

Swedish Ethnologists and Folklorists and Nazi Race Politics

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In April 1938, the Swedish folklorist Sven Liljeblad (1899–2000) wrote to his American colleague Stith Thompson (1885–1976), then a professor in English and Folklore at Indiana University in Bloomington, U.S., that he wanted to come to America. He wanted to get away from Sweden because he was tired of the old-fashioned research in his home country. Study of folklore in Sweden needed a revival. According to Liljeblad, it was impossible to expect any new ideas from Germany, because “German folklore had been nationalized and stagnated (försumpad)”. Now “we must turn our eyes towards America.”¹ Liljeblad received a Zorn fellowship and went to the U.S. at the end of 1939. Due to World War II, however, he could not return to Sweden after one year, as he had originally planned. He stayed in the U.S. for many years and became famous for his studies of the story telling practices of American Indian tribes. He did not return to Sweden until 1990 (Swahn 2010:148). Liljeblad’s comments on the development of folklore research in Nazi Germany are only one example of Swedish reactions to the politicization of their own discipline in Germany after 1933. It is possible that Liljeblad was the most consequent when he left Sweden for America to renew his discipline. Among Swedish ethnologists and folklorists, there were many different reactions to the events in Nazi Germany. The disciplines of ethnology and folklore during the 1930s are interesting subjects for studies of the darker sides of perceptions of Europe, because at this time, folklorists and ethnologists were developing large international networks and founding several international organizations over all of Europe. Historical-geographical research interests were an important motivation. At that time, intensive work was being done

¹ Sven Liljeblad to Stith Thompson, May 9, 1938. Stith Thompson’s mss., Box, 4, Lilly Library, Indiana University (LL, IU). Swedish original: ”[äro], sedan den tyska folkloristiken blivit nationaliserad och försumpad, våra ögon riktade till Amerika.” Courtesy Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana. All translations from Swedish and German texts from P.G.

to demonstrate the distribution of cultural expressions in maps (kulturatlas). The scholars realized that national maps were not sufficient to explain the origin and distribution of cultural expressions (Bringéus 1986:39ff., Schmoll 2009:18ff.). However, with the advent of international cooperation, different ideas about Europe converged.

In this paper, I give some examples of how the political environment influenced the production of scientific knowledge and how these developments can also be interpreted as different ideas of Europe. I also want to examine the different interpretations of the ideas of race, politics and science and address questions such as how did these ideas influence the production of scientific knowledge in ethnology and folklore, and how did they influence international cooperation in Europe during the 1930s? The paper is part of my ongoing postdoctoral project, in which I am studying the links and connections between Swedish and German ethnologists and folklorists during the period of 1930 to 1960. I am particularly interested in the relationship between politics and the science of ethnography; that is, the influence of the political environment on the production of knowledge. My sub-topics include the development of European Ethnology as a university discipline and the ways in which different scholars, institutions and nations provided each other with theoretical and methodological inspiration, as well as ideas about the connection of science and politics. I am also interested in the reaction of Swedish ethnologists and folklorists to Nazi Germany's and the GDR's political control of science, as well as the interest shown by Nazi German and GDR scholars and politicians in cooperation with Swedish ethnographers and folklorists. I began this project in December 2009, and I anticipate finishing in November 2011.

In my project, I look at scientific knowledge production as something that is always influenced by the political, economical and cultural environment. At the same time, science also has a significant influence on political development. Knowledge and power are linked together. There is no field of knowledge without any power relations. Power relations occur in the struggle for meaning (Foucault 1971). This means that I am studying knowledge production as a discursive process. For analyzing the discursive processes and the different power relations, I apply a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) that is inspired by the Austrian linguist Ruth Wodak (2003, 1998, 1996). This kind of CDA implies analysis of different kinds of texts in their historical, political and cultural context.

The material for the study was collected from German, Swedish, Swiss, British and American archives and from interviews with scholars who experienced a part of the period I am studying. Before I give some examples from my analyses, I want to mention that the name of the discipline "ethnology" is itself complicated. In different countries, the discipline has different names. During the 1930s, the discipline was called "ethnology" in several countries for studies of material culture, while "folklore" described studies of "mental" culture, e.g., narratives, story-telling, ideas and beliefs (Rogan 2008a and b). In Germany, the discipline was called *Volkskunde*, which included both material and non-material culture. In my paper, I refer to the discipline as "ethnology," because this is the name used today in Sweden. This term encompasses both non-material culture (folklore) and material culture (ethnology). But when it is important for my analysis, or, for example, when a scholar wants to emphasize his or her position as a folklorist (rather than a non-ethnologist), I describe these scholars as folklorists.

In 1935, the Swedish folklorist Carl Wilhelm von Sydow (1878–1952) wrote to his German colleague Karl Kaiser (1906–1940):

In Scandinavia, people have the general opinion that German race politics is wrong, because it is built on race theories that are not scientifically verified enough. For example, do we think that it is wrong to base politics on the theory of the superiority of the Nordic race, because the Nordic race could not have played the role as the theory states and because the Nordic race is no better than the other

European races, which we know through self-knowledge. To then impose this race upon all the other races in Germany, where this race is obviously in a minority position, results in an insult to the majority of the German people, which is a totally unnecessary and unfair insult.²

The background for von Sydow's letter was an invitation of Scandinavian folklorists and ethnologists to an international congress in Lübeck in 1936, which was organized by the Northern Society (Nordische Gesellschaft), a Nazi organization. Kaiser had asked von Sydow whether he and his colleagues would participate, and von Sydow wanted to explain to him the Swedish discussions about this invitation. He mentioned in his letter that he and some of his Scandinavian colleagues had met in Copenhagen some months earlier, where they had discussed the congress. Several scholars had been skeptical of the congress. According to von Sydow, one reason for this skepticism was that they had already planned to attend other congresses at the same time. Another reason was German race politics, which he explained in the quotation above. In the quote, von Sydow argues from a scientific point of view that German race politics are not acceptable, because they are built on race theories that are not sufficiently scientifically verified. Especially, he finds theories about the Northern race's superiority to be problematic. Here he argues from an essentialist standpoint: he and his Scandinavian colleagues know best, because they were born in Scandinavia and therefore, they automatically belong to the Northern race and thus they know what this means. He is not questioning race discourses; instead, he is talking within a race discourse, but at the same time he is criticizing the German interpretations of this discourse. When he is talking about himself and his colleagues belonging to Northern race, he is arguing from an essentialist point of view, but at the same time, this essentialist idea of race leads to resistance to German race politics. Because the Scandinavians belonged to the "Northern race," they assumed that they were the best scholars to understand this concept. This essentialist view of race also led to criticism of German politicians and scholars, who wanted to conduct research on Northern culture: this was defined by the Scandinavians as an area that belonged to their own research field and they maintained that they were the best for studying it. But von Sydow's words also show how he is talking within a common race discourse of that period, for example, when he discusses the "Northern race" and the "European races."

In his reply to von Sydow some days later, Karl Kaiser argued that race theory had been misunderstood by many people:

For example, it is not the case that the Nordic race has been presented as the exemplary race and as the complete race ideal. Neither Adolf Hitler nor many, many other Germans belong to the Nordic race. The Nordic race has only been emphasized, because this race is seen as a good example for a pure race. But some people have not understood that, and they believe that all other races have less

² Karl Kaiser was a philologist and folklorist at Greifswald University. He was also the leader of the "Atlas of Pommern's Folk Culture" (Atlas der Pommerschen Volkskunde, published in 1936) at that time.

Letter from Carl Wilhelm von Sydow to Karl Kaiser, at December 31, 1935. Carl Wilhelm von Sydow's letter collection, Lund University Library (CSB, LUB). Swedish original: "I Skandinavien anser man allmänt den tyska raspolitiken förfelad, i det man bygger på rasteorier som icke [är] tillräckligt vetenskapligt underbyggda. Att bygga det hela på teorien om den nordiska rasens överlägsenhet, anser vi här för ett fel bl.a. emedan den nordiska rasen icke kan ha spelat den roll som teorien menar och emedan den nordiska rasen icke såsom sådan är bättre än de andra europeiska raserna, vilket vi vet genom självkänedom. Att då sätta den över alla andra raser i Tyskland, då den ju avgjort är i minoritet där, betyder ju faktiskt en förolämpning mot majoriteten av [det] tyska folket, en alldeles onödig och orättvis förolämpning."

value. Even the idea of the pure race has not been pronounced so inflexibly as it often is presented. We are only protecting ourselves against the Jews. The struggle against the Jews should be understood from our people's history and fate. When the Jews have lost power in Germany, we will have reached the most important goal for German Anti-Semitism. As far as I know, there are different conditions in the Scandinavian countries with respect to the Jews than there are in Germany.³

Here a new meaning of the term Nordic race occurs. The term Nordic race is not meant to be the superior race, but it instead refers to a good example for pure race. According to Kaiser, race theory does not necessarily include a hierarchy of races. In order to legitimize his statement, he also mentions Hitler as an example of a person who does not belong to the Nordic race, but who has power in Germany regardless. In his letter, he even mentions the example of Sven Hedin, who was famous in Germany – while not belonging to the Nordic race type. He writes: “The Nordic race has only been emphasized” (man hat lediglich die nordische Rasse deshalb in den Vordergrund geschoben) and: “we are only protecting ourselves against the Jews” (man schützt sich lediglich vor den Juden). These sentences are examples of defending and justifying argumentation strategies that are present in Kaiser's letter. According to Kaiser, German Anti-Semitism is justified due to Germany's special history and fate. This is different from the Scandinavian situation, according to Kaiser. This argumentation strategy is described in CDA as “singularization” (Wodak et.al. 1998:83). That refers to the presentation of a phenomenon as something specific and different from others for the legitimization of special events. Because Germany's fate is different from other nations' histories, Germany has had to handle “other problems,” according to Kaiser.

Kaiser constructs in his letter two different categories of Jews: those with power – who must be defeated – and those without power; according to Kaiser, these Jews will not suffer from Anti-Semitism. Kaiser emphasized in his letter to von Sydow that there were no doubts that the Nazi German government “absolutely” did not want to exclude all Jews from employment – today we know, of course, that Kaiser was wrong.⁴ In Kaiser's letter, Anti-Semitism is described as something that was necessary, harmless and just. It is presented as a tool that was necessary to establish a new order in the German nation. Prior research about Nazism and the Holocaust has demonstrated that this was a predominant discourse in Nazi Germany and probably one of the reasons why so many Germans supported Nazi politics (see, among others, Aly 2005 and Wehler 2003). Here it is interesting to notice that the Swedish ethnologists and folklorists in the studied material did not protest against the Anti-Semitic politics in Nazi Germany in general, but were particularly critical of the connection

³ Karl Kaiser to Carl Wilhelm von Sydow, January 5, 1936. CSB, LUB. German original: „Es ist z. B. nicht der Fall, dass die nordische Rasse als die vorbildliche deutsche Rasse und das unbedingte Rasseideal hingestellt worden ist. Adolf Hitler gehört nicht der nordischen Rasse an, und sehr, sehr viele Deutsche auch nicht. Man hat lediglich die nordische Rasse deshalb in den Vordergrund geschoben, weil man an ihrem Beispiel besonders gut die Merkmale reiner Rasse veranschaulichen zu können meinte. Dann haben allerdings eine Reihe von Leuten falsch gehört und gemeint, dass alle anderen Rassen minderwertig seien. Selbst das Prinzip der Reinrassigkeit ist aus naheliegenden Gründen von dem deutschen Staat nicht in der starren Form verkündet worden, als das man es oft hinstellt. Man schützt sich lediglich vor den Juden. Der Kampf gegen die Juden aber ist verständlich aus der Geschichte und dem Schicksal unseres Volkes heraus. Nachdem die Juden ihre Machtposition in Deutschland verloren haben, ist das wichtigste Kampfziel des deutschen Antisemitismus erreicht. Soweit ich weiss, treffen in den skandinavischen Ländern die Voraussetzungen, die in Deutschland in Bezug auf die Juden vorgelegen haben, nicht zu.“

⁴ Karl Kaiser to Carl Wilhelm von Sydow, January 5, 1936. CSB, LUB. German original: „ – Es ist gar kein Zweifel, dass die deutsche Regierung nicht im entferntesten daran denkt, etwa alle Juden von selbstständiger Betätigung in Deutschland auszuschliessen.“

between science and Nazi race politics. They criticized, for example, that the regime supported the wrong scholars, meaning that the regime supported those scholars who were not accepted as serious scientists by their international colleagues. Von Sydow, for example, mentioned both Bernhard Kummer and Hermann Wirth. He wrote to Kaiser that it was a “scandal” that books from these people were set in the hands of students because this kind of research would negatively influence the next generation.⁵ He was especially critical of the combination of science with race and “Germanic religion,” which he described as “false” and as a “man-made religious surrogate” (*de nyttillverkade germanska religionssurrogaten*).⁶ Kaiser argued in his letter to von Sydow that the German *Volkskunde* had not yet found its proper path, and that scholars like Wirth were expressions of science during a revolution when science was still trying to find a new way.⁷ In fact, at that time, Wirth’s research was discussed in Nazi Germany and Wirth was also criticized by Nazi colleagues (Almgren 1997:151).

Even if von Sydow was critical of the combination of science and race politics in Nazi Germany, he did not want to blame Hitler for what was happening. In letters to his Swedish colleagues, he could express himself in a similar way as Kaiser did. In 1938, he wrote to Sven Liljeblad and stated that he did not want to blame Hitler for the negative developments in Nazi Germany. Instead, he explained the events in Germany by noting the ongoing “revolution” there. Because of that, it was not right to “boycott neither the German people nor the German Reich” (*att boycotta vare sig det tyska folket eller tyska riket*) (Bringéus 2006:185).

Another Swedish ethnologist, Sigfrid Svensson (1901–1984), who became a professor in ethnology at Lund University in 1946, was critical of the combination of Nazi politics and ethnology. In an article in *Stockholms-Tidningen* published in 1935, he argued that for German Nazis, the discipline of *Volkskunde* only had the task to show what was German in order to strengthen the Nazi activism. “The Nazis combine *Volkskunde* with expansion politics,” he wrote.⁸ In his article, which also reviewed a new book, *German Ethnology* (*Die deutsche Volkskunde*, edited by Adolf Spamer in 1934/1935), he implied that there was still some good research being done in Germany, but it was dangerous if *Volkskunde* was being used to legitimize Nazi politics. Research about folk culture should instead be used for propaganda for an avowal of friendship. Cultural borders should never be used to regulate political borders.⁹ From today’s perspective, Svensson can be described as someone who was quite early in recognizing the risks of the political use of his own discipline in Nazi Germany. In current studies, German scholars emphasize the influence of the politicization of *Volkskunde* for Nazi Germany’s expansion politics (see, among others, Schmoll 2009 and Jacobeit/Lixfeld/Jeggle 1994). It was used to legitimize not only expansion politics, but also the Holocaust.

But there were also voices that were positive toward the developments in Nazi Germany. The folklorist Waldemar Liungman (1883–1978) did not hide his sympathies for Nazism, and in 1939, he spent one year as a guest professor at Greifswald University in Germany (Skott 2008:64). In Greifswald, his work was appreciated by his German colleagues. He was described as a good lecturer, who opened his home for the “Swedish-German exchange of ideas” (*bildete sein Heim einen viel besuchten Mittelpunkt für deutsch-schwedischen*

⁵ Carl Wilhelm von Sydow to Karl Kaiser, February 2, 1936. CSB, LUB.

⁶ Carl Wilhelm von Sydow to Karl Kaiser, December 31, 1935. CSB, LUB.

⁷ Karl Kaiser to Carl Wilhelm von Sydow, January 5, 1936. CSB, LUB.

⁸ Sigfrid Svensson: “Nazism och folkkunskap”. *Stockholms-Tidningen*, October 31, 1935.

⁹ *Ibid.*

Gedankenaustausch).¹⁰ In Sweden, his colleague von Sydow argued instead that it was only the Nazi leaders who visited Liungman's lectures in Greifswald who applauded him (Bringéus 2006:154). Liungman's Nazi sympathies were well known and several of his Swedish colleagues despised them (Skott 2008:64). In this context, it is important to mention that his Swedish colleagues did not consider Liungman's research to be groundbreaking, and Liungman is often described as an "outsider" (see Klintberg 2010:95–102). This probably makes it easier to position Liungman as a "Nazi sympathizer" in the historiography of Swedish folklore.

Another area in which Swedish scholars met with German colleagues was international congresses and organizations. There were several Nazi organizations that wanted cooperation from Swedish ethnologists and folklorists. Because these scholars were interpreted to be part of the "pure Northern race," they were not only important as scholars, but also due to their bodies. One example is the earlier mentioned invitation of Nordische Gesellschaft, which tried to invite several Scandinavian scholars to an international congress in Lübeck in 1936 with the title "House and Farm" (Haus und Hof). They began different committees in the Scandinavian countries in order to prepare for the congress. During these preparations and meetings, the Scandinavian researchers grew increasingly skeptical of what this congress was meant to be. From the beginning, the Nordische Gesellschaft had planned that several lectures should be given at a marketplace in Lübeck in order to demonstrate both good Northern research and the "pure Northern race." The Scandinavian scholars experienced these ideas as something that would turn them into objects of study for Nazi race theories. In 1935, von Sydow was upset enough to write to Kaiser: "This will not be accepted of any Northern scholar."¹¹ A definite limit for the cooperation with German science had been reached when Northern scholars would be used as research objects for Nazi race politics. The Nordische Gesellschaft made many mistakes when planning this congress, with the result that only a few Scandinavian ethnologists participated in the congress.

Another Swedish folklorist, Gunnar Granberg (1906–1983) in Uppsala, mentioned in a conversation with Hermann Kappner, working for DAAD (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst) in Sweden and an informant for the Nazi government, that the Nordische Gesellschaft had created problems for the Swedish scholars who wanted to cooperate with Germany. Due to these poorly considered actions, especially those of the person responsible for the congress, Dr. Domes, it became more and more embarrassing for Swedish scholars to participate in the congress: "Only weak characters who absolutely need money would accept such an invitation," he said.¹² This probably created problems for Sigurd Erixon (1888–1968), a professor in ethnology at Northern museum (Nordiska museet) in Stockholm, who very early had promised to lead one of the sections at the congress.

The failed attempts made by the Nordische Gesellschaft for cooperation with Scandinavian scholars are also an expression of the skepticism of many Scandinavian scholars towards the connection of science and politics. Quite early, it was obvious to many Swedes that this

¹⁰ Johannes Paul to Reichsministerium für Wissenschaft, Erziehung und Volksbildung (REM) March 28, 1939. K 636, Swedish Institute, 1933–1947, University archives, Greifswald.

¹¹ Carl Wilhelm von Sydow to Karl Kaiser, December 31, 1935. CSB, LUB. Swedish original: "Sådant går inga nordiska forskare med på."

¹² Report from Hermann Kappner to Nordische Gesellschaft. Enclosure to a letter from German Legation Stockholm, gez. Meynen, to the Ministry of foreign affairs, February 26, 1936. German Legation Stockholm, Nordische Gesellschaft, Bd. 1, 1924–1937, Karton 328, Political Archives of the Ministry of foreign affairs (Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes), Berlin. German original: „Nur schwache Charaktere, die sich in Geldverlegenheit befinden, werden hierzulande einer solchen Aufforderung nachkommen“[...].

society was primarily concerned with Nazi propaganda. (Almgren/Hecker-Stampehl/Piper 2008:7–51).

But the Swedish ethnologists and folklorists developed international cooperation within some European organizations that they had founded in the mid-1930s. One example is the “International Association for Folklore and Ethnology” (Internationaler Verband für Volksforschung, IAFE), which was founded in Lund and Berlin in 1935 and 1936. In IAFE, several European nations worked together. In the beginning, the Nazi government financed IAFE’s publication *Folk*, but withdrew their support only one year later. Material from British archives demonstrates how British scholars warned their Swedish colleagues about cooperation with German scholars because they assumed there was a risk that the Nazi government planned to take over IAFE and *Folk* and use them for Nazi propaganda.¹³ Material in German archives confirms this theory.¹⁴ After 1937, the different nations in IAFE tried to find a balance in their cooperation with Germans: they tried to diminish the number of German representatives and they tried to find the “right” scholars, which meant those people, who were well-known as “serious” researchers and who had not adopted Nazi politics. In 1938, the situation worsened when the Swedish scholars realized that they had put their German colleagues in danger when they tried to suggest them as representatives in IAFE. At that time, IAFE had already been renewed and was renamed the International Association for European Ethnology and Folklore (IAEEF). The Swedish General Secretary in IAEEF, Åke Campbell (1891–1957), who was working in the Archives for Dialects and Folklore (Landmålsarkivet) in Uppsala, pointed out in a letter to Carl Wilhelm von Sydow that now it was too dangerous to openly criticize the development of German science to the Nazi Ministry of Science and Education (Reichsministerium für Wissenschaft, Erziehung und Volksbildung, REM) – which had been von Sydow’s suggestion. According to Campbell, it was also too dangerous to claim the appointment of special German representatives for IAEEF at REM, because this would put the German colleagues at risk.¹⁵ Here it was a problem that several of the German ethnologists and folklorists whom the Swedes appreciated in their cooperation with Germany themselves had trouble with REM. By the end of the 1930s, they lost their positions: for example, Karl Kaiser died as a soldier in 1940 and Lutz Mackensen (1901–1992) was moved around as a professor in Greifswald, Riga and Gent and the most of his letters were confiscated by the Nazi government after 1937.¹⁶ The leaders of IAEEF decided that they had to compromise and they accepted Adolf Helbok (1883–1968) and Heinrich Harmjan (1904–1994), two confirmed Nazis, as the German representatives in their international organization. Probably, they preferred this alternative to their other option: to stop all cooperation with Nazi Germany.

My analysis of the studied material reveals different views on the idea of Europe: from a Nazi perspective, research in Europe should be controlled from Germany and conducted in close cooperation with those countries that were supposedly dominated by people of “pure” and “Aryan” races. Race, politics and science were seen as concepts that belonged together. From the view of several of the leading Swedish ethnologists and folklorists, however, science and politics should be kept separate. They were also critical of the huge impact of race theories in the Nazi German humanities. According to these Swedish ethnologists, European

¹³ Private and confidential interview at Uppsala, August 14th, 1936. Report from H. Coote Lake. A 109/23, archives of the Royal Anthropological Society (RAI), p. 1.

¹⁴ See for example: „Internationaler Verband für Volksforschung“, Feb 1937–März 1943“, R 4901/3196, REM, Bundesarchiv Berlin.

¹⁵ Åke Campbell to Carl Wilhelm von Sydow, May 19, 1938. CSB, LUB.

¹⁶ Jan de Vries to Carl Wilhelm von Sydow, October 9, 1937. CSB, LUB.

cooperation should be conducted in a democratic way, one in which all nations were integrated and had the same rights. But it is important not to forget the economic question: Nazi Germany invested significant amounts of money in international cooperation (with the aim of furthering Nazi propaganda, of course). The Nazi government financed several international congresses, conferences and publications. At this time, there was huge interest among European scholars in creating a new international scientific organization in the field of ethnology and folklore, because they did not expect that La Commission Internationale des Arts et Populaires (CIAP), which had been founded in 1928, could represent their scientific interests as an institution (Rogan 2007). The cooperation with Nazi Germany made it both possible to continue the scientific connections between Sweden and Germany, and to finance the new international organization.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, I have discussed the attitudes of some leading Swedish ethnologists and folklorists towards Nazi German race politics and the developments within their own discipline after 1933, as well as what that meant for the idea of Europe and European cooperation during the 1930s. During this period, the subject of ethnology and folklore (Volkskunde) was established as a university discipline in Germany. The Nazi government gave extensive financial support to the new discipline. But the aim, of course, was to use it in Nazi propaganda and to legitimize German expansion politics. The Nazi regime gave the appearance of having a great deal of interest in scientific development in other countries and in international cooperation, but their idea was to prepare for their own vision of a National Socialistic Europe, one in which science would be controlled from Germany in cooperation with some “Aryan” partners, like the Scandinavian countries. From the perspective of Swedish ethnologists and folklorists, they needed this international cooperation for developing their own research, but also for being able to study cultural expressions in different nations for finding their origin and for being able to explain geographical distribution of cultural ideas and artifacts. Swedish ethnologists and folklorists were critical of the Nazi idea of combining science and politics with race theory. But the Swedish scholars mostly argued from a scientific point of view: they noted that there was not enough scientific evidence for the validity of race theories that justified their use in science and politics. They were also critical of the development of their discipline in Nazi Germany: they criticized that several “good” scholars were released and others got jobs just because the new ones had the “right” political opinion and not because they were good scholars. Already in 1935, a Swedish ethnologist had discussed the risks of the use of their discipline in Nazi expansion politics. But the Swedish scholars studied in this paper did not criticize Anti-Semitic politics in general – they mostly criticized the consequences for scientific development in Germany. When, in 1938, Swedish ethnologists and folklorists discussed an open protest of the Nazi authorities, it was probably already too late, because this could put some of their German colleagues at risk. At that time, several new politicians had come to power in Berlin, and the Nazi impact on science was strengthened. But it is also important to mention that before and during World War II, some Baltic and German refugees were employed at several Swedish ethnological institutions, such as those in Stockholm and Uppsala, and that this helped them survive the war.

Before World War II, large international networks and several big international projects had begun. For example, folklorists were planning an international archive for fairy-tales (with American support) and ethnologists in several countries were working on international atlas projects in order to map cultural expressions in different countries. All these projects were halted after the outbreak of the Second World War. After World War II, attempts were

made to restart some of these projects, but these attempts did not go very far. A new generation of scholars took over, and they again wanted to renew the discipline.

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