

## Abstract

Klas Grinell: *To sell the world : Images of the Other in Swedish tourism abroad.* [Att sälja världen : Omvärldsbilder i svensk utlandsturism] Ph. D. Dissertation in Swedish. Department of History of Ideas and Theory of Science, Göteborg University, 2004. ISBN 91-7346-511-9.

The purpose of this study is to analyse how the Swedish tourism industry has marketed the world outside Sweden. What images of the people who populate tourist destinations has the tourism industry used to lure customers abroad? Answers to this question are drawn from a body data comprised of prospecti and brochures put out by Swedish tourism agencies in the period between 1930 and 1990.

Tourism is defined as an industry whose purpose is to market the world. An industry that conforms to this definition did not exist in Sweden prior to the period between the wars. One of the central themes of this enquiry is that the world constitutes a coherent entity. Edward Said's insistence on the worldliness of all texts is the driving force behind this enquiry. To uncover those frames of reference (a phrase developed in relation to Said's structures of attitude and reference) regarding the world outside Sweden that are implicit in the idea of Swedish modernity, I make use of a contrapuntal reading that highlights connections that the texts only hint at. The most important phenomena that are analysed are the use of stereotypes and the denial of coevalness. The denial of coevalness is linked to the idea of Progress, which is tied to Hegel's philosophy of history.

The thesis provides a comprehensive historical overview of Swedish tourism abroad, but its primary goal is to ascertain how tourism and the Swedish self-image it caters is related to the modern/colonial era's ideologies and power structures. The Swedish self-image is juxtaposed to the Swedish attitude towards foreigners and it is made clear how Swedish modernity has been created through comparisons with people who are not regarded as modern: primitive Africans, exotic Orientals, mañana Spaniards, peasants in colourful folk-costumes and so on. Thereby it becomes clear that these portrayals of blissful vacation spots are neither objective nor harmless. On the contrary, they are pivotal to the construction of the modern Swedish self-image as well as the confinement of other people to marginal roles.

The dissertation ends with an in-depth discussion on the denial of coevalness, and the connections between the denial of coevalness and the metaphysics of presence discussed by Jacques Derrida is explored. Thus the analysis of tourism advertising is linked to the contemporary critiques of modernity.

**Keywords:** modernity/coloniality, Sweden, frames of reference, denial of coevalness, Swedish tourism industry, stereotypes, idea of Progress, the tourist gaze, marketing, worldliness, Edward Said, Walter Mignolo.