The winds of Hallyu, which for several years have swept through most of Asia and parts of South America and Africa, have not yet been able to penetrate the part of the world that is usually known as the West. The reasons for the relatively meager breakthrough and presence of all things Hallyu in Western countries are of course many and complex as well as differentiating according to country and region. The state of the popularity and spread of Hallyu and its type of audience, users and consumers is therefore not the same in North America with its big and territorialized Korean and Asian diasporic communities or in Australia and New Zealand which apart from their large Korean and Asian minorities also benefit from a geographic proximity to Korea compared to in Europe where the Korean presence is thin and where Korea is generally an unknown country.

This talk presents the situation concerning the reception and consumption of Hallyu in today’s Sweden, a Northern and Western European country with a small Korean and Asian population but nonetheless with a long and continuous relationship to Korea in modern history. The article which is based on interviews with Swedish Hallyu fans, on Swedish media reports and fan texts on the phenomenon and on personal observations and experiences as a Hallyu consumer, should be seen as a preliminary study of the reception and consumption of Hallyu in Sweden, which at least in parts could be generalizable to other Northern and Western European countries, thereby contributing to an understanding of the future potential for Hallyu in Europe. How is Hallyu being received and consumed in Sweden with an emphasis on Korean film and K-pop? When did Hallyu come to Sweden, and where and how is it present in terms of resources, users and activities? And which groups and categories are involved and participating as consumers and fans in terms of generation, gender, class and ethnicity?

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