

**Zwischen „Mittsommerreigen“ und „Höllenspektakel“:
Bilder von Schweden und ihr Einfluss auf Rezensionen im
deutschen Feuilleton der 1990er Jahre**

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Abstract

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Title: Zwischen „Mittsomerreigen“ und „Höllenspektakel“: Bilder von Schweden und ihr Einfluss auf Rezensionen im deutschen Feuilleton der 1990er Jahre

English title: In-between a “Midsummer Dance” and a “Spectacle from Hell”: Images of Sweden and Their Influence on Literary Reviews in the German Press in the 1990s

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The present work is a study of the representations of Sweden in literary reviews in German newspapers during the decade 1990-2000. The reviews were collected from the German newspapers *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *Die Zeit*. The source material consists of 20 reviews and concerns three Swedish writers; Henning Mankell, Kerstin Ekman and Torgny Lindgren. The German reviews of each writer were first evaluated individually and then the results of the analysis were compared with literary reviews regarding the same novels in the Swedish newspapers *Dagens Nyheter*, *Göteborgs-Posten* and *Svenska Dagbladet*. Finally, the results are evaluated and discussed as a whole.

The beginning of the 1990s marks the beginning of a “Scandinavian boom of literature” in Germany and in the wake of this “boom” a great amount of Swedish literature is translated and published in Germany. This “boom” has continued until the present day. Images of Sweden have been present in different ways in German society for a long time, since there have been a close cultural relationship and exchange between Germany and Sweden for centuries. Representations can thus also be expected in literary reviews.

The theoretical part outlines the concept of “image” upon which this work is based, against the background of culture, which can be defined as the reception of literature and literary criticism in the context of society. The term “image” in this work is defined as a cognitive schema or a concept, as a structure of expectations. The examined images are placed in a cultural context, as expressions of “cultural patterns”. – These cultural patterns are shared by the German communication community and they could therefore be understood as an integrated part of German culture.

The result of this study shows that existing images of Sweden as an idyllic and socially critical country are having an influence on the German reviews. Sweden is also typically more positively depicted in the German reviews than in the novels or in the Swedish reviews, which means that Sweden is more seldom represented as a spectacle from hell.

Keywords: image, literary review, newspaper, culture, literary criticism, cultural patterns, Sweden, Mankell, Ekman, Lindgren