Immigrants Introduce the Fine Points of Skiing as a Sport to Admiring Midwesterners," in Helen M. White, *The Tale of a Comet and Other Stories* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), 129.
[362] Steven A. Riess, "Sport and the American Dream: A Review Essay," *Journal of Social History* 14:2 (Winter 1980): 295 (295-303).
[363] See Daniel A. Nathan, "The Test of Time: Revisiting *Ellis Island to Ebbets Field*," *Journal of Sport History* 38:2 (Summer 2011): 275-288; reviewing Peter Levine's *Ellis Island to Ebbets Field: Sport and the American Jewish Experience* (1992).

in the 1930s in the development of both an expatriate Mexican national identity with transnational ties on the part of some athletes, and a Mexican-American identity connecting them to Southern California and American society in general, on the part of other athletes.[364] Other historians have looked at sport as popular culture, and the links with other aspects of popular culture, such as music.[365]

The intersection between sport, place/region, and tourism has also received attention. Hal Rothman, for example, has analyzed the roles of heritage tourism, recreation tourism, and entertainment tourism in the transformation of the American West in the twentieth century, with an emphasis on how local communities branded and marketed their culture and their place in an attempt to attract visitors.[366] Susan Sessions Rugh profiled Utah to demonstrate how state governments created and maintained local state brands (or identities) that they marketed to attract tourists. The "Ski Utah" slogan is an example of such a brand that not only marketed the state as a winter resort destination, but also rallied local corporate support around this vision.[367] Likewise, Annie Gilbert Coleman emphasizes the selling of skiing, the combination of recreation and a powerful consumer culture, to invent Colorado as a skiing resort destination after World

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[364] José M. Alamillo, " Playing Across Borders: Transnational Sports and Identities in Southern California and Mexico, 1930-1945," *Pacific Historical Review* 79:3 (August 2010): 360-392.
[365] See for example John Bale, Anthony Bateman, eds., *Sporting Sounds: Relationships between Sport and Music* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2010); and Dave Russell, "Abiding Memories: The Community Singing Movement and English Social Life in the 1920s," *Popular Music* 27 (2008): 117-133. Also see Kevin Moore, "Sport History, Public History, and Popular Culture: A Growing Engagement," *Journal of Sport History* 40:1 (Spring 2013): 39-55.
[366] Hal K. Rothman, "Selling the Meaning of Place: Entrepreneurship, Tourism, and Community Transformation in the Twentieth-Century American West," *Pacific Historical Review* 65:4 (Nov. 1996): 525-557.
[367] Susan Sessions Rugh, "Branding Utah: Industrial Tourism in the Postwar American West," *Western Historical Quarterly* 37:4 (Winter 2006): 445-472.

War II.[368] Skiing as a commodity, she asserts, combined with the formation of regional identity. The same is true for the Pacific Northwest, but there selling the region as a winter-wonderland tourist destination gained momentum already in the 1930s.

Historians have emphasized the Scandinavian origin of skiing, the role of working class Scandinavian immigrants in transplanting skiing to the United States in the nineteenth century, first for utility and later for recreation, and the role of continental European immigrants in the development of downhill skiing and the skiing resort culture especially after World War II. John Weinstock analyzed Sondre Norheim's contributions to the development of skiing as a sport and recreational pastime in Norway in the mid nineteenth century. Norheim, who became a Norwegian folk hero, began popularizing skiing through his invention of a better binding and by dropping jaws with his daring runs and jumps. Skiing was already thoroughly ingrained in Norwegian culture for its utility as a necessary means of transportation on snow-covered roads through hilly terrain when Norheim began to inspire recreation and competition.[369] In the Rocky Mountain West, skiing became known as "Norwegian snowshoeing" in the second half of the nineteenth century. Jack Benson and Coleman maintain that "Norwegian snowshoes" – or skis – became an important form of transportation in that region from about 1860 to 1920. Skiing represented utility and necessity, as it was the only way to get around in and between remote mining communities in Colorado during the winter months.[370] "Snowshoe" Thompson, a Norwegian immigrant, earned fame in the Sierra Nevadas in California by carrying 100-pound

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[368] Annie Gilbert Coleman, *Ski Style: Sport and Culture in the Rockies* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004), 4.
[369] John Weinstock, "Sondre Norheim: Folk Hero to Immigrant," *Norwegian-American Studies* 29 (1983): 339-358. Norheim emigrated with his wife, when both were at age 59, in the mid 1880s, to join a son in the Upper Midwest who had already emigrated. Norheim did not ski in the U.S., and died in poverty in North Dakota in 1897.
[370] Benson, "Before Skiing Was Fun," 431. Coleman, *Ski Style*, 15.

sacks of mail across the mountains in winter, by way of skis, as early as the 1850s.[371] Helen White also notes that a Norwegian-American newborn in Minnesota in the 1880s was said to "look about and order his skis ready for use as soon as he can walk," illustrating both the perceived need for skis and the close cultural association of Norwegians with skis.[372] Coleman argues that skiing began to shift toward recreation by the 1890s, but that working-class Scandinavian immigrants continued to shape the sport. Only with the advent of the downhill skiing resort culture, and especially after World War II, did Austrians and other continental European immigrants begin to shape the image of American skiing.[373]

Skiing has received far less attention than summer sports and team sports, and insofar as historians have studied skiing they have as yet mainly focused on the Rocky Mountain West, as well as New England and the Great Lakes. The Pacific Northwest has often been overlooked. E. John B. Allen asserts that the modern ski sport emerged in New England between 1870 and 1940, alongside developments in Europe, and highlights the contribution of Ishpeming, Michigan, as the home of the National Ski Association and the site of the first national competitions in 1904 and 1905.[374] Allen also suggests that Scandinavian immigrants played an important role in popularizing the ski sport in the United States, and maintains that historians of the Scandinavian immigration experience have under-recognized skiing as a major immigrant contribution to the new land.[375]

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[371] J. H. Hildebrand, "Duelling Skis," *California History* 61:4 (Winter 1983): 276-281. Reprinted from J. H. Hildebrand, "History of Ski-ing in California," *British Ski Year Book*, 1939.
[372] White, *Tale of a Comet and Other Stories*, 129, 150.
[373] Coleman, *Ski Style*, 15, 41-59.
[374] Allen, "Values and Sport," 56-57.
[375] E. John B. Allen, "The Modernization of the Skisport: Ishpeming's Contribution to American Skiing," *Michigan Historical Review* 16:1 (Spring 1990), 1 (1-20).

Scholars have begun to incorporate gender and race in studies of the development of the post-World War II skiing resort culture in Colorado. Coleman traces how the meaning of skiing changed and grew throughout the twentieth century, and how skiing connected to questions of place and identity. She considers the crossroads between the physical act of skiing, economic development, and cultural change, and how "cultural meanings become inscribed on the landscape and how landscapes in turn influence culture."[376] Defined as a masculine activity when applied to mail carriers, miners and ranchers, Coleman argues that women nevertheless took to skiing as well by placing it in a social context. They feminized women's use of skis by placing them in contexts that connected them to the landscape (going on a stroll), social activities (visiting people), or women's day-to-day care for their family. She highlights how ski clubs, jumping contests, and winter carnivals became commonplace by the 1910s, and that women's and girls' skiing competitions were organized alongside men's and boys' competitions as early as 1912. Coleman asserts that such contests brought people together across gender, class, ethnic, and generational divides, engaging women, men, and children in games and sporting competition. Owing to the influence of continental European immigrants, downhill skiing began to eclipse jumping and cross-country skiing in popularity by the 1930s. While Colorado skiing began with working-class European immigrants who created a white, European, alpine identity that blurred European national boundaries, Coleman maintains that the rise of the post-World War II commercial skiing resort industry redefined demographics. After World War II, Colorado

[376] Coleman, *Ski Style*, 3.

promoters marketed skiing vacations as a commodity to an elite crowd, and defined skiing as white and elite, with gendered limitations on women's participation in the skiing culture.[377]

Skiing developed later in the Pacific Northwest than it did in the East and the Rocky Mountain West. It emerged as a recreational sport in the 1920s, without having previously served a utility need as a means of transportation, such as it did in Colorado. While the Scandinavian-American population of Oregon and Washington had been relatively small before 1900, the climate of these two Pacific Northwest states is the main reason for the absence of that utility phase of skiing. Few people settled in the mountains, and few people needed to traverse the mountain passes in winter. Migrants came through Snoqualmie Pass by train, and Norwegian immigrants clustered west of the Cascades around the Puget Sound, Columbia River, and in the Willamette Valley, where winters never brought lasting snows. Skiing emerged by the mid to late 1920s as recreational sport along the Cascades centered around Mount Rainier and Mount Hood, and around communities on the east side of the Cascades such as Leavenworth, Washington, and Bend, Oregon. Ski jumping, in particular, gained popularity in the 1930s as a masculine sport almost exclusively drawing Norwegian competitors, but nevertheless attracting spectators across ethnic lines. The local winter sports clubs that organized ski jumping tournaments, such as Portland's Cascade Ski Club, actively recruited members across ethnic, gender, and social class lines. Like other ski clubs had done earlier in the East and Rocky Mountain West, Pacific Northwest ski clubs promoted skiing as healthy outdoor activity beneficial to body and spirit, a transplanted "idræt" ideology from Scandinavia. They promoted the sport as a traditional (though secular) pastime through informal winter carnivals and winter

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[377] Coleman, *Ski Style*, 4-40. Annie Gilbert Coleman, "The Unbearable Whiteness of Skiing," *Pacific Historical Review* 65:4 (Nov. 1996): 583-614.

fun days for male and female skiers of all abilities and ages. But they also promoted skiing as a modernized sport by organizing men's and women's downhill and cross-country skiing races, along with men's ski jumping tournaments, in events recognized by the National Ski Association and governed by the Pacific Northwest Ski Association. Skiing represented a Norwegian cultural practice to first, second, and third generation Norwegian Americans that persisted as part of their Norwegian identity, but also figured prominently in their invention of local Pacific Northwest identities.

The 1930s ski culture of the Pacific Northwest sheds light upon Norwegian Americans' ethnic environmentalism – the appropriation of the local landscape in the construction of ethnic identity. While many studies have emphasized the connection between immigrants, ethnicity, and sports, such as Jewish Americans, Italian Americans and ball games or boxing, studies on ski culture have examined the development of cultural landscapes and the skiing industry, and the formation of skiing identities on the part of individuals and communities. Allen pointed out in 1990 that few ethnic historians studying Scandinavian communities have paid attention to the ski sport.[378] Coleman has produced the most extensive study of ethnicity and skiing to date, but she is mostly concerned with the invention of skiing resort whiteness across Euro-American ethnic lines that made invisible the presence of non-white service staff.[379] No study yet has considered the role of skiing as part of an immigrant community's ethnic identity. Additionally, what makes the story of the development of Pacific Northwest ski culture in the 1930s unique compared to other parts of the United States, is that while modernized skiing emerged later in the region than elsewhere, local municipal and state authorities were quicker to recognize the tourism potential

[378] Allen, "Modernization of the Ski Sport," 1.
[379] Coleman, "Unbearable Whiteness of Skiing," 583-614. See also Annie Gilbert Coleman, "The White West: Ski Town Image, Tourism, and Community," in Coleman, *Ski Style*, 147-181.

of skiing. After the founders of the Cascade Ski Club convinced the local authorities to snowplow the road to the mountain in the 1920s, Mount Hood opened for recreational access in winter. Already in the 1930s, local boosters drew on the idræt ideology when they marketed and sold Mount Hood in Oregon, and Mount Rainier in Washington, as winter-wonderlands with Olympic level facilities, in ways that led to the construction of Timberline Lodge at Mount Hood, and National Ski Association Olympic tryouts at both locations. From the perspective of Norwegian immigrants, skiing and idræt represented an effort to preserve tradition and to emphasize Norwegian identity amid declining immigration numbers. To Portlanders and Seattleites – Scandinavian as well as non-Scandinavian – the ski clubs and the spectacle of competition offered inexpensive, local escape from the Great Depression's bleak everyday urban life.

Idræt and the Development of Skiing in the Norwegian Tradition in the Pacific Northwest

The present-day Scandinavian notion of "friluftsliv" – the enjoyment of the great outdoors viewed as a prioritized social value to be shared by all, was an ideology that Norwegian immigrants brought with them to the Pacific Northwest. At the turn of the century, it was known as *idrott* in Sweden, and as *idræt* in Norway and Denmark. Idræt translates simply to "sport," but carries a deeper meaning as an ideology or philosophy. Coleman defines "idræt" as outdoor sport infused with nationalist sentiment that also embodied the masculine characteristics of strength, manliness, toughness, and overcoming fear.[380] According to John Ross, Scandinavian tradition

[380] Coleman, *Ski Style*, 18.

revered idræt as the "vigorous but non-competitive pursuit of athletic endeavor."[381] Sporting professionalism, or modernization, eclipsed and transformed aspects of the philosophy over time in Scandinavia, Ross argues, but it never eradicated all the traditional elements. He further explains that while idræt refers to vigorous physical activity it is less about individual body development than about the collective health of the people, with a strong social element. It involves serious work built on diligence and strenuous effort. But it does not require specific rules and equipment. Instead, physical exertion is its purpose. According to Ross, Swedish idrott referred to all-weather sport from the standpoint of fitness, while the Norwegian idræt went further by putting a premium on the ability to effectively move across land and sea, such as in rowing and skiing. An equally important component to the idræt concept, Ross explains, was the notion that it embodied "life-enhancing" and "spiritual virtues" along with "physiological well-being," elements largely absent in modern sports.[382]

Scholars have recognized idræt as a central philosophical element in the ski culture Scandinavian immigrants transplanted to New England and the Rocky Mountain West, and the Pacific Northwest was no different. Allen views idræt as one of two cultural factors pertaining to skiing that Scandinavian immigrants brought with them to the United States in the nineteenth century. The first was the aforementioned utilitarian quality of skiing for work and everyday use. Idræt, Allen maintains, contained the larger ideal of sporting nature's grandeur. Allen asserts that the ski clubs and the National Ski Association organized around this belief in the promotion of the health of body and mind and nation. It represented an almost spiritual quality that made it border on a secular religion to some, but more broadly it represented an appealing atmosphere

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[381] John F. L. Ross, "Parting Ways, Testing Waters: Norway's Early Olympic Ventures," *Journal of Sport History* 40:3 (Fall 2013): 413 (413-433).
[382] Ross, "Parting Ways, Testing Waters," 417.

surrounding the activity of skiing to the general public. Idræt as sold to American city dwellers provided "both a philosophical and actual antidote" to every ailment of "urban man, woman, boy, and girl."[383] As suggested by the poem with which this chapter opened, the melancholy associated with everyday life in the "dark city" of the Great Depression would be forgotten as one headed into the world of snow-clad pine trees. Amongst the grandeur of a Norwegian fairytale landscape, the skier would replace depression with happiness, and worries about life's everyday struggles with an appreciation for the "splendor of the snow." In this nature's temple, as this skier conceived it, he or she experienced a degree of spiritualism and dreamed to offer the purity of the mountain's snow as a cure for all that ailed the city dwellers below.[384]

Nordic skiing began in earnest in the Pacific Northwest in the late 1920s. Prior to 1926, only the "sturdiest of fans" of the sport ventured from Portland into Mount Hood in winter. Such "venturesome souls," typically Norwegian or Scandinavian immigrants, were heavily represented amongst the handful of people who made up the membership of the Guide Ski Club of Hood River or the Mount Hood Ski Club of Portland. Interest in skiing increased after the demand for winter access to the mountain convinced the Oregon Highway Commission to clear the Loop Highway to Government Camp and the Summit ski area in the winter months, thereby providing winter access to the mountain to a greater number of people. The Cascade Ski Club of Portland was formed when the two aforementioned clubs merged in the winter of 1927-28 to develop facilities for competition as well as recreation.[385] Aiming to foster the sport, and

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[383] Allen, "Modernization of the Skisport," 3-4.
[384] "Paa ski," *Washington Posten*, Mar. 4, 1932, 6.
[385] Hal Laman, "Skiing in Oregon Experiences Phenomenal Rise Since '26," *Oregon Journal*, Jan. 20, 1946, newsclipping in the Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 2, 1936-1940s, Oregon Historical Society. The Cascade Ski Club still maintains a presence in Government Camp on Mt. Hood. http://www.cascadeskiclub.org/ (Date accessed: Sep. 23, 2017).

promote interest in it, the Cascade Ski Club formally organized on January 23, 1930. On land leased from the United States Forest Service they immediately began construction of a ski jump. From a membership of sixteen people at the formation, the club quickly grew to 450 members within a season or two.[386] The first exhibition jumps took place on a simple jumping hill at Swim, on the southeastern slopes of Multorpor Mountain as early as 1927, and attracted hundreds of spectators from Portland.[387]

Simultaneously, a number of other ski clubs or winter sports clubs formed in Oregon and Washington. Each club initially centered around ski jumping exhibitions conducted in large part by Norwegian immigrants. In Leavenworth, Washington, a town with a significant Norwegian immigrant presence, Leavenworth Winter Sports Club formed around the brothers Magnus and Hermod Bakke and their ski jumping prowess in the 1920s.[388] The Seattle Ski Club with a membership consisting mostly of Norwegian jumpers and cross-country skiers built a lodge at Snoqualmie Pass in the late 1920s, and soon had a world-class jumping hill at Snoqualmie Summit. Washington Ski Club, formed a little later in 1933, attracted members from Seattle and Tacoma, and became one of the largest ski clubs in America with 600 members by 1940. They leased club structures on Mount Rainier and Mount Baker, and hosted events in both locations.[389] Nels Olesen Skjersaa, a Norwegian immigrant lumber mill worker in Bend, Oregon was an

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[386] Harold A. Lee, President of the Cascade Ski Club, "How We Have Grown," in *The Take-Off: Year Book*, Cascade Ski Club, Inc., Portland, Vol. 1, No. 1, Fall 1931, 9. Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 1, Oregon Historical Society.
[387] Hal Laman, "Skiing in Oregon Experiences Phenomenal Rise Since '26," *Oregon Journal*, Jan. 20, 1946, newsclipping in the Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 2, 1936-1940s, Oregon Historical Society.
[388] Leavenworth Winter Sports Club still operates a ski jumping hill, groomed trails for cross-country skiing, and two ski tows. They sell a variety of season and day passes for people to enjoy their facilities. https://www.skileavenworth.com/ (Date accessed: Sep. 23, 2017).
[389] Joy Lucas, *It Started in the Mountains: A History of Pacific Northwest Ski Instructors* (Seattle: Professional Ski Instructors of America – NW, 1996), 3-5.

active mountaineer. With two other Norwegians and a Swede he founded the Bend Skyliners in 1927, and in 1928 helped establish a winter playground for the club that included a lodge and a ski jump, and the club began hosting cross-country ski races and jumping tournaments in 1929.[390] The Cascade Ski Club first built a temporary club house, and later a more permanent structure at Government Camp on Mount Hood. Already in 1931, *Washington Posten* began describing the Cascade Ski Club as a model club, and over the next few years contestants and sports journalists from Oregon and Washington consistently praised the club's organizational ability and its facilities, such as the jumping hill and the clubhouse. *Washington Posten*, reflecting the interests of Norwegian readers, wrote of the clubhouse that it had become "the ski cabin to the utmost extent," not a comfortable hotel, but "roomy and practical" for skiers' needs.[391]

By the early 1930s, competitive skiers with membership in any of the clubs spent their weekends carpooling to races in cross-country skiing and ski jumping tournaments in the various ski areas maintained by each club. A stipend from their club paid the main expenses of travel and lodging, and travelling competitors typically lodged in the clubhouses belonging to the club organizing each tournament. During the 1930s, spectators came from Portland to Mount Hood or from Seattle to Snoqualmie Pass in numbers ranging from about one thousand to ten thousand in a single weekend to see daredevil Norwegian ski jumpers in action. The events began as daredevil exhibitions, but sportswriters from the *Oregonian* and the *Oregon Journal*, along with

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[390] "Skiing as a Way of Life: The Skjersaa Legacy," and "Skyliners," interpretive panels in *Winter Comes: Oregon's Nordic Ski History* exhibit, Deschutes Historical Museum, Bend, Oregon.

[391] "Sports-Spalten: Portland-Rennet," *Washington Posten*, Mar. 27, 1931, 6. "John Elvrum Seirer Stort. Portlandrenn i to dager I alle slags vær og føreforhold," *Washington Posten*, undated ca. 1933, newsclipping in Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 1, Oregon Historical Society.

the *Seattle Times* and *Washington Posten* quickly began discussing the events in terms of tournament results. The newspapers gave contestants' times on the cross-country races, and the length of the jumps for the jumping tournaments. Lists of results printed in the newspapers named the top three or top ten participants. Already at Cascade Ski Club's first ski jumping tournament, held in December 1928, they divided contestants into an expert "A" class, and a less experienced "B" class, and the *Oregonian* took note of the event, and described it in sportsman's terms on the sports page.[392] The tournaments themselves, and the reporting, took on an air of a modernized sport in the British amateur spirit, from the very first tournaments and races Oregon and Washington clubs hosted in the late 1920s.

In 1932 competitive skiers from the Pacific Northwest performed well in the national championship, thereby securing national recognition for the region as ski country. An air of formal professionalism, in the amateur sportsmanship sense, had come in November 1930 when Fred McNeill, *Oregon Journal* sportswriter, took on a leadership role in the formation of the Pacific Northwestern Ski Association, a local unit of the National Ski Association.[393] In 1932, four Norwegian immigrants, Hjalmar Hvam, John Elvrum and Corey Gustafson of Cascade Ski Club, and Ole Tverdahl of Seattle Ski Club made up the ski team the Pacific Northwestern Ski Association sent to the national championships in Lake Tahoe, California. The four-man squad brought home three championship titles, two second places, and two third places. Hvam took the championship in an 18-kilometer cross-country race, and the all-round combined title for best

[392] "21 Contestants Enter Meet," *Sunday Oregonian*, December 23, 1928, 44.
[393] Fred H. McNeill, President Pacific Northwestern Ski Association, "Why an Association," in *The Take-Off: Year Book*, Cascade Ski Club, Inc., Portland, Vol. 1, No. 1, Fall 1931, 10. Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 1, Oregon Historical Society.

overall scores in both jumping and cross-country.[394] *Washington Posten*'s sports writer asked rhetorically what an unnamed sports writer "back east" must think of Pacific Northwest skiing after the 1932 championship, as this individual in jest had named it "unthinkable" that any eastern skiers would take a trip to the Pacific Northwest given the obvious absence of snow in "the evergreen states," and given the fact that eastern skiers had outgrown middle school tournaments.[395] Elsewhere on the same page, *Washington Posten* announced that "ski kings" from the east had registered at a Pacific Northwest event for the first time, and credited the "excellent little contingent of 4 men from the Pacific Northwest to the national championship" with the honor of the visit.

Hjalmar Hvam made a central figure in the establishment of the ski sport – and ski culture – on Mount Hood. He was one of the founders of the Cascade Ski Club, and remained a fixture on the mountain for the next fifty years. He took part in active competition in both jumping and cross-country, and later in downhill and slalom, for over two decades and earned the Pacific Northwest championship title in the combined four-way combining results in all four of these sports in one championship event in 1937. During the height of his career around 1936-37 he was expected to win every race he entered, and won twelve consecutive downhill races.[396] Later he judged many ski jumping tournaments, and travelled to Oslo for the Olympics in 1952 as a coach for the U.S. Nordic ski team. He also served as an officer of the Cascade Ski Club and on the board of the Pacific Northwestern Ski Association. He operated ski shops in Portland and

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[394] "Sports-Spalten: Landsrennet i California" and "Amerikas Skikonger Samles Ved Seattle-Rennet," *Washington Posten*, Mar. 4, 1932, 6. "Portland Jumpers Take Many Honors," *Morning Oregonian*, Feb. 29, 1932, 13 (first page of section 2).
[395] "Sports-Spalten: Landsrennet i California," *Washington Posten*, Mar. 4, 1932, 6.
[396] "Hvam Back in Running," undated article from Portland newspaper, clipping in the Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 2, 1936 – 1940s, Oregon Historical Society.

Government Camp, he taught young club members how to ski, and he developed and sold ski waxes and the Saf-Ski safety binding – the world's first ski binding designed to release in the event of a fall to avoid bone fracture. In these roles he embraced the idræt mindset, and he played a significant part in shaping the ski culture of the region.

Hvam had been born in Kongsberg, Norway, in 1902 and had grown up skiing amongst boys who later became Olympic champions. "Ours was a skiing paradise," he wrote in 1987, "lots of powder snow and many jumping hills." He reportedly won his first jumping tournament at age twelve. At fourteen, he recalled, he and his brother, who was two years younger, had skied a gallon can of milk "with a loose lid and wire handle" downhill to a neighbor for Christmas baking. When they arrived, the neighbor had scolded Hjalmar for skiing with a can of milk, prompting his brother to protest in Hjalmar's defense "WE DON'T FALL DOWN!"[397] He put away his skis and emigrated to Canada when he was 20 years old. Like many Norwegian immigrants, he worked in sawmills and lumber camps in Saskatchewan and British Columbia, before he moved to Portland in 1927 to work for Multnomah Lumber and Box Company.[398] He owned no skis and put no thought into skiing until a neighbor (a fellow Norwegian) persuaded him to come to Multorpor Mountain to watch the inauguration of the new ski jumping hill. Hvam recalled that it was snowing hard that day, and no one seemed willing to test the hill. Since he related it differently on two separate occasions, Hvam either exclaimed "I'd almost be willing to pay five dollars to see someone jump," or "I'd almost be willing to pay $5 for the privilege of jumping." In any event, somebody handed him a pair of jumping skis, and Hvam executed a

[397] Hjalmar Hvam to Harold Smith, Ancient Skiers project, March 24, 1987, in the Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 3, Oregon Historical Society.
[398] "Nordic West," Dec.-Jan. 1984-85, feature on Hjalmar Hvam, in the Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 3, Oregon Historical Society.

Kongsberg-style jump in perfect form.[399] Hvam was "one of the first of an impressive group of Scandinavians to invade the then almost unbroken snows of the Northwest," wrote Ray Atkeson of *Ski Illustrated* in 1944. Word came down from the mountain of various exploits, and Oregonians started heading into the mountains in winter for entertainment and recreation. The "name of Hvam became familiar to thousands."[400]

The local ski clubs transplanted the concept of *idræt* from Norway (and the ski cultures in the East and the Rocky Mountain West) into the Pacific Northwest. Hjalmar Hvam and other Norwegian immigrants like him founded and set the agenda for the Cascade Ski Club, and other clubs like it, in the 1920s and 1930s. As a result, a Pacific Northwest ski culture emerged during the 1930s, heavily shaped by the activities of the ski clubs along with those of other civic boosters inspired by ski club activities. Winter sports enthusiasts of other Euro-American ethnicities certainly helped shape the clubs from the very beginning as well, along with the developing ski culture. Swiss and Austrian immigrants, for example, played a more significant role in popularizing downhill and slalom skiing in the second half of the 1930s, than did Norwegians. In the first half of the decade, however, first and second generation Norwegian Americans popularized ski jumping and cross-country skiing through clubs that they founded. The clubs drew a large percentage of their earliest membership among Norwegian Americans, and by their very existence – as ski clubs formed in a Norwegian mold organizing competition from a Norwegian model – the clubs in and of themselves reflected the Norwegian idræt

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[399] Robert Pierce, "Super Skier Hjalmar Hvam: Skill, Strength, and Style," *Willamette Week*, Oct. 13, 1975, in the Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 2, Oregon Historical Society. Leverett Richards, "Skiing After 70 – Or 80," *Oregonian*, undated but ca. 1977 based on Hvam's stated age, in the Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 2, Oregon Historical Society.
[400] "Hjalmar Hvam," *Ski Illustrated*, Mar. 1944, 10-11, 32, in the Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 3, Oregon Historical Society.

philosophy by their very existence. *Washington Posten* celebrated Seattle Ski Club's tournaments as "grand, splendid ski meet[s] of the best, Norwegian mold." The newspaper asserted that the winter season helped strengthen Norwegiandom through sports, "and especially by the finest, whitest and most beaming representation of sports."[401] The idea of purity suggested by that assertion was undoubtedly in part a reference to the perceived racial purity central in Norwegian-American identity construction, but it also referenced the clean purity of fresh snow and vigorous activity in it – idræt. The wins of local Pacific Northwest athletes in the 1932 nationals, and the subsequent Snoqualmie Summit tournament that featured eastern ski aces, prompted the Sons and Daughters of Norway to place a congratulatory greeting to the "practitioners of NORWAY'S AND THE WORLD'S GREATEST SPORT" as an advertisement in *Washington Posten*. They showed pride that skiers from across America would vie against each other in a "tournament carved from the Norwegian mold on Snoqualmie Summit." They went on to explain that as an organization they supported everything that "brings honor to Norway's name," and "Norwegian skiers especially" had "earned the respect and admiration of millions in our new country for themselves and the country they came from, at the benefit of the entire expatriate Norway and our old fatherland."[402] The Sons and Daughters of Norway showed no doubt that skiers, many of them Norwegian, practiced a sport of Norwegian heritage and transplant. And they seemed especially pleased that the practice of this Norwegian activity inspired and excited Americans, earning practitioners praise from Americans, as this helped support their efforts to be viewed by others as exceptional immigrants.

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[401] "Snoqualmie-Rennet 1. Mars: Norskdom og Skiidrett," *Washington Posten*, Feb. 27, 1931, 1.
[402] "Sönner og Dötre av Norge Hilser Skiidrettsmennene," ad, *Washington Posten*, Mar. 4, 1932, 6.

As an aspect of skiing that made the activity particularly Norwegian, the idea and ideology of idræt can be summarized as an emphasis on the health of body, mind and spirit for the entire citizenry. The anonymous skier with which this chapter opened was a practitioner of this philosophy. The Cascade Ski Club stated that one of its organizing purposes was the development of "health and happiness by clean outdoor sport for young and old alike."[403] One of the articles in the Cascade Ski Club's 1931 year book frames winter activities on Mount Hood as a remedy to the ailments of modern, urban life. Winter posed a problem in the cities well recognized by society at large, the author (a judge) asserted. Winter was a "period of depression and a slowing up of physical exertions," and a time when young people committed more crime. Confined to the city, they lacked adequate opportunities to vent "their pent up energies," he continued, which in turn led them into "unworthy enterprises." Organizations that worked toward the "moral betterment of our people," welcomed efforts to "relieve the [current] condition," he argued, and suggested that the Cascade Ski Club offered a solution. As a "leading inspiration" for Mount Hood winter sports over the last four years, the club had been giving people something to look forward to in winter. It had filled people with "anticipation of the joys and exhilaration to be experienced." In the four winter seasons of the club's existence, Portlanders had "caught the spirit of winter sports. They [had] begun to realize their real worth in building up the moral and physical fiber of their citizens, and especially the younger generation."[404] The idræt ideology emphasized the health and spiritual payoffs of vigorous outdoor activity, and the Cascade Ski Club popularized this Norwegian value.

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[403] Cascade Ski Club recruitment flyer, undated, in Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 1, Oregon Historical Society.
[404] Judge Fred W. Stadter, "Mount Hood Our Winter Playground," in *The Take-Off: Year Book*, Cascade Ski Club, Inc., Portland, Vol. 1, No. 1, Fall 1931, 8. Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 1, Oregon Historical Society.

This idea spread from the Cascade Ski Club to civic leadership and boosters on the city and state level in the 1930s. The Portland Winter Sports Association came into existence in 1931, when "a few public-spirited citizens of Portland" came to appreciate the need for an organization to "provide facilities for the use and enjoyment of the general public" of Portland's winter backyard beyond the ability of any one club. At first, the organization focused on Portland and Mount Hood, but by the end of the 1930s it expanded its orientation to the entire state of Oregon and renamed itself the Oregon Winter Sports Association.[405] The Portland Winter Sports Association consistently showcased the idræt ideology as one half of its dual purpose to "promote interest in the finest, cleanest and most exhilarating of all outdoor sports – skiing – and to advertise that at Mount Hood there is a skiing terrain equal to any to be found."[406] In a description of the "object of the newly formed Portland Winter Sports Association" in the Cascade Ski Club's year book, the author highlights the promise of "a healthy, happy life" as the primary motivation for human migration. Migrants, in general, were no longer fleeing the tyranny of government, he argued, but instead "the crushing tyranny of too speedy civilization that is tearing down our nerves and our bodies." On this account, he asserted, it was essential for people to "get out in the open, exercise the physical body and revel in a bit of healthy, carefree play." No place offered better opportunities for outdoor exercise than Mount Hood, "one of nature's greatest gifts" and a "vast gold mine that was ours for the taking." Portland, it turned out, possessed the means for the health and happiness sought by capitalism's urban migrants

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[405] "National Amateur and Open Downhill and Slalom Ski Championships and Tryouts to Select Teams for 1940 F.I.S. World Championships and Winter Olympic Exhibitions," Apr. 1-2, 1939, Mt. Hood, Oregon, Official Program, Cascade Ski Club & Oregon Winter Sports Association, in Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 3, Oregon Historical Society.

[406] "Annual Rose Festival All Star Summer Ski Championships and Mazama Cup Race," New hotel site, Timberline, Mt. Hood, June 14, 1936, Souvenir Program, in Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 2, Oregon Historical Society.

from Norwegian and other European countrysides. It "possessed the very thing the whole world now want more than anything else – a great playground."[407]

Whether they made the observation on their own, or whether they were influenced by the Cascade Ski Club or the Portland Winter Sports Association, by 1936 the United States Forest Service mirrored some of these ideas when a forester wrote that "[highly] organized modern life seems to crave adequate outdoor recreation, especially the tang of the mountains and scented conifers in it."[408] It appears that they did crave it when one considers the boom in winter recreation throughout the 1930s. Mount Hood had almost no visitors in winter before the Cascade Ski Club began organizing ski tournaments in the late 1920s. A decade later over 100,000 people ventured to the mountain in winter annually.[409] In 1937, the *Oregonian* reported that "nearly 50,000 people had been hit by the ski virus in the northwest," flocking into the mountains that a decade earlier "Were Barren in Winter."[410] Mount Rainier witnessed a 43 percent increase in winter visits in 1937 compared to 1936, with more than 80,000 visitors during the latter year.[411] In part, they came as spectators for the many sporting events. But many came to ski or otherwise frolic in the snow themselves. Maybe they did so because they had

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[407] James A. Mount, "Making Portland America's Year Around Playground: The Object of the Newly Formed Portland Winter Sports Association," in *The Take-Off: Year Book*, Cascade Ski Club, Inc., Portland, Vol. 1, No. 1, Fall 1931, 12. Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 1, Oregon Historical Society.
[408] F. V. Horton, Assistant Regional Forester in Charge of Recreation and Lands, "Skiing, Sport of Vikings, Takes Pacific Northwest by Storm," Mar. 1, 1936, in Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 1, Oregon Historical Society.
[409] Stub Nelson, "Big-Time Ski Tourneys Slated for Hood Area," *Sunday Oregonian*, Dec. 4, 1938, 4, clipping, in Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 2, Oregon Historical Society.
[410] Stub Nelson, "I'll Be Skiing You!," *Sunday Oregonian*, Feb. 14, 1937, 60.
[411] "Figures Show Travel Increase to Mt. Rainier," *Western Skier: 'First in the Field' Weekly* 3:1 (Nov. 11, 1937): 7, in Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 2, Oregon Historical Society.

learned somewhere that skiing made a clean, healthy activity good for body, mind, soul and spirit.

Norwegian Americans, whether members of ski clubs or the Sons and Daughters of Norway, expressed satisfaction that Americans took to skiing, but there were times that they invoked their deep experience to caution. *Washington Posten's* sports column deeply criticized an early ski jumping tournament held by the Cle Elum Ski Club in Washington for inadequate safety measures. The newspaper viewed the event as a circus exhibition rather than a sports tournament, and criticized its apparent moneymaking emphasis. In clear racist overtones the sports reporter suggested that Norwegian jumpers made mere "foolhardy acrobats" and cash cows to entrepreneurial "Jews, Greeks, Irishmen, and [their] likeminded." Rhetorically, he asked, if "we" – the author, the Norwegians who read his column, and especially the skiers – "who view the ski sport as something clean and beautiful, the sport that ahead of any other demands willpower, courage, and strength," were served by non-Norwegian opportunists turning it into a money-making circus at Norwegian jumpers' risk and expense.[412] Foolhardy acrobatics and moneymaking had nothing to do with idræt, which was about physical, mental and even spiritual exertion in the great outdoors, motivated by health rather than profit – a philosophy that reinforced beliefs in Norwegian immigrants' superiority.

A few weeks later, J. S., most likely the same sportswriter, presented another commentary that echoed the same criticism. Apparently, the show atmosphere of Pacific Northwest ski jumping continued to trouble the author of the column, who asked his readers if we should "continue to promote clean Norwegian ski sport or … develop an American circus." J.S. complained that the American press, and Americans in general, failed to appreciate the

[412] "Sports-Spalten: Nok en Ski-fiasko," *Washington Posten*, Feb. 20, 1931, 6.

larger purpose of engaging in a "beautiful and healthy sport." They put too much emphasis on scale and on setting records, he explained. "Greenhorns need to see an objective, and the length of the jump becomes the easiest to understand," he ventured, showing clear disdain for those new to ski sport organizing. For the Norwegian press, and Norwegians in general, however, "the Norwegian ski sport should be something to protect, something holy." But "see if not also they go along with turning the finest Norwegian sport in to circus." The commentator referred to this emphasis on the length of the jump, and on beating previous records, as a "childhood disease." Children in Norway shared that mindset. Adult Norwegians, however, had outgrown it. He acknowledged that skiing was new to the Pacific Northwest, but even so, he deplored that "we" (Norwegians) "once more must endure all the childhood diseases." He admitted that an emphasis on world-class hills and record length jumps attracted spectators, if that was the only objective, but suggested that it harmed recruitment. American mothers among the spectators might admire the displayed skill and 'ooh' and 'ah' like anyone else, but when it came to their own children J.S. expressed conviction that they would never let them try.

J. S. made his key point in highlighting that there was more to the ski sport than daredevil displays. The objective of "creating interest in ski sport, because it is a beautiful and healthy sport to undertake [for any- and everyone] becomes empty talk," he protested.[413] J. S. suggested that the absence or inadequate adoption of the idræt spirit represented a main difference between Norway and America, or between Norway and the Pacific Northwest. In America, "we are seeking to make it a circus." In his eyes, fellow countrymen who accommodated the circus side of ski jumping became something of a traitor to their Norwegian heritage. They proved themselves "Norwegian Americans of the renowned caricatured type with fur coats," he charged

[413] J. S., "Sports-Spalten: Hopplengder!," *Washington Posten*, Apr. 1, 1932, 6.

venomously.[414] That caricature referred to the Norwegian impression of a capitalist, self-made man. The self-made man made a positive figure in rags-to-riches immigrant stories in American culture in general – an expression of the American Dream – but in Norway it was perceived as something vulgar and un-Norwegian. The fur-clad, cigar-smoking, automobile-driving rich uncle from America who returned home completely out of touch with Norwegian culture, while speaking a mixed Anglo-Norwegian with a heavy American drawl, became a satirical icon and cliché of frowned upon American success that culturally has persisted to the present day.

The growth throughout the 1930s in the popularity of various forms of skiing, however, and the language of winter-wonderland boosters such as the Portland Winter Sports Association, seem to have quickly silenced these kinds of criticism from Norwegian-American commentators. In part the Norwegian community may have accepted the "American circus" of skiing, but in part American skiers and winter-wonderland boosters also proved themselves inspired by the ideas encompassed by the idræt ideology. The term "carnival," for example, which became a commonly used name for multi-day winter sports events in the 1930s, such as events organized by the Portland or Oregon Winter Sports Association, might have brought associations to circus exhibitions, as might Cascade Ski Club's "Annual Outdoor Costume Event and Women's Races," which the club lumped together on the same day, at least in 1939, suggesting that women on skis made enough of a circus spectacle to be coupled with costumed men on skis.[415] "Sports-Spalten" (the sports-column) in *Washington Posten* generally discussed upcoming and

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[414] J. S., "Sports-Spalten: Hopplengder!," *Washington Posten*, Apr. 1, 1932, 6.
[415] *Multorporeans*, vol. 3, no. 4, Feb. 6, 1939, in Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 2, Oregon Historical Society. "Eleventh Annual Jumping Tournament of the Pacific Northwestern Ski Assn. in connection with the Annual Carnival of the Oregon Winter Sports Assn.," Multorpor Mountain Courses, Government Camp, Mt. Hood, Feb. 26, 1939, Score Card, in Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Oregon Historical Society.

past tournaments passionately and with a clear zeal of approval, however. Tournament results always received attention, and any ski jumping records were trumpeted with pride. Given the negative assessment of Cle Elum's tournament and ski jumping hill construction efforts in the winter of 1931, it is interesting to note that the tone is quite the opposite, celebratory and optimistic, one year later when Cle Elum's new hill is described as an "extraordinarily nice hill … as a 'constructed' hill ought to be when built in a good [Norwegian] mold."[416]

Ski Jumping: Gender and Race in the Developing Ski Culture

Many of the founding members and earliest membership of the ski clubs were forestry workers who were used to outdoor physical labor in all types of weather. Hjalmar Hvam of Cascade Ski Club worked sawmills and lumber camps, and Nels Olesen Skjersaa of the Bend Skyliners loaded timber onto railroad boxcars.[417] Perhaps to emphasize that they did not hold a working-class identity, the Cascade Ski Club made a point that the membership "represented all walks of life," and that woodworkers rubbed shoulders with working professionals such as doctors and lawyers.[418] Early membership applications specified the two-pronged purpose of developing and maintaining the "sport of Skiing and Ski Jumping," and to "assist in making Mt. Hood 'The Winter Playground of the Pacific Coast,' " but they also specified the goal of targeting both boys

[416] "Sports-Spalten: Rennet i Cle Ellum," *Washington Posten*, Feb. 19, 1932, 6. Also: "Sports-Spalten: Cle Elum og Mesterskapet," *Washington Posten*, Feb. 5, 1932, 6.
[417] "Skiing as a Way of Life: The Skjersaa Legacy," and "The All-Around Skier: Hjalmar Hvam, 1902-1996," interpretive panels in *Winter Comes: Oregon's Nordic Ski History* exhibit, Deschutes Historical Museum, Bend, Oregon.
[418] Harold A. Lee, President of the Cascade Ski Club, "How We Have Grown," in *The Take-Off: Year Book*, Cascade Ski Club, Inc., Portland, Vol. 1, No. 1, Fall 1931, 9. Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 1, Oregon Historical Society.

and girls for membership, suggesting that they believed in women's skiing.[419] As the founding members aged, and interest in ski jumping waned in favor of downhill skiing, the club continued to emphasize the recruitment of the young with lower membership dues and registration fees compared to adults, specialized events, and classes taught by Hjalmar Hvam and other aging mentors. "Members Attention – Especially Juniors," the club called out in a 1941 newsletter. In hopes of developing young talent into the jumpers of tomorrow they offered free weekly instruction and encouraged members to "forget your downhill and slalom for a while," and try ski jumping.[420]

Norwegians conceived of ski jumping as the most difficult, most masculine, and most skill-driven form of skiing, and Hjalmar Hvam earned much respect and acclaim winning tournaments in ski jumping and races in cross-country skiing, and later in downhill and slalom skiing. Attempting a comeback after the same bone in his leg had broken twice in the span of about half a year, and ruined his previous season, the *Oregonian's* Bill Gray emphasized Hvam as "the theme man of the story" – the protagonist – even though he deemed him unlikely to win since he was "[past] his prime." Gray called Hvam a legend people would watch, because "it embodies the climaxing chapter in the Hvam saga," and because "few people can do all four events – downhill, slalom, jumping and cross-country – as well as he can."[421] Sports narrators have always loved underdog stories, or the efforts of aging giants to reclaim slipping laurels, but Hvam's achievements in winning individual races in all four sports, and in winning the Mount

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[419] "Application for Membership Cascade Ski Club," in *The Take-Off: Year Book*, Cascade Ski Club, Inc., Portland, Vol. 1, No. 1, Fall 1931, 34. Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 1, Oregon Historical Society.
[420] "Cascade Ski Club Newsletter," Feb. 13, 1941, in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 3, Oregon Historical Society.
[421] Bill Gray, "Northwest Skiing Tips," *Oregonian*, Undated newsclipping from either 1938 or 1939, in the Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 2, Oregon Historical Society.

Baker four-way Pacific Northwest Ski Association championship – individually in all four events and combined – over a single weekend in May 1936, at the height of his career, earned him respect and admiration as the perfect example of an all-rounded skier (a skier who could do it all), which Norwegians valued above specialization in single events.[422] The *Oregonian* called Hvam "the northwest's finest all-around skier" following his Mount Baker win.[423] "Portland's lean Norwegian skier" won "as it was expected he would, without even a trace of argument," reported the *Seattle Times*.[424]

Washington Posten described ski jumping in language suggesting deeper familiarity with the sport on the part of both reporters and readership from the very beginning, and the Norwegian language newspaper read ski jumping as an expression of Norwegian masculinity, racial superiority and nationalism more readily than English-language newspapers. Depending on individual weather and hill conditions, *Washington Posten* could venture that "the boys showed the best kind of sportsman spirit, courage, and manliness by simply jumping," suggesting that in some conditions it took remarkable experience, skill, and courage, to even attempt a jump.[425] *Washington Posten* celebrated Norway's "role model" status in the ski sport in general, and argued that no sport compared to ski jumping "where manhood's courage and strength and results are found in excellent display." With clear ideas of masculinity and race in mind, the newspaper ventured that spectators unfamiliar with the sport viewed the jumpers' flight as "magnificent, something superior-human, which only specially equipped beings can

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[422] Ross, "Parting Ways, Testing Waters," 418.
[423] "Hvam Wins First in Ski Tourney," *Morning Oregonian*, May 11, 1936, 16.
[424] "Hvam Wins 4 Ski Events, And Tourney: Portland Ace Runs Off With Mt. Baker Meet," *Seattle Daily Times*, May 11, 1936, 18.
[425] "Sports-Spalten: Portland-Rennet," *Washington Posten*, Jan. 27, 1933, in Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 1, Oregon Historical Society.

handle."[426] That one needed to be specially equipped by nature as a member of the male gender was beyond doubt. But the newspaper also made it clear that Norwegians had that little extra, they were "specially equipped," as "superior humans" in ways that made them capable of undertaking ski jumping. "Most Americans today," the newspaper continued, "understand that these 'specially equipped' are Norwegians, and Norwegians in America can benefit from being seen as 'superior humans.' "[427] *Washington Posten*, reflecting a view from the Norwegian community in the Pacific Northwest, viewed ski jumping as something that at once was both beautiful and difficult, an expression of the courage, skill and oddly enough grace of manhood. But as the most profound expression of the national sport of Norway, "Norway's most splendid sport" also provided an opportunity to trumpet racial superiority.

Sports writers in the *Oregonian* and the *Seattle Times* did describe the sport in terms of foolhardiness and daredevilry, but they also spent a good amount of space explaining the sport to an unfamiliar audience. In connection to an indoor (!) ski-jumping exhibition in downtown Portland in 1937, the *Oregonian* announced that "Daring Skiers Laugh at Death," and promised that a "group of daring Norsemen, led by that one-man tournament, Hjalmar Hvam," representing the "Cascade Ski Club's finest (or should it be daffyest) twin plank pilots [will] climb aboard their suicide sticks" and attempt to "leap from the top of the balcony to the stage without even snow to soften their fall."[428] The *Seattle Times* called ski jumping the "most thrilling and daring of all the modern sports" as early as 1929.[429] And it described ski jumpers as

[426] "Snoqualmie-Rennet 1. Mars: Norskdom og Skiidrett," *Washington Posten*, Feb. 27, 1931, 1.
[427] "Snoqualmie-Rennet 1. Mars: Norskdom og Skiidrett," *Washington Posten*, Feb. 27, 1931, 1.
[428] "Daring Skiers Laugh at Death in Indoor Meet," *Oregonian*, Feb. 18, 1937, 16.
[429] "Ski Jumping Thrilling," *Seattle Daily Times*, Mar. 10, 1929, 24.

"lean, bronzed men who know the sensation of flight as unhampered as the birds."[430] Articles on ski jumping throughout the 1930s suggested a fascination with the sport, and an effort to understand and explain how the sport worked. In an illustrated half-page feature in the *Oregonian* in 1939, for example, sports writer Bob Webb drew on science and masculinity in explaining why ski jumpers avoid breaking their necks.

> A HUSH falls over the crowd as the ski jumper points his slats down the steep in-run, then the silence is split by a massed intake of breath as the jumper hits the takeoff and hurtles through space at express-train speed. The birdman lands on the hard-packed apron with a sharp slap of his skis and rides them over the flat to stop. On the heels a whistling exhalation, which is timed as if by command, comes the often-asked question: 'Wow! What a jump! How do they keep from breaking their necks?'[431]

The answer lay in aerodynamics and the construction of the hill, the reader learned, such as the incline, length of the run, size of the hill, flat and takeoff. But the answer also lay in the physical shape, balance, and "touch" of the jumper after extensive training perfecting his performance.

The *Oregonian*, the *Seattle Times*, and other newspapers, readily described ski jumpers' feats and characterized the skiers as daring Norsemen or Vikings at the top of their game, but they did not necessarily paint a picture of larger-than-life specimens of masculinity. Arden Pangborn, sports writer of the *Oregonian*, described Cascade's John Elvrum as "a slight, non-assertive, blond-headed youth, who might have mingled with and become lost in any group of those who watched, so unlike is he to the popular conception of an athlete," that he could be

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[430] "Thrills are Promised on New Course," *Seattle Daily Times*, Apr. 27, 1930, 44.
[431] Bob Webb, "Why They Do Not Break Their Necks," *Oregonian*, Feb. 1939, clipping, in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 2, Oregon Historical Society.

mistaken for the average (Norwegian) spectator.[432] Characterizations of Hjalmar Hvam had an element of tall tales to them, resembling the legend construction around folk heroes like Davy Crockett. Descriptions of Hvam contrasted almost feminine traits with foolhardy masculinity. He could be described simply as a "stocky Norwegian."[433] Or as a "tall, graceful man with a very outdoorish look and an interesting foreign accent," an "engaging Scandinavian" who "made a most attractive figure," who "brought the very essence of mountain air with him in his athletic strides and errect posture."[434] Royal Brougham of the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* highlighted the typical contrast in descriptions of Hvam when he characterized him as "a tall, slender Norwegian with the grace and rhythm of a toe dancer and the courage of a lion."[435] The press took note of Hvam's breakneck daredevilry such as his "classic ski run down a stairway" at the Paradise lodge on Mount Rainier where he accidentally took the wrong snow tunnel from the lodge front door and somewhat confused executed a perfect landing on a packed dance floor before gracefully finding his way to the slopes.[436] Regarding the ski jumping exhibition in The Auditorium in downtown Portland, the *Oregonian* commented that the "ace of aces," unsatisfied with "seeming deathdefying leaps from the ceiling … to the floor on … eight-foot hardwood planks," planned to "make his final leap with real barrel staves" under his feet. "It's barrels of

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[432] Arden X. Pangborn, "Portland Ski Title Taken by J. Elvrum," *Oregonian*, Jan. 4, 1932, in Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 1, Oregon Historical Society.
[433] "Touring Timberline Trails," *Sunday Oregonian*, Apr. 16, 1939, 56.
[434] "Hjalmar Hvam, National Champion, Eagerly Explains Skiing Mysteries," undated clipping from Portland newspaper, ca. 1935, in Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 1, Oregon Historical Society.
[435] "Hvam Set Record in Winning Silver Skis," *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, Apr. 20, 1936, clipping, in Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 2, Oregon Historical Society.
[436] "Auditorium to See Ski Stars Jump," clipping from Portland newspaper, Feb. 7, 1937, in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 2, Oregon Historical Society.

fun," he explained to the newspaperman, "at least it used to be when we did it outdoors in Norway, but I never have jumped on a dry hill before, so I hope no one breaks his neck."[437]

While Norwegians and Americans largely viewed ski jumping as a men's activity, the ski clubs welcomed women among their first members, both in the Pacific Northwest and in the East and Rocky Mountain West a couple of decades earlier. From its beginnings in 1905, the National Ski Association was interested from its beginnings in 1905 to expand ski jumping to include women, but without much success. In the idræt sense, the NSA viewed skiing as a healthy activity for women, and men welcomed women for socialization. Competition, however, was viewed as unnatural for women, who instead might occasionally do an exhibition jump outside competition.[438] In the Rocky Mountain West, ski clubs, winter carnivals, and ski jumping tournaments got off the ground from around 1911, with women's active participation from 1912, and a separate cross-country ski race for women already in 1914. Colorado's first winter carnival in 1912 featured a women's jumping exhibition, but women's roles connected to skiing remained distinct from men's. Carnival queens became a feature early on, and "women and men integrated notions of femininity and community power with winter sports," while limiting women's participation in sporting activities to a superficial level.[439]

No known ski jumping tournament for women took place in the Pacific Northwest in the 1930s, but women members practiced jumping with the clubs' blessing, and the ski clubs

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[437] "Daring Skiers Laugh at Death in Indoor Meet," *Oregonian*, Feb. 18, 1937, 16.
[438] Glenn L. Borreson, "From Telemark to Tamarack: Ski Jumping in Western Wisconsin," *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 97:2 (Winter 2013-2014): 10.
[439] Coleman, *Ski Style*, 34-37.

organized cross-country races for women as early as 1930 and 1931.[440] The Cascade Ski Club invited women to ski from its inception. "A word of welcome to those of you who are just taking up the sport and to those of you who are envying the good times evidenced by the lady skiers: We want, and urge you, to join our circle," Vera Nelson wrote on behalf of the club in 1931. While people generally viewed a lady to be "a feminine person who kept her head up and her feet down and who always was dignified," a "lady who skis" did not match that description, Nelson asserted, suggesting with approval that women skiers carried some masculine or working class traits.[441] Nelson further noted that the club planned on organizing races for women that same year, and that a "slide has been constructed alongside the jumping hills to encourage women to jump."[442] The club acknowledged that the male members far outnumbered the female members, but assured the reader that the "active masculine members" nevertheless considered women neither "unimportant or inconsequential." The volunteers who constructed ski hills, a warming room, and the clubhouse, relied on a "good natured staff of women" to provide the "eats, [prepare] dinners and lunches, coffee and lemonade; and [carry] heavy pails of water from the spring up the hill," they explained while showcasing a traditional view of gender roles.[443] Rosemary Young, the recording secretary of the club, challenged gender roles in 1938 with a

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[440] "Bakkerekorden Hjemföres," *Washington Posten*, Mar. 20, 1931, 1, 4. Vera Joyce Nelson, "A Word to the Ladies," in *The Take-Off: Year Book*, Cascade Ski Club, Inc., Portland, Vol. 1, No. 1, Fall 1931, 13. Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 1, Oregon Historical Society.
[441] Vera Joyce Nelson, "A Word to the Ladies," in *The Take-Off: Year Book*, Cascade Ski Club, Inc., Portland, Vol. 1, No. 1, Fall 1931, 13. Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 1, Oregon Historical Society.
[442] Vera Joyce Nelson, "A Word to the Ladies," in *The Take-Off: Year Book*, Cascade Ski Club, Inc., Portland, Vol. 1, No. 1, Fall 1931, 13. Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 1, Oregon Historical Society.
[443] Vera Joyce Nelson, "A Word to the Ladies," in *The Take-Off: Year Book*, Cascade Ski Club, Inc., Portland, Vol. 1, No. 1, Fall 1931, 13. Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 1, Oregon Historical Society.

"note to girls" encouraging them to come and help in clubhouse construction. "Some of you can saw crooked and split boards, too," she asserted.[444] Women's participation in the ski clubs challenged gender roles and the views on women's participation in competitive skiing, but the men who conceived of an annual winter sports queen contest as part of the winter carnival that funded the operations of the Portland and Oregon Winter Sports Association, were of the same mind as the men who organized the circuit of competitive events.[445]

When the competitive skiing circuit in the Pacific Northwest introduced downhill and slalom skiing, the ski clubs organized women's races from the beginning sanctioned by the Pacific Northwest Ski Association. Women skiers nevertheless faced challenges in their efforts to find opportunities to compete. Official championships for women were held side by side with official championships for men, but the individual clubs and booster organizations organized fewer ski tournaments for women than they did for men. In 1937 the Oregon Winter Sports Association 'forgot' to put women's races on the program for their major event, but after "a storm of protests from the feminine slatriders" they suddenly remembered and scrambled to add a downhill race for women.[446] A major challenge for women skiers was not necessarily to be accepted by their male counterparts as fellow skiers, but rather the challenge lay in being taken seriously as competitors and athletes by the men behind the events. While the Cascade Ski Club noted with a wink that it was far from difficult to recruit male volunteers to help organize ski

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[444] "Rosemary Young, "Out Volunteer Work," *Multorporeans* 3:1 (Nov. 12, 1938), in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 2, Oregon Historical Society.
[445] Dale R. Cowen, President, "The Oregon Winter Sports Association," in *National Amateur and Open Downhill and Slalom Ski Championships and Tryouts*, program, Mt. Hood, Oregon, Apr. 1 – 2, 1939, in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 3, Oregon Historical Society.
[446] Dick Nokes, "Champion Skiers Enter Hood Meet," *Oregonian*, Dec. 19, 1937, clipping in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 2, Oregon Historical Society. "Ski Tourney adds Race for Women," related undated clipping from Portland newspaper, in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 2, Oregon Historical Society.

tournaments for women, the clubs nevertheless also faced challenges in pushing enough women across the barriers keeping them from signing up for races.[447] One reason the Cascade Ski Club did not hold so many events for women was the failure of enough women to participate come competition day. The front page of the *Multorporeans*, the official publication of the Cascade club, in January 1938 offered the main headline "Girls, We Dare You!" The club's president admitted that women's competition had been neglected by the club in the last few seasons, but that they intended to make up for it that season, and give "our feminine contingent" an opportunity to demonstrate that they can match the women skiers of other clubs.[448] A couple of months later, however, a disappointed chairman attested that only five contestants showed up on competition day.[449] A woman's comment in the very first issue of *Multorporeans*, in 1937, gave the impression that from a "feminine standpoint" women were still learning competitive skiing, and learning to overcome obstacles to participation as well as the skills to overcome obstacles in the ski run itself.[450]

Women from the Pacific Northwest helped shape the ski sport in the 1930s and 1940s. By 1937 the *Oregonian* noted that "EVEN WOMEN take to skis nowadays. In the old days the so-called weaker sex never set foot on skis, but today from Mount Baker to Sun valley women

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[447] "Women's Race Set," *Skier's Informant with P.N.S.A. Recorder* 5:10 (Apr. 4, 1941), in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 3, Oregon Historical Society.
[448] Harold Hanson, chairman, "Girls We Dare You!," and "Women Skiers, Sign Now for Competition," *Multorporeans* 2:3 (Jan. 26, 1938), in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 2, Oregon Historical Society.
[449] Harold Hanson, chairman, "They Couldn't Take Dare, Says Indignant Chairman," *Multorporeans* 2:5 (Mar. 12, 1938), in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 2, Oregon Historical Society.
[450] Margaret Velde, "The Feminine View of It," in *Multorporeans* 1:1 (Jan. 20, 1937), in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 2, Oregon Historical Society.

participate, and women competitions are common."[451] In 1941, the Associated Women Skiers of Mount Hood came into being, and in 1942, twenty women representing most of the Seattle and Tacoma ski clubs set up the Associated Women Skiers of Washington.[452] One member, Gretchen Kunigk Fraser, a daughter of German and Norwegian immigrants, became the first American to win an Olympic gold medal in skiing in 1948. Her skill in skiing had made her a stand-in in Hollywood films for the famed Norwegian ice skater Sonja Henie a decade before her Olympic win, and in 1952 it earned her a place alongside Hjalmar Hvam and the U.S. Olympic ski team as a women's coach. About three decades after he had left home, Hvam returned to Oslo and his birthplace Kongsberg as the head coach of the U.S. Nordic combined men's ski team, while Fraser in a similar capacity visited her mother's birth country on account of her prowess in Norway's national sport.[453]

Ski jumping gradually declined as a sport in the United States during the course of the 1950s and 1960s. The Cascade Ski Club's jumping hill on Multorpor Mountain was one of the last in the Pacific Northwest to close in 1971.[454] Already in 1939, the Cascade Ski Club noted challenges in recruiting enough young ski jumpers to keep the sport going. The Norwegian skiers of the Pacific Northwest who had been "in the vanguard of jumping and [had] always dominated the field" were aging, and "immigration restrictions [barred] a new crop from Europe," the club

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[451] "Skiing Captures Northwest's Fancy," *Oregonian*, clipping, ca. 1937, in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 2, Oregon Historical Society.
[452] "Mount Hood Girls Form Association, Plan Meet," *Skier's Informant with P.N.S.A. Recorder* 5:8 (Mar. 7, 1941), in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 3, Oregon Historical Society. "Washington Women Set Up Association," *Skier's Informant with P.N.S.A. Recorder* 6:5 (Jan. 23, 1942), in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Oregon Historical Society.
[453] Chuck Boice, "Homecoming for 'Mister Skiing' / Hjalmar Hvam's Homecoming: The U.S. Olympic Ski Manager's Career," *Oregon Sports*, Feb. 1952, 9 (6-9, 27), in Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 3, Oregon Historical Society.
[454] "Lost Ski Jumps in Oregon," interpretive panel in *Winter Comes: Oregon's Nordic Ski History* exhibit, Deschutes Historical Museum, Bend, Oregon.

complained.[455] Hvam agreed with that assessment in a 1969 interview. "In the '30s we had a lot of newcomers from Norway, and we of course were the backbone of jumping," he said, suggesting that not enough newcomers arrived after World War II, and revealing how thoroughly Norwegian the sport remained.[456] He explained that in Norway you could not find young people in the city at Easter, they were all in the mountain pursuing the "vigorous life" of the idræt ideology. When he contrasted Americans to Norwegians, but also the younger generation to the older generation, as older boys are wont to do, he found "today's skiers" wanting. Hvam confirmed that he thought they were "softies." They specialized too much, and could not compare to the versatility and skill required of the four-way skiers of the past who could compete in jumping, cross-country, downhill and slalom. Ski jumping and cross-country skiing, Hvam believed, "petered out with the chairlifts, because the chairlifts made people so lazy," and that chairlift laziness, he asserted, was part of the explanation why the younger generation of skiers was "not tough enough" for ski jumping.[457] In 1952, Hvam called jumping and cross-country skiing the "zenith in skiing," and complained that they were almost forgotten in the Pacific Northwest. Too many "bunny-slope" skiers wasted too much time on the "baby-slopes," thereby failing to achieve the skill and skiing interest to learn to conduct the type of skiing that required "the best of a man and sets them apart from the boys."[458] Other Norwegians of his generation, in Norway and the United States, would easily have agreed. In Norway, of course, the strong tradition of skiing and the idræt ideology (relabeled as "friluftsliv") insured sufficient

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[455] "Jumping for Juniors," *Multorporeans* 3:3 (Jan. 5, 1939), in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 2, Oregon Historical Society.
[456] "Hvam Lowers the Hvoom," *Western Ski Time*, Nov. 1969, 54.
[457] "Hvam Lowers the Hvoom," *Western Ski Time*, Nov. 1969, 54-57.
[458] Chuck Boice, "Homecoming for 'Mister Skiing' / Hjalmar Hvam's Homecoming: The U.S. Olympic Ski Manager's Career," *Oregon Sports*, Feb. 1952, 9, in Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 3, Oregon Historical Society.

recruitment on competitive and hobby levels for all kinds of skiing. Hvam's generation, however, viewed ski jumping as the most masculine expression of a skier's daring and ability. This gendered impression of skiing explains why Hjalmar Hvam and other Norwegian immigrants introduced ski jumping and cross-country skiing to the Pacific Northwest, but only went along with it when other Euro-American immigrants introduced downhill and slalom skiing. Downhill and slalom skiing had originated in Norway, but as a "sport for women and children," and only became a competitive sport when continental Europeans made it one. To Hvam and his fellow Norwegian-American skiers of the 1930s, it initially represented "ping-pong skiing, … something below their dignity, something for softies without the guts for real skiing."[459] Hvam learned to master both downhill and slalom skiing on the expert level, and clearly enjoyed it, but continued to think of ski jumping as the truly masculine form of skiing that turned softies and boys into men.

Norwegian Identity, Transnationalism, and Race in the Pacific Northwest Ski Culture

The gendered view on ski jumping and cross-country skiing compared to downhill and slalom represents an aspect of the skiers' Norwegian identity. Hjalmar Hvam was always unabashed to assert his own Norwegian origin and the Norwegian origin of skiing, and sports writers seem to have viewed Norwegianness as an exoticism connected to skiing that gave it an authentic flavor. Among many things, Hvam was known for his Norwegian accent, which he marketed in a series of advertisements as part of the package and experience when you came to his ski shop. "Hvoom with Hvam and have no fear," the advertisements typically proclaimed, followed by a "pardon

[459] O. L. Eide, "Did Birger Ruud Win the Olympic Downhill Race by Accident," *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, Feb. 10, 1938 (reprinted in *Washington Posten* Feb. 11), in the Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 2, Oregon Historical Society.

my Norwegian accent," and a narrative about how a broken leg inspired his Saf-Ski safety binding.[460] He also earned recognition for his Norwegian-style ski wax, which he manufactured and sold in his shops, and which reportedly helped him win many races. When interviewed about the art of ski-waxing, Hvam took the opportunity to attribute its origin to Viking-age skiers in Norway who baked pine tar into their skis in baking ovens, while angering their wives who otherwise used the same ovens for baking bread.[461] Harold Laman of the *Oregon Journal* celebrated the "thrilling sight of a human figure floating through the air, … the fanfare, the rivalry, the color and the various old country accents, all of which combine to make a jumping tournament one of the top spectacles of any skiing competition."[462]

Sports writers identified the ski jumpers as "big blond Vikings," "stocky Norwegians," "rugged Norwegians," "Norse," or in one case, even as "a bashful little Norwegian, who blushes profusely when he wins the plaudits of the public," highlighted the skiers' European origin as part of the exoticism and mystique of the sport.[463] Newspapers noted that Cascade club skiers Hvam and John Elvrum would have made the Olympic ski team in 1932 based on tryout results had not their immigration status barred them. The tone of such comments resembled the regret and acceptance sports reporters might express when the local team's star player must sit out an important game. No visible judgment on the athlete's immigrant status, and instead a

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[460] "Hjalmar Hvam, National Champion, Eagerly Explains Skiing Mysteries," undated clipping from Portland newspaper, in the Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 1, Oregon Historical Society. "Hvoom with Hvam and have no fear," ad, undated clipping from the 1940s, in the Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 3, Oregon Historical Society.
[461] "Originator of Ski Wax Met Troubles," Eugene's *Register-Guard*, Dec. 4, 1938, in the Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 2, Oregon Historical Society.
[462] Harold Laman, "Ski-Scope," *Oregon Journal*, clipping dated only 1941, in the Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 2, Oregon Historical Society.
[463] "Beautiful Weather, Huge Crowd, for Ski Tournament," undated clipping from Portland newspaper, ca. 1930, in the Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 1, Oregon Historical Society.

language suggesting that such issues were part of the game (a cost of doing business).[464] Sports writers seemed to take for granted that the best competitive skiers and ski instructors came from Europe. Olav Ulland, for example, spent the 1938 and 1939 seasons in the Pacific Northwest on loan from the Norwegian Ski Association of Norway, to the Seattle Ski Club, Leavenworth Winter Sports Club, and Washington Ski Club. The three clubs jointly raised the funds to bring Ulland to the Pacific Northwest to compete in tournaments sponsored by the Pacific Northwestern Ski Association, and to instruct "youngsters in the art of jumping."[465]

There was a significant transnational component to the development of the Pacific Northwest ski culture. In addition to the first-generation immigrant status of many of the ski club members, ski clubs also worked actively to bring foreign ski experts, such as Ulland, to the Pacific Northwest on shorter or longer-term visits. In many ways, the term "expert skier" was synonymous with foreign European, and Ulland is one of many pre-World War II examples of such transnationalism in the developing ski culture that directly parallels that of ski instructors brought to resorts and ski areas in the United states in the decades after World War II. Annie Gilbert Coleman argues that the foreign ski instructors, the "funny talkers" with foreign accents, became important spokespeople of the ski industry in Colorado in the 1960s. Often temporary staff was recruited directly from Norway or Austria, they shared their knowledge, "displayed

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[464] "Hvam is Winner: Local Ski Stars in Victory," clipping from Portland newspaper, Feb. 29, 1932, in the Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 1, Oregon Historical Society. Elvrum had come to Portland from Trondheim, Norway a year and a half earlier, while Hvam who had been in the U.S. longer, had not yet submitted his final papers.

[465] "Minutes of the Eight Annual Meeting," Pacific Northwestern Ski Association, Rafferty's Hut, Mount Hood, Oregon Highway, Feb. 12, 1938, in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 2, Oregon Historical Society. "Ulland Wins Ski Tourney," clipping from Portland newspaper, Feb. 27, 1939, in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 3, Oregon Historical Society.

their good looks and foreign accents," and "publicized the Europeanness of their ski schools."[466] This mirrors some of the effects of Ulland, and other foreign ski instructors on Mount Hood and Mount Rainier in the 1930s and 1940s.

"Invading Plankmen" from Canada represented another significant transnational element to skiing in the Pacific Northwest. Ski Clubs in British Columbia took part in ski tournaments organized by ski clubs in Washington and Oregon, and vice versa.[467] Canadian flags regularly flew over the judges or near the takeoff point during tournaments in the Pacific Northwest, in addition to Norwegian and American flags.[468] An Olympic trials tournament at Snoqualmie Summit in 1931 had the then 22-year old John Elvrum on the top of the podium, a recent arrival from Trondheim, Norway. Nordal Kaldahl, in second place behind him, was a Norwegian Canadian. "The only American jumpers in the tournament were one or two in class B, whose performances were not particularly hot," wrote a *Seattle Times* reporter, and emphasized the point by bolding the font of the entire sentence. The tournament proved a great success, however, with 5,000 spectators, but it fared poorly as an Olympic tryout.[469] Kaldahl, nicknamed the Duke of Hollyburn, was one of several Canadians who crossed the border to compete in ski tournaments in the Pacific Northwest. Kaldahl competed for the Hollyburn Ski Club of

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[466] Coleman, *Ski Style*, 166-67.
[467] Lindsay Loutet, "Our Canadian Friends," in *The Take-Off: Year Book*, Cascade Ski Club, Inc., Portland, Vol. 1, No. 1, Fall 1931, 23. Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 1, Oregon Historical Society.
[468] "Hopprennet paa Snoqualmie Summit i Snökave," *Washington Posten*, Jan. 22, 1932, 1.
[469] Ken Binns, "Olympic Ski Trials: Stretching Out and Going Far! Foreign Stars Shine in Meet at Snoqualmie," *Seattle Daily Times*, Mar. 2, 1931, clipping, in the Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 1, Oregon Historical Society. Ski jumping tournaments were organized in A, B, and C classes, and sometimes separate senior and junior classes for those over 35 or 40 wishing to compete in the senior class, and for teenagers. Novice ski jumpers whose clubs believed they could handle the hill jumped in C class. B class jumpers were skilled and experienced. A class jumpers had placed in top three in a B class tournament, and that way advanced to A status.

Vancouver, B.C. Members of Hollyburn and Burns Lake ski clubs in British Columbia had already participated in the first Pacific Coast Ski Championship Tournament held on Mount Hood in 1929.[470] A year later, Grouse Mountain Ski Club of Vancouver, B.C. competed in addition to Hollyburn in the second annual championship, also this one held on Mount Hood.[471] Seattle Ski Club tried, although unsuccessfully, to entice the Duke of Hollyburn to "jump across the border," and compete for their club.[472]

The skiers, particularly the ski jumpers, often shared a Norwegian identity, whether they were Norwegian, American, or Canadian nationals. *Washington Posten* romanticized the comradeship across national borders between the ski jumpers. On one occasion, for example, the newspaper painted a typical scene in the Cascade Ski Club's clubhouse in connection to a tournament on Mount Hood that had drawn both Kaldahl and Tom Mobraaten from Canada. Both expert skiers who took turns with Americans like Hvam and Elvrum in winning tournaments (Mobraaten competed in the 1936 Olympics for Canada). The cabin was not a

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[470] "Pacific Coast Ski Championship Tournament," Feb. 17, 1929, Government Camp, Mt. Hood (sponsored by the Cascade Ski Club), Program/leaflet, in the Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 1, Oregon Historical Society. Burns Lake Ski Club, founded by early Scandinavian settlers in 1927, continues to exist in the present day as Omineca Ski Club. "Omineca Ski Club," http://ominecaskiclub.ca/ (Date accessed: Sep. 21, 2017), and "Omineca Ski Club," Village of Burns Lake, http://office.burnslake.ca/recreation__trashed/recreation-organizations/omineca-ski-club/ (Date accessed: Sep. 21, 2017). A Hollyburn Cross Country Ski Club exists today, but there is no indication that this club has any connection to the historic ski club. http://208.38.62.230/ (Date accessed: Sep. 21, 2017).

[471] "Second Annual Pacific Coast Amateur Championship Ski Tournament," Feb. 16, 1930, Swim, Oregon, Program/leaflet, in the Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 1, Oregon Historical Society. The Cascade Ski Club organized both of the first two Pacific Northwest championships, and the second event in 1930 earned the sanction of the National Ski Association as an official championship event. The Grouse Mountain Ski Club dates back at least to 1929, and also this club is still operational. "Grouse Mountain Tyee Ski Club," http://www.grousetyee.com/ (Date accessed: Sep. 21, 2017).

[472] "Skilöpere Gaar I Trening," *Washington Posten*, Dec. 16, 1932, in the Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 1, Oregon Historical Society.

comfortable hotel, the newspaper acknowledged, but it was roomy and practical enough for its purpose. Setting the mood, the article described floors wet with snow, and tar scents that drifted "into one's nose and throat." In and around the men's bunks "where the boys sleep, three on top of each other," the article continued, "a group is gathered around Kaldahl in good-natured difference of opinion. 'The Duke,' in a friendly engagement of his gift with words, is in the process of chewing out his friend Mobraaten." A laughter-filled brawl followed, which ended as quickly as it started when Kaldahl was thrown into Mobraaten's top bunk, and "peace immediately ensues because Kaldahl at that moment remembers that the other Kongsberg fellow has chew-tobacco. And then without further transitioning the conversation moves onto the ski wax problem of the day."[473] Newspapers printed in English and Norwegian leave no doubt that camaraderie developed between the competitive members of the various clubs who spent many weekends in each other's company. The skiers obviously shared a love of the sport, but especially during the early years of the competitive circuit, before downhill and slalom got underway, they often also shared the birthplace of Kongsberg, Norway.

The large number of Kongsberg Norwegians involved with the development of skiing in the Pacific Northwest, and the national titles taken by Pacific Northwest skiers, also received attention in Norway. Following Hvam's win in the U.S. National Championship in 1932, at least one Norwegian newspaper published an article about Hvam as a Kongsberg skier earning laurels in America. The newspaper celebrated the attention Kongsberg received in America on account of the Olympic performance of the "Kongsberg boys," Birger and Sigmund Ruud. Their performance had "received wide notice among our countrymen in America, and especially

[473] "John Elvrum Seirer Stort," *Washington Posten*, Undated, late January 1933, in the Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 1, Oregon Historical Society.

among people from Kongsberg," the newspaper continued. "We have received many letters to prove that claim."[474] The ski clubs knew to market Kongsberg talent, and came to expect that the audience recognized the meaning of Kongsberg. A 1938 issue of the Cascade Ski Club's *Multorporeans*, for example, made an announcement that an upcoming tournament on the Snoqualmie Summit hill was going to "have a great field of Konigsberg men," with eight signed up to compete.[475] While Hvam never became an Olympic athlete like the Ruud brothers or Tom Mobraaten, he had grown up in Kongsberg with them and made an example of the type of transnational ambassador for Kongsberg and skiing to the Pacific Northwest that the Ruud brothers' Olympic success did on a more international level. The Ruud brothers' success undoubtedly inspired Hvam and other Northwest skiers, and the transnational connections of Pacific Northwest skiing boosted the ski sport's standing in the region. Sportswriters in Seattle credited the success of Hvam and other skiers from the Pacific Northwest in the 1932 championship in eliminating the region's peripheral status in terms of the ski sport in the United States as a whole. Likewise, the ability of local ski clubs to attract visiting ski jumpers from Norway followed from the success of local skiers like Hvam, and the success of the developing Pacific Northwest ski culture in general. Ironically, in one Seattle Ski Club tournament on Snoqualmie Summit in 1937, when two such visitors by the name of Sverre Kolterud and Sigmund Ruud competed, Kolterud beat Hvam's 202-foot hill record that had stood for some

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[474] "Kongsberg-skiløper gjør sig bemerket i Amerika," Undated and unidentified Norwegian newspaper (likely Kongsberg local), 1932 clipping, in the Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 1, Oregon Historical Society.
[475] "Simple? You bet!," *Multorporeans* 2:4 (Feb. 9, 1938), in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 2, Oregon Historical Society.

years.[476] Such transnational links between the Pacific Northwest and Norway cost Hvam his record, but gained the region's skiing additional acclaim by the magnitude of the ski stars and the athletic feats the region's ski jumping hills could produce.

While there is no evidence to suggest that ski clubs in the Pacific Northwest actively discouraged minorities from taking part in the sport, ethnic diversity proved mostly Euro-centric in the region in the 1930s. Coleman argues that in terms of ethnic diversity the ski sport in the American West after World War II developed and "remained as white as snow."[477] Ahead of a major downhill race on Mount Rainier in 1937, for example, one newspaper listed favorites. The newspaper named the Norwegian national Kolterud as favorite to win. Other candidates included Hans Hauser, a ski instructor from Sun Valley, Idaho, and the winner of a European championship; Siegfried Engl of Yosemite, an Austrian with experience from the Italian Alps; and Hjalmar Hvam, "the ranking Norwegian from Portland, with heart and legs of steel."[478] Such names and nationalities were common for the contestants in downhill and slalom races in the 1930s and 1940s, and probably also reflected the limited ethnic diversity of the clubs' membership, unaffiliated hobby skiers, and spectators as well. When the Cascade Ski Club asked its members for ideas for a name for the new downhill course in 1935, the club joked that "[suggestions] so far run from the most unpronounceable combinations of Swiss, Norwegian, Afghanistan and Greek jargon to the simplest one-syllable English words."[479] No doubt

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[476] "Hvam's Record Falls," *Multorporeans* 1:3 (Mar. 31, 1937), in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 2, Oregon Historical Society.
[477] Coleman, "Unbearable Whiteness of Skiing," 583.
[478] "Thousands of Fans Await Ski Classic at Mt. Rainier Today," undated 1937 clipping from Portland, Seattle, or Tacoma newspaper, in the Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 2, Oregon Historical Society.
[479] Lin Bowman, Secretary, "Cascade Ski Club, Inc. Bulletin #2," Dec. 1935, in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 1, Oregon Historical Society.

suggestions reflected Scandinavian languages and the languages spoken around the Alps, but the author's claim otherwise appears intentionally exaggerated. In a column called "Tower Lights" from most likely a Portland newspaper, sports writer Harry Leeding encouraged everyone to attend the winter sports carnival of 1936 on Mount Hood. All "good Norwegians get out their long woolens with zippers and tassels attached," Leeding asserted. "If you're a Scotsman, that's all right, because Revelstoke is sending down McKay," he continued. "No matter what the nationality – French, Italian, Austrian, German, English, Irish, Japanese, Russian or Ethiopian – the gates are open because this ski jumping stuff is getting more cosmopolitan every day."[480] How cosmopolitan the spectator crowd that often numbered thousands could be in actuality is hard to say. A Portland sportswriter commented as early as 1931 that among the 2,500 spectators who came out to one tournament on the Multorpor Hill, "were two cars of visitors from Porto Rico, who received the thrill of their lives, and a woman from Honolulu, who was delighted at seeing snow again after 28 years of continual warmth and sunshine."[481] Due to the proximity of Government Camp to Portland, Mount Rainier to Tacoma, and Snoqualmie Summit to Seattle, and the fact that thousands of people visited each of these events, it seems likely that Americans of non-European origin found their way to the ski centers and ski jumping hills as well, but it seems certain that they were few in numbers compared to Euro Americans. At least as far as ski jumping was concerned, one was probably just as likely to hear Norwegian among the spectators,

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[480] Harry Leeding, "Tower Lights: Multorpor Hill Ideal For Initial Ski Tourney Today," unidentified newspaper, Jan. 26, 1936, in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 1, Oregon Historical Society.

[481] "Thrills Mark End of Winter Sports Season: 196 Foot Jump Thrills Crowd," clipping from undated Portland newspaper, ca. Mar. 1931, in the Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 1, Oregon Historical Society.

as English. This "whiteness" of the sport lent itself to Norwegian-American constructions of superiority. It reinforced Norwegian-American exceptionalism.

Boosting the Winter-Wonderland: Multorporean Identity and Ethnic Environmentalism

While competitive skiers in the various ski clubs in the Pacific Northwest were brought together by what they held in common – a shared love of skiing and the great outdoors, and often a shared Norwegian identity as well – club memberships also divided people in a good-natured sense. Rivalries developed between the clubs, and by extension between Portland and Seattle, or between Oregon and Washington. These rivalries reflected club loyalty along the lines of rooting for one's team, but they also reflected immigrants' newfound local identities associated with one's club, mountain, city, and state in their adopted country. When Fred McNeill launched the Cascade Ski Club's *Multorporeans* publication in 1937, he asserted local identity when he answered the anticipated question of why he had settled on this particular name.

> We anticipate this question in regard to the name of our publication. It has not been asked yet because no one ever saw the name in print before. Multorporeans coined for the occasion. Well, why not? This club has clung to the slopes of Multorpor ever since it was founded. Ole Haugen started building the first hill there…Then things swung around the corner a little ways to Swim for a season or so but we were still on Multorpor Mountain. And presently we came back around the corner again to our own hill, and we have been there ever since. Our flag is the only one that has ever flown on Multorpor. Some of the biggest tournaments ever held in the West were on her slopes. The crowds that have ever gone to

> Mount Hood, in fact the largest crowds that have ever gone out of Portland anywhere to a sports event, have gathered time and again on that northwestern shoulder of Multorpor. Most of our cross-country races have gone around that mountain and over its shoulders. … And finally our clubhouse is built there. … Our greatest triumphs and our worst disappointments have been scored for and against that hard-bitten hump. … So, tough looking though it be or not we have come to have lots of affection for Multorpor. We are by, of and for Multorpor. Moreover, its one of the more unusual names in the Mount Hood district and worthy enough of this mention. … Hence, we are indeed Multorporeans.[482]

Multorporean plank men, birdmen, or slat-riders. Funny terms. But they do say something about local identities shaped independently from national identities or hyphenated immigrant identities. While most of the Multorporean birdmen were Norwegian immigrants, many of the Multorporean slat-riders who swooped down the mountain were not. Yet, they shared Multorpor and the thrill of skiing long before ski bums became a recognized phenomenon. This localized identity production among members of the Cascade Ski Club is obviously not unique. Members of the Seattle and Washington ski clubs, the Bend Skyliners, and the Leavenworth Winter Sports Club shared the same club loyalty and affection for their "local stomping ground" as did members of Cascade.

Friendly rivalries between clubs, cities, and states became apparent in every tournament from the first organized events with inter-club participation. A mild-mannered feud erupted in

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[482] Fred McNeill, ed., "Why the name?," *Multorporeans* 1:2 (Feb. 17, 1937), in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 2, Oregon Historical Society.

the newspapers between Harold Lee, the president of the Cascade Ski Club, and *Washington Posten* in 1932 ahead of a team competition between Oregon and Washington at Snoqualmie Summit. "Can Washington win?," asked the "Sports-Spalten" columnist rhetorically. "On Sunday it will be determined who can field the strongest 10 man ski jumping team, the state of Washington or Oregon." While it is unclear if this particular tournament drew members from multiple clubs, it mainly represented a faceoff between the hosts, the Seattle Ski Club, and the guests, the Cascade Ski Club – or the cities of Seattle and Portland for that matter. The columnist evaluated the chances of either team's win, but unsurprisingly suggested a Washington win as the likeliest scenario. In a moment of generosity, he invited "Harald Lee, down there in the drizzle rain state" to comment on his predictions.[483] Lee of course responded in the next column. "Washington cannot win," the Cascade club president concluded. He suggested that to expect a win, Washingtonians must be out of their minds.[484] In the end, the hosts did beat Oregon 21 to 20, a feat that made headline news in the next issue of *Washington Posten*. Perhaps suffering the effects of a triumphant haze, the newspaper was generous with superlatives. The last tournament of the season was magnificent; the best of the season, the finest in Pacific Coast history, unmatched even in Norway. But the newspaper did also have the grace to credit Hvam with the finest jump of the day and the new hill record of 201 feet, which made the absolute "highlight of the day," and, according to the sportswriter, "made the Snoqualmie Hill the greatest on the coast."[485] The Bend Skyliners and the "Cascaders" also regularly vied in inter-club jumping meets, which in addition to club rivalries also represented city rivalries between Bend and

[483] "Sports-Spalten: Oregon-Washington Rennet," *Washington Posten*, Apr. 15, 1932, 5.
[484] "Sports-Spalten: Oregon-Washington Rennet," *Washington Posten*, Apr. 22, 1932, 5.
[485] "Washington Slo Oregon 21-20 i Lagkampen," *Washington Posten*, Apr. 29, 1932, 1. "Sports-Spalten: Oregon-Washington-Rennet," *Washington Posten*, Apr. 29, 1932, 5.

Portland. In 1940, Bend hosted the "first downhill and slalom rivalry" between the clubs. The members of the Skyliners club took "the visiting competitors into their homes and ski cabins as guests during the meet," underscoring that of course "the entire competition is on a basis of friendly rivalry."[486] Such friendly rivalries played off of local affiliations and developing identities that for the most part brought the skiers together, to some degree across Euro-ethnic, social, and gender lines, and divided them (when convenient) by club affiliation rather than ethnicity, social class or gender.

Individual skiers held multiple identities that all intersected with a love of skiing and the great outdoors. The club, city or state affiliations of individual favorites to win often featured prominently in the newspapers in connection to any tournament. Seattle, for example, could be framed as a midway point and a battleground of "Elverum-Kaldal" – a contest between Portland and British Columbia. By late 1932, however, the "Follestad-Binns theory," named after Rolph Follestad, the coach of the Seattle Ski Club, and Ken Binns, a sportswriter for the *Seattle Times*, asserted that enough talent had been nurtured by the Seattle club to make some of its skiers serious contenders for first place as well.[487] Finally, regional identities could also be reflected as that of skiers from the Pacific Northwest when contending against skiers from the East and the Rocky Mountain West, particularly in national championships or international competition tryouts. *Washington Posten*, for example, celebrated the fact that four "skiers from the Pacific Northwest overtook the skiers from the east" in the 1932 national championship in California.[488]

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[486] "Skyliners, Cascaders Vie in Dual Tourney," *P.N.S.A. Recorder*, Jan. 9, 1940, 4, in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 3, Oregon Historical Society.
[487] "Skilöpere Gaar I Trening," *Washington Posten*, Dec. 16, 1932, clipping, in the Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 1, Oregon Historical Society.
[488] "Sports-Spalten: Landsrennet i California," *Washington Posten*, Mar. 4, 1932, 6.

In the love of skiing and the great outdoors, the local landscape makes a significant component in the construction of identity. All the competitive members of the various ski clubs, to some extent even all the skiers on Mount Hood, appropriated identities that connected the self to place. In connection to William Lang's depiction of Native Americans' "enchanted environment" versus the more acquisitive Europeans' exploitative relationship with nature, Pacific Northwest Norwegians' recreational ideology contrasted deeply with their own labor in forestry.[489] Skiers' constructions of identities held perhaps more in common with the notion of an "enchanted environment." The construction of ski hills, parking lots and ski cabins, not to mention the presence of thousands of people at a time, modified the environment. But owing to the almost spiritual underpinnings of the *idræt* ideology, in its simplest form expressed as a love of the great outdoors, skiers seemed to identify more with the "enchanted environment" than they were about exploiting it for resources or economic gain. In the case of Norwegian-American skiers, one could perhaps also speak of an ethnic environmentalism in that one could argue that they engaged in an appropriation of the landscape of the Pacific Northwest in the construction of local variations of Norwegian-American identities. As already discussed, the idræt ideology represented a central component of both the transplantation of skiing as Norwegian culture brought to the United States, but also made an important factor in constructions of Norwegian Americans' identities that incorporated skiing as national heritage or as a source of national pride. Hence, ethnic environmentalism coupled with the idræt ideology helped define regional skiing, while it simultaneously figured into Norwegian-American identity production.

[489] William L. Lang, "Beavers, Firs, Salmon, and Falling Water: Pacific Northwest Regionalism and the Environment," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 104:2 (Summer 2003): 155, 159-60.

Norwegian Americans consistently adopted natural features of the Pacific Northwest, such as the geography of the landscape, natural features, climate, and opportunities for a livelihood (industries/resources) into their claims of belonging to the Pacific Northwest. But they did so also as part of their odes to the land of adoption, or as a combined expression of the affection they felt for both their home country and their adopted country. *Washington Posten* applauded that Portlanders justifiably felt

> proud of their skiing kingdom. This is Nordmarka and Hardangervidda combined. Pinetrees stand in small groves, or individually here and there; vast, open meadows, hills and valleys with 10-20 feet of snow as a workable resource, so treadable that a skier can set off anywhere. Even in overcast weather one is gripped by a boyish desire to get the skis on – there is something troll-like about these snow-covered expanses.[490]

In this declaration of boyish excitement and appreciation for the natural beauty of Mount Hood, the writer referenced two specific Norwegian places, the Nordmarka forest outside Oslo used for recreation by the city's inhabitants then and now, and the Hardangervidda mountain plateau, known for its scale, majesty, and glaciers. The author also found the snow-covered expanses of Mount Hood "troll-like," or enchanted. Once again, a reference to Norwegian landscape and culture, the home of Jotunheim and the trolls of lore, and a connection between an immigrant's boyish desires and his memories of childhood reimagined and recreated in his new home. Enchantment when faced with the majesty of the Cascade mountains made a common theme in Norwegian-American poetry as well. "How often have I turned with wonder unto thee," mused

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[490] "John Elvrum Seirer Stort," *Washington Posten*, Undated clipping ca. 1933, in the Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 1, Oregon Historical Society.

the Norwegian immigrant poet Thomas Ostenson Stine in tribute to Mount Rainier. "Most awful form, the king thou standest firm On green-swathed feet, with head of silver rising high. Enchanted I've stood and gazed upon thy rugged breast… enchanted in Thy gentle breath."[491] Filled with awe and wonder, Stine felt a sense of God when faced with the beauty and splendor of what he saw as God's creation. "Enchanting sunbeams, messengers from climes above, Tell me who robed this stately form with dazzling light? No answer, silence, save the soughing of the pine. O God! to Thee I turn, Thou Nature's God, to Thee."[492] While scholars have understood idræt as a secular idea or movement, its practitioners were wont to express a similar kind of spirituality in their awe of nature as well. "In this the snow's white temple," the anonymous poet who opened this chapter, offered his silent prayer and felt happy once again.[493]

An enchantment with the magic of a winter-wonderland was not a uniquely Norwegian sentiment. It made a common theme in publicity photographs taken of Mount Hood scenery and skiers as well.[494] A 1937 issue of the *Oregon Motorist*, for example, featured Pacific Northwest winter scenes from Mount Hood, Mount Shuksan, and Mount Rainier. The magazine showed photographs of the mountains in "wintery garb," a ski jumper in-flight on Multorpor Hill, winter scenes from Mount Rainier, a skier making a turn, a snow-covered tree creature – a Norwegian troll at Timberline on Mount Hood, or a "winter-bred ogre" as the magazine labeled it – and

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[491] Thos. Ostenson Stine, "Tribute to Mt. Rainier," in Thos. Ostenson Stine, *Echoes From Dreamland* (Seattle: Puget Sound News Company, 1903), 33.
[492] Stine, "Tribute to Mt. Rainier," 35.
[493] "Paa ski," *Washington Posten*, Mar. 4, 1932, 6.
[494] Hjalmar Hvam Photograph Collection, Oregon Historical Society. Contains a series of publicity photographs of Hvam and the Cascade Ski Club, as well as Timberline Lodge. Particularly the photographs of Timberline Lodge in deep snow help suggest a winter-wonderland feel.

Hjalmar Hvam engaged in "a few gymnastics 'with the greatest of ease.' "[495] Beginning already in the 1920s, but gaining momentum with the developing ski culture in the 1930s, local boosters attempted to sell Mount Hood to the broader public in Portland, and the United States, as a winter-wonderland. The Union Pacific Railroad boosted winter sports on Mount Hood already in the 1920s. The imagery in one promotional pamphlet showed people at play in majestic scenery, and heavily emphasized recreational skiing. The railroad company claimed that while lovely in summer, the place became "a center of happy magic" with "the coming of winter."[496] Similar to other booster's materials of the 1930s, it juxtaposed the mild winter climate of Portland with the snow depths and scenic beauty of Mount Hood a relatively short distance away. Rainier National Park Company in Washington boosted tobogganing, skiing, and snowshoeing as wintertime park activities already in the 1920s as well.[497] The United States Forest Service chimed in at least by 1930, emphasizing clothing and safety in the same activities Rainier National Park promoted, but also highlighting recent improvements in facilities as well as the proximity of Government Camp and Multorpor to Portland.[498]

In the 1930s, the Portland and Oregon Winter Sports Association articulated the express objective of the promotion of Mount Hood as a winter-wonderland, and depended heavily on the

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[495] *Oregon Motorist* 17:1 (Feb. 1937), in the Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 3, Oregon Historical Society.
[496] "Winter Sports on Mt. Hood and along Columbia River Gorge," Union Pacific Railway System, Promotional pamphlet, ca. 1920s, in the Pacific Northwest Promotional Brochures Collection, Mss 6000, Box 6, Oregon Historical Society. The leaflet is undated, but the cabin and ski club names listed, and the names absent, suggest a publication date of mid to late 1920s.
[497] "Winter Sports in Rainier National Park," Rainier National Park Co., Promotional pamphlet, ca. 1920s, in the Pacific Northwest Promotional Brochures Collection, Mss 6000, Oregon Historical Society.
[498] "Winter Sports: Mount Hood National Forest Oregon," United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service, Promotional pamphlet, 1930, in the Pacific Northwest Promotional Brochures Collection, Mss 6000, Oregon Historical Society.

Cascade Ski Club in this task. In 1933, the Portland Winter Sports Association put the slogan "Make Mt. Hood the National Winter Playground" on the front of their winter carnival program.[499] The association continued using that slogan in the years that followed. The 1934 program added "Right in your own front yard," and explained the thrill of leaving a green Portland in January for a ninety-minute drive to arrive in "fields of snow ten feet or more in depth!" A winter-wonderland that is "[i]nviting the world to Portland." People "travel thousands of miles to enjoy a vacation in winter sport centers," the program added. "Mount Hood now welcomes America to one of the finest winter playgrounds in the world."[500] By 1936, the association gave its two-pronged purpose of promoting the "finest, cleanest and most exhilarating" of all outdoor sports, and to "advertise to the world that on Mt. Hood there is a skiing terrain equal to any to be found."[501] The Cascade Ski Club mirrored the marketing language of the association, but while the association looked to the country as a whole, the ski club focused more on boosting Mount Hood and skiing to Portlanders.

The Cascade Ski Club adopted the slogan "Linking Portland with Mount Hood Winter Sports," and defined its purpose in part "to assist in making Mt. Hood 'The Winter Playground of the Pacific Coast.' "[502] A flyer that outlined the benefits of joining the club ended with a few

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[499] "Official Souvenir Program: 1933 Winter Carnival of the Portland Winter Sports Assn.," Jan. 19-22, 1933, in the Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 1, Oregon Historical Society.
[500] "Third Annual Winter Carnival of Portland Winter Sports Association," Jan. 25-28, 1934, Program, in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 1, Oregon Historical Society.
[501] "Annual Rose Festival All Star Summer Ski Championships and Mazama Cup Race," Souvenir Program, New Hotel Site, Timberline, Mount Hood, June 14, 1936, in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 1, Oregon Historical Society.
[502] "National Amateur and Open Downhill and Slalom Ski Championships and Tryouts," Apr. 1-2, 1939, Mt. Hood, Oregon, Cascade Ski Club, Official Program, in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 3, Oregon Historical Society. "Application for Membership Cascade Ski Club," in *The Take-Off: Year Book*, Cascade Ski Club, Inc., Portland, Vol. 1, No. 1, Fall 1931, 34. Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 1, Oregon Historical Society.

last points if "none of the above reasons strikes a responsive chord," the final of which was "helping Portland by putting it on the winter sports map of the world. As such it deserves the support of every lover of the outdoors and every public spirited citizen."[503] While the club shared, or supported, all the objectives of the Winter Sports Association, it tended to be more focused on its audience of prospective club members among Portland's citizenry. In the 1931 year book, Harold Lee, the club's president, predicted a big upcoming year at Mount Hood. "This will be our chance," he wrote, "to demonstrate to the people of Portland that Mt. Hood is the ideal winter playground."[504] A 1936 club bulletin quoted the president of the Portland Winter Sports Association when it boasted that Mount Hood "Will Rate With St. Moritz" upon completion of Timberline Lodge. With Timberline Lodge, Oregon would "boast the finest skiing and recreation center in the nation, comparable to the famous resorts at St. Moritz, Switzerland, and Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany," only "an hour and a half from the Rose City."[505]

Later in the decade, the Winter Sports Association, the Cascade club and local newspapers continued to boost Mount Hood's proximity to Portland, but they also began to emphasize the year-around snows. "Mount Hood will be a mecca for winter sports enthusiasts around the calendar," one sportswriter wrote, and predicted that the "unequalled thrill of mid-summer skiing and winter sports [will] bring thousands to the mountain in Portland's back

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[503] Cascade Ski Club recruitment flyer, undated, in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 1, Oregon Historical Society.
[504] Harold A. Lee, president, "How We Have Grown," in *The Take-Off: Year Book*, Cascade Ski Club, Inc., Portland, Vol. 1, No. 1, Fall 1931, 22. Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 1, Oregon Historical Society.
[505] "Cascade Ski Club Bulletin No. 6," Newsletter, Apr. 25, 1936, in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 1, Oregon Historical Society.

yard."[506] In 1939, all this boosting of Mount Hood climaxed when Cascade Ski Club hosted the national championships in downhill and slalom skiing, which told the story of "how boosters for Mount Hood … decided … that the area had developed to the extent that it should seek national recognition through large tournaments," and subsequently went ahead and convinced the National Ski Association.[507] The booster's alliance that promoted Mount Hood in the 1930s was not unique. Similar alliances between ski clubs, civic organizations, and newspapers existed around other ski areas as well. The program for the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer's* Silver Skis Championship on Mount Rainier in 1936, for example (which Hjalmar Hvam reportedly won by "hurtling down the steep, glistening slopes" of the mountain at such speeds that even a fall caused by an almost successful leap across exposed rock did not give him much pause), stated as one of the objectives behind the event to "prove to America and the world that here in the outdoor wonderland of the slopes of beautiful Mount Rainier, skiing is unexcelled, not only in winter but in the warm spring months."[508]

Conclusion

The diffusion, or transplantation, of skiing and ski culture from Norway to the Pacific Northwest, the implementation of the idræt ideology, and local boosters' efforts to market Mount Hood and

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[506] Jack Grover, "Ski Races End Festival With Thrill," clipping from undated Portland newspaper, 1936, in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 1, Oregon Historical Society.
[507] George M. Henderson, "From Hood to Olympus on Singing Skis," *Oregon Journal*, Mar. 26, 1939, in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 3, Oregon Historical Society.
[508] "Third Annual Silver Skis Championship," Paradise Valley, Mount Rainier, Apr. 22, 1936, Program, Auspices of Seattle Post-Intelligencer, in the Hjalmar Hvam Scrapbooks, Book 2, Oregon Historical Society. "Ski Crown Taken By Portland Ace," clipping from Seattle newspaper, Apr. 20, 1936, in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 1, Oregon Historical Society. Ken Binns, "Muir Race Time Cut Almost in Half," clipping from Seattle newspaper, Apr. 20, 1936, in the Cascade Ski Club Papers, Mss 6027, Box 1, Oregon Historical Society.

Oregon as a winter-wonderland, with Portland as its portal, combined to establish the local foundation of a lasting ski culture centered around Mount Hood and other ski centers in the Pacific Northwest. Pacific Northwest ski clubs promoted skiing as healthy outdoor activity beneficial to body and spirit, a transplanted idræt ideology from Scandinavia. Heavily influenced by Norwegian founding members, the ski clubs promoted skiing as a traditional pastime, and as a modern organized sport. Over time practitioners developed multiple complementary locally shaped identities as skiers, Oregonians, Portlanders, Multorporeans, Pacific Northwesterners, and Norwegian Americans.

Taken as a case study, the developing ski culture of the Pacific Northwest of the 1930s serves as an example of how sports and the environment contributed to Norwegian-American identity production in the Pacific Northwest. But it also sheds light on the Norwegian-American community's ethnic environmentalism – the appropriation of the local landscape in the construction of ethnic identity. While other Americans adopted and shared the idræt mindset, and other Americans experienced localized identity formation shaped by their love of skiing and their appreciation of the landscape, Norwegian Americans understood the sport of skiing and the snow-clad mountain landscape as linked in significant ways with Norwegian nationalism and heritage. Skiing is an example of a cultural transplant from Norway that demonstrated ethnic environmentalism as well as a return to traditionalism. In the case of August Werner, a baritone singer, choir director, sculptor, painter, and University of Washington music professor; cultural transplantation and reactionary traditionalism can be traced in a musical career. Marie Vognild Lund and Dorthea Dahl offer examples of how cultural transplantation and a call for a return to traditionalism presented itself in literature as well.

CHAPTER 5: MARIE VOGNILD LUND, DORTHEA DAHL AND AUGUST WERNER: THE ART OF NORWEGIAN-AMERICAN CULTURAL CREATION

"I consider the Northern arts and crafts the ultimate expression of a culture that is our very own, and by far the greatest contribution to America from the North."[509]

- Therese C. Holm

"And, though some people have erroneously thought so, it has never been necessary nor incumbent upon us as Norsemen, to apologize for our existence, for our language, literature, music, mythology, history, customs, national traits and characteristics – nay, nor our religion."[510]

- Ragna Tangjerd Grimsby

Introduction

When Marie Vognild visited Norway as an "Americanized young girl" in the late 1890s, she noted cultural differences between Norway and the United States and her linguistic challenges with multiple dialects and aristocratic and proper forms of addressing people. Norwegians appeared to have a hard time understanding Norwegian Americans who "mixa languagen" a

[509] Therese C. Holm, "My Work and My Vision," in Alma A. Guttersen and Regina Hilleboe Christensen, eds., *Souvenir "Norse-American Women," 1825-1925: A Symposium of Prose and Poetry, Newspaper Articles, and Biographies, Contributed by one hundred prominent women* (St. Paul: Lutheran Free Church Publishing Co., 1926), 213-14.

[510] Ragna Tangjerd Grimsby, "Norse in Our Schools," in Guttersen and Christensen, eds., *Souvenir "Norse-American Women," 1825-1925*, 81. Emphasis in original.

little. Norwegians were certainly good hosts, and, Vognild reported, they "admire Norwegian Americans' efforts to maintain the mother's tongue and the old traditions." But they also viewed visiting Americans as somewhat strange, "a curiosity," whom they "stared at." They could not understand how young unmarried women could have the money to travel by themselves, and found it incredible "that a young girl would want to spend so much just to see Norway."[511]

In a 1931 *Washington Posten* serial column entitled "Minner om Norge" (Memories of Norway), Marie Vognild Lund shared with Norwegian-American readers her reminiscences and informed perspective of her several trips to Norway between 1897 and 1930. Her column celebrated the simplicity of a laid-back, uncomplicated country life in Norway and juxtaposed it to the stress and rush of American and urban life. She constructed a romanticized narrative and memory of a progressive and modern Norway that changed over the course of the three decades of her visits, but that nevertheless remained faithful to its agrarian roots and its cultural traditions and customs. In this column, as well as in the 1933 biographical series "De Som Gaar I Kjøkkenet" (Those who walk the kitchen), summarizing the lives and the deeds of ordinary Norwegian immigrant women (not famous ones) who "lived up to their task," Lund noted different gender expectations between the two countries, but nevertheless celebrated what she understood as Norwegian character and Norwegian heritage, and sought to do her part in insuring the continued retention of that culture in America.

When Dorthea Dahl, sometime around World War II, visited her cousin Bernt's home in Weyerhaeuser Company housing in Potlatch, Idaho, to spend Christmas with her cousin's family, she enjoyed a "traditional American Christmas dinner" with them, before she noticed

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[511] Marie Vognild Lund, "Minner om Norge: Menn og andre mennesker," *Washington Posten*, Mar. 20, 1931, 1, 3.

three American flags sitting in an urn. One of the three children, explained that the flags belonged to the children in "words and intonation very definitely juvenile all-American." Their mother had given them the flags the first Fourth of July after "we got to be American citizens. There was a big parade and us kids marched in it and waved our flags."[512] Moved by the degree of affection their mother had shown for her adopted country, Dahl swallowed a lump in her throat. Next, she noticed two bibles, a shiny new one on top of a worn one. They told her that the worn one was mother Dagny's Norwegian Bible, given to her at her confirmation. It had been her custom to read the Christmas story on Christmas Eve. But when they became citizens two years before, she bought an English Bible that she gave to her eldest son. That Christmas Eve she had read haltingly from the English Bible. When she finished, her son had brought her the Norwegian Bible. "Now you read out of that too, Mama. First in English, because now we are Americans, and then in Norwegian, the way you always did before." Once more, Dahl was moved. On her way home she had thought about the symbolism of the two bibles and the three flags in the urn, and "felt that the mother in that home was well qualified for American citizenship."[513] Dahl's anecdote reflected transnational identities with respect to both women concerned. Dahl felt her emotions stir because Dagny demonstrated her "good" American citizenship, while her family displayed the value – to them – of their Norwegian heritage.

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[512] Dorthea Dahl, "Three Flags," *Latah Legacy* 30 (2001): 34-35, in the Dorthea Dahl Papers, Accession no. 820, Folder 1, Norwegian-American Historical Association, Northfield, Minnesota. A previously unpublished short story, dating from World War II (dated from an in-text reference to Norway's Princess Astrid "now exiled to the protective arms of America"), which contains enough detail to reflect an anecdote rather than a fictionalized short story (Dahl's fictional writing also typically identified its protagonist, keeping an author's distance in third person, but here she is writing in first person).
[513] Dahl, "Three Flags," 34-35.

Dorthea Dahl, a Norwegian-American author of short stories, believed Norwegian Americans, like other ethnicities in America, were in a "transition period," a process of cultural adaptation. "We are not Norwegians, that is certain. We are Americans, of course, in so far as we are good citizens and have contributed to building up this big, rich country of ours and we are highly regarded by our fellow-citizens."[514] In her stories, selfishness, modernism, and especially materialism threatened to cause harm, but a reconnection with traditional values (whether Norwegian, agrarian, or religious) typically provided the protagonist with newfound wisdom and appreciation of life. Through her literature, Dorthea Dahl argued that while cultural adaptation and Americanization was necessary and good – reflecting the pressures to assimilate among immigrants amid World War I-era American nativism – it was not mutually exclusive with the continued nurturing of ethnic values and cultural heritage.

When August Werner gave a speech in 1974 on Norwegian Americans he had met over the six decades since his arrival to American shores, he expressed annoyance with some Norwegian Americans' relationship with Norwegian heritage:

> They are so busy learning English and be[ing] super patriots and then they join a Norwegian society so as to be good Norwegians and fight for the socalled heritage i.e. Norsk Dommen. Norwegian history is almost forgotten and the net result is – lefse and rømmegrøt og coffee and if they can put on a silly red west then they are 100% Norwegians again – forgetting that their ladies, oftentimes, have gorgeous Norwegian

[514] Hilde Petra Brungot, "To Keep and Cultivate: Dorthea Dahl A Norwegian-American Voice in Idaho," *Latah Legacy* 30 (2001): 24, in the Dorthea Dahl Papers, Accession no. 820, Folder 1, Norwegian-American Historical Association, Northfield, Minnesota. (Originally from Dorothea Dahl to Sigrid Valen, Mar. 14, 1926 – a cousin in Norway and lifelong pen pal.)

costumes on.[515]

While Werner believed some immigrants assimilated too quickly, and had a casual, inauthentic relationship with "Norwegiandom," he spent a lifetime devoted to the arts and Norwegian cultural heritage. He trained as a baritone singer after his arrival from Norway to Brooklyn, New York in 1916. After he accepted a post as a professor of music at the University of Washington in Seattle in 1931, Wilhelm Morgenstierne, Minister of the Norwegian Legation in Washington D.C., regretted his departure for the West Coast, calling it "a great loss to all Norwegians here," and promised to miss his "beautiful rendering of the songs of our homeland."[516] In Seattle, the man who proudly accepted the nickname "Norway's singing ambassador," directed the Norwegian Male and Ladies' choruses.[517] The "songs of our homeland" continued to figure prominently in his work throughout the rest of his career, but he also conducted notable work as a sculptor and oil painter, most of which reflected a deep appreciation of Norwegian landscapes, Norwegian history, and Norwegian mythology. His obituary credited Werner with "influencing the lives of hundreds of students with his lectures on opera and his many performances on the opera stage."[518] His influence did not end there. His many talents and interests attracted audiences and earned him praise from the Norwegian-American community in the Pacific Northwest and beyond. As a naturalized American citizen, university professor, successful artist,

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[515] August Werner, Notes for speech on Norwegian Americans, Jan. 26, 1974, in August Werner Papers, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries. August Werner, Speech on Norwegian Americans, undated (corresponds to notes dated Jan. 26, 1974), in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 37, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries. Typos copied from original.

[516] Wilhelm Morgenstierne to Norwegian Singing Society, Norwegian Seamen's Church, Sep. 19, 1931, Telegram, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 11, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.

[517] August Werner to Otto Clausen, Apr. 11, 1938, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 16, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.

[518] "Service for U.W. Prof. August Werner Tomorrow," *Seattle Daily Times*, Aug. 14, 1980, 80.

and a living embodiment of Norwegian heritage he made an example to others of a model Norwegian American. In his forty-year career in the region, his dedication to the preservation of Norwegian cultural heritage impacted several generations of Pacific Northwest Norwegians.

Marie Vognild Lund, Dorthea Dahl, and August Werner are notable examples of cultural voices within the Norwegian-American community of the Pacific Northwest in the 1930s and beyond, who helped crystallize a regional Norwegian-American identity. All three can be interpreted as reactionary traditionalists – first generation immigrants who asserted traditional values in response to community acculturation – in a Norwegian enclave predominantly second and third generation.[519] But each of them also represented first-generation immigrants who by the maturity of their lives, through their cultural capital, had successfully integrated with the dominant culture outside their ethnic community.[520] Lund's voice came to expression as a

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[519] The context of the Immigration Restriction Laws of the 1920s, and the Great Depression, contributed to a reduction in overall Norwegian immigration numbers. The number of foreign-born Norwegians in the American West as a whole (the largest concentration of whom were found in Washington) increased moderately from 21,580 in 1890 to 28,925 in 1900. The number blossomed to 64,874 in 1910, peaked at 70,170 in 1920, and dropped to 63,320 in 1940 and 56,173 in 1950. The number of foreign-born Norwegians in Seattle saw a decrease from 9,118 to 8,436 between 1920 and 1940, with the corresponding number for Portland a slight increase from 2,915 to 3,025. These numbers mean that in Seattle, inbound migration of foreign-born Norwegians numbered fewer individuals than outbound migration and deaths, while in Portland inbound migration barely outnumbered outbound migration and deaths. When one takes the general late nineteenth and twentieth century trend of movement from the countryside to the city into account, these numbers illustrate a significant reduction in immigration numbers after 1920. The National Origins Quota Allocation of 1929 gave Norway a quota of only 2,377 immigrants per year, compared to Great Britain's 65,721, Germany's 25,957, and Ireland's 17,853. Poland and Italy's quotas were each more than double that of Norway. See Elliott Robert Barkan, *From All Points: America's Immigrant West, 1870s-1952* (Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2007), Appendix: Table 1.1, 3.1, 3.14, 3.18 and 4.4, 463-86.

[520] In terms of Elliott Barkan's six-step model of ethnicity, from contact to assimilation, most members of the Norwegian immigrant community in the Pacific Northwest had by the 1920s or 1930s reached the third stage, adaptation, though some had undoubtedly reached the fourth, accommodation. In the third stage, a greater numerical balance exists between the foreign and native-born (occurred by 1900 in Washington and Oregon). There is substantial use of English,

columnist, but also through a life of service both within and outside the Norwegian-American community. Her columns celebrated and promoted a romanticized memory of the traditional Norway, its customs and traditions, and advocated for preservation.[521] Dahl published a number of short stories and three books, interchangeably in Norwegian and English. In addition to the recurring theme of conflict between traditional values and the modern consumer culture, her cast of Norwegian immigrant characters reflected her own life experience as a repeat migrant, in her devout Lutheran faith, and in her own bereavement at the loss of close family members. Werner's voice came to expression in different media as a musician and artist, and as an educator. He held celebrity status with both Norwegian-American and Washington/national audiences, and he consciously planted Norway in the Pacific Northwest every time he set foot on a stage. Taken together, the three represent first-generation cultural creators in the Pacific Northwest who invented ethnic associations and identities, and argued for forms of negotiation between cultural adaptation and retained (or transplanted) cultural heritage. They showcase how first-generation community leaders used constructed memories and art to nurture the continuation of Norwegian cultural heritage and language in the face of an increasingly apathetic second and third generation immigrant community population.

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especially among the second generation, and religious leaders, secular organizations and the press make adjustments to maintain their influence across generations. In the fourth stage, there are more native-born than foreign-born members of the community, the third and fourth generations are more visible, ethnic organizations have English or bilingual proceedings, there is little use of the native language in general, and native language publications are diminishing in volume. There is only meager attention to the homeland. The Norwegian community at large seemed to occupy the third stage, as did the first-generation subjects of this chapter, Lund, Dahl and Werner. But they worked to preserve the traditional heritage central to the first two stages. See Elliott R. Barkan, "Race, Religion, and Nationality in American Society: A Model of Ethnicity – From Contact to Assimilation," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 14:2 (Winter 1995): 55-57 (38-75).

[521] Marie Vognild Lund married Gunnar Lund in Seattle in 1900. Her husband purchased *Wasington Posten* in 1905, and was owner and editor until his death in 1940.

Marie Vognild Lund, Gender, and the Affirmed Memory

In the 1931 serial column "Minner om Norge" (Memories of Norway), Lund recounts her impressions of Norway from several visits. The first in 1883, when her family had spent a few months with her fathers' relatives around Trondheim while on their way to America. The second had taken place in the winter of 1897-98, when she and her sister had gone back to Trondheim for an extended stay. Her first two experiences in Norway had been followed by several trips with her husband, *Washington Posten's* editor Gunnar Lund.[522] The serial column is focused on her 1897-98 experiences, with references to the other trips to provide additional insight or to highlight changes over time. The column largely reads like an account of the trip she and her sister undertook on their own as two young, unmarried women traveling by their own means, earned from their own work in America. While it is possible she kept a diary during her trip, which she consulted for accuracy, the column reads like a memoir. Written after immigration restrictions were enacted, it clearly intends to relive and celebrate the transnational character of earlier immigration, along with the Norwegian traditions it emphasizes. The column also showcases how women found ways to assert their independence in the new homeland, which they sought to share with their Norwegian sisters as well as contemporary Washington readers.

Lund recalled episodes from her trip that threw into clear relief how she had changed during her years in America, which especially rural Norwegians, accustomed to a simpler life and more rigid gender roles, could not understand. She frequently comments on how rural

[522] Marie Vognild was born in Northern Norway, in her mother's home community, but had spent her childhood in Russia where her father had set up business when she was very young. Her visit to Trondheim in 1883 had been her first visit to Norway after the family had left Russia.

Norwegians misunderstood or misinterpreted what they saw. On a train ride from Trondheim into the countryside, for example, she was mistaken for a middle-aged Swedish countess travelling with her daughter. Lund and her sister were already seated in their compartment when the third passenger entered. It was winter, and they were wearing fur coats they had purchased in Kristiania. In retrospect, Lund was not surprised at the young woman's mistake, nor her disbelief when told the truth that they were just two young women from America who "on their own had made enough money to take such a trip and buy such coats." Recognizing women's growing freedom in the twentieth century, Lund remarked, "[these] days no one would wonder about how young girls could raise that kind of money."[523] This was the only time she had been mistaken for a countess and older woman, she admitted, and owed her thanks to the fur coat.

Rural Norwegians were not unaccustomed to women's paid employment, but urban employment and consumer culture developed more slowly in Norway than in the United States. Young women commonly worked as domestics even in the countryside, and many Norwegians knew of young women, as friends or family, who emigrated to the United States to work as domestics. Norway was not particularly more patriarchical than the United States, and there are many examples of young women who either left the countryside for the city, or emigrated, by themselves.[524] A working class consumer culture, however, where wage-earning women asserted

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[523] "Marie Vognild Lund, Minner om Norge: Menn og andre mennesker," *Washington Posten*, Mar. 20, 1931, 1, 3.

[524] Young women travelling to America on their own, often after having obtained a ticket from a relative already living there, is a common theme in Lund's 1933 biographical series "De Som Gaar i Kjøkkenet" (Those who walk the kitchen). Lina Hamstad (b. Nikoline Nilsdatter Pedersen), for example, first migrated from the countryside to Kristiania to live with her brother and work as a maid and later in the kitchen at a public bath. After some years in the Norwegian capital, a cousin in St. Paul invited her to America and sent her a ticket. She eventually ended up in Seattle where she became president of the Daughters of Norway, and was active in Den Norske Hospitalsforening (The Norwegian Hospital Association), an organization organized and

themselves and made clear, independent choices had not yet emerged. A schoolteacher assumed that Lund had to be rich, since he found it "almost incredible" that a young girl would otherwise want to spend so much money "just to see Norway."[525] She often found herself misunderstood or misinterpreted that way. Any American, just by coming to Norway, but especially one that shopped for fineries, must somehow have obtained immense wealth in America. Lund opined in her column that she thought it was still not understood in Norway that Norwegian Americans prioritized travel to Norway with their hard-earned money, and made sacrifices to pay the expense in order to keep alive their transnational connections. Norwegians seemed to think Americans lived in excess, but Lund made it clear that she and other typical visitors spent money saved over several years, and that the expense often caused grief after their return to America.[526] Lund ran her own dressmaking business on the northern outskirts of Chicago before moving to Seattle to marry her husband.[527] Her sister earned a living as a schoolteacher. While not decidedly working-class, the two sisters nevertheless experienced the growing independence afforded wage-earning young women in the United States around the turn of the century, and they (especially Lund) took part in the developing American consumer culture.[528] This type of

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run for many years by Marie Lund. "De Som Gaar i Kjøkkenet: Seter-gjenten som blir president," *Washington Posten*, May 26, 1933, 5, to July 21, 1933, 5.

[525] Marie Vognild Lund, "Minner om Norge: Menn og andre mennesker," *Washington Posten*, Mar. 20, 1931, 1, 3.

[526] Marie Vognild Lund, "Minner om Norge: Menn og andre mennesker," *Washington Posten*, Mar. 20, 1931, 1, 3.

[527] "Marie Vognild Lund," biographical sketch, in the Marie Vognild Lund Papers, Vertical File, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.

[528] See Kathy Peiss, *Cheap Amusements: Working Women and Leisure in Turn-of-the-Century New York* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986); Vicki Ruiz, *Cannery Women, Cannery Lives: Mexican Women, Unionization, and the California Food Processing Industry, 1930-1950* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1987); or Nan Enstad, *Ladies of Labor, Girls of Adventure: Working Women, Popular Culture, and Labor Politics at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), for studies on the growing agency of the

employment, and this degree of independence, made the two sisters unusual among Norwegian immigrant women. David Mauk asserts that first-generation Norwegian immigrant women worked primarily as live-in domestics until the 1920s, when mostly second-generation Norwegian-American women advanced toward the middle class on account of more education and subsequent employment in professional positions.[529] The Vognild sisters had made that move by the end of the 1890s.

Lund also recalled other episodes that highlighted the contrast between herself as an urban American, and rural or even urban Norwegians – especially when she found that their stereotyped expectations about American consumption and wealth did not meet reality. She described a walk she made with a friend from Baklandet in Trondheim up the steep hill to Kristiansten Fortress in the spring of 1898. There were scattered snow patches melting away quickly under the spring sun. The first flowers had begun to bloom. She almost picked one of these "newborn" flowers, but stopped herself. Was she allowed to pick one? Her friend looked at her with an incredulous expression. "Just take them, if you like them, but I didn't think that you who have so many flowers in America would care for such petty ones." Lund expressed

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American working class in this time period, women's involvement in labor organizing across Euro-American ethnic lines, and the importance of young immigrant women's wages for both a revolt against patriarchy and its influence on the developing consumer culture.

[529] For a study on Norwegian immigrant women in urban settings during this time period, see David C. Mauk, "Finding Their Way in the City: Norwegian Immigrant Women and Their Daughters in Urban Areas, 1880s – 1920s," in Betty A. Bergland, Lori Ann Lahlum, eds., *Norwegian American Women: Migration, Communities, and Identities* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Press, 2011), 119-56. In this survey of Norwegian-American working women in New York, the Twin Cities, Chicago, and Seattle, Mauk found that the first generation worked primarily as live-in domestic labor, while the second generation received better education, and by 1920 increasingly left housework for skilled employment as clerks or healthcare professionals. Mauk argues that this switch showed that Norwegian-American women increasingly climbed the social ladder in the 1920s, and earned more respect and social acceptance, as well as greater integration within American society.

frustration with such situations in which Norwegians expecting her to act in a certain way, or like or dislike something on account of her American sensibilities. "Always the same," she complained. "Only the grand are we expected to love!" She noted that this had not changed by the summer of 1930. She commonly heard remarks connected to gift-giving that revealed a tad of an inferiority complex, and a stereotypical understanding of the milk and honey of the promised land. "If only there was something we could send our relatives over there, but you have everything, don't you?"[530]

Norwegians' assumptions about wealth in the United States also revealed to Lund how little they understood the degree to which Norwegian Americans valued cultural heirlooms. Many Norwegians expressed a want to send gifts to their relatives in America, but they could not imagine that they could offer anything that Americans would want or need. "Now over thirty years have passed since the cozy day that I tried to show and tell that also we over here appreciate old heirlooms and small, newborn flowers, as well as the proud memories of our forefathers in town and country." Over the years she had seen many examples of exceptional woodwork in the attics of farmhouses. Travel chests, carved mugs, painted wooden plates, and so on. She nevertheless had a hard time convincing people that their old junk would be regarded as treasured heirlooms by their relatives in America.[531] This same theme – the idea of Norwegians' junk as valued cultural heirlooms in America – returned in Lund's biographical series "De Som Gaar i Kjøkkenet" (Those Who Walk the Kitchen) as well.[532] Hence, among other emphases, she

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[530] Marie Vognild Lund, "Minner om Norge: Naar naturen vaakner," *Washington Posten*, Apr. 24, 1931, 1, 3.
[531] Marie Vognild Lund, "Minner om Norge: Naar naturen vaakner," *Washington Posten*, Apr. 24, 1931, 1, 3.
[532] Marie Vognild Lund, "De Som Gaar i Kjøkkenet: Otelie Sofie Torsdatter: Taalmodigheten lønnes," *Washington Posten*, May 12, 1933, 5.

communicated to the reader an assumed shared appreciation for Norwegian cultural heirlooms, and simultaneously argued for the preservation of such cultural artifacts.

Lund consistently contrasted key differences between the pressures of urban America and simplicity and freedom of traditional life in the Norwegian countryside. She celebrated and imagined an idyllic and carefree life in Norway. To Lund, the experience of waking up in a Norwegian guesthouse to the smell of fresh-brewed coffee, and having it and breakfast brought to her bed, contrasted deeply with the pace of American urban life. She spent Christmas of 1897 at a bell-ringer's farm across the Trondheim Fjord. The host had raised the Norwegian flag in celebration of the visit of the American schoolteacher and her sister and offered a feast with fresh-butchered lamb.[533] Lund considered this Christmas one of the most memorable of her life. The decorations were far simpler at this farm than the effort put into decorating for Christmas in the United States, but she maintained that a holiday spirit unlike any other she had experienced settled over everyone and everything on Christmas Eve. In 1930, a lady in Trondheim had asked why she remembered this particular Christmas celebration so vividly. She had nodded in understanding at Lund's response. "Yes, I think I understand. You rush around so quickly over there, so there is no time to think before [Christmas] is all over. I don't think you are better off with that when the end comes, do you think so? … It is not so strange then that they look so tired the Americans when they come home [to Norway] again." Lund agreed with that sentiment. She mused that "under the simple conditions in the country" one was closer to God.[534] From Lund's perspective, her "imagined" memories of a simpler past represented something true and authentic

[533] Lund also comments that this experience made her aware of Norwegians' intimate relationship with their flag. It would fly for baptisms, confirmations, and weddings, and in smaller sizes it also adorned the home and even the Christmas tree.
[534] Marie Vognild Lund, "Minner om Norge: Julehelgen paa klokkergaarden," *Washington Posten*, Apr. 3, 1931, 1, 3.

about rural Norwegian customs, and she highlighted this authenticity to her presumably urban Norwegian-American readers who were shaping their own family traditions.

Thinking back to a trip to visit her father's birth community in the mountains South of Trondheim in the winter of 1898, Lund celebrated Norwegian hospitality once more and continued to romanticize life in rural Norway. Her uncle came a long distance by horse-sled to pick her up at the last train station. They stayed in several guesthouses on the way, each one warmer and friendlier than the last, with better food. While Lund and her sister had ridden the sled, her relatives had walked beside it to avoid laboring the horse too much.[535] They learned to snowshoe to get around, and regularly climbed the hill above the schoolhouse to visit an old lady, who would welcome them with waffles. In her column, Lund painted a dreamy picture of the woman making waffles with her iron over the fireplace. "A silk hat on her head, and her grey hair like a silver wreath adorning her hat. I now think of it like a picture in a suitable frame, the embers spread their glow so richly, as if the frame was gilded here and there … the thick cream on the warm waffles was no dream; oh, how we enjoyed them!"[536] Lund imagined a picture-perfect moment that she shared with her readers, which showcased the simplicity and "framable" beauty of Norway's rural past. Decades later, the memory seemed almost too idyllic to her as to create doubt that the image was "real." To her readers, however, it offered a romantic fantasy meant to inspire their own dreamy images of Norway from the depths of memory and imagination.

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[535] Marie Vognild Lund, "Minner om Norge: Det hvite eventyr," *Washington Posten*, Apr. 10, 1931, 1, 3.
[536] Marie Vognild Lund, "Minner om Norge: Paa storgaardene og likesaa i de smaa stuer," *Washington Posten*, Apr. 17, 1931, 1, 3.

Although Lund appreciated her financial and social independence as an American woman, she also admired the collective family labors on Norwegian farms, even if women's traditional work was arduous. In the summer, women worked outdoors most of the time, but Lund noted that "[the] winter is the woman's work-shift for the wellness of the home." Women having safely put their cattle to bed in the barn for winter, "busy hands" in every farmhouse and cabin spun and weaved and knitted. "It was important to use the hours – the many drawers around the walls, one to each member of the big flock, needed to be filled with clothes for next year."[537] In observing the women conducting their traditional work, the author noted she felt ashamed when she brought out her purchased goods from which to sow undergarments. She nevertheless does not leave the reader with the impression that young women today should take up the labors of past generations. Quite revealingly, when one elderly woman commented that women today marry without even knowing how to sow a shirt, it is clear that Lund had wanted to respond but kept quiet to avoid "[provoking] judgment from her."[538] Lund highlighted the rushed atmosphere of urban life in the United States, and noted the irony that American women seemed to never have the time to make one such garment while these women had filled drawers. Undoubtedly a modern woman of the 1930s who appreciated women's right to vote, and women's improved financial opportunities, she nevertheless respected the labor women performed on Norwegian farms.[539]

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[537] Marie Lund, "Minner om Norge: Paa storgaardene og likesaa i de smaa stuer," *Washington Posten*, Apr. 17, 1931, 1, 3.
[538] Marie Lund, "Minner om Norge: Maihaugen, friluftsmuseet på Lillehammer," *Washington Posten*, May 22, 1933, 1, 3.
[539] She also noted on a couple of occasions Norwegian women's universal right to vote (1913), and the sculpture monument to Camilla Collett – a nineteenth century writer and feminist – in the Royal Palace gardens: "Minner om Norge: Bildende kunst i Norge og Gustav Vigeland," *Washington Posten*, Jun. 5, 1931, 1, 3.

Another theme present in Lund's writing is the ruggedness of Norwegian nature and the ruggedness of Norwegians, both men and women. Lund crossed the Trondheim Fjord by ferry in the late fall of 1897, on her way to the bell-ringer's farm. The pier was not yet equipped for a ferry that size, and she described her unease with the bad weather and the prospect of switching over to a smaller boat off shore. An older man who just shrugged at the prospect, and guessed her a visiting American, made her even more uneasy when he suggested people would have to share the smaller, open boat with cattle and horses. "To me it looked like every oar stroke that the men took only defied nature – but they got through it."[540] In "De Som Gaar i Kjøkkenet" (Those Who Walk the Kitchen) Lund stressed migration with young children as an illustration of this ruggedness as well. Otelie Sofie Torsdatter, for example, showed her Norwegian ruggedness and asserted her female independence when she took her newly born daughter and her sister on a journey from Wisconsin through Seattle to Alaska, in late fall, to join her gold-prospecting husband.[541]

While Lund noted the daring-do of winter sled riding, she also romanticized the winter wonderland of a supposedly unusually snow-rich winter. The journey through "the fairytale land" of "Norway's endless mountain landscape," and the ten weeks she spent in her father's birth community, made "the most wonderful winter I have experienced."[542] The roads lay higher than barns, and the snow banks came up to second-story windows. People had dug snow tunnels from the doorways that one had to pass through to leave or return to the house. A small boy

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[540] Marie Vognild Lund, "Minner om Norge: Naar fedrelandskjærligheten födes," *Washington Posten*, Mar. 27, 1931, 1, 3.
[541] Marie Vognild Lund, "De Som Gaar i Kjøkkenet: Otelie Sofie Torsdatter: Det Yngste Hvite Barn over Eagle Summit," *Washington Posten*, Apr. 28, 1933, 5.
[542] Marie Vognild Lund, "Minner om Norge: Det hvite eventyr," *Washington Posten*, Apr. 10, 1931, 1, 3.

called Lund and her sister "cold-ridden city folk," after having ignored her plea to put on a jacket as he ran off to the ski slopes. Illustrating Norwegian ruggedness in a child, this "small, dark figure … floated through the air and landed … at the foot of the hill," shortly thereafter making a statement that he definitely did not feel cold.[543]

Lund had mixed feelings about the progress Norway experienced in the next thirty years. The sled ride in the winter of 1898, for example, had seemed dangerous to her when she looked back on it while travelling the same distance by train in 1930.[544] But she also expressed regret at the way people now harnessed nature. She claimed that she and her sister were the first women to bicycle all the way from Trondheim upriver to the untamed waterfall Lerfossen on the Nidelven River, in the summer of 1898. But by 1930, the beauty of nature had been harnessed by dams. She witnessed Lerfossen "transformed to the service for the progress of the country." In the past people went to see the power of the waterfall for no other reason than to marvel at its splendor. Harnessed waterfalls, she opined, "have lost much of their grandeur." Nevertheless, she supposed, the "most beautiful is probably not too good to be sacrificed for the best of the country."[545] The regret connected to progress that she expressed carries similarities to regret expressed by her contemporaries with respect to progress in the American West. While taking care to preserve the "vanishing" past, she also acknowledged (from her perspective) the utility and inevitability of progress.

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[543] Marie Vognild Lund, "Minner om Norge: Paa storgaardene og likesaa i de smaa stuer," *Washington Posten*, Apr. 17, 1931, 1, 3.
[544] Marie Vognild Lund, "Minner om Norge: Det hvite eventyr," *Washington Posten*, Apr. 10, 1931, 1, 3.
[545] Marie Vognild Lund, "Minner om Norge: Naar naturen vaakner," *Washington Posten*, Apr. 24, 1931, 1, 3.

After the turn of the century, improved communications, which meant cheaper and faster travel for both people and mail, more closely bound Norwegian Americans to their Norwegian relatives. Coupled with financial success in America, Marie Lund exemplify Norwegian-American transnationalism in terms of frequent travel to Norway, and two-way cultural exchanges, not unlike that exhibited by Mexican Americans in the early decades of the twentieth century, as described by George Sanchez in his study of the transnationalism among first and second generation Mexican Americans in Los Angeles.[546] Lund's descriptions of Norway's wild wilderness and the ruggedness of Norwegian pioneers also invoke the narrative of early Pacific Northwest Norwegians' efforts to claim a living under difficult conditions, as exemplified by Otelie Sofie Torsdatter's rugged independence in a pioneer setting.

For the most part Lund's columns intended to appeal to second-generation Norwegian Americans in the making a case for cultural preservation – the passing on of cultural heirlooms, customs and traditions to one's children – at the same time they sought to both contrast American and Norwegian lives and mourn the passing of the celebrated rural, Norwegian roots. As the wife of Gunnar Lund, the owner and editor of *Washington Posten*, from 1905 to 1940, Marie Lund had unique access to the pages of the newspaper, and used it as a platform to showcase her literary talents and cultural perspectives. But she was also well known in Norwegian-American circles in Seattle as the founder and many-year president of Den Norske Hospitalsforening (The Norwegian Hospital Association). Her service and leadership, not just

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[546] See for example George Sanchez, *Becoming Mexican-American: Ethnicity, Culture and Identity in Chicano L.A., 1900-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993). Sanchez emphasized immigrant agency in the invention of a Mexican-American identity and culture, which was not simply transplanted Mexican culture. Sanchez contributed to works on borderlands and transnationalism in arguing the border as a socially constructed space in which continuous cross-border contact and exchanges took place, and cultural transmission went both ways.

among Norwegian Americans but also in a broader civic sense drove her to organize a speaker's bureau for the American Red Cross during World War I. Her leadership roles, as well as a series of speaking tours throughout the Puget Sound on behalf of the American Red Cross, made her a respected and influential figure in the region.[547]

Lund's constructed individual reminiscences became part of and helped create the shared ethnic community narrative in the Pacific Northwest. "All profound changes in consciousness, by their very nature, bring with them characteristic amnesias. Out of such oblivions, in specific historical circumstances, spring narratives," argues Benedict Anderson.[548] Similarly as adults remember their childhood only in fragmentary ways, Lund remembered and promoted a particular kind of "narrative of identity," replete with its vivid detail, and contributed to the invention of a hyphenated immigrant identity.[549] Like any other memoir, Lund's narrative was subject to her own interpretation of events thirty years removed from the experience itself. Her agenda as an author, the message she wanted to convey, further shaped how she *chose* to remember and recount her travels. Lund did not create a Pacific Northwest Norwegian collective narrative, on her own, that valued Norwegian heritage and emphasized the traditional. But her writing influenced others, and it joined with the voices of other cultural creators to take part in the overall construction of such a narrative.

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[547] "Marie Vognild Lund," biographical sketch, in the Marie Vognild Lund Papers, Vertical File, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries. "Den norske hospitalsforening," in Alma A. Guttersen and Regina Hilleboe Christensen, eds., *Souvenir "Norse-American Women," 1825-1925: A Symposium of Prose and Poetry, Newspaper Articles, and Biographies, Contributed by one hundred prominent women* (St. Paul: Lutheran Free Church Publishing Co., 1926), 268.
[548] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 1983, 2006), 204.
[549] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 205.

Dorthea Dahl and the Traditional

In an homage to Oscar Handlin, Werner Sollors wrote in a review that "ethnic literature *is* American literature."[550] With that remark, Sollors (with Handlin) suggested that immigrant literature produced an authentic account of *the* American experience, in an overall sense. Ole Edvart Rølvaag is a well known example of an author of immigrant literature owing to his novels *Giants in the Earth* (1927), *Peder Victorious* (1929), and *Their Father's God* (1931). The immigrant trilogy, as they are often called, showcases the American immigrant experience from the perspective of Norwegian immigrant characters. In his novels, Rølvaag argued against Anglo-American nativism and what he perceived as too much acculturation and assimilation in Norwegian immigrant communities. In a study of Rølvaag's rhetorical construction of ethnic identity in his immigrant trilogy, Erica Haugtvedt notes that Rølvaag through the character Beret advocated "a return to the 'indispensable' traits of Norwegian ethnicity," as he viewed them. [551] These traits, or the traditional values he felt threatened by acculturation and assimilation,

[550] Emmett Curran, "The Polish Immigrant in the United States: The Literary Image," *Polish American Studies* 42:2 (Fall 1985): 19 (19-24).

[551] Other scholars, such as Betty Bergland and Lori Ann Lahlum, have critiqued scholars' imbalanced attention to the stereotypical negativity expressed by Norwegian immigrant women characters in Norwegian-American literature, Beret being a case-in-point. Beret fits the stereotype of the reluctant female immigrant. Hungry heroines, however, as coined by Blanche Gelfant, are common enough in Norwegian-American literature, but have tended to be overlooked by scholars. Not all female Norwegian immigrant characters longed for home, or were failed immigrants. Many longed (or hungered) for a better life and were a propelling force in the decision to migrate, or were hungry for knowledge, and sought to improve their lives through education. Such hungry hereoines were the rule rather than the exception in fiction written by Norwegian-American women around the turn of the century. See Betty A. Bergland and Lori Ann Lahlum, "The 'Hungry Heroine' in Norwegian American Fiction," in Betty A. Bergland, Lori Ann Lahlum, eds., *Norwegian American Women: Migration, Communities, and Identities* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Press, 2011), 249-82.

included "strong religious faith, respect for one's parents, love of home, and an appreciation of a collective ethnic past."[552] In the Pacific Northwest, Dorthea Dahl expressed similar ideas.

Dorthea Dahl represented another Pacific Northwest voice that contributed toward the invention and development of an idea of Norway as a symbol of the traditional worth preserving. She shared Rølvaag's appreciation for Norwegian heritage, and his call for its preservation. Her characters mirrored Beret in a return to traditionalism becoming an important element of their story arc. Dahl, however, did not share Rølvaag's views on assimilation in that she viewed cultural adaptation as both desired and necessary.

Dahl was only two years old when her family left Norway for a South Dakota homestead. She grew up well read and well educated in a devout Lutheran home. In 1903, when she was about twenty years old, Dahl, her parents, other family members, and neighbors left South Dakota for Moscow, Idaho, in part due to Dahl's poor health. In Moscow, her health gradually improved she believed due to a less severe climate. She became an accountant, and continued her close affiliation with the Lutheran Church and the Temperance movement. She also wrote and published a large number of short stories during the course of four decades after she settled in Moscow (her first short stories were published in temperance publications).[553] Several short stories were collected in two books that she published through the Augsburg Publishing House of Minneapolis, Minnesota in 1915 and 1920 – *Fra Hverdagslivet* (From Everyday Life) and

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[552] Erica Haugtvedt, "Abandoned in America: Identity Dissonance and Ethnic Preservationism in 'Giants in the Earth,' " *Melus* 33:3 (Fall 2008): 147-49.

[553] "One of Idaho's Prominent Women in Literature," in Alma A. Guttersen and Regina Hilleboe Christensen, eds., *Souvenir "Norse-American Women," 1825-1925: A Symposium of Prose and Poetry, Newspaper Articles, and Biographies, Contributed by one hundred prominent women* (St. Paul: Lutheran Free Church Publishing Co., 1926), 330-32. Brungot, "To Keep and Cultivate," 1-7.

Returning Home, respectively.[554] Augsburg also published her only novel, *Byen paa Berget* (The City on the Hill) in 1925.[555] A main purpose for Augsburg Publishing House, which also published schoolhouse readers in Norwegian, was of course the preservation and cultivation of the Norwegian language (and Norwegian literature) in America, in the face of the cultural assimilation of the second and third generations. Augsburg carried out this objective even in the midst of the World War 1-era wave of anti-immigrant hostility and Anglo-American nativism that led to the Immigration Restriction Laws of 1921 and 1924.[556]

Dahl's stories portray a Norwegian immigrant cast of characters, often in rural or small town settings in the Pacific Northwest, which argued the value of Norwegian culture and heritage in a western setting. Her stories, often humorous, described ethnic environments familiar to Norwegian Americans, including westward migration from the Midwest to the Far West beyond the Rockies. They also explored the search for meaning and fulfillment through intellectual or spiritual growth, sometimes in competition with the demands of people's needs.[557] They could also deal with bereavement and death. As part of her involvement with the Norwegian Lutheran Church, Dahl took an interest in the debate on the question of language, that is, whether or not the church should continue its services in Norwegian, or switch to English. It is clear that she personally prized that heritage as a meaningful cultural basis in her own life.[558] Dahl's characters often underwent a transitional moment of crisis, in which they found meaning

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[554] As suggested by the titles the first book was in Norwegian, and the second in English. The third book, however, was written in Norwegian.
[555] Copies of all three books are available in the Dorthea Dahl Papers, Accession no. 820, Norwegian-American Historical Association, Northfield, Minnesota.
[556] See John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1988), for a classic reader on the subject of the nativism that made anything foreign suspect, in the context of World War I in particular.
[557] Brungot, "To Keep and Cultivate," 9.
[558] Brungot, "To Keep and Cultivate," 7.

when they reconnected with traditional elements they had abandoned as part of their acculturation.

While Elliott Barkan's two-way assimilation model has its problems, such as an oversimplification of reality and a largely assumed linear acculturation, his definition of the "integration" stage – when a member of an ethnic group became bilingual, and when he or she begins to associate with members of the larger society outside the ethnic community – nevertheless represents the degree of acculturation of most of Dahl's characters at the onset of her stories.[559] Dahl's stories, however, complicate and argue against "neat" assimilation. Dahl's characters have often left their parents' rural home, for example, and built a life in the big city. Such a person, Barkan suggests, has "gained some acceptance from the larger society, has become bicultural, and has begun to crystallize dual (or multiple) identities."[560] An individual's integration into the host society, however, could leave a person feeling marginalized in some ways. The transitional challenge experienced by Dahl's characters often represented a crisis of identity and belonging as a result of attempts to integrate as expected by mainstream society.

Dorthea Dahl, nevertheless, held a pragmatic view on struggles to maintain cultural identity in both worlds, including her view on the language question in the Norwegian Lutheran Church. In a speech given at a church conference in 1909, she argued that the language used should be the one best suited to keep young people in the church. She maintained that the question should not be settled on account of which language Norwegian Americans most valued, but instead, the central concern ought to be which language was most suited to consolidate the

[559] Barkan, "Race, Religion, and Nationality in American Society," 48.
[560] Barkan, "Race, Religion, and Nationality in American Society," 48.

Lutheran church in the United States.[561] She believed that the exclusive use of Norwegian in the church would hinder its development and growth and the maintenance of the church as an important cultural glue to the ethnic community across generations.[562] On the surface, "The Seventeenth of May," a satirical short story published in more than one publication, written no later than 1921, is about a small Norwegian-American community attempting to organize its first Norwegian Constitution Day celebration.[563] At its core, however, the story is a contribution to the debate on language in the Norwegian Lutheran Church.

The setting in "Seventeenth of May" is Butch's Butte, a fictional small Norwegian community somewhere in the Pacific Northwest. The local minister has long wanted to organize an annual event commemorating May 17, the Norwegian Constitution Day. He decides that now is the time, and resolves to organize a Seventeenth of May celebration as large as this community possibly can manage, in part as a fundraiser for the church. The pastor is also, in part, motivated by the church's language question. One faction of the congregation believes that services should be held in a language understood by most people, English, since Norwegian is no longer understood by an increasing number of younger people, as well as "unchurched" people from other ethnicities within the community. The other faction, who views themselves as conservatives, insist that the only acceptable language for teaching their children and children's children the catechism is the same as theirs – Norwegian. The minister imagines he can use the Seventeenth of May celebration to help resolve the language question with a compromise. He

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[561] The United Norwegian Lutheran Church of America, the Hauge Synod, and the Norwegian Synod existed separately until they merged as the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America in 1917. This church changed its name to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in 1946.
[562] Brungot, "To Keep and Cultivate," 8.
[563] Note the English title of the story. The fact that Dahl chose to write a satirical story on Norwegian Americans' culture quarrels in relation to a Seventeenth of May celebration – in English – clues the reader to the author's position in the quarrel that ensues.

suggests every other service in English and Norwegian, and expects the Seventeenth of May event itself to satisfy the conservative Norwegian faction, while a program mostly in English ought to satisfy the rest.[564]

Then during the community meeting, the women get involved, suggesting their critical role as arbiters of culture through foodways. Based on a simple misunderstanding, the suggestion that the Ladies' Aid should serve rømmegrøt, Norwegian sour cream porridge, is interpreted by the minister's wife to be a suggestion to serve ice cream. A standoff ensues between women representing each of the two factions, Norwegian conservatives rallying behind rømmegrøt, and those who "ain't Norwegians no more" advocating ice cream. The first faction, of course, makes their arguments in Norwegian, while the second group uses English. After some reminiscent tears when members of the respective factions thought of old country porridge pots or Iowa ice cream freezers, Olive Rudie, the young schoolteacher, quietly slips out to the kitchen to prepare the coffee and develop a plan. She beckons the minister and his wife to the kitchen, and after several rounds of coffee and pastries, the peacemakers convince the women to compromise.

When the day of celebration finally came, the orator by the name of Godfrey Turcott gave an English language speech in which he praised the "history and racial characteristics of the sturdy tribe of Norsemen, whom he declared had left the freest, most democratic country across the seas to escape political oppression and seek freedom for themselves and their children." The oratory was so powerful that even those who could not understand much English wiped tears. A

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[564] Dorothy Dahl, "The Seventeenth of May," *Sturdy Folks and Other Stories* (Minneapolis: K. C. Holter Publishing Company, undated), 70-79, in the Dorthea Dahl Papers, Accession no. 820, Folder 1, Norwegian-American Historical Association, Northfield, Minnesota. Dahl always went by her Norwegian name Dorthea, but publishers occasionally misspelled her name as Dorothy. "The Seventeenth of May" also appeared in *North Star* 3:4 (May-June 1921): 221-28.

choir of small girls, organized by Olive Rudie, sang all the best Norwegian folk songs, and even a token Swedish song. After the program, young girls in Norwegian national costumes handed out porridge bowls filled by two of the loudest ice cream advocates, while next to them, the loudest porridge advocate handed out generous portions of ice cream.[565]

In this short story, the young schoolteacher seems to represent the author, in both the author's perspective on the debate and her frustration with the other characters. The debate on rømmegrøt and ice cream is a metaphor for the debate on the Norwegian and English language, but the reader can also interpret the meaning more broadly in terms of retention of ethnic cultural heritage versus assimilation. Olive Rudie's perspective (or Dorthea Dahl's perspective) is far more pragmatic than that of the members of either faction. She agrees with points made by both, but disagrees that the question ought to require much consideration. To Rudie, valuing one's cultural heritage is not mutually exclusive with one's adaptation to a new identity as an American. Instead, Dahl argues, through Rudie's frustration and actions, that reverence for Norwegian heritage or adoption of American practices is a false choice. In real-world Moscow, despite Dahl's efforts, the church held onto Norwegian for decades, which eventually caused her to leave in frustration in 1931 and join a Swedish Lutheran church instead.[566]

Dahl's 1931 short story "Julekvad" (Christmas Song) addresses two common themes in her writing, which also have to do with adaptation. The first is bereavement of the death of a loved one, and the second is the conflict between the traditional and the modern and materialistic. In this story, an old woman, only identified as "grandma," is struggling to adapt to her new life as a widow. Last Christmas, she prepared a traditional Christmas celebration for

[565] Dahl, "Seventeenth of May," 78-79.
[566] Brungot, "To Keep and Cultivate," 8.

herself and her husband on their farm. After he died the following winter, she moved into her well-to-do son's home in the big city, and experiences a culture clash on top of her grief at the loss of her husband. The grandmother has been uncomfortable with the urban finery around her all year. At first she had tried to remain in her room, but her son Anders, and Laura, his wife, had wanted her to join them for dinner. Fine people asked her how she liked her new life in the city, and she tried to answer as best as she could, with her poor English. No one spoke to her in Norwegian, or asked her about Norway. She had no idea what to eat, or how to eat the various foods on the table. Her son was "Andy" or "dad," and Christmas appeared to be about "Christmas shopping" and "lists." The opening sentence of the story, "[it] was not at all clear what kind of Christmas it would be with Anders and his nice wife and his important children," makes it clear at the onset how unsettled the protagonist feels with respect to a new set of customs with which she is unfamiliar, and a new role with which she is also unaccustomed.[567]

On Christmas Eve the grandma figures out the importance of presents. She had not previously understood the hints about whether she needed money, or wanted to come along to town to go shopping. Her traditional Christmases had never been about gifts, other than the new sets of knitted winter clothes, which saw first use at Christmas. She feels horrible. A granddaughter comforts her, and gets an idea. She had seen many strange things unlike anything else she had ever seen, when she helped her grandmother unpack the previous winter. The granddaughter suggested she should give away some of the "old junk" she had been "dumb enough" to bring from the farm.[568] Old things were back in style, she insisted. At dinnertime, the

[567] Dorthea Dahl, "Julekvad," *Norden* (Dec. 1, 1931), in the Dorthea Dahl Papers, Accession no. 820, Folder 1, Norwegian-American Historical Association, Northfield, Minnesota.
[568] Dahl does not provide literal dialogue, but has the protagonist narrate her experience of events in a typical Scandinavian self-deprecating fashion.

big surprise her son has prepared for her is revealed. Anders had hired a Norwegian woman to prepare a traditional Norwegian Christmas supper. When the time came for presents, the grandmother had deposited hers under the tree. Anders received his father's old bible, and Laura and the children received old books, a Norwegian silver brooch, and Norwegian embroideries. From the expression on each their faces she knew that they appreciated her gifts. Then they all sang Norwegian hymns together, and even the grandchildren tried as best they could to follow the lyrics in the book. When she retired that night, the grandmother felt happy.[569]

This story contrasts the traditional Norwegian with Americanized, modern, urban, and materialistic second and third generation Christmas practices. The grandmother discovers that letting her family embrace her is a good way of coming to terms with her grief over the loss of her husband. The son, his wife, and the children, come to understand the value of tradition and heritage, and how important tradition is to the grandmother. She, in turn, takes part in the American custom of gift giving, and comes to appreciate this new custom as well. Instead of adopting materialism per se, with her granddaughter's help, she adapts the custom by gifting her own heritage – by creating heirlooms. The overall morale of the story, as in the "Seventeenth of May," is that it is possible to successfully combine the two seemingly conflicting values or cultures. The characters who learn this lesson, come away from it, with a broader perspective and a sense of satisfactory personal enrichment.

The urban versus the rural, the modern versus traditional, and genuine family values found in the traditional represent common themes in Dahl's writing. While "Christmas Song" addressed the modern versus the traditional in terms of the affluent versus the modest, assimilation versus ethnic heritage, and second and third generations versus the first, other

[569] Dahl, "Julekvad."

stories affirmed another cultural tradition – religious faith and religious values. In "The Story That Was Never Written" and "The Old Book Case," the protagonist undergoes an experience of self-discovery tied to religious faith. In the first story a writer tasked with composing a non-religious Christmas story is struggling. In a moment of clarity, the writer abandons the project, writes her editor presumably that she cannot complete the story, and drops to her knees in prayer.[570] In the second story, family relationships and family values are more centrally addressed. A son returns home after his father's death, and learns from his father's best friend that he came too late to fulfill his father's wish of returning home. Herman had pursued material success in the city, and neglected to visit his father. After the funeral, he goes over his father's belongings with the intent to sell them. He comes across an old bookcase, and in it he notices the old family bible, which had belonged to his grandfather. A book he knew customarily passed from father to son. Reviewing the books, most of which had religious content and had passed from his grandfather to his father, he begins to comprehend their value. By the end of the story he is beginning to grow attached to his father's community, and the reader is left with the impression that he may indeed have returned home for good.[571]

The conflict between traditional and modern American values is the thematic focus in "Bækkens Sang" (The Song of the Stream) as well. Signe leaves her family in the Midwest, to go to the Pacific Northwest with her husband. They build a home next to a brook, which sings a pleasing tune. After years of marriage, hard work and hardship, the stream's song has lost its charm to Signe. Instead it is starting to feel like a disconcerting noise. She takes her children on a

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[570] Dorthea Dahl, "The Story That was Never Written," *Jul i Vesterheimen* (1920): 20, in the Dorthea Dahl Papers, Accession no. 820, Folder 1, Norwegian-American Historical Association, Northfield, Minnesota.
[571] Summarized in Brungot, "To Keep and Cultivate," 22-23. Story published in Dorthea Dahl, *Returning Home* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1920), 7-29.

trip to visit her parents in the Midwest, but also feels like a stranger at her birth home. Her parents are absorbed in a modern, materialistic lifestyle, which feels foreign to her. Her childhood home is no longer the homely peace and quiet she remembers. Instead, it feels different. Her parents have replaced the things she knew with new and more expensive things. One day her father asks if her husband, Einar, has been kind to her. She is touched. He says that a good relationship is most important, even if one is poor and has to work hard. She returns to Idaho to her husband, with newfound happiness based on the discovery of how little material wealth is worth. She is determined to build a rich family life based on genuine relationships rather than material wealth. She returns home just before Christmas, just in time to make a traditional family celebration highlighting what truly matters in life. And once again, the sound of the stream is soothing music in her ear.[572]

In all of Dahl's short stories, the urban, modern, and material world – even accumulated wealth – fail to provide the happiness the protagonist and other characters pursue. Signe returned home to her husband with newfound wisdom. Her father no longer endured hard work and hardship. He was financially comfortable. But he was not happy. Her visit with her parents in the Midwest had shifted her priorities. Likewise, Herman's priorities shifted similarly toward an appreciation of the wholesome and simple, traditional family life after he returned home. As the short story writer working on the Christmas story conveys, religious values underpin this traditionalism. But the "Seventeenth of May" and "Julekvad" also convey that the traditionalism represents the generational shift in the immigrant community, and the perceived acculturation of the younger generations. Elliott Barkan defines this acculturation as the "absorption of the

[572] Summarized in Brungot, "To Keep and Cultivate," 23-24. Short story published in Dorthea Dahl, "Bækkens Sang," *Familiens Magasin*, Dec. 1917, 8-11.

cultural practices, norms, and values of the host (or dominant) society."[573] Members of the first generation perceived the second generation to lose touch with their ancestral culture as they more closely integrated with the host society. Conflicting feelings when faced with this reality, boosted reactionary traditionalism among members of the first generation. Even though Dahl's stories always argued the value of the traditional, she also argued pragmatic adaptation and a hyphenated identity. Olive Rudie, the schoolteacher, seemed to represent Dahl's perspective more than any other character in "Seventeenth of May" when she offered a compromise solution that suggested common ground between the traditionalists and the modernists. Adopting modern ideas, even "assimilating," did not require the abandonment of everything traditional. An American identity did not necessitate abandoning ethnic heritage.

August Werner: A Return to Traditionalism

Elliott Barkan defines assimilation as the "point at which individual members of ethnic groups have shed the cultural, linguistic, behavioral, and identificational characteristics of their original group as well as disengaged from the associational, or structural, activities that have set them apart from others." [574] Motivated by Werner Sollors' many questions concerning the invention of ethnicity, Ellen Litwicki maintains that the opposition between "pluralism" and its antagonist "assimilation" is false.[575] Litwicki argues that in ethnic celebrations in Chicago, for example, ethnicity and assimilation not only coexisted but proved interdependent and mutually reinforcing. Immigrants' homeland traditions and history intertwined with their responses and

[573] Barkan, "Race, Religion, and Nationality in American Society," 48.
[574] Barkan, "Race, Religion, and Nationality in American Society," 47-48.
[575] Werner Sollors, ed., *The Invention of Ethnicity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), xiv.

adaptation to lives in the United States.[576] The same appears to be true of Dorthea Dahl's short stories and August Werner's musical career.

During August Hansen Werner's tenure as a music professor at the University of Washington, between 1931 and 1965, most members of the Norwegian-American community in Seattle failed to "fully assimilate" as per Barkan's definition, owing to persisting cultural ethnicity.[577] Werner's career, which made him a leader in the Norwegian-American community, remained steeped in Norwegian cultural heritage throughout his life. Born in Bergen, Norway, on December 5, 1893, August Werner had arrived to the United States through Ellis Island with the *S.S. Bergensfjord* on February 14, 1916.[578] "It is enough to say that we came here," he wrote during World War II,

> we stayed here, we worked here, we found a new home here, and welcome and open arms, - we found the same freedom we had experienced in our old Fatherland, - and we found countless opportunities for our serious endeavors. And we learned to love this new home of ours, - and to respect it, and to work for its prosperity and its

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[576] Ellen M. Litwicki, "Our Hearts Burn with Ardent Love for Two Countries: Ethnicity and Assimilation at Chicago Holiday Celebrations, 1876-1918," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 19:3 (Spring 2000): 6.

[577] Integration and assimilation, the last two stages of Barkan's assimilation model, describe the status of the present-day Norwegian-American community in the Pacific Northwest, and even Seattle. But Werner would have seen this as well, by the end of his career in 1965 when Norwegian language newspapers and church services were largely gone. Language expressions (uff da), traditional foods (lutefisk and lefse), and some festivals (Seventeenth of May, Scandinavian festivals) persists in the final stages, but residential dispersion, intermarriage, and shifting or dropping memberships in churches and ethnic organizations occur. Most descendants of the original ethnic group have "blended or melded into the larger society culturally, socially, institutionally, and identificationally." See Barkan, "Race, Religion, and Nationality in American Society," 57-59.

[578] U.S. Census, 1930 (T626, roll 1515, film 2341250, digital folder 4638865, image 00907).

present and future progress and happiness.[579]

Werner's account of his early days in America suggested few difficulties in adaptation, but also an *effort* to adapt to "this new home" and to work for "its prosperity." He initially settled in the Norwegian immigrant enclave of Brooklyn, New York, where he quickly became a fixture of Brooklyn's Norwegian colony, popularly called "*Mysosten*" (The milk whey cheese). He stayed there for fifteen years before relocating to Seattle for a faculty position at the University of Washington.[580] In Seattle, he remained deeply connected to the Norwegian-American community throughout his life, where in addition to his long career as a teacher, baritone singer, and choir director, also made a reputation as an oil painter and sculptor.

As a single, male European who had crossed the Atlantic and found a place in American society after having been received with "welcome and open arms" at Ellis Island, Werner seems to represent a blueprint of the classic assimilationist narrative told and retold by scores of historians throughout the twentieth century. American public perception has long pressed this sort of origin story to its chest: A man of little to no means, perhaps a younger son in a large family, who took a chance and set out in search of a better life. Upon arrival in the United States, such men worked hard, slowly built a new life, and eventually met with success and the ability to craft a legacy they could pass on to future generations. The life of August Werner carries all of the main characteristics of this classic narrative of the immigrant experience. Articles and reviews in newspapers such as the *Seattle Daily Times* always mentioned his national origin, but

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[579] Speech about America, purpose and location unknown, undated, but written some time during the U.S. involvement in World War II, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 30, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.

[580] Werner to Otto Clausen, Apr. 11, 1938, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 16, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries. U.S. Census, 1930 (T626, roll 1515, film 2341250, digital folder 4638865, image 00907). Ship arrival date from Werner's naturalization papers, National Archives, New York.

then quickly went on to praise his talent. When newspapers introduced Werner to the public – the mid 1920s in New York and a few years later in Seattle – they also unsurprisingly highlighted his status as a naturalized American citizen, trained in America by an American instructor, but nevertheless mentioned his Norwegian origin.[581] Particularly in the case of New York in 1925 – a year after President Coolidge signed the Immigration Restriction Act into law – one gets a sense that the writer had to admit that the man with the strange name was indeed an immigrant, but then hurriedly added a "but" before anyone could raise an objection. Werner arrived amid a strong wave of nativist anti-immigration sentiment, received his training, and found his footing as a musician in the context of the new Immigration Restriction Laws. Subsequently, Werner experienced a more significant pressure to integrate than Marie Vognild and Dorthea Dahl before him.

Always noted, but rarely elaborated upon, Werner's national origin seemed to follow him in newspaper reports throughout his life as if the reporters meant to say that it was what he did with his life, not his birth, that ultimately mattered. Unfailing praise that never ignored Werner's Norwegian background suggested that Werner made a model immigrant: A well-assimilated professional who deservedly succeeded in America because he adopted American culture and values, and made a good citizen. However, on his own account, Werner never failed to remind everyone else of his Norwegian origins. In his own eyes, and those of other Norwegian Americans, Werner embodied transplanted Norwegian culture to the Pacific Northwest. He

[581] According to his naturalization papers, National Archives, New York, Werner received his citizenship in 1925. Already that same year a New York newspaper highlighted his citizenship status. Undated newspaper clipping from unidentified newspaper of article entitled "Pupils of Melanie Guttman-Rice Chosen for Free Opera Cast," unidentified New York newspaper, undated (but referencing a 1925 program), clipping, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 13, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.

personified cultural preservation, a continued transnational connection to Norway, and a model "Norwegian" as well as a model "American."

The *Seattle Times* praised Werner's talents as a musician and his Norwegian background. His name had first appeared in the newspaper in 1929. It announced and reviewed his Seattle concerts, and referred to him as "eminent" or "noted Norwegian baritone," and "assisting artist" with the Norwegian Male Chorus.[582] On one occasion, the newspaper explained that the Norwegian Male Chorus, "one of the oldest organizations of its kind in the Northwest, [held] as its ideal the furthering of songs which are dear to the hearts of Norsemen."[583] The *Seattle Daily Times* often identified Werner as "Norwegian baritone," as did event advertisements, but with the feel of a labeled quality product without any hint of criticism.[584] One time, the newspaper even ventured to name him "one of the finest Norwegian baritones in America today." It is doubtful that the United States had many other fine Norwegian baritones, but a likely editing glitch though it is, it suggests how entrenched "Norwegian baritone" had become as a label and identity for August Werner. The *Seattle Times* praised him in 1929, and continued to praise him throughout his performance career. Werner "is a Norwegian who came to America a few years ago and has won acclaim as a concert artist," the newspaper wrote in 1931. "Fine tonal qualities," it continued, "a satisfying style and sympathetic interpretation are characteristics brought out in his well-balanced programs."[585]

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[582] "Several Celebrities of the Music World are Scheduled for Local Appearance Shortly," *Seattle Daily Times*, Nov. 3, 1929, 24. "Norwegian Chorus Celebrating 40th Anniversary Today," *Seattle Daily Times*, Dec. 1, 1929, 5.
[583] "Norwegian Male Chorus to Hold Birthday Fetes," *Seattle Daily Times*, Nov. 24, 1929, 20.
[584] "Seattle Symphony Orchestra Popular Concert," Advertisement, *Seattle Daily Times*, Jan. 10, 1934, 13.
[585] "Werner Will Appear Here with Cadman," *Seattle Daily Times*, Mar. 29, 1931, 42.

Werner also received praise from his audiences, which included members of the Norwegian immigrant community and other Americans. Women swooned over the "deep, rich, rolling tones of August Werner's voice."[586] "Now just for tonight, Mr. Werner," one female admirer wrote him, "Make love to the ladies in ENGLISH, Italien and French I don't know."[587] He often performed as soloist with the Norwegian Male Chorus, which elected him director in 1935.[588] After hearing a concert on the radio, a San Francisco resident assured Werner that "I was only one of the many thousands that turned off the radio last evening wishing that the Norwegian Male Chorus could have had time for a few more songs." He went on to praise the chorus' "faithful work and splendid ability" which "was a worthy tribute to its leader."[589]

Werner held or participated in a large number of concerts in the 1930s and 1940s, with a growing emphasis on Norwegian cultural content. Most of his activities centered around Seattle, and his most common public appearances were with the Norwegian Male Chorus as conductor and soloist. He held a particular fondness for the composer Edvard Grieg, as his concert programs often included some of the famous Norwegian composer's pieces. From 1931, and onward, Werner's concerts always included a number of Norwegian folk songs or works by Norwegian composers and lyricists. From 1935 until the 1960s, he conducted the Norwegian Male Chorus at every Scandinavian event of significance, such as Seattle's Seventeenth of May Celebration for the Norwegian Constitution Day, the "transplanted ski party" midsummer festival, Ballard's First Lutheran Church annual blessing of the fishing fleet, and Leif Erikson

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[586] "Music Lovers Welcome Symphony Director Home," *Seattle Daily Times*, Oct. 12, 1933, 16.
[587] Elizabeth Hauger to Werner, undated, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 14, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.
[588] "Norwegians Will Observe Natal Day," *Seattle Daily Times*, May 17, 1935, 2.
[589] E. A. Parker to Werner, Feb. 19, 1936, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 13, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.

Day – the commemoration of the Viking explorer credited with "discovering" America during the Viking Age.[590] While Werner held an obvious appreciation for Norwegian and Scandinavian music, his performances usually included a variety of European and American works as well, which appealed to a broader audience.[591] During World War II, however, Norwegian cultural programming seemed to dominate his performances. The German occupation of Norway boosted Norwegian patriotism among Norwegian Americans in ways not unlike the effects of Norwegian Independence in 1905. This patriotic fervor affected the programming at Werner's concerts.

A survey of the Norwegian Male Chorus programming at various events between 1935 and 1945, makes it clear that a number of pieces represented a standard repertoire that Werner included in almost every concert. These included works by Norway's national poets Henrik Wergeland, Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, Henrik Ibsen and Andreas Munch, among others, set to music composed by Edvard Grieg, Halfdan Kjerulf, and Rikard Nordraak, among others.[592] Both the

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[590] "Norwegians to Observe Day of Independence," *Seattle Daily Times*, May 6, 1934, 4. "Norwegians Will Observe Natal Day," *Seattle Daily Times*, May 17, 1935, 2. "Ski Club Will Hold Festival Tomorrow Night," *Seattle Daily Times*, Jun. 21, 1935, 23. "Gov. Langlie to Speak at Church Fete," *Seattle Daily Times*, Mar. 15, 1941, 7. Various concert and event programs, August Werner Papers, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.

[591] "Massed Choruses to Have Werner as Guest Artist," *Seattle Daily Times*, Apr. 19, 1932, 18. "Norwegian Chorus Will Honor Poet," *Seattle Daily Times*, Dec. 4, 1932, 4. "Large Audience is Thrilled by Popular Concert," *Seattle Daily Times*, Mar. 13, 1933, 12. "Music Lovers Enjoy Variety at Symphony," *Seattle Daily Times*, Jan. 15, 1934, 8. "Three-Day Fete Awaits Norwegian Royal Couple," *Seattle Daily Times*, May 17, 1939, 1-2.

[592] Sample of event programs with August Werner and the Norwegian Male Chorus of Seattle: Leif Erikson Foundation, "Leif Erikson Day Celebration," Seattle, Oct. 9, 1935, 1936, 1941, and 1944, and Oct. 6, 1945, programs; Norwegian Male Chorus, "Annual Spring Concert," 1941, 1942, 1944, and 1945, programs; City of Seattle and Seattle Chamber of Commerce organizing committees, "Hil Jer Skudd av Haraldsstammen," May 26, 1939, Civic Auditorium, Seattle, Program for main event of festivities in honor of Royal visit from Norway; Oregon Norwegian Relief, Inc., "Norwegian Male Chorus of Seattle," Benson Polytechnic School Auditorium, Portland, Nov. 16, 1940, Program; Norwegian Male Chorus, "Seattle Male Chorus," First Methodist Church, Aberdeen, Apr. 5, 1941, Program; and Norwegian Male Chorus of Seattle, and Norwegian Male Chorus of Everett, "All Grieg Concert," Ballard High School Auditorium,

poets and composers had mostly been active in the latter half of the nineteenth century, and they were all heavily influenced by Norway's romantic nationalism of that time period. Werner often used selections (songs) form Bjørnson and Grieg's *Sigurd Jorsalfar*, which included "Landkjending" (Landsighting); a piece he often performed as soloist himself.[593] He also commonly used selections from Bjørnson and Nordraak's *Sigurd Slembe*, and Ibsen and Grieg's *Peer Gynt*.[594] Other examples of works by combinations of the same poets and composers that Werner and the Norwegian Male Chorus often performed, included the Norwegian national anthem (Bjørnson/Nordraak); "Norges Fjelde" (Wergeland/Kjerulf), which explores the meaning of the mountains to the Norwegian folk spirit, as well as their utility for defense; and "Brudeferden i Hardanger" (Munch/Kjerulf), a romanticized peasant folk wedding procession that glides through idyllic fjord scenery.[595] Such works romanticized and celebrated the Viking past, eighteenth and nineteenth century peasant culture, the rugged Norwegian landscape, and the Norwegian (rugged and seafaring) spirit; and they figured prominently in Werner's concerts.

Seattle, Apr. 30, 1943, Program. All in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 49, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.

[593] "Landkjending (Landsighting) from *Sigurd Jorsalfar* appears in five of the programs: "Hil Jer Skudd av Haraldsstammen," 1939; "53rd Annual Spring Concert," 1942; "Leif Erikson Day Celebration," 1941; "All Grieg Concert," 1943; "55th Annual Spring Concert," 1944. Part of an extended *Sigurd Jorsalfar* program 1943 and 1944.

[594] *Sigurd Jorsalfar*, *Sigurd Slembe*, and *Peer Gynt* are plays with significant elements of romantic nationalism, performed to music composed by Grieg or Nordraak. Five programs contain selections from *Sigurd Slembe* or *Peer Gynt*: "Norwegian Male Chorus of Seattle," 1940; "Seattle Male Chorus," 1941; "52nd Annual Spring Concert," 1941; "53rd Annual Spring Concert," 1942; and "55th Annual Spring Concert," 1944.

[595] "Ja, Vi Elsker Dette Landet (Yes, We Love This Country) is found on the programs for the 53rd and 55th "Annual Spring Concert," 1942 and 1944. "Norges Fjelde" (Norway's Mountains) appears on four programs: "Leif Erikson Day Celebration," 1936; "Norwegian Male Chorus of Seattle," 1940; "Seattle Male Chorus," 1941; and the "52nd Annual Spring Concert," 1941. "Brudeferden i Hardanger" (Bridal Procession in Hardanger) is found in three programs: "Norwegian Male Chorus of Seattle," 1940; "Seattle Male Chorus," 1941; and "56th Annual Spring Concert," 1945.

Concerts held during the German occupation of Norway showcased a boosted patriotic fervor on the part of both the performer and the audience. It was during World War II that programs specified joint chorus and audience singing of the Norwegian national anthem. The themes of romantic nationalism persisted, but selections also conveyed attention to Norway's predicament. Typical selections from the war years all bring forth love of country and a call to arms on its behalf.[596] "Give us strength and courage in our country's great trial, that freedom may be ours," one program offered in description of the piece "Stridsbøn" (Battle Prayer), but also as a bolded statement.[597] Concerts and other events organized by Norwegian organizations during World War II also often served as fundraisers for Norwegian Relief. Oregon Norwegian Relief, for example, hosted Werner and the Norwegian Male Chorus in Portland in 1940 to raise funds "to further our work of succoring to the needs of our dear ones across the sea."[598] In 1944 and 1945 programs contained parenthetical English translations of the title of every Norwegian piece, along with mood-setting "scene descriptions" in English for some of the selections. "Across the beautiful blue waters of the fjord comes the gay wedding procession returning from the little church whose bell tolls merrily in the distance, one such caption read in reference to

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[596] Oscar Borg's "Gud Signe Noregs Land" (God Bless Our Land); Otto Jonas Lindblad's "Stridsbøn" (Battle Prayer); Edvard Grieg's "Til Norge" (For Norway); David Monrad Johansen's "Gamle Norig" (Old Norway); Ole Olsen's "Fanevakt (Bearer of the Colors); and Sigmund Romberg's "Stout Hearted Men," are examples of pieces found in the programs of the Norwegian Male Chorus, 1940-1945, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 49, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries. Romberg was Austrian-Hungarian, but the theme of strong men with soul and spirit persevering, and fighting boldly shoulder to shoulder, is universal.

[597] Norwegian Male Chorus, "56th Annual Spring Concert," Plymouth Congregational Church, Apr. 21, 1945, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 49, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.

[598] Oregon Norwegian Relief, Inc., "Norwegian Male Chorus of Seattle," Benson Polytechnic School Auditorium, Portland, Nov. 16, 1940, Program, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 49, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.

Kjerulf's bridal procession."[599] The use of English may suggest and adaptation of the program text to accommodate the appeal and interest in Werner and Scandinavian choir music outside the Norwegian community; or it may suggest the hope of attracting Americans from outside the community and perhaps their support for Norwegian Relief. But it also likely suggests awareness that by the end of World War II, the number of first generation immigrants was diminishing rapidly. The community was shifting to third and fourth generation, and with that shift fewer people could understand Norwegian.

The preservation and promotion of Norwegian cultural heritage featured prominently in other aspects of Werner's active professional life as well. He orchestrated a lecture-recital entitled "The Life and Culture of the Ancient Norsemen." The talk covered "a period of 4,000 years, illustrated by sagas, poetry and folk music. Mrs. Werner, wearing Norwegian costume," accompanied "her husband's vocal numbers" on the piano. The Werners held this musical lecture at least four times over two years.[600] Gertrude Werner had an independent career as a musician. When her husband moved to Seattle in 1931, she stayed behind in Brooklyn for two years pursuing her own career as an accomplished piano accompanist. Nevertheless, after she joined him in Seattle the two of them often collaborated on musical performances, or she took part in Scandinavian programs that featured both of them separately.[601] By 1939, Werner had earned

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[599] Norwegian Male Chorus, "56th Annual Spring Concert," Plymouth Congregational Church, Apr. 21, 1945, in August Werner Papers, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries. Norwegian Male Chorus of Seattle, "55th Annual Spring Concert," Moore Theatre, May 6, 1944, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 49, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.

[600] "Lecture-Recital to be Given by Prof. Werner," *Seattle Daily Times*, Aug, 6, 1933, 15. "Entre Nous," *Seattle Daily Times*, Feb. 26, 1934, 8. "Entre Nous," *Seattle Daily Times*, Apr. 29, 1935, 8. "Music and Art Unit Will Hear August Werner," *Seattle Daily Times*, May 23, 1935, 21.

[601] Gertrude Gunston (1890-1958) shared her Norwegian ancestry with Werner when they met in Brooklyn's concert hall, civic club, and church musician scene in the years after his immigration.

enough recognition in the community to be named chairman of the committee in charge of the official entertainment during the May 1939 visit of Norway's Crown Prince Olav and Crown Princess Märtha.[602] Minister Morgenstierne later wrote him that it "was a pleasure to see you on various occasions during the visit of the Crown Prince and Crown Princess," and thanked him for "the splendid part which you took in the programs wherever you were present."[603] That "splendid part" during the royal visit, along with his "efforts through many years for Norwegian interests in America and for the connection between our countries and our peoples," earned him knighthood that fateful next spring.[604]

World War II crystallized for Werner the importance of preserving his Norwegian heritage. Sentiments on what Norway and Norwegian heritage meant to him came to expression in a series of speeches. On the "dark, monstrous day of sorrow" that made the Seventeenth of May celebration in Seattle in 1940, Werner used the imagery of the flag, the Norwegian landscape, and the terror or war to connect with his listeners over his sense of loss and tragedy. "The Norwegian flags no longer fly in the wind. They no longer blush red in the spring sun," he said. "The dew of the morning mist sheds its tears of sorrow in the quiet, barren valleys." Relatives and friends now lived their lives under the Nazi heel, and the "whole nation's life and

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They married in 1920, and both completed studies at the Master School of Music in Brooklyn under Mme. Melanie Guttman-Rice (1874-1961). See Fred Poyner IV, "Werner, August Hansen (1893-1980)," http://www.historylink.org/File/11186 (Feb. 5, 2016, accessed: Nov. 27, 2017).

[602] "Three-Day Fete Awaits Norwegian Royal Couple," *Seattle Daily Times*, May 17, 1939, 1-2.

[603] Wilhelm Morgenstierne to Werner, Aug. 26, 1939, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 12, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.

[604] Wilhelm Morgenstierne, Kgl. Norsk Legasjon, Washington D.C., to Werner, Apr. 5, 1940, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 12, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries. Consul of the Royal Norwegian Consulate, Seattle, to Werner, Apr. 26, 1940, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 12, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.

future" was threatened by the "barbaric, bestial tyranny" of Nazi Germany.[605] "We pause today to reflect on the great heritage we have from Norway," he wrote on the occasion of another Seventeenth of May celebration, "and to preserve and strengthen this heritage for the good of ourselves and this our new country."[606]

Werner spent a career as an embodiment of efforts to preserve heritage in an immigrant community, but World War II made him speak of preservation with increased urgency. No longer was the heritage threatened by the Americanization of the second and third generations alone, as Lund and Dahl articulated. During World War II, it was also threatened by German machine guns. "Words become so empty and meaningless," wrote August Werner in a speech manuscript some time after the attack on Pearl Harbor. They become "so inadequat in giving a true picture of what this country realy means and what it stands for in the eyes and minds of suffering humanity. And to us Norwegian this becomes very real indeed…All this becomes acutely real to us now when both our old Fatherland and our new Fatherland are united against the common foe and arm in arm we are marching forward to Victory."[607] The war brought Norway and the United States together as allies, but it also seemed to unify two sides of August Werner with renewed purpose. Werner had been accepted as an American citizen before he moved to Seattle. No one questioned his patriotism on account of his art. Clearly well integrated into Seattle public life while deeply rooted in the Norwegian community, Werner's life (along

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[605] "17de mai, 1940," typewritten speech manuscript, May 17, 1940, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 21, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.
[606] Notes for a Seventeenth of May speech, undated, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 21, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.
[607] Speech about Americans and the American WWII war effort, undated, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 30, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries. Spelling errors in the original.

with that of Lund and Dahl) exemplifies how real lives rarely neatly fit models such as that of Elliott Barkan.

Werner maintained a strong connection to Norway after the war. He secured scholarships for Norwegian students to attend the University of Washington. "Your efforts in this important field are highly appreciated," the Norwegian Embassy in Washington D.C. wrote him, "and your continued work to secure assistance from the Norwegian-American group in Seattle will be of greatest interest to everybody concerned."[608] He gifted a bust of the Norwegian composer Edvard Grieg that he had made to the embassy.[609] And he helped bring Norwegian choirs and artists to the United States.[610] Norwegian cultural heritage remained important to him, but he also embraced aspects of Cold War patriotism.

Even in his Cold War rhetoric (expressed in a series of speeches in the 1950s and early 1960s), however, Werner argued for the right to be "free" to claim both his Norwegianness and his Americanness. Norwegian Americans get together on the Seventeenth of May, he said in 1961, "because we have an inner feeling, a compelling force, that makes us go to a meeting place where we can celebrate the most important day in the history of our old Fatherland."[611] He went on to address freedom in Norway, and Norwegian Americans' freedom in the United States. "It is quite natural that in such a celebration we include the United States," he said, "and in a greater sense bind the aims and lofty ideals of our two countries together and thus give the day a greater,

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[608] Norwegian Embassy to Werner, Oct. 29, 1945, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 7, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.
[609] Wilhelm Morgenstierne to Werner, Dec. 6, 1957, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 7, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.
[610] O. C. Christopher, to Werner, Nov. 22, 1947 and Dec. 13, 1947, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 11, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.
[611] Speech manuscript for Seventeenth of May celebration, 1961, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 28, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.

a deeper and more nobel meaning and significance." Hence, he was speaking to a *settled* duality in Norwegian-American nature, and from the perspective of an assimilated American. "Let us look at the Norwegians," he said in his speech in 1951, "look at ourselves for a few moments. Look at Norway and ourselves as a nation." After a brief discussion of Norway's long fight for freedom, he turned his attention to the political situation in which the United States and its allies (including Norway) found themselves in 1951. Clearly speaking from the point of view of an American with dual identities, he said that it "is the same kind of freedom we are fighting for today. We fight the oppressing force whether you call it Communism or any other kind of ism. We fight it."[612] Werner's American patriotism remained deeply entwined with his Norwegian patriotism even during the Cold War.

In his old age, Werner remained a hyphenated Norwegian American whose Norwegianness often came to expression in romantic nationalist terms, sometimes perhaps with a touch of whiteness as well. Though never static, his appreciation for things Norwegian remained constant. When, on one occasion, two young girls visited from Norway they both delighted and moved him with their musical performance. "Two pretty, upright and beautiful Norwegian girls in colorful bunads, a more beautiful sight does not exist on earth," he said in his end remarks after their performance. "It beamed and glowed in colors" from which "came this wonderful song like the cleanest breath of spring air, a heartwarming greeting from old Norway." It was

[612] Seventeenth of May speech manuscript, 1951, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 25, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries. Spelling errors in the original.

"pleasant sound and harmony, for it was Norwegian sounds, it was Norwegian Harmony, and it was Norwegian girls that gave us all this."[613]

In old age, Werner continued to view the transplantation of Norwegian culture and heritage to the United States as not just a possibility, but also a responsibility. He celebrated the heritage along with its connection to nineteenth century romantic nationalism. He claimed Pacific Northwest Norwegians could be and were "proud" of their heritage. In a reference to one of Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson's nationalist anthems, he maintained that the "heritage can be transplanted as readily as not – because: 'Her er sommer sol nok, her er Sædejord nok, - bare vi, bare vi hadde kjærlighet nok. Her er diktende trang gjennom arbeidets gang til at løfte bort land – Blot vi løfter i flokk.' ['Here is summer-sun aplenty, here is good soil – if only, if only we had enough love. Here is a poetic urge from labor's toll busily moving the land – granted we do so together.'][614] Werner transplanted Norwegian culture and heritage throughout his career. He embodied the preservation and transplantation of such culture through his multi-pronged life's work. In a sense, every time he stepped onto a stage he *was* preserved Norwegian culture *transplanted* to the United States.

Conclusion

The Norwegian immigrant experience in the Pacific Northwest has been one of ongoing identity production. Marie Lund, Dorthea Dahl, and August Werner navigated pressures to "assimilate"

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[613] Speech to female singers, Undated, in August Werner Papers, Box 1, Folder 42, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries (style of hand-writing suggests it may be from the 1950s or 1960s, translated by author).

[614] Werner is here quoting Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson's "Fædrelandssang." Nineteenth century Norwegian romantic nationalist poem about laboring to build Norway into a country of its own. Seventeenth of May speech manuscript, 1965, in August Werner Papers, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries (translated by author).

and reject their native origins, but instead emphasized the importance of cultural traditions and not losing the best of those traditions in their new homes. All three spoke to the second and third generations through their crafts. Lund contrasted life and gender roles between the two countries, and romanticized and celebrated traditional Norway as a cherished memory that underscored the independence of Norwegian-American women in the 1930s, and the ways their mothers and grandmothers had worked hard to give them that independence. Dahl invented characters who navigated the same pressures as the author and her readership, and argued how men and women could make independent choices to adapt to their new homes while preserving their ethnic identity. Dahl made a case that adaptation of language, for example, was necessary, but that ethnic and American identities were not mutually exclusive. Werner taught music to younger generations, and preserved Norwegian heritage through performance in the Pacific Northwest. His many musical programs, event speeches, and varied medium artwork, all emphasized Norwegian heritage and Norwegian identities in the American context.

Lund, Dahl, and Werner are important not because they are representative of other Norwegian Americans, but because they were all first-generation immigrant voices who influenced the ways Pacific Northwest Norwegians, and other Americans, connected with both transplanted Norwegian culture and the developing, distinctly Norwegian-American culture. Lund's "invented" memories, Dahl's short stories, and Werner's music all created, and became part of, a collective Norwegian-American narrative asserting the value of Norwegian heritage in Pacific Northwest Norwegians' homes. Between the three cultural creators, gender also played a role. Werner achieved celebrity status, and could make a living from his chosen profession. Lund and Dahl wrote, but could not make a living from their writing. Lund's work in Seattle was devoted to community service, but her labor seemed to play second fiddle to her role as a well-

known editor's wife. Unmarried, throughout her life, Dahl made a living on her own. She earned most of her income, however, not from her writing but from accounting work.

As seen through the lens of Lund, Dahl, and Werner, the 1910s through the 1940s was a period when first-generation immigrants faced with the acclimation of second, third and fourth generation community members, and the pressures of Anglo-American nativism, suffered an "assimilative" identity crisis. Lund, Dahl, and Werner resolved that crisis in their own lives, and their voices helped readers and listeners find ways to navigate the demands of both American citizenship and Norwegian cultural fidelity. All three contributed toward preexisting narratives of the Norwegian ethnicity defined by the masculine "rugged sturdiness" of its people, and their ability to overcome hardship. All three also invoked the role of the wild and rugged Norwegian nature in shaping its people, and they created cultural impressions of how Norwegian nature, the people shaped by it, and the natural landscape and professions of the Pacific Northwest, combined in regional hyphenated identity production. Hence, the three not only exemplify the celebration of the traditional and the preservation of ethnic heritage, but they also exemplify the production of a regional Pacific Northwest Norwegian identity based in part on elements of ethnic environmentalism and a perceived cultural superiority.

EPILOGUE

Every year on May 17 people crowd the streets in the Norwegian ethnic community of Ballard, on the shore of Shilshole Bay, north of Elliott Bay and Queen Anne in Seattle. If one walks Market Street west from Bergen Place and turns north onto 24th Avenue, in the late afternoon one will discover that people carrying Norwegian flags in their hands, and displaying a lion crest emblazoned red, white, and blue ribbon on their chests, have set up their picnic areas on the sidewalks. As the time approaches 6 p.m., hardly any spot within view from the street is unoccupied. A pedestrian moving slowly between the crowds can hear scattered Norwegian spoken here and there, most likely by Norwegian tourists, students, and other Norwegian nationals living in the greater Seattle area. Some of the Norwegian speakers might also be local residents, but while Ballard still maintains a Norwegian-American, or perhaps more accurately Nordic-American, identity, there are very few first-generation immigrants living there today. In 2009, Olsen's Scandinavian Foods, once a mainstay on Market Street and a "venerable part of the Scandinavian community," symbolized the decline of a once vibrant immigrant community when it closed.[615]

Even today, however, on any day of the week, Norwegian imported foods, or freshly baked Scandinavian pastries, can be purchased from a couple of stores that still offer such an inventory. Throughout the year, the Leif Erikson Lodge of the Sons of Norway hosts special events, and its members regularly serve Norwegian traditional foods in their Kafestua.[616] One can visit the Nordic (Heritage) Museum, which will move into a brand new building in 2018, or

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[615] Nancy Bartley, "Olsen's Scandinavian Foods in Ballard Soon Will Close," *Seattle Times*, Jun. 23, 2009. https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/olsens-scandinavian-foods-in-ballard-soon-will-close/ (Accessed: Nov. 15, 2017).

[616] Sons of Norway, Leif Erikson Lodge, http://www.leiferiksonlodge.com (Accessed: Nov. 15, 2017).

enjoy murals depicting Norwegian migration to the United States above Bergen Place square, behind flagpoles flying all the flags of the Nordic countries. If one ventures to the Shilshole Bay Marina, the statue of Leif Erikson, the sculptural handiwork of August Werner, gazes toward the west, over the bay.[617]

As the largest Norwegian Constitution Day parade outside Norway, the Seattle Seventeenth of May parade demonstrates the persistence of the Norwegian and Scandinavian ethnic identity in the Pacific Northwest. Norwegian colors come out in great force. Folk costumes, or bunads, can be seen everywhere. After the chirp of a siren, and an exhibition by a handful of police officers on motorcycles, the Seventeenth of May parade, said to be the largest in the world after that of Oslo and Bergen in Norway, commences.[618] The parade itself resembles what is called a "folketog" (people's parade) in the "homeland." It has all the traditional elements of a Seventeenth of May parade in Norway, including romantic nationalist imagery and symbolism, children, school bands, the singing of various Norwegian anthems, and calls of "hipp, hipp, hurra." But it also has its local flavor signifying its 130-year history within Seattle's immigrant community.[619] The Grand Marshal, always a visiting Norwegian dignitary, is followed by representatives from various Sons and Daughters of Norway lodges, the Norwegian

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[617] Nordic Museum, http://nordicmuseum.org/future (Accessed: Nov. 15, 2017). The statue was a gift from the Leif Erikson League to the Port of Seattle during Seattle's World's Fair in 1962. A replica of the statue, gifted by the Leif Erikson Society in Seattle to the city of Trondheim, Norway, for its millennial celebration in 1997, gazes west over the Trondheim Fjord, and greets American cruise ship passengers on arrival.

[618] Madeline McKenzie, "Celebrate Seattle's Maritime and Scandinavian Heritage," *Seattle Times*, May 11, 2016. https://www.seattletimes.com/entertainment/celebrate-seattles-maritime-and-scandinavian-heritage/ (Accessed: Nov. 15, 2017). Lindsey Wasson, "Ballard Still Feels the Tug of Norwegian Ties," *Seattle Times*, May 17, 2015. https://www.seattletimes.com/photo-video/ballard-still-feels-the-tug-of-norwegian-ties/ (Accessed: Nov. 15, 2017).

[619] The parade has deep roots in Seattle's Norwegian immigrant community, where the first visible celebration took place in 1889. Some form of official celebration has taken place in Seattle every year since 1889, but the Ballard parade has been the focal point only since 1974.

Male Chorus, folk dancing clubs, and "lags" based on one's ancestry's regional origin in Norway – each flying their own banners. But it also has all the elements of a traditional American parade, including floats, cars, queens and princesses, grand marshals, and American marching bands. In both Ballard and Norway, parades show far more ethnic diversity than they did some decades ago. Seattle's parade certainly exhibits the nationalistic feel of its Norwegian counterpart, but it nevertheless represents the other Nordic countries as well. The incorporation of symbols of ethnic heritage from Sweden, Denmark, Finland, and Iceland makes the parade a Nordic (not just Norwegian) heritage festival.[620]

If May 17 events in the Seattle neighborhood symbolize traditional ethnic ties that remain central in the Pacific Northwest, the "Alt For Norge" (All for Norway) television reality show represents new transnational efforts to claim a Norwegian past in the region. The reality show, called "The Great Norway Adventure" in the United States when the casting call goes out, holds auditions for hopeful contenders in Seattle, Minneapolis, and Chicago. In late April, twelve contenders drawn from Norwegian Americans across the United States travel to Norway to compete against each other to demonstrate who has what it takes to be named the most "authentic" Norwegian. To enter, until 2017, a candidate had to be a U.S. citizen with "some Norwegian ancestry," who had never traveled to Norway.[621] From 2017 the eligibility rules

[620] Norwegian Seventeenth of May Committee, Seattle. http://www.17thofmay.org/ (Accessed: Nov. 15, 2017).
[621] "Casting Call for 'Alt For Norge, The Great Norway Adventure" 2017 Season 8," http://www.auditionsfree.com/2016/casting-call-alt-norge-great-norway-adventure-2017-season-8/ (Accessed: Nov. 15, 2017).

loosened to include Canadian citizens living in the United States (with some Norwegian ancestry) and individuals who had traveled to Norway before the age of fifteen.[622]

The selected "Alt For Norge" participants take part in a series of cultural challenges designed to tease out their Norwegian "authenticity" – all based on a mix of national pride, educational value, humor, and a tongue-in-cheek relationship with cultural stereotypes. The challenges reflect Norwegian national symbols from those rooted in iconic folk culture (drawn from romantic nationalism) to eating lutefisk or Norway's bestselling frozen pizza. The concept of this television show has been successful enough that the show has been casting participants for its ninth season in the fall of 2017, and it has spun off a Swedish equivalent. A show of this type could not exist without a curiosity among Norwegians directed toward the descendants of the emigrants who left Norway for a new life in America. At the same time, it could not exist without Americans' curiosity about their ancestry, their preconceived *idea* of Norway, and on some level, their desire to make connections with their ethnic roots and re-establish a heritage that had been privileged for so long in the United States that it no longer seemed "ethnic."

Norwegians' relationship with the great outdoors is a common theme in the show, just as it has been central to the establishment of an ethnic environmentalism in the Pacific Northwest. From packing their backpacks for Norwegian conditions to packing traditional Norwegian lunches, and from starting campfires with flint stones to rowing and cross-country skiing, the participants endure significant exposure to Norwegians' almost religious devotion to "friluftsliv"

[622] "Casting Info for "Alt for Norge 9" (aka "The Great Norway Adventure"), O'Connor Casting Company. http://oconnorcasting.tv/norway-2/ (Accessed: Nov. 15, 2017).

(outdoor life).[623] The term represents more than its literal meaning. It describes a feeling – the uplifted spirit afforded the practitioner. It is about the role nature plays in creating fulfilled and happy lives. As an almost spiritual philosophy rooted in the enjoyment of the great outdoors, friluftsliv represents a continuation in Norwegian society of the turn-of-the-century "idræt" tradition as practiced on the slopes of Northwest ski hills.

Regional ethnic identity production based on the idea of Norway, or the idea of the Pacific Northwest (preconceived or otherwise), has been one of the themes explored in this dissertation. Historians of the American West, ethnicity, and the environment have examined the relationship between the region as place, the region as an idea, and the individual in terms of processes of identity construction. The local environment made an important factor when turn-of-the-century Pacific Northwest Norwegians invented their ethnicity, but their memories of Norway and their preconceived idea of the Pacific Coast as a transplanted Norway were just as important as the landscape itself.

Norwegian-American reality show candidates who have not seen Norway with their own eyes, who have only heard of it and read about it, travel to Norway with a preconceived idea of Norway before they ever set foot there. Norway today represents to many Americans a utopian society, where inequalities are few, citizens have access to education and healthcare, democracy flourishes, and residents enjoy an unspoiled landscape. Similarly, their ancestors traveled from Norway to America, and then from the Upper Midwest to the Pacific Northwest, with a preconceived idea of the place they would find. In the Pacific Northwest, the landscape itself, along with its economic opportunities and perceived demands of settler characteristics,

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[623] The term "friluftsliv" translates directly to "free air life," but means outdoor life or living under the stars. It is believed to have first appeared in print in 1863 in Henrik Ibsen's poem *Paa Vidderne* (On the Heights).

contributed to an affirmation of ethnic identity for Norwegian migrants. This ethnic environmentalism – the appropriation of the natural landscape in the development of a locally defined ethnic identity, emphasized the ruggedness of the landscape, physical labor, and the masculine traits understood as a requirement to work that land. Men, therefore, often highlighted the ruggedness of the terrain, "[steep] hills and high mountains everywhere," and "good lumber-forest all the way to the top of Huckleberry Mountain … I almost thought I had come home to Norway," one migrant wrote from Addy, Washington, north of Spokane.[624]

Although the rhetoric about the region was often gendered male, women also held an aesthetic appreciation of the landscape and its similarity to Norway. Nikoline Nilsdatter Pedersen, or Lina Hamstad as she was called by the time she came to Washington, "had not thought that it could be possible to find something that was so similar to the old country – which she had thought was a country unlike any other." She felt enormous joy when she spotted "mountains and ocean and forest."[625] She felt much more at home in "this little town" [Seattle] than she had in Minneapolis.[626] Dorthea Dahl had wanted to "go to a land where the scent of flowers and the singing of birds filled the air, where the sun is shining without burning, where

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[624] "Korrespondance," *Decorah-Posten*, Apr. 19, 1907, clipping, in Kenneth Björk Papers, Accession no. 1343, Box 20, Norwegian-American Historical Association, Northfield, Minnesota.

[625] Mor Hamstad (Mother Hamstad), as she became known in her older years while president of the Daughters of Norway in Seattle, represented a typical migration pattern for single women. She left the countryside in Norway to live with a brother as a workingwoman in Kristiania/Oslo. A few years later, she migrated to St. Paul, Minnesota, with a ticket received from a cousin already there. After living a number of years in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Iowa, she married a second Norwegian husband after her first husband had died, and together they undertook the second-stage migration to Seattle. Marie Lund, "De Som Gaar i Kjøkkenet: Nikoline Nilsdatter Pedersen: Seter-gjenten som blir president," *Washington Posten*, Serial column, May 26, 1933, 5 – Jul. 21, 1933, 5.

[626] Marie Lund, "De Som Gaar i Kjøkkenet: Nikoline Nilsdatter Pedersen: Seter-gjenten som blir president," *Washington Posten*, June 30, 1933, 5.

the snow is falling without the thermometer being brought to zero, and where the rain is falling quietly and calmly without wind and without thunderstorms," and felt she found that in Moscow, Idaho.[627] Women's constructions of the Pacific Northwest as a new Norway did not differ significantly from that of men, but their assessments of the place differed. Men tended to draw parallels between rugged coastlines, stormy seas, and the masculine enterprises of the two locations, while women emphasized the climate and the aesthetic value of the scenery.

The phenomenon of ethnic environmentalism made a powerful vehicle for Norwegian Americans to assert a claim to the Pacific Northwest. They came to the region west of the Cascade Mountains with a preconceived idea that they would find a "New Norway." While migrants experienced hardship and disappointment here as anywhere else, the landscape and economic opportunity that they encountered nevertheless confirmed expectations sufficiently to reinforce the collective narrative of belonging. The region's natural landscape triggered memories of Norway, and in turn those memories helped shape immigrants' relationship with the adopted landscape. Norwegian-American working men in particular felt uniquely suited to this environment and easily settled into familiar shipping, fishing, and forestry industries, and asserted belonging with confidence.

The transplantation of Norwegian ski culture and the idræt philosophy, a belief in the maintenance of a healthy body, mind, and spirit in a collective sense through vigorous exercise, represented an aspect of Norwegian-American ethnic environmentalism in the Pacific Northwest. Motivated in part by this philosophy, Norwegian immigrants founded ski clubs in snow-rich areas of Oregon and Washington in the late 1920s and early 1930s, through which they shared

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[627] Hilde Petra Brungot, "To Keep and Cultivate: Dorthea Dahl A Norwegian-American Voice in Idaho," *Latah Legacy* 30 (2001): 5, in Dorthea Dahl Papers, Accession no. 820, Folder 1, Norwegian-American Historical Association, Northfield, Minnesota.

identities with men and women from other ethnic backgrounds as skiers, Washingtonians, Oregonians, and Pacific Northwesterners. A belief in the health of body, mind and spirit was not a uniquely Norwegian idea, and other Americans shared in an appreciation of the great outdoors with or without Norwegians on the scene. Along with Austrians, in particular, Norwegian immigrants were nevertheless an important factor in popularizing skiing in the region at a time when most Americans could use relief from the Great Depression. As suggested by the aforementioned television show, Norwegians continue to think that skiing and friluftsliv are uniquely Norwegian ideas to which they assume Americans have no previous exposure. The experience of Pacific Northwest Norwegians in the 1930s, however, and the lasting legacies of the ski sport in the Pacific Northwest, suggest otherwise.

Another theme explored in this dissertation is that of nationalist constructions of belonging, and the role of race in ethnic identity production within the context of an immigrant community. Within the rich pluralist historiography on the multicultural immigration experience, many historians have explored various examples of resistance and accommodation in response to discrimination, along with individual and collective efforts on the part of immigrant groups to "become white."[628] Other historians have emphasized the ways power structures of whiteness, structural racism, and the benefits of whiteness served as a powerful "leveling" mechanism that erased ethnic differences between Euro-American groups. Matthew Frye Jacobson, for example,

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[628] For example, Roger Daniels explores how immigrant groups added to the "American mosaic," or were prevented from doing so. Camille Guerin-Gonzales assesses how Mexican-American farm workers claimed access to the American dream. And Noel Ignatiev details how the Irish "became white." See Roger Daniels, *Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life* (New York: Harper Collins, 1990); Camille Guerin-Gonzales, *Mexican Workers and American Dreams: Immigration, Repatriation, and California Farm Labor, 1900-1939* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1994); and Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

has argued that whiteness as part of the Americanization project made the Caucasian race out of the conglomerate of formerly distinct European races, melting pot style.[629]

Racial constructions among Pacific Northwest Norwegians did not differ from racial constructions among Norwegian Americans in the Upper Midwest. From his home in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, Waldemar Ager, a prominent Norwegian-American novelist and essayist, and the editor from 1905 to 1922 of *Kvartalsskrift* (Quarterly Writings), the journal of the *Norske Selskab i Amerika* (Norwegian Society of America), published heavily on the topic of Norwegian assimilation. Ager's essays, published throughout the run of his *Kvartalsskrift* editorship, painted a picture of a Norwegian-American identity (or self-image) that demonstrated how Norwegians made the best Americans. Ager considered Norwegians racially superior to Anglo Americans owing to the "Americanized" qualities that Anglo Saxons received from Viking influence on Normandy and Great Britain. Ager warned that Norwegians needed to be careful about assimilation. In his view, what made Norwegians uniquely good American citizens were their Norwegian traits. If they assimilated, or conformed too closely to the Anglo-American norm, they forfeited their racial advantage. Only through maintaining the Norwegian language and culture, could Norwegian Americans assure continued success in America. Race gave Norwegians an edge, but full development of the promise of those racial traits was only possible in an environment exposed to Norwegian culture and language.[630]

Ager insisted that no conflict existed between ethnic cultural preservation and American loyalty and patriotism. He argued that Norwegian Americans "can preserve our own language

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[629] Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998).
[630] Daron W. Olson, *Vikings Across the Atlantic: Emigration and the Building of a Greater Norway, 1860-1945* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 104-06.

and simultaneously be fully loyal and patriotic American citizens. … No one *can* and *wants* [italics in original] to take [the Norwegian language] from us," he continued. He considered people who proposed that the language "*must* die" among Norwegian Americans to be mistaken, and offered as proof that second-generation Norwegian Americans worried far less about using the Norwegian language than did first-generation immigrants. "Most of us will not be assimilated with native Americans," he continued, "even if we ourselves would like to become assimilated in every way." Adopting a proto-multicultural view, Ager explained that Norwegians would not "melt into" Americans, but instead into (and among) a mixture of Germans, Irish, Canadians, and other peoples. "We will not become 'Americans' in any better sense than we now are. We will only lose our own racial characteristics without acquiring theirs."[631]

Measured against an idealized standard, rather than the Anglo-American standard, Ager argued that the assimilation of Norwegians was unnecessary. He posited that the success of Norwegians in America demonstrated that Norwegian immigrants were "fully as good citizens as the natives – and even better." Racially speaking, Norwegians were more Nordic (belonged to the purest branch of the Teutonic race), more Protestant, and they represented a better showcase of "American" values than the dominant culture mainstream American. To Ager, Norwegians in America remained strong and active in making and building America, while the old Anglo-American population suffered degeneration and a loss in vitality, and was growing soft.[632]

The influence of the Norwegian Society of America and Waldemar Ager's *Kvartalsskrift* in Norwegian-American communities from coast to coast cannot be underestimated. Pacific

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[631] Odd S. Lovoll, ed., *Cultural Pluralism Versus Assimilation: The Views of Waldemar Ager* (Northfield: Norwegian-American Historical Association, 1977), 72-74. Originally published under the title "Det viktigste," *Kvartalsskrift* 4:12 (January, 1908).
[632] Olson, *Vikings Across the Atlantic*, 106-07.

Northwest Norwegians represented roughly one sixth of the membership from 1903 to 1929. The novelist Dorthea Dahl was a member, and in addition to her, pastors, professors, and medical doctors along with urban and rural Norwegian Americans from across the Pacific Northwest were found on the roster.[633] In order to promote the preservation of the Norwegian language and culture, the society developed and sponsored the Sigvald Qvale Memorial Declamation Contest. From the 1910s through the 1940s, schools throughout the United States organized contests where students competed for a chance to win genuine silver or gold medals awarded the winner of each contest. Students memorized poems, fairytales, and selections from plays – all in Norwegian – and recited them in front of an audience. Most such contests were held in the Upper Midwest at the Lutheran colleges and upper secondary schools there, but a good number of them were held in the Pacific Northwest as well, particularly at the University of Washington, Pacific Lutheran College (Pacific Lutheran Academy until 1918), and later in Poulsbo, Washington.[634]

While preserving and celebrating ethnic culture through for example the annual Seventeenth of May celebration, Pacific Northwest Norwegians expressed a sense of their own "race" – the Norwegian or Scandinavian – that mirrored the ideas of Waldemar Ager. They adopted a narrative of belonging that argued that American values, institutions – even American democracy – derived from the inventions of the Norse Vikings. While rarely expressing an identity as "white" compared against a racialized other, Pacific Northwest Norwegians

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[633] Membership protocol, 1903 – Sep. 1924; and 1924 – 1929, in Det Norske Selskap Papers, Accession no. 564, Box 3, Norwegian-American Historical Association, Northfield, Minnesota.
[634] Det Norske Selskap, "Rapport: Sigvald Qvale Memorial Contest," Apr. 21, 1911 – Mar. 8, 1946; "Ansogning om Afholdelse af Sigval Qvale Memorial Contest, Poulsbo, Washington, March 10, 1939," Jan. 4, 1939; "Sigvald Qvale Deklamationskontest," Mar. 20, 1939; "Sigvald Kvale Kontest: Norsk Oplesningsaften," Apr. 22, 1947 – Mar. 15, 1949, individual event report cards, in Det Norske Selskap Papers, Box 2, Norwegian-American Historical Association, Northfield, Minnesota.

nevertheless benefited from whiteness when they trumpeted their own perceived racial superiority. A belief in Norway as the cradle of American democracy represented a common theme in the Seventeenth of May celebrations. As an annual event, the commemoration of the Norwegian Constitution Day in Seattle from the 1890s to the 1940s revealed a remarkable unity within the city's Norwegian community. Apart from the major influencing events of Norway's independence from Sweden in 1905, and the German occupation of Norway during World War II, the overall narrative expressed through the celebration proved remarkably consistent over the half century in question. As such, the Seventeenth of May in Seattle has proved a long-lasting sign of a healthy ethnic community.

Elliott Barkan's six-stage assimilation model suggests that an "old" immigrant community such as that of the Norwegian Americans in Seattle should have reached the sixth stage by now. In this stage, only a limited group memory of the old country prevails. People may retain knowledge of their ancestry, but the descendants of the once ethnic group have now "blended or melded into the larger society culturally, socially, institutionally, and identificationally."[635] In some ways, Barkan may be correct. People whose great-great grandfather on their mother's side came from Norway, and who may be Swedish, Polish, German, Mexican, and African American as well, would not be expected to show much interest in their Norwegian or any other specific ethnic heritage. But if one sits down to watch a certain reality show, or if one finds oneself on the streets of Ballard on May 17, one cannot be so sure. Perhaps a belief in the superiority of the culture then, and the "goodness" of the culture now, might in part explain this persistence.

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[635] Elliott R. Barkan, "Race, Religion, and Nationality in American Society: A Model of Ethnicity – From Contact to Assimilation," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 14:2 (Winter 1995): 58-59.

Blowing the dust off of Marcus Lee Hansen's 1938 essay, "The Problem of the Third Generation Immigrant," it is tempting to assert that his "principle of third generation interest" – "what the [immigrant's] son wishes to forget the grandson wishes to remember," applies to Americans trying to channel their inner Viking on Norwegian television, or other Americans showcasing folk dances on the streets of Ballard.[636] All the ancestry.com ads on television certainly do suggest that many Americans – whose nationalism is not based on ethnicity – seek to discover ethnicity in their genealogical inquiries. In Norway, genealogists most commonly expect that there is very little foreign ancestry in their extended family tree. Problematically, nationalism in Norway remains largely based on ethnicity, which offers challenges in determining what it means to be Norwegian, and who can truly be Norwegian, in today's multicultural society. It is somewhat ironic that Americans, for entertainment value, come to Norway in search of belonging, not unlike their ancestors' search for a place to belong in America, while present-day immigrants in Norway face more significant obstacles in acceptance and integration than Norwegian Americans ever did.

[636] Allan H. Spear, "Marcus Lee Hansen and the Historiography of Immigration," *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 44:4 (Summer 1961): 258-68.

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