

Special Issue

The Faces of Swedish Modernity: Social Realism, Decadence, Modernism, Postmodernism

Message from the Guest Editor

That modernity should possess multiple faces is a useful metaphor put forward by Matei Calinescu. Over the years, faces change, as does our understanding of various literary movements. Moreover, the variety of faces may change depending on where one is, so it is possible that different countries will have different perspectives on modernity and the responses it provokes. This Special Issue argues that in the case of Sweden, the faces of modernity include social realism, decadence, modernism, and postmodernism. This claim is not undisputed. Seldom is social realism included as a facet of modernity in studies oriented towards the Western world, but in Scandinavia and Sweden in particular, the Nordic Modern Breakthrough of the late 19th Century has left a strong legacy of socially engaged literature that continues into the present. Moreover, postmodernism is viewed with distrust in some Swedish critical circles, primarily because of its perceived lack of social engagement. This volume is intended to explore these terms, their relationship to each other and the Swedish context, as well as their individual manifestations.

Guest Editor

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