

**THE HISTORY AND TRADITIONS
OF FRILUFTSLIV**

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INTRODUCTION

Of the plentitude of Norwegian books which have been written about friluftsliv few have explored its traditions and even fewer its history in any detail. That which has been written on these subjects is usually precursory and superficial since the focus of attention is generally on the physical aspect rather than the spiritual inspiration. It is this attention to the physical which, in the past, has detracted from any serious study being given to the history and traditions of friluftsliv and this has particularly been the case in recent decades. However, friluftsliv has long traditions which find their roots, as will become clear, in the Age of Romanticism.

The task of tracing these roots is not apparently simple. The Age of Romanticism was many things. It was a comprehensive cultural movement with a seeming plurality of diverse arts and philosophies and its development brought ever new perspectives. However, that which stands central to romanticism as well as friluftsliv is the perception of universal truth: man's relationships to his world/cosmos and himself. It is these fundamental movements within romanticism which are the key to understanding the development of friluftsliv. Since the nature of this cultural movement was, by its own definition, organic, it is impossible to avoid contradictions of perspective when exploring the development of a single phenomenon such as friluftsliv, but by concentrating on the fundamentals it is possible to see that these apparent contradictions become expressions of the same universal phenomenon.

The development of friluftsliv from these fundamental romantic principles has a deeper significance: the association of such a phenomenon, which is now widely portrayed in its purely physical form, with the cultural movement of the romantic period indicates its manifestation as being intrinsically spiritual. So pervasive was the Age of Romanticism in European life that it is now receiving recognition as being a 'paradigm'. It is from this perspective that friluftsliv can be seen as a spontaneous and natural expression of the mood of the times and thereby a movement of considerable cultural significance in itself. By portraying friluftsliv in its cultural historic perspective it is hoped that this significance might be appreciated.

1. ETYMOLOGY

Friluftsliv as a modern word occurs in the languages of Denmark, Sweden and Norway. However, in referring to the appropriate dictionaries of each of these languages one notices marked lack of information available regarding the etymology of this word. The Swedish dictionary, Ordbok över svenska språket (1926) mentions the writer Heidenstam who used 'friluftsliv' in 'End' in 1889. The Danish dictionary, 'Ordbok over Det Danske Sprog' (1924) does not mention friluftsliv but observes:

'Friluft: først alm, brugt siden midten af 19aah. i talespr. næppe uden for ssgr.'
and under the title 'frilufts -'

'Friluftsnydelse. 'Vorthjem' (Red af Emma Gad 1903) jævnfor under - 'liv'.

The Norwegian dictionary, Norsk Riksmålsordbok (1937) mentions friluftsliv only as a word without explanation. One must refer to:

'Friluft: landets friluft. Ibsen: Kærlighedens Komedie (1873).'

One is also referred to 'Fri - (2d)' where it states:

'Fri: åpen og vid: uten tengede skrankes for utsynet',

after which are given several examples of 'fri utsikt' plus 'i Guds frie natur'.

Considering how much the word friluftsliv has been increasingly used particularly in modern times, such lack of clear etymological explanation is surprising, especially since, on closer inspection, there is a clear relationship between Scandinavian concepts of 'fri', 'fri-luft' and 'friluftsliv'. The Danish reference to the middle of the nineteenth century, together with the cross references by the Norwegian dictionary of 'fri' and 'fri luft' finally mentioning 'i Guds frie natur', is clearly an indication of 'friluftsliv' having its birth within the Romantic Period of nineteenth century Scandinavia. Further literary evidence supports this.

Henrik Ibsen was possibly the first writer to use 'friluftsliv' in 1859 in his poem 'Paa Vidderne':

*'I den øde sæterstue
al min rige fangst jeg sanker:
der er krak og der grue
friluftsliv for mine tanker.'*

From its date, subject and style, it is clear that this is very much a romantic poem and since this is the earliest reference to friluftsliv within Scandinavian literature, one can accept its origin as being Norwegian. From a pure etymological basis, therefore, one must accept Ibsen's use of the word 'friluftsliv' as being the earliest intentional use in literature. To understand the full implications of the word 'friluftsliv' however, one must also understand the fundamental spirit of Romanticism and how, for Norway, such a phenomenon became of national significance in the course of the nineteenth century.

2. ROMANTICISM

The unfortunate tendency to use 'romantic' and 'sentimental' as interchangeable words of similar meaning within the English language often leads to an apprehensive, if not cynical, response whenever the word 'romanticism' is used in, for example, a social or political context. Such a response seems to arise from a misunderstanding since criticising something for being 'romantic' often proclaims romanticism to be unpractical and, more popularly, out of touch with reality. Such criticism is not valid. It is precisely the concept of 'reality' which is the key issue in understanding the spirit of romanticism and thereby, as will become clearer, the spirit of friluftsliv.

The origins of romanticism are to be found in a time of cultural turmoil, a time of reaction against the so-called Age of Enlightenment. To understand this reaction it is worth examining the underlying features of the Age of Enlightenment, how man's relationship to his environment and himself had altered dramatically in the course of two centuries.

The progress of science and scientific thought was rapid throughout Europe from the fifteenth century. In the sixteenth century man's assumed dominant position in the universe (after God) was severely shaken by Copernicus. Galileo, also, clashed with the church, which, it must be remembered, represented universal truth, through his achievements in astronomy, but more importantly, as Fritjof Capra observes:

*'Galileo was the first to combine scientific experimentation with mathematical language to formulate the laws of nature he discovered.'*¹

These 'laws of nature' were further researched in England by Francis Bacon. He was the first to conduct scientific experiments using the theory of inductive empirical logic. René Descartes developed, obversely, his own rational and deductive method of scientific experiment. These two methods of scientific enquiry became unified by Isaac Newton who, in his time, exemplified the attitude of what had now become the Age of Enlightenment.

In the seventeenth century, the European view of reality was altering. The previous concept of an organic, living and spiritual universe became replaced by that of a machine. It was the world machine which developed as the dominant metaphor of a new and 'modern' era. This was achieved by the acceptance of logic and rationalism as the only methods of enquiry into the nature of reality. Nature, in its cosmic aspect, was reality and it was nature which was explained logically, as a machine. The cultural implications of this were great. A pure logical explanation of the universe implied that nature could now be predicted and thereby controlled. Descartes proclaimed man to be 'maître et possesseur de la nature' whilst earlier, Bacon had insisted that nature should be 'hounded in her wanderings', 'bound into service' so the scientist might 'torture Nature's secrets from her'. Such attitudes were used to maintain 'order' in the world. Indeed, the Newtonian physics in the Age of Enlightenment were based on a rational order in the natural processes. Refinement in understanding this 'order' was the overwhelming subject for art, architecture and culture generally throughout the seventeenth and first half of the eighteenth centuries. But as Per Øhrgaard observes:

*'Da opplysningstiden tanker ble til virkelighet, førte dette ofte noe skremmende med seg - selv mennedskets egen dyktighet ble truende... Men når maskinen for alvor begynner å erobre verden, ses den også som uttrykk for menneskets unatur.'*²

It is against this fundamental background that the so-called 'Sturm und Drang' movement began in Germany during the last decades of the eighteenth century. At that time Germany was a collection of small states with no real centre of authority of administration. The concept of a rational universe had developed to include the rational social order, particularly in France and England. As such Germany was a natural place for a reaction considering her relative political disunity and also her national temperament. Freedom and nature became the new focuses of attention:

*'Opplysningstiden hadde riktignok holdt oppgjør med tidligere fordommer, men den hadde også skapt sitt eget system som truet med å undertrykke det individuelle. Dypest sett er det det diktatoriske i fremskrittet, den tiltagende rasjonalistiske forvaltningen av verden som Sturm og Drang reageret mot.'*³

The first person to really formulate this reaction was Jean-Jaques Rousseau (1712-78). Born and brought up in Geneva, he spent much of his adult life travelling. As such he experienced a great contrast between the civilised town life and life in the natural environment. His ideas about this contrast were first expounded in his 'roman': 'Émile' which, in many ways, was autobiographical. Nature plays a central part in the book"

*'Fra naturen av er alle mennesker like.'*⁴

According to Rousseau, the advance and development of Enlightenment principles within science and art had so affected society that people had become lazy and corrupt. In 'Émile', Rousseau presents a positive view of a nature based religion and in addition he proposes a more natural way for the fostering of youth.

Such ideas attacked the very roots of society during the middle of the eighteenth century. 'Émile' was condemned by the authorities and Rousseau fled back to Switzerland. The book, however, received so much attention that Rousseau became a great controversial figure of his time. His view of nature as being the natural home for everyone received wide acclaim by a new generation somewhat disillusioned by the inhibitions, fossilization and downright corruption which had become apparent within the 'enlightened' society. Freedom from these inhibitions and restrictions was to be found in nature, that is, unspoilt nature which still flourishes in the natural rhythms of an organic whole. 'Free-nature' was now the focus of attention for a growing number of academics and educated people. However, Rousseau's philosophy was really made popular in the Germany of the 'Sturm and Drang' period where the roots of romanticism began to take form.

Johann Wolfgang Goethe (1749-1832) is perhaps one of Europe's most successful writer philosophers of the period. Born in Frankfurt, he was a key figure in advancing the new reactionary ideas. Goethe was directly opposed to all rationalisation of reality:

'Bak Goethes naturstudier lå forestillingen om verden som en organisk sammenheng av vekst og utfoldelse og om mennesket som en del av enne helheten.'

From nature one learns that one is a participant:

*'For ham kunne subjekt og objekt nettop ikke skilles radikalt fra hverandre i erkjennelsesprosessen.'*⁵

Goethe's popularity greatly helped to bring about a change of cultural focus within Europe. Germany's "Sturm und Drang" developed from a reactionary movement to a firm manifestation of cultural activity.

By 1800, nature particularly 'free-nature' had become very much the centre of cultural attention. The tradition of writing had also changed. The restrictive rhetorical rules, which had previously governed literature were now sundered by the Romantics who especially delighted in interspersing prose with poetry and exploring individual character and so developed the 'roman' from whence 'Romantic'. It was poetry which came to play a central rôle in German, and indeed Norwegian, Romanticism. One of the greatest influences on such conceptions of poetry came from Friedrich Schlegel (1722-1829) who drew comparisons between mythology and poetry. Poetry for him was organic and in its purest form there existed '*den progressive universal poesi*'.⁶ Poetization of nature became central to all Romanticism, free-nature especially playing a fundamental rôle. Freedom was often synonymous with spirit and this idea was formulated and expounded by perhaps Germany's greatest romanticist.

Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling (1775-1854) was born in Leonburg. During his education he became particularly interested in Spinoza and Kant who greatly influenced his development of a nature-philosophy. Conscious participation in the organic reality was expounded by Schelling. The concept of freedom, originally a reaction against the restrictions of Enlightened ideals, was now expressed in the concept of spirit. This was further developed by Schelling:

*'Die Natur als den sichtbar Geist, den Geist als die unsichtbar Natur.'*⁷

Nature (free-nature) and spirit are the fundamental reality and it is only within this reality that people can develop naturally and thereby find their true identity. It is perhaps Schelling who was the most important romanticist of his time. In further expounding and developing the fundamental principles of a nature-philosophy as begun by Rousseau and Goethe, he was greatly instrumental in establishing a firm tradition amongst the educated classes of seeking wisdom and inspiration from free-nature. It is this tradition which spread throughout Europe and, most importantly, to Norway.

3. THE SPREAD OF ROMANTICISM TO NORWAY

It is useful to date the arrival of romanticism to Scandinavia from a series of lectures given in Copenhagen in 1802 by Heinrich Steffens (1773-1845). Steffens was of Norwegian blood but his connection with Germany was far stronger. His lectures inspired others, not least Adam Oehlenschläger (1779-1850) who did much to establish romanticism in Denmark. At this time Norway was still ruled from Denmark. Education was controlled by the Danish upper classes and only the better off Norwegians were able to afford the university education in Copenhagen. It was here that 'Det Norske Selskab' had been founded which in many ways was both a reminder of Norwegian national identity within Denmark and a cultural bridge between Europe and the half-unknown mountain wilderness of Norway. However, this student society had little in the way of real influence and, like the seasonal norm, the Spring of romanticism was to come late to Norway.

The most important rôle of 'Det Norske Selskab' was played, perhaps, unwittingly. Its existence meant that as early as 1811 an artist, who was to become one of Europe's greatest, could travel to Copenhagen to further his education. He was also to be responsible for Norwegians enjoying intimate contact with European romanticism.

Johann Christian Claussens Dahl was born on February 24th 1778 in Bergen. After an apprenticeship as a decorative painter in his home town, his talent was recognized and the burgher society 'vennedkredsen' raised enough money to allow Dahl to continue his training at the Art Academy of Copenhagen. It was here in 1811 that Dahl first came into real contact with romanticism but as he later recounts:

*'In Copenhagen I met the two Swiss, Senn and Voss, both painters of talent. From them I received many a word of advice which kept me from leaving the Nature Way [Naturvei].'*¹

His love of nature, then, had begun in Bergen. This suggests that Dahl's 'Naturvei' was spontaneous rather than cultivated and accorded to the Rousseau tradition. Although Dahl never became an eloquent ambassador of his 'Naturvei', he was able to develop his ideas in Dresden where he lived from 1820. It was here that he embarked upon a career as a landscape painter.

He was in full empathy with Rousseau and Schelling. As a student in Copenhagen he wrote:

*'De Kunstnere jeg: i landskaper mest søger at danne mig efter er Røysdahl og Everdingen...dog studeres jeg først og fremst Naturen.'*²

As such he caught the mood of the times. He recognized that in his native Norway were all the elements so sought after by the European romantics, that is, unspoilt free-nature where 'the noble savage' of Rousseau was to be found, dressed now in the costume of the Norwegian 'bonde'. The Swiss Alps had become the great attraction for the educated and Dahl determined to show his audiences that his homeland was at least equally rich in romantic experiences. Thus his own consequent rise in popularity led to an increasing European awareness

of Norway as a land with its own very special characteristic: this previously half-forgotten once Danish state on the European periphery became the land of majestic free-nature with a noble population of mountain farmers who had not yet lost their contact with nature's rhythms. It was these farmers, the 'bonde', who became known as 'de vilde' and who the now Norwegian-conscious Europeans came to regard as being Norwegian. The dramatic scenery remained the primary attraction and there are many accounts, particularly in German, of how popular it was to travel to Norway in the first decades of the nineteenth century.

Dahl, therefore, can be seen as one of the most important figures in bringing Norway into European consciousness, not just because he became a popular, widely known painter of Norwegian landscapes but also because he began a tradition of Norwegian painters who lived and worked in Germany faithfully portraying rural scenes from their homeland. Such painters include Peter Blake, Adolf Tideman and Hans Gude. They provided a continuing reminder throughout the nineteenth century of Norway's dramatic free-nature and, particularly later, the mountain farmers who epitomized the romantic ideals of men living in harmony with nature.

Norway, then, became popular in Europe. For a people struggling to create and maintain a national consciousness and identity, this was greatly welcomed. However, the privileged upper classes who were attempting to form the new Norwegian identity were still largely influenced by the later principles of the Age of Enlightenment. It was in the town where the educated people were mainly to be found and here they determined to raise themselves above what they considered to be the depravity of rural life.

Until 1814 Norway had for several centuries been under the rule of Denmark. Danish language and culture had become the norm for all the privileged classes and the capital city was Copenhagen. Norwegian dissatisfaction with Danish rule became greatly agitated during the Napoleonic Wars. When Denmark lost Norway to Sweden at the Treaty of Kiel in 1814, Norwegians were enraged and quickly formulated their own constitution. This constitution took as its model the French and American constitutions from earlier in the eighteenth century which in turn were still very much influenced by the rationalism of the Age of Enlightenment. Despite having to bow under the rule of Sweden, the Norwegians were decisive in implementing their constitution and, in many ways, it became not just a symbol of independence but also a symbol of the modern culture of the upper classes who were trying desperately to emulate (anachronistically) their counterparts on the European continent, and thereby achieve a sense of prestige and refinement.

By 1820 the first signs of a romantic Spring were evident in Norway:

*'Den romantiske natur-opfatning lyser ut af brever og avis artikler fra den tid. Vi har her kanskje det beste bevis for at romantikken var kommet til Norge lenge før dikterne og kunstnerne gav uttrykk for den i sine verker.'*³

As with Dahl it, was not difficult for the Norwegians to recognize their own unspoilt landscape as a valuable cultural asset. However, such a 'cultural asset' was still largely a play-

thing of the higher classes. When the first Dahl inspired Europeans, and particularly Germans, began to flock to Norway filled with the expectations of experiencing majestic, unspoilt free-nature and, of course, 'de vilde' -mountain farmers- the inevitable meeting with the newly refined higher classes of Bergen and Christiana was merely an interruption on the journey to find the 'real' Norwegians. For the educated upper classes of Norway, this inevitably aggravated their sense of national identity and this became a recurring problem throughout the nineteenth century. What is a Norwegian? The question was largely answered by what became a manifestation of the fundamental romantic principles but not before these principles had become widely understood and accepted amongst the upper classes.

4. NORWEGIAN ROMANTICISM

The man who is most popularly associated with the Norwegian Romantic Period is undoubtedly Henrik Wergeland. He was born in Kirstiansand on June 17th 1808. His family originated from Sogn and Wergeland was somewhat proud to have his roots firmly in Norwegian soil. In 1817 his family moved to Eidsvoll, the historic meeting place where the Norwegian constitution was decided, and Wergeland was influenced enough to call himself the 'six years old brother of the constitution'. He began writing verse during his university education, Christiania having been granted a university in 1811. It soon became obvious that he was a literary genius and indeed it is probably because of this genius that another of Norway's great writers, Johann S. C. Wehaver (1807-1873), never achieved quite the same recognition.

The struggle for the cultural supremacy between these two men caused protracted and lively debates among the educated classes. As Harold Beyer observes:

*'The primitive and immature conditions of Norwegian culture had a directly opposite effect on those two personalities.'*¹

Wehaver believed that Norway could not afford to break the cultural link with Denmark whereas Wergeland was an enthusiastic force to develop an independent Norwegian culture. Such debate in Christiania was greatly influential not only in developing a richer high-cultural environment but also focusing attention on what was now acceptable and proper, that is, romanticism.

Wergeland had been described as 'a Nature lover par excellence', and despite the fact that critics are prone to show his complex personality as having multitudinous influences, there is no denying Wergeland's enthusiasm for writing about flowers. Indeed nature does play a very great part in all of his poetry:

*'He believed also that nature stood in a closer relation to God than human beings, and was accordingly more divine... for this reason it is a lesser crime to sin in the shadow of the sacred pulpit than under the branch where the chaffinch sits.'*²

Such sentiments clearly stem from Rousseau and Schelling and it is hardly surprising that Wergeland's love of nature extended to the mountain farmers but in this respect he displays a tendency which became the characteristic of Norwegian romanticism. He knew that there were two sides to the life of the mountain farmer and recognized the difficulties as well as the joys of such a life. His dream was to educate the farmer and give him the dignity ascribed to him in the constitution. In this way Wergeland was somewhat pragmatic, echoing what was to become the mark of his successors.

Wergeland's consciousness of the mountain farmer partly reflects the romantic trend of seeking one's roots in nature. For Wergeland, the 'bonde' was a somewhat impoverished class whom he hoped to educate. However, as the wave of romanticism firmly took hold of Norway so the perspective of rural life began to change. Despite having no writers who could formu-

late for themselves the ideas of Rousseau and Schelling which might have given Norwegian romanticism a clearer direction, there was no difficulty for the now enthusiastic Norwegian educated classes in appreciating the concepts of an organic universal reality, history as a reminder of man's ephemerality within the natural rhythms as well as a study of a perceived past 'Golden Age' when man lived in contact with nature and free-nature as being a manifestation of universal truths. The focus of attention was now turned to the 'bonde' who represented man in contact with the natural rhythms and, therefore, with himself. As a result of this a collection of folk tales, 'Norske Huldreeventyr og Folksagn' was published.

Peter Christian Asbjørnsen (1812-1885) and Jørgen Moe (1813-1882) had both been interested in collecting folk tales since their early days. There were several works written by them before the collections of 1845 and 1848 but these were of somewhat dry and unappealing style. The two writers had met each other in their youth and become firm friends. It was this partnership which partly helped in making their collection of folk tales so appealing to a now receptive public. They had travelled widely in the southern half of Norway to collect them especially in the areas of Gudbrandsdalen and Telemark and were quite conscious of exactly what they meant to display:

*'Disse sagn er ikke andet end Naturen selv og dens Brydninger i Folkets Fantasi, Naturfortoningerne gennem Folkets, poetiske Opfatning.'*³

wrote Asbjørnsen in this introduction to his first collection. Although Jørgen Moe suffered a religious crisis and returned to being a Pastor, he passed on all his work with folk tales to Asbjørnsen who continued collecting and publishing them all his life. Despite the enthusiasm for the poetry of the folk tales, Asbjørnsen was ever the pragmatist. As Beyer observes:

*'While Asbjørnsen was enough of a romantic to be fascinated by folklore and find it an expression of the folk soul, he was not a dreamer... He narrates amusingly and spontaneously, vividly and impressionistically, sometimes carelessly. He is not prudish and never hesitates to use strong words of popular usage.'*⁴

It is this consciousness of the folk soul in nature together with a necessary pragmatism which was the mark of Norwegian romanticism and was greatly instrumental in creating for Norway a national identity.

Norwegian society of the nineteenth century was split into two distinct factions: the upper, educated class and merchant society of the towns (this includes the embettsmen whose background was usually upper class) and the rural class of Norwegian farmers. The differences between the two factions were great. The town dwellers represented only one tenth of the population and were traditionally concerned with political and social administration and trade. For them to be 'cultured' was to realize a prestigious social position. The rural farmers, on the other hand, included a wide variety of economical and social circumstances, but common to all was the tradition that the 'bonde' was free to work his own land. This had become a tradition despite three centuries of Danish rule and was unique when compared to Denmark and the rest of Europe. However, the prestige of owning one's own farm was the

same whether one came from the rich agricultural land of eastern Norway and owned large amounts of property or if one struggled to run a smallholding in the mountains of the north. By the mid eighteenth century, a new class of 'husmenn', cottars, had developed who did not own their own land. However, the cultural traditions of rural life remained strong and the 'husmenn' in many ways helped enrich the established folk culture. Such is the geography of Norway that these folk cultures were very different. In decorative art, wood carving and even folk tales. This great variety of styles was naturally an extra attraction for the Romantics who travelled to Norway. The different life styles from one valley to the next also reflected the differences in language development over the centuries. This was now manifest in the wide variety of dialects spoken throughout the country.

The question of a national identity was posed mainly by the educated who were politically aware. These were mainly town dwellers but included some of the wealthier farmers from the eastern parts of Norway. In other words it was the (minority) upper classes. They perceived it to be prestigious and civilized to build a national identity on the development of a modern urban and trading nation with its own constitution and, especially, a history which had its birth in a perceived 'Golden Age' of Viking expansionism. The consequence of this was often a perception of the 'bonde' as being a living link with the distant past. The country dialects, particularly, were seized upon as being clear reminders of Norway's Viking greatness.

This perception of a Norwegian identity certainly influenced the urban civilized culture of the day but to what extent is not clear. It has become fashionable and widely accepted to call this phenomenon with all its various interpretations National Romanticism. However, for all the euphoric exclamations of artists until the 1870s, National Romanticism tends to be something of a misnomer since it is questionable how one reconciles the original impetus and inspiration of romanticism with the strong feelings of political patriotism expressed at the time. The concept is loaned directly from the German and as such fails in many ways to explain the mood of mid-eighteenth century Norway. Here there are no echoes of Rousseau or Schelling, the mountain farmers are not seen as representatives of man in contact with majestic free nature, neither is literature a poetization of an organic universe. From this minority perspective of a national identity romanticism seems dead. Professor Sigurd Aarnes has discussed this perspective as being a realistic rather than a romantic tendency:

*'Hos oss merker vi det nye realismekravet først og fremst i hele den nasjonal virkelighet som ut over i 1840 årene trenger inn i vår malerkunst og litteratur - i Tidemands og Gudes bilder, i Asbjørnsens og Moes folkeeventyr, i Asbjørnsens huldreeventyr og i Welhavens nasjonal romanser. Vi kunne like gjerne tale om en "nasjonal realisme" som om en "nasjonal romantikk" i Norge i 1840 årene.'*⁵

As has been mentioned before, there has been a widespread misconception of the word 'romanticism'. The feelings which accompanied 'nasjonal realisme' were feelings of sentimentality which constituted only a part of romanticism without reflecting the fundamental tenets. However, it is the fundamental romanticism which had deeply penetrated Norwegian life. When Asbjørnsen wrote of his folk tales that they were nothing other than 'Naturen selv', he is expressing quite clearly a universal reality as perceived by Schelling and Schlegel. Just

how widespread this consciousness of nature and become in Norway was expressed in the memorable years of 1848-49.

After a momentarily successful tour to America and France the now famous violinist and fiddler Ole Bull was given an ovation welcome back to Norway on Wednesday 8th November 1848. In one of his first return concerts he played some folk tunes taught to him by Torgeir Audunsson in 1831. So popular were they that Bull immediately sent a request that 'Møllergutten', as he became known, should come to Christiania to perform. Audunsson left Haukeli, his home place in Telemark, at once and travelled to the capital on skis. There he gave his first concert together with Ole Bull:

*'Der satt denne fjellmannen i en konsertsal med pyntede damer og Herrer med glacéhansker og lorgnetter. Der satt han og "henrev" "den fine verden" med gangarar hallinger og slatter mens han trampet takten.'*⁶

Here then was a clear example of the Norwegian bourgeoisie having learned from the visiting German romantics who flocked to Norway to experience 'de vilde' of whom Møllergutten was a shining example. As such he enjoyed a wide popularity:

*'Då Myllarguten steig fram på konsertpodiet i 1850 såg musikkmeldarane på ham som eit "naturprodukt".'*⁷

However, there was still a distancing by the upper classes from having too much real contact with the folk-like representatives of free-nature. The cultural festival of March 1849 was an example of this. Folk art, music and scenes from rural life in the mountains were displayed and were both acceptable and popular, but although people had begun to identify themselves with the Norwegian folk-soul it was still largely a plaything. The festival took place in Christiania and folk-life was experienced only in the comfort of city buildings. However the consciousness of nature prevailed and even developed. Gradually the cultured populace of the towns now began to follow in the footsteps of the European romantics and experience the unspoilt Norwegian landscape for themselves.

5. FRILUFTSLIV AND TOURISM

The second half of the eighteenth century was a time when the real folk identity of Norway began to show itself. It is this identity which came to be accepted and popular amongst Europeans and in a large way contributed to the first international agreement on Norwegian independence in 1905. The developers of this new identity include such representatives of 'high' culture as Ibsen and Bjørnsson. Vinje is also very important although perhaps on his own level. The underlying inspiration for all these men was 'naturbegeistring' and despite varying styles of expression one cannot but accept that for them, as for a large percentage of the educated Norwegian population, the fundamental principles of Rousseau, Schlegel and Schelling, expressed as romanticism had become a basis for their various works. Nature predominates and is ever recurring, even pervading the relatively short-lived Realistic movement. For this one must thank the increasing popularity of towns' people actually seeking contact with nature. That Ibsen and Vinje enjoyed travelling within their own country is clearly reflected in their writings.

Henrik Ibsen was born on March 20th 1828 in Skien. He moved several times in his youth often getting to know the local farmers. Francis Bull writes that Ibsen:

*'skal ha sagt at det var minner fra gutteårene på Venstøp som dannet grunnlaget for det han visste om den norske bonde.'*¹

Although most famous for his plays Ibsen was also adept at writing poetry and, in the spirit of the age, writing poetry about nature. It is Ibsen who gives us one of the clearest illustrations of the Norwegian romantic spirit in his poem 'Paa Vidderne'. It is in this poem, as already mentioned, that the word 'friluftsliv' occurs for the first time and as such one begins to attain a clearer understanding of how this concept had developed.

The poem is largely about the contrast between civilized life in the valley and life on the mountain heights (Paa Vidderne). The attraction of civilization is epitomized by the "I"'s love for a girl and he is torn between this love and the spiritual freedom which he finds in the free-nature of the mountains. 'Friluftsliv' is mentioned in a stanza which occurs near the middle of the poem and it is in this stanza where one is given a hint at what is meant by friluftsliv:

*'Friluftsliv for mine tanker.'*²

The stanza describes his cabin which is simple and comfortable. The material things he has enough of and for the spiritual, for his thoughts, he has friluftsliv.

Thoughts play an important rôle in the poem. His relationship to nature is reflective. This is no superficial hiking trip, but a spiritually liberation experience. From this perspective friluftsliv becomes very much a romantic conception/creation. Air (luft) is often synonymous with spirit within romantic literature. This occurs particularly in religious terminology where air is breath is spirit. This intimate transformatory relationship between phenomena is characteristic of the organic nature of the universe and is epitomized by Schelling's view of 'nature as visible spirit' and 'spirit as invisible nature'. Friluftsliv, therefore, implies 'fri-natur-liv' or free-nature-life. This accords with both the poem and the romantic spirit of the

times. In the poem the romantic and thereby reflective experience of *friluftsliv* or 'fri-natur-liv' is contrasted in the last verse with "lavlandsliv":

*Nu er jeg stålsatt, jeg følger det bud
der byder i høyden at vandre!
Mit lavlandsliv har jeg levet ud;
heroppe på vidden er frihet og Gud,
der nede famler de andre.'*³

This is a clear expression of romanticism where free-nature is the liberating homeland for all people. However, it is the protagonists' way to this liberating experience which is an underlying theme and is expressed most succinctly as 'friluftsliv'.

The phenomenon of Europeans and particularly Germans travelling to Norway to experience the unspoilt nature and 'de vilde', mountain folk was, as has been mentioned, somewhat frustrating for the more refined upper classes. However, with the firm establishment of romanticism and the growing realization that Norway's free nature was both culturally valuable and scarce on the European continent, it became at first acceptable and later popular for the educated higher classes to travel to the mountains. Stirred by the romantic spirit and offended by the foreigner's dismissal of them as not being 'real' Norwegians, they duly ventured forth to physically explore and experience what it was to be in contact with nature and thereby at home: in short, what it was to be Norwegian. It is this phenomenon, as Ibsen's poem illustrates, which was *friluftsliv*.

Probably the first person of fame to be involved with *friluftsliv* was Aasmund Olafsson Vinje (1818-1870). Although he was born in Vinje, Telemark, the son of a tenant farmer, his intelligence was recognised early and he spent much of his youth in education. Through this he came into contact with social circles normally denied to the rural classes. Throughout his life he tried a number of occupations including being a teacher, lawyer and correspondent for 'Drammens Tidene' but in 1858 he started his own paper 'Dølen'. Previous to this he had experienced the harder sides of life and this, combined with his farming roots, gave him very much a pragmatic view of life as well as an earthly somewhat dry humour as is apparent in his article 'Studentferdi til Kaupenhavn' 1862:

*'Ein kann soleides læra naturhistori av at reisa slikt: og naturhistori lærde me likeins um bord av dei sjøsjuke. Når ein postmeistare i Mandal kallade ei fururot 'en naturbegivenhed', so kann vel eg kalla det at læra naturhistori at sjå på dei sjøsjuke... Det var iltløgjet eller tragicomisk at sjå f.ex. ein ålvorsam filosof at sitja og glo ut yver det kolbæ kvitbærende hav liksom i djupe tankar. eg trudde han sat og filosoferade; men so strekte han halsen utyver rekkversket og 'Urian' gool.'*⁴

However, Vinje at heart was very much a romantic. Although he did not begin writing poetry in earnest until after his fortieth year, he became one of the best lyricists in Norway as Beyer observes:

*'Whatever criticism he might have of his people, he found nothing at all to object to in nature which called forth his reverence.'*⁵

It is this love for nature which inspired Vinje to venture forth on his 'ferd' of 1860. He had always enjoyed hiking trips but in this year he took the whole summer to travel from Christiania to Trondheim and back. The official aim of this journey was to report on the crowning of Carl XV, the Swedish Prince-Regent of Sweden-Norway.

However, Vinje in the best spirit of friluftsliv decided to take advantage of such a year of national focus and really come into contact with the majestic free-nature of his own land. He began by first taking the train from Christiania to Eidsvoll. He then continued on foot to Kongsvinger and Charlottenberg, further up Østerdalen and then over the Rondane mountains to Hjerkin. From there he travelled to Orkanger where he took the boat to Trondheim. He stayed there during the coronation of Carl XV and after a tour of North Trønderlag he travelled south through Romsdal thence to Gudbrandsdalen and so to Christiania. In 1861 he published an account of his travels 'Ferdaminni fraa Sumaren 1860'.

In this book, Vinje's writing style reveals both his pragmatic observations and understanding of the farmers he met and also his deep feelings for the country, particularly the mountains:

*'No ser eg atter slike fjøll og dalar
som deim eg i min fyrste ungdom såg,
og same vind den heite panna sular:
og gullet ligg på snjo som før det låg.
Det er eit barnemål som til meg talar,
og gjer meg tankefull, men endå fjåg.
Med ungdomsminne er den tala blanda:
Det strøymmer på meg, so eg knapt kan anda.'s*

As with his predecessor and contemporaries in literature such as Wergeland, Asbjørnsen, Moe and Ibsen, the pragmatic and realistic view of life, particularly rural life in the mountains, did not conflict with Vinje's romanticism. Indeed it is Vinje who could be said to epitomize the spirit of Norwegian romanticism. As for the others who engaged in friluftsliv during and after his lifetime, experiencing Norway's free and majestic nature demanded a positive and pragmatic attitude and this in turn, as we see from Vinje's writings, enriched the romantic experience. It was this which became the mark of friluftsliv and despite the minority group of popular writers who developed a fashion for realism, it became increasingly popular from the 1860s for urban people further inspired by the life of Vinje to take to friluftsliv in a search for a way 'home'.

By the second half of the nineteenth century, the development of a Norwegian 'high culture' was well advanced. Perhaps one of the greatest names of the time was Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson. Although he did not receive the same great international attention as Ibsen, he was, nevertheless, a dynamic and influential figure throughout Norway. From his youth in the Trøndelag/NorthØsterdalen district as well as Romsdal, he grew up with a passionate love of nature. Bjørnson developed, typically, as a pragmatist. From 1856 he began to have published his first country tales in the periodical 'Illustrert Folkeblad' and, as Beyer illustrates, these were a great example of his understanding of romanticism:

*'While these were pictures of rural life, they were not idyllically romantic.
He was a severe critic of Welhaven's romanticism and demanded "Nature!
Truth and Nature!"'*

It was nature and country life which was an important theme and inspiration in the greater part of Bjørnson's work, especially his poetry, and in typical romantic tradition it is his poetry which gained the highest recognition. After throwing himself into the political and cultural debates of the time he began writing poems about Norway. It was one of these which became so popular that it was accepted as an official Norwegian national anthem - the first verse perhaps formulating quite poignantly and succinctly what had become the popular, educated, Norwegian attitude.

The poem begins:

'Ja, vi elsker dette landet.'

Love for the country stands primary - but with a sharp awareness of its landscape and nature:

*'som det stiger frem.
furet værbitt over vannet
med de tusen hjem.'*

Man's relationship to nature is here special. It is harmonious, and it is this harmony which is recalled from the past:

*'Elsker elsker det og tenke
på vår far og mor,
og den saganatt som senke
drømme på vår jord.'*

Such a strong formulation of the love of nature and the traditional folk-life struck symphonic chords within the society of Norwegian high culture. It further reflected the mood of the times: 'Naturbegeistring' was proving by this time to be a durable cultural phenomenon and Bjørnsson's expressions of romanticism in this poem were confirmed (and even popular) over forty years later.

From the 1850s there was a growing change in the attitude of European romantic visitors to Norway. The age of late-romanticism now began to show itself, the exaggerated sentimentality which characterized this age was something which only the upper classes could afford. The extravagance in which they travelled became well known in Europe. Visitors, tourists had been coming for over a century. It is perhaps the British who have received most attention in literature. Contact with northern Britain has always been strong and Norway was the natural and convenient place to visit for the British gentry fired by the spirit of an age of exploration. Here was a challenging environment with plenty of opportunity for practising the gentlemen's pastime of climbing. Names like Heftye and Slingsby became well known in climbing circles and such people became greatly instrumental in making it easier for others to travel to Norway by the publication of guidebooks and the building of huts, especially on the mountain heights. Hunting was also included in the list of pastimes for the nobility but in this area the British were not always popular. Lord Garvagh became infamous for his over-enthusiasm for hunting reindeer, wiping out many herds on Rondane and Hardangervidde. It was the building of huts which aided access to the reindeer and aggravated the problem. For the British gentry therefore it becomes evident that Norway was a playground.

These were not people fired by the spirit of romanticism who sought the spiritual inspiration of unspoilt nature. It was, rather, challenge and excitement which they sought. There were, certainly, British romantics who travelled to Norway to experience like the Germans the incredible scenery. However, they tended not to make the same impression as their noble classed, sporting compatriots, neither did the style of English romanticism become so popular or durable in Norway as the German tradition with which there was greater contact.

The other category of tourists in Norway during the nineteenth century were the European romantics. These, again, were upper classes who could afford to travel - and usually in style. However, these tourists relied largely on travel by carriage and when they did take to walking rarely covered any great distances. Accommodation was often a problem: the usual being the posting stations (*skyss-stasjoner*) often governed by precise regulations. Important travellers found accommodation with local officials. For the élite urban classes from a relatively tame Europe the very same free-nature which they came to see also presented them with multitudinous travelling problems. The sheer inaccessibility, because of natural hazards or lack of modern roads, was a problem for them and despite their wealth they sometimes had to endure unanticipated delays and discomforts.

Such problems applied just as much to the travelling Norwegian romantics and it was in answer to this, as well as the increasing pressure of the growing national trend of going on tours in the free-nature of the mountains, that 'Den Norske Turistforening' was formed in 1868. From the outset this organisation proved a great success and such memorable people as Vinje and, later, Nansen have had articles published in their yearbook. It is the spread of tourism in Norway which is largely attributable to 'Den Norske Turistforening' and their building of mountain huts overcame many of the previous accommodation problems for tourists. The arrival of rail in Norway aided travel but the remote districts retained their remoteness for the time being and local travel problems for tourists continued.

For the growing number of Norwegian *friluftsliv* enthusiasts, these problems were far from insurmountable. The pragmatism and initiative so typical of Norwegian romantics greatly influenced the rapid development of *friluftsliv* and, whereas the German visitors rarely strayed too far from civilization, people like Vinje delighted in the remoteness of, for example, the Jotunheimen mountain range. In order to enjoy such experiences there developed a tradition within *friluftsliv* of learning from the rural people. A typical example of this, which reflects the times, is how Sondre Norheim, a 'husmann' from Morgedal in Telemark brought the use of skis as a method of travel in winter to the attention of the western world. Norheim was a typical 'Telemarking' and through his ability of using skis he earned the title 'Frikar'.

During the mid 1800s it had become popular in Morgedal for local inhabitants to compete in ski races over the local terrain. The courses consisted of steep mountainsides, jumps and forest trails. Not only were competitors judged by their timing and speed but especially by their elegance and style (still retained in modern *skijumping*). The local 'Embettsmenn' became enthusiastic spectators and supporters of these meetings and, recognizing the mood of the times, singled out Sondre Norheim as the greatest, most elegant of the skiers with his revolutionary new skis, bindings and telemark turn, and introduced him to the society of

Christiania. For the friluftsliv enthusiasts of the capital Norheim was perfect. Here, from deepest Norway, Morgedal, was a representative of 'de vilde', a genuine 'naturprodukt' whose method of winter travel and enjoyment was totally 'Norwegian'. The popularity of skiing from the 1870s grew explosively amongst the urban élite and Norheim spent many years as a ski instructor in Christiania having to be helped by others from Morgedal when numbers became too great.

The art of skiing, as revealed to the friluftsliv enthusiasts of Christianian by Sondre Norheim was also recognized as useful and appropriate by someone who became unequivocally Norway's most famous enthusiast of friluftsliv, and it is due to him that international attention again became focused on Norway at a time when the political links between Norway and Sweden were growing steadily more strained and weaker.

6. FRIDTJOF NANSEN

Fridtjof Nansen was born in 1861 just outside Christiania (now Oslo). He was from a relatively wealthy family and enjoyed close contact with the cultivated upper classes from an early age. However, the situation of his particular house gave him ample opportunity for getting to know the countryside of 'Nordmarka' and it became his habit to go hiking and skiing whenever the opportunity presented itself. In the 1870s Nansen competed in ski competitions at Husebybakken and, although he achieved high placings he was never able to beat the Hemmestvedt brothers from Morgedal, the successors of Sondre Norheim. Nansen took skiing lessons from them and indeed this might be said to be his first inspiration for his later development of equipment for travelling on snow.

Nansen was educated in science, primarily as a zoologist. However, his love of nature, particularly the winter aspect in Norway focused his attention ever on research that might take him out of the city. He was also inspired by the growing trend of polar research and it is with this in mind that he planned the crossing of Greenland on skis. The years leading up to the crossing were spent both in planning it as a scientific expedition and working for a doctorate. Nansen was both a dedicated student and a dedicated friluftsliv enthusiast which made him the ideal person for planning and executing such an unprecedented journey. His pragmatism both as a scientist and as a would-be polar researcher was obvious and it is perhaps this practical approach to life which dominates his early years. It is by taking advantage not just of his scientific appreciation of a polar expedition but also of his appreciation of the value of folk knowledge which enabled the crossing of Greenland to be successful. By adopting the innovative style and equipment of telemarkskiing, by developing a lighter but stronger sledge and by recognizing, for example, the suitability of reindeerskin ski-boots as opposed to ordinary leather, Nansen drew on a long tradition of Norwegian folk culture with which he came into intimate contact during his many tours. Indeed his insistence that two Lapplanders should be part of the team demonstrates his appreciation of the value and necessity to the expedition of people who were innately closer to nature than any of Nansen's civilized companions. As such, Nansen was very much a child of romanticism.

The successful crossing of Greenland in 1888 was received with wild jubilation in Norway. On his return Nansen and his companions were hailed as heroes. Nansen immediately got to work on his book 'Paa Ski over Grønland'. In London in 1889 he was warmly welcomed and recognized as the leading authority on polar travel during a visit to ensure publication of his book. After a lecture to the Royal Geographical Society, Sir Erasmus Ommaney directed Nansen's attention towards the Antarctic but Nansen was to become more involved in another project: an expedition to the North Pole. Nansen's plan to allow his boat to drift with the ice over the North Pole met with great international criticism and indeed derision but even though the North Pole itself was never reached, the success of the journey in scientific terms was immense.

On his return after two years on the Arctic, Nansen was again hailed as a national hero not just in Norway but also internationally. Indeed the impact which Nansen had on Europe was of great significance for Norway. As Shackelton explains:

*'To the Norwegians, a proud and democratic nation, ruled by their own Government, yet subservient to Sweden, the expedition had a deeper significance, as the symbol of Norway's emergence to full nationhood. These heroic events and Nansen's own personality were to play their part in the constitutional crisis which within a few years rocked the Scandinavian peninsula.'*¹

The events of 1905 were of crucial importance to Norway. The question of whether Norway should have her own consular service abroad, apart from Sweden, became an expression for and indeed an insistence on independence from Sweden. The Swedes regarded this as intolerable and there was even a threat of war. Nansen's rôle in the events of 1905 cannot be underestimated. Despite the fact that he could have taken advantage of his position as a national hero and answered the call of many of his countrymen to 'take to the helm,' he chose instead to be Norway's diplomatic representative abroad. He travelled first to Copenhagen to put Norway's case for independence to an international group of politicians and thence to England to raise support.

How Nansen managed to gain the support for Norway was due both to his past achievements and his personality. Norway's success at polar expeditioning was essentially due to Nansen and he was recognized both as the intrepid explorer and the polar scientist. However, in many ways he also represented the popular European view of a typical Norwegian. He often enjoyed wearing for everyday use his mountain-breeches and outdoor attire. From his student days he had been influenced by and indeed expounded the 'natur-begeistring' of the romantics. His writings on the crossing of Greenland and the polar expeditions show this:

*'Men også her skinner sola, og det så fredelig som noensteds, ned på det rullende hav og den tordnende brenning. Så kommer kvelden, like rød som i går synker sola bak innlandsisen, setter vesthimmelen i brann, og sender land, is, og sjø et langt avskjeds-kyss.'*²

Through friluftsliv Nansen had inherited the craft which enabled him to develop an effective method of polar travel and through his polar research expeditions he had achieved great recognition not just for himself but also for his homeland.

That Nansen himself acted as an ambassador for Norway in 1905 must have been a great influence as well as a reminder of Norway's growing international value as an individual nation. He was a man committed to world peace who reflected upon the supremacy of the industrialised west:

*'Under Kanon-torden tok vi avskjed med den européiske sivilisasjon, under kanon-torden møtte vi den igjen: er da kanonenes torden symbolet på vår kultur?'*³

His Rousseau-like appreciation of the absolute worth of free-nature combined with his inherent Norwegian pragmatism also gave him values which were still much respected in England and Europe. It is very much due to Nansen's efforts that military action was avoided during the tense months of 1905. It is possibly another reason why free-nature is still the

subconscious symbol in Europe for the country of Norway: after nearly a century's growth in the European's consciousness of Norway as a land of wild untouched mountains, islands, fjords, forest and ever-lasting snows one man at last steps forward to represent his country.

Here was an educated, peace loving humanist in the guise of 'de vilde', the expected representative of free-nature who also showed the promise and potential inherent in Norway's Spring blossoming to independence.

Nansen's position as the archetypal Norwegian was nowhere more enthusiastically supported than in Norway itself. During the build up to the agreement of independence in 1905 Nansen's popularity grew enormously:

'I Norge så man nå på Nansen som Norges stemme ute: i verden. Bjørnsen hadde forlikt seg med isbjørnmaneren. I et brev til Alexander L. Kielland skrev han: At vi har i foregangsmann som Fridtjof Nansen, så lys og rank, halvdann trygg på sig selv of på verktøyet, akkurat som andre representater for norsk vågsomhet før ham, synes mig å spå godt.'
Og han tilføyde:
*'Kunne vi nu få en republikk med ham som første man så var det symbol over os. Jeg har skrevet "Ja vi elsker" men han har levet den.'*⁴

Since Fridtjof Nansen was a byword for friluftsliv, it was friluftsliv which not only became even more widely popular but also a national movement to which Norwegians felt proud to associate themselves. In many ways, therefore, friluftsliv could even now be seen as an expression of Norwegian identity. The coming of the romantic period, and the empathy which it received in Norway encouraged 'naturbegeistring' to become an everyday aspect of Norwegian culture and, despite the popular literary movements of the early twentieth century, it was this which remained an important undercurrent in cultural and social life. Friluftsliv was its expression, and physical manifestation and epitomised now more than ever before what it was to be Norwegian.

From 1905 another phenomenon developed rapidly under the new political and economic freedom. The Norwegian industrial revolution had begun and with it an increase in the size of the towns. In spite of this, or rather because of it, the popularity of friluftsliv and 'natur begeistring' increased in Norway. Nansen had captured the imagination of the Norwegian people particularly the townsfolk and they responded in kind. A typical example of this is an article written by a scientist/mountaineer in 1914 for 'Norsk Fjellsport'. He begins:

*'Du ber meg skrive om fjeldsporten, hvad den betyr for os fjeldkarer. Det er vel nærmest en umulig oppgave du der har git mig. Det en føle sterkest, kan en aldrig folklare sig selv -angt mindre andre.'*⁵

Such reference to feelings and emotional response is clearly typical of the romantic influence, but further:

*'I ethvert normalt menneske er der en dyp trang til at føle samhørigheten med naturen, overbevise sig om, at hans sind eier røtter, som endnu ikke har tapt sitt tak i jorden.'*⁶

The inspiration here is obvious but his following statement is a clear reflection of the character of friluftsliv:

*'Det er denne trang som driver oss byfolk ut till havet, ind i skogen, og op paa fjeldet.'*⁷

Several times in the article he mentions the restrictive and unhealthy character of town life and proclaims nature as man's natural home. One also gains a strong impression from the article of how friluftsliv is not only townsfolk reacquainting themselves with their natural home but of how this phenomenon came to mean so much to Norwegians:

*'Vi prøvet os i Schweitz ogsaa, i Himalaya og England. Men jeg tror vi fandt begge to, dette var ikke det samme. Det var sport god nok, men det var ikke Norge. Ikke kameraterne, ikke de samme lune, betænksomme fjeldbønder. Nei, en lærer at forstaa for et land, det er vi har, naar en streifer sann omkring. En skjønner hvor en hører hjemme.'*⁸

Such sentiments are strong echoes of Rousseau and also reflect the movement of the nineteenth century when urban upper classes turned their attention to their own free-nature of which one could now in 1914 be proud, and this nearly ten years after Nansen had captured national and international attention. However, Nansen's heroism was no mere transient moment of glory. His popularity and influence lasted his whole life, mainly through his unceasing labours, and this particularly so with regard to friluftsliv.

Perhaps Nansen's best known speech about friluftsliv is the one he gave in 1921 at a meeting arranged by 'Den Norske Turistforening' for a group of school pupils. This was so highly regarded that it was recorded as a written article in 'Den Norske Turistforenings' yearbook for that year. Included in the article are several themes all of which are expressed from the perspective of Nansen's own considerable experience with friluftsliv, as such the article is romantic in flavour. He begins by noting how popular the practice of sport had become particularly with young people which he welcomes. But:

*'Men kanskje er ikke alt bare bra: i denne utviklingen. Det kan vel være blit meget sport av det istedenfor idrætt; for meget "rekorder" og spesialisering.'*⁹

He continues:

*'Det utvikler nok legemet, ialfald en del av det: men aanden skulde vel ogsaa være med.'*¹⁰

In emphasising the spiritual Nansen expressed the heart of friluftsliv from which he makes some telling observations. After stressing the importance of the individual experience: 'at...komme ut i naturen' he notes:

*'Men en faar nu engang ikke det ved at dra ut i flok og følge de optraakede veine, ved at klympe sig sammen paa hytter, ved at gaa i rute fra det ene sanatorium til det andet... Saa tiltalende det end kan være, saa er jo ikke dette friluftsliv.'*¹¹

He comments further on the lifestyle which had developed through urbanisation:

*'Men det det gjælder, særlig for os bymennesker, er jo netop at komme ut fra det vante. Dette bylivet er nu engang unatur, og det var sandelig ikke vor bestemmelse fra naturens haand av.'*¹²

Such sentiments are central to romanticism: the inherent value of nature cannot be denied, indeed:

*'Naar nu disse kasse menneskene skal søke adspredelse og nye indtryk, saa var det vel rimelig de søkte bort fra dette livet og ind dit, hvor de oprindelig hører hjemme: den store, frie natur.'*¹³

Nansen is clearly stating the character of friluftsliv which even then was built upon a seventy year old tradition. The value of friluftsliv is undoubted:

*'Det som skulde gi os erstatning og føre os tilbage til en mere menneskelig tilværelse er og blir nu engang det enkle liv i naturen, skog og fjeld, paa de vide vidder, i den store ensomhet, hvor nye og større tanker strømmer ind paa en og sætter merker, som ikke saa hurtig viskes ut igjen.'*¹⁴

It is in this article that Nansen formulates the exact nature of friluftsliv. It is a spiritual as well as physical experience. As such it is educational in the broadest and most natural sense, and especially it is for the urbanised inhabitant who has lost contact with nature and who craves 'a way home'. Because he was so famous for his journeys of polar exploration and had proven himself to be a man of initiative and pragmatism he had nothing to fear, as some did under the pressure of the growing modernist trend, of people criticising his attitude as being 'sentimental'. People continued to flock to the mountains, the fjords, and the coast inspired by Nansen who represented the inherent principles of friluftsliv. So great was Nansen's influence that he became a guiding light for his successors for nearly half a century.

7. THE AUTUMN OF THE MODERN AGE

Despite the reverence in which the Norwegians held nature, the industrial revolution and the urbanisation of the early twentieth century led to attentions being drawn more and more to the problems in the towns during the years following the First World War. Norway suffered economically like most of the world's industrial nations, but not only were these times of industrial and economic turmoil there was also the rising tide of Communism and with it the formulation of a new social class, that of the workers.

Such focus on industrial and social unrest boded ill for friluftsliv and 'naturbegeistring'. Already the new economics had started taking advantage of the Norwegian landscape which came to be seen by the industrialists purely in terms of a resource. The waterfalls could be used for hydro-electricity, the forests could be felled for export and the mountains could be mined for their ores. The only solution to the social depression in the towns was seen in terms of economic growth and national wealth. It is the ironic consequence of this relatively new urban focus which led to a strengthening and spreading to all classes of the tradition of friluftsliv.

The social circles patronised by such figures as Ibsen, to an extent Vinje, Nansen and Rubenson had been of the cultured upper classes. However, it was the Norwegian 'arbeidebevegelsen' which made friluftsliv popular for all. In its beginnings, the 'arbeidebevegelse' had broken away from a more radical communist party and set out on its own under the leadership of, amongst others, Martin Tranmæl and Kyrre Grepp. Initially they had no real place to house meetings and very often such gatherings took place in the open air (fri-luft). This eventually became tradition and throughout the twenties and thirties members were inspired not only by the leadership of Tranmæl but also by the 'nature' of their meetings. Indeed one finds in the archives of the 'arbeiderbevegelse' in Oslo many examples of nature poetry written by members at or about these meetings and even today there are many, now older, people who remember the early days and still practise friluftsliv for its own sake.

Tranmæl's leadership was perhaps one of the main inspirations for the popularization of friluftsliv within the 'arbeidebevegelse' and thereby the working classes. It is usual in any of the books on Tranmæl or the 'arbeidebevegelse' to see photographs of him with his political colleagues in many situations in the country, often at a 'hytte' or even on a tour. He was often accompanied by people such as Oscar Torp, Kyrre Grepp and notably Einar Gerhardsen who became a long standing Labour Prime Minister after the Second World War. Tranmæl was in best friluftsliv tradition a pragmatic romantic. He was, particularly in his youth, an energetic political activist who advocated social revolution and worked tirelessly for it. But he always retained a healthy respect for the spirituality of friluftsliv. Like Nansen he recognized the benefits of sport but:

*'Idrett skulle det falle like naturlig for folk å drive som det er for dem å vaske seg. Organisering av idretten kunne dessuten bidra til en skadelig uniformering av ungdomen, føre den inni en falsk heltedyrkelse og forkrakle dens sunne idealisme...'*¹

It was in friluftsliv according to Tranmæl where one was really allowed to develop:

*'Friluftsliv var etter hans mening den naturlig form for fysisk oppfostring, men han tilla friluftslivet en langt videre betydning. På et stort møte av idrettsungdomen vinteren 1939 hevdet han som i artikkelen nesten en mannsalder tidligere, at friluftslivet utløste det beste i menneskene, det styrket viljekraften og pågangsmotet det retter opp karakterkavanker som livet, i gatetrengsel og tåkedunst så lett fører med seg, Det er høyt under taket i den frie natur, men en står livkevel på trygg og sikker grunn. Den følelsen gir styrke og selvsikkerhet, sansene åpnes og skjerpes, livet i sin naturlige enkelhet rykket nær innpå og får menneskene til å være seg selv uten kunster og forstillinger.'*²

Such clarity in recognizing the fundamental tenets of friluftsliv not just by Tranmæl but also by his followers and friends reinforced the traditional Norwegian reverence for nature. Even though the great powers of industry had begun their explosive and revolutionary development, free-nature was still highly valued as man's spiritual home. But times were changing.

The occupation of Norway by Germany during the Second World War came as an immense shock to all facets of Norwegian life. Friluftsliv during the occupation became a very important part of life for an ever larger percentage of the population. This can be seen by the large amount of documentation from these years: books about mountain travel and the Norwegian landscape were written in unprecedented numbers and many people repressed by the occupying forces found solace in free-nature. However, it was perhaps unfortunate that instead of being sought for its own value nature was regarded as a therapy for downtrodden Norwegians.

After the war there still existed the traditional Norwegian love of his country landscape but now the focus was more than ever on the building of the economy and industrial development. Such was the fervor of the 'gjenreisnings' period that little else was taken into account. The damming of valleys and the harnessing of waterfalls for hydro-electric power progressed at an alarming rate as did the development of industry and technology. The side effects of these developments were substantial ecological problems, but initially these were not recognized. Only the people who were most affected made any real protest, and of this group a large percentage were friluftsliv enthusiasts. The mood of the times was one of progress and modernisation and as such the fervor became markedly similar to that of the Age of Enlightenment. Man was again 'maître est possesseur de la nature' with the heavy technology to support his claim.

The influence of the technological attitude penetrated Norwegian life even to the way people went on tours in the countryside. The emphasis was now laid on how new technologically, mass-produced equipment could make hiking, skiing or climbing easier and cheaper. Initially the idea was well-meant, however, the materialisation which developed with it was not accounted for. The production of luxury goods became an accepted norm. 'Luxury' 'hyttes', 'luxury' skis and even 'luxury' rucksacks were developed by the companies concerned and as the tide of economic competition rose so the brand names mirrored the competitive attitude, 'Crusader' and 'Ultimate' being just two examples. For many, experiencing free-

nature for its own sake and understanding it in poetic terms became replaced by excitement challenge or even just 'having fun outdoors'. This trend has continued to the present day and is in opposition to the values and experiences as related by Nansen. However, this is not a complete picture.

In keeping with the romantic tradition of friluftsliv, whoever seeks contact with nature regularly will inevitably become influenced by the education received. This can be demonstrated by the number of Norwegians who still retain the old values inherent in friluftsliv. Such people range from older members of the 'arbeidebevegelse' to younger students in their early twenties. The social revolution of the 1960s and 1970s were crucial years for friluftsliv. Under threat of extinction new life was given by a 'green' revival headed not least by figures such as Professor Arne Næss and Sigmund Kvaløy Sættering, who have since been greatly active in developing the 'Ecosophy' movement.

In the early 1960s a colleague of theirs, Nils Faarlund, founded the Norsk Alpin Senter, since renamed Norges Høgfjellsskole. The aims of this school were to promote traditional Norwegian friluftsliv whilst, at the same time, developing it according to its own spiritual character. The organic, traditional nature of the school has been successful in producing over forty 'mentors' who are also valued teachers and advisors in such areas as district colleges, the Norwegian Red Cross and Folk High Schools. In recent years greater success has been achieved in advising the Norwegian Department of the Environment in developing a 'friluftslivpolitikk'. This was largely due to 'For-ut' (Forskning for friluftsliv) a group of like-minded people who are interested in preserving the fundamental values of friluftsliv and developing it accordingly. Thus from suffering several decades of misappropriation, friluftsliv is now beginning to enjoy the first warm rays of Spring which not only reflects a change in society towards ecological awareness, but also the very durability of friluftsliv itself.

CONCLUSION

In writing about the history and traditions of friluftsliv, it becomes clear upon reflection that the time span covered is quite extensive. This is particularly so when considering the cultural, political and economical developments which occurred during this period. In fact there is enough potential for a large volume, at least, to be written. However, it seems that key movements and events in question have already been defined by the authorities and academics. It is this which is perhaps the major reason why such a volume about friluftsliv has not been forthcoming. New ideas and perspectives are always strongly challenged on appearance, particularly when the cultural climate has been heavily influenced by the somewhat pessimistic 'modernism' and 'post-modernism'. Our present fashion for deconstructuralism, a development of these trends, further provides difficulty for the original thinker. This is both ironic and paradoxical since it is originality which the modern age proposes. However, by examining the cultural development of the modern age it is not difficult to recognize a trend for an almost pedantic pessimism. This then becomes a difficulty when writing about friluftsliv. As discussed, the strong presence of a romantic attitude in friluftsliv's development is inherent to its character. By surveying the two, romanticism and friluftsliv, in juxtaposition it becomes clear that other perspectives are possible: on a fundamental level is the depth to which the Romantic Period penetrated in Norwegian society. This phenomenon is, in turn, something creative and celebratory. Words and concepts including happiness, spiritual fulfillment and joy, in its deepest sense, are typical of such. Against a background of relative pessimism these feelings tend to be dismissed. However, that they occurred and continue to occur should not be ignored. Friluftsliv has proved itself a durable cultural phenomenon and as such deserves to be studied.

In a time of a mass-produced, consumer society more attention is being paid to the side effects of such a lifestyle. Stress and social perplexity are the symptoms of our modern, somewhat unhealthy lives and in treating these symptoms a wide variety of therapies have developed. Modern psychology has divided into a complex variety of treatments. These are usually strongly flavoured with American culture. Alternatively, there are the more mystical of therapies from Asia, Yoga, Tai Chi Chuan and Karate to name a few, their popularity has in recent years exploded. Not only is it the health giving qualities of these activities which have become popular but also the tendency for participants to engage themselves in the culture - a necessary part of 'progressing' for example, in traditional karate where all commands are in Japanese and terminology is from Zen Buddhism. If one again looks at the fundamental problem of social perplexity and further considers the writings of Nansen, Rubenson or Vinje, one cannot but help getting the strong impression that with friluftsliv Europe has a tradition which at least matches the therapeutic value of the American and Eastern 'treatments'. More importantly, the character of friluftsliv is naturally more easily identified with for the average European and particularly Scandinavian, and rather than treating a social illness is in fact of more value in its traditional form as 'a way home'. It will be interesting to see in the coming generations how friluftsliv will develop, especially since in such a time not just of social perplexity but also of ecological crisis the value of free-nature is again becoming an important social question.

NOTES

Chapter 1 Etymology

- 1 Henrik Ibsen, Samlede Verker. Bind 111 (Oslo 1941) p.62.

Chapter 2 Romanticism

- 1 Fritjof Capra, The Turning Point (London 1982) p.39.
- 2 Per Øhrgaard, Verdens LitteraturHistorie 1720-1830 (Oslo 1985) p.160. The comprehensive and defracted view presented in this book contains condensed and succinct expressions about cultural movements treated in greater depth elsewhere (see bibliography). This succinctity has here been taken advantage of. Unfortunately, the enthusiasm resulted in a lack of recorded page numbers for which I apologize.
- 3 *ibid.* p.163
- 4 *ibid.*
- 5 *ibid.* p.189.
- 6 *ibid.*
- 7 Hans Joachin Störig, Kleine Weltgeschichte der Philosophie, (Fisher 1985).

Chapter 3 The Spread of Romanticism to Norway

- 1 Marie Lødrup Bang, Johann Christian Dahl. Life and Works, (Oslo 1988), p.230.
- 2 Marie Lødrup Bang, Jubileumsutstillings Catalogue, (Oslo 1988), p.279.
- 3 Wilhelm Keilhau, Det Norske Folks Liv og Historie. Bind IV 1840-75, (Oslo 1931), p.279.

Chapter 4 Norwegian Romanticism

- 1 Harald Beyer, A History of Norwegian Literature, (New York 1956), p.117.
- 2 *ibid.* p.126.
- 3 Theodor Caspari, Norsk Naturfølelser i det 19nde AArhundre, (Oslo 1917).
- 4 Beyer, p.151.
- 5 Sigurd Aa. Aarnes, Æsthetisk Lutheraner og andre studier i norsk senromantikk: Genre bildet og den poetiske realisme, (Oslo 1971), p.159.
- 6 Anders Bugge og Sverre Steen, Norsk Kulturhistorie, (Oslo 1938).
- 7 Alver Brynjulf, Norges Kulturhistorie Bind IV. Det Gjenfødte Norge, (Oslo 1965), p.159.

Chapter 5 **Friluftsliv and Tourism**

- 1 Henrik Ibsen, Samlede Verker, Intro. by Francis Bull (Oslo 1928).
- 2 Henrik Ibsen, Samlede Verker, Bind III, (Oslo 1941), p.62.
- 3 *ibid.* p.67.
- 4 Aasmund Olafsson Vinje, Fjellstaven min, Ed. O. Midtun, (Oslo 1975) p.59.
- 5 Beyer, p.165.
- 6 Den Norske Turistforenings Yearbook 1984. Several of Vinje's works were published in this yearbook in the immediate years after the founding of DNT.
- 7 Beyer, p.187.
- 8 Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, Digte og Sange, Ed. Francis Bull (Oslo 1957).

Chapter 6 **Fridtjof Nansen**

- 1 Edward Shackleton, Nansen. The Explorer, (London 1959)
- 2 Fridtjof Nansen, Paa Ski over Grønland, (Oslo 1948) p.34. The original was published in 1889.
- 3 *ibid.* p.135.
- 4 Rolf Edberg, Fridtjof Nansen: Europeeren, (Oslo 1961)
- 5 C. W. Rubenson, Norsk Fjellsport. Vor Sport (Oslo 1914) reproduced in mestre fjellet no. 25 (Hemsedal 1977) p.10
- 6 *ibid.* p.10.
- 7 *ibid.* p.10.
- 8 *ibid.* p.11.
- 9 Fridtjof Nansen, Den Norske Turistforenings' Yearbook 1922, Friluftsliv, (Oslo 1922) p.1
- 10 *ibid.* p.1.
- 11 *ibid.* p.2.
- 12 *ibid.* p.2.
- 13 *ibid.* p.2.
- 14 *ibid.* p.3.

Chapter 7 **The Autumn of the Modern Age**

- 1 Axel Zachariassen, Martin Tranmæl, (Oslo 1977) p.245.
- 2 *ibid.* p.245.

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