

## The Reception of Mary Wollstonecraft's Works in *Åbo Tidningar* 1797-1831

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In 1795, Mary Wollstonecraft travelled to the Nordic periphery of Europe, a journey that would result in one of her most famous books, *Letters Written during a Short Residence in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark* (1796). Her *Letters* evoked interest in the countries she had visited and was soon translated into German (1796) and Swedish (1798). Interestingly, the early Swedish reception first appeared at the margins of the Swedish realm, in the Turku based newspaper *Åbo Tidningar*, which published a four-part sequence of translated and commented extracts from the *Letters* in January to March 1797. This interest in Wollstonecraft seems to have been due to the paper's editor Frans Michael Franzén (1772-1847), who had in December 1796 returned from an almost two years long journey to Germany, France and England.

Franzén is known for his admiration and promotion of female Swedish poets, but his early interest in Wollstonecraft has remained unknown to scholars. Wollstonecraft is mentioned at least twice in the notebooks the young Franzén started keeping during his European journey and these notes as well as the comments in *Åbo Tidningar* show a keen though somewhat ambivalent interest in the rights of women in general and Wollstonecraft in particular. The extracts from the *Letters* are after Wollstonecraft's death in 1797 followed up by an obituary published in 1798. As late as 1831, after Franzén's editorship, when Turku is located at the western margins of the Russian Grand Duchy of Finland, *Åbo Tidningar* publishes a biography of Wollstonecraft, divided into four sequent parts. Interestingly, this later publication refers back to the earlier publications.

The aim of this paper is twofold. First, I examine how the reception of Wollstonecraft and her works in *Åbo Tidningar* adds to and to some extent revises our previous understanding of the dissemination of her works. Second, I will make some remarks on how *Åbo Tidningar's* interest in Wollstonecraft changes previous interpretations of Franzén's period as editor.