

Strindberg on International Stages/  
Strindberg in Translation



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Edited by

Roland Lysell

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SCHOLARS**

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P U B L I S H I N G

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## CONTRIBUTORS

### **Gunnel Engwall**

Professor emerita in French, Stockholm University, Department of French, Italian and Classical Languages.

### **Tânia Filipe e Campos**

PhD. Affiliated Researcher, Instituto Nacional de Engenharia Biomédica (INEB), Porto, Portugal and Auxiliar Professor, Instituto Superior de Ciências da Saúde- Norte, Gandra, Portugal.

### **Sofia Gustafsson-Capková**

PhD, Stockholm University Strindberg Corpus (SUSC) and Computational Linguistics (Department of Linguistics).

### **Anne-Charlotte Hanes Harvey**

Professor emerita of theater at San Diego State University, dramaturg and translator.

### **Hannah Hinz**

PhD student Department of Literature and History of Ideas, Stockholm University.

### **Rikard Hoogland**

PhD and associate professor in Performance Studies at Stockholm University.

### **Alexander Künzli**

Professor at University of Geneva, faculty of Translation and Interpreting.

### **Roland Lysell**

Professor, Department of Literature and History of Ideas, Stockholm University.

### **Kristina Nilsson Björkenstam**

PhD, Stockholm University Strindberg Corpus (SUSC) and Computational Linguistics (Department of Linguistics).

**Gytis Padegimas**

Theatre director, teacher, lecturer and actor. Teaches at Klaipėda University, Lithuania.

**Franco Perrelli**

Professor of performing arts at the DAMS University of Turin.

**Katerina Petrovska-Kuzmanova**

PhD at "Marko Cepenkov" Institute of Folklore, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University Skopje.

**Mats Wirén**

Associate Professor, Computational Linguistics (Department of Linguistics) at Stockholm University.

## INTRODUCTION

*Strindberg on International Stages and Strindberg in Translation* is a collection of scholarly and critical articles looking upon Strindberg from different perspectives. Three articles are case studies about Strindberg performances in different countries, i.e. the United States, Italy and Portugal. Three further articles approach the problems of transformation of the text on stage, where one article is based on Strindberg's texts about drama from an aesthetical point of view, another from the perspective of a Strindberg director and one article is an analysis of the to a certain extent postdramatic performances of a Swedish suburban theatre group.

The postdramatic aspect is also important in an analysis of Strindberg's Chamber Plays, followed by an article where especially the function of music is reflected upon. Translation problems have been important in all three countries discussed, especially Portugal. We have chosen *Le Plaidoyer d'un Fou* as a case study since the most radical consequences of translation can be seen in this text. Finally, we introduce our readers to the digital Stockholm University Strindberg Corpus.

Anne-Charlotte Hanes Harvey's "Challenges in dramaturging Strindberg in the US today" is based on her work as a Strindberg translator and dramaturge in the United States. Reflecting on Sean Mathias' production of *The Dance of Death* on Broadway in 2001 with Ian McKellen, Helen Mirren and David Strathairn Hanes Harvey discusses the problems of Strindberg productions in the four different categories of theatres in the United States: Academic theatre, Community theatre, Regional theatre and Commercial theatre.

The gateway for Strindberg into American theatre was the Little Theatre Movement inspired by Antoine's Théâtre Libre, and Eugene O'Neill considered him as the father of modernity. Still there are difficulties. Less is written about Strindberg's texts than about his marriages and his writings about the battle of the sexes. Americans tend to look upon Strindberg as a misogynist, often grim and searching. Strindberg is the inspiring "troubled Nordic genius". He is compared to Ibsen whose plays seem more efficient. Strindberg seems to be complex and difficult to Americans, a Strindberg text is sometimes a chaos of thoughts. Another problem is that the rehearsal times are shorter in the United States than in Europe.

According to Hanes Harvey, Strindberg should be produced with “insight and daring” and due to the demands of his dramaturgy Academic theatres seem to have the best possibilities. Regional theatres suffer under the economic recession and cannot afford to fulfil the intentions of the plays.

Franco Perrelli discusses “The Heritage of Strindberg on the 21st century Italian Stages”. The first production he mentions, Luca Ronconi’s mise-en-scène of *A Dream Play* and Calderón’s *La vida es sueño*, at the Piccolo Teatro in Milan, is an exception from the rule that Strindberg in Italy is “considered unilaterally nailed to the war of the sexes”. *The Father*, *Miss Julie* and *The Dance of Death* are his most famous plays in Italy, however. Perrelli describes Massimo Castri’s production of *The Father* in Cesena in 2005, which seems to be influenced by Castri’s version of Ibsen’s *Ghosts*, *A Doll’s House* and *John Gabriel Borkman*. Perrelli also discusses the critical reception. He finds the production “figuratively intense and admirable in its rhythms, broadened and thrusting at the same time”.

In 2006, there were three productions of *Miss Julie* in Italy: Sergio Maifredi’s at Teatro della Tosse, where the tragic structure was emphasized, Carmelo Rifici’s at Teatro Litta in Milan and Armando Pugliese’s version, where the end of the drama was left open. Already in 2002, Pugliese had directed *The Dance of Death* at the Teatro della Fortuna in Fano, an excellent production according to Perrelli. Marco Bernardi’s version of the same play in Bolzano in 2006 emphasized Strindberg’s “wish to find shelter in metaphysics and spirituality”, without refraining from grotesque and tragicomic elements.

Finally, Perrelli reflects upon Gabriele Lavia’s *The Dance of Death* in Modena in 2010 and Walter Malosti’s *Miss Julie* in Pinerolo in 2011, where the technical artistic work linked to light and sound seem to have been particularly impressive.

Tânia Filipe e Campos starts earlier, already in the 20th century, when she investigates “Strindberg in Portugal – 109 Years on Stage”. She emphasizes that there was never a regular reception of Scandinavian literature in Portugal due to the geographical distance and that the translations were indirect, i.e. based on existing translations into Non-Scandinavian languages. Ibsen’s *A Doll’s House* was not printed until 1894 and performed in 1897. Strindberg’s reception is to a great extent dependent on Portuguese history, especially the rise and fall of the Salazar regime.

The first play to be staged, *O Pae (The Father)*, in 1903 was suspended after only one performance as it questioned the legitimacy of paternity and the male protagonist resembled King Carlos of Portugal.

*A Viagem de Pedro O Afortunado (Lucky Per's Journey)* had been translated in 1906, but the first performance was in 2002 directed by Fernanda Lapa at the National Theatre combining contemporary and baroque techniques. At the same time Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* was performed at the Teatro Alberto Company

A production of *Miss Julie* in 1960 seemed to be heavily influenced by Alf Sjöberg's legendary Swedish version, which had been presented in Paris in 1955 and 1959. During the late Salazar era before the Carnation Revolution in 1974 another six plays were performed: *Creditors* (1962), *The Father* (1962), *Pariah* (1963), *The Dance of Death* (1969 and 1970), *A Dream Play* (1971) and *Abu Casem's Slippers* (1971).

After 1974, however, the interest in Strindberg increased and it reached its peak in the 1980s and 1990s. Luís Miguel Cintra made a remarkable production with avant-garde scenarios of *The Island of the Dead* in a cycle of three plays including *Easter* and *The Father* in 1985. In 1986, he staged *The Ghost Sonata* at Teatro du Cornucópia

Luís Varela directed another Strindberg Cycle in Évora in 1996: *Creditors*, *The Stronger* and *Pariah*. The most popular Strindberg play in Portugal is *Miss Julie* and the latest performance in 2009 resembles Mike Figgis' film. Most of them keep the conventions of naturalism and classic theatre, but a performance directed by Rui Sena in 1996 uses avant-garde technique.

Today Strindberg is perceived as the first expressionist in drama. Katerina Petrovska puts her focus on his aesthetics in "The Theatrical Ideas of August Strindberg Reflected in His Plays". Discussing documents as the preface of *Miss Julie*, his essay "On Contemporary Drama and Contemporary Theatre" and the motto of *A Dream Play* she shows how new concepts of acting as well and new functions of scenery and lighting transform drama. The actors are supposed to show emotional memories relevant to particular characters (Petrovska refers to Derrida's concept "the alphabet of the body").

Scenography becomes a means of characterization in Strindberg's texts and the visual space is sometimes an exact representation of the dramatized inner psychological perception. The dialectics between the public and the private is developed and Strindberg uses his knowledge of other arts. Finally, Strindberg's open ends and principles of incompleteness are mentioned.

The Lithuanian director Gytis Padegimas has taken a strong interest in Strindberg for over forty years. Beginning with his early enthusiasm founded on surviving collections in old libraries from the Czarist era he tells us about his career as a Strindberg director. In 1970, Padegimas became a student at the Lunacharsky State Institute for Theatre Arts (GITIS) in Moscow. Already in 1977 he interpreted *Miss Julie* at the Siauliai Drama Theatre and in 1981 he directed his most successful Strindberg production so far, *Creditors* at The Kaunas State Drama Theatre as a diptych: two parallel versions with casts from different generations of actors. The technical difficulties seem to have been enormous but usually the performances ended with ovations.

In 1992, Padegimas was invited to Sweden to direct *The Stronger* at a suburb theatre festival. Padegimas finishes with descriptions of two avant-garde productions after the Lithuanian declaration of independence: *The Ghost Sonata* at The Kaunas Drama Theatre in 1997 and *Easter* at the Siauliai Drama Theatre in 2009.

Rikard Hoogland analyzes two Strindberg productions in his article “Strindberg in post dramatic theatre”: *To Damascus – On the Ghost Train* (2004) directed by Andreas Boonstra and *A Dream Play* (2010), directed by Pontus Stenshäll, both belonging to the suburb theatre Moment Theater in Stockholm (Gubbängen).

The critics noticed affinities with German post-dramatic theatre, whereas Boonstra and Stenshäll maintained that The Actors Studio inspired them. Hoogland’s first focus is on Hans-Thies Lehmann’s *Postdramatisches Theater* (1999) and its thesis that modern avant-garde theatre has shifted into a new form, where the dramatic text has a completely new function. Hoogland notices an influence from Peter Szondi. Modern dramatists seem to be aware of this, e.g. an Elfriede Jelinek text is not intended to be a dominant sign in a performance.

Hoogland uses five of Lehmann’s criteria of post dramatic theatre when he analyzes the Moment productions: parataxis, simultaneity, and play with the density of signs, plethora and irruption of the real. Hoogland proves that both productions include post dramatic elements but maintains that it is impossible to say whether these tendencies are strong enough to make the performances into pure post dramatic theatre.

Both interpretations are placed in contemporary Sweden. This raises questions about location in time and space. Hoogland discusses the functions of the Strindberg script and other textual elements (e.g. from the popular author Ulf Lundell) from scene to scene. According to Hoogland, the two productions are good examples of post dramatic theatre and constitute radical ways to renew Strindberg and he finishes his article by

comparing these productions to some surprisingly conventional German interpretations, e.g. *Crime and Crime* in Vienna in 2011.

Lehmann's criteria are also discussed in Roland Lysell's "Metatheatrical and Postdramatical Aspects of Strindberg's Plays". First the texts of *Storm/Thunder in the Air*, *The Burned Site*, *The Ghost Sonata*, *The Pelican* and *The Black Glove* are discussed and analyzed in Aristotelian categories as plot (mythos), character (ethos) and dianoia (ideas) and then Lehmann's categories of a post dramatic theory (parataxis, simultaneity, density of signs, plethora, musicalization etc.) are applied to the plays.

In the Chamber Plays a multidimensional text is created where physical objects as well as music are not only emphasizing the words but are also elements in their own right in a dramatic structure. Not only are the destinies of the characters woven together, but also the elements of drama. Silence is just as important as repetition: "How many times have we sat here, saying the self-same things?" one of the characters exclaims. The plays are also plays where all the five senses are present, e.g. the carbolic smell after the funeral in *The Pelican*. In spite of Strindberg's interest for drama tradition and contemporary theatre aesthetics, his Chamber Plays in many ways foreshadow 20th century avant-garde.

From 1899 to 1912 Strindberg gathered a group of guests to Beethoven Evenings". In her article "Between Beethoven and Schönberg: Strindberg's Idea of Chamber Music and its Significance for and in His Chamber Plays" Hannah Hinz proves that his Beethoven interest was more than musical enthusiasm. It had a most obvious impact on the plays written in 1907 and performed at The Intimate Theatre, *Thunder in the Air*, *The Burned Site*, *The Ghost Sonata* and *The Pelican* as well as his fifth Chamber Play, *The Black Glove* written in 1909.

Around 1900 Beethoven was an iconic cult figure in Germany and Sweden and Hinz describes Strindberg's guests, The Beethoven Boys, and the performances in his flat – Strindberg was especially fond of having the music performed on the piano. Two of his plays involve Beethoven music: In *The Ghost Sonata* both Beethoven's Geistertrio, Beethoven's Piano Trio no. 5 D major opus 70 and his Piano Sonata no. 17 D minor, opus 31 no. 2 are of fundamental importance, both through the title of the play and through the musical structure of the drama. This musicalization opens up for a new kind of aesthetics, based on mood, atmosphere, even on pantomimic scenes, frequent pauses and silence.

In *The Black Glove*, Strindberg goes even further. Beethoven's music is supposed to be played from behind the scene. The subtitle of the play, "A lyrical fantasy (for the stage) in five scenes", refers to a musical form – Chopin's *Fantaisie Improptu* C sharp minor op. 6, is supposed to be

performed both in *Thunder in the Air* and in *The Pelican*. The setting of *The Black Glove* is a modern house and its tenants have “pianos” at their disposal. In the performance of the play Beethoven’s Sonata 31, Opus 110, “L’istesso tempo di arioso”, Beethoven’s Funeral March, Beethoven’s Piano Sonata no. 12, Opus 26 “Maestoso andante”, Beethoven’s Piano Sonata no. 29, Opus 106 and Sinding’s *Frühlingsrauschen* are intended to be played.

Referring to Charles Rosen’s analysis of Beethoven’s sonatas, their theatrical dramaturgy and their mood, Hinz makes the intricate functions of the music performed in the play evident. She also proves that there is an obvious contrast between the sonatas, which depict premonitions and lull the protagonist to sleep, and the Sinding melody, which is linked to light feelings, summer and happiness.

Hinz also relates The Chamber Plays to Richard Wagner’s music; Strindberg does not appreciate Wagner’s dissonances, and finally she finds affinities with the fragmentation of musical continuity in Schönberg’s last movements of the String Quartet no. 2, Opus 10.

Gunnel Engwall and Alexander Künzli discuss the French versions of *Le Plaidoyer d’un fou* as well as translations into Swedish, English and German. As Strindberg wrote the novel in French and the first version was corrected (and to a certain extent changed) by Georges Loiseau, there is no indisputable first text, which raises several questions: What is a translation? Where do we draw the line between a translation and an adaptation? How does the idea of translation change over time?

Six Swedish, four German and three English translations interdependent in a very complicated way are discussed. Through two short passages chosen as examples Engwall and Künzli prove that there are simplifications at all levels (lexical, syntactic and stylistic) and normalizations. Several translations, especially an early English translation still in use, are bowdlerized. Finally Engwall and Künzli declare that there are still no faithful translations into English or German.

Kristina Nilsson Björkenstam, Sofia Gustafson-Capková and Mats Wirén approach the works of Strindberg from a computational linguistic point of view. They refer to and introduce us to The Stockholm University Strindberg Corpus, consisting of seven of Strindberg’s autobiographical works with linguistic annotation.

The authors describe the novels included in the corpus by keywords, they compare Strindberg’s use of emotionally charged words with selected prose of both his contemporaries and present-day authors, and finally they explore the semantic prosody of the words “kvinna” (“woman”) and “man”.

Through this choice of articles we intend to give an overview of Strindberg's legacy to world literature and world theatre from ten different perspectives. We hope that our ten articles read together pose the most relevant questions of Strindberg performances and Strindberg translations to modern Strindberg scholars, Strindberg enthusiasts and Strindberg directors.



# SECTION I



# THE THEATRICAL IDEAS OF AUGUST STRINDBERG REFLECTED IN HIS PLAYS

KATERINA PETROVSKA–KUZMANOVA

Nowadays Strindberg is considered the first expressionist because of the new things he introduced into theatre. As an author and theatrical practitioner, he strived to reform the traditional people's theatre. He realized that the theatre of his time had become a prisoner in the magical circle of light entertainment, and the drama itself had been put in the background. He opposed this practice and strived to return the lost functionality, seriousness, and authenticity of theatre. For this reason he was focused constantly on seeking a new dramatically form with an open structure and a new approach to the performance on stage. In this direction, in addition to being a practitioner (an actor, playwright, director), he showed an interest in theatre as a theorist.

The kind of theatre Strindberg stands for can be seen in the preface of the drama *Miss Julie*, in which he defines the new concept of acting. In his treatise "On contemporary drama and contemporary theatre", he develops the principles which exist in the new aesthetic, and apply to the building of dialogue, scenography, lighting, make-up, etc. Even though his work took place about forty years before expressionist theatre reached its culmination, he traced the way of the new theatre, the new way of scenic presentation. This happens by the means of destruction of the realistic approach in dramaturgy and existing theatrical practices. In this sense, it is said by John Gassner in "Directions of modern theatre and drama": "When expressionists started destructing the realistic form in dramaturgy and theatrical performance (first Strindberg in his later works, and later his followers before and after the First World War) it became possible for the nature of drama and theatre to be remodelled in endlessly many ways. In each stage of this remodelling concepts or ideas of theatrical art, which have been developed as a reaction to realistic dramaturgy, have been used." The requests for a theatre reform Strindberg made were a reflection of the time in which a surfeit of the present models of theatre was felt. In

his thoughts on the new theatre, we can often recognize the ideas of Wagner, Gordon Craig or Appia. But, it can also be said that they, in some periods of their work, independently of each other, arrived at similar conclusions.

Strindberg thought that the future of theatre lies in the drama text which deals with essential questions of human behaviour, so that it will give up banality, including the unmotivated domination of the plot. Exactly these thoughts about the new language of the stage with which the new drama could be adequately articulated brought him to the finding of the necessity of a new actor. One of Strindberg's basic requests is that the actor doesn't copy reality. That means he shouldn't be absorbed by the character, but enriches the character with his individuality. He allows the actor to improvise, and even change the text to a certain extent, so he says: "I want to give the actor the greatest possible freedom, because I found that it's better to let him have his own perception of the pictures I've created than force a new interpretation on him which will break into pieces." (Strindberg, 1977, p.84) He thinks that in this way, the actor has the chance to be a part of the play equally, and to have an equal responsibility for the work as the author who created it. In this respect he thought that acting creates an organic whole with the text and direction, and all three components must function together, be equally important, and above all, in harmony with each other.

It can be said that solving the problem with acting is of crucial importance for the development of the new expressionist theatre. "If that essential form of acting performance doesn't develop spontaneously, it must be created no matter the price. Here the question must be asked: who should create the new actor? What should he be like?" (Nikolova, 2000 ,p.96) The answer to the first of them follows automatically from the already made observations- if the author is the main means for expression of the director, and then the director should be the one to create the actor. The answer to the second question should be undoubtedly concrete and radical: the new actor is a man who can and must talk, not with reason, but with the body (i.e. with the rational side of his essence). The new actor is a man who substitute's ordinary language or scenic language based on the word and text with the alternative, primary, and therefore true and clear for everyone, language of the body. The formation of the new scenic language of the body is a difficult and long process. This mainly comes from the fact that it, as a radical substitute for the system of words and signs, doesn't have an adequate predecessor from which it could get away, like the naturalistic scenic lexica does that in respect to the classical one. With

this demand, the play is radically changed and the era of modernism in theatre begins.

The request for a new actor led Strindberg to the creation of appropriate characters. The traditionally frozen character that has become similar to an automat and reflects a person who can't develop is rather deeply tragic in the impossibility to adapt to the time. Strindberg thought that in order to stay in the modern scene, the actor has to transform, go through a psychological analysis, or, as Strindberg says, emphasize the person's codes. (Strindberg, 1974, p.213) These considerations of his are most notable in the plays *The Father* and *Miss Julie*, in which Strindberg, while composing his characters, uses the (at the time) epochal discovery in psychology, the multiplication of the ego. The author sees the multiplication of the person in several ways. In the part of the process of the artistic creation we say that the artist goes through the process of identification with his characters, in order to achieve authenticity in the characterization, and in this way he becomes "rich with the wealthy and poor with the moneyless." Strindberg sees the second option for multiplication of the ego in the way in which we perceive others in our everyday lives. The third possibility for multiplication of the person is consisted of the inner process within ourselves which we start with vivisection, when we discover many different unknown, and yet opposing persons. "The characters split, multiply, disappear, get stronger, fade away. But they are all ruled by one consciousness – the consciousness of the dreamer, before it there are no secrets, scruples, laws. There is no conviction or a verdict of freedom, only a description. The dream as a liberator usually plays a dark game, but the awakening comes when the pain is strongest, so the sufferer faces reality, which no matter how unsettling, still looks bright compared to the tortures of the dream." (Strindberg, 1977, p.137) The split I is especially expressed in the play *The Ghost Sonata*, in which the visions of the past and the doubles of multiple characters in which they tangle and suffocate are crossed. The characters are an incarnation of committed sins (the Dead Man, the Milk Woman), as well as of the forthcoming transformations and actions (the woman – parrot is what Hummel is yet to become). Here the characters multiply in the various time layers and conversely collide in the past through the dense dough of time, whereby their false and unrealized identities fall apart. In this case the relation of the characters with their own past, identity and apparitions is interwoven with his social relations. The confrontation with the others leads to the identity decay of the character. The method is similar in the play *The Road to Damascus*, in

which there is only one character, the Unknown, while the rest are only projections of his consciousness.

The actor transforms his encounters with death into ‘poetry’, i.e. acting, through the synthesis of memories from a series of such street scenes. Different accidents that he or she has witnessed, and which repeat themselves, gradually become superimposed, thus enabling the actor to re-enact on stage the essential emotion memories relevant to a particular play. (Rokem, 2009, p.169) The composition of Strindberg’s dramas as drama-dream and the process of their execution uncover the contradiction between the principle of purely subjective expression of the self and using the language as a main means for its materialization. Solving this contradiction, he formulates a new dramatic language, a new alphabet – “the alphabet of the body.” (Derrida, 1978, p.98) That is clearly obvious in *The Ghost Sonata*, where the monolog I appear dressed as dramatic personae in the character of The Old Hummel. He says: “Everyone. At my age man knows everyone...but no one knows me really – I deal with people’s destiny!” (Strindberg, 1977, p.158) In order to express himself maximally in this case, he should pour out his soul into the people and objects on the stage. The gesture is what emotionalizes and turns him into his ecstatically lively medium. The actor and the environment are synchronized at the edge of vitalism. That gives the play the form of a dream in which the objects and the dead come to life and are moved by a greater power into foreign, frightening forms, poses and actions. *A Dream Play* (*Ett Drömspel*) is not a game of people themselves, but an epic game for people. Here Indra’s daughter is shown how that usually happens with them. She is developed with an epic distance towards humanity whereby the sentence “A shame for people” appears as a leitmotif.

Seeing humanity as an object, Strindberg shows the characters as an embodiment of their profession, which can be best observed in the words of the Lawyer: “Look at these walls: isn’t it as if all the sins damaged the wallpapers! Look at these papers on which I register the committed justices! Look at me! (...) See how I look and do you think that with the look of a criminal I can get the love of a woman? Or do you think that anyone would want as a friend him who should pay all debts of the city, every single debt.” (Strindberg, 1977, p.157) A significant aspect of the Strindberg legacy is connected to the dialectics between the public and the private. One very important aspect of this legacy is its application in the major theories of acting, which in turn have influenced contemporary playwriting.

Moreover, there is a significant dialectical interaction between these two poles. Street scenes are public events, just as the theatre is. The actor

studies public events, like accidents in the street, in order to transpose them to another public event: the performance, which takes place in front of and for an audience? What is ‘accidentally’ public in the street accident is purposefully so in the theatre. The actor studies how to create the appearance of ‘accidence’ in his deliberate public presentation or demonstration. But these are only the most apparent similarities. What at the same time actually takes place is a personal or private tragedy: someone has caused the death of another person by an accident which could have been avoided. The street scene presents a private event in the public arena. This is a tension which Strindberg explored, and which has become crucial for modern drama and theatre. (Rokem, 2009, p.169)

Even though Strindberg with his stances on theatre doesn’t create a theory on acting like Stanislavski or Brecht, his thoughts still give a good basis to allow us to put him in the line of authors who contributed to innovations in acting performance, who are revolutionary and far ahead of their time. This is especially clear in the finding that his model of acting in a way announces the future concept of Brecht’s actor.

In the creation of the concept of a new theatre, Strindberg applied his knowledge of other arts, transferred them to theatre by method of experiment, implemented them and transformed them into practice. He, seeing the lack of functionality of the scenography that was practiced in theatre, strives towards the new concept in determining the role of scenography and lighting in the performance. The ideas of a reduced or picturesque scenography come directly from Strindberg’s dramaturgy of essence and the psychological topic he will dedicate to. In his letter to Zola, Strindberg says: “As you can see, I took the freedom of putting before your judgment the drama written after an experimental formula, where the inner plot is more highly valued than theatrical tricks, the décor is minimized, and I respected the unity of time as much as I could.” (Strindberg, 1964, p.94) In the new dramaturgy the stage is a universe with qualities, and not a primal home of men. It’s reduced to, first, darkness, and then a podium covered with black canvas, with black curtains which limit different parts of the space on the podium. The objects present, usually only a few, are strongly and unusually deformed with impossible proportions, the walls and windows are drawn on the canvas and the curtains are lines which intersect in weird angles and are enriched with shadows. In this sense he says: “With one table and two chairs it is possible to represent the most complex conflicts life creates.” He transmits this one of his opinions in the form of a play in the chamber performance *The Pelican*, in which the décor is reduced to a prop with a symbolic meaning, for example, the rocking chair. In the preface to *Miss Julie* he says:

As for the scenery, I have borrowed the asymmetry and cropped framing of impressionist painting, and believe I have thereby succeeded in strengthening the illusion; for not being able to see the whole room or all the furniture leaves us free to conjecture, that is, our imagination is set in motion and we complete the picture ourselves. (Strindberg, 1977, p.83)

He forces the spectator to imagine the extension of the décor which on the stage is hinted at only partially, an angle of a stove, the edge of a table, or three-quarters of an exit. The outside experience mustn't influence the inner one, but rather highlight it. This way, in *The Father* and *Miss Julie*, the décor gets a different function, other than the realistic ambience of the play. In the play *The Father* the first thing that the spectator notices is the weapon on the wall and the hanger with the captain's uniform, and the only weapon used in the play is the psychological one. In the play *Miss Julie* the count's shoes replace his character on the stage, and the bell with which he calls for Jean has a profound effect on the characters. Scenography becomes a means of characterization of the character and introduces the spectator to the inner atmosphere of the play.

I also came up with a single décor, firstly, because I wanted to make the actors become one with their surroundings, and secondly, to stop the décor of luxury... (Strindberg, 1977, p.83)

In the line of one-act plays he created in 1982, the marks of the décor get two meanings, expressed through remarks and dialogue. The dialogical painting of space brings the décor to life, so that it gives us the possibility for two-sided viewing: with our eyes we see the outer space, through the dialogue we see how it affects the characters. This can be most clearly seen in *To Damascus*. In this play in the remarks the visible décor is described in one way, and in the dialogue in another, because the characters experience it completely differently. In the one-act play *Storm* the author tries out simulative décor, on the façade of the house we see the events that take place. In this play the colour of the objects reflects the inner atmosphere; there are the red curtains, the red cloud in the sky, and the ember of the lit cigarette. Strindberg, while working in the Intimate Theatre, tried to eliminate the flaws on the exaggerated realism in the scenography. He experimented with curtain instead of décor on the wall, and he would keep doing this until the end of his practical work in theatre. But, after the performance of *To Damascus*, Strindberg realized that the drawn curtain couldn't represent movement, so he decided for playing exclusively with colours and light on an empty stage, because it shows a reality different from the one we know. In its representation on stage he is looking for a styled beauty. In relation to lighting he would say:

Another perhaps desirable innovation would be the removal of the footlights. I understand that the purpose of lighting from below is to make the actors' faces fatter, but I would like to ask: why all actors have to have fat faces? Does not this under lighting obliterate a great many features in the lower parts of the face, especially around the jaws, distort the shape of the nose, and cast shadows over the eyes? (Strindberg, 1977, pp.83–84)

The lighting, which in expressionism becomes the director's principal instrument for composing of the act, is made of many colourful beams impossible in nature and material reality whose main function is to show and send back into the darkness the events, people, and facial regions, with which simultaneity and succession are ensured. The theatrical space in the drama-dream becomes reduced and symbolic in the own function of the dramatically form of the dream. It can be easily transformed following the logic of the dream and the unpredictable movement of time. The visible space is more exactly the dramatized inner psychological perception of the space surrounding us; depending on mood it expands or gets smaller and changes form, colour and quality. The same sense is followed by the relation to the costumes, which become in the dramas like ghosts because they underline the timeless character of dreams. This shows that Strindberg is an innovator on the stage, just as much as in the play.

Strindberg chooses this active principle of taking part in the artistic work instead of passive observation, because he thinks that's exactly what contains the essence of the open work: the active perception of the spectator is not finite. The principle of incompleteness applies, according to Strindberg, mostly to the dialogue and characterization, and then to time and space. It comes to the incompleteness that we encounter every day in life, in the fragments of events, words, memories, and perceptions of people, everything that our worldview is consisted of. In this way, modern theatre becomes a chronicle of the contemporary world in the lively pictures that give us the limits of the work, silhouettes of people, portraits of the epoch, important events, and even the current questions of the time. In the preface of *Miss Julie*, he says: "I made an attempt. If it doesn't work, there is still time to start over." (Strindberg, 1977, p.85)

All the novelties that Strindberg introduced to theatre, above all breaking the autonomy of the character, introducing the verbal theme instead of a functional dialogue, and leaving the theatrical scene for the expressionist one, are regarded as a merit without which contemporary theatre couldn't be imagined by some, and by others as the first articulated and convincing proof for establishing relations between the ambitions of contemporary authors and the theatre that stands at disposal. Strindberg himself didn't find the way to the future, but discovered the most hidden

depths of the human psyche, and with that the by the time unknown roads and forms in dramaturgy. That's why Strindberg's dramas will always be the subject of interest of contemporary theatre, mostly because his symbolic games are a constant challenge for a new scenic expression. T. Wilder claimed that Strindberg is the source of the overall modern drama. His influence carries on, a fact that is claimed by a large number of playwrights, such as T. Williams, E. Jonesco, and H. Pinter. And Ronald Harvud says:

Ibsen and Strindberg are master bricklayers of 20th century Theatre. All signs show that theatre has big changes ahead of it. Theatre had the task of facing reality, but not with a simply expressive material, which led to the search for a new, different theatrical language of the opposite side of reason – the language of symbolism. (p. 281-282)

This can be observed in the efforts to release the theatrical scene from the limits of the classical form, and the freedom which is given to the actors by the stenographer as well. But, just as well, by application of various means which are characteristic for film, circus, classical or medieval theatre on the modern scene, he opened the road to its constant change.

## **Abstract**

Today Strindberg is perceived as the first Expressionist for his efforts to show that the new subjective person can create his or her own drama that could express ineffable content. He sought a new dramatic form with an open structure and stands for reform of the traditional civic theatre. His thoughts on the transformation of drama and theatre go in two directions to the new definition of the concept of acting and determine the role of scenery and lighting. The formation of the new scenic language of the body is a difficult and long process. This mainly comes from the fact that it, as a radical substitute for the system of words and signs, it doesn't have an adequate predecessor from which it could get away, like the naturalistic scenic lexica does in respect to the classical one. With this demand, the play is radically changed and the era of modernism in theatre begins. That's why Strindberg's dramas will always be the subject of interest of contemporary theatre, mostly because his symbolic games are a constant challenge for a new scenic expression.

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# STOCKHOLM UNIVERSITY STRINDBERG CORPUS: CONTENT AND POSSIBILITIES

KRISTINA NILSSON BJÖRKENSTAM,  
SOFIA GUSTAFSON-CAPKOVÁ  
AND MATS WIRÉN

## 1. Introduction

The Stockholm University Strindberg Corpus (SUSC) consists of approximately 400 000 tokens and is annotated for parts-of-speech (PoS), including morphological analysis and lemmas. The linguistic annotation follows the Stockholm-Umeå Corpus (Källgren 2006) which is commonly regarded as a reference corpus for Swedish. Furthermore, the annotated texts have been converted to XML which makes the corpus searchable with analysis tools such as Xaira<sup>1</sup> and AntConc.<sup>2</sup> This allows for e.g., searching for keywords, concordances with a specific word form or lemma, for pattern matching (including PoS), and collocation extraction.

In this paper we describe the content of the corpus, how it was constructed, and the linguistic annotation. Furthermore, we discuss how approaches in computational linguistics can be of use within the area of stylistic and literary analysis, and illustrate the possibilities of a corpus-based approach by describing three quantitative studies. We propose the use of computational methods, not as a substitute to other kinds of literary analysis, but as a set of tools for exploration and discovery.

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<sup>1</sup> Xaira. URL: <http://www.oucs.ox.ac.uk/rts/xaira/> Last checked: 2012-10-11

<sup>2</sup> AntConc. URL: <http://www.antlab.sci.waseda.ac.jp/index.html> Last checked: 2012-10-11

## 2. Content

The current version of the corpus includes seven works by Strindberg which can all be classified as autobiographical (Robinson 2008):<sup>3</sup>

- *Tjänstekvinnans son* (*The son of a servant*, 1886-87)
- *Han och hon* (*He and She*, 1919)
- *Inferno* (*Inferno*, 1897)<sup>4</sup>
- *Legender, Jakob brottas* (*Legends and Jacob Wrestles*, 1898)
- *Fagervik och Skamsund* (*Fairhaven and Foulstrand*, 1902)
- *Ensam* (*Alone*, 1903)

We are aware of three other electronic collections of Strindberg's works: Projekt Runeberg,<sup>5</sup> Litteraturbanken,<sup>6</sup> and Språkbanken.<sup>7</sup> The first two collections consist of e-text, whereas the data available through Språkbanken Korp, a web concordance interface, is annotated for PoS, lemma, lexicon-semantic information, and dependency relations.

While these collections are valuable resources, our corpus is an important addition because, unlike the first two, it is linguistically annotated, and unlike the third, the data is available for download and thus can be processed using the researcher's software of choice. Even more importantly, researchers can add their analyses as new layers of annotation of the corpus.

### 2.1 Data pre-processing

The starting point was the digitized volumes of *Samlade skrifter av August Strindberg* (*Collected Works*, published 1912-1921), available from Projekt Runeberg, Linköping University.<sup>8</sup> The plain text files for each of

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<sup>3</sup> (Robinson 2008) includes *En dåres försvarstal* (*A Madman's Defense*), *Klostret* (*The Cloister*), and *Ockulta dagboken* (*The Occult Diary*) in Strindberg's autobiographical writing. Because we do not at present have access to these works in electronic form, they are not included in the corpus.

<sup>4</sup> *Inferno* and *Legender* were written in French and translated to Swedish by Eugene Fahlstedt.

<sup>5</sup> Projekt Runeberg, URL: <http://runeberg.org/> Last checked: 2013-10-25

<sup>6</sup> Litteraturbanken, URL: <http://litteraturbanken.se/> Last checked: 2013-10-25

<sup>7</sup> Språkbanken Korp, URL: <http://spraakbanken.gu.se/korp/> Last checked: 2013-10-25

<sup>8</sup> Projekt Runeberg, Strindbergs samlade skrifter, URL: <http://runeberg.org/strindbg/> Last checked: 2013-10-25