



Svend-Erik is a professor emeritus of comparative literature at the University of Aarhus. In his early career Svend-Erik worked on language philosophy and semiotics. Hence, many of his early publications focused on the study of sign systems by which we generate and express culture and consciousness. Another of his research domains was literature and culture in the modern city.

Over the last 200 years the metropolis has embraced more and more aspects of the arts and of the everyday experience for a growing number of humans, including those who live far beyond the last stop of the bus. Literature gives shape to the imaginations we as humans create on urban conditions and thereby integrates the open and flexible urban reality and its global effects in an aesthetic and communicative context that allows us to grasp it, both in a historical and a contemporary perspective.

A third field of his interest is the role of literature in the shaping of the fundamental ideas by which we, in different ways throughout history, interpret our individual and collective lives, for example nature, solitude, memory, personal formation or Bildung. His latest and fourth research field is globalization and literature under the headline World Literature. His current book project, also within the field of globalized culture and world literature, is a book in English on literature and forgiveness as a cultural challenge. In recent years he has established strong contacts with various Chinese universities and research groups and spends significant time in China with understanding its culture and literature and comparing them with Western culture and literature.

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