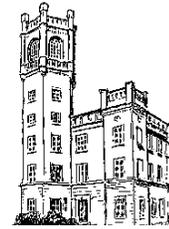




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Bridging the Past and Present

**An Analysis of the Swedish Institute's National Narrative of Sweden and World War
II From the War Through the 1960s**

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1. Abstract and Acknowledgements

1.1 Abstract

This thesis explores the Swedish Institute's construction of a national narrative of Sweden and the war and how it changed over time by comparing three time periods, 1939-1945, 1946-1959, 1960-1969. The adapting narrative of World War II serves to illustrate changes in the Swedish Institute's projected Swedish identity, focusing on neutrality as an intrinsic component. Creating a national narrative to compliment Sweden's image served to strengthen Sweden's international reputation. Thus the Swedish Institute's narrative of Sweden and the war adjusts according to the changing contexts. Ultimately the Swedish Institute constructed a narrative that was complimentary to the image of Sweden they intended to promote internationally.

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“You only live once: that’s the motto YOLO.

We bout it every day, every day, every day.”

As the end draws nigh, I reflect on my experiences, and DAMN am I glad to be done!!

New York, August 2012

Sara Marie Adhami

2. Introduction

World War II was the most profound event of the twentieth century, the enduring effects of which define many aspects of the modern era. The war raged on every corner of the globe and claimed some fifty million lives.¹ David Kennedy argues it caused a “lasting geopolitical revolution.”² Kennedy’s argument contains certain resonance when taking into account the many consequences of the war. The war facilitated the continued collapse of colonial regimes, inspired the development of new and destructive weaponry, exposed mankind’s horrifying capacity for cruelty, and more importantly left two of the victors in a four-decade long standoff, known as the Cold War. Furthermore, European hegemony faded into the background as America traded in its safeguard of isolationism to become a world leader.³ World War II facilitated a profound refashioning of national identities. Sweden, however, found itself in a unique position among the European countries. Characterized as neither Axis nor Ally, victorious nor defeated, Sweden faced a dilemma in terms of identity within an emerging world dominated by power blocs. Sweden did not fit easily into the grand narrative of World War II. A Swedish identity that centered on the concept of neutrality remained largely ambiguous.

The aim of this thesis is to consider the narrative of World War II that the Swedish Institute for Culture Exchange constructed for foreign audiences during the war and through the 1960’s, ultimately examining a time span of roughly 25 years. As a semi-governmental organization charged with promoting Sweden’s political, economic, and cultural interests abroad, the Swedish Institute constructed a national narrative that complimented Swedish neutrality as a component of identity in the post-war world.

The purpose of the present work is twofold. First, the aim is to develop and validate a method that measures changes in Sweden’s projected identity by examining the Swedish Institute’s narrative of World War II through the first two decades after the war. The national narrative initially emphasized Sweden’s role during the war but ultimately the war became less of a focal point as Sweden’s political climate changed. Specifically the shifts in the Swedish Institute’s use of World War II history becomes the means to measure aspects of how Swedish identity was presented abroad. Second, the purpose is to use this information to articulate hypotheses about the relationship between the Swedish Institute’s projected Swedish identity in terms of how political context converges with a changing

¹ David M. Kennedy, The American People in World War II: Freedom From Fear Part II (New York, 1999), p. xi.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

national narrative. Certainly the Swedish Institute formed a national narrative complimentary to Sweden's emerging international identity that they intended to promote abroad. A thorough examination of the Swedish Institute's construction and presentation of World War II history from the war through the 1960s serves to substantiate this postulation.

Although several contributions to recent scholarship discuss the Swedish Institute and assess the function of this semi-governmental organization in terms of foreign opinion and the constant interplay between national and international identity with questions of Swedish identity, this study offers a unique approach. Specifically using the Swedish Institute's narrative of World War II as a reflection of changing Swedish projected identity offers a fresh perspective. Identifying changes in specific aspects of the narrative provide a new way to assess changes in Swedish projected identity, which the Swedish Institute sought to construct and validate over a 30-year period. Due to the nature of the Swedish Institute's work and focus on cultural diplomacy, the term Swedish identity used within the confines of this thesis refers specifically to the Swedish identity and/or Swedish image that the Swedish Institute constructed for a foreign public. The source material ultimately creates an image that provides insight into the Swedish Institute's intended projected Swedish identity.

2.1 A Conceptual Analysis

World War II National Narratives: Bridging the Past and Present

Due to the fact that this thesis focuses on Sweden and the Swedish narrative of World War II, western national narratives, with special attention to Nordic national narratives, will be discussed in an effort to contextualize the Swedish narrative. Countries experienced the war in different ways and certainly the country's position both during and after the war ultimately helped to shape the narrative. Ultimately the winning and losing countries used their respective positions to construct a narrative either by downplaying their role or emphasizing their military heroics. But neutral Sweden's national narrative is most comparable to the countries with more ambiguous roles during the war that subsequently facilitated insecure political positions in the post war period.

Many narratives regarding World War II employ a modified version of Anthony Smith's 'cult of golden ages' as an intrinsic component of the subtext.⁴ They articulate a story of war and redemption, a story of triumph, a kind of golden age illuminating the country as beyond reproach. Often the canonized national narrative deviates severely from the historical version of events. The value of a national narrative is not in what it says, rather the value lies

⁴ Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (Reno, 1991), p. 66.

in what the narrative omits and emphasizes, and how the respective country intends to redeem its actions and forge its national identity in a post-war environment. Following Smith's conclusions that nations seek national narratives to glorify, the theoretical standpoint of this thesis depends on the perspective of omission. For the Swedish Institute, omission became a widely applied method to glorify the national narrative of World War II.

Countries in particularly delicate positions at the conclusion of the war exploited the national narrative to the fullest advantage. France provides an excellent case study to discuss initially, and against which to contrast Sweden, and provides an example of how the material from Sweden will be explored. Despite being an extreme case, France's construction of a national narrative clearly elucidates the omission and emphasis of facts intending to substantiate a particular post-war identity, namely France as an allied victor. Nicholas Atkin discusses the limited aid France provided to the war effort despite technically being an ally.⁵ Rather French troops capitulated to German forces in 1940 after only seven weeks of fighting, leaving half of the country under German occupation and the other half, *la zone libre* ('the free zone') a part of a collaborating regime (Vichy) headed by Marshal Philippe Pétain.⁶ Furthermore the regime committed many crimes, including the voluntary deportation of Jews. But all this was metaphorically swept under the rug in lieu of allied victory in Europe. Historians assign the name 'Vichy Syndrome' to this peculiar non-confrontation with the past.

By obscuring the past and emphasizing particular events, France created a narrative intending to redeem the questionable actions and secure the French identity as synonymous with allied identity. Henry Rousso states that the period from 1954—1971 is the period when the mythmakers rewrote history to create the legend of *la France résistante* intending to characterize the French war effort as heroic.⁷ Focusing on the efforts of a minority population, the resistance fighters in France, was simple. Within the context of the Cold War, this focus provided a means for national and international solidarity.⁸ The narrative of resistance fit nicely into the grand narrative of World War II and the story of allied victory. Atkin says "it was the Resistance that salvaged national honour, permitting France to play a part in the final defeat of Germany."⁹ The resistance narrative provided for a 'cult of a golden age' so coveted by nations and ultimately supported French redemption.

This is where the value of the narrative lies. Through the use of an historical narrative, France classified itself as a heroic victor and could more easily fit into the grand narrative of

⁵ Nicholas Atkin, *The French at War 1934-1944* (Harlow, 2001), p. 3.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

World War II. Indeed France firmly fixed its place in the western camp and could be a proponent of democracy. By securing its role in the war, the French national narrative ultimately secured its role in the post-war world.

However, national narratives constructed within the Nordic countries more closely resemble the Swedish model, as Stenius, Österberg, and Östling suggest. Although none of the Nordic countries actually constitute a victor, they do not consider themselves to be losers either.¹⁰ But Finland, for example, is more culpable than Denmark and Norway. Thus the respective countries adjusted their narratives accordingly, with Danish and Norwegian history focusing on resistance movements, contrasting a Finnish focus on defense.¹¹

Although technically a country fighting on the allied side, Denmark in reality contributed little to the war effort. Henning Poulsen condemns Denmark as a nation that quickly capitulated and cooperated with Germany.¹² However, it is the rescue of Danish Jews that Danish narratives commemorate. Poulsen argues that these resistance efforts only proved effective because of a civilized German occupation that allowed for many concessions coupled with mutual cooperation between the Danes and Germans.¹³ Furthermore, the story of Danish submission and cooperation is noticeably absent from the dominant national narrative. Denmark sought admission into the victor's club in 1945 and therefore historians forgot, excused or reinterpreted acts of cooperation to construct a 'golden age' characterized by a valiant resistance. Like France, Denmark used the narrative of World War II as a means to achieve a political end. In fact, the Danish historical narrative served to project Denmark's post-war identity as a victor internationally.

Similar to Denmark, resistance characterizes the dominant national narrative in Norway. Also like Denmark, Norway desired to be perceived as a member of the victor's club. Accordingly, the narrative ignores unpleasant elements like the persecution of Soviet, Yugoslav, and Polish prisoners of war brought to Norway.¹⁴ Instead historians constructed a narrative intending to emphasize resistance as a majority movement. Synne Corell describes the narrative as showing

¹⁰ Henrik Stenius, Mirja Österberg & Johan Östling, "Nordic Narratives of the Second World War: An Introduction," Nordic Narratives of the Second World War: National Historiographies, Ed. Henrik Stenius, Mirja Österberg & Johan Östling, (Lund, 2011), p. 22.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Henning Poulsen, "Denmark at War? The Occupation as History," War Experience, Self Image and National Identity: The Second World War as Myth and History, Eds. Stig Ekman & Nils Edling, (Stockholm, 1997). P. 99.

¹³ Ibid., p. 109.

¹⁴ Synne Corell, "The Solidity of a National Narrative: The German Occupation in Norwegian History Culture," Nordic Narratives of the Second World War: National Historiographies, Ed. Henrik Stenius, Mirja Österberg & Johan Östling (Lund, 2011), p. 103.

“...a polarized Norwegian community where the group in opposition to NS (*Nasjonal Samling*) and the occupiers is portrayed as a majority where social, political, cultural and ethnic diversities are minimized or even ignored, thus constructing Norwegian wartime society as homogeneous or monocultural.”¹⁵

Historians again chose to select, emphasize, and eventually canonize the events favorable to substantiating Norwegian identity as an allied combatant.

By contrast, Finland essentially had to restructure events to cast them in a more favorable light. During the war, Finland joined the side of Germany and fought alongside the Nazi forces against the allies.¹⁶ After the war, Finland, the historical enemy of the Soviet Union, sought integration into the Western bloc.¹⁷ According to Henrik O. Lunde

“The war at the side of Hitler was not one that brought pride to the nation and was a period many Finns would rather forget. Due to the lack of impartial and balanced treatment, large segments of the public inside the US and Europe continue to believe that Finland found itself at the side of Germany in 1941 because it was attacked by the Soviet Union.”¹⁸

In order to ingratiate itself into the western narrative and confront the nation’s shame, Finnish historians constructed a narrative that centered on defense. The Winter War with Russia became a context for Finland’s support of the Axis cause. From this vantage point, historians could portray World War II as a mere ‘continuation war’ in which Finland merely continued to defend herself against an increasingly aggressive Soviet Union.¹⁹ Viewing allegiance to Germany as a defense strategy offered a more positive connotation. By portraying the war as a struggle for survival and a necessary choice between two evil, the Finnish narrative could redeem the nation.

Using World War II as a contextual event could serve as a platform to espouse each country’s post-war political objective. France and Finland used their World War II national narratives in different ways to ultimately achieve the same result. In a broad generalization, it can be said both countries cooperated with Germany during the war. France’s Vichy regime was a collaborationist government while Finland fought alongside Germany. However after the war, both countries sought acceptance with the western allies. Clearly for France, acceptance in the west was a more fluid transition since the world considered them an ally. Nonetheless, France structured their national narrative to fit into the grand narrative of World War II as a nation of resisters, rather than a country dominated by a collaborationist regime. Similarly Finland presented a narrative that showed itself as a small country trying to

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Henrik O. Lunde, *Finland’s War of Choice: The Troubled German Finnish Coalition in WWII* (Philadelphia, 2011), p. 20.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

resist an aggressive Soviet Union and therefore forced to ally with Germany. Clearly both countries utilized their narratives to augment a positive post-war identity.

Similarly, Norway and Denmark used their narratives to both omit and emphasize events that proved most advantageous to the nation's post-war image. The narrative was adapted to compliment the country's political objective. Although the world tended to classify both countries as allies, the narrative nonetheless sought to counteract any ambiguity regarding wartime actions. The final result was a narrative that both remembered and forgot events most suited to the post-war national image.

The Concept of Cultural Diplomacy

This study relies on a comprehensive understanding of the concept of cultural diplomacy in order to investigate the Swedish Institute's narrative of history. During its early years, the Swedish Institute relied heavily on cultural diplomacy as a technique and a means to endear Sweden to foreign audiences. The construction of the national narrative likewise reflects this aim. A discussion of cultural diplomacy is necessary to establish the link between the narrative and foreign public opinion. In other words, foreign perception serves as a fundamental component of cultural diplomacy, ultimately shaping the exchange of information.

Cultural diplomacy as a definition can be understood as an amalgamation of several other definitions. First, *diplomacy* is a stately activity, involving interaction between states or rather, governments.²⁰ By contrast, *public diplomacy*, a term coined by Edmund Guillon, involves small and non-state actors and appeals to foreign publics rather than governments using bilateral information flow.²¹ An outgrowth of *diplomacy* and more specifically *public diplomacy*, *cultural diplomacy* is a more nuanced term. According to Cesar Rivas, cultural diplomacy is best understood as a method to represent culture abroad and construct diplomatic tools that effectively facilitate long term friendships between nations. The aim of cultural diplomacy is to make national culture accessible to foreign peoples.²² Rivas' definition is acceptable but does not clearly distinguish cultural diplomacy from the more broad pursuit of public diplomacy. Cynthia Schneider defines cultural diplomacy in more specific terms as "the exchange of ideas, information, art and other aspects of culture among

²⁰ Jan Melissen, "The New Public Diplomacy: Between Theory and Practice," The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations, Ed. Jan Melissen (Basingstoke, 2005), p. 12.

²¹ Ibid, p. 6, 12-13.

²² César Villanueva Rivas, Representing Cultural Diplomacy: Soft Power, Cosmopolitan Constructivism and Nation Branding in Mexico and Sweden (Göteborg, 2007), p. 18.

nations and their peoples to foster mutual understanding.”²³ However the most comprehensive definition is a hybrid between Rivas and Schneider. Cultural diplomacy is the exchange of relatable ideas, information and culture between publics aiming to foster and promote mutual and long-term cooperation and understanding between the nations. This definition will be applied for the course of the study as a means to decipher and position the work of the Swedish Institute.

Cultural diplomacy is also a type of *soft power*, a term coined by Joseph Nye Jr.²⁴ Soft power does not employ the militaristic weapons of hard power, but instead seeks to persuade and infiltrate with culture, values, and ideas.²⁵ The effect of soft power is longevity as it is both persuasive and pervasive. Rivas articulates the goal of soft power aptly, stating that it seeks to “conquer hearts and minds of other foreign people in order to make them well disposed in cultural terms, favoring the power positions of the dominant nation in international relations.”²⁶ As Rivas highlights, international relations depends on soft power conquering the hearts and minds of foreign people and facilitating perceptiveness among them. Soft power can be a manipulative way to promote a country’s policy agenda. Thus, cultural diplomacy is inextricably linked to politics.

Although the term cultural diplomacy aspires to distance itself from the more negative term of *propaganda*, the distinction is rather gratuitous. Rather than focusing on the negative connotations Melissen says that propaganda “should be seen as a wide-ranging and ethically neutral political activity that is to be distinguished from categories such as information and education.”²⁷ The emphasis is that propaganda, like cultural diplomacy persuades people to think a certain way. The two terms are not interchangeable, however, the distinction being in the fact that cultural diplomacy both transmits and receives.

The importance of cultural diplomacy is that it is largely political and adaptive. Cultural diplomacy seeks to influence politics through the back door. Since it both transmits and receives, the goals and messages change accordingly with the changing political climate. Accepting the Swedish Institute as an agent of cultural diplomacy and history construction as a means of cultural diplomacy demonstratives the adaptive nature of both said agent and means. In essence, the Swedish Institute could adapt both their technique and message in accordance with the political climate and foreign opinion.

²³ Cynthia P. Schneider, “Culture Communicates: US Diplomacy That Works,” The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations, Ed. Jan Melissen (Basingstoke, 2005), p. 147.

²⁴ Rivas, Representing Cultural Diplomacy, p. 20.

²⁵ Schneider, “Culture Communicates,” p. 31.

²⁶ Rivas, Representing Cultural Diplomacy, p. 16.

²⁷ Melissen, “Between Theory and Practice,” p. 18.

Swedish Neutrality as a Concept

The concept of Swedish neutrality is also a crucial component of the message of the Swedish Institute's narrative. Much of the Swedish narrative depends on restructuring neutrality to become a viable component of identity to a foreign public. The narrative of World War II was chosen as a focus of this thesis because discussions of neutrality remained constant through the three time periods. Although the Swedish Institute changed from using the war as a means to substantiate neutrality to discussing neutrality as a tradition, the concept of neutrality as a beneficial Swedish policy remained intrinsic in the narrative.

Generally negative connotations plague the concept of neutrality. Notions of weakness, insignificance, self-servitude, and a general lack of morality often accompany the term. Christine Agius calls it a perpetual "state of limbo" somewhere between action and inaction, a situation hardly conducive to identity formation and/or international relations.²⁸ It is somewhat curious that despite the negative connotations that accompany neutrality, Sweden ultimately employed the image to recast the nation's identity in a positive light and utilize the concept as a critical component in the internal and external identity of the nation-state.²⁹ However, upon close scrutiny, the flexibility of the term is hardly surprising. Rather the term 'neutral' denotes an inability to decide which side to take and is therefore artfully ambiguous in the noncommittal nature. The flexibility of such an ambiguity can serve to both aid and hinder identity, simultaneously implying the potential of a country to help everyone and no one at all. Neutrality can demonstrate a nation's weakness or a nation's resoluteness in adhering to their strict ideology. In many regards, the ambiguity of the term itself, promotes flexibility. Regarding neutrality as a flexible term provides for a more comprehensive understanding of the development of Swedish neutrality during the course of World War II.

Like the term itself, Sweden practiced neutrality in a flexible way. In 1945, Joachim Joesten discussed the adaptation of Swedish neutrality, stating that "the Swedes, like other wary bystanders, continually adjusted their concepts of neutrality in accordance with the demands of the winning side."³⁰ This adjustment gave rise to the idea that Sweden supported a pendulum policy during the course of World War II. Indeed Swedish policy adjusted with the fluctuation of fortunes during the war. However, as Jerrold Packard points out, none of the five neutrals of World War II — Switzerland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and Ireland — could sustain strict neutrality and accordingly adjusted their policies in order to continue to

²⁸ Christine Agius, *The Social Construction of Swedish Neutrality: Challenges to Swedish Identity and Sovereignty* (Manchester, 2006), p. 10.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

³⁰ Joachim Joesten, "Phases in Swedish Neutrality," *Foreign Affairs* 23, no. 2 (Jan. 1945), p. 324.

appease the warring enemies.³¹ It is the notion of neutrality in flux that came to define Swedish neutrality.

Most historians discussing the questionable actions of Sweden during the war converge on the postulation that following the allied victories of Stalingrad and the South Pacific, Swedish policy took a decisively pro-allied tilt.³² The pro-German actions Sweden pursued in the earlier half of the war provide the context for the early work of the Institute and will therefore be discussed in detail in Chapter 1. These actions are the ones that proved more formidable to overcome in terms of restructuring Swedish identity in the post-war world. However Swedish neutrality remained flexible and therefore many actions of the neutral nation also boasted pride. The interplay between positive and negative is a constant component of Swedish neutrality. Particularly the Swedish humanitarian efforts produced the more favored positive connotations. Sweden provided refuge for over 1,000 allied airmen crash-landing over Swedish territory, as well as refuge and aid for the Danish Jews fleeing German persecution.³³ Additionally, Swedish diplomat Folke Bernadotte pleaded for the release of over 19,000 Scandinavian and other prisoners of war, which the Germans subsequently granted.³⁴ Swede Raoul Wallenberg similarly saved thousands of Jews in Hungary from Nazi persecution.³⁵

However despite these heroic efforts many retained a disdainful opinion of Swedish neutrality, unable to forget the role Sweden played in the German war effort. In fact, Paul Levine argues that the Swedish humanitarian efforts were a method to assuage feelings of guilt and deflect allied economic demands.³⁶ After the war, allied opinion remained resolutely condemning, as the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Dean Acheson's comment demonstrates: "At home the public, almost to a man, regarded arrangements to supply the neutrals as traitorous connivance at treating with the enemy neutrals were judged to be enemy sympathizers."³⁷ For the allies, neutrality only meant one thing — cooperation with and appeasement for the enemy.

Sweden chose to play on the negative but more importantly the positive elements to restructure neutrality to become a key component of Sweden's international image. During the Cold War, Sweden thus constructed neutrality to become a political and social 'third way'

³¹ Jerrold M. Packard, Neither Friend Nor Foe: The European Neutrals in World War II (New York, 1992), p. x.

³² Ibid, p. 299.

³³ Ibid, p. 301, 306.

³⁴ Ibid, p. 307.

³⁵ Herbert R. Reginbogin, Faces of Neutrality: A Comparative Analysis of the Neutrality of Switzerland and Other Neutral Nations during WWII (Bern, 2006), p. 145.

³⁶ Ibid, p. 148.

³⁷ Packard, Neither Friend Nor Foe, p. xiii.

between two regimes.³⁸ The ambiguous nature of the concept facilitated this process. Neutrality as a term remained fluid and flexible. For Sweden, the positive connotations of neutrality inevitably transcended the negative.

2.2 What We Know

A major purpose of this study is to place it within the already significant discourse regarding the topics of cultural relations, identity, and nationalism. Ultimately the goal is to establish and validate the link between the construction of history and the aforementioned concepts. Since this present study relies on the idea national narratives play an important role in cultural relations, understanding and defining culture as a key to international relations and thus an effective political tool is crucial.

Several authors play a significant role in shaping the argument of this thesis. Particularly, Gregory Paschalidis and his argument centering on the increased politicization of culture as a means to influence nations will be argued here. Indeed, history as a reflection of culture contains a resonance that can breach political barriers more effectively than politicians. Also important is César Villanueva Rivas and the idea that national identity constructs culture. Substantiating this link between identity and culture facilitates the link between history and identity and makes discussions and understandings regarding national narratives as a reflection of national identity possible. Christine Agius discusses the particular case of Sweden, in terms of neutrality as a reflection of Swedish identity, focusing on the development of active neutrality and credible neutrality. These two neutrality concepts indeed shaped the Swedish Institute's national narrative of Sweden and World War II. With regards to the Swedish national narrative, the arguments of Johan Östling and Anthony Smith are especially relevant. Smith discusses narratives in a general sense, focusing on the tendency of nations to construct a golden age, while Östling discusses Sweden in particular and the country's reliance on the small-state realistic narrative as a means to downplay the negative Swedish action of World War II. Finally important is Michael Billigs argument that nationalism becomes increasingly banal and accepted as cannon with repetition and increased infiltration of cultural symbols. In fact, Billigs' argument offers one explanation for the decreased importance of the narrative of Sweden and World War II during the 1960s. In conjunction with Sweden's strong international position, the events of World War II entered the historical canon and Sweden no longer needed to justify or explain questionable actions.

³⁸ Kazimierz Musiał, Roots of the Scandinavian Model: Images of Progress in the Era of Modernisation, (Berlin, 2002), p. 13.

Rather the story of Swedish heroics and the idea of forced cooperation with Germany became the accepted narrative and no longer deserved discussion. The Swedish Institute's narrative of World War II becomes significant when applying the idea of constructing cultural aspects to represent and validate a projected Swedish identity.

Culture is by no means a new means of practicing diplomacy. Gregory Paschalidis discusses the increased politicization of culture through the decades, breaking the process into four distinct phases. The first phase, characterized by nationalist aspirations, depended on overseas rivalries and the European powers' lust for hegemony and control over particular regions.³⁹ Phase 2 began during World War II, when culture became aggressive and truly began to serve a political agenda.⁴⁰ The shift occurred somewhere around 1953 and marked Phase 3 so that during the Cold War culture took on a new diplomatic appearance and became the "most prudent option for bringing war-weary international society back to the conciliatory path of mutual appreciation and understanding."⁴¹ Finally Phase 4 emerged with the conclusion of the Cold War and culture became increasingly about exporting and nation branding.⁴² Due to the frame discussed in this thesis it is predominantly Paschalidis' Phase 2 and Phase 3 outlining culture's shift from aggressive to diplomatic that are relevant.

Indeed, many authors similarly emphasize culture's potentially aggressive nature, particularly during the hostilities of World War II. Frederico Neiburg and Marcio Goldman argue that during this period, culture really became objectified.⁴³ The idea of utilizing culture as a sound basis for waging war really substantiates the intensified objectivity of culture. John Dower discusses the employment of culture within the United States as a means of defeating the Japanese, paying special attention to the creation and promulgation of the *Why We Fight* series in 1942.⁴⁴ The films depicted, the United States and its allies as combatants of evil against Japan, Germany, and Italy, all of whom intended, based on their histories of conquest and lust for power, to enslave the free world.⁴⁵ The conclusion was that the Axis' culture facilitated their overtly aggressive behavior and desire for power. Furthermore, Capra created the series at the bequest of Army Chief of Staff, George C. Marshall, reflecting the state's increasing emphasis on culture as an object to wage and win war.⁴⁶ The success of

³⁹ Gregory Paschalidis, "Exporting National Culture: Histories of Cultural Institutes Abroad," *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 15, no. 3 (August 2009), p. 279.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 281.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 283.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 284.

⁴³ Frederico Neiburg, Marcio Goldman & Peter Gow, "Anthropology and Politics in Studies of National Character," *Cultural Anthropology* 13, no. 1 (Feb. 1998), p. 15.

⁴⁴ John W. Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race & Power in the Pacific War* (New York, 1986), p. 15.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

culture as a means of winning the war facilitated its shift to a method of winning peace during the Cold War.

Therefore it is the diplomatic nature of culture Paschalidis' Phase 3 that exists in a wealth of literature. Ruth Benedict's *Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, written in 1944, in which she studies Japanese culture, validates the importance of cultural understanding. She eloquently argues that

“One of the handicaps of the twentieth century is that we still have the vaguest and most biased notions, not only of what makes Japan a nation of Japanese, but what makes the United States a nation of Americans, France a nation of Frenchman, and Russia a nation of Russians. Lacking this knowledge each country misunderstands the other.”⁴⁷

Because the Cold War was fundamentally ideological in nature, the power of culture reached new dimensions. Frank Ninkovich says that culture had the power of permeability and could effectively penetrate barriers where politics failed.⁴⁸ Similarly Laura Belmonte argues for the power of culture as a technique to represent the nation to others and ultimately sell itself overseas.⁴⁹ Culture was a way to promote a nation and reinforce credibility abroad. Jan Melissen says that the ability to find and promote credibility is a means of collaboration and a method of achieving power.⁵⁰

Culture became an effective weapon to achieve foreign policy objectives and avoid outright war, cultivating the practice of cultural relations. Andrew Falk argues “once the Cold War became viewed as an ideological contest with Soviet communism, only culture...could breach the Iron Curtain with any regularity.”⁵¹ Therefore, culture developed within the undercurrents of diplomacy. Indeed the maturation of culture as a method of diplomacy serves to answer the question of why the Swedish Institute constructed the national narrative of World War II in a particular way.

Another key concept prolific in the discourse is the relationship between culture and identity formation. According to César Villanueva Rivas cultural representations are mere social constructs of national identities and intricately connected with political representations.⁵² The link between politics and national identity is particularly poignant in

⁴⁷ Ruth Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns Of Japanese Culture* (Boston, 1946), p. 13.

⁴⁸ Frank A. Ninkovich, *The Diplomacy of Ideas: U.S. Foreign Policy and Cultural Relations, 1938-1950* (New York, 1981), p. 6.

⁴⁹ Laura A. Belmonte, *Selling the American Way: U.S. Propaganda and the Cold War* (Philadelphia, 2008), p. 8.

⁵⁰ Melissen, “Between Theory and Practice,” p. 5.

⁵¹ Andrew J. Falk, *Upstaging the Cold War: American Dissent and Cultural Diplomacy, 1940-1960* (Amherst, 2010), p. 214.

⁵² Rivas, *Representing Cultural Diplomacy*, p. 83.

the case of Sweden. Marquis Childs' 1936 book *Sweden: The Middle Way* first characterized Sweden as path forger, a country that practiced a new and successful cooperative democracy and led the world into a more peaceful future.⁵³ This image proved ubiquitous and adapted itself following World War II. Identity became synonymous with uniqueness. Using Rivas's idea that national identity constructs culture, develops the assertion that the Swedish Institute ultimately employed the national narrative of World War II to project a Swedish image to the world.

Due to Sweden's policy of nonalignment exercised during the war and more importantly during the Cold War, neutrality came to comprise a critical component of Swedish identity and part of Child's 'middle way' or national uniqueness. In fact, Christine Agius labels Sweden's peculiar brand of neutrality as "active neutrality."⁵⁴ Neutrality as essential to Swedish identity became a venue to export core Social Democratic norms and values in an international arena. As opposed to the non-participation concept of neutrality, Swedish neutrality provided for international participation through solidarity with underdeveloped countries particularly in South America, development cooperation, mediation, peacekeeping, policies of disarmament, UN participation, and criticism of the Cold War superpowers.⁵⁵

Additionally in an effort to combat the negative notions surrounding neutrality and Sweden's pendulum policy of World War II, Swedish identity focused on what Agius terms "credible neutrality."⁵⁶ Sweden needed to construct their particular identity to become credible to the outside world. In other words, Sweden not a part of the winning or losing side of World War II, nor a state with a clear policy agenda in terms of the two power blocs, needed to construct an identity that proved credible to the international world.

Thus emerges the concept of nationalism and the perpetual interplay with internationalism. Nationalism depends almost exclusively on the desire of a nation to situate itself in an international context. Michael Billig says that "nationalism is an international ideology" and "nations exist in a world of other nations."⁵⁷ In other words one simply cannot exist without the other. International identity shapes national identity and vice versa. Many authors assert the exchange between external and internal forces. Paschalidis says that nations make an image constructed for the sake of others.⁵⁸ Similarly Rodney Brue Hall argues that nationalism relies on domestic and international interests that are perpetually in

⁵³ Marquis W. Childs, *Sweden: The Middle Way* (New Haven, 1936), p. 161.

⁵⁴ Agius, *The Social Construction of Swedish Neutrality*, p. 6.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

⁵⁷ Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (London, 1995), p. 53.

⁵⁸ Gregory Paschalidis, "Exporting National Culture: Histories of Cultural Institutes Abroad," *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 15, no. 3 (August 2009), p. 288.

flux because international relations spark changes.⁵⁹ Nicolas Glover's thesis also depends on the assertion that the Swedish Institute through their cultural diplomacy constructed an image that could be successfully promoted outwardly and inwardly.⁶⁰

Swedish identity came to be characterized both externally and internally in terms of neutrality according to Agius.⁶¹ Identity is not only about a country's domestic image but also a country's international image and is always adjusted accordingly. The thesis takes the perspective that national images are constructed for the benefit of international relations. An 'other' always facilitates identity formation because identity often is based on the relationship to this other. As Benedict Anderson argues, people think about themselves by relating themselves to others.⁶² Relating allows defining and that is why the interplay between national and international is crucial to understanding identity formation.

Narrative construction is often generalized and as a result fails to substantiate the main postulation of this thesis—that a clear link exists between the construction of a national narrative and identity. Rather the idea is often implied and not plainly expressed. Anderson writes

“Awareness of being embedded in secular, serial time, with all its implications of continuity, yet of ‘forgetting’ the experience of this continuity—product of the ruptures of the late eighteenth century—engenders the need for a ‘narrative’ of identity.”⁶³

Essentially, identity needs a narrative but not vice versa. It is the idea that a narrative promotes a constructed identity where the literature is less explicit.

However there is often a link between history and politics in a general sense. Anthony Smith sums up history as a tool utilized in promoting a political agenda rather when he writes “the other way of constructing maps and moralities for present generations was through the use of history and, especially, the cult of golden ages.”⁶⁴ The ‘golden age’ of a nation's narrative often centers on war and salvation. It is a contrived way to construct a narrative that will most profoundly romanticize the nation. Therefore, the romanticized version of events, rather the creation of myth, serves a political agenda and is indeed a

⁵⁹ Rodney Bruce Hall, National Collective Identity: Social Constructs and International Systems (New York, 1999), p. 6-7.

⁶⁰ Nikolas Glover, National Relations: Public Diplomacy, National Identity and the Swedish Institute 1945-1970 (Lund, 2011), p. 11.

⁶¹ Agius, The Social Construction of Swedish Neutrality, p. 5.

⁶² Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism (London, 1983), p. 36.

⁶³ Ibid, p. 205.

⁶⁴ Smith, National Identity, p. 66.

prolific concept. John Lewis Gaddis similarly argues that the past is often exploited to serve some current national, religious or political purpose.⁶⁵ National narratives are often united in patriotism. Henrik Stenius, Mirja Österberg and Johan Östling say they also serve to justify the present pattern of society and vindicate a dominant ideological viewpoint.⁶⁶ Additionally, Tony Judt argues that the European continent had to simultaneously hold the near past back and learn moral lessons from that very same past.⁶⁷ This argument is certainly a reflection of Anderson's 'remembering and forgetting' technique.⁶⁸

The small-state security policy certainly emerged as dominant and became essential to Swedish identity formation. Östling argues that Sweden as a small state needed to submit to the will of Germany, the larger and more aggressive state. All the concessions Sweden made were a result of this policy and therefore justified.⁶⁹ The basic premise emphasized that neutrality spared Sweden war and occupation, the implication being that neutrality was a positive choice. Furthermore, the policy benefited the other Nordic countries and brought peace to Sweden.⁷⁰ True the narrative was extremely self-righteous, overtly promoting the policy of neutrality. But the small-state realistic narrative served an important political purpose as Alf W. Johansson remarks:

“All the difficult questions which the policy of concessions posed about the Swedish social ethos during the war years, about the will to resist and submission, about fidelity to one's own ideals and ideological principles, were swept under the carpet by the triumph of small-state realism.”⁷¹

Sweden's narrative could serve the country's political agenda and promote a positive image of neutrality through cultural means. Thus it was this very same small-state realistic narrative that the Swedish Institute employed in their construction of history that would form the core of Swedish identity in World War II and the Cold War.

In large part this was dependent on Michael Foucault's argument that history needed to become natural.⁷² Once history became ingrained or canonized it becomes like Billig's banal nationalism, so intrinsically present in daily life that it is no longer questioned or even

⁶⁵ John Lewis Gaddis, The Landscape of History: How Historians Map the Past (New York, 2002), p. 122.

⁶⁶ Stenius, Österberg & Östling “An Introduction,” p. 14.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Anderson, Imagined Communities, p. 206.

⁶⁹ Johan Östling, “The Rise and Fall of Small State Realism,” in Nordic Narratives of the Second World War: National Historiographies Revisited, Ed. Henrik Stenius, Mirja Österberg & Johan Östling, (Lund, 2011), p. 128.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Michel Foucault, The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences (New York, 1994), p. 128.

considered, but rather accepted. After history becomes seemingly banal it can serve a political agenda through cultural diplomacy. Although the authors tend to generalize the link between current politics and history, the idea that history has power and potential as a political tool is emphasized.

The Swedish Institute took a lot of the theoretical elements of politicized culture and effectively utilized them to the utmost. In essence, culture in the form of history, can be understood as potentially able to enhance a country's political ideology. The Swedish Institute in particular capitalized on this thought and used the narrative of World War to promote Sweden's national image in terms of neutrality. As both the concept of neutrality and the Swedish narrative of World War II strengthened, the Institute's use of the narrative subsequently declined. The resulting narrative focused on neutrality as a tradition rather than a product of World War II, making discussions of the war increasingly obsolete.

2.3 Research Questions

A national narrative is a crucial component of a nation's identity. Not only does it promote self-awareness but it also allows a nation to situate itself among others. A well-constructed national narrative promotes admiration domestically and commands respect internationally. National narratives go hand-in-hand with legitimization. However, as with Swedish neutrality during the war, national narratives have the innate ability to adapt. It is the concept of adjustment, the translation of pragmatist and appeaser into key terms like 'small-state realism' and 'neutrality' that inevitably play an enormous role in both post-war academics and politics for Sweden.

This thesis focuses on two major research questions that are not mutually exclusive. In fact, determining the answers to the first plays an enormous role in subsequently answering the second question. As previously mentioned, the research aims to validate a method to measure Swedish projected identity changes. The changes of the Swedish Institute's narrative of Sweden and the war becomes the consequence, ranging from detailed discussions in the early period to omissions and finally to a virtual lack of reference to the war. As the concept of neutrality becomes synonymous with Swedish identity, discussions of the war decrease until they become almost nonexistent. Therefore the Swedish Institute's construction of history of World War II becomes an effective way to measure changes, basically mirroring Sweden's strengthening international identity and position. Because the Swedish Institute in its pursuit of cultural diplomacy constructs a narrative intended for a foreign public, this approach is indeed fruitful. Clear discursive shifts emerge as the political context changes.

Through analysis of events in terms of change and continuity, the narrative becomes a clear reflection of both Sweden's identity and political situation. The first research question is how did the history writing change over time and why? As context changes, the narrative accordingly adapted. Therefore the answer to this question relies heavily on context. The thesis will address context in terms of discussions regarding first the war and then the political climate with emphasis on how the events affect Sweden.

The second question relies on analyzing particularly what events the Swedish Institute's narrative omitted and included, emphasized and downplayed, or selected. By determining the narrative, or rather selection of events, it is clear what image and identity of Sweden the Swedish Institute chose to promote. It is the concept of adjustment, the translation of pragmatist and appeaser into key terms like 'small-state realism' and 'neutrality' that inevitably play an enormous role in both postwar academics and politics. Thus the second question is specifically how did the Swedish Institute construct history regarding the role Sweden played in World War II? The answer to this question relies on a thorough analysis of the discursive shifts within the narratives between three outlined time periods.

2.4 Sources

This section elaborates on the rationale employed for the selection of sources. Using the Swedish Institute's *Upplysningsmaterial på Främmande språk* as a source material offers a fruitful method to determine the transitory nature of Swedish identity during this time period and in the context of war. All the sources are in English, which allowed a more thorough analysis from the author. More importantly, relying on information in English allows for a more accurate assessment of the image Sweden intended to project to a foreign public. After all, the Institute constructed all the discussed documents for a foreign audience. Therefore the image the source material creates is ultimately indicative of Sweden's intended projected identity. For that reason the source material is an example of propagandistic and persuasive communication, discerningly constructed to attract and relate Sweden internationally.

This thesis also depends on accepting the idea that the Swedish Institute constructed history to reflect changes in Sweden's image. The Swedish Institute archives in Arninge contain a breadth of information, most highly propagandistic in nature. This includes pamphlets, brochures, books and fact sheets in English, all of which helped to shape the current analysis. Such an enormous amount of information required a discerning eye and a selection criteria. All material that related to history and World War II was used. The early years, immediately following the Institute's creation as well as the 1950s, boasted a large amount of material discussing Sweden's involvement in World War II. However, during the

mid 1960s the material declined until discussions of World War II became almost nonexistent. Therefore the development of discussions regarding Swedish involvement in World War II can be a way to perceive the development of Swedish identity in terms of neutrality, eventually transforming the image from a negative representation to Agius' 'credible neutrality.'

This thesis considers all documents available from the Swedish Institute archive, concerning World War II, from during the war until 1969. Three primary reasons support this selection method. First, Glover's thesis outlines the Institute's activities through 1970 when the state restructured the Institute into an official organization, changing the nature of the information propagation.⁷³ Second, Gregory Paschalidis discusses the cultural diplomacy of the Cold War era in his Phase 3, outlining the more prominent activities as occurring pre 1970. Thirdly, and most importantly, the quantitative data dictates the time period. After the early 1960s, historical narrative discussing World War II virtually disappear or provide only a cursory glance in the Swedish Institute archives. Therefore the amount of material played an enormous role in limiting the time period.

The context of the Swedish Institute as a source of information is also an important factor in ascertaining the usefulness of the material. The state and corporate members funded the development of the Swedish Institute in January 1945.⁷⁴ It is important to note that the architects created the Institute directly after Stalingrad assured allied victory and just before the war ended in May 1945. Although the details of the Institute's creation are further outlined in the paper, the context of the creation is crucial to understanding the selection of source material and particularly the emphasis of World War II. The Institute was a product of the war and became proficient at the practice of cultural diplomacy during the Cold War. Intending to conduct a massive damage control campaign, the Swedish Institute sought to disseminate information to repair Sweden's damaged international image. Erik Boheman during an address to the Institute in 1945 said:

"We will to an extent speak a language different from those peoples. This does not mean that our task will be any less important. Because of the privileged position that we have created for ourselves, we can on behalf of the future attempt to oversee this transition. We can restore the best of what Western culture has to offer, and if we do it with humility and modesty, we can help return to large parts of the European continent something of the heritage that got lost in the war."⁷⁵

⁷³ Glover, *National Relations*, p. 170.

⁷⁴ Nikolas Glover, "Imaging Community: Sweden in 'Cultural Propaganda' Then and Now," *Scandinavian Journal of History* 34, no. 3 (Sep. 2009), p. 248.

⁷⁵ *Ibid*, p. 249-250.

That is why considering the context of its creation, as well as the mission of the Swedish Institute elucidates the usefulness of history construction as a scale for changes in identity. The narrative served to validate neutrality as a fundamental component of Swedish identity, initially using World War II as the context.

2.5 Disposition of Thesis

This thesis is separated into three main chapters, based on three time periods. Each chapter is subsequently subdivided into a section of historical context, a comparative analysis between sources mainly following a chronology and a conclusion demonstrating the link between context and narrative of identity. The concluding remarks provide a brief summarization of each section as well as provide a final discussion of the overarching themes of this thesis.

The first section covers the years 1939—1945 and discusses sources produced and distributed during the war, examining the discursive shifts from the beginning of the war until after the year 1943. The observable tone of the narrative is largely insecure and explanatory in nature. The tendency in these articles is to stress a link between the United States and Sweden, and to develop the small-state realistic narrative and the image of Sweden as a humanitarian. Indeed the link between context and narrative is most visible during this time when examining the changes in the Swedish narrative before and after the 1943 date.

The second chapter discusses the immediate postwar years from 1946—1959. Many documents discuss World War II history, indicating the great importance of the subject during the period. The narrative clearly emphasizes the credible nature of neutrality as a key component of Swedish foreign policy. Indeed, the narrative focuses on Sweden's humanitarian efforts during the war as a means to highlight the benefits of neutrality as a policy. The Swedish Institute uses World War II history to the utmost as a platform to espouse Sweden's political ideology during this time. This is really the pinnacle and the subsequent time period demonstrates a waning of World War II history as a subject of importance.

The final chapter focuses on the years 1960—1969. The Swedish Institute began to use World War II history to a lesser extent. Instead a decided focus on neutrality emerged. History writing discussed neutrality as a long unbroken tradition with World War II merely discussed as an irrelevant side note. The world largely accepted Sweden's neutrality as a credible policy and therefore justification and explanation of events during World War II was no longer a necessity. As a result there exists a general lack of substantive material discussing the war during this final period. Swedish identity decidedly became more centered

on the neutrality concept and as a result World War II simply lost its relevance. The link between Sweden's political context and the Swedish Institute's national narrative is most evident during this time.

The entire analysis depends on the interplay between change, continuity, and context. As the context changes, the narrative also adapts and continues accordingly. The narrative is a reflection of Swedish projected identity and a reflection of Swedish policy objectives. For Sweden, national identity and policy became increasingly interchangeable and interdependent, particularly in terms of neutrality. Therefore, the narrative tends to emphasize and downplay different events depending on the political situation. The Swedish Institute's narrative sought to glorify and emphasize Sweden's role during the war because Sweden sought cooperation with the western bloc. However, as Maria-Pia Boëthius argues in the opening of her history of Sweden and the Second World War that:

“This is a history book for those who were born after the war; an indictment, a list of sins and a contribution to the debate. The post-war generation in Sweden knows extraordinarily little about Sweden and the Second World War. This might be a part of our general lack of a sense of history, this might be a conspiracy of silence. Sweden's role during the Second World War was not glorious.”⁷⁶

This statement highlights the waning importance of World War II as a topic of discussion. The thesis in part attempts to explain why the history of Sweden and World War II became a ‘conspiracy of silence.’

Indeed the war seemingly loses its relevance in favor of historiography focusing almost exclusively on Swedish neutrality as a longstanding tradition. What Billig's banal nationalism argument underplays is how deliberately the Swedish Institute constructed nationalism, regarding Sweden's national narrative of World War II. Rather than simply allowing time and repetition to canonize the narrative, the Institute methodically constructed a history to promote a positive Swedish post-war image. Initially, the Institute achieved this by using small-state realism to justify Swedish actions during the war and avoid difficult questions, in concordance with Östling's argument considering the proliferation of the small-state realistic narrative. However, his argument underscores the potential of the small-state realistic narrative to ultimately make discussions of the war obsolete. For the Swedish Institute, this idea contributed to the declining importance of World War II as a topic of discussion during the 1960s and use of the war as a means to espouse political ideology during the 1950s. Non-

⁷⁶ Östling, “The Rise and Fall of Small State Realism,” p. 136.

confrontation ultimately led to non-discussion. As a result the Institute of the 1950s increasingly relied on discussions of Sweden's humanitarian efforts during the war to promote the benefits of Swedish neutrality then and during the Cold War. Finally during the 1960s the Swedish Institute constructed an historical narrative that bypassed discussions of World War II in favor of discussing the Swedish tradition of neutrality. The Swedish Institute deliberately constructed a narrative that sidestepped World War II and removed the war from Swedish national identity. Thus Boëthius' argument that World War II became a 'conspiracy of silence' is particularly profound.

2.6 The Swedish Institute

In January 1945, the Swedish Institute for Cultural Exchange with Foreign Countries (*Svenska Institutet för Kulturellt Utbyte med Utlandet*), later shortened to Swedish Institute (*Svenska Institutet*), came to fruition with the purpose to promote cultural exchange, improve Sweden's image abroad, and facilitate a fluid integration into the sphere of post-war powers.⁷⁷ As a semi-official agency funded by both the State and corporate members, the Swedish Institute needed to restructure and repair Sweden's damaged reputation.⁷⁸ Both a product of an international trend of similar agencies, and a product of World War II, discussing the Swedish Institute's context establishes a method to properly assess the subsequent work and mission.

Similar Organizations as Models for the Institute

Although the Swedish Institute ultimately became a cultural institute in a sea of many comparable foreign cultural institutes, it is particularly the British Council and the Danish Society that Nikolas Glover argues provided the model for the Swedish Institute.⁷⁹ Indeed an assessment of these two institutes highlights similar formations and missions.

The British Council formed in 1934, well before the commencement of World War II. The Council's mission was comparable to the Swedish Institute. Intending to counteract a mounting negative image, the British Council sought to protect the country's political and economic interests. Furthermore, the Council sought legitimization as a cultural diplomat rather than as a propagandist machine. Appropriately, the Council would serve the interests

⁷⁷ Glover, "Imaging community," p. 248.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ Glover, *National Relations*, p. 27.

of both private investors and the governmental Foreign Office.⁸⁰ The negative effect a war potentially has on a country's image and economy facilitated the promotion of cultural diplomacy as a method to counteract negativity and ultimately serve foreign policy objectives. The Swedish Institute later employed this same rationale during the nascent stages of Swedish cultural diplomacy.

Similarly *Danske Selskab*, or the Danish Society was also a product of World War II like the Swedish Institute.⁸¹ However the Danish Society pursued an overtly different policy objective than both the Swedish Institute and the British Council, wanting instead to educate. Conceived during the Nazi occupation, Glover asserts that the Society sought "cultural resistance to the foreign occupation."⁸² The idea of educating through cultural means or using culture as a weapon ultimately influenced the Swedish Institute. Furthermore the idea that a cultural agency could promote and represent a national culture became crucial to the development of the Swedish Institute.

It is thus the formation of many similar institutes coupled with the specific methods they employed to engage culture that ultimately facilitated the formation of the Swedish Institute. These similarly constructed agencies, particularly the British Council and Danish Society served as a context for the later Swedish Institute.

Stalingrad and the America Inquiry

Considering an historical timeline is also essential when discussing context. With the advent of a monumental battle fought along the banks of the Volga, the fortunes of the war changed. Until the battle of Stalingrad, it remained uncertain if the Allies could defeat the powerful German forces. However, the Germans surrendered to the Russians on January 31, 1943 and abruptly stopped German movement eastward.⁸³ More importantly the victory at Stalingrad assured Allied victory beyond a reasonable doubt.

This reversal of fortunes provoked Swedish insecurity in terms of post-war foreign relations and in February 1943 the Swedish government appointed a committee to analyze Sweden's role in the post war world with particular regard to the United States and the potential South American commercial markets.⁸⁴ The aptly named 'America Inquiry' determined that the war effectively tainted Sweden's reputation and potentially presented an

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 28

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ Ronald Grigor Suny, *The Soviet Experiment: Russia, the USSR, and the Successor States* (New York, 1998), p. 326.

⁸⁴ Glover, "Imaging Community," p. 247.

impediment to Sweden's acceptance into the New World Order.⁸⁵ Stalingrad also elucidated the fact that the United States, not afflicted by the heavy casualties of the Soviet Union, would play a large role in the post-war world. Sweden understood this all too clearly, hence the special emphasis on America in the title 'American Inquiry.'

The negative image caused great concern for Sweden. Nabo Hedin, the manager of the American-Swedish News Exchange described the transformation in Sweden's reputation "from being hailed as the most civilized country in the world Sweden was suddenly scorned as a traitor to democracy, first for failing to fight for Finland and then for trading with Hitler's Germany."⁸⁶

It is essentially these misconceptions that the America Inquiry feared could adversely affect Sweden's future within the economic and political realms. A small country like Sweden depended on foreign policy for survival. Therefore after presenting the reports, Parliament formally established the Swedish Institute in January 1945.

The Mission of the Swedish Institute

In order to counteract negative perceptions, the Swedish Institute needed to explain Sweden's policy of neutrality. The early archives of the Institute boast an enormous amount of material discussing neutrality. Intending to expand public diplomacy internationally, the Swedish Institute launched a massive publicity campaign, offering Swedish culture as a substantive method to achieve foreign policy objectives. The founders of the Institute conceived of an organization equipped to not only repair Sweden's damaged image but also to package and sell Sweden abroad.⁸⁷

To achieve such a hefty policy objective the Swedish Institute needed a plan of action, a method to use the exportation of Swedish culture as a political tool. This meant "expanded official representation in the US, increased support to the Swedish-American News Exchange, and above all through establishment of a new 'base organization' for the coordination of Sweden's cultural exchange with other countries."⁸⁸ Culture would become the weapon the Swedish Institute engaged to win the war with the United States and endear Sweden to her. The 1945 Mission Statement claimed that "the mission of the Swedish Institute is to promote Sweden's cultural, social and economic relations with foreign countries by coordinating ongoing overseas enlightenment activities about Sweden and,

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 248.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ Glover, *National Relations*, p. 43.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 32-33.

where necessary and suitable, by initiating new directions in the service of cultural exchange.⁸⁹ The mission statement highlights the Institute's purpose of combining the fields of culture, politics and economic in the work of the institute.

Ultimately following the examples of the British Council and the Danish Society, the Institute would represent the nation in a descriptive way.⁹⁰ Representation would follow a more narrative style as opposed to delineating strict facts, marking history as a sound platform. Glover also argues that the appointment of leaders from a vast array of faculties emphasizes the Swedish Institute's commitment to the descriptive method.⁹¹ The attempt at impartiality also counteracted the negative perceptions of propaganda. The Swedish Institute would attempt to construct the image of Sweden in a holistic way by using the precedents of Denmark and Britain as models and engaging various faculties.

Glover also argues that the Swedish Institute from the outset desired to be an active architect as well as the representative of Sweden. The Institute needed to be as much a delegate, representing Sweden abroad, as a mapmaker, constructing the precise image of Sweden that best suited policymakers.⁹² The Swedish Institute certainly had an arduous task.

Some of the specific tasks of the Institute included commissioning, producing, and distributing publications on Swedish society, administering study abroad trips of foreign students, overseeing inbound and outbound scholarships, and facilitating Swedish lectures at foreign institutions.⁹³ Culture could appeal to the public in a way politics never could.

Certainly within the arena of the Cold War spheres of influence, cultural exchange programs, like the one employed by the Swedish Institute would gain increasing ascendancy in the world of diplomacy. For culture could petition the people and later breach the Cold War more acutely than any military weapon.

The most important aspect of the Swedish Institute is the idea that culture could appeal to foreign publics. Indeed using this idea and goal as a conceptual basis highlights that using the Swedish Institute's national narrative is a sound method of gauging changes in Sweden's projected identity.

2.7 Concluding Remarks

Essentially the Swedish Institute, as an agent of cultural diplomacy sought to restructure Swedish neutrality as a core component of Sweden's international image using first the small-

⁸⁹ *Ibid*, p. 34.

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 33.

⁹¹ *Ibid*, p. 33.

⁹² *Ibid*, p. 34.

⁹³ *Ibid*.

state realistic narrative, later the positive benefits of Swedish aid during the war, and finally exclusively discussing neutrality with a disregard of World War II. The overt purpose of the Institute's work was to promote Sweden to foreign audiences. The subsequent chapters highlight and discuss in detail, precisely how the Swedish Institute's narrative of World War II changes from 1939 through 1969, a time period of roughly thirty years. Indeed this thesis seeks to analyze and draw conclusions rather than simply interpret the Swedish narrative. This method provides for interesting and fruitful discussions by illustrating how the narrative changes over time while focusing on why these changes occurred within changing contexts.

3. The Significance of the Wartime Documents

The documents from the war years, 1939—1945 represent the development of a Swedish narrative of World War II. Indeed the Swedish Institute writes none of the articles. Instead they are written by predecessor organization like the Central Board of the Exchange of Pupils and the American-Swedish News Exchange. Nonetheless, the articles prove significant for three major reasons. First, is the almost exclusive appeal to the United States. While documents from later decades are intended for foreign, English speaking audiences, these articles stress a link or commonalities between Sweden and the United States. Swedish authors used history as a method to endear Sweden to the United States. This theme coupled with a largely insecure tone, characterizes the articles from the war years and the following two reasons are dependent on the first.

The second reason for the articles' significance is that the link between context and narrative is most pronounced here. Many vague concepts and ideas are developed after 1943. Including the third reason for the articles' significance, namely the development of the small-state realistic narrative. Indeed this particular construction of the Swedish narrative most contributes to Sweden's projected image by emphasizing the idea that Sweden was a victim of circumstance and allowing Sweden to explain concessions to Germany. Comprehensively, these articles represent a model for the Swedish Institute's narrative of Sweden and the war in the subsequent decades.

This chapter will discuss the changes within the Swedish narrative of World War II in relation to the changing context, with a particular emphasis on the small-state realistic narrative as a means to explain Sweden and Germany's early relationship. This focus allows for early conclusions regarding the main research question of how and why Sweden's national narrative changed over time.

3.1 The Role of World War II in the Swedish Narrative

Since World War II is a well-documented event, only the three aspects of the war that contributed most to the Swedish Institute's narrative will be discussed in regards to context. First is Germany's quick succession of victories and rapid advancement across Europe. The war began on September 1, 1939 and by the June 1940 surrender of France, Germany controlled almost all of mainland Europe.⁹⁴ The German success coupled with the allied retreat of 1939-1941 would form the basis of Sweden's small-state realistic narrative, the

⁹⁴ Mary Fullbrook, *The Divided Nation: A History of Germany 1918-1990*, (New York, 1992), p. 108.

argument centering on the idea that a small state could do little else except yield to German demands.

Second is the idea that Sweden wanted to protect neutrality at all costs and pursued a largely selfish policy during the war. Since Germany invaded both Norway and Denmark on April 9, 1940 and quickly defeated the two countries, Sweden became surrounded and feared invasion.⁹⁵ This fear became a justification for Swedish concessions to Germany throughout the war. Swedish policy vacillated, but became decisively pro-Allied only after the victory of Stalingrad in 1943 when it became clear the allies would emerge victorious. Christine Agius discusses how Sweden's capricious policy led to the image of Sweden as a 'modern Jezebel.'⁹⁶ Agius also argues the self-serving nature of Swedish policy allowed Sweden to benefit economically from the war.⁹⁷

The third aspect is that Swedish concessions tarnished Sweden's image internationally. Sweden allowed the transport of German troops and supplies through Swedish territory in direct violation of the Hague Convention.⁹⁸ Also Sweden allowed German use of Swedish airspace and territorial waters, including the transport of German ships with Swedish navy ships.⁹⁹ Most importantly, Sweden traded iron ore and ball bearings necessary for the German war effort. In fact 40 percent of Germany's total iron ore came from Sweden in 1939.¹⁰⁰ The amount did not change drastically until after Stalingrad and the renewal of the trade agreement with Germany when Sweden reduced the amount. The Swedish Institute was created in large part to counteract negative foreign opinion regarding these concessions to Germany. This is part of the central ideas of the research, articulating why the Swedish Institute constructed the national narrative in such a way.

The three discussed aspects of the war including Germany's early success, coupled with a Swedish self-serving policy and a tarnished international image shaped the national narrative of Sweden during the war. The relationship between context and the national narrative is particularly poignant because of the noticeable shift of the tone of the narrative occurring after 1943. This idea will contribute to an understanding of particularly how and why historical writing changed over time.

3. 2 The Sources Contemporary with World War II

⁹⁵ Poulsen, "Denmark at War? The Occupation as History," p. 99.

⁹⁶ Agius, *The Social Construction of Swedish Neutrality*, p. 77.

⁹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 85.

⁹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 79.

⁹⁹ Christian Leitz, *Sympathy For the Devil: Neutral Europe and Nazi Germany in World War II*, (New York, 2001), p. 58.

¹⁰⁰ Agius, *The Social Construction of Swedish Neutrality*, p. 78.

The documents before 1943 are largely characterized by discussions of neutrality in a general sense. They are all from 1939, resulting in a cursory discussion of the war. Nevertheless, common themes are noticeable throughout the three articles including explanations of Swedish neutrality and establishing links between the United States and Sweden. The beginnings of the small-state realistic narrative are also present. Eventually, the more developed version of these themes will also characterize the Swedish Institute's narrative from the following decades. The themes are rather vague and developed much more clearly after 1943.

The 1939 booklet *Sweden Past and Present* written by Gösta Langenfelt and published by the Central Board of the Exchange of Pupils, intends to both introduce and discuss Sweden through a focus on Swedish history.¹⁰¹ Much of the booklet indeed utilizes Anthony Smith's "cult of the Golden Age" and accordingly focuses on Sweden's triumphs from the Vikings to the development of democracy in the country. The booklet provides a special focus on Sweden's commitment to freedom through the ages, implying that Sweden has the right to dictate its own policy. Although it does not explain Swedish neutrality explicitly it does explain the rationale behind Sweden's commitment to the policy. Langenfelt states that "there has always been a sturdy, independent spirit among the Swedes, high and low, from earliest times, and personal freedom has always been and is still valued as the most important asset."¹⁰² The statement implies that Sweden valued its freedom and would ultimately protect and maintain neutrality as the country's policy. Indeed Langenfelt wanted to say very clearly that Sweden had the right to choose a policy of neutrality.

Langenfelt's narrative also seeks to build friendly relations with both England and the United States. He used a shared history to find commonalities between the countries, mentioning how Charles XII became a favorite topic for Swedish poets like Alexander Pope who wrote "heroes are much the same, the point's agreed, from Macedonia madman to the Swede."¹⁰³ He also includes examples of Sweden colonizing parts of Delaware and the emigration of two million Swedes to the United States as a way to emphasize the close relationship between the US and Sweden.¹⁰⁴ Indeed the Institute later applied this technique to achieve a similar result.

However, the most important aspect of the article is that it fails to mention World War I and comments on Swedish neutrality instead, a clear trend in later documents with regards to

¹⁰¹ Gösta Langenfelt, *Sweden: Past and Present*, (Stockholm, 1939).

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 6.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 8-11.

World War II. Since it remains unclear exactly when in 1939 the booklet was published or written, it is impossible to draw conclusions regarding a failure to mention World War II. The narrative abruptly ends with a discussion of Finland's transformation into a democracy.¹⁰⁵ This method of ignoring discussions regarding the war remains unchanged. Langenfelt instead offers a discussion of Swedish neutrality, arguing that the policy of "such a long period of peace has had important bearings on Sweden's culture and economy."¹⁰⁶ Espousing the benefits of Swedish neutrality is indeed mimicked in many later documents.

Similarly *Outlines of Sweden* written by E. Söderlund and Naboth Hedin uses many of the same techniques in a more articulate way. This 1939 booklet published by the Royal Swedish Commission for the New York World's Fair emphasizes the close relationship between Sweden and the United States in particular. It must be conceded that the authors possibly emphasize the link between Sweden and the United States because of the venue, namely the New York World's fair. Nonetheless there exists a subheading of "Swedes in America" under the more general heading "History."¹⁰⁷ The two pages discussing Swedish history in relation to American history is characterized by sentences like "there is practically no country in the world which the average Swede knows better than the United States and for which he feels greater sympathy" and American influences in Sweden are present everywhere.¹⁰⁸ The narrative expresses the Swedish desire to remain on friendly terms with the United States despite the conflicting policies between the two countries. The authors use historical writing to endear Sweden to the United States. Although the narrative is different from later documents, the method is very much the same.

However in contrast to *Sweden Past and Present*, *Outlines* does in fact address Sweden's adherence to neutrality explicitly rather than implicitly. The authors state that

"The Swedish government with the full approval of all political parties expressed its intention to maintain a strict neutrality, which at the outset of the present conflict, was confirmed by specific governmental declarations and the issuing of neutrality rules, in common with the other Nordic states."¹⁰⁹

Even in the confines of this short narrative of Swedish history, only comprising about 17 pages, the authors felt it was necessary to discuss Swedish policy to the American audience. Although the discussion is not detailed, it is clear that early authors felt that Swedish policy required explanation. Indeed explaining Swedish neutrality becomes a task of the Swedish Institute's narrative of the war during the 1950s. This example from the very beginning of the war sets a precedent.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*, p. 12.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*, p. 11.

¹⁰⁷ E. Söderlund & Naboth Hedin, *Outlines of Sweden*, (Sweden, 1939), p. 33.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*, p. 34.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid*, p. 32.

The final 1939 article cannot be classified as a narrative because it is both contemporary with World War II and aims to discuss Swedish democracy and economic policy.¹¹⁰ The author Gunnar Myrdal opens the article *With Dictators as Neighbors* by discussing the Swedish adherence to democracy.¹¹¹ Likewise, Myrdal ends the article with a proclamation that Sweden intends to defend democracy during the war.¹¹² What this discussion establishes is the link between democracy and Sweden's right to pursue neutrality. Again this technique explains the rationale behind Swedish neutrality.

More explicitly, Myrdal also discusses Swedish neutrality as a tradition dating back 125 years.¹¹³ Using World War I as the platform, Myrdal can show how neutrality remains in Sweden's best interests. The approach of structuring neutrality as a tradition is used frequently in the post-war period and almost exclusively in the 1960s. The technique structures neutrality more positively and transforms it into a Swedish convention with historical justification rather than a self-serving policy. But this method is more prevalent in later periods, as will be discussed later in this thesis.

Another emerging concept in the article is an early form of the small-state realistic narrative. Although Myrdal does not explicitly say that Sweden is a small state with limited options, he does discuss Sweden's threatened freedom in terms of an encroaching Soviet Russia and an aggressive Nazi Germany.¹¹⁴ The aim of this article was not to justify or explain Swedish actions during the war but to discuss Swedish democracy, trade, and economic relations with regards to the war situation. Nonetheless, these early articles preserved in the Swedish Institute's archives can be seen as models. Therefore discussing Sweden as a small nation surrounded by larger, more aggressive nations indeed begins to define the boundaries of the small-state realistic narrative that would comprise Sweden's narrative in the post-war world.

There are two main ideas particularly that the early examples from 1939 articulate which will prove important to the development of the paper. Firstly is the idea that Sweden has the right to choose neutrality as a viable policy choice. Secondly is the idea that the United States and Sweden share many commonalities. The two ideas illustrate how aspects of the Swedish narrative emerge and develop during and after the war.

3.3 The Battle of Stalingrad Precipitates Changes in Discussions of the War

¹¹⁰ Gunnar Myrdal, "Maintaining Democracy in Sweden: With Dictators as Neighbors," reprinted from *Survey Graphic: Magazine of Social Interpretation*, (May 1939).

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 8.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

This section will discuss the next period of the archive. A largely insecure tone characterizes the narratives after Stalingrad until the end of the war. Several features are dominant throughout the various authors' narratives, including the emphasis of a link between the United States and Sweden, and the emergence of the small-state realistic narrative as a method to justify Swedish concessions to Germany during the war. Also the articles discuss to a small extent Sweden's humanitarian efforts during the war. All of these elements shaped the Swedish Institute's narrative, particularly in the 1950s. Therefore, these narratives represent the emergence of the more adept Swedish Institute's narrative.

Sweden Looks to the Post-War World, written by Swedish Minister to the United States, Wollmar Boström in 1943 is largely characterized by an insecure tone. Indeed the American-Swedish News Exchange published the article after Stalingrad, when Sweden felt particularly insecure. In fact the final paragraph, Boström states that Sweden "gazes with apprehension toward the uncertain future."¹¹⁵ This coupled with discussions regarding Swedish economy and trade relations post-war substantiate the claim that Sweden was insecure regarding its international position. This is not a narrative of Swedish involvement in the war, but it does provide rationale behind future work of the Institute. Clearly the Institute felt extremely determined to construct the narrative of Sweden in the war in the most positive way in order to promote beneficial foreign opinion.

Another noteworthy feature of Boström's article is how he discusses the deprivations Sweden faced in the course of the war. He specifically discusses food rationing, the loss of merchant ships, and damage to communities caused by foreign bombs.¹¹⁶ This approach attempts to endear Sweden to the allies by showing that Sweden was not untouched by war. The war becomes a way to equalize and relate Sweden internationally. Although the Swedish Institute's approach is very different, the fundamental idea remains the same, namely to use the story of the war in order to effectively relate Sweden outward.

Evidence of continuity with the 1939 documents is Boström's discussion of how Sweden was able to maintain democracy despite the totalitarian regimes in Europe.¹¹⁷ The benefit of this technique is twofold. First, he can again promote the US-Swedish link, emphasizing the fact that both are democracies dedicated to freedom. Second, like the 1939 documents, Böstrom can provide rationale for neutrality as Sweden's policy choice. Both motivations are implicit, however.

¹¹⁵ Wollmar F. Boström, "Sweden Looks to the Post-War World," reprinted in abridged form from *The American-Scandinavian Review*, (Winter 1943), p. 8.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 1-2.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

The small-state realistic narrative emerges more concretely in Sven Dahlman's 1943 article *Endurance on a Neutral Front*.¹¹⁸ He argues that Sweden had to remain neutral and trade with Germany in order to gain vital products necessary for Sweden's survival.¹¹⁹ This argument as a means for justification of Sweden's German concession becomes the dominant narrative in Sweden. However Dahlman's 1943 article intended for the Swedish-American News Exchange shows the emergence of the narrative.

Indeed Dahlman's use of the small-state realistic narrative also serves to substantiate a link between America and Sweden, a common theme throughout the documents from the war years. In line with the argument that Sweden had to cater to the demands of a more powerful Germany is the example of the United States as a country with a similarly flexible form of neutrality. He argues that like Sweden's trade with Germany, the United States also continued to trade with Japan despite proclaiming neutrality originally.¹²⁰ This comparison serves the dual purpose of linking Sweden and the United States as countries that pursue similar policies and providing for a less condemning public opinion toward Sweden. He also links the two countries by comparing them in terms of population and stating that Sweden acted the only way a country with a population equaling only 5% of the United States' population could act.¹²¹ Again, Dahlman links the two countries in a way that inspires sympathy and ultimately promotes the small-state realistic narrative.

The overall tone of the article also proves significant. The idea of 'enduring' implies that Sweden overcame obstacles in the face of adversity. Statements like "it has been quiet a heavy burden" indicate that Sweden achieved some grand mission by remaining neutral.¹²² Dahlman links the idea of neutrality and Swedish dignity. He argues that Sweden maintained dignity despite concessions and cooperation with Nazi Germany. He states that if attacked the Swedes would have fought because "there are situations in which decent people fight simply because they have to—no matter what the chances are, no matter what the outcome."¹²³ It is nearly impossible to make a credible projection like Dahlman's and the argument is also highly unlikely. Using the quick defeats of Norway and Denmark coupled with the Swedish obsession to avoid war, arguing they would have fought is indeed far-fetched. However the purpose of the argument and the concept of Swedish neutrality as a dignified pursuit establishes the groundwork for Christine Agius' credible neutrality that

¹¹⁸ Sven Dahlman, "Endurance on a Neutral Front: An Address on Sweden and the War," *The American Swedish Monthly*, (March 1943).

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

emerges during the 1950s. It is the rationale that neutrality can be noble as a selfless, rather than selfish policy. A better articulated version of Dahlman's concept proves to be pervasive in later documents.¹²⁴

A much more clear and comprehensive version of the small-state realistic narrative emerges in Howard G. Smith's booklet, *Sweden's Wartime Trade*, from the *American-Swedish Monthly* July 1944 edition. The first page of the booklet shows a map of Europe to emphasize the desperate situation Sweden faced geographically. Smith also describes Sweden as a "tightrope walker" forced to make concessions to Germany during the war in order to survive.¹²⁵ He stresses that Sweden declared neutrality initially due to an unfortunate geographic position in combination with a weak military and economy.¹²⁶ He argues that this coupled with the fact that Germany effectively isolated Sweden from other markets and was initially winning the war, forced an increased trade between Sweden and Germany. Ultimately Sweden had to allow Germany to trade on credit.¹²⁷ The narrative relies on the notion that Sweden acted in accordance with the faculties of a small state. Indeed this allows Sweden to transform from active player into victim, more specifically a victim of an unfortunate circumstance.

Thus Smith's narrative highlights a need to explain and justify Swedish concessions. Smith transforms terms like appeaser and pragmatist into small-state realism. The technique allows the Swedish war effort to be conceptualized in a more positive way. Sweden was a victim of circumstance and had to adjust its war policy accordingly and is therefore blameless for conceding to Germany.

Another feature of Smith's narrative is to defend Sweden's policy of neutrality. Indeed that is certainly a goal of the small-state realistic narrative as a general rule, implying that neutrality facilitated cooperation as a means for a small state to avoid war. However, Smith also stresses the change in Swedish cooperation with Germany after the battle of Stalingrad. He argues that after 1943 trade with Germany decreased dramatically and by 1944, at the allies' request, Sweden reduced the export of ball bearings and iron ore.¹²⁸ By emphasizing this aspect of the war, Smith seeks to defend the policy of neutrality as a method to buy time until Sweden could support the allied cause. Smith further defends Swedish neutrality with the statement: "The Swedes feel that as regards their trade relations

¹²⁴ See Ingvar Andersson's *Introduction to Sweden* (1957), and Gunna Hägglof's "A Test of Neutrality in the Second World War" (1961) for more developed discussions regarding neutrality as a credible and viable choice.

¹²⁵ Howard G. Smith, "Sweden's Wartime Trade," reprinted from *The American Swedish Monthly*, (July 1944), p. 7.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3-5.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 6-7.

with Germany during the war, they have maintained a position in conformity with the policy of neutrality which appears to be inevitably staked out for the country.”¹²⁹ The emphasis is that Sweden, although cooperating with Germany had no choice because of an unfortunate circumstance. Smith’s use of the small-state realistic narrative and Swedish cooperation with the allies at the first available opportunity serves to defend Sweden’s policy of neutrality.

Similarly *How A Democracy Survived: Sweden’s Course of Neutrality in World War II*, Sven Dahlman’s 1945 speech in Minneapolis emphasizes the small-state realistic narrative and promotes Sweden’s image as a humanitarian during the war.¹³⁰ It is noteworthy that Dahlman also wrote *Endurance on a Neutral Front* and many of the techniques used in that narrative are also present in the speech. He stresses that neutrality allowed Sweden to remain a free nation during the course of the war.¹³¹ Furthermore, Dahlman uses the small-state realistic narrative to argue that Sweden would have lost quickly and therefore avoiding war proved the best method to “play for time, while Allies were weak in order to rearm.”¹³² Again, the emphasis is that Sweden wanted to support the allied cause but couldn’t due to an in unfortunate position. Dahlman uses a Swedish fear of German attack to justify Swedish concessions as well.¹³³ Sweden is not presented as a pragmatist but a victim of circumstance.

Another theme emerging in Dahlman’s narrative that would eventually become dominant and play an enormous role in shaping neutrality into a credible policy choice was projecting Sweden as a humanitarian. Dahlman argues that “by staying out of the war, Sweden did the right thing for herself, her neighbors, and the rest of the world” and that Sweden was “able to help by staying neutral.”¹³⁴ The idea Dahlman presents is that neutrality proved to be a beneficial policy choice for Sweden. Although this example is not as in depth as the documents from the 1950s, the idea emerges that neutrality is selfless and beneficial for Sweden and the world. The rationale is that Sweden made an enormous contribution internationally by accepting refugees, accepting Danish Jews fleeing persecution and using the Swedish Red Cross to aid war-ravaged Europe.¹³⁵ These examples serve to contribute to the idea that Sweden pursued a type of credible neutrality that proved largely beneficial.

The final theme presented in Dahlman’s speech is the Swedish-American camaraderie. Although it again must be conceded that similar to *Outlines of Sweden*, the venue certainly plays a role in emphasizing links between Sweden and the United States. Dahlman

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹³⁰ Sven Dahlman, “How A Democracy Survived: Sweden’s Course of Neutrality in World War II,” reprinted from *The Bulletin of the American Institute of Swedish Arts, Literature, Science*, (June 1945).

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 5-6.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 5, 8.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 8-9.

achieves this by discussing the similarities in the weather between Minnesota and Sweden as well as the shared ancestry.¹³⁶ Again the purpose is to establish commonalities and make Americans more perceptive to Sweden and the war. He even concedes to this aim with the statement “Most important of all, I can convey to you the strong feelings of appreciation and gratefulness that the Swedes expressed for your understanding and friendship during the difficult days of the war.”¹³⁷ Dalman’s rationale is that by using a method to equalize Sweden and the United States, namely through a shared ancestry, Americans will be more empathetic regarding Sweden’s actions in the war. Certainly they will be receptive to listening and accepting the small-state realistic narrative rather than simply dismissing Swedish neutrality as a selfish policy.

He Brought The News of Peace, an article discussing the efforts of Folke Bernadotte as a leader of the Swedish Red Cross, similarly emphasized Sweden’s humanitarian efforts. The aim of the article is twofold. Firstly, the article shapes Swedish neutrality to be more active. For example the article states that Sweden as a neutral “engaged in peace.”¹³⁸ The notion that Sweden ‘engaged’ reconstructs the image of neutrality as a largely passive policy. Engaging instead implies acting and therefore Swedish neutrality was characterized by a type of neutrality that allowed for Sweden to become a humanitarian and aid the rest of Europe. In fact, the article uses Bernadotte’s actions as a liberator of the oppressed and a negotiator with Himmler to emphasize the notion that Swedes were not passive as part of the policy of neutrality.¹³⁹

Indeed this example also substantiates the second aim of the article outlined by the author: to use a particular action of an individual to generalize about Sweden as a whole. The statement “those like Bernadotte went into the flames in order to rescue as many human beings as they could in the name of our common humanity.”¹⁴⁰ The implication is that there were many like Bernadotte willing to sacrifice themselves for the good of others. This concept attempts to promote the idea again that Sweden and Swedes pursued a policy that was selfless rather than selfish.

Another example of generalizing is the articles’ attempt to use Bernadotte’s heroics to separate Sweden from Germany. The article says that: “The Nordic supermen of the war were not the Nazis; who widowed and orphaned a continent, but the fighting Norwegians, Danes, and neutral Swedes, who preserved the Christian tradition against German

¹³⁶ *Ibid*, p. 1.

¹³⁷ *Ibid*, p. 3.

¹³⁸ Unknown, “He Brought the News of Peace,” *Picture Post*, (May, 1945), p. 21.

¹³⁹ *Ibid*, p. 22-23.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p. 21.

barbarity.”¹⁴¹ Emphasizing Sweden’s humanitarian efforts in such a way allowed Sweden to emerge from the war exonerated from the crime of fueling the German war effort through the trade of iron ore and ball bearings. For this reason, the Swedish Institute continued to emphasize Sweden as a humanitarian in the decades that followed.

Indeed the most significant aspect of the developing narrative is the emergence of the small-state realistic narrative. When analyzing the discursive shifts in the narrative after 1943 it becomes clear why the authors developed the small-state realistic narrative. The small-state realistic narrative solved all of the problems constructing a Swedish narrative presented. The negative connotations regarding Sweden’s concessions to Germany could be explained away. Authors focused on the idea that Sweden as a small state could hardly fight against a stronger Germany and feared invasion due to Germany’s early successes. Sweden had to respond with concessions to an aggressive Germany. The story ignores the fact that Sweden pursued a largely selfish policy and the small-state realistic narrative provides Sweden with, according to Johan Östling, “moral absolution.”¹⁴² The small-state realistic narrative would play an enormous role in Sweden’s projected image during the Cold War. More importantly the use of this narrative allowed the Swedish Institute to construct a more positive post-war image for Sweden. The emergence of this narrative illustrates how history writing evolved in accordance with Swedish desires to construct a positive image to distribute internationally.

3.4 Concluding Remarks

The link between context and narrative is most profound during this period. After 1943, Sweden needed to explain pro-German actions and thus the small-state realistic narrative came to comprise the narrative of Sweden and the war. Additionally, is the emergence of discussions regarding Sweden and the country’s humanitarian efforts. This allows the transformation of negative terms like pragmatist and self-server into more positive terms like neutrality and humanitarian. A major component of the small-state realistic narrative is the idea that Sweden pursued a policy most beneficial to Sweden, the Nordic neighbors, and most importantly the world. Discussing the humanitarian works of Sweden serves to substantiate this claim.

Therefore the narrative of small-state realism coupled with Sweden’s humanitarian works reconstructed Sweden’s tarnished international image, and paved the way for Swedish participation in the international scene. Ultimately Sweden constructed the narrative of the

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴² Östling, “The Rise and Fall of Small State Realism,” p. 128.

war to emphasize that Sweden was a neutral and peaceful democracy that could act internationally. Highlighting the positive effects of neutrality served to appeal to the United States in a less blatant way than the war documents. Indeed the small-state realistic narrative appeals to the western nations, rather than only the United States.

4. The 1950s and the Emergence of ‘Credible Neutrality’

From 1946-1959 the Swedish Institute’s narrative of Swedish involvement in World War II expresses the idea of credible neutrality. The context of the political situation played an enormous role in the Institute’s narrative construction. Therefore the tone of the narrative becomes decisively less insecure, a complete departure from the narratives of both Wollmar Boström (1943) and Sven Dahlman (1943). Neutrality needed to look like an active choice rather than a passive policy. Through restructuring Sweden’s involvement in the war and placing particular emphasis on Sweden’s humanitarian works, neutrality could be structured as a selfless rather than a selfish policy. The Swedish narrative of World War II furnished the Swedish Institute with a means to shape Swedish neutrality to become a largely positive policy that contained an international dimension. The emphasis that the Swedish Institute placed on the international component of Swedish neutrality expressed Swedish desires of the 1950s as well as the desire to make neutrality a credible policy choice. Indeed the Swedish Institute’s narrative tended to focus on how Sweden avoided war and ultimately benefited its war-ravaged neighbors and provided aid to Europe. This marked the transformation of neutrality into a fundamental component of how the Swedish Institute projected Sweden’s image.

This chapter deals exclusively with the narrative of Sweden and the war produced by the Swedish Institute. How the narrative structures Swedish neutrality facilitates further discussions about Sweden’s projected identity and the ways historical writing changed to reflect political context. The way the sources generally emphasize the benefits of neutrality demonstrates how the Swedish Institute could use an historical narrative to promote Sweden abroad and compliment an emerging Swedish image.

4.1 Sweden in an International Context

The Cold War defined the political climate of the 1950s. Several aspects of the Cold War prove relevant to the Swedish Institute’s construction of the national narrative delineating Sweden and the war. First, was the collapse of the Grand Alliance and the subsequent division of the world into spheres of influence dominated by the United States and the Soviet Union. After the war, the United States emerged as the indisputable economic power of the world, marking a remarkably unbalanced balance of power.¹⁴³ Indeed appealing to the United States became a major goal of the Swedish Institute, especially since the United

¹⁴³ Suny, *The Soviet Experiment*, p. 346.

States continued to feel negatively toward Sweden's policy of neutrality particularly with the latter's failure to join NATO.¹⁴⁴

The second relevant aspect of the Cold War was the ascendancy of diplomacy as a means of communication between nations. Words and political posturing indeed characterized much of the Cold War since the Soviet Union and the United States never engaged in direct military conflicts. Instead foreign conflicts regarding the opposing ideologies of the two great powers like the Korean War (1950-1951) characterized the period. The use of diplomacy as a Cold War political tactic contributes additional value to the work of the Swedish Institute as an agent of cultural diplomacy during the period. In concurrence with the idea that diplomacy was an effective method to reach foreign publics, constructing a narrative to promote and compliment a particular Swedish image was an effective tactic.

For Sweden, the post-war period ushered in a new brand of neutrality. In the new world divided by spheres of influence, Sweden sought international acceptance. Thus evolved what Agius characterizes as Sweden's 'active neutrality.'¹⁴⁵ This new tradition eliminated the non-action aspect that typically characterized neutrality and instead made neutrality more adaptive as a policy. In 1946 Sweden became a member of the United Nations.¹⁴⁶ However Sweden's international participation was nonetheless limited, as evidenced by the Swedish government's disclaimer in 1948 stating that should "the new security organization (be) undermined by the political formation of blocs or even paralyzed in its capacity to take action, our country must be free to choose the path of neutrality."¹⁴⁷ Neutrality as an intrinsic component of Swedish identity needed to be explained and promoted by the Swedish Institute.

Thus, the Swedish Institute's narrative of World War II became very much a reflection of Cold War politics, Swedish policy, and a validation of neutrality. The link between Sweden's projected identity, political context and the national narrative of World War II became stronger during this period. These sources demonstrate a focus on neutrality as an intrinsic part of a Swedish image.

4.2 Neutrality: From Selfish to Selfless

Even with the earliest post-war document, the Swedish Institute began constructing the narrative of World War II to reflect the idea that Swedish neutrality was selfless,

¹⁴⁴ Agius, *The Social Construction of Swedish Neutrality*, p. 103.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 90.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

international and credible. Naboth Hedin's *Main Facts About Sweden* from 1947 offers an interesting World War II narrative for a number of reasons, specifically regarding the focus of this thesis.¹⁴⁸ Hedin's narrative's opening of the World War II section stresses the international component of current Swedish neutrality during that period. He mentions Sweden's maintenance of neutrality during both World Wars, but focuses more attention on Sweden's role internationally. He includes examples of Sweden as an active member in the League of Nations and the United Nations as well as a brief mention of Swedish relief work.¹⁴⁹ Certainly Hedin intends with these examples of Sweden's post-war international participation to emphasize the increasingly credible aspect of Swedish neutrality. By opening the narrative with this discussion, Hedin indicates the prominence of this emerging concept. Later works will also promote the concept in a more substantive way than the one line mention Hedin affords it. How Hedin presents Swedish neutrality reflects an increasing emphasis on the concept as a fundamental part of Sweden's image.

Additionally, Hedin espouses the small-state realistic narrative to emphasize how Sweden pursued a selfless policy during the war that remained staunchly pro-allied. Hedin includes an entire section dedicated to Sweden's wartime policy. Sweden's actions during the war were still riddled with negative connotations and subsequently addressed as part of the narrative. Decidedly less apologetic than others during the war, Hedin nonetheless begins with the familiar narrative that Sweden, as a country isolated from the rest of Europe had to increase trade with Germany in order to survive and import necessities. Essentially, Hedin continues to use the small-state realistic narrative. However, Hedin begins to employ to an extent the idea of Sweden's policy as selfless, rather than selfish. He achieves this by distracting from the early partiality of Sweden toward Germany and instead discussing the fact that Sweden also traded with Russia until Operation Barbarossa made that impossible.¹⁵⁰ In line with the small-state narrative, Sweden traded to survive and thus stopped at the first available opportunity in 1944. He also adds for good measure that "at no time were munitions, foodstuffs or finished war materials shipped by Sweden to Germany."¹⁵¹

The statement clearly intends to divert attention from the fact that whether finished or not Sweden provided Germany amply with iron ore, a necessary material for waging war. According to Christian Leitz, Germany depended significantly on imports of raw materials and goods from neutral nations and 40% of its iron ore came from Sweden.¹⁵² The importance of Hedin's address of the trade, which largely disappears from later documents,

¹⁴⁸ Naboth Hedin, *Main Facts About Sweden*, (New York, 1947).

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 6, 15.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵² Leitz, *Sympathy For the Devil*, p. 1.

is that the Swedish position remained precarious internationally. Presenting the war in such a detailed fashion serves to highlight the insecurity Sweden still felt regarding the wartime policy of neutrality. As neutrality became more viable as a policy choice these types of explanations proved no longer necessary and disappeared.

The *Facts About Sweden* book series is a particularly interesting way to look at the emerging Swedish identity because of the many revisions. A small book dedicated to the formal task of briefly familiarizing a foreigner to the highlights of Sweden, the book contains topics ranging from the country and the people, government, defense, religion, history to standard of living, education, and summary of finances. It is basically an overview of all the need-to-know aspects of Swedish life. Clearly deemed an effective method by the Swedish Institute, the book went through a series of reprints. The thesis will discuss the 1947, 1949—1950, 1952—1953, 1956, 1957, 1958, and 1959 editions in this chapter with a focus on the history section. The book is mini based on actual size and actual pages that range from 10-15, with the first edition containing 23 pages. Each section is only about a page in length and therefore the history section is best described as a selection of the most important facts of Swedish history due to its short length.

Presented in a timeline format enumerating dates and brief descriptions, the 1947 edition offers the most detailed description differing greatly from the subsequent editions. In fact the tone is reminiscent of the apologetic tone from the war years and likewise much more explanatory in nature:

“1939 December: “National coalition government, representing all parties but Communists and Nazis, takes over under Per Albin Hansson’s leadership for duration of WWII. Sweden again remains neutral.

1939: Sweden rejects German proposal for non-aggression pact.

1940 July: Sweden agrees to permit transit traffic between Germany and Norway after latter’s surrender.

1943 August: Transit-traffic stopped.

1944 August: Trade relations with Germany broken.

1945 July: National coalition Government gives way for new Social Democratic Cabinet.

1946 September: Sweden enters UNO.”¹⁵³

As compared to later editions this timeline of events is much more defensive in nature, characterized by a large amount of detail in conjunction with a specific selection of facts emphasizing Swedish cooperation with the allies. Again promoting the idea of a selfless Swedish policy, the 1939 December heading goes into great detail about the fact that communists and Nazis were not a part of the government. The implication is that Sweden desires to be more closely related to the west, rather than dictatorial regimes. Furthermore,

¹⁵³ Arvid Edh (ed.), *Facts About Sweden*, (Stockholm, 1947), p. 17.

the next event discusses Sweden's rejection of the non-aggression pact, implying that Sweden maintained allied sentiments. The July 1940 event emphasizes the notion that Sweden permitted transit traffic only after the surrender of Norway, promoting the small-state narrative again. The next two years curiously include the cessation of both trade and transit agreements with Germany in order to emphasize Sweden's dedication to the allies. By only mentioning trade with Nazi Germany in regards to its cessation, the narrative avoids difficult questions and emphasizes Swedish policy's pro-allied tilt. The entry for 1945 indicates Sweden became dedicated to a new beginning starting with a new government. Similarly, the 1946 entry lists Sweden's entrance onto the international scene, with the joining of the United Nations. Indeed the selection of facts serves the purpose of simultaneously defending Swedish actions and highlighting the close relationship between Sweden and the West.

The 1949—1950 *Facts About Sweden* edition omitted detailed discussions and began to emphasize Swedish neutrality, marking a transition of the term to become more positive. Certainly this edition offers a more condensed version of events. Still attempting to endear Sweden to the allies, the year 1939 includes Sweden's rejection of the German non-aggression pact indicating Sweden pursued a pro-allied stance from the outset. But the events of the war years are condensed into a single line, stating that from 1939-1945 Sweden remains neutral in World War II.¹⁵⁴ Then 1946 and 1948 list Sweden's entrance to the United Nations and the Marshall Plan, respectively. All the subsequent editions through 1959 used the same shortened version, continuing to omit mention of the non-aggression pact as well.¹⁵⁵ The Institute felt increasingly less inclined to include a narrative that in any way addressed Sweden's wartime concessions. The changes in the narrative indicate the Swedish Institute felt more secure with Sweden's national narrative regarding World War II. The *Facts About Sweden* booklets outline precisely how the portrayal of the war changes, demonstrating a link between context and the Institute's narrative.

Similarly, the 1952 "Sweden" brochure lists historical events in a timeline format and omits facts regarding World War II.¹⁵⁶ Although the timeline considers important dates of Swedish history, it completely neglects the topic of World War II, skipping from 1932 to 1946 with Sweden's entrance into the United Nations. It is significant that the timeline simply omitted World War II altogether. Without discussion there is no need for

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

¹⁵⁵ Arvid Eldh (ed.), *Facts About Sweden*, (Stockholm, 1952/1953); The Swedish Institute, *Facts About Sweden*, (Stockholm, 1956); The Swedish Institute, *Facts About Sweden*, (Stockholm, 1957); The Swedish Institute, *Facts About Sweden*, (Stockholm, 1958); The Swedish Institute, *Facts About Sweden*, (Stockholm, 1959).

¹⁵⁶ The Swedish Institute, "Sweden," (Stockholm, 1952).

explanation. However, under the next heading “Sweden To Day” exists one sentence mentioning World War II only in relation to current Swedish foreign policy stating: “During both World Wars, Sweden was successful in maintaining her neutrality and has continued in her attempt to carry out an alliance-free foreign policy.”¹⁵⁷

Here the idea emerges that there exists a connection between Swedish image and neutrality, using World War II discussions as a method to validate Swedish neutrality to foreign publics. Since neutrality became a critical component of Swedish identity during the Cold War, Swedish actions during World War II could be structured to emphasize this neutrality. With this structure, Sweden’s current policy could be viewed as a continuation of a previous policy. Indeed this theme lends credibility to the idea that a national narrative serves a political purpose and thus is constructed to reflect a country’s image.

Additionally, Allan Kastrup’s book, *Digest of Sweden*, also discusses Swedish neutrality during World War II under ‘foreign policy.’¹⁵⁸ Although Kastrup concedes that Sweden had to make concessions to Germany, he also asserts that Swedish neutrality was extremely active. He separates the concept from ‘neutralism’ and argues that Swedish neutrality was instead a calculated policy based on the country’s insecure geographic position and other related factors.¹⁵⁹ According to him, Swedish neutrality was more about defense than passivity. To prove the active nature of neutrality Kastrup discusses in detail the relief work of Sweden and the efforts of Bernadotte and Wallenberg intending to promote the idea that Sweden’s non-participation allowed for a large contribution to international relief.¹⁶⁰

Allan Kastrup’s other 1955 book, *The Making of Sweden*, similarly focuses on the idea that Swedish neutrality benefitted humanity.¹⁶¹ He even says that neutrality ultimately proved to be to the benefit of all Scandinavia.¹⁶² Clearly the extensive relief work outweighs the forced concessions Sweden made to Germany since a discussion of this plays an insignificant role in the narrative. The insinuation is rather that Sweden’s dedication to relief work after 1943 atoned for the early concessions. Indeed constructing Swedish neutrality as largely positive ignores the negative aspects and promotes the policy.

This emphasis on Sweden’s relief work became a dominant method of structuring neutrality, exploited to a new level by the Swedish Institute. Already authors discussed Swedish humanitarian efforts during the war, but the narrative became the main component of the Swedish propaganda from the Institute during the 1950s rather than just a part. G.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸ Allan Kastrup, *Digest of Sweden*, (Sweden, 1956), p. 56.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

¹⁶¹ Allan Kastrup, *The Making of Sweden*, (Sweden, 1955).

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 96.

Howard Smith, who wrote *Sweden's Wartime Trade* emphasizing the helplessness of Sweden with regards to their geographic position, wrote another booklet for the Swedish Institute titled "Swedish Relief."¹⁶³ This time, rather than adopting an apologetic tone while discussing the less favorable actions of Sweden during the war, Smith discussed how profoundly Swedish neutrality affected Europe. The booklet begins with a discussion of the relief Sweden provided to Finland and Norway during the war and progresses to the admittance of some 300,000 refugees into Sweden following the war's end.¹⁶⁴ The entire pamphlet is dedicated to the task of delineating the positive effects of Swedish neutrality in regards to the humanitarian work. In fact Smith writes: "There can be no doubt about the Swedes having put the advantages neutrality gave them in the last war to good use in bringing relief to the war ravaged countries around them."¹⁶⁵ The idea emerging is that neutrality can be selfless rather than selfish. A pamphlet like Smith's clearly seeks to promote the idea of credible neutrality.

As neutrality became increasingly credible so too did the Swedish Institute's adeptness at historical construction as a means of promoting Swedish neutrality. Ingvar Andersson's book, *Introduction to Sweden* was, according to Nicholas Glover, the first major production.¹⁶⁶ Deemed very much a success, the Institute reprinted and repeatedly published new editions of the book over the years.¹⁶⁷ Glover characterizes it as a "blueprint for the nation," that contained an "explicitly coherent narrative."¹⁶⁸ In fact, *Introduction* combined many of the elements present in other documents. Arguably this narrative, much more comprehensive than previous works, would become the dominant Swedish narrative utilized repeatedly by the Institute. Certainly contributing to the credible neutrality identity promoted by the Swedish Institute, Andersson's history of World War II addressed the negative aspects of the war and manipulated them to become beneficial. Indeed he favored the small-state realistic narrative as the opening under the World War II section aptly shows, arguing that Sweden was in a "difficult and delicate position" during the war.¹⁶⁹ As a small country with inadequate defenses Sweden had to make concessions and trade with Germany, despite the fact that public opinion always remained on the allied side.¹⁷⁰ Nonetheless, Andersson reminds the reader that the Swedish people remained "aware of the strain on their

¹⁶³ G. Howard Smith, *Swedish Relief*, (Stockholm, 1951).

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁶ Glover, *National Relations*, p. 68.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 64, 67.

¹⁶⁹ Ingvar Andersson, *Introduction to Sweden: Second Slightly Revised Edition*, (Stockholm: 1949), p. 145.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 146-147.

conscience in this tragic situation.”¹⁷¹ Andersson’s narrative indeed demonstrates the Swedish Institute’s favoritism regarding the small-state realistic narrative.

Like Smith and Kastrup, Andersson promoted Sweden’s humanitarian work as a positive effect of the war. He discusses the refuge Sweden provided to Finnish children during the Winter War as well as to the Norwegian people.¹⁷² Andersson also discusses the fact that Sweden sent guns and ammunitions to neighboring countries in order to assist with resistance movements.¹⁷³ Similar to previous narratives, Andersson also includes the renowned and more heroic efforts of Wallenberg and Bernadotte as well as the rescue of the Danish Jews facing deportation. This description of Sweden’s role in World War II supports Sweden’s image of credible neutrality that provided for beneficial outcomes to all Europeans.

The most important aspect of Andersson’s narrative is that he adeptly fit Sweden’s role into the grand western narrative of World War II as a country that avoided war but nonetheless defended western ideals. He offered a vindication for neutrality demonstrating how despite non-action in war, Sweden actively and continually supported the allies resulting in an affirmation of western culture and ideals. Sweden could seamlessly joined with the other western nations because of the cultural interconnectedness. Indeed Glover argues that Andersson’s narrative declared that western ideals were similarly part of Swedish ideals as well as a Swedish tradition characterizing the historical narrative.¹⁷⁴

Andersson’s narrative proved that historical writing regarding World War II provided an excellent avenue to construct and promote Sweden’s identity in the post-war world. By constructing World War II history and emphasizing certain aspects like the humanitarian work of Sweden, neutrality could become credible from an international perspective. Since the Swedish Institute reprinted and revised Andersson’s “*Introduction to Sweden*” it is clear they regarded the narrative as concurrent with Sweden’s current image.

Additionally, the Institute divided the section from the book specifically dealing with history and published it as separate pamphlets. These included a *Short History of Sweden* and *Resume of Swedish History*.¹⁷⁵ This shows that the Institute both determined Andersson’s narrative to be the favorable narrative of Sweden and the war and found history to be a crucial component of national relations. Sweden wanted to relate itself to other Western nations. Adeptly constructing the history of Sweden’s non-involvement in World War II

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 51, 147.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 149.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁴ Glover, *National Relations*, p. 70.

¹⁷⁵ Ingvar Andersson, *A Short History of Sweden*, (Stockholm, 1957). Ingvar Andersson, *Resume of Swedish History*, (Stockholm, 1959).

allowed for Sweden to promote the credible neutrality as a viable alternative to both the eastern and western blocs.

4.3 Concluding Remarks

The development of the Swedish narrative of World War II closely follows the development of Swedish credible neutrality as a fundamental component of Swedish identity. According to Agius, in order to counteract the negative connotations associated with neutrality as a general rule, Sweden depended on constructing neutrality as credible.¹⁷⁶ A fundamental way Sweden achieved this was by emphasizing the fluidity of neutrality as a concept and entering the international scene by joining the United Nations.¹⁷⁷ Similarly, Musial argues that Sweden constructed an image centering on social democracy as a feasible ‘middle way’ between Soviet communism and Western democracy.¹⁷⁸ This concept of a ‘middle way’ aptly applies to the concept of neutrality as a way of existing between the two power blocs and committing to neither. The concept of neutrality, an ambiguous term, really came to define Sweden and Swedish image during this period.

The Swedish Institute’s use of history writing particularly emphasizes the changes in Swedish projected identity, according to context. The changes from the previous narrative of World War II to the narrative of the 1950s are truly profound. The narratives are generally less insecure in tone and decidedly clearer on the ways neutrality proved beneficial. More frequently the narrative simply avoids confronting difficult questions and instead emphasizes the heroics of Wallenberg, Bernadotte, and the Swedish government for providing refuge. The narrative mentions the enormous amount of trade and concessions to Nazi Germany less and less. In fact, the small-state realistic narrative provides for these actions to be discussed as a necessary alternative for a small state needing to avoid war. Unlike the documents during the war, these actions are only given a cursory glance because the main narrative focuses on the benefits.

Another concept developed in the documents of the period is Swedish endearment to the United States. Instead of mentioning things like Swedish immigration to the United States, which Andersson’s narrative mentions, the war provides a more effective platform to emphasize the close relationship. Indeed several authors, including Andersson, argue that the Swedish sentiment always remained firmly fixed on the allied side, even though the actions of the government may suggest otherwise. Emphasizing Sweden’s relief and humanitarian

¹⁷⁶ Agius, *The Social Construction of Swedish Neutrality*, p. 104.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

¹⁷⁸ Kazimierz Musial, *Roots of the Scandinavian Model*, p. 12-13.

work shows how Sweden helped the allied cause and fit into the grand narrative of World War II as more of a victor than a loser.

Finally as Swedish identity became more firmly fixed as mutually interchangeable with credible neutrality, the historical narrative of World War II lost the tone of uncertainty regarding Sweden's role in the post-war world. Statements reflecting uncertainty like Boström's and gratitude like Dahlman's largely disappeared.¹⁷⁹ Swedish projected identity became more firmly fixed and the uncertainty of position in the post-war world likewise vanished from the narrative. The increasingly positive connotations regarding neutrality as a credible option provided for the increasingly positive representations of Swedish neutrality during World War II.

¹⁷⁹ Boström, "Sweden Looks to the Post-war World," p. 8; Dahlman, "How a Democracy Survived," p. 3.

5. The 1960s and the Declining Importance of World War II

In this period, from 1960—1969, there is a major shift in the narrative of World War II: the war was no longer a relevant topic of discussion and there is a noticeable absence within Swedish narratives. Brochures, books and pamphlets intending to familiarize a foreigner with Sweden, as discussed in earlier chapters, always contained a discussion of World War II, even if it was brief. This included Naboth Hedin's *Main Facts About Sweden*, the *Facts about Sweden* booklets and Ingvar Andersson's *Introduction to Sweden*.¹⁸⁰ The authors chose to use history, specifically World War II, as a kind of equalizing platform because it strengthened the concept of Swedish neutrality using a familiar topic.

Two major changes characterize the Swedish Institute's narrative of World War II during the period. Firstly, silence in the documents is prominent. Often the documents discussing history simply omit discussion of World War II or provide only a cursory glance. The second characterization of the documents during the period is both significant alone and as an explanation for the aforementioned characterization. The narrative tends to construct neutrality as a long, unbroken tradition, marking World War II as one event among many that defined Swedish foreign policy for 150 years. This method makes the narrative of World War II subordinate to the narrative of neutrality. The narratives that do discuss the war continue to use the war context to compliment an image of credible and active neutrality. The way the sources generally discuss World War II, or rather fail to discuss, is markedly different than the previous time periods.

5.1 Sweden and the Cold War

The main aspect of the 1960s Cold War context that helps develop this thesis is the tense environment. A series of crises between the two superpowers, like the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Korean War, and the erection of the Berlin Wall characterize the period. Sweden remained dedicated to the increasingly credible policy of neutrality. The Swedish policy became an alternative to war and aggression, a proponent of peaceful dealings. This idea of a credible neutrality policy based on the concepts of non-participation in military alliances, a strong defense, and strong public support for the policy, defined Swedish identity during the era.¹⁸¹

¹⁸⁰ Hedin, *Main Facts About Sweden*; The Swedish Institute, *Facts About Sweden* (1950s editions); Andersson, *Introduction to Sweden* (1949 edition).

¹⁸¹ Agius, *The Social Construction of Swedish Neutrality*, p. 104.

The idea of Swedish neutrality as largely credible therefore influences the narrative of the period. Motivations that shaped the construction of the Swedish narrative previously, like counteracting a weak international image, a need to explain Swedish actions during the war, and a desire to familiarize and promote the idea of Swedish neutrality are no longer relevant. Therefore the narrative becomes decidedly less detailed as World War II discussions become increasingly obsolete.

5.2 Sweden: The Neutral Nation

A new production by the Swedish Institute in the early 1960s abandoned the strategy of using history as a way to contextualize the current policy of neutrality. Indeed many documents meant to familiarize the tourist with Sweden provided a silence in regards to history. Although similar to the aforementioned various introductions of Sweden, *Sweden in a Nutshell* made no mention of Swedish history.¹⁸² Meant to familiarize foreigners with the peculiarities of Sweden, *Sweden in a Nutshell* instead offers descriptions of typical Swedish food, the Swedish kronor, souvenir shopping and descriptions of places to visit in Stockholm, Gothenberg, and Malmö. Although it is possible the Swedish Institute felt history was not a necessary topic for tourists, the more likely explanation is that history was losing its relevance. Indeed discussions of history during the period are characterized by a silence or a cursory glance.

A similar overview of Sweden is the pamphlet titled *Sweden* from 1964, containing sections on industry, politics and defense, culture and traditions, home and family, the outdoors, Swedish inventions, and history as well.¹⁸³ Each section is approximately two pages in length. The history section does not address World War II in any capacity and instead focuses on Sweden's 'Golden Ages' including descriptions of the Viking period, Gustav Vasa, and the seventeenth century, as the time when Sweden was a great power. The only thing that is a continuation of earlier examples is that this is a brief enumeration of events. For example, this includes a statement that in 1783 Sweden was the second country to formally recognize the United States.¹⁸⁴ Again, the Swedish Institute uses history to endear Sweden to the United States, however this time it is not the history of World War II that provided the platform to achieve this goal. Significantly, the pamphlet ends at the year 1814 with the statement: "the founder of the present dynasty of Swedish kings, Charles John

¹⁸² The Swedish Institute, *Sweden in a Nutshell*, (Stockholm, 1963).

¹⁸³ The Swedish Institute, "Sweden," (Stockholm, 1964).

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

Bernadotte, has been one of Napoleon's marshals. Under him, in 1814, the Swedes fought their last war.¹⁸⁵

The Institute still wanted to promote neutrality as principled, but World War II no longer provided the proper venue. Rather World War II, as a war that often needed defending due to Sweden's actions, required no mention. Neutrality could be constructed as an unbroken tradition dating back to 1814. All the unpleasant aspects of World War II could be therefore avoided. The dominance of this technique as a component of history construction during the period indicates the declining importance of World War II as a topic.

The Swedish Institute also began a new method of disseminating information. They produced a series of fact pamphlets headed with their logo, ranging in topics from the economy, politics, geography, and history. The pamphlets regarding history prove the most valuable towards answering the central research question. For example, a fact pamphlet, titled "Sweden and the East West Conflict," written by Gunnar Heckscher, sets out to discuss the current affair of Swedish neutrality.¹⁸⁶ Heckscher begins with the increasingly familiar narrative that Sweden fought no war since 1814. Again, the technique is effective in contextualizing the current policy of neutrality as part of an historical timeline that promotes a long, unbroken tradition. The technique makes further discussion of neutrality unwarranted. However, Heckscher, unlike the Sweden pamphlet, deviates from the routine and instead does make a statement regarding World War II, writing: "During the Second World War, neutrality was more supple, and a considerable amount of maneuvering took place to avoid attack from Germany. This was successful, and by the same token Sweden never considered entering, like Turkey did, on the Allies side at the last moment."¹⁸⁷

Heckscher's discussion is interesting for a number of reasons. Firstly, is the idea that neutrality was 'supple.' A major point of this thesis is that the term neutrality allows for adaptation because it is ambiguous and therefore flexible by nature. Swedish neutrality certainly changed with the changing context of the war. In fact, neutrality underwent another transformation during the Cold War when it became credible. Heckscher's implication regarding the supple nature of neutrality denotes the idea that the term is indeed flexible.

Furthermore, unlike the small-state realistic narrative, the idea that Sweden consciously maneuvered to avoid attack presents the image that Sweden was an active player in the war rather than simply a victim of circumstance. The small-state realistic narrative primarily presented Sweden as a small state, victimized by the aggression of Germany. However, this time, Heckscher shows Sweden as an active neutral, choosing its course and actions in order

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Gunnar Heckscher, "Sweden and the East West Conflict," (Stockholm, 1962).

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 1.

to avoid war. This harkens back to the active neutrality concept, namely, the concept that a country could be both neutral and an active player in international politics. This concept plays into the credible neutrality concept, arguing that Sweden as an active, conscious player could similarly make a contribution to the war effort. Although the contribution was not measured in terms of battles won or military equipment supplied, the contribution remained nonetheless important. Sweden worked for the service of humanity. Such a hefty contribution serves to play on people's emotions and dispel negativity.

Heckscher continues with the active nature of Swedish neutrality by comparing Sweden to the capricious nature of Turkey. Unlike Turkey, who subsequently joined the allied side in order to also join the victor's club, Sweden remained unwavering in her devotion to neutrality. Although the connotation of neutrality is that it stands for nothing, Heckscher constructs the image that Sweden actually stood for neutrality. Regardless of winning or losing, Sweden remained strong in her convictions during the course of the war.

This discussion of World War II sets up the discussion for the rest of the article that emphasizes neutrality as Sweden's positive contribution to the world and Sweden's active choice policy. The tradition of neutrality becomes a steadfast dedication to the cause. Therefore Sweden did not join NATO, and continued to adhere to the policy in a world dominated by spheres of influence.¹⁸⁸ Heckscher emphasizes the active and therefore credible nature of neutrality as a political stance.

Another fact pamphlet that somewhat deviates from the decreasing relevance of World War II is the 1961 lecture by Gunnar Hägglöf titled "A Test of Neutrality: Sweden in the Second World War."¹⁸⁹ However, the audience of the pamphlet is also very specific which accounts for much of the discrepancy. Hägglöf was in fact an ambassador to the Court of St. James and he delivered the speech to the London School of Economics.¹⁹⁰ Therefore, it is hardly surprising that Hägglöf similarly purported a very specific message. The narrative is the usual small-state realistic narrative of the 1950s arguing that, due to an unfortunate geography and a dependence on iron ore exports, Sweden had to make concessions to Germany.¹⁹¹ This narrative continued to be effective in dispelling negative public opinion and victimizing Sweden. Hägglöf also emphasizes the positive aspects of neutrality discussing Count Bernadotte, Sweden allowing facilities on Swedish territory that Danish and Norwegian units utilized for training purposes, and that Sweden instituted a minor

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 1-3.

¹⁸⁹ Gunnar Hägglöf, "A Test of Neutrality: Sweden in the Second World War," (Stockholm, 1961).

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 23-24.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

Marshall Plan to help neighboring countries.¹⁹² The message remains largely unchanged, namely that neutrality worked to the benefit of all humanity.

Nevertheless, Hägglöf's argument is very different. He argues that neutrality rather than being 'active' was possible simply because the balance of power provided for neutrality.¹⁹³ In other words, Sweden was lucky. The argument is slightly different because the audience is specific, geared toward British people. Although most of the documents are intended for a foreign English speaking public, they often attempt to appeal primarily to Americans. For many reasons, this pamphlet is an anomaly in the 1960s.

The article is useful for the Swedish Institute's narrative because it uses World War II as a platform to promote the concept of neutrality. The title emphasizes the message as the main title is 'A Test of Neutrality.' In fact Hägglöf argues in his opening sentence that World War II allowed for a discussion of neutrality with the statement: "Against the vast panorama of the Second World War the destinies of the northern kingdom of Sweden appear as not much more than a tiny detail, but it is perhaps a detail of some peculiar configuration and interest."¹⁹⁴ Discussions of World War II are important because they facilitate discussions of neutrality. That is the implicit message of the entire lecture and the reason the Swedish Institute published the speech as a fact pamphlet in the 1960s.

Furthermore Hägglöf says that World War II highlights the precariousness of neutrality.¹⁹⁵ He is in effect appealing to the great powers because in his opinion, Sweden is similarly at the mercy of more powerful states. Indeed the argument becomes more apparent with the last statement that: "The great and obvious lesson of the Second World War, and a lesson which has been reinforced many times by the post-war development of nuclear weapons, is, of course, that the world cannot continue without a World Order."¹⁹⁶

Therefore, Hägglöf uses the description of the history of World War II and specifically the small-state realistic narrative to highlight the importance and endurance of Swedish neutrality, as well as to demonstrate that a neutral country can coexist in between power blocs. The narrative both endears Sweden to the west and asks for the western power's mutual cooperation in ensuring Swedish neutrality during the Cold War. Although this approach is very different from the rest of the Swedish Institute's narratives of the 1960s, it nonetheless focuses on neutrality as a viable concept. Again, it is an anomaly and the only new production in this period by the Swedish Institute that keeps World War II as a

¹⁹² *Ibid*, p. 20.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 1.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 23.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid*.

platform to espouse political ideology. Aside from this article, the narrative of World War II decreases in importance.

The changes to the perception of Swedish identity regarding World War II are most apparent in the revised edition of a familiar book. Much like the reprints of the 1950s *Facts About Sweden* booklets discussed in the previous chapter, revisions provide for the most comprehensible relationship between context and changes in identity. As the current context changes, events are omitted, added or revised. Ingvar Andersson's 1961 *Introduction to Sweden* as the 'blueprint for the nation' demonstrates these changes poignantly.¹⁹⁷ The discussion of World War II begins the same, with Andersson emphasizing the delicate position Sweden faced during the war. However, the discussion regarding the flexibility of neutrality changes profoundly. This time Andersson includes a discussion emphasizing the ways that Sweden aided the allies and used neutrality as a method to contribute positively to the war effort, beginning with the statement: "When after 1942, the general picture slowly changed, Sweden's delicate position was improved."¹⁹⁸ He also talks specifically about bringing the transit of military and personnel between Norway and Germany to an end.¹⁹⁹ Andersson also discusses the reduction of trade with Germany in terms of iron ore, reducing the amount from 10 to 7.5 million in accordance with the allied wishes.²⁰⁰ The message of this narrative in comparison to the previous edition means to emphasize the ways Sweden cooperated with the allies rather than Germany. In fact the tone is decidedly less insecure and explanatory and instead promotes the flexibility of neutrality, describing how Sweden, who purported to remain neutral continued to help the allies. This marks a major change in the Swedish Institute's narrative of Sweden and World War II, namely that neutrality was a beneficial policy choice for Sweden and the world.

Andersson places much less emphasis on the concessions because by adeptly bypassing them there is no need for explanation. Slowly they can become removed from the narrative altogether. In the previous edition Andersson explained and enumerated the reasons for press censorship. However, in the 1961 edition, the discussion of censorship is completely omitted. Again, the actions that show Sweden in a less favorable light are easier omitted than confronted. As Sweden's identity becomes increasingly intertwined with the credible neutrality concept, the negative aspects of the war no longer have a place in the narrative of World War II and the discussions desist.

¹⁹⁷ Ingvar Andersson, *Introduction to Sweden (The Fifth Edition)*, (Stockholm, 1961); Glover, *National Relations*, p. 64.

¹⁹⁸ Andersson, *Introduction (The Fifth Edition)*, p. 86.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 86-87.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

Andersson shows World War II as a largely positive experience for Sweden, ending with the discussion of Sweden's heroics. His final paragraph regarding the war discusses the rescue of the Danish Jews, Wallenberg, and Bernadotte.²⁰¹ Andersson completely omits the statement that Swedish neutrality proved beneficial to other Scandinavian countries. Also he does not include the admission from the previous edition that Sweden's war policies faced heavy criticism. This did not require addressing since neutrality was largely a credible policy during the current context and thus there was no need to mention the unpleasant. Furthermore, Sweden continued to prove the benefits of neutrality during the Cold War. This could again be viewed as a continuation of the previous wartime policy and from that vantage point a discussion of the war always proved beneficial, namely as a means to demonstrate continuity and emphasize the positive aspects of neutrality as a general rule. Thus Andersson promotes this idea with the statement in his final chapter of 'Introduction to Sweden,' stating that "Sweden's location in the area between the spheres of major interest dominated by the two power blocs has prompted the political leadership to adhere to the course of neutrality which has been of obvious advantage in the past."²⁰²

It is exactly this 'obvious advantage' of neutrality that discussions of World War II emphasized. History could show continuity in Sweden's stance of neutrality, but most importantly history constructed correctly could emphasize neutrality as a benefit to the world. More specifically World War II provided the context for such a discussion. Primarily that is how the tone of Andersson's narrative changed from the 1950's to the 1960's. Through both omission and inclusion of facts, Andersson's history became less explanatory in nature and increasingly credible. Neutrality did not require the same amount of explanation because Andersson took it for granted that it proved its credible nature within the context of the current political climate. Since the concept of credible neutrality was widely accepted, Anderson could emphasize the benefits of Swedish neutrality during World War II as a validation of the concept.

The Swedish Institute valued Andersson's narrative as complimentary to the message they wanted to disseminate to foreign audiences because again they separated his history specifically into a separate book. During the 1950s the Institute already showed a propensity to favor Andersson's narrative when they published *A Short History of Sweden* and *Resume of Swedish History* as excerpts taken from the history section of *Introduction to Sweden*.²⁰³ Likewise in 1962 the Swedish used exactly the same method when they published *Swedish History in*

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*

²⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 88.

²⁰³ Andersson, *Resume*; Andersson, *A Short History*.

Brief.²⁰⁴ Again this book contained only Andersson's discussion of history, taken directly from *Introduction to Sweden. Swedish History in Brief* did not deviate from Andersson's 1961 'Introduction' history section. Indeed as a 'blueprint for the nation,' the Swedish Institute continued to maximize the message of Andersson's narrative to the fullest, favoring the promotion of neutrality as a critical component of the Swedish narrative.²⁰⁵

Another revision of a similar work that served to emphasize the changes in the history construction of World War II with regards to changes in Swedish image is an analysis of the progression of the *Facts About Sweden* booklet during the 1960s. Indeed the format continues from the 1950s and the historical facts of World War II also remain the same in both the 1960 and 1961 edition. The timeline highlights the dates 1939—1945 as the period of Swedish neutrality during World War II, 1946 when Sweden entered the United Nations, and 1948 when Sweden joined the Marshall Plan.²⁰⁶

The book follows the examples from the 1950s and includes the events that demarcate Sweden as a world participant rather than an isolationist. The events of World War II continued to lack description and were lumped under one heading, notable for its simplicity. Nonetheless, these developments are not new and began in the 1950s in concordance with the changing narrative of the period. The basic argument of the previous section that neutrality became largely positive remains relevant. Although the tendency in the 1950s was to structure the Swedish narrative to focus on Sweden as a humanitarian, the overall concept remains the same: that Swedish neutrality serves to benefit the world.

However, the 1969 *Facts About Sweden* introduces a new narrative entirely.²⁰⁷ The format is similarly a complete departure from the earlier editions. The book generally offers more detail than before. The history section highlights the more detailed approach profoundly since it was no longer in timeline format. Rather the history section became instead a three-page narrative. Similar to the 1964 *Sweden* pamphlet, the fact book includes the narrative of Sweden's 'Golden Ages' from the Vikings to the great monarchs.²⁰⁸ Curiously, the narrative separates the history into sections with extremely significant titles. The first two sections, "How Sweden Began" and "The Middle Ages," serve to open the narrative.²⁰⁹ The subsequent three titles emphasize the main purpose of the narrative, namely to stress Sweden's progression into a country practicing the policy of credible neutrality. The

²⁰⁴ Ingvar Andersson, *Swedish History in Brief*, (Stockholm, 1962).

²⁰⁵ Glover, *National Relations*, p. 64.

²⁰⁶ The Swedish Institute, *Facts About Sweden*, (Stockholm, 1960); The Swedish Institute, *Facts About Sweden*, (Stockholm, 1961).

²⁰⁷ The Swedish Institute, *Facts About Sweden*, (Stockholm, 1969).

²⁰⁸ *Ibid*, p. 7-9.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid*, p. 7.

titles are “The Vasa Period and Sweden as a World Power (1523—1718),” “From a Land of Power to a Land of Culture (1718—1818),” “A Century of Peace (1818—1918),” and finally “The Emergence of Democracy (1918—).”²¹⁰ The history is constructed to emphasize the progression of neutrality as a compliment to democracy.

The titles are significant due to their respective implications. Highlighting the fact that Sweden was first a world power indicates that Sweden, as a country, understands the experience of success and power. Despite that, Sweden surrendered her power in order to pursue the moral high road: neutrality. For that reason, Sweden progressed from a land of power into a land of culture, indicating that the waning of power facilitates a development of culture. The implication there is that power does not define a state and a state can make positive contributions to the world better without the burden of power. This resulted in a century of peace for Sweden.

Even without power and entanglements Sweden managed to develop democracy. Indeed the particularly Swedish brand of democracy became increasingly idyllic as the decades progressed. The overall message remains blatantly clear. Sweden’s ability to pursue her particular brand of credible neutrality was a conscious decision. Sweden, once a great power, realized that the finer things in life are the result of developing in terms of culture and democracy. Furthermore this path facilitated modernizations in the wood and pulp industries, agriculture and the government, marking Swedish progress.²¹¹ Therefore the narrative changes to show neutrality as a means to facilitate culture.

It is particularly telling that the final title discusses democracy rather than World War II. In fact the defining event of the twentieth century was losing significance within the Swedish narrative. For all the positive aspects of neutrality World War II could emphasize, it also facilitated a potentially uncomfortable discussion regarding Sweden’s concessions and aid to Germany. Therefore, the Swedish narrative could generalize the event to fit aptly into the grand narrative of Swedish neutrality as a tradition dating back some 150 years.

Some specific textual examples serve to substantiate this assertion. Within the “Century of Peace” title, under the description of Charles XIV John’s ascension to the throne is a one-sentence description regarding the policy of neutrality stating: “During his reign neutrality became the guiding principle of Sweden’s foreign policy.”²¹² Neutrality became a guiding principle, a tradition that remained unbroken. Therefore, World War II lost its relevance for the Swedish narrative and the presentation of Swedish identity.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 8-9.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

²¹² *Ibid.*

In fact, after discussing the Labor movement's power dating back to 1936, the final paragraph of the history section ends with this statement: "In the field of foreign policy, neutrality remains the leading principle."²¹³ Brief and to the point, the narrative wastes no time in presenting the main essence. Neutrality *remains* the leading principle and is a Swedish tradition. There is absolutely no discussion of World War II. The topic is simply gratuitous. Neutrality could be touted and emphasized without any World War II discussion. The only place where *Facts* does discuss neutrality in any detail is under the "Foreign Policy" section.²¹⁴ Here, it discusses Sweden's foreign policy in terms of neutrality stating that the "...goal is to contribute to the preservation of peace."²¹⁵

Again neutrality, without regards to World War II, allows for contributions to peace. Before explicitly stating sentences similar to this, the Institute constructed narratives that showed how non-participation in World War II facilitated Sweden's humanity endeavors.

Furthermore, the section mentions the relationship between history and Swedish neutrality, already stated within the "History" section stating: "This policy of neutrality is anchored so deeply in Sweden's history, and in Swedish popular opinion, that any attempt to depart from it would meet with overwhelming opposition."²¹⁶

Similar to how the histories of World War II the historical experience demonstrates neutrality is a long unbroken tradition. Therefore, World War II did not require mention or discussion. Instead it could be portrayed as part of Sweden's unbroken history of peace. Ultimately the emphasis was on Sweden's ability to remain peaceful rather than the Swedish contributions to the German war effort. This new narrative indeed emphasized the active and credible components of neutrality stating that "in the Swedish definition, cases can often arise in which a neutral state wishes to voice its independent standpoint on important world problems..."²¹⁷ This meant that the small-state realistic narrative became subordinate to the new narrative emphasizing Sweden's long tradition of neutrality.

Thus *Facts* continues to promote the idea heralded by Gunnar Heckscher that neutrality had an active nature. Specifically, this meant the idea that a country could be both neutral and active within the world of politics. Sweden could "voice its independent standpoint on important world problems." This is in line with the active neutrality Christine Agius described.²¹⁸ Neutrality did not need to be discussed within the context of World War II history. Instead, it became its own concept separate and distinct from historical discussions,

²¹³ *Ibid.*

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*

²¹⁸ Agius, *The Social Construction of Swedish Neutrality*, p. 6.

often contained under the category of foreign relations. This example and discussion of neutrality in particular serves to substantiate the claim that World War II history lost its relevance.

5.3 Concluding Remarks

Although in the 1950s, the Swedish Institute used the history of World War II to effectively contextualize the presentation of Swedish identity, this ceased to be the case in the 1960s. In fact the period from 1960—1969 can be characterized by a general lack of substantive material regarding World War II history. There are few new productions, previous books like the *Fact Books* and Ingvar Andersson's *Introduction to Sweden* are simply revised to provide less discussion, and other general introductions of Sweden omit history altogether as a topic.

There are two major reasons for this change. First by the 1960s Swedish identity was more firmly secure. The advent of wars like Vietnam and highly stressful events like the Cuban Missile Crisis left the world questioning belligerent policies. Furthermore, Sweden managed to avoid war and participate in politics. Unlike World War II, where Sweden first appeared to be at the mercy of Germany and later the allies, in the current climate with the policy of 'active neutrality' Sweden no longer appeared passive. In fact Sweden avoided war and still pursued an active political stance. Therefore, the policy of neutrality became increasingly credible.

The second reason accounting for the declining importance of World War II history is mutually inclusive with the increased security of Swedish identity. The Swedish Institute no longer needed to apologize, justify, or enlighten the world regarding Sweden's actions during the war. The benefits of neutrality became more tangible during the Cold War. Therefore World War II no longer provided a platform to construct the positive aspects of neutrality. For that reason, World War II no longer required a place in the Swedish narrative.

If Swedish identity was constructed around the neutrality concept then the narrative of neutrality did not need mention World War II except in a generalized sense. For that reason the narrative from the 1969 *Facts About Sweden* discussed Swedish history as a series of events that culminated in the successful policy of neutrality. The narrative of neutrality remained an unbroken tradition and World War II became merely a component of that narrative, sort of assimilated within. Discussing World War II meant discussing good and bad aspects of the war. By discussing the tradition of neutrality, the narrative only needed to discuss the positive aspects. Therefore, the method of using World War II as a platform to explain the benefits of neutrality and espouse current political ideology was largely obsolete.

6. Conclusion

This thesis has explored the changes in the Swedish Institute's national narrative of World War II from during the war through the 1960s, focusing on the relationship between neutrality and the Institute's projected image of Sweden to a primarily foreign audience. Dealing with the main research question of how and why this specific context of history writing changed during the discussed time periods meant emphasizing elements of continuity and changes in the narrative over time. The Swedish Institute's national narrative supports the idea that political context and the adjusting of Sweden's projected international image facilitated changes in history writing. Indeed the national narrative served to bridge the past and present.

The early documents use World War II to strengthen the image of Swedish neutrality. César Villanueva Rivas's theory attests that a link exists between culture and identity and that culture is appropriately constructed to reflect this relationship. Therefore, as the Swedish projected identity changed within a shifting political context to become firmly focused around the concept of neutrality, the national narrative, as an element of culture, was adjusted accordingly. The image of Sweden's dedication to neutrality, led to a declining importance of World War II history as a venue to espouse the benefits of neutrality. The declining importance becomes readily apparent through a comparative analysis over time between the three selected time periods. With the strengthening of neutrality as inextricably linked with Swedish identity, World War II history becomes obsolete.

The first chapter 1939-1945 explores the war itself and the contemporary documents, characterized by an emerging narrative focusing on small-state realism. The link between context and narrative is most pronounced here, indicating clear discursive shifts after 1943. Pre—1943, represents rather vague discussions of neutrality and emerging concepts like Sweden's right to choose neutrality as a viable policy and a link between Sweden and the United States that will develop more clearly after Stalingrad when Sweden wants to endear itself to the allies. Many of the documents after the crucial 1943 date, were characterized by an uncertain tone. The link between Sweden and the U.S. develops and the construction of Swedish neutrality as necessary due to small-state realism and beneficial due to Sweden's humanitarian works. The overall goal of the narrative was to reconstruct Sweden's damaged international image in the post-war environment.

The second chapter, discussing the post-war period from 1946-1959, discusses the Swedish Institute's use of Swedish participation in World War II to construct credible neutrality. The effect is a comparatively less insecure narrative, with a focus on the international aspect of Swedish neutrality and its maturing qualities. Indeed, the narrative

continues to develop the small-state realistic narrative and emphasize the heroics of Folke Bernadotte, Raoul Wallenberg, coupled with discussions of Sweden's humanitarian efforts, in order to promote the idea that Swedish neutrality was selfless rather than selfish. The small-state realistic narrative provided a means to construct Sweden's role in the war more positively in conformity with Johan Östling's arguments. Furthermore the narrative sought to endear Sweden to the United States. The overall aim of the narrative is to compliment Sweden's image and construct neutrality as a beneficial policy.

The final chapter, outlining the years 1960-1969, focuses on the declining importance of World War II historical writing in the context of the Swedish Institute. In fact, a lack of substantive material regarding World War II characterizes the period in the archive. The narrative continues to promote the credible aspect of neutrality from the previous period. However there are many silences in the documents ignoring discussions of World War II. The narrative constructed neutrality as a tradition and effectively negated the need to discuss World War II and thus confront difficult questions. The credibility of neutrality was proven by Swedish policy and therefore the Swedish Institute used the narrative to promote neutrality as tradition, marking World War II as largely irrelevant.

Three major reasons account for the Swedish Institute's changes in historical writing and why the narrative of World War II ultimately became irrelevant. First, is the political element of national narratives that accounts for the changes in the Swedish Institute's construction of Sweden and World War II history in order to reflect a specific image for a specific context. Indeed, this idea illustrates Anthony Smith's 'cult of Golden Ages' concept. Constructing a national narrative to exploit the nation and serve a current political agenda explains why the message of the sources changed over time. This also facilitated adjustments in the narratives including omissions and new emphasis according to the overall message, lending history a goal and meaning.

Accepting the idea that history was a means to appeal to a foreign public, particularly the United States substantiates Gregory Paschalidis' idea that culture became largely diplomatic around 1953. Indeed during this period, the Swedish narrative emphasized the credible nature of neutrality as a means to promote the Swedish image abroad. As neutrality became a more a focus of Sweden's international image, World War II became less so. The story of World War II needed neutrality but not vice versa. For this reason, the use of the narrative of Sweden in World War was irrelevant by the 1960s.

The final reason for the declining importance of World War II and the decrease in discussions is that the particular narrative became canonized. Indeed Michael Billig attests to the idea that with repetition nationalism becomes ingrained. Since the narrative of the war promoted nationalism through a focus on the benefits of neutrality, the idea that repetition

facilitates canonization holds value. The war did not need to be discussed or explained during the 1960s because it was accepted and valid just as Swedish neutrality was credible.

This thesis has shown how the Swedish Institute's narrative functioned to project a particular Swedish image abroad. Indeed the narrative served to bridge the past and present. It is difficult to link this to a larger relationship of silence in other historical and historiographical writings in other contexts beyond specific examples discussed about the Swedish Institute. However, this idea opens up possibilities for further research into the relationship Sweden, and other neutral or conflicted nations, had with presenting and understanding World War II during this period.

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