

Memoirs, Megasellers and Markets

Mittwoch, 17. Mai 2023 11:30 (1 Stunde)

What makes a memoir move across languages and markets? More particularly, how does an English-language memoir become a bestseller in the German market? In this presentation we begin to parse out the different roles played by publishers and readers in producing bestselling memoirs in Germany by focussing on some recent high-volume sellers. Some, like Prince Harry's *Spare* (Random House 2023) and Michelle Obama's *The Light We Carry* (Crown 2022), have been published simultaneously in German and English, apparently in an effort to maximize audience reach in German-speaking countries. These memoirs exemplify a relatively new strategy adopted by German publishers which we will examine through one case study. Meanwhile, other bestselling memoirs, like Jeannette McCurdy's *I'm Glad My Mom Died* (Simon & Schuster 2022) and Baek Sehee's *I Want to Die but I Want to Eat Tteokbokki* (Bloomsbury 2022, translated into English from Korean) have become bestsellers in Germany in their English language versions prior to the publication of German translations (in May and March 2023). Can these successes be attributed to readers' involvement in online recommendation cultures? And how do readers, especially those who can read in German, respond to and talk about these books?

In this work-in-progress presentation, we will begin to make sense of the results emerging from our collaborative investigation into "Memoir Across Markets," in order to understand the various factors that "move" a memoir across languages, territories and platforms; and in order to interrogate how value is being brokered around the genre - and by whom.

Bios:

Danielle Fuller is a Professor in the Department of English and Film Studies and an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Alberta, whose research focuses primarily on contemporary cultures of reading, Canadian literature and interdisciplinary research methods that combine textual and empirical modes of investigation.

Corinna Norrick-Rühl is Professor of Book Studies at the University of Muenster in Germany. In her research and teaching, she focuses on book culture, bookselling and publishing in the 20th and 21st centuries.

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