NORWEGIANS IN AMERICA

AND PERCEPTIONS OF BELONGING

C. 1840–1870

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MASTER'S THESIS
History

DEPARTMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGY, CONSERVATION AND HISTORY
UNIVERSITY OF OSLO

Spring 2015

Title: Norwegians in America and
Perceptions of Belonging, c. 1840–1870

Thesis submitted for master' degree in
history, Department of Archaeology,
Conservation and History, University of Oslo

Print: Reprosentralen, Universitetet i Oslo

Acknowledgments

In letter after letter, emigrants writing home to Norway explained that in America, one "cannot expect any harvest from the land until one year has passed, and not enough until the end of the second year." Yet one need not even leave Blindern in order to appreciate the meaning of these words.

Unlike so many pioneers, immigrants and scholars, I have not made the trip across the Atlantic. The work of Theodore C. Blegen, Orm Øverland, and Steinar Kjærheim and many, many others to gather, transcribe and translate such letters have made it possible for me to rummage some eight hundred America letters, both in Oslo and in London. Moreover, Google Books, Bokhylla.no, Hathi Trust, and the Internet Archive are incredible tools, and so is the National Library of Norway's website "the Promise of America": together they give access to most of the main sources for the history of Norwegian migration to America. Offline, the Norwegian-American collection of the National Library is an entire library of itself. But while I appreciate that microfilmed versions of all the major Norwegian American newspapers have been procured by the National Library, I nonetheless blame twenty volumes of poorly photographed antebellum weeklies, all set in black-letter typeface, for my eventual need of having to procure glasses.

There are many persons who took an interest in my project, and gave of their time. Dr Joanna Cohen and Dr Daniel Peart at Queen Mary, University of London supervised the undergraduate dissertation which is the foundation of this thesis. Dina Tolfsby, former research librarian at the National Library of Norway, advised me on sources at various stages of my research. Editor Bruce Baker and two anonymous reviewers of *American Nineteenth Century History* provided essential criticism, helping me hone my initial argument. Håvard Brede Aven, Erik Tobias Taube, Christine Mathiesen, and Henrik Melsom read parts of or the complete manuscript and provided valuable feedback, as well as comforting words. My greatest debt, however, is to my thesis advisor, Professor Odd Arvid Storsveen, whose sparkling conversation is as memorable as it is instructive, and whose wealth of knowledge extends far beyond the fields of history.

During the first year I was researching this topic, Professor of Modern French History Julian Jackson took a few of his students to Paris for a couple of days, and chance had it that there was an extra spot. What a trip. And, on a late autumn afternoon last year, Sindre Holbek finally managed to drag me away from my desk and onto the football field, with the consequence that I,

despite a four-year long career as junior footballer, finally scored my first goal. My fellow students at the reading rooms of IAKH, my "partners in crime" on the editorial boards of *Fortid* and *Historikeren*, and the historians who in various ways contribute to make history such an interesting pursuit have all ensured that my studies have been a continous source of enjoyment. In the meantime, my family has kindly tolerated my absence – and the soporific monologues accompanying my occasional presence. For all these peoples' friendliness, lenience, and moral support, I am grateful. And few are so lucky to have their own Willy Wonka in their family. Chocolate makes everything bearable, and I have enjoyed unlimited access.

As two students of belonging cited in this dissertation observe, having a few close friends "may make a world of difference to the person's health and happiness." And indeed. Thanks to Leo for teaching me how to write letters of my own, and not simply letting me spend my time reading the mail of others long gone. Thanks to Peter for using beer as an excuse to engage in conversations about art, philosophy, and *The Big Lebowski* – variations on a theme. Thanks to Miriam for sharing cups of tea, coffee, hot chocolate, and what the world in general has to offer, and for all those moments when, failing to get on with my work, I instead enjoyed the best company there is. And of course, thanks most of all to Maja, my very own Norwegian American, for tolerating all those random facts of superannuated character at one o'clock in the morning.

CONTENTS

A note on abbreviations and translations

FATN 1 – *Fra Amerika til Norge*. Edited by Orm Øverland and Steinar Kjærheim. Vol. 1, *Norske utvandrerbrev 1838–1857*. Oslo: Solum, 1992.

FATN 2 – *Fra Amerika til Norge*. Edited by Orm Øverland and Steinar Kjærheim. Vol. 2, *Norske utvandrerbrev 1858–1868 (med et tillegg av brev 1836–1857)*. Oslo: Solum, 1992.

FATN (trans.) – *From America to Norway: Norwegian-American Immigrant Letters, 1838–1914*. Edited and translated by Orm Øverland. Vol. 1, *1838–1870*. Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 2012.

LTC – Theodore C. Blegen, ed. *Land of Their Choice: The Immigrants Write Home*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1955.

NAHA – Norwegian American Historical Association

NAS – *Norwegian-American Studies*

NASR – *Norwegian-American Studies and Records*

SR – *Studies and Records*

The sources, many of which are included in the appendix, have been transcribed verbatim, complete with typographical mistakes. I have not inserted [sic] or the like. All citations from newspapers and the letters of FATN 1 and 2 have been translated by me, unless otherwise indicated. Where other sources have been translated, it is indicated. Where possible, I have cited from the translated versions of letters and other sources, but where I have found the translation wanting, or alternatively if no translated version was available, I have included the original text in the footnotes. For quotations longer than four lines, or otherwise considered relevant for the reader, however, see the appendix, as indicated.

Illustrations

INTRODUCTION

Norwegian emigrants quickly established their own newspapers in America. Of these, it was *Emigranten* [the Emigrant] which arose to a hegemonic position in the Norwegian Midwestern community during the 1850s. Already in its fourth issue *Emigranten* began printing a translated history of the United States. The Norsemen have always treasured their own history, and were still doing so after having emigrated to America, the editor remarked introductorily. While celebrating their national history was to be encouraged, he reminded his countrymen that "we should not forget that America, for now and for the future, is even more ours and our children's fatherland […] Therefore it must be our duty, as it is to our own advantage, that we embrace this country with the greatest amount of love and involvement."[1]

The topic of investigation

From the start, Norwegian immigrants readily admitted to having "adopted" a "new fatherland" when they wrote letters home to Norway. It is also well established that Norwegian immigrants, like all other immigrant groups of the nineteenth century, have adapted and found themselves at home in America.[2] And as Orm Øverland has shown, in the late nineteenth century all immigrant groups would eventually engage in a process of mythmaking to demonstrate for Anglo-Americans that they too had a place in American history and American society – that they belonged in America.[3]

But the creation of homemaking myths did not necessarily reflect how immigrants perceived themselves to belong in America. While these myths were important in the ideological battle for acceptance in American society during the latter decades of the nineteenth century, immigrants did not need such narratives in order to imagine that they were at home in America. Homemaking myths tended to stress affinity and similarity with Anglo-American culture, ideas, and history, or they claimed precedence for the values, ideas and traits Anglo-Americans prided themselves on. While Norwegians would strive to underscore their similiarities with Anglo-Americans in the late nineteenth century, they would in the first decades of migration focus on

[1] *Emigranten*, February 20, 1852. See appendix 1.
[2] Odd S. Lovoll, *The Promise Fulfilled: A Portrait of Norwegian Americans Today* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998).
[3] Orm Øverland, *Immigrant Minds, American Identities: Making the United States Home, 1870–1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), see also a condensed version, Orm Øverland, "Hjemlandsmyter. Om skaping av gamle røtter i et nytt land," in *Migrasjon og tilpasning. Ingrid Semmingsen. Et minneseminar*, ed. Odd S. Lovoll (Oslo: Historisk institutt, 1998), pp. 142–157.

the differences they perceived between themselves and Anglo-Americans. As *Emigranten* continued introducing the history of the United States, it contended that "we should not give up our distinctive characteristics, or the religion of our fathers – we could not do so without committing a kind of spiritual suicide." Antebellum immigrants found themselves at the forefront of a historical development, where, in the midst of that great process, in which "peoples of many nations are tied together," they would all "afterwards melt together into a great nation." The Norwegians would also, the newspaper wrote, come to be "united with and melted together with the great American Nation." That they would be melted together was an indisputable fact, but not "how it will happen": "Should we as a soft drill simply be shaped by strangers' hands, and only passively receive impressions, without leaving any imprint ourselves?"

> No, we should on the contrary let our distinctive Nordic character, in its most noble features, appear as clearly as possible […] energized by the memories of history, and sanctified by the spirit of Christianity […] We should, in all our lives and behavior, in all our activities and endeavors, demonstrate outright for the strangers, among whom we have built our home, that we are peace-loving citizens, but also ready to sacrifice everything, even life, to protect the peace and happiness of our new fatherland.

The mission of the immigrant press, the editor concluded, would be to "awake our Scandinavian emigrants to this important calling, and to guide them towards fullfilling this splendid goal."[4]

It is this early assertion of cultural pluralism – of diversity within American society – which is the topic of this investigation. Focusing on the antebellum and Civil War years, but following developments into the period of Reconstruction and beyond, this study asks how Norwegian immigrants imagined they belonged in and to America. Doing so, the study seeks to expose a kind of mentality which some scholars have called "vernacular pluralism"; a more or less consciously held view that immigrants would not need to conform and assimilate to Anglo-American standards.[5]

The state of the field: Norwegian immigrants and belonging

The invocation and negotiation of dual loyalties became a common feature of immigrant cultures in the United Stated during the nineteenth century. Immigrants, relating themselves to two cultures simultaneously, acquired "complementary identities," in the words of Jon Gjerde. The construction of their ethnic identities enabled attachment to America because America

[4] *Emigranten*, February 20, 1852. See appendix 1.
[5] Russell A. Kazal, "The Lost World of Pennsylvania Pluralism: Immigrants, Regions, and the Early Origins of Pluralist Ideologies in America," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 27/3 (2008), pp. 7–42. He defines it as "pluralist views articulated at a more popular, grassroots level," in contradistinction to "formal theories of pluralism." see p. 9.

allowed immigrants to maintain the culture of their past while living in American society, or so immigrants were convinced.[6] Confronting the cultural hegemony of Anglo-Americans, immigrants attempted to make room for their own group in America. While the elucidation of homemaking myths has advanced our understanding of how immigrants perceived they belonged in America in the late nineteenth century, the period before 1870 – the starting point of Øverland's analysis – has been overlooked.

What is known about Norwegian immigrants' own perceptions of belonging in America in the antebellum era is impressionistic at best.[7] As the migration from Norway to America is considered to have been in its "founding phase" from the 1820s to the mid-1860s, the antebellum and Civil War era immigrants have not been considered on their own terms; their expressions of belonging has been treated as precursory constructions of an ethnic identity, but little more.[8] Daron W. Olson, who has recently investigated the construction of a transatlantic Norwegian identity, finds only in the antebellum era a Norwegian American "proto-identity" emerging. A group identity based on self-perceptions as pioneers, pious, and able sailors, there were few ways for Norwegians to express a sense of belonging in America. Indicative how historians have treated the period 1830–1860, Olson's observations are prefatory to his main project.[9] The assumption that the pre-Civil War years are the prelude to the real problem at hand has created a gap in our understanding of how Norwegians perceived they belonged in America.

The first expressions of belonging, according to what historians have assumed, were only to be found in the 1860s, when immigrants participated in the conflict which threatened to pull the country apart. The "American Civil War represented the watershed event," Olson writes, "for the development of the Norwegian-American identity." By sacrificing themselves for their adopted land, he notes, "Norwegian Americans could offer proof to the Anglo-American elite that they were a worthy immigrant group."[10] That the Civil War was of importance for expressions of belonging, there can be no doubt. Many scholars before Olson have come to the

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[6] Jon Gjerde, *The Minds of the West: The Ethnocultural Evolution in the Rural Middle West* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), pp. 51–76.

[7] But the historiography is vast. For an overview, see Nils Olav Østrem, *Norsk utvandringshistorie*, 2nd ed. (Oslo: Det norske samlaget, 2014).

[8] The "founding phase" is discussed in Ingrid Semmingsen, *Norway to America: A History of the Migration*, trans. Einar Haugen (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1978), p. 98.

[9] Daron W. Olson, *Vikings across the Atlantic: Emigration and the Building of a Greater Norway, 1860–1945* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013). Olson observes that "Prior to the Civil War, the Norwegian self-image in America lacked a coherent synthesis." The first "permanent Norwegian settlements did not begin to coalesce until the 1840s," and consequently, "that initial generation, often struggling to survive in its new environment, was by default a collection of Norwegians who had located in America," p. 26. Having noted this, Olson quickly jumps to the postbellum years.

[10] Olson, *Vikings Across the Atlantic*, p. 27.

same conclusion. The war, Odd S. Lovoll observes, "marked a decisive phase in the immigrants' process of adjustment." It created "a new patriotism, a sense of having earned a legitimate place in America," he argues, "for Norwegian blood had been spilled in the defense of the nation."[11] Ingrid Semmingsen too notes that "more than ever before," Norwegians "took part and so struck even deeper roots in American society."[12] In introducing the letters of the colonel who led the "Norwegian" regiment in the war, the 15th Wisconsin Regiment, E. Biddle Heg writes that the war "was a decisive stage," a "major catalyst," that ensured that on "whichever front they found themselves, the immigrants came to feel at home in America during these Civil War years."[13]

These contentions are problematic, and not only for their implicit neglect of how immigrants before the Civil War could "feel at home." The very formulations of striking roots and feeling at home refer to emotional experiences and subjective perceptions, while the patriotic expressions of belonging that arose in the context of the Civil War were, as both Olson and Øverland note, statements intended to convince Americans that Norwegians belonged in their society. While expressions of belonging cannot easily be categorically separated into intentional arguments and actual perceptions, it is possible to make an analytical distinction between the two. How immigrants imagined they belonged in America may not have been how they attempted to convince Americans that they belonged. It is rather the self-perceptions of belonging which created the fundament for how Norwegians could both imagine and claim that they had a rightful home in America.

Historians have of course been interested in questions of belonging for a long time, and also in matters related to the initial period of migration. There are indeed a plethora of studies that may be categorized within the subject of "belonging." If acculturation, adaptation, and adjustment to the American social and natural environment are taken as cues to how "home becomes the American home," in the words of Theodore C. Blegen, then a voluminous historiography on the Americanization of cultural habits, language, and social structures may be counted as evidence of immigrants' gradual sense of belonging in America during the antebellum years and later.[14] But the main problem with such displays of belonging is that they might have been practiced,

[11] Odd S. Lovoll, *The Promise of America: A History of the Norwegian American People* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), p. 107.
[12] Semmingsen, *Norway to America*, p. 97.
[13] E. Biddle Heg (ed.), "Twelve Civil War Letters of Col. Hans C. Heg to His Son," *NAS,* vol. 32 (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1989), pp. 177–197, q. at p. 177 and 178.
[14] *LTC*, p. 62. An indicative study, showing changes in the techniques in how Norwegians actually built their homes in America, is William H. Thisler, "Norwegians in Wisconsin," in *To Build in a New Land: Ethnic Landscapes in North America*, ed. Allen G. Noble (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1992), pp. 226–241.

but necessarily discussed. As Blegen himself writes, these "processes of adjustment and adaptation went forward year after year, with changes in outlook of which many of the immigrants themselves were scarcely conscious."[15]

It is exactly the conscious aspects of belonging which this thesis investigates. Belonging, as with other features of individual and collective identity, is not only constituted through formal inclusion into a community or adopting the practices of that community. A state of belonging is achieved by imagining and experiencing this belonging as well. Informal exclusion may constitute the reality of persons to a much larger degree than formal, institutionalized ways of inclusion. A citizenship does not inevitably create a sense of belonging. It is this self-conscious and intellectualized dimension which is lacking in the present understanding of the early period of Norwegian migration to America: the ways in which immigrants experienced belonging and conceptualized their understanding of what it meant to belong in America, and how they imagined they could belong to the American nation and the American continent. In this study, perceptions of belonging are for the purposes of analysis distinguished from arguments of belonging. The homemaking myths, which Øverland delineates, were employed specifically to demonstrate for Anglo-Americans and other immigrant groups that immigrants had a rightful home in America. Such arguments are of course ultimately connected to perceptions of belonging and in no simple way distinct from each other. Yet there is one important difference: while perceptions stem from or alternatively constitute a conviction, arguments are intentional statements designed to convince.

Few comparable investigations exist. Historian of German immigration Kathleen Neils Conzen has on several occasions suggested that antebellum Germans carried a "colonizing vision" with them to America, intent on preserving the "essence" of their homeland and thus of their own identity, and to change America before allowing America to change them.[16] Conzen defines three phases of debate in the German immigrant community from the 1840s through the 1880s. These phases were "logically though not chronologically distinct": first, cultural preservationist voices were prominent; second, a melting pot imagination in various ways defended an ethnic

[15] Therefore, Blegen argues, it is the "mirroring of change" which give "immigrant documents no small part of their historical significance."*LTC*, p. 258.

[16] Kathleen Neils Conzen, "Phantom Landscapes of Colonization: Germans in the Making of a Pluralist America," in *The German-American Encounter: Conflict and Cooperation between Two Cultures, 1800–2000* ed. Frank Trommler and Elliott Shore (New York: Berghahn Books, 2001), pp. 7–21. The colonization, she writes, "was more akin in its private sponsorship, mentalities, and structures of migration to North American settlement in the colonial era, and to settler colonialism elsewhere in the nineteenth-century world, sharing the same perceptions of emptiness and lack of indigenous civilization, the same concerns to replicate metropole society while improving one's status within it, the same obsessions with boundary maintenance and non-assimilation." q. at pp. 11–12.

presence; and third, arguments for permanent cultural pluralism emerged, though, as Conzen observes, they were ultimately "found elusive."[17] The ways in which Conzen has treated the case of German immigrants in the mid-nineteenth century have informed the methods and perspectives of the present investigation on Norwegians, and the present results, moreover, demonstrate several parallels with the German example.

Case or exception? Studying general questions of migration in specific groups

The question of how immigrants imagined they belonged in America could apply not only to Germans, but also to Irish, Britons, and Swedes; these were all sizeable immigrant groups in the antebellum era. When the focus here is on Norwegians, it is because this particular immigrant group, and especially in the early phase of migration, was remarkably homogenous in one crucial respect. They were, predominantly, oriented toward frontier settlement and a rural lifestyle, and more so than any other immigrant group.[18] Consequently the majority of them were not only immigrants, but also settlers in America. Even upper-class members of the Norwegian immigrant group, like Elise Wærenskjold, found the land to provide the most secure foundation for life in America: "Storekeeping may be more profitable than farming," she noted, but she had often "thanked God that we haven't gotten involved in it […] If the man dies it all goes apart since wives here never run a store and probably couldn't do so under our circumstances."[19] Elsewhere I have argued that it was this exceptional orientation towards settling on the land which facilitated a sense of belonging for Norwegian immigrants. Here I shall pursue this argument further.[20]

In selecting one group where expressions of belonging might be thought to emanate from one distinct outlook, it is possible to uncover some perceptions that might have informed the attitude of other immigrant groups as well. While I have mostly considered material produced by Norwegian immigrants, I have also included some perceptions by Swedish immigrants. Due to their relative low numbers before the late 1860s, Norwegians, Swedes, and Danes tended to

[17] Kathleen Neils Conzen, "German-Americans and the Invention of Ethnicity," in *America and the Germans: An Assessment of a Three-Hundred-Year History*, ed. Frank Trommler and Joseph McVeigh, vol. 1, *Immigration, Language, Ethnicity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), pp. 131–147, q. at p. 134.
[18] Odd S. Lovoll, *Norwegians on the Land: Address for the Society for the Study of Local and Regional History* (Marshall, Minnesota: Southwest State University, 1992), p. 5.
[19] Farming, by contrast, was safe: should the man die, their debt would be negligible, and hence she would not have to let "others take over." Elise Wærenskjold to Thomine Dannevig, Four Mile Prairie, Texas, October 16, 1858, in *FATN (transl.)*, pp. 245–248, q. at p. 247. For the older, translated collection of her letters, see C. A. Clausen (ed.), *The Lady with the Pen: Elise Wærenskjold in Texas* (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1961), and the biography by Charles H. Russell, *Undaunted: A Norwegian Woman in Frontier Texas* (College Station: Texas A and M University Press, 2006).
[20] Henrik Olav Mathiesen, "Belonging in the Midwest: Norwegian Americans and the Process of Attachment, ca. 1830–1860," *American Nineteenth Century History* 15/2 (2014), pp. 119–146.

associate with each other in America. Here they frequently referred to each other as "Scandinavians," and especially so in relation to Anglo-Americans. Between themselves, however, they tended to uphold a certain distance. As Johan Reinert Reiersen, a Norwegian traveling the American Midwest to scout for areas of potential Norwegian colonization observed when he came to Pine Lake, Wisconsin, in 1844: "Chance has brought together here several educated and wealthy men – Unonius, Gasmann, Fribert, St. Cyr, and several other Swedes and Norwegians." Living in the same area, they had, Reiersen noted,

> organized a kind of Scandinavian union, and, remarkably enough, the Swedes have settled on the east side of a little lake – Pine Lake – while the Norwegians live on the west shore. The 'Constitution' and the 'Union' are small boats in which the neighbors visit each other.[21]

And indeed, as a recent anthology of Swedish-Norwegian relations is called, Norwegians and Swedes in America were "friends and neighbors."[22] Gustaf Unonius, a Swede, had founded the settlement in Pine Lake where Hans Gasmann, a Norwegian, and many more of his countrymen would follow. Because Scandinavian immigrants often shared the same experiences and wrote of these experiences in a similar language, the writings of Unonius have been utilized to illustrate some general points regarding the experiences of Norwegian immigrants. For the most part, however, it is Norwegian immigrants, as individuals and as a group, that is in focus. Expressions of belonging are not solely to be understood within ethnic or national frames. Norwegians and Swedes perceived themselves as distinct immigrant groups in America, and it is what might be concluded from the expressions and experiences of a single group that remain the level of generalization which this study aspires toward.

The many ways to belong: theoretical perspectives

There are commonly, as the philosopher Linn Miller observes, three ways to conceptualize belonging. Humans imagine that they belong on to social groups, to a history, and to particular places.[23] Scientific investigations of the phenomenon have tended to explore each one of these dimensions respectively. The most influential approach is to understand belonging as

[21] Johan Reinert Reiersen to friends in Norway, Iowa City, Iowa Territory, January 24, 1844, in Reiersen, "Behind the Scenes of Emigration: A Series of Letters from the 1840's," ed. Theodore C. Blegen, trans. Carl O. Paulson and the Verdandi Study Club, *NASR,* vol. 14 (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1944), pp. 78–116, q. at p. 98.
[22] Philip J. Anderson and Dag Blanck (eds), *Norwegians and Swedes in the United States: Friends and Neighbors* (St. Paul, Minnesota: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2012).
[23] Linn Miller, "Being and Belonging" (PhD diss., University of Tasmania, 2006). See also her essay, "Belonging to Country – a Philosophical Anthropology," *Journal of Australian Studies* 27/76 (2003), pp. 215–223.

interpersonal attachment.[24] For instance, in his now famous theory of the hierarchy of human needs, the psychologist Arthur Maslow placed "belongingness" as the third most fundamental need, side by side with "love." Other psychologists have also understood it as a human need, to be fulfilled social relations of a certain quality.[25] Other scholars have viewed problems of belonging in relation to collectivities of various sizes, but mainly as it concerns nationality and ethnicity.[26] Human geographers inspired by the phenomenological philosophy of Martin Heidegger have focused on aspects of belonging as they relate to places and conceptions of what "home" is.[27]

It is clear that interpersonal connections or groups of various sizes and their situatedness both in time and space, have a bearing on how belonging is imagined. But what more fundamentally constitutes an experiential "feeling," a "sense" or an intellectually based conviction of belonging, is harder to grasp at. The idea of "home," as Shelley Mallet concludes in an expansive literature review, "can constitute belonging and/or create a sense of marginalisation." It can also be an "ideological construct and/or and experience of being in the world."[28] Even the various terms in different languages used to discuss the experience or conviction of belonging

[24] Treatments of social "belonging" occur within discussions ranging from personality to assisted reproduction. See C. Nathan DeWall, Timothy Deckman, Richard S. Pond, Jr., and Ian Bonser, "Belongingness as a Core Personality Trait: How Social Exclusion Influences Social Functioning and Personality Expression," *Journal of Personality* 79/6 (2011), pp. 1281–1314; Katherine E. Loveland, Dirk Smeesters, and Naomi Mandel, "Still Preoccupied with 1995: The Need to Belong and Preference for Nostalgic Products," *Journal of Consumer Research* 37/3 (2010), pp. 393–408; Charles A. Curran, "Toward a Theology of Human Belonging," *Journal of Religion and Health* 4/3 (1965), pp. 227–242; Marit Melhuus, "Conflicting Notions of Continuity and Belonging: Assisted Reproduction, Law, and Practices in Norway," *Social Analysis* 53/3 (2009), pp. 148–162.

[25] Arthur H. Maslow, "A Theory of Human Motivation," *Psychological Review* 50/4 (1943), pp. 370–396, see p. 380; Roy F. Baumeister and Mark R. Leary, "The Need to Belong: Desire for Interpersonal Attachments as a Fundamental Human Motivation," *Psychological Bulletin* 117/3 (1995), pp. 497–529. Nathaniel M. Lambert, Tyler F. Stillman, Joshua A. Hicks, Shanmukh Kamble, Roy F. Baumeister, and Frank D. Fincham, "To Belong Is to Matter: Sense of Belonging Enhances Meaning in Life," *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 39/11 (2013), pp. 1418–1427, argue that social relations, although fulfilling a fundamental "need" for belonging, does not necessarily create a "sense" of belonging.

[26] Michael Skey, "Why Do Nations Matter? The Struggle for Belonging and Security in an Uncertain World," *The British Journal of Sociology* 64/1 (2013), pp. 81–98; Lloyd L. Wong, "Transnationalism, Active Citizenship, and Belonging in Canada," *International Journal* 63/1 (2007/2008), pp. 79–99; Susan Bibler Coutin, "Cultural Logics of Belonging and Movement: Transnationalism, Naturalization, and U.S. Immigration Politics," *American Ethnologist* 30/4 (2003), pp. 508–526; Robert B. Perks, "'A Feeling of Not Belonging': Interviewing European Immigrants in Bradford," *Oral History* 12/2 (1984), pp. 64–67; Malinda Andersson, "Tilhörighetens gränser: Internationell adoption och ursprungets betydelse i svensk utredningsretorik," *Sociologisk Forskning* 45/3 (2008), pp. 56–76.

[27] Martin Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking," in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hoftstadter (New York: Harper Perennial, 2001), pp. 141–160; Alison Blunt and Robert Dowling, *Home: Key Ideas in Geography* (London: Routledge, 2006); Cathrine Brun and Gunhild Setten, (eds), *Hus, hjem og sted: Geografiske perspektiver på vår samtid* (Trondheim: Akademika, 2013); Eleanor Conlin Casella, "'That's Just a Family Thing, You Know': Memory, Community Kinship, and Social Belonging in the Hagg Cottages of Cheshire, North-West England," *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 16/2 (2012), pp. 284–299.

[28] Shelley Mallet, "Understanding Home: A Critical Review of the Literature," *The Sociological Review* 52/1 (2004), pp. 62–89, q. at p. 84.

demonstrate the complexity of the phenomenon. For example, Carsten Schjøtt Philipsen, who has investigated what is in Danish referred to as a "feeling of home" ["hjemfølelse"], argues that it is more than simply a "mood" ["stemning"]: "It is rather a disposition ["befindlighed"], which involves both a mood and the many emotionally based relations to the situated place, where one feels at home."[29] Both "stemning," derived from the German "stimmung," and "befindlighed," from the German "befindlichkeit," appear in the recent *Dictionary of Untranslatables*; a collection of concepts which according to philosophers would be impossible to translate directly into other languages.[30] This is to say nothing of the word "hjemfølelse" itself, not adequately captured in the English "feeling of home." It would need to be conveyed as a "sense that is akin to the perception that a certain place is home." Carl Jung once suggested that certain emotions do not "change the physiological condition" but are instead "very mental." That belonging is more a subjective feeling or sense, or perhaps thought of as a certain type of emotion, seems likely.[31] It is anyway both a subjective experience and an intellectual conviction that constitute how individuals perceive themselves belonging to somewhere, to someone, and to something. And, as Miller argues, there needs to exist a certain ontological reality behind a sensation of belonging in order for such a feeling to appear convincing. Without a citizenship one cannot perceive oneself to belong to a nation-state; reality denies it.[32]

Operationalizing "belonging" as an analytical concept for historical investigation necessitates a definition of how belonging is imagined by individuals and collectivities alike. While the commonsensical definitions of belonging which Miller has explicated provide an entry into how belonging is normally imagined, they are but a starting point. Following the Danish philosopher

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[29] Carsten Schjøtt Philipsen, "Hjemfølelse" (PhD diss., Roskilde University, 2013), p. 115. "hjemfølelse er *mere* end en stemning. Det er nærmere tale en befindlighed, som både involverer en stemning og mangfoldige følelsesinvolverede relationer til det situerede sted, hvor man føler sig hjemme." Original emphasis. Even the concept of "emotions" is an historicizable and contigent term. Thomas Dixon demonstrates, "'Emotion': The History of a Keyword in Crisis," *Emotion Review* 4/4 (2012), pp. 338–344.

[30] Barbara Cassin (ed.), Steven Rendall, Christian Hubert, Jeffrey Mehlman, Nathanael Stein, and Michael Syrotinski (transl.), Emily Apter, Jacques Lezra, and Michael Wood (trans. eds), *Dictionary of Untranslatables: A Philosophical Lexicon* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014, French ed. 2004). Both concepts are discussed in the entry "stimmung" at pp. 1061–1063. "Befindlichkeit" is also discussed under "disposition," p. 227. The difficulty in understanding historical concepts across languages is discussed by Margit Pernau, observing the need to paying attention to "the meaning with which the historical actors endow the translation process itself." "Whither Conceptual History? *From National to Entangled Histories*," *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 7/1 (2012), pp. 1–11, q. at p. 10.

[31] Carl Gustav Jung, *Analytical Psychology: Its Theory and Practice (The Tavistock Lectures)* (London: Routledge, 2014), p. 22. The lectures were held in London in 1935. A few years later, the French philosopher Jean Paul Sartre would argue that all emotions are "a phenomenon of belief," that is, the creation of emotions in humans are constituted from how humans perceive the situation and environment they find themselves in. *Esquisse d'une théorie des emotions* (Paris: HERMANN, 1939), translated by Philip Mairet as *Sketch for a Theory of the Emotions* (London: Routledge, 2014), p. 51.

[32] Miller, "Belonging to Country," p. 217.

Søren Kierkegaard, Miller argues that the experience of belonging is ultimately a state of being "correctly related" to one's social, geographical and temporal place in the world. Since the perceptions of our reality is constituted from our lived experience, belonging has both external and internal dimensions.[33] Having acquired citizenship in the United States, and having little ontological reason not to perceive themselves to belong to the nation-state, Norwegian immigrants would need to perceive themselves being "correctly related" to their own social worlds and to other inhabitants of the United States, as well as to America as a geographical region. Investigating perceptions of belonging historically, then, requires us to analyze how immigrants both demonstrated and articulated their sense of belonging.

Tracing past mentalities: sources and methods

Finding evidence of such experiences, ideas, and convictions is not a straightforward process. Conzen has attempted an exposition of a German settler mentality by analyzing the cultural changes in one German Sauk Valley community over a long period.[34] Such an approach to the study of mentalities yields good results, but as it must necessarily be limited to a clearly defined geographical place and social community, it would preclude an analysis of what is to be found in the majority of letters sent from America in general during a certain period. The writings which immigrants produced may be another pathway to uncovering an immigrant mentality. Still, perceptions and mentalities of the past cannot simply be extracted from the written material which the past has left us; the sources are bound to their contexts of intention, production and reception. The "America letters," which constitute the only direct entry into the thoughts of early Norwegian immigrants, are in many respects of severely limited value. As the main source of information of American conditions for a Norwegian audience, the letters, and especially those written in the period before the transatlantic telegraph and an efficient, international post system facilitated a larger degree of privacy, were written with certain reservations in mind.[35] Knowing that the content of their letters would reach a wide audience – despite addressing their letters primarily to their families – emigrants were in writing letters home aware of being participants in the debate on emigration that was raging in Norway.

[33] Miller, "Being and Belonging," esp. pp. 230–247. See also Rogers Brubaker, "Migration, Membership, and the Modern Nation-State: Internal and External Dimensions of the Politics of Belonging," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 41/1 (2010), pp. 61–78, for an connected argument related to belonging to the nation-state specifically.
[34] Kathleen Neils Conzen, *Making Their Own America: Assimilation Theory and the German Peasant Pioneer*, German Historical Institute, Washington, D.C., Annual Lecture Series No. 3 (New York: Berg, 1990).
[35] Orm Øverland, "Listening to Immigrant Voices: Reflections on Completing Seven Volumes of Letters from Norwegian Immigrants, 1838–1914," in *Norwegian-American Essays 2011: "Transnationalism and the Norwegian-American Experience*, ed. Øyvind T. Gulliksen, assistant ed. Harry T. Cleven (Oslo: Novus Press, 2011), pp. 187–214.

Having challenged strong-held notions of rootedness, Norwegians also considered it necessary to justify their choice to emigrate. The contents of America letters cannot be read outside of these contexts. Yet these contexts alone do not determine the contents of letters; they might still reveal perceptions of belonging.

If read against the grain, America letters may, despite their contextual limitations, give various indications of how Norwegians imagined they belonged in and to America. Scholars of intellectual history rightly observe that texts of the past must be rigidly interpreted within their communicative contexts, but that is not the same as to reduce the contents of these texts to mere examples of the discourses which they are intended as contributions to.[36] The descriptions, condonances, or castigations of homesickness as an emotion accompanying emigration, even if not interpreted as direct and sincere expressions of longing, may still be testimony to the existence of homesickness among immigrants in America. Moreover, by analyzing how immigrants described their own situation and how it related to the events of frontier settlement, the Civil War, and to Native Americans and Anglo-Americans, the letters of immigrants may indicate what perceptions were commonly held, widely shared, or controversial.

In the latter instance, the America letters complement immigrant newspapers in unveiling the usage of terms referring to collective identities in America. As investigations in the history of concepts demonstrate, the ways in which people of the past employed certain terms may reveal the larger mental outlook which these terms gave expression to.[37] The appearance of certain ethnic labels for a certain period and a consistent usage in refererence to certain collectivities are more telling than what is much harder to uncover: the prevalence of such usage. As Øverland has argued, the surviving letters from the period must be understood as an inevitable "canon" of the genre. We do not have access to certain letters because they have been selected for publication by historians. The letters which have survived at all probably overrepresent certain immigrants: there were probably written more letters telling stories of success rather than of

[36] Influenced by J. L. Austin's speech act theory and his conception of "performative utterances," Quentin Skinner is by far the most well-known proponent of a contextualist approach to intellectual history, see e.g. his collection of essays, *Visions of Politics. Volume 1: Regarding Method* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). Unlike his colleague J. G. A. Pocock, however, Skinner focuses not so much on the discourse context itself, but the fact that all texts must be viewed as interventions in a contemporary debate. For a comparison between the two, and also the history of concepts, see Melvin Richter, "Reconstructing the History of Political Languages: Pocock, Skinner, and the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*," *History and Theory* 29/1 (1990), pp. 38–70. Just as with the history of emotions however, the extent to which a contextualist approach is pertinent, is not settled. See e.g. Mark Bevir, "Are There Perennial Problems in Political Theory?" *Political Studies* 42/4 (1994), pp. 662–675 and Mark Bevir, "Mind and Method in the History of Ideas," *History and Theory* 36/2 (1997), pp. 167–189.

[37] See Reinart Koselleck, "*Begriffsgeschichte* and Social History," in *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, trans. Keith Tribe (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), pp. 75–92.

personal failure. Moreover, there are many different and utterly accidental reasons why some letters have been preserved, while others have perished.[38]

But even if questions of the representativity of the material make using America letters in one respect difficult to delineate a mentality correctly, the letters are not without their use. Castigation of homesickness, for instance, weigh up for the lack of genuine, direct expressions of the feeling; normalizing or denouncing the expression of homesickness in others reveal letter writers' own attitude to the emotion. The normalization of the experience of emigration by the emigrant community may be gleaned both from letters and from the pages of immigrant newspapers. That also suggests a link between individual expressions and the larger discourse among Norwegians in America. The rather few examples of homesickness that are to be found in America letters may therefore be viewed as concrete expressions of a more widely shared mentality among Norwegian immigrants. The letters of immigrants, which might otherwise thought of as lacking in quantity and quality, may thus be considered as sources to a more general immigrant mentality. The nature of immigrant writing and reading practices of the period were public and circuitious: America letters would often be published in Norwegians newspapers, and reprinted in the newspapers produced by Norwegian emigrants. Even if the contemporary publication of America letters has not been a criterion for using letters for this present study, the letters might in general be viewed as contributions to a larger public discourse, taking place on both sides of the Atlantic. The question of representativity for expressions in particular letters actually becomes less acute than what it would otherwise have been, had the letters been only privately written and read.

When it comes to the immigrant newspapers, the situation is somewhat different. Although Norwegian immigrants quickly established newspapers of their own, the antebellum and Civil War eras were periods of trial and limited success. While some newspapers survived the founding years, many more only lasted for a few years, and never acquired more than a few hundred subscriptions. The only newspaper which outlasted the Civil War was *Emigranten*, established in Wisconsin in 1852. Consequently it constitutes a major source for the thoughts and perceptions of Norwegian immigrants. Yet it had its competitors: *Den Norske Amerikaner* [The Norwegian American] vehemently attacked what it perceived to be an organ for the class of educated officials and clergy who had emigrated. The extent to which lower class immigrants adhered to the views of their educated countrymen – often acting as immigrants' pastors in

[38] Øverland, "Listening to Immigrant Voices," pp. 196–199.

America – is not easily established. The labor agitator of the revolutionary 1840s Marcus Thrane never achieved much success with his *Norske Amerikaner* [Norwegian American], the newspaper he established in Chicago after emigrating in 1863.[39] *Emigranten*, on the other hand, was the most widely read newspaper of the period. As it allowed for exchanges of opinion of a sometimes controversial nature, the discussions *Emigranten* printed may to a considerable extent be considered representative of the wider community of Norwegians in the American Midwest – to the extent that immigrants read papers, or cared much about the controversies, at all. Elisabeth Koren, a pastor's wife in Iowa, while living with the immigrant couple Erik and Helene Egge, waiting for her parsonage to be finished, eagerly attempted to get hold of *Emigranten*. While Koren in her diary described Helene as reading "half-loud a fearful story," in *Emigranten*, forgetting how it was "long past her customary bedtime," Helene was also "tireless in covering" the airy walls of her log cabin with the same paper, "whenever she manages to get hold of copies." Immigrant newspapers had many uses, and immigrant pioneers had many more immediate concerns than reading.[40] With this in mind, immigrants did on several occasions demonstrate that they read newspapers, evident in the way they sometimes attempted to explain to their correspondents the political situation in the United States.

Outline of the argument

The multifaceted nature of "belonging" as a phenomenon opportunes a thematically structured investigation. While the connection between the experiences and convictions of belonging is the topic of the first chapter, the next three chapters focus mainly on convictions. The interpersonal dimensions of belonging and emotional experiences connected to it are explored in the first chapter. The prevalent belief among immigrants that they needed to retain their cultural identities in order to emerge successfully and untraumatized from the uprooting process of migration mirrored a widely held opinion that cultural retention was crucial to the position of Norwegian immigrants as an ethnic group in America. While this perspective is further explored in the third chapter, the second chapter demonstrates how immigrants viewed America as a potential home for whomever relocated and established settlements on the undeveloped regions

[39] The Norwegian clergy in America even deemed it an "organ of Satan" and, as Terje I. Leiren concludes, "The *Norske Amerikaner* was, to a certain extent, a victim of Thrane's unduly optimistic appraisal of America and its influence on his fellow immigrants." See "The Reemergence of a Misunderstood Radical: Marcus Thrane's Norske Amerikaner," in *Scandinavians and Other Immigrants in Urban America: The Proceedings of A Research Conference, October 26–27, 1984*, ed. Odd S. Lovoll (Northfield, Minnesota: Saint Olaf College Press, 1985), pp. 111–122, q. at p. 118 and 119. Odd S. Lovoll, *Norwegian Newspapers in America: Connecting Norway and the New Land* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2010), pp. 86–87.

[40] Elisabeth Koren, *The Diary of Elisabeth Koren, 1853–1855*, ed. and trans. David T. Nelson (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1955), p. 142 and 187–188.

of the continent. The third chapter then considers immigrants' discussions of assimilation, nativism, the nature of the American nation, and how immigrants could perceive themselves to belong to the same. The fourth and last chapter reviews two second generation Norwegian immigrants' understandings of what the American nation was during the Gilded Age and how Norwegians, as well as other immigrant groups, could be considered an inherent part of the American population. Perceptions of belonging to an American nation predicated an experience of belonging in America in the first place, however, and it is to such experiences I first turn.

1. MIGRATION, HOME, AND BELONGING: COMMUNICATING EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCES

> The worst complaint of all is homesickness; everyone experiences that, of course. But time can heal even deeper wounds than that of having been severed from one's native land. Furthermore, most of the immigrants seem to cherish more or less consciously a hope of returning some day to their native land, having realized only after they had broken away how strong were the ties that held them there. –*Ole Munch Ræder, 1847.*[41]

> We need not attach much importance to statements of older settlers that they can never forget their native land, and that they earnestly desire to return thither, since such expressions may be ascribed to a momentary patriotic feeling awakened by seeing someone from their old home. – *Adam Løvenskjold, 1847.*[42]

Ole Munch Ræder and Adam Løvenskjold had traveled together to visit the Norwegian settlements in the Midwest, and yet they came to complete opposite conclusions regarding the professed homesickness of their emigrated countrymen. While Løvenskjold dismissed expressions of longing and of wishes to return to Norway as situational and inconsequential, Ræder took immigrants' expressions of longing at their word.[43] As Norwegian-Swedish Consul General in New York, Løvenskjold's observation appeared in a brief report to the Norwegian government. Ræder, on the other hand, was paid by the Norwegian authorities to survey the jury system in English-speaking countries abroad, and he wrote extensive travel letters from America which were published in *Den Norske Rigstidende* [the Norwegian State Times] in Norway.[44] In these letters, Ræder is shown as an astute observer of American society – perhaps the closest of all contemporary travelers to a Norwegian Tocqueville – but how correct was his analysis of the Norwegian immigrant mindset in the antebellum era? Did his travel companion perceive the situation better than Ræder did?

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[41] Gunnar J. Malmin (ed. and trans.), *America in the Forties: The Letters of Ole Munch Ræder* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1929), pp. 67–68.
[42] Knut Gjerset (trans.), "An Account of the Norwegian Settlers in North America," *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 8/1 (1924), pp. 77–88, q. at p. 84. Løvenskjold's report was printed in Bergen in 1848.
[43] However, Ræder too noted that "I have found few who said they were dissatisfied and wanted to return to Norway, and with some of these it was more a matter of talk than of a real desire to go." Malmin, *America in the Forties*, p. 65.
[44] Ræder's observations resulted in the three volume tome *Jury-Institutionen i Storbritanien, Canada og de forenede Stater af Amerika. Inberetning i Anledning af en efter offentlig Foranstaltning foretagen Reise*, published in Christiania in 1850–1852.

This is not simply a matter of determining the relative brilliance of Løvenskjold and Ræder's observational skills. Their diverging interpretations demonstrate how difficult it is understand the experience of migration. How did that experience influence how immigrants expressed a sense both of longing and belonging, and how were such expressions connected to the ways immigrants imagined they had acquired a home in America? By discussing the relative degree to how America letters may reveal genuine emotional expressions and experiences, this chapter attempts to connect the contents of letters to a more widely shared emigrant culture, which would develop a distinct way to describe and express feelings of longing and belonging.

Divided hearts, or divided opinions? Interpreting the immigrant experience

There are many statements in America letters which appear to convey immigrants' sense of belonging in America. Reading such statements at face value, the contentment with which immigrants reported their condition in America may give a reason to believe that immigrants came to find themselves at home as soon as they had acquired land and derived a good income from it. In America letters may be found expressions like the following, written by an unknown immigrant in the 1840s: "I am so well off that if I had been the owner of the best farm in Norway and could sell it at its value, I would not have stayed in Norway. Please spread this letter well."[45] Or as Gulbrand Engebretsen Thulien wrote in 1847: "I can say for myself that I do not wish to see Norway again, because here I live better every day than one did on Christmas Day in Norway."[46] Gullik and Ole Gulliksen Dorsett wrote the same year that the recipients of their letters would be glad to know that "we are in good health and have all we need and that we love America."[47] Holger Petterson Helle wrote in 1855 that "I am quite satisfied here because I see many people from the Stavanger region every day and I do not at all regret that I left Norway's grey and unfertile mountains and sought America's beautiful and fertile fields."[48] Even instances of homesickness, instigated by speaking of these barren mountains, did not apparently dampen immigrants' spirits significantly: "Only once have I been homesick," Paul

[45] An unknown immigrant to Knud Ellingsen Liane, Koshkonong, Wisconsin, probably 1843, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 58–60, q. at p. 60.
[46] Gulbrand Engebretsen Thulien to Engebret Guldbrandsen Thulien, Oswego, Illinois, February 7, 1847, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 79–80.
[47] Gullik and Ole Gulliksen Dorsett to Gullik Evensen Daaset, Indian Creek, Illinois, December 22, 1847, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 85–86, q. at p. 85.
[48] He continued noting that "Nevertheless I often think of Norway and my relatives and friends there, but without longing or dissatisfaction." Holger Petterson Helle to Hans Ormsen Øverland, Leland, Illinois, December 28, 1855, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 215–217, q. at p. 215.

Torstensen wrote in 1870, "and that was in a conversation about Norwegian mountains. This was a though sickness but it passed quickly."[49]

Nonetheless, Sigrid Lien, who has studied the cultural history of Norwegian immigrant photographies, argues that "even though few letters indicate that the emigrants wished to return," the photographs which were attached to the letters "betray a longing to the home place and to the loved ones they had left."[50] Some letters, notwithstanding whether they were accompanied by such pictures of longing or not, clearly expressed longing. Thor Torstensen Vigenstad, for example, wrote to his brother in 1869 that "I can truthfully say that there hasn't been a half hour since I came here that I haven't thought of you. […] The hope that I'll sometime come home and see you again now makes my time pass more quickly than it did to begin with."[51] Nils Ludvigsen Elvetun wrote in 1854 that "I haven't enjoyed myself to this day. […] I wish I were back when I get up every day."[52] Johan Gasmann wrote from Wisconsin that "Despite the fact that I have nothing to complain about in this country I often find myself longing for the old shores and the old mountains – they are not easily forgotten."[53] Even the phraseology of the letters might indicate feelings of longing: "Dear and unforgettable mother and brother," Lars Nilsen Nesheim began his letter in 1856. Ending with "loving regards to you my dear mother and brother," he added the admonition: "Don't forget to write to me." Coupled with his remark that "I haven't been without longing for the place of my birth. You mustn't

[49] His brother Thor, Paul wrote, "also insists that he hasn't felt any longing." Paul Torstensen to Ole Torstensen Vigenstad, Leeds, Wisconsin, October 26, 1870, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 462–466, q. at p. 463. This is incidentally the only example I have found of homesickness expressed as a physiological illness. "Nostalgia," as it was called, was medicalized in the United States during the Civil War, see David Anderson, "Dying of Nostalgia: Homesickness in the Union Army during the Civil War," *Civil War History* 56/3 (2010), pp. 247–282, and Susan J. Matt, "You Can't Go Home Again: Homesickness and Nostalgia in U.S. History," *Journal of American History* 94/2 (2007), pp. 469–497, see esp. pp. 482–484.

[50] Sigrid Lien, *Lengselens bilder: fotografiet i norsk utvandringshistorie* (Oslo: Scandinavian Academic Press, 2009), p. 18. (My translation.)

[51] Thor Torstensen Vigenstad to Ole Torstensensen Vigenstad, Spring Prairie, Wisconsin, February 1, 1869, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 415–418, q. at p. 416.

[52] Nils Ludvigsen Elvetun to Ludvig Kristiansen Elvetun, Madison, Wisconsin, July 12, 1854, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 183–185, q. at p. 185. Elvetun eventually returned back to Norway, Øverland notes, p. 185.

[53] Johan Gasmann to M. Rye, Amherst, Portage Co., Wisconsin, November, 1860, in C. A. Clausen (ed. and trans.), "The Gasmann Brothers Write Home," *NAS,* vol. 23 (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1967), pp. 71–107, q. at p. 101. The full address and the original letter is found in *FATN, vol 2*, pp. 149–151.

think that nothing is lost when you go to America for there are as great difficulties here as in Norway," the letters indeed appear to express genuine longing for the home emigrants had left.[54]

The duplexity of expressions that are to be found in America letters, reflects two influential ways of understanding the immigrant experience in nineteenth century America. Either immigrants are understood to have adjusted quickly, easily, and willingly to new conditions and a different environment, or they have been thought of as possessing a "divided heart," unable to avoid feelings of alienation, non-belonging, or divided loyalties – inescapable features of the process of migration itself. As Lovoll observes, when it comes to the "emotional content in the experience of immigration," historians have often arrived at "completely opposite conclusions."[55]

The pendulum of interpretation has swung several times throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century.[56] The earliest historical writings of Norwegian immigration in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, often written by members of the first or second generation of immigrants themselves, tended to stress immigrants' success in adjusting and achieving a better life in America.[57] Another vein of interpretation, influenced by the recognition that immigrants suffered mental illness in greater proportion than Americans, emphasized the rupturing, alienation effects of migration upon immigrants' sense of identity.[58] Oscar Handlin's now classic 1951 study of *The Uprooted* is emblematic of this approach: focusing on "alienation," his themes were "broken homes, interruptions of a familiar life, separation from known

[54] Lars Nilsen Nesheim to Martha Haldorsdatter Nesheim, Chicago, Illinois, March 28, 1856, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 219–220, q. at p. 219. Martyn Lyons critizices the tendency of scholars of the past to abbreviate letters in published collections, often excluding phraseology like that cited here. As he note, "The formulas and lists of people to whom greetings were addressed, which these scholars found repetitious and tedious, were important strategies for placing the authors within a family network and a local community. They were essential to the expression and preservation of the writer's social identity." *The Writing Culture of Ordinary People in Europe, c. 1860–1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 176.

[55] Odd S. Lovoll, "Innvandrernes Amerika," *Heimen* 3 (1994), pp. 147–155, q. at p. 147. (My translation.)

[56] Good introductions to the historiography of immigration include Reed Ueda (ed.), *A Companion to American Immigration* (Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell, 2006); Jason McDonald, *American Ethnic History: Themes and Perspectives* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007); Russell A. Kazal, "Revisiting Assimilation: The Rise, Fall, and Reappraisal of a Concept in American Ethnic History," *American Historical Review* 100/2 (1995), pp. 437–471.

[57] For historiographic discussions, see J. R. Christianson, "Myth, History, and the Norwegian-American Historical Association, in *Nordics in America: The Future of Their Past*, ed. Odd S. Lovoll (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1993), pp. 63–72; Daron W. Olson, "Norwegian-American Historians and the Creation of an Ethnic Identity," *Scandinavian Studies* 79/1 (2007), pp. 41–56; Odd S. Lovoll, "Norwegian-American Historical Scholarship: A Survey of Its History and a Look to the Future," in *Essays on Norwegian-American Literature and History*, ed. Dorothy Burton Skårdal and Ingeborg Kongslien (Oslo: NAHA-Norway, 1986), pp. 223–239.

[58] Semmingsen, *Norway to America*, p. 115.

surroundings, the becoming of a foreigner and ceasing to belong."[59] Relevant to Scandinavian migration in particular is Dorothy Burton Skårdal's 1974 study *The Divided Heart*, which argued that immigrant fiction demonstrated the real and not only fictional presence of conflicting feelings among immigrants.[60] A newer strand of scholarship, focusing on aspects of "transplantation" – the capacity of immigrants to bring their own social, cultural, and religious institutions with them to America – has made historians doubt that the immigration experience was such a devastating one after all.[61] In his synthesis of Norwegian American history, for example, Lovoll argues that even though "Norwegians in America might suffer from homesickness and a sense of loss, become overwhelmed by memories of conditions and people they had left behind, and long for a life that belonged to the past," these "emotions were, however, mostly suppressed." Moreover, Lovoll contends, the feelings "did not intrude into the daily toil, and the immigrants, needing to justify their own decision to emigrate, rapidly developed a great loyalty toward their new surroundings."[62]

Several scholars have dismissed the question of longing as inconsequential. In fact, Lovoll himself, in a review of what constituted a generalized immigrant experience, argues that it was "a historical phenomenon and a deep human need which makes the question of whether being immigrants was a tragic experience or not, less important, and likewise whether immigrants carried a deep sorrow caused by a divided heart." This is of minimal interest, Lovoll contends, because the immigrants were "humans who showed great skill in adjusting, as humans have always done."[63] Regarding immigrants' letters specifically, Øverland explains the occasional outbursts of longing as "situational nostalgia": writing letters meant sitting down, reflecting on

[59] Oscar Handlin, *The Uprooted: The Epic Story of the Great Migrations That Made the American People*, 2nd ed. (1951; repr., Little, Brown: Boston, 1973) P. 4. See also the subsequent critique of Handlin: David J. Rothman, "*The Uprooted*: Thirty Years Later," *Reviews in American History* 10/3 (1982), pp. 311–319, and David A. Gerber, "*The Uprooted* Would Never Have Been Written If Oscar Handlin Had Taken His Own, Latter-Day Advice," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 32/3 (2013), pp. 68–77.

[60] Dorothy Burton Skårdal, *The Divided Heart: Scandinavian Immigrant Experience Through Literary Sources* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1974), see in particular pp. 15–26.

[61] An early argument for a "transplantation" perspective is Rudolph J. Vecoli, "*Contadini* in Chicago: A Critique of *The Uprooted*," *Journal of American History* 51/3 (1964), pp. 404–417. See also John Bodnar, *The Transplanted: A History of Immigrants in Urban America* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985). Two examples on this approach include Gjerde's *Minds of the West*, which explores the extent to which transplanted cultural values and ideals were eroded by the pressures of American society, and Terje Mikael Hasle Joranger, "The Migration of Tradition? A Study on the Transfer of Traditions Tied to Intergenerational Land Transfers among Emigrants from the Valdres Region, Norway to the Upper Midwest and their Descendants for Three Generations, 1850–1980" (PhD diss., University of Oslo, 2008), which documents the relative persistency of familial land transfer ideals and strategies in the Midwestern environment.

[62] Lovoll, *Promise of America*, p. 69.

[63] Lovoll, "Innvandrernes Amerika," p. 154 (My translation.)

past times, and thinking about the recipients of the letter.[64] "Indeed, it is wrong to read expressions of nostalgia in immigrant letters as indications of a general longing among those who wrote them," Øverland argues.[65] Living in compact settlements, surrounded by others of their nationality, and in many instances their former neighbors, occupied with turning the soil and breaking roots, immigrants had few reasons for continuously feeling "uprooted."[66]

The various sources of belonging

Even if America letters should in general be dismissed as genuine descriptions and expressions of immigrants' emotions, a sense of belonging might be gleaned from other sources. When it comes the history of Norwegian migration, the most potent expressions of belonging might not even have been verbal. The America letters reveal that both senders and recipients asked for and sent each other portraits and other types of images. Elise Wærenskjold, for instance, asked in a 1867 letter for pictures of "Lillesand and my place of birth" and excused her failure in sending portraits herself, as "there has never been a photographer here."[67] Photographs were part of the transatlantic communication between emigrants and their home communities in Norway. Photographs had also certain psychological functions for emigrants. Elisabeth Koren, upon receiving their long awaited baggage sent after them, exclaimed how "gay it was to unpack and see all our things againg both old and new, but especially the daguerrotypes. God be paised for all the dear faces we have with us!"[68] There were also many photographs produced mainly for home consumption in the American Midwest. In the 1870s, Andreas Larsen Dahl traveled the Midwest, producing photographs like that shown in figure 1. Immigrants are shown dressed up, some even in Civil War uniforms, displaying their possessions and their lifestyle in front of their homes in America. The agricultural implements are reminders of cultivated land beyond the picture frame, and the tokens of their Norwegian identity are displayed as proud reminders of their cultural identity in America – note the immigrant newspaper *Norden* [the North] – rather than as symbols of nostalgia and a longing for being elsewhere.[69] The very act of paying a photographer to arrange and freeze such a highly constructed scene into a permanent image

[64] Orm Øverland, "Visions of Home: Exiles and Immigrants," in *The Dispossessed: An Anatomy of Exile*, ed. Peter I. Rose. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2005), pp. 7–26.
[65] Øverland, "Listening to Immigrant Voices," p. 209.
[66] On the internal migration in America, see Hans Norman and Harald Runblom, *Transatlantic Connections: Nordic Migration to the New World after 1800* (Oslo: Norwegian University Press, 1987), esp. pp. 141–190.
[67] Elise Wærenskjold to Thorvald Dannevig, Four Mile Prairie, Texas, April 15–30, 1867, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 374–377, q. at p. 375. The novelty of the photograhic medium is shown in Wærenskjold's request: "Cannot one now have photographs of landscapes? Are these expensive?"
[68] Koren, *Diary*, p. 209.
[69] Although it became a practice as early as the 1850s to attach photographs to letters to Norway, the photographs Dahl produced may as well have been kept in family albums or displayed in immigrants' homes in America; his negatives were discovered in a Wisconsin barn. Lien, *Lengselens bilder*, pp. 51–85.

indicate that immigrants wanted to express, if only for their own sake, that they perceived themselves to have become at home in the new land.[70]

Nothwithstanding whether such images might have been intended for immigrants' walls and photo albums or for their relatives across the Atlantic, a few America letters did put such an imagery of belonging into words. One of the first notable Swedish emigrants, the student Gustaf Unonius, wrote in the 1840s several letters to Sweden which inspired both Swedes and Norwegians to follow him to the settlement he founded near Pine Lake, Wisconsin. Unonius concluded one of his letters by observing that they were "living a free and independent life in one of the most beautiful valleys the world can offer; and from the experiences of others we see that in a few years we can have a better livelihood and enjoy comforts that we must now deny ourselves." He was convinced that personally, he would be "satisfied in America": "I am partial to a republican form of government, and I have realized my youthful dream of social equality."[71] In another letter, he admitted that "I sometimes long for the fatherland, but I do not have cause to regret the step I have taken. With God's help I look to the future with assurance. The soil that gives me sustenance has become my home; and the land that has opened opportunities and has given me a home and feeling of security has become my new fatherland."[72]

[70] For the practice of photography as a "homemaking" activity in the Midwest, see Christina E. Dando, "Constructing a Home on the Range: Homemaking in Early-Twentieth Century Plains Photograph Albums," *Great Plains Quarterly* 28/2 (2008), pp. 105–133. See also Lori Ann Lahlum, "Mina Westbye: Norwegian Immigrant, North Dakota Homesteader, Studio Photographer, 'New Woman'," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 60/4 (2010), pp. 3–15, 91–93.

[71] Gustaf Unonius, Milwaukee, October 13, 1941 [sic!], printed in *Aftonbladet* on January 4, 5, 1842, in George M. Stephenson (ed. and trans.), *Letters Relating to Gustaf Unonius and the Early Swedish Settlers in Wisconsin*, assisted by Olga Wold Hansen (Rock Island, Illinois: Augustana Historical Society, 1937), pp. 40–52, q. at p. 50.

[72] Gustaf Unonius, New Upsala, North America, January 25, 1842, printed in *Aftonbladet* on May 28, 30, 31, June 3, 7, 9, 1842, in Stephenson, *Letters Relating to Gustaf Unonius*, pp. 65–92, q. at p. 92.

Figure 1: Andreas Larsen Dahl (photographer), Norwegian Family with Possessions, Madison, Wisconsin, ca. 1870–1879. WHI-1972. Wisconsin Historical Society.

Unonius' letters were intended for and read by the general public in Scandinavia.[73] Material of a more private nature also reveal that immigrants did struggle with feelings of longing and homesickness, but also that they employed strategies to cope. Few private journals have survived from the antebellum period, but one which has, is telling.[74] Elisabeth Koren had followed her husband Ulrik Vilhelm on his calling as a frontier pastor in Iowa during the 1850s, and during the first years she wrote a lengthy diary which her children later convinced her was worth publishing.[75]

Some of the diary entries read like an internal monologue on longing and how to cope with it. As a frontier pastor's wife, Elisabeth had to content herself with long periods in solitude or among strangers as Vilhelm travelled about the territory: it took the settlers of their parish a long time to fund and build the parsonage. "When I sit alone in this way and all is quiet about me, my thoughts naturally tend to cross the Atlantic and dwell on earlier days," Elisabeth wrote in her journal. "But when Vilhelm is away," she was not "always rightly disposed for such memories and would rather keep them away."[76] On another occasion, sitting alone and looking at the monotonous view, she exclaimed: "Oh, for a mountain with a view of forest and sea!"[77] The lack of such a view had made her take an imaginary journey through the places of the old home in Norway, she wrote, and even though she "did not for a moment wish that we had not come here," these "dear memories have made me melancholy." Even if instances like these affected immigrants more than what might be understood from their correspondence, such recorded instances also show how immigrants attempted to compose themselves. Her nostalgia, she admitted, was momentary and quick: "Oh, well, I am melancholy no longer. That was a mood of the moment, brought on by thinking of home and everything associated with it. And a quiet Sunday, when all work and bustle ceases, tends to intensify such a mood all the more." Yet she continued to deliberate on it. She would not want to return to Norway immediately: "it would be

[73] An exploration of Unonius' later efforts of curtailing emigration from Sweden, as they related to his personal experiences, is Nils Runeby, "Gustav Unonius and Propaganda Against Emigration," trans. H. Arnold Barton, *Swedish Pioneer Historical Quarterly* 24/2 (1973), pp. 94–107.
[74] According to the guide to NAHA's archives at St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota, hold five diaries from the antebellum years. I have not had the opportunity to consult these. Lloyd Hustvedt, *Guide to the Archives of the Norwegian-American Historical Association* (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 2001). Available in PDF format at NAHA's website, http://www.naha.stolaf.edu/archives/guide.htm [accessed May 3, 2015].
[75] As stated by her children in the original, *Fra Pioneertiden. Uddrag af Fru Elisabeth Korens Dagbog og Breve fra Femtiaarene. Udgivet af hendes Børn* (Decorah, Iowa: privately printed, 1914), p. 5. However, when the English translation was prepared, several omissions from the original manuscript were discovered. See David T. Nelson, "Introduction," in Koren, *Diary*, p. xiv.
[76] Koren, *Diary,* p. 176.
[77] Koren, *Diary*, p. 243.

too soon to make so long a journey again. But to stay here forever – I cannot think of such a thing, nor can Vilhelm either."[78]

The private writings of immigrants might also reveal that immigrants acquired a sense of home as they settled down. Many pastors returned to Norway after working for a number of years among their emigrated countrymen. Elisabeth and Vilhelm eventually stayed, and towards the end of Elisabeth's diary it is possible to observe how she gradually found herself at ease in her new home. Already their first meal in the yet unfinished parsonage made her exclaim that "God grant we may have many meals just as happy as this first one! […] we were alone – alone in our first home! Now for the first time I begin to understand rightly what 'home' means, our own home, which becomes dearer to me day by day."[79] Her joy of being "alone" was certainly in part due to the extended period in which she and her husband had lived with other immigrants in primitive frontier housing conditions, but the final realization of a home seems to have given her a deeper sense of fulfillment than the mere fact of not having to live with strangers.

As they continued living in America, the Korens encountered many other immigrants whose voices have not been recorded by themselves. Through the writings of the Korens, however, other immigrants were given a voice. Vilhelm noted in his memoirs, published in 1905, that he found himself bewildered that so few immigrants had any "thoughts of Norway and little longing for the fatherland." Vilhelm recollected that if he "attempted to steer the conversation onto this topic, it usually came to a halt." Pressing the topic in a conversation with an immigrant from Hallingdal, Vilhelm asked: "Do you often think of Norway? […] Aren't you longing for it?" The response Vilhelm received, was: "'If I long for Norway?' he responded, 'No, *Sir*, if I do – there was so much rock there.' Afterwards he sat deep in thought, and said: 'Yes, well, those lingonberries in Autumn, – those I remember. Well *sir*, those were helluva berries!'"[80]

Although published memoirs do not give direct access to the author's own emotions, they should not be dismissed as sole constructions for a reading public either. The very premise of memoirs rests upon their intention to relate private experiences and memories. In the instance of Unonius, a large two volume publication of his memoirs exist, which he had printed promptly

[78] Koren, *Diary*, p. 244.
[79] Koren, *Diary*, p. 314.
[80] Ulrik Vilhelm Koren, "Nogle Erindringer fra min Ungdom og fra min første Tid i Amerika," in *Samlede Skrifter*, ed. Paul Koren, vol. 4, *Erindringer, Digte, m.m.* (Decorah, Iowa: Lutheran Publishing House Bogtrykkeri, 1912), pp. 5–40, q. at p. 31. Previously printed in *Symra* 1 (1905), pp. 11–37. (My translation.) Emphasis indicates original English spelling. See appendix 2.

on returning to Sweden in 1858.[81] Several instances in these memoirs indicate that Unonius was still participating in the debate on emigration, justifying his own choices and character.[82] Yet other passages reveal Unonius' reflections on the nature of home and belonging, and these read more like Elizabeth Koren's personal observations. It was only half a year after they had left "old Uppsala" in Sweden, Unonius wrote, that he and his wife were now moving into "what we wanted to call our New Uppsala."[83] Reflecting on the notion of "home," he observed: "*Our home!* How much lies in the words, though in our case, they meant a small unfinished cabin without floor, without a door, without chairs, table, or any other piece of furniture – only an empty room with great openings here and there between the rough logs." Nonetheless,

> it was home – the first *own* home a man has after life's first sorrow drives the child across the parental threshold to be a stranger in the world. It was our own home, built by our own hands, in a strange land, which nevertheless just because of it took on the coloring of home. It was home – a home we had longed for during the trials of a long journey and many brief sojourns, now in one place, now in another.[84]

It was "a feeling of this being home" – a "*hemkänsla*" – which made his wife and himself cope with the many deprivations of a life on the frontier.[85] Still, he recollected, "for all this we were not in the new home forgetful of the old": "the New Uppsala, with all our joy at having reached the end of our journey, with all our bright hopes for prosperity and good fortune, had still a tear of regret for the old home with its beloved and sacred memories."[86]

Some immigrants like Linka Preus, married to a pastor, could on account of their devoutness, not only dismiss feelings of longing as inconsequential, but also belittle the very notion of home altogether. In her diary, only posthumously published, Linka observed how feelings of attachment to a certain place were illusory: "What an important name – home – we use it so often during our life in this world." Yet,

> do we have a home? Is there any place here where we shall always live, from which we shall not be moved, from which moving would be impossible? No, no, this place does not exist on earth. The place where we pitiful human beings, who should be considered wandering workers, travelers in complete darkness who are only waiting for the light so that we can take the right way, *here* chose to call home, is not really *such*, it is merely a temporary place of residence. But our home – our righteous, *true* home – oh,

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[81] Gustaf Unonius, *Minnen från en sjuttonårig vistelse i Norvestra Amerika*, 2. vols (Upsala, W. Schultz's förlag, 1861–1862). The quotations are from the English version, *A Pioneer in Northwest America, 1841–1858: The Memoirs of Gustaf Unonius*, ed. Nils William Olsson, trans. Jonas Oscar Backlund, vol. 1 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, for the Swedish Pioneer Historical Society, 1950).
[82] He was, for instance, cross with the famed Swedish novelist Fredrika Bremer's depictions of his settlement. Unonius, *Pioneer*, pp. 311–315. But still he wrote that "there is no truer and better description of American life" than Bremer's travel account, p. 52.
[83] Unonius, *Pioneer*, p. 209.
[84] Unonius, *Pioneer*, pp. 209–210.
[85] Unonius, *Pioneer*, p. 211. Cf. Unonius, *Minnen*, p. 216. Orig. emphasis.
[86] Unonius, *Pioneer*, p. 211.

> happy creatures we are, children of mercy! It is in heaven we shall see the light – where in our wandering we shall see only light and blessed radiance, and never, never twilight![87]

Few immigrants were as philosophical as Linka Preus regarding the nature of "home," but the surviving private writings of antebellum immigrants do indicate that a sense of becoming at "home" in America could and was acquired.

The problems of reading emotional experiences from letters

While the private material is indicative, it is not entirely representative: all of the above material were after all composed by educated, upper class emigrants. This makes it difficult to extrapolate or generalize a sense of belonging from these sources, and to generalize from them to account for the majority of emigrants. The problem of class also confronts the reader of immigrant correspondence.

An upper class immigrant, the sea captain Johan Gasmann, wrote several letters to Norway in the period 1847 to 1864. These were published in newspapers at home. In them, Gasmann expressed a sense of longing which appear more genuine than what may be found in most of the America letters. Although initially positive to the strangeness of the American landscape, Johan Gasmann wrote in later latters of there being "always a longing which nothing can erase." This longing was produced by living in a strange environment: "I do not really know what I am longing for. The people? No. […] I had few friends of any real worth. What is it then I long for? The old mountains and fjords and lakes? A strange loneliness comes over me when I think of that land which I shall, most likely, never see again."[88] Knut Oyangen, having investigated the appreciation of landscape aesthetics among immigrants in the Midwest, argues that upper class, "poetically inclined immigrants who had absorbed the 'naturalization of the nation' that took place in the nineteenth century seem to have struggled more with the alienation caused by an unfamiliar environment."[89] And indeed, Johan Gasmann seems to have represented this type of immigrant perfectly: there are few examples to be found of lower class immigrants expressing their longing in such eloquent terms, and especially in terms of the aesthetics of the landscape. What importance immigrants seemingly gave to their surroundings might not, of course, have

[87] Linka Preus, *Linka's Diary: A Norwegian Immigrant Story in Words and Sketches*, ed. Marvin G. Slind, sketch ed. Gracia Grindal (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Lutheran University Press, 2008), p. 255. Orig. emphasis.
[88] Johan G. Gasmann to Johan Mathias and Christiane Elisabeth Rye, Appleton, Outagamie Co., Wisconsin, December 15, 1855, in Clausen, "The Gasmann Brothers Write Home," q. at pp. 98–99. Johan Gasmann had observed on his inland journey to visit his brother Hans Gasmann at Pine Lake in 1844 that "Everything has something new – something distinctive about it. It is not England, not France's straw roofs, and not Norway, but something distinctly new." Gasmann, "From New York to Wisconsin in 1844," ed. and trans. Carlton C. Qualey, *SR,* vol. 5 (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1930), pp. 30–49, q. at p. 36.
[89] Knut Oyangen, "Immigrant Identities in the Rural Midwest, 1830–1925" (PhD diss., Iowa State University, 2007), p. 94.

been due to a different, educated perspective, but rather to their sheer ability to express such feelings and emotions in romantic terms.[90] While class differences on the surface appear to explain the types of emotional expressions or the general lack thereof in America letters, these differences cannot explain the mentality of immigrants itself.

The ways in which immigrants described the contrasting environments of Norway and America testify to another problem inherent in America letters. In explaining the contrasts and similarities between Norway and America, which writers of the early America letters typically did, Gjermund Gjermundsen Barboe noted in 1846 that "I love both America and Norway in different ways." Norway was the "fatherland, which I will always remember with love and respect as the years of my childhood and youth were spent *there* so that I often turn in my thoughts to where I know my fatherland lies." America, by contrast, "as it relates to my income, […] has a great advantage: I can make three times as much here as in Norway."[91] Hans Nielsen Gamkinn wrote in 1867 that "Here in America there is an abundance of the good things in life but something is missing: I don't feel at home here even though I make a lot of money every day."[92] The frontier pastor Olaus Fredrik Duus wrote in 1856 that "everything is well with us." Yet, "*America is not Norway*. Here there is always a sense of strangeness, something unlike home, and I don't suppose we'll ever feel completely at home here."[93]

It is tempting to view these statements, invoking emotional states in constrasting Norway and America, as indications of various stages of emotional adjustment which immigrants had to go through. Carsten Schjøtt Philipsen, in his dissertation on "the feeling of home," argues that to achieve such a feeling, there are at least two fundamental techniques which must be employed.

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[90] Nevertheless, an important idea, which Oyangen himself emphasizes, is that to all "rural people, the image of 'home' was always situated in a natural environment." Oyangen, "Immigrant Identities," p. 87.
See also Lori Ann Lahlum, "'There Are No Trees Here:' Norwegian Women Encounter the Northern Prairies and Plains" (PhD diss., University of Idaho, 2003). Thor Indseth notes that the main difference between the educated elite and commoners in relating information about America to Norway, was their tendency to describe American conditions in abstract and specific ways respectively. "Forestillinger om Amerika i Norge: Med vekt på motiver for utvandring i perioden 1866–1900, i lys av amerikabrev, amerikabøker og aviser" (master's thesis, University of Oslo, 2006), pp. 110–119.

[91] Gjermund Gjermundsen Barboe to a friend in Aust-Agder, Muskegon, Michigan, and Chicago, Illinois, November 3, 1846, *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 70–75, q. at p. 73. Orig. emphasis.

[92] Hans Nielsen Gamkinn to Niels Jensen Gamkinn, Argyle, Wisconsin, April 7, 1867, *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 373–374, q. at p. 373. The original expression, as if to illustrate the complexity of expressions of belonging, does not include the word "home": "Og her i Amerika er i over-Flod af Mange Lives goder men det Mangler Dog noget ogsaa her Aller helst naar Ingen Trivne finder Stæd som jeg for min del maa bekjende Enskjønt jeg kjener Penger til hvær Dag i Stor Maalestok." *FATN, vol. 2*, p. 398.

[93] Olaus Fredrik Duus to father, Landsverk, Neenah Settlement, Winnebago Co., Wisconsin, July 30, 1856, in *Frontier Parsonage: The Letters of Olaus Fredrik Duus, Norwegian Pastor in Wisconsin, 1855–1858*, ed. Theodore C. Blegen, trans. the Verdandi Study Club of Minneapolis (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1947), pp. 31–32, q. at p. 32. The italics are from the original translation, which indicate that Duus originally wrote these words in English.

These are imprint and adjustment, or in other words, to make one's new surroundings more familiar and to familiarize oneself with new surroundings.[94] As a process that might involve the negotiation of feelings both of longing and belonging, statements in letters might be interpreted as evidence of various stages or examples of this process. Many other America letters also compared in various ways the natural and social environments of Norway and America. But as the bulk of such comparisons demonstrate, the intention in doing so was in most instances to explain to a Norwegian audience, anxious for information about American conditions in order to make up their own minds of whether to emigrate or not, what might be expected when crossing the Atlantic.

Contrasting observations may of limited value as to what might be learnt from America letters on how immigrants felt at home in America, but what of immigrants' own usage of the term "home" itself? In the letters of Duus and Unonius, "home" was used to denote attachment to place, or the lack thereof. Other immigrants of lower social class and in various parts of America also employed the term "home" in their letters to Norway. In most cases this usage must be understood within the communicative context of the letter writer and his or her recipients shared: their mutual understanding of "home" was of course the very address the letter writer sent the letter to. Historians K. D. M. Snell and Steven King have had success in analyzing the meanings embedded in the words "home," "friends," "community," and "belonging" which appeared in the letters of the urban and rural poor in England from the early nineteenth century. This strategy would be of limited value for the case of Norwegians in America. The English poor, hailing in legal terms from clearly defined communities, continued to receive relief from these villages, even though they were residing elsewhere. They thus had a clearly defined interest in emphasizing where their "home," was, and to where they "belonged," for better and worse, in writing their letters to their home communities.[95] Norwegian emigrants had no such similar, strong incentive to employ "home" or other terms.

Rather, the letters reveal a pragmatic usage. Immigrants frequently wrote of their "our old birth town," "our old home," and "my old home and birth place," "our old fatherland Norway," "our old home of the fathers," or, without the possessive, simply "old Norway." Referring to America, immigrants also wrote of "the so called New World," "our new home," the "new

[94] Philipsen, "Hjemfølelse," p. 296.
[95] K. D. M. Snell, "Belonging and Community: Understandings of 'Home' and 'Friends' among the English Poor, 1750–1850," *Economic History Review* 65/1 (2012), pp. 1–25; Steven King, "Friendship, Kinship and Belonging in the Letters of Urban Paupers 1800–1840," *Historical Social Research* 33/3 (2008), pp. 249–277. "Friends," Snell observes, was a wide concept denoting kin and acquaintances alike, and an instrumental term in highlighting (the lack of) monetary support.

fatherland," and even the "new native land."[96] Employing such a temporal contrast between homes may not be interpreted as a shifting sense of belonging, from the "old" to the "new." Just as often, immigrants simply employed the term "home," with or without any temporal qualifications, to refer to their childhood home, and consequently to a home they had shared with those they wrote their letters to.

Emotions and the social functions of correspondence

As information about America was scarce in the mid-nineteenth century, letters from America spread like wildfire in Norway: they were copied, read aloud, and published in newspapers. Not only were the contents of an America letter the most convincing argument for people contemplating emigration, but letters were also the main ammunition in the battle for or against emigration from the fatherland as a moral or immoral decision. Consequently letters were employed both by ardent defenders and bitter opponents of emigration in the debates raging in Norwegian newspapers.[97] Accusations of exaggeration, false witness or unfounded opinion met the stream of letters from America in Norway, and in writing home immigrants attempted to meet and to preempt such reactions.[98]

While the contents of America letters cannot be abstracted from that context, writing letters "home" had many functions, and any one letter could have many intented effects embedded in its intricately written sentences. As David Gerber argues, the way "mostly unschooled artisans, farmers and peasants" communicated so many types and layers of information in a single letter, should be viewed as "no small accomplishment."[99] Writing letters helped nurture social ties. Emigrants might, after all, be reunited with some of their correspondents if these chose to follow. Or, writing letters might have ensured that, if emigrants would ever return, they had someone to return to. And indeed, in describing the mechanisms of "chain migration," Gjerde observe a "dual role" which America letters played. "On the one hand," he writes, "letters

[96] These citations are all from *FATN*, vols 1 and 2: "vor Gamle Fødebøgd," vol. 2, p. 396; "vort gamle Hjem," vol. 1, p. 435; "mit Gamle Hjem og Fødested," vol. 2, p. 107; "our old Fædreneland Norge," vol. 1, p. 189; "Vort Gamle fedrenes Hjem," vol. 1, p. 401; "det gamle Naarge," vol. 1, p. 285; "saa kaldt nye Verdensdeel," vol. 1, p. 355; "vores nye Hjem," vol. 1, p. 260; "dette nye fædreneland," vol. 1, p. 188; "nye Fødeland," vol. 1, p. 119.

[97] Henrik Wergeland's 1843 article "On the Emigration Rage" [Om Udvandrings-raseriet] is an early and indicative example on the temperature of the debate. Wergeland describes how he admonished a returned emigrant to publish his diary, so it could become an instrument of God, preventing "many countrymen from making themselves unhappy by emigrating." *For arbeiderklassen*, February 6, 1843, in *Agora: journal for metafysisk spekulasjon* 28/1-2 (2010), pp. 207–212, q. at p. 209. (My translation.)

[98] Øverland, "Listening to Immigrant Voices,"pp. 191–194.

[99] David A. Gerber, "The Immigrant Letter Between Positivism and Populism: The Uses of Immigrant Personal Correspondence in Twentieth-Century American Scholarship," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 16/4 (1997), pp. 3–34, q. at p. 18. Gro Svendsen, a Norwegian immigrant in Iowa, and who also appears in Gerber's analysis, reported in 1874 that "There are many here who can write but very few who can compose letters, so that I have to write not only for our nearest neighbors, but also for those who live far away," in *LTC*, p. 405.

served as a balm to ease the distress caused by separation and to preserve attenuated ties of kinship and friendship." On the other hand, letters "provided encouragement and information – oftentimes inadvertently – which in turn led to reunions in the new western settlements."[100] Writing letters could also compensate for the loss of direct social interactions with familiar faces: "Our thoughts often go to the old home and we would like to visit, but we may compensate by using the pen."[101]

Yet, even if admitting that expressions of longing in letters were products of "situational nostalgia," as Øverland argues, or were efforts to maintain the social bonds with the recipients, there might be a degree of truthfulness to expressions in letters that are not reducible to the contexts in which the letters were produced and received. The process of writing letters undoubtedly produces feelings of nostalgia, but it might all the same intensify already existing – if mainly suppressed – feelings.[102] The decision to write a letter precedes, after all, the act of writing, and the wish to write may have been due to a nostalgia that, for all we know, immigrants in longer and shorter periods experienced and suffered from. Some expressions, like the one which is found in a letter from 1857, seem at least not entirely reducible to a contribution to the debate on emigration, nor merely as an attempt of maintaining social bonds:

> Dear parents, how many times have not my eyes been wet and my heart directed to God with the hope of being able to speak to you, before death should find us. This is to pray against the will of the Lord, as we are so far away from each other, but the home, home, that dear fatherland, it makes my heart uneasy day and night. This is how it is, apparently, for all those who has a loving memory of their home.[103]

The intention of assuring the existence of continued affection for their parents may be clearly read from these lines, but their longing for the "fatherland" and not only for their old family home may indicate that they experienced and expressed a longing that was not solely functional. Nor did this letter engage the debate on emigration, at least not in a direct manner: the letter writers did not discuss the advantages or disadvantages in emigration at all.

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[100] Gjerde, *Minds of the West*, p. 88. See also Orm Øverland, "Letters as Links in the Chain of Migration from Hedalen, Norway to Dane County, Wisconsin, 1857–1890," in *Interpreting the Promise of America: Essays in Honor of Odd Sverre Lovoll*, ed. Todd W. Nichol (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 2002), pp. 79–103.

[101] Elias Hansen and Ane Kristine Tørrisdatter Narjord to Hans Pedersen Narjord, Dorchester, Iowa, December 26, 1856, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 220–222, q. at p. 220.

[102] Lovoll contends that "logically speaking, humans do not go around daily with a longing in their heart or continuously experience conflicting feelings." "Innvandrernes Amerika," p. 149. (My translation.)

[103] Arne and Bertha Thorsdatter (Mehus) Johnsen to Thor Mehus, Bostwick Valley, La Crosse Co., Wisconsin, February 20, 1857, in *FATN, vol. 2*, pp. 504–506, q. at pp. 504–505. "Kierlige Foreldre, vor mangen gang mine Øiene har været vaade og hie[r]tet ophevvet til Gud med den bøn, at jeg kunde faa tale med dem, førren døden skulde bort kalde os. Dette er lige som at bede imod herrns villie da vi er saa langt burte i fra hindanden, men hiemmet, hiemmet, det kierre Fedreland det jør uro i mit hierte om Dagen og om Naten. Saaledes er det, vist med vær den som har sit hiem i et kiert minde."

Speculating on the various intentions behind such emotional expressions can never amount to more than speculation. Emotional expressions were tied to a variety of intentions that remain inaccessible for the historian. What is possible to establish, however, is how immigrants in their letters described the experiences of emotions. Looking closely at how immigrants discussed instances of homesickness, such descriptions reveal a prevalence of the emotion, which expressions of longing, interpreted as "situation nostalgia," may even have worked to overshadow.

Immigrants tended to report the absence of the feeling in their letters home. Sara Aslakson, for example, wrote in 1868 that "I find myself very satisfied here. I haven't longed for Norway since I came."[104] The same year Tor Torstensen Vigenstad wrote a letter to his brother, saying that "I've been doing quite well and I don't think that I'll be returning home as soon as I thought to begin with. But of course, anyone who has left such a home as I have will miss it."[105] If letter writers themselves admitted to having felt homesick, rather than expressing their feelings directly, they wrote of such feelings in the past tense. Hellik Olson Lehovd wrote in 1860 that "I am happier here than in Minnesota where I often longed for my home in Norway. But now I am living in the best and most fertile part of America with large farms and good houses and more money among people."[106] Letter writes assured their recipients that although other family members had been homesick, they were at the time of writing doing well. Magrete Nilsdatter wrote in 1853, that her brother Lars had been well "since he left you and hasn't missed a single meal. He has of course at times longed for his old home and he has often spoken of you, our dear mother, which is not surprising. But I don't think that this longing hurts his spirit because he is for the most part quite happy."[107] Ellev Bjørnsen wrote that his "sister is in good health and is doing well […] and she doesn't long for her homeland."[108]

Whether immigrants described the longing of others or their own, they evoked the continued connection with those they had left. In so doing, the communication of longing allowed immigrants to express a sense of belonging in America as well. Ellev turned the question of

[104] Sara Aslakson to Osmund and Beren Andreas Atlaksen Ovedal, Coon Prairie, Wisconsin, July 27, 1868, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 405–407, q. at p. 406.
[105] Tor Torstensen Vigenstad to Ole Torstensen Vigenstad, South Bend, Minnesota, and Spring Prairie, Wisconsin, June 1868, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 403–405, q. at p. 404.
[106] Hellik Olson Lehovd to Ole Helgesen Lehovd, Christiana, Wisconsin, November 4, 1860, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 276–278, q. at p. 276.
[107] Magrete Nilsdatter to Martha Haldorsdatter Nesheim, Cambridge, Wisconsin, December 19, 1853, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 172–177, q. at p. 175.
[108] Ellev Bjørnsen to Anlaug Christophersdatter Tunga, Pine Lake, Lebanon, Wisconsin, January 17, 1846, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 68–70, q. at p. 69. The original term, which is translated as "homeland," is "gamle Fødeland." *FATN, vol. 1*, p. 69.

longing on its head. Of course they missed their mother, Ellev insisted, but "as we don't wish to live in Norway, this would be too great a sacrifice; nature has set up too wide a separation between us" and "although we have chosen this separation ourselves, it has been created by God, and if we live Christian lives we won't be forgotten by him, wherever we may be on earth. Let this be our comfort, mother, when you are troubled in your thoughts."[109] Writing to inform his mother of the death of his sister in the same year, Ellev noted that she "was always in good health after she came to America. She was optimistic and was never homesick, but often spoke of mother and Torgon and always wished that her sister would come here."[110] "I have told you that I am happy here, and I really am," Gro Svendsen wrote to her parents from Iowa in 1863.[111] Reflecting on the falling land prices around her and the rumours of good land in Rock County in 1871, Gro displayed a sense of attachment to place: "To tell the truth, it would not be well for us to move, as this place has become quite dear to us."[112]

While the decision to emigrate was often final and incontrovertible, the ties that had bound them those they had left, had not been broken in the process, immigrants insisted. This insistence allowed immigants to communicate a certain degree of belonging in America to those at home. This strategy is evident in the 1850 letter of Henrietta Jessen, who wrote to her sisters from her homestead in Wisconsin. "Fate has indeed separated me from my native land and all that was dear to me there, but it is not denied me to pour forth my feelings upon this paper," she wrote. Giving no indication that she regretted her decision to emigrate, she on the contrary proclaimed: "thanks be to the Lord who gave me strength to carry out this step, which I hope will be for my own and my children's best in the future." Even though she hoped "that time will heal the wound" of separation, she admitted that "up to the present I cannot deny that homesickness gnaws at me hard." It was especially during "dark times such as this winter when my dear Peder was sick" that she "often wished that I were surrounded by my dear ones." Now, however, "the worst is over," and Henrietta was overall happy: "When I think, however, that there will be a better livelihood for us here than in poor Norway, I reconcile myself to it and thank God, who protected me and mine over the oceans waves and led us to a fruitful land, where God's

[109] Bjørnsen to Christophersdatter Tunga, January 17, 1846, p. 68.
[110] "She was granted this pleasure but for a very short time," Ellev notes. Ellev Bjørnsen to Anlaug Christophersdatter Tunga, Ashippun, Wisconsin, December 7, 1846, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 76–79, q. at p. 76.
[111] Gro Svendsen to Nils Knudsen Gudmundsrud, Skrattegaarden, July 25, 1863, in *Frontier Mother: The Letters of Gro Svendsen*, ed. and trans. Pauline Farseth and Theodore C. Blegen (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1950), pp. 41–43, q. at p. 42.
[112] Gro Svendsen to parents, sisters, brothers, May 18, 1871, in *Frontier Mother*, pp. 112–114, q. at p. 113.

blessings are daily before our eyes."[113] In reassuring the recipients of their letters that they were doing well, immigrants might of course have exaggerated their well-being, or avoided comments that they imagined would instill worry at home – that would be impossible to determine in each case.

Should not even such descriptions of homesickness be considered entirely authentic as to the actual emotional experiences of emigrants, then the communication of longing and homesickness might still have had another function than the preservation of social bonds.[114] Historian of homesickness in America Susan J. Matt argues that for immigrants in particular, the experience of homesickness was a "bridge that connected their old identities with their new, and preserved a sense of self in an alien environment."[115] The experience of homesickness ensured a sense of stability, of still being connected to their old home, their past, and the friends and families they had left, even as they were busy building a new life in America. If Matt is correct, then it might have been the act of describing homesickness in letters to those who had previously constituted much of their own personal identity that helped immigrants like Henrietta Jessen preserve a sense of continuity. Letter writing could allow immigrants to maintain a sense of a continuous identity, based upon the relations to the social world immigrants could still occupy in the country they had left, using their pen.

It is in the end difficult to verify such psychological effects of letter writing, although it is possible to assert the likelihood of their existence. Theorizer of "moral sentiments" Adam Smith observed almost a century before Jessen wrote her letter that, to evoke sympathy in others, the expression of emotions must be tempered to allow others to be able to sympathize with them; otherwise the bonds of sympathy are broken.[116] The communication of past homesickness might have been tempered in order to disavow reasons for worry, but it might also have been more than an expression of longing designed to maintain social bonds. Although individual letters are of limited value as a pathway to the actual emotional experiences of immigrants, they demonstrate that feelings of homesickness existed, and that these feelings were experienced.

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[113] Henrietta Jessen to Eleanore and "Dorea" Williamsin, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, February 20, 1850, in "Immigrant Women and the American Frontier: Three Early 'America Letters,'" ed. and trans. Theodore C. Blegen, *SR,* vol. 5 (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1930), pp. 14–29, see pp. 22–26.

[114] One school of thought considers emotional expressions to be social constructions. See e.g. James R. Averill, "A Constructivist View of Emotion," in *Emotion: Theory, Research, and Experience*, ed. Robert Plutchik and Henry Kellerman, vol. 1, *Theories of Emotion* (New York: Academic Press, 1980), pp. 305–339.

[115] Susan J. Matt, *Homesickness: An American History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 170.

[116] Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, ed. D. D. Raphael and A. L. Macfie (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1982), p. 22. First published in Edinburgh in 1759.

Moreover, in communicating these emotions, by describing or even by denying them, such feelings could also be instrumental in overcoming future instances of longing.

Normative descriptions of homesickness: establishing an emotional community

What gives immigrants' descriptions of homesickness their more general historical importance, however, is as examples of a more widely shared culture of emotional control among immigrants in America. Nils Olav Østrem has argued that the decision to emigrate must be understood in part psychologically, as potential emigrants were embedded in an "emigration culture" in Norway, in which emigration was an imaginable and available life course.[117] Gerber has suggested that it was America letters which created a lasting "culture of emigration," existing on both sides of the Atlantic.[118] And indeed, the letters give plenty of evidence of a continuous communication between emigrants and the fatherland: letters from America were printed in newspapers in Norway. The emigrant newspapers in America, receiving copies of Norwegian newspapers, reprinted such letters continuously.[119] The circuitous nature of the transatlantic communication notwithstanding, it was the normative discussion of emotions as it unfolded among emigrants in America that created what Barbara Rosenwein calls an "emotional community" in the Midwest; a community in which the proper expressions and control of emotions were negotiated.[120] It was emigrants, and not those read their letters in Norway, who needed to discuss emotional experiences connected to migration normatively.[121]

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[117] Nils Olav Østrem, "Emigrant Culture: The 'Psychological Factor' in Norwegian Emigration History," in *Norwegian-American Essays 2004*, ed. Orm Øverland, assistant ed. Harry T. Cleven (Oslo: NAHA-Norway, 2005), pp. 229–243.

[118] David A. Gerber, "Epistolary Ethics: Personal Correspondence and the Culture of Emigration in the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 19/4 (2000), pp. 3–23. "This culture of emigration, about which we have hardly begun to ask significant questions," Gerber observes, "was broader than simply individual sets of correspondents," and it consisted of "ongoing and mutually constructed and shared attitudes, emotions, and ideas of the participants in both the homeland and the land of resettlement," see p. 6. See also Knut Djupedal, "Personal Letters as Research Sources," *Ethnologia Scandinavica: A Journal for Nordic Ethnology* 19 (1989), pp. 51–63, who argues that the shared frames of reference between the writer and recipient of letters make personal letters "perhaps better sources of information for the study of collective ideas and attitudes than autobiographies or diaries," p. 62.

[119] E.g. Olaus Fredrik Duus noted in the letter, cited above, how the "letter, which appeared in *Emigranten*, probably copied either from *Morgenbladet* or *Christianiaposten*" was written by "old Captain Gasmann" and sent to "his friend Merchant Boiesen, in Porsgrund." *Frontier Parsonage*, p. 32.

[120] Barbara H. Rosenwein, "Problems and Methods in the History of Emotions," *Passions in Context: International Journal for the History and Theory of Emotions* 1 (2010), pp. 1–32. See also her article "Worrying about Emotions in History," *American Historical Review* 107/3 (2002), pp. 821–845.

[121] A contemporary parallel is found in the attempts of emotional control in the Union army, see Frances Clarke, "So Lonesome I could Die: Nostalgia and Debates Over Emotional Control in the Civil War North," *Journal of Social History* 41/2 (2007), pp. 253–282.

By emigrating, Norwegians had challenged strong-held notions of rootedness and stability. The Bishop of Bergen Jacob Neumann wrote as early as 1837 an admonition to the peasants of his district, urging them to remain in the fatherland, if not necessarily in the home valley:

> Here in Norway rest the bones of your fathers; here you first saw the light of day; here you enjoyed many childhood pleasures; here you received your first impressions of God and of His love; here you are still surrounded by family and friends, who contribute to your well-being, and there, when you are far away from all that has been dear to you, who shall close your eyes in the last moment of your life? A stranger's hand! And who shall weep at your grave? Perhaps – no one![122]

Emigrants would become individuals lacking a proper and secure home, and they would inevitably regret their decision, doomed to long for the home they had left. The poet Henrik Wergeland fronted a similar argument in the play he wrote on his death bed in 1845. "Many a fool went across the ocean to North America, but soon came back as a *fant*, without a single cent left," Wergeland's mouthpiece in the play observed. "One travels east, one travels west, the Norwegian home is in the end the best."[123] Those who emigrated would not only fail to achieve their goals, but they would also inevitably return, and then without any security of livelihood that they had previously enjoyed – they would be like the nomadic "fantefolk" who roamed about the Norwegian countryside. Previously, the term "fant" had such a wide meaning in the Norwegian language that it encompassed all sorts of outsiders and deviants of norms and traditions, the first sociologist in Norway, Eilert Sundt, observed in 1850. Now, however, it had come to refer to those who "do not leave their home on a journey, and then return again to that same home, but to those who, without a real home, spend their entire life traveling." These people had become "a segregated caste which do not belong to the Norwegian people."[124] Thus "fant" had in Wergeland's usage strong connotations to actual vagrancy, even though it also

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[122] Gunnar J. Malmin (ed. and trans.), "Bishop Jacob Neumann's Word of Admonition to the Peasants," *SR,* vol. 1 (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1926), pp. 95–109, q. at pp. 108–109. I have modified the translation, according to the transcribed version available at *The Promise of America* website, http://www.nb.no/emigrasjon/emigration/ [accessed April 27, 2015]. The original was published in Bergen in 1837.

[123] Henrik Wergeland, "Fjeldstuen," in *Samlede skrifter: trykt og uttrykt*, ed. Herman Jæger and Didrik Arup Seip, *2. Digterverker, vol. 6: 1845*, ed. Herman Jæger (Kristiania: Steen, 1922), pp. 561–598, q. at p. 597: "Saamangen Daare over Havet hen / drog ud til Nordamerika, / men kom og snart som en Fant igjen, / med ei en Skilling i Fikka. / Man reise øst, og man reise vest, / det norske Hjem er dog allerbedst." For Wergeland's views on America, see Odd Arvid Storsveen, "Wergelands doble Amerika," *Agora: journal for metafysisk spekulasjon* 28/1–2 (2010), pp. 5–25.

[124] Eilert Sundt, *Beretning om Fante- eller Landstrygerfolket i Norge. Bidrag til Kundskab om de laveste Samfundsforholde* (Christiania: A. W. Brøgger, 1850), pp. 1–4, q. at p. 4. "at de ikke for en enkelt Tour forlode sit Hjem og atter vendte tilbage til samme, men uden noget vist Hjem tilbragte deres hele Liv paa Reiser […] en afsondret Kaste, der ikke i Virkeligheden tilhørte det norske Folk."

suggested rootlessness in general. These were the attitudes that emigrants faced upon leaving, and in various communications with the home country.[125]

As emigrants, Norwegians considered it necessary not only to justify their decision to leave the fatherland, but also for privileging individual ambition over tradition. Therefore, in letters to Norway immigrants often celebrated the individual liberty to be found in America, as well as insisting that they had made a correct decision in leaving.[126] They could also directly challenge the very premises which the criticism of emigration rested upon. Berthe Østerli had received an admonition from a pastor in Norway, urging her to reconsider her decision to emigrate. But as Østerli inveighed, "In Norway as in other countries, people both high and low change their occupation, move from one place to another. Why should my emigration then be so dangerous?" And, she asked, "Why is it in this case talk of tempting our Lord, just because one wants to go out and look for bread, and indeed to leave a 'Sultihjel-Land' [a country of starvation], which Finnmark in Norway, where I labored for my bread, was."[127]

Immigrants could also reprimand the expressions of disappointment of failure by other emigrants, understanding such expressions to be evidence of a poor character. Already in 1845, eighty Norwegian settlers at Muskego in Wisconsin banded together to issue a defense of their colony in 1845, and thus set the standard for how homesickness among emigrants should be viewed.[128] The settlement had been plagued by ill fortune and illness. The settlement consequently received bad press in Norway, and this the settlers at Muskego sought to correct.[129] "The dissatisfaction that showed itself at the beginning among many of the immigrants at this place," they argued, "had its origin for the most part in an unseasonable homesickness more to

[125] The prevalence of such values may be gleaned from the discussions of emigration in the fictional literature of the period, see Jørunn Mannsåker, *Emigrasjon og dikting: Utvandringa til Nord-Amerika i norsk skjønnlitteratur* (Oslo: Det norske samlaget, 1971), particularly pp. 264–273. *Emigranten*, in fact, reprinted on January 11, 1856, reprinted an announcement from the Norwegian government that it would help "bands of Travelers to acquire permanent homes in Norway" ["Fantefølger til Erhvervelsen af faste Hjemsteder i Norge"] and *Emigranten* believed the announcement would "certainly be read with interest by many" ["visselig af Mange læses med Interesse."]

[126] See e.g. Johan Reinert Reiersen's letter of 1852, which the Minnesotan newspaper *Folkets Røst* printed on September 4, 1858, appendix 3.

[127] "Norges Dom over Amerika." *Emigranten*, November 23, 1863. Both Pastor Brun's letter and Østerli's reply were printed in the newspaper, along with some biting comments by *Emigranten* itself. See appendix 4.

[128] Muskego, indeed, became a hub of intellectual activity among Norwegians in America: *Nordlyset*, the first Norwegian newspaper in America, was printed at Muskego, and the first Lutheran Church congretation was also established here. See. Lovoll, *Promise of America*, pp. 55–58, and 102–103.

[129] Muskego suffered from its reputation. In 1847, an "old settler" would insert a defense of the colony in *Nordlyset*, which had only begun printing in that very place. The settler argued that as Muskego was the first (Norwegian, it was presumably implied) settlement in Wisconsin, it had functioned as a waystation for all those immigrants who came to the West, and who eventually had caused the epidemic in what quickly became an overpopulated settlement. *Nordlyset*, September 30, 1847.

be looked for in children than in adults." Yet those "certain few" who had succumbed to their feelings had managed to "spread the most thoughtless rumors, accompanied in some cases by curses and expressions of contempt for America, as much as to say that God had no part in creating this land." The failure to control their emotions, however,

> arose from such circumstances, for instance, as that they had to get along without certain kinds of food to which they were accustomed, that this or that article in their diet did not taste the same as it did at home, that they suffered from the lack of some convenience or other, or that they missed certain of their friends with whom they had before had pleasant association.

By clinging to the aspects of their past, they had given in to an unhealthy disposition:

> In such ways they fondly reminisce and let their minds become uneasy and full of longing without being able to satisfy their yearnings. Meanwhile they lose sight of all those former difficulties, of the whole gloomy prospect of earning their living, which they felt so intensely before they left their native land; and so they now imagine this to be that land of Canaan which at one time they supposed to lie in America.

Emigrants, the letter writers contended, had to "forget bygone things and to look forward instead." Longing for things, persons, and places of the past was immature, irrational, and had to be suppressed.[130] Communicating such longing, and not only the sheer demonstration of it, showed those who did so as unsuitable for emigration rather than that it proved such longing to be inherent in the process of migration itself.

It is this practice of discussing the proper disposition emigrants had to possess in order to succeed in America that Norwegian newspapers in the Midwest continued. The October 20, 1854 editorial of *Emigranten*, provides a dense example of many more loose comments that are to be found in the immigrant press. Caricaturing the mindset which produced feelings of longing, the editorial separated those who were disposed versus those who were indisposed for the emotional adjustment necessary for a migration. Emigrants who complained of conditions in Norway, would continue to complain in America, the paper argued. "They leave the conditions they deem oppressive, and throw themselves into entirely unknown conditions, where, as soon as the event has lost its novelty and attraction for them, it becomes clear that the dissatisfaction did not concern the conditions, but is found in their disposition." Those who could not "be content with what he has got" would always "be tormented more or less by dissatisfaction and malcontent." Neither would emigrants who expected to find immediate comfort and pleasure without the stamina required for the first years of hard work, avoid becoming homesick. Such an

[130] From eighty Norwegians to Norwegians in the old country, Muskego, Wisconsin, January 6, 1845, originally published in *Morgenbladet* on April 1, 1845. In *LTC*, pp. 191–194, q. at p. 193. I have modified the translation slightly, cf. Theodore C. Blegen (ed.), *Amerikabrev*, with a preface by Ingrid Semmingsen (Oslo: H. Aschehoug, 1958), pp. 178–181.

emigrant would "long home to the mean conditions, – he would be content with less, solely to be happy again." Finally emigrants who had been accustomed to living in civilized conditions, and who failed to recognize how important this was to them would, having "loosened the ties which bound them to place, and relations, kin and friends," never find compensation for their loss in America.

Even though *Emigranten* considered homesickness to be the result of an indisposition, it also suggested that the actual expressions of it underrepresented the amount of homesickness among Norwegians. There would be many pioneers, "and perhaps many more, who hardly would admit it" that would "feel the loss of the home of the fathers and its social relations," the editorial concluded. Despite the ill dispositions which produced homesickness, homesickness was an illness difficult to avoid entirely: "Longing and compensation! Those are two words which the pioneer often wants removed from his lexicon. They are to be found in it, though."[131]

In order to legitimize emigration by challenging values of rootedness, immigrants had to delegitimize or belittle these feelings. Both the experiences and the expressions of homesickness could threaten the success of emigration. As Tosten Levorsen Hvashovd warningly wrote in the same year: "I am sure that it is far easier to make a living here than in Norway" if, he added, "you can be at home here."[132] In 1844, Ellev Bjørnsen Tangen had written a letter to explicitly advise those who considered to emigrate. He listed eight different types of people, only three of which were in the proper situation for becoming successfull emigrants: "the growing youth," "those who are able to come here with ample means," and most importantly, the "strong and healthy" in body and spirit, possessing a "firm character" and an ability to "plan systematically." Regarding the ability to be mentally and physically "strong and healthy," he noted, "these qualifications ought to be added for all the other classes."[133]

In this context it appears a puzzle that *Emigranten*, in 1856, printed a long, eloquent America letter, evidently written by an upper-class emigrant, giving vent to most of the above-mentioned maladies. The letter writer, most likely Johan Gasmann, was so dissatisfied with American party politics – "The parties tear each other to pieces, all wants to govern, and eventually there is no

[131]Editorial, "Den norske Nybygger i Amerika," *Emigranten*, October 20, 1854, see appendix 5.
[132] Tosten Levorsen Hvashovd to Ole Nirisen Vangestad and Ole Helgesen Lehovd, Christiana, Wisconsin, January 14, 1854, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 177–180, q. at p. 178. Note that Øverland translates "if you can be at home here" from "dersom man kan finde sig tilfreds her." *FATN, vol. 1*, p. 309.
[133] Ellef Bjørnsen Tangen to relatives, Pine Lake, Wisconsin, January 14, 1844, in *LTC*, pp. 188–191, q. at. pp. 189–190.

government" – that he had "no real interest in being a fellow citizen."[134] The state of religion in the country was no better: "there is enough of religion here, at least preaching and singing – but I cannot deny that I deem it rather a mechanic process rather than the true teachings, which is the foundation of Christianity." While having considered it necessary to emigrate in order to earn his living, and while having made several friends among Americans "which somehow comforts me in the loss of my fatherland," the familiar landscape and the old social relations from Norway that made him long home: "these are not the familiar mountains, and where is that historical winter of my fatherland, my home, there, where every rock, every piece of soil, every nice bay of the ocean, yes, indeed every skerry and islet makes a kind impression on the soul." The "old country" might have been a poor one, but "it speaks with more power to the spirit and the heart, than what this admittedly bountiful, but yet monotonous great West does." For a Dane "this land might appear beautiful," but "not so for a Norwegian," he lamented. What tormented him most, it seems, was the lack of a stable community. In America "forward it can and must go, often headlong, naturally, everything is progress." But the "cozy home, old neighbors, national customs, which makes life stable – all this is unknown here."[135]

The printing of such letters might have had the same function, and presumably also the same intention, as the printing of nostalgic poetry. Among the many poems that were printed in the newspapers of this period, several were sentimental, and full of longing. In 1856, *Emigranten* printed the poem "En Normands Hjemvee" [The Homesickness of a Norwegian], describing how America could not, despite "a temperate zone" and a "free and lovely soil," compare to "my beloved North":

[134] "Et Brev om Amerika." *Emigranten*, June 27, 1856. This letter is most likely written by Johan Gasmann, brother of the former member of the Norwegian *Storting* Hans Gasmann, and sea captain for many years, before following his brothers' footsteps in migrating to Pine Lake in 1847. The clues are several: the address of the letter is "Mapleton, Waukesha County," only a few miles from Pine Lake; the letter is dated 1856, and in C. A. Clausen's collection of letters from the Gasmann brothers, there is a gap between the letter from Johan dated December 15, 1855, and the next, dated November, 1860; the letter writer mentions that he has been a "supervisor" of the town for the last three years, and in the 1855 letter from Johan, he mentions that he has become a "supervisor" for the township; the style and tone of the letter is similar to Johan's other letters, including the same themes and sentiments; and the letter writer concludes the present letter with the observation that he still has the strength to steer a ship across the Atlantic once more. See Clausen, "The Gasmann Brothers Write Home."

[135] "Et Brev om Amerika." *Emigranten*, June 27, 1856. See appendix 6.

There was my cradle, here I might find
In foreign soil a grave for my dusty remains;
Though the eternally cherished place I recall for you
And cast my longing gaze beyond the great Atlantic Ocean[136]

Svein Schrøder Amundsen and Reimund Kvideland, who have edited a collection of emigrant songs, argue that "Among the emigrants […] ballads about homesickness could ease psychological stress, and putting these feelings into words could function as a catharsis."[137] Yet, as Øverland remarks, there was "surprisingly little nostalgia in the literature of this early period." Expressions of longing in poetry, he argues, were generally "tempered by the liberal conviction that the United States offered freedom from the class barriers and restrictions that kept the Norwegian rural population in poverty."[138] But just as emigrants could celebrate the political liberty of the United States, they could also become disappointed with many aspects of American society. The lack of religious instruction and the unfamiliarity with partisan politics which Gasmann observed, are but a few examples of the many ways in which immigrants thought Norwegian society superior to America.[139] The printing of letters and emigrant poetry, nostalgic or not, might have defanged the worst bouts of homesickness which immigrants experienced, as it asserted the superiority of immigrants' world view and their cultural heritage.

The October 20, 1854 editorial comment of *Emigranten* cited above appears to have been inspired by an article sent to *Emigranten* and published the week before. The article was written by an immigrant in New York, "F.W.," and in a rather convoluted fashion, it argued that rootedness was a weakness rather than a strength. An anecdote described a farmer who complained of overpopulation in his valley, and, upon being confronted that he might live somewhere else – "the world was spacious enough, even if it was not exactly so in Hallingdal" – the farmer replied that indeed, "there may be many good places to live in the world, but none of them would be Hallingdal!" Despite the esteem such a "rooted love of the fatherland" must be accorded, the article argued, the farmer's "love was so intertwined with that piece of earth

[136] J.M.C.W.W., "En Nordmands Hjemvee." *Emigranten*, March 19, 1856. "Hist stod min Vugge, her maaskee jeg finder / I fremmed Jordbund for mit Støv en grav; / Dog evig elskete Plet jeg dig erindrer / Og skuer med Længsel hiinsides det store atlanti- / ske Hav."
[137] Svein Schröder Amundsen and Reimund Kvideland (ed.), *Emigrantviser* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1975), introduction, pp. 9–37, q. at p. 33. "On the other hand," they note, "in Norway the ballads could strengthen propaganda against emigration." I have quoted from Ann Clay Zwick' translation of the article, which is available at the National Library of Norway's website, *The Promise of America*: http://www.nb.no/emigrasjon/emigration/ [accessed April 12, 2015].
[138] Orm Øverland, *The Western Home: A Literary History of Norwegian America* (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1996), p. 37. Even though the publication of poems describing feelings of longing might have been an attempt to compartmentalize such feelings, so that when immigrants, reading such material in newspapers, experienced a "catharsis," it would at the same time necessarily have been a recognition that immigrants experienced such feelings.
[139] This will be further discussed in chapter 3.

where he was born and lived, that any transplantation thereof would be as damaging on him as would a similar change brought upon those delicate plants which cannot draw nutrition from any other soil than that in which they had originally struck roots." A "true emigrant," by contrast, had to be "governed by other emotions, if he is to answer his calling." The proper disposition of an emigrant would be to value all aspects of "home" and work to further "the language and customs of the home," while at the same time "truly engage with his new situation" in the country where his "descendants will live as native citizens." Otherwise, the article concluded, if his "feelings did not correspond to the world around him," then "he could just as well have stayed at home."[140]

Conclusion

Historians have with good reason doubted the possibility of accessing the emotional experiences of immigrants from America letters. The social, ideological, economic, and material contexts in which each letter must be understood, have been seen to determine the contents of immigrant writings to such a degree that they cannot be taken as genuine expressions of an experienced reality. If expressions are viewed in light of – and contrasted with – descriptions of emotional experiences, then it is possible to demonstrate the existence of feelings of nostalgia. This nostalgia was not simply situational, even if it is eventually impossible to determine the prevalence of homesickness among immigrants. The very communication of such descriptions of homesickness, which might occasionally be found in immigrants' letters, requires an understanding of the wider culture of migration of which emigrants were part. Giving evidence of homesickness, letter writers participated in a more widely shared activity defining and policing emotional expressions which could be taken as evidence of an ill-informed decision to emigrate. This "emotional community," which the early immigrant newspapers in America helped to shape, sought to define expressions of homesickness as evidence of maladjustment and weak character, rather than what critics of emigration in Norway understood it to be: a confirmation that emigration from the fatherland was an inherently wrong decision to make.

Contrary to critics who believed that homesickness would inevitably accompany emigration, ensuring that emigrants would never come to feel at home outside of their native country, Norwegians found little reason not consider themselves to have acquired a home in America. How immigrants came to imagined themselves to belong in America as a region is the topic of the next chapter.

[140] "Udvandreren og hans Stilling i det nye Hjem." *Emigranten*, October 13, 1854. See appendix 7.

2. THE POSSIBILITIES OF BELONGING: IMMIGRANTS AND COLONIZATION

> As a rule, the Norwegians are known for their clever choice of good, usable land. They like to choose places where they can handily cultivate the fertile, woodless prairie and yet have sufficient timber and easy access to good water. […] relatively few of our common country folk choose the city. So it is that our Scandinavians make their home in the western region of the New World. – *Herman Amberg Preus, 1867.*[141]

> Their conceptions of the land and fate they are going to are naturally highly obscure, and they are most obscure regarding themselves, but the goal which basically, it seems to me, they are expecting and hoping for is not any fresh and newly formed object, unlike all that the past has offered them, but rather is simply the old and well loved in a new and improved edition. It is old Sweden idealized. – *Måns Hultin, 1864.*[142]

Norwegians, like other Scandinavians, did not only emigrate to America during the antebellum and Civil War years; they became settlers. Their homes in America were not simply found; they were made by settling in the frontier regions of the United States. It was only during the last decades of the nineteenth century that emigrants from the Scandinavian countries significantly started to orient themselves toward other occupations than farming and the familiar crafts which they had known and practiced in the old country.[143] Accounting for the low interest among the Scandinavian immigrants and their historians in the more recent arrivals of their own, H. Arnold Barton explains that "Scandinavians found common cause with Anglo-Americans in Republicanism and Temperance, and generally shared with them anti-urban prejudices."[144] The

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[141] Herman Amberg Preus, *Vivacious Daughter: Seven Lectures on the Religious Situation Among Norwegians in America*, ed. and trans. Todd W. Nichol (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1990), pp. 37–38. Preus had married his cousin, Caroline Preus, whose diary is discussed in the previous chapter. Preus, *Linka's Diary*, p. 18.

[142] Måns Hultin, *Resa till Amerika 1864 med emigrantskeppet Ernst Merck*, ed. Erik Gamby (Helsingfors, 1958), quoted in H. Arnold Barton (ed.), *Letters From the Promised Land: Swedes in America, 1840–1914* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1975), p. 101.

[143] Hans Norman notes that homesteading required a sum of 1,000 dollars, in order to buy the necessary equipment and land, and that this was "the reason why many emigrants first began to work at lumbering, in the mines, or in other industries before they procured farmland." Norman and Runblom, *Transatlantic Connections*, p. 53.

[144] H. Arnold Barton, "Where Have the Scandinavian-Americanists Been?" *Journal of American Ethnic History* 15/1 (1995), pp. 46–55, q. at p. 48. On temperance, see Fredrick Hale, "Marcus Hansen, Puritanism, and Scandinavian Immigrant Temperance Movements," *NAS,* vol. 27 (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1977), pp. 18–40. On the diversification of immigrant groups, see e.g. Odd S. Lovoll, *A Century of Urban Life: The Norwegians in Chicago before 1930* (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1988), and David C. Mauk, *The Colony that Rose from the Sea: Norwegian Maritime Migration and Community in Brooklyn, 1850–1910* (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1997.

prejudice against an urban way of life remained strong among Scandinavian immigrants, and especially so during the early phase of migration. The tendency to continue rural life in other parts of the world was so tendentious that historians have characterized the Scandinavian relocation to the other side of the Atlantic as a "conservative migration," intent on preserving the societal organization and the lifestyle which they found difficult to pursue in the rapidly expanding population at home.[145]

By looking at how the immigrants themselves understood their process of migration to the frontier regions on the North American continent, this chapter explores the colonizing dimensions of the Norwegian immigrant imagination and the ways in which these influenced how Norwegians imagined they belonged in America as region.

Becoming settlers: the migrations of the nineteenth century

The rapid growth of the European population during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries dislocated hundreds of thousands from their old homes and lifestyles. Although many European states never acquired dominion of overseas territories in the "age of imperialism," a portion of their constantly growing populations nevertheless continued to remove themselves to the colonial "Wests" of other countries.[146] "In a certain sense," as Lovoll writes, "Norway became a colonial power, although the emigrants settled in regions that were beyond Norwegian jurisdiction."[147] Norwegian emigrants were only a small part of what James Belich has called a "settler revolution" in the nineteenth century. By 1930, some 800,000 Norwegians had emigrated to the United States, which at the time counted a population of 123,076,741.[148] Yet, as historians never tire of pointing out, only Ireland lost more of its relative population than Norway in the nineteenth century. The vast majority of these Norwegians became frontier

[145] Lovoll, *Norwegians on the Land*, p. 3.
[146] See James Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-World, 1783–1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), esp. pp. 177–218. Belich uses "Wests" as a comparative term, denoting colonial space or hinterlands as well as the geographically located regions. I am using the "age of imperialism" in a broader sense than the final decades of the nineteenth century. See Jennifer Pitts, *A Turn to Empire: The Rise of Imperial Liberalism in Britain and France* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), for evidence of the early rise of an imperialist mindset.
[147] Lovoll, *Promise of America*, p. 5.
[148] Computing the data of the U.S. census gives a total amount of 800,115 Norwegian immigrants entering the United States between 1820–1930, but the numbers are not reliable, not least because immigrants from Norway and Sweden were listed together untill 1861. See Stephan Thernstrom (ed.), *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*, managing ed. Ann Orlov, consulting ed. Oscar Handlin (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1980), Appendix 2, pp. 1047–1048. U.S. population according to the population estimates of the U.S. Census Bureau, available at https://www.census.gov/popest/data/national/totals/pre-1980/tables/popclockest.txt [accessed April 27, 2015]. For a discussion and tables on the Norwegian context, see Jan Oldervoll, "Kva hadde befolkningsveksten å seie for utvandringa?" in *Utvandringa – det store oppbrotet*, ed. Arnfinn Engen (Oslo: Det norske samlaget, 1978), pp. 20–37.

settlers: in 1900, more than 54 percent of the second generation of Norwegian immigrants still lived and worked on farms – by far the highest percentage of all immigrant groups.[149] As the Norwegian immigrant and journalist Svein Nilsson would observe already in 1869: "Most of the Norwegian emigrants have preferred farming to any other occupation in life." It was especially in the early years, when the vast majority of emigrants were people "from the mountain regions who from early childhood were accustomed to regard tillage and cattle-raising as the surest source of food and income. […] They left the old country in order to find a plot of ground on this side of the ocean which they could call their own."[150]

The values derived from an orientation toward subsistence farming on independently owned land were brought across the Atlantic and, with the newfound opportunities of acquiring land, denied them in the old country, these values stuck with the immigrants in the New World.[151] Even the continuous westward migration of immigrants in America, as Jon Gjerde demonstrates, was the result of "consistent attempts to permit landed futures amid kin within a string of compact settlements."[152] In the pages of the pioneer newspapers, these attitudes are readily observed. Translations of articles from English-language newspapers, extolling the virtues of yeomanry, were frequently printed in the antebellum immigrant press. On numerous occasions a piece entitled "The Farmer's Articles of Faith" appeared, as well as material condemning land speculation, bank crises, and the immorality of commerce. Even moralistic fictional stories of urban vice and rural virtues appeared during the early years of the immigrant press.[153]

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[149] "The federal census," Lovoll notes, "shows that of the 336,985 Norwegian-born persons in the United States in 1900, only a little more than a quarter resided in towns with more than 25,000 inhabitants. It was the lowest percentage for any European immigrant group. In that same year, a higher percentage of second-generation Norwegians were farmers than any other ethnic group, in fact, 54.3 percent, as compared to 44 percent of second-generation Danes, 32.6 percent of Swedes, and only 28 percent of German children of immigrants." Lovoll, *Norwegians on the Land*, p. 1.

[150] C. A. Clausen (trans.), *A Chronicler of Immigrant Life: Svein Nilsson's Articles in* Billed-Magazin, *1868–1870* (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1982), p. 79.

[151] Ingrid Semmingsen notes that still in 1865, two-thirds of the population were "associated with agriculture," and that it is "obvious that it was a difficult problem to make room for so great a surplus in Norway, a country with a simple and undifferentiated social organization and an inelastic economic life." "Norwegian Emigration to America During the Nineteenth Century," *NASR,* vol. 11, trans. Einar Haugen (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1940), pp. 66–81, q. at p. 70.

[152] His conclusion is based on a thorough case study of immigrants from Balestrand. Jon Gjerde, *From Peasants to Farmers: The Migration from Balestrand, Norway, to the Upper Middle West* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 166.

[153] "The Farmer's Articles of Faith" ["Bondens Troesartikle"] appeared, for example, in the March 23, 1848 issue of *Nordlyset*, and in *Emigranten* on July 6, 1855, as "En Farmers Troesbekjendelse." From the *Illinois Register*, *Norlyset* reprinted a translation of the article "The Farmer – His Public Importance" ["Bonden – hans vigtige Stilling i det Offentlige"], January 6, 1848. *Folkets Røst* printed on August 21, 1858 a story of a merchant who, losing his fortune, is forced to move out to the countryside, where the whole family experiences bliss.

In the articles which the editors of the immigrant newspapers themselves penned, the rural orientation was also evident. An 1865 editorial in *Emigranten* commented on the remarkable resilience of Norwegians in maintaining their rural lifestyle: "The Norwegians in America have in this respect hitherto been in a position of their own. They mainly belong to that class whose calling literally is to improve and perfect the soil and extract its fruits." But, the newspaper observed, "as the Norwegians have become more at home in this country and more and more have begun to feel as one people, also here, these conditions are starting to change":

> They have learnt to appreciate the necessity and power of learning, as knowledge is the carrier and preserver of the culture which they had voluntarily left behind, when they sailed away from the fatherland. It is a prerequisite for the preservation of their national characteristics, their religion and as a means to […] be involved in the liberties and rights, as well as in the culture and sciences of the great American nation, which are in general only superficially known, and in consequence are often misinterpreted.

Because of the necessity of to acquire knowledge in order to "maintain the Norwegian element among the mass of competing nationalities," the paper argued that Norwegians in America would need to diversify their range of occupations.[154] It would take a long time before they did, but from early on they realized that the preservation of their national characteristics would be of importance. That will be further discussed in the next chapter, however. Here the ways in which Norwegian immigrants viewed America as a potential home, and how that enabled them to become "more at home in this country," will be examined.

Early perceptions of America as a colonial space

As the first America letters and guidebooks for emigration began to appear in the late 1830s, there was little talk of a labor migration to America. The perceptions of the United States among the peasant sections of Norwegian society were shaped by rumors and reports of an empty land to "the far west." In his 1838 *True Account of America*, the pathfinding emigrant Ole Rynning noted how the old sagas told of a Norse discovery of America. When the country was first discovered, the United States – "This part of America" – "was inhabited only by certain savage nations that lived by hunting. The old inhabitants were pressed back more and more, inasmuch as they would not accustom themselves to a regular life and to industry; but as yet the greater part of the land has not begun to be cultivated and settled by civilized peoples." Rynning also observed how common people in Norway generally believed that

[154] *Emigranten*, February 27, 1865. The article read, in the end, as a badly disguised advertisement for the business colleges of "Bryant, Stratton & Spencer." See appendix 8.

> America was well populated some years ago, and that a plague – almost like the black death – has left the country desolate of people. As a result they are of the opinion that those who emigrate to America will find cultivated farms, houses, clothes, and furniture ready for them, everything in the condition in which it was left by the former owners. This is a false supposition.

Yet, for all of the indications in Rynning's guidebook that Norwegians already in the 1830s had some conception of what America and the United States was, he still considered it necessary to explain that it was the United States which was "meant when you hear some one speak of America in an indefinite way." And Rynning presumed no previous knowledge of America at all for his readership. The first question Rynning set out to answer, was "In what general direction from Norway does America lie, and how far is it away?"[155]

In scholarly discussions, the perceptions of the American West as a colonial territory have not tended to be distinguished from perceptions of the Americas in general.[156] Perhaps rightly so, as the early impressions of the hemisphere were vague and impressionistic. Sigmund Skard, who has traced the evolution of images of America in Norway, argues that before the 1840s, America had "existed, as far as Norway is concerned, mainly as an image in the minds of a few individuals, largely of the educated class." Yet, in the early 1840s, with a growing amount of reports and letters from travelers and pathfinders, "the country now became close and factual, a part of everyday life, to an increasing number of ordinary people."[157] Yet, even as information about "America" started to nuance Norwegians' ideas of the continent, it was not the United States as a political union which attracted most Norwegians to North America. The liberality of the government was of course important, but it was the abundance of available farmland offered by that government which fuelled emigration.[158] The first reports filtering back from those following the footsteps of Rynning's popular tract were intensely occupied with diversifying

[155] Theodore C. Blegen (ed. and trans.), *Ole Rynning's True Account of America* (Minneapolis: NAHA, 1926), p. 69. Orig. emphasis.
[156] Ingrid Semmingsen, "Emigration and the Image of America in Europe," in *Immigration and American History: Essays in Honor of Theodore C. Blegen*, ed. Henry Steele Commager (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1961), pp. 26–54. Even Ray Allen Billington's study of the frontier generalizes information about the West to create impressions of an abstract place – "the West" – rathern than the many actual places of the West. See *Land of Savagery/Land of Promise: The European Image of the American Frontier* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1981).
[157] Sigmund Skard, *The United States in Norwegian History* (Westport, Connecticut; Greenwood Press; Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1976), p. 45. Skard himself has become the object of a study on later European perceptions of America. See Richard Pells, *Not Like Us: How Europeans Have Loved, Hated, and Transformed American Culture Since World War II* (New York: Basic Books, 1997).
[158] The causes of emigration are of course vastly complex. For a historiographic overview, see Østrem, *Norsk utvandringshistorie*. Internal migration in Norway was a linked process, but that situation is also complex. See Arnfinn Engen, "Nordland – småkårsfolks Amerika?" in *Vandringer: Festskrift til Ingrid Semmingsen på 70–årsdagen 29. Mars 1980*, ed. Sivert Langholm and Francis Sejersted (Oslo: Aschehoug, 1980), pp. 53–72.

and nailing down impressions of America to the places were opportunities for farming were to be sought.[159]

A survey of the earliest reports reveals not only the pragmatic recommendations of where such land were to be found, but also more or less successful attempts of describing the relations between the Western territories to the United States proper. True, early, influential letter writers like Gjert Hovland was too concerned with the moral dimensions and legitimacy of emigration to describe "America" in more than contrasting terms for a Norwegian audience.[160] Others made more nuanced distinctions. In 1846, the pioneer pastor J. W. C. Dietrichson wrote of the region in which the earliest Norwegian immigrants had settled: "I had now entered Wisconsin which is known as the 'far, glorious west,' as the Americans in the eastern states call the region west of the Great Lakes." The region "attract eastern Americans in great hordes annually; it has also lured many Europeans,, among them our own countrymen."[161]

As the search for land continued through the 1840s, the images or impressions of "America" were cut down to size. The Dane Laurits Fribert, who lived in the Pine Lake settlement in Wisconsin, wrote in 1847 a comprehensive "Handbook for Emigrants to America's West." It was an exhaustive manual for immigrant settlers, describing the various regions of North America and its potential for self-subsisting agriculture. Fribert left no doubt as to where in America Norwegians should direct their attention: "When it is asked to what part of North America one should emigrate to, the answer is not difficult to give; it may be said without hesitation, go to the new, western states." As was common, and as several letter writers remarked, the tendency to exalt one's own choice of land was also evident in Fribert's specific recommendations of land: "Everyone should go to Wisconsin!" he proclaimed.[162] The visions of a colonizable part of North America were quickly further downsized, not only to Wisconsin, but to specific parts of that region. As one newcomer arriving fresh off the boat was told by an already settled immigrant in 1843: "Go farther west. Only when you reach Koshkonong will you

[159] While early Norwegian immigrants tended to praise the liberal constitution and government of the United States, few emigrated on account of political dissension alone. There are of course notable exceptions, and none more prominent than Marcus Thrane, who emigrated in 1863 after a period of incarceration for labor agitation in 1848–1851. See e.g. Oddvar Bjørklund, *Marcus Thrane: sosialistleder i et u-land* (Oslo: Tiden norsk forlag, 1970).
[160] Gjert G. Hovland's letters were written in the 1830s and the early 1840s, and appeared in Norwegian newspapers. Translations of the letters are found in *LTC*, pp. 21–27, 44–46, 54–57.
[161] J. W. C. Dietrichson, *A Pioneer Churchman: J. W. C. Dietrichson in Wisconsin, 1844-1850*, ed. E. Clifford Nelson, trans. Malcolm Rosholt and Harris E. Kaasa (New York: Twaine, 1973), p. 60.
[162] Laurits J. Fribert, *Haandbog for Emigranter til Amerikas Vest med Anviisning for Overreisen, samt Beskrivelse af Livet og Agerdyrkningsmaaden Nærmest i Viskonsin* (Christiania: Johan Dahl, 1847), p. 10. "Naar der spørges, til hvilken Deel af Nord-Amerika skal man udvandre, da bliver Svaret paa dette Spørgsmaal ikke vanskeligt, nemlig uden al Betænkning; gaaer til de nye vestlige Stater"; "Alle bør gaae til Viskonsin!"

find America!"[163] The journalist Svein Nilsson, who had recorded this anecdote in the late 1860s, would himself observe that the same settlement made it "seem as if here our countrymen first found the America of which they had heard such wonderful stories in their homeland."[164]

The contingent aspects of immigrants' settlement in America

As immigrants wrote home, information about various destinations in America quickly spread in Norway. Nils Olav Østrem, investigating the cultural reasons for the emigration from Skjold and Vats, suggests that perhaps the question "why, exactly, did so may move to North America" is more interesting to ask than "why people moved." The answer, he suggests, is to be found in a dynamic between available information on destinations, as well as contact networks and an existing "culture of migration."[165] Disregarding for the moment the places most immigrants would eventually end up in, it is also worth asking the question: were there any imaginable alternatives to North America at all, and if not, to what extent did emigrants care that their eventual destinations in North America were encompassed or controlled by the United States?

While immigrants distinguished between suitable and unsuitable places on the U.S. frontiers, the frontiers themselves were not always appreciated as frontiers of the United States in particular. The distinction that mattered was rather between settled and unsettled areas of the continent. In one exceptionally long America letter, two Norwegians told of their adventures in the Californian gold rush of the late 1840s and early 1850s. Their perspective on America is captured in the sentence that "It is four years since we left Norway and two since we left the United States and one since we came to this place."[166] They had left Wisconsin in 1849, and spent the winter outside St. Louis waiting for the next spring's trek across the desert. At the same time California was in the process of being admitted as a state to the Union, which it eventually was in September 1850. When these Norwegians wrote their letter in 1852, they were still in the United States, yet they wrote as if they had left it two years ago. The ambiguity in immigrants' writing on the Far West as a – somewhat – distinct region apart from the United States, is a necessary reminder of the fact that the "foreordained boundaries" of a federated United States spanning from coast to coast, originated as an ideological construct in this very

[163] Clausen, *Chronicler of Immigrant Life*, p. 109.
[164] Clausen, *Chronicler of Immigrant Life*, p. 113.
[165] Nils Olav Østrem, *Den store utferda: Utvandring frå Skjold og Vats til Amerika, 1837–1914* (Oslo: Scandinavian Academic Press, 2015), q. at p. 17 and 26. (My translation.)
[166] Onon Bjørnsen Dahle and Knud Halvorsen Dahle to Ansteen Johnsen Næss, Yreka, California, June 12, 1852, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 125–139, q. at p. 139.

same period, even though, of course, immigrants tended to acquired a general understanding of the boundaries of the United States.[167]

California has always had an exceptional status in American history. The contemporary observations on California and its relation to the United States would not be entirely representative for immigrants' understanding of American political geography.[168] What is today referred to as the "Midwest," however, was more readily understood as part of the United States. But whether immigrants understood the political boundaries of the Western Hemisphere correctly is in the end beside the point; the question rather concerns whether they considered it relevant to their migration. The ubiquitous usage of "America" to refer both to the Hemisphere and the United States raises the question of what importance emigrants gave to the "United States" as their destination. Of course, most emigrants were intent on going to the U.S. Western territories, as that was where cheap land could most easily be had. This was according to the information they received from pathfinders and early America letters. Most Norwegian emigrants indeed ended up in these regions. The actual direction of emigration, as it unfolded, should not be conflated with the colonizing imagination that gave rise to emigration itself.[169] As may be observed in the travel letters of Johan Reinert Reiersen, author of the 1844 *Pathfinder for Norwegian Emigrants*, the final decision lay not with the political authority of the colonial space alone, but also – and perhaps mainly – with the perceived possibilities of a successful colonization.[170]

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[167] David M. Wrobel, *Global West, American Frontier: Travel, Empire, and Exceptionalism from Manifest Destiny to the Great Depression* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2013). "The notion of a nation growing into its foreordained boundaries has such power that we can forget the foreign policy context of nineteenth-century western history," Wrobel observes, p. 24.

[168] See Bruce Greenfield, "The West/California: Site of the Future," in *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*, ed. Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 207–222. See also the letters of Frithjof Axel Meidel for a Norwegian immigrant perspective on antebellum California, in *FATN, vol. 2*, pp. 98–99, 108–111, 128–130, 131–132, 139–141, 147–149, 156–157, 175–176, 186–189, 190–191, 210–211, 231–235, 246–248, 269, 267–269.

[169] The naturalization records of Australia, for example, gives the figure 1,140 Norwegians before 1904, and also states that 4,560 Norwegians had arrived in Australia by that time. See Olavi Koivukangas, "Scandinavian Immigration and Settlement in Australia before World War II" (PhD diss., Australian National University, 1972), p. 38. See also Ingrid Semmingsen, *Veien mot vest*, vol. 2. *Utvandringen fra Norge, 1865–1915* (Oslo: Aschehoug, 1950), pp. 296–333, and Fredrik Larsen Lund, "A Norwegian Waltz: Norwegian Immigration and Settlement in Queensland 1870–1914" (master's thesis, University of Oslo, 2012). Occasional reports from Scandinavians were published in Norwegian-American newspapers, see e.g. *Emigranten*, October 14, 1857, and December 23, 1857.

[170] Johan Reinert Reiersen, *Pathfinder for Norwegian Emigrants*, trans. Frank G. Nelson (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1981). Reiersen's letters, which reveal Reiersen's attitude towards emigration to different parts in the Americas, and which will be referred to in this section, are found in "Behind the Scenes of Emigration." The letters to Christian Grøgaard were discovered by Blegen, and the two travel letters were originally printed in Reiersen's newspaper, *Christianssandsposten*, July 1 and 5, 1844.

During his nine month long travels through America in 1843, the Norwegian newspaper editor Reiersen did pass Koshkonong, which, as noted, had been viewed as one of the better places for settlement in America. Reiersen did not find it to be the exceptional place which the immigrant referred to above, had done.[171] In fact, as Reiersen would observe in his emigrant guidebook:

> When the prospective settler travels about this great territory, or even a small part of it, looking for land for his farm, his choice is not easy. The longer he looks, the less sure he may become just which place in all this lovely, promising, and fruitful countryside is the most beautiful, advantageous, and fruitful – especially as the whole region is so uniform that nature seems to repeat herself endlessly in various places.[172]

This observation was backed up with plenty of evidence. Of all the early Scandinavian accounts and reports, the most comprehensive, detailed, and balanced was Reiersen's survey of the existing and potential areas for Norwegian settlement. His book was also one of the most influential early guide books in Norway, as is evident in numerous America letters. In mentioning the "country called Iowa" in 1845, a group of immigrants simply added that "as you may see in more detail in a book by J. R. Reiersen called *Pathfinder for Norwegian Emigrants.*"[173]

Reiersen's attention had not been solely directed toward possible settlement within the present borders of the United States. Not only was the full title of his book *Pathfinder for Norwegian Emigrants to the United North American States and Texas*, but Reiersen had also speculated in the possibilities of Norwegian colonization in both Americas – though, for some reason, he never considered Canada an option.[174] The idea of a Brazilian colonization seems to have been taken seriously by Reiersen not only during the months before his departure to America, but also during his travels in North America. His intention to investigate conditions there seems

[171] Reiersen, *Pathfinder*, pp. 198–199.
[172] Reiersen, *Pathfinder*, p. 99.
[173] Ole Eriksen Sando, Niels Tollefsen Roe et al. to Ole Olsen Skrinde, Rock Prairie, Wisconsin, August 26, 1845, pp. 63–66, q. at p. 64.
[174] The original title was: *Veiviser for Norske Emigranter til de forenede nordamerikanske Stater og Texas* (Christiania: G. Reiersens, 1844). On Scandinavian migration to Canada, see Theodore C. Blegen, *Norwegian Migration to America: The American Transition* (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1940), pp. 357–382, and Harald Runblom, "On Northern Latitudes: Scandinavian Immigrants in Canada," in *Norwegian-American Essays 2001*, ed. Harry T. Cleven, Knut Djupedal, Ingeborg Kongslien, and Dina Tolfsby (Oslo: NAHA-Norway, 2001), pp. 41–56. Kenneth O. Bjork notes that for "the Scandinavians, heavily concentrated in those states faced by rural depression and agricultural crisis after 1893, the prairie provinces seemed the best, perhaps the last, great source of free or cheap land." See "Scandinavian Migration to the Canadian Prairie Provinces, 1893–1914," *NAS*, vol. 26 (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1974), pp. 3–30, q. at p. 5. For the first Norwegian travel account of Canada, see Orm Øverland, *Johan Schrøder's Travels in Canada, 1863* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989).

according to his letters mainly thwarted by a lack of funds.[175] In his guidebook Reiersen came to recommend – mildly, and for the most part quite indirectly – Texas as the most suitable place for a planned colonization venture. At that time, Texas was still an independent republic. Sam Houston, the president of the independent Texan republic, personally told Reiersen that he "doubted that Texas would be admitted to the Union in the near future."[176] Texas would in the end become Reiersen' preferred site for a Norwegian colony – that was where he himself settled eventually, to create his "New Normandy."

The decision to settle in Texas did not come to Reiersen at once. In the two letters Reiersen wrote underway, he is shown to evaluate many alternatives. In Iowa City, he wrote of his "wanderings in 'the glorious West,' way out to the farthest limits of civilization." "In a few days," he continued, "I shall have crossed even this boundary and shall be in the nearest Indian territory." Regarding "the choice of the states to which emigration from Norway should be directed, I think I am right in saying that it must lie between Wisconsin, Iowa, and Missouri," Reiersen wrote. He dismissed California, having learned of the difficulties in traversing the Far West by "talking with people who have made the trip."[177] Instead, he directed his attention to Texas, and wrote his second letter en route, in Cincinnati, Ohio. There he again revisited the idea of overland travel, having learnt of the ongoing discussion in Congress on the acreage of land to become freely available for settlers in Oregon. Reiersen writes that had his "purse contained one hundred dollars more, I think he [a Major Adams, informing him of the details of the journey] could have persuaded me to go along to Fort Hall on the west side of the Rocky Mountains" and onwards to San Francisco or Monterey in California. Regarding the trail itself, Reiersen was less reassured: it would take "about seventy to eighty days for the whole trip," and

[175] In fact, so did Marcus Thrane. Even after having arrived in Liverpool, Thrane and his four daughters went to Hamburg, in order to gain passage to Brazil, and only upon learning that it would cost them twice as much as going to the United States, did they return to Liverpool and from there across the Atlantic. Bjørklund, *Marcus Thrane*, p. 301. In another vein, Theodore C. Blegen describes the minister Jonas W. Crøger's promotional activities for a Brazilian colonization in his *Norwegian Migration to America: 1825–1860* (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1931), pp. 278–280. See also Kjartan Fløgstad, *Eld og vatn: Nordmenn i Sør–Amerika* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1999). Steinar A. Sæther and Nils Olav Østrem conjecture that the "real figure probably lies somewhere between 5,000 and 10,000" of Norwegians who emigrated to Latin America for the period before 1940. "Norwegian Emigration to Latin America: Numbers, Questions, and Methods," in *Nordic Migration: Research Status, Perspectives and Challenges*, ed. Christina Folke Ax and Nils Olav Østrem (Stamsund: Orkana Akademisk, 2011), pp. 115–133, q. at p. 131.

[176] Johan Reinert Reiersen to friends in Norway, Cincinnati, Ohio, March 19, 1844, in "Behind the Scenes of Immigration," p. 108.

[177] Reiersen to friends, Iowa City, Iowa Territory, January 24, 1844, p. 101 and 102.

he asked his correspondents, the prospective emigrants who had funded Reiersen's journey: "Do my friends have the courage and the desire for this little pleasure trip?"[178]

Reiersen's letters testify to the fact that for early emigrants from Norway, it was the opportunities of acquiring land, which the United States offered, and not any particular characteristics of the United States as a polity itself, which provided the main attraction for the stream of Norwegians coming to America. As Reiersen himself observed during his travels: "Health should be the first consideration in the choice of a new fatherland. State of health, productiveness, and a market are the three main points that, to my mind, must determine such a choice."[179] The point might be a banal one, but it is important to distinguish the reasons behind emigration from the eventual destinations of emigrants in order to bring forth the mentality of immigrants in this period. The contingency behind the eventual choice of land in America, which Reiersen's letters reveal, underscores the lack of interest immigrants in general had of what state authority would come to govern them and their settlement – as long as they were left to do as they pleased.[180] Yet for the contingencies in the choice of their lands, immigrants like Reiersen also picked up on and exposed a vision of Anglo-Americans' projected hegemony over the continent. "They do not recognize the moral right of any class of persons to monopolize the soil that a benevolent Providence has given them and their offspring, or to stop the advance of industry, civilization, and Christianity," Reiersen observed in his *Pathfinder*. "Supported by these rights and attitudes," he concluded, "the Americans are determined to drive through the deserts of the West and on to the shores of the Pacific before they submit to any attack on popular freedom and popular sovereignty."[181] As long as immigrants were to be included within this wave of individual liberty, accepting U.S. rule was considered unproblematic.

Immigrant settlers and colonizing visions

Not all immigrants in America were settlers, and not all settlers in America were immigrants – at least not according to those who considered themselves native to the continent. The

[178] Reiersen to friends, Cincinnati, Ohio, March 19, 1844, p. 106 and 107.
The Oregon question was a hot topic in the mid-1840s, and Reiersen, fluent in English, surely picked up on the then well-publicized congressional debate on the Oregon question. For an overview of the discussions in Congress, see Nina Maria Rud, "Den 29. amerikanske kongress og handsaminga av oregonspørsmålet (1845–1846): Ein studie i lovgjevande maktutøving" (master's thesis, University of Oslo, 2010).
[179] Johan Reinert Reiersen to friends in Norway, Iowa City, Iowa Territory, January 24, 1844, in "Behind the Scenes of Immigration," p. 102.
[180] On Brazil, Reiersen notes that "Vast stretches of land, which in fertility can fully measure up to the best in North America, are available. The government favors, in fact even supports, direct colonization by transferring land, actually whole districts, for nothing, and exempts all emigrant ships from all duty." Johan Reinert Reiersen to Christian Grøgaard, Christiansand, April 9, 1843, in "Behind the Scenes of Emigration," p. 89.
[181] Reiersen, *Pathfinder*, p. 183. The quotation appeared in a section on "Relation of the States to the Union," in which Reiersen gave a thorough characterization of American politics, society, and law.

difference, as Lorenzo Veracini argues, who has theorized the concept of "settler colonialism," is that while settlers are "*founders* of political orders and carry their sovereignty with them," immigrants are "*appellants* facing a political order that is already constituted."[182] Although there might ultimately be a conceptual gap between the status of immigrants and settlers in a society, this distinction is not custom-tailored to suit the American Midwest of the nineteenth-century. Immigrants, and in particular Norwegian immigrants, just like Anglo-Americans, sought land to settle on in regions where they participated in founding political order in frontier communities – an order which they themselves frequently had to enforce.[183]

While the sovereignty of this political order would in the last instance make immigrants appeal for entry into an American body politic, it was an abstract polity. The settlements on the frontier, on the other hand, provided a sense of community for immigrants. Proposing to conceptualize antebellum German Americans' view of America as a "colonizing vision," Conzen observes that immigrants oriented their lives mainly around their local communities. That immigrants perceived America as a place were such colonies could be established "may suggest the interpretive potential of reintegrating into a single spectrum of analysis the categories of colonist and immigrant," which only by the 1870s were becoming "explicitly separated," she argues.[184] Immigrants were settlers not only in daily practice, but also in thought. George Stephenson once characterized the "mind" of the Scandinavian immigrant thus: "the air castle he had built before the open hearth in the long winter nights was transformed into a substantial residence […] And when he paid his taxes he knew that he was contributing to the support of a government that would let him alone."[185] For Norwegian immigrants in the antebellum era as well, there was little difference between being immigrants and being settlers in America.

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[182] Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p. 3.
[183] Immigrants could either buy government land or private land directly, but they could also, according to the Preemption Act of 1841, claim land, receiving the first right to purchase the land after it had been surveyed. But the very act of settling also created a sense of entitlement to the land, notwithstanding the legal status of it, as the practice of the "club law" demonstrated: pioneers enforced their claims by banding together against newcomers. An episode concerning Norwegian settlers who had formed such a club society is given in Hjalmar Rued Holand, *De Norske Settlementers Historie: En Oversigt over den norske Indvandring til og Bebyggelse af Amerikas Nordvesten fra Amerikas Opdagelse til Indianerkrigen i Nordvesten, med Bygde- og Navneregister* (Ephraim, Wisconsin: Published by the author, 1908), pp. 483–497. See also Lovoll, *Promise of America*, pp. 137–139. The Preemption Act was little more than "legalized squatting," Richard White notes, *"It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own,"* p. 139.
[184] Conzen, "Phantom Landscapes of Colonization," q. at p. 18.
[185] George M. Stephenson, "The Mind of the Scandinavian Immigrant," *SR*, vol. 4 (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1929), pp. 63–73, q. at p. 73.

Therefore it makes sense to understand Norwegian immigrants as "immigrant settlers" for this period. Just as they were not directly imbued with the political authority of the metropolis, they were neither simply appealing for acceptance into an existing political community, and nor were they interested in recreating all aspects of American society. Instead, Norwegians participated in creating – or so they were at least convinced – new communities in the American West, to which they contributed as settlers, and to which they wanted to give their own contribution. The intensity in which Norwegians attempted to preserve their cultural and religious heritage from an early date – the first churches were raised already in the mid-1840s – testify to their unwillingness to shed their old culture, even if they had to adapt it to another environment.[186] According to Frank G. Nelson, it was only as Reiersen's emigration party landed in New Orleans that they made their decision to settle in Texas, and one of the deciding factors, he surmises, was the "encouragement that Texas gave European immigrants wishing to settle in compact communities […] Reiersen, for all his admiration of the Americans, was no cultural assimilationist."[187] And indeed: Reiersen's preference for Texas was in no small part due to the possibility, as he wrote, "to concentrate within the boundaries of a single township." Reiersen considered such concentration crucial to establish "a reasonably well-organized Norwegian settlement." Only then could they "set up the school system and manage their affairs as they think best."[188] Reiersen's planned colonization venture was perhaps extreme in vigor, but the spirit behind it was a common feature of the early Norwegian migration.

De-exceptionalizing the American West

Despite their tendency to associate among their own, Scandinavians came to envision a role for themselves within the westward expansion of the United States. To do so, they criticized the exceptionalist rhetoric which defended Americans' exclusive right to spread across the continent. When the famed Swedish author Fredrika Bremer traveled the United States a few years after Reiersen, she also took note of the American attitude toward the expansion of their republic, and not only to the west: "The North Americans will not rest till they have possessed themselves of the Southern portion of their hemisphere; already have they reached Panama with their rail-roads, canals, warehouses, homes, churches, and schools," she observed. "And they say quite calmly, when speaking of the country between Panama and the Rio Grande, that is to

[186] Kari G. Hempel, "Norskamerikanske kirker og integreringsprosessen: Holdninger til integrering i norskamerikanske kirker i 1880–årene," in *Norwegian-American Essays 2014: "Migrant Journeys: The Norwegian-American Experience in a Multicultural Context,"* ed. Terje Mikael Hasle Joranger, assistant ed. Harry T. Cleven (Oslo: Novus Press, 2014), pp. 73–97.
[187] Frank G. Nelson, "Introduction," in *Pathfinder*, pp. 3–57, q. at. p. 44.
[188] Reiersen, "To My Sponsors," in *Pathfinder*, Appendix, p. 209.

say, the whole of Central Mexico, 'When this is ours, then,' &c."[189] But unlike Reiersen, Bremer offered throughout her travel descriptions some critical comments on the conquest of the American West. In the letters she wrote her sister, published and subsequently translated to English in 1853, there are consequently to be found some of the first instances of Scandinavian criticism of Anglo-American exceptionalism.[190]

Bremer's *The Homes of the New World* is most known for its celebratory view of the potential of the Midwest for Scandinavian colonization. Visiting the territory of Minnesota, she found it exceptionally genial to Scandinavians: "What a glorious new Scandinavia might not Minnesota become," she exclaimed. Everything, "the climate, the situation, the character of the scenery agrees with our people better than that of any other of the American States." Every Scandinavian nationality would find a scenery akin to that which they had left. "Here," Bremer wrote, "would the Norwegian find his rapid rivers, his lofty mountains, for I include the Rocky Mountains and Oregon in the new kingdom."[191] In other words, Minnesota, yet to become a state, had in Bremer's mind fluid boundaries, and it was the larger region and not the actual Territory which symbolized such an unbounded space of colonial possibilities.

But just as the colonial spaces of the Midwest appeared unbounded, Bremer also remained critical of the general development which her projected Scandinavian colonization would become a part of. Bremer had come to the United States at a time of expansionist frenzy. In 1848 the United States had just won and concluded a war of conquest against Mexico, and territories in the Midwest were in the process of acquiring statehood. Wisconsin acquired

[189] The following quotations refer to the translated edition of Fredrika Bremer's letters. *The Homes of the New World: Impressions of America,* vol. 2, trans. Mary Howitt (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1853), q. at pp. 148–149. The original Swedish book was published in three volumes in 1853–1854, as *Hemmen i den nya verlden. En dagbok i bref, skrifna under tvenne års resor i Norra Amerika och på Cuba* (Stockholm: P.A. Norstedt og söner). On August 29, 1847, *Nordlyset* printed the translation of the impressions of an American, "Dr. Baird," on Norwegian immigrants. "Fredrika Bremer's marvelous writings first brought the attention of the American public to their character […] and now, when thousands, or rather tens of thousands of Norwegians are making this country their home, it is the duty of every patriot to know something about this people." ["Fredrikka Bremers fortryllende Skrifter bragte først det americanske Publicum til Kundskab om deres Characteer. […] Og nu, da Tusinder eller snarere Ti Tusinder af Norske gjøre dette Land til deres Hjem, saa er en Kundskab om dette Folk en Pligt til enhver Patriot."] Robert Baird had in 1841 written a travel account, *A Visit to Northern Europe: or Sketches, Descriptive, Historical, Political, and Moral, of Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Finland* (New York: John S. Taylor, 1841), and Ræder noted that he read extracts from it in *Nordlyset*, see Malmin, *America in the Forties*, p. 46. Other Americans also wrote travel accounts of Norway, some which appeared in national journals such as *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, a study of which might uncover Americans' perceptions of Norwegians in this period. See Miriam Finset Ingvaldsen, "'How Many Inconveniences…' Britiske og tyske reiseskildringar av produksjon og forbruk i Noreg og Sverige, ca. 1790–1840" (master's thesis, University of Oslo, 2014), for an indicative discussion on the value of foreign travelers' perspectives.

[190] Bremer's observations are found within a consecutive stream of letters, and were consequently presented in an essayistic manner, and they often figure among complex trains of thought. I have nevertheless found her observations on the West to possess enough consistency to present them as a cohesive set of impressions.

[191] Bremer, *Homes of the New World*, vol. 2, q. at pp. 56 and 57.

statehood the very same year, and the Territory of Minnesota was experiencing a rapid influx of settlers.[192] In her topographical description of the North American continent, Bremer noted how the "upper portion of Texas elevates itself by degrees into a mountain range, and unites itself on the northeast to the latest conquest of the United States, New Mexico."[193] "Conquest" might in this instance have been a more neutral term to employ for an disinterested outsider than for a American proponent or opponent of the recent war against Mexico. But although Bremer's intense Christian feeling prompted her hopes that the present Indian Territory, later to become Oklahoma, would be "admitted into the Great Union as an independent Christian Indian State," made her appear to be on the side of the Manifest Destinarians, she also refused to celebrate the recent territorial acquisitions. Creating a Christian Indian state would, she wrote, "be a more beautiful conquest for the people of North America than their acquisition of New Mexico!"[194]

On the areas of present settlement in the Midwest, however, Bremer did not describe a "conquest." When she reproduced the words of Mr. Allen, the senator of Missouri, on how he thought the Mississippi Valley's influence "must become coextensive with that of the habitable globe," and how it must "extend its dominion beyond that of the United States, and become the kernel of its empire, the source of its vital power, the diadem of its pride, the basis of the pyramid of its greatness," Bremer was less harsh, but still critical. "If you should be tempted to smile at this specimen of the great views of the Great West as regards this great Mississippi Valley and its great future," she wrote, "you will not fail to recognize in all a great mind – a great heart; and for the rest, that here the subject is not exactly a – small thing."[195]

"But enough of Mississippi eloquence," she broke off her exposition of Midwestern American exceptionalism.[196] On such a hope for Midwestern society, Bremer was – and remained – of two minds. On the one hand, she had become thoroughly dismayed at what the West could eventually produce. The Western cities "are all of them pre-eminently cosmopolitan cities," and the "Mississippi River is the great cosmopolitan which unites all people," but "here ends my admiration and my oration about greatness and growth." Giving up the "beautiful dream" of a regeneration of mankind, a "kingdom of peace, and love, and prosperity" in the "promised land

[192] See e.g. Ray Allen Billington, *The Far Western Frontier, 1830–1860* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956) and Richard White, *"It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own": A New History of the American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), pp. 61–84.
[193] Bremer, *Homes of the New World*, vol. 2, p. 147.
[194] Bremer, *Homes of the New World*, vol. 2, p. 148. The original reads: "Det blefve för Nord-Amerikas folk en skönare eröfring än den som forvärfvade Nya Mexico och Texas!" Bremer, *Hemmen*, vol. 2, p. 454. See her description on the situation of the Indians, in Bremer, *Homes of the New World*, vol. 2, p. 155.
[195] Bremer, *Homes of the New World*, vol. 2, p. 133 and 134.
[196] Bremer, *Homes of the New World*, vol. 2, p. 135.

of the West" was painful to her – yet, as she sojourned in the region, she had to admit it was gone: "The western land of the New World," Bremer lamented, "will not produce any thing essentially different from the eastern. The New Paradise is nowhere to be met with on earth. It will probably never be obtained in this world, and upon this earth!"[197] On the other hand, she still observed how "the character of the Western States is different than that of the Eastern. It has more breadth and cosmopolitanism," something which gave its people – "a people of many nations" – a less prejudiced and demanding mode of sociability.[198] And again she deliberated on the possibility for a "Millennium in the Valley of the Mississippi":

> It is not at all difficult to predict that the valley of the Mississippi, in consequence of the variety of nations by which it is populated, and from the variety in its scenery and climate, will at a future time produce a popular life of a totally new kind, with infinite varieties of life and temperament, a wholly new aspect of human society on earth.[199]

The people of the Mississippi Valley would become, she wrote, "citizens of the world, the universal mankind, *par excellence*."[200] In other words, although Bremer thought the American exceptionalist and regenerative rhetoric somewhat exaggerated, she recognized – and gave pre-eminence to – European immigrants' contributions to the creation of a new and improved society in the American West.

Universalizing the promised land: Christian perspectives on colonization

Fredrika Bremer was not exceptional among European travelers in America in criticizing the exceptionalist rhetoric of Americans in this period. David Wrobel, who has analyzed what he terms a "countercurrent" of European and American travel writing, which placed the American West into a comparatively global perspective, asserts that many nineteenth-century travelers were critical of the anti-conquest narrative embedded in Manifest Destiny ideology. Rather, European travelers compared the American conquests of territory to other contemporary imperial projects, and thus "deexceptionalized" the mythology of a *terra nullius* which Americans had an exclusive and destined right to fill.[201] Mary Louise Pratt, who originally coined the term "anti-conquest," did so in order to juxtapose a critical perspective with the more dominant "imperial eyes" of the period.[202] While talking of a specific immigrant gaze is perhaps unwarranted, Bremer's critical comments on the United States and the American West may have been representative of how immigrants tended to view their own position within the territorial

[197] Bremer, *Homes of the New World*, vol. 2, p. 136 and 137.
[198] Bremer, *Homes of the New World*, vol. 2, p. 136.
[199] Bremer, *Homes of the New World*, vol. 2, p. 145.
[200] Bremer, *Homes of the New World*, vol. 2, p. 145. Orig. emphasis.
[201] Wrobel, *Global West, American Frontier*, see particularly pp. 22–28, q. at p. 22.
[202] Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 7.

expansion of the republic. Pratt identifies what she calls an "imperialist internal critique of empire," often posited by white persons "whose national and civic identifications were multiple and often conflicted." Whilst such persons often found themselves positioned in between the conflicting cultures of the colonizers and the colonized, they could also, like Bremer, simply be "hyphenated, white men" – or women – whose loyalty did not lay solely with the imperial power.[203] Immigrants took part in American expansion, but unless they could view themselves or could be considered by Americans an essential part of the expansion, they could remain critical of how it unraveled.

It is especially Bremer's her Christian frames of reference used to describe the region that makes her views on the West representative of immigrants in this period. Giving her opinion on "the people of the United States," Bremer wrote that they had "a warm heart, and that which gives this people their eternal prerogative of progress is their imitation of Christ."[204] That the capitalist and materialist Anglo-Americans were diligent imitators of Christ might have been disputed by the more pious immigrants – especially their pastors – but that Americans made progress, and that America was being transformed on a spectacular scale, was a view which Norwegian immigrants frequently expressed.

American progress was not only material. It could be explained by a distinctly Christian interpretation of the "New World." In letters immigrants either wrote of America, like Gjert Hovland, thinking that "this is Canaan when we consider the fertile soil that without manuring brings forth such rich crops of everything," or, they could be disappointed with such letter writers, as Sjur Haaeim was: "Gjert Gregoriussen Hovland, who praised both the country and everything in it so that we all imagined that this country must be Canaan, a land of milk and honey."[205] Whatever immigrants thought of America, religious metaphors were often employed. "Others would think," Ole Stensen Karlsrud wrote in 1847, that "'Here is the land of Canaan.' Yet others would think and say, 'Here is Tabor; here I will build and live.' For my part I cannot find reason to praise or to criticize because of all my illness. At present I have enough for my daily bread."[206]

[203] Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, pp. 208–213, q. at p. 213.
[204] Bremer, *Homes of the New World*, vol. 2, p. 144.
[205] Gjert G. Hovland to a friend, Middle Point, Illinois, July 6, 1838, in *LTC*, pp. 44–46, q. at p. 45. Sjur J. Haaeim to Bishop Jacob Neumann, Middle Point, Illinois, April 22, 1839, in *LTC*, pp. 48–51, q. at p. 49.
[206] Ole Stensen Karlsrud to Sten Olsen and Gro Anfinnsdatter Karlsrud, Muskego, Wisconsin, February 18, 1847, *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 80–82, q. at p. 81.

The religious language which gave expression to so many thoughts and feelings surrounding their emigration was by its nature inclusive. In *Emigranten*, P.L. Mossin wrote of the "True nature of liberty," arguing that "it is our duty as humans and as citizens, but first and foremost as Christians, to realize or in other words utilize the perennial, spiritual truths to be found in the material, lived life." The political freedom of America was without value if it was not accompanied by a God-fearing mentality: "Liberty does not consist of liberality, the absence of law, but in the voluntary submission of the truthful and rightful."[207] Their Christian terms of reference tended to make immigrants position themselves well at home in America. As a single line printed in *Nordlyset* [the Northern Light] in 1848 simply asked: "who dug out the Lake Michigan basin and the Mississippi canal?"[208]

Immigrants could take such a cosmopolitan view of the United States not only because they viewed the cultural pluralism of the contemporary West within a religious framework, but also because their religiously informed interpretation of the history of American colonization could encompass all those who settled there. Fredrika Bremer drew a parallel to the first American immigrants when she envisaged the "right of the people of North America to be considered as one people, and as a peculiar people among the nations of the earth." This right was "founded upon the character of its first emigrant colonies, they who were peculiarly the creators of the society of the New World, and who infused their spirit into it," Bremer wrote. It was the "warmhearted souls" of "Fox, Penn, Oglethorpe," and "heroes of the faith, as Puritans, Huguenots, and Hernhutters," that came to the New World to "establish their fraternal associations, and to create a more beautiful humanity." Therefore, she concluded, the "first settlers of America belonged to the strongest and the best portions of the European population."[209] And already in 1845, in the "Muskego Manifesto," some of the first Norwegian emigrants drew a clear parallel between themselves and the first settlers in North America. "There are some who complain of the trials that immigrants at first meet here," they wrote in order to rebut unfavorable characterizations of their colony at Muskego. Such persons, however, "should feel a sense of shame when they recall what history has to tell of the sufferings of those earliest immigrants who opened the way for coming generations by founding the first colony in the United States, in Virginia." These immigrants "fought and won their victory; and so they

[207] *Emigranten*, May 2, 1856. "[…] og det er vor Pligt som Mennesker og som Borgere, men dog fornemmelig som Christne at virkeliggjøre, eller med andre Ord, at anvendeliggjøre de evige, og aandelige Sandheder i det materielle, virkelige Liv […]"; "Frihed bestaaer ikke i Lovløshed, men i en frivillig Underkastelse under det Sande og det Rette […]" P. L. Mossin is misidentified as "Mosstu" in Peter A. Munch, "Authority and Freedom: Controversy in Norwegian-American Congregations," in *NAS,* vol. 28 (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1979), pp. 3–34, p. 34n52.
[208] *Nordlyset*, January 13, 1848. "Hvem udhullede Indsøen Michigan's Bassin og grov Mississippis Canal?"
[209] Bremer, *Homes of the New World*, vol. 2, p. 144.

became the immediate occasion whereby it has been made possible for twenty millions of people to find abundant resources in the United States."

> Should not we likewise, with brighter prospects than theirs, entertain the hope of winning by perseverance victories like theirs and of gaining what we need to sustain life! Or should God, who in his word has laid upon us the precept 'Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth,' not crown such an undertaking with success, inasmuch as He has so richly endowed this land and made it more fitted to produce all manner of food for mankind than perhaps any other country in the whole world; more especially under the present conditions, when overpopulation in Europe, greater than at almost any earlier time, has made emigration a necessity.[210]

By settling in the West, immigrants did not only follow the long tradition of European colonization which had made the United States what it was at present, but they also followed the precepts of God – quite contrary to what influential voices in the fatherland at the time argued they were doing.[211]

As Christians, immigrants had a right to a home in America: they found themselves within a population which was made up of Christians of many nations. "All kinds of people from all nations of the world live together here like brothers and sisters," Hans Barlien wrote in 1839.[212] Ole Munch Ræder wrote in 1847 that "I believe that Wisconsin has acquired more European flavor than most of the other districts in the West."[213] Nils Hansen Nærum wrote of Wisconsin in 1845 that although "the degree of freedom is very great here and the nation is made up of people from almost all European countries, crimes are very rare." Celebrating the progress of Wisconsin, he thought the immigrant pastor Dietrichson's description of America as a "desert […] almost indefensible." How could he, Nærum asked, as a theologian, not show "more appreciation of God's providence than to call a country a desert which has been so richly endowed by nature."[214] By contrast, the editor of *Nordlyset* celebrated the constitution of Wisconsin about to be proposed and the "people of Wisconsin" in the following manner:

> Separated geographically from the intrigues of an envious world; without pressure or restraint from surrounding political powers, could we with the highest hopes unceasingly continue our remarkable progress, to develop and use the richest of nature's gifts […] Nature offers us all those riches which a benevolent creator has never before offered on earth to any people. When this people becomes 'enlightened,' 'wise,' 'moral,' and 'enterprising,' tell me – where is there now or has ever been such a country, that could be said to outdo our country? […] I am just expressing what I deeply feel – that the

[210] Eighty Norwegians to Norwegians in the old country, Muskego, Wisconsin, January 6, 1845, pp. 192–193. I have modified the translation slightly.
[211] Semmingsen describes attitudes toward emigration in *Veien mot vest*, vol. 2, pp. 405–444. Arne Garborg, for example, would as late as in the 1890s characterize emigration as "the great bloodletting" ["den store årelating"], see p. 425.
[212] Hans Barlien to the reverend Jens Rynning, St. Francisville on the Des Moines River, Missouri, April 23, 1839, in *LTC*, pp. 52–54, q. at p. 53.
[213] Malmin, *America in the Forties*, p. 150.
[214] Nils Hansen Nærum to J. H. Nærum, Muskego, Wisconsin, November 16, 1845, in *LTC,* pp. 198–201, q. at p. 199.

> heavens have been merciful in placing so many of my countrymen and myself in the middle of this golden 'desert' – to be a part of Wisconsin's happy people.[215]

Common to Anglo-Americans and European immigrants was their recent removal to the frontiers of settlement in the west. This had made the population of the West distinctly heterogeneous. Ræder noted how Wisconsin had experienced an exceedingly rapid increase in population, due both to the immigration of Americans as well as Europeans. "One of the results of this rapid growth," Ræder wrote, was that in Milwaukee, "the city has 'sights' of a quite peculiar nature – for example, a sixteen- or seventeen-year-old boy is the oldest person native to the place."[216] In a place where all where immigrants and all were newcomers, there could hardly be a reason to distinguish between natives and foreigners.

The law of the land: immigrants and strategies for land acquisition

As immigrants did not carry the political authority of the United States with them to the West, they related to the policies of the federal government in a pragmatic manner. The Homestead Act, proposed and discussed in federal politics throughout the 1850s, and finally enacted in 1862, left little traces in the writings of Norwegian immigrants during its first years of existence. The immigrant newspapers occasionally reported on the deliberations on the proposed bill in the 1850s, but without further reflection or enthusiasm. After it had been signed, *Emigranten* published a translated version of the Homestead Act, simply prefacing it with the observation that the "advantages of the Bill for impecunious settlers are too apparent to be in need of any explanation."[217]

In the few mentions of it that are to be found in letters to Norway, the ramifications of the Homestead Act were only hesitantly apprehended. Guttorm Olsen Lie wrote in 1862 that "We have a new law that says that anyone with a family may have free land of the land that belongs to the government. But this free land is far from here so it will cost money to go here."[218] Writing in 1870 from Bratsberg, Minnesota, Jul Gulliksen Dorsett told his brother that by "going about 1,400 miles further west you can get 160 acres from the government to have as your own by living on it for five years and paying twenty dollars. Many of our countrymen here

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[215] J. D. Reymert, "Constitutional Convention. Correspondence," *Nordlyset*, January 27, 1848. See appendix 9. He also commented on the actual proposal, in *Nordlyset,* February 17, 1848.
[216] Malmin, *America in the Forties*, p. 12.
[217] *Emigranten*, May 26, 1862. "Billens Gavnlighed for ubemidlede Nybyggere er altfor indlysende til at behøve nogen Forklaring."
[218] Guttorm Olsen Lie to Anders Olsen Lie, Blue Mounds, Wisconsin, July 25, 1862, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 308–309, q. at p. 309.

have made use of this offer from the government."[219] Also writing in 1870, Ole Evensen and his wife apologized for not having written sooner, but the "reason is that we have had so-called Homestead land and I wanted to know the outcome of this before I wrote to Norway."[220] From Leeds, Wisconsin, Paul Torstensen wrote in 1870 that "We've decided either to take Homestead Land (then you get 160 acres for fourteen dollars) or buy Government Land (160 acres for 200 dollars) depending on what we find most convenient. We'll of course buy other land if we find this better."[221] Norwegian immigrants wanted to investigate the costs and benefits of the enacted federal bill for themselves, as it was only one of many possible ways to acquire land.

Notwithstanding this hesitancy, their orientation toward the land enabled Norwegians to make use of the opportunities which the U.S. federal government facilitated. The westward expansion was, after all, not simply an unregulated mass movement.[222] But the federal government also demanded its returns. Although the enthusiasm with which Norwegians embraced the War of the Union has been seen as indicating immigrants' attachment to their new country, it also generated much concern among them, in no small part due to their position as settlers.

Immigrant settlers and the Civil War

In a latter-day tragic ballad, Erik Bye sings of the character Gudmund Gudmundson, a Norwegian immigrant who fought and died in the Civil War. Bye asks sardonically "What did you dream and think about in your last, red moment, when with a cry of death, you sank down and felt your hands on a bloody, foreign ground? Did you curse the day you went across the ocean?" In the end, Erik Bye concludes, "no one will know whether Private Gudmund Gudmundson was a dove or a hawk (and that's no joke)."[223] If it is not exactly easy to determine the extent to which immigrant soldiers truly sacrificed themselves for the cause of the war, "clinging to Lincoln's belief in freedom for the many," or rather would have preferred to stay home with their "cabin and wife in Wisconsin," it is, through the letters of the immigrants, possible to gain a sense of the relative importance of the conflict for them as settlers in America.

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[219] Jul Gulliksen Dorsett to Torstein Gulliksen Daaset, Bratsberg, Minnesota, October 15, 1870, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 461–462, q. at p. 461.
[220] Ingeborg Helgesdatter and Ole Evensen to Helge Gundersen Skare, Norway Lake, Minnesota, February 15, 1870, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 444–445, q. at p. 444. They note that when they "settled here at Norway Lake everything was new, almost wilderness and with only a few families. […] It is now four years since we moved to our land and in this time there have been great changes."
[221] Torstensen to Torstensen Vigenstad, Leeds, Wisconsin, October 26, 1870, p. 463.
[222] Thomas R. Hietala, *Manifest Design: American Exceptionalism and Empire*, rev. ed. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003).
[223] Erik Bye, "Gudmund Gudmundson," Bye, Erik. "Gudmund Gudmundson," *Jeg vet en vind*, Karussell, compact disc, 1995. Original release: Philips, vinyl, 1972. (My translation.)

By most appearances, Norwegian immigrants endorsed the possibility of showcasing their loyalty as citizens of the United States. *Emigranten*, the only Norwegian immigrant paper which survived the entire conflict, ceaselessly publicized the events of the Civil War. The whole first page, and sometimes also the second – which together composed half of an entire issue – was usually devoted to reports from the front, often in the form of letters from Scandinavians.[224] Immigrants expressed many outward signs of loyalty and sacrifice for the Union, which quickly developed into arguments of belonging.[225] This attitude was reflected in letters from the front to *Emigranten*. Torsten Erikson Nyhuus, for example, urged his countrymen not to "sleep, when the country needs our arms; let us demonstrate that we are Norwegians, and that we have not degenerated from our fathers." Come with us, he admonished, "to defend our dear country; I believe it is our duty, and it is a just cause that we go to defend."[226]

Judging from the letters sent to Norway, however, the Civil War loses its immediate importance. Some letter writers attempted more or less successfully to describe the causes and the progression of the war to those in Norway, but most often it is the consequences the war had for them that letter writers concerned themselves with. Norwegians who participated in the conflict mostly wrote of everyday concerns, not of the symbolism or the idealism of the cause. Ole Olson Lehovd's letter to his parents and siblings in December in 1864 opened with the usual exchange of information about migration, settling, farming, and social relations. Only halfway through the letter he told them he had joined the armed forces: "I enjoyed myself more in Wisconsin than in Minnesota," Lehovd wrote, "but I don't want to tell you about this as I may not see Minnesota nor those I knew in Wisconsin any more in this life […] I have in other words been recruited and the almighty God is my witness that I've been sworn into the United States Army." While the pride of the soldier was clearly communicated at the end of the letter in the phrase "You don't have to copy this letter and remove anything but let every iota stand and let any who wishes to see it see it as it is, because it is written by a soldier," the cause of the war, or any identification with the cause, was not communicated.[227] Ole's brother Hellik, who had also emigrated but had not joined the fight, wrote a letter dated three days earlier. In comparison to his brother, Hellik did describe the causes of the conflict, but he had not exactly given his heart

[224] See Lovoll, *Norwegian Newspapers,* pp. 47–55, and Arlow William Andersen, *The Immigrant Takes His Stand: The Norwegian-American Press and Public Affairs, 1847–1872* (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1953), pp. 77–107, for a further description of immigrant newspapers' coverage of the conflict.
[225] Øverland, *Immigrant Minds, American Identities*, p. 87–119.
[226] *Emigranten*, February 2, 1862. See appendix 10.
[227] Ole Olson Lehovd to Ole Helgesen and Joran Paulsdatter Lehovd, Madison, Wisconsin, December 29, 1864, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 330–334, q. at pp. 331–332 and 334. Lehovd explains that he is a "substitute," in place of a German who had been drafted. This was a common – and legal – practice during the Civil War.

to it: "I don't belong to the Republican Party and I haven't elected Lincoln who has now been reelected for another four years so the prospects for an end to the war are not good." Abolition was a just cause, Hellik thought, but not a cause for war: "It would have been much better if we had bought freedom for the slaves, yes given their weight in gold, and not started a war."[228]

The same ideological disinterest is found among those few Norwegians who had joined the Confederate forces, as C. A. Clausen and Derwood Johnson show: "Nowhere [in the letters] do we find any expressions of patriotism or intimations that they felt they were engaged in a noble or holy cause."[229] *Emigranten* in 1865 "A letter from a Norwegian Rebel," written to a brother who fought in the Union army. Describing the many engagements with regiments from Wisconsin, Ole D. Røndokken wrote how his heart "beat by thinking that among these brave men there might have been some of those who had been my close friends while I was up in Wisconsin." "I would gladly had joined the Union army a long time ago," he wrote, "but because I came down among the Southerners and won friends and made acquaintances among them, my sense of honor, pride, and self-esteem have kept me there." Nevertheless, Røndokken noted, "I have deeply regretted the evil fate which had me involved in this unnatural war; believe me, that although I have been a Rebel, I have been so most unwillingly, since I truly comprehended what it would mean to be a traitor." Røndokken thought little of the Southern cause: "I have long thought it despicable to fight for the Negroes, a kind of property I have never owned or have never wished to own." "The Negroes should be free," he stated, but, "it would perhaps be best for them if they came to a place where they could be for themselves, govern themselves."[230]

If sympathy for the war cause did exist among immigrants, it lay with the Northern war aims of freeing the slaves and preserving the Union. Yet in their letters to Norway, immigrants viewed the conflict mainly in light of their situation as settlers in America. Juul Gulliksen Dorsett explained that in their settlement, there had been "a draft here twice but we have hired people in our places and thus bought our liberty." Dissuading his brother of any fear of coming because of the war, Juul informed him that the government had "no right to draft a person who has come to

[228] Hellik Olsen Lehovd to Ole Helgesen and Joran Paulsdatter Lehovd, Salem, Minnesota, December 26, 1864, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 326–329, q. at p. 328.
[229] C. A. Clausen and Derwood Johnson, "Norwegian Soldiers in the Confederate Forces," *NAS*, vol. 25 (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1972), pp. 105–141, q. at p. 109.
[230] *Emigranten*, May 22, 1865. See appendix 11. The removal of African Americans from America to Africa was one among many alternatives fronted by abolitionists in the antebellum era, and the American Colonization Society explicitly worked for this aim. See e.g. Eric Burin, "The Slave Trade Act of 1819: A New Look at Colonization and the Politics of Slavery," *American Nineteenth Century History* 13/1 (2012), pp. 1–14. On March 23, 1848, *Nordlyset* took note of this Society and the fruits of its labors: the newly independent Liberia in West Africa.

this country and who has not sworn allegiance."[231] There were those who showcased their identification with the Northern war aims. Ole Jesperson Taksdal wrote his cousin in 1862, telling him that he had "signed up for the war for freedom here in the United States to liberate the slaves." Nevertheless, he also assured him of the opportunities of settlement in America: "I have heard that some write from Norway that they are afraid of coming because of the war but this should not keep them from coming as the war is far from the places they want to go to."[232] Erik Theodor Schjøth wrote his brothers telling them of the "unfortunate war" where "Many a Norwegian boy has lost his life, not so much because of bullets and sword as because of illness and the poor nursing available at the front." Being too old to join the Army himself, he wrote that he "had to stay at home to protect the women and children should the Indians become restless, as they have in some places."[233]

Writing with the needs and expectations of a distant audience in mind, immigrants would not, of course, have had any particular reason to profess their ideological commitment to the causes of the Civil War. But, as historians have found, all Norwegians in America were not unequivocally against slavery in itself. Their Lutheran Synod had not finished debating the peculiar institution's theological ramifications until several years after the Civil War had ended. Although many newspaper editors had expressed anti-slavery opinions in the antebellum years, there are also evidence of pro-slavery attitudes – some Norwegians in the South even owned slaves themselves.[234]

Immigrant settlers and frontier threats

All in all, most of the letters to Norway which discussed the Civil War in one way or another give off the impression that the conflict was but one of the challenges an immigrant settler had to overcome. Having finished his comments on the war, Hellik Olsen Lehovd proceeded to comment on the "wild Indians in the West," who had "rebelled two years ago and murdered about 900 white people in their homes and ravaged and burned wherever they went." The

[231] Juul Gulliksen Dorsett to Torstein Gulliksen Daaset, Newburg, Minnesota, September 5, 1864, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 323–324, q. at p. 323.
[232] Ole Jesperson Taksdal to Tobias Tørresen Kvia, St. Louis, Missouri, March 2, 1862, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 295–297.
[233] Erik Theodor Schjøth to Jens Rudolph and Christian Schjøth, Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, January 14, 1863, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 312–314, q. at p. 313.
[234] Brynjar Haraldsø, *Slaveridebatten i Den norske Synode. En undersøkelse av slaveridebatten i Den norske Synode i USA i 1860-årene med særlig vekt på debattens kirkelig-teologiske aspekter* (Oslo: Solum, 1988), pp. 60–69.

Indians had been only "100 miles away," he wrote, but now the Indians had been "forced further west so that we have no more reason to be afraid."[235]

The fear of being driven away from the homestead more generally was quite fundamentally a part of a settler anxiety. As an immigrant in Dodge County, Minnesota wrote, caught between the Civil War draft and the Sioux rebellion:

> now we are in a mood of uncertainty and tension, almost like prisoners of war in this formerly so free country. Our names have been taken down – perhaps I shall be a soldier next month and have to leave my home, my wife, child, and everything I have been working for over so many years. But this is not the worst of it. We have another and far more cruel enemy near by, namely the Indians.[236]

It is in the apprehensions against threats to their established homes that what might be called a settler mentality among immigrants is brought into relief. The father-in-law who had written a letter some immigrants were responding to in January, 1863, had evidently been concerned of their safety, but from the Indians, not the war: "You seem to fear that we are in danger from the Indians. But this has, praise God, not happened to us since we live almost 200 miles from there." The Civil War was not even mentioned in their response.[237] Similarily, the letter written by Ole and Halvor Lauransson in 1847 demonstrate how other major conflicts were viewed by immigrants. "Wisconsin," they observed, "was under the control of the other states but has now been declared an independent state with its own laws and defense." Furthermore, "In the south there is a war with Mexico about certain borders they cannot agree on," but, not to worry, they assured their recipients, it "doesn't concern us as long as they have enough men."[238]

Although the Civil War and other conflicts could figure as a threat to life on the frontier, for the most part these conflicts were perceived as indirect threats; the theatres of war were far removed. In 1855, Elisabeth Koren had written to reassure her father that there was no need to "be alarmed if you read of Indian troubles. The Indians in question live in the westernmost part of Iowa and we in the easternmost; her it is peaceful enough."[239] Yet frontier violence was sometimes a very real threat. One immigrant who had been driven away from his homestead during the 1862 Sioux rebellion wrote that "How sad it is to think of my peaceful home where I and my family might have lived quietly! Now I have thrown away so much money only to find

[235] Olsen Lehovd to Helgesen and Paulsdatter Lehovd, Salem, Minnesota, December 26, 1864, p. 328. "The reason for this rebellion," Hellik added, "was that the government did not pay them their annual pension as they were once the owners of the entire country," pp. 328–329.
[236] A farmer to friends, Dodge County, Minnesota, September, 1862, in *LTC*, pp. 425–427, q. at p. 426.
[237] Elling Ellingsen Wold, Ole Aslesen Myran, and Ingeborg Helgesdatter and Gunder Helgesen Skare to Helge Gundersen, Decorah, Iowa, January 19, 1863, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 314–316, q. at p. 315.
[238] Ole and Halvor Lauransson to Lavrants Knutsen, and Knut and Tov Lavrantsen Hogndalen, Christiana, Wisconsin, April 2, 1847, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 82–84, q. at pp. 82–83.
[239] Elisabeth Koren to father, Little Iowa Parsonage, June 10, 1855, in Koren, *Diary*, pp. 361–363, q. at p. 363.

myself in this terrible position. I certainly hope that not many people are still writing enticing letters home from America."[240] The extreme violence of the 1862 rebellion prompted Gro Svendsen to write that "I think that not a single one who took part in the revolt should be permitted to live. Unfortunately, I cannot make the decision in the matter. I fear they will be let off to easily."[241] And Guri Endresen, whose narrative of the rebellion has become quite well-known, described how her home had been destroyed: "it was four years August 21 since I had to flee from my dear home, and since that time I have not been on my land, as it is only a sad sight because at the spot where I had a happy home, there are now only ruins left as reminders of the terrible Indians." Now, however, the Indians had been "driven beyond the boundaries of that state, and we hope that they never will be allowed to come here again."[242]

Immigrant settlers and the displacement of indigenous peoples

The displacement of indigenous peoples by European settlers had a long precedence, but became an acute problem as mass migration combined with an emerging capitalist, industrial society in the nineteenth century, speeding up the process.[243] While it is relatively easy for a settler population to incorporate immigrants and others who seek admission from elsewhere, the existence of an indigenous population within the borders of a political community, but not part of the body politic, poses a problem. Settlers therefore tend to employ, as Veracini observes, a "transferist imagination and practice." In its logical conclusion it envisions a complete transfer of sovereignty from an original – that is, an aboriginal – population to the settlers.[244] Viewing Norwegian immigrants' descriptions of Native Americans in light of some of these strategies of imagined transfers, reveals that Norwegians did not only see themselves as farmers, but distinctly as settlers.

Unless they found themselves in the midst of violent encounters with Native Americans, Norwegian immigrants did not spend much ink describing the presence of an indigenous population or discuss them at much length, as both Betty Bergland and Orm Øverland point out. Øverland finds only 27 of a total of 331 letters throughout the nineteenth century to have mentioned Indians at all. Bergland makes up for the absence of comments in letters by

[240] E.O. to friends, St. Peter, Minnesota, September 9, 1862, in *LTC*, pp. 427–428, q. at p. 428.
[241] Gro Svendsen to parents, Estherville, Iowa, December, 1862, in *LTC*, p. 394.
[242] Guri Endresen to mother and daughter in Norway, Harrison P.O., Monongalia County, Minnesota, December 2, 1866, in *LTC*, pp. 428–430, q. at pp. 429–430.
[243] Though in a complicated and protracted way, see Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Mary E. Young, "Indian Removal and Land Allotment: The Civilized Tribes and Jacksonian Justice," *American Historical Review* 64/1 (1958), pp. 31–45.
[244] Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, pp. 33–34.

generalizing Norwegian immigrants' views of Indians from the writings of their pastors. Bergland finds that the pastors in general "spoke sympathetically of Indians, but they never called into question the landtaking."[245] Øverland suggests that the reason that there were so little mention of Indians at all in letters "may indeed have been that they did not regard them as relevant for their present and future life in America," and that the overwhelming silence perhaps reflected the "invisibility of people who were uncomfortable reminders of the ethical ambiguities of immigrant homemaking."[246]

Norwegians often anticipated the displacement of Indians, as seen in a letter from Hellek G. Branson in Kansas, written in 1867: "Next year there will be good opportunities for immigrants. We think that the Indians will be moved from a large area south of us and that those who keep up with developments will be able to get as good land as anywhere in the world."[247] Immigrants thought they themselves had little agency in the process of removing Native Americans from areas which could be sites of settlement. As Peter Cassel, in this case a Swede, wrote from Iowa: "Our plan is to found a Swedish colony about twenty-three and a half Swedish miles west of here, where the government has recently acquired land from the Indians."[248]Although such an "administrative transfer," as Veracini calls it, was not effectuated by the immigrants themselves, they did not question the process; they welcomed it.

More often, however, the removal of Indians was spoken of in a "passive construction." As Bergland notes, it was the land itself that was immigrants' object of concern.[249] Describing conditions and types of work in the West, Johannes Norboe wrote that "Fishing and hunting are Indian occupations, but most of the Indians have now gone."[250] To look for land further west was largely a matter of going were the contestants for the land no longer remained. A settler in Missouri wrote that after "much trouble and expense, on October 4 we finally arrived at this place, an area almost entirely uninhabited." Nevertheless, only a "couple of miles farther west

[245] Betty A. Bergland, "Norwegian Immigrants and 'Indianerne' in the Landtaking, 1838–1862," *NAS,* vol. 35 (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 2000), pp. 319–350, q. at p. 342.
[246] Orm Øverland, "Intruders on Native Ground: Troubling Silences and Memories of the Land-Taking in Norwegian Immigrant Letters," in Udo J. Hebel (ed.), *Transnational American Memories* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004), pp. 79–103, q. at p. 84. Øverland has counted the mention of Native Americans in the multivolume collection of letters he and Steinar Kjærheim have edited, and found that for the two volumes encompassing the antebellum and Civil War era, only four out of 147 letters in vol. 1, and 23 letters out of 184 in vol. 2 mention Native Americans. See p. 80.
[247] Hellek G. Branson to Ole Gulbrandsen and Anne Andersdatter Lande, Eureka, Kansas, July 22, 1867, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 381–383, q. at p. 382.
[248] Peter Cassel to friends and countrymen, Jefferson County, Iowa Territory, February 9, 1846, in Barton, *Letters From the Promised Land*, pp. 28–33, q. at p. 29.
[249] Bergland, "Norwegian Immigrants," p. 320.
[250] Johannes Nordboe to Hans L. Rudi, Ottawa, La Salle County, Illinois, April 30, 1837, in *LTC*, pp. 35–41, q. at p. 39.

the land is completely desolate, until you get to where the Indians live, about a hundred miles from here. We are staying with the nine or ten Norwegians who have made their homes here."[251] Or, as Norboe wrote, "I had to go forty miles northward where there were no human beings except a few Indians. Even though it was in the wilderness, the piece of land I selected was the best and most desirable I have ever seen."[252] As the land was not occupied, the rights to the land were up for the taking. Hans Barlien wrote that as "the free land I have mentioned is part of the territory of Wisconsin and belongs, so to speak, to no one, it is the freest and is particularly suitable for the founding of a colony."[253]

If Indians were encountered in these lands, their presence was considered irrelevant, illegitimate, or atavistic. Nevertheless, immigrants might have perceived that Indians still held sway over a region – even if their sovereignty was not recognized – and consequently avoided settling there. Gunder Helgesen Skare reported in 1868 from an expedition west that there was "some good land in the Indian country, both prairie and forestland, but it isn't yet safe to settle there because of the wild Indians. We didn't take any land there in the West but returned to Norway Lake."[254] But for the most part, Indians' continued presence was described as isolated remnants of the past.

Especially relevant to Norwegians' dual role as immigrants and settlers in America is a strategy Veracini calls "multicultural transfer," whereby "indigenous autonomy is collapsed within exogenous alterity." It is a strategy commonly used to deny aboriginals their sovereignty as a group, but immigrants could also employ a kind of reverse strategy: dividing indigenous autonomy into sub-factions in conflict with each other, thus defanging otherwise unified sovereign contestants to the land. Paul Hjelm-Hansen, having been hired by the state of Minnesota as an immigration agent, could in the aftermath of the well-publicized atrocities of the 1862 not avoid mentioning Indians' continued presence in the West. "many are afraid of new attacks by the Indians," Hjelm-Hansen wrote in 1869. But this danger was illusory, he wrote, as "the Chippewa Indians, who live here in Minnesota, did not take part in the massacre of 1862. That was carried on by the Sioux and a few allied minor tribes. These are now roaming about in Dakota and dare not come into Minnesota." Between "the Chippewas and the Sioux there is unquenchable hatred," he wrote, "for which reason the Sioux do not dare to approach

[251] A settler to a friend, Missouri, October 15, 1838, in *LTC*, pp. 46–48, q. at pp. 46–47.
[252] Nordboe to Rudi, Ottowa, La Salle County, Illinois, April 30, 1837, p. 40.
[253] Barlien to Rynning, St. Francisville on the Des Moines River, Missouri, April 23, 1839, p. 53.
[254] Gunder Helgesen Skare to Helge Gundersen Nerdrum (Skare), Minneapolis, Minnesota, September 5, 1868, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 407–408, q. at p. 408.

the stronghold of the Chippewas, especially because the Sioux know that in case of war the Chippewas would have the support of all white men." Yet it was only a rush of settlers could really assure against future Native American aggression, he concluded: "I do grant that one can never be entirely secure, and that is partly why I am hoping that the Scandinavians will begin the cultivation of the land with a big and well-planned settlement strong and watchful enough to overawe the Indians."[255]

Facing the problem of Indians' continued actual presence, immigrants also employed a type of "narrative transfer," emphasizing that, however regrettable, the disappearance of the indigenous population was inevitably part of a historical process in which settlers had no responsibility to stop. Patricia Nelson Limerick aptly summarizes this viewpoint: "since there was no chance in reversing the conquest, it was safe to regret it."[256] Or, as Pastor Dietrichson noted in his travel account: "culture and civilization progress, and it is in the nature of things that those who will not bow to them must yield."[257] And more often than not, immigrants found little cause for regretting this process. Johan Gasmann, traveling along the Hudson on his way inland to visit his brother in Wisconsin in 1844, wrote:

> All this is so grand, so beautiful, that anyone who enjoys living must be glad and cheerful – and the more so when one recalls that about a hundred years ago there were only a few miserable wigwams or Indian huts here, and on the river only solitary birchbark canoes wherein bloody Indians sat with their tomahawks and scalping knives, ready to torture and murder their enemies. What a transformation in such a short time! If all this does not rouse a man's enthusiasm, then the greatest human enterprises have no value.[258]

Similar celebratory accounts of progress from savagery to civilization may also be observed in immigrant newspapers. A letter to *Folkets Røst* described Houston County in Minnesota, "almost exclusively inhabited by Norwegians," where there was "no one, I think, who having made a home for himself in this place, wishes to exchange it for another." It had only been seven years "since this prairie was a place for the deer and the Indian to rule." Now "towns, mills, and farms jostle for place," and "everyone contributes to reach our mutual goal."[259]

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[255] Paul Hjelm-Hansen to the public, Alexandria, Minnesota, July 31, 1869, in *LTC*, pp. 436–443, q. at p. 442. Blegen notes that it is Carlton C. Qualey who has translated the letter.
[256] Patricia Nelson Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1988), p. 215
[257] Dietrichson, *Pioneer Churchman*, p. 107.
[258] Gasmann, "From New York to Wisconsin in 1844," pp. 30–49, q. at p. 35.
[259] *Folkets Røst*, November 20, 1858. "næsten udelukkende beboet af Norske"; "Der findes neppe Nogen, troer jeg, som her har tilarbeidet sig et Hjem, der vilde ønske at bortbytte dette for et Andet"; "Det er nu knapt syv Aar siden denne Egn var en Mark for Hjorten og Indianeren at beherske, frit og uforstyrret af den hvide Mand; og i denne korte Periode, er den bleven forandret til et dristigt Settlement, hvor Byer, Møller og Farmer kappes om at reise sig, og Enhver bidrager Sit til at naae vort felles Maal."

Among the many points in Veracini's list of transfer strategies, one in particular is applicable not only to how immigrants understood themselves as settlers, but also to how they established themselves within the narrative of settling the West. In a letter dated February 23, 1869, Gro Svendsen described the origins of the various place names around Estherville, the area where she lived. She had met "a woman named Esther, for whom the town of Estherville was named. She was the first white woman to settle here." The county, on the other hand, had received its name from "the first white man who settled here," Emmett, "hence Emmett County." The name of the state was "an Indian word meaning 'the beautiful land,'" and Svendsen told of how the Native Americans, led by the chief Black Hawk, had allegedly shouted "Iowa! Iowa!" when they "crossed the Mississippi for the first time into this region." Finally, she wrote of her own town: "Our township is Petterson Township, named for the Norwegian who first settled here. His name is Nels Pedersen Brugjeld, and he comes from Sogn in Norway."[260] In this version of a "narrative transfer," where "settler ethnogenesis happened on the land," immigrants could establish a kind of "moral equivalence between conflicting claims – while indigenous people just happened to have arrived earlier, both groups have successfully indigenised."[261] Svendsen positioned immigrants' own account of their settlement on an equal level with both American settlers, and Native Americans. All had come to the region at some point, and hence they all had a claim to be considered part of the region's history, and thus to belong there.

The point of casting immigrants' comments and understandings of the position of the American indigenous population *vis-à-vis* themselves as settlers, is not to assign blame or prove their complicity in the dispersal and displacement of Indians – there can be little doubt that they helped push this process along. The point is rather to bring forth the ways in which Norwegian immigrants in this period understood themselves as settlers. To a certain degree, Norwegians quickly adopted Americans' perspectives on Indians as Øverland observes, but the many, varied instances in which immigrants demonstrated a "transferist" mentality in their writings may indicate that if immigrants should have taken these attitudes from Americans, then they did not simply adopt them; they had also internalized them.[262]

By considering themselves as settlers or "colonists," as they tended to call themselves, Norwegians had available a framework for arguing they belonged in America. If the West was a distinct region of itself, where Europeans and Americans alike were immigrants, then they could

[260] Gro and Ole Svendsen to brother and family, February 23, 1869, in Svendsen, *Frontier Mother*, pp. 93–95, q. at p. 95
[261] Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, pp. 42–43.
[262] Øverland, "Intruders on Native Ground," p. 92.

also efface their differences as Europeans and Americans, and instead emphasize their shared position as settlers on the frontier. In the 1868–1870 Wisconsin publication *Billed-Magazin* [Picture Magazine], the editor Svein Nilsson contributed with several articles on Norwegian settlers in the state and in surrounding areas. Describing the settlement at Muskego, Nilsson observed:

> The red men have vanished from these regions and of their trails there is scarcely a trace left. Only legends, certain place-names, a few grave mounds, and occasional stone weapons found in the fields remind us that once another race possessed this land – the land now occupied by the immigrants to whom the sons of the wilderness reached a welcoming hand. Thus it happened here – and in many other places. The Indians retreated when confronted by another civilization, and a race further advanced in agricultural skills now till the soil and enjoy the fruits of those resources which the natives did not know how to utilize.[263]

Veracini notes that it is common for settlers to subsume on equal terms indigenous peoples into a multicultural population, thus denying them their distinct status as aboriginals. immigrants, it may be observed here, subsumed their own position within America's pluralistic population into a unilateral "civilization," the dominant feature of which was not any particular cultural characteristics, but the ability exploit land in ways Indians had not. Such a strategy provided immigrants with one of the first ways of conceptualizing their belonging in America.

Emerging narratives of settler belonging

Settlers tend to carry a particular mentality that structures their sense of belonging. The philosopher Linn Miller observes how, "By bringing the supposed nature of the land in line with their own supposed natures settler belonging is established." It is a story "about themselves and their experiences of place that synthesizes their identity with that of the land in which they find themselves," Miller argues.[264] While identifying with the properties of the land remains important, it is also settlers' stories of coming to the land and appropriating it which create a sense of belonging. Even though settlers often appeal to the Lockean conception of property as original appropriation and exploitation to legitimize their possession of as well as their very presence on colonial land, there is also an inherent historical dimension present. The "experiences of place," which Miller theorizes from, are necessarily temporal, and augment the sense of belonging. The experiential level is connected to the theoretical in the "imperial" idea

[263] Clausen, *A Chronicler of Immigrant Life*, p. 17.
[264] Miller, "Being and Belonging," p. 31 and 32. She discusses settler identity in the Australian context.

of legitimating power by temporal precedence – that the sense of belonging in colonial space becomes gradually truer the longer the settlers stay.[265]

The very first stories placing immigrants within a history of settling the West appeared in immigrants' own newspapers. On the initiative of editors, settlers sent in accounts of their regions.[266] These brief narratives included the history of a settlement, its present condition, and situated the letter writer within the history of settling the region – and typically at the very start of this history. *Wossingen* [the Vossing], a newspaper dedicated to gathering and spreading news of emigrants from the district of Voss in Norway, published a letter from "our agent, Mr. Magne B. Samson, who is postmaster in Christiana, Decotah Co., Minnesota." Samson declared that his "mother, I and Ole Thoresen were the first settlers in this settlement and among the first in this part of the Territory." They had been traveling through Madison, and "went westward to Prairie Du Chien, across the Mississippi and through Iowa, via Decorah and other towns, until we came to Minnesota, where at the time there were not any towns in the area." Coming to Sioux Creek and finding Sioux Lake, they settled, and "had no neighbors in a distance of eight miles, and saw no strange white people for the first ten weeks." From then on, "more countrymen arrived from Koshkonong, Muskego, and other places in Wisconsin. The land around Sioux Lake was settled in two years' time, and since then no Norwegian has settled here." A common motivation behind such letters was to attract more Norwegians to settle in the given locale, in order that the land may not be bought by speculators, as Samson in fact explicitly stated. Yet for his intention to advertise his own settlement, the embryo of an indigenizing, historically formulated homemaking story may be observed in such accounts.[267]

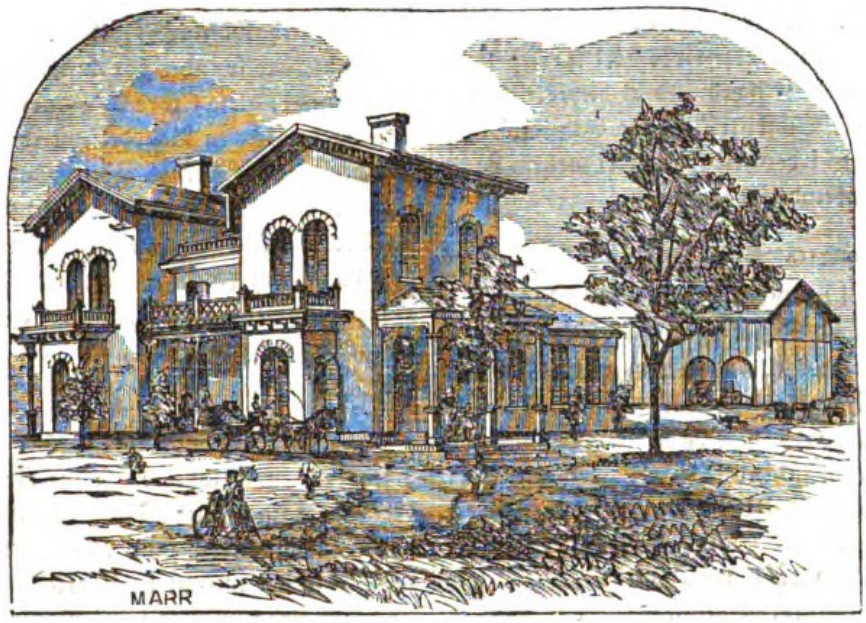
[265] For discussions on imperialist mindsets, see Anthony Pagden, *Lords of all the World: Ideologies of Empire in Spain, Britain and France, c. 1500–c. 1800* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), pp. 63–102, and Gregory D. Smithers, "The 'Pursuits of the Civilized Man': Race and the Meaning of Civilization in the United States and Australia, 1790s–1850s," *Journal of World History* 20/2 (2009), pp. 245–272.

[266] Lovoll notes that "the correspondents, regularly with great pride, related not only the mundane and the celebratory achievements of their new home in America, but also the triumph of the human spirit in overcoming homesickness and adversity, in making the wilderness prosper for the benefit of coming generations as they actively engaged in building new communities." Indeed, "The settlement letters that saw print in various Norwegian American newspapers helped to create a social network and a sense of a larger Norwegian American fellowship." *Norwegian Newspapers*, p. 62.

[267] "De Norske i Decotah County," *Wossingen*, April, 1859. See appendix 12.

En Wisconsin-Farmers Hus for 10 Aar siden.

Figure 2: “A Wisconsin farmer’s house ten years ago.” *Billed-Magazin*, 40, September 4, 1869.



Samme Farmers Hus for nærværende.

Figure 3: “The same farmer’s house at present.” *Billed-Magazin*, 40, September 4, 1869.

These homemaking stories acquired their full, historicized dimension in Svein Nilsson's articles on successful Norwegian settlers. Nilsson had traveled the Midwest with the intention to "seek out the oldest still-living persons among the first emigrants, and from their narratives it will be possible to gather material for an immigration history."[268] Although Nilsson's articles have figured among the main sources for the history of early Norwegian immigration ever since the initial publication of his own magazine, they have never been fully appreciated as claims of belonging.[269] But it is in Nilsson's presentation of immigrants' own narratives that we find the most explicit statements of belonging in America, which rested on primacy in time, successful settlement and successful homemaking. Justifying his attention to the stories of certain individuals, Nilsson wrote that "Many of our countrymen who crossed the Atlantic decades ago to seek a home in America have founded populous settlements; they have, with their reports, encouraged hundreds, if not to say thousands, to pack and leave their native land."[270] The stories of these early and influential immigrant pioneer settlers were proof that the areas "now blessed with the fruits of civilization" were once "a dreary wilderness inhabited only by wild animals and Indian hunters,"[271] in which "through the years so many of our countrymen have found a home and, as we hope, the happiness which was the goal of their migration."[272]

The tendency in Nilsson's stories was most succinctly captured in two illustrations which accompanied an article on the settlement of Wisconsin in general (figure 2 and 3). In the beginning of settlement in Wisconsin, "no one had yet contested the land rights of the Indians," the article read, but between the years 1840 and 1850, however, "the immigration to certain parts was especially large, and "as if by magic" the wilderness was transformed into fertile fields. "In the ancient forest the newcomer built his home, usually no more than a simple log cabin." But within a short time, "thousands and yet thousands of emigrants from Europe choose this place as their future home." The contrast between past hardship and present success in having acquired a home is telling. In fact, as Nilsson himself observed, "These illustrations, more than a long, well-written dissertation, demonstrate that diligence and responsibility in this

[268] Clausen, *Chronicler of Immigrant Life*, p. 5.
[269] It is indeed as material to immigration history that Nilsson's articles have been appreciated. Clausen notes that "later historians have found Svein Nilsson's articles to be real 'grass-roots' history – valuable source material for more sophisticated historical writing." *Chronicler of Immigrant Life*, p. 5. Although Blegen, in his *American Transition*, had earlier argued that Nilsson "was not so much a historian as a collector of the materials of history" (p. 584), other scholars have appreciated the articles as an attempt of historical writing in itself. Lovoll has stated that the articles "are a major source" and an "insightful account of the founding phase of immigration and settlement in Wisconsin." *Norwegian Newspapers*, p. 7. See also Øverland, *Western Home*, p. 55.
[270] Clausen, *Chronicler of Immigrant Life*, p. 31.
[271] Clausen, *Chronicler of Immigrant Life*, p. 83.
[272] Clausen, *Chronicler of Immigrant Life*, p. 69. This sentence was intended as a specific description of one settlement, but similar phraseology was employed to discuss the other Norwegian settlements as well.

country inevitably leads to prosperity and an independent, economic position."[273] Nilsson described migration to Wisconsin as a general process of movement, but he also put considerable emphasis on the role of Europeans in this process. The "newcomer," however, was without ethnicity; it was the act of settlement which gave immigrants their identity.

As the years went by, it became natural for the first immigrants to describe their situation and experiences in a historical perspective. In 1838, in one of the first written reports of America by a Norwegian immigrant, Ole Knudsen Nattestad had no history to tell, except that "most of us located near a creek which is called Baeverkrek (Beaver Creek) and there we took a piece of land each and are now well contented therewith if we are able to keep it and pay for it."[274] Ten years later, however, Nattestad responded to *Nordlyset*'s call for information of Norwegian settlements in the Midwest, and he had an account printed on May 18, 1848. Here he wrote that "I came to Jefferson Prairie on July 1, 1838, to the town of Clinton, and was the first Norwegian who farmed here, and, as far as I know, the first Norwegian in Wisconsin." Since then "the settlement and population of Norwegian emigrants have increased, so at present there are 51 families […] 42 in possession of land, which in total numbers 5,476 acres, whereof 516 acres are cultivated."[275] When Nattestad was interviewed by Nilsson in the 1860s, the historical perspective and his trailblazing role was emphasized more strongly: "I arrived at the place where I now live, near the center of Clinton township in Rock county, Wisconsin. Here I bought land and was thus the first Norwegian to settle in this state. […] Neither, to the best of my knowledge, had any Norwegian previously set foot on Wisconsin soil nor entered the state to inspect the land," Nattestad explained. "For a whole year I did not see any countryman of mine but lived secluded, without friends, family, or companions. To be sure, eight Americans had settled in the township before me but they lived in about as lonely and isolated a situation as I did."[276]

In Nilsson's interviews of the Norwegian immigrant pioneers, the immigrants claimed a role as trailblazers, and not only for their own ethnic group. As Nilsson himself observed in the instance of pioneer emigrants from the local valleys in Norway: "There is always some

[273] *Billed-Magazin*, 40, September 4, 1869. "endnu Ingen havde gjort Indianeren Eiendomsretten stridig"; "Især var Indvandringen til visse Trakter stærk i Aarene mellem 1840 og 1850, og i hvilket Tidsrum Vildmarken som ved Trylleri blev forvandlet fra Ørken til smilende Enge og frodige Agre. Inde i Urskoven opslog Nykommeren sin Bolig, bestaaende somoftest af en simpel Loghytte."; "Disse Illustrationer fortæller tydeligere end en velskreven lang Afhandling, at Flid og Omtanke her i Landet sikkert fører til Velstand og en økonomisk uafhængig Stilling."
[274] Rasmus B. Anderson and Ole Knudsen Nattestad, "Description of a Journey to North America," *The Wisconsin Magazine of History* 1/2 (1917), pp. 149–186," p. 183.
[275] *Nordlyset*, May 18, 1848. See appendix 13.
[276] Clausen, *Chronicler of Immigrant Life*, p. 54.

distinction attached to being the first person who performs a deed which later is imitated by many others."[277] Again and again, Nilsson's immigrants emphasized how they were the first settlers around: "When I settled here the whole region toward the west was a wilderness." Although "some Yankees had settled in the wilderness about seven miles away," the immigrants typically stated a version of the following: "I do not know whether any white people lived between me and the Mississippi."[278] There were "no other settlers in the township" when Knud Roe settled, and therefore he could claim to have been the "first white man to light his hearth in Pleasant Spring."[279] Wherever the immigrants in Nilsson's articles settled, they were often, as Gunder Torgersen Mandt told Nilsson, among the "advance guard of immigration who blazed a trail for civilization through the wilderness."[280]

Nilsson's was not the last to provide a comprehensive overview of the early Norwegian colonization: Rasmus B. Anderson's *The First Chapter of Scandinavian Migration* (1895) would follow Nilsson's efforts to establish the earliest history of the Norwegian settlements on the U.S. frontier. By setting the end point of his investigation to 1840, Anderson intended, as he wrote, to describe "first half dozen Norwegian settlements" in America.[281] Yet Nilsson was the first to place Norwegian immigration and colonization within a larger narrative of westward expansion. Whereas Nilsson carefully integrated the settlers within the history of settling the Midwest, other contemporary surveys were concerned with the present and future of Scandinavian colonization. Johan Schrøder, who undertook a similar, but a much more comprehensive journey throughout both Canada and the United States, wrote an expansive and detailed description of the West and the Norwegian settlements. Yet he did so for another reason than Nilsson. The intention, as stated in an advertisement published in *Emigranten* in 1863, was to travel "throughout those parts of America that in the immediate future will be of the greatest interest for Scandinavian emigration."[282]

When Schrøder let immigrants speak with their own voice, it was to give advice on prospective settlement, not to tell their own stories of having settled somewhere. Thus in the few places when Schrøder wrote that he would "let the settlers themselves speak of the soil and its

[277] Clausen, *Chronicler of Immigrant Life*, p. 12.
[278] Clausen, *Chronicler of Immigrant Life*, p. 70 and 71.
[279] Clausen, *Chronicler of Immigrant Life*, p. 107.
[280] Clausen, *Chronicler of Immigrant Life*, p. 116.
[281] Rasmus B. Anderson, *The First Chapter of Norwegian Immigration, (1821–1840) Its Causes and Results* (Madison: published by the author, 1895), p. v.
[282] As given in Orm Øverland's introduction to *Johan Schrøder's Travels in Canada, 1863*, ed. and trans. Orm Øverland (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989), p. 58.

condition," it was because "opinions here are so divided when it comes to whether the Norseman should settle in this climate and on this type of soil."[283] Whereas Schrøder was solely interested in the present and future opportunities for farming and made this interest the driving force of his survey, Nilsson took care to let immigrants' life stories build the larger historical narrative of Norwegian immigration in the United States. Conflating migrants to the American West with emigrants from Europe folded European immigrants and Americans into the same position as settlers, and Nilsson, although never argumentatively and explicitly insisting on such a conflation, published articles which gave immigrants an active role in the development of society on the western frontier. With the help of a journalist, immigrants styled themselves as pioneer settlers to the wider Norwegian public in America.[284]

Conclusion

In his 1909 review of the existing historical literature on Norwegians in America, Johannes B. Wist argued that when Nilsson published his magazine, there was "little concern among the Norwegian-Americans as to their own history." They had either been occupied with "becoming Americans" or they had been concerned with the Civil War, which had created "a strong patriotic-American mood, also to be found in the Norwegian settlements and city-colonies." Consequently "there was as yet little thought of anything else."[285] But even if Norwegians were still in the late 1860s not concerned with the history of their ethnic group, they were, and had for some time been concerned with their historical role as settlers in the West. It was only with *Billed-Magazin* that the stories of immigrants' hard work and success as pioneers in the westward expansion of the United States were expressed in full but, in contrast to later "homemaking myths," these stories of belonging were not mainly designed for convincing Americans of Norwegians' value as U.S. citizens; they were rather the perspective of immigrants which illustrated their sense of belonging in America as immigrant settlers.

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[283] Johan Schrøder, *Skandinaverne i de forenede Stater og Canada, med Indberetninger og Oplysninger fra 200 skandinaviske Settlementer. En Ledetraad for Emigranten fra det gamle Land og for Nybyggeren i Amerika* (La Crosse, Wisconsin: published by the author, 1867), p. 167 "Jeg vil lade Nybyggerne selv tale om Jorden og deres Stilling, da Meningerne her syntes meget delte om, hvorvidt Nordboen burde nedsætte sig under dette Klima og paa dette Slags Jord."

[284] John A. Johnson, a Norwegian immigrant, observes that "When I learned that many of *Billed–Magazin*'s subscribers send it home to relatives and friends in Norway, I concluded that a brief discussion concerning conditions in this country would be well received by the readers." John A. Johnson, "Concerning Emigration," trans. C. A. Clausen, *NAS,* vol. 33 (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1992), pp. 205–234, q. on p. 205.

[285] Johs. B. Wist, "Vor historiske litteratur," *Symra*, 5 (1909), pp. 127–143, at *The Promise of America*, http://www.nb.no/emigrasjon/emigration/ [accessed May 5, 2015], unpaginated. "Der var endnu dengang liden sans blandt norsk-amerikanerne for deres egen historie. Man hadde i den nærmest foregaaende tid været stærkt optaget dels af tanken paa hurtig at bli amerikanere, dels af den abolitionspolitik, som affødte borgerkrigen, og endelig af borgerkrigren selv, hvori saa mange norske deltog, og som nu nylig var slut. Borgerkrigen skabte, som intet andet kunde gjort det, en stærk patriotisk-amerikansk stemning ogsaa i de norske settlementer og bykolonier, og foreløbig var der liden tanke for andet."

Writing about the Norwegian Koshkonong settlement in Wisconsin, Svein Nilsson commended the settlers for having "changed a wilderness into flourishing meadows and fertile fields which give bread to thousands." Telling the story of immigrants successfully overcoming hardships, Nilsson continued: "Most of the immigrants were destitute when they came to a strange land, but their hopes were not put to shame; willing spirits and strong arms enabled them to reach their goal." And he concluded: "the foreign born is no longer a foreigner: the soil he tills belongs to him; he takes part in the governing of the land and enjoys all the rights of a native citizen."[286] Nowhere did Nilsson actually emphasize that Norwegians had become "Americans," however. Neither did Nilsson's contention of belonging rest on any perceived cultural assimilation having taken place. And in this, as will be seen in the next chapter, Nilsson was not alone.

[286] Clausen, *Chronicler of Immigrant Life*, p. 100. "fremmedfødte" is in the English edition translated as "newcomer", not "foreign born" – obscuring the contrast Nilsson made with the "native-born." See *Billed-Magazin* 49, November 6, 1869, p. 390. "og den fremmedfødte staar ei længere som en Udlænding her; den Jord, han dyrker, tilhører ham; han har Andel i Landets Styrelse og nyder alle en indfødt Borgers Rettigheder."

3. THE LIMITS OF BELONGING: NORWEGIAN IMMIGRANTS AND THE AMERICAN NATION

> Let them become Americans, as is the duty of holders of American soil, but this need not prevent them from remaining Norwegian for a long time to come. The American character is not yet so fixed that it excludes all others. – *Ole Munch Ræder, 1847.*[287]

> We are Americans, and as citizens nothing else in the world. But by descent, by ancestry, by *kinship* we are Norwegians, and can never be anything else no matter how desperately some of us try. For my part I cannot imagine that it won't always be true that *our* people originally came here from Norway. – *Ole E. Rølvaag, 1922.*[288]

Separated by 75 years, the words of the Norwegian traveler in antebellum America Ole Munch Ræder and the twentieth-century Norwegian-American author Ole Rølvaag were still variants of the same immigrant mentality. On the one hand, immigrants confronted a nation that had appeared inclusive, and they attempted to incorporate an understanding of their own group within it. On the other hand, the American nation also already appeared as a fixed cultural community, made up by people of Anglo-Saxon descent, which limited the ways immigrants were able to imagine they belonged to that community. Instead immigrants perceived their own heritage to be a source of a collective identity in America. Still, in space of 75 years, much had changed. When Ræder observed the unfinished character of Americans in the 1840s, nativist reaction to immigration was only in emergence; when Rølvaag insisted that Norwegians should maintain their ethnic identity in America, laws restricting immigration had already been in force for forty years: coming to a head in his day, the First World War's demands of "one-hundred-percent Americanism" were relentless.[289]

The ever-present, constantly pressing question which old and new immigrants throughout the nineteenth century had to face, was to what degree they should – and could – change their own culture, habits, and identity, in order to accommodate or integrate themselves into the polity of those whose country they came to. This chapter explores how Norwegian immigrants initially

[287] Malmin, *America in the Forties*, p. 19.
[288] Ole E. Rølvaag, *Concerning Our Heritage*, trans. Solveig Zempel (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1998), p. 204. Orig. emphasis.
[289] For the early twentieth century context, see April Schultz, "'The Pride of the Race Had Been Touched': The 1925 Norse-American Immigration Centennial and Ethnic Identity," *Journal of American History* 77/4 (1991), pp. 1265–1295.

reacted to the assumptions, admonitions and expectations of assimilation they encountered in America. Doing so, the chapter seeks to uncover how Norwegians imagined they could belong to the American nation, in the present as well as in the future.

American nationalism and immigrant identities

Initially the American nation was to be a new nation, based on ideological consent to an experiment in republican democracy. The framers of the Declaration of Independence (1776), the Articles of Confederation (1781), and the U.S. Constitution (1788) held up natural law and universal human rights as the foundation of their new American polity. But one of the mottos from the American Revolution, *e pluribus unum*, came not only to denote the consolidation of several colonies into a single union, but also the nationalization of the various peoples living within the borders of the union.[290] Although "We, the people of the United States" were at the outset ideologically defined (excepting the troubling status of "those bound to Service for a Term of Years," and "Indians not taxed," as the Constitution had it), in the early decades of the nineteenth century, as a group of immigrant historians have put it, "a polity experiencing rapid economic growth and social differentiation under conditions of virtually universal adult white male suffrage no longer seemed to function in quite the deferential fashion its founders had intended."[291] Benjamin Franklin's original 1754 admonition to the English colonies, urging them to "Join, or die" in the battle against outside threats, did not only over time translate into an intolerant attitude towards Loyalists after the Revolution, but also into expectations of conformity among existing and would-be citizens of the new republic.[292] President John Quincy Adams – who personally acquitted the very first bulk of Norwegian immigrants from what they considered an unfair taxation on import – wrote in 1819 to a German who considered emigration:

> They [all immigrants] come to a life of independence, but to a life of labor […] the Atlantic is always open to them to return to the land of their nativity and their fathers. […] they must make up their minds, or, they will be disappointed in every expectation of happiness as Americans. They must cast off the European skin, never to resume it. They must look forward to their posterity rather than backward to their ancestors;

[290] Andrew G. I. Kilberg, "We the People: The Original Meaning of Popular Sovereignty," *Virginia Law Review* 100/5 (2014), pp. 1061–1109; Christopher Childers, "Interpreting Popular Sovereignty: A Historiographical Essay," *Civil War History* 57/1 (2011), pp. 48–70; David Armitage, *Foundations of Modern International Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 191–214. "The American revolutionaries were forced to create states out of colonies as they also began to recognise themselves as members of the same nation. They had to become independent in order to realise their interdependence," Armitage observes, p. 213.

[291] Kathleen Neils Conzen, David A. Gerber, Ewa Morawska, George E. Pozzetta, and Rudolph J. Vecoli, "The Invention of Ethnicity: A Perspective from the U.S.A.," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 12/1 (1992), pp. 3–41, q. at p. 8.

[292] An excellent overview is Maya Jasanoff, "The Other Side of Revolution: Loyalists in the British Empire," *William and Mary Quarterly* 65/2 (2008), pp. 205–232; see also Robert S. Lambert, "The Confiscation of Loyalist Property in Georgia, 1782–1786," *William and Mary Quarterly* 20/1 (1963), pp. 80–94.

> – they must be sure that whatever their own feelings may be, those of their children will cling to the prejudices of this country.[293]

Yet even stronger versions of this expectation of conformity were expressed by Americans, and "assimilation" became the dominant way in which Americans imagined the incorporation of immigrants into their polity.[294] As John Higham notes, to speak of "assimilation as a problem" is an "anachronism" for much of the nineteenth century: "Assimilation was either taken for granted or viewed as inconceivable."[295]

European immigrants, it was expected, would assimilate into "Americans," but disentangling the ideological and cultural notions of this peoplehood proved difficult. Perhaps rather paradoxically, a nation initially and purportedly premised on consent began celebrating their descent, not only from the "founding fathers" of the late eighteenth century, but also from England and in particular from their idealized image of freedom-loving Anglo-Saxons.[296] Eric Kaufmann has pointed to the ethnic aspects of American nationalism. Arguing that an "ethno-nationalism" existed in America even well before the mass emigration following the Napoleonic Wars in Europe, Kaufmann also points to an attitude of "Anglo-conformity" existing even prior to the Revolution. Expectations of conformity demanded the assimilation of continental Europeans living in the American colonies to an ethnic or cultural idea of Englishness.[297] Although Thomas Paine had observed in *Common Sense* (1776) that "Europe, and not England, is the parent country of America," he had also observed, in the very same paragraph, that "it is so far true of England, that the same tyranny which drove the first emigrants from home, pursues their descendants still"; a potential duality between English descent and American consent was embedded in American nationalism from the very start.[298] Nonetheless, the "myth of the civic nation," as Bernard Yack writes, is still a myth, as "even nations founded by explicit

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[293] John Quincy Adams to Morris de Furstenwaerther, Washington, June 4, 1819, in *Niles' Weekly Register,* vol. 18 (Baltimore: Franklin Press, 1820), pp. 157–158, q. at p. 158. On the history and primary sources of John Quincy Adams and the *Restauration* from Stavanger, see the appendix in Blegen, *American Transition*, pp. 599–628.

[294] Harold J. Abramson notes that the positions varied between those who advocated the "amalgamation" of immigrants into a version of Anglo-Americans, and those who expected the development of a new American national character; yet "The Anglo-conformity view prevailed." See "Assimilation and Pluralism," in *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*, pp. 150–160, q. at p. 152.

[295] John Higham, "Integrating America: The Problem of Assimilation in the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 1/1 (1981), pp. 7–25, q. at p. 7.

[296] John Higham finds Anglo-Saxon nationalism "At best a minor strain in American thought before the Civil War," but he still recognizes the seventeenth century "vogue" of invoking Anglo-Saxon origins in England. *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860–1925* (1955; repr., New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1994), see pp. 9–11.

[297] See Eric Kaufmann, "American Exceptionalism Reconsidered: Anglo-Saxon Ethnogenesis in the 'Universal' Nation, 1776–1850," *Journal of American Studies* 33/3 (1999), pp. 437–457.

[298] Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*, ed. Edward Larkin (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview, 2004), p. 64. In the end, Paine thought this line of English descent inconsequential, and false, see pp. 64–65.

agreement, say, in a Declaration of Independence or an Oath of Federation, persist through later generations' affirmation of the heritage that they receive from the nations' founders."[299] As ideas of an American nationhood gradually emerged from the eighteenth century onward, an American "ethnogenesis" became unavoidable.[300] David C. Hendrickson has illustrated how Americans utilized three competing frameworks for their collective political identity in order to conceptualize their international relations to other states, as respectively a union, nation, and an empire.[301] A dualism, moreover, existed in their internal, national relations: their collective social identity vacillated between an ethnic and a civic idea of belonging.

Meeting such duality in a nation that proffered universal, ideological grounds for inclusion, while at the same time defining itself in light of its English descent and presuming newcomers to adapt to their own image, immigrants sought to imitate this dualism for their own advantage. Many scholars have observed and investigated the phenomenon, but it is Jon Gjerde who has defined the most useful concept to describe it. As the "ideological underpinnings of citizenship that privileged 'freedom' and 'self-rule' in fact enabled immigrants to nurture simultaneously their bond to nation and to ethnic subgroup," immigrants could construct a "complementary identity," Gjerde argues. This identity "merged allegiance to the national and ethnic group in a self-reinforcing dynamic that embedded pluralism into the national fabric as immigrants and their leaders understood it."[302] In another vein, the literary scholar Werner Sollors have identified this dualism as one between "consent" and "descent" running through American culture, and indeed as being a defining aspect of that culture itself.[303] The difference between these perspectives on the duality of an American nationalism points to the problems immigrants faced in belonging to the American community. While Gjerde emphasizes the inherent potential immigrants had of belonging on a civic level to America while also maintaining their ethnic identities, Sollors stresses how these two dimensions were in constant tension, thus enabling a

[299] Bernard Yack, *Nationalism and the Moral Psychology of Community* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), p. 30.
[300] Kallen observed already in 1915 how Anglo-Americans had established an ethnic understanding of American nationalism: "Democracy Versus the Melting-Pot," pp. 80–81.
[301] David C. Hendrickson, *Union, Nation, or Empire: The American Debate over International Relations, 1789–1941* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2009).
[302] Jon Gjerde, "Boundaries and Linkages: Norwegian Immigrants, the United States, and Norway," in *Interpreting the Promise of America*, pp. 13–29, q. at p. 19 and 18. "Immigrants celebrated life in the United States because it enabled them to retain beliefs that originated outside of it," Gjerde observes in his *Minds of the West*, p. 8. For some critical comments on the wider project of accounting for the "cultural wars" in the Midwestern landscape, which Gjerde's monograph is considered a part of, see the review essay by David A. Gerber: "Heartland Pluralism: Middle Western Ethnicities and Mentalities," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 18/1 (1998), pp. 93–102.
[303] Werner Sollors, *Beyond Ethnicity: Consent and Descent in American Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986).

potential exclusion from a core sense of the nation, even as newcomers professed their allegiance to the national community.

Yet another aspect of problem is found in advocacies for an exclusively ideological American national identity. This line of American exceptionalist rhetoric could inadvertently perpetuate an ethnic understanding of the present American nation. A cosmopolitan national identity existed, but it did so as a revolutionary promise: immigrants were at present welcomed into an existing, "American" peoplehood, even as its unfinished character was readily admitted; "Anglo-conformity" could take a subtle shape. Seen in light of its history, the American national polity was largely defined by their opposition to imperial rule. The contemporary historiography rarely portrayed the population of the United States as having originated from a diverse set of nations. Instead, the history of its people was closely intertwined with their unified revolt against Britain.[304] The national narratives of the people of the United States could thus exclude immigrants from belonging to the nation, if not so much in the future, then both in the past and in the present. More than historians at the time, it is time that we consider the idea that not all immigrants either perceived an American national identity to be available to them at present, or that they were able to identify with an American national past.

Calling names: labels of ethnicity

It has become quite uncontroversial to note that modern national communities are imagined before anything else.[305] Scholars of immigration have been keen to utilize insights from anthropology in order to explicate the historically contingent natures of national or ethnic identities.[306] Conzen and others highlight how ethnic identities in America were continuously invented and reinvented in conjunction with Americans' own understandings of their national identity, and also in relation to the continuous or obstructed streams of immigrants entering the United States. By "historicizing the phenomenon, the concept of invention allows for the appearance, metamorphosis, disappearance, and reappearance of ethnicities," they argue.[307]

[304] Dorothy Ross, "Historical Consciousness in Nineteenth-Century America," *American Historical Review* 89/4 (1984), pp. 909–928; David Thelen, "Making History and Making the United States," *Journal of American Studies* 32/3 (1998), pp. 373–397; Eileen Ka-May Cheng, "American Historical Writers and the Loyalists, 1788–1856: Dissent, Consensus, and American Nationality," *Journal of the Early Republic* 23/4 (2003), pp. 491–519.
[305] It was Benedict Anderson who pioneered this approach. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (London: Verso, 2006), originally published in 1983.
[306] The pre-eminent example is Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence O. Ranger's edited collection of essays, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
[307] Conzen et al., "The Invention of Ethnicity," p. 5.

The historical construction and employment of labels to describe the different collectivities of peoples within the borders of the United States may be seen as indicators to how particular ethnicities were understood. Just as Richard Merritt has attempted to trace the rise of an American national identity during the eighteenth century by analyzing the appearance of relevant terms in colonial journals and newspapers, it is possible to trace immigrants' understandings of themselves as part of an American nation by looking at the labels they applied to themselves and others. It is the terms used to describe the community and the members who belonged to this community that is of interest here.[308] Anthropological insights into the various processes "othering" have been widely employed by historians in order to explain the contents and borders of group identities, but the very names of these "others" have been less explored.

It is the self-appellations – the endonyms – that are important. The exonyms employed by Americans are only relevant to the extent these influenced the names immigrants themselves employed. While the endonyms of any one ethnic group may only provide a clue to understanding a broader mental outlook, they push us in the right direction. The question concerns, in part, the ways in which immigrants related to group identities in America, before, during, and after their migration. Although parochial and regional identities were important in Norway, it was a national identity which immigrants acquired as an exonym in distinction to Americans. Americans themselves seldom distinguished even between the various Scandinavian nationalities, and in this context, "Vossing," "Telemarking," or "Numedøling" would have been little expedient labels of identity for either Americans or immigrants themselves.[309] Consequently, immigrants' "terms" of inclusion rested upon their status as what is today called "foreign nationals."

[308] Richard L. Merritt, "The Emergence of American Nationalism: A Quantitative Approach," in "Part 2," supplement, *American Quarterly* 17/2 (1965), pp. 319–335. Merritt based his original symbol analysis on "four randomly selected issues per year of newspapers from each of five colonial population centers," (p. 330) but the present material does not afford such a quantitative, sampling method. First of all, most of the papers figured as a single broadsides, and the amount of self-produced contents of each issue varied wildly. And second, the pioneer newspapers seldom lasted for more than a couple of years, had different political affiliations, and had consequently widely different levels of circulation and readership. The following conclusions are based on my readings of the complete files of antebellum newspapers, but as my main preoccupation has been to find articles, comments, and perceptions of relevance, I might have missed a few instances of usage. This would still be a preferable method than a randomized sampling, however.

[309] Yet, as Blegen notes in his *American Transition*, "at present there are approximately a half hundred bygdelags in the United States, societies made up of immigrants, and of the descendants of immigrants, who originated in particular districts in the old country," p. 77n16. The persistence of parochial identities indicates the importance of internal distinctions within the Norwegian ethnic group in America. For the history of the bygdelags, see Odd S. Lovoll, *A Folk Epic: The* Bygdelag *in America* (Boston: Twaine, 1975).

It was largely unproblematic for European immigrants to be formally included in the American body politic during the nineteenth century.[310] The Naturalization Act of 1801 required immigrants only to reside for a period of five years in the United States before being granted citizenship. Several western territories and states, in order to attract immigrants and thus increase their population, were even more lenient.[311] As the Norwegian immigrant newspaper *Nordlyset* noted in 1848, the proposed state constitution for Wisconsin was "remarkably liberal – no difference is made between native Americans and foreigners. Everyone must stay here for a year before they receive the right to vote. Those who vote on this constitution will immediately receive citizenship."[312]

The acquisition of citizenship made some immigrants comment on their changed status in letters home. K. K. Hande, for example, wrote in 1877 that on "the fifth of March I acquired my citizenship papers and swore oath to the Constitution I am now an enfranchised American citizen."[313] But in the vast material of letters and newspapers that were produced in the antebellum and Civil War era, and of which is preserved today, there are only a handful of instances where "American" appears as a self-appellation. One of the earliest uses of the term is to be found in Frithjof Meidell's 1861 letter from California to his brother, and here the term is encapsulated by inverted commas: "you probably already know the great propensity 'we Americans' have of exaggerating."[314] In other instances, immigrants insisted on separating the use of "American" from labels describing Norwegians. Kristofer Jacobsen noted in an 1868 letter that the "American" his brother had met, was a "Norwegian in America."[315] Other

[310] Unlike European immigrants, African Americans struggled for formal inclusion, even after emancipation. See Eric Foner, "Rights and the Constitution in Black Life during the Civil War and Reconstruction," *Journal of American History* 74/3 (1987), pp. 863–883.
[311] Ronald Schultz, "'Allegiance and Land Go Together': Automatic Naturalization and the Changing Nature of Immigration in Nineteenth-Century America," *American Nineteenth Century History* 12/2 (2011), pp. 149–176; Halvdan Koht, "When America Called for Immigrants," *NASR*, vol. 14 (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1944), pp. 159–183; Paul W. Gates, "The Campaign of the Illinois Central Railroad for Norwegian and Swedish Immigrants," *NASR*, vol. 6 (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1931), pp. 66–88.
[312] "Constitutionen," *Nordlyset*, February 17, 1848. "Stemmeretten for Udlændinger er særdeles liberal, – ingen Forskjel er gjordt mellem indfødte Americanere og Udlændinger – alle maa opholde sig her et Aar før de faae Stemmeret – de som stemme paa denne Constitution faae strax Borgerret."
[313] K. K. Hande to his brother, Spring Valley, Minnesota, April 17, 1877, A0004, the Norwegian Emigrant Museum. "Den 5te Mars tog jeg mit Citizen papir og gjorde ed til Constitutionen jeg er nu stemmeberigtiget Americansk borger."
[314] Frithjof Axel Meidell to Ditmar Meidell, San Andreas, Calaveras Co., California, May 18, 1861, in *FATN, vol. 2*, pp. 186–189, q. at pp. 186–187. "Du kjender vel allerede til, hvilken stor Hang 'vi Amerikanere' have til at overdrive og at gjøre Elefanter af Fluer i enhver Henseende." Meidell was not only a "humorist and satirist," but also the "first Norwegian-American writer of fiction." Øverland, *Western Home*, pp. 42–43. By contrast, Meidell identified himself as "us Republicans," without any inverted commas.
[315] Christopher Jacobson to Hans Jakobsen Hilton, Idaho City, Idaho, March 22, 1868, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 399–401, q. at p. 400.

immigrants could apply the label "American" onto themselves, but then with the distinction of being an "adopted American," as Ole Trondsen wrote as late as in 1876.[316]

There is of course a contextual explanation for the seldom usage of the term in letters. Any use of words that might have served to underline the distance between friends and family in Norway, would be avoided – especially if the writer's goal was to maintain close bonds with the recipients, and not to emphasize or exaggerate a successful adaptation and adjustment to American conditions. Yet in the few uncovered instances of usage of "American" as a self-appellation, there seems to have been no variation between those who underscored their success as immigrants in the United States, and those who rather sought to express their continued connection with those in Norway.

A close reading of the most influential Norwegian pioneer newspaper *Emigranten*, from its first issue in 1852 to 1865, reveals a similar trend. In the 1850s, "American" was not a term used to refer to Norwegian immigrants, neither second or third person sentences. "We Norwegians," on the contrary, was the common appeal to the readers of the newspaper and, when discussing the condition of themselves as a group, it was almost always as "Norwegians in America."[317] An instance in which the term "Norwegian American" does appear, is in *Emigranten*'s castigation of the term, occasioned by the appearance of a new and rival newspaper in 1855, *Den Norske Amerikaner*. The *Free Press* of Janesville, Wisconsin, an American language newspaper, had announced that "Norwegian American" was to be "the name of a new Norwegian paper" in Madison. Addressing themselves specifically to Americans by printing their comment in English, *Emigranten* cast doubt on the recommendation another American newspaper, the *Wisconsin Patriot*, had made on the proposed venture, as well as the intention of the proposed editor Elias Stangeland, to "as fast as possible strive to americanize that very large and industrious class of our fellow citizens." Not least did *Emigranten* remain skeptical because of what they perceived to have been an intentional "mistake" on part of the *Free Press*: "it has been told us," *Emigranten* wrote, "that its name should be 'Norge i America,' ['Norway in America'] and we should not wonder if the article in the 'Free Press' has given a 'promoting

[316] Ole Trondsen to kin, Manitowoc, December 10, 1876, A0062, the Norwegian Emigrant Museum. "Da Politikken er det som i disse Dage mest beskjefiger Amerikanerne, saa faar Du ikke undres om jeg, som en adopteret Amerikkaner berører nogle Ord derom i et Norsk Brev; thi jeg er desverre ikke Sproget mægtig nok til at give mine Meninger Luft heri Landet."

[317] As of yet, these newspapers have not been digitized, making a complete frequency search impossible. Moreover, some issues are missing, badly damaged, or simply poorly photographed. There should be made room for human error on this account.

push in the enterprise intended,' as far as the yankeefication of the name is concerned."[318] The paper did end up as *Den Norske Amerikaner*, however, and in choosing this name, the polemic intent of Stangeland against what he perceived to be a priestly and reactionary paper was evident. Still, the appellation "Norwegian American" was mainly found in the masthead of the newspaper; there were merely a few, scattered instances of its use in its articles and editorials.[319]

Not until the 1860s does any self-appellation as "American" and "Norwegian American" begin to appear with some regularity in *Emigranten*. Within letters from the front, some variants on "us Americans" occasionally crop up, but these instances are far between. An increased, if not excessively strong will to identify with the label "American" may have been occasioned by the Civil War. Yet one of the first instances "Norwegian Americans" in *Emigranten* is found in a discussion on emigration. In the November 23, 1863 issue, commenting on the letters of Pastor Brun and Berthe Østerli, *Emigranten* in fact employed all three labels at once. Interpreting the pastor's letter as an example of the general attitude on emigration in Norway, the editor of *Emigranten* was clearly affronted by the "untrue colors" that was painted on the country that "Norwegians in America claim as theirs, and which they love as their own, and which they love and defend." The pastor had been wrong in assuming that Norwegian emigrants found themselves in a poor and destitute condition, *Emigranten* argued: "We Americans are not in need of the shipments of the poor who are sent us from Norway" – the tax contributions of Norwegians to the United States alone were already on a par with what "Norway's one million farmers may produce." Appealing to their readers, *Emigranten* asked: "or is there any Norwegian American who would fall silent and accept that his country is called the grave of the emigrants, and himself the victim of destitution and poverty?" Admittedly, many Norwegians had enlisted in the army, "but not to support themselves." It was a "national pride and quite another self-esteem as a citizen than what the common man in Norway knows, which had driven and still drives the Norwegian American to rally behind the colors."[320]

The label "Norwegian American," with or without a hyphen, was slow to catch on. Only as recently as the year before had a contributor to *Emigranten* employed "Norwegian American" as a word of derision. In an article ridiculing the tendency among immigrants to Anglicize their names, an understanding of what it meant to be "Norwegian American" was expressed in

[318] "Norwegian American." Editorial, *Emigranten*, December 15, 1854. See appendix 14. Emigranten had carried a constant and vehement critique of Elias Stangeland's activities as an emigrant runner, and continued to battle fiercely with *Den Norske Amerikaner* once it got underway. See Lovoll, *Norwegian Newspapers*, pp. 27–34.
[319] In some of the first issues of *Den Norske Amerikaner* in 1855, a few instances in which the hyphenated label appear without any apparent slant.
[320] *Emigranten*, November 23, 1863. See appendix 4.

unequivocal terms: "it was evident that these boys were a type of Norwegian Americans […] because they thought that in this country, where everything was allowed, anyone could modify their names to the language of the country and its people."[321] According to such usage, the label "Norwegian American" carried strong associations of untimely prostration before the alter of "Americanization." It is only with the Civil War that the hyphenated or, more frequently, simply the double nationality label may be observed spreading slowly through the broadsheets of the immigrant newspapers as a positively charged endonym.[322] The increased identification with America as Norwegians' own country which historians assume to have been occasioned by the Civil War, seems thus confirmed by this development.

What historians on the other hand have neglected, is the relative importance of the labels which immigrants used to refer to themselves before the Civil War.[323] While scholars have readily translated "native" and "native Americans" into simply "Americans," or "foreign born" into "newcomer," these are not terms which reflect immigrants' own usage. In fact, when Norwegian newspapers adressed their readers in English in 1857, they noted how their "American-born fellow-citizens," would excuse their English, knowing that "we are foreigners."[324] The self-appellations that were initially, continuously and consistently employed, both in America letters and in newspapers, were indeed "foreigners" and "strangers," and these were contrasted with "natives." The very first issues of *Emigranten* included an appeal in English which exemplifies this positioning: "To our American Friends," the editor wrote. "We came here strangers and friendless," but Americans had helped immigrants by alleviating "the wants and difficultuies, necessaryly atending our first setlement in a foreign Country, and made us forget, that we were strangers and foreigners here."[325] In another instance, pastor Dietrichson, working among the Norwegian emigrants in the Midwest, attempted to rally support for alleviating hunger in Norway in 1854. Facing criticism, he corresponded with the newspaper *Chicago Tribune* via *Emigranten*. Commending the editor for reprimanding his critics, Dietrichson wrote: "No wonder that a paper under his worthy superintendence is able to win the public opinion among

[321] "Een Mand – eet Navn." *Emigranten*, October 27, 1862. See appendix 15.
[322] I have not been able to analyze postbellum publications. That would require another study, as the situation of the immigrant press in many respects changed after the war. See Lovoll, *Norwegian Newspapers*, pp. 47–142.
[323] The tendency, as noted throughout this chapter, has been to translate usage of "natives," and "foreign-borns" inconsequently.
[324] Editorial comment. *Emigranten*, April 20, 1857. See appendix 16.
[325] *Emigranten*, January 23 and 30, 1852. The article was written in an idiosyncratic English distinctive of a Dano-Norwegian speaker. See appendix 17.

the Americans as well as the foreigners."[326] In both these cases, positioning themselves as "foreigners" was, paradoxically, a common way to appeal for acceptance and inclusion into the American community.

Yet immigrants also made use of "foreigners" in discussing their state and condition among themselves. The very first Norwegian immigrant newspaper, *Nordlyset*, asked already in December 1847 if it was not enough that the first generation of Norwegian immigrants "have been foreigners and strangers?" Urging the teaching of English to the children of immigrants, *Nordlyset* pointed out: "Why should our descendants, simply due to negligence on our part, be made into the same?"[327] Knud Langeland wrote *Nordlyset* a few months later, also urging the education of Norwegians in America: "Our position as citizens of the United States, as foreigners in America, deserves our attention, and should be more on our minds than it currently seems to be."[328] In the earliest discursive practices in the Norwegian immigrant community, "foreigners" remained the status from which they positioned themselves in relation to "Americans." Even though some emerging use of a hyphenated American label may be observed in the 1860s, it seems that the full, non-qualified label "American" was largely a term reserved for ethnic Americans, that is, the "Anglo-Americans."

Identity is both substantial and relational; people identify with a label, but they also identify against other labels: thus the world is broken into meaningful – if inevitably arbitrary – categories.[329] While "Norwegians in America" remained a substantial identity in itself, the ideological and inclusive dimensions of being an "American" did not wholly prohibit

[326] *Emigranten*, Apr 28, 1854. Orig. English. It was, according to Dietrichson, a case of Scandinavian rivalry: some Norwegians of one association had written the Chicago Tribune, uring not to arrange for relief, because they had thought that a few Swedes in a rival association, also seeking to assist, did so in order to appear more altruistic than the Norwegians, and consequently in order to outmaneuver the standing of their own association. The Norwegian government had another attitude towards poor relief; there has only been registrered a few, individual cases of assisted emigration to America. See Christin Emilsen, "'For at fri seg for den byrde at underholde hende': Fattigvesenets støtte til emigrasjonen til Amerika" (master's thesis, University of Oslo, 2013).

[327] *Nordlyset*, December 30, 1847. "Er det ikke nok at vi have været Udlændinger og Fremmede? Hvorfor skulle da vore Efterkommere, formedelst en Forsømmelse fra vores Side, gjøres til Saadanne?"

[328] *Nordlyset*, April 13, 1848. "Vor Stilning som Borgere af de Forenede Stater, som Udlændinge i Amerika, fortjener vor Opmærksomhed, og burde beskjæftige vor Eftertanke mere end den virkelig synes at gjøre." Knud Langeland would become editor of the paper in 1850, and enjoyed a career as a journalist and editor in the Norwegian press in the U.S. See Arlow W. Andersen, "Knud Langeland: Pioneer Editor," *NASR*, vol. 14 (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1944), pp. 122–138.

[329] Grete Brochmann and Knut Kjeldstadli, *A History of Immigration: The Case of Norway 900–2000* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 2008), provides a good introduction to the question of group identities, see in particular pp. 99–103. See also Knut Kjeldstadli, "Substantial or Relational Explanations? The Exclusion and Inclusion of Newcomers: The Norwegian Case," in *Norwegian-American Essays 2004*, ed. Orm Øverland, assistant ed. Harry T. Cleven (Oslo: NAHA-Norway, 2005), pp. 47–66.

immigrants from identifying with the label. Yet, as a label, it was used to designate those who were unlike Norwegians in several ways.

Whether they were called "Yankees" or "Americans," Anglo-Americans were essentially different to Norwegians and other immigrants – the "foreigners" and "strangers" in America.[330] A Norwegian identity in America was perhaps a constructed, American identity, as scholars have insisted.[331] The philosopher Horace M. Kallen described in 1915 the creation of a national identity in America as a redefining meeting of others. In America the immigrant

> encounters the native American to whom he is a Dutchman, a Frenchy, a Mick, a wop, a dago, a hunky, or a sheeny, and he encounters these others who are unlike him, dealing with him as a lower and outlandish creature. Then, be he even the rudest and most primeval peasant, heretofore totally unconscious of his nationality, of his categorical difference from other men, he must inevitably become conscious of it.[332]

Whether or not Norwegian immigrants actually identified themselves as Norwegians before emigrating is, however, beside the point, although research on popular nationalism in nineteenth century Norway does suggests that many immigrants likely had some idea of what nationality they possessed – unlike, for instance, several isolated communities of peasants in France who apparently still in the late nineteenth century were not aware of belonging to a French nation.[333] What Kallen observed, and what is relevant to the discussion here, is that identities in America were forged in relation to other groups.

Labeling the indigenous

Kallen's point acquires an additional significance when the meaning immigrants gave to the status of being a "native" is explored. Both in letters and in newspapers, immigrants described the "natives" of America. When *Nordlyset* noted how no distinctions were being made between "native Americans" and "foreigners" in Wisconsin's proposed state constitution, it was Anglo-Americans the paper referred to.[334] And when Kristofer Jacobsen observed in a letter in 1854 that "When it comes to religion, the native Americans are remarkably well-ordered," he was not

[330] Philip D. Jordan, "The Stranger Looks at the Yankee," in *Immigration and American History*, pp. 55–78.
[331] Lovoll, "Innvandrernes Amerika," for example, holds that "the immigrant culture was a part of America's history and societial development," p. 147. (My translation.) See also Conzen et al., "Invention of Ethnicity."
[332] Horace M. Kallen, "Democracy Versus the Melting-Pot: A Study of American Nationality," *The Nation* 100/2590 (February 18, 1915), in *Theories of Ethnicity: A Classical Reader*, ed. Werner Sollors (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996), pp. 67–92, q. at p. 79.
[333] For a discussion on the matter, see Øystein Sørensen (ed.), *Jakten på det norske: Perspektiver på utviklingen av en norsk nasjonal identitet på 1800–tallet* (Oslo: Gyldendal, 1998); Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870–1914* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1977).
[334] *Nordlyset*, February 17, 1848.

referring to American Indians.[335] In attributing the label "natives" to peoples in America, immigrants tended to follow American usage. It was the Anglo-Americans themselves who were referred to as "natives." The Native Americans, on the other hand, were most frequently discussed as "Indians." There could be variations on this practice. Asbjørn Pedersen Mehus wrote in 1863 to Norway, discussing "the natives, namely the Indians," and in a letter in 1870, Ole Andreason and Dorte Olsdatter mentioned "the native Indians."[336] In both these instances, as in many others, the status of "native" tended to be qualified by adding "Indians."

In contrast, immigrants writing about Anglo-Americans simply dropped any qualifiers when describing them as "natives." Writing about Wisconsin, Brynjulv Lekve observed in 1841 that "Many of the natives who first settled here claimed the best land, in particular forest land. The strangers were fools to buy their rights."[337] Gjermund Gjermundsen Barboe wrote in 1846 that not only "newcomers" experienced fever; "no, natives enjoy the same privilege."[338] In 1850, Hans Jørgen Haldorsen Strenge attempted to describe the proposed Homestead bill, which would enable "every poor man, either native or emigrant, who has not enough money to buy land," to be granted "40 acres of land, on the condition that it may never be sold."[339] These uses of "native" were, of course, all references to Anglo-Americans.

It is in the perceptions of American indigeneity that a clue to how antebellum immigrants understood American nationalism is found. The widely employed contrast between "foreigners" and "natives" or "Americans" which immigrants made use of, underscored a notion of difference, which was not merely pragmatic: it denoted the preeminent position of Anglo-Americans on the North American continent. *Nordlyset* printed in 1847 a series of articles on the history of American colonization, describing the "origin of the Anglo-Americans," where the

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[335] Kristofer Jacobsen (Hilton) to Hans Jacobsen Hilton, Batavia, Kane Co., Illinois, July 18, 1854, in *FATN, vol. 1*, pp. 323–325, q. at p. 324. "Angaaende Religjonen da er det en særdeles Orden blandt det indfødte Amerikanere." Note that Øverland translates this sentence as "The Americans have an especially well-ordered society." The translation is found in *FATN (trans.)*, p. 189.

[336] Asbjørn Pedersen Mehus to Morten Pedersen Nordhus, Springfield, Winneshiek Co., Iowa, February 9, 1863, in *FATN, vol. 2*, pp. 259–264, q. at p. 262. "De infødte nemlig Indianerne"; Ole Andreason og Dorte Olsdatter to their parents, "Bakkerene," February 12, 1870, A0184, the Norwegian Emigrant Museum. "de inføde indianer."

[337] Brynjulv Lekve to Arne Brynjulvsen Lekve, Wyota, Wisconsin, December 8, 1841, in *FATN (trans.)*, pp. 49–55, q. at p. 51. Note that Øverland translates "Infødde" as "Americans" here, and "Fremmede" as "newcomers." Cf. "En stoer Deel af de Indfødde der først nedsatte sig, Hjemlede det beste af Landet, især Skovland, derefter kommer Fremmede som er daarlige nok at kjøbe deres Ret," in *FATN, vol. 1*, p. 46.

[338] Barboe to a friend, Muskegon, Michigan, and Chicago, Illinois, November 3, 1846, p. 71.

[339] Hans Jørgen Haldorsen Strenge to Thore Haldorsen Strenge, Muskegon, Muskegon Co., Michigan, December 12, 1850, in *FATN, vol. 1*., pp. 177–180, q. at p. 179. "enhver fattig Mand, som ikke har saa meget at dem kan kjøbe sig Land for, hvad enten han er indfødt eller Emigrant, skal blive skjænket af Regjeringen, nemlig: i de nordvestlige Stater 40 Eker Land paa den Betingelse, at det aldrig kan blive solgt."

"seed" of all that Americans had accomplished, could be found.[340] It is worth looking closer at how Norwegian immigrants discussed indigeneity as an aspect of the American nation.

Nativists and Norwegians: The Know Nothings

Americans had their own assumptions of what an indigenous status consisted of. Starting in the late 1830s, Norwegian immigrants came to the United States during an emerging ideological backlash against immigration. Although Americans' very own "Manifest Destiny" required immigrants to conquer and settle the Western regions of North America, concern for religious and social corruption manifested itself in late 1840s hostile reactions to immigrants and their destinies, particularly in the eastern cities.[341] First known as the "American Native party," a nativist political movement emerged. Seeking to restrict the rights to the many immigrants in the United States, it had initially been a clandestine organization. Therefore, it soon acquired its infamous reputation as the "Know Nothing party."[342] Originally intended as a description of their members' policy of claiming to "know nothing" of such a movement, the double entendre was not lost on immigrants: Norwegians frequently described the Know Nothings as "the most narrow-minded Americans."[343]

The Norwegian immigrant newspapers were quick to observe and denounce the Nativist movement. The editorial of the November 17, 1854 issue of *Emigranten* is a typical example of how the movement was discussed and treated. The paper simply quoted two lines of "Know Nothing Poetry": "Let us kill the Irish priests, and send all Dutchmen to hell." The newspaper then sardonically commented, "apparently we Scandinavians and in fact any European have the honor of being labelled Dutchmen. What our Norwegians think of these Know Nothings and

[340] "Forholdene i America. Oprindelsen af Anglo Americanerne og dennes Vigtighed med Hensyn til deres fremtidige Stilling," *Nordlyset*, September 9, 1847. "Læseren af 'De Tocquevilles Skrift,' vil i det Efterfølgende Finde, 'Frøet' til næsten Alt hvad han har udviklet fuldstændigen." This was a serialized article, appearing on September 9, 16, 30, and October 7, 1847.

[341] Hietala, *Manifest Design*. For perceptions of international relations, see Jay Sexton, *The Monroe Doctrine: Empire and Nation in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2011). The dynamic between an open and an unfriendly reaction to immigration is explored in Gjerde's *Minds of the West*, pp. 25–76. Although expansionary ambitions are commonly associated with the Democratic party, see Michael A. Morrison, "Westward the Curse of Empire: Texas Annexation and the American Whig Party," *Journal of the Early Republic* 10/2 (1990), pp. 221–249.

[342] On the history of the Know Nothings and nativism, see Dale T. Knobel, *'America for the Americans': The Nativist Movement in the United States* (New York: Twayne, 1996); William E. Gienapp, "Nativism and the Creation of a Republican Majority in the North before the Civil War," *Journal of American History* 72/3 (1985), pp. 529–559; Tyler Anbinder, "Nativism and Prejudice Against Immigrants," in, *A Companion to American Immigration*, ed. Ueda, pp. 177–201.

[343] *Den Norske Amerikaner* explained: "Naar man altsaa spørger dens Medlemmer om Noget, der angaaer Foreningen, er det deres Regel at svare: 'Jeg veed Intet derom.'" ["When one asks its members of anything concerning the association, it is their rule to reply "I know nothing of it."] "The Know Nothings," February 28, 1855.

their poetry, we need not ask."[344] Yet, the very next year *Den Norske Amerikaner* observed that this "political association […] has in the previous year of 1854 shown a remarkable activity and progress." The strength of the movement was such "that we, as 'foreigners,' could not avoid discussing it, and make our readers as far as possible familiar with its origin, progress, and aims." Consequently the paper detailed the history and contents of the naturalization laws in the United States, in order to make immigrants aware of the potential the Know-Nothings had in attaining a "terrible power." The terror was not as of yet overwhelming, and *Den Norske Amerikaner* wrote, concerning a forthcoming election of a county supervisor in Racine County, that "We would urge Norwegians not to despair, but as far as possible appoint and vote for their own countrymen."[345]

In other instances the immigrant papers discussed at length the character and qualities of the Know Nothing movement, usually within a framework of attributing competitors an association with it.[346] The Know Nothings were a hot potato between the newspapers *Emigranten* and *Den Norske Amerikaner* for several years, both papers keen to associate the Know Nothings not only with the other paper, but also with the political party the competitor identified with.[347] An 1855 letter to *Emigranten* discussed the relationship the Know Nothings had to the newly formed Republican party and the reorganized Democratic party. The letter concluded that a party working to enfranchise Blacks could not also support the Know Nothings, which attempted to limit the franchise for immigrants.[348] Contrarily, *Den Norske Amerikaner* argued that, when "the foreigner (the adopted citizen) now knows that it is thanks to the Democratic party that he enjoys America's liberal naturalization laws and the rights and privileges which accompanies these laws, from President Jefferson's time until today," they could not vote for any other party.

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[344] *Emigranten*, November 17, 1854. "Know Nothing Poesi: Let us kill the irish priests, and send all dutchmen to hell. Gadedrengene i Cincinnati more sig ved denne Vise. Under begrepet dutchmen have formodentlig vi Skandinaver, og overhoved enhver Europæer den ære at være indbefattede. Hvorledes vore Norske synes om disse Know Nothings og deres Poesi, behøve vi ikke at spørge om."

[345] *Den Norske Amerikaner*, February 28, 1855. "Vi ville raade de Norske ikke at lade sig ruinere; men saa ofte det lader sig gjøre, udnævne og stemme paa sine egne Landsmænd."

[346] The polemic nature and the internal strife of the early immigrant press is well described in Lovoll, *Norwegian Newspapers*. See also Carl Hansen, "Den norsk-amerikanske presse. 1. Pressen til borgerkrigens slutning," in *Norsk-Amerikanernes Festskrift 1914*, ed. Johs. B. Wist (Decorah, Iowa: The Symra Company, 1914), pp. 9–40.

[347] See for example *Emigranten*'s editorial on May 18, 1855. On June 29, 1855, *Emigranten* noted that "It is now already a hackneyed subject, accusing *Emigranten* to be a Know-Nothing." [Det er nu allerede et forslidt Thema, at skjælde 'Em.' ud for en Knownothing."] The reasons for the intense animosity between these newspapers in 1855 might have been due to a peak of Know Nothing activity in Wisconsin. Joseph Schafer, "Know-Nothingism in Wisconsin," *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 8/1 (1924), pp. 3–21.

[348] En Iowa Republicaner. "Hvem er Know-Nothing." *Emigranten*, April 4, 1856. Playing on the name of the *Den Norske Amerikaner*, the writer noted that "in Iowa there are Norwegian Americans as old as [*Den Norske Amerikaner*] itself, who knows that when it claims that 'Know Nothings' and 'Republicans' are one and the same, it is lying." ["I Iowa findes ligesaa gamle Norske Amerikanere som Den selv, der vide at naar Den siger at 'Knownothinger' og 'Republikanere' er Eet og det Samme, saa lyver Den."]

When the immigrant knows, the newspaper observed, that "the Whig party, wherein a large part of the Know-Nothingism has originated, has always sought to change, limit, and even revoke these Democratic naturalization laws," was it then "so strange that the foreigners' devotion and sympathy should lie with the Democratic party?"[349]

Emigranten printed a translation of the Know Nothing platform September 1, 1854, which promised to "advocate a true and secure nationality," the exact content of which was never explained.[350] Yet, never as influential as their appearance and agitation seemed to suggest, the "Know Nothings" did endeavor to limit immigrants' space within the American polity. *Emigranten* also noted how the nativists attempted to limit the definition of American nationality in very real terms: one of their aims was a 21 year naturalization clause, the paper observed. Nevertheless, in most cases the immigrant papers openly declared that these measures were hardly likely to be realized, and consequently the "threat" that the Know Nothings represented, was seldom taken seriously.

In comparison, Norwegians tended to take notice of how Americans appreciated them as immigrants. This could even be expressed within immigrants' own brand of nativism. In 1855, Johan Gasmann wrote rather despairingly on democracy and immigration: "Were this country inhabited solely by Americans," he argued, "this democratic system of ruling this country" might be superior to a "constitutional monarchy." But, Gasmann wrote, "a coarser people can hardly be imagined than those who come from Ireland and some of those from Germany." Admittedly, "Norwegians also are uneducated, but the are in general peaceful, and they have some moral concepts. On the whole there is no one who the Americans rate higher than the Norwegians. Americans always say 'the Norwegians make very valuable citizens.' On the other hand, the ill will against the Irish is rising – and against Catholics in general."[351]

Still, even if Norwegians in general kept out of the nativists' spotlight, there were numerous reports of everyday discrimination by Anglo-Americans. Norwegians' occasionally overtly fervid and condemnatory reactions to the Know Nothing party may have been caused by a fear of or actual experiences of discrimination. Historians like Odd Lovoll have confirmed Gasmann's observation, arguing that there were "few examples of direct discrimination […] In the local journals Norwegian settlers are most often characterized as hardworking, thrifty, and

[349] *Den Norske Amerikaner*, March 14, 1855. See appendix 18.
[350] *Emigranten*, September 1, 1854. "6) At forfægte en sand og sikker Nationalitet."
[351] Gasmann to Rye, Appleton, Outagamie Co., Wisconsin, December 15, 1855, in Clausen, "The Gasmann Brothers Write Home," p. 96. The full address and names of recipients are found in *FATN, vol. 1*, where the original letter is given in full, pp. 370–375. I have modified the translation slightly.

law-abiding."[352] Yet there are several records of Norwegians perceiving themselves looked as much down upon as Indians, observations that Americans harbored this perception of immigrants. Adam Løvenskjold's observation that Americans perceived Norwegian immigrants to be so uncleanly and crude that they called them "Norwegian Indians" is the most famous instance which historians have noted.[353] Similarily, Ole Munch Ræder reported a meeting with an American who commented on the astonishing speed Norwegians showed in assimilating:

> The ease with which the Norwegians learn the English language has attracted the attention of the Americans, all the more because of the fact that they are altogether too ready to consider them entirely raw when they come here. 'Never,' one of them told me a few days ago, 'have I known people to become civilized so rapidly as your countrymen; they come here in motley crowds, dressed up with all kinds of dingle-dangle just like the Indians. But just look at them a year later: they speak English perfectly, and, as far as dress, manners, and ability are concerned, they are quite above reproach.'[354]

Knut Langeland mirrored the observation by claiming in 1848 that "it is well known that the Norwegians here, because of their different language, manners and customs, because of their different dress and their habit of uncleanliness, are seen as a crude and unenlightened people," met by the "mockeries and insults" of rude Americans. Admittedly, he wrote, "The injustice of this is well recognized by the better sort of Americans."[355] In early state politics, there has been noted an instance in the Wisconsin legislative council in 1846, where an American member of the council, Marshall Strong, claimed that African-Americans were "as deserving of a vote and [the] privileges of freemen as are many of the whites, and more so as a class in this territory than are the Norwegians."[356] Whether or not there was much actual experience of discrimination,

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[352] Lovoll, *Promise of America*, p. 118.

[353] Løvenskjold noted how in politics, "Norwegian settlers have no part," because of their ignorance of English and American society, but also because of their "general ignorance, because of which they are called 'Norwegian Indians' by the Americans," Gjerset, "Account of the Norwegian Settlers," p. 85. Reiersen had also picked up on this practice: "Where enlightenment is universal, it is no wonder that now and then one hears our mountain farmers called "Norwegian Indians." *Pathfinder*, p. 66. *Emigranten*, January 27, 1862, notes that Rasmus Sørensen, a Dane who had previously engaged himself in the controversy over the common school (see below), has "turned his back to 'the Norwegian Indians': his pet name for those Scandinavians over here, who were not liberal enough to regard all the different Sunday schools and churches to be equally good." ["vendt Ryggen til 'de norske Indianere': hans Kjælenavn for de Skandivaner herovre, som ikke vare liberale nok til at ansee alle Samfunds Søndagsskoler og Kirker for at være lige gode."]

[354] Malmin, *America in the Forties*, p. 37.

[355] *Nordlyset*, April 13, 1848. "Det er altfor vel bekjendt at de Norske her, formedelst deres forskjellige Sprog, Sæder og Skikke; formedelst deres forskjellige Klædedragt og deres Hang til Ureenlighed, ansees for et raat og uvident Folk, og mødes tildeels af ubetænksomme Amerikaneres Mokkerie og Spottegloser. Det Uretfærdige heri indsees meget vel af de bedre Amerikanere."

[356] See Bayrd Still, "Norwegian-Americans and Wisconsin Politics in the Forties," *NASR*, vol. 8 (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1934), pp. 58–64, p. 58 for the reference. The report of *Nordlyset* on the proposed constitution in 1847 noted that "White citizens," "White persons born in foreign countries, who has stated their intention to become citizens," and "Civilized persons of Indian origin not belonging to a tribe" were given the suffrage. *Nordlyset*, October 21, 1847. "Hvide Borgere af de Forenede Stater […] Hvide Personer fødte i Udlandet, som skal have ærklæret ved Lov af Congressen at være Borgere af de For. Stat. […] Civilizerede Personer af Indiansk Afkom, som ikke er Medlemmer af nogen Stamme."

there seems to have been an awareness of or at least a suspicion among immigrants that Americans viewed them in various ways as inferior to themselves.

If the attitude of Ole Munch Ræder's American is taken as a cue – whom, Ræder noted, "did not seem to know a great deal about the Norwegians in this country" – then the assumption among many Americans, Know Nothings not least, was that immigrants would and should blend quickly into their own image of what an "American" was.[357] But even if "assimilation" would make Americans out of immigrants, could immigrants in the end be considered as "native" Americans? Nativism was not only a matter of birthplace, as Langeland hinted to; immigrants' children could also be considered "foreigners," if they did not learn the English language.[358] Advertisements in English language newspapers of articles such as "Know Nothing soap" (see appendix 19), where two white Indians proudly presented a large Star Spangled Banner, clearly communicated strong ideas of Anglo-American indigenousness. The distinction between foreigners and natives was based on perceptions of cultural differences, but Americans' own perceptions of being "native" or indigenous to America may have contributed to the resilience of the distinction in immigrant usage. Nativism was, after all, not limited to the political movement of the Know Nothings; nativist ideas gained currency in the 1850s.[359] It is difficult to find any direct evidence of the sort, but the fact remains that most immigrants at least recognized the distinction Know Nothings particularly, but Americans in general tended to make between "native citizens" and "adopted citizen" – even if it had few practical consequences. The liberal immigration laws of the United States allowed Norwegians to be naturalized as American citizens, but their own perceived status as "adopted citizens" underscored a conceptual gap between being an American citizen by birth and becoming a citizen by naturalization.

The discussion on nativism also acquired transatlantic dimensions. Following the turbulent political year of 1855, *Emigranten* reprinted an article on January 4, 1856 which had appeared in the Norwegian newspaper *Christianiaposten*. The article had been written as a response to an

[357] Malmin, *America in the Forties*, p. 37.
[358] *Nordlyset*, April 13, 1848.
[359] Ideas of settler indigeneity are little explored in American historiography, but see Walter L. Hixson, *American Settler Colonialism: A History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), for an interpretation sensitive to these issues. On the 1850s surge of nativism, Tyler Anbinder notes that "entrepeneurs cashed in on the rage by offering consumers such items as 'Know Nothing Candy,' 'Know Nothing Tea,' 'Know Nothing Toothpicks,' 'Know Nothing Cigars,' and 'Know Nothing Soap.' […] The Know Nothings had clearly captured the popular imagination." *Nativism and Slavery: Northern Know Nothings and the Politics of the 1850s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 52. For connections between commerce and society, see e.g. Joanna Cohen, "Promoting Pleasure as Political Economy: The Transformation of American Advertising, 1800 to 1850," *Winterthur Portfolio* 48/2–3 (2014), pp. 163–190.

America letter, which had observed that Norwegian emigrants had joined the Know Nothing party. That Norwegians in America identified and kept more with Yankees than Germans, was quite correct, the paper pointed out, and after all, quite understandably so. The main point of the article, however, was to refute the letter writer, who "with such a great degree of ridicule discusses those Norwegians who Americanize themselves." The "most narrow-minded Americans, the Know Nothings," did not anyway target "foreigners in general," and the paper argued that "If the Norwegians truly are able to be admitted into the great American society, which would have to be the point of any immigration, then this must be viewed as an advantage not to be dismissed, and it shows a real skill of our countrymen that they understand to consider doing so."[360]

Emigranten also responded directly to the superiority which Know Nothings assumed over immigrants by virtue of being native to America. Entitled "George Washington and the Know Nothings," an editorial attempted to make short shrift of the importance of being a "native" American. "Washington, who is remembered as the father of the Republic, and who himself was a native American, (just as the present-day Know Nothings proudly asserts)," had an entirely different attitude to immigrants than "the politics of the Know Nothings," *Emigranten* noted, and proceeded by quoting from Washington's inaugural address.

> Citizens, by birth or choice, of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of AMERICAN, which belongs to you in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of patriotism, more than any appellation derived from local discriminations.

"The principle which is found in these expressions," *Emigranten* pointed out, "has made the Union exactly into what it is today, in regard to population and size. What would it have been without the large influx of the great masses of the East?" Accusing Know Nothings of being "aristocrats," *Emigranten* simultaneously picked up on the forms of accusatory rhetoric of American party politics – "aristocrats" was the constant characterization Democrats gave of Whigs – and the American tendency to perceive a gap between a democratic new world and an

[360] "Om de Norskes Politik i Amerika." *Emigranten*, January 4, 1856. "der med saa stor Haan omtaler de Nordmænd, som amerikanisere sig"; "Endog de ensidigste Amerikanere, Knownothings, udtale sig aldrig imod Udlændinger i Almindelighed"; "Dersom de Norske virkelig er istand til at optages i det mægtige amerikanske Samfund, hvilket jo maa være Hensigten med enhver Indvandring, er dette følgelig et Fortrin, som ikke maa slaaes Vrag paa og det røber en rigtig Takt af vore Landsmænd at de forstaae at vurdere det."

aristocratic old world. In doing so, the paper cleverly associated the anti-immigrant Know Nothings with their very own image of where "foreigners" in America had emigrated from.[361]

A contributor for *Den Norske Amerikaner*, a newspaper usually at odds with *Emigranten*, agreed with *Emigranten*'s contentions of the stupidity of nativism in an American context. On June 2, 1855, this contributor pointed out that "it is a well-known fact, that 'the native American Know Nothing party' […] with such swelled heads consider themselves as if they had created America, and God only the rest of the world."[362] If that was not enough, immigrants also showcased their patriotic contributions to the United States. The very first issue of *Nordlyset* eulogized the Norwegian immigrant "George Pilson (Jørgen Pederson Næsthuus.)," who had fought and died in the war against Mexico. "His countrymen could with pride refer to him as proof of that love they had for their country," the paper argued. "the mean, narrow-minded spirit which guides the 'native American' party, must fall silent, after such a noble patriotic example which one of our adopted fellow citizens, which this and many other circumstances of the war has demonstrated."[363]

Although Norwegian immigrants might generally have viewed the Nativist movement as a narrow-minded movement, the underlying understanding of an American identity as an ethnic as well as civic identity precluded Norwegians form wholeheartedly embracing an American identity. Notwithstanding showcases of patriotism like that found in *Nordlyset*, immigrants in the antebellum era, it seems, preferred to consider or at least to call themselves "Norwegians in America," despite their status as naturalized citizens. Daron W. Olson, in his exploration of a transatlantic Norwegian identity, argues that "there were elements of a proto-identity, developed in the late 1840s and 1850s." A "proto-Norwegian-American Identity," by which he means an emerging, united ethnic identity among Norwegians in America, only appeared in the late

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[361] "Gen. Washington og Knownothingerne." Editorial, *Emigranten*, March 1, 1855. The extract, in *Emigranten*'s translation, and *Emigranten*'s comments, is found in appendix 20. For the original address, see "Washington's Farewell Address," *Annals of Congress: 4th Congress*, Appendix, pp. 2869–2880, q. at p. 2871. Accessible at the *Library of Congress, American Memory Digital Collection*, http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=llac&fileName=006/llac006.db&recNum=677 [accessed March 8, 2015]. See also "Veritas," "Vil den norske Befolkning i Amerika opamme et Aristokrati i sin Midte?" *Den Norske Amerikaner*, February 9, 1855.

[362] The article polemicized against what it perceived to be the "essence of the preaching of the Republican party." ["Hovedsummen af Republicanerpartiets Prædiken."] Veritas, "Loven er ærlig men Holden besværlig!" *Den Norske Amerikaner*, June 2, 1855. "thi det er et velbekjendt Factum, at 'the native American Know Nothing party', hvad denne Gjenstand angaaer, betragte sig selv med saadan Svulst som om de havde skabt Amerika, og Gud kun den øvrige Deel af Kloden."

[363] *Nordlyset*, July 29, 1847. "Hans Landsmænd kunde henvise til ham med Stolthed som et Beviis paa den Kjerlighed de havde for deres Land; og den usle trangsjelede Aand som leder det 'indfødt Americanske' (native) Parthi, maa for stedse blive stum, efter et saadant ædelt Exempel Patriotisme af en af vore adopteredt Medborgere, som denne og mange andre Omstændigheder i Krigen har fremvist."

1860s.[364] Olson also speculates if this transnational Norwegian identity may be loosely defined as a "diaspora" identity, or at least one which demonstrated the "dynamic of a diaspora," allowing for "the Norwegian-American encounter with the United States to be viewed as something akin to a diaspora migration."[365] Even if antebellum Norwegian immigrants had an aversion to describe themselves as Americans – a disposition strengthened by the encounter with American nativism – could be interpreted as evidence of a diasporic national identity rather than a peculiarly American identity, Norwegians did not on the whole expect to remain temporary expatriates of Norway; they had come to stay. Consequently, a specter was haunting immigrants – the specter of "Americanism."

Contemporary conceptions of cultural change

The very first issues of *Emigranten* had promised Americans that Norwegians in America intended to "become AMERICANIZED – if we may use that word – in language and customs, as soon as possible, and be one people with the Americans." In the following years the pages of the *Emigranten* gave the lie to such commitment from Norwegian immigrant communities. Immigrants tended to express a wish to preserve much of their Old World culture in the New World – or to change only as much of it as they found expedient. But immigrants disagreed with each other on how to protect what they saw as their inherent traits, and indeed which of those traits it was worth to try to protect in the American environment. Although some outrightly denied any need to adapt to what they perceived as "American" culture, most tended to realize that some change was inevitable. In its first editorial, *Emigranten* contended that only by becoming thoroughly "Americanized" could immigrants "fulfill their destination, and contribute their part to the final developement of this great nation."[366] Many immigrants might have agreed that they would – and should – become part of an American nation, but how soon could that happen? Evident to all Norwegians, if not to all American nativists, was the unfinished character of the Amerinan nation – and this perception influenced how immigrants imagined themselves to be able to belong to the American nation in the antebellum era.

In general, Norwegians tended to reject the rhetoric of assimilation – especially if they understood the process as equivalent to giving up their own culture and language. Such rapid changes were understood as showing an unstable character, as the polemical article on "One

[364] Olson, *Vikings Across the Atlantic*, pp. 26–30.
[365] Olson, *Vikings Across the Atlantic*, pp. xvii and xviii. For an interesting comparison, see Kerby A. Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985).
[366] *Emigranten*, January 23 and 30, 1852. The spelling mistakes are in the original. See appendix 17.

man, one name" illustrates: "With a new name, new customs follow," the article pointed out, and "with these habits the very character changes,"

> until at least the person denies himself wholly and acquires a twisted personality, which would not know itself, not recognize its own, and not be recognized by common, trustworthy countrymen, and consequently becomes apart from both ourselves and the people of the country.[367]

The "school controversy," which began in the 1850s and only subsided in the late 1870s, concerned what immigrants viewed as an issue of utmost importance: how to maintain their Lutheran faith and Norwegian language, when the American common school offered only instruction in English, while forbidding religious instruction. As Frank Nelsen observes, it was especially the immigrant pastors who provided the reactionary voices against the American school system and American society in general; laymen celebrated the naturalization of these pastors.[368] Pastor A. C. Preus remarked in *Emigranten* in 1854 that as "the language is in itself undisputably the most explicit demonstration of nationality, it is also closely connected to the same. To wish to quickly eliminate a people's language is in fact quite the same as wanting to eliminate that people's national character." It was enough to observe those Norwegians that were "most eager to be Yankees in every way," Preus wrote, in order to recognize "the impropriety yes what is corrupt in such a sudden and unnatural recasting."[369]

If assimilation as an option was rejected, what it meant to become "Americanized" was never as unambiguously understood. Immigrants could assert their own culture, but they could not withstand the total pressure for cultural adaptation. It is thus possible to identify both a "weak" and a "strong" conceptualization of this process. The mild version was understood as an adaptation to American political practices and ideologies, as the appeal of *Emigranten* demonstrates. This type of "Americanization" was the less contended – few immigrants were naïve enough not to realize that living in another country would require any participation in that country's civic life. Still, the immigrant newspapers frequently castigated their readers for not involving themselves more in American politics. It was not only *Emigranten* which emphasized that their role as an immigrant newspaper was not to be "understood as if we in any way would try to separate those interests from the interests of society at large."[370] Every pioneer immigrant newspaper carried a variation on the explicit intention to "open the source of enlightenment and

[367] "Een Mand – eet Navn," *Emigranten*, October 27, 1862. See appendix 15.
[368] Frank C. Nelsen, "The School Controversy among Norwegian Immigrants," *NAS*, vol. 26 (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1974), pp. 206–219; James S. Hamre, "Norwegian Immigrants Respond to the Common School: A Case Study of American Values and the Lutheran Tradition," *Church History* 50/3 (1981), pp. 302–315. See "De norske Præsters Naturalisation." *Emigranten*, July 7, 1862.
[369] "Det Skandinaviske Professorat." *Emigranten*, April 7, 1854. See appendix 21.
[370] *Emigranten*, January 23 and 30, 1852. See appendix 17.

guidance adequately to place all our countrymen in position of knowledge, which would give them a right to stand side by side with other fellow-citizens."[371]

The stronger conceptualization of the process of "Americanization," however, employed a totalizing understanding of national identities, conflating cultural and natural characteristics into a substantial essence. This understanding of nationality was frequently expressed in the immigrant press during the antebellum years, when "Americanization" was on the table. As the frequent contributor "P.L.M.," remarked in 1856, "We are living in a country where we have the opportunity to observe and encounter many different peoples, and how soon do we not learn to distinguish the German from the Englishman, and the Irishman from the Frenchman, mainly on the basis on their appearance. How great must not then the inner differences be, if the outer differences are so apparent!"[372] When Preus in 1854 mused upon "what is called the nationality or the character of the people, that is the sum of all the peculiar characteristics of the soul, body, and habit, which belong to each particular people," he predicted that each of those nationalities' particularities would eventually "little by little be suppressed by the Americanism." Cautioning against any rash changes, he predicted that if any national group would "violate itself, and at once throw away its singularities, then it would be reduced to nothing." Any one people that "incorporates itself with another, strange people, where it may predict, that their national character will be heavily influenced, should then tread carefully," he argued, in order that it may prevent the "miserable results of such an unnatural recasting."[373] The process of Americanization – the "Americanism" in Preus' words – would in the last instance eradicate most of the cultural particularities of each nation of immigrants in America, according to priests like Preus, but this process need not happen prematurely; otherwise Norwegians would not have the time to influence the resulting American national character at all.

The "unnatural recasting" which Preus warned against, was probably a reference to the influential contemporary image of the American nation as a kind of "melting pot," although the concept itself was not formulated until later in the century.[374] Yet such an image had existed at least since the French immigrant J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur employed the the metaphor of

[371] *Nordlyset*, August 3, 1847. "Bladet udentvivl vil være et Middel til at hæve os selv, hvad vor Nationalitet angaaer, blandt vore Omgivelser saafremt det aabner Kilden for Oplysning og Veiledning tilstreækkelig til at sætte alle vore Landsmænd i besidelse af Kundskaber som ville give dem Ret til at staae ved Siden af andre Medborgere."
[372] P.L.M., "Den Nordiske Folkeaand." *Emigranten*, April 4, 1856. See appendix 22.
[373] "Det Skandinaviske Professorat." *Emigranten*, April 7, 1854. See appendix 21.
[374] See Sollors, *Beyond Ethnicity*, pp. 94–101, for an exploration of the concept in American literature.

melting to describe "this new American man" in 1782.[375] The Norwegian-American Waldemar Ager would criticize the metaphor in his novel *On the Way to the Melting Pot* in 1917."[376] Already in 1864 had Johan Gasmann described the American people as a type of pot more readily imaginable to an old sailor: the American people was "a lobscouse of all nations," he wrote.[377] The idea of a melting pot, if not the exact metaphor itself, was much discussed in the antebellum era, and not solely in defensive and reactionary ways. It could also denote a positive view towards a pluralist future, or at least one in which immigrants were made part in the American nation, without losing their characteristics, even so in the minds of Anglo-Americans.[378]

In general, the attitude expressed in the pioneer newspapers was a fear of dissolving in the mixture, but not of the mixing itself. This attitude was most exhaustively articulated in an article titled "The Nordic National Spirit," printed in *Emigranten* in 1856.[379] Reviewing the similarities and differences between the Swedish, Danish, and Norwegian nations in Scandinavia, the author, "P.L.M.," concluded that, based on evidence from mythology as well as geography – the Scandinavian nations appeared more as variants of a larger whole than as separate ethnic groups. The "Nordic National Spirit," which had given the Scandinavian race its "characteristic expression, its historical significance, its spiritual vitality" should, in a society in which "so many peoples are blended together," be guarded against "being lost."[380] *Emigranten*'s editorial interpreted it as an argument for cultural retention: "The Nordic folk character is perfectly able, as much as any other, to be transplanted onto the free soil of America. But once removed thither, it requires nursing to thrive and not degenerate." In order to find our position in this "strange land," the editor wrote, Scandinavians would first – "as one whole" – need to recognize the

[375] J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, "What Is an American? *Letters From an American Farmer* 1782: "Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men, whose labors and posterity will one day cause great changes in the world." Quoted in *Major Problems in American Immigration and Ethnic History: Documents and Essays*, ed. Jon Gjerde (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1998), p. 76.
[376] Øyvind T. Gulliksen, "Assimilasjonsprosessen i Waldemar Agers *Paa veien til smeltepotten*," in *Norwegian-American Essays 2001*, ed. Harry T. Cleven, Knut Djupedal, Ingeborg Kongslien, and Dina Tolfsby (Oslo: NAHA-Norway, 2001), pp. 183–205.
[377] Johan G. Gasmann to Elisa Rye, Amherst, Portage Co., Wisconsin, August 7, 1864, in Clausen, "Gasmann Brothers Write Home," p. 107. The address and the original letter is given in full in *FATN, vol. 2*, pp. 292–296, q. at p. 296. Note that Clausen translates "Nationer" as "races" in the English version; the original reads: "dette Folk, der er en Lapskaus, af alle Nationer."
[378] Kazal, "Lost World of Pennsylvania Pluralism," argues that there was a "range of vernacular pluralisms in late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century Pennsylvania," entertained by Anglo-Americans and German-Americans alike, p. 30.
[379] *Emigranten*, April 4, 1856.
[380] *Emigranten*, April 4, 1856, see appendix 22. Øverland, in his *Western Home*, notes that Mossin was one of the first "essayists of some ability": the "sophisticated level of his political reasoning and his familiarity with the contemporary American debate demonstrate the important role of the immigrant newspaper in acculturation," p. 41.

particularities they brought to the American mix – not in order to become a "state within the state," but to prevent "losing ourselves in the masses, like a drop of water in the ocean."[381]

A pervasive conviction in much immigrant writing of the period was that although the vortex stirred up in the melting pot would eventually amalgamate all hewn in metals, it would be a protracted process. The end result would not necessarily be a recasting into an American – in the meaning of an Anglo-American – mold. In Mossin's vision, the melting pot in America was not an American melting pot. He observed, as was usual among intellectuals of the mid-nineteenth century, that a new era had begun, introduced by "new inventions and discoveries, and numerous means of communication." More specifically, it was "the steam engine, the railroad, the telegraph, the discoveries of gold, the large migrations to the various parts of the world, indeed war itself," which had introduced a new historical era.[382] All these discoveries, developments, and processes were, however, a "sign of the times" of the grander "amalgamation of the many different peoples into one large, common humanity." Mossin argued that "We are on the dawn of an age, which evidently not only facilitates a closer association of all the peoples of the world." But, he noted, it "also facilitates a union of it to a large whole than the world has ever seen." Evidence that such a process were underway, Mossin concluded, was that even "our own inhabitation of this country, where at present so many other nations' earlier immigrants form a large, powerful, ever expanding, relatively new nation, where among the old elements of nations a new one is created." This was, as he emphasized, a process not limited to the American context, but one steering "the amalgamation of the world's peoples into a larger humanity." Scandinavians would have an "important, decisive influence" in this process, a global process where the liberalizing forces of progress could be observed: "the idea of freedom fights a battle of life or death with tyranny, slavery, and an obsolete system of repression."[383] But, he noted, "Providence has no haste with the progression of its sublime plans." In the meantime, they should guard and preserve their "treasures of character," not only "for the

[381] Editorial, *Emigranten*, April 4, 1856. See appendix 23.
[382] *Emigranten*, April 4, 1856. See appendix 22. On the effect of new means of communication for nineteenth-century political imagination, see Duncan S. A. Bell, "Dissolving Distance: Technology, Space, and Empire in British Political Thought, 1770–1900," *Journal of Modern History* 77/3 (2005), pp. 523–562; and his *The Idea of Greater Britain: Empire and the Future of World Order, 1860–1900* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).
[383] Cf. Knut Langeland's comments on the 1864 presidential election, in *Emigranten*, October 22, 1864. Reinart Koselleck observes how the "old concept of 'republic,' which had previously indicated a condition, became a telos in the nineteenth century: Aristotle's three modes of political government, monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, was "reformed, both historically and philosophically," as the "three constitutional types were changed into a compulsory alternative: 'despotism or republicanism,'" *Futures Past*, pp. 272–273.

generations to come, but also for our own use and further development in the present time and its demands of every one of us […] in this new age, which has yet to manifest itself."[384]

The melting pot was simmering, yet it simmered only on a low heat. Even if not every immigrant newspaper of the 1850s gave space to such abstract, cosmopolitan visions of a dawning age of globalism and unity, they let immigrants express concerns about what the melting pot might produce. Even admitting the inevitability of an assimilation at some point in the future, a contributor to *Wossingen* argued in 1858 that Norwegians were still "far from being ready for such a change," and, "dare we say, they would not be ready during the first half century from now on." Instead, the paper advocated the teaching of Norwegian to children of Norwegian immigrants in order to retain their national identity: "Have we perhaps any reason to be ashamed of our country of birth, our forefathers and our mother tongue, so that when we arrive here, we would happily mix ourselves with the masses so no one will notice us?"[385]

Not all immigrants harbored the same attitude toward even the stronger conceptualization of the process of "Americanization," whereby they would assimilate and shed their European skin. The different views of this process may be well observed in an argument on the virtues and vices of Americanization, as occasioned by a "Mr. Typo" and "a Norwegian" in *Emigranten* in the spring of 1857. Here the different understandings of what it meant to be or become an "American" truly came to a head.[386]

"Typo," like Mossin, celebrated the evidence of civilizational progress to be witnessed. "Progress is the great watchword of this age, and this great country illustrates it in particular," he wrote. Yet "progress" for Typo was not only material progress, consisting of new inventions and discoveries, but also the process of "Americanizing" his countrymen, "from **Norwegians to Americans**, in language, thought and feeling."[387] As America was "populated by people from all parts of the world," it was the duty of the "American press" (in which Typo included *Emigranten*) to "assimilate the heterogeneous elements of society, and consolidate a great nation with a government of the people." The assertion that Americanization equalled progress,

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[384] *Emigranten*, April 4, 1856. See appendix 22.
[385] *Wossingen*, March 1858. "Idet vi erkjende at denne Overgang vil komme og hjertelig ønske den var over, ere vi overbeviiste, om at Tiden er endnu langt fra ikke kommen. De Norske i Amerika ere endnu langt fra ikke modne til en saadan Forandring, og tør vi med Sikkerhed sige, at de heller slet ikke vilde være modne dertil det første halve Seculum"; "Have vi maaskee nogen Anledning at skamme os af vort Fødeland, Forfædre og Modersmaal, saa at naar vi ankomme hertil, vi gjerne ville blande os blandt Mængden for at Ingen skal lægge Mærke til os?
[386] Jon Gjerde has taken note of Typo's article, but not the fierce reply it received. See *Minds of the West*, p. 64.
[387] Typo, "Progress, the Scandinavians, and the Emigranten," *Emigranten*, April 20, 1857. Orig. English, orig. emphasis. See appendix 16.

Emigranten's editor politely disagreed to, admitting that Norwegians had "really benefitted by the intercourse with their American-born fellow-citizens," but that they had been somewhat "injured by the materialism, inseparable from the life and pursuits in a country like this."[388]

While *Emigranten* had "some doubts as to wether we ought to insert the above correspondence," but eventually let it pass alongside a few critical comments, Typo received a much fiercer response in *Emigranten* the following month.[389] Referring to Typo's intention to "uphold the Northern American disposition as an estimable ideal," the full-page reply attacked what the author perceived as the "false presuppositions of the virtues of the Yankee character." These beliefs were especially prevalent among the younger generation of Scandinavians, due to their "excusable lack of an adequate opportunity to acquire a nuanced perspective on American conditions." Nevertheless, the admonition to all Scandinavians in America was clear:

> Beware, thou Norwegian, Swedish, or Danish man, to become like that American, whom you see runs his business, not in order to be of use to his fellow man or the state, but for his own self-interest in making money, totally unscrupulous as to whether he is suitable for the job, and how he thereby earns his money, taking on whatever may come his way.

And in this comment, the contributionist perspective came to the fore:

> Beware, I tell you, to lapse into this American smartness, and then the state would be obliged to thank you and your children, if you could only save up that simple Nordic honesty for your state; it is truly short of this gold, and it must regard it of high value wherever you employ it.

If so, then "the Yankee character" had to become adopted as well, but, the writer asked: "should we consequently seek to destroy the noblest aspects of our own national character just to roll around in the dirt?" – "Oh no, there is no haste, I believe, with Mr. Typo's 'assimilation,' that will inevitably happen in due time– unfortunately!" The unscrupulous conduct of Americans translated into their political system, where their selfishness was formalized and institutionalized. Therefore, the writer admonished, "beware, thou Norseman, to become either Democrat or Republican, because the party spirit is always selfish and unjust. But neither should you throw away what good you might find in any of them, and prefer that one you find best." And, moreover, "As one of these alternatives by rule is inseparable from the concept of the American," then immigrants, if they were to become Americans, "must become one or the other."[390]

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[388] Typo, *Emigranten*, April 20, 1857. See appendix 16.
[389] Editorial, *Emigranten*, April 20, 1857. Orig. English. See appendix 16.
[390] "Hr. 'Typo's' 'Fremskridt, Skandinaverne og Emigranten." *Emigranten*, May 27, 1857. See appendix 24.

In this particular exchange of opinions regarding "Americanization," it is tempting to equate the position of Typo with that of the radical and politicized laymen among Norwegian emigrants, and the following reply with the moralizing voices of the transplanted Norwegian clergy. Moral and political questions often occasioned intense debate, dividing the Norwegian clergy and immigrants during the antebellum years. But the distinction should not be considered absolute. It is, as Betty Bergland in another instance has remarked, due to the often intense religious devotion among Norwegian immigrants, that church leaders likely spoke the views of many lay immigrants at the time.[391] Indeed, one of the most voluminous columns of that first immigrant newspaper, *Nordlyset*, was devoted to the topic of "Religion and Morality."[392] Many immigrants, clergy and laymen alike, harbored their reservations against what "Americanization" would entail, especially when it came to their Lutheran faith, but not only of what I have defined as its "stronger" conceptualization. A more relevant distinction between the views of the clergy and other Norwegians was the attitude towards American egalitarianism, as Peter A. Munch shows.[393] While immigrants were in general less skeptical regarding the lessons in republicanism and democracy to be had, many uttered outright condemnations of American capitalist practices, provoking a hostile attitude to everything they considered "American."

Conclusion

It was not always clear to immigrants whether "Americanization" threatened their ethnic or national identity as Norwegians in America. What their discussions and opinions regarding the process of "Americanization" reveal, however, is that they tended to be averse to the idea of adopting a strong American identity. They perceived that to belong in more than a minimalist, ideological way to an American nation, appearing to immigrants as either unfinished or simply uninviting, was not possible. Becoming part of an existing nation seemed a strange idea to immigrants in the antebellum era. Only if they conceptualized the American nation as an unfinished nationality, one that would be created in the future, and one which immigrants

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However, Daniel Peart emphasizes that Americans frequently organized into nonpartisan voluntary societies rather than engaging in partisan politics in attempts of influencing legislation. See "Looking Beyond Parties and Elections: The Making of United States Tariff Policy during the Early 1820s," *Journal of the Early Republic* 33/1 (2013), pp. 87–108. Skepticism of partisan politics might have derived from the fact that Norwegians were not accustomed to it. Cf. the political situation in Norway, Odd Arvid Storsveen, "Democracy and Elections: The Norwegian Experience, 1830–1850," *Nordic Historical Review* 10/1 (2010), pp. 95–111.

[391] Bergland, "Norwegian Immigrants." She generalizes the Church leaders' perceptions of Indians to account for the views of large portions of the Norwegian immigrant communities, see esp. pp. 336–344.

[392] See for example the extensive article on the need to fear God and to obey His Word, written by Ole Torjusen Bjørnstad, appearing in the regular column "Religion and Morality" ["Religion og Moral"], *Nordlyset*, December 23, 1847.

[393] The clergy tended to express skepticism toward notions of unrestrained, individual liberty, as they saw it to undermine the morals of society. Peter A. Munch, "Authority and Freedom."

themselves could help shape by bringing their own national characteristics to the table, only then did belonging to an American nation appear digestible for Norwegian immigrants.

The same perspective is not surprisingly attributed to another, quite similar immigrant group as well. Conzen and others have pointed to the fact that at mid-nineteenth century, German immigrants, starting in this very period to employ the term "schmeltztiegel" [melting pot] themselves, argued that America "may already be a political state, but its nationhood – its peoplehood – was yet unfinished. Thus each immigrant group could contribute its own special qualities to this peoplehood, indeed had a duty to do so."[394] These findings may be of little historical significance if it was not for an evident shift in the ways immigrants imagined they belonged to the American nation in the latter part of the century. As discourses on "race" were given increasingly biological content, the "will to descend" from the same origins as Anglo-Americans increased. If immigrants could claim a monogenesis in the past, instead of merely looking forward towards a process of "monogenization" in the future, they could also perceive themselves as part of the American nation.[395] The next chapter treats the tension between perceiving a common ancestry and the design of a pluralist ideology in the last three decades of the nineteenth century.

[394] Conzen et al., "Invention of Ethnicity," p. 11.
[395] David Hollinger coins the "will to descend" as a "sharpened and politicized form of more generic phenomena, the desire for noble ancestors, and the pride most people take in the cultural contributions of their kin and of their larger descent-community." See "National Culture and Communities of Descent," *Reviews in American History* 26/1 (1998), pp. 312–328, q. at p. 319. By "monogenization," I refer to a process where initially separate nations are coming to be seen as having a mutual ancestry, an imagined monogenesis.

4. HOMEMAKING MYTHS AND THE PLURALIST ALTERNATIVE

In what historians have termed the "Gilded Age," immigrant leaders began constructing homemaking myths of a golden age: historical narratives demonstrated how different immigrant groups were the first to discover or settle in America. While Øverland has analyzed these narratives, Lovoll has described the emerging historical scholarship in the period as a "'contribution' school of history": immigrant historians would show how their ethnic group in various ways had contributed to the making of American society.[396] How are these subsequent arguments of belonging related to how immigrants perceived themselves to belong in the antebellum era? This chapter attempts to connect the mentality of the pre-war years with post-war developments.

Early historical interest

In the antebellum period there had already been a few instances where a consciousness of the Norse discovery of America was shown to exist among Norwegian immigrants: in 1854 *Emigranten* printed an article received from Professor Carl C. Rafn in Copenhagen, "Amerikas Opdagelse af Nordboerne" [The Norsemen's Discovery of America], and in 1858 the paper reprinted extracts from the Norwegian historian P. A. Munch's recently published *Det norske Folks Historie* [History of the Norwegian People].[397] Ole Munch Ræder wrote from America that the emigrants were "carrying on a great national mission." The newly independent Norwegian nation could once again "show themselves in the world," as the Norwegian immigrants in America "come to demand their place in that country upon which their fathers cast the first ray of light, no matter how flickering and uncertain, and to take part in the great future which is in store for this youthful, but already mighty, republic."[398]

Ræder's observation probably owed more to Munch's emphasis on past Norwegian greatness than what Ræder observed from the contemporary Norwegian settlements in America. But

[396] Lovoll, "Norwegian-American Historical Scholarship," p. 227.
[397] *Emigranten*, November 24, 1854, and March 3, 1858. As Rafn discussed both Swedes, Danes, and Norwegians, I have translated "Norboerne" as "Norsemen." Rafn (1795–1864) was a Danish antiquarian, and published in 1837 *Antiqvitates Americanæ*, a compendium of sources relating to the Norse discovery of America. He is described in H. Arnold Barton, "Swedish Americans and the Viking Discovery of America," in *Interpreting the Promise of America*, pp. 61–78, and Barton notes that a translated extract was published in New York in 1838, see p. 63. Munch's *Det norske Folks Historie* counted eight massive volumes, but had only reached the year 1397 when Munch died in 1863.
[398] Malmin, *America in the Forties*, pp. 18–19.

Norwegian immigrants in the Gilded Age would, as Øverland has demonstrated, come to grasp at such available stories of Viking discovery as arguments for belonging in America at the present. Not only had Norwegians discovered America; they had also been the first settlers on the continent.[399] But in the very same year as *Emigranten* printed Munch's narrative of Viking discovery, *Folkets Røst* printed a Norwegian speech from the celebration of July 4 in St. Paul, Minnesota, observing how "today, a nation consisting of almost 30 millions, is praising that liberty, which our noble forefathers planted on the free soil of America," and as the Pilgrims left England, "so did we leave Scandinavia, in order to improve our civic status and our earthly happiness."[400] Here, the English pilgrims were appropriated as "our forefathers," and their emigration from England in the seventeenth century were compared with the recent Scandinavian emigration. Already in the antebellum era, Norwegians had tentatively explored the idea of common ethnic origin with Americans. These attempts would come into fruition in the postbellum years. Comparing the perceptions of belonging that may be found in the antebellum and Civil War eras with the development, not of historical homemaking myths, but of ideas of American nationalism, an initial, contributionist mentality of belonging may be seen to have developed into a pluralistic understanding of the American nation.

Territorializing "home"

Those who may with a degree of liberality be called "proto-theorists" of national and ethnic identities among antebellum Norwegian immigrants, tended to link the conception of a Norwegian national character with particular landscapes, as seen in chapter 3. And as demonstrated in chapter 2, Fredrika Bremer, in describing the territory of Minnesota as suitable for Scandinavian colonization, transplanted a correlational understanding of national character and landscape to an American setting.

Such a territorialized notion of national identity came, literally speaking, naturally to people of the nineteenth century; this was the Age of Romanticism when the nation was thoroughly "naturalized." Although few emigrants viewed the American landscape romantically, as Knut Oyangen has argued, the national character of ethnic groups was in the nineteenth century imaginatively linked with the particular landscapes of their native lands.[401] Either the nature of the territory which was identified as the homeland of the nation was "nationalized," whereby, as

[399] Øverland, *Immigrant Minds, American Identities*, pp. 144–173.
[400] O. Nelson, "En Fest-Tale, til Skandinaverne i St. Paul, den 4. Juli, 1858," *Folkets Røst*, July 24, 1858. "i dag lovpriser en Nation af henved 30 Millioner, den Frihed, som vore ædelmodige Forfædre plantede paa Amerikas frie Jordbund"; "saaledes forlode vi ogsaa Skandinavien, for paa Amerikas Fastland at forbedre vor borgerlige Tilstand og jordiske Lykke."
[401] Oyangen, *Immigrant Identities in the Rural Midwest*, pp. 62–96.

Oliver Zimmer observes, "popular historical myths, memories, and supposed national virtues are projected into a significant landscape," or the nation was "naturalized," whereby aspects of the natural environment is "depicted as a force capable of determining national identity and giving it a compact, homogenous, unified form."[402]

The "old home" which the Norwegians spoke of in letters and newspapers, was commonly associated with characteristics of the Norwegian landscape, as might be gleaned from immigrants' comments of homesickness in chapter 1. Moreover, when Norwegians in America referred to Norway, they consistently employed the term "Hjemmet" [the home]. "Home" need not even have been Norway in general: the newspaper *Wossingen*, dedicated to "communicate news and information about our countrymen in this land, as well as those from the parish of Voss," often employed "the home" as a referent to Voss.[403] In fact, it referred both to Voss and Norway simultaneously. "Mr. Vossing," a letter to the editor asked: "Can you tell us whether it is of use to wait any longer for news from our mutual home, Norway?" Asking forgiveness for the complaint, the letter writer "thought it would cool our temper to make our need known for our friends, urging those who are happily receiving letters and news from home, to share." If those "at home in Voss" would be interested in *Wossingen*, they concluded, the paper could instead become an exclusive organ for the "Vossings living in America."[404] Whereas emigrants employed contrasts to describe their "old" and "new" homes in their letters to Norway, in public discussions in America they established a usage of "the home" to refer to a shared home in Norway, and not to their shared home in America.[405]

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[402] Oliver Zimmer, "In Search of Natural Identity: Alpine Landscape and the Reconstruction of the Swiss Nation," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 40/4 (1998), pp. 637–665, q. at p. 643 and p. 645. For a similar perspective on the United States and Canada, see Eric Kaufmann, "Naturalizing the Nation": The Rise of Naturalistic Nationalism in the United States and Canada," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 40/4 (1998), pp. 666–695. A comprehensive review of how historians have treated the relations between the contested spaces of America and national historical writing, is Pekka Hämäläinen and Samuel Truett, "On Borderlands," *The Journal of American History* 98/2 (2011), pp. 338–361. See also Richard White, "The Nationalization of Nature," *The Journal of American History* 86/3 (1999), pp. 976–986.

[403] *Wossingen*, December, 1857. "Bladets Inhold eller Øiemed skal være at bibringe Nyheder og Oplysning om Forholdene blandt vore Landsmænd i dette Land, saavelsom fra Vos Præstegjeld." In this instance, *Wossingen* was transatlantic correspondence gone large. As Lovoll notes, more than a hundred copies of the paper had been sent to Voss, and it was "an early instance of how immigrant newspapers functioned as expanded America letters." Lovoll, *Norwegian Newspapers*, p. 76.

[404] Evanger, letter to the editor, *Wossingen*, March, 1859. "Mr. Vossing! Kan de underrette os om det kan nytte længere at vente paa at høre noget mere fra vort fælles Hjem, Norge?"; "troet det vilde afkjøle vort Temperament, at klage vor Nød for vore Venner, bedende dem, som ere lykkelige nok at erholde Breve og Nyheder fra Hjemmet, at dele broderlig"; "hvis man hjemme paa Vos slet intet vil gjøre for vort Blads Fremme […] vi da gjøre den (Vossingen) til et udelukkende Organ for de her i America boende Vosser."

[405] See for example the article on "Udvandreren og hans Stilling i det nye Hjem." *Emigranten*, October 13, 1854. See appendix 7. "He treasures home, and all that might remind him of home." ["Hjemmet, og Alt hvad der kan minde ham om Hjemmet, er ham dyrebart."] Note that here, America is designated as "the New Home."

In 1875, one of the most prominent voices of the Norwegian immigrant group in the United States, Rasmus B. Anderson, suggested that what originally had been the old Norse term for America, "Vesterheimen" [The Western Home], should also become the vernacular term used by present-day Norwegians in America. Øverland notes that the name "caught on and soon acquired the meaning of a specifically Norwegian America; it was used by Norwegians as a fond epithet to their own vaguely defined and unstable ethnic niche within the larger, multi-ethnic Western Home."[406] Yet this was not what Anderson had originally intended. Although Kristin Ann Risley surmises that Anderson "appears to have been the first ethnic leader to suggest its formal use as the designator of a distinct Norwegian subculture in the United States," Anderson's own suggestion was more limited."[407] In fact, he launched two names, one which to all appearances was a paleologism and one which undoubtedly was a neologism. "Vesterheimen" and "Bandariget" ["Bandaríkin" – the United States] were terms both found in contemporary Icelandic usage, Anderson observed. While "Bandariget" should be Norwegians' own name for the United States, "Vesterheimen" should designate "America," he suggested.[408] Anderson did not follow up the connotations "Vesterheimen" had to an idea of "home" in America, at least not initially. Yet, as Kristin Ann Risley observes, the term, "in its very articulation, implies the 'eastern home' or native ground of Norway."[409] The notion of "Vesterheimen," when it was popularized in the 1870s and onward, likely filled the conceptual gap which a singular use of "the home" had created. Employing "Vesterheimen," immigrants could now also refer a shared home in America. Territorializing America as a "home" – a "western home" – for Norwegians, immigrants denoted a space in which they were not to be considered foreigners any more.

For those Norwegian immigrants who arrived in the United States before the 1860s, it seems probable that most perceived a clear limit to belonging to the American nation, as chapter 3 demonstrated. As the century wore on, however, and Norwegian immigration to America became more and more established as a continuing tradition that could itself be viewed in a historical perspective, immigrants attempted to make conceptual room for themselves within the American nation; with the Civil War, immigrants had started, if only hesitantly, to label themselves "Norwegian Americans." The "western home" would from the 1870s likely help

[406] Øverland, *Western Home*, p. 5.
[407] Kristin Ann Risley, "Vikings of the Midwest: Place, Culture, and Ethnicity in Norwegian-American Literature, 1870–1940" (PhD diss., Ohio State University, 2003), p. 9.
[408] Frithjof, "En Tur ikring i Vesterheimen," *Skandinaven*, February 23, 1875.
[409] Kristin Ann Risley, "Vikings of the Midwest: Place, Culture, and Ethnicity in Norwegian-American Literature, 1870–1940" (PhD diss., Ohio State University, 2003), p. 178.

immigrants territorialize a Norwegian American ethnicity, allowing a sense of Norwegianness to exist outside of Norway.[410] Moreover, during the 1870s, the first of the American-born Norwegians reached adulthood.

Second generation Norwegians and the immigrant contribution to America

Rasmus Bjørn Anderson was born in Dane County, Wisconsin, in 1846, the son of Bjørn Anderson Kvelve and Abel Christine von Krogh.[411] Among his many positions in public life, Anderson was a newspaperman, a professor of Scandinavian languages, and a writer. He is best remembered for his never-ending efforts to make the Viking discovery of North America the building block of a Norwegian identity in America. The series of lectures he published in 1874 as *America Not Discovered by Columbus*, was the start of an unceasing occupation of promoting Scandinavian culture and history in the United States.[412] The speech Anderson held in 1875, commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of Norwegian migration to America, has been held up by Øverland as an early, but prime example of an immigrant group's formulation of homemaking myths in America. Norwegians had not only discovered America, Anderson contended, they had also by their successive settlements in Normandy and England brought with them a tradition of political liberty and democratic self-government, which the Pilgrims had subsequently transplanted in the English colonies in America.[413]

Anderson did not only claim that American political ideologies had Norwegian origins. Although he was concerned to tell the story of how liberty had been transplanted from Norway to America, via Normandy and England, he also pointed to a more direct ethnic connection. "Let us also remember," Anderson noted, "that we have among Americans relatives of our own kin":

> Our fellow American citizens are in fact descended from those masses who left Norway because of Harald Fairhair and settled in France and England […] We sought a perfect liberty and independence and found

[410] Olson argues that argues that both Norwegians and Norwegian Americans came to imagine a "Greater Norway" ["et større Norge"], a "transnational and extraterritorial space that expanded the boundaries of the Norwegian nation." Moreover, the "essence of belonging to Norway involved a sacred allegiance to a transcendent and imagined nation that was carried within the hearts and minds of Norwegians wherever they might roam." Olson, *Vikings Across the Atlantic*, pp. viii–ix.

[411] Paul Knaplund, "Rasmus B. Anderson, Pioneer and Crusader," *NASR,* vol. 18 (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1954), pp. 23–43. See also Lloyd Hustvedt's biography, *Rasmus Bjørn Anderson: Pioner Scholar* (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 1966).

[412] Rasmus B. Anderson, *America Not Discovered by Columbus. A Historical Sketch of the Discovery of America by the Norsemen, in the Tenth Century* (Chicago: S.C. Griggs, 1874). Anderson notes that he has "freely made use of such material as he considered valuable" from the works of among others, C.C. Rafn and P.A. Munch, see p. v.

[413] Rasmus B. Anderson, *Tale ved Femti-Aarsfesten for den Norske Udvandring til Amerika. Holdt i Chicago den 5te Juli 1875* (Chicago: Skandinaven, 1875). Øverland, *Immigrant Minds, American Identities*, p. 157–162. This historical narrative is a slighty revised version of the American historian George Bancroft's account of the American Revolution, which is explained and contrasted with alternative contemporary interpretations in Cheng, "American Historical Writers," see p. 498.

> them in a land that had first been discovered by our ancestors under the leadership of the republican Leif Erikson and later been possessed and settled in old Norse fashion by the descendants of Rollo. So when we Norwegians meet our fellow American citizens, it is a meeting between brothers, who have been separated from each other for a thousand years.[414]

Anderson took care to stress not only a ideological affiliation, but also an actual bond of kinship between Norwegians and Americans. Yet despite addressing his readers as "We Americans," he continued to view Scandinavians as a distinct people within the American population, as may be seen in the prefacing section of his study, *The First Chapter of Norwegian Immigration: Its Causes and Results* (1895). Here Anderson elaborated on "The Services Rendered by the Scandinavians to the World and to America." "Wherever they settle in the world," Anderson observed, "we find them associated with the most loyal and law-abiding citizens, giving their best energies to culture, law and order." This fact was evidenced historically "both in Russia, Normandy and England," and also in "their more recent settlements in the various Western states of America."[415]

Anderson was motivated to prove that Scandinavians were present throughout American history, a blind spot in Anglo-American historiography.[416] Another American-born Norwegian who found the omission of immigrants in the history of America aggravating, was Elias Molee. In his first publication, *A Plea for An American Language* (1888), Molee argued that there was "one great defect in the school histories of the United States," namely "the absence of any mention of the vast German, Irish and Skandinavian immigration."[417]

The son of John Evenson Molie and Anne Jacobson Einong, Elias Molee was born in the Norwegian settlement of Muskego, Wisconsin, in 1845. Molee was the senior of Rasmus B. Anderson by one year. Unlike Anderson, Elias Molee is seldom mentioned in Norwegian American historiography – he is not even in the biography of Anderson, despite the two of them

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[414] Anderson, *Tale ved femti-aarsfesten*, p. 25. The translation is based Øverland's, in *Immigrant Minds, American Identities*, p. 160, but it is slightly modified according to the original text. See appendix 25 for the original Norwegian extract.
[415] Anderson, *First Chapter of Norwegian Immigration*, pp. 5–6.
[416] Anderson, *First Chapter of Norwegian Immigration*, p. 31. His mission was to show how Scandinavians had contributed to the history of the United States from the very beginning, and although his introductory text was relatively brief, he could, as he wrote, "have gone on and enumerated many others of Scandinavian birth or descent who have acquired a lasting reputation in the annals of America," p. 30.
[417] Elias Molee, *Plea for An American Language…* (Chicago: John Anderson, 1888). Such an omission was akin to be "writing the history of Europe and say nothing about the Gothic migration, or to say nothing about the Crusaders," he argued, p. 89.

having met at Luther College in the 1860s, and remained acquaintances ever since.[418] When Anderson was researching his history of the early Norwegian settlements in America, he received a long narrative from Molee's father, penned by Elias. In the letter, which Anderson included in his book, John Molie showed himself to have been thoroughly influenced by Anderson's effort of promoting the history of Scandinavian vikings as an origin myth for Norwegians in America. "The Scandinavians have been and will be a leaven of popular rights wherever they settle," the elder Molie asserted. Those pioneer emigrants who came to America before 1840 were "the most democratic and self-helping and peaceable that ever came from Europe" – with the exception of the pilgrims, "which by the way," he added, "came from a district in England largely settled by Norsemen."[419] Molie asserted as much as that "Without the influence of the Scandinavians, there would have been no *Magna Carta* in England, and probably no '*Declaration of Independence*' in America."[420]

The pluralistic present and the monogenetic future

It is difficult to distinguish the older Molie's opinions from that of the pen of the son – some passages are distinctly reminiscent of Elias Molee's own views, especially his opinion on linguistics. Still, unlike his father, and unlike Anderson, Elias Molee was not so much interested in the past ethnic and ideological linkages between Scandinavians and Americans – at least not in such exclusivist terms. For Molee, Scandinavian history was only part of a larger historical background against his main project, which was to devise a pan-Germanic language to become a lingua franca for the United States. Taking as his premise that the American nation was still an unfinished ethnic community, Molee followed the pluralist argumentation of the antebellum years: "we are yet in a plastic state […] The true American has not yet appeared."[421]

What made Molee's views distinctive was not his adoption of a melting pot perspective, but his idea that the English, the Dutch, the Scandinavians and the Germans living in America were all descendants of the same original Teutonic race. In *A Plea for an American Language* he offered his view on the composition and nature of the American people. American history had but one

[418] Hustvedt, *Rasmus Bjørn Anderson*. For two recents sketches of Molee"s life, however, see Marvin G. Slind, "Elias Molee and Alteutonic: A Norwegian American's Universal Language," *NAS,* vol. 36 (Northfield, Minnesota: NAHA, 2011), pp. 85–104, and Mark L. Louden, "Speaking of Language: Elias Molee and the Dream of an International Language," *Max Kade Institute Friends Newsletter* 13/4 (2004), pp. 4-6.
[419] Anderson, *First Chapter of Norwegian Immigration*, the letter is found on pp. 300–326, q. at pp. 318–319.
[420] Anderson, *First Chapter of Norwegian Immigration*, pp. 318–319. Orig. emphasis. The Viking discovery narrative in Norwegian-American non-fiction literature is discussed by JoAnne M. Mancini, with a focus on Anderson: "Teutons, Brahmins, Skraellings, and Others: The Cultural Meanings of Viking Exploration Narratives," in Ingeborg Kongslien and Dina Tolfsby (eds), *Norwegian-American Essays 1999* (Oslo and Hamar: NAHA-Norway, The Norwegian Emigrant Museum, in collaboration with Unipub, 1999), pp. 241–257.
[421] Molee, *Plea for An American Language*, p. 88.

lesson for Molee: "This is a composite nation, a daughter of the whole western and central Europe."[422] Elaborating on this assertion in a section of the book entitled "What is Americanism," he observed how a "composite nationality" had developed in the United States since the very beginning of settlement in the New World. "We are a vast conglomeration of peoples – a great colonial empire": "England is but one out of many" nations who had "owned land and governed here." The independence of the English colonies and their subsequent union was not what had origined the present day United States or the American people. It was only after independence that the United States acquired the great territories to the west – "England has only had control over the small colonies along the Atlantic sea coast." Therefore,

> Only a fraction of the United States can call England the 'Mother Country.' A far larger portion can call Ireland the mother country, and a still larger portion can call Germany, Skandinavia and Holland the 'Fatherland.' The United States, as a whole, is a *daughter of Europe*, not of England.

Just as England could not claim any preeminence in the origin of the present United States, the English colonists could not claim to be at the core of an "American" nation.

The observation that the majority of peoples living in the United States had a monogenesis in the ancient Germanic people undoubtedly reflected Molee's training as a philologist, but it nonetheless informed his conception of what the American nation was, and what it should become. It was eminently wrong, he asserted, that "one Germanic people" in America, the Anglo-Americans, should claim to be "superior to the rest" – that was a "clannish and non-American" idea.[423] At first he criticized the English language for being that of a "conquered people" – its mixture of Latin with a Germanic language made it very little intuitive to learn and a highly impractical language for the various immigrant groups in America, most of them belonging to a Germanic nation. "The impure English cannot be loved as the pure German, Scandinavian and Irish, because English is so unkind, so arbitrary and so much mixed that it belongs in particular to no people," he asserted.[424] Followingly, he denounced the "*Anglo-Mania*" in America as "un-American,"[425] and proposed instead the construction of a "Germanic-English" language, following the principles of "True Americanism," which "must be a purified and systematized cosmopolitanism."[426] This would be the common language of the United States, a "union language" which would "strengthen kind sentiments, both in Europe and

[422] Ibid., p. 39.
[423] Ibid., pp. 87–90. Orig. emphasis.
[424] Ibid., p. 27.
[425] Ibid., p. 289. Orig. emphasis.
[426] Ibid., p. 93.

America, more than anything else could do. It would be the best means of melting our people into one solid nation."[427]

Germanic origins and the pluralistic past

Molee was not the only one who were attentive to the alleged Germanic origins of the present or future American nation; in fact, Americans tended to do the same.[428] And when the Norwegian immigrant and U.S. senator Knut Nelson made his speech in the Senate in 1896, arguing against restrictions on future immigration, he also considered the American nation to have originated not merely from Anglo-Saxons, but from a variety of "Germanic races." Americans "were the concentration and quintessence of the Saxon and Celt, the Norman and the Norseman," he argued. The blending of these had "made the mightiest nation on the face of the earth; and our vast immigration has only measurably enlarged, broadened, and deepened the process."[429] Immigrants assimilated "to all that is good and progressive among our people […] intuitively and as if by inspiration," Nelson argued, and they quickly became "the most intense and empathic of all Americans within our borders." Nelson's assimilatory rhetoric may on the surface have repeated the presumptions of a one-way assimilation, but he too, like Molee, gave the ethnic origins of the first Americans its due consideration as a Germanic conglomeration.

The distinctiveness of Molee's argumentation rather lay with his assertion that no single "Germanic" group had any preeminent status above the others; there was no mention of "assimilation" or other descriptions of acculturation to something essentially "American" in Molee's book. He maintained that Americans "have always been a composite people," and that "We are all foreigners, or descendants of foreigners. It is simply a question of longer or shorter residence." Because the United States was a settler society, a "colonial empire," the "states and territories have been just as anxious to induce foreigners, especially from northern and western Europe, to come here, as Canada, Australia, South America, and as new countries generally are." Therefore, Molee argued,

[427] Ibid., p. 291.
[428] See chapter 3.
[429] Knute Nelson, *Immigration: One of the Chief Factors in the Rapid Growth and Development of the Country* (Washington, 1896), at *The Promise of America*: http://www.nb.no/emigrasjon/emigration/ [accessed April 24.04.2015]. On Knute Nelson, see Millard L. Gieske, "The Americanization of a Norwegian Immigrant: Knute Nelson," in *Essays on Norwegian-American Literature and History, volume II*, eds. Øyvind T. Gulliksen, Ingeborg R. Kongslien, and Dina Tolfsby (Oslo: NAHA-Norway, 1990), pp. 101–120, and Torgeir E. Fjærtoft, "Political Power in Norwegian America: Knute Nelson's Political Career, 1878–1905," in *Essays on Norwegian-American Literature and history* (1986), pp. 313–331.

> All inhabitants of North and South America are Americans in one sense, and in another all naturalized citizens of the United States are Americans. For a few descendants of the English colonists to monopolize the word American, is not Americanism. I therefore call them Old Natives. We are all Americans by right of previous discovery, hard work in development, and hard fighting.

Whereas "Americanism" had meant the assimilation of immigrants into the image of the "native" Americans for Pastor Preus in 1854, "Americanism" was for Molee the attempt to homogenize these various nations into one people: "Americanism […] I take to mean mutual recognition and coalescence of the several European elements."[430]

Although Elias Molee's more singular views of the fashioning of the American nation might be dismissed as those of an eccentric philologist, Molee captured and elaborated on many ideas of his time. The rising subject of philology in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries itself lay at the foundations of many racial and national ideologies, and was also central to the idea of a civilizational progress of humankind.[431] Just as immigrants fretted over the question of maintaining their language in the antebellum era, seeing it as the core of their identity, philological insights could also broaden or alter the perspective on national and international developments. The American philologist William D. Whitney, whose authority Molee in several instances invoked, had studied oriental languages and had, on account of the emerging theory of a Sanskrit origin of all modern European languages, taken a sympathetic, but also utilitarian, view of the 1857 "Mutiny" in British India.[432] Moreover, Molee's charge that Americans needed a language of their own to build a distinctive American culture – "I desire the American people to be more independent and to strike out for themselves in language and literature, as our forefathers did in government" – was only a mildly exaggerated version of the common complaints of a postcolonial, culturally insecure United States.[433] Many Americans sought to distance themselves culturally from England, and in this context, Molee's suggestions were not as singular as they might at first seem.

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[430] Molee, *Plea for An American Language*, pp. 87–91. *Emigranten*, April 7, 1854. See appendix 21.
[431] Adam R. Nelson, "Nationalism, Transnationalism, and the American Scholar in the Nineteenth Century: Thoughts on the Career of William Dwight Whitney," *The New England Quarterly* 78/3 (2005), pp. 341–376.
[432] William D. Whitney, "The British in India," *New Englander and Yale Review* 16/61 (1858), pp. 100–141. For a review of American attitudes to the revolt, see David F. Mosler, "American Newspaper Opinion on the Sepoy Mutiny 1857–58," *Australian Journalism Review* 14/1 (1992), pp. 78–87; Elizabeth Kelly Gray, "American Attitudes Toward British Imperialism, 1815–1860" (PhD diss., College of William and Mary, Virginia, 2002), pp. 217–263.
[433] Sam W. Haynes, *Unfinished Revolution: The Early American Republic in a British World* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2010).

Yet his ideas never found as receptive an audience as Molee had wanted, despite the inclusion of several encouraging letters from prominent American intellectuals in his 1888 book.[434] There are few indications that he, unlike Anderson, at any level influenced the minds of Norwegian or other "Germanic" immigrants. Molee's ideas should therefore be viewed as the product of an immigrant mindset rather than a shaper of the same. They are for that not less important; his ideas reflect many sentiments which the generation of Norwegians in America before him had held. Stripping them of their linguistic garbs, these ideas proposed to view the United States as a settler society not dependent on the influence and control of Anglo-Americans. As a society, the United States was open for all because it had been created and was inhabited by all.

Conclusion

Although Molee's ideas were formulated in the latter part of the century, his ideas are reminiscent of the antebellum immigrant mindset described in the previous three chapters. Like Norwegians before the Civil War, Molee adopted a contributionist perspective on immigration and remained skeptical of Anglo-Americans' claim to a superior status as "native" Americans. While antebellum immigrants perceived a clear gap between an indigenized American and that of a foreigner, Molee insisted upon taking a colonizing vision of America and the United States to its logical extreme. Anderson himself, for all his efforts to demonstrate the similarities between Norwegians and Anglo-Americans, also made a distinction between "Bandariget" or the United States and the western hemisphere, "Vesterheimen." Indicatively, of those two terms it was "Vesterheimen" which caught on as a reference to where Norwegians had emigrated. The early Norwegian immigrants had considered themselves to belong in America on account of their contribution as settlers in the available colonial spaces of America. Molee insisted that all Americans were, historically speaking, settlers, and the only difference between them was their time of arrival in America.

[434] A committee on an "International Language" presented to the American Philosophical Society in 1888 a review of proposals, including Molee's, but found his grammar a "recurrence to obsolescent principles, and the preference awarded to the Teutonic group is inconsistent with the broad principles on which a modern universal language should be founded." In "Stated Meeting, December 7, 1888," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 25/128 (1888), pp. 307–318, q. at p. 313.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The editorial of the October 20, 1854 issue of *Emigranten* did not only discuss the various ways in which emigrants would experience homesickness, if they were not properly disposed toward migration. It also gave advice on how emigrants should relate themselves to their old and their new fatherland, in order not to feel homesick:

> Notwithstanding those who, in all their might, and as quickly as possible, become Yankeefied, and those who change their names, language and customs, losing themselves like a drop in the ocean; to those who will listen to us we would say the following words of advice. Do not deny your fatherland or your mother tongue or your national customs or your childhood faith. Instead, compare them to what new you might acquire, and choose carefully betweeen them. Then you will find the best compensation for your loss, knowing that you are working towards a worthy goal, and that your noble efforts as a pioneer will be recognized and appreciated by the American people.[435]

This was an admonition from a newspaper which worried about the consequences abrupt changes of identity might have on immigrants. Its very printing illustrates that far from all immigrants were concerned with preserving their culture, language, and customs. Yet it was also a description of many antebellum Norwegians' attitudes toward expectations of cultural change. Resistance to assimilation, more or less articulated, was part of a "pluralist" mentality. Immigrants had come to settle on empty land in a country with liberal institutions; they did not consider it necessary to assimilate into an existing American nation.

Oscar Handlin had ended his analysis of *The Uprooted* by describing the predicament of immigrants in America: "the free structure of American life permitted them with few restraints to go their own way, but under the shadow of a consciousness that they would never belong."[436] From the evidence reviewed here, it seems likely that immigrants faced homesickness more often and more severely than historians have been willing to admit – or rather, to take seriously. The very attempts of downgrading the emotion as evidence of a weak character rather than accepting its inevitability as an effect of emigration itself, indicate that homesickness was often present, even if it could also be suppressed. Yet this did not prevent immigrants from attaching themselves to their new homes, as expressions of homesickness and longing may paradoxically confirm. The social world which had constituted the social dimensions of "home" for emigrants was kept alive by correspondence and, moreover, expressions of longing allowed immigrants to communicate a sense of belonging in America as well. Although they did not often portray their migration as the result of an inexorable process, perceiving themselves as exiles of their home

[435] Editorial, "Den norske Nybygger i Amerika," *Emigranten*, October 20, 1854. See appendix 5.
[436] Handlin, *Uprooted*, p. 254.

country, the rhetoric of inevitability, inspired by their religious outlook, helped them express a degree of attachment to their homes in America. And if such explicit expressions of belonging in America are rarely found in letters, a sense of belonging might be gleaned from texts of a more private nature.

Coming to view America as "home" did not entail giving in to expectations of Anglo-conformity. Norwegians were predominantly interested in acquiring land, and they chose their destination from this orientation. Most ended up in the North American Midwest, but not because of an inherent ideological affinity with an "Empire of Liberty," as Thomas Jefferson described his republic of yeomen.[437] Contingent factors, not least the timing of Norwegian emigration, led immigrant settlers to the newly available colonial spaces of the Midwest. Here they quickly acquired and demonstrated a settler mentality, showing their attachement to the soil. Settling on the frontier made immigrants perceive themselves to belong to these regions – they had made their homes there.

The construction of an ethnic Norwegian identity in the Midwest might have been an American construction, but the immigrants themselves believed they were engaging in cultural retention. That immigrants should preserve their identities as Norwegians was never questioned, but rather asserted as a premise for becoming Americans – at least according to the discussions in their pioneer newspapers. Many Norwegian immigrants would of course undergo even the stronger variant of "Americanization," giving no sign of their previous identity – that this was a topic of discussion in newspapers at all testify to this fact. But even if early Norwegian immigrants learnt English, acquired American habits, and left their cultural baggage inside their America trunks, never to be unpacked, they did not, on the whole, consider themselves to be "Americans." Understanding the American nation as an existing, culturally defined community, immigrants described themselves as "foreigners," "strangers," and "newcomers" in relation to Anglo-Americans, or as the immigrants themselves would say, the "native Americans." Norwegian were "Norwegians in America," and only as the Civil War opportuned demonstrations of loyalty to the United States, did immigrants hesitatingly begin to refer to themselves as "Norwegian Americans."

While this change in endonyms would confirm the assumptions held by historians that the Civil War somehow marked a new phase in the adjustment of immigrants, the findings presented here

[437] For a discussion of Jefferson and republican ideology, see e.g. Peter S. Onuf, "Federalism, Democracy, and Liberty in the New American Nation," in Jack P. Greene (ed.), *Exclusionary Empire: English Liberty Overseas, 1600–1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 132–159.

also demonstrate that immigrants considered America their "home" long before they signed up to fight for it. Indeed, that conflict disturbed Norwegians in their individual homemaking activities as much as it enabled them, as an emerging ethnic community, to express their loyalty to the United States. Much of the present discussion has been devoted to establish just such an analytic distinction between expressions of belonging – between the telling of "homemaking myths" and the acquisition of a sense of belonging. And even though Norwegians found it hard to imagine that they could belong to an American cultural community, consisting as it did of Anglo-Americans, they argued from early on that immigrants could also have a home in America – the continent did not belong to Anglo-Americans alone. There was little reason why immigrants should not preserve their cultural identities – in fact, they urged each other to do so, for their emotional well-being as well as for their position in American society.

So what does all this mean – are these findings to be considered of historical significance? After all, can a collective imagination or a mentality have historical "explanatory power"? Tor Egil Førland suggests that it might.[438] And indeed, scholars like April Schultz and Daron W. Olson have demonstrated how beliefs of cultural preservation, or what might perhaps better be called a guiding ideology of permanent cultural pluralism in America, informed the organization of the centennial celebration for Norwegian emigration, as well as other celebrations connected to a Norwegian identity.[439] Yet Øverland finds that even the explicit arguments of belonging failed in their intended effect: they were largely ignored by Anglo-Americans. Instead, immigrant groups faced increasing intolerance of cultural pluralism in American society, which finally resulted in the infamous restrictions on immigration in the 1920s.[440]

Still, a collective mentality influence how people act and react in their environments. The case of the German immigrants in America is instructive. Conzen points to a Sauk Valley county consisting mostly of descendants of nineteenth-century German immigrants, which still in 1950 made German culture "locally hegemonic" in the region. The community's embeddedness in historical networks of chain migration makes it difficult for historians to describe the community and its modernization according to the "familiar notions of acculturation and assimilation," she contends, and consequently the implied telos in such notions may be false for

[438] Tor Egil Førland, "Mentality as a Social Emergent: Can the *Zeitgeist* have Explanatory Power?" *History and Theory* 47/1 (2008), pp. 44–56.
[439] Schultz, "The Pride of the Race," and Daron W. Olson, "On Both Sides of the Atlantic: Transnational Celebrations of Norwegian National Identity," in *Norwegian-American Essays 2014*, ed. Joranger. pp. 99–122.
[440] Øverland, *Immigrant Minds, American Identities*, p. 192. "They have nonetheless been important in American history," Øverland writes. "Homemaking myths have been separatist yet unifying: their most important functions have been to create ethnic pride and, paradoxically, pride in belonging in the United States."

some types of immigrant groups, or at least for some of their communities.[441] And, as noted, Kazal fronts evidence of a "vernacular pluralism," that is, a more or less conscious conception of a viable pluralist future for American society, to have existed among both Americans and German-Americans in Pennsylvania during the late nineteenth- and early-twentieth century. Consequently he challenges historians' conceptions that Americans themselves did not conceive of a possible pluralist alternative until Horace Kallen formulated his views in 1915.[442] What, then, may be said of an immigrant group, which as early as the antebellum decades also exhibited such a "vernacular pluralist" mentality?

Since the 1970s, with Michael Novak's "unmeltable ethnics," alternative suggestions of a "salad bowl" or a "mosaic," and a pluralistic-integration model of interpreting the American immigrant experience, the idea of American society as a "melting pot" has been thoroughly challenged.[443] For Norwegian immigrants of the antebellum era, however, the melting pot was an unproblematic idea, if it was not exactly an unproblematic process. Even harsh critics of the American character like Pastor Preus, accepted both the metaphor and the fact that the process was inevitable. Yet how could immigrants assert pluralistic views while accepting the idea that America would mix all nations into a single blend? The crux of the matter is the timing. As Lars Aarhuus wrote in *Wossingen* in 1858, "the Norwegians in America are still far from being ready for such a change."[444] The changes wrought by the melting pot were expected, but were believed to take place in a more or less distant period in time. In the meantime, immigrants could prepare for this process by asserting their own culture and nationality in order to, as *Emigranten* wrote, leave an "imprint" on the eventual outcome.[445]

When the Norwegian American philologist Elias Molee first presented his project of constructing a new American language on the basis of Norse and Germanic languages, his ideas were summarily dismissed by Anglo-Americans. Yet the underlying understanding of what the American nation was, which had informed Molee's project, did not simply reflect Rasmus B. Anderson's attempt of making Anglo-Americans realize that they had a shared past, both of blood and ideology, with Norwegians. Molee's ideas also reflected the immigrant mindset which had been present in the antebellum years. As America was "a great colonial empire," the

[441] Conzen, *Making Their Own America*, p. 9.
[442] Kazal, "Lost World of Pennsylvania Pluralism."
[443] McDonald, *American Ethnic History*, pp. 50–66. Regarding the model of interpretation, McDonald explains that it "views assimilation and pluralism as parallel or concurrent rather than opposing, mutually exclusive processes," p. 62.
[444] *Wossingen*, March, 1858. "De Norske i Amerika ere endnu langt fra ikke modne til en saadan Forandring."
[445] *Emigranten*, February 20, 1852. See appendix 1.

act of colonizing America had been a European venture from the start. As colonization continued westwards on the continent, contemporary Europeans were also settlers in America, even if they did not carry a political authority with them as they had done in the past. Jon Gjerde has aptly described the openness of an ideologically defined American nationality to have allowed immigrants to preserve their own cultural identity within it.[446] But the Norwegians of the first phase of migration imagined themselves to belong in America, not only because the liberality of American national ideology allowed them to do so, but also because America fundamentally was a land of colonial opportunities.

It would take another half century after Molee formulated his views before Oscar Handlin would famously proclaim that when he first thought to write the history of the immigrants in America, he discovered that "Immigrants *were* American history."[447] In recent years, however, historians have increasingly taken the perspective that "America was international before it became national."[448] Making their homes in America, this was a perspective Norwegians had quickly and more or less intuitively adopted, and it was a perspective they would also come to articulate. Coming as colonists, immigrants could imagine that they belonged in America by having settled on the land and that they were contributing to the development of the country. Notwithstanding the emotional difficulties involved in such a process, they both experienced and expressed a sense of belonging. Yet immigrants found it hard to imagine that they belonged to an American nation of the present. This did not prevent them from perceiving that they would come to belong to such a nation. On the contrary, Norwegians asserted that the preservation of their cultural identity was essential to build and blend an American nation of the future.

[446] Gjerde, *Minds of the West*, p. 8.
[447] Handlin, *Uprooted*, p. 3. Orig. emphasis.
[448] Karen Ordahl Kupperman, "International at the Creation: Early Modern American History," in *Rethinking American History in a Global Age*, ed. Thomas Bender (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), pp. 103–122, q. at p. 105. It is "symptomatic" of past scholarship, she writes, "that we have no term by which to refer to the region that would become the United States." Also, she observes, the many "nascent nations" of indigenous peoples demonstate that "America was an international arena before Europeans even knew of its existence," p. 106. See also Jay Sexton, "The Global View of the United States," *Historical Journal* 48/1 (2005), pp. 261–276, and Michael Adas, "From Settler Colony to Global Hegemon: Integrating the Exceptionalist Narrative of the American Experience into World History," *American Historical Review* 106/5 (2001), pp. 1692–1720.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1

"Indledning." Preface to "De Forenede Staters eller Den amerikanske Republiks Historie." *Emigranten*, February 20, 1852. Extract.

Fædrelandets Historie har især stedse været dyrebar for Nordens Folk; og at den er det endnu, ogsaa hos de som ere udvandrede til Amerika, viser sig blandt andet af den Begiærlighed hvormed Man læser Snorre Sturlasøns Norges Historie, Faye's Uddrag af Samme etc hvor Man kan erholde dem i vore Læse-Foreninger.

Men saa ædelt og skjøndt det end er, at vi her til Amerika udvandrede Nordboer endnu med Kjærlighed omfatte det Fædreland vi forlode, og levende tilegne os dets Historie – og et skjønt og herligt Træk er det tilvisse i vort Folks Characteer, som bebuder en eiendommelig kraftig Indvirkning paa Aandens og Forholdenes Udvikling og Dannelse her, – saa bør vi dog ei forglemme, at Amerika nu og for Fremtiden er nærmest vort og vore Børns Fædreland, til hvilket vi frivillig have knyttet vor egen og vore Børns timelige Skjebne i Vee og Vel, og som det derfor ogsaa maae være vor Pligt som vor Fordeel, at omfatte med den størst muelige Kjærlighed og Interesse. Vi kom jo hid, ikke paa et kort Besøg, eller blot forat erhverve Rigdom og derpaa vende tilbage, men for her at virke den os beskikkede Tid, og lade vort Støv engang hvile i dette Land vi have giort til vort eget, og til vore Børns Fædreland. derfor skulle vi hverken opgive vor eiendommelige Characteer eller vor Fædrene Tro – vi kunne det ikke engang, uden at begaae et Slags aandeligt Selvmord; – men vi skulle stræbe at giøre os skikkede til at opfylde vort Kald og vor Bestemmelse i den store Udviklings Proces som daglig foregaaer midt iblandt os, idet Folk af mange Nationer skulle sammenknyttes, og efterhaanden sammensmelte til een stor Nation. Ja ogsa vi og vore Bærn skulle forenes og sammensmelte med den store Amerikanske Nation, dette hverken maae eller kan vi tabe af Sigte; men det store og vigtige Spørgsmaal for so er om h v o r l e d e s det skal skee. Skulle vi som det bløde Bor villieløft lade os danne i de fremmede Hænder, og blot passivt modtage Indtryk, uden til Gjengjæld at gjøre noget Indtryk? Nei, Nei! saa kan ikkun den tænke og tale, som har ingen selvstændig Characteer, som har intet Øie for Menneskets høieste og helligste Kald i aandelig og legemlig Henseende. Nei, vi skulde tvertimod lade vor eiendommelige nordiske Characteer fremtræde saa klart som mueligt i sine ædleste Træk: i ædelt Mod og Kraft naar det gjælder i Farens Stund, i oprigtig Trofasthed og uskrømtet Kjærlighed, oplivet ved Historiens Minder, og helliget af Christendommens Aand; og vi kunne være visse paa, at det vil have en vigtig og herlig Indflydelse paa National-Aandens og Forholdenes Dannelse og Udvikling her.

[...]

Vi skulle i vort hele Liv og Adfærd, i al vor Virken og Bestræbelse, vise det Hart for de Fremmede, blandt hvem vi have bygget vort Hjem, at vi ere fredelskende Borgere, men ogsaa rede og villige til at opofre Alt, selv Livet, for at værne om vort nye Fædrelands Fred og Lykke; at vi ere vindskibelige Borgere, ei blot for selv at vinde Gods og Formue, men for at virke til det almeene Vel; at vi ere kjærlige og omhyggelige Huusfedre, trofaste Venner, ædruelige og redelige Bekjendte i al vor Omgjængelse. Vi skulle vise en alvorlig Omhu for vore Børns Opdragelse, saa de kunne vorde skikkede saavel til deres borgerlige som aandelige Kald, og derfor saa tidligt som muligt bibringe dem Kundskab, ei blot i Modersmaalet, men ogsaa i det engelske Sprog, som det der allerede har gjort sig gjældende som Landets Sprog, og gjennem hvilket de alene som Borgere kunne tage virksom Deel i Samfundets Anliggender, og sikre sig en i Sandhed uafhængig og hæderlig Plads i Samfundet.

[...]

At vække Bevidstheden om dette vigtige Kald hos vore skandinaviske Emigranter; og veilede til dets Opfyldelse og herlige Maal, derpaa skal fornemmelig vore ringe Bestræbelser gaae ud i dette Blad.

APPENDIX 2

Extract from Ulrik Vilhelm Koren's memoirs, "Nogle Erindringer fra min Ungdom og fra min første Tid i Amerika," in *Samlede Skrifter*, ed. Paul Koren, vol. 4, *Erindringer, Digte, m.m.* (Decorah, Iowa: Lutheran Publishing House Bogtrykkeri, 1912), pp. 5–40, q. at p. 31. Previously printed in *Symra* 1 (1905), pp. 11–37.

En Ting forundrede og bedrøvede mig dog ikke lidet, og det var, at jeg hos de allerfleste fandt saa liden Tanke paa Norge og saa lidet Savn af Fædrelandet. Forsøgte jeg at lede Talen hen paa dette, saa gik den oftest snart istaa. "Tænker Du ofte paa Norge?" spurgte jeg engang i den første Tid en brav Halling, i hvis hus jeg ofte opholdt mig; "længes Du ikke did?" "Om eg længjes efter Norrig?" svarte han, "No Sir, om eg det gjør – der var saa mykje Stein der." Han sad derpaa en Stund som i dybe Tanker og udbrød saa: "Jau du, dei Tyttebæren' om Hausten – dei min's eg. Well sir, det var helsige Bær!"

APPENDIX 3

Johan Reinert Reiersen to friends, Four Mile Prairie, Texas, July 27, 1852. Printed in *Folkets Røst*, September 4, 1858. Extract.

"Patriotiske Ord af en Landsmand."

[…]

Jeg har lært at elske det Land, hvortil jeg er flyttet, mer og høiere end mit gamle Fædreland, som jeg aldrig kan tænke paa med kjær Længsel ; og jeg betragter fra mit Standpunkt de gamle monarchiske, aristokratiske og hierarchiske Institutioner som noget foragteligt Legetøi, hvoraf den menneskelige Intelligents burde skamme sig. Jeg føler mig fri og uafhængig blant et frit Folk, som ikke lænkebindes af gamle Stands- og kaste-Forholde, og jeg føler mig stolt af at høre til en mægtig Nation, hvis Institutioner nødvendigviis vil og maa komme til at beherske den hele civiliserede Verden, fordi de hvile paa Principer, som Fornuften allene kan erkjende for rigtige.

APPENDIX 4

"Norges Dom over Amerika." *Emigranten*, November 23, 1863.

Norges Dom over Amerika.

"Frænde er Frænde nærmest," siger Fornuft og Hjerte, og handlede Beslægtede efter Fredens Samdrægtighedens og Kjærlighedens Stemme, saa var Meget anderledes. Men man siger ogsaa for et Ord, at Frænde er Frænde værst, og det Sande heri viser sig daglig i smaa som i store Samfund.

Der er imidlertid mange Maader at handle paa, hvorved Slægt og Venner skades af sine Nærmeste. Vi sigte dermed ikke til den grove Uenighed, som avler Strid mellem engere Kredse og Had og Kamp mellem mægtige Broderlande, saaledes som fordum mellem Normænd og Svensker og nu her i Landet mellem Norden og Syden. Ogsaa nu ubevidst kan Ven skade og fornærme Ven. Hvis man i Troen paa sit eget ufeilbare Velvære ynker og beklager sin Slægtnings Stilling, uagtet man i Grunden kjender saa lidet til denne, at man er uberettiget til at dømme, saa er baade Dommen selv og endnu mere de af den anledede utidige og falske Ynk og Klager en grov Fornærmelse.

Vi Normænd her i Amerika har Alle som En efterladt Slægt og Venner i vort forrige Fædreland. Selv forlod vi Klippelandet, fordi Jord og Levebrød i Dalen allerede var optaget af Andre, og vi selv ikke kunde presse Brød af

Stene. Her i Amerika fandt vi Jord, som var værd at arbeide paa; den giver os uden Vanskelighed det daglige Brød. Vi ere tilfredse her, og derfor forlader vi ikke dette Land, som af Herren synes skabt for alle arbeidsomme Trængende, der lede at de skulle finde. Samtidigt mindes vi altid Norge med al den Varme og Glæde, som følger de kjære Barndomsminder.

Hvorledes gjengjældes dette? Af Frygt for at miste en Overbefolkning, som Landet alligevel ikke kan holde tilbage fra at søge Brød udenfor Grændserne, fermstilles hyppigt i de norske Hovedblade Normændernes Stilling i Amerika som saare tvivlsom og deres Liv som en daglig Kamp for det tørre Brød. Paa samme Tid som vi ved vort velbesatte Bord gjerne kan lee ad denne tykke Uvidenhed i Norge om vore økonomiske Kaar, saa maa det dog tilsidst gaa i os, at ikke alene de norske Blade, men ogsaa dette Lands dannede Embedsklasse i blind Iver for at standse en naturlig Udvandring skildrer det Fædreland, som de Norske i Amerika erklærer for sit og som de elsker og forsvarer, med usande Farver.

Nedenstaaende Skrivelser har man anmodet os om at indtage i "Emigranten", og vi indsee ikke, hvorfor vi skulle nægte dette, da Hr. Pastor D. Bruns Skrivelse netop stadfæster hvad enhver norsk Amerikaner beklager sig over med Hensyn til falsk Dom over Amerika og dens Befolknings Kaar.

Vi Amerikanere trænger aldeles ikke til de fattige Ladninger, som sendes os fra Norge. Skjønt vi endnu ikke udgjøre mere end 200,000 Sjæle, saa kan vi dog uden at bryske os sige saa stort et Ord, at vi, naar det behøves, kan hjælpe vor Styrelse med et Skattebidrag ligesaa stort som det, Norges een Million Bønder kan præstere. Thi Landsmanden her betaler med større Lethed fem Daler i aarlig Skat, end han i Norge kan betale een Daler. Hvert Aar, naar Emigranter fra Norge ankommer, saa har vi at hjælpe en Deel af dem, at de kan komme i Vei, og dermed bærer vi i Virkeligheden en Deel af den Fattigbyrde, som egentlig udelukkende tilfalder den norske Stat. Enhver Landsmand fra Norge er desuagtet velkommen; thi vil han kun arbeide efter Evne, saa ligger den jomfruelige Jord, der bugner af Hvede, naar den vindes, færdig for ham og hans Børn. Det gjælder kun det første Aars Forskud for at komme i Vei.

Men det er om Pastor Bruns Skrivelse vi her skulle yttre nogle Ord, fordi en Deel af hvad han siger indeholder Norges stadige Dom over Amerika.

For ikke at misforstaaes af vore Læsere, ville vi udtrykkelig udhæve, at vi ikke angribe denne eller andre norske Præsters geistlige Virksomhed. Det er fuldkommen i sin Orden, at han i sit Brev formaner og advarer mod Familieuenighed, og at han her specielt foreholder en Hustru det høist betænkelige og kan hænde urigtige i at skille sig og Fællesbørn fra Mand og Fader – (skjøndt denne Mand seer ud til at have være en komplet Usling, som tærede paa Kone og Børn istedetfor at ernære dem). – I denne hans geistlige Virksomhed blande vi os ikke. Men naar han som vægtige Grunde for, at fattige arbeidsomme Folk skal trælle sig tildøde i Norge heller end gaae til et bedre Land, anfører som Sandhed, at vort Fædreland "Amerika befinder sig i stor Nød;" at der er "Arbeidsløshed for Mændene"; at de for at opholde Livet skareviis maa lade sig hverve til Soldater; at man "af Trang maa indskrænke Antallet af Arbeidsfolk og Tjenere;" at vi "efter Freden vil blive saa udarmede, at vi ikke faae Raad til at holde Arbeidsfolk," og endelig at Kvinder her ikke kan nære sig af Mangel paa Arbeide, saa pligter Redaktionen at tage til Gjensvar mod disse og lignende vrange Udsagn, som ikke udgaaer fra enkelt norsk Mand, men er et Udtryk af de Fabler, som i Norge sættes ud blandt Folket. Efter de norske Blades Praxis, hovedsageligen at optage kun de slette Efterretninger fra Amerika, maa dette Blads Læsere ikke vente at nærværende Artikel optages af de norske Blade, men vi har i alle Fald gjort vor Pligt ved at gjendrive Usandhed med Sandhed – eller er der vel nogen norsk Amerikaner, som tier stille og giver sit Samtykke til, at hans Land kaldes Udvandrerens Grav og han selv Elendighedens og Armodens Offer?

Den i Norge levende Almeenmand kan da tænke over og selv dømme efter følgende Oplysninger:

I hans Verdensdeel Europa gaaer ikke et Aar hen uden blodige Krige. De koste Penge ligesom her, og ingen Nation er sikker for at maatte deeltage. Norge staaer jo nu i Færd med at faae en blodig og kostbar Krig med det mægtige Tydskland, og en saadan Krig giver ethvert Folk, som ikke engang kan brødføde sig selv, en alvorlig Knæk. – De Nordamerikanske Stater alene udgjør et ligesaa stort Areal som det beboede Europa. Naar Krig føres her, indsees det let, at det ikke som i Europa er en enkelt Nation men en heel Verdensdeel, paa hvilken Betalingsbyrden fordeles, og at den saaledes bliver lettere paa hver Enkelt.

Arbeidsløshed opstaaer, hvor en Overbefolkning sukker efter Arbeide, eller hvor Arbeidet ikke lønner sig. – Det er langt fra, at Folk før eller for nærværende streifer om efter Arbeide, at det tvertimod er Landmændene selv i Staterne, som uafladeligt klager over, at de ikke kan faae Arbeidere nok, uagtet Daglønnen stadigt har været 1 Daler og derover med Kost pr. Dag. Dette vidner om den uigjendrivelige Sandhed, at Befolkningen er tynd og at Arbeidet

lønner sig. Arbeidsløshed for Mændene kjendes ikke her. Det er sandt, at mange Norske har ladet sig hverve, men det er ikke for at opholde Livet. Nationalstolthed og en anden Selvfølelse som Borger end den almindelige Mand veed af i Norge, drev og driver den norske Amerikaner til at ile under Fanerne. Betalingsvilkaarene ere ogsaa saa gode, at han finder sig tjent dermed. I Norge ved man kanskee ikke, at en Soldat her i Indskrivningspenge faaer fra 300 til 400 Daler samt 13 Daler om Maaneden med fri Klæder og fri Kost, og hans Hustru faaer Pension af 8 Daler om Maaneden i Tilfælde af, at Manden falder. Ikke behøvede Landmanden at gaa i Krigen af Mangel paa Arbeide, thi Jordbrug giver altid Arbeide; om han endogsaa havde villet, saa kunde han ikke afskedige en Tjener eller Arbeidstok, som han aldrig har leiet. Eller er virkelig de, som i Norge indlade sig paa at tale om amerikanske Forholde, saa uvidende, at de ikke kjende til at Forholdenes Natur medfører, at Folk her snarest muligt gjør sig til Selveiere, og dermed opstaaer Mangel paa Arbeidsfolk ved ældre Eiendomme, men ikke Arbeidsløshed.

Gaa, hvor man vil, saa er der Spørgsmaal efter norske Fruentimmer; thi de arbeider i Amerika, medens Yankeens Fruentimmer ofte ere uvillige til at tage Haanden i Nyttesarbeider; Gutten er ikke bleven 12 Aar, førend han har egen Løn; og mangfoldige Gutter og Piger paa 15 Aar forlader for stedse Forældrene, ikke af Nød, men fordi de allerede da ville begynde at lægge Penge op til at skjøde Eiendom for. Om flere hundrede norske Fruentimmer pludseligen ankom fra Norge, saa skulde de øyeblikkelig faa Ansættelse med Alt frit og fra 78 til 104 Dollar om Aaret.

Hvorledes det vil see ud efter Krigen er det nu for tidligt at udtale sig om her, endsige i Norge. Men et almindeligt Overblik viser os, at medens europæiske Lande maa føre Penge ud af Landet for at kjøbe en stor Deel af hvad de forbruge baade i Krig og i Fred, saa har Amerika næsten Alt, hvad det behøver inden sine egne Grændser. Soldaterne sende daglig store Summer hjem for at indkjøbe mere Jord; trives ikke Sædarterne overalt? dyrkes ikke Sukkerrør og Tobak lige op i Wisconsin og Minnesota? Farer ikke Dampbaade og Jernbanetrain i alle Retninger med Materiale og Kul hentet fra egne Gruber? Kan vi maaskee ikke klæde os selv i Uld og Bomuld, naar vi hjælper til at klæde hele den øvrige Deel af Verden? Er California og Klippebjergenes Guldgruber ikke mange Gange rigere end alle europæiske Landes ædle Metalgruber tilsammen? Og ligger der ikke for den hjemvendende Soldat og Indvandrerne fra andre Verdensdele unævnelige fede Strækninger og venter paa, at de meest lønnede Produkter skal afvendes dem gjennem tarveligt Arbeide? Behøver vi vel at optage udenlandske Laan eller nedlægge vore Penge i Europa og i Asia? Et Folk, som altsaa under Krigen ikke udfører sine Penge, ikke optager Laan, men saa at sige kun omflytter dem inden selve Landet; et Folk som under Freden ikke behøver at ængste sig for, hvorledes det da skal faa Arbeide, dette Folk – vi Amerikanere – hverken fortvivle selv eller opfordre Andre til at fortvivle, naar Freden engang indbyder os til at ombytte Sværdet med Plougen.

Mon Amerikas Modstandere i Norge har betænkt, at de ved at fraraade den Fattige at drage til et bedre Land, i Virkeligheden bedrager den Fattige med svigagtige Raad! forspilder mangen nedtrykt Families hele Livslykke! og under Paaskud af Venskab er den Armes værste Fiende; thi saa maa disse Raadgivere kaldes, naar Følgen af deres Raad er den, at Armoden synker ned i endnu dybere Armod.

Hermed overgive vi nu vore Læsere Hr. Pastor Bruns Skrivelse og den tilskrevne Enkes Svar.

Pastor Bruns Skrivelse

Til Berthe Sevardsdatter Østerli!

Du tænker, hører jeg, paa at reise til Amerika alene med Dine Børn og lade Din Mand blive tilbage. Kjære Berthe, nu skal Du tro, at jeg vil Dit Vel, og bare i den Hensigt skriver til Dig og at jeg intet siger, som ikke er sandt. Og jeg vil sige Dig, at Du gjør hvad Du ikke ved, og hvad Du bitterlig vil angre ved at reise saaledes alene. Formedelst Krigen, som hersker i Amerika, er der en stor Nød; der er Arbeidsløshed for Mændene, saa at de for at kunne tjene Noget, i Skareviis lade sig hverve til Soldater. Saa Mangfoldiges Koner søge da Arbeide; men de, som trænge Arbeide og Tjenere, de indskrænke sig saa meget som muligt, afskjediger saa vidt muligt Arbeidsfolk og Tjenere, fordi med Krigen følger dyr Tid. Men hvordan kan da Du ernære Dig med Dine Børn. De som trænge Arbeide, hjælpe dog heller deres eget Lands Børn end Fremmede, saameget mere som Du ikke kan forstaae Sproget. Kjære Berthe, tro mig, Du gaaer Elendighed imøde med Dine Børn ved at komme alene derover; var Manden med, saa var det dog ikke saa galt; blev ingen anden Raad, saa kunde han dog blive Soldat og fortjene til Livsophold for Eder. Komme I i Mangel, saa er der saa store Skatter, at de vist ikke kan sørge især for fremmede Fattige. Og selv om Krigen skulde ophøre, til I komme over, vil Folket være saa udarmet, at de ikke har Raad til at have mange Arbeidsfolk, og der er ved mange Mænds Død bleven saa mange ledige Kvinder at skaffe Arbeide, som man heller vil sørge for end Fremmede. Og saa, kjære Berthe, forlater Du egenmægtig den Mand, som Gud har givet Dig; har Du prøvet hvad det er at være saa længe borte fra Din Mand? har Du betænkt, at Du leder baade ham og Dig selv i Fristelse? Du tykkes Dig vel stærk nok; men see Din Kraft er kun svag, og Du kan ikke regne paa Herrens Hjælp,

naar Du leder Dig selv ind i Fristelsen. Og har Du betænkt Ansvaret for Dine Børn; med Dig selv vil Du og føre dem i Elendighed, og hvor vil ikke det Ansvar hvile tungt paa Dig, naar Du faaer see, at Du handlede tidt. Kjære Berthe, Du frister Herren og gjør ham imod med dette. Naar Din Mand vil reise, da er det Din Pligt at følge med; men naar han ikke reiser, er det Din Pligt at blive hvor han er. Og sandelig, hvad end Din egen Lyst vil tilsige Dig, der er ingen Velsignelse fra Gud ved et Foretagende, som man iværksætter imod hans Ord og Villie. Jeg har talt det som din Ven og Sjælesørger, og Gud er mit Vidne, at jeg har havt hans Ord og Dit eget Vel for Øie. Herren selv lede Dig til ret Betænkning. Hils Din Mand og Dine Børn. Din Præst D. Brun.

Tennæs, den 6te April 1862.

Berthe Østerlies Svar.

Til Gjensvar paa det indlagte Pastor Bruns Brev, da udbedes venskabeligst Hr. Redakteur Solberg om at begge Dele maatte indtages i Bladet "Emigranten", for at Anførte kan circulere for dem, som holder dette Blad.

Jeg har nu proberet Amerika og befinder det aldeles modsat i Henhold til Bruns Fortolkning, for at skrække mig fra at reise alene med 4 Børn til denne Verdens-Deel. Vel er det saa, i enkelte Dele, at Noget er sandt af hvad han siger; men saa finder jeg ved Erfaring – Nei! ikke en Tyvendedeel som er sandt efter det fremlagte Brev. Med Krigen følger dyr Tid – maaskee dette vil udarme Europa mere end de nordlige Stater heri Landet. Hvad Præsten siger, formedelst Krigen skal her herske stor Nød, er hidtil Usandhed. Han siger, at her er Arbeidsløshed for Mændene, saa at disse i Skareviis lade sig hverve til Soldater; men dette er en puur Usandhed. Der tales om Koner, der søge Arbeide, her er nok af Arbeide at faae, om jeg saa havde 10 Hænder. Der siges i Brevet, at de, der trænge til Arbeide og Tjenere, indskrænke sig saa meget som muligt, afskediger Arbeidsfolk og Tjenere; thi dette er ogsaa en stor Usandhed. Der spørges om, hvorledes jeg skal ernære mig med mine Børn. Jo! her i Amerika kan jeg sutittere godt og lever hver Dag som en Juledag i Norge; men siig mig Hr. Pastor Brun, hvorledes skulde jeg have ernæret mig i Finmarken med 4 Børn – det var et vanskeligere Spørgsmaal. At blive mægtig i Sproget, dette er det vanskeligste heri Landet, men saa findes nu her mange Norske, som i Førstningen tolker for sine Landsmænd, saa man ikke kommer i Forlegenhed. Endnu, Gud være lovet, har jeg ikke gaaet nogen Elendighed imøde – ved at komme over Søen alene; men det havde jo været en stor Fordeel for mig og Familien, naar Manden havde fulgt med, thi enkelte af de Karle der var i Selskab over Søen i 1862, har nu til denne Tid optjent 150 Dollars fra Juli f. A. Hvad synes nu de gode Normænd herom? Kan de nu dadle mig som en stakkels Kone, der ivrede saa stærkt for at komme udaf det fattige og haarde Finmarken i Norge, og opsøgte dette Canaans Land – Nord Amerika. Der tales i Brevet om at komme i Mangel – og blive arm – saa at ingen Hjælp skulle faaes for fremmede Fattige; thi dette er ogsaa noget overdrevet Paaskud, endnu har jeg ikke hverken seet eller hørt noget fattigt Menneske, som har hetlet efter Brød heri Landet; thi Enhver har lidt Jord at travle med, og her gives gode Fortjenester, for dem som vil arbeide og er i den Alder. De store Skatter der tales om, ere endnu ikke komne i Kraft, skjøndt dette Udtryk kan nok i sin Tid desværre gaae i Opfyldelse, formedelst den store og blodige Krig mellem Syden og Norden. Vi har læst om de storartede Krige i Napoleons Tider i Europa; men hvad er det mod denne rasende amerikanske Krig, der nu hersker meller de nordlige og sydlige Stater. Saa gjentager jeg endnu, at alle de nordlige Stater er et rigt Land. Her i Norden skjænktes til de trængende Fattige i England i denne Vinter ½ Million Dollars, enda siger "Emigranten", at den troede at 1 Million skulle ydes derhen. Hvilket Land i Verden kan opvise Saadant? og ligger nu for Tiden i saadan Krig, som ikke Verdenshistorien før kan maales med. At her bliver mange Enker og Faderløse er en Sandhed, men Mangel paa Arbeide for os fremmede Kvinder – det existerer ikke – det har da ikke truffet mig og Mine. En Pige faaer 1 ½ til 2 Dollar om Ugen, gak hen i Tromsø eller Molselom, hvor jeg boede, prøv om saadan Løn faaes. Det omhandlede Ansvar hviler vist ikke tungt paa mig, jeg indseer at jeg handlede ret og ikke ilde. Hvor lykkelig jeg er, selv og mine Børn, fordi jeg forlod det usle Finmarken, jeg takker den Allerhøieste, som nød mig bi i at kjæmpe – saa jeg kom afsted. Endvidere vil jeg takke den menneskelige Magt, som hjalp mig. Takket være De, Hr. Lensmand Birge paa Tromsø, som bestyrkede mig lidt med Reisepenge; thi ellers havde jeg maattet sidde i den traurige Stilling, hvor jeg var. Jeg gyser, naar jeg tænker paa alle Søtourer til Tromsø, for at reise i Snefog, Storm og Kulde igjennem Balsfjorden, saavel Vinter som Sommer, dette var just ikke morsomt Kvindearbeide, der maatte man sukke efter de stakkels Russe-Meelposer og betale dyrt. Nei! takket være Gud, som nu har skjænket mig Hvedebrød til ethvert Maaltid, og jeg beder Gud om, at Hilsen ville forundes mig, saa finder jeg mig inderlig glad og fornøiet. Skulle jeg friste Herren, fordi jeg ville prøve Næringsveien paa et andet Sted, naar Manden ikke brugte Tankerne og Hovedet til det Bedste. Jeg har læst, at dydige Kvinder ere Manden en Krone, for Salomon holder dem bedre end Guld. Vel veed jeg, at Kvinden skal være Manden underdanig, ligesom Sara var Abraham lydig; men det indtræffer jo i mangt et Ægteskab, at Kvinden kan være nok saa betænkt, for at udfinde Næringsveien og sette til det tarvelige Udkomme, end som Manden. Saavel i Norge, som i andre Lande, findes jo baade Høie og Lave, at de forandre sin Stilling, flytter fra det ene Sted til det andet, thi hvorfor skulde da min Flytning være saa farlig, og da

tale om at friste herren, fordi man vil vandre ud og lede efter Brød, thi at forlade et Sultihjel-Land, som Finmarken i Norge, var min Brøde. Gud skal være mit Vidne, at jeg har havt mit og mine Børns Vel for Øie, og jeg formaaer ikke at fuldtakke Skaberen, fordi han har hjulpet mig til mit forønskede Maal. Det her Indførte, til Gjensvar paa Pastor Bruns Brev, vil jeg oplyse, for de fattige Norske fornemmelig, og jeg kalder Gud til mit Vidne, at hvert Ord er sandt, som er nedskrevet af mig, det skal jeg, om forlanges, faa flere hundrede norske Mænd til at bevidne.
Ærbødigst

Berthe Sevaldsdater Østerli

i Moselom, men født i Storelvedalen i Østerdalen, paa en Gaard Misselt, i Hedemarkens Amt.

Nu boende i Vest Eau Claire Co., Wisconsin, dateret 2den Juni 1863.

APPENDIX 5

"Den norske Nybygger i Amerika." Editorial, *Emigranten*, October 20, 1854.

'Der er saa trangt i Norge' siger den misfornøiede Udvandrer. 'Folket er [ileg] og den, som gjerne vil arbeide sig frem, arbeider forgjæves, og slider sig ud – og er dog lige nær.' Saaledes lyder den gamle Vise; saaledes er Omkvædet paa alle de misfornøiede Emigranters Afskedshilsen til det Land, der fostrede dem. Og de drage til det store Vesten, og blive Nybyggere. De forlade de Forholde, de kalde saa trykkende, og kaste sig dristigen ind i aldeles ukjendte Forholde, der, saasnart Nyheden har tabt sin Tillokkelse for dem, viser dem, at Misfornøielsen ikke saameget havde sin Grund i Forholdene uden om, men noget mere i deres eget Indre. De erfare snart, at de nye Forholde i mange Henseender give dem ligesaamegen om ikke større Aarsag til Misfornøielse, og at den, som ikke eier den Skat, som er bedre end alle Californias Rigdomme, nemlig at nøies med det han har, og at søge Tilfredsheden i sin egen Barm, – altid vil i større eller mindre Grad plages af Utilfredshed og Misnøie. Saa er den menneskelige Charakteers Ubestemthed. Den higer altid efter Nyt.

'Der er saa trangt i Norge,' hedder det, og derfor drager man hid, til Egne, hvor der vistnok ikke er trangt, hverken i Henseende til Rum eller Erhverv. Og enhver den, hvis Behov tilfredstilles derved, at hans legemlige Kræfter kunne finde behørig Sysselsættelse, og bringe ham et Udbytte, der overstiger de Begreper og Forventninger han i saa Henseende i deres begrændsede Form var vant til hjemmefra, han har gjort et godt Bytte, saalænge han er ung og kraftfuld, eller saalænge hans Legemskræfter og Helbred forbliver upaavirket af Anstrængelse, forandret Levemaade og climatiske Forhold; men svigter et av disse Goder ham, da spørges det hvad hans Lod bliver, enten han er tilhuse mellem Landsmænd eller Fremmede. I mere end eet Tilfælde vil han da længes hjemad. Saa er Naturens Gang. Ingen vil derfor bebreide ham at han drog hjemmefra. Imidlertid vil han dog længes hjem til de trange Forholde, – han vilde nøies med mindre, for blot at vinde sin Helbred igjen.

Men der er atter andre Udvandrere, der vel ikke just vare saa misfornøiede, men som heller ikke kunne føle sig tilfredstillede saa let som hine. Der er Udvandrere, der forlade Fædrehjemmet, hvor deres Stræbsomhed og Flid ikke lønnedes med det Held, hvortil de satte deres Haab, og som, idet de ombyttede deres hidtilværende Virkekreds og løste de Baand, der knyttede dem til Sted og Forholde, Slægt og Venner, tillige gave Slip paa Fordelene af at boe og virke i et ordnet og civiliseret Samfund, i hvilket de allerede havde brudt sig en Vane. De paaregnede, at Tabe af disse Fordele, der, fordi de vare tilvante og let tilgjængelige, ikke altid [ileg] for deres Blik med det Værd, som de, efterat have følt Savnet deraf, lærte at sætte dem i, – at Tabet deraf snarligen skulde [ileg] opveiet af de ved saamange fremkomne Vidnesbord i saa høi Grad forroste Fordele, som Besiddelsen af Borgerret i de For. Stater, og den almindeligviis paaregnede lettere Erhvervelse af Eiendom, vilde medføre. De kastede sig ogsaa tillidsfulde ind i det besværlige Liv, som falder i Nybyggerens Lod. Men de erfare der, at de have at kjæmpe med Savnet af saa mangt og meget, der hører med til en glad og rolig Nydelse af Livet; de kastes om paa de vidtstrakte Prairier, og følgende den store Strøm, tilbringe de ofte i et haardført Trællearbeide de Aar, i hvilke [ileg] ved deres Afreise fra Hjemmet haabede at skulle i Sandhed nyde Livet. Mange naae ikke engang saavidt, og naar Alt kommer til Alt, saa ere maaske de Lykkelige kun faa, blandt denne Slags Nybyggere, der i Virkeligheden kunne sige, at de ved Byttet vandt de Goder, som de higede efter. Man vil maaskee modsige os heri, og pegende paa de mange gode og smukke Former [ileg] der tyde paa Velstand og timelig Velvære, svart: 'i saa kort Tid havde vi ei været istand til at erhverve os saadanne Eiendomme i Norge.' Nuvel, vi indrømme dette, og glæde os over, saavel at deres Virken hertillands har været saa heldig, som ogsaa over, at de ikke føle Savnet af Fædrehjemmet og dets sociale Forholde. Men vi

ville spørge: mon disse Savn, der nu i en Række af Aar ere blevne trængte tilbage, dog ikke engang i Tiden ville bryde igjennem med desmere Kraft? Vi forudsætte ingenlunde som givet, at dette just i Almindelighed skulde finde Sted, men i de Tilfælde, hvor saadanne Savn og Længsler ikke opstaae hos den Udvandrer, der først i de modnere Aar drog hjemmefra (thi vi tale ikke her om Ungdommen) – der mene vi at dette maae grunde sig paa, at han har været saa heldig, som Mængden umulig kan være, nemlig i de nye Forholde at finde et tilfredsstillende Vederlag for Afkaldet paa de hjemlige Forholde. Men vi sige dog som for, der er Nybyggere (og maaskee endog Mange, som nødig ville indrømme det), der i deres stille Sind, selv om de end have formaaet at bøie sig under Paavirkningen af det amerikanske Livs eensformige og afmaalte Former, dog mere end eengang ville mindes Digterens Ord, og sige med ham:

'Hvor i Verden jeg gaaer, om i Syd eller
Vest,
Det er dog ei min hjemlige Strand;
thi det Land som jeg faae i min Barndom [ileg]
bedst
ja, jeg elsker mit Fædreneland.
'At, jeg savner det Sted hvor min Moder
har grædt
hvor, som Barn, jeg i Skovene sang [ileg]
ved den Høi, hvor min Fader til Jorden blev
stædt,
tidt jeg længes at hvile engang!'

Savn og Vederlag! Det er to Ord, som Nybyggeren ofte ønsker sig borte fra sit Lexicon. De staae der dog. Hvad er det da han savner? Enhver kan have sit særegne Savn, men nogle af disse ere dog fælles for alle tænkende Nybyggere, hvis Formaal ikke er udelukkende begrændset af timelige Hensyn, og enhver saadan vil let kunne besvare Spørgsmaalet; men de Veie, paa hvilke han skal kunne haave at finde Vederlaget, ligge maaskee ikke altid lige klart for Enhvers Blik; og tiltrods for dem, der sætte af sin Higen og Tragten i saa hurtig som muligt at vorde yankeeficerede, og som skifte Navn, Sprog og Sæder, og tabe sig som Draaben i Havet, ville vi til Veiledning for dem, som ville lytte til os, i faae Ord angive disse Veie: Fornægt ikke dit Fædreneland eller dit Modersmaal eller dine nationale sæder eller din Barndomstro; men hold dem frem ved Siden af det Nye du tilegne dig og hvoraf du maa vælge med Omhu, og du vil finde det bedste Vederlag for dine Savn i din egen Bevidsthed om, at du arbeider til et værdigt Maal, og i det Amerikanske Folks Anerkjendelse af din hæderlige Bestræbelse som Nybygger.

APPENDIX 6

What is likely Johan Gasmann's letter appeared in *Emigranten* on June 27, 1856, with the title "Et Brev om Amerika" [A Letter about America]. It was sent from Mapleton, Waukesha County, Wisconsin, on February 18, 1856.

Kjære N. N.

Med god Grund kan du bebreide mig for min Efterladenhed i at skrive, men til min Undskyldning kan jeg kun sige, at jeg har tabt Lysten til at skrive, saasom kun liden Tid Levnes mig til aandelig Forlystelse i dette Land; men sandt er det, der er dog altid Tid tilovers, naar man vil, altsaa det nytter ei Udflugter. Vi leve ved det Gamle, Gud være lovet, Ingen af min Familie er endnu bortreven fra mig, og vi har i Grunden Intet at klage over. Vi have vort nødvendige Udkomme; og hvad mere har vi at fordre, da jeg maa tilstaa, at i den Alder og med de Midler, jeg kom hid med, mange Børn omkring mig, har jeg opnaaet mere end jeg kunde vente i et fremmed Land, og hvad jeg især maa være glad over er at vore Børn, baade Piger og Drenge, tage sig vel ud. Deres Stilling kjender Du formodentlig, saa jeg vil intet [ileg] herom, som sagt, jeg kan ei klage over Held, omendskjøndt nogen Herlighed har jeg ikke opnaaet her, ikke heller har jeg nogensinde tragtet derefter, og vel heller ikke opnaaet hjemme i Norge, om jeg havde forbleven der. En Ting har jeg opnaaet her, som nogenlunde trøster mig for Tabet af mit Fædreland, nemlig mine nye Landsmænd Amerikanernes Agtelse og Venskab, og jeg kan sige jeg har fundet Mange her, hvis Venskab jeg sætter Priis paa; – men en Længsel et Savn gnaver paa mit Hjerte, dette er ei de vante Fjelde, og hvor er mit Fædrelandshjems historiske Vinter, der hvor enhver Steen, enhver Plet Jord, enhver venlig Viig af Havet, ja

enhvert Skjær og Holme gjorde et venligt Indtryk paa Sjælen. Fattigt er vel det gamle Land, men det taler med mere Kraft til Aanden og Hjertet, end dette rigt udstyrede, men monotone store Vesten. Jeg kan ikke selv forklare mig hvad der mangler, jeg sammenligner Menneskene, og da forekommer det mig, som jeg intet har tabt, vel tale de ikke mit Modersmaal, men et nær beslægtet Folk er det jo, de ligner os, deres Sædvaner og Levemaade er ubetydelig forskjellig; de ere i Almindelighed mere dannede og oplyste end den almindelige Mængde i Europa, jeg maa foretrække Amerikanerne for mine egne Landsmænd her. Men med alt dette, Længselen er der endda, jeg kan ordentlig glæde mig, naar jeg træffer Situationer, der ligne noget de hjemlige Egne; men der er Intet her i Vesten, der ret ligner dem, for en Dansk maa dette Land synes skjønt, men ei for en Nordmand. Men maaske er der noget fantastisk i min Characteer, jeg tilstaaer det gjerne, hjemme iblandt Fjeldene vandrede Fantasien omkring, og om hiint fjerne blaa Fjeld laa en skjøn Dal, her løb en Elv med Fald og Fos, hist en Fjord med Øer og Bugter, og Solen legede paa de blaa Fjorde og blinkede paa Søen saa venligt, og her, her stod Kirken, som den stod i Aarhundreder, hvor vore Fædre hvile. Der har du Grunden til min Længsel, Du forstaaer mig kjære ....; men Savnet føler Du ikke, der vandrer paa dit Fødelands Jord; o! Paaskjøn dette Gode, og lad mindre Omsorger ei formørke denne ufattelige Glæde. – Jeg forlod ei mit Fædreland letsindig, nei det er mig altid kjært med alle dets Mangler. Kunde jeg fundet anstændig Udkomme, havde jeg aldrig reist. Gud har viist mig Naade i et fremmed Land, og jeg bør takke ham, og hans Hensigter, om ei med mig, saa med mine Børn til deres Lykke, kan vi ei indsee, og for dem bliver dette et Fædreneland; neppe vilde de leve i Norge igjen, saavidt jeg hører paa dem. De forenede Stater har for den Yngre og Kraftfulde noget mere at byde end de gamle Lande i Europa, det er vist, et umaadeligt Terrain i alle Henseender staaer aabent for dem, ingen Fordomme, ingen Privilegier staaer her i Veien for den kraftfulde Mand, og hindrer ham i hans Virksomhed – derfor har ogsaa den indfødte Amerikaner mere Energi og mere Mod end andre Mennesker, men han er et rastløst Væsen – han er født og voxet i Følelsen af en ubegrændset Frihed, med Resourcer nok omkring sig, og heraf haves idelig Virksomhed; fremad skal og maa det gaa, ofte hovedkulds, det forstaaer sig men alt er progress. – Men eet mangler, og kan ei opnaaes paa denne Maade, det hyggelige Hjem, gamle Naboer, nationale Sædvaner, der gjør Livet jævnt – alt dette er ubekjendt her. – Og endelig en hovedsag, som I godt Folk hjemme ikke tænke over nok, et ordnet Kirkesamfund. Her arbeides jo nok for Kirken ogsaa, men dette er jo ogsaa frit, og her kan man derfor ikke, som hjemme, samle bestaaende Menigheder – thi her er saa mange Sekter, at intet Heelt kan komme ud deraf, især paa Landet, og især i disse nye Landskaber, hvor Folkemængden er i bestandig Bevægelse, og ligesom en Lavastrøm, den Senere driver den Første foran sig, videre mod Vesten – Du forstaaer maaskee ikke, hvad jeg mener hermed, jo de Første, der bosætte sig paa ny Jordbund, ere gjerne fattige, de oprydde Jorden, bygge Huse osv., om faa Aar komme Folk som have Penge og udkjøber Pionererne, thi disse faae nu en rund Sum at begynde med igjen, og gaae videre frem paa nyt Land igjen – alt dette gjør, at intet Kirkesamfund er bestandigt her i Vesten og dette gjør, at det naboelige Samfunds Roe og Hygge ikke kan existere, man boer bestandig hos Fremmede – men alt dette maa man jo finde sig i, i et nyt Land; men for os Gamle er det ikke behageligt. – Nu hvad den politiske Tilstand her i Landet angaaer, da smager den mig saa lidet, at jeg slet ingen Interesse har i at være medborger. – Hvad Udfald det faaer er endnu et Problem, men efter min Anskuelse ere Udsigterne ei de meest beroligende – Alting, i mine Tanker, tyder paa Anarki og tilslut Revolution. Intet kan tydeligere overbevise os om at Mennesket ei vil være tilfreds med dette Land. Forsynet har ødslet med sin Rigdom af alle Slags over dette Land, en frugtbar Jordbund, riig paa alle Metaller, de herligste Skove, seilbare Floder og Indsøer, et godt Klima, kort Alt. Men see hvordan Sagerne nu – Partierne sønderslide hinanden, Alle ville regjere, og tilslut er der ingen Regjering. Staternes uhyre Resources opsluges af Kjæltringer. – See her – United States Budget udgjør omtrent 50 Millioner Dollars, dette er omtrent 2 Dollars pr. Sjel i Beskatning, alt indkommer ved Tolden, det forstaaer sig, men hvad udretter Regjeringen hermed – jo den har en Armee paa 12,000 Mand, og en Flaade, der ikke er større end det lille Danmarks – og intet Hof, thi Præsidenten og Vicepræsidenten har kun 37,000 om Aaret – her gjøres Lidet eller Intet til Forbering af Veie, Kanaler og Havnevæsen, dette overlades til Borgernes egen Omsorg. – Men naar jeg fortæller Dig, at det for at transportere over Land 300 Mand Soldater 500 engelske Miil til en Frontier. Post med deres Eqvipage kostede 120,000 Dollars, som er beviist og oplyst gjennem de offentlige Blade saa vil Du let see, hvordan det gaaer med hele Bestyrelsen. Bedragerier omtales hver Dag gjennem Aviserne, men blive upaalatte af Autoriteterne. – Dernæst har enhver Stat i Unionen sin særskilte Legislatur, Guvernement, Senat [ileg], for hvis Kostende man beskattes direkte og som er dobbelt saameget som Unions-Regjeringens Kostende, og som udretter ligesaalidet, men som snyder ligesaa godt, saa indseer Du at man i det frie Amerika betaler mere end i det kongelige Norge for at blive regjeret. Men hvorfor lader man sig snyde, vil Du spørge, jo fordi her er let at leve, og hvem vil lægge sig ud for det Hele, naar man kan have Ro. – Tingen er denne, Alting skeer her ved Stemmegivningen, og Stemmegivningen ledes af Partier; hvilket Parti der sierer, regjerer og røver saa godt de kan, thi de veed forud, at ved næste Valg er deres Tid ude, og at et andet Parti træder isteden, for at gaa frem paa samme Maade. – Jeg kunde opregne Dig en heel Side med Bedragerier, blot her i Wisconsin af dette Slags, den simple Jordbruger, Amerikaner, Tydsker, Nordmand [ileg] har ei Forstand og Evne til at modstaa, de Fleste ere dumme Djævle, især Europæerne, thi hjemme regjeredes de som Børn, og disse ledes af Partierne, hvilken Vei de vil – de oplyste Amerikanere kjæmpe imod hinanden, og flytte the multitude som Schakbrikker, det var længe inden jeg kunde sætte mig ind i Alt dette, men endelig begreb jeg Sagen, og blev snart ogsaa Ven med Amerikanerne, thi jeg kunde jo virke iblandt mine Landsmænd for deres Parti, – men hvilket Parti.

– Allesammen ere raadne Kar – altsaa jeg er helst udenfor Sagen; – jeg har nu i 3 Aar en suite været udvalgt som Supervisor for vores Town, der er et Formandskab bestaaende af 3 Personer, som bestyrer Veivæsenet, Fattigvæsenet, alle offentlige Arbeider, der vedkomme Townet (Sognet); det er en Honneurs Post, men som kun giver lidt af sig, nemlig en Dollar om Dagen for den Tid man benyttes, men nu vil jeg ikke længer, thi jeg vil ikke rives imellem Partierne, som jeg alle tilhobe foragter.

Men det farligste Stridspunkt i de forenede Stater, er Slaveri-Spørgsmaalet. Du veed at mange af Sydstaterne holde Negerslaver – dette har i lang Tid været et Tvistens Æble imellem Syd og Nord. – Enhver rettænkende Mand maa afsky denne Indretning, og Amerika mangler ei Mænd med Christen-Sindelag, men Sydstaternes Interesse fordrer, at de maa holde paa denne Uting saalænge som mulig. – For endeel Aar siden afsluttedes en Overeenskomst imellem Syd og Nord, det saakaldte Missouri compromise, at Slave-Territoriet, skulde ei udstrækkes videre end det var, og derved har det gaaet hen, dog altid med Had imod hinanden og bestandig Agitation; i Fjor fik Skurke-Pakket – baade Syd-Slaveholderne og Nord-Penge-Mændene – en Bill passeret gjennem Congressen, som ophævede dette Kompromiss, grundet paa den demokratiske Grundsætning, at enhver Stat i Unionen har sin egen Souverænitet, og maa saaledes indrette sig som den synes bedst om. Følgen heraf var, at det nye Territorium Kansas, der allerede havde endeel Beboere fra Nord-Staterne, og som ønskede fri Forfatning uden Slaver, blev overrumplet af et Indløb fra Slave-staterne, som paastode at ville indføre Slaveriet i Kansas – saa staaer det nu, allerede er Blod flydt imellem Partierne, den usle Regjering lader Alting gaae uden at gjøre noget til Ordens Overholdelse, og hvad Enden bliver kan ei let indsees, imidlertid synes det som Folket i Nord-staterne ere vaagnede. – Deres Paastand er nu Oprettelsen igjen af Missouri compromise, et bittert Had voxer op mere og mere imod Sydstaterne. – Hvad Enden vil blive synes mig tydeligt – en Splitning af Unionen; om ei just nu, den maa komme. – I det hele, min Kjære ...., jeg lider ei hele Stellet; stod det mig frit for, det vil sige var det blot min egen Person om at gjøre – da forlod jeg dette Land strax. – Ingen kan føle sig ret tilpas her, som har et menneskeligt Hjerte, og Erkjendelse af Religion og Sandhed. – Ja, Religion er her nok af, idetmindste Prædiken og Syngen nok, – men jeg kan ei nægte jeg anseer det mere for en mekanisk Bevægelse – end den rene Lære, som er Grundstoffet af Christendommen. Thi hvor kan der siges at være Christendom, hvor Pidskeslagene høres paa Slavernes Ryg uafladelig, – og hvor de største Afskyeligheder udøves mod dem daglig.

Jeg takker dig for de statistiske Efterretninger, Du sendte mig, hvor glæder det mig at see de Fremskridt, som ere gjorte i vort Fædreland – mere end man skulde tro var muligt, med de Resources, som Norge har; Intet kan tydeligere vise den kloge og redelige Bestyrelse, som dette Land besidder, end disse Efterretninger. Jeg vil ønske, at gamle Norge maa stadig skride fremad saaledes i alt Nyttigt, baade Materielt og Aandeligt; Ingenting fremmer almeen Velvære mere end Oplysning, og jeg haaber og seer, at ogsaa i denne Hendseende er meget gjort, men langtfra nok; blot at man rigtig vælger imellem rigtig nyttig Oplysning og den, der blot er til Prydelse, thi Norge taaler ei for megen Stads, endog i Lærdom. Men især Religion og Moral er Hovedsagen. Jeg har seet, at Baandet er løst, der bandt Folket til den ene Statskirke. Om dette er ønskeligt, vil jeg ikke sige; det er sandt, Enhver bør nyde Frihed at dyrke Guddommen efter sin Overbeviisning, og vist er det, at et saa aldeles trygt beskyttet Præsteskab, som Tilfældet var i Norge, kunde risikere at forfalde til Lunkenhed. Men paa den anden Side, tro mig, Skolevæsenet er værre end alt Andet, det see vi her. Ingen Religion kan her foredrages i Skolerne; man kan derfor sige, som Amerikanerne selv erkjende: at Skolerne her producere velunderviste Hedninger, og de forskjellige Sekter, der arbeide hver paa sin Maade for Religionen, frembringe Virvar og tilslut infidelity. Dette er en naturlig Følge – derfor siger jeg, jeg troer det var bedre, at det havde været ved det Gamle – at dens Kirke, vi havde og endnu har i Norge, er den bedste iblandt de protestantiske Samfund, tror jeg. Nogen Reform i de udvortes Former, passende til Tidens Aand, kunde ei skade – men dette er Ubetydeligheder i sig selv. Ingen, som lægger Mærke til Forskjelligheden i moralsk Henseende imellem de forskjellige Nationer i Europa, vil benægte at jo det norske Folk besidder mere Humanitet og Redelighed, end de fleste andre Nationer. Amerikanerne erkjende og bevidne, at de Norske er de bedste af alle Emigranter fra Europa; mon dette ei hidrører fra vores gode sunde Kirkeindretning?

Jeg seer idag af Times, at der tænkes paa Fred i Europa; dette havde man ikke ventet her. Er det muligt at det rovsyge, hovmodige Rusland vil give efter, og kan Bjørnen bindes saaledes at den ikke bryder ud igjen snart, – dette er hvad man spørger om her. Sverige og Norge skulde jo tage fat med til Foraaret? Her troer man, at dette har gjort meget til Ruslands Eftergivenhed. Hvis Skandinavien kan slippe klar med den Opofrelse, det har havt, da maa vi ansee det som et Beviis paa Almagtens Beskyttelse især deleshed. Smukt vilde det været, om det svenske og norske Sværd havde medvirket til Europas Beskyttelse imod Despotiets Anmasselser; men kan det skee uden mere Blodsudgydelse og Lidelser, da er det vistnok bedst – og Landet faaer da gaae fremad til mere Kraft, naar det engang paatrænges igjen.

Jeg haaber, at Emigrationen fra Norge til Amerika vil standse. Sig Folk derhjemme: de gjør et galt Bytte, uden saa skulde være, at de længes saa overmaade efter Flesk og Kage, at de derfor maa udvandre, thi i andre Henseender bo de bedre derhjemme. Intet Land paa Jorden har en mere fuldkommen Regjering, det er vist. Bevar den saaledes og

tragt aldrig efter mere Frihed end I har; thi hvad der er over, er af den Onde. Republiken lyser i Theori, men duer ikke i Virkeligheden – selv mange af de bedre Yankier erkjende dette nu. Men jeg maa holde op med mit Rableri for denne Gang. Jeg skal see at skrive lidt oftere herefter til Dig. Vi har havt en overmaade streng Vinter, en Kulde, som jeg aldrig har følt Mage til i Norge; flere Mennesker ere frosne tildøde paa Veiene. Vi have havt godt Føre siden først i December, og endnu er Kulden streng; men det er en god Sag, vi har nok av Brænde. Jeg er selv lige stærk og føler intet af Alderen endnu; endnu kunde jeg føre et Skib over Atlanterhavet. Jeg siger ofte til Moer: naar jeg faaer Penge, da kjøber jeg et Skib og seiler hjem igjen. JA det skulde være glædeligt, men det kommer nok aldrig. Hils dine Børn fra Moer og Jenterne og Dig selv fra

din Ven.

APPENDIX 7

"The Emigrant and his Position in the New Home." Letter to *Emigranten*, October 13, 1854.

Udvandreren og hans Stilling i det nye Hjem.

Den danske Digter Poul M. Møller fortæller en god lille Historie fra sit Ophold i Norge: Der kom nemlig en Bonde til Professor Hansteen og spurgte ham om Beskeed, Eet og Andet i Almanaken angaaende. Derpaa spurgte han, om han ikke meente, Verden skulde snart forgaae; thi der var nu dobbelt saa mange Indvaanere i Hallingdalen, som tilkom, og desuden havde en komet ladet sig see. Hver Gut, der var en Snees Aar, giftede sig naar han kunde faae en Plet at sætte Huus paa, og avlede en halv Snees Børn. Hansteen sagde, der var Plads nok i Verden, om der just ikke var det i Hallingdalen. "Ja, Fa'r" sade hiin "der kan være meget god at boe mange Steder i Verden, men det er dog ikke Hallingdalen!"

Det var en prægtig Bonde, der sagde disse Ord. Men hvor høit man end ma ære en saa rodfæstet Fædrelandskjærlighed, saa staaer det ikke destomindre fast, at han og hans Ligesindede ikke vilde være skikkede til at tage Plads mellem dem, der søge sig et nyt Hjem i et nyt Land. Hans kjærlighed var saa sammenvoxet med den Plet af Jord, hvor han blev født og levede, at enhver Omflytning derfra vilde virke ligesaa skadeligt paa ham som en lignende Forandring paa mangen fiin Plante, der ikke kan suge Næring af nogen anden Jord end den, hvori den først slog sine Rødder. Nei en ægte Udvandrer maa være behersket af andre Følelser, dersom han skal svare til sit Kald.

Lad os derfor prøve paa at afmale os en sand og ædel Characteer, der siger Farvel til sn egen og sine Fædres Fortid, og tænke os, hvorledes han maa føle sig i Forhold til begge, og hvorledes han skal stille sig i Forhold til den nye kommende Tid og den nye fremmede Omgivelse.

Et saadant Kjærne-Menneske, af hvilke Norden gudskeelov gjemmer saa mange, seer sig bedrøvet omkring i Hjemmet, hvor kun saa Lidet i de ydre Forhold svarer til den Trang, han som Menneske troer sig berettiget til at fordre tilfredstillet; paavirket af Samtidens Aand fordrer han mere af Livet end at slæbe det hen i lidet lønnede Trællen; han læser og hører mere om Verden omkring sig, end det stod i hans Fædres Magt at vide, hvorledes den samme Stræbsomhed under andre Forholde kunde bringe en langt større Frugt for ham selv, og videre Udsigt for hans Efterkommere, og han lider om de Steder paa Jorden, hovr hans beskedne Ønsker kunde tilfredsstilles, naar han kun med en kraftig Villie vil stræbe efter at faae dem opfyldte. Saa hører han da om Amerika; igjennem Bøger og Breve faaer han Vidnesbyrd om Sandheden af det Hørte, og med en kraftig Beslutning, en rolig Hengivenhed i hvad Fremtiden bringer, og med et levende Haab vandrer han ud, og følges med Glæde af de Kjære, hvis Tilværelse var sammenknyttet med hans.

En saadan Mand bliver ikke skuffet i sine Forventninger; maaskee har han først mange tunge Tider at gjennemgaae, maaskee bliver han skuffet i Meget, men i hovedsagen naaer han dog tilsidst sit Maal. Og det er ikke med Ligegyldighed han forlader Hjemmet. Han gaaer ikke fordi han ikke elsker det, men fordi det i sine tvungne Forhold behandler ham stedmoderligt, og med de varmeste Ønsker for de Hjemmeblivendes Fremtid troer han sig berettiget til ved egen Kraft at søge i det Nye, hvad det Gamle nægter ham.

Men selv naar Aar er svundne og hans Fremtid sikkret i det Fremmede, er Tanken og Mindet om Hjemmet ham dog altid kjær. Mange Udvandrere forfalde til en af to Yderligheder. Enten blive de saa ligegyldige for deres Fædreland, at det endog ofte seer ud som om de vilde faae Folk til at troe, at de virkelig vare indfødte, eller ogsaa udarter Følelsen for Hjemmet saaledes, at det seer ud som om de foragte og haane det Land, der dog giver dem deres rigelige Ophold. (Saaledes har f. Ex. indvandrede Tydskere næsten stedse viist sig i Danmark). Men den ægte sundtfølende Udvandrer er anderledes. Hjemmet, og Alt hvad der kan minde ham om Hjemmet, er ham dyrebart; han hjælper hvor han opfordres i dets Navn; han glæder sig i Kredse hvor han er sammen med Landsmænd, og han understøtter ethvert Foretagende der har til Hensigt at bevare Hjemmets Sprog og Hjemmets Skikke ogsaa for de kommende Slægter, der kjende Stammelandet uden at have seet det. Men paa den anden Side lever han sig virkeligt ind i de nye Forhold; han veed at Borgerens Pligt fordrer dette af ham; han veed, at det Samfund, der modtog ham med aabne Arme, bliver en Grundvold for den Stat, hvor hans Slægt skal virke som indfødte Borgere, og han føler, at der kan ingen Lykke være der, hvor hans indre Følelser ikke staae i Samklang med den omgivende Verden, thi saa kunde han jo ligesaa godt være blevet hjemme. Og saaledes viser han sig i Et og Alt, som et ægte Barn af det Land, hvor hans Fortid svandt af og det Land hvor han skabte sig en Fremtid.

"Der kan være godt at boe paa mange Steder her i Verden" siger han da maaskee ogsaa ofte, "men det er dog ikke Hallingdalen!" Ja, Kjære, saalænge du boer i Hallingdalen er det den deiligste Plads i Verden; men naar Trækfuglen i dit Hjerte slaaer med sine Vinger, og du lyder dens Trang til at flyve, da vil du ogsaa erfare, at "det er godt at boe paa mange Steder i Verden!"

New York 27 Sept. 1854

F. W.

APPENDIX 8

Editorial, *Emigranten*, February 27, 1865.

"Brødstudiet" eller, som en yndet norsk Forfatter kalder det, "Matstrævet" er altfor ofte paa Bane og berører os altfor nær, til at ikke Enhver skulde kjendes ved det som et Emne, han af og til er nødt til at behandle i Selskab med sine Kjære og Fortrolige.

Dette "Brødstudium", hvorved vi forstaa en fornuftig og tilladelig Planmæssighed baade i Arbeidet selv og i Anvendelsen af de Midler, det forskaffer os til Livets Fornødenheder, strækker sig for Familiefaderens Vedkommen forsaavidt noget mere ind i Fremtiden, som det for ham er et Spørgsmaal af stor Vigtighed, hvorledes han bedst kan opfylde sin Pligt med Hensyn til sine Børns Fremtid. Det er rigtignok sandt, at Gud giver hver Fugl dens føde: men han lægger jo ikke Føden ind i dens Rede; saaledes er Virksomhed for Livets Næring en guddommelig Lov, som er saa stræng i sin Følgerigtighed, at den endog strækker sig til den laveste levende Skabning. Da nu imidlertid det menneskelige Samfund i sin Helhed frembyder en Mangfoldighed af Midler og Maader, hvorvede det samme Maal kan naaes, saa bliver det en Gjenstand for Overveielse hos ethvert ungt Menneske og hans Foresatte, paa hvilken Maade han vil vælge at erhverve sit Brød i Verden, ligesom enhver Familiefader ved, at om han end ikke i Henseende til sine Børn har nogen ugudelig Bekymring, saa ligger det ham dog paa Hjerte efter bedste Skjøn at gjøre Sit til, at de maa "komme frem" i Verden.

En Ting ligger her altid ved Haanden, og det er "Hakken og Spaden"; eller med andre Ord, Jordens Dyrkning og Alt, hvad dermed staar i Forbindelse, og derved kan hver, som vil, finde gavnlig, hæderlig og lønnende Beskjæftigelse. Men skjønt det hedder i et amerikansk Ordsprog, at Uncle Sam har en Farm til hver Mand, saa er det dog ikke enhver Mand, som er tjent med at faa en Farm, om der end ikke var Andet iveien. Thi Evnerne, Kræfterne og Anlæggene ere saa forskjellig uddelte, at skjønt to eller flere Mennesker kunne være de bedste Venner, fordi deres høiere Interesser og moralske Anskuelser ere de samme, saa vilde de dog kjedes ved hinandends daglige Forretninger og komme til at føle sig utilfredse og ulykkelige, hvis de skulde bytte.

Dette betinger Adskillelsen af Haandteringer og Bestillinger og Valget af Kald i Livet, og da Mennesket trives bedst og gjør mest Nytte, naar han kommer i den Stilling, hvortil han bedst passer, saa er dette et Punkt, som fortjener at overveies af enhver forstandig Mand, hvad enten han har at træffe for sit eget Vedkommende, eller han skal lede yngre Personer i deres.

De Norske i Amerika have hidtil i denne Henseende været i en særegen Stilling. De høre hovedsagelig til den Klasse, hvis Kald det bogstavelig er at forædle og forskjønne Jorden og fremlokke dens Frugter, og denne Haandtering var altsaa for dem den naturligste at gribe til. Heller ikke have de fra sine beskjedne Forholde i Hjemmet medbragt store Kapitaler eller nogen stor Kundskabsmasse, der paa naturlig Maade kunde føre dem ind i andre Forretninger end den, deres nærmeste Forfædre have drevet.

Men efterhaanden som de Norske ere blevne ligesom mere hjemme her i Landet og mere og mere have begyndt ogsaa her at føle sig som et Folk, begynder dette Forhold at forandre sig. De have lært at vurdere Kundskabens Magt og Nødvendighed som Forplanter og Bærer af den Kultur, de frivillig have sagt Farvel til, da de seilede bort fra Fædrelandet, – som Betingelse for Bevarelsen af deres Nationalitets Præg samt deres Religion og som Middel til i Virkeligheden som i Navnet at delagtiggjøres i den store amerikanske Nations Friheder og Rettigheder saavelsom i dens Kultur og Videnskab, der vistnok hovedsagelig kun er kjendt paa Overfladen og derfor tidt udsat for Mistydning. Under Erkjendelsen af denne Kundskabens Nødvendighed til at holde det norske Element oppe blandt denne Masse af kappende Nationaliteter, der vistnok Allesammen engang ville smelte sammen i det store Folk, er det nu vi mene, at de Norskes "Brødstudium" vil have Gavn af at tage sig en videre Mark, saa at det ikke udelukkende indskrænker sig til Farming, Haandværksdrift eller den lavere Art af Handel, hvortil saagodt som ingen egentlige Kundskaber udfordres, undtagen hvad der sætter En istand til at holde et høist nødvendigt Regnskab. I et Land, hvor Spillerummet for de frie Kræfter er saa stort som her, der staar det fast, at den Nation, som mindst forstaar og mindst duer, den vil først forsvinde paa Samfundets Dybder, – den vil gaa tilbunds uden at efterlade noget Spor: thi Alt, hvad der kun er materielt, vil gaa tilgrunde, men Kundskaben, der i sit vide Begreb omfatter den evige Sandhed, vil bestaa, og derfor har den Magt til at løfte Folket op af det blot og bart jordiske "Matstræv" og nære og vedligeholde i det en levende Bevidsthed om Fædreland og Nationalitet med Fortidsminder og Fremtidshaab, ligesom den paalægger det Ansvarlighed ikke alene for dets egen Stilling men ogsa for den Stilling, Efterslægten skal indtage her i sin dobbelte Udlændighed.

Skjønt vor Religion lærer os, at vor jordiske Stilling er en Bisag, saa er den det dog ikke i den Grad, at man ustraffet kan støde fra sig de gode Gaver, Gud stiller os i sikker Udsigt, saafremt vi ville anstrenge os saaledes, som det er vor Pligt.

Lad altsa vore unge Mænd (og Qvinder ogsaa) lære noget Dygtigt! Her er baade Plads og Behov for alleslags Talenter, og Nordmændene have ligesom alle Fjeldfolk Ord for at besidde gode Hoveder. Prædikeskole, Lærerskole, County-Embeder, Statsembeder, Sæder i Legislaturerne, i Kongressen og i de Forenede Staters Senat venter paa dem, som ere duelige og opofre sig med Alvor og Redelighed til det Ene eller det Andet. Men ogsaa i rent privat Forretningsdrift er Kundskab aldeles nødvendig forat slaa sig vel igjennem og komme i en god Stilling. Vore norske Landsmænd synes at have særdeles Anlæg for Handel, og dette maa kunne blive dem til Fordel her, hvor Handelen har saa overvættes mange Grene og en saa overordentlig Rigdom paa Gjendstande, hvormed den kan beskjæftige sig. Men Handelen, der skjænker saa mange Millioner Brød, er en Næringsgren, som nu tildags fordrer sin Mand, naar den skal blive andet end en simpel Station og Pedling paa Slump.

Derfor er et Handelsakademi, hvor den unge Mand i forholdsvis kort Tid og paa en billig Maade kan lære Alt, hvad der behøves til at kunne drive Forretning paa egen Haand eller udfylde en betydelig Post i denne Bedrift, af stor Vigtighed og fortjener Opmærksomhed ogsa blandt de Norske.

"Emigrantens" No. 7 for d. A. indeholdt et Avertissement med fuldstændig "Prospectus" over Afdelingen i Milwaukee af den store Kjæde af udmærkede Handels-Akademier, som ere stiftede og bestyres af Firmaet Bryant, Stratton & Spencer, en Indretning, som vi tro at burde anbefale vore unge Landsmænd, der interessere sig for Handelen – især da dem i Wisconsin – som en sikker Vei til grundigt at lære Handelsvidenskaben.

Hvad vi især lægge Vægt paa her, og som giver de Bryant-Stratton-Spencerske Kollegier et udmærket Fortrin, er den ypperlige Methode, som der anvendes, idet den paa een Gang fører Lærlingen ind i den praktiske Anvendelse af, hvad han efterhaanden lærer. Dette er en meget stor Fordeel. Vi have selv erfaret, at man kan have Theorien paa sine Fingre, regne udmærket o.s.v., men kommer man fra en blot theoretisk Skole paa engang ud i det praktiske Liv og skal gjøre Anvendelse af, hvad man har lært, saa overvældes man af Frygtsomhed ved de ubetydeligste Vanskeligheder, famler og staar fast. Dette vil ikke være Tilfældet med dem, som have gjennemgaaet ovennævnte Institut; thi der gjør man dem strax under Skolens Omraade og Opsyn til Kjøbmænd, Regnskabsførere og Bankierer, og da den hele Kjæde af Kollegier, som ledes af ovennævnte Mænd, og ialfald efter samme Grundsætninger, bestaaer af otte og tyve eller flere store Instituter i de fornemste af Unionens Byer, og Bestyrerne mellem alle disse have indført et Slags Mellemhandel og en stadig Forretningsforbindelse, der under Opsyn og Ledelse drives af Eleverne selv, saa følger heraf, af en ung Mand, der har gjennemgaaet denne Skole, gaaer ud deraf som en fuldt færdig Forretningsmand.

Hertil kommer, at disse Indretninger nyde den største Anseelse i Handelsverdenen og have de meest udstrakte Forbindelser, saa at det bliver en betydelig Anbefaling for en ung Mand at have gjennemgaaet et af Bryant, Stratton & Spencers Handelskollegier, ikke at tale om, hvad disse Mænd selv ved sin specielle Anbefaling ville kunne gjøre for en ung Mand, der viser Redelighed, Duelighed og Orden.

Vi tro saaledes at være i vor fulde Ret ved at gjøre Fædre og unge Mænd opmærksomme paa en saadan Anledning til at lære Handelsvidenskaben grundigt og ordentligt og derved bane sig Vei til en uafhængig og hæderlig Stilling. Men herved lægge vi ogsaa endeel Vægt paa den Almendannelse, som Anstalten ved Siden af meddeler. Vi mene, det er af Vigtighed for os Norske, at vi kunne iblandt os tælle saamange oplyste og dannede Mænd og Qvinder som muligt, hvorfor de bedste Leiligheder bør benyttes. Vort Universitet i Decorah arbeider med Kraft og synligt Held, og snart vil derfra udgaae en Mængde dygtige unge Mænd, som vi haabe til Held og Velsignelse for de Kredse, hvori de komme til at virke; men ikke Alle føle sig kaldede eller have Gaver til den mere aandelige Virksomhed; nogle ere bestemte til andre Forretninger, og de bør da søge andre Skoler, som passe til deres Formaal. Vi kunne her erindre, at al nyttig Kundskab forædler Aanden og arbeider i Dannelsens, Sædelighedens og Frihedens Tjeneste, hvorved den bidrager til at gjøre Menneskelivet mere forstaaeligt baade for den Enkelte og for Samfundet og saaledes virker med til at fremme Folkets Lykke i det Hele. Kundskaber høre derfor til de gode Ting, som et Folk, der forstaaer sit eget Vel, altid lægger Vægt paa, og i denne Henseende har vort norske Folk et mærkeligt og særdeles betydningsfuldt Træk: det er den Lyst og Omhu, som endog meget tarveligt underviste Forældre vise, til at skaffe sine Børn Bøger og ønske, at de skulle lære mere, end de selv have havt Anledning til.

Til Slutning skulle vi anføre en Sætning, som vi erindre nylig at have seet et eller andet Sted, og som indeholder en meget vigtig Sandhed: "Lad de Unge lære Noget! Lad dem ikke opvoxe i Uvidenhed! En simpel Landsbyskole med en beskjeden Lærer eller Lærerinde og en Flok unge Børn med lurvede Antræk er for Despoten en langt farligere Anstalt end en stor Armee, der marscherer ind over hans Grændser".

APPENDIX 9

"Constitutional Convention. Correspondence." *Nordlyset*, January 27, 1848

Madison 15 Januari 1848

Endnu en Uges Forretninger ligger for Conventionen, og forhaabentlig vil "Grund Loven" ved Udløbet af den Tid være færdig. Dette vigtige Document, hvori hvor eneste Fordeel er hellig og dyrebar for Godt eller Ondt; for Held og Lykke til vor unge Stats, eller samme Skade og Fordervelse. Dog efter den allerflittigste Overveielse og alvorligste Eftertanke, tør jeg frit ytre, at hvad som hidindtil har været antaget er til meg "tilfredsstillende" og jeg nærer det varmeste Haab at "Folket af Wisconsin" vil tænke ligedan, samt at vi ret snart skal tælles blandt en af Vestens glimrende Stjerner. Intet Land paa Jorden kan have blidere og herligere Udsigter end Wisconsin. Adskildt ved geographisk Beliggenhed fra den misundelige Verdens Intriguer; uden Tvang eller Hindring fra omkringliggende politiske Magter, kunne vi med det fyrigste Haab og uden Hindring, fortsætte vort mærkelige Løb femad, udvikle og anvende de rigeste Naturens Gaver – indtil vor Stat – nu en fager Yngling skal tage sin Plads paa Verdens Skueplads i sin virkelige Kjæmpestørrelse.

Vi have et Skolefund, som vil give Envhver Yngling i Wisconsin en god Opdragelse, hvis han selv vil benytte sig af de hærlige Fordele af den nye Constitutiones Privilegier. Vor Folkemængde kan under dette Systeem blive det meest oplyste i Verden; og hvor hærligt vil da ikke vort Land blive? Naturen byder os al den Rigdom, som en gavmild Skaber nogen, skulde har ydet paa Jorden til noget Folk, og naar dette Folk er og bliver "oplyst" "klogt" "moralsk og "flittigt" siig mig – hvor er der nu eller har der nogensinde været et Land, som kan siges at overgaae vort Land?

Men jeg beder at undskylde for mine Enthusiastiske Følelser; – jeg har beskjæftiget mit Sind med at ponse over Wisconsins Udsigter og at sammenligne det med andre Lande og midt i min Barme kan jeg kun ytre hvad jeg dybt føler: – at Himlen har været naadefuld i at sætte saa mange af mine Landsmænd og mig selv midt i denne gyldne "Ørken" – at udgjøre en Deel og Part af Wisconsins lykkelige Folk.

APPENDIX 10

Letter to *Emigranten*, February 2, 1862.

(Indsendt).

Camp Ranall ved Madison, Wis. 27de Januar 1862.

Hr. Redaktør!

Vil de have den godhed at lade nedenstaande Linier have Plads i Deres ærede Blad, da det vil optage for megen Tid for mig at skrive til enhver enkelt af mine Slægtninge og Venner. I det Haab, at De opfylder min Begjæring, undertegner jeg mig meg Agtelse

ærb.

Torsten Erikson Nyhuus.

Til Slægtninge og Venner!

Jeg vil herigjennem fortælle Eder, at jeg er ved Helse og Sundhed til Dato og befinder mig nu som Soldat i Camp Randall, i kapt. Grinagers kompagni i 15de (det norske) Regiment. Da jeg saae den Fare, vor kjære Union stod i, troede jeg det ikke maatte være ret at lægge Hænderne i Skjødet, men gjøre hvad jeg kunde, for at være behjælpelig med at beskytte Lovene, som skulle sikre vort Liv og vor Eiendom. Jeg hendvendte mig først, efterat jeg havde raadført mig med Gud om min Pligt, til min Kone; hun var i Førstningen ikke villig til at lade mig gaae; men efter nøiere Overveielse troede hun det maatte være Pligt at lade mig gaae, da det var Kald fra Øvrigheden om Hjælp, og Guds Ord lærer, at vi skulle være Øvrigheden lydig. Med Bøn til den Almægtige om hans Varetægt stod vore Familier og Venner bedende, da vi forlode dem, som var den 2den dennes, og med rørte Hjerter toge vi Afsked fra vore Kjære, som vi stadig mindes. Vi naaede lykkelig Madison den 7de, og modtog samme Dag Mundering, som er meget god. Der kom i vort Følge med Mons Grinager 27 Mand; og næste Morgen bleve Olaus Solberg og Ole P. Slette udnævnte af Guvernøren til Løitnanter for at gaae ud og hverve flere; vi vente dem nu tilbage hver Dag og efter Sigende skulle de have faaet en Deel fra Iowa i Nærheden af Decorah. Vort Kompagni er endnu ikke fuldt, derfor kjære Venner, saa mange af Eder, som kunne komme med, anmodes om at komme til os og deltage med os for at forsvare vort kjære Land; thi det er min Tro, at dette er en Pligt og at det er en Retfærdig Sag, vi gaae at forsvare. Kom Landsmænd og gaae i Geledet med os, lad os ikke lægge os til at sove, naar Landet trænger til vor Arm; lad os vise, vi ere Nordmænd og ikke vanslægtede fra vore Fædre. Dersom det er Guds Villie, ere vi ligesaa sikre i Krigen, som ved vor gode Arne, og er det Guds Villie, kan Døden ligesaa hurtigt gjæste os hjemme, og døe vi i Troen paa vor Frelser, ville vi arve det evige Liv, hvor vi end døe. Ja kjære Venner og Slægtninge, lader os sætte vor Tillid til Gud og hans hellige Ord; thi det er Sandheden og Livet. Lad os altid bede for hverandre og saaledes stride Troens gode Strid, at vi maatte af Naade blive Medarvinger med Guds eenbaarne Søn Jesum Christum. Værer hilset Allesammen, Herren velsigne og bevare os Alle for sit Rige.

Venskabeligst

Torsten Erikson Nyhuus.

APPENDIX 11

"A Letter from a Norwegian Rebel." *Emigranten*, May 22, 1865.

Et Brev fra en norsk Oprører

En i Albion, Dane County, Wis., boende Norsk sender os følgende Brev, skrevet paa Engelsk, hvoraf vi hidsætte et Uddrag i Oversættelse:

Richmond, 26de April 1865
Kjære Broder!
Endelig er jeg istand til at lade Dig høre fra mig igjen, og troe mig, Du har aldrig været ude af min Hukommelse i disse lange Krigens og Ulykkens Aar. Nei, mange, mange have de Nætter været paa Balpladsen mellem de Saaredes Skrig og Jammer og Slagets frygtelige Ødelæggelser, at jeg har ligget vaagen og tænkt paa Dig og paa vor kjære Moder over i gamle Norge. Og nu, da jeg atter kan skrive til Dig, er jeg næsten bange for at gjøre det, thi du vil maaskee blues ved den Tanke, at du har en Broder, som er Oprører. Der er ogsaa andre Grunde – jeg kan faae det Svar fra Dit Hjem, at Du er falden som et af de Tusinder af Ofre i denne frygtelige Kamp. Det Regiment, i hvilket Du tjente, har jeg ikke stødt paa, men det 2det, 3die, 5te, 6te og 19de Wisconsin Regimenter har jeg til forskjællige Tider mødt i Slag. Det 3die Regt. saa jeg ved Cedar Mountain i Virginia i 1862. De gjorde tre Anfald mod os, og frygteligt var Blodbadet. O! mit Hjerte bankede ved at tænke paa, at der blandt disse tapre Mænd maaskee fandtes Nogle, der havde været mine fortrolige Venner, medens jeg var oppe i Wisconsin; der blev frygtelige Huller i deres Geledder. Det 19de Wis. Regt. har vi ogsaa havt voldsomme Kampe med, og jeg veed, mange af Eders tilbagekomne Soldater kan fortælle om "Louisiana Tigers". Jeg var i Kompani A. Det bestod af udsøgte Folk fra New Orleans, fordetmeste Franske. Hvor stolte, forfængelige, fulde af Haab og modtagelige for Smiger vi vare i Begyndelsen; men nu sover de fleste den lange Søvn, hvorfra de først vil vaagne, naar deres Navne skal opraabes ved den store Revelje histoppe, og Resten hopper omkring paa Krykker. Jeg vilde gjerne gaaet over til Unionsarmeen forlænge siden, men siden jeg kom ned iblandt Sydlændingerne og vandt Venner og stiftede Bekjendtskaber iblandt dem, har min Æresfølelse, Stolthed og Selvfølelse holdt mig der. En tusinddobbelt Død syntes at være at foretrække fremfor at blive kaldet en "ussel Desertør". Jeg har længe havt Modbydelighed for en Krig, som føres for Negerne, en Slags Eiendom, som jeg aldrig har eiet eller ønsket at eie. Negerne ere en Race, hvis nedværdigende Stilling og Laster har mere vakt min Medlidenhed end mit Had. Skylden er ikke saameget deres, thi i Syden er der alleslags nederdrægtige Hvide, som avle Børn med Negerkvinder og derpaa uden Samvittighedsnag sælge disse sine egne Børn som Handelsvarer. Negerne bør være fri, og bedst vilde det maaskee være for dem, om de kom til et Sted, hvor de kunde være for sig selv, regjere sig selv og være tvungne af en dobbelt Selvopholdelsesdrift som Samfund og som Individer til at arbeide og udvikle sine Evner.
Jeg har seet meget og gjennemgaaet mere, end Du kan have nogen Mening om. Engang var jeg som Krigsfange i Washington, men blev snart efter udvexlet. I Syden var det ikke godt at være. Afskaarne fra den hele Verden, aldeles afhængige af, hvad vi kunde frembringe i vore egne Stater, var det knapt med de meest nødvendige Midler til Livets Ophold og Intet af Luxusgjenstande. Hvad vilde Du sige til en Trediedeel Pund saltet Flesk og ti Unzer Kornmeel til daglig Kost i Maaneder ad Gangen uden Forandring, uden Andet end det? De taabelige Oprørere, som jeg nul vel maa kalde os, ikke blot levede paa denne Viis, men levede saaledes godvilligen. Unionsfolket i Norden vil aldrig kunne faae et fuldstændigt Begrep om hvad vore Lidelser have været, og Altsammen for nogle ærgjerrige sydlige Politikeres Skyld! Mange Gange syntes Hungersdøden at skulle blive vor visse Lod. Husker Du Oprørernes første indfald i Maryland? Jeg tjente da under Stonewall Jackson, og i over to Uger vare vi foruden Mad, naar undtages Grønkorn, som vi sankede paa Marken, idet vi løb igjennem Agrene. Proviant-Trænene kunde ikke følge os, fordi vore Marscher vare for hurtige og Fegtningerne kom saa hurtig ovenpaa hverandre, at Vognene maatte holdes tilbage. – I Slaget ved Gettysburg i Pennsylvania 4de Juli 1863 blev jeg saaret i høire Been og har ikke ganske overstaaet det endnu. Da Richmond faldt, leed jeg et stort Tab. Byen blev nemlig stukken ibrand for at forhindre Regjeringens Eiendom fra at falde i General Grants Hænder, og jeg mistede derved Huus og Hjem. I nogen Tid før havde jeg gjort Tjeneste i Byen, og da General Lee trak bort, blev jeg efterladt, fordi man vidste, jeg ikke var istand til at marschere. Det sydlige Forbund skyldte mig omkring et Tusinde Dollars, som jeg ikke fik. Forøvrigt er de sydlige Seddelpenge ogsaa uden Værdi, aldeles ubrugelige her, og det er mig det Samme, hvor hurtigt de blive værdiløse alle andre Steder ogsaa, thi som alle andre fornuftige Mennesker ønsker jeg, at Freden skal blive gjenoprettet hurtigst muligt. Jeg har dybt beklaget den onde Skjæbne, der indviklede mig en saa unaturlig Krig; troe mig, skjøndt jeg har været Oprører, har jeg været det meget uvilligen, siden jeg fik Forstand paa, hvad det i Virkeligheden vilde sige at være Landsforræder, og Kjære, bebreid mig det ikke i mit eget Sind pines jeg noksom ved Tanken derom. Da Krigen udbrød, herskede der en saa ophidset Stemning i New Orleans, at jeg i Liighed med alle Andre blev ligesom beruset. Kvindernes Paavirkning og Mændernes Praterier bragt mig til at troe, at det vilde blot blive en Lysttur. Men "fools wit has fools end" siger et gammelt engelsk Ordsprog, og den Ende er kommen med sine sørgelige Betragtninger ikke ublandet med nyttige Lærdomme. Lever vor Moder endnu? Kjære, hvis saa, som jeg inderlig haaber, da skriv hende til og siig, at jeg endnu er ilive.

Din Broder,
Ole D. Røndokken.

APPENDIX 12

"De Norske i Decotah County." *Wossingen*, April, 1859.

Af et Brev fra vor Agent, Hr. Magne B. Samson, der er Postmester i Christiana, Decotah Co., Minnesota, hidsættes følgende om det norske Settlement der:– "Min Fader og jeg og Ole Thoresen vare de første Nybyggere i dette Setlement og blant de Første i denne Deel af Territoriet. Vi forlode Koskonong, Dane Co., Wis., den 6te Marts, 1854, efter at have boet der i otte Aar og tidligere boet 5 Aar i La Salle Co. Ills. Vi toge Veien gjennem Madison og droge vestover til Prærie Du Chien, gik over Mississippi og drog igjennem Iowa, over Decorah og andre Byer til vi kom til Minnesota, hvor der den Tid ikke fandtes Byer opover Landet. Manterville, Rochester og andre Smaabyer vare dengang øde og ubeboede. Vor Hu stod til Minnesota-floden, og endelig kom vi da den 5te Juli til St. Paul, hvor vi opholdt os en Tid, medens et Par Mand drog op ad Floden for at besee det ubebyggede Land, men som de ikke fandt sig fornøiede med, hvorfor de strax kom tilbage. Vi reiste da til Sioux Creek, hvor vi opholdt os en Tid og besaae Landet rundt om, indtil vi fandt Sioux Lake (Lake d. e. Indsøe), hvor vi nedsatte os. det var den 20de Juli 1854. Vi begyndte da at samle Foder til Heste og Qvæg, hvilke gik godt, da der var rigt paa Græs. Men Tiden blev lang, thi vi havde ingen Naboer nærmere end 8 Mile, og ingen fremmede hvide Mennesker saae de første ti Uger, da der ad en indiansk Sti, som var Indianernes Vei mellem Faribault og St. Paul, kom kjørende til os en Mand, som var bleven Postfører mellem nævnte Byer og nu vilde gjøre denne Tour hver Uge. Den næste Morgen kom her flere Landsmænd fra Koskonong, Muskigo og andre Steder i Wisconsin. Landet ved Sioux Lake blev opsetlet paa to Aar, og siden har ingen Norske setlet her, men have nedsat sig ved Rock River, Sambros Arme og Albert Lee Lake osv. Her er nu omtrent 60 norske og 5 svenske Setlere, de Fleste velstaaende og Alle tilfredse, og eie eller have klaimed Land. Landet er særdeles godt. Vestenfor Sioux Lake er det Skov og østenfor Prærien. Skoven er der dog ikke meget af, men Farmingslandet er over det Hele godt, Plovland, Slaat og Vand tilstrækkeligt. Tre Mile vestenfor Sioux Lake er Grændselinien mellom Decotah og Scott og i Scott Co. findes endnu meget Land, som ikke er optaget og er godt til Farming og har tilstrækkeligt af Slaat og Vand. Der er ogsaa lidt Skov, men den er haard at oprydde i Begyndelsen. Der siges, at det nu vil komme i Marked, og der vil da blive god Anledning for dem, der have lidt Penge, saavelsom for dem, der kunne besidde Landet for det kommer til Salg. Det vilde være os meget kjærere at faae Landsmænd til Naboer, end at Landet skulde falde i Hænder paa Spekulanter. – Her er ganske hændigt til Marked, da der ikke er mere end 20 Miil til Hastings som er en af de bedste Markedspladse ved Mississippifloden, 30 Miil S. for St. Paul. Tillige have vi smaa Landsbyer ikke mere end ti Miil fra os, hvor alle Slags Varer ere at faae tilkjøbs og hvor der er Møllebrug. Her arbeides ogsaa fortvæk paa Cedar Valley og Minneapolis Jernbanen [ileg].

Magne B. Samson

APPENDIX 13

Ole Knudson Nattestad, Letter to *Nordlyset*, May 18, 1848.

Indsendt

Efter Opfordring i Nordlysets No. 29, har jeg efter bedste Evne søgt at udfinde Efterstaaende, i det norske Setlement paa Jeffersons Prairie og dens Omegn, hvilket tildeels tilhører Town of Clinton Rock Co. W.T., og tildeels Boon Co. Town of Manchester i Illinois.– Efterdi Setlementet vel er eet, men dog deles ved Statlinien der gaaer Øst og Vest, saa finder jeg det mere passende, først at give en speciel Fortægnelse mellem dem som leve i Wisconsin nordenfor og de i Illinois søndenfor Statlinien.

Aar 1838 den 1ste Juli ankom jeg til Jeffersons Prairie, til Town of Clinton og var den første Norske som farmede her, og saavidt jeg veed, var jeg den første Norske i Wisconsin.– 1839 i September Maaned kom Thore og Thorsten Kjerkejorden, samt Jens Nyhuus m. fl. og nedsadte sig her paa Jefferson; fra den Tid og indtil nu har Bosætning og Befolkning af norske Emigranter tiltaget, saa at her for Nærværende er 51 Familier, 19 Mandspersoner og 20 Qvindespersoner over 20 Aar som ere ugifte, under 20 Aar af begge Kjøn 98 og den hele Befolkning er 319. Af de 51 Familier ere 42 i Besiddelse af Land, som tilsammen udgjør en Sum af 5,476 Acre, hvoraf 516 Acre ere under Dyrkning.

I Boon Co. Illinois vare Tønnæs Tolleivsen og Svend Larsen de første norske Beboere, som nedsadte sig der Aar 1840. Ved aarlig Indvandring og Bosættelse, har Folkemængden, saaledes tiltaget, at der for Nutiden er 40 Familier, ugifte Mandspersoner over 20 Aar 14, ugifte Qvindespersoner over 20 Aar 7, den hele Befolkning 191 og under 20 Aar 96. De ere Eiere af 4,687 Acres Land, hvoraf 571 Acre ere under Dyrkning.

Befolkningen over hele Setlementet er 482 Mennesker, som ere Eiere af 10,183 Acre Land, hvoraf 1,087 Acre er under Plougen. her er det i hele taget nogenlunde formuende og velstaaende Folk, som naar enkelte undtages, ogsaa føre et ærbart og borgerligt Levnet; og bekjender sig, saavidt mig er bekjendt, til den reformerte lutherske Kirke.

Clinton Mai 8de 1848.

Ole Knudson Nattestad.

APPENDIX 14

"Norwegian American." Editorial, *Emigranten*, December 15, 1854

NORVEGIAN AMERICAN.

The "Free Press" of Janesville announces that this is to be the name of a new norwegian paper, which is to be started at Madison, At the same time he warns the Norwegians of the New movement, "as this new paper [ileg] an old hunker paper." "Wisconsin Patriot" comes then out in favor of this "new movement" and tells us that "Mr. E. Stangeland, who appears to be very much of a gentleman, and a good scholar both in the norwegian and english languages, is the Editor; and that his object is above mere party considerations – it is to furnish a correct compendium in their own language, of our instituions to his uninitiated countrymen, and as fast as possible strive to americanize that very large and industrious class of our fellow citizens."

Time to come will propably prove, that some mistake may have occurred in either of these presuppositions of the "Patriot," Pro primo, because Elias Stangeland, "who appears to be very much of a gentleman," probably should not feel inclined to put his name up as Editor, (unless he should not find any body else willing to take the chair), while he is not able himself to write a article in either of said languages. All other Editors probably deem it pretty inconvenient to depend upon another behind- or sub-agent in his sanctum sanctorum. The fact is, that E. St. has not got the capacities himself that would enable him to edit a paper in any language at all. We are in possession of his own handwritings as well in English as Norwegian, which will prove it to be so indeed. But he has perhaps made money enough this summer to pay an editor, and we don't doubt he will find one who [ileg] Pro secundo [ileg] some mistake about the name of the paper, because it has been told us, that its name should be "Norge i America," and we should not wonder if the article in the "Free Press" has given a "promoting push in the enterprise intended," as far as the yankeefication of the name is concerned. […]

APPENDIX 15

"Een Mand – eet Navn." *Emigranten*, October 27, 1862.

Een Mand – eet Navn.

(Af Dagens Begivenheder).

For os Norske her i Amerika er det [ileg] stunder mere end nogensinde fornødent at tage under alvorlig Overveielse Vigtigheden af at udrydde den store Misbrug, som lige siden Innvandringen fra Norge begyndte ssa hyppig har gaaet og endnu gaaer i Svang iblant os, nemlig den letsindige Forandring af Navn.

Den uforsvarlige Sædvane at skifte Navn ligesom man skifter Klæder eller Bopæl og Vilkaar har vore gamle Mænd saavelsom de unge, Konerne saavelsom Pigerne, altformeget hengivet sig til. Nogle gjøre det af Tankeløshed og Ligegyldighed ligesom for at behage Yankee'erne, men Andre gjøre det med Forsæt og Overlæg, og af en Slags Forfængelighed, alene for at behage sig selv.

Hvad saa en Bevæggrunden kan være og hvorledes Sagen end betragtes, saa bliver den dog intet Andet end en Misbrug, og bør som saadan modarbeides til den er udryddet. Der existerer ingensomhelst Undskyldning derfor – der kan intet Godt siges til Forsvar derfor og intet Gavn kan flyde deraf – Skam og Skade er Alt hvad den kan afstedkomme. Skam, fordi det viser Yankee'erne at vi ringeagte vort gode Navn, Noget som alle ærlige Folk lægge Bind paa at bevare Hæderligt og ukrænket, og fordi det med det Samme beviser, at vi ikke ere gjennemtrængte af den Selvstændighedsfølelse, der forbuder et civiliseret Folk at give efter for Andres Luner og Indfald. See til, om det hjemme i Norge findes en Amerikaner eller anden Udlænding, som tillader sit Navn at blive forvandsket for at føie dem, for hvem det stundom kan være vanskeligt at udtale det franske, spanske eller engelske Navn rigtigt. Langtfra! See om de andre Nationer hertillands, f. Ex. Franskmænd, Hollændere eller Tydskere, tillade Yankee'en noget Saadant. Hellerikke. Kun os godtroende Skandinaver er det, som lade Yankee'en, der sjelden eller aldrig hvad Sprog angaaer forstaaer mere end sit Modersmaal, skalte og valte med vore gode Navne. Men er det Dumhed, der gjør at Yankee'en engliserer vore Navne, saa er det værre Dumhed af os ikke at protestere derimod; thi os gaae det ud over, ikke ham. Skammen bliver vor – ikke hans, og Skaden bliver der tilsidst ogsaa vor, det ville vi komme til at [ileg] Den er vel neppe en Familie iblandt os, hvor [ileg] denne Navnesyge mere eller mindre er trængt ind. I de fleste Tilfælde behandle vi denne Syge ligesom Skjødesynderne; vi sige til disse: "Synd, jeg hader Dig, men jeg elsker Dig i mit had." – Vi vide nok Allesammen fra Barnsbeen af, at det er Galskab at lade sit Navn forvanske, men stundom synes vist Samme, at det er morsomt at bilde Folk ind, at der er blevet noget rigtig Stort af dem her i Amerika, og dersom det ikke træffer, at Folk give dem et nyt Navn, som det hedder, saa tage de sig et. Vi more os med ligesom at lege Blindebuk med Nykommerne og med dem derhjemme. Men vi ville tilsidst komme til at finde, at det var os selv, der havde Bindet for Øinene. Det høieste, vi burde tillade os, skulde være, at bruge en af Sprogbrug autoriseret Oversættelse af vore Fornavne, f. Ex. John for Johan eller Johannes, William for Wilhelm, Charles for Carl, Ann for Anna, Carrie for Karen osv. Men selv dette er ligesom det Andet uværdigt for os, og derfor er det dumt, og de kloge Yankee'er, jeg mener kloge i alt Andet end Sprog, sige ved sig selv – "hvor dumt!" Følgende vil vise, hvor vigtigt det er for os, især i et fremmed Land, at holde fast paa vort Navn, istedetfor at lade det gaae os som det gik

Guri, der lod sig kalde **Julia**.

Guri hørte, da hun gik derhjemme i Fjeldbygden og "gjætte [ileg], at Frøkenen til Skriveren hedte Julia, og hun tænkte, hvilket pænt Navn, den som bare hedte Julia; og da Yankeemadamen spugte hende: "what's your name my dear? what – did you say Gully eh? – oh, now I know, it is Julia, oh yes – a nice name; – you don't spell it as we do, I suppose, but never mind – for all I care – it is just the name; I want to call you Julia, as long as you stay with us." Ja dermed var det gjort, Guri tog det som en Gave, og med det Samme tænkte hun paa Skriverfrøkenen derhjemme, som ogsaa hedte Julia, og saa "lo hun og nikked' og nikked' og lo" og pillede paa sit Forklæde, og var ordentlig glad for det. Da hun saa fik sine Klæder og Hat med Blomster og Fjer, samt [ileg] da maa troe hun gik og [ileg] og troede næsten, at hun var bleven forvandlet til en Skriverfrøken og at hun altid havde hedt Julia, [ileg] Miss Julia! Og saa havde hun med sig en Trunk, jo det vil sige en Kasse eller Kiste, som var malet ganske rød med blaa Hjørnekanter og hvide Blommer; paa den var der malet med sorte Bogstaver:

Guri Niels Datter [ileg]ergaardsodden,

født 17de Mai 1843,

malet den 4de Juli 1860.

Saadant var hendes rigtige fulde Navn hjemmefra.

Hvergang nu Miss Julia skulde, som man siger, ned i Kisten, saa stak dette gamle Guri-navnet hende saa svært i Øinene, at hun tog sig fore engang hun skurede i Kammerset, at give gamle "Guri" en Vask med Skurefillen, ligesom for at faae det stygge norske Navnet udvasket eller udslidt; men det er rart med Sligt. Der er noget Solidt og [ileg] i Alt hvad der er Norsk – og det norske "Guri" stod derfor ogsaa den næste Morgen saa meget klarere og tydeligere end nogensinde før; det var ogsaa første Gang at "Guri" var bleven skuret siden Farten over Atlanterhavet og [ileg] i Krogene paa alle de mange Depoter langs Veien herop. Miss Julia forsøgte aldrig oftere paa at drukne den gamle "Guri" i Vadskebaljen, men hun tørnede Kassen omkring, saa at Navnet vendte mod Væggen. Siden kjøbte hun sig en rigtig Trunk og fik en Sadelmagergut, som hun kjendte, til at sætte

[ileg] Navnechiffre paa med forgyldte Messingspiger, og han gjorde det efter sit bedste Skjønne, og da stod der: INDIGO hvilket skulde betyde: **J**ulia **N**iels **D**atter **I**er **G**aards **O**dden.

Det saae virkelig fiint ud ogsaa! Men Folk, som ikke forud kjendte hendes Navn, læste bare ligefrem Indigo, og det trak med alle Pigerne, som kom for at "see" Guri, at de skulde ogsaa "see" Trunken med det samme, og allesammen saa stavede og stavede det bedste de kunde, men de fik aldrig Andet ud end Indigo, og saa forstode de sig slet ikke paa det og spurgte Guri med største Forundring, om det virkelig var hendes Trunk, og om det var hendes Navn. Og saa fortalte hun dem, at hun nu hedte Julia, og det glædede de sig svært over, ja de hoppede af bare Glæde over Navnet Julia. Endda skjønte ikke Julia, at der var noget rart med de Bogstaverne, førend en Dag Yankeemadamen kom op og saa paa dem, og begjærte en Udtydning paa de Gaadefulde Chiffre, og den fik hun og, og der blev nok Moro i hele Huset over den Sag, og efter den Tid var det Somme af dem, der kaldte hende Miss Indigo, saadan bare for Spas. Julia likte lite denne [ileg] for Navnets Skyld, om Aftene maatte hun ordentlig graate lidt, men det stod ikke længe paa, og det blev nu med det alligevel. Dengang den nye Trunk kom ind, blev den gamle slæbt ud i Ba gaarden. Det var der jeg traf den, paa den anden Side af Fencet, og Alle, som kom forbi, maatte standse for at see paa den; og som jeg stod der og læste, saa fik jeg med Eet hele Hemmeligheden med Julias Navn at vide. Nu forstod jeg Alting. Det var længe siden jeg havde seet en saadan Nationalkiste – det var det meest gediegne norsk-amerikanske Inventarium jeg nogensinde havde seet. Rødt, Hvidt og Blaat, og 17de Mai og 4de Juli – det var ordentlig mærkeligt! Hvor jeg kom, fortalte jeg om dette Nationalværk, og Alle, som hørte derom, gik hen for at "see" den – saa den blev vidt og bredt bekjendt. En Dag, som jeg kom der forbi, kom der en Lumbervogn med en Stadsmø i siddende paa Noget, som stod bagenfor Kudskesædet, og hvem skulde jeg see uden Miss Julia selv, siddende paa det nationalfarvede Kunst[ileg] der igjen var taget til Naade og nu skulde tjene som Sæde i Vognboxen. Førend jeg kom nær nok til at kunne see Optoget, saa tænkte jeg: monstro der skal være Meeting etsteds – for jeg troede, at det var en Landdame, som kom til Byen for at være med – jeg saae saa meget Rødtoghvidtogblaat. Da fik jeg Øie paa Nationalklenodiet og forstod strax hele Greia. Det var Miss Julia, som skulde Hjem i Harvesten; og det skal jo alle Piger; hun var saa skraalende og stadselig, at det var ingen Maade paa; Blaa Florskjole, hvidt Korsette og rødt, langt Silkeskjærf, der flagrede og vaiede. Kisten stod paalangs i Vognboxen, saa Navnet kunde læses fra Siden af, men den blaa Florskjolen bedækkede omhyggelig "Guri"; – dog, netop som de dreiede om Hjørnet, viftede Kjolefligen op i Vinden, just saa vidt, at jeg fik see selve "Guri". – Vel kjendte jeg den unge Miss Julia af Anseelse," som man siger, men havde det ikke været for Kisten, saa skulde jeg slet ikke have troet mine egne Øine, thi det var egentlig kun med gamle "Guri" at jeg havde stiftet Bekjendtskab. Ja nu bar det altsaa hjemover – til Harvesten! – Fa'er og Mo'er og de smaa Jentungene skulde nu vel neppe været istand til at gjenkjende deres Datter og ældre Søster i den stadselige Bydame, som kom reisende, hvis det ikke havde været for den velbekjendte røde Kisten. Just som de kjørte igjennem Grinden, gik et af Hjulene op mod Stolpen, saa der ligesom kom en Bevægelse i det gamle Møbel; thi ved det Jump, som den gjorde, kom Julia til at Staae, og maatte holde sig fast i Driveren for ikke at falde, og Nationalfarverne flagrede med det samme for Vinden ligesom et udfoldet Banner, men saa fik ogsaa "Guri" paa Kassen Leilighed til at vise sig heel og holden, og jeg skal lade det være usagt, hvem af de To blev meest hjertelig modtaget, – idetmindste i de første Øieblikke. Da Bykjolen og Stadsen blev lagt hen, saa fik ogsaa Julia sit gamle Navn igjen. Thi der var Ingen derhjemme, som forstod sig paa at kalde hende Andet end Guri, og det var kun naar der leilighedsviis kom en Yankee ind fra Byen at "Miss Julia" kom frem. Og saa kom dette nye Navn gjerne bagefter paa Tale i Huset – de Smaa maatte lære at sige det ligesom Yankee'en havde gjort, og da hoppede de omkring Guri og syntes det var saa nydeligt. Men han Fa'er, han likte det ikke, og det stod Mo'er fore, at der bestemt var noget Galt derved, saa hun kunde aldrig komme sig til at bruge andet Navn end det gamle rette, som hun vidste, at Guri var døbt med. Fa'er meente, at "Julia" var et hedensk, romansk Navn; han havde bestemt hørt noget Saadant i sin Ungdom, da han foer tilsøes paa Lissabon og St. Yves. Derhos paastod han, at "Guri" var et godt norsk, christent Navn; Somme kaldt det Guro og Goro eller Goraa; han havde læst sagde han, at vore Forfædre havde skrevet Godraad eller Gudraad – hvilket tydelig skulde betyde enten Godt Raad eller Guds Raad, ligesom Dorothea betyder "Den Guds Gave" – men i Tidernes Løb, sagde han, var Navnet forkortet til Guri, men det blev dog alligevel det samme Navn med den samme Betydning. Og han syntes at den, der havde faaet et saa vakkert, ja saa deiligtbetydende et Navn, hverken kunde have Ret til eller Godt af at kaste det bort og lade sig paahænge et hedensk eller Katholsk Navn. Det var nu Gamlens Mening, og derfor fik Navnet Julia ingen Hævdsret der i Huset.

I Harvesten kom der forskjellige Slags Folk, som Enhver veed, og det traf sig engang, at der blev Tvist mellem Unggutterne om, enten det var Guri eller Julia hun hedte. De meente Alle paa Een [ileg] at det tilkom hende selv alene at kalde sig som hun [ileg] bedst; det var øiensynligt, at disse Gutterne vare et Slags Norsk Amerikaner (skjønt slet ikke i Politik!) for de meente, at hertillands, hvor Alt var frit, maatte Hvemsomhelst have Lov til at læmpe sit Navn efter Landets Sprog og Landets Folk; – det var nu Altsammen godt og vel, – men Lars Torgersen, som Yankee'erne saa tidt havde været efter for at faae ham til at kalde sig enten Lorents eller Lewis Thompson, han fortalte dem følgende Historie om en Kammerat som just var død i et af Hospitalerne, og som før han reiste i Krigen havde skriftlig overdraget til Naboen at indkræve Lønning og Bounty efter ham, hvis han skulde falde fra,

men som havde gaaet hen og ladet sig indliste i Rullerne med et yankificeret Navn, og dog underskrevet Fuldmagten med sit rigtige Døbenavn. Han havde altsaa givet sig to Navne. Alt hvad han havde havt tilgode gik aldeles tabt for ham. Og saa fortalte han om

Engebret, der svoer sig ind som **Albert.**

"Albert Hanson" stod der skrevet i Rullerne. Indlistet 14de April 1861. Hans rette Navn var Engebret Hansen, men i Regimentet vidste Ingen bedre, end at han hedte Albert. Han blev saaret i et af Slagene tidlig i Sommer og blev ført til Hospitalet, hvor han døde af sin Vunde den 12te April d. A. Han havde altsaa tjent i omtrent 12 Maaneder, og saasom han ved de to sidste Lønningsdage havde været syg, havde han ikke modtaget Lønning siden Oktober Maaned 1861 og havde tilgode ialt mellem 70 og 80 Dollars foruden 100 Dollars Bounty. Det var en flink og paapasselig Fyr. Da han døde, havde han endnu tilbage hos sig 10 Dollars, som Løitnanten sendte hjem under Adresse Tom Johnson tilligemed Budskabet om hans Død. Han har Forældre og Sødskende i Norge. De ere ikke arveberettigede her i Landet. Regjeringen opgjør saadanne Regnsaber alene med Arvinger eller Fuldmægtige, der boe her i Landet. Dette vidste han, og derfor havde han før han døde befuldmægtiget En ved Navn Thore Jørgensen Bækken til at indkræve Løn og Bounty, og denne skulde da gjøre Rede derfor til Forældrene i Norge. Men for det Første havde han skrevet Fuldmagten paa Norsk istedetfor paa Engelsk, skjønt det var der Raad for, thi den kunde jo oversættes paa Engelsk, men saa havde han, – læg Mærke hertil:

1) glemt Sted og Datum, da han skrev denne Fuldmagt,

2) hadde han befuldmægtiget Tom Johnson istedetfor at skrive Mandens sande Navn, som var Thore Jørgensen Bækken,

3) havde han uderskrevet Engebret Hansen, hvilket jo var hans eget rette Navn, men under hvilket han ikke var indsvoren. Han indskrev og indsvoer sig jo som Albert Hansen.

Nu indsendte Thor Jørgensen Bækken en med Eed bekræftet Ansøgning, og skrev den Afdødes Navn saaledes som det stod i Rullerne baade i Regimentet og i Kontorerne i Washington. Og Fuldmagten blev oversat paa Engelsk men Navnene bleve skrevne ligesom Soldaten havde skrevet dem, saaledes, at Engebreth befuldmægtigede Tom. Strax kom der Svar at de maatte have Alberts og ikke Engebrets Fuldmagt, og der maatte enten vises Fuldmagt for Thor Jørgensen Bakken istedetfor Tom Johnson, eller ogsaa maatte Tom Johnson underskrive Ansøgningen. Begge Dele var umuligt. Soldatens rette Navn var Engebret, men han havde indsvoret sig under et forvendt Navn og stod i Rullerne som Albert, – og Thor Jørgensen Bækken kunde ikke gaae hen og sværge paa, at hans Navn var Tom Johnson; endnu mindre kunde han finde to vederhæftige Vidner, der vilde sværge paa, at de kjendte Tom Johnson – thi alle Naboer og Andre deromkring tillige med Justicen vidste, at Tom var bare et forseert Navn, og at Mandens rette og sande Navn var Thore Jørgensen Bækken. Saaledes tabte Engebret Hansens Forældre Alt hvad han havde tilgode af Regjeringen. Og det maatte just blevet akkurat det samme, om Soldaten havde indsvoret sig saaledes, som enhver ærlig Mand bør, med sit rette Døbenavn, men alligevel skrevet Naboens Navn paa Yankeemaneer; eller om han havde skrevet Naboens Navn rigtigt, men indsvoret sig som han gjorde under et forvansket Navn. Arven var ligefuldt, blot for eet af de forseerte Navnes Skyld, gaaen tabt. Guri hørte paa dette, men tænkte som saa, det faaer gaae som det kan med Sligt. Mit Navn staaer ikke Rullerne! Vel, vi faae nu høre videre om

Julia R. Jarood og **Alexander Newton.**

"Disse to Personer kjende vi nok ikke videre til endnu, med mindre det skulde være vor gamle bekjendte Guri, men den Alexanderen have vi ikke hørt Noget om" Ja nu fortsætte vi, saa opklares det nok.

Harvesten var tilende, og Guri pyntede sig igjen i sit "Red, White and Blue", tog sin Hat og Parasol, og fik Følge med en Flok Rekrutter, der skulde ind til Camp Randall. En af disse Fyrene, Helge Knudsen, saae ganske godt ud, og var en saadan smart Fyr, han talte bare Engelsk og sad paa Forsædet med Guri og kaldte hende bestandig Julia my sweet love, osv. Som de kjørte sammen, saa forlskedte han sig i hende og fortalte hende, at hvis hun vilde have ham og gifte sig med ham, før Regimentet reiste, saa vilde hun faae 5 Dollars om Maaneden af Staten, og at dersom hun kunde tjene Noget extra, mens han laae i Felten, saa kunde hun spare det sammen til han kom hjem igjen, og saa for en Dag. Miss Julia likte Forslaget svært godt, for hun syntes, at Helge ogsaa saae ganske godt ud, og dersom hun blev gift og fik Penge af Staten, saa kunde hun slippe at ligge ude og tjene, og ein, zwei, drei, saa var Alting klappet og klart, og fjortende Dagen derefter, saa vare de Mand og Kone.

Regimentet reiste strax og Mønstringsrullerne bleve indsendte. Da den første Maaned var forløben, gik Guri Knudsen ud for at [ileg] sig om, hvorledes hun skulde forholde sig for at faae sine Maanedspenge af Staten. Hun fik

sig et Formular (Blank) og var saa heldig at træffe en norsk Justice of the Peace, som var vel bekjendt med den Slags Forretninger, og som derfor uden Vanskelighede strax gjorde Papirerne istand for hende. "Hvad er Soldatens Navn?" "Helge Knudsen, Ko. F, 20de Regiment." "Og hvad er Deres Navn?" spurgte Squiren videre, "jeg mener Deres Døbenavn eller christian name." – Guri betænkte sig paa, om hun skulde svare Julia eller Guri, men Squiren havde jo udtrykkelig sagt "christian name", og saa tænkte hun det skal vel være Guri, og svarede derfor Guri Knudsen. "All right", sagde Squiren, "vær saa god at skrive Papirerne under paa disse tre Steder." og saa pegede han med Fingeren paa de Steder, hvor hun skulde skrive. Med disse i "lovlig Orden" udstedte Papirer, som hun betalte Squiren 25 Cents for, gik Guri op til Statssekretæren. Squiren havde jo sagt det var all right. Der var heller ingen Indvending at gjøre mod Papirerne, men Soldatens Navn stod ikke anført paa Listen over dem, som vare gifte. Hun blev betydet, at hun maatte komme igjen senere. Statssekretæren vilde selv besørge undersøgt hos Generaladjudanten, hos hvem hele Mandtals-Rullerne vare, om hvordan det forholdt sig at Helge Knudsen var udeladt i Listerne over de Gifte. Næste Morgen, da Guri kom igjen, var der indløben Underretning fra Generaladjudanten om, at Helge Knudsens Navn ikke fandtes i hele 20de Regiment. Man antog, at han havde indlistet sig under et engliseret Navn, men der var saa faa Norske i det Regiment, og Ingen vidste hvad Navn han havde taget. Guri blev adspurgt, men til hende havde han Intet sagt herom. Hun blev derfor tilraadet at faae En til at skrive for sig til Kompagnichefen for Ko. F og formaa ham til at give fornøden Oplysning. Guri blev reent forskrækket over alt dette, og var næsten bange for at Helge havde narret hende. Endelig fik hun skrevet derom, baade til Helge og til Kaptainen, men intet Svar indløb. Langt om længe fik hun desværre høre, at saagodtsom Halvdelen af Ko. F var bleven syge og efterladt paa Hospitalerne i eller nærved St. Louis, medens Regimentet reiste til Springfield i Missouri. Kort at fortælle, hendes Brev naaede ikke frem til Regimentet for efter to Maaneders Forløb, og til hende kom der intet Svar, og om Helge hørte hun Intet. Sagen var den, at Kaptainen forgjæves havde søgt at finde Nogen i Ko F, som kjendte En af det Navn, og Helge var netop blandt de Syge ved St. Louis. Da han kom sig begav han sig til Regimentet, men blev underveis paany angreben af Sygdom, kom tilbage til St. Louis, og blev derfra ført op til [ileg] i Iowa, hvor han pludselig døde. Her traf han flere Norske og Kjendinger. Til en af disse fortalte han, at han havde indlistet sig under Navn af Alexander Newton, og at han havde opgivet til Kaptainen, at hans Kones Navn var Julia R. Jarrodd (dette skulde Betyde Jergaardsodden). Og under disse Navne fandtes de ogsaa ganske rigtig i alle Listerne. Men hvorledes skulde Papirerne kunne blive gjorte istand med slige Navne? Det var umuligt for Guri at underskrive sig med et saadant forseert Navn, og ingen Justice, der var en ærlig Mand, vilde indlate sig paa at bekræfte at han kjendte hende under et saadant Navn. Ingen troværdig Mand vilde under Ed bevidne, at han kjendte disse to Ægtefolk, hvilket udkræves ved Ansøgning om Bounty og Pension. Ikke heller kunde nogen Ægteskabsattest være at faae, thi Præsten, som forrettede Vielsen, skrev deres ærlige norske Navne, og i Kirkebøgerne findes hverken Alexander Newton eller Julia R. Jarrodd. Denne Oplysning i Forening med Dødsfaldet vare sørgelige Begivenheder for Guri. Det er altsaa plad umuligt at faae istand de fornødne Papirer, og umuligt at faaae noget af hans Tilgodehavende, baade hos Staten og Generalregjeringen indkrævet. Der mister Guri altsaa for den Spas først af Volontørfondet for 4 Maaneder og 8 Dage omtrent 22 Doll.

Helges Løn for 3 Md. og 8 Dage 43

Bounty af Unionen 100

tilsammen 165 Dollars kontant, og desforuden mister hun 96 Dollars om Aaret, som hun tilkom i Pension saa længe hun lever som Enke. Altsammen bare for denne slemme Navnesyge, som regjerer blandt de Norske her i Amerika. Saaledes skuffet i alle sine Forhaabninger vendte Guri forleden Dag hjem til sine Forældres Huus som Enke, men da Faderen er i temmelig gode Omstændigheder behøver hun ikke at tage i Tjeneste i Byerne, saa hun formodentlig forbliver hjemme Vinteren over, især da dette dobbelte [ileg] saaledes paa hendes Helbred, at hun tilraadedes ikke at anstrenge sig ved haardt Arbeide, hvilket hun vilde blive udsat for hos Fremmede. Desuden har hun tabt Lysten for Øieblikket til Bylivet. Denne Tildragelse med hendes og med hendes Mands forvendte Navne har været hende en haard Prøve, og hun har udtrykkelig ønsket, at det skulde blive bekjendt, for at Andre, der ere i samme Fix i Tide kunde drage Omsorg for, at det ikke skal gaae dem lige saa ilde; men især fordi hun ønskede at advare enhver Norsk imod Navnesygen. Den Opsigt, dette har vækt der, hvor det passerede, iblandt dem, det nærmest angik, og alle deres Kjendinger, har bragt for Dagen andre Tilfælde af lignende Natur, der vise, at det paa ingen Maade ere de Unge og Uerfarne, der alene lide under denne Navnesyge, men at tvertimod denne, som alle andre Syger, saa at sige viser sig at være arvelig og egentlig er udsprungen fra uforstandige Fædre og Mødre og i Tidens Løb har udbredt sig, som før er sagt, over den hele norske Befolkning. Det er den for saa mange af os sædvanlige Lyst til at stille os lige med Verden udenom os, som forlokker os til at kaste Vrag paa vore rette Navne og at lade os paatvinge eller selv optage nye i vor Indbildning høitravende og mere velklingende. Med det nye Navn komme sædvanligviis nye Sæder, som oftest lige saa vrange som Navnene, og med Sæderne skifter selve Karakteren, indtil endelig den hele Person reentud fornægter sig selv og bilder en forskruet Personlighed, der ikke vil kjende sig selv, ikke vedkjende sig Sine, ikke være kjendt af jevne, troværdige Landsmænd, og som derfor bliver staaende midt imellem os og Landets Folk. Ingen tænkte vel paa, at det nogensinde kunde komme slige Vanskeligheder ud af saa liden en Ting

som denne, og derfor tænkte i al Fald kun de Færreste paa at gjøre Noget for at standse Misbrugen. Krigen har medført blandt saa meget Andet dyre Erfaringer i dette [ileg] for nogle af os. Mon disse Erfaringer ville vare istand til at reformere os!

Adopted Citizen.

APPENDIX 16

Typo, "Progress, the Scandinavians and the Emigranten." *Emigranten*, April 20, 1857.

"Progress, the Scandinavians and the Emigranten"

Mr. Editor!

Allow me to intrude upon your valuable time a few moments

Progress is the great watchword of this age, and this great country illustrates it in particular. Of this, the vast American navigation, which surveys every sea and communicates with every Nation, our internal Improvements, and enterprise, and our boundless agricultural resources supplying food for the starved Nations of Europe, [ilegible] unmistakable evidence.

And I am happy to say that the Norwegian Population of this country forms no exception. When we first landed on the shores of this continent we knew no more of the English language than 'yes' and 'no'. Now, however, a large majority, to say the least, are capable of doing their business transactions with the native born, while we have those among our people, who represent us in the legislative halls of this country, and those, occupying many positions of honor and usefulness in the Community. This is decidedly Progress.

As a conspicuous result of this progress among our People we have the Scandinavian Press Association' and 'Emigranten', the paper, published by it. As a stockholder in the Association and a reader of the paper, I feel an interest in its welfare; and I know this feeling to be reciprocated by the majority of the Norwegians. The unanimous resolution passed by the last Meeting of this Association, to the effect that Emigrantens printing Office **be removed to Madison,** is another progressive step to greater Influence and a more extended usefulness.

To judge from your last issue, your pen must be considerably pregnant with articles, heads, and phrases in the English language. That is just right. This Country is populated by people from all parts of the world, having as great diversity in customs and habits as the have countries of nativity. It is the duty of the American press to assimilate the heterogeneous elements of society, and consolidate a great nation with a government of the people, and it ought to be the chief aim of 'Emigranten' to prepare our population to a change from **Norwegians to Americans**, in language, thought and feeling. A column of your paper, more or less, devoted to English Literature, would be productive of much good. It would greatly enhance this **Americanizing** process; and I have no doubt, it would meet the taste of a large number of your readers, and enlarge its circulation. –

Brevity is one of the necessary characteristics of a journal. I do'nt wish to assert that you fail in this respect. Yet, I am of the opinion, that your paper would be more interesting if you could relate some of your Kansas News in a more concise language. It may be well, always to remember that 'Brevity is the soul of wit.'

May 'Emigranten' prove true to the position it occupies, and be a credit to the Norwegians.

TYPO.

We had some doubts as to wether we ought to insert the above correspondence of 'Typo', but as we heartily concur with him in some of the opinions advanced, and as we further are at liberty to meet our correspondent on those points on which we may differ from him, we have given it a place in our columns.

Progress is endeed the watchword of our age, and the country we have chosen for our second home is especially a token of the truth of this sentence. We need only glance through our windows and behold! –before us lays a multitude of neat and comfortable houses, on a spot, where twenty years age only the wigmam of the 'Sons of the Forest' was seen – the railroad, that mighty instrument of Progress, in more than one sense of the word, runs in different directions and connects a beautiful and thriving city with all parts of the world, where twenty years age the fleet deer and the roaming Indian were, one might say, in undisturbed possession of the fertile soil and the charming scenery. We might illustrate the above sentence with thousands of instances, but we need not go any farther to prove it truth.

When 'Typo' alludes to 'the starved Nations of Europe' we cannot admit the truth of such an expression. True, this country is wealthier than perhaps any state in the old World, but even Norway, which in regard to fertility of soil may be considered as one of those by Nature least endowed, is far from being inhabited by a 'Starved Nation' – Also the Scandinavian countries, and especially Old Norway, are advancing rapidly towards the same eminence of culture and wealth, that this country occupies.

Our countrymen are in many points really benefitted by the intercourse with their American-born fellow-citizens, and we think they generally appropriate for themselves as quickly as possible the **desirable** qualities and customs of the Americans. It cannot however be wondered at if some of the nobler traits in the Norwegian Character is some what injured by the materialism, inseparable from the life and pursuits in a country like this. The following description of the Norwegians, from 'the History of Rock County,' illustrates their character in a few words better than we could describe it: 'From an acquaintenanne of eight years with the Norwegians within the influence of the settlement, above described, (Luther Valley) I can say that as a class, they are an honest, industrious, enterprising, and moral population. They assume the habits (except office-seeking) of the American people faster than any European population with which I am acquainted.' We thank our correspondent for the compliment, paid the 'Emigranten' and taking it in good faith we shall strive to deserve it. As to the removal of the printing-office to this place, it was really effected by an unanimous vote of the stokholders for the purpose of advancing the interests of the Association, laboring under the thought that it thereby would be better enabled to fulfil its design – the enlightening of our countrymen – and we sincerely hope that this important step must prove to be equally to the benefit of our paper and our countrymen.

We agree with Mr Typo on the adaptableness of articles in the English language for the 'Emigranten' and we wish to inform our readers, that there occasionally will appear such articles in the paper. We have a right to suppose that a majority of the Scandinavians reads well enough English to comprehend an article, written in not too difficult a language, and it may be of benefit to those, who, though they understand some English, still do not as yet, understand enough for to consider it worth while to pay for an English paper.

That 'Brevity is the soul of wit' is too old a sentence to be disputed, but when 'Typo' complains of the length of our 'Kansas News' we need only remark that he is a thorough going Democrat, which will explain all.

We have admitted 'Typo's' correspondence to our paper, principally for the purpose of putting to the test the taste of our readers for English in this paper and in order to encourage others, that have made them selves, to a certain degree, masters of the English language, ay, even Americans, to write for our paper. Of course, it cannot be expected that the language should be in every way faultless, neither in our own articles nor in our correspondences, but knowing that we are foreigners, our american co-temporaries will not ridicule us on account of a flaw in the language, if there be no flaw in its meaning.

APPENDIX 17

"To our American Friends." *Emigranten*, January 23 and 30, 1852. Extract.

TO OUR AMERICAN FRIENDS.

It is with sincere Gratitude, that wi recollect the freqvent manifestations of your friendly feelings toward us and our people generally. We came here strangers and friendless, ignorant of Your institutions, Your Language and Your customs, but You cheered our hearts with a friendly welcome: You extended to us the rights of Citizenship, and equal participation in all Your Privileges, and did all in Your power to alleviate the wants and difficultuies,

necessaryly atending our first setlement in a foreign Country, and made us forget, that we were strangers and foreigners here.

[…]

The Name we have given to our paper, "The Emigrant," speaks for itself, and need no commentary. It is needless to say, that it will be especially their wants and interests we will keep in view; but we must not here be understood as if we in any way would try to separate those interests from the interests of society at large. No! we sincerely believe that the true interest of our people in this Country is, to become AMERICANIZED – if we may use that word – in language and customs, as soon as possible, and be one people with the Americans. In this way alone can they fulfill their destination, and contribute their part to the final developement of the character of this great nation.

APPENDIX 18

Editorial. *Den Norske Amerikaner*, March 14, 1855. A discussion of the annual party of the Scandinavian Association in Chicago, February 22, 1855. Extract.

Naar nu Udlændingen (den adopterede Borger) veed at han skylder det demokratiske Parti Takken for Amerikas liberale Naturalisations-Love og for de Rettigheder og Privilegier han har nydt under samme ligefra Præsident Jefferson's Dage til nærværende tid; naar han nu ogsaa paa den anden Side veed at Whigpartiet, hvoraf nu for en stor deel Know-Nothingismen er opstaaet, altid har søgt at forandre, indskrænke, ja endog nu søger at ophæve hine demokratiske Naturalisations-Love, og derved berøver dem, der ere saa ulykkelige at være fødte i et andet Land, ei alene deres Borgerret, men endog nedværdiger dem til Dyrene, idet de indirekte frakjende dem Forstand til selvstændig Handling – er det da forunderligt at Udlændingernes Hengivenhed og Sympathi skulde Hænge ved det demokratiske Parti, og saa sent og vanskeligt lade sig løsrive derfra? I Betragtning af dette tro vi det mindre menneskeligt at stigmatisere dem som Fiender af sit adopterede Fødeland; thi Erfaring har allerede forlængst lært os, at Ingen er mere villig til at lade sit Blod flyde for Fødelandet naar det angribes af en udvortes Fiende, medens Nativismen sidder i Hartford Konvention og raadslaaer om Forræderi mot Fædrelandet; handle de ikke mere i Overensstemmelse med en ædel, taknemnemmeligsfuld Natur, naar de vise Troskab og Hengivenhed for deres Venner og nægte, under Venskabets Maske, at støde Snigmorderens Dolk i deres Velgjørers Hjerte?

APPENDIX 19

Know Nothing Soap. Litograph, 1854. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Online Catalog, http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2008661571/ [accessed May 7, 2015].

APPENDIX 20

"Gen. Washington and the Know-Nothings," editorial. *Emigranten*, March 1, 1855.

Gen. Washington og Know-nothingerne.

Hvorledes Washington, der der stedse ihukommes som Republikkens Fader, og som selv var en indfødt Amerikaner, (ligesom de nuværende Knownothinger rose sig af at være) – hvorledes han, den store Frihetshelt, tænkte og dømte om indvandrede Borgere, turde maaske være af Interesse at Læse. –Man vil deraf see, hvor afstikkende Knownothingernes Politik er imod Washingtons.
I sit Afskedsbudskap ytret han:
"I indvandrede Borgere, der ved frit Valg have beslutet at gjøre dette store Fælledsland til Eders Hjem, – dette Land har Ret til at fordre, at I sammenknytte alle Eders Interesser og føle Eders Kjærlighed med same. Navnet Amerikaner, der tilhører Eder i Eders Egenskab som Borgere, maa altid begeistre Eder til en stolt Patriotisme, mere en ethvert andet Navn, der kunde gives eder, udsprunget fra tilfældige Omstændigheder.
Fraregnet en ubetydelig Forskjellighed, have I samme Religion, Sæder og Skikke, saavelsom politiske Grundsætninger. I have fægtet og feiret med os i vor fælleds Sag, den Uavhengighed og Frihed som I nu nyde fælleds med os, og er en Frugt af fælles Samraad, fælles Anstrængelser, fælles Farer og [ileg] Møie, samt fælleds Seier."
Saaledes talte Washington til de Indvandrede paa hans Tid! Og hans Ord gave en ikke ringe Styrke til den siden hans Dage stadigt tiltagne Indvandring. Derfor tilhører ogsa hans Ord, forsaavidt de ere anvendelige efter vore Tider, enhver senere adopteret og vordende Borger af Unionen. Den Grundsætning, som tilkjendegives I disse Ytringer, har netop gjort Unionen til hvad den er i Folkemængde og Udstrækning. Hva vilde den været uden tilstrømningen af de store Skarer fra Østen?" Derfor indsee ogsaa enhver retsindig Amerikaner det Absurde og Taabelige saavelsom Uretfærdige i de forskjellige Bestræbelser af det nystøbte politiske Samfund af Know-nothings, der ei alene gaae ud paa at omstøde den os Indvandrede allerede konstitutionsmægtig givne Borger- og Stemmeret, men som ogsaa søge at nedsætte os aldeles i borgerlig Henseende, ved ikke at ville tilstaae nogen Invandrer Borgerret før efter 21 Aars Ophold her i Landet.
I det vi sige, at enhver retsindig Amerikaner indseer og fordømmer det Ubillige og Aristocratiske heri, paastaae vi naturligviis, at samtlige Knownothinger ere Aristokrater, og som Saadanne, Mennesker, der ikke besjæles af Retsindighed. Hermed have vi med det samme givet tilkjende, at vi ligesaalidet som den øvrige Verden, undtagen de norsk amerikanske Politikusser i Madison, [ileg] Aristokrati en Regjering form, og vi have tillige paany sagt vor Mening om knownothingerne.

Aristokrati.
I mere end een Betydning fortjener Amerika Navn af "den nye Verden." Befolkningen, sammensat som den er, af Væsener fra alle Verdens Kanter, er i det Hele taget en Sammendyngen af Elementer, der i den "gamle Verden" tildeels havde tabt deres Betydning og Kraft, men som her i den "nye Verden" igjen kommer tilsyne, ligesom Frøkornet, der forsættes til et friskt Jordsmon, udvikler sig paany. – Ofte have vi Nordboere, alene efter en kort og overfladisk Kjendskab til Naturlovene her i Vesten, maattet bemærke, hvor godt ethvert Ukrut trives i disse Lande i Modsætning til i vore Hjemlande, og det er vist en saare naturlig Tankefølge om man ved en saadan Iagttagelse med det samme vender Blikke udover Folkelivet, og finder en vis Lighed mellem dette og Plantelivet. De Spørgsmaale, som forlængst ere afgjorte i Europa, fremstikke sig saare ofte her, om end i en forandret Form. Mange Sandheder, som for længst have faaet Indpas hos Menigmand i vore Fødelande, omtvistes her som ukjendte og uprøvede. Hvorom Alting er, saa er det vist, at intetsteds kunne Contrasterne mere iøinefaldende sees at berøre hinanden netop her.
[…]
Det er bleven Mode at tale om Aristokrati, og een av Dagens [ileg] Folkeledere, har taget sig fore det halsbrækkende Arbeide at forklare for os Norske, at Ordet betyder en Regjeringsform, "hvorefter Kongen og hans Raad giver Love og regjerer Folket" medens det udenfor den Verden, hvori samme "Folkeleder" bevæger sig betyder de Fornemmes eller Mægtiges Anmasselse af Myndigheden. Og hvor mon et større Aristokrati vel findes end mellem de mægtige Slaveeiere i det Sydlige af Unionen og mellem disses Repræsentanter i Staternes Nationalforsamling, medens Fristaterne i Norden staae lige overfor som de klareste Modsætning? Men Aristokratiet er ikke bundet af Landsgrændser. Selv i Nordens Fristater finder man Aristokrater. Og Nordens saakaldte "Demokrater" er for Øieblikket dets værste Aristokratie, den Slange, som Folket har næret ved dets Barm, og som det derfor nu berøver Braadden.

APPENDIX 21

A. C. Preus, "Det Skandinaviske Professorat." *Emigranten*, April 7, 1854. Extracts.

Enhver Norsk, som kommer til Amerika, om han end er nok saa tankeløs og uvidende, bemærker dog en overmaade stor Forskjel paa sin egen Tanke- og Handlemaade, og den Tanke- og Handlemaade, som er gjængs mellem det fremmede Folk, hvori han ved sin Ankomst hertil indtræder. Men dette er en Forskjel, som ei blot finder Sted mellem den enkelte Norske og den enkelte Amerikaner; men den samme Forskjel gjenfindes i alle sine Hovedtræk mellem det samlede Norske Folk paa den ene Side og det Amerikanske paa den anden. Den samme Iagttagelse vil ethvert Folk gjøre lige over for et andet Folk, og dette har sin Grund i hvad man kalder Nationaliteten eller Folkecharacteren, det er Summen af alle de særegne Sjælens, Legemets og Sædvanens Egenskaber, som tilhøre ethvert enkelt Folk for sig. Ligesom det nu er saare vanskeligt at lede, og omdanne det enkelte Menneskes Særegenheder i Characteren, og ligesom disse meget hyppigen nedarves fra Forældre til Børn, saaledes er dette i endnu høiere Grad Tilfældet med de Egenheder, som tilhøre os på Grund af vor Nationalitet, deels fordi de ere saa at sige indsugede med Modermelken og saaledes saa dybt indvævede i vort inderste Væsen, og ere blevne udviklede og befæstede der gjennem alle vore Omgivelser, deels ogsaa fordi vi, ved den almindelige Overeensstemmelse i den Henseende mellem os selv og vore Omgivelser ei blive opmærksomme paa disse Særegenheder hos os selv, forinden vi indtræde ganske nye og forskjellige Omgivelser. Et Folks Nationalitet eller Almeencharacteer, indbefatter i sig, ligesom det enkelte Menneskes Characteer, baade gode og slette Egenskaber. – og naar derfor et Folk indforliver sig med et andet og fremmed Folk, hvor det kan forudsee, at deres nationale Characteer vil blive mægtigt paavirket, da bør det handle forsigtigt; maa det ei ønske at bevare sine gode og afslibe sine mindre heldige Egenskaber? Dersom det her vilde gjøre Vold paa sig selv, og med eengang afkaste hele sit særegne Jeg, da vilde det blive til et Intet. Der er ingen Mangel paa Exempler, der kunne overbevise os om de usle Resultater af en saadan unaturlig Omstøbning; det gaaer dem, som Baggesens Soldater, der vilde være Matroser. Det meest udprægede og lettest bemærkelige Træk i Nationaliteten er Sproget. Som Sproget vel uomtvistelig er i sig selv den ypperste Frembringelse af Nationaliteten staaer det og i den nøieste og inderligste Forbindelse med den, saaat det, at ville pludselig tilintetgjøre et Folks Sprog er i Grunden det samme som at ville tilintetgjøre dets hele Folkecharacteer. Dette har ogsaa alle Erobrere vidst, hvorfor det har været deres Formaal at tilintetgjøre det undertvungne Folks Sprog, fordi dette var eensbetydende med for bestandig at udrydde Folket af Nationernes Række. Den aldeles utidige Iver for at udrydde det Norske Sprog mellem [ileg] Landsmænd her i Amerika, anseer jeg derfor for en saare skadelig og fordærvelig Forholdsregel i sig selv betragtet, fordi jeg føler mig overbeviist om, at derved alle de mange Sindets og Sædvanens Egenskaber, som hidtil vare en Prydelse for det Norske Folk, derved og tillige vilde blive tilintetgjort. Man betragte kun de Norske, som ere meest ivrige for i Eet og Alt at være Yankeer, og jeg troer at de Enkeltes Exempler i saa Henseende ere aldeles tilstrækkelige til at overbevise enhver Fordomsfri om det uhensigtsmæssige ja Fordærvelige i en saadan pludselig og unaturlig Omstøbning. Men som jeg saaledes aldeles misbilliger denne Bestræbelse for for Tiden at frembringe en Forandring, som er imod Naturens Orden, saaledes kan jeg heller ikke være enig med den Stræben, der i en naturlig Bevægelse vil hænge andre hæmmende Tyngdelodder til dem som Naturen selv dannede. Det Norske Folk i Amerika, maaske i det Høieste 50,000, kan mellem 23 Millioner Fremmede, paa nogle Hundredetusinder nær, Engelsktalende, ei tænke paa at vedligeholde deres Sprog, og følgelig heller ikke sin oprindelige Nationalitet for bestandig; det vil lidt efter lidt fortrænges af Amerikanismen, og ligesaa urigtigt som det er, for Tiden at ville fremskynde dette, ligesaa urimelig er den Tanke, at ville forhindre det. New York med Omegn var oprindelig en Hollandsk Coloni og Rige; hvor sporløst er [ileg] det Hollandske Sprog forsvundet? De flere Svenske Setlementer langs Delawarefloden leve kun i Sagnet, og alt dette er saa naturligt, som at den lille Bæk forsvinder i den store mægtige Flod. Hvor agtværdig en Vedhængen ved vort Modersmaal og vore fra Fædrene nedarvede Sæder end kan være, bør vi atter igjen vogte os for at denne vor Vedhængen, som formedelsk sin Seighed, er en Feil i vor Nationalcharacteer, ei hindrer vort Folks Fremskriden i mange vigtige Henseender og hindrer den endelige og naturlige og derfor ogsaa nødvendige Sammensmeltning med den Amerikanske Nationalitet."

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Overgangen fremkommer af sig selv

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Hist og her i de ældste Setlementer begynde ren her i Amerika tilvoxende Slægt at trække ind mellom de ældre, fra Norge i en moden Alder Indvandrede; de ere i mange Henseender endnu Norske, mindre formedelst noget egentlig fædrelandsk Minde, [ileg] formedelst den stærke Paavirkning af Norsk Tænkemaade, som de endog i et Norsk Setlement her i Amerika modtage, men de ere ogsaa meget amerikaniserede og ofte ligesaa fortrolige med det Engelske Sprog, som med deres Modersmaal; men denne Slægts Børn igjen ville være fuldstændig Amerikanske, og der vil altsaa Overgangen fuldendes. Men maa der ei være et fælles Baand, der kan omfatte disse paa de forskjellige Steder til forskjellige Tider indræffende Perioder? Er der ei visse Behov inden et Samfund, hvis egentlige indre Beskaffenhed vel i ethvert Tilfælde er det samme, men som i sit udvortes Forhold stiller sig forskjelligt under de forskjellige ydre Omstændigheder? Af disse Behov hos ethvert Samfund kommer udentvivl det religieuse Enhver først i Tankerne; man spørger, hvorledes ordner Kirken sig under saadanne Omstændigheder?

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Og det Vigtigste vilde være gjort da, naar vi kunde have Præster, som af Fødsel vare Landsmænd og derfor beslægtede i Aand og Tankemaade med sin Menighed, men opvoxne og oplærte her i dette Land og derfor ogsaa paa den anden Side fortrolige med alle det Lands Forholde, inden hvis Grændser de skulle virke.

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den Omstændighed, at vort Sprog kunde blive lært ved vor Stats Universitet vilde allerede i og for sig stille vort Folk paa et høiere Trin og i en bedre Belysning og give os mellem dette Lands frie Borgere en større Vægt og Betydning.

APPENDIX 22

Emigranten, April 4, 1856

P. L. Mossin. “Den nordiske Folkeaand.” Emigranten, April 4, 1856. Extracts.

Vi leve her i et Land hvor vi have Leilighed til at see og træffe sammen med mange forskjellige Folkeslag, og hvor snart lære vi ikke her at kjende Tydskeren fra Englænderen og Irlænderen fra Franskmanden, og dette i Hovedsagen blot ved deres Ydre. Hvor stor maa Forskjellen være i det Indre, naar den i det Ydre kan vise sig saa tydelig! Hvor bestemt maa ikke Folkets Aandsretning oprindeligen have været, siden den indtil nu har bevaret sit Avpræg i hver enkelt Mands Ansigtstræk, Miner og Holdning! – Og naar dette ydre Omrids af Karaktereren – Skallen – endnu sa umiskjendelig og saa let forstaaelig gjenfindes, maa da ikke Kjernen ogsaa findes? Dette er ligesaa utvivlsomt som at der findes et Hvedekorn i Jorden, naar vi see Hvedens Blade og Straae over Jorden. Vi leve i et Land, hvor saa mange Folkeslag blandes sammen, vi skulde derfor, Enhver efter Evne, drage Omsorg for at det ædle og gode Grundlag, der har givet det Folk, hvorfra vi ere udsprungne, sit eiendommelige Udtryk, sin historiske Betydning, sin aandelige Livskraft, at dette folkelige Grundlag, at denne Nationalkarakteer ikke gaaer fortabt, men at den medbringes reen og uforfalsket som en værdifuld Skjærv til Sammensmeltningen af de mange forskjellige Folk til een stor, almindelig Menneskehed. Thi vi befinde os paa Grændsen af en Tid, der gjensynlig ikke blot begunstiger en nærmere Forbindelse af alle Verdens Folk, men endog fordrer en Forening af den til et større Heele end Verden nogensinde for saae. Ja Tiden fører aabenbart med sig en saadan stor Forening udaf den hele Menneskehed. Ethvert Aar afgiver ved nye Opfindelser og nye Opdagelser en Række af nye Forbindelsesmidler dertil; Dampmaskinen, Jernbanerne, Telegrafen, Guldopdagelserne, de store Udvandringer til forskjellige Verdensdele, ja selve Krigen tjener som Forberedelse til en saadan Sammensmelting.

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Forsynet har ingen Hast med Udførelsen af sine ophøiede Planer, men at vi ere inde paa Planens Udførelse, dette er klart af Tidens tegn, ja selv af vort eget Ophold her i dette Land, hvor der af saa mange andre Nationers tidligere Indvandrede danner sig een stor, kraftig, bestandig voxende, forholdsviis ny Nation, hvor der i Nationernes Række af gamle Elementer dannes et nyt.

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thi selve Naturen har ogsaa bidraget Sit til at give Karakteren dens Retning

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drage en Slutning fra Fortiden i Henseende til vore Forventninger om Fremtiden. Og denne burde simpelthen være, at Nedleggelsen, Vedligeholdelsen og den videre Udvikling af de skandinaviske Folks Hovedkarakteristik vil have en betydelig og vigtig Indflydelse under Verdens-Folkenes Sammensmeltning til den større Menneskehed, - det vil sige I den nye og skjønne Tid, som kommer, som nu tages over Verden midt under Krigens Larm og Bulter, nu da de lyse og de mørke Magter støde sammen. Thi ligesom Lys og Mørke mødes og kjæmper imod hinanden i Dagningen, saaledes kjæmper ikke i de gamle, det blødende Europa vestlige og østlige Magter med hinanden, men her saavelsom der, og overalt, hvor der er Liv og Bevægelse og Udvikling i Verden, der kjæmper Friheds-Ideen en kamp paa Liv og Død med Tyraniets, Slaveriets og Undertrykkelsens forældede Systeem.

[…]

De nordiske Karakteertræk ville have deres vigtige afgjørende Indflydelse under Verdens-Udviklingen. Indrømmelsen heraf maae bevæge os til med Alvor og Oprigtighed, med Glæde og Paaskjennelse, at vaage over de Karakteerskatte, som Forfædrene have efterladt os, ikke blot til Bevarelse for Efterslægten, men til en gavnlig Benyttelse og videre Udvikling i Nutiden og dens Krav til Enhver af os. Opfylde Folkene, eller Individerne, deres pligt nu, da vil Verden utvivlsomt eengang see den Dag, da vore Moderlande, saavelsom vore Folkekarakterer, ville spille deres store og afgjørende Rolle i den nye Tid, som endnu skal aabenbares.

APPENDIX 23

Editorial comment, "Den nordiske Folkeaand." *Emigranten*, April 4, 1856.

Den i nærv. Nr optagne Afhandling af ovenstaaende Titel indeholder adskillige gode Træk, sigtende til at vække Skandinavernes Opmærksomhed for Nødvendigheden af i borgerlig Henseende at gjøre sig selv noget mere gjeldende end hidtil, med andre Ord, at bevare den ifra Fædrenelandene medbragte Selvstændighed, og tildeels paa samme begrunde den Selvstændighed, som Skandinaven hertillands absolut bør indatge for ikke at tabe sig selv aldeles i den almindelige Strøm. Den nordiske Folkekarakteer taaler saagodtsom nogen at overplantes paa Amerikas frie Jordbund. Men engang henflyttet der, fordrer den Pleie for ei at vantrives eller udarte. Lader os kun læse P. L. M.s Opsats, og lader os derhos ihukomme, at vi behøve at lære os selv og vor Nationalitet at kjende, førend vi tilfulde kunne beregne hvilken Stilling, det sømmer sig for os at indtage i dette fremmede Land. Her er ingen Tale om en Stat i Staten. Men hvis ikke vi Skandinaver – som et Heelt – virkelig først kjende os selv, saa at ikke Hvermand i snæverhjertet Egennyttighed kun [ileg] sig om sig selv alene, da tabe vi os Alle tilhobe i Massen, som en Draabe i Havet – og vi kunne sige om os selv, at "Bølgen kold sig lukker og sletter ud vort Spor!"

APPENDIX 24

Typo Reply, *Emigranten*, May 27, 1857.

Hr. 'Typo's' 'Fremskridt, Skandinaverne og Emigranten.'
(Indsendt.)

I Emigranten, No. 46, læses en paa Engelsk affattet 'Correspondence' Artikel fra En, der kalder sig Typo. Heri søger denne at fremhæve det nordamerikanske Væsen som et ophøiet Forbillede, værdigt til ubetinget Efterligning, og opstiller for den skandinaviske Presse som dens Hovedmaal ('chief aim') at stræbe efter at bringe de Norske (hvorfor ikke ogsaa de øvrige Skandinaver?), tilligemed den selv til at aflægge den gamle europæiske Adam og iføre sig det nye Yankee-Menneske heelt og holdent. Det er en af de Frembringelser, som paa en vis Frastand kunne blænde lidt det uerfarne Øie, men som snart ved lidt nærmere Undersøgelse vise sig tomme for Saft og Organisation.

I betragtning af en saadan Vægtløshed i samme Stykke er hensigten af nærværende Opsats mindre at modarbeide samme for dens egen Skyld end at benytte den derved givne Anledning til i Korthed at fremstille de nordamerikanske Forholde saaledes som de ere, idet jeg anseer det for sundest først vel at prøve alle Ting og saa forsøge at vælge det Bedste, og det selv i dette store Land ('this great country') som Hr. Typo synes ubetinget at antage som Uovertræffeligheden selv. Og jeg finder mig saameget mere opfordret dertil som jeg veed, der er mange Skandinaver, især blandt den opvoxende Slægt, som, af undskyldelig Mangel paa tilstrækkelig Anledning til en fleersidig Opfattelse af de amerikanske Forholde, have temmelig overspændte Forestillinger om Yankeevæsenets Fortræffelighed. Dette er naturligen som alle falske Forestillinger skadeligt, da det leder til de mangfoldigste Vildfarelser baade i Tænke- og Handlemaade. I Betragtning heraf haaber jeg ogsaa den ærede Læser vil undskylde mig naar jeg endog blot under en almindelig Behandling af en saa omfattende Sag ikke kan undaae at blive noget vidtløftig.

Først skal nu summarisk fremhæves 'dette store Lands' Fortrin fremfor alle andres. – Her opnævnes da: den udstrakte Søfart, de indre Fremskridt med den derunder fremtrædende Foretagelsesaand og Agerdyrkningens 'grændseløse' Resourcer, der endog, siger Typo, skaffe Føde til Europas undsultete ('starved') Nationer.

Lad nu alt dette midlertidig staae ved sit Værd, skjøndt det foreløbig benægtes, at der i Forhold til Statens Størrelse og naturlige Hjælpe[ileg] i hvilkensomhelst Henseende er udviklet nogen større Fuldenthed end i de mere civiliserede Lande i Europa, og derimod paastaaes, at de Forenede Stater i saare Meget staae langt tilbage for de paapegede europæiske. Men hvilken Andeel har nu for det første den nærværende Slægt af Amerikanere i denne kolosale Bygnings Opførelse og hvad virker den til dens Vedligeholdelse og Fuldendelse, saa at vi i Betragtning deraf skulle ansee den for mønsterværdig? Uafhængighedskrigen og Constitutionens Stiftelse vare Foretagender, der, trods den sidstes især senere bemærkbare Mangler, vakte en berettiget Sympathi og Beundring hos den humane Deel af den øvrige Verden, medens den nye Stat indgjød Respekt ogsaa ved sin materielle Vælde. Imidlertid var det amerikanske Folk ikke endnu modent for en saa udstrakt Frihed, som pludselig blev det til Deel, medens ogsaa andre, rigtignok af særegne Forholde fremtvungne Grundfeil eller Mangler ved Statsværket, maatte afstedkomme sine almene Ulemper, og iblandt disse fornemmelig Indrømmelsen af Slaveri-Indretningen.

Naar jeg for det første her taler om Folkets Umodenhed, da er min Mening væsentlig den, at der med Hensyn til Besættelsen af Embedsstillingerne i Staten blev sat Folket en større Opgave end det, som det fornemmelig senere alt mere og mere viste sig, var voxent til at løse, førend nemlig Mængden havde tilegnet sig et saadant Forraad af grundige Kundskaber, at der altid var Væddestrid imellem afgjort fortrinlige Qvaliteter.

Indtil da burde der være Garantier ved paalidelige Prøver. Enhver Frihed, som ei er tilstrækkelig lovbunden, bliver til fordærvelig Lovløshed saalænge Samfundet ikke har naaet en vis Fuldkommenhed og kun i Forhold til Fremskridtene mod denne kunne Baandene uden Fare efterhaanden løses. Men en saadan Fuldkommenhed findes ligesaa lidet i en ny politisk Skabning, som i selve den opspirende og vilde Natur med alt dens Ukrud og dens Vanskud; den er utænkelig, unaturlig. Derfor burde ogsaa de unge Fristater itide have foreskrevet sig selv et større Maadehold i Nydelsen af deres Frihed; da vilde dette Statslegeme ikke have været saa skrøbeligt, som det uimodsigeligen nu er. Følgerne af denne folkelige Umodenhed viser sig nu noksom i det Overfladiske, det Løse, det Upaalidelige, det Falske i enhver Embedsretning, idet Statens Embedsvæsen i Regelen maa overlades til Personer uden sand videnskabelig og grundig Dannelse. Det vil blive altfor vidtløftigt her at udvikle dette nøiere, men jeg antager, at Enhver strax finder tilstrækkelig Stadfæstelse af Bemærkningens Sandhed, allerede ved den blotte Henpegen paa det politiske, det juridiske, det medicinske Væsen, paa det af Amerikanerne selv saameget udskregne Oplysningsvæsen; er ikke ialfald Størsteparten et Mistmast og overfladisk, og bedragerisk Floskel og [ileg]?

Hvad dernæst Slaveri-Indretningen angaaer, da anseer jeg det unødvendigt at trætte Læserne med Gjentagelser af nogen af de mange Fremstillinger af denne bedrøvelige Gjenstand. Kun maa jeg gjøre nogle faa Bemærkninger. Det er en bekjendt Sag, at en eneste falsk og egennyttig Grundsætning er nok til i sine blinde Conseqventser at forstyrte al Sandhed og Billighed; saaledes følgelig ogsaa den, at Slaveriet er forsvarligt og bør fremmes. – Deraf de [ileg] Menneske-Røverier, [ileg] ligesaa skjændig Forbrydelse, som nogensomhelst, der er bleven straffet ved Bøddelense Haand; deraf Dannelsen af et hovmodigt, skamløst og raat Aristokrati, der selv kalder sig Demokrati, (!) der vilkaarligen og af Hjertenslyst mishandler sine Medmennesker værre, end det nogensinde skete i nogen anden af Verdens meest barbariske Stater, medens selv deres Qvinders naturlige Medfølelse sees udslukket; deraf dette Parties skamløse og næsten ligesom vanvittige Bifald til den raaeste, og forvoryneste, af hele den øvrige Verdens Foragt ledsagede Fremgangsmaade i selve Nationalforsamlingen foruden ved mange andre offentlige Leiligheder, nemlig den at møde Fornuftens og Menneskelighedens ubestridelige Grund med legemlige Mishandlinger af deres ædle og allerede derved personligen uendelig overlegne Modstandere, netop ligesom det var vant til at øve paa sine ulykkelige Slaver; – deraf endelig en Høiesterets Dom, som søger at befordre Skjændselsværket indtil den meest ubegrændsede Yderlighed. Og dette Parti styrer nu Staten, dette er det raadende Parti i Nationalforsamlingen, det er

Udvalget af den Majoritet, Præsidenten i sit Budskab er saa glad over kan raade, blot fordi den er en Majoritet, og uden Hensyn til dens sørgelige Væsen, i Betragtning af hvilket han snarere burde græde over en saadan Majoritet, og det desto mere jo rigere den er paa Slaverimænd.

Hermed vil jeg imidlertid ikke have udelukkende lastet enhver saakaldet Demokrat, da dette Ords Betydning, selv som Partinavn, her er meget variabelt, eller have afgjort ophøiet det republikanske Parti, der just heller ikke altid er frit for egennyttige Hensigter. – Det er kun den nævnte Grundsætning og dens Conseqventser, som jeg ubetinget fordømmer, især hvor den gjør sig gjældende til Slaveriets Udvidelse, hvilket jo langtfra er Enhvers Hensigt, som hører til det 'Demokratiske' Parit. Forøvrigt danner jo Slaveri-Indretningen den Grundfeil i de forenede Staters politiske Forfatning, at der kommer til at mangle Eenhed i dens Grundprinciper. Principet i den indtil Overdrivelse frie Grundlov er nemlig allerede modsagt i det Øieblik, den gives, ved sideordnede Bestemmelser af samme Gyldighed, den danne dens meest skjærende Modsætning, idet de kuldkaste Menneskets helligste Rettigheder ved at indrømme Slavevæsenets Berettigelse. Hvad Resultater kunde ventes heraf? – Hvad andre end: enten et voldeligt Overgreb af det Parti, der kan vinde Magten under de hadefuldeste og og fordærveligste borgerlige Tvistigheder eller tillige omsider en fuldkommen Adsplittelse med alle dens svællende Virkninger?

Det er nu 'denne store Stat' med dens vidtløftige Samfærdsel med andre Nationer, som 'Typo' synes at være saa indtagen i, at han allerede af disse ydre Grunde – nemlig Størrelsen og Forbindelserne – tager Anledning til at anbefale sit Amerikanisations-Forslag: Thi uden denne Mening er Nævnelsen deraf betydningsløs. Men lyder ikke dette omtr. som om En vilde opfordre Folk til at blive aandsbroderlig Medlem af et eller andet Selskab med et stort Huus – det være nu f. Ex. et Tugthuus eller et Bedehuus – blot fordi dette Huus havde en anseelig Størrelse samt et pralende Udseende og formedelst dets Beboeres udstrakte Bekjendtskaber? Om Selskabets indre Væsen, som er Livet og Sjælen, nævner han Intet. – Men naar der sees hen til det Sidste, som nu jeg anseer for Hovedsagen, saa mener jeg der er Opfordring til at sige: vogt Dig, o norske, svenske eller danske Mand for at blive lig den Amerikaner, som du seer drive sin 'Business,' ikke for at gavne sine Medmennesker eller Staten, men for egennyttigen at 'make money' med den fuldstændigste Samvittighedsløshed baade med Hensyn til hvorvidt han er sit antagne Hverv voxen og hvorledes han forøvrigt tjener Penge derved og som paa denne Maade paatager sig hva det skal være, vogt dig, siger jeg, for at forfalde til denne amerikanske 'Smartness,' og Staten vil have Grund til at takke dig og dine Børn om I kunne opspare for den Eders Stat af simpel nordisk Ærlighed; Staten er sandelig saa fattig paa dette Guld, at den maa vurdere det høit hvor du gjør det gjældende. Dog medens I med Eders Ærlighed ere eenfoldige som Duer, bør I ei heller glemme iblandt disse Folk at være kloge som Slanger. Fremdeles holder jeg for, at der er Grund til at udraabe: vogt dig, o Nordboer, for at blive enten Demokrat eller Republikaner, thi Partiaanden er altid egennyttig og uretfærdig, men forkast ikke heller det Gode, du maatte finde hos Nogen af dem, og foretræk den Bedste af dem. Endelig mener jeg, at der er Opfordring til at tage os selv iagt og forberede os paa at redde os ud af det muligens vordende Sodoma itide om der skulde komme en Dag, da vi selv med al vor oprigtigste Stræben ikke længere maatte kunne formaae noget til Forandring i de sørgelige Forholde, under deres videre Udvikling i nærværende truende Retning. Men lader os imidlertid heller ikke glemme vor Pligt at være virksomme Medborgere til det Gode medens vi, for bedre at forstaae og opfylde dette vort Verdenskald, saa godt vi formaae sætte os ind i Tingene og følge deres Gang.

Dernæst synes Hr. Typo i Statens indre Fremskridt at finde en vægtig Grund til hans projecterede Amerikanisation, uden at han dog befatter sig med at paapege hvorfor eller hvorledes de skulle tjene som Mønster for de Norske, saa at disse skulle ile med 'at forvandle sig fra Norske til Amerikanere i Sprog, Tanke og Følelse.' Lader da os, der ei forstaae denne Ting saa let som Forfatteren, betragte dette Hovedpunkt lidt nærmere, lader os berøre dets væsentligste Enkeltheder. I hvilke Retninger altsaa foregaae nu for det første de indre Fremskridt? Det er vel eller skal vel være i videnskabelig Henseende, idet Videnskaben danner Udspringet for næsten al praktisk Fuldkommenhed, fremdeles idet sig hertil sluttende øvrige Oplysningsvæsen af Ethvert Slags [ileg] i Literaturen, i de [ileg] saavelsom i de nyttige Kunster, i Handelsvæsenet, i Samfærdselsveien og endelig i det praktiske Arbeide. – I noget af dette, nemlig i de sidstnævnte Retninger, staae Nordamerikanerne unægtelig for en Deel paa et respektabelt Trin. Imidlertid benægtes det, at de forenede Stater i nogensomhelst Henseende endog heri staae over de mere civiliserede europæiske Lande, men derimod ogsa i dette paa Grund af forskjellige Mangler og Misligheder maa vurderes lavere. Og hvad de førstnævnte Gjenstande angaaer, hvilke skulle danne det ene paalidelige Grundlag for de øvrige, da aabenbarer der sig i dem alle en vis Kjærneløshed, et forfængeligt og indbildet Skinvæsen, der som bekjendt stiller Nordamerikanerne blot for de dannede europæiske Nationers Spot. At paapege og fremhæve Enkelthederne i dette udfordres særlige Afhandlinger. Imidlertid vil formeentlig Envher for sig let uden en sadan yderligere Fremstilling erkjende det Rigtige i mine Bemærkninger. Overeensstemmende med disse vil jeg have sagt til Skandinaverne, til mig selv: følg hvad der er efterlignelsesværdigt hos Amerikaneren, vurder hans Maskiner, hans Redskaber, hans praktiske Arbeider og agt ham derfor, bliv, om mulig, som han deri saalænge du ikke kjender noget bedre; men lad dig ikke heller derved beskikke saaledes, at du strax i Eet og Alt anseer ham som noget

Mønster, for En, der, som han oftest vil indbilde sig selv og Andre, veed Alt, eller ansee ikke hans Værk for ubetinget fuldkommen, bliv ikke derfor 'Amerikaner i Sprog, Tanke og Følelse.'

Endelig anfører, som berørt, Forfatteren det herværende Agerbrugs, efter hans Mening 'grændseløse' Resources der, ligesom han udtrykker sig, endog forsyner Europas udsultede ('starved') Nationer, som en Grund til at blive fra 'Norske til Amerikanere i Sprog, Tanke og Følelse'. Klinger det ikke for det første omtrent ligesom han fEx. kunde ville mene: bliv lig den værste Slaveholder, skjeld som han paa Engelsk, tænk som han, udryd alle andre Følelser end Egenkjærlighedens og Egennyttens ligesom han, ja tag ham i Et og Alt til Formønster, thi see hans rige Marker. – Lader os nu dog sætte, at Agerdyrkningsvæsenet kunde gjælde som en Grund til den paafordrede Forvandling. Hvilke Fortrin frembyder da denne Ernæringsgreen her fremfor i Europa? Det er nu for det første en bekjendt Sag, at den amerikanske Naturverden bærer et ringere Præg end den europæiske. Ligesaa bekjendt er det at Landbrugsvæsenet i Europa nu stadigen fuldkommengjøres efter de meest fuldendte videnskabelig-theoretiske og praktiske Principer, saa at Jorden paa mangfoldige Steder, som før vare værdiløse, nu frembringer den størst tænkelige Overflod. Ligesaa bekjendt er det, at Landbruget her i Amerika for størstedelen drives efter aldeles overfladiske og mangelfulde Theorier og ofte paa en rovmæssig Maade, idet Jorden udsuges og udpines for den øieblikkelige vindings Skyld, istedefor at forbedres *).

Fremdeles veed man, at uagtet den store Hjælp i de betydelige vestlige Vidder, som jo dog kun er tilfældig og paa en vis Maade midlertidig Fordeel, alligevel de østlige, ja selv allerede de vestlige Staters Befolkning ere besværede med en ligesaa betydelig Dyrhed og Vanskelighed for Næringsmidler som der nogetsteds findes i Europa **). Og lad det fremdeles gaae her som det nu gaaer, sa skulde vi med Tiden see, hvo der kommer til at lide meest av 'Starvation', enten det unge Nordamerika eller det gamle Europa. Eller sæt allerede nu dettes Befolkning, som i enkelte Lande beløber sig til 8000 Individer og tildeels meget der over i Gjennemsnit paa en Qvadratmiil (16 Sectioner), i Tanken for en Stund hen hen hvorsomhelst i Amerika, hvilket Land mon da bedst vil bevare dem for 'Starvation'? Efter dette vil jeg derfor sige: følg ved dit Landbrug Amerikaneren i hvad der er bedre end du selv veed, men ansee ham ingenlunde for uovertræffelig, og undlad derfor heller ikke at søge Kundskaber fra andre og bedre Kilder.

Efterat Forfatteren har gydet sin Virak paa sin amerikanske Afguds Altar, at den kunde stige op som en sød Vellugt for Yankeens Næse, henvender sig til den norske Mand, som han særligen byder hans Andeel af lignende Lækkerier. Han fortæller da os Norske, at vi allerede have gjort store Fremskridt i Omskabningsveien. Dette skal nu for det første vise sig deri, at vi, fra i Begyndelsen ikke at have forstaaet mere end Yes og No, nu ere avancerede saa vidt, at vi kunne drive Forretninger med Yankeerne. Er det ikke i Grunden som om han sagde: 'Nordmændene danne ingen Undtagelse ('form no exception') fra andre menneskelige Skabninger, saa at de mere end disse just ere umælende Dyr (saaledes som man maaskee kunde troe?): thi de kunne lære det engelske Sprog ved at leve iblant Personer, der tale det. Forøvrigt er vel ikke dette Fremskridt af synderlig anden Beskaffenhed end det, næsten alle smaa Børn begynde at gjøre, saasnart de have faaet deres nødvendigste Melketænder. Dernæst skal Fremskridtet aabenbare sig deri, at der gives de af os, som repræsentere os i Lovforsamlignerne og de, som indtage ærefulde og nyttige Stillinger i Samfundet. Naar man ogsaa her drøfter Indholdet uden at lade sig blænde af de Klingende Ord, siger da dette stort andet end: fremdeles see vi, at heller ikke vi Nordmænd mere end andre menneskelige Væsener mangle en fornuftig Sjæl; ti vi kunne tænke og erhverve os visse Indsigter fEx. ligesom Yankeerne. Med al fortjent og oprigtig meent Agtelse for de Norske, der ere blevne beærede med de berørte Stillinger, maa jeg, overeensstemmende med hvad ovenfor er sagt, bemærke, at der just ikke skal saa særdeles fremragende Egenskaber til for at pleie disse paa den sædvanlige Maade, saa at jeg derfor antager, at der gives mangfoldige Norske, som allerede førend de kom til Amerika, fraseet det manglende Bekjendskab til Forholdene, besadde en intellectuel Udvikling og Indsigtsfuldhed, hvorved de stode over mange af de Yankeer, der beklæde de omtalte Poster. Altsaa ville vi neppe heraf saa afgjort ('decidely'), som Forfatteren paastaaer, kunne godtgjøre Fremskridtet.

Efterat Hr. Typo saaledes har trakteret Yankeerne og de Norske hver med sine Sød-Sager, saa skal dernæst i Forening med de Sidste den skandinaviske Presseforening og Emigranten ogsaa have sine Godter af samme Deig. Den skandinaviske Presseforenings og Emigrantens Tilbliven skulle nu være Tegn paa vort amerikanske Fremskridt. Men ere da disse Ting andet end simpel Medfør af Nødvendigheden, at de Norske ligesom andre Væsener for sin egen Tarv, og det paa en Maade, som snarere etablerer en vis Grad af Selvstændighed, der danner et Værn mod altfor stærkt at rives med af den muddrede fremmede Strøm, end det er noget Fremskridt i denne Retning? Og ligesaalidt skyldes den Grad af Oplysning og Kraft, som heri er lagt for Dagen, i nogen Maade de Norskes aandige Udvikling i Amerika, men var heelt og holdent en reen skandinavisk Frembringelse. Den sidstnævnte Paastand af Forfatteren er altsaa aldeles falsk og løber ud i modsatte Retning af den, hvori han sigter, naar han paa denne Maade vil sige de Norske en Compliment, og hans selvbehagelige Deeltagelse som Aktiehaver med hensyn til samme Fremskridt gaaer saaledes dessværre tabt for os.

Iblandt Fremskridtene nævner han nu ogsaa Trykkeriets Flytning til Madison. Imidlertid er Tingen, skjøndt vel ei utrolig, dog endnu temmel dunkel, tænker jeg, for de Fleste, nemlig som Udtryk for et virkeligt Fremskridt iblant de Norske, om den end maaskee gjerne kan have sine vel meest materielle Fordele. Kun Tiden, mener jeg, vil kunne afgive sikkre og klare Beviser for det Hele, som jeg derfor hidtil næsten kun vil regne som et Forsøg.

Vi kunne altsaa aldeles ikke være enig med Hr. Typo i hans ubetingede Bestræbelse for at blive Amerikaner, især i Tanke og Følelse. Men lader os dog for et Øieblik tænke os Hr. Typos Opfordring som om den kunde være begrundet, hvad vil det da sige at blive Amerikaner i Sprog, Tanke og Følelse? Er det at tale, tænke og føle som en Slavehandler eller Slaveholder? – hvilket Slags Amerikanere jo nu, som nævnt, tilligemed andre Demokrater er de raadende i Staten; og baade af denne Grund og fordi Hr. Typo selv, ifølge Redactionens Bemærkning, er Demokrat, maa man vel nærmest antage, at han anseer det demokratiske Stempel hos Amerikaneren som det gjæveste, det kan vel derfor ikke være at blive republikansk Partimand med eller uden den gjængse Tilsætning af Know-Nothingisme eller andre egoistiske Grundsætninger? – og det om ogsaa Forfatteren naadigt eller liberalt nok beærer Emigranten, der jo hidtil har havt Ord for at være republikansk, med den særlige Interesse. Da en af disse Alternativer i Regelen her er uadskilleligt fra Begrebet Amerikaner, maatte man nu blive det Ene eller det Andet deraf. Desuden maaste nu Yankeecharacteren saaledes som den ovenfor i sin Almindelighed er skildred overhovedet antages, og da hid medbragte ædleste Træk i vor Nationalcharacter skulde vi altsaa søge at udslette for endog at vælte os i Smudset? – O nei sandelig, det har ingen Hast, tænker jeg, med Hr. Typo's 'Assimilisation', den kommer nok af sig selv tidsnok – desværre! Kun byder vort Kald som Medlemmer af Samfundet os efter Evne at bidrage vort Skjærv til at befordre det Lands Vel, hvori vi virke. Lader os ogsaa tilegne os det engelske Sprog saa godt vi kunde, men derhos bevare vort eget saalænge det gaaer an; thi med vort Sprog ville maaskee vore bedste Characteertræk forsvinde og at kunne to eller flere Sprog er altid et stort Fortrin, ogsaa derved, at det mere end de fleste andre Ting bidrager til at danne Aanden.

At derimod Emigranten skulde tale Engelsk, troer jeg er et mindre heldigt Forslag, da jeg for det første er bange for, at den istedetfor at vinde vilde tabe meget i Interesse hos dens norske Læsere, hvoraf de Fleste kun vanskeligen læse Engelsk og derfor helst vilde løbe over de engelske Stykker ligesom jeg har erfaret netop var Tilfældet med Typos Opsats. Og dernæst frygter jeg for, at Emigranten derved blev udsat for omsider at gaae i omtrent den modsatte Retning fra dens nuværende Maal, som netop væsentlig er at haandhæve Skandinavernes eiendommelige Tarv, hvortil jeg ogsaa som antydet regner den længst mulige Vedligeholdelse af deres Sprog. Hvis derfor nærværende Redaction, ligesom der paa Forfatterens Opfordring saa høfligen lovedes, gaaer ind paa dette Forslag, da troer jeg at den afviger fra den rette Bane. Dog heller ingen Yderligheder – der kunde jo gives særegne Anledninger, hvor det faldt af sig selv at bruge idetmindste et og andet Udtryk eller endnu mere.

Hvad angaaer Korthed, som Hr. Typo anpriser saameget, da troer jeg denne Regel som saa mange andre har sine Undtagelser, og det især med Hensyn netop til et offentligt Organ, som han fortrinsviis anbefaler den; thi til fuldstændig og klart at oplyse og begrunde en Sag slipper man vel sjeldent ud med Korthed. Og naar Hr. Typo vil stadfæste sin Bemærkning med Talemaaden: 'Brevity is the soul of wit,' saa viser han uheldigviis, at han ikke har forstaaet det Udtryk han selv anfører; medmindre det skulde være hans Mening, at Emigranten skulde sammensættes af lutter Vittigheder. Thi Talemaaden betyder: Korthed er Vittigheds Sjæl. Men Hr. Typo synes at have antaget det engelske 'wit' for eensbetydende med det norske Ord: Vet (Forstand), som her uheldigvis bliver meningsløst.

Saaledes kan jeg desværre, trods min bedste Villie, ikke endog i et eneste Punkt være enig med Hr. Typo, da Kjendsgerningerne i Forbindelse med den logiske Slutningmaades Magt uimodstaaeligen drage mig bort i den modsatte Retning af den, som han i sine ligesaa dristige som nøgne Fordringssætninger udpeger.

En Normand.

*) Ogsaa i denne Henseende viser Misligheden sig værke i Slavestaterne. I Staten Virginia er der saaledes som bekjendt umaadelige forhen verdifulde Landstrækninger, der ved Slaveholdernes ødelæggende Dyrkningsmaade ere forvandlede til værdiløse Ørkener, som man har forgjæves falbudet for nogle Cent pr. Acre.

**) Man erindres Optrinet i New York i næstsidste Vinter da mangfoldige Tusinde Mennesker paa Grund af Mangelen stimlede sammen og give tilbedste en [ileg]

APPENDIX 25

Extract from Rasmus B. Anderson, *Tale ved Femti-Aarsfesten for den Norske Udvandring til Amerika. Holdt i Chicago den 5te Juli 1875*. Chicago: Skandinaven, 1875.

Det er vor Pligt ligeoverfor baade Norge og Amerika, at tilegne os Alt, som er ædelt og godt i den norske Folkekarakters Eiendommeligheder, at leve os selv ind i vore Forfædres Aand og dernæst ved vort daglige Liv, ved Tale, Sang og Skrift at overføre denne samme Aand saavidt som muligt paa det amerikanske Folk, bringe den gamle ægte Nordmannaaand ind i det amerikanske Folkeliv, saa at Fremtiden kan se, naar den analyserer det Amerikanske Folk, at Nordmændene har været med som en Faktor i den Amerikanske Nations Udvikling.

[…]

Lader os ogsaa erindre, at vi i Amerikanerne have Efterkommere af vor egen Slægt. Vore amerikanske Medborgere ere nemlig nedstammede fra de Skarer, som forlod Norge for Harald Haarfagers Skyld og nedsatte sig i Frankrig og England. Og maaske have vi ogsaa dette tilfælles med Gange-Rolfs Ætlinge at vi henved tusen Aar senere forlod Norge af nogenlunde samme Grund som de. Vi søgte fuldkommen Frihed og Selvstændighed og fandt den i et Land, som vore Forfædre først havde opdaget under Republikaneren Leif Eriksons Ledelse og som de senere, gjennem Gange-Rolfs Efterkommere havde taget i Besiddelse og bebygget paa gammelt nordisk Vis.

Naar vi Norske derfor træffe sammen med vore amerikanske Medborgere, da er det et Møde mellom Brødre, som i tusen Aar har været skilte fra Hverandre.

[…]

Anmærkning. Det er maaske unødvendigt at gjøre opmærksom paa, at denne Tale paa enkelte Steder (til Ex. paa Side 17 og 18) indeholder endel Tanker og Udtryk, som den ærede Læser kan finde igjen – vistnok i en anden Dragt og i andre Forbindelser – i Henrik Wergelands Tale ved en Borgerfest i Eidsvold i 1834; og denne Eidsvold-Tale af Wergeland vil jeg paa det hjerteligste anbefale enhver Norsk i Amerika ikke alene at læse, men ogsaa at studere, indtil han bliver fuldkommen fortrolig med hele dens rige Indhold. – R. B. A.