



## GERMAN AUTUMN

Fifteen years after the end of the Second World War the novelist Lars Gyllensten published 'Dawn in the West', a brief essay looking back on his 1930s. Given that he was a man born in 1921 it took the form of a retrospective look at the years of his youth and secondary schooling. Gyllensten described how he began to sense the road he would follow. For his generation that road almost invariably led to Germany: German was the first foreign language in school, German literature was read studiously, and for those who – like Gyllensten – were inclined towards philosophy, going south seemed the natural thing to do. But as the 1930s progressed, his distaste for things German became more and more marked. 'I began to be nauseated by all that bombast and geniality, that sentimentality and pomposity, and I began seeking new contacts and stimuli', he wrote, recalling that these were experiences he shared with many of his generation:

We turned away from the German language and culture and from the things we associated with 'Germanness' – the pretentiousness, the sentimentality, the pathos, the rhetoric that led nowhere and promised nothing, the sweeping abstraction, the 'baa baa' flock mentality. For many of us it involved turning to the West – to what was English and to what we believed pertained to the English character and tradition: critical thinking, calm consideration, empiricism.<sup>1</sup>

Memoirs and autobiographies demonstrate that Lars Gyllensten was far from alone. For the generation born between the First World War and the Nazis coming to power, the trial of strength of the Second World War was an ideological and intellectual experience of enduring impact. The rejection of Nazism led in many cases to an aversion of Germany and the traditions associated with things German. The cultural journalist Sigrid Kahle (1928–2013) is one of the people who has admitted that in the first five years after the war she embraced Anglo-Saxon and French culture as unthinkingly as she rejected German culture. She believes that knowledge of the concentration camps

effectively vaccinated her against everything to do with Nazism and anti-Semitism. 'Unfortunately this vaccine was also effective against everything that was German', Kahle explained at the beginning of the 1950s when she was about to marry a West German diplomat and re-examine her attitude. The literature professor Thure Stenström (born in 1927) too, has given examples of how a loathing for Nazism generated strong animosity against everything German. In his younger days, 'for indeterminate cultural reasons', he had been a friend of Germany, but the revelations of the final phase of the war came as a monstrous disappointment. 'Precisely because I had admired Germany so much, my disappointment was all the more profound', he wrote in his memoirs. 'After the reports from Belsen, Ravensbrück and Auschwitz I swore I would never set foot on German soil again.'<sup>2</sup>

Memoirs have to be taken for what they are in terms of reworkings of the self, but in this case they do provide evidence of a tendency that is confirmed in various other sources: the years following the Second World War involved a general reorientation away from things German. We have been talking here about a group of Swedish academics and writers born in the 1920s and bearing the marks of the catastrophic years of their youth – what Stenström called 'my war-scorched generation' – but we might well suspect that it was not limited to them.<sup>3</sup> One important conclusion of my reconstruction of the Nazi experience was its German dimension. National Socialism had grown in Germany, its origins lay in German tradition and it had been nurtured by the German mentality. When the judgment was pronounced on Nazism we can assume that much that was in the German storehouse was cleared out. With hindsight we can see a whole cultural historical epoch coming to an end.

The changes in elective affinities in the wake of the Second World War are what form the basis of this chapter. The focus is not so much on the cultural reorientation in itself, as on how the historical lessons of Nazism called forth an accommodation with and a reworking of those ideals, phenomena and traditions that were associated with Germany. In the interfaces between the Swedish and the German it is possible to trace the presence of the Nazi experience.

## Changes in Elective Affinities

The Swedish relationship with the German sphere during the early postwar period has to be understood in the light of Swedish–German relations going back at least as far as the second half of the nineteenth

century. It is only when we take a reasonably lengthy chronological perspective on the German orientation of Sweden that the force and significance of the breach during the 1930s and 1940s become clear.

### *Sweden and the German Sphere*

Ever since the Middle Ages the history of Sweden has been intertwined with developments in the German areas – spiritually and linguistically, ideologically and culturally, militarily and commercially. Its geographic location has made Germany a recurrent point of orientation for Sweden. Enduring commercial and political links were forged as early as the Hanseatic period and they were strengthened both culturally and confessionally by the Lutheran Reformation and, during the seventeenth century, by Swedish ambitions to be a great power. Even during periods when Sweden sought other models – France, for instance, during the eighteenth century – exchange and cooperation with Germany within science, art and theology continued to run parallel.<sup>4</sup>

In spite of centuries of mutual influence we can agree with the Germanist Gustav Korlén in naming the nineteenth century ‘the German century’ in Swedish history. In the same way as the eighteenth had been the French century and the twentieth would be the Anglo-Saxon century, the nineteenth century was the period when Sweden took its really definitive impulses from its expansive neighbour to the south. Neo-Humanism, Classicism and Romanticism were appealing to the educated classes as early as 1800 and German influences gradually reached into other social milieux, inspiring revivalist movements of a Herrenhutist tinge, the birth-pangs of early socialism and new bourgeois ideals. The influence became particularly dominant during the period from the unification of the German Empire in 1871 to the First World War, during which time almost every cultural and social sphere in Sweden was shaped by German conditions. There are those who would go so far as to describe Sweden as a German cultural province during that period, whereas others have stressed that the exchanges were a two-way process and pointed to the importance that figures such as Ola Hansson, Sven Hedin, Ellen Key, Carl Larsson, Selma Lagerlöf and August Strindberg had in Germany. Scholarly literature is agreed that German culture in the broadest sense was the most important international source of inspiration in Sweden in the decades before the First World War.<sup>5</sup>

It is essential to recognise the depth and breadth of this Swedish orientation towards Germany if we are to understand the nature of the change of direction in the decades that followed. After the foundation

of the German Empire in 1871, admiration for imperial Germany grew rapidly and to the image of a militaristic Prussian Germany was added the perception that Sweden's southern neighbour was the leading country par excellence. The enormous German influence was facilitated by the fact that German was the first foreign language in school, but the influence was by no means restricted to cultural spheres alone. Germany was also the land of scientists, engineers and big business, and during the process of Swedish industrialisation Germany emerged as a dynamic trading partner with many lessons to teach. For men of the church, Germany was the home of Lutheran theology; for jurists, German civil law was a model; for the officer corps, the military might of Germany was impressive. Even the radical social rebels of the age – socialists, Christian evangelists, Nietzscheans – drew strength from the debates in Germany; and the modern political parties that were taking form in Sweden at that time often had their mother organisations in Germany – this is particularly the case with the strong Social Democratic movement. And, moreover, German ideals and concepts were being spread ever more widely through society by a steady stream of translations of works of popular science, works of entertainment and edifying literature.<sup>6</sup>

The First World War ended this phase of Swedish history. The Great War polarised opinion into those who favoured Britain and France and the block that favoured the Germans; the left as a whole, liberals and socialists, tended to favour the Western Allies whereas conservatives supported the Central Powers. The war ignited an at times heated ideological debate in Sweden, which was a significant factor in the cultural orientation of the country during the 1920s. During the years of the war, Germany had come to be associated with nationalism and militarism with the result that between the wars Swedish attitudes to things German tended to be ambivalent. Because of the Treaty of Versailles, which many Swedes of different shades of opinion considered to be an unjust diktat, Germany regained some of the sympathy it had lost. In the years from 1919 to 1933, politicians of both the left and the right worked on behalf of the democratic, demilitarised but diplomatically cold-shouldered Weimar Republic. During the 1920s the great cities of Germany became arenas for Swedes attracted by artistic modernism and political radicalism. But Berlin, Hamburg and Munich were no longer the self-evident places of pilgrimage; the future could also be sought in Paris or London, New York or Moscow.<sup>7</sup>

The coming to power of the Nazis changed the scene. Generally speaking there was a weakening of the bonds of friendship between Germany and Sweden after 1933. The goodwill with which the new

Germany was initially greeted in some parts of the traditionally pro-German bourgeoisie was replaced by a growing aversion. Among a wide range of people, even in the latter part of the 1930s, the long history of orientation towards Germany gave rise to a feeling of ambivalence rather than an attitude of outspoken criticism about the southern neighbour. It is difficult to be certain when the decisive breaking point occurred – Kristallnacht in 1938, or the invasion of Norway and Denmark in 1940, perhaps – but during the war itself there was only a very small group that openly sided with the Third Reich. Fredrik Böök, Sven Hedin and Annie Åkerhielm were among them, but their views were controversial during the war years.<sup>8</sup>

The Swedish musical world can serve as an illustrative example. Its dependence on Germany was equalled by few other sectors of cultural life. During the first decades of the twentieth century, Germany was still seen as the great land of music, an obvious destination for study, concerts and musical inspiration. When the National Socialists came to power a new age began even in this respect. While research has revealed that many Swedish musicians and composers kept up their contacts with musical life in Germany by means of travel and guest appearances even after 1933, it is nevertheless apparent in this as in other fields that rejection grew stronger with the passing of time. When the composer Kurt Atterberg, who did not object to working in the Third Reich and consorting with its cultural establishment, wanted official Sweden to become involved musically with Nazi Germany in 1935, the government gave him a chilly reception. It was considered inappropriate to support music festivals that sanctioned quite so obviously the Nazi enthusiasm for things Nordic. A leading article in the journal of the musicians' union in 1938 summed up the attitude that had gradually become the dominant one in Swedish musical life: the arrival of the Nazis meant that Germany had lost its leading position in the international musical world. The growing interest in jazz during the war years showed where future inspiration would be sought.<sup>9</sup>

The situation was different in the world that emerged after the Second World War. America was the great land of the future for the postwar generation, and not only culturally. The strong and close links across the Atlantic became even stronger and closer during the 1950s.<sup>10</sup> Meanwhile Germany had lost all the spiritual and political status that had made it a power house in the Europe of the previous century. The German question remained an important point of reference during the Cold War, but the engagement of Swedish foreign policy during the postwar decades was not in Europe.<sup>11</sup> Economic links with the zones of Germany, on the other hand, were re-established almost immediately,

first of all in the form of emergency aid and then gradually in the form of straightforward trade relations with both of the rapidly industrialising German states.<sup>12</sup>

The reorientation that took place in Sweden also occurred in other Western European countries. As a result of Nazism and military defeat Germany had lost much of its cultural and intellectual attraction. A number of foreign observers who had earlier been inspired by German debate and discussion reported on the spiritual impoverishment they met during their visits to the young Federal Republic. The French philosopher Raymond Aron had studied in the Weimar Republic and been profoundly influenced by the intellectual tradition of the country, but following the Second World War he asked himself whether the Germans had anything to bring to European intellectual discourse. There were German thinkers and authors with the potential to reach beyond the borders but they remained of little interest to the larger body of Europeans because they were almost exclusively concerned with the internal problems of their country.<sup>13</sup>

### *Foreign Languages in School*

English replaced German as the first foreign language in Swedish schools in 1946. In the eyes of posterity this change of language has become the symbol of the cultural reorientation that took place in the aftermath of the Second World War. The debate that followed revealed a whole series of viewpoints that reflected the more profound change of course that occurred in the postwar era.

German had been the first foreign language in Sweden ever since 1859 and when it was introduced it had marked a definitive break with the French dominance of Swedish culture and education. It was seen as the dawn of a new age and that perception was undoubtedly reinforced by the result of the Franco-Prussian War and the unification of Germany at the beginning of the 1870s. During the decades that followed, the position of German as the first and dominant language in schools in Sweden was uncontested. This situation continued well into the twentieth century, but the First World War saw the beginnings of a debate on the language question that then continued throughout the whole interwar period. As a reaction to the war and to German nationalism there were demands in some circles for an expansion of English and French at the expense of German – these circles tended to be representative of those elements in Swedish opinion that favoured Britain and France. The report of the 1922 Schools Commission proposed a new model in which English would be the initial language and

German the second foreign language, the reasoning being that it was advantageous to leave the complicated grammar of German until a later stage. The argument was thus largely a pedagogical one, although the commission also stated that English was the language of the future and that the change of language would benefit Swedish links with the wider world. This view was questioned by legislative scrutinising committees and by parliament and, instead, English was to be made the subject of more wide-ranging trials. The question came up again on a number of occasions during the following years and the education ministry appointed a new commission in 1937. This commission, like its predecessor, proposed English as the first language and by now opinion had changed among language teachers and among politicians. The pedagogical reasons given for choosing English were more forceful than earlier and, at the same time, the practical and cultural arguments were all pointing in the direction of the Anglo-Saxon world. This was the thinking that underlay the parliamentary decision to make English the first foreign language in Swedish schools.<sup>14</sup>

The change from German to English in 1946 was thus not a decision made on the spur of the moment. The issue had been the subject of thorough discussion throughout the whole of the period between the wars and there had been pedagogical trials. This does not mean that the catastrophic history of Germany in the 1930s and 1940s lacked significance. The experiences of the war, of Nazism and of the subsequent shift in the European power dynamic were at the forefront of people's minds whenever the 'first foreign language' issue was commented on in public.

The language issue was the subject of lively debate in pedagogical journals during the years immediately before and after the end of the war.<sup>15</sup> The change from German to English also sparked off a run of articles in the press. A minority – shrinking to the point of disappearing – declared that the outcome of the war was of no relevance at all to the language issue; they argued that the discussion should be based on pedagogical arguments and only pedagogical arguments. But the dominant view was that the upheavals of recent years had led to a complete change of circumstances and that there was no question that English was now the prime language of the future. A typical expression of this view was given in *Aftontidningen* in April 1945: 'The way the world will look after the war, as far as it is possible to judge, means that we shall probably have very limited use for a knowledge of German and almost certainly a much greater use for English and possibly also for Russian.' The conclusion was that English should replace German as the main language in schools without delay.<sup>16</sup>

Most other comments were similar to this in being based on a combination of political, pedagogical and all-round cultural considerations. The majority of commentators did not leap to reject the German language and everything to do with it out of hand, but they did note in a practical way that world events had changed the situation. One newspaper, for instance, writing as early as 1943, stated: 'The result of the world war is bound to be decisive in the question of the order of modern languages in the curriculum.' And the longer the war lasted, the more obvious it became that time was not on the side of German.<sup>17</sup> 'It would seem to be very unlikely that we shall be drawing our main cultural influences from Germany within the foreseeable future' was how one writer in *Stockholms-Tidningen* put it a month after Germany had capitulated in 1945.<sup>18</sup>

To the majority of people it was thus quite clear that the Swedes were faced with a *fait accompli* at the end of the war and that a change of language was the natural thing to do. But there was also another position. It did not have as many representatives as the majority view but it appeared in organs that enjoyed considerable respect and exerted significant influence at the time – *Dagens Nyheter*, *Expressen* and *Handelstidningen*. They, like many others, had come to the conclusion that German must give way to English as the starter language, but their judgment was based on a broader analysis. The change in the first language as far as they were concerned was much more than an issue of schools policy: it was a question with a much more far-reaching ideological compass.

*Dagens Nyheter* published a significant contribution in the summer of 1945. Strictly speaking the choice between English and German was no longer a choice. The newspaper argued that those who were clinging to German were to a great extent also adherents of old-fashioned language teaching, but it was not pedagogical reasons that the paper was stressing:

No one can dispute the fact that there is greater joy to be had from a knowledge of English than of any other language. During the last half-century practically all of the popular movements with lasting appeal have come from the Anglo-Saxon world: the cooperative movement, the temperance movement, the Salvation Army and sport, as well as popular phenomena like film, jazz and reading for pleasure. From Germany during the same period we have received various kinds of police ideals and, at an early stage, socialistic influences. Knowledge of English offers contact with the democratic world in a way that German never can.<sup>19</sup>

That last sentence captured the essence of it: the shift away from German and everything it stood for also meant an orientation towards



democratic values and traditions. To choose English rather than German was to be on the side of rule by the people, of freedom and of peace; it was to turn one's back on the wars and catastrophes that had afflicted Europe during the past decades. The change of language could therefore also be seen as a 'belated expression of the process of democratisation that had basically transformed Swedish society during the last fifty years'.<sup>20</sup> Stirred by the same spirit, *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfarts-Tidning* put in a plea for English immediately after the war. A short historical sketch demonstrated that German had been losing its relevance to Swedes during the years between the wars. There had been little left of German scientific and cultural status by the outbreak of war in 1939 and even in Sweden, 'one of the last German cultural bastions, it had become clear that English was the world language, German merely a European dialect'. And it was therefore appropriate for young people 'to acquire familiarity with the leading cultural language of the day at an early stage'.<sup>21</sup>

Reactions to the language issue provide us with a spectrum of attitudes to Germany. Most people felt it was self-evident that English should be the first foreign language in schools. Only a few were vehemently opposed to German in principle; the overwhelming majority simply agreed that it was not the language of the future. Sweden proceeded to leave the German sphere with considerable speed. And during this period of changes in elective affinities there was a simultaneous process of evaluating the experiences of Nazism.

## **Travelling Among the Ruins**

The genre of reportage enjoyed something of a golden age after the Second World War. Hans Magnus Enzensberger has contended that it was eye-witness descriptions and analytical travel narratives rather than memoirs or fictional depictions that corresponded to the contemporary need to process and reflect reality. A number of the most outstanding testimonies of the time were written by writers – both men and women – who accompanied the victorious armies of the Western Allies into defeated Germany – authors such as Edmund Wilson and Norman Lewis, journalists such as Janet Flanner, Martha Gellhorn and Osmar White. Like other significant figures who described immediate postwar Europe (Max Frisch from Switzerland, for instance) they came from countries that had been spared the devastation of war. The contrast served to sharpen their eyes.<sup>22</sup>

It comes as no surprise, then, that a number of Swedes set out to discover the world of postwar Europe. Despite Sweden being a small country the latter part of the 1940s saw the publication of several books of reportage from the war-torn continent. All the major newspapers with any degree of self-respect sent a reporter to defeated and devastated Germany. Many of the most prominent journalists went south to report on our ravaged neighbour and a surprising number of these series of reports were collected and published in book form.<sup>23</sup>

One of the very first to go after the capitulation was the Swedish journalist and author Elly Jannes. She set off on her European odyssey as early as the summer of 1945 and she reported back in a long series of articles for the magazine *Vi*. Like many other immediate postwar travellers she then collected her eye-witness accounts into a book, *Människor därute* (People Out There).<sup>24</sup>

Jannes had travelled through the occupied zones of Germany on her way south, but her real interest lay in the countries of southern and central Europe. In general, it was not until 1946/1947 that Swedish readers were given more comprehensive coverage from Germany. That was when the major Swedish newspapers began publishing long and expert articles on everyday life and society in the zones of occupation. The reports were written, for the most part, by well-known names who had spent quite significant periods of time on location, and when the reports almost immediately came out in book form they were usually received by an eager audience.<sup>25</sup>

Travel narratives deal with encounters between the traveller and the country being described. Inherent to the genre are the overlaps between the familiar and the alien, the expected and the unexpected.<sup>26</sup> The reports from the postwar German landscape dealt with the points of intersection between what was Swedish and what was German. Swedish travellers, bearers of their own particular form of Nazi experiences, were attempting to find their way in a post-Nazi world, reading the past, the present and the future with one eye fixed on their homeland and the other on Germany.

### *Reportage from Germany*

Victor Vinde's *Nürnberg i blytljus* (Spotlight on Nuremberg) (1946) was an important prelude to the reports from Germany that appeared during the following years. It achieved the widest distribution of all the Swedish accounts of the Allied war crimes tribunal. During the Second World War, Vinde had been the Paris correspondent of *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfarts-Tidning* and he reported the trials for a month as

the representative of the same paper. His book bears witness to how harrowing it was to witness the trials: 'What has been revealed in Nuremberg so far confirms our worst fears before and during the war, but it also exceeds anything even our wildest imaginings believed the Germans capable of. Our imagination has proved inadequate.' After his stay in Germany it was quite clear to him how thoroughly the idea of Nazism had permeated the country. He wrote of 'the German disease' that had infected the nation and from which it had to be cured. The Nuremberg trials 'do not only condemn a system and its men, they also condemn an era and a nation', was how Vinde summed up the situation.<sup>27</sup>

*Nürnberg i blytljus* was welcomed not least for its living descriptions of the atmosphere of postwar Germany. A vital aspect of that was the inability or the unwillingness of the Germans to take responsibility or to accept guilt. Several newspapers remarked on the absence of any consciousness of guilt among the Germans. The reviewer in *Svenska Dagbladet* commented: 'They complain of the miseries of the present, but a gentle suggestion that the occupied countries had and still have a hard time is met with amazement or complete indifference. They blame Hitler as a matter of course whenever there is a mention of Germany's guilt.' The utter indifference, the ordinary German's astounding avoidance of self-examination, horrified Swedish observers. And along with that there was what Vinde had called 'the German disease', which seemed in a disturbing way to have survived the war and still to be afflicting Germany. 'Vinde has not found any signs of the recovery that is necessary if Germany's neighbours are to acknowledge it as a neighbour. Germany is groping around to find a new leader, a new Hitler, but a somewhat more pleasant Hitler, one who will look after the affairs of state for them and tell lies, in moderation at least.' That was Johannes Wickman's grim conclusion in *Dagens Nyheter*.<sup>28</sup>

Vinde was the forerunner of the Swedes who were to publish travel narratives and reportage from the occupied zones of Germany over the coming years. In a concentrated form his report from Nuremberg touched on many of the problem areas that others would take up later. That was true, for instance, in the case of the journalist Barbro Alving (Bang), who wrote one of the earliest, more comprehensive series of articles on Germany for Swedish readers. In the summer of 1946 she undertook a journey through the zones of Germany for *Dagens Nyheter* and wrote ten substantial articles. Her reports on poverty and hunger, ruin and reconstruction covered everything from daily life to grand politics. Bang's series of articles crystallised a number of themes that linked up with Vinde's reports but which also pointed forward to later

reportage. German self-pity, ominous political tendencies and fear of a Nazi restoration were topics that she and others returned to time after time. When these issues arose it was clear that they could not be discussed except in relation to Swedish experiences of Nazism.<sup>29</sup>

Along with the overwhelming majority of Swedes, Barbro Alving dismissed the idea of collective German guilt. In her view that concept was 'philosophically and psychologically absurd' and utterly unrelated to the problems of ordinary Germans. In this respect she was like most of the other Swedish travellers, since the notion of collective guilt – a subject of intense debate among Germans during the first postwar years – aroused no more than fleeting interest among Swedish observers. German self-pity, however, stirred her emotions all the more. There were, she asserted emphatically right at the start of the series of articles, far too many Germans who were incapable of accepting any guilt at all. They blamed others. Alving called this 'the German egocentric line', a sickening combination of self-pity, attacks on the policies of the occupying powers and an inability to recognise the suffering that the countries around them had endured.<sup>30</sup>

It did not, however, stop at self-pity and misdirected empathy. In the course of her travels Alving found traces of a political tendency that was, in itself, far more disturbing. Right there, in the midst of the ruins of war, there was a widespread resurgence of nationalism. Rumours of an imminent Nazi coup were undoubtedly exaggerated, but what could not be underestimated was the number of Nazi sleepers who had managed to conceal themselves in other guises. Instead of being removed once and for all, old Nazis were able to remain active in commerce and industry, in the cultural sphere and in the administration. Not even the political sphere stayed clean. CDU, the big Christian Democratic Party, for example, was 'the party favoured by Nazi infiltrators'; it was an organisation with a powerful reactionary tendency 'into whose ranks many a Nazi and Nazi sympathiser disappeared'. That was a view that Alving returned to time after time.<sup>31</sup> Self-pity and incomplete denazification hardly formed a good basis for beneficial political developments. And there was also the fact that the Germans appeared to distrust democracy as such. Foreign occupation had induced a state of political paralysis that could only lead to defeatism. The electoral procedures set up by the Allies produced at best the appearance of democracy, but there were many Germans who rejected the political teachings of the occupying powers. Bang's final conclusion was that this was a country and a people still not mature enough for democracy.<sup>32</sup>

Barbro Alving's pessimistic conclusions can be seen in other works of the same period. The writer Erik Ask Lund, commissioned by the

weekly magazine *Folket i Bild* (Illustrated Nation), travelled through Europe by car in the autumn and winter of 1946–1947. On his return home his articles were published in book form as *Människor under jorden* (People Underground).<sup>33</sup> An important premiss of Asklund's narrative was that Sweden had not taken part in the Second World War. The obvious traces of the war that Asklund was constantly being confronted with on the continent were placed in contrast – to great effect – to his untouched homeland.<sup>34</sup> Much of his journey through the landscape of Germany consists of descriptions of misery, devastation and the slow work of reconstruction, but every so often Asklund stops and gathers his thoughts for a brief analysis. Germany is an invalid, Asklund thought as he left the occupied zones.<sup>35</sup>

During his visit to Berlin, Asklund felt that those in charge of denazification were doing a less than rigorous job. Many former Nazis remained in posts in the administration, and demilitarisation was hardly 100 percent. Most disquieting of all was the lack of comprehension shown by the Germans for the suffering they had caused other nations. It was as if they had never completely freed themselves from the curse of ideology, as if they did not recognise that they themselves bore the guilt for what they were now suffering: 'Germany is a country in quarantine; the contagion of Nazism is still present and is spreading in various forms through invisible channels from its old centres. Berlin is a kind of epicentre of the plague, where rumours and exaggerations about Russian behaviour are mixed with self-pity and flattery of the senior personnel of the other Allies.'<sup>36</sup>

Asklund returned to what he considered to be the postwar German inability to perceive things clearly. There still remained, he thought, reflexes of the old Nazi ideology. The old fear of the Russians, for instance, stirred up sympathy for Hitler and his war against the enemy in the East. Asklund recounted a number of depressing meetings with Germans who had never really learnt the lessons of history. He was afraid that this, along with an increasing irritation with the policies of the occupying powers, could lead to a growing desire for a return to strong leadership. This was particularly true of German youth, who were still attracted by many of the ideas of Nazism. Far too few of them had truly understood that 'the core of Nazism had consisted of bestiality, terror and a lust for power that overrode everything else'. Asklund's observations led him to take a gloomily pessimistic view: he had no faith in the ability of the Germans to move in a genuinely new political direction.<sup>37</sup>

With some variation, depending on temperament and approach, the Swedes reporting on Germany constantly returned to topics of this

kind. Victor Vinde, Barbro Alving and Erik Asklund were united in their pessimism. They remained suspicious of German intentions and doubted their will for democratic renewal. Time after time they raised the question of the repulsive combination of unconcealed self-pity and the absence of self-insight. Swedish reporters saw a link between these sins of omission and an ominous political undercurrent noticeable in the zones of occupation. There was much to suggest that the process of denazification was coming to a halt at a halfway stage and that a political restoration of a reactionary nature was imminent. Observers from other nations made the same observations as the Swedes: once shock at the scale of the destruction was over, what lodged in people's minds was German self-pity.<sup>38</sup>

### *A Dark Germany*

The narratives written by Vinde, Alving and Asklund provide us with a test card of Swedish impressions of postwar Germany. But among the steady stream of books of reportage and travel descriptions, there were two that stood out: Stig Dagerman's *Tysk höst* (German Autumn) and *Kulissbygget* (Building a Mock-Up) by Egon Kötting and Ragnar Thoursie. These were the two most noticed and ambitious analyses of postwar German society. Their scale offered scope for detailed argumentation and for a critical inquiry that reflected Swedish experiences of Nazism.<sup>39</sup>

During the war years the young Stig Dagerman had been active as a journalist with syndicalist leanings before making his literary debut with *Ormen* (The Snake) (1945), an anguish-filled novel of wartime preparedness that received considerable attention. In the late autumn of 1946 he was sent by the newspaper *Expressen* to report on events in a postwar Germany that was still utterly devastated. He arrived in Hamburg and then crisscrossed the British and American zones in a journey that took him to Berlin, Dusseldorf, Frankfurt and Munich, as well as many other places. Once back in Sweden he wrote twelve articles that were published in *Expressen* between December 1946 and April 1947. The articles aroused interest when they appeared in the paper, but their great success came when they were brought out in book form as *Tysk höst* (German Autumn) in May 1947.<sup>40</sup>

Stig Dagerman's persona in the book is that of literary author disguised as a journalist. His method was that of the journalist, but it was the author's ability to create moods and impressions that lifted the text far above hack reporting. And there were other ways in which Dagerman's narrative sets itself apart from contemporary reportage.

In her thesis on Dagerman as a journalist, the literary scholar Karin Palmkvist likens the book to a drama and she picks out the scene, the characters and the action. The scene is the most bomb-damaged of the German cities rather than Germany as a whole and the scenography consists of an accurately depicted landscape of ruins. The characters emerge as individuals, collective concepts such as 'the German people' being carefully avoided. The opposite pole to these vulnerable individuals is provided by 'the Allies', a collective term that contains an element of criticism and marks out a distance. The action often proceeds from common assumptions about Germany or the Germans. Using concrete examples and frequently taking a single individual or a single episode as his starting point, Dagerman shows how inadequate all blanket judgments are. In his texts, which are full of the echoes of hopelessness and suffering, he demonstrates how misguided one-sided accusations are.<sup>41</sup>

Dagerman used both composition and language to achieve his purpose, which was to depict life in Germany in the autumn of 1946 without siding with the occupying powers or producing a charge sheet against the German people. In this way he painted a portrait that in many ways ran counter to much of the reporting on Germany at that time. Above all, his account was notably different from the polemical and at times aggressive leader writers in *Expressen*, whose articles would give their readers to understand that the Germans were a warlike race and should be punished accordingly. And in a certain respect Dagerman's book also distanced itself from other reportage and travel narratives. Because of his impartial tone and the quality of his literary creativity Dagerman succeeded in avoiding clichés, though he did, nevertheless, address the same sort of themes as other Swedish travellers.<sup>42</sup>

*Tysk höst* was widely reviewed and many people appreciated its pregnant observations and insightful and sensitive descriptions. In his positive review Herbert Tingsten wrote, for instance, that it was 'a brilliant book in many respects'. Where the book was criticised it was usually because the reviewer was judging it from a particular political position. Tingsten, for example, questioned both the author's anarchistic outlook and his tendency to avoid taking the firm stance demanded by the time. The Social Democrat Kaj Björk, too, mistrusted Dagerman's political judgment and insinuated that he had communist sympathies.<sup>43</sup>

The basic pattern of the Cold War, which became so clear some years later during the debate about the third way, was already apparent here. It was most obvious when the question of Germany was brought up. Dagerman's unwillingness to become involved in big power politics tended to be interpreted as a manifestation of postwar pessimism of the

kind that typified the group of writers of the 1940s he was thought to represent. But when he did adopt a position – as in his critical portrait of the Social Democrat leader Kurt Schumacher – some people accused him of being unjust and indulging in ‘the technique of literary suggestion’. The majority of reviewers, however, refrained from political polemic and restricted themselves to other questions.<sup>44</sup>

German guilt – whether the Germans as a race could be blamed for Nazism – was a topic of heated discussion in the years immediately after the war. As far as the atrocities of the past were concerned, perpetrated by the Germans both inside and outside Germany, there could, of course, only be one view, and Dagerman had no doubts about it. His individualistic credo, however, made it impossible for him to accept a collective German guilt – ‘the fact is that German hardship is collective whereas in spite of everything German brutality was not’.<sup>45</sup> He also expressed it more in terms of principle:

The principle of guilt and retribution in itself might at least have some appearance of justification if those sitting in judgment were themselves attached to a principle absolutely contrary to the one that led to the majority of Germans having to live through this autumn in a wet and cold hell of ruins. But that is not the case: what the collective accusation against the German people actually refers to is obedience *in absurdum*, obedience even in situations where disobedience would have been the only humanly justifiable thing to do.<sup>46</sup>

Stig Dagerman’s thoughts on the question of guilt gave rise to comments and to reflection. On the whole, people sympathised with his fundamental position, albeit with some reservations. Knut Jaensson, for instance, wrote: ‘But without going along with any collective accusation against the German people one might nevertheless say that the Germans have shown even more of a predisposition to that kind of obedience than a number of other nations.’ But he added: ‘to draw the conclusion that the Germans should therefore be condemned to an existence unworthy of human beings would undoubtedly be absurd, pharisaical and inhuman’. Although the question of guilt was brought up in many contexts there were few people who were really committed to it. Some suggested that the question was overplayed, that people in both Germany and Sweden should put it behind them and concentrate instead on the problems of today and tomorrow. That was an attitude that would have been difficult to advocate a year or so earlier.<sup>47</sup>

The most disturbing aspect was without doubt the fact that there were still smouldering elements of Nazism present. Almost all the commentators drew attention to that fact. Dagerman himself was careful not to indulge in the kind of biased denigration that characterised much



reporting. In his book he caricatured the foreign journalists who sought out a bombed-out cellar in Hamburg, interviewed the local population about their view of democracy and then drove off in their American jeeps to the press hotel to write up an indignant article on the topic 'Nazism is Still Alive in Germany'. He pointed out that statements hinting that people mistrusted the goodwill of victorious democracy were not made in a vacuum but in an absolutely real cellar in Hamburg.<sup>48</sup> Without playing down the continued existence of Nazism in postwar Germany he was at pains to see it in context:

There is in fact in Germany a large group of honest anti-fascists who are more disappointed, homeless and defeated than any of the fellow-travellers of Nazism. They are disappointed because liberation was not as radical as they had imagined it would be, homeless because they don't wish to show solidarity either with German dissatisfaction, among whose ingredients they feel there is far too much concealed Nazism, or with the policies of the Allies, whose complacency with regard to former Nazis they view with dismay; and, lastly, they are defeated because they doubt whether they, as Germans, can hold any shares at all in the final victory of the Allies and yet simultaneously they are not so convinced that they as anti-Nazis do not have some share in the German defeat.<sup>49</sup>

In his own wartime articles in the newspaper *Arbetaren* Dagerman had emerged as an anti-fascist opinion former. When he now turned the spotlight on the anti-fascists, they became representatives of the viewpoint he himself stood for. His starting point was that liberation from Nazism was incomplete and that there was a risk of it remaining that way. But the group that had been actively involved in the struggle against the Hitler regime, the anti-fascists, could neither join in with the lamentations of the great majority nor reconcile themselves to the half-hearted denazification programme of the Allies. Because they were German they suffered from the measures introduced by the occupying powers and simultaneously, because they were Germans, they could not be given any acknowledgement for their anti-Nazi resistance.

In the articles written about Dagerman's book his carefully nuanced observations often disappeared. Many people seemed to see Nazism as some kind of enduring pattern of thought, a spirit that still lay over Germany and controlled the minds of many Germans. Erwin Leiser, for instance, writing in *Aftontidningen* (The Evening News), said that what is particularly interesting 'is the excellent examples of an unconscious Nazi mentality that are brought out into the open in Dagerman's book'. After reading *Tysk höst* he was certain that the struggle against the poison of Nazism would be long and drawn out. It was true that

the Allies were using provisional courts and re-education measures to combat what remained of Nazism, but there was a widespread perception that denazification had been a lame and unsuccessful procedure. In so far as any Nazis were caught in the net, they were only the small fish, whereas the big fish swam free.<sup>50</sup>

There was a divergence of views as to who should bear the blame. There were those who thought there were good reasons to criticise the abortive methods of the occupying powers – using militarism to banish militarism. Others insisted that accusations of that sort failed to recognise the scale and difficulty of the task. Where commentators from different parts of the political spectrum were all agreed, however, was in their conviction as to the inadequate nature of denazification. The Allies might occasionally manage to capture a major figure or two, but beneath the surface, sometimes right in the middle of the devastated German landscape, Nazism was still flourishing.

Overall, then, we can see how the perception of surviving but latent Nazism took form, an idea that in the longer term became part of a larger narrative about a Nazi restoration in postwar Germany. National Socialism was not considered to have been consigned to history: it presented a challenge to the present and to the future and was an indefinable threat constantly looming over everything.

In terms of range and rigour, the only book that could match Stig Dagerman's *Tysk höst* was Egon Kötting and Ragnar Thoursie's *Kullisbygget* (1948). The two authors aimed to give a composed and balanced analysis of the new Germany, a country torn – as the subtitle states – 'between Molotov and Marshall'. Kötting was a German journalist with social democratic leanings and he had spent the war in exile in Sweden; Thoursie had made a promising debut as a poet in 1945 and had professed his belief in democratic socialism in a variety of contexts.<sup>51</sup> On the basis of substantial reading as well as the impressions gained on a fairly lengthy journey in the occupied zones in 1947, they reported on important aspects of postwar German society – industry, the supplies crisis, refugees, cultural life and the new political movements. 'We have attempted to present fundamental German problems and difficulties in the context of the developments in international politics since the war', Kötting and Thoursie stated in their foreword. They rejected all forms of demonisation of the Germans, insisting that the time was now ripe 'for moving from an irrational approach to the German question to a rational and dispassionate one'. Part of this involved a heavy dose of scepticism about the political polarisation in both east and west that had begun to set its mark on the German question by the end of the 1940s.<sup>52</sup>

The picture they produced of the divided Germany was a bleak one. Poverty and confusion were still the norm in many respects, material circumstances were utterly appalling and the foundations of society were notably fragile. The occupying powers, both in the East and in the West, had hindered any genuine democratisation. 'In all areas – political, economic and cultural – we have found stagnation, chaos and decay being reinforced by the conflict between the great powers', was how Kötting and Thoursie summed it up. 'We have sought in vain for the presence of genuine democracy and real reconstruction and we believe we can summarise our impressions under the title "building a mock-up".'<sup>53</sup>

In spite of the way the authors spotlighted changing aspects of post-war society, all duly supported with figures and details, the shadow of pessimism hangs over their work as a whole. The failure of denazification was not dealt with as a topic in its own right, but the authors return to it time after time. By means of hints and ironies they gave the reader to understand that there were Nazis living in desirable and affluent hibernation. Many of them had been able to pick up their former professional activities – journalism, for instance – without any great fuss. Although it was mainly a case of vague hints rather than direct evidence, the underlying message was unambiguous: denazification was a fiasco and there would be long-term consequences.<sup>54</sup>

For Kötting and Thoursie the unfinished process of settling accounts with old Nazis was associated with disturbing political tendencies in postwar Germany. Social need and the failed policies of the occupying powers were fuelling German nationalism and that, in its turn, was providing fertile soil for dangerous forces. There were already signs that suggested that a political restoration was on the cards and, as the opposition between the East and the West grew more marked, the process of democratisation faded into the background. New groups began to test the air instead, groups that were primarily anti-socialist and anti-Soviet. The two observers, the Swede and the German, concluded: 'Under the cover of an expressly anti-Russian mentality there is no doubt that there are good openings for a new fascist ideology.'<sup>55</sup>

The broad panorama painted by Kötting and Thoursie also included sections on German history. Their interpretation of the recent past of the country may be said to be a variant of the *Sonderweg* (special path) hypothesis whereby German authoritarianism diverges from the normal democratic path of other comparable countries. The German unification of 1871 had, in the view of the authors, been limited in democratic terms and freedom in the Western European sense had been absent. Instead the German Empire had been developed on the Prussian model

with 'militarism, feudalism and *Junker*-conservative imperialism' as its normal currency. Nor had the Weimar Republic been a fully fledged democracy, but a federation in which the small states had a 'compact reactionary atmosphere [that] created nothing short of a hotbed for nationalists and Nazis who, together with the all-encompassing bureaucracy, erected effective barricades against efforts to achieve democratic unity'. From the unsuccessful revolution of 1848 onwards, and then through the whole of the process of modernisation, Germany, in contrast to the great democracies of Western Europe, lacked a liberal, democratically minded bourgeoisie. Significantly enough this stratum of society had allied itself with the national liberals. After the First World War they were never able to put up any resistance against those who wanted to destroy the fragile Weimar government. Indeed, many of the national liberals actually supported the critics of democracy. In other words, the origin of the German catastrophe could be explained in terms of a specifically German development: 'To summarise, it can be said that the German bourgeoisie, in spite of repeated efforts in the other direction, had been decisively right-wing in its attitudes ever since Bismarck – and in this context that means reactionary. The nationalistic, militaristic and anti-Semitic elements that would eventually form Hitler's party were recruited from the ranks of the bourgeoisie.'<sup>56</sup>

They also addressed the continuing debate about guilt, and Karl Jasper's four-part typology of guilt was discussed at length. Kötting and Thoursie agreed with those critics who argued that the Heidelberg existentialist had a tendency to change 'political, economic and social questions into metaphysical, moral and individual ones'. Jasper's concept of metaphysical guilt most resembled theological argumentation, and every thought about German collective guilt threatened to turn any talk of responsibility into hypocrisy. It was consequently condemned and rejected as meaningless and counter-productive.<sup>57</sup>

The shadow that dominated everything else, however, was the imminent Cold War. Kötting and Thoursie liked to think of themselves as non-political authors so their condemnations were aimed at the West as well as at the East. The conflict between the Great Powers threatened to make permanent the state of chaos and stagnation in Germany and thus smother any efforts to create genuine democracy. The Allies were blamed for their failure to settle the issues of recent history.<sup>58</sup>

*Kulissbygget* was reviewed in the major Swedish newspapers but the reviews were not very substantial. The book was rarely examined in any great depth, which was possibly a reflection of the fact that interest in Germany was beginning to wane and the Cold War starting to oust the German question. The reviewers frequently homed in on the

criticism of the Allies – a portent of the antagonisms that would arise a few years later in the debate about the Third Way. The social democratic press on the whole approved of the criticism directed at the western powers whose occupation policies ran the risk of fanning the embers of neo-fascism. The bourgeois press, on the other hand, took the view that the authors treated internal German resistance far too lightly. ‘Criticism of the occupying powers ought to be joined with criticism of the mind-set in Germany, which also plays its part in making the reconstruction process a mock-up’, was the view of the liberal newspaper *Aftonbladet*.<sup>59</sup>

There was, however, agreement on one thing: the situation in Germany was alarming, reconstruction risked becoming a half-measure and Nazism had not really been confronted. The genesis of National Socialism was no longer a topic of debate, nor was the question of guilt being discussed with any passion. On the other hand, there were fears that a reawakening of nationalism would pave the way for a political restoration under the sign of militarism and reaction. That conclusion was supported by experience of the history of modern Germany.

### *Journeys Among the Ruins*

The images communicated by Swedish travellers to Germany during the first years after the war were remarkably consistent. There was an amazing level of agreement between the reports they gave of their journeys among the ruins. There may have been differences of tone, but what is more noteworthy is the fact that the majority of Swedish observers returned time after time to common themes.<sup>60</sup>

Swedish reporting taken as a whole offered a collective narrative of postwar Germany. The Germans, so ran the thinking, were a race which had turned self-pity into an art form and showed no inclination to interrogate their own past. The fact that they were complaining about their conditions in the shambles of the postwar world was one thing, but they ought to be capable of taking a wider and deeper view than they did. They showed no comprehension at all of the misery inflicted on neighbouring countries as a result of Nazism, complaining instead about the unjust, harsh policies imposed on them by the occupying powers. There were in fact good reasons to question the measures the Allies were taking and many Swedes concurred with that, but a more fundamental problem was the incomplete settlement with Nazism. Denazification had failed and old Nazis were occupying positions in new structures.

The conclusion reached by the Swedish observers was that Nazism remained a latent threat. Many of the old patterns of thought had

survived beneath the surface and the reactionaries were returning under new names. These perceptions were reinforced by the trend towards political restoration that many observers bore witness to. In the new political parties, above all among the Christian Democrats, nationalism and conservatism were flourishing. Old Nazis, in new and deceptive guises, found a place for themselves there.

German self-pity, incomplete denazification and the risk of political restoration went hand in hand in the Swedish travel narratives. The historical lesson was a pessimistic one and emerged as a profoundly sceptical attitude to developments in the occupied zones of Germany. If the postwar reportage is considered in a wider context, its overall conclusion tended to underline the general historical lesson of Nazism. One important aspect was the existence of a firm aversion to all things German in the widest sense; there was a sort of distrust of the ideals, thinking and emotional patterns associated with German tradition. The real encounters the Swedish travellers had in the occupied zones of Germany thus underpinned their preconceptions and reinforced the political dimension of the lesson. Fear of an ideological restoration in the centre of Europe was an important part of this collective reading of the situation. In their reports and travel narratives the Swedes reported back that Nazism had not been completely defeated – in fact, Nazism had survived and was now beginning to grow again.

The historical lesson was consolidated even though Nazism in any real sense was rarely dealt with in the reportage literature. The pessimism induced by developments in Germany reinforced the general impression, as did the fact that nothing that was reported in the travel narratives challenged the content of the Nazi experience. German self-centredness, currents inimical to democracy, and the failure to settle scores with the past, destined Germany to continue to diverge from the common European highway. There were sound reasons for occupying a position of suspicious watchfulness and to stay a safe distance from things German. That was the lesson.

## **Farewell to Faust**

Another encounter between Swedes and Germans took place in the literary arena. German literature, like all the other cultural phenomena from the neighbour to the south, had exerted a very powerful influence on Sweden for a very long time. Between the time of the creation of the German Empire in 1871 and the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 over two thousand literary works were translated from German

to Swedish. Even though this peaked during and immediately after the First World War a score or more works were still coming out every year even at the end of the 1930s, everything from popular literature and uplifting works to editions of classics and modernistic prose. In the world of literature in the 1940s, as in other spheres of culture, it is possible to register a notably rapid move away from German literature. By the first postwar decade what had once been an abundant flow had been reduced to a mere trickle.<sup>61</sup>

The following section will concentrate on the implications of this cultural reorientation rather than its process or the statistics involved, and the focus of the inquiry will be on discussions of literature that evaluated the place of National Socialism in German tradition. These aspects of the Swedish treatment of the Nazi experience will be analysed at the moments of exposure when German literature was being placed in relation to Nazism.

The field of literature offers huge possibilities. During the 1940s it enjoyed high status and was not merely a matter for a small circle of specialists. Many critics, authors and opinion formers were involved in issues related to German literature. Thus articles about German literature were part of the wider conceptual debate about German tradition and mission in the shadow of Nazism that was going on at the time. In order to examine contemporary perceptions it will, for a start, be necessary to provide a general characterisation of the situation of German literature in Sweden. That will be followed by the central issue: an analysis of the discourse that ensued in early postwar Sweden on German patterns of thought.<sup>62</sup>

### *Sweden and German Postwar Literature*

Cultural life burgeoned in the midst of the devastation of postwar Germany. In the first post-1945 years many Germans devoted themselves to debate, criticism and performance. New plays were put on in cold cellar spaces, new films shown in rotting tents and new newspapers were produced in temporary editorial offices. For literature, too, the years that followed the end of the war were a vital phase of rebirth. Literary magazines saw the light of day, publishing houses were founded and book production took off. The kind of literature dominant at the start was what came to be known as ‘rubble literature’ or *Kahlschlagsliteratur* (clear-felling literature), which often consisted of neo-realistic depictions of homecoming, loss and sorrow. But the spectrum soon widened. Group 47, with Hans Werner Richter as its leading light, was formed just two years after the return of peace; it was a loose

grouping of authors that would set its mark on the literary life of West Germany during the coming decades.<sup>63</sup>

This lively cultural activity was in marked contrast to the limited coverage in the Swedish press. Having analysed Swedish coverage of German literature in six big daily papers during 1946, the Germanist Cecilia Hansson concluded that the interest was singularly slight, particularly when it came to contemporary literature. Virtually all the attention was directed at a group of eleven authors, among whom Thomas Mann was the dominant figure by far. His name occurred very frequently and was an orientation point even in articles that did not deal with him. Hermann Hesse (Nobel Prize winner in 1946), Heinrich Mann, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Bertholt Brecht and Friedrich Nietzsche figured among the others. It is noteworthy that all eleven authors had the lion's share of their literary production behind them and several of them were long dead.<sup>64</sup>

Hansson's conclusions are confirmed by studies carried out by another Germanist, Helmut Müssener. As far as Swedish translations of German belles-lettres during the twentieth century were concerned, the years 1945–1949 were absolutely rock-bottom. The wider field of popular and entertainment literature associated with names like Hedwig Courths-Mahler, Vicki Baum and Hermann Hoster had been translated in significant quantities right up until the second half of the 1930s. This group was effectively decimated in the years following the war. The translations that reached the Swedish reader consisted, to a great extent, of established and well-regarded literature. Twentieth-century writers such as Hesse, Kafka and Thomas Mann were the dominant figures, but Goethe, Lichtenberg and Lessing were also published.<sup>65</sup>

A small number of critics – prime among them Johannes Edfelt, Erwin Leiser, Ragnar Thoursie, Peter Weiss and Anders Österling – continued to review German literature in the Swedish press during the years after the war, but the usually short notices discussed the wretched conditions endured by the German authors as much as the literature itself.<sup>66</sup> With noticeable frequency they turned their attention to the emigrant German writers and not to what was happening on German soil.<sup>67</sup> And when they rallied round to produce an overall evaluation of postwar German culture they came up with gloomy forecasts. Was it really the case, Österling asked in the summer of 1946, that even the best authors suffer 'a weakening of their feel for language and a disorientation of their creative powers when they have become emigrants and torn from their roots for some years'?<sup>68</sup>

The first postwar anthology of contemporary German prose was published in 1951 but it was not until around 1960 that a more



comprehensive introduction began. In 1971, when Thomas von Vegesack looked back on a quarter of a century of postwar German literature, he came up with several reasons for the limited interest within Sweden, but the more general explanation he offered was 'the distaste for everything German that became widespread in Sweden after the war'.<sup>69</sup>

That, however, is a truth that needs significant modification. It is true to the extent that German culture lost much of its authority, dynamism and brilliance after the Second World War. It is also correct that Swedish literary circles paid scant attention to new German writing. That is not the same thing as stating that all German literature was neglected during the second half of the 1940s. The picture becomes a different one if we take into account Goethe, Hesse and, above all, Thomas Mann. Their works were highly praised in articles which simultaneously formed the basis for a thorough Swedish examination of the relationship between German culture and Nazism.

Rather than talking of a period of complete lack of interest we should instead be stressing split and ambivalence. On the one hand, there existed a widespread distrust of core aspects of the German heritage; on the other hand, the German literature that did actually get discussed in print generated considerably more comprehensive discussions about Germany's disastrous past. This was particularly true of Thomas Mann, who was the literary fixed star of his age, an authoritative celebrity with a special aura. Mann's works invited the reader to reflect on German conventions in the light of the Nazi experience – in fact, they became the scene of Swedish confrontation with the roots of National Socialism and of a review of the German cultural tradition.

### *A Dionysian with a Stiff Collar*

At the end of the war Thomas Mann (1875–1955) was considered to be perhaps the greatest living European writer. The son of a Lübeck merchant, Mann had won an international reputation right from his first novel *Buddenbrooks* (1901). In the following years he consolidated his reputation with a series of novellas that developed the realistic narrative tradition in the direction of symbolism. During the First World War Mann was passionate in his support of Germany and in a number of works he voiced the call of the nation, but he became a supporter of the Weimar Republic during the 1920s. *Der Zauberberg* (The Magic Mountain) (1924), a reflection with Nietzschean overtones on the post-war European intellectual crisis, was the next milestone in a literary career that brought him the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1929. By this

time Mann had already started the great tetralogy of novels *Joseph und seine Brüder* (Joseph and his Brothers), which he completed in American exile, having fled Nazi Germany with his family in 1933 and settled in the United States in 1938. He spent the war years firing off one anti-Nazi appeal after another at his countrymen. His last great novel was *Doktor Faustus* (1947) which purports to be the biography of a composer and interrogates the spiritual and political traditions of German up to the end of the catastrophe in 1945. He refused to return to Germany after the Second World War and lived in Switzerland until his death.<sup>70</sup>

Thomas Mann had been given an enthusiastic reception in Sweden from the start. His work had been introduced by the leading critics of the day and translated by several of the best-known translators. The publication of *Der Zauberberg* in Swedish in 1929, Mann's Nobel Prize year, helped to make him one of the portal figures in the 1930s' debate about humanism, modernism and philosophy of life. In his works the conflicts of the age clash: the artist with the bourgeois, demonism with responsibility, Naptha with Settembrini, spirit against life. He was, to use the philosopher Rüdiger Safranski's phrase, a Dionysian with a stiff collar.<sup>71</sup>

During the first postwar years Thomas Mann was without doubt the German-language author who attracted most interest within Sweden. He was an untainted force who had resisted National Socialism over the course of many years. Now, post-1945, he could step forward as the representative of 'the other Germany', a beacon of humanism in a dark age. Mann published many significant works in these years after the war and they were reviewed at length in Sweden. *Lotte in Weimar* appeared in Swedish in 1946 and parts of the Joseph series came out in a new edition, but the greatest stir was undoubtedly created by Nils Holmber's translation of *Doktor Faustus* in 1948. What added to the interest was that Mann visited Sweden a number of times during the early postwar years including, for instance, in order to receive an honorary doctorate from Lund University in 1949.<sup>72</sup>

The reactions to Mann's life and work provide a basis for an analysis of the attitudes to things German among the Swedish public during these years. Thomas Mann's accomplishments were so interwoven with the traditions of his homeland that bigger questions always arose. What value did German culture have after the Second World War? Would the after-effects of the Hitler regime continue to afflict postwar Germany? What was the relationship between Nazism and the German tradition?<sup>73</sup>

Many of the reviews published in the Swedish press addressed these questions. Mann became a sort of medium through which a Swedish

working of the Nazi experience took place. When Swedish critics, writers and intellectuals were dealing with him, they were not simply stating their position with regard to the work of a great contemporary author: the instant they broadened the discussion to include a general survey of the merits and shortcomings of German culture, they began to reveal how these things were perceived in Sweden.

## A Magnificent Farewell Performance

Reviews, essays and survey articles beyond number were devoted to Thomas Mann during the decade following the end of the war in 1945. They were written by the men and women who dominated Swedish literary criticism during the 1940s and 1950s: Karl Ragnar Gierow in *Svenska Dagbladet*, Käte Hamburger in *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning*, Olle Holmberg in *Dagens Nyheter* and Anders Österling in *Stockholms-Tidningen* all wrote extensively and familiarised the Swedish public with the German author. Articles by Gunnar Brandell, Carl Fehrman, Sten Selander, Ragnar Thoursie, Karl Vennberg, Bengt Holmqvist and Artur Lundkvist also contributed to this. In spite of differences in temperament and artistic outlook they all shared an appreciation of Thomas Mann.<sup>74</sup>

The great majority of the articles on Mann expressed profound admiration, many of them emphasising his exceptional artistic gifts and humanistic passion. He was described as 'almost superhuman' and was thought to belong to 'that rare and indispensable group, humanity's truly great'.<sup>75</sup> Sten Selander's conclusion when reviewing the final part of the Joseph-series in 1945 was shared by many people: 'if a writer can be awarded the Nobel Prize twice, Thomas Mann ought to be given it again'.<sup>76</sup>

The universal respect for Thomas Mann did not exclude critical reservations, sometimes expressed in political terms. A number of critics with socialist leanings saw him as a monument to the age of the bourgeoisie. Ragnar Thoursie, inspired by a Thomas Mann study by the Marxist Georg Lukács, undertook a critical reading of the German author and wondered whether he was a figure of the past. Karl Vennberg, too, was voicing similar thoughts when he contended that Mann represented a narrow and essentially problematic bourgeoisie. But they still appreciated Mann the artist. That was not the case, however, with the few commentators, often of a liberal bent, who objected to more fundamental aspects of Mann's style, mentality and themes. They mounted fierce attacks on Mann's 'Germanness': he was infected with the same kind

of 'German disease' as so many others down there – verbosity, political passion, gratuitous 'heart on the sleeve' emotionalism. So, according to the view that could sometimes be heard in *Dagens Nyheter* and *Expressen*, Mann had no remedy to offer to an infected people.<sup>77</sup>

But attitudes of this sort were the exception. From the aesthetic viewpoint, Mann's greatness was uncontested among Swedish critics during the first decade after the war. The tributes were reinforced by the recognition that he was the spokesman of ideals that did not belong to the future. Time after time one could hear it said that Thomas Mann was the last representative of a mighty but rapidly fading tradition. A major article in *Svenska Dagbladet* on Mann's seventieth birthday, in 1945, expressed this in phrases typical of the time:

He is – and it is almost banal to repeat it – the incomparably greatest of living novelists, the last of the great classics, and he has the same kind of universality as Goethe. He can do everything that a realist author should be able to do and he possesses what the great philosophers have possessed. One can learn more about humanity from him than from anyone else in the present age.<sup>78</sup>

It was as a spokesman for a passing era that Mann was praised to the skies. That he marked the end of an era was self-evident, but what was not so evident was which cultural epoch or which historical period he was the representative of. Karl Vennberg and Ragnar Thoursie had considered him to be the death throes of the bourgeoisie, and other people too had stressed that he was a product of the European bourgeoisie of the nineteenth century.<sup>79</sup> An obvious problem, however, was that there was no easy way of ascribing him to a particular generation or school. It was more a case of his life having overlapped many different periods, one following another, from the Wilhelmine empire right up to the time after the Second World War.<sup>80</sup>

Most of the characterisations of Thomas Mann nevertheless ended up as being variations on a common theme. He was the standard bearer of classical German humanism at a time when it was constantly under threat. This earned him epithets such as 'the Goethe of the twentieth century', 'the representative of the true European spirit'.<sup>81</sup> Mann had never been transformed into a mere relict of a past age mainly because he had never become a passive steward of the classical German heritage. His sources of inspiration remained the German and common European traditions – poetry, music, philosophy, science, in his case all interlinked. When 'The Age of Thomas Mann' (the title of an article full of praise on his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday in 1955) came to an end it was very much more than the life of a great author coming to its close; it marked the final end of an epoch in European history that had started with Kant,

Schiller and Goethe. It had, in fact, come to a close much earlier but Mann became a medium that linked an older humanistic culture with the twentieth century.<sup>82</sup>

This was never more obvious than in the numerous comparisons that were made between Mann and Goethe during the first postwar decade. There was no German writer who could talk about Goethe with the same degree of intimacy and justice as Thomas Mann, it was claimed. It was, however, not primarily as an authoritative interpreter that Mann deserved to be called what the writer Artur Lundkvist called 'the modern equivalent of Goethe'. It was more a case of him being the only German author in world literature to occupy a similar position to the privy councillor from Weimar, a *Gesamtkunstler* with universal ambitions who engaged with the German problems more profoundly than anyone else. Someone stated that Mann built bridges over to a new Weimar; others compared his life's work as a whole with that of his great predecessor. When Mann was awarded an honorary doctorate at Lund University in 1949, Carl Fehrman went straight to the point when he said that he was 'the foremost inheritor of the tradition of Goethe in German cultural life'.<sup>83</sup>

To be compared with Goethe was the ultimate honour in a culture that took the classical European authors as its yardstick. It was symptomatic that in praising Mann he was not only placed in the same exclusive group as Goethe, but they were even found to have common traits in their careers, dispositions and oeuvres. But a note of loss could be heard in the midst of the pretentious rhetoric of the occasion. It was as if the recognition that Thomas Mann was the last representative of a dying tradition led to feelings of emptiness even before he had gone.

The tributes to Thomas Mann became a grand farewell. As with other similar occasions it followed a ritual pattern. The people who had followed the hero from the start of the twentieth century – and there were many Swedish critics who had done that – stepped forward to recap and attest their respect. They frequently padded out their speeches with personal memories of earlier encounters with Mann, both actual and literary. And as at all farewell ceremonies his life's achievements were repeated time after time. The milestones in Mann's biography were repeated in essays, survey articles and necrologies. All this happened on his seventieth birthday in 1945, on his eightieth in 1955 and on his death that same year, but the reviews of the Joseph novels, of *Lotte in Weimar* and *Doktor Faustus* frequently also contained summaries of the whole of his works. A sense of loss was palpable in all this. What was being borne witness to was a grand farewell and one of the premises of the staging was that there was only one direction in which

the development could now go. This was all the more obvious in that Mann stood out as the representative of a dying tradition. His going marked the disappearance of a living link with the classical German culture which had been revitalising the cultural life of Europe right up until the years between the wars. The marks of honour and distinction were accompanied by lamentations.<sup>84</sup>

'German culture has perished for the present, but its obsequies have been pronounced by the greatest novelist of the age, who is a German', was John Landquist's succinct summing up in an article about Mann with the title 'Funeral Address to German Culture'. That would have been an appropriate heading for the whole farewell performance. Landquist wrote his article in the autumn of 1948 at a time when no one was talking of the rebirth of Germany, least of all in the cultural sphere. Anyone observing Germany from a Swedish perspective would have been in no doubt that Nazism and the Second World War had swept away any German culture worthy of the name. There was little to be expected from that quarter for the foreseeable future.<sup>85</sup>

### *German Demonism*

The Nazi experience does not at first seem to have been central in any discussion of Thomas Mann. It would almost seem that he could be cited as an exponent of German humanism without there being any need to go into Nazism in any detail. And that is true to the extent that references to National Socialism did not by any means always enter the picture. In actual fact, however, his life and work were intricately entwined with the fateful history of modern Germany and were consequently always treated against some sort of Nazi backdrop. In some cases that backdrop slipped so far into the background that it lost significance; in other cases it moved so far into the foreground that it became completely dominant. It is time now to consider the points at which discussions of Thomas Mann intersected with discussions of Nazism.

The experience of the destructive power and anti-culture of Nazism was the origin of *Doktor Faustus*, Thomas Mann's last great novel. During the Second World War, alongside attacking the Hitler regime, Mann was working on this, his contribution to the cultural processing of Nazism.<sup>86</sup> It became clear by the Swedish reception of Mann's postwar novel that he was far from simply being interesting as a representative of a dying culture – on the contrary, the book demonstrated his ability to tackle the spiritual-political history of Germany and to continue to captivate his readers in Sweden.

*Doktor Faustus* tells the story of the fictional German composer, Adrian Leverkühn, whose life is being narrated by his childhood friend Serenus Zeitblom. Against the background of the final phases of the Second World War (Zeitblom is stated to be writing between 1943 and 1945) Zeitblom recounts Leverkühn's human and artistic career from his birth in 1885 to his death in 1940. One of the main themes of the narrative takes the form of a parallel with Nietzsche. As a young man Leverkühn intentionally contracts syphilis from a prostitute and he accepts the slow destruction of his physical capacity because it is simultaneously providing him with a powerful and euphoric creativity. After a long phase of musical inspiration the day of reckoning arrives and Leverkühn, having made his pact with darkness, is afflicted with madness throughout the whole of the 1930s. To commit oneself to evil in exchange for great artistic productivity – that ominous combination in the German tradition of driven activity and a pact with the devil – thus provides the overarching theme of this complex Faustian novel. The parallels between the life of Leverkühn and the modern history of Germany are shown by Zeitblom constantly working in the major events of the age. According to Thomas Mann himself, the novel aims 'to portray the idea of intoxication and anti-reason and, in doing so, the tragic fate of Germany'.<sup>87</sup>

As far as Swedish critics in 1947 and 1948 were concerned, the life of Adrian Leverkühn was clearly symbolic of the unhappy history of Germany. None of them reduced Mann's novel to a simplistic allegory of his homeland and none of them denied that it could certainly also be read as a multi-layered reflection on the cult of the genius and the nature of the artist. Nor, however, did any of them fail to draw parallels between Mann's protagonist and the fate of Germany under Nazism.<sup>88</sup>

In his review of *Doktor Faustus* Olle Holmberg pointed out that Mann 'drew a parallel between the fate of Adrian Leverkühn and that of Germany from start to finish' and that the choice of 1940 as the year of the composer's death was anything but random: '1940 was the year when it became obvious to clear-sighted people that a sentence of death had been pronounced on Germany, that Germany would die, die physically just as it had already died morally, died in madness and in dishonour'.<sup>89</sup> Käte Hamburger went farther than that, stating that Mann's Faustian book dealt with "'Germanness", with the "'blessed unblessed" essence and fate of the German soul'. Ever since *Buddenbrooks*, of course, Mann had focused on German people and circumstances, but the events of recent decades had caused him to approach the topic with new intensity. 'The 1930s and the 1940s saw the dehumanisation of Western life. It was no longer possible to shut your eyes to this phenomenon, to

shut your eyes to the dreadful fact that, cynically and terrifyingly, it was the nation of Goethe that had made a historical reality out of this dehumanisation.' In Hamburger's view Mann's solution had been to choose the biographical format because it revealed the German problem in a double sense: partly by describing how the Faust figure of Leverkühn fell for demonic temptations and partly by having Zeitblom's biographical narrative run parallel to contemporary German history:

The final catastrophe, political and cultural, of the great power Germany thus becomes the viewpoint from which the chronicler looks back on past life. The madness into which the history of the German people, at once spiritually and artistically so elevated and yet so captivated and possessed by demonic forces, finally descends corresponds symbolically with the catastrophe of Leverkühn.<sup>90</sup>

Other Swedish critics agreed. Karl Ragnar Gierow considered it all quite clear-cut: Leverkühn's double function in the novel was as bearer of the Faust motif and as symbol for the downfall of Germany. 'The parallel is carried through quite consistently', he stated, pointing out that Zeitblom's description of the career of his brilliant friend was 'associated chapter by chapter with the story of Germany's path from empire to the collapse of the Nazi regime'. Artur Lundkvist stressed that Mann had not only seen the drama of an individual soul in the medieval fable of Faust 'but a symbol of the tragedy of the whole of Germany, a schemata for the catastrophes of the German rise to power'. Mann thus became 'an elucidator of the tragic drama of Germany'.<sup>91</sup>

It was quite clear that *Doktor Faustus* was to be read as a parallel narrative of an artist who has sold his soul to the devil and a country that has pledged itself to the same evil power. The novel was, however, open to more sophisticated interpretations than that. Thomas Mann's work was said to be at least as much an inquisition into German tradition as a fictitious biography of a composer. Swedish critics devoted a great deal of space to discussing the traits peculiar to German developments.

Demonism was a basic theme in these considerations. It was not for nothing that Mann had chosen the Faust motif to link the life story of Leverkühn with the history of modern Germany. The Swedish interpreters of Mann's work were agreed that a meaningful way of looking at things was to seek the origins of the madness of National Socialism in the predilection that German culture showed for demonism. What was meant by demonism, however, was not so much that Germany had sold its soul to the devil in exchange for honour and success – as was the case with the Faust figure Leverkühn – but that the German tradition was fatally drawn towards what was dark and demonic. The parallels between the biography of the composer and the fate of the nation were



not pushed any further, but it was quite sufficient to reveal how the spiritual composition of Germany was permeated by blackness.

Olle Holmberg wrote that the music of Adrian Leverkühn reflected these deeper tendencies and he went on to stress: 'For Thomas Mann this demonism is German, it dwelt in Luther's belief in the devil, in the nature philosophy of romanticism, here and there in German music. Vulgarised and detached from reason and humanity it existed in German politics – until German politics suddenly came to a stop a few years ago'.<sup>92</sup> Anders Österling came to the same kind of judgment in his review. Mann had had good reason to make Leverkühn 'an arrogant denier of the humanistic value system', a man whose music was essentially 'a triumph of the inhuman'. The permanent secretary of the Swedish Academy saw diabolic temptation as a common theme in the life of the composer and the history of his homeland:

The musician, with gifts of the highest order but tempted and possessed by the devil, his soul pledged to demonic-romantic powers, embodies for Thomas Mann something central in the spiritual constitution of the German people, something which is nothing less than that spellbound fixation with greatness that defines its history. The German spirit, he has said, is home to a fatal attraction to the irrational and the diseased, to self-glorification, catastrophe and death. In reality even the most positive traits lead to a negative outcome.<sup>93</sup>

In this passage Österling stood out as the eloquent mouthpiece of the whole corps of Swedish critics. This was not just a restatement of the notion that Leverkühn was a personification of the German spirit. A significant feature of its history seemed to result from its 'spellbound fixation with greatness' and its 'fatal attraction to the irrational' that inexorably caused destruction and devastation. Swedish observers were united in their agreement that Mann's greatness was to be found in particular in his revelation of these traits of German culture even though he himself was a product of the same traditions. That was why people would return to this novel in the future, in order 'to seek documentation and information about what had happened in Germany', as Österling stated in conclusion.<sup>94</sup>

The origin of German misfortune was to be found in 'demonic-romantic forces'. These had provided reservoirs of energy for German creativity and they had constantly been passed onwards, pouring new life into European art and thought. Swedish commentators were prepared to concede that much. But they were also keen to emphasise the significant degree of ambivalence in the demonic-romantic temperament. Nowhere was that more obvious than in the case of Friedrich Nietzsche. The German philosopher was occasionally referred to in the

postwar years, sometimes in connection with Mann's effort to take up arms against the German heritage. It would be an exaggeration to claim that Nietzsche was consistently seen as a proto-Nazi in philosophical guise, but many people did point out that his ideas on the superman and his critique of morality were adopted by Nazism. If nothing else, the example of Nietzsche demonstrated that demonic attraction was at its most dangerous when it was brought into the political sphere.<sup>95</sup>

Mann had experienced that more than many other people. During the First World War this author, who up to that point had scarcely shown any social commitment, had become profoundly engaged in politics. In texts such as *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen* (Observations of a Non-political Person) (1918) he had made a polemical case for the unique nature of German culture in contrast to the superficiality of Western civilisation. In spite of the fact that Mann emphatically distanced himself from this position during the 1920s and emerged as one of the sharpest critics of German nationalism, the views he had espoused during the First World War belong quite unambiguously to his biography. When this chapter in the story of his life was addressed in Sweden it was, however, often turned to his advantage. What was stressed was that his defence of freedom and reason was the result of his own bitter experience and of a profound conversion. It was described as if Mann had tasted an excess of German nationalism during the First World War and was consequently immune to it. Gunnar Brandell wrote, for instance: 'As early as 1922 he was ready to turn against fascism even in its German form ("this romantic barbarianism") and he has consistently held that position.'<sup>96</sup>

This line of thinking was made even more clear-cut in an article in *Morgon-Tidningen* in which a number of the elements associated with Mann were gathered in a concise sentence: 'In his aesthetic youth he was close to that demonic and Machiavellian romanticism which has deep roots in the German spirit and which burst into its lushest and most poisonous flower with National Socialism.' The wider logic of this is unambiguous. Nazism was perceived as a product of German demonism, irrationalism and ultra-nationalism. During his more markedly artistic phase, up to the end of the First World War, Mann had been close to those forces that just a few years later would develop into National Socialism. He had seen at an early stage where they might lead and resolutely worked against the political forms in which they revealed themselves between the wars. But he had continued to be fascinated by the demonic attraction to be found in the spiritual and political traditions of Germany, in what Käte Hamburger called 'omnious Germanness'.<sup>97</sup>

The demonism was manifested as a fundamental imbalance in German culture. It could be described as the contest between spirit and might, reason and magic, internal fervour and external forcefulness. Anders Österling was but one of many who drew attention to this peculiarity. Erik Forssman, whose review gave a detailed account of the musical aspects of the novel, argued that even the music became symbolic of the Germanness because dissonances were particularly important to the German composer Leverkühn. They were the contradictions and undesired elements that prevented the beautiful details uniting in a harmonious whole. Forssman concluded: 'And consequently the whole of Leverkühn's brilliant career and tragic decline, built as they are on both genius and disease, should be seen as symbolic of the greatness and final decline of the German people.'<sup>98</sup>

We can see here a glimpse of a view of Germany that recurred in many situations in the years after 1945. It was the idea that the body of German society was afflicted by a dangerous contagion. According to Forssman, Mann had been quicker than most to notice the growth of this disease and to see the approach of ruin. During the years between the wars he had already recognised that what he was witnessing was 'the final phase in the progress of the disease and soon the underlying decay would be visible'.<sup>99</sup>

Nazism as a disease, either as an infectious bacterium or as the symptom of a sick culture, seems to have been a common view. The metaphor recurred in one form or another in countless statements during the immediate postwar period and it was by no means only anti-German writers who voiced it. It was more a case that commentators were linking up with a well-established Western perception: in a classic study the social anthropologist Mary Douglas had shown how dirt, infestation and disease were associated with a structure in the process of collapse, whereas health was an expression of harmonious and controlled conditions. Appalling misfortunes afflict those who contract unclean diseases, and Nazism was one of the worst.<sup>100</sup>

So Swedish critics dwelt upon the demonism in Thomas Mann's novel: it was one of the central themes of the book and it was also a way of approaching the diabolic in German culture. The precise diagnosis might vary but there was general agreement that the root of the evil was a specific German predisposition to the romantic and the irrational. What was meant by romantic in this case was not so much an aesthetic-individualistic attitude to life or a reference to an epoch in German literary history: it was more a matter of a mental state in which the rush of Dionysian expression – intoxication, desire, ecstasy – permeated all aspects of existence.<sup>101</sup> In recent times, since the latter part of the

nineteenth century anyway, German demonism had been nourished by and had fuelled a level of nationalism that had grown into chauvinism. The phenomenon might variously be described as arrogance, affliction or infection but, whatever the specific judgment might be, it was clear that this inclination was life-threatening when it came into contact with politics. The First World War had been an eruption of a devastating order, but things only became truly catastrophic when the Nazis seized power and pushed German megalomania to truly terrifying heights.

The biography of Thomas Mann followed the developmental curve that the history of Germany should have followed. Like so many others he had been inspired by the romantic, the dreaming, the emotional aspects of his national culture; he had drunk from the sources that had animated such feats of national spiritual energy. But in sharp contrast to many of his countrymen he had soon settled accounts with his political aberrations of the First World War. At the crossroads in history where Mann chose the road of democracy and reason, Germany chose the romantic demonism that reached its apogee in National Socialism.<sup>102</sup> This was a conclusion shared by many people in the years after the Second World War, Herbert Tingsten, the editor in chief of *Dagens Nyheter* among them. In three wide-ranging articles in the autumn of 1947 Tingsten drew a complex composite portrait of Mann as politician, conservative nationalist and radical democrat. He analysed the special qualities of his thinking and stylistics as well as stressing his dialectical method and the changes in his political views. In a manner that was more nuanced than the usual one he traced Mann's political development and made the effort to understand his views during the 1910s against the background of the Europe of that time. 'With the rise and victory of National Socialism Thomas Mann embarks on a new stage of political thinking', Tingsten stated firmly. He described how Mann more and more accepted democracy as a way of life and simultaneously distanced himself from his earlier nationalism: 'The things that he feared and disliked in democracy and in socialism existed to a much greater extent in Nazism.'<sup>103</sup>

The discussion about Thomas Mann and German demonism carried an inherent historical lesson: avoid this conceptual world, resist the force of attraction and stay well away from this tradition. Mann's examination of German patterns of thinking, especially the attraction to the romantic and the irrational, thus served to confirm in Sweden a general lesson of Nazism. His description of the diabolic tendency in German culture was completely in accord with the early postwar understanding of Nazism and its historical origins. The same perceptions recurred in the reactions to the Faust novel between 1947 and 1948. It did not stop

with Mann probing the fateful history of his country and revealing the aspects that had led to Hitler. The whole of Mann's biography took the form of a mighty act of emancipation, an exemplary course of action that very few were capable of. He had freed himself from the nightmare of the demon and struck a course that Germany had never followed. He could now look back – and assess and contemplate.

It was not only in Sweden that *Doktor Faustus* was the subject of animated debate at the end of the 1940s and beginning of the 1950s. It is interesting to note, however, that the direction taken by the discussions differed from country to country. In the Anglo-Saxon world the discussion centred mainly on the style and structure of the book – literary criticism in the narrower sense. The more profound political and intellectual lesson that Swedish critics found in the Faust novel does not seem to have been anything like as evident to American and British readers.<sup>104</sup>

In Germany itself the book's literary qualities and artistic thematics tended to be overshadowed by its ideological and historio-philosophical theses. As in Sweden, the parallels between the fate of Germany and Leverkühn's life gave cause for reflection on the recent past. The book found a self-evident place in the multi-faceted debate about guilt that was current in the immediate postwar period; the relationship between Nazism and German Romanticism was an important line in that debate.<sup>105</sup>

The Swedish reception of Mann's postwar novel was thus similar to the German reception. The book could never be treated in Sweden as if it were a novel by André Gide or a volume of poetry by T.S. Eliot; without excluding other dimensions the reviews took the form of examinations of the German cultural tradition. The discussions about *Doktor Faustus* are witness to how deeply involved in German culture Swedish literary culture was, even as late as the 1940s. Thomas Mann gave Swedish critics a great farewell performance, an opportunity to work through something that also belonged to their own history.

### *A Classic Epilogue*

Along with Thomas Mann the two most frequently discussed German authors in the early postwar period were Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Hermann Hesse. Like Mann they emerged as proud representatives of a culture that belonged to yesterday. They were treated politely, almost respectfully, by Swedish critics, but there was no sign of the intensity with which Mann's work was approached. Attention was paid to Goethe primarily in connection with 1949 bicentenary of his birth.

It was an event that did not pass unremarked in Sweden and there were many articles that offered appreciative resumés of his oeuvre. But, unlike the articles about Mann, it was only in exceptional cases that they took the form of discussions about the relationship between Nazism and German culture. It was more a case of learned disquisitions on Goethe as a writer, artist and scientist rather any profound drilling down into German tradition.<sup>106</sup>

A few writers did, however, locate Goethe in the context of greater movements in time. For Anders Österling, Goethe had foreseen the imbalance between spirit and power, culture and German national politics, that conjured up the most destructive forces of the twentieth century. In Österling's view, the celebration of his memory in 1949 could be compared to an act of penance, but he did wonder how deep the emotional commitment actually went among the Germans, who had manifestly proved the antithesis to the Goethe ideal and disinherited themselves in a cultural sense. 'Seen as a highpoint of bourgeois culture Goethe is irredeemably a figure of the past', Österling stated, and others agreed with him. Compared with Thomas Mann, Goethe seemed to postwar Swedes to belong to antiquity and all that remained to be done was to raise a monument to an epoch that was past.<sup>107</sup>

Hermann Hesse spoke more directly to the age. Two particularly significant events drew attention to him and to his art during the early postwar period: the publication of his novel *Das Glasperlenspiel* (The Glass Bead Game) (1943, Swedish translation 1952) and the award of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1946. From a Swedish perspective Hesse was described as one of the anchors of German literature, an author who still spoke 'the language of the old education'. To some degree, then, he was a soulmate of Thomas Mann but, unlike Mann, Hesse never became a 'political accuser'. Rather the opposite, in fact, it was claimed that his commitment was focused on the development of the lone individual. Lisa Mathias, writing in a characteristic article in 1945, stated: 'He is not interested in any campaigning front, in Prussianism or supermen; he worships loneliness or, more accurately, seclusion, but there doesn't seem to be anything resigned or forgotten about him.'<sup>108</sup>

It was exceptional for anyone to associate Hesse with the Nazi catastrophe. The reactions to him being awarded the Nobel Prize emphasised that ever since the First World War he had definitively turned against the nationalism and mentality of violence that had raged in his homeland. He, along with Thomas Mann, had been living proof that there really were other cultural ideals in Germany. 'The award of the Nobel Prize to Hesse should perhaps also be regarded as both

a reminder of and an encouragement to that tradition', was how *Handelstidningen* put it, in a way that was typical.<sup>109</sup>

Compared with the treatment of Mann, Goethe and Hesse were given limited coverage in the Swedish public media during the first years after the war. Space seldom permitted a more detailed discussion of Nazism and the German tradition. When, despite everything, these two figures were seen in the context of National Socialism it was as a corrective and a relief – they reminded Swedish critics that there was more than one strand to the German tradition. The tradition that they themselves represented – classical German-language humanism with its roots in the late eighteenth century – had undoubtedly come to the end of the road. As far as Swedish observers were concerned, Nazism had totally undermined the foundations on which German culture had traditionally rested. The elders like Mann and Hesse were writing the epilogue to their own tradition.

## German Autumn

The introduction to Stig Dagerman's *Tysk höst* had set the tone. The young Swedish traveller undertook his journey during 'a miserable autumn of rain and cold'. The ragged, hungry and unwelcome refugees from the East who were pouring across into the Western zones set 'a stamp of dark bitterness on this German autumn', and they 'gave nourishment to suspicions, that people were willing to have, to distrust, that people were willing to feel, to despair, that people were willing to be possessed by'. And Dagerman asked himself: 'Can anyone who experienced this German autumn for himself actually claim that this distrust was unjustified or that this despair was unmotivated?'<sup>110</sup>

The Germany that Dagerman was visiting was in a season of falling leaves in every possible sense. A raw wind, a wind of bitterness, was blowing across the rainy postwar autumnal landscape. Reports from the occupation zones made no mention of budding, flowering, confidence; instead they described decay, rotting and disintegration. Instead of the revitalisation of German society, Swedish travellers met lethargy, self-pity and depression; instead of a full-scale showdown with the remaining Nazis, the travellers witnessed the return of the old panjandrum in new guises and nationalism being allowed to flourish. The Germany that Dagerman and other Swedes described was an autumnal land.

The future of German culture lay in the past; its flowering had been back in the nineteenth century. Not only had it withered: it had proved

to be in league with the most destructive doctrines. Significantly, the few people who had succeeded in overcoming the German heritage, Thomas Mann prime among them, were themselves in the autumn of their days and would soon be leaving the scene.

### *Sweden and the German Sphere*

Swedish experiences of Nazism were what essentially set their mark on Swedish encounters with things German during this autumn period. Suspicion of Germany's political and spiritual traditions was unshakable. Swedish reporters and travel writers were profoundly perturbed by the trend towards political restoration and the absence of any sign of self-examination. The ambivalence was even more obvious for critics and students of literature: they were united in their praise of Thomas Mann but, viewed more profoundly, he was an anomaly, an example that German demonism did not necessarily have to lead to shipwreck.

The Nazi experience thus contained a historical lesson that was actualised in encounters with German phenomena: be on your guard, be suspicious and keep your distance. It bred widespread scepticism of core aspects of German culture and society and, in particular, of significant elements of the ideological and intellectual heritage of Germany.

The overwhelming majority of people saw no reason not to distance themselves from the German sphere. So much misery had arisen from it and much that was ominous still existed. But the process of distancing was not always enthusiastic: it can equally be compared to a kind of acceptance of a fait accompli. On the other hand, in the postwar treatment of German literature it is possible to trace a degree of vacillation which is most manifest in what might be characterised as a farewell performance for Thomas Mann. Thus the Nazi experience seems not to have excluded an element of disappointment, indeed, perhaps even an element of sorrow.

Was this a question of separate generations? For a younger group, those born during the 1910s and 1920s, it came as a relief to distance themselves from things German. For a slightly older generation, those born around the turn of the century, it involved emotional ambivalence. They had grown up with German culture, been inspired by it and could not turn so unreservedly away from it: to do so would have been to make a radical break with the traditions that had formed their personalities. They rejected the excesses, but it is still possible to perceive some degree of anxiety about the separation. This, in turn, can shed light on why members of this generation – Olle Holmberg, Herbert Tingsten, Ingemar Hedenius and Carl Arvid Hessler – reacted so vehemently



when a representative of an undesired Germany put in an appearance in the way I have analysed in the Wittenberg Case. Not only did he remind them of Nazism, but he was also a reminder of the fact that because of Nazism they had been forced to abandon the German culture they held in such high respect, the culture of which Thomas Mann was the foremost representative. And this insight, in its turn, gave new force to the condemnation of Nazism.

The Germanist Per Øhrgaard has written a thought-provoking essay on the position of German culture in Denmark after 1945. There are several interesting similarities with the Swedish situation. Since the end of the nineteenth century the German language and German culture had to a great extent occupied the same dominant position in Denmark as it did in Sweden. That this situation changed radically during the second half of the twentieth century is clearly connected with the Third Reich but, according to Øhrgaard, it had less to do with the German occupation of Denmark and more to do with the overall worldwide devaluation of German culture that occurred after the Second World War. Although there were strong forces in favour of cutting all links with their big southern neighbour immediately after the war, the consequences did not in fact become fully visible until the 1960s and 1970s. During the first postwar decade many Danes still had a good knowledge of German and contact with the German sphere was retained, although, it has to be said, with time the links came more and more to resemble museum exhibits. The new political and intellectual culture that crystallised at the end of the 1960s coincided with a younger, more Americanised generation taking its place in the public arena. Any remaining German elements were cleared out in the course of this process and it was not until 1989 that Germany once again became interesting from the point of view of Danish culture.<sup>111</sup>

Per Øhrgaard's thesis can be transferred to the history of the changes of elective affinities I have been describing in this chapter. In Sweden the intense involvement with Germany during the first postwar years was followed by a growing lack of interest. But there is good reason to think that, just as in Denmark, it took some time for the cultural change of course to have full effect. And it is possible that the Swedish break with its German connection was more radical than Denmark's because Swedish relations with Germany had been less problematical than those of Denmark: there had not been an 1864, a 1920 or a 1940 in Swedish history. This, perhaps, offers an explanation of why the Swedish break contained feelings of loss as well as of disgust and dismay.<sup>112</sup>

The historical lesson of Nazism in this chapter has to some extent been of a different kind than the one that led to the stigmatisation of

the Nazi sphere of association, or which cleared the path for the ideas of 1945. The common ground in all three cases was provided by the experiences of National Socialism. But the character of the lesson, its structure and its temporal orientation, has varied. In the stigmatisation of people thought to have connections with Nazism, the lesson tended to be of a self-confirming sort: it confirmed an already fixed value system. The attitude was an aggressive one, a combination of triumphalism and self-assertion. In temporal terms it focused on the then and now, whereas ideas of the future remained unclear. In Chapter IV (The Ideas of 1945), on the other hand, we encountered a lesson that was unambiguously focused on the future. In that case it was visions of the new postwar society that were in the foreground.

The repertoire was a wider one when it came to the German sphere. Many of the travel narratives from the occupied zones of Germany manifested something of the same confirmatory, even self-righteous, historical lesson that could be seen in the incidents of stigmatisation. The encounters with the ruins of postwar Germany stressed the importance of watchfulness and underlined the convictions that the majority of people already held. The Swedish discussions on German literature, on the other hand, have revealed a different aspect. It was not just the fatal demonism that was condemned in this case. The lesson also included evaluating a whole cultural epoch, a kind of self-judgment in the face of the inevitable parting from the German sphere, but one that contained a degree of ambivalence. After Nazism, relations could never again return to where they had once been.<sup>113</sup>

## Notes

1. L. Gyllensten, 'Gryning mot väster', in B. Christofferson and T. von Vegesack (eds), *Perspektiv på 30talet* (Stockholm: Wahlström & Widstrand, 1961), 78.
2. Stenström, *I alma maters tjänst*, 60.
3. S. Kahle, 'Mitt liv med Tyskland', in A. Björnsson and P. Lutheresson (eds), *Vändpunkter: Europa och dess omvärld efter 1989* (Stockholm: Svenska Dagbladets förlag, 1995), 107–108; S. Kahle, *Jag valde mitt liv* (Stockholm: Bonnier, 2003), 75–86; T. Stenström, *I alma maters tjänst: En Uppsala-professor ser tillbaka* (Stockholm: Atlantis, 2004), 59–60.
4. H. Müssener, *Das Bild Deutschlands in Schweden* (Stockholm: Tyska institutionen, Stockholms universitet, 1978); B. Henningsen et al. (eds), *Skandinavien och Tyskland: 1800–1914: Möten och vänskapsband* (Stockholm and Berlin: Nationalmuseum, 1997); J. Black (ed.), *Schweden und*

*Deutschland: Begegnungen und Impulse. Tyskland och Sverige: Möten och impulser* (Stockholm: Svenska institutet, 1999).

5. G. Korlén, "'Svenska är plattyska i tolv dialekter': Om det tyska inflytandet på svenska språket", in Black (ed.), *Schweden und Deutschland: Begegnungen und Impulse. Tyskland och Sverige: Möten och impulser* (Stockholm: Svenska institutet, 1999), 23; N. Runeby, "'Tyskarnas stora flit och berömmelse": Akademiskt och vetenskapligt utbyte", in Black (ed.), *Schweden und Deutschland: Begegnungen und Impulse. Tyskland och Sverige: Möten och impulser* (Stockholm: Svenska institutet, 1999); B. Henningsen, 'Från "valfrändskap" till "stamfrändskap": Det svensk-tyska kulturutbytet under 1800-talet', in J. Black (ed.), *Schweden und Deutschland. Several of the contributions to Henningsen et al. (eds), Skandinavien och Tyskland*, for instance, B. Henningsen, 'Bilden av Norden'; H. Müssener, 'Evangelisk själaspis för hemmet'; N. Runeby, 'Tyskland som teknisk förebild'; A. Heitmann, 'Skandinaviska författarinnor i Tyskland' and F. Paul, 'Tyskland – Skandinavien's port till världslitteraturen' deal with important aspects, as does E. Gullberg, *Tyskland i svensk opinion 1856–1871* (Lund: Gleerup, 1952); B. Steckzén, *Svenskt och brittiskt: Sex essayer* (Uppsala: Geber, 1959), 45–56 and S. Nordin, 'Tyska utsikter 1871–1995', in A. Björnsson and P. Lutheresson (eds), *Vändpunkter: Europa och dess omvärld efter 1989* (Stockholm: Svenska Dagbladets förlag, 1995).
6. Outlined in Henningsen et al. (eds), *Skandinavien och Tyskland*; H.H. Brummer and C. Lengefeld (eds), *En glömd relation: Norden och Tyskland vid sekelskiftet* (Stockholm: Carlsson, 1998); Runeby, "'Tyskarnas stora flit och berömmelse'"; B. Henningsen, 'Från "valfrändskap" till "stamfrändskap"'. H. Müssener (ed.), *Nicht nur Strindberg: Kulturelle und literarische Beziehungen zwischen Schweden und Deutschland 1870–1933* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1979) contains many informative essays, particularly G. Wingren, 'Deutscher Einfluss auf Kirche und Theologie in Schweden 1870–1933'; H. Müssener and G. Frandsen, 'Fast nur Nataly von Eschstruth & Co' and A. Fritz, 'Deutschsprachige Dramatik auf dem schwedischen Theater 1870–1933'. See also H. Müssener, *Deutschsprachige Belletristik in schwedischer Übersetzung 1870–1979: Bibliographie und Kommentar* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1985); J.O. Sundell, *Tysk påverkan på svensk civilrättsdoktrin 1870–1914* (Stockholm: Institutet för rätthistorisk forskning, 1987) and Y.M. Werner, *Svensk-tyska förbindelser kring sekelskiftet 1900: Politik och ekonomi vid tillkomsten av 1906 års svensk-tyska handels- och sjöfartstraktat* (Lund: Lund University Press, 1989).
7. Müssener (ed.), *Nicht nur Strindberg*; E. Bergman, *Diktens värld och politikens: Bertil Malmberg och Tyskland 1908–1928* (Lund: Natur & Kultur, 1967); Nordin, 'Tyska utsikter 1871–1995'; J. Östling, 'Frisinnets krig: Den kulturradikala svenska opinionen under första världskriget', DIXI: Arbetsrapporter (Uppsala: Uppsala University, 2002); M. Alm, *Americanitis: Amerika som sjukdom eller läkemedel: Svenska berättelser om USA åren 1900–1939* (Lund: Studia Historica Lundensia, 2002).
8. S. Oredsson, *Svensk rädsla: Offentlig fruktan i Sverige under 1900talets första hälft* (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2001); A.W. Johansson, *Den*

- nazistiska utmaningen: Aspekter på andra världskriget (Stockholm: Prisma, 2006), 217–236.
9. See the various contributions in G. Andersson and U. Geisler (eds), *Fruktan, fascination och frändskap: Det svenska musiklivet och nazismen* (Malmö: Sekel, 2006), in particular G. Andersson, 'Nazismen och musiken', 44; G. Andersson, 'Receptionen av svensk musik i Nazityskland', 81–82 and B. Lindberg, 'Exportera den där Hitlermusik till Tyskland'.
  10. A. Lagerkvist, *Amerikafantasier: Kön, medier och visualitet i svenska reseskildringar från USA 1945–63* (Stockholm: JMK, Stockholm University, 2005), 12–16.
  11. M.F. Scholz, 'Östen Undén und die schwedische Deutschlandpolitik in den fünfziger Jahren', *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* (3) (1993); A. Muschik, *Die beiden deutschen Staaten und das neutrale Schweden: Eine Dreiecksbeziehung im Schatten der offenen Deutschlandfrage 1949–1972* (Münster: Lit-Verlag, 2005).
  12. J. Lindner, *Den svenska Tysklands-hjälpen 1945–1954* (Umeå: Acta Universitatis Umensis, 1988); *Neuanfang: Beziehungen zwischen Schweden und Deutschland: 1945–1954: Sieben Beiträge* (Stockholm: Militärhistoriska förlaget, 1990).
  13. T. Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* (London: Penguin Press, 2005), 203–209.
  14. S.O. Henriksson, 'Tyskundervisningen i Sverige: Historisk studie med särskild hänsyn till metodiska synpunkter på undervisningen i främmande språk' (Stockholm: unpublished licentiate dissertation at the German Department, Stockholm University, 1960); H. Johansson, 'När engelskan tog kommandot i skolan', *Tvårsnitt* (1) (2004); Almgren, *Drömmen om Norden*, 366–367.
  15. Henriksson, 'Tyskundervisningen i Sverige', 224–226; Johansson, 'När engelskan tog kommandot i skolan'.
  16. 'Tyska eller engelska?', *Aftontidningen*, 9 April 1945; 'Engelskan', *Morgontidningen*, 15 June 1945; 'Det första språket', *Aftonbladet*, 17 July 1945.
  17. 'Latin och engelska', *Nya Dagligt Allehanda*, 27 June 1943.
  18. M. Palmaer, 'Tyskan som skolspråk och världsspråk', *Stockholms-Tidningen*, 4 June 1945; 'Reducerad tyska i läroverken', *Stockholms-Tidningen*, 9 April 1945; 'Skolöverstyrelsen och lärarna skyller tyskpluggen på varann', *Aftontidningen*, 11 April 1945.
  19. 'Engelska eller tyska', *Dagens Nyheter*, 9 July 1945.
  20. 'Engelska eller tyska'.
  21. 'Världsspråket engelskan', *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfarts-Tidning*, 9 June 1945.
  22. H. M. Enzensberger, *Europa in Ruinen: Augenzeugenberichte aus den Jahren 1944–1948* (Frankfurt am Main: Eichborn, 1990), 5–23. See also S. Hansén and C. Thor (eds), *Århundradets reportage* (Stockholm: Ordfront, 2000), 14–15.
  23. The selection of travel narratives and reportage is based on systematic searches in Libris and in the catalogue of Lund University Library (the so-called Katalog –1957) under the headings 'Resor Tyskland' and 'Resor Europa' for the years in question. An important overview is also given in

- K. Palmkvist, *Diktaren i verkligheten: Journalisten Stig Dagerman* (Stockholm: Federativs förlag, 1989), 158–169 and N.O. Franzén, *Sven Jerring: Ett stycke radiohistoria* (Stockholm: Bonnier, 1988), 320–323.
24. E. Jannes, *Människor därute: Ögonblicksbilder från Europa 1945/46* (Stockholm: Kooperativa Förbundets Bokförlag, 1946).
  25. Palmkvist, *Diktaren i verkligheten*, 162–163.
  26. A. Melberg, *Resa och skriva: En guide till den moderna reselitteraturen* (Gothenburg: Daidalos, 2005), 31–33.
  27. V. Vinde, *Nürnberg i blyxtljus* (Stockholm: Bonnier, 1946), 51–59. Of course, a variety of other people also reported from Nuremberg, including Willy Brandt. During the early postwar period the future chancellor wrote a great deal about the German situation for Scandinavian newspapers. He also published the volume *Norden i Nürnberg* in 1946. See P. Merseburger, *Willy Brandt 1913–1992: Visionär und Realist* (Munich: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 2002), 172–269.
  28. J. Wickman, 'Vinde i Nürnberg', *Dagens Nyheter*, 20 May 1946; G. Olsson, 'Tyska fakta och stämningar', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 4 July 1946; C. Jäderlund, 'Nürnbergreportage', *Stockholms-Tidningen*, 11 June 1946; S. Berger, 'Snabbskisser från Nürnberg', *Sydsvenska Dagbladet Snällposten*, 25 May 1946; B. Enander, 'Utrikespolitik mer eller mindre', *Expressen*, 18 June 1946.
  29. Barbro Alving published her articles in *Dagens Nyheter* 30 June, 1 July, 3 July, 5 July, 7 July, 9 July, 12 July, 14 July, 17 July and 19 July 1946.
  30. B. Alving, 'Självömkan och omoral gror i ruiner', *Dagens Nyheter*, 30 June 1946; B. Alving, 'Var är Hitlers Frauenführerin?', *Dagens Nyheter*, 1 July 1946; '1 miljon nazister döms i Bayern på 1 år', *Dagens Nyheter*, 3 July 1946; 'Oberammergau övar till 1950', *Dagens Nyheter*, 5 July 1946; 'Ungdom om konst: Skjut målarn!', *Dagens Nyheter*, 7 July 1946; 'Hemvänd fånge hatar kommunism', *Dagens Nyheter*, 12 July 1946.
  31. B. Alving, 'Låt de unga emigrera och Tyskland dör', *Dagens Nyheter*, 9 July 1946.
  32. E. Asklund, *Människor under jorden: Europa runt i bil* (Stockholm: Wahlström & Widstrand, 1947), 5.
  33. Asklund, *Människor under jorden: Europa runt i bil*, 11 and 167.
  34. Asklund, *Människor under jorden: Europa runt i bil*, 54.
  35. Asklund, *Människor under jorden: Europa runt i bil*, 44–45.
  36. Asklund, *Människor under jorden: Europa runt i bil*, 185.
  37. Asklund, *Människor under jorden: Europa runt i bil*, 185–192.
  38. Enzensberger, *Europa in Ruinen*, 10.
  39. S. Dagerman, *Tysk höst* (Stockholm: Norstedt, 1947); E. Kötting and R. Thoursie, *Kulissbygget: Tyskland mellan Molotov och Marshall* (Stockholm: Ljus, 1948).
  40. Palmkvist, *Diktaren i verkligheten*, 91–94; R. Schröder, *Stig Dagerman – littérature engagée in Schweden der Nachkriegszeit* (Berlin: Logos-Verlag, 2001), 32–33.
  41. Palmkvist, *Diktaren i verkligheten*, 119–129.
  42. Palmkvist, *Diktaren i verkligheten*, 160–162.

43. Palmkvist, *Diktaren i verkligheten*, 153–156. H. Tingsten, 'En diktare om Tyskland', *Dagens Nyheter*, 14 May 1947; K. Björk, 'Diktarsyn på Tyskland', *Morgon-Tidningen*, 28 October 1947; K. Juste, 'Orsak och verkan', *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfarts-Tidning*, 9 June 1947. As a contrast, it is worth noting the communist newspaper *Ny Dag* (9 December 1947) accused Dagerman of supporting reactionaries because of his vague and apologetic anarchism.
44. Ragnar Thoursie and Kaj Björk attacked Dagerman on this point after the publication of his article in *Expressen*. Dagerman expanded his discussion of Schumacher in the published book, to which Björk did not take kindly. On the other hand, several of the right-wing papers found his analysis of German social democracy to be very apposite. See Palmkvist, *Diktaren i verkligheten*, 120–121.
45. Dagerman, *Tysk höst*, 17.
46. Dagerman, *Tysk höst*, 18.
47. K. Jaensson, 'En diktare i verklighetens land', *Bonniers Litterära Magasin* (1947), 514; K. Juste, 'Orsak och verkan', *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfarts-Tidning*, 9 June 1947; G. Olsson, 'Tyskland på drift', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 19 May 1947.
48. Dagerman, *Tysk höst*, 13–15.
49. Dagerman, *Tysk höst*, 35–36.
50. E. Leiser, 'Likgiltighetens land', *Aftontidningen*, 1 November 1947; V. Heyman, 'Två ockupationer', *Arbetaren*, 29 May 1947.
51. Egon Kötting was just one of many German exiles during the 1940s to act as knowledgeable intermediaries for a Swedish readership. See H. Müssener, *Exil in Schweden: Politische und kulturelle Emigration nach 1933* (Munich: Hanser, 1974), 300–354.
52. Kötting and Thoursie, *Kulissbygget*, 5–6.
53. Kötting and Thoursie, *Kulissbygget*, 286.
54. Kötting and Thoursie, *Kulissbygget*, 16, 26 and 30.
55. Kötting and Thoursie, *Kulissbygget*, 12–14 and 29.
56. Kötting and Thoursie, *Kulissbygget*, 39–41 and 266–267.
57. Kötting and Thoursie, *Kulissbygget*, 182–190
58. Kötting and Thoursie, *Kulissbygget*
59. *Aftonbladet*, 6 June 1948; D. Viklund, 'Tyska sommarstudier', *Dagens Nyheter*, 14 September 1948; K. Björk, 'Tyskland och den tredje kraften', *Morgon-Tidningen*, 4 October 1948; T. Höjer, 'Efter Ragnarök', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 31 May 1948; S. Berger, 'Patientmedicin för tyska sjukan', *Sydsvenska Dagbladet Snällposten*, 3 June 1948
60. Stig Dagerman's reportage was the most obvious deviation. His biographical background is not without significance in this respect. See O. Lagercrantz, *Stig Dagerman* (Stockholm: Norstedt, 1958), 92–94.
61. Müssener, *Deutschsprachige Belletristik in schwedischer Übersetzung 1870–1979*, 6–53.
62. The collections in the cuttings archive at the Sigtunastiftelsen reveal that during the early postwar period, at least in the morning and evening newspapers, interest in German literature was much greater than in German film, music and art.

63. W. Schivelbusch, *Vor dem Vorhang: Das geistige Berlin 1945–1948* (Munich: Hanser, 1995); W. Barner (ed.), *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart: Geschichte der deutschen Literatur von 1945 bis zur Gegenwart* (Munich: Beck, 1994).
64. C. Hansson, 'Die Gruppe 46: Anmerkungen zu einigen Feuilletonartikeln in der schwedischen Tagespresse des Jahres 1946', in H. Müssener (ed.), *Aspekte des Kulturaustausches zwischen Schweden und dem deutschsprachigen Mitteleuropa nach 1945* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1981), 141–149.
65. Müssener, *Deutschsprachige Belletristik in schwedischer Übersetzung 1870–1979*, 52–53 and 203–208.
66. There were exceptions, for example, P. Weiss, 'Mörkrets litteratur', *Stockholms-Tidningen*, 30 August 1947.
67. See, for example, A. Österling, 'Tyska romaner från exilen', *Stockholms-Tidningen*, 4 August 1946; E. Leiser, 'Tyska diktare i landsflykt', *Morgon-Tidningen*, 3 April 1947 and T. Nerman, 'Emigrantdikten', *Morgon-Tidningen*, 5 June 1947.
68. Österling, 'Tyska romaner från exilen'. See also T. von Vegesack, *Inte bara Grass ...: De tyska litteraturerna efter kriget* (Stockholm: Bonnier, 1970), 205–207.
69. von Vegesack, *Inte bara Grass ...*, 208–209 and 231 (quotation 209); F. Benzinger, *Die Tagung der 'Gruppe 47' in Schweden 1964 und ihre Folgen: Ein Kapitel deutsch-schwedischer Kultur- und Literaturbeziehungen* (Stockholm: Stockholm University, 1983), 16–27; Müssener, *Deutschsprachige Belletristik in schwedischer Übersetzung 1870–1979*, 203–208.
70. The biographical and critical work on Thomas Mann is enormous. See H. Koopmann (ed.), *Thomas-Mann-Handbuch* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 2005).
71. E. Selberg, 'Der Zauberberg: Die Rezeption in Schweden während der Jahre 1924–33', in H. Müssener (ed.), *Nicht nur Strindberg: Kulturelle und literarische Beziehungen zwischen Schweden und Deutschland 1870–1933* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1979); J. Hansson, *Humanismens kris: Bildningsideal och kulturkritik i Sverige 1848–1933* (Eslöv: B. Östlings bokförlag, 1999), 183–184; L. Hallberg, 'Tio år efter Nobelpriset: Thomas Mann, hans förläggare och Sverige 1939–1940', in K. Abukhanfusa (ed.), *Av kärlek till arkiv: Festskrift till Erik Norberg* (Stockholm: Riksarkivet, 2002). Safranski is quoted from U. Greiner, 'Die Verzauberung der Welt', *Die Zeit* (37) (2007).
72. Hansson, 'Die Gruppe 46', 142–145; C. Fehrman, 'Det hände i Lund', in G. Blomquist (ed.), *Under Lundagårds kronor: Minnen upptecknade av gamla studenter*, vol. 1 (Lund: Lund University Press, 1991), 269–271.
73. Parts of the following have been published as J. Östling, 'Med Mann tog Sverige ett tyskt farväl', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 7 May 2008.
74. T. Segerstedt, 'En religionsstiftare', *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfarts-Tidning*, 1 February 1945; S. Selander, 'Thomas Mann Josefsroman', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 21 February 1945; 'Thomas Mann 70 år', *Vestmanlands Läns Tidning*, 6 June 1945; G. Jönsson, 'Josef och hans bröder', *Sydsvenska Dagbladet Snällposten*, 27 June 1947; H. Tingsten, 'Thomas Mann som politiker', *Dagens Nyheter*, 28 September 1947; H. Tingsten, 'Thomas Mann som konservativ nationalist',

- Dagens Nyheter*, 30 September 1947; H. Tingsten, 'Thomas Mann som radikal demokrat', *Dagens Nyheter*, 4 October 1947; C. Fehrman, 'Thomas Mann och arvet från Goethe', *Sydsvenska Dagbladet Snällposten*, 30 May 1949; K.R. Gierow, 'Epoken Thomas Mann', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 6 June 1955; H. Levander, 'Thomas Mann – mittens rike', *Morgon-Tidningen*, 6 June 1955; 'Mann var den siste humanisten', *Dagens Nyheter*, 13 August 1955; 'Thomas Mann död', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 13 August 1955; C. Fehrman, 'Tjugonde seklets Goethe', *Sydsvenska Dagbladet Snällposten*, 14 August 1955; S. Stolpe, 'Thomas Mann död', *Aftonbladet*, 13 August 1955.
75. Gierow, 'Epoken Thomas Mann'; 'Thomas Mann 70 år'.
  76. S. Selander, 'Thomas Mann Josefsroman'. See also: 'Thomas Mann kan få ett andra nobelpris', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 22 February 1945; Jönsson, 'Josef och hans bröder'; Fehrman, 'Thomas Mann och arvet från Goethe'; Gierow, 'Epoken Thomas Mann'; 'Mann var den siste humanisten'; Levander, 'Thomas Mann – mittens rike'; 'Thomas Mann död'.
  77. R. Thoursie, 'Lukacs i Weimar', *Aftontidningen*, 4 December 1946; E.H. Linder, 'Thomas Mann och "gudstänkandet"', *Svenska Morgonbladet*, 10 February 1945; K. Vennberg, 'Thomas Mann och vi', *Aftontidningen*, 5 June 1945; 'Andens adelsman 1945', *Expressen*, 6 June 1945; P.H. Törngren, 'En ledare', *Dagens Nyheter*, 17 February 1946.
  78. G. Attorps, 'Thomas Mann 70 år', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 4 June 1945.
  79. E. Forssman, 'Thomas Mann nya roman', *Sydsvenska Dagbladet Snällposten*, 30 November 1947; Gierow, 'Epoken Thomas Mann'.
  80. 'Mann var den siste humanisten'.
  81. Fehrman, 'Tjugonde seklets Goethe'; 'Mann var den siste humanisten'; F.S. Grosshut, 'Levande humanism', *Aftontidningen*, 26 May 1949.
  82. Selander, 'Thomas Manns Josefsroman'; Attorps, 'Thomas Mann 70 år'; 'Thomas Mann sjuttio år', *Svenska Morgonbladet*, 6 June 1945; H. Dhejne, 'Geniet i Weimar', *Sydsvenska Dagbladet Snällposten*, 12 October 1946; K. Hamburger, 'Thomas Mann och Goethe', *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning*, 21 May 1949; Grosshut, 'Levande humanism'; Fehrman, 'Thomas Mann och arvet från Goethe'; Ö. Sjöstrand, 'Thomas Mann och djävulen', *Aftonbladet*, 16 May 1950; E. Leiser, 'Goethes arvtagare på besök', *Aftontidningen*, 4 May 1950; 'Mann var den siste humanisten'; Fehrman, 'Tjugonde seklets Goethe'.
  83. I. Pauli, 'Thomas Mann 70 år', *Morgon-Tidningen*, 6 June 1945; Hamburger, 'Thomas Mann och Goethe'; Grosshut, 'Levande humanism'; Fehrman, 'Thomas Mann och arvet från Goethe'; Leiser, 'Goethes arvtagare på besök'; Fehrman, 'Tjugonde seklets Goethe'; Artur Lundkvist, 'Pakten med djävulen', *Bonniers Litterära Magasin* (10) (1948), 84.
  84. Forssman, 'Thomas Mann nya roman'; J. Landquist, 'Ett gravtal över tysk kultur', *Aftonbladet*, 26 November 1948; C. Fehrman, 'Thomas Manns Faustsaga', *Sydsvenska Dagbladet Snällposten*, 4 January 1949; K.R. Gierow, 'Thomas Mann och Nietzsche', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 11 March 1949; Gierow, 'Epoken Thomas Mann'; Levander, 'Thomas Mann – mittens rike'; 'Thomas Mann död', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 13 August 1955.
  85. Landquist, 'Ett gravtal över tysk kultur'.



86. See in general G. Bergsten, *Thomas Manns Doktor Faustus: Untersuchungen zu den Quellen und zur Struktur des Romans* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1974) and J.H. Petersen, *Faustus lesen: Eine Streitschrift über Thomas Manns späten Roman* (Würzburg: Kösinghausen & Neumann, 2007). Thomas Mann described the genesis of the novel in his autobiographical *Die Entstehung des 'Doktor Faustus': Roman eines Romans* (1949), which was translated into Swedish in the same year as T. Mann, *Roman om en roman: Hur 'Doktor Faustus' kom till*, trans. N. Holmberg (Stockholm: Bonnier, 1949).
87. T. Mann, *Doktor Faustus: Den tyske tonsättaren Adrian Leverkühns liv skildrat av en vän*, trans. N. Holmberg (Stockholm: Bonnier, 1948). See also Koopmann (ed.), *Thomas-Mann-Handbuch* and Bergsten, *Thomas Manns Doktor Faustus*.
88. Rüdiger Safranski points out in *Romantik: Eine deutsche Affäre* (Munich: Hanser, 2007), 370–373, that the Leverkühn–Germany parallel cannot be considered to have been completely carried through in the novel because the composer distances himself from the Dionysiac sphere and remains a kind of Apollonian. For Swedish critics, however – as for Mann himself – the analogy was a fact.
89. O. Holmberg, 'Faust och djävulen', *Dagens Nyheter*, 10 November 1947.
90. K. Hamburger, 'Thomas Manns Faustroman', *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfarts-Tidning*, 27 November 1947.
91. Gierow, 'Thomas Mann och Nietzsche'; F.H. Törnblom, 'Thomas Manns nya bok'; Fehrman, 'Thomas Manns Faustsaga'; A. Österling, 'Thomas Manns nya roman', *Stockholms-Tidningen*, 12 January 1948.
92. Holmberg, 'Faust och djävulen'.
93. Österling, 'Thomas Manns nya roman'.
94. Österling, 'Thomas Manns nya roman'.
95. O. Holmberg, 'Uppgörelse med Nietzsche', *Dagens Nyheter*, 6 September 1948; Gierow, 'Thomas Mann och Nietzsche'. See Melker Johansson's critical and exacting study of Nietzsche's thought, *Nietzsche och Tredje riket* (Stockholm: Kooperativa Förbundets Bokförlag 1943) and the more general Swedish reception of Nietzsche in D. Brolin, 'Efterkrigs-Nietzsche: Om den svenska Nietzsche-forskningens myter', *Häftan för kritiska studier* (3–4) (2005).
96. G. Brandell, 'Kring Thomas Mann', *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfarts-Tidning*, 19 November 1945.
97. Pauli, 'Thomas Mann 70 år'; Hamburger, 'Thomas Manns Faustroman'.
98. Forssman, 'Thomas Mann nya roman'.
99. Forssman, 'Thomas Mann nya roman'.
100. M. Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge, 1966).
101. This reading of the relationship between Nazism and Romanticism was normal during the early postwar period. See Safranski, *Romantik*, 356–357.
102. Apart from those already mentioned, this view was also advanced in W.A. Berendsohn, 'Thomas Mann och Tredje riket', in K. Lervik (ed.), *Åndsmenneskets ansvar: Nordiske akademikers festschrift til Thomas Mann på 80 årsdagen 6. juni 1955* (Oslo: Norske studentersamfund, 1955), 13–15.

103. Tingsten, 'Thomas Mann som politiker', *Dagens Nyheter*, 28 September 1947; H. Tingsten, 'Thomas Mann som konservativ nationalist', *Dagens Nyheter*, 30 September 1947; H. Tingsten, 'Thomas Mann som radikal demokrat', *Dagens Nyheter*, 4 October 1947.
104. J.F. Fetzer, *Changing Perceptions of Thomas Mann's Doctor Faustus: Criticism 1947–1992* (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1996), 2–9.
105. T. Goll, *Die Deutschen und Thomas Mann: Die Rezeption des Dichters in Abhängigkeit von der politischen Kultur Deutschlands 1898–1955* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2000), 294–316; B. Eberan, *Luther? Friedrich 'der Grosse'? Wagner? Nietzsche? ...? ...? Wer war an Hitler schuld?: Die Debatte um die Schuldfrage 1945–1949* (Munich: Minerva, 1983), 88–91; Safranski, *Romantik*, 348–352 and 370–380.
106. A. Larsson, 'Diktarfursten Goethe', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 27 August 1949; A. Mohlin, 'Goethes Über allen Gipfeln', *Arbetet*, 8 August 1949. With reference to Goethe in postwar Germany: W. Lepenies, *The Seduction of Culture in German History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), 159–164; and in much more detail K.R. Mandelkow, *Goethe in Deutschland: Rezeptionsgeschichte eines Klassikers: 1919–1982* (Munich: Beck, 1989).
107. A. Österling, 'Goethebilden', *Stockholms-Tidningen*, 22 August 1949; I. Pauli, 'Goethe, olympiern', *Morgon-Tidningen*, 27 August 1949; A. Werin, 'Goethe – medicina mentis', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 7 August 1949.
108. L. Matthias, 'Besök hos Hermann Hesse', *Expressen*, 12 December 1945; S. Selander, 'Hermann Hesse', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 15 November 1946; E. Lindegren, 'Hesse och hans lyrik', *Stockholms-Tidningen*, 20 December 1946. The reasons given by the Swedish Academy ('for his inspiring authorship which, as it develops towards boldness and depth, represents both classical humanistic ideals and high stylistic values') did not make any allusion to 'the other Germany'. Meanwhile, however, Anders Österling argued in a special statement that Hesse should be awarded the prize because 'he and Thomas Mann are at present the only significant authors who uphold the German literary cultural heritage with status and style'. There were also, the permanent secretary of the Swedish Academy was convinced, other reasons: 'An award to the 69-year-old author would also be justified in that the whole of his production reveals a good, struggling human being who has followed his calling with rare honesty and propriety and who has preserved the true emblem of humanism in a tragic period.' See B. Svensén (ed.), *Nobelpriset i litteratur: Nomineringar och utlåtanden 1901–1950:1921–1950* (Stockholm: Norstedt, 2001), 365.
109. H. Söderhjelm, 'Hermann Hesse', *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfarts-Tidning*, 15 November 1946; A. Österling, 'Årets litterära nobelpristagare', *Stockholms-Tidningen*, 15 November 1946; H. Åkerhielm, 'Hermann Hesse – äntligen!', *Morgon-Tidningen*, 15 November 1946; Selander, 'Hermann Hesse'.
110. Dagerman, *Tysk höst*, 7–8.
111. P. Øhrgaard, 'Abkehr und Wiederentdeckung: Die deutsche Kultur (vor allem die Literatur) in Dänemark nach 1945', in *Deutsche Akademie für Sprache und Dichtung: Jahrbuch 2006* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2007), 57–65.

112. For the historical tensions in German–Danish relations: K. Salomon, *Konflikt i grænseland: Sociale og nationale modsætninger i Sønderjylland 1920–33* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1980), 11–17 and K.C. Lammers, 'Hvad skal vi gøre ved tyskerne bagefter?': *Det dansk-tyske forhold efter 1945* (Copenhagen: Schonberg, 2005), 12–24.
113. In an essay, the essayist Kay Glans, born in 1955, reflects on what the abrupt break with the German cultural sphere meant for Swedes born after the war: 'Germany has been the dark continent for my generation, frightening, something that one prefers to avoid having anything to do with, at the same time as one is darkly conscious of its great significance.' See K. Glans, 'Bekænelser av ett efterkrigsbarn', in A. Björnsson and P. Luthersson (eds), *Vändpunkter: Europa och dess omvärld efter 1989* (Stockholm: Svenska Dagbladets förlag, 1995), 157.

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