

**Linda Badley, Andrew Nestingen and Jaakko Seppälä (eds.):  
*Nordic Noir, Adaptation, Appropriation.*  
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While some have been quick to declare the “death” of Nordic noir, this transmedial genre remains vibrant across northern Europe, while also gaining increasing popularity around the globe. In *Nordic Noir, Adaptation, Appropriation*, Linda Badley (Middle Tennessee State University, USA), Andrew Nestingen (University of Washington, USA) and Jaakko Seppälä (University of Helsinki, Finland) have assembled an impressive array of voices to examine the ways in which the septentrional crime story makes its way onto the screen, from popular films and television series such as *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* and *Forbrydelsen*, to lesser-known examples like *Ø* and *The Glass Dolls*. The collection builds on a growing set of literature that engages with Scandinavian, Icelandic, and Finnish crime drama as a key cultural export from the region, but also investigates the role of Nordic noir as a mirror of the problems faced by the nations of northern Europe. Linked by the concepts of adaptation and appropriation, the chapters necessarily cast a wide net, examining not only cinematic and television artefacts, but also print literature, paratextual discourses, touristic practices, and creative industries. Such a spectrum allows the assembled scholars to comment on varied themes, including the welfare state, geopolitics, mythology, mobility, ethnic prejudice, and gender. Not surprisingly, special attention is paid to the location aesthetic and social critique that have grounded previous English-language works on screened adaptations of Scandinavian crime fiction, including texts by Toft Hansen and Waade (2017), Hochscherf and Philipsen (2017) and Redvall (2013). However, the volume stakes new ground in its careful assessment of the nuances of contemporary

Nordic as an adaptation of earlier forms of media, while also serving as a “model, inspiration, and category” (p. 10) that shapes cultural production outside the region. Predominantly drawing on scholarship from within the Nordic region, the “inside-out” approach of *Nordic Noir, Adaptation, Appropriation* is a perfect companion to Stacy Gillis and Gunnþórunn Guðmundsdóttir’s *Noir in the North: Genre, Politics and Place* (2020), which assumes more of an “outside-in” approach to the genre, with the majority of its contributors being from Anglophone countries.

Badley, Nestingen, and Seppälä open the text with an overview of Nordic noir qua adaptation, providing the reader with a brief, yet substantive unpacking of the concepts employed in the subsequent chapters, while also signposting the volume’s overall contributions to the field. The body is neatly divided into three sections: Centre/Periphery; Similarity/Difference; and Narration/Style. The first of these parts showcases new work from several established Nordic noir scholars, including Gunhild Agger, Anne Marit Waade, and Jakob Stougaard-Nielsen. Not surprisingly, the chapters focus on the “redirection” of Nordic noir (p. 24) away from the centre (i.e. Copenhagen, Stockholm, Oslo), either from the perspective of setting (Bornholm, the Shetland Islands, Sápmi), or in terms of consumption and translation in/for other markets (especially the UK). Part II gathers essays that focus on innovative aspects of the remake, such as Lynge Stegger Gemzøe’s analysis of the personal touch of the showrunner in adapting *The Killing* for the North American market, and Mark B. Sandberg’s assessment of the meaningful differences that emerge between the Swedish *Människor* and its British clone *Humans*. This section also seeks to interrogate other elements of remediation, including Maaret Koskinen’s compelling study of how crime novelists such as David Lagercrantz actually anticipate their works being adapted for the screen. The final section features Jaakko Seppälä’s case study of *Border-town/Sorjonen* as a Finnish exemplar of adapting the Nordic noir “prototype”, alongside essays by Kim Toft Hansen and Björn Nordfjörd on the scope of Nordic noir’s influence outside the region and the genre, respectively.

Looking at the text as a whole, *Nordic Noir, Adaptation, Appropriation* offers the reader a coherent and accessible guidebook for examining Nordic noir as a “network of similarity” (p. 158), a form of “flexible cultural capital” (p. 10), and a “popular modernism” (p. 258), therein providing a valuable addition to earlier analyses of the genre. This is especially true with regards to those aspects of Nordic noir that travel well, such as the use of “twilight surroundings, dark weather conditions, and the gloomy family home” (p. 287), and the featuring of “troubled protagonists, a set of murders focusing on the vulnerable in society, [and] links to high-level corruption” (p. 114). However, less-predictable perspectives are also present, including Nordic noir’s enduring pessimism (see chapters by Engelstad and Stegger Gemzøe), and the genre’s potent eco-criticism (see contributions by Waade and Toft Hansen). More than simply a gathering of loosely-affiliated papers, the volume’s chapters resonate with and reinforce one another, despite the geographical and disciplinary diversity of its contributors. Of particular value is the strong focus on

the Arctic, which is key to three of the essays in Part I, as well as many of the chapters' sophisticated approaches to the UK-Norden continuum of noir, which includes not only overseas broadcasts, but also hybrid series like *Marcella*, *Shetland*, *River*, and BBC's *Wallander*. As the list of comparable texts above suggests, the study of Nordic noir as a genre is an increasingly crowded space; that being said, Badly, Nestingen, and Seppälä's volume is a welcome addition to Scandinavian/Finnish film and television studies, and one which charts a course for the next stage of Nordic noir scholarship.

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