

Showing the Dragon's Tongue: P.A. Munch's journey to Scotland, Orkney and London in 1849-1850

Bjørn Bandlien

IN September 1849 the Norwegian historian Peter Andreas Munch (1810–63) left his hometown Christiania and headed for Edinburgh. The journey was financed by the Norwegian government and the purpose was to study the medieval monuments, inscriptions and archives in Scotland, Orkney and London. However, the studies were not intended to merely blow dust off antiquities. Munch wanted to rewrite history. The traces in the British Isles were of utmost importance for Norwegian history and to the Norwegian people. For too long, Danish and English scholars had called all the Vikings 'Danes' as if they all came from Denmark. This was in Munch's opinion misleading when in fact Norwegians had been very active in the British Isles, not least in Scotland and Orkney.

Munch had become frustrated that British scholars tended to overlook the reality that Norway was an independent nation, and not merely a part of Denmark. Since Norwegians had been so unfortunate to be in submission to Denmark for centuries, their achievements had too long been ascribed to either Denmark or Scandinavia in general. According to Munch, this delusion was even shared by the Scots and Orcadians. He compared this misapprehension to the legend about the dragon slayer:

One is bound to think about the old fairytales concerning the knight who kills the dragon, but does not enjoy the glory thereof, because another has exploited this while the hero slept and cut off the dragon's head. But the fairytale also tells that the rightful dragonslayer has been wise enough to keep the dragon's tongue and by this prove, when it is almost too late, that the glory and reward for the heroic deed belongs to

him. Fortunately, Norway is not in lack of tongues for legitimizing itself. (Munch 1851a; citation from 1873–6, III: 19).

The Norwegian people themselves are the heroic dragon slayers, the remnants from the Viking Age and Middle Ages was the tongue, but the hero had been sleeping during the Danish reign up to 1814, so that it was almost too late. In 1849 Munch intended to see the archives and monuments there himself to bring the Norwegian past in Scotland to light. Now he wanted to step up and show the world the dragon's tongue.

The Background for the journey: National rivalry and anti-Scandinavism

For P. A. Munch this use of the term 'Danes' in the Viking Age was part of a problematic pattern of emphasising the Danish past at the cost of Norwegian history. Just some decades previously, in 1814, Norway had become independent with its own constitution. In Munch's opinion, however, the fact that Norway had been part of Denmark for hundreds of years, had misled both Danes and Englishmen to think that Norwegians were merely a subdivision of the Danes, and not an independent people. If the medieval sources called the Vikings 'Danes', the same mechanism must have been working: already in the Middle Ages, Englishmen were too ignorant to distinguish between Danes and Norwegians. It did not help if the Vikings were termed 'Nordic' either in learned writings, since all but Norwegians would then think of Danes. Munch appealed to the Scots; what would they think if anyone called them Englishmen? (Munch 1851d).

Earlier histories of Norway had most often been written from either a Danish or Swedish perspective. This indicated that Norway needed a history based on the oldest Norwegian sources, and it had to be done as soon as possible. In his preface to the first volume of *Det norske Folks Historie* ('*History of the Norwegian People*'), published in 1852, he considered that from a scientific point of view it would be ideal to wait for more source editions to appear before the history of the Norwegian people was written.

However, since historians in the neighbouring countries published works that 'glorified their own nationality', it was of utmost importance that a Norwegian historian, 'by collecting and publishing everything that older and newer research in the history of his fatherland has unravelled', should seek to oppose 'those false imaginations that otherwise, if one entirely entrusts this

field to the foreigner, would most likely be spread.¹ The writing of a national history became a race to beat the foreigners' ignorance and tendencies.

P. A. Munch visited Scotland in a very turbulent period in Scandinavia, something that affected both him and his relationship with the Scandinavian world. Due to Munch's strong scepticism about the Danes' sense of superiority relating to Norway, he became a stern opponent to those who worked for closer relations between the Scandinavian countries. Such ideas met with wide support even in Norway, and Munch's anti-Scandinavism created heated debate in the late 1840s.

Based on the works of Rudolf Keyser, Professor of History at the University of Christiania, Munch argued that northern Germanic people had moved from the east and settled in Norway from the north. Southern Germanic peoples had settled in Denmark and southern Sweden, but when those two peoples met, the southern Germanic peoples lost a great battle remembered in mythic poems as the 'Battle of Bråvalla'. Thus, contrary to what was the usual Danish opinion, Denmark was settled from the north; the Danes were a mix of the victorious northern race and the subdued middle German race.

In the view of Munch, Norway had as close bonds to Germany as to Denmark. Munch was more positive about closer relationships and cooperation with Germany. In a hypothetical pan-German union, the Norwegian people would preserve their nationality more easily than within a Danish-dominated Scandinavian union.² Moreover, this would also secure all the Nordic peoples from pan-Slavism, which Munch considered to be dominated by despotism, not freedom.³

In view of the political situation in 1848–49, it is not strange that Munch became very unpopular in Denmark. Germany occupied Schleswig and

1 It might be useful to cite the whole paragraph in the original Norwegian: 'Der udarbeides nu nemlig vigtige fædrelandshistoriske Verker rundt om oss i Nabolandene. Overalt søker de historiske Forfattere at frembringe, hvad der kan tjene til Forherligelse av deres egen Nationalitet. Den politiske Stilling Norge i flere Aarhundrer har indtaget, har utsatt det for mer enn andre Nationer at se sin nationalitet forglempt, og den Deel det i eldre Tider har taget i Verdensbegivenhetene, enten ignoreret, eller fremstillet i et uriktig Lys. Det er at befrykte at denne Forglemmelse, Ignoreren eller uriktige Fremstillingsmåte vilde vedvare og befeste sig under vore Tiders historiske Kappestrid, hvis ikke en norsk Historieforsker selv, ved at samle og utgive alt, hvad ældre og nyere Granskninger i hans Fædrelands Historie har bragt for Dagen, søgte at modarbeide de falske Forestillinger, der ellers, naar man ganske overlod Feltet til Udlendingen, sansynligvis vilde udbrede Sig.' (Munch 1852–64, I,1: iv). On Munch's views on methodology, see Melve 2012.

2 In a moment of frustration, Munch continued to dream of Denmark's dissolution: 'From my experiences, the time is now suitable for a skilled *Politician* to, for the relief of us Norwegians and Swedes, end the Scandinavistic nonsense, namely by the dissolution of Denmark: the islands go to Sweden, Jylland to Preussen, Iceland and Faroe Islands to Norway' (Munch 1924–71, II: 298).

3 Munch 1873–76, II: 42, 81; III: 90–1, 591.

Holstein in 1848 and seemed to threaten to invade Jutland. At the height of the tension, the German scholar Jacob Grimm wrote a work on German language, using Munch's work to argue that Danes had originally spoken German, and that this more or less legitimised German rule there once more (Adriansen 2007; Rowley-Conwy 2007).

Munch did support the Danes in the war against Germany, and even though he continued to send letters to Jacob Grimm he made it clear to him that Germany should respect the freedom of the Scandinavian peoples. Cooperation and friendship between brotherly nations was the ideal, not that the different peoples should be part of the same state. Still, Munch continued to have strained relations with many Danish scholars. As his long-time friend Carl Christian Rafn at the Society of Antiquities in Copenhagen tried to explain to him: 'You go too far in the claim that neither Denmark nor Sweden has some claim to the Old Nordic literature; such an argument awakes resentment. I have received strong requests from men whose opinions bear considerable weight to introduce Old Danish in the upcoming lexical works instead of Old Nordic, as I prefer and would like to keep.'⁴

These conflicts between Munch and Danish scholars also affected their view on the place of British Isles. In the view of Munch, the Angles and Saxons that migrated to Britain came from Jutland, but had migrated before the Northern Germans had settled in Denmark. So the English people and language were cousins, not brothers, in the pedigree of Germanic peoples. Munch found support for this view from one English scholar who worked in Stockholm, Georges Stephens (1813–95).⁵ They also found a common interest in the relationship between the English and Nordic languages and peoples. To Stephens, the English people were descended from the Nordic peoples, and the Old English language was a variant of the Nordic languages. Stephens even attempted to recreate a sort of English-Nordic language, something which Munch thought rather overstated the case, but concerning their common lineage and culture they both agreed, 'That Great-Britain belongs to the North *only*, and that she has been wrong when in any period thinking

4 Mellbye-papers [not yet catalogued], National Library in Oslo, Norway.

5 Stephens was born in Liverpool and studied languages and antiquities at University College in London. He moved to Stockholm in 1834 to teach English and Literature. Stephens soon became interested in Old Nordic literature, and already in 1839 he translated Esaias Tegnér's *Frithiofs saga* and the Old Norse *Friþjófs saga* into English. He was also an important collector of ballads. His most famous work is *The Old-Northern runic Monuments of Scandinavia and England* in four volumes, and although Stephens' interpretations now are generally seen as dated, the volumes presented many of the runes for the first time. In several of the letters exchanged between Stephens and Munch, runic inscriptions were discussed, but although Munch had many suggestions, Stephens's interpretations were often highly original, see Wawn 2000: 215–44; Eriksson 2008.

herself belonging to the South, we can certainly state as beyond all doubt!' (Munch 1924–71, I: 115)

The challenge for Munch was that a noted Danish scholar had visited Scotland already with the same mission as himself. In 1846, the archaeologist J.J.A. Worsaae (1821–85) had been asked by the Danish king Christian VIII to visit the British Isles to record the Nordic monuments from the past. At the same time, the Duke of Sutherland, George Granville Sutherland-Leveson-Gower (1786–1861) – one of the founders of the Roxburghe Club and a trustee of the British Museum, had written to the Kongelige Nordiske Oldskriftselskab (Royal Society for Northern Antiquities) to assure them that any scholar they would send to study Danish remnants in Britain would receive support and funding. Worsaae travelled for over a year in the British Isles, and the book in which he presented the findings was soon translated into English (Worsaae 1851/2; Jensen 2007; Rowley-Conwy 2007: 13–20).

In fact, Munch had conceived the idea for the trip to the British Isles at the same time as Worsaae. Already in 1846, he received a travel grant for two journeys. He decided, however, to travel to Paris and Normandy first, which he did in the summer of 1846. He planned to go to Scotland the following year, but was delayed by work. When he heard about Worsaae's generous conditions, he was a bit dismayed. To some extent, it was fine that the Dane went to England, but it was evident to Munch that a Norwegian scholar would be more fitting to travel to Scotland (Munch 1873–6, III: 2–3). In his review of Worsaae's book, Munch showed great respect for the accuracy of his descriptions of monuments, and even was positively surprised that Worsaae did actually attribute the Viking Age in Scotland and Ireland to Norwegians (Munch 1851a).

However, in Munch's opinion Worsaae had only done half the job, and had proved little on the subjects that were of great concern to Munch: the study of ethnography, written sources, languages and place names which he thought would show the migration of peoples. Worsaae has often been regarded as the first professional archaeologist, not only collecting things from the past, but actually digging to get answers to a research question. He is conventionally attributed with developing the 'Three Ages System' (Stone Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age) based on metals (Rowley-Conwy 2007). This did not impress Munch much, and in the summer of 1848 he wrote to his friend Rafn:

Antiquities are well and good, but conditions of language still have to weigh even more when doing ethnographic studies. Whether it is a Nordic or German Asa-worshipper who lies buried in this or that mound on the border between the Nordic countries and Germany cannot be seen from his skeleton or those weapons, etc., that are buried with him.

However, if there are remnants of language in the grave, then we would immediately have certainty. For Worsaae, the languages do not seem to have relevance at all. He sternly denies that the Angles were Germans, or, as I prefer to call them, Southern Germans, as if we did not fully know the Anglo-Saxon literature in depth? In this we find a certain superficiality connected to what Germans call 'Eigendünkel', which should not be a quality of a real, humble, truthloving man of science. It should hardly be considered to be naivety, since such naivety would presuppose too much lack of knowledge. (Munch 1924–71, I: 292)

In 1849, shortly before his journey to Scotland, Munch wrote two pieces on Scandinavism. The second especially was a direct attack on Worsaae and his alleged ignorance on language and literature in establishing which people belonged to certain districts (Munch 1849a; 1849b; cf. Worsaae 1849b; 1849c).

In the autumn, however, his attention shifted from the border conflicts between Germany and Denmark. In a letter, dated 11 July 1849, to his friend Christian Lange, who at the time stayed in Copenhagen, Munch revealed that he was not only to look for documents and manuscripts relevant for Norwegian history by chance: 'One thing I ask of you especially to find out for me, that is in which places in Britain Worsaae has been. You certainly see how important it is for me to go thoroughly in his footsteps, and if possible erase those false impressions he has produced' (Munch 1924–71, I: 376). Munch wanted to go to Scotland and Orkney in order to set things straight again. His goal was to end the Danish appropriation of Scotland.

Iona – Norwegian power under the surface

P. A. Munch left Christiania on the 1st of September 1849. He went by ship to Lübeck and over land to the Netherlands. From Rotterdam he went by ship to Hull and then took the train to Edinburgh. His contact in Scotland was George John Robert Gordon (1812–1902), who in the late 1840s was a *chargé d'affaires* in Stockholm (cf. Foster 1884: 6–7). He and Munch had exchanged many letters previously, since Gordon was very much interested in the antiquities of Scotland. In the autumn of 1849 Gordon stayed at his family's estates at Ellon Castle outside Aberdeen. From the Danish scholar C. C. Rafn, Munch had also a letter of recommendation to John M. Mitchell, Belgian Consul-General and foreign secretary in the Society of Antiquaries.

Mitchell introduced Munch to David Laing (1793–1878), the librarian of Signet Library and secretary of the Bannatyne Club, which had published many editions and studies of Scottish sources and history. The meeting of these two scholars developed into a life-long friendship, both sharing their interest in a

far range of sources. When Laing heard that Munch had a strong wish to visit Iona, he offered to travel with him since he had never been there himself.⁶ They left Edinburgh on the 20th of September, and stayed a few hours in Glasgow to inspect the cathedral, university, museums and libraries. Munch was thrilled with what he saw on the trip, from the pleasant River Clyde, the majestic mountains, the lack of trees, the simple farm houses made of stone, the view of Dumbarton Castle, as well as his attempts at conversations with people; he was stunned that so many could barely understand English, but only talked in Gaelic. In the afternoon of the 21st of September, Laing and Munch reached the small town of Oban, and took a walk up to Dunstaffnage Castle where he was overwhelmed with the view over the fjord, isles and mountain. To Munch, this landscape reminded him of the western part of Norway, and the small cottages in stone seemed to him very similar to Norwegian mountain pastures. He later wrote that it was with a sense of pride he travelled in the districts once ruled by the Norwegian king Magnus Barelegs (1093–1103), but was somewhat annoyed that few, if any, he met in these districts knew that the kings who ruled there in the olden days were Norwegians, not Danes (Munch 1873–6, III: 33).

The next morning, the steamer made a stop at Staffa, offering Munch and Laing to visit Fingal's Cave at Staffa in a small boat. In Munch's own words, this was the 'most interesting and remarkable work of Nature I have ever seen' (Larsen-Naur 1901: 43). He knew the stories of Ossian well, and made associations with Macpherson's infamous epic cycle on Fingal.

Later the same day they arrived at Iona itself. Munch was quite stunned to see all the children that flocked around them, trying to sell them 'holy' stones and shells.⁷ However, he was disappointed to see that there were no people of Norwegian descent there. The children only spoke Gaelic, except for 'four pence' or 'six pence', prices that Munch found rather expensive for small stones. He later described their language as monotonous and very melancholic – it was as if the language itself knew that it was dying, just as Old Norse and Anglo-Saxon had done so long ago.

On the same day Munch and Laing visited the ruins of the cathedral, St. Oran's Chapel and the Nunnery, and were stunned by all the crosses and tombstone. The next day was Sunday, and even though Munch wanted to inspect the antiquities of the island further, he was advised not to work

6 Munch wrote about his trip to Iona in a letter to his wife dated to the 27th of September 1849 (Larsen-Naur 1901: 38–46), in Munch 1851b, and in the report from his trip to the government (1924–71, III: 432–5). See also Laing 1862–4: 174.

7 Munch 1873–6, III: 28. A contemporary description of Iona is found in Graham 1850: 3: 'The population of Iona is about 400 ... The village consists of about forty thatched cottages, and there are a good many more scattered about the north end, but south of Cul Taimh is not inhabited'. Also Graham mentioned antiquarian tourism at this time.

because this would have offended the people. Instead they attended the service of the Free Church. Munch referred to the conflict between the Free Church and the official Church, saying the Free Church at the time of his visit were about to construct a church of their own. Since it was unfinished, the service was held at the St Oran's churchyard. Munch wrote that never had a service made such a deep impression on him – the people were singing and praying under the open sky, while he was sitting on a tombstone with antiquities everywhere around him. In his later account of the journey, he wrote that the simplicity of the sermon had not appealed to him at first, but it afterwards seemed appropriate to the place. Munch was not very interested in the sermon itself and the theology of the Free Church – to him it was basically the same as the official Church. However, the will of the Scots to oppose the London government was used by Munch as a great example of national resistance and desire for freedom. According to Munch, just as Norway had been in a union with Denmark, but during the later Middle Ages gradually became ruled from Denmark, so England tried to dominate Scotland in the union (Munch 1873–76, III: 46–47).

The next day he got time to study the ornaments on the crosses and tombstone even more, and was especially fascinated by the burials at Rèilig Odhrain and the place where, according to a source from the sixteenth century, there was the inscription *Tumulus regum Norwegiæ*. Here allegedly eight Norwegian kings were buried. Munch could not find this inscription, but assumed that it was meant to be for the Hebridian kings of Norwegian extraction.



Figure 1. Rèilig Odhrain. Henry Davenport Graham. From *The Antiquities of Iona*, 1850, Plate 5.

Munch looked in vain for more concrete evidence for the burials of Norwegians there. His thesis was that such tombstones with Norwegian inscriptions would be found under the visible ones, and after his return to Edinburgh he strongly recommended the members of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland to initiate an excavation there. He also thought of making sketches of the ornaments and inscriptions there, but when visiting the priest of the island, he met a young Englishman, Henry Davidport Graham, who lived on the island for over a year. He showed Munch his sketches of the ruins and tombstones (Figure 1). Munch later judged Graham's work, printed in 1850 as *Antiquities of Iona*, to be very accurate indeed. There Munch also met a doctor, Mr Acorn, who had travelled widely in the Hebrides. Acorn told Munch about many place names, ruins and legends of the Norwegian past. Munch could even see the island of Skye in the distant, but apparently felt no need to see more of these islands. Worsaae had been travelling in the Hebrides a few years before, something that Munch probably knew well, but as Acorn did not mention any monuments with Old Norse inscriptions and also stated that the local people in the district would not have much information, he went back to Edinburgh after the short visit to Iona.

Munch's rather superficial studies of the tombstones of Iona yielded little result. He created, however, enthusiasm in the Royal Society of Antiquities in Edinburgh, where on the 30th of November 1849 he presented 'some interesting notices of Iona in the *Fagrskinna*, and other early works of northern literature, and directed the attention of the Society to the unnecessary exposure to injury of the interesting ruins, and the surrounding monuments.'⁸ Munch may have been somewhat insulted that the report omitted to note his call to search for further tombstones which he presumed were hidden by later stones and *Rèilig Odhrain*, and that the king's saga *Fagrskinna* was lumped together with other 'northern' literature; his point was that they were Norwegian, not merely northern.

Orkney: 'as Norwegian as Norway itself'

Just two days after his return from Iona, Munch left Edinburgh for a trip to the Orkney (on the 26th of September).⁹ These islands he knew very well from his previous studies. A decade earlier he had published (Munch 1839) a long study on the historical topography of Orkney and Shetland with a special focus

8 *The Gentleman's Magazine and Historical Review*, no. 187 (1850): 195. Munch's contribution was supposed to have been printed in the Society's *Archaeologia* (cf. Munch 1924–71, II: 38), but is now lost.

9 The steamer went from Granton Harbour, so he the evening before he visited John M. Mitchell in Mayville and spent the night at a motel there. The main sources for the Orkney journey is a letter to his wife dated 10 October 1849 (published in Amundsen 1925) and his report to the government (1924–71, III: 435–40).

on the Norse place-names, also making a quite detailed map of them based on the literature he could find at the University Library in Christiania.¹⁰ Now he finally had the opportunity to see the islands for himself. His contact there was the official and antiquarian George Petrie (1817–75). Petrie was the administrator of the local archives at Kirkwall, where Munch had expected to find valuable documents. Petrie told him that a previous sheriff, James Allan Maconochie (d. 1845), had taken most of the collection to Edinburgh. Only a couple of letters in the archive in Kirkwall proved to be from the Middle Ages.¹¹

Munch was more fortunate concerning his other interests. He was introduced to the officer Frederick W. L. Thomas (1816–85), who at the time of Munch's visit was making sea charts of the Orkney Islands.¹² Munch thus got the opportunity to discuss and learn about many place-names on the isles. They continued to exchange letters and Munch later wrote that Thomas was the most useful contact he met in the Orkneys.¹³ Shortly after Munch's arrival at Kirkwall, Thomas invited Munch to sail with him to Stromness, something that he gladly accepted. Although Stromness itself was rather a disappointment when it came to antiquities, he visited the stone ring at Stenness which exceeded his expectations. He was furthermore invited to the farm of the Englishman Archer Fortescue at Orphir, and got the opportunity to visit the circular church there.

From Orphir he went back to Kirkwall. His main interest was St. Magnus Cathedral, and he spent most of the remaining visit studying this church (Figure 2). Luckily, the church was being restored at the time, and Munch learned much from the architect who supervised the work. Although he

-
- 10 After his journey, Munch (1852–8) revised the article and the map of Orkney. He intended to continue the article with a study on the historical geography of Isle of Man, the Hebrides, Ireland and Scotland. Each section was supposed to include a map, but he does not seem to have had time to finish it (I have not found any sketches in the National Library nor the National Archives). He also planned to continue with a critical comparison of the British and Irish sources on the one hand, and the Norse sources on the other (Munch 1924–71, II: 56, 68). As late as the 15th of September 1862, shortly before Munch's death, the editor C. C. Rafn asked for the treatise on Hebrides (Munch 1924–71, III: 233). Munch also published this in English, as 'Geographical Elucidations of the Scottish and Irish local Names occurring in the Sagas' in *Mémoires de la Société royale des Antiquaires du Nord*.
- 11 There are three transcripts of letters in the notebook in the National Archive in Oslo, all signed by Munch on the 2nd of October 1849. The first dated to the 21st of March 1465 (not included in *Diplomatarium Norvegicum*), and two transcripts of a letter dated to the 3rd of June 1467 (DN II 865).
- 12 He shortly after published an account of the Celtic antiquities of Orkney for the Society of Antiquities in London (Thomas 1851). Munch and Thomas continued to exchange letters at least until 1861, with updates on antiquities and place names from Orkney, Shetland and the Hebrides.
- 13 Thomas continued to correspond with Munch for several years afterwards. In addition to the letters in *Lærde brev*, there is a short, unedited letter from Thomas to Munch in the Mellbye-papers at National Library in Oslo dated to the 21st of July 1850.



Figure 2. St Magnus Cathedral, Kirkwall. Drawing by P.A. Munch. National Archives, Oslo (NRA PA 0013).

did not find any Norwegian inscriptions there, he was very pleased that the tombs of the bishops Thomas (d. 1461) and William the Old (d. 1168) had been found shortly before his arrival. He made a copy of the inscription on lead plate in the tomb of Bishop William, and speculated that he had been buried first at Christ Church in Birsay and then moved to St Magnus Cathedral (he later showed the copies to Daniel Wilson, Wilson 1851: 536–7). Also two figures in sandstone had recently been uncovered, which Munch immediately suggested depicted St. Olav and St. Magnus. He made drawings of them, emphasising their significance as a sign of the brotherhood, not only of the saints, but also of the peoples in Norway and Orkney.

Munch was fascinated not only by the cathedral, but also by the Pictish houses that were much discussed at the time. Petrie and Thomas led the investigations of these sites, and Munch used the opportunity to witness the opening at the chambered tomb at Wideford Hill just outside Kirkwall.¹⁴

14 The examination of Wideford was first published by Thomas (1851); and shortly after mentioned by Daniel Wilson (1851: 84); Petrie sent a report to the Society of Northern Antiquities in Copenhagen with sketches and maps, read in a meeting in April 1852 and later paraphrased in Danish (Petrie 1852–4).

Munch did not support the speculations of Walter Scott, James Ferguson and others, that these were Scandinavian remnants, but reasoned that they were the earliest settlements of the Picts at an early stage in their cultural development. Munch also reflected on the great stone circle at Stenness, applying the name Stenness to it and concluding that the stones had to be erected long before the Scandinavians came there.¹⁵

Munch was, however, pleased that the locals called the place Hávardsteigr, also a Norse name connected to the slaying of Earl Hávardr by his nephew around the year 970. In this respect, Munch viewed Orkney 'as Norwegian as Norway itself' (Munch 1873-76, III: 52). When he met the local people, he always, unlike with the Gaelic population at Iona, recognised their faces as Norwegians. He was almost astonished whenever the locals opened their mouths and talked English instead of Norwegian. Intending to make a mark there, he talked to whoever he saw about the time when Orkney was a part of the Norwegian realm. He also gave a set of the medieval laws of Norway to the archives of Kirkwall (*Norges gamle Love indtil 1387*) which he edited himself with Rudolf Keyser.¹⁶ Munch's purpose seems to have been to raise the Orcadians' consciousness about the Norwegian past, when their forefathers had been proud and free landowners, while instead they now worked and paid heavy taxes to English magnates.¹⁷ Munch thus tried to make them remember their Norwegian past, and thereby elevate them from the submission they had been forced into after the islands' transfer to Scotland.

Expelling the Danes from Edinburgh

He left Kirkwall on the 8th of October for Aberdeen. In a letter sent on the 10th of October to his wife, he wrote that he enjoyed the town, and that 'the size and beauty in many respects astonish me'. Some days later he went to stay for a few days with his friend G. F. R. Gordon at Ellon Castle outside Aberdeen. After visiting Dundee for a day, he returned to Edinburgh and did most of his

-
- 15 David Wilson used Munch's opinion about the pre-Scandinavian origins as an argument in itself: 'Professor Munch, whose natural bias as a Norwegian might have inclined him to claim for his countrymen the erection of the Great Scottish Circle, remarks, in a recent letter to me, [...] 'that the standing stones belonged to the population previous to the Scandinavian settlement' (1851: 112, n.1).
- 16 When he later got the opportunity, he gave a large gift consisting of his own books to the new library of the Shetland Literary and Scientific Society in Lerwick at its foundation in 1862 (Munch 1924-71; III: 225, 233).
- 17 Indeed, Munch later remarked that it was a striking coincidence that the same morning he left Kirkwall, people organised a general meeting concerning new taxes.

work in the Signet Library.¹⁸ Although he wrote to his wife in November that his workload was huge, he still had time for many dinners and conversations.

One of the things he worked on during his stay in Edinburgh was a manuscript David Laing had been working on for some time. It was at the time in the possession of Lord Panmure and was thus termed the 'Panmure Codex' by Laing and Munch.¹⁹ This manuscript contained a remarkable collection of texts that showed strong connections to Orkney and also Norway. Laing had already transcribed many of the texts from the manuscript, mainly those that concerned Scotland, for the third volume of *Bannatyne Miscellany*, published in 1855. Munch made his own facsimile of the manuscript. This enabled him to publish three of the texts from the manuscript: the *Catalogue of Norwegian kings*, *Genealogy of the Orkney earls* and not least an unknown Latin chronicle on Norway, later known as *Historia Norvegie* (Munch 1850). Munch discussed the manuscript with Laing, and agreed that the handwriting indicated a date in the latter half of the fifteenth century. The question was its connection to the earldom; was it collected and written before the transfer of Orkney from Norway to Scotland in 1468? Munch was inclined to believe that the manuscript had been written on Orkney for the last earl, William Sinclair (d. 1484), during the Danish-Norwegian age. To Munch, this manuscript was an important link between Norway and Orkney, although he considered it somewhat more valuable to the history of literature than history.²⁰

18 In addition to the letters from Gordon to Munch in *Lærde brev*, there are also two unedited and uncatalogized letters in the Mellbye-papers in the National Library in Oslo, dated to the 19th of September and the 1st of October 1849, both being invitations to stay in Ellon Castle. Munch's copies from the archives in Edinburgh are preserved in the National Archive in Oslo, PA-0013, most of them written in the end of October.

19 As the owner's family name shifted from Panmure to Dalhousie a decade later, the manuscript is now often referred to as the Dalhousie manuscript.

20 Later studies date the manuscript, now known as the Dalhousie MS., to around 1500, and indicate that it was probably written in Scotland (Crawford 1977; Chesnutt 1985; Mortensen 2003: 37–40). None of these studies mention Munch's perhaps most important argument for dating the manuscript to around 1460 and to Orkney. His opinion on this was confirmed when he, on his return from London to Christiania, in February 1850 found in Copenhagen two letters. These were 'written entirely and exactly in the very identical handwriting of the Panmure Codex. There is no doubt of it. You know that I took a very accurate facsimile, and in comparing this with the above mentioned diplomata the handwriting of them all was found, not only by me, but by all the other gentlemen and clerks present, to be the same. One of these diplomata is dated Kirkwall, ultima die Febr. 1460; the other is a letter from Earl William of Orkney, dat. Roslin, penultima die Septbr. 1461. This shows, that the writer really lived about 1460. Moreover, the fact, that he accompanied Earl William to his extra-orcadian seat of Roslin, shows that he must have been somehow connected with the Earl's household, probably his chaplain or his secretary. All this is very interesting indeed' (Munch 1924–71, I: 409, Letter to David Laing dated to the 10th of February 1850; cf. Munch 1850: ii and Munch 1855: 195–6) The letters were printed in *Diplomatarium Norvegicum*, vol. V, no. 827, and vol. II, no. 840. The latter was printed in facsimile in Munch 1850 (Tab. II).

The other important acquaintance Munch made in Edinburgh was Daniel Wilson (1816–92).²¹ At the time of Munch's stay in Edinburgh, Wilson had turned his attention from medieval buildings to the oldest monuments of human activities in Scotland. At the time of Munch's visit, Wilson was about to finish his monumental *The Archaeology and Prehistoric Annals of Scotland*. This work is considered by some (for instance, Ash 1999) to be perhaps the most important and innovative study in Scottish archaeology. Interestingly, its paradigms have all been connected to some degree to Munch or his antagonist Worsaae.

Wilson seems to have found great inspiration in the work of Worsaae, based on his travels in 1846–7. Worsaae had developed the tripartite division of ages based on materials; of stone, bronze and iron, which initially C. J. Thomsen, his predecessor as curator of the National Museum of Copenhagen, had introduced. Worsaae did not seem to intend to introduce and promote the 'Three Age System' in Edinburgh, since he was looking mainly for antiquities with Scandinavian links (Briggs 2005). However, Worsaae's ideas had a deep impact on Wilson and his organisation of the collections in Edinburgh. Although Worsaae did not meet Wilson during his stay in Edinburgh in the

21 The warm friendship between Wilson and Munch continued for the rest of their life, and Wilson even wanted to dedicate his *Prehistoric Annals* to Munch, but as he had made so many attacks on the Danish origins of Scottish antiquities, and then also on some scholars 'directly traceable to Copenhagen', he dedicated it instead to the Marquess of Breadalbane, the president of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, to avoid getting Munch in trouble (Munch 1924–71: 5). The friendship also continued after Wilson moved to Toronto. In the unedited Mellbye-papers, there is a letter from Daniel Wilson to one of Munch's daughters (probably Sophie Mellbye), dated to the 21st of December 1878. He expressed his gratitude for a lithography of Munch's tombstone in Rome, and continued: 'I learned of his early death with deepest sorrow. He was a great favourite with my wife and myself: and it would have been a source of extreme happiness to me, had he survived, so that I might have enjoyed his society once more, on my visit to Christiania. But he is known and valued still by many, as the historian of Norway, and the author of other learned writings ... A recent letter from Edinburgh has informed me of the death of Mr. David Laing, who was one of your father's special friends.' It is of some interest that Munch also met both Robert Chambers (1802–71), publisher and writer, and Charles Neaves (1800–76), sheriff of Orkney and Shetland, but never seems to have become close friends with any of them. In the unpublished Mellbye-papers, there is a letter from Robert Chambers, dated to the 16th of November 1849, in which he makes queries about Norwegian statistics and the use of tobacco in Scandinavia. Chambers's scepticism about the use of tobacco is evident in several articles in the *Edinburgh Journal* and the *Journal of Popular Literature, Science and Arts*. This was hardly the interest of Munch, and I doubt he ever answered Chambers's letter. Concerning Charles Neaves, Munch later said that he was the only one in Edinburgh who was 'at home' in the Anglo-Saxon language. On the 18th and 20th of October 1849, Munch transcribed several letters in the possession of Charles Neaves concerning relations between Norway and Shetland in the sixteenth century. His transcripts are preserved in the notebook of Munch in the National Archives, Oslo (PA-0013). Neaves had published it anonymously in 1840 in cooperation with the previous Sheriff Maconochie (cf. Goudie 1891: 193).

autumn of 1846, they exchanged letters and Wilson often quoted Worsaae's work, especially *The primeval Antiquities of Denmark* (1849). On the other hand, Munch probably knew the Three Age System from Christiania. The Norwegian historian Rudolf Keyser (1803–64) might have known the system in 1825, when he met Thomsen in Copenhagen. Later the same year, Keyser became the head of the collection of antiquities in Christiania and organised it (Undset 1886; Undset 1887; Andersen 1960: 49, 115–27, 542–3). Keyser and Munch became close friends and worked together on many projects in the 1830s and 1840s. Munch had been in Copenhagen in the winter of 1835–6, and held weekly talks with Thomsen concerning 'history, art and antiquities' (Munch 1924–71, I: 13). At the time of Munch's visit in Edinburgh, he probably had no reason not to encourage Wilson to continue to reorganise the collections in Edinburgh according to the Three Age System.

Second, in the title of this work, Wilson introduced the term 'prehistoric' into the English language (as he himself mentioned with some pride in the second edition). Worsaae never met Wilson in Edinburgh, and it has been suggested that the concept of 'prehistory' was developed in his conversations with Munch in 1849 (Rowley-Conwy 2006). However, Wilson told Munch that he was displeased with the title of the book: 'My publishers having laid out a considerable sum of money on the Book considered they should have some voice as to the title; having given me my way otherwise, they did not like my title, I was equally little pleased with their's, and the above is a sort of *tertium quid*, embracing the faults of both, and looking to my eye, somewhat pedantic' (Munch 1924–71, II: 4). This indicates that the 'prehistory' in the title was very much Wilson's own idea, although Munch was familiar to the Danish term and used it frequently in his pamphlets in 1846–9.²² In Munch's later writings, however, 'prehistory' (*forhistorie*) hardly ever occurs (he uses for instance *oldtid* in his *Det norske Folks Historie*, published in 1852). Even in Munch's review (1851d) of Wilson's book, he used the terms such as *antikvarisk tid* and *oldsager* rather than *forhistorie*. Still, it might be a combination of Wilson's interest for the Three Age System and his conversations with Munch in Edinburgh from October to December in 1849 that might have formed the idea. This seems likely as Wilson later asked Munch for Scandinavian terms on artifacts (Munch 1924–71, I: 403; Wilson 1851: 124–5). However, Munch certainly never claimed the honour of coining the term, and his interest for archaeology and artifacts in itself, was very limited.

22 Rowley-Conwy 2007: 158. The term *Prehistoric Annals* was Wilson's idea, and he named the second edition (1863) just *Prehistoric Annals*. 'Annals' was a metaphor alluding to written sources. He later described how watching the uncovering of the successive layers was 'like turning over the leaves of an old chronicle' (quoted from Rowley-Conwy 2007: 156).

The third innovative element of Wilson's work was, on the other hand, of great interest to Munch. When he presented the book to the Norwegian audience in December 1851, Munch devoted almost the whole review to Wilson's revision of Scottish-Scandinavian relations. Most importantly the influence of Danes was rejected, while the Norwegians found their proper place in Scottish history. Munch chose to quote (and translate) a passage from Wilson's preface:

Hence, while the artless relics of our primeval Stone Period were generally assigned to native workmanship, whatever evinced any remarkable traces of skill distinct from the well-defined Roman art, was assumed of necessity to have a foreign origin, and was usually ascribed to the Danes. The invariable adoption of the latter term in preference to that of Norwegians or Norsemen shows how completely Scottish and Irish antiquaries have abandoned themselves to the influence of English literature, even where the appropriation of its dogmas was opposed to well-known historical facts. The name of Dane has in fact for centuries been one of those convenient words which so often take the place of ideas and save the trouble and inconvenience of reasoning. (Wilson 1851: xiv–xv; Munch 1851d)

Munch had no problem in attributing the ancient brochs or Picts' houses to the Celtic people, as long as the Norwegians were attributed their rightful position in the Viking Age, when Norway was more individualistic and less influenced by foreign influences than Denmark. Munch felt Wilson was doing exactly the same in Scotland as he himself did in Scandinavia, clearing the old misconceptions that all achievements of the Scots or Norwegians were Danish (cf. Graham-Campbell 2004: 221; Ash 1981: 109). In the purging of Danes from Scottish history, Wilson may very well have been influenced by Munch (cf. Newby & Andersson Burnett 2008; Downham 2009: 153–4). Not least Munch was pleased that Worsaae's report of his travels in the British Isles in 1846–7, published first in Danish in 1851 and in English 1852, actually granted 'Norway what belonged to the Norwegians' and divided the book into three parts: Danes in England, Norwegians in Scotland and Norwegians in Ireland (Munch 1851a). In this respect, Munch must have felt that his journey to Scotland had been very rewarding; the Northern Isles were written into Norwegian history again. The Northern Isles were again conquered this time won from the unrightful dominion of the Danes.

Munch planned yet another publication, which he considered to be even more important. He wanted to edit *Orkneyinga saga* and translate it into English. This was significant for two reasons: firstly, the only edition (with Latin translation) in existence by Jónas Jónasson, published in Copenhagen 1780,

was error-ridden and did not include the important manuscript *Flateyjarbók*; and secondly the text, along with Munch's commentaries on place-names and persons, would make everyone see how closely related Orkney was to Norway. This would put the talk about the Danes to rest.

David Laing was positive about the idea, and suggested that the Bannatyne Club should print the edition and translation. The idea of a revision and English translation had already been suggested for their members a few years earlier, when the Icelander Þorleifur Repp (1794–1857) offered to do the work for the Bannatyne Club, first in 1834 and then again in 1846. Since he was deeply sceptical of the Danes, he thought it was better to have a English edition than a Danish one – the fear of the Danes being the first to publish the saga might have been sparked off by the visit of Worsaae in Scotland the same year (Wawn 1991). The members had met Repp's plan with some coolness, and Laing also had problems in raising enthusiasm and money after Munch's visit. Munch was optimistic, however, and while already on his way back to Christiania started transcribing *Flateyjarbók* with the intention of publishing the edition.

When it became clear that the sponsorship could not come from Edinburgh, Munch tried to get funding from first the university and then Det kgl. Norske Videnskabers Selskab ('The Royal Norwegian Society of Sciences and Letters') in Trondheim. He agreed with Repp that the saga should not be published in Copenhagen, and tried to ally with George Stephens, then professor in Copenhagen, to get help to transcribe the rest of the saga in the *Flateyjarbók* codex. He later learned that Thomas Barclay at Glasgow University had plans to make a translation. In 1855, David Laing proposed cooperation between them, but that was not quite to Munch's liking, especially in the areas of chronology, geography and identifying names (Munch 1924–71, II: 141–5). Also George Dasent, the translator of *Njáls saga*, worked on a translation, but none of these plans was ever realised.²³

Munch seems never to have given up on the plans to edit the saga, but eventually his work on the history of the Norwegian people, his office as a National Archivist and not least his long stay in Rome to study the Vatican Archives took precedence. The first translation of the saga was therefore not published until 1873, a decade after Munch's death.

The Isle of Man and London

Munch did, however, manage to publish another edition of a crucial text showing a Norwegian presence in the British Isles, *The Chronicle of Man and*

23 George Petrie published some excerpts of the saga in the newly founded local paper *The Orcadian* in 1854/55 (Seibert 2008: 121–3).

the Sudreys. This manuscript was not in Edinburgh but in the British Museum in London, and on the 2nd of January 1850 Munch left Scotland. The Manx chronicle had been edited several times before, but Munch did not rely on any of them and wanted to make his own copy of the manuscript.²⁴ His intention during his stay in London was not to make a new edition, but to correct his own copy of Johnstone's edition from 1786. However, since there were no signs of others making an edition, he decided it was best he did it himself, with notes that fully integrated his, at the time, innovative view that Isle of Man and the Hebrides had been settled, and for a long time ruled, by Norwegians.

Munch did not only make an edition of the Latin chronicle, but also included a revised reading of the runic inscriptions from the Isle of Man. He had seen casts of them when he had stayed in Edinburgh, and made transcripts of them. Daniel Wilson had discussed them in his *Prehistoric Annals*, but ascribes the honour of their finding to Munch: 'To these features of the Manx alphabet, my attention was called by Professor P. A. Munch of Christiania, during the visit of that distinguished Northern scholar to this country in 1849; by whom, indeed, they were for the first time detected, when inspecting a series of casts of the Manx inscriptions in the Museum of the Scottish Antiquaries' (Wilson 1851: 528). In the museum in London he found some more casts of Manx runic inscriptions, and he later was lent the paper-rubbings Worsaae had made of such inscriptions in the private collection of Sir Henry Dryden. This enabled him to revise the readings he had communicated to Daniel Wilson on his stay in Edinburgh and which were included in *Prehistoric Annals* (Wilson 1851: 539–42).

To Munch's great satisfaction, another antiquarian followed the lead of Wilson and Munch, distancing the people of northern England from the Danes. Robert Ferguson (1817–98) in Carlisle had read Worsaae's book on *Danes and Northmen in England*, but was convinced that his own district, Cumberland and Westmoreland, had been inhabited by Norwegians through the Isle of Man, rather than Danes (Munch 1924–71, II: 148–9, 163).

Although Munch had the option to visit Northumbria, including York, and East Anglia, an area he knew very well from the sources, Munch went straight from Scotland to London. Perhaps it is surprising that he did not prioritise the following invitation of John Earle (1824–1903), newly appointed Professor in Anglo-Saxon in Oxford: 'I hope you intend to spend a good time with us: you must not pay Oxford a flying visit ... I don't know a single person that I so much wish to have some long conversations with than yourself ... Let me hear

24 He complained that the Camden edition was abridged, while James Johnstone's edition from 1786 was 'far from being good or accurate even in the most moderate meaning of the word' (Munch 1860: xxix).

from you: if you write in your own beautiful language, so much the better.²⁵ Munch regretted that he did not have time to visit Earle in Oxford, but this was more because of the missed opportunity to have pleasant conversations with a learned Professor rather than his wish to reveal activities of Norwegians in England (Munch 1924–71, I: 411). Anglo-Saxon language and culture were closer to Danish, and although ‘stemming from the same chief stem of nationality as the Norwegians did’ (Munch 1860: v), there was less likelihood of finding sources for a Norwegian presence in England; Worsaae had already covered the Danish antiquities there on his journey some years before.²⁶

There are not many details preserved on the contacts he made in London, since the letters from his stay there and this part of the report to the government are lost. His daughter recalled in her memoirs that he written home about ‘a very interesting visit at the home of Charles Dickens’.²⁷ His two short weeks in London probably did not allow much social mingling; besides transcribing the Manx chronicle and copying the casts of the runic inscriptions in the museum, we know also that he transcribed another work, the itineraries of Ohthere and Wulfstan, which was important in Anglo-Norwegian history.²⁸ Munch made contact with H. Bowyer Lane, the secretary in the Royal Archaeological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland. He offered to publish the article on the runic inscriptions of the Isle of Man in the Institute’s *Archaeological Journal* (Munch 1924–71, I: 403–4). He later sent a version to the Royal Archaeological Institute, and it was read at the annual meeting in Oxford in June 1850, but not printed.²⁹

25 Mellbye-papers, National Library of Oslo, 8th of November 1849. Two other unedited invitations from Earle dated to December 1849 are found in the same collection. In the last, he invites him to come on the 21st of January, but Munch left London for his home journey on the 19th of January (Cf. Munch 1924–71, I: 396–7).

26 This did not mean that Munch did not tell Danish scholars about new sources to the history of Denmark. When in Rome, he copied many letters and sent them to Copenhagen.

27 Unfortunately, when Munch’s youngest daughter Laura published her memoirs about her father, she recalled the lost letters but did not specify the contents (Larsen-Naur 1901: 62). Also the report Munch wrote of his journey to the government is incomplete and ends after his visit to Orkney. The invitation to Devonshire Terrace from Mrs. Dickens to the birthday party of Charles Dickens Jr. is printed in Dickens 1965–2002, VI: 5. The visit does not seem to make a deep impact on either Dickens or Munch beyond the anecdotic.

28 Munch’s transcript of the stories of Ohthere and Wulfstan from Cotton MS. Tiberius B. is in the National Library, Oslo (NBO Ms. 4° 1253:f), where he makes a good attempt at copying the Anglo-Saxon script in the original manuscript. It was later edited, translated and commented by Munch in *Antiquités Russes*, vol. II, ed. by C.C. Rafn (Copenhagen, 1852): 458–70.

29 *Archaeological Journal* 6 (1851): 314–15. Munch also accepted to read an anonymous pamphlet for the journal on ‘Sóringesheall’, which he returned with the remark ‘certainly the most horrible trash that can be imagined’ (1924–71, I: 403). He also met the ethnologist and philologist Robert Gordon Latham (1812–88) in London, but was far from impressed: ‘I can not call him a great linguist; or rather I can not imagine that he will become one, unless God grant him a lifetime of 500 years.’ (Munch 1924–71, I: 425) This might have something to do with the fact that Latham, during his stay in Norway in the 1830s, was the friend of Munch’s rivals Henrik Wergeland, poet and national archivist, and Ludvig Kristensen Daa, historian and Scandinavist.

Concluding remarks

At the time of his journey to Scotland, Orkney and London, P. A. Munch was becoming something of a celebrity in Norwegian learned circles. He was a Professor of History at the newly founded University of Christiania and in a very productive phase of his career; he was also an editor, philologist, ethnologist, cartographer, runologist, and a controversial political activist in Scandinavia. Shortly after his return from Scotland, he began the work he is most famous for today, the massive *Det norske Folks Historie*, containing over 6600 pages. This work is unparalleled in Norwegian historiography in its ambition. His initial plan was to continue the work up to 1814, the end of Danish rule over Norway, but the final volume ended instead at the beginning of the union with Denmark in 1397.

Although several works on Norwegian history had been written in the years before the grandiose work of Munch, he was the first who wrote a history of Norway that was founded on thorough source studies and the new principles of historical science as developed by Barthold G. Niebuhr and Leopold von Ranke. As his studies progressed, this ambition showed itself in his publications on runes and the grammar of Old Norse, as well as many editions and translations of medieval chronicles, sagas, diplomas and laws.

At the time of his death in Rome on the 25th of May 1863, aged just 52 years old, Munch was remembered as something of a national hero. In a memorial poem by the Norwegian poet Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, Munch was likened to a king's fleet that had brought treasures back home to the glory of his kingdom and people.³⁰ According to his cousin, the poet Andreas Munch (1811–84), he already in his youth wanted to be 'a Herodot for his Fatherland'. In many ways he achieved exactly this – an historian that created a national history founded on all known sources, many rediscovered by himself. Although his *magnum opus* was not widely read, he became an important symbol of Norway's glorious past after hundreds of years under Danish rule. A later account tells that people who passed by Munch's window late at night could always see light inside. Then they would be assured that Munch was writing *their* history (Brinchmann 1910: 101).

However, one of his main tools in his anti-Scandinavism, his theory of immigration from the north, was soon dismissed after his death. The following generation of historians in Norway concentrated more on the period after 1397 and the union of Denmark and Norway. Munch's lasting contribution to the history of Norway turned out not to be Norway's superiority over Denmark in

30 *Illustreret Nyhedsblad*, 5 July 1863. Also published as a separate print, and later reprinted in Larsen-Naur 1901: 223–31.

the Middle Ages. It was his idea of a powerful medieval kingdom in the Viking Age and High Middle Ages that stuck in the Norwegians' consciousness. In this construction, Munch's broad interests in Norway's relations to the rest of Europe were crucial. His most famous journey abroad, to the Vatican Archives in the last years of his life, is justly seen as a magnificent achievement in this respect. However, the journey to Scotland, in particular Orkney, was also important in establishing the power of Norway that reached over the North Sea to Shetland, Orkney, the Hebrides and Isle of Man. Although he did not establish close contact with the scholars in England, he managed to establish that it was the Norwegians who had settled there and not Danes or more vaguely Scandinavians or 'Northmen'. This perception of a powerful and glorious past of Norway (*storhetstid*) connected to the settlement of and rule in the northern British Isles was a lasting inheritance from Munch. That he also got the opportunity to influence the most noted scholars in Scotland at the time, David Laing and Daniel Wilson, must have made Munch confident that the goals of his voyage were achieved. Another victory was that even Worsaae, his Danish rival and scholar, accepted the Norwegians' dominion in Scotland, Orkney and Ireland. The Danes could keep England; Munch felt that Norwegians still had a lot more in common with the suppressed Scots and Orcadians in their battle for acknowledging their past.

Still, despite using terms like 'nation' and 'national character' in his historical writings and political rhetoric, Munch himself saw the limitations of the idea of the nation; for him such an ideal should not determine how one should interpret the sources. Furthermore, he did not argue for a revitalisation of the Viking Age in respect of language, as some of his fellow Norwegians did; for him this was part of the Norwegian people's history that legitimised their political independence in the present. Munch's project in this respect was to educate the people, to show them that they should carry on the inheritance of a medieval independent kingdom. Munch himself, however, wrote that the nation was not the highest ideal: 'I have nowhere expressed the opinion that a pure and unmixed national identity is a blessing and glorifying for a people. In that respect I am too much a cosmopolitan.'³¹ He thus felt very much at

31 Munch 1873–6, II: 87: 'jeg har ingensteds, udtalt den Mening, at en reen og ublandet Nationalitet er en Velsignelse og stor Hæder for et Folk. Dertil er jeg altfor meget Cosmopolit.' Munch found a fellow cosmopolitan in Copenhagen: C. C. Rafn, Director of the Society of Northern Antiquities, wrote in similar terms, for example to Grimm and later to Munch in 1849: 'I praise the foundations and could never support endeavours wherein the national fanaticism seems unbearable to me. It is certainly most tragic if such an excess of a noble emotion now should bring upon humanity the same miseries as religious fanaticism did in previous centuries. I hate anti-Germanism as much as anti-Danism and am of the opinion that all brave and sensible people should pursue, with united forces to lift this gulf between nations and that this is the duty of the linguist as it is of the scientist in general' (Munch 1924–71, III, 339).

home when he visited learned scholars abroad, such as in Edinburgh or in Rome. His nightmare was rather the situation of Iona: only two, the priests, of the population were men of learning, and they could not talk to each other because of the great disruption in the Scottish Church.³²

Thus, during the rest of his life he longed to be back in Edinburgh to continue the conversations he had had there. On the 24th of January 1850, on his way back to Christiania, Munch wrote to David Laing:

And it is not only this unexpected stoppage [at Nyborg, Denmark] that makes me sad, it is also the feeling, never before experienced by me, of everything here being so mean, so second rate. I almost despair of the North. Indeed, now I feel that it is a dangerous thing for us Scandinavians, at least those of us, who do not at all want taste and learning, to visit Britain for as long a time as I did, because one grows so accustomed to that comfort and elegance that reigns there everywhere, that we cannot but feel most unhappy without it. I feel now very well, that however I shall rejoice in joining my family, and how much so ever I love my country, I shall not be able to banish some thoughts or feeling with regard to Britain somewhat analogous to home-sickness, and I shall not be able to suppress the sincere wish that I might make Britain my home.³³

Still, Munch was content – he had found the links between Scotland and Norway in the historical records. On behalf of the Norwegian people, he had found the dragon's tongue and was now able to hold it up high and show it to the world.

Bibliography

- Adriansen, I. (1997), 'Jyllands formodede tyskhed i oldtiden – den dansk-tyske strid om Sønderjyllands urbefolkning', in *The Waking of Angantyr: The Scandinavian Past in European Culture*, ed. by E. Roesdahl and P. Meulengracht Sørensen (Århus), pp. 120–46.
- Andersen, P. S. (1960), *Rudolf Keyser: Embetsmann og historiker* (Oslo).

-
- 32 Munch 1873–6, III: 48. Munch did not feel at home in London, though. Munch's attempt to publish in the journal of the Royal Archaeological Institute seems half-hearted, and he may have felt that there was little interest for his Norwegian history here, compared to Worsaae's success. However, it was the Scottish link that secured his fame in the early 1860s, when George Petrie and James Farrar excavated Maeshowe and sent the rubbings of the runic inscriptions to Munch, Stephens and Rafn (cf. Barnes 2012).
- 33 Munch 1924–71, I: 407. Also later, P.A. Munch expressed his wish to move to Scotland (Munch 1924–71, I: 411), something that Laing also mentioned in his memorial (Laing 1862–4). His daughter noted in her memoirs that Munch always remembered his journey to Scotland with the greatest pleasure because he made such close friends there (Larsen-Naur 1901: 37–8).

- Amundsen, L. (1925), 'P.A. Munchs ophold paa Orknøerne: En hittil utrykt reiseberetning', *Morgenbladet*, no. 347, 7 Nov.
- Ash, M. (1981), "'A fine, genial, hearty band": David Laing, Daniel Wilson and Scottish archaeology', in *The Scottish Antiquarian Tradition*, ed. by A. S. Bell (Edinburgh), pp. 86–113.
- Ash, M. (1999), 'Old Books, old Castles, and old Friends: The Making of Daniel Wilson's *Archæology and Prehistoric Annals of Scotland*', in *Thinking with Both Hands: Sir Daniel Wilson in the Old World and the New* (Toronto), pp. 60–80.
- Barnes, M. (2012), 'Runer og runeinnskrifter', in P.A. Munch. *Historiker og nasjonsbygger*, ed. by S. Bagge, J. P. Collett and A. Kjus (Oslo), pp. 176–92.
- Briggs, C. S. (2005), 'C.C. Rafn, J.J.A. Worsaae, Archaeology, History and Danish National Identity in the Schleswig-Holstein Question', *Bulletin of the History of Archaeology* 15:2, pp. 4–25.
- Brinchmann, C. (1910), *National-forskeren P.A. Munch: Hans liv og virke* (Kristiania).
- Chesnutt, M. (1986), 'The Dalhousie Manuscript of the *Historia Norvegiae*', in *Opuscula VIII, Bibliotheca Arnemagnæana* 38 (Copenhagen), pp. 54–95.
- Crawford, B. E. (1977), 'The fifteenth-century "Genealogy of the earls of Orkney" and its Reflection of the contemporary political and cultural Situation in the Earldom', *Mediaeval Scandinavia* 10, pp. 156–78.
- Dickens, C. (1965–2002), *The Letters of Charles Dickens*, 12 vols., ed. by Madeline House and Graham Storey et al. (Oxford).
- Downham, C. (2009), "'Hiberno-Norwegians" and "Anglo-Danes": Anachronistic Ethnicities and Viking-Age England', *Mediaeval Scandinavia* 19, pp. 139–69.
- Enebakk, V. (2012), 'Kartlegging av Norge i tid og rom', in P.A. Munch. *Historiker og nasjonsbygger*, ed. by S. Bagge, J. P. Collett and A. Kjus (Oslo), pp. 129–51.
- Eriksson, K. (2008), 'George Stephens. Samlare, fornforskare och skandinavist', in *En värld för sig själv: Nya studier i medeltida ballader*, ed. Gunilla Byrman (Växjö), pp. 29–72.
- Foster, J. (1884), *The Royal Lineage of our noble and gentle Families, together with their paternal Ancestry* (London).
- Goudie, G. (1891), 'A Norwegian Conveyance of Land in Shetland, 1537', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 25, pp. 188–95.
- Graham-Campbell, J. (2004), "'Danes... in this Country": Discovering the Viking in Scotland', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 114, pp. 201–39.
- Jensen, J. (2007), *Et archæologisk vikingetog: J.J.A. Worsaaes rejse til England, Skottland og Irland 1846–47* (Copenhagen).
- Kjus, A. (2002), *Sitt lands Herodot: P.A. Munch og Det norske Folks Historie* (Oslo).
- Laing, D. (1855), 'Extracts from a Manuscript Volume of Chronicles, in the possession of the Right Hon. Lord Panmure', *Bannatyne Miscellany* 3, pp. 25–60.
- Laing, D. (1862–4), 'Biographical Notice of Professor P.A. Munch', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 5, pp. 173–81.
- Larsen-Naur, L. (1901), *P.A. Munchs Levnet og Breve i Familiekrederen* (Kristiania).
- Melve, L. (2012), 'Vitskapsfilosofi, historieteori og metode hjå P.A. Munch', *Historisk tidsskrift* 91, pp. 9–36.

- Mortensen, L. B. (2003), 'Introduction', in *Historia Norwegie*, ed. by L. B. Mortensen and I. Ekrem (Copenhagen), pp. 8–47.
- Munch, A. (1863), 'Peter Andreas Munch', *For Hjemmet* 4, pp. 339–43.
- Munch, P. A. (1839), 'Geographiske og historiske Notitser om Orknøerne og Hetland', *Samlinger til det norske Folks Sprog og Historie* 6, pp. 79–133 and 475–524.
- Munch, P. A. (1849a), *Om Skandinavismen* (Christiania) [repr. in *Samlede Afhandlinger*, II: 1–43].
- Munch, P. A. (1849b), *Skandinavismen, nærmere undersøgt med Hensyn til Nordens ældre nationale og literaire Forhold: Bemærkninger ved J.J.A. Worsaae's Skrift 'om en forhistorisk saakaldet 'tydsk' Befolkning i Danmark'* (Christiania) [repr. in *Samlede Afhandlinger*, II: 82–127].
- Munch, P. A. (1850), *Symbolæ ad historiam antiquiorem rerum Norvegicarum* (Christiania).
- Munch, P. A. (1851a), 'J.J.A. Worsaae, 'Minder om de Danske og Nordmændene i England, Skotland og Irland'', *Norsk Tidsskrift for Videnskab og Litteratur* 5, pp. 269–96 [repr. in *Samlede Afhandlinger*, III:1–26].
- Munch, P. A. (1851b), 'En Udflugt til Staffa og Icolmkill', *Norsk Folke-Kalender for 1852*, pp. 17–42 [repr. in *Samlede Afhandlinger*, III: 27–52].
- Munch, P. A. (1851c), 'Why is the Mainland of Orkney called Pomona?', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 1, pp. 15–18.
- Munch, P. A. (1851d), 'Wilson's Archæology of Scotland', *Morgenbladet*, no. 355, 21 Dec.
- Munch, P. A. (1852), 'Erindringer fra Orknøerne', *Norsk Folke-Kalender for 1853*, pp 8–34 [repr. in *Samlede Afhandlinger*, III: 52–79].
- Munch, P. A. (1852–64), *Det norske Folks Historie*, 6 vols. (Christiania).
- Munch, P. A. (1852–8), 'Geographiske Oplysninger om de i Sagaerne forekommende Skotske og Irske Stedsnavne', *Annaler for nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie*, pp. 44–103 (1852); pp. 308–81 (1857); map (1858) [repr. in *Samlede Afhandlinger*, III: 79–181; English translation in *Mémoires de la Société Royale des antiquaires du Nord*, 1846–9].
- Munch, P. A. (1855), 'Notes on the Extracts from the Panmure Manuscripts in the present Volume', *Bannatyne Miscellany* 3, pp. 189–96.
- Munch, P. A. (1860), *Chronica Regum Manniæ et insularum. The Chronicle of Man and the Sudreys* (Christiania).
- Munch, P. A. (1873–6), *Samlede Afhandlinger*, 4 vols., ed. by G. Storm (Christiania).
- Munch, P. A. (1924–71), *Lærde Brev fraa og til P.A. Munch*, 3 vols., ed. by G. Indrebø et al. (Oslo).
- Newby, A. and L. Andersson Burnett, 'Between Empire and "the North": Scottish Identity in the nineteenth Century', in *Parting the Mists: Views on Scotland as Part of Britain and Europe*, ed. by S. Litonius et al. (Helsinki), pp. 37–56.
- Petrie, G. (1852–4), 'Oldtidslevninger paa Ørkenøerne', *Antiquarisk Tidsskrift*, pp. 144–57.
- Rowley-Conwy, P. (2006), 'The Concept of Prehistory and the Invention of the terms "Prehistoric" and "Prehistorian": The Scandinavian Origin, 1833-1850', *European Journal of Archaeology*, 9, pp. 103–30.

- Rowley-Conwy, P. (2007), *From Genesis to Prehistory: The Archaeological Three Ages System and its Contested Reception in Denmark, Britain, and Ireland* (New York).
- Seibert, S. (2008), *Reception and Construction of the Norse Past in Orkney* (Frankfurt am Main).
- Seip, A.-L. (2012), 'Nasjonsbygger og kosmopolitt', in P.A. Munch. *Historiker og nasjonsbygger*, ed. by S. Bagge, J.P. Collett and A. Kjus (Oslo), pp. 11–32.
- Thomas, F. W. L. (1851), 'Account of some of the Celtic Antiquities of Orkney, including the Stones of Stenness, Tumuli, Picts-houses, &c., with Plans', *Archaeologia* 34, pp. 88–136.
- Undset, I. (1886), 'Zur Geschichte der Lehre von den drei Perioden', *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie* 18, pp. 18–22.
- Undset, I. (1887), 'Nordisk og mellemeuropæisk Arkæologi', *Nyt Tidsskrift* 6, pp. 363–83.
- Wawn, A. (1991), *The Anglo-Man: Þorleifur Repp, Philology and Nineteenth Century Britain* (Reykjavík).
- Wawn, A. (2000), *The Vikings and the Victorians. Inventing the Old North in Nineteenth-Century* (Cambridge).
- Wilson, D. (1851), *The Archæology and prehistoric Annals of Scotland* (Edinburgh).
- Worsaae, J. J. A. (1849a), *The Primeval Antiquities of Denmark, translated, and applied to the illustration of similar Remains in England* (London).
- Worsaae, J. J. A. (1849b), *Om en forhistorisk, saakaldet "tydsk" Befolkning i Danmark* (Copenhagen).
- Worsaae, J. J. A. (1849c), *Svar paa Prof. P.A. Munchs andet Stridsskrift om "Skandinavismen"* (Copenhagen).
- Worsaae, J. J. A. (1851), *Minder om de Danske og Nordmændene i England, Skotland og Irland* (Copenhagen) [English edn. (1852): *An Account of the Danes and Norwegians in England, Scotland, and Ireland* (London)].