

## Karin Boye, *Kallockain* (1940)



Dr. Theresa Thompson  
Engl/Wmst 3330  
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## Karin Boye (1900-1941)



- Born October 26, 1900 in Gothenburg, Sweden.
  - Moved to Stockholm in 1909.
- University in Uppsala 1921-1926.
- Swedish Lutheran: State Religion
- Influences: Buddhism, Schopenhauer, Neitzsche
- First collection of poems: Clouds (1922)
- First novel: Crisis
  - Depicts religious crisis and lesbianism.
- Merit and Too Little: focus on male / female role-playing.
  - Explores gender performativity
- Suicide 1941

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## Terms

- **Reification**: Berger and Luckmann, "the apprehension of human phenomena as if they were things, that is, in non-human or possibly supra-human terms."
- **Mead (1934) - Symbolic interactionism** - Children learn to interact with others by assimilating a shared system of symbolic representation, which allows for the social negotiation of meaning.
  - Semantic relativism: meanings of words are specific to languages and cannot be translated without loss of meaning [e.g. *litost*; 'snow'].
  - Ontological relativism: the existence of a thing (e.g. God, sorcery, individuality, addiction) is usually tied a conceptual system, which may be real for some people, but not others.
  - Epistemological relativism: theories are historically-situated; best understood when located in the conditions of their emergence (e.g. intelligence).
  - Moral relativism: the value and meaning of things and actions is culturally and historically specific. (from Smith, M.J. 1998).

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### 1930s: Concepts of Degeneration

- Eugenics: Lower / higher life (*Kallocaïn* 51)
  - Unfit to live and breed....
  - Homosexuality
- Eugenics and a "liberal" Sweden
  - Libidinal economy of Sweden 1930s (30)

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### Libidinal Economy

- **Economy**: a community's system of using its resources to (re)produce wealth.
- **Political economy**: theory or study of the role of public policy in influencing the economic and social welfare of a political unit.
- **Libido**: emotional energy or urge, especially that associated with sexual desire. Libidinal desire ≠ reproductive urge.
- **Libidinal economy**: a community's system of directing, controlling, and / or modifying sexual desire with the intention of producing (or reproducing) its resources and increasing its general wealth.

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