

## Foreword

First and foremost a Renaissance scholar, Åke Bergvall's research has consistently focused on past imaginings, so we wish honor him and his research through the title of this volume: *Past Imaginings*.

The contributions to this festschrift resonate and dovetail in various ways with his studies and publications in addition to some of his other professional assignments over the years. Among the contributors are colleagues at Karlstad and other Swedish universities, as well as three of the PhD students he has either supervised in the past, or is currently supervising.

*Past Imaginings* opens with two articles written by fellow Renaissance scholars Anna Swärdh and Per Sivefors. Until recently a colleague of Åke's at Karlstad University, in 'Progression and Return in Västanå Theatre's Re-telling of the *Edda* (2019),' Swärdh explores, among other things, how the convention of the dumb show was employed by Västanå Theatre's adaptation and staging of Norwegian dramatist Jon Fosse's *Edda*, which in turn is a selection and adaption of tales from the *Poetic Edda*. She argues that the dumb show—which originated in Elizabethan and Jacobean performances, but declined in the seventeenth century with its increased focus on realism—worked very well in this context of layered past imaginings. Sivefors's 'Stephen Gosson's *The Schoole of Abuse* and the Representation of Masculinity' shares an interest in gender issues with Swärd's article, while Gosson's anti-theatrical pamphlet is dedicated to Sir Philip Sidney, whose education of the reader is the subject of Åke's dissertation from 1989.

Johan Wijkmark was Åke's first PhD student at Karlstad University and later his long-time colleague. In his contribution "'The Awful Parenthesis": Ethics and Aesthetics in De Quincey's Murder Essays,' Wijkmark expands our understanding of De Quincey's cycle of murder papers by showing how the author's critical essay on *Macbeth* should be read as part of the same cycle. In these four essays, Wijkmark argues, De Quincey questions the line between reality and fiction as readers are drawn to and are morally implicated in the crimes perpetrated on the pages of fictional narratives. As Maria Holmgren Troy points out in the introduction to her article 'Imagining Gender in Nineteenth-Century Fairy Tales by Hans Christian Andersen and Richard Henry Stoddard,'

Holmgren Troy, Maria, Fredrik Svensson, and Andreas Nyström. 2020. 'Foreword.' *Nordic Journal of English Studies* 19(4): i-iii.

there are fairy-tale elements in Chaucer, Shakespeare, and, unsurprisingly, in Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, which is one of the Renaissance texts on which Åke has published more than one article. Holmgren Troy's contribution, like Wijkmark's, further reverberates with Åke's interest in the Romantics. In some of the literary fairy tales that she examines, both Andersen and Stoddard employ the notion of the Romantic child, often traced to Wordsworth's 'Ode,' which seems to have an impact on how gender is imagined in these tales.

Tapping into Åke's interest in rhetoric as well as his publications on Dickens, Yuanyuan Zhu, one of Åke's current PhD students, argues in 'Social Critique and the Imagining of Perversion as Satire in *Hard Times*' that Dickens's *Hard Times* employs perverted rhetoric as a means of satirizing characters—such as Gradgrind, Bounderby, Bitzer and Slackbridge—that hold idolatrous beliefs or otherwise turn their backs on religion and morals. Social critique is also in focus in Ronald Paul's contribution to *Past Imaginings*. Åke is well acquainted with much of Ronald Paul's earlier work on working-class issues in literature as he served as one of the experts assessing Paul for promotion to professor at the University of Gothenburg. Here, in 'Commitment and Class: Female Working-Class Activists in Three Suffragette Novels,' Paul examines portrayals of working-class Suffragettes in three novels from the beginning of the twentieth century: Elizabeth Robins's *The Convert* (1907), Gertrude Colmore's *Suffragette Sally* (1911), and Constance Elizabeth Maud's *No Surrender* (1911).

Moving somewhat closer to the present, albeit with a parallel focus on literary history, Renaissance scholar Lars-Håkan Svensson, a dear friend of Åke's, homes in on the translation of poetry in general and the poetry of Paul Muldoon in particular. In 'Translation as Appropriation in the Work of Paul Muldoon,' Svensson suggests that the translation of a poem is always affected by the context in which the translation takes place and that this process inevitably turns the original text into a new original.

Also one of Åke's former PhD students in Karlstad, Erik Falk returns to one of the authors he examined in his dissertation. In "'That little space": Locating Abdulrazak Gurnah in the Global Literary Marketplace,' Falk discusses the developments on the global book market through the lens of Tanzanian author and literary critic Gurnah's

double effort to both avoid easy categorization of him as a postcolonial writer while also influencing the construction of his own public persona.

Fellow cinephile and colleague at the Department for Language, Literature and Intercultural Studies (ISLI), Andreas Jacobsson explores other aspects of this volume's temporal focus. Drawing on the film-philosophical concepts 'time' and 'belief in images,' and acknowledging the impact of the Fukushima catastrophe on contemporary Japanese cinema, Jacobsson's contribution, 'Remembering the Future: Sion Sono's Science Fiction Films,' concludes that Sono's films question humanity's prospects for a future by highlighting the passing of time.

A former colleague of Åke's, and sharing our dedicatee's interest in rhetoric, Magnus Ullén demonstrates how the postcritical approach to literature fails to deliver on its promise to be highly attentive to the particular case, largely as a result of its refusal to acknowledge the literariness of literature. Ullén's 'The Art of Judgment: Postcritique and the Particular Case' begins by illustrating how this failure manifests itself in the perspective of literary critic Toril Moi, the article's case in point, and proceeds by elaborating on the shortcomings of postcritique, as they come to the fore in Moi's understanding of Paul de Man and Anders Behring Breivik.

*Past Imaginings* closes with a contribution that directly engages with the title of this volume. A professor of English linguistics at Karlstad University, Andrea C. Schalley explores in detail the second word of the title in 'The Lexical Semantics of Imaginings—A Corpus-Based Analysis' but finishes her detailed analysis of *imaginings* by deconstructing the word's ambiguous relationship with the preceding *past*. Through her conclusion that '*Past imaginings* thus makes us remember imaginings that were experienced in the past,' a connection is made with Åke's keen interest in literary history.

September 2020, Karlstad

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