

# [This united in the years subsequent to](https://assignbuster.com/this-united-in-the-years-subsequent-to/)

[Art & Culture](https://assignbuster.com/essay-subjects/art-n-culture/)

This chapter aims to understand how Scandinaviancountries stand historically aligned through their design values andphilosophies and how they have developed over time. Explainhow these principles lay the foundation in advocating world-renowned designsuccess. Examine the relationship between politics and designand the cultural impact the relationship holds. Study historical influences and iconic designers whohave shaped Scandinavian design standards throughout the decades. MJ1  The term ‘ Scandinavian’usually applies to Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Iceland.

Thesecountries united in the years subsequent to World War II as a ‘ cold war construct in a region searching for avoice within an inharmonious war devastated Europe.’ (K Murphy, 2014) TheNordic identify provided comfort and solidarity to a fragile post war region. The countries’ small populations, vast impenetrable landscapes and geographicalisolation emphasised the need for cooperation within and across the countries. Scandinavia stands historically aligned through cultural and ethical values; these principles are perhaps the foundation in advocating world-renowneddesign.  Within the world ofScandinavian design the use of the colour red is significant, as it standsboldly against the frequently used whitepine, ash, and beech wood. The Swedish usethe expression den röda tråden. Translated as the redthread, they use it to describe ‘ the heart of the matter or common denominatorof something.’ (E.

Terragni 2017) The red thread is a principle that links thesecountries together with their past heritage and aesthetic appreciation insociety; this red thread runs deeply through each country’s designapproach.   They key characteristics of Scandinaviandesign focuses on function without compromising aesthetic qualities. Surroundedby a prodigious landscape, Scandinaviansdesigners make the most of sourcing naturally available materials.

TheScandinavian style is minimal; there is no ostentation involved in the designexecution, but tasteful clean forms consisting of true quality.  These values have created traditional designshighly regarded around the world such as Swedish Dala wooden horses, NorwegianReindeer hides and Eero Saarinen’s Tulip Chairs MJ2 from Finland.  Quality of life is highlyregarded in northern countries; this involves the right to good design. Luxurious items made from expensive materials do not define their values ofgood design. They place value in everyday objects such as cutlery, ceramics, lighting, furniture made from suitable materials that will last throughgenerations. These objects shape how society goes about their day to day lifeand how they interact with one another there, it’s an appreciation forfunctional necessities to accommodate a practical modest way of living.  Design in Scandinavia ismore than form and aesthetic consideration for products; politicians and urbanplanners use it as a tool to support and enable social change.

For example, thetextures of the tiled street paths are coarser at the edges than in the centreso that using the opposing textures the blind can understand where to stop andcross. It is examples like this, investing to integrate design to benefit ourdaily interactions that makes Scandinavia unique.  Scandinavian countries havedeveloped people-centric societies; meaning that citizens are considered theirmost important asset. This has been developed over history due to “ harshweather conditions, limited resources and external threats from large Europeanpowers” (Soren Petersen, 2012.)The “ Nordic Model” of welfare politics is the economicand socialpolicies usually applied to thecountries Sweden, Norway and Denmark, Finland and Iceland in Scandinavia.

Thismodel highlights basic criteria that each country values, such as providingindividuals with a high quality life day to day. Principles of care (omsorg), justice (rattvisa), and social equality (jamlikhet) are shared thoughScandinavian democracy. This framework urges equality of economic and sociallife across rural and urban sceneries. It looks to even out the extremedisparities through ‘ access to employment and job protection for all workers.'(K Murphy, 2014) The federal government subsidizes all social, economic, healthcare and educational issues. This removes the burden from the individual tomaintain a good quality of life by investing money and trusting in the state.

Today welfare state values are ingrained in contemporary Scandinavia that ismore accurately defined as ‘ a social system in which welfare assumptions are anorganic part of everyday life.” (J. Robertson, 200) Scandinavians are moulded bytheir deep connection with nature; they nurture their landscape and treat it ina sustainable way. There are various Norwegian words referring to humanrelationships with nature such as ‘ fjellvant – walking habitually in themountains, or frilufsliv – living in harmony with nature.’ (A.

Roos, 2016)Northerners travel from urban areas and retreat into weekend forest cabinssurrounded by vast lakes, providing a sense of escapism and perspective ontheir 8-4pm occupation. There is an understanding in the power nature and theuncultivated danger of it, ‘ you feel that you are quite small compared tothese forces of nature and, at the same time you feel an inner greatnessbecause you are always connected to them,” says polar explorer, Erling Kagge.(A. Roos, 2016) Norway, Sweden Denmark, Finland and Iceland all have to preparethemselves against harsh dark winter elements and endure lightless days throughwinter against tough terrain.

Its safe to say Nordic countries struggle againstextreme conditions, these environments have created certain attitudes in beingpractical, frugal and resourceful with natures provisions. Scandinavia’srelationship with its resources has always been important; it forms part of theregion’s identity as they cultivated and harvested produce in balance withnature. It meant products inherently were made to last due to the use ofquality material. Houses had to withstand harsh conditions and furniture waspassed down from generation offering a longevity scheme to prevent waste.  The theme of contact withnature and a once frugal, predominantly rural society inspired many of the mostinfluential Scandinavian designers – Alvar Aalto, Kaare Klint and BorgeMorgensen. Alvar Aalto was inspired by the simplicity of objects commonly foundin rural farmhouses.

Scandinavia has always been resourceful andenvironmentally aware, iconic designers never discarded old designs butimproved upon existing products such as tables and chairs applying newtechniques.  Post-World War II presentedScandinavia with an opportunity for a new design approach to shape the pastinto something new. They kept the value of reflection on their own culturalheritage, but they looked to create a fresh start using modernism. Scandinavianprinciples have always been utilitarian even surrounded by a wealth of naturalresources.  Scandinavian designs evolvedseparately from other countries’ take on modernism. Their style of modernismembraced warmth and considered the simplicity of human touch to machine-madepracticality that characterises Modernism.

This stood out as they used their local craft skills and local materialsfor which the Scandinavian countries are known. They progressed withtraditional methods that preserved the skill and originality of the region’scraftsmanship, while other countries focused on only embracing new productionprocesses. Designers experimented with traditional processes, leading toexciting advancements in manufacturing methods such as plywood bending and theuse of unusual wood varieties. This inspired architects and designers to createbrilliant designs that would be affordable to regular consumers, using newlower cost production techniques. Alvar Alto was very influential during thistime.

He created iconic furniture in laminated plywood, it was ground-breakingas it was such a simple material, yet provided strength and longevity. Nordichome building and prefabricated housing were monumental in the industrialrevolution, M3 allowing quality homes to be built for the housingcrisis post World War II. Nordic values of combining old traditions and newdevelopments have characterised Scandinavian homes; this creates the atmosphereof warm, understoodqualityM4 .  The wordhygge (pronounced hue-gah) comes from Danish origin meaning “ a qualityof cosiness and comfortable conviviality that engenders a feeling ofcontentment or well-being.

” It encompasses people’s attitudes to their homesand tactility between objects and furnishings. However, Britain’s perception of’Hygge ‘ is narrowed to a Danish lifestyle sold through high-street consumerism, it is actually more endemic within Scandinavian culture. Other Scandinaviancountries have different names for the same set of principles, the Swedescalling it mys, the Norwegians, kose, and the Finns l? mpö?. ‘ Hygge’ has a directinfluence on the traditional design values of Scandinavians to provideemotional comfort that help enhance daily living. MJ5    MJ1Writeas a paragraph.  This chapter aims to . .

.  MJ2removelink M3Mightneed to distinguish this from the main Industrial Revolution. M4Notvery clear.  Understated quality? MJ5Aconcluding paragraph will be useful.