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Chapter 2: The Nietzsche Reception: Questions of Primacy and Authenticity

Über Dänemark geht Nietzsches Name um die Welt. Das ist allgemein bekannt. Mit den Voraussetzungen für seinen Erfolg und mit der Geschichte seiner Rezeption in Skandinavien ist man weniger vertraut.

(Nietzsche's name went out to the world from Denmark. This is common knowledge. People are less familiar with the preconditions for his success and the history of his reception in Scandinavia.)¹

As Steven E. Aschheim points out, Nietzsche had enjoyed a small and devoted readership in Austria as early as the mid 1870's² and prior to 1890, a »kind of subterranean influence in Germany, appealing to individual readers or specialized obscure societies such as the Leipzig Genius Club founded in 1886 or a medley of radical fringe groups«.³ However, the Scandinavian reception and interpretation of Nietzsche preceded his entry into the main currents of the cultural debate in his homeland, and it is generally accepted that the translation of Brandes' essay on Nietzsche and several essays by the Swede, Ola Hansson were the first published texts on Nietzsche in German to reach a wider audience.⁴

Even though Brandes delivered a series of lectures on Nietzsche in April and May of 1888, Hansson's German texts published in 1890 preceded the translation of Brandes' subsequent essay and there was some controversy as to which Scandinavian was the first to introduce Nietzsche to the wider world. In his memoir *Levned (Life)* Brandes complained that Hansson's fiancée Laura Marholm (born Mohr) had delayed her translation of his work into German therefore enabling Hansson to reach a German audience first.⁵ The dispute that ensued was very much

1 BRANDL: 1983, 387. My translation.

2 ASCHHEIM: 1994, 17. Aschheim cites William J. McGrath's *Dionysian Art and Populist Politics in Austria* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), and points out that members of the Austrian Pernerstorfer circle, whose members included Gustav Mahler and Viktor Adler, »were inspired by NIETZSCHE as early as 1875–1878.«

3 ASCHHEIM: 1994, 18.

4 See FAMBRINI: 1997.

5 Georg Brandes, *Levned: Snevringer og Horisonter* (Kjøbenhavn: Gyldendalske Boghandel, 1908). This is volume three of Brandes' memoirs. See *Levned*, 270–273, and Brandes' addendum to *Friedrich Nietzsche. En Afhandling om aristokratisk Radi-*

about authenticity. The battle over the right to represent Nietzsche's thought occurred on two levels: the first being epitomized by what Alessandro Fambrini calls Hansson's »rassische Postulat« (racial postulate)⁶ and the second being best viewed as a generational confrontation. Suffice it to say for the moment that Hansson used his Nietzsche essays to directly attack Brandes, and the older man's defense was much more dismissive. His reference to Hansson in the 1899 postscript to a new edition of his Nietzsche essay gives us an indication as how little credence Brandes gave Hansson's work. He wrote: »I en Artikel af en fortysket Svensker, der gerne vilde være saare onskabsfuld, blev jeg rost, fordi jeg i hin Afhandling havde brudt med min Fortid og resolut fornegtet det Sæt af frisindede Tanker og Ideer, jeg hidtil havde forfægtet.« (In an article written by a Germanized Swede, who wanted desperately to be cuttingly wicked, I was praised for having broken with my past with this essay. He resolutely denied how I had always supported free thoughts and ideas.)⁷ Brandes did not mention Hansson by name and was more concerned with defending his own authenticity by stating that his Nietzsche lectures were a continuation of his previous work. This claim of consistency proved to be an important aspect of Brandes' own perception of his role in introducing Nietzsche to Scandinavia.

Even if Hansson reached a German audience first, there is no denying that Georg Brandes acted as midwife for the Nietzsche reception in Scandinavia. Hansson became passionately interested in Nietzsche only after Strindberg fanned the flames, and it was Brandes who introduced Strindberg to Nietzsche. Nietzsche is said to have heard about Brandes' interest in his work as early as 1883,⁸ but it was not until 1886 that

kalisme, 645, found in BRANDES: 1901. Also, see Fambrini's article for a rather thorough narrative of the controversy. For more on Laura Mohr/Marholm see BRANTLEY: 1991.

6 FAMBRINI: 1997, 46.

7 Georg BRANDES: 1901, 2:645, *Friedrich Nietzsche. En Afhandling om aristokratisk Radikalisme* (December 1899).

8 Two sources confirm this date. The first is Harald BEYER: 1958. Beyer writes: »Elizabeth Förster – Nietzsche sier at hennes bror alt i 1883 hadde hørt om Brandes interesse for Ham. Og Brandes skriver i et brev av 7 Mars 1888 at han ikke minst har gledet seg over NIETZSCHES første bøker ...« Volume 1 58. »Elizabeth Förster – Nietzsche says that her brother had already heard of Brandes' interest in him in 1883. And Brandes writes in a letter dated March 7, 1888 that he had particularly enjoyed Nietzsche's first books ...« Förster-Nietzsche is a rather ironic source for Beyer, for in a letter to her brother dated September 6, 1888 she writes: »Ich persönlich hätte dir einen anderen Apostel als Hr. Brandes gewünscht, er hat in zu vielerlei Töpfchen geguckt und

Nietzsche sent the Dane some of his writings.⁹ Brandes described the arrival of Nietzsche's books in his memoirs, *Levned*, and from his description we can discern that Brandes had heard of Nietzsche quite a while before he had actually seen a Nietzschean text:

Længe var det siden der i den Menneskevrimmel, der Aar efter Aar bølgede mit Øje forbi, havde været et Aasyn, som fængslede mig ved overlegen Aand. Dag ud, Dag ind skyllede Posten Bøger og Tryksager ind over min Tærskel. Men længe var det sidste, der iblandt disse havde været et enkelt skrift, som bragt mig bud fra en beslægtet Aand og tillige fra en lærig og mægtig, som var mig ny. Da kom de første, betydningsfulde bøger fra en Tænker, jeg tidligt havde hørt tale om i Anledning af hans Skrift mod den alderstegne Strauss's Bog *Den gamle og den nye tro* ...«

It had been a long time since I had been captivated by the sight of a superior spirit emerging from the swirling mass of people that passed before my eyes year after year. Day in and day out the postman slid books and printed materials over my threshold. But it had been a long time since there had been a single work among these things that brought me bidding from a kindred spirit, one who was also so powerful, erudite and new to me. Then came the first meaningful book from a thinker, who I had previously had heard spoken about in connection to his writing against the elderly Strauss' book *The Old and the New Belief* ...¹⁰

Brandes' retrospective comments date his awareness of Nietzsche to the discussions he had heard around the first of the latter's *Unzeitgemäße Betrachtungen* (Untimely Meditations), *David Strauß der Bekenner und der Schriftsteller*, which had been published in 1872. While it is uncertain

von zu vielen Tellern gegessen, indeßen man kann sich seine Verehrer nicht wählen und ganz sicher ist es: er wird Dich in Mode bringen, denn das versteht er.« Collected as letter 574 in Nietzsche's *Briefwechsel III: Briefe an Nietzsche*, eds. Colli and Montinari (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1984), 295. Brandes' Jewish background is most probably the source of Elizabeth's objection. At the time she was living in Nueva Germania, a colony in South America set up by her rabidly anti-Semitic husband. Our second source is ADMUNDSSON: 1981. On page 234, Admundsson writes, »As far back as 1883, and again in 1886, Nietzsche had heard of Brandes' interest in him, which prompted him to send Brandes two of his books.«

9 The most probable identification of which books were sent comes from Brandes himself. In his first letter to Nietzsche dated November 26, 1887, Brandes wrote: »Vor einem Jahre erhielt ich durch Ihren Verleger Ihr Werk *Jenseits von Gute und Böse*; vor kurzem kam mir durch denselben Weg Ihr neuestes Buch zu. Ich besitze ausserdem von Ihnen »Menschliches Allzumenschliches«. Ich hatte eben die beiden Bände, die ich besass, nach dem Buchbinder geschickt, als das Werk *Zur Genealogie der Moral* ankam, ich habe es also nicht mit den früheren vergleichen können, wie ich es thun will.« This letter is collected in NIETZSCHE: 1984b as letter 500, 120.

10 Georg BRANDES: 1908, 228–229. This is the third volume of his memoirs. The reference is to David Strauss' *Der Alte und neue Glaube* (1872).

as to exactly when or what Brandes had heard about Nietzsche's »medi-
tation« on Strauss, we can safely assume both that it was prior to 1883
and that his first impression was not altogether favorable. Brandes re-
spected Strauss and before he received Nietzsche's books he »kun havde
hørt lidet fordelagtig; mig selv havde det dengang forekommet haardt og
grusomt at slaa sig til Ridder paa en saa fortjent og udmærket Mands
Alderdomsværk« (could hardly have heard anything positive; it struck me
at that time as being rough and gruesome to attack such a deserving and
remarkable man's late work).¹¹ Brandes' mind was changed, however,
when he read Nietzsche's work for himself. He was immediately capti-
vated upon reading his first Nietzschean text, having simultaneously
experienced the contradictory feelings of identification and alienation
that were to mark his thoughts on Nietzsche right from the start.¹²
Brandes had the sensation that Nietzsche had put some of his more po-
lemical thoughts into words, yet he was able to keep his distance and
never became »Nietzschean«. Strindberg would experience the same
attraction and repulsion for the philosopher's work, but internalized the
conflict, and this internalization, as a mode of valuation is the very heart
of his commonality with Nietzsche.¹³ Hansson identified strongly with
Nietzsche and his reception was colored by a species of hero worship
that did not allow him to take any distance from the texts. Hansson
would suffer the blurred vision that occasionally accompanies strong
intoxicates.

Despite his reservations, Brandes was convinced that Nietzsche was a
great writer and a rare personality.¹⁴ Following this conviction, he kept to

11 BRANDES: 1908, 229.

12 Ibid. »Nu mødte jeg mig i Nietzsches Bøger Tanker, jeg selv polemisk havde tænkt
og med hvilke jeg var fortrolig, ligesom prægede i højt Relief, andre, som var mig
fremmede, men som fristede mig til begrundet Afvisning eller Tilegnelse.« My transla-
tion. »Now I came upon in Nietzsche's books, thoughts stamped in high relief, thoughts
which I had myself thought polemically, and thoughts that I was both familiar with, and
other thoughts that were alien to me, which for that reason tempted me to either reject
or adopt them.«

13 Suffice it to say for now, that it is my conclusion the internalization of contradic-
tory elements in a polemical mode from the *pathos of distance* is the hallmark of the
Nietzschean genealogical method. This issue will be addressed in Chapter 4 and in even
greater detail in Chapters 5 and 6.

14 Georg BRANDES: 1908. »Hurtig forstod jeg, at Manden ragede op blandt de
Ypperste og Ejendommeligste i Samtiden. Saa betydelig og selvstændig var blandt mine
Venner eller Velyndere vistnok kun Ibsen og Taine, men ingen af dem havde hans

his practice of introducing unknown writers to the world. »Jeg følte det som Pligt at gøre for ham, hvad jeg en Snes Aar forinden havde gjort for Ibsen, senere for Klinger, for Jacobsen og talrige andre, henlede Læseverdenens Opmærksomhed paa denne Kraftkilde og Tankekilde, der sprudlede og randt uagtet, denne geniale Røst, der raabte uden at møde det savnede mangedobbelte Ekko, det endnu slumrede, som sikkert kunde vækkes.« (I felt it was my duty to do for him what I had done for Ibsen a score of years before, then for Klinger, for Jacobsen, and for countless others: that is to direct the reading public's attention towards that power source and idea source, that bubbled and ran unobserved, that genial voice that cried out without meeting the missing multiplied echo that still slumbered and surely could be awakened.)¹⁵ This was the basis of Brandes' ability to take distance from Nietzsche. He saw a certain constancy in his own role and never considered himself to be another's acolyte. Just as he had introduced the Scandinavian reading public to the works of the »modern breakthrough« and many of the leading European writers and thinkers, he would awaken the public to this new source of intellectual vitality. Brandes claimed to have introduced Nietzsche for the very same reason he had introduced others, and by extension with the purpose of breaking through the »slumber« into which the reading public had fallen. Brandes considered his introduction of Nietzsche to be a continuation of his efforts to present the works and the personalities who were exceptional to the age. These personalities were to be the creators of values in an agonistic public sphere.

endnu ungdommelige Lidenskab for at gøre sig gældende, ingen hans *impetus* og ingen af dem hans betagende, mig saa kære dristighed.« My translation: »I quickly understood that the man ranked up with the greatest and most original men of his time. Certainly, the only ones among my friends or well wishers who were so meaningful or independent were Ibsen and Taine, but none of them had his still youthful passion for asserting himself, none had his *impetus*, and none had that which was so seductive – his endearing boldness.«

¹⁵ Ibid.

Georg Brandes and Nietzsche:
The Authenticity of the Aristocratic Radical

Brandes entered into a correspondence with Nietzsche by sending a letter on Nov. 26, 1887. His first letter to the philosopher contained what was to prove to be a felicitous turn of phrase:

Ich verstehe noch nicht völlig was ich gelesen habe: ich weiss nicht immer wo Sie hinaus wollen. Aber vieles stimmt mit meinem eignen Gedanken und Sympathien überein, die Geringschätzung der asketischen Ideale und der tiefe Unwille gegen demokratische Mittelmässigkeit, *ihr aristokratischer Radikalismus*.

(I do not fully understand what I have read: I do not always know what you want to accomplish. But quite a bit agrees with my own thoughts and sympathies, the disparagement of the ascetic ideals and the deep resistance to democratic mediocrity, your aristocratic radicalism.)¹⁶

Brandes used the term, »aristokratischer Radikalismus« (aristocratic radicalism) to entitle his essay on the philosopher. More importantly for our purposes, this turn of phrase provides a crystallized description that allows us to understand how Nietzsche fit into Brandes' conception of the need for a »modern breakthrough«. Seeing that Brandes' call for a vitally interventionist and realist aesthetic in the 1870's was addressed to a phalanx of writers, who were later depicted in a gallery of portraits in *Det moderne Gjennembruds Mænd* (*The Men of the Modern Breakthrough*) (1883), *Aristocratic radicalism* can be defined as the self-assertion of the exceptional personality in the shaping of a collective notion of reality.¹⁷ However, despite his claim that his project had a clear and consistent trajectory, Brandes thought was received very differently by his opponents, who regarded his Nietzsche lectures as an indication of the failure of his earlier program.¹⁸ The ironic aspect of Brandes' contemporary reception is epitomized in the anti-realist polemic of 1889, which associated the Brandesian author as tendential and democratic even though Brandes was to state, »I have never been and will never be a de-

¹⁶ Collected as letter 500 in NIETZSCHE: 1984b, 120. Emphasis and translation mine.

¹⁷ This conception dovetails nicely with Nietzsche's notion of »monumental history« though Brandes would certainly take some distance from the philosopher's assessment of the purpose of this species of historical writing.

¹⁸ Though the main philosophical objections to Brandes' Nietzsche readings were made by the Danish philosopher Harald Høffding (1843–1931), I am concerned with the reaction of literary figures to the Nietzsche reception in this monograph.

mocrat. I have one god in politics: Caesar, and one aversion: Brutus.«¹⁹ The atmosphere in Scandinavia was so charged that even if Brandes' introductory lectures on Nietzsche provided an important impetus for a second generation of Scandinavian modernists, they could not prevent his own work from being a popular target for the polemics of the »new literature«.

These attacks on Brandes' work and the facile association of his call for authors to debate the problems of their societies with democratic principles and leveling alert us to three aspects of the anti-realist revolt in Scandinavia. First, it was based more on polemic than actual differences. Second, a strong motivating factor was a revolt against the first wave of modernity, which can be read as a generational revolt. Third, the revolt against realism took on the aspect of a call for authenticity, which in turn was expressed along either personal or »racial« lines. In a sense, a polemic directed against realist aesthetics was against a straw man, and the association of Brandesian *Tendenzliteratur* with leveling was a mask for an attack on growth of state institutions and the bourgeoisie, both of which Brandes also opposed. Suffice it to say at this moment that these aspects of the anti-realist revolt can certainly be seen as being congruent with Brandes' notion of *aristocratic radicalism*. This explains how Nietzsche could be received favorably by both Brandes and the anti-realists who polemicized against him.

Aristocratic radicalism is the term in which the movements of our analysis of the environment of the reception converge. It explains an aspect of the initial realist impulse in Scandinavian realism in its Brandesian moment and brings us back to the question posited in Chapter One: namely, what is the relationship of the realist author to the society that he claims to depict? It helps to clarify that Brandes' notion of the activist author who debates existentially relevant issues was colored by his understanding of this action as an anticipatory and vital form of value creation. In his mind, the author that Brandes had envisioned in 1872 was cut

19 Brandes in a letter to the Danish writer Sophus Schandorph, cited and translated by ASMUNDSSON: 1981, 235. The original letter is collected in BRANDES, E., and G. BRANDES: 1952–1956, 233. The entire citation reads: »Jeg for min Del har jo altid skilt mig fra Jer andre (og døjet nok derfor) at **jeg aldrig har været og aldrig bliver Demokrat. Jeg har i Politik én Gud: Cæsar, og en Afsky: Brutus**, det Fjols af en Aagerkarl, som ikke kunde andet end stikke en Kniv i en Mand.« I have set in boldface type the excerpt that I have translated in the body of the text.

from the very same cloth as Nietzsche, and he used this material to tailor his notion of the *aristocratic radical*.

Unlike many others at the time, Brandes did not take Nietzsche at his word, believing that the philosopher's thought had rent a fissure in the landscape and that this demanded a radical intellectual turn; instead, he understood Nietzsche to be part of a progression of thought that he had been part of himself for decades. This explains how Brandes could remark: »Nietzsches Skrifter befrugtede mig ikke; men de indgød mig Mod.« (Nietzsche's writings did not inseminate me, they instilled me with courage.)²⁰ The salient issue for Brandes was not insemination but dissemination. Herein lay his understanding of the formal aspect of his own project as well:²¹ the *aristocratic radical* is the one who debates, the one who wrestles with his own conception of *reality* and who through the force of his own personality publishes this conception.

Jeg skrev for mig selv: »Jeg leser stadig i min gale ven Nietzsche klemmer ham, krænger ham, presser og endevender ham, ælter ham om og om, saa han faaer snart et Fysiognomi, snart et andet. Jeg holder af Nietzsche. *Er hat mir's angethan*. Der er denne ene store Mand, som Tyskland har, og Ingen vurderer ham i Tyskland, næsten Ingen kender ham. O denne universelle Dannelsesketinisme!«

(I wrote for myself: »I read my mad friend Nietzsche constantly. I squeeze him, turn him inside out, press and turn him on end, knead him over and over until he quickly has one physiognomy then quickly another. I am fond of Nietzsche. *He has taken my fancy*. He is the only great man that Germany has, and no one values him in Germany, nearly no one knows him. O that universal educated cretinism!«)²²

Because Brandes believed that Nietzsche had *articulated his own thoughts in their polemical moments*, he identified with the philosopher in the same agonistic and creative manner that he had hoped the authors of the modern breakthrough would engage their society – in a way that had the characteristic of mutual recognition and engagement. It is no accident that Brandes used a sculptural metaphor to express his encoun-

20 Georg BRANDES: 1908, 230.

21 The term *aristocratic radical* was self-referential as well. Brandes expressed this in his letter to Nietzsche of December 2nd, 1888: »Ich gebrauchte das Wort ›aristokratischer Radikalismus‹ weil es so genau meinen eigenem politischen Überzeugungen entspricht.« Collected as letter 505 and found on page 131 of NIETZSCHE: 1984b.

22 Ibid. Note: *Dannelse* is the Danish equivalent of the German word *Bildung*. There is no real English equivalent. *Education* is the closest we come.

ter with the philosopher. The Brandesian realist in Brandes takes in Nietzsche's text and experiments with its appearance. Like a sculptor using soft clay, he wrestles with it and shapes its aspect. The vitality of his endeavor comes through revealing the unknown to the public, by making it known through the transformation of his touch.²³ This is how we can understand how a critic who had embraced realism could embrace Nietzsche and imagine himself consistent. It is here; in his essay on Nietzsche that Brandes bared the device, and it is with this that we begin our own analysis of the initial Nietzsche reception. For if the concept of the *aristocratic radical* germinated within the Brandesian conception of the activist author and the *modern breakthrough*, it is from under the umbrella of these concepts that Brandes now called for a renewal for a second time. It is to these lectures that bear the name, *Friedrich Nietzsche: En Afhandling om aristokratisk Radikalisme* (*Friedrich Nietzsche: An Essay on Aristocratic Radicalism*), in their published form, that we now turn.

Brandes footnoted his essay's title with an excerpt from Nietzsche's answer to his letter of November 26. The footnote reads »Der Ausdruck ›aristokratischer Radikalismus‹, dessen Sie sich bedienen, ist sehr gut. Das ist, mit Verlaub gesagt, das gescheuteste Wort, das ich bisher über mich gelesen habe.« (The expression, ›aristocratic radicalism‹, which you use, is very good. That is, if I may say so, the shrewdest remark I have read about myself till now.)²⁴ This was an interesting strategy that established authenticity immediately on two levels. First, the subject of the essay himself speaks to the reader through a footnote, remarking that the writer of the essay has written, in this context, the most measured of descriptions, that he employs the »shrewdest« of terms. Brandes hoped to convey that this was an essay that emerged from a personal exchange and one that caught the ear of its subject. Secondly, by separating his text from Nietzsche's, Brandes was establishing himself as an independent, original voice on his subject; one that could take distance and disagree with the »great« man he was presenting. With this footnote, he emphasized that had the respect of the philosopher whose work he addresses

23 Perhaps Brandes like Nietzsche believed that it is interpretation that allows things to appear in the world.

24 Georg BRANDES: 1901, 596. The original letter is collected in NIETZSCHE: 1984a, 206 as letter 960. The English translation comes from MIDDLETON: 1996, 279

and that he was engaged in a dialogue with him.²⁵ He was showing that this concept, *aristocratic radicalism*, was his and his alone. With this simple act of footnoting, Brandes establishes an aura of both personal and intellectual authenticity. This act gives us an inkling to Brandes' rhetorical strategy and how he attempted to link himself to the notion of *aristocratic radicalism* as well. Authority was established through an intersubjective process of mutual recognition and respectful debate. For Brandes, this debate was the essential component of a »living literature,« a literature open to changing currents that ebb and flow, acting as a medium of exchange between individuals and cultures.

This motivation resembles the earlier impulse to bring the Scandinavian literature in touch with the »great church« of continental European thought. Brandes remarked:

Jeg har villet henvise till ham især, fordi det forekommer mig, som om Nordens Skønlitteratur nu vel længe har tæret paa Tanker, der blev fremsatte og drøftede i det forrige Aarti. Det ser ud som om Evnen til at undfange geniale Ideer var taget af, ja som om Modtageligheden for dem var ved at svinde; man tumler stadigt med de samme Lærdomme, visse Arvelighedsteorier, lidt Darwinisme, lidt Kvinde-Frigørelse, lidt Lykkemoral, lidt Fritænkeri, lidt Dyrkelse af Folket osv. Og hvad vore »Dannedes« Dannelse angaar, ligger Faren nær, at den Højslette, som omtrent betegnes ved det franske Tidsskrift *Revue des deux mondes*, bliver Højdemaalet for de højslette Dannedes Kultur. Det synes ikke endnu at være gaaet op for de Bedste, at den finere, den eneste virkelige Kultur begynder hinsides *Revue des deux mondes* i den store, idèfyldte Personlighed.

(I have wanted to point him out especially because it occurred to me that for a good while now that belles lettres in the North have corroded the thoughts that have been presented and discussed in the last years. It appears that the capacity to grasp genial ideas has diminished, yes it as if the receptivity for these ideas was about to disappear. One grapples constantly with the same teachings, certain theories of inheritance, a little Darwinism, a little Feminism, a little Utilitarianism, a little free thinking, a little worship of the people, etc. And regarding the education of our »educated« class, the imminent danger being that the plateau that is defined by the French journal *Revue des deux mondes* becomes the highest goal of the most highly educated. It does not yet seem to have occurred, to the best, the finer, that the only true culture begins beyond *Revue des deux mondes*, in the great personality filled with ideas.)²⁶

25 Brandes expressed his disagreement with Nietzsche on two levels: he disagreed with the philosopher's high opinion of *Also sprach Zarathustra*, and he questioned Nietzsche's critique of pity. Brandes explicitly took distance from Nietzsche's »politics«.

26 Georg BRANDES: 1901, 643. My translation.

Once again, Brandes called for a cultural renewal. This is the key to understanding how Brandes linked the notion of personal and intellectual authenticity. His stated purpose for introducing Nietzsche to the North resided in his belief that Scandinavian literature had ceased to utilize ideas from the outside. As a result the letters of the North had stagnated and become formulaic even when citing the main currents of the moment. It is important to recall that Brandes' understanding of the cultural situation in Denmark in 1872 was similar. In his *Indledning till Emigrantlitteratur* he had postulated that Danish culture was in reaction to revolutionary changes in Europe. He saw two distinct trajectories to history: the first the movement of freedom that emerged from the French Revolution, and the second being the reaction to this movement where social conservatism wore the mask of freedom. Nietzsche represented a continuation of Enlightenment thought for Brandes, despite the philosopher's critique of the French revolution, and he regarded Nietzsche's introduction as a continuation of his own project to bring the Enlightenment to the Scandinavia. It is important to note here that this does not mean that Brandes endorsed Nietzsche's position wholeheartedly. He considered the German to be »en Aand af betydelig Rang, som tilfulde fortjener at studeres, at drøftes, at bekæmpes og tilegnes« (a spirit of considerable standing, who fully deserves to be studied, to be debated, to be struggled against, and to be appropriated).²⁷ Brandes placed Nietzsche's texts under debate and used his dissemination of the philosopher's work to forward his own agenda. He considered himself to be a full partner in this project. This is why Brandes reacted when Nietzsche wrote him and included the Dane among his admirers: »It is a real joy to me that such a good European and missionary of culture such as yourself should wish henceforth to belong among them; I thank you with all my heart for your goodwill.«²⁸ Brandes' response to being designated a *cultural missionary* reads as follows:

Sie dürfen mich sehr gern einen »guten Europäer« nennen, weniger gern einen »Cultur-Missionär«. Alle Missionsthätigkeit ist mir ein Greuel geworden – weil

²⁷ Ibid., 596.

²⁸ Letter from Nietzsche to Brandes dated December 2, 1887. NIETZSCHE: 1984a, 205. Collected as letter 960. The German reads: »Es machte mir eine aufrichtige Freude, daß ein solcher guter Europäer und Cultur-Missionär, wie Sie es sind, fürderhin unter sie gehören will, ich danke Ihnen von ganzem Herzen für diesen guten Willen.« The English translation is from MIDDLETON: 1996, 279.

ich nur moralisierende Missionäre gesehen habe – und an das, was man Cultur nennt, fürchte ich nicht recht zu glauben. Unsere Cultur als ganzes kann nicht begeistern, nicht wahr? und was wäre ein Missionär ohne Begeisterung! D. h. ich bin vereinzelter als Sie glauben.

(You may certainly call me a »good European,« less gladly a »culture missionary.«. All missionary activity has become detestable to me – as I have only seen moralizing missionaries – and regarding that, which one calls culture, I am afraid that it is not right to be a believer. Our culture as a whole cannot enthuse, is this not so? And if one were to be a missionary without enthusiasm! I. e., I am more isolated than you believe.)²⁹

Brandes' conception of his own role as a public intellectual was in stark contrast to the notion of the *cultural missionary*. His objection to this designation occurred on two levels. Primarily he distanced himself from the moral implications of the term. A missionary serves and transmits a doctrine originally disseminated by a higher power, be it Church, State, Deity, or in this case, Philosopher. Secondly, Brandes considered himself to be more isolated (*vereinzelter*), or in a nuance of the word, more of an individual standing alone. Rejecting the role of a *missionary*, Brandes attempted to re-establish himself as a creator of culture. He took the role that he had assigned to the realist of the *Indledning* upon himself, the role of the *aristocratic radical, the bearer of culture who stood in opposition to philistinism*. He regarded his introduction of Nietzsche's work to be part and only parcel of his project of enlivening the literary culture of Scandinavia. He continued to valorize the future, and continued to link his own role to the notion of *dannelse (Bildung)* as opposed to *dannelse cretinism (Bildungsphilisteri)*.

If we recall our previous discussion of Brandes' project, then a metaphor comes to mind. Brandes saw his own task historically; he was to divert the course of Scandinavian intellectual life by connecting the current, which carried its thought to the flow of Enlightenment thought on the continent. The electricity generated by this connection would perhaps illuminate Scandinavian cultural obscurity. Brandes saw both Nietzsche and himself as examples of *good Europeans*, thinkers whose concerns were not delimited by the parochial interests of nationalism and the preservation of established cultural mores.

²⁹ Letter from Brandes to Nietzsche dated December 17, 1887. NIETZSCHE: 1984b, 131. Collected as letter 505. The English translation is mine.

Subsequently, Brandes valorized two aspects of Nietzsche's project: his critique of morality and his notion of culture. However, he was not uncritical. He placed Nietzsche's critique of conventional moral thinking in the context of the contemporary intellectual environment and even questions whether Nietzsche had not been influenced by Paul Rée, despite Nietzsche's critique of the same man in *Zur Genealogie der Moral*.³⁰ Contrary to the early Nietzsche's claims of »untimeliness,« Brandes saw the philosopher's thought as part of a larger European movement, one that questioned the cultural containment of the dynamic of Enlightenment thought and he contextualized Nietzsche's work within his own understanding of this tradition. For Brandes, the important aspect of Nietzsche's work lay not in the »originality« of its content, but in the force with which he expressed who he was:

Saadan er han da, denne stridbare Mystiker, Poet, og Tænker, denne Immoralist, som ikke kan blive træt af at forkynde. Naar man kommer til ham fra den engelske Filosofer, staar man som ført ind i en helt anden Verden. Englænderne er allesammen taalmodige Aander, hvis Væsen gaar ud paa Sammenlægning og Omspændning af en Masse smaa Kendsgerninger for derigennem at finde en Lov. De bedste af dem er aristoteliske Hoveder. Faa af dem fængsler personligt eller synes meget sammensatte som Personer. De virker mere ved hvad de gør end hvad de er. Nietzsche derimod er (som Schopenhauer) en Gætter, en Seer, en Kunstner, mindre fængslende ved hvad han gør end hvad han er.

30 Nietzsche criticized Rée in Section 4 of his »Vorrede« in the Genealogy. The beginning of this section reads: »Den ersten Anstoss, von meinen Hypothesen über den Ursprung der Moral Etwas zu verlautbaren, gib mir ein klares, sauberes und kluges, auch altkluges Büchlein, in welchem mir eine umgekehrte und perverse Art von genealogischen Hypothesen, ihre eigentlich englische Art, zum ersten Male deutlich entgegentrat, und das mich anzog – mit jener Anziehungskraft, **die alles Antipodische hat. Der Titel des Büchleins war »der Ursprung der moralischen Empfindung«; sein Verfasser Dr. Paul Rée; das Jahr seines Erscheinens 1877. Vielleicht habe ich niemals Etwas gelesen, zu dem ich dermaassen, Satz für Satz, Schluss für Schluss, bei mir Nein gesagt hätte wie zu diesem Buche ...**« NIETZSCHE: 1993, KSA 5, 250 (my boldface). On page 620 of his Nietzsche essay, Brandes pointed out that Nietzsche had criticized an early book by Rée and ignored his 1885 *Die Entstehung des Gewissens*, which he sees as quite similar to Nietzsche's own work. In addition Brandes wrote of the friendship between the two German writers and concluded: »Det er mig derfor ikke muligt at se, hvem af de to der har paavirket den anden, og hvorfor Nietzsche i 1887 berører sin Uvilje mod Rées i 1877 udtalte Anskuelse uden at nævne, hvor nær denne staar hans egen Opfattelse i det et Par Aar før hans eget udgivne Værk.« (It is therefore not possible for me to see which of the two had influenced the other, or why in 1887 Nietzsche had expressed his aversion to Rée's observations of 1877 without naming how close Rée's was to his own understanding of the question a couple of years before the publication of his own work.) See also HOLUB: 1999, 149–171.

(He is that type of combative mystic, poet, thinker, this immoralist, who never tires of preaching. When one approaches him after reading the English philosophers, it is as if one is lead into a completely different world. The English are all patient spirits, whose nature puts together and reevaluates a mass of small actions to come upon a law. The best of them are Aristotelian heads. Few of them are personally fascinating or seem well integrated as persons. They function more by what they do than by what they are. Nietzsche, on the other hand, is (like Schopenhauer) an enigma, a seer, an artist, less fascinating because of what he does than for who he is.)³¹

While this citation provides us with good indication that Brandes felt that it was the subjective inflection of Nietzsche's writings that mattered, it also indicates that it is still important to explore the question of who Nietzsche was in Brandes' eyes. However, this question leads us down a slightly digressive path for the sake of arriving at a satisfactory answer.

We began our analysis of Brandes' Nietzsche essay by pointing out that the Dane was concerned with *Dannelse* or *Bildung*, and that the trope, *aristocratic radicalism*, connoted the individual as a creator of culture. Ironically, Brandes borrowed a term that Nietzsche used in his meditation on Strauss; the German *Bildungsphilister*³² was directly translated into Danish by him as *Dannelsefilister*. For both Brandes and Nietzsche, the *Bildungsphilister* is one who is educated by a system that leaves him barbaric despite his erudition. The *Bildungsphilister* is not a creator of culture, but a moribund parrot in a stagnant society, a symbol of a false consciousness. For the Brandes of 1888, the antidote to the *Bildungsphilister* was the *aristocratic radical*, and so depicted, Nietzsche represented the personality that bears within him the possibility for cultural renewal. This individual personality stands in contradistinction to the state:

Af Staten kan de fremragende Enkelte ikke vente Meget. Den gavner dem sjældent ved at tage dem i sin Tjenste; den gavner dem kun sikkert ved at

31 Georg BRANDES: 1901, 639–640.

32 See NIETZSCHE: KSA I, 1988a, *David Strauss der Bekenner und der Schriftsteller*, especially pp. 165–184. On page 165, Nietzsche writes: »Das Wort Philister ist bekanntlich dem Studentenleben entnommen und bezeichnet in seinem weiteren, doch ganz populären Sinne den Gegensatz des Musensohnes, des Künstlers, des ächten Kulturmenschen. Der Bildungsphilister aber – dessen Typus zu studiren, dessen Bekenntnisse, wenn er sie macht, anzuhören jetzt zur leidigen Pflicht wird – unterscheidet sich von der allgemeinen Idee der Gattung »Philister« durch Einen Aberglauben: er wähnt selber Musensohn und Kulturmensch zu sein; ein unbegreiflicher Wahn, aus dem hervorgehe, dass er gar nicht weiss, was der Philister und was sein Gegensatz ist: weshalb wir uns nicht wundern werden, wenn er meistens es feierlich verschwört, Philister zu sein.«

skænke dem fuld Uafhængighed. Alene virkelig Kultur vil modarbejde, at de for tidlig bliver trætte eller udtømte, og vil skaane dem for den oprivende Kamp mod Dannelsesfilisteriet. Nietzsches Værdi beror paa, han er en saadant Kulturbærer: en Aand, der selv uafhængig meddeler Uafhængighed og som vil kunne blive for andre den frigørende Magt, som Schopenhauer i hans Ungdom var for ham.

(Significant individuals cannot expect much from the State. It seldom rewards them by giving them a position; it surely rewards them only by giving them full independence. Only real culture would struggle against their becoming spent or emptied, and wants to spare them from the lacerating struggle against cultural philistinism. Nietzsche's value depends upon his status as a bearer of culture: a spirit, whose very independence communicates independence and as such wants to become for others that liberating power, that Schopenhauer was for him in his youth.)³³

For Brandes, Nietzsche was an *aristocratic radical* because he was a bearer of culture who was independent of the cultural philistinism engendered by state sponsorship. The Brandesian call for a literature that debated the problems of society now had transmuted into a valorization of the authentic individual who stands in opposition to cultural complacency. While on the surface this may seem to be a shift in priorities, I contend that we must approach his position as a paradox as there is both a change and a consistency in Brandes' position. Brandes' essay on Nietzsche should be placed within the discourse of the public intellectual in Scandinavia in 1889. To do so, we must recall that the seeds of the initial Nietzsche reception in Scandinavia gestated within the discourse of modern realism in the north. The anti-realist discourse that accompanied the reception was the result of a dialectical sublation of the two positions articulated by Brandes and Herman Bang. In order to explicate these positions in Chapter one, we interrogated both positions by asking the same two questions of them, namely: what is the role of realist art in the community whose likeness it claims to depict? And what is the relationship of the artist to the community he addresses? In Brandes' essay on *aristocratic radicalism* these two questions merge into one and become: what is the relationship of the artist to the questions he addresses? Now seen as a deterrent, community seems to have dropped out of the equation: the discourse of the real had become the discourse of personal authenticity; the questions had become self-reflexive. Brandes' earlier

³³ Georg BRANDES: 1901, 607. It is significant that Brandes could well be describing his understanding of his own trajectory as well, That is, if one replaces Schopenhauer with Hegel, Kierkegaard, Taine, and Mill.

elitism, where he anticipated the creation of a social understanding of reality created by an avant-garde movement, now became more apparent. His own sense of speaking in an unpopular voice alerted him to the shortcomings of his agenda, yet he continued to believe in the need for the individual who stood apart from the crowd. This is the reason that Brandes saw his project as consistent, his essay on Nietzsche being another chapter in a monumental literary history depicting the leading personalities of the nineteenth century. His Nietzsche was the author whose understanding of his role was subjectively determined: his engagement with the world resulting from a radical self-vivisection that revealed the process of an internal negotiation and appropriation of »reality«.

Brandes' self-reflexive notion of authenticity, in which he saw himself as an *aristocratic radical* as well, was not shared by his critics. Ola Hansson, in particular, was to exploit the very idea of authenticity in his polemic against Brandes. It is here that we can discern the implications of Nietzsche's initial reception in Scandinavia for the history of his reception proper. For if Brandes regarded Nietzsche's authenticity as being synonymous with his notion of the *aristocratic radical* as a *good European*, Hansson was to take a more essentialist position, seeing Nietzsche as an exemplary pan-German.³⁴ Certainly this is the great irony of Nietzsche reception; the philosopher who declared that »there is no ›being‹ behind doing, effecting, becoming; the ›doer‹ is merely a fiction [poeticized] into the deed – the deed is everything,«³⁵ is often read as a great »doer« behind the »deed« of his text. For Nietzsche, the doer is merely written into the deed, *hinzugedichtet*. The Nietzschean text, which highlights the fictional construction of the subject named Nietzsche,³⁶ was

34 For another perspective, see BRANTLEY: 1987. Brantley's fine essay concentrates on the more positive aspects of Hansson's attempts to search for an alternative to a naturalist aesthetic.

35 NIETZSCHE: KSA 5, 1993, 279, *Zur Genealogie der Moral*, Essay 1, Section 13. The German reads: »es gibt kein ›Sein‹ hinter dem Thun, Wirken, Werden; ›der Täter‹ ist zum Thun bloß hinzugedichtet, – das Thun ist Alles.« The English comes from KAUFMANN and HOLLINGDALE: 1967, 45. I substituted the word poeticized for their translation to better reflect the implications of the German »hinzugedichtet«.

36 For a point of view that construes Nietzsche's project itself as the creation of the self as a literary figure, see NEHAMAS: 1985. My point is not identical to Nehamas' notion. Here, I only wish to point out that a strong misreading of Nietzsche in one direction leads to the conflation of author and text and to illustrate that the 19th Century Scandinavian version of this reading resulted in a hypostatic notion of personal authenticity.

read in Scandinavia as the work of a great individual, a great spirit whose authenticity exemplifies the ideological position shared or reviled by the particular reader. But a conception of authenticity based on a notion of agon is a double-edged sword for the question arises: if one is authentic, who is inauthentic? It is to the danger of this notion that we now turn.

Interlude: The Double Edge of Authenticity:

Hansson's »Rassisches Postulat«

If Brandes' notion of the *aristocratic radical* can be seen as a crystallization of his notion of the creative individual and a continuation of his project in a formal sense, his conception of the term was not essentialist in the least. He envisioned a type of cross-cultural fertilization in which authentic and authoritative individuals would serve as exemplars. His notion of authenticity was based on the ability of an author to forward works of culture that furthered a trajectory of thought (or certainly seen in the terms of the Hegelian residue in Brandes' own thought, spirit or *Geist*), which contributed to the movement of European culture towards the ideal of freedom for the individual. His reading of Nietzsche was grafted onto and inflected by an already existent ideology of an intellectual vanguard that would create the cultural signposts for future *aristocratic radicals*. Nietzsche became a figure in the Brandesian pantheon of the great personalities of cultural renewal who would create new possibilities for *Dannelse* (Bildung) outside of the auspices of institutional *philistinism*, and struggle for the freedom of the individual against the state. Cultural production was still to be judged by its »vitality« deriving value from the subjective relationship of the artist to his art. Herein lay the authenticity of the work and the individual who produced it; the *aristocratic radical* was to have an international effect; he is a confluence in the currents of an international movement of thought. He should constitute a locus of debate. In a sense, Brandes' notion of authenticity was con-textual, and in both meanings of the prefix, both with and against the text. The concept of authenticity would take on a different meaning for Ola Hansson. However, please forgive another digression involving Brandes and Nietzsche; one designed to illustrate through example how the trope of authenticity has the element of variability, and in itself, contains the seeds of essentialism.

The correspondence between Brandes and Nietzsche was partially reproduced in a Danish translation at the back of his essay on the philosopher. Brandes published only Nietzsche's letters to him and failed to publish his own replies. Brandes would later comment on Nietzsche's reaction to the lectures: »Det vandt Nietzsches Hengivenhed og gav ham den sidste Trøst. Mine Foredrag var det første Forbud om Verdensry, der naaede ham, før Sindssygdommen opslugte hans Bevidsthed.« (They gained Nietzsche's devotion and gave him his last comfort. My talks were the first intimation of world renown that would reach him before his mental illness would devour his consciousness.)³⁷ This retrospective comment reveals an aspect of Brandes' reading of Nietzsche as a great individual who suffered a tragic fate and his own almost paternal understanding of his own role as a trustee of new literary impulses, a role that was both personal and intellectual. His compassion allowed him to feel for his subject, to provide him with his last comfort, and this enabled Brandes to approach Nietzsche. Yet, Brandes was also able to keep his distance, to recognize the tragedy and weave a narrative that fit his own ideological position of the moment, which pointed to the destruction of the great individual by mass society. But this still told only half of the story. The challenge to Brandes' authenticity as a reader of Nietzsche has its origin in the possibilities of reception generated by the work of the man he championed.

Auf das Buch hin gab es nur zwei Briefe, allerdings sehr schön: einen von Dr. Fuchs; und einen von Dr. Georg Brandes (der geistreichste Däne, den es jetzt giebt d. h. Jude). Letzterer ist Willens, sich mit mir gründlich zu befassen: er ist erstaunt von dem »ursprünglichen Geiste,« der aus meinen Schriften spreche und gebraucht, zu deren Charakteristik, den Ausdruck »aristokratischer Radikalismus.« Das ist gut gesagt und empfunden. Ah, diese Juden!

(There were indeed only two quite nice letters about the book, one from Dr. Fuchs and one from Dr. Georg Brandes (the most richly intellectual Dane, that is, a Jew). The latter is willing to occupy himself with me thoroughly, he is amazed with the »original mind,« articulated in my writings and he uses the expression »aristocratic radicalism« to describe them. This is well founded and said. Oh these Jews!)³⁸

Die Juden scheinen auch hier bloß »Vermittler« – sie erfinden nichts.

³⁷ Georg BRANDES: 1908, 230. Translation mine.

³⁸ Letter from Nietzsche to Heinrich Köselitz dated December 20, 1887. Collected as letter 964 in NIETZSCHE: 1984a, 212–213. Translation mine.

(The Jews here appear only as »mediators« – they invent nothing.)³⁹

Nietzsche's own position towards Brandes was much less self-servingly compassionate and much more self-interested in a practical sense. News of Brandes' lectures inflamed his sense of self importance and he spread the word. He regarded Brandes as a popularizer of his work. Between the 2nd of December of 1887 and December of the following year, he mentioned Brandes or his lectures over twenty times in letters to friends, family, and professional contacts.⁴⁰ Although he certainly admired Brandes and was incredibly excited over his recognition by a respected figure in European letters, he admired him in a way that he admired the Jewish people as a whole, with an ambivalent mixture of respect, disdain and stereotypicality. While on one hand, he respected and even identified with Brandes, on the other hand he saw Brandes as a »Vermittler« (mediator). His postulation that the Jews mediate rather than create would have its echoes in the pan-Germanic ideology forwarded by Hansson. This view would reverberate many more times in the reception of Nietzsche, and the danger of this ambiguous position would become painfully evident in the Nazi interpretation of the philosopher.⁴¹ The notion of the Jewish abstract appropriation of German creativity and the subsequent circulation of this production was just one of the branches

39 Letter from Nietzsche to Köselitz dated May 31, 1888. Collected as letter 1041 in NIETZSCHE: 1984a, 324. Translation mine. Nietzsche was discussing a French translation of the lawbook of Manu. This excerpt comes from a digression where Nietzsche entered into a discussion about the historical development of law and the intrusion of »decadent races« into the process. This comment is interesting for our discussion when one considers that Nietzsche was well aware of Brandes' Jewish blood. This lends us some insight as to how Nietzsche perceived Brandes' forwarding of his work.

40 See NIETZSCHE: 1984a, letters 961, 964, 1006, 1007, 1015, 1018, 1022, 1026, 1027, 1034, 1035, 1039, 1042, 1048, 1050, 1061, 1078, 1087, 1096, 1130, 1148, and 1210.

41 See HERF: 1984, 226–227. In his conclusion, Herf produces an interesting chart that juxtaposes the ideological conception of the »Jew« in comparison to »German.« He states that »[t]his ideology is presented in the following list of conceptual opposites comprising a cultural system.« Here is a sampling of some of these oppositions. The »German« is described by the term to the left, the »Jew« by the term to the right.

Concrete Immediacy	Abstraction
Experience	Analysis
Soul	Mind
Feeling	Intellect
Productivity	Parasitism
Production	Circulation
Creative labor	Finance Capital

upon Nietzscheanism could be grafted, and this limb would form the challenge to Brandes' authenticity as a reader of Nietzsche in Scandinavia.⁴² This challenge came on two levels: a generational shift and racial difference.

Ola Hansson is a case in point. His critical production in the years 1889–1891 is a location where the generational conflict and the racial nuancing of the trope of authenticity converged. While his essay on Nietzsche itself did not directly treat either of these themes, his other essays serve to provide us with a context for his reception of the philosopher. It is within this context that Hansson's position becomes clear: *Nietzsche represents a radical break in the history of cultural movement, and this moment of rupture calls for a cultural renewal along generational and racial lines.*

Hansson agreed with Brandes' assertion that there was a struggle between two trajectories of thought: the Enlightenment and its perceived »other«. Hansson also shared Brandes' conviction that a culture needed exemplars, »great men,« to create its future values. But there was an *essential* difference in the two men's positions. Brandes valorized Enlightenment thought and denigrated what he perceived as the quietist politics of Romantic literature and the Bildungsphilisteri of his contemporaries in turn. Hansson saw the predominance of Enlightenment thought, as ushered into the cultural arena in Scandinavia by Brandes, as precipitating »den dogmatiska nykterhetens tidevarv« (the age of dogmatic sobriety).⁴³ He claimed that the cultural phenomena that regulated this era originated from the French Revolution's institutionalization of Enlightenment principles. These were listed by Hansson as »likhetsprinciperna med avseende på klasser och kön, kosmopolitismen, massherraväldet, jdebörsen, miljonstäderna, proletariatet, teorien om en objektiv diktning, specialisteriet inom vetenskapen, avogheten emot personligheten och subjektiviteten« (the principles of equality with respect to class and gender, cosmopolitanism, mass rule, the Jewish stock market, big cities, the

42 This is certainly not a claim that Nietzsche was anti-semitic; it is merely an acknowledgement that his philo-semitism carried an ambivalence that allowed variable readings in reception. For a nuanced reading of Nietzsche's relationship to the Jews see Yirmiyahu YOVEL, »Nietzsche, The Jews, and Ressentiment« (1994, 214), or Tim MURPHY's (2001) defense of Nietzsche in »Nietzsche's Narrative of the ›Retrospective Confiscations‹ of Judaism«. See also SANTANIELLO : 1994, and GOLUMB: 1997.

43 HANSSON: 1920, 292. My translation to English.

proletariat, the theory of an objective poetry, specialization in science, [and] an aversion towards personality and subjectivity).⁴⁴ These phenomena resulted in a cultural life stripped of its color, reduced to an abstract »grått i grått« (gray on gray).⁴⁵

Hansson proposed a solution to this »lifeless« literature.⁴⁶ He called for a literature infused with the spirit of anti-materialism and anti-naturalism.⁴⁷ This spirit, »lika genuint germansk till ursprung och väsen som den andra varit fransk« (just as genuinely German in origination and being as the other had been French) found its most genuine expression »in two German men: in the production of Friedrich Nietzsche and in the book *Rembrandt als Erzieher*«. ⁴⁸ If Brandes saw his time's history as being subject to a pan-European struggle between the forces of individual freedom and the repression of this movement, Hansson understood the

44 Ibid., 292. My translation.

45 Ibid. My translation of »grått i grått«. This could well be a reference to Brandes' alleged Hegelianism and an attack on his abstraction through the offices of Goethe's famous statement in *Faust* uttered through Mephistopheles: »Grau, teurer Freund, ist alle Theorie/Und grün des Lebens goldner Baum.« *Faust* I, lines 2038–2039. For Hansson's take on Brandes' Hegelianism, see HANSSON: 1921b, 18, *Den nya riktingen* (*Georg Brandes*). It is also interesting to note both the vitalist implications of Mephistopheles' statement and the connection of abstraction to Jewishness in Herf's paradigm. Also, considering the role that Nietzsche plays in Hansson's text, it is also rather ironic that Nietzsche was not enamored with *Faust*. See »Der Wanderer und sein Schatten,« Aphorism 124.

46 It is interesting to note, that even while Hansson attacked Brandes, his analysis echoed the older man's opposition between a living and a dead literature.

47 HANSSON: 1920, 294.

48 Ibid. The entire citation reads: »... en anda, vilken för övrigt synes vara lika genuint germansk till ursprung och väsen som den andra varit fransk och som i överensstämmelse därmed erhållit sina hittills fylligaste uttryck hos tvenne tyska män: i Friedrich Nietzsches alstring samt i boken *Rembrandt als Erzieher*.« (... a spirit, which moreover seems just as genuinely Germanic in origination and essence as the other had been French, and in concert with this has found its fullest expression to date in the work of two German men: in the production of Friedrich Nietzsche and in the book *Rembrandt als Erzieher*.) My translation. Hansson read Julius Langbehn's *Rembrandt als Erzieher* in the spring of 1890. While this reading fueled Hansson's pan-Germanic ideology and his anti-Semitism, it is beyond the scope of this study to address Langbehn's influence on the Swede. Suffice it say that Hansson retrospectively fused his reading of Nietzsche (1889) with his reading of Langbehn. For an account, see Ingvar HOLM: 1957, 223–391. There is also reference to Hansson's anti-Semitism in these pages. In 1890, Hansson published an article entitled *Rembrandt als Erzieher* in German in *Kunstwart* (Nov.-Dec., Dresden) and in *Ur dagens krönika* in Swedish. For an analysis of Langbehn's work in its ideological context, see Fritz STERN: 1974, 97–153.

same historical progression in quite a different way. He understood this conflict in essentialist cultural terms, the French inspired Enlightenment stood in the way of an authentic expression and actualization of a pan-German culture, a culture of the future. Nietzsche took on the aspect of a prophet in Hansson's work, and it was within this conception that Hansson gave Nietzsche the attribute of being an anti-Enlightenment thinker. For Hansson, Nietzsche's work heralded things to come. The name Nietzsche became a trope connotating cultural renewal within the context of German *Innerlichkeit*.

Three works by Hansson epitomize this position: *Nietzscheanismus in Skandinavien* published in the Viennese daily, *Neue Freie Presse* on October 15, 1889, *Georg Brandes und die Skandinavische Bewegung* which reached the public through the offices of the Berlin-based *Freie Bühne* on March 26, 1890, and *Materialism i skönlitteraturen* written in the summer of 1891 and first published in German by Encke of Stuttgart under the title *Gegen den Materialismus* in the same year.⁴⁹ A composite of *Nietzscheanismus in Skandinavien* and the essay on Brandes was published in Hansson's collected works under the title *Den nya riktingen (Georg Brandes)* in 1921.⁵⁰ I will begin my analysis with these texts and discuss Hansson's attack on Brandes' authenticity.

Alessandro Fambrini comments on Hansson: »In seiner Streitschrift *Nietzscheanismus in Skandinavien* (1889) sah er in Brandes' Entwicklung vom utilitarischen Polemiker zum Kuder einer heroisch-aristokratischen Lebensauffassung den Versuch, sich Nietzsches Philosophie zu eigen zu machen.« (In his polemic, *Nietzscheanism in Scandinavia*, he saw Brandes' development from a polemical Utilitarian to a adherent of a heroic-aristocratic life-philosophy as an attempt to appropriate Nietzsche's philosophy.)⁵¹ Hansson not only accused Brandes of appropriating Nietzsche's work, he challenged the older man's claim of consistency, and he questioned the Dane's authenticity. In *Georg Brandes und die Skandinavische Bewegung* (Georg Brandes and the Scandinavian Movement), Hansson attacked Brandes on two fronts. On one hand, he condemned him with faint praise, and on the other, he

49 We will use the Swedish text, which was published in 1892 by Albert Bonnier in *Populrvetenskapliga avhandlingar* 3, Stockholm 1892.

50 This can be found in HANSSON: 1921b, 8–22.

51 FAMBRINI: 1997, 424–425. My translation.

attacked the »naturalist« from a naturalist perspective. He praised Brandes for having had the foresight to twice bring fresh literary impulses to Scandinavia. The first time came with his attack against romantic literature in 1872. The second instance was his lectures on Nietzsche. For Hansson, the irony of this second introduction was that it alienated Brandes from the movement that he had called his own. According to Hansson, Brandes did not fully accept Nietzsche's perspective and the philosopher's work precipitated the effect that »den av honom framkallade andliga rörelse utbredde sig över Norden och trängte ner i folket, kände sig allt mer främmande gent emot det som man kallade hans eget verk« (the intellectual movement called forward by him spread itself throughout the North and penetrated into the people, and soon found itself to be all the more and more alien to what one had called his own work).⁵² Hansson argued that Brandes had failed to maintain a cultural continuity and could not rein in the effects of what he had started. This charge led to the Swede's second line of attack and his »rassisches Postulat«.

Georg Brandes föddes i Köpenhamn i en judisk familj. Den dubbla personlighetsprägel, vilken härmed är given, bildar det tudelta hjärta, som fyller med blod de bägge stamådrorna i hans ande.

(Georg Brandes was born in Copenhagen to a Jewish family. This double aspect of his personality, which is thus given, forms the divided heart that fills with blood from both of the tribal arteries in his soul.)⁵³

Brandes saw the origin of Nietzsche's greatness in the uniqueness and completeness of his personality rather than the originality of his work. Hansson shared this view of the philosopher's personality, but, turning the trope of authenticity around, he saw both Brandes' rise and his downfall as a result of his »doubleness,« his lack of completeness. For Hansson, this »doubleness« was a function of race. According to Hansson, Brandes' Jewishness was both to his advantage and to his detriment. On the one hand, Brandes' otherness allowed him a critical freedom.⁵⁴ His

⁵² HANSSON: 1921b, 10.

⁵³ Ibid., 14. Apparently Hansson did not quite understand Nietzsche's postulations about the »good European« being someone who was no longer anchored to national interests. Though as usual, Nietzsche's formulations are ambiguous enough to be appropriated in the interests of seemingly divergent ideologies. Nietzsche was always much more historically savvy than his right-wing admirers.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 15: »Hade han varit ren dansk skulle Brandes säkerligen varken haft så mycken nykterhet eller så mycken brutal fördomsfrihet eller – så oförskräckt uthållighet

independence enabled him to act as a conduit through which outside influences could flow into Scandinavian cultural life. On the other, Brandes was conflicted and his actions exacerbated latent conflicts within his environment. These characteristics enabled Brandes to create a sensation: »Larm och strid ha omgivit hans namn, såsom intet annat namn i Skandinavien under de senaste årtiondena.« (Clamor and dispute have surrounded his name, like no other name in Scandinavia during the last decades.)⁵⁵

However, Hansson came not to praise Brandes, but to bury him, and it is here that Hansson's strategy comes to the fore. He argued that the Brandesian movement could not provide a home for the Scandinavian authors who passed through its door, for in the moment »är det nästan tyst omkring honom, en tystnad som blir djupare dag för dag« (it is nearly silent around him, a silence that becomes more profound day by day).⁵⁶ This was certainly a polemical move on Hansson's part. Though Brandes' work was always at the center of debate, and his introduction of Nietzsche was a focal point of contention, he was in no sense of the word on the road to obscurity. Brandes was and remained a controversial figure, and controversy implies recognition. The discourse of authenticity and the anti-realist (read anti-naturalist here) discourse converge in Hansson's polemic against Brandes. For Hansson posited the reason for the »silence« around Brandes; the very same »doubleness« that allowed him to connect international currents to Scandinavian literature was the cause for the lack of the congruity of Brandesian literature for the Scandinavian people in a time that called for a cultural renewal along pan-German lines. It is in this manner that Hansson sought to undermine Brandes authority on both an intellectual and personal (read racial) level.

Hansson's reasoning unfolded as follows.

Brandes was inauthentic for exactly the same reason that he was able to act as a catalyst for the revolt against the state of Scandinavian letters in 1872. According to Hansson, those times demanded a figure that embodied the conflicts present in the historical environment. Because of the conflicts that Brandes carried within him, the contradictions created by

och en sådant trots på sig själv.« My translation: »If he had been a pure-bred Dane, Brandes surely would have had neither so much sobriety or such a brutal lack of prejudice nor such an uncowed endurance and such defiance.«

55 Ibid. My English translation.

56 Ibid., 16. My English translation.

his racial »doubleness,« he became the man of the hour. Commenting on the Brandesian impulse in literature, Hansson wrote:

Det är givetvis tiden själv, som framalstrad denna brokiga företeelsemängd: det är Skandinaviens andliga liv, som i den tagit konkret form. Men det egendomliga är; att precis samma process med sina differentieringar och med sin rikedom på motsägelser även röjt sig i Georg Brandes personligen ... Och alla dessa motsatser av sympatier och tankar lågo likaså lösa, spridda och utan samband i honom som i tiden själv; **han ägde icke den slutna, enhetliga personligheten, vilken i sig omfattar dem alla och i dem alla giver blott sitt eget väsen.**

(Given, it is the times themselves that brought forth this motley medley of events: it is in them that Scandinavia's spiritual life had taken concrete form. What is strange is that precisely the same process, with its differentiation and with its richness of contradiction, was betrayed in Georg Brandes himself ... And all of these contradictions of sympathies and thoughts lay just as loose, spread, and without connection within him as in the times themselves; **he did not possess the self-contained, integrated personality, which in itself encompasses all these contradictions and gives them all only the mark of its own nature.**)⁵⁷

Hansson conflated three separate aspects here: historical environment, cultural production, and Brandes' personality. With this move he connected Brandes to both foreign influence and an »unsatisfactory« past. On the personal level, we must remember that Hansson saw Brandes' personality as determined by the »doubleness« of his position as a Jew in Denmark. He understood this to be a matter of »blood« or in other words, he posited the conflation of Brandes' »personality« and his work through the optic of a racial essentialism.

In the three essays published around the time of his Nietzsche reception, Hansson forwards a naturalistic and dialectical view of cultural history despite himself. His narrative of Scandinavian cultural development takes the following path: In the 1870's, the moribund condition of Scandinavian culture is injected with the impulses of English utilitarian philosophy, Darwinian teachings, and French thought.⁵⁸ Enter Brandes, who reflected the motley condition of the Scandinavian spirit at a point

⁵⁷ HANSSON: 1921b, 16–17 My emphasis and translation.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 10: »De idéer, som Brandes satte i omlopp och i kurs i Skandinavien, låta sig sammanfatta i två huvudgrupper, vilka representeras av två namn i den europeiska kulturen: Mill och Taine.« My translation: »The ideas, that Brandes initiated and circulated in Scandinavia, can be summarized by placing them in two main groups, which are represented in European culture by two names: Mill and Taine.«

in its development, embodied this condition concretely in his person, and introduced a Hegelian will to synthesis to the equation.⁵⁹ These international influences, which created contradictory impulses, eventually resulted in a dominance of »materialistic« thinking in the cultural environment. This materialistic thinking, inspired by foreign thought, eventually led to a deadening of the literary and cultural production. However this deadening contained the seeds of its own revitalization due to Brandes' understanding of the German notion of historical progression expressed as his championing of a species of Hegelian cultural movement. The next infusion of German thought appeared with Nietzsche. This new infusion was for Hansson the moment where the need of a pan-Germanic cultural renewal was revealed.⁶⁰ The absorption of the alien influences had roused Scandinavia out of her slumber, but their time had passed and the North once again was in need of an awakening. Hansson implied that Brandes reflected a time of cultural confusion, that he was caught in the naturalist mire of being controlled by his environment, and that he thereby was not up to the task of reinvigorating the culture. According to this logic, Brandes was a man of the past. Hansson called for a figure that could have the type of personality that could sublimate the con-

59 For Hansson's ideas on Mill's influence in Brandes thought, see pages 9, 10 and 20, in HANSSON: 1921b. For his statements concerning Brandes' Hegelianism, see 21: »Från Tyskland utgick Brandes; i Tyskland har han slutat. Hans utgångspunkt var Hegel; hans sista station betecknas tills vidare av Nietzsche.« My translation: »Brandes came out from Germany, in Germany he has stopped. His point of departure was Hegel, his last station is marked by Nietzsche for the time being.«

60 Hansson's own particular understanding of pan-Germanism had a rural, primitivist element. A letter to Hans Larsson written on September 2, 1891 (just after he finished writing »Materialismen i skönlitteraturen«) is quite revealing: »Det finns väl också andre bondstuder, som i vår judiskt-galliskt-teoretiskt-demokratiska tid ännu bibehållit oberörd inom sig den jordandens individualistisk-aristokratiska instinkt, hvilken dock, när allt kommer omkring, är allas vårt kulturella raison d'être, vår lifsbasis, vår historia och vår framtid. Vi, som sträfvat efter att kläda naken inför oss vår individuella egenart, böra till detta ändamål vara betänkta på att lära känna de djupaste schakten i rasen. Egensjäl, folksjäl, stamsjäl, o.s.v.« Letter excerpt taken from HOLM: 1957, 310.« My translation: »There are certainly other rural students, who in our Jewish-gallic-theoretical-democratic time have still retained untouched within them the spirit of the land's individualistic-aristocratic instinct, which nonetheless, when all comes around, is all of our cultural raison d'être, our basis for life, our history, and our future. We, who strive to bare our individual character, ought to for these ends learn the deepest levels of race. The soul of self, the soul of the folk, the soul of the tribe, etc.«

traditions internally. That figure was Nietzsche. It was time for a generational shift and that shift needed to occur along racial lines.

Let us return to the notion of Jewish appropriation and how Hansson used this ideology to discredit Brandes. According to Hansson, while Brandes twice brought German ideas to the North, he was unable to bring them forward purely for he was beset by the contradictions of his own state of being as a Danish Jew. Furthermore, »[f]rån de franska estetikererna Sainte-Beuve och Taine lånade Brandes för sin egen räkning den kritiska metod, genom vilken allena för sig han står som en verklig nyskapare inom den nordiska litteraturen« (Brandes borrowed critical methodology from the French aestheticians Sainte-Beuve and Taine, and it is through this alone that he took credit as a true creator of the new in Northern literature).⁶¹ Hansson's key phrase in the original passage reads »för sin egen räkning« (for his own credit) and with this he charges Brandes with appropriating German philosophy and French literary criticism under his own banner. Hansson's point is further accentuated when we consider his discussion of Brandes and his teacher, Hippolyte Taine, in *Materialismen i skönlitteraturen* (Materialism in Belles Letters).

Det finns en himmelsvid klyfta i rang emellan dessa tvenne största nu levande litteraturkritiker. Taine är som individualitet och som ande ojämförligt mera betydande än Brandes. Han är en manlig intelligens i högsta potens, Brandes en kvinnlig. Han är som en blank metallspiegel, där den andre är som en orolig, skiftande, grumlad vattenyta. Han tumlar materialet och ordnar det till ett system, vilket i sin storslagna arkitektonik påminner om medeltida katedraler, medan Brandes står mitt inne bland sitt material, konfus i oredan, sätter samman och slår sönder.

(There is a world of difference in rank between these two greatest living literary critics. As an individual and as a spirit, Taine is incomparably more important than Brandes. He is a masculine intellect; Brandes is a feminine intellect. He [Taine] is like a shiny metal mirror, where the other [Brandes] is like an uneasy, shifting, muddy watery surface. Taine reins in his material and then arranges it into a system, which in its magnificent architecture is reminiscent of a medieval cathedral, while Brandes stands in the midst of his material, confused in disorder, puts together and breaks apart.)⁶²

Hansson's comparison of the two men is telling: Taine is masculine, has a clear surface for reflection and he builds. Brandes is feminine, muddy, in a state of disorder and he breaks things apart. Taine, the Frenchman, is

61 HANSSON: 1921b, 21. My translation.

62 HANSSON: 1920, 323–324. My translation.

creative. He represented a branch of naturalism that brought out the importance of environmental factors in cultural production. Though Hansson criticized the overdetermination of Taine's theory, he regarded it as an important aspect of understanding a people. According to Hansson, the limits of such a theory in its practical application can be compared to the limits of a landscape or a genre painting.⁶³ Individuality is sacrificed for the sake of the depiction of a typical environment. Characteristics are still legible, but stereotypical. The nuancing of character is sacrificed in favor of an emphasis on the environment. Brandes, however, was typified as representing »den orimligheten i den naturalistiska litteraturen, som man benämnt objektivitet. Det finns ingen sak och ingen term, som ställer begreppsförvirringen och snedvridenheten i den moderna konsten i så bjärt dager« (the absurdity in naturalist literature, which one has named objectivity. There is no other thing and no other term that presents the conceptual confusion and distortion in modern art in such a glaring light).⁶⁴ For Hansson, the difference between the two was clear: Taine is an authentic product of a trajectory of thinking and he is creative within that context. Brandes is destructive, he is conflicted and he appropriates the work of others in an inauthentic manner. The logic of this comparison can be best understood if it is measured against the cultural code of anti-Semitism. This code was the optic through which Hansson read Nietzsche.

Hansson's anti-materialism depended on naturalist criteria in order to enforce his notion of authenticity along racial and generational lines. He understood Brandes as being a product of both a conflicted time period and an impure heredity. Though Hansson called for a departure from a naturalist aesthetic and objective science, he employed aspects of the racial categorization that developed out of this movement. This is a salient aspect of his methodology, and it was no accident that he wrote the following at the end of his Nietzsche essay:

Har man iakttagit och fixerat arten av Nietzsches verkande, seende och skapande, är det dubbelt intressant att konstatera, hurusom en annan modern ande, som är en fullblodsrepresentant för den nyktra, faktiska, långsamma detaljforskningen, med användning av en helt annan metod kommit till – som det synes – ungefär liknande resultat.

63 Ibid., 325.

64 Ibid., 326. My translation.

(If one has observed and fixed the species of Nietzsche's activity, seeing, and creating, it is doubly interesting to note that another modern spirit, who is a full-blooded representative for the sober, factual, slow detailed research, with the use of a completely different method has come to – as it seems – nearly the same result.)⁶⁵

Hansson was referring to the Italian, Cesare Lombroso.⁶⁶ Lombroso was a criminologist and a phrenologist, who measured skulls and faces to determine type. Hansson's comparison chills when we consider the history to come. In the end, Hansson understood the »subjectivity« of Nietzsche's work and the »objectivity« of the natural sciences as meeting at the moment of biological typing. Here is an example of the conflation of rational and irrational impulses meeting at the extremities of the Enlightenment and its »other«. This is the importance of Hansson's reading of Nietzsche for our narrative. For it is within this reading that naturalist theories of environment and race meet their counterpart in a neo-romantic call for a cultural authenticity carried within the subjectivity of the racially pure representative of the folk. This meeting of rational and irrational elements is eerily reminiscent of Horkheimer and Adorno's warning about the *Dialectic of the Enlightenment*.⁶⁷ This is the dark side of the conflation of history and a racially understood notion of subjectivity.

Hansson's Nietzsche Essay: Nietzsche Is the Ocean

Hvad tycker du om min Nietzscheartikel? Hvad jag velat ge är en résumé i formen af en dikt.

(What do you think about my Nietzsche article? I wanted to present a résumé in the form of a poem.)⁶⁸

Ola Hansson structured his Nietzsche »résumé« as a prose poem intersected by a survey of the philosopher's writings. His Nietzsche essay was published first in German, partly in *Unsere Zeit*, Leipzig, in the fall of 1889 and partly in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* on March 9 and 11, 1890. In

65 HANSSON: 1921a, 173. My translation.

66 In one of history's many ironies, Lombroso was born Jewish.

67 See HORKHEIMER and ADORNO: 1995. The German edition is: *Dialektik der Aufklärung*. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1969.

68 Ola Hansson, letter to August Strindberg dated November 2, 1889. Collected in STRINDBERG: 1938, on pg. 65. My translation.

1890, the entire essay appeared in brochure form and was published by E.W. Fritsch in Leipzig under the title: *Friedrich Nietzsche. Seine Persönlichkeit und sein System*. The same year, the brochure was translated into Norwegian by Arne Garborg and published by Cammermeyer in Kristiania. A somewhat abbreviated version was published in Swedish, appearing in the June issue of *Ur dagens krönika* in 1890. It was entitled *En framtidssiare. En essay öfver Fredrich Nietzsche*.⁶⁹ The version I am analyzing is from Hansson's collected works and was published as a chapter of *Tolkare och siare* (Interpreters and Prophets) in 1921. The essay opens: »Det finns ingenting som Nietzsches diktning liknar så som havet, det stora havet.« (There is nothing that Nietzsche's writing resembles as much as the ocean, the great ocean.)⁷⁰

If Brandes' Nietzsche essay had a measured, even sober quality, Hansson's *Friedrich Nietzsche* had a worshipful, even intoxicated air about it. If Hansson's *Brandes* was the muddy surface of the turbulent waters of racial doubleness, his *Nietzsche* was the ocean, the source of infinite possibility. The later comparison between Brandes and Taine in *Materialismen i Skönlitteraturen* was an extension of an aquatic metaphorical complex in Hansson's critique. In his Nietzsche essay, He developed this comparative progression in which simile moves to metaphor and this movement designates degrees of authenticity and inauthenticity. The significance of this seemingly minor point is that the »as« of the simile expresses the relationship of a noun with another in comparison, while metaphor is the replacement of one thing by another. In simile, a comparative dynamic between elements remains in force, while metaphor suggests a merger of characteristics and a conflation of identities.

According to Hansson, »[i]nom mänsklighetens elit, som bildas av de banbrytande andarne, kulturheroerna, finns det två huvudgrupper och två grundtyper« ([w]ithin the human elite, which is comprised of pioneering spirits, cultural heroes, there are two main groups and two main types).⁷¹ The first group of these »cultural heroes« brings the characteristics of already existing trajectories of thought in sharper relief. These men move with the current, they are just a short step ahead of the masses, »deres verksamhet är **såsom** en liten bölja på den stora utveckling-

69 My translation. »A prophet of the future: An essay on Friedrich Nietzsche.«

70 HANSSON: 1921a, 128. My translation.

71 Ibid., 128. My translation.

soceanen, vilken bildar sig fjärran från den centrala stormhård, varutur de stora vågorna framgå« (their activity is **like** a little wave on the great ocean of development, a wave which builds far from the center of the storm, out of which emerge the great waves).⁷² The work of these men is delimited by time and space, is historically and racially determined. They build upon what is already existent, what is within the range of vision. They have discernible predecessors and will live to see intellectual progeny who build upon their work. They are represented by Taine in France, and by Mill and Darwin in England.⁷³ They are what Hansson referred to as »tolkare« or interpreters. Their work is *compared* to small waves on the surface of the ocean.

Nietzsche belonged to a different breed of thinker. For Hansson, Nietzsche's »diktning,« his poetry, was **like** the ocean, and the ocean is »oändlighets symbol, det för öga och tanke gränslösa« (eternity's symbol, that which is for the eye and the mind without limit).⁷⁴ Hansson gave the following characteristics to the ocean: it is eternally changing, immortal, seductive, solitary, fertile, proud, a source of health, and performs an endless soliloquy.⁷⁵ For Hansson, Nietzsche was a »siare,« a prophet, independent of historical conditions.

While his essay opened by comparing Nietzsche's »poetry« to the ocean, by the end of the essay, Nietzsche had merged with his production, and the movement of simile to metaphor is telling. »Nietzsche **är** den egentliga centrala stormhård, ur vilken de stora böljorna utgå« (Nietzsche **is** the center of the storm, from which all the great waves find their source).⁷⁶ Nietzsche has become the ocean and all of its characteristics become his. In Hansson's comparative system, the representation of Nietzsche has moved from a discussion of his work through use of a simile to the substitution of the name Nietzsche for his poetic production. In this way the comparison, »Nietzsche is the ocean« has a metaphorical resonance. Nietzsche represented the merger of subjectivity and poetic production for Hansson, and this was the highest rung of his hierarchical ladder, the quintessence of authenticity. In the end, Hansson represents

72 Ibid., 131. My translation and my boldfacing.

73 Ibid., 130.

74 Ibid., 127. My translation.

75 Ibid., 127–128.

76 Ibid., 172. My translation. My boldfacing.

Nietzsche as a proto-cultural force from which intellectual movements derive.

This highest level of authenticity is achieved by the poet through his metaphorical merger with a natural force. Nietzsche depicted by Hansson as this natural force expresses both an integrated subjectivity and reveals a process of subject formation achieved through writing. Hansson's definition of Nietzsche's methodology reads as follows:

Han anteciperar det kommande genom intuitiva syner. Han reproducerar detta intuitivt undfånga innehåll uti dikterisk form. Som alla andar av den grupp och av den art som han tillhör, ernå han den nya, allmänt mänskliga och allnaturomfattande sanningarna genom fördjupning av det egna jaget: han är den subjektivaste bland dem alla.

(He anticipates that which is to come through intuitive visions. He reproduces this intuitively received content in poetic form. Like all spirits of this group and of the species to which he belongs, he achieves the new, universal human and all encompassing natural truths through a deepening of his own »I«: he is the most subjective of them all.)⁷⁷

That is who Nietzsche was for Hansson, a poet who gives subjective form to his intuition and thereby creates what are to be universal truths from a subjective core that transcends individuality through its merger with the creative power of a vast dionysian ocean. He becomes the metaphor of the textual self as a timeless dynamo that reproduces the vision of a way of life yet to come. He is a source, a signpost for a humanity that will not come in the near future, for »vad han giver, är blott ett litet frö, vilker behöver oöverskådliga tidsträckor för att växa sig stort« (what he gives is only a little seed, which requires incalculable stretches of time to grow large).⁷⁸ The fruits of his thought will emerge through the work of the others who are the interpreters (tolkare) of his work. These interpreters are not objective; they do not reproduce his meaning, they follow his praxis. This reproduction is not the same as the unfathomable depths of the »master«; the interpreter's works are the waves on the surface of the great ocean. Only Nietzsche can escape the bounds of time and place. The prophet is beyond history.

This raises two questions: who is to be Nietzsche's interpreter among the living – the creator of waves in Scandinavia? – and how is he to be interpreted? Hansson's hierarchy of authenticity answers our questions.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 173. My translation.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 172. My translation.

If we refer to our previous discussion of Hansson's racial postulate, we can state our first premise: Hansson saw Scandinavian literature from a pan-Germanic perspective. From this perspective, he regarded Taine, Mill, and Darwin as authentic representatives of foreign thought. He viewed their work from a naturalist perspective as being the product of racial temperament and historical conditions. Their work, seen from Hansson's perspective has two qualities: first it lacks the inwardness, the subjectivity which is prerequisite for a source that would knit Scandinavian culture into the fabric of the greater German whole, and secondly, it was an alien influence that only gained ascendancy in Scandinavia due to the conflicted condition of the Scandinavian cultural environment in the 1870's. They represented the true creators of naturalism for Hansson. They were the creative interpreters of the spirit of their age influenced by their specific cultural context.

Brandes, according to Hansson, inhabited the lowest rung of the hierarchical ladder. He was the embodiment of the predominance of foreign cultural influence on Scandinavian soil. Though, like Nietzsche, Brandes' subjectivity merged with his production, Hansson differentiated between the two. If Nietzsche was the ocean in all its depth, Brandes was the indiscernible surface, unable to merge his subjectivity creatively with his work; he was merely the muddied reflection of a troubled soul in a troubled age. In other words, in Hansson's critical thought the name Brandes stood in for the concept of naturalist literature as a foreign plant on Scandinavian soil.

Hansson read Brandes as the embodiment of the »materialist« principle in Scandinavian cultural life, and from this we can derive his second implied premise: Hansson regarded the rise of the naturalist literature in Scandinavia to be an effect of the inauthenticity of a culture that was unable to generate an exemplar to guide its own renewal. The name Brandes became a trope representing this inauthenticity.

This brings us to our third premise: according to Hansson, Nietzsche's interpreter must be »Germanic« and have the same subjective relationship to his work as the »master«. Since we are immersed in the discourse of authenticity, a question arises: If the prophet needs an interpreter, and the interpreter needs to be racially congruent to Scandinavian culture, who did Hansson see as being authentic enough for the task? He asks:

När skall han komma, den nya tidens förstfödde, kulturens cäseriske tuktare,
den onde, den förfärlige, den tyranniske, halvt rovdjur, halvt orm, tacksam mot

Gud, djävul, får och mask i sitt inre, nyfiken ända till last, forskare ända till grymhet, ensamhetens förståare och dess vän! – när skall han komma, som spelar segerdansen på tillvarons strängar och får livet att sjunga? – den nye Zarathustra, den förste av arierna, – när skall han gå opp, den blonde herren, lik morgonrodnaden över havet?

(When will he come, the new era's first born, culture's Caesar-like punisher, the evil one, the terrifying one, the tyrannical one, half predator, half snake, inwardly thankful to God, devil, sheep, and worm, curious to a vice, researcher even to cruelty, understanding of solitude and its friend! – when will he come, who will play the victory dance on the strings of existence and make life sing? – the new Zarathustra, the first of the Aryans, – when will he ascend, the blond master, like the red sky at dawn over the ocean?)⁷⁹

I read Hansson's question rhetorically, as a poetically posed expression of a romantic longing that is typical of his reading of Nietzsche. Even if we read Hansson's merger of the blond beast of *Zur Genealogie der Moral* with Zarathustra as a rhetorically convenient misreading of a doer and another deed, and even when we consider that Fambrini sees Hansson's reading as placing »den Nietzsche des *Zarathusthra* und *Götzendämmerung* in den Vordergrund« (the Nietzsche of *Zarathustra* and *The Twilight of the Idols* in the foreground)⁸⁰, the answer comes only when we consider that Hansson valorized the merger of subjectivity and poetic production.

There can be no doubt that Hansson's polemic against Brandes' authenticity as a reader of Nietzsche provides us with a clue as to how he viewed his own position as an interpreter of the philosopher. His choice of style of a »poetic résumé« is informed by his contention that »truth« was a subjective enterprise and that the appropriate reading of Nietzsche was a poetic response.⁸¹ If Brandes sought to reestablish his authenticity

79 Ibid., 170. My translation.

80 FAMBRINI: 1997, 427, Translation mine. Note: Fabrini is mistaken about Hansson's valorization of *Götzendämmerung*. Hansson remarks: »Nietzsches yngsta, under loppet av år 1889 utkomna bok: »Götzendämmerung oder: Wie man mit dem Hammer philosophiert,« betecknar intet framsteg i hans produktion och lämnar inter nytt bidrag till hans karaktäristik.« (Nietzsche's newest production, *Götzendämmerung: oder wie man mit dem Hammer philosophiert*, which came out during the course of the year 1889, represents no progress in his production och leaves no new contribution to his characterization.) My translation. Hansson goes on to criticize the diffuse style of the book and calls it a »genial tourists dagboksanteckning,« a »clever tourist's diary entry.«

81 It is interesting to note here that Brandes urged Nietzsche to read Kierkegaard, mentioned Kierkegaard in his Nietzsche essay, and used a Kierkegaardian term »denne Enkelte« (the singular individual) to indirectly compare the two thinkers. Brandes saw

with his reading of Nietzsche, Hansson attempted to raise himself through the ranks of the Scandinavian literary elite. In Brandes' essay, the name Nietzsche acted as a self-reflexive trope, the *aristocratic radical*, representing the need for a continuation of the struggle against established cultural institutions, and reflecting back on Brandes' view of his own enterprise through time. In Hansson's essay, the self-reflexive quality of the trope remained, for the poetic aspect of his reading of Nietzsche turned the name Nietzsche back onto the writer of the *poetic résumé*. However, there is a significant difference in both men's use of the trope. Brandes employed the name Nietzsche in a metonymic fashion, as a representative for an aspect of thought, as a reduction of the conflict between this aspect of thought and its »other«. For Hansson, Nietzsche was a figure that represented the need for the transformation of Scandinavian culture. In his essay, the name Nietzsche was given a metaphorical valence, and this valence helps to create the romantic quality of the representation of the philosopher as a poetic merger of subjectivity and the word. The philosopher's »poetry« is vitally likened to a natural force and the philosopher/poet himself eventually becomes that force, a substitution of man for text. For Hansson, that which lies beyond history provides the exemplary poetic autobiography written by the most »Germanic« of all souls. This was his conception of the source of a pan-Germanic cultural renewal in Scandinavia.

The subplot of the initial Nietzsche reception in Scandinavia is the story of a split in the avant-garde. This split occurred along generational lines with one notable exception. August Strindberg, despite his self-proclaimed naturalism, would remain a figure of considerable weight even in the circles that attacked realism. We will now embark on an exploration of the tropical affinity that the names Nietzsche and Strindberg enjoyed within this discourse.

both men as being subjective thinkers. He did not disagree with Hansson there. But for Brandes the question of his own authenticity was hinged upon regarding himself as sufficiently distanced from the thinker he read. For Hansson, authenticity was a question of subjective immersion in Nietzsche's thought.