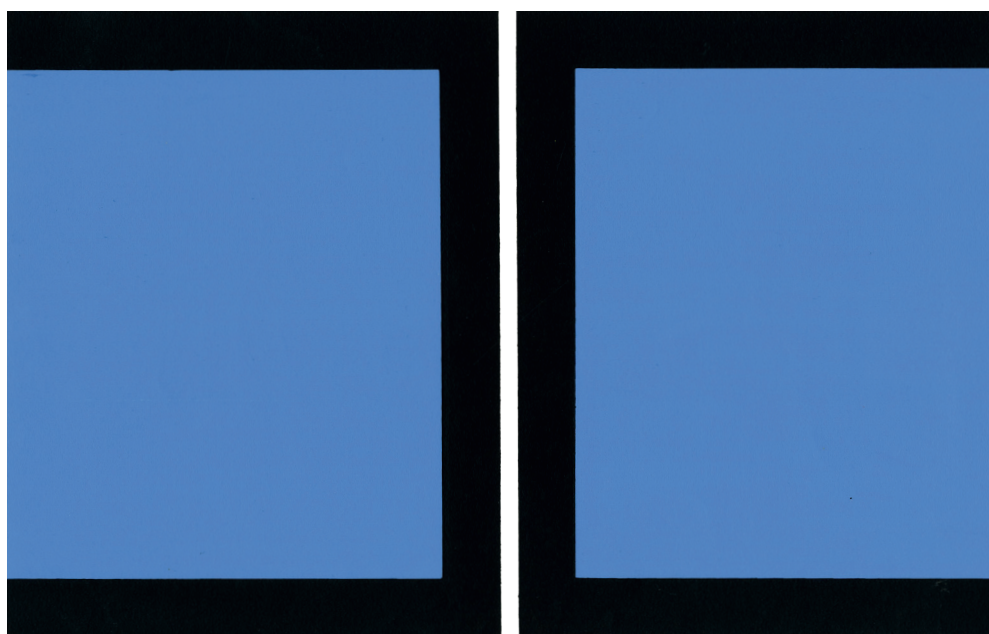


# TRANSLATING SCANDINAVIA

Scandinavian Literature  
in Italian and German Translation, 1918-1945

EDITED BY

BRUNO BERNI & ANNA WEGENER



Edizioni Quasar

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# The First Edition of Strindberg's Chamber Plays in Italian (1944): Indirect Translation and Cultural Reconstruction after Fascism

by MASSIMO CIARAVOLO

## Abstract

The first Italian edition of August Strindberg's chamber plays (1907) came out in 1944 thanks to the efforts of Rosa e Ballo, a publishing house operating in war-torn Milan. The translator was the Germanist Alessandro Pellegrini, and his source was Emil Schering's standard edition of Strindberg's *Werke. Deutsche Gesamtausgabe*. In addition, the introductions Pellegrini wrote in each of the five booklets (the four chamber plays and the play *Easter*) were refashioned to become the first Italian monograph on Strindberg: *Il poeta del nichilismo* (1944). This article highlights how important Strindberg and Schering's collaboration was to Strindberg's transnational agenda; when Strindberg became part of the German literary and dramatic canon at the beginning of the twentieth century, more of his works, especially his late experimental plays, succeeded in reaching Italy. This article also focuses on the Italian reception of Strindberg's dramatic production through German mediation, giving evidence that Pellegrini's translation is based on Schering's and examining how Pellegrini's role as a critic was enacted in the paratext (eventually metatext). Indeed, these texts took shape within the intellectual network created by Rosa e Ballo and represent the vehicles through which Strindberg's radical bourgeois pessimism helps to explain mankind's contemporary condition.

*"Jag ville helst glömma att jag lefver i Sverige, ty man lefver icke här, utan man dör, eller somnar, och jag börjar tro, dass Sie, Herr Schering, mich schon persönlich eingedeutscht haben; ja ich habe fast aufgehört Schwede zu sein [...]."*<sup>1</sup>

## 1. Introduction

This article deals with the travel of a group of Strindberg's dramatic texts, the so-called chamber plays, from Sweden (1907) through Germany (1908) and on to Italy (1944). It is international in scale, as it includes dramatic literature written in three languages, and interdisciplinary in method, since it seeks to interrelate literary studies and translation studies. For this reason, I find it necessary to begin with an account of my methodological sources of inspirations, before I start the analysis of my case study.

The article is based on different approaches in literary and translation theory, which find a common ground in historicism, whereby literature and its agents – writers, readers, translators, critics and other mediators – interact with society and the real world around them. First of all, the case presented should be seen in terms of world literature, not merely intended in the broader sense that August Strindberg's chamber plays, written in 1907, belong to the canon of internationally well-known plays, successfully staged in Sweden as well as abroad throughout the twentieth century.

1. Letter from August Strindberg to Emil Schering, December 3, 1903 (Strindberg 1974, 321-322).

Indeed, following David Damrosch's suggestions, world literature is more specifically understood as "a mode of circulation and of reading" of those works beyond the borders of their original culture, which have made them actively present in other literary systems.<sup>2</sup> It is important to explore this mode of circulation and therefore examine translations and the transformations they introduce in the analyzed literary works, as they manifest themselves differently abroad than they do at home, and translations accomplish the fundamental task of reframing them in a new cultural context.<sup>3</sup> Damrosch concludes:

[...] works become world literature by being received into the space of a foreign culture, a space defined in many ways by the host culture's national tradition and the present needs of its own writers. Even a single work of world literature is the locus of a negotiation between two different cultures.<sup>4</sup>

The practice of world literature implies, according to this view, an increased awareness of the fact that a great part of the texts are, when read and studied across national borders, mediated by translations, i.e. by existing frameworks of reception and interpretation.<sup>5</sup>

This article accounts for a significant pattern in the European reception of the chamber plays, which makes them world theatre and world literature. The term "negotiation", used by Damrosch, takes us back to an idea of understanding, and of pursuing knowledge in humanities, as put forward in Hans Georg Gadamer's hermeneutics (1960). Such a negotiation is a historical actualization and concretization of possible meanings of a work, which may even go beyond the author's original intention but, at the same time, bring later readers closer to him or her, to another time, another space and, often, another language, so that his or her historical experience comes alive. It is what Gadamer calls "fusion of horizons" (*Horizontverschmelzung*),<sup>6</sup> and also what makes him see the importance of translation in the creation of a world literature.<sup>7</sup> My concept owes much to Hans Robert Jauß, who develops Gadamer's ideas to propose a science of literature which is a history of literature, understood as a history of reception of literary works and of the "events" (*Ereignisse, Vorgänge*) and "effects" (*Wirkungen*) they produce in a different context or "horizon of expectation" (*Erwartungshorizont*).<sup>8</sup>

Itamar Even-Zohar's polysystem theory is equally relevant to our case thanks to the essential role it gives translation in the dynamic, historical process of renewal of a literary system.<sup>9</sup> However, owing to its main objective – detecting the general laws governing the relations between and within cultural systems, which are seen as complex, heterogeneous "polysystems"<sup>10</sup> – his theory is also impersonal,<sup>11</sup> whereas I am interested in the historical individuals who actively take part in the system, be it original authors, translators, theatre directors, critics, publishers or cultural managers.

Translators and their work – their agenda and the cultural context in which they worked – must be made more visible, opposing what Lawrence Venuti, in his seminal critique of the translator's traditional invisibility, has defined the "illusion of transparency" in translation.<sup>12</sup> In this article I propose to employ Venuti's critique of the translator's invisibility – a category he specifically uses in translation studies, as the (in)visibility of the translator's work in the translated text – in a broader sense, applying it to literary studies. My aim is to shed light on two passages, or events, in which translators feature as protagonists, locating Strindberg's original texts in different cultural contexts: Emil Schering as the German translator of Strindberg's complete works, and in particular of his

2. Damrosch 2003, 5.

3. *Ibid.*, 6, 24.

4. *Ibid.*, 283.

5. *Ibid.*, 289, 295.

6. Gadamer 1960, 284-290.

7. *Ibid.*, 152-157, 361-367.

8. Jauß 1970.

9. Even-Zohar 1990, 1-3, 13, 24-26, 45-51, 57, 73-78.

10. *Ibid.*, 9-12, 85-94.

11. Even-Zohar's theory is impersonal, as indebted to Rus-

sian Formalism, but also historical, dynamic and not static; it argues that the equation of Formalism with a-historicity is fallacious (Even-Zohar 1990, 1). Even-Zohar specifies that his conception of a "polysystem" is "dynamic and heterogeneous in opposition to the synchronistic approach", and that "[o]nce the historical nature of a system is recognized [...], the transformation of historical objects into a series of uncorrelated a-historical occurrences is prevented" (*Ibid.*, 12).

12. Venuti 1995, 1-42, 307-313; here 1.

innovative chamber plays (1908), which was the starting point of Strindberg's success on German stages during World War I;<sup>13</sup> and Alessandro Pellegrini, who used Schering's versions for the first Italian, indirect translation<sup>14</sup> of Strindberg's chamber plays (1944), while Milan and Italy were experiencing the effects of World War II. In this respect Gideon Toury's reflection on the historical and cultural relevance of indirect translation is seminal:

no *historically* oriented study of a culture where indirect translation was practiced with any regularity can afford to ignore this phenomenon and fail to examine what it stands for [...] not as an issue in itself, but as a **junction where systematic relationships and historically determined norms intersect and correlate**.<sup>15</sup>

An equally relevant approach in contemporary literary studies is, for this article, the growing awareness of authorship as normally multiple and collaborative. The idea that literary production, reproduction and reception is a fundamentally social practice, involving several agents and not simply the authors, is paramount in Robert Darnton's history of book as well as in Jerome J. McGann's critique of modern textual criticism.<sup>16</sup> Such an awareness has developed in the last decades, defying the traditional notion of "solitary genius", solely responsible for the right meaning and interpretation of a work.<sup>17</sup> Harold Love observes that the idea of the author creating a text singlehandedly tends to omit important phases in the process of creation, for instance

[...] everything that follows the phase of initial inscription while the work is vetted by friends and advisers, receives second thoughts and improvements, is edited for the press, if that is its destination, and given the material form in which it will encounter its readers.<sup>18</sup>

Although Jack Stillinger mentions the translator as one of the possible agents in the creation of a collaborative product in literature,<sup>19</sup> the scholarly approach that focuses on multiple and collaborative authorship does not often include translation as one of its functions.<sup>20</sup> In this article, I argue that translation should be included in the perspective of world literature, all the more so as the important letter exchange between Strindberg and his German translator Schering clearly shows a partnership and a shared agenda, aimed at launching Strindberg's dramatic and literary output in the theatres and literary market of Germany, eventually determining their dissemination in the rest of Europe, Italy included.

In his *Les Règles de l'art. Genèse et structure du champ littéraire* – a further relevant source for my approach – Pierre Bourdieu criticizes Gadamer and his idea of a "fusion of horizons" which, in Bourdieu's view, is idealistic and transcendental, as it does not methodically go deeper into the historical conditions of either the creation or the reception of a literary work.<sup>21</sup> In spite of this difference of perspectives and objectives between Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics and Bourdieu's

13. Oberholzer 1979, 33.

14. Indirect translation is defined as "a translation of a translation" by Rosa *et al.* 2017, 118. Specific articles on this subject use a variety of terms (e.g. "relay translation", "pivot translation", "mediated translation", "second-hand translation", etc.) and explain the reasons for different classifications. In this study, I employ the term "indirect translation" which, as Rosa and her colleagues point out, has "gained ground against other competing designations for both the process and the ultimate TT" (*Ibid.*, 115). For other recent studies of the phenomenon of indirect translation, see Ringmar 2006; St. André 2009; Ringmar 2012; Washbourne 2013.

15. Toury 1995, 130; quoted in Ringmar 2006, 4; italics and bold type in the original.

16. See Darnton 1982 and McGann 1985.

17. Cf. Stillinger 1991, v-vi, 3-24, 182-202; Chartier 1994, 25-59; Love 2002, 32-50; Bennett 2005, 1-8, 94-103.

18. Love 2002, 33.

19. Stillinger 1991, v; Jansen & Wegener 2013, 4-5.

20. Although Darnton's and McGann's perspectives remain

seminal as for the idea of literature as a social practice, it must be observed that they omit translation as one of its *loci*. Darnton's omission is particularly eloquent: "Despite the proliferation of biographies of great writers, the basic conditions of authorship remain obscure for most periods of history. At what point did writers free themselves from the patronage of wealthy noblemen and the state in order to live by their pens? What was the nature of a literary career, and how was it pursued? How did writers deal with publishers, printers, booksellers, reviewers, and one another? Until those questions are answered, we will not have a full understanding of the transmission of texts" (Darnton 1982, 75). This is all the more remarkable as Darnton *can* imagine literary communication across borders (but without translations): "books themselves do not respect limits, either linguistic or national. They have often been written by authors who belonged to an international republic of letters [...] and read in one language by readers who spoke another" (*Ibid.*, 80-81).

21. Bourdieu 1992, 393-430.



sociology of cultural production, I am convinced that they can coexist on the common ground of historicism, and I am not the only one to think so.<sup>22</sup> Roger Chartier explains:

In spite of striking differences, even divergences among them, a common characteristic of all these approaches [the aesthetic of reception, the New Historicism, the sociology of cultural production] is that they reconnect the text with its author; the work with the intentions or the positions of its producer. This is of course not a restoration of the superb and solitary romantic figure of the sovereign author whose primary or final intention contains *the* meaning of the work and whose biography commands its writing with transparent immediacy. As he returns in literary criticism or literary sociology the author is both dependent and constrained. He is dependent in that he is not the unique master of the meaning of his text, and his intentions, which provided the impulse to produce the text, are not necessarily imposed either on those who turn his text into a book (bookseller-publishers or print workers) or on those who appropriate it by reading it. He is constrained in that he undergoes the multiple determinations that organize the social space of literary production and that, in a more general sense, determine the categories and the experiences that are the very matrices of writing.<sup>23</sup>

What I would modestly like to add to Chartier's masterly description is, again, the presence of translators among those who appropriate the author's text by reading it as well as among those who turn it into a (new) book.

## 2. *Strindberg, translation and Schering*

It is well known that August Strindberg (1849-1912), the greatest Swedish writer and playwright, was an outstanding letter writer, and throughout his rich correspondence, he gives, among other things, clear evidence of how crucial a matter translation is to him. He developed a transnational agenda at an early stage of his career, considering himself more a European than simply a Swedish writer. In September 1883 he decided to leave Sweden for France, after which he spent a few years in parts of Europe where French, German and Danish were spoken, the foreign languages he was proficient in through his education and cultural background. He soon learned to write and publish directly in French and had, in that case, his text translated into Swedish by others, while the French original could serve as the source of translations into yet other European languages as well. Furthermore, in his eagerness to conquer Paris as a writer and a playwright, Strindberg translated some of his own Swedish texts into French.<sup>24</sup> Finally – and this was his common and constant strategy – he wrote in Swedish and searched for translators, recommending his works and maintaining a continuing letter exchange with them. The main areas in this intercourse were, again, the French, the German and the Danish languages; the first two were felt to guarantee his European reception, whereas Danish was important in order to be read and performed in the rest of Scandinavia outside Sweden and especially in Copenhagen, which was the capital of Scandinavia as regards publishing houses, journals, newspapers and theatres. Strindberg, however, did not neglect other areas of Europe if he saw the possibility of publication or of a theatre performance. On such occasions he was pragmatically in favour of indirect translation through a German or French edition that could serve as a source text.<sup>25</sup>

22. Cf. Boschetti 2005, 36-37; Bourdieu 2005, 445 [Boschetti's note].

23. Chartier 1994, 28-29; italics in the text.

24. In Strindberg studies, "conquering Paris" is a familiar quotation since Stellan Ahlström's dissertation (1956). More recent contributions about this subject are Briens 2010 and D'Amico 2010. In her interesting book about Paris as the place of "the world republic of letters", Pascale Casanova dedicates some pages to Strindberg (Casanova 1999, 193-195); furthermore, her analysis of translation as consecration (Casanova 2010, 294-297) is useful for the case presented in this article. Casanova's

chronology as referred to Strindberg must however be revised and specified (cf. Ciaravolo 2015, 54).

25. On June 19, 1898 Strindberg asks for Schering's permission to use his German translation of *To Damascus* as the source of prospective translations into Italian and French (Strindberg 1970, 325). In 1899 Strindberg allows Schering's wife to translate from her husband's German translations into English (Strindberg 1972, 84, 88-89 [Torsten Eklund's notes]). The central role of Schering's German translation as a source for all Europe, even for major centres such as London and Paris, is clear to Strindberg, for example in letters to Schering on



Strindberg's attitude to translation and translators is indeed another facet of his modernity, and thanks to the development of translation studies and the growing awareness of translation as a fundamental but often invisible passage in world literature as well as a key-function in the interdependence of literary systems,<sup>26</sup> Strindberg studies have paid more and more attention to this aspect in the last decades.<sup>27</sup> As his beautiful introductory poem to the sequence *Sömngångarnätter på vakna dagar* (*Sleepwalking Nights on Wide-Awake Days*) from 1884 shows, Strindberg knew well that he had to expose and sell his heart in shop windows as a commodity.<sup>28</sup> No matter how painful this condition might be existentially, Strindberg was a practical man too, who therefore acted as such: a writer on the market, a small entrepreneur who had to pursue self-promotion and practice daily exchanges with publishers, editors and translators alike. Strindberg operated in a contradictory situation, in which a purportedly free modern writer was torn between the strong need for artistic autonomy and the objective constraints imposed by the economic power – a situation well examined by Bourdieu in the case of Strindberg's French predecessors and contemporaries Baudelaire, Flaubert and Zola.<sup>29</sup>

Bourdieu describes the creation of a relatively autonomous literary field in France during the second half of the nineteenth century, in which the normal rules of the economic world were, as it were, turned upside down: the “symbolic capital” gathered by authors through their work gave them a higher degree of prestige, or “consecration”, than money or worldly honour would have bestowed on them.<sup>30</sup> Strindberg shared this *habitus*, which was particularly evident in his experimental urge as a playwright, quite tightly connected, in fact, to the model of André Antoine and his naturalistic Théâtre libre, founded in Paris in 1887.<sup>31</sup> Strindberg knew that he was not working for immediate economic profit but for wider recognition in the future. Initially, even translations gave him, in terms of publications and theatre performances, more symbolic than economic capital, that is to say that the foremost consecration he sought through translation was in his home country.<sup>32</sup> In this sense we can see Strindberg's first breakthrough in Germany and Austria as an avant-garde writer and playwright between 1888 and 1893.<sup>33</sup> In the first decade of the twentieth century, however, during the last years of his life, Strindberg perceived that something was changing, as his plays were increasingly performed both in Germany<sup>34</sup> and in Vienna.<sup>35</sup> Although even that recognition mainly concerned avant-garde intellectuals and artists, and was not what we would call a commercial success, it paved the way for Strindberg's veritable success in Germany after his death, from 1912 to the early 1920s, when he became a figure that was instrumental in the breakthrough of Expressionism.<sup>36</sup>

If Strindberg could never conquer Paris and France as he had wished, one of the reasons being a resistance from within the French literary system against foreign influence,<sup>37</sup> he managed to conquer Berlin and the German-speaking area in the end and, through that, reach the whole of Europe, including Italy. The turning point of this reception was his collaboration with Emil Schering (1873-1951), a translator who was active in Berlin.<sup>38</sup> Schering was so overwhelmed after attending a performance of Strindberg naturalistic play *Fördringsägare* (*Creditors*) in 1893, and so impressed

August 19, 1899 (Strindberg 1972, 183-184), and on February 10, 1910 (Strindberg 1993, 279-280). In some of his letters to Strindberg, Schering mentions attempts at translations from his own German versions into English, Czech, Hungarian and Italian (February 12, 1910; November 17, 1910; March, 30, 1911; Schering *KB*, Sg NM, II 1910-1912).

26. See also Lefevre 1992, dedicated to “those in the middle, the men and women who do not write literature but rewrite it” (Lefevre 1992, 1), and considering translation as the most recognizable type of rewriting (Lefevre 1992, 9). I refer in particular to Lefevre 1992, 11-16, 37-39, 41, 92.

27. See the several contributions dedicated to Strindberg and translation in issues of the annual journal *Strindbergiana* 1993 (8), 1999 (14), 2013 (28), and in Meidal & Nilsson 1995. Two more contributions – Tegelberg 2016

and Künzli & Engwall 2016 – are included in another anthology.

28. Strindberg 1995, 165; cf. Olsson 1990; Ciaravolo 2012, 172.

29. Bourdieu 1992, 50-55, 76-89; cf. Ciaravolo 2016.

30. Bourdieu 1992, 43-45, 89-92, 121-126, 201-245.

31. Cf. Ahlström 1956, 86-123; Ollén 1982, 497-498; Bourdieu 1992, 172-173.

32. Meidal 1995, 11, 13-14.

33. Cf. Baumgartner 1979; Haider-Pregler 1979, 225-228.

34. Pasche 1979; Ollén 1982, 497.

35. Haider-Pregler 1979, 234-238.

36. Cf. Oberholzer 1979, 33-35; Haider-Pregler 1979, 239-244; Volz 1979.

37. Cf. Ahlström 1956, 164-168, 190-192, 219-221; Even-Zohar 1990, 64-65.

38. Meidal 1995, 18-19.

by Strindberg's work, that he decided to learn Swedish so as to be able to translate it into German, which in fact became his life's mission.<sup>39</sup>

From 1898 to 1912 Schering was also one of Strindberg's main addressees.<sup>40</sup> We know it because the Swedish writer's letters have been published; his devoted German translator's letters are, on the contrary, still unpublished and contained in three big files and a couple of thinner folders (Schering *MS KB*) in the archives of the Royal Library in Stockholm.<sup>41</sup> When read together, as a dialogue, Strindberg and Schering's letters tell a story of literary passion, intellectual exchange, collaborative authorship and bold entrepreneurship in the publishing and theatrical business of the early twentieth century. I have called Strindberg a small entrepreneur; with Schering, he entered into partnership.

As evidenced by Schering's letters, he was more than simply a translator to Strindberg. He accomplished tasks as Strindberg's personal secretary, agent and impresario. He represented, promoted and defended Strindberg's rights in German-speaking areas; he was in constant touch with publishers, theatre directors, actors, critics and newspapers, and kept Strindberg – who was much less inclined to travel in his late years – updated on the literary and theatrical scene, especially in Berlin and Vienna, but also in other major German cities. Most of Schering's frequent and detailed letters are typewritten, but also the handwritten ones are easy to read thanks to his clear and elegant style; indeed, they include a rather thorough coverage of the reviews concerning Strindberg with enclosed transcriptions or press cuttings.

Still, Schering's most remarkable contribution remains translating and editing, as he did not simply translate Strindberg's works, but thoroughly constructed the German Strindberg by recreating his complete oeuvre, first with *August Strindbergs Skrifter. Deutsche Gesamtausgabe*, published between 1899 and 1906,<sup>42</sup> then with the more comprehensive edition *Strindbergs Werke. Deutsche Gesamtausgabe*, a forty-six volume standard edition published between 1908 and 1930,<sup>43</sup> stating on the front page that Schering "cooperated" in the edition as a translator, and was appointed, and therefore authorized, by the author: "Strindbergs Werke / Deutsche Gesamtausgabe / unter Mitwirkung von / Emil Schering als Übersetzer / vom Dichter selbst veranstaltet" (here taken from Strindberg 1908, front endpaper).

If we read this declaration carefully, we can sense its complexity as far as the translator's (in)visibility is concerned. Two almost opposite truths coexist. On the one hand, Schering makes himself utterly visible, claiming the position of a collaborative author, in fact editor and co-author.<sup>44</sup> On the other hand, the creation of a nearly complete collection of Strindberg's works in German has in practice given this oeuvre the status of an original, recognized and authorized by the Swedish author, which makes us wish to forget that it is a translation.<sup>45</sup> In the letter from August 27, 1900, in which he gives Schering his famous authorization, Strindberg writes:

39. Strindberg 1968, 42 [Torsten Eklund's note]; Schering's memories from 1946 quoted in Paul 1979, 147; cf. Pasche 1979, 248; Müssener 1995, 25-26.

40. Dahlbäck 1994, 67-71, 75.

41. It must be pointed out that Schering's letters and feedback to Strindberg are mentioned in the notes by the two editors of Strindberg's letters, Torsten Eklund (Strindberg 1948-1976 *Brev*, 1-15) and Björn Meidal (Strindberg 1989-2001 *Brev*, 16-22). It is a precious contribution, but still only a glimpse of Schering's unpublished material. Strindberg's letters to Schering are in volumes 10 and 12 to 22 (i.e., letters written in 1894 and from 1897 to 1912).

42. Quandt 1988, 2099-2108.

43. *Ibid.*, 2109-2134.

44. Schering was little known before translating Strindberg; in a certain sense he obtained visibility and consecration through such a comprehensive work. Pascale Casanova observes that "once a writer has been canonized and his

works have become classics, the process is reversed, and it is then the writer who consecrates the translator" (Casanova 2010, 301).

45. This strategy can be read according to the "translation pact", often working at paratextual level, as examined by Cecilia Alvstad. She observes that "the translated book's rhetorical structure invites us to perceive the translated text as the author's even when the discursive presence of the translator is obvious. [...] As part of the translation pact, the discursive presence of the translator in the text will prompt the reader to trust the translator, inviting the reader to believe that the translation provides a true account of the foreign text" (Alvstad 2014, 274-275). The German readers were invited to read Strindberg's works in translation as if they were originals, although the presence of the translator was not hidden but highlighted. The fact that the author had authorized his translator and collaborated with him, made the translation reliable and, as it were, an original copy.

Dear Mr. Schering,

I have not read any reviews, and do not intend to! I fully trust you, who have appeared so "providentially" in my path and are interested in all aspects of my writing, and despite such poor pecuniary results have not got tired.

If you wish to declare that your translation occurs after my explicit appointment and is carried out with my approval, in principle, please do so!<sup>46</sup>

Apart from the symbolic capital gained by Schering through such authorization, the measure was needed in practice, as the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, signed in 1886, had not been fully implemented.<sup>47</sup> Legislation was uncertain and pirate editions were common. Again, what makes Schering visible in the paratext, even as a collaborative author, derives in fact from the strong, inviolable sense of individual authorship, which, as Andrew Bennett points out, corresponded to both the creation of modern laws on copyright and to the growing commodification of literature.<sup>48</sup> Strindberg had given his authorization to several other German translators before, but since he was rather chaotic in running his business, he tended to forget agreements or even played the translators off against each other, according to what was more convenient to him on a given occasion. However, once he had found such a devoted translator as Schering, Strindberg did not want to change any longer. Furthermore, what is interesting in the above-quoted passage from Strindberg's letter is his crucial specification "in principle".<sup>49</sup> Strindberg never had the time, or really bothered, to proofread and double-check any translator's writings. He trusted Schering on the whole, "in principle", although he sometimes could detect some translation errors in his texts.<sup>50</sup> Above all Strindberg understood that Schering was "providential" to him from the point of view of marketing.<sup>51</sup> Schering's relentless work was so important for the reception and dissemination of Strindberg's work in Germany and in the rest of Europe that translation errors – certainly beyond Strindberg's authorial intentions – became a minor problem, a risk to be taken. According to the letters we have at our disposal (some of them might be missing), Schering and Strindberg seldom discussed translation choices.

It is true that Schering's translations were far from flawless, and they have therefore been harshly criticized by German scholars. At the same time these scholars must surely recognize that Schering accomplished something unique, by making Strindberg part of the German contemporary canon of literature and drama.<sup>52</sup> Schering did so by operating within two systems, i.e., through a tight interplay between printed word and performance. While he translated anything by Strindberg – drama, fictional prose or essays – he was eager to make German and Austrian theatres perform the plays. Through Schering, Strindberg was, for instance, well informed about the innovative director Max Reinhardt (1873-1943), who had founded Kammerspielhaus, the Chamber Play Theatre, in Berlin in 1906. When Strindberg called his new plays *kammerspel* in 1907, it was because of their musical and contrapuntal structure, and because of their analogy with the reduction of elements and means that occurs in chamber music; he was, however, also considering that his new creations might find a favourable reception in Germany and might be performed at Kammerspielhaus in Berlin.<sup>53</sup> In turn, Max Reinhardt, when he opened Kammerspielhaus in 1906, had been inspired by Strindberg's idea of theatre that had been formulated as early as in 1888, in the preface to the naturalistic tragedy *Fröken Julie* (*Miss Julie*).<sup>54</sup> In that preface, Strindberg pleaded for a theatrical style based on reduction: few characters, concentration, intimate space, not so much a richly developed plot, as in the French 1800-century tradition (and in Ibsen), but rather the clash of brains, the war between the

46. Strindberg 1972, 305: "Bäste Herr Schering, Jag har icke läst några kritiker, och ämnar icke läsa! Med fullt förtroende stannar jag vid Er, som så 'providentielt' uppträd på min väg och som intresserar Er för alla sidor af mitt författari, och oakadt så små pekuniära resultat icke tröttnat. Vill Ni tillkännagifva att Er öfversättning är efter mitt uttryckliga förordnande och med mitt gillande verkställd, i principen, så gör det". (Translations are mine if not stated otherwise).

47. Paul 1979, 148-150.

48. Bennett 2005, 49-54.

49. Cf. Meidal 1995, 21-22.

50. Cf. Paul 1979, 141-142.

51. Cf. Müssener 1979, 118-120.

52. Paul 1979, 146-158; Müssener 1995, 25-26, 28-29, 32-33.

53. Ollén 1982, 498-499.

54. Kvam 1979, 266-267.

sexes, and the explosion of psychic forces in the dialogues. The dialogue should therefore not be symmetrical but irregular and abrupt, like the real working of our brains.<sup>55</sup> In 1888 Strindberg formulated the program as a naturalistic playwright, but there are clear connections between it and his later, post-naturalistic ideas of chamber plays and intimate theatre.<sup>56</sup>

Thus, the creation of Strindberg's own *kammarspel* in 1907 – with the plays *Oväder (Storm)*, *Brända tomten (Burned House)*, *Spöksonaten (The Ghost Sonata)* and *Pelikanen (The Pelican)* – might be difficult to understand without considering the interaction, mediated by Schering, with the contemporary scene in Berlin. It is no coincidence that Schering had the privilege of becoming the first, confidential reader of Strindberg's chamber plays, as well as the addressee of the author's important, introductory comments in the letters, his creative laboratory here as always.<sup>57</sup> Schering was, in turn, the first to give enthusiastic feedback to the playwright in his letters, and he became the first translator of the chamber plays, which he could translate directly from a clean copy of Strindberg's manuscript.<sup>58</sup> This circumstance was generally an advantage, but, as we shall see, it could prove to be a disadvantage in case the author eventually changed the text before publication of his original version.

### 3. *The chamber plays and their German reception on stage*

In Strindberg's chamber plays, real places of social cohesion and human relations – the block of flats, the city around it, the interiors made of bourgeois homes – are made unreal by a sense of deep alienation, as if mankind were made of sleepwalkers who have not yet awoken from the illusion of life. Strindberg's most cherished hopes – love, marriage, children and parenthood – have become the source of such a pain that liberation from life seems to be the only way out. Hence the author's radical, even cruel pessimism, but also the vital creativity with which he reinvents the stage as a place where so-called objective reality is not separated from the inner quality of memory, vision, dream or nightmare.<sup>59</sup>

As Jauß points out, the historical life of a literary work is inconceivable without the active participation of its addressees; and the literary work is not a static monologue, a timeless monument that reveals its essence and always shows the same features to different observers in different epochs.<sup>60</sup> The theatre performances that mark Strindberg's growing success in Germany and Austria during the first two decades of the twentieth century were mainly based on Schering's translations. Reinhardt's productions of Strindberg's post-naturalistic plays, in particular, gave the Swedish writer a seminal role as an interpreter of the collapse of the bourgeois world at the time of World War I. Thus we can see the relevance of Schering's complete edition, both within and outside the German-speaking area. While Strindberg's naturalistic plays were also known through previous French and German translations, Schering's translations made Strindberg's later works, such as *Dödsdansen (The Dance of Death)*, *Till Damaskus (To Damascus)*, *Ett drömspel (A Dream Play)* and the chamber plays, known for the first time outside Sweden. Through these translations Strindberg could be staged and read almost as he if he had been incorporated into the German canon, a contemporary German author among others.<sup>61</sup> His chamber plays helped to enhance the Expressionistic movement in

55. Strindberg 1984, 101-113.

56. Ollén 1991, 367-371.

57. As Gérard Genette observes, the author's private communication by letter becomes public for later readers and, as such, a paratextual element or, more precisely, a "private epitext" (Genette 1987, 341).

58. Strindberg's intense letter writing connected with the composition of his chamber plays, frequently addressed to Schering, occurs between February 22 and April 26, 1907 (Strindberg 1976, 348-364). Strindberg's letters to Schering should be compared with Schering's letters to

Strindberg on March 23, March 30, April 1, and April 3, 1907 (Schering *MS KB*, Sg NM, I 1899-1909). On April 3 Schering writes that *The Ghost Sonata* seems to have been written by the world spirit, through the medium Strindberg ("Die Gespenstersonate scheint der Weltgeist selber geschrieben zu haben! durch das Medium Strindberg!").

59. Cf. McFarlane 1991b, 523-526.

60. Jauß 1970, 169, 171-172.

61. Cf. Balzamo 2013.

Germany and eventually became a fundamental contribution to European Modernism at large. In the two peak years 1915-17 Strindberg's plays were performed more than 1,500 times on stages in German-speaking countries,<sup>62</sup> and created a sense of identification among intellectuals and in the audience, changing the horizon of expectation by giving a specific art form to a recognizable, widespread perception – what Jauß calls an event. René Sckickele wrote in 1919: “August Strindberg ist unser Erkennungswort” (August Strindberg is our password);<sup>63</sup> in a similar fashion Ludwig Marcuse declared in 1922: „Strindberg ist nicht irgendein Leben. Wir sind Strindberg” (Strindberg is not just any life. We are Strindberg).<sup>64</sup> In particular, Max Reinhardt's successful Strindberg productions between 1912 and 1920 were able to render the particular visionary quality of the chamber plays on stage.<sup>65</sup> In turn, Reinhardt's stage interpretation became decisive even for a new understanding and reception of Strindberg's chamber plays in Sweden.<sup>66</sup>

Such impact – through a successful combination of translation, book publication, promotion for the theatres and creative stage production – confirms Itamar Even-Zohar's description as to the innovating force of translation within a literary system; German readers and theatre-goers could see things in a different way thanks to Strindberg:

[...] in such a state when new literary models are emerging, translation is likely to become one of the means of elaborating the new repertoire. Through the foreign works, features [...] are introduced into the home literature which did not exist there before. These include possibly not only new models of reality to replace the old and established ones that are no longer effective, but a whole range of other features as well, such as a new (poetic) language, or compositional patterns and techniques.<sup>67</sup>

Mapping the chronology and geography of European Modernism – seen as an age of crisis and transition, fragmentation and discontinuity, in which art was looking for new forms and modes of expression – Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane underscore the decisive role as initiators and models played in Europe by Scandinavian authors such as Georg Brandes, Henrik Ibsen, August Strindberg and Knut Hamsun, whereby Scandinavia, until then a little known periphery, was acquiring the status of an avant-garde, a new dynamic European centre of literary and dramatic production.<sup>68</sup> Applying Even-Zohar's polysystem theory and terminology, we can say that a renewal was promoted, through interference and translation, from the periphery, conquering major centres of the European literary system.<sup>69</sup> In the case of Strindberg, the most important centre became Berlin, in many respects the stronghold of the avant-garde opposition against bourgeois society, both when the Wilhelmine society flourished and when it definitively collapsed during World War I.<sup>70</sup> Schering's experience and epiphany as a theatregoer in 1893 as well as the widespread perception of Strindberg's centrality some twenty years later, in the age of Expressionism, must be seen as part of this context.

#### 4. *Strindberg's chamber plays in Italy. Rosa e Ballo's network and the translator Alessandro Pellegrini*

The Italian reception of this part of Strindberg's dramatic output came late, as far as both translations and performances were concerned. Fascism came to power in 1922, but during the 1920s and 1930s this did not prevent some more open-minded writers, directors, critics and publishers from becoming aware of Strindberg's dimensions as an author and a playwright, and especially aware of how little the Swedish writer was staged and read in Italy, in particular his later plays. Such awareness came mostly through contacts with Germany and German culture before the Nazis

62. Volz 1979, 289.

63. Quoted in *ibid.*, 303.

64. Quoted in *ibid.*, 303.

65. Kvam 1979.

66. Ollén 1982, 534.

67. Even-Zohar 1990, 47.

68. Bradbury & McFarlane 1991, 27, 36-37, 42-43, 47.

69. Cf. Even-Zohar 1990, 14, 24-26, 47-48, 69-70, 80-81.

70. Cf. McFarlane 1991a; Esslin 1991, 527; Sheppard 1991, 276.



came to power in 1933.<sup>71</sup> Two small avant-garde theatres in Rome staged *Storm* and *Ghost Sonata* in 1925, but these chamber plays were not published, and little was known about them outside the intellectual and artistic circles that were trying to promote them. The same can be said of Strindberg's prose works. Some of his autobiographical writings were translated in the 1920s, and his most popular novel *Hemsöborna* (*The People of Hemsö*) was translated twice in the 1930s, an example of the trend whereby translated popular fiction played an important role in the growth of the Italian publishing industry.<sup>72</sup> At an academic level – before Scandinavian studies were founded in Italy – the professor of German literature Giuseppe Gabetti (1886-1948) dedicated some penetrating essays to modern Nordic writers in 1926 and 1935, where he also shows a vast knowledge of Strindberg's oeuvre and even of his later plays. Whether this knowledge was mediated by German sources or based on Swedish sources, Gabetti offers a sensitive reading of Strindberg's tormented, modern conscience.<sup>73</sup> In spite of these events, however, Strindberg remained on the whole a marginal author in Italy. Finally, the Fascist regime's cultural autarchy in the late 1930s made his case impossible, both in prose and drama.<sup>74</sup> In particular, forms of pressure and censorship made theatrical activity dull and conventional.<sup>75</sup>

A new situation took shape in Milan in the troubled years that included Mussolini's decline and fall, the allies' invasion of Italy from the South, the Nazi-Fascist rule in northern Italy, the partisans' war against it, the heavy bombing of Milan and other towns in 1943, and finally the liberation and the first years of post-war reconstruction. Achille Rosa (1903-1949), an entrepreneur, and Nando Ballo (1906-1959), a music critic, decided to start a new publishing house. They and the intellectual network that gathered around Rosa e Ballo, as it was called, were convinced that culture, too, had to play an active role in society as a form of resistance, a way to moral reconstruction and new dignity after the disasters caused by the dictatorship and the war. Their publishing programme included the humanities – figurative arts, architecture, music, theatre, and literature – in a multidisciplinary fashion.<sup>76</sup> In spite of the above-mentioned attempts in the 1920s and 1930s, Italy had missed out on important impulses from the twentieth-century avant-gardes during Fascism. Rosa e Ballo's leading idea was to open Italian art and culture to international currents again, after two decades of suffocating self-sufficiency. In short, the intellectual network gathering around Rosa e Ballo practiced a form of "war humanism", and were convinced that being European was the best way not to be Fascist.<sup>77</sup>

Rosa e Ballo became a seminal undertaking, though a short-lived one. After a time of preparation, publication began in 1944 but stopped already in 1947. Surely there was something utopian about the whole project, but with their vision they managed to sow seeds for the future;<sup>78</sup> above all, the harsh period of transition in which they operated was also full of opportunities: a sort of no-man's land where new actors could emerge, occupy new positions in the Italian literary field, and propose new values. As Even-Zohar observes, translations can play an innovating role "when there are turning points, crisis, or literary vacuums in a literature".<sup>79</sup> In his illuminating Bourdeausian reading, Michele Sisto analyses how Paolo Grassi (1918-1981), at the time a young theatre critic and manager, and the network around Rosa e Ballo worked for the accumulation of "symbolic capital" as newcomers in the cultural field, and especially in the field of theatre. Sisto observes:

If the external conditions were not the best for founding a new publishing house, the ones relative to the field of publishing significantly expanded the possibilities for newcomers; the system of publishers and journals that had consolidated itself under Fascism was falling into a crisis [...].<sup>80</sup>

71. Perrelli 2015, 90-124.

72. Rundle 2010; Ciaravolo 2013, 19-20.

73. Gabetti 2016, 63-73; cf. Bruno Berni's essay in this volume.

74. Rundle 2010, 113-205, considers fictional prose, mainly novels. As for theatre, an important source is the memoir written by Leopoldo Zurlo, the main censor appointed by the regime and in charge from 1931 to 1943: Zurlo 1952. For a critical historical perspective see Iaccio 1986

and Iaccio 1994.

75. Iaccio 1986, 614; Thompson 1996; Cavallo 1996.

76. See in particular Ferdinando Ballo's letter to Carlo Levi, a programme written in the first months of 1942, quoted in Vallora 2006, 77-78.

77. Modena 2006, 92; Sisto 2015, 77.

78. Casiraghi 2006; Ponte Di Pino 2006; Modena 2006.

79. Even-Zohar 1990, 47, 69; cf. Ganapini 2006, 27.

80. Sisto 2015, 70.

Rosa e Ballo's most successful series consisted of "Teatro" and "Teatro Moderno" with forty-six published titles in all; it was directed by Grassi, who became an outstanding figure in the publishing house. Grassi's idea of a new start is well expressed in his programmatic article.<sup>81</sup> His idea was to create a repertoire of international dramatic texts of high literary quality; these modern and contemporary classics should be read and known in order to be staged and start a new era in Italian theatre, based on the director's theatre (*teatro di regia*).<sup>82</sup>

Thanks to the transnational dimensions of the project, collaborating with translators was of primary importance in the daily work of Rosa e Ballo, as forty-four out of the forty-six titles were by foreign playwrights; works by Anton Chekhov, Vladimir Mayakovsky, Federico García Lorca, Jean Cocteau and James Joyce were published, but the bulk of the series was made by German or Austrian playwrights: Bertold Brecht; expressionists such as Ernst Toller and Georg Kaiser; predecessors such as Georg Büchner, Friedrich Hebbel, Arthur Schnitzler, Frank Wedekind and Hugo von Hofmannstahl. Works by Henrik Ibsen and August Strindberg can be seen as part of this German / Germanic group (insofar as they were translated from German and read through the lenses of Naturalism and Expressionism); and with five translated plays, Strindberg was the second most represented writer in the series, after Kaiser with six.<sup>83</sup> It must also be observed that Fascist censorship was still active in northern Italy in 1944, and several of the above-mentioned authors, for instance Kaiser and Büchner, were banned. As the Fascist system was collapsing, Rosa e Ballo went ahead and published those works despite the ban.<sup>84</sup>

These general conditions explain the coming into being of the first Italian translations of Strindberg's chamber plays within the framework of Rosa e Ballo's project and their dramatic series. The correspondence between the translator and critic Alessandro Pellegrini (1897-1985) and Rosa e Ballo (in other words, with the editorial secretary and translator Giulia Veronesi, the editor Paolo Grassi, and the publisher Nando Ballo), held in the archives of the Fondazione Arnoldo e Alberto Mondadori in Milan, accounts for the different stages of the project developing between November 1943 and December 1944, and for the intellectual network Pellegrini was part of (Pellegrini *MS FAAM*), a collaborative enterprise that can be read in terms of "multiple translatorship".<sup>85</sup> Pellegrini, a Germanist, translated *Storm*, *Burned House*, *The Ghost Sonata* and *The Pelican*, in addition to Strindberg's earlier play *Easter*, written in 1901.<sup>86</sup> He supplied each publication with an introduction dedicated to the play. Initially his idea was to unite these separate paratexts into a broader one, to be used in a collected edition of the chamber plays. This plan was eventually changed, and a separate book, a metatext, was published instead, *Il poeta del nichilismo: Strindberg*,<sup>87</sup> nothing less than the first Italian monograph on the Swedish author. In *Il poeta del nichilismo*, the five introductions are remoulded into one chapter. Another important chapter is dedicated to the play *Till Damaskus (To Damascus)*, which Pellegrini also translated for Rosa e Ballo in 1944, as the correspondence shows. *Verso Damasco* would however be first published some years later by La Fiaccola, which had taken over Rosa e Ballo's drama series.<sup>88</sup> Apart from *Verso Damasco*, all the books were published by Rosa e Ballo in one and the same year, while Italy was collapsing as a result of war. With their soberly functionalistic layout and covers, these books are a cult object for bibliophiles today.<sup>89</sup>

81. Grassi 1946; cf. Casiraghi 2006, 17-18.

82. Sisto 2015, 73-74.

83. Ponte di Pino 2006, 42-45; Di Domenico 2006, 126-133.

84. Ponte di Pino 2006, 44-45; Vallora 2006, 67-68.

85. See Jansen & Wegener 2013. About Giulia Veronesi's great job for the publishing house and her collaboration as a translator from German, see Modena 2006, 101, 105-106.

86. Strindberg 1944d, 1944b, 1944c, 1944a, 1944e respectively.

87. Pellegrini 1944.

88. Strindberg 1954. Paolo Grassi was interested in *To Da-*

*mascus* and planned to include it in the theatre series at Rosa e Ballo (Ponte di Pino 2006, 49-50, 54-55).

89. In a letter to Pellegrini, dated October 24, 1944, Grassi describes the layout and the cover of *Il poeta del nichilismo: Strindberg*, and reassures the author: "You can be sure that the volume will be edited scrupulously. / Besides, it is in our interest that the books retain the exact and rational distinction we wish to imprint them with" ("Sii certo che ogni cura sarà riservata al volume. / È nostro interesse oltre tutto che i libri conservino quella signorilità esatta e razionale che vogliamo loro imprimere"; Pellegrini *MS FAAM*).



It is clear that a new horizon of expectation in post-Fascist Italy made Strindberg's theatre possible. In his chamber plays we are far from the idea of traditional moral sanity that Fascism wanted to promote; his unmasking of the family as hell did not match with the Fascist sacralisation of the family as a social institution.<sup>90</sup> An author like Strindberg was indeed more likely to be included in the Fascist notion of "depressive" literature.<sup>91</sup> In contrast, Strindberg's awareness of the crisis of the bourgeois world made him a forerunner in the eyes of those who, even in post-Fascist Italy, were experiencing a world out of joint, a landscape of ruins in the material as well as in the spiritual sense. Through Strindberg's awareness and artistic mastery they could better read and interpret their own present situation, and therefore nourish a hope for reconstruction, paradoxically starting from his "nihilism". This "fusion of horizons"<sup>92</sup> had occurred in Germany at the time of World War I and of the Expressionist movement, and this is also what Pellegrini's actualization deals with in his comments, published during World War II, that is: in the separate introductions to the plays, in the corresponding chapter of *Il poeta del nichilismo*, where these introductions merge, and in the monograph as a whole. Pellegrini writes:

Strindberg, tra gli ultimi decenni dello scorso secolo e il primo di questo, visse quella disintegrazione di una civiltà, che si dimostrò poi storicamente nelle due guerre mondiali [...]. Si disfaceva la visione umanistica, la persuasione di una consistenza del carattere e della personalità, sulle quali durante secoli la civiltà aveva avuto le sue fondamenta.<sup>93</sup>

[...]

La grandezza dello Strindberg sta nell'aver vissuto il nichilismo con spaventoso rigore, ma il limite della sua poesia e della sua esperienza sta però nella incapacità di andar oltre di esso.<sup>94</sup>

[...]

[I]l mondo moderno può sperare che oltre la catastrofe sia possibile l'alba di una vita rinnovata.<sup>95</sup>

(Between the last decades of the past century and the first decade of the present one, Strindberg experienced the collapse of a civilization, which would eventually emerge in history with the two world wars [...]. The humanistic vision and the belief in the consistency of character and personality were destroyed. Civilization had been based on them for centuries.

[...]

Strindberg's greatness consists in experiencing nihilism with terrifying rigour, but the limit of his art of writing and his experience consists in his inability to overcome it.

[...]

The modern world can hope that the dawn of a renewed life is possible beyond catastrophe.)

Pellegrini's general approach confirms the process described by Gérard Genette, whereby posthumous introductions, written by someone who is not the author of the original work, tend to resemble critical essays and detach themselves from a paratextual function, thus becoming "metatexts".<sup>96</sup> On the other hand, as Siri Nergaard rightly observes, Genette does not pay much attention, in his analysis of paratexts, to the specific case of translated literature, in which introductions, sometimes written by the translator, sometimes by another critic, accompany translations, thereby accomplishing a fundamental, mediating task, i.e., filling a cultural gap when reframing, within a new horizon, a text originally produced for a foreign context.<sup>97</sup> Furthermore, it is evident that Pellegrini's interpretative reframing is mediated by the favourable German reception of Strindberg's dramatic output before the Nazi era. There is, in other words, an element of "relay" also in the critical interpretation which accompanies the translation.

90. Cf. Iaccio 1986, 589.

91. Cf. Rundle 2010, 173, 176.

92. Gadamer 1960, 289-290.

93. Pellegrini 1944, 7-8.

94. *Ibid.*, 72.

95. *Ibid.*, 92.

96. Genette 1987, 249.

97. Nergaard 2004, 53-54, 83-88; cf. Jansen & Wegener 2013, 6-7; Alvstad 2014, 272.



Ill. 1. Rosa e Ballo Book Covers.

5. *Changed in translation: indirect patterns from Strindberg to Pellegrini through Schering*

I would like to provide evidence that Pellegrini's translation is based on Schering's German translation, using Strindberg's first chamber play, *Storm* (*Oväder*, *Wetterleuchten*, *Lampi*) as an example. Clues in the correspondence between Pellegrini and Rosa e Ballo, held in the archives of the Fondazione Arnoldo e Alberto Mondadori in Milan,<sup>98</sup> indicate that Pellegrini translated the plays from the German. The letters do not reveal, though, the name of the German translator or the edition; and since three German versions of *Oväder* existed at the time of Pellegrini's translation, external evidence is not enough to determine the exact indirect pattern. My linguistic comparison between the first edition of *Oväder*,<sup>99</sup> Schering's translation *Wetterleuchten*,<sup>100</sup> Heinrich Goebel's translation *Gewitter*,<sup>101</sup> Else von Hollander's translation, also called *Wetterleuchten*,<sup>102</sup> and, finally, Pellegrini's Italian version *Lampi*<sup>103</sup> shows that Pellegrini regularly follows Schering (with few exceptions) whenever the German translations differ from the original. The differences may concern the editing and layout of the text, or particular lexical choices, additions, clarifications or omissions, which are aimed at a general practice of domestication, a smoother way of rendering peculiar contexts and idioms in the source text.<sup>104</sup> We can also observe some changes in the syntax, whereby Schering, unlike Strindberg, tends to make sentences with a finite verb in the captions, and turn hypotaxis into parataxis in the speech.<sup>105</sup> Finally, Schering makes some translation errors, and they too are repeated in Pellegrini's translation. I have counted about eighty cases of such differences between Strindberg's *Oväder* and Schering's *Wetterleuchten*. To make my point clear, I will present a few illuminating examples.

To start with, one evident clue is the title of the play. Strindberg calls it *Oväder*, which can either mean storm or bad, stormy weather. As part of the leitmotif "oväder" throughout the play, another semantic and symbolic marker is the word "kornblix", heat lightning in summer storms, especially when lightening is seen in the distant clouds, but thunder cannot be heard. The play *Oväder* deals with a particular late summer day in the life of a distinguished elderly Man. He is retired, divorced and lives in a flat in town. He seeks calm and resignation in life, but when his young ex-wife Gerda moves into a flat in the same house, above him, together with their daughter and a new husband (the daughter's stepfather), the Man feels threatened by his past; a mixture of passion and hatred arises, just like a coming storm. Fortunately, the storm does not break out, but remains a distant, gradually vanishing threat.<sup>106</sup> Initially, Schering proposed *Gewitter* (storm) as a title, but changed it later into *Wetterleuchten*, which rather corresponds to the Swedish "kornblix", sheet lightning.<sup>107</sup> The two other German editions that Pellegrini might have known, both from 1919, are entitled, as I have mentioned, again *Wetterleuchten* and *Gewitter*.<sup>108</sup> The meaning of the Italian title *Lampi* is a domesticated version of *Wetterleuchten*.<sup>109</sup>

Connected with the title, a paratextual element in the copyright page of *Lampi* offers a clue to indirect translation. It reads: "TITOLO ORIGINALE: / *Oväder* / (Kammerspele n. 1) / A cura di Alessandro Pellegrini". As Ringmar observes, indirect translation has been a common, often concealed practice, and what the paratexts state is not always trustworthy. In particular, indicating the original

98. Regarding the documents about Rosa e Ballo held at the Fondazione see Cavazzuti 2006. I would like to express my thanks to Anna Lisa Cavazzuti and her colleagues at the Fondazione Arnoldo e Alberto Mondadori in Milan for their competence and kindness.

99. Strindberg 1907.

100. Strindberg 1908, 1-52.

101. Strindberg 1919a.

102. Strindberg 1919b, 1-52.

103. Strindberg 1944d.

104. Venuti 1995, 20.

105. Müssener 1995, 32-33.

106. Cf. Ollén 1982, 500-502.

107. See Schering's letters to Strindberg on April 1, 1907, and June 26, 1908 (Schering *MS KB*, Sg NM, I 1899-1909). Fritz Paul (1979, 157) criticizes Schering's choice of the

title as "interpreting".

108. The German titles of this play would continue to vary: *Unwetter* (1965), *Gewitterluft* (1977), and again *Wetterleuchten* (1984; 1989). A similar instability occurs in the English-language editions variously titled *The Thunderstorm* (1921), *Storm Weather* (1962), *Stormy Weather* (1975), *Thunder in the Air* (1989), *Storm* (1997; 2012), and *The Storm* (2001); see <libris.kb.se/>.

109. After *Lampi* (1944) the Italian titles were *La tempesta* (1951), *Temporale* (1968 and 1980), and *Aria di tempesta* (1987); see <www.letteraturenordiche.it/svezia.htm> and <www.iccu.sbn.it/opencms/opencms/it/>. As we will see, wide recognition on stage was first achieved with Giorgio Strehler's *Temporale* at the Piccolo Teatro in Milan in 1980.

title in the source language is a smooth, typical way of avoiding a clear statement about the language the target text has been translated from.<sup>110</sup> The fact that this language is probably German, and not Swedish, is shown however by a double error: “Kammerspele” instead of “Kammarspel”, as it should be in Swedish, is influenced by the German “Kammerspiele”.

As the editor as well as the translator of the *Deutsche Gesamtausgabe*, Schering sometimes rearranges and, as it were, improves Strindberg's text, trying to be more coherent and logical.<sup>111</sup> In the list of the dramatis personae of *Oväder* (fig. 1) Strindberg has forgotten to include two of the five minor characters; Schering adds them and, as well as this, reorders the names of all the minor characters according to the order of their appearance on stage, whereas Goebel and von Hollander keep to Strindberg's original list. Pellegrini's version follows Schering's and includes the new list of the minor characters; he could not have taken it from any other sources than Schering's.<sup>112</sup>

Strindberg 1907, 2	Strindberg 1908, 4 (Schering)	Strindberg 1919a, 5 (Goebel)	Strindberg 1919b, 2 (von Hollander)	Strindberg 1944d, 3 (Pellegrini)
PERSONER:	PERSONEN:	ES TRETEN AUF:	PERSONEN	PERSONAGGI
HERRN, Pensionerad ämbetsman. BRODERN, Konsuln. KONDITOR Starck. AGNES, hans dotter. LOUISE, herrns släkting. GERDA, herrns fränskilda fru. FISCHER, Gerdas nye man, stum person. ISKARLEN.  BREFBÄRARN. LYKTTÄNDARN.	DER HERR, pensionierter Beamter DER BRUDER, Konsul KONDITOR STARCK AGNES, seine Tochter LUISE, des Herrn Verwandte GERDA, des Herrn geschiedene Frau FISCHER, Gerdas neuer Mann, stumme Person  <b>Nebenpersonen:</b> <b>Hausdiener, Milchmädchen,</b> Briefträger, Eismann, Laterneanzünder	DER HERR, ein pensionierter Beamter DER BRUDER, Konsul KONDITOR STARCK AGNES, seine Tochter LUISE, Verwandte des Herrn FISCHER, Gerdas neuer Mann, (stumme Person) DER MANN MIT DEM EIS DER POSTBOTE DER LATERNENANZÜNDER	Der Herr, ein pensionierter Beamter Der Bruder, Konsul Konditor Starck Agnes, seine Tochter Luise, eine Verwandte des Herrn Gerda, die geschiedene Frau des Herrn Fischer, Gerdas jetziger Mann, stumme Person Der Eismann Der Postbote Der Laternenanzücker	IL SIGNORE, funzionario in pensione IL FRATELLO, Console IL PASTICCIERE STARCK AGNESE, sua figlia LA SIGNORA GERDA, moglie divorziata del Signore FISCHER, il nuovo marito di Gerda (personaggio muto)  <b>Un fattorino, la lattai</b> a, il portalettere, un uomo che porta il ghiaccio, il lampionaio

(Fig. 1)

An interesting case of domestication occurs when the Baker, who lives and works on the premises, tells the Man that he and his wife have not been out of town during the summer (fig. 2). He uses the Swedish expression “utom tullarna” (literally: outside the toll gates), which is in fact peculiar of Strindberg's hometown Stockholm, as only here the limits of the central town are, still today, indicated by the names of the former toll gates (an indirect but rather clear topographical marker of the “town”, which remains without a name in the play).<sup>113</sup> Schering's version is a correct domestication of the meaning, whereas Goebel's and von Hollander's versions are less precise. Again, Pellegrini's follows Schering's version – an advantage in this particular case:

110. Cf. Ringmar 2006, 1, 7-9; Ringmar 2012, 143.

111. Such editorial interventions have been criticized by various scholars. Cf. Paul 1979, 140-142; Müssener 1995, 29-30.

112. Here and in the following, I use bold type to highlight.

113. Cf. Ollén 1982, 502, 504.



Strindberg 1907, 6	Strindberg 1908, 5 (Schering)	Strindberg 1919a, 8 (Goebel)	Strindberg 1919b, 4 (von Hollander)	Strindberg 1944d, 6 (Pellegrini)
KONDITIONER. Hvarken jag eller hustrun ha varit <b>utom tullarna</b> [...]	DER KONDITIONER. Weder ich noch meine Frau sind <b>aus der Stadt herausgekommen</b> [...]	KONDITIONER: Weder ich noch meine Frau sind <b>hier herausgekommen</b> [...]	Der Konditor: Ich und meine Frau, wir haben beide <b>keinen Fuß vors Tor gesetzt</b> [...]	IL PASTICCIERE A mia moglie e a me non è stato possibile <b>lasciare la città</b> [...]

(Fig. 2)

Another case of domestication occurs when the Man hears waltz music being played in the flat above, and recognizes it as “Pluie d’Or”, written in French in Strindberg’s original (fig. 3). Schering domesticates it by translating that title into German, unlike Goebel and von Hollander who keep it in French. Pellegrini follows Schering by translating it as “Pioggia d’oro”:

Strindberg 1907, 13	Strindberg 1908, 10 (Schering)	Strindberg 1919a, 14 (Goebel)	Strindberg 1919b, 9 (von Hollander)	Strindberg 1944d, 14 (Pellegrini)
HERRN. Jag tror minsann... det är <b>Pluie d’Or</b> ... den kan jag utan till...	DER HERR. Ich glaube wahrhaftig... Es ist <b>Goldregen</b> ... den kann ich auswendig...	HERR: Ich glaube... <b>Pluie d’Or</b> ... ich kenne ihn auswendig...	Der Herr: Ich glaube wahrhaftig... es ist <b>Pluie d’Or</b> ... den kann ich auswendig...	IL SIGNORE Credo proprio... è « <b>Pioggia d’oro</b> »... lo so a memoria...

(Fig. 3)

As for Schering’s translation errors in *Wetterleuchten*, one occurs when Agnes, the Baker’s daughter, escapes with Gerda’s husband Fischer, a non-speaking character, mainly referred to as an unreliable adventurer (fig. 4). The Man observes indignantly that eighteen-year-old Agnes is “bara barnet”, just a child. While Goebel and von Hollander interpret the idiomatic expression correctly, Schering misunderstands it and chooses instead “das einzige Kind”, thus referring to Agnes as the Baker’s only child.<sup>114</sup> Pellegrini inevitably repeats Schering’s mistake:

Strindberg 1907, 59	Strindberg 1908, 40 (Schering)	Strindberg 1919a, 54 (Goebel)	Strindberg 1919b, 41 (von Hollander)	Strindberg 1944d, 66 (Pellegrini)
HERRN. [...] Med hvem har han rymt? – Konditor Starcks dotter! Åh, Herre Gud! Hur gammal var hon? — Aderton år! <b>Bara barnet!</b>	DER HERR. [...] Mit wem ist er geflüchtet? – Mit der Tochter des Konditors Starck! O Herr Gott! Wie alt war sie? – Achtzehn Jahre! <b>Das einzige Kind!</b>	HERR: [...] Mit wem ist er ausgerückt? Mit der Tochter des Konditors Starck! Herr Gott!... Wie alt war sie denn?... achtzehn Jahre! <b>Also noch ein Kind!</b>	Der Herr: [...] Mit wem ist er durchgebrannt? – Mit Konditor Starcks Tochter! O du lieber Gott! Wie alt ist sie? – Achtzehn! <b>Noch ein Kind!</b>	IL SIGNORE [...] Con chi è fuggito? – Con la figlia del pasticciere Starck? Oh, Signore Iddio! ma quanti anni ha quella bimba? – Diciott’anni! <b>ed è figlia unica!</b>

(Fig. 4)

Translating directly from a clean copy of the manuscript, as Schering did, could prove to be a disadvantage, in case corrections were added by Strindberg at a later stage, after sending the copy to the translator and before printing. It happens when the Man complains that his young daughter is now in the hands of such an adventurer, and predicts that she will dance in a variety entertainment

114. Other similar misunderstandings occur in Schering’s *Wetterleuchten*. A notorious one is when the Baker’s *bakugn* (Strindberg 1907, 36) – simply [baking-]oven – is rendered as *der hintere Ofen* (the oven at the rear)

(Strindberg 1908, 25; cf. Paul 1979, 156; Müssener 1995, 28), which even becomes *il secondo forno* for Pellegrini, with a further interpretation of the error (Strindberg 1944d, 40).

(fig. 5). The latter part of this statement is eventually deleted and not included in any Swedish editions. However Schering includes it, and so does Pellegrini after him:

Strindberg 1907MS, 46 <sup>115</sup>	Strindberg 1907, 61	Strindberg 1908, 41 (Schering)	Strindberg 1919a, 55 (Goebel)	Strindberg 1919b, 42 (von Hollander)	Strindberg 1944d, 67 (Pellegrini)
HERRN [ensam]. Ålderdomens ro! — Och mitt barn, i händerna på en äfventyrare; <b>skall dansa på en varieté</b> — Louise!	HERRN [ensam]. Ålderdomens ro! — Och mitt barn, i händerna på en äfventyrare! — Louise!	DER HERR (allein). Die Ruhe des Alters! – Und mein Kind in den Händen eines Abenteuers; <b>soll in einem Varieté tanzen!</b> – Louise!	HERR <i>allein</i> : Die Ruhe des Alters! ... Und mein Kind in den Händen eines Abenteuers! ... Louise!	Der Herr (allein): Die Ruhe des Alters! – Und mein Kind in den Händen eines Abenteuers! – Louise!	IL SIGNORE ( <i>solo</i> ) La quiete della vecchiaia! – E mia figlia nelle mani di un avventuriero; <b>e andrà a ballare nel Varietà!</b> – Luisa!

(Fig. 5)

Finally, another case of domestication must be mentioned, because this time Pellegrini keeps closer to the Swedish text, unlike Schering and von Hollander. It is an exception to the general pattern whereby Pellegrini follows Schering's version. At the end of the play, Gerda and her daughter have fled from Fischer, and gone to Gerda's mother who lives in the rural region of Dalarna, seen as a safe place; the Man is now relieved (fig. 6). To avoid mentioning the name of the region, Schering resorts to the general and somewhat misleading expression "in die Berge" (to the mountains), whereas von Hollander simply writes that Gerda went to her mother. But Goebel writes "nach Dalecarlien", and so does Pellegrini ("in Dalecarlia"). The circumstance shows that the Italian translator must have had access to other versions in addition to Schering's;<sup>116</sup> it seems unlikely that he could read the Swedish original version; Pellegrini might have known Goebel's translation, but otherwise he never follows this version. However, as his correspondence with Rosa e Ballo confirms, Pellegrini, who also translated from French, had access to the French translation of *Oväder*, published in 1926 as *Éclairs* and rather well known in Milan.<sup>117</sup> In a letter sent to Giulia Veronesi on January 21, 1944, Alessandro Pellegrini asks:

[...] poiché Lei possiede la versione francese dei Kammerspiele, me la potrebbe prestare? il testo tedesco è già una traduzione, e il confrontarlo con un'altra traduzione può giovare a richiamare il testo originale.<sup>118</sup>

(Since you have got the French version of Kammerspiele, could you lend it to me? The German text is itself a translation, and comparing it to another translation may help to come closer to the original text.)<sup>119</sup>

In this case Pellegrini follows the French translators J. Bucher and A. Wall's version quite closely:

115. The page of the manuscript is accessible on the Internet through <www.litteraturbanken.se> (see Bibliography). The page is numbered 46 by Strindberg, whereas it is page 52 in the electronic document. The sentence, stricken through with a blue pencil, is at the bottom of the page.  
 116. See Ringmar 2012, 143: "Generally, the eclectic use of several STs – including or not the original – is often concomitant with relay translation and it is, likewise, a sensitive practice that tends to be concealed or denied".  
 117. Strindberg 1926, 103-214. I have found this edition in three public libraries in Milan.  
 118. Pellegrini MS FAAM.

119. If we could call this French translation a "support translation" in Pellegrini's work, it must be pointed out that he did not know Swedish and did not use either the German or the French translations as a "support" in his work with the Swedish text (see the classifications in Washbourne 2013, 616-617). They were on the contrary his starting point and "supported" each other, as this case shows. Considering the hard conditions Pellegrini was working in during that period of war and misery, he made a virtue of necessity, expressing in his letter the idea of "coming closer" an unknown Swedish source with the help of its translations into German and French.

Strindberg 1907, 77	Strindberg 1908, 51 (Schering)	Strindberg 1919a, 69 (Goebel)	Strindberg 1919b, 51 (von Hollander)	Strindberg 1926, 212 (Bucher & Wall)	Strindberg 1944d, 86 (Pellegrini)
LOUISE. Frun har rest till sin mor i <b>Dalarna</b> för att bosätta sig där med barnet.	LUISE. Frau Gerda ist zu ihrer Mutter <b>in die Berge</b> gereist, um sich dort mit dem Kind niederzulassen.	LUISE Die Frau bestellt, dass sie zu ihrer Mutter <b>nach Dalekarlien</b> gereist sei, um sich dort mir ihrem Kinde niederzulassen.	Luisse: Die gnädige Frau ist <b>zu ihrer Mutter</b> gereist und will dort mit Kinde bleiben!	LOUISE. Mme Gerda s'en va <b>en Dalécarlie</b> pour se retirer chez sa mère avec l'enfant.	LUIZA La signora Gerda va <b>in Dalecarlia</b> per ritirarsi colà in casa di sua madre con la bimba.

(Fig. 6)

6. Conclusion

It is generally true that August Strindberg was rather egotistic and instrumental in his letter exchanges; he tended to choose suitable addressees who could receive his artistic and intellectual experimentations in a particular phase of his development, giving him the feedback he needed. When he entered a new phase, he changed addressees. However, we reinforce a misleading myth of the solitary genius when we ignore that such creative processes required an intellectual partner. This letter exchange had therefore also a pragmatic, communicative relevance for Strindberg, and created a dialogic space for collaborative authorship. In this respect we should not disregard Emil Schering's important feedback from Germany to Strindberg, and in my opinion an edition of Schering's letters to Strindberg is highly needed in order to better understand the personal and literary/sociological terms of this collaborative authorship.

When translations appear old and inadequate, translators and translations become inevitably more visible, whether we wish it or not. A historical study of translation must acknowledge this fact and understand its conditions. German scholars have expressed dissatisfaction with what they perceive as the linguistic and stylistic inadequacy of Emil Schering's translations of Strindberg's works, and therefore also with Schering's visibility; at the same time they have been obliged to admit, with a certain reluctance, that these translations have been influential in the reception history. Just because translations play such a key role in the circulation of world literature, they must be accurate and not mishandle their object.<sup>120</sup> A certain German frustration is therefore understandable, but we need a phenomenological approach in the study of translations<sup>121</sup> and of indirect translations in particular,<sup>122</sup> which can account for the historical significance of Schering's translations, in spite of their faults. Fritz Paul seems particularly irritated by Schering's visibility – which also includes his voice in paratexts and his “pose” as the self-sacrificing Strindberg-translator with a strong sense of mission.<sup>123</sup> I think that, in this case, Paul is a victim of the illusion of transparency in translation and cultural mediation. Besides, there is evidence for the opposite case: Schering's astonishing invisibility and muteness, for instance in his own edition of Strindberg's letters to Schering, featuring, even in German, only the great writer's letters (as part of his oeuvre), not the letter exchange that included the interlocutor's voice.<sup>124</sup> Finally, historical sense is also needed when assessing the accuracy of Schering's translations; what were the chances of gaining professional and academic skills in Swedish language in Germany at the beginning of the twentieth century, apart from a strong will and sense of mission?

120. Damrosch 2003, 4.

121. *Ibid.*, 6.

122. This is a main point in the recent scholarly contributions that deal with indirect translation. See Ringmar

2006; St. André 2009; Ringmar 2012; Washbourne 2013;

Rosa *et al.* 2017.

123. Paul 1979, 148.

124. Strindberg 1924.



Even contemporary Italian reviewers were dissatisfied with indirect translations in general, and with the specific shortcomings in the translation of Strindberg's chamber plays.<sup>125</sup> Although these translations inherit Schering's adaptations and errors, while adding some more of their own, Pellegrini's work for *Rosa e Ballo* must be seen as a significant turning point and a valuable attempt to understand and interpret Strindberg within a horizon of expectation that includes the disruptive perception of a world at war and out of joint, but also the strong need for material and spiritual reconstruction after the war. Thanks to this act of interpretation, Pellegrini gave Strindberg a more recognizable shape and place in the Italian literary and theatrical canon, above all by pinpointing the relevance of his late dramatic output, which had played an important role for Reinhardt and German Expressionism, but was practically still unknown to the Italian readership. That Pellegrini's translations gave the Italian audience a significant reading experience is witnessed by some reviews.<sup>126</sup> Strindberg's disquieting world and atmosphere could evidently reach and touch post-war Italian readers, in spite of the greater distance from the source text implied in the practice of indirect translation,<sup>127</sup> and although Pellegrini's language could be felt as too academic and learned, far from the lively speech a dramatic text needs.<sup>128</sup>

Pellegrini's contribution, based in the intellectual network around *Rosa e Ballo*, came at a time of renewal for drama in Italy, both as a theatrical practice and as a publishing strategy. After the early reception of Strindberg as a naturalistic playwright at the turn of the century, connected to the practice of the lead actor's theatre,<sup>129</sup> Strindberg had been virtually absent from Italian stages for forty years. Paolo Grassi and Giorgio Strehler (1921-1997), who had also started out from the intellectual network around *Rosa e Ballo*,<sup>130</sup> founded *Piccolo Teatro* in Milan in 1947, with the purpose of establishing the practice of the director's theatre, whereby directors, and not lead actors, gave their artistic interpretation of a play, by unifying the semiotic elements on stage into a coherent whole. Moreover in 1953 Grassi, after developing the project started at *Rosa e Ballo* a few years before, became the editor of "Collezione di Teatro" at Einaudi, Italy's largest, bestselling and still existing drama collection in book form.<sup>131</sup> Finally Strindberg's late plays have been staged more frequently in Italy since the Seventies, and Giorgio Strehler's only Strindberg production became a milestone. It took place at the *Piccolo Teatro* in Milan as late as 1980, and it was the chamber play *Temporale*, i.e., *Ovåder*, once called *Lampi*, now with a new title and in a new translation.<sup>132</sup>

Obviously, I do not want to argue for inadequate translations and indirect translations. I plead however for a historical and hermeneutical understanding of them. As in this case, they may reveal an urge to communicate and share a relevant human experience, on the side of both the sender (Strindberg) and the receivers (Schering and Pellegrini; German and Italian readerships and theatregoers); and even if communication occurs with adaptations, imperfections and interferences, the conveyed message remains viable as an aesthetic experience that speaks to people, widens their horizon of expectation and renews the literary system.

125. Unsigned review "Teatro da leggere", *Politecnico*, February 2, 1946. The same article reappears as Pandolfi 1946. Also Mario Gabrieli, one of the founders of Scandinavian studies at an academic level in Italy, expresses a negative assessment of Pellegrini's indirect translation, and on Schering as his source as well (Gabrieli 1946). Gabrieli's total dislike of Pellegrini's undertaking does not only depend on a refusal of indirect translation, but also, and mainly, on Pellegrini's historicism, which connects the present European state of mind, after two world wars, with Strindberg's perception of the dissolution of the bourgeois world, i.e., with his seminal "nihilism". The subject of Gabrieli's idealism (Gabrieli 1945) versus Pellegrini's historicism, is too

wide to be developed here and will be examined in a new article.

126. Rubini 1944.

127. Ringmar 2006, 10.

128. Unsigned review "Teatro da leggere", *Politecnico*, February 2, 1946; also as Pandolfi 1946 (see note 125).

129. Perrelli 2015, 50-89.

130. Strehler 1945. This article offers further evidence of how Italian readers of the post-period understood Strindberg through the lens of Expressionism.

131. From 1953 to 2006 "Collezione di Teatro" included almost 400 titles and sold over five million copies (Cerati 2006, 116). Cf. Ponte di Pino 2006; Sisto 2015, 78.

132. Ollén 1982, 508; Ciaravolo 2002; Perrelli 2015, 142-143.

## ABBREVIATIONS

FAAM	Fondazione Arnoldo e Alberto Mondadori, Milan
KB	Kungliga Biblioteket, Stockholm
MS	Manuscript

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MS KB Letters from Schering, E. to Strindberg, A., Kungliga Biblioteket (Royal Library), Stockholm, Ep. S 53 a, Sg NM, I 1899-1909, Sg NM, II 1910-1912, Sg NM, III Bilagor.
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