

Thesis Prospectus

“Europeanization in Norway and Finland:
A Question of Identity, Security, Economy, or All of the Above?”

Madeline Goodwin

Advisor: Dr. Michael Metcalf

2 October 2006

Thesis Prospectus

Working Title: "Europeanization in Norway and Finland: A Question of Identity, Security, Economy, or All of the Above?"

I. Research Question(s)

What major factors have contributed to the nature of Norwegian and Finnish relationships with the European Union (EU)? Why has Norway remained resistant to full EU membership when three geographically, historically, politically, and economically close neighbors – Denmark, Sweden and Finland – have joined the Union over the past four decades? Why has Finland experienced a comparatively easy transition to full European membership, and why has Europeanization received a fairly broad measure of popular support from Finnish citizens? How can one account for the different attitudes of Norway and Finland toward European integration in an increasingly globalized world?

II. Hypothesis

Some scholars, such as Christine Ingebritsen, argue that rational self-interest in the economic and security spheres is the primary element behind the different Scandinavian attitudes toward European integration. Other scholars, such as Lene Hansen and Ole Wæver, argue that the compatibility (or lack thereof) of Scandinavian national identities with a supranational European identity is the primary element behind the various attitudes of Scandinavians toward Europeanization. I want to argue instead that, in order to more fully explain the nature of Norwegian and Finnish attitudes toward Europeanization, a synthesis of these viewpoints must occur. I will test the hypothesis that neither national identity nor rational self-interest alone can account for reluctance or acceptance of European integration; instead, both factors play a significant role in the way that Norwegians and Finns view themselves in relation to Europe.

National identity, for my purposes, refers to a set of "shared norms...about political and social order" by which citizens relate to their nation, and to the position of the state in global situations such as "foreign policy traditions and experience of foreign rule."¹ Additionally, security here refers to national feelings of safety, protection and defense in relation to other

¹Sieglinde Gstöhl, "Scandinavia and Switzerland: Small, Successful and Stubborn Towards the EU," *Journal of European Public Policy* 9:4 August 2002: 537.

nations and to national and international conflicts, such as the occurrence and eventual end of the Cold War. The terms European integration and Europeanization will be used synonymously to refer to the influence of the EU on citizens in Norway and Finland.

Two political theories, constructivism and rationalism, relate to my hypothesis for this thesis. Constructivism is the idea that interests, instead of being predetermined, are “socially constructed”; the theory often revolves around issues of identity – specifically, how identity is formed and constructed in relation to social factors and shared norms. My interest in constructivism lies in examining the compatibility of the Norwegian and Finnish national identities with a greater European identity. I am also interested in constructivism as it applies to the idea that Norway and Finland have joined or resisted the EU based on how they have constructed images of Europe as relating to their national identities. Rationalism is the idea that people or states make rational decisions by ordering preferences and deciding on the best choice with regard to self-interest; interests are seen as material in nature, and states are said to pursue foreign policy based on an analysis of costs and benefits. I am interested in rationalism as it applies to the way in which Norway and Finland have made choices about EU relationships based on economic and security interests.²

III. Pertinence of the Issue at Hand

Many people view Scandinavia as a homogenous and social-democratic bloc of countries. It is interesting to research the basis of varying Scandinavian attitudes toward European integration because such a study provides: 1) an ability to overcome homogenizing stereotypes and understand Scandinavia for the diverse region that it is, and 2) an appreciation of the fact that, despite similarities, each Scandinavian country is rather distinct and unique. In light of the EU “legitimacy debate” that has arisen with the European expansion of recent years, it is particularly useful to examine the “crisis perceptions” of the reluctant Scandinavians in an effort to understand the widening gap between the European political elites and electorate.³ While Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland are all “reluctant Europeans,” it is interesting to compare Norway and Finland because both are “twentieth century nations,” in the sense that

²Ben Rosamond, “New Theories of European Integration.” *European Union Politics*. Ed. Michelle Cini (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2003) 121-122.

³Lene Hansen, “Introduction.” *European Integration and National Identity*. Ed. Lene Hansen (Florence, KY, USA: Routledge, 2002) 3-4.

both were long dominated by other states and national identity has emerged fairly recently as a matter of concern. Denmark and Sweden, by contrast, are more confident about national identity because, as nations that have long been independent, they have had more time to figure out how to define themselves. It is especially pertinent to compare Norway and Finland with regard to Europeanization because, while Norway is one of the most reluctant nations in Europe toward the idea of integration, Finland is characterized by a lack of reluctance that is surprising when compared to the other Nordic countries and, instead, a rather easy transition to EU membership. Indeed, Finland has experienced the highest EU popular approval ratings of the Scandinavian countries. Additionally, each nation represents a special phenomenon – Norway is the only country that, when presented with the option of EU membership, has said ‘no,’ and Finland is the only Nordic EU member that does not widely perceive Europeanization as a threat to national identity.⁴

Finally, so long as the factors responsible for the varying Norwegian and Finnish attitudes toward European integration remain unresolved, the issue continues to be a pertinent and interesting question for research and discussion.

IV. Methodology

Drawing primarily upon secondary sources, I will use the theoretical framework presented above to build on prior research that I carried out in Stockholm, Sweden, in the winter of 2005. This prior research provides a solid basis for my thesis: a comparative study of Norway and Finland with regard to European integration.

I will begin the thesis with a discussion of pertinent background information about Norwegian and Finnish identity formation, economics, security history, and relationships with the EU. I will next begin my analysis with Norway - first addressing national identity issues enveloped by constructivist theory, and then addressing economic and security-related issues of self-interest that can be connected with rationalist theory. I will then analyze Finland in the same method as Norway, relating ideas of national identity followed by ideas of self-interest to European integration attitudes. Finally, I will conclude with a summary of my findings and a look toward the future of Europeanization in the two countries.

⁴Pertti Joenniemi, “Finland in the New Europe: A Herderian or Hegelian Project?” *European Integration and National Identity*. Ed. Lene Hansen (New York: Routledge, 2003) 182-183.

In my research to date, two journals – *Scandinavian Studies* and *Cooperation and Conflict* – have emerged as key sources of articles that will be useful to me. Both journals discuss the ways in which European integration has affected national identity, economics, and security policy in the Scandinavian countries. Furthermore, the book titled *European Integration and National Identity: The Challenge of the Nordic States*, edited by Lene Hansen and Ole Wæver, offers a variety of viewpoints and theories regarding the nature of European integration in four of the Scandinavian countries. Finally, the book titled *Small States in International Relations*, edited by Christine Ingebritsen, Iver Neumann, *et al*, examines how small states such as Norway and Finland react to international pressures in today's increasingly connected and globalized world.

My research has not yet revealed any pertinent primary sources, but I am still looking around for some. Eurobarometer polls may be of some use to me in the future, as well as voter exit polls from various elections in Norway and Finland.

Following is a brief list of additional articles and books found thus far that will be helpful in my continuing research.

V. Bibliography of Articles Deemed Useful Thus Far

Alapuro, Risto

1992 Finland, Thrown Out Into the World Alone. *Scandinavian Studies* 64 (4): 699-708.

Browning, Christopher S.

2002 Coming Home or Moving Home? 'Westernizing' Narratives in Finnish Foreign Policy and the Reinterpretation of Past Identities. *Cooperation and Conflict: Journal of the Nordic International Studies Association* 37 (1): 47-72.

Cole, Paul M.

1992 Competing Interests in the Nordic Region. *Scandinavian Studies* 64 (4): 614-625.

Einhorn, Eric S.

2002 Just Enough ("Lagom") Europeanization: The Nordic States and Europe. *Scandinavian Studies* 74 (3): 265-286.

Einhorn, Eric S., and John Logue

2004 Can the Scandinavian Model Adapt to Globalization? *Scandinavian Studies* 76 (4): 501-534.

Eliassen, Kjell A., and Nick Sitter

2003 Ever Closer Cooperation? The Limits of the 'Norwegian Method' of European Integration. *Scandinavian Political Studies* 26 (2): 125-144.

Gstöhl, Sieglinde

2002 Scandinavia and Switzerland: Small, Successful and Stubborn Towards the EU. *Journal of European Public Policy* 9 (4): 529-549.

Hansen, Lene, and Ole Wæver, eds.

2003 *European Integration and National Identity: The Challenge of the Nordic States*. New York: Routledge.

Henriksen, Carol

1992 The Scandinavian Languages and the European Community. *Scandinavian Studies* 64 (4): 685-698.

Ingebritsen, Christine

1992 As Europe Changes, Will Scandinavia Remain the Same? *Scandinavian Studies* 64 (4): 641-651.

Ingebritsen, Christine

2004 Learning From Lilliput: Small States and EU Expansion. *Scandinavian Studies* 76 (3): 369-384.

Ingebritsen, Christine, Iver Neumann, Sieglinde Gstöhl and Jessica Beyer, eds.

2006 *Small States in International Relations*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Jungar, Ann-Cathrine

2002 Integration by Different Means: Finland and Sweden in the EU. *Scandinavian Studies* 74 (3): 397-426.

Larsen, Knud S., David H. Groberg, Gyorgy Csepeli, *et al*

1995 Ideology and Identity: A National Outlook. *Journal of Peace Research* 32 (2): 165-179.

Logue, John

1992 Of Maastricht, Social Democratic Dilemmas, and Linear Cucumbers. *Scandinavian Studies* 64 (4): 626-640.

Ollila, Anne

1998 Perspectives to Finnish Identity. *Scandinavian Journal of History* 23 (3-4): 127-137.

Øyvind, Østerud

2005 Introduction: The Peculiarities of Norway. *West European Politics* 28 (4): 705-720.

Pinder, John

2001 *The European Union: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press Inc.

Rieker, Pernille

2004 *Europeanization of Nordic Security: The European Union and the Changing Security Identities of the Nordic States*. *Cooperation and Conflict: Journal of the Nordic International Studies Association* 39 (4): 369-392.

Rinehart, Robert

2002 *Finland's European Vocation*. *Scandinavian Studies* 74 (3): 427-440.

Strøm, Kaare

1992 *Norway, Sweden, and the New Europe*. *Scandinavian Studies* 64 (4): 498-528.

Svåsand, Lars

2002 *The Re-Emergence of the EU Issue in Norwegian Politics*. *Scandinavian Studies* 74 (3): 329-348.

Vibe, Kjeld

1992 *Norway in a Changing Europe*. *Scandinavian Studies* 64 (4): 582-593.

Wormuth, Diana

1992 *Meeting 1993: The Scandinavian Commercial Sector and the New Europe*. *Scandinavian Studies* 64 (4): 672-684.