

## Chapter 3

### Neglect, grief, revenge

#### Finland in Swedish nineteenth-century literature

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What does it mean to lose territory? What is lost and to whom? How does one make sense of the lost parts and with what emotions should one react? The answers to these questions have varied over time, and perhaps the most dramatic shift in responses in European history took place in the nineteenth century as a result of the spread of Romantic nationalism. Territorial loss obviously affects those people living in the so-called lost area – the change of governmental rule is likely to have an impact on their everyday lives. However, it is much less clear how territorial loss affects the people living in the remaining parts, i.e. in the area losing size. To experience a sense of loss, a certain identification with the lost territory is needed, an imaginative geography encompassing the lost parts, that somehow identifies you as a person. As an ideological construct, these imaginative geographies belong to modern nationalism.

Nationalist temporalities rest on the notion of loss: if nineteenth century nationalist thought argued that national characteristics should be revived, the premise is that they were lost in the first place. The three-dimensional temporality of nationalist ideology – an imagined past, providing prerequisites for the present and a promise of future prosperity – necessitated that the past had been lost. That operation is easy enough to spot when it is a matter of lost virtues or lost golden ages, or even lost languages, but it indeed also applies to contemporary, real losses of territory. A case in point is Sweden's loss of Finland. In the peace treaty of Fredrikshamn on 17 September 1809, Sweden lost one-third of the territory and a fourth of the population, amounting to one million people. The loss of Finland is often regarded as the trauma that fuelled Swedish nationalism.<sup>1</sup> It would be more correct, however, to put it the other way around: Romantic nationalism produced the emotionally charged loss of Finland.

Finland had been part of Sweden since the thirteenth century, since before there even was a Swedish realm, and several hundred years before the former Danish and

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<sup>1</sup> See e.g. Ingmar Stenroth, *Sveriges rötter: En nations födelse* (Stockholm: Bokförlaget Atlantis, 2005), 13, 17; Bo Grandien, *Rönndrövens glöd: Nygöticistiskt i tanke, konst och miljö under 1800-talet* (Stockholm: Nordiska museet, 1987), 45.

Norwegian provinces in the south and west of present-day Sweden, were incorporated in the seventeenth century.<sup>2</sup> On 17 September 1809, the main geographical axis of the realm turned 90 degrees overnight; the horizontal line of Stockholm – Åland – Sveaborg – Viborg became a vertical line extending from Stockholm to Malmö.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, Sweden had repeatedly suffered territorial losses in the many eighteenth-century wars, after which most of the seventeenth-century conquests had to be ceded. None of them were the cause of debate or the object of nationalist emotions in nineteenth-century Sweden. Furthermore, the significance attributed to the loss of Finland in Swedish historiography and public debate swayed over time. Historians Henrik Edgren and Åke Sandström have shown remarkably shifting attitudes in the press and in historiography from the early nineteenth century to the present day.<sup>4</sup> Unlike Denmark’s loss of Schleswig later in the century (see Bjarne Thorup Tomsen’s and Peter Nørgaard Larsen’s chapter in the present volume), the loss of Finland had no stable function for Swedish national self-understanding.<sup>5</sup> In fact, the construction of a trauma did not take place until the late nineteenth century, and in the twentieth century, the loss of Finland might be portrayed as an “amputation” leaving the Swedish body bleeding from still unhealed wounds.<sup>6</sup> Literature provides the opportunity to investigate more thoroughly the figures of thought that construct loss and engender emotions.

The present chapter will trace the emotional history of the loss of Finland in Swedish literature by analysing four examples from different historical periods. The poem “Svea” penned by Esaias Tegnér (1782–1846) was awarded a prize by the Swedish Academy in 1811 and is usually acknowledged as the poem that sparked off Swedish nationalism. It is also famous for being censored: Tegnér was awarded the prize on condition that he softened the poem’s revanchism with the explicit objective of regaining Finland. This example from

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<sup>2</sup> See e.g. Max Engman, *Ett långt farväl: Finland mellan Sverige och Ryssland efter 1809* (Stockholm: Bokförlaget Atlantis, 2009), 23.

<sup>3</sup> Heikki Talvitie, “Sverige och 1812 års politik,” in *Sverige i fred. Statsmannakonst eller opportunist? En antologi om 1812 års politik*, ed. Tapani Suominen (Stockholm: Atlantis, 2002), 18.

<sup>4</sup> Henrik Edgren, “Traumakonstruktionen: Svensk historieskrivning om rikssprängningen 1809,” *Scandia* 76, no. 1 (2010): 9–39; Åke Sandström, “Sökandet efter en ny svensk identitet: Om svensk självsyn och synen på Finland 1808–1860,” in *Maktens mosaik: Enhet, särart och självbild i det svenska riket*, eds. Max Engman and Nils Erik Villstrand (Helsinki: Svenska litteratursällskapet i Finland & Stockholm: Bokförlaget Atlantis, 2008), 381–402; Åke Sandström, “Sveriges 1809: Föreställningar om finska kriget under 200 år,” in *Fänrikens marknadsminne: Finska kriget 1808–1809 och dess följder i eftervärldens ögon*, ed. Max Engman (Helsinki: Svenska litteratursällskapet i Finland & Stockholm: Bokförlaget Atlantis, 2009), 27–96.

<sup>5</sup> On the loss of Schleswig in Danish historiography, see Rasmus Glenthøj, “Historier om et nederlag,” in *Konfliktzonen Danmark: stridende fortællinger om nyere dansk historie*, eds. Sissel Bjerrum Fossat, Rasmus Glenthøj and Lone Kølle Martinsen (Copenhagen: Gads Forlag, 2018), 88–115. Glenthøj shows that even though different political camps made sense of 1864 in different ways and drew different lessons from the defeat, there is still today an agreement on the loss of Schleswig as an important *memory site* for national self-understanding.

<sup>6</sup> Torvald T:son Höjer quoted in Edgren, “Traumakonstruktionen,” 22.

the very inception of nationalist thought in Sweden will be compared to two literary works from the mid-nineteenth century by two Finnish-born authors. Gustaf Henrik Mellin (1803–1876) and Fredrika Bremer (1801–1865) both came to Sweden as small children because of the Finnish war, even though Bremer’s father sold his holdings in Finland and moved to Stockholm a few years before the war, whereas Mellin fled his home with his father in 1808, and finally left Finland in 1810.<sup>7</sup> Both became prominent Swedish writers, and Mellin’s pamphlet *Sweriges Sista Strid: Fantastiskt Nattstycke* (*Sweden’s Last Battle: Fantasmagoric Night Piece*, 1840) was part of heated debate over the possible benefits for the Finnish people of being under Russian rule.<sup>8</sup> Bremer’s novel *Syskonlif* (Engl. transl. *Brothers and Sisters* the same year), issued a few years later in 1848 – the year of revolutions – depicts the construction of a model society informed by Utopian Socialism with a Liberal touch. The loss of Finland turns up in a side story, although it is a key to the overall message of promoting a better world for mankind. Finally, a coda provides a brief glimpse into the future after Finland’s independence in 1917. In Selma Lagerlöf’s (1858–1940) biography on the Finnish national author Zacharias Topelius, published in 1920, she looks back on her own emotions regarding the loss of Finland as a young girl reading Topelius’ historical novels.

The aim of the analysis is to study the displacement of the construction of loss by asking: how is territorial loss imagined? In other words, what exactly is lost? And what are the emotions associated with loss and how do they circulate in these literary works? These examples belong to different genres – poetry, a pamphlet, a sentimental novel, and a biography – entailing different prerequisites for structuring emotions. The exploration of the shifting emotions attached to Sweden’s loss of Finland uncovers the mechanisms at work in the production of loss in changing figurative repertoires. Featuring the nation as an amputated body, using a corporeal metaphor, will also be of special interest. Bodies make emotions “stick”, and they offer an opportunity for imagining loss in different ways.

Sara Ahmed’s concept of “affective economies” suggests that emotions circulate and accumulate in a way resembling the Marxian analysis of capital, increasing by circulation.

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<sup>7</sup> On Bremer, see Carina Burman, *Bremer. En biografi* (Stockholm: Bonnier, 2001). On Mellin, see Emilie Flygare-Carlén, *Minnen af svenskt författarliv 1840–1860 II* (Stockholm: Albert Bonniers förlag, 1878), 3–65; Rickard Berghorn, “Inledning,” in Gustaf Henrik Mellin, *Sveriges sista strid: Fantastiskt nattstycke* (Sverige: Timaios Press, 2016), 7–10.

<sup>8</sup> Flygare-Carlén, *Minnen af svenskt författarliv 1840–1860*, 9–10; Berghorn, “Inledning,” 7–10.

Affect does not reside in an object or sign, but as an effect of the circulation between objects and signs (=the accumulation of affective value). Signs increase in affective value as an effect of the movement between signs: the more signs circulate, the more affective they become.<sup>9</sup>

She uses the word “sticky” to articulate how objects become “saturated with affect, as sites of personal and social tension”, transferring emotions.<sup>10</sup> Barbara H. Rosenwein’s notion of “emotional sequences” will also be important in the analysis. Rosenwein points out that emotions seldom are experienced one by one, but rather in a cohesive sequence, defining each other:

Sequence are important because they tell us how emotions are felt differently according to the company they keep. If I feel angry and then guilty, that is a very different *feeling* of anger than if I feel angry and then euphoric. The sequence reveals how an emotion is valued.<sup>11</sup>

The sequences of “emotion words” that Rosenwein is working on reveal the evaluations and expressions of emotions mainly in medieval and early modern communities through personal documents or spiritual guidebooks. The emotional sequences that my analysis will highlight pertain to literary works of the nineteenth century with a conscious nationalist agenda, using skilfully crafted emotional sequences to produce nationalist affects. Still, the relevance of the sequence, formulated by Rosenwein, is the same.

The foundational trope of territorial loss in European nineteenth-century nationalist discourse was Poland (see the Introduction and Maciej Janowski’s chapter in the present volume). *Another* people’s loss functioned as a warning evoking terror.<sup>12</sup> Poland’s loss of territory was also the ultimate threat envisioned by Esaias Tegnér in “Svea” (1811) – it put forward the most compelling argument for revenge. However, the general opinion in Sweden concerning the loss of Finland at the time of the actual loss is a subject with divergent interpretations.

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<sup>9</sup> Sara Ahmed, *The Politics of Emotion*, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, [2004] 2014), 45.

<sup>10</sup> Ahmed, *The Politics of Emotion*, 11.

<sup>11</sup> Barbara H. Rosenwein, *Generations of Feeling: A History of Emotions, 600–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 8.

<sup>12</sup> Anne-Marie Thiesse’s notion of the “trade of national identity” thus applies also to territorial loss. Anne-Marie Thiesse, “National Identities: A Transnational Paradigm,” in *Revisiting Nationalism: Theories and Processes*, eds. Alain Dieckhoff and Christophe Jaffrelot (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 125.

Obviously, there is no way of telling how the Swedish common people felt – if they had any opinion on the matter at all. There are those who suppose that Tegnér’s poem expressed a general feeling among the public, based on accounts of the recital of parts of Tegnér’s poem at a public meeting of the Swedish Academy in December 1811.<sup>13</sup> A “stifled rumbling” was reported from the hall, suggesting that the audience had to “restrain their feelings” of approval.<sup>14</sup> This view is contradicted by Edgren’s research, which shows that the press was curiously silent on the loss of Finland in the 1810s and 1820s.<sup>15</sup> A contributing factor was no doubt the so-called “policy of 1812”. Swedish King Gustaf IV Adolf was forced to abdicate as a result of the defeat in the war, and a new Constitution was proclaimed in 1809. After the *coup d’état*, the new Crown Prince Jean Baptist Bernadotte, later King Karl XIV Johan, changed allegiance from France to Russia. “The policy of 1812” meant that Sweden’s revanchist interests were redirected from East to West: to Norway. Little room was left for revenge. Still, in 1811, the Geatish Society was formed and the “engineers” behind “the invention” of the Swedish nation, in Sandström’s words, certainly shared Tegnér’s enthusiasm for revanchism.<sup>16</sup> Some of the members contributed to poetic revanchism along the line of Tegnér’s “Svea”, most notably Per Erik Ling in his poem *Gylfe* (1812).<sup>17</sup> Tegnér himself, subsequently a bishop and a prolific poet, would join the society the following year. While the other members swiftly adjusted their opinions to coincide with the “policy of 1812”, Tegnér did not.<sup>18</sup> He remained hostile to the Crown Prince, whereas another distinguished member of the Geatish Society, Erik Gustaf Geijer, the founder of history as a modern discipline in Sweden, showed an “active disinterest” in Finland when constructing Swedish history in the following decades, according to Sandström.<sup>19</sup>

The emotions expressed by the cultural elite in the Geatish Society who introduced nationalist ideas in Sweden most likely did not represent the public in general, though. They were the pioneers of the new ideas, constructing a national identity connected to the national territory. At the beginning of 1809, when large parts of the country were occupied and the Russian army was approaching Stockholm from the archipelago, the inhabitants of the capital were busy celebrating the new Constitution. Social life, feasting and

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<sup>13</sup> Stenroth, *Sveriges rötter*, 42.

<sup>14</sup> Peter Wieselgren quoted in Åke K. G. Lundquist, “Kommentar,” in Esaias Tegnér, *Samlade dikter II. 1809–1816*, edited by Fredrik Böök and Åke K.G. Lundquist (Lund: C W K Gleerup, 1968), 232; Stenroth, *Sveriges rötter*, 42.

<sup>15</sup> Edgren, “Traumakonstruktionen,” 12.

<sup>16</sup> Sandström, “Sökandet efter en ny svensk identitet,” 390.

<sup>17</sup> Grandien, *Rönndrövans glöd*, 46; Stenroth, *Sveriges rötter*, 28.

<sup>18</sup> Grandien, *Rönndrövans glöd*, 46; Lönnroth, “Fänrik Ståls Sverige,” 47.

<sup>19</sup> Quotation in Sandström, “Sökandet efter en ny svensk identitet,” 392; Sandström, “Sveriges 1809,” 36.

partying continued as usual.<sup>20</sup> The public mourning for Finland did not start until thirty years later, when cries for revenge were raised in the Liberal press.<sup>21</sup> Some agree with the Finnish historian Matti that one reason for the Swedish lack of response to the loss of Finland in 1809 was due to the fear of suffering the same fate as Poland: a general feeling was that Sweden was so weakened that the country might have disappeared from the map. A complete partition of Sweden between Russia and Denmark was a real possibility.<sup>22</sup> People were simply relieved that there was some land left. But then again, it has been suggested that this analysis of the situation was in fact the result of the new king Karl Johan's propaganda.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, neglect and silence were probably the backdrop against which "Svea" appeared.

### *Dead bodies and lost virtues in "Svea"*

Tegnér's "Svea" is all about virtues. The basic idea is that lost virtues are the cause of Sweden's territorial loss, and consequently, the predominant emotion is shame. At the end of the poem, the poet has a vision of a future battle and the metre changes from Alexandrines to Dithyrambs, inspired by the Eddic "Voluspá". The ghosts of the Viking forbears rise from their burial mounds (on burial mounds cf. Jens Eike Schnall's chapter in the present volume), accompanied by riding Valkyries, to bring revenge and regain honour. The message is clear: the lost virtues of dead ancestors are needed to secure future glory and escape shame. The Swedish Academy had remarks on formal aspects of the verse as well as on the politics of the poems, and the rewritten version mainly reflects minor changes in the rhymes, but twelve lines have been deleted and 26 lines were newly composed in 1812.<sup>24</sup> Revenge is replaced with grief. Presumably, the poem was well known in both versions, however, because Tegnér's poems and speeches were usually quickly copied and circulated in manuscripts.<sup>25</sup>

In the original version, a "Giant" – easily recognised as Russia – is closing in on "us" devouring the plain with his eye, and the poet asks: "What will soon be left to us?"<sup>26</sup> Even nature reacts emotionally as the iron taken out of the cliffs "blush with indignation to be

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<sup>20</sup> Sandström, "Sökandet efter en ny svensk identitet," 386–88.

<sup>21</sup> Sandström, "Sökandet efter en ny svensk identitet," 381–402; Matti Klinge, *Den politiske Runeberg* (Helsinki: Söderströms & Stockholm: Atlantis, 2004), 150, 259.

<sup>22</sup> Klinge, *Den politiske Runeberg*, 30–31; Nils Holmberg, "Från Svea till Frithiofs saga," *Scandia* no. 4 (1933): 211; Sandström, "Sveriges 1809", 84.

<sup>23</sup> Erik Lönnroth, "Fänrik Ståls Sverige," *Historiska och litteraturhistoriska studier* 50 (1975):48–50.

<sup>24</sup> Lundquist, "Kommentar," 231–243.

<sup>25</sup> Lundquist, "Kommentar," 189, 233; Stenroth, *Sveriges rötter*, 44.

<sup>26</sup> "Hvad återstår oss snart? Allt närmre tränger Jätten. / Han står på fjellets spets, och ögat slukar slätten." Esaias Tegnér, *Samlade dikter II. 1809–1816*, eds. Fredrik Böök and Åke K.G. Lundquist (Lund: C W K Gleerup, 1968), 54.

forged for his defence”.<sup>27</sup> Finland is a “grave”, the poet contends, and apostrophizes “the spilled blood of the Fathers”: “What happens to the soil defended by thy courage?”<sup>28</sup> In the original version, the reader is encouraged to take up arms – “Thou Man, where is thy sword?”<sup>29</sup> – whereas in the printed version, the poet takes farewell of “the land of Heroes”, and the reader is urged to weep. The Baltic Sea will carry “our tears” to “thy strand”.<sup>30</sup> In accordance with the speech made by Crown Prince Karl Johan to the Parliament in 1810, attention is redirected to the land that is left to love and protect, and to help prosper in economic growth, summarized in the famous line: “And within Sweden’s borders regain Finland anew.”<sup>31</sup> This peaceful message, however, is contradicted by the Viking ghosts’ battle, a passage left untouched. There could be no doubt about the political message even in the published version. Since the printed version has been reprinted over the years, the following analysis will be based on the version of 1812, subsequently published in 1817.<sup>32</sup>

Writing at the dawn of modern nationalism, Tegnér had to perform two tasks: he had to create an emotional connection to the soil of the Swedish territory, and he had to construct a sense of loss in order to inspire revenge. The poem establishes several different relations between the earth and bodies. Firstly, Tegnér repeatedly stresses that the soil feeds bodies. Secondly, the soil consists of bodies, as in the ashes and blood of the ancestors. Both of these bonds to the earth relate to what geographer Jan Penrose calls the “emotional power of territory”.<sup>33</sup> She claims that the success of the nation state rests on the combination of two different *territorialities*, the practice of “bounding space”.<sup>34</sup> In the first, “identity is *culturally* defined” and significance is attributed to a territory as “emotional power”, for instance by bonds “cemented through birth and nurturing” or by buried or cremated bodies becoming “indistinguishable from the soil itself”.<sup>35</sup> In the second, “identity is *territorially* defined”, and

<sup>27</sup> ”En annan skär vår skörd och upptar klippans jern, / som rodna utaf harm att smidas till hans värn.” Tegnér, *Samlade dikter*, 54.

<sup>28</sup> ”O Finlands vida graf! O Fädrens spillda blod! / Hvad blir det af den jord som värjdes av ert mod?” Tegnér, *Samlade dikter*, 54.

<sup>29</sup> ”Du Man, hvar är ditt svärd?” Tegnér, *Samlade dikter*, 54.

<sup>30</sup> Esaias Tegnér, *Axel, and Svea*, trans. Oscar Baker (London: James Carpenter, 1840), 91. ”Farväl du Sveas värn, farväl, du Hjeltars land! / Se, Bottnens bölja för vår gråt intill din strand! [...] Gråt, Svea, hvad du mist; men skydda hvad du äger.” Esaias Tegnér, “Svea: Skaldeestycke,” in *Svenska Akademiens Handlingar Ifrån År 1796. Sjette delen* (Stockholm: Carl Deleen, 1817), 162.

<sup>31</sup> The English translation of this verse is not literal and this is therefore my own translation. ”Och inom Sverges [sic] gräns eröfra Finland åter.” Tegnér, “Svea,” 162. On the inspiration from Karl Johan’s speech, see Nils Holmberg, “Från Svea till Frithiofs saga,” 211; Lundquist, “Kommentar,” 234.

<sup>32</sup> Tegnér, “Svea,” 155–169. On the different versions of the poem, see Lundquist, “Kommentar,” 231–252.

<sup>33</sup> Jan Penrose, ”Nations, States and Homelands: Territory and Territoriality in Nationalist Thought,” *Nations and Nationalism* 8, no. 3 (July 2002): 282.

<sup>34</sup> Penrose, ”Nations, States and Homelands,” 279.

<sup>35</sup> Penrose, ”Nations, States and Homelands,” 281–84.

significance is primarily attributed in terms of “material resources of a territory”.<sup>36</sup> Tegnér’s “Svea” firmly rests on the first kind of territoriality; the poem bounds space by depicting the national territory as a grave.

The very first line of the poem starts with the word “earth”:

Earth, which has fostered me and which hides the ashes of our forbears,  
People, who have inherited a land of heroes and forgotten their virtues!  
From the shadow of my valley, I dedicate a song to you.<sup>37</sup>

Tegnér returns on several occasions to this idea of the soil actually consisting of the deceased. These first lines also refer to a third *topos* permeating the entire poem, namely the idea that the soil fosters not only bodily qualities but also inner characteristics, informed by the climate theory of Montesquieu and Herder. The personification of Sweden, referred to in the title of the poem, Svea, is indeed depicted as a female body with golden hair sitting on a throne in the mountains, but not until the end of the poem, and only very briefly.<sup>38</sup> Actually, Svea is an unclear reference, and the poem plays on this uncertainty to make emotions stick to the territory. The “you” that is apostrophized “Svea”, sometimes refers to the people, sometimes to the old territory of the former kings, “the earth of the Vasa kings”, sometimes to the territory of the present, and importantly, “you” sometimes refers to the reader, who is then by association implicated in all of these categories: the people, the history of the territory and the present territory. The soil is then connected to bodies in multiple ways, nurturing, fostering, and even occupying the same apostrophized position. Above all, the soil consists of bodies – the sticky objects charging the national territory with emotions in Tegnér’s “Svea” are dead bodies.

The poem rests on a fundamental irony: on the one hand, the *logos* argument hails male virtues, defined as anti-sentimental, fostered by an unfruitful soil and untarnished by external influence. On the other hand, the rhetorical success is entirely dependent on very

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<sup>36</sup>Penrose, “Nations, States and Homelands,” 284. For a discussion on nationalist territorialities the Swedish novel of the 1840s, see Anna Bohlin, “Den svenska 1840-talsromanen som nationell kartografi,” *Sammlaren* 137 (2016), 58–86.

<sup>37</sup> Oscar Baker’s English translation is not literal, therefore this prose translation is my own. ”Jord, som mig fostrat har och fädrens aska gömmer, / Folk, som ärft hjeltars land och deras dygder glömmet! / Ur skuggan af min dal jag egnar dig en sång.” Tegnér, “Svea,” 157.

<sup>38</sup> Pär Alexandersson comments on the evasive portrait of Svea in Tegnér’s poem, and points out that she is stripped of her traditional attributes in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century depictions: the sceptre, the sword, the coat of arms and the heraldic lion. The role of mother, that would characterize Svea throughout the nineteenth century, is only vaguely suggested. Pär Alexandersson, *Moder Sveas historia: Den svenska nationspersonifikationen under fem sekler* (Stockholm: BoD, 2017), 107–115.



strong and indeed very unstable sentiments, as the invoked emotions rapidly change. The carefully worked-out structure of *pathos* in the poem presents an emotional sequence, ordered according to a belligerent logic in a complex interplay with the three-dimensional time of nationalism: past, present, future.

The poem starts by rubbing in nostalgia for past times and lost virtues, based on the idea that Nature (with a capital N) has destined the peoples of the North to simplicity, duty, freedom and pride. The memories of past days are gone, according to the poet: “Through the long nights of ages that are run, / Ye gleam a moment, and again are gone.”<sup>39</sup> By the time Tegnér moves on, it seems reasonable to treat the present time with nothing but utter contempt, which he then regrets, addressing God, the soil, and the former royal dynasty in the same sentence: “What say I? Oh God, Oh Sweden, the Vasa earth!”<sup>40</sup> The poet asks forgiveness for his “wild sorrow” and pleads with the “sleeping” people of Svea to wake up and look around: “Now the sun shines o’er lands that thou hast lost.”<sup>41</sup> The loss of land leads to the deleted lines, where the 1812 version of the poem exchanged revenge with pride in what is left of the country. They still end up where the original version ended: in the threat of complete dissolution, which sets the tone for the rest of the poem.

Tegnér does not mention Poland in “Svea”, but he is undoubtedly activating the Poland trope. Horror is invoked by a personification of Destiny, ready to wipe Sweden’s name from the records of history:

Thoughtfully destiny stands with raised pencil  
To write our doom, the eternal and the last.<sup>42</sup>

That is an incentive to egg on – and to evoke hope. Even though the poem deals with territorial loss, the printed version refers to the land to be defended as one of “graves”, in second place after king and the state: “Yet thou hast King and State and Graves to defend / And the ghost of a name, the pride of memory.”<sup>43</sup> Tegnér still understands the nation in terms

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<sup>39</sup> Tegnér, *Axel, and Svea*, 88. “O! Sveas fordna dar, o! Fädrens gudaminnen! / I seklers långa natt J skynten och försvinnen.” Tegnér, “Svea,” 159.

<sup>40</sup> My own translation, as the English translation is not literal. ”Hvad säger jag? O Gud, O Sverge, Vasars jord!” Tegnér, “Svea,” 161.

<sup>41</sup> Tegnér, *Axel, and Svea*, 90. ”Och morgonsoln går opp i land som du förlorat.” Tegnér, “Svea,” 161.

<sup>42</sup> Tegnér, *Axel, and Svea*, 92. The first line is amended since the English translation has omitted the personification of destiny. ”Betänksamt ödet står, med griffeln höjd att rista / I kopparn in vår dom, den eviga, den sista.” Tegnér, “Svea,” 163.

<sup>43</sup> Oscar Baker’s English translation is not literal, therefore this prose translation is mine. “Än har du Kung och Stat och Grafvar till att värja / Och vålnan af ett namn som minnets stolthet gör.” Tegnér, “Svea,” 163. The original version has “fatherland” (“fosterland”). Tegnér, *Samlade dikter*, 54.

of older patriotic ideals of the king and the state (cf. Schnall's chapter in the present volume); it is not a question of defending a national people, other than those who are already dead and who earned bygone glory. Hope, of course, leads to the future, and to the Dithyrambic vision of the battle, which turns out to be a re-enactment of Old Norse myth. As the battle is won, the vision inspires awe, holiness, virtue and prosperity, which in its turn create a longing to sacrifice oneself, to avenge and die in order to join the glorious dead. To ensure that action will be taken, the poem's last lines are devoted to fear and threats:

Will Svea now fall at the autumn of Times  
A slave among the peoples without name, and will  
Thou hero's beacon suffocate for ever in its chest; –  
[...]  
With our land let our shame perish,  
Let no one know where your Svea stood!<sup>44</sup>

If Svea loses the territory, the poet hopes that the shame of the people will be lost together with the territory as the name of Svea will vanish forever. The emotion of shame will ultimately lead to complete annihilation even of the memory, in Tegnér's account.

The significance of territorial loss in "Svea" is lost honour, which is explained by lost virtues. The sequence of emotions, the logic of *pathos* so to speak, makes a convincing argument for regaining the lost territory of Finland. The rhetoric calls for self-sacrifice and signals the dissolution of the nation. The emotional connection to the soil is made by means of dead bodies that then constitute a perfect illustration of the three-dimensional temporality of nationalism: the lost virtues of the past rise in the present to engender the future. The Romantic poets would only rarely return to territorial loss in the subsequent decades. However, the Polish uprising caused Finland to resurface in the Swedish debate, especially as the official politics were still pro-Russian, while the newly established oppositional Liberal press and the cultural elite were fiercely pro-Polish.<sup>45</sup> In the autumn of 1831, Finland disappeared from the public agenda for some years, until the controversial professor of medicine Israel Hwasser started an agitated debate, arguing that Finland had no wish to be

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<sup>44</sup> The English translation has not translated the entire poem, it ends before the vision of the Viking battle and the quoted lines are thus not included. "Skall Svea falla här i Tidens höst / En slaf bland folken utan namn, och qväfves / Er hjeltelåga evigt i dess bröst; – / [...] Att med vår jord vår skam må bli förgången, / Och ingen veta hvar ert Svea stod!" Tegnér, "Svea," 169.

<sup>45</sup> Sandström, "Sökandet efter en ny svensk identitet," 395–96; Klinge, *Den politiske Runeberg*, 144–149.

reincorporated with Sweden and was in fact, better off in its present circumstances.<sup>46</sup> Gustaf Henrik Mellin reacted with rage to this statement.

Fig. 1 The cover of the first edition of G. H. Mellin's *Sweden's Last Battle* (1840) with mixed Roman and Gothic styles. Photo by Ann-Sofie Persson, Kungliga biblioteket, Stockholm.

### *Buildings and feelings in Sweden's Last Battle*

While Tegnér's poem did not specifically address the population in Finland, the Finnish people were the centre of attention in Mellin's and Bremer's works, although with different narrative techniques. Thirty years as a Grand Duchy within the Russian empire and burgeoning Finnish nationalism meant that there was a Finnish people to address in the first place, but changing historical circumstances and transforming nationalist thought also entailed a different construction of loss. Mellin was mostly known as a writer of historical short stories. He was, in fact, the first to publish a literary work set during the Finnish War in *Pavo Nissinen: Scener ur sista finska kriget* (*Pavo Nissinen: Scenes from the Last Finnish War*, 1838).<sup>47</sup> His furious response as to whether Finland was better off without Sweden is a pamphlet of approximately hundred pages. *Sweden's Last Battle: Fantasmagoric Night Piece* (1840) takes place in the imagined near future, when the entire Swedish territory is under Russian rule. Surprisingly, the story starts out in India, where the unnamed narrator tells the story of how Sweden was lost and decides to go back to organise an uprising, which eventually succeeds, and the Russian emperor is killed. The publication was bound in an ominous black cover and the story printed in Gothic type, which suggests that it was intended not only for upper-class readers. At the time, reader circuits were still somewhat divided according to class. Poetry and novels – read mostly by the upper classes – were usually printed in Roman types in Sweden, whereas the literature of the common people – mostly religious literature – was printed in Gothic types.<sup>48</sup> To be sure, the pamphlet caused a heated

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<sup>46</sup> Edgren, "Traumakonstruktionen," 13–17; Jyrki Paaskoski, "Åt sådana män, som Duncker uppreste fornverden ärestoder": Fredrik Cygnæus biografi över J. Z. Duncker och mottagandet av den," in *Fänrikens marknadsminne: Finska kriget 1808–1809 och dess följder i eftervärldens ögon*, ed. Max Engman (Helsinki: Svenska litteratursällskapet i Finland & Stockholm: Bokförlaget Atlantis, 2009), 212; Klinge, *Den politiske Runeberg*, 150.

<sup>47</sup> Paaskoski, "Å sådana män som Duncker," 200; Johan Wrede, *Världen enligt Runeberg: En biografisk och idéhistorisk studie* (Helsinki: Svenska litteratursällskapet i Finland & Stockholm: Bokförlaget Atlantis, 2005), 216–17.

<sup>48</sup> Gunnel Furuland, *Romanen som vardagsvara: Förläggare, författare och skönlitterära häfteserier i Sverige 1833–1851 från Lars Johan Hierta till Albert Bonnier* (Stockholm: LaGun, 2007), 48–49.

debate that engaged all layers of society and quickly sold out, and was immediately followed by a new edition.<sup>49</sup> The preface to the third edition 27 years later in 1867 is an apology; the tense emotionality now had to be explained, retrospectively, as the result of an earlier historical situation.<sup>50</sup>

Mellin takes his cue from “Svea”, and revanchism is the objective of the story, though with a different construction of what is lost linked with slightly different feelings, and most of all portrayed with very different literary techniques. The basic argument in Mellin’s pamphlet – to prove that Finland suffers from being part of the Russian empire – is engineered to entice the reader to identify with the Finnish people by making them imagine the same fate happening to Sweden. Tegnér’s nostalgic portrayal of lost Viking virtues was no longer a viable rhetoric.

Mellin even indirectly refutes Tegnér’s claim, informed by climate theory, that the nation was lost when customs were softened and minds were weakened by influences from the South. The forbears in “Svea” were “not clad by Asia, nor fed by Indians”.<sup>51</sup> In contrast, Mellin’s narrator is indeed fed by Indians, as he has fled Sweden after the Russian invasion and since then become a wealthy merchant in Bombay. In Mellin’s novelistic version, the climate theory on morals engendered by interactions between North and South has a different function and is exemplified by qualities in the main characters and as a driving element in the plot line. Southern customs and warmth in Mellin’s story add beauty and comfort to the Northern cold, displayed in and through the narrator’s Indian-Swedish daughter, and equally important, the fortune amassed in India is used to finance Swedish rebellion against Russia. The dead forbears do indeed come alive and take part in the battle when Sweden is lost in *Sweden’s Last Battle*, as they do in the vision of the future in “Svea”, but in a decidedly more comical and theatrical fashion: the fight takes place in the old royal armoury, where the armour of the old kings and queens are put to use by the intelligentsia who are forming the resistance movement. Viking virtues and ghosts from the past had lost their allure and were apparently not sufficiently sticky objects to trigger revanchist feelings in 1840 but changing city skylines were. Nature has no voice; what is lost and regained are the cities. The production of loss in Mellin’s pamphlet is an urban affair.

The *pathos* rhetoric in *Sweden’s last battle* rests on buildings. The narrative elaborates repeatedly on detailed reports on the transformation of views and lost landmarks of

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<sup>49</sup> Flygare-Carlén, *Minnen af svenskt författarlif*, 9.

<sup>50</sup> G. H. Mellin, *Sveriges sista strid: Fantastiskt nattstycke* (Sverige: Timaios Press, 2016), 13–14.

<sup>51</sup> “Ej Asien klädde än, ej Indier honom födde.” Tegnér, “Svea,” 159.

Stockholm and other major cities. On the narrator's return to Stockholm, his first view of the city from the sea, "so familiar and yet so changed and foreign", prompts an extraordinary sequence of emotions:

I was seized by a deep resentment and felt a peculiar pleasure in nourishing this resentment by observing the very objects that would hurt my national feelings the most. The more I saw my fatherland violated by the conquering barbarians, the more I experienced a kind of wild, horrible joy that caused me to shiver myself. A burning desire to harm the insolent victors was kindled within me, and revenge, the deep thirst for revenge, began to eat away at my insides. But I concealed the hateful feelings deep, deep inside, or at least tried to hide them with a scornful smile, while clenching my teeth.<sup>52</sup>

This careful description of a sequence of conflicting emotions functions as an exposition of the emotional pattern explored by the story and prescribes the reader's emotional response. Resentment caused by hurt feelings engenders pleasure and wild joy, which in turn are horrifying because they emanate from a lust for revenge, but the hatred is masked by a scornful smile – this formulates the emotional range of the narrative arousing revanchism in *Sweden's Last Battle*.

The skyline of Stockholm has changed since Riddarholm Church, the royal burial site in Stockholm, burnt down. In real life, the church tower did collapse after a fire caused by a strike of lightning in 1835 and was rebuilt during the years 1838–1841, when Mellin's pamphlet was issued. In the story, the church is completely destroyed and the ground put to military use. Burial sites are specifically pointed out: the ancestors' bones in the earth still hold emotional value. At the former churchyard in Gothenburg, the gravestones with the names still visible make up the enemy's defensive wall. Architectural constructions containing the nation's memories, such as the library and the museum, also receive special

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<sup>52</sup> “[M]in blick flög ut öfwer den dyrbara fädernebygden, som nu låg framför mig, på en gång så wäl bekant och dock så förändrad och främmande. Jag kände mig betagen af en djup harm, och det war mig en egen wällust att nära denna genom betraktandet af just de föremål, som mest skulle såra min fosterlandskänsla. Ju djupare jag såg mitt fädernesland kränkt af de eröfrande barbarerna, desto mera erfor jag en slags wild, hemsk glädje, för hwilken jag sjelf ryste. Ett lågande begär att göra de fräcka segrarna illa upptändes inom mig, och hämnaden, den djupa hämnadens törst begynte att tära mitt innersta. Men jag gömde djupt, djupt de hatfulla känslorna, eller försökte åtminstone att med ett hånfullt leende dölja dem, medan jag bet mina tänder tillsammans.” Gustaf Henrik Mellin, *Sweriges Sista Strid: Fantastiskt Nattstycke* (Stockholm: A. G. Hellsten, 1840), 34. There is no English translation of Mellin's pamphlet, therefore the translation of the quotations are my own with help from Tim Challman. I'm grateful to Tim for his careful proofreading throughout this chapter!

attention; their purpose has likewise changed to serve the Russian military, which makes the narrator turn pale in “ice-cold horror”.<sup>53</sup> Buildings are clearly sticky objects, disseminating horror and wrath; flags even more so. On several occasions in the story, flags – as well as the lack of “the dear old Swedish flag” – signalise lost independence, as do canons and walls blocking entrance to former recreation areas.<sup>54</sup>

Even though the narrator has to admit that the transformation of certain buildings has beautified the city, he objects that the taste is foreign, and even mere perfection is understood as terrifying. This is the case when the narrator approaches Uppsala and is met with an “unexpected view”:

[T]he gigantic castle [was] no longer half in ruins as formerly, but terribly perfected, with spires on all the four towers [...]. A Russian garrison filled the great halls. In front of the castle, facing the city, a new fortress was built with canons, the hollow, voracious mouths of which threatened the city.<sup>55</sup>

Mellin depicts the castle in Uppsala as a kind of reversed Gothic ruin: the very restoration of the half-ruined building into a splendid palace evokes terror.

These changes to the architectural identity of the Swedish cities are clearly inspired by the imperial style of the new capital Helsinki, as are the accounts of the government, the administration, and the Russification of the universities.<sup>56</sup> Furthermore, the battles of Stockholm when Sweden is lost and regained, respectively, are carefully located. An overwhelming number of place names allows the reader familiar with Stockholm to follow the dramatic events step by step through the city like a cinematic panorama. If the adventures of the narrator and his daughter are fantastic, the depiction of Stockholm and Swedish society under Russian rule bear every mark of verisimilitude. The long sequence of

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<sup>53</sup> The Swedish reads: “iskall fasa”, “bleknade”. Mellin, *Sveriges Sista Strid*, 43.

<sup>54</sup> Mellin, *Sveriges Sista Strid*, 28, 33, 36, 83, 91.

<sup>55</sup> The entire quote reads: “Och då, om aftonen, wi anlände till den gamla staden wid Fyris, mötte oss den owäntade åsynen af det gigantiska slottet, inte såsom fordom halft i ruiner, utan fruktansvärdt fulländat, med höga spiror på de fyra tornen, och widsträckt våningar, hwilkas glimmande fönster på alla sidor omslöto en praktfull, pelarbeprydd borggård. En talrik Rysk garnison uppfyllde de ofantliga salarna. Framför slottet, åt stadssidan till, reste sig, på den gamla skansen Styrbiskops plats, ett nytt fästningswerk, vars kanoner, med ihåliga, rofgiriga gap, hotande wände sig emot staden.” Mellin, *Sveriges Sista Strid*, 65.

<sup>56</sup> On the imperial aesthetics of Helsinki, see Klinge, *Den politiske Runeberg*, 120; Rainer Knapas, “Alexander I:s Finland,” in *1809 – rikssprängning och begynnelse. 200-årsminnet av Finska kriget*, ed. Per Sandin (Stockholm: Livrustkammaren); Rainer Knapas, “Eastern and Western Neoclassicism in Finland,” in “Proceedings of the Seminar on Architecture and Historic Preservation in Central and Eastern Europe. New York, 28–30 November 1975,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 38, no. 2 (May 1979), 124–129.

emotions in Tegnér's poem is abbreviated by means of realistic, visual impressions designed to evoke resentment as prescribed in the initial sequence of emotions. The realistic horror is combined with the fantastic story of the success of the resistance movement, restoring honour and joy – with a fair amount of laughter.

A large number of real personal names appear in the story; the leaders of the resistance movement are, somewhat jokingly, contemporary authors and journalists, mostly Mellin's real-life friends. For example, Fredrika Bremer and two of her female authors colleagues, Sophie von Knorring and Emilie Flygare-Carlén, are depicted throwing hand grenades, wearing the armour of former queens.<sup>57</sup> However, this unrealistic comic feature serves to make a point about what is lost with independence. Tegnér was still alive when Mellin's story was published, but *in* the story itself, he is dead, murdered by the Russians, as are many other prominent Swedish men.<sup>58</sup> The fate of the cultural elite including restrictions in their businesses, censorship, imprisonment, and exile, evoke fright. The loss of the nation's memories, suggested by the transformation of the content of the buildings, is reinforced by the fate of persons representing learning and the arts. Familiar sights and well-known persons representing the nation's memories and culture become the sticky objects, accumulating and circulating feelings of horror and wrath, underscored by the black cover of the original edition.

The tension between surface and content of the buildings is underscored by an analogy suggested by the narrator's daughter. Hindiah, "my Hindustani Swede", as her father calls her, proves the case in point in reverse.<sup>59</sup> In contrast to the transformed buildings, her brown skin and black eyes distinguish her body as foreign, but her inner qualities vouch for her true nationality (cf. Bjarne Thorup Thomsen's and Eve Annuk's chapters in the present volume). In the introduction to the novel, the narrator recognises his beloved Hindustani family – "his own" – as foreign. Still, his daughter is "the most beautiful flower of my inner being", specified in terms of her Nordic melancholic state of mind and her ability to express "feelings of the heart" in her father's language.<sup>60</sup> Most important though, is her love of the "fatherland", which in her case is literally a "fatherland", since her "motherland" is India. The narrator explains that his love for the fatherland has a different quality than the love for his wife and daughter – in a man's heart, love for a woman can never compete with love for the

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<sup>57</sup> Mellin, *Sveriges Sista Strid*, 18.

<sup>58</sup> Mellin, *Sveriges Sista Strid*, 72. "Svea" is quoted as a motto to the last, short chapter, added in the last edition of 1875. Mellin, *Sveriges sista strid*, 94.

<sup>59</sup> Mellin, *Sveriges Sista Strid*, 5.

<sup>60</sup> The Swedish reads: "hon är också mitt wäsendes skönaste blomma!" "Jag hade lärt henne att tyda sitt hjertas känslor med mina ord [...]." Mellin, *Sveriges Sista Strid*, 4–5.

native territory.<sup>61</sup> It is “a violent force [he] cannot resist”.<sup>62</sup> Hindiah shares this love: she too is drawn to the North with an irresistible force and joins her father on his journey.<sup>63</sup>

Nationalist feelings have become essential in Mellin’s account, as have feelings in general. The Russian emperor’s despotism is characterised by indifference towards his subjects’ feelings: his lack of compassion, explained by absolutist rule, makes him, in Mellin’s pamphlet, unfit to govern.<sup>64</sup> The narrator explains his own readiness to sacrifice everything for the liberation of his fatherland: he is “excited by the great thought that all true human *Bildung* must emanate from a noble and independent nationality”.<sup>65</sup> Tegnér’s manly Viking virtues are replaced in Mellin’s account by emotions. The necessary inner qualities to liberate the territory and build the future, according to Mellin’s story, are emotions, especially love and compassion, from which noble virtues supposedly will spring. However, exactly what love of the fatherland means is the cause of conflict in Fredrika Bremer’s novel *Brothers and Sisters*, published eight years later. Whereas what is lost with independence in Mellin’s *Sweden’s last battle* is the cultural memory and learning of the nation; loss in Bremer’s novel is first and foremost the loss of the Finnish people.

#### *A sentimental novel of lost siblings: Fredrika Bremer’s Brothers and Sisters*

As the title of Bremer’s novel denotes, *Brothers and Sisters* is a tale of siblings, and the family metaphor is transferred to nations. In this case, the territorial loss is transposed into a sentimental novel and thus portrayed as a family conflict (cf. Kristina Malmio’s chapter in the present volume).<sup>66</sup> The vision, stated in the beginning of the novel, is that all the nations of the earth should be regarded as one family that will be united in the future.<sup>67</sup> The notion that

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<sup>61</sup> Mellin, *Sweriges Sista Strid*, 5.

<sup>62</sup> Mellin, *Sweriges Sista Strid*, 8.

<sup>63</sup> Mellin, *Sweriges Sista Strid*, 28.

<sup>64</sup> Mellin, *Sweriges Sista Strid*, 84–85.

<sup>65</sup> “Vi kände oss båda eldade af den stora tanken, att all sann mensklig bildning måste utgå från en ädel och själfständig nationalitet [...]”. Mellin, *Sweriges Sista Strid*, 75.

<sup>66</sup> For a discussion on the nineteenth-century sentimental novel and its political impact, see Jane P. Tompkins, *Sensational Designs: The Cultural Work of American Fiction, 1790–1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

<sup>67</sup> Fredrika Bremer, *Nya teckningar ur hvardagslifvet XIII. Syskonlif I* (Stockholm: L. J. Hjerta, 1848), 18. On Bremer’s take on Utopian Socialism, see Eva Heggstad, *En bättre och lyckligare värld: Kvinnliga författares utopiska visioner 1850–1940* (Stockholm/Stehag: Symposium, 2003), 33–58; Burman, *Bremer*, 249–260. On Bremer’s nationalist vision and idea of female citizenship, see Anna Bohlin, “Geography of the soul – history of humankind: the Jerusalem code in Bremer and Almqvist,” in *Tracing the Jerusalem Code III. The Promised Land. Christian Cultures in Modern Scandinavia (ca. 1750–1920)*, eds. Anna Bohlin and Ragnhild Johnsrud Zorgati (Berlin: Verlag Walter de Gruyter, forthcoming in 2020); Anna Bohlin, “Female Citizenship in Scandinavian Literature in the 1840s,” *Rethinking Scandinavia – CSS Publications Web Quarterly* 2, no. 1



the characters in the novel may conversely be understood as representatives of a nation is likewise anchored in Scandinavian rhetoric. Early on in the novel, the siblings and their uncle receive an Icelandic/Danish artist, who is invited to regard the family as her own relatives out of respect for Scandinavian ideas of brotherhood between the nations.<sup>68</sup>

In this sentimental novel, the relation between Sweden and Finland is subsequently portrayed as personal relations of three kinds: firstly, between half-brothers, secondly, between two friends and brothers in arms, and thirdly as marriage. The two latter relations depend on the General and his half-brother, and all three relations are intimate indeed. The two friends, allegorically named Proud and Happy, are servants of the two brothers: “He was like my other self,” Proud says, “since he parted from me, I have never been in a right good humour”.<sup>69</sup> The loss of the Finnish counterpart is formulated as a loss of identity and a bereavement of happiness.

The loss of Finland is only a parallel narrative, but it is undoubtedly the conflict with the longest emotional consequences in the novel. The General states that he has never loved another person as much as he loved his half-brother, described as “calm, firm, mild, and generous”, stubborn in a good way, like “a rock in a storm”.<sup>70</sup> After fighting in the Finnish War together, the two brothers have parted from each other in a dispute over how to conceive of the nation: territory or government? That was a real question many Finns had to face.<sup>71</sup> The General would leave everything behind rather than become a subject of the Russian emperor, whereas his brother chooses the territory, or as he later explains:

After I ceased to bear arms for Sweden, I never bore them more. I have lived as a peaceable citizen upon my paternal state, cultivated the soil of Finland, and have sown the seeds of cultivation in Finnish hearts. I have been faithful to God and my Fatherland, and I have peace with my own conscience.<sup>72</sup>

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(2018). [http://www.css.lu.se/fileadmin/user\\_upload/CSS/CSS\\_Quarterly/2/RS\\_2 - Anna Bohlin - Female Citizenship in Scandinavian Literature in the 1840s.html](http://www.css.lu.se/fileadmin/user_upload/CSS/CSS_Quarterly/2/RS_2_-_Anna_Bohlin_-_Female_Citizenship_in_Scandinavian_Literature_in_the_1840s.html)

<sup>68</sup> Bremer, *Syskonlif* I, 27.

<sup>69</sup> Fredrika Bremer, *Brothers and Sisters: A Tale of Domestic Life* I, trans. Mary Howitt (London: Henry Colburn, Publisher, 1848), 296. “Och han var som mitt andra jag. [...] [S]’en han skiljdes vid mig, har jag aldrig haft rätt godt humör.” Bremer, *Syskonlif* I, 216.

<sup>70</sup> Bremer, *Brothers and Sisters* I, 197–98. The quotation in Swedish reads: “lugn, fast, mild, storsinnad. [...] Envis [...]. Han var som en klippa i stormen.” Bremer, *Syskonlif* I, 146, 151.

<sup>71</sup> Engman, *Ett långt farväl*, 226–25.

<sup>72</sup> Fredrika Bremer, *Brothers and Sisters: A Tale of Domestic Life* III, trans. Mary Howitt (London: Henry Colburn, Publisher, 1848), 271. “Sedan jag upphörde att bära vapen för Sverige, har jag icke burit vapen mer. Jag har lefvat som en fredlig borgare på mitt fädernegods, odlat Finlands jord, och utsått odlingsens frön i finska hjertan. Jag har varit Gud och mitt fosterland trogen, och har med mitt samvete frid.” Fredrika Bremer, *Nya teckningar ur hvardagslivet XIII. Syskonlif* II (Stockholm: L. J. Hjerta, 1848), 241.

Being faithful to the homeland in the Finnish brother's account, is to stay true to the territory and to contribute to the future of the population on that territory. In the General's mind, this is treason.<sup>73</sup>

The difference of opinions ripped the heart apart, according to the General, as convictions are "fixed" to "the roots of our heart".<sup>74</sup> This highly emotionally charged conflict is underscored as the narrative plays out the metaphors of the heart in physical action. Thirty years later, in the present time of the narrative, the General tells the story of how he unsuccessfully pleaded with his brother to change his mind, begged, and cried "tears of blood".<sup>75</sup> Overcome with rage, he called his brother "friend of Russia" and "a traitor to his country", and ended up wounding him in the chest with a sword.<sup>76</sup> He "did not pause before I saw a great bloody mouth gape against me in his chest, and felt his blood spirt in my face".<sup>77</sup> It is the novel's task to reconcile this emotional and physically violent conflict over the concept of the nation, literally tearing hearts apart. The General cannot forgive his brother for his betrayal – although Bremer specifically points out that strictly speaking, it was not treason – and for not being moved by the Swedish brother's grief. He contends that the Finnish brother's physical wound may have healed, but the spiritual wound inflicted on the General will bleed forever: "It remains still in the marrow of the soul."<sup>78</sup> His bad conscience over nearly having killed his brother and his sorrow has "put an enemy into my bosom" – the loss of the Finnish brother is once again formulated as a split identity: he "has put division between me and my better self".<sup>79</sup>

The ideological conflict is resolved in two opposite ways through the marriage on the one hand, and on the other through the reconciliation between the brothers. The General's niece from the Swedish family, Göthilda, marries his nephew, Jarl, from the Finnish family, but the match requires some political adjustments. Göthilda expresses a

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<sup>73</sup> The view that the Finns committed treason during the Finnish war was not uncommon in the Swedish press, especially at the middle of the nineteenth century, and the feeling of being betrayed was mutual on both sides of the Baltic Sea. Sandström, "Sveriges 1809," 60–69; Engman, *Ett långt farväl*, 226–30.

<sup>74</sup> Bremer, *Brothers and Sisters* I, 203. "Och hjertrötterna sutto så fast i [våra öfvertygelser] [...]." Bremer, *Syskonlif* I, 150.

<sup>75</sup> Bremer, *Brothers and Sisters* I, 201. "blodstårar". Bremer, *Syskonlif* I, 149.

<sup>76</sup> Bremer, *Brothers and Sisters* I, 202.

<sup>77</sup> Bremer, *Brothers and Sisters* I, 202. "Jag kallade honom 'ryssvän', 'landsförrädare' [...]. Han blott försvarade sig, ville slå värjan ur handen på mig, men jag var ursinnig, högg in på honom, och stannade ej förr än jag såg en stor, blodig mun gapa mot mig ur hans bröst, och kände hans blod spruta i mitt ansigte." Bremer, *Syskonlif* I, 149.

<sup>78</sup> Bremer, *Brothers and Sisters* I, 204. "Det sitter ända i mårgen af själen." Bremer, *Syskonlif* I, 151.

<sup>79</sup> Bremer, *Brothers and Sisters* I, 205. "Han har satt split emellan mig och mitt bättre sjelf; han har satt en fiende i mitt bröst, hvars svärdsudd än i dag der aggar och skär." Bremer, *Syskonlif* I, 151–52.

burning hatred of the Russian emperor for “the evil that they did to Sweden”, and she thus hates Jarl for being a Russian subject and for speaking up for the emperor.<sup>80</sup> Once he has agreed to become a Swedish citizen, though, she has no objections to the marriage. Doris Sommer has shown in *Foundational Fictions: The National Romances of Latin America* that the Latin American national novels of the nineteenth century united the nation over regional, racial, political and economic differences in romantic love.<sup>81</sup> In this case, however, the marriage confirms a conception of the nation based on government, suggesting that the Finnish people under Russian rule can only be acknowledged if they, like Jarl, are “Swedish in soul and heart”.<sup>82</sup> The highly emotional reconciliation between the brothers suggests otherwise.

The meeting of the two brothers after 30 years of separation is a kind of manual on how to settle conflicts and re-forged bonds of fellowship. At first sight of his brother the General has a violent emotional and physical reaction, described in detail:

The General turned pale, pale as if from fear. His eyes seemed as if they would start from their sockets, whilst they were fixedly riveted upon the other. He looked confounded, and an uncomfortable feeling oppressed every one who was witness of this scene. At length, the General raised his hand, and pressed it to his forehead; he then extended it towards his brother’s breast. It was seen that he trembled.<sup>83</sup>

The melodramatic body language exaggerates the intense fear and sorrow as the General opens his brother’s shirt “and revealed upon the naked breast a large and deep scar”.<sup>84</sup> The identity is thus established, and he is “violently overcome” by love as he was earlier

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<sup>80</sup> Fredrika Bremer, *Brothers and Sisters: A Tale of Domestic Life* II, trans. Mary Howitt (London: Henry Colburn, Publisher, 1848), 255. Bremer, *Syskonlif* II, 36–37.

<sup>81</sup> Doris Sommer, *Foundational Fictions: The National Romances of Latin America* (Los Angeles & Oxford: University of California Press, 1991). See also Linda Kaljundi, Eneken Laanes and Ilona Pikkanen, eds., *Novels, Histories, Novel Nations: Historical Fiction and Cultural Memory in Finland and Estonia* (Helsinki: The Finnish Literature Society, 2015).

<sup>82</sup> Bremer, *Brothers and Sisters* III, 266. “svensk i själ och hjerta”. Bremer, *Syskonlif* II, 237.

<sup>83</sup> Bremer, *Brothers and Sisters* III, 269. “Generalen bleknade, bleknade fruktansvärdt, i det han oafvänt fixerade den andre. Ögonen syntes vilja tränga ut ur sina hålor. Han såg förvirrad ut, och en hemsk spänning uppstod hos alla de omgivande. Ändteligen höjde generalen handen och tryckte den mot sin panna; sedan täckte han den ut, och förde den mot broderns bröst. Man såg att den skälfdde.” Bremer, *Syskonlif* II, 240. On melodramatic body language, see Peter Brooks, *The Melodramatic Imagination: Balzac, Henry James, Melodrama, and the Mode of Excess* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985).

<sup>84</sup> Bremer, *Brothers and Sisters* III, 269. “[I] det hans hand öppnade skjortans veck, syntes på det blottade bröstet ett stort, djupt ärr.” Bremer, *Syskonlif* II, 240.

overcome by rage.<sup>85</sup> While crying and kissing his brother, he begs forgiveness and promises to honour his brother's conviction even though he cannot share it. The wound in the Finnish brother's chest has healed, and the thorn in the Swedish brother's heart is suddenly gone out of love and respect. Accepting national affiliation to the territory under Russian rule is the key issue, but while the Russians themselves are the objects of hatred in Göthilda's account, they are definitely portrayed in friendlier terms by the General. Russians make fine enemies, "and who can hate the brave?" he asks rhetorically.<sup>86</sup> He has no objection to drinking with Russian officers between the battles, and tells the story of the battle of Leipzig, when the Swedish and the Russian armies were joined against Napoleon.<sup>87</sup> In contrast to Mellin's pamphlet eight years earlier, the loss of Finland in Bremer's novel does not call for revenge, but grief.

As opposed to grief in Tegnér's and Mellin's different sequences of emotions, grief takes on another meaning in Bremer's account. Since loss is depicted in a sentimental novel as family relations, grief over betrayal may be remedied by forgiveness, mutual love and respect. Grief and fear follow anger, instead of the other way around, and may thus prepare the ground for reconciliation. The shame connected with territorial loss in Tegnér's "Svea" is replaced by feelings hurt by betrayal. The loss of the Finnish people tore the Swedish heart and soul apart in *Brothers and Sisters*, but it is the sentimental novel's business to mend hearts by recognizing differences in forming new kinds of unions.

#### *Coda: celebrating the independent Finland in 1920*

The Crimean War (1853–1856) presented the last opportunity for Sweden to play a role on the international stage, and the last chance for revanchism. This time even the Conservative press started to argue that Finland was a lost limb of the Swedish body, a bleeding wound that had to be healed by revenge. Revenge was not sought and Finland once again became invisible in the Swedish press. However, during the second half of the nineteenth century, the Finnish national authors J.L. Runeberg and Zacharias Topelius (see Jens Grandell's chapter in the present volume) became extremely popular in Sweden; the Swedish readers tended to overlook the Finnish nation-building project and perceived Finnish nationalist history as a

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<sup>85</sup> Bremer, *Brothers and Sisters* III, 269–70. Bremer, *Syskonlif* II, 240–42.

<sup>86</sup> Bremer, *Brothers and Sisters* I, 203. Bremer, *Syskonlif* I, 150.

<sup>87</sup> Bremer, *Syskonlif* II, 244.

contribution to Swedish nationalism.<sup>88</sup> Nevertheless, Finland was invested with emotions, which is fully acknowledged in Selma Lagerlöf's biography of Topelius.

As a member of the Swedish Academy, Lagerlöf was required to write a biography, and she chose Topelius. She truthfully presented her work as a popularization of the Finnish literary historian Valfrid Vasenius' three volume work, and happily admitted having borrowed extensively from Topelius' own novels.<sup>89</sup> However, she did add some aspects, most notably an elaboration on nationalism. Lagerlöf's biography is a celebration of Finnish nationalism, the Finnish independent state, and in particular of Topelius' nationalist responsibilities as a writer – responsibilities that she herself assumed in relation to the Swedish nation and with great success. She balanced on a thin line between celebrating an independent nation and grieving for a lost territory.

Nationalism in Lagerlöf's own time, and indeed in her own authorship, was firmly anchored in the soil. Thus the Finnish nation is portrayed in a full-fledged personification, awakened in 1840 by the noise of all the carriages going to Helsinki to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the university, established in 1640. Interestingly she slept for only 30 years; that is, she fell asleep when most Finnish authors would like to have had her awake, as a result of the separation from Sweden in 1809. It makes you wonder how Lagerlöf imagined her origin. There is even a section elaborating on the national territory as a paradoxical body: the homeland is a mistress, a goddess, a hostess that has given you everything, always present, but cannot be seen, the unborn that never dies, the dumb that teach her lovers to speak, drinking the blood of her sons and daughters.<sup>90</sup> In other words: the nation is an evanescent, ungraspable form, a void that sets human bodies in motion, but a void that takes on the qualities of a body in order to bring about action and engender emotions.

By the 1920s the maiden of Finland was a well-established figure, and in Lagerlöf's biography, she appears dressed in a skirt of spruce fir, moss in her hair, a cloak knitted of flowers and a crown of spruce cones: the accumulation of affective value in the soil makes the territory in Lagerlöf's work amount to nationalism itself.<sup>91</sup> Furthermore, the maiden of Finland is endowed not only with agency, but also with emotions herself. The Finnish poet Carl Michael Franzén, who moved to Sweden after the war, visited his former

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<sup>88</sup> See e.g. Wrede, *Världen enligt Runeberg*, 19, 337; Klinge, *Den politiske Runeberg*, 301; Matti Klinge, *Idyll och hot: Zacharias Topelius – hans politik och idéer*, trans. Nils Erik Forsgård (Helsinki: Söderström & Co. & Stockholm: Bokförlaget Atlantis, 2000), 15.

<sup>89</sup> Selma Lagerlöf, *Zachris Topelius: utveckling och mognad* (Stockholm: Bonnier, 1920), 1–3.

<sup>90</sup> Lagerlöf, *Zachris Topelius*, 135.

<sup>91</sup> Lagerlöf, *Zachris Topelius*, 144–45. On the Maiden of Finland, see Johanna Valenius, *Undressing the Maid: Gender, Sexuality and the Body in the Construction of the Finnish Nation* (Helsinki: The Finnish Literature Society, 2004).

homeland for the university feast in 1840, and Lagerlöf makes the maiden of Finland stretch her arms out to him asking: “How could you abandon me?” Lagerlöf explicitly states that the “earth is still mourning the loss of a great son”.<sup>92</sup> Lagerlöf has thus reversed the position of the subject: it is not the people mourning a lost territory, but the territory mourning for lost peoples. For Tegnér, this would have been an unimaginable exchange of agency. For him, the soil engendered human actions; for Lagerlöf the soil is identified with emotionally loaded corporality to such an extent that it acts on humans.

Nevertheless, Lagerlöf also wanted to give credit to Topelius’ enormous impact on Sweden in terms of emotions attached to commonly shared history. Recalling her reading of the historical novel *Fältskärens berättelser* (*The Surgeon’s Stories*, 1856–67) in her childhood, she emphasises the admiration, the hatred, the love aroused by Topelius’ depiction of history. They evoked “an almost painful tenderness” for Finland.<sup>93</sup> And she goes on:

We could never stop bewailing the fact that it was no longer Swedish, never stop hating that power that had robbed us of it, never do anything other than wish it well as a reward for the loyalty it used to show us in the old days.<sup>94</sup>

These are strong emotions indeed, and the grieving and hatred obviously had to be handled with care, as after all, her aim was to celebrate the independent Finland. In an earlier episode she renounced the Swedish revanchism of the 1840s. The Swedes, she claimed, unwisely declined to accept the idea that the Finns could be happy with another government.<sup>95</sup> By the 1920s, revanchism was a feeling that needs explaining; likewise mourning. The childhood scene is supposed to reflect an emotional history that is gone – nostalgia for a lost feeling of loss. Whereas revanchism needs to be discarded, heightened emotions in relation to Finland are indeed promoted throughout the biography. Finland is no longer Tegnér’s dead bodies in the ground, nor is it Bremer’s dear brother lost and found in forgiveness. To Lagerlöf, Finland is envisioned as a lovely body, evoking “an almost painful tenderness”.

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<sup>92</sup> Lagerlöf, *Zachris Topelius*, 148. There is no English translation of Lagerlöf’s biography and the translations of the quotations are therefore my own.

<sup>93</sup> Lagerlöf, *Zachris Topelius*, 317.

<sup>94</sup> “Aldrig kunde vi sluta upp att begråta, att det inte mer var svenskt, aldrig kunde vi upphöra att hata den makt, som hade rövat det ifrån oss, aldrig kunde vi göra annat än önska det lycka till lön för den trohet, som det i forna dagar hade skänkt oss.” Lagerlöf, *Zachris Topelius*, 317.

<sup>95</sup> Lagerlöf, *Zachris Topelius*, 234–35.

### *Concluding remarks*

The imagining of Sweden's loss of Finland in 1809 was transformed during the nineteenth century both in terms of emotions associated with the territorial loss and in terms of what was lost. In Tegnér's "Svea" from 1811, the loss of virtues engendered shame that called for revenge, whereas the loss in Bremer's novel of 1848 was constituted by the Finnish people, causing grief over a feeling of betrayal and a split identity. The "sticky" objects, accumulating emotions, changed from Tegnér's Viking virtues and burial mounds to Mellin's city skylines and buildings that represented the nation's memories in 1840, and again to the beautiful landscape itself in Lagerlöf's account. Evidently, historical and political circumstances are crucial for making sense of the displacement of the production of loss, but so are rhetorical and literary aspects.

The representations of the relationships between territory and bodies were transposed from the notion of the soil consisting of dead ancestors at the beginning of the nineteenth century, to characters in the novel exposing their true nationality by their love for a territory, leading to a reversal of agency in Lagerlöf's early-twentieth-century biography: the personification of Finland mourns for lost peoples rather than the other way around. The rhetorical success of Tegnér's poem is due to a sequence of rapidly changing emotions that constitute a logic of *pathos* that concludes with revenge. Mellin's pamphlet, on the other hand, initially prescribes the reader's expected sequence of emotions as a response to the realistic, visual impressions advanced by the story. The novelistic treatment allowed for the elaboration of corporeal metaphors for nations. It is the sentimental novel's business to mend hearts, and Bremer's *Brothers and Sisters* provided a manual for how to re-forge new bonds of fellowship between Sweden and Finland, depicted in three relationships between characters in the novel. The interrelation between genre and a corporeal metaphoric scheme proves to be an important mechanism at work in producing the emotionally charged loss of Finland in Swedish nationalist discourse – emotions that history has luckily rendered unintelligible.

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