

# 'Until the domination of the Jews is crushed, Sweden is not the land of the Swedes!'

*Hammaren* as an example of Swedish conspiracist antisemitism, 1943–1945

LARS M ANDERSSON



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**ABSTRACT** • This article analyses *Hammaren*, a Swedish blend of *Der Stürmer*, *Der Hammer* and domestic antisemitic publications, published by the most radical Swedish national socialists and antisemitic crusaders, launched in January 1943 and discontinued on 30 April 1945, the day of Adolf Hitler's suicide in Berlin. *Hammaren* fought a global war against an imaginary enemy, 'the Jew', described as evil and immensely powerful. 'The Jew' was responsible for everything wrong in the world, from embezzlement, petty theft and peddling to capitalism, Bolshevism and the ongoing world war, understood as an eschatological race war instigated by 'the Jew' and threatening the very existence of the white race. *Hammaren*, according to its contributors, was an enlightenment project; antisemitism meant self-defence against an overbearing, all-powerful enemy. This article investigates some of the strategies employed by *Hammaren* to spread rumours about the Jews, to 'expose' them and their henchmen, and thereby awaken Swedes to the dire situation.

## A boisterous entry

'The domination of the Jews must be crushed.'<sup>1</sup> With this ostentatious headline, the antisemitic journal *Hammaren* ('The Hammer') introduced itself to the Swedish public in January 1943. The declaration that followed read:

Undoubtedly, the most burning question of our time is the Jewish question. It is also, without any doubt, one of the most misunderstood and intentionally misconstrued questions there is. The reactions to the so-called persecution of the Jews in recent times also reveal an astonishing ignorance regarding the role of the Jewish people in world history. Against this ignorance, there

is only one weapon – enlightenment.

To contribute to shedding light on the Jewish question, we submit the first issue of *Hammaren*. Through this mouthpiece, we intend to tell the Swedish people the truth about the Jews and the rule and domination of the Jews. We wish to speak clearly and straightforwardly about the alien dominion that increases its might daily.

The old Nordic Hammer symbolises our journal's struggle. Not the international Hammer of Jewish Marxism – with or without the sickle – but the Nordic Hammer of Thor that will now be hurled at the dens of Judaism. May that Hammer be the thunderbolt that these days must flash through Sweden.<sup>2</sup>

1 'Judeväldet måste krossas', *Hammaren*, 1943:1, 1. All translations by the author of this article.

2 'Anmälan', *Hammaren*, 1943:1, 1.

This message was hammered home in every one of the twenty-seven issues, published monthly from January 1943 to May 1945,<sup>3</sup> through mottos such as: ‘Until the domination of the Jews is crushed, Sweden is not the land of the Swedes’,<sup>4</sup> and ‘Antisemitism is not persecution of the Jews! Antisemitism is the people’s self-defence!’<sup>5</sup> To convey its message, the journal also relied heavily on imagery, for instance a recurrent drawing of a swarthy, masked Jewish burglar carrying a sack on his back containing the ‘Press’, the ‘Radio’, the ‘Banks’ and ‘Industry’, and a set of keys (to Sweden).<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, a fund named ‘Front against the Jew’ was established.<sup>7</sup> Its call for funding illustrates the conspiracist understanding of the world permeating *Hammarén*:

Front against the Jews.

The Jews own the capital. Therefore, they control public opinion in today’s Sweden. We must destroy their power through enlightenment and propaganda. The output and circulation of *Hammarén* must increase. But this requires money. Give it to us. Do you want to contribute to crushing the domination of the Jews? Then give us

- 3 The eulogy in the last issue is dated 30 April, the day of Adolf Hitler and Eva Braun’s suicide in the *Führerbunker* in Berlin; when the ‘master’s voice’ silenced, so did *Hammarén*. During the first two years *Hammarén* was an eight-page tabloid. In 1945, the format was changed to A5 with a cover in color and the number of pages increased to 32. However, the change only lasted for three months. The last issue was a six-page tabloid.
- 4 ‘Förrän judarnas välde är krossat är Sverige ej svenskarnas land!’, *Hammarén*, 1943:1, 7; 1943:2, 2; 1943:3, 1.
- 5 ‘Antisemitism är icke judeförföljelse! Antisemitism är folkens självförsvar’, *Hammarén*, 1943:5, 3.
- 6 ‘Front mot juden’, caricature by ‘Manne’, e.g. Carl Magnus Berg, *Hammarén*, 1943:1, 7.
- 7 ‘Stöd kampfonden: Front mot juden’, *Hammarén*, 1943:12, 6.

weapons – give us the means, with the help of *Hammarén*, to cast light on the Jews in Sweden. The domination of the Jews will be crushed. *Hammarén* deals the blow. Support the fund for the combat front against the Jew.<sup>8</sup>

*Hammarén*, a Swedish journal inspired by Julius Streicher’s *Der Stürmer*, Theodor Fritsch’s *Der Hammer* and domestic Swedish antisemitic publications, thus understood and described politics as a global war against ‘the Jew’, represented as an evil and immensely powerful entity. In line with this reasoning, it held ‘World Jewry’ responsible for everything wrong in the world, from embezzlement, petty theft and peddling to capitalism, Bolshevism and the ongoing world war, understood as an eschatological race war instigated by the Jews and threatening the very existence of the white race.<sup>9</sup> *Hammarén* thus fought ideologically alongside Nazi Germany and its allies, apparently inspired by Adolf Hitler’s infamous speech in the German Reichstag on 30 January 1939, where the Führer prophesied that the ‘Jewish race in Europe’ would be annihilated if they ‘should succeed in plunging the nations once more into a world war’ (Kershaw 2000: 697). Its message was unequivocal: the Jews were always and everywhere to blame, and must be combatted wherever they appeared, albeit at least initially through ‘enlightenment’ (see the article by Karcher and Simonsen in this volume; Simonsen 2020; Karcher & Simonsen 2023). The journal and its allies perceived themselves as victims, fighting a struggle of self-defence against the all-powerful Jews. The picture that

8 ‘Front mot juden’, *Hammarén*, 1943:8, 9.

9 The world war is constantly referred to as ‘the Jews’ war’: Nässlan, ‘Sverige och judarnas krig’; Wilhelm Liljencrantz, ‘Judarna och krigsmakten: Krigsanstiftarna äro kroniska fanflyktingar’, and ‘Judarnas krig’; *Hammarén*, 1943:1, 2–3.

emerged was a carbon copy of the one given by Jeffrey Herf in his comprehensive study of Nazi propaganda during the Second World War and the Holocaust: the white race was targeted for extinction by a vast international conspiracy led by a Jewish clique, the puppet masters pulling the strings and controlling the actions of Stalin, Churchill and Roosevelt (Herf 2006). *Hammaren* was the most antisemitic journal published in Sweden during the Nazi era (Löow 1990; Lundberg 2014; Berggren 1999). It showcases the antisemitism of the most radical and intellectual Swedish national socialists, loyal to Nazi Germany (Löow 1990: 223–7), and the collaboration between them and the most single-minded Swedish antisemites, the category of unruly, obsessed Jew-haters (Bak & Emberland 2022). At the same time, it relied heavily on antisemitism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and sometimes on even older Swedish (and German) forms of it (Heß 2022), that represented the ‘Jew’ and ‘Jewishness’ as the opposites of the ‘Swede’ and ‘Swedishness’ (Tydén 1986; Andersson 2000), opposed Jewish settlement (Nyman 1988) and immigration (Hammar 1964; Lindberg 1973; Hultén 2018), and stereotyped, caricatured and verbally, literally and sometimes even physically attacked individual Jews (Bedoire 1998; Andersson 2000; Rosengren 2007; Gedin 2003; Grünwald 2011; Heß 2018; Carlesson Magalhães 2023a, 2023b). There were also campaigns against peddling and Jewish peddlers by the two leading merchant associations (Tydén 1986; Hammarström 2016).

The editors and contributors to *Hammaren* thus perceived the journal as a project of ‘enlightenment’ intended to awaken the Swedes by making them aware of their sinister situation in servitude to the Jews. All texts and images claimed to reveal what was going on behind the scenes, to expose the puppeteers and their schemes and machinations, to unmask the clique ruling the world and their

non-Jewish henchmen. This unveiling of the Jews was also the objective of the books and booklets advertised and reviewed, such as Hitler’s *Mein Kampf* and Martin Luther’s *Von den Juden und ihren Lügen*.<sup>10</sup> The entire project was in other words conspiracist, based on the idea that the Jews were the actual but hidden masters of the world and that their domination must be revealed and crushed. To expose this purported conspiracy, *Hammaren* appealed to national (and racial) solidarity – ‘true’ Swedes were supposed to understand the importance of *Hammaren*’s struggle and join it.

Since *Hammaren*’s message is so unequivocal and simplistic, and repeated *ad nauseam*, there is not much point in analysing it as such. Far more interesting is to study the journal on its own terms, as an alleged enlightenment project, and the strategies employed to awaken the Swedes.

*Hammaren* employed six main strategies: 1. listing Jews in various contexts and professions; 2. naming Jews suspected, accused and (sometimes) sentenced for various crimes; 3. attacking prominent members of Swedish Jewry; 4. mocking the majority Swedes seen as advocates of the Jews; 5. promoting negative and selective descriptions of Judaism, Jewish traditions and Jews in history and 6. re-publishing antisemitic ‘classics’, old antisemitic Swedish texts and quotations revealing ‘truths’ about the Jews.

This article focuses on the mapping and listing of Jews and Jewish businesses, the representation of Jews as criminals, attacks on alleged ‘lackeys of the Jews’, and, finally, on references to the antisemitic tradition and quotations from non-Jews and Jews ‘confirming’ antisemitic allegations. It discusses what these

10 *Hammaren* not only advertised for Luther’s work, it also published Luther’s ‘Om judarna och deras lögnar’, *Hammaren*, 1944:1, and 1944:2, 3.

strategies reveal about *Hammaren's* project to enlighten the Swedes.<sup>11</sup> Since *Hammaren* is not only a clear proponent of *conspiracist* and *redemptive antisemitism* (Friedländer 1997: 87; Karcher & Simonsen 2023) but also relies heavily on *everyday Swedish antisemitism* it allows for a study of the relationship and interconnectedness between different antisemitisms.

### **A baron, a political scientist, a draughtsman, a bookseller and publisher, some John Does and the readers: the contributors and editors of *Hammaren***

Before analysing *Hammaren's* strategies, the editors, principal contributors, the journal's finances and the size of the edition should

11 The reason antisemitic attacks on prominent Jews are not analysed here is that these campaigns, as indicated above, have already been studied. The two main targets in *Hammaren* were the modernist artist, Isaac Grünewald, and members of the Bonnier family. The attacks on Grünewald became particularly venomous as a result of his conflict with the *Hammaren* editor, Einar Åberg, and its judicial repercussions. See, for instance, 'Antisemiten Åberg dömd – men Isaac straffri', *Hammaren*, 1943:8, 8. The journal even indicated that 'the Jews' had plans to murder Åberg; 'Einar Åberg interneras: Judiska planer på likvidering av antisemiten', *Hammaren*, 1943:10, 1. It constantly targeted the Bonnier publishing house, representing the alleged Jewish control of the media, the newsagents and the system of press distribution. True to its conspiracist antisemitism, *Hammaren* blamed Bonniers for the measures taken by the newspaper publishers' association to stop the distribution and sale of the journal when it first appeared. For attacks on Bonnier, see, for instance, Slagfinn, 'Den Bonnierska folkförgiftningen', *Hammaren*, 1943:5, 1. The horror stories regarding the role of Jews in history and the abominations of Judaism are covered by the presentation of the contributors and their articles and in the study of how the antisemitic tradition was used and 'corroborated' and therefore not analysed separately.

be discussed. *Hammaren* claimed that each issue was printed in 10,000 copies. Given the circulation of the Swedish dailies, the Nazi press in general and the number of members in antisemitic organisations at this time, the figure seems exaggerated (SOU 1946: 86; Tydén 1986).<sup>12</sup> The finances appear to have been shaky, as for most of the national-socialist and antisemitic publications; begging letters and calls for help with the distribution recurred regularly.<sup>13</sup> This financial hardship was probably exacerbated by The Newspaper Publishers' Association's (Tidningsutgivareföreningen) decision in February 1943 to stop the distribution and sale of the journal because it violated the norms of public decency (Lööw 1990: 228). *Hammaren* blamed the ban on the 'Jewish' publishing house Bonnier, stressing that 'the result of the Jew Bonnier's fear of us will not to any great extent stop us'.<sup>14</sup> However, as was the case with many other antisemitic and national-socialist activists, projects and organisations (Berggren 1999: 221–30; Pettersson 2000: 174–273), the journal had at least one major benefactor, an elderly stockbroker in Malmö named Per Jönsson.<sup>15</sup>

The editor of the first issues, Knut H. Jonsson, and publisher in charge, E. Arvastsson,<sup>16</sup> have not left many traces in the journal and have not received any attention in previous research. However, there are shorter texts and editorials signed K. J.,

12 <https://tidning.kb.se/nld/nld/main?tidnId=&katId=39&PFD=1938&PTD=1945&sok=S%C3%B6k>, accessed December 2023.

13 For instance 'Till Hammarens vänner', *Hammaren*, 1944:4, 2.

14 *Hammaren* blamed the decision on the Bonnier publishing house: 'Bonnier till angrepp mot Hammaren', *Hammaren*, 1943:3, 1, 3.

15 'Två 75-åringar', *Hammaren*, 1945:1, 1.

16 Editorial information, mentioning K. Jonsson, *Hammaren*, 1943:2, 1; editorial information, mentioning both K. Jonsson as editor and E. Arvastsson as publisher, *Hammaren* 1943:5, 1.

probably written by Jansson. A short news item mentions a meeting organised by the national-socialist organisation, the Swedish Socialist Union (Svensk Socialistisk Samling, SSS), commonly called the Lindholm movement, where its leader, Sven Olov Lindholm, had concluded a speech by declaring a 'total war against Judaism'. K. J. expressed his gratitude and stressed that *Hammaren* had 'waged a war as totalitarian as possible against the domination of the Jews'.<sup>17</sup>

Quoting Lindholm was no coincidence. As the historian Heléne Lööw has shown, *Hammaren* originated within the Lindholm movement (Lööw 1990: 221–7). The close ties between the two are visible in the material gathered by the Swedish intelligence organisation, surveilling *Hammaren*'s writers, contributors and subscribers. Short news items such as greetings from SSS volunteers fighting in the Continuation War in Finland<sup>18</sup> and songs by Lindholm from the SSS's songbook were published, further underlining the connection.<sup>19</sup>

A key figure in the Lindholm movement and *Hammaren* was Olof Örström, an adjunct, lecturer, editor and author (Lööw 1990: 65; Berggren 1999: 83, 215, 312). *Hammaren* referred to him as 'the grand old man of Swedish antisemitism'.<sup>20</sup> Örström originally belonged

to a rival national-socialist party, commonly referred to as the Furugård movement. With the physician and eugenicist Åke Berglund, and the lawyer Dr Gunnar Prawitz, he constituted a clique in SSS devoted to Nazi Germany and members of Carlberg's antisemitic association Manhem (Carlsson 1942: 50–1, 118–19). Örström, who had a doctorate in political science (Örström 1899), wrote popular history, biographies, history textbooks and encyclopaedia articles, and contributed regularly to conservative dailies. In addition, he belonged to the editorial board of the SSS mouthpiece *Den svenske folksocialisten*, referred to as *Den Svenske*, and was its *de facto* editor when Lindholm was called up for military service. A relentless advocate of Nazi Germany and of Vidkun Quisling and his regime in Norway (Lööw 1990: 108–11), Örström wrote articles for *Hammaren* describing the allegedly nefarious role of the Jews in history and the contemporary world.<sup>21</sup> He repeatedly disseminated the myth of Judaeo-Bolshevism, a conspiracist narrative analysed by Paavo Ahonen in this issue (see also Blomqvist 2013), and constantly returned to 'the Jewish question':

In the Jewish question, there is no compromise. One is either an antisemite out of self-preservation or not. The Jewish race becomes the undoing of all who do not see and who do not want to defend themselves against the Jewish demands for power. The proverb: if you give a Jew the tip of your finger, he will soon take possession of your entire person, is a historical reality, confirmed from century to century. We must never grow weary but always, and especially in these fateful times, fight the Jewish

17 K. Jonsson, 'Totalt krig mot judeväldet', *Hammaren*, 1943:5, 5. There is also a greeting from the SSS volunteers in Finland, 'Hälsning from Finland', signed by a Karl Jansson 'with Nordic salute', e.g., the Fascist salute and a call for ethnic cleansing: 'May the struggle therefore continue until no Jew and no Bolshevik sets foot on Nordic holy soil', *Hammaren*, 1944:2, 2.

18 *Hammaren*, 1945:1, 32.

19 Sven Olof Lindholm, 'Framför oss ligger Sverige', *Hammaren*, 1945:3, 30; Lukas, 'Huset Bonniers marsch', *Hammaren*, 1943:10, 5; *SSS sångbok* (Stockholm, 1942).

20 'Filosemiterna – den Judiska lögnens profeter', *Hammaren*, 1943:7, 3.

21 Olof Örström, 'Bolsjevism, den judiska talmudlärans följdriktiga tillämpning', *Hammaren*, 1944:2, 5; Olof Örström, 'Bolsjevism är judendom', *Hammaren*, 1943:2, 3, 6.



threat and this race that in all its doings, in the [seemingly] insignificant as well as in the larger scheme of things, looks to political actions that will help them achieve their goal: Jehovah's promise, the world domination of the Jews.<sup>22</sup>

The quotation captures both the central message in Örström's articles in particular and in *Hammaren* in general, embracing an antisemitic conspiracist understanding of history and the contemporary world.

Another vital member of the Lindholm movement was Carl Magnus 'Manne' Berg, the most prominent Swedish national-socialist caricaturist,<sup>23</sup> who drew the covers of *Hammaren* just as Philipp 'Fips' Rupprecht drew them for *Der Stürmer*. He was involved in the Lindholm movement from early on (Lundberg 2014: 149), was in charge of its Malmö branch, serving as its treasurer, and ran for parliament in 1944.<sup>24</sup> His caricatures appeared regularly in *Den Svenske*, and he regularly wrote editorials.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, he worked for other national-socialist and antisemitic publications, was editor of yet another SSS mouthpiece, *SSS vill: fred, frihet, folkgemenskap: för ökad nationell aktivitet mot bolsjevismen*,<sup>26</sup> and was deeply involved in the antisemitic campaigns carried out by SSS.<sup>27</sup>

Another significant contributor was Baron

- 22 Olof Örström, 'Kompromiss i judefrågan är förintelse', *Hammaren*, 1944:4, 5, citation 8.
- 23 Philipp 'Fips' Rupprecht was the draughtsman behind the covers and illustrations of *Der Stürmer*.
- 24 Riksarkivet, RA (Marieberg), Allmänna säkerhetstjänsten, Carl Magnus 'Manne' Berg.
- 25 See for instance, 'Häll ut!', *Den svenske folksocialisten*, 20 July 1940.
- 26 Riksarkivet, RA (Marieberg), Allmänna säkerhetstjänsten, Carl Magnus 'Manne' Berg.
- 27 Riksarkivet, RA (Marieberg), Allmänna säkerhetstjänsten, Carl Magnus 'Manne' Berg. Document listing Berg's activities from 1938 to 1940.

Wilhelm Liljencrantz, who like several other prominent national socialists was a veteran from the civil wars in Estonia and Russia, where he had fought the Bolsheviks. As Oula Silvennoinen shows in this issue, the veterans from these civil wars played a vital role in the fascist movements in the Nordic countries. Like Örström, Liljencrantz was a prolific writer who contributed to various nationalist and national socialist publications, and wrote numerous booklets, printed and disseminated by his own publishing house, Argus.<sup>28</sup> His contributions to *Hammaren* consist primarily of excerpts from these booklets, advertised and reviewed in the journal.<sup>29</sup> The topics addressed give a clear understanding of his conspiracist antisemitic worldview. Among his contributions was an open letter 'to the International and Swedish Jewry', as well as essays on 'Jewish Freemasonry', 'the Jewish master race', 'the Jewish war of extermination', short histories on both antisemitism and alleged ritual murder as well as a collection of quotations about 'the chosen people' and a text attacking traditional Jewish slaughter.<sup>30</sup> Most of his booklets from 1943 to 1945 appeared in *Hammaren*.<sup>31</sup>

In addition to the contributions by prominent members of the Lindholm movement, there was a vast number of unsigned articles and editorials signed with a *nom de plume*. Some leading Finnish antisemites and national socialists also contributed, such as father and son Rafael and Gunnar Lindqvist, whose antisemitic activities Silvennoinen's article in this issue clarifies. While Lindqvist senior, whose

28 Sven A. Lundehäll, 'Till det tysta ledet'.

29 'Argus förlag presenterar', *Hammaren*, 1945:3, 11; 'Litteratur', *Hammaren*, 1945:2, 23.

30 [https://libris.kb.se/hitlist?q=Wilhelm+Liljencrantz&r=pers:\(Liljencrantz+Wilhelm+1894+1963\)&p=1&f=simp&g=&s=r&t=&m=10&d=libris](https://libris.kb.se/hitlist?q=Wilhelm+Liljencrantz&r=pers:(Liljencrantz+Wilhelm+1894+1963)&p=1&f=simp&g=&s=r&t=&m=10&d=libris), accessed December 2023.

31 Wilhelm Liljencrantz, 'Den vandrande juden', *Hammaren*, 1943:2, 2–3.

antisemitic journal *Fyren* and early translation into Swedish of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* (1919) were essential to Swedish anti-semitism, published a conspiracist antisemitic poem, 'Blackbirds',<sup>32</sup> his son wrote a couple of articles. Lindqvist junior was introduced as 'our Finland-Swedish colleague [...] famous from the Jäger movement'.<sup>33</sup> *Hammaren* also translated articles by non-Nordic antisemites, such as André Chaumet, editor of the French antisemitic journal *Le Cabier jaune* and propagandist for *L'Institut d'étude des questions juives* (IEQJ). His article 'With UNKNOWN in the house' described France as ruled by the Jews.<sup>34</sup> An article by the German professor of theology, Georg Bertram, claimed that "The domination of the Jews summarised all Jewish expectations for the future, including religion".<sup>35</sup> The point of these and other articles by prominent foreign antisemites was apparently to bring testimony from as many other countries as possible about the alleged power of the Jews and thereby to underline the gravity of the situation. As shown by Karcher and Simonsen in their contribution to this issue, this strategy was also employed by the journal *Welt-Dienst*.

Berg, Liljencrantz and Örström contributed to *Hammaren* throughout its existence, including in 1945, when Einar Åberg became publisher and the format changed from tabloid to A5. Åberg was the most prolific and public of the Swedish one-man crusaders against the Jews. According to his own testimony, he saw the light when reading *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* in the 1920s and, from that moment on, dedicated his life (he died in 1970) to 'enlighten'

32 Rafael Lindqvist, 'Svartfåglar', *Hammaren*, 1944:2, 2.

33 Gunnar Lindqvist, 'Judisk lojalitet i kriminell röntgenbelysning', *Hammaren*, 1943:12, 4.

34 André Chaumet, 'Med OKÄNDA i huset', *Hammaren*, 1943:2, 2-4.

35 Georg Bertram, 'Om judendomens väsen', *Hammaren*, 1944:1, 3, 6.

people all around the world about the imminent and mortal threat posed by 'international Jewry'.

In 1941, he founded his own antisemitic association, the Anti-Jewish Action League of Sweden (Sveriges antijudiska kampförbund), which advertised in *Hammaren*. Besides running a tiny bookshop, he tirelessly worked together with other leading antisemites, both nationally and internationally (Berggren 1999: 95-7). Åberg even wrote a pamphlet where he forged proceedings from the first Zionist congress in 1897 to corroborate the claim in another forgery, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, that the Jews were plotting to take over the world (Carlsson 2021: 218-19). Åberg's antisemitic activities eventually resulted in the promulgation of a Swedish hate crime legislation in 1948, sometimes referred to as Lex Åberg (Berggren 1990: 219; for Denmark, Bak 2021). However, when *Hammaren* in 1945 attacked suggestions for a legislation against hate speech, it was boisterously referred to as 'Lex Hammaren'.<sup>36</sup>

The change in format and Åberg's taking over as publisher also entailed the appointment of a new editor, Åke Johansson, and the enrolment of some additional writers.

The well-known antisemitic champion, the publisher Einar Åberg, is stepping in as publisher in charge and joining the editorial board. In addition, we have enrolled new famous talents in the fields of the Jewish question and the race questions. Our established, well-known collaborators, Fil. Dr Olof Örström, Baron Wilhelm Liljencrantz, the *noms de plume* Nässlan and Slagfinn, and the famous artist Manne will, of course, continue. We have also managed to enlist some of the leading men of science in our domain.<sup>37</sup>

36 'Lex Hammaren', *Hammaren*, 1945.

37 'Hammaren 1945', *Hammaren*, 1944:12, 8.

Among the recruits, some appear not to have shared all the ideological convictions of the old guard, but their work could still be published since it was critical of the Soviet Union.<sup>38</sup> Others, however, were Swedish and Finnish national-socialist hardliners, such as Gunnar Vesterlund (Carlsson 1942: 79–81) and Paavo Pekkanen.<sup>39</sup> The fact that these articles attacked the Soviet Union is no coincidence. The myth of Judaeo-Bolshevism, which is also discussed in Ahonen's article in this issue, permeated *Hammarén*. Interestingly, articles on Judaeo-Bolshevism and the Soviet Union became more frequent towards the end of the war, pointing towards the post-war developments in the European Social Movement, the so-called Malmö movement.<sup>40</sup>

Berg, Liljencrantz and Örstöm together with other Swedish national socialists writing under pseudonyms and foreign contributors were of vital importance for the journal. Equally important, however, were the readers and subscribers; they were *Hammarén's* eyes and ears, monitoring the Jews in their local communities and informing the journal about Jewish businesses and professionals, and about allegations and trials against Jewish individuals. The readers and subscribers provided the rumours about the Jews that *Hammarén* printed.

This is obvious from documents in the archive of the Swedish intelligence service. Swedish police opened and read the letters sent to *Hammarén* and tapped the journal's

38 William L. White, 'Sovjet av idag', *Hammarén*, 1945:3, 16.

39 Gunnar Vesterlund, 'Den undertryckta sanningen eller hur judarna värna det fria ordets rätt', *Hammarén*, 1945:2, 12–13; Paavo Pekkanen, 'Sovjetspionaget i Finland', *Hammarén*, 1945:2, 21–3.

40 *Hammarén*, 1945:2 is almost a special issue on the Soviet Union and 'Judaeo-bolshevism'. In addition to the texts mentioned above, there is one text about Ilja Ehrenburg, 'Profeten Elias av Moskva: Juden Ilja Ehrenburg'.

telephones, which makes it possible to identify the individuals who contributed the information resulting in articles describing the alleged wrongdoings of individual Swedish, but also Danish and Norwegian, Jews who had found refuge in Sweden.<sup>41</sup>

*Hammarén* thus enlisted its readers. From the first issue, there were calls to 'The readers of *Hammarén*' to help reveal the Jews and their influence:

With this journal, we intend to shed light on the domination of the Jews. Registers of Jews in finance and the media, of bankers and con-artists of Jewish decent, of businessmen and usurers belonging to the alien people are at our disposal. We would be grateful for any information from different parts of the country to complete these registers. Therefore, we request our readers to write to us in these matters and await with the greatest interest contributions regarding anti-Jewish issues.<sup>42</sup>

Some answered these calls. For example, a 'Gösta Rudman, Norr Edsbyn' claimed to have witnessed preferential treatment of a wealthy Jew at a Swedish hospital.<sup>43</sup>

In the column 'Letterbox', used for communication with the readers and contributors, questions such as 'Where does the Bonnier family [literarily 'the house of Bonnier'] actually come from?' and 'Who is the director of the Stockholm synagogue?' were posed and answered.<sup>44</sup>

41 This, however, will be the topic of a separate article.

42 Redaktionen, 'Till Hammaréns läsare', *Hammarén*, 1943:1, 2.

43 Gösta Rudman, 'Fritt svenskt språk', *Hammarén*, 1943:8, 8; Riksarkivet, RA (Marieberg), Allmänna säkerhetstjänsten, *Hammarén*, Samtal & Listor.

44 'Brevlåda', *Hammarén*, 1944:2, 7.



However, relying on the readers for information was hazardous. On more than one occasion, *Hammaren* had to publish rectifications and apologies when non-Jewish individuals had become collateral damage in the struggle by being pointed out as Jews. The first appeared in the third issue, 'Men's Fashion and John Sörman are NOT Jewish companies'.<sup>45</sup> In the short news item 'The Swedes A. Levin and G. Rexed are not Jews', the editor apologised for having included them in a list of (alleged) Jewish dentists in Stockholm, claiming that the journal did everything possible to avoid that kind of mishap.<sup>46</sup> Despite these mistakes, publishing these kinds of lists remained one of *Hammaren's* most important strategies.

### The aliens in the professions - listing the Jews

As demonstrated, *Hammaren* claimed already in the first issue that it had registers of Jews in business, finance and the media at its disposal. This was indeed the case; the first issue presented a list of 'Jewish businessmen', encompassing thirty-three companies.<sup>47</sup> The category 'Jewish businessmen' included non-Jewish businessmen married to Jews and having Jewish employees. Since Swedish companies after 1940 were almost completely dependent on trade with Nazi Germany, it had real-life consequences for companies to be labelled as 'Jewish' (Nordlund 2005a & b). The registers were updated regularly, at least for as long as *Hammaren* existed; the last appeared in the first issue of 1945.<sup>48</sup> The list covering the newly established limited companies had a categorisation further

demonstrating *Hammaren's* obsession with separating 'Swedish' and 'Jewish'. A distinction was made between limited companies in general, and 'Truly authentic Swedish companies'. The latter was an ironic category commenting on one 'Jewish' company that, according to *Hammaren*, had usurped the Swedish national symbol, the female personification of Sweden, Svea, by naming their business 'AB Svea' (Svea Ltd). A third category consisted of companies established by 'black-market characters'. Like Swedish comics and dailies during the First World War, *Hammaren* represented all profiteers as Jews, and profiteering as a Jewish specialty (Andersson 2000).<sup>49</sup> This is only one of many examples of continuities between *Hammaren* and mainstream media before the rise of fascism, where the main difference is the passing of time and – in particular – conspiracism.

Following a conspiracist logic according to which all Jews were part of the conspiracy and everything a zero-sum game, where Swedes lost whenever Jews gained, exhortations never to buy from Jews accompanied the presentations of the registers.<sup>50</sup> Thus, the objective was to convince 'Swedes' not to buy from 'Jews', not consult Jewish dentists, or, in general, have anything to do with Jews. Finding and mapping 'the Jew' was a shared obsession among antisemites everywhere, and in Sweden, there were several projects similar to *Hammaren's*. Barthold Lundén's antisemitic association in Gothenburg had in the 1920s started mapping the city's Jews and in 1926 published a 'blacklist' encompassing 195 Jewish companies and professionals that the association hoped the people of Gothenburg would boycott. It

45 'HERRMODET och John Sörman äro ICKE judiska företag', *Hammaren*, 1943, 4.

46 'Svenskarna A. Levin och G. Rexed äro icke judar', *Hammaren*, 1943:8, 7.

47 'Judiska affärsmän 1: Pålshandlare', *Hammaren*, 1943:1, 4.

48 'Nya judiska bolag', *Hammaren*, 1945:1, 28–9.

49 E.g., 'Judiska valutasmugglare och svartabörs-hajar härja vilt i Stockholms under värld', *Hammaren*, 1943:4, 1; 'Judisk masskriminalitet', 1945:4, 3; 'Svartabörskungen', *Hammaren*, 1943:11, 1.

50 E.g., 'Handla aldrig hos en jude!', *Hammaren*, 1943:11, 9.

was later expanded to a booklet (Tydén 1986: 60). In 1939, Elof Ericsson published his *Semi-Gotha*, a eugenic study of the racial (im)purity of the Swedish nobility, based on the German publication with the same title, published from 1912 to 1914. In his preface, Ericsson explained that one of the main reasons why the Swedish people had been unable to withstand ‘the violent attacks from the Jewish mongrel race fighting for world domination’ was the ‘Judaisation’ of the higher social strata through immigration and mixed marriages.<sup>51</sup> ‘Manne’ Berg was also involved in compiling lists of ‘full and half-Jews’ and Jews married to ‘Aryans’ (regarding similar strategies in the case of Norway, see Karcher & Simonsen in this volume).<sup>52</sup> This work intensified in the years between 1943 and 1945, at the same time as lists detailing ‘Jewish’ companies and professionals, and wealthy Jews, appeared in *Hammarén*, which was hardly a coincidence.

*Hammarén* demanded that ‘races’ should be kept apart and especially that the ‘Jews’ should be clearly distinguished and separated from the Swedes, the Danes and the Norwegians. To ensure that the Jews were identified as such, it published lists of Swedish Jews who had changed or modified their names in a way that allowed them to pass as non-Jews. *Hammarén* referred to them as ‘chameleons’ and made sure the readers could identify them as ‘Jews’ by providing their ‘true’ names.<sup>53</sup> Under the heading ‘Swedish-Jewish engagements’, *Hammarén* monitored alleged *Rassenschande* and listed mixed couples.<sup>54</sup> However, unlike

- 51 Elof Ericsson, ‘Förord’ in *Semi-Gota: Från Ghetton till Riddarbusen* (Stockholm, 1939), 9.  
 52 Riksarkivet, RA, Marieberg, Allmänna säkerhetstjänsten, Carl Magnus ‘Manne’ Berg.  
 53 ‘Hur Tarschys blev Tarselius – Nissalowitz blev Nordelius’, *Hammarén*, 1944:1, 8. See also ‘JUDEN ABRAHAM IGELINSKY BLEV HR “IGELL”’, *Hammarén*, 1943:9, 1.  
 54 ‘Svensk-judiska förlovningar’, *Hammarén*, 1944:1, 7.

*Der Stürmer* or the Danish antisemitic journal *Kamptegnet* (see Sofie Lene Bak’s article in this issue), there was hardly any explicit pornographic content.<sup>55</sup> The mutually exclusive character of ‘Swedes’ and ‘Jews’ was often the sole message.<sup>56</sup> One editorial further underlined this alleged incompatibility, claiming that all mainstream political parties worked for the Jews and against the Swedes, stressing that ‘No political party can get a seal of approval as Swedish in truth and spirit until it has unequivocally taken a stance – against the Jews and for Sweden’.<sup>57</sup> Another lamented that ‘the Jewish vermin’ had the same rights as Swedes.<sup>58</sup> *Hammarén* thus regarded Swedes and Jews, Swedishness and Jewishness, as mutually exclusive categories. According to the journal, the two groups should not only be separated; the ‘Jews’ should also be subjugated to the ‘Swedes’, and eventually expelled and prohibited from living in Sweden.<sup>59</sup> The different lists published ultimately aimed to ensure that every single Jew was accounted for when the time came to settle the score.

### The Jewsual suspects: criminality as a defining characteristic

In line with the antisemitic tradition of

- 55 There is one caricature by ‘Manne’ Berg, showing a cruel, drawing, voluptuous ‘Jew’ holding a blood-soiled dagger in one hand, the head of the female personification of Europe in the other, titled, ‘Jewish drama’, *Hammarén*, 1943:9, 1.  
 56 ‘Svensk eller jude?’, *Hammarén*, 1943:1, 5–6.  
 57 Slagfinn, ‘För eller mot judarna’, *Hammarén*, 1943:4, 2.  
 58 Slagfinn, ‘Bakvänd befolkningspolitik’, *Hammarén*, 1943:7, 2. Population policies is a recurring theme. See also, ‘Befolkningspolitik i sin prydno’, *Hammarén*, 1943:8, 3.  
 59 ‘The firm conviction that the ‘Jewish question’ would eventually be resolved through ‘a prohibition for Jews to reside in Sweden’ was for instance expressed by Slagfinn, ‘Judarnas landsmän’, *Hammarén*, 1944:2, 2.

blaming everything, including antisemitism, on the Jews and a widespread belief in the inter-war and war years that Jews 'contaminated' non-Jews with antisemitism (Bachner 2009; Byström & Kvist Geverts 2008; Kvist Geverts 2008), it was essential for *Hammaren* to show that it was the Jews, not the antisemites, who were responsible for the hatred of the Jews.<sup>60</sup> This was achieved through a strategy focusing on stories about dishonest, immoral, cheating, fraudulent, murderous and ungrateful Jews, designed to make 'Swedes' hate 'Jews' without remorse. In doing so, *Hammaren* made criminality as such 'Jewish', a defining feature of the 'Jewish race'. This kind of narrative is by far the most common in *Hammaren*.

The journal's strategy in this regard has a long tradition in Sweden, stretching at least back to the campaigns in the late eighteenth century against permitting Jews to settle and live as Jews in Sweden. Eventually, this resulted in a Jew ordinance in 1782, restricting the economic activities and professions open to Jews (Nyman 1988). Similarly, in the debates in the assembly of estates following the end of the Napoleonic wars in 1815 and an ensuing literary feud (*Grevesmöbbska fejden*), Jews were accused of dishonest business methods, fraud (smuggling), and economic speculation and monopolisation, and of forcing up the rent and thereby the costs of living (Carlsson 2021: 75). Similar allegations were put forward in 1838 following the abolition of the ordinance regulating Jewish life and during the tumultuous year 1848, resulting in riots and vandalism of Jewish property in Stockholm (Carlsson 2021, 84–6; Heß 2018, 65–87; Carlsson Magalhães 2023a & b). Accusations of dishonesty, deceit and avarice, but also incest, rape of a female servant, and wife abuse, were also part of the rumours about the Jews, characterising the

60 Nässlan, 'Har vi redan fått nog', *Hammaren*, 1943:12, 2.

*on-dits* campaigns run by the Swedish *Vormärz* press from the mid-1840s and to the mid-1860s (Johannesson 1988: 179–208). In the late nineteenth century, the two leading and rival merchant associations, organising the wholesalers and retailers respectively, in aggressive anti-semitic media campaigns branded peddling and peddlers as 'Jewish' and thus dishonest, fraudulent – an illegal and disloyal competition putting 'Swedes' out of business (Tydén 1986: 38–42). Echoes from these campaigns were recurrently heard in *Hammaren*.<sup>61</sup>

The allegations discussed above are legion in *Hammaren*. The journal even had several different sections for them, such as 'News about Jews from all over the world', 'In the East and in the West', and 'This month's Jew pickings'.<sup>62</sup> Furthermore, the journal ran a series, 'Notorious Jewish Criminals', claiming that 'Most political [terrorist] attacks were carried out or inspired by Jews'.<sup>63</sup> Every single issue provided numerous examples of different Jewish criminal activities. To demonstrate the character of these allegations and how frequent they were, some of the accusations made in the first and the last issues will be discussed.

The first article in the first issue was an excerpt from the book *Makten bakom presidenten* by the German SS officer, leading ideologist and propagandist Johann von Leers, claiming that the American Jews murdered the congressman and antisemite Louis T. McFadden.<sup>64</sup> The story about the alleged

61 'Klädjudarna Juvalls och Gordons härjningståg på landsbygden: Offer supas fulla och luras skriva på växlar åt svartingarna', *Hammaren*, 1943:5, 1, 5.

62 'Judenytt från hela världen', *Hammaren*, 1943:12, 2; 'I öst och väst', *Hammaren*, 1944:2, 2; 'Månadens judepolock', *Hammaren*, 1944:1, 8.

63 'Beryktade judiska förbrytare: De flesta politiska attentat ha verkställts eller inspirerats av judar', *Hammaren*, 1944:3, 6.

64 Johann von Leers, 'Judeväldet upprätthålles

murder of the congressman who stood up to the Jews and paid with his life was followed by another lengthy text, describing Jewish Communist spies and their purported activities in Sweden.<sup>65</sup> *Hammaren* used 'the affair' to attack the supposed laxness of Swedish immigration policy and the Stockholm chief rabbi, Marcus Ehrenpreis, representing him as an *Ostjude*, and thus linking him to the alleged spies, some of whom came from Central and Eastern Europe, thereby implying a conspiracy.

Keeping track of the Jews and their alleged doings remained *Hammaren's* top priority until the very end, in April 1945. The last issue opened with a furious article by Liljencrantz on the final act of the war and the fate of Nazi Germany, describing it as 'the completion of the Jewish vengeance'.<sup>66</sup> It was accompanied by an announcement: '30/4 1945 Jewish victory over *Hammaren*?' acknowledging defeat but insisting that it was only a temporary setback and that the struggle would continue. And it did. The rest of the issue consists of articles and short news items exposing Jewish individuals accused of various heinous crimes, in particular against Germany. Since *Hammaren* either denied the fate of the Jews or, in line with its conspiracist understanding of the world, claimed they deserved whatever befell them, the purported horrible vengeance became an expression of the age-old antisemitic stereotype of Old Testament vengefulness. Jews, according to *Hammaren*, not only violated

genom mord', *Hammaren*, 1943:1, 2. The allegations that the Jews controlled the USA was also the message in an article by Wilhelm Liljencrantz describing how Benjamin Franklin, to no avail, had tried to warn his compatriots of the Jews; Wilhelm Liljencrantz, 'Jag varnar er gentlemen', *Hammaren*, 1943:1, 5.

65 'Judiska spioner – häktade i Sverige: 7 judar dömda till 30 år', *Hammaren*, 1942:1, 3, 6.

66 Wilhelm Liljencrantz, 'Den judiska hämnens fullbordan', *Hammaren*, 1945:4, 1.

international, criminal and civil law but also unwritten laws: the sculptor Sigrid Friedman, for example, was accused of committing crimes against the laws of aesthetics and good taste with her statue of the author, educator and women's rights activist Ellen Key. According to *Hammaren*, a '100% unanimous opinion' opposed 'the Jewess "piece of art"', the quotation marks stressing it was anything but art.<sup>67</sup> Here, *Hammaren* echoed Richard Wagner's claim in *Das Judentum in der Musik* that Jews were artistically sterile and therefore could not create true art, only mimic (Weiner 1995).

In the same issue, *Hammaren* reported about a Jewish builder in Stockholm, who had been sentenced to pay damages to a construction worker, commenting that the former had, 'naturally not' voluntarily, compensated the worker for his suffering.<sup>68</sup> Under the headline 'Jewish mass criminality' numerous other examples of purported 'Jewish criminality' were presented, including conspiracy to defraud, smuggling, theft, fencing, alcohol and black-market businesses, the running of a speakeasy, tax evasion, insulting a Swedish public official and a 'Giant Jewish currency ring'. The enumeration was followed by a direct question to the readers: 'When you have read this page, do you think that *Hammaren* is needed?' The question was not rhetorical. It was an attempt to rally support for the journal's cause, employing a strategy introduced with the first issue. To attract subscribers, the launch of the journal was accompanied by the dissemination of flyers describing alleged crimes committed by individual, named Jews. The flyers also informed the potential subscriber that the way to fight the problem described was by subscribing and supporting the journal in other ways.<sup>69</sup>

67 'SKANDALSTATYN', *Hammaren*, 1945:1, 1.

68 'Juden Claes Groschinsky', *Hammaren*, 1945:4, 1.

69 Riksarkivet, RA, Marieberg, Allmänna

The exposure of purported Jewish criminals continued with the description of a paternity suit, involving the actor Charlie Chaplin, whom *Hammaren* considered to be Jewish. This was not the first attack on the actor. The journal had before that reported that he was on trial for statutory rape.<sup>70</sup>

Just like the national-socialist news outlets and dailies in general, *Hammaren* closely monitored Norwegian and Danish Jewish refugees and described in detail every single alleged transgression committed by Danish-Jewish and Norwegian-Jewish individuals (Byström 2006). ‘Exposing’ them was of vital importance since the plight of the Scandinavian Jews had been a critical reason for the shift in Sweden’s refugee policy from indifference to activism, which took place in 1942 (Levine 1996; Kvist Geverts 2008; Byström & Kvist Geverts 2008; Rudberg 2015; Jarlert 1993). When the national-socialist anti-Jewish policies affected Scandinavian citizens, they could no longer be ignored. Although the National Welfare Board (Socialstyrelsen), in its statistics, distinguished between ‘Danes’ and ‘Danish Jews’ and ‘Norwegians’ and ‘Norwegian Jews’ (Kvist Geverts 2008), the Norwegian Jews who escaped deportation found refuge in Sweden in late 1942, and the Danish Jews were officially welcomed a year later. This infuriated *Hammaren*, which described the reception of the Norwegian Jews fleeing across the border as a ‘lemming migration of orientals’ and claimed that more than a thousand Jews had come to Sweden.<sup>71</sup> The journal argued that the Jews should be kept out of Sweden and Europe,<sup>72</sup> and that Jews could never be a part of the ‘Nordic race’. To stress the incompatibility,

säkerhetstjänsten, *Hammaren*, Skrifter.

70 ‘Chaplin blev fälld’, *Hammaren*, 1945:1, 4.

71 ‘Judarna välla in över Norge-gränsen’, *Hammaren*, 1943:2, 1, 6; ‘Den “norska” judeinvasionen’, *Hammaren*, 1943:5, 6.

72 Slagfinn, ‘Bakgrunden till judetransporterna’, *Hammaren*, 1943:3, 2.

*Hammaren* placed ‘Danish’ and ‘Norwegian’ within quotation marks when writing about Danish and Norwegian Jews.<sup>73</sup> *Hammaren* also blamed the Jews for sabotage in Denmark, insisting that the ‘Semites at all costs wanted a civil war’<sup>74</sup> and, in October 1943 when most Danish Jews had fled to Sweden, stated that they had a vastly disproportionate influence in Denmark.<sup>75</sup> According to *Hammaren* Swedes had lost their jobs to the newly arrived Danish Jews, allegations graphically presented by ‘Manne’ Berg in a drawing showing four smug, swarthy, well-dressed ‘Jews’ standing in line ahead of a poor, threadbare, pale, unemployed ‘Swede’. A sign over the door through which one of the ‘Jews’ was about to enter reads ‘Employment agency: Jew[ish] refugees prioritised’.<sup>76</sup> After all Danish Jews had arrived, *Hammaren* published article upon article about the ‘black invasion’ and its purported horrifying consequences for Sweden and the ‘Swedes’.<sup>77</sup>

Other reasons for ‘unmasking’ the Scandinavian Jews residing in Sweden were to underline criminality as a purported characteristic of the ‘Jewish race’, to show that they abused their refugee status, and to argue that granting Jews refuge was an ill-conceived policy and that the permits should be revoked.<sup>78</sup> However, this strategy was also an expression of *Hammaren*’s loyalty to Nazi Germany and its whitewashing of the anti-Jewish policies.

73 “‘Danska’ judeartister gå före de svenska’; ‘Svenska elever ratas judar kommo istället’, *Hammaren*, 1943:12.

74 ‘Sabotagedåden i Danmark: Vackert judiskt verk’, *Hammaren*, 1943:10, 1.

75 Wilhelm Liljencratz, ‘Judarna i Danmark’, *Hammaren*, 1943:10, 2.

76 ‘Svenska anställda på gatan!’; ‘Svenskarna trängas undan’, *Hammaren*, 1943:10 [11], 1.

77 Slagfinn, ‘Den svarta invasionen’; ‘En nationell opposition mot JUDEINVASIONEN’, *Hammaren*, 1943:10 [11], 2.

78 “‘Dansk’ jude fast för stöld’, *Hammaren*, 1934:12, 7.



*Hammaren* regarded the Hitler regime's policy against the Jews as a necessary self-defence in the struggle against the Jewish plans for world domination. In *Hammaren's* conspiracist narrative, the Jews, who according to the journal already controlled the USA and the Soviet Union, had started their conquest of Germany before Hitler's ascent to power. With the establishment of the Third Reich, the 'Jews' had to change their plans. All efforts since 1933 therefore went into overthrowing and penalising the Nazi regime and restoring Jewish world domination: the 'Jews' war' meant the mass slaughter of 'white people' and 'No sacrifices of the white peoples on the altar of Jewish imperialism seem too large'. This context and line of reasoning also explained the 'Greuelpropaganda' regarding atrocities against the Jews; it was presented as a trick by the 'Jewish' press to divert the attention, which there was no reason whatsoever to believe.<sup>79</sup> This was a well-known motif from German Nazi propaganda (Herf 2006).

### *Pour le Sémite*

*Hammaren* detested the alleged 'lackeys' of the Jews almost as much as the Jews themselves, an antipathy also expressed by the Quisling regime in Norway. As Karcher and Simonsen show in their contribution to this issue, representatives of the regime repeatedly claimed that 'the Jewish spirit' was infecting non-Jewish Norwegians. This line of argument was widespread in antisemitic thinking in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, not only in conspiracist milieus but also in mainstream discourse. In *Hammaren* it was legion. Under the recurring vignette 'Hammer blows' with the headline 'Watch out Jews and Jew lackeys', the *nom de plume* 'Nässlan' exclaimed: 'Curb your frenzy, Jews and Jew lackeys. The time for

79 "Dansk" jude fast för stöld', *Hammaren*, 1934:12, 7.

reckoning is coming. For Jews and Jew lackeys, it will not be a day of joy.'<sup>80</sup>

The contributors to *Hammaren* defined themselves as proud and unrepentant antisemites, and regarded non-Jews who did not side with them in the struggle against the alleged domination of the Jews as traitors. According to *Hammaren*, the Jews stuck together, which was why the non-Jews also had to; whenever someone broke ranks, the Jews would win.<sup>81</sup>

Given this conspiracist understanding of the situation, it is hardly surprising that *Hammaren* bestowed some of its non-Jewish foes with a mock order, *Pour le Sémite*, an ironic take on *Pour le Mérite*, established by King Frederick II of Prussia and awarded as a recognition of extraordinary personal achievement. *Pour le Sémite*, as the name implies, was given to people deemed to have done something outstandingly wrong on behalf of the Jews and thus against the interest of their own people/race. According to a short editorial note, the readers nominated the recipients, a claim corroborated by the documents in the archives of the Swedish intelligence service.<sup>82</sup> The medal was a drab Magen David in silk to be worn on the chest in a blue and white ribbon. In contrast to the yellow stars that Jews were forced to wear on the European continent, *Pour le Sémite* was meant for 'Jew lackeys'.<sup>83</sup>

The first recipient of this fictional medal was Erik Brandt, a social democrat MP, a refugee activist, and a militant antiracist and anti-fascist, working relentlessly for a more

80 Nässlan, 'Judar och judelakejer – tag er i akt!', *Hammaren*, 1943:7, 5. See also, 'Israels vänner', *Hammaren*, 1943:3.

81 'Filosemiterna – den judiska lögnens profeter!', *Hammaren*, 1943:7, 3.

82 Nässlan, 'Gustav Möller fick *Pour le Sémite*', *Hammaren*, 1943:12, 1.

83 Nässlan, "'*Pour le Sémite*" till herr Brandt', *Hammaren*, 1943:9, 5, 4.

generous refugee policy and especially for a legislation against hate speech. *Hammaren* regarded such a legislation as a lethal threat since it would make the dissemination of anti-semitic propaganda illegal. But they also took pride, as they interpreted it, in having struck fear into the hearts of the Jews.<sup>84</sup> The second recipient was the journalist and editor Carl Adam Nycop, who, together with the publisher Åke Bonnier Sr, had established a Swedish version of *Life Magazine*, called *Se*, and was engaged in the anti-fascist struggle. He received the medal because he was ‘a white man’ who diligently and enthusiastically worked for ‘the Jew Bonnier’.<sup>85</sup> The third to receive *Pour le Sémité* was Gustav Möller, one of the architects behind the Swedish welfare state, the social democrat party secretary and long-time minister for social affairs. In the latter capacity, he was responsible for the restrictive Swedish refugee policy in the 1930s and early war years. However, as indicated above, the policy shifted in 1942 with the reception of the remnants of Norwegian Jewry and with the welcoming of the Danish Jews in October 1943, outraging *Hammaren*, which held Möller accountable for the ‘the invasion of the blacks’ purportedly flooding Sweden.<sup>86</sup> The fourth recipient was another social democrat politician, Arthur Engberg, a prominent publicist, former MP, minister of ecclesiastic affairs, and an anti-semitic turned anti-fascist and anti-racist in

the late 1920s. Engberg had protested against the deportation of the Norwegian Jews in a widely discussed article – ‘The ship of death’ – published in December 1942, explicitly stating that the deportees would be killed for the crime of being Jews (Blomqvist 2001). *Hammaren* described him as a corrupt traitor bought by the Jews.<sup>87</sup>

There are also meta-texts where *Hammaren* comments on its doings regarding *Pour le Sémité*; for instance, a poem by the *nom de plume* Näsölan:

*You have striven to win the grace of the mighty  
you have crawled for the power of the Jews  
you have obeyed their orders and given them  
advice.*

*When they have summoned you, they have said:  
– If you obey us unconditionally, you will get  
gold for consolation,  
you will get money and pour ‘le mérite’ –  
But instead, on the breast of the traitors  
shall be fastened the drab ‘pour le sémité’.*

Some of the foes of *Hammaren* were not awarded *Pour le Sémité* but instead pilloried, a fate suffered by the prominent author and women’s rights, peace and refugee activist Mia Leche Löwgren, representing everything *Hammaren* loathed. She not only worked tirelessly on behalf of refugees but like Brandt called for hate-crime legislation, and on top of that contributed to *Judisk Tidskrift*, established by the Stockholm chief rabbi, Ehrenpreis.<sup>88</sup>

84 According to the conspiracist understanding of the world that *Hammaren* promoted, a call for legislation against antisemitic propaganda meant that ‘the Jews’ felt the pressure. The signatories, social democrat and liberal MPs, appeared under the headline ‘The perpetrators’; ‘Antisemitismen skulle kriminaliseras’, *Hammaren*, 1943:1, 5; Slagfinn, ‘Judarnas landsmän’, *Hammaren*, 1943:2, 2, 5, 6.

85 Näsölan, ‘Carl Adam Nycop fick “Pour le Sémité”’, *Hammaren*, 1943:10, 6.

86 Näsölan, ‘Pour le Sémité till hr MÖLLER’, *Hammaren*, 1943:12, 8.

87 Näsölan, ‘ARTHUR ENGBERG fick “Pour le Sémité!”’, *Hammaren*, 1944:2, 7.

88 ‘Vid skampålen denna månad Mia Leche’, *Hammaren*, 1943: 7, 7; Mia Leche-Löfgren, ‘Vår hedersskuld till judafolket’, *Judisk tidskrift*, 1943 (16), 187–9; Mia Leche-Löfgren and Jeanna Oterdahl (eds.), ‘Två svenska röster mot antijudisk propaganda’, *Judisk tidskrift*, 1945 (18), 137–42; Mia Leche-Löfgren, ‘Svensk motion om kamp mot antisemitism’,

*Hammaren* questioned her Swedishness and attacked her for an article in which she had stressed Sweden's responsibility to help Jewish children and to safeguard Jewish culture as an integral part of Western civilisation. For *Hammaren*, this was preposterous: according to their conspiracist world view everyone already acted on behalf of the Jews and their culture did not belong to the Western world. Therefore, it promised Leche Löfgren that it would do everything within its power to 'crush everything Jewish in Sweden as an extremely harmful part of our and Western culture'. The article ended with the antisemitic call 'Hep!', known from the antisemitic riots in Germany and Denmark in 1819 (Hoffmann et al. 2002).

### 'Everyone everywhere hates the Jews'

Theodore Adorno has claimed that 'Antisemitism is the rumour about the Jews' (Adorno 2023, firstly published in 1951: 135). This definition fits all aspects of *Hammaren's* 'enlightenment' project, especially the journal's use of negative accounts from prominent persons throughout history. According to *Hammaren*, everyone everywhere hated the Jews from antiquity up to the 1940s. This, as the historian Christhard Hoffmann has pointed out, is an antisemitic 'invention of tradition' (Hoffmann 1994: 306). Already in the nineteenth century antisemites constructed a narrative stressing that antisemitism was an eternal phenomenon, a 'natural response' to the alleged power and negative influence of the Jews, thereby aligning their antisemitic project with those of their predecessors. The narrative comes across as a perverted version of 'the lachrymose conception of Jewish history' identified and criticised by the historian Salo Wittmayer Baron (Baron 1963).

In the following, examples of the strategy are presented, starting with alleged quotations

*Judisk tidskrift*, 1946 (19), 251.

from Jews, followed by citations and imagery from non-Jews, not necessarily directly associated with antisemitism, and finally by examples from the antisemitic tradition, often consisting of excerpts or entire texts from the 'classics'.

Enlisting Jews in antisemitic propaganda is an age-old practice, going back to the use of Jewish converts to 'unmask' Judaism (Adams & Heß 2017; Adams 2023) and the editions of extracts from the Talmud and other rabbinical texts such as *Entdecktes Judenthum* (1700/1711), compiled by the German orientalist and theologian Johann Andreas Eisenmenger and the source for the Catholic theologian August Rohling's influential *Der Talmudjude* (1871). The 'grand old man of antisemitism', Theodor Fritsch, popularised this strategy through his *Handbuch der Judenfrage* (1887). Thus, the continuity not only concerned the content in the antisemitic writing of history – that Jews bore the responsibility for everything bad in history – but also the methods employed; *Hammaren*, just like its predecessors, used quotations from anyone, but preferably straight from the horse's mouth, both in the past and in contemporary society, who had something negative to say about the Jews to establish a narrative depicting them as an eternal problem and antisemitism as its 'natural' consequence.

Given *Hammaren's* understanding of the world where every single Jew was part of the conspiracy, it was self-evident that any Jew represented 'World Jewry' and its ideas and interests. This is the logic behind the random selection of 'testimonies', which, for obvious reasons, also had to reveal something about the Jews. The New York banker Otto H. Kahn's statement that he had come to the conclusion that 'Judaism is a matter of race and blood, from which we can never escape'<sup>89</sup> corroborated the idea of 'Jewishness' as a biological characteristic, passed on unchanged from

89 'Judarna och konsten', *Hammaren*, 1945: 1, 1.

generation to generation. The American Jewish author, Sholem Ash, was quoted in support of *Hammarén's* conviction that the ongoing war was 'the Jews' war'.<sup>90</sup> To ridicule the alleged ungratefulness and entitlement of 'the Jews', *Hammarén* also quoted a *plaidoyer* published in the Swedish Jewish periodical *Judisk Tidskrift*, where Jakob Klatzkin blamed the Christian world for the sufferings of the Jewish people and demanded justice.<sup>91</sup>

Just like the Jews cited, the non-Jewish 'witnesses' came from different backgrounds. A Communist publication, *Arbetsfront*, was quoted since its message – that 'the liberators and standard-bearers of the working class were and are Jews' and fighting antisemitism was therefore an obligation<sup>92</sup> – confirmed the myth of Judaeo-Bolshevism. The instruction that all Swedish males received when doing military service, *Svensk soldatinstruktion*, was used to support the idea that 'race' was crucial and racial mixing fatal.<sup>93</sup> *Hammarén* even quoted the liberal journalist Gunnar Th:son Pihl's highly critical book about Nazi Germany, *Tyskland går sista rondan* (1944), which described the ongoing genocide and estimated that 5½ million Jews had been murdered. However, Pihl also stated that 'a Jewish problem' existed and expressed disgust over Jewish trans-persons, something *Hammarén* appreciated since it confirmed their conviction that Jews were perverts.<sup>94</sup> Stereotypical caricatures of 'the Jew' illustrating jokes about Jews, that had originally been published in the vastly popular comics from the late nineteenth century and up to the 1920s, were regularly recycled in *Hammarén* and can thus be seen

as quotations (Andersson 2000). Some of the jokes were, in the context of *Hammarén*, quite harmless, poking fun at alleged Jewish physical characteristics, but most fitted the journal's narrative, depicting the Jews as filthy, cowardly, greedy, cheap and obsessed with money. However, more importantly, the caricatures, regardless of the jokes, conveyed the same message as *Hammarén*: the Jews were a race vastly different from the Swedish/Nordic race, and every single Jew thus both looked and indeed was the same, and had the same interests.<sup>95</sup> Furthermore, some of the caricatures expressed the same conspiracist worldview as the journal, for instance a caricature showing an attractive young woman in front of a mirror. She wears a British First World War helmet and a revealing dress made from the famous newspaper *The Times*. However, the mirror image 'reveals' something else. It shows a plump 'Jewess' and the text on her dress reads 'Semit[e]'. It is thus a classical 'Judaism unmasked' motive.<sup>96</sup>

As mentioned, *Hammarén* also had several international sources of inspiration, including Martin Luther, Edouard Drumont, Theodor Fritsch and the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem.<sup>97</sup> Quotations from Luther on Jews and extracts from the Swedish translation of *Von den Juden und ihren Lügen* recurred, making *Hammarén* an heir to Luther and a link in the chain of

90 'Judarnas krig', *Hammarén*, 1943:8, 2.

91 'En judes försvarstal' [alluding to Strindberg, *En dāres försvarstal*], *Hammarén*, 1943:11, 6.

92 *Hammarén*, 1943:2, 4.

93 'Ur Svensk soldatinstruktion', *Hammarén*, 1943:3, 3.

94 'Åven en blind höna', *Hammarén*, 1944:2, 6.

95 For instance: 'Ur Strix 1918', *Hammarén*, 1943:1, 6; 'Stangenbergs bästa', *Hammarén*, 1943:3, 6; 'Albert Engström i Strix', *Hammarén*, 1943:5, 3; [No title] *Hammarén*, 1944:6, 7. *Hammarén* also published antisemitic postcards from USA, claiming that they were printed 'in secret' by 'the antisemitic resistance movement' in Pittsburg, [No title], *Hammarén*, 1944:4, 6–7.

96 'Ur Strix 1918', *Hammarén*, 1943:1, 6.

97 Olof Örström also praised Julius Streicher's role in the agitation against the Jews as 'ground breaking', 'Bolsjevism är judendom', *Hammarén*, 1943:2, 4.

antisemites fighting Jews and Judaism through the centuries.<sup>98</sup> *Hammaren* also published Theodor Fritsch in Swedish<sup>99</sup> and celebrated the centennial of Eduard Drumont's birth.<sup>100</sup> The Grand Mufti, who supported the German war efforts and helped recruit Muslim volunteers to the SS (Magnusson 2024), was called upon to inform the readers that Arabs and Muslims hated Jews, too.<sup>101</sup>

*Hammaren* was also well aware of its Swedish antisemitic forefathers and found support for its enlightenment campaign in an antisemitic pamphlet published in the literary feud of 1815 (*Grevesmöblska fejden*), by the hospital director H. A. Kullberg. Just like *Hammaren* more than a century later, he blamed the Jews for the economic hardships and claimed that the 'spirit of the time was poisoned' and 'aliens favoured at the expense of the natives'.<sup>102</sup> In addition, *Hammaren* quoted a Swedish chapbook from the nineteenth century to underline that previous generations, too, had noted the threat from the Jews. Given the content and wording, it is most likely a forgery.<sup>103</sup> A royal decree from 1685, signed by king Charles XI, demanding the Stockholm governor round up all the Jews residing in the capital and expel them, was presented as an example to follow.<sup>104</sup>

98 'Martin Luther', *Hammaren*, 1943:3, 6; Martin Luther, 'Om judarna och deras lögner', *Hammaren*, 1944:1, 4; 1944:2, 3-5; 1944:3, 3-5.

99 Theodore Fritsch, 'Huru kan judefrågan lösas', *Hammaren*, 1944:4, 3-7.

100 'Republiken Dreyfus och dess motspelare', *Hammaren*, 1945:3, 5-7.

101 'Stormuften talar', *Hammaren*, 1943:5, 4.

102 'Antijudisk kampskrift från 1815 års Sverige', *Hammaren*, 1945:3, 3; 1943:8, 4; 1943:9, 4. *Hammaren* also republished a harsh antisemitic article by a prominent Finnish antisemite, F. V. Jalander, originally published in 1882, 'Finsk kulturkämpe för 60 år sedan', *Hammaren*, 1944:6, 3.

103 *Hammaren*, 1945:5, 3.

104 'Så skulle det låta idag', *Hammaren*, 1943: 9, 2.

*Hammaren* thus sought support for its 'enlightenment' campaign wherever it could find it and simultaneously took the opportunity to mock the opponents whose quotations it used. In doing so, the journal placed itself in a *longue durée* of antisemites, thereby making its fight part of an eternal struggle between good and evil, between antisemites and Jews.

## Coda

This study could have been based solely on any of the hundreds of articles or images published in *Hammaren* in the two years and four months it existed. Every single article and image conveyed the same message: the Jews represented a threat, they were the evil adherents of a horrendous religion, a fraudulent, dishonest, deceitful, hateful and criminal lot controlling everything. In this context, a conspiracist logic of reasoning was crucial: the Jews were portrayed as a 'coulisse people' operating behind the scenes, and as the true power behind capitalism and Bolshevism, controlling the allied side in the war. Against this allegedly all-powerful, obnoxious, overbearing enemy, supported by their henchmen, the lackeys of the Jews, *Hammaren* argued, stood a small group of proud and unrepentant antisemites who had taken up the task of awakening their fellow Swedes to their sinister situation through an enlightenment project, *Hammaren*. The journal described this as a herculean and heroic task and, most importantly, as an act of self-defence against the Jewish aggressors. For these antisemitic crusaders, the hour was always five to twelve, but it was not yet too late to convince the people to rise and cast off the Jewish yoke. The journal lost the battle in April 1945 but several of its contributors did not yield. *Hammaren's* editors and publishers continued the war, most of them, like Berg and Åberg, until they died in the 1960s and 1970s.

The conspiracist message of *Hammaren* was thus blatant, unequivocal and repeated



*ad nauseam*. Therefore, it does not as such require an in-depth analysis to reveal any hidden meanings. More interesting is to look at the strategies employed to convey the message. This article has focused on the mapping and listing of Jews and Jewish businesses, the representation of Jews as criminals, attacks on alleged 'lackeys of the Jews', and, finally, on references to the antisemitic tradition and quotations from non-Jews and Jews 'confirming' antisemitic allegations. Through these strategies *Hammaren* performed a hate campaign against a miniscule, vulnerable Swedish Jewish minority and a small group of Jewish refugees who had found a safe haven in Sweden, making this into a Manichaean, global drama about the survival of 'the White race'. In the process, they turned the Jews into perpetrators and themselves into victims, forced to defend themselves and their noble cause, and transformed antisemitism into a natural and eternal phenomenon, the inevitable response to the existence of the Jews.

Finally, a few comments on the relationship between conspiracist and redemptive antisemitism on the one hand and more mainstream expressions of the phenomenon on the other. I would argue that it is not so much a question of content – most of the stereotypes, allegations and even the individuals attacked were the same. Rather, the differences concern frequency, unambiguity, level of animosity and sense of urgency. The frequency is self-explanatory. The level of animosity is related to the unambiguity: for *Hammaren*, there are no 'good Jews', not even as exceptions to the rule. 'Swedes/the White/Nordic Race' and 'the Jews' constitute an absolute dichotomy. This in combination with a conspiracist understanding of the world as a zero-sum game means that whenever a Jew gains, a non-Jew loses. This accounts for the sense of urgency and for the

hatred of non-Jews not supporting the struggle against the Jews. This also means that the only solution to 'the Jewish problem' is the disappearance of the Jews.

The antisemitic caricatures discussed offer an illustrative example of the continuities and discontinuities between mainstream antisemitism on the one hand and conspiracist and redemptive antisemitism on the other. They were ubiquitous in the comics until the late 1920s, but then more or less disappeared. The most influential, and one of the few to survive into the 1930s and 1940s, *SöndagsNisse-Strix*, for instance, almost completely stopped publishing caricatures of and jokes about Jews, and in general refrained from writing about Jews. Furthermore, in the few instances where Jewish caricatures appeared after Hitler's ascent to power, they showed the Jews as victims. This, in combination with the anti-fascist stance of the journal, rendered the well-established stereotype of the fat Jewish capitalist obsolete. Instead, there appeared the 'Wandering Jew', thin, poor and haunted, and thus more suited to the role as victim. However, the stereotype of the fat Jewish capitalist (and Bolshevik) thrived in the national-socialist press and the drawings no longer published in the liberal, conservative and socialist comics reappeared in *Hammaren*. In the new context, the message it conveyed became more sinister since there were no other images of Jews, no room for ambiguity. However, I would argue that what the disappearance and reappearance of the 'Jewish capitalist' teaches us is that antisemitism became obsolete in polite conversation in mainstream society as a consequence of the Nazi anti-Jewish policies, and at the same time became far more radical in national-socialist and antisemitic milieus, as a consequence of political polarisation and the influences from Nazi Germany. ■

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Lars M Andersson, Ph.D., is Senior Lecturer at the Department of History, Uppsala University. From 2006 to 2012, he was head of the department. Andersson has mainly done research on Swedish antisemitism and refugee policy but also published high school textbooks on history and religious studies, anthologies on contemporary history, counterfactual history, the image as a historical source, liability issues and moral debate in historical accounts on national socialism, and on migration, and Jewish history. He has been editor of *Historisk tidskrift* (Stockholm) and co-editor of the Lagerbringbiblioteket series, and is member of the editorial boards of *Historisk tidskrift*, *Nordisk Judaistik/Scandinavian Jewish Studies* and *Opuscula Historica Upsaliensia*, co-editor of the series *Uppsala Jewish Studies*, and editor of *Personhistorisk tidskrift*. Since 2013, he is co-director of Forum for Jewish Studies at the Faculty of Theology. In 2019, he received Uppsala University's pedagogical prize in the field of the humanities, theology, and educational science. Andersson was one of the expert in the inquiry preceding the establishment of Sweden's Holocaust Museum (Sveriges museum om Förintelsen). He is also a member of the steering committee of the Network for Nordic Fascism Studies (NORFAS).