This thesis examines the history of the Nordic Peace hermeneutically. In order to do this, the foundation of the peace, its principles, will be abstracted from the *ad hoc* solutions to regional conflicts between Nordic countries. These solutions ultimately transformed a region of conflict or negative peace, to a zone of positive peace.

The thesis will answer the following questions:
1) *How have the solutions that underlie the Nordic Peace transcended causes for conflict?* And 2) *are there universal potentials in the Nordic solutions?*

This will be elucidated through an in depth analysis of three historical cases that would shape and transform the region after 1814, the year marking the onset of the Nordic Peace and its subsequent paradigm shift. These three cases will be comprised of: 1) The Union of Norway and Sweden. The unification of Norway and Sweden was forced on Norway as the Napoleonic Wars were ending. The union would however be one of internal conflict with several contentions, which finality saw the peaceful dissolution of the union by Norway seceding from Sweden. 2) The Schleswig-Holstein Issue. A conflict over the ownership of the twin duchies of Schleswig and Holstein between Denmark and Germany culminated with the Danish loss of the duchies after two wars. This created an irredentist conflict as the Danes of Schleswig now inhabited Germany. A solution would come in the aftermath of the First World War with a plebiscite that resulted with the border between Denmark and Germany being redrawn, which compounded the irredentist problem by establishing two minorities in the border area, one Danish and the other German. Ultimately, the irredentist conflict would be solved by comprehensive minority rights. 3) The Åland Islands problem. Finland and Sweden would enter a conflict over the ownership of the Åland Islands when Finland gained
independence from Russia. The Ålanders, being Swedish used their self-determination to try to cede from Finland, while Finland argued its territorial integrity was inviolable. The conflict would be solved by the League of Nations that ruled the Åland Islands were Finnish, granted the Ålanders autonomy under Finland. The laws were agreed upon by Finland and Sweden. Furthermore, as the Åland Islands are of a militarily-strategic importance and been part of several regional wars, the islands were demilitarized and neutralized.

A further four cases that are part of the continuum of this peace will be highlighted, in order to show the emergence of a pattern being formed and later maintained; a pattern showing a preference for peaceful resolution to conflict. The four additional cases are: 1) Denmark and Norway over the East Greenland dispute; 2) Denmark and Iceland over Iceland’s peaceful secession and independence from Denmark; 3) Norway and Russia and the delimitation of the boundary in the Barents Sea; and 4) Canada and Denmark with the ongoing territorial dispute over Hans Island. This in turn shows how pragmatic solutions to conflicts, transformed the region to a zone of sustainable peace. The overarching principles that underpin the region’s peace will be extracted from the solutions to complex conflicts in which 1) irreconcilable principles such as self-determination and territorial integrity are reconciled, and as such 2) are transcended. This has led to the establishment of a sustainable security community in the Nordic Region.

As a contrast to the Nordic Region, Japan and the Northeast Asian Region will be used as the conflicts there are structurally similar conflict to those that the Nordic Region transcended. The conflicts will comprise: 1) the territorial dispute between China and Japan over the Pinnacle Islands; 2) the territorial dispute between Japan and South Korea over the Liancourt Rocks; 3) the territorial dispute between Japan and Russia over the Kuril Islands; and 4) the regional conflict over the history of the Second World War. Therefore, as the Northeast Asian conflicts have not been solved, they will be compared with the those of the Nordic Region. The Nordic Peace is best described as resultant to conflicts producing win/win solutions that ultimately benefit all. As such they are the antithesis to zero-sum solutions,
which seems to be the preferred pattern in Northeast Asia. Even in the conflicts that were sent to arbitration, amicable results were either attained or the supranational decision was deferred to and accepted without animosity.