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Master's Thesis

On behalf of the people

The making of the petty intellectual class, the two-culture narrative, and the Landsmaal movement, 1814–1885

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Abstract

This thesis covers the creation of the two-culture narrative and the *Landsmaal* movement. It argues that to understand the creation of the two-culture narrative one must look at the development of the class that created it. The thesis identifies this class as the "petty intellectuals." Through looking at the development of the social and political conditions that led to the making of the petty intellectual class and by showing how these petty intellectuals became involved with nationalism, it shows that petty intellectuals emerged as a relatively poor and underprivileged group of outsiders that came about as a consequence of the social disintegration of the Norwegian pre-modern estates and the spread of education to larger sections of the Norwegian population. These petty intellectuals rose to prominence after the revolutions of 1848 by presenting themselves as voices of the people that idealised a national culture rooted in the Norwegian farmer. When these petty intellectuals clashed with the established elite of civil servants, the two sides consolidated in opposition to each other, and two distinctive national cultures were created. While it was an identity that claimed to be rooted in the world of farmers, the petty intellectual national vision did not attract the poor, uneducated, and rural. Instead, it captured the imagination of rich, educated sons of the urban classes who acquired the Norwegian farmer identity through intellectual institutions like the student society and new private schools. While attempts were made to bridge the gap between the petty intellectual national farmer identity and farmers in their rural communities, differences in social identity and political interest rendered the two-culture narrative almost exclusively an intellectual elite phenomenon. However, petty intellectuals made inroads into the new political leadership that emerged in opposition to the civil servant government during the 1860s and 1870s. Through establishing these political ties and becoming part of the political elite of the capital, petty intellectuals linked *Landsmaal* to a popular political movement, *Venstre*, which helped it becoming recognised by parliament in 1885.

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Acknowledgments

This thesis proved way more of a challenge than I could ever have imagined it to be. I have learned so much and still it feels like I have barely scratched the surface. It has been a humbling experience to get to know what it takes to produce a finished thesis.

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Theodor Jørgen Lund, May 12, 2022.

Introduction

In 1877, Arne Garborg (1851-1924), a twenty-six-year-old schoolteacher, newspaper editor, and author, published a roughly two-hundred-page book: *Den ny-norske Sprog- og Nationalitetsbevægelse* (The New Norwegian language and nationality movement) - consisting of ten polemic letters that presented his thoughts on the national language situation in Norway. In this book, Garborg describes the official Norwegian language as Danish.[1] This official Norwegian language had been known as "Norwegian" since Norway gained its independence in 1814, but Garborg argued that as Norway was a separate nation with its own history, culture, and spoken language, it was impossible that the written standard inherited from the four-hundred-year-old political union between the two kingdoms could be Norwegian.[2] He advocates instead for the use of written forms of dialects from rural Norway whose roots could be traced back to the medieval period before Norway entered into a political union with Denmark.[3] To Garborg, the two competing national languages, Danish and Norwegian, also represented different social identities, namely, rural Norwegian farmers that made up the people and a foreign elite in the cities.[4] Because of their differences in culture, language, and even nationality, Garborg argues that their interests are inherently opposed to each other, and that until the foreign is replaced, the Norwegian people, nation, and language could never become fully united.[5]

This idea of a cultural divide between a Danish cultural elite and a Norwegian people rooted in farmer culture is most commonly referred to as *Tokulturlæra* (the two-culture narrative) by historians. This idea has played an important role in shaping the national discourse in the Norwegian public sphere, as it has been employed by both *Venstre* and the Labour party to legitimise their political aims, but also by historians to frame the history of Norway in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In fact, as I will go on to show, it continues to shape historians' accounts of modern Norwegian history to this day. Taking a critical perspective on the role of nationalism research in Norway, the present study seeks to uncover the origins of

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[1] Arne Garborg, *Den ny-norske Sprog- og Nationalitetsbevægelse* (Kristiania: Cammermeyer, 1877), 15-16, 30-32.
[2] Garborg, *Den ny-norske Sprog- og Nationalitetsbevægelse*, 23-26, 104-107.
[3] Garborg recognises Ivar Aasen's *Landsmaal* standard as the most popular alternative but does not believe that it is guaranteed to be the one which will unite the people. Garborg, *Den ny-norske Sprog- og Nationalitetsbevægelse*, 181-183.
[4] Garborg, *Den ny-norske Sprog- og Nationalitetsbevægelse*, 102, 118-122.
[5] Garborg, *Den ny-norske Sprog- og Nationalitetsbevægelse*, 101-104, 136-137.

the two-culture narrative by emphasising the interests, needs, and strategies of those who advocated for it. It suggests that rather than being a reflection of essentialist national traits that the entire Norwegian people shared, the two-culture narrative became popularised through the efforts of a particular group of people whom I call "petty intellectuals". By focusing on how these petty intellectuals created the two-culture narrative and the associate *Landsmaal* movement, I argue that their campaign to establish the idea of a cultural divide rooted in "the people" became successful through its resonance among fellow petty intellectuals who went on as a class to assumed political influence in schools and civil society and eventually became connected to the *Venstre* movement. By emphasising the connection between the two-culture narrative and these petty intellectuals, this thesis seeks to highlight the actors – rather than "the people" – behind the ideas of Norwegian nationalism.

Historiography

Despite its significant influence on Norwegian historiography and politics, the two-culture narrative has only recently received its first dedicated study by Jens Johan Hyvik, who explains the origins, development, and role of the two-culture narrative as an ideological phenomenon from its creation in the 1850s until about the turn of the twentieth century.[6] Hyvik identifies three pillars of the two-culture narrative: *Målsak* (the *Landsmaal* movement), *norskdom* (Norwegianness), and *Venstre* (the liberal opposition).[7] These three pillars were initially separate phenomena but became linked with each other into a two-culture narrative through organisations and parliamentary politics from the 1850s onwards. Their association only became closer after the leadership of *Venstre* seized the reins of power in 1884 and officially recognised the importance of Norwegianness and the *Landsmaal* standard by symbolically declaring *Landsmaal* equal to the established Dano-Norwegian standard that. This divide of the national language, the main cultural symbol of the nation, into two written standards divided the Norwegian nation into two-cultures, thereby recognising a two-culture divide within Norway. By highlighting the various ideological sources which advocates for the two-culture narrative drew from and showing how these ideas played an important role in the development of Norwegian nationalism, politics, and democracy, Hyvik makes an important

[6] The translation of *Tokulturlæra* to two-culture narrative is my own. *Læra* could also be translated as teaching or theory, but those terms have scientific connotations. I wish to emphasize that these theories were rooted in belief, not fact. Jens Johan Hyvik, *Tokulturlæra i norsk historie* (Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget, 2016)
[7] Hyvik, *Tokulturlæra i norsk historie,* 7-8.

contribution to the understanding of how the central ideological tenets of the two-culture narrative came together.

There is however a serious flaw in how Hyvik approaches the two-culture narrative in his analytical section, where he interprets it from a postcolonial perspective, as an anti-colonial movement against a foreign elite.[8] This approach is flawed because an explanation of a colonised people rising against their foreign oppressors mirrors the exact same nationalist dichotomy, people against elite, that was utilised by nineteenth century nationalist intellectuals like Aasmund Olavsson Vinje, Ernst Sars, and Arne Garborg to frame their cause as a popular one.[9] In other words, by pitting a people of colonised Norwegians against an elite of Danish colonisers, Hyvik is perpetuating a well-established interpretation in the historiography of Norway that essentialises national distinctions while fading out other non-national motivations and identities that led to individuals undertaking the conscious efforts to launch, develop, and establish a conceptual framework like the two-culture narrative.

This essentialist interpretation of the two-culture narrative props up an overarching national master narrative in which the history of Norway conforms to a dialectical pattern where the Norwegian nation through its democratic integration of the people progressed towards a broader, more unified, and integrated national community that in turn explains its currently successful social-democratic welfare state. This historical two-culture narrative has been developed over the course of two centuries by historians like Ernst Sars (1835-1917), Halvdahn Koht (1873-1965), Sverre Steen (1898-1983), Stein Rokkan (1921-1979), and Knut Mykland (1920-2005), but two characteristics have always been at its core: the democratic and the national. The narrative is democratic in that the will of the people is always depicted as a progressive force in conflict with a narrower elite.[10] It is national because the framework of the narrative corresponds to and is limited by the borders of the Norwegian nation-state. This view of history stems from the idealisation of popular sovereignty that has been used to justify the existence of the nation and democracy since the late eighteenth century and remains an

[8] Hyvik, *Tokulturlæra i norsk historie*, 135.
[9] The Norwegian nationalist even utilised the colonial term themselves. A.O. Vinje was likely the first to use the colonialist term to describe Norwegian politics, but Ernst Sars popularised it. Jens Arup Seip, *Utsikt over Norges historie: 2: Tidsrommet ca. 1850-1884* (Oslo: Gyldendal, 1981) 160.
[10] Hyvik, *Tokulturlæra i norsk historie*, 20-26; Fredrik W. Thue, "Knut Mykland som nasjonal forteller," *Historisk Tidsskrift* 85, no.4 (2006): 634-635, 640-641.

essential part of Norwegian identity to this day.[11] In its post-war form, this historical narrative that has helped maintain this identity retains a bipolar structure similar to the older two-culture narrative, but it is instead presenting an essentialist success story in which the democratic nature of Norwegian history is emphasised and contrasted against other European countries. I use the term "success story" to describe this narrative because the historians using it are trying to identify cultural traits that explain why the democratic nation-state succeeded in Norway, where other less desirable traits won elsewhere. Below I will highlight two influential works by Øystein Sørensen and Rune Slagstad as examples of how this historical two-culture narrative is reiterated in this way.

In *Jakten på det norske: perspektiver på utviklingen av en norsk nasjonal identitet på 1800-tallet* (1998), Øystein Sørensen locates a political culture essential to "the Norwegian people" that explains why the country became a successful democracy. He identifies three distinctive features of Norwegian nationalism: the need for resonance between elites and the common people, the higher degree of egalitarianism within Norway compared to other European nations, and that the national building elite was not uniform as there were many competing visions of the nation. Sørensen argues that these traits are so deep-seated that one cannot use a constructivist approach to nationalism to accurately describe Norwegian history without them.[12] The essentialism of this claim is even more clearly expressed by Sørensen in *The Cultural Construction of Norden* (1997), jointly edited with Bo Stråth, whose main thesis is that the development of the Nordic nation-states was shaped by a unique Nordic branch of the enlightenment which used the peasant as its foremost symbol of education, freedom, and equality. This created a peasant culture that led to the Nordic countries walking down an especially democratic path through modernity that is favourably compared to the paths of Fascism and Bolshevism that appeared elsewhere in Europe.[13]

In *De nasjonale strateger* (1998), Rune Slagstad explains the influence education had on the development of democracy in Norway through explicitly attributing it to the democraticness of the cultural traditions of itinerary teachers and farmers that he contrasts

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[11] Francis Sejersted, *Demokrati og rettsstat* (Oslo: Pax, 2001), 232; Jan Heiret and Teemu Ryymin, "Konklusjon," in *Fortalt fortid: Norsk historieskriving etter 1970*, ed. Jan Heiret, Teemu Ryymin, Svein Atle Skålevåg (Oslo: Pax, 2013), 340-342.
[12] Øystein Sørensen, "Hegemonikamp om det norske," in *Jakten på det norske: perspektiver på utviklingen av en norsk nasjonal identitet på 1800-tallet,* ed. Øystein Sørensen (Oslo: Ad Notam Gyldendal, 1998), 17-19.
[13] Bo Stråth and Øystein Sørensen, "Introduction: The Cultural Construction of Norden," in *The cultural construction of Norden,* ed. Bo Stråth and Øystein Sørensen (Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 1997), 1-3.

against a German culture of authoritarianism. In his section dedicated to popular education in the nineteenth century, Slagstad writes:

> "*Venstre*staten (1884-1940) var folkedannelsens storhetstid. 1840-tallets gjennombrudd for folkeligheten i romantisk drakt var en opptakt. Men dette gjennombrudd hadde sin basis i eldre, folkelige lærdomstradisjoner i bygdenorge, båret frem av omgangsskolelærere og lesende bønder. Den romantiske bevegelse var dypt inspirert av tysk ideliv, men folkeligheten tok en annen retning i Norge enn i Tyskland – norsk folkelighet var en opplyst folkelighet. I sin tyske versjon avtegner folkeligheten en katastrofal historie fra Herder til Hitler – folkeligheten mobilisert til diktaturets forherligelse. I Norge, som i de skandinaviske land for øvrig, ble derimot folkeligheten en demokratisk pregende kraft. Den demokratiske folkelighet er den norske gave til den moderne verden."[14]
>
> [The *Venstre* state (1884-1940) was the great period for the people's enlightenment. The breakthrough for folkishness in its romantic form was a prelude. But this breakthrough had its basis in older, folkish learning traditions in rural Norway, carried forth by itinerary teachers and reading farmers. The romantic movement was deeply inspired by German ideas, but folkishness took another direction in Norway than in Germany – Norwegian folkishness was an enlightened folkishness. In its German version, folkishness delineates a catastrophic history from Herder to Hitler – folkishness mobilised for the glorification of dictatorship. In Norway, as in the Scandinavian countries incidentally, did folkishness instead become a democratic force. The democratic folkishness is Norway's gift to the modern world.][15]

As can be seen with both these examples, the Norwegian people are presented as an inherently democratic people with their national identity rooted in cultural values which are democratic, educational, and egalitarian. Both authors utilise this essentialism to explain why Norwegian nationalists were different from German nationalists despite them both sharing intellectual impulses like Romanticism and Hegelianism.[16] As Sørensen and Slagstad would have it, these inherent cultural differences between the two national cultures led Norwegians down a *Sonderweg* (special path) to social democracy while the Germans went down a different *Sonderweg* to fascism.

These essentialist narratives of national exceptionalism have a critical shortcoming in that by attributing these long historical developments of nation-states over centuries to inherent values, it locks down national history to an inevitable development towards an ensured

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[14] Rune Slagstad, *De nasjonale strateger* (Oslo: Pax, 1998), 93.
[15] Translated by author.
[16] Peter Aronsson, Narve Fulsås, Pertti Haapala, and Bernard Eric Jensen, «Nordic National Histories,» in *The Contested nation : Ethnicity, Class, Religion and Gender in National Histories*, ed. Stefan Berger and Chris Lorenz (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 257.

conclusion. What is obscured are the individuals and their efforts that made this history happen. Essentialists downplay the importance of conflicting interests and differences in perspective for the sake of simplicity and clarity, e.g., when Sørensen sorts different nationalist projects in Norway into winners and losers to argue that civic forms of nationalism have won out consistently over the course of the last two hundred years.[17] Pitting these ideologies against each other on an abstract battlefield obfuscates the fact that there were people behind these nationalist ideologies. I do not intend to question the historical trajectory as such, but I wish to highlight how ideological creations like the two-culture narrative was the result of historical actors, rather than predetermined, vague cultural forces consisting of values and traditions that remained consistent over hundreds of years.

To avoid essentialism, I rely on theoretical works on nationalism that reject the idea of any essentialist interpretation of the nation. Instead, these works argue for an approach that understands nations as political constructs completely created by its advocates. This interpretation of the nation as consciously constructed does not mean to imply that the phenomenon is no more than talk without substance but that nations are malleable, a matter of perception, and of constant debate. So, when it comes to studying nations, it means that I will focus on the historical actors who understood themselves to be nationalists. Nationalists appeared only in the last three centuries and I therefore believe that nations can only be understood as existing within this period. The most known scholars of nationalism who argue for such a constructivist approach to nationalism are Ernest Gellner and Benedict Anderson, whose main works were translated to Norwegian roughly thirty years ago.[18]

Although both Gellner and Anderson are familiar names among Norwegian historians and cited regularly, their concepts seem to hardly inform historical studies of nationalism in Norway. For instance, the two-volume work *Norsk målreising* covering the history of the Norwegian language movement between 1739 to 1940 by Jens Johan Hyvik and Oddmund Løkensgard Hoel sees both historians cite prominent critics of constructivist like Anthony D. Smith and John Hutchinson as part of their conceptual basis for their approach to nationalism.[19]

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[17] Sørensen, "Hegemonikamp om det norske," 21-23, 46.
[18] Ernest Gellner, *Nasjonalisme*, trans. Pål Eitrheim (Oslo: Spartacus, 1998); Benedict Anderson, *Forestilte fellesskap: refleksjoner omkring nasjonalismens opprinnelse og spredning*, trans. by Espen Andersen (Oslo: Spartacus, 1996)
[19] Jens Johan Hyvik, *Norsk målreising: 1: Språk og nasjon 1739-1868* (Oslo: Samlaget, 2009), 26; Oddmund Løkensgard Hoel, *Norsk målreising: 2: Mål og modernisering* 1868-1940 (Oslo: Samlaget, 2011), 21-24.

The ethnosymbolist theory of Smith stands in opposition to the constructivist approach of Gellner and Anderson because it presupposes that for nations to exist there must be an older group identity that constitutes an "ethnic core" from which nationalists could build a modern nation-state. This "ethnic core" carries the core values and cultural traits of the modern nation, making the development of each nation inherently unique to its culture.[20] As the defining characteristic of the ethnosymbolist theory is the unique ethnic origin for each national myth, Hyvik and Hoel reiterate the narrative of Norwegian exceptionalism. In a Norwegian context, this is achieved through attributing the "ethnic core" to the Norwegian farmers, a group that has been used as an ideal representation of "the people" since the eighteenth century. Therefore, despite taking on an outward appearance of a critical theory on nationalism, the ethnosymbolist theory retains a narrative where an existing national culture is discovered, instead of constructed, by nationalists.[21] In this way, historians using the ethnosymbolist theory are therefore perpetuating an essentialist nationalist narrative.

Evidence for the existence of a pre-modern national culture, the key tenet of ethnosymbolist theory, is dubious, however. Rasmus Glenthøj shows that among the political elite in medieval and early modern Norway, terms like "folk" and "nation" were in use, but there was no strong identity or loyalty before 1750 tied to one's nationality, so their meaning and significance were so completely different from how nineteenth-century nationalists understood them that describing them with the same national label would be misleading.[22] The opinion of common people concerning nationalism is even more uncertain because as Sørensen points out, it impossible to answer the question of national consciousness for certain, as there are no reliable ways to gauge the opinions of the "average Norwegian" on nationalism before 1850 with so few written sources produced by farmers or workers about their views on the state or nation.[23]

However, if one looks at nationalism as a product of political acts instead of an inherent cultural identity, it becomes at least possible to gauge the national consciousness of average Norwegians through their political actions. To understand if average Norwegians were

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[20] Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 191-192.
[21] Alexander Maxwell, "Primordialism for Scholars Who Ought to Know Better: Anthony D. Smith's Critique of Modernization Theory," *Nationalities papers*, 48, no.5 (2020): 840.
[22] Rasmus Glenthøj, *Skilsmissen: Dansk og norsk identitet før og efter 1814* (Odense: Syddansk Universitetsforlag, 2012), 52-53.
[23] Øystein Sørensen, "Når ble nordmenn norske?," in *Jakten på det norske*, ed. Øystein Sørensen (Oslo: Ad Notam Gyldendal, 1998), 15.

influenced by nationalism before the creation of a Norwegian nation-state in 1814, one can for instance look at rural protests in the period between 1750 to 1800. These indicate that the political culture of farmers in Norway was not rooted in a national consciousness, but in localised estates, as unrest was instigated by what local farmers perceived as threats to their established rights such as food shortages, new financial burdens, or excessive mistreatment by local authorities. One case from Karmøy in 1799 indicates that this estate solidarity was also localised, as the local farmers refused to pay taxes meant to cover the construction of roads in neighbouring Jæren.[24] Estates also maintained the social order, as their rights and duties limited political action. Farmers rebelled not in order to overthrow the system, so unlawful action was usually done with restraint which indicates that they only sought to restore the old balance to the social order.[25] This is further corroborated by the records of interrogations by commissions established after unrest had taken place. When asked by these commissioners to explain their reasoning for breaking the law, farmers typically presented narratives in which local civil servants were responsible for their grievances,[26] and that they had never acted with the intention of going against the king's laws.[27] By stressing their loyalty and regret, they received paternalist mercy and protection against the harsh punishments mandated by the law.[28] The court in turn acted out the role of paternalist father on behalf of the king: interrogating, punishing, and forgiving in the kings name at their own discretion.[29] Throughout this entire process, neither farmers nor civil servants seemed to have been acting with any semblance of a national framework in mind, but as estates protecting their own rights and privileges. As I will demonstrate in this thesis, one can only begin to see farmer's utilise national ideas in their politics decades later, long after the nation-state had already been created. It therefore seems doubtful that there was any national consciousness among common Norwegians before 1814.

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[24] Nils Olav Østrem, "Krigsskip mot skattenektarane på Karmøy" in *Opptøyer i Norge 1750-1850*, ed. Knut Dørum and Hilde Sandvik (Oslo: Scandinavian Academic Press, 2012), 157-158.
[25] Thomas Ewen Daltveit Slettebø, "Strilekrigen i Bergen i 1765: Improvisasjon i eneveldets politiske teater," in *Opptøyer i Norge 1750-1850*, ed. Knut Dørum and Hilde Sandvik (Oslo: Scandinavian Academic Press, 2012), 55-59; Ingrid Fiskaa, "Lofthusreisinga i Agder og Telemark 1786-87," in *Opptøyer i Norge 1750-1850*, ed. Knut Dørum and Hilde Sandvik (Oslo: Scandinavian Academic Press, 2012), 116-117.
[26] Dørum and Sandvik, "Skatteopptøyer og bondebevegelser 1765-1818," 39-40; Fiskaa, "Lofthusreisinga i Agder og Telemark 1786-87," 110, 115; Knut Dørum, *Frå undersått til medborgar : styreform og politisk kultur i Noreg 1660 til 1884* (Oslo: Samlaget, 2016), 57-58;
[27] Slettebø, "Strilekrigen i Bergen i 1765," 52-53, 59; Fiskaa, "Lofthusreisinga i Agder og Telemark 1786-87," 109, 117.
[28] Slettebø, "Strilekrigen i Bergen i 1765," 91-92; Fiskaa, "Lofthusreisinga i Agder og Telemark 1786-87," 121-123, 128, 139.
[29] Slettebø, "Strilekrigen i Bergen i 1765," 90-91; Fiskaa, "Lofthusreisinga i Agder og Telemark 1786-87," 114, 117, 139.

Theoretical approach

Instead of relying on any of the essentialist frameworks that have defined so many studies of nationalism in Norway, this thesis operates with three categories that it believes make up the fundamental building blocks of the Norwegian nation-state: nation, state, and language. The first two categories are taken from the theoretical framework of Ernest Gellner. Gellner centres his understanding of nation and nationalism around the politics of the state, arguing that "Nationalism is primary a political principle, which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent."[30] The addition of language to this dynamic is taken from Tomasz Kamusella's study of Central Europe in what he calls "ethnolinguistic nationalism".[31] Kamusella argues that in Central Europe, which he includes Norway and the other Scandinavian countries in, language makes up an essential part of the national, cultural and political identity.[32] I believe this framework of ethnolinguistic nationalism is appropriate for the study of Norwegian nationalism because in Norway language was made an essential part of the legitimacy of the Norwegian nation-state during its creation in 1814 when the Norwegian language was established as the only legal form of political communication by the November Constitution.[33] The importance of the national language only grew over the course of the nineteenth century as it became a defining cultural symbol in the conflict over the nation that created the two-culture narrative. These three parts of an ideal-typical ethnolinguistic nation are manifest in the Norwegian case through the two-culture narrative, with each pillar of the two-culture narrative which Hyvik identifies aligning with one of Kamusella's three categories: State (*Venstre*), Nation (*Norskdom*), and Language (*Målsak*).

While Gellner and Kamusella are useful for a theoretical understanding of nationalism as a political ideology, they lack a practical approach for how to study the social groups behind the politics that brought the nation-state and the two-culture narrative into being. For my understanding of how collective identities are utilised in political debates, Dror Wahrman's study on the political representation of the English middle-class between 1780 to 1830 has been an important influence. Wahrman expresses through highlighting examples of political language how contingent the idea of a British "middle-class" was, and how it was driven

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[30] Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), 1.
[31] Tomasz Kamusella, "The Rise and Dynamics of the Normative Isomorphism of Language, Nation, and State in Central Europe," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 35, no. 1/4 (2017): 352.
[32] Kamusella, "The Rise and Dynamics of the Normative Isomorphism of Language, Nation, and State in Central Europe," 359, 362.
[33] Glenthøj, *Skilsmissen,* 294-295.

forward by competing political discourses that utilised the middle-class term in order to attain other, underlying political goals.[34] In a similar manner, I will look at how the "farmer" social identity became utilised and contested through the two-culture narrative by petty intellectuals in order to advance their own political and social interests.

Such an understanding of collective identities and nationalism as a product of a social group's actions is evident when one looks at the first Norwegian national culture that emerged in Norway in 1814. Its values, language, cultural identity, and political legitimacy were all tied to the ruling elite of civil servants in Norway. But the second national culture that created the two-culture narrative and which was represented through *Venstre, Norskdom,* and *Målsak* is understood to be rooted in the much broader and vaguer social identity of the farmer. However, as an ideology it was not created by farmers. Sørensen identifies the elite of the *Venstre* movement that utilised the two-culture narrative as one of oppositional intellectuals, teachers, and farmers.[35] I believe that this nation-making group can be more clearly identified and that by studying how they came about, it is possible to get a better understanding of why the two-culture narrative emerged the way it did.

To isolate this oppositional elite from the vaguer, broader, and contested social identity of "farmer", which carries with it so many social, political, and nationalist connotations within Norwegian historiography, I refer instead to the social group that was most influential in the formation of the second national culture and the two-culture narrative, the "petty intellectuals." By petty intellectuals, I mean the class of individuals who saw themselves as fulfilling the social role of intellectuals, but who fell outside the ruling elite of civil servants that also justified their political power and social privileges through education. The separation between civil servants and petty intellectuals was not determined by their education, as there was often little to no differences between them in the education they obtained. Many notable petty intellectuals went through the same educational courses and institutions that characterised a typical civil servant education in Norway after 1815, namely *latinskoler* (Latin grammar schools) and the Royal Frederik's University in Christiania. Instead, what distinguished civil servants from petty intellectuals was that petty intellectuals did not occupy a position within the Norwegian bureaucracy that defined one as belonging to the civil servant estate. Many of those who became petty intellectuals ended up instead in a lower section of the bureaucracy as *bestillingsmenn* (functionaries), a less socially

[34] Dror Wahrman, *Imagining the middle class: the political representation of class in Britain, c. 1780-1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 10-11.
[35] Sørensen, "Hegemonikamp om det norske," 30-31.

prestigious and privileged classification that included jobs like copyists, public schoolteachers, postal workers, and various other functionary roles.[36] But the Norwegian bureaucracy was too small and too poorly financed to accommodate the rapid growth in the number of higher educated individuals. As a result, a large number of petty intellectuals ended up in intellectual positions outside of the state. The most typical examples of private employment for petty intellectuals were as private schoolteachers, journalists, newspaper editors, authors, or freelance researchers.

Common for all these sources of employment from the highest civil servant to the lowliest schoolteacher was that they gave their holder some sense of intellectual authority because the political culture imposed upon Norwegian society by the civil servants put heavy emphasis on expertise when it came to the legitimacy on having a public opinion on a subject.[37] As a growing number of petty intellectuals obtained these positions of intellectual authority, they contested the hegemonic role that civil servants held over defining the nation. The most active group among the petty intellectuals in the national discourse was especially those who worked in education or the press as they saw themselves as directly contributing to *Folkeopplysningen* (the enlightenment of the people), a role which involved deciding on behalf of the broader population what they should consider true, good, and useful.

This concept of petty intellectuals shares some traits with Antonio Gramsci's understanding of intellectuals in that I define petty intellectuals by the social role they fulfil, and that I see them as not existing separate to but tied to other social identities like that of civil servants and farmers.[38] However, I would not label petty intellectuals "organic intellectuals", as I do not believe that any individual "organically" belongs to a class which he acts on behalf of. He only believes he does. For instance, *Landsmaal* advocates like Aasmund Olavsson Vinje and Ivar Aasen were born into rural families and claimed to speak on behalf of the farmers when they advocated for a nation based on the farmers' culture. However and as I will go on to show, they hardly did so. When they moved in their youth to gain an education and worked their entire adult life outside of rural communities as researchers, journalists, and newspaper editors, they developed different interests, understandings, and beliefs as those who stayed behind to work and live as farmers in rural communities. Intellectuals from a farmer

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[36] The social groups which I believe fit under the petty intellectual term within Norway overlaps with the term "Bestillingsmenn" used by Jens Arup Seip. Seip's term is limited to state employment, so it excludes a large number of privately employed intellectuals and students who played a large role in shaping national discourse within Norway. I believe the petty intellectual term is more useful as it is emphasising the intellectual aspect which unified these people. Jens Arup Seip, *Utsikt over Norges historie: 2,* 115-116.
[37] Sejersted, *Demokrati og rettsstat,* 145-146.
[38] Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the prison notebooks,* ed. and trans. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1971), 134-136.

background are therefore not representing the farmer class organically through underlying economic structures as Gramsci argues; instead, the intellectual imagines himself as part of a broader community that is not actually there.

Research Object and Selection of Sources

The central questions this thesis then asks are: how and under what circumstances did petty intellectuals emerge, how did they make a class, and how did they establish the two-culture narrative? By challenging the interpretation that the two-culture narrative emerged from an already existing national culture rooted in the tradition or experience of a "people", I will instead show through the study of the social origins of petty intellectuals and their use of political language, how the idea of a two-culture narrative emerged and became recognised by the broader Norwegian political class. By focusing on the social and political conditions that drove individuals towards the organisations involved in creating the two-culture narrative and the societal conditions which enabled them to create and spread their ideological visions of the nation, this study proposes an alternative interpretation of how the Norwegian-state gained legitimacy during a period of increasing political and social turmoil. In this way I hope to complement Hyvik's study on the ideology of the two-culture narrative, by focusing on the practices, political tactics, and material interests that underlay the ideological debates that he has highlighted. This will hopefully further the understanding of why individuals were drawn to the ideas of the two-culture narrative, how they advocated for it, and why the two-culture narrative eventually gained traction among broader political groups in Norway.

To make the clearest and most coherent argument, this thesis will for the most part concentrate its effort on the *Landsmaal* movement that advocated for the two-culture narrative. Compared to other groups that advocated for the two-culture narrative, the *Landsmaal* movement was a lot smaller and concentrated with the most coherent nationalist ideology, as they had a clear goal of making Ivar Aasen's *Landsmaal* standard to the national language. I have also made this choice because it is in the *Landsmaal* movement that one can most clearly see a disconnect between petty intellectuals who used and advocated for the *Landsmaal* standard, and farmers that refused to support them, as they had their own social and political desires.

I have separated the thesis into four chapters. The first chapter covers the making of the petty intellectual class in the first half of the nineteenth century, and how they were influenced by civil servants' ideals and the social interests of farmers. The second chapter looks at the

origin of the two-culture narrative in the 1850s by looking at the intellectual discourse within *Selskabet for Folkeoplysningens Fremme*. The third shows how the petty intellectuals in the capital developed the *Landsmaal* identity into a coherent political ideology through the 1860s. The fourth chapter traces the growth and recognition of *Landsmaal* by the *Venstre* movement between 1868 and 1885.

An important element to explain the development and spread of the two-culture narrative are the three political mass movements, *Arbeiderforeningene* (the Workers' Associations), *Bondevennene* (the Farmer Friends), and *Venstre* (the Left Party). These ran parallel to the creation of the petty intellectual class and the two-culture narrative. They involved much larger sections of the Norwegian population than just the petty intellectuals, but petty intellectuals were connected to each of these movements as it was them who played leading roles in the leadership of all three organisations. These mass movements help demonstrate that the Norwegian population both inside and outside of the political privileged class had a well-established understanding of the political culture of their time and that they knew what was possible to achieve through organised political activity. These examples of political organisation also help contrast the repeated failures of the largely petty intellectual *Landsmaal* movement to convince farmers to take an interest in the language question before the 1880s. This contrast makes it clear that it was more about a lack of appeal, than lack of understanding of nationalism that made the farmers so reluctant to adopt *Landsmaal* and its associate, the two-culture narrative. These parallel movements are therefore included in the scope of this thesis. They highlight the fact that the creation of the two-culture narrative as a popular ideology was not easily done. It had to be imposed upon a population that had their own desires and ambitions developed over decades of independent political participation.

This thesis builds on a broad selection of existing work on the activities of notable Norwegian nationalist but reads this scholarship against the grain. In addition, it delves into published sources produced by both petty intellectuals and civil servants to provide insight into how they conceptualised themselves and others within the Norwegian nation-state. This body of sources includes newspapers, scientific journals, pamphlets, and speeches. These printed sources reveal how the individuals involved with the language movement understood themselves within Norwegian society, how they argued against other conceptualisation of the nation, and how they organised themselves.

1 Petty intellectuals and their position between civil servants' ideals and farmers' interests, 1814-1850

In 1824, ten years after the creation of an independent Norwegian nation-state, a tenant farmer's son named Ole Vig (1824-1857) was born on a small farm east of Trondheim. Because his family was poor, Vig only received a rudimentary education through the public schooling system. Itinerant schoolteachers would periodically visit the local cluster of farms for a few weeks at a time, teaching the children to read and the fundamentals of Christianity. Despite the irregularity and poor quality of teaching offered to him, Vig displayed an aptitude for learning and was recommended by the local priest for further education so that he could become a schoolteacher himself. However, Vig's parents were hesitant to let him go. The rural schooling system was at the time so underfunded that even tenant farmers were considered to inhabit a higher social status than teachers. For instance, an important social milestone like marriage was considered unlikely for teachers as it was impossible to sustain a family on a teacher's salary.

Nevertheless, Vig decided to follow the career path of a rural teacher anyway. After completing his education at the teacher school, he would have likely gone on to become a rural teacher, but by coincidence he was noticed at graduation by Frederik Moltke Bugge (1806-1853), a civil servant. Bugge hired Vig as a private tutor for his sister's children, bringing him into a civil servant household, a social world that he otherwise would have been completely shut out from. It was while working for the family that Vig was introduced to the ideas of the Danish school reformer Nikolaj Frederik Severin Grundtvig (1783-1872). After becoming a devout follower of Grundtvig, Vig left to work as a public-school teacher in Christansund. Vig's attempt at implementing Grundtvig's ideals of nationalistic and spiritual cultivation through education was however hampered by the economic realities of the city's working class. Most working families relied on the children to contribute to the household through labour, thus parents disliked the public school that kept their children away from work. The experience was miserable for Vig as the number of absentee pupils was high, and he was so poorly paid that his living conditions were comparable to that of a servant.[39]

To add to his meagre earnings as a teacher, Vig tried his luck as an author, first publishing a crime novel in 1850, then a collection of poetry in 1851. Both these books were financial

[39] Salaries was still a lot better for urban teachers than rural teachers in this period. Average salary for a rural teacher was 18,5 spesidaler a year while the average urban teacher made 108 spesidaler a year. Harald Thuen, *Den norske skolen: utdanningssystemets historie* (Oslo: Abstrakt forlag, 2017), 76.

failures, and Vig would likely have had to give up his venture if it had not been for the upheavals caused by the revolutions of 1848. Vig's third book released in the autumn of 1851 included a political essay with his ideas about history, morals, religion, and nationalism. The essay concludes with a denouncement of Marcus Thrane (1817-1890) and other leading figures in *Arbeiderforeningene* (the Workers' Associations) as dangerous firebrands that split the Norwegian people into parties and goaded them into violence. Vig encouraged the people to instead look to established civil servants within the government and parliament for guidance. In particular, he praised the newly announced *Selskabet for Folkeoplysningens Fremme* (Association for the betterment of the people's enlightenment) as a promising initiative that could lead to a national reawakening for the people.

It is unlikely that Vig expected a job out of his endorsement, but as he publicly presented himself as an anti-Thrane educator at the same time as Hartvig Nissen (1815-1874) was looking for an editor for the society's publication, *Folkevennen* (the People's Friend), he was offered the position of editor.[40] In addition to the influence and prestige that the position would bring, Nissen's included a part-time teaching position at his bourgeois school that increased Vig's yearly salary from 130 to 290 spesidaler.[41] Vig moved to the capital in the autumn of 1852 and spent the rest of his life working tirelessly as editor for *Folkevennen* until he unexpectedly passed away in the winter of 1857.

Vig's journey from tenant farmer's son to leading intellectual in the capital is a striking example of how broader opportunities for education, increasing social unrest, and new avenues of employment made rapid social advancement possible for poor and relatively unknown individuals from the 1840s onwards. In working as an educator of the people and expressing himself as a source of intellectual authority on nationalism through *Selskabet for Folkeoplysningens Fremme*, Vig became among one of the first to belong to a growing petty intellectual class that emerged below the established intellectual class of civil servants. Alongside him, there were several other petty intellectual figures who were also not willing to accept their exclusion from the estate-based socio-political order established after 1814. These notable petty intellectuals like Ivar Aasen, Knud Knudsen, and A.O. Vinje challenged the civil

[40] This biographical information on Vig's early life is taken from Arild Bye, *Folkevennen Ole Vig* (Oslo: Aschehoug, 2014), 15-119.
[41] I use bourgeois as a translation of the Norwegian word *Borger*. I use "bourgeois" instead of "middle-class" to emphasise the medieval roots of the social and political privileges associated with being a politically privileged town-dweller in nineteenth century Norway. Bye, *Folkevennen Ole Vig*, 59, 355-356.

servant's interpretation of the Norwegian nation by advocating for educational and cultural reforms through publications like *Folkevennen*, *Den Norske Folkeskole*, and *Dølen*. Their shared ideological basis was a "Norwegian" national cultural that emphasised traits more closely corresponding to their own social background and identity as farmers. These efforts centred around promoting farmer culture, and laid the foundation for the farmer-centric nation that took clear shape at the end of the 1850s. At that time, Ivar Aasen, the creator of the *Landsmaal* standard, publicly critiqued both the culture of the civil servant estate and more moderate language reformers such as Knud Knudsen, accusing them both of advocating for an "un-Norwegian" culture and language. Instead, Aasen wanted the nation and language to be based on his interpretation of the farmers' language centred on his *Landsmaal* standard. As this cultural identity became adopted by students and other petty intellectual figures within Norway's intellectual elite in the 1860s, a political identity of opposition to the king, union, and government emerged clearly by 1868. This created an oppositional national, political, and social identity that was united in the form of the two-culture narrative.

The nationalist opposition of Aasen has led Oddmund Løkensgard Hoel to emphasise the early *Landsmaal* movement as a prerequisite for the democratic and social advancement of the farmers that occurred over the next decades through broad political coalitions like *Bondevennene* and *Venstre*.[42] Hoel also argued that until 1868, the *Landsmaal* movement was not a popular one, describing it as an elite phenomenon with a narrow academic following confined and concentrated to Norway's three largest cities.[43] This discrepancy between the larger population that did not participate in the discussion or organisation of the *Landsmaal* movement for its first decades, and petty intellectuals like Aasen, Vig, and Vinje who presented themselves as quasi-farmers speaking on behalf of the people will be explored in this chapter by looking at both the development of political and social identities for larger sections of the rural and urban population in Norway alongside the making of the petty intellectual class between 1814-1850. Highlighting these differences between petty intellectuals and the general population is essential to understand why the two-culture narrative remained an elite phenomenon for so long, despite the formers' efforts of making themselves credible voices of the people through nationalism.

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[42] Oddmund Hoel, *Nasjonalisme i norsk målstrid 1848-1865* (Oslo: Noregs Forskningsråd, 1996), 389, 397-8.
[43] Hoel, *Norsk målreising: 2*, 15.

This chapter argues that the disconnect in question emerged because those petty intellectuals who formulated the two-culture narrative could only do so by socially climbing through higher education. In doing so, they became separated from the social and political understanding of the larger Norwegian population that experienced their own crisis of identity, not rooted in nationalism, but in the dissolution of their older social identities. These identities were rooted in estates that were under pressure from the economic transformation of rural and urban society. How these alternative outlooks on rural identity without nationalism could function will be highlighted in this chapter by looking at the first political mass movement started by a petty intellectual, the Workers' Associations. This movement successfully mobilised tens of thousands of Norwegians in both cities and rural regions without relying on nationalism to any significant degree. The Workers' Associations reveal that it was possible for petty intellectuals and the larger population to understand one another and collaborate, but that this required petty intellectuals to advocate for political, economic, and social policies which reflected the social desires and political culture present within the general population.

The chapter begins with the events of 1814 when an independent Norwegian nation, state, parliament, and constitution were being created. The year 1814 marks a political revolution in Norway, a sudden shift from absolutist monarchy to bourgeois constitutionalism. However, because the breakup of the Dano-Norwegian state was instigated by political decisions outside of Norway, there was no accompanying social revolution like in France. In the decade before and after 1814, the social structures and political culture of Norwegian society remained largely the same. It would take decades for the social, political, and cultural fabric of Norwegian society to gradually transform towards one in which a national cultural divide, like the two-culture narrative, could take place. This chapter will highlight the most important trends that made this possible, by going through how the nation, the state, and the major social groups in Norway were impacted by the political and ideological development in the decades after 1814. It will use this as an opportunity to nuance the understanding of what it meant to be a farmer, a civil servant, or a petty intellectual. This will provide a necessary foundation for the discussion of how these identities subsequently developed through organisations like the Workers' Associations, and *Selskabet for Folkeoplysningens Fremme*.

1.1 The creation of a Norwegian nation by civil servants

The most political and culturally influential group in Norway during the nineteenth century were the around two thousand or so individuals who belonged to the civil servant estate.[44] Individuals from this group were the ones who designed the framework of the Norwegian nation-state as well as implementing it through governing the state for most of the nineteenth century. It is therefore useful to follow Jens Arup Seip in describing the state between 1814 to 1885 as a "Civil Servant State".[45] The introduction of the idea of a Norwegian nation and people in 1814 was also directly related to the civil servants' identity, as they justified both the existence of the state and their role in it through nationalism. It could be said that under the absolutist monarchy, civil servants had governed the country on behalf of the king with absolute political authority over its subjects. After 1814, civil servants instead governed on behalf of the parliament, the laws, and "the people". It is therefore also useful to understand the official nation between 1814 to 1885 as a "Civil Servant Nation" although it claimed to include all members of the Norwegian population, as it built its legitimacy on the principle of popular sovereignty.[46]

The idea of the nation and popular sovereignty within Norwegian politics as the basis of government had its intellectual roots in a doctrine of popular sovereignty created by civil servants at the intellectual centre of the Dano-Norwegian state, the University of Copenhagen, in the late seventeenth century. Leading jurists, most notably Johan F. W. Schlegel (1765-1836), argued that the king should no longer be able to do whatever he wanted, but that he had to respect the ruling of the courts, follow established legal principles, and act in accordance with the "popular will".[47] This ideology of a *rettstat* built on popular sovereignty reflected the desire of many civil servants to have a greater say in the affairs of the state because the absolutist monarchs were, as Jan Eivind Myhre puts it, "too drunk, too lazy, too simple or too insane to be equal to their job."[48] As imagined under the absolutist monarchy, popular sovereignty would have given nominal power to the people, but would have also privileged civil servants

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[44] Jan Eivind Myhre, "Academics as the Ruling Elite in 19th Century Norway" *Historical Social Research* 33, no.2 (2008): 25; Dørum, *Frå undersått til medborgar*, 88.

[45] The term «Civil Servant State» is a translation of the term "Embetsmannstaten" introduced in Jens Arup Seip's classic essay on the Norwegian state between 1814 and 1885. Seip's emphasis on the hegemonic role of the civil servants has been challenged and nuanced by historians like Francis Sejersted and Odd Arvid Storsveen. Sejersted emphasises that were strong legal ideals built into the Norwegian state (*rettsstat*) which prevented abuse of power. Storsveen has shown that the civil servants relied on the cooperation of another influential group within Norway to govern. I believe that the term is still appropriate because it accurately describes the dominant role the civil servants played in shaping both the state and nation. Jens Arup Seip, *Fra embedsmannsstat til ettpartistat og andre essays* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1963), 21; Francis Sejersted, *Demokrati og rettsstat: politisk-historiske essays* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1984), 15-45; Odd Arvin Storsveen, "Smaken av Frihet: En grunnlov for makt og for avmakt," in *Smak av frihet : 1814- grunnloven. Historisk virkning og sosial forankring* ed. Odd Arvin Storsveen (Oslo: Scandinavian Academic Press), 14-16.

[46] Dørum, *Frå undersått til medborgar*, 92.

[47] Jostein Gripsrud, *Allmenningen: historien om norsk offentlighet* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 2017), 107.

[48] Myhre, "Academics as the Ruling Elite in 19th Century Norway," 23.

as they saw themselves through their education as those who best understood and spoke on behalf of the popular will.[49] Behind the lofty ideals of a nation-state there was therefore clear social interests at play.

These social interests contributed to creating the Norwegian nation as to better understand and define the popular will, civil servants like Niels Treschow (1751-1833), Laurits Engelstoft (1774-1851), and Oluf Christian Olufsen (1763-1827) took it upon themselves to define traits which they believed contributed to the behaviour of the people.[50] These topographical, historical, and linguistic studies, which categorised the population within the Dano-Norwegian state, were the beginning of what was to become Norwegian and Danish national identity. However, the separation between the two was not immediately apparent. Between 1780 and 1814, there were as many similarities as there were differences between the national traits associated with the population in Denmark and Norway.[51] The later separation between the two was primarily a political one, and since that political separation would come as a consequence of an unexpected war, the national identity before political separation was bipolar. This can be seen by looking at how nationalist inquiries from the period varied between suggesting a separate and shared identity according to which national traits were emphasised. The earliest nationalist studies in the 1770s and 1780s - inspired by Charles Montesquieu's ideas about how climate and geography influenced the development of peoples - suggested a clear difference between Danish and Norwegian people, as Denmark is flat and warm, and Norway is cold and mountainous.[52] On the other hand, those scholars who studied "national consciousness" on the basis of language, inspired by the popular writings of Johan Gottfried Herder (1744-1803), predominantly conceptualised Danish and Norwegian dialects within a shared national language, and therefore strengthened the case for a shared Dano-Norwegian national identity.[53]

The tendency towards a more clearly separated Norwegian national identity reflected the uncertain relationship between civil servants in Denmark and Norway as the Norwegian civil servants increasingly saw themselves as a distinct group from their colleagues in Denmark. This distinction was accelerated by the British blockade of the kingdoms during the Napoleonic Wars, which prevented extensive contact between the administrations in each kingdom, thereby increasing political autonomy for civil servants living in Norway.[54] Nevertheless, the political ambitions of civil servants in Norway remained largely limited to a desire for greater autonomy, and there was not significant support among

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[49] Dørum, *Frå undersått til medborgar,* 104.
[50] Glenthøj, *Skilsmissen*, 215-218.
[51] Olav Christensen, "En nasjonal identitet tar form: Etniske og nasjonalkulturelle avgrensninger" in *Jakten på det norske: perspektiver på utviklingen av en norsk nasjonal identitet på 1800-tallet*. ed. Øystein Sørensen (Oslo: Ad notam Gyldendal, 1998), 51.
[52] Christen, "En nasjonal identitet tar form", 56-58.
[53] Hyvik, *Norsk målreising: 1*, 130-135; Glenthøj, *Skilsmissen*, 219, 287-289.
[54] Glenthøj, *Skilsmissen,* 341.

civil servants for political separation from the Danish state before it was made a *fait accompli* by the treaty of Kiel on 14 January, 1814.[55] Nationalism was therefore not a prerequisite for Norway gaining its independence. Rather a distinctive national identity from Denmark became a necessity because of political independence.[56] This independent Norwegian identity would manifest itself through national symbols such as history, language, flag, and constitution.[57]

However, there were clear social influences from the civil servants in the process of creating national symbols. This can be most clearly seen in the unprecedented mention of a "Norwegian language" in the November constitution of 1814, which helped legitimise the civil servant's control of the state. The constitution stated that only the Norwegian language could be used in all official business regarding the Norwegian state. Knowing Norwegian therefore became a prerequisite for any employee of the state, which was useful for preventing the new king with his powerbase in Sweden from appointing Swedes or other foreigners into positions in the Norwegian bureaucracy. The Norwegian language was, however, completely identical to what had been known as Danish; the only thing that had changed was the name of the language. An explanation as to why Danish had suddenly become Norwegian was not given by the government itself. Instead, the university's governing board published a bulletin defending the government's decision, explaining that the language was as Norwegian as it was Danish. This statement was challenged by Danish intellectuals at the University of Copenhagen, but the declaration remained in the Norwegian constitution. It was entrenched by a decade long scholarly effort from Norwegian scholars who used "scientific" studies of history and philology to justify their political position.[58] I highlight this incident to exemplify that the nation that was created in 1814 emerged from specific political and social interests that embedded national symbols within the state. In the short term, these had little immediate impact. However, a declaration like that which established an official Norwegian language created a precedent for the national language to become a symbol of cultural legitimacy. Ownership of this legitimacy would be challenged four decades later through the debates over the national language that led to the creation of the two-culture narrative. Before I can move onto to discuss this and the creation of petty intellectuals, I must first highlight how farmers fit within the nation and political order created in 1814.

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[55] Glenthøj, *Skilsmissen*, 83-84, 215, 225.
[56] Glenthøj, *Skilsmissen*, 391-392.
[57] Glenthøj, *Skilsmissen*, 260-262, 294-295, 307-310, 369.
[58] Glenthøj, *Skilsmissen*, 287-303.

1.2 The partition of the state by farmers

Although civil servants dominated the new state, there were other social groups in Norway with influence. Before the constitutional assembly at Eidsvoll during the spring of 1814, the three estates of the old regime elected representatives, resulting in 18 bourgeois delegates, 37 farmers, and 57 civil servants. The May and revised November Constitution that these delegates agreed to support reflected the social interests of these three estates, as it established an elected parliament whose electorate consisted of civil servants and large elements from both the farmer and bourgeois estate, who were over the age of 25 and owned property. In 1814, this was somewhere around 30-45% of the male population above 25. Including these groups in politics was important for both ideological and practical reasons. Ideologically, because the farmer was used as a patriotic and nationalist symbol.[59] Practically, because the civil servants were not numerous enough to establish an effective opposition to the monarch on their own. They were simply too few, around two thousand, or roughly one percent of the Norwegian population in 1814.[60] What the civil servants offered to the farmers and bourgeois was equality, representation, and leadership in a state where old privileges and divides would be formally abolished in favour of a singular parliament in which their votes would be equal to that of civil servants. However, this ideal of citizenship came with clear moral restrictions, as the right of citizenship was held down by the idea of patriotic self-sacrifice for the greater good of the nation-state. Contrasted with the ideal citizen was the self-centred egotist who put his own interest ahead of the greater good.[61] Critically, the civil servants presented themselves as standing above these interests by representing the nation-state and therefore everyone's interests.[62] This nationalist moralism attached to the responsibility of citizenship would become a recurring form of moral policing that civil servants attempted to utilise against any opposition.[63]

However, this did not stop farmers from challenging civil servants at Eidsvoll. Multiple surviving constitutional drafts by farmer representatives indicate that farmers had a good understanding of how to utilise politics to further their own interests. For instance, they proposed a broader electorate that would benefit them the most.[64] In the final draft, around 40% of rural males above the age of 25 fulfilled the property and wealth requirements necessary to attain the right to vote in 1814.[65] These 40% were enough

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[59] Dørum, *Frå undersått til medborgar*, 91, 102-103.
[60] Jan Eivind Myhre, "Academics as the Ruling Elite in 19th Century Norway," 25.
[61] Glenthøj, *Skilsmissen*, 95-101, 103-107.
[62] Dørum, *Frå undersått til medborgar*, 113.
[63] Jens Arup Seip, *Utsikt over Norges historie: 1: Tidsrommet 1814-ca. 1860* (Oslo: Gyldendal, 1974), 110, 118, 170-171; Seip, *Utsikt over Norges historie: 2*, 46, 74.
[64] Marthe Hommerstad, *Politiske bønder: bondestrategene og kampen om demokratiet: 1814-1837* (Oslo, Scandinavian Academic Press, 2014), 36, 42.
[65] Marthe Hommerstad, "Bondestrategene," in *Ideal og realitet: 1814 i politisk praksis for folk og elite*, ed. Marthe Hommerstad and Morten Nordhagen Ottosen (Oslo: Akademika Forlag, 2014), 49.

to make farmers the largest electorate by far. This large pool of people with voting rights meant that farmers were a potentially influential voter group within the new state. However, a large percentage of those who had been enfranchised never utilised the rights granted to them. Looking at Alf Kaartvedt's study of voter participation between 1829 and 1869,[66] on average only around 50% of voters participated in elections, and when rounded up to the total population this then averages around only 2 to 3% of the total population participating in elections.[67] The lowest number of voters lived in rural constituencies, where voter participation hovered around 40 to 50% compared to urban voter participation which was between 60 to 70%.[68]

This was not because rural voters were not interested or capable of engaging in politics, in fact, quite the contrary. Hilde Sandvik has highlighted how a strong tradition of broad, local political activity through petitions, meetings, and protests before 1814 in the rural world continued to live on within the new state.[69] However, these political activities were locally oriented and locally minded as they promoted local interests, were rooted in local communities, and centred on local institutions such as the *tingsted* (thing) and the church. Parliament and its elections on the other hand were a new form of politics that required more complicated organisation on a regional and national level to win elections and to influence political decisions. Before 1814, there had been no comparable institution to the parliament that encouraged the development of an active and participating political culture.[70] This meant that many rural voters remained spectators to national politics throughout the nineteenth century and many of those that did vote voted for civil servants.[71] However, Marthe Hommerstad has shown that farmers who were, had been, or were sons of *ombudsmen* (appointed officials) and richer farmers that were involved with trade or business quickly adapted to the new political system.[72] These emerged as a national political elite among the farmers and convinced other farmers to elect them to parliament on the basis of their shared social identity. How successful these agitators eventually were can be seen in the election of 1832, when 45 out of 96 representatives elected to parliament were farmers.[73] The introduction of a national

[66] 1829 is the first year in which voting numbers became registered. Hommerstad, *Politiske bønder*, 68.
[67] Alf Kaartvedt, *Det Norske Storting gjennom 150 år: B. 1: Fra Riksforsamlingen til 1869* (Oslo: Gyldendal, 1964), 116.
[68] Kaartvedt, *Det Norske Storting gjennom 150 år: B.1*, 116.
[69] Hilde Sandvik, "Norway 1750–1850: Riots and Participation" in *Popular Struggle and Democracy in Scandinavia: 1700-Present*, ed. Flemming Mikkelsen, Knut Kjeldstadli, and Stefan Nyzell (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2017), 181-182, 194-195.
[70] Hommerstad, "Bondestrategene," 193.
[71] Hommerstad, "Bondestrategene," 70-71.
[72] Hommerstad, *Politiske bønder*, 26-27, 64.
[73] Arne Bergsgård, *Ole Gabriel Ueland og bondepolitikken: 1* (Oslo: Aschehoug, 1932), 62.

parliament did therefore not only introduce a national identity to the population, but also helped create a more defined farmer identity on a local, regional, and national level through political participation.[74]

The increased political influence of farmers did not result in an upending of the civil servant state, only a slight reform of the political compromise settled on in 1814. This was because the unifying policy that the farmer opposition built itself upon was a decentralisation of the state. The national economy was still too localised with too many distinctive regional peculiarities to create a common need among farmers for a strong state, so the only political issue that could tie them together was resistance to the state itself, whose taxes presented a shared financial burden. The farmer's coalition of the 1830s was therefore centred around the two primary goals of achieving greater local autonomy and keeping state expenditure low.[75] This *bondekommunalisme* (farmers' communalism), as Trond Nordby terms it, achieved two large victories in 1837,[76] as the second farmer majority parliament successfully passed legislation for the removal of direct taxation, and the creation of municipal government (*formannskapsdistrikter*) that increased control over financial and political decisions at the local (*kommune*) and regional level (*amt*).[77] After achieving these important goals, the farmer coalition lost its cohesion and parliamentary majority in the 1840s, but a relatively stable faction of fiscally conservative farmers continued to be elected over the next decades. Most of these representatives were farmers that were at the top of the social hierarchy in their rural communities in terms of both wealth and prestige.[78] The development towards a more defined group of farmer parliamentarians therefore helped consolidated a political and social elite of farmers on a national level.

This national farmer identity created by parliamentary politics was not as inclusive as the estate-identity which had preceded it, as it was limited to those farmers who had *matrikulert jord* (taxable land). The development towards a stronger political farmer identity therefore meant that many inhabitants in rural communities now clearly stood outside the political class created in 1814. A more limited farmer identity was further compounded by the fact that the basis for political participation – property – was becoming more unattainable to most of the population in the decades after 1814. This enlarged the gap between enfranchised elite and disenfranchised mass. Before industrialisation took off in the second half of the nineteenth century, population growth was the main driving force of this social change. Just between 1814 and 1848, the population of Norway increased by over 50%, which strained available land resources

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[74] Hommerstad, *Politiske bønder*, 121-122, 193-195, 201.
[75] Hommerstad, *Politiske bønder*, 186, 190.
[76] Trond Nordby, *Det modern gjennombruddet i bondesamfunnet: Norge 1870-1920* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1991), 73.
[77] Dørum, *Frå undersått til medborgar*, 142.
[78] Hommerstad, *Politiske bønder*, 191-192.

enough to instigate a significant decrease in property ownership relative to population.[79] As the percentage of property owners among the population became smaller, the parliamentary system became more exclusive. Because property served as the main indicator of social status for both bourgeois and farmers, I would argue that this change in property ownership was so prominent that it is no longer meaningful to talk about "farmer" and "bourgeois" as groups which represented the entire population outside of civil servants. Instead, it is necessary to separate each estate between the political and social haves and the have-nots.

Within the farmer estate, especially in Eastern Norway, the population growth caused the numbers of farmers to surpass available land resources, forcing the next generation to divide plots of land between themselves. As plots became untenably small, an increasing number of farmer's sons had to become tenant farmers (*husmenn*) and rent plots of land belonging to the remaining landowners in exchange for work or cash.[80] Those who became propertyless lost their political privileges, but more acutely was the fact that they became reliant on wages and enough work to be available. Despite rural day labour being illegal until 1854,[81] many *husmenn* found themselves competing with even poorer day labourers for work by the 1840s.[82] Those who profited immensely from this devaluation of labour were those that managed to retain or purchase land, especially *storbønder* (great land-owning farmers) living in the most fertile regions of Eastern Norway. However, this wealth came with the consequence of there being a greater section of the rural population below them which now felt a greater sense of social insecurity as they became reliant on wages.

A similar wealth gap appeared between the two major social groups of merchants and craftsmen in most Norwegian cities as a consequence of economic deregulation of crafts in 1839 and of trade in 1842. Although the parliament's policy of liberalisation was meant to apply equally to both groups, it affected urban craftsmen particularly hard as they were the most vulnerable to unregulated competition from rural craftsmen.[83] Wealthier merchants on other hand managed through their stronger political influence in parliament to limit rural competition by retaining many restrictions on rural trading.[84] The growing social divisions within the bourgeois estate was compounded by rapid population growth in most cities, especially in eastern Norway, where rural population growth created an influx of workers to the

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[79] Tore Pryser, *Klassebevegelse eller folkebevegelse?: en sosialhistorisk undersøkelse av thranittene i Ullensaker* (Oslo, Universitetsforlaget, 1977), 12.
[80] Pryser, *Klassebevegelse eller folkebevegelse?,* 12.
[81] Pål Thonstad Sandvik, 2nd ed., *Nasjonens velstand: Norges økonomiske historie 1800-1940* (Bergen: Fagbokforlaget, 2022), 75-76.
[82] Mona R. Ringvej, *Marcus Thrane: forbrytelse og straff* (Oslo: Pax, 2014), 27-8.
[83] Nordby, *Det moderne gjennombruddet i bondesamfunnet,* 26.
[84] Seip, *Utsikt over Norges historie: 1*, 132-133.

capital and the emerging industrial cities surrounding it.[85] These factors combined to create an impoverished urban working class consisting of people who had previously belonged to the bourgeois or farmer estate, but for whom their new social reality presented a crisis of identity. The most common contemporary term used to describe these disenfranchised individuals who fell outside of the traditional confines of the estates was the politically neutral *allmue* (common people).

The reason the parliament proved unable to defuse these social problems before they erupted into political activity was that many of its members were responsible for creating them in the first place. Liberal ideals of free trade and self-sufficiency were being realised by parliament, but these ideals were compromised in order to secure the social interest of the most influential and powerful groups within each estate. Because the economic interests of property owners were often fundamentally opposed to most of the propertyless population, their political interest rarely coincided with much of the population which they claimed to govern on behalf of.[86] This led to the three estates represented in parliament to devise an economic policy which benefited them all as the landowning class, but which disproportionally burdened the disenfranchised population.[87]

This can be clearly seen when one looks at how parliament balanced the state's budget for most of the nineteenth century, which was done through a combination of strict austerity and a taxation policy that after 1837 replaced the direct state taxes on property owners with local taxation at the municipal level, and instead balancing the central government's budget with increased tariffs on most imported and exported goods. The most notorious example of these new tariffs was the tariff on grain which had been implemented already in 1816 to prevent imported grain from devaluing the more expensive, home-grown grain that farmers in eastern Norway produced. But as there was not enough domestically grown grain to go around, imported grain was a necessity for the growing population, and an expensive burden that got lumped equally on all households, regardless of income.[88] As a growing share of the population consisted of wage workers who owned no land and relied on wages to feed themselves, the artificially high price on grain ensured that price fluctuations could suddenly create a nation-wide social crisis. These price hikes would never be so severe as to lead to famine akin to the worst years of blockade during the Napoleonic wars. In fact, on average, there was a significant increase in the standard of living for the entire population in the first half of the nineteenth century.[89] But these price hikes fostered a deep sense of insecurity, as

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[85] Ringvej, *Marcus Thrane,* 29-30.
[86] Hommerstad, *Politiske bønder,* 120.
[87] Dørum, *Frå undersått til medborgar,* 142.
[88] Francis Sejersted, *Den vanskelige frihet* (Oslo: Cappelen, 1995), 128, 131-32.
[89] Sejersted, *Den vanskelige frihet,* 72.

they intensified the feeling of sudden decline, if not in prosperity or living standards, then in the loss of social status and security that was associated with property ownership.

The creation of an independent Norwegian-nation state had in the thirty years after 1814 then not led to a greater awakening or unification of the Norwegian population. In fact, I would argue for quite the opposite. Through the parliament, the three social groups of civil servants, bourgeois, and farmers which had been granted political rights in 1814 had consolidated their respective political rights and interests, in practice making an estate-based social order. This order became formalised by the introduction of voting rights attached to property which clearly defined who officially was a farmer or a bourgeois. At the same time, economic deregulation and population growth eroded the social fundament of property ownership that this system was built upon, shrinking the percentage of people within the political system. The border between the rural and urban world had also become more blurred, as the rural poor looking for work were forced to move, with many ending up in cities and towns. It was these social and political conditions that created the necessary unrest for new social identities and organisations to emerge. Their chief organisers and leaders would be the petty intellectual class that emerged alongside it.

1.3 The creation of the petty intellectual class

The first traces of a petty intellectual class appeared in the 1840s. The making of a petty intellectual class was caused by the growing social divides within the rural and urban world discussed above as the social and political development of estate identities directly impacted and shaped the development of the educational institutions that would bring petty intellectuals into being. During the first half of the nineteenth century, three parallel educational systems developed to address the educational needs of each of Norway's three biggest social groups: civil servants, bourgeois, and farmers. These institutions also help strengthened each estate identity, but in different ways as each educational institution emphasised different curricula and values.

That education became a larger part of estate identity was most noticeable within the civil servant estate, as notable civil servants like Fredrik Stang and Anton Martin Schweigard, who completed their educations in the 1820s and 1830s, argued that their university education and their knowledge provided them with the necessary insights and culture to govern.[90] This generation's interests in promoting themselves as a distinctive national elite likely came about as a response to an increasingly aggressive political rhetoric from farmers and bourgeois that criticised civil servants for being "parasites" living off

[90] Seip, *Utsikt over Norges historie: 1*, 107; Slagstad, *De nasjonale strateger*, 12-17, 30.

the tax paying population.[91] The glorification of education can hardly surprise because education at Latin grammar schools (*Latinskoler*) was a trait that clearly distinguished civil servants from the rest of the people, unlike wealth or property, which both bourgeois and farmers possessed. The ideological idealisation of education can best be summarised by the Norwegian word *Dannelse*, which does not have a suitable synonym in English but has similar implications to the German word *Bildung*.[92] Through establishing a link between *Dannelse* and the right to rule, education itself became an important source of political and public authority that helped justify the transition of the civil servant identity from governing elite into ruling elite.

For the bourgeoisie, education also became an important part of their identity as in the cities, new private bourgeois schools (*Borgerskoler*) financed by tuition became increasingly popular in the first half of the nineteenth century. These bourgeois schools distinguished themselves from Latin grammar schools by emphasising more "modern" subjects such as history, mathematics, contemporary European languages, and the national language.[93]

A connection between estate identity and education was also seen within the farmer estate as teacher schools (*Seminarskoler*) were set up after 1814 to educate schoolteachers for the public schooling system with a teacher school set up within every *stift* (diocese) by 1839.[94] These were intentionally established outside of cities, as the civil servants who spearheaded the project romanticised the influence rural life would have on those who became educated there. It was also considerably cheaper to establish schools in rural regions.[95] While these teachers schools helped instil its students with a sense of rural identity, they played for many decades a much more limited role in shaping farmer identity than the other estate schools, as they only educated a few of those that were meant to become public schoolteachers. For instance, in 1840, only 49 out of the 2200 working in the public school system were educated at a teacher school. At least a few hundred had been educated at the teacher schools by then, but most did not stick around as teachers. Before 1860, most rural teachers never went to these rural teacher schools, instead they only took the required test or had a shorter, more *ad hoc* course set up by one of many departmental decisions meant to address the low quality of rural teachers.[96] The various forms of rural teacher education and the public school system was

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[91] Seip, *Utsikt over Norges historie: 1*, 178-9.
[92] Myhre, "Academics as the Ruling Elite in 19th Century Norway," 25.
[93] Thuen, *Den norske skolen*, 32-34.
[94] Helge Dahl, *Norsk lærerutdanning fra 1814 til i dag* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1959), 3-7.
[95] Dahl, *Norsk lærerutdanning fra 1814 til i dag*, 15.
[96] Dahl, *Norsk lærerutdanning fra 1814 til i dag*, 11, 13.

linked together through their reliance on public funding. Because the public school system was completely financed by the state, it relied on the political elite of farmers and civil servants within parliament, but funding was neglected by both estates, and so teacher schools were poorly funded.[97] Consequently, education at any form of teacher school was not a mark of high social status. Many of those who became teachers only did so to avoid conscription, as one was exempt after working seven years as a teacher. After this time was up, many teachers simply quit the public school to find employment elsewhere.[98] So, unlike the other two estates that were cultivating an elite in terms of both education and political privileges, the farmer estate was dividing itself into a wealthy, but poorly educated political elite and an educated, but poor intellectual elite.

It was these three educational institutions that would most strongly influence the creation of a petty intellectual class. The growing number of schools and students created a large demand for teachers that could not be fulfilled by the existing intellectual class of civil servants. This produced a large number of educated individuals who did not become civil servants. It is especially at the rural teacher schools that a petty intellectual class can be most clearly seen emerging. In the fifteen years between 1837 and 1852, the number of public-school teachers grew from 2,100 to over 20,000.[99] The sudden and great demand for public schoolteachers encouraged many new schools, short education, and low salaries which made teachers low-status outsiders. Neither the bourgeois nor Latin schools could match this rapid growth in students and staff, but there was growth in these institutions as well.[100] These urban schools offered an opportunity for career advancements for rural teachers so despite there being a large difference in quality, length, and curriculum between these three parallel educational institutions, they were often tied together through faculty and similar life stories that led to common interest between the individuals that worked at these schools. This contributed to bind these educated individuals together into a petty intellectual class.

What was the social background of a petty intellectual? A petty intellectual could be from a poor family like Knud Knudsen (1812-1895), Ole Vig (1824-1857) or A. O. Vinje

[97] Dahl, *Norsk lærerutdanning fra 1814 til i dag*, 75.
[98] Thuen, *Den norske skolen*, 76.
[99] Thuen, *Den norske skolen*, 76.
[100] Thuen, *Den norske skolen*, 81.

(1818-1870),[101] or a wealthy family that had fallen on hard times like in the case of Marcus Thrane (1817-1890), Christopher Bruun (1839-1920) or Eilert Sundt (1817-1875).[102] For all of them, education was a way to escape their social predicament, as they significantly increase their chances for social advancement through the education system. Most had to work hard as they needed loans or wealthy benefactors to attend a bourgeois or Latin school and those that were from the poorest background had to initially settle for an education through the teacher schools, although this did not stop them from attaining further education down the line as they utilised their exceptional talent and strong work ethics to escape the limited opportunities granted to them by the public schooling system. Most would, however, experience that there was an upper limit to their social advancement. Despite enduring hardships to enter the intellectual world of the civil servants, very few petty intellectuals could attain a position that gave them the social prestige or political privileges as those civil servants who belonged to the "thousand academic families." The main reason was that the civil servant bureaucracy hardly grew.[103] In 1825, there were about 1,900 civil servants. In 1875, there were 2,300. In the meantime, the overall population had doubled to nearly two million and the number of petty intellectuals outnumbered the civil servants by at least four to one.[104] Many of these petty intellectuals were without political rights as they lacked property, e.g., only 1 out of 5 of the 10,000 or so of the petty intellectuals working within the bureaucracy in 1875 had voting rights.[105] Because of their lack of political rights and social prestige despite their higher education, petty intellectuals were clearly distinctive from civil servants.

However, they were also separated from the rest of the population. As although they were born as sons of farmers, craftsmen, or merchants, they were through the educational system overseen by civil servants instilled with its hegemonic *Dannelse* ideology that encouraged them to view themselves as distinctively superior because of their education. This separation from their original background was further reinforced by their need to migrate within the country for both their education and employment. This removed them from the local

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[101] Knudsen, Vig, and Vinje were all sons of husmenn. Hoel, *Nasjonalisme i norsk målstrid 1848-1865*, 66; Bye, *Folkevennen Ole Vig*, 15; Olav Vesaas, *A.O. Vinje: ein tankens hærmann* (Oslo: Cappelen Damm, 2018), 39-45.
[102] Thrane's father left when he was young. Bruun's father died when he was young. Sundt grew up with both parents, but his bourgeois family struggled financially during his upbringing. Ringvej, *Marcus Thrane*, 14-5; Aslak Torjusson, *Den norske folkehøgskulen: opphav og grunnlag* (Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget, 1977), 103; Bodil Stenseth, *Eilert Sundt og det Norge han fant* (Oslo: Gyldendal, 2000), 43.
[103] «De tusen akademiske familiar.» Another phrase borrowed from Seip to denote the hereditary and nobility-like characteristic of the civil servant estate. Seip, *Fra embedsmannsstat til ettpartistat og andre essays*, 13.
[104] Dørum, *Frå undersått til medborgar*, 111; Seip, *Utsikt over Norges historie: 2*, 115.
[105] Nordby, *Det moderne gjennombruddet i bondesamfunnet*, 87.

and regional peculiarities of their rural communities, and often made them outsiders to the established local order. This lack of social belonging, imagined authority through education, and experienced social hardship gave rise to a very politically active petty intellectual class.

An important instigator which transformed the social grievances of petty intellectuals into political action were the European revolutions of 1848. This created a political crisis that coincided with a large enough group of impatient and ambitious petty intellectuals waiting for their chance at recognition. Among those who would become notable petty intellectuals during the 1840s and 1850s, none became so defined by revolution as Marcus Thrane, who rose to national infamy at the head of a coalition of the disenfranchised under the label of *Arbeiderforeningene*. His success at mobilising the disenfranchised population to political action would serve as a symbol for a generation of petty intellectuals, both as an example of what was possible to achieve, and as warning of what could happen if they themselves did not act. Therefore, to understand how the nationalist movements that would define the two-culture narrative came about, it is necessary to first understand the first political mass movement on which they would stand on the shoulders of.

1.4 A petty intellectual solution outside of nationalism: *Arbeiderforeningene*

Arbeiderforeningene (the Workers' Associations) were the first mass political movement in Norway. It emerged in the wake of the revolutions of 1848. The Workers' Associations were spearheaded by Marcus Thrane, a self-declared socialist who wanted to bring the ideals of the French revolution of 1848 to Norway. Before becoming a populist agitator, Thrane had worked as a bourgeois schoolteacher and newspaper editor. Thrane would be the first notable petty intellectual to challenge the established civil servant state through organised political opposition.

Thrane's efforts to establish Workers' Associations were motivated by his own personal experiences. He was born into a wealthy bourgeois family but when he was only four, his father left the country after losing the family fortune and his mother died shortly thereafter. Suddenly a penniless orphan, Thrane was taken in by wealthy friends of the family who paid for his education at a Latin grammar school. Thrane decided to delay his studies, first by working for a year and then by travelling for six months abroad. It is likely that Thrane encountered the socialist ideas of Louis Blanc while visiting Paris, but this does not seem to have made an

immediate impression on him as he returned to Norway to resume his studies for a theology degree in 1840. However, he must have disliked his studies, for he abandoned them after finishing his *examen artium*, deciding instead to establish a bourgeois school in 1841. In Lillehammer, he met Josefine Buch, a respectable and educated bourgeois woman from Drammen. They soon married and would work together at Thrane's school.[106] Despite not having a university education, Thrane's *examen atrium*, together with his extensive knowledge of French and German, was enough for him to become a respectable teacher in Lillehammer. Thrane seemed initially content in this role. There is no indication of socialist agitation in these years, quite the contrary. For instance, on Norwegian Constitution Day in 1844, Thrane wrote a celebratory nationalist poem praising the social harmony within Norway in the local paper: "Ak! stor er Norges Herlighed. Ei har vi guld, oranger, ranker, men vi har enighed i tanker, og her boer nøisomhed og fred."[107] (Ah! Great is Norway's delight. We do not have gold, oranges or vines, but we have agreement in thought, and here we live in austerity and peace.)[108]

But Thrane faced financial challenges with a growing family to feed. As his financial troubles were mounting, Thrane seems to have become disillusioned with national romanticism and more sensitive to social divisions between the bourgeois and poorer population in Lillehammer. These divisions extended to the education of the children, as there was a sharp contrast between what was offered to those who attended the public school and those who could pay for a private bourgeois education. A contributing factor that must have pushed Thrane towards socialism was the fact that the livelihood which he depended on was taken away from him once his concerns about social inequality became known within the city's bourgeois circles. The bourgeois families took their children out of Thrane's school in protest, and so Thrane was forced to close it. After a period of considerable trouble finding a new home, the family resettled down at the Blue Colour Works in Modum where Thrane again taught bourgeois children. It was while Thrane worked at Modum that the first news of the revolutions of 1848 arrived. During the summer of 1848, Thrane began expressing his views on political events by writing an anonymous article in *Morgenbladet* that critiqued the pro-war support for Denmark that was dominating the Norwegian press. At the same time, the Blue Colour Works went into recession, which led to many workers and managers suddenly being laid off.[109] Without enough

[106] Ringvej, *Marcus Thrane*, 14-5; Sejersted, *Den vanskelige frihet*, 266-267.
[107] Citation taken from: Ringvej, *Marcus Thrane*, 63.
[108] Translated by Author.
[109] Ringvej, *Marcus Thrane*, 31-2, 64.

children to teach, Thrane could again not sustain his teaching position and was forced to move his family once again.

It was with these personal experiences that Marcus Thrane took over as editor in the local Drammen paper, *Drammens Adresse*, on August 1st, 1848. It did not take long for him to become infamous among the newspaper reading public in Drammen and the nearby capital for his radical socialist ideas.[110] His articles caused such a stir that he was informed that he would be dismissed as editor after December 28.[111] Facing unemployment again, Thrane organised a meeting with local day labourers and craftsmen in Drammen on December 17 at which they agreed to set up a Workers' Association. From around 150 members by the end of December 1848, the organisation grew quickly into a movement over the next three years. By 1851, there were over 400 Workers' Associations in existence throughout the country, with a total membership of 30,000, which was nearly as many as had voted in the parliamentary election that year.[112]

Although the name Worker's Association would likely lead one to conclude that this was a movement aimed at industrial workers, the socialist ideology that inspired Thrane was born out of France where social conditions were different from those in Norway. In Norway, there simply were not enough industrial workers to base a political movement on, so the population that Thrane identified as "workers" included much larger segments of the rural and urban workforce. This definition is from the second number of *Arbeiderforeningernes Blad* published in May 1849, in which Thrane describes Norway as being divided into three estates, different from the old estates as they were divided by education and prosperity rather than old social privileges:

> "Til den første Stand kan man regne de meest Oplyste og de Rigeste. Til den anden Stand (Middelstanden) henhører ialmindlighed i Byerne de fleste handelsmænd og haandværkere, og paa Landet de mere velstaaende bønder (Gaardbrugere). Til den tredje Stand maa regnes alle Arbeidere, saavel i Byerne som paa Landet. (De fleste Arbeidere paa Landet ere huusmænd eller Leilændinge.)"[113]

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[110] Two examples of articles from Thrane's tenure as editor in *Drammens Adresse* are reprinted in Hans Johansen, *Marcus Thrane og Thraniterbevegelsen: artikler* (Tiden, 1949), 31-37.
[111] Marcus Thrane, "Poltisk afsked," *Drammens Adresse*, December 28, 1848, 1.
[112] Ringvej, *Marcus Thrane*, 16.
[113] Marcus Thrane "Arbeidere!," *Arbeiderforeningsblad*, May 12, 1849, 1.

> [To the first estate one must account for the most enlightened and richest. To the second estate (the Middle-class) belongs most merchants and craftsmen in the cities, and in the countryside the wealthier farmers (those who own farms). To the third estate one must consider all workers, in the country as well as in the cities. (Most workers in the countryside are husmenn or tenant farmers][114]

These third estate "workers," i.e., rural tenant farmers, poor farmers, day labourers, and poor craftsmen were those who had fallen outside the political system. Thrane envisioned that these would make up the majority of members in the Workers' Associations. How Thrane reconciled these non-industrial groups with his socialist ideology can most likely be explained by what he read in the newspaper and in socialist literature and then observed at Modum. For while the industrialisation that socialists spoke about in France was still in its infancy in Norway, it was not completely absent. The Blue Colour Works at Modum were a large industrial site that employed at least 1,200 workers.[115] As the works went into deep recession during 1848 as a result of the introduction of synthetic blue colour production abroad, Thrane experienced how vulnerable workers could be in the face of unregulated international competition. That this peculiar industrial crisis coincided with the revolutions of 1848 was likely important for convincing Thrane of the need for social reform. But this observation of industrial hardship came alongside an experience of a larger rural recession that also occurred around Modum in 1848 as a combined result of the Blue Colour Works and the timber trade going into recession.[116] As this did not align with what Thrane read about in European literature, he reconciled these experiences by expanding the worker identity to include anyone at the bottom rung of the Norwegian social ladder, no matter their employment or background.

Because most of the "workers" identified by Thrane lived in rural communities, Thrane had to spread his political associations beyond the confines of Drammen. The spread of the Workers' Association was done by personal agitation. Thrane or another trusted representative would visit a local rural community, gather the locals for a meeting, and speak to them about the need for political organisation and collective action. Those that were receptive would come together in a local Workers' Association that would itself decide on future meetings, elect a trusted member among them as local leader, and collect the monthly membership fees of one

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[114] Translated by author.
[115] Sandvik, *Nasjonens velstand*, 81.
[116] Oddvar Bjørklund, *Marcus Thrane* (Oslo: Tiden 1982), 12.

shilling from each member. Half of the funds would be spent on financing further travels to spread the organisation to other local communities; the other half would be sent back to the central organisation.[117] That such a large amount was spent on financing the spread of the organisation meant that those recruited as agitators were well paid compared to other sources of rural employment.[118] In Ullensaker, Tore Pryser highlights two notable agitators, Abraham Borgen and Carl Johan Michelsen, who together claimed to have established 80 Workers' Associations with around 4000 to 5000 members in 1851 alone.[119] What is especially notable about both of these agitators is that they were uneducated, poor, and of low social reputation even within the rural social hierarchy. Before being hired by Thrane, Borgen had worked as a tenant farmer and Michelsen was a convicted thief who had just finished serving a six-month sentence of penal labour.[120] Despite, or perhaps because of their unimpressive backgrounds, they proved themselves effective at convincing rural people to join the Workers' Association, although many of the local associations they founded quickly collapsed after they left as they were dependent on locals continuing to organise meetings and continuing to pay their monthly membership fee.

Those Workers' Associations that did not immediately collapse usually took on a broad role within rural society, often broader than what Thrane had intended. In Ullensaker, Tore Pryser found that once local associations were established, they tapped into established social networks, pulling family, friends, and neighbours into the Workers' Association, transforming them into formalised versions of already existing communities. As farmers and *husmenn* lived alongside each other, these local communities were more socially inclusive than what Thrane had imagined when he identified the three social estates in his 1849 article. Using Ullensaker as an example, local Workers' Associations consisted of as many farmers as *husmenn* and day labourers.[121] However, more surprising is that the majority of participating *husmenn* and farmers were not particularly poor.[122] The likeliest explanation is that despite their middling

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[117] Marcus Thrane, "Bekjentgjørelse fra redaksjonen," *Arbeiderforeningernes Blad*, May 5, 1849, 4.
[118] At least 36 shilling per day in addition to recruiting bonuses and travel compensations compared to 20-30 shilling per day as a day labourer. Pryser, *Klassebevegelse eller folkebevegelse?*, 100.
[119] Pryser, *Klassebevegelse eller folkebevegelse?*, 87, 100.
[120] Borgen: Pryser, *Klassebevegelse eller folkebevegelse?*, 96; Michelsen: Åke Jünge, *Tre dagar i februar : historia om Levanger-opprøret i 1851 : Thranerørsla i Innherred*, (1994), 48.
[121] Thrane nuances his initial separation of estate identities in the second edition of *Arbeiderforeningernes Blad* by arguing that it is hard to define which estate "farmers" belonged to because financial interest varied so immensely within this social group. Marcus Thrane, "De tre Stender og de to partier," *Arbeiderforeningernes*, May 12, 1849, 1.
[122] Pryser, *Klassebevegelse eller folkebevegelse?*, 137, 224.

status, the sense of crisis was likely as strong, or even stronger for them than for those at the very bottom of rural society. These farmers were the ones that were between two growing extremes of rich and poor, and who were next in line of losing their status as respectable members in their communities. For Ullensaker in particular, a large number of farmers and *husmenn* relied on secondary work as cart drivers, an occupation which was under threat of competition from the planned railroad in the area.[123] The peculiarities of Ullensaker are not indicative of the social trends of the Workers' Association on a national level as several other places where the movement advanced was home to the poorest section of rural society. However, it reveals that the relation between social conditions and political action was complicated by local economic circumstances.[124] In effect, local associations did not always align with the ideological distinctions and identities that petty intellectuals like Thrane imposed upon them, but because the local Workers' Associations were largely free to govern themselves, varying motivations and identities could co-exist without local associations causing any immediate conflict with the central organisation.

However, in the capital and the surrounding cities, Thrane played a much more active role within the organisation by launching educational initiatives through schools in several cities and through *Arbeiderforeningernes Blad*.[125] As he was educated at a Latin school, Thrane brought the *Dannelse* ideal as a basis of political legitimacy with him to the Workers' Associations.[126] But only three registered members had received a higher education: Thrane, his successor Theodor Abildgaard, and the student Paul Hjelm-Hansen. Most members had only a rudimentary education in reading and Christianity through the public school. If his workers were to participate in politics, Thrane believed that they needed further education. He therefore pushed for local Workers' Associations to educate their members. Thrane also wrote about educational topics within *Arbeiderforeningernes Blad*, covering subjects similar to that which he had taught bourgeois children during his tenure as a schoolteacher: reading, writing, history, and geography.[127]

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[123] Pryser, *Klassebevegelse eller folkebevegelse?*, 235.
[124] Dørum, *Frå undersått til medborgar*, 154.
[125] Merethe Roos, "Marcus Thrane, demokratiet og 1850-tallets opplysningsvirksomhet," *Nytt Norsk Tidsskrift* 35, no.2 (2018): 140.
[126] In 1855, Thrane would doubt his earlier belief in universal male suffrage as he thought most of the population too uneducated. Dørum, *Frå undersått til medborgar*, 156.
[127] Ringvej, *Marcus Thrane*, 74-76.

Thrane's efforts at educating his members in politics and constitutional law was likely one of the things that provoked the government to violently suppress the Workers' Associations.[128] The controversial nature of political education can also be seen in the attempt from a local Workers' Association to engage itself in an educational programme in Horten.[129] The initiative was initially supported by notable civil servants, like Horten's bishop who lent his educational expertise to the worker's school.[130] However, the programme was subsequently shunned by both civil servants and bourgeois when it became clear that Thrane intended to include political and legal lessons. These "radical" lessons included the reading of the 1814 constitution and instructions on how property-owning members of the Workers' Associations could utilise their right to vote to influence parliamentary politics. Ringvej highlights how this was thought to disturb the social harmony between estates.[131] The harsh reaction to political education demonstrates how entrenched the belief in the patriotic, independent citizen was and how it limited acceptable organised political behaviour. Everyone could agree that workers should receive some education, but the predominant opinion outside of the Workers' Associations was that political education was too dangerous, as it organised a particular class against the greater good of the nation.

But when the Workers' Associations presented its political programme in the petition to the king in the summer of 1850, the ideas and their justifications were not argued on the basis of revolution or socialism, but through the language of nationalism and limited reform on the basis of the 1814 constitution, liberalism, and paternalism. The central request of the petition contains ten suggestions for reform including the abolition of economic tariffs with a special emphasis on the grain tariff, a strengthening of labour rights for *husmenn* and urban day labourers, an improvement of the public education system, and the implementation of universal male suffrage.[132] The economic reforms are largely justified in liberal *laissez faire* terms, presenting the existing system as upholding the privileges of elites while "the people", i.e. "the workers" are deprived of their right to free and fair competition. The arguments for educational and political reform were also working within the existing confines of property and

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[128] Mona Ringvej, "Arbeider-Foreningernes Blad – stemmen til de stemmeløse," *Vox Publica* 26.01.2015 https://voxpublica.no/2015/01/arbeider-foreningernes-blad-stemmen-til-de-stemmelose/
[129] Ringvej, *Marcus Thrane*, 125.
[130] Ringvej, *Marcus Thrane*, 73, 127.
[131] Ringvej, *Marcus Thrane*, 127-128.
[132] Marcus Thrane, *Petitionen fra 1850: Thrane-foreningenes bønnskrift til kongen* (Oslo: Arbeidernes Opplysningsforbund, 1957), 1.

education, as Thrane sought to lift the disenfranchised male population up to fit the existing education and property requirements for active citizenship. The petition argues that in order to achieve this goal, the state would have to play a larger role in the market and in society than it was currently doing. For education, the state had to adequately fund the schools so that it attracted qualified teachers and could properly educate all students. For property, the state had to help those at the bottom so that they would be able to secure themselves land. This second point was the most socialist idea within the petition, so it was suggested in a rather careful and limited manner in the section about *husmann* reforms. It suggested that the state should buy up uncultivated marshes and sell it cheaply to *husmenn* so that they could once again become property owners.[133] Finally, although the petition encouraged measures that would increase property ownership and education among those that were currently disenfranchised, it nevertheless suggested that universal male suffrage should be implemented immediately as it argued that there was no significant division between those that were currently enfranchised and disenfranchised in terms of education and wealth, using *husmenn* and farmers as an example of the arbitrary divide of property, and lawyers and doctors against civil servants as an example for education.[134] The petition mentions that universal suffrage had been implemented through revolutions in France and Denmark but follows up by implying that there was no concern for a revolution in Norway because unlike Frenchmen, Norwegians were respectful of the law, steady, calm defenders of property and civil liberties.[135] If this petition was a genuine expression for Thrane's ideas, then it indicates that Thrane was neither a revolutionary in ideas nor actions despite his sympathies with the French revolution. He was intellectually rooted in the same values and ideas as the established elite of civil servants, but he opposed them by sympathising with the plight of the disenfranchised.

Whatever motivated Thrane, the demands of the petition would never be fulfilled as the monarch rejected it after pressure from the Norwegian government. Subsequent attempts to influence parliament directly in 1851 led to a government crackdown on the Workers' Associations for fear of revolution. Thrane and the leadership were arrested and despite knowing that Thrane had not been guilty of revolutionary activity, the court sentenced him to

[133] Thrane, *Petitionen fra 1850*, 11-12.
[134] Thrane, *Petitionen fra 1850*, 14.
[135] Thrane, *Petitionen fra 1850*, 14.

five years in prison.[136] A*rbeiderforeningernes Blad* would survive until 1856 but was ultimately forced to shut down due to lack of funding.[137]

The fact that several of the demands from the petition were subsequently granted by parliament reveals how small the political divide between the nascent workers' movement and the established order actually had been. The grain tariff would be gradually abolished.[138] A commission was established to study the conditions of *husmenn* which would result in a law strengthening their rights in 1852 being passed, but it would prove to have little effect as the *husmenn* system had already peaked and was in decline.[139] The development towards a liberalised economy that had already begun in the 1830s also continued.[140] The dividing issue seems to have been political rights, as the universal male suffrage reform that Thrane had been a vocal supporter of, would not be passed until 1898, as the topic remained deeply controversial all the way up until the 1890s. Norwegian political culture was too deeply rooted in elite identities, tied to education and property. One could have one or the other, but as the disenfranchised lacked both, they were considered hopelessly unable to govern themselves. These ideas were not exclusively held by civil servants, but almost universally shared among the political class.[141] However, this did not mean that the population could not be brought to the sufficient level of education or prosperity. In fact, the most important legacy of the Workers' Associations would be in popular education, as the intellectual elite of the capital organised their own association, *Selskabet for Folkeoplysningens Fremme*, to begin moral and national education of the population, in the hopes that a mass movement like the Workers' Associations would never occur again. It was through this association that the petty intellectuals would become involved with the national debate and create the two-culture narrative.

[136] Dørum, *Frå undersått til medborgar*, 157.
[137] Roos, "Marcus Thrane, demokratiet og 1850-tallets opplysningsvirksomhet," 140.
[138] Fritz Hodne, *Norsk økonomi i det nittende århundre* (Bergen: Fagbokforlaget, 2000), 184.
[139] Sandvik, *Nasjonens velstand*, 98.
[140] An overview over the liberalising economic reforms implemented between 1840-1870 can be found in Sandvik, *Nasjonens velstand*, 73-80.
[141] Bye, *Folkevennen Ole Vig*, 195-196.

2 Educating "the people" for political stability: *Selskabet for Folkeoplysningens Fremme*, 1850-1858

Across Europe, the revolutions of 1848 exposed the political potential of the disenfranchised masses. In Norway, the Workers' Associations proved that the Norwegian population was no exception. By 1850, the prevailing sense among the capital's leading intellectuals was that something had to be done to contain the revolutionary energy, or Norway would soon join the European fold of countries in upheaval. These intellectuals thought that Thrane and his agitators had tricked the people by leading them astray with dangerous ideas, so they thought that the best way to combat his ideas was by educating the people on how society "really" functioned so that they could not be misled again.[142] This meant establishing their own society for the advancement of popular education. This society became known as *Selskabet for Folkeoplysningens Fremme* (Association for the betterment of the people's enlightenment).

The initiative for a conservative educational society was spearheaded by Hartvig Nissen, a civil servant, who convinced twenty-five likeminded intellectuals in the capital to make a public announcement proclaiming the intention of an educational society on 23 April 1850.[143] However, the association was not founded until 21 September 1851.[144] The sixteen-month gap between announcement and creation meant that the society was not established before the government crackdown on the Workers' Associations had already happened, but the disappearance of the Workers' Associations did not mean that the need of popular education disappeared. The revolutionary events between 1848 and 1851 had such a lasting impression on these intellectuals that they thought things could never go back to the way they had been. As they expressed it in a newspaper announcement sent out in 1850, the need for popular education went beyond the immediate threat of revolution. The Workers' Associations were identified as only a symptom of a larger development in politics that had been caused by the progress of modern society:

> "Og med Hensyn til de øvrige Grene af Folkeoplysningen maa det vistnok erkjendes, at selve Livet i Nutiden har et ganske anderledes rigt Indhold end tidligere Tiders, idet Videnskabens beundringsværdige Fremskridt og de politiske Forholdes Udvikling have fremkaldt en Mængde nye Forestillinger og de

[142] Anders Johansen, *Komme til ordet: politisk kommunikasjon 1814-1913* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 2019), 610-611; Roos, "Marcus Thrane, demokratiet og 1850-tallets opplysningsvirksomhet," 142.
[143] "Inbydelse" *Den Norske Rigstidende*, 1 May 1850, 1-2.
[144] Ole Marius Hylland, *Folkeopplysning som utopi: tidsskriftet Folkevennen og forholdet mellom folk og elite* (Oslo: Novus Forlag, 2010), 46.

> fuldkomnere Meddelelses- og Befordringsmidler have bevirket, at disse nye Forestillinger ogfaa have trangt ned i Folkenes Masser."[145]
>
> [And with consideration to the upper branches of the people's enlightenment, it must be recognised that life itself has a pretty different rich substance than earlier times, in that the remarkable progress of science and the development of political conditions have evoked a host of new imaginations and improved methods of communication and transport that has brought about that these new imaginations also have spread down to the people's masses.][146]

Through technological and political advancement, politics had escaped its established confines. New ideologies had trickled down to the common people, and this had transformed them into a political force to be reckoned with. As this development was perceived as inevitable, the old political divide between enfranchised and disenfranchised appeared impossible to re-establish. So, the question became how to utilise the ideological awakening of the common people as a productive force that would strengthen the established order instead of tearing it down. As the connection between education and political soundness was already well-established within the Norwegian political culture, the solution became to extend the need for education so that it corresponded to the politicised people:

> "Folkets Oplysning er en Betingelse saavel for den Enkeltes som for det Heles Velvare. Kun den Oplyste indseer, at hans Vel er uadskillelig forenet med det Heles Vel. For at kunne blive en god og nyttig Borger maa man altsaa vare oplyst, og kun det Samfund, i hvilket Oplysningen er almindelig udbredt, kan blive et lykkeligt Samfund. Det er derfor Statens Pligt at drage Omsorg for Oplysnings Udbredelse i Folket."[147]
>
> [The people's enlightenment is a condition for the wellbeing of the individual as well as for society as a whole. Only the enlightened realises that his wellbeing is inseparable from the greater good of the whole. To become a good and useful citizen, one therefore must be enlightened, and only in that society in which enlightenment is spread throughout the people can it become happy. It is therefore the state's duty to take care of the spread of enlightenment to the people.][148]

The belief that education was necessary for the individual to realise himself and to understand his role within society was not new. But this *Dannelse* ideology had before 1848 been limited to a smaller segment of the population which attended one of the three higher educational institutions discussed in the previous chapter. Demanding that education should be spread

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[145] "Inbydelse" *Den Norske Rigstidende*, May 1, 1850, 1.
[146] Translated by author.
[147] "Inbydelse" *Den Norske Rigstidende*, May 1, 1850, 1.
[148] Translated by author.

among the entire population and that the state should facilitate this was a radical move. By naming this educational initiative *Folkets Oplysning* (the people's enlightenment), the initiative shows how nation, education, and politics were imagined to be closely interlinked. The authors of the declaration stated that society can only achieve its ideal state if the individual was aware of his national identity and his belonging to the national community. Although the initiative was clearly aware of how the individual's education affects society's well-being, it did not address how universal education would justify political participation based on education. National education was here presented as a collective right, but it was separated from its earlier association with enfranchisement. In fact, no measures were suggested for enfranchisement at all. This contradiction of granting political rights based on education to some and not to others seems hard to sustain logically, although Ole Vig would rationalise it away by seeing the enfranchisement of the common people as a long-term goal, not something which was achievable in the near future.[149] In the very same article, the authors are struggling to maintain the contradiction of the national community as universal on one hand and the state as limited on the other when it came to how national education should be implemented. Given that the nation is interconnected with the state, the authors recognise that the state should be responsible for national education through a public school system. Nonetheless, because the current educational system was divided into three parallel institutions that catered to the interests of the three political groups in Norway, the state could not fulfil the task of universal education. A private initiative was therefore necessary:

> "Det man imidlertid erkjendes, at det er vanskeligt for Staten her at kunne udrette Noget, og i Regelen til dens Virksomhed i denne Retning kun bestane i at fjerne Hindringer. Det maa altsaa hovedsagelig overlades til private Krefter at understotte Individets og Familiens Bestrerbelser for at fortsatte Skolens Gjerning. Men skulle private Krefter kunne udrette Noget i et Anliggende af et saa stort Omfang, maae de ikke virke enkeltviis og spredte, men samles og forenes for med sin hele Styrke plaumassigen at anvendes paa de vigtigste Punkter."[150]
>
> [What one has to admit however, is that it is difficult for the state to accomplish anything, and in general its business in this direction should only consist of removing obstacles. It must therefore primarily be left to private forces to support individuals and families to continue the work of the schools. But if private

[149] Bye, *Folkevennen Ole Vig,* 195-198.
[150] "Inbydelse" *Den Norske Rigstidende*, May 1, 1850, 2.

> forces are to accomplish such a great undertaking, they must not work individually and spread, but gather and unite, so that their entire planned strength can be utilised on the most important points.][151]

Selskabet for Folkeoplysningens Fremme was a call for intellectual unity, as the authors believed that they could act together as private citizens and create an association that could become influential enough to successfully educate and protect the "common people" from "dangerous" ideas, through strengthening their ties to the national community. Because the emphasis was on educating the "common people" correctly, any attempt at national education had to be overseen by those that already possessed the right education and political maturity. National education was therefore fundamentally a paternalistic project. This was reflected in the social composition of the founding members of *Selskabet for Folkeoplysningens Fremme*, who were overwhelmingly from the intellectual elite of the capital like P. A. Munch (Professor), J. L. Arup (Bishop), and J. H. Vogt (Government minister). Among the twenty-six signatories of the invitation there was only one farmer, R. Winderen, and two schoolteachers, C. Holt and Chr. Knudsen.[152] Nonetheless, there was a genuine ambition for social inclusion in this educational initiative, at least by Nissen, who attempted to expand the social confines of the society by sending out invitations for the establishment of local chapters to every city and rural community in Norway.[153] Despite Nissen's ambitions, no more than a thousand people initially subscribed to the publication and because so few of them were from outside the highly educated elite, the idea of local chapters was quietly dropped.[154] *Folkevennen* was meant to reach "the people", but in organisation, financing, writing, publishing, and even readership, the publication would almost entirely consist of intellectuals.[155] Eilert Sundt's study of the readers of *Folkevennen* in 1857 shows that it was civil servants, schoolteachers, students, and merchants who made up almost all subscribers. Sundt argued that the 1 spesidaler membership fee was too much for the average Norwegian.[156] His other arguments were that there was little

[151] Translated by author.
[152] Merethe Roos, *Hartvig Nissen: grundtvigianer, skandinav, skolemann* (Oslo: Cappelen Damm akademisk, 2019), 146.
[153] Roos, *Hartvig Nissen*, 70.
[154] Roos, "Marcus Thrane, demokratiet og 1850-tallets opplysningsvirksomhet," 148; Roos, *Hartvig Nissen*, 70.
[155] Johansen, *Komme til ordet*, 612-613.
[156] A spesidaler was 120 skilling so compared to the Worker Association monthly membership fee of 1 shilling, the financial entry barrier to Folkevennen was 120 times as large. Kolbjørn Skaare, *Mynt i Norge* (Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget, 1978), 56.

interest for reading due to excessive physical work and that reading was associated with religious themes so secular literature was considered heresy.[157]

Nonetheless, Nissen's ambition to include those he considered "the common people" into his organisation contributed to his decision to hire an outsider like Ole Vig, who was born into rural poverty and never attained a university education, as editor.[158] This was a decision with relatively little importance for Nissen, as *Selskabet for Folkeoplysningens Fremme* was only a side-project to his other duties as a teacher of pedagogy at the university, as a consultant to the Church Ministry responsible for education, and as principal and owner of his own private school in the capital. For Vig, this appointment was the most significant career development of his life, as Nissen offered him a prestigious job as editor and a well-paying teaching position at his private school. Before coming to the capital, Vig had worked at a public school in Christiansand, so even though the position at the private school was part-time, it increased his salary considerably, from 130 spesidaler to 290 spesidaler a year.[159]

The act of letting a social outsider run this educational programme would lead to trouble. As Leiv Mjeldheim points out when discussing popular mobilisation three decades after *Folkevennen* began, while popular enlightenment could have a social function that would conserve and entrench the established order, it could equally reveal faults and injustices to create new divisions within society.[160] This was exactly what happened during the five years Vig was editor, for although he was a rather conservative follower of Grundtvig's idea about national education, he still firmly believed in the need for reforms. Through being given a platform like *Folkevennen*, Vig instilled his ideas on national education to teachers across the country as many teachers subscribed to the publication. His position as sole editor and largest contributor allowed him to fill *Folkevennen* with his own ideas and writings. In the five years he occupied the position, he managed to publish over 1,200 pages of his own writings about language, history, education, and nationalism, becoming one of the most productive authors on these topics in the 1850s.[161]

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[157] Hoel, *Nasjonalisme i norsk målstrid 1848-1865*, 205.
[158] Johansen, *Komme til ordet*, 611.
[159] Bye, *Folkevennen Ole Vig*, 111.
[160] Leiv Mjeldheim, *Folkerørsla som vart parti : Venstre frå 1880 åra til 1905* (Bergen, Universitetsforlaget, 1984), 52.
[161] Hylland, *Folkeopplysning som utopi*, 135.

These writings also became important for shaping the nationalist discourse towards what would become the two-culture narrative. It was a conflict within *Selskabet for Folkeoplysningens Fremme* over what topics should be covered that instigated the discussion over a reform of the Norwegian language. Two opposing factions, the materialists and the idealists, faced each other.[162] Both were concerned about how to prepare the "common people" for the future, with materialists wanting to focus on publishing literature that taught them how to improve their material conditions, while idealists wanted to publish literature that would improve the people's inner condition through national ideals that corresponded to the national spirit of the age (*Tidsånden*).[163] This belief in cultural education as a medium for spiritual development corresponded to the *dannelse* ideal which civil servants used to argue for the usefulness of their classical education in Latin and Greek, rendering it acceptable as such.[164] But the Grundtvigian idea of an inner development was different in that it emphasised cultural traits specific to the nation like language, history, and morals.[165] As Vig was an idealist, his writings alone ensured that idealist literature filled most of the *Folkevennen*, but alongside him other figures like Aasen and Knudsen would also help write about how to define Norwegianness.[166] In Eilert Sundt's summary of the content in *Folkevennen* from before 1861, only 4.4% of the pages were dedicated to discussing economic matters.[167] It was therefore a discussion around which cultural traits could be considered Norwegian that characterised the nationalist discourse within *Folkevennen* and in doing so the first pillar of what would become the two-culture narrative, *Norskdom*, was for the first time extensively discussed and debated outside the university.

Among the various traits of Norwegianness discussed within *Selskabet for Folkeoplysningens Fremme*, language proved to be the most divisive. Articles about this topic may not have taken up a significant amount of column space. However, the discussion about them spread to other newspapers which created a public divided between those who advocated for and those who spoke against language reform. Here Vig played an important role, as he was first to voice his ideas for language reform on the basis of Norwegianness when he argued

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[162] Hoel, *Nasjonalisme i norsk målstrid*, 203-4.
[163] Helge Dahl, *Knud Knudsen og latinskolen* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1962), 19.
[164] Dahl, *Knud Knudsen og latinskolen*, 16-18.
[165] Hoel, *Nasjonalisme i norsk målstrid,* 142-143.
[166] Knud Knudsen, "Norge og jeg eller Det hele Folk og den enkelte Borger" *Folkevennen* 1, no.1 (1852): 160-180; Ivar Aasen, "Han Nils Prest," in *Folkevennen* 1, no.1 (1852): 81-86.
[167] Hylland, *Folkeopplysning som utopi*, 55.

in the first issue of *Folkevennen* that the current written language was Danish and that it needed to closely reflect the spoken language of the common people.[168] With the publication of the first edition of *Folkevennen*, two key ideas of what would become the two-culture narrative, Norwegianness and the national language was being discussed publicly.

However, Vig did not see himself in 1852 as an intellectual confronting the established elite on behalf of the people. Instead, he thought of himself as a mediator between the two. He argued in his proposal for language reform that the common spoken language and current written language should meet in the middle as it would not be reasonable to expect the educated elite to give up their language entirely.[169] This compromise reflects Vig's understanding of the people which he explains in the first welcoming article in the first edition of *Folkevennen*:

> "Ved "Folket" tænker vi nemlig her ikke paa en enkelt Stand eller Klasse af Mennesker. Bondestanden alene udgjør ikke Folket, ligesaalidt som Byborgere og Embedsmænd. Nei, naar vi taler om det norske Folk, da mener vi hvær en "Mors Sjæl" imellem Lindesnæs og Nordkap, mellem Kjølen og Vesterhavet, hvad enten de findes i By eller paa Bygd, saafræmt de ikke rent ud vrager vort «Faedreland og Modersmaal». Den høieste Embedsmand i Hovedstaden horer ligesaavel til Folket som den fattige Fisker paa et øde Skjær; og naar vi derfor taler om folkelig Oplysning, tænker vi først og freemst paa en saadan, som er gavnlig og nødvendig for det hele Folk, og passer paa Alle."[170]
>
> [With the "people", we are not thinking of a single estate or class of humans. The farmer estate alone does not make up the people, just as the bourgeoisie or civil servants do not. No, when we are speaking about the Norwegian people, then we are meaning every "mother's soul" between Lindesnæs and Nordkap, between Kjølen and Vensterhavet, whether they may be found in cities or in rural regions, as far as they do not directly discard our fatherland and mother tongue. The highest civil servant in the capital belongs to the people as well as the poorest fisherman on a barren reef; and when we then speak about the people's enlightenment we are first and foremost thinking about it in a manner that is useful and necessary for the entire people, and that fits all.][171]

Vig is therefore not imagining the two-culture narrative in a national sense. He sees two different cultures in Norway, but they are united as one people, and can become even more strongly connected by merging their cultures together. It is less clear where Vig understands himself within the Norwegian nation as he does not reflect upon his own social belonging within *Folkevennen*, but it is possible to piece it together by examining his writing style. He

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[168] Ole Vig, "Nogle sprogbemerkininger," in *Folkevennen* 1 (1852): 74, 78-79.
[169] Vig, "Nogle sprogbemerkininger," 80.
[170] Vig, "Til Tidskriftets Læsere," in *Folkevennen* 1 (1852): 5-6.
[171] Translated by author.

clearly sees himself as part of the people as he is using "vi" (we) and "os" (us) when instructing the reader within the article, e.g.:

> «Vi maa ei glemme, at det just er af deres Lænder, vi Alle udsprang. Vi maa elske dem og ære deres Minde, og derved opmuntres til at vandre i deres Fodspor. Det er af de Gamle vi skal lære Visdom.»[172]
>
> [We must not forget that it is just from their loins that we originated. We must love them and cherish their memory, and thereby become encouraged to walk in their footsteps. It is from the old that we will learn wisdom.][173]
>
> «Slovhed og Dorskhed, Vankundighed og Død har haft altfor stort Herredomme iblandt os,…»[174]
>
> [Sloth and apathy, ignorance and death have a far too large a hold over us.][175]

However, Vig often contrasts these statements with his own desires and perspectives on the issues throughout the first edition by switching to "jeg" (I), e.g.:

> "Jeg tror dog, at der ogsaa i denne Henseende er Haab; jeg teenker, at Menigmand endnu vil elske og beholde sit Sprog, naar han blot gjøres opmærksom paa, at det er Noget han har baade Ære, Gavn og Glæde af. Jeg ved af egen Erfaring, at man kan sætte det formeget tilsides, naar man begynder at sysle med Boger og Bogsprog; men jeg ved ogsaa, at man igjen kan faa det kjært, saasnart man faar lidt Forstand paa, hvilken Rigdom af Sprogmalm det indeholder, og hvor vakkert det dog igrunden er."[176]
>
> [I think though that in this respect there is also hope; I think that the average man will still love and retain his language, when he is first made aware that it is something that will give him honour, usefulness, and happiness. I know by my own experience that one can largely put it aside when one begins to occupy himself with books and book language; but I also know that one can again treasure it dearly as soon as one gets a bit of understanding for what wealth it contains, and how beautiful it fundamentally is.][177]

For Vig, there is no conflict of interests between himself and that of the nation, as he is completely committed to the cause. In the opening article for instance, Vig expresses his strong sense of duty and personal happiness over being entrusted with the position to lead and run the publication as editor.[178] It therefore seems likely that Vig saw himself first and foremost not as

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[172] Vig, "Til Tidskriftets Læsere," 9.
[173] Translated by author.
[174] Vig, "Til Tidskriftets Læsere," 2.
[175] Translated by author.
[176] Vig, "Nogle sprogbemerkininger," 78.
[177] Translated by author.
[178] Vig, "Til Tidskriftets Læsere," 3.

belonging to any estate, but as a Norwegian who was building bridges between estates by bringing them into the national community.

While praising the culture of the common people, seeing their potential and understanding himself to be part of the same national community as them, Vig sees himself as above the people due to his education. There are several instances in the first issue of *Folkevennen* where Vig talks down the common people, describing their understanding as simple, lamenting their vices which prevent them from taking his lessons to heart, and arguing that they require to be taught about their culture before they realise the value of maintaining it.[179] The "common people" therefore needed the leadership of Vig and the other intellectuals. Vig and his petty intellectual peers were socially separate from the elite of civil servants but did not stand in opposition to them. Both participated in *Selskabet for Folkeoplysningens Fremme* and were united in their paternalistic care for "the people's" education. It is important to remember that this national unity that Vig imagined did not involve any foreseeable changes in social or political conditions for the people, instead it was an inner, spiritual journey towards equality through education that was being emphasised.[180] Despite his own social advancement through education, Vig was like most of his contemporaries a strict believer in the need and naturalness of hierarchy and he justified it through Lutheran doctrine that said that each man should be happy with his lot in life and therefore not pursue social advancement.[181]

This role as a paternalistic educator is reflected in Vig's main argument for a Norwegianization of the written language, which stipulated that it would make it easier for the "common people" to learn the language.[182] Learning the written language was important because Vig believed reading books was one of the most important tools to improve the people's minds.[183] Easier reading would make it easier to become educated, and once the person became educated, he would know his place within the national community. In this manner, language reform was the key to make it easier for the average Norwegian to embrace their national identity. Vig's proposal was not, however, inherently confrontational to the

[179] Vig, "Til Tidskriftets Læsere," 6; Vig, "Om Landalmuens Næringsdrift og Levemaade," in *Folkevennen* 1 (1852): 169-170, 171-175, 180; Vig, "Nogle sprogbemerkininger," 78.
[180] Slagstad, *De nasjonale strateger*, 95.
[181] Hylland, *Folkeopplysning som utopi*, 194-195.
[182] Vig, "Nogle sprogbemerkininger," 74.
[183] Vig, "Lidt om Bøger og Læsning" in *Folkevennen* 1 (1852): 39-40.

existing order, as his emphasis on unity meant that he imagined a solution where everyone would find their part in the nation.

A social divide within the nation would instead first appear in a review of the first issue of *Folkevennen* by Ivar Aasen, a farmer's son, rural schoolteacher, and self-taught philologist who lived and worked in the capital as an independent researcher. Aasen had helped Vig with his article on language reform by contributing a short-written text in his dialect and wrote his review of the first issue to provide Vig with helpful remarks, as he saw it.[184] Overall, Aasen praised Vig's work and expressed many similar views. Like Vig, he regarded himself as part of the people, while simultaneously distancing himself from the common people on the basis of his education.[185] He also argued for the need to spread appropriate books to make it easier for the common people to learn. However, Aasen criticised Vig's proposal for gradual language reform. The fundamental problem he saw with Vig's approach was that the gulf between the common language of the people and Danish was so large that it could not be bridged with a gradual reform. Not only were the large number of foreign, non-Nordic words in Danish an issue, but the syntax and spelling in Danish was also different from the spoken Norwegian language.[186] This made Aasen propose a clean break from Danish and a completely new written standard based on a combination of rural dialects that were most similar to the old Norwegian language used in the medieval period.[187] Although it was not directly stated, it was clear to contemporary readers that Aasen was arguing on the basis of his own grammar and dictionary which was published in 1848 and 1850.

In his review of Vig's suggestions for language reform, Aasen expressed publicly for the first time his intention to establish a *Landsmaal* standard that would become a pillar of the two-culture narrative. This was not the first time that the idea of a separate Norwegian language had been discussed between intellectuals. The influential professor P. A. Munch had among others floated the idea years before.[188] However, Aasen was the first to have a clearly defined

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[184] Aasen contributed a short story in his dialect and began his review article by explaining his reasoning for writing the review. Vig, "Nogle sprogbemerkininger," 80; Ivar Aasen, "Folkevennen," in *Skrifter i samling: trykt og utrykt: 3.* (Kristiania: Gyldendalske Boghandel, Nordisk Forlag, 1912), 24-25.
[185] At the end of his article, Aasen requests that his remarks be considered as a voice from the people. Aasen sees the need for better education, but also argued on the basis of personal experience that only a few have the time and circumstances to make themselves highly educated. Aasen, "Folkevennen," 29, 44, 56.
[186] Aasen, "Folkevennen," 31, 41-43, 47, 53-56.
[187] Aasen, "Folkevennen," 47.
[188] Hoel, *Nasjonalisme i norsk målstrid 1848-1865*, 250-251.

plan and structure in the form of his own grammar and dictionary. He had created his standard through systematically comparing dialects to the medieval Norwegian language, thus seeing the national language rooted in a tradition that was hundreds of years old. He was convinced that Norwegian, regardless of its similarities and shared ancestry with Danish and Swedish, had developed into its own separate language since the medieval period.[189] Aasen had compared the various dialects found in Norway to old Norwegian texts to construct the most ideal Norwegian written standard possible. In sorting the dialects in regards to their "Norwegianness", Aasen was creating a national culture that based itself on the spoken language of the farmers while excluding the vernaculars of the bourgeois and civil servants. The words used to describe those dialects that were shut out by Aasen were *uægte* (false) or *bysprog* (urban language) while the rural dialects that Aasen approved of were *norsk* (Norwegian), *fullkommen* (perfect), or *ætge* (real).[190] In defining a rural standard, Aasen was essentially creating a national conceptualisation that corresponded to the farmer estate. It should be kept in mind that Aasen's definition of "farmer" was not corresponding to the politically privileged farmer identity that had emerged after 1814 as he uses the terms *Almuen* (common people) and *Bondestanden* (farmer estate) interchangeably to refer to the people in his article from 1852.[191] This definition made sense from a linguistic perspective as there was no clear divide in dialect between *husmenn*, farmers, or day labourers from the same local area. However, it ignored the social and political development of the farmer identity that had occurred since 1814. This discrepancy between the idealised farmer national identity of Aasen and the socio-political realities of the rural world would remain a contradiction that created problems for the *Landsmaal* movement for decades.

However, it was not the opinion of farmers that Aasen needed to worry about. Instead, he quickly found himself at the centre of a public debate between the capital's intellectuals on Norwegianness. Despite not explicitly stating this national divide between farmers and civil servants, the implication turned out to be enough to garner strong reactions in the press.[192] Aasen's response to his critics was conciliatory, as he stressed the fact that the process of

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[189] Hoel, *Nasjonalisme i norsk målstrid 1848-1865*, 232
[190] Hoel, *Nasjonalisme i norsk målstrid 1848-1865*, 233.
[191] Aasen writes "Allmue eller Bondestanden" (common people or farmer estate), but in the next sentence refers to it by the singular "denne stand" (this estate) indicating that they are one and the same. Aasen, "Folkevennen," 29.
[192] Hoel identifies as many as 15 responses in the press in 1852 and 1853 and lists those involved. Hoel, *Nasjonalisme i norsk målstrid 1848-1865*, 254.

codifying a Norwegian language was far from complete and that it would be a gradual and careful process which would occur alongside the continued use of Danish.[193] But a precedent on questioning who belonged to "the people" had been set. Aasen himself would not go out in public with the idea that it was the farmer's culture that made up the cultural fundament of the Norwegian nation before 1857, as he did not want a large-scale political showdown until he could prove his claims rested on a solid scientific foundation. Plus, he was not pressed for time because he had been granted a large yearly stipend from parliament to continue his work since 1848. This financial support from the state likely assured Aasen and might have been one of the main reasons why he was initially so careful about publicly confronting those who attacked his standard. Be that as it may, Aasen spent the period between 1852 and 1857 in self-imposed exile from the public debate while revising, testing, and conceptualizing his *Landsmaal* standard.[194]

Others who sympathised with Aasen either did not know or share his personal concerns, and therefore had no qualms about writing polemics against those who attacked him in the press. Niels Hauge wanted the entirety of *Folkevennen* written in *Landsmaal*.[195] Aasmund O. Vinje warned that "den studerende Stand og det meste af Byernes Befolkning ere blevne Dansk." (the studying estate and most of the city's population have become Danish.)[196] Mathias Dahl Gjessing declared in *Morgenbladet* that "Kampen mellem Folkesproget og Bogsproget er i fuld gang" (The battle between the people's language and the book language is in full swing).[197] He also called out both the elite and the *middelstand* (the middle class) for using a different language than the rest of the people.[198] Hauge, Vinje, and Gjessing were all from different social backgrounds, but had all studied at university and taken an interest in the national language.[199] Now that they were given a two-culture narrative to rally around, they were deepening the divide between those who wanted a national language rooted in the language of "the people", and those who disliked the idea of expanding the cultural basis of the nation

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[193] Ivar Aasen "Om det norske sprog" in *Skrifter i samling: trykt og utrykt. 3* (Kristania and Kjøbenhavn: Gyldendalske Boghandel, 1912), 57-66.
[194] Hoel, *Nasjonalisme i norsk målstrid 1848-1865*, 227, 256, 263.
[195] Hoel, *Nasjonalisme i norsk målstrid 1848-1865*, 257.
[196] Quote Taken from Hoel, *Nasjonalisme i norsk målstrid 1848-1865*, 257.
[197] Quote Taken from Hoel, *Nasjonalisme i norsk målstrid 1848-1865*, 259.
[198] Hoel, *Nasjonalisme i norsk målstrid 1848-1865*, 257.
[199] Hoel, *Nasjonalisme i norsk målstrid 1848-1865*, 257, 261; Olav Midttun, A.O. Vinje (Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget, 1963), 8.

beyond the civil servants' ideals. At this point, Aasen could no longer control the public use of his linguistic work. Through his supporters it was taking on a political life of its own.

The fact that the language debate became increasingly polarised in the public sphere meant that other public figures advocating for more moderate language reform like Vig experienced increased hostility towards their work from many civil servants. The criticism from Aasen also demanded a response in the form of a clearer plan, but as Vig did not possess extensive knowledge about language reform, he chose to begin a partnership with schoolteacher Knud Knudsen who had been a notable voice for language reform in the capital since the mid-1840s.[200] Knudsen's standard was based on what he called *dannende dagligtale* (educated vernacular). This standard was, as the name implies, based on the dialect of the higher educated urban class, which was largely shared by the civil servants, bourgeois, and other highly educated individuals like Knudsen, Vinje, and Aasen, as it only slightly differed from the official written Norwegian language.[201] Through a partnership with Knudsen, Vig created a concrete plan for language reform. However, he simultaneously alienated a large section of the conservative leadership within *Selskabet for Folkeoplysningens Fremme* as Knudsen was a controversial figure among the more conservative circles within the capital's intellectual elite. This was because he advocated for the removal of Latin from the higher education system. This idea to dismantle an important symbol of civil servant identity had been tolerated by Nissen, who had allowed Knudsen to publish his ideas. Others were less accommodating, and Knudsen was repeatedly faced with attempts to censor, bribe, or fire him to make him stop attacking the role of Latin in education.[202] Vig would soon face similar attempts to silence him in *Folkevennen*, as he and other writers were forced to adhere to the official written standard by the editorial board of *Selskabet for Folkeoplysningens Fremme* after 1854.[203] Through their partnership, both Vig and Knudsen were moving further into the position of oppositional intellectuals. They ended up there not so much by their own choice than by the pressure put upon them by those who rejected their proposals.

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[200] Knudsen published a proposal for language reform in 1845, three years before Aasen published his first study. When comparing the article written in 1845 and 1850, Hoel points out that Knudsen's reasoning for language reform had been devoid of nationalism before 1850. If this change was a result of Aasen's popularity, or the revolutions of 1848 is uncertain. Hoel, *Nasjonalisme i norsk målstrid 1848-1865*, 79-80, 143.
[201] Johannsen highlights how even the most fervent Landsmaal advocates like Vinje, Aasen, and Garborg all spoke "Danish" in their daily lives despite their Landsmaal advocacy. Johannsen, *Komme til Ordet*, 362-363.
[202] Dahl, *Knud Knudsen og latinskolen*, 23, 42, 76.
[203] Bye, *Folkevennen Ole Vig*, 210-211.

In response, Vig, Knudsen and another schoolteacher, Peder R. Andresen, founded in 1853 a publication of their own, *Den norske Folkeskole*, which they used to disseminate their ideas about education and language.[204] Knudsen also attempted to form a student organisation for language reform in 1852 but had found little support among the students, possibly because P. A. Munch, one of the most influential professors who partook in the language debate at the university, openly criticised Knudsen's work.[205] Nevertheless, Vig and Knudsen strengthened the idea of an oppositional petty intellectual class through their own publication, as they could freely advocate for language and educational reform without fear of censorship.[206] *Den norske Folkeskole* was specifically aimed at schoolteachers, among whom both Knudsen and Vig had existing networks of former colleagues and associates who could become subscribers and supporters. Initially there were around 80 subscribers, but this number grew to 300 within a year, and peaked at 474 after two years. Most of those who subscribed were schoolteachers or other intellectuals interested in school reform. This group was still small compared to total number of teachers working in public schools that were around 2,500 to 3,000 by the mid-1850s, but it indicates that petty intellectuals outside of the capital were aware of the nationalist debates going on within *Folkevennen*.[207]

Vig took on the role as editor of *Den norske Folkeskole* as well, which translated to a leading role among the teachers in the capital and Eastern Norway. Through the paper, he also organised a series of teacher assemblies for the region in the 1850s.[208] These early teacher gatherings were a prelude to the many teacher-led organisations that would later become a backbone of oppositional mass movements like *Bondevennene* and *Venstre*. In the 1850s, however, the number of higher educated public-school teachers was too small, and their social standing too poor compared to the rest of the population for them to be able to influence the state to implement Knudsen's and Vig's reform plans. This lack of support was reflected by the fact that *Den norske Folkeskole* turned out to be a very expensive venture for both Knudsen and Vig, who never managed to make it a sustainable or profitable paper. By 1855, Vig probably earned around 320 spesidaler a year but was constantly broke as he spent all his

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[204] *Den norske Folkeskole* was given out privately by Vig, Knudsen, and Andersen. Andersen died in 1853, and Knudsen went out of the project in 1855 so Vig was alone for the last period between 1855-1856. Vig therefore likely had the greatest influence on the publication. Hoel, *Nasjonalisme i norsk målstrid 1848-1865*, 141-4.
[205] Hoel, *Nasjonalisme i norsk målstrid 1848-1865*, 197-201; Bye, *Folkevennen Ole Vig*, 166.
[206] Hoel, *Nasjonalisme i norsk målstrid 1848-1865*, 141.
[207] Bye, *Folkevennen Ole Vig*, 240-241.
[208] Hoel, *Nasjonalisme i norsk målstrid 1848-1865*, 142.

money on the publication. Knudsen, who earned twice as much, spent even more. He also loaned Vig a lot of money to help him cover his end, which eventually strained the relationship between the two to the breaking point. Their partnership collapsed after three years. On his own, Vig only managed to keep the paper afloat for another year.[209]

Assuming an oppositional role also hurt Vig in his role as editor of *Folkevennen*. Vig had before his partnership with Knudsen received a free hand to publish anything he saw fit to write, but as his notoriety as a public figure grew, the board felt increasingly uncomfortable with giving him so much leeway. The rejection of anything but the official written standard in 1854 was specifically aimed at him, and in 1856 the board refused to publish his largest work, a three-volume popular history of Norway. Arild Bye suggests that these rejections were justified on the basis of Vig's lack of university education.[210] Indeed, Vig always remained a social outsider, a fact that he was constantly reminded of by his relatively low salary, and him being described as a schoolteacher by the board, instead of the more prestigious title of editor.[211] The division between petty intellectuals and civil servants was therefore not just the result of Knudsen's and Vig's more confrontational approach to language reform, but also by elitist behaviour of those civil servants on the board.

As Nissen, who had been Vig's most ardent defender, left the board in 1857, Vig's position became even more insecure. The belief that he was going to be fired may have radicalised him politically in a similar way to how Thrane was radicalised in the 1840s. In 1857, Vig was openly wrote about a two-culture divide within Norway.[212] In that same year, he was also planning a new publication with Vinje. Vinje would go on to become a prominent *Landsmaal* advocate through his publication *Dølen* from 1858 and that would help shape the development of the two-culture narrative in the 1860s.[213] However, the collaboration with Vinje never came to pass because Vig's health was deteriorating to such an extent that it prevented him from taking on a very active role in the public debate anymore. He passed away in December 1857.[214]

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[209] Bye, *Folkevennen Ole Vig*, 265.
[210] Bye, *Folkevennen Ole Vig*, 252-256
[211] Bye, *Folkevennen Ole Vig*, 253.
[212] Hyvik, *Tokulturlæra i norsk historie*, 75.
[213] Hoel, *Nasjonalisme i norsk målstrid 1848-1865*, 274; Bye, *Folkevennen Ole Vig*, 286-8.
[214] The last year of Vig's life is covered in Bye, *Folkevennen Ole Vig*, 289-303.

The causes to which Vig had devoted his life would go on to be realised by his friends. The first reformist victory came in 1857, when Knudsen with the help of a former colleague who now worked in the Church Ministry, Brede Thurmann (1816-1895), and a series of articles in the press, managed to influence the parliamentary committee to accept a proposal that abolished a mandatory Latin examination for entrance into the university.[215] A second victory came in 1860, when Nissen's school reform was passed by parliament. This reform saw the introduction of mandatory public schooling in rural regions, implemented increased educational demands for teachers, and contributed more extensive funding to the public school system.[216] A third victory came in 1862, when the ministry largely accepted Knudsen's petition for language reform, adopting four out of five proposal suggestions for more orthographic spelling. These proposals were quite small but had symbolic importance, e.g., the capital Christiania could now be officially written as Kristiania. At the end of the day, however, the ministry's partial adoption was not an official recognition of the two-culture narrative. The announcement from the department contained no mention of nationalism, nor a stated goal of reform away from Danish. The official reasoning for the reform was a wish to reaffirm that the Norwegian state maintained the right to control the Norwegian language, and that the language should reflect the common usage in Norway. Knudsen had again support within the Church department from Thurmann (1816-1895). Importantly, the reforms of the written language were complimentary and voluntary, so it was up to each individual and local school if they wanted to follow the suggested reform.[217] The state therefore retained its authority over language reform but was simultaneously setting a precedent for compromise through liberalising the language through voluntary reforms. This was a pattern that would repeat itself in the following language reforms of 1878, 1885, and 1892 and that eventually established the *Landsmaal* standard in the state and public school system.[218]

A striking thing about the language reform of 1862 is that although there had been extensive debates about Vig and Knudsen's proposals in the 1850s, debate was almost completely absent when the proposal came up in 1862. This lack of controversy likely contributed to the reform passing without Knudsen having much support. Hoel argues that the

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[215] Dahl, *Knud Knudsen og latinskolen*, 71-85.
[216] Bye, *Folkevennen Ole Vig*, 242-243; Roos, *Hartvig Nissen*, 232-239.
[217] Hoel, *Nasjonalisme i norsk målstrid 1848-1865*, 193-5.
[218] Ernst Håkon Jahr, *Language planning as a sociolinguistic experiment : the case of modern Norwegian* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), 60-64.

most likely reason for Knudsen's minor changes not being such a controversial topic in 1862 anymore was that Aasen and his *Landsmaal* supporters had drawn much of the ire of those who wanted to prevent language reform since 1858. That, in turn, made Knudsen seem quite moderate in comparison.[219]

Aasen had resurfaced as a public figure in the language debate during the autumn of 1857 by writing a polemic in *Folkevennen* attacking the established understanding of the relation between language, culture, education, and nationality. In this article, Aasen defined how he understood nation, nationality, and Norwegianness. He specifically attacked the educated elite and their *Dannelse* which he described as largely superficial, consisting of customs that only appealed to the vanity of those who emphasised their possession of it. Aasen identified this moral "sickness" with the cities, as many people living in them had adopted foreign customs, manners, and languages. To Aasen, it was an inner *Dannelse* that was needed, and this could only come through a revival of the Norwegian language. He called for knowledgeable men to adopt his written standard and to publish books, stories, and articles in it. This would make the written language easier for people to read and would create a sense of confidence and sense of self in the entire nation.[220] With this article, Aasen was not only attacking the national culture of the civil servants, but he was also attacking the *Dannelse* fundament of their political authority.

When the article came up for consideration during the autumn of 1857, Aasen's call for more *Landsmaal* was granted by the board. They commissioned him to translate *Fridtjof's Saga* to *Landsmaal*, which Aasen completed and published a year later. At the same time as the translated saga came out, Aasen began helping Vinje with the publication of the first newspaper written in *Landsmaal*, *Dølen*, from October 1858. Alongside *Fridtjof's Saga* and *Dølen*, Sophus Bugge published his *Norske Folkeviser* which were written in rural dialects and praised Aasen in the introduction. Aasen's aggressive rhetoric from earlier in the year, combined with the sudden flurry of *Landsmaal*-oriented literature, provoked adverse reactions from civil servants. The resulting back and forth in the press was characterised by such hostile

[219] Hoel, *Nasjonalisme i norsk målstrid 1848-1865*, 193.
[220] Hoel, *Nasjonalisme i norsk målstrid 1848-1865*, 265-266.

accusations that Aasen no longer was willing or welcome to publish his work through *Folkevennen*.[221]

The year 1858 is therefore considered by historians like Reidar Djupedal and Oddmund Løkensgard Hoel as the moment when a distinctive *Landsmaal* movement came into being.[222] The debate about *Landsmaal* indeed created a cultural front that clearly separated the proposal for a new Norwegian language from the more modest reforms of Knudsen and Vig. Aasen's criticism of the civil servants and their *Dannelse* had also clearly established a two-culture framework, as he was not only describing a cultural difference, but also rejecting the legitimacy of the civil servant's political authority over the nation. However, it would take another decade for this ideology to be transformed into a coherent political identity that could serve as a symbol for a political mass movement.

3 A complicated relationship: petty intellectuals and farmers in the 1860s

During the formative years between 1858 and 1868, *Landsmaal* advocates established a distinctive identity for themselves as *Maalmenn* (language advocates) in the intellectual circles of the capital through informal *Maallag* (language associations). Their members, who were largely university students or alumni, participated actively in the debates in the student society and ran their own newspaper, *Dølen* (1858-1860, 1862-1870) and *Vort Land* (1867). These activities helped consolidate the *Landsmaal* movement and turned it from a loose group of Aasen sympathisers to an organised movement of students, teachers, and politicians who through the two-culture narrative saw themselves as fighting both a political and cultural struggle for control of the nation-state. While the movement more clearly defined its national farmer identity, it remained even at the end of the 1860s largely isolated from the rural world and farmers which they built their identity upon. If it was not the efficacy as a mass movement, what was it about the *Landsmaal* standard that attracted students and intellectuals to engage in it?

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[221] These conflicts are detailed in Hoel, *Nasjonalisme i norsk målstrid 1848-1865*, 267-93.
[222] Reidar Djupedal, "Ei Framtid på Borg," in *Det Norske samlaget 1868-1968* ed. Bjarte Birkeland (Oslo: Samlaget, 1968), 20; Hoel, *Nasjonalisme i norsk målstrid 1848-1865*, 290-293.

Initially, those who became *Landsmaal* advocates in 1858 did so because they supported Aasen's public attack on the civil servants' language and culture. However, these Aasen's sympathisers quickly found out that Aasen had no ambition or desire to lead an organised movement as he again stepped away from the public debate after 1859. This might seem strange considering the fact that Aasen's efforts to push for the acceptance of the *Landsmaal* standard the year before. But for Aasen these actions were in defence of his research project. He made his own views clear, and gladly consulted those who came to him for advice on how to use the *Landsmaal* standard.[223] However, he would not lead, organise, or push others around.[224] It therefore would be others who surrounded Aasen who organised and shaped the formation of a *Landsmaal* movement in the following decade.[225]

The key figures of the *Landsmaal* movement during the 1860s were petty intellectuals who lived in capital and who were or had recently been students at the university, including A.O Vinje, Hans Ross (1833-1914), and Hagbard Emanuel Berner (1839-1920). These men had become aware of *Landsmaal* while they studied in the capital as they could easily follow the debates about it in *Folkevennen*, at the student society, or in one of the many intellectual cliques of the capital.[226] This was an important arena for the formulation of an opposing petty intellectual national identity as by the late 1850s there were a lot of students in the capital that faced an uncertain future. The total number of active students at any time is uncertain, but there were at least 1,312 students that completed their exams between 1859 and 1868. This made for a lot of potential petty intellectual recruits for the *Landsmaal* movement. Some students who joined the movement were sons of farmers, who were a small minority of students overall; though the overwhelming majority of the students that became identified with the *Landsmaal* cause in the 1860s were sons of civil servants or the rich bourgeoise.[227] Looking at the social background of the three individuals I just mentioned, Ross's and Berner's fathers were priests,[228] while Vinje, who was considerably older than the rest of the students that would

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[223] Hoel, *Nasjonalisme i norsk målstrid 1848-1865*, 298-303.
[224] Hyvik, *Tokulturlæra i norsk historie*, 76-77.
[225] Djupedal, "Ei Framtid på Borg," 36.
[226] Vinje studied at the university between 1851-1856. Ross studied at the university between 1849-1855. Berner studied at the university between 1858-1863. Bruun studied at the university between 1857-1862. Vesaas, *A. O. Vinje*, 143; Hoel, *Nasjonalisme i norsk målstrid 1848-1865*, 304; Olav Midttun, *Mål og menn: utgreidingar og livsskildringar* (Oslo: Samlaget, 1953), 155; Aslak Torjusson, *Den Norske Folkehøgskulen: opphav og grunnlag* (Oslo: Samlaget, 1977), 105.
[227] Djupedal, "Ei Framtid på Borg," 33.
[228] Hoel, *Nasjonalisme i norsk målstrid 1848-1865*, 304; Sindre Hovdenakk, *Alt er politikk: Hagbard Berner og hans tid* (Oslo: Samlaget, 2007), 27.

become involved in the *Landsmaal* movement, was a *husmann* son.[229] In other words, it was not a social background from "the people" that motivated students to join a nationalist movement centred on an idealisation of farmer culture.

Landsmaal's attraction to the sons of civil servants and bourgeois becomes understandable if one considers it in the early 1860s less of a movement and more of a social club. With the exception of Aasen, everyone actively involved with *Landsmaal* in this period was or had recently been a university student. Central figures like Vinje, Ross, Berner, and Sars had met each other at lectures related to the language question such as Keyser's lectures on the Norse language in 1857. When these intellectuals interested in the *Landsmaal* standard came together to discuss it, they brought other friends along with them. This led to informal conversational groups being formed which were given the name *Maallag* (language association) by its attendants. These early language associations were, unlike *Selskabet for Folkeoplysningens Fremme*, not dedicated to spreading their ideology outwards but instead in helping its participants come to grip with the *Landsmaal* standard through reading, discussing, and socialising. In the first years after 1858, there were only loose groups in existence. The first began to meet in 1859 and was centred around Vinje, with Aasen and a few others lesser-known figures occasionally participating. In 1861, a group of students centred around Hans Ross (1833-1914) reached its peak at 38 members, but which came down to around 8 to 10 members for most of period it was active.[230] The total number of *Landsmaal* speakers in the capital before 1868 therefore likely numbered around fifty or so individuals who were loosely associated with each other through personal networks of friends and associates.

Only a handful of these were so dedicated to the cause that they attempted to use *Landsmaal* in their daily lives, and even Aasen continued to use the official written standard in both for most of his affairs. Only Vinje would attempt to dedicate his entire intellectual identity to promoting the farmers culture by writing everything in *Landsmaal.* This included publishing *Dølen,* a newspaper written in *Landsmaal* between 1858 to 1860 and 1862 to 1870.[231] However, in doing so, he would reveal how large the gap actually was between petty intellectuals involved with the *Landsmaal* movement and the farmers that Vinje sought to market his paper towards. Vinje is therefore an interesting individual to consider, and I will highlight some

[229] Vesaas, *A.O. Vinje,* 39.
[230] Djupedal, "Ei Framtid på Borg," 24-26.
[231] Johansen, *Komme til ordet,* 362.

aspects of his life to demonstrate how he became a petty intellectual, why he became attracted to the idea of the *Landsmaal* standard, what it meant to be a *Landsmaal* advocate and to show how even through his many personal failures Vinje helped spread the *Landsmaal* identity to a new generation of students who would go on to transform it into a coherent political ideology rooted in the two-culture narrative.

3.1 The petty intellectual identity of a *Landsmaal* advocate: Aasmund Olavsson Vinje and *Dølen*, 1858-1865

As a historical figure, Vinje is difficult to position in terms of class, status, and identity which makes his life an illustrative example of how complex and fluid identity could be for those petty intellectuals who became associated with the *Landsmaal* movement during its formative years. If one looks only at his background, Vinje could be called a farmer, as he was born into a family of tenant farmers. However, already in his teenage years he became an itinerary rural schoolteacher. Six years later, while in his twenties, he was able to secure himself a teaching position at the bourgeois school in Mandal.[232] Working at a bourgeois school for four years made Vinje adopt a bourgeois lifestyle. His colleagues taught him Latin, German, and French, he enrolled in the city's bourgeois rifle association, he began celebrating national holidays like the king's birthday and constitution day by drinking, singing, and shooting with his colleagues, and he became a citizen of Mandal so that he could vote.[233] By 1846, it would be fair to call Vinje bourgeois. However, that came to an end in 1848 as he moved to the capital to become a student. In the capital, Vinje became an active figure in the press, writing for *Morgenbladet* and even putting out his own radical paper, *Andhrimmer*, with fellow students Paul Botten-Hansen and Henrik Ibsen in January 1851. He also acquired a correspondent position for *Drammens Tidende*, a paper for the neighbouring city of Drammen. This position made Vinje into a notable figure in the Norwegian public sphere. He wrote over 700 correspondent letters during his seven-year tenure, receiving attention far beyond Drammen, and having his articles reprinted in newspapers across the country.[234] During his time as a student and journalist in the capital, Vinje became so deeply involved in the intellectual life of the capital that he fully embraced the values and lifestyle of an intellectual. However, he did not see himself as

[232] Vesaas, *A.O. Vinje*, 39-45. 56-61.
[233] Vesaas, *A.O. Vinje*, 67-68; Midttun, *A.O. Vinje*, 26.
[234] Vesaas, *A.O. Vinje*, 117-118.

belonging to the same intellectual elite as the civil servants for long as he quickly became inspired by Ole Vig and Aasen to cultivate an intellectual farmer identity.

Initially, Vinje had been drawn towards Vig's approach to national unity through language, attempting a similar *ad hoc* implementation of dialect words into his own writings. But after Vig's death in 1857, Vinje turned towards Aasen.[235] However, unlike Berner and Ross who were sons of civil servants, Vinje would already in 1858 sacrifice his entire career for the idea of being a farmer intellectual by quitting his job as a correspondent and using all his income on financing his own newspaper. In his last letter to readers in *Drammens Tidende*, he apologised for having written in Danish and declared that from now on his writings would be in Norwegian.[236] Vinje tied his fate to the *Landsmaal* cause entirely, he was willing to sacrifice his career to the idea of a cultural struggle against the established intellectual elite, likely because he saw it as an opportunity to play a leading role as an intellectual. Consider for instance this line in a letter to his brother on December 12, 1858:

> "Nu er jeg kommen did, jeg vilde: nu fører jeg Krig mod Aarhundrer og Landets største Mænd, og skal føre Sproget frem til Seier og mig til Udødelighed."[237]
>
> [Now I have come to where I wanted to be: Now I am waging war against centuries and the country's greatest men and shall lead the language forward to victory and myself to immortality.][238]

That Vinje wanted to make the language movement about himself was also reflected in that he only loosely adopted the grammar and vocabulary of Aasen's standard.[239] This would improve over the years, but Vinje's writing style never perfectly aligned with Aasen's because Vinje never intended for it to do that. He called his own written language *Dølenmaalet* (Dølen language),[240] with *Dølen* (from the valley) referring to himself, the rural son who had come to the city to promote his language and culture.[241] The personal association between Vinje and *Dølen* was also reflected on the organisational side, as Vinje personally financed, edited, and wrote almost everything in *Dølen*. *Dølen* was a newspaper in *Landsmaal*, but it would be more appropriate to say that *Dølen* reflected Vinje more than the *Landsmaal* cause as a whole. But

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[235] Vesaas, *A.O. Vinje*, 154.
[236] Midttun, *A.O. Vinje*, 60.
[237] Citation taken from Midttun, *A.O. Vinje,* 59.
[238] Translated by author.
[239] Vesaas, *A.O. Vinje*, 170-3.
[240] Vesaas, *A.O. Vinje*, 310.
[241] Midttun, *A.O. Vinje*, 59.

as Vinje was the only one publishing weekly in a written standard vaguely similar to Aasen's, the difference seems to have been negligible to everyone except Aasen who disliked what Vinje was doing to his standard.[242]

Dølen began in the autumn of 1858. Published without the support of financial backers, *Dølen* is a testament to Vinje's solid reputation among the newspaper reading public, as it managed to attain nearly 600 subscribers during its first autumn. This initial number would also represent a peak for the newspaper, as it stayed between 500 to 600 for the rest of the decade. *Dølen*'s subscription figures reveal the restrictions of a paper based around a language movement which was an exclusively intellectual phenomenon. Although it presented itself as a publication for the cultural and social advancement of farmers, most subscribers were living in the cities, primarily the capital, and were likely intellectuals. There were some farmers subscribing, but they were few, e.g., only a single subscriber from Vinje's home region.[243] The lack of interest among farmers seems to have become obvious to Vinje already by 1860, as when he thanked his readers in December that year, his gratitude goes out to his friend Botten-Hansen, the civil servants, and the students. For the farmers, Vinje had only words of disappointment as he believed he was writing on their behalf, but not receiving nearly enough support or attention that he felt he deserved.[244]

This disappointment with farmers only increased as the running of a weekly newspaper took its toll on Vinje. Even though he had only himself to take care off, *Dølen* was not sustainable even with 600 subscribers. Vinje had no other steady income as he had to dedicate most of his time to maintain a steep pace, as apart from a few contributions by Aasen, Ross, and other *Landsmaal* sympathisers, he wrote everything himself. Problems already appeared during the second year of publication, as Vinje had to take a break after 33 weeks to travel to Trondheim to witness the coronation of King Oscar I. Publication did not resume until the summer of 1860, but by then Vinje had already lost over 100 spesidaler on the paper without even having given his subscribers what they had paid for.[245] As the paper was unprofitable, Vinje was forced to look for other sources of income to sustain himself. He began working on a series of books, the first being *Ferdaminni fraa Sumaren 1860* which was a travel account of

[242] Vesaas, *A.O. Vinje*, 187.
[243] Vesaas, *A.O. Vinje*, 225.
[244] Vesaas, *A.O. Vinje*, 264.
[245] Vesaas, *A.O. Vinje*, 226, 262.

his journey to Trondheim which he sent to his subscribers to compensate them for a half-year of missing weekly publications. He also looked for a job in the state administration and petitioned the authorities for a grant to travel abroad. While he did not manage to attain a position, he secured a 250 spesidaler stipend to travel to England. He also got another 100 spesidaler from *Det Kongelige Norske Videnskabers Selskap* (Royal Norwegian Society of Sciences) in Trondheim for the same task. Vinje left for England in the summer of 1862, but was forced to return home after a few months as he had run out of money. This travel stipend solution turned out to be a one-off incident. Although Vinje tried to repeat the venture in 1863 by sending new petitions to both the state and the science society in Trondheim for a longer journey to America, he was turned down by both.[246]

These persistent financial troubles led to a vicious cycle where Vinje attempted new – and ultimately failing – projects. When these projects lost him even more money he had to stay at his friends and family outside of Christiania for long periods, which meant that *Dølen* disappeared for months on end. These failures eventually took a severe toll on Vinje's self-confidence. A close friend, Ernst Sars, recollects in his diary that during the spring of 1864 Vinje was at his lowest point, near tears and hopeless at how his life had come to nothing despite all his efforts.[247] But Vinje had managed to publish at least some issues of *Dølen* every year except 1861, and so it remained a useful channel of publication for him as he could publish parts of his books like *Ferdaminni fraa Sumaren 1860* in it. This meant that Vinje maintained a publication written in *Landsmaal* through most of the 1860s, which was important for maintaining the public use of the standard, even it only was an intellectual novelty. However, there was a clear bitterness from Vinje as he projected his failure onto the *Landsmaal* cause and the farmers it idealised identity.

How Vinje's petty intellectual farmer identity clashed with others who identified as farmers can be seen in a response to a letter from a subscribing schoolteacher in 1862 who asked if Vinje could write more about enlightenment, *Landsmaal*, and history–and less about daily news and politics.[248] He replied by saying that he had written too much about it and that nobody wanted to read about it because *Landsmaal* as a subject was too dry and boring for the

[246] Vesaas, *A.O. Vinje*, 263, 280, 307.
[247] Vesaas, *A.O. Vinje*, 329-331.
[248] Aasmund Olavsson Vinje, "Ymse Krav til Dølen" in *Skrifter i Samling. B. 2: Bladstykke i Dølen II-VIII* (Oslo: Cappelen, 1944), 56.

average reader. He says that readers instead mainly wanted daily news about robberies, deaths, and disasters. The best way to help the *Landsmaal* cause was therefore just to write about daily news and politics in *Landsmaal*, because this was the only way he got readers, and if he had no readers than it would become impossible to live of a *Landsmaal* newspaper.[249] If readers wanted to support the *Landsmaal* cause, then they should also just write in *Landsmaal* and stop asking him to write more about Ivar Aasen's work.[250] Vinje went even further when voicing his disappointment in the people. He compares the people to children who had to be reared in the right way before they could understand the importance of *Landsmaal* and argued that they did not care about Aasen and his work at all, and if it had not been for the effort of educated civil servants and students, Aasen would be back in his home region herding sheep.[251] In the same article, Vinje showcases another letter from a reader who criticised him for being too harsh on the farmers. To this, Vinje angrily replied that criticism and hostility is all the thanks he got from farmers. He had no confidence in these people to act wisely on their own as they lacked education. They should know better and to keep these senseless opinions to themselves.[252]

Vinje's exchange with this schoolteacher and farmer demonstrates that despite his cultural championing of a "farmer" culture against Danish culture, he clearly identified himself as someone above the farmers while also distinctive from the civil servants. However, even though he was engaged in a cultural struggle with the civil servants, he admired them more than he did the farmers because they respected education and culture, which he did not find among farmers. Vinje's preference for association with civil servants was also reflected in his social life during this period, as Vinje corresponded and stayed with prominent civil servants like the Norwegian prime minister in Stockholm, Georg Sibbern (1816-1901) who hosted Vinje in Stockholm during the winter of 1863.[253] In terms of education, work, and social life, Vinje was separated from the farmers, whom he misunderstood, regardless of his belief that he spoke on their behalf because of their shared social background, culture, and language. His experiences running *Dølen* had then not led him to embrace his farmer identity further, instead

[249] Vinje, "Ymse Krav til Dølen," 61-2.
[250] Vinje, "Ymse Krav til Dølen," 60-61.
[251] Vinje, "Ymse Krav til Dølen," 65-66.
[252] Vinje, "Ymse Krav til Dølen," 66-69.
[253] Vesaas, *A.O. Vinje*, 318-320.

he was pushing it away, replacing it with an idealised intellectual farmer identity that is clearly shining through when he interacted with farmers in *Dølen*.

3.2 Defining the political identity of the *Landsmaal* cause and two-culture narrative: *Døleringen* and *Vort Land*, 1865-1868

While farmers largely ignored Vinje, he found support and allies among students and other university graduates in the capital. This became especially clear after 1865, when Vinje received a government job as a copyist in the Ministry of Justice. The copyist job was a position typically given to newly graduated jurists and considered lowly for a man of his seniority – he had at this point graduated from the university nearly a decade ago. But 250 spesidaler a year were better than nothing and the job gave him enough leeway to work on *Dølen* while at the office. *Dølen* therefore returned on 1 October 1865, with a continuous weekly run for an entire year.[254] In working in a lower echelon of the bureaucracy in the capital, Vinje was surrounded by many younger students. The most important among them was Hagbard Emanuel Berner, who Vinje worked alongside at the office as a copyist. Berner was in 1866 a young law graduate, who had been interested in the *Landsmaal* cause since the late 1850s when he had still been a student. He and Vinje had occasionally met each other at Keyser's lectures and at the early student *Mållag* around Hans Ross, but as colleagues they became close friends.[255] Berner helped Vinje out with *Dølen* and began to meet regularly with him in a circle of other *Landsmaal* interested students and graduates. This circle is typically known as *Døleringen* (*Dølen* clique) among historians.[256] The other regular attendees were 15 to 20 years younger than Vinje and mostly sons of civil servants, but they had a common identity as university students or graduates. Many of them also had similar jobs as they worked as copyists in the various government departments.[257] These shared experiences tied Vinje and the younger students together in a closeknit group.

What separated *Døleringen* from earlier *Maallag* was that it also became a political group after 1866. Alongside Vinje, Berner and his friend Johan Ernst Sars (1835-1917) assumed a leading role within the group. Sars brought with him an intense personal rivalry with

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[254] Vesaas, *A.O. Vinje*, 332, 339.
[255] Hagbard Emanuel Berner, "Fraa Ungdomsaari," *Syn & segn* 23, no. 1 (1917): 3.
[256] Berner contests this name in his memoirs, saying that it was not used among the participants themselves and that the name "Vort Land's krinsen" would be more appropriate as he, Sars, and Werner Nilsen Werenskjold played as large a role as Vinje. Berner, "Fraa Ungdomsaari," 7.
[257] Vesaas, *A.O. Vinje*, 363.

Det skandinaviske selskab (the Scandinavian society) that began to influence the rest of *Døleringen* towards a more confrontational interpretation of the two-culture narrative.[258] This radicalisation was helped by a larger public debate over the union between Sweden and Norway that had begun in 1865 after a parliamentary commission began to prepare a proposal for a revision of the union treaty. This triggered a lengthy debate on the union within the student society of the capital and through participating in this debate, the members of *Døleringen* became the main intellectual group within the capital associated with opposition to the union.[259] This anti-union agenda was primarily driven forward by the younger students, not Vinje, who before 1868 held a rather positive view of the government, the union, and the king, only opposing the proposed reform because he wanted to keep things as they were.[260] Instead, Berner and Sars took on a leading role in the debate within the student society during 1866 and 1867. Both were aware that they were a part of the intellectual elite, but they utilised the two-culture narrative to argue against the union, against Scandinavianism, and against the culture of the civil servants.[261] The nationalist rhetoric that characterised these debates over the union meant that the *Landsmaal* standard and the two-culture narrative was becoming attached to a much broader oppositional political identity that reflected the confrontational mood among the younger students in *Døleringen*.

This more active political agitation by Sars and Berner also led to *Døleringen* replacing *Dølen* with a new paper, *Vort Land*, in 1867. This paper was primarily concerned with the political debate over the union, but still included *Landsmaal* through reserving a dedicated spot for *Dølen* in every issue. *Vort Land* had, unlike *Dølen*, a political programme with a statement of working towards political goals such as greater national independence for the Norwegian state and resistance against any form of Scandinavism.[262] These commitments were important for creating a cohesive political ideology around the two-culture narrative. However, cohesion was short-lived as the paper only lasted for six months before falling apart due to internal disagreements, lack of financing and the lack of a central leadership figure after Berner left.[263] However, most of those who had participated in *Vort Land* would go on become part of the

[258] Narve Fulsås, *Historie og nasjon: Ernst Sars og striden om norsk kultur*, (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1999), 30.
[259] Hyvik, *Tokulturlæra i norsk historie*, 79-80.
[260] Vesaas, *A.O. Vinje*, 372-3.
[261] Hyvik, *Tokulturlæra i norsk historie*, 81-85.
[262] Seip, *Utsikt over Norges historie: 2*, 140.
[263] Vesaas, *A.O. Vinje*, 369.

founding group of *Det Norske Samlaget*, the first official organisation for the *Landsmaal* movement in the capital, or Berner's new political paper *Dagbladet*, which he began as soon at the end of 1867.[264] The only figure who fell away was Vinje, as he went back to publishing *Dølen* on his own for two more years and only played a marginal role in *Det Norske Samlaget.*[265] By 1868, the *Landsmaal* movement within the capital had outgrown Vinje, and he gave way for a new generation of students to reinterpret what the cause was meant to be about.

This did not mean that Vinje was done with the *Landsmaal* cause entirely, but there was a fundamental change in his outlook on politics that occurred in 1868, as he was fired from his job within the bureaucracy after having criticised the head of the Norwegian government, Fredrik Stang. After being dismissed, Vinje began attacking the government relentlessly in the press writing between February 2, 1868, and October 17, 1869, over 200 pages worth of articles in *Dølen* called "Vår politik" (Our politics) where he castigated the civil servant estate for having separated themselves from the people, for advocating for class politics, for being corrupt, and for unnational behaviour despite their education.[266] Vinje clearly felt that the action of the government reflected the civil servants as a whole, and was a betrayal to him personally. Because of this betrayal, Vinje turned back towards the farmers again in an attempt to establish a direct political alliance with them. Vinje knew the interest among the farmers for *Landsmaal* was limited, but he wanted to be a part of the farmer opposition, which was organising for the 1868 election, so he decided to stand for parliamentary in a rural election district, right outside the capital. The elections turned out to be a success for the farmers as they got fifty representatives into parliament, which was more than there had ever been before. However, Vinje failed to become elected. That Vinje even bothered to run demonstrates his limited insight into how the rural political culture and system functioned. As an outsider without roots and allies in the region, he was not taken seriously by voters.[267] Vinje therefore failed in his effort to create a political alliance between himself and the farmers. Another *Landsmaal* advocate, Olav Fjørtoft also pushed for a political coalition with the farmers in 1870, but despite being praised the leader of the farmer oppositon, Søren Jaabæk, the response from other

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[264] Birkeland, *Det Norske samlaget 1868-1968*, 36.
[265] Djupedal, "Ei framtid på borg," 48.
[266] Aasmund Olavsson Vinje, "Vår politikk (1868-1869)" in *A.O. Vinjes skrifter i Utval. B. 5: Innanlandsk politik*, 313-520; Fulsås, *Historie og nasjon*, 64.
[267] Vesaas, *A.O. Vinje*, 394-396, 400-402.

farmers was not any greater than it had been with Vinje.[268] Despite the political radicalisation of *Landsmaal* advocates within the intellectual circles of the capital and their desire for a political coalition with farmers, there still was a large rift between those who claimed to represent the farmers and the farmers as a voting group

Nevertheless, through both Vinje and the students, by 1868, *Landsmaal* advocates and their two-culture narrative were clearly established in political opposition to the civil servant government. The most important result for the petty intellectual *Landsmaal* movement in the 1860s was the consolidation of the two-culture narrative into a political ideology that opposed the union, the civil servant government, and Scandinavism. Although it was small, there was a distinctive group of petty intellectual *Landsmaal* advocates who now clearly saw themselves as distinctive from the ruling elite of civil servants in every sense of the word. They were still few, only in the hundreds, and even outnumbered by the small elite which they opposed, but they believed that they spoke on behalf of the entire rural population through their culture. What they lacked was political support that could make the political vision of the two-culture narrative into reality. The next chapter will look at how *Landsmaal* advocates attained it through *Bondevennene* and *Venstre*.

4 Recognition at last: From a fledgeling *Landsmaal* movement to the two-culture narrative, 1868-1885

In the early 1870s, the *Landsmaal* association in Bergen, *Vestmannlaget*, sent out a group of booksellers to the rural regions along the western Norwegian coast to inquire about the interests of the rural population in literature written in *Landsmaal*. The report sent back by the booksellers, printed in the society's publication *Fraa By og Bygd*, will not have filled *Landsmaal* advocates with confidence. It stated that many farmers had not even heard of the *Landsmaal* standard. On several occasions, locals were so unfamiliar with the subject that they misunderstood what *Landsmaal* (Country language) and *Maalsak* (Language movement) were about at all. Some asked if the booksellers meant a court case,[269] while others wondered why

[268] O. J. Fjørtoft, "Nokre Or te Bondevenne og Målmenn. 1871" in *Målpolitiske dokument 1864-1885 : ei folkerørsle blir til,* ed. Kjell Haugland (Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget, 1971), 90-91; Hans Try, "Bondevennrørsla 1867-1873 – Ei regional jamføring" in *Bondevenene: Jaabækrørsla 1865-1875,* ed. Dagfinn Slettan and Hans Try (Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget, 1979), 30.
[269] Sak could mean both court case and cause.

they wanted to change the measurements of barrels and pots.[270] However, in some places there were glimmers of hope as local intellectuals like priests, teachers, or higher educated farmers had heard about it in school or read about it in a newspaper. Among these educated individuals, some were even receptive to the idea of using the *Landsmaal* standard, although they were few and far between.[271]

This booksellers' report illustrates the large gap that still existed between urban petty intellectuals who believed they led a *Landsmaal* "movement" and rural farmers who remained largely oblivious to this initiative. However, over the course of the next fifteen years, the *Landsmaal* movement would successfully spread itself across Norway, becoming an important part of the *Venstre* movement. In 1885, the *Landsmaal* standard would be recognised by parliament as a national language equal to the official language that had held the title of Norwegian since 1814. This chapter shows how, with the help of two political mass movements, *Bondevennene* and *Venstre*, how the *Landsmaal* movement was transformed from a concern of an urban petty intellectual elite to an integral part of the *Venstre* movement whose parliamentary representatives made the *Landsmaal* standard into the people's language. This will be done by first looking at how the rural population itself reacted and mobilised for political activity between 1865 and 1873 through *Bondevennene*, how the urban *Landsmaal* campaign developed alongside it, and how these two finally became associated together in the *Venstre* movement.

4.1 An attempt at redefining the political farmer identity towards nationalism: Bondevennene

Bondevennene (the Farmer Friends) was the second political mass movement in Norway. It was active as a national movement between 1867 and 1873. Like the Workers' Associations two decades earlier, the Farmer Friends emerged primarily as a response to a growing social crisis under a strong central figure who proposed economic reforms, liberalism, and an expansion of voting rights as solutions to the crisis. Like Thrane, the leader of the Farmer Friends, Søren Jaabæk, sought to redefine the political limits of rural society and unite a broad section of the population behind him. However, unlike the Workers' Associations, the Farmer Friends appealed to farmers who were already enfranchised, while ignoring urban workers.

[270] Mål could mean both language and measurement.
[271] Anecdote taken from Vemund Skard, *Frå Dølen til Fedraheimen : målstriden 1870-1877* (Oslo: Samlaget, 1949), 28-9.

This led to great electoral success in rural regions during the elections of 1868 and 1870. However, when Jaabæk tried to redefine the political identity of the Farmer Friends towards a broader, more socially inclusive national democratic ideology of the two-culture narrative which was associated with petty intellectuals like Johan Sverdrup and the *Landsmaal* movement in the capital, the Farmer Friends were torn apart by internal disagreements. Nevertheless, through appealing to local teachers and collaborating with petty intellectuals through the People's High Schools (*Folkehøyskoler*), the activities of the Farmer Friends helped lay the political and organisational foundation for political cooperation between petty intellectuals in the *Landsmaal* advocates and farmers in the *Venstre* movement a decade later.

The leader of the Farmer Friends was Søren Jaabæk. He was a farmer's son but had received a more extensive education than many of his farming peers through working as a teacher at age seventeen, and through being taught English and German. Jaabæk was throughout his life interested in literature from abroad, particularly from England, which he wrote his own history about in the 1870s. While his status resembles that of many petty intellectuals, he did not pursue a career as a publicist but became instead a notable parliamentarian. By 1865, he had already spent two decades as a representative for Lister and Mandal amt. These two decades were characterised by a divided farmer opposition under Ole Gabriel Ueland. Jaabæk and Ueland shared many political positions, but they became increasingly separated from one another as Jaabæk became frustrated by his and many other farmers' seeming passivity towards the civil servant run government.[272] Jaabæk envisioned the Farmer Friends as a vehicle for revitalising rural politics and mobilising farmers behind political candidates that would fight for their interests in parliament.[273]

Jaabæk founded the first Farmer Friends association in his home constituency of Lister and Mandal in Southern Norway on February 2, 1865. With the central leadership, publication, and largest membership numbers, this region would become the heartland of the Farmer Friends movement. For the first two years, the original Farmer Friends local association run by Jaabæk was the only one in the country, but in 1867 the movement began to spread quickly across Southern and Eastern Norway. During the election year of 1868, 54 new local organisations were founded,[274] and by the election of 1870, the movement had come to

[272] Seip, *Utsikt over Norges historie: 2*, 86.
[273] Try, "Bondevennrørsla 1867-1873," 21.
[274] Seip, *Utsikt over Norges historie: 2*, 78.

somewhere around 300 local organisations with somewhere between 21,000 and 30,000 members from every region in the country except Finnmark.[275] These members could sway elections as despite there being a considerable population growth in Norway from 900,000 in 1815 to 1,800,000 in 1875, there had been no considerable growth in election participation in the previous decades. [276] In 1865 for instance, there were roughly 126,000 qualified for the vote, but only about 34,000 actually voting.[277] However, in the elections that the Farmer Friends won, the number of active voters increased only slightly in 1868 and 1870 to about 39,000 and 37,000, respectively. What changed was the concentration of votes. The Farmer Friends printed political programmes, elections lists, and practiced with mock elections, which reduced the waste of votes and brought out the number of voters needed to ensure that their preferred candidates became elected. The result was that the Farmer Friends helped getting 50 farmers elected to parliament in 1868, and 62 farmers in 1870.[278] For the first time, over half of the representatives in parliament were farmers.

Like in 1848, the incentive to organise a new political movement came from an economic crisis. The underlying trends of population growth, lack of available land, and a growing wealth gap which had led to popular support for the Workers' Association two decades earlier had not gone away; they had only been temporarily relieved by an unprecedented period of economic growth and prosperity between 1850 and 1857.[279] However, from 1857 a new economic downturn hit, and unlike in 1848, it became a decade-long recession that hit middling farmers particularly hard. The causes were many, and these varied in how they impacted every local region in Norway, but they had national influences. The first nation-wide problem was that the profitability in the traditional business of farming was challenged by a recession in three essential commodities: grain, timber, and land. A significant reason for this was that the grain tariff that had protected farmers in Eastern Norway was gradually phased out in the 1850s and 1860s, allowing cheap foreign grain to be sold on the market and reducing the value of domestic grown grain.[280] The profit margins for many farmers therefore significantly decreased, the value of their land dropped, and these trends were compounded by several years of low

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[275] Seip, *Utsikt over Norges historie: 2*, 78; Hans Try, "Bondevennrørsla 1867-1873," 24; Kaartvedt, *Det Norske Storting gjennom 150 år: B. 1*, 135.
[276] Sandvik, *Nasjonens velstand*, 62.
[277] Jostein Nerbøvik, *Bondevener og andre uvener : ein studie frå Telemark* (Oslo: Samlaget, 1979), 18.
[278] Rolf Danielsen, *Det Norske Storting gjennom 150 år. B. 2 : Tidsrommet 1870-1908* (Oslo: Gyldendal, 1964), 64, 83; Kaartvedt, *Det Norske Storting gjennom 150 år: B. 1*, 136, 148.
[279] Sandvik, *Nasjonens velstand*, 78.
[280] Hodne, *Norsk økonomi i det nittende århundre*, 184.

crop yields. The timber trade that many farmers relied on also went into recession in the 1860s, causing a wave of bankruptcies.[281] This combined recession in land, timber, and grain led to many farmers ending up in hopeless amounts of debt for which land was collateral. The confiscations of these properties culminated in 1869, corresponding to the height of political activity of the Farmer Friends.[282]

While the profitability of farming decreased, farmers faced a growing tax burden caused by an increase in government expenditure as the Norwegian state intensified its investments to modernise the nation's economy.[283] The three new main areas of expenditure were investments into new forms of transportation like railways and steamships,[284] investment in education through reforms like the rural school reform in 1860,[285] and increase spending on poverty relief after multiple commissions had looked into the situation of the poor in the 1850s.[286] The government had wanted to invest considerably more into these initiatives but was limited by the parliament rejecting any form of direct taxation despite regular proposals by the government to reimplement such a system.[287] The state therefore still relied on local taxation and tariffs on imported and exported goods to make up the bulk of its income. This system had functioned during the long period of growth in the first half of the nineteenth century, when exports and import had grown steadily in synch with state expenditure, but with a lasting recession, both exports and imports contracted, meaning that the basis of the income that the state relied on was shrinking.[288] With less funds to draw upon, the actions the government could take to alleviate the situation was severely limited, and so the crisis continued to worsen.

The popular support for Jaabæk then becomes understandable, as he offered a political solution to this economic crisis that appeared convincing to farmers. The political programme of the Farmer Friends as presented by Jaabæk in 1865 emphasised austerity (*sparsomlighet*) and liberal principles like free trade, free work, free business, and free help (*fri handel, frit*

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[281] Sandvik, *Nasjonens velstand*, 83.
[282] Seip, *Utsikt over Norges historie: 2*, 79.
[283] Between 1835 and 1860, the increase in state expenditure on modernising infrastructure was tenfold. By 1860, a fourth of all government expenditure. Sandvik, *Nasjonens velstand*, 69.
[284] States grants to building out the transportation network increased twenty times over between 1845-1860. Sandvik, *Nasjonens velstand*, 70.
[285] Law of 1860 implemented a regular contribution by the state to the public schools in rural regions primarily to cover teacher salaries. Fritz, *Norges økonomiske historie 1815-1970*, 243.
[286] Poverty aid expenditure almost double between 1850 and 1863 even though the amount of poor only slightly increased. Sandvik, *Nasjonens velstand*, 97.
[287] Sandvik, *Nasjonens velstand*, 69.
[288] Sandvik, *Nasjonens velstand*, 67.

arbeid, fri Virksomhed, fri Hjælpsomhed).[289] Both these policies were a clear continuation of the farmers' communalism from the 1830s that was popular among farmers because it directly impacted their lives by lessening the tax burden and weakening the control of the state over their lives.

This political continuation meant that despite no social groups being explicitly mentioned in Jaabæk's programme, it was mostly enfranchised farmers that joined to the Farmer Friends. A movement consisting of only enfranchised farmers was not what Jaabæk had imagined though. In his earliest writings from 1865, he addresses himself not to the farmers, but to working people more generally, as those who produced anything of value and were without privileges. He specified this a year later by naming three classes he believed had common cause: farmers, workers, and merchants.[290] Nevertheless, only the first would become a significant presence in the Farmer Friends. In 1870, Jaabæk collected information on the background of members in the Farmer Friends through a survey to the local associations. About a third of the roughly three hundred local associations responded, and these show that in most regions the membership consisted of about 90% farmers with the rest being *husmenn*, craftsmen, and teachers.[291] The farmers' attraction to the movement was quite straightforward, the current economic crisis was primarily affecting the middling farmers and the proposed solutions to the crisis aligned with their economic interests. For the poorest in rural society, austerity in poverty relief meant taking away funding which they relied on to survive. For merchants, liberalising away existing regulations in trade, work, and business meant the risk of increased rural competition.[292] The difficulty of consolidating so many conflicting interests behind a single political movement overnight was likely understood by Jaabæk, so although he aspired to create a broader, national coalition, he knew that he would have to rely on farmers for political support and therefore concentrated his effort around mobilising them for elections.

This can most clearly be seen by the fact that he named his movement *Bondevennene* instead of the broader and vaguer *Folkevennene* (People's Friends) that many local organisations of Farmer Friends decided to call themselves. When challenged on the name of

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[289] Seip, *Utsikt over Norges historie: 2*, 85-86; Dagfinn Slettan, *Søren Jaabæk og bondevennbevegelsen i Lister og Mandals amt* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1974), 43.
[290] Slettan, *Søren Jaabæk og bondevennbevegelsen i Lister og Mandals amt*, 43.
[291] The categories on the questionnaire were: Gårdbruker (farmer), bestillingsmenn (non-civil servant bureaucrat), husmenn (tenant farmer), arbeider (worker), andre (other). Try, "Bondevennrørsla 1867-1873," 14-16; Seip, *Utsikt over Norges historie: 2*, 88.
[292] Seip, *Utsikt over Norges historie: 2*, 85.

the movement by those who wished to emphasise a more inclusive political identity, Jaabæk justified the name by the fact that the farmers were those who had political rights, so they were ones who the movement should focus on. Nevertheless, Jaabæk argued that the farmers should see beyond their own narrow interests and work towards emancipating the workers and the rest of rural society for the wellbeing of the nation as whole.[293] Through contrasting the nation against the farmers identity, Jaabæk was trying to convince farmers to support an expansion of the social and political goals of the Farmer Friends.

The local associations of Farmer Friends proved to be resistant to Jaabæk's reform attempts. This was not because farmers were hostile to new ideas or principles, but that the implementation of broader policies suggested by Jaabæk like a stronger education system, yearly parliaments, and a jury system would require more funding. This contradicted the established main goal of austerity. These disagreements could co-exist in the movement as long as there was room for ambiguity between the central leadership and local organisations. This was possible between 1865 to 1869 as the initial political programme of the Farmer Friends was vague, apart from the central tenets of austerity and liberalism. However, beginning in 1869, Jaabæk attempted a political partnership in parliament with Johan Sverdrup. In order to accommodate Sverdrup's goal of constitutional reforms, Jaabæk attempted to force local associations of Farmer Friends to declare a position on these issues through sending them questionnaires about political issues that the central leadership deemed important.[294] These questionnaires were sent with a brief explanation, the opinion of the central leadership, and instructions to hold a vote and send the results back.[295] Jaabæk's most ambitious attempt was made in 1870 with "Sak 33" (case 33) which asked the local associations if they had confidence in the government ministry, and if not, whether they wanted to replace it with a new government centred around Johan Sverdrup. The response from the local associations was mixed. Only a third of Farmer Friends associations answered at all, but only 27 of these 86 were sceptical, with 3 being clearly against the motion.[296] The lack of response suggests that the majority of the movement wanted to stay out of nationalist politics.

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[293] Slettan, *Søren Jaabæk og bondevennbevegelsen i Lister og Mandals amt,* 44.
[294] Seip, *Utsikt over Norges historie: 2,* 88.
[295] Slettan, *Søren Jaabæk og bondevennbevegelsen i Lister og Mandals amt*, 33-34.
[296] Try, "Bondevennrørsla 1867-1873," 29.

Jaabæk would continue to attempt to mobilise the Farmer Friends behind new policies, but outside of parliament, the movement was beginning to unravel. The economic crisis that had been a leading cause of social discontent and political motivation receded after 1870 as the economic situation improved.[297] With rapid economic growth again, the solutions which Jaabæk had offered five years ago seemed to be no longer necessary. Already in 1870, there were signs that interest in the Farmer Friends was decreasing in Eastern Norway.[298] This was further helped along by Jaabæk's personal standing having fallen considerably among farmers. His criticism of the church was publicised through a lengthy political trial, which came to the verdict that it was appropriate to call Jaabæk an enemy of Christians.[299] This political smear campaign worked, as it alienated many conservative farmers.[300] Many broke off contact, and by 1873, only 15 local associations communicated with the central leadership.[301] More critically was that most local Farmer Friends associations stopped organising for elections. Farmer representatives to parliament therefore sharply decreased down to 50 again after the election of 1873.[302] Jaabæk attempted to press on in supporting Sverdrup, even using the term "*Venstre*" to describe his own policies in preparation for the election of 1876, but his support among farmers had been so severely diminished that he could no longer play a significant role as a political figure.[303]

4.2 The leading role and growing influence of petty intellectuals through Farmer Friends

While Jaabæk alienated many farmers by focusing on national politics, rural teachers were likely more welcoming to Jaabæk's emphasis on constitutional and national questions. These teachers made up only a few percent of the total membership, but Hans Try estimates from local membership lists that they likely made up over half of the leadership of local Farmer Friends organisations across Norway.[304] These teachers had been drawn to the movement

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[297] Sandvik, *Nasjonens velstand*, 104.
[298] There was a decline in political activity after 1870 that first occurred in the places that relied the most on the timber trade. Try, "Bondevennrørsla 1867-1873," 30; Tore Tinnes, "Mye foreningsliv, men få bondevennner I Hedemarkens Amt" in *Bondevenene : Jaabækrørsla 1865-1875,* ed. Dagfinn Slettan and Hans Try (Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget, 1979), 80-1.
[299] Dagfinn Slettan, "Politisk aksjon i kristendomens namn? Kristeleg autoritetar i strid med Jaabæk," in *Bondevenene : Jaabækrørsla 1865-1875,* ed. Dagfinn Slettan and Hans Try (Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget, 1979), 63.
[300] Try, "Bondevennrørsla 1867-1873," 30; Slettan, "Politisk aksjon i kristendomens namn?," 66.
[301] Try, "Bondevennrørsla 1867-1873," 12.
[302] Danielsen, *Det Norske Storting gjennom 150 år. B. 2*, 83.
[303] Dagfinn Slettan, "Samfunnsstormarar frå Sørlandet? Bondevener I Lister og Mandal amt." in *Bondevenene : Jaabækrørsla 1865-1875,* ed. Dagfinn Slettan and Hans Try (Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget, 1979), 40; Slettan, "Politisk aksjon i kristendomens namn?," 54.
[304] Try, "Bondevennrørsla 1867-1873," 16.

already in the 1860s, as Jaabæk spoke highly of them from the very beginning. He demanded in *Folketidende* that farmers should reward rural teachers for their efforts by granting them a larger salary through the educational budget.[305] Teachers were also drawn to the Farmer Friends because many of them had by the 1860s become farmers themselves. In his study of Oppdal during this period, Kjell Haugland notes how the identity of rural teachers was dualistic in that they were part-time farmers as most resident teachers combined their teaching job with farming on smaller plots of land or animal husbandry.[306] In this way they began to share economic interests with local farmers and integrated more fully into the rural community.

That teachers assumed a leading role in the Farmer Friends was a testament to how socially respectable teaching as a profession had become since the 1840s. The new generation of teachers educated in the 1860s were not experiencing the same deprivation and poverty as those from a decade or two before, as the school reform of 1860 had begun to improve their living conditions and career prospects considerably. As a matter of fact, teacher schools had become so popular during the 1860s that they regularly had to turn potential students away.[307] The attraction to the schools was likely helped by the fact that salaries had become considerably higher for teachers, increasing on average around 25% between just 1861 and 1866.[308] This occurred simultaneously as the income of many farmers declined. As a consequence, many of those who became teachers by 1870 were farmers, meaning that once they began working as teachers they more easily integrated into rural society than the old teachers who were usually sons of *husmenn*.[309] The shift from *husmenn* to farmers as the most typical social background for teachers was also likely helped by the total number of *husmenn* declining after 1860, as the poorest of the rural population decided to move to the cities or emigrate instead.[310] The status of the teacher also likely improved by many teachers no longer being itinerant, instead they got their own school building and became resident in a local rural community. The reform of 1860 had demanded that local authorities erect a school building when the headcount of students exceeded thirty.[311] These buildings were a new financial burden, but they also became local

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[305] Slettan, *Søren Jaabæk og bondevennbevegelsen i Lister og Mandals amt*, 70-71.
[306] Kjell Haugland, *"Oppdal, bøgda mi -" : modernisering, nasjonsbygging og identitetsdanning i ei sørtrøndersk fjellbygd ca 1860-1940* (Oslo: Norsk forskningsråd, 1996), 55.
[307] Dahl, *Norsk lærerutdanning fra 1814 til i dag*, 100-101.
[308] Dahl, *Norsk lærerutdanning fra 1814 til i dag*, 117-118.
[309] Ole Dahlhaug, *Mål og meninger : målreisning og nasjonsdannelse 1877-1887* (Oslo: Norges forskningsråd, 1995), 104.
[310] Sandvik, *Nasjonens velstand*, 98.
[311] Bye, *Folkevennen Ole Vig*, 243.

gathering places and worked as a foundational institution on which interested locals and visitors could organise associations and meetings. The teacher, who controlled this institution, assumed a central position as an organiser and a leader. This leadership role was more clearly instilled on the teacher through a longer teaching education as well.[312] This likely contributed to the teacher more clearly seeing himself as an intellectual authority.

Consider for instance, Mons Bjørlo, as an example of the new generation of schoolteachers. Bjørlo had been born in Nordfjord but moved to Oppdal to work as a teacher after finishing his education at a teacher school. In 1867, while still in his mid-twenties, he started a local Farmer Friends association, although he called it *Folkeforeningen i Opdal* (People's Association in Oppdal) to present a more socially inclusive image. The majority of the roughly 200 members were farmers, but there were somewhere between 7 to 9 teachers registered as members. These were overrepresented among the leadership. The first available records from 1871 show that the chairman was a teacher, and in 1872, 3 out of 6 positions on the board were held by teachers. From their leadership positions, these teachers exerted a great influence on important decisions. Haugland notes how they could use their education to nudge the larger number of farmers towards resolutions as they came prepared to debate with long treatises. On a contentious issue like enfranchisement reform, many farmers were opposed to Jaabæk's suggestions, but teachers like Bjørlo and Bjerkager managed to turn the majority around to their side.[313] When convincing the farmers, they identified with them. For instance, when the teacher Johannes Braut argued against judging civil servants solely because of their estate in 1873, he spoke about the issue from the perspective of "vi bønder" (us farmers).[314]

As the teachers' influence in rural communities grew, politics within the rural world took on a broader and more national character. Local politics continued to play the predominant role, but these local issues were often contextualised nationally through teachers instilling the national ideology that they had received during their education down upon local farmers. Bjørlo, for instance, preached in *Folkeforeningen i Opdal* about the value of education and working for the benefit of the nation. Even more significant was the influence the teacher acquired over the younger generation of farmers, who as their students were usually under their sole supervision and influence. Through the influence of these teachers who had become interested

[312] Mjeldheim, *Folkerørsla som vart parti*, 50-51.
[313] Haugland, *"Oppdal, bøgda mi -"*, 55-56.
[314] Haugland, *"Oppdal, bøgda mi -"*, 56-57.

in nationalism through their higher education, the younger generation of farmers also became increasingly nationalised. Through the public school system, the ideology and authority of petty intellectuals was therefore beginning to take root within rural society. The teacher had by 1870 become a figure that the farmers respected enough to listen to and gather around. The teachers also liked their new position, which was evident by the fact that they stuck around. Gone were the seven-year teachers who were in it only to avoid military service. Using Opdal as an example again, Johannes Braut and Mons Bjørlo both worked as schoolteachers for forty years in this community.[315]

However, the teacher's authority was not absolute. Once farmers lost interest in Jaabæk's politics, the local organisations of Farmer Friends largely disappeared. When the interest of farmers in politics receded, teachers had to instead transfer their organisational capabilities to other associations that replaced the Farmer Friends associations. Many Farmer Friends associations were turned into politically neutral organisations like *landbruksforeninger* (farming societies) or *samtalelag* (conversation societies). In turn, when the farmers political interest was rekindled by recession a decade later, these organisations would again serve as basis for mobilisation of the rural population for political action.[316] In Oppdal there was a direct organisational continuation into the *Venstre* movement as *Folkeforeningen i Opdal* was replaced by *Opdals Samtalelag* (Opdals conversational society) and when political activity restarted a decade later with the *Venstre* movement, leading figures like Bjørlo would reappear as the first chairman in *Opdals Venstreforening* (*Venstre* association in Opdal). Bjørlo and the teachers would also go on to occupy many other positions in local organisations and politics. Bjørlo was elected Mayor of Opdal between 1880 and 1889, and his colleague Ingebrigt Hustøft was deputy mayor during the same period. Bjørlo also took over as deputy chairman in the local abolitionist society in 1884 and became its chairman in 1887.[317] In short, the teacher had by the 1870s become a leading figure, not just in politics, but throughout rural society. This was a leading role that was built on appealing to the farmers interests, as teachers had to engage in causes which farmers had an interest in to get them organised. In return, the teachers from their positions as leaders acquired influence and social respectability.

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[315] Haugland, *"Oppdal, bøgda mi -"*, 58-61.
[316] Mjeldheim, *Folkerørsla som vart parti*, 55.
[317] Haugland, *"Oppdal, bøgda mi -"*, 57, 86.

Another educational institution with ties to the Farmer Friends that helped consolidate the role of petty intellectuals as local leaders within the rural world was *Folkehøgskoler* (People's High Schools) that were established and financed through private initiative. These schools had first appeared in Eastern Norway in the 1860s, with a larger, conservative school near Hamar founded by Herman Anker and Olaus Arvesen in 1864, and a more radical, but smaller school that moved around in the Gudbrandsdal Valley under Christopher Bruun from 1867. The founders of these two schools were university educated theologians who had met Ole Vig and taken an interested in Grundtvig's work during their period of study in the 1850s, when *Selskabet for Folkeoplysningens Fremme* was at its most active.[318] However, the next People's High School established in 1868 at Halsnøy in Western Norway was created by Wollert Konow, a dropout law student. Anker, Bruun, and Konow all came from wealthy families. This was likely important as these privately funded schools were expensive to run.[319] The schools were small, but also without significant income as tuition was extremely cheap in order to make it accessible to farmers and their sons.[320] The most extreme example of how expensive these schools could be to maintain was *Sagatun*, where Herman Anker spent about a third of his entire inheritance, somewhere around 130,000 kr. on building and running the school during its first decade.[321] A similar situation occurred in Sogndal where Henrik Mohn Dahl gave 3,000 spesidaler to build a schoolhouse in 1874, and another 20,000 kr. for maintenance costs and stipends for the students later that same year.[322] Other schools like at Vonheim or Stjørdalen were run cheaper by a combination of spartan living by its teachers and local support in the form of free housing and grants by the local or regional government.[323] Despite their financial difficulties, the schools proved capable of surviving. By 1875, there had been at least 35 attempts to establish these kinds of schools across Norway, and by 1880, there was at least one active People's High School in every region of the country.[324] However,

[318] Øystein Sørensen, *Kampen om Norges sjel* (Oslo: Aschehoug, 2001), 278.
[319] Torjusson, *Den norske folkehøgskulen*, 75, 103, 106, 165.
[320] Torjusson, *Den norske folkehøgskulen*, 83, 166, 193.
[321] Torjusson, *Den norske folkehøgskulen*, 87, 101.
[322] Torjusson, *Den norske folkehøgskulen*, 181, 184.
[323] Bruun set a 4 spesidaler salary for himself and a yearly income of 296 kr. in total. The two teachers at Stjørdalen lived on 360 spesidaler a year that they earned in tuition fees. This was all the income they had before they gained support from the local government in 1873. Torjusson, *Den norske folkehøgskulen*, 116, 193-4.
[324] A list of these early schools can be found in Torjusson, *Den norske folkehøgskulen*, 164-235; Hoel, *Norsk målreising: 2*, 51.

student numbers remained low. Each school was only capable of educating somewhere between 6 to 70 students per semester.[325]

An important reason why these schools obtained political support from farmers was that their costs were met by their founders, not the students or local farmers. Students paid, on average, relatively small fees, somewhere between 1,5 to 7 spesidaler a month, to attend these schools.[326] From the outside, these schools therefore appeared cheap, especially when compared to the Public High School (*Høyere Allmueskole*) that had begun to replace the private bourgeois schools after another education reform was passed in 1869. In these school, teacher salaries alone were somewhere around 300 spesidaler a year.[327] The comparable cheapness of the People's High Schools endeared them to farmers like Jaabæk, who saw them as austere alternatives to a public education. In his principled opposition to the civil servants' control and spending, Jaabæk attacked the established higher educational system and wanted their funding taken off the state's budget.[328] This attack also extended to the Public High Schools since Jaabæk and the central leadership of the Farmer Friends wanted these public institutions closed and instead replaced by support to the People's High Schools.[329] These schools were regularly put in a positive light in *Folketidende* and contrasted with a wasteful public educational system controlled by civil servants.[330]

Hoel shows that although not all People's High Schools help spread the idea of the two-culture narrative and the *Landsmaal* standard they became the most important institution alongside the teachers' schools and the public-school teachers for spreading awareness and use of the *Landsmaal* standard in the rural world during the rest of the nineteenth century. During the 1870s, these rural teachers would become the largest group within the *Landsmaal* movement, and both the People's High Schools and the teacher schools became regional centres for contact between teachers and of *Landsmaal* activity.[331] The spread of *Landsmaal* between these institutions came through a considerable degree of overlap between the two

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[325] In Valdres, K.K. Kleve taught only 6 students. Sagatun was the biggest with somewhere between 60-70 students. Torjusson, *Den norske folkehøgskulen*, 98, 216.
[326] Torjusson, *Den norske folkehøgskulen*, 83, 166, 187, 193.
[327] Slettan, *Søren Jaabæk og bondevennbevegelsen i Lister og Mandals amt*, 72.
[328] Jaabæk launched the idea of defunding Latin grammar schools and to transfer funds to the public school in parliament already in 1845. Torjusson, *Den norske folkehøgskulen*, 62; Slettan, *Søren Jaabæk og bondevennbevegelsen i Lister og Mandals amt*, 70.
[329] Slettan, *Søren Jaabæk og bondevennbevegelsen i Lister og Mandals amt*, 70-74.
[330] Torjusson, *Den norske folkehøgskulen*, 152-153.
[331] Hoel, *Norsk målreising: 2*, 51.

educational institutions, as many teachers passed through both. The number of teachers involved with the *Landsmaal* movement was not all that impressive, but nevertheless significant. For instance, Stord seminar's *Landsmaal* association saw at least 620 teachers as members during its first twenty years of activity between 1877 and 1897. However, these official teachers' schools could not offer *Landsmaal* education openly. This began instead at People's High Schools with short summer courses like in Sogndal in 1881.[332] *Landsmaal* was also taught to the students at the People's High Schools in Gausdal which resulted in a local *Landsmaal* association that was probably the most active in the country during the 1870s outside of Christiana and Bergen.[333] Together, these two educational systems became bastions of the *Landsmaal* movement and helped entrench the idea of the two-culture narrative within rural society. However, interest was still largely limited to the petty intellectual teacher.

One of the local activities that attempted to spread awareness of the *Landsmaal* standard to broader sections of rural society was *Folkemøter* (People's Meetings) which were open and large public meetings meant to bring education and enlightenment to the broader population that could not attend a People's High School.[334] Near Vonheim for instance, the local farmer Per Bø organised People's Meetings in Lillehammer for seven years in a row, starting in 1872.[335] At these meetings, local People's High School teachers like Christopher Bruun, Frits Hansen, and Kristoffer Janson spoke to the crowd about national and democratic ideas like the *Landsmaal* standard and the two-culture narrative,[336] but they also brought along friends and associates from the capital like Johan Sverdrup to speak about political events.[337] The inclusion of political figures like Sverdrup meant that the meetings quickly turned political, and through these discussions broader political goals and the two-culture narrative became associated with each other.

While regular meetings were limited to the places close to a People's High School, there were more infrequent People's Meetings arranged by teachers like Kristoffer Janson who spent his time between semesters touring the country to talk about the *Landsmaal* cause to anyone

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[332] Hoel, *Norsk målreising: 2*, 51-52.
[333] O. J. Fjørtoft, "Nokre Or te Bondevenne og Målmenn. 1871," 86.
[334] Torjusson, *Den norske folkehøgskulen*, 155; "Folkemøde paa Lillehammer," in *Bondevenene : Jaabækrørsla 1865-1875*, ed. Dagfinn Slettan and Hans Try (Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget, 1979), 181-182.
[335] Arne Finborud, "Frå Søren Jaabæk til Johan Sverdrup," in *Bondevenene : Jaabækrørsla 1865-1875*, ed. Dagfinn Slettan and Hans Try (Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget, 1979), 85.
[336] Torjusson, *Den norske folkehøgskulen*, 110.
[337] "Folkemøde paa Lillehammer," 182.

who would listen. Between 1870 and 1877, he managed to visit nearly every city in Norway reaching as far as northern Norway. These meetings were often the first time many of those who listened had heard about the *Landsmaal* standard or the two-culture narrative at all, and the idea was further spread through local papers writing about Janson's visit.[338]

Through his public support of teachers and People's High Schools, Jaabæk had therefore by 1870 loosely united a petty intellectual national movement behind him. However, in the process of doing so, he had lost support from most farmers. Nevertheless, the Farmer Friends legacy would be the growing influence of petty intellectuals as teachers, organisers, and leaders of rural society. A decade later the petty intellectuals and farmers would become politically united in the oppositional national *Venstre* coalition, but before that can be discussed it is important to understand how the urban *Landsmaal* movement organised itself as its own movement in between these two political mass movements.

4.3 An organised *Landsmaal* movement: Det Norske Samlaget

It was with a backdrop of growing political tensions in parliament and the mobilisation of farmers throughout rural society that the urban *Landsmaal* advocates in 1868 founded their first official associations in Bergen and Christiana. In the capital, Berner and Hans Ross made a combined effort to unite the *Landsmaal* movement in one national organisation, *Det Norske Samlaget*, founded on 24 March 1868.[339] This society had been preceded by *Vestmannalaget* in Bergen, founded in the same year with 38 members.[340] However, *Det Norske Samlaget* differed from *Vestmannalaget* by aspiring to be a national organisation for the printing and publishing of *Landsmaal* literature rather than just a local *Landsmaal* organisation. Nonetheless, in practical terms, *Det Norske Samlaget* functioned as both a local organisation for the *Landsmaal* movement within the capital and a publisher for *Landsmaal* literature on a national level.

Berner was the chief architect behind the plan to advance the use and knowledge of the *Landsmaal* standard through financing and publishing books in it. Publishing had been a notable problem for those attempting to become farmer intellectuals since the *Landsmaal* movement had begun. *Landsmaal* books sold poorly, and even Aasen struggled to find a

[338] Skard, *Frå Dølen til Fedraheimen*, 31-35.
[339] Vesaas, *A.O. Vinje*, 396.
[340] Djupedal, "Ei framtid på Borg," 30.

publisher by the 1860s. However, there was evidence that it was possible to succeed. In 1867, Hans Ross had published *Lauvduskaer* a 48-page book of which he printed over 16,000 copies and sold them over the course of the next decade. Compared to Aasen's *Prøver af Landsmaalet* from 1853, which existed in only 500 copies, it was a massive step up.[341] These large number were made possible by Hans Ross being wealthy enough to pay for the printing out of pocket, although he had help from his fellow students Andreas Broch, Marius Nygaard, and Jan Johanssen. Berner thought it could be possible to replicate the success of Ross through an organisation devoted to publishing *Landsmaal* literature, but having known Vinje during his troubles, Berner knew well the challenges of this endeavour. He identified two bottlenecks that needed to be passed to successfully enable a thriving publishing environment for *Landsmaal* literature: available books in *Landsmaal* and the funds to publish them. To attain more books to publish, Berner encouraged his friends and fellow *Landsmaal* advocates to write more manuscripts in the language with the promise that he would publish them. In addition, he compiled articles, poetry, and stories from earlier publications of Aasen and Vinje into books. He also bought books from *Vestmannalaget*.[342]

For his effort, Berner received broad support in the *Landsmaal* circles of the capital. With his close friends in *Døleringen,* students interested in *Landsmaal*, and Aasen all participating in the initial founding of the organisation, the subscriber base counted 110 members who paid a 60-shilling yearly fee.[343] Nevertheless, ambition far surpassed capability. Money was a constant issue throughout the first decade, and this problem was compounded by the fact that those books that got published turned out to be largely unprofitable.[344] With membership stagnating shy of 1,000,[345] *Det Norske Samlaget* only managed to publish around 2-6 books every year throughout the 1870s, with 1876 being the worst year with only one book being published.[346]

In a similar manner to the Farmer Friends, the mid-1870s proved to be a period when *Det Norske Samlaget* lost momentum. However, in this case it was primarily due to ideological

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[341] Djupedal, "Ei framtid på Borg," 38, 40-41.
[342] Djupedal, "Ei framtid på Borg," 53-56.
[343] Olav Midttun, *Mål og menn: utgreidingar og livsskildringar* (Oslo: Samlaget, 1953), 159.
[344] Sigmund Skard, "Det Norske Samlaget," in *Det Norske samlaget 1868-1968* ed. Bjarte Birkeland (Oslo: Samlaget, 1968), 13.
[345] Olav Midttun, "1868-1918," in *Det Norske samlaget 1868-1968* ed. Bjarte Birkeland (Oslo: Samlaget, 1968), 70.
[346] Midttun, "1868-1918," 66.

infighting. Berner had initially attempted to unite all *Landsmaal* advocates behind the project, so there was initially a great tolerance of opinion within the leadership of *Det Norske Samlaget*.[347] But the structure of a printing and publishing society meant that a decision had to be made when it came to which written *Landsmaal* standard(s) should be tolerated in the books accepted for publication. As the publishing resources were so limited, this question created tensions between different factions within the small *Landsmaal* movement of the capital. The most radical circle centred around Olaus Fjørtoft wished for every dialect to be recognised as an acceptable written standard. Meanwhile, the more moderate and conservative faction centred around Berner and Ross wanted to maintain a singular Aasen standard as the only *Landsmaal* standard fit for publishing. Because Berner held significant influence, the result was a victory for the Aasen standard. More radical figures like Fjørtoft and Horst were pushed out of the leadership in 1872 and replaced by moderate figures like Elias Blix and Hans Ross.[348] This helped consolidate Aasen's standard, but it also pushed away many students and radicals sympathetic to the *Landsmaal* movement. With an even slower growth in subscribers after Fjørtoft and the radicals were expelled, *Det Norske Samlaget*'s output decreased further. The organisational leadership was also in limbo. There were no annual general meetings between 1872 and 1877.[349] For a while, it seemed like an organised *Landsmaal* movement would peter out.

However, in 1877, *Det Norske Samlaget* experienced a renaissance as Berner left the board of directors, turning the leadership over to Arne Garborg, a 26-year-old schoolteacher and university student who had become a notable public figure through publishing articles and books about religion, politics, and *Landsmaal*. Unlike Berner, Garborg proved to be a lot more radical and confrontational in his public advocacy for *Landsmaal* through books like *Den ny-norske Sprog- og Nationalitetsbevægelse,* which put the struggle to advance the *Landsmaal* standard into an even grander two-culture narrative that saw it as a struggle between nations instead of cultures.[350] At the same times, Garborg proved to be a lot more tolerant of opinion within the *Landsmaal* movement itself, as he utilised Aasen's standard in his own writings while supporting the inclusion of those that advocated for multiple written standards of

[347] Skard, "Det Norske Samlaget," 11.
[348] Midttun, *Mål og menn,* 161-163.
[349] Skard, *Frå Dølen til Fedraheimen*, 76.
[350] Dahlhaug, *Mål og meninger,* 52-53.

Landsmaal.[351] As a result of Garborg's leadership between 1877 and 1879, the *Landsmaal* movement became consolidated around *Det Norske Samlaget*, reaching 865 members in 1880,[352] and 1,400 members in 1885.[353] Andreas Hølaas took over the chairmanship in 1879, but Garborg remained on the board along with Hans Ross.[354] Outside of working together on the board of *Det Norske Samlaget*, Hølaas and Garborg also became colleagues after 1879 as they both worked within the parliament's bureaucracy.[355]

In October 1877, Garborg also launched a new weekly paper, *Fedraheimen*, which became the central newspaper for the *Landsmaal* movement.[356] But despite the growth of the *Landsmaal* movement, *Fedraheimen* turned out to be as unprofitable as *Dølen*.[357] Like Vinje, Garborg wanted the *Landsmaal* movement to be a movement for farmers, but simultaneously complained about how farmers were not giving him enough support.[358] These frustrations resulted in him leaving the management of the paper with Ivar Mortensson-Engund in 1882.[359]

Frustration with the difficulties of being a *Landsmaal* advocate are also visible in Garborg's writings from 1877 as he expressed considerably negative views about being a *Landsmaal* advocate in *Den ny-norske Sprog- og Nationalitetsbevægelse.* He warns all those who think of becoming *Maalmenn* of hard work and many difficulties. They would win little and loose much. They would become punished if they worked in the bureaucracy. They would live in poverty. They would be attacked by the press or ignored. They would have to work extensively with learning the different dialects and how to use the language. Instead of greatness and glory, they should expect many small niggles. The only two reasons Garborg would suggest becoming a *Maalmann* was if you really believed in the cause and if you were willing to sacrifice yourself for *folkeoppdragelsen* (the people's upbringing).[360] Despite the growth of the *Landsmaal* movement, the identity associated with it even by its most fervent advocates was emphasising an educational elitism. Garborg believed that this elite of great

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[351] Skard, *Frå Dølen til Fedraheimen*, 77.
[352] Dahlhaug, *Mål og meninger,* 118.
[353] Kjell Haugland, "En pressgruppe tek form," *Historisk tidsskrift* 53, no.2 (1974): 151.
[354] Midttun, "1868-1918," 71.
[355] Midttun, "1868-1918," 71
[356] Dahlhaug, *Mål og meninger,* 95.
[357] Haugland, "En pressgruppe tek form," 151.
[358] Midttun, *Mål og menn*, 54-5; Dahlhaug, *Mål og meninger,* 54.
[359] Skard, *Frå Dølen til Fedraheimen*, 77-8.
[360] Garborg, *Den ny-norske Sprog- og Nationalitetsbevægelse*, 231-239.

educated men like him deserved respect and recognition as he believed that they were necessary for leading the way for the uneducated.[361]

Garborg's emphasis on hardships, martyrdom, and elitism is perhaps understandable when one compares the growth of the *Landsmaal* movement to other contemporary organisations. Despite having created a distinctive profile and interest group for itself, neither *Det Norske Samlaget* nor *Fedraheimen* seems particularly impressive when compared to its contemporaries. *Lutherstiftelsen* (the Luther Foundation) for instance, an association that sought to promote the Lutheran state church in Norway, had begun in the same year as *Det Norske Samlaget*, but it had by 1876 created 220 local organisations, employed 80 wandering bible colporteurs (*bibelbud*), created their own profitable bookstore in capital, and published over 2 million copies of both large and small texts.[362] This was not the only large association. *Det Norske Totalafholdselskap* had by 1880 over 8,000 members.[363] Compared with other significant political papers, *Fedraheimen's* 1,500 subscribers was also a relatively small number, compared with the 10,408 subscribers of *Verdens Gang* or the 7,121 of *Vestlandsposten*.[364]

In other words, despite its growth, the *Landsmaal* movement remained a relatively niche phenomenon, with a membership that remained largely restricted to university graduates, schoolteachers, and other petty intellectual figures.[365] These groups had increased their influence over the rest of the population considerably, but this did not yet translate to acceptance of the two-culture narrative or adoption of the *Landsmaal* standard. What would instead ensure the spread of the *Landsmaal* movement would be its political connections that led to state funding. Hagbard Berner and Elias Blix were mostly responsible for securing this support as they both became central figures within the *Venstre* movement's political leadership.[366] This was especially the case for Berner, as after he left the leadership of *Det Norske Samlaget*, he assumed a greater role in the growing *Venstre* political movement as

[361] Morten Haug Frøyen, *Arne Garborgs kulturnasjonalisme : to studiar* (Oslo: Noregs Forskningsråd, 1996), 79-81.
[362] Åge Løsnesløkken, *På ditt ord : Indremisjonsselskapets historie 1868-1993* (Oslo: Luther, 1993), 43, 46, 48.
[363] Mjeldheim, *Folkerørsla som vart parti*, 378.
[364] Mjeldheim, *Folkerørsla som vart parti*, 43.
[365] Teachers made up the largest number of members of *Det Norske Samlaget* in the 1870s and 1880s. Hoel, *Norsk målreising: 2*, 51.
[366] Midttun, «1868-1918,» 74.

editor of *Dagbladet*, and he became a parliamentary representative for Akershus.[367] Once within parliament, Berner got a seat on the financial committee and began, with other figures on the radical side of parliament, coordinating with the current leadership of *Det Norske Samlaget* to secure funding for the organisation. In 1881, this was only 2,500 kr. for the printing of Steinar Schjøtt's *Norigs Soga*, but this sum was estimated to have been enough to print 5,000 copies.[368] This was significant because without the grant from parliament *Det Norske Samlaget* only had an income of 2,839 kr. in 1881.[369] Through this one grant, *Det Norske Samlaget* had therefore almost doubled its income. These grants were followed up in 1884 with an additional 500 kr. and 6,000 kr. in 1885.[370] Even more would follow, as between 1885 and 1888 the state spent over 30.000 kr. on courses in *Landsmaal* for teachers through People's High Schools which ensured that somewhere between 800 to 900 teachers received *Landsmaal* education.[371] By targeting rural teachers through state funding, the *Landsmaal* advocates of the capital were finally beginning to establish a strong association between the *Landsmaal* standard and the rural petty intellectuals that organised and led farmers.

What made these large grants after 1885 possible was the state officially recognising the *Landsmaal* standard as equal to the official Norwegian written standard in 1885. This motion passed through parliament with 78 votes for and 31 against. This was a vote that followed the party lines that had been established between *Høyre* and *Venstre* by 1885.[372] This decision was just a symbolic recognition of the *Landsmaal* standard, but this was an important step towards further implementation of the *Landsmaal* standard into state institutions. This begs the final question of how the *Landsmaal* movement secured support within the *Venstre* movement when it itself was not a popular phenomenon?

4.4 How the Farmer and Petty intellectual identity came together through *Venstre*

To understand how the *Venstre* movement came to be so closely associated to the *Landsmaal* movement that its parliamentarians helped recognise the *Landsmaal* standard, it is first

[367] Djupedal, "Ei framtid på borg," 51.
[368] Johs Aanderaa, "Kulturpolitiske perspektiv," in *Det Norske samlaget 1868-1968* ed. Bjarte Birkeland (Oslo: Samlaget, 1968), 281.
[369] Aanderaa, "Kulturpolitiske perspektiv," 278.
[370] Midttun, *Mål og menn*, 163.
[371] Kjell Haugland, *Striden om skulespråket : frå 1860-åra til 1902* (Oslo: Samlaget, 1985), 111-112.
[372] Haugland, "En pressgruppe tek form," 171.

necessary to define and understand what the *Venstre* movement was. *Venstre* as a term was initially used in the 1860s to denote the circle of radical intellectuals and liberals that centred around Johan Sverdrup in parliament.[373] During the 1870s as the coalition around Sverdrup expanded beyond parliament through new political allies and supporters, *Venstre* as a term began to encompass a broader, less narrowly defined political identity. From 1879 onwards, the *Venstre* opposition became a mass political movement organised in *Venstreforeninger* (leftist societies) which had about 50,000 members by 1885.[374] Alongside its own associations, the *Venstre* movement would be supported by other voluntary organisations like *skytterlag* (shooting societies), *Samtalgelag* (conversational societies), and the aforementioned People's High Schools. In 1884, *Venstre* reorganised into a political party that represented a parliamentary opposition to *Høyre*, a conservative party.[375]

The continuous element in *Venstre* throughout its rapid growth was its central leader, Johan Sverdrup (1816-1892). Sverdrup was like many other influential petty intellectual figures born into a wealthy civil servant family. His father was a headmaster and Sverdrup followed a traditionally civil servant career trajectory in his youth by receiving a typical civil servant education at a Latin grammar school, then a law degree at the university, and subsequently a job as a lawyer in Larvik between 1846 to 1848. A career change for Sverdrup came with the revolutions of 1848, as his participation in a series of civil societies created in Larvik during the tumultuous years between 1848 and 1850 propelled him to a position of a local political leader, mostly with the support of the city's craftsmen and Workers' Association. Sverdrup developed this leadership in local politics into a professional role. He became a career politician who was repeatedly elected to parliament from 1850 until he became prime minister in 1884.[376] Dedicating his life to politics without any other source of income meant that Sverdrup depended on contributions and support from his supporters, which made for precarious existence.[377] However, it also made him the perfect parliamentary leader as all his influence and income was tied to his position as a political leader within parliament which made him willing to try again and again to achieve increase his political influence.[378]

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[373] Mjeldheim, *Folkerørsla som vart parti*, 30.
[374] Mjeldheim, *Folkerørsla som vart parti*, 101.
[375] Seip, *Utsikt over Norges historie: 2*, 77, 109.
[376] These biographical details are taken from Halvdahn Koht, *Johan Sverdrup : 1 : 1816-1869* (Kristania: Aschehoug, 1918), 14, 70, 75-81. 82-89, 90, 93, 114, 210-214.
[377] Koht, *Johan Sverdrup. 1*, 206-208.
[378] Seip, *Utsikt over Norges historie: 2*, 143.

Several attempts would be necessary before Sverdrup became a prominent political figure. *Venstre* in the 1870s was Sverdrup's fourth attempt at an oppositional coalition. Sverdrup had attempted to form smaller, more elite coalitions with Ueland and the farmers between 1851 to 1860 and then with a group of younger urban intellectuals in the early 1860s, but he had been largely unsuccessful as an oppositional leader because his partners had proven to unreliable or independent. However, when he cooperated with Jaabæk between 1868 to 1873, he had passed some key reforms such as yearly parliaments and a motion of no confidence against the minister of the Navy, Wolfgang von Haffner, which pressured him to resign from the government in 1870.[379] However, the partnership with Jaabæk declined as the two could not seem to trust each other for long. Instead, Sverdrup would build up a new powerbase of farmers and petty intellectuals exclusively loyal to him in the 1870s. It was through support from both the farmers and the petty intellectuals that Sverdrup would succeed as a political leader, and it was through him that the *Landsmaal* movement and the Farmers would become associated with each other.

The most important common denominator between the *Landsmaal* ideology and Sverdrup's political platform was the two-culture narrative that Sverdrup began to associate himself with during the 1870s. Johan Sverdrup had helped Sars, the old friend of Berner and Vinje, to get an extraordinary professorship at the university through a parliamentary grant in 1873.[380] Sars had since 1867 written his historical accounts around a historical two-culture narrative, and would pay Sverdrup back in kind for his support by writing Sverdrup into the two-culture narrative as the leader that would lead the farmers to national triumph.[381] That individuals like Sars came to follow Sverdrup alongside so many other petty intellectuals figures can be explained by their shared belief in education as a source of authority. Sverdrup had imagined a political leadership founded on an educated middle-class coalition already in the 1860s,[382] and this aligned well with the intellectual elitism common among the members of *Døleringen* that both Sars and Berner was a part of in the 1860s.[383]

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[379] Seip, *Utsikt over Norges historie: 2,* 147-151.
[380] Fulsås, *Historie og nasjon*, 120-121, 123.
[381] Fulsås, *Historie og nasjon*, 96-98, 133; Seip, *Utsikt over Norges historie: 2,* 136-137, 148.
[382] Seip, *Utsikt over Norges historie: 2,* 115-116.
[383] Sars saw education as the foundation for ideal national leaders as he argued that those who were educated had a right to lead the people. Fulsås, *Historie og nasjon,* 208-210.

This similar view on education is what likely drew Sverdrup to *Døleringen* in the 1860s. In 1868, he had written to Vinje, asking him to make sure that the *Landsmaal* movement backed him and his politics as much as they could.[384] This cooperation did not result in much, so Sverdrup instead built a lasting partnership with Berner by encouraging him to make his own independent paper, *Dagbladet*, which Sverdrup used as his political paper from 1868 onwards.[385] It is therefore likely that it was Berner who brought Sverdrup to occasional meetings in *Det Norske Samlaget* in the early 1870s.[386] This must have convinced Sverdrup of the usefulness of the two-culture narrative because in 1874, he publicly expressed the central tenets of the two-culture narrative in a speech:

> "Det sprog vi taler og skriver, er dog dansk. Det er ikke norsk. Endnu den Dag i Dag er det væsentlig dansk, dansk i sin Oprindelse, dansk i sit Væsen, dansk i sine Former. Det tales og skrives kun af et forholdsvis lidet Antal af Nationen; Nationens store Masse taler ikke dansk som sit Fødesprog, og når de benytter det, er det som et fremmed Sprog de har lært." [387]
>
> [The language we today speak and write is Danish. It is not Norwegian. Still to this day is it considerably Danish, Danish in its origin, Danish in its being, Danish in its forms. It is spoken and written by just a relatively small section of the nation: the nations great masses do not speak Danish as their birth language, and when they utilise it, it is like a foreign language that they have learned.][388]

Sverdrup's cooperation with *Landsmaal* advocates must have extended beyond just Berner, as four years later when he presented a motion to instruct public schools to educate the children in their own dialects, Garborg had been the one who had formulated the proposal on Sverdrup's behalf.[389] In return for his support of the *Landsmaal* movement, Sverdrup was loyally supported by the urban leadership of the *Landsmaal* movement. Between 1880 and 1884, *Fedraheimen* was an openly *Venstre* oriented paper, and when *Det Norske Samlaget* got its first government grants in 1881, Sverdrup was declared an honorary member.[390]

Landsmaal advocates also became involved in support of *Venstre*. In parliament, Ole Anton Qvam who had during his studies read *Landsmaal* literature and participated in a *Maallag* alongside Aasen and Ross, delivered the first proposal to implement *Landsmaal* in

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[384] Nerbøvik, *Bondevener og andre uvener*, 105.
[385] Koht, *Johan Sverdrup. 1*,, 430-431.
[386] Midttun, *Mål og menn*, 159.
[387] Midttun, *Mål og menn*, 62.
[388] Translated by author.
[389] Midttun, "1868-1918," 70.
[390] Dalhaug, *Mål og meninger*, 57-75; Aanderaa "Kulturpolitiske perspektiver," 279.

schools as a subject of education within parliament.[391] Outside of parliament, *Landsmaal* advocates also became associated with *Venstre* through voluntary organisations, especially the shooting societies, where Berner, Garborg, and Ola Five were active at both a local and national level.[392] Through these leaders' personal ties, the *Landsmaal* movements become an important national symbol for *Venstre*. For instance, in early 1881 when Five founded *Indtrøndelagen og Namdalens folkevæbningssamlag* (Indtrøndelagen and Namdalens home defence league), Aasen was the one who was commissioned to come up with a slogan. This slogan was then embroidered onto their banner by Fredrikke Marie Qvam, the wife of Ole Anton Qvam.[393] Through these personal relations at the highest level, the *Venstre* movement symbolically tied these seemingly separate movements together in a broad, but vague political alliance that eventually led to political support for the *Landsmaal* movement within parliament.

These personal connections that emerged through the social and intellectual life of the capital helps explains the link between the petty intellectuals involved with the *Landsmaal* movement and the political elite of *Venstre*, but it does not explain why the enfranchised rural population who made up 85% of all *Venstre* voters supported Sverdrup and his nationalist platform.[394]

One important reason that Sverdrup's national rhetoric resonated better with rural voters than previously was that rural politics were undergoing considerable change by the 1870s, as more petty intellectuals became parliamentary representatives. Most of these were teachers at rural public schools and People's High Schools, and as many of them had taken a leading role in politics on a local level during the organisation of the Farmer Friends, the next logical step was to enter parliamentary politics. In 1876, 22 percent of the 52 farmer representatives had completed an education at a rural teacher school. These teachers won further ground in 1879 and 1882, so by 1882 they made up 33 percent of farmer representatives in 1882. [395] Nevertheless, these petty intellectuals were by themselves not enough to make up

[391] Midttun, *Mål og menn*, 62; Djupedal, "Ei framtid på borg," 25-27.
[392] Mjeldheim, *Folkerørsla som vart parti*, 74; Ane-Charlotte Five Aarset, *Skyttergeneralen Ola Five: den ukjente historien om geriljalederen med stort ansvar for Norges frihet i 1905* (Høvik: Kolofon, 2005), 22, 27, 35.
[393] Hoel, *Norsk målreising: 2*, 168.
[394] Mjeldheim, *Folkerørsla som vart parti*, 58-59.
[395] Seip, *Utsikt over Norges historie: 2*, 116; Danielsen, *Det Norske Storting gjennom 150 år. B.* 2, 83.

a majority within parliament, and they still relied on farmers as they made up 80% of *Venstre*'s rural voters.[396]

That Sverdrup succeeded in mobilising these farmers behind him as well was due to a series of circumstances that aligned in the late 1870s. The first was that the economic fortunes changed again around 1875 with a long period of slow growth that followed a shift in the global economy.[397] This led to social discontent and unrest among the rural population that attracted voters to Sverdrup as he promised to realise popular farmer issues such as austerity and decentralisation.[398] The second reason was that the government and their conservative allies hunkered down after 1872 and refused to compromise with the parliamentary opposition, hoping to outlast them. This prevented factions that were drawn towards the *Venstre* coalition from being drawn away by the opposition.[399] The third was due to the petty intellectual core of *Venstre* being capable of organising ahead of elections through the large number of organisations that now existed in rural communities. These were predominantly led by the growing number of petty intellectuals that outnumbered the civil servants by at least 4 to 1 in 1875.[400] These factors helped contribute to oppositional representatives winning seats in parliament in both the elections of 1876 and 1879, but these were not clearly united behind Sverdrup before 1880.

The instigating issue that mobilised the majority of parliament clearly behind Sverdrup was a political issue, namely *Statsrådsaken* (The minister case). This issue was about whether or not government ministers should have the right to attend parliament. This question had been suggested for the first time in the 1820s and had been a relatively minor issue associated with the conservative government through the 1850s and 1860s. However, in the wake of the parliamentary rejection of the union reform bill, Sverdrup adopted the proposal as his own policy and the government responded with bluntly rejecting it in 1872. This let the issue develop into a symbolic struggle between the government and parliament. The parliament passed the motion again in 1874 and 1877, but each time it was vetoed by the king. This vetoing had been within political acceptable precedent, as it was agreed by both opposition and government that the king had the constitutional right to delay any parliamentary bill three times,

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[396] Mjeldheim, *Folkerørsla som vart parti*, 58-59.
[397] Mjeldheim, *Folkerørsla som vart parti*, 48-9.
[398] Seip, *Utsikt over Norges historie: 2*, 179-181, 197-199.
[399] Seip, *Utsikt over Norges historie: 2*, 176-177.
[400] Seip, *Utsikt over Norges historie: 2*, 115.

but when the bill was passed for its fourth time in 1880, it was passed with a clear mandate of 93 out of 114 representatives supporting the motion. Many moderate and conservative representatives wanted to send a clear message to the government that they needed to respect the rights of the parliament. But the government encouraged the king to utilise his veto again, which he subsequently did. This unprecedented decision put the king and government on the path of a direct confrontation with parliament over who controlled the constitution. Sverdrup seized upon this opportunity to mobilise the parliament behind him by spearheading a motion to declare the bill constitutional law regardless of the king's veto. This motion which has later become known as "9. juni vedtaket" (June 9th decision) passed with 74 representatives voting for the motion, and 40 against. This majority was not as a large as the previous bill, as some moderates wished to avoid a confrontation, but Sverdrup attained a significant majority with every farmer representative within parliament supporting Sverdrup's motion to prosecute the government.[401]

Leiv Mjeldheim argues convincingly that this incident turned *Venstre* into a successful mass movement. One of the points he brings up was that the involvement of the constitution created a legal conflict that made compromise difficult. As the issue concerned the question of whether or not the veto and the following parliamentary sanction was legal, one of the two factions had to be wrong, and in voting on it through the June 9th decision in parliament, everyone had declared a position. Until the issue was resolved there was no room for a neutral centre anymore.[402] Out of fear of prosecution, parliamentary delegates were considerably more willing to give Sverdrup and the other central leaders a lot more leeway and support than he probably would have gotten otherwise. For mobilising voters, an aspect that I believe was most important after 1880 was that the fact that the government and king challenged the status quo by threatening to undermine the established rights and principles of parliament through redefining the king's veto powers. This made the issue about parliament defending its privileges and prerogatives something which tapped into the personal interest of farmers, as they knew the importance of their influence over the parliament and constitution for guaranteeing their social interests.

[401] Mjeldheim, *Folkerørsla som vart parti*, 35-6.
[402] Mjeldheim, *Folkerørsla som vart parti*, 36.

In other words, mass mobilisation occurred because of a constitutional issue, not because of the *Landsmaal* movement or the two-culture narrative that they elite section of the *Venstre* movement advocated for. This is further indicated by the fact that many voters still held an aversion to the political use of national symbols. This can be seen clearly in the political fallout of *flaggsaken* (flag issue) from 1879. This incident started as a proposal in parliament to remove the union symbol from the official Norwegian flag. Berner had convinced Sverdrup to support the proposal in parliament. However, when presented to the people at a political rally, it backfired horribly as the crowd reacted with violent protests and from across the country petitions came in against the motion.[403] Trying to whip up the people with nationalism before 1880 seems to have been largely unpopular. But after the veto issue, voters were willing to go far. The following election of 1882 was openly about whether or not *Venstre* would get a large enough majority to impeach the government for advising the king to utilise his veto in parliament.[404] This was given to them, as in the election of 1882 there was a significant increase in voters from 42,500 in 1879 to 72,100 in 1882 that gave *Venstre* 83 out of 114 seats.[405] This allowed Sverdrup to establish complete control over parliament.

That the question of parliamentary rights attained such broad support from multiple social groups was also due to its vagueness. As the constitution stood at the centre of Norwegian politics it could be connected to nearly everything within society, so when it was threatened, everything could be at stake. This provided an opening for the two-culture narrative to be connected to the conflict. Notable public speakers for *Venstre* like Berner, Sars, Sverdrup, and Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson (1832-1910) all coated the central goal of protecting the constitution in broader and more ambiguous rhetoric that melded popular sovereignty, farmers rights, and the two-culture narrative together.[406] These nationalistic mass meetings also helped build up cult of personalities that replaced the need for actual political results in the short term. Sverdrup in particular became a mythical figure that embodied the vague political goals of the entire nation in what Jens Arup Seip describes as a "førerkultus" (cult of the leader).[407] This cult helped compensate for the lack of a long-term political program, as voters were instead asked to put their faith in the leader. This was a consistent feature of the *Venstre* movement

[403] Seip, *Utsikt over Norges historie: 2*, 196.
[404] Mjeldheim, *Folkerørsla som vart parti*, 19.
[405] Mjeldheim, *Folkerørsla som vart parti*, 306.
[406] Mjeldheim, *Folkerørsla som vart parti*, 40; Fulsås, *Historie og nasjon*, 202; Seip, *Utsikt over Norges historie: 2*, 152.
[407] Seip, *Utsikt over Norges historie: 2*, 145.

throughout the entire period and it only grew in importance towards the end. Before the election of 1876, *Verdens Gang*, the largest *Venstre* paper, wrote that "Sverdrup er det liberale Partis anerkjendte Fører, nu vel, saa følg ham". (Sverdrup is the liberals party recognised leader, so follow him). In 1885, *Venstre*'s official election slogan was "Tillid til Johan Sverdrup!" (Trust in Johan Sverdrup).[408]

This political platform built on fear and vagueness managed to maintain the unity of *Venstre* in parliament until the summer of 1885. Between 1880 to 1884, there were legitimate fears that government and king would attempt a coup to overturn their defeat in the election of 1882 and to prevent an impeachment of the government.[409] But after the government resigned and the king relented, Sverdrup became prime minister in 1884 and so *Venstre* assumed control over the government and the threat to the parliamentarians faded. Between 1884 to 1885, it would instead be Sverdrup's cult of personality that maintained the unity of the movement as he utilised his important status by repeatedly threatening to resign if he did not get support from the rest of the party on key issues.[410] For a year this worked, *Venstre* parliamentarians stretched themselves far to accommodate Sverdrup. But by the summer of 1885 the party was on its way towards disintegration.[411] Within the *Venstre* coalition, there was three large factions that could agree on much: farmers wanting a cheap state, radical petty intellectuals wanting more extensive reforms, and conservative Christians who wanted moral government.[412] These factions could not be reconciled for long, and over the next three years, the party would gradually fracture before being split in two in 1888: "Det Rene *Venstre*" and "Moderat *Venstre*."[413] With *Venstre* breaking up, a conservative *Høyre* government returned in 1889.

But despite the fact that *Venstre* as a coalition and movement was weakened by internal disagreements after 1885, the petty intellectual class, the *Landsmaal* movement, and the two-culture narrative had come to stay in Norwegian politics. The two-culture narrative and its most symbolic issue in the form of the *Landsmaal* standard had not yet managed to engage the people, as they had other more pressing social concerns to worry about. But through making up a large degree of *Venstre*'s leadership and a sharing the two-culture narrative as an ideology, the

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[408] Johansen, *Komme til ordet*, 730-733.
[409] Mjeldheim, *Folkerørsla som vart parti*, 142.
[410] Mjeldheim, *Folkerørsla som vart parti*, 141.
[411] Mjeldheim, *Folkerørsla som vart parti*, 149-163.
[412] Mjeldheim, *Folkerørsla som vart parti*, 143.
[413] Dørum, *Frå undersått til medborgar*, 182-183.

Landsmaal standard had become an integral part of the ideological identity that was attached to the radical section of *Venstre*. The symbolic recognition of the *Landsmaal* standard split the national language into two written standards and recognised the claims of Norway being a divided nation. This division was further manifested into social reality as the petty intellectual class grew in size and wealth through the greater funding that began to flow to the People's High Schools, to *Landsmaal* organisations, and to public school teachers that advocated for this national narrative. This set the stage for the rapid growth of a petty intellectual led *Landsmaal* movement in the 1890s.

Conclusion

Over the course of forty years, the petty intellectual class that formed in the 1840s had fundamentally changed the state to accommodate them as a second intellectual elite. Correspondingly, it created a second national culture that split the Norwegian nation into two national cultures. This secondary national culture had been created by a group of petty intellectuals who themselves had come about as a consequence of the creation of the Norwegian nation-state in 1814, an event that had led to the disintegration of the pre-modern Norwegian estate identities and the expansion of education. Education had created new opportunities for those who fell outside of the established system, but for most of the nineteenth century their economic position and social status were often precarious. The first generation of petty intellectuals were social outcasts, men of relative poverty, and of little prestige apart from their education. Through stubbornness and chance, a few petty intellectuals managed to climb their way up the Norwegian social ladder to become respected enough to participate in the discourse over Norwegian national identity and education with civil servants. However, their existence remained precarious, and their authority contested. In the capital, they met and often became dependent on an entrenched elitist class of civil servants whose national ideal as well as state positions they were shut out from. When petty intellectuals like Vig, Knudsen, and Vinje went too far in their attempts at criticising the civil servants, they were punished through loss of income or opportunity.

That civil servants resorted to social punishment to resolve ideological conflicts meant that intellectual compromise eventually became impossible, and so the attempts at reforming the Norwegian nationality identity towards a broader, idealised interpretations of the people's culture largely failed. Instead, the national culture became split into two with Ivar Aasen's

Landsmaal standard as the opposition's main cultural symbol. The idealisation of the farmer identity that came with this became gradually consolidated around students, teachers, and other petty intellectual figures in the capital so that by the end of the 1860s a clear two-culture narrative had been created. This two-culture narrative implied a clear political opposition to the civil servant government, the union, and Danish culture. While it was an identity that claimed to be rooted in the world of farmers, the petty intellectual national vision had not attracted the poor, uneducated, and rural. Instead, it captured the imagination of rich, educated sons of the urban classes who acquired the Norwegian farmer identity through institutions like the student society and new private schools. While attempts were made to bridge the gap between national farmer identity and rural farming communities, differences in social identity and political interest rendered *Landsmaal* and, by extension, the two-culture narrative almost exclusively an intellectual elite phenomenon. However, petty intellectuals made inroads into the new political leadership that emerged in opposition to the civil servant government during the 1860s and 1870s. Through establishing these political ties and becoming part of the political elite of the capital, petty intellectuals linked *Landsmaal* to a popular political movement, *Venstre*, which helped it becoming recognised by parliament in 1885.

What is most striking about looking at the development of the two-culture narrative and the petty intellectuals is the contrast between the importance that both civil servants and petty intellectuals placed on national symbols like language, history, and culture and its lack of appeal among the wider population throughout the nineteenth century. Political alliances between the two sides were forged, but they were often temporary and remained tenuous. Farmers followed intellectuals' lead when they experienced a social crisis and saw the possibility for material gain through organisation, as seen with the Workers' Associations or the Farmers' Friends. However, they expected results and when these did not come quickly support faltered, as could be seen in the case of the Farmer Friends and *Venstre*. Even in *Venstre*, the Farmer relation to nationalism remained tenuous at best as can be seen with *flagsaken* which indicates that "the people's" interest in symbolic nationalism remained low. Instead of nationalism, there was a clear tendency for movements being driven by social interest and held together by strong cults of personalities, as illustrated by the leadership of Thrane, Jaaabæk, and Sverdrup. This reliance on a strong leader proved equally precarious as the movements faltered once confidence in this leader was broken.

The tenuous relationship between petty intellectuals and the people that they claimed they spoke on behalf of does not only raise questions about a historiography of nationalism that has overlooked the gaps in stories of national unity and an allegedly shared political culture. More importantly, as this thesis has shown, it highlights the influence that petty intellectual figures had on the making of the Norwegian nation and society during the nineteenth century. Rather than the nation finding its essence in the farmer figure, this study has identified how a failed author like Vig or a thrifty journalist like Berner could shape the nation in their image to become one of the main protagonists in the modernisation of Norway around the mid-nineteenth century.

Where to go from here? Certainly, there are many questions surrounding the petty intellectuals that remain unanswered. How strongly and how far this idealisation of education that lay at the centre of the petty intellectual identity actually reached is a question that requires a lot more research, both within and outside of the narrow selection of petty intellectuals that have been covered in this thesis. As mentioned in the first chapter, there was a large degree of variation between the educational institutions that produced petty intellectuals. Did rural schoolteachers feel themselves different from the bourgeois teacher? Did they have different interests in what causes they supported or organised behind? These questions pertain the degree of coherence within what this thesis has described as a class of petty intellectuals. Another question coming out of this thesis pertains the links as well as differences and similarities between *Landsmaal* and other social movements. *Landsmaal* was not the only organised movement that experienced rapid growth in the 1880s. Religious and temperance movements outpaced them, and it is likely that many petty intellectuals' figures were central in these organisations as well, as seen with Mons Bjørlo. Finally, the thesis raises the question for how much longer after 1885 it is useful to talk about a petty intellectual class? As education continued to spread to larger sections of the population, and the influence of the civil servants whom the petty intellectuals were contrasted against waned, the strata of intellectuals between "the people" and the civil servants probably becomes more difficult to distinguish. As this thesis has shown for nineteenth century Norway, identities and social interests were rapidly changing as individuals responded to an unpredictable future. As historians, we must be ready to accept that the identities and values we take for granted today were much less clear two centuries ago.

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