

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND

“Vi er alle Australiere”:

**The migrant newspaper *Norden* and its promotion of
pan-Scandinavian unity within Australia,**

1896-1940



A thesis submitted by

Mark Joseph Emmerson, BA (Hons), MA

For the award of the degree

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in History

2014

ABSTRACT

Between 1825 and 1930 over two million Scandinavians left their homelands as part of a mass exodus from Northern Europe, settling across the face of the globe and re-establishing networks of imagined communion. The Scandinavian-Australian newspaper, *Norden* (1896-1940), was integral in creating such networks and connecting migrant communities across vast transnational spaces, as well as historicising the extent of the Scandinavian diaspora's activities in the Antipodes. As a comprehensive, chronologically detailed record of the migrant communities' activities and aspirations over almost half a century, *Norden's* records have been a veritable gold mine of information concerning one of Australasia's overlooked minority groups. However, despite its immense value as a source and significance as a long-lived migrant institution, a thorough history of the Scandinavian-Australian migrant press remains unwritten. Furthermore, its overlooked importance as a cultural and social connector – and pan-Scandinavian community unifier – warrants direct scholarly attention.

This thesis charts the history of the Scandinavian foreign-language press in Australasia, from the first attempts to establish a migrant newspaper in the 1850s to the decline of *Norden* and its readership during World War II. *Norden's* establishment in the 1890s enabled scattered Scandinavian readers to identify as a small yet unified cultural group, and their ensuing involvement in wider society marks it as a significant site for migrant community-building despite Australia's vast distances. More importantly, this thesis uses *Norden's* influence to examine two major historiographical issues regarding Scandinavian-Australian migrants, namely pan-Scandinavian versus nationalist sentiments and the reactions of Scandinavians to Australian assimilation pressures. I argue that the Scandinavian foreign-language press transcended initial goals of reconnecting migrants to their countries of origin, and instead was critically influential in attempting to ethnicise a united Scandinavian-Australian identity. As an informational vehicle of first-generation migrants, *Norden* enabled isolated Scandinavians to reconnect on grounds of shared heritage and receive relevant news based on their individual circumstances, tailored to them in their own vernacular languages. It also gave a fragmented segment of Australia's immigrant population a much-needed sense of direction and purpose. While fostering this united sense of community was, in itself, insufficient to guarantee migrant identity, *Norden's* continual enunciation of its readership's uncertain status within Australian society – especially through the airing of grievances and stories of societal friction – worked together with other political, economic and social exclusionary factors to drive expressions of a 'Scandinavian-Australian' migrant group identity forward.

Norden acted as a powerful symbol of pan-Scandinavian unity at a time when homeland nationalist sentiments threatened to fragment migrants into separate Swedish, Danish and Norwegian groups, and destroy a united readership. While the individual nationalisation of migrant churches, clubs and societies limited the efficacy of pan-Scandinavian co-operation in Australia, this thesis argues that migrant newspapers required an inclusive pan-Scandinavian readership for economic and social survival. It is here that *Norden's* real significance is evident. In re-establishing networks of belonging and encouraging socially constructed migrant

groups to exist within a framework of dominant British-Australian society, *Norden* was indirectly combating assimilation pressures felt by its first-generation readership through the continuation of shared heritage, languages, and pan-Scandinavian cultural pursuits. In rallying a readership to its united cause, *Norden* ensured its own survival for as long as the migrant community's sense of ethnic identity lasted.

CERTIFICATION OF THESIS

I certify that the ideas, work, results, analyses, interpretations and conclusions reported in this thesis are entirely my own effort, except where otherwise acknowledged. I also certify that the work is original and has not been previously submitted for any other award, except where otherwise acknowledged.

Signature of Candidate

Date

ENDORSEMENT

Signature of Supervisor

Date

Signature of Supervisor

Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The production of this thesis has been a formidable task, and challenging in every aspect. Fortunately, I have not been alone, nor is the history profession as solitary as I had believed it to be when starting out. I have many people to thank for their continual support, advice, and friendship.

My Principal Supervisor, Dr Catherine Dewhirst, must of course receive my heartiest of thanks in putting up with me for such a long time. Guiding me in the right direction, Catherine's knowledge, diligence, continued encouragement and belief in my abilities have been crucial for the project's success. Thanks also go to my Associate Supervisor Dr Libby Connors, as well as that of Dr Robert Mason. The School of Arts and Communication at USQ has been supportive of my project, and I take the time here to thank all those who aided my studies.

I acknowledge the financial help I received from a USQ research grant, which enabled me to travel to various archive sources in Australia. I am appreciative of staffs of the many repositories that I visited, and their efforts to help me locate materials. I am also indebted to the University of Melbourne, who through the Anna Lodewyckz Icelandic Minor Scholarship were able to partly fund a trip to Sweden and take up a short guest researcher position at Linköping University's Institute for Migration, Ethnicity and Society (REMESO). The staff at REMESO, especially Dr Tünde Puskás, allowed me to share my research with experts in the field and garner much advice about how to tackle a history of this 'failed group', as Tünde called them.

While I was unable to make contact with John Martin before he passed away, I thank him as well as Olavi Koivukangas for their previous contributions to this field. While researching, I was constantly amazed at the breadth of knowledge accumulated by them, and often confounded when realising that they had beat me to an important document, idea, or story. I thank them for making me work harder and aiming at the unknown, and I hope this thesis adds to their influential studies.

Finally, to my wife Annelie, thank you for encouraging me to keep going. *Jäg älskar dig så mycket, snygging!* Our newborn son, Finn, should also be thanked for succeeding where I failed – setting a firm deadline for thesis submission.

I trust that readers will find this work informative and enjoyable, and that it is of sufficient quality and depth without losing meaning. Please understand that any faults in the research, analysis, writing or outcomes are entirely my own.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
CERTIFICATION OF THESIS	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF MAPS, TABLES, AND IMAGES	vii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	47
CHAPTER 3: PIONEERS OF PRINT: 1850-1896	73
CHAPTER 4: FOUNDING <i>NORDEN</i>:	
JENS LYNG, 1891-1906	99
CHAPTER 5: REVITALISING A COMMUNITY:	
THE CLAUSENS, 1906-1913	139
CHAPTER 6: A THREATENED READERSHIP:	
CARL FISCHMANN, 1914-1924	171
CHAPTER 7: THE LONG DAY CLOSES:	
<i>NORDEN</i>'S OBSOLESCENCE, 1925-1940	217
CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION	251
BIBLIOGRAPHY	257
APPENDICES	286

LIST OF MAPS, TABLES AND IMAGES

Plate 1:	‘The First Patient’, <i>Norden</i> , 31 October 1903, p. 1.	4
Plate 2:	‘Masquerade Ball’, <i>Norden</i> , 19 September 1903, p. 1.	14
Plate 3:	‘Composition of the Australian People’, in Jens Lyng, <i>Non-Britishers in Australia: Influence on Population and Progress</i> , Melbourne, Macmillan, 1927, p. 21.	24
Map 1:	‘Norway, Sweden and Denmark’ by F. Delamarche	28
Table 1:	Overseas Migration from Europe in the nineteenth-century	31
Table 2:	Percentage Distribution of Overseas Destinations	32
Table 3:	Australian Commonwealth Census: Overseas Born 1871-1991	35
Plate 4:	‘A Page of our History’, <i>Norden</i> , 21 August 1901, p. 1.	98
Plate 5:	Jens Lyng, <i>Norden</i> , 26 May 1906, p. 1.	114
Plate 6:	West Melbourne Printing Works, <i>Norden</i> , 30 September 1905, p. 1.	114
Plate 7:	‘From the Danish Association <i>Dannebrog</i> ’s Birdshoot in Melbourne, 13 April 1900’, <i>Norden</i> , May 1900.	120
Plate 8:	‘From the Scandinavian Carnival’, <i>Norden</i> , 17 September 1904, p. 1.	132
Plate 9:	‘The Carnival’, <i>Norden</i> , 3 October 1903, p. 1.	132
Plate 10:	‘Miss Olga Clausen’, <i>Norden</i> , 1 April 1911, p. 1.	146
Plate 11:	‘Norden’s Committee, 1913’, <i>Norden</i> , 21 December 1935, p. 3.	146
Plate 12:	‘From <i>Norden</i> ’s [Yearly] Party’, <i>Norden</i> , 10 July 1909, p. 9.	151
Plate 13:	‘The Scandinavian Lutheran Sunday School in Brisbane’, <i>Norden</i> , 1 July 1911, p. 5.	151
Plate 14:	‘The Danish Club <i>Dannebrog</i> ’, <i>Norden</i> , 1 March 1913, p. 17.	175
Plate 15:	‘Thor’s Birdshoot’, <i>Norden</i> , 1 March 1913, p. 19.	175
Plate 16:	The Hansen Army, <i>Norden</i> , 27 January 1917, pp. 3-4.	185
Plate 17:	‘J. C. Jensen, V. C.’, <i>Norden</i> , 5 October 1918, p. 5.	185

Plate 18:	‘Fallen in the War: Lance-Corporal C. W. Jansen’, <i>Norden</i> , 15 May 1915, p. 11.	185
Plate 19:	‘Norden’s Sub-Committee’, <i>Norden</i> , 13 November 1915, p. 3.	193
Plate 20:	‘Capt. J. Lyng’, <i>Norden</i> , 23 March 1918, p. 3.	193
Plate 21:	Scandinavia House, <i>Norden</i> , 9 July 1932, p. 6.	210
Plate 22:	‘Deeds and Doings of Scandinavians in Australasia’, <i>Norden</i> , 11 October 1924, p. 8.	232
Plate 23:	‘The Monument’, <i>Norden</i> , 5 April 1924, p. 3.	232
Plate 24:	The Second Generation, <i>Norden</i> , 22 February 1936, p. 5.	243
Plate 25:	Stalwart Supporters, <i>Norden</i> , 14 January 1939, p. 1.	243