

Forshaw, Barry. (2012). *Death in a Cold Climate: A Guide to Scandinavian Crime Fiction*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 224, £17.99. ISBN: 9780230361447.

There has been a growing wave of crime fiction and television being imported from Scandinavia in recent years. Seeing as Anglophone markets are often viewed as being quite insular, avoiding translations, this in itself should be celebrated. Barry Forshaw's *Death in a Cold Climate* is a great readers' guide to Scandinavian crime writers, from the hugely popular Stieg Larsson and Henning Mankell to lesser-known authors such as K.O. Dahl (Norway), Kjell Westö (Finland) or Christian Jungersen (Denmark). Forshaw covers the central Scandinavian countries of Norway, Sweden and Denmark as well as looking at Iceland and Finland, where he discusses both Finnish and Swedish language crime writing. He also gives a lot of space to women writers such as Camilla Läckberg (Sweden), Anne Holt (Norway) and Yrsa Sigurðardóttir (Iceland). With all these inclusions, the book is comprehensive and should offer much to anyone interested in crime fiction from Scandinavia – the hidden gems will delight people who already know the field while the overall coverage is useful for anyone who wants to begin exploring beyond girls with dragon tattoos.

Forshaw is an enthusiastic and generous reader: he comes across as really enjoying having read the books he talks about. He does make critical comments, but for the most part these are in passing. For example, he remarks that "*The Troubled Man* is Henning Mankell (almost) on good form" (28) – that "almost" shows his reaction to the text. Forshaw is not, however, an academic writer and any reader coming to *Death in a Cold Climate* looking for a theoretical treatise on Scandinavian crime will be disappointed. The book is clearly aimed at the general reader and makes use of a chatty, journalistic style. There are a lot of summaries of plots and an excellent range of writers is surveyed, but Forshaw seldom analyses the texts beyond this. He does give good context to the novels, along with discussing some of the changes that have taken place in Scandinavian societies in the last 30 or so years (e.g. immigration, the changing nature of the welfare state, etc.), which are useful for the general reader but Forshaw does not draw on academic sources in this discussion. There are, on the other hand, many interviews with authors, translators and editors that give a good background to the field and offer some very interesting material for scholars to mine.

Death in a Cold Climate is scrupulous in mentioning the translators of texts. Often these translations are described as "sympathetic" (1) or "ably translated" (28), but there is more nuanced discussion of translation here than such adjectives suggest. Forshaw argues that the translated texts "are not quite the books that their authors created" (6) as there is "a new dimension added when Nordic crime fiction is translated and sold in the

American and British markets” (20). As with the discussion of the texts, Forshaw’s discussion of the translations is resolutely non-theoretical. In fact, Sarah Death notes that most “currently practising fiction translators” have not studied translation theory (8). Without theory, though, it is still possible to discuss key ideas such as the difficulty of translating culturally specific items, such as the symbolism in characters’ names (100) or ranks in police forces (74). The book does reinforce the notion that translators should be invisible; as Marlaine Delargy says in an interview: “the aim is, of course, to make the reader forget that s/he is reading a translation” (75). A more nuanced opinion comes from editors such as Briony Everroad, who highlights the balance between not patronising readers and making the text too complex to read (132).

I think the great strength of *Death in a Cold Climate* for academic readers and translators is the broad picture it paints of the publishing industry. The interviews from a range of translators, publishers and authors give the book a lot of authentic material and this will prove valuable for anyone studying the translation of Nordic crime. Translation permeates the book, with many discussions of specific examples. One particularly interesting example is the comparison of the Krister Henriksson and Kenneth Branagh TV adaptations of Henning Mankell’s Kurt Wallander series (182-185), which shows that the sorts of comparison normally undertaken by translation studies are relevant in the TV medium as well as being interesting to a general public, which is, when it comes down to it, the target audience of *Death in a Cold Climate*. Yet there is still interesting material here for scholars, especially anyone with an interest in crime fiction in translation.

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