

Here be Vikings: Ethno-National Narratives in Late Nineteenth Century Norwegian Textbooks

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Here be Vikings: Ethno-National Narratives in Late Nineteenth Century Norwegian Textbooks.

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Abstract

The late nineteenth was a time of national awakening in Europe, and Norway was no exception. The young nation sought to define itself and consider its identity and political narratives in the face of changes on the continent. A crucial component was the transmission of ideas of community and historical continuity to the people, and through that, the building of a new world. Accordingly, the transfer of national narratives and political mythology is evident in textbooks in history in Norway. Due to the state dominance of the education systems in the Nordic region, textbooks and learning materials are excellent avenues for exploring the transmission of official narratives and mythologies. This paper explores the stories of Norse migration and settlement included in Norwegian textbooks. To achieve this, the paper explores a corpus of textbooks from the period 1870-1900. Accordingly, this article seeks to examine how the retelling of the narratives of the Viking migration and *Norgesveldet* contributed to the development of an imagined community as the modern nation constructed its cultural memory.

Keywords

Norway, History, Textbooks, Identity

Introduction

Historians are to nationalism what poppy-growers in Pakistan are to heroin-addicts: we supply the essential raw material for the market. Nations without a past are a contradiction in terms.¹

Ingen Eiendomsret bør derfor mellom nationerne indbyrders mer respecteres, end den, enhver Nation har til sine historiske Minder. At berøve en Nation disse, er næsten ligesaa uretfærdigt som at berøve den et Stykke af dens Territorium.²

As these two quotes, the first by Eric Hobsbawm, and the second by the Norwegian nineteenth century historian Peter Andreas Munch, points to the relationship between nations and history. The American historian R. Kelley corroborated these views in 1980, by noting that history education in schools and history as conveyed in textbooks shapes the population's understanding of their own country.³ In light of the observations made by Kelley, Hobsbawm, and Munch the content of textbooks, and especially their historical content, are intriguing glimpses into the interplay between nation-building and education. This is the point of departure for this paper exploring late nineteenth century Norwegian textbooks.

This paper aims to examine how the textbooks present the earliest Norwegian history, the Viking migration, and the high medieval Norwegian North Sea Dominions, hereafter known as *Norgesveldet*. In exploring these narratives, this paper argues that this presentation constructed of a cultural memory hat served as a basis for a sense of national unity and historical greatness.

To examine and make sense of the historical narratives, this paper will focus on a few key areas. Firstly, the origin of the Norwegian people; secondly, the founding of the North Atlantic settlements of Iceland, Greenland, Orkney, Shetland and the Faeroe Islands; thirdly, the continued relationship between these settlements and mainland Norway, and finally why these narratives are included in the books at all.

To explore the questions stated above, this paper undertakes a structured analysis of selected Norwegian history textbooks from the late nineteenth century. The paper will, due to the scope and length of this chapter not explore the inclusion of historical material in other books of the period. The textbooks examined are selected based on their circulation and publication numbers, as this indicates a significant readership familiar with the ideas and narratives of these texts. Books have also been chosen to be representative of both sides of the linguistic divide of late nineteenth century Norway so that versions on both Nynorsk and Bokmål is represented in every period. Books from both sides of

the linguistic divide have been included to illustrate that regardless of the split, they all subscribed to using history as part of their nation-building.

Introduction of the Selected Textbooks

The textbooks selected for this study are published under two different educational reforms, the 1860 and 1889 reforms, which is discussed more closely below. Due to the reform in 1889, the books selected can be divided into two chronological groups, those published before and those after 1889. It is worth noting that some books published before the reform are re-issued after the reform as well.

The books selected for this paper is the 1879 edition of *Norigs Soga til heimelesning og bruk fyr lærarar* published by "Det Norske samlaget", the 1868 edition of *Læsebog for Folkeskolen og Folkehjemmet* volume 1 and 2 by P.A. Jensen (1812-67),⁴ the 1897 edition of *Norges historie: mindre udgave for folkeskolen* (first published in 1859) by Siegart Petersen (1826-78) which by 1897 had a print run of 122 000 copies,⁵ and the 1889 edition of *Lærebog i Fædrelandshistoriee, nærmest til brug i almueskolen* (first published in 1879) by A.E. Eriksen (1841-1919).⁶ From the period after the reform, this paper will also draw on *Norigs saga aat folkeskulen* (1900) by Jonas Velleesen (1842-1915) that in 1900 had a print run of 40 000 copies.⁷ These short introductory notes give a brief insight into the multiplicity of authors operating in this period, and that among their works some were that were considered classics that were re-printed long after the authors' death. As was the case with Petersen's textbooks, which according to Svein Lorentzen, widely used up until 1914.⁸

The books and authors introduced above have been sampled for this study as they give chronological and linguistic spread for this investigation. Additionally the significant print runs suggested above and number of editions of certain of these books, i.e. Petersen, Velleesen and Jensen, testify to the continuity of these and reach of these books and the narratives they convey. Thus it is my belief that these books will allow this study to explore how the retelling of the narratives of the e Viking migration and the high medieval Norwegian North Sea Dominions 'Norgesveldet' is presented in late nineteenth century textbooks at a crucial time of nation building and nationalism in Norway. Additionally these books will allow this study to say something about the role narratives play in the construction and maintenance of an imagined cultural community.⁹

I have previously argued that both the cultural and political aspects of this nationalism were closely linked to how Norwegians understood their medieval past. Thus, the textbooks and teaching materials are a crucial access point to

understand the foundations for contemporary uses of the past at this time, as well as laying the foundations for how Norwegians created a sense of cultural unity and community for the twentieth century independence.¹⁰

Educational Reforms in Norway in the Nineteenth Century

Norway saw two significant educational reforms in 1860 and 1889. These reforms affect the contemporary understanding of education and the use of textbooks.

The reform of 1860, made Norwegian elementary schools (*almueskole*) in both towns and rural areas compulsory and established that they should teach literacy by using reading materials that included texts on geography, nature and history.¹¹ These readings were intended to 'provide the knowledge and skills all members of the society should have',¹² thus the history was knowledge the society believed its constituent parts needed to know. This aim suggests that the schools were understood as crucial for creating a culturally unified Norway through transmitting and creating a shared historical identity.

The 1889 reform introduced history as a separate school subject for both urban and rural schools. In doing so, the Norwegian government seems to have aimed to create a culturally unified Norway; a nation where the population shared an idea of fellowship founded on cultural similarities and historical experiences. This nation-building project through education was, in many ways, a crucible for a Norwegian community. The creation (i.e. awakening) and preservation of such imagined national communities¹³ were standard features of late nineteenth century European politics. The Norwegian experience from this time must, therefore, be seen as a reflection of a broader European pattern whereby ideas of nationalism and nation-states informed and influenced political and cultural trends.

Norwegian School in the Second Half of Nineteenth Century

Norwegian schools following the 1860 reform went from being predominantly ambulating schools (*omgangsskoler*) to being schools with a permanent location (*fastskoler*). Pupils received a minimum of 12 weeks of education each year between the ages of 7-14.¹⁴ The system differed slightly between urban and rural settings with urban pupils receiving more instruction than their rural counterparts. Following the 1889 and the introduction of *Folkeskolen*, rural pupils received between the ages of 7 and 14 30-36 hours instruction 12 weeks, while urban pupils received between 18- 30 hours a week, for 45 weeks a year, all depended on the age of the pupils.¹⁵ The guidelines for the instruction of history as found in *Undervisningsplan for den lavere Almueskole paa Landet i Kristiania Stift* from 1877 indicates a reliance on the texts present in textbooks

and the teachers' ability to narrate the history. The *Undervisningsplan* suggests four consecutive stages for this instruction. First, the teacher tells the story based on the narrative in the textbook, after which the pupils recite the narrative, as homework the pupils then read the text, before a final recital in the subsequent history lesson.¹⁶ If *Undervisningsplan* is taken at face value as an indicator for the use of textbooks, then this is a significant insight into how books are used in teaching. This form of instruction was likely popular also after the 1889 reform, making this a plausible explanation for how historical narratives are transmitted from the pages of the textbook into the memory of the population.

Norwegian Nationalism in the Late Nineteenth Century

Framing the reforms was a growing of Norwegian nationalistic sentiments. Norway was in the period 1814-1905 in a union with Sweden. Some individuals and groupings, particularly in the middle and second half of the nineteenth century, sought to emphasise Norway's distinctiveness in opposition to Sweden. Øystein Sørensen highlighted that these acts had their roots in the Romantic Movement, and gained political impact through the establishment and activities of the party Venstre.¹⁷ Politically the 1883-4 impeachment of the Norwegian Government contributed to a shift in the political balance in the Swedish-Norwegian union, which over time was intensified by the increasingly diverging political and economic interests of Sweden and Norway at the closing of the nineteenth century, contributing the political crisis of 1905 and the dissolution of the union. I have discussed in other publications how markers of national identity were sought and found in early medieval history.¹⁸ These developments form part of the context of these textbooks and illustrate why exploring the imagery and narratives of early medieval history can help to make sense of the formation of communal identities at the end of the nineteenth century.

Previous Research on Late Nineteenth Century Textbooks in Norway.

Questions of identity and a significant effort of re-defining "the self" were not unique for Norway at the end of the nineteenth century. Similar processes have been attested across Europe,¹⁹ and within the Nordic world, prominent examples can be found in Finland and Iceland where the 'self' was redefined in relation to an 'other' and drew on the 'self's' historical experience. Nation-building is not a nineteenth century phenomenon, and Siobhan Brownlie

explored how the inclusion of historical materials in the modern curriculum in English schools and argued that 'Schools have the function of passing on a society's collectively accumulated historical knowledge ...'.²⁰ In arguing this, Brownlie continues a tradition, which sees the history content in a curriculum as tools for perpetuating a society's cultural heritage and historical sensibilities. In this sense, the examination of educational resources shed light on cultural ideas and sensibilities at different times and might inform us about what kind of society the authors of these educational resources wished to create. The study of the role of late nineteenth century textbooks has focused on the interplay with nationalism. Scholars such as Svein Lorentzen,²¹ Ragnhild Sigurdsson and Hilde Kjølberg,²² Ola Svein Stugu²³ and Dagrūn Skjebred *et al.*,²⁴ have in recent decades examined the overall themes of nationalism and nation-building in Norwegian textbooks. A consensus amongst these scholars has concluded that national sentiments significantly influenced the content and focus of educational resources, especially in the last decades of the nineteenth century. In his study, Svein Lorentzen concluded the textbooks at the end of the nineteenth century demonstrated a very self-conscious Norwegian identity.²⁵ Lorentzen suggests that the content of the books inform us about both the cultural and the political ideas of the time.

Viking settlements in Norwegian Textbooks.

In the 1897 edition of *Norges historie, mindre udgave for folkeskolen*, Siegwart Petersen and his editor Gustav Storm (1845-1903) expressly declared the intentions of the book. The content was to present the 'historical truth' and not any anecdotes without any basis in history.²⁶ Through this, the authors aimed to give a good and accurate account of the history of the *Fatherland*.²⁷ They sought to encourage patriotism among the readers and to stimulate knowledge of the glory of the nation in the readers through the medium of the textbooks, so that future generations would know the history of their homeland, and know how the Norwegian society had developed. This aim, to narrate the history of Norway and the Norwegian people, reflected and permeated their works in many ways, not least through their approach to and emphasis on the origin narrative of the Norwegian kingdom and its Golden Age under the Fairhair- and Sverri-dynasties until the death of Haakon V Magnusson in 1319. However, this focus was not novel in this textbook, but was, as I argue, part of a larger cultural pattern and shows how late nineteenth century textbooks was a tool for cultural nation-building through familiarity with a historical

narrative and illustrates how cultural and political sensibilities were evolved and interconnected with ideas of historically founded homogeneity. Petersen and Storm's book is just one of many books of the period, and the subsequent sections of this paper will examine how these books present the origin of the Norwegian people, its historical, and possibly continued, relationship with the North Atlantic settlements. The overarching pattern (see fig. 1) indicates a continuity of narratives in which the readers of these books encounter the idea that Norway and the North Atlantic settlements have the same ethnic and cultural origin.

The Origin of the Norwegian people in Textbooks

Norwegian history textbooks in the late nineteenth century open with an introduction of the origin of settlements in Norway. This narrative is vital for one reason. It sets the frame for presenting the Norwegians as a distinct ethnic group, separated from Danes, Swedes and Saami. This can be exemplified by *Samlaget's Norigs Soga* from 1879 sets this narrative up to explain the development of counties and communities in Norway and plays on how the geography of the land shaped the natural boundaries of the nation arguing that all the different regional identities – like Raumar, Ryger and Horder – were all different versions of one Norwegian people.²⁸

This sentiment of the Norwegians being a distinct and coherent group since the migration of humans into Norway is also visible in Petersen and Velleesen's texts, wherein the authors identify the ancient population as *Norse* and the land as *Norvegr*.²⁹ At the same time as *Samlaget and Petersen and Storm* stresses the distinctiveness of the Norwegians, they also fail to explore or acknowledge the pre-existing settlements of the Saami in Northern Scandinavia and their relationship to the Norwegians. In so doing, the book not only excludes the Saami from the overall narrative of the Norwegian nation but also its version of the nation's cultural memory. Thus, they set the tone of how they see the different communities of people in the Norwegian kingdom – except the Saami – as one Norwegian people. After establishing the unity of the people, the textbook goes on to elaborate on the social structures of the people through their coverage of the Viking age.

All the authors of the textbooks sampled specifies in their introduction of ancient history that the Norwegian people consisted first and foremost of free farmers, also known as *Bønder* and tenant farmers are known as *leilendinger*. Unlike Eriksen and Samlaget, does Jensen, Velleesen and Petersen also introduce their readers to the top and bottom of the social ladder of Norse society through references to chieftains known as *Jarler* and slaves known as

Treller.³⁰ While acknowledging the existing of slavery and aristocracy in pre-historic Norway, these books do not linger on these facts but move instead on to talk about the social and political institutions of the assembly system known as *Ting*. In using the term *bønder* and *ting*, the authors are also, consciously or unconsciously, drawing a parallel between the emancipated classes of nineteenth century Norway and the politically active groups of the early history of the Norwegian kingdom. Combined the descriptions of the social and political structures of pre-historic Norway in these textbooks gives the readers an origin myth for the social and political structures in Norway.

The Foundation of the North Atlantic Settlements and how These are Presented as Linked to Norway

Since the textbooks sampled for this study are chronological structured, there should be little surprise to readers familiar with the Viking Age that the books continue from the social structures of pre-historic Norway with an introduction to Norse mythology, before moving on to the reign of Harald I (862-930) and the unification of Norway. The similarities in how the books describe Harald I's conquest of Norway in the second half of the ninth century as the catalyst for both the unification of Norway and the Norse migration into the North Atlantic³¹ is not surprising as this narrative and interpretation are lifted directly from the medieval source materials. However, by presenting Harald I Fairhair as the catalyst for the migration, the books implicitly suggest that all those who took part in these migrations were in some way or another related to the people of Norway. This 'fact' has been refuted by both the medieval Icelandic *Landnamabok* and modern scholarship on the topic.³² However, the key here is not the validity of the 'facts' but instead that the authors consistently make a case for a direct link between the North Atlantic settlements and Norway in the textbooks.

There are some nuances in how the textbooks describe the origin of the North Atlantic settlements and the subsequent *Norgesveldet*. All agree, on the basic principle that the former Viking settlements in the North Atlantic was the foundation of what later evolves into *Norgesveldet*. As described above, the books presented Harald I's conquest and rule of Norway as the primary cause of the migration and settlements. However, the nuances lie in how the texts go beyond the causes of these migrations and explore their later relationship to Norway and their identity. For instance, *Samlaget* and Petersen both stress that wealthy farmers [*bønder*] founded these settlements after abandoning their substantial land properties and wealth in Western Norway. Whereas Jonas Vellesen and Eriksen only refer to the migrants as *landnåmsmenn*, i.e. *the land-*

taking-men. In doing so, they shift focus from the social background of the migrants to stressing the settlers as Norwegians, i.e. Nordmenn. This difference in phrasing have no significant consequences for the way the settlements are presented in the books, but might be an indicator of how the author's used source materials and what primary sources if any, they were familiar with.

The textbooks also differ in how much space they use to describe the settlements. Eriksen and Vellesen are sparse with information with only brief information about the polities (i.e. Orkney, Faroe Islands, Shetland, Iceland and Greenland) founded by the settlers. Eriksen briefly notes that the Icelandic commonwealth was founded in 930 as a republic can exemplify his lack of details.³³ However, considering his lack of information on the North Atlantic settlements, Eriksen like all the other authors dedicate time and space for his readers to become aware of the founding of a polity in Normandy by a Norwegian Viking Gange-Rolf [in English known as Rollo]. The Normandy link to Norway in these textbooks is discussed further below. Compared to Vellesen and Eriksen, Petersen and *Samlaget* discuss the settlements in the North Atlantic in significant detail, with particular focus on Iceland. These accounts focus on specific episodes and individuals in the history of Iceland, such as the founding of the Commonwealth, the introduction of the *Ting*, the Sagas and Skaldic poetry and significant individuals such as Eirik the Red, Leif Eiriksson and Snorre Sturluson. All of these events and stories are through their inclusion in these books explicitly identified as Norwegian and might be understood as the historic achievements of the Norwegian people. As such these narratives stand in stark contrast to one of the core structural frames of all the textbooks sampled, namely the political history of Norway as told through the history of the Norwegian kings and their achievements. Somewhat surprisingly in light of the political focus of the narratives in the books is the lack of coverage of the Norwegian king's subjugation of the North Atlantic settlements in these books, only in Vellesen and Petersen do we find the briefest references to king Magnus VI Haakonson's subjugation of Iceland in 1262. They also note that the churches of the North Atlantic Settlements were part of the Archbishopric of Nidaros (today Trondheim in Norway) from its founding in 1152. Vellesen's book is also equipped with a map of the extent of the medieval kingdom of Norway in the back of the book. This map is the only map included in the 1900 edition of Vellesen's book, which re-emphasises the importance of these areas in the narrative of Norway in the eyes of Vellesen.

Presentation of Heroes of the Nation and the Cultural Legacy of the Migration

A particular feature of the coverage of *Norgesveldet* in these textbooks is the space given to the story of the foundation of the County, and later Duchy, of Normandy by the Viking Rollo. In these books, the narrative of Normandy is connected to Norway through a recitation of Snorri Sturluson's account of the founding of the Duchy, where Sturluson credits a man known as Gange-Rolf. Jonas Vellesen describes the foundation of Normandy, where he refers to the Normans as *Nordmenn*, the same words as he uses about the Norwegians. Furthermore, Vellesen stresses how Gange-Rolf was the son of a Norwegian Earl and the ancestor of the William the Conqueror and 'fraa han er dei engelske kongarne ætta'.³⁴ Unlike his contemporaries, Vellesen is the only one to highlight Rollo's role as the link between Norway and the English kings, and in so doing claiming a greater honour of the Norwegian people and its colonies. Compared to this coverage of Normandy, Petersen and Eriksen acknowledge that Rollo was the son of Earl Ragnvald of Møre and that he was a mighty Viking to whom the French king surrendered Normandy.³⁵ However, they made no claims about the relationship between the line of the Norman Dukes and the Norwegian people. The cause for the inclusion of the foundation of the Norman duchy in Norwegian textbooks should be understood in the light of the late nineteenth century debates between Norwegian historian Gustav Storm and the Danish historian Johannes Steenstrup concerning the foundation of Normandy and Rollo's ethnic origin.³⁶ The background to this debate is a quarrel over cultural legacy and national glory, since Normandy was the most prestigious Norse settlement and in the long-term also the cradle of the British Empire.

The prominence given to the Icelandic settlement is likely due to the wealth of sources available about the settlement, its relationship with the Norwegian kingdom, and that one of the most prominent narrative sources for the History of Norway in the Viking Age – *Heimskringla* – was composed in Iceland in the thirteenth century. *Heimskringla*'s cultural importance as a Norwegian national epos in nineteenth century Norway has probably influenced the choice of Petersen and *Samlaget*'s focus. *Samlaget* even goes so far as to state that the literature the settlers brought with them and preserved, was the 'norske skaldskapen', that is 'the Norwegian poetic tradition'.³⁷ This was probably not intended as an attack on the Danish or Icelandic claim on this literature, but rather a more consistent understanding of a perceived cultural and ethnic kinship between Norway and Iceland.

The Dis-continued Relationship between Norway and the Settlements

The end of the Napoleonic Wars and the peace treaty at Kiel between Sweden and Denmark-Norway in 1814 is the backdrop and contexts for how the textbooks close their description of the relationship between *Norgesveldet* and Norway. In all the sampled textbooks readers find brief notes discussing the end of the Napoleonic Wars and treaty of Kiel, whereby mainland Norway was separated from its former overseas territories and transferred from the Danish to the Swedish King. Such coverage can take the form of sentences like the one we find in Velleesen:

... den 14 januar 1814 laut kong Fredrik gaa inn paa freden i Kiel og avstaa til den svenske kongen heile Norig so nær som Island, Grønland og Færøyarne. Soleis vart Norig skilt fraa Danmark, som det hadde vore saman med i 434 aar.³⁸

And in Jensen:

... Freden I Kiel, og her blev den 14de Januar 1814 Norge avstaaet til Sverige. Dermed var det forbid med Foreningen mellem Danmark og Norge, som havde varet i over fire hundrede Aar.³⁹

These quotes show that the focus in these brief notes is not on the relationship between Norway and the former overseas realms, but the focus is instead on observing the longevity of the Danish-Norwegian Union.

Constructing a Nation and Nationalism through Textbooks

The overarching trends in how Norwegian textbooks of the late nineteenth century narrates the relationships between Norway and its former North Atlantic dominions demonstrates, as Lorentzen has previously argued, a very self-conscious and self-promoting nation working to promote narratives of past greatness, ethnic homogeneity, and cultural and political unity based on an understanding of the historical origins of Norway, Normandy and the North Atlantic settlements. This sentimental memorialisation over the past greatness of the Norwegian people as found in history textbooks between 1870 and 1900 illustrates several things, primarily that contemporary Norwegian textbook authors were concerned about the historical legitimacy and

distinctiveness of the Norwegian kingdom and the origin of its population. This concern is visible through the description of the migration into Norway and the unification of the Norwegian farmers into a kingdom in the Viking age. Furthermore, the concern for historical distinctiveness goes beyond this in that within the textbooks the settlements and histories concerning the origins of the North Atlantic settlements and their heroes are adopted whole-heartedly as part of the narrative of Norway due to their supposed ancestral migration from Norway. Perhaps unsurprising, the inclusion of these stories are not followed up within the textbooks or teaching materials by any critical discussion or analysis concerning the reason behind this inclusion. Instead, the silence within the textbooks testifies to a plausible cause, namely that the shared origin of Norway and the settlements justify the inclusion of such narratives in textbooks, as they inform the reader about the deeds of their distant kin. Moreover, a lack of justification in the introduction of the books indicates that such ideas might be somewhat commonplace and a “truth” beyond discussion.

As the textbooks focus on the shared origin and loss of the settlements, and not on the long, slow and steady, continuous relationship between mainland Norway and the settlements throughout the centuries between 1319 and 1814, this paper must conclude that these narratives, and especially the founding of Normandy provided examples of the deeds of ancient Norwegians for which the readers could feel proud. It is tempting to see this pride and the subsequent patriotism that might have resulted from it as the actual goal of including these narratives in the textbooks. Nevertheless, seen in the light of the reforms of 1860 and 1889 and their focus on ‘provide the knowledge and skills all members of the society should have’,⁴⁰ it is not farfetched to understand the inclusion of historical materials as a move to stimulate an awareness of the past within the population. Additionally, I will argue that a plausible consequence of this was the strengthening of national sentiments within the people that contributed to the context of the dissolution of the Swedish-Norwegian union in 1905. Although the content of textbooks per se was not directly under government control in this period, the educational reforms created the opportunity for increased visibility and promotion of historical knowledge. Thus, the focuses and

concerns of the books sampled concerning the relationship between Norway and the North Atlantic settlements do not suggest direct governmental control on the content. However, the government promoted and approved guidelines for instruction such as the *Undervisningsplan for den lavere Almueskole paa Landet i Kristiania Stift* (1877) shows how teachers are meant to use textbooks in their work, which might be understood as an attempt to assure all pupils that undertake education in Norway are thoroughly familiar with the knowledge presented.

The focus on and explicit referencing of the farmers as the core of the Norwegian people builds upon an idea popular throughout nineteenth century Scandinavia. This idea argues that the people and through them, political legitimacy is based on the free farmers of the Nordics.⁴¹ As such, the explicit inclusion and mentioning of the *Bønder* and the exclusion of the Sami within the narratives about the origins of the Norwegian people can be understood as a legitimation of the contemporary political idea while also linking the population of Norway to their ancient brethren who shared their agricultural occupation and land. However, it is difficult to assess the widespread appreciation of the ties between Norway and the North Atlantic presented in these books if we only look at the context of these books. However, the presence of the North Atlantic settlements in textbooks in this period leaves me wondering how these narratives as told in textbooks relate to the broader cultural understanding and appreciation of these settlements at the end of the nineteenth century, and above all at the beginning of the twentieth century when the pupils reading these text came of age and took part in the political life of the nation. Whereas the impact of the narratives is hard to assess in the time of the textbooks, the contemporary focus on ensuring that all citizens of the countries had an appreciation of the same or similar historical narratives demonstrates a concern for and focus on scholarly investment in the future of the community, i.e. the nation.

Notes

- ¹ Hobsbawm 1992: 3.
- ² Munch 1873: 122
- ³ Kelley 1980: 296-303.
- ⁴ Skjelbred, Askeland, Maagerø & Aamotsbakken 2017: 87-89.
- ⁵ Lorentzen 2005: 41.
- ⁶ Norsk biografisk leksikon 1926: 543-47.
- ⁷ Skjelbred et al. 2017: 123.
- ⁸ Lorentzen 2005: 41.
- ⁹ Anderson 1991.
- ¹⁰ Alvestad 2016: 113-5.
- ¹¹ Selskap for Norsk Skolehistorie 1986: 4.
- ¹² 'fremskaffe de kundskaber og færdigheder, som ethvert medlem af samfundet bør besitte', Selskap for Norsk Skolehistorie 1986: 3.
- ¹³ See Anderson 1991 for more on imagined communities.
- ¹⁴ Myhre 1992: 44; Selskap for Norsk Skolehistorie 1986: 3-5.
- ¹⁵ Myhre 1992: 50.
- ¹⁶ Norsk Skolemuseums Venner 1960: 6-7.
- ¹⁷ Sørensen 2001: 30-34.
- ¹⁸ Alvestad 2016.
- ¹⁹ Lee & McLelland 2009; Marchal & Evans 2010;
- ²⁰ Brownlie 2013: 32.
- ²¹ Lorentzen 2005.
- ²² Sigurdsrud & Kjølberg 1998.
- ²³ Stugu 2001: 107-122.
- ²⁴ Skjelbred et al. 2017.
- ²⁵ 'Vi aner i historiebøkene som i rikspolitikken konturene av et mer selvbevisst Norge' Lorentzen 2005: 71.
- ²⁶ 'Thi en lære bog i historie maa give i sanddru fortælling fortidens virkelige be givenheder og disses sammenhang med nutiden, ikke optage fabler eller tvilsomme anekdoter og endnu mindre indeholde usikre formodninger eller ubegrundede hypotheser.' Petersen 1897: ii.
- ²⁷ 'Det er mit haab, at herved er istandbragt en paalidelig, for folke skolen passende, smukt udstyret og i forhold til udstyret særdeles billig lærebog i fædrelandets historie.' Petersen 1897: ii.
- ²⁸ Det Norske Samlaget 1879: 2.
- ²⁹ Vellesen 1900: 3; Petersen 1897: 1.
- ³⁰ Jensen 1868: 21-22; Vellesen 1900: 3-4; Petersen 1897: 2.
- ³¹ Det Norske Samlaget 1879.
- ³² Sigurdsson 2012: 562-570.
- ³³ Eriksen 1889: 11.
- ³⁴ Vellesen 1900: 13.
- ³⁵ Eriksen 1889: 11; Petersen 1897: 6-7.
- ³⁶ Alvestad 2016: 70.

³⁷ Det Norske Samlaget 1879: 87.

³⁸ Vellesen 1900: 73.

³⁹ Jensen 1868: 77.

⁴⁰ 'fremskaffe de kundskaber og færdigheder, som ethvert medlem af samfundet bør besitte',
Selskap for Norsk Skolehistorie 1986: 3.

⁴¹ Kettunen 1999: 262.

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