Acknowledgements

This book draws from discussions that began at the University of Helsinki’s Centre for Nordic Studies and its networks. Largely inspired by Henrik Stenius, we wanted to develop a way to analyse Norden as culturally constructed, while at the same time acknowledging that the region is constantly redefined in political debate. Instead of looking for the essential features of Nordic political culture, we shifted our perspective towards an examination of the many different things that were rhetorically coupled with the Nordic countries, as well as the reasons and motives for this in various historical situations.

These debates developed into the idea for this book, which was first discussed at a seminar organised by Jani Marjanen and Johan Strang in 2015. We would like to thank Letterstedtska föreningen and the Finnish Institute in Berlin for supporting this initial meeting, and the Centre for Nordic Studies and the Faculty of Arts at the University of Helsinki for sponsoring a follow up seminar in Helsinki in December 2016. After these meetings, the book matured as a dialogue between the editors and the individual authors of the chapters in this book. We also want to direct our warm thanks to those colleagues who attended these earlier meetings and made valuable contributions to the discussion, especially Matti La Mela, Jussi Kurumäki, Malcolm Langford, Haldor Byrkjeflot and Kazimierz Musiał. We are also grateful to Ragnheiður Kristjánsdóttir, Nils Edling and two anonymous referees for suggestions and comments that helped improve the individual chapters. The foundation of the Helsinki Centre for Intellectual History and the launch of its Yearbook series provided a final impetus to complete the book. We thank the series editors and the publisher for including this volume in the series.

Andreas Hansen, Ilana Brown and Mark Shackleton provided us with valuable assistance with preparing the final manuscript.

Acknowledgements are also due to the Academy of Finland (grant number 323489), Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation (grant M19-0231:1), the Independent Research Fund Denmark (grant number 8018–00023B), UiO:Nordic, and the University of Helsinki three-year project “Vernacularization and nation building” for their support of our research. Publication of the open-access edition of this volume was made possible by a grant from the NordForsk university hub ReNEW (Reimaging Norden in an Evolving World).

Helsinki and Aarhus, May 2021
Mary Hilson, Jani Marjanen and Johan Strang