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Norwegian Identity Politics in 19th and 20th Centuries



The Kingdom of Norway – Past Realities and References

- A North-West Atlantic empire in the High Middle Ages (=> ca. 1350)
- Ca. 1350-1500: Royal unions with Denmark and Sweden
- The Roman-Catholic Church: Nidaros as its center



The Watershed: The Lutheran Reformation 1536-1537. Christian III (1503-1559)

- Norway: province or kingdom?
- Roman-Catholic Church abolished
- Lutheran state Church with strict Royal control



Another Watershed 1813-1814:

Napoleon I (1769-1821) and Frederik VI (1768-1839)



The Norwegian «Summer King» 1814: Christian Fredrik (1786-1848)



Norway – Constitution and Independence 17 May 1814



1814-1905: Union Norway-Sweden.

King Carl Johan (1763-1844)



1905: An independent kingdom.

King Haakon VII (1872-1957) and Queen Maud (1869-1938)



Identity Politics?

- Political and cultural answers to the question: What is Norway? Have Norwegians something in common?
- Point of departure in 1814: A country without its own history, language, literature, institutions

Building Cultural Institutions: The University of Oslo (1811)



The Political Project: The National Assembly Grants – Exploring Norway's society and culture



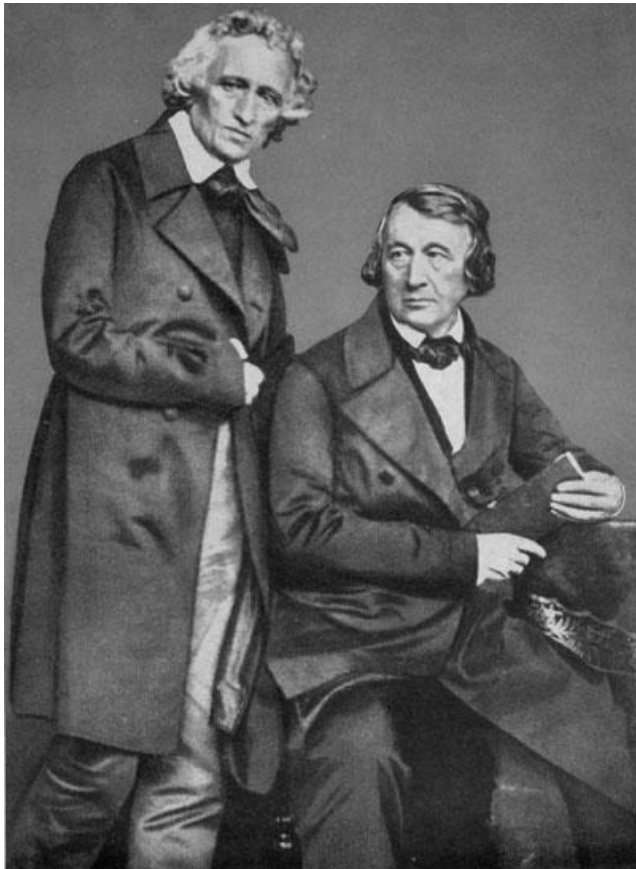
The Cultural Philosophy of Identity – A Romantic European Commonplace

- Language as container of culture
- History as a national, continuous «flow»
- The quest for the authentic or unspoiled culture
- Art as expression of nation, people and nature
- Culture as difference

The Philosopher: Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803)



The Prototypical Collectors and Interpreters: The Grimm Brothers (Jacob 1785-1863 & Wilhelm 1786-1859)



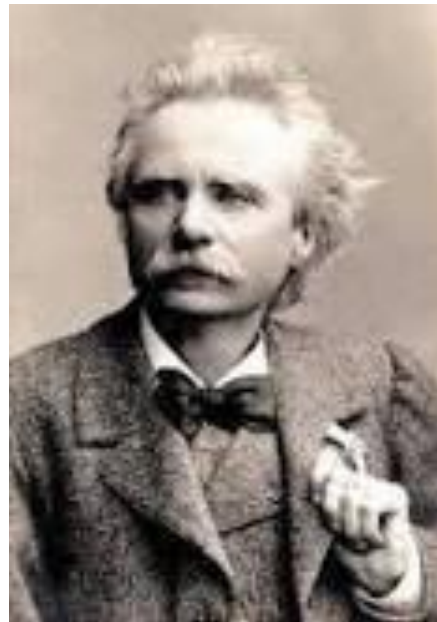
Constructing Language – Ivar Aasen (1813-1896): «The New Norwegian Language»



Developing Art – I. C. Dahl (1788-1857)



National Music – Ole Bull (1810-1880), Edvard Grieg (1843-1907) , Tarjei Augundson (1801-1872)

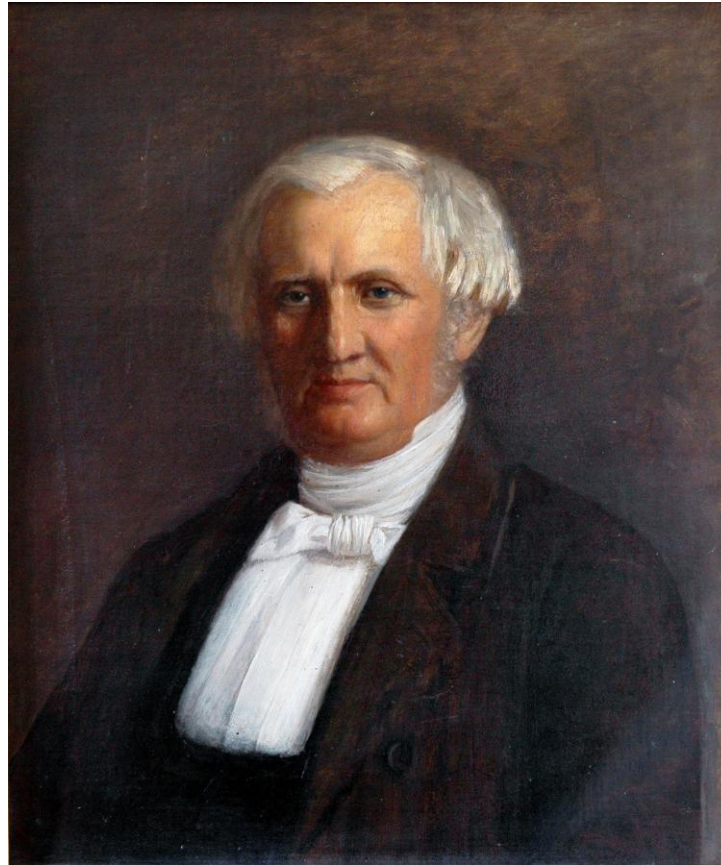


The National Historian: Peter Andreas Munch (1810-1863)

- Where did the Norwegians come from?
- The unspoiled culture
- The people formed by nature and history
- Frank, independent, equal brave



Andreas Faye (1802-1869): The Norwegian Legends (1833) – A European Contribution



Faye – contributor to:

- Historical knowledge
- Poetry and art
- Education
- Source criticism (what had really happened?)
- Language
- Conclusion: The closeness to nature, to the Middle Ages, to local societies

Jørgen Moe (1813-1882): The Norwegian Folktale – Literature & Aesthetics



Moe – contributor to

- Poetry and literature
- Language
- Genre theory
- Historical explanations
- «Norwegianness»

The National Storyteller

Peter Christen Asbjørnsen (1812-1885)

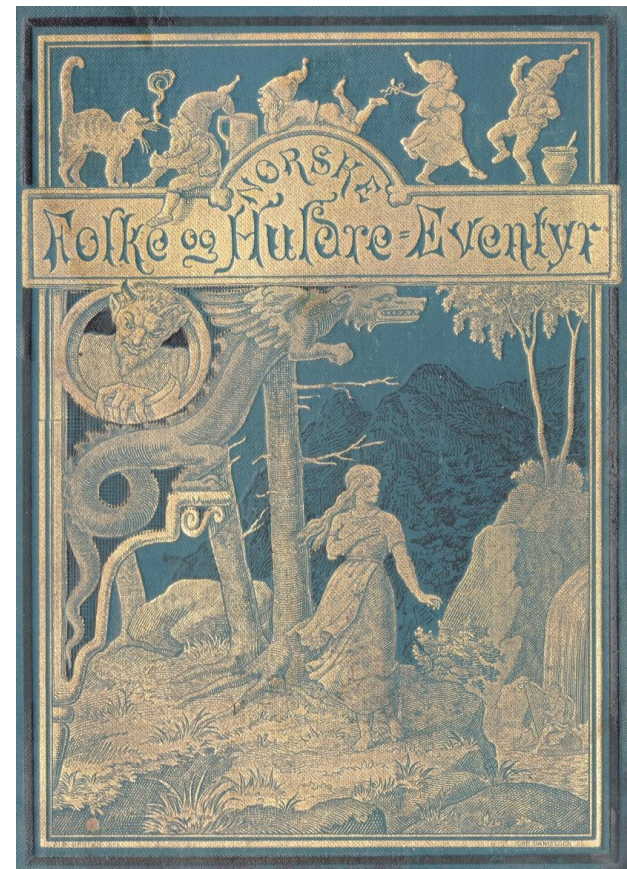
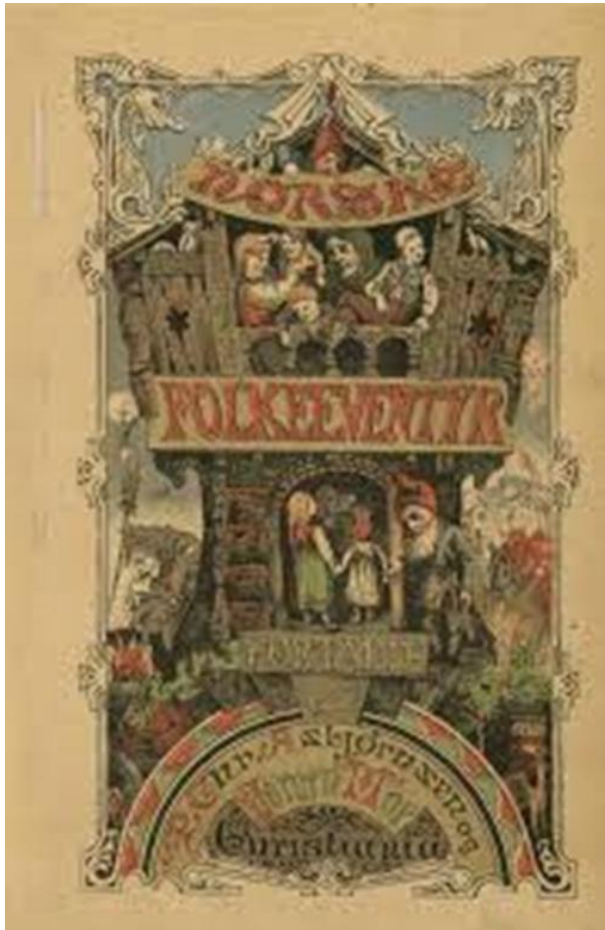


Moltke Moe (1859-1913) as First Professor of Folklore Studies in the Nordic Countries (1886)

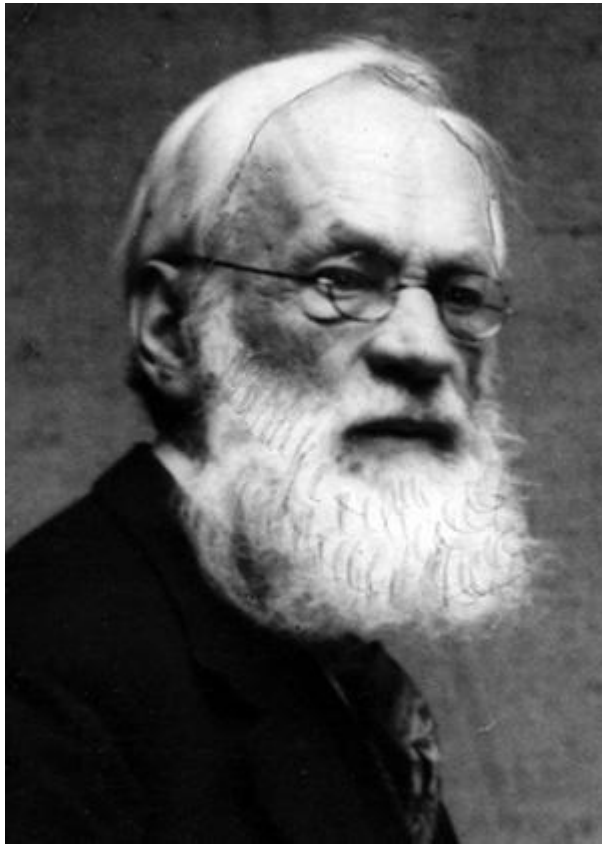
- Politization of national folklore
(common people vs. the elites)
Folklore as academic discipline
- International comparison
- «One Norwegian Tongue»
- The Middle Ages as the Utopia



The Publishers – The Educated Readers



The Artists: Erik Werenskiöld (1855-1938)



The Artists: Theodor Kittelsen (1857-1914)



Kittelsen Visualizing The Norwegian Trolls



The Conqueror: Fridtjov Nansen (1861-1930)

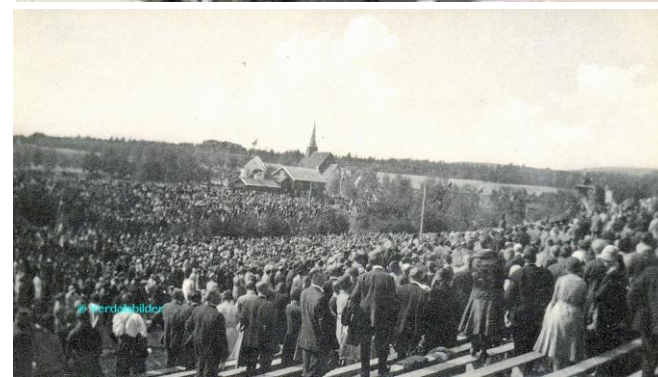
- Scientist
- Explorer
- Sportsman
- Nationalist
- Globalist



Museums: Norwegian Folk Museum 1895



Religion: National legacy?



The National Narrators Around 1900

- The nationalisation of culture: Fully established in the 1850s-1860s
- The marginalisation of culture: Industrialisation and urbanisation – «collecting the remnants of a lost culture»
- 1801: 0,9 million, 9 % in cities
- 1900: 2,2 million, 28 % in cities
- 1950: 3,5 million, 51 % in urban areas
- 2000: 4,5 million, 77 % in urban areas

The Imagined Norwegian Community

- National identity as a success: Religion, folklore, history, language
- The power of narrative and imagery
- The future?

Whose culture and history?

Halvdan Koht (1873-1965)

- Culture in a socialist country
- Nation building and solidarity
- May 17 or May 1?
- Building bridges between classes

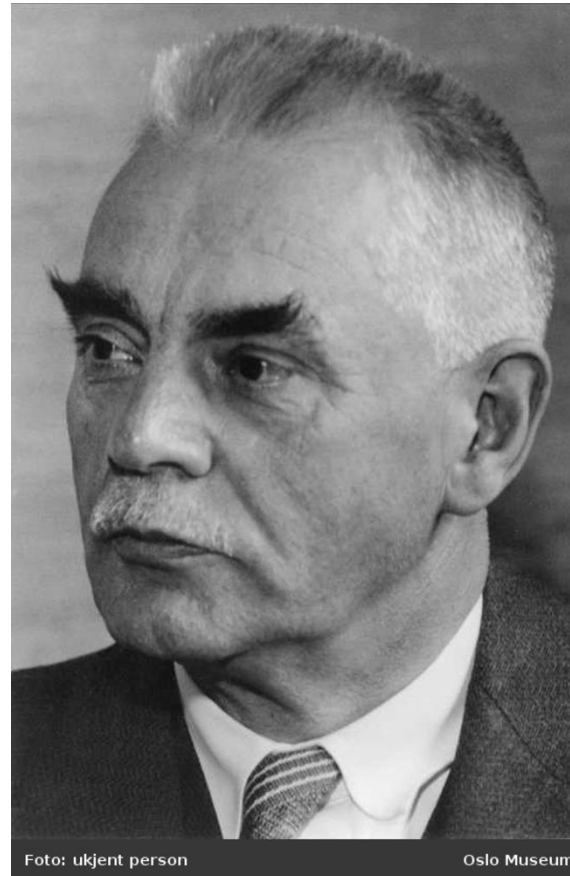


Foto: ukjent person

Oslo Museum

Post 1945: Whose Culture and History - A Nation of Minorities?

- Indigenous People: Sami
- National minorities: Kvens/Norwegian Finns, Jews, Forest Finns, Roma and Romani people
- Language, cultural heritage, historical narratives
- Continuous strategy: inclusion of new groups

A Non-European Nation? 1972, 1994



A Multicultural Nation? Integration or Assimilation?



A Grammar of National Identity Still Valid – Hommage à Herder

- Language
- History
- Narratives and symbols
- Rituals
- Identity politics for the future?