

Eyvind Johnson's Hybrid North

Dynamics of Place and Time in Travelogues and Memory Sketches 1943–1963

ABSTRACT The article explores the depiction and understanding of the Swedish North in memory sketches and travelogues, published between 1943 and 1963, by the author Eyvind Johnson, who was born in 1900 in Svartbjörnsbyn in Sweden's northernmost county, Norrbotten, and went on to win the Nobel Prize for literature in 1974. The overarching argument of the article is that a creative interplay between places, "traffic," time and memory in Johnson's writing shapes a hybrid picture of the Swedish North as a dynamic, inclusive and multidimensional domain, making Johnson's articulations of the North of heightened relevance today. While frequently preoccupied with the past, Johnson's representations of the North are always also, explicitly or implicitly, grounded in a contemporary political, economic or environmental context, be it world-war preparedness, welfare development, cold-war crisis, or increased utilisation of natural resources. The article begins by focusing on memory sketches that belong to official anthologies celebrating milestones in the history of administrative structures and demarcations in the North. In these contexts, Johnson operates as an ambassador for the North, while providing incisive, at times critical, perspectives on past and present in the region. Drawing on theories of travel writing as a hybrid and "freer" form of writing, the article goes on to discuss how Johnson in travelogues such as *Winter Journey in Norrbotten* (1955) and "Summer Diary from Norrbotten" (1963) journeys into contemporary landscapes and townscapes that, at the same time, contain the traces or contours of his personal past. In these texts, Johnson acts both as a child of the North and as a special reporter approaching from the South in order to familiarise external audiences with the region. The article concludes by demonstrating how Johnson in *Winter Journey* uses contexts and concepts of travel to explore the relationship more broadly between his literary activity and the northern experience. In its finishing argument, the article suggests that notions of hybrid creativity and "transport" of motifs, material and perspectives are key to Johnson's literary practice and "programme" in relation to the Swedish North.

ANTJE WISCHMANN

Performing Space —A Modernist *Hembygd*

An Exploration of Sara Lidman's Works

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG Dieser Beitrag über das ‚modernistische Heimatdorf‘ in Sara Lidmans Werk bzw. ‚die Heimat des Lidmanschen Werkes im literarischen Modernismus‘ baut auf der Erfahrung eines Aufenthaltes in Missenträsk auf (März 2013). Im Geburtshaus der Dichterin habe ich mich von den konkreten und textlichen Spuren des Ortes leiten lassen, eine Auswahl von Werken gelesen und mich, als deutsche Literaturwissenschaftlerin und Touristin, einem biographischen und atmosphärischen Experiment ausgesetzt. Vor diesem Hintergrund setzt sich die Werkauswahl aus den beiden ersten Romanen (1953, 1955) und dem zweiten Teil der Romanserie *Jernbanan* (1983–1999) zusammen, die einen starken regionalen Bezug aufweisen. Hinzu kamen einer der sogenannten Afrika-Romane, *Jag och min son* (1961), und das Protokoll-Buch *Gruva* (1968), die den dörflichen Horizont zwar klar überschreiten, aber dennoch gemeinsame thematische Komponenten und verwandte erzähltechnische Gestaltungsmittel aufweisen.

Die mehrfache Fokalisierung ist eines der Verfahren Lidmans, die für einen eigenartigen Übergang zwischen der Wahrnehmungsposition von impliziter Erzählinstanz und den jeweils involvierten Figuren sorgt. Auf diese Weise wird das ‚biographische Interesse‘ der Lesenden immer wieder geweckt, die häufig eine Sprachrohrfigur vorzufinden meinen, aber niemals Klarheit über die jeweilige Parteinahme gewinnen können. Zugleich wird eine

geschlechtsspezifische Zuordnung der Perspektiven verunsichert, denn der weiblich und der männlich konnotierte Blick können gleichzeitig zur Anwendung kommen.

Trotz meiner biographischen Neugier, die auf die atmosphärische Wirkung von Missenträsk zurückgeht, liegt der Schwerpunkt der vorliegenden Analyse auf der sprachlichen Konstruktion des Heimatdorfes. Diese Verankerung in der mündlichen Sprache (als sprachlich erzeugter Ort) weist ebenso deutlich eine eigene Historizität auf wie der regional-, kultur- und mediengeschichtliche Wandel Norrlands. Nimmt man eine distanzierte, ethnographische Haltung ein, wie sie Lidman selbst in der Serie *Jernbanan* nahelegt, ergibt sich eine Neubewertung der Kombinationen von historischen, auch dialektalen sprachlichen Registern: Dieses Verfahren zielt darauf ab, dass die Lesenden im performativen Nachvollzug die Kon-flikte zwischen den staatlichen Institutionen und Akteuren und den neuen Siedlern in Norrland erfahren können. Diese in der gesprochenen Sprache der Lokalbevölkerung aufgeführten sozialen und psychischen Konflikte hinterlassen Spuren in den Träumen, Gedanken, Dialogen, Lektüren und Texten. Der historische Ort erscheint vornehmlich als ein Konglomerat, das die mündliche Rede von Zeitzeugen hervorgebracht hat.

Die Erzählinstanz nimmt sich der vielstimmigen Figurenrede an und dokumentiert den historischen Sprachgebrauch, unabhängig davon, ob ein realistischer oder phantastischer Code zur Geltung kommt. Häufig taucht das Motiv einer verzerrten Nachahmung auf. Dies kann als programmatischer Hinweis auf eine Ästhetik einer formalen, hier performativen und narrativen Mimesis gedeutet werden, die besonders klar den Nexus von sprachlichen und sozialen Handlungen herausstellt. Sprechen ist Handeln. Das Glossar, das den ländlichen Dialekt und Soziolekt ins Hochschwedische überträgt, unterstreicht ebenfalls das sprachliche Handlungspotential, das unmittelbare soziale und politische Effekte herbeiführen kann. In der Serie *Jernbanan* werden die stilistischen Kollisionen zugespitzt, wobei lautliche und syntaktische Mittel hinzutreten. Dies ist als prosalyrisches Verfahren gedeutet worden, kann aber auch der nachdrücklichen Betonung der inszenierten mündlichen Rede in ihrem Vollzug dienen.

HELENA FORSÅS-SCOTT

Telling Tales Testing Boundaries

The Radicalism of Kerstin Ekman's Norrland

ABSTRACT Beginning with analyses of *De tre små mästarna* (1961) [*Under the Snow*] and *Händelser vid vatten* (1993) [*Blackwater*], this investigation into the representation of Norrland in the prose fiction of Kerstin Ekman draws on theoretical material by, among others, Umberto Eco, Mieke Bal, and Rosi Braidotti. The study revolves around the ways in which the texts are told and, especially, who is seeing the events narrated and the implications of this. The juxtaposition of different focalisers in *Blackwater* helps engage the reader in the novel's central questions about memory, identity, environmental destruction, and interpretation. With the central character a troll from the forest, *Rövarna i Skuleskogen* (1988) [*The Forest of Hours*] develops a far-reaching critique of the western categories and boundaries used to determine what is 'human' and what is 'animal'. In the trilogy *The Wolfskin*, consisting of *Guds barmhärtighet* (1999) [*God's Mercy*], *Sista rompan* (2002) ['The Last String'] and *Skraplotter* (2003) ['Scratch Cards'], a plot covering the whole of the twentieth century is focalised by a number of characters and involves the reader in issues to do with postcolonialism, environmentalism and ethics.

KRZYSZTOF BAK

What is Hidden in Västerbotten's Stomach?

On Augustine and Torgny Lindgren's *Minnen*

ABSTRACT The article investigates the complex intertextual dialogue between Torgny Lindgren's *Minnen* (2010) and Augustine's *Confessions*, from which Lindgren has taken the motto of his autobiography. By using the patristic intertext as a starting point, the investigation intends to show how Lindgren has constructed his image of Västerbotten. The article is divided into four parts. The first part (I), establishes the heuristic principles of the investigation, which adhere to the recent tendency in patristic studies to observe the heterogeneous character of Augustine's world of thought. The second part of the article (II) charts parallels between text and intertext in their portrayal of grace, evil, and man. It emerges that those elements of Lindgren's world view which are particularly closely related to Augustinian theology are also the ones that possess a particularly strong Västerbottnian character. This intertextual affinity can be explained not only with reference to the Lutheran tradition of Västerbotten, but also has to be related to the text's specific structure of *memoria*, which is unravelled in the remaining parts (III–IV). On the basis of modern cultural anthropological theories of memory, the third part demonstrates that most of the differences between text and intertext can be linked to the cultural memory of modernity, and document the rise and fall of industrial subjectivity. Lindgren embeds his autobiographical version of Västerbotten into the basic structure of modern memory, transforms it into a quasi-subject, and taints it with the symptoms of decay that plague the industrial 'I.' In the same as Western modernity, *Minnen* draws the majority of its metaphors of dissolution from Augustine's paradigmatic doctrine of sin. The fourth part of the article (IV) aims to analyse the autobiography's mechanisms of substitution. It is argued that these attempt—in analogy to many Western critics of modernity—to counteract the crisis of industrial cultural memory by reviving the Augustinian forms of *memoria* and creating a synthesis of pre-industrial and industrial. Within the quasi-subject of Västerbotten and its wealth of agrarian objects, Lindgren finds adequate metaphorical models for use in his compensatory project of counter-memory. The article concludes by observing that, just as *Minnen*'s productive dialogue with Augustine allows it to recapitulate the history of Western memory, Lindgren's Västerbotten is elevated to the status of a universal symbol of European consciousness and its fate.

ELISABETH HERRMANN

Norrland's Regional Literature as World Literature

Per Olov Enquist's Literary Work

ABSTRACT The work of Per Olov Enquist, one of the most important contemporary Swedish authors, is known far beyond Sweden's and Europe's borders, and thus even received in North America. A great many of his fictional documentary works and dramatic plays, the biographies of poets such as Hans Christian Andersen, Selma Lagerlöf, Knut Hamsun, and August Strindberg, as well as the bestselling novels *Lewis Journey*, *The Royal Physician's Visit* and *The Book about Blanche and Marie*, have secured a firm position for this Norrland author in the canon of world literature. The continuous transgression of the borders between historical facts and their fictionalization builds the basic characteristic of Enquist's literature. For Enquist, the goal of writing is to sound out the "innermost space of human existence." He is eager to explore those secrets and ambiguities that underlie certain historical events or individual life stories. How is individual life determined? And how do individuals find their place in the world? In several of his works, the author uses the metaphor of drawing topographical maps to illustrate the search for one's

own identity as an attempt to position oneself in the world. Starting from his memory of lying on the kitchen floor as a young boy and drawing maps of his native village Hjoggböle, the area around Bureå, the Västerbotten and Norrland region as well as of his native country Sweden, Enquist reveals to his readers what it is that he considers literature to be: the compression of real signs into a fictional space which resembles reality, but, at the same time, moves beyond the boundaries of reality. Through an analytical synopsis of those works that use the motif of map-drawing as a central theme and often refer to each other in direct intertextual reference, namely the novel *Captain Nemo's Library*, the essay collection *Kartritarna* ['The cartographers'], and Enquist's biography *Ett annat liv* ['A different life'], this article examines the metaphorical function and poetological meaning that the depiction of the author's own region and home as well as references to his own life story and origin have in Enquist's work.

THOMAS MOHNIKE

The Joy of Narration

Mikael Niemi's *Popular Music from Vittula*

ABSTRACT *Le goût du baiser d'un garçon* (2000) de Mikael Niemi fut le plus grand succès littéraire en Suède après 1989. Souvent, le roman est décrit comme un témoignage d'une culture minoritaire dans la région suédoise frontalière de la Finlande, où l'on parle une langue particulière, le *meänkieli*. Dans mon article, j'explique que cette réception est moins due à l'intention implicite du roman qu'aux attentes de ses lecteurs dans une phase de restructuration identitaire en Suède après la fin de la guerre froide. En effet, la Suède est, depuis, souvent imaginée comme un pays multiculturel, et le témoignage littéraire supposé d'une culture minoritaire sur le territoire du pays répondait bien à ces attentes. Cependant, ce n'est pas la seule façon d'interpréter le roman. Il s'agit plutôt d'un texte ouvert, jouant avec des discours identitaires multiples pour ouvrir des pistes d'identification au lecteur, sans préférence pour l'une de ces pistes. Plus important que le contenu du roman est donc en effet la forme, ou plutôt la dynamique inhérente aux formes narratives utilisées. Une œuvre composée moins pour donner du sens que pour l'ouvrir, et pour suivre la joie de la narration.