



The Popularity of Danish TV Drama Series on German Television

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Public discourse

– News Magazines and Daily Newspapers:

- Discursive fields: gender roles, task of Public Broadcasting, political ethics, social norms and morality
- Shift in framing from intra-textual aspects to extra-textual factors
- Dominant interpretive frames:
 - 1) idealized Danish productions vs. the poor German output
 - 2) aspiring towards more quality in German television

Market conditions

- Collaboration between DR and ZDF since the early millennium. Raising production value and international appeal
- Fitting into audience preferences (Nordic Noir) and habits (program slot)
- Wide audience range: ZDF and ARD as market leaders

A matter of cultural proximity? German and Argentinian audiences in comparison:

Following concepts of cultural proximity audiences from different cultures would either have a closer involvement or a greater distance to the series. Accordingly, German audiences should relate more to Danish drama series than Argentinian audiences. But Argentinian and German viewers like the very same elements of the series: they all see a specific quality in the series based on authenticity, convincing characters and good acting, and an original way of storytelling. This differentiates these series from domestic as well as American television.

However, German audiences tend to explain their text involvement with cultural proximity to Denmark, while the explanatory frame of Argentinian audiences is curiosity to find out about distant, exotic realities such as the small and peculiar society of Denmark.



Audiences – Focus Groups in Berlin and Rostock

Main topics of interest:

- female lead character
- authenticity
- current topics
- high quality
- complex narration
- local specificities (aesthetics, landscapes, gender equal society)

Authenticity and credibility through:

- emphasis on specific places
- emphasis on a specific society
- universal topics
- current topics
- credible characters
- ambivalent “edgy” lead characters
- cultural proximity to neighbour country

Implications

The findings highlight the social facet of watching television: at their specific time of occurrence, Danish drama series successfully involved their audiences across the globe in topics of lifeworld relevance (→lifeworld proximity).

Transnational Television Drama Conference